

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS HERALD

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Keystone Heights finds strength from within to deal with tragedies

School district sends counselors to support grieving process

By Don Coble
don@claytodayonline.com

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – Their young faces were desperate for answers. Their eyes were red and puffy from crying. They hugged, hoping, as a group, they could summon the strength to find peace from the unspeakable pain a child feels about the unfairness of death.

So they gather, holding hands in a parking lot, in school hallways, on neighborhood corners and at a funeral, each looking to regain some sense of normalcy.

In time, they will remember the horrible days around the first of September. They will go to Prom, graduate and start lives of their own. But for now, they hurt, with many looking for an outlet to vent their frustration and confusion.

The Clay County District Schools has a team that supports schools dealing with tragedies. Five counselors were at Keystone




Keystone Heights students hold hands and pray for freshman Ryder Trull after he was seriously injured on Aug. 26 in a car crash.

SUBMITTED PHOTO


SEE STRENGTH, 3

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PUZZLE FUN

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There are four differences between Picture A and Picture B.

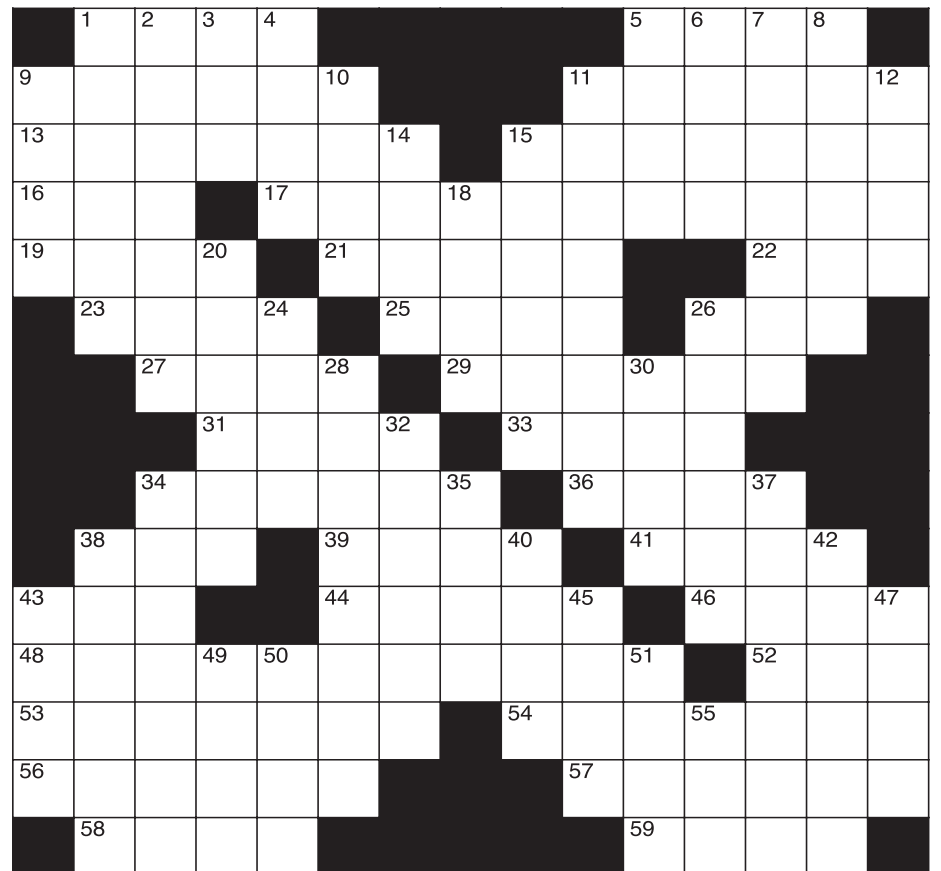


Answers:
1. Missing acorn on plate 2. Extra yellow gourd 3. Glass has beverage in it 4. Extra candle on the right

GUESS WHO?

I am an actor born in California on October 18, 1987. My father worked as an engineer and my mother as an admin. I was a class clown in school, but rose to fame playing a popular athlete in a musical about high school. I've starred in other movie musicals as well.

Answer: Zac Efron



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Tall, upright post on a boat
- 5. Basics
- 9. Used to refer to cited works
- 11. Folds
- 13. Former UK PM May
- 15. Cold region of Russia
- 16. Standard operating procedure
- 17. Separating
- 19. Particles
- 21. A way to map out
- 22. Referee declares
- 23. Beginner
- 25. Water (Spanish)
- 26. Gov't lawyers
- 27. Non-reproductive parts of an organism
- 29. Spanish friends
- 31. A type of tree
- 33. Walk heavily
- 34. About a wood
- 36. Free-swimming marine invertebrate
- 38. Political action committee
- 39. SB19 hit song
- 41. Scorch the surface of
- 43. Moved quickly on foot
- 44. Sacred state for a Muslim

CLUES DOWN

- 1. One who rides an elephant
- 2. Absence of bacteria
- 3. Soviet Socialist Republic
- 4. Men's fashion accessories
- 5. "Honey" actress Jessica
- 6. Round red root vegetable
- 7. Latin term for "charity"
- 8. Doesn't smell good
- 9. Mental health issue
- 10. Millisecond
- 11. Hairstyle
- 12. Edible starch
- 14. Middle Eastern military title
- 15. Protein-rich liquids
- 18. Indian musical pattern
- 20. Cancer and Capricorn

- 24. Country along the Arabian peninsula
- 26. A bend
- 28. Fishes of the herring family
- 30. Antelopes
- 32. Chaos
- 34. Popular music app
- 35. Cooking material
- 37. Musical instrument
- 38. San Diego ballplayers
- 40. Small amounts
- 42. Poured
- 43. Fabric
- 45. Food option
- 47. Finger millet
- 49. The U. of Miami mascot is one
- 50. Alberta, Canada river
- 51. Canadian flyers
- 55. Dry white wine drink

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Strength

from page 1

Heights Junior/Senior Highs last week after freshman Ryder Trull sustained serious injuries in a car crash on Aug. 26 on State Road 100. His sister was treated and released, but he was airlifted to Shands Hospital in Gainesville with critical head injuries, where the junior varsity football quarterback remains in the Intensive Care Unit.

Then, on Sept. 1, Ayden Graff, 17, was killed in a head-on collision near the Gainesville Airport.

“There’s no one solution fits all,” said District Coordinator of Mental Health Support Mellisa Moree. “You have so many different resources and answers for complex areas of tragedy. We have training for dealing with



Students often struggle to find ways to deal with grief, members of Clay County District Schools’ Mental Health Support said.

grief and mental health needs. And a lot of times, regardless of the situation around grief, the treatment of grief tends to be the

same. It’s a lot of listening.”

Keystone Height presented a unique challenge because it’s a tight-knit community where everyone either knows each other or is related. Other students may not be as connected in other schools.

“Some students would rather talk to a school counselor here because they have a relationship with them,” Principal Laurie Burke said. “So it’s different here. For each person, it’s different. For each family, students don’t know how to handle grief. I hope They’re young and haven’t been through a lot of grief. I would say it’s vital that we have support. Keystone, in particular, is a very supportive community, and they will wrap their arms around any family who is having a difficult time or going through some tragic event. As a school, we must do our end and

what each student needs. That could look different for each one because we are a community where everybody knows somebody, somebody’s cousin, and somebody’s next-door neighbor. There are no strangers in this town.”

Graff’s funeral was Monday, Sept. 9.

The school canceled the rest of the junior varsity football season on Tuesday, Sept. 10, citing “unforeseen circumstances and in consideration of the team’s well-being.”

“We don’t feel completely whole at this time,” Burke said. “We’re a family here. It’s our family members, and it’s just tough. We have one still in the hospital, so getting those updates is important to us all. We all sit on tons of needles each day to hear an update because it’s important to us.”

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OPINIONS & VIEWPOINTS

Pay attention:
The facts have been right in front of you!

By Don Coble
Managing Editor

City Manager Steve Kennedy sat quietly during the first reading of the millage rate, final budget, and electric, water and stormwater rates at the Sept. 3 Green Cove Springs City Council Meeting, quietly listening to a lot of confusing and misguided information.

He heard residents complain the rates were too high. Like everyone else in the standing-room-only crowd, he probably was the first to agree.

Many argued the rates were increased



Don Coble

in secrecy and without regard for the residents. Some wondered why they weren't allowed to be part of the process.

They cried foul.

They smelled a rat.

Kennedy had enough, and he said, in part, what should be mentioned at every Town Council, City Council and Board of County Council meeting.

"I don't say this to insult anyone's intelligence," he said. "We are held to a standard of open meetings and open records. Every meeting we have is published and advertised, and the agenda is published before the meeting occurs. The meetings are broadcasted on livestream. The meetings are recorded. And then, if you want to come out and get a transcript of that and take it home with you and watch, the idea is not even possible that we as a city and staff can function over here and sneak in this meeting. This meeting is the meeting date we've had for decades. This is not a

sneaking meeting. Except for a holiday, we meet on the first and third Tuesdays. The information is available. To come over the comment, what's this for? We've been working on the budget since June. All those meetings that we've had where we've talked in detail about details in the various budgets there's a meeting that you can go and look up, and you can hear exactly what was said, the discussions that were there some of these, we've had studies that supported this from consultants. Consultants' reports were received, presented, and adopted by the Mayor and Council in a public meeting, throwing out the idea that we're sneaking around or are not being open about these sorts of things and these critical issues are not true.

"Our meetings, we can't have a meeting without it being publicized, and we've had budget meetings with one person outside

SEE FACTS, 5

Politics without panic:
Strategies to manage election stress

By Dr. Delia Glissette-Toledo
For The Herald

ORANGE PARK – What an election year! Just when we thought we saw it all in 2020, the 2024 presidential election campaign has served some real surprises, including an assassination attempt and the current president stepping away from the race at the 11th hour.

Locally, days before the August primary election in St. John's County, controversy marred the Florida House District 13 race with accusations and a lawsuit against incumbent Rep. Angie Nixon, who prevailed in the Democratic primary. Former Rep. Corrine Brown claimed Nixon had a role in distributing false voter guides. Nixon denied involvement.



Della Glissette-Toledo

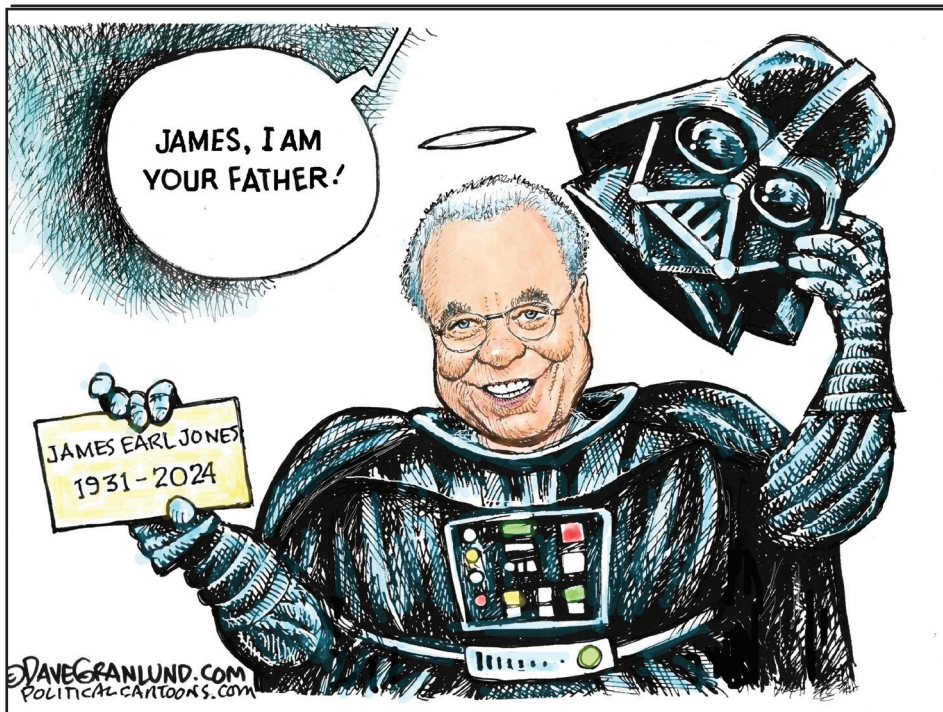
In addition, an interparty GOP fight, much of which centers around growth plans near historic St. Augustine, became so heated that a sitting county commissioner faced criminal prosecution for raising the upcoming election at a meeting earlier this year.

Is it any wonder that a July poll by the American Psychiatric Association showed that 73% of respondents felt anxious about the election, regardless of their political affiliation?

Additional election stressors include legal cases, a presumed battle for preserving democracy, extreme weather events, international conflicts, the fight for bodily and reproductive autonomy, the economy and immigration.

Another unsettling element of election anxiety is the feeling that you cannot control the election's outcome, even when you vote for the candidate you support. This can be

SEE STRESS, 5



Word
OF THE MONTH

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.

Boswell: (BAHZ-well) a noun that means a person who accompanies someone and records their life.

"The rock band hired a Boswell to assist in writing their memoir."

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email, type Letter to the Editor in your subject and send it to Managing Editor Don Coble at don@claytodayonline.com. We look forward to hearing from you!

Opinions ...

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

Facts

from page 4

of staff in the Council to show up. I'm not sure what some of you may feel like is a solution. Our staff is open. We're available. And I was going to ask how many of you were, just curious, reached out to any of our staff members about some of the questions or comments tonight. OK, if you want to know what's happening and have a question, please reach out."

Not only were the budget numbers posted on the websites for Green Cove

Springs, Orange Park, Keystone Heights and Clay County in advance of their regularly scheduled meetings, the numbers from their budget workshops are also included. In Green Cove Springs' case, the Council met on Aug. 8 and 13. Residents could have looked at those numbers weeks before reading the budget. If so, maybe the meeting wouldn't have lasted 6 hours, 15 minutes.

Indeed, Keystone Heights, Orange Park and Clay County didn't increase the millage rate for 2024-25, but they don't face the infrastructure challenges like Green Cove Springs. Massive development will require expanding the city's water and electric de-

partments. The Council said once developers start applying for building permits and paying assessment fees, the city will recoup some of its upfront millage costs and will be able to reduce rates in the future.

That still wasn't good enough for some, who suggested the city could keep the rates low by cutting costs, such as getting rid of a grass cutter or two, shutting the police department or not spending any more money on beautification projects like Walnut Street.

Costs are out of control everywhere—not just with taxes and insurance but also at the gas pump, grocery store and restaurants. The problem is that wages aren't going up that

fast. Instead of raising the millage rate from 4.7 to 6.0, it fell back to 5.3. That will barely be enough to complete necessary projects but not raise city employees above the 50% salary threshold compared to cities of similar size as originally planned.

The final reading of the budget will be on Tuesday, Sept. 17, at 7 p.m. Details are at greencovesprings.com. Click on Agendas & Minutes, then City Council and City Council Regular Session. You can see every document's PDF or HTML packet there, so know before you go.

And if it's like the last meeting, bring a sleeping bag.

This Month in History

Five years ago, 2019

- Charter schools will have to wait at least a month before finding out if they will get an officer from the newly formed Clay County District Schools Police Department after the school board tabled the discussion until its October meeting.

- After Hurricane Dorian veered away from Clay County, emergency supplies gathered in the county were delivered to the Orange Park Mall and re-directed to storm victims in the Bahamas.

- The Board of County Commissioners voted 5-0 to increase the millage rate from 9.332 to 8.101 tentatively. The final decision will come at the next meeting.

10 years ago, 2014

- Green Cove Springs residents will pay an extra 3% for water and garbage and 6% for sewage if the City Council approves the budget.

- A black bear relocated to Camp Blanding was euthanized after it wandered back to Jacksonville Beach.

- Residents don't like a suggestion to outsource the management and funding of the county's library system to Library Systems and Services Inc.

20 years ago, 2004

- While Hurricane Frances was downgraded as it passed through Clay County, it still did significant damage with wind gusts estimated between 40-60 mph, with thousands of downed trees, grounded boats, roof

damage, flooding, high winds and power outages.

- Hurricane Frances prompted emergency management to open shelters and activate HAM radio operators to keep lines of communication open.

- The Clay County Chamber of Commerce gets a \$33,000 grant from Florida Gov. Jeb Bush's 2004-05 Defense Reinvestment Grants.

30 years ago, 1994

- The Clay County Sheriff's Office met with homeowners in the Pier Station area between Green Cove Springs and Penney Farms after nearly 100 burglaries, domestic violence and drug abuse cases were reported.

- A grand jury indicts 16-year-old Bruce Brock for the murder of his 15-year-old ex-girlfriend, Anita Sue Russell, in Green

Cove Springs.

- A rabid raccoon found near Thrower Road and County Road 209 in Green Cove Springs forced the Florida Health Department Clay County to issue a rabies quarantine until Nov. 20.

40 years ago, 1984

- Developer Marvin Wilhite donates a half-acre to Darrell May, president of the Middleburg Volunteer Fire Department, at Old Jennings Road and Foxmeadow Trail to store a fire truck.

- The BCC created controversy when they voted 3-2 to allow non-licensed builders to construct residential swimming poles.

- The Florida Highway Patrol said Ricky Raaiz of Jacksonville pulled two women from their burning car on the Black Creek bridge on U.S. Highway 17 after he rear-ended their car.

Stress

from page 4

incredibly stressful for Gen Z, the nation's youngest voters, who will live with the election's consequences for many years.

Emotions in the lead-up to the election can range from fear to anger, stress to sadness and fear for the future.

These emotions can be good when channeled into ways we can make a difference. This can include seeking information about candidates, volunteering with organizations consistent with our beliefs and values, and voting. While voting does not give you control of the outcome, it is an affirming action that can help you feel heard.

However, if feelings of stress and anxiety, such as sadness, worry, hopelessness or physical tension, are overwhelming or per-

sist for a long time, it is essential to find ways to manage them. First, it's essential to understand what may be causing your stress and anxiety. It's most likely uncertainty. Instead of envisioning the worst-case scenario, focus on things you do have control over.

Part of taking control is to limit how much news you view. Even social media is loaded with messages about the election. Please feel free to take a break if you are getting agitated by news and social media.

Another way to take control is to do meaningful things, whether they are election-related or not. It could be volunteering to deliver meals or picking up the trash in the neighborhood. Research shows that meaningful activities improve overall well-being. Also, working at the polls, encouraging others to vote or volunteering for an organization can help you regain control by connecting you to something positive

and hopeful.

Taking control also includes doing things that bring you joy in the present, taking the focus off worrying about the future. Exercise helps relieve stress, and mindfulness techniques bring awareness to the present. Between now and the election, other things will happen in your life.

Encouraging social connections during an election where sides are taken and heated discussions may seem counterintuitive. Staying connected to friends and family is vital for support and helps you recognize that you aren't alone and that others are struggling with similar feelings. Just be sure to create boundaries, such as avoiding arguing about the election with people who do not share your beliefs. Boundaries help us stay mentally, physically and emotionally safe.

Most importantly, acknowledge and

accept your feelings. It's OK to admit you are anxious and then let those feelings go. Take a few minutes to write down your feelings, and then focus on something else, like breathwork or taking a walk.

Headspace, a free website that provides evidence-based meditation and mindfulness tools, has developed "Politics without Panic" at headspace.com/election. The site includes a quiz to assess election stress and a series of meditations and exercises to deal with political uncertainty or help set boundaries.

Stress and anxiety are normal human emotions and part of the fight or flight response that keeps us safe. However, when they become overwhelming and interfere with daily life, you may want to seek help from a mental and behavioral health professional. While the months leading up to the election may seem far from unifying, we must remember that we are all together.

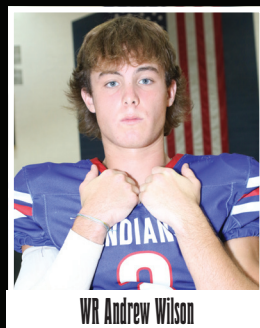
Keystone Heights Indians



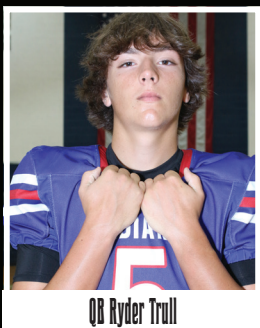
WR Jackson Parmeter



SS/BB Colton Hollingsworth



WR Andrew Wilson



QB Ryder Trull



FS Micah Screen



RB/LB Zane Leger



WR Tallon Campbell



QB Baylor Ford



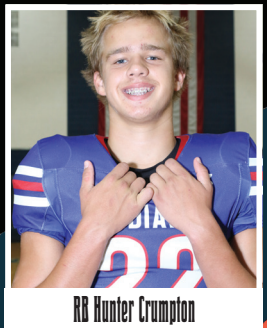
WR/DB Tyler Sapp



Trace Wooden LB/TE



LB/TE Tyler Brinson



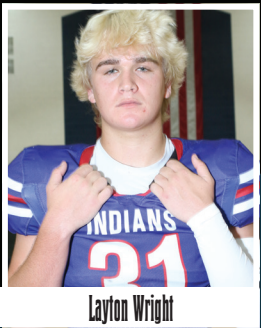
RB Hunter Crumpton



WR Deshawn Williams



WR Michael Dukes



Layton Wright



RB/LB Kyle Perkins



WR Evan Lallemond



OL Jagger Lancaster



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OL Jackson Faul



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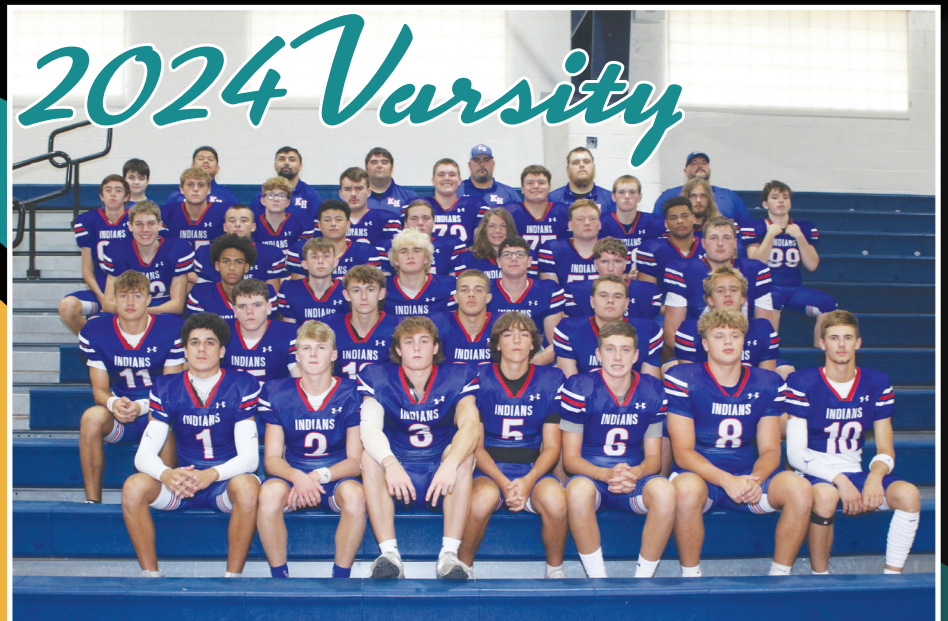
OL Logan Madden-Moore



TE Aiden Alvarez



K Ryder Omas



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‘We did a lot of praying ... and God sent us him’

Clay firemen make miraculous rescue of baby trapped under boat

By Don Coble
don@claytodayonline.com

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – The improbable, if not inconceivable, chain of events started after nobody saw the small Sea-Doo Switch Pontoon Boat flip in the channel of Black Creek and the St. Johns River, 120 yards from the Black Creek Marina on Sunday, Aug. 25.

Within seconds, three things happened: Joseph Bianco was sitting at the bait shop and heard screaming. He quickly called 911.



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Clay County Fire Rescue Lt. Thomas Gill was working overtime at another station and was at the marina entrance, returning from another call when the call was sent.

And, CCFR Lt. Joe Hutchins was off duty and driving home from church with his daughter. They crossed the Black Creek bridge on U.S. Highway 17 when Gill pulled into the marina parking lot. Instinctively, Hutchins followed.

Gill and Hutchins ran to the end of the dock and saw a father and son in a boat who were about to go shrimping. The CCFR lieutenants asked them to take them to the scene. Bianco, Dwight McVey and Jay Oppenborn were already there trying to help three victims get on top of the capsized boat. In broken English, a man yelled his daughter was trapped underneath.

McVey unsuccessfully tried to dive under the boat to find the 15-month-old. The men said seconds seemed like several minutes. Soon, minutes seemed like a hopeless eternity.

“We did all we could do, so we started praying,” Bianco said.

That’s when Gill and Hutchins arrived. Bianco continued, “We did a lot of praying ... and God sent us him (Gill).”

“Sometimes, it ain’t pretty. Sometimes, it ain’t by the book’

“I didn’t even think about it,” Gill said. “I took the stuff out of my pockets and got in the water. I was acting on instincts and adrenaline.”

Hutchins said Gill disappeared in the black, brackish water. After nearly three minutes without coming up for air, Hutchins contemplated going in after him, although it would violate the rescue policy of “one in, one on the boat.” Besides, he kept two men and a woman from returning to the water to look for the girl.

“Joe had to keep those people, the other adults, calm and make sure they weren’t reaching out and grabbing him,” Battalion Chief Billy Futch Jr. said. “They were already exhausted from looking for her. You had three adults, and they wanted to be off that

boat and be with that kid.

“There’s a lot of moving parts there. No matter what the call is, we’re going to figure out a way to do it and get it done. Sometimes it ain’t pretty. Sometimes, it ain’t by the book. But this is a fluid profession, without a lack of better words.”

Hutchins knew they would compound the problems for his fire rescue brother, but his concerns had turned to fear.

On shore, the call “fireman down” was sent agency-wide.

Suddenly, the little girl’s lifeless body appeared above the surface of Black Creek. Gill was summoning the last bit of life and energy to push her above the surface. Hutchins grabbed her. Gill desperately grabbed the side of the boat, coughing up water and fighting to maintain enough strength and consciousness to not slip back into the murky depths.

“I immediately started doing CPR on

“I don’t know how much longer I could have lasted. But I wasn’t coming back up without her.”

— CCFR Lt. Thomas Gill

the girl. I’m sure it had to be something the father and son didn’t expect to see. I wish we knew who they were.

We’d like to reach out to them, thank them, and see if they’re all right,” Hutchins said. “The little girl was in full cardiac arrest.”

McVey, Oppenborn and Bianco said the girl was underwater for as long as 10 minutes. That didn’t keep Gill and Hutchins

SEE RESCUE, 9



STAFF PHOTO BY DON COBLE
Clay County Fire Rescue Lts. Joe Hutchins, left, and Thomas Gill happened to be at the entrance of the Black Creek Marina when they got a call for a capsized boat with a trapped baby. With the help of a resident, they managed to pull her lifeless body from the water and revive her.



STAFF PHOTO BY DON COBLE

From left, CCFR Lts. Joe Hutchins and Thomas Gill, returned to the Black Creek Marina to thank Dwight McVey, Jay Oppenborn and Joseph Bianco for their help in rescuing a 15-month-old girl from the channel of Black Creek and the St. Johns River on Aug. 25.

Rescue from page 8

from reacting.

“I tried opening my eyes a couple of times, but it stung too much,” Gill said. “You couldn’t see anything anyway. I kept reaching, but I couldn’t feel anything. I knew the adults weren’t wearing PFDs (personal floatation devices), but the baby was.

“I was trying to look for a better area to find her. The complete boat is at the water level, so there are no air pockets. She’s just trapped underneath.

“I kept reaching, and I finally felt a leg. I got her and pushed her to the surface. I don’t know how long I was under; I don’t know how much longer I could have lasted. But I wasn’t coming up back up without her.”

Gill struggled to get back on board. His skin was colorless; his breathing was labored with brownish bubbles and water oozing from his nose.

“The only color he had was his tattoos,” Futch said.

On the ride to the hospital, Hutchins said the girl regained her pulse and blood pressure.

The firefighters said their relationship with a patient ends when they leave the emergency room. While there are no priorities in saving lives, it’s natural to be more aware of the outcome of a younger patient,

especially a baby.

“They took me to the hospital because I took in a lot of water,” Gill said. “My only concern was the child. I had no concern for myself at all,” Gill said. “As far as that, I didn’t care. I was born here, so that wasn’t the first time I drank some water from the St. Johns.”

Before he left the hospital, Gill went to the pediatric intensive care to check on the girl. She was about to be transferred to Wolfson Children’s Hospital in Jacksonville, but he was relieved to know she was alive.

Hutchins said the last time he checked, the girl remained in critical but stable condition. He will also make sure there are no long-term problems for Gill.

“Once he evacuated, all that helped,” he said. “I’m starting to think down the line, what bacteria did he ingest, pneumonia and all these other things?”

Futch said the rescue highlights the versatility of the members of CCFR. Gill doesn’t do water rescues; Hutchins wasn’t on duty. It was as if, by fate, they were at the exact spot where they were needed most, and they responded professionally and instinctively to save a life.

“There are a lot of decisions going on in seconds – probably less than that,” Futch said. “You know, they got back and they got those people back.

“I’ve been doing this 25 years, and we call them the ‘pucker’ factors. That was definitely No. 1 in 25 years.”



Nikita Narvab
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Don Morgan, architect of City Hall, dies at 92

For *The Herald*

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS — Throughout his monumental architectural career, Donald “Don” Morgan designed the current Keystone Heights City Hall, Keystone Heights High and many other iconic buildings.

Morgan, described as “one of the great men of Keystone,” helped build the city today.

Morgan was born on Sept. 22, 1931, in Pennsylvania — fittingly nicknamed the “Keystone State,” which the city also takes its name. As a 15-year-old, Morgan enjoyed going to the Keystone Beach Pavilion to listen to concerts.

“It was used for entertaining, they had little orchestras that would play and ... the sound was all over the area,” Morgan told Clay Today in 2017.

One of Morgan’s final projects was helping renovate the historic Keystone Beach Pavilion, which was initially built in 1924. However, Morgan was at the end of his career and likely had his eyes already set on retirement. He told Clay Today adamantly, “He will not be the architect designing this project.”

Two months later, he submitted his design plans pro bono to the city council — completely free of charge — on behalf of the Heritage Commission. His designs included air conditioning, a small kitchen and restrooms while removing the old changing

rooms that were mostly unused.

The city used Morgan’s plan and spent two months and nearly \$1 million overhauling the community hub for the Lake Region.

One of Morgan’s most fascinating projects was his alligator farm.

Morgan, then 53, told the Chicago Tribune in 1985 that his goal was for his alligator farm to earn him half a million dollars a year. His alligator operation in Keystone Heights was intended to be “computerized” (as in, using a computer?), and its alligator pens were to be temperature controlled.

“I don’t mind telling you,” Morgan told the reporter from the Tribune. “There’s money to be made.”

While it’s unknown whether he made that profit margin, it was nonetheless a business venture on which he may have risked his life. In 1985, Morgan recounted how one of his alligators clamped down on his leg and nearly began a death roll.

“Tore my Levis right off me,” he said. “A seven-footer. I was lucky; that’s all he got.”

Morgan was known for his sharp and focused eyes, which he used to sketch his blueprints and aim down the barrel of his rifles.

“I recall him as a nice-looking man, easy to talk to and a good sense of humor. Don’t recall talking about his architecture work in particular. He was a big game hunter and once told me that he would be gone for a



STAFF PHOTO

Designing the modern Keystone Heights City Hall was one of Don Morgan’s career highlights.

month to Europe or Asia to shoot a mountain goat that has on his list,” said Dr. James Minesinger, a member of the Rotary Club in Keystone Heights who knew him.

According to his online obituary, Morgan died at HCA Florida North Florida Hospital on Wednesday, Aug. 7, at the age of 92.

His wife, Sharon Booher Morgan, and his sons, Donald Chase Morgan and Scott Morgan, died before he did. He is survived by his

daughter, Tamara Lynn Millikin, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Morgan graduated from the University of Florida—where he earned his bachelor of architecture in 1961 — and was known as a lifelong Florida Gators fan. On the day of his death, his son-in-law posted a photo of the sky: “RIP, Don M. The Sante Swamp and Orange and Blue was out for you one last time.”

Clay County teacher’s union tentatively wins \$4 million raise



COURTESY OF CCEA

The Clay County Education Association bargaining team during negotiations with Clay County District Schools.

For *The Herald*

The Clay County Education Association (CCEA), the labor union representing public school teachers employed at Clay County District Schools, will aptly celebrate Labor Day next week, following the conclusion of months of labor negotiations with the school district.

The CCEA tentatively won a historic collective bargaining agreement with CCDS on Monday, Aug. 26. If both parties approve in September, the new contract would raise teachers’ pay by \$4 million across the school district.

CCEA said this would help remedy a statewide problem. According to a report published in April by the National Education

Association, which CCEA is affiliated with, public school teachers employed in Florida are paid less than in any other state besides West Virginia.

According to the District, the starting salary for a first-year public school teacher is \$48,250, and the average is \$49,379.

In Florida, the average salary for an educator is \$53,098.

The teacher’s union’s win follows other labor gains in Orange Park labor gains in Orange Park earlier this year.

The Fraternal Order of Police representing the Orange Park Police Department acquired \$184,704 in additional wages and \$55,411 in benefits. The International Association of Firefighters representing the Orange Park Fire Department got \$79,306 in

additional wages and \$23,792 in benefits.

The school district appeared satisfied as well. Superintendent David Broskie said he heard the news from a text he received Monday night at 11:45 p.m.

“This is the highest compensation package in the District’s history,” Broskie said during the school board workshop meeting on Aug. 27.

“We’re in the people business, and people really make Clay County schools. We should always strive to honor the work of our employees,” he added.

School Board candidate Jim Hughes, endorsed by CCEA, offered praise.

“Congratulations to both CCEA and CCSD for reaching an agreement. Thank you for your hard work,” Hughes said.

Pavilion in Historic Triangle dedicated to local veteran

By Kyla Woodard
kyla@claytodayonline.com

GREEN COVE SPRINGS - A new pavilion dedicated to the memory of one local veteran is in the Clay County Historic Triangle.

Recently unveiled, the pavilion features a plaque that reads the name of retired U.S. Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Mason "Ed" Wiggins Sr.

Ed served in both the Korean and Vietnam wars for 28 years. He was a family man and someone who loved his country.

He passed away back in 2020.

Gary Newman, the president of the Florida State Council for the Vietnam Veterans of America, was the catalyst behind the monument.

Newman, a fellow veteran, came up with the idea of creating something to honor Ed's service.

Seven years ago, Newman spearheaded the TAPS Military Monument, which also resides in the triangle. That project was in collaboration with Ed's son, Joseph B. Wiggins Sr., and his construction company.

Newman said that to make the new pavilion a reality, he reached out to Wiggins again to partner up, and the rest is history.

With the help of what he calls the three pillars — the TAPS monument committee, Wiggins Construction and the county's public works department - Newman raised the memorial from the ground.

Newman said the project received an outpouring of support throughout last year, from raising funds to receiving donated materials.

"If we didn't have one of the pillars, none of it would have been accomplished," Newman said. "So, it was a good partnership."

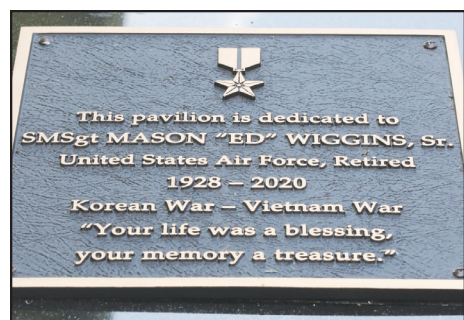
According to the county, the official pavilion will serve as a venue for future events, celebrations and moments of reflection. At its unveiling ceremony, the Wiggins family, Newman family, fellow Vietnam veterans and county staff joined to celebrate the new addition. Newman said it was great to see the hard work come to life.

"It was quite self-satisfying," Newman said. "Especially that we got to recognize one of Clay County's war veterans."

Wiggins said it was an honor for him and his family to witness the unveiling of his father's monument. As a military family, Wiggins said their pride for their country is generational.

And, although the occasion was bitter-sweet, he said it felt great to give back to the community.

"The Vietnam veterans are such an amazing group of people that have given so much for our country," Wiggins said. "And to be associated with them and to help with this pavilion is just amazing to our family."



A new pavilion in the Historic Triangle is dedicated to the memory of local veteran Mason "Ed" Wiggins Sr.



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"We Make It Happen"

Local woman saved by CCSO from Bitcoin scheme

By Kyla Woodard
kyla@claytodayonline.com

CLAY COUNTY – While at a local Circle K gas station on College Drive, Clay County Sheriff’s Office Lt. Michael Layne overheard and saw something strange.

It was a woman standing in front of a Bitcoin ATM. On speakerphone, someone

with a foreign accent coached her on how to use the machine.

Layne said he decided to step in and see if the woman needed help. When he approached her, he said he could tell something was off. She was confused. He didn’t know the person but thought it was her bank, and her money was in danger.

As someone who has seen this scenario

repeatedly, he realized what was happening and instructed her to hang up the phone.

And, luckily, she did.

Witnessing a scam right before his eyes, Layne said that had he not stepped in, the victim would have lost all her life savings that day.

Scams like this are becoming more prevalent in the county, predominantly targeting



STAFF PHOTO BY KYLA WOODARD

Lt. Michael Layne said that it’s Bitcoin machines like this that are beginning to raise red flags in the county.

elderly communities. Layne said scammers tend to prey on older adults due to their vulnerability.

“Folks generally want to think that people are good-natured,” Layne said. “And, when that good-natured person, that they feel is good-natured anyway, instills that sense of urgency in them if they’re about to lose that money, they become much easier to victimize.”

That same woman had already been a previous victim. She even posted a public service ad about fraud after being scammed out of her money last year.

Layne said the internet is making financial fraud a lot easier. He said the web makes it easy for criminals to get people’s information, spoofing their phone numbers and claiming to be anyone they want to be.

And this makes it hard for law enforcement to catch them as many scammers use a VPN, making tracking their location almost impossible. Once a machine records a transaction, there is no way to get it back.

“It’s difficult sometimes for law enforcement because many of these crimes are perpetrated overseas,” Layne said. “And with

SEE BITCOIN, 15

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Rock's death leads to Melrose Post Office named in her honor

Tragedy spurs 'Pam Rock Act' state bill

Special to The Herald

MELROSE — The U.S. post office was named in honor of a mail carrier last Monday who was mauled to death by a pack of dogs when her postal car broke down on a dirt road on Aug. 21, 2022.

Pam Rock's family said she was transported to UF Shands Hospital in Gainesville. Doctors attempted to save her life by amputating her right leg, right arm and left ear. Her family said she lived long enough for them to say goodbye. She later succumbed to her injuries and died the next day at the age of 61.

Rock, the youngest of 14 children, was a beloved community member. Her family, friends and coworkers described her as a cheerful, charitable woman. One post office worker said Rock came in early to leave candy for her coworkers.

She also sent "good morning" texts and pictures of sunrises. Rock's family honored her commitment to serving her community



Pam Rock

during the ceremony.

"Pam spent her life serving others. Her role as a letter carrier was no exception," said one of Rock's siblings during the ceremony. "When you walk through this door (to the



STAFF PHOTO

The renaming ceremony was emotional for Pam Rock's family and friends.

Melrose Post Office), we hope you remember Pam."

H.R. 3947 changed the name of the U.S. post office on 859 North State Road 21 to the Pamela Jane Rock Post Office Building. The legislation was spearheaded by U.S. Rep. Aaron Bean and signed into law by President Joe Biden earlier this year.

According to the U.S. Postal Service, Florida ranks No. 7 in the nation for dog bites, with 296 dog attacks on Postal Service employees reported last year.

Florida Rep. Bobby Payne, representing southern Clay County, offered his condolences to the family.

"Something needs to happen in Florida," Payne said during the ceremony.

Payne proposed the "Pam Rock Act" with the companion bill carried by Florida Sen. Jay Collins. The bill would create a registry of "dangerous dogs" with a history of attacks and require their owners to securely confine their dogs in proper enclosures.

Because it was not passed before the end of the legislative session, the Pam Rock Act died in the Judiciary Committee. Payne, who will be term-limited this November, told Clay Today he is optimistic Collins will spearhead the bill into law next legislative session.

Bitcoin

from page 14

the internet, they can reach right out and touch our victims here in Clay County."

Currently, there are several of these machines throughout the county. Layne said the state regulates them, and CCSO seeks more information to keep the public aware.

Although the machines serve the purpose of buying or selling cryptocurrency, he said it's essential to be aware of its ramifications.

"The ATMs serve a valid purpose," Layne said. "The problem is that it's all electronic, and they also make it very easy. If somebody puts money in somebody else's wallet, it's gone."

As some general tips for avoiding possible scammers, Layne said always to be mindful of who you're talking to and be wary of phone numbers. He said that sometimes scammers begin by saying that they are calling from "your financial institution." That is a good clue.

"Hang up the phone and call your bank at their appropriate number," Layne said, "or reach out to them on the internet or whatever the case might be."

He also said it is common for individu-

als to claim that they are law enforcement. Many will ask for a payment for an unpaid ticket or jury duty fines. He assured law enforcement would never ask to be paid via Apple Pay or Green Dot card.

"Those are not valid forms of payment to pay a bill," Layne said. "Those are somebody who's trying to obtain that tangible benefit."

In the occurrence that an individual is scammed, Layne said to first report the case to local law enforcement. Next, he said to use that case number to file a report with www.ic3.gov. Here, the case will be reported on the federal level.

Then, individuals should freeze all three credit reports using the three primary credit bureau services Equifax, Experian and TransUnion. This is free of charge.

He said a freeze on the credit reports prevents scammers from opening accounts in someone else's name.

Layne said that residents must be aware that while most people are concerned about violent crime, financial crimes are on the rise.

"Internet crime is increasing, and they should be very mindful that anytime they're dealing with somebody who is requesting or asking about any sort of personal information, they should make sure that that person is the person they think they are," he said.

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Protecting our children from pot-laced candy, snacks

Parents need to be on guard for THC-infused treats, alcoholic lookalikes

By Don Coble
don@claytodayonline.com

CLAY COUNTY — To a 10-year-old, it looks like a treat. A gummy. A piece of chocolate. A rice crispy cake. A cookie. A brownie. A link of licorice rope. A bag of popcorn. A cup of ice cream. Why not have a bite? Why not share? Maybe a can of orange juice or a soft drink? It's on the counter or the refrigerator shelf, so it must be all right.

What seems so innocent can be dangerous, and those concerns are amplified as THC-infused products become more available and packaged to resemble popular children's snacks.

THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) is the psy-

choactive component in "pot-laced" candy and snacks. It comes typically in two forms: Delta-9 and Delta-8. While Delta-8 products are milder, they still also lead to temporary cognitive effects if ingested.

"A study that came out last year said 11% of high school seniors have now used this stuff because you could go buy it in a gas station, a smoke shop, some convenience stores carry these," said Mike McCormick, Media Relations and Education Coordinator for Florida/U.S. Virgin Island Poison Information Center. "They are in gummies and candy bars and drinks and vapes. The problem is they look so much like regular candy. When these things end up in the home, if they fall into children's hands, we run into a problem."

It happens more often than you think.

Last year, four 8-year-old second-grade students overdosed and were taken to the hospital in Putnam County after one of them found a container of THC gummies and brought them to school.



STAFF PHOTO BY DON COBLE

All of these were purchased locally. Only three don't contain THC or alcohol. Can you spot them?

Four sixth-grade students also ate THC gummies at the same school earlier in the year. The school called the county's fire rescue department after a 12-year-old girl passed out.

Seventeen months ago, a 15-year-old girl was rushed to the hospital from Ridgeview High after eating a brownie infused with THC.

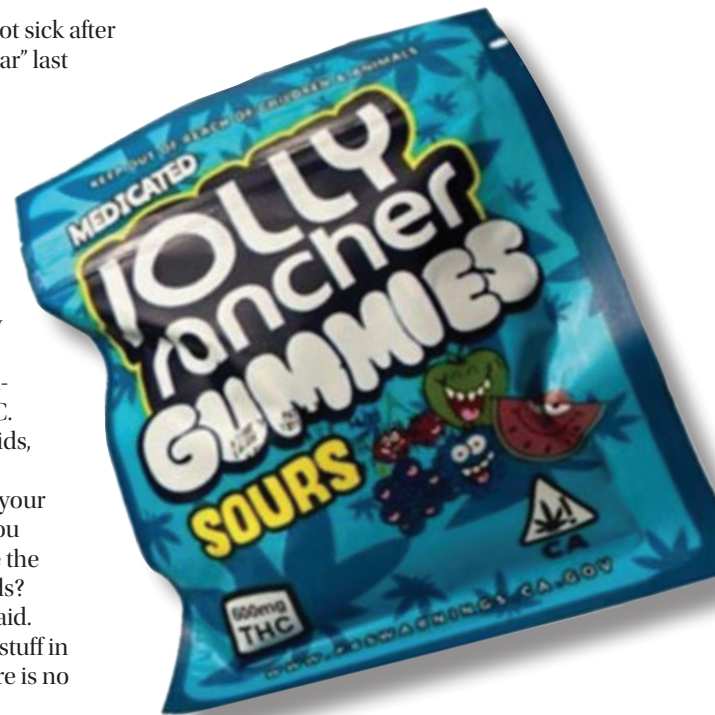
A student in Duval County got sick after eating a "Lucky Charms snack bar" last year that likely contained THC, the student's mother said.

McCormick warned it's nearly impossible to distinguish legitimate candy and snacks from THC-infused edibles. He had a display of three rice crispy treats at the Thrasher-Horne Center recently and challenged the Clay Today Active After 50 audience to identify which, if any, contained THC.

"Some parents will tell the kids, 'These are mommy and daddy's special gummies, and these are your gummies.' Well, which one do you think the child wants to get, take the school, and share with his friends? The special ones," McCormick said. "That's how we end up with this stuff in schools. And the problem is there is no antidote for THC."

Many alcohol and THC-infused products are packaged to mimic items popular with children. The Food and Drug Administration and the Federal Trade Commission last year sent a cease-and-desist letter

SEE CANDY, 17





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Candy

from page 16

to six companies that marketed edibles containing Delta-8 THC that looked like candy and snack brands that children enjoy, like “Double Stuff Stoneo” cookies, “Stoney Patch” gummies, “CHEETOS Crunchy THC,” “Cheetos Puffs THC Chips” and “Medicated Jolly Rancher Gummies Sours.”

According to the FTC, “The major national brands whose foods have been imitated by the products cited in the cease-and-desist letters have absolutely nothing to do with the sale of the lookalikes.”

McCormick said many parents aren’t taking enough precautions to make sure their legally obtained THC and alcohol products are secured because some don’t consider them as dangerous as opioids or hard liquor. But for a child, a small amount of THC or alcohol can be dangerous because it can lead to intoxication, altered perception, anxiety, panic, paranoia, dizziness, weakness, slurred speech, poor coordination, excessive sleepiness, apnea and heart problems.

“There was a study a year or so ago; the number of calls for THC-related poisonings was up 1,375% for children,” McCormick said. “The problem is, it just looks so much like regular candy. So I hate to say this to parents because we all want to teach our kids that sharing is caring, but when it comes to stuff, if they’re going to ingest that’s medicine, that’s candy, that’s anything they should not take it unless it comes from their mom or dad, grandmother or grandfather. OK?”

Another area of concern is the added prevalence of alcohol in popular drinks. Mountain Dew, for example, has a line of “Hard” drinks that contain 5% alcohol. Although the alcohol version is marked with the word “HARD” across the label, the colorful cans closely resemble their other lines of new products like Baja Blast, LiveWire, Voltage and Maui Burst. Mtn Dew’s Hard lines are called Baja Blast, Livewire and Original.

Dunkin has a line of four “Spiked” iced coffees and four “Spiked” teas, while SunnyD also has vodka-infused cans of its orange drink on the shelves.

“We really need them separated, where children can’t have access,” McCormick said. “When you bring it home, most people don’t have two refrigerators so it will end up in the same refrigerator.



Last year, four 8-year-old second-grade students overdosed and were taken to the hospital in Putnam County after one of them found a container of THC gummies and brought them to school.

That’s what we worry about – your child will go in and grab one of them.”

McCormick is concerned about the unintentional consequences of Amendment 3 if it passes in November, which would allow for the legal recreational use of marijuana in Florida. He said the more readily products become available, the more likely they could end up in the wrong hands.

“It’s a crazy world we live in this day,” he said.

According to the FTC, “The major national brands whose foods have been imitated by the products cited in the cease-and-desist letters have absolutely nothing to do with the sale of the lookalikes.”



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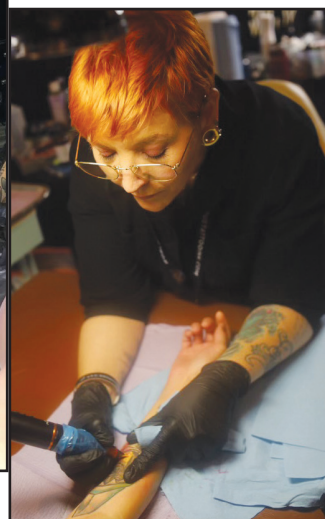
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Leaving their 'mark'

Local women artists break down barriers in the tattoo industry



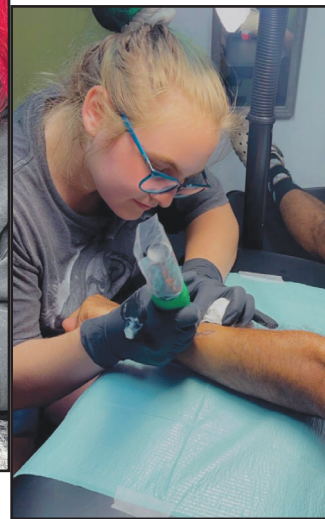
Morgan Stout



Suzi Clark



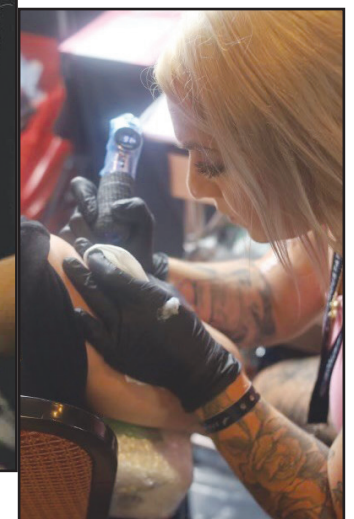
Tabitha Chandler



Faladeen Andrews



Kera Scene



Mickayla Santiago

By Kyla Woodard

kyla@claytodayonline.com

CLAY COUNTY - Here in Clay County, many female tattoo artists dare to stand out.

Their vibrant styles, colors, skills and personalities make them who they are.

Decorating your "temple" is something that all of these women know how to do and have in common.

But, the road to get there was not easy. Faced with discrimination and bias from an industry that's supposed to be their calling, they each had to learn how to cope and break through the mold.

And, frankly, defy all odds to do their job and do it well.

For artist Mickayla Santiago, tattoos symbolize her artistry. Putting a needle to skin, Santiago said she enjoys being the person who creates and sees what's important to her clients.

Drawing and art has always been her passion. She defines herself as a crafty individual. Anything different and "out there" is what speaks to her the most. Mandala dot work, traditional, black and gray, and custom lettering are all some of her favorite tattoo

designs.

But, her road to getting there was all but linear. Santiago said she has been in the tattoo industry for eleven years. She was initially supposed to go to college but didn't take that route.

"I got scared, and I chickened out," Santiago said.

Right out of high school, she began her first apprenticeship in what she calls a "respect-run industry." But, she said it was very hard to gain that respect at first.

"But sometimes you gotta tough it out and bite back a little bit. And, I think women have had to do that a lot coming up in the years," Santiago said.

Ever since she was 14, artist Kera Scene said she loves tattoos.

"I always thought that body modifications and being able to decorate yourself was really cool," Scene said.

Known as "teeny tiny," she has always been the shortest person in all the shops she has visited. But her passion for what she does stands tall.

She said she didn't get into the industry until later in life, but it didn't come without

its challenges. As a woman, she found it hard to get shops to hire her.

"It was really hard to find a shop that wanted to take a female," Scene said. "Because nobody really wanted to teach a female how to tattoo. I don't particularly know why."

Eventually, she said, someone gave her the chance to do what she loved, and she's been doing it ever since. Of all the designs she curates, adding a pop of color is her specialty.

"If you're gonna get tattooed by me, be ready to have like 20 colors out on the stand," Scene said. "And, be ready to sit because I want to put as much as possible in there."

Morgan Stout said that art has always given her a way to express herself and to create a voice for what she is feeling.

Stout is decorated with many tattoos, one for her childhood pet, some for her grandparents, and some for her children. All of them mean something special to her.

And being a tattoo artist, she said she is proud to help provide that for others.

"I like being able to do that for people,"

Stout said. "[To] allow them to carry something with them for the rest of their life."

But, although she is flourishing in her career now, early on in her apprenticeship, Stout said she remembered an offensive incident. She said a man who entered the shop was very dismissive of her art portfolio.

"He didn't even take the time to look through it, and he really was just like, 'I'm not letting any female touch me with a needle. I'll get a man to do it,'" Stout said.

When artist Suzi Clark first entered the tattoo scene around 20 years ago, she said she dealt with situations like this head-on. Starting out in the corporate world, Clark said she was laid off during the recession in the early 2000s.

After being unable to find a job in her field, she said she began her apprenticeship. She said the industry was very old-school, and only 3% of it at the time were women.

"It's hard to fit in. You had to deal with a lot of inappropriateness," Clark said. "Because you're already in a tattoo shop where people have those free reigns to be who they are and say what they want."

Tattoo

from page 18

Clark said she has seen the industry make great strides. With a much larger percentage of women joining the field, Clark said she has seen some massive changes.

"Now, I have dudes that look for girls," Clark said. "Because they're like, 'Well, you're just probably more light-handed or more sympathetic. So, I actually have now the reverse of what it was when I first started.'"

Faladeen Andrews and Tabitha

'Don't let anybody tell you you can't. Just keep moving forward and find somebody who tells you can.'

- Keri Scene

Chandler are young artists just beginning their tattoo journey. Andrews started a year ago, while Chandler officially began consistently tattooing around four to six months ago.

Chandler is thankful for the ones who came before them, making it easier for her.

"I thankfully just started tattooing to where the industry is overwhelmed by women," Chandler said. "Which is amazing,"

Andrews, an apprentice, said she luckily doesn't have to experience any significant challenges, but she does remember the owner giving her a warning at the very first shop she visited.

"He's like, I can't do the apprenticeship, but a heads up, it is a male-driven industry," Andrews said. "There are going to be shops out there that will use you as just the shop maid. You're going to not be

tattooing, you're not going to be learning, you're going to be cleaning."

But all six of these women are proving to defy those odds, walking their own ink-stained paths. In the future, they all hope to see continued progression in the male-dominated industry.

They said we were getting there slowly but surely. And for any woman who is trying to enter the industry, Scene said she has some touching advice.

"Be tough and be persistent," Scene said. "Don't let anybody tell you you can't. Just keep moving forward and find somebody who tells you you can."



Art by Tabitha Candler



Art by Keri Scene



Art by Suzi Clark



Art by Mickayla Santiago

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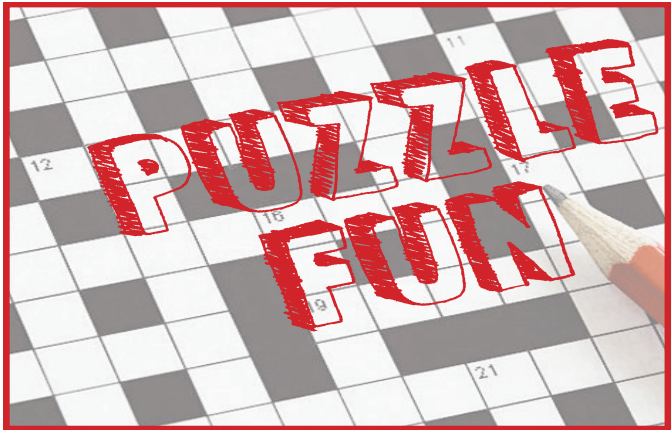
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		3	2				7	
		4			3	8		
6								1
						7		
					2	4		
	5		1	7		9		
				8			5	
			7		1		9	
1			9	2	6			

Level: Intermediate

FREE HEALTH SERVICES provided by Comprehensive Health Center of Orlando and Clay County Fire Rescue's Community Paramedicine Program will be on Sept. 19 from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Paramedicine Office at 2110 Blanding Blvd, Suite 8, in the Grande Ole Plaza in Middleburg. Residents can get free rapid testing and treatment, free health care insurance (must meet qualifications) and giveaways.

FLORIDA REP. BOBBY PAYNE will hold office hours on Sept. 19 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at Keystone Heights City Hall, 555 S. Lawrence Blvd. For more information, contact Tammy Still at (352) 732-1244 or tammy.still@myfloridahouse.gov.

NARCAN DISTRIBUTION AND INFORMATION will be provided on Sept. 19 from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Community Paramedicine Program Office, 2710 Blanding Blvd., Suite 8, Middleburg, in the Winn-Dixie shopping center. Receive free Narcan spray, information on how to administer the spray, how to recognize someone who is overdosing and information to avoid the stigma that comes with addiction.

MONKEY WRENCH will play on Sept. 20 at 8 p.m. at Whitey's Fish Camp, 2032 County Road, Fleming Island.



Solve the code to discover words related to Halloween. Each number corresponds to a letter. (Hint: 24 = A)

- A. 15 19 24 23 17**
Clue: Spooky
- B. 25 23 3 24 25**
Clue: Something pleasant
- C. 26 5 5 23 6 3 14 14**
Clue: Something to ring
- D. 19 24 11 26 17**
Clue: Sweets

Answers: A. scary B. treat C. doorbell D. candy

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to Halloween.

E V A R I M P

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Answer: Vampire

GUESS WHO?

I am an actor born in California on October 18, 1987. My father worked as an engineer and my mother as an admin. I was a class clown in school, but rose to fame playing a popular athlete in a musical about high school. I've starred in other movie musicals as well.

Answer: Zac Efron

HALLOWEEN WORD SEARCH

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

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

WORDS

- BONE
- BOO
- CANDY
- CAT
- COSTUME
- DRACULA
- GOBLIN
- GRAVE
- HALLOWEEN
- HAUNTED
- MONSTER
- MOON
- NIGHT
- OCTOBER
- PUMPKINS
- SCARE
- SCREAM
- SKELETON
- SPIDER
- SPOOKY
- TREAT
- TRICK
- VAMPIRE
- WITCH



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

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Tragic week, major injury tough road for the Indians

By Randy Lefko
randy@claytodayonline.com

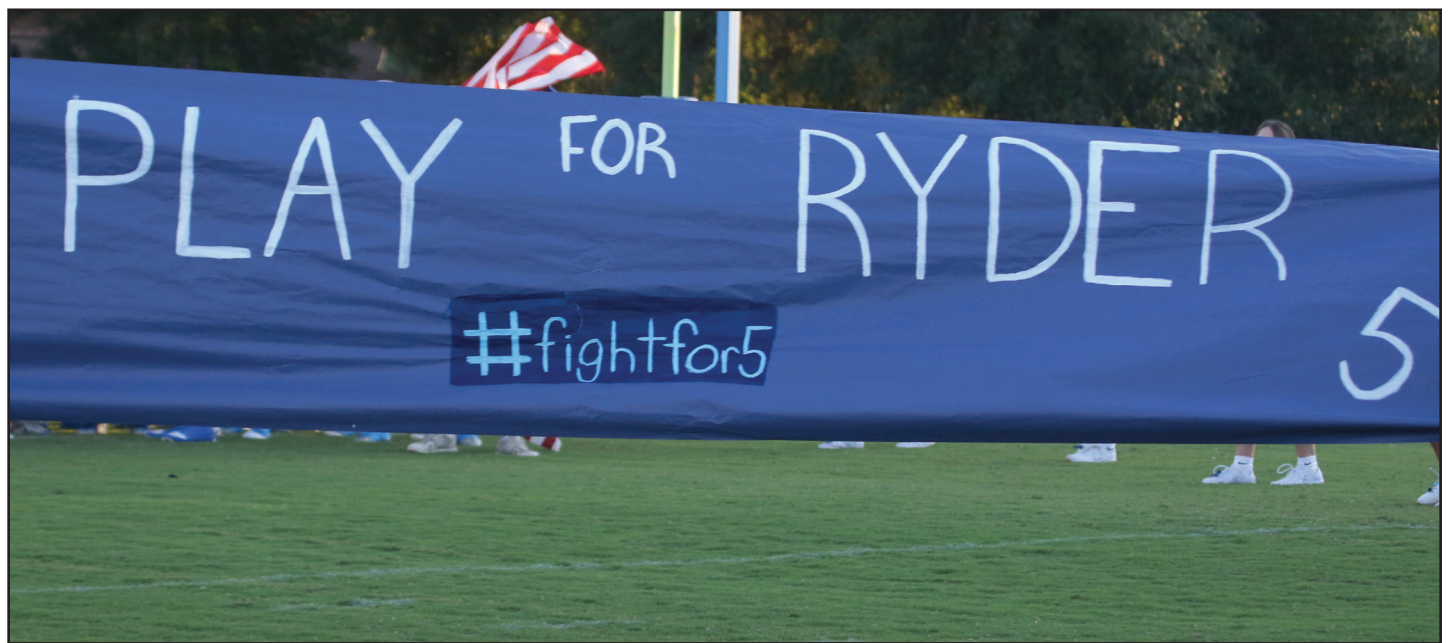
KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – With a tragic car accident resulting in critical injuries to one of their own and a season-ending injury for one of their best, the Keystone Heights High football team survived a tough week of character testing and faith that ended with a 35-0 rout at the hands of Union County on Friday, Aug. 30.



Ryder Trull

“This has been a tough week from start to finish,” said Keystone Heights coach Steve Reynolds. “I’m going to pray with the guys and with a bye week, we can heal a little and let some of this settle in, but regroup on Tuesday and come back stronger from everything that has happened.”

Reynolds, who first got jolted by a car accident that put freshman Ryder Trull in a Gainesville hospital with severe head injuries suffered in an Aug. 26 crash, got a second jolt in the first half of the Indians’



A banner for Keystone Heights football player Ryder Trull, a freshman, awaits entry of his Indians’ teammates before the game against Union County on Friday. Trull survived a horrific car accident earlier in the week and is in a Gainesville trauma center.

game against Union County when sophomore center Bryce Daniels left the field on a stretcher with a possible fractured ankle incurred on a scrum in the middle of the line.

“These are just kids out here and to han-

dle a game like tonight; 35-0 against a strong playoff team, is a tough ask,” said Reynolds. “But, I’m proud of how they handled themselves and I even saw some sportsmanship among the mess with our guys playing hard

and then helping the Union County guys up after tackles. Union County also showed a lot of class after Bryce’s injury.”

SEE INDIANS, 22

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Keystone Heights team gets some prayer time after tumultuous week of tragedy, injury and a game loss.



Indians

from page 21

For most of the game, it was Union County's girth up front versus the Keystone Heights defensive line that was led by Jackson Herman up front and linebacker Zane Leger in the second wave.

"Zane continued to run strong and Jackson was all over the place," said Reynolds. "I'm proud they still played hard all night. It would have been easy to just finish out the night."

Union County's team speed got to a 23-0 halftime lead off long runs and some nifty downfield passes.

A third-period scoring run got the score to 35-0 with a running clock to end the game.

Offensively, Keystone Heights quarterback Baylor Ford had limited time to look downfield but did have success with passes to Tanner Campbell and Tyler Sapp that got the Indians to the Union County one-yard line, but Leger was stopped on a fourth down plunge. A fake field goal attempt that Jackson Parmeter ran to a first down with a targeting flag put the Indians inside the Union County 10-yard line.

Leger finished with 10 tackles on the night as Union County rolled for more than 400 yards of total offense.

Keystone Heights gets a week off on a BYE week, then returns to Newberry on September 13. Newberry lost a 28-27 overtime game on Friday to two-time 1A state champion Hawthorne with the Panthers beating University Christian 44-20 in their opener on August 23.



Keystone Heights quarterback Baylor Ford tries to evade handful of Union County tacklers in Indians' 35-0 loss on Friday. Keystone Heights will be on a BYE Week this Friday.

STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

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