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Vol. 4 • No. 11



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This aerial photograph was taken by a drone and shows the progress of Discovery Oaks Elementary School in the Eagle Landing section of Oakleaf. The school is on track to open for the start of the 2018-19 school year.

School "Y" no more Meet Discovery Oaks Elementary

By Eric Cravey
The Oakleaf

FLEMING ISLAND – It not only came with a unanimous vote from the school board, but a letter of support from Florida's premier space agency.

The Clay County School Board voted Nov. 2 to named Elementary School "Y" Discovery Oaks Elementary and with that vote, also named the school's mascot the Voyagers.

"With the next generation's educational voyage beginning in elementa-

ry school, what better way to inspire our youth than to name their newest school after one of our nation's most storied and historic vehicles: Space Shuttle OV-103, aka DISCOVERY, and to have as a mascot the name of one of humanity's greatest scientific instruments: the Voyager spacecraft, the only sign of man beyond our Solar System," stated Frank DiBello, president of Space Florida, in his letter of support.

SEE DISCOVERY, 15

School Names

WE HAVE A WINNER

Discovery Oaks Elementary School
-Voyagers-

DOE

See letter of support from Frank DiBello, President Space Florida

Bear Creek Elementary School
-Cubs-

BCE

Canopy Oaks Elementary School
-Cardinals-

COE

Mini 'trash mountains' aid in Irma cleanup

By Kile Brewer
The Oakleaf

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – For Clay County Emergency Management Director John Ward and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, roadside trash piles are a thing of beauty.

The sites, nine of which have been activated in Clay County, are currently acting as overflow sites where debris can be stored to prevent backups at the Rosemary Hill Solid Waste Management Facility. The sites also allow crews to focus on cleaning up residential streets and yards before moving all the debris to its final destination in a Georgia landfill. Clay County also has access to two additional sites in Bradford County.

Though most residents wouldn't welcome the sight of construction debris piled up alongside a stretch of rural highway, those directly involved in the post-Hurricane Irma trash frenzy see the sites as a sign of progress, a light at the end of the tunnel.

"People see mounds of trash piled up, but we want them to know that

SEE MOUNTAIN, 4



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Dark fiber loop in Clay's future?

By Debra W. Buehn
The Oakleaf

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – From high-tech communication ideas to “low-tech” loving animals, the Board of County Commissioners took a look at proposals for the upcoming Capital Improvement Plan for the coming years at a workshop held Nov. 13.

While the CIP is generally reviewed every 5-years, the county, which is trying to look at a bigger picture with more vision geared to the future, also included ideas and situations that could come up in the next 10 years.

The BCC heard from a number of county officials and department heads who made their cases for what they believe will make their areas of expertise run better and more efficiently and help the county and its residents.

“This is a starting point,” said Stephanie Kopelousos, county manager, explaining that staff had put together a list of what members have seen and heard are the wants of the community, and what the community might need to best function. The

request from staff to the BCC is for direction on what additional information it needs to make decisions and what becomes a priority so funding can be divided up properly and maximized.

Among items discussed was the idea of a dark fiber loop, something that helps provide top-level, high-speed internet.

Troy Nagle, director of Management Information Services for the county, presented the information to the BCC, saying, among other things, it could be important to economic development.

A dark fiber loop involves an entity – such as the county – purchasing fibers used for high-speed internet and the like, laying the fibers underground and then using them for the county, its residents and its businesses. Such a project could either be done by the county alone, which would then rent out whatever fiber it did not use, essentially making it its own utility, or in a partnership, such as a public-private partnership. Either way, the money spent is essentially recouped by renting out what fiber is

not used by the county.

The idea appears to have support from the BCC.

BCC Vice Chair Diane Hutchings said she has studied the idea for a long time, and believes it is the way to go.

“I frankly see no downside,” she said. “Economic development-wise, it puts you in the game for companies that need that dependable high-speed fiber. We just need a plan.”

Hutchings said she believes a public-private partnership is probably the way to go.

BCC Chairman Wayne Bolla also backed the idea of dark fiber.

“That is probably the single most – other than getting the school district to Number One for industrial development – (thing) I’ve seen fly through here. If we could get world-class internet back in this county so that IT outfits would want to come here, that would be something really positive we could all do without spending a ton of money.”

But Bolla also said he also wanted to make sure the project resulted in getting access to the rural areas.

“So, I would prefer to see the model more like we run it and we can tell them where to go with it,” he said.

For Commissioner Gavin Rollins, the idea of getting to rural areas is also important. Rollins lives in Keystone Heights and has often had trouble with internet service and related technology.

“There’re some points that are rough. There’s just very little connectivity,” Rollins said.

Commissioner Mike Cella, who said “in theory” he was for the whole idea, also preferred the concept of the county having control, had another suggestion of hiring a company to run things and have them take their percentage, as opposed to the county just going in as a partner with someone.

Commissioner Gayward Hendry could not attend the meeting.

On a somewhat different note, the commission also heard from Christina Sutherin, Animal Services Division director. Sutherin spoke about the

SEE LOOP, 12

Bradley will ‘hit the ground running’ as Senate budget chief

By A.G. Gancarski
FloridaPolitics.com

TALLAHASSEE – Northeast Florida may have had one of its biggest days in some time recently in Tallahassee.

State Sen. Audrey Gibson (D-Jacksonville) won a contested election Nov. 6 to become the Leader Designate for Senate Democrats, replacing Jeff Clemens, who resigned after news of an affair with a lobbyist broke.

And before that, Sen. Rob Bradley, a Fleming Island Republican, took over the Senate Appropriations Chair from embattled Jack Latvala (R-Clearwater).

Bradley addressed the regional significance of the twin triumphs.

“I’m so happy for Audrey. She’s a pragmatic leader who works well with senators from both parties. Very

effective,” Bradley said. “When you think about the fact that we have Senators Bean and Hutson from our area, both highly regarded, and Senator Gibson will be leading the Senate Democrats,” Bradley added, “I’m excited because we have a strong regional team. We all work well together.”

Bradley also discussed the move to the Appropriations Chair.

“Everyone has a different style. I’m just focused on getting the job done with as little drama as possible. There’s been enough drama in politics lately. It’s time to just roll up our sleeves and get the



Sen. Rob Bradley

job done,” Bradley said, noting that he’s not new to the appropriations game.

“I’ve spent a lot of my Senate career working in the Appropriations arena,” Bradley noted, “having chaired three different budget subcommittees.”

“We will hit the ground running. President [Joe] Negron and I have worked together for years and had success together, and we have a great group of budget sub chairs. The transition has already been smooth,” Bradley added.

Bradley is noted for a big-picture vision – one of the reasons he was able to push Senate Bill 10 through in the last Legislative Session – and he is very well-positioned to carry key priorities, such as his proposal to allocate \$100 million for Florida Forever – a program that has been

underfunded since its inception.

His comments in a Senate panel Nov. 6 bear noting, in context of deployment of those funds; at long last, Bradley is positioned to ensure that North Florida gets its share.

“The Aquifer doesn’t just exist in one area of the state. The precious ecosystems don’t just exist in one area of the state. The entire state is unusual as an ecosystem,” Bradley said. “That’s why you have the Acquisition and Restoration Council ... and do it on a basis grounded in science. And really sometimes that ends up with money going to one area of the state or the other, but I think it’s less parochial.”

With Sens. Bradley and Gibson in key leadership roles, it’s entirely possible that the time is now for North Florida’s bipartisan, yet largely collaborative, delegation.



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S.B. Jennings' alumni go back to school, 50 years later

By Kile Brewer
The Oakleaf

ORANGE PARK – For one evening, Bryan Benda and Russell Payne got to go back to elementary school.

The S. Bryan Jennings alumni returned to their old stomping grounds last Friday evening for the school's 50th anniversary celebration, and were instantly transported back to the mid-1970s when they were students.

"It's amazing how similar it is," Payne said.

"To come back and visit really brings back memories of the school," Benda added.

The men stood shoulder-to-shoulder as they flipped through old yearbooks and photographs that were on display in the school's library, where some of the books may still have the two men's names scrawled onto their check-out cards. They discussed minor changes, such as the relocation of the principal's office, and that their old playground had been turned into a pond. An old oak tree that contained hundreds of football-torn t-shirts had been cut down, too, but overall the campus felt, and smelled the same.

"The smell of the wood in all the classrooms brought back memories for me," Payne said. Inspired by that notion, Benda led his friend to their old art classroom, "We're gonna' go smell the art room!" he said before leaving the room – although the art room is not in the same location.

Aside from the walk down memory lane offered up in the SBJ library, the cafeteria served as the hub of activity during the half-century celebration. The schedule was packed with speakers, including former principals and teachers, and performances by the school's chorus, and the Orange Park Junior High School band, whose membership contains former SBJ students.

Beverly Oglesby taught at the school from 1971 until her retirement in 2009. When it came time to celebrate the school's first 50 years, Oglesby was asked to speak about the nearly 40 years she spent on the faculty.

"A lot of things have changed since 1971," she said after taking the stage. The bulk of the changes she listed consisted of changes to the



STAFF PHOTO BY KILE BREWER

Retired S. Bryan Jennings Elementary School teacher Beverly Oglesby, who taught multiple grade levels in her 38-year career, speaks to the attendees Nov. 3 during the school's 50th Anniversary celebration.

SEE SCHOOL, 10

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Mountain

from page 1

it's for the greater common good," said Russell Simpson, DEP ombudsman. "There is an end in sight."

Simpson said the DEP anticipates debris collection sites to close just after the start of the new year. At that things might finally start to go back to normal, following months of debris collection from one of the worst storms in Clay County history.

"After Matthew we picked up 110,000 cubic yards over about three months," Ward said. "[After Irma] we've collected about 280,000, and we've got about another 100,000 to go. It'll be more than triple the amount of debris."

The sites are opened on an as-needed basis and many opened immediately following the start of post-storm cleanup. However, the county has been forced to extend their efforts and continue opening collection sites as others fill up. One site, located adjacent to the Oak Grove Baptist Church on County Road 215, was opened after the closure of the County Road 218 bridge which prevented access to Rosemary Hill. The site is home to at least two large mountains of trash left in the wake of Irma. For Ward, his main concern is getting debris out of people's yards and off the streets as quickly as possible.

"I want my haulers to get picked up and turned around," Ward said. "We try to create enough sites so they can turn around quicker and get back out to get more debris picked up."

Though the number of sites has grown, it is not as simple as driving trash to a county-owned piece of land and starting a pile. There are tight DEP regulations that must be followed in order to operate these



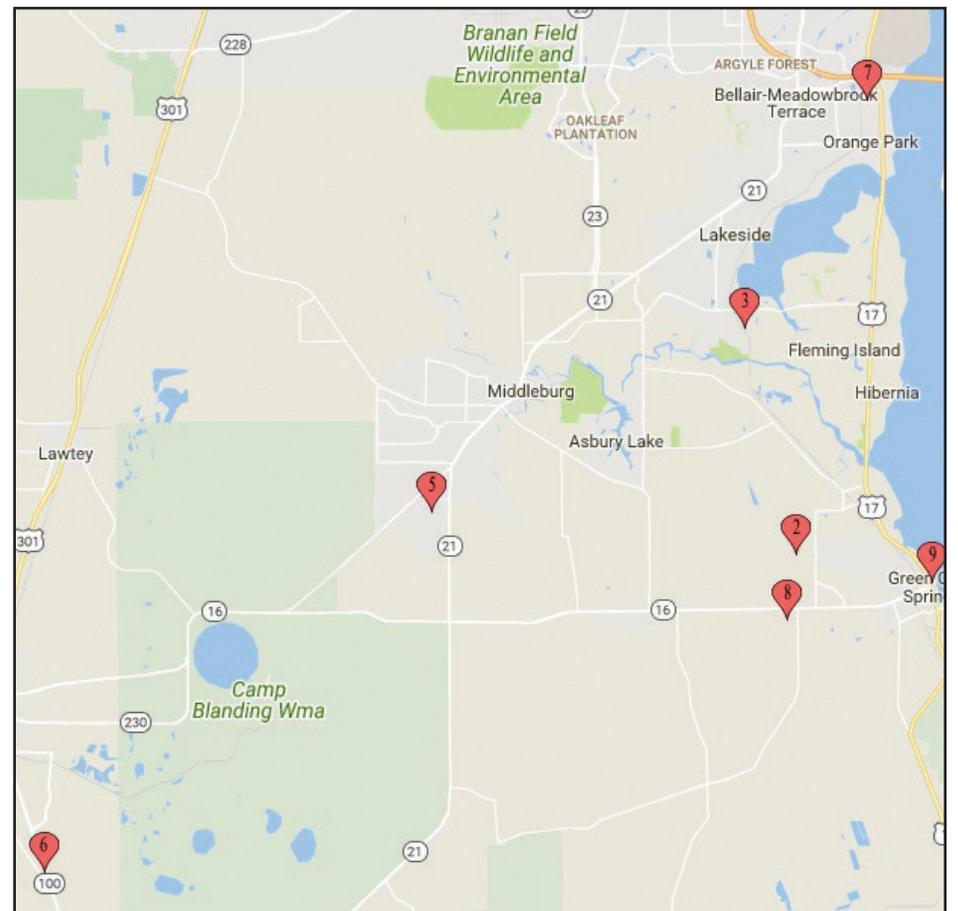
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A temporary Hurricane Irma debris storage site is shown here off County Road 215 just south of Middleburg. The site is a temporary home to a mix of construction and vegetative debris while local removal contractors prepare to move everything to landfills in Georgia with which Clay County has longstanding dumping agreements.

temporary sites.

Brian Durden, an environmental consultant at DEP, explained that the county must meet certain guidelines before activating a temporary disposal area. Following their initial request to DEP, the county must provide information on what contractor or contractors will be operating at the site. The site must also be secured by fencing so that citizens cannot dump their trash or rifle through what has been dropped off. Durden said that once these boxes are checked, his organization will look at overhead maps to see if there are any obvious concerns for placing a waste collection site on the property.

According to DEP's rules for the sites, there are three types of collection areas allowed: construction, vegetative and mixed, which combines



The map marks some of the DEP-approved temporary debris dumping sites Clay County is using to store waste before it is transported to a Georgia landfill the county has used for years.

the other two. Construction debris is not allowed within 500 feet of a potable water well, and within 200 feet of a wetland or body of water. The restrictions on vegetative debris are less, at 100 and 50 feet respectively, which allows more of those collection sites than construction or mixed.

Once these criteria are met and confirmed by DEP the site will be allowed to begin operation on a temporary basis, and will always see a field visit from a DEP inspec-

tor within the first couple weeks of operation to make sure nothing has been overlooked and the site is continuing to run smoothly. The inspector will return after all the waste has been removed to do a closing inspection, ideally seeing that the contractor has left no traces of debris on the property. After DEP clears the site the county will be eligible to apply for reimbursement for cleanup costs from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.



STAFF PHOTO BY KILE BREWER

Oak Grove Baptist Church sits next to a county-owned property where leftover Hurricane Irma debris is being stored temporarily on its way to a Georgia landfill. Crews are working to get everything off the street and into temporary storage areas as a means of cleaning up the community before transporting the waste elsewhere.

School district ramps up classroom tech

By Kile Brewer
The Oakleaf

MIDDLEBURG – Clay County District Schools are now more connected than ever with almost 3,000 wireless access points throughout the district.

This number is up from just over 1,000 at the beginning of the 2017-18 school year, and the effort is part of a much larger three-month plan to ensure that every core classroom at every school will have the materials necessary to meet the tech needs of their lesson plans.

“We are now a totally wireless school, we have access points in every classroom,” said Laura Fogarty, principal at Tynes Elementary School.

Tynes hosted Superintendent Addison Davis last week after he reached out to the school to serve as a demonstrative model for the district’s recently-completed tech upgrades. The upgrades will allow

better access to the OneClay portal as well as the iReady and Achieve 3000 learning applications.

“We’ve got to stay connected and relevant,” Davis said. “The big thing for me is equity for our kids, and to make sure that they have the best tools that they need to compete and to be successful.”

While touring a couple of second grade classrooms at Tynes, the district’s updated model for education could be seen clearly. Teachers no longer stand in front of a room full of kids reviewing a chapter from a book and assigning a one-page homework assignment from that chapter. Now kids shift between about three stations within a core class, either in a small group with the teacher for that face-to-face traditional style of learning, or in groups with their peers working together to complete a task.



STAFF PHOTO BY KILE BREWER

Students work in a variety of learning situations in Michelle Cambron’s second-grade classroom at Tynes Elementary School. With the advent of technology-based learning classes, students rotate in and out of pen and pencil homework, time with the Chromebooks and more traditional lecture style teaching directly from Cambron.

SEE TECH, 12



STAFF PHOTOS BY KILE BREWER

Clay County District Schools Superintendent Addison Davis talks with a student at Tynes Elementary while touring the school to observe technology improvements implemented by the district.

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Shelter receives outpouring of aid, plans re-opening

By Kile Brewer
The Oakleaf

DOCTORS INLET – After Hurricane Irma hit in mid-September, the sign outside Safe Animal Shelter read “closed.”

Shelter Director Sherry Mansfield received numerous calls, emails and text messages from concerned friends of the shelter who were worried the storm had knocked them out for good.

“Everybody thought we were wiped out,” she said.

Mansfield quickly got volunteers out to fix the sign, adding the word temporarily, because she was determined to bring the shelter back as soon as possible, starting immediately after the storm.

“The first Saturday [after the storm hit] we held our cleanup day,”

Mansfield said. “We probably got about 50 or 60 people out here and carried out anything that could be carried out.”

During the initial cleanup, the shelter filled three large dumpsters, Mansfield said, before finally being able to get into the building’s struc-

ture and pressure wash everything before going in for more detailed cleaning.

As Black Creek spilled into the surrounding plots of land, the shelter found itself under between three and four feet of water. The water brought with it a slimy brown muck that got into every nook and cranny of the shelter. Mansfield said that in the two months since closing for the rebuild she has continued to find hidden pockets of flood water and mud.

Overall, the shelter estimates its total damages are around \$80,000, but through several grants from Petco, Petsmart, Adopt-A-Pet, and Best Friends Animal Society, some for as much as \$10,000, Mansfield felt they had a good standing to try and work toward opening back up much sooner than she had originally thought.

“Support from the community, and these organizations, it was just pouring in,” she said. “And it’s not just local, we’ve had donations and support from across the country.”

Through Facebook, people concerned for animal safety were able



STAFF PHOTO BY KILE BREWER

SAFE Animal Director Sherry Mansfield scouts a location in the repainted lobby for their framed mission statement as the shelter looks to open back up early next month.

to find out about Safe and read its story, next thing they knew, trucks and trailers started showing up to drop off pallets of supplies. Safe has received so much, in fact, that Mansfield has had to donate some of the stuff back to the county to be spread to other shelters in need. One morning, she said, they arrived to find a pallet of horse food blocking their door even though the shelter does not take in horses. It was draped in a

Texas flag. Mansfield said the selfless giving really helped her stay optimistic as she watched crews tear out drywall and rebuild the nonprofit’s building from the studs.

“I didn’t realize how appreciated we were,” Mansfield said. “It’s nice to have people who understand and appreciate what we’re doing here, it makes our job easier.”

SEE SHELTER, 7



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Shelter

from page 6

Mansfield also found a crucial player in the shelter's rehabilitation through a connection she made when looking for ways to save the hard drives from her mud-caked computers.

She contacted Jason Steedley, a Lake Asbury resident and owner of a local electronics repair business called Tech Resurrect. Steedley was not only able to save the files from the hard drives, but he also sourced, through a friend, two complete computer systems with printers for the shelter on which he reinstalled all their old files, and Steedley's connections didn't stop there. While helping out around the shelter, he discovered that their large air conditioning units had ended up on their sides and all the ductwork would need to be redone. Steedley contacted a buddy of his who does air conditioning work, and after a little volunteer work, the shelter's air conditioner was fixed for free.

"It's a network of people we have," Steedley said. "They've got new computers, new cabling, new phones are coming in Friday hope-

fully."

Steedley's work is not done. He continues to come forward with different ideas for things they could do to not just get the shelter back to normal, but to provide it with some technological upgrades at the same time.

After evacuating all the animals from the shelter, Mansfield found foster homes in a hurry as she moved into the home of a shelter board member while her own house started to take on water. Once the water receded, Mansfield said, many of the fostered animals found permanent homes with their foster parents, and others were sent around the country through the Humane Society. In total, they released about 25 dogs and around 50 cats to other states where they will, hopefully, find new homes.

Safe Animal Shelter currently cannot accept any new animals, but it will be back in operation soon. They have set their grand re-opening for Dec. 2 and expect to take in a few animals sometime between Thanksgiving Day and the first Saturday in December.

The event will take place at the shelter and be held from noon until five o'clock that afternoon. The shelter will provide snacks and refresh-



STAFF PHOTO BY KILE BREWER

The largest storage shed at SAFE Animal Shelter sits packed with supplies and food donated after the shelter was damaged tremendously by Hurricane Irma.

ments, as well as raffle prizes and discounted adoption fees as a thank you to the people who helped them

get through their hardships following September's flood.

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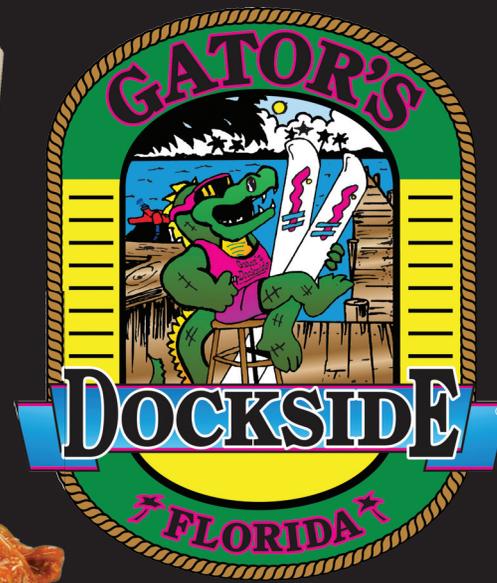
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Recovering Clay to raise funds in wake of Irma

By Wesley LeBlanc
The Oakleaf

MIDDLEBURG – Carole Gardner and her family moved into a house on the banks of Black Creek 16 years ago. Not once has her house ever flooded.

As Hurricane Irma began to make landfall in mid-September, Gardner and her family left with the clothes on their backs, the family dog and a generator. When they returned to where their house was located, they weren't met with the sight of their home, but rather, complete devastation.

"On 9/11, when Irma hit, our lives were changed forever," Gardner said.

Once the worst of Irma had passed, Gardner found herself on a boat, slowly making her way down the creek joined by her family and neighbors.

"As we kept going, I kept thinking, 'Oh my gosh, this is terrible,'" Gardner said.

And then she saw it.

"As we turned around a corner, I could see the first part of my house – a mother-in-law suite – and the water was up to the roof," Gardner said. "As we continued closer to my house, I realized our cars were gone and water had risen to five-and-a-half feet inside."

"Everything we had was destroyed," she continued.

Two days later, when she was able to return to the house by foot, her husband bashed open the front door to unveil a sight that still brings tears to Gardner's eyes.

"Everything in my house, my pictures, my furniture, all of it, was underwater," Gardner said. "My whole life was floating in front of me."

Despite having flood insurance and despite reaching out to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Gardner wasn't receiving any help.

"We've jumped through so many hoops and still, nothing," Gardner



STAFF PHOTO BY WESLEY LEBLANC

Bobby Ingram of the band 38 Special, left, talks with Rep. Travis Cummings (R-Orange Park) Nov. 9 at the Middleburg Boat Ramp and Park along Black Creek, the backdrop for a press conference announcing Recovering Clay, a new nonprofit aiming to help Irma victims.

said. Gardner isn't alone. Clay County resident Maury Kopman has faced the same obstacles with little to no avail.

"There's just so much red tape that you don't realize you have to cut through to get help," Kopman said.

Fortunately for Gardner and Kopman, Recovering Clay, a new nonprofit organization and extension of Mercy Support Services, has arrived to the scene. Led by Joelle Marquis, in collaboration with area churches and Sen. Rob Bradley (R-Fleming Island) and Rep. Travis Cummings (R-Orange Park), Recovering Clay aims to help those in dire need, like Gardner, who despite having reached out to all avenues, have received virtually no help. The idea for Recovering Clay began when Marquis realized that traditional methods of hurricane recovery assistance were failing residents in the county.

"There are people who just aren't getting the help they need," Marquis said. That's when she enlisted the help of Sen. Bradley and Rep. Cummings.



STAFF PHOTOS BY WESLEY LEBLANC

Carole Gardner, at right, a 16-year resident along Black Creek, saw her home devastated by Hurricane Irma. She told her story Nov. 9 at a Recovering Clay kick-off press conference.

Both graduates of high schools in the area – Bradley graduated from Clay High School and Cummings graduated from Orange Park High School – the two couldn't help but get involved when approached by Marquis.

"Being here all our lives, we know the people who are going through this terrible aftermath of Irma," Cummings said. "You start realizing that there's some gaps and lapses in government help and I knew that Senator Bradley and I could raise some dollars to help fill those gaps."

At a Recovering Clay kickoff event held in Middleburg Nov. 9, Cummings announced that he and Bradley had already raised \$100,000 for Recovering Clay.

But how will that money be allocated?

Wanting to guarantee the money is used to its fullest potential, Marquis and Recovering Clay have enlisted the help of experts who will ensure the money goes right where it needs to.

By utilizing experts who represent the different sectors of post-hurricane restoration, Recovering Clay can more accurately target those who are in need of help.

"If someone needs help with structural damage, we have someone who is an expert in assessing structural damage," Marquis said. "The needs define the target and the experts are involved to help with that."

According to one inventory by Clay County Emergency Management, roughly 450 homes in the county are either completely destroyed having sustained substantial damage from flooding and winds.

Recovering Clay doesn't plan to slow down anytime soon and is committed to raising \$500,000 by Valentine's Day with an objective of providing shelter for every family displaced by Irma and responding to the immediate and unresolved needs of those affected.

"Things will only continue to get better as more money is raised and more families are helped," Marquis said. "Now, we need to get the word out there and let people know that help is on its way."



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If you build it...

Raiders' alum helps rebuild ball field

By Kile Brewer
The Oakleaf

ORANGE PARK – Jay Adair has been watching Orange Park High School baseball for a few years now.

His son Jordan is currently a junior at the school, and his son Jared recently graduated from OPHS. During his years of sitting in the stands rooting for the home team, Adair noticed a small problem with the ballpark after his older son twisted his ankle in a game while leaving the shortstop position and heading toward the outfield to chase the ball.

The area between second and third base, just into the outfield, had a significant drop-off. One day after a game, Adair walked onto the field to take a look at the spot, and noticed that there was a depression in the field that went about 2.5 feet down at its lowest point. The problem was bad enough that Adair, who heads up information technology with Jacksonville-based contractor Petticoat-Schmitt, decided to try and get something done about it.

“Someone could’ve gotten a real injury from [the elevation change], we’re lucky we haven’t had one,” Adair said. “It needed to be fixed, so I spoke with the athletic director about three or four months ago to see if we could work on getting together to make it happen.”

In addition to creating a potential hazard for players, the area led to drainage problems, and there were other areas on the field that needed

work. Once Adair got the ball rolling with the school, his company agreed to help out in any way they could, especially considering the connection of the company’s owners to OPHS.

Petticoat-Schmitt President Ryan Schmitt is an Orange Park High graduate himself, a member of the class of 1985. Schmitt, a soccer player at OPHS in the 1980s, saw this project as a great way to propel his company’s community-first message and help his alma mater at the same time.

“Our goal is to give them a better playing field and something that they can be proud of,” Schmitt said. “Part of our mission is to give back to the community.”

For him, this project was a perfect combination of giving back to the community, and helping the sports program at OPHS to which he attributes his own coming of age.

SEE BALL, 13



STAFF PHOTO BY KILE BREWER

Dirt moving equipment from Petticoat-Schmitt levels out soil on the Orange Park High School baseball field. The company’s president, Ryan Schmitt, has donated his company’s time and equipment to the project to help the school improve some drainage problems on the field.

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FINANCIAL FOCUS:

Time to Review Your Investment Strategy for the Year

As the year draws to a close, it’s a good time to review your progress toward your financial goals. But on what areas should you focus your attention?

Of course, you may immediately think about whether your investments have done well. When evaluating the performance of their investments for a given year, many people mistakenly think their portfolios should have done just as well as a common market index, such as the Standard & Poor’s 500. But the S&P 500 is essentially a measure of large-company, domestic stocks, and your portfolio probably doesn’t look like that – nor should it, because it’s important to own an investment mix that aligns with your goals, risk tolerance and return objectives. It’s this return objective that you should evaluate over time – not the return of an arbitrary benchmark that isn’t personalized to your goals and risk tolerance.

Your return objective will likely evolve. If you are starting out in your career, you may need your portfolio to be oriented primarily toward growth, which means it may need to be more heavily weighted toward stocks. But if you are retiring in a few years, you may need a more balanced allocation between stocks and bonds, which can address your needs for growth and income.

So, assuming you have created a long-term investment strategy that has a target rate of return for each year, you can review your progress accordingly. If you matched or exceeded that rate this past year, you’re staying on track, but if your return fell short of your desired target, you may need to make some changes. Before doing so, though, you need to understand just why your return was lower than anticipated.

For example, if you owned some stocks that underperformed due

to unusual circumstances – and even events such as Hurricanes Harvey and Irma can affect the stock prices of some companies – you may not need to be overly concerned, especially if the fundamentals of the stocks are still sound. On the other hand, if you own some investments that have underperformed for several years, you may need to consider selling them and using the proceeds to explore new investment opportunities.

Investment performance isn’t the only thing you should consider when looking at your financial picture over this past year. What changed in your life? Did you welcome a new child to your family? If so, you may need to respond by increasing your life insurance coverage or opening a college savings account. Did you or your spouse change jobs? You may now have access to a new employer-sponsored retirement account, such as a 401(k), so you’ll need to decide how much money to put into the various investments within this plan. And one change certainly happened this past year: You moved one year closer to retirement. By itself, this may cause you to re-evaluate how much risk you’re willing to tolerate in your investment portfolio, especially if you are within a few years of your planned retirement.

Whether it is the performance of your portfolio or changes in your life, you will find that you always have some reasons to look back at your investment and financial strategies for one year – and to look ahead at moves you can make for the next

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STAFF PHOTO BY KILE BREWER

Former S. Bryan Jennings Elementary School principal Tiffany Outman gave a speech Nov. 3 at the school during their 50th Anniversary celebration.

School

from page 3

way students are taught. She appealed to the crowd to talk to kids, and to instill in them manners and discipline, because, according to her, kids today need these lessons more than ever.

For Oglesby, though, many of the things about S. Bryan Jennings elementary that made her stick around all those years are still in place.

“SBJ has always been a family-ori-

ented school,” she said. “To educate one child, you also have to be concerned about their families.”

Oglesby mentioned in her speech that she had seen a couple of families there she had taught for at least two generations, she knew those families almost as well as her own. That sense of a school family seemed to resonate throughout the program – old friends were reunited, and students were able to catch up with their former teachers.

A cork board placed in the cafeteria for the event allowed students



STAFF PHOTO BY KILE BREWER

From left, Randall Payne and Bryan Benda, both former students at S. Bryan Jennings Elementary School, look through old yearbooks and photographs from their days at SBJ during the school’s 50th Anniversary reception last Friday.

and alumni to post notes about their favorite teachers and school events. The boards were packed with notes and among the favorite activities, were family-oriented events like the Thanksgiving turkey feast and Christmas gift giving.

That feeling of being a part of something greater has even been extended to the school’s current principal, who is in her first year with SBJ. “I felt that before tonight, as early as this summer and into the first two weeks [of the school year],” said Principal Elise Love. “Everyone has been so welcoming and so accepting. The students here are the most loving and accepting you’ll find anywhere.”

Love hopes to stay a part of S. Bryan Jennings Elementary for years to come, seeing this as the best experience she’s had as a part of a school in the Clay County School District.

“I’ve been teaching in Clay County schools since 1995 or 1996,” Love said. “I have never seen or experienced anything like what is present here at this school.”



STAFF PHOTO BY KILE BREWER

Current and former students of S. Bryan Jennings Elementary School dug through old photos and yearbooks to see snippets of the school’s past during the 50th Anniversary celebration.

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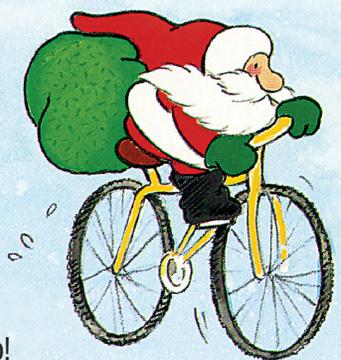
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Wolf sanctuary hit by Hurricane Irma

By Wesley LeBlanc
The Oakleaf

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – Hidden by fences reaching 10 feet high, with zero publicity, just as its owner intended, sitting in between Palatka and Green Cove Springs is a sanctuary and safe haven for five dozen wolves and wolf dogs.

You can't pet these wolves. You can't even see these wolves as they are not on exhibit. You might hear them but beyond that, you'll likely have zero interaction with these wolves.

Although different from many wolf sanctuaries around the country, there's a reason for such seclusion.

"To have strangers enter their home, to have people they don't know try and interact with them, it would destroy the sanctuary they have and feel," said John Knight, owner and operator of Big Oak Wolf Sanctuary. "That's why we are closed to the public."

Knight's story began in his early years, when his life consisted of what he calls browbeating from his mother. Condemnation and a fear of God

forced him into a life burdened with guilt and sin. According to Knight, it wasn't until after he was 18 that he began to understand God and his relationship with humans.

"Jesus died for us so that we don't feel condemned," said Knight. "He endured the punishment for us so that we can live without constant guilt."

Simply put, Knight refers to this as grace. This is what the entire message of Big Oak Sanctuary centers itself around – grace, unwavering and infinite. It's this grace that allows the wolves to be who they truly are, without fear of punishment for acting as they are meant to, according to Knight. It's this lack of grace, though, that leads to a wolf without a proper home. The surge in popularity of wolves from the likes of the Twilight movie trilogy and more recently, Game of Thrones, is what has led to so many wolves being kept as pets. However, wolves are not meant to be pets and will never behave like a pet, said Knight.

"These young people are more concerned with looking cool and



While outsiders are not allowed to pet the wolves that called Big Oak Wolf Sanctuary home, founder John Knight has worked for years to build trust with the abandoned animals.

how they are perceived by owning a wolf than they are concerned about the well-being and happiness of the wolf," Knight said. "They act as wolves do and are punished, even though they shouldn't be, and here at Big Oak, our goal is to teach the wolves that they won't be punished for being what they are."

"When these animals get here, they're confused when they do something and look at us expecting punishment, and nothing happens, because we extend them the grace to be who and what they are until they realize that nothing they do will cause us to treat them with any feeling other than love and nurture," Knight continued.

Despite the love and nourishment Knight pours into these wolves, Big Oak Wolf Sanctuary has run into some problems that desperately need fixing. As much of Florida received destruction and devastation from Hurricane Irma, so too did Knight's wolf sanctuary. Needing to replace more than two miles of 10 feet high fence, Big Oak Wolf Sanctuary needs \$200,000, but because Knight chooses to keep his sanctuary closed to the public – for the safety and sanctity of the wolves – a steady flow of income is hard to come by.

"We need donations," Knight said. "With 100 people committed to donating \$50 a month, I could hire

help. Any donation, of any amount, will help though."

For Knight, hiring help is no easy task as for the past 12 years, he hasn't received a single paycheck and has completed all operations and repairs by himself, except for the help of a handful of volunteers.

Just days before Hurricane Irma hit the area, Knight fell off a 12-foot high ladder, an accident that left him with five broken ribs, a broken clavicle and a punctured lung. For obvious reasons, Knight isn't able to complete the repairs he had planned, which is where the need to hire workers arises.

Despite the rising need for fence repairs, Knight is confident in getting the job done. While certainly slowed down by his injuries, he still manages to get new fences up and that's because of his dedication and passion for these animals, which shines through with everything he does and says. "If I won the lottery, I'd still be doing this," Knight said. "After doing this for so long, you can't think of anything else other than what you have to do to meet these animals' needs."

To donate to the sanctuary, go to bigoakwolvesanctuary.org and click on the word 'donate' on the left side of the website. If you prefer mailing a check, the sanctuary's address is there as well.



STAFF PHOTOS BY WESLEY LEBLANC

John Knight, founder of Big Oak Wolf Sanctuary, said the private center endured about \$200,000 in damages during Hurricane Irma.

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Loop

from page 2

needs and plans for a new facility for animals in need of help in Clay County.

Sutherin said she knew it was probably “not a surprise” that Animal Services was hoping to build a new facility that would serve the county better than the one now on State Road 16 near Penney Farms.

The idea and how to best implement it has been discussed for quite some time for the aging facility that was flooded during Hurricane Irma.

“We are maxed out, it seems, all of the time,” she said.

A growing county population brings a growing animal population. Some 4,000 animals on their own are served per year,” she said.

The current facility is about 13,700 square feet. It lies on 6.8 acres, 2.5 acres of which is being used. The rest is wetlands, Sutherin said.

Animal Services – formally known as Animal Care and Control – would like to see about a 20,000-25,000 square foot facility, which would house about 38 dog kennels as opposed to the current 12 animals, she said. It would also include space for cats, meeting areas, an expanded medical area and offices.

The new facility is proposed, along with a new health department building, to be on some 40 acres of land that is county-owned and

located along County Road 220 just behind the Black Creek Park and Ride.

“We’re not trying to build the Taj Mahal,” said Stephanie Kopelousos, county manager.

Sutherin said the proposal is to look at plans in the next year that would give them the most “flow and functionality.” That would call for about \$500,000 for architectural drawings and design work.

Animal Services is looking at a variety of places that already have proven designs, such as University of California at Davis, University of Wisconsin, University of Florida and Maddie’s Fund.

Grants would also be sought to help with funding for that portion of the project. Having been under 10 percent euthanasia for years should help that effort, she said.

About \$7 million would be sought during 2020-2021 to construct the new facility, she said.

Numerous other items were discussed including streamlining via software the library’s check-in and check-out system so librarians could be freed up to work more with readers and library users, fire equipment and facilities and using something called “chip asphalt” for paving low-use residential roads, including dirt roads.

Kopelousos said staff would bring back a list of priorities for further discussion at the Dec. 12 BCC meeting.

Tech

from page 5

task. More recently another category of learning has emerged – allowing students individualized learning using Chromebooks, which is where iReady and Achieve 3000 come into play.

“We have a blended model and we want to protect a blended model,” Davis said. “The bulk of learning will be [whole group]. This is just a small percentage [that is tied to this technology].”

The programs allow each student to move through education resources that adapt to the learner, slowing down to help some kids, or presenting more difficult challenges to those who breeze through a lesson. Through the connection to the OneClay portal, these applications can provide statistics on each student and show teachers areas where students are excelling, or areas where students need improvement.

The use of these platforms will now be available district-wide with the school district providing at least six devices per classroom after the purchase of 6,200 Chromebooks since August, bringing the district total to about 20,700, which will increase by about 500 next year.

In an effort to continue to

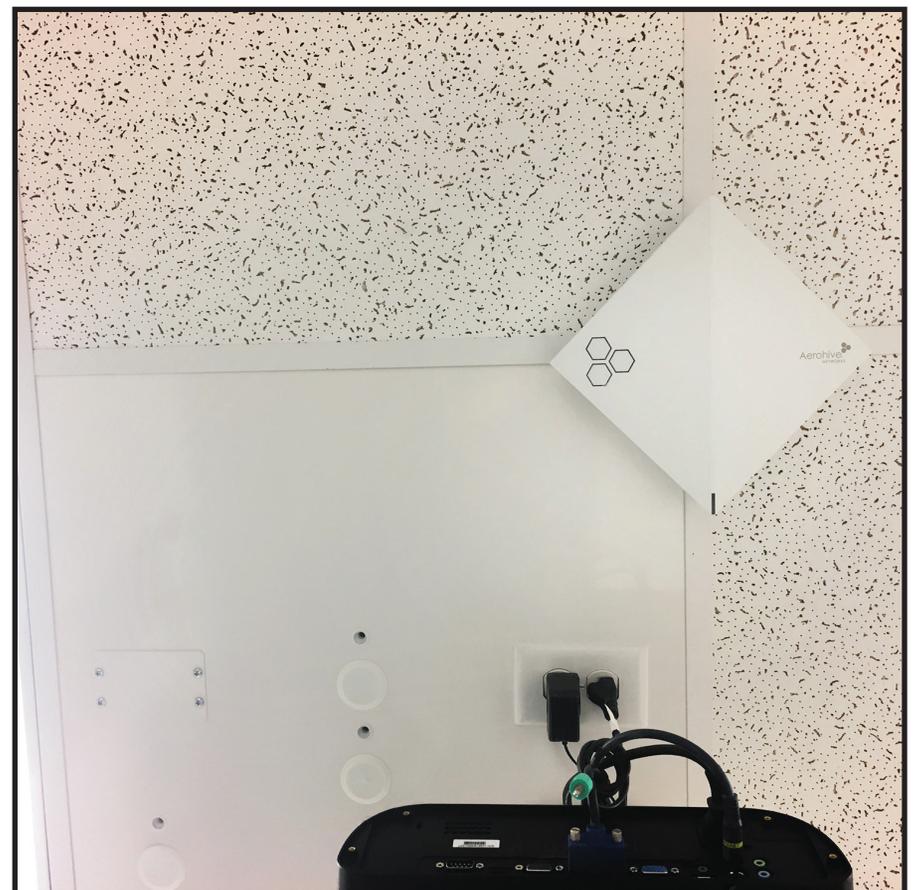
stay ahead of the tech obsolescence curve, the devices are rented by the district, and will be upgraded on a yearly basis for about the same \$600-700,000 price tag in each year’s budget, most of which comes to the district through federal education dollars.

“Most of the money comes out of our E-Rate,” said Sabrina Thomas, the district’s Technology Services supervisor. “Also, we received some help from the facilities team, our technology budget and our Digital Classroom Plan.”

According to Thomas the district is close to meeting its goal for devices, which places one device per two students in grades Kindergarten through second, and one device per child for students in grades three through high school.

Davis is aware that the introduction of technology in the classroom needs to be a gradual process, and is doing what he can to direct staff to help maintain the ultimate goal, which is to teach the “whole child.”

“We’re trying to implement this with high implementation, but couple that with high support,” Davis said. “We want to make sure that we take it slow, that we have high support, and that it’s being implemented in an effective manner within our school district, so it’s not driven at such a fast pace that we lose the integrity of what we’re trying to accomplish.”



A white box is seen on the ceiling in the second grade classroom of Tynes Elementary School teacher Michelle Cambron. The box is an access point that can be found in every classroom throughout the Clay County district to ensure quick and reliable internet access for every teacher.

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STAFF PHOTO BY KILE BREWER

From left, Terry Connor, Clay District Schools Chief of Secondary Education, Clayton Anderson, Orange Park High School principal, Tim Clay, Director of Field Operations for Petticoat-Schmitt, Michael Harrison, OPHS athletic director, Ryan Schmitt, president at Petticoat-Schmitt, and Jay Adair, Director of IT at Petticoat-Schmitt, stand next to dirt moving equipment on the OPHS baseball field which is currently being leveled and filled by Petticoat-Schmitt at no cost to the school as part of a larger baseball field renovation.

Ball from page 9

Once Schmitt's company and the school were on the same page, Petticoat-Schmitt sent out surveyors, and eventually heavy equipment operators to start what Schmitt estimates to be a nearly \$7,000 dirt-moving project pro bono. The district estimates the entire project to run around \$25,000 including re-landscaping and running irrigation, but the dirt-work gives them a solid starting point.

"This is really a blessing to us," said OPHS Athletic Director Michael Harrison. "Without their help we couldn't do this project."

Harrison said the dirt-moving project officially began Oct. 26 and should be done sometime this week. After that sod will be laid and irrigation placed to get the field all finished up before baseball season starts early next year. "It should be looking like a baseball field again by Thanksgiving week," Harrison said.

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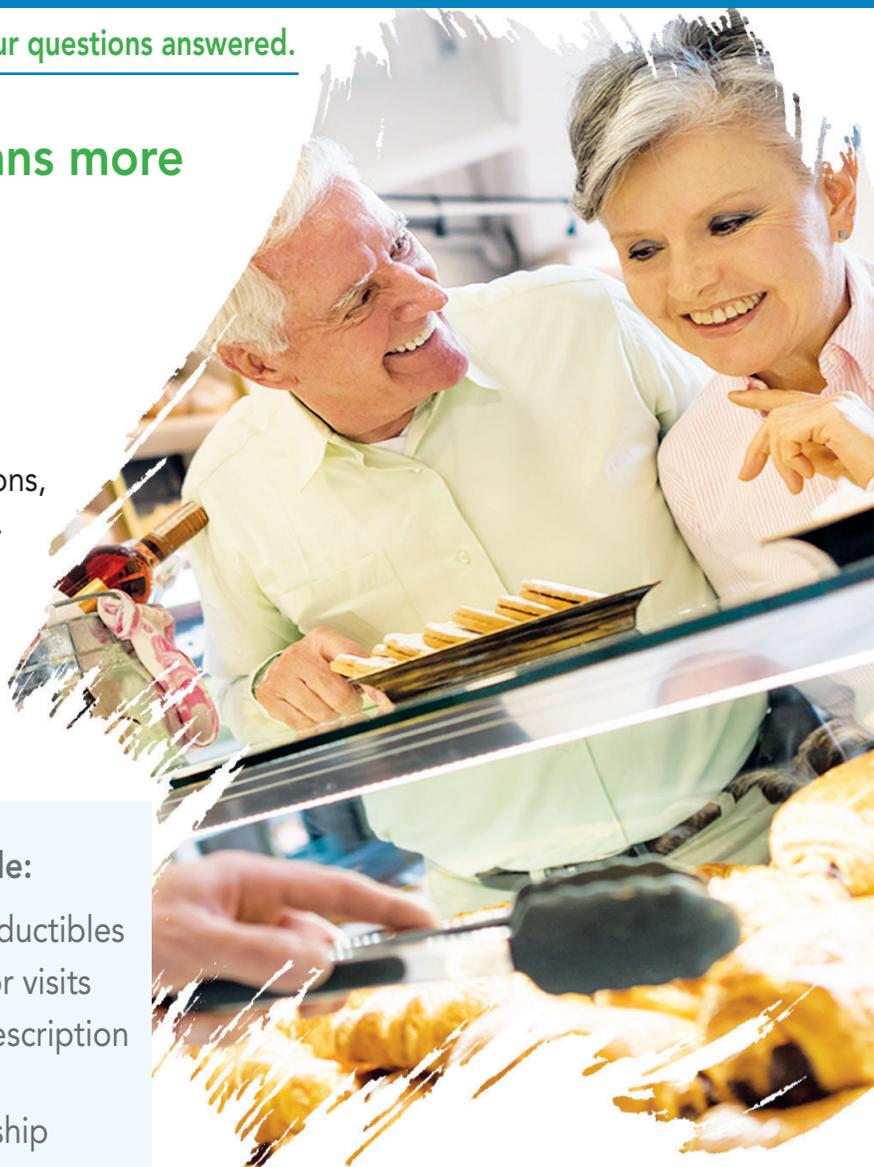
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Community Briefs

Bike donations needed

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – It's time to do some fall cleaning for J.P. Hall Children's Charities.

The 36th Annual Christmas Party for Clay County's children is looking for a few good bike donations in preparation for its Dec. 16 event. The party will be held at the Clay County Fairgrounds, 2497 State Rd. 16 West in Green Cove Springs from 8 a.m. until noon.

Bike donations, along with new toys, will be accepted at every Clay County Fire Station between now and the day before the party. Firefighters refurbish the bikes to new condition and they are given to children who may not otherwise have a Christmas of their own.

The Christmas Party is open to any Clay County resident and Santa is on hand to make their wishes come true.

The J.P. Hall Children's Charities Annual Dinner and Auction – which raises funds to provide college scholarships to Clay students – will be Nov. 17 at the Thrasher Horne Center beginning at 6:30 p.m. Dress is cock-

tail attire and there is a dinner, silent and live auction.

For more information, check out the charity's website at jphallcharities.com.

Celebrate a 'Hometown Holiday'

ORANGE PARK – The Town of Orange Park and The Historical Society of Orange Park are gearing up to celebrate the holiday season.

The fun begins on Dec. 5 at 6 p.m. when town officials host "Light the Park" at Town Hall Park. The season kicks off with the traditional reading of "The Night Before Christmas."

From there, town residents are invited to "Hometown Holiday in the Park" at Clarke Park on Kingsley Avenue.

This event features a shopping village, hay rides through a decorated trail of lights, live entertainment, historic Clarke House tours, photos with Santa and more. It may even snow. Admission and many activities are free. This event will be held on Dec. 8-9 from 6-9 p.m.

Vendor applications are now avail-

able and town officials are seeking sponsorships for "snow Stations" Five snow stations are available throughout the park for \$500 each. For additional information, contact the Emily Dockery at (904) 278-3043 or edockery@townop.com.

Thanksgiving Day garbage collection

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – The Clay County Department of Environmental Services has released its 2017 Thanksgiving schedule.

Residents who have regular pickup on Thursdays will receive pickup service the next day, the Friday after Thanksgiving. Residents whose regular pickup is on Friday will receive pickup service on the Saturday after Thanksgiving.

The Rosemary Hill Solid Waste Management Facility as well as the Environmental Convenience Centers will be closed Thanksgiving Day.

Learn about clinical research

JACKSONVILLE – Clay County residents involved in or interested in learning about clinical research are invited to attend AWARE for All, a one-day seminar scheduled for Dec. 5 in Jacksonville.

Clinical Research Education Day is a free educational event that serves as a forum for open dialogue between patients, members of the public, and health and research professionals. AWARE for All will provide information about the clinical research process and activity here in Jacksonville, as well as food, prizes, and free health screenings. The event is hosted by the Center for Information and Study on Clinical Research Participation, an independent non-profit organization based in Boston that educates the public about clinical research.

The seminar will be held from 4-8 p.m. on Dec. 5 at the Schultz Center at 4019 Boulevard Center Dr. in Jacksonville. There will be blood pressure, Body Mass Index, glucose and vision screenings. Guests can register for the event online at <https://aware-jax17.eventbrite.com/?aff=calendarlisting>

"Festival of Trees" sponsors needed

MIDDLEBURG – Canterfield of Clay County, in partnership with Life Care Centers of America's two area locations in Orange Park and Wells Crossing, is seeking corporate tree sponsors to support a new holiday

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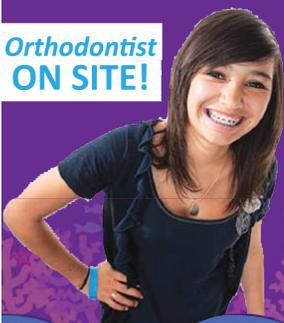


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Discovery

from page 1

The second name considered was Bear Creek Elementary School where the mascot would have been the Cubs. This name would be an homage to Clay County's Black Bear population, which is labeled as "abundant" by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

The third name considered was Canopy Oaks Elementary School with the mascot being the Cardinals.

School Board Vice Chair Betsy Condon made a motion to name the school Discovery Oaks, while board member Ashley Gilhousen seconded the motion, which was passed 5-0.

Immediately after the vote, former chairman Janice Kerekes asked Superintendent Addison Davis about the timeline to appoint a principal for Discovery Oaks.

He said it was "best practice" to have a seasoned principal open up a new school, while adding he wants to see principal candidates come in with a vision to make this school the envy of Clay County.

The current vision calls for developing Discovery Oaks as a STEAM school where Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Math are the driving force behind curriculum. Davis said Terri Stahlman, assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction, and Michael Kemp, assistant superintendent for operations, appointed a committee of teachers and principals who are tasked with creating content areas for Discovery Oaks.

"We had our first kick-off meeting last week and everybody was given their charge. They saw the blueprint of the school, they learned about what has come out of the ground already, what they can influence.

Mostly, our decisions are in furniture and equipment decisions," Stahlman said.

She said a team of teachers are going to be traveling the state looking at other STEAM models that are excelling in hopes of duplicating and even improving upon to implement in Clay County.

"It's fun work. It's a lot of work. Those content teams that Dr. Stahlman put together for the facility planning; it's a huge responsibility. They're representing more than their own wishes, they're representing the content for years to come for what's going to happen inside that facility," Kemp said.

"We were there for an hour-and-a-half and they were still there excited and planning and strategizing, so I think we're going to see a really inviting school choice opportunity for our families in Clay County," Stahlman said.

After Stahlman's comments, Condon asked what was meant by referring to the new school as a school choice opportunity. Davis responded by saying, "It's a theme. It's theme-based."

Condon said she wanted to make sure the district was not creating another concept school much like Orange Park Elementary.

Discovery Oaks is under construction in the Eagle Landing area of Oakleaf and is targeted to open the start of the 2018-19 school year. The school is being funded with residential construction impact fees, which prevented the district from having to borrow funds for the estimated \$23 million project. It's the first new school to be built in Clay County since Oakleaf High opened on August 26, 2010 for the 2010-11 school year.

Before the official meeting got underway Nov. 2, Davis opened the



PHOTO BY CLAY COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Originally dubbed Elementary School "Y," the Clay County School Board voted unanimously on Nov. 2 to name the county's newest school Discovery Oaks Elementary.

meeting and took on an "acting chairman" role to kick off the board's annual reorganization meeting in which a new chairman and vice chairman are elected.

Outgoing Chairman Kerekes nominated outgoing Vice Chair Carol Studdard to serve as chair, while Ashley Gilhousen nominated Mary Bolla. When the votes were counted, Studdard was named chairman by

a vote of 3-2 with Condon, Kerekes and Studdard voting for Studdard and Bolla and Gilhousen voting no.

Kerekes then nominated Condon for vice chair, the sole nominee. When the vote was taken, Condon was elected 5-0.

The next school board meeting will be a special workshop Nov. 9 at 4 p.m. to discuss the rezoning parameters for Discovery Oaks Elementary.



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Prayer & Bible Study 7:00pm

Kidz4Christ KG-6



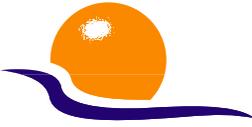
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Knights scholarship signings



Oakleaf High triple jump state champ Melvin Briley heads to South Florida.



Oakleaf High softball got a big bat from Angela Agurkis who heads to Florida Atlantic University.



Oakleaf base-stealing speed demon and outfielder Destiny Pacetti heads to Pensacola State College.

Athletes sign letters of intent

By **Randy Lefko**
The Oakleaf

OAKLEAF – Led by state titles in softball and track, Oakleaf High School saw a flurry of letter of intents signed the week of November 6-10 as athletes were able to confirm their decisions to continue playing at the college level. Tops on the roster were Oakleaf's girls softball team, the defending Class 8A state champions who won in classic fashion behind the bats of Angela Agurkis and Rebecca Koskey, who both signed on to play at college with the bonus of playing against each other in conference play.

Agurkis, a first baseman and catcher for coach Christina Thompson, heads to Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton where she will join former teammate Alex Acevedo, an infielder already on the Owls' roster as a freshman. FAU finished at 35-21



Oakleaf rightfielder Rebecca Koskey, also a big bat for coach Christina Thompson, right, heads to Florida International University.

last year, but lost in the Conference USA tournament 6-5 to Western Kentucky to end their season.

Koskey, an outfielder also with a big bat and run-scoring instincts when on base, heads to Florida International University, just

south of FAU in Miami, where she joins a team that finished 46-15 in 2017 with a first-ever tab in the Conference USA championship game and a 1-2 record in the NCAA Division I championship tournament with a season-ending

SEE SCHOLARSHIP, 19

Irish no match for Shaq defense

No. 7 Hurricanes (9-0) dominate No. 3 Notre Dame, 41-8

By **David Villavicencio**
HurricaneSports.com

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. – The Miami Hurricanes earned the reputation of being a big game team in the 1980s and 90s, but the 2017 Canes looked like some of the legendary UM teams of the past in their dominant 41-8 victory over No. 3 Notre Dame Saturday night.

The No. 7 Hurricanes (9-0, 6-0 ACC) faced the rival Fighting Irish (8-2) in Miami for the first time in nearly three decades and they, along with a loud crowd of 65,303 fans at Hard Rock Stadium, made sure to remind Notre Dame of what it was like to play the Canes in their home stadium.

"It was magical," said sophomore linebacker Shaquille Quarterman, an Oakleaf High School graduate in the post game press conference. "The energy in the stadium was all around. It all adds to the big win tonight."

For Miami head coach Mark Richt, the program's unbeaten season is a by-product of the energy of the players as well as Miami, the town.

"What a wonderful night for our

SEE SHAQ, XX



STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Oakleaf High graduate Shaquille Quarterman has led the University of Miami Hurricanes defense to a 9-0 season and a top three rank in national football polls.

Soccer action

Oakleaf gets bumped 2-0 by Fleming Island

Two second half goals doom Knights in key district match.



STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Oakleaf forward Michelle Kanaskie fires shot off to Fleming Island goalie Rachel Conomea who made numerous outstanding saves to thwart Oakleaf shots on goal.



Oakleaf High defender Zoe Perez moves to get ball into Fleming Island zone.



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Shaq

from page 17

fans, for our players, every single person who's a part of this program," Richt said. "It's amazing what can happen when everybody works together and just cares about each other, loves each other and just trusts each other enough for everybody to do their job. Just really impressed with our team tonight. Notre Dame, without a doubt, is a great team. It's obvious. It just got away from them. I never would have predicted what happened, but it happened and I'm thankful for it and I'm proud of the guys."

Miami's win snapped a four-game losing streak against the Irish and was its sixth consecutive home victory over Notre Dame dating back to 1981. It also extended the Hurricanes' FBS-leading win streak to 14 games. The Canes' last loss came at Notre Dame on Oct. 29, 2016.

The Hurricanes held Notre Dame



Oakleaf High has two linebackers at Miami with senior Darrion Owens a fourth defender in on pass situations for the Hurricanes.

to just 89 yards of total offense in the first half, including 56 yards rushing. The Irish only netted 261 total yards with 109 rush yards. The Hurricanes also had four turnovers; three interceptions and a fumble recovery.

"It took every person that was out there, every person that was rotating," said Quarterman, who had five tackles with two pass breakups. "It took effort throughout the week preparing for this team because they were and they are a great rushing team, so we prepared, prepared and prepared even more. And then when we came out it was almost as if we were over-prepared; we were

on edge. I've never seen our players like that before, just with all the disrespect that we got, feeling that we were just overlooked constantly. After every win that we got, we were still overlooked. We just had to—it was for the coaches, it was for the tradition."

The Fighting Irish became the first Power 5 team to be shut out in the first half by Miami at Hard Rock Stadium. Miami previously held Georgia Tech scoreless in the opening half of its 2007 game at the Orange Bowl.

Miami came out of the locker room ready to play, scoring on its opening drive of the second half. Rosier hit redshirt sophomore receiver Lawrence Cager on fourth-and-9 from the Notre Dame 36 for a 28-yard gain to give Miami a new set of downs from the Notre Dame 8. Three plays later, Dallas rushed for a four-yard touchdown that put the Hurricanes up, 34-0.

The Hurricanes also clinched the ACC Coastal Division title with Virginia's loss to Louisville earlier in the day, assuring Miami a date with defending national champion and ACC Atlantic champ Clemson in the ACC Championship Game on Dec. 2 in Charlotte, N.C.

"It's a great moment for the program as a whole," said Quarterman about winning the ACC Coastal division and getting a shot at Clemson. "The standard is to get a ring."



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Oakleaf High midfielder Braden Ammon, in white, breaks between two Middleburg defenders.



Oakleaf High's Steven Londono awaits corner kick in match with Middleburg High.



Oakleaf midfielder Anthony Cooper speeds past Middleburg defender.



Oakleaf forward Michelle Kanaskie fights through two Fleming Island defenders in Knights' 2-0 district loss.

Scholarship

from page 17

loss to Oklahoma State at the NCAA Regionals.

Also signing on was speedy outfielder and basestealing threat at all times Destiny Pacetti, who heads to Pensacola State College where two teammates already are on the roster; outfielder Tracey Ferguson and catcher Haley Willis, both incoming freshman.

Pensacola finished as the Panhandle Conference runnerup last year, losing 3-0 to third-ranked nationally Chipola in that final.

Two more softball signees included spot players Madison Mifsud, heading to North Carolina Central University and Lauren Wexler, heading to University of South Carolina-Salkehatchie.

In track, Class 4A triple jump state



Oakleaf High triple jump champion Melvin Briley, left, shows off scholarship cake with mom Carrie Briley in signing ceremony for Briley to continue jumping at South Florida.

champion Melvin Briley, who briefly held a top five jump in the nation last summer, will head to the University of South Florida

to continue his track exploits. Briley dominated the fields in the triple jump with a 46 foot, 10 inch leaping winning district 1-4A, a

48'-10.75" leap winning the region 1-4A title and a 49'-7" inch jump winning the state title by more than a foot with second place at 48 feet even.

Other area athletes signing scholarships were, from Clay, Arden Brake, golf to Florida Southern in Lakeland; from Middleburg, Cody Carroll, golf to University of North Florida; from Fleming Island, Caleb Lenoux, baseball to Seminole State; Madi Lenoux, softball to University of South Carolina-Upstate; Nick Hackett, swimming, to University of Florida; Andrew Miller, cross country, to Elon College; Tiara Peters, softball, to University of South Carolina-Salkehatchie; Morgan Grimm, softball, to University of South Florida; from St. Johns Country Day School, Troy Britts, for baseball, to Liberty University.

Briefs

from page 14

event called "Festival of Trees."

All proceeds from "Festival of Trees" will benefit Community Peds-Care hospice services.

Cost for a corporate tree sponsorship is \$100. Tree sponsors are requested to donate one decorated tabletop tree that is a maximum of 3-feet high to be displayed that evening for the silent auction. Corporate tree sponsors will receive pre-event and on-site acknowledgement the evening of the event.

Festival of Trees will take place Dec. 5 from 5-7 p.m. at Canterfield of Clay County, located at 1611 Winners Circle off Old Jennings Road. The public is invited and admission and parking are free. For more information, contact Brenda Lee at (904) 203-6100, extension 405.

19 schools recognized for student achievement

TALLAHASSEE – The Florida Department of Education recently recognized 19 Clay County Schools for achieving certain achievement benchmarks during the 2016-17 school year that ended this past June. The District will be awarded more than \$1.5 million through the program.

The Florida Department of Education awards schools with funding through the Florida School Recognition Program. This year's program award amount is \$100 per full-time student. The distribution of funds will come from lottery funds appropriated for improving school grades. Schools and School Advisory Council committees are required to agree on how all funds are allocated while ensuring alignment with the School Improvement Plan.

"This recognition shows that Clay County continues to excel academically. We have nine additional schools eligible to receive the Florida School Recognition Award, which wouldn't be possible without the hard work and commitment of our educators this past school year. This award is directly linked to school improvement and our faculty, teachers, parents, and students have worked extremely hard to move the needle academically in Clay. I am excited about the direction that our county is moving as we strive to become a systemic "A" school district," said Superintendent Addison Davis.

Here is the list of 2016-17 honorees: Argyle Elementary, Bannerman Learning Center, Coppergate Elementary, Clay Charter, Fleming Island Elementary, Fleming Island High, Green Cove Springs Junior, Keystone Heights Elementary, Lake Asbury Junior High, Lakeside Elementary,

Lakeside Junior High, Middleburg High, Orange Park Elementary, Orange Park Junior High, Paterson Elementary, Ridgeview Elementary, S. Bryan Jennings Elementary, Swimming Pen Creek Elementary and Thunderbolt Elementary.

Department of Health needs your input

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – The Florida Department of Health in Clay County needs the help of residents and partners to understand environmental health in Clay County.

The department is asking Clay County residents to take a survey – shown below with a web link – and then tell their friends and neighbors about the survey so they can share their opinions as well.

This survey will help the department collect opinions about the environment and quality of life in Clay County. Results will be made available to the public in a written report. The information gathered from responses to this survey will help make Clay County a better place to live. The survey, which is completely online, will close Nov. 30 at midnight.

The survey can be completed electronically by visiting <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Clay-EH-Survey>.

'Low Bono' program reaches out to Clay County residents

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – Clay County Clerk of the Circuit Court Tara S. Green is continuing her office's Low Bono Program.

While not free legal advice, the Low Bono Program lowers the barriers that usually prevent people with moderate financial means from accessing legal services, specifically those involved in family law cases.

The program is available to Clay County residents involving Clay County family law cases only, with a focus on clients representing themselves, a practice referred to as pro se. Individuals wishing to participate, should contact the Clerk's Office to schedule an appointment with these local, licensed Florida attorneys at a rate of \$1 per minute. The minimum appointment time is 30 minutes. Clerks require the following information: client name, name of adverse party, client's contact phone number, client email address. Individuals are responsible for bringing full payment to their scheduled appointment time (cash only) along with all relevant documents. Appointments are held at the Clay County Courthouse in Green Cove Springs at 825 N. Orange Ave. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call (904) 269-6363.



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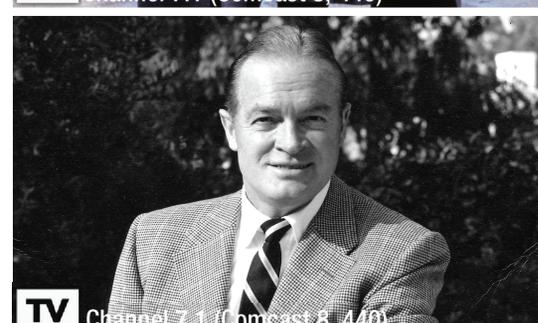


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SAT, NOVEMBER 25, 8 PM

The Beatles: Eight Days a Week — The Touring Years

Explore the history of the Fab Four from their early days in Liverpool to their last concert in San Francisco. Ron Howard directs this look at how the foursome became the global phenomenon that is "The Beatles."



TV Channel 7.1 (Comcast 8, 440)

TUE, NOVEMBER 28, 8 PM

American Masters: This is Bob Hope

Explore the entertainer's life with unprecedented access to his personal archives including writings voiced by Billy Crystal, clips from his body of work, and interviews with celebrities he influenced.



TV Channel 7.1 (Comcast 8, 440)

THU, NOVEMBER 30, 10 PM

The 80s (My Music)

Take a joyful jump into the 1980s and harken back to the era when music videos ruled the airwaves in this new special for PBS. Original MTV "VJ" Martha Quinn hosts this non-stop celebration of pop hits that defined the decade.

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Loop

from page 2

needs and plans for a new facility for animals in need of help in Clay County.

Sutherin said she knew it was probably “not a surprise” that Animal Services was hoping to build a new facility that would serve the county better than the one now on State Road 16 near Penney Farms.

The idea and how to best implement it has been discussed for quite some time for the aging facility that was flooded during Hurricane Irma.

“We are maxed out, it seems, all of the time,” she said.

A growing county population brings a growing animal population. Some 4,000 animals on their own are served per year,” she said.

The current facility is about 13,700 square feet. It lies on 6.8 acres, 2.5 acres of which is being used. The rest is wetlands, Sutherin said.

Animal Services – formally known as Animal Care and Control – would like to see about a 20,000-25,000 square foot facility, which would house about 38 dog kennels as opposed to the current 12 animals, she said. It would also include space for cats, meeting areas, an expanded medical area and offices.

The new facility is proposed, along with a new health department building, to be on some 40 acres of land that is county-owned and

located along County Road 220 just behind the Black Creek Park and Ride.

“We’re not trying to build the Taj Mahal,” said Stephanie Kopelousos, county manager.

Sutherin said the proposal is to look at plans in the next year that would give them the most “flow and functionality.” That would call for about \$500,000 for architectural drawings and design work.

Animal Services is looking at a variety of places that already have proven designs, such as University of California at Davis, University of Wisconsin, University of Florida and Maddie’s Fund.

Grants would also be sought to help with funding for that portion of the project. Having been under 10 percent euthanasia for years should help that effort, she said.

About \$7 million would be sought during 2020-2021 to construct the new facility, she said.

Numerous other items were discussed including streamlining via software the library’s check-in and check-out system so librarians could be freed up to work more with readers and library users, fire equipment and facilities and using something called “chip asphalt” for paving low-use residential roads, including dirt roads.

Kopelousos said staff would bring back a list of priorities for further discussion at the Dec. 12 BCC meeting.

Tech

from page 5

More recently another category of learning has emerged – allowing students individualized learning using Chromebooks, which is where iReady and Achieve 3000 come into play.

“We have a blended model and we want to protect a blended model,” Davis said. “The bulk of learning will be [whole group]. This is just a small percentage [that is tied to this technology].”

The programs allow each student to move through education resources that adapt to the learner, slowing down to help some kids, or presenting more difficult challenges to those who breeze through a lesson. Through the connection to the OneClay portal, these applications can provide statistics on each student and show teachers areas where students are excelling, or areas where students need improvement.

The use of these platforms will now be available district-wide with the school district providing at least six devices per classroom after the purchase of 6,200 Chromebooks since August, bringing the district total to about 20,700, which will increase by about 500 next year.

In an effort to continue to

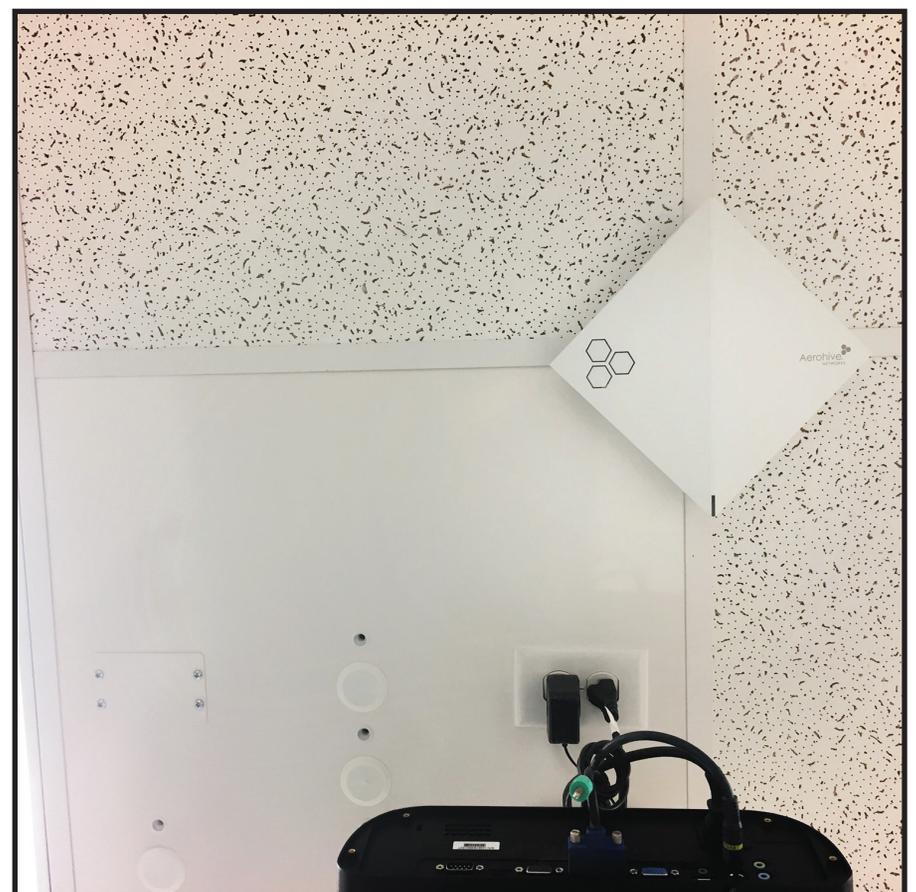
stay ahead of the tech obsolescence curve, the devices are rented by the district, and will be upgraded on a yearly basis for about the same \$600-700,000 price tag in each year’s budget, most of which comes to the district through federal education dollars.

“Most of the money comes out of our E-Rate,” said Sabrina Thomas, the district’s Technology Services supervisor. “Also, we received some help from the facilities team, our technology budget and our Digital Classroom Plan.”

According to Thomas the district is close to meeting its goal for devices, which places one device per two students in grades Kindergarten through second, and one device per child for students in grades three through high school.

Davis is aware that the introduction of technology in the classroom needs to be a gradual process, and is doing what he can to direct staff to help maintain the ultimate goal, which is to teach the “whole child.”

“We’re trying to implement this with high implementation, but couple that with high support,” Davis said. “We want to make sure that we take it slow, that we have high support, and that it’s being implemented in an effective manner within our school district, so it’s not driven at such a fast pace that we lose the integrity of what we’re trying to accomplish.”



A white box is seen on the ceiling in the second grade classroom of Tynes Elementary School teacher Michelle Cambron. The box is an access point that can be found in every classroom throughout the Clay County district to ensure quick and reliable internet access for every teacher.

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Knights scholarship signings



Oakleaf High triple jump state champ Melvin Briley heads to South Florida.



Oakleaf High softball got a big bat from Angela Agurkis who heads to Florida Atlantic University.



Oakleaf base-stealing speed demon and outfielder Destiny Pacetti heads to Pensacola State College.

Athletes sign letters of intent

By Randy Lefko
The Oakleaf

OAKLEAF – Led by state titles in softball and track, Oakleaf High School saw a flurry of letter of intents signed the week of November 6-10 as athletes were able to confirm their decisions to continue playing at the college level.

Tops on the roster were Oakleaf's girls softball team, the defending Class 8A state champions who won in classic fashion behind the bats of Angela Agurkis and Rebecca Koskey, who both signed on to play at college with the bonus of playing against each other in conference play.

Agurkis, a first baseman and catcher for coach Christina Thompson, heads to Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton where she will join former teammate Alex Acevedo, an infielder already on the Owls' roster as a freshman. FAU finished at 35-21 last year, but lost in the Conference USA tournament 6-5 to Western Kentucky to end their season.

Koskey, an outfielder also with a big bat and run-scoring instincts



Oakleaf rightfielder Rebecca Koskey, also a big bat for coach Christina Thompson, right, heads to Florida International University.

when on base, heads to Florida International University, just south of FAU in Miami, where she joins a team that finished 46-15 in 2017 with a first-ever tab in the Conference USA championship game and a 1-2 record in the NCAA Division I championship tournament with a season-ending loss to Oklahoma State at the NCAA Regionals.

Also signing on was speedy outfielder and basestealing threat at all times Destiny Pacetti, who heads to Pensacola State College where two teammates already are on the roster; outfielder Tracey Ferguson and catcher Haley Willis, both incoming freshman.

SEE SCHOLARSHIP, 19

Irish no match for Shaq defense

No. 7 Hurricanes (9-0) dominate No. 3 Notre Dame, 41-8

By David Villavicencio
HurricaneSports.com

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. – The Miami Hurricanes earned the reputation of being a big game team in the 1980s and 90s, but the 2017 Canes looked like some of the legendary UM teams of the past in their dominant 41-8 victory over No. 3 Notre Dame Saturday night.

The No. 7 Hurricanes (9-0, 6-0 ACC) faced the rival Fighting Irish (8-2) in Miami for the first time in nearly three decades and they, along with a loud crowd of 65,303 fans at Hard Rock Stadium, made sure to remind Notre Dame of what it was like to play the Canes in their home stadium.

"It was magical," said sophomore linebacker Shaquille Quarterman, an Oakleaf High School graduate in the post game press conference. "The energy in the stadium was all around. It all adds to the big win tonight."

For Miami head coach Mark Richt, the program's unbeaten season is a by-product of the energy of the players as well as Miami, the town.

"What a wonderful night for our

SEE SHAQ, XX



STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Oakleaf High graduate Shaquille Quarterman has led the University of Miami Hurricanes defense to a 9-0 season and a top three rank in national football polls.

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SEE SHAQ, 18



STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Oakleaf High graduate Shaquille Quarterman has led the University of Miami Hurricanes defense to a 9-0 season and a top three rank in national football polls.



Oakleaf High midfielder Braden Ammon, in white, breaks between two Middleburg defenders.



Oakleaf High's Steven Londono awaits corner kick in match with Middleburg High.



Oakleaf midfielder Anthony Cooper speeds past Middleburg defender.



Oakleaf forward Michelle Kanaskie fights through two Fleming Island defenders in Knights' 2-0 district loss.

Scholarship

from page 17

Pensacola finished as the Panhandle Conference runnerup last year, losing 3-0 to third-ranked nationally Chipola in that final.

Two more softball signees included spot players Madison Mifsud, heading to North Carolina Central University and Lauren Wexler, heading to University of South Carolina-Salkehatchie.

In track, Class 4A triple jump state champion Melvin Briley, who briefly held a top five jump in the nation last summer, will head to the University of South Florida to continue his track exploits. Briley dominated the



fields in the triple jump with a 46 foot, 10 inch leaping winning district 1-4A, a 48'-10.75" leap winning the region 1-4A title and a 49'-7" inch jump winning the state title by more than a foot with second place at 48 feet even.

Other area athletes signing scholarships were, from Clay, Arden Brake, golf to Florida Southern in Lakeland; from Middleburg, Cody Carroll, golf to University of North Florida; from Fleming Island, Caleb Lenoux, baseball to Seminole State; Madi Lenoux, softball to University of South Carolina-Upstate; Nick

Oakleaf High triple jump champion Melvin Briley, left, shows off scholarship cake with mom Carrie Briley in signing ceremony for Briley to continue jumping at South Florida.