



See pages 12-14 for this year's Teachers of the Year



Help Wesley fight cancer

Grace McAlister
Reporter1@riverbendnews.org

Wesley Rizer, a Mayo resident, was recently diagnosed with neuroblastoma cancer in his spinal cord. Neuroblastoma is a type of cancer that forms from immature nerve cells. It usually begins in the adrenal glands, but may also begin in the abdomen, chest or in nerve tissue near the spine. Neuroblastoma most often occurs in children younger than five years of age. It is thought to begin before birth.

Rizer has several chemotherapy appointments coming up, as well as surgery. The Rizer family would appreciate any donations to aid them in getting him back and forth to appointments. If you would like to donate, please search "Wesley fight this neuroblastoma cancer" on GoFundMe.



Photo courtesy of Dawn Rizer
Wesley Rizer

Collision at Hometown Jewelry leaves one dead



Riverbend News photo by Lucy Golub, January 15, 2023
A memorial can be found at the corner of Hometown Jewelry and Loan.

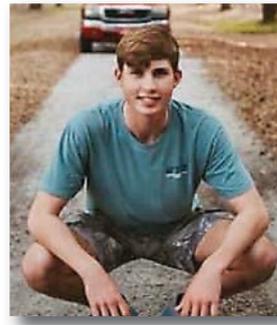
Christian Peterson
Reporter@riverbendnews.org

According to a report by the Florida Highway Patrol, on *See "Collision" on page 3*

Show Will Carpenter some love

Mickey Starling
reporter3.riverbendnews@gmail.com

Will Carpenter is a bright young man who is a resident of Live Oak, Fla. He is now terminally ill with a rare form of bone cancer. The following message was posted on Facebook by Carpenter's aunt, Laura Arant. Please read



Photos courtesy of Lara Arant
Nineteen-year-old Will Carpenter is battling a rare form of bone cancer, and could use plenty of cards and letters filled with prayers, encouragement and a few laughs.

the entire message and share it with as many people as possible. This is our opportunity to encourage Carpenter and brighten his days.

"I used to joke that I had a horrible birthday because it was literally right after Christmas, but now I will forever remember that my birthday last year is when we got the devastating news that my nephew was

See "Carpenter" on page 3

Capt. Todd Nichols retires from Navy

Laura Young
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After a distinguished career, Captain Todd Nichols held a retirement ceremony honoring his 40 years of Naval service on Oct. 28, 2022, at the Norfolk Yacht and Country Club in Norfolk, Va.

Nichols was born in Jasper and, when his parents divorced, moved with his mother to Monticello, Fla., at the age of six to be closer to his grandparents. Throughout his teen years, he did seasonal work as a gas station attendant, and occasionally worked at his father's seafood restaurant and as a laborer for local farmers who grew hay, watermelons and pecans.

As he reflects on the shaping influences of his youth, he recognizes many in the community for their positive encouragement during his upbringing. He especially reveres Sally Beshears, who became a supportive and guiding presence in Nichols's life, offering wise counsel. He's also thankful for several teachers at Jefferson County High School (JCHS) who found innovative ways to keep him and other classmates academically challenged. Two memorable math teachers at JCHS, Bill McRae and Kay Foland, pushed him to study advanced mathematics. Nichols highly regards Becky Pickenpaugh Stoutamire, who championed and started a gifted program at JCHS,

introducing him to varied academic topics including the parliamentary, government and formal debate processes. English teachers Doris Scott and Gloria Norton held him to the strictest behavioral standards with demanding curricula which covered classic novels every student should read, which Nichols didn't appreciate until he encountered the high standards of self-study and discipline expected of him by the military. In school sports, Nichols was notably a member of the JCHS 1982 State Champion football team, where the importance of being part of a larger group and tenacity were instilled in him. He credits head coach Blair Armstrong and his coaching staff for teaching him the life values of perseverance and enduring resiliency through adversity.

After his first two years of high school, Nichols was looking forward to attending college. However, those hopes were dashed when he learned his family had no means for his



Photo Courtesy
Captain Todd Nichols retired on Oct. 28, 2022, after 40 years of Naval service.

See "Retires" on page 3

Suwannee Fire Rescue warns of scam

Christian Peterson
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On Monday, Jan 11, Suwannee County Fire Rescue (SCFR) advised the public of a scam circulating throughout the county.

This particular scam is common and has come and gone a few times. An individual will receive a text reading something along the lines of, "Suwannee County Fire Rescue shirt, \$10 off, ready to order now."

However, SCFR does not sell the shirts. Instead, an individual will lose their money and no shirt will arrive. Stay alert and do not purchase these shirts. Be careful when purchasing items online from unknown sources.

Photo courtesy of Suwannee County Fire Rescue

The t-shirt pictured is not sold by SCFR and is part of a scam.



State legislators visit Tri-county area

Lee Trawick
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On Friday, Jan. 13, Florida State Senator Corey Simon and State Representative Jason Shoaf visited Lafayette, Suwannee and Hamilton Counties to hear from their constituents of the third district in preparation for the State Session on Tuesday, March 7.

While Representative Shoaf attended via Zoom, Senator Simon conducted the meetings for everyone. The day began in Lafayette County, where county officials and citizens voiced their concerns while pointing out areas of need. The general consensus among the constituents was the infrastructure, as well as their concerns over the recent hot topic of recreational vehicle (RV) parks popping up throughout the county.

Next, for Senator Simon and Representative Shoaf was a visit with the citizens of Suwannee County. In attendance were both public officials, as well as concerned citizens, who discussed issues such as concealed carry permits versus Constitutional carry laws, as well as concerns of third district

See "Legislators" on page 3

Kinetic cuts ribbon on fiber optic project

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On Thursday, Jan. 12, Kinetic by Windstream officially cut the ribbon on their fiber optic project in Hamilton County. Kinetic was joined by the Hamilton County Board of Commissioners and Clerk of Court Greg Godwin. Before the ribbon cutting, former commissioner and Kinetic employee Josh Smith took a moment to say a few words, as he has been spearheading the project.

First, Smith thanked everyone who helped with the project. Smith told the public there are already 125 homes in Hamilton County that have fiber optic. He also announced that by 2025, 98 percent of Hamilton County will have the

opportunity to gain fiber optic lines. "It's a very proud moment to see both sides come together," Smith said.

Kinetic also brought a trailer and some employees to show the process and work they were doing. It illustrated how they splice the wires and how small, thin and fragile they are. Conversations filled the air as the group celebrated the culmination of all the hard work they had put in.

Fiber optic internet is a new internet technology that transmits information as pulses of light. It is transferred via fragile strands of fiber made of glass or plastic. The fibers are roughly the diameter of a strand of hair, however, when they

See "Windstream" on page 3



Riverbend News photo by Christian Peterson, January 12, 2023
The Hamilton Board of County Commissioners and Kinetic leadership cut the ribbon on the fiber optic project.



Do we value God's wisdom?



Sheryl Boldt
Guest Columnist

Proverbs 2:3-4 (ESV) commands us to “call out for insight and raise [our] voice for understanding,” and “seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasure.” Yet few of us do.

Most of us seek our own way, for our own purposes, with our own limited perspective. We can't see how our narrow view affects us and those we love. We lack wisdom from the only One Who sees the big picture perfectly. All the time.

Some aren't sure what to

believe about God, so they never pray. But they're comforted by those who do – those who believe nothing is too difficult for God. Even an agnostic or two might be secretly glad that in this chaotic world, there are believers who unwaveringly trust God, but aren't blind to the reality that the world is a mess. People who know God is real. And that God is wise.

As mere mortals, we'll never be able to comprehend the vastness of God's wisdom. We find it hard to believe that when we pray and study His Word, God gives us, mere humans, a portion of this vast wisdom.

But this is no excuse not to

pursue God's wisdom. Can you imagine what extraordinary (godly) insight could mean in our lives and in our world? Sadly, many people can't. And because they don't, individuals, communities, churches and, indeed, the entire world, suffer tragic consequences.

What if we called out (even raised our voices) to God for insight and understanding? What if we pursued Him and His ways with such determination that we didn't give up – because we know what we find in our search will bless and prosper us in richer ways than even silver could?

Read Proverbs 2:3-4 again and let it speak directly to you.

God's Word is life changing. As we seek God's wisdom by praying and diligently searching through the pages of the Bible, we'll discover hidden treasure.

It's my prayer that as we pursue and follow God's counsel, others will see the wisdom of God displayed in our lives. Then perhaps they, too, will seek and cry out for insight and understanding.

From a God Who is real. And wise. And sees the big picture. Perfectly. All the time.

Sheryl H. Boldt is the author of the blog, www.TodayCanBeDifferent.net. Connect with her at SherylHBoldt@gmail.com.

Living God's Way: The believer's mindset towards God



Carlton McPeak
Guest Columnist

What mindset should the believer have towards God? What should their established attitudes be about their life? The ninth stanza of Psalm 119 (verses 65-72) describes several elements of the believer's mindset towards God.

He is grateful that God has kept His word in how God has “dwelt well” with him. He has the desire to learn God's “good discernment and knowledge.” He admits God does good things and is good. He has a strong desire to be taught by God as well as to learn from God when he has made a mistake or accidentally left God's law.

This mindset prompts the different actions the poet takes towards God's instructions. He believes in God's commandments. He keeps God's word. His heart's desire is to observe God's precepts and to delight in God's law. Mentally, he

values the law God has spoken more “than thousands of gold and silver pieces.”

He admits he has gone astray from God's word, but because he was “afflicted,” he is now keeping God's word. He says it was “good for [him] that [he] was afflicted” so that he might learn God's statutes. He is confessing that it was a good thing for him to be humbled or to endure hard times or embarrassing times so that he might realize that he had left God's word.

With these firmly established attitudes, it is no wonder this believer is living this way of life. It demonstrates that his thinking is dictating his actions. Even when he makes a mistake, when he accidentally goes astray, the word of God is influencing the correction he should make in his life.

He is not like the “arrogant,” those who are presumptuous in thinking their way of life is better than God's way. These unbelievers have expressed things which are not true about this

believer, they are trying to smear his name. The reason for the actions of the “arrogant” is that “their heart is covered with fat,” meaning their mind is covered by their own standards, which is preventing them from observing and delighting in God's precepts and law.

The question for the modern day believer is, are we living up to the mindset of this author? Do we desire to have the ability to make judgments about living our life which are according to God's commandments? Are we willing to change our life to be back in conformity with God's word when we have gone astray?

Having these established attitudes is of utmost importance if one is going to be a true follower of God. Having this mindset towards God and His word will continuously motivate the believer to be living God's way.

Carlton G. McPeak (carlton_mc@msn.com) is an evangelist working in the Florida Gateway region. Scriptural quotations from the NASB.

The embarrassing state of high school sports



Lee Trawick
Riverbend News

I grew up in the small town of Mayo, where I was listed at 5'2" and 97 pounds during my senior season in baseball. When I would put on that jersey to represent Lafayette High School (LHS),

I had a sense of pride knowing I was representing, not only myself and my team, but my school and my community.

For the opposing teams that came to Mayo or hosted us at their place, I understood I may be the only representation they would see of LHS. While I wanted to win at all costs, winning did not outweigh the risk of embarrassing my school, family or community. As a high school athlete, it was relayed to us that it was a privilege to represent our school and wear the jersey that had LHS written across the chest.

When I was in the sixth grade, I was playing little league baseball, and was the ball boy for the Lafayette Hornets' varsity baseball team. That was the greatest learning experience I ever encountered in my baseball career. I got a grade A education from some high school

greats and a ton of good high school baseball players. I remember watching my cousins, Ryan, Chan Perry and Maury Byrd, take batting practice and work through defensive drills. I got to watch Derek Garland, Steve Land, Brett Hewitt, Travis Hicks, David Olgeslby, Matt Pearson and Tyler Folsom, none of whom realized their every move was being watched and studied. I remember watching Steve Land and thinking I wanted to be him on the ball field one day. He was only a high school player and just six years older than me, but he played on the LHS varsity baseball field and, to me, he and the rest of that team were larger than life. I always immolated him on the baseball field; I would pump my fist into my glove the way he did, I would wear my uniform the way he did. I remember sitting in the dugout before home games and looking throughout the crowd, thinking, “Wouldn't be cool to one day play in front of fans like this on this big stage?”

Today, not a single player probably recalls me being their ball boy that season, but the impact they all left on me would shape my baseball career. By watching them, I understood what it meant to be a

varsity baseball player at LHS. No, we weren't celebrities, and we weren't signing autographs, but I understood younger eyes were somewhere, watching us, just waiting on their chance to play on the varsity field and wear the Hornets jersey.

I remember the fans that would come to every game, no matter if their child was playing or had already gone past high school. I remember being grateful that they would take the time out of their schedules just to come watch us play. It wasn't until years later I understood they weren't there watching a particular player, they were there watching Hornets baseball, something larger than one singular player.

I mention all this to say these are the memories I built and remember throughout my childhood growing up in Mayo and at Lafayette High School. Today, however, all of those types of memories are lost at the high school level. Kids' memories are being filled with parents screaming at referees and coaches, players fighting with other players. All for what? The opportunity to say you won the game. I look around today and see parents screaming at opposing players, players fighting with other players. Fans argue with other fans, getting ejected from gymnasiums, and fighting with law enforcement when asked to leave. For what? Because your child's team or your child in particular is getting beat? These actions are being justified every day as “kids will be kids,” or because an adult's foolish pride got the better of them instead of setting an example for the children who are watching them.

Recently, I heard about a game that involved a bench clearing brawl between players and parents on a varsity soccer field between two middle school teams. The result of such actions? The players were suspended, while the parents received no disciplinary action from the schools or the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA). I also heard about

another altercation of fans fighting amongst each other in the stands, resulting in players getting involved because they felt they had to defend their mothers who were amongst those fighting. The result of that fight? Parents, again, received no disciplinary action, while the players were suspended.

However, the embarrassment of the fans', parents' and even players' actions does not stop there. Fans at another game became so unruly law enforcement was called into action, leading to a fan being forcibly removed from the gymnasium after refusing to leave his seat. All of this chaos has taken place at high school sporting events. I could not tell you a single score from those games, because parents, fans and players decided for themselves that they were bigger than the game itself. Your actions are being watched, too; what kind of examples are they setting for the next generation?

High school sports and their integrity is growing frailer every day, not by the sport or the players themselves, but rather by the parents and the fans who continue to act obnoxious and unruly, then question why their children and players are always being singled out as the problem. Perhaps the issue isn't with the child's “high strung personality” or their “extreme competitive nature.” Perhaps it's their parents' actions that teach them it is okay to act disrespectful and unlawful, then quickly turn around and say, “it wasn't my fault” and point fingers at others to deflect their own foolish pride.

Playing high school sports is not a right, it is a privilege, as is being a fan and helping to create a positive atmosphere for the kids to play in. Let's hope 2023 will bring sportsmanship to our area schools, and the kids can get back to playing a game that, in itself, could help shape their future moving forward. Let the struggles of practice, games and the feeling of a tough loss and greater wins fill their memories rather than the chaos many players have witnessed and have been part of recently.

This is a paid service announcement

MORSELS FOR ZION'S POOR

The Psalms are, prophetic, descriptive, and indicative of CHRIST. HIS glory, HIS life, and HIS redemptive work in the behalf of that people which HE came to save are all on display there. The promises of GOD are first made to HIM as that PERFECT MAN and the benefits of those promises are laid to the account of those for whom HE is a glorious SUBSTITUTE. When we see a prayer, we know that every complaint which is made and every desire which is expressed has come forth from the heart and soul of HIM as the great MEDIATOR of HIS people. Every word of rejoicing is the fruit of HIS soul whose delight is in the LORD HIS GOD. Every hymn of praise, found there, is but the testimony of HIS heart desiring to magnify the LORD. The description of a righteous man is a description of CHRIST's perfections acceptance in the presence of GOD. HE is that ONE who has not lifted up HIS soul unto vanity nor sworn deceitfully. HE is that ONE who walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly nor standeth in the way of sinners. The prophecies in the Psalms have their entire fulfillment in HIM as the LORD declares the glory of HIS redemptive work in the establishment of HIS kingdom. The earth and all of its fullness is HIS. Every blessing of the saints is due to HIM and HIS purpose to establish HIS Kingdom in the Earth for the benefit of HIS elect. As HE said “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” HE is pleased to call each one by name granting them eternal life and giving them an entrance there. HE said, “I am the door of the sheep.” The LORD JESUS, became sin for HIS people, Drinking in their guilt and sin and becoming an OUTCAST in their behalf. HE did not attempt to alter the swamp of man's sin, but by HIS own power, drained every last drop of its filth and condemnation, destroying even the fountainhead from which it flowed and has forever set them free from condemnation and guilt.

-m.a.m.

forthepoor@windstream.net

Collision

Cont. from page 1

Saturday, Jan. 14, an accident at Hometown Jewelry and Loan left one man dead. At

roughly 3:30 a.m., a 2004 Ford Explorer driven by a 57-year-old Live Oak man, identified as Dale William Morris, was heading southbound on Highway 129. When Morris approached the city limits of Live Oak at the intersection of Duval Street and Highway 129, he traveled onto the curb due to an alleged health emergency. Morris then collided with the corner of Hometown Jewelry and Loan. He was pronounced dead at the scene.



Photo courtesy

Dale William Morris

Carpenter

Cont. from page 1

diagnosed with an extremely rare terminal cancer - FOX1/PAX3 fusion positive Alveolar Rhabdomyosarcoma. One year ago, Will had a Florida Bright Futures Scholarship and was a freshman at the University of Central Florida,

majoring in engineering. This beautiful kid was a top swimmer, an avid competitive fisherman and absolutely loved the Jacksonville Jaguars. In 2021, my lovely sister called to casually let me know they may be a little late for Christmas Eve dinner, as Will had very swollen lymph nodes from his sinus infection and they were getting them checked out at the hospital. Needless to say, they never made it to dinner. Since then, this kid has gone through hell. He left school for treatment, endured endless weeks of extreme chemotherapy, radiation to the face, spine and shoulder, countless hospitalizations, taken methadone, morphine and suffered unfathomable body pain, and now has a G tube so he can just simply eat. The cancer has now been deemed Chemo/treatment resistant and has completely spread throughout his bones. I struggle to find words to describe this living hell and the pain in watching it happen. Through it all, Will has been positive, funny and chastised my sister and me when we dare to ask why God did this to one of our children. We have exhausted every avenue - top cancer facilities, along with world renowned western and homeopathic oncologists. Now, I'm asking for a miracle and for us to flood this sweet boy with love and prayer. I'm asking that you have everyone you know send Will a card, letter, small note, anything you want. Let him know he's loved, prayed for...give him hope, make him laugh. Ask your church, Sunday school, book club, elementary class, neighborhood, ask everyone. He told me not long ago that one of his biggest regrets is not talking more when he was healthy and getting to know people better. Please share this story and change that for him.

PLEASE HELP ME FLOOD HIS MAILBOX WITH LOVE – SEND LETTERS/CARDS TO:

WILL CARPENTER
P.O. Box 835
Live Oak, Fla. 32064

Absolutely no money or monetary gifts of any kind. I'm only asking to flood him with love and prayer."

Windstream

Cont. from page 1

are bundled together into a cable, they gain the ability to transmit more information over greater distances and faster than other mediums. On top of the faster speed and longer distance, there cables are nonmetallic, so they are not affected by any electromagnetic interference. Even more impressive is they are safer, as there is no current and they cannot create a spark for fires.

Legislators

Cont. from page 1

representatives turning into RINOs (Republican in Name Only) in Tallahassee. However, the more pressing issue was brought forth by Sheriff Sam St. John and Deputy Chief Buddy Williams, who requested funding for an up to date Sheriff's Office. The current building was built in 1972, and has had minimal updates throughout the years, which could jeopardize the protection of evidence stored at the facility. The rest of the time was devoted to discussion of infrastructure.

To round out the day, Senator Simon and Representative Shoaf made an appearance in Hamilton County, where infrastructure dominated the concerns of citizens and county officials. Among those in attendance were the county commissioners, as well as other officials and first responders. Each brought forth particular concerns they would like to see addressed in March in Tallahassee.

Retires

Cont. from page 1

college education. Local employment opportunities lacked upward mobility and career progression. In

February of his senior year, Nichols enlisted with the Navy, intent on starting boot camp as soon as possible after graduation. He graduated from JCHS in 1983 and reported for duty in September that same year, just a couple of weeks after his 18th birthday.

His world travels on Naval submarines, ships and aircraft carriers began with boot camp in Great Lakes, Ill., where Nichols recalls experiencing his first harsh winter on Lake Michigan while completing Recruit Training and Machinists Mate "A" School. While there, he learned how to operate steam propulsion plants and gas turbine systems that propel the Navy's massive ships. The following year, he completed the Navy's rigorous Nuclear Power School in Orlando, Fla., where he says he felt pushed to his intellectual limits. As he learned reactor plant operations and advanced engineering principles and theories at a highly accelerated pace, he relied heavily upon the knowledge instilled by his JCHS math teachers to endure the program's rigor. Next, he gained hands-on engineering experience during operational training in Ballston Spa, N.Y., where in six months' time he qualified on his first reactor plant and became eligible to serve on a nuclear submarine.

In his first operational assignment, he served five and a half years aboard U.S.S. GRAYLING (SSN 646), a Sturgeon-class attack submarine, during the height of the Cold War with a demanding operational tempo. In that era, Nichols recalled being at sea nearly eleven months within a rolling calendar year. The submarine service is a demanding, dangerous and unforgiving profession; however, Nichols recalls a lighter moment like going to the North Pole and circumnavigating the globe in record time by running 'around the world' in just a few seconds, mere feet from the true North Pole. His next assignment was to the U.S.S. DANIEL WEBSTER (SSBN 626) conversion crew, which converted a ballistic missile submarine to a Moored Training Ship (MTS 626).

During his enlisted service, Nichols steadily pursued promotions by gaining experience, developing skills, leading people and volunteering for the Navy's most demanding and arduous assignments. After rapidly advancing to Chief Petty Officer, he was hand-selected as Machinery Division Leading Chief Petty Officer for the U.S.S. SEAWOLF (SSN 21) initial construction crew. Nichols says serving aboard this vessel was a highlight of his career; not only was it was the Navy's first submarine built in the 21st century, SEAWOLF also was the most advanced, deepest diving, fastest and most heavily armed submarine in the fleet. While serving in these challenging positions, Nichols was concurrently completing his college education and graduated with a bachelor's degree in 1993; at that time, Nichols transitioned from enlisted service to a commissioned

officer.

After completing Officer Indoctrination School, Nichols served aboard U.S.S. MCKEE (AS 41) as the Nuclear Repair Officer and Planning and Estimating Officer. His next tour, aboard the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier U.S.S. JOHN C. STENNIS (CVN 74), involved deployments in support of Operation Southern Watch, in response to the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks and Operation Enduring Freedom. As Ship's Maintenance Officer aboard U.S.S. RONALD REAGAN (CVN 76), Nichols was heavily involved in completing new construction and delivery of the Navy's newest aircraft carrier of the time, an inter-fleet transfer and maiden Western Pacific deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. For Nichols, delivering this ship from Norfolk, Va., to San Diego, Calif., was unforgettable. To make the transit, the ship travelled through the stunning Straits of Magellan, which he describes as "the last bastion of untouched places on earth – natural, preserved, with no imprint by civilization."

Nichols was then selected to serve as the Production Management Assistant on U.S.S. EMORY S. LAND (AS 39), a Submarine Tender tasked with mobilizing or deploying to repair submarines and surface ships throughout the Atlantic and Mediterranean theater. Though stationed in Italy, the ship traveled to Montenegro to host a summit for that country to enter NATO membership. While there, Nichols enjoyed the Old World setting of Montenegro, its rich history with castle ruins, stone forts and notably statuesque people.

Subsequently, Nichols was selected by the Director of the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program to serve as the Nuclear Limited Duty Officer Community Manager in Washington, D.C. Following this tour, he served as U.S.S. GEORGE H. W. BUSH (CVN 77) Chief Engineer, completing an extended combat deployment in 2014 which executed the initial strikes against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS). In that same year, Nichols was awarded the 2014 Commander U.S. Naval Air Forces Senior Officer Leadership Award for outstanding leadership in the execution of his duties. He then served as the Nuclear Power/Submarine Limited Duty Officer and Chief Warrant Officer Branch Head (PERS 42) at Naval Personnel Command in Millington, Tenn.

During his naval service, Nichols completed his pursuit of a college degree. In 1993, he earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Southern Illinois University, graduating Magna Cum Laude, and in 2003 completed a Master's in Business Administration with a concentration in Financial Management from National University, graduating with Honors.

His final assignment was Norfolk Naval Shipyard Deputy Commander, overseeing the oldest, largest, and most comprehensive U.S. Navy industrial facility, with several additional tenant and satellite commands along the east coast of America. He oversaw nearly 12,000 civilian Department of Defense employees, as

well as approximately 1,100 military personnel charged with overhauling and maintaining nuclear attack submarines, ballistic missile submarines and aircraft carriers across the globe, wherever the U.S. Navy operated.

As Nichols looks back over his military career, he reflects, "When you choose to serve in the military, you never know what position you will be placed in, and what challenges you will face. The U.S. Navy does a great job at preparing Sailors for life's adversities."

As chronicled in his retirement ceremony, Captain Nichols traveled the world several times over, sailing in every sea and ocean, and setting foot on every continent in the world. Nichols's record of serving in 23 named operations and nearly every war since 1983 shows the commitment of a skilled Sailor and an Officer of the highest caliber dedicated to the Navy's mission to "maintain, train and equip combat-ready naval forces capable of winning wars, deterring aggression and maintaining freedom of the seas."

At his retirement ceremony, Nichols was awarded the Legion of Merit on behalf of the President of the United States. His other awards include the Meritorious Service Medal (four awards), Navy Commendation Medal (five awards), the Navy Achievement Medal (nine awards), Navy Expeditionary Medal, Southwestern Asia Service Medal, National Defense Medal (two awards), Good Conduct Medal (three awards), the Global War on Terrorism Medal and multiple other unit awards.

"The Navy provided me with a lot of opportunities," says Nichols. "I travelled the world. I encountered many cultures and experienced things I never could have imagined growing up in Jefferson County. I've met some amazing people."

In the end, he is grateful for the full spectrum of what he has endured, accomplished and learned.

"You can't quantify the value of those experiences," he adds.

With so much to draw on and offer, Nichols spent only about one month in his transition from military retirement to the civilian sector. On Thursday, Dec. 1, he was appointed as the Deputy Executive Director of the Hampton Roads Military and Federal Facilities Alliance, which works closely with the Virginia Governor's staff and the U.S. Congressional delegation, advocating and influencing Federal policy, legislation and appropriations for the economic benefit of the Hampton Roads region. The Alliance includes 16 mayors and 14 major business leaders from the Hampton Roads area of coastal Virginia, advocating to bring beneficial federal projects to the area as well as take protective action against unwanted encroachments.

This means that Nichols will be staying in Norfolk for the foreseeable future and continue to have an impact on the lives of the Hampton Roads populace. It's a community he and his wife of 11 years, Sandra Walker of Waukeenhah, Fla., look forward to enjoying from a new perspective.

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Branford Town Council looks to increase parking at Hatch Park

Danny Federico
reporter3.riverbendnews@gmail.com

The Branford Town Council held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 13, at 7 p.m. in the council chambers of Town Hall, located at 502 SW Suwannee Ave.

Following the approval of the minutes from previous meetings, as well as a few updates from the various departments, the council proceeded to discuss the possible purchase of property near Hatch Park. This is a subject the council has broached a few times before, as there is not much parking available. It is common to see vehicles parked along Craven Street when there are ball games or practices due to the insufficient amount of parking space. The property in question, located between Southeast Owens Avenue and Southwest Lafayette Avenue, to the left of the current parking lot, would provide a solution to these troubles.

President Ken Saunders started the conversation by stating he had spoken with Suwannee Parks and Recreation, and they are interested in pursuing the property. According to the Suwannee Property Appraiser's website, the property has an assessed value of \$28,800, while Saunders states "a couple other blocks" around town are assessed at around \$32,000. "Probably the negative to that is because the town has a road running through that property that we could keep or we could close," Saunders stated. He went on to add how he had previously spoken with Greg Scott, and had even received requests from residents that the property could also be used for a pickleball court.

He then turned the floor over to Attorney Jonathan Turner to provide further updates.

At this time, Turner stated he had spoken with the realtor and had discussed the town not offering the full asking price of \$40,000 based on the encumbrance of the road. However, he stated the seller had not budged from the asking price. "I'm told there is another interested party," Turner added. However, he stated there had not been any physical offers at that time. He then said the difference in prices they discussed were essentially between \$8,000 to \$10,000. "The discussion that y'all need to have [is the] risk of losing it to another buyer and whether or not y'all see the benefit of going ahead and proceeding with the set offered price," Turner said, addressing the council.

"I think we should think about accepting that offer," Councilman Matt Burns replied.

One resident suggested the town look into clearing out the trees on the current parking lot's property, rather than spending money on purchasing the new property and clearing it out. "It would be closer to the facilities for parking instead of way out there," he said. "And it'd be a lot less expensive to take those trees down, and clear that out and pave it and have all the parking right there. It's just a lot of expense to me."

Councilwoman Stacey Griffith then asked about the field in the back, to which Saunders responded he believes that area would still be for the soccer and football games.

"They took down the horseshoes, they're going to take up the volleyball [nets]," Mayor Donny Glover

said. "There's room over there to put a pickleball court on instead of giving into that man (the property owner) and paying \$40,000."

"The last meeting, I was kind of against that kind of number too, but I didn't really realize how close we were," Burns added.

"I think we need to focus on other things we need in the town versus that right now at this point," Councilwoman Griffith said.

At this time, a second resident spoke up, lobbying in favor of the purchase. "I think it's much needed and I would encourage you to take a look at it," he said. "You're not gonna find property available that is adjacent to the park. This is one of the rare times you have that option."

Saunders then stated the council had actually been looking at the property for a couple of years, and now that the opportunity has arisen, he believes the council should go ahead and acquire it.

Councilwoman Alice Childress spoke up next, speaking on how people park alongside the road when the front and back parking areas are full. "So, the parking's needed," she said. Following a brief discussion, Childress motioned for the council to pursue the property at the requested \$40,000, as well as close the section of Lafayette Avenue that runs through the park. Saunders added that the council would also request a survey or relocate the corners of the property. The motion was seconded by Burns, and approved by a vote of 4-1 with Griffith opposing.

The next Branford Town Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 14, at 7 p.m. in the Town Hall, located at 502 SW Suwannee Ave., in Branford.

Mayo Town Council approves digging for Verizon Hotwire

Christian Peterson
Reporter@riverbendnews.org

On Monday, Dec. 12, at 7 p.m., the Mayo Town Council held its regularly scheduled meeting in the Town Hall, located at 276 W Main St.

Before approving the agenda, the council amended it by adding an approval on banking. Next, the council approved the minutes from the previous meeting. They then had the second reading and, subsequently, adopted an ordinance changing land use regulations to match state regulations. The council then began discussion on which bank they would switch to, as their current one, Drummond Bank, will be closing. They had sent proposals to First Federal State Bank and Lafayette State Bank, however, they had only received a response from First Federal. The deal offered a better percentage than Drummond, however, they did not offer to comp checks or deposit slips. Wayne Hamlin offered to go speak to them to ask if they would be willing to offer the compensation. The council agreed for him to go and then approved the switch to First Federal.

The council then held the selection of mayor and vice mayor. After a few minutes of discussion, it was decided that Anne Murphy would retain her position as mayor and Hamlin would remain vice mayor. The council then heard a presentation from Eric Woods with Verizon Hotwire. The proposal from the company was to add dark fiber for 1.2 miles from their macrosite to their radio tower. The fiber would be completely underground and would assist in increased cell traffic on the Verizon line. Woods stated all costs are covered by the company and wouldn't require any help from the city or county aside from permission to do the project. The council proceeded to approve the dark fiber project.

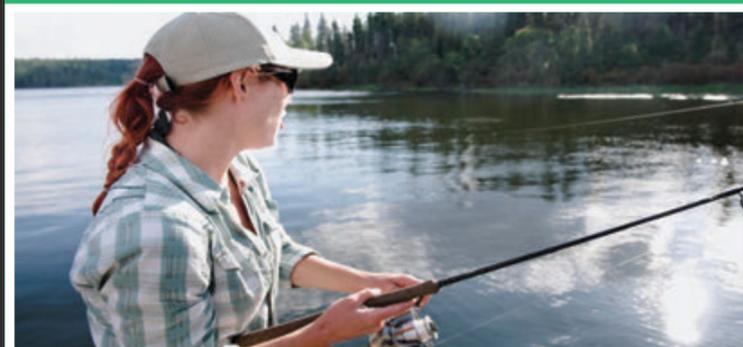
They then moved on to the department head reports. Sampson Edwards was first, presenting the bids on the mini backhoe. However, he clarified that he would like to demo the options before making a decision. He also told the council that, with the current economy, it was a struggle to get any parts for the lift stations. Next to report was Garret Land from the county, who told the council that the abandoned Mexican restaurant can be approved for demolition. After many attempts to contact the owners and get the property fixed, the time had come for the final recourse. The council approved the advertisement for general contractors to handle the demolition.

The council ended the meeting with two final announcements. The first was announcing they had received an award for 50 years of weather observation, and the second was announcing they had received their TRIM certification. The council then approved their bills and adjourned the meeting. The next Mayo Town Council meeting will be held on Monday, Feb. 13, at 7 p.m. in the town hall, located at 270 W Main St., in Mayo.

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Words for the wise

The City of Live Oak keeps Curtis as manager

Grace McAlister
Reporter1@riverbendnews.org

The City of Live Oak selected George Curtis as its city manager in early 2021. Curtis previously worked in the city's planning and zoning department. He served the city as its planning and zoning director and development manager specialist dating back to 2008.

Aug. 2, 2022- Letter is written to the board about Curtis

Since being elected, Curtis's role as city manager has been filled with controversy. On Aug. 2, 2022, a former City of Live Oak employee wrote in an open letter to the city. The letter stated the morale and work environment "has NEVER been as bad as it is now." The reason for this was Curtis's leadership, which she expressed included emails and letters in their paystubs that are "borderline bullying, or are downright bullying and at some even threatening to our jobs." "I am resigning my position because I can NOT work in the environment that the city is being run in," she wrote in the letter. "Being targeted by the City Manager and his assistant (or feeling like you are being targeted) and to work in a hostile work environment is not a pleasant way to work."

Dec. 13, 2022- Campbell comments on building permit process

At the Tuesday, Dec. 13, Live Oak City Council meeting, Councilmember Matt Campbell stated his dissatisfaction regarding the building permit process and potentially streamlining the process. He said it has taken him two weeks to get a permit to put a metal building next to his home. Council President David Burch stated the process with permits and zoning should be addressed in a special called meeting. At that time, councilmember Lynda Owens motioned to have a special meeting open to the public on Tuesday, Jan. 9, which Councilmember Tessie Allen seconded. There was a discussion from Councilmember Tommie Jefferson inquiring about the city manager's contract and when his position was ending, to which Curtis responded that it does not end. Council President Burch advised the council that the City Manager has an annual evaluation at the end of this year. Councilmember Owens and councilmember Campbell explained the process of handling the City manager position to Councilmember Jefferson. They then explained that it is a different agenda from the special meeting for planning and zoning issues.

Curtis stated at the Dec. 13 meeting he has the report for the building permits for the year 2021-2022 to demonstrate how, in the months of January to May, the value of permits that were issued compared to the months of June to November that there is a great increase in value of permits as well as consistency in the number of permits that are being issued. In November, Curtis issued 25 permits, he stated. The "personnel problems" caused delays in getting permits out, Curtis added. Mayor Frank Davis suggested that Curtis should meet with all the employees to explain the process of getting permits.

Jan. 9, 2023- Planning and Zoning workshop

At the Jan. 9 Workshop, the agenda stated one thing, "discussion regarding the permitting process for planning, zoning, and building departments." Daryll Bridget was one of many speakers who wished to comment on Curtis's employment with the City of Live Oak. Bridget stated he "followed the proper procedures but still got nowhere." Bridget reportedly paid for his permit and was given a list of what he needed to do to move forward with his project, but he was unable to advance because he was denied by the City of Live Oak's Planning and Zoning division. Councilmember Owens told Bridget the board would schedule a time for him to meet with Curtis as well as other members of the Planning and Zoning division to help him do what he needs for his project.

Wayne Hannaka spoke next, starting by stating he had a history of working in construction. He stated that businesses begin to

lose money when the permitting process is slow. Hannaka said that part of the problem might be that the City of Live Oak does not have a full-time building inspector. He further stated that it was "ludicrous" that Planning and Zoning only meet every three months, and if an applicant is rejected, they must wait another three months. He asks the board, "is it the process or the person managing the process?"

Don Wainwright, a local developer, said he hopes the meeting "isn't lipstick on a pig." He stated that his team started to build an apartment complex because of the city's need for housing. However, because the building permit process takes so long, interest has skyrocketed, and now the project may not be possible. "Time is money," Wainwright stated. He adds that while he thinks Curtis is a good man, he does not think he is qualified for the job. Another developer, Deb Salvatos stated that she had never seen the permitting issues that Live Oak has in the other cities she has worked with.

Councilmember Owens stated that she approached the Planning and Zoning department prior to the workshop to look into the issue. Owens commented that they spent hours going over their processes. She asked the department why it take them so long to give out permits in a meeting. The staff stated they felt underqualified and understaffed. She added, "George wanted to micromanage; he wanted his hand in everything, which caused issues with [staff]."

When Owens asked the staff what the City of Live Oak could do to help the Planning and Zoning department be more efficient, "they said they needed more training, they needed more employees and better technology."

Councilmember Allen commented, "Why can't we have planning and zoning meet once a month." The council echoed that this is a valid idea.

This discussion was continued during the Jan. 10 city council meeting.

Jan. 10, 2023- Curtis's contract is on the agenda

The Live Oak City Council held a lengthy discussion at the Thursday, Jan. 10 city council meeting about Curtis and whether or not his contract should be limited. Curtis did not attend the meeting or the workshop held the previous day due to illness. During the meeting, there were comments from 18 individuals, some of which were advocating for Curtis, while others criticized him. These concerns were aired early during the workshop on the city's permitting process and Land Development Regulations, which took over three hours.

Eddie Ojeda, another former City of Live Oak employee spoke criticizing Curtis, "George Curtis claims he is short-handed when it comes to employees. However, you are not aware of the constant firing and hiring of employees by Mr. George Curtis." Ojeda provided the board with a list of employees who allegedly resigned from the City of Live Oak because of Curtis' treatment. Ojeda then shared that in 2021 he was falsely accused of sexual misconduct.

A petition for an administrative hearing from this incident states, "George Curtis, the City Manager, along with Luther, Remmers and Salvati, orchestrated the false sexual harassment claims against [Ojeda] in order to remove him before his probationary period ended. Curtis, Luther, Remmers and Salvati knew sexual harassment allegations against a male supervisor would be easier to make than the allegations of poor job performance they would have needed to terminate [Ojeda]'s employment for just cause after the probationary period. The false allegations against [Ojeda] were a pretext to terminate his employment before the end of his probationary period."

The document further states, "the witness for Remmers's allegations of sexual harassment, Gina Salvati, admitted to only writing a complaint because she was asked to and in fear of losing her job. Remmers and Salvati received new positions as a result of their actions to remove [Ojeda] from

his position." During the meeting, Ojeda stated that he won the lawsuit against the City of Live Oak and procured a settlement against the city. Ojeda also encouraged the board to speak to former City of Live Oak employees about their experiences with Curtis

Among the issues that need fixing, according to a number of business developers and engineers, is the city's permitting process. Many claimed projects have drug on due to a lack of communication and delays in getting them moved through the city to obtain permits.

After public comment and general business, Councilmember Jefferson made a motion to cancel City Manager Curtis' contract, "you have to cut the head off the snake in order to kill it," Jefferson said. The motion immediately failed for lack of a second. Jefferson stated he would "put it back on the agenda for next month."

After Jefferson's motion died, Councilmember Campbell said although he agrees with many of Jefferson's and the citizens' concerns, he did not want to fire Curtis with no plan for what to do next. "Without a plan in place, then we're going to do more harm than good at this point," Campbell said.

Small business owner Rudy Robles stated while he desired for the council to help address the concerns that were being aired, he did not want anybody fired. Instead, he believed the city needed to draw in more development. "There's no reason why a business should go to City Hall and feel like they're being bothered," Robles said. "They should be celebrated, welcomed in, rolled out the red carpet. We need to have Operation Greenlight, get businesses in here and let's get rolling."

Council President Burch said, "Bottom line, we want to fix these problems. We've got to come up with a fix."

Curtis's response

Riverbend News reached out to Curtis for comment, he stated:

"My unwavering commitment to Suwannee County as a public servant has spanned close to 24 years, with nearly 15 of them with the City of Live Oak. I am extremely proud of all my contributions to our community and I know a verifiably positive difference has been made as a result. I have worked very diligently to earn and maintain the respect and support of the Department Heads, staff, Council and the community. I have always represented the City with dignity and always made decisions in the best interests of the organization, even when those decisions were not popular.

Like all elected and appointed officials, I am sworn to adhere to and uphold the law and to act ethically in all I do, and to ensure staff under me are doing the same, which is what has been and remains the standard of excellence I aspire to maintain. During my time to-date as Manager, every crisis has been dealt with effectively, budgets have been balanced and audits clean. Under my leadership, many challenges have been met with solutions, many new endeavors and accomplishments have taken place for the first time for the Citizen's benefit, and many more challenges are currently being dealt with to the best of our ability and within our means. I am well-pleased of my established track record as a trailblazer and the clean, safe, attractive, prosperous and orderly condition of our City reflects the countless hours I, and others alongside me, have spent over the course of the last 178 months with only the betterment of our City in mind.

A tremendous amount of work is still to be done and that will always be the case, as each day brings new difficulties to face and overcome, as well as new opportunities for progress. I appreciate the opportunity I have had to come together with others for the success of the City, and I look forward to many more years of service to our City, County and the North Central Florida area."

The next Live Oak City Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 14, at 5:30 p.m.. The meeting will take place at Live Oak City Hall, located at 101 White Ave SE, in Live Oak.

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White Springs Town Council approves resolution for harassment

Christian Peterson
Reporter@riverbendnews.org

On Tuesday, Jan. 10, the White Springs Town Council met for its regularly scheduled meeting. The meeting began at 6:30 p.m. and was held at the Town Hall, located at 10363 Bridge St., in White Springs.

The council began by hearing various public comments before approving nine applications for the planning and zoning board and five applications for the special events committee. The council then moved to the fire department report, at

which time the chief reported the fire department is officially operational. Additionally, he stated the department has three firefighters who are also certified as paramedics.

At this point in the meeting, resident Derek Snead raised his hand to address the council, as he had missed the public comment section. Mayor Anita Rivers invited him to speak. Snead stated that he no longer felt safe in Hamilton County, claiming the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) used excessive force and did not follow rules regarding the use of

body cameras. He also claimed all deputies with the HCSO were rejected from other sheriff's offices prior to employment. Snead then proceeded to make claims about a video of the altercation between Warren and the HCSO, stating anyone who disagrees with his take should be ashamed of themselves.

Town Attorney Joel Foreman presented the council with a new resolution, which came about because the town staff had been submitted to harassment over the past year. The resolution would allow the town staff and council to

handle incidents where they feel they are being harassed. The resolution was approved unanimously. Administrative comments were the next section, with Williams being the first to speak. Williams states she believed they should implement a policy to protect the council against attacks through social media. Rivers then adjourned the meeting.

The next White Springs Town Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 14, at 6:30 p.m. in the Town Hall, located at 10363 Bridge St., in White Springs.

Lafayette Commission considering fee changes

Christian Peterson
Reporter@riverbendnews.org

On Monday, Jan. 9, the Lafayette Board of County Commissioners met for their regularly scheduled meeting. The meeting began at 9 a.m. and was held on the second floor of the Lafayette County Courthouse, located at 120 W Main St., in Mayo.

The commission started by approving the minutes from the previous meeting. Then the meeting moved into department head reports. First to report was Marcus Calhoun from maintenance. He said that work on the roof and handicap ramp would begin soon. Garret Land from building and zoning presented a request from Christine Dylan. The request was to use the Third District Community Center on Tuesdays and Thursdays for Alcoholics Anonymous meetings. Dylan told the board that the meetings would run for at least a year, however, she would defer the location if anyone else needed it at their scheduled time. The board unanimously approved the request.

After department head reports, the board discussed a moratorium on recreational vehicles. Land presented to the board four different options

for permitting on campers. First, to simply raise the prices above the current permitting fee of \$200. Second, begin a yearly fee system, which would require the county to hire someone. Third, restrict where campers can be put to certain zoning areas, or, finally, stop permitting campers at all. Land explained to the board that this was an issue due to campers on property, outside of campsites, not paying their fees. The board decided to set the permitting fees for single campsites outside of group campsites to the same fees as single wide home. Furthermore, they also approved shutting down all permitting for 90 days so that Land could get a hold on all the code violating campers around the county.

The board then continued the discussion with their next item, regarding changes in the special assessment policy. The main idea proposed by the board was assessing every 10 sites up until 100 and then every 15 to 20 after. However, due to the number of large campsites in the county, the board decided to table the item until their next meeting and let the large campsite know about the considered change. The board then chose to discuss the possibility of raising impact fees. Currently, the fee is set \$300. The board stated the

funds could be used for anything related to public safety and that they should take advantage of this. Furthermore, the surrounding counties have a much higher fees and it is helping cause a massive influx of population into Lafayette County. Adams said he wasn't opposed to raising it but not by a large amount, the rest of the board agreed. The idea of a fee schedule entered the conversation, however, the board decided to table the item until the next meeting. Hoping to gain more information about other counties prices as well as what a fee schedule would entail.

The board then chose Volkner Incorporated for the engineering of North East County Road 53. They also approved an agreement with the Florida Department of Transportation for the resurfacing of County Road 250. Furthermore, the board adopted the transportation plan for behavioral health cases in the county, the same contract as it had been for the past three years. The board then paid its bills before adjourning.

The next Lafayette Board of County Commissioners meeting will be Monday, Jan. 23 and will start at 5:30 p.m. The meeting will be held on the second floor of the Lafayette County Courthouse, located at 120 W Main St., in Mayo.

Mayo hears about influx of RVs

Christian Peterson
Reporter@riverbendnews.org

On Monday, Jan. 9, the Mayo Town Council met for its regularly scheduled meeting. The meeting began at 7 p.m. and was held in the Mayo Town Hall located at 276 W Main St., in Mayo.

The council first adopted the agenda for the evening. Then they went to approve the minutes, however, Murphy acknowledged that the minutes had listed a motion being

made by Murphy when it was actually made by Lawson. The council quickly changed that and then approved the minutes. Then there was a call for public comment to which there was no response.

The council then began discussing old business. The only item was a letter from a woman involved in the council's attempt at receiving the Community Development Block Grant. The letter said that there was no update yet, but, as soon as there was one the council

would know. The council then called for department head reports.

First to speak was Sampson Edwards who told the board that the fencing they have been working on is almost done. Edwards claimed he did find one spot of erosion that had him concerned but that he would have it solved soon. Next to speak was Garret Land with an update on the restaurant building the town was trying to handle. He told the board that the owners have an active building permit for demolition. He

then warned the council that the County had placed a 90-day moratorium on recreational vehicles (RV) permits. Land explained that the RV problem in the county had gotten very out of hand and even cited that two out of 10 well ins Lafayette are testing positive for E.coli.

The council then paid its bills and adjourned for the evening. The next Mayo Town Council meeting will be Monday, Feb. 13, starting at 7 p.m. It will be held at the Mayo Town Hall located at 276 W Main St., in Mayo.



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Hamilton Correctional Institution employee arrested for smuggling narcotics

Grace McAlister
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According to a Florida Department of Corrections Office of Inspector General report, a Hamilton Correctional Institution (HCI) employee, thirty-nine-year-old Jamie Lynn Smith of Lake Park, Ga., was arrested Friday, Dec. 23, for bringing narcotics into the prison. The report states that Smith, while supervising inmates and working in the kitchen at HCI, schemed with an inmate to bring cigarettes, synthetic cannabinoids (K-2) and molly into the



Jamie Lynn Smith

from eight different inmates' family members between November 2021 and April 2022 through Cash App to bring in the contraband.

prison with compensation.

Smith was being compensated for the contraband through Cash App transactions, according to the report. She accepted payments 32 times

Smith accumulated a grand total of \$9,550 through these transactions. Some of the transactions included a transaction note that it was being sent for "BG," "Cuba" and "Slim," which are aliases for inmates housed at HCI. Upon accepting the payment, Smith would alert an inmate where the illicit items were located, usually in a food cart, the storage room or in the freezer.

Smith is currently being held at HCI and facing 32 counts of bribery as well as one count of conspiracy to introduce contraband into the prison.

Suwannee County Sheriff's Office cleans up the streets

Grace McAlister
Reporter1@riverbendnews.org

Ralph Andrew Shaffer

Around 6 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 10, while Deputy Noah O'Conney was on routine patrol on US 129 South in the area of 196th Street, he conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle for failing to maintain the lane of travel.



Ralph Andrew Shaffer

The driver of the vehicle, 57-year-old Ralph Andrew Shaffer, from Live Oak, admitted to failing to maintain his lane of travel but stated that he was unaware he was required to.

A consensual search of the vehicle resulted in Deputy O'Conney locating a cigarette box with several clear plastic baggies containing 13.8 grams of methamphetamine.

Shaffer was arrested and transported to the Suwannee County Jail, where he was charged with possession of methamphetamine. He was released the following day.

Mikah Nathaniel Strickland

On Sunday, Jan. 8, while Deputy Juan Quispe was on routine patrol, he conducted a traffic stop due to the driver failing to wear their seatbelt near the intersection of Houston Avenue and Nobles Ferry Road.

The driver of the vehicle, 27-year-old Mikah Nathaniel Strickland, from Live Oak, appeared nervous and was sweating profusely, despite the

weather being cool, and kept grabbing at his pants pocket, the SCSO report states. Strickland could not provide the vehicle's registration or proof of insurance.

Deputy Quispe had Strickland exit the vehicle and, while patting him down for weapons, observed a cut plastic straw containing white residue plainly visible in Strickland's pocket. Strickland admitted to Deputy Quispe that he also had an oxycodone pill that he had purchased "off the street." The report states a further search resulted in the discovery of approximately two grams of crushed oxycodone folded inside a piece of paper. Strickland was arrested and transported to the Suwannee County Jail, where he was charged with possession of a controlled substance (oxycodone) and possession of drug paraphernalia.



Mikah Nathaniel Strickland

Erin Ray Trusty

On the evening of Wednesday, Jan. 11, Inv. Chris Ferguson conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle on US 90 and CR 137 in Wellborn, for a traffic violation. While speaking with the driver, Inv. Ferguson



Erin Ray Trusty

noticed a glass smoking pipe sitting on the center console. In the front passenger seat, 30-year-old Erin Ray Trusty, from Live Oak, admitted that the pipe was hers and she uses it to smoke marijuana, the SCSO report states.

A search of the vehicle resulted in the discovery of a syringe and a small glass vile containing Methamphetamine in Trusty's purse. While being arrested, Trusty recovered another bag of methamphetamine from her pant leg and gave it to Inv. Ferguson. Trusty was transported to the Suwannee County Jail, where she was charged with possession of methamphetamine and possession of drug paraphernalia.

Rudolfo David Ochoa

On Tuesday, Jan. 10, members of the Suwannee County Sheriff's Office Investigations Division received information that 37-year-old Rudolfo David Ochoa, from Live Oak, was at a residence on County Road 349. Ochoa was released from prison in December 2022 after serving 13 years for numerous crimes he committed in Pinellas County, according to SCSO. Ochoa was required by law to register with law enforcement upon his release as a career felon and failed to do so. Ochoa was arrested and transported to the Suwannee County Jail, where he was charged with failure to register as a career offender.

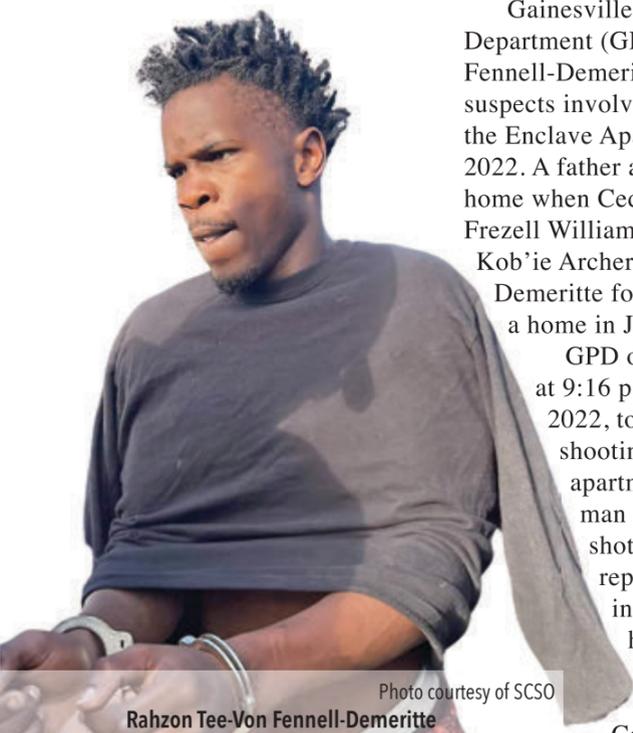


Rudolfo David Ochoa

SUWANNEE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE NABS TEEN INVOLVED IN GAINESVILLE SHOOTING

Grace McAlister
Reporter1@riverbendnews.org

On Wednesday, Jan. 11, the Suwannee County Sheriff's Office helped arrest a man involved in a shooting that paralyzed a man during a home invasion robbery in Gainesville, Fla.



According to the Suwannee County Sheriff's Office, deputies assisted U.S. Marshals in arresting Rahzon Tee-Von Fennell-Demeritte, 18, of Live Oak. Deputies say Fennell-Demeritte was wanted for home invasion robbery and attempted murder in Gainesville, Fla.

Gainesville Police Department (GPD) officers say Fennell-Demeritte was one of the suspects involved in a shooting at the Enclave Apartments in June of 2022. A father and son were in the home when Cedric Cohens, Frezell Williams Lamar Rowe, Kob'ie Archer, and Fennell-Demeritte forced their way into a home in June 2022.

GPD officers responded at 9:16 p.m. on June 27, 2022, to a reported shooting at The Enclave apartments and found a man who had been shot; his son was reportedly the intended victim of a home invasion robbery. The son told police that Cohens had come

over earlier in the evening to smoke marijuana with him, and when he left, he let three armed subjects into the apartment. The son reportedly said that one of them hit him in the back of the head with a pistol, then dragged him into his bedroom and told him to hand over his cash, a report from the GPD states. He told officers that the subjects stole about \$2,000 in cash from him while holding him at gunpoint. The arresting officer reported that a large amount of marijuana, white powder, and other drug paraphernalia were present in the apartment.

The father had been asleep in his room, according to the GPD report, but ran into his son's room when he heard the disturbance, and one of the intruders shot him in the back. The officer reported that doctors said the bullet severed the man's spinal cord and that he was expected to be paralyzed from the neck down. The subjects fled the apartment



Rahzon Tee-Von Fennell-Demeritte

after the shooting. Cohens was arrested later that night after his vehicle was found at a nearby apartment complex. He is currently in the Alachua County Jail.

Fennell-Demeritte was identified using

information associated with a Cash App transaction between him and Cohens and through phone records for a cell phone associated with his Facebook account. Fennell-Demeritte's warrant recommends \$2,000,000 bail. Fennell-Demeritte, was arrested and charged with armed home invasion robbery and attempted felony murder in connection with the June 27 shooting at that left a man paralyzed.

Archer, of Lake City, was arrested on July 24. Fennell-Demeritte, 18, of Live Oak and Rowe, 20, of Lake City, were arrested Wednesday, Jan. 11. All three are currently at the Alachua County Jail.

Photo courtesy of SCSO

Rahzon Tee-Von Fennell-Demeritte

In Loving Memory

Lillian Norris



Lillian Clarice Jones Norris passed away peacefully on January 9, 2023, at Haven Hospice in Lake City, FL., surrounded by her family. Lillian was the wife of the late Dr. Wade B. Norris, Sr. and the mother of Dr. W. Benjamin Norris, Jr. and Mary Beth Norris Windham.

Lillian was a native of Franklin, N.C. and if you were blessed to be around when she reminisced about it, you could almost feel the cool mountain breeze because her memories were so heartfelt. She graduated from Franklin High School and moved to Akron, Ohio to further her education at Hammel Business School. Upon returning to Franklin to begin work, she met the young Wade B. Norris who was also working there. The two soon married and they joyfully supported each other in life until his death in July of 1999. Life was good and Hamilton County was blessed when he chose to move to Jasper to begin his dental practice in 1959. Lillian quickly became active in the community and remained so until well into her early nineties when her health began to slow her down a bit. She was a member of the Jasper Women's Club as well as a longtime member of the Hospital Pink Ladies

Auxiliary throughout its existence. Lillian served on the Board of Directors for the North Florida Mental Health Board and the American Cancer Society. In her spare time, she enjoyed doing crossword puzzles and playing bridge. Surprisingly in a late in life twist, she followed her true passion of writing and began writing articles and accompanied those articles with her own photography for The Jasper News. This soon led to her own column "Norris Notes" which appeared weekly for many years. She covered a variety of subjects and her true ability to write was noticed and she reached her ultimate goal of becoming Editor of The Jasper News, a position she held for a number of years.

Lillian was always a gentle and kind lady and she truly enjoyed visiting with family and friends. Her friends were true to her long after she stopped driving and it was a fact that if she was invited, she was going to accept the invitation and be ready even on short notice usually before the g in go left the lips of the person issuing the invitation. Lillian was never prideful for she felt truly blessed. She honored her late husband Wade by keeping his memory alive and she was indeed proud of the accomplishments of both of her children and grandchildren. If you were blessed to be her friend, she honored you as well until her final days because she was passionate about walking down memory lane and recalling all of the

good times that were shared in Jasper and the many family trips back to Franklin with their new and old friends.

Lillian was preceded in death by her husband of 43 years, Dr. Wade B. Norris, Sr., infant daughter Cathy Jo, and a sister Martha Gibson.

She is survived by her son, Dr. W. Benjamin Norris, Jr. and his wife Leigh Ann; her daughter, Mary Beth Windham; her grandchildren, Kaleb Windham (Rachel), Jordan Windham, Wade Benjamin "Trey" Norris, III, and Kaleigh Matson (Andrew); and great grandchildren, Kason and Jensen Windham.

Her life was celebrated on Wednesday, January 11, 2023 at the First Presbyterian Church in Jasper, FL. with Mr. Ryan Mitchell officiating. Interment followed at Evergreen Cemetery in Jasper, FL.

Memorial contributions may be made In Memory of Lillian Norris to First Presbyterian Church, P.O. Box 329, Jasper, FL. 32052 or to Haven Hospice 4200 NW 90th Blvd, Gainesville, FL. 32606.

Ninety-five is but a blink of the eye in eternity but it is a blessed accomplishment on this earth and Lillian did "Life" well and has now gone to join her beloved Wade but in the words of Theodore Geisel, "Don't cry because it's over. Smile because it happened."

Community Calendar

Wednesday, Jan. 18

Let TOPS (Take Pounds Off Sensibly) help you with your weight management goals. TOPS is a weight-loss support group that meets weekly at Grace Lutheran Church, located at 9989 CR 136, in Live Oak. Weigh-in begins at 9:15 a.m. on Wednesday mornings, with the meeting beginning and 10 a.m. For more information, call (386) 362-5933.

Thursday, Jan. 19

The Live Oak Public Library's Craft Club will meet on Thursday, Jan. 19, at 12 p.m. This month's craft will be a collage canvas.

Seating is limited, so please stop in or call the library at (386) 362-2317 to pre-register. The Live Oak Public Library is located at 1848 Ohio Ave. S, in Live Oak.

Wednesday, Jan. 18 and Monday, Jan. 24

First Baptist Church of Live Oak's Clothes Closet will provide free clothes to those in need on Mondays and Wednesdays from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. The Clothes Closet is located in the old red barn at 515 SW 5th St., in Live Oak. If you have questions or concerns, contact Sandra Hodgdon at Mrsdew5834@outlook.com.

Daddy,
I know this is not a Happy Anniversary day for you. Even though mama isn't here, you are still celebrating 63 years of loving her. I know you are still heartbroken and I wish there was something I could do to make this easier for you. You were so good to her Daddy and took such good care of her. She talked to me all the time about how she didn't know that she would do without you taking care of her. She loved you so much and she knew how much you loved her. I am so sorry that you are alone and missing her every day. God knew she couldn't make it without you so he took her first.
I love you Daddy,
Lynn



Revival Under the Tent Freedom Rally!

January 27-29 (Fri-Sun) 7 PM

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The Oasis Church grounds
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- Children's Ministry each night
- Worship by The Oasis Church worship team
- Prayers for the sick each night

Speakers

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- **Saturday:** Youth Pastor Jason Pilkington
- **Sunday:** Sister Dorothy McCann
- Come, bring a guest!

Pastor Jim Hurst
(352) 221-4534

Jail Report

Lafayette

Jan. 9

Timothy Elmore, probation violation

Hamilton

Jan. 10

John Michael Thomaset, withhold support

Jan. 13

Brian Bidd Hill, conditional release violation

Travis Bernard Hawkins, bond surrender/revocation

Jimmy Lee Wyers, operating vehicle without license

Jan. 15

Janet Dionne Keim, smuggle contraband, drug equipment possession

Malcolm Travelle Lee, out-of-county warrant

Suwannee

Jan 10

Nicholas Phillip Douglas, probation violation

Christy Kay Thomas, failure to appear

Horation Leonartos Fead, probation violation

Rudolfo David Ochoa, failure to register as a career offender

Ralph Andrew Shaffer, drug possession

Shayla Seantel Duran Pittman, failure to appear

Jan. 11

Dreyveun Bernard Jackson, probation violation

Rahzon Tee-von Fennell-Demeritte, out-of-county warrant

Orona Gerardo, probation violation

Erin Ray Trusty, drug possession, drug equipment possession

Jan. 12

Christopher Edelin, moving traffic violation

Kevin Timothy Martin Kight, battery

Elizabeth Ann Browning, trespassing, disturbing the peace

Abigail Lynn Hale, battery

Jan. 13

Zackery Tyler Bridges, flee and elude law enforcement, operating vehicle without license

Marcia Lynn Grand, petit theft

Jesus Perez, failure to appear

Gavin Brandon Flores, failure to appear

Lesley White, domestic violence by strangulation

Jan. 14

Luis Ramirez Serna, dui-unlawful blood alcohol level

Jan. 15

Jeremiah Edward Fenney, public order crimes

Erica Jean Ortiz, aggravated battery

Enrique Daniel Garcia-Meono, resisting an officer, moving traffic violation

American Legion Post 107 spreads holiday cheer with No Vet Alone Christmas dinner



Photo courtesy of American Legion Post 107

Those who attended the dinner smile for a photo.

Grace McAlister
Reporter1@riverbendnews.org

Many people enjoy spending the holidays with family;

however, many people do not have family close by and often don't even have a place to share a special meal with others. Sadly, many Veterans are in a similar

situation, with no one close to share the warmth and fellowship of this special time of year. With this in mind, American Legion Post 107 hosted a free Christmas

dinner for Veterans and families in the Suwannee Valley. Through this event, Post 107 was able to provide a Christmas dinner for 52 people.

Florida Peanut Producers Association seeks National Peanut Board nominees

Florida Peanut Producers Association
Contributor

The Florida Peanut Producers Association seeks eligible peanut producers interested in serving on the National Peanut Board. The Florida Peanut Producers will hold a nomination election to select two nominees each for member and alternate to the National Peanut Board during a meeting on Thursday, Feb. 23, at 6:30 p.m. at the Jackson County Ag Complex and Conference Center, located at 3631 US 90, in Marianna. All eligible peanut producers are encouraged to participate. Eligible producers are those engaged in producing and selling peanuts and who own or share the ownership and risk of crop loss.

William Carte of Live Oak is the current Florida National Peanut Board Member, and Nick Marshall of Baker serves as the alternate. The term for the current Florida board member and alternate expires Sunday, Dec. 31.

USDA requires two nominees for each position of member and alternate. The National Peanut Board will submit Florida's slate of nominees to the US Secretary of Agriculture, who makes the appointments.

The National Peanut Board encourages the inclusion of persons of any race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation and marital or family status. The National Peanut Board encourages all persons who qualify as peanut producers to

attend the meeting and run for the nomination.

It is USDA's policy that membership on industry-government boards and committees accurately reflect the diversity of individuals served by the programs.

Florida Peanut Producers Association is the state-certified check-off organization for peanuts in Florida and represents Florida's peanut producers in the areas of research, promotion and education.

The National Peanut Board represents all USA peanut farmers and their families. The mission of the Board is to improve the economic condition of USA peanut farmers and their families through compelling promotion and groundbreaking research.



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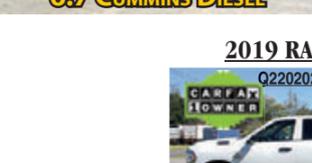


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<p>2021 DODGE CHALLENGER GT QU5127 CARFAX OWNER</p> 	<p>2020 DODGE CHALLENGER RT QU5129 CARFAX OWNER</p> 	<p>2020 DODGE CHARGER GT QU5124 CARFAX OWNER</p> 	<p>2017 KIA OPTIMA Q210307C</p> 	<p>2014 LEXUS IS 250 C1849</p> 
<p>2013 CHEVY EQUINOX C230005A</p> 	<p>2015 CHEVY TAHOE LTZ QU5162A</p> 	<p>2022 CHEVY TAHOE LT QU5146 CARFAX OWNER</p> 	<p>2018 CHEVY TAHOE PREMIER QU5091A</p> 	<p>2014 CHEVY SUBURBAN C230008A</p> 
<p>2021 CHEVY SUBURBAN PREMIER C230010A CARFAX OWNER</p> 	<p>2019 CHRYSLER PACIFICA Q220134A CARFAX OWNER</p> 	<p>2016 DODGE DURANGO Q210220B CARFAX OWNER</p> 	<p>2022 FORD BRONCO C1795A CARFAX OWNER</p> 	<p>2018 FORD EXPEDITION XLT C220078A CARFAX OWNER</p> 
<p>2020 FORD PLATINUM Q220198A CARFAX OWNER</p> 	<p>2020 GMC YUKON SLT C1860B</p> 	<p>2015 GMC YUKON XL SLT Q4912B</p> 	<p>2014 JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE Q230009A</p> 	<p>2017 JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE SUMMIT QU5072A</p> 
<p>2020 JEEP GLADIATOR 4x4 Q210275A CARFAX OWNER RUBICON</p> 	<p>2021 JEEP WRANGLER QU5128</p> 	<p>2020 JEEP WRANGLER SAHARA QU5143 CARFAX OWNER</p> 	<p>2015 LEXUS GX460 Q220107B</p> 	<p>2016 LINCOLN MKX QU5119A</p> 
<p>2019 RAV 4 Q210329A CARFAX OWNER</p> 	<p>2017 SUBARU CROSSTREK QU5058A</p> 	<p>2016 TOYOTA HIGHLANDER LIMITED QU5034A</p> 	<p>2021 CHEVY COLORADO C220087A</p> 	<p>2021 CHEVY RST Z71 C1822B</p> 
<p>2019 FORD F-150 XLT 4x4 Q220199A</p> 	<p>2019 FORD F-150 PLATINUM 4x4 Q220176B CARFAX OWNER</p> 	<p>2016 FORD F-250 LARIAT 4x4 Q220204B CARFAX OWNER</p> 	<p>2018 FORD F-250 LARIAT 4x4 Q220162B CARFAX OWNER</p> 	<p>2019 FORD F-350 4x4 QU5145A PLATINUM</p> 
<p>2015 F-450 FLATBED Q220125A</p> 	<p>2022 FORD MAVERICK Q220214A CARFAX OWNER</p> 	<p>2016 FORD TRANSIT C1850M</p> 	<p>2022 GMC 1500 LIMITED 4x4 QU5172 CARFAX OWNER</p> 	<p>2017 NISSAN TITAN PRO-4X QU5040A</p> 
<p>2017 RAM 1500 CREW 4x4 Q220150 CARFAX OWNER</p> 	<p>2020 RAM 1500 4x4 QU5140 CARFAX OWNER LARAMIE</p> 	<p>2017 RAM 1500 CREW 4x4 QU5074A CARFAX OWNER</p> 	<p>2019 RAM 1500 CREW SLT Q220001A CARFAX OWNER</p> 	<p>2021 RAM 1500 LARAMIE 4x4 Q220255A CARFAX OWNER</p> 
<p>2020 RAM 1500 LONGHORN 4x4 QU5026</p> 	<p>2020 RAM LARAMIE Q220189A 6.7 CUMMINS DIESEL</p> 	<p>2021 RAM REBEL 4x4 Q220154B CARFAX OWNER</p> 	<p>2022 RAM 2500 CREW 4x4 Q220220A CARFAX OWNER 6.7 CUMMINS DIESEL</p> 	<p>2016 RAM 2500 LARAMIE 4x4 Q220175A CARFAX OWNER 6.7 CUMMINS DIESEL</p> 
<p>2022 RAM 2500 LIMITED 4x4 Q220173A 6.7 CUMMINS DIESEL</p> 	<p>2018 RAM 2500 MEGA LARAMIE Q220124M CARFAX OWNER 6.7 CUMMINS DIESEL</p> 	<p>2014 RAM 2500 MEGA 4x4 QU5046 6.7 CUMMINS DIESEL</p> 	<p>2014 RAM 2500 MEGA 4x4 QU5086 CARFAX OWNER 6.7 CUMMINS DIESEL</p> 	<p>2020 RAM 2500 POWER WAGON QU5117</p> 
<p>2019 RAM 3500 4x4 Q220202A CARFAX OWNER FLATBED</p> 	<p>2020 RAM 3500 4x4 QU5139 FLATBED</p> 	<p>2019 TOYOTA CREW Q220043C CARFAX OWNER</p> 	<p>2022 TOYOTA TACOMA C1818 CARFAX OWNER</p> 	

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“As long as I'm alive and breathing, John will have a voice” Suwannee Valley Unsolved brings local cold cases to light

Danny Federico
reporter3.riverbendnews@gmail.com

Suwannee Valley Unsolved is currently investigating the murders and disappearances of 41 individuals, 30 of which occurred in Columbia County and 11 of which occurred in Suwannee County. In an effort to keep these cases alive and moving, the group's creator, Jason Futch, in coordination with the Suwannee River Regional Library, hosted “Cold Cases of the Suwannee Valley” in Branford on Monday, Jan. 9.

The presentation, held in the Hatch Park Community Center, was centered around three homicides, Darlene Messer, Deborah Howard and John Robert Thomas. In an effort to bring awareness to these horrific crimes, Futch dove head first into the past, with the assistance of the Suwannee County Sheriff's Office, the Lake City Police Department, the Columbia County Sheriff's Office and Suwannee Valley Crime Stoppers. Over 80 people attended the presentation, and almost 200 people viewed the event live on Facebook.

Retired Detective Sgt. Randy Roberts with the Columbia County Sheriff's Office kicked the event off by presenting Darlene Messer's case. Messer was abducted from the Suwannee Swifty Convenience Store

in Lake City on Sept. 18, 1989. Her body was later discovered floating in a body of water beneath the Swift Creek Bridge in Union County—approximately 15 miles from where she disappeared—on Sept. 20, 1989. Her death was reportedly caused by blunt force trauma. Although there are persons of interest in the case, the investigation is still ongoing.

The Suwannee County Sheriff's Office and Retired Detective Jake Brooks then presented Deborah Howard's case. Howard was last seen on Sept. 25, 1976, at a bar in Lake City, Fla., before she returned to Live Oak with her boyfriend, George McCraney. An official investigation began in 2015 after her family came forward to report her missing. McCraney, who is serving a life sentence on unrelated charges, was developed as a suspect. He was interviewed at Florida State Prison, but has been uncooperative and avoids questions concerning Howard. He is still a suspect in her case.

The final presentation came from Investigator Greg Burnsed with the Lake City Police Department. Thomas was murdered on Dec. 9, 2001, in a home on the corner of Northeast Washington and Broadway Streets in Lake City. An altercation occurred at the home, leading to Thomas

being shot in the face. Although a woman was arrested for the murder in 2002, a grand jury did not indict her for the charges. She still remains a person of interest.

Heather Landacre, Thomas's aunt, closed out the presentation by delivering a family impact statement. “To the person that is still of interest in this case, we all want you to know that you took a beautiful soul—a beautiful person...He had a bright future, he wanted to play baseball for Florida State University. He never got to do that,” Landacre said. “I was 14-years-old. I didn't have a voice back then, but I have one now. I now look out into a crowd, anywhere I go, and wonder, is this the person? Could you have been the one that took our nephew, our friend, our brother? I'm hoping that you watch this—that you see this, and you decide you're finally going to come forward. And as a victim impact statement, I would also like you to know that if you're caught, we pray that you are shown no mercy, just like you showed him none the night you killed him and left him there alone...As long as I'm alive and breathing, John will have a voice.”

The full “Cold Cases of the Suwannee Valley” presentation can be viewed on Suwannee Valley Unsolved's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/SuwanneeValleyUnsolved.



John Robert Thomas



Deborah Howard



Darlene Messer



Riverbend News photo by Danny Federico, January 9, 2023

Jason Futch with Suwannee Valley Unsolved, in coordination with the Suwannee River Regional Library, hosted “Cold Cases of the Suwannee Valley” in Branford.

TOPS begins the new year in the *black*

Lucille Heinrich
Contributor

Members of TOPS (Take off Pounds Sensibly) Chapter 0662, a weight loss support group, dressed in black at their first meeting of 2023 to signify this was the only meeting of the year where everyone's weight is recorded in black ink. After this first meeting, if a member has a weight gain, it is recorded in red. Members meet in Live Oak each Thursday at First Advent Christian Church, located at 699 Pinewood Dr. SW, in Live Oak, at 9:30 a.m. During the months of January and February, new members who join TOPS will be exempt from chapter dues for three months. Contact Lucille Heinrich at (386) 362-5995 or Kathy Bechet at (386) 362-6012 for more information.

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ANNUAL DONATE FOR LIFE 5K RUN/WALK
In partnership with *Donate Life* and *Life Quest Organ Recovery Services*
Saturday, April 1, 2023 at Heritage Park & Gardens, Live Oak
The public is welcome to participate and learn about this life-saving cause.
Pre-register at raceentry.com
Or register at the event
Registration begins at 6:45 a.m.
Race begins at 7:30 a.m.
Entry fee is \$20 for adults 13 and over
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Awards and Door Prizes
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All funds go to Donate for Life.

The Donate Life Florida Foundation is a non-profit, 501 ©3 organization and all contributions are tax deductible.

Suwannee County Teachers of the Year



Patrick Jernigan
Teacher of the Year
Suwannee Riverside Elementary



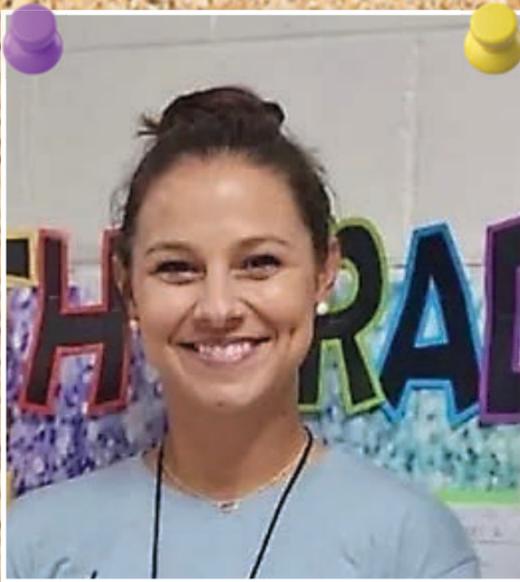
Kelli Roberts
Rookie of the Year
Suwannee Riverside Elementary



Stacey Skierski
Grandmaster of the Year
Suwannee Riverside Elementary



Emily Murphy
Teacher of the Year
Suwannee Springcrest Elementary



Brooklyn Ross
Rookie of the Year
Suwannee Springcrest Elementary



Stephanie Gray
Grandmaster of the Year
Suwannee Springcrest Elementary

CONGRATULATIONS
to all of Suwannee County's Teachers of the Year!

from:



Superintendent Ted L. Roush and Suwannee School Board Members



Sara Voss
Teacher of the Year
Suwannee Pineview Elementary



Tamara Felton
Rookie of the Year
Suwannee Pineview Elementary

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Kim Hudson
Grandmaster of the Year
Suwannee Pineview Elementary



Allison Brown
Teacher of the Year
Suwannee Middle School

Congratulations to our Teachers of the Year!

- Derwin Bass - Grand Master Teacher of the Year
- Katie Miller - Teacher of the Year
- Marcia Toledo-Garcia - Rookie Teacher of the Year



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Alyssa Hahn
Rookie of the Year
Suwannee Middle School



Robyn Bonds
Grandmaster of the Year
Suwannee Middle School



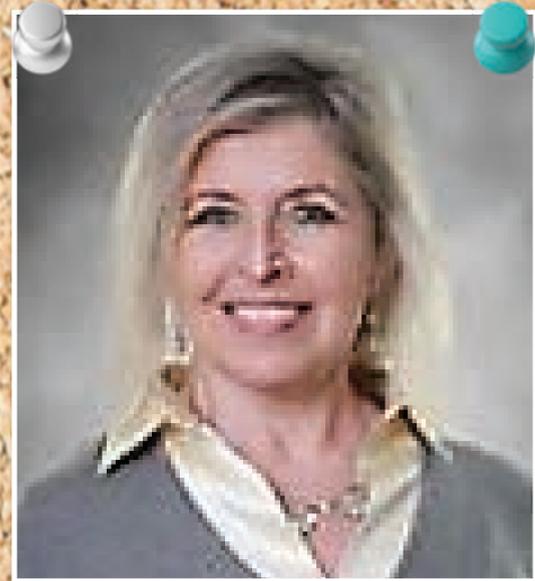
Sherry "Angel" Dean
Teacher of the Year
Suwannee High School



Barrinesha Washington
Rookie of the Year
Suwannee High School



Michelle Thompson
Grandmaster of the Year
Suwannee High School



Angie Hester
Teacher of the Year
Suwannee Virtual School



Mary Johnson
Grandmaster of the Year
Suwannee Virtual School



Jennifer Winnett
Teacher of the Year
Branford Elementary

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Allison Brown
SMS Teacher of the Year

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Congratulations Branford teachers and school personnel of the year!



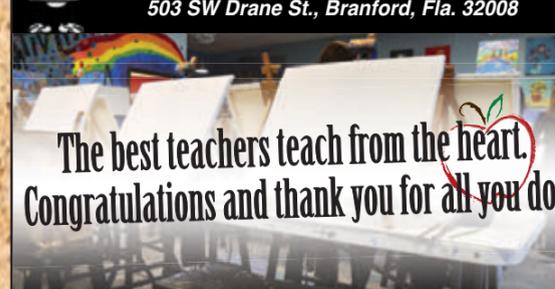

Amanda Koon
Rookie of the Year
Branford Elementary



Caron Heffner
Grandmaster of the Year
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Branford High School



Linda Whitley
Grandmaster of the Year
Branford High School

Hamilton County Teachers of the Year



Candice Arnold
Teacher of the Year
Hamilton County High School



Kimberly Crowder
Teacher of the Year
Hamilton County Elementary



Maria Toledo-Garcia
Rookie of the Year
RIVEROAK Technical College



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The impact of a great teacher can never go unnoticed. Well done and congratulations!!

Lee Wetherington-Zamora, Superintendent
Hamilton County School District



Thank you for your determination and dedication to our students.



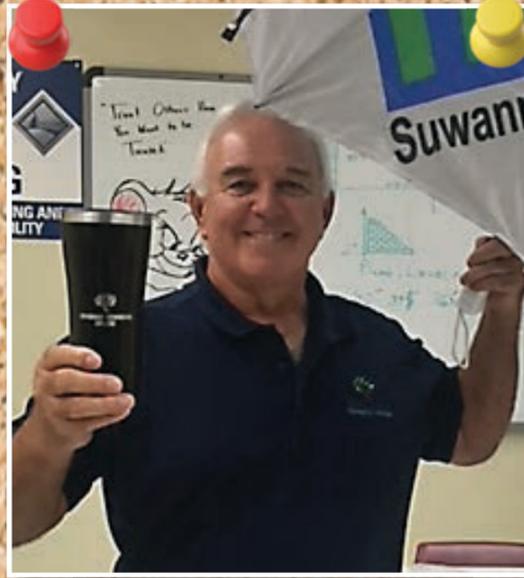
Thank you teachers for your hard work and for what you do for our kids!



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Katie Miller
Teacher of the Year
RIVEROAK Technical College



Derwin Bass
Grandmaster of the Year
RIVEROAK Technical College

Lafayette County Teacher of the Year



Lori Sadler
Teacher of the Year
Lafayette School District

RIVEROAK'S DERWIN BASS ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT:

"It's been a great career, I wouldn't do anything different."



RIVEROAK staff take a photo with Derwin Bass before he leaves to enjoy retirement.

Photo courtesy of RIVEROAK Technical College

Christian Peterson
Reporter@riverbendnews.org

On Friday, Dec. 16, RIVEROAK Technical College (RTC) made a Facebook post, announcing the retirement of one of its teachers, Derwin Bass. Bass is a staple of RTC and has been for years. As he moves on to the next part of his life and away from RTC, his hard work and accomplishments will live on in RTC memory.

Bass was born in Naylor, Ga., in 1955. When he was only 11-years-old, his family moved to Live Oak. Bass attended Suwannee High School and graduated in 1973. The spark of his future career started while he was still in high school. Bass worked for his agriculture teacher Doug Fletcher fixing tractors and other farm equipment. During this time, Bass felt his first bit of inspiration for teaching. He cites Fletcher as a major positive influence in his life. Fletcher guided

Bass and taught him various skills during their after school working hours.

After graduating, Bass was invited by Walter Boatwright, in 1993, to teach an auto body class at RTC. He accepted the offer after a year, Bass left RTC and went on the road. For four years he traveled doing refractory work. Then, in 1997, Bass was contacted again by RTC. This time asking if he would be interested in helping start a masonry course at the school. Initially, it wasn't requested that Bass be the main teacher for the class. However, the original teacher hired for the program left and Bass took his place.

From 1997 to 2022, Bass taught masonry at RTC. He worked for a total of 26 years and became one of the most well-liked instructors at the school. He claims the best part about working at RTC is that it feels like working with family. In his reflection, Bass said

the biggest challenge he had at RTC was at the beginning of his career. He thought to himself, "what do I do to inspire these kids?" He eventually came to the conclusion to get down to their level and engage with them in ways they would understand. The plan worked wonderfully, and Bass found himself easily identifying with his students. The best memories that Bass has at RTC are two stories similar to one another. First was winning teacher of the year at RTC. Second was being invited to a luncheon by the Masonry Association. He went only expecting to enjoy lunch, however, he was met with a surprise. During the luncheon it was announced that Bass had won Florida Masonry Teacher of the Year.

Now, after his 26 years of teaching Bass has retired. Mary Keen with RTC said, "Derwin Bass has been instrumental in the growth of RIVEROAK Technical College

and the success of its programs. We are happy for him in his retirement, but he will be missed immensely." He has many plans for his future and what he will do with his free time. First and foremost is to enjoy time with his family. He has been married to his high school sweetheart, Esther Bass for 42 years and "dating for 50." He also looks forward to spending time with his three daughters and their families, Amber Buda her husband John Buda and their two daughters; Shelley Grantham her husband Jacob Grantham their two daughters and one son and Dana Thompson her husband Bradley Thompson and their daughter. Bass also plans to follow some of his other passions, such as, collecting, fixing and building 1955 and 1957 Chevrolet trucks. He also plans on fishing in Steinhatchee on his airboat or taking his family out on the Suwannee River in his riverboat.

RIVEROAK receives donation from the Live Oak Elks Club

Christian Peterson
Reporter@riverbendnews.org

On Monday, Jan. 9, RIVEROAK Technical College and the Live Oak Elks Club met for a special occasion outside the Suwannee County Agricultural Colosseum. RIVEROAK is proud of all of the partnerships it has inside and outside the community. One of those partnerships is with the Live Oak Elks Club.

The Florida State Elks Association is a protective order dedicated to serving the citizens around them. In Florida, there are close to 56,000 men and women involved with the association and close to 100 lodges. These lodges each have unique indoor and outdoor experiences, allowing Elks to enjoy sports, entertainment, parties and even dances. "More importantly, Florida Elks take great pride in

giving back to our communities," the Florida Elks website states. "Nationally, each year, the nearly one million Elks working together with the Elks National foundation provide over \$80 million for charitable programs such as the Hoop Shoot competition, scholarships, drug awareness in our schools and assistance for Veterans of all wars."

During its meeting on Saturday, Jan. 7, the Live Oak Elks Club donated \$500 to the SkillsUSA chapter of RIVEROAK, giving RIVEROAK even more opportunity to fund students to compete in skill-related competitions. "RIVEROAK Technical College is appreciative of the Live Oak Elks Club's partnership in supporting postsecondary training for adults and we are thankful to be part of such a supportive community," said RIVEROAK's principal Mary Keen. "It truly takes a village!"



Photo courtesy of RIVEROAK Technical College

The Live Oak Elks Club presents RIVEROAK with money to sponsor students at the SkillsUSA competition.

Westwood announces spelling bee winners

Grace McAlister
Reporter1@riverbendnews.org

On Monday, Jan. 9, Westwood Christian School announced the winners of its Junior spelling Bee. Though the competition was tough, four students came out on top. The first-place winner was third-grade student Cooper Forehand. In second place, there was a tie between Aubree Holtzclaw, a second-grade student and Jake Bryant, a fourth-grade student. In fourth place was first-grade student Julie Camille. Congratulations to these expert spellers!

ASK DR. MANTOOTH

TEMPORARY FILLINGS

Q: What's the purpose of a temporary filling?

A: A temporary filling is a stop-gap measure your dentist may use to save a tooth. If the removal of tooth decay has exposed and compromised the pulp, or nerve, of the tooth, your dentist may opt to employ a temporary filling. This process is sometimes referred to as "indirect capping."

A temporary filling gives the opportunity for a wall of tooth structure to grow between the pulp and the decayed area, and for the pulp to heal. After an appropriate time, the dentist can remove the temporary filling and take an x-ray, if necessary, to see if the pulp has healed. If that's the case, the dentist can clean out any remaining decay and put in a permanent filling. If the pulp damage is too severe, you may need a root canal. This is a procedure normally performed by an endodontist, a dentist who specializes in root canals.

The endodontist will remove the pulp, clean out the interior of the tooth, and fill it. In the worst cases, if the decay and damage to the pulp is extreme, the tooth may have to go. A root canal is also an expensive procedure. The best way to avoid the eventualities described above is to maintain a good regimen of home care, brushing and flossing, and visiting your dentist at least twice a year.

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Lady Hornets kick off second half of their season

Lee Trawick
Reporter2@riverbendnews.org

The Lafayette High School girls' varsity basketball team is looking to bounce back after the Christmas break with hopes of a District Tournament appearance. Having struggled to find consistency during the first part of the season, they will look through their young roster for someone to emerge as the clear leader of the team.

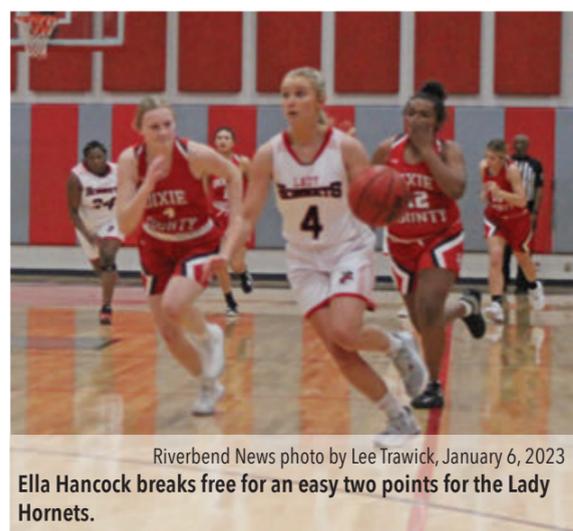
The Lady Hornets entered the Christmas break with a 5-6 record, along with district wins over the Branford Lady Buccaneers and Hamilton County Lady Trojans. However, the Lafayette girls are still looking for that signature win to help propel them into the post season with confidence.

To kick off the second half of their season, on Friday, Jan. 6, the Lady Hornets traveled to take on the Hamilton County Lady Trojans. There, they took

a step in the right direction behind sophomore Kiley Beach, who went off for 25 points after the team fell behind 13-8 at the end of the first quarter. With the efforts of Beach and the rest of the Lady Hornets, they were about to overcome an early deficit and earn the win, 48-39 and improving their record to 6-6 on the season.

The Lady Hornets then returned home on Tuesday, Jan. 10, to take on the Dixie County Lady Bears, where they fell behind early. In the second half, the Lady Hornets were able to cut into their opponents' lead, only to see the Lady Bears extend their lead back on their way to a 55-37 victory. With the loss, the Lady Hornets' record falls to 6-7 on the season.

The Lady Hornets will be back on the road on Thursday, Jan. 19, as they travel to take on the Trenton Lady Tigers at 6:30 p.m. Trenton High School is located at 1013 N Main St., in Trenton, Fla.



Riverbend News photo by Lee Trawick, January 6, 2023
Ella Hancock breaks free for an easy two points for the Lady Hornets.

Lady Bucs begin to bounce back

Lee Trawick
Reporter2@riverbendnews.org

The Branford High School girls' varsity basketball team began the second half of the season with a 4-7 record. In order to make a push into the District Tournament, they would need to right the ship. Coming off a two point loss to the Cedar Key Lady Sharks to end the first half of the season, the Branford girls were eager to make their bid.

To do this, they had to resume their season on Thursday, Jan. 5, by traveling to Bronson High School to take on the Lady Eagles. Despite a tight match up, it was the Lady Buccaneers who came out on top with a final score of 49-40, improving their overall record to 5-7.

Then, on Friday, Jan. 6, the Branford girls traveled to Dixie County to take on the Lady Bears. The Lady Buccaneers managed to edge out their opponent in the first quarter by a score of 10-9. Each team showcased their defensive skills in the second quarter, as both were held to just five points, giving the Lady Buccaneers a 15-14 score going

into halftime. Both teams continued to match each other point-for-point in the third quarter. However, in the fourth quarter, the Lady Buccaneers finally wore down. The Lady Bears got the best of them, outscoring the Branford girls, 16-7, taking the lead and ultimately the win with a final score of 37-27. With the loss, the Lady Buccaneers' record dropped to 5-8.

However, they would bounce back, as they defended their home court on Monday, Jan. 9, against the Union County Lady Tigers. There, the Lady Buccaneers fought hard to outscore their opponent, all while relying on their defense to keep the Lady Tigers at bay. With great defensive play by the Branford girls, the Lady Tigers were unable to find any rhythm offensively. As a result, the Lady Buccaneers were able to secure the win, 39-31, improving their overall record to 6-8.

The Lady Buccaneers will return to the road on Thursday, Jan. 19, as they travel to take on the Countryside Christian Minutemen at 6 p.m. Countryside Christian High School is located at 10926 NW 39th Ave., in Gainesville, Fla.

Lady Bulldogs gear up for second half of season

Lee Trawick
Reporter2@riverbendnews.org

The Suwannee High School girls' varsity basketball team began the second half of their season with hopes of regrouping after dropping two straight before the Christmas break. As the Lady Bulldogs begin the second half of the season and aim for a District Championship, they will surely lean on the veteran play of their senior, Amyah Jones.

On Thursday, Jan. 5, the Lady Bulldogs (5-4) played host to the Bell Lady Bulldogs. The Suwannee girls jumped out to a fast start, making the Bell Bulldogs play catch up through all four quarters. When the final buzzer sounded, the Suwannee Lady Bulldogs came away with a 41-29 victory.

Then, on Tuesday, Jan. 10, the Lady Bulldogs played host to the Trenton Lady Tigers, jumping out to a 14-8 lead at the end of the first quarter. Although they were outscored by the Lady Tigers in the second quarter, 9-5, the Suwannee girls continued to hold on to the lead, 19-17. They continued to hold on to a two-point lead going into the fourth quarter. Unfortunately, the Lady Bulldogs were unable to maintain the upper hand, as the Lady Tigers outlasted them, 14-8, in the final quarter for a 44-40 victory. With the loss, the Lady Bulldogs' record fell to 6-5 on the season.

The Lady Bulldogs will return to the road on Wednesday, Jan. 18, as they travel to take on the Palatka Lady Panthers at 7 p.m. Palatka High School is located at 302 Mellon Rd., in Palatka, Fla.

Bulldogs drop two straight in second half of season

Lee Trawick
Reporter2@riverbendnews.org

The Suwannee High School boys' varsity basketball team began the second half of the season by coming off a three game winning streak prior to the Christmas break. Despite their 5-9 record on the season, the Bulldogs were eager to kick off the second half with the hopes of capitalizing on the momentum built. Unfortunately, they were

unable to do so.

The Bulldogs opened the second half of their season by traveling on Saturday, Jan. 7, to take on the Newberry Panthers. There, the Suwannee boys battled four quarters before the Panthers were able to close them out by a score of 57-49. With the loss, the Bulldogs' record fell to 5-10 on the season.

Then, on Thursday, Jan. 12, the Suwannee boys once again hit the road to take on the Hilliard

Flashes. Although they tried to keep pace with the Flashes, the Bulldogs were unable to maintain the push. Eventually, the Flashes outscored the Bulldogs, 64-44, dropping their overall season record to 5-11.

The Bulldogs will be back on the road on Friday, Jan. 20, as they travel to take on the Echols County Wildcats at 7:30 p.m. Echols County High School is located at 190 Hwy 49 E, in Statenville, Ga.

Buccaneers recover after loss

Lee Trawick
Reporter2@riverbendnews.org

The Branford High School boys' varsity basketball team was eager to kick off the second half of the season after the Christmas break following a 70-36 loss to the Chiefland Indians. Despite the loss, the Buccaneers still carried an 7-5 record into the second half of the season with high hopes of making a strong run towards a District Championship.

On Thursday, Jan. 5, the Branford boys traveled to Bronson High School to take on the Eagles. In a game of back and forth, both teams presented strong defensive fronts. However, it was the Buccaneers who carried the lead throughout the game. While the Eagles managed to get close, it was the Buccaneers' fourth quarter precision shooting that secured the win with a final score of 59-42, improving their overall record to 8-5 on the season.

Next, on Friday, Jan. 6, the Buccaneers traveled to Dixie County to take on the Bears. The Branford boys pulled out to a commanding lead after the end of the first quarter, bringing the score to 14-6. Then, by the end of the first half, the Buccaneers had expanded their lead by 10 points. The Bears were able to show signs of keeping pace in

the fourth quarter, however, they would come up short against the Buccaneers, as they secured the win with a score of 48-33. With the win, their record improved to 9-5 on the season.

Then, on Monday, Jan. 9, the Buccaneers returned home for two straight games against the Union County Tigers and the Bronson Eagles. Although both the Tigers and the Buccaneers flexed their muscles on the defensive side of the ball, it was the Buccaneers who came out on top with a 48-40 win. The Buccaneers' offense shined against the Eagles the second time around. The Eagles pushed the Buccaneers through four quarters in hopes of outlasting them in the end. However, the Buccaneers were ready for a four quarter battle and were well conditioned to outlast the Eagles on their way to their fourth consecutive win by a score of 70-55. The Buccaneers appear to be trending in the right direction as they prepare for the District Tournament with an overall record of 11-5.

The Buccaneers will be back on the road on Thursday, Jan. 19, as they travel to take on the Countryside Christian Minutemen at 7:30 p.m. Countryside Christian High School is located at 10926 NW 39th Ave., in Gainesville, Fla.

Lee Trawick
Reporter2@riverbendnews.org

The Hamilton County High School girls' varsity basketball team entered the second half of the season with a 4-6 record with the hopes of getting above .500 heading into the District Tournament. However, things have not gone the way the Lady Trojans would have liked, as they began the second half of the season on the road at Santa Fe High School on Thursday, Jan. 5. There, they tried to match the Lady Raiders' speed to offset the size advantage they had over the Lady Trojans. However, the Lady Raiders took full advantage of the height difference on their way to a 54-23 win.

Next, the Lady Trojans returned home on Friday, Jan. 6, to take on the Lafayette Lady Hornets. The Lady Trojans jumped out to a five point lead after the first quarter, bringing the score to 13-8. Unfortunately, the Lady Trojans had a rough second quarter, as they managed to only score two points compared to the Lady Hornets' 10 points, leaving the score 18-15 in favor of the Lady Hornets at halftime. Then, in the second half, the Lady Trojans tried to bounce back, but

Lady Trojans begin second half of the season 2-1

were unable to rebound, as the Lady Hornets continued to extend their lead to a final score of 48-39. With the loss, the Lady Trojans' overall record fell to 4-8 on the season.

On Tuesday, Jan. 10, the Lady Trojans tried to rebound against the Brooks County Lady Trojans. There, the game started just as the previous game did; the Lady Trojans jumped out early, but were unable to hold on, as Brooks County fought back with a fast-paced offense and a full court press style on defense. While the Lady Trojans battled for all four quarters and were able to keep it close, it was not enough when the final buzzer sounded. Brooks County carried the day with a 51-40 victory, dropping the Lady Trojans' record to 4-9 overall on the season.

The Lady Trojans will be back on the road on Thursday, Jan. 19, as they travel to take on the Bell Lady Bulldogs at 7 p.m. Bell High School is located at 930 S Main St., in Bell, Fla.

Suwannee Bulldogs soccer team honors its seniors

Lee Trawick
Reporter2@riverbendnews.org

The Suwannee High School Bulldogs soccer team kicked off the second half of their season by honoring their senior class members on Friday, Jan. 6. However, prior to the halftime festivities, the Bulldogs had to battle the Palatka Panthers. The Bulldogs entered the game with a 3-5-1 record on the season.

With the first game after the Christmas break, the Bulldogs were hoping to regroup and begin the second half of the season with a win on senior night. Through most of the first half, the Bulldogs battled the Panthers, where they had several opportunities but came up empty. On the other end of the field, the Bulldogs stove off tremendous pressure by the Panthers, as they desperately tried to gain the upper hand. However, as the first half came to a close, the score remained 0-0.

At halftime, Bulldog soccer fans honored their

seniors as they were escorted onto midfield with their families. The Bulldogs will say goodbye to six seniors who gave so much to the soccer program over the years. While the coaches and fans honored their seniors, it was the coaches and fans who were honored to have had the privilege to watch the seniors give all they had for three and four years of their lives.

Then, just minutes into the second half, the Bulldogs broke through the Panthers' defense, led by junior Joel De La Cruz, who found senior Joshea Jahuey running free towards the goal. With a pass to Jahuey from Cruz, Jahuey was set up perfectly to score for the Bulldogs, giving them the lead 1-0. The Bulldogs continued to press on as the opportunities arose. However, holding off the Panthers became their main focus, as they repeatedly advanced up the field only to be denied by goalie Alex Mabey. The Bulldogs would hold on to a 1-0 lead for a final score, improving their record to 4-5-1 on the season.

Next, the Bulldogs would take on another set of

Panthers on Monday, Jan. 9, against St. Johns Paul II. The Bulldogs came out fast, with the mission of improving their record to 5-5-1. The Bulldogs got on the board in the first half and carried a 1-0 lead into halftime. In the second half, the Panthers would match the Bulldogs point-for-point, eventually claiming a 2-1 victory over the Panthers and securing their fifth win of the season.

Then, the Bulldogs went on the road to take on the Buchholz Bobcats on Thursday, Jan. 12. The Bulldogs were looking to avenge an earlier season loss they faced at home against the Bobcats, 2-1. While the Bulldogs did all they could in the first half, both teams remained scoreless. Then, in the second half, both the Bulldogs and Bobcats put the ball in the back of the net for a 1-1 tie, bringing the Bulldogs' season record to 5-5-2.

The Bulldogs will be back in action on Wednesday, Jan. 18, as they travel to take on the Leon Lions at 7 p.m. Leon High School is located at 550 E Tennessee St., in Tallahassee, Fla.



Riverbend News photo by Lee Trawick, January 6, 2023
Robert Robinson was escorted by his family on Senior Night.



Riverbend News photo by Lee Trawick, January 6, 2023
Luis Lopez was escorted by his family on Senior Night.



Riverbend News photo by Lee Trawick, January 6, 2023
Joshea Jahuey was escorted by his family on Senior Night.



Riverbend News photo by Lee Trawick, January 6, 2023
Isacc Mendoza was escorted by his family on Senior Night.



Riverbend News photo by Lee Trawick, January 6, 2023
Alex Beristain was escorted by his family on Senior Night.



Riverbend News photo by Lee Trawick, January 6, 2023
Kendal Vasquez-Herandez was escorted by his family on Senior Night.

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BULLDOGS CROWNED DISTRICT AND REGIONAL CHAMPIONS AFTER DOMINATING WINS OVER WAKULLA

Lee Trawick
Reporter2@riverbendnews.org

The Boston Red Sox have the New York Yankees, the Michigan Wolverines have the Ohio State Buckeyes, the Suwannee Bulldogs wrestling team has the Wakulla War Eagles. "Most of these kids were barely born the last time Suwannee beat Wakulla in wrestling," Bulldog Head Coach John Wainwright said. "Therefore, when I took over the program three and half years ago, the first thing I told them was, 'We have to beat Wakulla.' So, they have heard it for three years."

While that was the team's goal, in order to

perfectly position themselves to slay the beast in their path, each wrestler had to concentrate on getting better every day. Regardless of their gauntlet of a schedule, the Bulldogs began their season with high expectations. "The real goal was to get better and back to competing at the State level. Qualifying wasn't good enough," Coach Wainwright said. "They have to believe they can bring a medal home, so I focused on taking them to the toughest tournaments, against the top-ranked wrestlers of their class. They understand, in order to be the best, you have to beat the best."

Expectations were high as the Bulldogs entered the 2022-23 wrestling season. Coach Wainwright understood his team was very talented, but were perhaps still a year away from being great. Although this might have been the general consensus of those outside the team, the wrestlers themselves set out to prove this will be the year they'll elevate themselves to greatness.

On Thursday, Jan. 5, the Bulldogs began solidifying their names in history by hosting the Class 1A District 2 Championships with a 23-2 record on the season. Their first opponent, the Godby Cougars, were no match for the young men in green, as they bulldozed over them with a score of 84-0. Next was a battle of the Bulldogs, as Suwannee had to face-off against Liberty County High School. However, it was Suwannee who proved to have the most damaging bite, as they came out on top by a score of 63-18. Waiting for their chance to overtake the Bulldogs in the semi-finals round were the Florida High Seminoles. Despite their best efforts, the Seminoles could not hold their footing against the Bulldogs' might, as they advanced to the Championship round with a 53-24 win.

Finally, it was time for the long awaited matchup, as the Wakulla War Eagles were ready to dig their

talons into the mat. Unfortunately for them, the 2023 Bulldogs were not fazed by the results of the past; rather, they were ready to change history's course. In a battle of might, both teams went back and forth in the first match, neither ready to give up points. However, Justin Contreras truly ingrained the tone of the day with his win in the second match, electrifying the stands and putting the War Eagles on notice; they were ready to fight back, and fight back they did. The Bulldogs sank their teeth into their opponents and went on to pull away with each follow up match win. As the dust settled, and the earth stopped shaking, it was the Bulldogs who emerged as the Class 1A District 2 Champions with a score of 49-21.

Then, on Thursday, Jan. 12, the War Eagles returned to Suwannee High School for the Regional Championships. Joining them in their bid for the crown were the Bay County High School Tornadoes and the North Bay Haven Academy Buccaneers. The Bulldogs entered the match as the number one seed, and began the day by facing off against the Tornadoes. Meanwhile, the War Eagles faced off against the Buccaneers.

In the first duel for the Regional crown, both the Bulldogs and War Eagles made easy work of their opponents, setting up a rematch between the top two schools in Class 1A Region 1. This was the Bulldogs' opportunity to prove their District Championship win was not a fluke, all while earning a trip to their first appearance at the State Championships.

The War Eagles got off to an early lead, winning two out of the first three weight classes. However, the Bulldogs would not give up. It wasn't long before the atmosphere

began to shift throughout Suwannee High School's gymnasium; the thrum of anticipation electrified the air, as the Bulldogs began to pull away point by point. As the dust cleared, the boys in green and white had achieved what no other Bulldogs team ever has – they won the crown of Regional Champions.

"Coming into tonight, knowing we had beaten Wakulla in Districts, gave us a bit more confidence. But, we still knew we had to take care of business," senior Austin Howard said. "To be going to State is something I couldn't have imagined my freshman year, but here we are. We have been through a lot over the last four years, so to see all the hard work and dedication payoff like this is pretty special for my senior year."

"I'm so proud of our guys. They fought hard against a very talented team and a great program over there in Wakulla. We have nothing but respect for those guys, so beating them tonight means a lot...they are pretty special and I couldn't be more proud of them," Coach Wainwright said. "The way our guys trained so hard—we pushed them to get to this point, now to see all the guys stick with it, because it wasn't easy for them...and to have the success they are having, just goes to show on the practice mat is where you earn the opportunity to go to State and these guys have proved that to everyone and, I hope, themselves. Now, we have to get ready for State. That will be a tough go. We will match up against a team out of Jacksonville in the first round, and I feel pretty good about that matchup. Then, we will have to face the number one team in the State in Jensen Beach."

The Bulldogs will now travel to Osceola High School in Kissimmee, Fla., to compete in the State Championships on Friday, Jan. 20 and Saturday, Jan. 21.



Riverbend News photo by Lucy Golub, January 5, 2022
Marshall White flips his opponent in the 145 lb. weight class against the Florida High School Seminoles.

Riverbend News photo by Lucy Golub, January 5, 2022
Justin Contreras pumps up the crowd with a win over the War Eagles.

Riverbend News photo by Lucy Golub, January 5, 2022
Elie Jolicoeur contributes to the Bulldogs efforts win, by dominating his opponent in the 106 pound weight class.

Riverbend News photo by Lucy Golub, January 5, 2022
Christian Harrell prepares for his final match in the 195 lb. weight class against the War Eagles.

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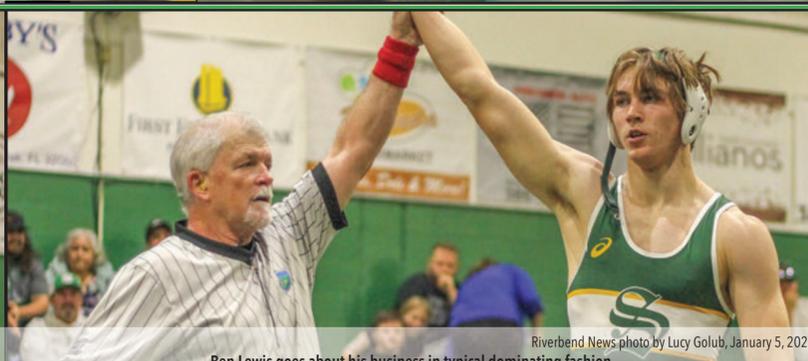
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Riverbend News photo by Lucy Golub, January 5, 2022
Torynn Johns give his best impression of Spartacus for the Bulldogs crowd.



Riverbend News photo by Lucy Golub, January 5, 2022
Ben Lewis goes about his business in typical dominating fashion.

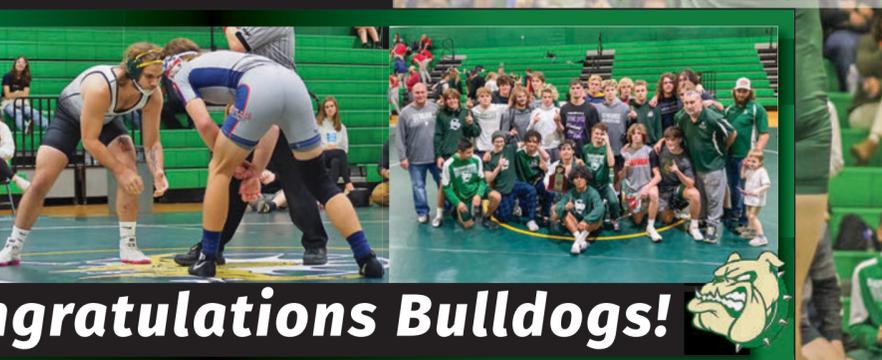
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Pastor Louis Medaris
SUNDAY

Sunday School.....10:00 a.m.
Children's Church.....10:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.
Morning Service.....11:00 a.m.
Evening Service.....6:00 p.m.
WEDNESDAY
Bible Study.....6:00 p.m.
Teen Bible Study.....6:00 p.m.

Live Oak First Assembly of God

13793 76th St., Live Oak Fla.
(386) 330-2210
Rev. Mike Townsend
SUNDAY

Sunday School.....9:30 a.m.
Children's Church.....10:30 a.m.
Morning Worship.....10:30 a.m.
Evening Worship.....6:00 p.m.
WEDNESDAY
Evening Service.....7:30 p.m.

Rocky Sink Baptist Church

8422 Rocky Sink Rd., Live Oak, Fla.
(386) 362-3971
Pastor Bruce Wehner

Sunday Morning Worship.....11:00 a.m.
Wednesday Evening Worship.....6:00 p.m.

St. Francis Xavier Church

928 E. Howard St., US 90 E. Live Oak, Fla.
(386) 364-1108

Father Anthony Basso

Saturday (Vigil) Mass.....6:00 p.m.
Sunday Mass.....9:00 a.m.
Sunday (Spanish) Mass.....11:30 a.m.

St. Luke's Episcopal Church

1391 SW 11th St., Live Oak, Fla.
For more information call (386) 362-1837
WEDNESDAY

Eucharist & Unction.....10:30 a.m.
SUNDAY
Adult Sunday School.....10:00 a.m.
Eucharist.....9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

St. Therese Catholic Church

Three Miles North of Jasper US 41
P.O. Box 890, Jasper, Fla.
Rectory US 90 E., Live Oak, Fla.
(386) 364-1108

Saturday Mass.....4:00 p.m.

The Village Church at Advent Christian Village

Rev. Sam Worley, Pastor

Worship with us on Facebook and YouTube
Sunday Morning Worship.....9:40 a.m.

Friendship Baptist Church

14364 140th St., Live Oak, Fla.
(386) 776-1010
Interim Pastor
SUNDAY

Sunday School9:45 a.m.
Morning Service.....11:00 a.m.
Evening Service.....6:00 p.m.
WEDNESDAY
Church Dinner5:45 p.m.
AWANA6:30 p.m.
Prayer Meeting7:00 p.m.

Lighthouse Christian Center to host Carolina the Band

Lee Trawick
Reporter2@riverbendnews.org

On Sunday, Jan. 29, at 6 p.m., the Lighthouse Christian Center in Mayo will be opening its doors for everyone to enjoy a free night of Christian country and Southern gospel music. The night will include a list of various artists, including Carolina the Band.

Carolina is a country gospel group comprised of seven band members, all from the Carolinas. Their sound is reminiscent of the Oak Ridge Boys and the Statler Brothers, all while incorporating the importance of family, the gospel and patriotism.

The Lighthouse Christian



Photo courtesy of Lighthouse Christian Center

Lighthouse Christian Center will host Carolina the Band on Sunday Jan. 29.

Center is located at 772 N SR 51, in Mayo. For more

information, call (386) 294-3089.

Pastor Spotlight: Earl Green

Christian Peterson
Reporter@riverbendnews.org

Earl Green is a chart-topping musician, in fact, he is a multiple time chart topping musician. However, his greatest work is much humbler. Green is the pastor of Lighthouse Christian Center in Mayo and has become an integral part of the church and the community.

Green was born June 7, 1959, to two loving parents, his father was a pastor. He grew up in Lake City, Fla. for most of his life. Near the end of his primary education, his family moved to Live Oak where he graduated from Suwannee High School in 1977. The church he grew up in was Watertown Congregational Holiness Church in Lake City. It was there that he found his first love, music. Green's church was full of talented and professional musicians who were constantly amazing him. One day, Windy Johnson and the Messengers came to visit the church and Green saw his future before him. During the car ride home that night, Green told his father that he was going to be a musician when he grew up.

In November of 1975, when the Green family moved to their next church, Suwannee River Community Church in Live Oak, he accepted Jesus. After graduating, Green began exploring career options, he attended the Suwannee VoTech receiving certification in advanced forest technology. He eventually formed his first quartet, the Singing Reps, they toured performing for everyone and spreading the good news. However, his most recent band, the Mercy Mountain Boys, is one of his most impressive feats. They had a number one song in 2018 titled, "Come on back." Green toured for a total of 40 years; and during this time, he released 16 albums had seven top 40 songs and even opened for Charlie Daniels. Throughout all this he never forgot to care for others and show Christ's love wherever he went. The Mercy Mountain Boys' main mission was to help Veterans, especially homeless Veterans.

Green pastored at Christ Central in Mclenny, Fla. and had a missions work called



Photo courtesy of Earl Green

Earl Green

Mercy's well in Lake City. However, in September of 2020, Lighthouse Christian Center in Mayo asked Green to come preach for them. He told them that he was not interested in being the pastor of the church, but God had different plans. He felt inspired after serving as the interim pastor and by January 2021, Green became the official pastor of Lighthouse Christian Center.

Green's favorite verse is John 3:16, "for God so loved the world he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believes him shall not perish but have eternal life." His favorite book of the Bible is James. He has been married to his wife, Wanda, for 29 years and they have two children, his son Travis Green and stepson Michael Housch. On top of that they adopted Green's 10-year old granddaughter Sammi, who they love very much. When asked to sum up his experience in one sentence, Green said, "it's the feeling of being a servant to those searching."

Lighthouse Christian Center is located at 772 Fl-51 in Mayo and meets every Sunday at 10:30 a.m. They also meet on Wednesday nights, adults meet at 7 p.m. for a bible study and prayer. The youth meet at 6 p.m. for the Army of Fire and the children meet at 7 p.m. for their Kids of the King program. Lighthouse Christian Center also has a school called Lighthouse Christian Academy with almost 200 students. "We don't care who you are, where you've been, what you've done or what your reputation is, come on down," Green stated.

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01/18 pd

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PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Lafayette County Commission will be holding a regular meeting on Monday, January 23, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. The meeting will be held in the County Commissioners Meeting Room, on the second floor of the Lafayette County Courthouse in Mayo, Florida. Listed below is an agenda for the meeting.

By Order Of:
Earnest Jones, Chairman
Lafayette County Commission

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING:

1. Open the meeting.
2. Invocation and pledge to the flag.
3. Approve the minutes.
4. Requests and comments from the community.
5. Department Heads:
 - A) Marcus Calhoun – Maintenance.
 - B) Scott Sadler – Public Works.
 - C) Garret Land – Building/Zoning.
 - D) Marty Tompkins – EMS.
 - E) Shawn Jackson – Extension Office.
6. Special Assessment Policy as it relates to campgrounds (continued from the last meeting).
7. Discuss the possibility of raising impact fees (continued from the last meeting).
8. Discuss changing the meeting day from Monday to Tuesday.
9. Discuss the issue of "Jake Breaking" in Day Town.
10. Leenette McMillan-Fredriksson – various items.
11. Approve the bills.
12. Other Business.
13. Future agenda items.
14. Adjourn.

All members of the public are welcome to attend. Notice is further hereby given, pursuant Florida Statute 286.0105, that any person or persons deciding to appeal any matter considered at this public hearing will need a record of the hearing and may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceeding is made which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

Persons with disabilities requesting reasonable accommodations to participate in this proceeding should contact (386) 294-1600 or via Florida Relay Service at (800) 955-8771.
See www.lafayetteclerk.com for updates and amendments to the agenda.

01/18

Notice of Enforcement of lien without judicial intervention. The contents of the listed leased space(s) located at Ms. Lillian's Self-Storage, 11714 102 Trce., Live Oak, FL 32060 will be placed for Public Auction and Sale to the highest bidder to be held online at www.storageauctions.com on February 7th, 2023, bidding ends at 2:00 PM. \$50 refundable deposit required on each winning bid. Units may include: Furniture, Antiques, Electronics, Household items, Office items, Clothes, Toys, Baby items, Tools, Automobiles, Trailers, etc. The units, description, and customer names included in this Auction are;

- 3, 5x10, Rose Bass,
- 6.6, 10x25, Erica Washington
- 7.7, 10x25, Marlene Haynes,
- 22, 5x10, Rita Ogburn,
- 23, 5x10, Vivian Slaughter,
- 26, 10x10, Rose Bass,
- 35, 5x10, Traryshia Davis,
- 38, 5x10, Danielle Houle,
- 43, 10x12.5, Marlene Ogburn,
- 59, 10x10, Jimmy Schofield,
- 62, 10x12.5, Alifia Jackson,
- 72, 10x10, Bianca Morgan,
- 76, 10x10, Meagan Roberts,
- 83, 10x10, Bryce Kearce.

01/18, 01/25

PUBLIC NOTICES

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR LAFAYETTE COUNTY, FLORIDA

Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. GENERAL JURISDICTION DIVISION
Case No. 20200021CAAXMX

Plaintiff, vs. JERRY WAYNE SULLIVAN A/K/A JERRY W. SULLIVAN A/K/A JERRY SULLIVAN Defendant.

FILED
STEVE LAND-CLERK
LAFAYETTE COUNTY, FL
2023 JAN -9 PM 2:05

NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to the Final Judgment and/or Order Rescheduling Foreclosure Sale entered in Case No. 20200021CAAXMX of the Circuit Court of the THIRD Judicial Circuit, in and for Lafayette County, Florida, wherein Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. is the Plaintiff and JERRY WAYNE SULLIVAN A/K/A JERRY W. SULLIVAN A/K/A JERRY SULLIVAN is the Defendant, that I will sell to the highest and best bidder for cash at the north door of the courthouse, 120 West Main Street, Mayo, FL 32066, beginning at 11:00 AM, on the 13th day of APRIL, 2023, the following described property as set forth in said Final Judgment, to wit:

COMMENCE AT THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF THE NORTHWEST ONE QUARTER OF THE NORTHWEST ONE QUARTER OF SECTION 16, TOWNSHIP 7 SOUTH, RANGE 14 EAST, LAFAYETTE COUNTY, FLORIDA, FOR THE POINT OF COMMENCEMENT; THENCE RUN SOUTH 00 DEGREES 27'59" EAST ALONG THE 40 LINE 2627.25 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 89 DEGREES 49'40" WEST 643.00 FEET FOR THE POINT OF BEGINNING; THENCE CONTINUE SOUTH 89 DEGREES 49'40" WEST 402.64 FEET; THENCE NORTH 00 DEGREES 24'57" WEST 412.73 FEET; THENCE NORTH 89 DEGREES 49'40" EAST 402.64 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 00 DEGREES 27'59" EAST 412.73 FEET TO CLOSE ON THE POINT OF BEGINNING. TOGETHER WITH AN EASEMENT FOR INGRESS AND EGRESS ACROSS THE SOUTH 30 FEET OF THE NORTH 440 FEET OF PROPERTY DESCRIBED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 62, PAGE 678, OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS OF LAFAYETTE COUNTY, FLORIDA. TOGETHER WITH THAT CERTAIN 2011 LIVE OAK HOMES MOBILE HOME VIN# L0HGA11012533

Dated this 9th day of JANUARY, 2023.

Steve Land
As Clerk of the Circuit Court of Lafayette County, Florida
By: *[Signature]*
As Deputy Clerk

If you are a person with a disability who requires accommodations in order to participate in a court proceeding, you are entitled, at no cost to you, the provision of certain assistance. Individuals with a disability who require special accommodations in order to participate in a court proceeding should contact the ADA Coordinator, 173 NE Hernando Avenue, Room 408, Lake City, FL 32055, (386) 719-7428, within two (2) business days of receipt of notice to appear. Individuals who are hearing impaired should call (800) 955-8771. Individuals who are voice impaired should call (800) 955-8770.

01/18, 01/25

Notice of Enforcement of lien without judicial intervention. The contents of the listed leased space(s) located at Ms. Lillian's Self-Storage, 7434 County Rd 795, Live Oak, FL 32060 will be placed for Public Auction and Sale to the highest bidder to be held online at www.storageauctions.com on February 7th, 2023, bidding ends at 1:00 PM. \$50 refundable deposit required on each winning bid. Units may include: Furniture, Antiques, Electronics, Household items, Office items, Clothes, Toys, Baby items, Tools, Automobiles, Trailers, etc. The units, description, and customer names included in this Auction are;

- A12, 5x10, Joni Kelly,
- B52, 5x10, Gail Martin,
- C65, 5x10, Erika Hodge,
- C73, 10x15, Michelle Videon,
- D95, 5x10, Evan Walters,
- Y2, Parking, Xavier Wolbert,
- Y3, Parking, Bruce McFarland.

Vehicle and trailer photos & Vin #s and descriptions are available online at www.storageauctions.com

01/18, 01/25

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR SUWANNEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
PROBATE DIVISION

IN RE: ESTATE OF MARY BETH AMMONS, Deceased. Case No. 61-2022-CP-000203

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

The administration of the estate of Mary Beth Ammons, deceased, whose date of death was May 2, 2022, is pending in the Circuit Court for Suwannee County, Florida, Probate Division, the address of which is 200 South Ohio Avenue, Live Oak, Florida 32064. The name and address of the personal representative and the personal representative's attorney are set forth below.

All creditors of the decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate on whom a copy of this notice is required to be served must file their claims with this court ON OR BEFORE THE LATER OF 3 MONTHS AFTER THE TIME OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE OR 30 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF SERVICE OF A COPY OF THIS NOTICE ON THEM.

All other creditors of the decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate must file their claims with this court WITHIN 3 MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE.

ALL CLAIMS NOT FILED WITHIN THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH IN FLORIDA STATUTES 733.702 WILL BE FOREVER BARRED.

NOTWITHSTANDING THE TIME PERIOD SET FORTH ABOVE, ANY CLAIM FILED TWO (2) YEARS OR MORE AFTER THE DECEDENT'S DATE OF DEATH IS BARRED.

The date of first publication of this notice is January 11, 2023.

Attorney for Personal Representative: Personal Representative:
White, Griffiths & Littell, PLLC by: John L. Dickhaus Florida Bar No. 1002729 5303 SW 91st Drive, Suite 200 Gainesville, FL 32608 Telephone: (352) 372-1011 Facsimile: (352) 416-3452 Email: jld@wgl-law.com Email2: mml@wgl-law.com Cathy J. Reed 9833 U.S. Hwy. 129 Live Oak, FL 32060

01/11, 01/18

The Hamilton County Local Mitigation Strategy Working Group will meet on Wednesday, January 25, 2023, at 9 am. This meeting will be held in the Hamilton County Emergency Operations Center, 1133 US Hwy 41 NW, Suite 1, Jasper, FL 32052.

The County encourages any interested citizens and/or business owners to attend and provide input. The Working Group provides input in the preparation of the project list that is a part of the Hamilton County Local Mitigation Strategy. This document serves as a plan to reduce the community's long-term risk for protecting people and property from the effects of natural disasters and to build a safer and stronger community.

Please contact Hamilton County Emergency Management at (386) 792-6647 for more information.

01/11, 01/18

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR SUWANNEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
PROBATE DIVISION
IN RE: ESTATE OF JACQUELYN WOOD JOHNSON, Deceased. File No. 2022-200-CP

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

The administration of the Estate of JACQUELYN WOOD JOHNSON, deceased, whose date of death was July 11, 2022; File Number 2022-200-CP, is pending in the Circuit Court for Suwannee County, Florida, Probate Division, the address of which is 200 South Ohio Avenue, Live Oak, FL 32064. The name and address of the Personal Representative and the Personal Representative's attorney are set forth below.

All creditors of the decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate, on whom a copy of this notice is required to be served must file their claims with this Court WITHIN THE LATER OF 3 MONTHS AFTER THE TIME OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE OR 30 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF SERVICE OF A COPY OF THIS NOTICE ON THEM.

All other creditors of the decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate must file their claims with this court WITHIN 3 MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE.

ALL CLAIMS NOT FILED WITHIN THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH IN SECTION 733.702 OF THE FLORIDA PROBATE CODE WILL BE FOREVER BARRED.

NOTWITHSTANDING THE TIME PERIOD SET FORTH ABOVE, ANY CLAIM FILED TWO (2) YEARS OR MORE AFTER THE DECEDENT'S DATE OF DEATH IS BARRED.

The date of first publication of this notice is: January 18, 2023.

JAMES W. PREVATT, JR. Attorney for Personal Representative Florida Bar No. 0352012 Prevatt Law Firm, P.L. 120 East Howard Street Live Oak, FL 32064 Telephone: (386) 362-7979 jprevatt@windstream.net MICKEY BRIAN PARKIN Personal Representative 7742 C.R. 136 Live Oak, Florida 32060

01/18, 01/25

PUBLIC NOTICE OF INTENT TO ISSUE AIR PERMIT
Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Northeast District Office
Draft Air Permit No. 0470018-001-AC
Green Point Research, Green Point Research Processing Facility
Duval County, Florida

Applicant: The applicant for this project is Green Point Research. The applicant's authorized representative and mailing address is: David Hasenauer, CEO, Green Point Research, Green Point Research Processing Facility, 6986 Highway 129 South, Jasper, FL 32052.

Facility Location: Green Point Research proposes to construct a new hemp oil processing facility to be located in Hamilton County at 6986 Highway 129 South in Jasper, Florida.

Project: Green Point Research proposes to construct an oil extraction process facility to extract cannabidiol (CBD) from hemp. This process will use a hexane solvent extraction process, a mineral oil scrubber, and a propane boiler. Potential hazardous air pollutant (HAP) emissions from the hexane solvent is estimated to remain under ten tons per year. Potential carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen oxides (NOX), sulfur dioxide (SO2), volatile organic compounds (VOC), and particulate matter (PM) combined from the propane boiler is less than one ton per year. Permitting Authority: Applications for air construction permits are subject to review in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 403, Florida Statutes (F.S.) and Chapters 62-4, 62-210 and 62-212 of the Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.). The proposed project is not exempt from air permitting requirements and an air permit is required to perform the proposed work. The Permitting Authority responsible for making a permit determination for this project is the Northeast District Office. The Permitting Authority's physical and mailing address is: 8800 Baymeadows Way West, Suite 100, Jacksonville, Florida 32256. The Permitting Authority's telephone number is (904) 256-1700.

Project File: A complete project file is available for public inspection during the normal business hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday (except legal holidays), at the physical address indicated above for the Permitting Authority. The complete project file includes the Draft Permit, the Technical Evaluation and Preliminary Determination, the application and information submitted by the applicant (exclusive of confidential records under Section 403.111, F.S.). Interested persons may contact the Permitting Authority's project engineer for additional information at the address and phone number listed above. In addition, electronic copies of these documents are available on the following web site: <https://fldep.dep.state.fl.us/air/emission/apds/default.asp>.

Notice of Intent to Issue Air Permit: The Permitting Authority gives notice of its intent to issue an air construction permit to the applicant for the project described above. The applicant has provided reasonable assurance that operation of the CBD extractor will not adversely impact air quality and that the project will comply with all appropriate provisions of Chapters 62-4, 62-204, 62-210, 62-212, 62-296 and 62-297, F.A.C. The Permitting Authority will issue a Final Permit in accordance with the conditions of the proposed Draft Permit unless a timely petition for an administrative hearing is filed under Sections 120.569 and 120.57, F.S. or unless public comment received in accordance with this notice results in a different decision or a significant change of terms or conditions.

Comments: The Permitting Authority will accept written comments concerning the proposed Draft Permit for a period of 14 days from the date of publication of the Public Notice. Written comments must be received by the Permitting Authority by close of business (5:00 p.m.) on or before the end of this 14-day period. If written comments received result in a significant change to the Draft Permit, the Permitting Authority shall revise the Draft Permit and require, if applicable, another Public Notice. All comments filed will be made available for public inspection.

Petitions: A person whose substantial interests are affected by the proposed permitting decision may petition for an administrative hearing in accordance with Sections 120.569 and 120.57, F.S. Petitions filed by any persons other than those entitled to written notice under Section 120.60(3), F.S., must be filed within 14 days of publication of the Public Notice or receipt of a written notice, whichever occurs first. Under Section 120.60(3), F.S., however, any person who asked the Permitting Authority for notice of agency action may file a petition within 14 days of receipt of that notice, regardless of the date of publication. A petitioner shall mail a copy of the petition to the applicant at the address indicated above, at the time of filing. A petition for administrative hearing must contain the information set forth below and must be filed (received) with the Agency Clerk in the Office of General Counsel, 3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, MS 35, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000, Agency_Clerk@dep.state.fl.us, before the deadline. The failure of any person to file a petition within the appropriate time period shall constitute a waiver of that person's right to request an administrative determination (hearing) under Sections 120.569 and 120.57, F.S., or to intervene in this proceeding and participate as a party to it. Any subsequent intervention (in a proceeding initiated by another party) will be only at the approval of the presiding officer upon the filing of a motion in compliance with Rule 28-106.205, F.A.C.

A petition that disputes the material facts on which the Permitting Authority's action is based must contain the following information: (a) The name and address of each agency affected and each agency's file or identification number, if known; (b) The name, address, any email address, telephone number and any facsimile number of the petitioner; the name, address any email address, telephone number, and any facsimile number of the petitioner's representative, if any, which shall be the address for service purposes during the course of the proceeding; and an explanation of how the petitioner's substantial interests will be affected by the agency determination; (c) A statement of when and how each petitioner received notice of the agency action or proposed decision; (d) A statement of all disputed issues of material fact. If there are none, the petition must so state; (e) A concise statement of the ultimate facts alleged, including the specific facts the petitioner contends warrant reversal or modification of the agency's proposed action; (f) A statement of the specific rules or statutes the petitioner contends require reversal or modification of the agency's proposed action including an explanation of how the alleged facts relate to the specific rules or statutes; and, (g) A statement of the relief sought by the petitioner, stating precisely the action the petitioner wishes the agency to take with respect to the agency's proposed action. A petition that does not dispute the material facts upon which the Permitting Authority's action is based shall state that no such facts are in dispute and otherwise shall contain the same information as set forth above, as required by Rule 28-106.301, F.A.C.

Because the administrative hearing process is designed to formulate final agency action, the filing of a petition means that the Permitting Authority's final action may be different from the position taken by it in this Public Notice of Intent to Issue Air Permit. Persons whose substantial interests will be affected by any such final decision of the Permitting Authority on the application have the right to petition to become a party to the proceeding, in accordance with the requirements set forth above.

Extension of Time: Under Rule 62-110.106(4), F.A.C., a person whose substantial interests are affected by the Department's action may also request an extension of time to file a petition for an administrative hearing. The Department may, for good cause shown, grant the request for an extension of time. Requests for extension of time must be filed with the Office of General Counsel of the Department at 3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, Mail Station 35, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000, or via electronic correspondence at Agency_Clerk@dep.state.fl.us, before the deadline for filing a petition for an administrative hearing. A timely request for extension of time shall toll the running of the time period for filing a petition until the request is acted upon.

Mediation: Mediation is not available in this proceeding. 01/18

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT, THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR SUWANNEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
CASE NO. 2022-CP-190

IN RE: The Estate of RACHEL M. DAVIS, Deceased.

NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATION

The administration of the estate of RACHEL M. DAVIS, Deceased, File Number 2022-CP-190, Social Security Number xxx xx 2224 is pending in the Circuit Court for Suwannee County, Florida, Probate Division, the address of which is 200 S. Ohio Avenue, Live Oak, Florida 32064. The names and addresses of the personal representative and the personal representative's attorney are set forth below.

ALL INTERESTED PERSONS ARE NOTIFIED THAT:

All persons on whom this notice is served who have objections that challenge the validity of the will, the qualifications of the personal representative, venue, or jurisdiction of this Court are required to file their objections with this Court WITHIN THE LATER OF THREE MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE OR THIRTY DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF SERVICE OF A COPY OF THIS NOTICE UPON THEM.

All creditors of the decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate on whom a copy of this notice is served within three months after the date of the first publication of this notice must file their claims with this Court WITHIN THE LATER OF THREE MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE OR THIRTY DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF SERVICE OF A COPY OF THIS NOTICE ON THEM.

All other creditors of the decedent and persons having claims or demands against the decedent's estate must file their claims with this court WITHIN THREE MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE.

ALL CLAIMS, DEMANDS AND OBJECTIONS NOT SO FILED WILL BE FOREVER BARRED.

The date of the first publication of this Notice is **January 18, 2023.**

Attorney for Personal Representative Personal Representatives
HAL A. AIRTH MELANIE CZAJKOWSKI
P.O. Box 448 P.O. Box 543
Live Oak FL 32064 Valdosta, GA 31603
(386) 362-4915 (229) 444 - 0326
FL Bar #306533

01/18, 01/25

PUBLIC NOTICES CONTINUED

"NOTICE"

**LIVE OAK COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
REQUEST FOR BOARD SEAT APPLICATIONS**

The City of Live Oak, Florida, on behalf of the Live Oak Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), is currently accepting applications for Commissioner Seat Number 7 of the Agency. Any person may be considered for appointment as a commissioner of the Agency if he or she resides or is engaged in business (which means owning a business, practicing a profession, or performing a service for compensation, or serving as an officer or director of a corporation or other business entity so engaged), within the area of operation of the agency (the adopted CRA District), and is otherwise eligible for such appointment under 163.356(3)(b), Florida Statutes. This is a volunteer position which will serve a four (4) year term of office. Persons interested in volunteering for appointment consideration should contact the City of Live Oak at 101 White Avenue SE or by calling 386-362-2276 to obtain an application for such. Applications will be accepted through Friday, February 10, 2023, @ 5:00 P.M., for qualified applicants to be considered by the City Council at the March 14, 2023, regular meeting, at 5:30 P.M., or shortly thereafter.

CITY OF LIVE OAK COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY,
Lynda Brown Owens, CRA Board Chair
01/18, 01/25, 02/01



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