

CLAY TODAY

This Week ...

Davis in final seven for Hillsborough job – Page 6
 Wrestling, basketball, soccer and more ... – Sports
 Entertainment Guide – INSERT



THURSDAY, JANUARY 16, 2020

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County County School District:

Clay graduation rate at all-time high

The 91.9% rate is 17.7% higher than 10 years ago

By Wesley LeBlanc
 Staff Writer

CLAY COUNTY – Graduation rates from the 2018-2019 school year were the highest in the district's history. Graduation rates have been on the rise for years. Last year's class, however, set a new standard at

91.9%. That's .8% higher than last year's rate of 91.1% and 17.7% higher than the graduation rate of 10 years ago.

"Once again, the graduation rates released by the Florida Department of Education illustrates that Clay County District Schools is preparing all learners for post-secondary opportunities," Superintendent Addison Davis said.

The 2018-19 school year graduation

SEE GRADUATION, 21



City officials, CCSO go door-to-door to dispel rumors of fight club

Despite social media post, Keystone residents assured there's no gang activity

By Don Coble
 Managing Editor

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – At first, residents seemed apprehensive as a group of Clay County Sheriff's Office deputies and volunteers went door-to-door Tuesday afternoon in the neighborhood surrounding Keystone Heights Elementary.

Several minutes later, many of those same residents joined in the neighborhood walk.

"I was going for a walk anyway," said Deanna Hopkins as she pushed a stroller along Highland Avenue. "I've never lived in a town with something like this. It makes you feel good to know they're here."

About 20 residents joined with deputies,

SEE KEYSTONE, 21



Orange Park, Clay County officials unveil Rob Bradley Conservation Park

Gary and Pat Meeks, left, join Florida Sen. Rob Bradley during last week's ceremony at Nelson Point. The Meeks donated the 10-acre plot to give Orange Park public access to the St. Johns River. Bradley was honored for his tireless work on behalf of the county. *See story on page 2.*

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Ben Carroll

FOR **Sheriff**

Paid by Ben Carroll, Republican, for Sheriff

Orange Park names park after Sen. Rob Bradley

By Wesley LeBlanc
Staff Writer

ORANGE PARK – The waterfront property that someday will be the town's first public access to the St. Johns River will be called Rob Bradley Conservation Park at Nelson Point.

Town and county officials unveiled a sign last week to honor the work by the state senator and the Nelson family to turn the 10-acre lot into a public park. The property is situated on the banks of the St. Johns River and had long been in the Nelson family. But after a sale by two Nelson family members, Pat Meeks, who is the wife of former Orange Park Mayor Gary Meeks, and her sister, the park will now be enjoyed by the entire town.

"Years ago, [Bradley] shared with me the vision of today," Gary Meeks said. "This day holds significant importance for Orange Park: the town had no way to enjoy the water until [Bradley] made it a reality."

Residents, commissioners, council members, congressional representatives and town officials gathered at 670 Nelson Drive South to unveil the official sign of the park. The sign was an important part of the



STAFF PHOTO BY WESLEY LEBLANC

County and Orange Park officials applaud the work by outgoing Florida Sen. Rob Bradley by naming a 10-acre park after him at Nelson Point.

day, as was honoring everyone involved in making it happen.

County commissioner Diane Hutchings spoke about the importance of Bradley placed on the environment during his time in office, recalling his votes for projects totaling more than \$1 billion like the Keystone Heights lakes, algae blooms, everglade protection and making the Nelson Drive park a reality.

Orange Park Town Mayor Connie Thomas also talked of the hard work by the Nelson family and Bradley.

"We are blessed to have this day, such a beautiful day, to create together a lasting legacy in Orange Park," Thomas said. "Generations and generations of people in this town will enjoy all that this park has to offer."

Bradley said the park's name is an

honor beyond comprehension, and that it means a lot to his family. The park wouldn't have been possible had it not been for the Nelson family, the Meeks, the BCC and of course, the Orange Park Town Council, he said. He also thanked others that made it possible.

"None of this stuff happens in the world without teammates...and I'm very honored this is happening today, but it wouldn't have been possible without teammates of mine like [Rep. Travis Cummings] and [Rep. Bobby Payne]," Bradley said. "There are a lot of people that brought this to life that aren't me and today wouldn't be happening without them."

The new sign is located at what will be the main entrance. When park will be opened still hasn't been finalized. Now that the BCC has turned the deed over to the town council, the council will have to determine how best to utilize the property.

Thomas said in previous town council meetings the park will remain natural and void of large structures or buildings. She hopes for access to the water with a boat ramp or kayak launch, as well as sidewalks and trails for families wishing to take advantage of the natural amenities.

Dr. James St. George joins race for Yoho's Congressional seat

Republican primary for 3rd District grows to five candidates

By Drew Wilson
For FloridaPolitics

The race for Florida's 3rd Congressional District has added another candidate.

North Central Florida physician James St. George announced Friday that he would seek the seat being vacated by retiring U.S. Rep. Ted Yoho.

The self-described conservative Republican is the fifth Republican to enter the race and the second to do so this week, following the declaration of Clay County Commissioner Gavin Rollins.

"Now more than ever we need members of Congress who support our President and represent our conservative values just as Congressman Yoho has done so honorably," St. George said.

"As a physician I've helped patients across North Florida with their medical needs, as a conservative Republican I've supported candidates locally who stand for our conservative principals, and as a father I was a leader in an organization that teaches our youth the value of strong morals and service to the community.

"With Congressman Yoho's retirement,

I am taking the next step in service, by declaring my candidacy for Florida's 3rd Congressional District. I am ready to take off my white coat, roll up my sleeves, and get to work helping our President heal our country."

St. George has run medical clinics within the district, including an office on Fleming Island, for more than a decade and cited the business experience in his decision to run for Congress.

In addition to working as a vascular and interventional radiologist, St. George serves as a scoutmaster and on the Execu-

tive Board of Directors for the Boys Scouts of America North Florida Council, where he was once the District Chairman.

In addition to St. George and Rollins, Judson Sapp, Amy Pope Wells and Kat Cammack are also seeking the GOP nomination. Ocala Mayor Kent Guinn has also stated he is considering a run for the seat.

CD 3 covers Alachua, Clay, Putnam, Bradford and Union counties with parts of Marion also included. It is a safe Republican district. Yoho won reelection to the seat in 2018 by 15 points.



Dr. James St. George

County employment strengthens with 200-plus vacancies

For Clay Today

CLAY COUNTY – The county is hiring. According to the Clay County Economic Development Corporation, there are more than 200 job openings in the area, marking some of the lowest local unemployment rates in more than 20 years.

While the national unemployment rate is at a 50-year low at 3.5%, Clay County's currently is at 2.6%, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Those looking in the county for qualified

candidates include: Orange Park Medical Center (62 available positions); Parallon (15); St Vincent Health (49); Walmart (eight); bestbet (10); Vac-Con (two); Clay Baptist Health (14 positions); AT&T (four); General RV (one); VyStar Credit Union (four); Roller Die (one); Superior Construction (14 career fields); Clay County Utility Authority (one); Life Care Centers (10); Vallencourt Construction (seven career fields); Great Lakes Dock & Dredge

Co. (27); Kindred Hospital (14); Clay Electric (six); Penney Farms Retirement Community (seven); Andromeda Systems Inc. (12); Isle Health & Rehabilitation Center (17); Moosehaven Retirement Community (four); and ICG Builds (eight).

The figures released by the county don't reflect the number of job vacancies at smaller "mom and pop" stores and restaurants.

CLAY TODAY

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New year means new state, local laws

By Wesley LeBlanc
Staff Writer

CLAY COUNTY – The new year brings resolutions and changes to people’s lives, including state and local laws.

Several new laws went into effect on Jan. 1, including a raise in civil limits for lawsuits, fines for texting and driving and an increase from 18 to 21 to legally purchase tobacco and vaping products.

County civil limits are doubling from a maximum of \$15,000 to \$30,000. That means judgments now can be as much as \$30,000. Small Claims limits are increasing, as well, by 60% to a limit of \$8,000.

In disputing exceeding \$8,000, civil cover sheets must declare how much money is at stake in the case. For more details about changes to the court system, Circuit Court Community Outreach Director Mary Justino said people can visit KnowYourCourt.flcourts.org.

As to why these changes came about, Justino said guidelines were due for adjustments after remaining the same for more than 10 years.

“Inflation is at least part of the reason,” Justino said.

The new civil action limit of \$30,000 will only last until January, 2023m when it will increase

to \$50,000. Justino said all of the changes don’t equate to additional money going into the pockets of the Clerk’s Office. It instead will go to the state’s Department of Revenue.

Justino said it will take about a year for the court system to see what impact the changes will have on annual filings.

The courts aren’t the only systems seeing changes. The biggest change now in effect is texting and driving. Texting and driving have been illegal, but before Jan. 1 it was a secondary offense. Now it’s considered a primary offense.

Before Jan. 1, a traffic stop couldn’t be made just for texting and driving. Now it can be the sole reason for a citation.

Another big law that is now in effect is the legal age to smoke and purchase tobacco products like cigarettes, vaping cigarettes and cigars is now 21.

Also, the state’s minimum wage increased 10 cents an hour to \$8.56.

If you’re looking specifically for assistance with new laws, Justino recommended calling your local law enforcement agency. For any questions concerning these new 2020 court changes, Justino said her office is prepared to help in any way it can.

“OurCivilDepartmentstaffhasbeenbriefedonthechangesandwearereadytoassistcitizens,”shesaid.

KNOW YOUR COURT
COURT JURISDICTIONAL CHANGES
COMING JANUARY 1, 2020

What you should know about upcoming
CHANGES TO FLORIDA'S TRIAL COURTS

County Civil Limits Are Doubling To \$30,000
Limits on amounts in dispute for **civil cases** heard in Florida's **county courts** are doubling.

Small Claims Limits Are Increasing To \$8,000
Limits on amounts in dispute for **small claims cases** are increasing by 60 percent.

ZERO Changes Will Be Made To Fees
Filing fees will **remain the same** and do not change with the updates to dollar limits for amounts in dispute.

NO FEE CHANGES

UPDATED Civil Cover Sheets
Beginning January 1, 2020, filers must include a civil cover sheet that **declares how much money is at stake** in disputes exceeding \$8,000.

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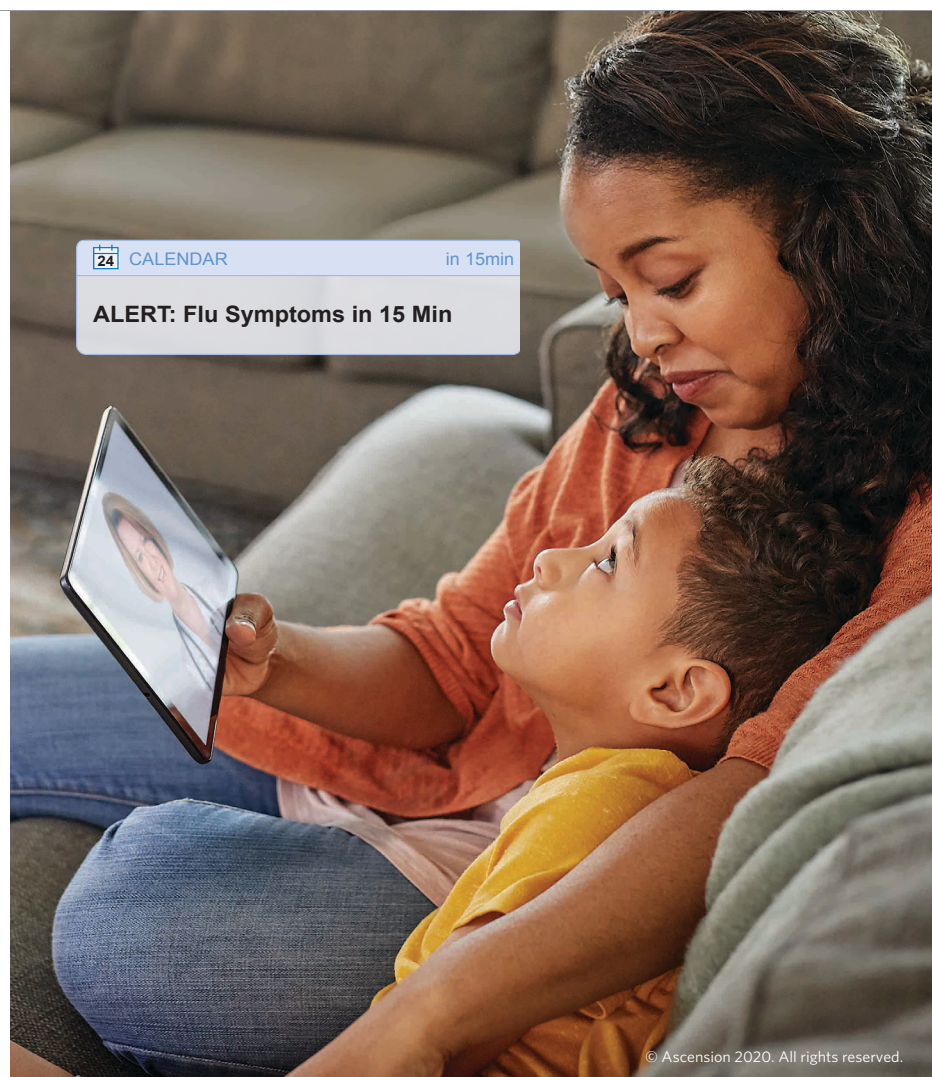
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Honoring the dream of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

By Jack Levine
4Generations Institute

It was late August 1963. I was 12. I remember my father calling me into his room. The radio was on, and I heard cheering. It was not a baseball game kind of cheer...it seemed louder and longer. It was a sustained roar.

My dad, aged 72 and blind, pointed in the direction of the radio with one hand, and put his other index finger to his lips... he was signaling me to be quiet...and to listen.

Next, I heard the voice. A combination of speech and chanting. The cadence was like none I ever heard. The word music rose and fell, the power was like a wave... swelling and then resting, soon to rise again.

My father's blind eyes were shining in the window light. He was tearful, his lips pursed, his head gently nodding in agreement, timed to the melody of the voice. Seeing my father so moved gave me a sense that history was being made.

There, in that sun-bathed room, I was captured by the sound of that voice, and felt the power of its persuasion. I never saw my father so attentive. All of his energy focused on listening to the words.

"I have a dream that one day my four little children will live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.

"And so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

Dr. King's monumental speech commanded the attention of not only the half-million who gathered at the Lincoln Memorial on the Washington Mall, but touched the hearts and influenced the minds of a nation to pay attention and take action.

That speech on that sweltering August day ignited a charge of energy that would not be stopped...not by gushing fire hoses, snarling dogs, enraged threats, church bombs or snipers' bullets. At the tender age of 35, that eloquent preacher from Atlanta set in motion a flood of individual and collective actions which would change how people viewed not only our neighbors, but ourselves.

The impact of that leader's courage was felt in that tumultuous decade of the

SEE KING, 5

OPINIONS



Davis should be judged on performance, not political, racial grandstanding

By Don Coble
Managing Editor

By any measure, Addison Davis would be a terrific hire for the Hillsborough County School Board.

With a record graduation rate, an eighth-place standing statewide and an emphasis to help the children at Charles E. Bennett Elementary with revolutionary programs that result in higher grades, his record is indisputable.

But like everything else, facts aren't always an issue, especially when something as important as educating our children turns political.

We hope Hillsborough makes a smart decision. Whether that involves Davis is something that should be determined by skills and his record. To interject politics, particularly race, is an insult to his work and to the legitimate process.

The American Civil Liberties Union and NAACP object to Davis being hired in Tampa.

They claim Davis runs a district where there have been concerns about student discipline. The ACLU presented copies of a letter it sent to Clay County last June outlining their concerns and the organization gave copies of that letter to the Hillsbor-



Don Coble

ough School Board during its meeting last week.

The board is expected to narrow its field of candidates from seven to two or three this week and make a final decision at its Jan. 21 meeting.

In reality, the ACLU sent all 67 counties a letter after collecting information from the 2017-18 school year. And it found issues with every district.

It states that Clay County had 64 student arrests that year, along with 62 citations and three arrests for disorderly conduct.

It claims those arrests feed into "school-to-prison" pipeline. The organization also pointed out black students make up 15% of the district's population, but figures on disciplinary actions ranged from 17% for arrests to 32% for police citations for the same group.

The study doesn't address guilt or innocence. Apparently that has no bearing on the information they want to present, and it only proves Mark Twain to be correct when he said: "there are lies, damn lies and statistics."

The study was conducted the same year of the mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High in Parkland that left 17 dead. That didn't matter.

"These findings prove what advocates have been saying for years," Michelle Morton, a juvenile policy coordinator for the ACLU of Florida said in a release when it sent letters to all 67 counties. "Our schools

SEE DAVIS, 5

Word OF THE WEEK

Word of the Week is a feature that aims to help readers boost their vocabulary in a meaningful way that has practical application. Each week, our editorial staff presents a word, its definition and its use in a sentence.

Cacophony: (*kə'kəfənē*) a noun that means a harsh non-harmonious mixture of sounds.

"A cacophony of instruments tuning up for the marching band competition drowned out the encouragement from the band director."

This week in history

Five years ago, 2015

- The Keystone Heights Volunteer Fire Department puts the Board of County Commissioners on notice it intends to sue over a "breach of contract."

- Middle-schooler Justin Boothe of Fleming Island finds a rare Nazi army medal hidden in a piano his family purchased from a Goodwill store in St. Augustine.

- The Citizens for a Greater Orange Park tell the town council it needs to address people using Plainfield Avenue for cut-through traffic, as well as demand replacing cracked sidewalks.

10 years ago, 2010

- The first meeting with a federal mediator generated a tentative contract agreement between the Clay County School District and the union representing teachers.

- Sam Garrison enters race to replace retiring Circuit Court Judge William Wilkes on the Clay County bench.

- Farmers markets on Fleming Island and Orange Park will serve as collection points for donations to the earthquake victims in Haiti.

20 years ago, 2000

- Orange Park follows Green Cove Springs' lead to creating a program to promote chlorine safety at the town's water treatment plant.

- Fleming Island's Christy Fitzgerald files to run for the District 1 County Commission seat left vacant at Dale Wilson said he wouldn't run again.

- The Orange Park High wrestling team wins the First Clay High Green Cove Rotary Invitational Tournament.

SEE HISTORY, 5

Send us a letter ...

We'd like to hear from you. Perhaps you are concerned about the county commission, the school board or your city council or commission, sit down and take a few moments to write us a letter. All we ask is that you keep it civil, no name-calling and write no

more than 600 words. All we ask is that you stick to local issues, be clear and make a point. We reserve the right to edit for AP Style-book errors, grammar and spelling. In your email, type Letter to the Editor in your subject and send it to Managing Editor Don Coble at don@opcfla.com. We look forward to hearing from you!

Opinions ...

The views and opinions expressed on this page are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Clay Today.

Davis

from page 4

don't need more cops."

She also said students are "crying out for help and schools are responding by pushing them away." She also bemoaned the disorderly conduct arrests, claiming it "pushes students further from a life of success and feels to a school-wide climate of distrust and disengagement that undermines school safety and student achievement."

The ACLU gave the Hillsborough district the same kind of blistering assessment

What the ACLU and NAACP didn't address last week was the state's improving

graduation rate.

Clay County rose to a district-record 91.9%. And it ignored another fact: graduation rates for blacks, Hispanics, at-risk students and students with disabilities had greater increases than white students.

We don't endorse candidates at Clay Today for one simple reason: we respect our readers to be smart enough to make their own decisions.

We certainly aren't going to suggest the Hillsborough County School Board should hire Davis.

That's a decision for Hillsborough to make.

Let's hope they show diligence and study the facts, not emotional grandstanding.

- The Green Cove Springs City Council pick Richard C. Fellows as its new city manager.

40 years ago, 1980

- Clay County officials examine the need to create a pressurized sewer system.
- J.P. Hall Jr., president of the Bank of Green Cove Springs, is one of 2,100 delegates invited to Washington to participate in the White House Conference of Small Business.
- State Attorney Ed Austin appoints Rick Beseler as an investigator for the State Attorney's Office.

pass? Not yet. Has his legacy brought forth a tremendous surge of change in attitude, law, and economic opportunity? Yes.

But there's so much still to be accomplished.

Justice is not static...it's active, and must be actively asserted and strictly guarded every day.

The fight for freedom has no limitations as long as the struggle for justice continues.

Every generation has its opportunity and obligation to recognize problems and create solutions.

In memory and in tribute to those who marched, fought and sacrificed for the rights we hold dear, being responsible voting citizens is one of our highest callings.

The courage to speak truth to power is one of democracy's great freedoms.

During my 40-plus year professional life as both a teacher and family policy advocate, I've learned that progress is not achieved by intention alone or in silence. As examples to our children and grandchildren let's commit to be ardent and assertive advocates.

Jack Levine, founder of the 4Generations Institute, is a Tallahassee-based family policy advocate. He may be reached at jack@4gen.org.

History

from page 4

30 years ago, 1990

- A 29-year-old man, Michael Alan Durocher, already on Florida's Death Row, was arrested by the Clay County Sheriff's Office for the 1983 killing a mother and her two children. Durocher was executed in 1993.
- Penney Farms' John Gannon is honored at the Craig Airport for being part of the 446th Bombardier Group of the 8th U.S. Air Force during World War II.

King

from page 4

1960s, and for generations to come.

The ideals of Dr. King's mission were rooted in his Christian faith; his principles and civil disobedience techniques were borrowed from Gandhi.

But no matter our faith, race, ethnicity, gender or age, the heroic vision and oratorical brilliance of Dr. King is a beacon for us all.

In the 11-year period between 1957 and 1968, King traveled more than a half-million miles and spoke more than 2,500 times, appearing wherever there was injustice to be protested, and action to be taken.

At age 36, he was the youngest person to be awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace. Although his life was cut short at age 39 by an assassin's bullet in April 1968, Dr. King's legacy lives in anyone who chooses to question those who would hold us captive to old ideas and discriminatory policies.

While Dr. King was by no means a perfect person in all of his personal behaviors (who among us is?), the courage and commitment of this one man has left a legacy which I believe should be taught to our young and admired for the lasting impact he created.

Has all that Dr. King envisioned come to

Letter to the editor

Saving water, money part of 'Skip A Week' program

Dear editor:

You can help us work toward saving a billion gallons of water this winter — and save money on your water bill.

Even in sunny Florida, lawns and landscapes take a break during the winter and naturally go dormant. During the cooler months of December, January and February, our landscapes typically need less water, and irrigation often isn't needed at all, so now is a great time to save water without giving up curb appeal.

On Dec. 2, the St. Johns River Water Management District kicked off its annual "Skip A Week" water conservation message, part of our year-long "Water Less" campaign. "Skip A Week" asks residents who water their lawns to voluntarily skip every other week this winter.

While current irrigation restrictions do allow watering up to once a week during Eastern Standard Time, weekly irrigation isn't always needed this time of year. If homeowners who do regularly water their yards simply skipped every other week this winter, more than a billion gallons of water could be saved across our 18 counties, including Clay.

Skipping every other week is as easy as

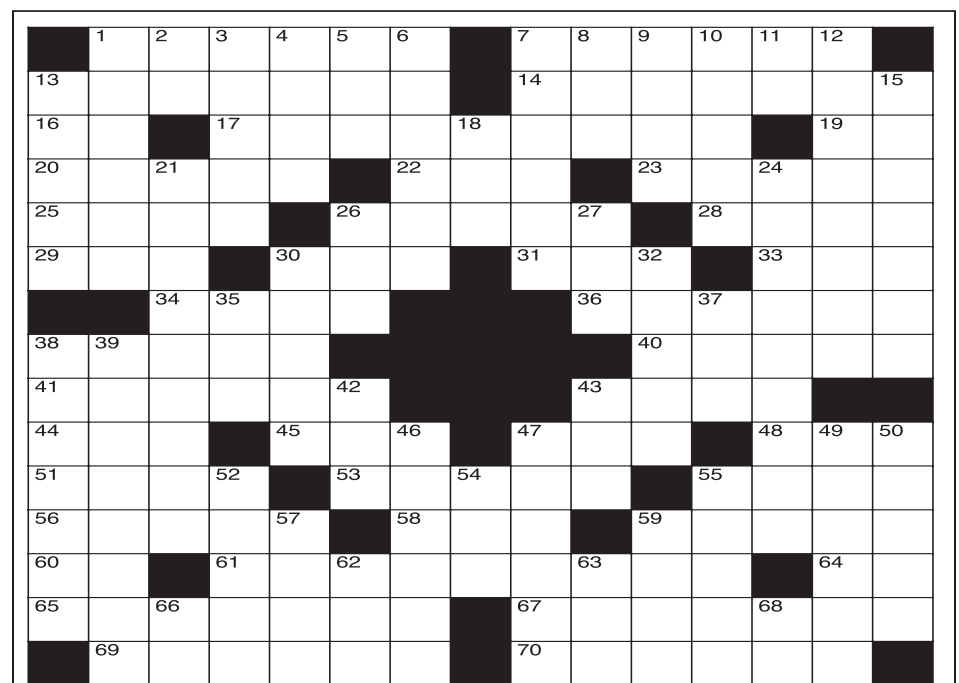
manually turning off your automatic sprinkler system. You'll be training your grass to grow deeper root systems, which makes them more drought-tolerant and less susceptible to pests and disease. Overwatered lawns are weak lawns.

Research shows watering deeply every 10–14 days is generally plenty during winter months

If you do water your lawn — and even when you "Skip A Week" — remember that your watering day is based on your address: odd addresses irrigate on Saturday, even addresses irrigate on Sunday, and non-residential addresses water on Tuesday. Always water before 10 a.m. or after 4 p.m.

We're all in this together. Skipping every other week of sprinkling is a simple way to do your part to help the region meet current and future water supply needs and conserve our most precious water resources. You can learn more at Water-LessFlorida.com, where you'll also find tips on year-round water conservation and efficient irrigation.

*Ann B. Shortelle, Ph.D.
Executive Director, SJRWMD*



CLUES ACROSS

1. Recurring TV show
7. Throws out
13. Iberian Peninsula microstate
14. Gossip
16. Atomic #20
17. Ivy League institution
19. Of I
20. 'He Is ___!': Scripture excerpt
22. Musical genre
23. Heavy cavalry sword
25. Ancient Olympic Site
26. Satisfies
28. Popular flower
29. Shared services center
30. Drain
31. A way to attack
33. Urban Transit Authority
34. Spiritual leader
36. Postponed
38. N. American plant with edible purple-black berries
40. Gazes unpleasantly
41. Gets up
43. Capital of Ukraine
44. Returned material authorization (abbr.)
45. Golf score
47. Superhigh frequency
48. Swiss river
51. Felons
53. Succulent plants
55. Soluble ribonucleic acid
56. Deliberately setting fire to
58. Infamous singer Zadora
59. Anwar ___, Egyptian statesman
60. Influential sports mag
61. Aromatic Mediterranean plant
64. Sixth note of a major scale
65. Unit of explosive power
67. Large watertight chamber
69. Popular street
70. A way of watering

CLUES DOWN

1. Mollusks
2. ___ denotes past
3. Anchor ropes
4. Large Middle Eastern country
5. To make a mistake
6. Ancient governor
7. Extents
8. Chinese surname
9. NYC subway 'residents'
10. Essential oil used as perfume
11. A way to treat injuries (abbr.)
12. Session
13. Units of land areas
15. Goes over once more
18. Where wrestlers work
21. Italian islanders
24. Avenue
26. ___ Adams, U.S. President
27. Rest with legs bent
30. Type of flour
32. The Golden State (abbr.)
35. More (Spanish)
37. Stinging, winged insect
38. The use of irony to mock
39. Arsenals
42. Pouch
43. 22nd letter of the Greek alphabet
46. Violent seizure of property
47. Restrict
49. Something comparable to another
50. Punishment device made from stems
52. Soul and calypso songs
54. Formerly OSS
55. Athabaskan language
57. ___ bene: observe carefully
59. Six (Spanish)
62. Read-only memory
63. Chinese philosophical principle
66. American conglomerate
68. Tin

School District to make final pitch to keep Davis during emergency workshop

Superintendent now one of seven finalists in Hillsborough County

By Wesley LeBlanc
Staff Writer

CLAY COUNTY – The school board wants its superintendent to stick around, even if he's offered a job by Hillsborough County.

Superintendent Addison Davis recently was among the final seven candidates being considered for the job in Tampa, the eighth largest school district in the nation. The Hillsborough County School Board hired a recruitment firm to select potential candidates for the position and Davis



Addison Davis

was one of 51 selected. Now he's one of seven.

"I would like to discuss where we will be going forward if, indeed, he ends up getting offered a job at Hillsborough County," board member Mary Bolla said.

If Davis gets the job, Gov. Ron DeSantis will appoint a replacement since he is an elected official. A new superintendent then would be elected during November's general election.

The school board would like to avoid it all and scheduled a tentative workshop for Friday, which is the day Davis would find out if he is one of the finalists for the position. The board hopes to convince Davis to remain in Clay County rather than possibly taking a new job.

It all may void if Davis isn't selected for the position, but Bolla said she'd wants to be prepared.

If Davis gets the job, Gov. Ron DeSantis will appoint a replacement since he is an elected official. A new superintendent then would be elected during November's general election.

"Is there anything more we can do to keep you here," Bolla asked. "We have not yet had that discussion."

Bolla suggested potentially adjusting Davis' salary as an enticement to stay. Board member Ashley Gilhousen said she doesn't think the school board should try to compete with Hillsborough, which advertises a salary more than double that of Davis'. Bolla said she was thinking less of a competitive match and more of a small boost to potentially convince him to stay.

Davis said at the Jan. 9 meeting money isn't a factor.

"To get the chance to go impact 220,000 students, that's truly a great op-

portunity," Davis said then. "There's five school districts that drive education and Hillsborough is one of those and when you're driving the work with Miami-Dade, Orange and Duval county, that can truly and positively can have a great impact on Clay County."

Davis reaffirmed his love and devotion to Clay County during the meeting and explained that he wasn't on the lookout for a new job. He didn't apply to multiple jobs, he said. He was asked to apply for this position and said he couldn't pass on the opportunity. If he doesn't get the position, Davis said he has every intent to run for another term.

So far, former superintendent Charlie Van Zant and Keystone Heights Senior High math teacher Melanie Dawn Walls are the only two candidates who've said they plan to run against Davis.

Board member Carol Studdard joked

SEE DAVIS, 7

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Orange Park's Thomas to run for county commission

Mayor hopes to fill vacancy created by Diane Hutchings's departure

By Wesley LeBlanc
Staff Writer

ORANGE PARK — Town Mayor Connie Thomas announced she will run for the District 3 seat of the Board of County Commissioners.

Diane Hutchings, who has served on the Orange Park Town Council before, is currently represents the District 3, but she is concluding her term. Thomas said she hopes to fill that vacancy.

"There is a great deal of work ahead and it would be a blessing to be able to truly serve our community in this expand-

ed capacity," Thomas said. "I am up for the task, but I can only do it if you are partnered on that journey."

Thomas has been on the Orange Park Council since 2017 and her term ends this May. Despite announcing a bid to run for the BCC, Thomas assured residents she will finish her current term. Thomas can't officially qualify for the commissioner race until af-



Connie Thomas

ter her she leaves town council.

Because of her intricate knowledge of the town she's known for more than 50 years, Thomas feels she's the perfect candidate.

"We need someone who knows the intricacies of our area and is willing to bring that voice to the county level," Thomas said. "I think we all understood in a very real way the significance of this when we needed the [BCC] to grant permission for the ownership of our own rescue until this past year. Because we were able to work closely with our representative, commissioner Hutchings, we were able to navigate this issue to a positive outcome for our town."

There are many issues ahead for Orange Park, according to Thomas, and she feels she can be a connection to the county for the town much like Hutchings was earlier this year when the town took over its emergency services.

Thomas said she wants to continue the environmental work on the town's waterways and water systems. She also wants to partner with schools to resolve Title 1 issues.

"I want to hear from our local businesses through round table discussions

to begin to devise ways to uplift them and create avenues for our town and district to become a destination rather than a traffic pass through," Thomas said. "I also want to continue my regular town hall meetings with our town citizens and expand that to include our surrounding neighbors."

Thomas said serving the town of Orange Park as a council member and subsequent mayor has been one of the greatest blessings of her life.

Thomas is up against Alexandria Hill, who is the only other person to have filed for this race. Hill has received \$16,050 in contributions. Thomas has not yet received any contributions yet. Both candidates filed as Republican.

Davis

from page 6

high school remaining, and it wouldn't be nice if she had to start at a new school in the Tampa area. She also said she prays every night he doesn't get the job.

Studdard said she's disappointed in Davis because during his election in 2016 was a promise to give the Clay County School District at least four years, but she understands his desire.

Davis will go to Hillsborough on Thurs-

day to be interviewed against seven semifinalists. The board in Hillsborough will narrow the six down to two or three on Thursday and make its final decision a week later. According to the search firm, Davis, Knoxville, Tennessee superintendent James McIntyre, Stephanie Elizalde of Dallas and Don Haddad of St. Vrain Valley, Colorado have earned the top-four grades so far in the evaluations.

The tentative workshop in Clay County is at 3 p.m. on Friday — the day after the field is cut to two or three finalists.

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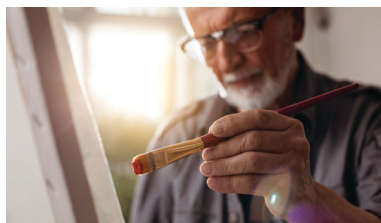


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Obituaries

John Donnelly Warner

John Donnelly Warner, 82, passed away January 4, 2020. He was born August 6, 1937 in Berlin, Germany to the late Dewitt T. and Lattra D. Warner.

He graduated in 1959 from The Citadel with a BS and earned an MBA from the University of South Carolina.

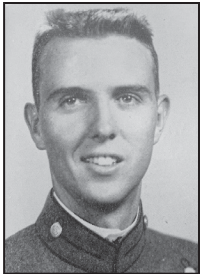
John had a sales career with Browning Manufacturing for 30 plus years. He was a member of Orange Park United Methodist Church and volunteered with the Good Samaritan Ministry. John was a member of the Southern California DeMolay. He actively coached his children and grandchildren in basketball, baseball and softball, was an avid tennis player, bridge player and basketball player. He is preceded in death by his parents and sister, Dorothy Warner Young.

John is survived by his wife of 60 years, Elizabeth S. Warner; children, Lisa Lozano, John "Jack" Warner and Martha Warner; grandchildren, Tyler Tucker, Luke Tucker, Megan Medina, Shea Medina, Isabella Lozano, Julianne Lozano, Elliott Warner, Spencer Warner and Phoebe Warner; brother-in-law, Bob Young; nephew, Alex Young and a host of friends.

The family would like to give special thanks to VITAS Hospice of Jacksonville.

A funeral service was held on Saturday, January 11, 2020 at Aaron and Burney Bivens Funeral Home, 529 Kingsley Avenue, Orange Park, FL 32073, (904) 264-1233, with Chaplain Mike Cannady and Dr. Al Eads, Jr., CLP Charleston Atlantic Presbytery officiating. He was interred at Magnolia Cemetery, 1040 Kingsley Avenue, Orange Park, FL 32073.

Donations may be made to The Citadel Foundation Class of 1959 N Company, in memory of John Donnelly Warner, 171 Moultrie Street, Charleston SC 29409, or online at <https://securelb.imodules.com/s/1674/bp17/interior.aspx?sid=1674&gid=1004&pgid=783&cid=2151>.



John Donnelly Warner

JoAnn Cox Burris

JoAnn Cox Burris, 80, of Middleburg, Florida, passed away Tuesday, January 7, 2020 with loved ones by her side. JoAnn was born to James Hoyt and Ella Mae Cox on Saturday, June 10, 1939 in Williamsburg, South Carolina. In the early 1960's, she moved to Jacksonville, Florida.

Jobs she enjoyed were Lerner's Department Store, where she retired after about 15 years; Pensacola Airport and Lil Champ, where she was a cashier and made new friends daily.

Some of her hobbies were dancing, going on cruises, camping with family, watching races with her baby brother, reading books, doing word searches, watching TV, and crocheting. But her favorite was fishing! Don't forget—feeding the great-grandchildren fruit and watching them play on her hill.

JoAnn is preceded in death by her parents, James Hoyt and Ella Mae Cox; sister, Mae Elizabeth "Betty" Faulk; brothers, James "Bud" Cox, Billy Wayne Cox, and Clemmie Gene Cox; grandchildren, Spring Marie Thomas, Robert Daniel "Robbie" Thomas, and Michelle Williams.

She is survived by her children, Glenda Ann Thomas, Hartford "Hardy" Burris, Jr. (Penny) and Sharon Lee Mire (Jeff); one sister, Roselle "Rosie" Rheurk; grandchildren, Jeffery Mire, Jr., Sabrina White (Curtis), Jason Bracken (Ibis), Robert Williams, Kenneth Parker (Autumn) Thomas, and Donald Price; great-grandchildren, Jeffrey "Lil Red" Mire III, Dakota Mire, Curtis, Cayden, and Cassidy White, Marc Thomas (Tiffany) Tyler, Hannah, Tristan, Jessica Bracken, Morgan, Bohi, Mallory Williams, Kendra, Haley Porterfield, Raven, Damian Parker, and Melanie Price, as well as many nieces and nephews.

Many will remember her as independent, hardworking, caring, loving, and sweet. She is forever in our hearts. Mom, Granny, GG... We love you!

Funeral services will be held at 1:30 pm Friday, January 17, 2020 in the Broadus-Raines Chapel with Dr. Tim McDaniel officiating. The family will receive friends in the chapel from 12:30 pm until service



JoAnn Cox Burris

time. Interment will follow in Russell Haven of Rest Cemetery.

Please sign the family's online guestbook at www.broadusraines.com. Arrangements are under the care of Broadus-Raines Funeral Home, 501 Spring St., Green Cove Springs, FL 32043. (904) 284-4000.



Brenda Carroll Saunders

Brenda Carroll Saunders, age 51, of Keystone Heights, Florida passed away on January 10, 2020 at Shands at the University of Florida in Gainesville. She was born in Jacksonville, Florida on December 6, 1968 to Winnie Gaskins Sikes and Andrew J. Sikes.

Brenda was raised in Lawtey, Florida, attended the Bradford County School System and graduated from Ed White High School in Jacksonville in 1986.

Following graduation, Brenda attended Florida Community College of Jacksonville and shortly after relocated to South Carolina where she worked at General Electric Company as an Assembly Line Technician.

In 1998, Brenda moved back to Florida and started her career at Invision at North Florida Regional Medical Center as a Medical Coder where she has worked for the last 15 years.

Brenda was a devoted wife to Karey Saunders, and loving mother and grandmother. She enjoyed arts and crafts, planning weddings, arranging flowers, and worshipping at New Grace Baptist Church in Florahome, FL where she was a longtime member. Most of all, Brenda loved her family and enjoyed spending time with her grandchildren and friends. She was preceded in death by her step-father, James "Sonny" Douglass.

Brenda is survived by her loving husband of 9 years, Karey D. Saunders of Keystone Heights, FL; her parents, Jenny



Brenda Carroll Saunders

Douglass of Starke, FL and Andrew J. (Elaine) Sikes of Jacksonville, FL; her children, Jennifer (Benjamin) Ferguson of Starke, FL, Christopher (RuIndia) Padilla of Jacksonville, FL; step children, Goldie Lyn (Jeremy) Kilgore of Keystone Heights, FL and David Saunders of Middleburg, FL; her sister, Shelley (Phil) Smith of Keystone Heights, FL; her step sisters, Sunnie (Beau) Pearson and Kim Matt Stucky both of Starke, FL; and 2 grandsons, Oliver James Ferguson and James Ryley Padilla.

A celebration of Brenda's life was held on Wednesday, January 15, 2020 at 12:00 pm at Archie Tanner Memorial Chapel with Pastor Jay Baker officiating. Interment followed at First Black Creek Baptist Church Cemetery in Penney Farms, FL. The family received friends on Wednesday, January 15, 2020 an hour prior to the service at the funeral home.

Arrangements are under the care and direction of V. Todd Ferreira Funeral Services and Archie Tanner Memorial Chapel, Starke, FL. 904-964-5757. Visit www.ferreirafuneralservices.com to sign the family's guest book.

Edward D. Stickles

Edward D. Stickles, 90, of Orange Park, FL, passed away January 13, 2020.

Broadus Raines Funeral Home, 501 Spring St., Green Cove Springs, FL (904) 284-4000. www.broadusraines.com



Mary Frances Clark

Mary Frances Clark, 75, of Green Cove Springs, FL, passed away January 7, 2020

Broadus Raines Funeral Home, 501 Spring St., Green Cove Springs, FL (904) 284-4000. www.broadusraines.com



SEE OBITUARIES, 9



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Camp Blanding still thriving as training base, historical landmark

Local base celebrates its 80th birthday

By Wesley LeBlanc
Staff Writer

CAMP BLANDING – Clay County is full of history. It's home to southern rockers like Lynyrd Skynyrd, Molly Hatchet and 38 Special, artists like Augusta Savage and one of the most haunted buildings in north-east Florida, the Old Clay County Jail.

It also has a decades-long history with the nearby World War II camp, now training facility, known as Camp Blanding, which just celebrated its 80th birthday.

Camp Blanding was an important military installation throughout World War II before it was handed back to the state to become a training facility.

"Its glory days began two years before the U.S. entry into World War II when its heavily wooded, mostly sandy, partly swampy terrain was transformed into a training site for the Florida National Guard," W. Stanford Smith, author of "Camp Blanding: Florida Star in Peace and War," wrote in his book. "Camp Blanding was expanded in size and given additional missions when war came with the result that it played a major role in successful prosecution of that war."

Smith said in his book that Camp Blanding owes its creation to the National Guard. Before the second World War, in the 1930s, the U.S. Navy was on the lookout for land in Northeast Florida that could be developed into a Naval Air Station. The site that would eventually become NAS Jax was known as Camp Foster back then and it was owned by the National Guard.



Soldiers learn to throw grenades during basic training at Camp Blanding. During World War II, it served as a training base as well as a POW camp for cooperative German soldiers.

The National Guard and the U.S. Navy agreed to a trade, with financial backing of course, that saw the Navy take over the land of Camp Foster to develop it into a naval air station. In return, the National Guard received several pieces of land and more than 30,000 acres and \$400,000 for a plot between Green Cove Springs and Starke.

"The check from the Duval County Air Base Authority in the amount of \$400,000 was received November 18, 1939, and

deposited with the state treasurer to the credit of the 'Armory Board Replacement Fund,'" Smith said in his book. "The new camp site turned out to be the Kingsley Lake area acquired after another series of complications and given the name Camp Blanding in honor of Major General Albert H. Blanding, a Floridian who served in the War Department as Chief of the National Guard Bureau."

Camp Blanding was leased to the U.S. Army as an active duty training facility at

the beginning of World War II. The compound became more than just a training facility. It was a prisoner-of-war camp, a holding center for 343 different immigrant residents of the country and a training camp for nearly one million soldiers in its World War II lifetime. Smith said in his book that it was the second largest training camp in the country and that it never slept.

"Operations at Camp Blanding went on a 24-hour basis with anti-aircraft protection, vehicle dispersion and accelerated training tempo," he wrote.

Of its many functions during World War II, one of Camp Blanding's most important was its use as a prisoner-of-war camp for key German soldiers. Clay County Archivist Vishi Garig said Camp Blanding was a nice POW camp, relatively speaking, and that German soldiers who cooperated well with the United States were sent to Camp Blanding, rather than harsher camp.

Robert Billinger Jr.'s book, Hitler's Soldiers in the Sunshine State back that up, citing the success of Camp Blanding's POW work program.

"The prospect of large numbers of idle German prisoners of war within the United States presented a potential security problem," Billinger said. "But there was a solution to that problem and to the wartime manpower shortage at military installations and in the civilian economy: it was a POW work program.

"The former wartime American executive officer at Camp Blanding, Col. Harry A. Johnston, recalled that the German workers usually outdid themselves in their labor efforts. Such deeds would be rewarded, as best they could at a [POW camp]."

Camp Blanding became one of the coun-

Obituaries continued from page 8

Clayton Eugene Moody

Clayton Eugene Moody, 78, of Orange Park, FL, passed away January 13, 2020.

Broadus Raines Funeral Home, 501 Spring St., Green Cove Springs, FL (904) 284-4000. www.broadusraines.com



Aurea Dampier

Aurea Dampier, 88 of Orange park, FL passed away January 11, 2020

Russell Haven of Rest Cemetery, Funeral Home and Cremation Center, 2335 Sandridge Road Green Cove Springs, FL 32043. 904-284-7720. www.RHRFH.com



Karen Joan Chamblee

Karen Joan Chamblee, 69 of Orange Park, FL passed away January 11, 2020

Russell Haven of Rest Cemetery, Funeral Home and Cremation Center, 2335 Sandridge Road Green Cove Springs, FL 32043. 904-284-7720 www.RHRFH.com



Ruby Jefferson

Ruby Jefferson, 66, of Green Cove Springs, FL passed away January 11, 2020.

Broadus Raines Funeral Home, 501 Spring St., Green Cove Springs, FL (904) 284-4000. www.broadusraines.com



Stanley Russell "Bear" Quintern

Stanley Russell "Bear" Quintern, 40 of Middleburg, FL passed away January 7, 2020

Russell Haven of Rest Cemetery, Funeral Home and Cremation Center, 2335 Sandridge Road Green Cove Springs, FL 32043 904-284-7720. www.RHRFH.com



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Thursday publication

SEE CAMP BLANDING, 15

Trap, neuter, return

Community Critter Care committed to corralling county cat crisis

By Bruce Hope
Staff Writer

MIDDLEBURG – Clay County has a feline problem.

Approximately 30,000 community cats, both domestic and feral, roam the area. Jane Hawley, of Community Critter Care of Clay County, is working hard to change that. On Mondays and Tuesdays, she is awake at 3.30 a.m. and out trapping stray cats to prepare them to be neutered, spayed and then returned to their environments.

In 2015, then Orange Park Councilman Steve Howard proposed community cats not be fed if without written permission of the owner of the cat. The proposed ordinance upset many people who were

feeding of the cats and didn't want them to starve. The ordinance was put before an Ad Hoc committee for further examination. Hawley was on that committee.

"We basically researched the issue of this ordinance," Hawley said. "Everybody agrees that TNR [trap, neuter and return] was the way to go in dealing with the problem of too many community cats."

A community cat is one that falls into any of three categories: homeless, domestic or feral. Community cats often have some sort of caregiver. A caregiver is a person that usually feeds a community cat and, in some cases, ensures the cats' medical attention.

Cats fall into the "community" category by different means. Homeless domestic cats often end up that way after being



abandoned by transient military personnel. Feral cats are wild and are even more problematic because they can't be touched or handled by people. These cats live in groups of two to 50. If left unchecked, their numbers can soar exponentially due to the

fact they have multiple breeding cycles annually.

Right now, Hawley is the person out in the field of trapping the community cats for CCC. She uses different traps such as drop and humane. The drop trap is nothing more than a box held up by stick or something close with a long string or rope tied to whatever is holding the box up at an angle. Once the cat is under the box, the string/rope is pulled and the box drops, containing the cat. The humane traps are simply those with an open door and bait – Hawley likes to use a liver and chicken pate', as it has a strong scent to lure the cats – on the opposite end of the cage. Once the cat enters the cage and walks over a pressure

SEE CATS, 15

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Black Creek Trail may be extended to NAS Jax

Plans being examined to add five miles to the 8.3-mile trail

By Wesley LeBlanc
Staff Writer

ORANGE PARK – The Black Creek Trail, which currently extends south to Orange Park may be extended NAX Jax.

The trail today runs from Black Creek bridge on U.S. Highway 17 through Fleming Island to Orange Park for 8.33 miles, but it could be extended for five more miles. Orange Park Mayor Connie Thomas asked resident Michael Wallwork, who has an extensive background in transportation planning, to create a new plan to make the extension a reality.

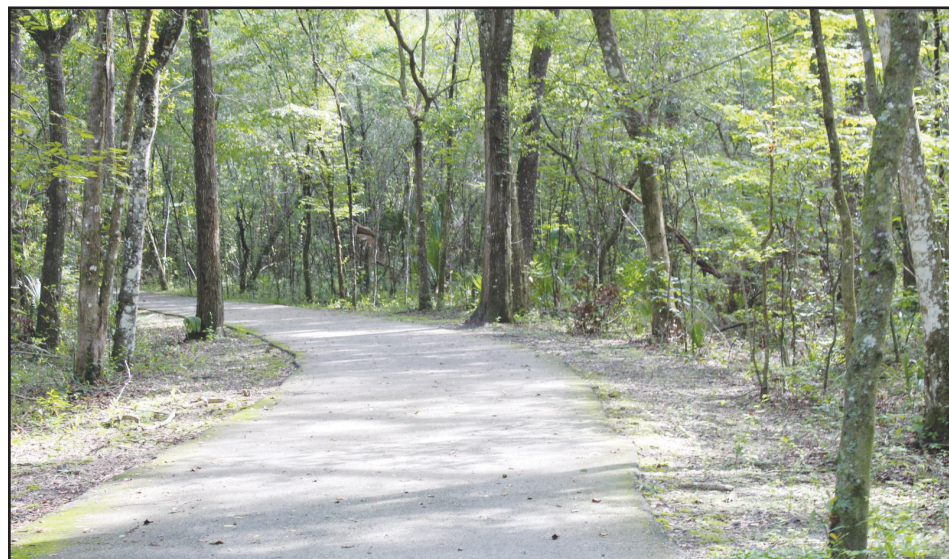
“The mayor asked me to take a look at it...and I didn’t like what I saw because...you have pedestrians up along [U.S. 17],”

Wallwork said of the proposed trail extension. “We don’t want people all along these busy roads, so I went ahead and redesigned it.”

That redesign includes an additional 1.55 miles of trail in Orange Park, 450 feet of Clay County north of Orange Park, 3.53 miles of Jacksonville and a final 360 feet to NAS Jax. This extended portion of the trail goes from U.S. 17 to Milwaukee Avenue to Dogwood Lane to Doctor’s Lake Drive. The trail then goes to Kingsley Avenue and then turns to run parallel with the nearby CSX railroad tracks.

“I can confirm that the trail can be built from Kingsley to NAS Jax without using CSX’s right away,” Wallwork said. “This is very important because I haven’t been able to get in touch with CSX at all.”

Wallwork doesn’t yet have a cost estimate for this trail extension since it’s still in the preliminary stages. There are



a number of options, some more expensive than others, and all parties involved will have to determine which option to use.

The City of Jacksonville, the Florida Department of Transportation and Ascension Medical Group St. Vincent’s, which has a few buildings in the area that the trail would occupy, have agreed to allow the extension to happen. The Orange Park Town Council will rely on town staff to explore options and final costs.

“Now that everyone is in agreement, we have to get a better cost estimate...so that’s the next step,” Wallwork said.

Wallwork said the commanding officer of NAS Jax is especially excited about the potential of this extension as it could provide an alternative route for as many as 20,000 of its staff for things like bicycling and running.

There is no timeline attached to the project.

Department of Labor proposes \$1 million in fines

Contractor cited for fall hazards at Fleming Island, Middleburg locations

For Clay Today

JACKSONVILLE – The U.S. Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has cited Florida Roofing Experts Inc. – a Jacksonville, Florida, roofing contractor owned by Travis Slaughter – for failing to protect workers from falls at two work sites on Fleming Island and one in Middleburg, Florida. Florida Roofing Experts Inc. faces penalties totaling \$1,007,717.

OSHA initiated the inspections on July 11 and 12, 2019, after receiving complaints on July 9, 2019 of employees performing residential re-roofing activities without fall protection. Given the employer’s extensive history of violations, pursuant to OSHA’s egregious citation policy,

the agency issued eight willful citations for failing to protect employees from fall hazards.

“This employer has an extensive OSHA history with willful, serious, and repeat violations that has demonstrated an egregious disregard for the safety of their workers,” said OSHA Regional Administrator Kurt Petermeyer, in Atlanta. “The employer continues to allow employees to work without fall protection, and has made no reasonable effort to eliminate the risk.”

“OSHA has extensive resources to help employers and workers understand how to comply with fall protection standards,” stated Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health Loren Sweatt. “Fall protection and training requirements that address falls continue to be among the top 10 cited OSHA standards. Fatalities and injuries from falls are preventable.”

Given these investigations and citations, OSHA has placed Florida Roofing

Experts in the agency’s Severe Violator Enforcement Program due to high-gravity willful, egregious violations related to fall hazards.

OSHA has investigated Florida Roofing Experts and its predecessor, Great White Construction, 19 times within the last seven years, resulting in 42 citations related to improper fall protection, ladder use, and eye protection.

The company has 15 business days from receipt of the citations and proposed penalties to comply, request an informal conference with OSHA’s area director, or contest the findings before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, employers are responsible for providing safe and healthful workplaces for their employees. OSHA’s role is to help ensure these conditions for America’s working men and women by setting and enforcing standards, and pro-

viding training, education, and assistance. For more information, visit <https://www.osha.gov>.

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SJRWMD to convert 79 septic tanks to sewer on Doctors Lake

For Clay Today

MIDDLEBURG – The St. Johns River Water Management District Governing Board today approved an agreement with Clay County Utility Authority to convert as many as 79 septic tanks to central sewer on properties adjacent to Doctors Lake. The project, spearheaded by Sen. Rob Bradley and Rep. Travis Cummings through a 2018 legislative appropriation, is estimated to reduce total nitrogen loading to Doctors Lake by approximately 1,500 pounds a year.

“The District thanks Sen. Bradley and Rep. Cummings for being champions of the Lower St. Johns River Basin and working with us to fund projects that will bring water quality improvements to the St. Johns River and its tributaries,” said St. Johns River Water Management District Executive Director Dr. Ann Shortelle.

“We set out two years ago to end the algae blooms in Doctors Lake,” said Sen.

Bradley. “This is another important step in the process. I’m proud to work with Rep. Cummings to fund these critical efforts to clean our waterways.”

“Senator Bradley and I worked tirelessly to secure the funding to empower CCUA and the district to partner and implement this project to help eradicate algae blooms and other troubling issues in Doctor’s Lake and restore health to our waterways so that the residents of Clay County and its visitors may enjoy our precious natural resources for generations to come,” said Rep. Cummings.

“We are excited about the first phase of this effort and look forward to opportunities to improve the health of the Doctors Lake watershed,” said CCUA Chief Operations Officer Jeremy Johnston. “It’s partnerships like these that continue to benefit our waterways and our community.”

Doctors Lake has experienced algal blooms for 33 of the last 35 years due largely to excessive nutrients entering the



From left, Rep. Travis Cummings, SJRWMD Executive Director Dr. Ann Shortelle and Sen. Rob Bradley announce it has the funding to replace as many as 79 septic tanks at Doctors Lake.

watershed and this partnership.

The \$1.5 million project includes septic tank abandonment, providing sewer infrastructure to the area and connecting participating residences to the CCUA wastewater collection system for greatly improved treatment and beneficial reuse.

Under the agreement, the district will reimburse CCUA periodically as residents agree to abandon their septic tank and connect to sewer.

The project goal is to abandon 79 septic tanks with subsequent connection to cen-

tral sewer, which is estimated to reduce total nitrogen loading to the lake by approximately 1,500 pounds per year.

During the 2018 legislative session, Sen. Bradley and Rep. Cummings secured specific funding during the budget process for the St. Johns River to implement projects that will help restore the river, its tributaries and the Keystone Heights Lake Region, as well as improving public access and recreation projects within the St. Johns River Water Management District.

College Briefs

Orange Park’s ABWA offering another \$2,000 scholarship

ORANGE PARK – The Orange Park Charter Chapter of the American Business Women’s Association is again offering a \$2,000 IMPACT Scholarship funded through the Stephen Bufton Memorial Educational Fund to support a deserving Northeast Florida student.

Each year the trustees award scholarships to women who will be attending accredited U.S. colleges and universities. Applicants for the IMPACT Scholarship must be a citizen of the United States, a resident of Northeast Florida, attending a college or university in Florida in the fall semester

with awards at least a baccalaureate degree studying at any college grade, including post-graduate levels and have a current grade point average of at least 3.0.

Eligible women may apply at: Lynn McCarthy, Scholarship Chair, Orange Park Charter Chapter of American Business Women’s Association, at lynnmccarthy1@comcast.net.

Once added to the applicant database by the Scholarship Chair, applicant packages must be completed online by May 15. Contact the Scholarship Chair for complete application details. A minimum of three eligible applicants are required in order for the scholarship to be awarded. The scholar-

ship recipient will be notified in June.

O.P.’s Alexis Carter on honor roll at Dixie State

ST. GEORGE, Utah – Alexis Carter was one of 1,978 students who earned a spot on the honor roll at Dixie State University for the Fall semester.

Inclusion indicates students’ strong commitment to their academic pursuits, as they must achieve a semester grade point average of 3.9 or higher to be included on the President’s List and a GPA of 3.5 to 3.89 for the Dean’s List. Both lists require students to complete a minimum of 15 credits.

Keystone’s Stephens on Dean’s List at Bob Jones

GREENVILLE, S.C. – Jordan Stephens, a Sophomore Biblical Studies major from Keystone Heights, was among more than 900 Bob Jones University students named to the Fall 2019 Dean’s List.

The Dean’s List recognizes students who earn a 3.00-3.74 grade point average. Bob Jones University provides an outstanding regionally accredited Christian liberal arts education purposely designed to inspire a lifelong pursuit of learning, loving and leading.

SEE COLLEGE, 14

DANGERS OF NICOTINE USE AMONG YOUTH

Parents and educators have an important role to play in addressing this public health epidemic. Having the facts on the dangers of nicotine can help when talking to your kids or students about



E-liquids typically contain nicotine, which is highly addictive.

Nicotine exposure among youth can affect brain development, which continues until about age 25.



The developing brain is more vulnerable to nicotine’s effects, including deficits in attention and cognition, reduced impulse control, and mood disorders.

Using nicotine may also increase the risk for future addiction to other drugs.



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Contact:



904-703-5445
www.TFP-Clay.org

PET ADOPTIONS



Domino

Oh, hey! My name’s Domino and I am 6 years old. I came here with my buddies Moo and Bow. I joined them a few years ago when I was a stray, and there was a big storm coming through called a hurricane! It was terrifying, I took shelter at their door and they let me in. We’ve been buddies ever since. But recently, one of the humans got really sick, now we’re at Safe Animal Shelter. I can be a bit shy, and I’m very afraid of storms, but I love to play and hang around. I’ve got a bit of a bad hip, so I can’t jump as high as some cats, but it’s not hurting me so I don’t mind. Do you have any pipe cleaners? Paper towel rolls? Or oooh, oh, lasers. Those are some of my favorite things. It doesn’t take much to entertain me!



Rocket

Hi there, great to meet you! My name is Rocket and I am only 10 months old. In case you haven’t guessed yet, I’m definitely a people-person/kitty. I’m just looking for someone to love, and adore, and play with. I’m very friendly, and love cuddles. Wherever you are, that’s where I’ll be!

Safe Animal Shelter | 2913 County Road 220 Middleburg | 904-276-7233
Wednesday-Sunday 12pm-5pm | www.safeanimalshelter.com



Valedictorian Award recipient Jasmine Day (left) and fellow graduates line up for the processional march during SJR State's fall commencement. The ceremony included graduates completing the nursing, EMT, engineering and baccalaureate programs.

Jasmine Day earns Valedictorian Award during SJR State graduation

Clay students pick up diplomas during ceremony at Thrasher-Horne Center

For Clay Today

ORANGE PARK – St. Johns River State College recently celebrated its Fall Commencement, honoring the students who earned their associates and bachelor's degrees or college credit certificates.

More than 150 students from the Orange Park, Palatka and St. Augustine campuses participated in the ceremony held at the Thrasher-Horne Center.

During the ceremony, Jasmine Day, of Clay County, was presented the Valedictorian Award. The award is given based on grade point average and difficulty of courses. Day graduated with her Associate in Arts degree with a 4.0 grade point average. She is continuing her education at the University of Florida to pursue her bachelor's degree in biomedical engineering. She hopes to ultimately work in neural engineering or genetics.

Among the Clay County graduates was Veteran Michael Arrington, who is trading in his Army boots for story time. When the 39-year-old father of three relocated to Clay County and continued his transition into civilian life, he enrolled in business courses at SJR State. Although he originally considered teaching to be his dream job, and he thoroughly enjoyed training Iraqi soldiers during his active duty, he did question whether teaching was the right choice.

It wasn't until he volunteered at his son's school and watched the delight of learning in his own child's face that he decided to return to his initial career path

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SJR
from page 13

and earn his bachelor's degree in early childhood education. "I would see him come home from school just so excited about something he learned or something he did, and I was like, I should have stayed with it," Arrington said. "I thought, that's

it! I'm going to go back to become a teacher," he said.

Also graduating was Andy Rodriguez, who after a 10-year gap, decided to return to SJR State and complete his Associate in Arts degree that he initially started right out of high school.

The difference this time around was that he felt "ready" – unlike the time before when he was simply going through the

motions at his parents' request.

Rodriguez now plans to become a nutritionist after his experience with bariatric surgery. "Through that my eyes were opened to the world of nutrition," Rodriguez said. "I want to be a bariatric dietitian and help those wanting to make that life-changing surgery, share my story and steps with them, and help ensure they, too, can attain success."

Communications professor Dawn Bergeron, who taught Rodriguez in 2009 and in 2019 said, "I think it takes a lot of courage and determination to "come back" after so many years have passed. He has graduated, and I am so proud to have had him as my student."

Former Viking baseball player Jeremiah Aut also returned to SJR State to complete his degree following a decade long gap.

When his now-deceased father became severely ill, Aut left the College to assist in his care.

Aut's challenges would continue with three shoulder surgeries, progressive hearing loss, and the responsibility of nursing his mother through two major surgeries. "Earning my associate degree is just the first step toward fulfilling a promise I made to myself and my parents, despite the hardships my family has endured," said Aut.

His next stop is the University of North Florida, where he plans to work on his bachelor's degree in business administration. He hopes to own a sporting-related business one day.

A portion of the ceremony was dedicated to presenting the Paul "Dee" Causey President's Award.

Each year, the award honors the memory of the SJR State alumnus whom SJR State President Joe Pickens described as not only his mentor, but a fearless athlete, dedicated family man and successful businessman. "Dee Causey loved the underdog, and he loved nothing more than helping the underdog succeed," Pickens said.

President Pickens presented the award to former mathematics professor Stephen Dennis, who retired due to Lou Gehrig disease.

He was diagnosed in 2018 and retired last June.

The presentation was delivered through a video call streamed to where Dennis now resides in Ohio, where he is receiving specialized care near his family.

Pickens shared that after Dennis' diagnosis, he was determined to stay as long as possible at SJR State, doing his life's work - teaching students. "Throughout his decline, he never made excuses, and he never complained," Pickens said.

Pickens continued with a letter written by SJR State's Vice President for Academic Affairs, Melanie Brown, "We admire Professor Dennis' pride in being an educator, and his love of mathematics. We admire his wisdom, his wit, his determination, his refusal to give up or take the easy path," Pickens said. "He exemplifies SJR State's Viking spirit."

College
from page 12

Green Cove Springs' Porter on Bucknell's Dean's List

LEWISBURG, Penn. – Danielle Porter, an undeclared major from Green Cove Springs, was selected to the dean's list at Bucknell University during the fall semester of the 2019-20 academic year. A student must earn a grade point average of 3.5 or higher on a scale of 4.0 to receive dean's list recognition.

Bucknell University is a highly selective private liberal arts university that offers majors in the arts, engineering, humanities, management, and social and natural sciences, along with broad opportunities outside of class, to its 3,600 undergraduates. Graduate programs are available in select disciplines. Students benefit from a small student-faculty ratio

of 9:1, personal attention from faculty, leadership opportunities, and excellent graduation rates and career outcomes.

Detlefsen, Deitch earn academic honors at Troy University

TROY, Ala. – Two local students earned spots on academic honors lists last semester at Troy University.

Alisa Detlefsen of Fleming Island made the Provost's List. The Provost's List honors full-time undergraduate students who are registered for at least 12 semester hours and who have a grade point average of at least 3.65.

Sarah Deitch of Middleburg made the Chancellor's List. The Chancellor's List honors full-time undergraduate students who are registered for at least 12 semester hours and who earn a grade point average of 4.0.



Clay County District Schools

High School Freshman Showcase Nights for the Class of 2024

All 8th-grade students and their parents or guardians are encouraged to attend High School Freshman Showcase Nights to see firsthand what each high school has to offer in their programs of study. That night you can learn about course offerings, advanced programs of study, electives, extra-curricular activities, athletic programs, gather information, visit classrooms and meet the teachers.

Date	School	Phone Number
February 11, 2020	Ridgeview High School	904-336-8975
February 18, 2020	Orange Park High School	904-336-8675
February 19, 2020	Fleming Island High School	904-336-7500
February 20, 2020	Keystone Heights High School	904-336-7775
February 24, 2020	Middleburg High School	904-336-8075
February 25, 2020	Clay High School	904-336-7175
February 27, 2020	Oakleaf High School	904-336-8375

Please contact the High School for the start time and any questions you may have.

*High School Guidance Counselors and College & Career Coaches will visit each Junior High School on **February 20th** during the school day to hand out high school information, course selection sheets and make presentations to the students about their High School opportunities.*



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Cook joins growing field for Clay County Sheriff

By Bruce Hope
Staff Writer

CLAY COUNTY – Atlantic Beach Chief of Police Michelle Cook is looking to return to Clay County – this time as sheriff.

“Clay County is my home,” Cook said. “I’ve always considered Clay County my home. I just feel a calling to come home and run... Clay County.”

Cook has been in law enforcement for the last 28 years, serving with four sheriffs and holding just about every position in the Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office before retiring three years ago as the Director of Operations. Cook then moved on to her current position at Atlantic Beach.

She originally wanted to join the U.S. Navy, following in the footsteps of her sail-



Michelle Cook

or father, who retired as a Senior Chief.

“I was very interested in going into the Navy, like my father. I scored very high on the ASVAB [Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery]. I remember the recruiter was all excited talking to me. They were going down the list of things that would prevent you from joining the military and they said ‘asthma’ and I said yes, and they said, ‘ok, this interview is done,’” Cook remembers with a giggle.

After going on to college, she originally wanted to go study education, but that all changed when she did a ride-along with a local police officer.

“The moment I sat down in that car, I knew it was for me,” she said. “I literally went that week and changed my major to criminal justice. It just felt right; the opportunity to serve, to be out in the community, talking to people, interacting with people was all something that was very ap-

pealing to me.”

She eventually joined the JSO and rose through the ranks during a distinguished career.

“When I was a street sergeant, that was a lot of fun,” said Cook. “You got to influence young officers and work one on one with the officers on the street and have an impact on them. The other job I really enjoyed was the last one, the Director of Operations. Having 1,000 policemen working for me and being able to help the sheriff implement different initiatives along the way.”

With everything she’s accomplished, Cook, is still relatively young.

“The citizens of Clay County deserve a sheriff they can be proud of,” said Cook.

Current Sheriff Darryl Daniels has not yet officially filed to run for reelection. His office currently is being investigated by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement

after he admitted to an extramarital affair last summer.

Cook will join a field of candidates that already includes Harold Rutledge, Ben Carroll, Catherine Webb and Mike Taylor

“The type of leadership that I bring to the table. My history of leading men and women. It’s the type of leader that I am. I’m genuine and responsive and transparent. I care about the community that I serve,” Cook said.

Cook has held numerous roles over her career such as Assistant Chief of Narcotics and Vice, incident commander during SWAT/Negotiator call-outs and Training Academy Director. She is also well-versed in active shooter response and has given training nationwide in that discipline.

Cook has a Master’s degree in Criminal Justice Administration from the University of North Florida. She and her husband, Don, have four children.

Gov. DeSantis:

Residents will save \$1.3 billion with Florida Prepaid plan

JACKSONVILLE – Gov. Ron DeSantis announced the Florida Prepaid College Board will lower Prepaid Plan prices by \$1.3 billion, a reduction benefitting 224,000 current customers. Nearly half of the affected families will have refunds available totaling more than \$500 million. The remaining Plans will have lower monthly payment amounts and may be paid off earlier than anticipated due to the price reduction. The savings are due to successive years of lower than anticipated tuition increases and fee inflation.

DeSantis was joined by Florida Prepaid College Board Chairman John Rood and board members during the announcement Monday. “My administration has been committed to holding the line on the increasing cost of higher education, and as a result, we are starting to see tuition rates level out,” said Governor DeSantis. “I thank

Chairman Rood and the Board for their wisdom and financial stewardship, without which these incredible savings would not be possible. This price reduction is great news for hardworking Florida families looking to invest in their children’s future.”

More than 108,000 Plans are now paid in full and can receive an average cash refund of \$4,700. Plan holders also have the option to transfer their refund to a Florida Prepaid savings account for other college expenses like books, supplies and housing. Pricing for the upcoming 2020 plan year will have the lowest rate in five years, starting at \$44 a month for a newborn.

“Our goal has always been to empower and support Florida families by making college savings simple and affordable,” said Board Chairman John D. Rood. “The price reduction reflects our unwavering commitment to that objective. We commend Gov.

Ron DeSantis and the Florida Legislature for their continued efforts to make a college education affordable for Florida students and families.” Eligible plan holders will receive notification from the Board about their refund and/or payment reduction information. Families can find out how their Plan will be affected by going to MyFlorida-Prepaid.com/lowprices.

Prepaid.com/lowprices.

Families can also check pricing and payment options using the online Prepaid Plan Pricing Tool.

Camp Blanding

from page 9

try’s largest POW camps during the war, according to Billingers, and at its height, it contained a population equal to the fourth largest in the state.

Camp Blanding also was one of the largest training facilities in the country.

Following the war, Camp Blanding reverted to state control and by the end of the 1940s, many of its structures were destroyed or moved to a new location. Since that reversion, the Florida National Guard has retained its purpose as a training base.

Until the 1970s, Camp Blanding wasn’t heavily used but following an expansion in the 1970s, the camp began to grow in a

way it hadn’t since the 1940s. The expansion allowed Camp Blanding to be used as an artillery firing point base, a tank range, a parachute drop zone and an airport for military aircraft, according to Smith.

People that live close today can hear practice bombings and Northeast Florida conservation efforts have turned land surrounding Camp Blanding into a wildlife corridor that serve as sanctuaries for Florida wildcats like the Florida panther and other species of Florida wildlife.

Camp Blanding is now home to a museum detailing its history and a memorial park complete with displays of U.S. military equipment ranging from World War II to as recent as the war in Iraq in the early 2000s.

Cats

from page 10

plate to get to the bait, the door of the trap is released and closes, containing the cat.

Jane then returns to one of the holding facilities where the cats must remain without food and drink for at least eight hours prior to being neutered or spayed to allow them to be placed under anesthesia. Once the felines are rendered infertile, they are released.

“Our goal for this year is to do more targeted, large en-masse spay and neuter projects,” said Hawley. “These targeted TNRs are the only way that you can really bring the numbers down.

Overall, TNR is a more effective method than euthanasia. Even if it was possible to euthanize many community cats at once – and it isn’t – they eventually would return.

Community Critter Care is also teaching the caregivers what to do. They are instructing in how to trap humanely, how to contact people to provide medical care for the cats, and proper feeding techniques. In short, they are teaching caregivers how to take care of some of their own colony issues. For more information, contact claycrittercare@gmail.com.

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Students build robotic knowledge with LEGOs



STAFF PHOTOS BY DON COBLE

Rideout Elementary advances to FIRST LEGO League regionals

ORANGE PARK – Middleburg's Rideout Elementary's ROE-Botics team was one of four teams from the FIRST LEGO League of Northeast Florida to advance to next month's regional competition in Jacksonville, while five other Clay County teams were selected as alternates following the two-day RoboThrasher qualifier tournament at the Thrasher-Horne Center. St. Johns County Day School's Spartan Robotics, Girl Scout Gateway Council and Girl Scouts of Fleming Island's Orange Eaters, Orange Park Elementary's Orange and W.E. Cherry Elementary's Builderbots of Green Cove Springs all will be alternates. Other local awards included: Doctors Inlet's DIS Robotics and Charles E. Bennett, both of Green Cove Springs, earned the RoboThrasher Togetherness Award; Clay Virtual Academy's Robo Vipers earned the Shine On Award; Fleming Island's W.M. Patterson's Islanders earned the Innovation Project Award; Orange Eaters and McRae earned the Global Innovation Award; Orange Park's Plantation Oaks' RoboHawks earned the Robot Design Award; Spartan Robotics and Builderbots each were selected for the Core Value Award. The regional tournament is Feb. 29 at the Prime Osborne Center in downtown Jacksonville.



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Bowling still enjoys its niche in world of video games, technology

By **Bruce Hope**
Staff Writer

ORANGE PARK – In an age of increasing digital entertainment, video games, social media and mobile streaming of television and movies, classic pastimes such as bowling are going extinct.

Or are they?

According to John Sudduth, a regional manager for Bowl America, who has been with the company for 41 years, bowling is alive and well. Walking into a Bowl America center in Orange Park last week, surprisingly there about 40 people there. Most are older – children were in school – and many wore matching shirts signifying league play.

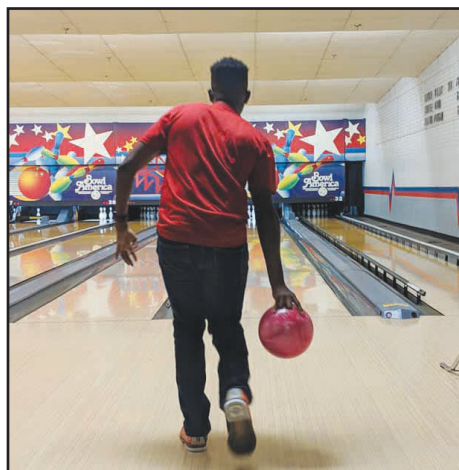
“I’ve been with Bowl America for 41 years,” Sudduth said. “I’ve seen different phases of the business. League bowling is pretty flat, not up or down for my centers in Florida. Open play bowling is pretty good; it’s up. That’s why you see a lot of the boutique centers... those are centers that are real fancy, bright lights. They have Laser Tag, Putt-Putt Golf. They have all types of

things besides bowling. Those are called Entertainment Centers.”

Sudduth believes those centers are specifically designed to lure the younger generation away from their devices and into the bowling alley.

As for Bowl America, who has 17 locations nationwide across Maryland, Virginia and Florida, “Bowling is our main focus and always will be,” said Sudduth.

Sudduth says that he sees only a slight



While interest in league play isn't as big as it was years ago, it's still popular as a break away from video game screens and cellphones.

change in the demographic that frequents his Bowl America locations, such as the one on Blanding Boulevard, and that's generally affected by the proximity to one of the boutique centers. Boutique centers don't offer league bowling, so Bowl America is not adversely affected.

“We do parties, and we do a lot of open play also, so that's a good part of our business,” said Sudduth. Bowl America hosts birthday parties, Bar and Bat Mitzvah's, Sweet 16s and other events.

The Orange Park lanes numbers are only slightly down as compared to the Man-

darin and Southside locations.

He says that he still sees plenty of families with kids and young people on dates who come in to enjoy a good time.

“We give a place for people young and old alike to go and have a good time. Nice clean place; we have good customer service. I think we do a good job overall,” said Sudduth. “I think the bowling industry is going to survive. As long as we keep doing a good job of customer service and make people feel like they came in, had a good time and had fun, we will continue to stay in business.”



Adams Homes Purchases 43 Lots in Their Newest Community in Clay County, Edgewater Landing.

Adams Homes of Northwest FL, Inc., one of the nation's largest privately-held homebuilders, recently purchased 43 Lots in their newest Green Cove Springs, FL www.greencovesprings.com/community, Edgewater Landing.

Sales Manager, Guillaume Vincent said, “Our Edgewater Landing community will offer both high value and quality in a great location perfect for NASJAX www.navy.mil/local/nasjax personnel as well as Jacksonville www.visitjacksonville.com commuters with our close proximity to SR17, I-295, and I-10.”

Our homes are skillfully designed plans that fit today's family needs. From split floor plans, open concepts, and a variety of three, four, and five-bedroom homes, we have the options to suit any family's lifestyle. Our Edgewater Landing homes for sale are built to exceed Florida's rigorous building codes and are extremely energy efficient.

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Woman killed 30 years ago in fire finally identified

New DNA tests confirm victim was woman who was reported missing

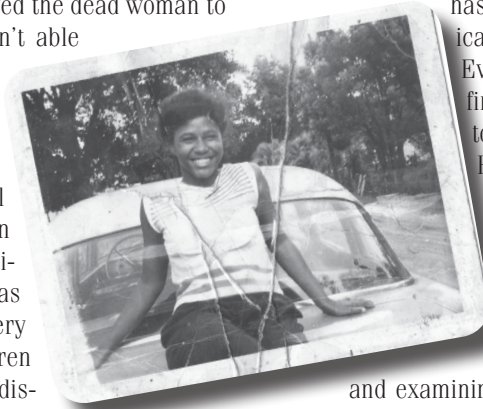
GREEN COVE SPRINGS – Charred bones found shortly after Green Cove Springs Police Department officer Phil Duval arrived at a vacant burning house at 404 Harrison St. on Dec. 10, 1989, were finally identified more than 30 years later.

Tests at the University of North Texas recently confirmed the dead woman was Melinda Joyce Holder after re-examining her remains and comparing it with DNA samples from her children, GCSPD said.

Holder was reported missing by her adoptive mother, Theresa Plummer, on Jan.

24, 1990. Although investigators with the Green Cove Police and the Florida State Fire Marshal's office believed the dead woman to be Holder, they weren't able to make a conclusive identification until they re-opened the case.

"A Mitochondrial DNA test comparison conducted by the University of North Texas has led to the discovery that Holder's children and the remains discovered in the 1989 fire significant matches, GCSPD Lt. John Guz-



holder

man said in a release. "With this evidence, the Duval County Medical Examiner's Office has issued a death certificate for Melinda Holder. Evidence from the 1989 fire leads our investigators to believe Melinda Holder was deceased for a considerable amount of time before her body was damaged in the fire. Our department is investigating leads and examining evidence recovered from the scene."

The vacant house was known to be a lo-

cal hangout for drug users, Guzman said. The house had been condemned and was scheduled to be torn down. The fire started in a bedroom near the front of the house, according to then-Asst. Fire Chief Richard Knoff. It was the same room where Holder's remains were found.

Anyone with information on Holder's disappearance, her subsequent death, or the house fire on Harrison Street is urged to contact the Criminal Investigations Section of the Green Cove Springs Police Department (904) 529-2220, or First Coast Crime Stoppers.

Wendell Chindra brings diverse, optimistic attitude to Chamber of Commerce

By Bruce Hope
Staff Writer

FLEMING ISLAND – Multiple New York Yankee figurines sit atop an overhead shelf, only about a foot from an autographed red, white and black Jacksonville Sharks arena football. In a tucked away corner of the office just next to a floor-to-ceiling window sits a cricket bat, giving clues as to the British West-Indian roots, and the transient, but now static existence of the office's lone occupant.

Wendell Chindra is the new president of the Clay County Chamber of Commerce. That much is easy to find out. The real question though, is who is Wendell Chindra? That is a much more interesting story.

Chindra is a husband. He is a father of three. He is a businessman. He is, in many ways, the embodiment of the American dream.

He is a 44-year-old native of Princes Town on the small island nation of Trinidad and Tobago, located in the Caribbean Sea, just off the north-eastern coast of Venezuela. Raised by a Hindu father and Muslim mother, Chindra is a Christian, currently a member of Restoration Church of God in Jacksonville, having developed interest in the faith after one of his cousins entered the seminary. His parents, though not Christian themselves, were in line with the morals and values of the Christian church.

Chindra arrived in the United States



Wendell Chindra

(Queens, New York) in 1996 to attend Lehman College and study geology with the intent of returning to his native Trinidad to enter the oil industry. He was close to completion of his bachelor's degree when he was coaxed away from the classroom by a business opportunity in which he says he was "relatively successful." He worked in the mortgage business, but when the housing crisis of 2008 happened, the bottom fell out. That, he said, is how he ended up moving his family to Jacksonville.

He went back to school, this time at Jacksonville University, but the school didn't have a geology program.

"I liked political science, so I ended up

doing a social science degree with a minor in political science, then I did a graduate degree in Public policy," Chindra said. Due to his experience in the financial sector and in business, he then began working at Merrill Lynch as a financial advisor.

In October of 2018, he was hired as the director of operations for the Clay Chamber of Commerce. In December of the same year, the then president of the CCOC resigned, opening the door for Chindra's foray into leadership.

"I ran the chamber with the, at that time, Chairman of the Board Amy Pope-Wells, [a current District 3 U.S. congressional candidate]," he said. "We did the day-to-day together for about six months with the new staff."

After being the Director of operations for one year and one day, Chindra was offered the position of president.

"I was on the job training," Chindra said. "For one year, and one day. After talking to my wife and praying about it, I decided to accept."

Impressed with Chindra, the fifteen board members of the CCOC voted to make Chindra the president.

He is driven and wants to see Clay county develop into what he knows it can

become.

In the short term, his biggest goal is to regain the trust of the community. He wants to see more business with the chamber of commerce stickers on their windows and doors.

In the long term, he wants the county to come to a place where they can lead the conversation on advancements and not just follow Jacksonville's and Duval County's leads. He believes that becoming a smart city is something to which Clay can aspire down the road. For that to happen, the conversation needs to be started. He believes that Clay can be and needs to be that starter.

Chindra is working hard at his current post, which came with a three-year contract. Besides that, being a man of faith, he is also working towards a doctorate in Ministry from Pentecostal, Theological Seminary in Cleveland, Tennessee. He wants to serve his community in every possible way.

Chindra looks fondly on Clay County and has great hope for its future.

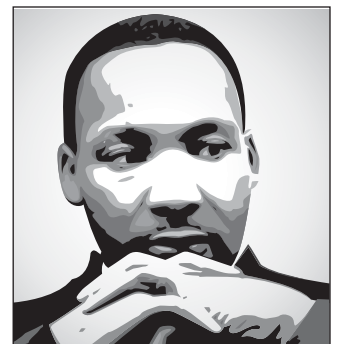
"I think for too long in Clay County, they've been at the base level. They've been the stepchild to Jacksonville. I think its own way it's unique. It's an amazing place."

Clay's Ministerial Alliance, St. James AME Church to celebrate Martin Luther King's birthday

For Clay Today

FLEMING ISLAND – Orange Park Mayor Connie Thomas will join Rev. Alvin Britt and Pastor Cody Thompson at the Martin Luther King Jr. breakfast celebration on Monday, Jan. 20, at the Sullivan Hall, 7190 U.S. Highway 17. The breakfast starts at 8 a.m.

Tickets are \$15 a person or \$100 for a table of eight. Seats are limited. Cash or checks are accepted at the door. For more information, contact Dr. Bost at (904) 316-2212 or at CCMAJESUS@yahoo.com. The breakfast is sponsored by the Clay County Ministerial Alliance and St. James AME Church.



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Clay Elections unveil new, fair, secure, transparent website

For Clay Today

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – To welcome in 2020, the Clay County Supervisor of Elections Office is proud to announce its redesigned website. Launched on Tuesday, ClayElections.gov offers a streamlined design, enhanced functionality and useful resources to better serve the voters of Clay County in a secure environment.

As more people use their mobile devices to access information, the Elections Office recognizes the need to provide a responsive and secure website. Visitors to ClayElections.gov are able to access election information quickly and easily, from any device they choose. They can register to vote, make address or name changes, update their sig-

natures, and much more. Clay County voters are encouraged to explore ClayElections.gov for all their election needs.

The Elections Office is committed to Clay County voters and to providing fair, secure, transparent elections. As the trusted source for voting information, ClayElections.gov is simply one more way to connect with the voters and provide them with relevant news and tools. Elections security continues to be at the forefront in all that we do, which is why we secured the ClayElections.gov domain. Only official U.S. government websites will have addresses that end in .gov. Through this and other security enhancements, ClayElections.gov is more secure against DNS hijacking or website spoofing.

Clay Elections warns against voter registration mail campaigns

For Clay Today

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – County Clay Supervisor of Elections Chris Chambless wants to warn voters of a mail campaign by the Voter Participation Center and the Center for Voter Information which is expected to land in Florida this week. The VPC is a non-government organization and NOT affiliated with the Clay County SOE Office or any state election office. These mailings

can potentially be misleading and cause confusion for recipients.

In previous mailing, VPC has used unverified sources to pull personal information. As a result, letters have been sent to current registered voters, deceased individuals, minor children, and, occasionally, pets. These mailings not only cause concern, but also undermines the public's trust in the elections process.

These letters may include voter regis-

tration applications and say a number of things, including:

- You're not registered to vote.
- Your mailing address is wrong.
- Your voter information needs to be updated.

Again, the VPC and CVI are non-government organizations and these mailings are not affiliated with the Clay County SOE Office or any state election office and may

not reflect the information we have on file.

The Clay county SOE Office makes every effort to update our voter information and maintain accurate registration. Eligible voters are encouraged to visit ClayElection.gov to review their current information and make any necessary changes. Voters who have questions or want to be removed from the list are urged to contact VPC directly at (877) 255-6750 or CVI at (866) 290-1599.

Keystone

from page 1

Sheriff's NET volunteers and city officials as the strolled through the neighborhood. Residents seemed eager, and thankful, for the interaction and assurances.

City officials and CCSO officers did the walk as part of the agency's Neighborhood Walk program and to address a recent social media posting that claimed children had created a fight club. The video, which has since been removed, showed two girls in a violent confrontation."

The sheriff's office said it already has identified the two girls and it wasn't part of any club or gang.

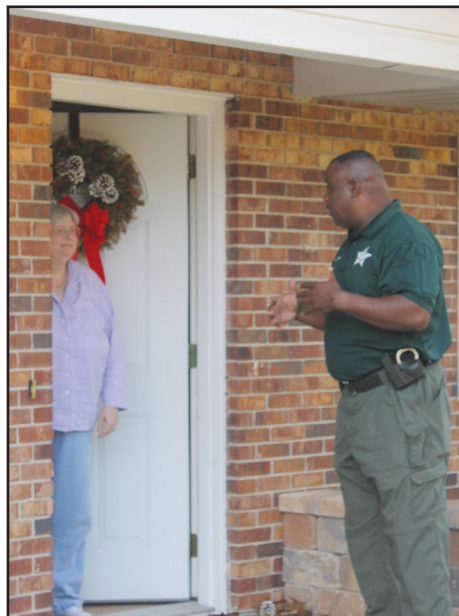
"It was just a couple kids fighting that blew up and got out of hand," said deputy Dimiti Santiago. "We know who's involved."

Mayor Karen Lake and City Manager Scott Kornegay both knocked on doors and talked to residents.

"We have to stay on top of it," Kornegay said. "We've done a lot of things to address these things. We've put up cameras and security systems at the theme park and national park. We're in the process of doing it at the beach park."

Kornegay said Keystone's surveillance systems will plug into the county's new Clay Community Connect system that will allow the sheriff's office to monitor the parks.

A 9-year-old girl also was attacked last Friday at a park. Santiago said nothing



Deputies hit the streets in Keystone Heights to talk with residents. Mayor Karen Lake (above, left) and Undersheriff Ray Walden (right) reminded residents the sheriff's office is just a call away. They also said social media reports of a gang activity and fight clubs weren't accurate.



STAFF PHOTOS BY DON COBLE

suggests that assault had anything to do with the fight between two girls.

Lake wanted residents to understand the reports of gang activity and fight clubs weren't correct.

"There is no gang activity here," she said. "I really appreciate everyone coming out and showing support."

Undersheriff Ray Walden also talked with residents.

"We want them to know we're here," he said. "They want to know what's going on. By doing this, they know they can trust

us to help out. We can't do this all by ourselves. Going out and talking with people

on a good day is a lot better than having to talk to them on a bad day."

Graduation

from page 1

rates were released last week, and it showcased a continued upward trend. The school district has improved its rate by 7.2% points in the last three years. And with the new rate, Clay County now among the top 10 for the highest in Florida in eighth place.

The release detailing the rates also show that eight of the nine targeted subgroups of learners reached a record high in Clay County. Davis said this demonstrates that the district is focused on improving the academic well-being of very student.

"We have continued to create a culture that establishes high expectations and allows learner to thrive within our organization," Davis said.

The nine subgroups are white, Hispanic, black, two/three races, Asian, at-risk students, students with disabilities, English-language learners and economically disadvantaged. The Asian subgroup was the only group that didn't post an increase.

It dropped from 98.6% to 97.6%. The English-language subgroup made the largest increase with a jump from 77.5% to 87%, while the Hispanic subgroup, jumping from 91% to 96.1%, making the second-largest increase.

Post-Secondary Readiness rates rose as well. District schools posted 82% points – a 21% increase during the last three years in Reading PSR rates. Mathematics PSR rates were at 64%, 19% increase over the last three years.

"This data is powerful and highlights the culture established in Clay County District Schools as we seek to prepare students to become college and career ready," Davis said.

The district's graduation rate has remained above the state average since the 2011-2012 school year. Davis attributes the trend and increase in graduation rate to the hard work of everyone in the school district.

"I am extremely proud of the hard work of our school-based leaders, teachers, college and career coaches, school counselors and support staff for dedicating their efforts to ensure that our graduates reached this milestone," Davis said. "This is a remarkable accomplishment for our community, and I am proud of all stakeholders who have positively impacted children's lives by preparing them to compete inside and outside of our classrooms."



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Police Briefs

Murder charges added following New Year's Eve shooting

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – Murder charges were filed a week following a triple-shooting on New Year's Eve during an argument over clothes that left two people dead and one man in the hospital.

Taylor Ryan Hill, 22, officially was charged with two counts of second-degree murder and one count of attempted second-degree murder eight days after he ended a fight by shooting three people, including one in the back.

Hill, of Jacksonville, already was in custody after being charged with possession of a handgun by a convicted felon, robbery with a firearm, removing serial number from a firearm and parole violation.

Victoria Ann Scifo, 20, of Woburn, Massachusetts, was charged with attempting to flee police while they had their flashing lights and siren active, as well as accessory after the fact involving a murder. Her bond was set at \$300,006.

Clay County Sheriff's Office deputies were called to 4374 Lori Loop Road after three people were shot during an argument. A few minutes later, deputies also were called to a neighbor's house after a Dodge Ram was taken from a man who was pistol-whipped by Hill.

Shayne Wooten was the first shooting victim. He was shot in the stomach and was hospitalized with "non-life-threatening injuries," according to the arrest report.

Liza Nichole Dukes, 29, died inside her living room after being shot in the back while she was on top of Scifo during a struggle. James Wooten, Shayne's father, then was shot in the head and had "no brain activity." He was taken off life support and died Jan. 2.

The couple were chased in the stolen pickup until they crashed on State Road 100 in Bradford County. Hill suffered a broken pelvis in the accident.

The couple's next court appearance is Feb. 10.

Hill cut his GPS tracking anklet off be-

fore the shooting. He had just served seven years of a 35-year sentence for burglary and was on parole. An arrest warrant was issued on Dec. 11 for violating terms of the parole.

Scifo served 15 months for heroin possession, car theft and attempting to flee police.

CCSO tracks down man wanted for December home invasion robbery

ORANGE PARK – A 19-year-old Orange Park man was arrested on Jan. 8 in connection with an armed home invasion robbery on Dec. 7.

Darry Darnell Jackson with home invasion with a handgun and armed burglary.

The Clay County Sheriff's Office said several men broke into a home on Sunrise Village Drive and forcibly took a gaming system, marijuana, and iPhone and a car. A handgun then was taken from the car.

Jackson is being held without bond. His next court appearance is Feb. 3.

Dirt-biker at Chinese buffet goes to jail on several drug charges

ORANGE PARK – A routine traffic stop of a man riding a dirt bike through the parking lot of a Chinese buffet resulted in his arrest on a litany of charges, including possession of methamphetamine.

Loranzia Outin, 43, of Jacksonville, was in the Clay County Jail on Jan. 11 after being charged with having two false driver's licenses, possession ammo by a convicted felon, possession of drug paraphernalia and methamphetamine with intent to sell, driving with a suspended license and without

valid registration.

According to the Clay County Sheriff's Office arrest report, Outin walked between cars while a deputy checked for warrants. Once he was arrested for driving with a suspended license, the deputy found bullets, two pipes, two spoons, 18 syringes and small plastic bags with meth residue. He also found marijuana laced with 20.9% THC and a counterfeit \$50 bill.

A man leaving his business then found another bag where Outin was standing shortly before his arrest. Inside the bag, the deputy found 10.6 grams of meth.

Outin's bond was set at \$28,017.

Jacksonville man caught following rash of October break-ins

ORANGE PARK – Clay County Sheriff's Office deputies tracked down a man in Jacksonville on Jan. 9 who was wanted for several break-ins at a local storage unit.

Jamal Rashad Youman, 22, was charged with six counts of armed burglary and with resisting an officer without violence.

According to the arrest report, deputies were called to Public Storage at 210 Park Ave. on Oct. 1 after security cameras from another business alerted the owner of "suspicious activity." When they arrived, two men ran into some nearby woods and a woman was caught inside the car. Deputies eventually found a backpack with a firearm inside, as well as at least three television

sets inside the car.

Youman's bond was set at \$31,520.

Drug raid leads to arrest for methamphetamine, marijuana

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – A 34-year-old man was arrested on Jan. 9 following a drug bust by the Clay County Sheriff's Office's SWAT and Targeted Narcotics Team.

Joseph W. Smith, of Green Cove Springs, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, marijuana and drug paraphernalia.

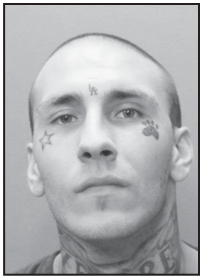
The raid on Mitchells Road led to the seizure of three pipes, five plastic bags with methamphetamine residue and a jar of marijuana.

Army helicopter makes emergency landing in Middleburg

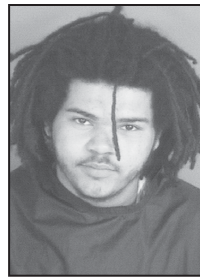
MIDDLEBURG – Nobody was injured when military helicopter made an emergency landing Tuesday night in the Middleburg Elementary parking lot.

The U.S. Army Chinook from Hunter Army Airfield in Savannah, Georgia had a mechanical issue and landed safely in the empty parking lot, according to the Clay County School District Police Department.

Repairs were made on the helicopter and it was able to fly back to base long before the first bell on Wednesday morning.



Taylor Ryan Hill



Darry Jackson



Jamal Youman



Joseph Smith



Loranzia Outin

Arrests & Bookings

(Name, age, location of arrest, charges).
Key: FTA-Failure to Appear; DWLSR-Driving Without a License-Suspended or Revoked; DUI-Driving Under the Influence; VOP-Violation of Parole. There are no assumptions or representations about guilt or innocence. Everyone arrested or booked is presumed innocent.

Tuesday, Jan. 14

Virgil W. Moss, 37, Green Cove Springs, VOP-battery

Reynaldo C. Casales, 55, Orange Park, FTA-possession-marijuana, FTA-no valid ID/leaving scene of accident with property damage, FTA

Patrick W. Bailey, 33, Orange Park, 13 counts VOP-community control

Aaron N. Danos, 25, Middleburg, simple domestic battery

Kristian E. Barnhill, 45, Orange

Park, possession-concealed firearm by convicted felon, trafficking amphetamine/methamphetamine, keeping vehicle/home for drugs, possession/use-drug paraphernalia

Matthew T.I. West, 33, Orange Park, possession/use-drug paraphernalia, non-support, FTA

Donald W. Sharp, 22, Orange Park, burglary

Steven A. Heflin, 18, Middleburg, retail petit theft

Alyssa R. Fowler, 18, Orange Park, retail petit theft

Monday, Jan. 13

Brian C. Fife, 29, Middleburg, no valid registration, FTA-failing to register vehicle

Crystal G. Clevenger, 41, Middleburg, simple domestic battery

SEE ARRESTS, 23

FIND MY ATTACKER

Im looking for a man who would have been in Middleburg FL in 01/88. He was 20-25 with light brown/aub hair & light blue eyes. He was 5'9" - 6 ft & thin with an oval face, straight nose, crooked teeth and dipped. He was wearing a big light brown jacket, blue flannel & jeans w/ a light brown trucker hat. He had a class ring. He drove a 2 door, chevy hatchback with tan interior. The panel & speaker was missing behind the drivers side door in back seat.

After the Minute Mart on CR 218/Mimosa, my car broke down before Cocoa. He offered a ride to call my dad but then refused to turn around. He yelled about police coming to his work & making him look bad, they said he hurt a girl.

This man knew Middleburg very well, Main St boat ramp, past mimosa into the woods/fields and a property in Muscovy area w/ lighted barn. He probably offered other girls rides or tried to talk them into his car. I was 16; he may have targeted young women.

This man he may have offered you/friend a ride after a breakdown or any other time please.

Call/email or go to the Facebook Page: **Unsolved In Northeast Florida**

memesofia71@gmail.com | 562-576-6997 | www.facebook.com/UNSOLVEDINNORTHEASTFLORIDA

Arrests

from page 22

Jonathan T. Bass, 37, Green Cove Springs, court order transport
 Kyle L.K. Randelston, 20, Middleburg, simple battery, vandalism
 Maurice L. Jones, 38, Green Cove Springs, fugitive from justice
 David J. Teixeira, 57, Starke, simple domestic battery
 Jason L. Giddings, 40, Green Cove Springs, VOP-domestic battery
 Alexandria McNabb, 33, Keystone Heights, accessory after the fact
 Zachary J. McKenzie, 22, Green Cove Springs, VOP-DUI
 Amy E. Pelfrey, 40, Green Cove Springs, dealing in stolen property, providing false ID to pawn shop, three counts leaving scene of accident with property damage
 Emilee M. Maier, 22, Orange Park, simple battery

Sunday, Jan. 12

Silviere Butler, 38, Orange Park, grand theft \$300-\$4,999
 Miguel A. Santos, 44, Orange Park, out of county warrant
 Cal J. Mainor, 29, Orange Park, possession-marijuana
 Charles K. Cloud, 63, Middleburg, assault/battery during burglary
 Crystal G. Taylor, 31, Middleburg, violating injunction against domestic violence
 Andrew A. Lee, 42, Orange Park, using home/car for drug business
 James M. Davis, 40, Green Cove Springs, possession-firearm/ammo by convicted felon
 Shawn S. Stewart, 35, Orange Park, non-support
 Travis P. Latner, 37, Orange Park, felony warrant
 Kareem A. Russell, 45, Middleburg, simple domestic battery
 Brandie D. Johnson, 33, Middleburg, DWLSR
 Mason W. Pye, 22, Middleburg, FTA
 Jackie R. Padgett, 36, Middleburg, FTA

Saturday, Jan. 11

Justin T. Ricketson, 34, Middleburg, DWLSR-habitual offender, no valid registration, illegal license tag
 Kyle L. Betts, 35, Middleburg, simple battery
 Jayeshkumar Khatri, 41, Orange Park, out of county warrant
 Robert E. Hulse, 54, Middleburg, simple battery
 Lanzia Outin, 43, Orange Park, 43, Orange Park, knowingly possessing fewer than four IDs, two counts possession-firearm/ammo by convicted felon, possession-methamphetamine with intent to sell/manufacture, deliver, possession/use-drug paraphernalia, DWLSR, no valid registration
 Charles U. Jordan, 31, Middleburg, aggravated assault, felony battery/domestic battery by strangulation
 Michael A. Rothmeyer, 36, Middleburg,



PHOTO CLAY COUNTY PROFESSIONAL FIREFIGHTERS

Pickup plows through Old Time Pottery

ORANGE PARK – A 33-year-old Middleburg man was charged with driving under the influence Wednesday night after he plowed his pickup truck through the showroom of Old Time Pottery at 380 Blanding Blvd. Ricky Bruce Evans was charged with DUI with property damage after witnesses said they saw him driving at a high rate of speed on Loch Rane Boulevard before he crossed the concrete median into oncoming traffic, eventually stopping after he crashed into the store. He was arrested after he failed a field sobriety test. His blood alcohol level was measured at .171 – more than twice the legal limit of .08 – following two tests. Nobody was injured and the store's security system captured the crash on video.

three counts FTA

Christie L. Weaver, 39, Orange Park, possession/use-drug paraphernalia
 Sean P. Childs, 33, Orange Park, possession-marijuana
 Drew J. Cripps, 31, Orange Park, driving without valid license
 Keith D. Beason, 53, Keystone Heights, simple battery, criminal mischief
 Cedric A. Crimley, 26, Green Cove Springs, VOP-community control
 Jason R. Spooner, 47, Green Cove Springs, two counts FTA
 Lewis C. Jones, 43, Orange Park, possession-cocaine, possession/use-drug paraphernalia
 Nicole S. Butler, 38, Orange Park, resist/obstruct/oppose
 Ashely M. Walden, 35, Orange Park, resist/obstruct/oppose

Friday, Jan. 10

Jason L. Rankin, 44, Middleburg, DUI, third offense in 10 years, DWLSR
 Sebastian A. Busuttil, 21, Middleburg, possession-marijuana
 Carl A. Heichel, 38, Orange Park, possession-heroin
 Karrah A. Mongone, 30, Orange Park, possession-controlled substance, possession-marijuana
 Elijah B.D. Hurst, 18, Orange Park, possession-marijuana
 Kayla M. Watson, 29, Green Cove Springs, out of county warrant
 Michael L. Allen, 32, Orange Park, loitering/prowling, resist/obstruct/oppose police
 Eric M. Frock, 46, Oakleaf, DWLSR
 Scott D. Dodd, 35, Middleburg, trespassing
 Nicholas A. Colon, 19, Orange Park, possession-marijuana with intent to manufacture/sell, possession/use-drug paraphernalia
 Michael T. Miller, 31, Green Cove Springs, FTA
 Cathy C. Wright, 57, Middleburg, domestic battery
 Katelynn L. Childress, 23, Orange Park, possession-marijuana
 Kaitlynn S. Dominguez, 25, Orange Park, possession-marijuana, possession/use-drug paraphernalia

Timothy E. Sexton, 22, Orange Park, possession-methamphetamine, possession-marijuana, possession/use-drug paraphernalia
 Aaron J. Driver, 23, Middleburg, domestic battery

Thursday, Jan. 9

Karaka K. Jordan, 18, Orange Park, obtaining property less than \$20,000
 Brittany S. Swilley, 30, Orange Park, possession-methamphetamine, possession/use-drug paraphernalia
 Mathew A. McDonald, 43, Oakleaf, FTA
 Carlos M. Grissett, 26, Orange Park, no valid driver's license
 Tammy A. Davis, 43, Orange Park, trespassing
 Kristen M. Rossow, 36, Middleburg, retail petit theft
 Kayla M. Watson, 29, Orange Park, DWLSR
 Destini H. Carpenter, 32, Fleming Island, retail petit theft
 Kristin L. Brownfield, 35, Orange Park, DUI with property damage, battery on corrections officer, disorderly intoxication, leaving scene of accident with property damage, resist/obstruct/oppose police
 Joseph W. Smith, 34, Green Cove Springs, possession-methamphetamine, possession-marijuana, possession/use-drug paraphernalia
 Michael O. Pendarvis, 23, Orange Park, possession-marijuana, possession/use-drug paraphernalia, DWLSR
 Clayton T. Scalcucci, 23, Green Cove Springs, FTA-grand theft
 Jona P. Thigpenn, 44, Orange Park, DWLSR
 Adam R. Wyza, 41, Middleburg, use of firearm while under the influence
 Richard J. Decker, 63, Green Cove Springs, FTA-DWLSR
 Walter S. Davis, 29, Keystone Heights, FTA-burglary

Wednesday, Jan. 8

Mark E. Davis, 43, Middleburg, DWLSR
 Benjamin R. Walters, 33, Middleburg, violating injunction against domestic violence
 Terrell M. Robinson, 27, Green Cove Springs, fugitive from justice

Darry D. Jackson, 19, Oakleaf, home invasion with firearm/deadly weapon, armed burglary
 Jamal R. Youman, 23, Green Cove Springs, six counts armed burglary, resisting officer
 Troy W. Grubbs, 33, Orange Park, VOP-community control
 Taylor R. Hill, 22, Keystone Heights, two counts second degree murder, attempted second degree murder
 Michael C. Malson, 22, Green Cove Springs, FTA-DWLSR, FTA-attached tag not assigned
 Alyssa T. Earls, 21, Middleburg, retail petit theft
 Adam D. Fletcher, 35, Orange Park, failing to comply with registration law
 Rodricquez D. Holmes, 22, Jacksonville, possession-marijuana
 Rebecca L. Peek, 48, Green Cove Springs, possession-methamphetamine, possession/use-drug paraphernalia
 Ricky B. Evans, 33, Orange Park, DUI with property damage
 Ashley E. Matetzck MacArthur, 29, Orange Park, domestic battery
 Alan M. Green, 24, Green Cove Springs, affray
 Kayla R. Chavez, 28, Green Cove Springs, affray
 Antwaun D. Cooper, 18, Orange Park, retail petit theft
 Kyric J. Lewis, 18, Oragne Park, retail petit theft
 Yavanda R. Prudden, 57, Green Cove Springs, VOP-community control
 Nicholas B. Kolehmainen, 36, Green Cove Springs, affray

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Farm Share continues to bring community together

Compassion served, along with groceries, necessities

By Wesley LeBlanc
Staff Writer

MIDDLEBURG – Families lined up at the American Legion 250 last week for free groceries like bread, fruit and other necessities like soap.

Farm Share is a nonprofit organization that serves 11 counties in Florida, with Clay being one of those counties. For the second time in the area Farm Share, along with veterans from American Legion 250 and volunteers from the Clay County Sheriff's Office and the community, provided fresh groceries and toiletries to any and all families, free of charge, with no questions asked.

"We will service well over 300 families and we do so without asking questions about income or need or even without asking for an ID," Farm Share Representative Leighsha Johnson said. "You never know what predicament someone and their family is in so for us, it's about simply showing up and helping anyone who comes."

Johnson said Farm Share has been around since 1991 and has held many events in the area, but this event on Tuesday was the second of its kind. This is because it was put on by Clay County Veteran Services and the men and women of American Legion 250. This post, much like the county's veteran services, serves veterans and military families in need in any way they can.

"It's a really good feeling that we're all



STAFF PHOTO BY WESLEY LEBLANC

More than 300 families were able to take home food and necessities from American Legion Post 250 last week as part of Farm Share.

feeling today," American Legion 250 Commander Dick Rowe said. "We are a legion like all of the others, but we're here for everyone. We're community based and our goal is to serve the community."

Rowe worked with Clay County Director of Administration and Contractual Services Karen Thomas to make the event happen. Thomas said when Clay County had learned of Farm Share's services, she worked to bring the organization to Clay County as she saw a need.

"We have families in Clay County in need of things like this, so it was important for us to get Farm Share out here," Thomas said. "This is only [our second one] and we hope to continue this partnership to con-

tinue providing food to families in need."

Thomas said the event doubles as a way for community members to give back to the community. Not only were CCSSO officers present to help hand out goods, but citizens from all over the county were out, too.

Some of the people behind the donations weren't on hand, but their presence was felt nonetheless. Gary Newman leads a chapter of Vietnam Veterans at Union Correctional Institute. The veterans are prisoners at the institute, but every year they hold a walkathon to raise money for the community surrounding them.

They raised \$3,500 in 2019 and used that money to fund purchases for local schools. They also gave Newman \$1,000 and 250 bars of soap to use in the veteran community of Clay County. The soap was given out to everyone.

"I think it's really commendable on the part of the prisoners wanting to give back," Newman said. "They are the people behind the soap at the [event]."

Dale Gass was there to pick up things like oranges and soap. He was grateful for the outreach.

"It means a lot to know there's organizations in the county that have my back," Gass said. "I don't know if you can find something like this in other counties and it just goes to show how special Clay County is."

VVA makes donation to Food Pantry of Green Cove Springs

Vietnam Veteran of America Col. William G. Byrns Chapter 1059 made a holiday donation of 488 pounds of food to the Food Pantry of Green Cove Springs ahead

of the Christmas Party in December. VVA Chapter President David Treffinger then presented a check of \$250 to Food Pantry Director Wynema Lowell on Dec. 16. In addition, chapter members donated dog food for the Rock Hounds at Union Correctional Institution. Food Pantry director Wynema (left) accepts the check from Treffinger.



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CORRESPONDENT PHOTO BY RAY DIMONDA

Orange Park High basketball erupts after gamewinning three-point play from senior guard Kadin Elmore beat Oakleaf 43-42. In front is Corey Thomas, No. 2, and coach Derek Kurnitsky.

Elmore's three-point play downs Knights, 43-42

By Ray DiMonda
Correspondent

ORANGE PARK – Coming off a three game win streak, the visiting Oakleaf Knights basketball team walked into the Raiderdome looking pretty confident and played as much, quickly building a 12-0 lead over the host Orange Park Raiders.

But on a night where the Raiderdome was full to capacity, standing room only, the band tucked in the corner, a team of scrappy kids who wouldn't quit clawed

their way back in, 24-19 at the half.

"Sometimes you just have to hang around and survive a little bit" said Raider Head Coach Derek "Coach K" Kurnitsky. "We played bad up front and had to get over the nerves. We simply focused more and got our confidence."

On a lay-up to tie, Orange Park guard Kadin Elmore got fouled, then sunk the free-throw to go up 43-42 with 8.6 seconds to play. On the throw-in, the Knights could

SEE RAIDERS, 29

Lake Asbury grapplers gut out Toughman win

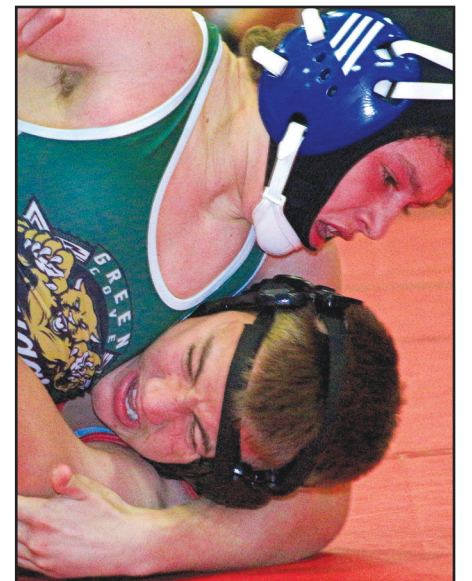
By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

MIDDLEBURG – With championship titles to five wrestlers, the Lake Asbury Junior High wrestling team needed team depth to armlock a Wilkinson Toughman Invitational win from challenge Green Cove Springs Junior High in a day of high-flying action at Middleburg High School on Saturday. Wilkinson chased both front runners with a third place finish with points at 283, 249 and 238 for the top three.

In fourth was Lake City, fifth Suwannee, sixth Lakeside, seventh Episcopal, eighth Orange Park and ninth Oakleaf.

Green Cove Springs, with six individual champions, was not able to close on a 12 point Lake Asbury lead as teams readied for the championship rounds to determine first through fourth places.

Winning titles for Lake Asbury, coached by Matt Krabill and Coll Robertson, were KJ Rheume at 80, who blasted Suwannee's Keshawn Johnson with a



STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Green Cove Springs Nathan Newman puts the hammer on Wilkinson's Tucker Cody.

second period fall; Jacob Bucci at 90 who pinned a second Suwannee challenger

SEE WRESTLING, 31



Back-to-back thrillers at the 'Burg

Middleburg High basketball had a buzzer beater loss by the boys on Thursday and a girls' upset win, in picture Britany Range, over an unbeaten team on Friday. See page 26 for story.



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'Burg girls hoops knocks out unbeaten Christians

'Burg boys dance with Creekside to buzzer

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

MIDDLEBURG - In back-to-back basketball thrillers at Middleburg High School, the Lady Broncos girls team staved off a late-game surge by previously unbeaten University Christian (now 14-1) to win, arguably, one of the biggest games in the season while, on the previous night, the Bronco boys teams, fielding a three-game win streak, stayed ahead of former Class 8A powerhouse Creekside until a buzzer beater three pointer ended the potential major upset.

"I have said since the beginning of the season, that this girls team is one of the most athletic and talented that I have had and if I can figure a way to get them all to play four quarters of exciting basketball, those kids would be unstoppable," said Middleburg High girls basketball coach Michael Hayward, who got a supreme inside game effort from junior center Skylar Baltezegar to win 60-55. "Our schedule has been one of the toughest, but our five



STAFF PHOTO BY RANDY LEFKO

Middleburg High center Skylar Baltezegar had a dominating 18 point, nine rebound, three assist night to lead Lady Broncos to upset win over previously unbeaten University Christian.

losses have been against good teams. This game was one where people may have been saying 'Is this the big game they might win?'"

With his five losses to the likes of Bishop Kenny (10-8), Raines, (20-1) Apopka (15-2), Ribault (16-6) and Wekiva (12-5),

Hayward saw Baltezegar dominate the paint with 18 rebounds on top of 20 points apiece from guards Britany Range and Mar'riah Davis. Range got five steals on the night with six assists.

"I have worked to become the dominant player I was supposed to be and my

teammates now rely on me to make plays in the middle," said Baltezegar, who scored nine points and had three assists. "When I'm up top and have a clear vision under the basket instead of backing into the lane, I can find my teammates making runs for layups."

Hayward next lines up against Robert E. Lee (10-6) in a key district 3-5A clash as the Broncos, Lee and Orange Park (11-4) will finish as the top teams the very competitive district.

For the boys team, under coach Travis Tipton, a surge for the Broncos who returned home with a three game win streak; (Stanton, Mandarin and Bell) in four nights, ended with a formidable Creekside team that beat the Broncos 38-35 prior to the Stanton win.

"We had the momentum coming in and wanted to get the payback win on them after the close loss before the streak," said Tipton. "We are finally playing together as a team and trusting each other."

Creekside, a Final Four finisher in Class 8A in 2018 and a region finalist in 2017, brought their normal strong outside shooting game to Middleburg and were

SEE HOOPS, 29

Raiders lock down Panthers

By Ray DiMonda
Correspondent

ORANGE PARK - "Defense; that is where we want to hang our hat at" is how Orange Park Lady Raiders girls basketball coach Frederick Cole described how his team had so much dominance over the visiting Ridgeview Panthers tonight inside the Raiderdome. "We worked defense all week on, never even focused on any offense" and it showed as the Raiders racked up double digit takeaways by the half, then went on to bury the Panthers 71-41.

It wasn't a Flash-mob offense as the game started slow, but came to a boil quickly. "We were sluggish Tuesday night against Fernandina Beach, and started

sluggish tonight. But the girls got into it and with this being a bit of a rival game, things picked up." Throwing a blanket over the Panthers with defense, by the end of the first quarter, the Raiders were sitting on a 19-7 lead, then opened it up to 42-19 at the half. Orange Park was a little off on initial shots, but the girls under the glass did their job very well and drained the rebounds. "We are working on four girls going under the rim on the shot, and one dropping back for defense. I've been playing Khaleeha Restall because she is a rebound machine. When she's in there, she's coming down with the ball. She ups everyone's game. Nia Brown and Sha'mia Capers were really hot on the boards tonight as well."



CORRESPONDENT PHOTOS BY RAY DIMONDA

Orange Park High guard Macie Faucett grimaces as she negotiates the lane in Lady Raiders district win over Ridgeview.

In the third quarter, the Raider defense held the Panthers to 11 points as they put up 20 more for a 62-30 lead with one quarter left.

In the last quarter, Cole held auditions. "I was able to play the younger girls tonight and get them some valuable experience," said Cole. "That's going to help us in the long run so I know who I can go to when my starters need a break."

Raider guard Macie Faucett led her team with 15 points, followed by Amara Delgado with 10. Of note, 10 girls dressed out and played. All 10 scored points.

Asked if he's where he wants to be on

the season, coming off the break, Cole said "Last year I think we peaked too early. This is not a sprint, it's a marathon. Last year we dealt with some injuries, peaked in December, then started a downslide. My starters were worn out. Tonight, my starters got in there, then got some rest. This year, we are doing well. I'm able to rotate players out. We're about where we need to be. Not there yet, but we are going in the right direction." The Raiders will face their next cross-town rival when they host the Oakleaf Knights in one week.

Before facing the Knights, they will square-off against Paxon and Episcopal.



Orange Park High girls basketball coach Fred Cole is on a collision course in the upcoming district 3-5A tournament with Middleburg High in a possible Clay County championship game.

Clay, Oakleaf clash in weightlift title tuneup

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – In a battle of weightlifting titans, Clay High School's girls weightlift team narrowly whisked the Clay County championship crown from Oakleaf High School in the Clay County Championship meet held Saturday at Clay High School.

Both teams traded off top finishes in all but one weight division; Fleming Island taking the 106 pound slot, as the two teams traded barbs leading up to a dramatic finish for the final two weight classes; 199 and heavyweight, where Oakleaf, 11th in Class 2A, featured Gabby Willits, a recent Strongman competitor and 11th at 183 last year (320 total), and Clay, third in Class 1A last year, featured Kaila McKean, a 13th place finisher in Class 1A (355 total).

"Runnerup at the county meet to Clay was a good performance for us," said Oakleaf coach Benjamin White. "Clay is solid as always. I see Tamira Briley, Gabby Willits and Nicole Masters making to stat with Macy Wyman, Shana Walker and Markayla Green outside shots."

McKean finished with an impressive

425 total on Saturday to win the unlimited weight class by more than 100 pounds over Oakleaf's Markayla Green at 315 while Willits placed second by 30 pounds (370-340) to Clay's Lindsey Brooks, third at 199 last year (350 total) at 199 for the decider for team points with Clay taking the team title at 90 points and Oakleaf second at 70. Fleming Island and Keystone Heights tied for third with 18 points. Orange Park was fourth. Ridgeview and Middleburg did not compete.

Fleming Island got a win at 106 with Teresa Le edging Clay's Gabby Ethridge (175-160 totals).

At 110, Clay's Sam Migliore, a state meet qualifier last year, won convincingly with a 255 total to runner Taylor Lawrence at 175.

At 119, Oakleaf's Tamira Briley, 10th in Class 2A at 110 last year, won over Clay's Riley Wedford.

At 129, Clay's Nadya Jones won a five pound battle with Oakleaf's Nicole Masters, 275-270, with a five pound better on the bench press, 135-130.

At 139, Clay's Jamiyah Stevens won with a 255 total with Fleming Island's Ca-



STAFF PHOTO BY RANDY LEFKO

Clay High powerhouse weightlifters Lindsey Brooks, left, and Caila McKean will be state meet candidates for upcoming district, region and state tournaments.

leigh Perkins at 245.

At 154, Clay went 1-2 with Nayeli Trejo beat teammate Ali Sarman, 290-230 for 12 team points.

At 160, Oakleaf got their own 1-2 finish with Macy Wyman setting a personal best record en route to a 245 total with teammate Shanna Walker second at 230.

At 183, Clay's Gianna Torres totaled 245 to beat Orange Park's Shelby Leese's 230.

For Keystone Heights best finish was a

third and fourth, respectively, at 183, from Emily McFarland and Dakota Herring. Katie Gruel finished fourth at 199.

District meets are forthcoming on Jan. 24-25 with Oakleaf hosting district 3-2A on January 24 (11am lift starts) and Baker County hosting district 5-1A on January 24 (330pm lift starts). Keystone Heights travels to Pedro Menendez for the district 7-1A tournament on January 22 (330pm lift starts).

Battle of staters goes to Wallizada

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

ORANGE PARK – Prior to the start of the Florida Striders' Resolution Run 5K run Saturday on River Road, two high school cross country runners that both competed at the state championships in November were spied smiling and sharing pleasantries prior to the starter's pistol.

At the gun, it was Fleming Island High's Kameron Wallizada taking off in a sprinter's fashion to nestle up to St. Johns Country Day School sophomore Matthew Stratton in the early miles as both were very big pre-race favorites for the annual sojourn along the St. Johns River.

Truth be told, Wallizada, a Class 4A championship race 63rd place finisher in 16 minutes, 41.60 seconds amidst a season with minor, nagging injuries, has returned to full season training while Stratton, the best finisher of all Clay County runners who finished a thrilling second in Class 1A in 15:39.45 with a scintillating final mile, has been on a soccer pitch for the 8-1 Spartans soccer team.



STAFF PHOTO BY RANDY LEFKO

Fast future runners blast away from start of Resolution Run one mile fun run in Saturday running fest at Bestbet Orange Park dog track on River Road. Proceeds for the Florida Strider event benefit the elementary school Run/Walk clubs in Clay County.

In the final surge, Wallizada, 17, was alone ahead of runnerup Trevor Beesley, 33, with a winning time of 16:31 on the newly-paved River Road course. Stratton strode in at third in 17:15 with a smile to his dad, Greg, on the sidewalk with camera.

For the female race, Orange Park veteran Belissa Del Valle, 32, dominated from

the start with a 20:31 effort with runner up Regina Soeey, 48, in at 21:16, and Fleming Island High freshman cross country runner Anna Rafalski, 15, third at 21:19.

Right behind Stratton, in fourth, was Orange Park master and dentist Gary Myers, 47, in 17:31, who out-strategized son Logan, 15, who finished eighth in 18:36 and is destined to mow the lawn for his

second place family finish.

Upcoming races in the area include the Hellcat 10k/30K/50K ultradistance series held January 18 at the Green Cove Springs Military Museum on Highway 16 just off the Shands Bridge with the very fast Matanzas 5K set also for January 18 in downtown St. Augustine.



ATHLETES OF THE WEEK



Kadin Elmore
OPHS Basketball

Orange Park High senior point guard Kadin Elmore capped a thrilling come-from-behind 43-42 win over rival Oakleaf with a final drive to layup with a free throw for the gamewinner with just eight seconds on the clock.



Skylar Baltezegar
Middleburg Basketball

Skylar Baltezegar, Middleburg High junior center, dominated the paint in the Lady Broncos pseudo-upset win over previously unbeaten University Christian (now 14-1). Baltezegar had 18 rebounds, nine points and three assists.

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Fleming Island, Clay move into Duals regions

Raiders near-miss with 2A-Lincoln

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

LAKE CITY - Fleming Island and Clay wrestling had dominating wins for their respective district duals titles, but it was Orange Park who provided the most theatrics for the week with a toe-to-toe battle with defending region finalist Tallahassee Lincoln in the district 2-2A semifinal Friday at Columbia High in Lake City.

"It was close," said Orange Park coach Justin Daniels, after watching his Raiders fight back to a 36-33 gap against Lincoln behind consecutive pins from Vince Walker, Arlo Wilson and Cameron Broughton to set up a dramatic 12-11 loss from Trevon Sermons in what could have been a game decider. "It's fun to see our guys rise up to the level of competition that teams like Lincoln and Columbia bring to the mat. We are exponentially better today than we were four weeks ago."

Lincoln, who beat Orange Park 45-33, eventually defeated Columbia for their third consecutive duals title. Chiles, who Orange Park lost a three point match last week at the Ron Bierbaum Invite in Jacksonville, beat Columbia 42-28 in their semifinal. Columbia beat Orange Park for third place.

In the other districts, district 1-3A, Fleming Island put a 69-12 win over Oakleaf in that final with the Knights garnering their first invite into the region playoffs in duals tournament play.

In district 4-1A, Clay High exercised nearly 10 first period pins en route to beating Wolfson 77-6 in that final.

Round One regions duals

January 16 (3A) at Fleming Island - Flagler Palm Coast vs. Oakleaf; Fleming Island vs. Buchholz. At Hagerty, Apopka vs. Timber Creek, Hagerty vs Lake Brantley. Round two follows at both venues. Region finals scheduled for January 24 at Osceola High School. State Semifinals/Finals scheduled for January 25 at Osceola.

Round One regions duals

January 16 (1A) At Yulee - Clay vs. Bishop Kenny, Yulee vs. Wolfson. At Arnold - Arnold vs. Suwannee, Wakulla vs. South Walton. Round two follows at both venues. Region finals scheduled for January 24 at Osceola High School. State Semifinals/Finals scheduled for January 25 at Osceola.

Clay win came after a 67-12 semifinal win over University Christian that had nine forfeits from the Christians, now coached by former Oakleaf coaches Wes Champs and Tyler DeHart. On the University Christian; two former Clay area wrestlers, Jayce Paridon and Egan Gustilo, younger brother to former Oakleaf High wrestler Ethan Gustilo, now wrestling at Reinhard University, who both won their



STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Orange Park wrestler Jacob Moore, left, hoists Lincoln High opponent in dramatic district 2-2A duals semifinal match won by Lincoln. Moore pinned in his match. See results at claytodayonline.com.

matches against Clay.

For the Blue Devils, returning to the top tier of Class 1A wrestling started with the duals district win, according to coach Hunter Hill, but is targeted another match with frontrunner Wakulla High. Wakulla and Clay tangoed two weeks ago in Manatee with Wakulla winning a hard-fought 36-34 win. Wakulla beat Suwannee in their district final 66-12.

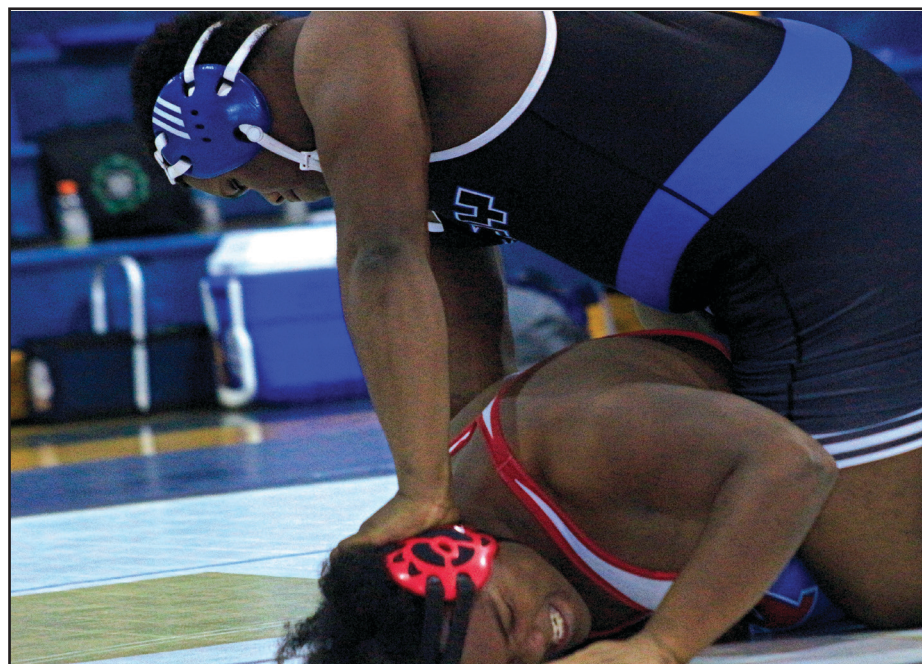
"A good win, back to a title, but still got to find a way to beat Wakulla," said Hill, who repeated as district champion, but faces a Wakulla team that dethrottled the Blue Devils last year 59-4 in the region final. "We had a couple guys not here

for illnesses (106-er Tazz Hampton most notable), but we are just going to go in a battle hard."

Against Wolfson, Clay rattled off first period pins from Dalton Huckleberry (:39), Leo Garcia (1:10), Luke Davis (:42), Aiden Mayo (:39), Thomas Viens (:39) and Dominic Martin (1:48) before Cale Hoskinson had to go three rounds to win 18-1. Clay got back on the pin train after Hoskinson with Jordan Bell (:27), Garrett Tyre (1:13) and Derrek Mosley (:58) ending the mismatch.

For Fleming Island, the state runnerup

SEE DUALS, 33



STAFF PHOTO BY RANDY LEFKO

Clay High heavyweight Derrek Mosley punishes Wolfson opponent in final match of district 4-1A championship match won by Blue Devils 77-6 at University Christian.

Hoops

from page 26

able to come back from a 45-41 Bronco lead with 2:47 left in the game with back-to-back three pointers to get to 48-47 with 1:21 left in the game.

A questionable travel call on Bronco guard Olivier Osier gave Creekside the ball with 19.7 seconds on the clock.

With just two team fouls, Tipton attempted to knock out some clock with four fouls putting the clock at 5.7 seconds.

On the inbound, Creekside found sophomore guard Jonothan Gupton, who had just two missed jumpers for the game in limited game time, just off the three point stripe in front of Middleburg defenders Britan Bussey and Osier. Gupton calmly stepped in, backed out behind the stripe and nailed the gamewinner as the buzzer sounded.

For the game, Osier and senior Edgard Enriquez both hammered the Creekside defense with Osier scoring 12 points with 10 rebounds and Enriquez scoring 18 points



with 12 rebounds. Enrique hit his final three pointer with 1:33 to put the Broncos up 48-44.

In the first quarter, Enriquez hit his first three pointer at the buzzer as the Broncos surged to a 21-13 lead.

At the half, Middleburg remained up 30-26 with Creekside attacking inside with 6'-2" center Ergys Muhametal, who hit for 13 points for the game.

Middleburg opened the third with Andy Patterson hitting a three to push the lead to 33-28, but Creekside stayed within shouting distance with a 40-36 fourth quarter start.

Middleburg kept pace with tenacious man-to-man defense with Jordan Robinson hitting a jumper to put the Broncos up 45-41 with 2:59 left in the game.

Middleburg gets a third shot at Creekside on February 6 at Creekside.

STAFF PHOTO BY RANDY LEFKO

Middleburg High guard Olivier Osier battles with Creekside defender in Broncos 50-48 loss to Knights on Thursday.

Raiders

from page 25

only get one shot off, hit the rim and ran out of time before trying to get the rebound and get the ball off once again, causing the Raiderdome to exploded with Orange Park celebration, and sending the Knights home in the agony of defeat. At the end of the first, Orange Park was flying all over the court, but found themselves in a 15-5 hole.

After the break for the quarter, the Raiders began finding their stride, and deployed some tiger claws to scratch, kick, and fight their way back in. Going into the half, the Raiders battled back to a 24-19 deficit, but things were clicking.

"I told them, just settle down... just settle down," said Kurnitsky. "We should have been down by 20 at the half, but because of their will to fight, we were only down five."

The third quarter was slow to get going as no one put any points up for almost four minutes. Once the cork got pulled out, things picked up. Just when his team needed it, Raider forward D'marre Craddock hit a three-pointer to get the Raiders within two, 26-24. At the end of the third, the Raiders were still down, but only by two, 28-26.

The final quarter was a maddening pace with both teams leaving everything they had on the court.

At 7:40, Orange Park finally tied 28-28.

At 5:26, the Raiders had the lead, 34-31. The Knights were not letting up at all and kept it a dual within a single point until :56 seconds, when Oakleaf guard Quintez Johnson put the Knights back up 41-38.

On the Raider offensive attack, forward Josiah Sabino hit to get the Raiders to 41-40 with 42.1 left to play.

On the Oakleaf counter, Kurnitsky called for an intention foul as Oakleaf at-



CORRESPONDENT PHOTOS BY RAY DIMONDA

Orange Park High guard Kadin Elmore calmly gets set to shoot gamewinning free throw in dramatic 43-42 come-from-behind win for Raiders over Oakleaf High School.

tempted to drain the clock passing the ball. Javon Dickerson grabbed Johnson's arm to stop the clock and give the Raiders a chance. If Johnson hit both shots, the Raiders would need a three-pointer to tie and take it to overtime.

Johnson missed the first, then hit the second bringing the score to 42-40 with 23.9 seconds to play.

On the throw-in, Orange Park worked the ball back to Elmore looking for him to work more of his magic.

"I stayed with the pick and roll. They couldn't guard me so we were going to keep going back to it," said Elmore, who ended the night with 19 points. "I tried to attack

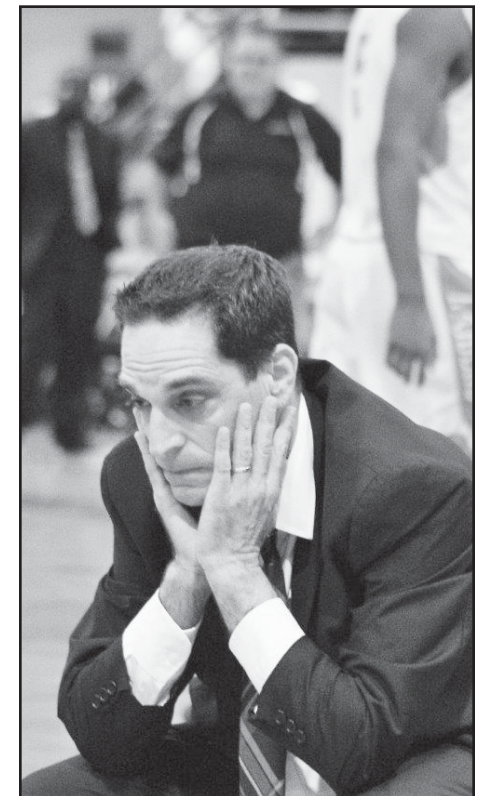
and get fouled, but I didn't think it went in. I was on my back, looking up and watched it go in and I thank God for that."

The drive tied the game at 42-42 and Elmore, getting fouled, went to the line for a single free throw.

"It was just another free throw. It's all good," said Elmore. "I practice free throws for long periods of times, so I wasn't too worried about it."

His throw was nothing but net, giving the Raiders a 43-42 lead. The Knights had one final charge left with 8.6 seconds to work with. Kurnitsky called timeout and set his defense.

"I play situational basketball and we



Orange Park High basketball coach Derek Kurnitsky settles into his emotions of a thrilling come-from-behind win over Oakleaf.

practice this. I got my defense set and put it in their hands" said Kurnitsky. "These kids, they did it, not me."

The Raiders went to a man-on-man defense, but let Oakleaf get the throw-in quickly, then pounced on them. The Knights worked the ball to Markel Allums who threw it up for a 3-pointer from the corner, only to have the ball hit the far side of the rim. Dewane Copeland had the final chance. The clock would run out with Copeland trying to get a handle on the ball with Raider Jeremy Monterola fighting Copeland for the ball under the hoop as the buzzer went off to close the book on the 43-42 comeback victory.

BOYS SOCCER SCHEDULES

District 3-6A

Fletcher (8-2-0)
 Fleming Island (8-1-2)
 Creekside (5-3-2)
 First Coast (4-7-0)
 Atlantic Coast (3-8-0)

Bartram Trail (5-2-4, 0-0)
 Mandarin (13-0-1)
 Flagler Palm Coast (5-11-0)
 Nease (6-4-2, 1-0)
 Oakleaf (2-9-1)

District playoff ranks (Class 7A)

District champions enter regions, four at-large rankings finish region eight playoff teams
 District 1-7A
 1. Mandarin 3
 2. Bartram Trail 92
 3. Nease 94
 4. Flagler Palm Coast 235
 5. Sandalwood 246
 6. Oakleaf 393

Class 6A, Region 1

(Top district teams, record, playoff points)

1-6A. Niceville (14-0-1)2
 2-6A. Leon (11-3-2)15
 3-6A. Fleming Island (9-1-2)17
 4-6A. Lake Howell (4-6-2)170

Class 7A, Region 1

(Top district teams, record, playoff points)

1-7A. Mandarin (13-0-1)3
 2-7A. Seminole (12-3-1)14
 4-7A. Winter Park (6-2-1)19
 3-7A. Boone (8-2-2)37

Fleming Island schedule

Jan. 8: FHHS 9, OPHS 1
 Jan. 10: FHHS 8, First Coast 0
 Jan. 13: FHHS 8, St. Augustine 0
 Wed., Jan. 14: at Matanzas
 Wed., Jan. 22: vs. Bolles
 Fri., Jan. 24: at Seabreeze
 Tues., Jan. 28: at Buchholz
 Fleming Island hosts district tournament, Jan. 31-Feb. 7

Oakleaf schedule

Jan. 7: OHS 7, Atlantic Coast 0
 Tues., Jan. 14: vs. PK Yonge
 Mon., Jan. 27: vs. St. Augustine

District 3-4A

Baker County (12-1-0, 3-0)
 Ed White (1-11-1, 0-1)
 Clay (8-5-0, 0-1)
 Menendez (7-5-3, 0-0)
 Palatka (11-5-1, 0-1)
 Ridgeview (4-5-2, 0-0)



STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

St. Johns Maddy Moody misses with headball shot on corner kick in 8-0 win over Clay.

District playoff ranks (Class 4A)

District champions enter regions, four at-large rankings finish region eight playoff teams

District 3-4A

1. Baker County 119
 2. Menendez 147
 3. Clay 205
 4. Palatka 228
 5. Ridgeview 277
 6. Ed White 543

Palatka hosts district tournament Jan. 31-Feb. 7

4-4A. Bishop Kenny 43
 2-4A. Suwannee 72
 3-4A. Baker County 119

Class 4A, Region 1

(Top district teams, record, playoff points)

1-4A. Arnold 33

Ridgeview schedule

Sat., Jan. 11: RHS 3, OPHS 1
 Mon., Jan. 13: at Bishop Snyder

Tues., Jan. 14: at SJCDOS 6pm
 Wed., Jan. 15: vs. Episcopal
 Wed., Jan. 22: vs. Bartram Trail

Clay schedule

Jan. 6: CHS 0, Menendez 4
 Jan. 7: CHS 1, Palatka 2
 Jan. 9: CHS 7, University Christian 0
 Jan. 13: CHS 4, Hamilton County 2
 Thurs., Jan. 16: vs. Ed White
 Mon., Jan. 20: vs. Keystone Heights
 Tues., Jan. 21: at Bishop Snyder
 Thurs., Jan. 23: vs. St. Joseph
 Mon., Jan. 27: vs. Hamilton County

District 2-5A

Stanton (10-3-1, 1-0)
 Westside (3-5-2, 1-0)
 Middleburg (3-9-2, 0-1)
 Orange Park (3-5-2, 1-0)
 Robert E. Lee (0-7-1, 0-0)

District playoff ranks (Class 5A)

District champions enter regions, four at-large rankings finish region eight playoff teams
 District 2-5A
 1. Stanton 51
 2. Middleburg 280
 3. Robert E. Lee 308
 4. Orange Park 457
 5. Westside 479
 Stanton hosts district tournament Jan. 24-Jan. 31

Class 5A, Region 1

(Top district teams, record, playoff points)

1-5A. Gulf Breeze (10-2-1)13
 2-5A. Stanton (9-3-0) 51
 3-5A. Ponte Vedra (6-5-3)65
 4-5A. Vanguard (13-0)79

Orange Park schedule

Jan. 8: OPHS 1, Fleming Island 9
 Jan. 11: OPHS 1, RHS 3
 Mon., Jan. 13: vs. Menendez
 Tues., Jan. 21: at Yulee

Middleburg boys soccer

Jan. 7: MHS 2, Keystone Heights 8
 Jan. 9: MHS 1, St. Augustine 1
 Wed., Jan. 22: at Robert E. Lee

District 4-3A

Keystone Heights (12-4-2, 7-0)
 PK Yonge (10-2-4, 2-2)
 Fort White (2-11-0, 0-4)
 Crescent City (6-5-2, 0-1)
 Interlachen (3-6-0, 0-1)
 Newberry (7-2-2, 2-2)

District playoff ranks (Class 3A)

District champions enter regions, four at-large rankings finish region eight playoff teams
 District 4-3A
 1. Keystone Heights 142
 2. Crescent City 224
 3. PK Yonge 278
 4. Newberry 279
 5. Interlachen 471
 6. Fort White 505

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Fleming Island senior forward Tristan Ayers's return to the lineup for Golden Eagles after minor injury adds another element of speed downfield as district tournaments loom.

ORANGE PARK MALL





Clay High (9-5), led by Jacob Upchurch, in white, and Keystone Heights (12-4-2), here with defender Jordan Holmes in regular season action, are both pushing to a district titles.

Class 3A, Region 1
(Top district teams, record, playoff points)
3-3A. Bolles (7-4-1)21
4-3A. Keystone Heights (12-4-2)142
2-3A. Florida High 189
1-3A. Pensacola Catholic (3-5-1)331

Keystone Heights schedule
Jan. 3: KHHS 6, West Nassau 1
Jan. 7: KHHS 8, Middleburg 2
Jan. 9: KHHS 4, Williston 5
Jan. 10: KHHS 0, Suwannee 4
Jan. 13: KHHS 7, Fort White 0
Tues., Jan. 14: vs. Crescent City
Fri., Jan. 17: vs. Interlachen
Mon., Jan. 20: at Clay
Thurs., Jan. 23: vs. Palatka
Fri., Jan. 24: at Williston
Mon., Jan. 27: vs. Santa Fe
PK. Yonge hosts district tournament
Jan. 31-Feb. 7

District 3-2A
St. Johns Country Day School (8-1-0, 0-0)
St. Joseph Academy (5-5-3, 0-0)
Christ's Church (1-3-0, 0-0)
University Christian (1-8-0, 0-1)
Warner Christian (1-2)

District playoff ranks (Class 2A)
District champions enter regions, four at-large rankings finish region eight playoff teams

District 3-2A
1. St. Johns Country Day School 61
2. Warner 352
3. St. Joseph 357
4. Christ's Church 515
5. University Christian 516

Class 2A, Region 1
(Top district teams, record, playoff points)
1-2A. Maclay (11-0) 6
3-2A. St. Johns Country Day School (9-1) 61
2-2A. Hamilton County (9-0-3) 188
4-2A. Lake Mary Prep (6-2-1)296

St. Johns Country Day School
Jan. 9: SJCDs 8, Warner Christian 0
Jan. 13: SJCDs 3, Providence 1
Tues., Jan. 14: vs. Ridgeview 6pm
Fri., Jan. 17: vs. Father Lopez 6pm
Tues., Jan. 21: at St. Joseph
Mon., Jan. 27: vs. Christ's Church 6pm
St. Johns Country Day School hosts district tournament Feb. 3-Feb. 6

GIRLS SOCCER SCHEDULES

District 3-6A
Fleming Island (6-4-0, 0-1)
Atlantic Coast (6-4-2, 0-0)
Creekside (6-3-1, 1-0)
Fletcher (5-4-1, 0-0)
First Coast (5-5-1, 0-2)

District playoff ranks (Class 6A)
District champions enter regions, four at-large rankings finish region eight playoff teams
District 3-6A
1. Creekside 23
2. Fletcher 94

3. Fleming Island 110
4. Atlantic Coast 132
5. First Coast 324

Class 6A, Region 1
(Top district teams, record, playoff points)
2-6A. Lincoln (7-2-3)12
3-6A. Creekside (6-3-1)23
1-6A. Niceville (7-3-1)52
4-6A. Edgewater (8-2-3)134

Jan. 7: FHHS 1, Bishop Kenny 0
Jan. 9: FHHS 8, Middleburg 0
Jan. 10: FHHS 6, First Coast 0
Mon., Jan. 13: vs. St. Augustine
Tues., Jan. 23: at Episcopal
Thurs., Jan. 24: at Seabreeze (6-3-1)
Creekside hosts district tournament Jan. 30-Feb. 7

District 1-7A
Bartram Trail (9-1-3, 0-0)
Oakleaf (8-1-0, 1-0)
Sanddalwood (10-4-1, 0-2)
Flagler Palm Coast (8-4-3, 1-1-1)
Mandarin (8-5-0, 1-0)
Nease (11-9-1, 0-0)

District playoff ranks (Class 7A)
District champions enter regions, four at-large rankings finish region eight playoff teams
District 1-7A
1. Bartram Trail 2
2. Oakleaf 49
3. Flagler Palm Coast 69
4. Mandarin 160
5. Sanddalwood 205
6. Nease 240

Class 7A, Region 1
(Top district teams, record, playoff points)
1-7A. Bartram Trail (9-1-3)2
4-7A. Lake Nona (9-1-2)4
2-7A. Spruce Creek (7-2-1)40
3-7A. Boone (8-3-2)68

Oakleaf schedule
Jan. 7: OHS 9, RHHS 1
Jan. 9: OHS 1, SJCDs 4
Mon., Jan. 13: vs. Yulee
Wed., Jan. 15: vs. Bishop Snyder
Tues., Jan. 21: at Clay
Thurs., Jan. 23: vs. Buchholz
Bartram Trail hosts district tournament Jan. 30-Feb. 6

District 2-5A
Orange Park (0-8-1, 0-1-1)
Lee (5-1-3, 1-0-1)
Middleburg (4-8-3, 0-0)
Stanton (9-3-0, 0-0)
Westside (3-9-0, 0-0)

District playoff ranks (Class 5A)
District champions enter regions, four at-large rankings finish region eight playoff teams

District 2-5A
1. Stanton 51
2. Middleburg 280
3. Robert E. Lee 308
4. Orange Park 457
5. Westside 479
Orange Park hosts district tournament Jan. 27-Jan. 30

Class 5A, Region 1
(Top district teams, record, playoff points)
1-5A. Gulf Breeze (10-2-1)13
2-5A. Stanton (9-3-0) 51
3-5A. Ponte Vedra (6-5-3)65
4-5A. Vanguard (13-0)79

Middleburg schedule
Tues., Jan. 7: at OPHS
Jan. 9: MHS 0, Fleming Island 8
Jan. 10: MHS 1, Fletcher 4
Mon., Jan. 13: vs. Matanzas 530pm
Tues., Jan. 21: vs. Keystone Heights 6pm
Wed., Jan. 22: at Robert E. Lee

Orange Park girls soccer
Jan. 7: OPHS 0, MHS 5
Jan. 9: OPHS 1, Palatka 5

District 3-4A
Clay (9-2, 1-0)
Baker County (11-2-0, 2-0)
Ed White (5-10-0, 0-3)
Menendez (4-6-0, 1-0)
Palatka (11-8-2, 2-2)
Ridgeview (3-5-2, 0-0)

District playoff ranks (Class 4A)
District champions enter regions, four at-large rankings finish region eight playoff teams

District 3-4A
1. Baker County 146
2. Clay 176
3. Ridgeview 286
4. Menendez 309
5. Palatka 370
6. Ed White 395
Menendez hosts district tournament Jan. 30-Feb. 6

Class 4A, Region 1
(Top district teams, record, playoff points)
4-4A. Bishop Kenny (7-3-1)88
1-4A. Arnold (7-3-1)102
2-4A. Wakulla (10-0-0)109
3-4A. Baker County (11-2-0)146

Clay schedule
Jan. 7: CHS 5, Paxon 0
Jan. 9: at University Christian (0-6)
Mon., Jan. 13: vs. SJCDs (9-1)
Tues., Jan. 14: at Ponte Vedra (5-5-2)
Tues., Jan. 21: vs. Oakleaf (7-0-0)
Thurs., Jan. 23: vs. St. Joseph (5-4)

Ridgeview girls
Jan. 7: RHHS 1, OHS 9
Jan. 9: RHHS 0, Episcopal 3
Tues., Jan. 14: vs. Palatka
Thurs., Jan. 16: at Wolfson
Tues., Jan. 21: at Matanzas
Thurs., Jan. 23: vs. Mandarin
Tues., Jan. 28: vs. Keystone Heights

District 4-3A
Bishop Kenny (7-3-1, 2-0)
PK. Yonge (7-2-1, 2-0)
Keystone Heights (10-6-1-7-2)
Williston (6-2-1, 3-1)
Crescent City (6-9, 0-1)
Fort White (5-7, 0-2)
Newberry (3-9, 0-3)
Interlachen (0-11, 0-3)

District playoff ranks (Class 3A)
District champions enter regions, four at-large rankings finish region eight playoff teams

District 4-3A
1. PK. Yonge 138
2. Keystone Heights 272
3. Williston 341
4. Fort White 385
5. Crescent City 401
6. Newberry 477
7. Interlachen 516

Class 3A, Region 1
(Top district teams, record, playoff points)
3-3A Bolles (12-3)16
4-3A PK. Yonge (7-2-1)138
2-3A Florida High 148
1-3A South Walton (6-6)267

Keystone Heights schedule
Jan. 3: KHHS 0, West Nassau 2
Jan. 6: KHHS 1, Suwannee 2
Jan. 7: KHHS 2, Gainesville 2
Jan. 9: KHHS 7, Williston 0
Jan. 13: KHHS 8, Fort White 0
Tues., Jan. 14: at Crescent City (6pm)
Thurs., Jan. 17: vs. Interlachen (5pm)
Tues., Jan. 21: at Middleburg (6pm)
Thurs., Jan. 23: vs. Palatka (530pm)
Tues., Jan. 28: at Ridgeview (6pm)
PK. Yonge hosts district tournament Jan. 30-Feb. 6

St. Johns Country Day School
District 3-2A
St. Johns Country Day School (11-1, 0-0)
St. Joseph Academy (7-4, 0-0)
Christ's Church(1-5)
University Christian (0-7)

District playoff ranks (Class 2A)
District champions enter regions, four at-large rankings finish region eight playoff teams
District 3-2A
1. St. Johns Country Day School 11
2. St. Joseph 191
3. Christ's Church 363
4. University Christian 469

Class 2A, Region 1
(Top district teams, record, playoff points)
3-2A. St. Johns Country Day School (11-1) 11
1-2A. Maclay (7-2-2)63
4-2A. Seven Rivers Christian (9-1-0)224
2-2A. Oak Hill (5-6-0)310

St. Johns Country Day
Jan. 7: SJCDs 3, Creekside 2
Jan. 9: SJCDs 4, Oakleaf 1
Jan. 13: SJCDs 8, Clay 0
Fri., Jan. 17: at Tallahassee Lincoln (7-2-3)
Sat., Jan. 18: at Tallahassee Chiles (10am) (8-2-3)
Tues., Jan. 21: vs. Bishop Snyder (5-6-1)
Thurs., Jan. 23: vs. Bolles (12-3-1)
Mon., Jan. 27: vs. Christ's Church (1-5)
St. Johns Country Day School hosts district tournament Feb. 4-Feb. 6



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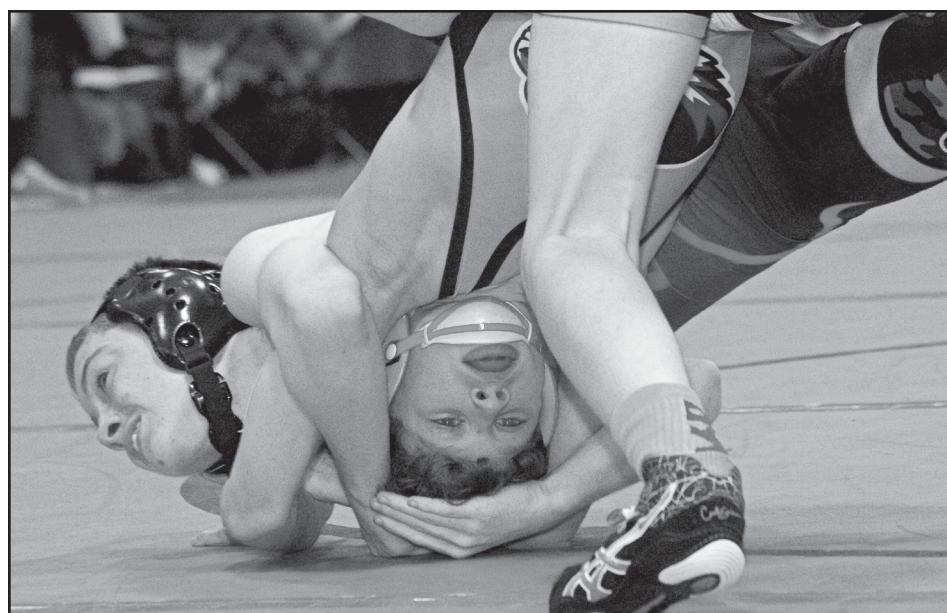
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STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Wilkinson Junior High's Austin Joiner rears up to down Green Cove Springs' Ladarius Jackson en route to 12 second pin at Wilkinson Toughman Tournament at Middleburg.



Lake Asbury Junior High's Wyatt Leduc, upside down, reversed his position on Wilkinson's Grady Woodard to win a 9-0 decision at 106 at the Wilkinson Toughman tourney.

Wrestling

from page 25

in the first period; Wyatt Leduc at 106, who battled to a 9-0 win over Wilkinson's Grady Woodard in a match that was filled with rough tumbling; Hayden Meszaros at 138 who won a 7-0 decision over Lake City Middle School's Kareem Kinlock, and Gavin Rossow at 152 who quickly dispatched of Episcopal's Christian McGarity with a 35 second pin.

For Green Cove, titles went to Brady Glavine at 85, an 8-4 win over Suwannee's Justin Contreras; Gunner Ivey at 126, who spent just 16 seconds on the mat with Episcopal's Chance Wolff with an explosive pin combination; Nathan Newman at 160 who punished Tucker Cody with quick velocity moves before pounding a head locked pin in the second period; Jadon Bell at 195 who won a tough 7-0 match with Wilkinson's Dylan Cloud; Gage Isbell at 220 who beat Lake Asbury's Ronan Carns 7-1

in the only match featuring both top teams, and heavyweight Zeth Wager with a pin at the first period buzzer over Lake City's Allen Irish.

Top performance in a final was arguably Lakeside Junior High's Matthew Newman at 95 who reversed a third period near fall from Green Cove Springs' Vonte Burke with just seconds left in the match to win by pin and take the 95 title.

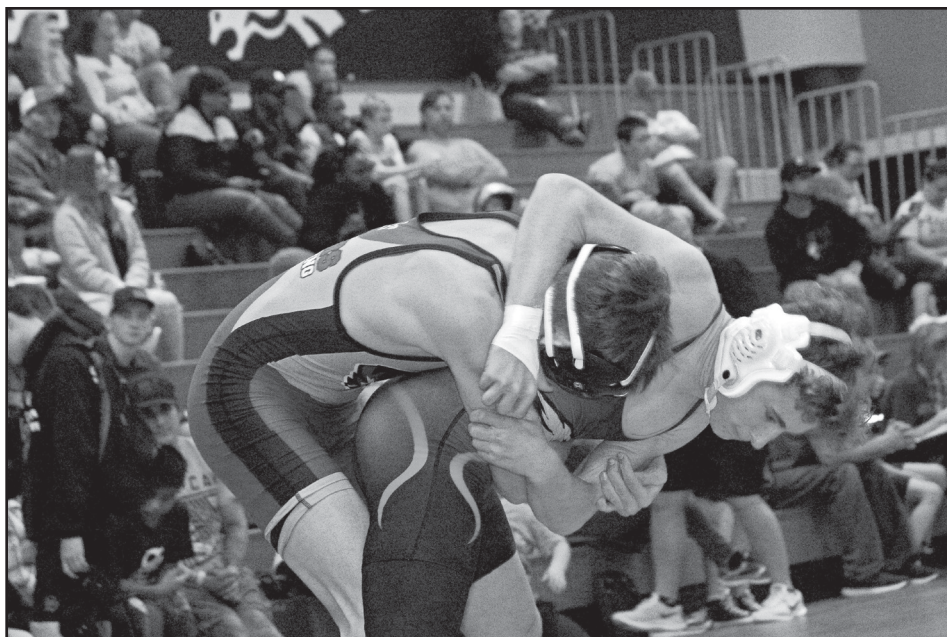
Other finalists were Caleb Green (GCS) who lost by pin at 75 to Suwannee's Eli Jolicoeur; Ryder Pimienta (OP) who lost by pin at 100 to Suwannee's Austin McKinney; Markos Barfield (OAK) who lost by pin to Austin Smith of Lake City at 113; Zane Raulerson (WILK) who pinned Lakeside's Chris Chop at 120; Chandler Thomas (WILK) who pinned Shane White (LkASB) in just 21 seconds at 132; Caiden Kowal (LKSide) who pinned Nick Wilkerson of Lake City at 145; and Austin Joiner (WILK) who pinned Ladarius Jackson (GCS) in just 12 seconds at 170.



Lake Asbury Junior High's Jacob Bucci, on top, checks his toes to see if he scored points in takedown of Szander Boehn of Suwannee Middle School in 90 pound match won by Bucci with a 48 second pin.



Lakeside Junior High's Matthew Newman, on top, had most dramatic win with a third period reversal to pin of Green Cove Springs' Vonte Burke in the 95 pound division.



Wilkinson Junior High's Chandler Thomas gets set to throw Lake Asbury's Shane White for 21 second pin in finals of Wilkinson Toughman invitational at Middleburg High School Saturday.

Duals

from page 28

to South Dade last year, rifling through their district duals was not a surprise for the red-hot Golden Eagles who showed no mercy on their county compadres with the 69-12 win with Oakleaf scoring on two forfeits. In the 11 pin scorecard, the fastest of the day went to Riley Holton at 126 who edged Luke Chop at 160 with a 26 second tip versus 27 for Chop.

In the closest match of the day, at 285, Fleming Island's Raul Gonzalez fought to a 2-0 win over Oakleaf's Josh Murrell.

Fleming Island beat Creekside 65-12 in their semifinal with the Creekside Knights scoring off two forfeits. Oakleaf advanced with a 37-34 win over Bartram Trail.

In district 5-1A, Keystone Heights opened with a 36-18 win over Florida Deaf, but lost 54-18 to Pedro Menendez, Palatka 54-18 and Atlantic 48-30.

Keystone Heights win over Florida Deaf featured wins from Sam Ulsch at 126 (pin 1:53), Jonas Cole at 138 (pin at :58), Sheppard Wingate at 160 (pin at 3:55), Eliyah Cole at 182 (pin at 1:46) and Steven Raab at 195 (pin at 2:35).

Ridgeview and Middleburg did not compete in district duals tournaments.

In weekend action, Middleburg finished fourth at the Joe Bees Memorial Battle of the Border at Yulee High School with Camden County's B team winning over 1A-Yulee and Mosley High. Brayden Weaver won at 170 with a pin over West Nassau's Deonta Robinson. Drew McDaniels lost in the 220 final. Ethan Larsen was third at 182. Michael Higginbotham finished fourth at 152.

Oakleaf traveled to the Marine Corps Duals on Sat., Jan. 11 and came home with wins over Westside (59-24), Gainesville (63-6), Terry Parker (60-16), Paxon (77-3), Lee (57-24), Mandarin (66-18) and Bolles (49-24).

Fun AND Humor

⊙ * ✖ ☞ ✚ ✛ ✞ ✟ ✠ ✡ ✢ ✣ ✤ ✥ ✦ ✧ ✨ ✩ ✪ ✫ ✬ ✭ ✮ ✯ ✰ ✱ ✲ ✳ ✴ ✵ ✶ ✷ ✸ ✹ ✺ ✻ ✼ ✽ ✾ ✿ ♂ ♀ ♁ ♂ ♃ ♄ ♅ ♆ ♇ ♈ ♉ ♊ ♋ ♌ ♍ ♎ ♏ ♐ ♑ ♒ ♓ ♔ ♕ ♖ ♗ ♘ ♙ ♚

CRYPTO FUN

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Solve the code to discover words related to mentoring.
Each number corresponds to a letter.
(Hint: 23 = e)

A. 8 23 26 18 14 15
Clue: Adviser

B. 20 11 24 19 23
Clue: Shows the way

C. 12 23 7 7 14 26 7
Clue: Teachings

D. 26 23 18 17 14 15 5
Clue: Group of associates

Answers: A. mentor B. guide C. lessons D. network

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to mentoring.

PXSRETE

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Answer: Experts

Guess Who?

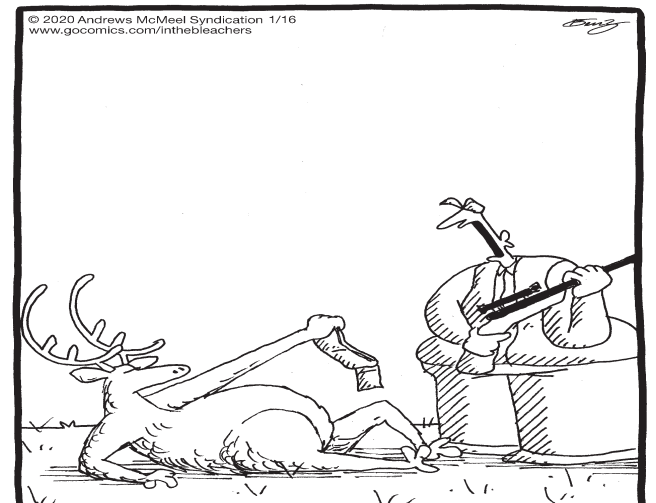
I am an actress born in Illinois on January 17, 1922. I have been a beloved actress and animal activist for decades. I have appeared on programs like "The Mary Tyler Moore Show" and a long-running hit about senior women living together.

Answer: Betty White

Flying McCoys

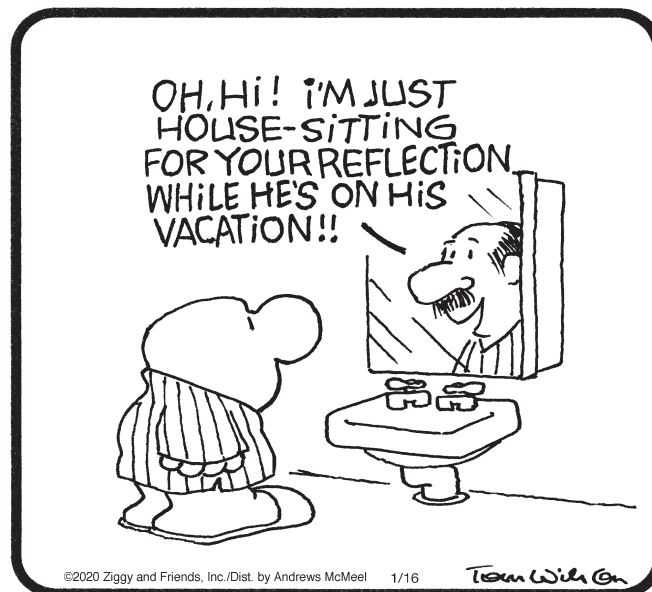


In the Bleachers



S	E	R	I	E	S	S	C	R	A	P	S				
A	N	D	O	R	R	A	C	H	A	T	T	E	R		
C	A	D	A	R	T	M	O	U	T	H	M	E	R		
R	I	S	E	N	R	A	P	S	A	B	E	R			
E	L	I	S	S	A	T	E	S	R	O	S	E			
S	S	C	S	A	P	S	I	C	U	T	A				
		I	M	A	M			T	A	B	L	E	R	S	
S	A	L	A	L				L	E	E	R	S			
A	R	I	S	E	S			K	I	E	V				
R	M	A	P	A	R	S	H	F	A	A	R				
C	O	N	S	C	A	C	T	I	S	R	N	A			
A	R	S	O	N	P	I	A	S	A	D	A	T			
S	I	C	O	R	I	A	N	D	E	R	L	A			
M	E	G	A	T	O	N	C	A	I	S	S	O	N		
S	E	S	A	M	E		H	O	S	I	N	G			

Ziggy



UNIVERSAL Sudoku Puzzle

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.

				5	7	3	4	9
				4				
	3	4		9				5
4	8		7	2				
	6		9		8		5	
				1	5		2	6
7				8		6	1	
				7				
8	4	9	1	6				

SOLUTION:

1	2	8	6	5	7	3	4	9
5	9	7	8	4	3	1	6	2
6	3	4	2	9	1	7	8	5
4	8	5	7	2	6	9	3	1
2	6	1	9	3	8	4	5	7
9	7	3	4	1	5	8	2	6
7	5	2	3	8	9	6	1	4
3	1	6	5	7	4	2	9	8
8	4	9	1	6	2	5	7	3

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CLASSIFIED DEADLINE
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12:00 p.m.

TO REACH OUR OFFICE CALL:
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Fleming Island, FL 32003

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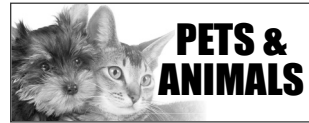
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Miscellaneous

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Legal Notice

Kent B. Pruitt a/k/a Ken Pruitt; Unknown Spouse of Kent B. Pruitt a/k/a Kent Pruitt; community First Credit Union of Florida F/K/A Educational Community Credit Union; United States of America, Department of Treasury; Unknown Parties in Possession #1, if living, and all Unknown Parties claiming by, through, under and against the above named Defendant(s) who are not known to be dead or alive...

TO: Kent B. Pruitt a/k/a Kent Pruitt; LAST KNOWN ADDRESS, 104 Oakwood Court, Middleburg, FL 32068 and Unknown Spouse of Kent B. Pruitt a/k/a Kent Pruitt: LAST KNOWN ADDRESS, 104 Oakwood Court, Middleburg, FL 32068...

Legal Notice

less than 7 days. If you are hearing or voice impaired, call 711. (seal) Tara S. Green Circuit and County Courts By: Stacie Towns Deputy Clerk Legal 45477 published Jan 9 and Jan 16, 2020, in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper 19-321571

LEGAL NOTICE

Dear Patients: This notification is to inform you that as February 13, 2020, Dr. Paul Baldwin III, will be resigning from Hughston Clinic medical staff, and relocating his practice. Hughston Clinic will continue to be staffed by outstanding fellowship trained physicians and staff members...

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA PROBATE DIVISION File No. 19 CP 0581 Division E IN RE: ESTATE OF CECIL ANSEL LARAQUE Deceased. The administration of the estate of CECIL ANSEL LARAQUE, deceased, whose date of death was November 19th, 2019, is pending in the Circuit Court for Clay County, Florida...

Legal Notice

notice is January 16, 2020. Law Office of Thomas M Wich PA Attorney for Personal Representative: 2701 NE 14TH ST Suite 3 Pompano Beach FL 33062 Telephone: (954) 788-7771 Florida Bar No. 442607 Email: tomwiclhw@gmail.com

KIM DISANTO 7410 NW 70TH AVENUE Pompano Beach, FL 33067 Personal Representative Legal 45499 published Jan 16 and Jan 23, 2020 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

PUBLIC NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the undersigned intends to sell the personal property described below to enforce a lien imposed on said property under The Florida Self Storage Facility Act Statutes (Section 83.801 - 83.809). The undersigned will sell by competitive bidding at lockerfox.com on Tuesday the 4th day of February 2020 at 12:00 PM.

NOTICE OF ACTION - CONSTRUCTIVE SERVICE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FOURTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA GENERAL JURISDICTION Case No. 102019CA001242CAAXXX PHH Mortgage Corporation Plaintiff, vs. The Unknown Successor Trustee, as Trustee of the Hiseiro Living Trust dated April 9, 2002; et al Defendants. TO: Unknown Spouse of Jane W. Cumming a/k/a Jane Woodley Cumming a/k/a Jane Cummings and JANE W. CUMMING A/K/A JANE WOODLEY CUMMING A/K/A JANE CUMMINGS

Legal Notice

in the complaint or petition. DATED on January 8, 2020. (seal) Tara Green As Clerk of the Court By: Kasey Valentin As Deputy Clerk Legal 45504 published Jan 16 and Jan 23, 2020 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper. 19-F01703

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the undersigned, pursuant to SECTION 83.801-809 Florida Statutes "Storage Facility Act" will sell to the highest bidder the contents of the following storage units located at the following locations. Said contents consisting of personal property, household and other goods, furniture, etc., or as otherwise indicated. Sale will take place on January 18th, 2020 @ 10:00am @ the locations listed below.

LEGAL NOTICE (SECTION 98.075 F.S.)

Notice is hereby given to the following person(s) with the last known address of: 117691547 AVERY, ALYSSA B 3614 THUNDER RD GREEN COVE SPRINGS,32043

Legal Notice

notice within 30 days may result in a determination of ineligibility by the Supervisor of Elections and removal of your name from the statewide voter registration system. You may contact the Supervisor of Elections office to receive information regarding the basis for the potential ineligibility and the procedure to resolve the matter.

FICTITIOUS NAME Notice Under Fictitious Name Law Pursuant to Section 865.09, Florida Statutes

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned, desiring to engage in business under the fictitious name of: HARP DAIRY Located in the County of CLAY, in the City of LAKE GENEVA Florida with mailing address of PO BOX 263 LAKE GENEVA FL 32160-0263

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA PROBATE DIVISION FILE NO: 2019-CP-571 DIVISION: F IN RE: THE ESTATE OF ALAN F. ROST Deceased. The administration of the estate of Alan F. Rost, deceased, whose date of death was October 30, 2019, is pending in the Circuit Court for Clay County, Florida, Probate Division...

Legal Notice

PALATKA, FL 32177 Telephone: (386) 385-3101 Fax: (386) 530-2794 E-Mail: dallas@hehalaw.com Secondary E-Mail: amanda@hehalaw.com Personal Representative FLEVIA DUSTIN 504 South Veverka Drive Prairie City, Iowa 50228 Legal 45475 published Jan 9 and Jan 16, 2020, in Clay County's Clay Today

APPROVAL TO ADVERTISE/ NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND WORLD LANGUAGES TEXTBOOKS SCHOOL BOARD OF CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA

Approval to Advertise: The School Board of Clay County, Florida ("the Board") approves the advertisement of the advertisement of a Legal Public Notice for the World Languages and Career and Technical Education (CTE) Textbooks. Purpose & Effect: The proposed adoption pertains to the implementation of the state and school district policies and procedures regarding World Languages and Career and Technical Education. Access to Text of Proposed Amendments: The selected texts will be displayed for public viewing on February 6, prior to the regular school board meeting between the hours of 5 pm to 7 pm.

CALL MARTHA AT 904-579-2154 TO PLACE YOUR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENT TODAY!

Zero to Sold...in no time flat! CLAY TODAY Nothing moves faster than a Clay Today classified. Get your merchandise moving today! Place a classified by calling 904-579-2154

Legal Notice

the meeting, he or she will need a record of the proceedings, and, for such purpose, he or she may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.
Legal 45415 published Jan 16, 2020 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

Bid Notices

LEGAL NOTICE
 The Clay County School Board is hereby announcing that professional county-wide architectural services are required for the development of plans and specifications, bidding, and construction administration for various projects, in which the estimated construction cost of each project under the contract does not exceed \$2 million, throughout the School District.
 Interested Architects should apply in duplicate to Bryce Ellis, Director of Facility Planning and Construction, School District of Clay County, 925 West Center Street, Green Cove Springs, Florida 32043. The application shall include, but not be limited to, a letter of interest, current resume, a completed SF 330 and information on previous similar work and current workload. Applications will be accepted until 2:00 p.m., January 30, 2020.
Legal 45443 published Jan 2, Jan 9 and Jan 16, 2020 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

REQUEST FOR BID
 NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that sealed bids will be received until 4:00 P.M., Monday, February 24, 2020, at the Clay County Admin Bldg, 4th floor, 477 Houston St, Green Cove Springs, FL 32043, for the following:
BID NO: 19/20-28, CR 315 C SHOULDER IMPROVEMENTS AND PAVING
 Bids will be opened at 1:00 P.M., or as soon thereafter as possible, on Tuesday, February 25, 2020 in the Clay County Admin Bldg, Conference Room "B", 4th floor, 477 Houston St, Green Cove Springs, Florida. Bids will not be valid unless received by the proposal deadline.
 All communications with the County regarding this Bid should be directed to Donna Fish, Purchasing Division, (904) 278-3761 or by email: purchasing@claycountygov.com
A Mandatory pre-bid meeting will be held at the Clay County Administration Building, 477 Houston Street, 4th Floor Conference Room B, Green Cove Springs, Florida 32043 on February 5, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.
Proposals require a five (5%) percent bid bond and may not be withdrawn after the scheduled opening time for a period of thirty (30) days. The term bond shall include cashier or certified checks payable to the County.
 The County reserves the right to waive formalities in any bid, to reject any or all bids with or without cause, including the lack of availability of adequate funds, regulatory agency requirements, and/or to accept the bid that, in its judgment, will be in the best interest of the County of Clay.
FOLLOWING THE BID OPENING AND TABULATION, A "NOTICE OF INTENT TO AWARD BID" OR A "NOTICE OF REJECTION OF ALL BIDS" WILL BE POSTED ON THE INTERNET AT: <http://www.claycountygov.com/departments/purchasing-division/bcc-bid-tabs-current-bids-intent-bids-rejection-bids> THIS WEB PAGE CAN ALSO BE ACCESSED FROM THE HOMEPAGE OF THE COUNTY'S WEBSITE AT: www.claycountygov.com BY FOLLOWING THE "NOTICE OF INTENT BIDS" LINK UNDER THE "BUSINESS" ROLLOVER BUTTON ON THE COUNTY'S HOMEPAGE. NO OTHER NOTICE WILL BE POSTED.
PROSPECTIVE BIDDERS ARE NOTIFIED THAT THE FAILURE TO INCLUDE WITHIN THE SEALED BID ENVELOPE, A PROPER BID BOND OR OTHER SECURITY APPROVED UNDER THE COUNTY'S PURCHASING POLICY, IF REQUIRED FOR THIS SOLICITATION, OR THE FAILURE TO FILE A WRITTEN PETITION INITIATING A FORMAL PROTEST PROCEEDING WITHIN THE TIMES AND IN THE MANNER PRESCRIBED IN SECTION 8. (N), OF SAID POLICY, SHALL CONSTITUTE A WAIVER OF THE

Bid Notices

RIGHT TO PROTEST THE BID SOLICITATION, ANY ADDENDUM THERETO, OR THE BID DECISION, AS APPLICABLE, AND TO INITIATE A FORMAL PROTEST PROCEEDING UNDER SAID POLICY. THE COUNTY'S PURCHASING POLICY CAN BE VIEWED AT THE COUNTY'S WEBSITE BY FOLLOWING THE APPROPRIATE LINKS FROM THE HOMEPAGE ADDRESS SET FORTH ABOVE.
IF A PROSPECTIVE BIDDER IS IN DOUBT WHETHER THIS SOLICITATION REQUIRES A BID BOND, SUCH PROSPECTIVE BIDDER IS SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING APPROPRIATE INQUIRY.
 A person or affiliate who has been placed on the convicted vendor list following a conviction for a public entity crime may not submit a bid on a contract to provide any goods or services to a public entity, may not submit a bid on a contract with a public entity for the construction or repair of a public building or public work, may not submit bids on leases of real property to a public entity, may not be awarded or perform work as a contractor, supplier, subcontractor, or consultant under a contract with any public entity, and may not transact business with any public entity in excess of the threshold amount provided in Section 287.017, Florida Statutes, for CATEGORY TWO for a period of 36 months from the date of being placed on the convicted vendor list.
Legal 45521 published Jan 16, 2020 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper.

Notice of Sale

NOTICE OF SALE
 IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FOURTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA
 CASE NO. 2016-CA-000412
BAYVIEW LOAN SERVICING, LLC, Plaintiff,
VS.
ERIC A. VROBEL; AMANDA N. VROBEL; UNKNOWN SPOUSE OF ERIC A. VROBEL; UNKNOWN SPOUSE OF AMANDA N. VROBEL; UNKNOWN TENANT #1 AND UNKNOWN TENANT #2, AS UNKNOWN TENANTS IN POSSESSION Defendants.
 NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to the Final Summary Judgment of Foreclosure entered on June 6, 2018, in the above-captioned action, the following property situated in Clay County, Florida, described as:
LOT 37, BLOCK 1, FOXRIDGE-UNIT 4, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF AS RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 16, PAGES 17 THROUGH 21, OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS OF CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA.
Property Address: 2846 Circle Ridge Drive, Orange Park, FL 32065
 Shall be sold by the Clerk of Court, TARA S. GREEN, on the 4th day of February, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. ON-LINE at www.clay.realforeclose.com, to the highest bidder, for cash, after giving notice as required by section 45.031, Florida Statutes.
 Any person claiming an interest in the surplus from the sale, if any, other than the property owner as of the date of the Lis Pendens must file a claim within 60 days after the sale.
 The court, in its discretion, may enlarge the time of the sale. Notice of the changed time of sale shall be published as provided herein.
 If you are a person with a disability who needs an accommodation in order to participate in this proceeding, you are entitled, at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. Please contact the ADA Coordinator at ertintrp@coj.net or (904) 255-1695 at least 7 days before your scheduled court appearance, or immediately upon receiving this notification if the time before the scheduled appearance is less than 7 days; if you are hearing or voice impaired, call 711.
 WITNESS my hand and seal of this court on January 13, 2020.
 (seal)
 TARA S. GREEN
 Clerk of the Circuit Court
 BY: Rebecca Crews
 Deputy Clerk
Legal 45531 published Jan 16 and Jan 23, 2020 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper.

Notice of Sale

NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE
 IN THE CIRCUIT COURT IN THE FOURTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA
 GENERAL JURISDICTION DIVISION
 CASE NO: 2019-CA-000555
U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, Plaintiff,
vs
CHRISTOPHER WARREN PRUETTE; SABRINA ANN PRUETTE; FLORIDA HOUSING FINANCE CORPORATION; et al. Defendant(s).
 NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to a Final Judgment of Foreclosure dated December 11, 2019, and entered in 2019-CA-000555 of the Circuit Court of the FOURTH Judicial Circuit in and for Clay County, Florida, wherein U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION is the Plaintiff and CHRISTOPHER WARREN PRUETTE; SABRINA ANN PRUETTE; FLORIDA HOUSING FINANCE CORPORATION; are the Defendant(s). Tara S. Green as the Clerk of the Circuit Court will sell to the highest and best bidder for cash at www.clay.realforeclose.com, at 10:00 AM, on February 11, 2020, the following described property as set forth in said Final Judgment, to wit:
LOT 26, RIDGECREST UNIT 1, ACCORDING TO THE MAP OR PLAT THEREOF, AS RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 14, PAGE(S) 45 AND 46, OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS OF CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA
Property Address: 752 ASHWOOD ST ORANGE PARK, FL 32065
 Any person claiming an interest in the surplus from the sale, if any, other than the property owner as of the date of the lis pendens must file a claim in accordance with Florida Statutes, Section 45.031.
 Dated this 11th day of December, 2019.
 (seal)
 Tara S. Green
 As Clerk of the Court
 by Kasey Valentin
 As Deputy Clerk
IMPORTANT
AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT. If you are a person with a disability who needs any accommodation in order to participate in this proceeding, you are entitled at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. Please contact the ADA Coordinator at ertintrp@coj.net or (904) 255-1695 at least 7 days before your scheduled court appearance, or immediately upon receiving this notification if the time before the scheduled appearance is less than 7 days; if you are hearing or voice impaired, call 711.
Legal 45473 published Jan 16 and Jan 23, 2020 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper 19-277497-AnF

RE-NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE
 IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FOURTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA
 CASE NO: 2015-CA-000416
DEUTSCHE BANK NATIONAL TRUST COMPANY, AS TRUSTEE FOR AMERIQUEST MORTGAGE SECURITIES INC., ASSET-BACKED PASS-THROUGH CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2004-R6, Plaintiff,
VS.
DONNA CLARK A/K/A DONNA C. CLARK; GEORGE CLARK A/K/A GEORGE S. CLARK, ET AL. Defendants
 NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to a Final Judgment of Foreclosure dated January 3, 2018 and entered in Case No. 2015-CA-000416, of the Circuit Court of the Fourth Judicial Circuit in and for CLAY County, Florida. DEUTSCHE BANK NATIONAL TRUST COMPANY, AS TRUSTEE FOR AMERIQUEST MORTGAGE SECURITIES INC., ASSET-BACKED PASS-THROUGH CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2004-R6 (hereafter "Plaintiff"), is Plaintiff and DONNA CLARK A/K/A DONNA C. CLARK; GEORGE CLARK A/K/A GEORGE S. CLARK; UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY - INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE, are defendants. Tara Green, Clerk of Court for CLAY, County Florida will sell to the highest and best bidder for cash via the internet at www.clay.re

Notice of Sale


alforeclose.com at 10:00 a.m., on the 28th day of January, 2020, the following described property as set forth in said Final Judgment, to wit:
LOT 70, WALNUT CREEK AT EAGLE HARBOR, ACCORDING TO PLAT THEREOF AS RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 28, PAGES 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22 AND 23 OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS OF CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA.
 If you are a person with a disability who needs any accommodation in order to participate in this proceeding, you are entitled at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. Please contact the ADA Coordinator at ertintrp@coj.net or (904) 630-2564 at least 7 days before your scheduled court appearance, or immediately upon receiving this notification if the time before the scheduled appearance is less than 7 days; if you are hearing or voice impaired, call 711.
 Dated this 6th day of January, 2020.
 (seal)
 TARA S. GREEN
 CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
 By Stacie Towns
 As Deputy Clerk

NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE
 IN THE CIRCUIT COURT IN THE FOURTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA
 GENERAL JURISDICTION DIVISION
 CASE NO: 2019-CA-000597
U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, Plaintiff,
vs
TROY E. LADUE; LAUREN LADUE; FLORIDA HOUSING FINANCE CORPORATION; NORTHGLEN HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC., et al. Defendant(s).
 NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to a Final Judgment of Foreclosure dated December 11, 2019, and entered in 2019-CA-000597 of the Circuit Court of the FOURTH Judicial Circuit in and for Clay County, Florida, wherein U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION is the Plaintiff and TROY E. LADUE; LAUREN LADUE; FLORIDA HOUSING FINANCE CORPORATION; NORTHGLEN HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC. are the Defendant(s). Tara S. Green as the Clerk of the Circuit Court will sell to the highest and best bidder for cash at www.clay.realforeclose.com, at 10:00 AM, on February 11, 2020, the following described property as set forth in said Final Judgment, to wit:
LOT 77, NORTHGLEN, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF, RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 35, PAGE(S) 50 THROUGH 55, INCLUSIVE, OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS OF CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA
Property Address: 1556 GLEN VIEW STREET MIDDLEBURG, FL 32068
 Any person claiming an interest in the surplus from the sale, if any, other than the property owner as of the date of the lis pendens must file a claim in accordance with Florida Statutes, Section 45.031.
 Dated this 12th day of December, 2019.
 (seal)
 Tara S. Green
 As Clerk of the Court
 by Stacie Towns
 As Deputy Clerk
IMPORTANT
AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT. If you are a person with a disability who needs any accommodation in order to participate in this proceeding, you are entitled at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. Please contact the ADA Coordinator at ertintrp@coj.net or (904) 255-1695 at least 7 days before your scheduled court appearance, or immediately upon receiving this notification if the time before the scheduled appearance is less than 7 days; if you are hearing or voice impaired, call 711.
Legal 45472 published Jan 16 and Jan 23, 2020 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper 19-282214-AnF

Notice of Sale

RE-NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE
 IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 4TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA
 CIVIL DIVISION
 CASE NO.: 2019-CA-000586
VYSTAR CREDIT UNION, Plaintiff,
vs.
ESTATE OF LEANNE R. PYRON; ET AL, Defendant(s).
 NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to a Final Judgment of Mortgage Foreclosure dated the 13th day of November, 2019 and the Order Granting Plaintiff's Motion to Reopen Case and Reschedule Foreclosure Sale dated the 9th day of January, 2020, both entered in Case No. 2019-CA-000586, of the Circuit Court of the 4th Judicial Circuit in and for Clay County, Florida, wherein VYSTAR CREDIT UNION is the Plaintiff, and ESTATE OF LEANNE R. PYRON; UNKNOWN HEIRS, DEVISEES, GRANTEEES, ASSIGNEES, LIENORS, CREDITORS, TRUSTEES AND ALL OTHER PARTIES CLAIMING AN INTEREST BY, THROUGH, UNDER, FOR LEANNE R. PYRON; CHRISTOPHER SCOTT PYRON; UNKNOWN TENANT #1 AS TENANT IN POSSESSION OF THE SUBJECT PROPERTY AND TENANT #2 AS TENANT IN POSSESSION OF THE SUBJECT PROPERTY, are Defendants. I will sell to the highest and best bidder for cash via electronic sale at www.Clay.RealForeclose.com at 10:00 a.m. in accordance with Section 45.031, Florida Statutes on the 4th day of February, 2020, the following described property as set forth in said Final Judgment, to wit:
LOT 24, BLOCK 197, BLACK CREEK PARK, UNIT TWO, ACCORDING TO PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 11, PAGES 34 THROUGH 49, INCLUSIVE OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS OF CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA.
Property Address: 4649 Tarragon Ave, Middleburg, FL 32068
ANY PERSON CLAIMING AN INTEREST IN THE SURPLUS FROM THE SALE, IF ANY, OTHER THAN THE PROPERTY OWNER AS OF THE DATE OF THE LIS PENDENS MUST FILE A CLAIM WITHIN SIXTY (60) DAYS AFTER THE SALE.
 If you are a person with a disability who needs an accommodation in order to access court facilities or participate in a court proceeding, you are entitled, at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. To request such an accommodation, please contact Court Administration at least three business days prior to the required service by using one of the following methods: Phone - (904) 630-2564; Fax - (904) 630-1146; TTD/TTY - (800) 955-8770 (Florida Relay Service). E-Mail - ertintrp@coj.net.
 Dated this 10th day of January, 2020
 (seal)
 TARA S. GREEN
 CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
 By: Rachel Petty
 Deputy Clerk
Legal 45513 published Jan 16 and Jan 23, 2020 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper.

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