

CLAY TODAY

Merry Christmas

FROM OUR FAMILY TO YOURS



THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2023

WWW.CLAYTODAYONLINE.COM

VOLUME 61, NO. 51 \$1.00

'Searching for Augusta Savage'

Cinematographer completing documentary on Augusta Savage's career, lost artwork

By Lee Wardlaw
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GREEN COVE SPRINGS – Black History Month will include a 22-minute PBS documentary called "Searching for Augusta Savage" by Clay High graduate and Lake Asbury cinematographer Nick Solorzano.

The film about Savage will premiere the "American Master Shorts," which will air during Black History Month in February.

The film crew will work to uncover the

SEE FILM, 17



STAFF PHOTOS BY LEE WARDLAW

Lake Asbury cinematographer Nick Solorzano, a 2009 graduate of Clay High's television production program, is happy to highlight the Augusta Savage Museum and Mentoring Center with a PBS documentary.



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY BROADHURST FAMILY

Neighbors resuscitate 17-year-old in cardiac arrest

FLEMING ISLAND – Riley Broadhurst was running through his neighborhood on Dec. 13, training for Ninja Warriors competitions. Moments later, he was on the ground in cardiac arrest. A woman visiting her son discovered him on Castille Drive and quickly yelled for help. Three neighbors came to the rescue and provided CPR until Clay County Fire Rescue arrived and shocked his heart three times to get it back into rhythm. The Fleming Island High senior survived because of the heroic efforts of his neighbors and first responders. He should be released from the Intensive Care Unit at Wolfson Children's Hospital on Friday to join his family for Christmas. See the story on page 3.

From concept to construction

Work underway at new The Way Free Medical Clinic on College Drive

By Don Coble
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ORANGE PARK – For the first time in three years, Don Fann doesn't need to close his eyes to imagine what The Way Free Medical Clinic on College Drive will look like.

All he has to do is walk through the 5,100-square-foot site and watch workers framing walls and pouring concrete.

With every nail driven, the medical and dental care facility for uninsured and under-insured residents is becoming a reality.

"We worked as a team of doctors and architects and others to design what

the clinic's functionality was going to look like," said Executive Director Don Fann. "It was always a concept on paper, and then once they started laying the framing the interior framing, I could actually walk inside

SEE CLINIC, 16

PHOTOS BY THE WAY FREE MEDICAL CENTER

After getting donations and the first installment of a \$1.45 million payment from the State of Florida, workers are framing the interior of the new free medical clinic on College Drive. In addition to remodeling the existing building, work will include a 2,200-square-foot expansion, according to Executive Director Don Fann.



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GCS council honors Clay High World Champion pitcher, then tackles two high-profile issues

By Jack Randall
jack@claytodayonline.com

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – “That’s a hard act to follow,” said City Attorney L. J. Arnold following the ceremony where Dane Dunning was given Keys to the City after he and his Texas Rangers teammates won the World Series in October.

After a standing ovation and photos of the World Champion, the clamor from sports enthusiasts trickled out of the room, and the council changed gears to listen to multiple high-profile public hearings for two new citywide ordinances.

The first ordinance granted the city permission to lease the old firehouse building it owns at 25 Roderigo Ave. to the Green Cove Springs Wrestling Club.

Richard Knoff’s workshop volunteer spoke against the ordinance. He said the

firehouse is critical to their mission of repairing and maintaining nearly 1,000 bicycles a year. The refurbished bicycles are handed out year-round to the Quigley House, Clay County schools, and most recently last Saturday at the 43rd J.P. Hall Charities Children’s Christmas Party.

“We’ve already started working on more bikes,” the volunteer said. “We’re expecting more next year. I hope you will look on that favorably. We can’t afford to lease anything, and that is the bottom line.

“Thousands have been helped, and thousands more will be too, with your help.”

Clay High wrestling coach James Reape said the station is needed to nurture youth wrestling for a productive place for children after school surrounded by positive role models. The space would provide



STAFF PHOTO BY RANDY LEFKO

Former Clay High baseball pitcher Dane Dunning accepts the key to the city from Green Cove Springs Mayor Connie Butler, left, and the city council members behind him while wife Rachel and son Mack Anthony enjoy the Tuesday ceremony at the Green Cove Springs City Council meeting.

more room for children of different ages and fitness levels.

“We want to make improvements to the facility. We would add a bathroom for women and men. We’d happily invest in the building. Our interest is to get kids in-

involved in sports,” he said.

Although the ordinance merely permitted the council to lease the building, the council was already feeling pulled in two

SEE COUNCIL, 14

Aaron Bean reflects halfway mark into his first Congressional term

By Jack Randall
jack@claytodayonline.com

U.S. Rep. Aaron Bean (R-Fla.) settled into a leather chair in the Speaker’s Lobby in the Capitol Building. He tossed a log into the fireplace and took a phone call from Clay Today. The smell of smoke hung in the air.

The representative had much to reflect on. The 118th Congress has been tumultuous, and the year isn’t even over. Speaking of the “Speaker’s Lobby,” this year saw former Speaker Rep. Kevin McCarthy ousted on Oct. 3 – the first time in U.S. history that the House of Representatives had removed its speaker from office.

Bean voted against the motion. He described the year, his first year as a congressional representative, as constantly putting out small fires.

“There’s been plenty of long hours, especially now. We’ve been working tirelessly toward getting a budget and a new speaker. The country is in peril. It has been an unprecedented year,” Bean said.

A razor-thin majority separated McGar-

thy from his job, Bean said.

“There are 222 Republicans and 213 Democrats in the House. Kevin McCarthy had a 95% approval rate and still lost by four votes. Representatives from Biden’s districts – those who think much differently than Clay County – were able to take advantage of the situation.”

The interview with Bean was interrupted by chiming bells, which called the representatives to the floor. Bean took his seat in the chamber, where he voted “Yea” for a resolution pertaining to small business lending and “Nay” in the vote that would expel Rep. George Santos.

Both measures passed. Santos is the sixth member and only Republican ever expelled from the House.

Still, the representative remains hopeful in the face of great uncertainty. He said he was excited for Rep. Mike Johnson’s leadership to move the country forward.

“Under his leadership, we will restore our economic prosperity, secure our border, rein in government abuse and fight for our fundamental freedoms,” he said in an earlier press release in October.

Bean hasn’t let the jostling on Capitol Hill distract him from fulfilling his campaign promises: securing the southern border, protecting 2nd amendment rights and combatting inflation.

“Everything I do is through that lens,”

he said over the phone in an airport. “Clay County is a conservative district, and my campaign was built on conservative tenets.”

He cited Commitment to America as an outline for his policy stances and personal values: an economy that’s strong, a nation that’s safe, a future that’s built on freedom, and a government that’s accountable.

“We spend three-quarters of our time (in the House) fighting Biden,” Bean said. “Can you believe he wants to ban gas stoves?”

Bean serves on the House Committee on Small Business. On that committee, Bean introduced the anti-fraud legislation referred to colloquially as the “We Want Our Money Back Act,” which would require the Inspector General of the Small Business Administration to report to Congress with quarterly updates on the ongoing Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and Economic Injury Disaster Loans fraud investigations.

“The COVID pandemic is behind us... but fraud remains,” Bean said.

Bean quoted the inspector general, saying, “Over \$200 billion of pandemic loan programs were potentially fraudulent... He has identified over 90,000 fraud cases, over (20% of all applicants).”

During social distancing, loan applicants would have to submit a face scan to

ensure that one person received one loan. To circumvent the authentication measure, many fraudulent applicants scanned the faces of Barbie or Ken dolls to collect multiple loans. One individual used the method to acquire 19 loans, Bean said.

“This was a big win for the Bean Team,” he said. “That was the first bill that our team introduced, and it passed. It passed unanimously.”

More than anything, the representative wanted to stress how proud he was to represent Florida’s Fourth Congressional District.

“It is the greatest honor. I can’t thank the voters enough. There is nothing I take more seriously. I was born here. I’ve lived here. And my kids are raised here. It’s paradise. It’s home.

“I used to date a girl in Green Cove Springs, and for one of our first dates, I took her to the Clay Theatre. The two of us just recently celebrated our 31st wedding anniversary.”

When the interview ended, the representative flew home but couldn’t stay long for the holidays. The representative is preparing for next year’s election season – and all that will be in store – as he continues to represent his constituents from Northeast Florida. And if the second year of his term is anything like his first, it is shaping up to be a busy year indeed.



Aaron Bean

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Periodical Postage Paid at Orange Park, Florida

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Quick-thinking neighbors save 17-year-old boy in cardiac arrest

Christmas miracle: Riley Broadhurst revived by CPR, three electric shocks

By Don Coble
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FLEMING ISLAND – Riley Broadhurst likely would have died if Vivian Primizic hadn't left her son's house early on Wednesday, Dec. 13, to drive home.

Broadhurst probably wouldn't have survived if neighbors Bobby Dopson, Mike Leach and Stephanie Pratt didn't hear Primizic's screams.

Dopson was a retired fireman. Pratt is a former emergency room nurse. Leach was retired from the military. All knew how to administer cardiopulmonary resuscitation.



Riley Broadhurst

Leach did chest compressions; Pratt gave mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

Clay County Fire Rescue arrived and needed to shock his heart three times to restore it to a normal rhythm.

After arriving at HCA Florida Orange Park Hospital, doctors and nurses continued to provide life-saving treatment until he was stable enough to be transported to Wolfson Children's Hospital in Jacksonville.

"I was there when he came out of the ambulance," Christian said. "It was the most horrifying thing I've ever seen. But I am glad I was there because I would rather have been anywhere else."

So many moving parts. So many opportunities for a split-second of indecision to be fatal.

"If any small thing had happened differently, he would not be with us today," said his mother, Dr. Jennifer Broadhurst.

But not on his neighbor's watch.

"This kiddo was lucky that it happened in front of our home and that there were people that had background and training who weren't afraid to help out," Pratt said. "I mean, our neighborhood is one where we all kind of keep to ourselves and do our own thing. We'd get together for different community events; otherwise, we just keep to ourselves. Something had to be done. We all sprung into action. You can't ignore that."

Riley should leave Wolfson's Intensive Care Unit on Friday. He will be home to celebrate what his father calls "our Christmas miracle."

Ninja Warrior wins the fight to save his life

Riley trains to be a Ninja Warrior. He was running when he collapsed a few doors down from his house.

"He's ridiculously healthy; he's an athletic monster," said his father, Dr. Christian Broadhurst, the senior veterinarian at the Clay County Humane Society.

Riley's heart passed a stress test "with flying colors" on Tuesday. He received an MRI on Wednesday and was to have an in-

ternal defibrillator implanted on Thursday. If there are no setbacks, Riley will return home to a neighborhood that's eager to see him.

"I was concerned. I have worked in an ER for 15 years, and I've done CPR a lot of times," Pratt said. "None of them have ever hit me like this kid. You know, because it was just different. I wasn't in an ER. It wasn't my team of people and in my controlled environment. It was in a street in my next-door neighbor's house. It was personal. It kind of stuck with me a little bit more."

"The best possible outcome would be that this kid was alive. Now he's going to

be home for Christmas. We had a couple of days of not knowing. My neighbors and I were all checking in with each other to find out."

Dopson said his response was fueled by adrenaline.

"I just had open heart surgery about five weeks ago when this happened," he said. "Man, I was struggling to do it. But you know, you have to do what you have to do."

Riley's late grandmother "played enormous part"

The father said the collapse came on the first anniversary of the passing of Riley's grandmother. The family planned a vigil to remember her later that night, followed by watching a musical.

"We wanted to do the things she would have wanted us to do," Christian said.

"Instead, we ended up at the hospital trying to save his life. I have absolutely no doubt that she played an enormous part in his making it through this in one piece."

"It could have been the worst day of my life, and it turned into one of the best days. The same 24-hour period was unreal."

Riley still faces "a long road ahead of him," but he suffered "no long-term effects," Jennifer said.

Christian said he will be forever grateful to his neighbors. "If anyone had not been where they were, my son would not be with us," he said. "It's divine intervention. I think that's the truth."

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An interview with

Santa Claus

Toys continually change, but not a child's creativity, curiosity

By **Kylie Cordell**
For Clay Today

Kylie Cordell, who worked as a correspondent at Clay Today last year, wrote a heartfelt Christmas story about a fictitious interview with Santa Claus. It was one of our most popular features and won the Florida Press Association award for feature writing. With great reverence, we are sharing it again.

NORTH POLE – We sat by an open fire with stockings hanging from the mantle, draped by a pine and spruce garland with red and gold ornaments. On either side of the stone fireplace were red armchairs, the same color as Santa's coat. He smiled, rosy cheeks crinkling the corners of his twinkling blue eyes, and stroked his long white beard.

"Toys are constantly changing," Santa Claus said. "They have more bells, whistles, gigabytes and bandwidth. It is truly fascinating. There is so much creativity in a toy, so much possibility. As a toy maker, I'm always fascinated by new toys."

To keep up with the latest trends in the industry, Santa's Workshop has had to become more innovative in rapidly changing times.

"Children ask for the most interesting things: unicorns, jetpacks, a yacht and

SEE SANTA, 5

OPINIONS & VIEWPOINTS



Christmas: A time for holiday cheer, great movies

By **Don Coble**
Managing Editor

Christmas Day in 1966 was a special time for this 9-year-old. I got the Stingray bicycle I so desperately wanted from my mother and a fishing rod from my grandfather.



Don Coble

Back then, gifts were more about the delight of giving. I miss those days.

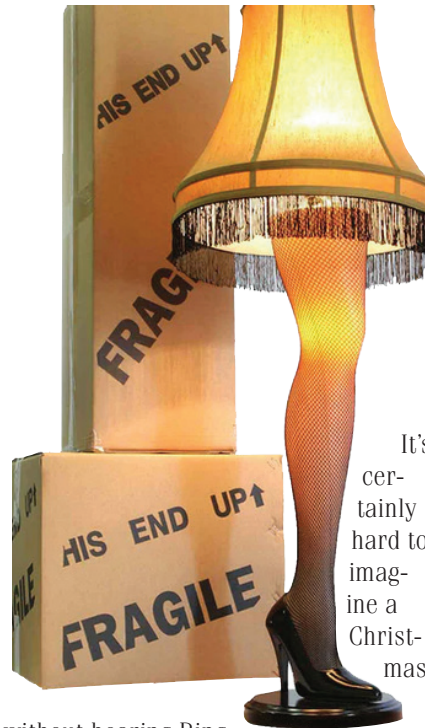
That year, my grandparents left their farm and drove 40 minutes to our house to treat us to the movie, "The South of Music."

We dressed up like we were going to church. My brother and I wore a tie. My sister and mom put on their Sunday dresses.

The movie was incredible. I still hum, "I am 16, going on 17," while grilling outside.

Movies, especially at Christmas time, were better back then. They told fascinating stories with heart-wrenching plots and satisfying endings.

That's why, nearly 60 years later, "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" with Burl Ives singing the title song, "A Charlie Brown Christmas," "Santa Claus is Coming to Town," "Little Drummer Boy" and "Frosty the Snowman" are still classics. I watch them every year, and I fondly remember the Norelco electric shaver commercials with Santa Claus riding one down a ski slope.



It's certainly hard to imagine a Christmas

without hearing Bing Crosby singing in "White Christmas," or seeing Susie, Doris and John suddenly stopping at an empty house to find Kris Kringle's cane against the fireplace in "A Miracle on 34th Street." That scene still gives me goosebumps, especially since my late wife and I always went to New York during the first week of December to see them turn the lights on the Christmas tree at Rockefeller Plaza, and for her to see "the real Santa" at Macy's.

Admit it, you still chant, "Stink. Stank. Stunk," when you think of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas!"

I have to admit, I still haven't watched "It's a Wonderful Life," and I

SEE MOVIES, 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.

Overweening: (oh-ver-WEE-ning) an adjective that means showing excessive confidence or pride.

"I didn't believe a word of the politician's overweening speech."

This Week in History

Five years ago, 2018

- "Tad's Toys" made its inaugural premiere at Orange Park Elementary School. Kathy Lawrence, project manager of Network for Students with Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities founded the annual Christmas toy drive to honor her son. Tad, a senior at Orange Park High with cystic fibrosis, died in 2003. Tad's attitude and memory inspired her, she said.

- Gov. Rick Scott announced the appointments of Leslie Dougher, James Reid, and Rev. Bobby Crum and the reappointment of Sam Garrison to

the St. Johns River State College District Board of Trustees. Garrison would eventually be elected to the Florida House of Representatives.

10 years ago, 2013

- Green Cove Springs-based Vac-Con announced a \$5.8 million sale of 18 of its signature excavation trucks to the water and sewer supplier for the city of Lima, Peru. The 18 trucks were shipped from the Port of Jacksonville's Blount Island Marine Terminal.

- Mark Phelps the assistant principal at Charles E. Bennett Elementary School in Green Cove Springs was surprised with a flash mob as a farewell to celebrate his upcoming retirement after a nearly 30-year career.

20 years ago, 2003

- The Clay County Sheriff's Office reported that a string of automobile burglaries had ended with the arrests of four area teens. The break-ins occurred primarily in the Ridgeview and Orange Park South areas of Clay County.

- Mitchell Watts turned himself over to

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.

Movies

from page 4

really don't know why.

I still have a miniature leg lamp from "A Christmas Story" in storage. It must be from Italy because it's "frageelay"

"March of the Wooden Soldiers" is curiously funny and scary when Laurel and Hardy rent a room in Mother Peep's Shoe in Toyland. When she can't afford her mortgage payment, the comic duo convinces the Wooden Soldiers to fend off an attack from the banker's bogeymen. Who thinks of things that clever?

I certainly don't want a lump of coal in my stocking, so I must admit there have been some good Christmas movies in the past 30 years.

"Home Alone" highlights the genuine

love between family. "Elf" is a winsome tale of a delightfully uncomplicated and gullible man who travels from the North Pole to New York City. How can you go wrong with Buddy the Elf's four-group food pyramid – candy, candy canes, candy corn and syrup?

Despite sewage spewing from Eddie and Catherine's motorhome and getting a year-long Jelly of the Month Club membership, "National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation" was amusing. Who hasn't blown a fuse from too many outdoor lights?

Along those same lines, Bill Murray's "Scrooged" is a modern adaption of Charles Dickens' 1843 classic, "A Christmas Carol." It's also the only time four of the six Murray brothers – including Joel, Brian-Doyle and John – appear in the same film.

Santa

from page 4

carpet shampooers. But for the most part, they just want toys. Christmas is still about toys when you're a child," he said.

"We aim to touch as many lives as possible. As you can imagine, it's a lot to manage on my own, and there are a lot of children expecting presents under the tree, so I outsource from international companies, especially the high-tech product- technology has never been my strong suit, as the younger elves like to remind me," he said, chuckling.

"But you can be assured that my most trusted elves oversee the production of every assembly line," he added with a wink. Although technology has affected toy manufacturing, toy delivery continues to occur through the same age-old, mysterious process. So how does he do it?

"I'm a jolly old elf with a magic bag of toys in a sleigh pulled by flying reindeer," he said. "I've got all I need. Plus, I have secret helpers all around the world."

Next year, Santa will be pushing for an internship program to bring in fresh minds worldwide.

"We're calling it the YETI Program or Young Entrepreneurs Take Initiative. I thought of the name myself," he said, beaming. The program aims to improve toy quality, increase production and enhance business continuity.

"We want to make the best toys, and there are no better experts than the youth. They have such wonderful ideas."

Toys are a tool of the imagination and are a much more precious gift than anything wrapped in a candy cane striped box. Imagination, Santa said, is where the real magic comes from, the spark of creativity that makes a toy more than just a toy.

"Toys are constantly changing, but children still like to do what children have always liked to do," he said. "They enter this world as they always have filled with curiosity and wonder."

They pretend to be adventurers, defenders, makers and heroes. They still enjoy collecting, competing, building, taking apart, launching, listening, solving, setting

up and dressing up.

"That's what I really hear when they whisper in my ear or send me a letter. It's not just about what they want but who they want to be. You never know how a toy can help reveal a child's path to lifelong happiness and fulfillment," he said. "Watching them grow up is both the most wonderful and hardest part of my job."

Santa Claus still keeps an eye out for every child, even after they grow up and have children.

"You know I love talking with children – their faces and little voices, the ways they pronounce words. It's the most magical sound on earth," he said, leaning forward in his seat. "However, my favorite part is when I glance over to see the faces of parents, many of whom sat on my lap when they were children. You can see it in their eyes – for a brief moment, they believe again."

Grown-ups, Santa said, sometimes lose sight of what it was like to be a child. They lose their imagination and sense of wonder.

"In my experience, we give imagination less value and space as we grow up. We are taught to value material things. We stop dreaming. We stop questioning, "what if?" We stop believing," he said. "But like I tell my elves, it's never too late to have a happy childhood. It's never too late to believe."

So, how can we reconnect to our inner child?

"Spend time with children, simple as that. Don't just parent them; learn to see through their eyes. Play their games. Build a snowman or start a snowball fight. Bake cookies from scratch. Drink hot chocolate with marshmallows. Tell them a bedtime story and act out the characters. Smile often. Love like a child loves, innocently and freely," Santa said.

"Christmas can mean many things to different people, but Christmas is exactly what it has always been for me: a night for a miracle. It's a time for hope, joy, and peace to take center stage. And it's necessary to pause and remember that the gift of being loved by another is the greatest gift of all."

That is the true gift of Christmas.

Although it's the season to be merry, some Christmas movies are like getting socks and underwear under the tree. They don't inspire a lot of joy.

Take all the Christmas movies on Hallmark. Please. They all have the same storylines. It's as if the writers created one script and stretched it into 25 movies. I can't wait until the holidays are over and reruns of "Monk" return.

Because the story happens during Christmas, you can hardly call "Trading Places" or "Gremlins" a holiday movie.

Under no circumstance should "Die

Hard" and "Bad Santa" be considered Christmas movies. The season shouldn't include flicks with the seven words you can't say on television or assault weapons. So to all of you "Die Hard" fans, stop it. Take a sip of eggnog and step away from the remote.

Yippee Ki-Yay and Merry Christmas to all.

History

from page 4

the Clay County Sheriff's Office after confessing that he sedated and then killed Carrie Cromwell, his long-time girlfriend. Her buried remains were unearthed from the backyard of the house they rented. She had been missing since 2001.

30 years ago, 1993

- Wright's Clay County Farms an-

nounced it would cease monthly production of two million pounds of milk at its site on County Road 315, west of Green Cove Springs citing allegations of criminal charges that the company polluted nearby Peter's Creek.

- Officials on the Clay County Hospital Authority awaited of official word on a buyout offer for Clay Memorial Hospital in Green Cove Springs from Kentucky-based Vencor Inc.

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CLUES ACROSS

- Nocturnal S. American rodent
- Requesting
- Give temporarily
- Happiness
- Military branch
- ___, denotes past
- Middle Eastern city
- Air hostesses
- Partner to Pa
- Percussion instrument
- Popular computers
- Decrease light
- Valley in the Osh Region
- To ___ his own
- Absence of difficulty
- Notice announcing intended marriage read out in church
- Trims by cutting
- Impact
- Military member
- A French river
- Member of prehistoric people in Mexico
- Messenger ribonucleic acid
- Musician Clapton
- Greek sophist
- Largest English dictionary (abbr.)
- Narrow valley
- A way to disentangle
- Indicates not an issue (abbr.)
- Recommending

- Genus of legumes
- Friend to Larry and Curly
- Off-Broadway theater award
- Fencers
- Small Eurasian deer
- Denoting passerine birds
- Separate by category

CLUES DOWN

- Colorless fluid part of blood
- Of a main artery
- Photographic equipment
- Confirms a point
- Developed over time
- Not the leader
- ___ Lang (country singer)
- Adults need one
- Nests of pheasants
- Antelopes
- One quintillion bytes (abbr.)
- Japanese three-stringed lute
- Type of cat
- Cools your home
- The ancient Egyptian sun god
- Pouches
- Trigraph
- Form of Persian spoken in Afghanistan
- ___ route
- Body part
- Bridge building degree
- Indicates position
- Political action committee
- Tasty snack
- Part of a quadruped
- Locate
- Pitching statistic
- Of I
- City in Utah
- Football players in the trenches
- Hammer is one
- A Nightmarish street
- Performers
- Slang for cut or scrape
- More breathable
- Most slick
- Provokes
- Home to college's Flyers
- Sodium
- Large fish of mackerel family
- Zero
- ___ and behold
- The Palmetto State
- Popular Tom Cruise movie franchise (abbr.)

'A hero remembered never dies'

Rain couldn't keep 150 from honoring veterans with wreaths at Keystone Heights Cemetery

By Don Coble
don@claytodayonline.com

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – As the rain slowly turned from pesky to drenching, retired U.S. Marine Gayward Hendry never balked. His jaw remained chiseled; his words remained poignant; his resolve remained focused.

Saturday's Wreath Across America honored and remembered veterans at more than 3,400 cemeteries nationwide. For a soldier like Hendry, respect for the military really was service above self.

"There may be a day when we can't do this. With all of the things going on in this country, you don't know," he said. "But today is not that day!"



STAFF PHOTOS BY DON COBLE

The threat of rain didn't dampen the patriotic duties of more than 150 people at the Keystone Heights Cemetery. Retired U.S. Marine Gayward Hendry provided a powerful recollection of what it means to remember the memories of soldiers. The Wreaths Across America ceremony included songs from the Keystone Heights Elementary Chorus and the ceremonial laying of wreaths at every veteran's grave.

Hendry was the keynote speaker at the Keystone Heights Cemetery for the annual remembrance. Keystone Heights Wreaths Across America Chair Tina Bullock spearheaded a year of fundraising to ensure every veteran in the city's cemetery received a fresh evergreen wreath at their gravesite.

"Our mission today is to recognize the fall, honor those that serve and their families and teach the next generation the value of freedom," Bullock said.

"At our Keystone Heights Cemetery, we have over 560 veterans laid to rest here."

Bullock said the organization is funded solely by "folks like us."

Because the December storm was ap-

proaching, Bullock said wreaths were laid at the Bradford County side of the cemetery before Saturday's program. Also, wire stands were erected in advance at graves so families, fellow veterans and residents could quickly find each site.

The Keystone Heights Elementary Chorus sang patriotic songs at the beginning and end of the ceremony. Hendry thanked them and reminded everyone the young singers represented the future of the country. The rain started midway into Gayward's address. But like most, he didn't walk away.

"It's a poor nation that has no heroes," he said. "But it's a poorer nation that fails to honor its heroes."



See more photos on page 24.



"A hero remembered never dies."

Australian native Joan Jones helped create the Veterans Memorial Pathway at the cemetery in 2006, and she followed that by starting a local Wreaths Across America program in 2012. Jones died in 2022. She was 95. But her legacy – and the community's commitment to remember its veterans – continues.



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Firetrucks and free hot cocoa

Residents line the streets for Orange Park's holiday parade



By Lee Wardlaw
lee@claytodayonline.com

STAFF PHOTOS BY LEE WARDLAW

Hundreds of residents followed firetrucks, police vehicles and first-responder vehicles as they weaved around town for the annual Firetruck Parade.

The community was treated to free hot cocoa and food trucks to support local and county businesses.

ORANGE PARK- Hundreds of Clay County residents enjoyed the Orange Park Firetruck Parade last Friday Night, which started at Town Hall.

The procession traveled west down Kingsley Avenue and to Arbor Circle, wrapped around to Holly Point Road, moved north on Park Avenue and finally finished along River Road. The group of firetrucks, police cars, and other first responders weaved around the perimeter of Moosehaven and concluded their trip.

The caravan of first responder vehicles played Christmas tunes during the parade. Several school choruses and bands, such as the Oakleaf Elementary choir and chorus, performed lovely holiday music.



The Oakleaf Elementary School chorus and choir were among several schools that participated in the fun at Cocoa and Carols.



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Green Cove Springs' Community Redevelopment Plan honored with leadership award

By Lee Wardlaw
lee@claytodayonline.com

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – Northeast Florida Regional Council recently awarded the City of Green Cove Springs with a Regional Award for Excellence in Planning and Growth Management with the formation of the Green Cove Springs downtown Community Redevelopment Agency.

The city's Development Services Department celebrated a significant accomplishment after it earned a Northeast Florida Regional Leadership Award. The city will officially be recognized at a ceremony for elected officials on Jan. 4.

The redevelopment plan hasn't been completed, but NFRL was impressed with how the city worked with the county to identify areas of concern.

City Manager Steve Kennedy serves on the Board of the NFRL along with commissioners Jim Renninger and Betsy Condon.

"This is the first step in being able to accomplish a lot of big things. The rest of it will be able to fall into place over the

next three to seven or 10 years," Kennedy said.

The plan is a local initiative undertaken in collaboration with the county for future projects.

Service Department Director Mike Daniels helped craft the CRA Plan.

"To be honored by the Northeast Florida Regional Council is very special because we work with these people daily. For those people to acknowledge what we're doing is a great feeling," he said.

According to Florida statutes, a municipality must define "finding of necessity" to prove there is "slum and blight in the area."

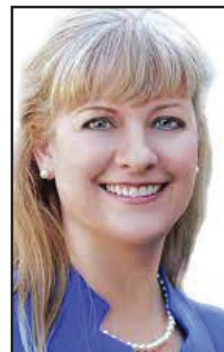
"We looked at a number of factors, such as deteriorating infrastructure in the sidewalks and the roadways, property values



Steve Kennedy



Jim Renninger



Betsy Condon

and unsafe private structures. We found that the property values are increasing downtown, but not at the same rate as they are outside of downtown," Daniels said.

Daniels shared information about the slum and blight areas to the city council, which suggested the creation of the CRA.

The CRA plan lists 10 objectives and properties within CRA boundaries. Some of these objectives include modal improvements like adding sidewalks and bikeways and potential future transit options down-

town. Once the CRA Plan is approved and submitted to the County Tax Collector, monies will specifically be allocated to the plan.

"This gives us an opportunity to focus on the area and make improvements. All of those factors go into trying to revitalize and improve that CRA," Daniels said.

Money charged early in the plan will be collected at a lower rate. But those rates are expected to increase in the later years, Kennedy said.

"Just making sure citizens have a voice in the process, whether that be the Citizen's Advisory Committee, where (residents) can provide feedback on their concerns, or what they want the city to focus on, as well as us working closely with our elected and appointed officials, the development community, and (of course), our citizens," Kennedy said. "The more feedback we get, the better we can ensure we are responding to the needs of the community. That is the most important part of projects such as the CRA and the Downtown Master Plan."

Obituaries claytodayonline.com

Roy James Langlais

Roy James Langlais, 80, of Jacksonville, FL, passed away peacefully on December 14, 2023. He was born on April 19, 1943 in Northampton, MA to Paul Emile and Bernice Langlais.

Roy's life epitomized service, evident in his unwavering dedication during his twenty years of service in the US Navy, where he achieved the rank of Master Chief Petty Officer. During his military career, he attained both a bachelor's and a master's degree in human resource management from Pepperdine University. Following his retirement from the Navy, Roy embarked on a twenty-eight-year career at Logistic Ser-

vices International, Inc. (LSI) where he retired as a Vice President.

Roy's true joy stemmed from his family. His nearly sixty-year marriage to Claire was a testament to enduring love, resilience, and unwavering support, fostering a foundation of strength for their children and grandchildren. As a father, Roy was an example of love, sacrifice, and guidance. His wisdom and selflessness molded the lives of David, Stuart, and Michael.

Roy found solace and comfort in his Catholic faith, which remained a guiding force throughout his life. He appreciated the beauty of nature and enjoyed RV'ing, boating, camping, and golfing. His commitment to the community extended beyond family; Roy was instrumental in founding the West Duval Youth Soccer Association in the 1970s.

Roy is survived by his wife Claire, his sons David (Rhonda), Stuart (Kim), & Michael (Victoria), his three siblings Judy, Bernard, & Linda, along with grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews and many, many friends.



Roy James Langlais



A funeral service to celebrate Roy's life and honor his military service will be held at Jacksonville National Cemetery—the date and time to be determined.

The family would like to sincerely thank the staff at Ortega Gardens Memory Care for their compassion, care and support given to Roy and his family.

Please sign the family's online guestbook at www.broadusraines.com

Arrangements are under the care of Broadus-Raines Funeral Home, 501 Spring St., Green Cove Springs, FL 32043. (904) 284-4000



Edna Arnold Freeman

Edna Arnold Freeman, 94, of Starke, FL, passed way December 16, 2023

Please sign the family's online guestbook at www.broadusraines.com

Arrangements are under the care of Broadus-Raines Funeral Home, 501 Spring St., Green Cove Springs, FL 32043. (904) 284-4000

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Salvation Army makes sure children will wake up to Christmas toys, clothes

By Don Coble
don@claytodayonline.com

CLAY COUNTY – Capt. Julie Chamberlain prays there will be a time when there won't be families in need, especially at Christmas time. But the reality is, while circumstances often change, there will always be people going without.

"I don't see that happening," she said after her organization distributed 492 bags of toys, clothes and toiletries during a three-day event last week. "The Bible tells us that we'll always have the poor among us. That's fine. The Salvation Army will be there to serve."

Julie was joined by her husband Capt. Mike Chamberlain, other Salvation Army officials and a host of volunteers.

The group gave away 449 bags, including bicycles, at the organization's headquarters on County Road 220. On Friday, an additional 43 bags were given to Clay County Guardian ad Litem Office officials for abused, neglected or abandoned children who've been placed with a relative or friend.

It took one Guardian ad Litem worker an extended moment to compose herself while volunteers unloaded the gifts at the Clay County Courthouse. Because of the



PHOTOS BY SALVATION ARMY
Capts. Mike and Julie Chamberlain said the Salvation Army gave out 492 gift bags to needy children last week. As long as there are people without, Julie promised, "The Salvation Army will be there to serve."

sensitive nature of her work, she asked not to be identified.

"Some of these kids, if it weren't for these donations to the Guardian ad Litem Foundation, they wouldn't receive Christ-



Last week, the Salvation Army of Clay County hosted its annual Christmas Angel Tree program at its headquarters on County Road 220 in Middleburg. Children received bags of toys, clothes and toiletries following a Christian Christmas magic show on Thursday, Dec. 14. Toys for 43 children were delivered to the Clay County Guardian ad Litem at the Clay County Courthouse a day later. Organizations and passionate residents donated the gifts.

mas," she said. "We are helping children that are placed with family and non-relatives. This might be the only Christmas they'll get."

The Chamberlains decided to invite families back into their headquarters and sanctuary. The COVID-19 pandemic forced them to hand out gifts with a drive-through. This year, children and families were entertained by a Christian Christmas magician while volunteers sorted through the orders before they were taken to their cars.

"It was very nice," Julie Chamberlain said. "We did it a bit differently this year

than we usually do, but it was really good."

Julie said every child who requested through the Angel Tree Program received a gift bag. In addition to getting support from the community to fill Christmas gift requests, the Salvation Army was generously supported by Fields Automotive, HCA Florida Orange Park Hospital, Parallon, Kirkwood Presbyterian, Moos Lodge, Soaring Eagles, Orange Park Presbyterian, Trinity Community Church, Agape Chiropractic, Career Source, Ladybird Academy of Oakleaf, Advent Lutheran Church, Orange Park Mall, Artgerm Collectables and VyStar Credit Union.



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Orange Park teen gets critical Wellness Pod from Planet Fitness

Chair promotes relaxation, muscle memory for girl with Rett's Syndrome

By Lee Wardlaw
lee@claytodayonline.com

ORANGE PARK – Life was made easier last week for Sophia Archuleta, a 14-year-old girl from Orange Park living with Rett Syndrome when Orange Park Planet Fitness got into the holiday spirit by donating equipment to improve her health, wellness and quality of life.

Created by WellnessSpace Brands, the Wellness Pod has magical powers to promote relaxation, reduce stress and advance muscle memory by placing her feet above her head to encourage back and spine support. The pod was hand-delivered to Sophia's mother's home. Along with Brandi Archuleta and Planet Fitness Member Service Representative Wendy Santiago, the women quickly became part of Sophia's treatment.

While she has trouble walking and performing other daily tasks, that doesn't stop Sophia from enjoying life. She rode her adaptive bicycle with her mother and went surfing last summer with a group of volunteers. Anything is possible for the little girl, who frequents the gym with her

mother.

"We don't let (Rett's Syndrome) stop or define her," the mother said.

Rett's Syndrome is a genetic disorder that can cause severe anxiety, seizures and other complications. Her mother takes care of her around the clock, and she remains vigilant if there are problems associated with the disease that attack the nervous system.

The Wellness Pod has already been proven to help.

"It has factually (proven) to slow down her seizures. They're not as long and not as abrasive. It hasn't even been a week yet," Brandi said. In less than two weeks, the Wellness Pod has created a monumental impact on her daughter's well-being.

They originally discovered the Wellness Pod at Planet Fitness at 700 Blanding Blvd.

"When (Archuleta) told me about her daughter, I said, 'You know what, I've got something special for you. She had never seen (the Wellness Pod) before. It's not something you would (regularly) think about,'" Santiago said.

When Sophia tried the device at Planet Fitness, she said the impact was immediate.

I said, 'Bring her over, let's just see what happens. Immediately, (Sophia) started to



STAFF PHOTOS BY LEE WARDLAW

Mother and daughter Brandi and Sophie Archuleta said the Wellness Pod donated by WellnessSpace Brands and Orange Park Planet Fitness has already led to positive results by helping the girl with Rett's Syndrome reduce stress and promote back and spine support. When she's inside the pod, Sophie is immersed in gentle, relaxing videos of nature and other calming imagery.

talk and open up. Her eyes twinkled, and you could see that she was clearly engaged with the experience," Santiago said.

When the Archuletas started making daily pilgrimages to the gym, Santiago knew she needed to take action.

"I got in touch with (WellnessSpace) and said, 'Let's see what happens.' Lo and behold, to my surprise, they sent Brandi a message in an email and said, 'We're going to donate one (to your daughter),' she said.

The company, based in Clearwater, delivered the Wellness Pod and assembled it

inside their Orange Park home. "They put it right where she wanted it. She was so excited to see the gift, her favorite thing that keeps her calm," Santiago said.

Santiago and Brandi were friends before the process started. Now, they have forged a sisterhood during the journey. The full circle moment came when it all came together.

"We both just started to cry," Santiago said.

When watching the screen, Sophia enters another world. It displays 15 natural

SEE POD, 18

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Wanes keep on rockin' by spreading Christmas cheer in Green Cove Springs

By Don Coble
don@claytodayonline.com

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – Less than two weeks after Paul and Lisa Wane hosted their Rockin' for Stockins' Christmas party, the couple was back in Green Cove Springs last Saturday to spread more holiday cheer at three different events.

The couple dropped off toys, T-shirt bags and some repurposed instruments to the Green Cove Springs Police Department to be given to needy children. From there, they stopped to wish fellow musician Curt Towne a Merry Christmas and Happy Birthday before heading across the street for "An Evening with Ali" at The Corner Pocket and Around the Corner Diner. The event was a fundraiser for Alice "Ali" Schwisow, who is battling cancer, and guitars were some of the gifts that were auctioned.

Equally important, Ali's 13-year-old son, Carson, received an instrument as part of Wane's Rising Star Give Kids a Guitar program.

After that, they joined the police department and residents for "Caroling Around



the Cove" at Spring Park. The couple gave away 50 more bags of instruments and toys from the Guitars for Kids program.

"It was a great time, especially for an 18-hour 'off' day," Wane said.

Wane's Rising Star program has distributed nearly 300 instruments to children "to give them something else to do, something positive. We need to give them their own little universe so they can do their own thing."



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Guitarist Paul Wane and his wife Lisa spent a busy Saturday celebrating the Christmas Holidays during several stops in Green Cove Springs, including the Police Department, a cancer benefit at The Corner Pocket and "Caroling Around the Cove" at Spring Park.



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Palagio's Winter Wonderland sheds light on the meaning of Christmas

By Jack Randall
jack@claytodayonline.com

ORANGE PARK – Residents welcomed their family and friends to enjoy some Christmas cheer at the Palagio's Winter Wonderland. Music, hot chocolate, s'mores and a Christmas tree scavenger hunt were some of the festivities at the senior living community last Thursday.

The Festival of Trees scavenger hunt led participants through the lobby, the dining hall and up the elevator to the second and third floors to find all 17 Christmas trees and vote which ones they liked best. The Clay Today Christmas tree rested in between the elevators on the first floor, right before you stepped in.

The 17 Christmas trees, Clay Today's included, were donated to senior families in need after the event.

The Winter Wonderland event kicked off on the third floor, where residents and their guests enjoyed appetizers and live Christmas music performed by local singer Kristen Lee. With dinner ready downstairs, the carolers were corralled to the dining hall on the first floor. Santa Claus greeted families in the lobby.

At Palagio Senior Living, special events and a vibrant community are why more



Residents dressed up for the occasion and enjoyed live Christmas music with their families.

than 80 residents proudly call the facility home. Palagio is also decorated with Best of Clay accolades for first place in senior living, assisted living and memory care.

"It's about being fun and festive in a safe way," said Director Tiffany Doreste.

"It's fun to watch them smile with their grandkids. Some families come for the event and then take them home afterward. So, it's our sendoff event, in a way," said Doreste.

Residents staying at the facility through Christmas can look forward to a Palagio Pajama Party, she said.

"We're also planning more quarterly events," she said.

Chef Sandy Bernard's theme for dinner and dessert was "retro Christmas" which featured old fashioned classics such as beef wellington, deviled eggs, fruitcake, marzipan and walnuts with nutcrackers. Prime rib was one of the main entrees.

More than anything, Bernard loves cooking for her residents and letting her creative side shine through.

"They love comfort food, but they'll try anything, and they'll definitely let you know how they feel about (the dish). It's fun for us. This is what I was made to do," she said.

Carol Pangborn is a resident who has settled into her new home at Palagio. She

enjoyed her meal in the company of new friends, whom she was thankful for. She described transitioning to life in her new home.

"I picked up the phone when I saw the signs go up. I kept calling, and then we (Pangborn and a Palagio representative) met at an Urban Bean Coffeehouse – great place by the way – to talk about reserving my spot. I said, 'Sign me up!' I wanted my spot reserved," Pangborn said.

"I'm a widow. I had a good-sized house that was 42 years old. Sitting alone in your home as you age is not healthy. I needed to socialize. When my husband died, I went into a bit of a downslide. My friends here helped me out of it."

She looks forward to holiday events throughout the year and movie nights every Friday.

"The programs we have here are great," she said. "The people (residents and staff) are kind. They say, 'we're here for you' and they really mean it. If there's a problem, they'll fix it. That's why I like it here."

She enjoys Christmas at Palagio, because Christmas isn't meant to be celebrated alone; it is meant to be celebrated with others.

"(My favorite part of the holiday season) is to be here and to enjoy the company. That is the most important part of



Clay Today graphic designer Lisa Murphy-Uhrie enjoyed the holiday festivities with her friend Margit Martin, who lives at the Palagio.

Christmas. Gifts are great, but that's not what Christmas is about. Christmas is about putting other people first.

"Life needs to be funny. It needs to have joy. Enjoy everyone, no matter how grumpy they can be. You can always find good in anybody," she said.



Residents and their families roast marshmallows for s'mores over the fire.



The Clay Today Christmas tree was located on the first floor by the elevator. After the event, it was donated to a senior family in need.

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PHOTOS FROM ORANGE PARK LIONS CLUB

The organization recently dropped off bleach, dog, cat and kitten food at the Safe Animal Shelter.

Orange Park Lions Club assists Safe Animal Shelter

For Clay Today

MIDDLEBURG – Lions Club members from the Orange Park Lions Club visited the Safe Animal Shelter with a donation of bleach and dog, cat, and kitten food.

Carl Crosby, Vicky Crosby, Kezia Check and others visited the shelter, spending time there and bringing donated items.

The Lions Clubs International is an international service club organization, with more than 1.4 million members in approximately 46,000 clubs in more than 200 countries and geographical areas worldwide.

The Orange Park Lions Club just celebrated its 75th Anniversary this year. They meet on the second and fourth Monday at 7 p.m. in their meeting hall at 423 McIntosh Ave.

The club reaches out to provide eyeglasses to those in need, accept donated used glasses and hearing aids, provide eye exams for those who can't afford them, provide diabetes research, take part in senior citizen services, help local food banks and many other services.

For those interested, drop in for a meeting or give a call at (904) 264-5866.

Community Briefs claytodayonline.com

DAR accepting applications for \$1,000 scholarship

CLAY COUNTY – Graduating high school seniors are encouraged to apply for a \$1,000 scholarship sponsored by the Sophia Fleming Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution.

Applicants must graduate this year from the Clay County Public School System, St. Johns Country Day School or be home-schooled in Clay County. Students are eligible if they attend any post-secondary program of study, including colleges, universities or vocational/technical schools. No GPA information is required.

Points will be awarded from an essay, awards, recognitions, community service, and school and community letters of recommendation.

The instruction sheet and application form is available at all public high school guidance offices in Clay County and St. Johns Country Day School. They are also available by clicking on Sophia Fleming Scholarship at sophiaflemingchapter.org.

Applications are due Feb.16, and the winning recipient will be notified the week of March 23. Applications need not be hand delivered or mailed by certified or registered mail. Each applicant will

receive an email or telephone call saying his/her application has been received. The applications must be received on or before the deadline date to be eligible.

Completed applications are to be printed or typed and mailed to Terreca Hurley, Scholarship Chair, 1912 Moorings Cr., Middleburg, 32068.

Outdoor Adventure Park now open to public on Fridays

MIDDLEBURG – The Clay County Outdoor Adventure Park is open on Fridays from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. The shooting range is also available on Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The gun range opened in late September with a soft rollout on the hours of operation. The 200-yard, 30-target range is the first aspect to become a reality in the sprawling 158-acre complex near Camp Blanding, at 3829 Sgt. Bradley Crose Road off County Road 215, just south of Oak Grove Baptist Church.

Local law enforcement holds training at the range for a portion of the week and is open to the public for the remainder. The range will be open on Thursday, Friday and Saturday in the upcoming months. To learn more and read FAQs, visit claycountygov.com/community/clay-county-outdoor-adventure-park.

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Sen. Scott demands answers from Playoff Selection Committee on FSU snub

By A.G. Gancarski
For FloridaPolitics

The college football regular season is over, the bowl game slate has begun, and a Florida Senator is still fuming over the exclusion of Florida State University from the playoffs.

"This is bigger than college football," Rick Scott wrote Executive Director Bill Hancock, citing the "implications that stretch far beyond the football fields or athletic departments of our nation's universities" of which teams get selected for this year's four-team playoff tourney, which excluded the Seminoles because they were ranked fifth.

Scott added that "those who feel snubbed or mistreated should not be denied the opportunity to get an explanation for the decisions that created that perception," saying that not only did "athletes" at FSU feel that way, but also "Americans across the country who doubt the integrity of the playoff system."

Scott's latest letter to Hancock came after he received one defending FSU's exclusion from the playoffs. The committee apparently concluded that the Seminoles, the unbeaten champions of the Power 5 Atlantic Coast Conference, were "not the same team" after starting quarterback Jordan Travis was injured on the next-to-last regular season game on Nov. 18.

Beyond that, the committee believed



that Florida State's "strength of schedule" didn't match the teams that made the cut above them.

In his previous letter, Scott "outlined my concerns with the Selection Committee's decision, which will deny significant financial and economic opportunities for FSU, our student-athletes, the City of Tallahassee and the State of Florida, in my first letter. I am sure that you will agree that those who feel snubbed or mistreated should not be denied the opportunity to get an explanation for the decisions that created that perception."

In his latest communication, Scott again demanded information from the selection committee, including internal communications about the rankings and communications between committee members, ESPN, and the Southeastern Conference.

The Senator isn't the only Florida Republican riled up about this gridiron goof-up from the selection panel. Attorney General Ashley Moody wants more details about the selection process, including "communications relating to deliberations to or from the SEC, ACC, NCAA, ESPN, Group of Five conferences, Power Five conferences or any other person relating to the deliberations."

Additionally, Moody's office wants "all documents relating to public statements relating to the deliberations, including

media talking points and interview notes," and documents "relating to restrictions of the Conferences against having alternate playoff schedules" along with documents "showing compensation of members in 2023."

Gov. Ron DeSantis has already pledged \$1 million from the new state budget to sue the College Football Playoff committee, assuming that grounds for a legal challenge exist.

"If you think about the damages, being in that College Football Playoff versus being in the Orange Bowl is a big difference," DeSantis said in Iowa earlier this month.

Though Florida State fans won't see them in the national championship, the Seminoles will face off in the Orange Bowl against the Georgia Bulldogs on Saturday, Dec. 30, in a matchup between the country's fifth- and sixth-best teams, according to the selection committee.

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.

Council from page 2

directions.

"I was mentored by Coach Reape. I have been subject to his yelling and passion," Councilmember Thomas Smith said fondly.

"I was fortunate to have rides (to practice). I can attest that (Reape) had many kids in the bed of his truck on the way to practice," Smith said. "Both causes are great for our city. This isn't one cause versus another. They're both great."

The rest of the council seemed conflicted.

"At the end of the day, it's the taxpayers' building. We want to put it in the community's best interest," said Vice Mayor Steven Kelley.

After thoughtful consideration, the ordinance was passed unanimously.

The second ordinance granted the city permission to levy taxes on Reynolds Park for "special assessments," tests or other analytical data collections.

Former Florida Sen. Rob Bradley, who represents Reynolds Park, spoke against the ordinance. He wished his client was notified regarding the proposed ordinance.

"As a local government attorney, when a property is singled out, it is because there have been series of discussions between the owner and the government," Bradley said. "This is a headscratcher because there have been no plans (or discussions with my client)."

Councilmember Edward Gaw responded, citing a preliminary electric study as an example.

"We took feedback from the electrical department in Green Cove Springs. What

you're seeing is essentially the beginning of how to best serve the citizens of Green Cove, given the electrical needs," he said.

"Will this just be an assessment for electrical infrastructure?" Bradely asked.

"Not limited to that, no," Gaw said.

"I am surprised, but OK," said Bradley. City Attorney L. J. Arnold reaffirmed that the ordinance merely grants City Council permission, but no steps would be taken without subsequent notices and additional hearings.

"There may be a special assessment, there might not be, but we're the only one on the crosshairs. If you're having conversations (regarding aging infrastructure), I would assume you're talking about the whole city," said Bradley. "If you want this tool in your toolbox, why is it only (impacting Reynolds Park)?"

Bradley gave his final remarks. "We know we have to pay our fair share. It just has to actually be fair. Not more. Not less. Thank you for letting me talk for more than (three) minutes. These are tough conversations, so I'm glad you let me have it with you," Bradley said.

After much deliberation, the ordinance was also passed unanimously.

"Communication is a two-way street," said City Manager Steve Kennedy. "If there is a desire, it (has to be) both ways. The (plan they sent) is as definite as the way the wind blows."



Rob Bradley

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MM1481



Bret Michaels, Martina McBride, Vanilla Ice, Diamond Rio highlight Clay County Fair musical lineup

Clay Today staff

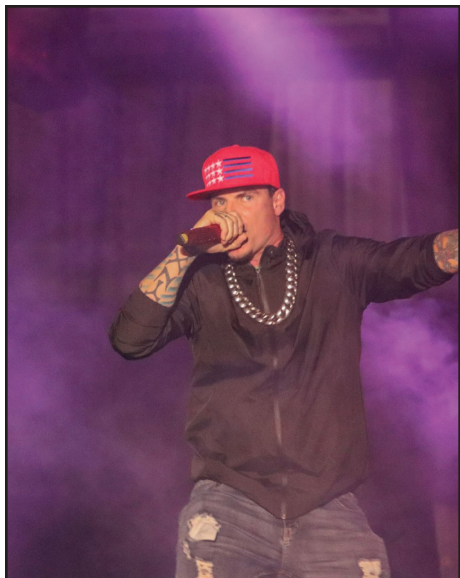
GREEN COVE SPRINGS – The Clay County Agriculture Fair will continue its diverse music lineup at the Cattleman’s Arena in 2024.

For hard rockers, former Poison frontman Bret Michaels will be joined by Julia Gulia on April 9.

For rappers, Vanilla Ice will be joined by Tone Loc and will return on April 4 after a wildly successful appearance in 2021.

Country fans expect performances from Diamond Rio with Allen Higgs and Kaden Meeks on April 8, Martina McBride with Jess Kellie Adams on April 7, Tyler Farr with Chapel Hart and Grace Tyler on April 5 and the Oak Ridge Boys on April 10.

Fans of Christian pop can enjoy an eve-



PHOTOS BY CLAY TODAY STAFF, FAIR ASSOCIATION
Vanilla Ice will make a return to the Clay County Agriculture Fair on April 4. He drew one of the largest crowds in fair concert history in 2021, and, along with Tone Loc, promises to be one of the biggest shows in the fair’s 38-year history.



Last year’s attendance shattered records by more than 21,000 guests. A big part of the fair’s success is the rides from Deggeller Attractions.

ning with For King + Country with Free Life Workshop on April 8.

In addition to concerts, the Silent Disco Goat Party, which sold out quickly a year ago, will return on Friday, April 12, followed by Tractor Pulls on April 13-14.

This year’s fair, the largest event in Clay County, is from April 4 to 14.

The fair will also continue its Picnic Project, where local artists transform old tables into colorful artwork. They will be part of a silent auction, donating the money to local charities. Applications are available at claycountyfair.org. Artists should contact Fair Tasha Hyder at tasha@claycountyfair.org.

Advance tickets for admission are available at claycountyfair.org for \$10 for adults, \$6 for seniors and children and \$20 for ride armbands for each night, except Saturdays. Presales include a \$5 admission discount for adults, \$3 for seniors and children 6-12, and between \$5 and \$10 for ride armbands. Parking and tickets for children 5 and younger are free at the Clay County Fairgrounds.

Other specials include super concert



VIP access to all shows for \$499; family six-pack of six gate admissions and four ride armbands for \$125 and a four-pack including four gate admissions and two ride armbands for \$70; and gate admission for all 11 days for \$75.

Other events include a Mullet Matchup on April 7, FFA Livestock and Poultry judging and Rabbit Showmanship on April 8, STEM Contest and Husband Calling on April 12, and various performances daily at the Community and Early Florida Re-inoled stages.



PHOTOS BY NORTH FLORIDA LAND TRUST

A guide welcomes hikers to the two-mile trail at Smith Lake Preserve.

With trails cleared, NFLT opens trail at Smith Lake Preserve

Special to Clay Today

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – A portion of the North Florida Land Trust’s Smith Lake Preserve is now part of the Florida National Scenic Trail. NFLT, the Florida Trail Association and the U.S. Forest Service opened a new two-mile portion of the trail last week in Smith Lake Preserve to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the 1,500-mile Florida National Scenic Trail.

“We are proud to now be a part of the Florida Trail and invite everyone to come take a walk on the trail and experience nature’s beauty for yourself,” said Allison DeFoor, president of NFLT. “We acquired Smith Lake Preserve in 2019 and have been working alongside the Florida Trail Association to reroute the trail away from roadway medians and through our preserve. We thank our partners for helping us be a part of one of Florida’s great assets. This is why we do what we do because it is now or never.”

This new trail is a regional highlight. It runs through Smith Lake Preserve and eliminates the need for hikers to walk along the road. There is not a trailhead at Smith Lake Preserve. Hikers can park at Goldhead Branch State Park and walk along the trail to enjoy it.

“The Florida Trail Association is pleased to have these two miles of road-walk replaced with a scenic sandhill landscape,” said Royce Gibson, executive director of the Florida Trail Association. “This new route will provide a high-quality outdoor recreation experience, and we look forward to working with the North Florida Land Trust and other partners on similar endeavors as we close more gaps in the Florida National Scenic Trail.”

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Clinic

from page 1

the exam rooms and say, 'Yeah, this exam room is bigger than the one that I was in when I was at a doctor last time.'

"All of a sudden, it seemed real." The state sent The Way \$290,000 last week as part of the \$1.45 million that was approved this fiscal year by the legislature and signed by Gov. Ron DeSantis. Along with other in-kind donations, it was enough to get the project off the ground.

The Way started in 2006 and spent five years at the Sacred Heart Church in Green Cove Springs. It moved to 479 Houston St. between the county's administration building and courthouse, but Fann said they've outgrown the 3,300-square-foot center. And with land becoming so valuable in the downtown area, he knew a new home eventually would be needed.

Fann then got a call from Karen King that changed everything. She wanted to donate a 5,100-square-foot commercial building at 302 College Dr., across the

street from St. Johns River State College. The new clinic will be 7,300 square feet, including an expansion to the existing building. And if work stays on schedule, it could be opened by July.

Since the county's free dental services were about to end with the construction of a new firehouse on Idlewild Avenue in Green Cove Springs, the county asked Fann to include dental at the new clinic.

"Three years ago, when she donated the property, the concept has really evolved over time," Fann said. "Once we got our design set, we couldn't start until we had the money. The silent phase of the campaign started. All of those institutional partners that may have, or maybe in some cases, haven't given us money for operating expenses in the past came on board. They saw this as a great thing."

Fann said the final bill for The Way on College Drive will be at least \$2.6 million.

The rest of the money from the state will come as reimbursements for expenses. Fann said The Way still needs financial support because the project can't afford delays while it waits for the state to make payments.



"We still need an additional \$400,000 for that project alone," Fann said. "I'm confident Clay County will come through for its most needy neighbors."

The Way provides free care to residents within 200% of the national poverty guideline. For a single adult, that's \$29,000 a year. Fann said if someone is making car and rent payments, that doesn't leave enough for medical care.

The clinic has served as many as

20,000 uninsured, low-income county residents, providing free medical care, including primary care, specialty care for diabetes, respiratory disease, hypertension, and obstetrical and prenatal care for pregnant women, leading to a healthy live birth.

"The Way Clinic provides \$5 million in care annually on a budget of less than \$750,000," Fann said. "The return on investment is indisputable, not to mention the lives we save, which are priceless."



Shoppers can order from IKEA at Orange Park Mall kiosks

For Clay Today

ORANGE PARK – As the holiday season peaks, Orange Park Mall is thrilled to announce an exciting collaboration to elevate the last-minute shopping experience for its valued patrons.

Embrace the spirit of convenience with a new IKEA ordering kiosk near Hollister. Shoppers can seamlessly browse and order from a selection of stylish and functional furnishings while enjoying the festive atmosphere. This innovative partnership brings the renowned Swedish design directly to your fingertips, blending the joy of holiday shopping with the ease of modern technology.

The excitement doesn't end there. The mall proudly features a 2023 Tesla car near Old Navy. Patrons can admire the

sleek designs and groundbreaking features of Tesla's electric vehicles; you can even take one for a test drive during select times.

"Our aim is to make the holiday shopping experience convenient, enjoyable, and memorable, said Mall General Manager Randy Bowman. "With the addition of an IKEA ordering kiosk and the Tesla display, we're offering a unique blend of style and innovation right here at Orange Park Mall."

The collaboration exemplifies the mall's commitment to creating an exceptional shopping environment, providing the community with the latest trends and innovations.

Hours will be extended to 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Thursday, Friday and Saturday and 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Christmas Eve for last-minute shopping.

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Film

from page 1

lost art and legacy of Savage, a prominent figure in the Harlem Renaissance and one of the country's most influential contributors to Black art. On Thursday, the crew was at the center on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, where they interviewed key figures, like the President of the Friends of Augusta Savage, Henrietta Frances, and volunteer art teachers Barbara Cornett and Johnny Mathis.

The cinematographers filmed at the Augusta Savage Arts and Community Center, which lies on the site of her family's former homestead and Paul Laurence Dunbar High, historic homes on the St. Johns' River, Spring Park and the Clay County Courthouse.

They finished at the newly remodeled Augusta Savage Mentoring Center, where they filmed children working with clay to create nature-inspired sculptures such as ducks and other small animals with bricks, just like Savage intended.

The filmmakers interviewed the class. Teachers talked of how art was created, how art inspired them and the profound impact that Savage left.

"We're just trying to showcase the best of what Green Cove Springs has to offer and showcase such an important person of color that really fought against the grain to earn her accomplishments," Solorzano, 33, said.

The film title was inspired by the quest to find evidence of her clay-inspired sculpture works and career accomplishments, many of which are gone.

Sandra Rattley, Executive Producer and Director of Audacious Women Productions, the New York company behind the documentary, said 70 of Savage's approximately 160 pieces of art were either lost or destroyed.

Jereen Hayes, the film's narrator and lead investigator, spoke with sources and visited locations influential in Savage's life and career to get to the bottom of the mystery.



Volunteer Johnny Mathis showcased his unique teaching style for a documentary that will share the iconic artist's legacy in the community.

Filming also included locations in Harlem, New York, where she relocated to pursue her art career during the First Great Migration.

However, no hometown was more notable than Green Cove Springs.

"This documentary is a full-circle moment for myself and the community as a whole," Solorzano said.

The documentary will shed light on Savage's journey from a small farm to becoming a prominent sculptor in New York. The film explores Savage's determination to overcome obstacles, including her father's disapproval of sculpting with clay, to her eventual rise as a renowned artist and advocate for art education.

Cornett, an art instructor at the center, was thrilled the documentary would chronicle the center's mission.

"It's really heartwarming to see because the whole mission of everyone volunteering here is to keep the legacy of Augusta Savage alive," she said.

Student Ansley Bivens was interviewed for the film. Her connection to Savage's

legacy spans three generations. Her grandmother, Felicia Hampshire, served as the first Black Mayor of Green Cove Springs and played a pivotal role in establishing the Museum and Mentoring Center.

"I'm (absolutely) ecstatic about this documentary. I'm amazed, and I'm humbled. This is a big deal not only for Augusta Savage but also for Green Cove Springs as a whole. (The documentary) puts us on the national map. This warms my heart because I fought for this building, and I was born and raised here," she said.

Hampshire said other trailblazers would be proud, none more than Mary Tuggle, a long-time piano player and first Black teacher to integrate Doctors Inlet Elementary. Tuggle died in 2022. She was 87.

"She was at the groundbreaking ceremony for this building, and I know she would have been so proud," Hampshire said.

"The past couple of years, there have been a lot of conversations on what history is worth knowing and teaching and which monuments are worth saving and preserving," Hampshire said. "The lost work of Augusta Savage needs to be part of our nation's story, in terms of art innovation, particularly in her (medium) of sculpture, which was very expressive and emotional in representing black life and culture. She was ahead of her time, and despite the obstacles she had to overcome, she created so much. She was an innovator and creator who shaped and changed the history of art in America. It's a story that more people should know."



Rain doesn't dampen Wreaths Across America salute in Orange Park

By Lee Wardlaw
lee@claytodayonline.com

ORANGE PARK – An approaching storm system that brought intermittent rain didn't deter patriotic residents from heading to Magnolia and Moosehaven cemeteries to honor veterans during Wreaths Across America, a nationwide event last Saturday.

Sandra DiGiovanni, Location Coordinator for both ceremonies, was instrumental in helping Magnolia with its first program a year ago. Moosehaven's ceremony was joined by Vice Mayor Susana Thompson and Councilwoman Winnette Sandlin, with help from Cub Scout Troop 25 and other volunteers. At both ceremonies, wreaths were placed, and the veteran's name was read aloud.

Sandlin led the program with the children, many of whom participated in the patriotic event for the first time.

Riders from American Legion Post 250 riders arrived early to unbox the fresh, live natural wreaths and helped prepare for the event at Magnolia. The wreaths were purchased from donations from local businesses, nonprofits and patriotic citizens.

"(American Legion Post 250 riders), you did an amazing job. Thank you," DiGiovanni said during her opening remarks.

But it all wouldn't have been possible without DiGiovanni, said Town Mayor and retired Navy veteran Randy Anderson.

"None of this could have happened without Sandra. I thank you. If you need anything (from the town), please let us know," he said.

Girl Scout Troop 310210 was responsible for laying three wreaths recognizing entire branches of the armed services. Peyton Cooper honored the

SEE WREATHS, 24



Ansley Bivens, a young student in the class, is well aware of the impact Augusta Savage had on the community. When cinematographers asked her interview questions, she responded with a seemingly-scripted tell-all on Augusta Savage. She was taught well by her teachers, along with her grandmother, Felicia Hampshire, an influential figure in the local community



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**General surgeon
Dr. Noaman Ali joins
Orange Park Hospital**

For Clay Today

ORANGE PARK – HCA Florida Orange Park Hospital announced that board-certified General Surgeon Dr. Noaman Ali has joined HCA Florida Orange Park Surgical Specialists.

Dr. Ali will work alongside Dr. Kara Wanchick and Dr. Julia Heizmann to provide advanced surgical care for a variety of conditions, including pancreatitis, colon

cancer, abdominal masses and tumors, as well as benign skin lesions and skin tumors. He is fellowship-trained in Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary surgery and holds specialized expertise in robotic and laparoscopic surgical methods.

In addition to providing comprehensive surgical oncology care, Dr. Ali will serve



Dr. Noaman Ali

as the director of the general surgery residency program, providing detailed surgical training to medical residents.

“I am passionate about supporting the next generation of healthcare leaders,” Dr. Ali said. “Nothing makes me happier than seeing a resident leave the program with the surgical skills, knowledge, and compassion to help the community they end up in. I am excited to be able to bring surgical oncology care to HCA Florida Orange Park Hospital and Clay County.”

Dr. Ali will see patients in Suite 150 in the Medical Office Building at 1825 Kingsley Ave.

Community Performing Arts Center and Student Housing. Before her work with foundations, she was the director of leadership giving and affinity groups for the United Way of Palm Beach County.

In addition to its Orange Park campus, SJR State has Palatka and St. Augustine campuses.

“We are excited to have Kate return to our Foundation team,” said SJR State President Joe Pickens. “Her experience with foundation operations, relationship building, fundraising, community engagement, communication, student housing management, and events will help us take our foundation to the next level and serve our students well.”

Adornetto holds a Bachelor of Arts in Strategic Communication from Wichita State University, a Master of Arts in Non-profit Management from Florida Atlantic University and a doctoral student in Higher Education Administration at St. Cloud University.

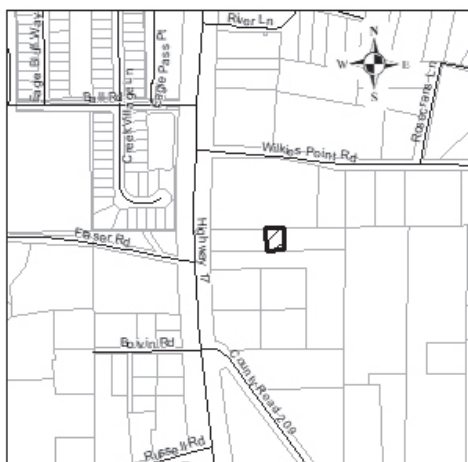
“I am thrilled at the opportunity to return to SJR State in this capacity, and I look forward to connecting our college community with the philanthropic generosity of others,” Adornetto said. “This feels full circle for me, being able to return to the community where my passion for higher education began while raising funds for students. It truly is an honor to be a part of the SJR State Foundation.”

Adornetto will begin her role at the Foundation in January 2024. To learn more about the St. Johns River State College Foundation, go to sjrstate.edu/foundation.

**NOTICE OF PROPOSED CHANGE
TO THE CLAY COUNTY 2040
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

THE PUBLIC IS HEREBY NOTIFIED that the Planning Commission of Clay County, Florida, will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, January 2, 2024, at 5:00 p.m., or as soon thereafter as can be heard, and that the Board of County Commissioners of Clay County, Florida, will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, January 23, 2024 at 5:00 p.m., or as soon thereafter as can be heard. The hearings will be held in the Board of County Commissioners Meeting Room, 4th Floor, Clay County Administration Building, 477 Houston St, Green Cove Springs, Florida. The public hearings are scheduled for the purpose of considering the adoption of a small-scale amendment to the Future Land Use Map of the Clay County 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The ordinance adopting the proposed amendment is entitled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE CLAY COUNTY 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN INITIALLY ADOPTED PURSUANT TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 163.3184, FLORIDA STATUTES, UNDER ORDINANCE NO. 2018-31, AS SUBSEQUENTLY AMENDED, IN ORDER TO AMEND THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP TO CHANGE THE FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATION OF A PORTION OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY (TAX PARCEL IDENTIFICATION # 28-05-26-014417-000-00), TOTALING APPROXIMATELY 0.26 ACRES, FROM RURAL FRINGE (RF) TO COMMERCIAL (COM); PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.



Interested parties may appear at the hearings and be heard with respect to the proposed ordinance. After the public hearings the Board may take immediate action on the proposed ordinance, or may continue its deliberations to a date, time and place then announced without publishing further notice thereof. A copy of the proposed ordinance is available for inspection by the public at the Clay County Planning and Zoning Division, Third Floor of the Administration Building, between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays.

Pursuant to Section 286.0105, Florida Statutes, a person deciding to appeal any decision made by the Board with respect to any matter considered at the hearings or at any subsequent hearing to which the Board has continued its deliberations is advised that such person will need a record of all proceedings and may need to ensure that a verbatim record of all proceedings is made, which must include the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, any person needing accommodations to participate in this matter should contact Clay County Risk Management by mail at P.O. Box 1366, Green Cove Springs, Florida 32043, or by telephone at (904) 278-4718, no later than three (3) days prior to the hearing or proceeding for which this notice has been given. Deaf and hard of hearing persons can access the telephone number by contacting the Florida Relay Service at 1-800-955-8770 (Voice) or 1-800-955-8771 (TDD).

Clay County Board of County Commissioners

Legal 94777 published December 21, 2023 in Clay County's Clay Today Newspaper.

Kate Adornetto selected as SJR State's Director of Development and Foundation Operations

ORANGE PARK – St. Johns River State College Foundation selected Kate Adornetto as its development and foundation operations director.

Adornetto, formerly SJR State Foundation's fundraising and alumni engagement director, returns to SJR State with a wealth of foundation experience. She currently serves as the Central Lakes College Foundation's executive director, leading the Foundation, the Central Lakes



Kate Adornetto

**Pod
from page 10**

scenes, like a tropical beach, a starry galaxy, a blue ocean with fish, and several major tourist destination cities.

“This is meant to hit all five of your senses. This is set up to embrace that. What you are perceiving with your eyes and ears, your mind is telling you, ‘It’s time to turn off and just relax,’” Santiago explained.

The heat from the pod penetrates her back, which has already improved her flexibility and range of motion. And if Sophia isn’t practicing peace of mind, she can watch interactive educational videos, like on how to cook. The activities help her to learn, grow and thrive.

“Just one hour for her to relax and know that everything is going to be OK is so worth it for both of them. If you spend one day in Brandi’s shoes (taking care of Sophia), you still would not understand the full impact of what she goes through,” Santiago said.

Brandi exercises at Planet Fitness so she can lift her daughter out of bed, along with showers to bathe.

“My job is providing her full care and giving her my everything. The gym is my oasis, my church and my therapy. If I didn’t work out, I wouldn’t be strong enough to lift her,” she said.



The posture of Sophia’s head and neck has already begun to improve.

“In the morning and before school, and when we get home, (the Wellness Pod) is our ritual,” Brandi said. Even when she had a seizure at school, her mother rushed to campus and showed Sophia a video of herself in the wellness pod, which eased her frantic state of mind. “She just started smiling. I still can’t believe this happened,” she said.

Sophia sometimes has seizure on a nightly basis, but on two nights during their first week with the Wellness Pod, she rested quietly. It’s all thanks to Santiago and Planet Fitness.

ShuvIT, then love it: Melrose wakesurfing company makes splash with revolutionary training device

By Don Coble
don@claytodayonline.com

MELROSE – Chad Hovsepian wanted feedback on a wakesurfing training device he developed at his Lake Area Watersports shop, so he took six ShuvIT Boards to the Masters Water Ski and Wakeboard Tournament at Georgia’s Callaway Gardens last August.

He never got a chance to set up his exhibit.

“That’s when I finally knew I had something,” he said. “I had a real product. I took five or six boards to the show to get some feedback from professional athletes. I never made it to my destination because people were stopping my golf cart and buying them. I set one out and didn’t ask anyone to get on it. Everyone flipped over it. They were gone in 30 minutes. I kept one prototype because I didn’t have any logos on it. I knew right then that this was something people wanted.”

The training device handles like a real wakesurfing board, except it stays dry. A swivel base mimics the wave a board feels behind a boat. It can turn 360 degrees and rock up and down. More importantly, it’s three inches off the ground, so it allows surfers to work on difficult tricks without the danger of a hard flop during high speeds on the water.

Specifically designed wakesurfing boats, with the propellor located far beneath the boat rather than behind, coast along at 11 mph. Wakesurfers trail just behind, riding the crests of the wake. Unlike wakeboarders, they let go of the rope for a true surfing experience.



World Champion John Akerman, who called Hovsepian’s ShuvIT Boards “the best wakesurf trainer board there is,” shows the skills of wakesurfing on one of Phase 5 Wakesurf Boards.



Hovsepian was inspired to create his training device while watching his daughter Lindsay compete at a tournament more than a year ago.

“The honest truth of it is I have a daughter that competes in wakesurfing, and she competes in the national events,” he said. “I was watching her compete, and we knew that if she could land a 360



school, Hovsepian, who has a degree in mechanical engineering, said he suddenly had more free time to take his idea from the planning board to reality.

“I found myself with a little more thinking time because I wasn’t running around to soccer games and flag football games and FFA meetings – all that goes with kids in school,” he said. “So, I was able to put a little bit more time and effort into it. I built a prototype, put her on it, and immediately knew it worked. I always had this desire to create something from scratch.”

Lindsay can now perform a 360 Shove without problems.

“It has helped several people,” Hovsepian said.

He also asked world champion wakesurfer John Akerman to review the ShuvIT Board.

“This is the best wakesurf trainer board there is,” Akerman said.

“Everyone has always asked me if there is any way to im-



Shove, she would win. But she didn’t land it. I got so frustrated because I knew her body’s motion relative to the board was incorrect. It’s difficult to train for that off the water. So, immediately, I started searching. I knew in my mind what I needed to do.

“I bought everything on the market to help her. I bought everything that would supposedly help her fix her form or motion, the physical way she would spin. They claimed they could help with balance with people doing the same type of spin trick called a shove-it. The problem with some of those boards is they hurt. They’re sketchy and harmful to your shins and knees if you don’t land correctly.”

After Lindsay graduated from high

school, she would win. But she didn’t land it. I got so frustrated because I knew her body’s motion relative to the board was incorrect. It’s difficult to train for that off the water. So, immediately, I started searching. I knew in my mind what I needed to do. “I bought everything on the market to help her. I bought everything that would supposedly help her fix her form or motion, the physical way she would spin. They claimed they could help with balance with people doing the same type of spin trick called a shove-it. The problem with some of those boards is they hurt. They’re sketchy and harmful to your shins and knees if you don’t land correctly.”

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The board can also be used for exercising because it twists side to side to strengthen upper body muscles. Surfers can safely practice difficult tricks because it’s only three inches off the ground.

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Faith Walk

by Pastor Billy Register
True Life Church
Clay County

Best Christmas ever: A season of love

Christmas, celebrated as a season of love, encapsulates the spirit of compassion, kindness, and the commemoration of the birth of Jesus Christ. It is a time that symbolizes the immense love of God for humanity, as reflected in the gift of His Son, Jesus.

At the heart of the Christmas story lies the concept of love. The birth of Jesus signifies God's profound love for the world, described in the well-known verse found in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life". Christmas is a celebration of God's love made manifest in the form of a child born in a manger.

Christmas expresses a fundamental pillar of the Christian faith: the love of God extended to humanity. Jesus' birth was a pivotal moment in history, the divine embodiment of love and compassion. Just as we exchange gifts at Christmas, through the person of Jesus Christ, God shared with us the greatest gift of all time.

God's act of selflessness in giving us Jesus serves as an enduring model for how we can represent that love in our lives year-round. It's a reminder to be compassionate, to extend kindness and to be a beacon of hope to those around us. We're encouraged to follow the example set forth at Christmas—to selflessly give, to love unconditionally, and to be a source of comfort and support to others.

Every act of kindness, every gesture of goodwill, every moment of empathy and understanding reflects the love that Christmas represents. It's in the simple acts of generosity, in offering a helping hand to those in need, and in being a light in someone's darkness. Whether it's through volunteering, donating, or simply lending an ear to someone in distress, these actions mirror the love and compassion that Christmas represents.

May God's blessing and favor rest upon you and your family this season! Merry Christmas!

You can write the Pastor at pastor-billy@findtruelife.com

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Proclamations, party highlight Garden Club's 75th anniversary

For Clay Today

ORANGE PARK – On Dec. 9, 1948, the Orange Park Garden Club was officially organized by 11 women who were interested in improving the beauty of the Town of Orange Park.

Last week, current members and special guests celebrated the 75th anniversary of the club's founding with proclamations, refreshments, and a PowerPoint presentation highlighting memories throughout the years.

Bryan Campbell, an aide to U.S. Rep. Aaron Bean, read a proclamation which Bean read into the Congressional Record honoring the ongoing legacy of the club. A copy of a proclamation was presented to the Club on Dec. 5 by Mayor Randy Anderson and was read by President Kay Earhart. Both documents are on display at the Orange Park Library on Plainfield Avenue. FFGC District IV Director Sam Runyon attended, and he offered congratulations on behalf of the District and State.

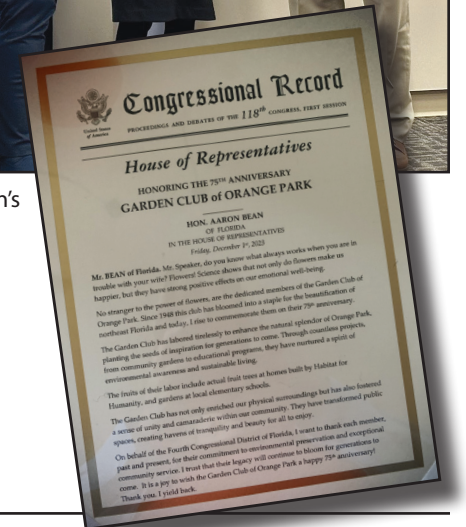
We invite the public to view an informative display entitled "That was Then, This is Now" at the Orange Park Library, featuring photos of past presidents and some



The Town of Orange Park and U.S. Rep. Aaron Bean's office issued proclamations as the Garden Club of Orange Park celebrated its 75th anniversary.

of the club's community service activities.

The Garden Club of Orange Park looks forward to serving the community through educational programs, conservation efforts and warm camaraderie for at least another 75 years.



Keystone native releases revised book on jiu-jitsu training

By Lee Wardlaw
lee@claytodayonline.com

Jordan Hix, a Keystone Heights native and U.S. Naval officer with seven years of jiu-jitsu fighting experience, made revisions to his 2021 book, "Rapid Growth in Grappling: How to Use the Principles of Deliberate Practice to Get Better Faster!"

The book gained popularity for its insights into the practice and efficient training methods of jiu-jitsu.

The updated edition was a six-month project completed this month, and it brings new features and expanded content.

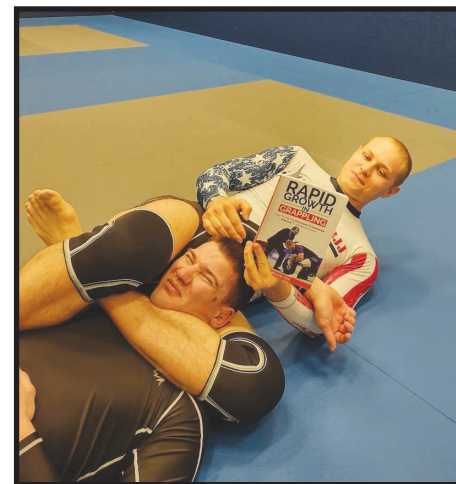
Hix reformats his book to feature a smoother flow. Minimizing space, the author delivers an even more engaging and accessible reading experience while also reimagining the theme, which often carries over into other areas of life.

"This is for anyone who wants to get better at learning a skill. It doesn't have to be martial arts. It can be piano or writing music. It just uses the lens of martial arts," he said.

The new content and additions are divided into short-term and long-term categories. Another common theme Hix expands on is coaching and leadership, making the book popular for youth and high school sports coaches.

Hix went on a journey of reading 12 new books and weaving lessons learned from those to create a condensed, no-nonsense version. He also spent countless hours writing and editing his new work.

"The research phase was a long, grueling process. I read several books, but many



STAFF PHOTO BY LEE WARDLAW

With seven years of experience competing in international jiu-jitsu tournaments, former Keystone Heights resident Jordan Hix released a revised edition, "Rapid Growth in Grappling: How to Use the Principles of Deliberate Practice to Get Better Faster!"

of them didn't provide relevant information. Also, writing, editing, and reformatting took quite a bit of time. There were countless lessons in the writing of (the revision)," he said.

Hix said the best books were written by several high-performance, successful individuals, including an NFL athlete and a fighter pilot.

"A lot of their themes were similar. Their endeavors were just tailored in a different way. It's really cool to see those overarching themes, time and time again," Hix said.

Hix began at the University of Florida with the Gator Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Club in 2016. He also cross-trained in Japan with

local clubs in Sasebo while simultaneously training with locals and people who served in the U.S. Military Police.

"It's a story about my first white belt competition, where the referee was actually my opponent's coach. Even though he was (the official), he started trash-talking me during the match. Fortunately, I ended up winning, but I just used that as an example of obstacles that you sometimes really don't expect in life," he said.

The original book generated a wide-ranging appeal for readers.

"I actually try to give strategies instead of just using flowery language or anything. I want to get down to it and give people real techniques they can implement in their everyday lives," he said.

Hix said the first edition helped him learn how to write, edit and self-publish. He experienced "countless lessons" about elite performance and coaching with the Keystone Heights Martial Arts Academy, where he was a longtime member and coach, and from people across the United States. He said a fan from New York made him a better guitar player because it helped him focus on attention to strategy detail and positive reviews. "In martial arts and combat, you get very immediate feedback on your errors," Hix said. "There's a lot of metaphors to life in that as well. That's why learning lessons on the mat can be so valuable because they're right there. You can choose to learn and grow or sulk in your losses, and that's true in life as well."

The book is available on Kindle or at amazon.com/Rapid-Growth-Grappling-Principles-Deliberate-ebook.

Smiles, cheers and toys for local children

J.P. HALL CHILDREN'S CHARITIES

Giving the Gift of Hope

Group donates gift bags, bikes to more than 1,300 at fairgrounds

By Don Coble
don@claytodayonline.com

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – The little voice was shrilling and piercing, but nobody minded. A girl sat in the backseat of her mother's car clutching a new squeaky stuffed animal, rocking back and forth while screaming, "Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!"

Two Clay County Sheriff's Office deputies looked at each other and nodded.

"That makes it all worth it," one said.

"Yep," said the other.

The 43rd annual event had more than enough toys, bicycles and smiles to go around. Volunteers sorted through a mountain of Barbie dolls, Monopoly games and other new toys to ensure anyone 14 and younger would have the merriest of holidays.

"Everybody got toys. We had enough for everybody that came through from start to finish," said J.P. Hall IV, the organization's president.

Enough for 1,300 children.

Hall's grandfather started the Christmas giveaway to improve the quality of life for underprivileged children in Clay County. The group has also donated nearly \$500,000 in college scholarships.

Cars waited in a long line that snaked through the fairgrounds parking lot. Hall said the first arrived shortly after 4 a.m. Everyone there was served before noon.

The James Boys of Orange Park and a group of volunteers in Green Cove Springs spent a year refurbishing bicycles for the event.

"We had 850 bikes this year, which is 100 more than we've done in the past," Hall said. "And there weren't any left. It was amazing."

One woman was overwhelmed by the outpouring of generosity. She chanted, "Merry Christmas! Thank you, God!" many times. Her smile was infectious.

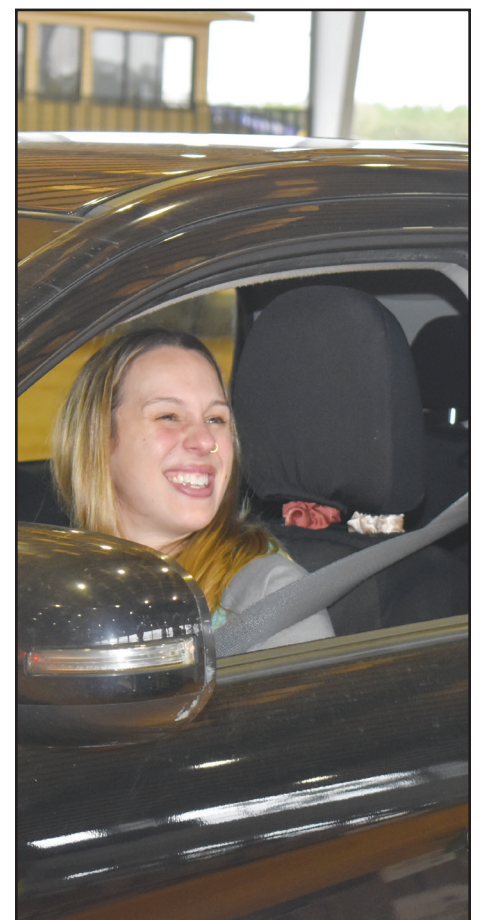
"I will remember the continued support of our community and our community partners," Hall said. "I'm just so grateful that we get to do this every year, to see new members of the community and those that have been here for their whole lives."

"We will continue to provide toys to every Clay County child that needs Christmas presents. Otherwise, they wouldn't have Christmas toys under the tree on Christmas morning."



STAFF PHOTOS BY DON COBLE

The first car arrived at the Clay County Fairgrounds shortly after 4 a.m. – nearly five hours early – for the 43rd Annual J.P. Hall Charities Children's Christmas Party at the Clay County Fairgrounds. Children screamed excitedly as Santa Claus greeted them when they entered the Cattleman's Arena. Parents were appreciative their little ones would have gifts under the tree on Christmas morning. Every child 14 and younger got a bag filled with new toys, a stuffed animal and the opportunity to choose from an assortment of 850 bicycles.



Police Briefs

claytodayonline.com

Investigation leads to arrest for videos of animal, child sex

ORANGE PARK – A cyber tip resulted in the arrest of an Orange Park man accused of possessing five videos of animal and child sexual activity.

Richard Norwood Swain, 43, was charged with five counts of having videos of animal sexual activity after the CCISO's Internet Crimes Against Children Unit worked with Homeland Security Investigations on an investigation that started in March 2022 after CCISO received the tip.



Richard Norwood Swain

The investigation showed files were uploaded in September and December 2020 and May 2021. Detectives found 92 separate KIK files when they served a federal search warrant at Swain's house on Nov. 4, 2021. According to the heavily redacted affidavit for arrest warrant, the files depicted at least one minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct.

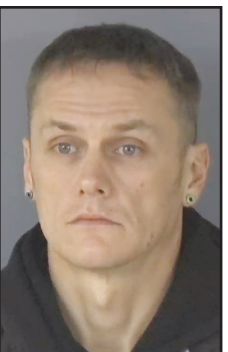
Swain was arrested after subpoenas were served to several companies that offer email accounts.

The bond for Swain was set at \$220,012. He will return to court on Jan. 23.

Man charged with voyeurism for recording woman in bedroom

MIDDLEBURG – A man was charged on Dec. 13 after the Clay County Sheriff's Office said he secretly recorded a woman in September in her bedroom.

Michael Peter Olsen, 38, of Middleburg, was charged with video voyeurism after a woman told deputies there were recording devices hidden in her room without her consent. He was arrested during a traffic stop. Olsen had two children in the car when he was taken into custody.



Michael Peter Olsen

According to the heavily redacted affidavit for the arrest report, deputies found "several" videos with a time stamp of Sept. 13.

Olsen's bond is \$50,003. His next court appearance is Jan. 16.

CCSO: Man wanted for probation violations caught with more drugs

MIDDLEBURG – A 43-year-old man with an outstanding warrant was caught

with fentanyl and drug paraphernalia when the Clay County Sheriff's Office arrested him on Dec. 12.

Timothy Travis Perry, of Middleburg, was wanted for violating the conditions of his probation after he failed to report to this probation officer, pay \$40 a month for supervision, moving from his home on Chinchilla Court without consent from his probation officer, failing a direct order to appear to the probation office, pay \$798.72 in court costs and failing to attend a drug treatment program.

He was on probation after pleading guilty to disorderly intoxication, possession of fentanyl and resisting law enforcement on Dec. 10, 2022, in Orange Park.

When deputies arrived to arrest him on Dec. 12 for probation violations, they found him with fentanyl powder and liquid, two spoons, four needles, a broken glass pipe and a blue straw.

His new bond was set at \$50,011.

Man charged with using electronic device to keep track of local woman

MIDDLEBURG – A 39-year-old man was arrested for attaching a tracking device to his estranged wife's car without her knowledge or permission.

Dwayne Dustin Padgett, 39, of Middleburg, was pulled over on Dec. 14 after a Clay County Sheriff's Office deputy was alerted the owner of a truck traveling on Old Jennings Road had an outstanding warrant for installing a tracking device without permission. According to court records, the device was detected on May 12. Padgett's wife filed for divorce on Aug. 24.

Padgett was released on his recognizance.

Fugitive pleads guilty to identity theft, cellphone scheme

JACKSONVILLE – U.S. Attorney Roger B. Handberg announced that Rohan Conrad Campbell, 49, of Jamaica, pleaded guilty to wire fraud and aggravated identity theft. He faces a maximum penalty of 20 years in federal prison for the wire fraud offense and a consecutive minimum mandatory sentence of two years in federal prison for the aggravated identity theft offense.



Timothy Travis Perry



Dwayne Dustin Padgett

Campbell has agreed to forfeit \$4,207, representing his offenses' proceeds. His sentencing hearing hasn't been scheduled.

According to the plea agreement and public records, on Aug. 5, 2017, Campbell entered a Five Star Cellular store in Clay County. Campbell obtained multiple cellphones using a fraudulently established account and a counterfeit state of Washington driver license, both in the name of a victim. On Aug. 15, 2017, Campbell returned to a Sprint store in Clay County to collect cellphones he had fraudulently ordered using another victim's identity. A store employee recognized Campbell and called the Clay County Sheriff's Office. Upon arriving and making contact with Campbell, Campbell provided a deputy with a counterfeit Washington driver's license in the identity of a third victim. As a deputy was talking with him, Campbell ran but was tackled. Campbell then got up and fled but was later apprehended by the CCISO after a pursuit.

A follow-up investigation by CCISO and the U.S. Secret Service determined Campbell set up numerous fraudulent accounts, using counterfeit identification documents in the identity of various victims, and obtained thousands of dollars worth of cellphones at multiple stores in Florida.

Campbell was arrested on May 31, 2018. After being released on pretrial supervision, Campbell fled the jurisdiction in August 2019, and a warrant was issued for his arrest. Campbell remained a fugitive for more than three years until law enforcement arrested him in early 2023.

This case was investigated by the Clay County Sheriff's Office and the U.S. Secret Service – Jacksonville Field Office. Assistant U.S. Attorney Kevin C. Frein is prosecuting it. Assistant U.S. Attorney Jennifer M. Harrington is handling the asset forfeiture.

Jacksonville man indicted for bank fraud, stealing mail

JACKSONVILLE – U.S. Attorney Roger B. Handberg announced the return of an indictment charging Frank Anthony Acanda, 26, with conspiracy to commit bank fraud, eight counts of bank fraud, conspiracy to commit theft of mail and theft of mail. If convicted, Acanda faces as many as 30 years in federal prison for each count of bank fraud and conspiracy to commit bank fraud, up to five years for the theft of mail and conspiracy to commit theft of mail count, and payment of restitution to the victims he and his co-defendant, Jonathan Benavide Hidalgo, defrauded.

According to the indictment, Acanda and Hidalgo and others drove around areas of Fleming Island, Jacksonville and St. Augustine and stole large volumes of mail from residential and business mailboxes over several months. After opening the mail and stealing checks and money orders, Acanda, Hidalgo and others acting on their behalf, deposited the items into bank accounts they controlled and used ATMs to withdraw the cash. In some instances, the co-defendants altered the stolen checks by increasing the amount of the stolen checks to maximize the amount of money they could withdraw from ATMs.

An indictment is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed one or more violations of federal criminal law, and every defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

The Clay County Sheriff's Office, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service - Jacksonville Office investigated the case.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Kevin C. Frein will prosecute it. Assistant U.S. Attorney Jennifer M. Harrington is handling the asset forfeiture.

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, Dec. 19

Dalton E. Lary, 21, Green Cove Springs, VOP-reckless driving

Sidney N.J. Armster, 28, Green Cove Springs, driving without valid license

Johnny L. Thomas, 63, Orange Park, distributing cocaine, use of two-way communication device to facilitate felony, possession-cocaine, possession-drug paraphernalia

Harry E. Truesdell, 61, Green Cove Springs, violation of jail rules

Annie L. Richardson, 29, Fleming Island, trespassing

Alex L. Patnaude, 39, Green Cove Springs, FTA-DWLSR

Melissa M. Satayavinit, 32, Orange Park,

DUI, attempting to flee/elude law enforcement with lights/siren active

Monday, Dec. 18

Frankie R. Wheeler, 55, Green Cove Springs, FTA-petit theft

Matthew A. Meikle, 37, Green Cove Springs, DWLSR

Kjaristy J. Levo, 38, Middleburg, three counts aggravated animal cruelty

Benjamin M. Williams, 49, Green Cove Springs, VOP-DUI with BAL .15 or greater

Italy J. McGriff, 37, 37, Green Cove Springs, FTA-grand theft auto

Jaquan C. Scott, 22, Green Cove Springs, VOP-armed trespassing

Antonio J. Hatch, 29, Green Cove Springs, battery in jail

John K. Evans, 29, VOP-possession-methamphetamine, VOP-grand theft auto

Avery L. Cohen, 56, Green Cove Springs, battery

Courtney A. Casady, 29, Orange Park, DUI, DUI with property damage

Michael P. Olsen, 38, Orange Park, video

Pickleball in the County Commission's court

GCS hears pleas to fund the growing sports sensation

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – A Clay County Pickleball team comprised a large chunk of the crowd during the last Board of County Commissioner meeting. One by one, with fervor, they expressed their enthusiasm for their sport and asked the BCC to consider funding the construction of more highly anticipated pickleball courts.

“Think of the kids and all of us old folks,” said one team member.

Pickleball, which is the “fasted growing sport in America,” has been shown to have broad appeal among all age groups and fitness levels. With millions of new players nationwide every year, the new sporting sensation isn't fizzling out anytime soon.

“I'm not at all a pickleball hater... but I am concerned about the money,” said Commissioner Mike Cella.

Earlier that day, the BCC heard an argument from an angry resident to balance the budget. The resident was dismayed the county's growth did not correlate to an increase in funds.

“(I know it looks like) we raid the piggybanks to find loose change. But we (the BCC) don't print money,” said Cella. “People on Facebook say we do.”

Commissioner Betsy Condon said that the county's budget was readjusted to match a \$7.8 million price tag for road improvements along Russell and Sandridge roads, a public safety project that will benefit more than 20,000 residents.

Ultimately, the BCC said the funds must come from somewhere else. BCC cited rising inflationary costs and a historically high-interest rate as other confounding variables.

The proposed pickleball courts in Green Cove Springs were estimated to cost the county \$464,830.31. The city has offered the land and contributed \$28,324 to the project and an additional \$15,000 for designs.

A resident found the site's location, which is proximal to a nearby gym, favorable to spur greater youth participation. The commentator argued that costs will increase if the project is delayed.

Many youth teams across the county have taken the year off. Last April, Tessa Wilson and Ahmed El-Zarif participated in the U.S. Pickleball Open in Naples, which qualified them for the recent Nationals in Dallas.



The Fleming Island High Golden Eagles officially started their club pickleball program in August, but it will take two years and a few hoops to jump through before they can officially call themselves a varsity athletics program.

Condon expressed a concern that Green Cove Springs would be the sole beneficiary of the project. She cited the pool in Springs Park as an example. The county helped fund the pool in Springs Park, but it is not a county asset. Therefore, she said the county does not have influence over it.

“The facilities we have in the city are in the county,” GCS City Manager Steve Kennedy said.

Kennedy affirmed that the pickleball courts would have a “first come, first serve” policy and be entirely open to the public. Furthermore, Kennedy assured that the city would maintain the courts' electricity and amenity needs.

“No one will be using headlights to play in the dark,” he said.

With a few stipulations – an assurance that the pickleball courts would be open for

the public, a “do not exceed clause” that would cap the amount of funds the county will provide to what was estimated, and a provision that would allow the BCC to have influence over the courts for county events or tournaments – the BCC voted to unanimously approve the motion that would fund the pickleball court project.

The pickleball team was tremendously grateful. They cheered and clapped as the members exited the meeting.

“The county is working on an amended interlocal agreement with Green Cove Springs, which is still under discussion. A timeline for construction will follow that final agreement,” said Jessica Barreto, Clay County Public Information Officer, in an email on Dec. 18.

Until then, the ball is in the county's court.

Arrests

from page 22

voyeurism

Richard N. Swain, 43, Orange Park, five counts possession-videos of animal sexual activity

Cortez D. Lipson, 22, Middleburg, out of state warrant

Sunday, Dec. 17

Mary A. Welker, 36, Orange Park, FTA-trespassing

Brandon A. Melton, 19, Middleburg, possession-marijuana

Jonathan L. Simmons, 18, Middleburg, possession-marijuana

Aleah R. Butler, 18, Middleburg, possession-marijuana

Esteban M.M. Mendez, 29, Green Cove Springs, leaving scene of accident without rendering aid for injuries

Shantay M. Brewer, 20, Orange Park, domestic battery

Kathryn C. Fain, 39, Middleburg, possession-drug paraphernalia, DWLSR

James K. Ziegler, 52, Middleburg, possession-controlled substance

Anthony R.J. Pierre, 30, Middleburg, trespassing

Michael P. Wyatt, 48, Fleming Island, possession-fentanyl, possession-drug paraphernalia, DUI

Jennings W. Jackson, 26, Middleburg, trespassing

Destiny A. Cuevas, 21, Middleburg, re-

sisting law enforcement with violence, battery on law enforcement/firefighter/EMT

Saturday, Dec. 16

Maria M. Cron, 36, Middleburg, DWLSR

Deborah D. Hatcher, 52, Middleburg,

VOP-possession-controlled substance

John K. Taylor, 58, Green Cove Springs, possession-marijuana, possession-methamphetamine, DWLSR

Perri A. Morrison, 20, Orange Park, shoplifting

Devin M. Duncan, 31, Fleming Island, DUI

Daniel E. Gomez, 28, Fleming Island, possession-cocaine

Friday, Dec. 15

Jordan J. Roberson, 22, Orange Park, VOP-community control, possession-marijuana

Rogelio T.P. Orozco, 28, Orange Park, possession-marijuana

Joshua M. Nettles, 41, Green Cove Springs, non-support

Brittany R. Wink, 23, Orange Park, battery

Asia K. Harris, 30, Orange Park, shoplifting, three counts grand theft, petit theft

Ima M. Smallwood, 54, Orange Park, three counts grand theft

Ronald G. Thacker, 40, Green Cove Springs, violation of pretrial release conditions for protection against domestic violence

Thursday, Dec. 14

Linda M. Power, 55, Middleburg, domestic battery

Dwayne D. Padgett, 39, Middleburg, installing tracking device without owner's knowledge

Ima M. Smallwood, 54, Orange Park, grand theft

Ronald G. Thacker, 40, Green Cove Springs, violation of pretrial release conditions for protection against domestic violence

Antwane M. Staten, 30, Green Cove Springs, grand theft auto

Tyrone Dowthard, 22, Green Cove Springs, VOP-armed burglary, burglary

Kassidy R. Sabourin, 24, Green Cove Springs, two counts VOP-resisting law enforcement, VOP-DWLSR

Mackenzie White, 19, Green Cove Springs, illegally obtaining property

Tyler R. Utech, 18, Maxville, domestic battery

Robert F. Ayers, 58, Green Cove Springs, writ of attachment

Jennyffer A. Rodriguez, 34, Orange Park, domestic battery

Wednesday, Dec. 13

Paul D. Stone, 44, Oakleaf, trafficking-amphetamine/methamphetamine, possession-drug paraphernalia, VOP-resisting law enforcement, VOP-possession-drug paraphernalia

Tyler L. Combs, 19, Middleburg, FTA-criminal mischief

Krista L. Shepler, 37, Green Cove Springs, criminal mischief, failure to redeliver hired/leased property

Tyler M. Duncan, 23, Middleburg, FTA

Brittany R. Wink, 23, aggravated battery with deadly weapon

William J. Short, 25, Middleburg, DUI, DWLSR, no vehicle registration

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WREATHS
across
AMERICA



PHOTOS BY RICH CAREY

Left: Local Chapter of American Heritage Girls, who collected donations for Wreaths Across America over Veterans Day weekend.



Mission BBQ Orange Park is one of the Corporate Sponsors of Wreaths Across America at Jax Memory Gardens.



Leonard's Express provides official transportation of the wreaths from Columbia Falls, Maine to Orange Park.



Representatives laid wreaths to honor the various branches of military. L-R: Retired Navy Commander Kevin Owens, Retired Navy Captain Todd Allerton, Colonel Jeff Pozen, State Staff Judge Advocate, Florida Air National Guard, Retired Marine Corps Gunnery Sergeant Jay Heather, and Mrs. JoAnne Speicher Harris, who placed the POW/MIA wreath. Harris was married to Captain Scott Speicher whose F18 was shot down over Iraq on the first night of the Gulf War.



Wreaths were placed at markers representing each branch of the military at the Veterans Memorial Wall inside the Magnolia Cemetery.



STAFF PHOTOS BY LEE WARDLAW

Town Councilwoman Winnette Sandlin explained how to lay wreaths at the graves of veterans during last Saturday's ceremony at Moosehaven Cemetery. Cub Scout Pack 25 and other volunteers laid a wreath at each grave and repeated the veteran's name. The program emphasizes the importance of patriotism to children.

Wreaths

from page 17

Air Force, Margaret Schwegmann saluted the Marine Corps and Layla Davis did the honors for the Merchant Marines.

Former Vice Mayor Alan Watt, a Navy veteran, thanked his fellow seamen. After the Black Creek Young Marines presented the colors, all seven branches and POW/

MIA soldiers were honored, followed by a 30-second moment of silence for the fallen, POW and MIA veterans. DiGiovanni then dismissed the group. They formed a caravan toward the first gravestone, where Anderson laid a wreath in honor of the Civil War Union Brigadier General Joseph Tarr Copeland. An additional 174 wreaths were distributed throughout the two large cemeteries.

"You cannot put a price on our veterans or active-duty military, living and passed. You, the volunteers, are also priceless," DiGiovanni said.

Anderson said the special nature of the Wreaths Across America event and the international phenomenon didn't forget the veterans of Clay County.

"We take a moment to thank them for our service to our nation. It's a small act

that goes a long way toward keeping the memory of our veterans alive. We are not here today to decorate graves but to remember their lives. Each wreath is a gift of appreciation from a grateful America," he said. Anderson echoed Sandlin's message at Moosehaven, saying, "To our children, we want you to understand that the freedom you enjoy today is not free, but comes with a cost."

TODAY'S Sports

Clay Today | December 21, 2023 | claytodayonline.com



Soccer titles for Green Cove Springs



Left: Green Cove Springs Junior High went two-for-two at the Northeast Florida Athletic Conference championship soccer game held Monday at Orange Park High with seventh grader Jordan Marshall celebrating after scoring their first goal in overtime after a tough 0-0 regulation time tie with Oakleaf Junior High that went to 1-1 with Marshall's goal and Oakleaf's Tyler Fleming's goal with just 10 seconds remaining in overtime that eventually ended with the Cougars winning 5-3 in penalty kicks off a final save from Cougars goalie Everett Haynes. Cougars coach Tony Bartel won his fourth title in six years. Right: Green Cove Springs Junior High girls soccer coach Ashleigh Nosse awaits her third straight championship trophy; three in her six years, from her athletic director Daniel Slater after Nosse's Cougars beat Oakleaf 2-0. Oakleaf and Green Cove split in regular season matches with Oakleaf getting the top seed via a tie-breaking coin flip but the Lady Cougars got two goals from Berkley Morgan for the win. Oakleaf goalie Victoria Vick knocked down nearly 25 Cougar shots on goals in an outstanding night in front of her goal. **See pictures from both finals and the semifinal games at the Clay County Soccer Complex inside, pages 29, 30 and 31.**



Three blowouts for girls teams

SJCHS, OPHS, RHS basketball post

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

ORANGE PARK - Back to back 21-point quarters, a 100th 3-pointer and an 8-0 the first quarter against an unbeaten highlighted a marquis Thursday night in girl's basketball with the blowout spirit prevailing

St. Johns Country Day School eighth grader Kendall Proffitt has sharpened her three-point shooting skills to add to the three-way shooting prowess of the Spartans offensive attack; with senior Mary Kate Kent and sophomore Sophia Mejias.

amongst the rainy, windy outside weather.

In the St. Johns Country Day School Brown Gym, senior guard Mary Kate Kent shredded the nets with 25 points with four threes. In comparison, eighth grader Kendall Proffitt upped the challenge with six threes on her 22 points as the Lady Spartans knocked out Middleburg 69-41 behind two consecutive 21-point quarters to the halftime break.

"Mary Kate Kent has been a great leader on the floor and our approach is to share the ball," said St. Johns coach Tyler Miller, now 8-1 overall. "The big boost to

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NEW ARRIVALS

BENNINGTON

Broncos hoops shooting for banner on the wall

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

MIDDLEBURG - After back-to-back 10-win seasons, Middleburg High boys basketball coach Sean Sweeney is feeling pretty good about his 2023 start at eight wins and just one loss.

"People around here remember when this team was 0-10 and nobody came to our games," said Sweeney, now 8-1 after a come-from-behind 54-53 win over a tough Suwannee High team on a Saturday matinee contest at Middleburg High. "These guys are scrappy and, in this game, turned it on when they needed it for the win."

Sweeney noted that the Broncos had four games in five days; wins over Interlachen on Tuesday, Baker County on Thursday and West Nassau on Friday. Middleburg's last winning season was a 15-11 finish under coach Travis Tipton in 2019 with Michael Harrison winning 16 games in 2011 and 2012.

With Suwannee winning a fifth straight "W" for the Middleburg, Sweeney nodded to the banners in the Carrie Prewitt gym that all of a sudden have state champions written on them; softball and volleyball.

"There is a feel in the hallways that the Middleburg programs have turned a corner and we want to be part of that," said Sweeney. "It is a driving force to get our banner up there one day."

Against Suwannee, the Broncos opened with three-pointers from Aidan Farber, Jacob Lohse and Camren Burns building to a 19-8 first-quarter lead, it seemed the Broncos were easily on their way to their



Middleburg guard Jarren Rozier gets final shot of afternoon in Saturday's 54-53 win over Suwannee High School.

eight win. Wrong. Both teams managed to miss the net throughout the stanza and the halftime score was just 25-16; a 6-8 scoring spree.

"Thank God they were just as bad as we were for the quarter," said Sweeney. "At the half, I told them every one is telling them how great they are playing and that now is the time to show it."

In the third, both teams tightened up on

SEE BRONCOS, 34



Middleburg forward Aidan Farber lets go with three pointer in Saturday win over Suwannee High. Broncos are now 8-1. Below: Middleburg forward Nate Lowery chases loose ball with Suwannee guard.



CORRESPONDENT PHOTO BY RAY DIMONDA

Oakleaf High center Austin Davenport throws down dunk in Knights thrilling 46-40 win over Clay on Friday. Knights traveled to Camden County High on Saturday, but lost a 63-39 game to fall to 6-3 overall.

Knights win showdown against Blue Devils

By Ray Dimonda
Correspondent

GREEN COVE SPRINGS - After the host Clay High Blue Devils boys basketball team spotted the visiting Oakleaf Knights 10 points at the half of their Friday night county rivalry clash, the Blue Devils dug in much like the way they overcame an 11-point deficit a week ago for an upset of Orange Park.

"I'm pretty sure every game they won, they came back from double digits," said Oakleaf Knights Head Coach Jason Price. "I kept telling my guys, they're coming. We were able to body some people, they had some foul trouble, we didn't and we were able to make some timely shots. It looked a little more like us from last year down the stretch, getting multiple stops. They played hard tonight; our first true road game. To come into that, I'm very pleased."

In the second half, the Blue Devils

gnawed their way back into the mix. With 14.3 seconds to play, the Blue Devils were only down three points, 43-40. But the brick wall the Knights built all evening, keeping the Blue Devils out of the paint most of the night, held when it counted most. With Clay going to intentional fouls to regain possession, it wasn't enough to match the Oakleaf defense as the Knights went on to a 46-40 Friday Night showdown victory in the Devils Den.

Outside on the soccer pitch, Middleburg and Clay's boy's soccer teams battled to a hard-fought 1-1 tie in a night of entertaining sports in Green Cove Springs. Junior Xavier Abuhl scored Middleburg's lone goal off an assist from Brandon Anderson.

Clay moves to a season record of 3-3-3 while Middleburg goes to 5-3-2. Middleburg also got back on their home pitch on

SEE SHOWDOWN, 27

Showdown

from page 26

Monday and gave Keystone Heights (8-1-1) all they could handle with a 1-1 tie in that game.

Back indoors on the hardwood, after the 23-13 halftime score, and a defensive showdown, Clay unleashed the beast and turned up the wick, getting physical. It was Oakleaf's defense shutting down the lane which frustrated Clay all night. Working the ball around up-tempo, Clay began to drain shots along with some amazing defense to outscore the Knights 15-13 in the third, 36-28.

The Knights were held at 36 points for almost two minutes of the final quarter as the Blue Devils pulled closer, 36-30. The Blue Devils would suffer several self-inflicted wounds as they threw the ball out of bounds on several late drives. "I told them it was a game of missed opportunities," said Clay Head Coach Jared Moses, now 6-2 overall with a road game to Beachside on Tues., Dec. 19 before the holiday break. "We had free throws and points missed early on. When you lose by two possessions; six points, that's too good of a team to have empty possessions against."

With the turnovers, the Knights were clock killers with passing, looking for quality shots. With 14.3 to play, Clay had a chance when Xavier Longmire banged a three-pointer, 43-40. But the intentional fouls only added to the Knights's total when



Middleburg High's top soccer scorer, Xavier Abuhl, No. 10, gets high five after lone goal in 1-1 tie with Clay. Middleburg also tied Keystone Heights 1-1 on Monday to move to a 5-3-2. Abuhl now has 11 goals for the Broncos. Right: Clay High forward Isaac Espino battles with Middleburg's Hunter Hare in game action Friday night; a 1-1 tie.



CORRESPONDENT PHOTOS BY RAY DIMONDA

Joseph Dorvilus added points off foul shots, then stopped the Blue Devils from getting near the net to bring the game to the final 46-40 Friday night nail-biter.

Oakleaf's rugged schedule got a notch tougher on Saturday with a trip to 9-1 Camden County High where the Knights lost a 63-39 contest. Oakleaf is scheduled to participate in Palatka High's Jarvis Williams Invitational Dec. 28-30 with a 6 p.m. game on Thurs., Dec. 2

In Clay County, a host of girls and boys teams will visit the Fleming Island and Orange Park high gymnasiums for the annual

Battle on the Island Invitational with games starting on Thurs., Dec. 21. Fleming Island, 9-2, is on a four-game win streak with wins over Ridgeview, University Christian, Westside and Tallahassee Maclay in the past week. Fleming Island opens the Battle of Island with a game Thurs., Dec. 21 at 4 p.m. against Auburndale (21-9 last year, 5A region semifinalist).

Fleming Island's girl's basketball team opens on December 21 with a 1 p.m. game at Fleming Island High against Trinity Catholic with Ridgeview playing Mandarin at 10 a.m. at FIHS and Oakleaf playing Ribault at

OPHS at 1:30 p.m.

For the boy's schedules, at FIHS, Fleming Island has Auburndale at 4 p.m. and, at OPHS, the Raiders take on Bolles at 7:30 p.m. The rest of the boy's teams include Baker County, Chattanooga SAS, Mandarin, Columbia, Ribault and Lake Wales in the Green bracket and, in the Gold bracket, Creekside, Trinity Catholic, Gainesville, McMain (LA), Andrew Jackson and Santa Fe Catholic.

The girls' bracket has Oakleaf, Ridgeview, Fleming Island, Bolles, Rickards, Mandarin and Trinity Catholic.

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Left: Orange Park guard Mariah Young moves downcourt under watchful eyes of coach Michael Nesmith. Center: Watchful eyes of guard Piera Alexander looks for basket while, right, Middleburg forward Cheyenne Jenkins powers up for layup against St. Johns.

Hoops

from page 25

Miller, now 8-1 overall. "The big boost to the offense has been the improvement of sophomore Sophia Mejias."

Mejias, the off-side guard in the Spartan's approach, has been one of the reasons for the Kent/Proffitt power punch, as she has up ticked her shooting with a 19-point night Thursday with five threes.

"The other coaches know we are going to shoot threes," said Miller. "We don't have great size underneath though Ashanti Williams (14 rebounds) has done a great job to start our fast break."

St. Johns travels to Charleston, SC, for

tournament play Dec. 28-30 with games against Porter-Gaud (SC, 5-4), Academic Magnet (SC, 4-6) and Barbourville (KY, 3-4).

Just six miles away, at Orange Park High School, senior guard Hailey Revak netted her 100th career three-pointer for the Raiders as the Lady Raiders improved to 8-1 overall with a 48-38 win over Nease and Hall of Fame coach Sherri Anthony in a key district 3-6A win for Orange Park coach Michael Nesmith. Revak, having her best season stat-wise in her four-year career, has been averaging 12 points per game with 16 three-pointers thus far on pace to reach her 32 total from last season; 19 each in her freshman and sophomore seasons.

On Friday, though, Orange Park's one loss season became two; 8-2, with an 87-61 loss to 8-1 Bolles.

Orange Park will travel Dec. 28-30 to Charleston, SC, for tournament play against James F. Byrnes High (Duncan, SC, 6-2, 5A), First Baptist School (Charleston, SC, 8-2, 4A) and Carroll County High (Hillsville, VA, 4-0, Ranked No. 3 in Virginia; 25-1 2022 and 27-1 2023 state champions, ranked No. 2 in Virginia both seasons).

Another six miles away, Ridgeview blitzed the previously unbeaten University Christian Lady Christians with a wicked 8-0 first quarter behind drives by Nia and Nacoya Blocton to win a 49-36 non-district contest. Nia Blocton scored 17 on the night

with sister Nacoya at 14 points as the Lady Panthers uptick their attack energy with full-court pressure for most of the game. Nia Blocton led the team with 10 rebounds on the night with Nacoya getting three assists and a steal. Third Blocton Narissa, the sophomore, had three Ridgeview and now has a four-game win streak after three losses in a row to Providence, Ponte Vedra and Bishop Kenny. The four wins came against St. Augustine, Fleming Island, Mandarin and University Christian with 7A-Creekside (4-4) and 7A-Mandarin (6-2) to finish the first half of the season before a tournament trip Dec. 22-23. Two of Creekside's losses are also to Ponte Vedra and Providence.



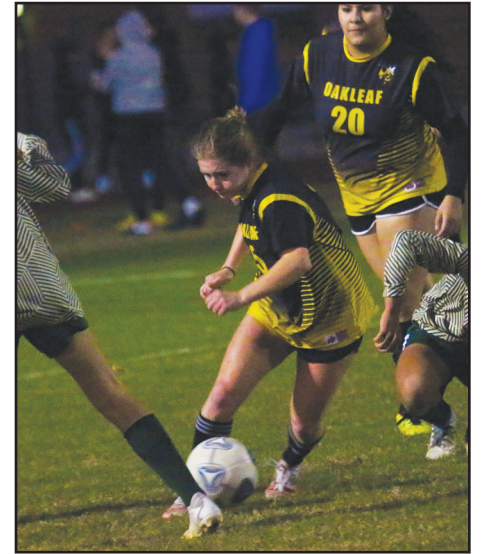
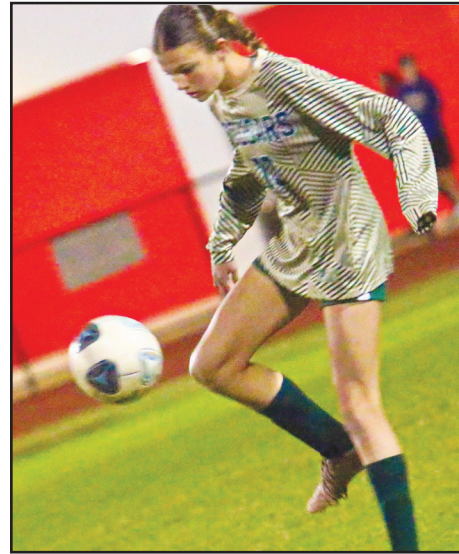
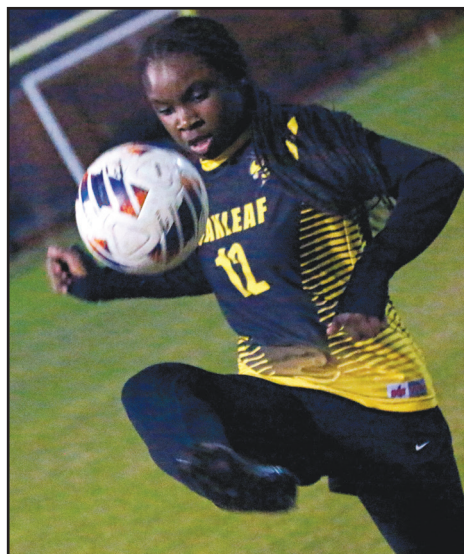
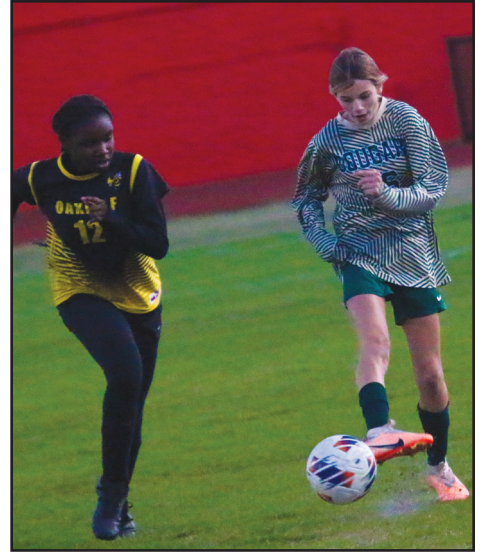
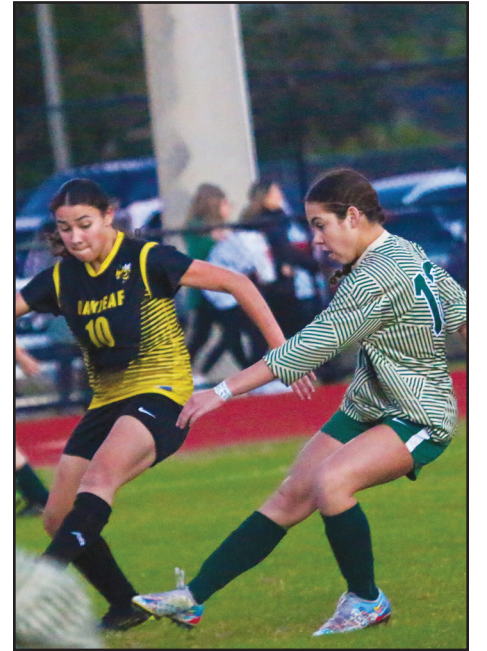
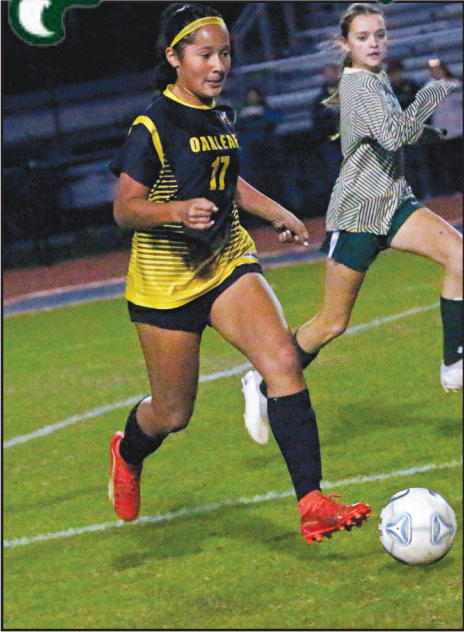
Left to right top: Ridgeview's Nia Blocton with power move against University Christian, St. Johns Mary Kate Kent is top scorer for Lady Spartans, Orange Park power center Mychaela Parker is dominating the paint for Raiders and St. Johns center Ashanti Williams is strong paint presence for fast-moving Spartans.



Left to right, bottom, Ridgeview's Nacoya Blocton has been director of multi-attack Panther attack, Orange Park shooter Hailey Revak surpassed 100 career threes in win over Nease and Ridgeview forward Ja'leah Robinson sets up for three pointer in win over University Christian.



GIRLS NORTHEAST FLORIDA ATHLETIC CONFERENCE CHAMPIONS





BOYS NORTHEAST FLORIDA ATHLETIC CONFERENCE CHAMPIONS



JUNIOR HIGH SOCCER SEMIFINALS ACTION

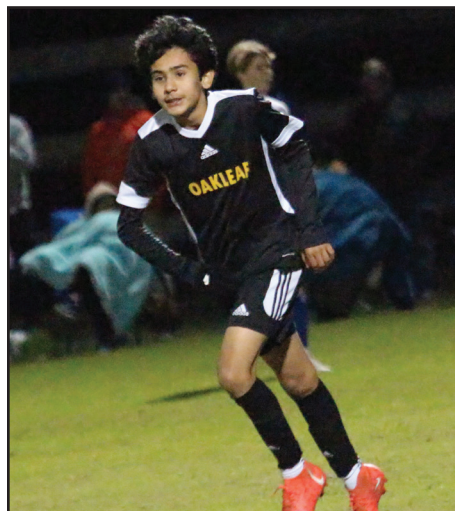




PHOTO BY JOCELYN DUHAYLUNGSOD

Fleming Island heavyweight Kevin Reyes, left, had best match of the Keystone Memorial weekend with championship win over Georgia state runner-up from Colquitt County.

Eagles powerhouse program smokes at Keystone Memorial

Reyes knocks out Georgia runner-up

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

FLEMING ISLAND - Fleming Island High's wrestling team got a show of force from a Florida powerhouse program; Suwannee High School, but the Golden Eagles flexed their team depth muscle to take a 235-220 win in the Keystone Memorial individual brackets tournament at the Keystone Memorial Invitational held Friday and Saturday. Oakleaf was third at 171 points. 14 teams were competing in the annual event.

With Fleming Island grabbing seven individual titles; Matthew Newman at 113, Jordan Mukaddam at 120, Shane Duhaylungsod at 126, Laird Duhaylungsod at 138, Kaden Schaefer at 150, Chris Chop (5th 160 2A last year) at 175 and Kevin Reyes at 285, Fleming Island dashed away from Suwannee's pursuit with the Bulldogs getting just three individual titles.

For Reyes, a first-year wrestler for coach P.J. Cobbert at Fleming Island, the learning curve comes hard every day he is on the mat.

"Coach P.J. is giving me little pieces of the strategy and tactical part of wrestling



Oakleaf High's sophomore Sebastian Bonachea is strong medal contender for Mark Detoro led Knight's wrestling team to send more athletes to state meet.

to combine with my strength and speed," said Reyes, a state weightlifting champion last year as well as starting offensive lineman for football for Fleming Island. "I thought about that I wanted to try and get a second state title and wrestling would be a good sport to do it in."

Cobbert liked Reyes' intensity as well as his immense strength and power.

"He's the kind of kid that just hates losing and loves competing," said Cobbert, noting Reyes beat Georgia 285 state runner-up Jaquavian Daniels from Colquitt County 5-2 in his final. "We are not trying to overwhelm him with too much wrestling stuff, but to give him enough to improve each week and gain more confidence. He could be a big surprise come March."

Daniels also was a linebacker for 12-1 Colquitt County football that lost in the 7A region finals in Georgia.

Two finals matchups for both teams were Schaefer, third in 2A at 145 last year, with a 4-0 win over Suwannee's Austin McKinney (5th 152 1A last year) at 150 and Newman, fourth in 2A last year, with an 8-0 win over Topher Pearson (3rd 1A 120 last year) at 113.

Oakleaf got an individual title from Kelton Duncan at 144 with seconds to Jerimiah Baker at 157 (lost to Suwannee via injury default) and Sebastian Bonachea at 132 who lost a thrilling tiebreaker to Dalton Lowe of Brantley County (GA) (6-6). Oakleaf was without state qualifier Ion Hortinela due to illness.



Fleming Island senior Kaden Schaefer, a recent Bucknell University commit, will be one of team leaders for Golden Eagles. Schaefer has been an individual champion at the prestigious Danny Byron in Orlando and now the Keystone Memorial at Fleming Island High School.

Cruce three-pins to Freedom title

Barrientos takes out No. 1

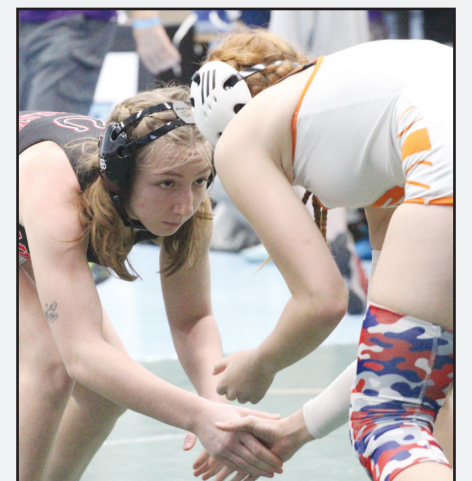
By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

ORLANDO - Middleburg High's Cheyenne Cruce and Oakleaf's Kailani Barrientos stayed undefeated in 2023 with wins for titles at the Let Freedom Ring Girls IBT at Freedom High School in Orlando on Saturday.

Cruce, unbeaten for all of last year en route to a state title, continued her streak with three pins to the Freedom title with all three opponents making it past the two-minute marks. Cruce, the top seed at 190, is noted for her quick, first-period pins. Cruce beat fifth seed Day'Jah Clark of Miami Norland with a third-period pin in the final.

Barrientos, who won an individual crown as well as Cruce at last week's Own the Ocean tournament at Ponte Vedra High School, advanced with three pins before battling Gulf High's Callie Alfieri to a 6-3 decision in the final. Barrientos was ranked second to Alfieri in the Kabra state girls' rankings prior to the matchup.

Other placers for Middleburg were



Middleburg High's Sarah Walsh finished sixth at Let Freedom Ring Girls Invitational at Freedom High.

Skyla Fisher, sixth at 105; Memphis Moses, fifth at 115; Sarah Walsh, sixth at 120, and newcomer Lauren Hughes, second at 140B.

For Oakleaf, Jazzmine Moore was third at 235 with four wins and two losses. Moore, ranked eighth at 235, lost to Grace Vernine of Admiral Farragut Academy, ranked seventh.

Gloria Paisley, at 190B, was sixth.



Orange Park senior flag football athlete Blicante Platas, center, shows off her two Super Bowl tickets awarded to her from Jacksonville Jaguars and Hispanic Heritage Foundation. Platas will take a friend for a week of Super Bowl action in Las Vegas in February.

OPHS' Platas heading to Super Bowl

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

ORANGE PARK - Orange Park High senior flag football ace Briciani Platas has a goal of an Olympic team invite somewhere in her future, but for the next few weeks, Platas will be preparing for the NFL's Super Bowl LVIII in February in Las Vegas.

Not that Platas will be playing in the game at her usual defensive back position amongst the behemoths of the NFL, but Platas will be a guest of the Jacksonville Jaguars after she earned two tickets to the sports season finale in Las Vegas.

"They asked questions about how flag football impacted my life and how I learned the sport itself," said Platas, also a striker for the Orange Park High girls soccer team. "I've been playing flag football for my four years here at Orange Park and have thought about the Olympics as it is an exhibition sport this year and will become a medal sport in the future."

Platas answered questions on how flag football has impacted her life as a Hispanic student at Orange Park High School and was chosen as winner of the Grant Award Winner for Latino Youth Honors by the Hispanic Heritage Foundation Team and the Jacksonville Jaguars as one of eight finalists of 56 competitors.

The National Football League and the Hispanic Heritage Foundation (HHF) announced the inaugural "NFL Latino Youth Honors," recognizing outstanding high school tackle and flag football athletes from around the country for their academic and athletic excellence. Eight of these exemplary student-athletes were announced as finalists, representing each of the eight league divisions.

"The NFL is proud to again join forces with the Hispanic Heritage Foundation in the launch of this year's 'NFL Latino Youth Honors,' where Latino students and their inspiring stories will motivate the next generation of fans and athletes of this great sport," said Marissa Solis, NFL Senior VP/ Global Brand & Consumer Marketing.



The elite group of athletes will be in Las Vegas and will also participate in a variety of events before attending the game. The HHF and the NFL will also announce a national winner of the 2023 NFL Latino Youth Awards.

Platas' excellence on the field was with an estimated 62 flag pulls last year with six tackles for loss, three sacks, and six interceptions as well as 18 pass breakups. Off the field, Platas has a 3.2 grade point average.

"I'm the oldest child in my family and played lots of sports," said Platas, who gets a round trip flight with a friend (an aunt), hotel and accommodations and her two tickets to the game. "I fell in love with the sport once I played it."

Flag football — a fast, non-contact and gender-equal format, renowned as the most accessible and inclusive version of American football — is spearheading exceptional worldwide participation growth in American football, especially among women and girls.

An estimated 20 million people in more than 100 countries currently play flag football, which is growing in tandem with the exploding international popularity of the NFL, as America's favorite spectator sport continues to build on a global fan base of 340 million. This year, 65 national representative teams will participate in the IFAF continental flag football competition, building towards the IFAF World Flag Football Championships to be held in Lahti, Finland in August 2024.

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SUSAN NEUMAN

Former Assistant Secretary,
Secondary & Elementary Education



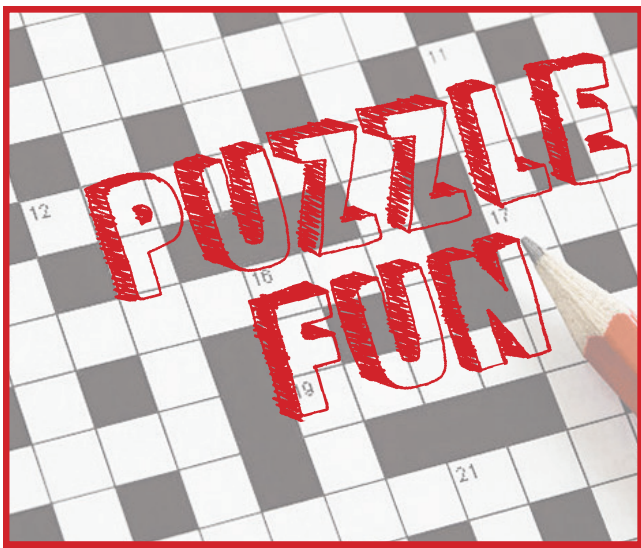
VINCENT TAYLOR

Educator & Author

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Level: Advanced



Middleburg center B.J. Carter is equally adept in the paint as on the perimeter.

Broncos

from page 26

defense and forced plenty of sloppy turn-overs with Middleburg staying cold and Suwannee using drives to the bucket to create points to end the quarter at 37-36 with the Bulldogs hitting a three-pointer with 16 seconds to go to take the lead. Middleburg got another three from Farber and a jumper with Nate Lowery adding a jumper.

Suwannee rolled ahead to a 44-38 lead before a layup and free throw from guard Jarren Rozier closed the gap to 44-41 with Farber hitting a jumper and center Landon Seago snaring a follow-up rebound to chop the gap to 46-45.

A Suwannee three-pointer dashed the momentum before Farber cashed in twice; one off a no-look pass from Chico Ally to tie the game at 49-49 with 2:13 to go.

“We just had to do what we had to do to get the win,” said Farber. “We knew the shooting would come back.”

In the final two minutes, Farber again made the key plays with a jumper, and a steal to a layup by Rozier putting Middleburg up 53-51 before a Suwannee layup to tie.

In the final 12 seconds, a scuffle under the basket got two free throws to Rozier for the win.

Middleburg has games with Florida Deaf, Baldwin to end the pre-Christmas slate and then Yulee on January 4.

☉ ✱ ☽ ☼ ☿ ♁ ♃ ♅ ♇ ♉ ♋ ♌ ♍ ♎ ♏ ♐ ♑ ♒ ♓ ♀ ♂ ♆ ♇ ♉ ♋ ♌ ♍ ♎ ♏ ♐ ♑ ♒ ♓

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

CRYPTO FUN

Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Solve the code to discover words related to Thanksgiving.
Each number corresponds to a letter.
(Hint: 26 = H)

A. 6 20 11 1 24 25

Clue: Gobble gobble

B. 12 3 6 26 24 11 19 17 12

Clue: Coming together

C. 26 5 23 19 4 3 25

Clue: Special event

D. 6 26 3 17 1 2 20 23

Clue: Showing gratitude

Answers: A. turkey B. gathering C. holiday D. thankful

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to Thanksgiving.

ARTOS

Five empty boxes for the word.

Answer: Roast

Guess Who?

I am an actress born in Washington, DC on November 24, 1978. As a child I appeared in a TV commercial for Cheerios. I gained fame playing a doctor on a popular show, which earned me a Primetime Emmy Award. I also have been in many different movies, particularly rom-coms.

Answer: Katherine Heigl

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

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

WORDS

- APPLE PIE
- BISCUITS
- BRINE
- CASSEROLE
- CIDER
- CORNBREAD
- CORNUCOPIA
- DINNER
- ENTERTAIN
- FAMILY
- FRIENDS
- FULL
- GRACIOUS
- GRATITUDE
- GRAVY
- GREEN BEANS
- HOLIDAY
- MEAL
- OVEN
- SOUP
- STUFFING
- THANKSGIVING
- TURKEY
- YAMS

P	A	C	A	A	S	K	I	N	G									
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8	4	7	2	9	5	6	1	3
6	1	5	4	7	3	2	8	9
4	6	1	3	5	8	7	9	2
2	9	3	7	1	4	8	5	6
5	7	8	6	2	9	1	3	4

CLAY COUNTY LEGAL NOTICES

you are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, to it on Gary Gassel, Esquire, of Law Office of Gary Gassel, P.A. the plaintiff's attorney...

NOTICE OF SALE PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 45

IN THE COUNTY COURT OF THE FOURTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA CIVIL DIVISION Case No. 2023CC002035 THE COTTAGES AT OAKLEAF CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION, INC., a Florida not-for-profit corporation, Plaintiff, vs. OPEN RANGE PROPERTIES, LLC and UNKNOWN TENANT, Defendants. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to an Agreed Final Judgment of Foreclosure entered in Case No. 2023CC002035...

PUBLIC AUCTION

Extra Space Storage, on behalf of itself or its affiliates, Life Storage or Storage Express, will hold a public auction to sell personal property described below belonging to those individuals listed below at the location indicated: 1709 Blanding Blvd., Middleburg, FL 32068, Tuesday, January 9, 2024 @ 12:00 PM.

Storage may refuse any bid and may rescind any purchase up until the winning bidder takes possession of the personal property. Legal 94398 Published 12/21/2023 and 12/28/2023 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

Meeting Dates of the Clay County Utility Authority

The Board of Supervisors of the Clay County Utility Authority will meet on Friday, January 5, 2024, in a Workshop Session beginning at the Clay County Utility Authority's Administrative Office, located at 3176 Old Jennings Road, Middleburg, Florida commencing at 8:00 A.M., or as soon thereafter as the Board of Supervisors in attendance may convene...

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FOURTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA PROBATE DIVISION FILE NUMBER: 2023-CP-000617 DIVISION: B IN RE: ESTATE OF ADELLE KENNEDY LANOUE, a/k/a ADELE K. LANOUE, a/k/a ADELLE K. LANOUE Deceased, The administration of the estate of ADELLE KENNEDY LANOUE, deceased, whose date of death was August 25, 2023, is pending in the Circuit Court for Clay County, Florida, Probate Division...

PUBLIC AUCTION

Extra Space Storage, on behalf of itself or its affiliates, Life Storage or Storage Express, will hold a public auction to sell personal property described below belonging to those individuals listed below at the location indicated: 3168 Blanding Blvd., Middleburg, FL 32068, Tuesday, January 9, 2024 @ 12:00 PM.

FICTITIOUS NAME

Notice Under Fictitious Name Law Pursuant to Section 865.09, Florida Statutes NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the undersigned, desiring to engage in business under the fictitious name of Summerhill Publishing, located at 111 Swimming Pen Dr, in the County of Clay, in the City of Middleburg, Florida 32068 intends to register the said name with the Division of Corporations of the Florida Department of State, Tallahassee, Florida...

LEGAL NOTICE

Public notice is hereby given the Town Council of the Town of Orange Park will hold a public hearing on an ordinance amending Ordinance 32-23 which adopted and enacted the final budget of estimated revenues and expenditures and made appropriations for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2023 and ending September 30, 2024 for the first time during the course of said fiscal year, providing an effective date.

LEGAL NOTICE

Public notice is hereby given that the Town Council of the Town of Orange Park will hold a public hearing on an ordinance amending Article II, Section 2.04.13 of the Land Development Regulations of the Town of Orange Park to prohibit parking garages within the Kingsley Avenue Character Overlay; providing for conflicts, severability and an immediate effective date.

LEGAL NOTICE

Public Notice is hereby given the Town Council of the Town of Orange Park will hold a public hearing on an ordinance amending Chapter 36 of the Orange Park Town Code; amending Stormwater Management Utility Fee rates for fiscal year(s) 2023-2024 and 2024-2025; providing for conflict, severability and establishing an immediate effective date.

of the Town Clerk, Monday through Friday from 7:30 A.M. until 5:30 P.M. Interested parties may attend the meeting and be heard. Courtney Russo, Town Clerk Legal 94316 Published 12/21/2023 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE:

ELITE TOWING gives notice that on 01/01/2024 at 09:00 AM the following vehicles(s) may be sold by public sale at 4353 CO RD 218 MIDDLEBURG FL 32068 to satisfy the lien for the amount owed on each vehicle for any recovery, towing, or storage services charges and administrative fees allowed pursuant to Florida statute 713.78.

FICTITIOUS NAME

Notice Under Fictitious Name Law Pursuant to Section 865.09, Florida Statutes NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the undersigned, desiring to engage in business under the fictitious name of Visual Appetite, located at 2073 Palmetto St, Unit #2247 in the County of Clay, in the City of Middleburg, Florida 32068 intends to register the said name with the Division of Corporations of the Florida Department of State, Tallahassee, Florida...

PUBLIC AUCTION

Extra Space Storage, on behalf of itself or its affiliates, Life Storage or Storage Express, will hold a public auction to sell personal property described below belonging to those individuals listed below at the location indicated: 3764 Jacobs Xing, Middleburg FL 32068, Tuesday, January 9, 2024 @ 12:00 PM.

NOTICE OF ACTION

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FOURTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA CASE NO.: 2023CA001460 PNC BANK, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, Plaintiff, vs. ANGELA M. WESTER; et al., Defendant(s). TO: Angela M. Wester Last Known Residence: 738 River Rd Orange Park, FL 32073 TO: Unknown Spouse of Angela M. Wester Last Known Residence: 738 River Rd Orange Park, FL 32073 YOU ARE NOTIFIED that an action to foreclose a mortgage on the following property in CLAY County, Florida: A PARCEL OF LAND SITUATED IN LOT 24 SECTION 1, ORANGE PARK, CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA, ACCORDING TO PLAT BOOK 1, PAGE 23, OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS OF SAID COUNTY AND BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: FOR A POINT OF REFERENCE COMMENCE AT THE INTERSECTION OF THE NORTH LINE OF LOT 23 OF SAID SECTION 1 WITH THE EAST LINE OF STATE ROAD NO.15 (SAID POINT BEING 50 FEET FROM THE SURVEY LINE OF SAID ROAD AS MEASURED AT RIGHT ANGLES THERETO); THENCE ON SAID NORTH LINE SOUTH EIGHTY 89 DEGREES 56 MINUTES 40 SECONDS WEST, 782.98 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 00 DEGREES 3 MINUTES 20 SECONDS WEST, 120 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 07 DEGREES 59 MINUTES 20 SECONDS WEST 110.44 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING; THENCE NORTH 89 DEGREES 48 MINUTES 20 SECONDS EAST, 246.45 FEET TO THE EAST LINE OF SAID LOT 24; THENCE SOUTH 09

DEGREES 00 MINUTES 20 SECONDS WEST, 15.41 FEET TO A, CONCRETE MONUMENT ON THE EAST LINE OF SAID LOT 24; THENCE SOUTH 06 DEGREES 34 MINUTES 00 SECONDS WEST, 92.87 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 89 DEGREES 54 MINUTES WEST, 237.62 FEET; THENCE NORTH 04 DEGREES 11 MINUTES 30 SECONDS WEST, 92.48 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 89 DEGREES 54 MINUTES WEST, 1.45 FEET; THENCE NORTH 00 DEGREES 10 MINUTES EAST, 14.78 FEET; THENCE NORTH 89 DEGREES 48 MINUTES 20 SECONDS EAST, 12.38 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING. TOGETHER WITH THE PROPERTY DESCRIBED AND CONVEYED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 1480, PAGE 1717. LESS AND EXCEPT ANY PORTION DESCRIBED AND CONVEYED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 1485, PAGE 1673, OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS OF CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA has been filed against you and you are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, to it on ALDRIDGE PITE, LLP, Plaintiff's attorney, at 5300 West Atlantic Avenue Suite 303 Delray Beach, FL 33484, on or before 30 days from first day of publication, and file the original with the clerk of this court either before service on Plaintiff's attorney or immediately thereafter; otherwise a default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint or petition. Dated on December 11, 2023. As Clerk of the Court By: Jennifer Brosky As Deputy Clerk Legal 94312 Published 12/21/2023 and 12/28/2023 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

NOTICE OF ACTION

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 4TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA CIVIL DIVISION: CASE NO.: 2023CA001479 SPECIALIZED LOAN SERVICING LLC, Plaintiff, v. MICHAEL A WERBY, et., al., Defendants. TO: MICHAEL A WERBY 2986 FOREST OAKS DR ORANGE PARK, FL 32073 UNKNOWN SPOUSE OF MICHAEL A WERBY 2986 FOREST OAKS DR ORANGE PARK, FL 32073 LAST KNOWN ADDRESS: STATED, CURRENT ADDRESS: UNKNOWN YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that an action to foreclose Mortgage covering the following real and personal property described as follows, to-wit: LOT 20, THE FOREST, ACCORDING TO PLAT THEROF AS RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 16, PAGES 52 AND 53 OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS OF CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA, has been filed against you and you are required to file a copy of your written defenses, if any, to it on Orlando Deluca, Deluca Law Group, PLLC, 2101 NE 26th Street, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33305 and file the original with the Clerk of the above-styled Court on or before 30 days from the first publication, otherwise a Judgment may be entered against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint. WITNESS my hand and seal of said Court on the 11th day of December 2023. CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT As Clerk of the Court By: Chelsey Mason Deputy Clerk Legal 94311 Published 12/21/2023 and 12/28/2023 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

NOTICE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FOURTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA FILE NUMBER: 2023-GA-14 DIVISION: A IN RE: GUARDIANSHIP OF EMILY TAYLOR, Pursuant to Section 744-631(2), Florida Statutes, PATRICIA A. TAYLOR and MICHAEL E. TAYLOR, Plenary Guardian of the Person and Property of EMILY TAYLOR, gives notice of their intention to make application for Authority to Act related to selling the property located at 5400 LaMoya Avenue, Unit 17, Jacksonville, Florida, 32210. The Honorable Judge James E. Kallaher of the Fourth Judicial Circuit, Probate Division, will call up this matter on January 11, 2024, at 9:20 a.m., via Zoom hear-

ing, Join Zoom Meeting, https://zoom.us/j/7793110365. Meeting ID: 779 311 0365. GERALDINE C. HARTIN, Esquire HAMILTON & HARTIN, PA Florida Bar: 15201 3168 Highway 17, Suite A Fleming Island, FL 32003 904-278-3888 geraldine.hartin@gmail.com Legal 94244 Published 12/14/2023, 12/21/2023, 12/28/2023 and 1/4/2023 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

PUBLIC AUCTION

Extra Space Storage, on behalf of itself or its affiliates, Life Storage or Storage Express, will hold a public auction to sell personal property described below belonging to those individuals listed below at the location indicated: 918 Blanding Blvd. Orange Park FL, 32065 January 9th, 2024 at 9:30 AM Monica Arroyo Rodriguez- Boxes, Clothes Daniel Harrell- Household Goods/Furniture, TV/Stereo Equipment The auction will be listed and advertised on www.storage-treasures.com. Purchases must be made with cash only and paid at the above referenced facility in order to complete the transaction. Extra Space Storage may refuse any bid and may rescind any purchase up until the winning bidder takes possession of the personal property. Legal 94243 Published 12/21/2023 and 12/28/2023 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

PUBLIC AUCTION

Extra Space Storage, on behalf of itself or its affiliates, Life Storage or Storage Express, will hold a public auction to sell personal property described below belonging to those individuals listed below at the location indicated: 600 Blanding Blvd Orange Park, FL 32073, 01/09/2024 at 10:00AM. Andra Jones Household Goods Opal Dixon Household Goods The auction will be listed and advertised on www.storage-treasures.com. Purchases must be made with cash only and paid at the above referenced facility in order to complete the transaction. Extra Space Storage may refuse any bid and may rescind any purchase up until the winning bidder takes possession of the personal property. Legal 94242 Published 12/21/2023 and 12/28/2023 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

PUBLIC AUCTION

Extra Space Storage, on behalf of itself or its affiliates, Life Storage or Storage Express, will hold a public auction to sell personal property described below belonging to those individuals listed below at the location indicated: Extra Space Storage #6162 2406 Hutton Ct. Middleburg FL, 32068. 01-09-2024 10:00 AM. Samuel Furniss-Roe - Household goods Leigh Pecor - Household goods The auction will be listed and advertised on www.storage-treasures.com. Purchases must be made with cash only and paid at the above referenced facility in order to complete the transaction. Extra Space Storage may refuse any bid and may rescind any purchase up until the winning bidder takes possession of the personal property. Legal 94241 Published 12/21/2023 and 12/28/2023 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: SAVVY FL LLC FTB COLLATERAL ASSIGNEE, 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.: 795/2021 Legal Description: LOTS 21 & 22 BLK 79 HIGHLIDGE ESTATES AS REC O R 3851 PG 239 Parcel ID No.: 210823-003847-000-00 Opening Bid Amount: \$1,472.46 Physical Address: 6192 HUNTER AVE, KEYSTONE HEIGHTS Classification: VACANT RESIDENTIAL Name in which assessed: GT MARINE AND OUTDOORS INC Said property being in the County of Clay, State of Florida.

Large advertisement for Clay Today with a speedometer image and text: Zero to Sold...in no time flat! Nothing moves faster than a Clay Today classified. Get your merchandise moving today! Place a classified by calling 904-579-2154

CLAY COUNTY LEGAL NOTICES

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: BUFFALO BILL LLC, 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.: 379/2018
Legal Description: LOT 24 BLK 7 BIG TREE LAKES SEC B AS REC O R 890 PG 626
Parcel ID No.: 140823-001437-476-00
Opening Bid Amount: \$2,217.81
Physical Address: 5676 SEQUOIA , KEYSTONE HEIGHTS
Classification: VACANT RESIDENTIAL
Name in which assessed: LINDA L BURCH
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 21st day of February, 2024 at 9:30 A.M at www.clay.realtaxdeed.com.
Dated this 4th day of December, 2023
TARA S. GREEN
Clay County Clerk & Comptroller
Clay County, Florida
By: Christina Spadea
Deputy Clerk
Legal 93682 Published 12/7/2023, 12/14/2023, 12/21/2023 and 12/28/2023 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: DEL REY PACHECO, 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.: 812/2017
Legal Description: LOT 13 BLK 71 HIGHRIDGE ESTATE AS REC O R 1923 PG 1711
Parcel ID No.: 220823-003650-000-00
Opening Bid Amount: \$1,701.38
Physical Address: LEHIGH DR , KEYSTONE HEIGHTS
Classification: VACANT RESIDENTIAL
Name in which assessed: BURGREN ENTERPRISES INC
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 21st day of February, 2024 at 9:30 A.M at www.clay.realtaxdeed.com.
Dated this 4th day of December, 2023
TARA S. GREEN
Clay County Clerk & Comptroller
Clay County, Florida
By: Christina Spadea
Deputy Clerk
Legal 93680 Published 12/7/2023, 12/14/2023, 12/21/2023 and 12/28/2023 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: BUFFALO BILL LLC, 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.: 1929/2019
Legal Description: PT OF W1/2 A/K/A PRCL 10 AS REC O R 804 PG 10,4091 PG 1399 & 4098 PG 891
Parcel ID No.: 160724-006901-022-00
Opening Bid Amount: \$2,965.33
Physical Address: 5331 STATE ROAD 21 , KEYSTONE HEIGHTS
Classification: VACANT RESIDENTIAL
Name in which assessed: JOAN DAVIS (HEIRS) C/O CANDICE LEE DAVIS P/R
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 21st day of February, 2024 at 9:30 A.M at www.clay.realtaxdeed.com.
Dated this 4th day of December, 2023
TARA S. GREEN
Clay County Clerk & Comptroller
Clay County, Florida
By: Christina Spadea
Deputy Clerk
Legal 93678 Published 12/7/2023, 12/14/2023, 12/21/2023 and 12/28/2023 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: CINDA M WITTMAN, 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.: 314/2021
Legal Description: LOT 23 BLK 11 BIG TREE LAKES SEC C AS REC O R 872 PG 379
Parcel ID No.: 130823-001437-863-35
Opening Bid Amount: \$2,293.24
Physical Address: 5712 CARIBBEAN CIR , KEYSTONE HEIGHTS
Classification: VACANT RESIDENTIAL
SPECIAL FEATURES OR YARD ITEM Name in which assessed: ALMA JEAN TAYLOR (ESTATE OF), C/O DALE JOHNSON
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 21st day of February, 2024 at 9:30 A.M at www.clay.realtaxdeed.com.
Dated this 4th day of December, 2023
TARA S. GREEN
Clay County Clerk & Comptroller
Clay County, Florida
By: Christina Spadea
Deputy Clerk
Legal 93661 Published 12/7/2023, 12/14/2023, 12/21/2023 and 12/28/2023 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: ROBERT W OTTFCLOVERLAND LLC, 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.: 923/2020
Legal Description: LOT 9 BLK 102 HIGHRIDGE ESTATE AS REC O R 2492 PG 254
Parcel ID No.: 160823-004356-000-00
Opening Bid Amount: \$1,869.26
Physical Address: 6209 OLGETHORPE AVE , KEYSTONE HEIGHTS
Classification: VACANT RESIDENTIAL
Name in which assessed: EARL & TATJANA NELSON, TATJANA NELSON
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 10th day of January, 2024 at 9:30 A.M at www.clay.realtaxdeed.com.
Dated this 27th day of November, 2023
TARA S. GREEN
Clay County Clerk & Comptroller
Clay County, Florida
By: Christina Spadea
Deputy Clerk
Legal 93220 Published 11/30/2023, 12/7/2023, 12/14/2023 and 12/21/2023 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: LORI DENES, LD 401 K PLAN & TRUST, 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.: 3687/2018
Legal Description: LOTS 19 & 20 BLK 31 OF LAKE GENEVA AS REC O R 3550 PG 786
Parcel ID No.: 280823-021917-007-00
Opening Bid Amount: \$11,244.70
Physical Address: 7730 CYPRESS ST , KEYSTONE HEIGHTS
Classification: MOBILE HOME
Name in which assessed: OMAHA 2011 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 21st day of February, 2024 at 9:30 A.M at www.clay.realtaxdeed.com.
Dated this 4th day of December, 2023
TARA S. GREEN
Clay County Clerk & Comptroller
Clay County, Florida
By: Christina Spadea
Deputy Clerk
Legal 93681 Published 12/7/2023, 12/14/2023, 12/21/2023 and 12/28/2023 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: BLUEBIRD PROPERTY HOLDINGS LLC, 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.: 830/2017
Legal Description: LOT 24 BLK 76 HIGHRIDGE ESTATE AS REC O R 3148 PG 1025
Parcel ID No.: 210823-003768-000-00
Opening Bid Amount: \$1,666.40
Physical Address: 6180 HARVARD AVE , KEYSTONE HEIGHTS
Classification: VACANT RESIDENTIAL
Name in which assessed: ELLA III 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 21st day of February, 2024 at 9:30 A.M at www.clay.realtaxdeed.com.
Dated this 4th day of December, 2023
TARA S. GREEN
Clay County Clerk & Comptroller
Clay County, Florida
By: Christina Spadea
Deputy Clerk
Legal 93679 Published 12/7/2023, 12/14/2023, 12/21/2023 and 12/28/2023 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: BUFFALO BILL LLC, 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.: 1835/2019
Legal Description: LOT 25 BLK 202 BLACK CREEK PARK UNIT 2 AS REC O R 2855 PG 570
Parcel ID No.: 350524-006699-820-00
Opening Bid Amount: \$2,169.15
Physical Address: 2790 TANSY AVE , MIDDLEBURG
Classification: VACANT RESIDENTIAL
Name in which assessed: JOSEPH M G PRINSTON
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 21st day of February, 2024 at 9:30 A.M at www.clay.realtaxdeed.com.
Dated this 4th day of December, 2023
TARA S. GREEN
Clay County Clerk & Comptroller
Clay County, Florida
By: Christina Spadea
Deputy Clerk
Legal 93662 Published 12/7/2023, 12/14/2023, 12/21/2023 and 12/28/2023 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: CITRUS CAPITAL HOLDINGS LLC, 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.: 3748/2020
Legal Description: UNIT 1321 & PT OF COMMONS AREA O R 809 PG 632 RAVINES RESORT CONDO CLUSTER 13 AS REC O R 3826 PG 1516
Parcel ID No.: 130524-021388-055-25
Opening Bid Amount: \$2,545.39
Physical Address: 2960 RAVINES RD 1321 , MIDDLEBURG
Classification: CONDO
Name in which assessed: ROY JAMES DODGEN III
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 21st day of February, 2024 at 9:30 A.M at www.clay.realtaxdeed.com.
Dated this 4th day of December, 2023
TARA S. GREEN
Clay County Clerk & Comptroller
Clay County, Florida
By: Christina Spadea
Deputy Clerk
Legal 93660 Published 12/7/2023, 12/14/2023, 12/21/2023 and 12/28/2023 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

SUMMONS AND NOTICE OF ACTION BY PUBLICATION

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT, FOURTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,
IN AND FOR CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA
CASE NO.: 10-2022-DP-000064
DIVISION: JVE
IN THE INTEREST OF:
P.I.
DOB: 01/26/2022
MINOR CHILD
THE STATE OF FLORIDA
TO:
Robert Imler, FATHER
Address Unknown
YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that a Petition has been filed in the above-styled Court by the FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES for termination of parental rights and permanent commitment for subsequent adoption of the above-named child, P.I., born January 6, 2022. You are hereby commanded to appear before **Honorable Angela M. Cox**, at the Clay County Courthouse, Juvenile Dependency Courtroom, 825 North Orange Avenue, Green Cove Springs, Florida at the hour of 2:00 p.m. o'clock on January 5, 2024 A.D. You must appear at the hearing on the date and time specified.
FAILURE TO PERSONALLY APPEAR AT THIS ADVISORY HEARING CONSTITUTES CONSENT TO THE TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS TO THIS R.S. AND YOU MAY LOSE ALL LEGAL RIGHTS AS A PARENT TO THIS CHILD. Pursuant to Sections 39.804(4)(d) and 63.082(6)(g), Florida Statutes, you are



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