

CLAY TODAY

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ARMED FORCES DAY MAY 20

THURSDAY, MAY 18, 2023

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STAFF PHOTO BY DON COBLE

Residents were asked to identify long-range projects they embraced the most as well as ideas they deemed unimportant during the first of six long-range strategic meetings last Monday. Below, Commissioner Mike Cella gave residents updates on projects scheduled for District 1.

Residents encouraged to guide county through the next 20 years

First of six Strategic Plan meetings gives officials plenty of ideas

By Don Coble
don@claytodayonline.com

FLEMING ISLAND – Residents had the opportunity Monday night to help county officials create a 20-year long-range strategic plan.

Although the Board of County Commissioners generally look 10 years into the future, they solicited help in developing a master plan that will serve as a roadmap

for the next generation.

“I’m definitely a proponent of habits for success,” said County Manager Howard Wanamaker. “So, these habits can lead to many things out into the future. So as a county and as we’re growing and expanding, we can now take the lead and ultimately have a litmus test on how we’re doing

SEE GUIDE, 14



If the refrigerated van isn't replaced soon, the nonprofit could lose contracts with stores that provide meat, eggs, milk and produce.

Van at Clothes Closet and Food Pantry running on a prayer

Nonprofit desperately needs funding to keep families fed

By Don Coble
don@claytodayonline.com

ORANGE PARK – Anita Aultman cringes every time the 12-year-old refrigerated van makes a run to pick up frozen food for the Clothes Closet and Food Pantry of Orange Park. It's in bad shape, held together by a

SEE VAN, 15

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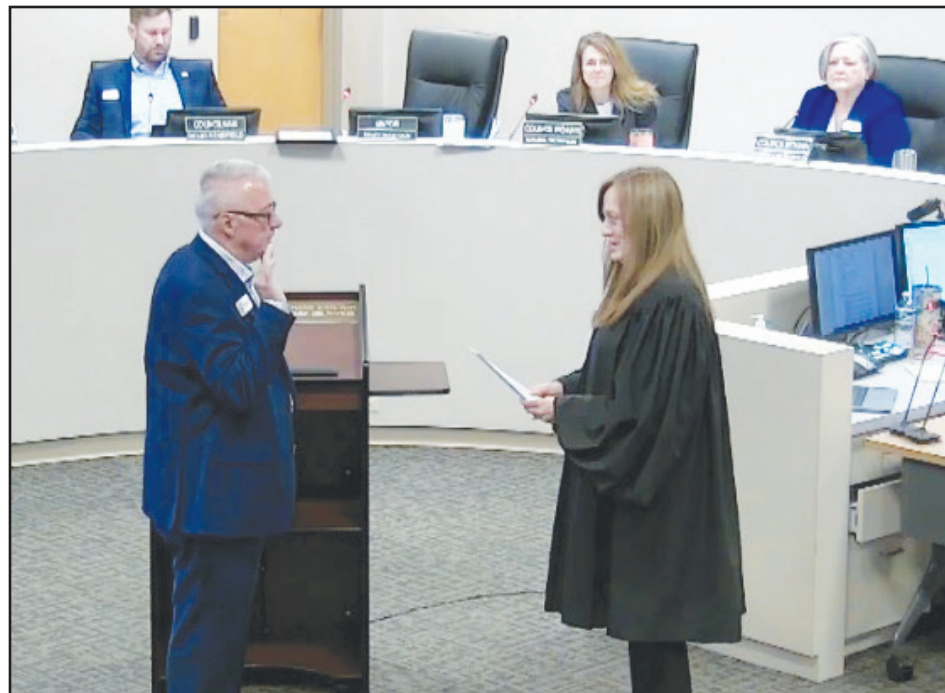
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Susana Thompson is sworn into office for the vice mayor position, where she will replace Alan Watt.



Mayor Randy Anderson takes his oath of office at Town Hall on Tuesday.

Randy Anderson re-elected to serve as Orange Park's mayor

By Lee Wardlaw
lee@claytodayonline.com

ORANGE PARK – The town council reorganized Tuesday night by swearing in Doug Benefield and Susan Winnette Sandlin for the next three years, while councilman Randy Anderson will continue as mayor and Susana Thompson will be the vice mayor.

But the results didn't come without some drama.

That's because after Anderson was nominated for mayor by Benefield, Susana Thompson appointed herself for nomination. Anderson won, 3-2, and will start his third year in the ceremonial position.

Councilmembers acted quickly to retain Thompson as vice mayor. She will fill in the vacancy left behind Alan Watt, who recently finished his term at the post.

Benefield was selected to complete the term after councilman and vice mayor Eddie Henley quit a year ago after he was bypassed to be the town's first Black mayor.

Sandlin and was unopposed for Seat 2 on the council.

The council also passed a proclamation honoring National Police Week, where the town's officers were called to the podium for recognition.



Officers were proudly called to the podium for recognition for National Police Week.

Green Cove Springs to start work on West Street Project

By Kyla Woodard
For Clay Today

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – Construction for the West Street Project is set to begin within the next 30 days following approval from the city council on Tuesday. A vital piece of a project that has been years in the making was finally approved, 5-0.

The project's construction contract was awarded following a bid of more than \$2 million. The project aims to replace half a mile of stormwater pipe through the en-

tirety of West Street, from Walnut Street to Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

Assistant City Manager and Public Works Director Mike Null said the project is something the city has been dwelling on for 10 to 15 years. The faulty pipe extends near Green Cove Junior High, raising many safety concerns.

"It is underneath the sidewalk. So, whenever that pipe collapses, the sidewalk fails. And, then we have concerns about school children," Null said.

According to the city, the cost to complete the project is \$1,133,000. However, \$330,000 was funded by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity Small Cities Development Block Grant Program, with the rest funded through the City Stormwater Utility User Fee.

Null said the city placed the contract out to bid about two to three months ago and two bids were made. One at approximately \$2.2 million and the other at approximately \$2.7 million. Null said the

city ultimately chose to award the lower bidder, EltonAlan, Inc. Following the approval, Null said the project is set to bring positive changes to the city.

"We've been constantly repairing and repairing. It's taken a long time to work up the funding to pay for the project. It's going to make the area a lot safer, especially for the kids that are walking to school everyday," Null said.

Construction for the project should take 10½ months.

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TobaccoFreeFlorida.com/get-involved.



Trump: Florida's new abortion laws are 'too harsh'

By A.G. Gancarski
For FloridaPolitics.com

Former President Donald Trump is deriding Florida's new abortion restrictions.

In an interview with The Messenger, Trump said that even "pro-lifers" think the new six-week abortion ban is "too harsh."

"Well, he has to do what he has to do. If you look at what DeSantis did, a lot of people don't even know if he knew what he was doing. But he signed six weeks, and many people within the pro-life movement feel that that was too harsh," Trump told reporter Marc Caputo.

"I'm looking at all alternatives. I'm looking at many alternatives. But I was able to get us to the table by terminating Roe v. Wade. That's the most important thing that's ever happened for the pro-life movement."

– Donald Trump

Trump was vague in saying his feelings about the law, meanwhile, focusing instead on the changes he brought to the Supreme Court.

"I'm looking at all alternatives. I'm looking at many alternatives. But I was able to get us to the table by terminating Roe v. Wade. That's the most important thing that's ever happened for the pro-life movement," Trump said.

"For 50 years, they've been trying to get rid of Roe v. Wade. I was able to do it. Nobody else could have done that but me. And I was able to do it (by nominating) three excellent judges on the Justices of the Supreme Court. And I was able to do that. What it did more than anything else is it gave us a tremendous power of negotiation, which we didn't have, the pro-life movement, a tremendous power of negotiation. ... Now the pro-life movement has the power to negotiate a deal that's acceptable for them."

DeSantis has messaged lightly around the new law, a change from the 15-week ban enacted the year before, one that is still being challenged in court.

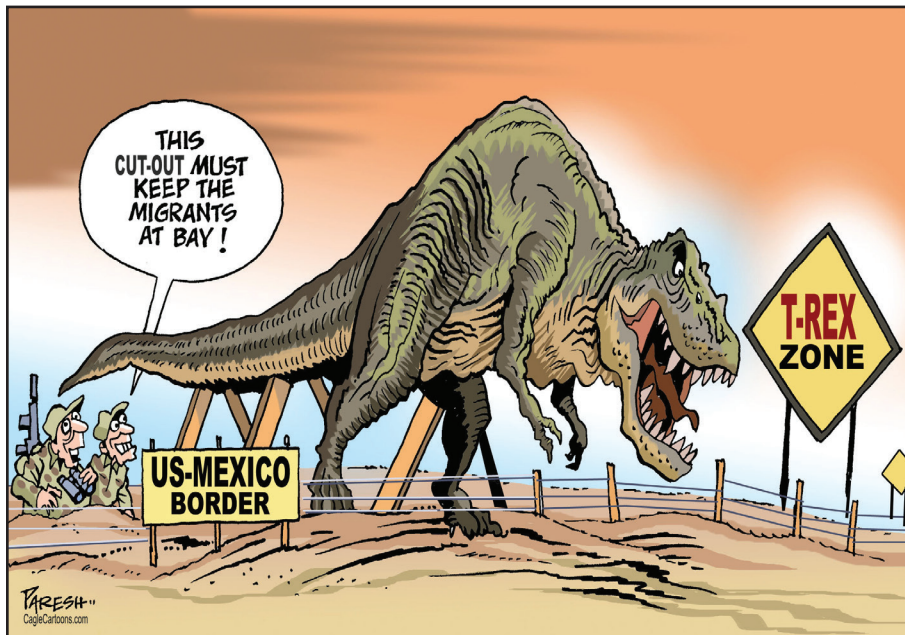
"We have stood for life by enacting the heartbeat bill in the state of Florida," he said in Utah in late April.

The Governor has addressed the law change with no more than one sentence in any speech given since he signed it last month.

Despite the six-week ban in most cases, the law allows for certain exceptions.

SEE LAWS, 5

OPINIONS & VIEWPOINTS



Civics 101: We need a refresher course on how government works

By Don Coble
Managing Editor

The television ads and personal attacks for the 2024 Presidential election have already started, and we're still 18 months away from the election. Sadly, it's only going to get worse.

Every day there is a new poll that reportedly shows the popularity of President Joe Biden and former President Donald Trump. Other polls pit Trump against Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, although DeSantis hasn't officially filed for candidacy.



Don Coble



Here's the fallacy of these national polls: we don't elect presidents nationally. The outcomes of 50 separate state and District Columbia elections determine who will live at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. People who were born in U.S. Territories like Puerto Rico, Guam, U.S. Virgin Islands, Northern Mariana Islands and American Samoa are considered U.S. Nationals and not citizens, so they can't vote in Presidential, Senate

or House of Representative elections. Whether that's right or wrong is a conversation for another day.

So when you hear about a national poll, turn the channel. That's not how we elect our Presidents. Knowing somebody has a five-point lead nationally doesn't mean anything, although knowing the current President's national approval rating is at or less than 42% is significant because it sets the tone.

But once the polls open, the only thing that matters is the checkmarks on the ballots.

The polls don't explain how it was conducted. The results also would be significantly skewed if you question 1,000 people, and 800 were from California. The same for the other side if most of the people surveyed were from South Carolina or Tennessee.

We've lost a grasp of how things work. DeSantis famously said half of U.S. adults couldn't name the three branches of government while he was at Ridgeview High recently. He also said 10% of college graduates believe Judge Judy is on the Supreme Court.

Our society has too many clueless dullards who believe everything they see on television or read in the newspaper. If what some media is peddling isn't factual, then your thought process is compromised.

DeSantis started the 50-hour Civics Seal of Excellence "boot camp" to provide educators with the tools that explain how our government works. Teachers who complete the course earn a \$3,000 bonus. More importantly, they can channel that knowledge to their

SEE CIVICS, 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.

Lapidary: (LAP-eh-der-ee) an adjective that means cutting or engraving stone and gems.

"The jeweler learned the lapidary arts from his grandfather and father."

This Week in History

Five years ago, 2018

- Connie Butler is selected by fellow Green Cove Springs City Council as its next mayor.

- Clay Humane donate pet masks to fire department to help animals recover from smoke and carbon monoxide.

- Tomy Byrd is found guilty of two counts of attempted murder for trying to run over two Clay County Sheriff's Office deputies with his car.

10 years ago, 2013

- Superintendent Charlie Van Zant and the school district agree to drop a lawsuit filed by Van Zant after he claimed the board overstepped their authority by rewriting the job description for the director of career and technical education.

- After getting blowback from residents, Gustafson's Cattle Inc. decide to build an asphalt plant in a more remote area of Green Cove Springs.

- More than 29,000 residents visit the Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall when it made a stop at Green Cove Springs Junior High.

20 years ago, 2002

- The Clay County Sheriff's Office issues a be on the lookout for a man who is suspected of flashing three women in Orange Park.

- BCC Chairman Larry Lancaster apologizes for a staff error concerning re-zoning areas of Forman Circle.

- Modern Mustangs organize a car show at Blanding Boulevard and Kingsley Avenue to benefit Orange Park resident Shan Spears, who was on life support after being struck by a tractor-trailer as he tried to cross Blanding.

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 Stylebook 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@claytodayonline.com

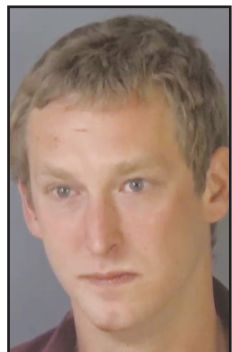
Opinions ...

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

Runaway car turns True Life Church into drive-thru

FLEMING ISLAND – The last thing Pastor Billy Register expected to find in a classroom at True Life Church was a minivan.

According to two arrest reports, the Clay County Sheriff's Office said William Charles Davis, 32, of Jacksonville, first threatened a clerk with a knife at the Fresh Spot in the Silos Shopping Center on County Road 200 before crashing his minivan through the church's back wall.



William Charles Davis

After the clerk said Davis threatened him, he said Davis left at "a high rate of speed. When the defendant turned west onto County Road 220, he lost control of the van and crashed into the building.

"How he got on that trajectory to hit the building, I just don't know," Register said. 'We call that room the Praise and Worship room.' We also use it as a classroom.

"There are a lot of places he could have hit the building that would have been more inconvenient, so it could have been worse."



PHOTOS BY TRUE LIFE CHURCH

Deputies caught Davis and found a knife on the northeast side of the building.

Davis was charged with driving under the influence, leaving the scene of an accident with property damage and aggravated assault with a deadly weapon.

His bond was set at \$22,507.

and irreversible physical impairment of a major bodily function of the pregnant woman other than a psychological condition," she could have an abortion. If only one doctor were available, that sole physician's recommendation would suffice.

Likewise, if the fetus had a "fatal abnormality," abortion would be permitted during the first two trimesters.

A.G. Gancarski has written for FloridaPolitics.com since 2014. He is based in Northeast Florida. He can be reached at AG@FloridaPolitics.com or on Twitter: @AGGancarski.

40 years ago, 1983

- Former Supervisor of Elections worker Martha Kelley files a civil suit after she claims she was sexually harassed by Supervisor Lanny Lancaster.

- Despite some pushback by the Fleming Island Advisory Committee, which was created to protest the marshes and wetlands, DuPont Corporation announces its plan to develop portions of the island.

- Crustless quiche, lime almond cheesecake and broccoli supreme all were declared winners of the 4-H Dairy Food Contest at the Clay County Agriculture Center.

Civics

from page 4

students.

Maybe we all need a refresher course, especially before the next election cycle.

Trump and Biden have both entered the race. If they become the nominees, the finger-pointing and name-calling will be brutally hateful. And our country will be even more divided. One will continue his claim the last election was rigged; the other will continue to tell the country the economy is good and our borders are "closed" and "secure."

We deserve better than that.

In a series of elections last Tuesday, some publications suggested it was an early showdown between Trump and DeSantis for the Republican nomination. They said more Trump-backed candidates beat DeSantis-backed candidates. One thing not mentioned was what if the winning candidates were better.

I believe DeSantis would be a better option as President – if and when he

decides to run. But in reality, I don't want him to run. He's more important to me as my governor. I know it pains some of you to read this, but there's a reason why people are leaving California, New York and Illinois for the Sunshine State.

Our population has grown here in Clay County in 10 of the past 11 years. Just five years ago, our population was 212,800. Now it's 226,500. With nearly 10,000 building permits already approved – mainly in the southern end of the county – Clay continues to be a popular spot for families to set their roots.

Just two years ago, more than 101,000 people moved away from California, while 75,000 bailed from New York and 29,000 escaped Chicago. And according to the U.S. Census, Florida has become the fastest-growing state. There are important reasons for that, and it starts in Tallahassee.

Because of the state's growth, Florida gained an additional electoral college vote for the Presidential election. Basic civics reminds us that's how we really elect our President, not by a national poll.

Law

from page 4

2022's HB 5 made no exception for cases of rape and incest, a controversy at the time. However, the new bill would allow abortion up to the 15th week of pregnancy if the woman was impregnated by human trafficking, rape or incest or a combination thereof. That exception would include statutory rapes.

Other exceptions would apply. If two doctors judge the pregnant woman as in danger of dying or suffering "substantial

History

from page 4

30 years ago, 1993

- The Orange Park Town Council amends its agreement with Camp Dresser and McKee to complete the Reed Street pump station for \$7,800.

- An 18-year-old man, Donald George, is convicted of attempted murder after he shot the clerk at Sina Mart on Orange Street.

- Clay High wrestling coach Pete McCabe is selected as the Class 1A/2A coach of the year after announcing he was retiring after 16 years.

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CLUES ACROSS

- American composer
- Very fast aircraft
- Workplaces
- A mount on a surface
- Small freshwater fish
- Double-reed instrument
- Canadian flyers
- Famed astronomer
- Smooth, shiny fabric
- Profited
- Conspiracy
- Infections
- Chum
- Secondary school (abbr.)
- Resistance unit
- Sound unit
- Ancient city of Egypt
- Crease
- Polished
- For goodness' sake!
- College basketball tournament
- Scorches
- Describe precisely
- Thick piece of something
- Frocks
- Indicates near
- Senior enlisted US Army member
- A note added to a letter
- A nose or snout
- Clumsy

CLUES DOWN

- Fruit of the service tree
- At some prior time
- Mongolian city __ Bator
- Strongboxes
- Russian river
- Gurus
- Horse mackerel
- Pearl Jam's debut album
- Confines
- First month of Jewish ecclesiastical year
- Famed Idaho politician
- Prevents from seeing
- Indicate time
- Male parents
- Tab on a key ring
- The Great Dog constellation: __ Major
- Frying necessity
- Former CIA
- The leader
- Produces
- London soccer club
- Closes
- Region in the western Pacific Ocean
- Not present
- Small drink of whiskey
- Begat
- Helps little firms
- Pointed end of a pen
- Fencing swords
- Inches per minute (abbr.)
- Hymn
- Philippine island
- Flemish names of Ypres
- A way to inform
- Small lake
- Linear unit
- Central Japanese city
- Partially burn
- Sports award
- Part of your foot
- Atomic #21

Common sense, safe trade zones make online purchases more secure

Sheriff's Office suggests making transactions at their parking lots

By Lee Wardlaw
lee@claytodayonline.com

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – The Clay County Sheriff's Office now offers three "safe trade zones" for anyone planning to meet a stranger to conduct an online transaction.

Buyers and sellers should be more wary of meeting a stranger online at an indiscriminate location, said Michael Layne, Community Affairs Lieutenant.

"I can tell you that people who choose to conduct e-commerce will meet at the Wal-Mart parking lot or somewhere at the mall to make a trade. You don't know who you're meeting when doing online business, and folks have a greater chance of being victimized. You don't know who these people are or where they come from," he said.

Safe trade zones provide a safe, well-lit area to conduct business where officers and county employees are likely to be close by.

"Most of these (locations) are well-lit areas that typically have law enforcement or county employees roaming around. This offers a place to meet where you can feel a little bit safer in a well-lit area outside the main sheriff's office and substations," Layne said.



Layne reiterated people need to be as safe as possible when conducting in-person transactions with someone they met online.

"I just like people to be mindful of their business online and not know who you're dealing with. Take someone with you or go somewhere with cameras in an area that's well-populated if you don't go to the police station," he said.

Layne said one reason not as many residents may not be meeting at the safe trade locations in the county is because they don't know they exist.

"Most don't know it, but we have three locations here in our county," Layne said.

The three locations are at the sheriff's office at 901 North Orange Ave. in Green Cove Springs, the agency's substations at 3799 Irvin Court in Middleburg, and 212

Blanding Blvd. in Orange Park.

The Green Cove Springs and Orange Park police departments also have safe zones at their offices.

The program launched nationally 2015 in response to thousands of transactions that went awry initiated via Craigslist and other third-party sites, according to the SafeTrade website.

CraigslistKillings.Blogspot.com, which has a landing page on SafeTrade's website, details 132 murders connected to third-party online transactions from 2007-2021.

Here are some additional tips provided from the sheriff's office on how to protect yourself when meeting someone for an online transaction:

- Bring a friend or family member: Having someone with you can provide an extra layer of security and make you feel more comfortable during the transaction.
- Avoid meeting at your home or at the other person's home: It's always best to meet in a public place rather than at someone's residence.
- Consider using a third-party platform: Online marketplaces like eBay, Craigslist or Facebook Marketplace offer transaction protection services and can help ensure a safer exchange.
- Remember always to trust your instincts and be cautious when conducting in-person transactions.



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Green Cove Springs Dollar General pivots to offering fresh fruits, vegetables

By Lee Wardlaw
lee@claytodayonline.com

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – News flash: a healthy, sustainable, delicious food source option is now available at the Dollar General store.

But get there quickly, because they are bought as soon as they are stocked.

“Produce? Yeah, I like that,” a customer said as he hurriedly paced towards the section.

The items have been so popular during their first week that assistant store manager and acting general manager Veronica Johnson could barely keep up with stocking and tagging items during the first-week rollout of the produce.

“These tomatoes were loaded up, and the bananas were, too,” she said.

But plenty of sections were empty and several items were sold out in less than six days after the section was opened on May 6.

“This was the first order, which is usually giant. So, for them to have a giant order and for it to be this low, it is doing



STAFF PHOTOS BY LEE WARDLAW

Assistant Store Manager and Acting General Manager Veronica Johnson said the produce business is booming at the Dollar General in Green Cove Springs.

amazingly well,” Johnson said.

The multitasking manager believes the store’s rural, remote location and far distance from customers living in the area

SEE PRODUCE, 15

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Obituaries

Bruner "Gerald" Barksdale

Mr. Bruner "Gerald" Barksdale age 87 a longtime resident of Green Cove Springs, passed away at his home Thursday, May 11, 2023, with his family by his side. He was born September 20, 1935, in Ocala to the late Bruner T. and Vasta (Jackson)



Barksdale. Mr. Barksdale proudly served in the United States Army as a Paratrooper and retired as a building contractor. He was an ordained Deacon and faithfully served in churches for over 60 years and loved teaching Sunday School classes. He enjoyed traveling to the mountains, camping, feeding animals at Spring Park, woodworking, and just staying busy.

Mr. Barksdale also had a big heart for all animals. He was best known for not complaining or worrying and ALWAYS staying positive, but most of all he loved his family and spending every minute he could with them.

Mr. Barksdale leaves behind his loving and devoted wife of 62 wonderful years Rebecca (Green) Barksdale of Green Cove Springs and their three children Blaine Barksdale (Tina) and Ken Barksdale (Alicia) all of Green Cove Springs, and Lisa Hopkins (Eddie) of Middleburg; a sister Patricia Ann Turner of Pensacola and a sister-in-law Patricia Ann Saunders of Middleburg. Mr. Barksdale was lovingly called "Papa" by grandchildren Lacey (Corey), Savanna, Shara (Preston), Jared (Hannah), Shelby (Bryan), Mandy (Daniel), Meagan (Chris), Austin, Chelsey (Cameron), Trenton (Caitlin), and Halea (Austin) along with great grandchildren McKaelyn, Maddox, Reid, Heidi, Roman, Caden, Gavin, Mason,

Landon, Kayson, Kaydin, Kelvin, Elina, Wyatt, Harper, Dawson, and Alaia Rynn.

The family received friends at 11:00 a.m., Tuesday, May 16, 2023, in the Living Waters Worship Center and funeral services followed at 11:30 a.m., with Rev. Joe Barry officiating.

Burial will follow at Hickory Grove Cemetery. In lieu of flowers memorial donations can be made to Living Waters Worship Center Israel fund.

Arrangements are by HELM-GALLAGHER FUNERAL HOME & CREMATION SERVICES, 1811 Idlewild Ave. Green Cove Springs, FL 32043. 904-284-9696. www.helm-gallagherfh.com



In Memoriam

*Memorial for David George Busse
May 19, 1936-July 3, 2018*

David George Busse

David George Busse, 82, passed away on July 3, 2018, in Orange Park, Florida.



He is interred with his wife, Roswitha Susanna Busse (Rosi) who passed away in Tallahassee, Florida on November 17, 2020. They were married for 60 years and will now be able to spend the rest of time together in the Jacksonville National Cemetery in Jacksonville, Florida.

David was born May 19, 1936, in Waynesburg, Kentucky. He was a retired US Air Force Captain. He attended the University of Colorado, graduating in

1965. Rosi always said she worked to put 4 persons through college-her three children and David! David, fluent in German, met Rosi in Trier, Germany, where they were married in 1958. They had three children-Yvonne (Max), Kenneth (Lynn), and Michelle (Mike).

David is survived by his brother Roger Busse and sister Teresa Bellville, five grandchildren (Christina, Eric, Sarah, Stephanie, and Emily), and born since his death, 2 great-grandchildren Cecil and Westley, all of whom miss him.



David George Busse

David enjoyed working on genealogy before there were on-line resources, contacting relatives in Switzerland and throughout the US by phone or letter for information on the various family trees. David and Rosi enjoyed visiting with their grandchildren, and even had the pleasure of babysitting Michelle's children often when they lived nearby.

There were times David had a large garden, paying tribute to his farming background. He brought his children to the family farm in Kentucky for weeks at a time during moves for the Air Force; the kids were able to experience the farm life with the grandparents and eat a lot of blackberries.

David and Rosi are missed greatly by their family, and will always be remembered.

Former Orange Park Public Works Director Chuck Pavlos dies

By Lee Wardlaw
lee@claytodayonline.com

ORANGE PARK – A former legend of the Town of Orange Park has died. It is with sadness Clay Today learned of Chuck Pavlos' death on Thursday, April 27, after a hard-fought battle with cancer.

After serving the position for nine years, Pavlos, who retired as the town public works director on April 22, 2020, led the charge during an era in which Orange Park completed some of its biggest infrastructure projects.

One of Chuck's biggest accomplishments was spearheading the Wells Road from the U.S. Highway 17 to Plainfield Avenue project, which included implementing a new water sewer and roadway.

Pavlos also guided the town through extensive stormwater maintenance work, which was completed after Hurricane Irma in 2017. The storm may have hit the town with force, but the repairs have helped the

town cope with Florida's hurricanes.

These were just two projects Pavlos completed after arriving in Clay County from Southwest Florida in 2011. He came out of retirement as public works director of Cape Coral to serve the same role in Orange Park.

"His Naval engineering background and rapport with employees led to his great leadership skills. He oversaw many important projects during his time here-including the reconstruction of Plainfield Avenue, Kingsley Ave East, and River Rd. The town was able to acquire numerous pieces of equipment under his direction-utility trucks, trash trucks, Genie lifts, water trailer, water line jetting, Menzi Muck, street sweeper and first-ever Vac-Con truck," said town manager Sarah Campbell.

Pavlos then left Orange Park to return to his home in Southwest Florida in Spring 2020, retiring again to North Fort Myers.

While the former public works director made a tremendous impact through his engineering escapades, Pavlos will be remembered for much more in Orange Park, said longtime town resident and U.S. Air

SEE PAVLOS, 10



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Pavlos

from page 8

Force veteran Kenny Radwanski.

Radwanski was a close friend who kept in touch with Pavlos after he retired more than three years ago.

“He was well-liked by everybody. Very smooth. He didn’t talk much, but when he did, everybody listened. He was not only a thinker, planner, good friend and confidant, but he was able to get things done the right way,” Radwanski said.

Pavlos was a resilient fighter, surviving three bouts with cancer and six rounds of chemotherapy. Radwanski kept in contact every two to three days via phone call or text. He had a gut feeling something was wrong when he couldn’t get in touch with his friend two and a half weeks ago.

“Finally, I realized that his heart stopped, and he died. He went right to heaven. (Chuck) was a great friend and a great person. His legend will live on in the town forever,” Radwanski said.

The public works director was well-versed in civil engineering and a 20-year veteran of the Naval Civil Engineer Corps, where he retired as a commander.

Chuck especially enjoyed Orange Park’s small-town, laid-back lifestyle, Radwanski said.

“I asked him, ‘I hear you came from a bigger town, a lot bigger than this one.’ I said, ‘Chuck, why did you downsize?’ He said ‘I worked in bigger cities and big ar-

“He was well-liked by everybody. Very smooth. He didn’t talk much, but when he did, everybody listened. He was not only a thinker, planner, good friend and confidant, but he was able to get things done the right way.”

– Kenny Radwanski

“He was actually a computer genius on the sly, which nobody knew until he wrote some programs and assisted with our finance department and town manager Sarah Campbell,” Radwanski said.

Another little-known fact about the former town official is that he was a computer genius.

“He was actually a computer genius on the sly, which nobody knew until he wrote some programs and assisted with our finance department and town manager Sarah Campbell,” Radwanski said.

Pavlos’ impact was immense, Radwanski said.

“He was a very good, religious and family man. I’m sure he’s up in heaven with the other engineers in the afterlife. And as the tears are rolling down my face, they’re of sadness, but also joy, because his cancer was very hard, and he’s not suffering anymore,” he said.

John Bowles served as town manager from 1989-2010, returning on an interim basis in October 2013.

During Bowles’ time back at the post, he spent one year working alongside Chuck, which was great.

Here were the former town manager’s

thoughts about his co-worker, confidant and close friend:

“Chuck was just excellent to work with. He was not only technologically proficient but also did a really fine job (as public works director). I’m just sorry to hear that Chuck passed away. They say, ‘The good die young.’ I really did appreciate him, and he really was a good fit for the town while he was here. I hated to see him leave for (North Fort Myers). I thought an awful lot of Chuck, and I’m sure going to miss him. I send the very best condolences to his family,” Bowles said.

Pavlos was a close confidant of Campbell’s outside of the workplace.

“Chuck was a great husband, father, grandfather, and friend. He is deeply missed. I traveled to meet him at his home in Fort Myers in February,” Campbell said.

By then, she said his health was taking a turn for the worst.

“The bone cancer was Stage 5, and his health was rapidly declining. It was good to reminisce and share one last visit together. I traveled to his funeral in Sarasota (a few weeks ago) to pay respects and spend time with his family, friends, and colleagues from the cities of Cape Coral and Punta Gorda.

At his funeral, the town presented a warm tribute saluting his friendship and service to Orange Park.

“The town presented a large spray of white roses and a photo book of memories from his time in the Town of Orange Park to his family,” she said.

Community News



Future MLB stars to compete in Pitch, Hit & Run Saturday

Middleburg – Aspiring Major League Baseball stars will be at Paul Armstrong Park on County Road 220 Saturday for Pitch, Hit and Run.

Clay County Parks and Recreation is partnering with MLB to host the one-day skills challenge for boys and girls ages 7-14.

The contest runs between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. and it will be based on three skills – speed, throwing accuracy and hitting.

Children can register in advance at rb.gy/ayppja or at the park. Participants can compete at any time during the four-hour event and aren’t re-

SEE COMMUNITY, 15



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12 Point Dinner shines spotlight on Scout fundraising

By Lee Wardlaw
lee@claytodayonline.com

ORANGE PARK – The North Florida Council of the Boy Scouts of America hosted sponsors and the community at the 12-Point Scout Dinner on Thursday, where the Scouts honored Travis Cummings and raised funds for children in the greater North Florida area.

All of this led up to the big moment after the event, where guests pulled out their checkbooks in pride, collectively donating \$44,350 to serve scouting in the 17-county area the district serves. The name for the event came from the 12 principles of scouting – trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean and reverent.

The event was hosted at St. Catherine's Catholic Church and included a reception, dinner and speakers led by Cummings' close friend, former state senator Rob Bradley.

"Your support is a critical part of our council's budget. Your help will provide safe and quality programming to nearly 10,000 youth and adults. Included in this are more than 400 underprivileged children who need assistance to join quality scouting programs. Your gifts will help provide books and uniforms and help send them to camp," Bradley said.

Bradley mentioned the virtues of scout-



Kelvin Williams, Chief Executive Officer of the North Florida Council, Boy Scouts of America, welcomed guests at the 12-Point Scout Dinner.

ing and commemorated the accomplishments and contributions to the Clay County community provided by Cummings, a close friend of the former state representative.

"Travis is my best friend, and I will tell you that I can't think of anybody that has

given more back to the community. He's done things that you don't even know to improve the lives of all of our neighbors that make Clay County something we all enjoy to live in, run a business in and call home," he said.

Other speakers included Superintendent David Broskie and Scout Executive and CEO Kelvin Williams.

"It's always a pleasure to see how our community really stands up for this great organization. I just moved to Clay County, and I'm just glad to be here and see so many friendly faces. You guys just don't know how much we appreciate it," Williams said.

Bradley said he was pleased with the results of the dinner.

"Well, it was a huge success. The community came out in record numbers, and we raised almost \$50,000. That's going to go on to support scouting in our community. It's a worthwhile endeavor, and we're just proud to be a part of it. It was bigger and better (than last year's event), and that's appropriate because scouting just keeps getting bigger and better," he said.

Williams agreed. "Once again, the community stood up for scouting, and we just appreciate everybody and all the leadership. I tell you, man, it's special because I live here, and for everybody just to come out was awesome. We surpassed our (fundraising) goal, and that's always great. It's good programming for scouting and the community, so I'm just very glad and thankful for the guys and girls and everybody coming out to sponsor," Williams said.

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Post office helps Clothes Closet and Food Pantry stamp out hunger

By Don Coble
don@claytodayonline.com

Orange Park's Clothes Closet and Food Pantry was closed last Monday. And that was a good thing.

The nonprofit that's committed to feeding needy families was busy sorting through nearly 9,500 pounds of non-perishable food collected by carriers from the U.S. Postal Service's Stamp Out Hunger National Food Drive.

Post office workers set aside one day a year to collect and deliver food in more than 10,000 cities in the nation's largest one-day food drive.

Local carriers delivered truckloads of food to the pantry's office on Fromhart Street on Saturday, May 13.

"We had 114 volunteers with us on Saturday, and about 30 were clothes closet volunteers," said pantry secretary Kathy Wray. "The rest were from the community. We had a nice turnout. As usual, we stayed busy."

The pantry used its distribution office for the drop-off. That allowed them to set up tables inside, stack the bins filled with food and leave before nightfall. The group returned on Monday to sort and stack food – the reason the office was closed.

Nearly five tons of donated food cer-

tainly will help, Wray said, but it paled in comparison to previous years.

"We collected about 11,000 pounds last year," she said. "In past years, pre-pandemic, we typically got 20,000 pounds-plus. A while back, I remember we got 43,000 pounds."

"I think it's indicative of the economy. People are having as much trouble filling their pantry as we are."

Carriers will make a second sweep on Friday for food that wasn't collected last week.

According to the post office, led by letter carriers represented by the National Association of Letter Carriers, with help from rural letter carriers, other postal employees and other volunteers, the drive has delivered more than 1.82 billion pounds of food in the past 30 years.

Carriers collect non-perishable food donations left by mailboxes and in post offices and deliver them to local community food banks, pantries and shelters. Nearly 1,500 NALC branches in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Virgin Islands are involved.

The United States Postal Service, National Association of Letter Carriers, National Rural Letter Carriers' Association, AFL-CIO, United Way, Vericast, Valpak Direct Marketing Systems, CVS Health, Kel-



Volunteers helped unload nearly 9,500 pounds of food donated by residents and collected by the U.S. Postal Service last Saturday during the Stamp Out Hunger National Food Drive. Residents were asked to leave non-perishable food in their mailboxes.

logg's, and United Food and Commercial Workers International Union are all supporting this year's Stamp Out Hunger food drive.

Residents were asked to leave cans or boxes of non-perishable food in their mailboxes on the second Saturday in May. The post office then delivered it to food banks.



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Thrasher Horne Happenings



Disney Junior's Costume Palooza! to appear on Oct. 1

The three-time Pollstar-nominated Disney Junior tour is back with Disney Junior Live On Tour: Costume Palooza!

The show brings beloved Disney Junior characters and favorite Marvel Super Heroes live on stage for a jam-packed, concert-style show with singing, dancing, acrobatics and more.

The tour will make a stop at the Thrasher-Horne Center on Oct. 1 at 4 p.m. Tickets, which start at \$29, are available at thcenter.org.

It will feature favorite songs from hit Disney Junior series and new original music. Mickey, Minnie and their pals are getting ready to throw a huge costume party, but mysterious green rain, wind, and smoke keeps interrupting the fun. Can Spidey and his Amazing Friends help save the Costume Palooza?

Come join the party and see Mickey, Minnie, Goofy, Doc McStuffins, the Puppy Dog Pals, Bo from Firebuds, Ginny from SuperKitties, and Marvel's Spidey and his Amazing Friends LIVE on stage.

Rick Springfield to hit Thrasher-Horne stage on May 26

ORANGE PARK – During the past four decades, Rick Springfield has worn many hats as an entertainer and performer. The creator of some of the finest power-pop of the 1980s, a Grammy Award-winning singer, songwriter and musician who has sold 25 million albums and scored 17 U.S. Top 40 hits, including "Jessie's Girl," "Don't Talk to Strangers," "An Affair of the Heart," "I've Done Everything for You," "Love Somebody" and "Human Touch."

He's an accomplished actor who starred opposite Meryl Streep in the feature film "Ricki and the Flash; and gave a chameleonic performance as the creepy Dr. Irving Pittlor in HBO's prestige drama "True Detective," earned great reviews for his portrayal of Lu-

cifer on the CW hit "Supernatural" and most recently played the insane Pastor Charles on FX's worldwide hit series "American Horror Story."

It has been a long and fruitful affair, and one that has gifted him with a powerful connection to his legions of devoted fans, who pack his annual fan getaway events, as well as the nearly 100 shows a year he performs both with his band and solo in an intimate "storyteller" setting that he captured on the 2015 CD/DVD and concert film, "Stripped Down." Though too self-deprecating to discuss his immense appeal, he will acknowledge that the fans connect with him through the music. "I guess they think I'm honest," Springfield said. "They must like my approach, what I write about. I think they like that I have a sense of humor in it at times. Because the 'cute' thing isn't going to last forever."

Warrant to rock Thrasher-Horne on Nov. 3

ORANGE PARK – At its core, WARRANT is an American rock band through and through. Hitting it big in 1989, the Hollywood, California-based band rose through the ranks of the local Sunset Strip scene to the level of multiplatinum-selling, chart-topping success.

The band first came into the national spotlight with their debut album "Dirty Rotten Filthy Stinking Rich." The album produced radio and MTV chart-toppers "Down Boys," "Sometimes She Cries," and the massive hit "Heaven," which reached #1 in Rolling Stone and #2 on the Billboard Hot 100 for two weeks in a row.

The band will bring its hard-rocking act to the Thrasher-Horne Center on Nov. 3 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are available at thcenter.org.

Warrant's sophomore album Cherry Pie debuted in September 1990. This album, which spawned the MTV and radio hits "Cherry Pie," "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and "I Saw Red," all reached the Top 10 in the United States and went on to sell 3 million copies, getting Platinum sales in Canada and Australia. The band has played 200 shows in support of Cherry Pie it wound up being one of the top-grossing tours of 1991.

Warrant's signature style of rock music is very catchy and yet very melodic and remains the band's signature sound today. In September 2008, Robert Mason replaced Jani Lane as lead vocalist joining the other four original members, Jerry Dixon, Steven Sweet, Joey Allen and Erik Turner. Their current album Louder Harder Faster, released on Frontiers Records, has been highly regarded in reviews and embraced by fans.

Baptist Health appoints Goodman to vice president, system quality officer

For Clay Today

FLEMING ISLAND – Dr. Jeremy Goodman, MD, MBA, FACHE, CPE, FACS, is joined Baptist Health in the newly created role of vice president and system quality officer.

In his new role, Dr. Goodman will support and implement Baptist Health's plans for continued quality and clinical excellence at all Baptist facilities, including Baptist Medical Center Clay.



Jeremy Goodman

He will oversee the effectiveness of clinical management, patient safety and performance improvement, and help develop and strengthen clinical and physician collaboration across the health system to ensure effective clinical integration. He will report to Dr. Timothy Groover, senior vice president and system chief medical officer of Baptist Health.

"Dr. Goodman brings a wealth of experience to Baptist Health, and we are excited to have him join our team," said Dr. Groover. "He is a highly accomplished physician executive with a significant background in process improvement and clinical care design. He has worked with physicians, nurses and administration across disciplines to drive clinical excellence and improve outcomes. He will play a vital role in ensuring continued clinical excellence across the system and will build upon our culture of promoting healthcare equity through quality and safety standards.

"I could not be more excited to join Baptist Health and help advance clinical quality and patient safety efforts across the system. Baptist has an outstanding record of providing the highest quality care, and

"I could not be more excited to join Baptist Health and help advance clinical quality and patient safety efforts across the system. Baptist has an outstanding record of providing the highest quality care, and its commitment to excellence in clinical delivery is evident throughout the organization."

– Jeremy Goodman

its commitment to excellence in clinical delivery is evident throughout the organization."

Dr. Goodman comes to Baptist Health after six years at Banner-University Medical Center Phoenix, Arizona's largest hospital. He served as chief medical officer for the flagship medical center of an integrated health system that includes 28 hospitals, urgent care, health plans, post-acute services and multiple medical groups.

Before this, he was chief medical officer for Banner Estrella Medical Center, a 317-bed community hospital in Phoenix. Dr. Goodman also held critical roles in transplant surgery, including serving as associate professor, attending surgeon and fellowship director of Abdominal Transplant Surgery at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and transplant surgeon and surgical director of the Living Kidney Donor Program at Birmingham VA Medical Center.

He earned his Bachelor of Science in Biology from Yale University and his Doctor of Medicine from the University of Southern California. He also has a Master of Business Administration from Auburn University.

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Guide

from page 1

and achieving these goals.”

Some residents were surprised to know many future projects were already approved. Assistant County Manager Troy Nagle said, “We’re doing seven bonded road projects. We have implemented impact fees recently, which is a fee charged on new developments to help them pay for the needs like fire stations and police stations. We are currently working on a regional park and a gun range; we’ve got designs in the works for two fire stations and others to build four fire stations in the next five years.”

Residents were encouraged to list what they liked and disliked about the county. Then they were asked to suggest what they’d like to see in the future. Two primary concerns were roads and growth.

Some said the best part of living around Clay County is the small-town feel. Others said their biggest concern is how growth is erasing that coziness.

Other popular features of the county were the quality of schools, availability for recreation, overall quality of life, safety, low taxes and affordability for retirees.

Dislikes mentioned were traffic, over-development, a lack of access to public transportation, food deserts, a lack of alternative modes of transportation and putting development ahead of addressing infrastructure.

Monday’s meeting focused on Dis-

trict 1, and it was the first of six that are scheduled around the county. Others will be at the County Administration Building in Green Cove Springs on May 11, Middleburg/Clay Library on May 24, Orange Park Library on June 1, Plantation Oaks Athletic Center on June 5 and the Keystone Heights Pavilion on June 14. All town halls will be from 6-7:30 p.m.

Residents were asked to identify which projects they wanted the most and which ones weren’t as important. Congestion – particularly the two-lane section of County Road 220 in Middleburg – dominated the conversation.

The busy artery has four lanes from U.S. Highway 17 on Fleming Island to Knight Boxx Road. The final portion of the road narrows down to two lanes westbound to State Road 21 (Blanding Boulevard).

District 1 Commissioner Mike Cella said there are plans to widen the road.

The first phase will include expanding the intersection at Henley Road. The second will involve widening the road to four lanes from Henley Road to Baxley Road. The final phase will be to go to four lanes from Knight Boxx to Henley. The entire project is expected to take about two years, but the first two phases are scheduled to start later this summer.

Wanamaker said it was important to think 20 years into the future so the county would be in a better position to plan.

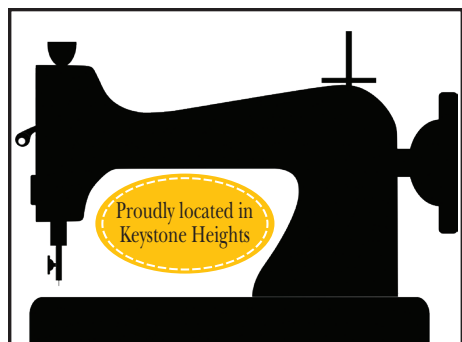
“We’ll bring back the data to the Board of County Commissioners in a plan and then ultimately see if it kind of fits nicely into our budget,” he said. “We always have done a five-year plan for capital improvement projects. We’ve managed to get it out now to 10 years, budgeted, right? You’re going to say, ‘Where are we going to be 10 years from now, revenue-wise?’ Well, we’ve got to make a few assumptions.”

By then, residents said they’d also like to see higher-paying jobs, alternative recreation parks, more manufacturing jobs, conservation of green spaces, more parking at boat ramps, affordable housing and a ferry service along the St. Johns River to Jacksonville.

The county has a survey posted on its website, claycounty.gov, where residents can make additional suggestions.



Residents from District 1 were able to tell county officials what they liked and disliked about the county during a strategic planning town hall. The purpose of the meeting was to get information so the county can plan 20 years into the future.



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Community

from page 10

to be at the park for the entire competition.

Friends of GCS Library to meet on May 30 at Magnolia Point

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – The Friends of the Green Cove Springs Library will have their general meeting at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, May 30, at the Magnolia Point Golf Club. All members and people interested in becoming new members are invited. Tell the guard at the main gate that you're attending the Friends of the Library meeting, and they'll direct you to the club.

Boater Skip Day to set sail on June 2 at Bayard Point

FLEMING ISLAND – Work on your best sick day excuses now to be ready for Boater Skip Day on June 2, south of the Shands Bridge on the St. Johns River.

The unofficial holiday where people play hooky and spend the day on the sandbar. According to the Clay County Sheriff's Office, last year's event attracted as many as 300 boats. While there's no official start time, most boats will start setting anchor about 9 a.m.

Teens can work out for free this summer at Planet Fitness

CLAY COUNTY – Starting May 15, teens 14-to-17 years old can work out at Planet Fitness for free during the summer.

In addition, the company will be giving away \$200,000 in scholarships.

There are three Planet Fitness clubs in Clay County – 1980 Wells Road and 700 Blanding Boulevard, both in Orange Park, and 1514 County Road 220 on Fleming Island.

Mission of the Dirt Road offering free showers

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – Adults can sign up for free showers on Tuesdays and Fridays at the Mission of the Dirt Road, 7790 State Road 100. Adults can utilize the services from 10 a.m. to noon on Tuesdays and from 9 a.m. to noon on Fridays. Families with children can get free showers on Tuesdays from 4-6 p.m. Showers are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Residents are required to sign up during the day of the shower. To make a reservation, call or text (601) 568-3473.

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Van

from page 1

patchwork of repairs and faith.

"Our current truck has a serpentine belt that's cracked and worn, and there's a bracket underneath that's broken and can't be replaced," the volunteer said. "We're riding on a prayer every day when it goes out."



The nonprofit needs the refrigerated van because it picks up meat and produce from stores like Publix and Walmart. The food pantry is contractually committed to picking up frozen or chilled items with refrigerated transportation. For now, the pantry manages and prays. But that will keep the van rolling for only so long.

"We need the truck because we have to have a way to transport frozen meat," Aultman said. "Publix and Walmart donate meat that's been flash frozen. We're doing fundraisers and sending grants out. We have about \$65,000 of our goal of \$100,000. The vans are very expensive. We need funding. We need to



bring it on home for the rest of the \$35,000-\$40,000."

The Clothes Closet and Food Pantry serve families from Orange Park and Fleming Island. If the van breaks down, families won't be able to get meat, milk, eggs or produce. Each family gets a week's worth of chilled items as well as non-perishable goods.

"We are committed to providing our clients with nutritious food options, but we need a reliable refrigerated van to make that possible," said President Mandy Nelson of The Clothes Closet and Food Pantry. "We are calling on the community to support our efforts and help us purchase this vital piece of equipment."

"I have personally seen the looks of gratitude, hope, and even tears, on the faces of

so many clients."

Residents who want to help can write checks to the pantry, and on the memo line, write "Van" and mail the check to P.O.I. Box 2892, Orange Park, 32067. Or you can stop by the pantry at 1010 Fromhart St. across from the Orange Park Athletic Association fields in Orange Park from 9 a.m. to noon, Monday through Friday and the first three Saturdays of each month.

Other ways to donate is by scanning the QR code or visiting www.ccfpop.org/check-out/donate/. "We need the refrigerated van because we're getting in more produce," said pantry secretary Kathy Wray. "A lot of the (non-perishable) stuff we have on the shelves, we can store it in our overflow area. But our freezers will be full. With God's luck and God's grace, we should be OK for another three months for food, but we have an ongoing need for the refrigerated van."

Without a refrigerated van, Aultman said the organization could lose its contracts with suppliers. The group said it needs the replace its old van by July 31.

"At the close of the campaign, any spillover (of donations) will go toward food acquisition," Nelson said.

Produce

from page 7

from other grocery stores in the area could play a factor. The closest store – Winn-Dixie – is four miles away on U.S. Highway 17. The next best option is Publix Supermarket at Hibernia Pavilion on Fleming Island, which is even more challenging commute.

When walking inside the doors, a customer might be amazed to discover what they will find within the small-yet-surprising gold mine in four rows and two sections.

Available for the choice for rural customers include Fuji and Gala Apples via Riveridge Produce of Sparta,

Michigan, a municipality based 37 miles from the Great Lakes, along with iceberg lettuce, bell peppers, cabbage and fresh corn cob from Southern Valley, which are grown in three locations: Georgia, Tennessee and the Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico.

Blueberries, strawberries, original and black bean corn salsa, guacamole, and classic, romaine and peppercorn salad kits are all on the menu, along with lemons, lime, fresh minced garlic and tomatoes also are available, along with classics like Vidalia Sweet Onions, Avocados from Mexico and Idaho potatoes.

Even better? In true Dollar General form, staple products come in large portions and are available for a fair price.

For example, five bananas for \$2,


large bags of potatoes and onions are selling from anywhere from \$2.50-3.95, and the sweet, crisp and prized apples grown on the shores of the Great Lakes are just \$4.95 in packs of six.

In a tough economy, that's bargain shopping on a budget.

Plenty of cheap, healthy snack and drink options are also available to fuel children.

The phenomenon can be accessed by entering the store and hanging an immediate right after walking inside.


Now, the only question that remains for Johnson is how quickly she and the Dollar General will have pick up the phone to dial in trucks to reload the shelves for the following order.



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‘The Cross Man’

Murphy whittles in his retirement after flying in Vietnam, hurricanes

By Lee Wardlaw
lee@claytodayonline.com

MIDDLEBURG – Roger Murphy is a long-time resident, a local legend, an American hero – and much more.

Murphy's life was simple, growing up in rural Georgia. Murphy took the school bus, attended classes and ran to the local movie theater, where he had a part-time job.

Roger's life would take a severe turn when his father was paralyzed in a construction accident. Soon after the near-fatal accident, he enlisted in the Navy. His brother also enlisted in the Armed Forces.

"Well, that looks good to me," Roger recalled his father saying after he handed his bedridden father a pen to sign his paperwork.

That was just the beginning of a long, twisted, and legendary life journey for Roger, who will turn 86 in July.

During a 22-year career in the Navy, Roger and his squadron had a career that resembled a Hollywood movie scene.

Murphy was a metalsmith and cook for the "Hurricane Hunters," which would dangerously fly into hurricanes and tropical cyclones to gather data and simultaneously send it to the National Weather Center in Miami every 15 minutes.

"We would drop what you call "drop buoys in," and (the devices) would (tell you) what the wind speeds were and (the other data)," he said.

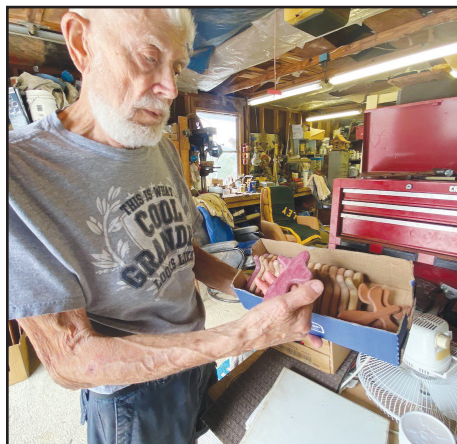
That was before satellites tracked powerful, dangerous, destructive coastal storms.

The calm lay within the storm's center when Roger and his squadron arrived at their 100-mph-plus destination, but getting in and out was a hellacious journey.

"So, the wind would be going one way, and we would start going the other way and get the wind on our tail. We would fly into the eye, and we were just sitting there. Then, we would keep going into a circle until we were about 20,000 ft., and we would be above (the hurricane). As we would leave, we would be looking down on it, and it was perfectly round," Murphy said.

For Roger flying into the eye of the powerful storms just wasn't enough for the ambitious, adrenaline junkie who joined the Vietnam War.

He made five deployments on five ships, where Roger and his squadron would cruise



along the coast of North and South Vietnam in helicopters.

Their mission was to search for fallen fighter pilots shot down at distances of up to 6,000-7,000 feet – all amid the chaos of war.

"What are those big white poles?" Murphy remembered asking.

He found out they were surface-to-air missiles (SAM rockets).

Murphy's Helicopter Combat Support 7 mission was to fly at 30 knots (34 mph) 30 ft above fighter pilots, hovering in motion over the South China Sea with a major deadline to meet. That's because the chute attached to the fallen fighter pilots is like an anchor. If somebody didn't quickly rescue them, they could sink. That's where Helicopter Combat Support 7 would come in to save the day.

"We would jump out and get (the pilot) out of his chute and get (the pilot), and the (crew member) hooked up with a harness. The helo (helicopter) would roam up and down the beach to make sure they didn't lose (the pilot) because the chute is like an anchor. Then, they would throw out (the cable), and you grab it, and it would get you and the pilot up (to the helicopter)," he said.

Among their rescues included one pilot who had torn the muscle out of his arm. But that's just the tip of the iceberg.

Before retiring from the military, he spent a year in Bushehr, Iran, as a leading chief and TAFT (Technical Assistance and Field Trainer), where he trained soldiers in swimming and rescue.

That was the sacrifice Murphy had to bite to live out his dream of permanently relocating to the Jacksonville area with his wife.



STAFF PHOTOS BY LEE WARDLAW

Roger Murphy, 85, was a hurricane hunter, veteran of the Vietnam War, pilot and longtime volunteer at the Food Bridge at Middleburg United Methodist Church, but one of his favorite hobbies is whittling crosses for patients going into surgery.

But his commanding officer wouldn't allow him to relocate to the Naval Air Station Jacksonville base. He got around that order by spending a year in the Middle East.

"That was the most miserable year of my life, spending time away from my family," he said.

It was one year without his wife, Mary, who had been on his side throughout their 59-year marriage.

"We haven't killed each other yet, so that must mean we like each other," she said laughingly.

After two decades of service to his country, Murphy worked at NAS-Jax as a civilian, moving up in rank from sheet metal mechanic to progress man to estimating planner during a decorated career from 1977-2004.

But during that time, he suffered a

heart attack at his Middleburg home in 1999. After the attack, his next instinct may have seemed unnatural to 99% of others – becoming a pilot.

"(After) getting out of the hospital, I thought, 'Well, I've always flown with the crew, so I want to be a pilot. So, I got out and got into a flying club at the base,'" he said.

He was 64 when he earned his pilot's license. The next step?

"Well, I've got to have an airplane," he said.

But one wasn't enough.

He flew a 1946 Stinson 108, an aircraft that is similar to the Alaskan Bush plane, and worked on a Zenair Zodiac.

"After I bought the (Zenair Zodiac), I said, 'Well, I need someplace to put it.' So,

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Keystone Heights News



Heritage Commission hosts Mother's Day tour

By Natalie Gilstrap
For Clay Today

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – The Keystone Heights Heritage Commission recently hosted its second-annual Mother's Day Tour of Historic Homes with the goal to share and educate the community about the city's hidden treasures.

"It's about educating the general public and for those interested in wanting to know a little more about Keystone and why it is a gem of a community," Deidre Murphy, Co-Chair of the Keystone Heights Heritage Commission, said.

The self-guided walking tour started at the Keystone Beach Pavilion and was held between 10 a.m.-1 p.m. In honor of Mother's Day, the commission gave out pink roses to the first 50 walkers. Mayor Nina Rodenroth greeted the locals and brochures containing information about the historic homes were available. Unlike

last year's tour, which focused on historic homes that are 100 years or older, locals toured 15 historic homes that were built during the 1950s, '60s and '70s. The event also had refreshments provided by Clyde's Cozy Corner Café.

The commission was available to answer any questions about the historic homes.

"It's a great way to look at the old homes and get a feel for the different styles," walker Lynde Jones said. In addition, the Heritage Commission was pleased with the event's outcome and how it connected the commission to the community.

"It was great," Murphy said. "It was great to connect with the community."

As of now, the Keystone Heights Heritage Commission is planning to expand the Mother's Day Tour during the city's centennial in 2025. Its goal is to incorporate inside tours of the historic homes.



AMVETS hand out 13 scholarships to graduating Keystone seniors

By Natalie Gilstrap
For Clay Today

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – Since 2008, AMVETS Post 86 and its support organizations, the AMVETS Riders, the Sons of AMVETS, and Ladies Auxiliary, have provided graduating high school seniors scholarships through their Keystone Heights High Seniors Scholarships.

"The scholarship fund has been going on for years and it's something we do for the community," said member Jerry Keefner. Every year, graduating seniors submit their essays and the scholarship committee chooses the recipients. This year, the organization awarded 13 scholarships ranging from \$500 - \$1,000 and hosted an award ceremony.

Graduating seniors along with their families and friends attended the award ceremony. It started with an open prayer and a Pledge of Allegiance before Bob Alexander and Post Commander Bob Beinlich gave a brief welcoming speech. In addition, the event had guest speakers Mayor Nina Rodenroth and Lt. Col. Mark Alexander speak to the students. The students' names then were announced as

they received their checks.

"I thought it was great," Beinlich said. "We had 13 scholarships and we had five or six the year before. It's a big improvement."

AMVETS Post 86 is a nonprofit civic organization that serves as a community hub for veterans to get together and connect. The post was founded in 1986 and offers their members a canteen, live music and entertainment.

"It's a really great place to come in and socialize and make friends," said trustee Jerry Johnsen. "It's not like a local bar. We don't put up with any stuff at our post." The post also supports organizations such as the VA Hospital and the Fisher House Foundation. Lastly, they are very involved in their community. Besides awarding scholarships to senior high school students, the organization hosts fundraisers, supports community projects through monetary donations, and donates to the local food pantry.

"We do a lot for the community as much as we can and the people here really enjoy it," Keefner said.

AMVETS Post 86 located at 6685 Brooklyn Bay Road.

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Keystone Heights News



Powells win Keystone Heights Garden Club's Yard of Month

PHOTO BY NATALIE GILSTRAP

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – Inspired by Garden Club's Yard of the Month and as part of the High Ridge Initiative, a committee was formed to identify homeowners with yards worthy of receiving an award. The committee's members Patricia Hatch, Diedre Murphy and Julie Pickett selected the yard for Mr. and Mrs. Powell the Yard of the Month award for May. The couple were given a sign, framed certificate and a \$50 ACE gift card.

Keystone Heights schools honor volunteers during luncheon

By Natalie Gilstrap
For Clay Today

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – A Volunteer Appreciation Lunch was held at the Keystone Heights Jr/Sr High on Thursday, May 11, for all the volunteers. The group consisted of about 45 residents who've dedicated their time to assist with the Trading Post, school events such as Junior High Dances and classrooms.

Some of these volunteers have become mentors to the students.

"It's just a way to say thank you for all or volunteers and mentors," said Alicia Hunter, Family and Community Engagement Coordinator.

The lunch was at the school's Culinary Dining Room, where Laura Leach and her culinary students provided lunch. She served Poblano or vegan burgers and Santa Fe fries with sweet tea or lemonade and students prepared Biscochitos cookies with coffee ice cream as a dessert for the guests. As everyone enjoyed their meals, volunteers got to connect with each other, and Principal Laurie Burke visited to thank the volunteers.

"We have the most amazing volunteers," Hunter said. "It's just giving back. They give so much. This is just one little thing we can do to say 'thank you' to our volunteers."

The event was a success. Everyone who attended the lunch enjoyed themselves.

"I think it's nice," one volunteer said. "We love what we do, but having a little extra thank you is nice."

All of the volunteers were impressed by the food that the culinary students prepared.

"It was good. Culinary went above and beyond," Hunter said. "The food was delicious and the volunteers are very grateful." As of now, Keystone Heights High School is looking for volunteers to help next year with the Clothes Closet, a clothing store where families and students can get clothes for free. "We are desperately in need next year for volunteers to come in daily and work in our Close Closet."

To learn more about volunteering at the Keystone Heights Jr/Sr High, contact Alicia Hunter at Alicia.hunter@myoneclay.net.



The Ability Experience for Gear Up Florida to make stop at Camp Chowenwaw

Organization to ride 950 miles to bring acceptance, understanding for people with disabilities

By Natalie Gilstrap
For Clay Today

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – Challenge Enterprises of North Florida partnered with The Ability Experience for Gear Up Florida on May 13 to further promote acceptance and understanding for people with disabilities.

A team of 28 cyclists and six crew members started their 14-day journey from the shores of Miami with plans to finish at the State Capitol in Tallahassee. During their trip, cyclists will visit local groups supporting people with disabilities.

"We are excited to continue this tradition and reconnect with so many of our friends with disabilities across the state," said Basil Lyberg, the President and Executive Director of The Ability Experience.

Challenge Enterprises of North Florida will be one of the many groups Gear Up Florida will visit.

Members of Club Challenge and the Adult Day Training Program will be sharing lunch with the participants at Camp Chowenwaw Park on Wednesday, May 24. The lunch will have yard games and a visit to Brooks Adaptive Sports and Recreation Program, in which individuals will be allowed to play wheelchair basketball against some of the country's top adaptive athletes.

ation Program, in which individuals will be allowed to play wheelchair basketball against some of the country's top adaptive athletes.

"The participants at Challenge Enterprises look forward to this annual event," said Stephanie Young, Director of Marketing and Communications at Challenge Enterprises of North Florida.

"The mutually beneficial experience of sharing a meal, having conversations, and playing field games helps to break down stereotypes as new friendships are formed."

Overall, Challenge Enterprises is excited about the return of Gear Up Florida. Since 1997, more than 500 cyclists have participated in this 950-mile event to spread their message of awareness and inclusion for those living with a disability. The event will also provide an opportunity for Challenge Enterprises and Gear Up Florida to share the news through different media platforms and reach a larger audience throughout the state.

"Individuals with disabilities want to be seen, heard, and taken seriously as contributing members of our community. We all are uniquely able in our own ways, and we all have the need to be acknowledged and valued," Young said. "An Inclusive Community is a strong community because it gives each person in the community the opportunity to use their ability to better the community as a whole."

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Clowns at Paranormal Cirque really are scary ... on purpose

Mysterious, dark production appearing at OP Mall May 25-28

For Clay Today

ORANGE PARK – Welcome to the darkest corner of your mind as Paranormal Cirque III comes to town.

This one-of-a-kind production features incredibly talented artists with the sole purpose of taking you on a sensual journey of acrobatics, contortion, aerial acts and more.

Prepare to be on the edge of your seat while you witness death-defying stunts, creepy creatures, and haunting performances. Horrifying yet seductive, this show comes to life under the mysterious white and black Big Top Tent with hypnotic and sultry acts. Provocative illusionists, freaks and mysterious creatures will make you see that this circus is anything but normal. Its wide range of otherworldly characters will send shivers down your spine. From zombies to erotic witches, sexy vampires to gruesome ghosts, and everything in between, this show has no shortage of terrifying beings.

The Big Top will be at the Orange Park Mall starting Thursday, May 25, for six shows in a four-day run. Showtimes and tickets are available at paranormalcirque.com or (941) 704-8572. Because the cirque has an adult theme, nobody younger than 13 will be allowed inside and an adult must accompany anyone between 13-17.

A new production, fresh out of the mind of the talented and successful entrepreneur Manuel Rebecchi, comes to join the other five touring shows Cirque Italia has produced since its creation in 2012. A new spectacle combines breathtaking visuals, first-class circus artists worldwide, and the latest technology. Whether you're a horror enthusiast or just looking for a thrilling night out, Paranormal Cirque III is an experience not to be missed. "We're excited to bring this unique and thrilling show to Orange Park," said Luisa Nealon, Cirque Italia's Marketing and Public Relations Manager.

"We've assembled an incredible cast of performers and can't wait to showcase their talents to our audiences. This show is perfect for anyone looking for a night of



The Paranormal Cirque will play six shows in four days at the Orange Park Mall. The unique production is so unusual, children younger than 13 aren't allowed.



entertainment and scares."

Patrons will step into a world of delicious scares, sensual horror, alluring acrobatics and plenty of saucy secrets you'll get to discover for yourself.

Don't miss your chance to experience the most spine-tingling show of the year.



St. Johns RIVERKEEPER studies loss of grasses at Doctors Lake

For Clay Today

CLAY COUNTY – St. Johns RIVERKEEPER launched a multi-day expedition to investigate the lost grasses of the St. Johns River, raise awareness about the fragile state of the river and demonstrate the need for urgent action.

The project started Tuesday in Clay and St. Johns counties.

Submerged aquatic vegetation (SAVs) are an important biological indicator of river health and is vital to the continuation of a healthy river ecosystem. SAVs are sources of refuge, oxygen, habitat, and food for many aquatic species, including the West Indian Manatee (*Trichechus manatus*).

Yet, scientists have concluded that the vast majority of SAVs have disappeared in the Lower St. Johns River, with estimates as high as 99%. SAVs periodically decline due to droughts or hurricanes, but the grasses typically begin to bounce back within a few years.

However, this time is different.

The grasses in St. Johns have not returned since Hurricane Irma, but why?

What is preventing the regrowth of the SAV? Government environmental agencies have offered several possible reasons, but consensus has not been determined, and a lot more work needs to be done.

As a result, St. Johns RIVERKEEPER launched a multi-day expedition to investigate the case of the lost grasses. The team studied 80 miles of the most-threatened habitat of the St. Johns River, between Doctors Lake and Lake George.

The team also worked in Putnam County between May 17-19.

To better understand current conditions and identify possible reasons for the decline, water quality parameters will be assessed, including sampling common stressors of SAVs, such as algal blooms, pH level, turbidity, and salinity concentration.

Aboard St. Johns RIVERKEEPER's patrol boat, the Kingfisher, St. Johns RIVERKEEPER team members and volunteers will visit numerous sampling sites and meet with homeowners, anglers, scientists and community leaders to collect observational intel and data.

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Make Time for God

You have heard it said that Christianity is “not about religion, but about relationship.” What’s the relationship in question? Our relationship with God of course! To thrive in our faith, we must invest in our relationship with God. As we grow closer to Him, we grow deeper and deeper in our faith. Think about any other relationship in your life. That relationship grows when you share quality time with the other person. If you ignore that person, what do you think is going to happen to that relationship? It’s going to become stagnant, or even worse, diminish. On the other hand, when you invest your time and energy into the other person, your relationship grows by leaps and bounds!

It’s the same way in our relationship with God. 1 Chronicles 16:11 says, “Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always.” There is no time or place that God doesn’t want to be present in our life. Invite Him into your day, wherever you are, and whatever it is that you’re doing. He wants to be an active and intimate part of your daily life!

Prioritize Him! Don’t just give Him the leftover time. In Matthew 6:33, Jesus says, “Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.” Let God and the things of God be the number one pursuit of your life. When you do, everything else will fall into place. He should and deserves to be your highest priority.

Martin Luther once said, “I have so many things to do today, I dare not ignore my time with God.”

It all starts with a practice of daily quiet time spent with God. This is a time to push away all other distractions and focus solely on Him. Put away any phones or devices that might take your eyes away from this quiet time. Psalm 46:10 says, “Be still, and know that I am God! I will be honored by every nation. I will be honored throughout the world.”

Open your Bible, read, pray, and listen to what God would say to you in that moment. When you make this a consistent, daily part of your life, you will grow immeasurably close to God. He will speak to you, and you will learn to hear His voice.

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Sweet Success

PAL hosts Donut Get Caught 5K

ORANGE PARK – Nearly 300 runners had three good reasons to cross the finish line at the Donut Get Caught 5K last Saturday at the Orange Park Mall – the opportunity to benefit the Clay County Police Athletic League, a remarkably clever medallion and a warm victory doughnut. The annual event helps support the Clay County Sheriff’s Office’s sports programs like tackle and flag football, cheerleading and baseball and the Explorers. Green Cove Springs’ Heather Thompson, who’s part of the Striders Track Club, posted the fastest time at 20 minutes, 59 seconds, followed by Green Cove Springs’ Christopher Balanguie (21:35) in second, Orange Park’s Charles King (21:44) in third, Green Cove Springs’ Stephen Barker (22:07) in fourth and Green Cove Springs’ Mary Arvie Balanguie (22:19) in fifth. Also, Terry Reed of Jacksonville finished 46th overall and first in the 70 and older division. There were 196 registered runners in the 5K and another 100 in the one-mile children’s run.



STAFF PHOTOS BY DON COBLE

Green Cove Springs’ Heather Thompson was the overall winner, running five kilometers in 20 minutes, 59 seconds.



Cheerleaders with the Police Athletic League Guardians get excited ahead of the Saturday morning run that benefited their organization.



Byynn Yaffe, 7, sprints to the finish line where she was met by PAL cheerleaders. This year’s fundraiser attracted nearly 300 runners.



One of the best prizes for finishing the 5K run was getting a doughnut at the finish line. Sarah Grimm, who finished 19th overall and eighth among women runners, shows her prizes - seconds before eating it.

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College Briefs

Two Clay students join Omicron Delta Kappa

LEXINGTON, Va. – Omicron Delta Kappa, the National Leadership Honor Society, welcomed 1,869 new initiates, including Orange Park's Riley Hulett at Presbyterian College and Oakleaf's Aysia Washington at Alabama, from 78 universities during April 2023.

Students initiated into the Society must be sophomores, juniors, seniors, or graduate/professional students in the top 35% of their class, demonstrate leadership experience in at least one of the five pillars, and embrace the ODK ideals.

Fewer than 5% of students are invited to join each year.

Omicron Delta Kappa Society, the National Leadership Honor Society, was founded in Lexington, Virginia, on December 3, 1914. A group of 15 students and faculty members established the Society to recognize and encourage leadership at the collegiate level.

Wacha graduates from Young Harris College

YOUNG HARRIS, Ga. – Benjamin Wacha of Melrose graduated from Young Harris College.

Members of the Class of 2023 have completed their final year in the Enchanted Valley. After celebrating YHC seniors at the annual Senior Reception and Bac-

calaureate Service, the College held its traditional Commencement ceremony on Saturday, May 6, in the Harp Recreation and Commencement Center.

Wacha was awarded a BA degree.

The invocation was given by Case Winkler, Master of Arts in Teaching, Class of 2023. Matthew George, Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies and Spanish, Class of 2023, delivered the keynote speech. Graduates reflected on their time together and the memories they created during the past four years.

Three from Fleming Island on Berry's Dean's List

ROME, Ga. – The Dean's List honors students who posted an academic average of 3.5 or better on a 4.0 scale while carrying a class load of at least 12 hours during the semester.

Three from Fleming Island – Hannah McDonald, Laura Pittman and Ellie Rosenau – were included.

Nationally recognized for academic excellence and as an outstanding educational value, Berry is an independent, coeducational, comprehensive liberal arts college of approximately 2,100 students.

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Fleming Island's Steward-Sciuto wins Ms. Florida Senior America

For Clay Today

THE VILLAGES – Sharon Steward-Sciuto of Fleming Island was selected Ms. Florida Senior America 2023 at the Colony Recreation Center.

She competed in Interview, Talent, Evening Gown and Philosophy of Life to win the crown in a field of 14 contestants. For her talent, she sang "You Were Always There," the final song from

her original one-woman show, "FLUTTERBY... the Metamorphosis."

She will go on to represent Florida and compete for the title of Ms. Senior America 2023 in October at the Tropicana Casino in Atlantic City, New Jersey. Sharon is an actress-performer and motivational speaker.



Sharon Steward-Sciuto

Entrepreneur magazine selects Grumpy's as one of its Top New, Emerging Franchises

CLAY COUNTY – Grumpy's Restaurant, an award-winning full-service Americana breakfast, lunch and brunch diner, was recognized as one of the Top New and Emerging Franchises for 2023 in the May/June issue of Entrepreneur magazine. The ranking highlights some of the most substantial companies that have begun offering franchise opportunities in the last five years.

"It is an incredible honor to be recognized as one of 2023's Top New Franchises," said Daniel DeLeon, President and CEO of Grumpy's Restaurant. "This would not be possible without our amazing franchise partners and team members within the Grumpy's family, and we look forward to

providing more communities with excellent home-style cooking, attention to detail, and sweet southern hospitality."

The flagship restaurant is located at 834 Kingsley Ave. in Orange Park. A second Clay County restaurant opened at 1805 Blanding Blvd. in Middleburg in 2020.

The Top New and Emerging Franchises ranking is based on information submitted to Entrepreneur for its annual Franchise 500 and is part of the brand's continuing effort to understand best and evaluate the ever-changing franchise marketplace. Companies featured on the 2023 list have been offering a franchise opportunity for five years or fewer and were assessed across multiple data points, including unit growth, startup costs and fees, training and support, the parent company's financial stability, and brand strength.

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Police Briefs

Orange Park man arrested for punching detective at CCSO substation

ORANGE PARK – Clay County detectives apprehended 26-year-old Darius Dacosta Padmore, of Orange Park, on battery charges on a law enforcement officer. On May 15 at approximately 10:35 a.m., Padmore came into the CCSO Orange Park substation lobby, seeking to discuss a previous complaint he had filed.



Darius Padmore

A supervisor from the investigations unit conversed with Padmore, informing him that the sergeant he was requesting to see was unavailable. The detective supervisor offered to take a message and ensure follow-up. Growing increasingly agitated, Padmore wanted to speak with a civilian staff assistant, who was also unavailable then. Despite the detective supervisor's reassurance in handling any issues personally, Padmore became confrontational, raising his voice, taking a combative stance and making threats. He approached the supervisor closely while continuing to escalate the situation. The detective supervisor repeatedly commanded him to step away and calm down, but Padmore refused and maintained his proximity and aggressive behavior.

Padmore then grabbed the supervisor's right wrist and pulled it towards himself, leading to a brief altercation. Additional detectives intervened upon hearing the commotion, and Padmore was taken into custody.

This incident is not the first involving Padmore. On April 6, deputies responded to an anonymous call at his residence. During this encounter, he displayed an AR-style rifle in his garage and was belligerent toward deputies. Since Padmore was on his property, he didn't aim the weapon at the responding deputies, they determined he didn't commit a crime.

An additional incident involving Padmore occurred on April 7. Padmore entered the CCSO Orange Park Substation and demanded to speak with a supervisor. While inside the substation, he became very angry at the civilian staff. Deputies escorted him out and spent the next 30-45 minutes speaking with him and calming him down. Padmore left on his own that day without further incident.

Deputies noted each of the incidents involving Padmore due to his increasingly unprovoked belligerent behavior towards law enforcement. The May 15 incident, which Padmore instigated, ultimately led to an arrest for battery on a law enforcement officer.

"We take the safety of every member of our agency very seriously. I am grate-

ful that the detective supervisor who was on scene and able to intervene before any citizens conducting business at our substation or our civilian staff members were accosted," Sheriff Michelle Cook said. "This is just another reminder that although we live in a very safe community, there are still those out there that do not like law enforcement and are confrontational and aggressive towards our deputies and staff."

Padmore's bond was set at \$25,003. His next court appearance will be on June 12.

Middleburg man accused of having child sex on his cellphone

MIDDLEBURG – A tip from the public led to the arrest of a man accused of exploiting a boy by getting him to perform unlawful sexual acts on his cellphone.

Hunter Clay Deen, 19, of Middleburg, was charged with four counts of possessing child sexual conduct and using his cellphone to facilitate a felony after the Clay County Sheriff's Office's Crimes Against Children Unit said it received a tip about the inappropriate communication.



Hunter Deen

According to the affidavit for the arrest warrant, the boy posed for sexually explicit acts and sent the photos to Deen.

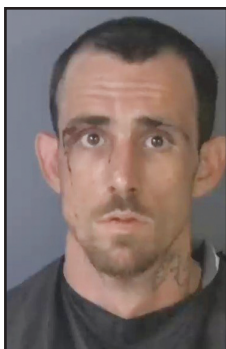
According to the warrant, Deen was already in the Clay County Jail after the Green Cove Springs Police Department arrested him after he was accused of stealing a car on July 12. Deputies took his cellphone during the booking process.

While in jail, another inmate, Curtis Courtney, spit on him because Deen refused to pay a debt owed by another inmate. Courtney was charged with battery in the jail on May 5.

Deen's bond was set at \$375,015. His next court appearance will be on June 5.

Man jailed for selling methamphetamine, fighting with deputies

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – A confidential source working with the Clay County Sheriff's Office helped put a 32-year-old man behind bars after being charged with selling methamphetamine, but not before he fought with deputies to avoid being arrested. Coy Lee Frank-



Coy Franklin

lin, of Keystone Heights, was charged with selling methamphetamine, resisting arrest with violence and punching a sheriff's deputy with his fist after they responded to a 911 hangup call on May 11.

When they arrived to the 7100 block of Pembroke Street, two deputies were greeted by Franklin and his girlfriend. He fought with both when they attempted to arrest Franklin for the outstanding warrant. Franklin was wrestled to the ground and punched so the deputies could gain compliance.

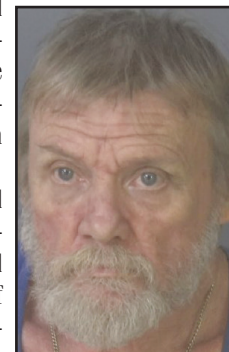
An arrest warrant was issued after the confidential source bought \$50 worth of methamphetamine on Dec. 28, 2022, according to the arrest report.

Franklin's bond was set at \$300,009.

Man busted for selling methamphetamine to undercover agent

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – A 59-year-old man was arrested after the Clay County Sheriff's Office said he sold methamphetamine to an undercover agent.

Randall Edward Vantassel, of Melrose, was charged with two counts of selling meth, possessing drug paraphernalia, and using



Randall Vantassel

SEE POLICE, 23

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 Probation; BAL-blood alcohol level. There are no assumptions or representations about guilt or innocence. Anyone arrested or booked is presumed innocent.

Tuesday, May 16

Jean Guerrier, 38, Green Cove Springs, domestic battery
Stephen W. Mabey, 40, Middleburg, two counts FTA
Brandon E. Crum, 38, Middleburg, petit theft
Jesse W. Quigley, 46, Orange Park, grand theft auto
Isaac D. Higginbotham, 27, Green Cove Springs, fugitive from justice
Kaitlyn P. Muhammad, 29, Orange Park, petit theft
Teahya E.S. Perez, 18, Middleburg, shoplifting
Lisa M. Shriver, 50, Green Cove Springs, VOP-aggravated assault with deadly weapon
Beau D. Cook, 40, Green Cove Springs, contempt of court/violation of injunction for protection against domestic violence
William H. Ferrell, 54, Green Cove Springs, battery

Monday, May 15

Michael H. Defusco, 27, Middleburg, possession-drug paraphernalia
Charles E. Johnson, 73, Middleburg, three counts uttering forged/counterfeit bill
Anthony L. Harris, 24, Orange Park, aggravated assault with deadly weapon, battery
Mario Velasquez, 55, Green Cove Springs, driving without valid license
Vickie D. Bard, 60, Green Cove Springs, possession-crack cocaine, possession-drug paraphernalia
Robert K. Euler, 61, Jacksonville, possession-controlled substance, possession-drug paraphernalia
Dionte'L. Aaron, 27, Green Cove Springs, FTA-DWLSR
Mary A. Lambert, 52, Middleburg, shoplifting
Natashia Y. Rhoden, 46, Keystone Heights, possession-controlled substance, possession-marijuana, possession-drug paraphernalia
Michael C. Dyne, 34, Middleburg, possession-cocaine, possession-drug paraphernalia
Darius D. Padmore, 26, Orange Park, battery on law enforcement

Nicholas R. Cutway, 27, Green Cove Springs, battery on detention officer
Roxie B. Nazworth, 36, Green Cove Springs, FTA-DWLSR
Hector F. Rodriguez, 60, Orange Park, FTA
Alex Bernard, 29, Orange Park, DUI

Sunday, May 14

Gary E. Boyd, 42, Keystone Heights, violation of injunction against domestic violence
Lori L. Roche, 52, Middleburg, shoplifting
Nicholas J. McCauley, 41, Orange Park, trespassing
James A. Toney, 18, Orange Park, FTA-DWLSR
Janard S. Toson, 21, Orange Park, resist/obstruct/oppose law enforcement

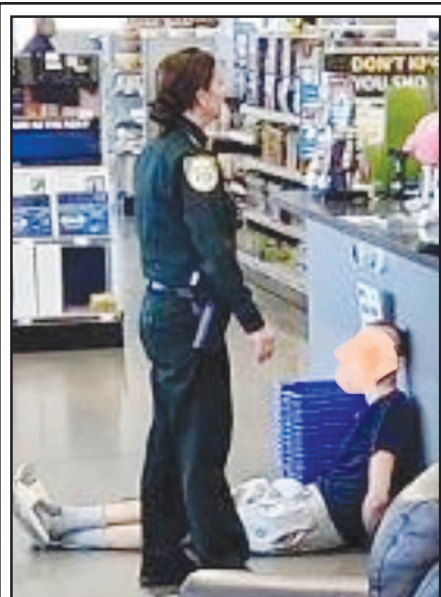
Saturday, May 13

Brian T. Brown, 48, Middleburg, follow/harass/cyberstalking with credible threat, use of two-way communication device to facilitate felony
Alberto R. Andujar, 27, Orange Park, FTA-DWLSR
Christopher R. Lewis, 42, Fleming Island, shoplifting
Jennifer A. Strickland, 36, Middleburg, battery on law enforcement/firefighter/EMT, resist/obstruct/oppose law enforcement, DUI with passenger younger than 18
Kathleen B. Carroll, 47, Middleburg, shoplifting
Jeremy A. Warner, 45, Green Cove Springs, two counts domestic battery

Friday, May 12

William C. Davis, 32, Middleburg, aggravated assault with deadly weapon, DUI with property damage/injury, leaving scene of accident involving property damage
Malik S. Washington, 19, Orange Park, grand theft auto
Johnathan R. Warren, 21, Green Cove Springs, VOP
Hunter C. Deen, 20, Starke, four counts possession-obsene material of child sexual conduct, use of two-way communication device to facilitate a felony
Tara M. Spears, 48, Middleburg, FTA
Melissa J. Sheffield, 40, Keystone Heights, possession-drug paraphernalia, DWLSR
Ryan D. Fitz, 46, Keystone Heights, selling-methamphetamine
Randall E. Vantassel, 59, Melrose, two counts

SEE ARRESTS, 23



This photo of Sheriff Michelle Cook subduing a man who was acting irrationally was a hit on social media last week. It was shared nearly 5,000 after she grabbed a machete from the man at a store. While Cook downplayed the incident, several national media outlets reported it.

Arrests

from page 22

selling-methamphetamine, possession-controlled substance, two counts use of two-way communication device to facilitate felony
Christy A. Decker, 42, Middleburg, DUI

Thursday, May 11

Patrice M. Edwards, 29, Orange Park, possession-marijuana
Arthur J. Mealer, 22, Green Cove Springs, driving without valid license
Brandon A. Gadson, 40, Green Cove Springs, VOP-community control
Delman J. Austin, 32, Middleburg, DWSLR
Christopher L. Whiten, 27, Keystone Heights, aggravated assault with deadly weapon during domestic battery, possession-ammo/firearm by convicted felon, violation of injunction to possess ammo/firearm, two counts violation of injunction against domestic violence, shoot/throwing missile into dwelling/vehicle/building/aircraft, grand theft auto
Sean L. Price, 54, Oakleaf, battery
Cesar T. Talamantes, 43, Green Cove Springs, two counts aggravated assault on law enforcement/firefighter/EMT, burglary, resist/obstruct/oppose law enforcement

Lori A. Glass, 55, Orange Park, trafficking-methamphetamine, possession-marijuana, possession-drug paraphernalia

Coy L. Franklin, 32, Keystone Heights, selling-methamphetamine, battery on law enforcement/firefighter/EMT, resisting law enforcement with violence

Linda F. Blanchard, 66, Orange Park, trespassing

Robert E. Hulse, 57, Middleburg, selling-methamphetamine

Todd L. Bolick, 43, Middleburg, delivering-methamphetamine

Rodney T. Bennett, 30, Middleburg, possession-controlled substance, DWSLR

Tara L. Tucker, 60, Orange Park, possession-methamphetamine, possession-drug paraphernalia

Troy E. Tucker, 53, Orange Park, possession-methamphetamine

Wednesday, May 10

Brian C. Bielik, 47, Middleburg, domestic battery

Mhisani A. Ally, 30, Middleburg, distribution-cocaine

Brooke D. Randolph, 31, Orange Park, domestic battery

Robert J. Beegle, 34, Middleburg, DWSLR, failure to register

Brandon C.E. Dugan, 32m Green Cove Springs, VOP-community control

Michelle L. Woodard, 41, Middleburg, possession-controlled substance

William F. Donovan, 64, Green Cove Springs, indecent exposure

Zainal A. Uddin, 57, Green Cove Springs, VOP-battery

Zachary D. Hurt, Keystone Heights, delivering/manufacturing-opium, use of two-way communication device to facilitate felony

John W. Phillips, 30, Green Cove Springs, FTA-battery

Jeremie I. Lume, 21, Middleburg, resisting law enforcement with violence, trespassing on school grounds

Lawrence G. Wellmon, 28, Green Cove Springs, shoplifting

Police

from page 22

his cellphone to facilitate a felony after he sold \$150 of the drug to the agent on March 27 on Immokalee Road.

Vantassel's bond was set at \$130,015.

Man making YouTube video charged with fighting deputies

MIDDLEBURG – A man who was being questioned for trespassing on church property quickly became aggressive and fought with two Clay County Sheriff's Office deputies.

Jeremie Isaac Lume, 21, of Middleburg, was charged with resisting arrest with violence and trespassing on school grounds after deputies said he was seen inside a fenced area at Pinebook Presbyterian Church on May 10. Lume said he was at the playground to make a YouTube video at

the pull-up bars.

According to the arrest report, when deputies stopped him on Knight Box Road, he became combative. He wrestled with deputies, which led to Lume's tooth being knocked loose. One of the deputies suffered a cut on his right arm.

Lume's bond was set at \$40,005.

Daytona Beach man charged with exposing himself during concert

ORANGE PARK – According to the Clay County Sheriff's Office, a Daytona Beach man was arrested for exposing himself during the Sara Evans concert on May 4 at



Jeremie Lume

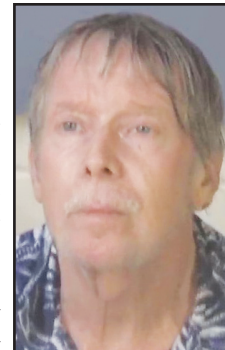
the Thrasher-Horne Center.

According to the arrest report, William Donovan III, 64, was charged with indecent exposure after two witnesses told an off-duty deputy working security about Donovan exposing himself to the victims in the audience while they watched the show.

His bond was set at \$50,003.

CCSO: Woman arrested after using Facebook to sell meth

ORANGE PARK – With the help of an undercover agent, the Clay County Sheriff's Office charged a woman with trafficking methamphetamine on May 11.



William Donovan

Lori Ann Glass, 55, of Jacksonville, also was charged with possessing marijuana and drug paraphernalia after the undercover agent bought the meth in the 1300 block of Blanding Boulevard after Glass arranged for the purchase by using Facebook messenger.

While the amount of methamphetamine Glass possessed was redacted from the arrest report, anything weighing more than 14 grams is considered trafficking.

According to court documents, Glass was arrested on Nov. 18 for trafficking methamphetamine.

Glass' bond was set at \$155,007.



Lori Glass

Cross Man

from page 16

I put it at (Melrose Landing Airport) and bought five acres of land down there," he said.

Murphy and his friends spent every weekend putting together the project plane together. But they couldn't get the engine to fire.

Roger still owns the engine but gave away the parts for his dream project. After that, he retired in 2004.

But he still wasn't finished.

"When I retired, I had to do something else. I'm not going to sit around and die behind the TV," he said.

So, he got involved with Middleburg United Methodist Church's "Food Bridge."

"Business" has skyrocketed by 87% in 18 years.



"We did only about 35-40 families at the time. Last Thursday, we did about 300," Murphy said.

Housed at the church's Budington Building of Hope, its refrigerated truck travels

to eight retail stores in Orange Park and Middleburg to pick up food in partnership with Feeding Northeast Florida.

When the truck returns, the scene is surreal and action-packed, with volunteers unloading, weighing, sorting and storing food items, complete with a walk-in freezer and refrigerator.

The operation is open all week, all in preparation for "Big Thursday," where food is disturbed 7:30-10:30 a.m.

During the drive-thru, no-contact process, local families of one-to-four family members receive 40-50 pounds of frozen meat, fresh produce, bread, dry goods and dairy products. Families of five members or more receive 80-100 pounds of goods.

Winn-Dixie, Publix, Walmart, Dollar General and Rose's locations all contribute to the volunteer mega-operation feeding hungry families. Dogs and cats aren't forgotten, either.

In the meantime, Murphy found a way to convert his homey garage to whittle fine Christian crosses out of cedar.

But you don't need to think about pulling out your checkbook if you want one.

"I don't sell them," he said.

"I've probably made over 2,000 over the last 15 years. I don't make money off of them because God gave me the talent to do this, and if I charge for it, I feel that he might come and take (that talent) away from me," he said.

"He loves making them as a ministry to comfort people going through difficult times," his wife said.

Murphy's crosses are so impactful those facing an operation or surgery refuse to give up the beautiful works of art as they are wheeled to the operating room.

"They call me the cross man," Murphy said.



PHOTO COURTESY OF RCHJA

River City Hunter/Jumper show, clinic rides into Fairgrounds

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – The season-opening Hunter/Jumpers show and clinic will be at the Clay County Fairgrounds from May 19-21. According to the organization, its mission is to provide the hunter/jumper industry with affordable, quality horse shows and educational opportunities with a commitment to support local businesses. It also strives to remain community-focused in all of its efforts, investing as much into the growth and success of the local economy by promoting and preserving the sport. The season opener will be the first of five events at the fairgrounds. The Summer Soiree will be on June 9-11; Fall Festivities on Sept. 15-17; the Halloween Horse Show on Oct. 20-22; and the Circuit Closer on Nov. 17-19.



Murphy earns Art Guild of Orange Park scholarship



Shannah Murphy

ORANGE PARK – The Art Guild of Orange Park awarded Orange Park High’s Shannah Murphy the \$1,000 Courtenay Hunt Scholarship.

Shannah’s art teacher, Carrie Keene, also received a \$100 check to use in her classroom.

Runner-up Makayla Kampfer received \$500 and second runner-up Lola Lanier received \$100. Both are seniors at Oakleaf High and study art under Kezia Laberis.

All three students displayed outstanding art portfolios at the AGOP’s May meeting where each was honored with cake and punch, art supplies and a year’s membership in the Art Guild.

The Art Guild named the scholarship

in honor of Orange Park’s prominent local artist, Courtenay Hunt, following his death in 2013. He was a founding member of the Art Guild, and his home and studio were on Doctors Lake in Orange Park. Hunt was recognized as Jacksonville’s portrait artist of choice. In 1967, he was commissioned to paint a portrait of Andrew Jackson which hangs in Jacksonville’s City Hall.

Several of his paintings will be auctioned off to fund this scholarship at the AGOP annual gala, Putting on the Ritz, to be held at the Hilltop Restaurant on Friday, Sept. 22. The event is open to the public. Tickets are available through the Art Guild of Orange Park at artguildoforange.org.



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STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Ridgeview High first year softball coach Angela Agurkis smiles as her catcher, Haylee McCrae, on left, runs to teammate Brooke Schneider after pair combined for spectacular play at home plate in Panthers 2-0 region semifinal win over Clay.

Mamea's rocket seals Spartans' Final Four ticket

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

ORANGE PARK - St. Johns Country Day School baseball avenged last year's 4-1 region final loss to North Florida Christian behind a sixth inning three run home run by senior Isaiah Mamea with St. Johns taking a 10-5 slugfest Monday night at St. Johns.

"I kind of felt the big hit coming and we were needing a spark," said Mamea. "We were struggling, but we were getting on base and not scoring."

The win puts the Spartans, now 25-4, back into the Class 2A Final Four after two years ago losing in the 2A championship

SEE SPARTANS, 32

Agurkis' Cinderella season continues

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

ORANGE PARK - In a clash of youth and vigor versus age and wisdom, the youthful vigor of Ridgeview High's first year coach Angela Agurkis permeated her team's enthusiasm to win with a tough 2-0 region 1-5A semifinal win over Clay High Tuesday night.

"This season has been insane," said Agurkis, who heads to the region championship on Friday against No. 2-ranked Deltona for a shot at a Final Four berth. "It's ironic that Casey (former Ridgeview coach Casey Thompson, now Middleburg athletic director) went to the Final Four in his first season. I have been mentored by the Thompson family through my high school days (all state catcher for Christina Thompson on state champion Oakleaf



Ridgeview High first year softball coach Angela Agurkis, left, has dipped into her championship experiences as a state champ catcher at Oakleaf High to have the Panthers a game away from a Final Four berth.

High team) and I'm just doing what they do."

Ridgeview, the No. 4 seed in the region at 19-6, advances to the region championship game against No. 2-ranked Deltona, 20-4, who beat No. 3 seed Fort Walton Beach 9-0 in their semifinal. Clay, under the direction of three decades coached by Matt Lewis, finishes their season at 13-11 with a 4-1 win in their region opener over top seed and previously unbeaten Gulf Breeze behind pitcher Gabbi Ellis' 15 strikeouts.

"I thought it would turn into a pitcher's duel between our Saige (freshman Saige Bialek) and their Gabbi (senior Gabbi Ellis for Clay), but both teams were hitting the ball," said Agurkis. "Then it becomes

SEE PANTHERS, 29



St. Johns relief pitcher Trevor Bradley finished off North Florida Christian in Spartans 10-5 region championship win on Monday.

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Fleming flags fall in final

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

MANDARIN - Fleming Island High's flag football team held off the defending 2A champion Western High to avenge their 2022 Final Four loss, but did not fare as well against Alonso High of Tampa, now 23-0, as the Golden Eagles lost 33-6 in their first foray into the FHSAA flag football championships Saturday at Mandarin High School. Against Western, Fleming Island held off a late surge by the champions to win a 20-14 match to advance.

"Overall, the past two seasons we were back to back regional champs with an overall record of 32-3 and two of those losses to the eventual state champs; Western in 22 and Alonso in 23," said Fleming Island coach Clinton Lyons, who guided the team with his dad, Mike, as his assistant. "It was an outstanding season we are only the second North Florida team (Mandarin in 2013) to ever make the championship game since flag playoffs started 20 years ago in 2003."

Against Western, with senior quarterback Mykala Maddox, headed to Florida Gateway College to play flags in college, Fleming Island, ranked third nationally, gave Western a first score, but responded with Maddox putting the ball in the end zone three straight series; a one yard run, an eight yard pass to Gabi Musa and a two yard run to put Fleming Island up 20-7.

On defense, Fleming Island got in-

terceptions from Musa, Maddox and two sacks from rusher Daisy Fletcher.

Against Alonso, Fleming Island fell uncharacteristically behind 14-0 in the first quarter; 20-0 into the second quarter, off an interception and pass score.

Late in the first half, Maddox, who was, at times, pressured with two players by Alonso, hit passes to Musa and Megan Cobb to keep the chains moving before a 30 yard pass to Alyssa Langston put Fleming Island in scoring position.

Alonso's defense was able to corral any long passes to wide receiver London Jenkins who has been Maddox's favorite scoring threat all season.

"London Jenkins was a huge asset in our passing game to be able to take the lid off of defenses and also having defenses worried about her going deep opened up more stuff underneath for other receivers to make plays or for Mykala to run," said Lyons. "On defense, As Natalia Ramdas, Musa, and Cobb were a great front line for our defense pulling flags and breaking up the short passes. Ramdas was an emerging player in 2020 as freshman then covid hit and after an ACL tear in soccer her 10th grade year was able to finally comeback as a senior and was a huge help on defense to round out our starting lineup."

From the six yard line, Maddox galloped in for the Golden Eagles lone score with Alonso scoring two more to end the contest.



CORRESPONDENT PHOTOS BY LAURA ANDERSON/FIHS

Fleming Island rusher Daisy Fletcher had two key sacks in Golden Eagles Class 2A championship loss to Alonso of Tampa. Below: Wide receiver Taylor Thompson stretches for key first down.



Boylston dinger wrecks Crusaders

By Lee Wardlaw
Staff Writer

ORANGE PARK- A Kyle Boylston three-run homer fueled the St. Johns Country Day School baseball team (24-4) to see another day in a highly competitive 2A tournament bracket on Friday night, this time fighting to the finish in a sloppy, error-filled, and exciting slugfest to seal a hard-fought, 5-2, grind-it-out victory over University Christian (Jacksonville).

But the win didn't come without play-off drama.

"It was a battle. You've got to tip your hat to University Christian, both of their pitchers I thought were really good, competed. We didn't play great, we made four or five errors, but the guys kept battling," said Spartans' head coach Tom Lucas.

University Christian put Spartans' fans on the edge of their seats early in top of the second inning, as the Fighting Christians shot out to a 1-0 lead on an error.

St. Johns pitcher Jacob Thomas was reliable throughout the night, but a walk to UC's Alonzo Monts set up a sequence that allowed the Christians to shoot out to their first lead of the night, as shortstop Shawn Andrade couldn't retrieve a hot-hit grounder or make the difficult cutoff



St. Johns first baseman George Gilson awaits throw for out in Spartans region semifinal win over University Christian. Spartans got stellar pitching night from senior Jacob Thomas in win over University Christian.

throw home for catcher Hunter Rodgers to lay the tag in time for the out.

The battle-tested Spartans had to do the comeback thing one more time, but St. Johns was made for the moment, with Luca's squad putting things away for good in the bottom of the fourth.

"Kyle Boylston with that three-run home run, was just clutch. The bigger the



moment, he generally steps up," Lucas said. "I actually turned to our coaches and said, 'I think he's fixing to fix one out and properly pimp this thing, and he did, so hats off to him.'"

Thomas left the game to a standing ovation from Spartans faithful in the top of the fifth inning, who received strong bullpen support in the form of side-

armers, senior Jeffery Henry and junior Trevor Bradley, who has not given up an earned run all season.

"You don't usually pull a guy who's throwing strikes with a three-run lead, but I had a note written to myself that said 'seventh inning, you go to Trevor Bradley. And (Bradley) has done this every game,'" Lucas said.



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Hampton's double fuels fifth barrage

By Ray Dimonda
Correspondent

GREEN COVE SPRINGS - Clay High baseball needed a spark to overcome a 3-0 deficit in the fifth inning in a rematch against district champion Ridgeview High, who beat Clay 8-1 a week ago for the district crown, and Aiden Hampton answered with a thunderous double off Panther starter Billy Girgis.

"I don't know what Aiden's (Hampton) batting average is, I think it is like .193 or something like that, but I just believed in him," said Clay Head Coach Josh Persinger. "His swing is one of the best we have in practice. He was the Firestarter there."

Hampton's blast fueled a five-run fifth inning for the Blue Devils who took and maintained a 5-3 gap to the final inning to avenge the district final loss and also put Clay in the driver's seat for a Class 5A Final Four berth.

With the win, Clay will host Columbia on Tues., May 16 in the region championship with the Class 5A Final Four set for Mon., May 22 (State Semi) and Wed., May 24 (State Final) in Fort Myers.

The Panthers looked to double down on their previous win over the Blue Devils with a great start, a 1-0 lead in the volatile Blue Devil fancave, thanks to Xavier Harris leading off the game with a line drive single to center field, moving to second with a sacrifice fly by Douglas Langley, and driven home by Girgis.

With Clay being unproductive in the batter's box, Ridgeview went back to work in the top of the third inning when Billy Girgis was safely on after an infield grounder was bobbled. Alfredo Jimenez smacked an RBI

double into right field to score Girgis, 2-0. Jimenez would add the third Panther score when Clayton Gulbrand hit a grounder to second base which was another handful for the Clay defense, 3-0.

After both teams left a runner here and there on the bases with nothing to show, the Blue Devils had an inning of everything go their way when Hampton was safely on second base as the lead off hitter in the bottom of the fifth. Like a huge wave going through the Clay dugout, the players knew the time was now or maybe never. With the capacity crowd going crazy, Merrick Rapoza walked, putting two runners on base. Sean Alvers next put down a textbook bunt down the third base line which the Panther's had no time to make a play on any player, loading the bases and no outs.

Cole Carnell delivered an RBI singled to left field to finally break through, 3-1, followed by Chase Haggard sacrificing to score Rapoza and Alvers to tie the game, 3-3. Now with two outs, it looked like the Panthers could lick their wounds and get back in the driver's seat. That was until Josh Rouw said not so fast with an RBI grounder to left field to score Carnell, 4-3. Panther's Keegan Roach relieved Girgis on the pitcher's mound to try and slow the roll of the Blue Devils.

"I probably should have made a different decision there instead of letting Billy (Girgis) continue that inning," said Panther Head Coach Saul Jimenez. "We felt confident, but that's baseball. It bit us badly and clay took advantage of it. That's baseball."

Clay's Easton McMahan didn't get the memo and laid down a hard RBI grounder to left field as well, which scored Rouw,



STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Clay High's Cole Carnell gets greeting after scoring run in Blue Devils' five-run fifth inning in 5-3 region 1-5A semifinal at Clay High.

5-3. The Panthers closed the inning and now needed to scratch and claw their way out.

"I'm a big energy guy," said Persinger. "I've been at this a long time. There are sparks. Who we face and who we are doesn't really matter if we buy in."

The Blue Devils went all in and put Elijah Roberts on the mound to close things out. The strategy worked as Roberts went two innings with no hits, one walk and three strikeouts to earn the save behind Easton McMahan who went five innings, five hits, three runs, two walks and one strikeout.

For the Panthers, it was an impressive second year under Manager Saul Jimenez. Jimenez took the team from a 6-18 season, to 8-15 in 2022, to a 20 win, District Championship 2023 season. While he loses 10 seniors after graduation, six starters, the future looks bright for Panthers Baseball as he now has a great JV squad

building players, and he has weapons returning to the lineup for 2024 which holds much promise for the team.

"I'm proud of my guys," said Jimenez. "They fought all the way down to the end. They have nothing to hang their heads for. This is the first time these kids have been in this situation in a long time. We got the second District Championship in school history so their legacy is written forever at Ridgeview, and the first 20 win season in Ridgeview history. They have to be proud of themselves. We won't look back on what we could have done, we'll just build from that and look for a good run next year like we had this year."

Persinger was humbled by Jimenez' affect on the season.

"They got the monkey off their back. We are two swings away from having a completely different conversation," said Persinger. "I give Saul all the credit. He really turned that program around."



PHOTO COURTESY OF USNAATHLETICS

Fleming Island cross country and soccer ace Landon Opp shows off national championship trophy won by his unbeaten U. S. Naval Academy mens rugby team.

FIHS alumni triggers Navy rugby national title

Courtesy of Navysports.com

HOUSTON - The unbeaten and nationally top-ranked United States Naval Academy mens rugby team (18-0) beat No. 5 California 28-22 to win their first-ever NCAA Div. 1A Elite national championship on Saturday in Houston, Texas. The season was the inaugural season for the Naval Academy program. California was playing in its 27th D1-A championship game since 1980 with titles in 2011, 2016 and 2017.

Despite facing their largest deficit of the season (15 points) and trailing for over 60 minutes, the Mids came from behind to earn their second victory of the season against the Golden Bears (13-4).

Flanker Tanner Russell was named the College Rugby Association of America (CRAA) DI-A National Championship Play-

er of the Match.

On the field in the final seconds of the tense finish, Fleming Island High cross country and soccer player Landon Opp, now a Naval Academy junior fly half and fullback for the rugby team, secured the game with a kick that pushed back a Southern Cal scoring drive. Also, Opp's older brother, Landon, was a 2020 Naval Academy grad and a two year rugby player.

"It wasn't until the kick went out and the final whistle was blown that I felt this match was over. To go down, 15-0, to Cal and claw back to win this game is remarkable and this team earned the right to call themselves national champions," said director of rugby Gavin Hickie, who has coached the rugby program for the past six years and ushered in its varsity status this year. "Before this season we had never beaten Cal and to do it twice with all the pressure shows you what kind of team this is. They can't get enough accolades and

credit for the work they've put in. These men deserve medals and now they have them around their necks that say national champions."

In the final moments of the game, Cal drove inside the five-meter line, but Navy's defense came up with a huge turnover to prevent a try. The Mids gained a few meters back with their ball movement before committing a knock-on penalty to give the Golden Bears a scrum. Cal again marched inside the five-meter line, but a hard tackle by Gray knocked the ball out to return possession to Navy. Opp used a kick attempt to push the Golden Bears back to the 10-meter line. Cal did regain possession after the kick, but was penalized for an illegal throw-in attempt on the lineout. The Mids used short carries to melt the clock and kicked the ball out of bounds in the 80th minute to become national champions.

SEE TITLE, 33



STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Strong pitching all year from freshman Saige Bialek, left, has kept the Ridgeview High softball team winning and just one game from a Class 5A Final Four invite. Right, Cynthia Hilton scored first run in Panthers' 2-0 region semifinal win over Clay.

Panthers

from page 25

who makes the first mistake in the field."

Against Clay on Tuesday, Ridgeview got aided on a line drive in the second inning by Nicole Deschamps that landed between the Clay center and left fielders and allowed baserunner Cynthia Hilton to score the game's first run. Hilton was on base via a fielders choice single.

Agurkis, after taking some early lumps as the rookie coach in north Florida's powerful softball arena, is now recognized for her persuasive suave in the dugout and has



Nicole Deschamps celebrates her run scoring double against Clay.



Left: Ridgeview right fielder Brooke Schneider whipped a laser throw to home plate to thwart a bases loaded score for Clay. Right: Schneiders' throw made it to catcher Haylee McCrae in time to snag Clay baserunner Kaitlyn Howell at home plate.



molded her highly energetic and enthusiastic team into a tight-knit wrecking machine. With the win, Agurkis is one game from a Cinderella season that could put both ends of the team; coach and players, back into Final Four territory; Agurkis with a state champion ring as a player.

"I run a pretty tight ship but I also want them to have fun," said Agurkis. "We are

very loose."

With the score at just 1-0 into the third, Clay had their best scoring opportunity in the third inning with a base loaded situation via singles by Bailie Jackson, Kaitlyn Howell and Brooke Hamilton to put Ridgeview freshman pitcher Saige Bialek in tough waters, but Panther right fielder Brooke Schneider ran down a Kendyll Mann fly ball then threw a laser strike to catcher McCrae that beat Howell to the plate for an astounding double play to end the inning.

"Two things there, first, Brooke was my third baseman for most of the season, but we switched her up and literally worked on that throw all week, that's crazy," said Agurkis. "Second, me being a catcher, and Haylee executing the home plate block and tagout warmed my heart. That was exactly how I would have done it. She's like my Mini-me."

While both pitchers controlled the bats on either side for the next two innings, it was Ellis who blinked by hitting Schneider with a pitch after Kirk singled to right field. Ridgeview senior Mary Girgis singled to load the bases for the Panthers with Ky

Torrence slicing a grounder to Clay second baseman Mann that scored Kirk for the second run.

Bialek again issued just playable ground balls to the Clay batting lineup; three up, three outs.

Ridgeview got a sixth inning double from Hannah Crosby to ding Ellis, but the savvy Ellis calmly locked down to strand Crosby at third with a groundout and a whiff to Kirk.

In quarterfinals action last week, Ridgeview High freshman softball pitcher Saige Bialek tossed an eight-hit shutout as streaking Ridgeview downed visiting Ponte Vedra 5-0 in a Region 1-5A quarterfinal on May 11.

Against Gulf Breeze, the top seed team in the region and unbeaten prior to the game with Clay, the Dolphins got derailed by a 15 strikeout effort by Clay senior pitcher Gabbi Ellis who stifled the 25-0 Dolphins.

In other region playoffs, defending 5A champion Middleburg, the sixth seed, lost an eighth inning 5-4 game to Fort Walton Beach, the third seed, and, in 6A, Oakleaf lost a 2-0 match with number two Hagerty.



Saige Bialek will face formidable bats in region final against Deltona on Friday.

Indians throw passes; Daniels rumbles on ground

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS - With new head coach Steve Reynolds flexing a bit of air muscle via offensive coach Ken Mudge, the Orange Park High gunslinger from the Danny Green era, Keystone Heights High football had a little excitement in the air at Friday's Blue and White scrimmage.

What was evident for Reynolds was the team's overall conditioning and also the execution of the run game, led by tailback Cartez Daniels.

"He's going to be a force, Cartez, and our offensive line looked pretty good with just eight days of practice," said Reynolds. "We have the Keystone Heights size back on the offensive line, now, we as coaches have to fine tune the blocking schemes."

As for a possible passing game for the Indians attack, Reynolds used a few swing passes and slants to loosen up the defense; with middle linebacker Trey Jeffries lurk-

ing and defensive end Garrison Teague disrupting quarterback Jackson Parmeter's pocket.

"I saw some good solid technique tackling out there as we are not here to knock each other around," said defensive coordinator Lantz Lowery. "They got guys on the ground efficiently which is what we wanted today. Come season time, we'll be a little more active in our attack."

On the edge, Wyatt Van Zant was constantly near the ball and the secondary got two interceptions; one by Brad Lowery who nearly picked six it.

The lone score of the night, which ended 7-0, was a 10-play drive sprinkled with Daniels hitting the edge and Colton Hollingsworth pounding the interior. Hollingsworth is the little brother of All State running back Dalton Hollingsworth.

"He's just as ornery, a little smaller than Dalton, but a strong kid," said Reynolds. "He's in the weight room and, if he



STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Keystone Heights historical fielding of huge offensive linemen will continue behind, from left, Clayton Shaw, Tyler Duncan, Bryce Daniels and Brayden Wester.

gets that growth spurt as a sophomore, he'll run people over like his brother."

On the ever-famous formidable offensive line, the calling card for many Keystone Heights season, Reynolds liked his beefy boys up front; Clayton Shaw, Thylar

Duncan, Bryce Daniels, Brayden Wester and Luke Bacora.

"I like our size, our athleticism and they are all young guys hungry to dominate," said Reynolds. "I'm excited to see what they can do with Daniels behind them."



From left: Keystone Heights cheerleaders were smiling with energetic Blue and White action of the field led by running back Cartez Daniels, center, and sparked by fourth quarter running from Andrew Ulsch.



FIHS Scrimmage/FIHS

Fleming Island football got a quick look at the Chad Parker era of football as the former Orange Park and Bartram Trail high football coach is now heading up the Golden Eagles. Fleming Island will travel to Middleburg in a spring game Monday night clash on May 22.



STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Left: Omar Goosby made his big presence known as the focal point of the Blue Devil defense trying to stop hard running from Chandler Thomas, center, and pass slings to Payton Dykas under the guidance of offensive coach Brian Flaherty.

Coach Kennard likes the Blue Devil look

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

GREEN COVE SPRINGS - Without returning starter quarterback Merrick Rapoza behind center Cody Mobley due to baseball regionals, Clay High football coach Kyle Kennard got a good look at his young returners from last year's 3-7 team including backup Landon Chadwich who was efficient for the Blue Devil offense in the team's Saturday scrimmage at Clay High.

"We got some things to fix, but overall, they looked good, not a lot of penalties and some good adjustments to situations," said Kennard, who finished 3-7 last year after

a playoff berth two years ago. "We'll be alright. The line looked good, strong and fast, the backs were running hard; Chandler Thomas should be our lead guy and the outside ball guys; Payton Dykas, Antonio Thomas and Vonte Burke are good hands guys downfield. Burke also got a nice interception out there today."

On the defense, the big presence inside is junior Omar Goosby, who was in the Blue Devil backfield for most of the attack forcing Chadwich to be inventive on his feet.

"He's a monster," said Kennard. "We will build around his size up front."

On the line, led by center Cody Mobley, line coach Jim Reape liked Eli Iscoa and



Clay High's offensive line has been a historical power squad for Blue Devils and looks to keep that tradition up.

senior John Johnson as incoming strong man. Offensive coach Brian Flaherty is back to construct the Blue Devil attack.

On defense, Craig Nosse and Hunter Hill direct the attack on that side of the ball.



Broncos action

Middleburg High has a new quarterback and a new offensive look with Jayden Jenkins on the outskirts of the offense as well as normal tough hits from the defense with Austin "Cowboy" Cruce and DB Hasani Scott, left, throwing some plastic on an well-read swing pass.



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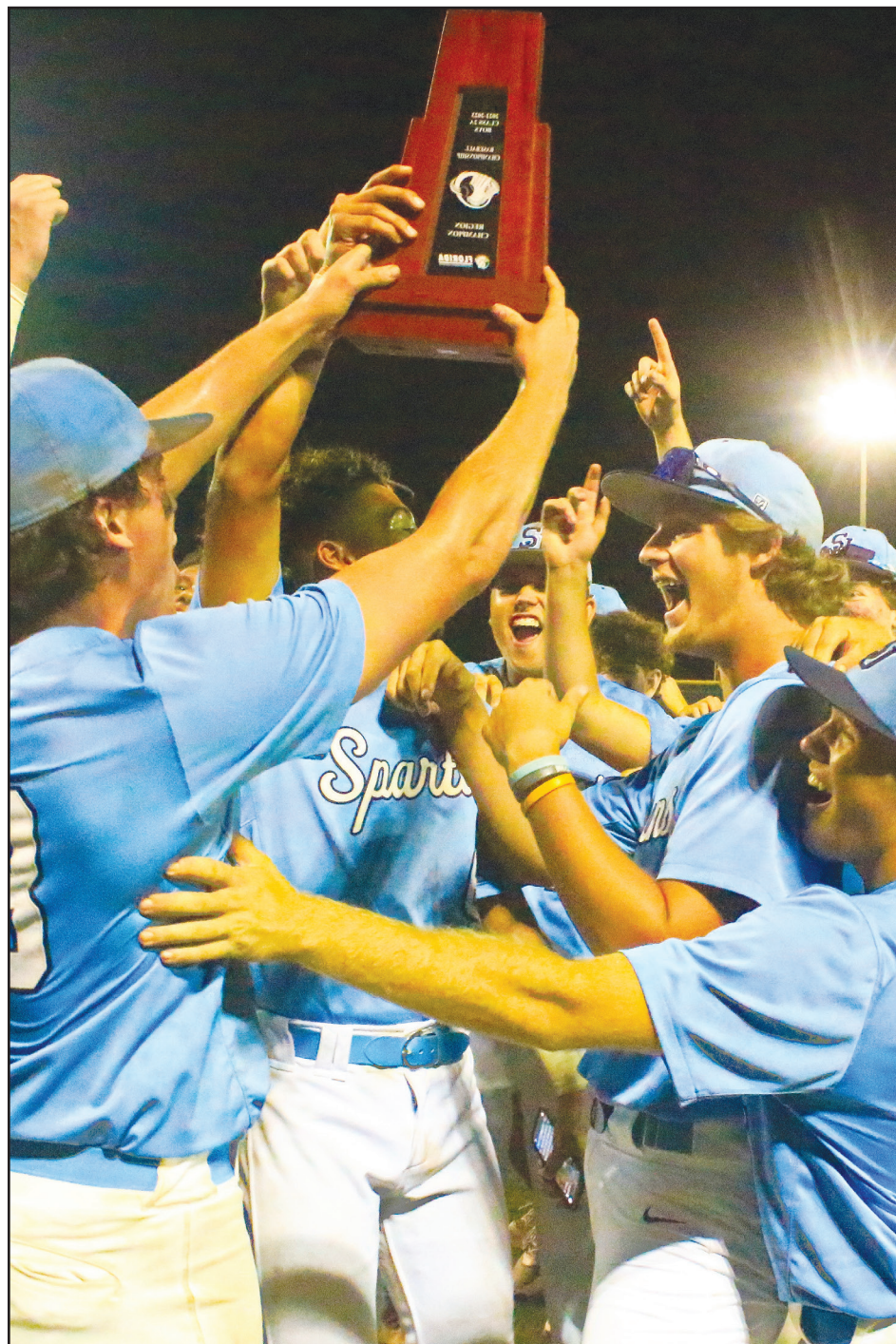
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STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

St. Johns Country Day School senior Jacob Thomas hoists region 1-2A championship trophy for team after 10-5 win over North Florida Christian.

Spartans

from page 25

game and, last year, losing to North Florida Christian, the eventual 2A runner-up to Miami Christian, in the same region championship game.

In the other three regions, Westminster Academy beat Miami Christian 3-1, Lakeland Christian beat Foundation 6-5 and Neumann beat Canterbury 9-4.

"We talk about the teams that we play throughout the season and know that this team is battle tested," said Spartan coach Tom Lucas. "We play in Georgia and all the best upper class teams in the area to be ready for games like this."

The Class 2A state semifinals are scheduled for Thurs., May 18 in Fort Myers with the championship game on Sat., May 20 at 11 a.m.

In the tense back and forth game against NFC, NFC scored the games first run off a base loaded single off starter Kody Daneault.

St. Johns answered with a Kyle Boylston single and a Jacob Thomas double to tie the game, but the Eagles answered that answer with back to back doubles to go up 2-1.

Daneault again answered the bell with a run scoring double pushing Kellen Brown across home plate on a nifty diving slide under NFC's catcher.

"When I got the go sign as I headed to third base, I knew I had to keep my speed and time the dive," said Brown, who executed a second home plate slide later in the game. "I just want to do my part of us winning games."

NFC got their own two run homer in the third to get the game to 5-4 before St. Johns got Brown around the diamond again and at home on a Hunter Rodgers single to 6-4. Still in the third, Daneault doubled to put the score to 7-4.

Both teams exchanged a handful of pitchers; Jeff Henry and Trevor Bradley for St. Johns, before Mamea's sixth inning dinger.

PUZZLE FUN

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

Level: Beginner

Title

from page 28

Opp's game-winning try was his fourth of the season to raise his point total to 34 points.

"I hope our seniors have learned a valuable lesson over the last four years that they can use in the fleet and be the best leaders they can be. No matter what the scoreboard says, if that's what happens then it's a job well done."

Earlier in the game, Opp scored the go ahead points with a 30 yard scamper.

The Golden Bears kicked the ball back to the other half of the pitch, but Krieger gained back over 20 meters on the kick return. Opp received a pass on the right sideline and slipped through a pair of ankle tackles. He ran over 30 meters before touching the ball down in the middle of the try zone for the go-ahead score in the 68th minute. Krieger put the ensuing conversion kick right down the middle of the uprights to give the Mids a 28-22 advantage.

Opp's statistics for 2023 included nine starts, six conversion kicks for 12 points and a season-high eight points on four made conversion kicks in a Navy 75-0 win over Southern Virginia earlier in the season.

The Naval Academy had wins of 71-0 over Air Force and 88-0 over The Citadel en route to their national title.

IN the DI-A National Championship Playoffs, Navy beat Army 30-6, No. 2-ranked Lindwood 12-10 and California 28-22 in the final game. Navy beat California 33-28 in regular season play on March 11.

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O	H	M			B	E	L		T	A	N	I	S			
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L	A	R	I		O	R	E	M		S	C	R	A	P		
M	R	N	A		E	A	R			C	H	A	R	Y		

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

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CRYPTO FUN

Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Solve the code to discover words related to surfing.
Each number corresponds to a letter.
(Hint: 18 = a)

A. 23 12 18 17 11

Clue: Where water meets land

B. 7 12 18 5 3

Clue: Surfer's tool

C. 23 2 5 10

Clue: Area of breaking wave

D. 1 18 4 16 17

Clue: Moving water

Answers: A. coast B. board C. curl D. waves

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to surfing.

RTSCE

Five empty boxes for the word.

Answer: Crest

Guess Who?

I am an actor born in Boston on June 13, 1981. I studied at Lee Strasberg Theatre and Film Institute, honing skills I'd later use to marvel film fans with my role as a world-saving captain.

Answer: Chris Evans

SURFER SLANG WORD SEARCH

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

WORDS

- AERIAL
- A-FRAME
- AIR
- BACKHAND
- BACKSIDE
- BAIL
- BARREL
- BLOWN OUT
- BOOGIE BOARD
- BOOST
- CHANNEL
- CHOPPY
- CLEAN
- CUTBACK
- DECK
- DING
- DUDE
- EPIC
- FLOATER
- GLASSY
- HUMPBACK
- PADDLE
- TUBE
- WAVE

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

CLAY COUNTY LEGAL NOTICES

scription of the property, and the names in which it was assessed are as follows:

Certificate No.: 637/2020
Legal Description: LOT 15 BLK 19 HIGHRIDGE ESTATE AS REC O R 3144 PG 462
Parcel ID No.: 210823-002695-000-00
Opening Bid Amount: \$1,862.80
Physical Address: 7168 WESLEYAN DR, KEYSTONE HEIGHTS
Classification: VACANT RESIDENTIAL
Name in which assessed: VERONA V LLC
 Said property being in the County of Clay, State of Florida.
 Unless said certificate shall be redeemed according to law, the property described in such certificate shall be sold to the highest bidder online on the 28th day of June, 2023 at 9:30 A.M. at www.clay.realtaxdeed.com.
 Dated this 21st day of April, 2023
 TARA S. GREEN
 Clay County Clerk & Comptroller
 Clay County, Florida
 By: Christina Spadea
 Deputy Clerk

Legal 66499 Published 4/27/2023 5/4/2023 5/11/2023 and 5/18/2023 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: WALDEMAR RODRIGUEZ-ELEMENTS HOME SOLUTIONS INC, the holder of the following certificate has filed said certificate for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The certificate number and year of issuance, the description of the property, and the names in which it was assessed are as follows:

Certificate No.: 625/2020
Legal Description: LOT 2 BLK 15 HIGHRIDGE ESTATES AS REC O R 842 PG 454
Parcel ID No.: 200823-002615-000-00
Opening Bid Amount: \$1,857.37
Physical Address: 7217 RADCLIFFE ST, KEYSTONE HEIGHTS
Classification: VACANT RESIDENTIAL
Name in which assessed: PRIGMORE NANCY C/O LESLIE E PRIGMORE
 Said property being in the County of Clay, State of Florida.
 Unless said certificate shall be redeemed according to law, the property described in such certificate shall be sold to the highest bidder online on the 28th day of June, 2023 at 9:30 A.M. at www.clay.realtaxdeed.com.
 Dated this 21st day of April, 2023
 TARA S. GREEN
 Clay County Clerk & Comptroller
 Clay County, Florida
 By: Christina Spadea
 Deputy Clerk

Legal 66498 Published 4/27/2023 5/4/2023 5/11/2023 and 5/18/2023 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: WALDEMAR RODRIGUEZ-ELEMENTS HOME SOLUTIONS INC, the holder of the following certificate has filed said certificate for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The certificate number and year of issuance, the description of the property, and the names in which it was assessed are as follows:

Certificate No.: 624/2020
Legal Description: LOT 1 BLK 15 HIGHRIDGE ESTATES AS REC O R 874 PG 641 & 2556 PG 615
Parcel ID No.: 200823-002614-000-00
Opening Bid Amount: \$1,810.39
Physical Address: 7221 RADCLIFFE ST, KEYSTONE HEIGHTS
Classification: VACANT RESIDENTIAL
Name in which assessed: LOLA WIEMER
 Said property being in the County of Clay, State of Florida.
 Unless said certificate shall be redeemed according to law, the property described in such certificate shall be sold to the highest bidder online on the 28th day of June, 2023 at 9:30 A.M. at www.clay.realtaxdeed.com.
 Dated this 21st day of April, 2023
 TARA S. GREEN
 Clay County Clerk & Comptroller
 Clay County, Florida
 By: Christina Spadea
 Deputy Clerk

Legal 66497 Published 4/27/2023, 5/4/2023, 5/11/2023 and 5/18/2023 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: WALDEMAR RODRIGUEZ-ELEMENTS HOME SOLUTIONS INC, the holder of the following certificate has filed said certificate for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The certificate number and year of issuance, the description of the property, and the names in which it was assessed are as follows:

Certificate No.: 588/2020
Legal Description: LOT 5 BLK 7 HIGHRIDGE ESTATES AS REC O R 2494 PG 1379
Parcel ID No.: 200823-002442-000-00
Opening Bid Amount: \$1,823.12
Physical Address: 6353 ANTIOCH AVE, KEYSTONE HEIGHTS
Classification: VACANT RESIDENTIAL
Name in which assessed: MICHELINE DORVAL
 Said property being in the County of Clay, State of Florida.
 Unless said certificate shall be redeemed according to law, the property described in such certificate shall be sold to the highest bidder online on the 28th day of June, 2023 at 9:30 A.M. at www.clay.realtaxdeed.com.

Legal 66343 Published 4/27/2023, 5/4/2023, 5/11/2023 and 5/18/2023 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

[clay.realtaxdeed.com](http://www.clay.realtaxdeed.com).
 Dated this 21st day of April, 2023
 TARA S. GREEN
 Clay County Clerk & Comptroller
 Clay County, Florida
 By: Christina Spadea
 Deputy Clerk

Legal 66496 Published 4/27/2023, 5/4/2023, 5/11/2023 and 5/18/2023 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

NOTICE OF ACTION FOR DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE (NO CHILD OR FINANCIAL SUPPORT)

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 4TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA
 CASE# 23-DR-381
 Division
 Maria De Lourdes Diaz
 Petitioner
 and
 Johnny De Los Santos
 Respondent.
 TO: Johnny De Los Santos
 1408 Palmer St, Green Cove Springs, FL 32043

YOU ARE NOTIFIED that an action for dissolution of marriage has been filed against you and that you are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, to it on Maria De Lourdes Diaz whose address is 1425 Woodland View Dr, Fleming Island, FL 32003, on or before June 2, 2023, and file the original with the clerk of this Court at 825 North Orange Ave, Green Cove Springs, FL 32043, before service on Petitioner or immediately thereafter. If you fail to do so, a default may be entered against you for the relief demanded in the petition.

Copies of all court documents in this case, including orders, are available at the Clerk of the Circuit Court's office. You may review these documents upon request.

You must keep the Clerk of the Circuit Court's office notified of your current address. (You may file Designation of Current mailing and E-Mail Address, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915.) Future papers in this lawsuit will be mailed or e-mailed to the addresses on record at the clerk's office.

WARNING: Rule 12.285, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure, requires certain automatic disclosure of documents and information. Failure to comply can result in sanctions, including dismissal or striking of pleadings.

Dated: April 18, 2023.
 CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
 By: Jennifer Brosky
 Deputy Clerk

Legal 66343 Published 4/27/2023, 5/4/2023, 5/11/2023 and 5/18/2023 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

Do You Sometimes... Wish Your Cell Phone was LOUDER??

- To Qualify:**
- Florida resident
 - Have hearing loss or speech disability
 - Over the age of 3



FTRI Can Help!

Florida residents with hearing loss are eligible to receive **FREE CELL PHONE AMPLIFIERS**

from Florida Telecommunications Relay, Inc., a nonprofit agency established in 1991

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XLCgo Amplifies up to 50 dBs
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www.ftri.org/free

Florida Telecommunications Relay, Inc.
 888-497-1410
www.ftri.org
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 Attention oxygen therapy users! Inogen One G4 is capable of full 24/7 oxygen delivery. Only 2.8 pounds. Free info kit. Call 877-929-9587

Miscellaneous

Prepare for power outages today with a GENERAC home standby generator \$0 Down + Low Monthly Pmt Request a free Quote. Call before the next power outage: 1-855-948-6176
 Eliminate gutter cleaning forever! LeafFilter, the most advanced debris-blocking gutter protection. Schedule free LeafFilter estimate today. 20% off Entire Purchase. 10% Senior & Military Discounts. Call 1-833-610-1936
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 Donate Your Car to Veterans Today! Help and Support our Veterans. Fast- FREE pick up. 100% tax deductible. Call 1-800-245-0398
 HughesNet- Finally, super-fast internet no matter where you live. 25 Mbps just \$59.99/mo! Un-limited Data is Here. Stream Video. Bundle TV & Internet. Free Installation. Call 866-499-0141
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 Inflation is at 40 year highs. Interest rates are way up. Credit Cards. Medical Bills. Car Loans. Do you have \$10k or more in debt? Call National Debt Relief to find out how to pay off your debt for significantly less than what you owe! Free quote: 1-877-592-3616
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 Are you a pet owner? Do you want to get up to 100% back on vet bills? Physicians Mutual Insurance Company has pet coverage that can help! Call 1-844-774-0206 to get a free quote or visit insurebarkmeow.com/ads
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AN EVENING WITH DR. ZAHY HAWASS
THE WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS ARCHAEOLOGIST

Miami: June 16 at 6 PM
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THE TIME TO REVEAL THE SECRETS OF ANCIENT EGYPT HAS FINALLY COME!
EXCITING ANNOUNCEMENTS & NEW GROUNDBREAKING DISCOVERIES THAT WILL BE REVEALED FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME!

Register now at: ZahiLectures.com

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904-579-2154
3513 U.S. Hwy 17
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MESSAGE TO ADVERTISERS

All ads are non-refundable. Please check your ad copy the first week of publication. We will only apply credit for the first run and credits are subject to approval of the publisher. If ad is canceled prior to the first insertion cancellation must be made by classified deadline of Monday by noon. Ads must comply with Federal, State &

local laws. We are not responsible for ad content. Ads are subject to approval by the publisher.

DEADLINE MONDAY NOON

LINER ADS

All line ads are 4 lines, 20-25 characters per line. Additional lines may be purchased. All rates are NET.

PRIVATE PARTY	COMMERCIAL
1 week \$14.50	1 week \$23
2 week \$24	2 week \$40
3 week \$32	3 week \$56
4 week \$40	4 week \$72

Cost includes online at: claytodayonline.com

EMPLOYMENT SPOTLIGHT

Ads are \$27 per column inch with a minimum of 2"

ESTATE & GARAGE SALES

\$21

BUSINESS & SERVICE DIRECTORY

1.5" x 2" \$80 for 4 weeks
1.5" x 4" \$160 for 4 weeks

Miscellaneous

DISCOUNT AIR TRAVEL. Call Flight Services for best pricing on domestic & international flights inside and from the US. Serving United, Delta, American & Southwest and many more airlines. Call for free quote now! Have travel dates ready! 866-245-7709

Gun Show

May 20th and 21st
Snyder Armory
9900 Normandy Blvd
Jacksonville 32221
Sat 9-4 Sun 9-3
904-481-8604 or
Cliffhangersgunshows.com

Burial plots for sale

2 side by side burial plots in The Garden of Faith at Holly Hill off Old Jennings Rd. \$3,200 each or best offer
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Attention: VIAGRA and CIALIS USERS! A cheaper alternative to high drug store prices! 50 Pill Special-Only \$99! 100% guaranteed. CALL NOW: 866-259-6816

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FREON WANTED: Certified buyer looking to buy R11, R12, R22 & more. Call Clarissa at 312-535-8384.

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BATH & SHOWER UPDATES in as little as ONE DAY! Affordable prices - No payments for 18 months! Lifetime warranty & professional installs. Senior & Military Discounts available. Call: 888-460-2264

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PROTECT YOUR HOME from pests safely and affordably. Pest, rodent, termite and mosquito control. Call for a quote or inspection today 888-498-0446

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Stone Medical Group, LLC

Assignment for the Benefit of Creditors Case No. 502023CA004713XXXXMB

Auction ends: Tues, May 23, 2023 at 10:00 A.M.

Assets located in: Pompano Beach, FL 33069

Surplus medical supplies, inventory and equipment

Auction will consist of: 2021 Isuzu FTR Cab Over Box Truck, Crown FC electric forklift FC4515-40, forklift chargers, Marathon Hy-press cardboard compactor/bailer, commercial weight scale, pallet wrapping machines, warehouse equipment, floor scrubber/cleaners, shrink wrapping machine, Crown PE 4500 electric pallet jack, shipping tables, warehouse supplies, office furniture, office supplies, kitchen appliances, metro racks, TV's, large quantity of assorted surplus medical supplies (60+ assorted pallets) and related equipment. Registration, catalog, photos and terms available at www.moeckerauctions.com

Preview: 05/22 by appointment. Call for details (954) 252-2887 | (800) 840-BIDS

<https://moeckerauctions.com/2023/02/22/florida-spine-and-joint-institute-llc-d-b-a-irise-3/> (No onsite attendance) AB-1098 AU-3219, Eric Rubin

Garage Sale

Garage Sale
1316 Plainfield Rd
Orange Park
Friday - Saturday
May 19th and 20th
8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

GARAGE SALE

Starting At
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For more information call (904) 579-2154 to speak with a Sales Rep. today!

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NEW BUSINESS STARTING A NEW BUSINESS?

Have you registered your name with the state and need to run a fictitious name advertisement?

It is a very easy process. Email legal@claytodayonline.com or call 904-579-2153 to request the necessary form. It will run in our legal section for one week. The cost is \$35. An affidavit will be mailed to you.

NOW HIRING

NOW HIRING

Concrete Curb Finisher

Essential Job Functions:
The following are typical duties for this position. These are not to be considered exclusive or all-inclusive. Other duties may be required.

- Hand finish concrete curb, sidewalk, and inlet.
- Spread concrete to specified depth and workable consistency.
- Levels, smooths, and shapes surfaces of freshly poured concrete, using straight edge, float, machine trowels, and/or power screed.
- Finishes concrete surfaces using power trowel; rub and patch concrete to meet quality standards.
- Loads, transports, and unloads tools, equipment, and supplies required for each project.
- Perform minor maintenance and cleaning activities with tools and equipment.
- Responsible for observing and complying with all safety policies and guidelines.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

Requirements

- Candidate must possess at least 2 year experience as a Concrete Finisher.
- Interpersonal competencies that include a drive for results, effective oral communication skills, organization, planning, trust, respect, being dependable and cooperation. Must be punctual and have reliable transportation to job sites.

Heavy Civil Estimator

Essential Job Functions:
The following are typical duties for this position. These are not to be considered exclusive or all-inclusive. Other duties may be required

- Analyzing requirement documents, blueprints, and project plans to gain a thorough understanding of the project
- Determining what factors of production will influence the cost of a service or project
- Preparing material estimates and cost estimates for the product or service
- Creating labor estimates for any project
- Developing and maintaining relationships with company vendors and contractors
- Using bid data to prepare a detailed cost analysis
- Presenting prepared estimates to management
- Compiling and recording actual costs

Requirements

- Must have 5+ years in construction/estimating. Background in hard bid and design build procurement
- Strong background in Excel and Trimble Business Center or AGTEK
- Experience with HCSS HeavyBid preferred
- Candidate must possess a strong work ethic; good interpersonal skills; demonstrate good organization, verbal, and written communication skills
- Ability to work independently and self-motivate

Pipe Crew

Essential Job Functions:
The following are typical duties for this position. These are not to be considered exclusive or all-inclusive. Other duties may be required.

JB Coxwell Contracting, Inc is currently looking for a Pipe Crew to include: **Foreman, Tailman, Equipment Operator.**

- Perform a variety of tasks involving physical labor at construction sites.
- Clean and prepare construction site to eliminate possible hazards
- Dig ditches or trenches, backfill excavations, or compact and level earth to grade specifications.
- Lay water lines, storm water lines, sanitary sewer, and other underground utilities.
- Properly operate hand and power tools.
- Responsible for safety in all aspects of work

Requirements

- The requirements of this position involve extended periods of strenuous physical activity under various field and weather conditions. Applicant must be able to lift 75lbs, carry, stand, walk on uneven surfaces, manually manipulate, grasp, reach out, climb, kneel, bend, twist, and push/pull.
- Foreman and equipment operator must possess at least 1 year experience.
- Must be able to read and follow plans, blueprints, and instructions from supervisors, lay out the job, and work efficiently with the materials and tools of the trade.
- Interpersonal competencies that include a drive for results, effective oral communication skills, organization, planning, trust, respect, being dependable and cooperation. Must be punctual and have reliable transportation to job sites.

Concrete Foreman

Essential Job Functions:
The following are typical duties for this position. These are not to be considered exclusive or all-inclusive. Other duties may be required.

- Lead crew in everyday operations.
- General Knowledge of concrete standard specifications for public and private sectors
- Set example for company safety culture.
- Maintain a clean driving record.
- Layout foundations and set forms to correct elevation and location.
- Schedule concrete pours with the project Superintendent, maintain pour schedule and accurately calculate yardage.
- Mentor and teach subordinates.
- Move materials, tools, and machinery necessary for the job.
- Professionally represent the company.

Requirements

- Candidate must possess at least 3 years' experience as a Concrete Foreman.
- Must be able to read and follow plans, blueprints, and instructions from supervisors, lay out the job, experience pouring curb with machine, and work efficiently with the materials and tools of the trade.
- Interpersonal competencies that include a drive for results, effective oral communication skills, organization, planning, trust, respect, being dependable and cooperation. Must be punctual and have reliable transportation to job sites.

J.B. Coxwell Contracting was established in 1983. We offer top pay, benefits, gym membership reimbursement, 401(k), holidays, vacation and more. J.B. Coxwell Contracting is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer and is a drug-free workplace.

PINWOOD APARTMENTS AVAILABLE

Pinewood Apartments, a USDA/RD elderly project in Green Cove Springs is available for purchase by a nonprofit or unit of government for 180 days from November 24, 2022.
Contact Jay Mason at jay.mason@covington.net

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With purchase of a new Safe Step Walk-In Tub. Not applicable with any previous walk-in tub purchase. Offer available while supplies last. No cash value. Must present offer at time of purchase. CSLB 1082165 NSCB 0082999 0083445

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\$0 MONEY DOWN + LOW MONTHLY PAYMENT OPTIONS

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Contact a Generac dealer for full terms and conditions

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Cardiologist



Nothing is more important than your heart. That's why we recruit the top-notch cardiologists, like **Chetan Hampole, MD**, who was named the Best Cardiologist in Clay County for the third year in a row by local residents.

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