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2017 YEAR IN REVIEW

By **Eric Cravey**
 KH Herald.com

Happy New Year! As we welcome 2018, the Keystone Heights Herald takes a look back at the Top 10 stories of 2017. Presented as a countdown, the Year in Review looks back at some of the significant events that touched our community in 2017.

Food pantry making dent for decades

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – At the beginning of each month, Lake Area Ministries on Northeast Commercial Circle is packed, standing room only.

Since 1989, the organization has become a staple of the Lake Region for those faced with food insecurity. Early in the month is usually a busy time.

“We have received tremendous support from the community with private donations of money and food, church donations, business donations, and donations of food from Harvey’s Supermarket in Melrose,” co-director Chip Wester



Volunteers at food gleaning nonprofit Waste Not Want Not, which is located on Carnes Street in Orange Park, load and unload food on a hectic day. Volunteers from Lake Area Ministries come to Orange Park to pick up foods that will be distributed to needy families in the Lake Region.

said. “We have a large number of people who give to us regularly.”

The organization describes itself as a “faith-based, non-denominational” nonprofit that serves as a food pantry. Though based in Keystone Heights, it serves areas throughout Clay, Bradford, Putnam and Alachua counties.

“About 80 percent of the people we serve are in Clay County,” said Wester, who, along with co-director Paula Buckner, oversees day-to-day operations.

Lake Area Ministries serves nearly 450 families and has an annual budget of approximately \$100,000.

People who receive food must meet certain income

No. 10

requirements and fill out paperwork on their first visit. For instance, a family of three that makes \$26,208 per year or less is eligible.

Any individuals or families who are part of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, Supplemental Security Income or Medicaid are automatically eligible.

“Sometimes I’m asked, ‘Aren’t you worried about people committing fraud and getting food when they can afford to buy their own?’” Wester said. “My response has always been that, yes, I’m sure some people try to take advantage, but if I’m going to err, I’d rather err on the side of helping people.”

Among the regular items people can get at Lake Area

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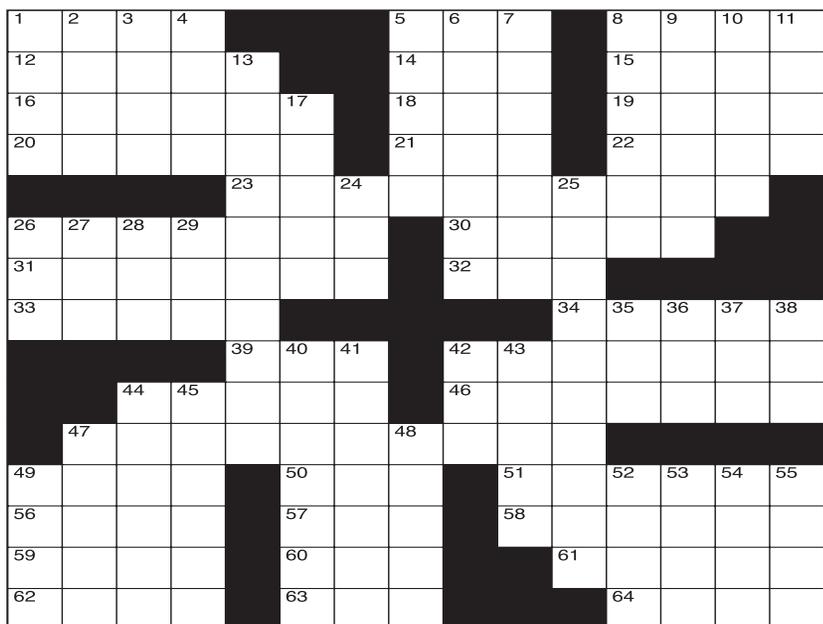
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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Make ale
- 5. Residue
- 8. Female parent
- 12. Succulent plants
- 14. OJ's judge
- 15. Czech river
- 16. Embarrassing predicament
- 18. NHL legend Bobby
- 19. Sunfish
- 20. One who acclaims
- 21. On the __; running away
- 22. Oklahoma's OWheat Capital
- 23. The Golden State
- 26. Merrymake
- 30. Siberian nomads
- 31. Pock-marked
- 32. Baleen whale
- 33. Leaf-footed bug genus
- 34. Treasure
- 39. Tanzanian shilling
- 42. Changed
- 44. Intestinal pouches
- 46. Walked in a celebratory way
- 47. South American mountain chain
- 49. Jai __ sport

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Crush
- 2. Razorbill genus
- 3. O'Full House O' actress Loughlin
- 4. Bluish green
- 5. Garlic mayonnaise
- 6. Attacks repeatedly
- 7. Secretion
- 8. Special instance
- 9. A handsome youth loved by Aphrodite
- 10. Tree genus in the mahogany family
- 11. Israeli city
- 13. Formed a theory
- 17. Remove

- 24. Type of light
- 25. Repeats
- 26. Certified public accountant
- 27. River in eastern France
- 28. Returned material authorization (abbr.)
- 29. Special __; military group
- 35. Ribonucleic acid
- 36. Not even
- 37. Power transmission belt
- 38. Doctor of Education
- 40. Type of nerve
- 41. Types of tops
- 42. Large primate
- 43. Flooded, low-lying land
- 44. Gritty
- 45. Gets up
- 47. Stake
- 48. Not the most
- 49. Swedish rock group
- 52. Expresses pleasure
- 53. Expression of boredom
- 54. Queen of Sparta
- 55. Where Adam and Eve were placed at the Creation



This storage room at Lake Area Ministries in Keystone Heights houses food for residents from Clay and surrounding counties.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Ministries are peanut butter, pasta, canned vegetables, bread, limited meats, soup and laundry soap.

"Other items vary a lot," Wester said. "We don't get to choose what we receive."

Lake Area Ministries – which has multiple rooms filled with shelves and pallets of food, as well as a room filled with large refrigerators of food – relies solely on volunteers, many of whom hail from 22 area churches.

Council looks to help with housing needs

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – Residents of Keystone Heights who need housing repairs or renovations may soon be able to get help from city hall.

City Council voted on Feb. 6 to apply for a \$650,000 Community Development Block Grant from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity that would fund home repairs for low-income families in the city limits.

"For this particular grant, we would be looking again at a minimum of nine low-to-moderate income houses," said Scott Modesitt of Brandon, Fla.-based Summit Professional Services, a consulting firm specializing in helping governments apply for grants.

"The primary requirements for applicants – the resident must live within the incorporated area of the city, has to be owner-occupied, they can have a mortgage and it cannot be a rental property," Modesitt said. "And the individual must be below 80 percent of the median area income."

Modesitt said, as drafted, the grant application could possibly fund more than nine home repair projects. He also said that, of the nine total homes, three homes will be low income – where the owner's income does not exceed 50 percent of the median for Clay County and another two homes will be for those falling in the very

low income category, which is for residents whose income does not exceed 30 percent of the median income for Clay County.

In addition to assistance with housing repairs, temporary relocation assistance will be provided to residents who will be unable to remain in the home during construction, as needed, the grant documents state.

"Currently the grant application is budgeting \$540,500 for housing rehabilitation/replacement, \$12,000 for temporary relocation, and \$97,500 for administration costs. Only households that are low to moderate income are eligible to participate in the project; this ensures that the project meets a national objective," states the application.

The Feb. 6 meeting marked the second public hearing that is required before applying for this type of grant. The first public hearing was held in October, a month after the city appointed and met with a Citizens Advisory Task Force, which is comprised of residents who meet the income requirements for the grant – both requirements for applying for the grant.

Sheriff brings neighborhood walks to Lake Region

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – When the sheriff comes knocking on the door, some people may run and hide. For residents in the High Ridge Estates neighborhood of Keystone Heights, though, Clay County Sheriff Darryl Daniels was a welcome face as he toured their neighborhood documenting their problems and promising to fix whatever he could.

Since being sworn in at the beginning of the year, Daniels has visited a different neighborhood once a month to talk to residents in a push to make Clay County a better place to live.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5



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Florida falling behind in criminal justice reform

By Melba Pearson,
Shalini Goel Agarwal
FloridaPolitics.com

Florida is falling behind on criminal justice reform. While a majority of states – including Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas – have adopted comprehensive criminal justice reforms over the last several years with bipartisan support, Florida has done little to evaluate its existing policies and create a more effective system. Other states are reducing incarceration levels while simultaneously lowering crime rates and saving millions of dollars.

Meanwhile, Florida spends more than \$2.3 billion a year to incarcerate nearly 100,000 people in prison. From 1970 to 2014, our population has roughly tripled; but the number of people in prison increased by more than 1,000 percent. Between 1990 and 2009, the length of sentences increased by 166 percent – more than any other state.

It's clear that Florida is sending too many people to prison for too long, and in doing so, wasting our tax dollars. It's time that our legislators do something to stop as well as reverse Florida's ineffective reliance on mass incarceration.

Florida's failure to overhaul its system has nothing to do with lack of opportunity or popular support. Year after year, our lawmakers fail to move forward proposals that would undoubtedly improve the criminal justice system. They cannot shift their complacency onto the backs of constituents, claiming voters want "tough-on-crime" politicians. Floridians are ready for change. A poll recently released by Right on Crime – a conservative advocacy group – found that registered Florida voters, including Republicans, back criminal justice reforms that are being proposed in the 2018 legislative session.

For starters, lawmakers should allow judges to depart from mandatory minimum sentences when they find that level of punishment is not justified. Right now, judges' hands are tied by laws meant to target drug kingpins. Instead, people facing nonviolent, and often first-time, drug offenses are now captured in a system with long sentences and no rehabilitation. Imprisonment is not appropriate for people who suffer from ad-

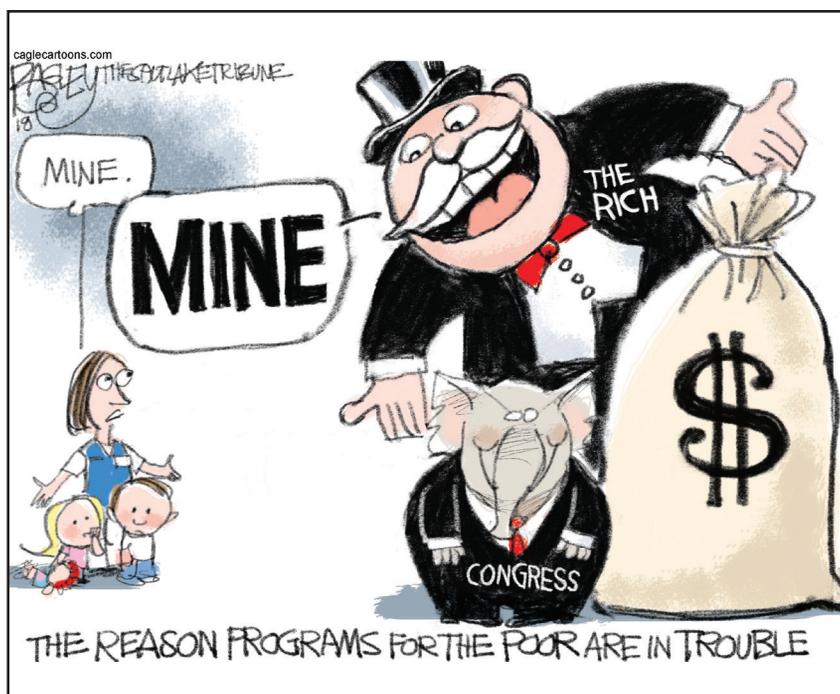


Melba Pearson



Shalini Goel Agarwal

SEE REFORM, 5



By Tony Young
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Forest fires caused by lightning once played a major role in forming and maintaining much of Florida's palmetto-pine flatwoods, sandhills, scrub, prairies and wetlands ecosystems. Many species of wildlife benefit greatly from fire. Historically, Native Americans, farmers and ranchers practiced controlled burning to clear land and initiate new plant growth for wildlife and livestock. But over time, as more people moved into Florida, development began to take over and fragment many natural areas.



Tony Young

Prescribed fire is the best and most cost-effective tool the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's wildlife managers have for managing wildlife habitat, especially large tracts. Safely-controlled prescribed fire techniques to improve and maintain habitats for deer, quail, turkey and many other wildlife species, have been used for some 75 years.

Some people worry that animals are harmed by prescribed fire. However, the slow-moving flames of carefully planned burns allow animals time to find shelter or move away from the approaching fire. Fire enables habitats to produce enough of the right kinds of food for wildlife by promoting nutritious, tender new growth of plants as well as increasing the production of seeds and fruit. This new growth attracts many insect species, which are great sources of protein for turkey and quail.

Periodic controlled burns also reduce the danger of devastating wildfires developing because the buildup of underbrush on the forest floor has been removed. Prescribed fire is the best way to eliminate such flammable debris, which helps lower the risks of wildfires forming and reduces their intensity if they do occur. Burning also allows ani-

mals to move through areas that would otherwise be impassable and unusable.

Controlled burns release and recycle nutrients back into the soil and allow more sunlight to reach the ground. This stimulates seeds to sprout, which produces tender, low-growing vegetation that provides food and appropriate shelter for wildlife. Prescribed fire also reduces the number of parasites and pests such as ticks.

Rigorous training and mandatory safety gear ensure that safety is the top priority for burn crew staff and the public on every prescribed burn the FWC conducts. Controlled burns are planned months in advance by skilled teams of experienced wildlife biologists and land managers who identify and prioritize areas that need it the most. Each burn unit has a specific plan, or "prescription," that describes the area to be burned, optimal weather conditions, humidity levels and wind direction, personnel and equipment needed, and specifics necessary to conduct a safe and effective burn. When weather conditions are appropriate, the FWC obtains a burn authorization External Website from the Florida Forest Service External Website and notifies people living nearby before starting a burn.

The FWC conducts prescribed burns at various times of the year to produce the best-desired results. Burning during the spring and summer increases the growth of native grasses and hardwoods. Burning during the winter is less damaging to shrubby plants.

When conducting a prescribed burn, the FWC makes every effort to minimize impacts to the public. You might see smoke plumes travelling high into the air, where they quickly dissipate. It is normal for the area around a burn to smell smoky for a day or two.

Right after a prescribed burn, the area may appear charred and bare but will attract deer and turkey, which can often be found in a burned area the very next day.

A few weeks to months following, the area will be lush with all kinds of thriving wildlife. By using prescribed fire as a management tool, the FWC can keep Florida's wildlife populations and their habitats healthy.

Word of the week

Word of the Week is a feature that aims to help readers boost their vocabulary in a meaningful way that has practical application. Each week, our editorial staff presents a word, its definition and its use in a sentence.

Paucity: A noun meaning "the presence of something only in small or insufficient quantities or amounts; scarcity."

"In the event of a fire, there is usually only a paucity of information available as to its causes."

Letter to the Editor

If it Ain't Broke Fix It? Addressing Evolution in Clay County Schools

My daughter is a seventh grader at Wilkinson Middle School. Recently she came home and asked some very smart questions about genetics, evolution and how it fit with our faith verse other religious traditions. This is nothing new in our home, we discuss topics like these all the time. The discussion passed and so I was happy to have had time with my daughter discussing her school experience, answering her questions and where I couldn't, guiding her to a source to find the answers.

At the most recent School Board meeting Mrs. Gilhousen suggested a change to the framework of Evolution curriculum in our district.

Parents, teachers and students have been exposed to our current methodology of teaching evolution for years with no issues, as was pointed out by the chairwoman.

The suggestion was that we teach all the theories and/or that we teach the controversy.

I would suggest that this is a direct challenge to teacher autonomy and an unnecessary action that could confuse students as well as being a possible violation of the establishment clause of the U.S. Constitution.

The fact that there are literally thousands of creation myths, the fact that teaching mythology in science is absurd. All that aside, requiring teachers to address even a small amount of creation myths challenges the autonomy of science teachers in their classrooms.

It would also put teachers in the precarious position of attempting to balance the secular teachings of science with the mysticism of multiple cultures and religious traditions if not inadvertently promoting particular religious beliefs – a clear violation of the establishment clause of the Constitution.

SEE LETTER, 5

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

“These people know what the problems are,” Daniels said, during the March 15 walk. “Some areas of Clay County have problems and I think it’s best to get our intel from the people that live there.”

This was the third walking tour the sheriff has taken, with the first two being successful, according to the department. In Keystone Heights, one problem that kept coming up were issues with unleashed dogs that roam the neighborhood. Daniels assured all residents that his deputies would make their presence known and enforce leash laws.

High Ridge Estates resident Jackie DeWitt expressed concerns with packs of pit bulls she said she has seen running wild near her home.

“Loose dogs are the biggest issue around here,” DeWitt said. “People have been bitten



Sheriff Darryl Daniels, front left, is shown here with various Clay County Sheriff's Office staff, while carrying out his third Neighborhood Walk of his new administration in March 2017. The walk focused on the High Ridge Estates community.

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Letter

from page 4

This suggestion also chances our students of being confused. Being exposed to extraneous information for no other reason than the religious beliefs of a single board member seems a high price to pay.

Where would we draw the line of which creation myths have “value” and how do we avoid the implication of bias and/or the favoring of particular religious traditions over others – a direct challenge to the findings in *Edwards v. Aguillard*.

Kitzmiller v. Dover Area School District

was a case very similar to what the board discussed. The decision in this case was “Teaching intelligent design in public school biology classes violates the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States because intelligent design is not science and “cannot uncouple itself from its creationist, and thus religious, antecedents.” While this case was heard in Pennsylvania the precedent seems clear.

We don’t teach about Vishnu in Biology for the same reason we don’t teach mitosis in ELA.

Thus, it is a violation of the public trust for a single board member to exceed their

mandate and push a personal issue absent a public outcry. The saying goes vox populi vox dei, the voice of the people is the voice of God.

As parents we have a spiritual obligation to raise our children to follow the right path. That means taking an active part in their education as well as discussing where curriculum and personal belief intersect. I, for one, do not want teachers filling the role of spirituality, particularly if such a role would only serve to marginalize one’s religious beliefs in order to promote secular teachings.

It would be my hope that students not be subjected to the thousands of creation myths in a science class, that teachers not

have their autonomy challenged, that our district take into account the precedent of the past several years as well as the cases across the country throughout the past 50 years and make no change to the methodology we currently use to teach evolution.

Roel Escamilla Jr.
Middleburg

Editor’s Note: Mr. Escamilla has filed paperwork as a candidate for the District 3 seat on the Clay County School Board, the seat currently held by Betsy Condon.

Reform

from page 4

diction or mental health issues.

Treatment is the more effective path in the short and long-term, and the less expensive option. Two-thirds of Florida voters believe judges should have the discretion to depart from these sentences when appropriate. Legislators should support two bills in this legislative session, Senate Bill 694 and House Bill 481, as these bills will allow a judge the discretion to impose an appropriate sentence that fits the crime.

Further, we should also raise the monetary value threshold at which theft

becomes a felony. The amount hasn’t been updated – even for inflation – since 1986. At \$300, we have one of the lowest thresholds in the country; in Georgia, it’s \$1,500 and in Texas, it’s \$2,500. This outdated law burdens people charged with theft of items like bicycles, an article of clothing, or small electronics with lifelong consequences that don’t fit the crime.

Each conviction could end up costing Florida taxpayers up to \$100,000 – the average amount it costs to house someone in a state prison for five years. Senate Bill 928 and House Bill 713 would raise the monetary threshold to \$1,500, which a majority of Floridians support. While that amount is still lower than some other Southern states,

passing this legislation would be a much-needed step in the right direction.

Lastly, we should encourage pre-arrest diversion programs that keep people from cycling into the criminal justice system in the first place and save money. A majority of arrests in Florida are for misdemeanor offenses. We shouldn’t be sending so many people to jail for low-level crimes and burdening taxpayers with the cost of housing, meals, health care and supervision. Nearly three in four Florida voters believe counties should be encouraged to create civil citation programs that would provide law enforcement officers an alternative to arrest.

Fortunately, several leading legislators have proposed these reforms and are taking

to heart that Floridians say the primary purpose of the criminal justice system should be to rehabilitate, not punish. Now is the time for the entire legislature to support their effort. It is time for our leaders to adopt smart policies that will prevent crime and reduce recidivism, while saving taxpayer dollars and keeping us safe. No more excuses. It is time we had better justice in Florida.

Shalini Goel Agarwal is managing attorney for the Southern Poverty Law Center. Melba Pearson is deputy director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Florida and immediate past president of The National Black Prosecutors Association. Their column appears courtesy of FloridaPolitics.com.

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just walking to their mailbox.”

DeWitt only had good things to say about Daniels’ visit.

“I think this is fantastic, there needs to be more of a presence back here,” she said.

Down the road from DeWitt, Julie Hammock and her little son Michael were waiting for the sheriff, also to express concerns about the dog problem, but also because Michael is a big fan of law enforcement. Michael’s father is a former police officer, so, according to his mother, Michael gets excited every time he sees a police car.

“Other kids will say, ‘There goes a Lamborghini,’ and Michael will say, ‘Look, a police car!’” she said while talking to Daniels.

After their discussion, Daniels pinned an honorary deputy’s badge on Michael, then administered Michael an oath, and swore him in as an honorary deputy.

“I’m gonna’ tell all my friends at school!” Michael said while admiring his new badge.

Hammock also shared the rest of the neighborhood’s concerns with the loose dogs. She told the Daniels that her son can’t ride up and down the streets on his bicycle because he’s been bitten by a dog before. Instead, he is forced to ride his bike in circles in the family’s yard.



Sheriff Darryl Daniels pins a junior deputy badge on the chest of Michael DeWitt of Keystone Heights during his Neighborhood Walk in the High Ridge Estates community.

Artist’s work helps promote public broadcasting

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – Echo Saunders has been painting and drawing her whole

life as a hobby, so she never expected something she would do for fun would thrust her in the spotlight.

The Keystone Heights resident’s name was recently broadcast all over the airwaves of Public Radio station WJCT 89.9 FM for having submitted and designed

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the winning entry for the station’s 45th anniversary T-shirt contest.

She spent most of her life watching PBS whether it was children’s programming such as “Mr. Roger’s Neighborhood” and “Arthur” or radio programs such as “Car Talk” and “Science Friday.”

“I’m grateful for how much I learned from PBS, how much interesting culture and art and new ideas I was exposed to,”



Echo Saunders of Keystone Heights won a regional contest sponsored by WJCT Public Broadcasting to design its new T-shirt.

Saunders said.

In her design, Saunders forms an earth with the words, knowledge, wonder and life. Saunders said she derived knowledge from watching and listening PBS, wonder from various cultures and environments in documentaries and life from things about the world around her that have shaped her life.

Although Saunders describes herself as

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

a "hobby artist," she grew up in an artistic family and has been drawing and painting her whole life. She took some art classes in college, so when she heard about the contest, she didn't think she would win.

"Frankly I didn't think I'd be one of the finalists, let alone win," Saunders said.

Now Saunders is looking to go back to school to become an art therapist so she can use art to help children who have suffered trauma express themselves through drawing and painting. Saunders said she hopes to work with autistic children.

"I would help the autistic people communicate better with the outside world and help them to relate to people and things better," Saunders said.

Need to expand bumps into cuts in grants

MELROSE – Three days a week, a host of Clay County seniors play a variety of games, participate in group discussions and enjoy a hot meal at the Melrose Senior Community Center.

"The main goal is to provide accessibility to health programs, leisure and nutrition to people in this community," said Jonathan Leslie, executive director of the Institute for Workforce Innovation, a Gainesville company that started the community center as one of its projects. "We're seeing a higher need [for these centers] across the country, and Melrose is not exempt from that. We're looking at the boomer generation, and with more patrons there is a higher need for a place like this."

With a growing number of senior citizens, the small community of Melrose, which sits at the intersection of four counties, needs a place where residents can gather to enjoy social activities and the occasional lunchtime meal.

The center opened in 2011 and relies totally on donations from the public and some funding from grants. Now open Monday, Wednesday and Friday, they have changed operating hours several times since the center's inception, and are trying to expand hours and services to five days a week, Monday through Friday.

"Grants we've received in the past have ended," said Peggy Jo Thran, center program coordinator "We're hoping that with upcoming fundraisers we can return to being open five days a week."

The center has teamed up with local groups to promote donations for its continued operation. On May 9, there was a silent auction hosted by the Melrose Business and Community Association, which featured donated items from local artists and collectors up for bid. They have also planned a 50/50 raffle fundraiser for a Cruise In scheduled from 4-8 p.m. on May 12 at Heritage Park in Melrose. Aside from fundraisers, the community center also operates a full-service public coffee shop inside their main room, complete with espresso drinks. Proceeds from the coffee sales go toward funding the center.

The regular lunches range from fried chicken to pizza, potato bars and build-



Although Northeast Florida was in the middle of a drought leading up to Independence Day, members of the Our Country Day event committee pleaded with city council to lift the burn ban, therefore, allowing the committee's spectacular annual fireworks show to take place as planned.

your-own-sub sandwiches. There is a suggested minimum donation of \$3 for the meals, but those who can't give that much are not turned away.

"Hopefully we'll be able to start serving lunch five days a week," Thran said. "Some people would not have a hot meal [otherwise]."

Thran's sister, Sue Corbett, who has been volunteering at the community center for two years, echoed Thran.

"Some of these people simply have no place to go, some of them would not eat without us," Corbett said. "The people here are great people."

Keystone fireworks a go for July 4

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – The Keystone Heights City Council voted unanimously June 5 to rescind a burn ban effectively greenlighting fireworks at the 2017 Our Country Day celebration.

"Any fires that we've had when we're

shooting them off, normally, is within 50-to-75 feet of the shoot," said Fred Goetzman, fireworks director for Our Country Day, who also works as a contractor for Skylighters of Florida, the company that provides the July 4 fireworks display.

Goetzman said the fireworks are placed in tubes and loaded on a trailer by the

fireworks manufacturer to ensure pre-event safety.

"In the 20 years I've been affiliated with shooting them for the City of Keystone [Heights], we have not had big fires. There is fires that it does create, but it's usually right there at the shoot site. It's usually a brush fire and we're usually able to stomp it out ourselves," said Council Member Steve Brown.

Clay County issued a state of emergency on May 9 and put a burn ban in place until at least May 15. However, with recent rains, officials rescinded the burn ban on May 29, a week before the regular monthly city council meeting.

Our Country Day volunteer Tina Bullock also pleaded with council to lift the ban in time for Independence Day.

"The bottom line is, for a lot of years, it brings a lot of people into the city," Bullock said. "I know people talk about coming to the area of Keystone to be a part of what's going on because it's a tradition...I think it's a positive thing for our city."

John Ward provided background on the fireworks issue that dates back 10 years ago when he worked part time for the city as a safety official. He said there were safety concerns then that could not be met, so the fireworks display was moved to Twin Lakes Park for two years to give city officials enough time to develop a safety plan for Keystone Beach.

"One of the things that we addressed was the crowd that's here at the beach...I think it's a broader issue we're dealing with here," said John Ward, director of

No. 6

No. 5

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

Emergency Management for Clay County.

Ward suggested that city council and Our Country Day work to bring new volunteers in to help with the July 4th celebration now and in the future to help improve safety conditions at the beach. Ward indicated he was concerned about the beach being over capacity in the event a fire does happen and cause an issue at the beach, but he also raised concerns about traffic.

"We're getting older, we're going to move on. We need to look at start recruiting other folks to get involved and keeping this tradition here. I enjoy this tradition here just as much as everybody else in this room setting out here," Ward said.

Canadian makes huge investment here

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – A Canadian company is investing hundreds of millions of dollars to set up a new subsidiary here that will train military from foreign countries on airplane flight and maintenance.

MHD Rockland Inc. of Montreal has set up MHD Rockland Services at a 16,600-square foot hangar at the Keystone Heights Airport. Plans call for building an additional 18,000 square feet of hangar space to allow two P3 Orion aircraft to fit in the hangar at one time. The company is looking to hire 10 employees who will train not only P3 pilots but mechanics who will travel here from all of the foreign countries that still use the P3 in their military.

Todd Falconer, senior program manager, with MHD Rockland Services, would not disclose exact dollar amounts of any aspect of the project ranging from expected sala-

No. 4

ries or costs of buying the nine P3 aircraft that are coming from Australia. However, he did say that it costs \$9 million just to replace a set of P3 wings and \$500,000 to replace an engine. When new and were in use by the U.S. Navy, one P3 cost \$36 million.

"It's a significant investment and it's tricky because we're not operating on a high profit margin," Falconer said.

Falconer said the new subsidiary and its venture is an outgrowth of a training school the Keystone Heights Airport hosted in summer 2016 dubbed the Keystone Depot Project. It was held in conjunction with Lockheed Martin, which used to manufacture the P3 in Marietta, Ga., and Rolls Royce, the plane's Allison engine manufacturer, and Buffalo Airways, a Canadian air carrier.

"That was very successful, so we're going to expand upon that and we're still going to continue to offer depot level training on the airframe. Depot level maintenance cycle is when we basically take the entire plane apart and inspect everything. Take all the inspection skin off the airplanes and then put it back together. It's an FAA-mandated inspection cycle on the airplanes," Falconer said.

"So, the benefit I see for the community is, one, we're going to bring a lot of money into the local economy and ... we're going to be bringing in those higher paying jobs into the local community, so the flow down is they're going to be spending money in the community," Falconer said.

MHD Rockland looked at other Florida cities before selecting Keystone Heights. They came here because of the proximity to Naval Air Station Jacksonville and retired U.S. Navy personnel who have years of P3 expertise.

"This is the right area. Part of the reason we selected this area was the P3 experience locally – it's probably the best place in the world to draw on that. But the job skills that are required are very specialized, so most of the jobs we're going to have are fairly specialized, higher paying jobs," Falconer said.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9



Todd Falconer of MHD Rockland stands in front of a P3 Orion at the Keystone Heights Airport. The Canadian company is investing hundreds of thousands of dollars to setup a subsidiary here that will train P3 mechanics and pilots from militaries around the world that still use the aircraft.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

New fire station coming to Keystone Height

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – When Hurricane Matthew barreled over the Eastern Seaboard October 2016, many in the county fled unfortified homes to shelters and other safe havens.

So did Keystone's firefighters.

No. 3

The current base for Keystone Height's firefighters is a 900-square foot house modified with a rescue bay at its rear.

So, when the hurricane blew through, Clay County Fire Chief Lorin Mock said those firefighters had to evacuate to a more secure location and modify their response to the hurricane.

However, a new firehouse could change all of that.

By the end of the year, county officials hope to break ground on a \$2 million facility located at 7390 State Road 21 in Keystone Heights.

"This will allow [firefighters] to operate as an independent base," Mock said. "It will have a generator and meet current code requirements, so from that perspective we'll be able to meet the needs of the community from that facility without needing to relocate or modify our response. I think what



This is an architect's rendering of the new fire station that was approved for construction in Keystone Heights.

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

they'll get is a facility that's better suited to meet their needs, obviously if those existing facilities is in a hurricane."

The county intends to sandwich the facility on a narrow piece of property between Hersey Realty and Keystone Heights Insurance.

Due to the property's slim tract, the facility will be two stories and include a traditional fire pole – something rarely seen in modern facilities.

The existing fire station in Middleburg still has a fire pole.

At the current facility, when a call comes in, the firefighters must cross the street to get to the facility that formerly housed the Keystone Heights Volunteer Fire Department. There, one of the bays holds their fire engine.

Mock said the entire situation just isn't optimal.

"It's obviously not a very good arrangement," Mock said. "The building is nowhere near up to code, and walking across the street to go on call is nowhere near ideal."

In 2000, the county upgraded the staffing in Keystone. The number of firefighters currently sits at five.

Mock said the county has been working on getting a new fire station in the area for about two years.

With this station, and a new station being erected in neighboring Bradford County, Mock said he's confident that, more than ever before, area residents and firefighters will have a proper facility to meet their needs.

Quiet coming to the dry lakebeds at night

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – The Clay County Commission put an end to late-night parties and races in the dried-up lakebeds of Lake Geneva and Lake Brooklyn that, for many residents, are their backyards.

The board of county commissioners passed an ordinance that prohibits the use of motor vehicles from sunset to sunrise along the dried banks of the two lakes.

The ordinance, long a topic of complaints with little movement, contains a three-strike system where a first offense would result in a documented warning. The second offense will be met with a notice to appear in court and the third offense puts



Residents who live along the dried lakebeds of Lake Geneva and Lake Brooklyn, much like this one shown here, will get relief from late night partying, music playing and such after the Board of County Commissioners passed a new ordinance that prohibits the use of motor vehicle from sunset to sunrise along the lakes' banks.

the offender subject to arrest.

Residents can still drive all-terrain vehicles, dune buggies and golf carts and other vehicles around the lakebeds during the daytime, but the proposed ordinance would prevent them from doing so after dark.

"I'm happy that the county is taking the lead on that. I get calls all the time and I hate having to tell the people, 'Well, you're in the county, you need to call your county commissioner,' so apparently they've been calling and they're working and they're doing something with this ordinance," said Tony Brown, former Keystone Heights Mayor, a long-time champion for the ordinance. "It's not fair. These people pay taxes

and everything and these kids and adults are going out there all night long, partying and everything and it needs to come to an end."

Residents have complained to city council members and county commissioners since shortly after the lakes began to recede, but officials remained in a holding pattern because the water bodies are public

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

Keystone Heights & Lake Region Area Church Directory

Abundant Life Church
6865 North State Rd 21 • Keystone
Sunday service 10:30am
Wed. 7:00pm

The Church Courageous
205 SW Magnolia • Keystone
904-263-3613
Sunday service 10:30am

Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church
3760 S.E. State Rd 21 • Keystone
Sunday service 11:00am

Community Church of Keystone Heights
345 SE Palmetto • Keystone
352-473-4182
Sunday service 10:00 am

Faith Presbyterian Church
2738 S.E. State Rd 21 • Keystone
Sunday service 11:00am

First Baptist Church of Keystone Heights
550 E. Walker Dr. • Keystone
352-473-7201
Sunday service 10:30 am
Wed. 6:30pm

Freedom Baptist Church
7207 State Rd 21 • Keystone
352-473-2778
Sunday service 10:00 am • Wed. 7:00pm

Fresh Start Fellowship
7191 State Rd 21 • Keystone
352-473-6550
Sunday service 10:00 am & 6:00pm
Wed 6:00pm

Friendship Bible Church
1155 Orchid Ave. • Keystone
352-473-2713
Sunday service 10:30am & 6:00pm

Gadara Baptist Church
6779 County Road 315C • Keystone
352-473-3615
Sunday service 11:00am & 6:00pm
Wed. service 6:30pm

Hope Baptist Church
3900 S.E. State Road 100 • Starke
352-473-4188
Sunday service 10:45am

Keystone Heights Christian Church
3528 SE State Rd 21 • Keystone
352-473-0620
Sunday service 10:30am • Wed. 6:30pm

Keystone Heights First Assembly of God
8025 Hwy 100 • Keystone
352-473-3432
Sunday service 10:30am • Wed. 7:00pm

Keystone Heights Presbyterian Church
4002 State Rd 100 • Keystone
352-448-9440
Sunday service 10:00am

Keystone United Methodist Church
4004 S.E. State Rd. 21 • Keystone
352-473-3829
Sunday service 8:00am, 9:15 & 11:00am

Lake Hill Baptist Church
5165 County Rd 214 • Keystone
352-476-4191
Sunday service 11:00am & 6:00pm

St. William Catholic Church
210 SW Peach St • Keystone
352-473-4136
Sat. service 5:00pm • Sun. 9:00 am

Trinity Baptist Church
3716 SE State Rd 21 • Keystone
352-473-7261
Sunday service 8:30am & 11:00am
Wed. 6:30pm

Cross Point Church
Meets Park of Palms chapel
677 Hebron Ave • Keystone
352-473-4545
Sunday service 10:40am

Trinity Episcopal
204 state Rd. 26 • Melrose
352-475-2177
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Wed. 6:00pm

Keystone Church Of Christ
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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

bodies of land owned and governed by the state.

When residents call the police with noise complaints, deputies more often than not could do nothing about it because they had no jurisdiction. Instead, wardens from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission would come to resolve disputes.

Often, however, the warden's response times lagged, meaning most thrill seekers got away with keeping residents awake with the sounds of their engines.

To enforce the ordinance, County Attorney Courtney Grimm had to broker a deal between the state and the county to give the county power to enforce the ordinance. Violating the ban would be a second-degree misdemeanor and could result in a 60-day jail sentence and/or a \$500 fine.

The ordinance provides a legal defense within it that states if a violator could prove he was on private property at the time, then he can be absolved of the jail time and fine.

Alternatively, it would not be a violation if the vehicle were used to transport a boat from public or private upland property to the water for the purpose of launching it.

Karen Lake appointed interim mayor

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – After four months of searching, the Keystone Heights City Council voted unanimously to elect

Karen Lake as its Mayor.

The Dec. 4 action came after former mayor Tony Brown stepped down in August, leading the city to open up the application process three times to find his replacement who would serve on a temporary basis until the Super Tuesday election in April when a permanent mayor will be elected.

Lake was one of two original applicants whose application was passed over before the council opted to reopen the application process. After the two original application periods came to a close, the city received a third application from Planning and Zoning board member Bill Dixon, who resigned from his position on that board to throw his name into consideration.

When the council met in November, they opted to again open up the position to applications, and validated Dixon's application, which was turned in late. The month-long application period saw no additional residents apply. Dixon was present at the Dec. 4 meeting to state his case and answered questions the council used to screen Lake and Catherine Southard in October.

However, before the meeting began, Lake walked into the council chambers and presented a citizens' comment card to acting mayor Steve Hart. Once the meeting got underway, Hart invited Lake to the podium during the public comment portion of the meeting.

Lake said that by throwing out her application without giving it any consideration

No. 1



Karen Lake was appointed acting mayor of Keystone Heights in December by a 4-0 vote of city council, four months after Tony Brown, at right, resigned to focus on his growing business.



to begin with, and then asking her to reapply was redundant. She said the move also penalized her and Southard who had originally filed applications once the position was announced.

"If it had indeed been this council's objective to have a larger pool of applicants, the right thing to have done was to roll over the two timely-filed applications into round two, and, ultimately, this third round," Lake read from a prepared statement. "Why were [our applications] removed? We didn't request for them to be removed."

Lake said she had been hearing accusations throughout the city of sexism through the selection process, being that the two original applicants were both women.

"Immediately rejecting two female applicants, but accepting a late-filed male applicant speaks to me on gender discrimination," Lake said. "Whether it was intentional or not, this council is responsible for that message."

After hearing Dixon's presentation and interview, the council voted 4-0 to allow Lake to be, again, considered as a valid candidate for mayor before a brief discussion of the pros and cons of the candidates.

Next, Hart asked for a motion to accept Lake as mayor, Lewandowski made the motion with Hart and Marion Kelly voting yes immediately, Dan Lewandowski and Steve Brown, the two yes votes for Dixon, eventually spoke up and made the vote 4-0.

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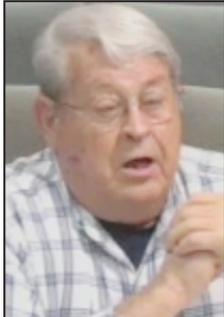
Charter Review panel recommends BCC pay hike

By Debra W. Buehn
KH Herald.com

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – In an effort to correct what they see as a punishment to the wrong people, the Charter Review Commission will present the voters of Clay County with a ballot issue in November designed to bring Clay County commissioners' salaries more in line with their peers across the state.

Members of the CRC present at the commission's Jan. 4 meeting voted 9-0 unanimously to put on the November general ballot an item that would raise Clay County commissioners' salaries from their current \$37,000 a year to about \$51,580 a year. The pay hike would be done in 5 percent increments over a four-year period. Six Charter Review Commission members were absent from the meeting.

That option won out over two others



Ron Stotler

that were brought before the full CRC by a subcommittee that was formed specifically to look at the issue of commissioners' salaries. One of those options would have raised commissioners' salaries to state statutes' levels of a little over \$70,000 in one fell swoop as soon as legally possible, presumably Jan. 1, 2019. The other would have raised the salaries to the state formula level, but over a period of five years. (The state formula is known as section 145.031 or "145" for short.)

The third option, which won out, was a slight modification of the second option. It stated that the CRC would not have to put salaries at 100 percent of the state statute formula's amount, but could use any percentage of that formula it deemed proper.

The option that the CRC approved to bring before the voters of Clay County would put commissioners' salaries at 70 percent of the state formula level, instead of



Art Hooker

the 50 percent at which it now is.

"I feel like this is reasonable looking out for both the citizens and the commissioners," said Larry Kirkman, who chaired the subcommittee.

Kirkman said he was originally going to support going to 80 percent of the state formula level, but after hearing from many people who were "in opposition to all or some increase" decided 70 percent was a good number.

The 70 percent level, if approved, would not go up over the years, but the pay level could because of a state stipulation associated with rising population levels, said CRC member Art Hooker.

Officials have repeatedly said county commissioners have not asked for the raise. It came up for discussion because it was one of the top three items members of the Charter Review Committee thought should be dealt with during the CRC's 2017-2018 session.

A Charter Review Commission is appointed every four years to review the county's charter and determine if there are items that need to be revised or amended. The 15 members of the CRC are nominated by the Board of County Commissioners.

The problem members of the CRC saw with the county commissioners' salaries is that their salaries fall near the bottom of the pay scale compared to the majority of other commissioners in the state. Because Clay County is one of 20 charter counties in the state (the other 47 counties are known as "constitutional" counties and are ruled by state statute), it is governed by what is called "home rule."

The commissioners' current salaries were set by a voter initiative passed in the 2008 general election. That initiative amended the county charter.

Most other Florida county commissioners' salaries are determined by the state's formulas. In a report recently issued through the Office of Economic and Demographic Research for 2017-2018, the amount paid to Clay County commissioners should be \$73,686, said Hooker.

That's a bump up according to figures previously supplied by county auditor Mike Price, who said in a Nov. 8, 2017 memo in answer to CRC questions that following 145, "the salary for sitting commissioners today would be \$70,505."

SEE HIKE, 14

Sheriff drug bust video goes viral

By Kyle Brewer
KH Herald.com

ORANGE PARK – Clay County Sheriff Darryl Daniels has gone viral.

Following a raid on a home in near Orange Park's Hickory Glen neighborhood on Jan. 5, Daniels filmed a vlog-style video to send a message to the public.

"As the sheriff of Clay County I'm telling you that if you want to commit crimes in Clay County, you've got options," Daniels said. "You can stop what you're doing, you can leave Clay County or you too will be on the receiving end of this," Daniels said before turning his back to the camera and heading toward the house. Casually dressed in a cable-knit sweater, peacoat and jeans, Daniels stopped once he made his way through the front door.

"One day you'll be sleeping at night, or early one morning and you'll hear a bang and a lot of noise and the end result and the outcome will be: me, standing in your living room, like I said, drinking my morning coffee," Daniels said. After taking a long drink from his CCSO coffee mug, he leaves viewers with a final word, "15 going to jail, three big gulps. Y'all take care, Clay County."

The video spread quickly, being shared more than 30,000 times as of the morning of Jan. 10, where it has already racked up 3.3 million views on Facebook.

About a dozen of the 15 people mentioned by Daniels can be seen at the

beginning of the clip, lined up on the curb wrapped in blankets and joking with each other. They had been pulled from the house at 3080 Hickory Glen Dr., a house that has become commonplace for CCSO deputies in the last year.

In late October 2017, the house was raided by U.S. Marshals, resulting in the arrest of Khiry Aurian Lee Lindsey, 25, for possession of heroin and possession of MDMA. Lindsey still sits in Clay County Jail awaiting an expected May 31 court date with no option for bond.

According to the description on the video, a previous raid on the house resulted in the recovery of trafficking amounts of heroin and MDMA. The description also noted that deputies have responded to the house 30 times in the last six months for a variety of things including gunshots and fights. It was also stated that several medical calls have been received from the house that are believed to be overdose related.

The recent sting operation has resulted in five arrests that could be found at the time of publication, including: Haley Autumn Thompson, 21, Joseph Abraham Hand, 21, Aviron William Lippus, 18, for marijuana possession more than 20 grams, and Devontae Joseph Robert Gibson, 21, for marijuana possession of not more than 20 grams. The fifth arrest was on William Edward Endres, 30, who faces a felony for owning or renting



Clay County Sheriff Darryl Daniels stands in front of a home on Hickory Glen Drive in the Orange Park near where the SWAT Team made a drug bust Jan. 5.

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SEE SHERIFF, 20

Hike

from page 13

In comparison, constitutional officers in the county, who are paid through the state formula, currently receive the following annual salary for what is considered full-time work: the clerk of courts, supervisor of elections, property appraiser and tax collector receive \$128,874 while the sheriff receives \$137,837, Price said in the same memo.

The reason behind the voter initiative that lowered county commissioners' pay was a large part of the general review of the commissioners' salaries at the Jan. 4 meeting. Hooker had invited Price to attend and went over a 47-page document Price wrote titled "Internal Inquiry Final Report" and dated Nov. 17, 2005.

In the report, which is public record, Price went over what had happened that led voters to lower commissioners' pay. Price also went over the basics of the situation in a recent memo to the CRC answering its questions concerning the history of the time.

Basically, Price said during the mid-2000s, the public came to view the county government as "basically dishonest." This came on the heels of "scandals" involving county government that resulted in a Federal Bureau of Investigation and state attorney's office investigations, a grand jury being convened in 2006 and two senior management-level BCC employees being terminated. There was also the indictment and trials of an elected official and a senior

"We cannot continue as a county, as a community and as human beings to make others suffer for someone else's sins."

– Tamara Brandt

manager. In addition, another scandal had occurred in 2004 that alleged an elected official had misused a county credit card.

Looking to make the county government more accountable, the 2006 Charter Review Commission came up with the idea to add two at-large members to the county commission, paying for the new members by cutting the existing members' salaries. Even though that idea was passed by voters and two new members elected, they never took office as a citizen's initiative group that voters supported in 2008 resulted in the two new members being cut and commissioners' salaries being lowered to \$37,000 a year, where it still remains.

For Price, the whole thing essentially resulted in punishing future commissioners for what previous commissioners had done, something he did not agree with. Price – a Certified Public Accountant – also said on Jan. 4 that he wanted to make sure people understood no county commissioner had ever complained to him about their salary or asked him to write a memo to the CRC concerning the salary history (that was written in response to a CRC question, he said).

"No member of the BCC asked me to write a memo to you guys. No member of

the Board of County Commissioners has ever discussed their pay or expressed any dissatisfaction with their pay in my presence, ever," he said.

At the end of the review, Hooker thanked Price and said he thought it was important for people to understand how things had gotten to the point they are today and "also to understand that's in the past and that does not involve these current county commissioners and if we're smart as voters, it won't involve future county commissioners."

The other CRC members present agreed with him.

"We cannot continue as a county, as a community and as human beings to make others suffer for someone else's sins," said Tamara Brandt, who added she believed the commissioners put in a tremendous amount of time – much more than a part-time job – and deserved a pay hike.

Much of the resulting discussion revolved around whether the commissioners' jobs were part time or full time, and how to present a pay hike to the public so it would understand why it was being suggested. Among the methods discussed were meeting with civic groups or home owners associations and others to answer questions and

utilizing various forms of publicity. Brandt is president of Ridgecrest Civic Association.

"I think we have to make sure that we educate the citizens and that we bring them on board to understand how important it is if we're going to get the caliber of people that we want on the commission," said Glo Smith.

As for how much time commissioners put into their job, the consensus was that the jobs are much more than part time.

"I'm guessing that it's a full-time or more than full-time job," said Paul Sarto, who took the place of David Cheers, who had to resign.

Ronald Stotler, a former county commissioner, said it's definitely not a job where you punch in from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., but rather one where a person is constantly on call. "There's no set hours," he said.

CRC Vice Chairman Charles R. "Scotty" Taylor Jr. suggested inviting current and/or former commissioners to appear to let the CRC know how they view their jobs. "I think we need to have that on record," he said.

Brandt also suggested getting calendars from the past couple of months for current commissioners to see what their schedules are like.

The CRC will meet again at 7 p.m. Jan. 29 in the county commission chambers to discuss single district representation versus at-large representation, another issue that came about from a previous citizen petition and referendum.

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Bird count gets kids acquainted with nature

By Kile Brewer
KHHerald.com

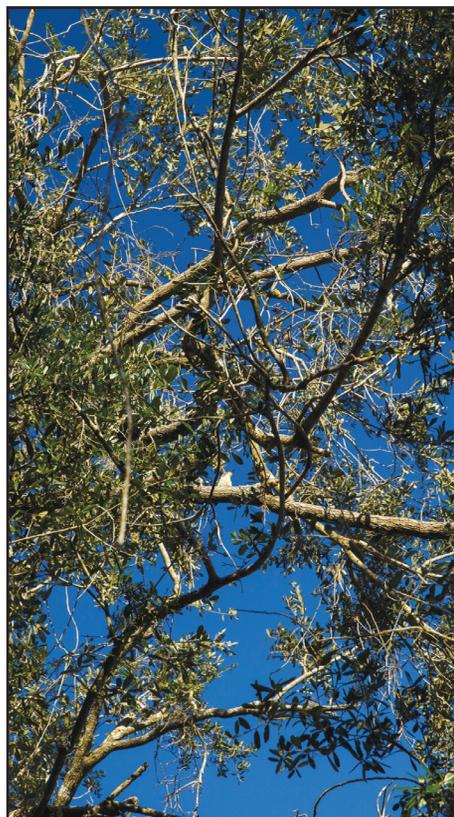
GREEN COVE SPRINGS – When wintry weather hits, Floridians take shelter, but Saturday a couple dozen Clay County adventurers headed outside into the cold to be with the birds.

Through its Christmas Bird Count for Kids, the Duval Audubon Society hopes to get kids out of the house and into the woods of Camp Chowenwaw, even if it was only for a half-day.

For the past four years the organization has hosted the kid's version of the society's bird count. The Christmas Bird Count, adult version, is one of the longest standing ventures by Audubon, with volunteers going out to collect census-like data on birds every year since the early 1900s. In more recent times, the kid's count came about as a means of spawning volunteers for the next generation's official count, as well as just getting kids in nature.

"It's always nice to get kids involved in things outside, especially when so many things today are geared toward being inside," said Debra Hill Duval Audubon's CBC4Kids director. "We're hoping to introduce kids to nature and birding, and we do that by putting them on a trail with experienced birders."

Hill noted that a lot of people don't understand birding, but those who do typically



A red-bellied woodpecker sits perched in a tall tree at Camp Chowenwaw. The bird was spotted and marked on the list of several young birders Jan. 6 during the annual Duval Audubon Society-hosted Christmas Bird Count for Kids.



PHOTOS BY KILE BREWER

Participants in the Duval Audubon Society's annual Christmas Bird Count for Kids look for a red-bellied woodpecker Jan. 6 at Camp Chowenwaw.

love the activity. The day began early with a quick rundown of what is involved in birding. The kids are taught some of the basic types of birds they might see, and the ways to tell similar-looking birds apart. They were also provided with a basic set of binoculars and taught how to use and focus them.

After their briefing, the kids went outside

and split into groups led by seasoned birders like Hill. The groups wandered throughout the grounds at the Green Cove Springs campsite. Their birding adventures took them around the various lakes and over the wooden walkways that dot the park. Though the cold weather kept some of the bird count participants away, it might have sparked more bird participants, as the typically bird-lacking January sky was filled with winged visitors of all shapes and sizes Saturday.

Hill said that in typical years they get about 45 participants, but this year kids signed up quicker than they could close the application process. They ended up with 86 signed up, but the weather kept some participants from showing up. However, the interest is there, and next year's count is sure to be a popular activity.

One group of youngsters who braved the cold, Cub Scouts Pack 802 out of Fleming Island, had several members at the count donning winter coats with their hoods cinched. Den Leader Lisa Stroble corralled the group during the bird count, which she said would fulfill a belt loop requirement for the young Scouts.

"I'm pretty sure none of them have been out using binoculars before," Stroble said. "Not all of them were excited to come, but since they have been here they've gotten into it."

After the count had taken place, the kids headed back to one of the camp's main cabins for a presentation by the Jacksonville Zoo Ambassadors.

The event is held annually in the week following New Year's Day. Those hoping to grab a spot next year would be advised to check the Duval Audubon site early as the spots are expected to fill up quickly as they did this year.



bird had been spotted by the experienced birders who led groups throughout the grounds at Camp Chowenwaw to check birds off their list and make their count.

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The Beat is a look at some of the crime activity reported to the Clay County Sheriff's Office in the previous month. Included here are arrests, police briefs and crimes reported by and involving Lake Area residents in the past 30 days until press time.

Tuesday, January 9

Dylan Craig Hurt, 18, Keystone Heights, Aggravated Battery, Shooting or Throwing a Missile Into a Dwelling or Vehicle, Child Neglect Without Great Bodily Harm, Vandalism \$201-999

Sunday, January 7

Eduardo Buenaventura Macedo, 27, Keystone Heights, No Valid Driver's License

Wednesday, January 3

Terry Edward Sorensen, Keystone Heights, 62, Child Abuse Without Great Bodily Harm

Monday, January 1

Israel Harris Banda, 38, Keystone Heights, Fugitive From Justice
Miles Dean Hudson, 28, Keystone Heights, Leaving the Scene of an Unattended Vehicle or Other Property

Thursday, December 28

Jonathan Kyle Cox, 25, Keystone Heights,

Failing to Report Name or Residence Change, Failing to Report Vacating of Permanent Residence

Joe Arthur Turner, 27, Keystone Heights, Burglary, Grand Theft \$300-4,999

Wednesday, December 27

James Isiah Martin, 20, Keystone Heights, Robbery-armed Firearm/other Deadly Weapon, Aggravated Battery With a Deadly Weapon, Armed Grand Theft \$300-4,999, Vandalism Over \$200

Monday, December 25

Christopher Sean Silvey, 35, Keystone Heights, Simple Battery

Saturday, December 23

Daniel Allen Simpson, 34, Keystone Heights, Simple Domestic Battery

Monday, December 18

William Joseph Aviles, 38, Keystone Heights, Simple Domestic Battery

Wednesday, December 13

Cody Arthur Carpenter, 25, Keystone Heights, VOP - Introduction and/or Possession of Contraband in a County Jail

Joshua Andrew Elliott, 28, Keystone Heights, Cocaine Possession, Drug Equipment Possession

Hollie Nicole Moore, 34, Keystone Heights, Aggravated Assault With a Deadly Weapon

Police make child abuse arrest

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – A Keystone Heights man was arrested after allegedly assaulting a child in his home.

The Clay County Sheriff's Office arrested Terry Edward Sorensen, 62, on Jan. 3 after responding to a 911 hang up call.

According to the report, Sorensen became angry with a child in his home in the 7000 block of Twin Lakes Road when the boy had left something on the counter. Sorensen made him put the item away and then pushed the victim on to the ground, police said. Sorensen then knelt onto the victim's abdomen and began punching and slamming his head into the floor, in addition to choking the boy. The victim then threatened Sorensen with a screwdriver he had in his pocket before Sorensen would stop.

Sorensen was taken to the Clay County Jail following his arrest and faces a felony charge for child abuse. He has since been released from jail.

Man faces robbery charge

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – A man is charged with allegedly assaulting another man and stealing his cell phone.

The Clay County Sheriff's Office arrested James Isiah Martin, 20, of Keystone Heights, on Dec. 27 after he assaulted a man at the Nature Park at 550 Lawrence Blvd. Police said the victim was standing in the park charging his cell phone when Martin walked toward him and threatened him with a gun in his waistband.

The victim said he was not afraid so Martin went to him and then started hitting the man in the back of the head. The victim kicked Martin in the groin multiple times until he fell to the ground. Martin then pointed the handgun at the victim and

robbed him of his backpack and cell phone, and immediately smashed the cellphone on the ground before running away. Officers arrested Martin at his home in the 7000 block of Lakeview Street after being contacted by the victim. He is charged with armed robbery, aggravated battery with a deadly weapon and armed grand theft and vandalism for the phone.

Body found in Spring Lake

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – After a four-day search, the Clay County Sheriff's Office found a body in Spring Lake that may be that of a man who was reported missing while swimming on Dec. 22.

However, a CCSO prepared statement did not confirm whether the body was that of 27-year-old Sean Leverette.

CCSO officials returned to the lake with members of its dive team and other Special Operations team members who used drones periodically in their search along the lake bed.

Leverette was last seen swimming in Spring Lake on Dec. 21, around 5 p.m."

Spokesman Chris Padgett also said that there was no reason to believe foul play was involved.

"Sean had been spending time with friends around the lake, but later in the afternoon his friends left the area leaving him to swim. This was the last time he was seen, because upon the return of his friends, he could not be found," according to one CCSO statement.

He is described as a white male, 5-feet 7-inches tall and approximately 155 pounds, with brown hair and brown eyes. He was possibly wearing military style boots, pants and a T-shirt, that he was believed to be wearing while swimming.

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Cushman named state player of week

By Randy Lefko
KHHERald.com

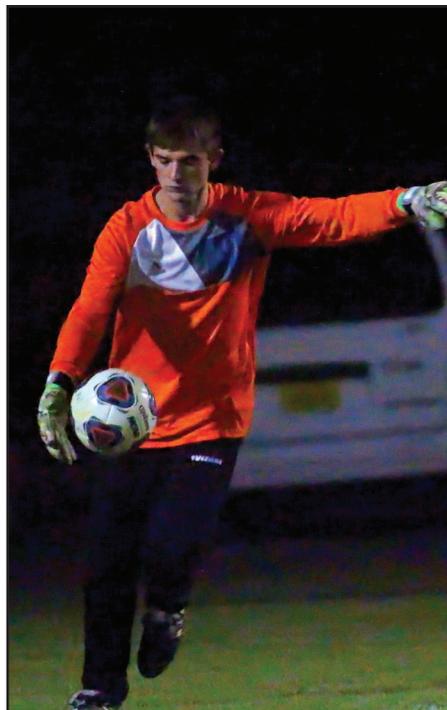
KANSAS CITY, MO. – Keystone Heights High junior goalie Caleb Cushman was recently named a United Soccer Coaches/Maxpreps High School State Player of the Week for the week of Dec. 11-17.

"Our stats database goes to the two organizations and they make the decision from there," said Waters. "It's quite an honor."

Cushman, a Clay Today All County second team selection last year, is joined by players from California, Arizona, Hawaii, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas in the weekly vote released by United Soccer Coaches and Maxpreps. His award comes with national recognition and a patch for his uniform.

Cushman, also an all county band member, currently is Keystone Heights top goalie with the Indians holding an 11-7-2 overall record, 4-5-1 in district 5-2A, with a 1.518 goals against average with 178 saves and just 26 goals scored against him. Cushman also has seven shutouts for the year.

"He had like 17 saves in that week in a tough 3-2 loss to district rival Crescent City," said Keystone Heights coach Trevor Waters. "He has had to have some big games



Caleb Cushman launches goal kick.

because we try to push the ball more on offense and sometimes that leaves the defense vulnerable. He's got great instincts."



STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Keystone Heights High School soccer goalie Caleb Cushman, right, awaits shot from Crescent City opponent in recent match at Keystone Heights High School. Cushman was named a national high school player of week Dec. 11-17 by United States Coaches/Maxpreps.

For that week, Keystone Heights had a 0-0 tie with P.K. Yonge, the 3-2 loss to Crescent City, a 7-3 win over Fernandina Beach and a 4-1 loss to Palatka.

"He had some spectacular saves against Orange Park on January 4 with 19 saves," said Waters. "He has a great career going. He has seven shutouts in our nine wins at one

point."

Maxpreps is the pre-eminent sports website nationwide that compiles stats, records and player of the week nominations from nearly all high school sports.

United Soccer Coaches, established in 1941 is the world's largest soccer coaches organization.

Bortles gets playoff win for Jacksonville Jaguars

By Randy Lefko
KHHERald.com

JACKSONVILLE - Jacksonville Jaguars' quarterback Blake Bortles rushed for a game-high 88 yards and threw a fourth and one touchdown pass to lead the Jags to a 10-3 wild card playoff win over the Buffalo Bills in the first playoff game in 10 years at Everbank Field.

"I kind of reference it to a pitcher who is not quite on; can't hit the fastball or curveball, but has to find some way to win," said Bortles, in a post game interview. "I was fortunate to be able to run around out there and have an option B."

Jacksonville (11-6) will next travel to Pittsburgh (13-3) to take on the Steelers for the AFC Division championship. Pittsburgh had a bye week. Jacksonville beat Pittsburgh 30-9 earlier in the season with the Jags secondary intercepting Steeler quarterback Ben Roethlisberger five times.

After a hard-fought 3-3 tie at the half-



STAFF PHOTO BY RANDY LEFKO

Jacksonville Jaguars cornerback Jalen Ramsey runs downfield after making game-ending interception with 32 seconds left in the Jags 10-3 wild card playoff win over Buffalo Bills on Sun., Jan. 7 in Jacksonville. Jaguars advance to AFC Division playoff game at Pittsburgh Steelers on Sun., Jan. 14.

time break, the Jaguars remained stellar on defense in front of the sellout Everbank Field crowd with defensive back Aaron Colvin intercepting Bills' quarterback Tyrod Taylor in the third quarter and Jalen Ramsey picking off Bills backup quarterback Nathan Peterman with a tip and catch spectacular with 32 seconds left in the game that sealed the game for the Jaguars.

"The energy in the stadium was outstanding; better than what coach Tom Coughlin said it would be," said Jaguars coach Doug Marrone. "Colvin woke up with a little flu bug, but he toughed it out out there."

Ramsey snagged his interception in front of Bills wide receiver Deonte Thompson with a tip up and diving catch that ignited the Everbank crowd.

"Peterman (Bills quarterback Nathan Peterman) threw the same hitch pass on the other side a couple of plays before and

SEE JAGS, 19

Boys Soccer Update

District 4-4A

Fleming Island (9-0-1, 3-0-0)

St. Augustine (2-5-1, 2-1-1)

Nease (3-9-1, 1-1-1)

Middleburg (2-6-0, 0-4-0)

Bartram Trail (7-2-1, 0-0-1)

Creekside (7-3-1, 0-0-0)

Oakleaf (6-2-0)

Recent games:

Fleming Island: FIHS 2, Bartram Trail 0; FIHS 12, Andrew Jackson 0

Oakleaf: FIHS 6, Oakleaf 1; Oakleaf 1, Creekside 1; Oakleaf 7, Atlantic Coast 1

Middleburg: MHS 9, Baldwin 1; MHS 0, Baker County 1; MHS 0, St. Augustine 3

Upcoming games:

Fleming Island: Jan. 15 at Leon (8-3-1); Jan. 16 vs. Creekside; Jan. 17 vs. OPHS; Jan. 19 vs. Ocala Forest (8-2-1); Jan. 23 vs. Ponte Vedra (8-3-1); Jan. 26 at Fletcher (12-0-1)

Oakleaf: Jan. 9 vs. Bartram Trail; Jan. 12 vs. St. Augustine; Jan. 17 at RHS; Jan. 23 vs. OPHS

Middleburg: Jan. 8 at St. Augustine; Jan. 12 vs. RHS; Jan. 16 at OPHS; Jan. 17 at CHS; Jan. 19 at Baker County

District 4-3A

Ridgeview (7-0-0, 4-0-0)

Ponte Vedra (8-3-1, 4-1-0)

Menendez (5-6-1, 1-1-1)

Matanzas (6-5-0, 2-4-0)

Orange Park (4-5-1, 1-3-1)

Palatka (7-10-0, 1-3-0)

Clay (3-8-0, 0-1-0)

Recent games:

Ridgeview: RHS 2, Matanzas 1; RHS 2, SJCDs 0; RHS 3, OPHS 0

Orange Park: OPHS 1, Menendez 1; OPHS



Keystone Heights forward DeeDee Taylor is top scoring threat for Lady Indians.

1, Matanzas 4; OPHS 1, Keystone Heights 2
Clay: Clay 0, Menendez 6; Clay 0, Palatka 1; Clay 1, Matanzas 8

Upcoming games:

Ridgeview: Jan. 10 at Clay; Jan. 12 at MHS; Jan. 17 vs. Oakleaf; Jan. 20 at OPHS

Orange Park: Jan. 8 vs. Nease; Jan. 9 vs. West Nassau; Jan. 10 vs. St. Augustine; Jan. 12 vs. Bishop Snyder; Jan. 16 vs. MHS; Jan. 17 at Fleming Island; Jan. 20 vs. Ridgeview
Clay: Jan. 8 vs. OPHS; Jan. 10 vs. RHS; Jan. 12 at Menendez

District 5-2A

Santa Fe (10-0-1, 7-0-0)

Crescent City (9-5-0, 7-1-0)

Newberry (7-3-1, 4-3-1)

Keystone Heights (11-6-2, 4-4-1)

Interlachen (2-8-2, 2-6-2)

Fort White (2-9-1, 1-6-1)
P.K. Yonge (0-7-3, 0-5-3)

Recent games:

Keystone Heights: Keystone Heights 3, Fort White 0; Keystone Heights 2, Orange Park 1; Keystone Heights 3, P.K. Yonge 2

Upcoming games:

Keystone Heights: Jan. 9 at Santa Fe; Jan. 11 at Interlachen; Jan. 12 vs. Suwannee; Jan. 16 vs. St. Francis Catholic; Jan. 17 at Newberry

District 2-1A

St. Josephs Academy (4-2-1, 1-0-0)

St. Johns Country Day School (5-2-0, 1-0-0)

University Christian (4-3-1, 0-1-0)

St. Francis Catholic (1-9-0, 0-1-0)

Christ's Church Academy (5-0-2, 0-0-0)

Hamilton County (1-8-0, 0-0-0)

Oak Hall (4-6-0, 0-0-0)

Recent games:

St. Johns Country Day School: SJCDs 4, University Christian 2, SJCDs 0, RHS 2

Upcoming games:

Jan. 8 vs. St. Francis; Jan. 8 at University Christian; Jan. 10 vs. St. Joseph Academy; Jan. 11 vs. Duval Charter; Jan. 16 at Providence

Girls Soccer Update

District 4-4A

Nease (13-2-0, 6-1-0)

Bartram Trail (11-2-2, 5-1-1)

Creekside (8-3-4, 4-1-1)

Fleming Island (5-4-0, 4-3-0)

Oakleaf (5-6-1, 2-4-0)

St. Augustine (3-6-1, 0-4-1)

Middleburg (3-8-1, 0-5-1)

Recent games:

Fleming Island: Creekside 2, Fleming Island 1; Fleming Island 2, 3A-Menendez 1; Fleming Island 8, 3A-Ponte Vedra 1
Oakleaf: Oakleaf 8, Ridgeview 0; Creekside 3, Oakleaf 1; SJCDs 8, Oakleaf 0

Upcoming games:

Fleming Island: Jan. 9 vs. Stanton (11-2-2); Jan. 11 vs. Episcopal (3-6-0); Jan. 15 at Leon (9-5-1); Jan. 17 vs. OPHS (1-9-0); Jan. 18 at Bolles (11-4-1); Jan. 19 vs. Ocala Forest (7-2-0); Jan. 23 vs. Ponte Vedra

Oakleaf: Jan. 8 vs. Middleburg; Jan. 16 at RHS; Jan. 18 vs. Trinity Christian

SEE SOCCER, 19

Put a Trusted 'Quarterback' on Your Financial Team

On February 4, many of us will watch the Super Bowl. As a fan, you can admire the way quarterbacks direct their teams. But as an investor, you may want to put together your own team to help you achieve your financial objectives – and you may find it helpful to have your own “quarterback.”

Your financial team might consist of a financial advisor, a tax professional and an attorney. Ideally, your financial professional – the individual with the broadest view of your financial situation – should serve as the quarterback.

And, as quarterback, your financial advisor needs to communicate with the other

team members constantly. For example, you and your advisor can work with your tax professional on how your retirement plan contributions might affect your tax bracket.

Also, you and your financial advisor should work with your attorney to integrate your financial assets into your important legal documents, such as your will and living trust.

With the right team in place, and the right quarterback to lead it, you can keep moving toward your financial goals – and you might cut down on “fumbles” along the way.

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Clay High 129 pound weightlifter Brooke Berger sets for clean and jerk before winning a district title recently at Baker County High School.

Clay gets four titles, RHS one at districts

By Randy Lefko
KH Herald.com

MACCLENNY – Powered by four individual champions, the Clay High girls weightlifting team threw their hat into the ring of state teams looking to upend Baker County High as the powerhouse lift team in north Florida as the Blue Devils finished second overall recently at Baker County High School.

Teams will reconvene at Clay High School on Jan. 20 for the region championships with top lifters heading to the state championships in Panama City Beach on Jan. Feb. 2-3. Top six lifters from districts advanced to the region meet.

River Ridge won the Class 1A title last year with a dominant 29 points with Nature Coast second at 17 and Clay fourth with 14; powered by state titles from Erykah Murray and Ashleigh Dean, both now graduated. Baker County was fifth with 12 points.

Fleming Island, Oakleaf and Middleburg compete Thurs., Jan. 12 at Oakleaf High School in their district 4-2A championship. Keystone Heights competes January 12 at Interlachen High School in the district 7-1A championships.

At Baker County, with the Wildcats taking the team title with 82 points ahead of Clay's 68, Clay came home with gold medals from Hannah Forbes in the 110-pound class; Brooke Berger at 129; Carlie Mcrae at 139 and Jade Berger at 154. Mcrae and both Bergers were state meet qualifiers with Brooke Berger finishing 12th at 129, Mcrae no-lifting in clean and jerk at 139 and Jade Berger finishing 19th at 154 pounds.

Baker County countered with individual titles from Savannah Stafford at 101,

fourth at 101 last year, who edged Clay's Sereniti Forkey; Ryah Davis at 119, second at 119 last year, who beat Clay's Katie James, who competed at state but no-lifted in clean and jerk; Quinci Hand at 183 who teamed with teammate Brandi Taylor for a 1-2 finish and Eva Gray at 199. Hand finished 12th at 199 last year with Gray 16th also at 199.

Also winning an individual title was Ridgeview High's Sydney Davis at 169 pounds who beat out Baker County's Emily Carpenter with a total of 305.

Finishing with top six finishes and advancing were, at 101, from Clay; Sereniti Forkey (2nd) and Sierra Forkey of Clay (fourth); at 110, from Orange Park, Carington Robinson (2nd) and Emma Hashtak (4th); from Ridgeview, Vishwa Patel (6th); at 119, from Clay, Kamerin Peters (4th); at 129, from Ridgeview, Crystal Hunter (3rd) and Joanna Fowler (5th), from Orange Park, Kayla Saunders (6th); at 139, from Clay, Jordyn Ferguson (2nd), from Ridgeview, Jenna Henderson (4th) and Alanna Bonifacio (6th); at 154, from Clay, Sabrina Huete (3rd); from Ridgeview, Tania McCormick (4th) and Jayla Hall (5th); from Orange Park, Ramsy Phillips (6th) at 169, from Orange Park, Addyson Mauldin (3rd), from Clay, Ahna Marti (4th), from Ridgeview, Tabytha Rickett (6th); at 183, from Orange Park, Shehovah Williams (3rd), from Clay, Morgan Silvis (5th); at 199, from Ridgeview, Grier Burrows (4th) and Laura Deliscar (5th); from Clay, Dakota Worley (6th); at Unlimited, from Clay, Madilyn Rossetti (3rd), Lindsay Brooks (5th) and, from Ridgeview, Nava Hall (4th). Hall was 17th in unlimited last year.

Fournette seemed destined to stall the drive, but Bortles came back and slinged a touchdown pass in the back of the end zone to tight end Ben Koyack to push the edge to 10-3 with a minute left in the third period.

"We didn't convert on the first turnover and I was thinking that would come back to haunt us and we need to either score or keep them bottled up down there," said Marrone. "It's not a beauty contest out there. We just played to win."

Jags

from page 17

I recognized the same formation on my side," said Ramsey. "I figured they were running the same route. I took a read step and jumped the route."

In the third period, Bortles moved the Jaguars inside the Bills Red Zone, but a stop by the Bills defense on a third down diving effort from Jaguars' running back Leonard

Soccer

from page 18

District 4-3A

Ponte Vedra (9-5-2, 6-0-0)

Ridgeview (3-6-2, 2-1-0)

Menendez (7-5-0, 4-3-0)

Orange Park (1-9-0, 1-3-0)

Clay (5-2-0, 0-1-0)

Matanzas (5-8-0, 0-3-0)

Palatka (5-7-3, 0-4-0)

Recent games:

Ridgeview: RHS 9, OPHS 1; RHS 3, MHS 2; RHS 4, Mandarin 4

Orange Park: Menendez 6, OPHS 1;

Yulee 4, OPHS 3

Clay: Ponte Vedra 7, Clay 1; Clay 6,

Matanzas 5

Upcoming games:

Ridgeview: Jan. 8 at Fernandina Beach (8-0-1, 7-0-1); Jan. 9 at MHS; Jan. 11 at Menendez; Jan. 16 vs. Oakleaf (5-6-1, 2-4-0); Jan. 18 at Episcopal

OPHS: Jan. 9 vs. West Nassau; Jan. 11 vs.

Clay: Jan. 16 at MHS; Jan. 17 at FIHS

Clay: Jan. 9 vs. Menendez; Jan. 11 at OPHS; Jan. 12 vs. Keystone Heights; Jan. 16 vs. **SJCDS;** Jan. 18 vs. MHS

District 5-2A

P.K. Yonge (11-0-0, 3-0-0)

Santa Fe (10-5-0, 3-0-0)

Keystone Heights (6-7-2, 2-0-0)

Interlachen (4-7-1, 4-5-0)

Fort White (4-6-1, 3-4-1)

Crescent City (4-7-4, 2-3-0)

Newberry (4-9-0, 1-3-0)

Williston (0-9-0, 0-3-0)

Bradford (0-0-0)

Recent games:

Keystone Heights: P.K. Yonge 5, Keystone Hts. 0; Keystone Heights 1, Fort White 1

Upcoming games:

Keystone Heights: Jan. 9 at Williston; Jan. 11 at Interlachen; Jan. 12 at Clay; Jan. 17 at Newberry

District 2-1A

St. Josephs' Academy (3-2-0, 2-0-0)

St. Johns Country Day School (14-0-0, 2-0-0)

Hamilton County (3-6-1, 1-2-0)

St. Francis Catholic (1-9-1, 1-2-0)

University Christian (0-4-0, 0-2-0)

Christ's Church Academy (4-3-0, 0-0-0)

Oak Hall (1-7-1, 0-0-0)

Recent games:

SJCDS: SJCDS 4, Montverde Academy 1; SJCDS 4, Merritt Island 2; SJCDS 6, Bolles 1

Upcoming games:

SJCDS: Jan. 8 vs. St. Francis; Jan. 10 vs.

St. Joseph's Academy; Jan. 10 at Bartram

Trail (11-2-2); Jan. 16 at Clay (5-2-0); Jan.

18 at Creekside (8-3-4)

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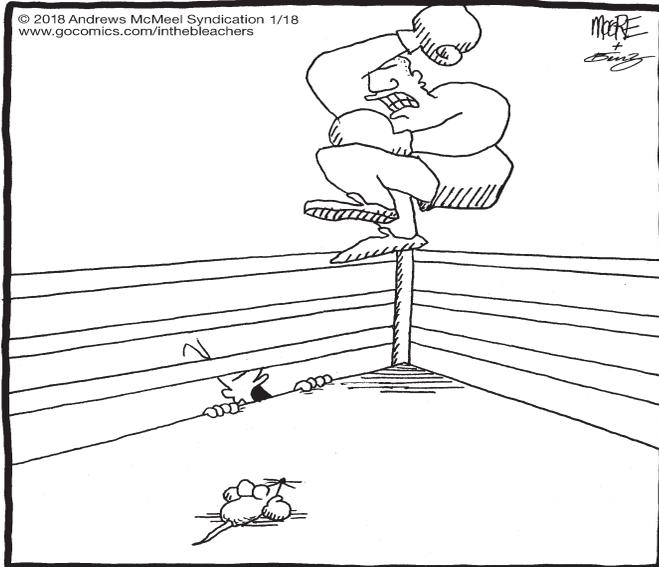
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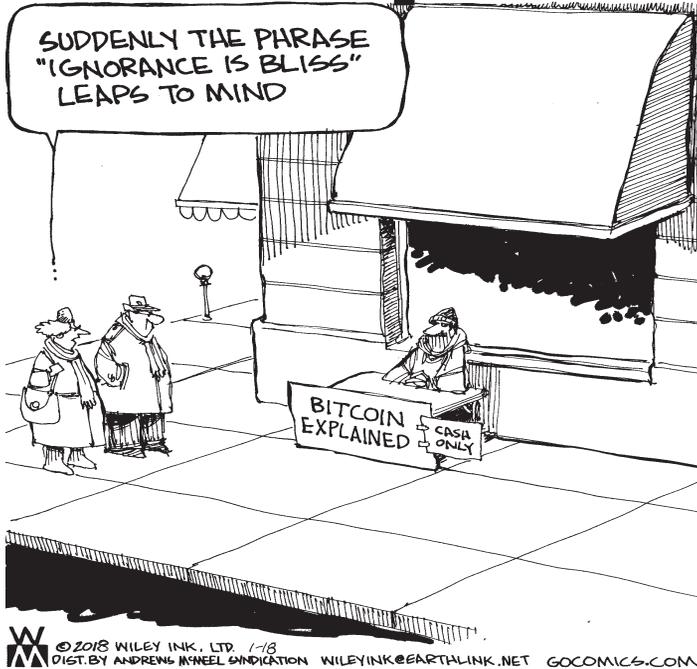


In the Bleachers



"We'll find out what went wrong at the weigh-in later. Now get in the ring!"

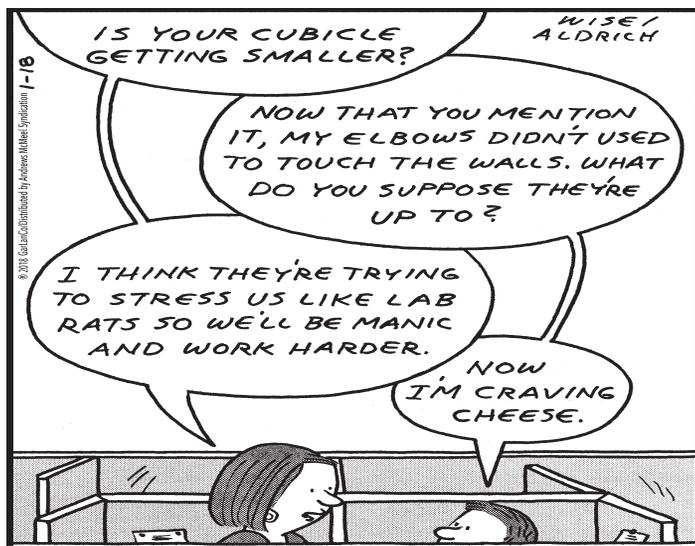
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2				4	7		3	
					5	7		
			9			4	7	
8				7				5
	1	9			4			
		6	7					
	2		4	9				6
	4	3		6	8			

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Sheriff

from page 13

a home that is a known drug manufacturing or trafficking facility. At press time, on Jan. 10, Endres remained in jail with bond set at \$75,003.

During the operation, deputies employed their full array of tactical vehicles and body armor, equipment that the Sheriff's Office said was necessary for their own safety due to the violent nature of recent dispatches to the house.

"We call this Operation: You Were Warned," Daniels said during his monologue. "These individuals, all 15 of them that came out of this residence, were warned before that if they kept up then we'd come back."

We call this Operation: You Were Warned, Daniels said during his monologue. These individuals, all 15 of them that came out of this residence, were warned before that if they kept up then we'd come back.

- Daryl Daniels

Since its posting, and subsequent spread, the video has received both positive and negative feedback on social media. The CCSO Facebook page is a mix of those praising the officers for removing drugs from residential neighborhoods and those claiming the Sheriff's Office used excessive force to make a handful of marijuana arrests. The page has since garnered numerous one-star reviews on the platform, from locals as well as viewers across the country, describing deputies as paramilitary and the video as propaganda, in addition those who seem to think their rights have been called into question by the sheriff's stern warnings and threats to criminals.

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

SOLUTION:

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

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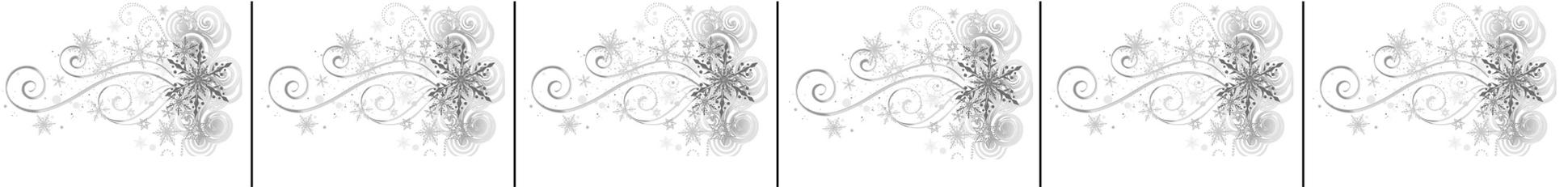
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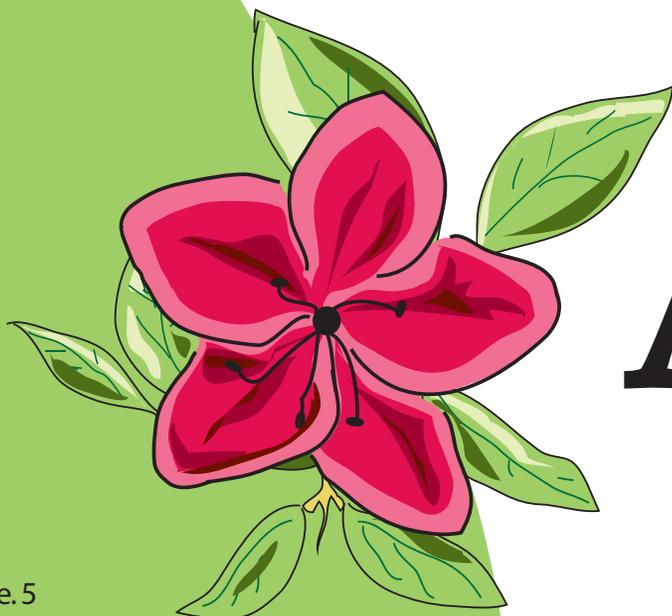
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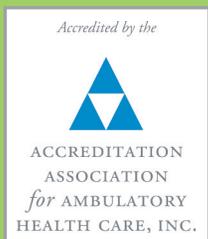
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