

CLAY TODAY



SOFTBALL & BASEBALL FEVER
— SPORTS

THURSDAY, APRIL 14, 2016

WWW.CLAYTODAYONLINE.COM

VOLUME 50, NO. 16 75¢



Andrew Caldwell of Green Cove Springs, right, with his friends at Muscular Dystrophy Association camp last summer.

Walking to find a cure

Caldwell family walks and raises funds for those who cannot

By **Jesse Hollett**
Staff Writer

GREEN COVE SPRINGS — Ten-year-old Andrew Caldwell just likes to go fast.

But of course every speedster needs a racetrack, and that's what the Muscular Dystrophy Association will provide with its seventh annual Muscle Walk. The walk raises money for treatment research, and helps kids with muscular dystrophy like Caldwell afford to go to a camp where he can meet kids who have the same condition.

"This will be our fifth year in the walk, and this will be my

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\$1 million headed to education

New state funding received for the Academies of Clay

By **Jesse Hollett**
Staff Writer

ORANGE PARK — Cubes of cheese and rolls of luncheon meat served as part of the backdrop last Thursday morning as the Clay County School District celebrated receiving a \$1 million special legislative appropriation for career and technical education in the district.

The electric excitement among the attendees at Orange Park High School was evident with the audience's claps and laughs, despite School Superintendent Charlie Van Zant Jr. not providing a specific plan for how the money will be spent in the coming year.

He did say, however, that the school district will use part of the funds to upgrade for culinary arts equipment at Middleburg High. On hand for the event, OPHS culinary student Audrey Duke, knows how state of the art equipment helps students earn and practice the necessary skills to succeed in the workforce right out of high school.

"I'm in here for like three hours of the day," Duke said. "But I can't say I've learned one thing on my own. Without my teacher, I don't know where I'd be."

Currently, the school district has some 6,000 students taking part in the Academies of Clay programs, which offer students the opportunity to get a leg up on their peers when entering the

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Clay County Memories



By Mary Jo McTammany mjmctammany@yahoo.com

Masonic history in Clay County a rich one

Practice of the age-old customs of Freemasonry commenced in Clay County in 1876 with the formation of a lodge in Green Cove Springs.

Many of the late 1800s movers and shakers who became permanent and winter settlers in the town belonged to lodges in the Northeast.

It seemed only natural to transplant the rituals and traditions that originated in the European Middle Ages to the sunny climes of Clay County. Sadly, this first effort to establish the fraternal organization didn't take and disbanded.

They were re-chartered in 1890 with a leadership of the recognized and established community leaders and designated Cabul Lodge No. 116. Their charter membership boasted such influential men as George Bardin, Allen Geiger, W.J. Wilson and S.M. Hendricks.

Meetings were held on the second floor of a commercial building on the northeast corner of Walnut and Palmetto Streets. The building still stands, restored by visionary Steve Duval. Members of this lodge, operating under a provisional charter, performed full Masonic rites at the laying of the cornerstone for the county's new courthouse in 1889.

In fact, in the 1880s, Masonic lodges were popping up like sandspurs all over the county. Four lodges were organized



In 1932, the most recent Masonic Lodge in Clay County was chartered in Orange Park. Meetings were held in the second floor of the Farmers' Co-operative building, which still stands at the northeast corner of Kingsley and Railroad Avenues. Originally, the train station was conveniently next door.

and chartered including Melrose No. 89, Highland No. 75, Lake View No. 63 and Middleburg No. 107.

Melrose Lodge No. 89 became official in 1886 but over the years was occasionally in Clay County and sometimes not. At first it was located in Putnam County but the official national organization's records placed it in Clay County until 1891 when it was recorded in Alachua. Then the lodge began meeting at Keystone Heights so they were considered officially back in Clay

County.

Up in the northeastern tip of the county, Highland on the Florida Railroad Line was founded in 1887, remained active for over 42 years and disbanded in 1929. Lake View Lodge No. 63 lasted only seven years in the Kingsley Lake area where Camp Blanding now stands.

Middleburg's Lodge No. 107 received its charter in 1889 with a membership filled with the powerful and influential men at the time.

Being a member of the Middleburg lodge was still difficult for any man living on the wrong side of Black Creek.

The ferries quit running at dark and so the trip home meant fording the creek on horseback.

Things then hit a lull until 1910 when a lodge was formed in McRae, Northeast of Keystone Heights. The area was already seeing a steady decline and the new lodge lasted barely 12 years.

In 1932, Orange Park Masonic Lodge became the last to be chartered. Over half of the charter members transferred from Cabul Lodge in Green Cove Springs. Again geography was the driving force. It was a long lonely drive through nothing but dark timber and turpentine woods on State Road No. 3, now U.S. Highway 17, to Green Cove Springs and back. Many of the Masons residing in Orange Park were able to walk to meetings in the old Grange building by the train station and in the summertime stroll up Kingsley to Jimmy Wylie's soda shop and get an ice cream cone or an icy Coca-Cola.

Masons in Green Cove Springs, Melrose, Middleburg and Orange Park continue to share fellowship, serve their God and community and strive as individuals and brothers to make a difference for good. Luckily there is no creek fording involved for members today.

Bikers ride, raise awareness for victims' rights week

By Jesse Hollett
Staff Writer

ARGYLE – White balloons represented awareness, red silhouettes represented the victims and multi-colored t-shirts gave the silenced a voice.

Quigley House laid them out last Saturday during its inaugural Ride for Victims' Rights, where bikers, victims and locals alike rode all across Clay County to raise awareness for the those who have been the target of different forms of violence.

The group started at Whitey's Fish Camp on Fleming Island that morning, and ended in the afternoon at Dick's Wings in Argyle. The riders logged 100 miles for all of the victims in Clay County.

"The reason why we decided to do the

motorcycle ride is because there are so many accidents that include motorcycles," said Peggy Payne, executive director of Quigley House. "So we thought this was a way that, as a group, we could raise awareness about this, about crime victims within our community and the wide range of people who are victimized."

For the most part, Quigley House deals with domestic and sexual violence, but it also offers support to any victims in the community, such as transgender, gay and lesbian residents that may have no support system.

"Awareness always helps," said Matt Williams, supervisor of the Clay County Sheriff's Office's Special Victims Unit. "Just making people aware that these things are out there, and if they know

something is going on, then they can say something, even if they're not directly involved. By seeing these things and knowing that there are people out there able and willing to help, then that'll spark them. Some people don't want to go to the police, so we've got people like Quigley House to help those people."

Nine riders showed up for the ride, which took them through Keystone Heights and back northward ending at Dick's Wings on Youngerman Circle on April 9.

Quigley House intended the event to end with a candlelight vigil for the victims in Clay County, but that was cancelled due to the wind that blew all through Argyle. Instead, representatives of Quigley House played music over speakers and the brave guests danced with the 50 or so transient

observers who watched and chatted.

Many of the people at the event were either Quigley House employees or bikers who attended bike week and received informational pamphlets about the ride from Quigley House employees, and decided to attend. Both Whitey's and Dick's Wings helped in getting the word out by putting the event on their marquee and hosting the events at their locations.

That same day, however, bikers from all over Clay County participated in Ride4S-miles, a ride benefiting abused children. The turnout for the Quigley House event was affected because of it, however they intend on making it an annual event, which is good news for not only bikers and em-

SEE QUIGLEY, 7

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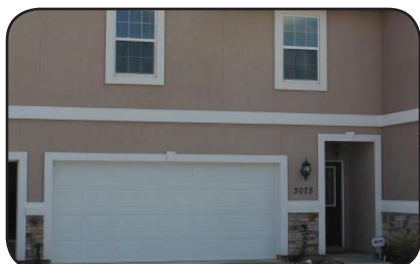
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Starbucks encounter wasn't Everywoman vs. Voldemort

By Jac VerSteeg

I confess I was delighted when I first saw the viral video of a woman berating Florida Gov. Rick Scott in a Gainesville Starbucks.

This was an instance, I thought, of the underdog amateur defeating the villainous professional. It was the 1980 U.S. Hockey team beating the Russians. It was Jamie Lee Curtis escaping Michael Meyers. It was Harry Potter destroying Voldemort.

But it was better than a movie because it was something much more rare. It was authentic. It was the underdog venting in real life.

Watching the woman call Scott "an a-hole," I imagined I knew what her story would be. She was unemployed or struggling in a low-wage job. No health insurance for herself and her family. She



Jac VerSteeg

was an ordinary Floridian overwhelmed by life and underwhelmed by the politicians who were supposed to represent her.

All that frustration, I figured, boiled over when she saw the governor and she gave a bravura, once-in-a-lifetime performance telling him off. The Everywoman elevated to Icon.

Then I found out it was Cara Jennings.

Well, darn.

When I looked at the video again, I recognized Cara. I interviewed her several times when I was an editorial writer at The Palm Beach Post and she was a Lake Worth commissioner.

Jennings is not the amateur, once-in-a-lifetime activist I yearned for. She has been practicing, pretty much her whole life, to confront and annoy those in power. Sometimes it's little things, like refusing to say the Pledge of Allegiance. Sometimes it's big things like, well, calling the governor an a-hole.

Since she was a youth, Jennings has been involved in guerrilla theater. She was a founding member of the Radical Cheerleaders. That group now has lively affiliated chapters all over the place.

I thought that Jennings was a pretty good commissioner in Lake Worth. She did her homework. She asked good questions. I'd rather have a commissioner who was diligent and refused to say the Pledge of Allegiance than one who happily recited the Pledge by rote and just as happily voted for any development proposal that appeared before the commission.

Still, there always was a clash between her activism, which included getting arrested at protests, and the decorum expected from an elected official. In 2009, she was arrested in front of the Israeli Consulate in Miami after refusing to move along. She was standing on stilts at the time, and a video shows her screeching as

SEE JENNINGS, 5



Guest Column

Together, we can save the St. Johns River

By Lisa Rinaman
St. Johns Riverkeeper

Recently, St. Johns Riverkeeper and a team of river advocates completed the Save the St. Johns Tour, a 13-day journey of the entire 310 miles of the river. We embarked on the tour to raise awareness about the urgent threats facing our river and her tributaries and springs and engage and activate people and organizations throughout the watershed in a collaborative campaign to save the St. Johns.

We are grateful to the residents of Clay County who joined us along the way and grateful for the opportunity to spend the night in the lovely River Park Inn in historic Green Cove Springs.

After spending 13 days and nights on one of our planet's truly great rivers, we are more energized, inspired, and optimistic than ever before that we can and must save the St. Johns. Throughout the tour, we were constantly in awe of the tremendous beauty and wonders of this magical waterway. We experienced and learned about the rich history and culture, ecological diversity, and economic importance of the river and her watershed.

Our team became more acutely aware of just how special our river is, how inter-



Lisa Rinaman

connected we all are, and how much we stand to lose, if we continue to allow neglect and abuse our mighty river.

Unfortunately, looming threats from urban sprawl, surface water withdrawals in Central Florida, and dredging in Jacksonville combined with the array of existing pollution problems create a potential recipe for disaster.

The good news is that there is hope for our river. Throughout the tour, we met so many passionate people who love the St. Johns, are concerned, and want to help or are already doing great things for our river. We cultivated new relationships and partnerships that will strengthen our collective efforts to protect our state's only American Heritage River.

By working more closely together, concerned citizens and communities throughout the watershed can protect our water resources and forge a more sustainable path forward.

While this tour has come to an end, the work has just begun to protect and restore our river more aggressively and more strategically. It won't be easy and it won't come quickly or without conflict along the way. However, we must consider our collective interests and those of future generations, address the cumulative impacts of our actions, and recognize that we all benefit from clean and healthy waterways. By doing so, we can address the threats facing our river and together save the St. Johns.

Learn more, watch videos, and see photos from the tour at www.savethestjohns.org.

Letters To The Editor Policy

Clay Today welcomes readers to send letters to the editor on topics of common interest to Clay County. Letters should be no more than 600 words and should include the writer's name and town they live in. Clay Today reserves the right to edit letters for grammar, content and length.

Email: to eric@opcfla.com or mail to Eric Cravey, Editor Clay Today
3513 U.S. Hwy. 17 Fleming Island, FL 32003

This Week In History

5 Years Ago, 2011

- Paul Clark, a technical service specialist at the Clay County Public Library's Fleming Island headquarters, received the honor of Librarian of the Year from the Florida Library Association, his third time receiving the honor.

- Federal authorities indicted Brian Russell Pollock of Clay County on charges of transmitting and owning images of child pornography.

- The Clay County Agricultural Fair closed by setting an historic attendance record of 106,789, breaking 100,000 guests for the first time in its history. The record reflected a 3.9 percent increase in its 2010 attendance.

10 Years Ago, 2006

- Clay County and St. Johns County sheriff's deputies worked together to conduct a sting targeting unlicensed building contractors, which resulted in 12 arrests.

- Circuit Court Judge Fredric Buttner swore in former Florida House Speaker John Thrasher to serve on the Clay Board of County Commissioners in the aftermath of Commissioner Christy Fitzgerald being forced to resign after the illegal dumping scandal investigation.

- Lakeside Junior High's School-Related Employee of the Year, Joey Williams, was named one of five finalists for Florida School-Related Employee of the Year.

20 Years Ago, 1996

- With the announcement that the Hollywood film "G.I. Jane" would be filmed at Camp Blanding and other Clay County locales, County Commissioner Dale Wilson proposed an ordinance prohibiting the disturbance of a film production hoping to fend off tabloid paparazzi.

- Gate Petroleum Chief Executive Officer Herb Peyton addressed the monthly breakfast meeting of the Clay County Committee of 100.

- BCC members cried foul when Clerk of Court John Keene placed campaign signs by voting booths on the date of the Presidential Preference Primary. Commissioners debated passing a strict sign regulation ordinance.

30 Years Ago, 1986

- The Board of County Commissioners voted to hire the Scruby and Scruby law firm for \$85 an hour to serve as the county's legal counsel.

- Teen's Turf opened at 2178 U.S. Highway 17 in Orange Park promising to be a safe place for youth to hang out on Friday and Saturday nights.

- Former Orange Park Police Chief J.H. Tillman became the fourth person to run for the vacant Seat 2 post on the Orange Park Town Council.

40 Years Ago, 1976

- Officials from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools began its

SEE HISTORY, 5

Jennings

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police lowered her to the ground.

Of course by this year's election cycle, decorum has gone by the wayside. Before I knew that the screamer-at-Scott was Cara Jennings, I felt this was an impulse episode in valid contrast to Donald Trump's calculated insults. It's understandable, in my book, if an ordinary citizen suddenly brought face-to-face with a political nemesis opts to condense his or her emotions and thoughts into the seven-letter shorthand that Cara Jennings employed.

But even if the confrontation was a matter of luck, Cara Jennings wasn't being spontaneous. She was reading, or shouting, from a well-worn script.

Perhaps Rick Scott deserved to have his own little political theater scene interrupted. He, after all, was mixing with the Starbucks Hoi Poloi and using them as unwitting and perhaps unwillingly props. Scott tends to put on that kind of show instead of answering real questions.

Scott was completely unprepared to go off his own script when Jennings ambushed him. Scott muttered his usual line about creating jobs. It was lame, Jennings ridiculed it, and Scott retreated.

The next day, Scott's backers unveiled a "comeback" commercial. And what did they do? They called Jennings a "Latte Liberal." More name-calling.

How much better if, in the midst of the actual event, Scott had simply listened to Jennings' outburst and then retorted, "Next time, order the decaf."

That, at least, would have been amusingly authentic. Instead, all we're getting is rehearsed rudeness. It's good for viral videos and campaign ads, bad for political discourse.

Jac Wilder VerSteeg is a columnist for The South Florida Sun Sentinel, former deputy editorial page editor for The Palm Beach Post and former editor of Context Florida. His column appears courtesy of Context Florida.

Academy

from page 1

job market. Academy students have the opportunity to pass tests allowing them to become certified in subjects ranging from culinary – such as Duke – to computer technology and auto mechanics. The academies also give students access to such high-tech equipment as 3D printers, wind tunnels and fully functional kitchens.

The Academies of Clay also allow students to try something they are interested in before going to college and selecting a major they may not like.

"There's much value in finding out what you don't want to do as well by having this exposure," Van Zant said. "There's no arguing that the academies make learning more relevant for students, and the data shows it."

Clay County's graduation rate has risen nine and a half percent in the last four years, Van Zant said, a data point he has repeated on several occasions this year. And while career and technical education academies – schools within schools – are not new to the district, the numbers don't matter to the students.

"I know I'm going to be a chef one day," Duke said. "Knowing that there is

History

from page 4

re-accreditation review of Clay County Schools by first visiting Keystone Heights High School.

- The Clay County School Board rejected 12 bids for constructing "Middle School E," which was proposed for the Duck Pond area citing they were all too high.

- The Clay County School Board voted to re-appoint all but 49 of its 248 teachers on grounds they were either teaching out of field, lacked specific certification requirements or "reasons of staff improvement."

going to be a greener grass on the other side is important. You have to know that it is going to be worth it, and you have to keep your head up. I don't know I feel like I can go through that, because it's definitely what I want to do."

The academies' goals is to produce high school graduates who are career ready, college or not. State Sen. Rob Bradley(R-Fleming Island) was also on hand to celebrate the appropriation at the April 7 event. He said the Academies of Clay are an example of innovation that has a reputation around Florida. He said the funding made it through the legislature because it's an example of

the innovation the state wants to see in public schools.

Van Zant drew fire earlier this year from teachers and two school board members who questioned the hiring of lobbyist Deno Hicks of Southern Strategy Group's Jacksonville office. Last October the district paid Hicks \$5,000 a month for his lobbying work in Tallahassee. Originally, the district was seeking \$1.3 million.

"We're one of only a handful of districts that do not have a lobbyist," said Diane Kornegay, deputy superintendent, "To have that voice or that advocate specific to our needs is critical, and it was successful."

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING PROPOSED ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE GREEN COVE SPRINGS CITY CODE AND THE LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS, FLORIDA, AMENDING CITY CODE SECTIONS 86-3, 102-5, 102-88, 102-91, AND 102- 523 TO MODIFY THE REQUIREMENTS THAT A GARAGE IS REQUIRED FOR ALL DWELLING UNITS; CLARIFYING THE DEFINITION OF A CARPORT AND RELATED CLARIFICATIONS; AND PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, REPEALER AND SETTLING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

The City of Green Cove Springs proposes to adopt the above described Ordinance at the following scheduled public hearings to be held in the City Council Chambers of City Hall, 321 Walnut Street, Green Cove Springs, Florida at the times stated herein or shortly thereafter:

Planning and Zoning Board	Thursday April 28, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. or shortly thereafter
City Council :	Tuesday, May 17, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. or shortly thereafter (First Reading of Ordinance by Title Only)

The public is invited to attend this public hearing to offer comments for or against the proposed change to City Code. A copy of the proposed Ordinance is available for inspection at City Hall, 321 Walnut Street, Green Cove Springs, Florida, during normal working hours of 7:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday, (office is closed on Friday). Written comments may also be submitted.

Please be advised that if a person decides to appeal any decision made by the City Council with respect to any matter considered at this scheduled public meeting, they will need to ensure that a verbatim transcript of the proceedings is made, which record includes testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is based.

In accordance with the Americans With Disabilities Act, any person needing a special accommodation to participate in this matter should contact the City Clerk's Office by U.S. Mail addressed to 321 Walnut Street, Green Cove Springs, Florida 32043, or by telephone at 904-297-7500, no later than three (3) days prior to the hearing or proceeding for which this notice has been given. Hearing impaired persons may access through (904)284-4849 (TDD).

All interested individuals are invited to attend these public hearings.

By Janis K. Fleet, AICP, Development Services Director
Danielle J. Judd, City Manager
City of Green Cove Springs
321 Walnut Street
Green Cove Springs, FL 32043

Legal 36959 published April 14, 2016 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper.



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PHOTO SPECIAL TO CLAY TODAY

After a previous no vote, Moosehaven awaits new rezoning vote

By **Jesse Hollett**
Staff Writer

ORANGE PARK – The Town Council will meet April 19 to decide the future zoning status of Moosehaven, which plans to rezone from a general residential, general commercial, and Commercial Professional Office to a Planned Unit Development zoning.

The zoning change will allow Moosehaven to continue doing what it has always done, with the caveat being that once the

CPO goes away, a number of the things that go on at Moosehaven will then become noncompliant with the current zoning. John Capes, the executive director of Moosehaven, is trying to change that.

“We continue to renovate and replace old facilities, so in that respect the plan moving forward is to continue that process,” Capes said. “We have a number of congregate halls, and those halls by and

SEE MOOSEHAVEN, 13

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Clay County Sheriff's Candidate Forum

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Quigley

from page 2

ployees of Quigley House, but victims all across Clay County.

"Take a stand, honestly," Payne said. "If you want to help to take a stand against victimization. If you see a crime being committed whether it's identity theft, or you see someone abusing their child in public, then you can make an anonymous report. Be aware of what's going on around you so

you don't become a victim. People can volunteer, and they can go to different organizations not just Quigley house. Your time is the most valuable thing you can give an organization."

The employees of Quigley House often advocate for victimization that they face themselves. Their different colored shirts signify the kind of victimization they faced. For example, blue is the color of sexual violence, just as the white of the balloons that blew in the wind at the event signified awareness for the victims involved.



T-shirts hang from a display representing different types of victims at the first annual Ride for Victims' rights held April 9.



STAFF PHOTOS BY JESSE HOLLETT

Peggy Payne, chief executive officer of Quigley House, addresses attendees at the inaugural Ride for Victims' Rights held April 9. The 100-mile ride began at Whitey's Fish Camp and ended in Argyle to raise awareness for victims from every walk of life.

For Payne, however, she advocates for victimization not because she has experienced it, but because she knows the toll it can take on those involved. It's her calling, she said.

"I believe as human beings when we're put on this earth we're put here to do a difference," Payne said. "I was very fortunate to find what I love and passionate about at a young age. I know when I leave this earth I would have helped so many people. Some people I will never know that I touched their lives. That's why I do it. I can't imagine not being able to do it."

Payne recalls a victim's story that sticks with her and drives her to help others. She said the woman's hopelessness at the time

reaffirms the truth and importance of the advocacy she does.

"She shot her husband, and plead guilty to second degree murder," she said. "I remember sitting with her in the jail, and her looking at me and saying 'can you tell me what's wrong with me, because people have been mean to me my whole life.' Her parents were abusive her husband was abusive. She said 'if you tell me what's wrong I'll change it,' and there was nothing wrong with her. God, it has been 30 years and I still remember her, and I still remember this hopeless, helpless look in her eyes, and her wanting to know why. I couldn't answer that question."

Walk

from page 1

third year at camp," said Caldwell, who lives in Green Cove Springs. "Before I went to camp I thought I was the only one that had this, and after camp I was like 'I'm not the only one that has this.'"

The walk and the following camp allow kids like Caldwell the chance to reconnect with his friends that are about by counties, cities, or even entire states. The walk takes place at the Jacksonville Landing on April 16 at 8:30 a.m. and is only \$9,000 short of its \$124,000 goal.

The walk raises funds for research in much the same way schools have fundraisers. The kids and their parents will go out and help raise money, whether it be door to door, or through business sponsorships such as one team did this year when it raised \$100,000 for the cause, 77 cents of each dollar will go directly towards research that will help find a cure for the disease. Muscular dystrophy is a group of diseases that cause progressive weakness and loss of muscle mass. In muscular dystrophy, abnormal genes, or mutations, interfere with the production of proteins needed to form healthy muscle.

"Once upon a time he was able to walk," said Kristina Perry, Caldwell's mother. "It was about a year ago in November that he stopped walking. His disease just progresses like that. It effects everything. Once upon a time, he could lift his arms up this high, and now he can barely lift one



Andrew Caldwell, 10, of Green Cove Springs, and his family are ready to take part in the Muscular Dystrophy Association's Seventh Annual Muscle Walk at the Jacksonville Landing April 16 at 8:30 a.m.

up."

There are about 40 different types of muscular dystrophy, but Caldwell has Duchenne's muscular dystrophy. The disease is the most common and severe among boys, and has an average life expectancy of about 20 years.

Perry tries to stay positive, but some days it feels as if "the world is falling in on her" and others it seems like Caldwell is the strongest in the family.

"The future is just unknown, but like I said we try to be as positive as we can be," Perry said. "Because if he can, then so can I. I mean he's the one with the disease, and if he's not feeling sorry for himself, then why should I? I try to be as positive as I can, because the future is unknown for everybody."

Caldwell isn't impervious, however. He notices the differences between himself and the kids vaulting on and off jungle gyms during recess.

"I wish I could go on a regular swing at school and play with everybody else," Caldwell said. "Everybody is running around, and I can't go in the sand. I want to do more stuff. For instance, today I was outside and I saw everyone on the swings and playing tag and running around in the sand, and I was like, why can't I do that? I just want to play with everyone else."

For Caldwell, this is his favorite part about the MDA's annual muscle walk – and their summer camp held each June at Camp Weed near Live Oak, Fla. There, he has the opportunity to be with kids his own age who are dealing with the same

disease. Camp allows campers to explain their health to each other around the first night's bonfire.

"It's not like your Gate River Run or anything like that," said Jasmyne Stanley, fundraising coordinator for the MDA. "Ours is very much family oriented, so it's geared towards the families living with the disease. We empower the families to raise the money for themselves, and for the families and friends that are fighting that same disease. I think it makes a big difference for the atmosphere of this type of walk."

The MDA's Gainesville office has helped Caldwell with such services as diagnostic evaluations and flu shots, which might not seem run of the mill. However, the flu can actually be fatal for some of those living with muscular dystrophy as it compromises the human immune system.

"Duchene muscular dystrophy is very aggressive," Stanley said. "When I look at some of the boys I saw just a year ago, and I look at them now you can see how aggressive the disease is. It's very noticeable, and it breaks your heart every time."

For Caldwell, the disease has placed a haze of uncertainty on his future. However, he remains passionate in what he wants to pursue as a career and feels confident in being able to obtain it.

"I'm gonna be a scientist," Caldwell said. "I want to make something that can make me live to 90 years old, or maybe even longer. I wanted to be president, but I don't want to be president anymore. I'm letting one of my friends be president."

Business Briefs

Orange Park Medical Center awarded silver Beacon Award for Excellence

ORANGE PARK – The American Association of Critical-Care Nurses recently conferred a silver-level Beacon Award for Excellence on the intensive care unit at Orange Park Medical Center.

The Beacon Award for Excellence recognizes unit caregivers who successfully improve patient outcomes and align practices with AACN's six Healthy Work Environment Standards. The award is given to units that achieve this three-year, three-level award with a gold, silver or bronze designation that meet national criteria consistent with Magnet Recognition, the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award and the National Quality Healthcare Award.

AACN President Karen McQuillan applauds the caregivers at Orange Park Medical Center ICU for working together to win the award.

"The Beacon Award for Excellence recognizes caregivers in stellar units whose consistent and systematic approach to evidence-based care optimizes patient outcomes. Units that receive this national recognition serve as role models to others on their journey to excellent patient and family care," McQuillan said.

The award signifies continuous learn-

ing by the staff and effective systems put in place by hospital leadership to achieve optimal patient care. The Aliso Viejo, Calif.-based AACN reviewed the OPMC ICU on the following criteria to award the honor – leadership structures and systems, appropriate staffing and staff engagement, effective communication, knowledge management, learning and development, evidence-based practice and processes and outcome measurement.

Renowned orthopedic clinic opens here

FLEMING ISLAND – The Hughston Clinic, a nationally-known orthopaedic group, opened its newest location April 1 on Fleming Island at 4689 U.S. Highway 17.

Physicians William E. Neway III, D.O., Julie Barré, M.D., Jeffrey Burnette, M.D., Albert Henry, M.D. and Erin Laipply, PA-C will specialize in total joint replacements for the hip and knee, shoulder, sports medicine, fracture treatments, arthroscopies and spine reconstructions. Surgeries will be performed at Orange Park Medical Center.

The Columbus, Ga.-based orthopedic group was founded in 1949 by Jack C. Hughston, M.D. and has been recognized both nationally and internationally for research, education and training as well as quality treatment of musculoskeletal injury and disease.

Mark Baker, chief executive officer for Hughston worked with Orange Park Medical Center to develop and offer orthopedic trauma services. Since assuming the office in 2009, Baker has helped establish orthopedic and trauma care centers in multiple states.

Currently, the Hughston Clinic includes several Level II trauma centers and ortho-

paedic clinics in Alabama, Georgia, Florida and Tennessee.

"Hughston Clinic is expanding orthopedic practices and establishing trauma centers rapidly across the southeast. Hughston will be working on building lasting relationships with the community, providing world renowned orthopedic care," said Baker, CEO.

The ribbon cutting ceremony will kick off May 6th and the doctors will start seeing patients at the Fleming Island facility on April 1st. To schedule appointments, patients should call 904-375-9753

CruiseOne is now Dream Vacations

FLEMING ISLAND – Bill and Joan Aselage have recently changed the name of their CruiseOne franchise to Dream Vacations.

The move is part of a corporate franchise initiative that is reinvesting in the travel brand's growth and addressed all types of vacation experiences, not just cruises.

"Changing from CruiseOne to Dream Vacations will give us a broader client base to emphasize not only cruises but also land tours" Bill Aselage said.

The Aselage's are full-service vacation specialists and have more than 16 years of experience as a franchise owner with sister brand CruiseOne.

"We have taken more than 160 cruises all over the world including landing on all 7 continents. We are certified to handle special needs travel," Joan Aselage said.

The Aselages walk clients step-by-step through the entire booking and planning process, from selecting destinations and excursions based on clients' interests to providing packing lists and enhancing memorable vacation moments. Their clients will receive experienced and personalized assistance in selecting cruise and resort vacation packages for independent travelers as well as groups ranging from family reunions at sea to corporate meetings and ship charters.

As a Dream Vacations franchise owner, the Aselage's continue to be part of the World Travel Holdings' family of brands, the world's largest cruise agency and award-winning leisure travel company, which offers buying power with every major cruise line and many tour operators, resulting in exceptional low prices and exclusive offers such as upgrades, discounts and more.

Baptist Clay receives state's first stroke designation for a free-standing emergency center

FLEMING ISLAND – Baptist Clay has received certification as an Acute Stroke Ready Hospital, the first designation by The Joint Commission to a freestanding emergency center in Florida.

The certification from The Joint Commission and the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association recognizes hospitals that are equipped to treat stroke patients using timely, evidence-based care prior to transferring them to a primary or comprehensive stroke center.

The Baptist Clay Medical Campus recently underwent a rigorous onsite review to assess its compliance with the Joint Commission's Advanced Disease-Specific Care certification requirements. The review examined such aspects as providing a stroke-focused program, staffing by qualified medical professionals trained in stroke care, collaboration with local emergency management agencies, 24/7 ability to perform rapid diagnostic and laboratory testing, ability to administer intravenous clot-busting medications to eligible patients and availability of telemedicine technology.

"This certification demonstrates our ability to deliver the best in timely acute care for patients suffering from a stroke," said Darin C. Roark, administrator of Emergency Services for Baptist Health. "Research demonstrates that during a stroke, two million neurons die each minute. The Baptist Health Stroke and Cerebrovascular Program offers timely evaluation and treatment with the appropriate medication and when necessary, further endovascular intervention for patients suffering from acute stroke. The residents of Clay County can rest assured knowing immediate stroke care is ready and available 24/7 at our Fleming Island campus."

"When responding to a stroke, every second counts," said Casey Carrigan, M.D., medical director of the Stroke Program for Baptist Clay Medical Campus. "Time lost is brain lost. In a typical ischemic stroke, a person's brain ages 3.6 years every hour without treatment compared to a normally aging brain. Our medical team is here to ensure patients receive the highest quality and timely care to improve chances of survival."

Established in 2015, Acute Stroke Ready Hospital Certification is awarded for a two-year period to Joint Commission-accredited hospitals and critical access hospitals. Stroke is the fifth cause of death and a leading cause of adult disability in the United States, according to the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association. On average, someone suffers a stroke every 40 seconds, someone dies of a stroke every four minutes and 795,000 people suffer a new or recurrent stroke each year.

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Clay County

Community Briefs

Spirituality conference to highlight race and ethnicity

JACKSONVILLE – Interfaith clergy, counseling professionals, health care workers and educators from Clay County are invited to attend the annual Spirituality Conference to discuss the importance of understanding the role of race and ethnicity when counseling diverse persons.

The conference “Race and Ethnicity in

Spiritual & Psychological Counseling” is May 5 at Jacksonville University’s Gooding Auditorium. Baptist Health Pastoral Care and Behavioral Health departments in collaboration with JU’s Brooks Rehabilitation College of Healthcare Sciences Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program are hosting the 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. conference which is free and open to the public.

Nationally recognized expert Trina Arm-

strong, professor of pastoral care and pastoral theology at United Theological Seminary in Minnesota, will speak on “History Matters: Intercultural Spiritual Caregiving for the African American Soul.” In another session, Armstrong will discuss facilitating survival, healing and liberation among African Americans who need spiritual and mental health care and counseling.

In the first afternoon session, a local panel will provide a “Community Response to the Interdependence of Spirituality & Counseling Among African Americans.”

Following a large group community panel, participants can choose from four breakout sessions where additional community panelists will discuss such issues as race, ethnicity, and culture and how these affect care.

To register for the conference, go to pastoralcare2016.eventbrite.com.

Religious pluralism talk slated

FLEMING ISLAND – The topic “The Urgency of Religious Pluralism in Public Higher Education” will be discussed at this month’s meeting of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, Clay County Chapter.

Tarah Trueblood, director of the Interfaith Center at the University of North Florida, will present the discussion April 23, at 10 a.m. at the Fleming Island Library, 1895 Town Center Blvd.

Trueblood will reflect on the place of religion has a large secular university. The public is invited to this spring meeting. For additional info, call Harry at (904) 529 1496 or Julie at (904) 284-0668.

SEE BRIEFS, 11

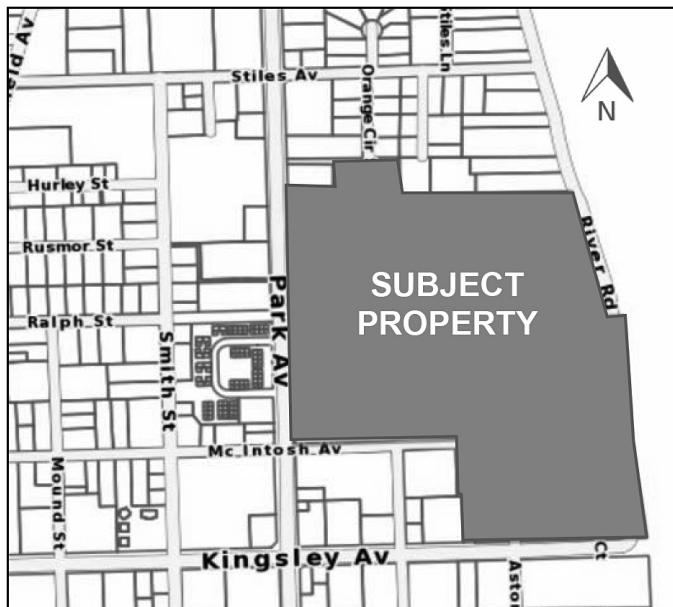
TOWN OF ORANGE PARK NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS TO CONSIDER A PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE TOWN OF ORANGE PARK ZONING MAP

Notice is hereby given that the Town of Orange Park Town Council on **Tuesday, April 19, 2016** at **7:00 p.m.** will hold public hearings on a proposed rezoning. The Town Council will consider an ordinance on the adoption of Application for Rezoning No. **R-02-2015**. The Council considered First Reading of an ordinance adopting the rezoning on March 1, 2016. Final action on an ordinance for rezoning the property on April 19, 2016.

Said hearing will be held in the Orange Park Town Hall Council Chambers located at 2042 Park Avenue, Orange Park, Florida 32073. All interested parties may appear at the public hearing and be heard regarding the rezoning.

The subject property includes approximately 62 acres and is located between Park Avenue and River Road, north of Kingsley Avenue (see map).

The owner proposes to rezone the subject property from RG-1, RS-2, CPO and CG to PUD (Planned Unit Development). The PUD zoning district is being sought to provide for a long-term build-out master plan emblematic of pedestrian- and bicycle-oriented mixed-use development, which may include a mix of commercial, medical, office, retail, residential, and recreational uses on the campus.



A copy of the proposed ordinance, including the complete legal description by metes and bounds, may be examined in the office of the Town Clerk, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.

Should any person decide to appeal any decision made with respect to any matter considered at the meetings or hearings, such person will need a record of the proceedings for such purpose and may need to ensure that a verbatim record of these proceedings is made, which records include the testimony and evidence upon which appeal is to be based.

NOTICE TO PERSONS NEEDING SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS AND TO ALL HEARING IMPAIRED PERSONS: In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons needing a special accommodation or an interpreter to participate in these proceedings should contact the Town Clerk at (904) 278-3018 no later than five (5) days prior to the respective hearing.

Legal 36780 published March 17 and April 14, 2016 in Clay County’s Clay Today newspaper.



Women honored for service to agriculture

BOCA RATON – Florida women representing 24 county Farm Bureau organizations received the Women’s Activity Award on March 31 at the 2016 Florida Farm Bureau Women’s Leadership Conference, March 31-April 2 at the Boca Raton Marriott.

The award honors the entire women’s committee from the Clay County Farm Bureau and the work they’ve done in the past year improving awareness of agriculture through educational programming, leadership development and public outreach.

Marlene Whitman, center, is shown here accepting the award on behalf of the Clay County Women’s Committee.

“As the number of women as principal operators on farms and ranches increases, so will the role of women in leadership positions in agriculture,” said Sarah Carte, chair of the Florida Farm Bureau’s State Women’s Leadership Committee. “These women are committed to making a difference in their local communities and sharing the positive story of agriculture.”

Florida Farm Bureau honored women from Bay, Bradford, Broward, Clay, Columbia, Duval, Hamilton, Hernando/Citrus, Highlands, Hillsborough, Jefferson, Lafayette, Madison, Marion, Nassau, Okaloosa, Okeechobee, Orange, Osceola, Putnam/St. Johns, Suwannee, Taylor, Union and Volusia counties at the event.

The 2016 Florida Farm Bureau Women’s Leadership Conference welcomed more than 120 attendees from across Florida. Conference sessions included workshops on public speaking, event planning, recruitment, farm tours of local agriculture and a motivating closing session featuring farm mom and TLC TV star Amy Roloff of “Little People BIG World.”

Briefs

from page 10

Food entrepreneurs can learn "How to Start a Food Business in Florida"

GAINESVILLE – Clay County residents thinking about starting a food business have a learning opportunity coming up.

The workshop "How to Start a Food Business in Florida" offers general information on food safety and quality, basic food science, business planning and federal and state regulatory requirements for food businesses.

It will be held in Gainesville on May 13. Registration is limited due to room capacity.

Registration is through Eventbrite : <http://tinyurl.com/FoodBusinessGNV>

Hazardous Waste and Electronics Amnesty Day for Keystone Heights area

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – The Clay County Board of County Commissioners, the Department of Environmental Services and the City of Keystone Heights encourage all Clay County residents to participate in the 2016 Spring Household Hazardous Waste and Electronics Amnesty Day.

The event takes place from 8 a.m. until noon on April 23 at the Keystone Beach parking lot at 565 S. Lawrence Blvd., which is also State Road 21.

Residents are asked to bring all household hazardous wastes including paint, pesticides, pool chemicals, oil, anti-freeze, drain cleaners and paint thinner to the disposal day.

Electronic wastes will also be accepted, including computers, monitors, printers, scanners, keyboards, modems, cables, cell phones, pagers and hand-held devices.

Amnesty Day is for Clay County residents only and proof of residency will be required. No commercial wastes will be accepted.

Residents in areas closer to Rosemary

Hill Solid Waste Management Facility should be aware that e-waste and household hazardous wastes are accepted at that facility Monday – Saturday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

For more information, contact Jamey Wilkes at (352) 473-3711 or (904) 284-6374.

Florida Bluebird Society meets

JACKSONVILLE – Clay County birding

enthusiasts are encouraged to attend the Northeast regional meeting of the Florida Bluebird Society on April 30 at 10:30 a.m.

The meeting will be at The Bolles School, McGehee Auditorium, at 7400 San Jose Blvd.

The meetup will include informational sessions on such topics as "How to Get a Better Shot", presented by

Gary Whiting. Another session will discuss avian research and the Bolles Bluebird Project, including a tour of the new on-campus bluebird trail.

The meeting is free and a light lunch will be served.

To help us plan for seating and food, please RSVP by April 23 to (904) 400-1459 or email at FloridaBluebirdSociety@gmail.com.



NOTICE TAX IMPACT OF VALUE ADJUSTMENT BOARD

DR-529
R. 12/09
Rule 12D-16.002
Florida Administrative Code

Clay County

Tax Year 2015

Members of the Board

Honorable	Diane Hutchings	Board of County Commissioners, District No. 3
Honorable	Ronnie Robinson	Board of County Commissioners, District No. 5
Honorable	Carol Studdard	School Board, District No. 2
Citizen Member	Scott Roberts	Business owner within the school district
Citizen Member	John O'Connor	Homestead property owner

The Value Adjustment Board (VAB) meets each year to hear petitions and make decisions relating to property tax assessments, exemptions, classifications, and tax deferrals.

Summary of Year's Actions

Type of Property	Number of Parcels					Reduction in County Taxable Value Due to Board Actions	Shift in Taxes Due to Board Actions
	Exemptions		Assessments*		Both Withdrawn or settled		
	Granted	Requested	Reduced	Requested			
Residential	46	49		71	72	\$1,819,556	\$14,740
Commercial				42	42		
Industrial and miscellaneous							
Agricultural or classified use				1	1		
High-water recharge							
Historic commercial or nonprofit							
Business machinery and equipment				24	24		
Vacant lots and acreage				3	3		
TOTALS	46	49		141	142	\$1,819,556	\$14,740

All values should be county taxable values. School and other taxing authority values may differ.

*Includes transfer of assessment difference (portability) requests.

If you have a question about these actions, contact the Chair or the Clerk of the Value Adjustment Board.

Chair's name Diane Hutchings	Phone 904-269-6300
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Clerk's name Cindy Atkinson	Phone 904-541-6334
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Legal 36985 published April 14, 2016 in Clay County's Clay Today newspaper

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- ~Bluegrass Music
- ~Nature Center & Artist
- ~Learning Booths
- ~Food Vendors
- ~Door Prizes

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Pre-registration required, rods and tackle provided
Contact Ann.Stodola@claycountygov.com

Camp Chowenwaw Park, 1517 Ball Road, Green Cove Springs, FL 32043
Phone: 904-529-8058 Email: CampChowenwaw@claycountygov.com
<http://www.claycountygov.com/departments/parks-and-recreation/camp-chowenwaw-park>

Funding for the acquisition of Camp Chowenwaw Park was provided by Clay County and the Florida Communities Trust using Florida Forever Funds. The site was acquired in March 2006 and is managed as a conservation, historic preservation, and outdoor recreation area.

Community Calendar

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE: Of the BCC meets April 14, April 21 and April 28 at 10 a.m. in the Zoning Department Conference Room, 3rd Floor of the Administration Building, 477 Houston St., Green Cove Springs. The meeting is open to the public.

ROUND ROBIN SHAKESPEARE: Join in this free continued reading of Shakespeare's Hamlet out loud, round robin style. April 14 at 6:30 p.m., Fleming Island Main Library, 1895 Town Center Blvd. Newcomers welcome. No experience needed. www.roundrobinshakespeare.com

COFFEE WITH A COP: Meet representatives from the Clay County Sheriff's Office, share concerns, learn about the agency on April 15 from 7-9 a.m. at The Circle K - Kangaroo Store on County Road 218 in Middelburg.

GOLF TOURNEY: To benefit the vision care programs of the Middleburg Lions Club, April 15 at Eagle Landing Golf course in Oakleaf. Shotgun Start Captain's Choice. \$75 registration includes boxed lunch before play and dinner following. There will be a New Car Hole-in-One and a \$10,000 Hole-in-One and Putting Contest. Info, Ed Dickson (904) 254-7891 or Ron Bell (904) 553-9947.

GOLF TOURNEY: The Second Annual Lutheran Youth Golf Outing will be held at the Country Club of Orange Park on April 16 with a 1 p.m. shotgun start, followed by a dinner and awards banquet. Info, Jerry Nordseik pastorjerry@gmail.com.

COMMUNITY PICNIC: April 16 at noon, St. James AME Church, 1324 Kingsley Ave., Orange Park. Free. The public is welcomed and invited.

PASTOR APPRECIATION DAY: Resurrection Christian Life Center, 3114 County Rd. 22, Middleburg, April 17 at 10 a.m. presenting "Moving Forward - Our Best Days Are Ahead" with Bishop Richard B. Peoples Sr. of Faith Outreach Christian Church of Hepzibah, Ga. Info, (904) 282-8307.

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA: Meets April 20 at NAS Jax Officers Club. Social Hour, 11 a.m., lunch at 11:30 a.m. \$14 per plate. RSVP: Dick Chadwell (904) 264-5589 by April 18. Guest Speaker, Mr. Mike O'Brien, chief executive director of the Greater Jacksonville Area USO.

FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE: of the BCC meets April 19 at 9 a.m. in the BCC Meeting Room, Fourth Floor, Administration Building, 477 Houston St., Green Cove Springs. Open to the public.

MOVIE NIGHT: Free Movie Night with Dinner, April 19 at 5:45 p.m. dinner and 6:30 p.m. movie. Watch "Heaven is for Real," St. James AME Church, 1324 Kingsley Ave., Orange Park.

CONSERVATION DISTRICTS: The Clay County Soil and Water District is hosting the Association of Florida Conservation Districts Area 2 annual meeting, April 22 at 9 a.m. at the Clay County Extension Office, 2463 State Road 16 West, Green Cove Springs. Open to the public.

CAR SHOW: Clay County Cruzers 7th

Annual REV IT UP car show April 23 from 10 a.m.- 2 p.m., Fleming Island Presbyterian Church, 1743 County Rd. 220 to benefit Clay County-based charities. All makes and models welcome. Door prizes, 50/50, food, live music by "The Hot Rod Lincoln Band."

REVIVAL: Sponsored by the Clay County Ministerial Alliance, this 'old time Revival' will be April 23-24 at 3 p.m., St. James AME Church, 1324 Kingsley Ave., Orange Park. Free and open to the public.

CELEBRATE CLAY: April 26 8:15 a.m., Thrasher-Horne Conference Center, 283 College Dr., sponsored by the Paul & Klare Reinhold Foundation honoring nonprofits that make Clay County a great place to live. RSVP by April 19 to Amy Parker, (904) 269-5857, ext. 404.

6TH ANNUAL TASTE OF CLAY FESTIVAL: Join local chefs from local restaurants serving local fare, plus great entertainment, April 30 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m., St. James AME Church, 1324 Kingsley Ave, Orange Park.

FREE CONCERT: The Ancient City Brass Band performs May 4 from 6:30-7:30 p.m. at the Headquarters Library, 1985 Town Center Blvd., Fleming Island. All ages are invited to attend this free event. No tickets required.

CAREGIVER EXPO 2016: Presented by the Caregiver Coalition of Northeast Florida, May 7, from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront Hotel, 225 East Coastline Dr., Jacksonville. Lee Woodruff, New York Times best-selling author and CBS This Morning contributor is the keynote speaker.

TEES FORE TAILS: Charity Golf Tournament to benefit Safe Animal Shelter, May 12, River Bend Golf Links, 659 State Road 16, Green Cove Springs. Registration for the 9-Hole tournament is at 12:30 pm. Captain's Choice format with Shotgun Start at 1 pm. \$50 per person/\$200 per foursome. Cost includes prizes, food, beverage. Tournament Sponsorships available for \$500. Hole Sponsorships available for \$100. Info, Lee DiGiovanni, (904)264-3108.

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT: of the BCC meets May 17 at 7 p.m., Board of County Commissioners Meeting Room, Fourth Floor, Administration Building, 477 Houston St., Green Cove Springs. Open to the public.

BENEFIT CONCERT: Help Orange Park Chorale raise funds for a deserving local charity. The benefit concert is scheduled for May 21 at 7:30 p.m. at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, U.S. Highway 17, Fleming Island.

SPRING CONCERT: Orange Park United Methodist Church Handbell, May 23 from 6:30-7:30 p.m. Headquarters Library, 1895 Town Center Blvd., Fleming Island. All ages are welcome to attend. No tickets required.

PENNEY FARMS HISTORICAL SOCIETY: Eugene Hickey discusses what it was like growing up after the time of Penney-Gwinn Farms, Sept. 18 at 7 p.m., Historical Society of Penney Farms. Hear the tales of childhood, school days and later work at Shadowlawn Farms. Meeting will be held at Town Hall, 4100 Clark Ave.

Obituaries

Michael David Carpenter

Michael David Carpenter (U.S. Navy Sr. Chief, Ret.), age 65, passed away Tuesday, March 22, 2016.

Mike was a native of Oklahoma City, Okla., a Retired U.S. Navy Sr. Chief, having served in Vietnam and Desert Storm, a member of Lake Asbury Baptist Church and he was the Manager of Advanced Auto Parts in Green Cove Springs.

He is survived by his wife of 23 years, Linda Sue Carpenter, his daughters; Michelle Hicks (Maurice), Amy Ortiz (Marvin), step-sons, Steve Darcey (Christina), Kevin Darcey (Kimberly), his brothers, Gary and Mark Carpenter, 6 grandchildren, Marcus, Maurissa, Tia, Ariel, Phoebe and Kloe and one great granddaughter, Autum.

Graveside services were held Thursday, March 24, 2016 at 2:00pm in the Jacksonville National Cemetery with Rev. Matt Swain officiating with US Navy honors followed by a memorial service at Lake Asbury Baptist Church at 4:00pm

Casey H. Johns

Casey H. Johns, 76, passed away April 5, 2016. He was born in Clay County to Shelt and Ethel Johns, both deceased. He was predeceased by 4 brothers and his daughter Loretta Johns. He is survived by sons Casey Jr., Lucus and Bo, daughter Brittany, sisters Barbara and Laura, brothers Gordon and Lynn; three grandsons Hunter, Corey and Cody; granddaughter Brooke Fountain; three great granddaughters Chloe, Tristen and Shai-Lynn, many nieces and nephews and friends. A funeral was held April 9, 2016 at Russell Baptist Church, Burial at Padgett Cemetery Middleburg, Fla.

Broadus Raines Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Master Chief John L. Frick

Master Chief John L. Frick, US Navy (retired), 75 of Fleming Island, Fla., passed away April 4, 2016 Russell Haven of Rest Cemetery, Funeral Home and Cremation Center 2335 Sandridge Road Green Cove Springs, FL 32043. 904-284-7720 www.RHRFH.com



Samuel Day Reasor

Samuel Day Reasor, 92, passed away in his home April 9th. He suffered a stroke in February and battled valiantly 51 days while under the care of family, friends and Haven Hospice.

Sam was born in Big Stone Gap, VA, and retired from the Navy as a Chief Petty Officer. He worked in Civil Service at NAS Jax and received a B.A. from Jacksonville University. He enjoyed many years of membership in the Masonic organizations of Scottish and York Rites, Shrine, Grotto, and Blue Lodge.

He is preceded in death by Jane, his wife of nearly 59 years, and leaves behind sisters Matilda Cobb (VA) and Peggy Blevins (FL) and brother Buddy (VA), daughters Susan Hendry (Gayward) and Linda Moody, plus 9 grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren, and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

Arrangements are under the care and direction of Fraser Funeral Home, 8168 Normandy Blvd, Jacksonville, (fraserfuneralhome.com) 904-781-4314.

A visitation will be held at Fraser's from 5 -7 p.m. Saturday, April 16. Services will be at the Middleburg United Methodist Church, 3925 Main St. in Middleburg at 2 p.m. Sunday, April 17. In lieu of flowers, please make donations to the Katy Hendry Memorial Scholarship Fund, c/o Susan Hendry (577 Branscomb Rd, Green Cove Springs, FL 32043).

Clara L. Ruth

Clara L. Ruth, 83, of Orange Park, Fla., passed away April 10, 2016. Please sign the family's online guestbook at www.broadusraines.com. Broadus-Raines Funeral Home, 501 Spring St., Green Cove Springs, FL (904) 284-4000



Barbara June Burney

Barbara June Burney, 71 of Jacksonville, FL passed away April 6, 2016, Russell Haven of Rest Cemetery, Funeral Home and Cremation Center, 2335 Sandridge Road Green Cove Springs, Fla. 32043. 904-284-7720 www.RHRFH.com

Moosehaven

from page 6

large are old and difficult for us to maintain and manage. We have a plan to consolidate those into one facility, which will be located in the center of the facility for the variety of healthcare services we offer. It's just more of the same redevelopment, replacing old with new."

Moosehaven is a complex area to zone. The area includes 61 acres, and contains medical and residential facilities for the many clients that call the space their home. The new zoning would allow for better compliance of events, retail and facilities once the GPO is gone.

Under its current zoning status, Moosehaven can put storefront along its front entrance on Park Avenue. This area is the largest piece of available commercial property in Orange Park and, as such, has potential – if commercially developed – to bring in tax revenue for the town.

Moosehaven is a tax-exempt entity, however if they were to lease the front of their property as commercial space, then those businesses would then become taxable. Residents along River Road have raised concerns about closing the scenic thoroughfare, as well as worries that once the new zoning is in place, allow such businesses as pawn shops to take up

space there.

"They're trying to put together a mix of uses for their residents in this center area that they feel like they can't get with special approvals in their current zonings," said Jim Hanson Orange Park town manager. "The council has recently made it a strategic goal to try and be business friendly, and work with businesses to encourage good positive businesses to locate in vacant properties along the roots."

The zoning change will also help Moosehaven throw more public events such as its annual free Fourth of July event. The parking created from the commercial property along Park Avenue will also be used for public parking after Capes writes it into the lease agreements for the businesses.

Until then, Capes will wait until April 19 when the council meets for the motion's second hearing, which will decide the future zoning of Moosehaven.

"We've met now with various council members," Capes said. "We had a community Q and A, and we believe we know what the current concerns of the community are. We're hopeful that once people understand that we don't intend to change, and we're willing to work with the community to make sure concerns are addressed, then we'll secure the PUD, put this behind us and keep moving forward."

Feds warn public about income tax scam

WASHINGTON, D.C. – With tax season in full swing, the U.S. Justice Department is urging the public to avoid dishonest tax-return preparers who fleece their customers and illegally drain the U.S. Treasury.

Noting that every taxpayer is ultimately responsible for the contents of his or her own return, Acting Assistant Attorney General Caroline D. Ciralo of the Tax Division also warned the public to be wary of anyone who guarantees a refund or who claims to sell a sure-fire way to reduce your taxes.

U.S. taxpayers filed approximately 150 million returns in 2014. According to statistics available from the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration, the Internal Revenue Service identified more than 2.1 million of those returns that claimed fraudulent refunds totaling more than \$15.7 billion.

As in past years, the IRS has designated return preparer fraud as one of 2016's "Dirty Dozen" tax scams to avoid during return filing season. In 2015, the tax division permanently shut down more than 35 fraudulent tax-return preparers located all over the United States. The defendants in those cases spanned the spectrum from large-scale return preparation franchises to small, independent return preparers.

"Every year, thousands of federal in-

come tax returns are prepared by people who care much more about making a quick buck than about preparing accurate returns," Ciralo said. "Most tax return preparers are honest. But some preparers who charge clients a percentage of their tax refund intentionally prepare false returns to increase their clients' refund, and thus their own fees. Likewise, some preparers who charge by the form will intentionally prepare incorrect forms that their clients don't need in order to increase their compensation.

"Taxpayers might think that they're getting a good deal on their taxes, or that as long as someone else prepares the return, they're not responsible. They're wrong. Taxpayers who have their return prepared incorrectly are required to pay the tax they owe, or pay back the refund they weren't entitled to get. These clients might also owe interest and penalties, which can be substantial. Fortunately, there are red flags that taxpayers can look for and avoid when choosing a return preparer."

Your refund should never be deposited directly into a preparer's bank account. In United States v. Elton L. Barnes, the court barred a return preparer who caused other

SEE SCAM, 27

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Trees need a spring check up

Prepare them for a summer of growth

By Raymond H. Zerba Jr.
Program Assistant
Clay County UF/IFAS

We often field questions from gardeners, so this week's column focuses on a question about trees and their leaves.

Q. My trees have all leaved out, but one does not have many leaves on it and it is an old tree, what should I do to help it?

With leaves just coming out on most trees, now is a good time to evaluate the health of our landscape trees. Here are some things to look for and perhaps have attended to before the storm season comes on with its high winds:

Are leaves formed all the way out to the end of all branches? If not and they are coming out back on the branch further in toward the trunk, then the tree is showing significant dieback – usually due to a root issue.

Are there branches that are broken and hanging on the tree? They should be removed.

Are there branches with very dark colored leaves on them – much darker than the actual trees leaf and do they appear a different shape? If so, this is probably mistletoe. Infested branches should be removed to stop this parasitic plant from spreading throughout the tree. There are no chemical sprays to control it.

Are there branches overhanging the house, growing into a power line or rub-

bing on the roof or the house? These should be removed because they not only damage roof shingles in high winds or fall on power distribution lines, but they are a direct "bridge" to the roof for house invaders such as carpenter ants and scorpions.

Bottom line – this is a good time to evaluate the health of trees and deal with their problems. For large trees, this is usually out of the realm of what the average homeowner can deal with. Branches can really be dangerous to remove if a person does not know how to safely do it. It is usually wise to call in a professional. Unfortunately, there are a lot of individuals claiming to be "tree surgeons." A homeowner can't really be sure about their credentials unless they talk with some of their previous clients and then be sure that the person carries full liability insurance – not just vehicle insurance.

If a tree should fall on your house because of something they do wrong, their insurance should cover it – not yours. If the person working is injured on your property, their insurance should pay the workmen's compensation and medical bills – not your homeowners insurance.

The best way to go is to hire only certified Arborists. These individuals have completed extensive educational classes, as well as passed a rigorous certification exam. They are required to carry the proper insurance to be certified and to remain certified they must take regular refresher classes.



PHOTO BY RAYMOND H. ZERBA JR.

How do you find out who they are? The best way is to go online to <http://www.isaarbor.com> and click on "find an arborist." This site will also tell you if someone you are considering is certified.

Want someone to answer a specific plant question for you? Go online to <http://clay.ifas.ufl.edu> and under the heading

"Horticulture" (left hand side of page) left click on "Ask a Master Gardener" and a reply will be sent plus a hyperlink to the appropriate University of Florida Fact Sheets. Please send a digital picture if you could – it would help. To speak to someone by phone, call 269-6355.

Vintage open-air bazaar slated for April 17

MIDDLEBURG – The shopping event that brings unique and creative local vendors and includes all things chippy, rusty, vintage and handmade makes its debut appearance at Vintage Market of Middleburg, 2747 Blanding Blvd in Middleburg this weekend.

Everything old is new again at Vintage Bazaar featuring vendors who share a love of all things vintage, antique, repurposed, recycled and upcycled. The outdoor event is hosted by Vintage Market of Middleburg and includes a variety of antique and collectibles vendors showcasing today's hottest decorating trends for the home and garden. Whether it's vintage tubs turned into storage or floral arrangements, old sewing machine drawers converted to or-

ganizers for smaller items and rusty horse-shoes, buckets and more used as outdoor decor for your porch, it will be on hand.

On April 17, vendors from around the area will showcase vintage goods and furniture, antiques, primitives, art and hand-crafted gifts in the grassy area located in front of the store. The hosting venue features a 1,100 square foot retail store filled with vintage goods, antiques, collectables and more.

"It's our first event and our intent is to build awareness of our stores, along with giving our shoppers a variety of offerings from other local vendors," Carole DeJarnatt said.

Show hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. and is free to the public.

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In Spirit

Clay Today | April 14, 2016

Celebrating God's 'Oneness'

The Baha'is of Clay

"We are all waves of one sea,
We are all leaves of one tree,
We are all flowers of one garden,
Bring us together in unity,
Bring us together as one family."



By Jesse Hollett
Staff Writer

FLEMING ISLAND – For some teenagers, the morning ritual is a careful balance between yawning, sighing, and rushing for the bus, but for Maria Mahmoodi, she was just grateful that she woke up in her home that morning.

As a teenager, Mahmoodi was forced to escape her native Iran and the ensuing religious persecution her family faced from the Islamic Republic during the revolt that overthrew the Shah of Iran in 1979. Now a Fleming Island resident and a physician at St. Vincent's Medical Center in Riverside, Mahmoodi – a member of the Baha'i faith – can still remember the uncertainty she

felt at age 17 struggling to sleep in a city where the rise and fall of the moon in her window was the only certainty.

"After the revolution the Baha'is were severely persecuted, and although we are the biggest minority of religion in Iran, we are not recognized," Mahmoodi said. "We were excluded in the constitution, so we had no rights at the all. As a result, the Baha'i children could not go to school. Baha'is could not be employed in general. There was a lot of persecution."

When the Islamic Republic revolted and subsequently took power, they ostracized Baha'is for a multiplicity of reasons, but predominantly Islam saw Baha'is as spies, and criticized them as a false religion. For

Iran's hard line government, Islam is seen as the final religion, and Muhammad the final prophet, hence his title 'the seal of the prophets.'

Mahmoodi and her family escaped when she payed smugglers to sneak her through the Pakistan border. In doing so, however, she left the birthplace of her religion whose roots are in Tehran, Persia, present day Iran. The Báb – considered the Herald of the Bahá'í faith – lived in the mid 19th century and announced he was "the bearer of a message destined to transform humanity's



SEE BAHÁ'Í, 17

Maria Mahmoodi



Comes to
Grace Anglican

By Sarah Wakefield Rosser
Staff Writer

FLEMING ISLAND – A new children's curriculum is allowing adults and children to have deeper conversations about the Bible.

Grace Anglican Church at 5804 U.S. Highway 17 recently repurposed adult education classrooms into a wing for newborn children to fifth graders and implemented a new curriculum called the Gospel Project. The lessons are taught on Sunday mornings at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m.

"There are some great curriculums out there but what we wanted to accomplish

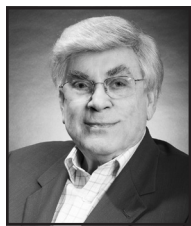


From left, four-year-olds Ismael Qazi, 4, Wyatt Haber-Knight, 4, and Cheyenne Waters, take part in Grace Anglican Church's weekday Busy Bees program.

was what can we do to have every child from babies through fifth grade be on the same page learning the same thing?" said Shelley Tebo, director of children's ministries. "This curriculum starts with Genesis and goes chronologically through the Bible. For instance, a parent who has a two year old and a fifth grader can discuss the same topic but on different levels."

Associate Pastor Dan Wolf said a change in spiritual education needed to evolve to include parents in their children's spiritual journey. At Grace Anglican,

SEE GRACE, 18



Faith Walk

Dr. William P. Register
First Assembly Fleming Island

The Only Way

A truth that is difficult for the mentality of the world to accept is that salvation can only come through Jesus Christ.

You can believe this only if you declare your faith in God's word and believe it regardless of the contradictions posed by the world's "knowledge."

This is a paraphrase of something written by Billy Graham that I once read. He said, "Early in my Christian life, I had difficulty believing the Bible."

My logic and reasoning did not coincide with its teachings. I finally came to the place that I determined I would believe the Bible regardless of questions and things I did not understand." He went on to write, "You must decide that, despite questions and uncertainty, you believe the Bible!"

If you believe the Bible is God's word, you believe that Jesus is the only way of salvation.

Throughout the Scriptures, Old and New Testament, the teaching is firm and declarative.

Mankind must be saved through Jesus Christ or be lost forever.

The Old Testament teaches this clearly. Noah's ark teaches one way: it was the only place of safety when God drowned the world. Rahab's safe house teaches one way: it was the only place of safety when Joshua's army captured the city. The Passover as Israel was escaping Egypt teaches one way: there was safety only in the house where the blood was on the doorposts. The cities of refuge located throughout Israel's land under the Judges teach this: they were the only places where the pursued were safe.

Jesus said it clearly about Himself. "I am the way, the truth and the life," He declared. And a part of this claim was the further statement "No one comes to the Father except through me."

The apostles continued to teach it when they proclaimed, "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12 ESV)

Turn to Jesus. He is your Savior. This is your answer.

If you have sought assurance for your eternal life, Jesus Christ is our assurance. He is the one way that is provided for us to live forever.

www.firstagcc.org Write the Pastor at PastorBill@firstagcc.org

Grammy winner to perform in Middleburg

NASHVILLE – The unmistakable sound of multi-Dove and Grammy Award-winning recording artist, David Phelps comes to Middleburg on April 29 with a performance at the First Baptist Church at 7 p.m.

Once a childhood musical prodigy from Tomball, Texas, Phelps earned a bachelor's degree in music from Baylor University.

Since then, he has become a nationally-celebrated vocalist, whose gifts and talents are virtually unmatched.

Perhaps best known as the powerful tenor for the multiple Grammy and Dove Award-winning Gaither Vocal Band, Phelps is constantly building on what has already been a groundbreaking career.

Emerging as a leading voice in contemporary Christian music, Phelps has been winning the hearts of audiences all over the world for more than two decades. He has performed at numerous prestigious venues across the globe, including the White House, New York's Carnegie Hall and the Sydney Opera House in Australia. With 14 solo albums to his credit, David's electrifying voice has moved audiences from all walks of life, crossing generational and stylistic barriers.

Performing with Phelps will also be talented vocalist, Charlotte Ritchie, as



David Phelps

well as Phelps' seven-piece musical entourage. Many of the songs featured during the evening are included on Phelps' recently release Freedom recording.


For more information, call (904) 282-5289 or go online to fbcmiddleburg.com. Tickets can also be obtained by calling 1-800-965-9324 or online at itickets.com.



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Church prays for cool summer

By Jesse Hollett
Staff Writer

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – Past an arterial network of residential asphalt and lonely parking lots sits one of God's landmarks of worship sandwiched between the St. Johns River and quaint brick houses dotted with campaign signs.

In 1878, St. Mary's Episcopal Church planted its permanent residence amongst the Spanish moss and encroaching river breeze, and gave Northern vacationers a place of spiritual rest among the medicinal springs here.

Now, even after 137 years of worship, not much has changed for the congregation. Every Sunday they raise their hands and worship to organ playing and the river breeze still sweeps through the French doors of the parish hall, but in the summer, that breeze isn't always enough.

However, that could change soon, because the church has kicked off a fundraising campaign to update their historic parish hall to add new lighting, a fan system, and, if the budget allows, an air conditioning sys-

tem, which would keep the summer swelter from rising from the heart pine floors.

On April 13, the church held a free performance by Alexei Romanenko, Jacksonville Symphony principal cellist, and pianist Lynne Radcliffe with the expressed aim of raising the money necessary for the renovation of the church.

"The purpose is to raise funds to cool down the parish hall. The parish hall is not air conditioned and there are no ceiling fans," said Rev. Celeste R. Tisdelle. "It gets very hot in the summer as you can imagine, and there may be multiple faces but we're going to start with new lights and fans."

When looking at the church, or overlooking the water, it's easy to think that the parish hall was always there, but it has only been there for a fraction of the church's history. In early 1948, the church turned towards obtaining a government building from Camp Blanding, which was beginning the process of removing unnecessary denominational buildings from their compound. That did indeed happen, and in September of 1948 the parish hall was shipped in five



Rev. Celeste R. Tisdelle, and parish administrator Janet Robinson stand in the St. Mary's Episcopal Church parish hall on St. Johns Avenue where parishioners are raising funds to add air conditioning to the historic building.

sections to rest where it currently stands today.

Fundraising from the congregation is nothing new to St. Mary's, said Tisdelle, who knows members of the congregation who have attended longer than she has been serving the parish. For example, the deck, which encompasses the back end of the church, and the room that it touches, were built using donations from long time parishioners.

Changes to the church are also common. The church added French doors, which is something Tisdelle wanted since she became pastor, remodeled a bathroom, and

even received a state grant to remodel the stained glass windows in the main church.

The parish hall serves as a chapel for weddings. It hosts Narcotics Anonymous meetings, as well as funerals. The church is open to the community, and up until recently, even left their doors open at night to provide shelter for local homeless looking for a place to sleep for the night.

"We are a midsize congregation in a small church building," Tisdelle said. "We have over 100 attending on Sundays. It's just joyful, musical, and grateful. St. Mary's is a holy place, and it has good, faithful people that attend here and do ministry."

Baha'i

from page 15

spiritual life." His message continued with Bahá'u'lláh – which means the "Glory of God" – "is the Promised One foretold by the Báb and all of the Divine Messengers of the past."

Bahá'u'lláh taught that all of humanity is of the same race and stressed the importance of uniting in the 'oneness' of God and humanity itself.

It was these disruptive teachings that saw Bahá'u'lláh thrown in prison for the remainder of his life, however the Baha'i faith did not end there. Instead, Bahá'í began spreading around the world in 1844 as the Báb fulfilled the same role for Bahá'u'lláh that John the Baptist did for Jesus.

"People want to call this a new religion, and in a sense it is a new development of religion, but there is only one religion, God's religion," said Tom Armistead of Orange Park, one of the 30 members of the Clay County Baha'i community. "It's not Christianity, it's not Judaism, and it's not even the Baha'i faith. It's God's religion, it just has different stages of revelation throughout the whole sweep of history. So we revere the revelations of every divinely revealed religion."

The acceptance is visible in their Sunday service, which includes members from Brazil, Uganda, and Clay County natives intermingling and singing their hymns, which speak of peace, harmony, and the love of



Worship at the Jacksonville Baha'i temple is much like that at other houses of worship. Music plays a key role in worship and children are also part of the ministry.

humanity.

"We like to draw boundaries, and divide people up into this class, and this race, and this nationality, but in fact there is only one human race, because God has created us all with the same love, care and compassion," Armistead said. "This is an entirely fresh depiction of what we have always thought of as the brotherhood of man. This is recognizing that just as there is one God, that God's oneness is so vast, so massive, and so great, that there is only one humanity as a reflection of his oneness."

This oneness with humanity means that Baha'is cannot participate in bipartisan politics. They do vote, however. It is beliefs like this that can be confusing for some people, as another member of the Clay County Baha'is, Ellen Dorger, points out.

"They would first look at me and assume

that because I'm a blonde haired blue-eyed girl that I was a Christian," Dorger said. "They asked me if I believe in Jesus 'yes I do believe in Jesus,' 'are you saved?' 'Well no I'm not saved' 'how do you believe in Jesus if you're not saved?' So, I educated them and some of them were very accepting, other people, like one of my boyfriend's parents, didn't like it, so they made him break up with me saying I was in a cult. Especially with kids it can be very hard on them."

Baha'is still face persecution. However, the Baha'i Community Center of Jacksonville off Greenland Road is thriving. Their library contains the Bible and all the volumes of their religion written by Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb.

The multicultural congregation sings out in unison in the next room over while

a man with a curly gray beard strums on a guitar:

*"We are all waves of one sea,
We are all leaves of one tree,
We are all flowers of one garden,
Bring us together in unity,
Bring us together as one family."*

For the members, it reminds them of the unity they all believe in so wholeheartedly, the unity that saw the death of their prophet, the unity that still binds them hand in hand, and the unity that lets them harmonize the words of the hymn "Bring Us Together in Unity."

Mahmoodi doesn't need the reminder. She sees it every morning in her family and recalls the same nostalgia when she thinks back to her life as a teenager in Austria, standing on the blazing cement in front of the United States Embassy.

"When I was in Austria, I had an interview with the American embassy, I'll never forget this," she said while tears welled up in her eyes.

"When I interviewed with the person who was making the final decision in allowing me into immigration he shook my hands and said 'I have read your file and I'm very sorry for what you have been through, and I hope you find safety and security in my country.' I'll never forget that. For someone who didn't even know me try to realize how difficult it was for me, what I experienced, and open up his country to help me find a new life. I'll never forget that."

Grace

from page 15

parents are encouraged to play a role in their child's spiritual journey the way they play a role in their education.

"If you think about it similarly to school education, parents that are involved with their kids' education, they're going to get a better education, they're going to see where the gaps are in their understanding," Wolf said. "

Faith formation isn't just understanding. It's application. How does this affect the way I treat my brothers? How does this affect the way I treat people at my school who I don't like?"

In the 1970's, there was a time in ministry where kids would get dropped off at Sunday School and parents would pick them up similar to dropping kids off at piano lessons.

"Faith is so much more holistic," Wolf said. "It ended up that faith wasn't affecting kids' lives. We want for the parents to understand their role. If you can help kids understand who God is from an early age and set the foundation, it affects all of their relationships and the reality is who we understand ourselves to be in God's eyes affects who we understand ourselves to be as we grow up.

"The reality is it's hard to be a kid. There are so many things that are distracting so for a place set apart to have a place where kids can come and feel there are teachers who love me there are kids who love me and it can become this formative experience for them."

To increase communication between parents and teachers, the church uses an online check-in system through PlanningCenterOnline.com. Not only does the check-in system add an extra layer of safety about allergies and parent pick-up, it enables teachers to communicate with parents about what the children learned that morning.

"Technologically, you can do so much with an online system," Wolf said. "The ability to have a database where you can send out emails to parents, where parents can tell what allergies they have and give family information, we wanted to be able to step up the game. One of our big visions for parents is it's their primary role to bring kids up in the faith. Being able to say hey, this is what the kids are learning about in class and here's how you can follow up with it."

The church, established in 2008, offers early childhood learning classes called Busy Bees, which meets Mondays, Wednesday and Friday mornings. The junior and high school youth groups, students take part in Young Life and summer youth camps use the "barn" equipped with a stage and music equipment while relaxing in rocking chairs.

Student headed to Australia

Clark to compete in Down Under Sports Golf Tournament

By Jesse Hollett
Staff Writer

MIDDLEBURG – Normally it would take 14,430,592 golf clubs put together end to end to get to Australia – but it's much easier to just use one.

Mackenzie Clark, a junior at Middleburg High, will represent the East Conference Golf Team, and the entirety of Florida, during the 28 annual Down Under Sports Golf Tournament in the gold coast of Australia this summer.

Clark is one of two Florida students selected by Down Under Sports to represent the state and is among about 66 students who will also be taking the trip to Australia to compete.

"When we found out my mom and dad cried and my nerves were getting to me because I was excited that I would get a once and a life time chance," Clark said. "I want to go pro and this will look good on my resume. You have to get a scholarship and play at a school for a certain amount of time. If you're good enough, the professional LPGA tour will look at you and decide whether they want you on their tour or not."

Clark has been golfing since she was three. Her father began playing in high school and one day she decided to join him on the green. That day triggered her passion for golf and eventually led to her being selected for Australia.

The trip will last nine days, give or take three days in Hawaii where she can relax from the stress of the Australian tour. She starts in Brisbane with some time for touring the city, then she plays a few practice rounds and the event ends with two rounds of 18 holes.

No matter how excited Clark and her parents are, however, it might not mean



STAFF PHOTO BY JESSE HOLLETT

Mackenzie Clark stands with her driver, which she expects to use to win the Down Under Sports East Conference Golf Tournament.

much if they aren't able to meet their fundraising goal of \$6,000. So far, her family has raised "a little over \$2,000." Clark is set to leave on June 24 and they're confident they can raise the remainder of the money before the set date.

"A lot of my friends and family have been going online and donating on the website," said Ronnie Clark, her mother, who added that the Winn-Dixie at which she works has donated buns, hotdogs, and soda for them to sell. "The profit goes to us, and we're going to be doing it the following weekend as well. We'll have to have all the money by June first."

In addition to online fundraising and selling hotdogs, Clark's father is in talks with Eagle Harbor Golf Club to host a golf tournament to help raise funds for his daughter's trip.

When she isn't on the course practicing her swing, Clark works on her other passions – health science and childcare. She stays late after school with her health science teacher and helps other students at

the school. She plans to become a registered nurse.

"She's got her mind set, she knows what she wants, good ambition," said Kristin Rogers, Mackenzie Clark's best friend, who screamed when she found out Clark had been invited to go to Australia. "She's always determined to get good grades. She knows where she wants to go. I'm with her every day, same old same old. I'm her second mom."

Clark is looking forward to the trip whether she wins or not. She doesn't expect to raise enough money to follow the rest of the national team to Hawaii, but she thinks she'll have enough fun in Australia to make up for it.

"It's going to be hot, different. I'm not expecting a lot of English. They have a different way of speaking English, like 'G'day mate' instead of 'hey' or 'hello.' Their eating habits are strange, but if I win I will probably cry [and] be proud for working so hard to get myself there."



Career events lets students see industry

JACKSONVILLE – More than 1,500 students met at the Jacksonville Equestrian center last week to take part in the Florida Department of Transportation's Construction Career Days, which introduces students to the different types of jobs and careers available in the transportation industry. FDOT awarded \$1,000 scholarships at the event and allowed students to operate 53 pieces of construction equipment throughout the day. The aim of the April 5-7 event was to get kids interested in going into a career in logistics and not just construction. The event lasted three days, and included students from nearly every Clay County school.



This past Saturday, Penney Retirement Community hosted Dinner and Music under the Oaks. This was a celebration of their community with special emphasis on upcoming events and renovations made and to be completed in the near future with the construction of a new church gathering hall. Clay County Chamber Director Doug Conkey was the official MC. The opening prayer by Bill Waterson was followed by Penney Farms Executive Director Teresa Scott with some wonderful opening remarks.

The weather for the event was perfect as residents of Penney Farms and various Clay Communities gathered to enjoy excellent food, music from the Penney Community Band and messages from Mr. George Egan of the Reinhold Foundation. Mr. Egan spoke on the long standing their group has

enjoyed since the founding of Penney Retirement Community. Ms. Virginia Hall spoke on the J.P. Hall Family Foundation and their role in Clay County and historical significance of their family and partnership with Penney Farms and helping the needy of Clay County. Mr. Vernon Smith, Second Vice Chair, Board of Directors spoke and the crowd enjoyed music from the Clay County Swing Ensemble.

A guest appearance from Mr. John Bowles in character as J.C. Penney entertained those in attendance. Several Gift Drawings were held and closing remarks were given by Penney Farms Executive Director Teresa Scott with some special thanks to all in attendance as well as sponsors of the event.



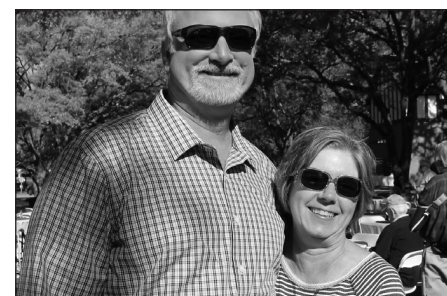
**Mr. George Egan,
Reinhold Foundation**



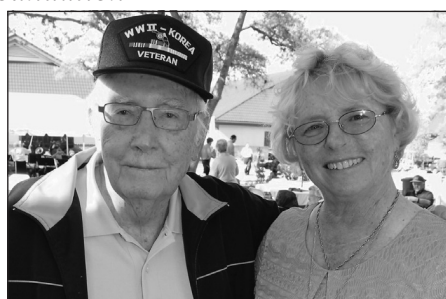
Ms. Virginia Hall



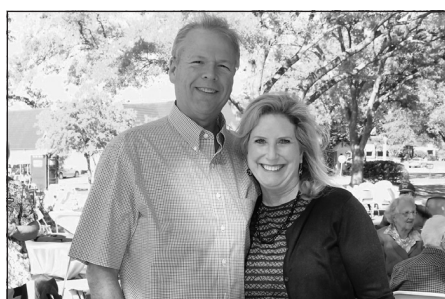
Teresa Scott and Renee DiPatri



Mr. Van Royal and Sandra Royal



George West a resident and Nancy Keating from Challenge Enterprise



Mark Scruby and Virginia Hall



Maureen Gartland and Bill Bucklin



Katherine VanZant and Mother Lavinai Powell, Penney Farms Retirement Community Resident and children Joshua and Lydia.



John Boles and Mayor of Penney Farms Tom Deville

To find out more about Penney Farms Retirement Community go to: www.VisitPRC.org or contact Teresa Scott at 800-638-3138. Gifts and Donations can be made throughout the year by contacting the Development Office at (904)531-7032

Gold Head: Finding peace in sand hills

Words and images by Andre Roman
onetankmedia

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – The road past the ranger station leads to a 2,366-acre park positioned on the Central Florida Ridge, an area filled with rolling pine sandhills. The ridge is all that remains of dunes that were formed over thousands of years by the rise and fall of sea levels.

In Mike Roess' Gold Head Branch State

Park, that ridge helps form a stunning 1.5-mile ravine that loops through the park. At its bottom is Gold Head Branch, once the site of an old grist-mill.

Designated as a State Natural Feature Site, the ravine is special because it has an entirely different ecosystem than the rest of the park, which lies just north of Keystone Heights. Nearly 70 feet below the surrounding parkland, the cool, moist ravine is coated by a dense canopy of loblolly



A view of Little Lake Johnson from underneath a pine tree as its needles block the view.

pinos, hickories and magnolias.

"There are some really rare animals in there and there's also dragonfly that's only

here and a couple [other] places," said

SEE PARK, 23

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Amateur radio operators commemorate 25th anniversary of Desert Storm



CAMP BLANDING – Amateur Radio Operators Scott Roberts and Jim Winfrey made contacts with ham operator stations in Belgium and Serbia on April 2 to recognize the 25th anniversary of Operation Desert Storm. Hams set up special event station, call sign N4G, which made 161 radio contacts during the event. Stations that contacted N4G will receive a certificate honoring "...the valiant military forces..." that liberated Kuwait.



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Middleburg native keeps the Navy's newest, most advanced helicopters flying

By Navy Office of Community Outreach

MAYPORT, Fla. — A Middleburg native is serving with a U.S. Navy helicopter squadron that flies the Navy's newest and most technologically-advanced helicopter.

Lt. Robert Mills is a pilot with the "Vipers" of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron 48, a Mayport-based squadron that operates the Navy's next generation submarine hunter and anti-surface warfare helicopter, the MH-60R Seahawk. Each helicopter is nearly 65 feet long, may weigh up to 23,500 pounds and can travel more than 120 miles per hour for nearly 320 miles on a tank of gas.

As a pilot, Mills is responsible for commanding the MH-60R helicopter.

"I really like that my job is constantly changing both in mission and atmosphere," Mills said.

According to Navy officials, the MH-60R is the most capable multi-mission helicopter available in the world today. It is used for a variety of missions, including hunting and tracking enemy submarines, attacking enemy ships, search and rescue, drug interdiction, delivering supplies and supporting the Navy's special operations forces.

It is replacing the Navy's older helicopters because of its greater versatility and more advanced weapon systems.

Mills said he and other HSM-48 sailors are proud to be part of a warfighting team

that readily defends America at all times.

"This is one of the best groups of people I have had the opportunity to work with in my eight years of service," said Mills, a 2005 Middleburg High School graduate.

Sailors' jobs are highly varied within the squadron. Approximately 270 Navy men and women are assigned and keep all parts of the squadron running smoothly. This includes everything from maintaining helicopter airframes and engines to processing paperwork, handling weapons and flying the aircraft.

"The thing I love the most about being a part of this great organization are the people," said Cmdr. Jeff Hill, HSM-48's commanding officer. "The level of commitment and professionalism by every member of Viper Nation is second to none. But more importantly, they represent what's best about our nation and the generation of American's dedicating their lives to something bigger. Dedicating themselves to making a difference. Because at the end of the day, that's what we do in Viper Nation, it's what we do in the Navy, we make a difference."

Serving in the Navy, Mills is learning about being a more respectable leader, sailor and person through handling numerous responsibilities.

"The Navy has taught me the importance of team work and how to work effectively with others," Mills said.



PHOTO BY U.S. NAVY OFFICE OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Lt. Robert Mills, a 2005 graduate of Middleburg High School, proudly serves with a U.S. Navy helicopter squadron, the Vipers of HSM 48.



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Park

from page 20

Dennis Parson, assistant park manager. As one of Florida's first state parks, Gold Head Branch State Park was developed in the 1930s. The property was donated by Mike Roess and developed by the Civilian Conservation Corps, a program launched in 1933 under Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt to decrease the unemployment rate during the Great Depression.

In 1935, after the area became part of the state park system, CCC workers descended on the park to help in development. Together they planted trees, cleared areas for campsites, built roads and constructed most of the buildings.

Even today the astonishing craftsmanship of the CCC workers stands in stone foundations and hand-hewn beams in the buildings and cabins that are enjoyed by thousands of visitors every year.

Although the ravine and a number of old sinkhole lakes offer eye-catching focal points for the park, much of the land here consists of sandhills. These dry, porous "hills" reflect those that originally covered much of the area, but today are becoming more and more sparse.



The moss monster scares Turkey Oak Campers with its eyes that reflect from car lights at night.

"We have a nice piece of sandhill," Parson said. "It used to be very prevalent in

Florida [but] now you don't see them much often."

The state park is also composed of scrub communities and basin marshes.

In addition to the ravine trail, there are a number of different areas for hikers. One of them, in particular, is called the Florida Trail because it runs through the entire state. It's a must do for passionate hikers who want to check it off their bucket list.

The park is also home to wildlife such as American kestrels, bald eagles, white-tailed deer, turkeys, gopher tortoises, fox squirrels, pocket gophers, bear, raccoons, ducks, geese and bobcats. The best time to see these animals is either early in the morning or just before dark.

Directly across the main park road from the stairway down to the ravine is crystal-clear Sheeler Lake, filled with small fish. Quartz sand and gravel with sandy clay beds cover the geology of the shore. Currently, some activities are limited due to the restoration of the lake shoreline.

The seepage springs at the bottom of

the ravine connect to Gold Head Branch that flows through most of the park and pours into Little Lake Johnson. Fisherman, such as the overly passionate Keystone Heights local Mark Cornellier, can be seen along the shoreline casting their lines.

"Last summer I came out here to fish every day for three months straight," Cornellier said. Anyone who wants to follow Cornellier's lead should be aware that a Florida fishing license is required.

Next to Little Lake Johnson sits Turkey Oak Campsite, where the smells of campers grilling mouth-watering steaks wafts through the air. It's also a perfect picnic spot and has a rentable recreation hall located nearby.

The Sandhill Camping Area isn't as populated, which makes it more tranquil. This area is more popular with RV campers, like Gary Efaw. He visits this park, with his wife, once a year from Stuart, Va. to escape the cold weather and because he sees this

SEE PARK, 24

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Park

from page 23

park as one that is different than most. "This state park is different because it's spread out, whereas the others are all jammed," Efav said. "I've been to Paynes Prairie (in Gainesville) and it was all jammed."

The third camping area is Lakeview, which is located on the opposite side of Little Lake Johnson. Lakeview is the best place to stargaze at night because of the way the stars glisten atop the water in the night sky.

Finally, on the opposite side of Big Lake is the Primitive Camping Area. It's also where the old mill used to be. The Loblolly Trail loop starts and stops at the mill site.

The campgrounds offer 73 sites that accommodate both tents and RVs and provide water, electricity, picnic tables and ground grills. Primitive camping and a group camping area are also available.

Sixteen furnished cabins – original CCC, block style and modern – overlook Little Lake Johnson. Each sleeps four to six persons and is equipped with a refrigerator, stove, a double bed and hide-a-bed. Some have a wood or gas fireplace. Linens and kitchen utensils are provided.

The last major spot in the concrete road is Big Lake Johnson. Evident by its name, it's the biggest body of water in the state park, spanning a little under 110 acres.

Park Ranger Max Forehand said Big Lake Johnson was the spot in the 1970s.

"If you look at pictures of Big Lake Johnson from back then, you'll see how it was packed back there," Forehand said. "It was as popular as Little Lake is today."

Many believe the park is a place to clear heads and think, while Jacksonville environmentalist Paul Garfinkel it makes long for a simpler time.

"It provides me with a sense of peace in the creek that runs through the gorge, peace in the lakes where the water rises and falls," Garfinkel said. "It's a connection with the sandhill cranes who trumpet their joy at every sunrise."

Onetankmedia is a project designed, written and managed by journalism students at the University of North Florida.

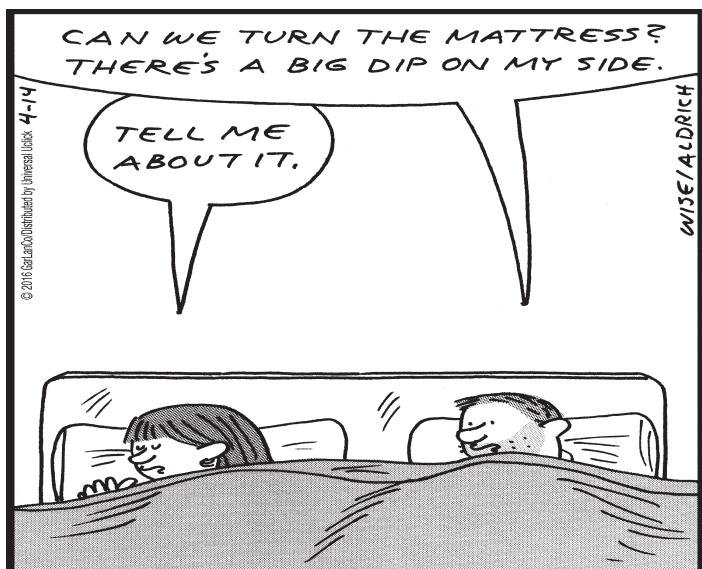
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		9	6					
1		7	2					
6			3		4			2
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		5	2					

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

SOLUTION:

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

Federal authorities to investigate workplace death

MAXVILLE – The Clay County Sheriff's Office has launched an investigation into a workplace accident that claimed the life of a Williston, Fla. man on Monday.

Police said James M. Henderson, 61, was working as a heavy machine operator at Chemours Mining at 6700 County Rd. 218 near U.S. Highway 301 in Western Clay County when the accident happened April 11.

"This afternoon he became entrapped in the track of the machinery he was operating/exiting and was killed. The man's next of kin has been notified and federal workplace authorities who handle mining accidents have been notified as well," stated a media release from Mary Justino, public information officer for CCSO.

She said Henderson was an 18-year employee of the company. Mining operations were shut down overnight Monday.

The U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration will investigate the accident at the plant.

Teen facing child abuse charge

ORANGE PARK – What began as a dispute over the social media application KiK has ended in child abuse charges for an Orange Park 18-year-old.

The Clay County Sheriff's Office arrested Jacob Alfred Merilan, 18, on April 8 at 10:31 p.m. after launching an investigation into the November 30, 2015 incident.

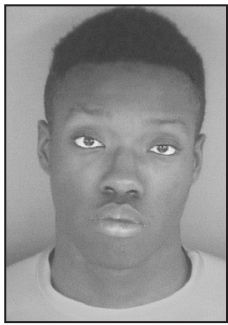
According to the police report, Merilan and the victim had been communicating via the app KiK when the victim used a word to describe Merilan's girlfriend, a word Merilan considered to be offensive.

Police said Merilan decided to take action about the offensive description by driving over to the victim's home to confront him in person.

Merilan, police said, found the victim on the sidewalk walking home from school, got out of his car and started verbally arguing with the victim.

Police said the fight escalated into a physical assault that left the victim "on the ground in an unconscious state. As a result of the investigation, it was discovered that [redacted] went unconscious due to Jacob Merilan repeatedly punching him in the head with a closed fist," states the report.

Police used a warrant issued by a judge to book Merilan into the Clay County Jail where, at press time, he remained held on \$30,003 bond. He faces one count of child abuse without great harm.



Jacob Merilan

Woman charged with heroin possession

LAKE ASBURY – A Lake Asbury woman originally brought in by Clay County Sheriff's Office investigators on charges of credit card fraud has also been charged with possession of heroin.

According to the police report, Lillian Raquel Del Priore, 28, was being questioned at the CCSO Orange Park Substation when an officer saw her reach into her pants and remove a plastic baggy on April 7. Officers then placed her back into an interview room where a detailed search revealed a gram of heroin in her bra.

Del Priore is also charged with felony retail theft and burglary after police found she had allegedly broken into a woman's Lake Asbury home on April 4 and stole two credit cards. According to the police report, Del Priore stole the cards from the victim's car and later made three purchases totaling \$828 on such items as cigarettes and doughnuts.

At press time, Del Priore remained in the Clay County Jail without bond.

Student charged with sexual battery

FLEMING ISLAND – Clay County authorities charged a Fleming Island High student with sexual battery after an investigation.

Sheriff's deputies arrested Giratt Alejandro Molina, 18, on April 7 at 3:06 p.m., a day after he was interviewed by detectives.

According to the CCSO report, the female victim went to Molina's home in Eagle Harbor where the alleged attack occurred.

The victim told police she had never been intimate with Molina before, but that on April 4, she said "he all of a sudden got on top of her and pushed her onto the bed with his hands," states the police report. "The victim said she was scared of the defendant because of his aggressive behavior and she continued to tell him stop no and stop." Police said she also verbally told Molina that she did not want to have sex with him, however, according to the report, he took off her clothes and had unprotected sex with her.

Molina was booked into the Clay County Jail, but has since been released on bond.

Convicted felon charged with 2015 armed robbery

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – The Clay County Sheriff's Office recently extradited a Hollister, Fla. man from the Northwest Florida Reception Center in Chipley, Fla. to face



Lillian Del Priore

one count of armed robbery here.

Police charged Michael Lynn Fulghum, 41, on April 6 and booked him into the Clay County Jail. He is charged with breaking into a woman's home in in the 7000 block of Floral Ridge Circle in Keystone Heights on July 5, 2015.

According to the police report, Fulghum is accused of stealing a television, a laptop computer, and lottery tickets, all valued at \$750.

The victim told police she was asleep when she heard what she believed was her front door opening. She said she woke up to find two unidentified men in her bedroom and one of them was carrying a firearm.

At press time, Fulghum remained in the jail where he is being held without bond. Fulghum is in the middle of serving a state prison sentence for grand theft auto and fleeing and eluding police for a crime committed in Putnam County, according to court records.

Teen pulls knife on twin brother, gets arrested

ORANGE PARK – An Orange Park teen faces one count of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon after a fight with his twin brother.

The Clay County Sheriff's Office arrested Christian James Hattaway, 18, on April 6 at 9:44 a.m. after he pulled a knife on his brother who does not live with him, but was visiting that morning at their aunt's home.

According to the police report, Hattaway woke up angry on the morning of April 6 and began yelling at his brother because he could not find his prescription pain pills he had been taking for injuries he received in an auto accident on April 4.

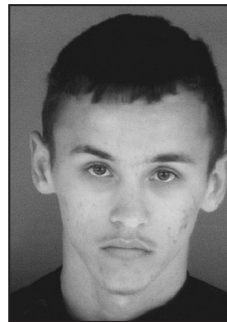
Police said Hattaway continued to get irate and shout when his brother told him he could not have any of the pills until he ate something first. Police said even after Hattaway was given the pills, "he still would not calm down," went into the kitchen and pulled a steak knife on his brother.

Hattaway's brother then pulled out his BB gun and told police "he was not going to use the weapon for its intended purpose," but "was going to use the gun as a blunt object," states the report.

Hattaway was booked into the Clay County Jail, but is now free on bond.



Michael Fulghum



Christian Hattaway

Arrests & Bookings

Tuesday, April 12

Allen, Terrence, 19, Orange Park, CCSO, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis

Beers, Catrena, 29, Fleming Island, CCSO, Petit Theft

Brunick, Brandon, 19, Middleburg, OPPD, Possession of Drug Paraphernalia

Bushey, Christopher, 24, Orange Park, CCSO, Possession of Less Than 20 g. Cannabis

Collins, Derek, 36, Jacksonville, CCSO, Assault and Battery During Burglary, Burglary

Gross, Carie, 38, Orange Park, CCSO, Petit Theft

Hernandez, Robert, 45, Orange Park, CCSO, Simple Domestic Battery

Juvenile, 12, CCSO, Simple Battery, Petit Theft

Katzmire, Elizabeth, 67, Middleburg, CCSO, Domestic Battery

Komatz, Andrew, 19, Jacksonville, OPPD, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis

Montgomery, Ronald, 28, Middleburg, CCSO, Violate Probation - Community Control

Rose, Kyle, 31, Jacksonville, CCSO, Violation of Promotion

Rutkowski, David, 34, Jacksonville, CCSO, VOP - Felony Domestic Battery

Santos, Hector, 30, Orange Park, CCSO, Non-Support

Savage, Susan, 34, Satsuma, Fla., CCSO, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis, Burglary, Possession of Drug Paraphernalia, Possession of a Controlled Substance

Waggy, William, 53, Orange Park, CCSO, Petit Theft

Walls, Nicole, 30, Middleburg, CCSO, Grand Theft \$300-4,999, Burglary

White, Bobbi, 48, Middleburg, CCSO, Sale And Delivery Of Heroin

Monday, April 11

Brooks, Elizabeth, 18, Orange Park, CCSO, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis, Possession of Drug Paraphernalia

Donley, Bruce, 23, Melrose, CCSO, Battery During Burglary

Drakos, Thomas, 26, Jacksonville, CCSO, Grand Theft \$300-4,999

Frey, Marc, 25, Keystone Heights, CCSO, Introduce or Remove Contraband Into County Jail

Jedrziwski, Max, 24, Fleming Island, CCSO, FTA - Petit Theft

Jordan, Benjiman, 25, Middleburg, CCSO, Vandalism \$1,000 or More

Juvenile, 15, CCSO, Simple Battery

Morgan, Kevin, 39, Homeless, CCSO, Burglary, Grand Theft of Firearm, Grand Theft \$300-4,999

CRIME WATCH

This is a weekly collection of crime reports from the Clay County Sheriff's Office Community Relations Unit meant to inform, educate and generate community feedback. To receive these alerts via email, go online to www.claysheriff.com, click on the Sharing Tree logo and follow the instructions.

CCSO CONTACT NUMBERS: (MAIN) 264-6512 (EMERGENCY) 911 (COMMUNITY RELATIONS) 213-6114

Thefts

4/08 refreshments and a cooler were stolen from the parking lot of The American Legion Post on County Road 218 in Middleburg.

4/07 an unattended wallet was stolen from the waiting room at St. Vincent's Medical Center Clay County off Branan Field Road north of Middleburg.

4/06 a trailer was stolen from a home on Marilyn Court in Keystone Heights.

4/06 miscellaneous electronics items were stolen from a gym locker at Oakleaf High School on Plantation Oaks Boulevard.

4/06 miscellaneous personal items were stolen from a boat parked at home on Commanche Court in Orange Park.

Burglary to Structures

4/08 miscellaneous personal and electronics items were stolen from residence on Surrey Glen north of Middleburg.

4/07 an apartment door was damaged

during an attempted burglary on Lombard Street near Orange Park.

4/06 miscellaneous personal items were stolen from a home on Wells Road in Orange Park.

Burglary to Autos

4/10 items were stolen from a pickup truck at a home on Glen Laurel Drive north of Middleburg.

4/10 a wallet, purse and electronics items were stolen from a vehicle at a home on Harrison Avenue in Orange Park.

4/09 items were stole from two vehicles at a home on Applewood Court on Fleming Island. There were no signs of forced entry into one vehicle and the other was left unlocked.

4/08 miscellaneous personal items were stolen from a vehicle at a home on Decidedly Street in Lake Asbury.

4/08 miscellaneous personal and electronics items were stolen from two un-

locked ransacked vehicles at a home on Misty Maple Court in Oakleaf Plantation.

4/07 an installed radio was stolen from a truck at the intersection of County Road 217 & Twin Pines Road in Maxville. There were signs of forced entry.

4/07 items were stolen from an unlocked vehicle at a residence on Rushing Drive near Orange Park.

4/06 miscellaneous personal items were stolen from a vehicle at a home on Stonebrier Ridge Drive in Oakleaf Plantation.

4/06 miscellaneous personal items were stolen from a ransacked unlocked vehicle at a home on Piedmont Manor Drive in Oakleaf Plantation.

4/06 miscellaneous personal items were stolen from a ransacked unlocked vehicle at a home on Williamsburg Court in Oakleaf Plantation.

4/06 miscellaneous personal items were stolen from a ransacked unlocked

vehicle at a home on Wakemont Drive in Oakleaf Plantation.

Criminal Mischief

4/10 the mailbox was damaged at a home on Swarthmore Drive in Keystone Heights.

4/10 the windshield was damaged on a vehicle at an apartment complex on Lombard Street near Orange Park.

4/08 miscellaneous body and glass damage was reported on a vehicle at the AMC movie theatre at the Orange Park Mall.

4/08 there was glass damaged on a vehicle at a residence on Greenridge Road in Orange Park.

4/07 mail boxes were damaged at residences along Riverbank Drive north of Middleburg.

4/07 mail boxes were damaged at residences along Talisman Drive north of Middleburg.

Arrests

from page 26

Mosley, Brandi, 21, Middleburg, CCSO, Petit Theft

Settles, Benjamin, 28, Middleburg, CCSO, Aggravated Battery On Pregnant Female

Tillman, Tina, 37, Green Cove Springs, CCSO, Petit Theft

Sunday, April 10

Brown, Aloha, 33, Middleburg, CCSO, Possession of a Controlled Substance, Possession of Drug Paraphernalia, Possession of More Than 20 g. Cannabis

Congdon, Timothy, 30, Green Cove Springs, CCSO, Possession of Heroin, Possession of Cocaine

Cross, Douglas, 29, Green Cove Springs, CCSO, FTA - DWLSR

Dearborne, Johnny, 31, St. Augustine, Fla., CCSO, Simple Domestic Battery

Garner, Robin, 42, Orange Park, CCSO, Petit Theft

Gonzalez, Pablo, 38, Jacksonville, CCSO, Driving Without a License

Morgan, Kevin, 39, Middleburg, CCSO, Trespassing

Scriven, John, 51, Green Cove Springs, GCSPD, Simple Battery

Saturday, April 9

Culliton, Kyle, 25, Orange Park, CCSO, Possession of Not More Than 20 G. Cannabis, Possession of a Control Substance, Possession of Drug Paraphernalia

Cunningham, Penny, 50, Orange Park, CCSO, Disorderly Intoxication

High, Travis, 45, Orange Park, CCSO, Driving Without a License

Jean-Piere, Anthony, 22, Green Cove

Springs, CCSO, Driving Without a License, Failure to Appear For Court

Juvenile, 16, CCSO, Simple Battery

Juvenile, 12, CCSO, Aggravated Assault With a Deadly Weapon

Juvenile, 17, CCSO, Petit Theft

Longley, Joshua, 29, Green Cove Springs, CCSO, Dui

Macleod, Evelyn, 54, Orange Park, Oppd, Simple Domestic Battery

Mervar, Jason, 38, Middleburg, CCSO, Dui

Mills, Charles, 20, Middleburg, CCSO, Possession of Not More Than 20 G. Cannabis, Possession of Drug Paraphernalia

Ogden, Tracie, 45, Orange Park, CCSO, Burglary

Pledger, John, 42, Fleming Island, CCSO, DUI

Reid, Jon, 37, Orange Park, CCSO, Petit Theft

Shaver, Nolan, 26, Keystone Heights, CCSO, Burglary

Shoemake, Priyawatee, 46, Orange Park, CCSO, Petit Theft

Smith, William, 42, Fleming Island, CCSO, Possession of Not More Than 20 G. Cannabis

Weyandt, Lois, 33, Green Cove Springs, GCSPD, Cause Bodily Harm

Friday, April 8

Ballew, Marshall, 33, Green Cove Springs, CCSO, Two Counts of Burglary, Giving False Ownership Verification to Pawn Broker, Dealing Stolen Property, Grand Theft \$300-4,999

Cantlon, Alicia, 37, Middleburg, CCSO, Petit Theft, Resisting Arrest While Committing Theft Del Priore, Lillian, 28, Green Cove Springs, CCSO, Burglary

Fuquay, Conner, 20, Middleburg, CCSO,

Petit Theft

Juvenile, 17, Gcpspd, Possession of Not More Than 20 G. Cannabis

Merilan, Jacob, 18, Orange Park, CCSO, Child Abuse Without Great Harm

Messer, Robert, 45, Fleming Island, CCSO, Petit Theft, Resisting an Officer

Mobley, Donovan, 22, Middleburg, CCSO, Driving Without a License

Santos, Janette, 36, Satsuma, Fla., CCSO, Out Of County Warrant

Smith, Garlin, 57, Jacksonville, CCSO, Possession of a Controlled Substance, Possession of Drug Paraphernalia

Stewart, Derrick, 18, Orange Park, OPPD, Failure to Appear For Court

Uzewicz, Jeremy, 40, Middleburg, CCSO, Petit Theft, Resisting a Retail Merchant, Giving False Name Or False ID, VOP - Drug Offender Probation

Thursday, April 7

Addison III, Theldon, 20, Middleburg, FWC, Taking Deer or Turkey With Gun, Making False Written Declaration, Resisting or Interfering With Wildlife Officer

Anderson, Robert, 25, Middleburg, CCSO, Simple Domestic Battery

Baize, Zachary, 22, Orange Park, CCSO, Out of County Warrant

Ballew, Marshall, 33, Green Cove Springs, CCSO, Fraudulent Use of Credit Card

Blodgett, Thomas, 44, Middleburg, CCSO, VOP - Battery on Person Over 65

Choate, Norman, 49, Middleburg, CCSO, VOP - DUI With Serious Injury

Del Priore, Lillian, 28, Green Cove Springs, CCSO, Possession of Heroin, Fraudulent Use Of Credit Card

Drakos, Thomas, 26, Jacksonville, CCSO, Two Counts of Dealing Stolen Property, Two Counts of Giving False Info to a Pawn

Broker

Greer, Meagan, 30, Middleburg, CCSO, Petit Theft

Hand, Amber, 30, Middleburg, CCSO, Schemes To Defraud

Jackson, Marcus, 25, Jacksonville, CCSO, Trespassing, Fraudulent Use of Credit Card

Johnson, Melissa, 42, Jacksonville, CCSO, Petit Theft, Trespassing

Juvenile, 16, CCSO, Failure to Appear for Court

Juvenile, 15, CCSO, Domestic Battery On Person 65, Simple Domestic Battery

Juvenile, 16, CCSO, Simple Battery

Keene, David, 20, Middleburg, FWC, Tampering With or Fabricating Physical Evidence, Making False Written Declaration, Take Deer Or Turkey With Gun, Resisting or Interfering With Wildlife Officer

Merritt, William, 53, Middleburg, CCSO, DWLSR

Miller, Joshua, 19, Middleburg, FWC, Tampering With or Fabricating Physical Evidence, Making False Written Declaration, Take Deer or Turkey With Gun, Resisting or Interfering With Wildlife Officer, Habitual Traffic Offender

Molina, Giratt, 18, Fleming Island, CCSO, Sexual Battery

Moore, Corri, 39, Orange Park, CCSO, VOP - DWLSR

Pufko, John, 32, Middleburg, CCSO, DWLSR

Rivera, David, 28, Waukegan, Ill., CCSO, Fugitive Warrant

Romero, Luz, 55, Orange Park, CCSO, Petit Theft

Royal, Michael, 48, Jacksonville, CCSO, Petit Theft

Shaw, Ansel, 27, Tampa, CCSO, Non-Support

Scam

from page 13

people's tax returns to be deposited to bank accounts in his name. Never sign a blank return or a blank form, or sign a return or a form without reading it first.

By law, a return preparer must provide a client with a completed copy of the return no later than the time the customer is asked to sign the return. In *United States v. Syed N. Ahmed et al.*, the United States alleged that the defendants' Liberty Tax Service franchises asked customers to sign blank forms that stated that the customers had non-existent businesses, which were then used to maximize the customer's refund. Although the defendants did not admit to the allegations in the complaint, they agreed to an order from a federal court permanently shutting down the stores.

Don't use a preparer who mischaracterizes your expenses. In *United States v. Lawrence Preston Siegel*, the defendant prepared returns that falsely characterized personal purchases as deductible expenses. For instance, one customer's return deducted purchases at Tiffany & Co., Louis Vuitton, and Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines as "medical expenses." The court permanently barred Siegel from preparing tax returns or providing tax advice for compensation.

Do not use a preparer who fabricates business expenses or deductions, or who claims bogus credits to which you are not entitled, such as the Earned Income Tax Credit, the child care credit or the education credit.

One of the most common dishonest return-preparation practices is to prepare returns that include non-existent businesses, sometimes based on a client's hobbies. In 2015, for example, federal courts shut down tax return preparers in Kahului, Hawaii; Appleton, Wisconsin; and Chicago, Illinois, who fabricated supposed "businesses" for their clients. Federal courts have also ordered return preparers in Miami and Memphis, Tenn. to submit to third-party monitoring at their own expense to make sure they are not preparing returns with fraudulent "businesses."

Some other fraudulent schemes and practices that have been stopped through injunction orders entered by federal courts throughout the country include, fabricating fake Form W-2 information, claiming bogus education and first-time homebuyer credits, claiming phony child and dependent care credits or residential energy credits, claiming fraudulent fuel tax credits, falsely exempting foreign earned income, inflating unreimbursed employee business expense deductions and fraudulently inflating or decreasing a client's income or deductions to maximize the Earned Income Tax Credit.

In January 2016, a federal court in Orlando entered a preliminary injunction against Jason Stinson, who ran a series of tax return preparer storefronts under the name "Nation Tax Services," requiring him to shut down the stores pending resolution of the case.

As part of its explanation for why it was ordering Stinson's stores to shut down in the middle of the case, the court said that Stinson's business "exposes . . . [his] customers to individual tax liability. Both the

Government and Stinson's customers will suffer irreparable harm if an injunction is not granted. Moreover, it is in the public's best interest to protect vulnerable customers from the inaccurate preparation of their taxes, not to deplete Government resources, and to maintain the public trust in the tax system."

The IRS advises taxpayers who ask a tax professional to prepare their return to be careful in the professional they select. The IRS offers some basic tips and guidelines to assist taxpayers in choosing a reputable tax professional and is also offering taxpayers a number of instructional YouTube videos to help them prepare their own taxes for the upcoming filing season. Several options, including free assistance with preparation and electronic filing for the elderly and individuals making \$50,000 or less, are available to help taxpayers prepare for the current tax season and receive their refunds as easily as possible.

In addition to return preparers who deliberately falsify returns, the Tax Division targets those who peddle schemes that

purportedly reduce taxes—but in fact rely on false statements or financial sleight-of-hand.

In *United States v. Wayne Reeves*, the court found that defendants Wayne Reeves and Diane Vaoga advised their clients "to set up sham trusts and have their wages directed into accounts for those trusts as a way to improperly reduce their tax liability." They advised their clients that the income the clients received from the trusts was "nontaxable and did not need to be reported on tax returns." The court further found that Reeves prepared tax returns that "willfully attempted to understate his clients' correct tax liabilities," and that Vaoga assisted him in doing so. In January 2015, the court permanently barred both Reeves and Vaoga from preparing returns or giving tax advice to others.

The IRS website has info on how to report a dishonest return preparer, as well as how to report other types of tax fraud. The Justice Department's website has a list of tax-return preparers and tax-scheme promoters whom the courts have shut down.

Arrests

from page 26

Smith, Kimberly, 52, Middleburg, CCSO, DUI

Stevens, Dustin, 20, Middleburg, FWC, Tampering With or Fabricating Physical Evidence, Making False Written Declaration, Take Deer or Turkey With Gun, Resisting or Interfering With Wildlife Officer

Wednesday, April 6

Beegle, Robert, 26, Middleburg, CCSO, Grand Theft \$300-4,999

Carter, Erin, 30, Middleburg, CCSO, VOP - Giving False Owner Info to a Pawnbroker Chamberlain, Caroline, 51, Jacksonville, CCSO, FTA - Failing To Present Insurance Info

Cochran, Joshua, 38, Jacksonville, CCSO, Writ Of Attachment

Fulghum, Michael, 41, Hollister, Fla., CCSO, Armed Robbery

Harper, Jenny, 36, Middleburg, CCSO, VOP - Grand Theft Auto

Hattaway, Christian, 18, Orange Park, CCSO, Aggravated Assault With a Deadly Weapon Henderson, Deja, 20, Jacksonville, CCSO, FTA - Petit Theft

Hicks, Holly, 35, Jacksonville, CCSO, DUI With Property Damage

Ibanez, Francisco, 32, Green Cove

Springs, CCSO, Driving Without a License

Juvenile, 12, FTA - Affray

Juvenile, 16, CCSO, Petit Theft

Juvenile, 17, CCSO, Petit Theft

Moser, Richard, 34, Middleburg, CCSO, Petit Theft

Pacheco, Lauren, 18, Orange Park, CCSO, Petit Theft

Rivera, David, 28, Waukegan, Ill., CCSO, Possession of Less Than 20 g. Cannabis

Santiago, Jimmy, 33, Orange Park, CCSO, Criminal Mischief, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis

Smith, Lisa, 50, Jacksonville, CCSO, Petit Theft

Thurmond, Tiesha, 26, Orange Park, CCSO, DWLSR, Possession of Not More Than 20 g. Cannabis, Resisting an Officer
Ton, James, 25, Fleming Island, CCSO, Grand Theft \$300-4,999, Grand Theft, Four Counts Of Petit Theft, Two Counts Of Criminal Mischief

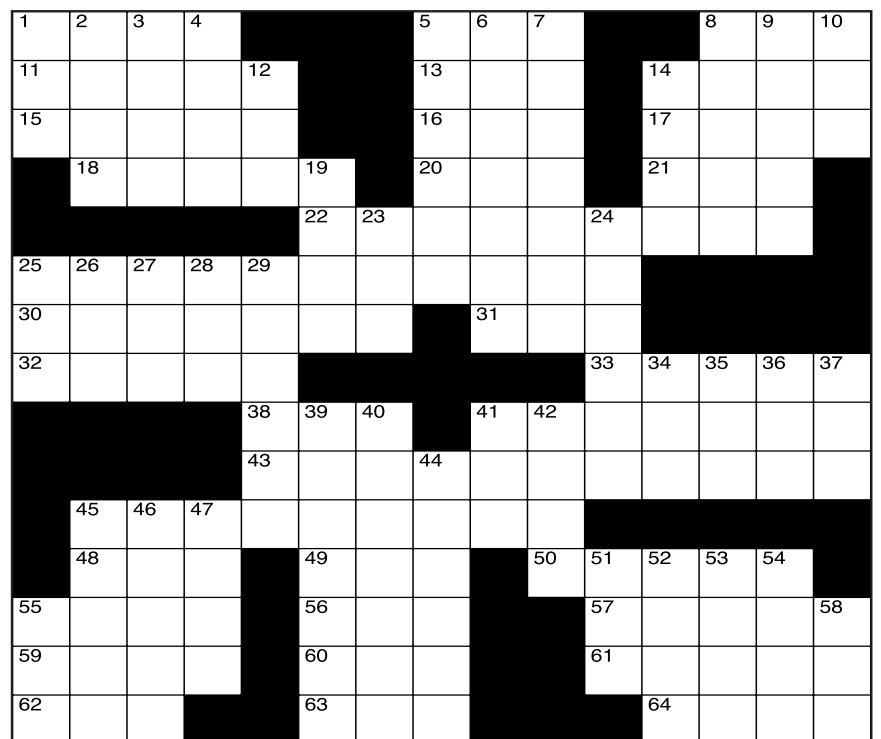
Walker, Christian, 18, Orange Park, CCSO, Petit Theft

White, Melissa, 34, Orange Park, CCSO, Possession of a Controlled Substance, Resisting an Officer

White, Thurman, 33, Orange Park, CCSO, Possession of a Controlled Substance, Possession of Drug Paraphernalia

Wilkinson, Tyler, 24, Evans Mills, N.Y., CCSO, Violate Probation - Community Control

Weekly Crossword



CLUES ACROSS

1. Crooned
5. Luck
8. Cosecant function
11. Rock bands play here
13. Surrounds the earth
14. Jessica ___
15. A type of clique
16. No seats available
17. Greek sophist
18. Stiff hair
20. Recipe measurement (abbr.)
21. Legal periodical
22. Saloons
25. He tricks you
30. Closing over
31. Man's best friend is one
32. Distinguish oneself
33. Immoralities
38. Marsh elder
41. Blasts
43. A discerning judge
45. Avenge for a wrong
48. Doctors' group
49. Jerry's friend
50. Type of sword
55. Swedish rock group

CLUES DOWN

1. A baglike structure in a plant or animal
2. Bird genus
3. One point east of northeast
4. A type of fly
5. Hurry
6. Lighter-than-air craft
7. Ask to marry
8. Thick rope made of wire
9. Imposters
10. Central nervous system
12. Pie ___ mode
14. Robert ___, poet
19. Dwelt
23. Firewood
24. Voices

25. Water in the solid state
26. Superman's foe
27. Chris Paul's team (abbr.)
28. Employ
29. Mineral
34. Vessel
35. Nigerian City
36. Romania
37. Sirius Satellite Radio (abbr.)
39. Potential difference
40. A class of synthetic detergents
41. Drunkard
42. Doesn't win or lose
44. Appellative
45. Spiritual leader
46. Implant
47. Language (Afrikaans)
51. Basics
52. A one-time Giants center
53. Every one of two or more
54. A way to gather
55. Swiss river
58. Small spot

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Cole's fever quickly became life threatening.

The fever Cole couldn't shake turned into every mother's nightmare. He began to have seizures and was rushed to Wolfson Children's ER at Baptist Clay. Cole stopped breathing, but the team of pediatric emergency specialists was able to resuscitate him. He was quickly transported to Wolfson Children's Hospital for a comprehensive evaluation and, after an overnight stay, the Clay County toddler was back to being his healthy, happy self. Parents Lydia and Ryan know firsthand and will tell any parent: Where you take your child for emergency care matters.

Watch Cole's story at wolfsonchildrens.org/ER.



Emergency Centers

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TODAY'S Sports

Clay Today | Thursday, April 14, 2016 | claytodayonline.com

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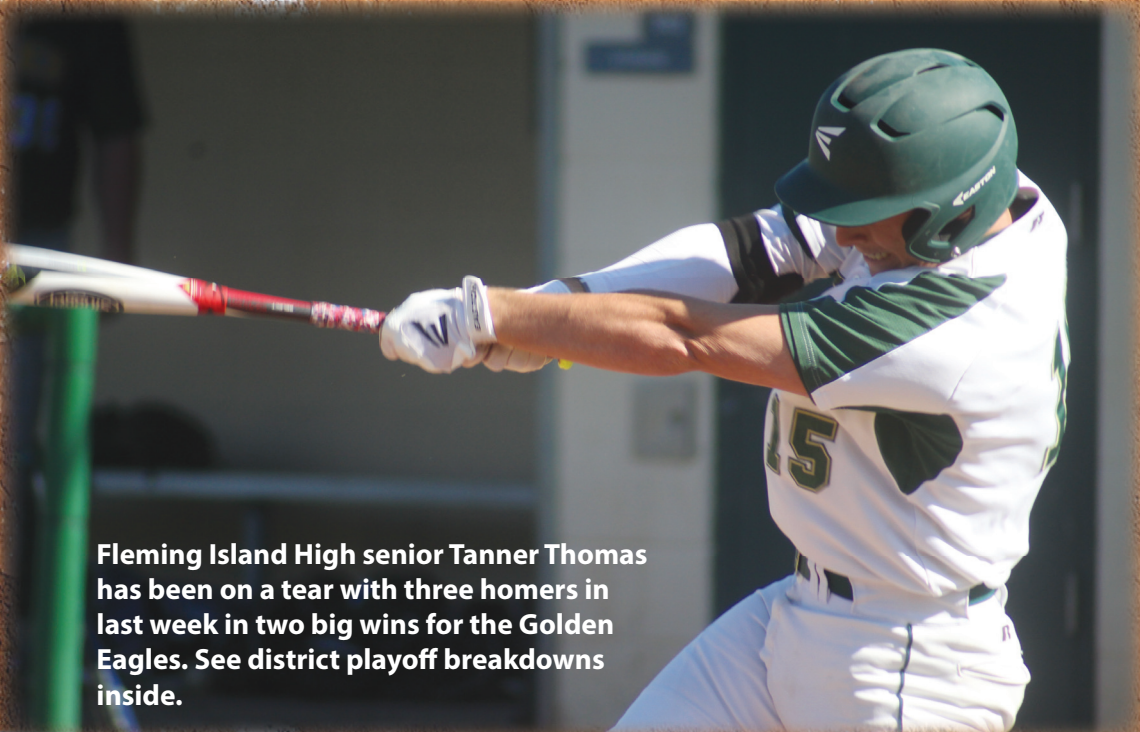
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Softball & Baseball Fever



Softball districts finish with championship games April 14 with Clay second baseman Katlyn Morgan and Fleming Island's Maya Littles key players searching for region playoff berths.

CORRESPONDENT PHOTO BY RAY DIMONDA



Fleming Island High senior Tanner Thomas has been on a tear with three homers in last week in two big wins for the Golden Eagles. See district playoff breakdowns inside.

STAFF PHOTO BY RANDY LEFKO

Clay, Ridgeview, Ponte Vedra knotted at top of 4-6A baseball



Clay High baseball coach Josh Persinger got caught in a Shark frenzy with two losses to Ponte Vedra, but prevailed to stay No. 1.

Clay wins coin toss, top seed

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

PONTE VEDRA – Clay and Ridgeview High baseball teams both felt the brunt of two-game losing streaks that put the Blue Devils, the Panthers and the Ponte Vedra High Sharks into a three-way tie for the top seed in district 4-6A. On Sunday, Clay won the district's coin toss and was named as the district top seed with Ridgeview second and Ponte Vedra third. Districts begin April 18.

"Remember last year when Ridgeview came in as the five seed, beat Palatka and Menendez and then got to us in the district championship after we beat Ponte Vedra in the semifinal," said Clay coach Josh Persinger. "Every team in this district is capable of a great game at any time if you give them a couple bounces or errors."

In the last 10 days, Ridgeview (16-5 overall) sported a shot at the top spot with an identical 4-0 district record before facing Clay High (13-7), also with a 4-0 district record.

"It's been a long time since Ridgeview is as close as we are to being the top seed in the district," said Ridgeview coach John Sgomolo, now 16-5 overall. "At this point, with all these good teams playing each other, it's not a matter of the best team, but who makes less mistakes. We preach to stay with the process and don't let mistakes ruin your game."

Ponte Vedra (12-11), the 2013 Class 5A champions and a winner over Clay in the 2012 Class 5A state semifinals, held on with a 4-2 record, but wound up last week beating Clay twice;

SEE DEVILS, 32



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Fleming Island nearly pulls off softball upset

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

JACKSONVILLE — Fleming Island High School's softball team bludgeoned Robert E. Lee 16-0 in their district 2-8A championship opening game, but Golden Eagles coach Jennifer Bucklew was tepid in her enthusiasm of the lopsided score on Monday. The win put the Golden Eagles in the district semifinal on Tues., April 12 against Atlantic Coast, who beat Fleming Island 14-0 on February 17, but whom Fleming Island beat 4-3 on March 4. Atlantic Coast would win the topsy-turvy game 8-6 to end the Golden Eagles first season under Bucklew.

"We can play against any team when we all show up," said Bucklew, the recent orchestrator of a mid-season turnaround that put the Golden Eagles in prime pouncing position to challenge district top seed Oakleaf High School in this week's district championship tournament. "We had Clay on the ropes on Friday, but left four runners in scoring position in the last two innings. We have to finish."

Against Clay (19-4, ranked fifth in 6A, 39th in Florida) on Friday, a well-fought 3-2 loss as compared to a February 9 13-0 drubbing, Bucklew saw her girls in an inspired mode making plays and hustling around the baselines.

"We are very young and do not have the club players like other teams," said Bucklew, who starts just two juniors as upper classmen in her lineup. "We stay with basics and keep within our skills."

As the season progressed from five straight early losses by scores of 4-1, 13-0, 13-0, 14-0 and 8-2, Fleming Island won two key district games; 8-3 over Fletcher and 5-3 over First Coast, before slipping up to 3A-St. Johns Country Day School 6-4.



STAFF PHOTO BY RANDY LEFKO

Fleming Island High second baseman Mady Lanoux filled in admirably at catcher and nearly fueled the Golden Eagles to a come from behind district semifinal win over Atlantic Coast High on Tuesday at First Coast High School. Lanoux switched to catcher after starter Jordan Hunt lacerated a finger chasing a foul ball.

A March 10 loss to Oakleaf, 9-4, woke up the Golden Eagles to put together a 6-2 record and stage a glimmer of an upset against Clay that may have fueled some confidence for the district tournament, Bucklew hoped. Leading the charge statistically were sophomore Tiffany Steczo with four homers and 21 runs batted in with junior catcher Jordan Hunt, a key hitter last year, hitting at .350 with two homers, two triples and 19 RBIs.

Infielder Morgan Grimm has a team-leading .397 average with 17 runs scored off a team-leading 25 hits. Sophomore pitcher Madison Kendrick has handled most of the mound duties with the departure of all-everything pitcher K.K. Leddy, now at North Dakota State, and has 72 strikeouts with a season-high of nine

against St. Augustine on April 6.

"We'll just have to see what happens," she said during the Golden Eagles 16-0 win over Lee. "Atlantic Coast is our first priority at this point."

In the Atlantic Coast semifinal game, Kendrick was bashed hard early by Atlantic Coast ace Taylor Bauman who launched a three run homer in the first inning that was followed two innings later by another three run homer and a 6-0 Stingray lead.

"We tried to just calm everyone down and play the game," said Lanoux. "We've been down before and come back."

In the third, Maya Littles doubled and scored on a Hunt single with Hunt scoring on an single via error from Grimm.

Fleming Island was hit with disaster in the next inning with Hunt lacerating a fin-

ger trying to catch a foul ball. Hunt left and Lanoux took over behind the plate.

"The whole thing was pretty scary, but we tried to just buckle down and play hard knowing someone had to step up for Jordan," said Lanoux.

Stepping up in the fifth inning for three more Fleming Island runs were nearly the entire batting order with Grimm getting another RBI with Littles again on base and Steczo hitting an RBI single before Lanoux bashed a long double to left field to breathe life into the Golden Eagle dugout as the score stood at 6-5.

Atlantic Coast came back with their seventh run with an RBI double deep to right field, but Fleming Island wasn't done with their ensuing at bat as Kyleigh Matthews hit a blooper single then moved on another Littles hit and later scored off a Halle Corless single to put the Golden Eagles within one run at 7-6.

At superb diving stab of hard line drive from Grimm by Atlantic Coast's shortstop ended the inning. A single and a double by the Stingrays in the sixth was followed by Bauman taking the batter's box and Bucklew contemplating an intentional walk to load the bases. "She fouled off the first pitch and we thought she may be off," said Bucklew. "She was not."

Bauman bashed a long double to centerfield that Littles made a diving grab of, but hit the ground hard and wound up releasing the ball to right fielder Lexi Stevenson who made a late throw to home plate to leave the score at 8-6.

Oakleaf, set to play Atlantic Coast Thursday in the district final, won the second semifinal over First Coast convincingly 10-0 in five innings with pitcher Kelsey Sweatt throwing a no-hitter with seven strikeouts.

District 3-7A

Gainesville 5, Middleburg 2

Columbia 6, Ocala Vanguard 2

Championship: Gainesville vs. Columbia

District 2-8A

Fleming Island 16, Robert E. Lee 0

First Coast 6, Fletcher 5

Atlantic Coast 8, Fleming Island 6

Atlantic Coast scored three first inning runs off a three run homer and scored three more off another three run homer in the second, but Fleming Island fought back to within 6-5 in the fifth before a long double scored the game 7-5. Fleming Island catcher Jordan Hunt lacerated a finger on a foul ball in the bottom of the third and left the game causing a lineup shift for Golden Eagles coach Jennifer Bucklew.

Oakleaf 10, First Coast 0

Oakleaf High opened their semifinal game with First Coast with three runs off doubles from Alex Acevedo, Rebecca Koskey and Baylee Goddard before cashing in for three more in the fourth and fifth innings to eliminate First Coast. Knight pitcher Kelsey Sweatt controlled the game from



CORRESPONDENT PHOTO BY RAY DIMONDA

Clay High pitcher Ashley Stokes punished the Menendez High batting lineup with one hit and 16 strikeouts as the Blue Devils won a 1-0 district semifinal match on Tuesday at Orange Park High. Clay will play Ponte Vedra on Wed., April 13 for the district championship.

the mound with another no-hit performance and

seven strikeouts in the five inning extravaganza.

Championship game: Oakleaf vs. Atlantic Coast

District 4-6A

Menendez 12, Ridgeview 2

Clay 1, Menendez 0

Clay pitcher Ashley Stokes rifled through 16 strikeouts and just one hit from the first batter of the game to pace the Blue Devils to a 1-0 district semifinal win over Menendez. The score was knotted at 0-0 into the seventh inning when Meagan Stone hit an RBI single with Raelye Rouw and Katlyn Morgan on base from singles. Morgan bunted to get to first base and move Rouw. "Our seniors stepped up when we needed it," said Clay coach Matt Lewis. "That's why we hit them 1-2-3-4."

Ponte Vedra 6, Orange Park 4

Ponte Vedra got six runs in the first two innings off two homers to beat Orange Park 6-4 at Orange Park High School in the district semifinal.

Championship game: Clay vs. Ponte Vedra

District 2-3A

Oak Hall 8, St. Johns Country Day School 0

St. Francis 14, St. Joseph Academy 6

University Christian 10, St. Francis 0

Championship game: Oak Hall vs. University Christian

District 5-5A

Keystone Heights 5, Bradford County 0

Megan Moncrief threw a shutout to lift the Keystone Heights HS Varsity/Indians to a 5-0 win over Bradford at Santa Fe High School in seven innings. Bradford couldn't get anything going so long as Moncrief was on the hill. Bradford managed just one hit off of Moncrief, who allowed no earned runs, walked none and struck out five during her seven innings of work.

Ashleigh Jennings racked up two RBIs on three hits for the Indians. She singled in the first, fourth, and seventh innings.

In the fourth, Keystone Heights scored on a two-run single by Jennings, bringing home Cheyenne Helton and Autumn Overton.

P.K. Yonge 14, Palatka 3

Santa Fe vs. P.K. Yonge (Tuesday)

Championship game: Keystone Heights vs. Santa Fe/P.K. Yonge winner

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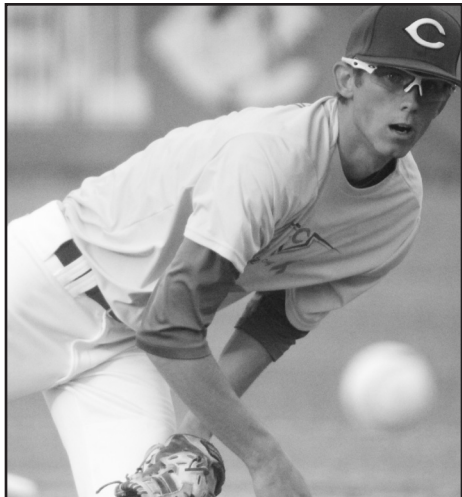
Devils

from page 29

Ironically, Clay, who lost three times to Ponte Vedra in regular season play in 2014, beat Ponte Vedra twice in a week; for the district 4-5A title and in the region 1-5A semifinals, before losing to Tampa Jesuit in the Class 5A championship game with Clay coach Josh Persinger and Ridgeview coach John Sgromolo both assistant coaches with Clay then-head coach Rob Thompson.

"Our district has been like this for the past couple of years and with John coaching at Ridgeview and making them better, it makes it even more interesting," said Persinger. "Clay and Ponte Vedra have plenty of history and coach Stanton may have had an average record, but he plays a tough schedule like us and, come this time of year, everyone is on their game."

In the Ridgeview and Clay showdowns; a 7-2 Clay win on March 29 and an 8-7 Clay win on March 31, Clay took control of the top spot for a few days as Ponte Vedra, with a seemingly inconsequential 12-11



Clay pitcher Holden Alexander is top tosser for Blue Devils and needs strong game to put Clay back in region playoff hunt.

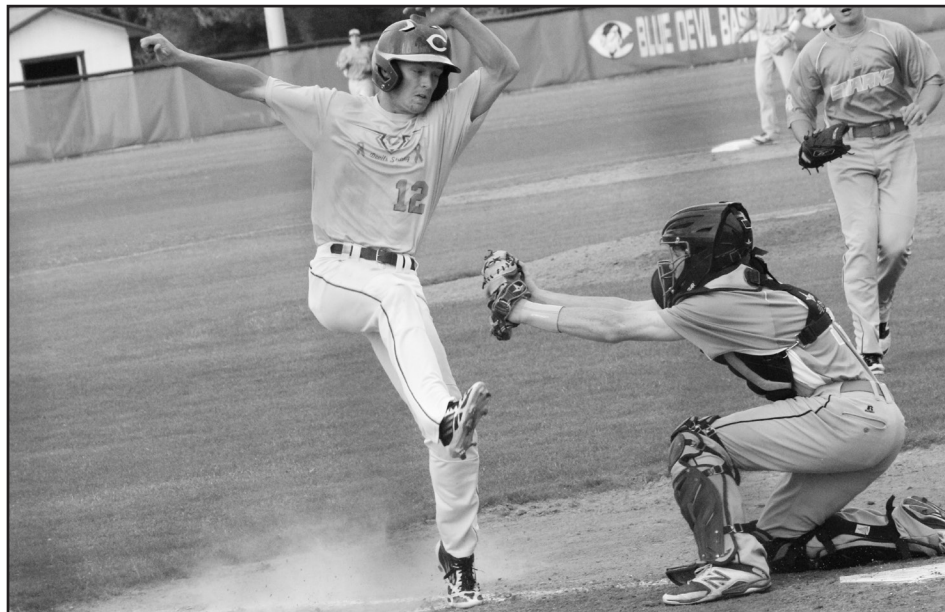
overall record and an 8-5 loss on March 9 and a 4-3 loss to Ridgeview on March 10, loomed for their double header with Clay just five days later.

"John was on a roll for that week and maybe got some bounces in their Ponte Vedra wins," said Persinger. "Against us, we got some bounces and they were hitting right to our gloves. It's baseball."

Ridgeview won in their first game against Ponte Vedra with pitcher Hunter Morris on the mound despite an early 2-0 Ponte Vedra lead. Ridgeview second baseman Christian Draper went two of three at bat with Tyler Robison adding a two-run single in a six run second inning for Ridgeview.

"In both teams, actually all four top teams in the district including Menendez, no one has a standout Division I pitcher or batter so it comes down to teamwork and fundamentals," said Sgromolo. "It's exciting to be a part of all this, but two of those four great teams will not get to play past the districts."

In the second game against Ponte Vedra, Ridgeview scored three runs in the first inning off an RBI-double from Tyler



Clay High's Gage Chancey gets tagged out at home in Blue Devils first loss to Ponte Vedra.

Oliveira and got solid defense throughout the game behind winning pitcher Tyler Robison to win 4-3 with Ponte Vedra scoring a single run in the second and two more in the fifth. Austin Kittle added an RBI single in the first inning.

The two games between Ridgeview and Clay, both losses for Sgromolo, were as a result of strong field play for the Blue Devils as the Panthers sprinkled strong hits around the outfield, but only to have Clay's outfield be on the spot for the out.

"We hit, they are in position, simple baseball," said Sgromolo. "Us against Ponte Vedra, we hit, they are out of position and we capitalize."

In the first game between Ridgeview and Clay, on March 29, Ridgeview came out swinging with a quick 1-0 lead after Morris got three fly outs after a double from Cole Escher. Ridgeview quickly went to work with Yamil Tosado singling and Oliveira doubling, but Tosado was picked off at third base on a steal attempt. Draper singled to score Tyler Turner who was hit by Clay pitcher Holden Alexander.

Up 1-0, Clay answered with five runs off a three run triple from Gage Chancey and Chancey later scoring on a single by



Clay High second baseman Austin Burke finishes off successful pickoff of Ponte Vedra baserunner in Blue Devils' second loss in three days to Sharks. Clay needs the right formula to upend Sharks in district tournament next week.

Tyler Spence. "I think both teams hit for 10-11 hits apiece, but we got some opportunities to score and made the count," said Persinger. "They came back the second game to make it close though."

Clay later scored off a Styron homer in the third to go up 6-2 where the score held until the sixth with Clay getting two singles and two walks to go up 7-2.

In the second Ridgeview and Clay matchup, Clay pushed to a 7-2 lead in the fifth then held off a five-run final two innings for Ridgeview for the 8-7 win. Clay's Michael Styron doubled and hit two singles to lead the Blue Devils with Cole Escher the winning pitcher. Ridgeview's Tyler Robison suffered his first pitching loss.

Ridgeview scored first with Tyler Turner homering in the first inning with two outs. Down 2-1 in the third, Clay scored three runs to take the lead with Chancey singling and moving to third on an Escher double before scoring off a grounder to Spencer Speer. Escher would score off an Alexander single.

In the fifth, Clay added runs to go up 7-2 off an Austin Burke double with Alexander and Styron on base. Burke later scored the game 8-2 on a tagup on an Escher line

drive to centerfield.

Down 8-3, Ridgeview buckled down to make the game close behind singles from Cameron Cooper, an error on a Tosado grounder and a single to Oliveira. Turner singled to score Cooper with a walk to Robison scoring Tosado.

Garrett Barfield walked to score one more with a Draper fielder's choice scoring Turner. Kittle would strike out to end the comeback threat.

Against Ponte Vedra, in the critical second of two games, Clay's outfield fell prey to well-placed hits that found grass between the infield and outfield lines. In the fourth inning, with the score still 0-0, with Shark baserunners at second and third on two walks and an outfield throwing error, Clay rightfielder Kevin Jackson tracked down a deep foul ball near the fence, made the catch, but was unable to make a throw to a tagging runner headed safely to home plate. The momentum shifted despite the still-close 2-0 score off an RBI-single.

"Kevin is just a sophomore and that was his first game back after some minor



Ridgeview High shortstop Yamil Tosado is strong vacuum for Panthers defense.

injuries," said Persinger. "That batter for Ponte Vedra is one of best in state and you never know if Kevin drops the ball and the runners freeze, he doesn't get another shot to hit a bomb on the next pitch. He hit a homer and triple in the first game against us. There was 100 other things we could have done better."

Ponte Vedra would chase starting pitcher Cole Escher in the fifth inning, but Alexander would not fare better with the Sharks increasing their lead to 5-0 off a 2RBI single with bases loaded and an RBI single that ended the inning.

A walk to Alexander plus a fielder's choice single to Styron enabled an RBI single to Chancey and Clay's first run of the night.

A dropped fly ball in the seventh nearly fueled a Clay comeback as Speer doubled and moved to third on a passed ball before scoring off a Spence RBI-single, but Austin Burke struck out to end the game.

"The bus ride is always quiet after a loss, but we reflected and I tried to get them to learn from it and know we can come back and anything can happen in any game," said Persinger.

STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Bartram Trail, Providence fall to Golden Eagles

Thursday showdown with No. 1 Trinity Christian

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

JACKSONVILLE — Fleming Island High's bats exploded behind a two homer day for Tanner Thomas and 14 hits as a team to smash 4A-Providence 12-3 on Thurs., April 7 in a stellar week of baseball for the Golden Eagles. Fleming Island, 17-3 overall, pushed to the 15th spot in Florida and second in Class 8A behind Tallahassee Lincoln, now 16-4. Providence, ranked third in 4A and 20th in Florida, dropped to 20-4. "I just sat down and got a chance to actually reflect on what we have done the past two weeks and it's pretty remarkable," said Fleming Island coach Jeremiah Klosterman. "The key now is to keep the momentum flowing and not get too cocky."

Fleming Island, on April 5, staved off an early 3-0 lead to 7A-Bartram Trail (12-

6, ninth in 7A) just two days earlier and came back to win a 7-4 non-district showdown as the Golden Eagles bats never let up. Fleming Island continues its assault on Florida's top teams with 7A-Nease (19-4, 10th in 7A) and 4A-Trinity Christian (20-4, first in 4A, sixth in Florida). Fleming Island ends the regular season Fri., April 15 with 6A-Paxon (12-9). Fleming Island lost a 6-3 decision to Trinity Christian in their season opener on February 9.

With all that, Fleming Island and Oakleaf both sit atop district 2-8A with 4-1 records with the Knights holding a 2-1 win over the Golden Eagles as the trump card come district tournament seeding giving the Knights the number one slot and Fleming Island number two. Atlantic Coast sits precariously in the next slot at 3-2 in district play making the tournament, hosted by Atlantic Coast, one of the closest in north Florida. Atlantic Coast defeated Oakleaf for their lone district loss, but lost to Fleming Island and First Coast.

"It's crazy to think we beat all these other teams and still sit and number two," said Klosterman. "We will undoubtedly face Atlantic Coast's best pitcher and if we are off, the season could be done just as quick."

Against Providence, Thomas blasted a three run homer on his first at bat to score Billy Schopp who walked and Austin Morton who singled to set the tone for the Golden Eagles batting lineup. Thomas now has five homers and 27 RBIs for the year.

"Tanner is hot and he's a strong senior leader," said Klosterman. "He has been the guy that can get a big hit and ignite the rest of the dugout."

Cleanup batter Chris Hawkins singled before Cory Solomon doubled after outs to Will Sarsen and Matt Whetstone to give Fleming Island a 4-0 lead. Caleb Lanoux singled to score Solomon and Fleming Island pushed to a 5-0 lead. Providence would score a solo run off a hit batter and

SEE BASEBALL, 39



Fleming Island senior pitcher Zack Blankenship has gotten stronger as the season has progressed to lead Golden Eagles staff.



CORRESPONDENT PHOTO BY RAY DIMONDA

Spartans go to battle

St. Johns Country Day School pitcher Troy Myers is top hurler for Spartans who will be battling with to unhinged top-ranked St. Joseph Academy in district 2-3A and second seed University Christian.

Baseball Districts

Districts (April 18-22)

Regions (Quarters 5A-9A Wed., April 27)
(Semifinals 1A-4A Thurs., April 28)
(Semifinals 5A-9A May 3)
(Finals 1A-4A May 3)(Finals 5A-9A May 10)

State Championships May 11-May 21

JetBlue Park, Fort Myers

1A-4A State Championships

Wed., May 11- 2A, 1A Semifinals

(10 a.m, 1p.m. and 4 p.m., 7 p.m.)

Thurs., May 12 - 2A, 1A championships

(4:05 p.m., 7:35 p.m.)

Fri., May 13 - 4A, 3A semifinals (10 a.m., 1 p.m. and 4 p.m., 7 p.m.)

Sat., May 14 - 4A, 3A championships (4:05 p.m. and 7:35 p.m.)

5A-6A State Championships

Wed., May 16 - 6A, 5A semifinals (10 a.m., 1 p.m., 4 p.m. & 7 p.m.)

Thurs., May 19 - 7A semifinals (10 a.m. and 1 p.m.), 6A, 5A state championships (4:05 p.m. and 7:35 p.m.)

Fri., May 20- 9A-8A semifinals (10 a.m., 1 p.m., 4 p.m. & 7 p.m.)

Sat., May 21- 7A, 8A, 9A championships (12:35 p.m., 4:05 p.m., 7:35 p.m.)



STAFF PHOTO BY RANDY LEFKO

Keystone Heights senior Wyatt Harvin got the Indians to the region semifinals last year and must figure way to repeat with new district lineup.

Sports Briefs

Wright holds power bat for Lynn University

By Barbara Boxleitner
Special to Clay Today

BOGA RATON – Leanne Wright has been a

leading power source for the Lynn University softball team.

Through 40 games, the junior tied for the team lead with five home runs and led the squad with 22 runs batted in. The Oakleaf High School graduate hit .242.



Former Fleming Island High ace Kaitlyn "KK" Leddy has six wins at North Dakota State University, now 23-12 overall.

"She's one of our most consistent players," Lynn head coach Amy Bellisari said. "She works really hard."

"She has a very high softball IQ," the coach said.

Wright typically is third or fourth in the batting order. She had a season-high eight-game hitting streak March 12 to 25, with three multihit efforts. She had a season-best three hits in four at-bats during a March 19 loss to Southern Connecticut State University.

The left fielder had a .974 fielding percentage in 76 chances.

Baseball Roundup

CARLINVILLE III. – Blackburn College sophomore Shane Lewis hit .283 through 24 games. Previously at Middleburg high, the infielder had 10 RBIs.

Chipola College sophomore outfielder Reese Cooley batted .278 through 31 games. The past Golden Eagle had eight home runs, second on the squad, and 25 RBIs. He added 11 stolen bases in 12 attempts.

Santa Fe College freshman pitcher Kyle Morton had a 4-2 record and 4.10 earned run average in 10 games. The right-hander out of Fleming Island High fielded all seven of his chances.

Florida A&M University redshirt senior Marlon Gibbs batted .290 through 30 games, all starts. The Orange Park High graduate had three home runs and 19 RBIs.

Formerly at Clay High School, Jake Frisosky hit .278 in 30 games for Webber International University. The junior first baseman had two home runs and 10 RBIs.

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Ridgeview boys win Don Hall title

Districts this week

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

ORANGE PARK – Ridgeview High's boys team garnered key team points in the field events to take the team trophy at the Don Hall Track Invitational held Friday at Orange Park High School. Atlantic Coast High edged out Nease High for the girls title.

With just two relay wins; the boys 4 x 800 and the boys 4 x 400, Panther coach Al Nesi, Jr., placed enough athletes in enough events with top five finishes to take the title with no individual champions. The 4 x 800 team of Nathaniel Desgoutte, Joel Nesi, Andrew Smith and Julian Suarez won by six seconds over Nease with an eight minute, 41.41 second split while the 4 x 400 of Desgoutte, Smith, Devon Fertit and Christopher Schaefer punched up a 3:38.75 winning time again with Nease second, this time nearly five seconds behind.

In the long jump and triple jump, Ridgeview sprinter/jumper Marcus Gomez got seconds with a 20'-9" long jump and a 42'-7.75" runnerup in the triple jump to Middleburg High freshman Marcus Floyd



Orange Park distance runner John Bear makes strong move in Don Hall 800 meters.

who won with a 43'-9.5" triple jump. Gomez also took fourth in the 100 meters with Floyd second to Ed White's Cameron Boldon's 10.60 time. Floyd ran 10.85 while Gomez went 11.16.

For the girls, Ridgeview, led by a first in the 400 from freshman Chereece McEwan



Ridgeview High sprinter Marcus Gomez pushes at start next to Clay High's Roshawn Boswell in Don Hall 100 meter dash in Friday's annual track meet honoring former OPHS coach Don Hall.

and a first in the 3200 from freshman Alisia Honyumptera, was top county team at third behind Atlantic Coast and Nease with Orange Park a close fourth followed by Middleburg and Clay. Orange Park's boys finished fifth with Middleburg seventh and Clay 11th.

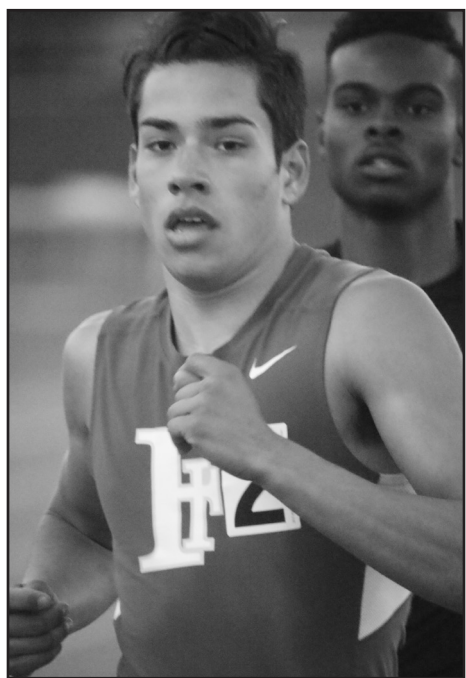
Orange Park sprinter Candice Childs continued her top finishes in the 100 meters with a winning 12.27 split over three Atlantic Coast sprinters. Raider teammate Angela Dimichele finished sixth in 12.76 with Clay High's Erykah Murray ninth in 13.10. Dimichele later finished fifth in the

200 in 26.62 with Chloe Ways of Nease the winner in 25.55. Childs and Dimichele later teamed with Talezah Craggette and Neahmija Sanchez to take second in the 4 x 100 relay behind Atlantic Coast. Ed White edged Ridgeview in the boys 4 x 100.

In the hurdles, Orange Park's Kate Berlin finished third in the 100 hurdles with Ridgeview freshman Glenn Rodgers taking third in the boys 110 hurdles.

Ridgeview's Desgoutte and Orange Park's John Bear went 2-3 in the 800 with both just under 2:10. Nease's Jonathan

SEE PANTHERS, 41



Fleming Island junior Cameron Dill and Oakleaf senior David Hall are top contenders to push into regions after Wednesday districts.

Hall, Dill to face 800 slugfest

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

OAKLEAF – With some district rearrangements for the upcoming track championships, top draws will be Oakleaf High senior distance ace David Hall, fifth in 3A at 800 meters last year, battling with formidable

Oakleaf to take on track power at Flagler

challenges from district 1-4A champions Flagler Palm Coast, Orange Park sprinter Candice Childs in the 100s and 200s where she has stayed in touch with some of the area's fastest sprinters, Middleburg High freshman Marcus Floyd with his sub-50 second 400s and sub-11 second 100s and Fleming Island shotputter John Broyles, who hoisted a 50-plus foot toss this year after finishing fifth in regions last year.

Middleburg High pole vaulter Samantha Stelmaszek has bettered her 10 foot seventh place 3A finish of last year with an 11'-6" vault this year and will be a key favorite to get to the podium at a higher level in 2016.

Hall, with a handful of sub-1:57 800s already this year and a 4:21 mile, treks into fast and dangerous land in Flagler with the district harboring 16 sub-2:00 half milers this season with senior Justin Pacifico tops the state rankings at 1:51 at the recent Pepsi Relays at the University of Florida. Hall finished eighth at the Pepsi Relays with a 1:55.52 and has a winning 4:21.47 mile effort at the UNF Spring Break Invite with 4:14 the state's top time. Fleming Island junior Cameron Dill has blasted a couple of sub-2:00 800s and a 1:56 relay leg at the UNF Spring Break Invite and will add to the track excitement

in Flagler. Dill outsprinted Hall at the Clay County Championships with a winning 2:01.34 effort in March.

Oakleaf's girls have dominated the jumps and sprints in 3A, but they lose district and region champ Ka'Tia Seymour to Palatka this year. Jumpers Jaqueline Thomas and Osa Obasuyi both return to attack the triple jump where both made the 3A state meet last year.

Childs has hovered in the near-12 second 100 meters range and is a strong finisher in the 200 plus a lethal leg of the Lady Raiders 4 x 100 relay. Childs recently clocked 12.27 to win the Don Hall Track Meet 100 final with an 11.81 leading the state rankings.

Ridgeview has experienced trackster Marcus Gomez in the long and triple jumps and a sprint or two with enough savvy to get top four finishes at districts and regions. Distance ace Alisia Honyumptera blasted the region cross country field chock full of Bolles and Bishop Kenny power to make the state meet and has enough moxie to give the 1600 or 3200 a region run. Shotputter Cra'Sean Carey has improved immensely in both the shot and discus and could return to the 3A state meet.

St. Johns Country Day School senior Madeline Schultz finished third in the 1A

400 last year, but has targeted the long, triple and high jumps this year with youngsters Helena Kummings and Mackenzie Glenn possible region invitees in the 3200.

In district action this week with top four finishes moving on to region championship meets a week later, Fleming Island and Oakleaf travel to Flagler Palm Coast on Wed., April 13 to take on defending champion Flagler High School. Oakleaf will be in their first district 1-4A championships after taking second in boys and girls scores to Creekside in last year's district 4-3A championships. Top district 1-4A returners for Fleming Island are senior John Broyles, second in shot put; Valesha Watson, third in shot put; Kaitlyn Paul, fourth in shot put; Devin Middle, sixth in 100 hurdles and third in 300 hurdles; Luc Larson, seventh in 110 hurdles; John Hashtak, seventh in 800; Ashley Nelson, third in 200; Julie Franzoni, eighth in 3200 and Evan Fuller, 12th in 3200.

For Oakleaf, top threat is distance runner David Hall, a district champion in the mile last year and with a 4:21 mile this year and a 1:55 800. Hall took fifth at the Class 3A championships in the 800 with a 1:56.28 time. Oakleaf had two other state

SEE KNIGHTS, 41

April 16 races: Run to Sun 8k, Seamark Mudder



Left: The annual Seamark Mudder run, a 3.1K race with 25 mud-filled, climbing and slippery slide obstacles is a featured race at the Seamark Ranch in Green Cove Springs that starts with waves at 8:30 a.m. and goes until 2 p.m. and benefits the Seamark Ranch, a home for children in crisis.

Below: The annual Florida Striders Run to the Sun 8K race starts and finishes at the BestBet of Orange Park with an 8 a.m. start that benefits area elementary school run/walk clubs.



SPECIAL TO CLAY TODAY

Disney champs

The Clay County Hoyas Under-17 boys basketball team shows off their team trophy after winning the AAU Super Regional Disney Easter Classic. The Hoyas, coached by Deivid Miller advanced with the tournament win to play in the AAU National Championships in Orlando in July. Pictured front from left: Jonathan Barnes, DJ Stubbs, Eric Collins, Diallo Bryant, Dy Stubbs and Ty McBride. Back row from left: Coach Kenny Mitchell, Brandon Maloney, Tajon Davis, Warren Miller, Jacari Cicero, Colin Wilson, Jordan Bundy and Coach Deivid Miller.

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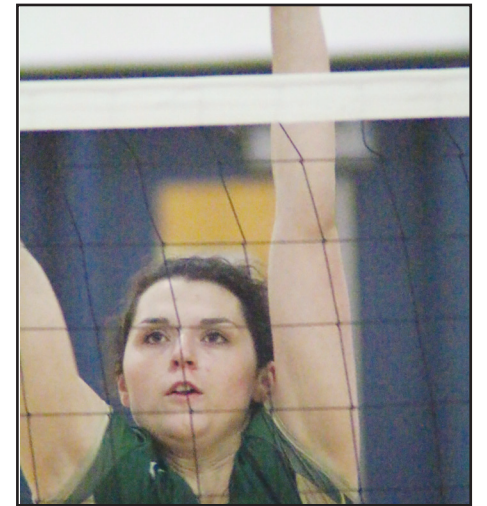
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STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

University of Florida will get two more Clay High swimmers after Dakota Mahaffey, seated left, and Sherridon Dressel signed to compete in Gainesville next year.



Top left: Fleming Island High libero Sydney Bates signed to continue her volleyball playing days at Towson State University in Maryland.

Top right: Fleming Island middle blocker Macey Gardella will continue her volleyball playing at Sewanee University in Tennessee.

Left: Middleburg High pitcher Savannah Combs will continue her softball playing at Florida State College-Jacksonville.



Middleburg High catcher and infielder Alyssa Rosenbaum has signed to continue her softball playing days at Tallahassee Community College.



Fleming Island High middle blocker Olivia Rutledge has signed with Montevallo University in Alabama to continue her volleyball playing days.

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Junior high baseball/softball teams gear up for championship week April 21-28



Lakeside Junior High second baseman Calvin Gunsaulus turns and throws to complete a double play in Gators 7-5 win over Orange Park Junior High School.



Lakeside Junior High pitcher Ben Johnson lets fly in Gators 7-5 win over Orange Park Junior High on Friday at Orange Park High School.



Orange Park Junior High School pitcher Richard Long put up a tough fight in Wildcats 7-5 loss to Lakeside Friday at a special showcase at Orange Park High School. Area junior high teams will start championship tournament play on April 21-25 at Lakeside Junior High School.



Lakeside Junior High hurdler Albert Williams, here battling with Orange Park Junior High in recent dual match, will be striding out in the Clay County Junior High Track and Field Championships to be held Fri., April 15 at Orange Park High School.

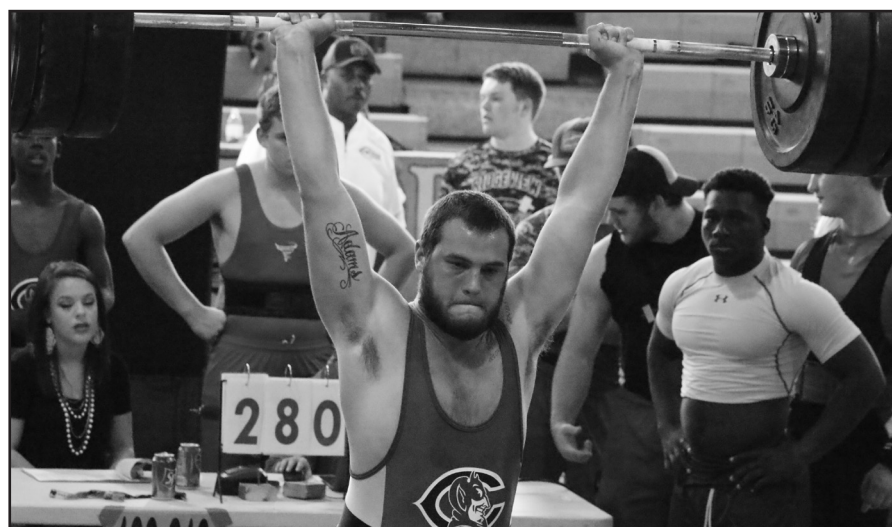


STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Above: Fleming Island singles region champion David Burns won his opening match at the Class 4A tournament in Altamonte Springs on Mon., April 11 7-5, 6-1, but fell in the quarterfinals 6-3, 6-1.

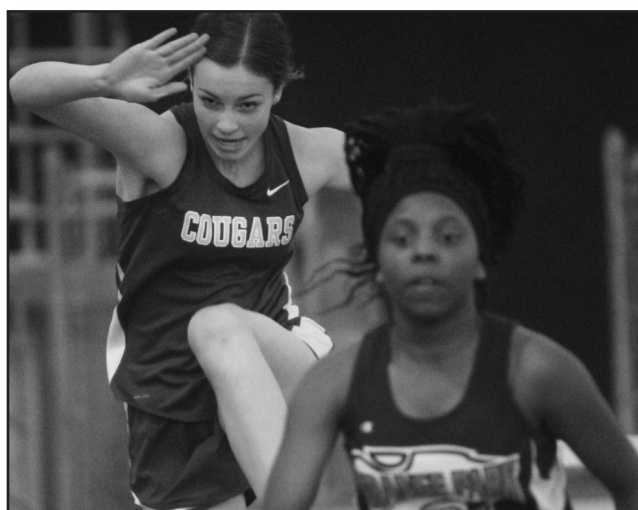


Left: Fleming Island's number one doubles team of Mark Suhrer, pictured here, and David Burns won their Class 4A tournament opener in overtime 4-6, 7-5, 1-0 (10-7) to advance to the semifinals against number one seed Ferguson (Miami). Burns and Suhrer had a first round bye. In Class 2A, Ridgeview High's James Bratt won his first round match 1-6, 7-6 (0), 10-3 in extra sets before losing in the quarterfinals 6-2, 6-1.



STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Clay High senior Mike Adams finishes a successful lift at the recent region 1-1A championships to qualify to lift at the April 15-16 state championship meet in Kissimmee.



Green Cove Springs hurdler Sarah Zima will be competing at the Clay County Junior High Track and Field Championships on Fri., April 15 at Orange Park High School.



Oakleaf High pitcher Will Pillsbury is the heart of the Knights district 2-8A number one ranking with his mid-season return from a minor injury.



Oakleaf High baserunner Keegan Barrs gets snagged on a third base rundown in Knights 3-2 loss to 3A-University Christian April 11 in Jacksonville.

Baseball

from page 33

an error to close the gap to 5-1.

In the third, Fleming Island piled on two more runs with Sarsen walking, Whetstone singling and Solomon hitting a fielder's choice grounder. Lanoux again added a final run with a single that put the Golden Eagles up 7-1.

In the fourth, back to back doubles from Schopp and Morton set up Thomas for his second base-clearing blast and an 11-1 lead that pushed to 12-1 with Whetstone doubling to score Hawkins who doubled after Thomas' homer.

Providence answered with two runs off a single and a homer to make the score

12-3. Against Bartram Trail, the Bears opened with a leadoff triple on starting pitcher Zack Blankenship then added a walk, a single, a double and a second triple by leadoff batter Tanner Murphy to score three fast runs.

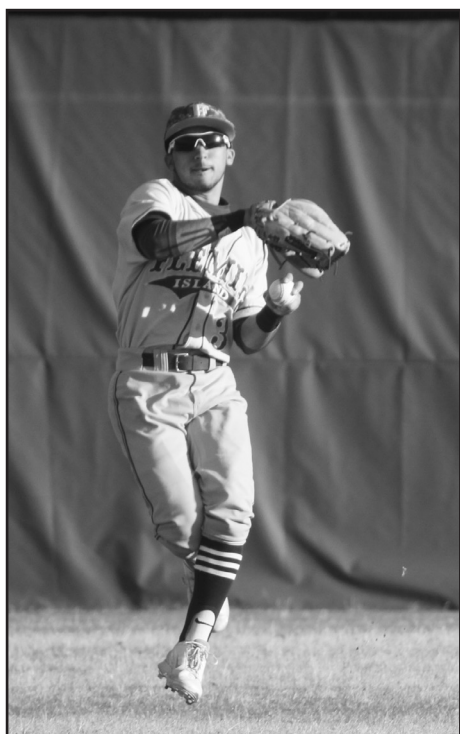
With Blankenship settling down and closing down the Bartram Trail attack with

six groundouts, a strikeout and two flyouts, Thomas answered the call with a homer in the fourth with Morton again in scoring position after a double to put the game at 3-2.

In the sixth, Bartram added a run off a walk and a double, but Fleming Island doubled down in the seventh with a Justin Stadelmaier single, a walk to Schopp and run-scoring singles to Morton and Thomas

to push the score to 4-4 in the seventh to force extra innings.

Fleming Island punched in again in the eighth with Lanoux walking, a single by Stadelmaier a walk to Schopp plus three errors from Bartram Trail to win 7-4. Whetstone finished on the mound for Fleming Island.



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RANDY LEFKO

Overall winner Eric Nkaimbi flies through the finish line with handful of color as finish line "sprayers" await him crossing the finish line.



Three somewhat decorated runners, left to right, Savannah Martinez, Tristin Quiett and Raven Shannon, get set for some running action at the OPPAA Color Me Rad 5K.



The Orange Park Performing Arts Academy staff and Color Me Rad 5K runners get ready for speedy action.



Mother-daughter Roberta and Silvia Tomlinson venture through cloud of color and spray at finish of Color Me Rad 5K staged at the OPPAA campus on Saturday.



Runner Cameron Coaxum blasts through cloud of color at finish line.



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Knights

from page 35

meet qualifiers that return with Jaqueline Thomas and Osa Obasuyi finishing 10th and 14th in the triple jump, respectively.

Other Oakleaf athlete returning finals finishers in district 4-3A last year were Nia Anthony, fourth in high jump; Madeline Sgro, third in pole vault; Anthony Norris, fourth in triple jump and fifth in long jump; Jaqueline Thomas, second in triple jump; Osa Obasuyi, third in triple jump; Melvin Briley, fifth in triple jump; Makayla Stewart, sixth in 100 and sixth in 200; Nick Roberts, seventh in 100; Rashaan Swain, third in 200; Judah Brown, eighth in 200; Ashley Brooks, seventh in 400; Cheyenne Thompson, eighth in 400; Kyle McDaniels, sixth in 400; David Hall, first in 1600 and second in 800.

In district 4-3A, Middleburg and Orange Park travel to St. Augustine on Wed., April 20 for their championships. Top returner is Middleburg High pole vaulter Samantha Stelmaszek who finished seventh at the state meet in the pole vault at 10 feet. Stelmaszek has jumped 11'-6" this year with 12'-4" the top vault in Florida. For Orange Park, returning with top finishes at last year's district meet are sprinter Candice Childs, third in 100 and fourth in 200 and



STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Two key parts of the Oakleaf High track attack are Jaqueline Thomas, left, and Osa Obasuyi who both competed in the the triple jump at last year's Class 3A state meet. Oakleaf is now 4A.

Katie Berlin, fourth in 100 hurdles.

In district 4-2A, Clay and Ridgeview, formerly of 4-3A, travel to Bolles on Wed., April 13. Ridgeview drops to 2A with top district 4-3A finishers Marcus Gomez, sixth in long jump; Jacolbi Sampson, third in triple jump; Ciara Walker, fifth in discus and fifth in shot put; Cra'Sean Carey, second in shot put, sixth in 100 hurdles and sixth in 300 hurdles; Mozart Louis-Charles, first in shot

put; Autumn Woodard, eighth in 100 and Nathaniel Desgoutte, 11th in 1600. Freshman distance runner Alisia Honyumputera, a state meet cross country qualifier, will be competitive in either the 1600 or 3200.

In district 5-2A, Keystone Heights travels to Eastside High in Gainesville on Thurs., April 14.

In district 4-1A, St. Johns Country Day School travels to Bishop Snyder on Tues.,



Middleburg High pole vaulter and sprinter Samantha Stelmaszek has improved to 11'-6" this year in the pole vault and should better her seventh place finish at 10 feet in last year's 3A state championships.

April 12. Top returners are 400 meter specialist Madeline Schultz who finished third at the Class 1A state meet. Former 2A track powers Snyder and Trinity Christian drop into the 1A ranks this year and will offer formidable challenges. St. Johns coach Jay Birmingham likes distance aces Helena Kummings and Mackenzie Glenn to do well with shotput/discus thrower Emily Patterson much improved.

Panthers

from page 35

Jackson won in 2:06.36.

For Middleburg, senior Samantha Stelmaszek won the triple jump at 35'-.25" and took second in the long jump to lead the Lady Broncos. Orange Park's Maxine Knox, Berlin and Shakarri Mack finished 3-4-5 in the long jump. Mack finished third in the triple jump.

For the Broncos, Floyd won the 400 in 51.40.

In the girls discus, Middleburg's Dakota



STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Don Hall action

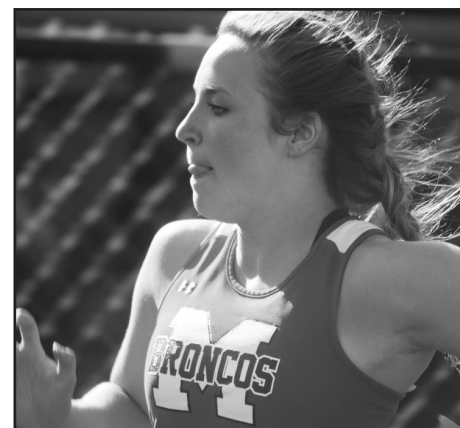
Top: Clay High sprinter Christy Carlisle blasts from start of 100 meter dash.

Left: Ridgeview High miler Joel Nesi tracks down opponent in early laps of 1600.

Right: Middleburg High hurdler Kaitlyn Howard concentrates on steps in her 100 meter hurdles at Don Hall Invitational.

Peppard, St. Johns Country Day School's Emily Patterson and Ridgeview's Cecelia Walker went 2-3-4, all with throws over 100 feet. Alex Mezera of Orange Park threw 144'-4" to take second in the boys discus behind state number one ranked

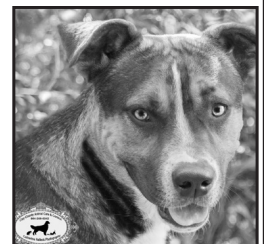
Eron Carter of Palatka's 178'-4" winning toss. Ridgeview's Cra'Sean Garey won the girls shot put with Clay's Autumn Null third. Mozart Louis-Charles of Ridgeview and Shawn Bizzell of Orange Park finished 2-3 behind Carter in the shot put.



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OPAA Raiders in championship final

The Orange Park Athletic Association Raiders youth football team recently won their Florida Spring Youth Football League East Conference championship in the Mitey Mites division and will be playing in the state championship game April 24 in Tarpon Springs. The team is coached by Bryan Black with assistants Charles Jewell and Kasey Davis. The team members are Cibastian Broughton (No. 1), Aiden Postemski (No. 4), Xavier Branch (No. 8), Chase Black (No. 9), Jaden Williams (No. 10), Dylan Greene-Miles (No. 18), Nathaniel Wood (No. 24), Joseph Restall (No. 30), D'Mari Bruce (No. 44), Ceboliz Williams (No. 52) and Brennan Davis (No. 66). The Raiders finished with a 4-2 record and will face the Gulf Coast Cyclones for the title. The Raiders won 22-0 over the Down South Ballers in their regional playoff game.



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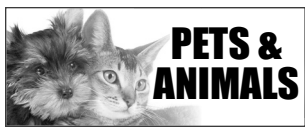
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Features, business profiles and community news are also part of the gig. Ideally, candidates will have some experience in small towns and know how to be diplomatic in

the kind of place where everyone knows everyone. The job emphasizes reporting and writing, a lot, for a weekly paper with Web updates throughout the week. Photography experience is required. Thorough knowledge of strong visuals to accompany your writing is a must! It's a family-owned small town paper. We're looking to act fast but get a good candidate who wants to be part of the community for a while.

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