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STAFF PHOTOS BY DON COBLE

Once the can is secured, it's lifted and dumped in an opening on the top of the garbage truck. Each can takes about 15 seconds to empty.

FCC Environmental dumps troubled reputation with smooth first day

By Don Coble
don@claytodayonline.com

CLAY COUNTY – The shiny new garbage truck quietly turned the corner in a Middleburg neighborhood. It approached one of the new FCC Environmental Services trash bins positioned six feet from the curb with the lid facing away from the street.

The driver could have, make that should have, driven past, but since it was the first day FCC started its contract as Clay County's garbage pickup company, the driver showed leniency by hopping out to see if there was any trash in the can.

With so much negative attention coming from residents and the St. Johns County Council in August, which led to FCC being fired from its contract less than a month after starting service, Clay paid particular attention to FCC's operation on Tuesday.

According to county spokesperson Laura Christmas, unlike St. Johns, where computer glitches led to thousands of missed pickups,

there were very few problems.

"As of 2 p.m., FCC said it's picked up between 85-95% of the yard debris and 95% of the trash," she said. "We haven't heard of any major issues. So far, it's been quiet."

Christmas said the county's call center received 1,200 calls on Monday – the final day of Waste Management's contract. Residents wanted to know if their pickup day had changed or if FCC had special rules for how trash must be left at the curb.

On Tuesday, Christmas said the center on received 500 calls – and most of those were to same questions.

"We had a few who said they were missed, so we went out and took care of it," she said. "We have technology on the trucks to see what happened. We meet with FCC every day. Most of the calls today were questions, not complaints."

Following Hurricane Helene, there will be three pickups. FCC will send one truck for

SEE PICK UP, 7

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PUZZLE FUN

WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE?

There are four differences between Picture A and Picture B.

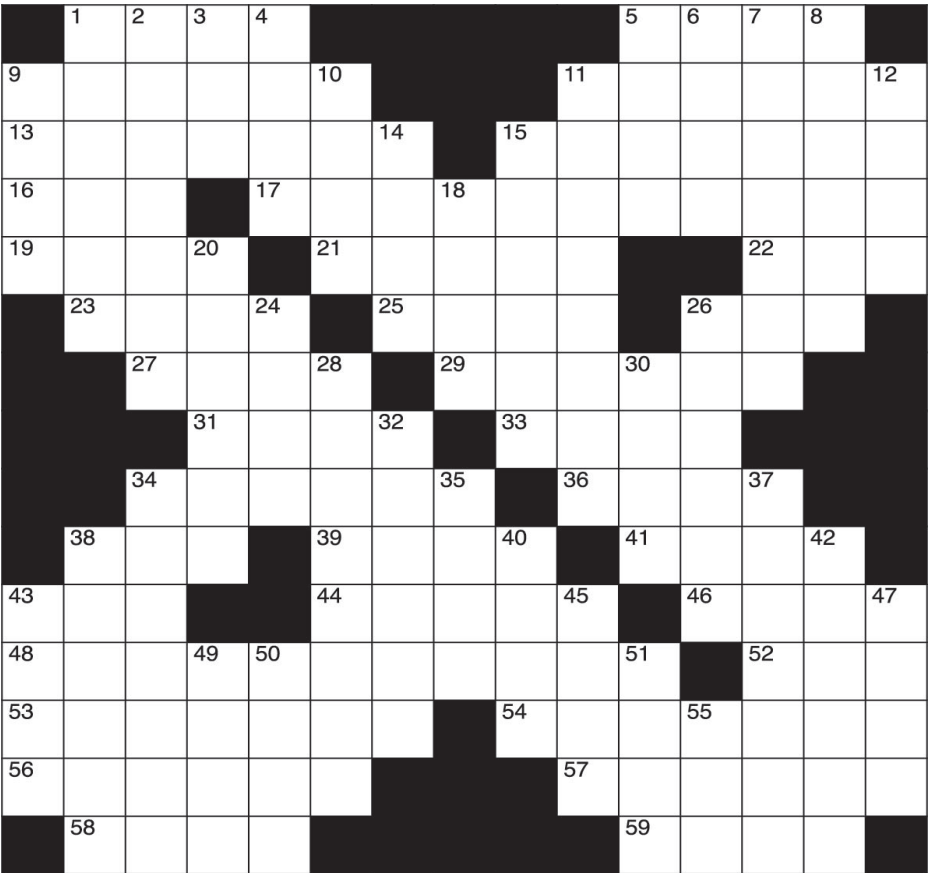


Answers:
front left 1. Different face on pie 2. Missing stick in apple 3. Extra little pumpkin
front left 4. Missing candy corns

GUESS WHO?

I am a singer-songwriter born in Canada on November 5, 1959. As a child, I traveled to different places with my father, who was a diplomat. I’ve had many hit songs, but my work on the soundtrack for a Robin Hood movie really set my career ablaze.

Answer: Bryan Adams



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
- 46. Growl

- 48. Pearl Jam frontman
- 52. Irritating person
- 53. Something requiring a solution
- 54. Firing
- 56. Hazards
- 57. Taiwan capital
- 58. Impudence
- 59. Rock frontman Durst

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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Upcoming Clay County bond referendum, Florida amendments explained

By Don Coble
don@claytodayonline.com

CLAY COUNTY – Early voting is approaching from Oct. 22 to Nov. 2 with polls open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., and the General Election is Nov. 5, which means registered voters have a month to study the issues before casting their ballots.

In addition to voting for candidates, from the president to community development district representatives, residents will have other important issues that will affect their lives to consider.

The ballot has one county bond referendum and six statewide amendments. Because they are often written confusingly, here are all the amendments with simplified

explanations to help voters make more informed decisions.

State amendments must pass by at least 60% of the vote, while the county amendment needs 50% plus 1.

County Charter Bond Referendum

CLAY COUNTY LAND CONSERVATION REFERENDUM TO PROTECT WATER QUALITY, WILDLIFE HABITAT, FORESTS AND FARMS

To acquire and manage lands that protect water quality in rivers, lakes, creeks, and drinking water sources; conserve wildlife

habitat, natural areas, and working forests and farms; reduce flooding; and provide outdoor recreation, shall Clay County issue general obligation bonds up to \$45 million, maturing within 20 years, bearing interest not exceeding legal maximum rates, payable from ad valorem tax up to 0.2 mills, with annual audits, citizen oversight, and full public disclosure of spending?

The skinny: It's pretty much what it says. Are you willing to spend 20 cents for every \$1,000 of the assessed value of your home to pay up to \$45 million in the next 20 years to protect the waterways and natural areas in the county?

Florida Constitutional Amendments

AMENDMENT 1: Establishing School Board Elections as Partisan Ballot Language
Proposing amendments to the State Constitution to require district school board members to be elected in a partisan rather than a nonpartisan election and to specify that the amendment only applies to elections held on or after the November 2026 general election. However, partisan primary elections may occur before the 2026 general election to nominate political party candidates to that office for placement on the 2026 general election ballot.

SEE AMENDMENTS, 8

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OPINIONS & VIEWPOINTS

The things I could do if I were King for a day ...

By Don Coble
Managing Editor

Have you ever wondered what you'd do if you were King or Queen for a day? I know it's not possible, but just imagine ...

If I had the power, I'd twitch my nose like Samantha Stephens on "Bewitched" and automatically mute cellphones for people who continue conversations while checking out in the grocery store or a restaurant. The other person deserves your attention for 30 seconds.

Anyone driving slow in the left lane of a four-lane highway should get a \$100



Don Coble

ticket on the first offense, a \$250 ticket on the second offense and a bus pass on the third offense.

It should be an NFL rule there should be no Taylor Swift mentions or TV views during any broadcasts.

Friday night has always been sacred for high school football. College football should never be played on Fridays, and it should never be on television.

Anyone who doesn't pick up after their dog during a walk should have their nose rubbed in the dog's mess.

Everyone needs a break from politics and the Kelce brothers, so why not make Sundays a day of rest from all political and Travis and Jason Kelce brother commercials, especially during football season.

Before you get your knickers in a knot, this abortion comment isn't going where you think. When a couple finds out they're

going to have a baby – yes, it takes two – the mother only decides whether to carry it to term. If the couple is unmarried and she decides to have the baby, the man has four options – if they are still a couple, he can help support the woman and his child as a family; if they aren't a family, he can support the child, he can be forced to pay child support or he can walk away and be a deadbeat dad. I have another solution: why not offer the father the option of custody if the mother doesn't want the child instead of abortion? If the father had a 50% role in creating the child and a 50% legal responsibility in caring for the child, shouldn't he have a voice in that child's future? I believe it's another option that lessens the divide in the abortion debate.

If I were King or Queen, televisions would automatically go into mute mode when crackpots like Hillary Clinton, a

SEE KING, 5

Fleming Island Rep. Garrison:
Florida doesn't need legalized pot to survive

By Jacob Ogles
For FloridaPolitics.com

A Florida lawmaker in line to be House Speaker is explaining why he's voting against legalizing recreational marijuana in November.

Rep. Sam Garrison, who represents District 11, which includes most of Clay County, sent a detailed email to the media outlining his opposition to Amendment 3. The Fleming Island Republican said even voters who want cannabis decriminalized should be concerned about cuffing the Legislature's policymaking ability with an amendment to the Florida Constitution.



Jacob Ogles

"Policymaking by constitutional referendum is no way to run a railroad, especially in America's third largest state. (Remember 2002's pregnant pigs amendment?) This is especially true in an area like marijuana where our state has made a concerted effort to strike the right balance between personal liberty and community standards," Garrison said.

"Regardless of where you stand on marijuana policy, and I have friends on all sides of this issue, the place to debate it is in Tallahassee at the Capitol where the public can see and hear what we say and do."

He noted that those Floridians with a legitimate need for cannabis access already have it through Florida's medical marijuana program. Garrison currently chairs the House Health Care Appropriations Subcommittee, offering insight into the state

SEE POT, 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.

Acidulous: an adjective that means a sharp-tasting or sour; bitter and cutting.

"Precilla paid all of her parking tickets after making an acidulous comment to the city clerk."

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. 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.

King
from page 4

Democrat, and Marjorie Taylor Greene, a Republican, talk.

I would change our national anthem to “America.” If that doesn’t happen, I would make it a rule that the “Star-Spangled Banner” must be played in less than 85 seconds. It’s not a love song, and it’s not supposed to be sung as a ballad.

Let’s get back on the roadway for pro-

posed rules. First, I’d make it illegal for anyone not to use their blinker when making a turn, punishable by losing their driving privileges for one week.

That little lever on the left of the steering wheel is called a blinker. Use it. And anyone caught flipping a cigarette butt out of a car window and onto a roadway should be required to put on a dayglow vest and pick up trash on the highway for eight hours. Our streets aren’t an ashtray.

Finally, transferring has gotten out of control in college sports. Dillon Gabriel

started his football career at Central Florida. He announced he was transferring to UCLA and accepting NIL money.

A day later, he changed his mind and said he was getting more NIL money from Oklahoma. Two years later, he’s starting for Oregon. Building a college program is difficult when players don’t stay long enough to unpack their bags.



This Month in History

Five years ago, 2019

- Gov. Ron DeSantis used Middleburg High as the backdrop to announce a proposed \$ 9,500-a-year starting pay increase for Florida school teachers.
- Orange Park animator Carlton Batten won an Emmy for his work on “The Simpsons.”
- The Green Cove Springs City Council merged its planning review, inspection services and a building official under the same roof via a private contractor to better handle the city’s growth.

10 years ago, 2014

- Pace Center for Girls announced plans to open a nonprofit school on College Drive in Orange Park in January.
- Nature students from St. Johns River

- State College’s Orange Park campus collected trash along a three-mile stretch of the St. Johns River.
- Erica Cole is crowned Homecoming Queen at Middleburg High. The school’s football team also won a pivotal football game against Jacksonville Englewood.
- 20 years ago, 2004**
- Orange Park Fire Rescue paramedic Frank Moorefield confessed to tampering and removing morphine from the department. The Orange Park Police Department charged him with three counts of possession of a controlled substance and petit theft.
 - Clay County Sheriff Scott Lancaster said the county’s first Peace Breakfast was a success in remembering victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

- The Clay County District Schools wrestled with how to pay for one school under construction and two others that needed to be built with new residents moving into the county.
- 30 years ago, 1994**
- Assistant State Attorney Tim Collins told the owners of lingerie shops they were operating illegally after the owners of Pretty Lady Lingerie on Parkwood Avenue were sentenced to one year of probation for racketeering.
 - Former M*A*S*H star Mike Farrell spoke at the Quigley House “Every Woman Can ... Live Without Fear” campaign kickoff dinner to raise awareness about domestic violence.
 - Emman Tolmachjova and Galina Potopova – dentists from Russia – shadowed Orange Park dentist Peter McLeod as part of a program with Sister Cities International in hopes of going back to their country and

- sharing what they learned.
- 40 years ago, 1984**
- Carl Elbert Mosley went on trial for two counts of second-degree murder, one count of attempted murder and one count of carrying a firearm for the deaths of Frederick B. Hendrickson and George Dyson and injuring Randy Darwin Page on March 24, 1984.
 - Federal Judge Susan Black released Clay County Board of Commissioners from a discrimination lawsuit filed by Martha Kelley against her former employer, L.H. “Lanny” Lancaster, Clay County Supervisor of Elections.
 - A \$20 million bond issue by the Clay County Finance Authority helped low-income families borrow home loans at 11.45% interest, points below the prevailing mortgage at the time.

Pot
from page 4

program’s operations.

“Whether or not you support the concept of recreational marijuana, the truth is today, Floridians who need medical marijuana can access it safely and with little to no bureaucratic hurdles,” Garrison wrote.

“The focus of Governor (Ron) DeSantis and the Florida legislature over the last decade has been alleviating suffering. This is something an overwhelming percentage of our fellow citizens, left, right and center, all agree on. Amendment 3 is something else altogether.”

Of note, medical marijuana was legalized in Florida following the passage of a constitutional amendment in 2016, not by lawmakers approving it.

Garrison made clear that Florida’s economy doesn’t need marijuana and suggested it could ruin the state’s reputation.

“We’re not California. We’re not Colorado. And we are certainly not New York,” he wrote. “Florida’s great pro-family, pro-business, and tourism-rich successes bring an equally great responsibility to preserve them for successive generations.

The ‘recreation’ we as a state should promote are our beaches, springs, weather, and unique environment. Not marijuana.”

Garrison will become House Speaker

after the 2028 election if Republicans maintain control of the chamber.

Jacob Ogles has covered politics in Florida since 2000 for regional outlets, including SRQ Magazine in Sarasota, The News-Press in Fort Myers and The Daily Commercial in Leesburg. His work has appeared nationally in The Advocate, Wired and other publications. Events like SRQ’s Where The Votes Are workshops made Ogles one of Southwest Florida’s most respected political analysts, and outlets like WWSB ABC 7 and WSRQ Sarasota have featured his insights. He can be reached at jacobogles@hotmail.com.



Wolf CTP finds permanent home at Penney Farms Retirement Community

Clay County District Schools Program assists young adults with disabilities to transition into workplace, adulthood

By Don Coble
don@claytodayonline.com

PENNEY FARMS—After moving three times in the past eight years, the Wolf Community Transition Program at Penney Retirement Community finally has a place to call home.

The Clay County District Schools program assists young adults with disabilities in transitioning from school to the workplace and adulthood. Participants receive specialized support, work-based learning experiences, interaction with the community, skills development, collaboration and professional development.

And from now on, they don't have to worry about moving.

The retirement community offered

spaces for their classroom until the room became too small for their needs, or Penney Farms needed the space for a project. When it became apparent they would move again last spring, retirement community CEO Teresa Scott got the school district to provide a portable. That was the easiest part. She still needed approval from the Penney Farms Town Council and retirement community residents. She also needed about \$10,000 for the permits and costs of moving and installing it. She said everyone eagerly supported it.

"We were able to get people in the community to donate their time to move it," Scott said. "It would have cost probably \$10,000 just to move the building, and that was all done free. We have some contractors that work out here at Penney – electricians, plumbers, excavating – all these folks came together and donated their time to get the building up and running by the time school started. We got the building in April or May and wanted it to be ready by school."

The students work around the community in the dining hall, housekeeping, library, gardening and greeting guests as ambassadors. They must wear proper work clothes, be on time like an employee and continue their education. They are eligible to stay in the program until they are 22.

"It's real life," said Lead Instructor Tami Cox. "We try to mimic a real job and have a pretty good lunch. The dress, you know, we have a dress code. They have to call or text me if they're out or inform you in advance every time. There's no pay, of course, but they need to get a job and hopefully keep a good job. "We have a combination of practical experiences and lectures, so we're in a classroom, but very minimal time in the classroom. It's necessary to be a great worker in the community."

The students said they enjoy the opportunity to be self-efficient. "I love this class. It's amazing. I love the teachers here," said Megan Register, who is in her first year with Wolf. "They are really helpful. They make me feel like I can do anything and try my best. I can also learn more skills than I did during school. I feel comfortable in what I did in school, too." Several residents have come to like the students. They see them during the week around the campus, and they appreciate their work ethic and optimistic outlook. Since the group had a permanent home, one



STAFF PHOTOS BY DON COBLE
The Clay County District Schools provided a portable at Penney Retirement Community, and the residents and staff did the rest to give the district's Wolf CTP a permanent home.



This year's WOLF CTP class, from left, Caleb, Jake, Daniel, Megan, Fred, Lacey, Zach, Brogan and Jada, are happy to be in their permanent classroom at Penney Farms Retirement Community.

couple provided a cornhole game. Another built a picnic table for the group.

"This is your home, and hopefully, it will be for a long time," Scott said. "It's such a

great program. Our residents love working with all the students, teachers, coaches, and employees. You're part of our family."

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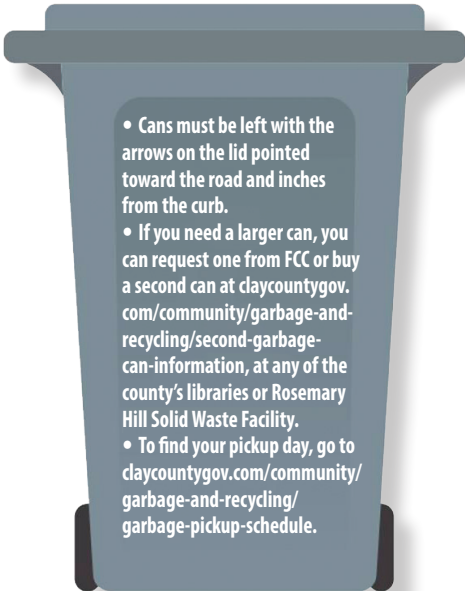
Pick Up
from page 1

garbage and another for yard debris, while the county has hired a third party to pick up hurricane debris.

The FCC trucks utilize an automated arm that picks up the can, lifts it over the truck, and dumps it before returning it to the ground. Each household garbage truck only has a driver, so loose items outside the can can't be collected.

FCC is responsible for garbage in the county, except for the City of Green Cove Springs and the Town of Orange Park.

Cans must be left with the arrows on the lid pointed toward the road and inches



- Cans must be left with the arrows on the lid pointed toward the road and inches from the curb.
- If you need a larger can, you can request one from FCC or buy a second can at claycountygov.com/community/garbage-and-recycling/second-garbage-can-information, at any of the county's libraries or Rosemary Hill Solid Waste Facility.
- To find your pickup day, go to claycountygov.com/community/garbage-and-recycling/garbage-pickup-schedule.



from the curb. If you need a larger can, you can request one from FCC or buy a second can at claycountygov.com/community/garbage-and-recycling/second-garbage-can-information, at any of the county's libraries or Rosemary Hill Solid Waste Facility.

To find your pickup day, go to claycountygov.com/community/garbage-and-recycling/garbage-pickup-schedule.

STAFF PHOTOS BY DON COBLE
FCC Environmental picked up yard debris on its first day off Henley Road.

VINTAGE GRACE BOUTIQUE

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Have you checked out the cutest shop in town?

The boutique's interior is filled with a variety of vintage goods. One photo shows a red dress on a mannequin next to a typewriter and other small items. Another photo shows shelves stocked with hats, boots, and bags. A third photo shows a white wicker chair with a basket of colorful fabrics. The fourth photo shows a display of clothing on hangers and a wooden cabinet.

Amendments

from page 3

The skinny: proposed by the Florida State Legislature, for years, parents believed it was more important for school board members to be more focused on children, not politics. However, the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent book ban debates exposed many board members' political biases, prompting the legislature to ask voters if they want to know about their school representatives.

AMENDMENT 2: Establishing a State Constitutional Right to Hunt and Fish Ballot Language

Proposing an amendment to the State Constitution to preserve fishing and hunting forever, including using traditional methods,

555 S. Lawrence Blvd. Keystone Heights



October 22- November 1

as a public right and preferred means of responsibly managing and controlling fish and wildlife. Specifies that the amendment does not limit the authority granted to the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission under Section 9 of Article IV of the State Constitution.

The skinny: as proposed by the Florida Legislature, hunting and fishing would be enshrined as the preferred methods of managing wildlife in Florida, not science.

AMENDMENT 3: Recreational Marijuana Legalization Ballot Language

Allows adults 21 years or older to possess, purchase, or use marijuana products and marijuana accessories for non-medical personal consumption by smoking, ingestion, or otherwise; allows Medical Marijuana Treatment Centers and other state-licensed entities to acquire, cultivate, process, manufacture, sell, and distribute such products and accessories.

The skinny: the citizen-initiated amendment would allow anyone 21 or older to possess up to three ounces of leafy marijuana or five ounces of THC concentrate. The state will issue licenses to businesses where marijuana and THC concentrate can be

purchased. Buying from a non-licensed seller is illegal. The bill also failed to define use limitations, such as time, place, or manner, like alcohol or cigarettes.

AMENDMENT 4: Right to Abortion Ballot Language

No law shall prohibit, penalize, delay, or restrict abortion before viability or when necessary to protect the patient's health, as determined by the patient's healthcare provider. This amendment does not change the Legislature's constitutional authority to require notification to a parent or guardian before a minor has an abortion.

The skinny: the citizen-initiated amendment has featured a lot of misinformation in television commercials. If passed, abortions would be allowed to the point where the fetus/baby could survive outside the womb, generally considered 24 weeks. It would also allow an abortion to protect the mother or baby's life, as determined by the health care provider. If the mother is a minor, parents would be notified.

AMENDMENT 5: Homestead Exemption Inflation Adjustment Ballot Language

Proposing an amendment to the State Constitution to require an annual adjustment for inflation to the value of current or future homestead exemptions that apply solely to levies other than school district levies and for which every person who has legal or equitable title to real estate and maintains thereon the permanent residence of the owner, or another person legally or naturally dependent upon the owner is eligible. This amendment takes effect January 1, 2025.

The skinny: The Florida State Legislature's proposed amendment would reduce non-school government property taxes by adjusting for inflation.

AMENDMENT 6: Repeal of Public Campaign Financing Ballot Language

Proposing the repeal of the provision in the State Constitution, which requires public financing for campaigns of candidates for elective statewide office who agree to campaign spending limits.

The skinny: the Florida State Legislature proposed amendment would eliminate public funding for campaigns for governor and lieutenant governor, attorney general, chief financial officer and agricultural commissioner.

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Clay Economic Development VP Laura Pavlus hired by Putnam Chamber

For The Herald

PALATKA – The Putnam County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors announced the recent selection of Laura Pavlus as the organization’s new president. Laura Pavlus most recently served as the Senior Vice President for Clay County Economic Development Corporation beginning in 2015. Pavlus has more than 20 years of experience in management, business development and marketing.

She holds a bachelor’s degree in organizational management from St. Johns River State College. During her tenure with CCEDC, she was involved with more than \$1 billion in high-wage job creation capital investment

projects for the community. Pavlus, the daughter of two small business owners, is passionate about helping businesses thrive and succeed.

“It takes tremendous grit, determination, and adaptability to succeed in business, and I have incredible respect for business owners and leaders,” Pavlus said.

She is passionate about elevating communities through job creation, workforce development efforts,



Laura Pavlus

capital investment and revenue generation. Pavlus is also an advocate for smart and sustainable growth planning that preserves the fabric and integrity of the community.

“I am extremely enthusiastic about the expanded opportunities coming to Putnam County as neighboring counties grow and expand. Putnam is in a great position to capitalize on this surrounding growth. The completion of the First Coast Expressway to the north will also open transportation corridors and provide a tremendous logistical opportunity for the community,” Pavlus said.

Jini Robbins, Chairwoman of the Putnam County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, said, “There is so much positive collaboration and momentum in the commu-

nity surrounding the Elevate Putnam capital campaign and strategic plan. We are thrilled to have found a candidate to carry that energy and enthusiasm forward. Laura Pavlus has a large network of regional and state connections, and she understands the community’s needs about the region’s economic activity and balanced growth. She will be a strong advocate for our businesses and residents.”

Dana Jones, the former president, has served the Putnam County Chamber of Commerce Board and community for 37 years.

She will remain on staff in an advisory role during the leadership transition. The Board and community are extraordinarily grateful for her tremendous service and dedication to the organization.

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Young Oakleaf chef second-guesses his second-place finish

Landon Brown excels in statewide Florida Future Chef competition

By Don Coble
don@claytodayonline.com

OAKLEAF – Although he's just 10 and in fifth grade, Landon Brown couldn't help but wonder if he should have been a little bolder with his spices in the Florida Future Chef championship finals.

A second-place finish in the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and Division of Food, Nutrition and Wellness competition still earned him



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Landon Brown, left, earned a \$3,000 Florida Prepaid 529 Savings Plan scholarship for finishing second at the Florida Future Chef championship finals.

a \$3,000 Florida Prepaid 529 Savings Plan scholarship, a premier cutting board and a chef's hat.

So young to be such a perfectionist, he can't help but think an extra pinch here, a little splash there or an extra piece of basil may have made a difference.

Cooking is all Landon wants to do. He was a top-five finalist on Gordon Ramsay's "MasterChef Junior: Home for the Holidays" a year ago. He's used to working under pressure and appeasing the taste buds of picky judges. He enjoys the challenge of making rare meals well done.

"I just really like cooking. It's always been pretty comfortable for me," he said. "I just have fun. I just like to cook. Maybe I would probably change some of my seasonings, maybe be bolder, take a little more risk."

Landon goes to Oakleaf Village Elementary. He was one of 191 students statewide who entered the Florida Future Chef Champion competition to create a unique school dish that will be standardized by FDACS and shared with schools across Florida for other students to enjoy.

Landon was interviewed over Zoom and was one of three finalists selected to compete for four days in Tampa.

Sprouts Healthy Communities Foundation sponsored the event. Part of the competition involved shopping for ingredients at a local Sprouts store. All three students then

had to create dishes focusing on Florida Fresh ingredients. Landon's first dish was blackened salmon with a cantaloupe and arugula salad, mango, tomatoes and a home-made vinaigrette.

His championship round dish was called "Camo's Paradise Pasta." It included hand-made pasta and shrimp. Camo is always by his side. It is an iguana from the 1997 Beanie Baby line and serves as his "sous chef."

Landon's long-range goals include starting with a food truck, becoming a world-class chef and opening Michelin-rated restaurants.

The competition also included a pizza party, a tour of Bern's Steakhouse and hands-on cooking opportunities with local chefs.

The finals were in the lobby of the Epicurean Hotel. A theater was erected to seat more than 50 people to watch the finals.

Sophia Balmaseda of Conchita Espinosa Academy of Miami-Dade County finished first, while Michael Fanning of Manatee Bay Elementary was third.

"We love watching kids pursue their culinary passions, especially when that aligns with nutritious school meals," said Jeremy Eason, Outreach Director for the Division of Nutrition, Education and Outreach. "Combining their love for cooking with nutrition education and eating a balanced meal is a huge win in our book."



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Community Briefs

BBQ to benefit Clay seniors coming to OP Town Hall Park

ORANGE PARK – The community is encouraged to fire up their appetites. Mojo Smokehouse BBQ and Blues will fire up their grills on Oct. 24 for the 19th annual BBQ fundraiser to benefit the seniors of the Clay County Senior Adult Advocacy Council.

The event will be from 10:15 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. under the oak trees at Town Hall Park on the corner of Park Avenue and Kingsley Avenue. Proceeds will help support senior causes, including the senior pageant and assisting seniors in need.

Dinners are \$10 and come with pulled pork or sliced turkey on a bun, cole slaw and baked beans. Bottled water or soda is \$1, and a pulled pork and turkey combo is \$12.

The Senior Adult Advocacy Council accepts sponsorships and preorders. For more information, contact Taryn Schultz at (904) 687-7551 or tmschultz@beyourhaven.org.

A Platinum Sponsorship is \$1,000 and includes 10 dinner tickets, a logo on the BBQ banner, a vendor table in the high-traffic area, a logo on flyers with dinners, an acknowledgment in the Clay Today article about the event, and a thank-you by the DJ every hour.

A Gold Sponsor costs \$500 and receives five dinner tickets, a company name on the BBQ banner, flyers with dinner, acknowledgment by Clay Today, a vendor table and a DJ thank you. In comparison, a Silver Sponsor will get four dinner tickets, a company name on the BBQ banner, flyers with dinner, a vendor table and a DJ thank you for \$300 table.

For \$200, a Bronze Sponsor will get two dinner tickets, a company name on the BBQ banner, flyers with dinner, and a DJ thank you, while a "Friend" who makes a minimum donation of \$100 will receive a T-shirt and company name on flyers with dinner.

UF/IFAS: Taking the peanut butter challenge only takes a jiff

CLAY COUNTY – Whether you favor crunchy or creamy, the challenge is on. The annual University of Florida Peanut Butter Challenge that is.

Launched in 2012 in Florida's Panhandle region to raise awareness of peanut farming in the area, the challenge has grown into a

friendly competition to help fight hunger in our state. UF/IFAS Extension offices in counties across the state invite people to donate jars of peanut butter, with the office collecting the most crowned champion and the peanut butter donated to local organizations to distribute to those in need. This

year's challenge runs through Oct. 31.

Why peanut butter? It's nutrient-dense, which means it packs a lot of nutrients for the number of calories. It's shelf-stable, so it will hold in a pantry or cupboard. And, of course, it's loved by many (though the debate over crunchy versus creamy rolls on).

Food insecurity—the lack of financial resources or access to food within a household—can lead to an array of negative health outcomes. Many children and their families go hungry each day. So, spread the word:

the challenge is simple and has far-reaching outcomes.

Please stop by the Clay County Extension Office adjacent to the Clay County Fairgrounds to drop off unopened, unexpired jars of peanut butter. You'll find a collection box will be in the lobby. Or look to donate when you attend an Extension class or event; bring a jar to donate.

To learn more, visit sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/peanutbutter, call (904)-284-6355 or email clay@ifas.ufl.edu.



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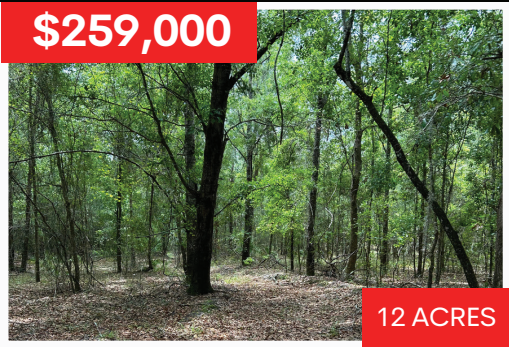
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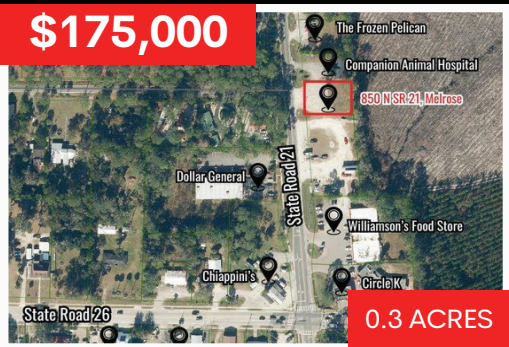
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UF/IFAS helps young entrepreneurs build businesses

By Meredith Bauer
UF/IFAS Senior Public Relations Specialist

When Emily Flowers began taking public speaking lessons through Florida 4-H, she never imagined using those skills to grow her own business.

But years later, the 14-year-old regularly talks with customers at markets and sales

events, promoting her two bee-based businesses: Awesome Blossom and Wrap Em.

"Personally, I think it makes me feel really proud to own my own business, especially at the age that I am," she said.

Florida 4-H has been a business catalyst for scores of youths statewide. From public speaking and leadership courses to hands-on experience running agricultural small

businesses, at least a dozen 4-H youth have begun their own companies in recent years. Some have even made enough profit to sell their businesses.

Taylor Thigpen, an 18-year-old Florida 4-H alumnus from Green Cove Springs, has been in the program since he was 8 years old at 4-H camp. A decade later, he sold his house plant business, PlantKingUSA, after building



PHOTO COURESY OF EMILY FLOWERS
Emily Flowers stands with her honey for sale at her business, Awesome Blossom.

it with skills he learned in Florida 4-H.

"Florida 4-H prepares you to be able to be comfortable in an ever-changing world and learn how to communicate effectively with your peers and adults. It helps us find solutions to the problems that our communities face," he said.

A Florida 4-H entrepreneurship program accelerated Thigpen's business concept when he won a \$1,000 grant prize from the Florida 4-H Gator Pit program.

Within four years, his small personal project blossomed into a profitable business selling houseplants to all 50 states online within four years.

Stacey Ellison, state 4-H program leader, said Florida 4-H strives to prepare youth for the future, including their careers.

"4-H is preparing a future-ready generation and helping youth transform their passions into purpose," she said. "For some, that includes creating businesses that impact their lives, families, community and futures."

Abigail Padon, a 19-year-old University of Florida educational sciences major, started her business, Blessed Boots Boutique, as a Florida 4-H member.

"In Florida 4-H, you learn by doing, and that's exactly what building a business is," she said. "4-H teaches you to learn from your mistakes and keep going when situations get tough."



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- A close-up photograph of a cat's head, showing its ears and the top of its head. The cat has light-colored fur with darker stripes. The image is positioned in the bottom left corner of the page.



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Pumpkin spice ...
or not so nice?

By Kyla Woodard
kyla@claytodayonline.com

It's that time again. Fall is here, and so is pumpkin spice – you know, that popular blend of nutmeg, cinnamon,, ginger and cloves. The first official pumpkin spice recipe dates back to 1796 when Amelia Simmons featured the flavor in the first American cookbook. Since then, it has garnered a large fanbase. For some, it's a reminder of something special. Stephanie and Olivia Hall said the smell always prepares them for fall. "It feels like that homey, spice feeling," Stephanie said. "I feel like it just sets the tone for the season." From lattes and donuts to cookies and tea, the spicy flavor never fails to make itself known for one time every year. But what was originally meant to spice up foods and beverages has transformed into a national 'scented' craze, finding its way into anything and everything. Here is a list of six unique pumpkin spice products currently on the market.

1. Glade Golden Pumpkin and Spice Air Freshener

This limited edition, an 8.3-ounce bottle of spray is said to provide luxurious comfort and a fall scent that everyone craves, including pumpkin, star anise, cinnamon and essential oils.

2. Dawn Pumpkin Spice

Powerwash Dish Spray
If you want your dishes to possess the sought-after scent, this product may be just for you! Who knew dishes could be so flavorful?

3. Pumpkin Spice Toilet Paper

According to the package, it smells good enough to eat (but don't do that!). Although this toilet paper may not be for everyday use, it does wonders and adds a bit of humor and flair to any bathroom!

4. Swiss Miss Pumpkin Spice Hot Cocoa

With the winter feel of hot chocolate and the fall feel of pumpkin spice, this product mixes two popular seasons into one 'delicious' beverage - taking your hot cocoa to the ultimate next level!

5. Burt's Bees Pumpkin Spice Lip Balm

Attention pumpkin spice latte lovers! Did you know that caffeine causes dry lips? So, if your lips feel chapped, maybe it's time to invest in this unique product. You can still get that pumpkin spice taste you crave, along with some relief!

6. Blossom to Bath Pumpkin Spice Latte Deodorant

If you dream of carrying that pumpkin spice scent with you everywhere, this product will fit your bill and last all day!

Bees

from page 14

Padon, of St. Lucie County, said she started creating trinkets for fun at home, but after being introduced to craft fairs and art shows through Florida 4-H, she began to realize that many of the items sold were products she could make, too.

But building a business is much more than just making exciting products. She had to learn to build a customer base, which she did by leveraging the public speaking and leadership skills that she cultivated as a 4-H youth.

"4-H has instilled that perseverance in me," she said.

Flowers of Gulf County agreed that Florida 4-H gave her the soft skills and practical hands-on experience she needed. The organization provided her first exposure to bees and taught her—through experiences like the UF/IFAS Bee College – how to profit safely and sustainably with her bee businesses.

Through her two businesses, she now sells two types of honey and honey-added products, as well as beeswax wraps.

"Florida 4-H is the reason I'm even in beekeeping," she said.

Thigpen, now a freshman at the the University of Notre Dame studying global affairs and social entrepreneurship, agreed that Florida 4-H taught him skills like public speaking and leadership, but the exposure to horticulture through his club gave him the essential skills to grow his plant business—literally. "I credit 4-H for many of my life's successes because it's given me a broad variety of skills to be ready for life," he said.



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'It takes everybody'

Clay, Putnam, St. Johns and Jacksonville agencies join forces to recruit personnel

By Kyla Woodard
kyla@claytodayonline.com

ORANGE PARK—On Wednesday, People of all ages filled the Thrasher-Horne Center with one common goal: to learn more about four Northeast Florida law enforcement agencies.

The career fair, hosted by Clay, Putnam, St. Johns and Jacksonville sheriff's agencies, aimed to spread the word about available career opportunities within each, including police officers, deputy sheriffs, dispatch, IT and public records.

Clay County Sheriff's Office recruiting manager Jim Morgan said hosting the event occurred during a conversation with the other agencies. Morgan said that with all the offices having the same needs, it was essen-

tial to collaborate and carry out their public safety goals together.

With many people making presumptions based on what they see on TV, Morgan said it was important for the agencies to provide resources for people to learn and make informed decisions.

"I think it's important for people who want to get into this business to come talk to people who are in it," he said.

The event, which took four to five months to plan, was open to all citizens. With many students from Clay High's Academy of Criminal Justice in attendance, it also presented a great opportunity to garner more knowledge of prospective career paths.

In addition to visiting tabling booths, anyone interested in working for an agency could take part in actual interviews conducted by CCSO or apply for a position.

With staff on-site, Morgan said CCSO was ready to hire on the spot.

"If you show interest, you pass it through



our interviews, you make it through our application process and our background, guys, there is a potential you could leave here today with a job offer from us," Morgan said.

Morgan said the event was a success, with 161 pre-registered attendees. He said the agencies plan on holding the fair again next year.

Morgan does not underestimate the importance of keeping these jobs alive. He said that with law enforcement's key goal being to serve and protect, not having people willing to do that is consequential.

He said that he hopes future events continue to show that.

"That's why you must go out there and find the best people for this. Young people, older people, people with maturity, people with experience. It takes everybody. It takes all phases of people in their lifetimes to get into this and want to come do this job."

Morgan said if you or someone you know is interested in working in law enforcement, don't hesitate to call any of the agencies for more information.



STAFF PHOTOS BY KYLA WOODARD

Attendees were able to visit tabling booths, interview with CCSO and even apply to other agencies.



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Annual Fall Festival continues to amaze families

By Don Coble
don@claytodayonline.com

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – Families disappeared in one end of the crop maze, only reappearing from another during the first weekend of the Amazing Grace Family Farms Fall Festival. The month-long event has a variety of activities and photo opportunities to keep children and parents entertained, including a giant jump pad, farm

animals, hula hoop roping cows, a corn crib, a cow train, a pumpkin patch, bubble hoops, games, tug-a-war, photo opportunities, and carnival games. Fall Festival is located on State Road 21, one mile south of State Road 16. It's open on Fridays from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. through Nov. 1 and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. through Nov. 2 and on Monday, Oct. 14, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For tickets, visit agcropmaze.ticketspice.com/amazing-grace-grace-2024-fall.



Brianna finds an opening in the pumpkin house to share a smile.



Genevieve learns that the best part of playing in the corn crib is that you don't get dirty, and you can make a mess without getting in trouble.



STAFF PHOTOS BY DON COBLE
This year's crop maze layout celebrated Green Cove Springs' 150th anniversary since incorporation.

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‘There is a world out there beyond Middleburg’ Worldly curiosity leads Joe Shaffar’s colossal fossil collection

By Don Coble
don@claytodayonline.com

MIDDLEBURG — As a child, Joe Shaffar’s mother immersed him in various worldly cultures, histories and differences. She gave him a subscription to National Geographic and often took him out of town to restaurants that featured an international menu.

“She wanted me to know there was a world out there beyond Middleburg,” Shaffar said.

During a 1989 trip to Sydney, Australia, he spotted a fossil that caught his attention. To most, it looked like a rock. To him, it triggered a fascination that’s led to one of the country’s largest collections, if not the largest, of fossils.

In 26 years, Shaffar’s curiosity grew into a hobby and an obsession. He has more than 500 pieces, including two extremely rare pieces of *Cleithrolepis Granulata* — a fish fossilized in sandstone found in Hornsby Heights in Sydney, Australia. They are so rare that Shaffar needed permission from the country’s government to remove them from the country.

According to the internet, the only other place with that fossil on display is the Australian Museum at Darlington, Australia.

“There’s very little information about it,” Shaffar said. “Some of that stuff is so rare, there’s hardly anything written about it. But that fish is the crown jewel of my collection. I don’t have any other fossil that comes close. I’ve got the second one (the bigger fish), the crown jewel of my collection, and only two of those have been found.”

Shaffar has fossils with leaves, bugs, jellyfish, footprints and shells. He has petrified dung, teeth, skulls and ruby squid tentacles. He has several New Guinea Cassowary bone daggers made from shin bones, original Aboriginal art and a small slab of banded iron mineral that’s 4.4 billion years old.

His first fossil cost less than \$50. He’s now spent more than \$100,000 on his collection, including \$10,000 on the *Cleithrolepis Granulata* fish.

“I collected it because I enjoyed it. I didn’t realize how rare it was,” he said. Shaffar said he would put his collection in a trust fund so it would be displayed when he dies. He doesn’t want it to be sold or disbanded. He hopes others enjoy them as much as he does.

“I’ve always wanted to put it on display,”



Joe Shaffar holds a Cassowary Bone Dagger from New Guinea. Below: This *Cleithrolepis Granulata* fossil is so rare, Joe Shaffar needed permission from the Australian government to bring it to the United States. It is the prized piece of his collection.



Shaffar said. “I’m not going to be selfish and keep this for myself. Other people need to be able to see it. I need to share this.”

And the inspiration started when his mother bought a “National Geographic” subscription in 1963.

“She subscribed when I was a baby, put in my name, and I grew up looking at the magazine,” Shaffar said. “I was learning how to read, she’d read articles to me. I’d look

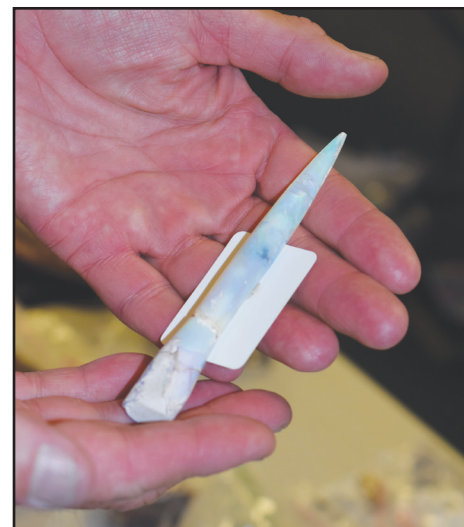
at pictures. She took me to museums and plays. She’d make a big deal about taking me to movies in Jacksonville, eating out at restaurants, and traveling to different historical sites in the state. She was the one. She put that into me. She put that desire and knowledge into me. If it weren’t for her, I wouldn’t have done this.”

Because of that, there is a part of the world inside Middleburg.



STAFF PHOTO BY DON COBLE

This fossil is of an animal’s head with fangs.



Joe holds a ruby fossilized squid tentacle.



Joe Shaffar also has a collection of original Aboriginal art.

New beginnings for PlantKingUSA

Lake Asbury's Taylor Thigpen sells his renowned business

By Kyla Woodard
kyla@claytodayonline.com

GREEN COVE SPRINGS - Taylor Thigpen, the county's renowned plant king, has officially passed the "green" torch to someone else.

PlantKingUSA, Thigpen's plant business, skyrocketed to great heights when it was established almost five years ago. Recently, Thigpen decided to sell the company to pursue other passions.

Owner Chadwick Hurston now reigns as the new king of the plants in Green Cove Springs. Hurston said he and Thigpen are third or fourth cousins, meaning the company will surely stay in the family.

At 8 years old, Thigpen joined Clay County's 4-H program. Learning about and being involved with horticulture influenced him greatly, Thigpen said.

"I kind of learned a lot about house-plants. A lot about entrepreneurship and just different skills that are needed in society," Thigpen said.

At the start of the pandemic, Thigpen said some leftover plants prompted him to start selling cuttings of the plants online. With only \$5 to his name, Thigpen said he made \$500 in the first week of selling.

The company eventually grew even more, working with growers worldwide to sell various plants and shipping over 10,000 plants to all 50 states. Thigpen said he was even able to begin employing local youth.

"Which was very exciting," he said. "To give them another opportunity to work and earn some money themselves. And, also



PHOTO COURTESY OF TAYLOR THIGPEN

Taylor Thigpen recently sold PlantKingUSA to pursue a higher education at Notre Dame.

learn the skills of working and [the] importance of earning income."

Thigpen said that although it was an incredible journey, all good things must come to an end. Preparing to attend college out-of-state at Notre Dame, PlantKingUSA wasn't 100% his passion, but pursuing higher education was. As a freshman, Thigpen is studying global affairs and social entrepreneurship, which he hopes will continue him on his path of helping others.

Additionally, Thigpen said he continues to be a grant writer for local non-profits in the county.

"Now, I get to see the business that I started from the ground up continue to go while I'm following my passions, as well," Thigpen said.

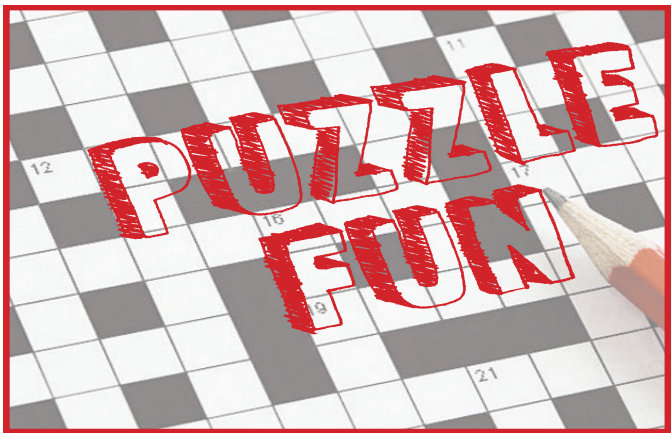
Hurston and his wife, co-owner Analyssa, are still in touch with Thigpen, who continues to send them tips and tricks.

Amid the hardships of owning a business, Hurston said he is grateful for the opportunity and has many goals. These include expanding from just online selling to going commercial.

"We've found that there is a need for commercial businesses to have plants in their space of business to bring alive their office space," Hurston said. "And, so, we also want to expand in that aspect. Offering different services, whether it be just selling plants or almost like a lawn care service."

Hurston said he and his wife are excited for what's to come and hope to continue keeping the legacy alive.





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Fleetwood Mach Tribute coming to Thrasher-Horne in January

ORANGE PARK – Fleetwood Mach Tribute Show recreates the magic and mystique of Fleetwood Mac in an unforgettable performance of all the greatest hits, including “Dreams,” “You Make Lovin’ Fun,” “Gypsy,” “Don’t Stop,” “Gold Dust Woman,” “The Chain” and “Rhiannon,” as well as Stevie Nicks songs including “Landslide,” “Edge of 17,” “Leather and Lace,” “Stop Draggin’ My Heart Around” and many more.

The tribute band will perform one show at the Thrasher-Horne Center on Jan. 24 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets start at \$29. Visit the box office or thcenter.org for tickets.

Fleetwood Mach Tribute recreates the sound and look of Fleetwood Mac with dedication and attention to detail while capturing the emotion and feel of the music in a show not to be missed.



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

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to Halloween.

E V A R I M P

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

	M	A	S	T					A	B	C	S			
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8	5	7	2	6	3	4	9	1
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7	3	8	5	2	6	1	4	9
1	4	6	9	3	8	2	7	5
9	2	5	7	4	1	3	8	6
2	7	1	6	9	4	5	3	8
5	9	3	1	8	7	6	2	4
6	8	4	3	5	2	9	1	7

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Scottish World Games puts 'world' on stage

By Randy Lefko
randy@claytodayonline.com

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – Clay County got a bit of rain, but the weather did not deter the spirit of nearly 900 very big, very strong athletes of a special skill set that stayed the weekend at the Clay County Fairgrounds as the 2024 Scottish Master's Athletic International World Masters Championship featured the kind of people that could be a neighbor, a firefighter or a nurse one may know, but an athlete at heart that can throw a stone, flip a telephone pole or toss a small hay bale 14 feet up.

"I started doing this stuff about 12 years ago just because I read about it somewhere," said Teresa Nystrom, 59, of New Mexico, who had just tossed three world record throws in the Hammer throw which features a 12-16 pound steel ball fixed to the end of a pole about six feet long and tossed much like a Shot Put or track hammer throw except no chain attached to the ball. "I've been a firefighter, EMT, and fitness person all my life, did shot put in high school, but this has been my life the last decade."

Nystrom, who has more than a dozen world records in all of the Masters World Championships events, was on hand as well as 900 other athletes from around the world; Scotland, New Zealand, Germany,



among the hometowns to grab a bit of glory in sports such as Braemar and Open Stone, a shotput like toss of an triangular type of stone weighing between 20-26 pounds for the guys and 12-18 for the women; the Caber, one of the more popular events to watch as athletes hold a large, tapered pole (think small telephone pole with knots in it), balance it in their hands near their waistline, then walk-run a calculated three steps before lifting and trying to flip the pole

(90-150 pounds) so it lands as close to a 12 o'clock position in front of the athlete; the Hammer mentioned above; the Weighted Ball and chain which sounds as obvious as it looks only the athlete throws the ball from a rectangular box; a Sheaf toss, small haybale (16 lbs. for men/10 lbs. for women) and pitchfork to toss over head over a high jump type bar, and a weight over Bar

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Scottish

from page 21

(WOB) which looks like a kettle drum (21-42 pounds) tossed over head over a bar.

“I’ve set records all over the world; Iceland, Texas, France,” said Nystrom. “There is a certain type of person that does this, but once you get into it, you can’t let it go. The people who compete make it a big family worldwide because we all know we may be thought of as a little weird.”

Football stats

Quarterbacks

Oakleaf
9 Jack McKissock, QB, Jr.
6 Games: 91 of 129 passes, 1396 Yds, 13TDs, 3INTs, 129.9 QB Rating

Fleming Island
0 Cibastian Broughton, QB, Sr.
5 Games: 50 of 77 passes, 914 Yds, 9TDs, 1 INT, 139.2 QB Rating

Middleburg
7 Carson Stewart, QB, Sr.
6 Games: 46 of 74, 723 Yds, 8TDs, 1 INT, 125.0 QB Rating

Ridgeview
15 Jordan Mesa, QB, Soph
6 Games: 16 of 60, 144 Yds, 2TDs, 4INTs, 22.9 QB Rating

Orange Park
80 Quinton Moore, QB/WR, Sr.
7 Games: 10 of 32, 111 Yds, 1TD, 3INT, 13.9 QB Rating
8 Gabe Taylor, QB, Jr.
3 Games: 25 of 51, 247 Yds, 2TDs, 1INT, 68.0 QB Rating

Keystone Heights
11 Baylor Ford, QB, Jr.
4 Games: 13 of 31, 161 Yds, 3TDs, 0INT, 75.5 QB Rating
1 Jackson Parmeter, QB, Jr.
6 Games: 9 of 24, 111 Yds, 1TD, 0INT, 66.5 QB Rating

Clay
7 Landon Martin, QB, So.
6 Games: 71 of 121, 845 Yds, 10TDs, 3INTs 97.3 QB Rating

Running Backs

Oakleaf
0 Chris Foy II, RB, Sr.
6 Games: 88 for 866 Yds, 9TDS, 4-100+ games, AVG 144.3 per game
14 Malaci Warten, RB, Sr.
6 Games: 16 for 181 Yds, 1TD, AVG 30.2 per game

Fleming Island
7 Dehmir Jackson, RB, Sr.
5 Games: 56 for 473 Yds, 4TDs, 2-100+ games, AVG 96.4 per game
0 Cibastian Broughton, QB, Sr.
5 Games: 57 for 375 Yds, 5TDs, AVG 75.0 per game

Middleburg
10 Travis Pinkard, RB, Jr.
6 Games: 48 for 223 Yds, 4TDs, AVG 37.2 per game
16 Jordyn Grace, RB, Jr.

6 Games: 29 for 158 Yds, 2TDs, AVG 26.3 per game

Ridgeview
5 Christian Felder, RB, Jr.
6 Games: 79 for 342 Yds, 1 TD, 1-100+ games, AVG 57.0 per game
35 Malik Cole, RB, Fresh
1 Game: 10 for 127, 2 TDs, 1-100+ game

Orange Park
25 Dylon Ruiz, RB, Jr.
7 Games: 64 for 316 Yds, 3TDS, 1-100+ games, AVG 45.1 per game
80 Quinton Moore, QB/RB, Sr.
7 Games: 61 for 506 Yds, 1 TD, 4-100+ games, AVG 72.3 per game

Keystone Heights
8 Zane Leger, RB, Jr.
6 Games: 66 for 312 Yds, 3TDs, 2-100+ games, AVG 52.0 per game
2 Colton Hollingsworth
6 Games: 37 for 126 Yds, 0TDs, AVG 21.0 per game

Clay
18 Lavaris Roberts, RB, Sr.
6 Games: 105 for 690 Yds, 3TDS, 3-100+ games, AVG 115.0 per game

Receiving

Oakleaf
1 Carlos Witherup, WR, Sr.
6 Games: 33 catches, 404 Yds, 3TDs, AVG 67.3 per game, 12.2 per catch
8 Michael Conner, WR, SOPH
6 Games: 22 catches, 348 Yds, 3TDS, AVG 58.0 per game, 15.8 per catch
12 Jordin Price, WR, Jr.
6 Games: 14 catches, 254 Yds, 2TDS, AVG 42.3 per game, 18.1 per catch

Fleming Island
3 Trace Burney, WR, Jr.
6 Games: 33 catches, 595 Yds, 9TDs, AVG 99.2 per game, 18.0 per catch
13 Olivewr Piechota, WR, Soph
5 Games: 13 catches, 107 Yds, 0TDs, AVG 21.4 per game, 8.2 per catch
16 Eric Gentry, WR, Soph
4 Games: 4 catches, 121 Yds, 1TD, AVE 30.3 per game, 30.3 per catch

Middleburg
0 Deshun Green, WR, Jr.
6 Games: 16 catches, 319 Yds, 4TDs, AVG 53.2 per game, 19.9 per catch
12 Mason Zwilling, WR, Sr.
6 Games: 6 catches, 58 Yds, 2TDS, AVG 9.7 per game, 9.7 per catch

Ridgeview
7 Micah Burdetsky-Smith, WR, Sr.
6 Games: 5 catches, 54 Yds, 0TDs, AVG 9 per game, 10.8 per catch

10 Landon Kleiber, WR, Jr.
4 Games: 5 catches, 53 Yds., 0TD, AVG 13.3 per game, 10.6 per catch

Orange Park
80 Quinton Moore, QB/WR, Sr.
7 Games: 9 catches, 120 Yds., 2TDs, AVG 17.1 per game, 13.3 per catch
4 Brock Afledge, WR, Jr.
7 Games: 7 catches, 42 Yds, 0TD, AVG 6.0 per game, 6.0 per catch
0 Daniel Richardson, WR, Sr.
7 Games: 6 catches, 59 Yds, 0TD, AVG 8.4 per game, 9.8 per catch

Keystone Heights
10 Tallon Campbell, WR, Sr.
6 Games: 9 catches, 83 Yds 0TD, AVG 13.8 per game, 9.2 per catch
3 Andrew Wilson, WR, Sr.
6 Games: 3 catches, 76 Yds, 2TDs, AVG 12.7 per game, 25.3 per catch
2 Colton Hollingsworth, RB, Jr.
6 Games: 3 catches, 54 Yds, 1TD, AVG 9.0 per game, 18.0 per catch
Clay
1 Antonio Thomas, Sr.
6 Games: 35 catches, 485 Yds, 4TDs, AVG 80.8 per game, 13.9 per catch
14 Daylen Brown, So.
6 Games: 21 catches, 265 Yds, 5TDs, AVG 44.2 per game, 12.6 per catch

Tackles (TFL tackles for loss)

Oakleaf
10 Bryan Copeland, Sr.: 6 Games 70 tackles/47 solos/AVG 11.7 per game/1TFL
4 Jermaine Robinson, Jr. 6 Games 62 tackles/36 solos/AVG 10.3 per game/3TFL
99 Amare Thomas, Sr.: 6 Games 55 tackles/35 solos/AVG 9.3 per game/7.5 TFL

Fleming Island
6 AJ Whitt, Sr.: 6 Games 47 tackles/24 solos/AVG 7.8 per game/7TFL
2 David Smith, Sr.: 6 Games 49 tackles/32 solos/AVG 8.2 per game/3TFL
1 Sebastian Cruz, Jr.: 6 Games 39 tackles/34 solos/AVG 6.5 per game/0TFL

Middleburg
8 Kadin Hanifen, Jr.: 6 Games 57 tackles/20 solos/AVG 9.5 per game/1TFL
11 Angel Delgado, So.: 6 Games 36 tackles/13 solos/AVG 6.0 per game/1TFL
15 Keensdee Roseme, Jr.: 6 Games 27 tackles/12 solos/AVG 5.4 per game/1TFL

Ridgeview
3 Gavin Huey, Sr.: 6 Games 38 tackles/20 solos/AVG 6.3 per game/0TFL

1. Rashad Bligen, Sr.: 5 Games 33 tackles/17 solos/AVG 6.6 per game/0TFL
18 Lucious Harris, Sr.: 6 Games 26 tackles/13 solos/AVG 4.3 per game/0TFL

Orange Park
42 Djeden Innocent, So.: 6 Games 37 tackles/24 solos/AVG 6.2 per game/0TFL
16 Jack Rivera, Jr.: 7 Games 32 tackles/24 solos/AVG 4.6 per game/2TFL
7 Derek Page III, So.: 7 Games 26 tackles/20 solos/AVG 3.7 per game/0TFL

Keystone Heights
32 Kyle Perkins, Jr.: 6 Games 38 tackles/27 solos/AVG 6.3 per game/0TFL
8 Zane Leger, Jr.: 6 Games 36 tackles/21 solos/AVG 6.0 per game/0TFL
3 Andrew Wilson, Sr.: 6 Games 28 tackles/9 solos/AVG 4.7 per game/2TFL

Clay
11 Javaris Roberts, Sr.: 6 Games 68 tackles/16 solos/11.3 per game/9TFL
9 Aaron Stacy, Sr.: 6 Games 51 tackles/13 solos/AVG 8.5/14.5 TFL
2 Kendall Doctor, Sr.: 6 Games 26 tackles/5 solos/AVG 4.3 per game/0TFL

Interceptions

Keystone Heights: Tallon Campbell 3, Jackson Parmeter 1
Orange Park: Jayden Blanton 1, Caleb Fields 1
Ridgeview: Camryn Hall 2, Aaron Holmes 2
Clay: Jvian Cobbert 1, Mikeise Battle 1
Middleburg: Joel Lowe 2, Dusty Silcox 2, Jaden Boyd 1, Angel Delgado 1
Fleming Island: David Smith 2, Sebastian Cruz 1, AJ Whitt 1, Chase Donaldson 1
Oakleaf: Jordin Price 1, Rodney Townsend 1, Maurice Samuel 1

Kicking

Clay: Ethan Bellemare, Sr., 14 of 15 PATs, 3 of 4 FG, long 36
Middleburg: Brock Araujo, Jr., 17 of 19 PATs, 1 of 1 FG, long 21
Fleming Island: Parker Sirdevan, Jr., 24 of 26 PATs 3 of 5 FG, long 30
Oakleaf: Andrew McDaid, Sr., 23 of 25 PATs, 2 of 3 FG, long 27
Ridgeview: Christian Hanson, Jr., 2 of 6 PATs, 1 of 2 FG, long 30
Orange Park: Brock Afledge, Jr., 9 of 11 PATs, 0 FGs
Keystone Heights: Tyler Sapp, 3 of 5 PATs, 2 of 2 FG, long 33

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