

Riverbend News

Serving Suwannee, Lafayette and Hamilton Counties

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Live Oak man deceased after New Year's accident

By Danny Federico
Riverbend News

A Live Oak man was pronounced dead in the early morning hours on New Year's Day, Friday, Jan. 1, after a vehicle versus pedestrian accident near the Columbia/Suwannee County line.

The pedestrian, 25-year-old Dillon Snelgrove, was in the middle of US-90, west of Lake City, when he was struck by an SUV at approximately 2:44 a.m. The vehicle was driven by a 34-year-old man, also of Live Oak. Florida Highway Patrol states the investigation is still ongoing.

Snelgrove is survived by his wife, Shannen Snelgrove and his young son and daughter.



Dillon Snelgrove

COVID-19 vaccines have arrived for Hamilton, Lafayette and Suwannee Counties

By Susan K. Lamb
Riverbend News

In less than one year since COVID-19 raised its ugly head around Christmas 2019 and started killing and making sick millions of Americans, two new COVID-19 vaccines have been miraculously developed in less than a year and released to vaccinate the public against this deadly virus. Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are now available across the nation with Moderna having arrived last week at local Florida Department of Health (DOH) offices in Hamilton, Lafayette and Suwannee Counties.

The vaccines were right on time as

COVID-19 cases in all three counties jumped to dangerous highs in December. All three health departments began administering the vaccine immediately upon receiving it last week.



Photo courtesy of Lafayette Nursing & Rehabilitation Center
James Hingson received the COVID-19 vaccination just before the new year.

Based upon Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis' Executive Order, individuals who receive it first are persons 65 years of age or older and healthcare personnel with patient contact, according to Suwannee and Lafayette County Department of Health (DOH) Administrator Kerry Waldron.

Waldron said Suwannee received 500 vials, Lafayette received 400, and he expects those to run out very quickly this week, but more vials are expected to be delivered locally.

See "Vaccines" on page 3

Live Oak man arrested for imprisonment and strangulation

By Danny Federico
Riverbend News

A Live Oak man was arrested on Tuesday, Dec. 29, after deputies received a call of suspected domestic violence.

In a report filed by Suwannee County Deputy Hunter Cason with the Sheriff's Office, 30-year-old William Harvey Pool and an unnamed female victim got into an altercation on Monday, Dec. 28. During the altercation, Pool struck the victim in the left eye with a closed fist before pushing her to the ground, where he then began to choke her with his forearm, causing her to become unconscious for an unknown period of time. During the altercation, Pool took the victim's cell phone, vehicle keys and credit cards so she couldn't leave their shared residence or call for help.

Pool did not let the victim leave the residence during the night of Monday, Dec. 28, going into Tuesday, Dec. 29. The victim stated that she feared for her life during this time. In an effort to escape, she cut a hole in a screen of one of the residence's windows, but Pool stayed up all night to make sure she couldn't leave.

On Tuesday, Dec. 29, Pool sliced the tires on the victim's vehicle so she couldn't leave. However, the victim was able to get her cell phone back and call 911. After witnessing her using her phone, Pool chased the victim down with a knife and took her phone away once more. Again, Pool began to choke the victim, blocking her airway so she couldn't breathe, but she didn't lose consciousness. He then held the knife to her



William Harvey Pool

See "Arrested" on page 3

Flournoy recognized for excellence in leadership



Photo courtesy of Jim Flournoy
Flournoy was presented the 2019 FDLE Excellence in Leadership Award on Monday, Dec. 14. Pictured, from left to right, are: FDLE Commissioner Rick Swearingen, RAC Jim Flournoy and Assistant Commissioner Michelle Pyle.

By Ramsey Sullivan
Riverbend News

Madison resident James (Jim) Flournoy's career in law enforcement has been nothing short of amazing. Now, he has been awarded for all of

his accomplishments as a leader at the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE).

As a Resident Agent in Charge (RAC), Flournoy is responsible for eight Special Agents, an Analyst and a Staff Assistant, while covering six counties within the

See "Flournoy" on page 3

Woodshop fire lights up the New Year

By Ramsey Sullivan
Riverbend News

Around 4:25 a.m. on Friday, Jan. 1, the Jennings Volunteer Fire Department responded to a call to assist the Crossroads Volunteer Fire Department with a structure fire near State Road 6 and County Road 143 on the Hamilton and Madison County line.

The fire was contained to a woodshop in the back corner of the owner's property. After nearly three hours, the responding fire departments were able to extinguish the fire. The cause of the fire was accidental, and the woodshop was a total loss. Jasper and Geona Fire Departments assisted as well.



Photo courtesy of Jennings Volunteer Fire Department
The fire departments kept the fire contained to the woodshop, and it was declared a total loss.



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Stimulus checks are on the way

By Lazaro Aleman
Riverbend News

Millions of Americans can expect to receive a \$600 stimulus at anytime, and some may have already received them, according to U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin.

Mnuchin is reported to have tweeted on Tuesday evening, Dec. 29, that stimulus checks from the latest COVID relief bills were officially on their way to bank accounts that evening.

The checks, Mnuchin said, could arrive as early as that Tuesday night for those who had direct deposits set up with the IRS and had provided the federal agency with the necessary bank account information when filing their 2019 tax returns.

The direct deposits, Mnuchin tweeted, would begin on Tuesday evening and continue through next week, barring the holidays.

"The paper checks will begin to be mailed tomorrow," Mnuchin tweeted, meaning Wednesday, Dec.

30. "Later this week, you can check the status of your payment at [IRS.gov/GetMyPayment](https://www.irs.gov/GetMyPayment)."

Those eligible for the checks are qualified adults and their dependents, each of whom will receive \$600. This means that a family of four could receive up \$2,400. To qualify for the money, an individual's annual income cannot have exceeded \$75,000 in 2019; for couples filing jointly, that amount is \$150,000 annually.

Meanwhile, Congress, or more specifically the Senate, remained locked in battle over whether to increase the checks to \$2,000 per individual and \$4,000 for couples, as the president wanted and as the House of Representatives had already voted.

If the larger amount were to be approved, it would mean additional financial help to the millions of Americans facing possible eviction and in dire financial straits due to the loss of income because of job losses during the pandemic.

However, as of Monday afternoon, Jan. 4, *Riverbend News* press deadline, the Republican-dominated Senate had yet to vote on the increase, despite mounting pressure from the president, allied Republicans and Democrats. It was generally expected, however, that the chamber would vote on the issue before the end of the week.

Lawmakers' frenetic end-of-year activity on an economic relief package came after nine months of inactivity on the issue, following the first round of stimulus checks that Congress approved back in March, when the pandemic started.

After months of negotiation, Congress on Monday, Dec. 21, finally approved a 5,593-page bipartisan bill that, among other things, contained a \$900 billion economic relief package assuring direct payments of \$600 to adults and children.

President Trump, however, immediately threatened to veto the bill, saying that the \$600 payments

was a measly amount and calling for it to be increased to \$2,000 for individuals and \$4,000 for couples.

Then, without explanation, Trump signed the bill into law on Sunday night, Dec. 27, releasing the \$900 billion in emergency relief funding to help financially struggling individuals and businesses and averting by just one day a general government shutdown.

Even after signing the bill, however, the president continued to call for an increase of the stimulus checks.

The Democrat-controlled House took this call up and on Monday night, Dec. 28, approved a bill to increase the stimulus checks to \$2,000 and \$4,000. The measure then went to the Senate, where it was still being debated as of press time.

First minimum wage increase occurred Jan. 1

By Ramsey Sullivan
Riverbend News

In the November 2020 general election, the state of Florida passed a new minimum wage law. This law calls for a gradual increase of minimum wage from the current rate of \$8.56 per hour to \$15 per hour. As of Friday, Jan. 1, 2021, the minimum wage rate increase in Florida has officially begun by increasing nine cents, to \$8.65 per hour.

The gradual increase will continue until minimum wage is equal to \$15 per hour. On Sept. 30, 2021, the next increase will occur, moving minimum wage to \$10 per hour. Employers need to be aware of the annual increase, triggered by Florida Statute 448.110, which will increase the minimum wage separate from Amendment 2.

Employers of tipped employees may count tips received as wages under the Florida minimum wage. The employer must pay the tipped employees a direct wage. The direct wage is calculated as equal to the minimum wage increase, \$8.65, minus the tip credit for Florida of \$3.02, or a direct hourly wage of \$5.63 as of Jan. 1, 2021.

Both Florida's minimum wage rate and the direct hourly rate for tipped employees are higher than the federal rates, so Florida employees must be paid the higher rates. The minimum wage rate will increase \$1 every year on Sept. 30 until the minimum wage rate in Florida reaches \$15 on Sept. 30, 2026.

New laws that took effect on New Year's Day

By Lazaro Aleman
Riverbend News

Friday, Jan. 1, marked not only the beginning of a New Year, but also the start of a slew of new laws that will affect Floridians to one degree or another going forward.

The new laws – which range from revising the state's specialty license plate program, to enhancing Veteran protections, to increasing the minimum wage, to ending greyhound racing – are parts of the 201 bills that Gov. Ron DeSantis has signed into law of the 206 bills that the Florida Legislature passed in the 2020 legislative session.

Most of the new laws went into effect on July 1, when the state began its fiscal year, but those going into effect now are the ones that the governor signed in mid September.

Among the more significant of the new batch of laws that took effect on Jan. 1 are:

- Employers will be required to check the immigration status of new hires through the federal E-Verify or by collecting I-9 forms to ensure the latter's legal status. The intent, according to state officials, is to ensure the hiring of legal citizens, especially given the current economic downturn.
- Illegally passing a stopped school bus will become a more expensive proposition now that the state has doubled the fines. The minimum penalty for failing to stop when a school bus is loading or unloading children is going from \$100 to \$200, and it's going from \$200 to \$400 if the motorist passes on the side of the bus where the children are entering and exiting.
- In keeping with a constitutional amendment that voters approved in 2018, the New Year will see the banning of greyhound racing in Florida, an industry that is said to go back a century. The very last greyhound races in Florida were scheduled for Dec. 31 at the Palm Beach Kennel Club in South Florida.
- Florida's minimum wage rose nine cents at the start of 2021, going from the current \$8.56 to \$8.65 hourly for most employees and \$5.63 hourly for tipped workers. The small increase, a precursor to the larger one that will come later in the year, stems from a 2004 constitutional amendment that tied increases to cost-of-living changes.

On Sept. 30, 2021, however, the overall minimum wage will increase to \$10 hourly; and ultimately it will go to \$15 hourly in 2026, thanks to a

constitutional initiative that Floridians approved this last November.

- County canvassing boards and supervisors of elections will be allowed to use automated tabulating equipment that is not part of the voting system to conduct machine and manual recounts.

The new law also requires that voting equipment be tested for accuracy at least 25 days prior to the start of early voting, as opposed to the equipment being tested after the canvassing of vote-by-mail ballots has begun.

- Two bills separately expand a section of a state law that is designed to prevent people from misrepresenting their military service and enhance the penalty for swindling or attempting to swindle military Veterans, respectively.

The first law makes it a third-degree felony to use military service representations to obtain a job or a political office. The second law makes it a first-degree felony to swindle or attempt to swindle \$50,000 or more from 10 or more military Veterans.

- Three new laws relate to law enforcement or the justice system. One prohibits courts from granting bail to adult defendants who are appealing convictions in cases that involve minor victims and that require registering as a sexual offense or sexual predator. Another allows law-enforcement officers to make warrantless arrests for indecent exposure. And the third adds medical marijuana, hemp and industrial hemp to the list of prohibited contraband's at state and local detention facilities.

Another of the new laws provides for penalties for public officials and employees who abuse their positions. The law carries out, in part at least, a 2018-approved ballot initiative that aimed to slow the revolving door between public officials and the private sector. The law basically prohibits public officials and employees from using their offices to benefit themselves, their families or employers.

- Concerning specialty license plates, one of the new laws expands the potential number of designs for the plates from the current 123 to 150 and also requires a minimum of 1,000 sales before a new specialty plate can move forward or an existing plate can remain in circulation.

And lastly, one new law increases the penalties for people who remove fins from sharks and discard the rest of the animal. It also bans the import, export and sale of shark fins, except for individuals who previously held a federal shark fishing permit and seafood dealers with a federal shark dealer permit.

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Vaccines

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Each vial will serve 10 people. A second dose will be administered in about a month to each person receiving the initial vaccine.

If you fit the category currently being served please call the Suwannee County Department of Health at (386) 362-2704, the Lafayette County Department of Health at (386) 294-1321 or the Hamilton County Department of Health at (386) 792-1414 or you can also go to Hamilton.floridahealth.gov to sign up. If the line is busy, and it may well be, please try again until you reach someone and make an appointment to get the vaccine.

Hamilton and Columbia County Department of Health (DOH) Administrator Thomas Moffeses' office is providing the same vaccines, but you must call the Hamilton office at (386) 792-1414 to make an appointment.

All three offices are open from 8 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Waldron suggests anyone in Suwannee or Lafayette

Counties who would like to get the vaccine and who fits the category currently eligible for it must call the office closest to them and make an appointment and please keep that appointment. "Coordination is very important as once we open a vial, it's good for only six hours so we have to be sure we coordinate everything in advance," Waldon said. "With the phone calls we've been receiving, the vials we received will go really quickly and the state should be pushing another shipment to us."

Waldron said CVS and Walgreens have contracted with the government to go into nursing homes and long-term care facilities to vaccinate and is doing so locally. Rising Oaks Assistant Manager Brandy Corbin said Monday no one is being forced to take the vaccine but those who want it will begin getting theirs through CVS in a week or so. Advent Christian Village began vaccinations Monday and while attempts to contact other assisted living facilities failed, it can be assumed that all are in the process of receiving the vaccine.

Arrested

Cont. from page 1

throat and stated that he would cut her throat if she didn't tell the arriving deputies that she was crazy and didn't mean to call.

At approximately 11:45 a.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 29, Pool was arrested at the shared residence off of 145th Road, in Live

Oak, and booked into the Suwannee County Jail. He was charged with two counts felony battery or domestic battery by strangulation, property damage, felony aggravated assault with a deadly weapon, felony obstructing justice by tampering with a witness attempting to report a crime, simple battery and felony kidnapping-false imprisonment of an adult.

Flournoy

Cont. from page 1

Third Judicial Circuit. He determines what criminal cases FDLE investigates, which can be anything from homicides, officer

involved shootings, robberies, major drug trafficking organizations, crimes against children, public integrity, cyber-crimes, fugitives and fraud, as well as, conducting protective operations for the governor and other dignitaries. He and his squad handle search warrants and arrests for their criminal cases.

Flournoy has led the Live Oak Field Office (LOFO) to be one of the most productive squads in the State of Florida. The Live Oak Field Office is a part of the Tallahassee Regional Operations Center (TROC), within the Investigations and Forensic Services (IFS) Program. His knowledge, leadership abilities, tactical proficiency and ability to address interpersonal issues are only a few of the reasons behind the success of LOFO. These are the same qualities which landed him the 2019 FDLE Excellence in Leadership Award. The award, sponsored by Attorney General Ashley Moody of the State of Florida, was presented by FDLE Commissioner Rick Swearingen and FDLE Assistant Commissioner Michelle Pyle on Monday, Dec. 14. Additionally, Gov. Ron DeSantis and the Florida Cabinet presented a Resolution to him at the Florida Capitol on Tuesday, Dec. 15, where Flournoy gave special remarks.



Photo courtesy of Jim Flournoy
Jim Flournoy is grateful that his family has been so supportive of his career. Pictured, from left to right, are: John Flournoy, Jim Flournoy, Lisa Flournoy and Jim Flournoy, III.

In addition to his main duties as RAC, Flournoy has served as a member of the North Special Operations Team (SOT) for over 18 years and is still currently a member of North SOT. In addition to being one of the North SOT lead operators on entries, Flournoy has served as a sniper for over 12 years and has traveled out of country while protecting Florida's Governor. Flournoy has been a high liability instructor for approximately 14 years and during that time has taught newly hired Special

Agents in FDLE Agent's Academy in areas such as surveillance, firearms, tactical entries, officer survival and administrative duties within the FDLE case tracking system.

"I was shocked and humbled to receive this award," said Flournoy. "I have a lot of great, hardworking agents and staff that make my job much easier. They were the ones who nominated me for this award."

This award hasn't come without hard work for Flournoy, work that began in 1991. While he was a student at Florida State University (FSU), Flournoy was given the opportunity to intern with FDLE. As soon as he accepted his internship,

Flournoy knew this was the field for him, and he's never looked back. "I fell in love with the job special agents do," said Flournoy. "I knew this would be a job that I could wake up and enjoy going to every day."

To accomplish his dreams, Flournoy knew he would have to put in a lot of work in his senior year at FSU; and that's exactly what he did. During his senior year, Monday through Friday he attended class at FSU during the day, then attended the police academy at night, from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., as well as 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays in attempt to

get ahead of other criminology students. In February of 1992, Flournoy graduated from NFCC Police Academy and three months later in May, graduated from FSU with a B.S. in Criminology.

For the last 25 years, Flournoy has been fulfilling his dream of making a difference in his community and state, investigating cases, arresting criminals and helping victims. Flournoy worked as a Special Agent for 15 years and was promoted to his current position in 2010.

Flournoy is married to Lisa Flournoy, and the couple have two children, Jim and John Flournoy, both of whom are currently studying at FSU. "I'm very grateful my family has been extremely supportive of my career," said Flournoy.

Binderholz purchases North Carolina sawmill for \$83.4 million

By Susan K. Lamb
Riverbend News

Suwannee County's new owners of a large local sawmill have now purchased a second sawmill, this time in Enfield, N.C., according to a press release by Binderholz.

The Austrian Binderholz Group purchased all assets of the company, headquartered in Enfield, on Sunday, Dec. 10 at a virtual auction for \$83.4 million. With the recent acquisition, Binderholz says it's now the largest European sawn timber producer. With its nine sawmills in Austria, Germany, Finland and the USA, Binderholz says it has a capacity of approximately 8.5 million solid cubic meters of round wood.

Binderholz purchased the Live Oak facility in August for \$61 million. That facility is already working rapidly to reorganize this local sawmill, repair and upgrade machinery and make needed changes to get ready to restart the sawmill. Both facilities specialize in southern yellow pine (SYP) and are similar in performances. Each facility can put out around 350 million board feet of SYP annually, Binderholz stated. Suwannee County Economic Development Director Jimmy

Norris and Suwannee County Commissioner Don Hale visited the Live Oak facility recently and reported to the county commission on Dec. 1, with glowing reports of the progress at the facility in Live Oak. Norris said the Binderholz staff invited he and Hale out to view the progress, and both were astonished at the accomplishments. Norris said there were about 25 employees working at that time to get the facility ready to open. Norris said the Binderholz Group had invested about one million in upgrades. Hale said when all repairs have been completed, that amount will rise to about \$35 million.

"We were told by one individual they are not about quantity, it's about quality," Norris said at the time.

The North Carolina property's sale and purchase came after the former owners, Klausner Lumber Two LLC, filed bankruptcy, Binderholz' release said. "The acquisition of Klausner Lumber Two in Enfield, N.C., is the logical complement to the plant in Live Oak, Fla., which we acquired in August," said Binderholz CEO Reinhard Binder. "This step will significantly improve availability for our customers. With this acquisition accomplished, the foundation has been laid for further investments in the depth of value creation."

Emerald's Gem Box: 2021 – Hit Refresh – New Year – New You!



Emerald Greene Parsons
Publisher

2021 is here!

It is time to press refresh – it is time to become the newest, most updated version of who you are!

If you don't have a dream this is the time to establish a dream.

Rule #1 – you need a dream – you need a goal.

Tell yourself, "2021 will not be my settling year – it will be my conquering year!"

Don't let this year be the year you settle for an average marriage average career, or average worship life. No! This is the year you decide you want NEW. You want FRESH. You want the REAL STUFF!

This is YOUR time!

New Year – New You!

Don't let the habits of your past stop the metamorphosis of the new you!

It's time to be tired of always doing what you are used to doing! If you always do what you've always done then you'll always be where you've always been!

It's time to get a new attitude and a new mind, because the real battlefield is in your mind! That's where the real fight is! It is not what other people say about you that matters it is what YOU say about YOU that matters! You will never be defeated by what "they" say about you! You will be defeated by what YOU say about YOU!

You can have a new year, but it means nothing if you don't have a new mindset! You can buy a new car, but if you put the old man in the new car you will still have the old experience. A new house doesn't make a new marriage; a new outfit doesn't make you a new person. But, a new mind WILL make a new life!

Bring the past only if you are going to build from it. ~Doménico Cieri Estrada

What you need to know about the past is that no matter what has happened, it has all worked together to bring you to this very moment. And this is the moment you can choose to make everything new. Right now. ~Author Unknown.

Deliberately examine the landscape of your inner-circle. Who in your life is not feeding you possibilities? Who are you letting infiltrate you on a daily basis? What are you watching? What

are you listening to? Who has access to you? And if they are not people who expand your awareness of what is possible – then you need to eliminate them!

In life, you don't get what you want; you get what you physically go after and get for yourself! What is your dream? What do you want? Are you willing to go after it? If so, then you will have to spend EVERY. SINGLE. DAY going after that dream!

This new year is your new chance. It is all up to you! You now have 365 new days and 365 new chances.

Instead of making a "New Year's Resolution" make a "Lifestyle resolution."

If you want to live a happy life, tie it to a goal, not to people or things. – Albert Einstein

I hope all of you, our faithful readers, will be richly blessed in the upcoming new year. May you all find peace, love and happiness in all that you do.

Furthermore, always remember to cherish your loved ones, for one day/year they might not be here to show your love to!

AROUND THE BANKS



Johnny Bullard
Guest Columnist

You've got to accentuate the positive Eliminate the negative Latch on to the affirmative Don't mess with mister in-between You've got to spread joy up to the maximum Bring gloom down to the minimum Have faith or pandemonium Liable to walk upon the scene

The lyrics of an old song still ring true. One can easily find fault with something that another is doing, but the question we must ask ourselves and try and be honest, "What are we doing to make our families, our communities, our churches, our organizations and more positive?" Do we think about solutions to problems or potential problems, or do we simply complain?

I had a beloved principal for whom I worked once, and he told me, "You can bring any issue you want to bring to me about concerns regarding the operation of the school, but when you bring it, I want you to have thought of one viable solution to the problem you can share." It made me think, and I never brought many at all, but, when I did, I had a possible solution.

Now, here is something else, and I may be wrong. If one who is in leadership surrounds him or herself simply with "yes" people who agree with them on everything, does any real progress occur? I have found often times, progress comes when someone is brave enough to say "I don't agree with such and such, and not to be contentious, but, because I have given it some thought." If a person in leadership is more interested in the organization or business in which they are in charge than their own ego, they will take into consideration opinions other than their own.

You may not care for someone personally, but if they do their job, and do their job well, you don't have to invite them to your house for

dinner or like them personally, but you do need to consider their opinions and input, especially if it makes the organization more positive and productive. If you can't do that, check your ego, it may be a tad too "big for your britches." Enough of that.

I wish to commend Adams Country Store and Ann and Don Wilson for doing all they can to make Suwannee Hardware in the old Adams Brothers Mercantile more positive and create a place for local vendors to sell their goods.

Adams Brothers began as a general store. They sold everything from 10 penny nails to coffins. Established in 1865 by the late Captain Robert Watkins Adams, the original store was located near where the Riverside Filling Station, later the White Springs Public Library, is located. In 1893, the present store was constructed. The town owes a huge amount of gratitude to Raymond "Raymee" Cheshire, Wellborn, for purchasing the store from the Saunders family and for a lot of work he did to stabilize the building. White Springs and its people extends its sincere gratitude to our own Mrs. Tracy Woodard, longtime librarian and library branch manager for 24 years at the White Springs Public Library. Tracy will be missed. She is a dear friend and is without a doubt one of the most able and brilliant individuals ever. Her dedication to literacy, the community and all aspects of the community is more than commendable. We love you Mrs. Tracy, and we will miss you. Her last day as White Springs Library Manager was Dec. 31, 2020. Tracy, along with her husband, Clayton E. "Woody" Woodard, live here, raised their children here, and all the children were students at South Hamilton Elementary School when I served as principal. They were very involved in the education of their children.

In Branford, I must express how great I feel each time I drive down to Branford and dine in

one of the town's great eateries. It is such a pretty town located right on the banks of the historic Suwannee River, there is an atmosphere there so warm and welcoming.

Mayo, located in Lafayette County, how many ways can one say "top notch" for all the wonderful and justifiable recognition received by this district for the quality of their school system. I must also express that to me, the beauty of the Hal Adams Bridge going into Mayo remains an outstanding iconographic symbol of our area like the historic Suwannee County Courthouse or the Stephen Foster Carillon Tower in White Springs, Fla.

Thanks to those who worked in Suwannee County's McDonald's outside of White Springs with Dr. Helen Miller's not for profit HOPE program, the Santa Claus event on Saturday, Dec. 18, was wonderful. Thank you to these dedicated board members for their help: Nicole Williams, Anita Rivers, Margaret Henry and Dr. Helen Miller. The Santa Claus event followed a stellar and successful White Springs Christmas Parade. Thank you again to Ward Daniels and family of Jasper for allowing me as school board member from district 4 to ride on your beautiful float. I do appreciate it. I truly had a good time throwing out chocolate candy to all the holiday revelers, magical evening, magnificent.

We have so much in our area for which we can always be positive and proud. Let's keep that attitude in 2021. Despite the pandemic and all that it implies, let's keep alive the lyrics of an old African American spiritual:

*This joy I have within
The world didn't give to me
The world didn't give it
The world can't take it away.*

From the Eight Mile Still on the Woodpecker Route north of White Springs, wishing you a day filled with joy, peace and above all, lots of love and laughter.

Christian Concepts: What is on your 2021 reading list?



GARY B. KING
Guest Columnist

Yesterday, I completed my fifty-fifth reading of the Scriptures. Today I began reading through them again. Some may wonder why I discipline myself to read through the Bible each year. Here are a few of my reasons.

One cannot read about the life of Christ without realizing the Scriptures were important to Him, and if they were important to the Son of God they should be important to me as His follower. I do not rely on someone to spoon feed me from the pulpit telling me what to believe; I prefer to know for myself what I believe about the spiritual issues, and think through why I believe them.

Although written by approximately forty human authors over a period of around 1600 years the Bible has a wonderful unity and needs to be read and understood from this perspective. Reading it over again reminds me of this truth,

spares me from being isolated on favorite passages, and prevents my memory of what they say from being supplanted by my imagination of what I think they say.

Constantly pouring over the Scriptures, I see things I missed before but have become clearer as I (hopefully) mature in Christ. Reading the Word of God is one of the disciplines that aids in that maturation. The Book of books enjoins us to renew our minds so that we begin to see life from God's perspective.

Focusing on His perspective helps prevent us from being blinded by the confusion of current events that can overwhelm the thinking of the best of us. We see events through the lens of time, God sees the same events through the lens of eternity, and we are in constant need of His eternal perspective so that we do not lose our way in time.

I have said the first four words of the first chapter of Rick Warren's bestselling book, "The Purpose Driven Life," are the most important in

the whole book, "It's not about you." If you believe as I do that God created us, then He created us to fulfill His plan and purpose, not ours. The Father has revealed His will to us in His Word.

If you are searching for the true meaning of life this is the only Book that has it. The ancients worshipped objects as gods, often idols, the sculpted creations of men. Why not gaze on the written Word that reveals to us in grand detail the One who created and sculpted us?

I have a very simple reading plan; I begin with Genesis 1:1 and read about five chapters a day, Monday through Friday. I keep a journal and post my thoughts on some portion of what I have read on my Facebook page "Christian Concepts" Monday through Friday.

If you have never read through the Bible here's your chance, consider adding the Bible to your 2021 reading list. "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever," Isaiah 40:8.

Obituaries

IN LOVING MEMORY



Carol Lynn Smith Skeen

Carol Lynn Smith Skeen, 65, passed away Wednesday, Dec. 30, 2020 at the Suwannee Valley Care Center (Haven Hospice) in Lake City, Fla., following an extended illness. She was the daughter of the late Edward 'Chief' Smith and Hazel 'Kitty' Smith and was preceded in

death by her brother, Tommy Smith. Skeen enjoyed shopping, decorating, singing and going to church. She was a member of Melody Christian Church; she also attended Christ Central Ministries and was a lifelong resident of Suwannee County.

Carol is survived by her husband of 39 years, Randall Skeen; one daughter, Katie

Croft (Taft), of St. Augustine, Fla., one son, Jason Shaw (Lindsay), of St. Augustine, Fla., a sister, Sandra Leach (Darrell), of Lake City, Fla., and five grandchildren.

A memorial service for Carol Lynn Smith Skeen will be conducted at a later date. Please sign the guestbook at www.danielsfuneralhome.com.

Georgene Winona Taylor

Georgene Winona Taylor, age 74, passed away on Saturday, Dec. 26, 2020 at her home in Live Oak near Dowling Park.

A memorial service will be held at 3 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 9, 2021 in the chapel of T. J. Beggs, Jr. & Sons, in Madison, Fla.

She was born in Huntington, N.Y. and had lived in Pembroke Lakes, Fla., before moving to Live Oak in 2015. She was an account manager for R. T. Williamson Petroleum Co. She was a member of the Live Oak Women's Club and First Baptist Church in Dowling Park. She loved country music and often attended concerts at the Spirit of the Suwannee. She also loved taking photos, animals and old cars.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the First Baptist Church of Dowling Park.

She is survived by her son, Charles Taylor (Eva) of Dowling Park, Fla. and grandson, Joshua Richardson of Dowling Park, Fla.

T. J. Beggs, Jr. & Sons, Madison, Fla. (850) 973-2258.

You may send condolences to www.beggsfuneral.com.

Madison to Live Oak marathon: Jacksonville attorney runs for charity



Photo courtesy by Nancy Kinnally

Jacksonville Area Legal Aid CEO Jim Kowalski and Jacksonville attorney Mike Freed from the Gunster Law Firm set out from the Madison County Courthouse on their way to the Suwannee County Courthouse in Live Oak as part of a six-marathon series Freed to Run, JALA's largest fundraiser.

By Rick Patrick
Riverbend News

For the last four years, Jacksonville attorney Mike Freed, from the Gunster Law Firm, has held his "Freed to Run" marathon series to raise money for Jacksonville Area Legal Aid (JALA). This year, Freed helped JALA raise more than \$400,000 for its Northeast Florida Medical Legal Partnership.

Freed's "Freed to Run" consists of a series of six marathons and has raised \$1.44 million over the past four years toward a planned \$2.25 million endowment that will fund a partnership between JALA and area

health-care institutions in perpetuity. The program helps provide "civil legal aid to pediatric patients whose struggles with critical and chronic illness are further exacerbated by poverty and the legal issues that can accompany it." Through the partnership, JALA attorneys help hundreds of young patients each year access health benefits, special education accommodations, adequate housing and other needs.

This year, one of Freed's marathons took him from Monticello to Madison, before continuing on from Madison to Live Oak, on his way to Jacksonville.

Community Calendar

If you would like to have anything added to the community calendar, please email Starr Munro at reporter2@riverbendnews.org or give us a call at (386) 364-4141.

Jan. 6

Sturges at Ellie Ray's is hosting a new annual event beginning on Wednesday, Jan. 6, beginning at 7 p.m. Every first Wednesday of the year will now be dedicated to a night of comedy. The entertainment of the night will feature comedians Dean Napolitano and Joe Censabella. There's no cover charge for the event, and instead has a requirement of two items off of the menu being ordered during the show. Ellie Ray's is located on the Santa Fe River at 3349 Northwest 11th St., in Branford.

Jan. 7

District Seven State Representative Jason Shoaf is hosting a legislative meeting in Mayo on Thursday, Jan. 7 at 5 p.m. The meeting is taking place in the County Commissioner meeting room, located on the second floor of the Lafayette County Courthouse, at 120 W Main St., in Mayo. The meeting is held each year, prior to the legislative session and gives local officials, citizens and others the opportunity to make their voices heard by their representative. For more information regarding the meeting, please contact Rep. Shoaf's office at (850) 508-3207.

Jan. 16

Ellianos Coffee is having a "Cars + Coffee" event on Saturday, Jan. 16, from 8 a.m. until 11 a.m. They invite car enthusiasts of all kinds to come out and share their passion over a cup of coffee. All types of cars are welcome to come be displayed, such as world class, multibrand or multiperiod. Ellianos Coffee is located at 1541 Ohio Ave. S, in Live Oak. Please send a message over Facebook if you plan on participating at <https://www.facebook.com/liveoak.fl.cc/> or call at (904) 728-5901.

Jan. 28- Jan. 31

The Graveyard, an ATV recreation park located in Jasper, invites ATV enthusiasts to come out on Thursday, Jan. 28 at 5 p.m. until Sunday, Jan. 31 at 4 p.m. for a three day event of fun in the mud. "Winter Wheelin'" at The Graveyard, will host not only riding, but camping, vendors and more. Night riding is included in this event and a bonfire is scheduled for Saturday night, Jan. 30. You can visit <https://thegraveyardfl.com/> to purchase tickets or call (239) 823-3542 for any questions. The Graveyard is located at 11637 SE 54th Dr., in Jasper.

Jan. 29- Jan. 31

The Suwannee County Coliseum is hosting the Mojo Bluegrass Festival on Friday, Jan. 29 at 4 p.m. until Sunday, Jan. 31 at 11:55 p.m. Ticket prices ranges from \$30 for Friday, \$45 on Saturday and Sunday or \$100 for the full weekend. Tickets are available at the door. Bring your instruments, RV's and tents to dedicate the weekend to music. The Suwannee County Coliseum is located at 1302 11th St. SW, in Live Oak.

Education spotlight: Pam Moseley

By Danny Federico
Riverbend News



Pam Moseley was born in August of 1977 in Valdosta, Ga. In 1998, she graduated with her AA from North Florida College in Madison, Fla. "I always knew I wanted to get my bachelor's degree," Moseley said. So, she decided to attend the University of West Florida (UWF) while her husband, Ralee Moseley, was stationed with the Air Force. She felt a tug toward the education field and went on to earn her bachelor's in Elementary Education in 2001, before continuing on to earn her master's in Reading in 2009. In 2002, Moseley started her first job at Tyndall Elementary School, located at Tyndall Air Force Base, east of Panama City.

Now residing in Mayo, Fla., Moseley teaches English and Language Arts (ELA) to fourth graders at Lafayette Elementary School (LES), where she has worked since August of 2016. With 22 students in her homeroom class and 21 students in her second class, she says the connections she makes with the kids each day is the most enjoyable part of her job. "My kids will tell you I like to throw glitter," Moseley said. Moseley said she wears an apron with glitter in the pockets during her classes. When a student makes a connection with something they've learned in class to something in the outside world, she takes a pinch of glitter and sprinkles it on their desk. "The most rewarding part is having them apply what I'm teaching to the outside world."

Minus a few months taken off over the years for the births of her children, Moseley has worked in the education system approximately 18 years. In October of 2020, she was named the 2021 Teacher of the Year for her hard work and dedication to the students of Lafayette County.

"It's more than just teaching standards," Moseley said. "Seeing students thrive both in and out of the classroom is what makes teaching the most rewarding job."

SCSO Lieutenant Musgrove presented award for 43 years of service

By Danny Federico
Riverbend News

The Florida Sheriff's Association presented Lieutenant Wayne Musgrove a Lifetime Achievement award for his 43 years of service in law enforcement. Musgrove, a proud resident of Suwannee County, has worked with the Suwannee County Sheriff's Office (SCSO) since November of 1980 and achieved the rank of Lieutenant around 2002.

"It's an honorable attribute for him," Sheriff Sam St. John said. "You don't see many people stay that long." Sheriff St. John adds that he appreciates how dedicated Lieutenant Musgrove is and how he has and will continue to pass his knowledge on to each wave of new deputies.

Lieutenant Musgrove says that winning the

reward reminds him that he's been doing his job for a long time, yet he doesn't plan on retiring any time soon. "I like to get out and do things," he says. "I like trying to do what's right." Lieutenant Musgrove adds that he enjoys being able to help train each new generation that comes through.

"It's an investment in the community," Lieutenant Musgrove says. "Every day you're earning the right to wear the badge." He would also like to thank the people of Suwannee County, as well as Sheriff St. John, for helping him to achieve this award.

Riverbend News would also like to congratulate and thank Lieutenant Musgrove for his 43 years of service.



Photo courtesy of Suwannee County Sheriff's Office
Sheriff Sam St. John (left) presented Lieutenant Wayne Musgrove a Lifetime Achievement award for his 43 years of service in law enforcement.

A holiday tradition: The poinsettia plant

By Carolyn Saft,
Environmental /Horticulture Extension
Agent
Contributor



The poinsettia plant is the most popular flowering plant during the holiday season. Aztec Indians used the poinsettia leaves to dye fabric for clothing and the sap to help control fevers. They considered the red color a symbol of purity, so poinsettias were traditionally a part of their religious ceremonies.

Did you know that National Poinsettia Day was on Dec. 12? The University of Florida's Horticulture Department hosts an annual Poinsettia Field Day. Plant breeders develop new varieties available for commercial production. Although there are many color choices, the nationwide sales trend indicates red plants still account for approximately three-quarters of all sales. The next popular color is white, followed by pink. The poinsettia industry generates about \$250 million annually.

Poinsettias are a tropical evergreen growing to eight feet in South Florida. Their flowers are inconspicuous, but the modified leaves have showy petal-like bracts in shades of red, white, pink, coral, and purple tones, or combinations of these colors. When selecting plants to buy, choose plants with little or no yellow pollen showing on the flower clusters. Plants that have shed their pollen will soon drop their colorful bracts or leaves. The poinsettia is a short-day plant that blooms when days are short and nights are long. If the dark period is interrupted by artificial light from any source after Oct. 1, flowering will be delayed or interrupted.

To prolong the life of your plants, avoid placing them near hot or cold drafts. They are highly sensitive to cold temperatures and even a few minutes of exposure will cause the leaves and bracts to discolor and drop off. Ideal temperatures are 70°-75°F during the day and 60°-65°F during the night. Water them regularly to keep the soil moist but avoid keeping them soggy. The drying out of the roots will cause premature leaf loss. The sticky, milky sap can be irritating to people who are allergic to rubber latex plants. If ingested, the plant can cause stomach irritation and discomfort. Keep out of reach of children, dogs and cats.

As a child, I remember my mom always picked out her poinsettias the weekend after Thanksgiving so she could enjoy them through the Christmas season. She selected two red ones and one new cultivar. Over the years, we had an interesting collection of plants we kept alive from year to year.

Suwannee Valley citizens give to hurricane victims in need

By Starr Munro
Riverbend News

Floridians are no strangers to the devastation that a hurricane can bring. So when John Hill of Live Oak Kiwanis received a call from the Texas/Louisiana division of Kiwanis Club International asking for help, there was only one thing to do. Live Oak Kiwanis' members sounded the rallying cry to their community members to help out. A trailer was loaded up with whatever was needed by the small communities in Louisiana that were hit by this summer's hurricane season. Two hurricanes hit them back to back, extremely hard, and little was being done for them due to a lack of media coverage. Bare necessities like trash bags, paper towels, batteries, canned foods and bottled water were in dire need. Tarps, buckets, shovels, diapers and baby formula too. Everything that was necessary to help them move forward was desperately needed.

Donors included the Branford High School's Beta Club, Suwannee High School's Key Club, the Law Offices of Ryan Peters, Lake Region Kiwanis, JW Hill and Associates and *Riverbend News*, as well as many other community members. The drive from Live Oak to Griffin, La., is nearly 10 hours long but it was a trip well worth the time spent to John Hill. They arrived at the Kiwanis Club of Griffin in Louisiana where the donations were distributed to those in need.

If you're interested in keeping up with the Kiwanis Club of Live Oak, you can follow their Facebook page "Kiwanis of Live Oak."



Photo courtesy of Kiwanis of Live Oak
Community members not only helped collect donations but drove them to Louisiana too.



Photo courtesy of Kiwanis of Live Oak
John Hill begins loading up the donations bound for Louisiana hurricane victims.

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Jennings holds Santa Run



Photo courtesy of Jennings Volunteer Fire Department New Jennings Fire Chief, Steven Lang, poses with Santa during the first Santa Run.



Photo courtesy of Jennings Volunteer Fire Department Santa and his elves enjoyed spreading Christmas cheer throughout the community on Tuesday, Dec. 22.



Photo courtesy of Jennings Volunteer Fire Department The children in Jennings were happy for a chance to meet Santa and even wanted to give him a hug.



Photo courtesy of Jennings Volunteer Fire Department Fire Chief Steven Lang poses with a few of the kids who were given treats.

By Ramsey Sullivan
Riverbend News

On Tuesday, Dec. 22, the kids in the town of Jennings had a fun surprise when they saw Santa running around and giving out candy.

A spur of the moment decision by the community led to the Santa Run, which then led to a community gathering. After Santa had visited the children around town and handed out candy, those in the community were invited back to town hall for hot dogs, juice, candy and toys.

The idea of the Santa Run was brought up at a Christmas celebration lunch for the town. "We were talking about what the other towns were doing for Christmas and we wanted to do something, too," stated Jennings Fire Chief, Steven Lang. "We want the best for the town and we thought it'd be fun for the kids. We still have some kinks to work out but we want to continue doing it."

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TREATING GUM DISEASE REDUCES PROSTATE SYMPTOMS

Treating gum disease reduces symptoms of prostate inflammation, called prostatitis, according to a new study.

Previous studies have found a link between gum disease and prostatitis, a disease that inflames the gland that produces semen. Inflammation can make urination difficult.

Gum disease not only affects the mouth, but is a system-wide condition that can cause inflammation in various parts of the body. Dental research has previously found a link between gum disease and fetal deaths, rheumatoid arthritis and heart disease.

Researchers studied 27 men, 21 years old and older. Each had a needle biopsy within the past year that confirmed inflammation of the prostate gland, and a blood test that showed elevated prostate specific antigen (PSA) levels, possible signs of inflammation and cancer.

The men also had to have at least 18 teeth and were examined for signs of gum disease, such as increased levels of inflammation and bleeding and/or loose teeth due to attachment and bone loss.

All the men had moderate to severe gum disease, for which they received treatment. They were tested again for periodontal disease four to eight weeks later and showed significant improvement.

During the periodontal care, the men received no treatment for their prostate conditions. But even without prostate treatment, 21 of the 27 men showed decreased levels of PSA. Those with the highest levels of inflammation benefited the most from the periodontal treatment. Six participants showed no changes.

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Jail report

Hamilton County

- Dec. 28**
- Diovion Quanshey Ash**, bond surrender/revocation
- Jan. 2**
- Nicholas Gerald Spence**, flee/elude officer in patrol vehicle, reckless driving, property damage-criminal mischief 200 dollars and under
- Jan. 3**
- Terrell Malik-Rashaun Jefferson**, firing weapon

Suwannee County

- Dec. 28**
- Felipe de Jesus Hernandez-Almaraz**, D.U.I., no driver license
- Jessica Lashay Skillman**, two counts retail theft, grand theft, warrant service
- Jesse Levi Dixon**, two counts retail theft, grand theft
- Dec. 29**
- Samantha Rene Bozeman**, drug possession
- Dean Max Sakowski**, failure to appear, hold for other reason
- William Harvey Pool**, kidnapping-false imprisonment, aggravated assault with a weapon, felony battery or domestic battery by strangulation, obstructing justice, damage property-criminal mischief, simple battery-domestic violence, hold for other reason
- Devin Waymon Allen**, marijuana-possession, operating while driver's license revoked, cocaine-possession, drug equipment-paraphernalia, two counts violation of probation

- Dec. 31**
- Albert Ali Gibson**, resisting officer/arrest with violence, possession of controlled substance, possession of cannabis under 20 grams, possession of drug paraphernalia, drug possession
- David Keith Massie**, contempt of court
- Jan. 1**
- Brandy Nicole Blackstock**, simple battery-domestic violence
- Danny Ray Smith**, two counts probation violation
- Christian Daniel Carter**, warrant service
- Al Travis Sullivan**, D.U.I.

- Jan. 2**
- Marsha Vizell Boyd**, probation violation
- Kimberly Lynn Flood**, drug possession, drug equipment-paraphernalia

- Jan. 3**
- Deon Merron Griffin**, failure to appear

Lafayette County

- Jakarti Brown**, property damage-criminal mischief, disturbing the peace
- Gary Zayas**, trespassing
- Tyler Sullivan**, trespassing
- Malcolm Cook**, aggravated battery with a deadly weapon

American Patriots to be at the Suwannee County Coliseum

By American Patriots Live Oak Contributor

Patriotic Americans are concerned about what is happening in our country and to our Constitution. We don't think, as individuals, we can do anything about it but vote. Now more than ever that seems quite inadequate. Here in Live Oak, a new grass-roots group has been getting together to discuss what local citizens can do to change things. American Patriots is a group of people who love our country and are concerned about the direction it is going. The goal of this group is to be a positive public presence and to strongly support the U.S. Constitution. We believe our nation is currently being redefined in ways that diminish our republic. Personal freedoms will be lost if citizens do not understand their rights and responsibilities, bend to political correctness or allow elected officials to be unaccountable to those who placed them in office.

The first American Patriots event was held at the Live Oak Train Depot on Friday, Sept. 25 and featured renowned Constitutional Instructor and former Suwannee County resident, KrisAnne Hall. The next two gatherings were held at the Live Oak Garden Club. Florida State University senior, Dillon Harrell and Turning Point USA district representative, Browning Sandusky, told attendees fascinating stories of successes with high school and college students. Their goal is to encourage conservative students to have a voice and to help liberal students understand what conservatives believe. The speakers encouraged us to begin chapters in our local high school and home school program.

On Saturday, Jan. 9, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., at the Suwannee County Coliseum, Hall will again cover Constitutional issues as she always does with riveting interest and humor. This venue will offer plenty of "distancing space" for a large group of folks. People of all races, political backgrounds and faiths can come and join others in the search for truth. We support local law enforcement, the American family and our Constitution. Please plan to join us in this exciting event.



Photo courtesy of Live Oak Police Department
Four LOPD patrol officers were promoted to Sergeant on Thursday, Nov. 19. Pictured, from left to right, are: Nicholas Gutshall, Daylene Homer, Shawn Craig and Michael Nicholson.

Four LOPD officers promoted to Sergeant

By Danny Federico
Riverbend News

Four Live Oak Police Department (LOPD) patrol officers were promoted to Sergeant on Thursday, Nov. 19. The ceremony took place in the Live Oak Police Department training room, located at 205 White Avenue SE, where Police Chief Eugene Davis presented badges to Sergeant Nicholas Gutshall, Sergeant Daylene Homer, Sergeant Shawn Craig and Sergeant Michael Nicholson.

Applicants who met the current training standards and had served for at least one year were allowed to apply for the position of Patrol Sergeant. The applicants that were accepted then began a two month process of additional testing and evaluation to determine if they would be promoted. Upon conclusion of the testing process, those applicants who received the highest level of achievement were selected by the Chief of Police to be promoted into available positions for the rank of Patrol Sergeant.

"The Live Oak Police Department is proud of all four Sergeants and their performance in this promotional process," said Chief Davis. "They have begun a journey of great responsibility and much will be expected from each of them. We expect that these four Sergeants, based upon their individual conduct and commitment thus far, will serve their community well."



Photo courtesy of Live Oak Police Department
Sergeant Nicholas Gutshall (right) accepted his new badges from Police Chief Eugene Davis.



Photo courtesy of Live Oak Police Department
Police Chief Eugene Davis (left) presented Sergeant Michael Nicholson with these new badges on Thursday, Nov. 19.



Photo courtesy of Live Oak Police Department
Sergeant Daylene Homer (right) shook hands with Police Chief Eugene Davis upon receiving her badges.



Photo courtesy of Live Oak Police Department
Police Chief Eugene Davis (left) presented Sergeant Shawn Craig with his new badge.

Santa's helpers join Love INC kids' Christmas party



Photo courtesy of Suwannee County Fire Rescue
Community members and local businesses all worked together to ensure that the 169 children who were invited to the Love INC party were fed, entertained and excited for Christmas.



Photo courtesy of Suwannee County Fire Rescue
A volunteer from Love In the Name of Christ (INC) poses with the big man himself, Santa.

By Susan K. Lamb
Riverbend News

The 2020 Love In the Name of Christ (Love INC) children's party was a big success this year with a few changes. Suwannee County Sheriff's Office, Suwannee County Fire Rescue, Live Oak Police Department, Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park and Campground, Binderholtz Lumber and Big Wood BBQ and Grill teamed up to assist Love INC with this special Christmas dinner and Christmas gifts event where 169 kids and 95 adults were invited. Special thanks from all to Pilgrim's Pride for the chicken and a big thank you to Big Wood for hosting the event and preparing all of the food.

Love INC is grateful for the many local businesses, service clubs and private individuals donating gifts for the children and volunteering to make this special event successful.

There were many individuals in the community who dropped off gifts anonymously and Love INC staff are grateful to all who helped and donated time, effort and gifts for this much needed event. "May God bless you for your kindness," said Love INC's Executive Director Martha Wood.

These families were also presented gifts by The Spirit of Suwannee Music Park and Campground. These gifts were passes to see the Suwannee Lights Christmas extravaganza at The Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park.

Love INC has held a Christmas distribution event for many years for kids, but this 2020 event was a first,



Photo courtesy of Suwannee County Fire Rescue
Chase and Marshall from Paw Patrol joined Santa Claus in making children smile at this year's Love INC children's party.

vastly different from the usual Christmas event due to the many factors associated with COVID-19. Wood said it was a joy and a privilege to be a part of this event. "I believe all participants, both volunteers and recipients, were greatly blessed to have been a part of this. We look forward to what God has in store for 2021 and give Him all the glory for allowing us to share His story with all that He sends across our path," she added. "It is our prayer God will richly bless all those who helped to make this Christmas a blessing to all involved."

Love INC's Debbie McCall said kids were nominated from various organizations within the community that have direct involvement with kids such as schools, daycare and others.

Not knowing what COVID restrictions would be by the time the event happened, they had to plan something that would be easily adapted if it had to be a drive-thru event. That's where Big Wood stepped in and solved the problem regardless of the constraints. Big Wood's owners donated their location, did all the cooking and even provided some of the meal and paper goods to make it easier on cleanup and staff. McCall said Love INC was unable to hold any of its events, which are usually a staple in gathering toys and gifts for the kids this year but thanks to the graciousness of Suwannee Countians, all the needs were met.

Suwannee County Sheriff's Office, Suwannee Fire & Rescue and Love INC board members happily volunteered as servers and elves helping kids choose a toy. Santa Claus wouldn't have missed this event for anything and gladly posed for photos all evening, along with help from the mascots. Toys and gift cards from local businesses like Dairy Queen, Little Caesars, Subway, Waffle House and others were among the gifts donated and given to the excited and grateful kids.

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Meet your neighbors: *Krystin and Daniel Fee*

By Ramsey Sullivan
Riverbend News

Krystin Fee and her husband, Daniel, have already made their mark in Mayo, even though they've only been a part of the community for a few years.

Krystin and Daniel's boutique, .Forty5 Apparel, sells everything from lady's apparel, men's apparel and some youth apparel to gifts, accessories and

shoes. The boutique in Mayo first opened in January 2020, but the pair previously owned a boutique in South Florida.

Not only does Krystin own and run .Forty5 Apparel, she also owns a nail salon, Polished on Main Street, and is the pageant director for the Miss Mayo Pageant. If that isn't enough, the pair also have three children, Rylan, Mason and Nolan, who go to Lighthouse Christian Academy.

"I fell in love with Mayo after I met the crew over at Sandy's Country Curl," said Krystin. "They're absolutely great people."

Daniel Fee currently works at Wes Haney Chevrolet and is the co-owner of the boutique. Daniel says his kids and his job take up most of his time, but he also enjoys golfing.

Although the Fee family spends much of their time in Mayo, they currently reside in Live Oak.

White Springs' Tracy Woodard retires from Suwannee River Regional Library

By Helen Miller
Contributor

After 24 years serving as the librarian of the White Springs Library, Tracy Woodard is retired on Thursday, Dec. 31. Talked into opening a local branch of the Suwannee River Regional Library in 1997, Woodard has many accomplishments to her credit.

Early on, when the library was located at the historic Delegal Building, Woodard used an internet computer from which she provided reference services. At that time, the library had a very small non-fiction section and sparse reference resources. When the library was awarded a Gates Foundation grant, the funds were used to wire Delegal for the internet. This act ushered in a critical addition to the community's infrastructure, and provided the means for patron access – it was indeed, "a new day."

Today, WiFi internet access at the library serves as a major resource, not only for White Springs residents, but also residents of and visitors to the tri-county area around White Springs, and guests at the Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park.

Woodard also worked with Hamilton County officials overseeing construction of the "new" library facility, which was dedicated in 2013. The new building, which features a patron-friendly Front Porch, is unusual for a library. With WiFi access, rocking chairs, and electric outlets, patrons "use the library" even when closed. The library was built with funds donated by PotashCorp, now named Nutrien, Hamilton County's largest private employer, on land set-aside by the Camp family.

"Several of our citizens and even some visitors have attended college on that Front Porch. The county commission hit it out of the park with that design," noted Woodard.

The library includes a meeting room, which currently serves as the White Springs voting precinct site. It is also available for community groups to meet, conduct meetings, and host local authors and out-of-town guest speakers. "We've had some rollicking teen group programs in that room, hosted Santa one year, and provided educational programming for toddlers, school-age kids and adults," stated Woodard.

Prior to her tenure as a librarian,

Woodard worked as a correspondent for the White Springs Leader and the Lake City Reporter, a general assignment reporter for the Jasper News, and as a paraprofessional at South Hamilton Elementary School.

Woodard has also been active at

know that sounds monumentally boring and nerdy to most folks, but I love all things historical and have an insatiable curiosity," stated Woodard.

Tracy's retirement plans include publishing a second edition of her "Documented History of White



Photo courtesy of Mackenzie Platt
Tracy Woodard has retired after serving as the librarian of the White Springs Library for 24 years.

Hurricane Helene while in Scotland and the full force of Hurricane Dorian while in Nova Scotia. Tracy hopes to take an extended trip out west to see the places they missed before and travel to Ireland. She also plans to take a more active role in the family businesses.

"I loved working at the library, where I had the honor of serving children who are now adults and bringing their own children to the library. I worked with some fine people. Mr. Danny Hales, my first director, was an excellent mentor, and Mrs. Betty Lawrence, his successor, has been supportive and enthusiastic about local libraries," concluded Woodard.

Former and current town officials, heads of local and regional organizations, as well as countless library patrons continue to express their appreciation to Tracy Woodard for her dedication to improving access to educational resources and the knowledge, magic and fun of books and digital media made possible through the local library in White Springs.

The library in White Springs is located at 16403 Jewett Street and the phone number is (386) 397-1389.



Photo courtesy of White Springs Library Collection
The Delegal Building had its grand opening on January 27, 1997. Pictured, from left to right, are: Hamilton County Commissioners Lewis Vaughn and Lamar Hill, Pat Hill, Patricia Harrington, David Haygood, Sandra Smith, Library Director Danny Hales, Tracy Woodard, Mary Haygood, Hamilton County Commissioner Randy Ogburn and Virginia B. Chandler.

the municipal level in White Springs, serving on the town council and as a member and officer of numerous local committees and organizations. She presently serves on the planning and zoning board and was project coordinator for the historic district nomination and grant coordinator for the town's historical tour brochure and markers. Woodard also co-founded the annual White Springs Christmas Parade with Joyce McDaniel in 1978. She coordinated the Christmas Parade for 25 years before transiting it to the town's special events committee.

Tracy and her husband Woody moved to White Springs as newlyweds for Woody to work construction at the Occidental Chemical Plant. They will soon have been married for 48 years. They have three children: Cleta (St. Augustine), Melissa (Sebring) and Clay (Gainesville); and three grandchildren: Nick (FSU), MacKenzie (UF) and Clara, who will soon be nine years old.

In retirement, Tracy will continue to enjoy her house plants and outdoor gardening, bird watching and reading. She has signed up to be a Citizen Archivist; in this capacity, she will be transcribing and tagging historical records for the National Archives. "I

Springs" once the pandemic eases. She loves the Pacific Northwest, the Western Desert States, Scotland and Nova Scotia, even though she and Woody were hit with the remnants of



Photo courtesy of Tracy Woodard
The new library was dedicated in 2013.

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Hamilton 4-H Spotlight: *Brian and John Roelandts*

By Ramsey Sullivan
Riverbend News

Getting involved in local clubs can be very beneficial for the growth and development of children. The Hamilton County 4-H Club has many students who enjoy learning, doing science experiments, volunteering in the community and participating in contests.

Brian Roelandts, 12, and John Roelandts, 9, both love being able to take part in the 4-H Club. This is their second year being involved with 4-H, and they have both decided they will continue to be part of it for many years to come. In just two

years, Brian has become the vice president of his local chapter, and enjoys filling this role.

"I get to start the meetings and lead the pledge when the president can't be there," said Brian.

For his brother, John, being part of the 4-H Club is all about seeing his friends and getting out of his comfort zone, which he had to do in the recent 4-H speech contest. He has also found his niche in cooking, which he became involved in because of 4-H.

Both of the boys love competing in competitions, with their most recent being a gingerbread house building competition.

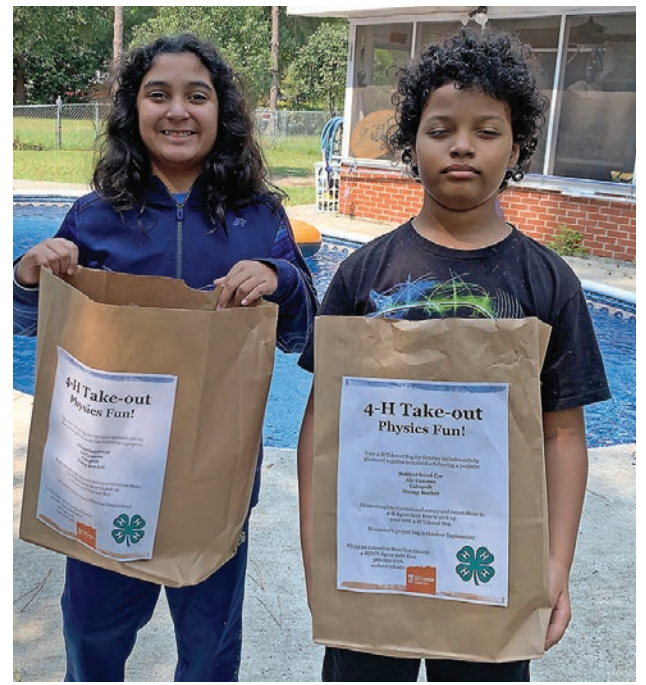


Photo courtesy

Brian (left) and John (right) show off their 4-H takeout bag. These bags are filled with different science projects each month that the boys love to participate in.

Spicy, sweet, or why not both?

By Danny Federico
Riverbend News

Although she was born in New York in 1978, Bernadette Platt grew up in White Springs and has lived in Suwannee County for the majority of her life. She left for a few years after graduating from high school, but came back, now having lived in the area with family for almost 20 years.

Platt is the owner of Mrs. Platt's Peppers, a business which offers some of the most unique and delectable condiments in the county. Her number one seller, jalapeño jelly, was the first product she ever made. Platt said she first got the idea of making jelly out of jalapeños after finding a jar of it in a store several years ago. Now, she's been making her own jellies for around seven years. Platt grows a variety of peppers on her own, seven of which she uses for her shop, along with others which she gives away. She also grows peas, broccoli, cauliflower and cabbage, among other things.

Mrs. Platt's Peppers offers 16 different products, ranging from jellies to sauces, crushed spices and even mustard. While her jalapeño jelly is her biggest seller, Platt says her banana pepper mustard is also a big hit, being her second highest selling product. "You can put them both on anything," she said. One famous snack which shows how universal her jalapeño jelly is, is simply cream cheese and crackers, while her banana pepper mustard is sweet and goes well on just about anything, especially sandwiches.

Platt even offers a jar of candied jalapeños which she calls, Cowboy Candy—a sweet and spicy snack which can be eaten by itself or with any meal. "They're sweet, but spicy because they still have the seeds with them," she said. "It

definitely takes a cowboy to eat Cowboy Candy."

Habañero hot sauce, pickled jalapeños, Cowboy Candy, datil pepper sauce and crushed cayenne peppers are just a few condiments Mrs. Platt's Peppers has to offer, with her banana pepper mustard being the mildest and her habañero hot sauce being the spiciest. "People have the idea that just because they're made of peppers, they're going to be hot. That isn't the case," she said. "Peppers are only really hot if they have the seeds in them."

Mrs. Platt's Peppers products can be found at JRP Pinestraw and Pepe's Grocery Store in Live Oak, Momma T's in Mayo, Perry Fish Market in Perry and even at Old Times Country Buffet in Lake City. Her products can also be found on her website, mrsplattspeppers.com.



Photo courtesy of Bernadette Platt
Bernadette Platt, owner of Mrs. Platt's Peppers, sells a variety of goods ranging from jalapeño jelly to banana pepper mustard, datil pepper sauce and even Cowboy Candy, which is a jar of candied jalapeños.

Donations can help keep seniors warm

By Ramsey Sullivan
Riverbend News

There are only a few weeks of the year in Florida where it is cold enough outside to turn on the heater, and Floridians are in the middle of that time. With the "cold front" that comes around this time of year, it is important to bundle up and keep warm. Many people stay warm in their homes by turning on the heater or lighting up the fireplace; but what happens when you are unable to do those things?

The chilly winter nights and mornings can have a detrimental effect on senior citizens and those who cannot afford electricity. The Suwannee River Economic Council, Inc., wants to help those in need of blankets, heaters, electricity or gas get what they need, but they need supplies first.

Donations of blankets or heaters can help many people, specifically, people in Hamilton, Lafayette and Suwannee Counties. To donate to those in need, call the Suwannee River Economic Council at (386) 362-1164. After calling, donations can be dropped off at one of the centers listed below:

- Hamilton County - 1509 Martin Luther King Drive SW, in Jasper.
- Lafayette County - 114 SW Community Circle, in Mayo.
- Suwannee County - 1171 Nobles Ferry Road, NW, BLDG #1, in Live Oak.

Donations will be distributed to senior citizens in need. In addition to handing out donations, the Suwannee River Economic Council also participates in an energy assistance program. This program is meant to assist people, of all ages, that need help paying their electric bill or buying gas. To participate and receive assistance, you may call the Suwannee River Economic Council at (386) 362-1164, or fill out an application online at srecinc.org.

Meet Helen Miller: White Springs' first female mayor

By Danny Federico
Riverbend News

Helen Miller was born in East Bernard, Texas, in 1949. As a child, she attended Holy Cross Elementary and spent the first 14 years of her life on a small farm, surrounded by cotton, corn, pigs, cows and much more. After she turned 14, her mother purchased a piece of land closer to town, where she then began to attend East Bernard High School.

After high school, Miller attended Wharton Community College in Wharton, Texas, where she graduated with her AA before moving on to the University of Texas in Austin. There, she worked her way through school, teaching business communications, conducting research with faculty members and consulting for state agencies and small businesses. She received her Bachelor's degree in Business Administration in 1971, a Master's in Business Administration in 1973 and a PhD

in Management Technology in 1980. She also graduated with a minor in Organization Theory and Behavior, as well as with a degree in Regional Economics, which was a field outside of the business school. In her time after college, Miller began to work a plethora of jobs in Texas, including positions as an employee for Exxon USA in Houston and as a Director of Technical Engineering at Texas A&M.

She found herself moving from Texas to Ann Arbor, Mich., in 1990, where she worked for the National Center for Manufacturing Sciences (NCMS), a national research and development consortium, as the Director of Institutional Relations. While there, she met her soon-to-be husband, Ed Miller, the founding president of the NCMS. They married on the beach in Maui and have now been together for 30 years.

Now, Miller is a resident of White Springs, having moved



Photo courtesy of Helen Miller

Helen Miller, originally from East Bernard, Texas, moved to White Springs in 2007 with her husband. In 2010, she became the first female mayor of White Springs.

to the area in 2007 with her husband. One year after moving to the area, Miller and her husband went out of town for two months. When they came back, they found that a group of juveniles had broken into their home. "Out of that whole experience, we both had to realize that kids don't have a lot to do in their free time," Miller said. So, she decided to change that. When she was making her victim impact statement at the sentencing of the ringleader, Miller informed the young man

that she was going to start a summer program for the kids in the community. True to her word, Miller started a program in 2010, which involved over 80 kids.

After her victim impact statement and how she followed through on her word, Miller had a number of people ask her to run for mayor. In 2010, she was elected as the first female mayor of White Springs and served until 2014, before serving again from 2018 to 2020.

She has started other programs throughout the community, too, such as Project HOPE—which was started in

2019 as a charitable and educational outreach to at-risk communities—as well as the Fuel Bank, which has locations in various areas of White Springs and provides free firewood to families who need it. "There are still opportunities to work together and make a difference," Miller said. "When people come together and do positive things, it just makes people feel better."

Miller was also active in the Florida Greenways and Trails from 2010 until she retired in October 2020, where she participated in the Suwannee Bicycle Association, recreation issues and events. In her spare time, she enjoys researching the best educational and developmental technology for her grandchildren, devoting time to Project HOPE and reading. Right now, she's focused on reading about Allied spy networks during World War II.

Grace Baptist Church AWANA kids "shop" for their family

By Ramsey Sullivan
Riverbend News

On Wednesday, Dec. 16, to get ready for Christmas, the children and youth in the Grace Baptist Church AWANA were given the opportunity to go "shopping" for Christmas gifts for their family.

AWANA, which stands for Approved Workmen Are Not Ashamed, at Grace Baptist Church in Mayo, was started just before the pandemic took hold of the United States in March 2020. Due to COVID-19, AWANA was unable to meet until September of 2020. When they began meeting again, they opened the AWANA store, where kids were given the opportunity to "shop" for themselves using shares they earned by memorizing scripture, good behavior, dressing in their AWANA uniform and more.

When the Christmas season rolled around, AWANA wanted to do something special for the kids and their families. Instead of the AWANA store being stocked with candy, toys and drinks for the kids as it normally is, it was stocked with gifts that fathers, mothers, grandparents and even siblings would like to receive. All of the gifts were donated by the congregation and each child was able to choose two things they wanted to give their family members for Christmas, free of charge.

"The kids were more excited about this store than they normally are when they can get gifts for themselves," said AWANA director at Grace Baptist Church, Alicia Poole.

Not only did the children get to choose two

Photo courtesy of Alicia Poole
Dwight Poole, Pastor of Grace Baptist Church, lent a helping hand to the AWANA store by helping wrap gifts for the kids.



gifts for their family members, they also had their gifts wrapped by the youth and some congregation members so their gifts would be ready to put under the tree when they got home.

About 15 kids were able to get gifts for their family members from this AWANA event this Christmas. The goal of using the shop in this way was to focus on giving during the Christmas season, which is a lesson the children won't soon forget.

AWANA at Grace Baptist Church meets on Wednesday nights from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Dinner is served at 6 p.m., free of charge, and the AWANA program begins at 6:30 p.m. Grace Baptist Church is located at 5196 US-27, in Mayo.



Photo courtesy of Alicia Poole

Church member Jean Sullivan, volunteered her time to help wrap gifts.



Photo courtesy of Alicia Poole

Barbara Revels, a church member, and Daisy Revels, a member of the youth group, teamed up to help wrap gifts at the store as quickly as possible.



Photo courtesy of Alicia Poole

The AWANA clubbers enjoyed posing in front of the photo booth with their props and decorations, like Scarlett Hamlin did.



Photo courtesy of Alicia Poole

The youth was involved in the AWANA store by helping wrap gifts for the kids to take home and put under the tree. Pictured, from left to right, are: Zabrian Lee, Avery Keen and Hyatt Richardson.



Photo courtesy of Alicia Poole

Embrie Revels, an AWANA clubber, poses in a Santa disguise in front of the photo booth at the shop.

To advertise in the church directory call the Riverbend News at (386) 364-4141.

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.

White Springs United Methodist Church

16580 Spring St., White Springs, Fla. 32096
Pastor Brian Leonardson
Come join us this Sunday!
Bible Study.....10:00 a.m.
Worship.....11:00 a.m.

Live Oak Christian Church

1015 Ohio Ave. N., Live Oak, Fla. (386) 362-1085
Mark Hassler, Pastor
COME WORSHIP WITH US
SUNDAY
Sunday School.....9:30 a.m.
Morning Worship.....10:30 a.m.
Evening Worship.....6:00 p.m.
WEDNESDAY
Evening Worship.....6:00 p.m.

Live Oak Church of Christ

1497 Irvin (SR 51), Live Oak, Fla. (386) 364-5922
Dennis Rosenbaum, Evangelist
SUNDAY
Bible Class.....10:00 a.m.
Morning Worship.....11:00 a.m.
WEDNESDAY
Bible Study.....6:45 p.m.
All are welcome

St. Therese Catholic Church

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Rectory US 90 E., Live Oak, Fla.
(386) 364-1108
Saturday Mass.....4:00 p.m.

Rocky Sink Baptist Church

8422 Rocky Sink Rd., Live Oak, Fla., 32060
(386) 362-3971
Pastor Mike Chauncey
Sunday Morning Worship.....11:00 a.m.
Wednesday Evening Worship.....6:00 p.m.

Live Oak First Assembly of God

13793 76th St., Live Oak Fla., 32060
(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.

St. Francis Xavier Church

928 E. Howard St., US 90 E. Live Oak, Fla., 32064
(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.

Lighthouse Christian Center

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SUNDAY
Morning Worship.....10:30 a.m.
Kids of the King.....10:30 a.m.
MONDAY
Prayer Meeting.....6:00 a.m.
WEDNESDAY
Bible Study.....7:00 a.m.
Kids of the King.....7:00 a.m.
Army of Fire Youth.....7:00 p.m.

St. Luke's Episcopal Church

1391 SW 11th Street, Live Oak, 32064
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.

Live Oak Church of the Nazarene

915 Church Ave. SW, Live Oak, Fla., 32064
(386) 362-6380 **Pastor Louis Medairis**
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.

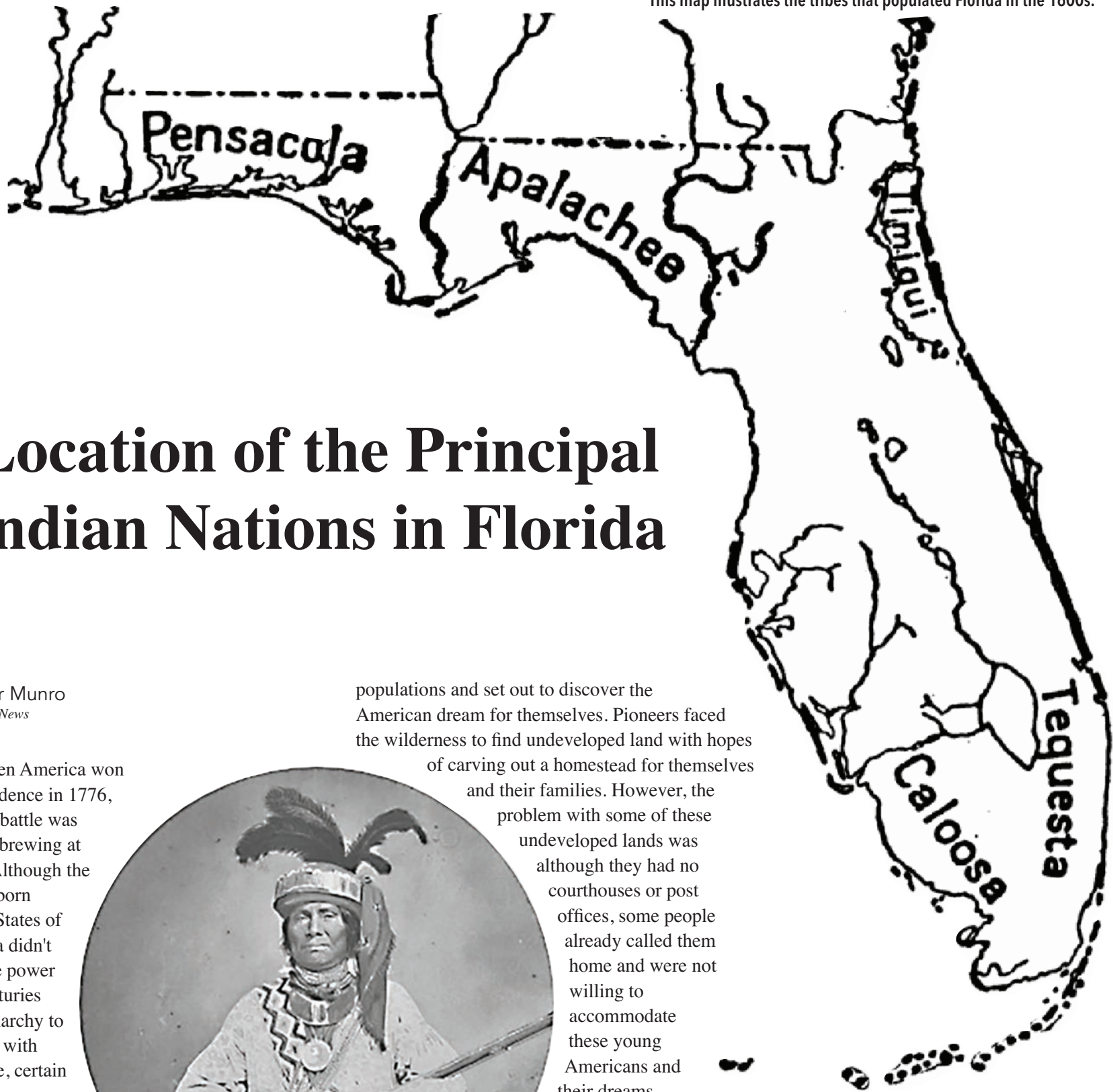
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Jasper's tribes of the past

Photo courtesy of Caroline Mays Brevard and her book, "A History of Florida" (1919). This map illustrates the tribes that populated Florida in the 1600s.



Location of the Principal Indian Nations in Florida

By Starr Munro
Riverbend News

When America won independence in 1776, another battle was already brewing at home. Although the freshly born United States of America didn't have the power of a centuries old monarchy to contend with anymore, certain conflicts were quickly becoming full-blown wars. With many English descendants embracing a new identity of their new country, pioneers were beginning to make their way out of the cities and towns that had established



Photo courtesy of the tribe of the Miccosukee. Halato Micco, a Native American village that once sat in Hamilton County, is named after Holata Micco, "Billy Bowlegs," a strategist and warrior.

populations and set out to discover the American dream for themselves. Pioneers faced the wilderness to find undeveloped land with hopes of carving out a homestead for themselves and their families. However, the problem with some of these undeveloped lands was although they had no courthouses or post offices, some people already called them home and were not willing to accommodate these young Americans and their dreams.

The tribes of North America's Native Americans were beginning to have persistent conflicts with the settlers who moved too close, and north Florida was no exception to that issue.

The land that Hamilton County consists of is just one location that saw significant change in the

1800s, due to the discord between tribes and pioneers. Florida officially became a state in 1845 and the city of Jasper was established 13 years later, in 1858. It was a good area for a city, close enough to get supplies, but secluded enough from other settlements that they could maintain a sense of solitude and independence. But Jasper would have been a lot more complicated without the 1823 Treaty of Moultrie Creek. The U.S. government and several groups of Indians living in present-day Florida made an agreement to establish a reservation in the center of the Florida peninsula and if not for the treaty, Florida may have taken a lot longer to develop into what it has become today.

With many of the first nations people of Florida wiped out from disease, and multiple Seminole wars further devastating relations between the tribes and settlers, the tribes eventually agreed to move to the east side of the Suwannee River, hoping for less conflict in the future. A large amount of Native Americans in that area at that time were Seminole, from the Creek nation of Georgia and are federally recognized as the Miccosukee tribe today. The Miccosukee people currently make the Everglades their home, a long ways from north Florida. The River of Grass is one of the only places in America that both the Spanish and the English found impossible to navigate. Many tribes found sanctuary in the Everglades during the Indian Removal Act, and escaped slaves also hid out in the unmapped territory and evaded capture for many years to come.

Jasper is said to be on what were originally Miccosukee lands. A suspected Indian burial mound is located in Baisden Swamp on the outskirts of the small city. Six miles north of Jasper along the Alapaha River, an established village called Halato Micco once stood. Pottery, spear points and arrowheads have often been found in the area. It has been speculated that "Billy Bowlegs" himself may have once resided in the village for some time, and they named their village after his birth name, Holata Micco. Bowlegs was a man who played a large part in the Second and Third Seminole Wars, and is quite literally the stuff of legends. He further gained infamy as a Union Captain during the American Civil War, using the guerrilla warfare that helped him evade capture for years in the Everglades.

Hometown Salute

Mike Williams

Mike Williams was born in March of 1956 in Lake City, Fla. In 1973 he joined the United States Army, attending basic training at Fort Knox in Kentucky. Williams then went on to advanced training in Fort Benning in Georgia. After, he went to Fort Campbell in Kentucky and became part of the 101st Airborne Division. Leaving Fort Campbell, Williams traveled to the east, visiting Germany for a while. He would then spend his time going back and forth between the U.S. and Germany, making his way to Homestead Air Reserve base in Miami and going back to Fort Benning in between trips to the east.



After returning from a tour in Yemen, Williams went to Fort Riley in Kansas, where he changed his specialty to communications. He then went to Fort Gordon in Georgia, where he attended signal school. After three years, he went to Korea, took part in Desert Storm and then eventually made it back to Fort Gordon. Williams retired for his first time in 1995. However, in 2005 he was called back to

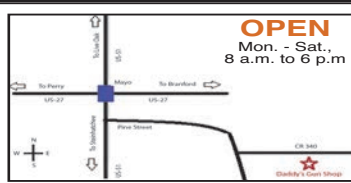
duty and went from Fort Bragg in North Carolina, to Iraq and settled at the United States Central Command in Tampa, Fla. He retired for his second time in 2006.

Now, Williams lives outside of White Springs, having moved to the area after his first retirement in 1995. After his second retirement, Williams went to school and received his master's degree from Valdosta State University. He then got a job with Nutrien and has worked with them for 15 years. Williams will be retiring in either March or April of 2021.

Williams is married to Laurie Williams, a registered nurse with the Lake City VA Medical Center. Between the two of them, they have two grown children, a son and a daughter, as well as three grandchildren. In his spare time, Williams is active in the March of Dimes and the Lake City Columbia County Chamber of Commerce. At the chamber, he is currently serving his last year as president.



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Suwannee Middle Bulldogs win Big Bend Championship



Photo courtesy of Suwannee Middle School

The SMS girls soccer team had an undefeated season and ended it with the Big Bend Championship.

By Starr Munro
Riverbend News

The soccer teams of Suwannee Middle School (SMS) had a well-deserved Christmas break to end the year. The school's boys and girls soccer teams won the 2020 Big Bend Championship before the school closed for the holidays and brought a fantastic end to what was a stellar year for both teams. It was a memorable season for all, with the Lady Bullpups finishing their undefeated and the Bullpups winning

the championship title for the fifth year in a row.

The playoffs were both meant to be home games, but after a forfeit, the SMS boys instead spent the evening of Tuesday, Dec. 15, supporting the girls by watching the Lady Bullpups game play out. The SMS girls remained undefeated and, in doing so, won the honor of hosting the championship game at home in Live Oak, at Langford Stadium.

The SMS boys team traveled to Wakulla for their championship game on Thursday, Dec. 17, and

went on to defeat Riversprings Middle School (RMS), securing their five-year winning streak. The Lady Bullpups of Suwannee were matched against Taylor County Middle School (TCMS) for the second time that season, but the Bulldogs of Perry were not a match for the SMS girls team, who also walked away with a championship.

SMS is sure to have a lot of new talent that will tryout next spring, and another championship season will be underway in 2021, but in the meantime, both the girls and boys of

the school's soccer teams can enjoy the feeling of being champions after working so hard to earn the title. The boys' coaches, Head Coach Adam Hitt and Assistant Coach Felipe Yaxon, have had a great year with the boys. Likewise, the girls' coaches, Head Coach Amanda Mabey and Assistant Coaches Ashley Turner and Bethany Mabey, have had as great of a year, thanks to the girls. SMS has dedicated individuals when it comes to the school's sports and with coaches like them, champions are sure to continue being made.



Photo courtesy of Suwannee Middle School

The SMS boys soccer team brought home their fifth championship title and ended 2020 with a bang.

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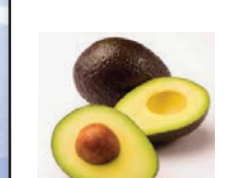
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PUBLIC NOTICES

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR LAFAYETTE COUNTY, FLORIDA. NOTICE OF ACTION FOR DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE (NO CHILD OR FINANCIAL SUPPORT)

AGENDA TOWN COUNCIL, TOWN OF MAYO, FLORIDA REGULAR MEETING MONDAY, JANUARY 11, 2021 7:00 P.M. TOWN HALL, CONFERENCE ROOM, 276 WEST MAIN STREET

Legal Ad RFQ 21-101 The Hamilton County School District, pursuant to F.S. 255.32 and 287.055, requests statements of qualifications from licensed Florida Construction Management firms to provide Construction Management Services to assist with the construction phase of various small projects to be less than two million dollars (\$2,000,000.00) on an as needed basis.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR HAMILTON COUNTY, FLORIDA CIVIL ACTION KENNETH REHM and BARBARA REHM Plaintiffs, vs. MICHAEL ANDERSON, AS HEIR OF ROBERT L. ANDERSON, DECEASED, and ROBERT ANDERSON, JR., AS HEIR OF ROBERT L. ANDERSON, DECEASED. Defendants.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR SUWANNEE COUNTY, FLORIDA PROBATE DIVISION IN RE: ESTATE OF STARLETT D. BARBER File No. Deceased. NOTICE TO CREDITORS

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR HAMILTON COUNTY, FLORIDA CIRCUIT CIVIL DIVISION U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, AS TRUSTEE, FOR MANUFACTURED HOUSING CONTRACT SENIOR/SUBORDINATE PASS-THROUGH CERTIFICATE TRUST 2000-1

NOTICE OF ACTION TO: ROBERT ANDERSON, JR. as Heir of Robert L. Anderson, Deceased and to all parties claiming interest by, through under or against Defendant, and all parties having or claiming to have any right, title or interest in the property herein described.

NOTICE OF INTENT TO REGISTER FICTITIOUS NAME NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to the provisions of Section 865.09, Florida Statutes, the hereinafter named company intends to register with the Secretary of State of the State of Florida, Division of Corporations and Fictitious Trade Names, under which said business is to be carried on, to-wit: Mayo Ag Services

Notice Under Fictitious Name Law Pursuant to Section 865.09, Florida Statutes NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the undersigned, desiring to engage in business under the fictitious name of Scrub Society located at P.O. Box 885 (mobile business), in the County of Suwannee, in the City of Live Oak, Florida 32064 intends to register said name with the Division of Corporations of the State, Tallahassee, Florida. Dated at Live Oak, Florida, this day of December 28, 2020.

NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT, pursuant to Plaintiff's Final Judgment of Foreclosure entered on December 10, 2020 in the above-captioned action, the Clerk of Court will sell to the highest and best bidder for cash at the south door of the Hamilton County Courthouse, 207 Northeast First Street, South Front Lobby, Jasper, Florida 32052 in accordance with Chapter 45, Florida Statutes on the 20th day of January, 2021 at 11:00 AM on the following described property as set forth in said Final Judgment of Foreclosure or order, to-wit:

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR HAMILTON COUNTY, FLORIDA CIVIL ACTION KENNETH REHM and BARBARA REHM Plaintiffs, vs. MICHAEL ANDERSON, AS HEIR OF ROBERT L. ANDERSON, DECEASED, and ROBERT ANDERSON, JR., AS HEIR OF ROBERT L. ANDERSON, DECEASED. Defendants.

FOR SALE For Sale Four Cemetery plots in Live Oak Cemetery. \$750.00 OBO Barbara Davis (386) 364-6616

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

NOTICE OF INTENDED EMPLOYMENT AND REQUEST FOR APPLICANTS The Hamilton County Custodial Department gives notice of intent to fill available position: Custodian (40 hours per week) Salary - \$11 per hour

CDL drivers needed, Class B. Apply in person only at Scruggs Concrete Company 186 SW Commerce Dr. Madison, Fla., 32340

RECEPTIONIST(FT), Green Point Research. Seeking personable, responsible and motivated individual to join our team. Will be required to answer phones, greet visitors, manage mail, shipping/receiving, and other duties. Must have HS Diploma/GED, ability to use computer, working knowledge of MS Word & Excel and good communication skills. EOE. 2+ years of relevant experience. Wages DOE. Submit resume via email to careers@greenpointresearch.com

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE Third JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR Suwannee COUNTY, FLORIDA. Notice of Action for Dissolution of Marriage (No Child or Financial Support)

PUBLIC NOTICE The Lafayette County Commission will be holding a regular meeting on Monday, January 11, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. The meeting will be held in the County Commissioners Meeting Room, on the second floor at the Lafayette County Courthouse in Mayo, Florida. Listed below is an agenda for the meeting.

12/30, 01/06

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