

# School News

HAPPENINGS FROM OUR CLAY COUNTY SCHOOLS

December 2017

Vol. 6 — Issue 4

## 'Y' no more Meet Discovery Oaks Elementary

By Eric Cravey  
School News

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 name 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 elementary school, what better way to inspire our youth than to name their newest school after one of our nation's most storied and historic 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.

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.



Photo provided by Parrish-McCall Constructors Inc. of Gainesville

This aerial photograph was taken by a drone and shows the progress of Discovery Oaks Elementary School in the Eagle Landing section of Oakleaf. It is on track to open for the start of the 2018-19 school year and is located at 950 Oakleaf Plantation Parkway.

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.

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# Bonnie Plants kicks off cabbage program

MIDDLEBURG – Members of Clay County's agricultural community, coordinated by Clay County Farm Bureau, delivered nearly 3,000 cabbage plants to third grade students across the county on Oct. 17 to kick off the Bonnie Plants Third Grade

Cabbage Program. The program was launched in 2002 to instill a love of vegetable gardening in young people. Each year, Bonnie Plants distributes more than one million free cabbage plants to third grade classrooms across the country. As part of the program, Bonnie Plants awards a \$1,000 scholarship to one student in each state. Teachers submit a class winner and a child is chosen via random drawing by each state's director of agriculture. In 2011, twins from Ridgeview Elementary won the \$1,000 scholarship and in 2012, a student from Oakleaf Village Elementary won the prize. Clay County Farm Bureau strives to educate children and adults about where their food comes from, and highlights the importance of the agriculture industry. Volunteers included County Commissioner Gayward Hendry, School Board member Betsy Condon, FFA Advisors from Lake Asbury, Wilkinson and Oakleaf Junior High, along with their students, UF IFAS Extension Agents and Master Gardeners, Clay County Farm Bureau Directors and Young Farmers and Ranchers members.



Wilkinson Junior High FFA students who delivered cabbages to Tynes, Ridgeview, Argyle and Wilkinson Elementary schools.



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# Students get virtual tour of Navy rescue

By Kile Brewer  
School News

FLEMING ISLAND – Fleming Island High student Elliot Mendez walked out of a trailer on campus with a smile on his face on Tuesday.

Mendez, a cadet in the school's Fleming Island High School Navy Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps, was one of the students who got a glimpse of simulated Navy life. Thanks to virtual reality technology, he was able to step into the shoes of a Navy boat captain tasked with rescuing a cadre of Navy SEALs.

The simulator was brought to the school campus Nov. 7 after the weekend-long air show at Naval Air Station Jacksonville. The air show hosted the U.S. Navy's virtual reality simulator, a portable trailer complete with Oculus Rift goggles, and SubPac backpack systems that allow participants to feel vibrations and provide a fully-immersive experience. The simulator operates as a recruitment tool and tours the country for large events and air shows.

Once the air show came to an end, the simulator didn't have anywhere to go for a few days, so the Navy reached out to FIHS to see if they would like to have the simulator brought on campus for their NJROTC class. "What I like about this particular unit is that it is smaller and more cozy. It brings



Staff photos By KILE BREWER

**Fleming Island High School students simulated the role of a U.S. Navy boat driver who had been assigned to a rescue mission for some Seals. The simulation is a mobile unit that tours the country for air shows and other Navy recruiting events.**

kids together with technology and introduces them to actual Navy recruiters who know Navy life," said Heather Ewton, the Navy's public affairs officer for the regional recruiting district. "The simulation shows kids the capabilities of the navy and exposes them to future career opportunities. It shows them that when you join the Navy you aren't just a sailor on a ship."

One of the Fleming Island JROTC instructors,

Jeff Barlow, was on site to supervise cadets from Fleming Island, as well as those from the Middleburg High School NJROTC program who were invited to participate as well. Barlow, a first-year teacher at FIHS, was excited to hear that the simulator would be coming to their school.

"This is a really good opportunity for them to check out what the Navy has to offer," Barlow said. "The more these kids see and the more they are exposed to will make them better able to choose

which route to take in life."

The simulator isn't all that different from popular military-based video games, but the added value of the VR goggles, immersive sound and the SubPac, in addition to using a real steering wheel and throttle, creates a different environment from someone's living room game console setup.

Before heading to his next class, Mendez only had one suggestion for how to improve the simulation, "I wish it was longer!"



Navy workers help Fleming Island High School students get set up in their virtual reality simulator Nov. 7 at Fleming Island High. The simulator was set up at the school between stops after the NAS Jacksonville Air Show.

# Clay teachers earn Governor's Shine Awards

TALLAHASSEE – Two Clay County teachers are among 18 educators from across Florida who received the Governor's Shine Award on Tuesday.

During a Nov. 7 meeting of the Florida Cabinet, Gov. Rick Scott recognized teachers and administrators who make significant contributions to the field of education. In recognition of Veterans Day, 15 of the educators honored were veterans and are now teaching in Florida public schools.

The two Clay County teachers who were honored are both Clay County Teacher of the Year winners.

Twenty-year teaching veteran Michelle Bily, now a teacher at Doctors Inlet Elementary, was the Clay County School District's 2018 Teacher of the Year when she taught at Lakeside



Michelle Bily



Jessica Ehlinger

Elementary.

The second Shine Award recipient was Jessica Ehlinger, a 12-year-veteran and 2017 Clay County Teacher of the Year. Ehlinger currently teaches gifted education at Ridgeview Elementary School and is a Florida Teacher LEAD Network alumna and a two-time Fishman Prize nominee.

"I am proud to present these outstanding educators with the Governor's Shine Award today. I would like to thank them for their service to our country and for their commitment to ensuring all students reach their full potential. The educators honored today represent Florida's extraordinary teaching staff who are dedicated to preparing students for success in college and career," Scott said.

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

By Kile Brewer  
School News

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 he remembered.

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



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.

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 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-oriented 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 re-



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.



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.



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.

united, and students were able to catch up with their former teachers.

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

# Concert on the Green poster contest open to students

ORANGE PARK – Budding student artists in Clay County have a unique opportunity to win a scholarship from one of Clay County's premier arts organizations.

Concert on the Green, the nonprofit that supports visual and performing arts in Clay County is now accepting entries for its 2018 Poster Contest.

Winning students not only receive a scholarship, they are recognized for their work and will have a copy of a juried piece for their portfolios.

Using the theme of "A Celebration of Symphonic Music in an Outdoor Setting," students have until March 2, 2018 to turn in their poster contest entries. There is not an entry fee for the contest and students can enter only one poster. The poster design must cover a 11-inch by 12-inch section of a 11-inch by 17-inch paper or canvas (saving five inches on the bottom). Any artistic medium can be used to create the poster.

When submitting a poster for our contest, make sure their art follows the theme and is sized properly. Students can ask their school art teacher

for help or feedback when designing their posters.

The contest is open to any school-age student residing in Clay County, in grades 4-12. Students can attend a school outside Clay County as long as they reside in Clay County.

The purpose of the contest is to encourage Clay County students to seek and learn more about the finest forms of visual art and music.

All submitted artwork is released to Concert on the Green for the exclusive use of Concert on the Green. Students who need a copy for their portfolio, should take a picture beforehand.

Students must first register their poster in the concertonthegreen.com website, fill out the Contest Checklist Submission Form and attach the form to the backside of their poster art. Posters must be delivered to Orange Park Town Hall at 2041 Park Ave., in Orange Park. All entries must be turned in by March 2, 2018 by 5 p.m.

Judging will be based on the artwork that will make the best poster for the upcoming Concert on the Green event on Sunday, May 27, 2018.

Judging will be performed by at least three judges chosen for their expertise in visual arts and printing. Winners will be announced on or before Friday, March 31, 2018 and the winning entries will be framed for display and for the use of Concert on the Green.

Prizes will be awarded in the Elementary Division for 4th-6th grades, the Junior Division for 7th and 8th grades and Senior Division for grades 9-12.

Awards range from cash to college or art camp scholarships.

The grand prize winner's poster will be used as the official poster for the 2018 Concert on the

Green event and will be used in all promotional materials for the event.

The Clay County school program responsible for producing the winning poster will receive a program grant, in addition to recognition via Concert on the Green press releases and news articles.

All student winners will be recognized on the Concert on the Green website, at the Clay County Fair, and at the Memorial Day Weekend Concert on Sunday, May 27, 2018. For more information, contact Lauren Hoffman at lauren@concertonthegreen.com or (904) 505-3051.



Shown here is the 2017 winning poster titled, "Musical World," which was created by Orange Park High School student Adrianna Horne, a student of art teacher Carrie Keene. Horne's was the official Concert on the Green poster and was printed on the front cover of the program for the 2017 outdoor concert held at St. Johns Country Day School.

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# Discovery

from page 1

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 con-

tent 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 fami-

lies 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.

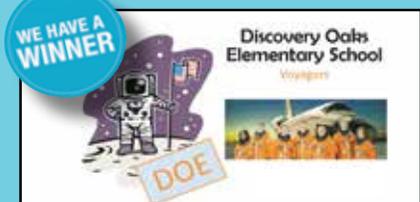
Before the official meeting got underway Nov. 2, Davis opened the meeting and took on an "acting chairman" role to kick off the board's annual reorganization meeting in which a new chairman and vice chairman are elected.

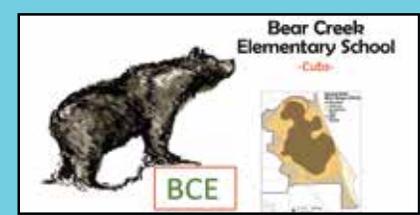
Outgoing Chairman Kerekes nominated outgoing Vice Chair Carol Studdard to serve as chair, while Ashley Gilhousen nominated Mary Bolla. When the votes were counted, Studdard was named chairman by a vote of 3-2 with Condon, Kerekes and Studdard voting for Studdard and Bolla and Gilhousen voting no.

Kerekes then nominated Condon for vice

## School Names

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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.



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.



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# Clay schools venture into the 'blue'

By John Gatlin  
School News

PALATKA – The St. Johns River Water Management District has announced its most recent grant recipients, and two Clay County schools will be big winners.

The SJRWMD announced the recipients of its second annual Blue School Grant Program. Eleven schools across Alachua, Clay, Duval, Lake,

## BLUE SCHOOL GRANT PROGRAM



**The program seeks to offer \$20,000 to teachers across its 18-county service area who are promoting water resource protection through hands-on projects in the classroom. In 2016, the program's inaugural year, it provided funding for field trips to organic and conventional farms, water quality comparison projects, seagrass restoration projects and the installation of micro-irrigation in-school gardens.**

Orange, Seminole, St. Johns, Putnam and Volusia counties will be receiving grants of up to \$2,000 a piece, to further education in science, technology, engineering and math.

This year, two grant requests were awarded to Clay County schools. Wilkinson Junior High School will be constructing a water conservation garden, and Oakleaf High School will be conducting a water quality comparison of storm water ponds and riparian zones. These projects give students hands-on experience to understand the necessity of water conservation.

The program seeks to offer \$20,000 to teachers across its 18-county service area who are promoting water resource protection through hands-on projects in the classroom. In 2016, the

program's inaugural year, it provided funding for field trips to organic and conventional farms, water quality comparison projects, seagrass restoration projects and the installation of micro-irrigation in-school gardens.

According to marine and environmental science teacher Kelly Morris of Oakleaf High, the grant provides the needed funding to explore new teaching avenues in public schools.

"[The grant] offers the opportunity for teachers to engage their students in a variety of hands-on activities," Morris said. "Being a public school, we often don't have the funds to purchase the equipment and items we can use to engage our students at a deeper level."

In July, Florida's Legislature allocated \$13.3

million towards a project in Clay County to support regional water supplies.

The project will use water from Black Creek, where levels are considered healthy, and provide it to shore up water levels in the Etonia Chain of Lakes in southwest Clay County. While big steps like these are essential towards maintaining an adequate water supply across the state, providing educational opportunities to students are equally important. These opportunities afforded by the grants will inspire the next generation of scientists and engineers to focus on the Floridan Aquifer.

"Water is important for our future, and we don't want to pollute it," said Mary Tarrant, lab teacher of Wilkinson Junior High. "We're not going to get any more [water], this is it, so we have to conserve it."

By providing teachers with adequate funding, students can look forward to more hands-on experiences in the classroom, while the rest of us can continue to enjoy an essential resource required for life.

Out of 41 public schools in Clay County, Wilkinson Junior and Oakleaf High were the only Clay schools awarded "Blue School" grants this year.

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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.

## School district ramps up classroom tech

By Kile Brewer  
School News

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. 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



The Clay County School District has placed at least six Chromebooks in each classroom throughout the district as part of a larger effort to bring all the schools up to a higher standard of technological connectivity.

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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.

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."



STAFF PHOTOS BY KILE BREWER

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

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# If you build it... Raiders' alum helps rebuild ball field

By Kile Brewer  
School News

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

**"Our goal is to give them a better playing field and something that they can be proud of. Part of our mission is to give back to the community."**

**– Ryan Schmitt**

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 play-

ing 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.

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



Staff photos By KILE BREWER

Dirt moving equipment from Petticoat-Schmitt levels out soil on the Orange Park High School baseball field Oct. 30. 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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Staff photos By KILE BREWER

From left, Clay District Schools Chief of Secondary Education Terry Connor, Orange Park High Principal Clayton Anderson, Petticoat-Schmitt Director of Field Operations Tim Clay, OPHS Athletic Director Michael Harrison, Petticoat-Schmitt President Ryan Schmitt and Petticoat-Schmitt IT Director Jay Adair, stand next to dirt moving equipment Oct. 30 on the OPHS baseball field. The company is leveling and filling the ballfield at no cost to the school as part of a larger baseball field renovation.

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.



Orange Park High School graduate and Jacksonville-based contractor Ryan Schmitt walks onto the baseball field at OPHS where his company is providing free dirt work to help get the field back in top form.

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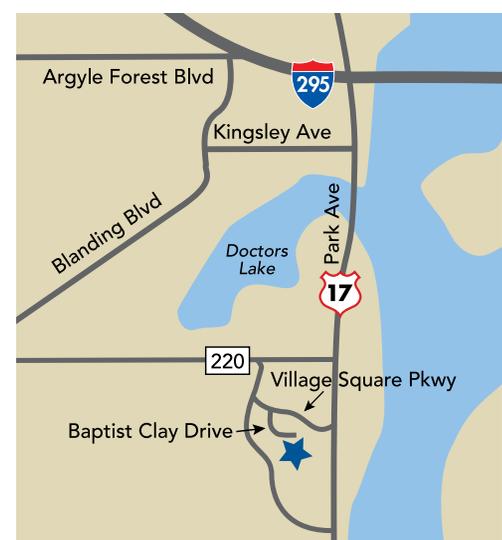
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