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Proposal to dissolve Town of White Springs to be discussed at upcoming delegation meeting

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A proposed bill to dissolve the Town of White Springs will be discussed and voted on during the annual Hamilton County delegation meeting on Monday, Feb. 10. The meeting will begin at 11 a.m. in the Hamilton County Courthouse, located at 207 NE 1st St., in Jasper.

The proposal, presented by Senator Corey Simon and Representative Jason Shoaf, seeks to dissolve the municipality.

"This town has had many issues and I believe that there comes a time when we have to step up and make some serious decisions for what is best for the citizens," Representative Shoaf said.

The discussion will be part of the broader delegation agenda. Residents are expected to attend and voice their opinions on the matter.

Keep an eye out for more information as it becomes available.

Minor injuries reported in Suwannee County school bus crash

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A school bus crash that occurred early in Suwannee County on Wednesday, Jan. 29, resulted in multiple passengers being transported to area hospitals for minor injuries.

According to the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) report, the accident took place at approximately 7:35 a.m. at the intersection of County Road 137 and 208th Pass in O'Brien. The report states that a school bus was traveling south on County Road 137 and began slowing down near 208th Pass to approach a bus stop. However, a sport utility vehicle (SUV) traveling behind it failed to reduce its speed and collided with the rear of the bus.

The SUV was driven by a 34-year-old Branford woman, who sustained minor injuries. Two child passengers, a 5-year-old and a 10-year-old, were also in the vehicle and suffered minor injuries. All

See "Crash" on page 3

State legislators visit Lafayette County

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On Thursday, Jan. 30, a crowd gathered in the foyer of the Lafayette County Courthouse for the legislative delegation meeting with State Representative Jason Shoaf and State Senator Corey Simon.

"This is my favorite place to come for these meetings," Shoaf said as the meeting opened.

"I'm just really appreciative of the folks here," Simon added afterward. He continued setting the tone for the meeting, explaining that he had committed to putting the people of his district first. "We don't have time to

See "Legislators" on page 3

Sinkhole causes traffic delay in O'Brien

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On Friday morning, Jan. 31, drivers encountered a unique delay due to a sinkhole that had opened in the middle of the roadway the previous

afternoon in O'Brien.

The sinkhole formed at the intersection of U.S. Highway 129 and County Road 349 East, leading deputies from the Suwannee County Sheriff's Office to assist in directing traffic around the area. Although the road was not completely closed, motorists experienced minor delays as repairs were

See "Sinkhole" on page 3



Riverbend News photo by Danny Federico, January 31, 2025

Deputies with the Suwannee County Sheriff's Office helped direct traffic around a sinkhole that opened at the intersection of U.S. Highway 129 and County Road 349 East in O'Brien.

Fires destroy Suwannee County properties

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Between Saturday, Jan. 18, and Monday, Jan. 20, fires erupted in Suwannee County,

resulting in the total loss of property for one Suwannee County man, and a close call for another local family.

Family seeks assistance after fire claims home

On Saturday morning, Jan. 18, at approximately 4 a.m., the home of Jay Crouch was engulfed in flames in what is believed to be an electrical fire.

See "Fires" on page 3



Photo courtesy of Rebecca Word

A house fire on Saturday, Jan. 18, resulted in a total loss for Jay Crouch, who resided in the home. The fire also damaged electric and water that supplied the property, leaving family members without power or water.



Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Brooks

A pool shed located behind Kim Ribbing's home in Live Oak was engulfed in flames on Monday, Jan. 20. The fire, which was close in proximity to the house, did not cause significant property damage other than the shed, which was a total loss.

FLORIDA MURALIST TO PAINT THE TOWN OF WHITE SPRINGS

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The Florida Wildlife Corridor Foundation and the White Springs Historic Preservation Society (WSHPS) have begun a collaboration with a Florida muralist who will be painting three landmarks in the town.

The WSHPS has announced that the murals will be painted at three locations in

White Springs: Suwannee Hardware & Feed, Buds and Suds Laundromat and the old White Springs Fire Department on U.S. Highway 41. The funding for the project

See "Muralist" on page 3



Christian Stanley

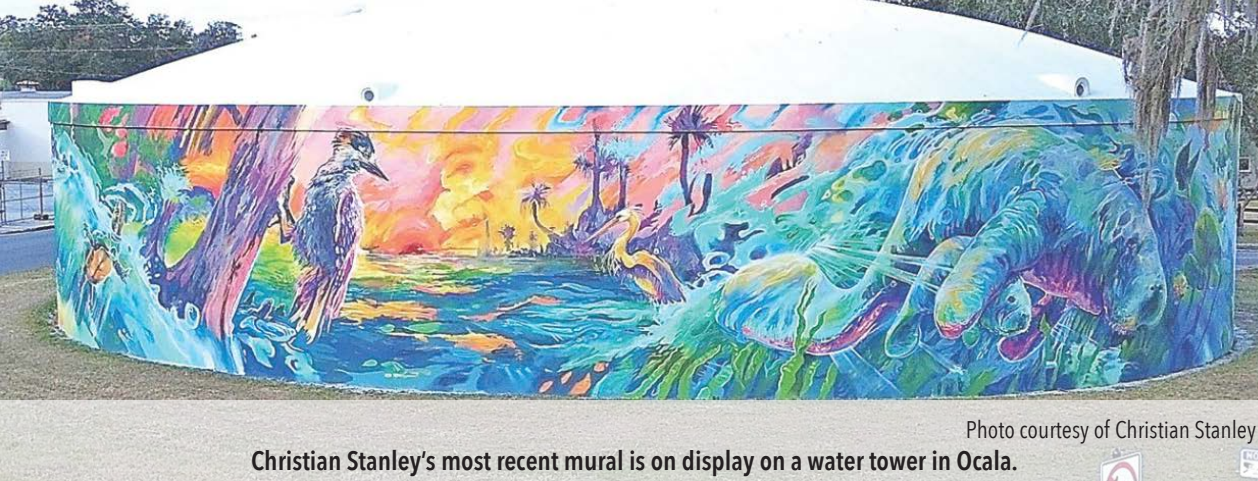


Photo courtesy of Christian Stanley

Christian Stanley's most recent mural is on display on a water tower in Ocala.

89-year-old man arrested for attacking neighbors with cane



Benjamin Ralph Bell

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An 89-year-old Live Oak man was arrested on Tuesday, Jan. 28, after attacking two women with a cane at the Silas Oaks Apartment complex.

According to a report from the Live Oak Police Department (LOPD), at approximately 1:31

p.m., Officer Brandon Taylor responded to the Silas Oaks Apartments on Southwest Silas Drive in response to a verbal disturbance. Upon arrival, Officer Taylor was flagged down by a white female, identified as one of the victims, who had fresh blood on the left side of her face.

The victim advised that she was in her apartment when she

heard a man screaming. When she left her apartment and walked around the building, she noticed 89-year-old Benjamin Ralph Bell yelling at her mother. She said that when she told him to stop yelling at her mother, Bell struck her on the left side of her face with a brown cane.

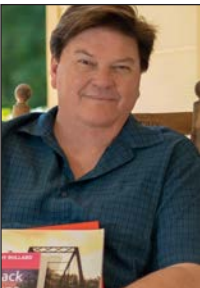
After Bell struck the victim, he allegedly then grabbed her

mother around the back of the neck, and they both fell to the ground. The victim said that she then separated her mother and Bell, and that was when he went back inside. As the victim told Bell that she was going to call 911, he came back out of the apartment, striking her in the face again with the cane. This time, the cane broke in half.

See "89-year-old" on page 4



Around the Banks



Johnny Bullard
Guest Columnist

The month of February is upon us. We think about Groundhog Day, Valentine's Day, the birthdays of Presidents Washington and Lincoln and Black History Month. February is the shortest month of the year, with just 28 days. It is the last full month of winter, as spring officially begins in late March.

Enough of the facts most of us know.

Driving past the school in White Springs is a visible and melancholy reminder of what once was there. The building, for now, is still there, and the memories are there, but sadly, the school is no more.

South Hamilton Elementary was famous for its plays and productions. The late Virginia J. Daniel, White Springs native, pillar of the Methodist Church, and great educator, often presented a program in February entitled "Who Will Rule?" She created costumes and props and played the piano for songs. It was a memorable event for our small community.

During the winter months, the gymnasium was alive with basketball tournaments, and we had some good ones. Our entire end of the county came

out to cheer on our teams. Towards the end of the school year, huge Easter egg hunts, end-of-school awards programs and cookouts were held.

The school is now an empty hull of a once bustling school community. What stood and provided a leading place and a center for community meetings took the tale of a focused politician who isn't a native of the county. He churned up four board members to go along with him. During the next cycle of elections, three of those four were not really elected, and neither was the one-term superintendent.

We had massive protests from District 4, but the die was cast. It's a shame the phosphate company didn't purchase it and make it into a center to train high school students in practical skills to get a job.

It still hurts me because not only did the school close, but the opportunity to attract young families was greatly diminished.

Maybe one day, enough positive growth will return to Hamilton County to turn the tide for progressive growth and present more opportunities for all people.

From the Eight Mile Still on the Woodpecker Route north of White Springs, wishing you a blessed day.

A Plan to Jumpstart Your Quiet Time



Do you remember how your heart ached when you were dating your husband or wife, and you had to go a whole day

without talking to them? Circumstances kept you from connecting and you couldn't wait until the next day so you could spend time with them again.

Have you ever felt this way about your relationship with God?

Similarly, has there been "that" person who always brought out the best in you? You always felt better about life after spending time with them.

Does spending time with God make you feel the same way?

In recent columns, we've discussed the importance of regularly pursuing God. Yet day after day, you regret that you haven't done anything except

pray for a few minutes in bed. Then, just before drifting off to sleep, you again promise yourself (and God), "I'll do better tomorrow."

As believers, no matter how much we ignore it, we feel an ache, an undeniable longing, to get to know our awesome, wonderful God. Here's the good news: As our heavenly Father, God wants to spend time with us too. 1 John 3:1 (ESV) confirms this: "See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are."

Think about it: God – the Creator of all things – wants a relationship with us. With you!

One of the easiest ways to spend time with God is to read the Bible. Perhaps your New Year's resolution was to read through the Bible in a year, but you've already fallen so far behind that you'll never catch up.

What if you try setting the timer to read your Bible for five minutes every day? When the timer goes off, mark the last verse you read so you know where to begin the next day. You could start with Psalms, Proverbs, Genesis (the first book of the Bible), or Matthew (the first book of the New Testament). Beginning with this manageable step might help you gradually increase your time in God's Word.

I confess. There are days when I don't take time to read the Bible and pray. Thankfully, God always draws me back. When I miss a day, I feel something missing in my spirit. I miss God's presence, and I miss His power – both of which I've grown to need and appreciate. When I skip several days in a row, my family and friends can tell I haven't spent time with God. They may not know exactly what's causing me to act out of sorts, but I know:

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume XXIII Issue 5

Published occasionally for mourners in Zion

Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

Hebrews 12:12-13

OUR ADVOCATE

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

1 John 2:1

Men are creatures of time and as such are completely unable to fully comprehend the concept of eternity or HE who is ETERNAL. All that is revealed to us by the LORD is bounded in our own minds by the concept of time. The great gulf that exists between GOD and man is defined by the contrast between HE who alone is eternal and we who are HIS creatures of a span. HE inhabits eternity. We return to the dust from which we were made. HE dwells in the LIGHT to which none can approach. We wander in the darkness of ignorance and unbelief. HE is immortal and invisible. We are neither. HE is completely unbounded. HE has set our bounds that we cannot pass.

Thus, it should come as no surprise to us that HE declared these words to Moses on Mt. Sinai. "Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live" (Exodus 33:20). HE first met with Moses at the foot of Mt. Horeb on the backside of the desert in Midian. There HE spoke to Moses for the first time, out of a "burning bush." As Moses drew near to see the odd sight of a bush that was continually burning yet was not consumed, the LORD gave HIM a warning and a stern yet delightful introduction. "And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face: for he was afraid to look upon God" (Exodus 3:5-6). Here the HOLINESS of GOD is demonstrated and the wall of separation that exists between HIMSELF and HIS creatures apart from HIS willingness to condescend to commune with them.

Moses reaction is quite understandable to us when we are given eyes to know something of the HOLINESS of GOD. All who are brought into HIS presence experience the same thing. As the LORD appeared to Job out of the "whirlwind," he made this lament, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:5-6). In a similar circumstance, the prophet Daniel declared, "Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength. Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground" (Daniel 10:8-9). John, the Apostle whom the LORD JESUS loved, saw HIM in his vision on the Isle of Patmos and he recorded his reaction. "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead" (Revelation 1:17).

By nature (especially religious nature), men think that they can just sit down with their CREATOR and talk with HIM whenever they please. Very few people never pray. Just like the heathen of old they have hewn them out "a god(s)" who is just like themselves, only hopefully possessing a certain degree of power to deliver them out of the daily dilemmas that beset them but not enough power to rule over them in any effective way. They think they can "let him in" or "keep him out" according to their own free will. For the most part they think he is obligated and waiting to help them and is like their faithful hound who comes when they call. "There is no fear of God before their eyes" (Romans 3:18).

In order for a man to have any true understanding of the grace and mercy of GOD, it is necessary that he becomes acquainted with the fact that he possesses no innate ability to converse with GOD nor has any power to cause GOD to do anything. "There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God" (Romans 3:11). On top of that limitation, men have repeatedly transgressed the commandments of GOD and failed to give unto HIM the glory that is due unto HIS great NAME. They have been unthankful for HIS many mercies including but not limited to their daily provision and sustenance.

David was enabled, by the LORD, to understand the separation between the CREATOR and the created. He was made to marvel at the condescension of the LORD of GLORY as he wrote these words: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? (in our colloquialism we might say why would HE bother with us?) and the son of man, that thou visitest him" (Psalms 8:3-4)? I would dare say that the average so called "Christian" today has no consideration of such. They are not amazed that HE would show mercy to men of low estate but rather grow angry if told HE does not show the same mercy to all. Men love a god who loves the same things they do and acts as they wish, certainly not ONE who determines all things.

One of the most glorious aspects of the redemption of the LORD's elect Bride is the revelation in the scriptures that HE is her MEDIATOR. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5). "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (Hebrews 9:14-15).

CHRIST JESUS is exactly suited to fill the office of our MEDIATOR. That office is primarily demonstrated as HE serves as a "intermediary" between those who have broken the Law of a Just and Holy GOD who will not acquit the wicked or by any means clear the guilty. HE is essentially that ONE who has come to the legal aid of HIS elect in HIS purpose to be both JUST and the JUSTIFIER of those who are guilty without excuse. As their MEDIATOR HE pleads their case by presenting HIMSELF as their SUBSTITUTE, shedding HIS own blood as HE laid down HIS life for their REDEMPTION. Then, according to HIS eternal purpose was buried and rose again for their JUSTIFICATION. In all of this HE performed that which was impossible for them to do, since they could not approach unto a HOLY GOD with impure hands and corrupt nature. "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Romans 4:25). "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Hebrews 9:12).

We are made to rejoice in a consideration of HIS mediatorial work. All would surely perish without it. "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Leviticus 17:11). "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22). "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission (i.e. blotting out) of sins" (Matthew 26:28). "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross" (Colossians 2:14).

The scriptures also tell us that HE is our "ADVOCATE". Now there are some ways in which an advocate would be operating in a legal capacity as a courtroom lawyer is sometimes called an advocate for his client. Yet that is not the exact capacity which the scriptures refer to when the LORD JESUS is called our "ADVOCATE" with the FATHER. The English word "advocate" only appears one time in the KJV New Testament and it is here in 1 John 2:1. However the Greek word which is here translated as "advocate" appears five times and is in all other instances translated as "COMFORTER," directly referring to that ONE whom the LORD promised to send to HIS disciples in HIS absence.

Those whom the LORD awakens from being dead in sins, by the operation of the new birth are made acutely aware of their sinful flesh. When they walked according to the spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience they were not troubled by their sin but rather embraced it. Now they are as Paul described to the Romans. "For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I" (Romans 7:15). When they hear the exhortations such as John made, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not," they could easily become discouraged were it not that John also reminds them that they have an "ADVOCATE" (i.e. a consoler or comforter). The LORD does not simply pay the price for our transgressions but continues to minister PEACE and HELP to those who are yet weak in the flesh. We see HIS work as their "ADVOCATE" when HE found HIS disciples asleep as HE prayed for them in Gethsemane's garden. HE recognized their weakness and did not condemn them. We see it with Peter when HE tenderly spoke to him on the seashore shortly after Peter's shameful denial. "For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust" (Psalms 103:14). For HE has walked among us tempted in all points carrying our griefs and our sorrows. HE is our "ADVOCATE" who is touched by our infirmities. "What we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2). mam fortheepoor@windstream.net

It's All About Literacy: What is Literacy?



K. Vaughn-Malpress, Ed.D.
Guest Columnist

Greetings, and "Thank you" to the Riverbend News and "You," the readers, for your time and the opportunity to share information and conversations via printed communications. Revelation 1:3 (KJV), teaches, "Blessed is he that readeth,"as John promises a blessing to those who read aloud the written word, etc.

Since 2008, "It's All About Literacy" has been the lifeline brand of The Optimus Literacy Institute of America, Inc. (TOLIA), and through this monthly column, we will continue to share, aspire, encourage and support literacy. Until today, perhaps your definition of literacy is the ability to read and write. In a sense, that is correct; however, literacy is not limited to reading and writing or only academic matters in the classroom. Being literate involves an ongoing process of learning and being in the know. And being in the know will wage an unstoppable offense against ignorance; literacy is an unassailable shield from not knowing.

The goal and objectives of this column include (but are not limited to) creating a culture of reading and learning that will facilitate the critical needs and consciousnesses of our varied communities, inside and outside of all Pre-K-12 and Post-Secondary Classrooms. Beginning with the subscribed cities, households, families, locations and communities of Riverbend's readers, "It's All About Literacy" will also advocate professional development as it relates to interdisciplinary and project-based – intergraded learning for EVERYBODY.

As an Educator, this scribe will always promote reading, teaching, transparency and transforming educational approaches for students, parents, teachers, school administrators and concerned residents of all communities, all races, all ethnicities, regardless of socio-economic status, and especially for all Black and Brown students and families.

Interestingly and unplanned, how wonderful could it be that this column debuts in February, the nationally celebrated month for Black History!!! However, the caveat regarding Black History is that many of us celebrate Black History 365/366/24/7. Amen.

Withal, we look forward to sharing printed conversations on varied topics and subject matters. TOLIA has always provided support services and listening ears for the common good of EVERYBODY; this column will not be different because it really is all about literacy.

Thank you – HAPPY READING!!!

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Sinkhole

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made.

By the end of the day, the sinkhole had been sufficiently sealed, allowing drivers to pass over the roadway once again.

Crash

Cont. from page 1

three were transported to HCA Lake City Hospital as a

precaution.

The school bus, operated by a 62-year-old Lake City woman, did not sustain significant damage, and the driver was uninjured. Several students aboard the bus, however, reported minor injuries and were transported to HCA Florida Suwannee ER for evaluation.

FHP is continuing to investigate the incident. No further details have been released at this time.

Muralist

Cont. from page 1

was provided by a grant through the Florida Wildlife Corridor

Foundation, as well as support from the Hamilton County Tourism Development Board.

The artist, Orlando resident Christian Stanley, is well renowned for his stellar murals throughout the Florida Wildlife Corridor and elsewhere. He is also known for his street art, illustrations and canvas art. Stanley recently completed a project in Ocala, covering the city’s water tanks with stunning visuals depicting a number of native plants and animals that reside within the Ocala National Forest, which is part of the Florida Wildlife Corridor.

“White Springs was selected for this mural campaign because of its proximity to irreplaceable gaps in the Florida Wildlife Corridor, an area that is both urgent and vulnerable to development,” said Mallory Dimmitt, CEO of the Florida Wildlife Corridor Foundation. “As a designated trail town, White Springs holds a unique role in creating a sense of place for the community and for hikers who enjoy this special part of Florida. This mural is not only a celebration of the Corridor’s natural beauty but also a symbol of the connection between conservation and the people who call this area home.”

The Suwannee Hardware & Feed mural, which will be painted on aluminum panels to protect the integrity of the building, will be dedicated with a ribbon cutting on Saturday, Feb. 8, at 3:30 p.m. The ribbon cutting will be part of the Florida Trail FEST festivities, as Florida Trail hikers trek from Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park to the hardware store.

Between Monday, Feb. 10, and Friday, Feb. 21, Stanley will be painting the murals at the old fire station and Buds and Suds. The WSHPS invites the community to come out and watch Stanley as he performs his work on the murals, which will celebrate the local wildlife, plants, birds and fish.

On Saturday, Feb. 15, a group of youths will paint a section of the mural. The WSHPS invites other kids and young at heart to create chalk sidewalk art.

“The murals are going to bring an aspect of public art and draw people from other parts,” Julie Gay with the WSHPS and co-chair of the Hamilton County Tourist Development Council said. “Murals have been proven to bring tourism and diversity to communities.”

For more information about the project and the WSHPS, contact Sharon Shea at (904) 534-4417 or visit www.historicwhitesprings.com. To learn more about Stanley’s work, visit www.cstanleycreative.com.

Fires

Cont. from page 1

According to Rebecca Word, Crouch’s daughter, the fire was believed to have

started on the back porch and worked its way through the home.

“My dad’s house was a big, log house,” Word said. “It took 12 minutes to burn down.”

Suwannee County Fire and Rescue responded to the scene, and were able to douse the flames, but were unable to save the home. Additionally, three vehicles belonging to Crouch were also destroyed.

According to Word, the Florida State Fire Marshal’s Office in Jacksonville arrived at the scene the following day to assess the damage and determine how the fire started. Based on the assessment, the fire was not positively identified as an electrical fire, but a preliminary review determined there were signs of such.

Although the fire destroyed Crouch’s home and damaged the electrical and water sources on the property, cutting off supply to Word and her sister, who both have homes on the property, she said that his spirits are still high.

“Physically, he’s okay, just had a minor burn mark,” Word said. “Mentally, he's exhausted, but keeping his spirits up. There were just things that were in that house that money just can’t buy.”

While insurance is still being processed, the family has started a GoFundMe to help with assistance in fixing up a double-wide currently on the property that will serve as Crouch’s temporary home. The family is also accepting donations of building materials and Lowes or Home Depot gift cards to repair the double-wide.

“Dad is good with clothes, but fixing up the double-wide is going to take some work,” Word said. They are also seeking help with food and temporary housing for Crouch until the insurance claims can come through, as lack of refrigeration spoiled their food.

To help the Crouch family, visit www.gofund.me/5d3fe25c.

Pool shed a total loss following fire

In the morning hours of Monday, Jan. 20, Elizabeth Brooks woke up to a frightening scene: a fire by the home of her mother, Kim Ribbing. A loud explosion jolted Brooks, followed by bright orange flames brightening the early morning sky.

“I just couldn’t believe what I saw,” Brooks said. “I raced over there as soon as I was woken up by an explosion and saw the fire.”

Brooks said that she knocked on her mother’s door as loud as she could. While she was knocking, another loud bang came from the pool shed. “You could hear the propane tanks that were inside the shed exploding,” She said. “Then, suddenly, the roof of the shed exploded!”

The explosion, as well as Brooks’s knocking, woke up her mother and step-father, Shane Ribbing, who answered the door to their daughter panicking about the fire. Suwannee County Fire Rescue was called to the scene, where they were able to help put the fire out. Other than the pool shed being a total loss, there was minimal damage elsewhere.

“The only damage to my mother’s house was my sister’s window being melted,” Brooks said. She credited the swimming pool as a buffer from setting the house on fire.

Amidst the chaos of the situation, her parents’ dog, Piper, had run off in a panic. It prompted a search, ultimately leading to her recovery later unharmed.

The fire is believed to be electrical, pending the outcome of the State Fire Marshal’s investigation. For now, the family has a mess to clean up. It is a mess, Brooks said, her step-father cannot do it alone, and invites the community to assist in any way they can.

To help the Brooks family in their cleanup efforts, contact Lizzie Brooks on Facebook.

Legislators

Cont. from page 1

play politics,” he said adding that it was okay for folks to disagree on national issues, but he

was there to focus on the local issues. “Please understand that you all are at the top of my list.”

The two elected officials then took a moment to introduce their staff and speak on some committees they would be serving on that year. After that, they gave a quick update on appropriations requests before turning to the local elected officials to hear their concerns.

Commissioner Anthony Adams stood up to speak first. The first issue he brought up was the Small County Outreach Program and Small County Road Program. He explained that the program funding hasn’t increased in years, but the process for roads has only grown more expensive. His second concern was simply that the county was dealing with constrained funding and could use more. His third concern was that the county had recently learned the Lafayette High School gymnasium, which was supposed to be the storm shelter, did not qualify anymore. Therefore, they needed help solving that issue. The final concern that he brought up was the flooding in South Mayo. Adams ended by saying, “Thanks for your leadership, both in the past and in the future.” Simon responded by saying, “Rural Florida will not be forgotten or left behind.”

Sheriff Brian Lamb simply thanked the officials saying, “You all have been very good to us.” Clerk of Court Steve Land was the next speaker, starting by showing gratitude and thanking Shoaf and Simon for their attendance. He made them aware that the hurricanes had been rough on the county, but that they were incredibly grateful for the debris cleanup help. Supervisor of Elections Travis Hart followed. He told the officials that they had record-breaking voter turnout in the state and Lafayette County. His only request was that he wanted to work with the state on setting up alternative early voting

locations. Hart explained that the statute states that the early voting location must be his office, however, his office is too small.

Superintendent Robbie Edwards was the final elected official to speak. He thanked Shoaf and Simon for their appearance in Lafayette County. Then he voiced his concerns about schools. First was the new 8:30 a.m. start time. Edwards explained that, while on paper it might seem to make sense, in reality, it complicates the issue greatly while solving nothing. He explained that simply pushing every school activity back a half hour means that students will go to bed half an hour later. On top of that, he was concerned about parents whose schedules would be ruined, making them late for work as a result of the new time change. His second concern was that the middle school acceleration digital tool did not work for all students and, in his opinion, needed to be revisited. Edwards’s final concern was the Florida Empower Scholarship statute, which he claimed was almost impossible for them to pull off.

After hearing all the concerns and asking some clarifying questions, the meeting was brought to a close. Simon’s final comment was, “I truly appreciate you guys. Lafayette County is very special to me. I just want you to be willing to ask. Challenge us to help you grow.” Shoaf ended by saying, “Conversations like this are how you make Florida and America great.”



Riverbend News photo by Christian Peterson, January 30, 2025
Representative Jason Shoaf (left) and Senator Corey Simon (right) speak to Lafayette County residents about their concerns.

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Jason Futch
reporter2.riverbendnews@gmail.com

A dramatic two-day manhunt involving multiple agencies ended in the arrest of a suspect of a homicide investigation in Santa Rosa County. The suspect, 31-year-old Toby James White, was apprehended by Suwannee County Sheriff's Office (SCSO) deputies, with the assistance of the Columbia County Sheriff's Office (CCSO), Florida Department of Corrections (DOC), Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation (FWC).

The incident started when CCSO deputies attempted to pull over a vehicle, a Ford truck, near Fort White on Friday, Jan. 24. According to the arrest report, the vehicle had been reported stolen the previous day, Thursday, Jan. 23. During the attempted stop, White refused to stop the truck and engaged deputies on a chase that crossed into Suwannee County and back into Columbia County. According to CCSO, the pursuit ended when the suspect crashed the vehicle on Southwest Old Spanish Fort Road in Fort White.

White allegedly fled on foot in an attempt to evade deputies. CCSO engaged the mutual assistance of the SCSO, FHP, FWC and K-9 teams from the Suwannee and Baker Correctional Institutes. Additionally, CCSO and FHP engaged drones, while FHP offered additional air support. Despite attempting to apprehend White, he was nowhere to be located and the search was ultimately suspended. At the time, it was believed that White had left the area.

The following day, Saturday, Jan. 25, a tip led investigators with CCSO and SCSO back to the same area that was searched the previous day at the Suwannee-Columbia County line.

Two-day manhunt ends in arrest of homicide suspect



Photo courtesy of Wayne Kelly
Toby James White is marched through a wooded area shortly after being apprehended by law enforcement.



Toby James White



Photo courtesy of Santa Rosa County Sheriff's Office
Toby James White sits in a patrol car after being apprehended by law enforcement.

Mutual support from DOC, FHP and FWC also returned. The Alachua County Sheriff's Office and Taylor and Mayo Correctional Institute K-9 teams joined the search.

White was apprehended shortly after, and updates were provided to the community through both CCSO and SCSO's social media accounts. According to sources familiar with the investigation, K-9 deputies located White in a wooded area in Suwannee County. He was apprehended and escorted to a patrol vehicle.

He was booked in the Suwannee County Jail on the murder warrant and was additionally charged with battery, trespassing, two counts of resisting arrest and probation violation. He was also charged with public order crimes.

"The deputies did a great job in apprehending the fugitive," Columbia County Sheriff Wallace Kitchings said. "It was a great cooperation between agencies, which paid off and resulted in Mr. White's capture." Suwannee County Sheriff Sam St. John also offered praise to the agencies that assisted in the investigation and

apprehension of White.

"It was a really good outcome," Sheriff St. Johns said. "Our deputies, along with others, were able to get a bad guy who was terrorizing people off the street. I just want to emphasize the team effort and the people who lived in the area for coming forward with information. This outcome was what we needed."

Santa Rosa County Sheriff Bob Johnson also commended the cooperation of the agencies in apprehending White. "Together, we are making Florida communities safer," Sheriff Johnson said.

89-year-old

Cont. from page 1

Officer Taylor spoke with the victim's mother, who explained that the confrontation began when she heard someone yelling outside. She and another neighbor checked to see what the commotion was, and found Bell walking his dog. When they confronted Bell, he yelled at them, saying he was trying to keep his dog, who was not on a leash, from chasing a cat. Bell continued to yell at the two when the victim finally confronted Bell. The victim's mother confirmed that Bell had struck her daughter with a cane and that he had grabbed her and fallen to the ground. She had a laceration on her left hand, as well as a bruised left wrist.

After speaking with the victims, Officer Taylor also talked to the neighbor who had witnessed the incident. She was able to verify their story.

Officer Taylor then spoke with Bell. According to the report, he stated he was trying to catch his dog because it was chasing the neighbor's cat. He said that, after securing his dog, four women confronted him about his dog chasing their cat, and that the women were pushing him around. He then stated that he did use his cane to defend himself against the women.

After reviewing security footage provided to him, Officer Taylor was able to determine that the two victims' story was accurate and that Bell had provided a false statement. Bell was arrested and charged with two counts of aggravated battery with a deadly weapon. He was transported to the Suwannee County Jail, where he later bonded out on Friday, Jan. 31, on a \$20,000 bond.

Jail Report

Lafayette County

Jan. 28

Michelle Hall, violation of probation
possession of marijuana over 20 grams, drug equipment possession, control substance without prescription

Hamilton County

Jan. 27

Michelle Oprean Macdonald, withhold support
Raquis Nyquil Daniels, probation violation
Jashaun Devontae House, out-of-county warrant

Jan. 28

Kenneth Lamar Rawls Jr., out-of-county warrant
Jessica Lauren Tyre, probation violation
Henry Lee Pyle, driving under the influence

Jan. 30

Gabriel Alej Acacio Rodriguez, drugs possession, drug equipment possession
Milage James Harris, out-of-county warrant

Feb. 2

Wylie Jerard Gresham, moving traffic violation, resist officer without violence
Kalin Javon Timmons, battery

Feb. 2

Eric Quincy Thomas, probation violation
Albert Bernard Pierce, out-of-county warrant

Suwannee County

Jan. 27

Joshua Vernest Smith, probation violation
Eric Antonia Akins, cocaine possession, drug equipment possession

Jan. 28

Frederick Jonathan Hill, moving traffic violation
Maxel Deangelo Baggs, probation violation
Benjamin Ralph Bell, aggravated battery

Jan. 29

Amy Marie Norris, driving under the influence
Breanna Smith Kirkland, battery
Adam Christopher Butler, possession of stolen property, fail to obey police or fire department
Jose Concepcion Cuellar Lopez, failure to appear
Kevin Wayne McCage, failure to appear
Donna Gaylard Hall, possession of controlled substance

Jan. 30

John Andrew Wilson, larceny, damage property criminal mischief, probation violation, two counts of burglary
Alejandro Hernandez Cruz, moving traffic violation, driving under the influence
Roger Enrique Caceras, trespassing
Benjamin Dale Register,

probation violation
Robert Lewis Sneed, aggravated assault

Jan. 31

Milage James Harris, moving traffic violation
Joshua Aaron Eckenrod, drugs possession, drug equipment possession, out-of-county warrant
Ana Fabiola Camama-Rodriguez, petit theft
Rebecca Lynn Heston, trespassing, resist officer without violence
Selenia E. Baez Chacon, moving traffic violation
Michael Larone McQuay, driving under the influence

Feb. 1

Johnny Burnette Pettet, battery
James Ryan Conway, driving under the influence
Christopher Aaron Williams, withhold support
Andrew Junior Williams, two counts deal in stolen property, petit theft
Bryant Matthew Jerkins, out-of-county warrant

Feb. 2

Jessica Leigh Ray, probation violation
Timothy Lyle Coons, out-of-state fugitive
Thomas Alvin Pipkin, battery, driving under the influence, resist officer without violence

Feb. 3

Stephanie Erin Bass, failure to appear

In Loving Memory

Marion Irene Waterman Blake

Marion Irene Waterman Blake passed away peacefully on Thursday, Jan. 23, 2025, while under hospice care.

Marion is survived by her son, John, his wife, Bonnie, and her two granddaughters, Katherine and Sarah. She is also survived by her son, Jason and his wife, Jacqueline.

A funeral service will be held on Saturday, Feb. 22, 2025, at 11 a.m. at the First Advent Christian Church in Live Oak, Fla. Burial will take place in Sheffield, Vt., at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Haven Hospice of Lake City.

Dewey Herman Shaw

Dewey Herman Shaw passed away peacefully on Thursday, Jan. 23, 2025, at his home in Mayo, Fla. Herman was born in Shamrock, Fla., to Dewey and Edna Raulerson Shaw on Sept. 25, 1931. After graduating from Lafayette High School, Herman enlisted with the United States Army and was stationed at Fort Jackson, S.C. Upon receiving an honorable discharge, he and Helen returned to work on the family farm. In 1960, Herman began a career as an insurance agent with Farm Bureau, serving both Lafayette and Taylor Counties for 25 years. Herman was a member of the Mayo Rotary Club, serving as president for two terms. Herman, along with his wife, Helen, and children, operated the family farm, growing tobacco and watermelons and raising beef cattle; upon retirement, Herman enjoyed hunting, fishing and growing a bountiful vegetable garden for his family and friends.

Herman was an active member of the Alton Church of God. He served as church clerk and as a member of the church council. Herman and Helen had a heart for world missions as they supported numerous missionary endeavors locally and around the world.

Herman was preceded in death by his wife of 70 years, Helen Odom Shaw; parents, Dewey and Edna Shaw; brothers, Gary Shaw and Wyatt Shaw; and sisters, Elaine Lancaster, Demetria Hewitt and Malinda Morgan.



Herman is survived by his son, Mike (Freda) Shaw and daughters, Pam (Fred) Ward and Robin (Randy) Smith; eight grandchildren, Keith (Melissa) Shaw, Kyle (Darby) Shaw, Keri (Tyler) Dykes, Kody (Madison) Shaw, Phillip (Heather) Ward, Jill (Zeb) Bowdoin, Samantha (Joey) Chamberlain, Cameron (Alyssa) Smith; 18 great-grandchildren, Michaela (Jerrett) Kandzer, Kaypers, Tucker and Emerson Shaw, Ellery and Ethan Dykes, Wade and Worth Shaw, Davis and Ayla Ward, Noah, Beau, Myles and Amelia Bowdoin, Madison, Bria and Abigail Chamberlain and Sawyer Smith; and one great-great-grandchild, Caroline Kandzer; sisters, Freida Chesser and Gail Henderson; and a host of nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held on Sunday, Jan. 26, 2025, at 3 p.m. at Alton Church of God with reverends Jeremy Davis, Timothy Hamm and Jimmy Legg officiating. Interment services followed immediately afterward in the church cemetery. The family received friends beginning at the church prior to the service. In lieu of flowers, those who wish may send a memorial donation to Taunton Family Children's Home, PO Box 870, Wewahitchka, Fla. 32465 or Haven Hospice, 4200 NW 90th Blvd, Gainesville, Fla. 32606. All arrangements are under the direction of Burns Funeral Home of Perry.

Fundraising event for Evangeline McKenna coming soon

Jason Futch
reporter2.riverbendnews@gmail.com

As the family of 7-year-old Evangeline McKenna continues to hold on to hope for a miracle, the community is once again coming together to help support her fight against rhabdomyosarcoma (RMS).

The Dance Shop, in partnership with the Live Oak Police Department, is hosting a basket raffle and chicken dinner, which will raise funds for McKenna's medical, travel and financial expenses.

The chicken dinner will be held at The Dance Shop on Friday, Feb. 21, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tickets will be sold in advance at The Dance



Evangeline McKenna

Shop and the Live Oak Police Department. The tickets for the dinner will be \$10 each, while raffle tickets will be sold at \$5 each. Anyone wishing to donate towards the raffle can also drop items off at either location.

For the raffle, the following baskets are being requested to be raffled off: picnic baskets, baking baskets, girls' and boys' toy/play baskets, family movie night baskets, spa baskets, tool baskets, date night baskets, game baskets, grill baskets and gardening baskets.

For more information, contact The Dance Shop at (386) 362-1906 or the Live Oak Police Department at (386) 362-7463. To purchase tickets or make a donation through CashApp, send them to \$tds339.

Mayo Woman's Club to host chili cookoff, silent auction and bingo

Jason Futch
reporter2.riverbendnews@gmail.com

The Mayo Woman's Club has announced that it is hosting its inaugural fundraising event, which will consist of a chili cook-off, silent auction and bingo. The event will be held at the Alton Church of God on Saturday, March 1.

The chili cook-off and raffle will begin at 11 a.m., and there will be multiple chili entries. There will be awards for first, second and third place winners, as well as a people's choice winner. A raffle will also be held, which will include baskets and a 50-50 raffle.

The Mayo Woman's Club requests that entrants wishing to participate in the chili cook-off sign up before Saturday, Feb. 22. The

entry fee is \$25 and \$10 to judge the chili, which also includes a meal. To sign up for the event, use the QR code accompanying this article.

Following the chili cook-off, at 2 p.m., the Mayo Woman's Club will also be hosting bingo. The game will include 15 cards, payouts and bonus games. The entry fee to play bingo is \$15, and participants may bring

their own daubers or purchase one from the Mayo Woman's Club for \$1.

For questions about the fundraising event, call (352) 540-8606. The Alton Church of God is located at 2365 U.S. 27, in Mayo.



Community Calendar

Email reporter3.riverbendnews@gmail.com or call us at (386) 364-4141 with any events you would like to be included in next weeks edition of the Riverbend News.

Tuesdays - Sundays

“You want to drink? That’s your business. You want to stop? That’s our business.” Join Live Oak’s Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) group to discover a new way of life. Regular Live Oak AA meetings are held each week at 7 p.m., Tuesdays through Saturdays. Men only meetings are held each Sunday at 8 a.m., and are followed by women only meetings at 4 p.m. The group also holds Al-Anon and AlaTeen meetings every Sunday at 2 p.m., which are open to friends and family of all ages. Each session will be held in the building next to the Suwannee County Health Department at 911 Nobles Ferry Rd., in Live Oak.

Wednesday, Feb. 5 and Thursday, Feb. 6

Let TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) help you with your weight management goals. TOPS is a weight-loss support group that meets weekly on Wednesdays and Thursdays. TOPS will meet on Wednesday, Feb. 5, at 9:15 a.m. at Grace Lutheran Church, located at 9989 CR 136, in Live Oak. The group then meets on Thursday, Feb. 6, at 9 a.m. at First Advent Christian Church, located at 699 Pinewood Dr. SW, in Live Oak. For more information, call (386) 362-5933 or (386) 362-5995.

Wednesday, Feb. 5 – Wednesday, March 26

Many older adults experience concerns about falling and restrict their activities. “A Matter of Balance” is an award-winning program designed to manage falls and increase activity levels. This free eight-week program, hosted by the UF/IFAS Suwannee Extension, emphasizes practical strategies to manage falls. Participants learn to view falls as controllable, set goals for increasing activity, make changes to reduce fall risks, and exercise to increase strength and balance. Each class runs from 10 a.m. to noon and meets each Wednesday. Space is limited to 12 people. To register or learn more information, contact Sandra Wainwright at (386) 362-2771.

Friday, Feb. 7

Tribute artists Jim Fields and Rowdy Johnston will be performing Elvis classics at Wellborn Baptist Church beginning at 6:30 p.m. Dinner will be served during the show, and a cake auction will follow. Funds raised through the cake auction and donations will support the church's kids and youth worship groups. Wellborn Baptist Church is located at 4146 Lowe Lake Rd.

Saturday, Feb. 8

Join Suwannee Hardware & Feed for its monthly Community Street Sale. Find an array of vendors selling an assortment of animals, arts and crafts, produce, antiques, plants, yard sale items and more. The fee to set up as a vendor is \$10. Vendors should bring their own tables, chairs, tents and cash for change. Call (386) 397-2551 to reserve your spot. The sale will run from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. outside Suwannee Hardware & Feed, located at 10572 Bridge St., in White Springs.

Saturday, Feb. 8

The White Springs Historic Preservation Society invites the community to gather for a dedication of Suwannee Hardware & Feed's newest mural, which is being painted by Christian Stanley. The dedication will begin around 3:30 p.m. at the hardware store, located at 10572 Bridge St., in White Springs.

Tuesday, Feb. 11

Join Hearthstone Gardens to learn how to remove rust and sharpen your gardening tools. Bring two to three tools of your choice to work on. Materials, except for tools, will be provided. The cost to attend this workshop is \$15. Call (386) 438-3102 to reserve a spot. Hearthstone Gardens is located at 330 134th Pl., in Wellborn.

Suwannee River Breast Cancer Awareness Association hosts Open Bass Tournament

Jason Futch
reporter2.riverbendnews@gmail.com

The Suwannee River Breast Cancer Awareness Association, Inc. (SRBCAA) will be hosting an Open Bass Fishing Tournament on Saturday, Feb. 8, at Sandy Point, located at 29685 59th Dr., in Branford, beginning at safe light until 3 p.m. It is an opportunity for fishermen and women from across North Florida to win big while raising money for a good cause.

The SRBCAA has announced that the top 10 catches will be guaranteed cash prizes, with the first-place winner earning \$5,000, while 10th place will receive \$450. A big bass will also give participants an opportunity to win big. For every boat that enters, \$10 of the fee will go towards the Big Bass Pot, plus \$500 from the SRBCAA. The Big Bass Pot will guarantee a 100 percent payout.

Each boat entry costs \$100 to take part in the fishing tournament.

The SRBCAA stated that during the tournament, the Waccasassa and Steinhatchee Rivers are off-limits to fishing.

To pre-register, visit www.suwanneeawareness.com. For more information about the tournament and learn more about additional rules, contact Donnie Feagle at (386) 365-1191. All proceeds raised at the tournament will go toward the SRBCAA’s mission in its fight against cancer.



Photo courtesy of Angels of Care Pediatric Home Health
Jovanni

Jason Futch
reporter2.riverbendnews@gmail.com

The Angels of Care Pediatric Home Health made a recruitment post on social media seeking nurses to assist a Jennings child in need.

Jovanni, a 4-year-old who has epilepsy, a trach, a ventilator and a gastrostomy tube and button, is in need of a nurse who is available from 7:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. to help take care of him. “Jovanni is a precious, brave little boy who loves to snuggle with

his blanket and spend time with his little sister,” the Angels of Care Pediatric Home Health said.

The Angels of Care Pediatric Home Health shared that it is seeking Registered Nurses and Licensed Practical Nurses to apply for the position to help care for Jovanni.

To learn more about this opportunity, contact the Angels of Care Pediatric Home Health recruiting team at (844) 384-2567. To apply for the position, scan the QR code accompanying this article.



Suwannee Bicycle Association looking for volunteers

Christian Peterson
reporter.riverbendnews@gmail.com

The Suwannee Bicycle Association (SBA) is an easily missed organization in the Suwannee Valley area, not because it’s a small group but because its members are usually deep in the natural world, enjoying the beauty around them.

However, that doesn’t mean they aren’t assisting with events for all kinds of people to enjoy. Recently, the group put out a request for those interested in volunteering opportunities.

Some of the events that the SBA puts on or helps with include the Florida Trail FEST from Friday,

Feb. 7 to Sunday, Feb. 9, historic property signage installation, the Florida Folk Festival, the Sugar Cane Festival and a plethora of fundraisers. Not to mention, the group participates in the world-famous IDIDARIDE. Now, as the SBA grows, it is continually looking for new ways to increase its impact in the community. Individuals interested in volunteering or becoming a member of the SBA can reach out to Sharon Shea at

sharonallen.shea@gmail.com. “We’ve got a big year ahead of us,” the organization wrote in a Facebook post. “It would be wonderful to increase our board members.

Reach out if you are interested or if you have any ideas as we move into

2025. Hope to see you there! Not a member? Now is a great time to join!”



Suwannee Valley Unsolved and SCSO hosts forensic training

Jason Futch
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On Tuesday, Jan. 21, Suwannee Valley Unsolved, Inc. (SVU) and the Suwannee County Sheriff’s Office (SCSO) put together a training session, hosting DNA Labs International (DLI) to provide information on new techniques being offered to help solve some of the areas most challenging cases.

Dave Nutting and Greg Thomas, both experienced homicide investigators who retired from the Orange County Sheriff’s Office and Hillsborough County Sheriff’s Office, respectively, shared with investigators from various agencies key methods being used to solve cases nationwide. The free event was open to law enforcement agencies only.

The discussions mainly centered around methods being used to recover DNA from porous and non-porous objects, bullet shell casings, and a technique known as M-VAC, which is used to recover DNA from difficult-to-access surfaces and is collected in a filter. The discussion also educated investigators on various grants available for funding through the state, national and private levels.



Photo courtesy of Suwannee Valley Unsolved, Inc.

Investigators with the Suwannee County Sheriff’s Office, Lafayette County Sheriff’s Office, Baker County Sheriff’s Office, Florida Highway Patrol and Alachua County Sheriff’s Office listen as Dave Nutting and Greg Thomas present information on DNA Labs International.

Discussions also touched on forensic genetic genealogy, a forensic tool that has been utilized to solve some of America’s most challenging cold cases. One of the first cases solved by this method was the case of the Golden State Killer, Joseph James DeAngelo, in California. Since then, the technique has been used not only to solve cold cases but also to identify previously unidentified decedents. DLI currently offers this method.

DLI is a private, third-party laboratory based in Deerfield Beach, Fla., and is accredited by the ANSI National Accreditation Board (ANAB) and meets requirements as set by the International Organization for Standardization and Federal Bureau of Investigation Quality Assurance Standards.

The two-hour training was attended by the SCSO, which also provided the venue at the Emergency Operations Center, Lafayette County Sheriff’s Office, Baker County Sheriff’s Office, Alachua County Sheriff’s Office and the Florida Highway Patrol.

To learn more about DLI and its work, visit www.dnalabsinternational.com.

Photo courtesy of Suwannee Valley Unsolved, Inc.

Dave Nutting with DNA Labs International shares information about the program’s ongoing efforts to educate area law enforcement about new techniques being used to help solve homicide and sexual assault cases.



**ASK DOCTORS
HIGGINS AND WHITE
PRIMER ON IMPLANTS**

Q: What is a dental implant?
A: Dentistry has come a long way from the days of George Washington and his wooden choppers. One of the best ways to replace a missing tooth or teeth these days is with a dental implant. Implants are generally preferable to dentures in that they don't slip. That makes talking and chewing easier. What's implanted is a pin, usually made of titanium. The pin goes into your jaw. It acts as a replacement root to support an artificial tooth. Inserting the pin is a procedure normally done under local anesthesia. Not everyone, however, is a candidate for an implant. For one thing, you have to have enough bone in the jaw to support the implant. If you don't have enough bone, under some conditions the dentist might be able to graft bone. Gum condition is also a consideration when determining if some one is a viable candidate for an implant.

Even if you have implants, you'll want to continue regular visits to the dentist. For one thing, the dentist will want to check regularly on the condition of the implant and of the tissue in the immediate area of the work. For instance, tissue near the implant might not have as much blood flow as tissue elsewhere in your mouth, and therefore could be more susceptible to infection. Talk with your dentist about whether you're a candidate for an implant.

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LAFAYETTE COUNTY TOXIC ROUND-UP EVENT COLLECTS HAZARDOUS WASTE ALACHUA COUNTY HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE DEPARTMENT

Alachua County Household Hazardous Waste Department
Contributor

The Alachua County Household Hazardous Waste Department (ACHHWD), in partnership with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the Lafayette County Commission, will sponsor a FREE "Toxic Round-Up" collection event to properly dispose of and/or recycle common household waste items that cannot be collected curbside. Residents can bring hazardous waste items to the Mayo Community Center, located at 176 SW Community Cir., on Saturday, Feb. 8, between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Household hazardous waste can be toxic to the public and pose a threat to the environment if improperly discarded. In 2024, almost four TONS of waste (7,890 pounds) was collected and neutralized at the Lafayette County event alone. The ACHHWD processed over 121 TONS of hazardous waste in 2024 from the

Toxic Round-Up mobile collection events.

A total of nine Toxic Round-Up events are scheduled for 2025, serving residents on the following dates: Gilchrist (Feb. 1), Lafayette (Feb. 8), Bradford (Feb. 22), Baker (March 1), Union (March 8), Dixie (March 15), Columbia (March 29), Putnam (April 12) and Nassau (April 19).

Please use the following as a helpful guideline for items that will be accepted:

- Aerosol cans.
- Antifreeze.
- Automotive fluids – brake fluid, automatic transmission fluid, lubricants, etc.
- Batteries – automotive batteries, lead-acid, Ni-Cd, rechargeable, etc.
- E-waste – computers, TVs, microwaves, radios and other electronic waste.
- Fluorescent lamps and tubes, CFL and LED bulbs.
- Household cleaners, degreasers and solvents.

- Fertilizers, pesticides and insecticides (solid or liquid).
- Paint, paint thinner and other waste/paint-related materials.
- Propane tanks.
- Fire extinguishers.
- Non-controlled pharmaceuticals (pills and liquid) and over-the-counter medications.
- Gasoline and fuels.
- Used oil and used oil filters, shop rags and absorbents.
- Flares and ammunition.
- Used vegetable oil.
- Sharps in hard plastic containers – syringes, needles, lancets, insulin pens, etc., used or unused.

For safety, all containers must be labeled. Use a tub or tarp to contain any potential spills in vehicles. If possible, drive with a well-ventilated cab and the windows open. For everyone's safety, participants should remain in their vehicles and allow staff to remove any disposable items.

NOTICE: Trash and/or recyclables will not be accepted at the Toxic Round-Up events.

Asbestos, explosives, reactives and/or radioactive, infectious or biohazardous wastes will not be accepted. Tires will not be accepted.

For any questions or concerns about the handling of additional wastes (which are not listed here or which cannot be accepted at this event), call Alachua County Household Hazardous Waste Collection at (352) 334-0440, option #2, prior to the event.

All Lafayette County residents and small businesses are welcome! The event is FREE for residents; however, the Alachua County Solid Waste and Resource Recovery Department must assess small businesses a nominal fee for eligible quantities of all aforementioned waste items. Small businesses may contact (352) 334-0440 for more information about associated fees and program availability.

For more information and a full list of accepted items, call Seth Jackson from Lafayette Public Works at (386) 208-2795 or visit www.alachuacountyhazwaste.us.

Walk down memory lane – Dr. Hugo Sotolongo

John Medina
Contributor

I remember arriving in Live Oak, Fla., in 1974 as a 10-year-old immigrant from the Dominican Republic and not being able to speak English. Prior to starting school at Suwannee Elementary School, I had to visit a doctor and get the required immunization. That's when I first met Dr. Hugo Sotolongo, one of the few doctors in Live Oak and an immigrant from Cuba. Finally, I'd met someone I could understand. While he has always been small in stature, I would come to see him as a giant in so many ways over the next 50+ years.

The Physician - In those days, small-town doctors addressed every facet of human physiology. As such, Dr. Sotolongo was an OB/GYN (delivered my wife, Dee Dee), pediatrician (took care of many children, including my brother and me), orthopedic (mended many bones), general practitioner (took care of my mother), geriatrics (took care of my grandmother and great-grandmother), etc. In short, Dr. Sotolongo was a, if not, the primary physician and surgeon for our entire community.

The Father and Husband - Dr. Sotolongo was married to the love of his life, Priscila, until her passing in 2021. They met while in Cuba and arrived in Live Oak in 1955. They were married 70 years and raised five children, Hugo, Carlos, Prissy, Bobby and David, in Live Oak. After his almost 50-year career as a physician, Dr. Sotolongo retired and soon moved to Durham, N.C., to be closer to their adult children and grandchildren. In both Live Oak and Durham, the Sotologos were very active in the Catholic church. Faith, family, friends, service to those in need, community and education were key foundations for their family. I was able to meet four of their five children and attest that the Sotologos's values, character and spirit are alive and well. What a great testament to the legacy of Dr. Sotolongo and Priscilla.

The Business Leader - First Federal Saving and Loan of Live Oak (now First Federal Bank) was founded by John Flood in 1962. Flood asked Dr. Sotolongo to be a member of First Federal Bank's founding Board of

Directors. For the next 30+ years, Dr. Sotolongo served on the board and was instrumental in the company's early growth. During his board tenure, First Federal Bank grew from \$1 million in total assets to over \$100 million in total assets. Today,

thanks to the leadership and legacy of great leaders like Dr. Sotolongo, First Federal Bank is a \$4 billion bank helping clients throughout the USA.

Today - At the age of 101, Dr. Sotolongo is the only remaining founding board member of First Federal Bank. He is still living in Durham, N.C., and is frequently visited by his family. I recently had the high honor of visiting Dr. Sotolongo and was able to express my/our profound appreciation for his many years of service to humanity, our community, First Federal Bank and, yes, for caring for multiple generations of my family. We discussed old Cuba, Live Oak (then and now), the bank, his former friends and patients, and the good he has done in this world. He is still gregarious as ever and small in stature, but as much of a giant today as he has been his entire life.



Photo courtesy of John Medina
Taken by S. Weigel, this photo depicts the First Federal Saving and Loan Association of Live Oak's 1990 Board of Directors. Pictured in the back row, from left to right, are: John H. McCormick, Dr. Hugo Sotolongo, Daniel Chandler and Keith Leibfried. Pictured in the front row, from left to right, are: Philip Moses, Jr. and Duke McCallister, Sr.



Photo courtesy of John Medina
Taken by S. Weigel, this photo depicts the First Federal Saving and Loan Association of Live Oak's 1976 Board of Directors. Pictured, from left to right, are: Dr. Hugo Sotolongo, Vice President Duke McCallister, Sr., Seward Fleet, Assistant Vice President Keith Leibfried, President John S. Flood, Secretary and Council Alfred T. Airth, John McCormick and Treasurer Daniel Chandler.



Photo courtesy of John Medina
John Medina (left) and Dr. Hugo Sotolongo (right) smile for a photo.

Don't let safety slip away, get on board with the W.H.A.L.E. Check

Jason Futch
reporter2.riverbendnews@gmail.com

Local law enforcement have made a goal of educating the community about the importance of keeping children buckled up and in proper seating while in a moving vehicle. This effort, in partnership with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), aims to keep children safe and reduce fatal injuries to children should they be involved in a car accident.

The W.H.A.L.E. (We Have a Little Problem) Check is a method that families can use to ensure that children remain safe inside a moving vehicle. The following are five smart safety tips to help prevent injuries:

- 1. Wear safety belts.** Studies show that if adults wear their seat belt, kids will too.
- 2. Follow the manufacturer's instructions.** Always check the manual for both your car and the child safety seat for proper installation guides.
- 3. Ensure the seat belt is strapped in tight.** Guardians should not be able to move the car seat more than one inch in any direction at the belt path. Be sure to always use the top tether when forward facing.
- 4. Make sure the chest clip is at armpit level and the harness is snug.** Straps should be tight enough so that the fabric of the harness at the shoulders cannot be pinched.
- 5. The back seat is safest.**

Children aged 13 and under should sit in the back seat. Older children no longer need a special seat if their legs bend comfortably at the seat's edge with their back resting flat against the back of the seat.

To learn more about the W.H.A.L.E. Check program, visit trafficsafetyteam.org/whale-check-program.

Church Directory

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

Apostolic Lighthouse Church

10344 CR 10A, Live Oak, Fla.
(386) 365-8506

Pastor Dustin Bell

Sunday School.....10:00 a.m.
Worship.....11:00 a.m.
Evening Worship.....6:00 p.m.
THURSDAY
Evening Worship.....7:00 p.m.

First Methodist Church of Live Oak

311 South Ohio Ave., Live Oak, Fla.
(386) 362-2047

Pastor Bill Payne P.H.D.
COME JOIN US IN WORSHIP!
SUNDAY

Sunday School.....10:00 a.m.
Traditional Worship.....11:00 a.m.

Lighthouse Christian Center

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(386) 294-3089 Mayo, Fla.
www.lcamayo.org
SUNDAY

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

Live Oak Christian Church

1015 Ohio Ave. N., Live Oak, Fla. (386) 362-1085
Scott McNeely, 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 the Nazarene

915 Church Ave. SW, Live Oak, Fla.
(386) 362-6380

Pastor Louis Medaris
SUNDAY

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

Live Oak First Assembly of God

13793 76th St., Live Oak Fla.
(386) 330-2210

Rev. Mike Townsend
SUNDAY

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

St. Therese Catholic Church

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

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

The Village Church at Advent Christian Village

Rev. Sam Worley, Pastor

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

Friendship Baptist Church

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

Reverend Marshall Faulkenberry, Pastor
SUNDAY

Sunday School9:45 a.m.
Morning Service.....11:00 a.m.
Evening Service.....6:00 p.m.
WEDNESDAY
Church Dinner5:45 p.m.
AWANA6:30 p.m.
Prayer Meeting.....7:00 p.m.

Journey Church offers help for church members’ summer camp

Christian Peterson
reporter.riverbendnews@gmail.com

Journey Church in Mayo has announced its summer camp options for its members. “This year, students will have the choice to attend one of two camps. Of course, you may attend both camps if you wish, but our fundraisers will only help provide funds for one camp of your choice,” a Facebook post from the church reads.

The two camp options are Camp Realife in Vero Beach, which runs from Monday, July 7, through Friday, July 11, and Camp Suwannee in Dowling Park which takes place from Saturday, July 13, to Saturday, July 19. The camps are available for students in grades six through 12 and leaders who actively attend Journey Church and have good conduct and character.

Camp Realife costs \$375 per person, which covers lodging, camp activities, meals and a camp t-shirt. Camp Suwannee costs \$400 per person for lodging, camp activities, meals and a camp t-shirt. Interested parties should note that a \$60 deposit is due by Sunday, Feb. 23. To learn more about Camp Realife, visit www.realife.org. To learn more about Camp Suwannee, visit www.campsuwanneecamps.org.

Journey Church is also offering a fundraiser for its students, both individuals and groups. Either the parents or students, or preferably both, must participate in the fundraiser. Any money earned from

the fundraiser goes to camp accounts only, it cannot be cashed in or refunded. However, funds can be transferred to another student or chaperone. Additionally, funds will not contribute to the initial deposit.

“Please note that our policy is to help any student with financial hardship get to camp,” the church wrote. “We don’t ever want a student to miss the opportunity to go to camp because of money. However, please understand that we will only help those students or families who make an effort to help themselves. If a student does not participate in any fundraising efforts, that student should not expect to have their camp paid for.

The church also encourages students to seek out creative ways to earn money for camp. They offer a couple of ideas, to help find odd jobs, such as babysitting, pet sitting, yard cleanup and car washing; having a yard sale or selling items on Facebook or eBay; making something, such as a craft or food item to sell; setting up a personal camp donations campaign, such as GoFundMe on social media; and giving lessons on something, such as an instrument, or offering tutoring services in a subject.

A brilliant idea is to start saving now. If a family saves \$50 each month, they will have enough for camp by the time it comes. “We are super excited for summer camp this year! Camp is about more than just going and having a good time (although we do that!). Camp allows us a dedicated time to specifically draw

Help provided for the cold by local church

Christian Peterson
reporter.riverbendnews@gmail.com

Have you ever heard of CarePortal? The company was created in December 2013 to connect kids in crisis with churches that can help them. Since then, the organization has worked diligently to connect with churches all over the nation to help children who are in need. It works in just a few simple steps. Step one is “uncovering needs. A child or family in need requires help from a child-serving professional.” Step two is “submitting needs. The child-serving professional vets and types needs into CarePortal.” Step three is “sharing needs. CarePortal alerts nearby churches and community members to needs.” Step four, the final step, is “meeting needs. Churches and community members partner to ensure that the child and family is helped.”

The strategy has clearly been working, as Journey Church of Mayo was one of the churches that the group had partnered with, as well as The Nest North Florida. Due to this partnership, three different children in Mayo were able to get the help they needed. Journey Church was made aware of three teenage boys in low-income situations; all three were in need of coats during the recent cold spell. A request was sent to CarePortal, and almost instantly, the request was fulfilled, and all three boys received what they needed.

“Shout out to Journey Church for making the connection and being the hands and feet of Jesus,” CarePortal wrote in a Facebook post. “Churches, agencies and donors: imagine how many lives you can impact when needs are met exactly when they’re needed most. CarePortal connects real-time needs with those ready to respond, creating moments of hope and dignity for families.”

To learn more about CarePortal, visit www.carePortal.org. To learn more about Journey Church, visit its Facebook page by searching “Journey Church – Mayo, Florida.” To learn more about The Nest North Florida, visit www.thenestnorthflorida.org.

Elvis coming to support Wellborn Baptist Church youth ministry

Jason Futch
reporter2.riverbendnews@gmail.com

Aloha, Wellborn! Get ready for a memorable trip down memory lane on Friday, Feb. 7, at 6:30 p.m., as Elvis makes an appearance at Wellborn Baptist Church for its “Elvis: Aloha From Wellborn Dinner Show and Cake Auction.”

The event will feature Elvis tribute artists Jim Fields and Rowdy Johnson as they perform classics

from the King of Rock’s songbook. The event is free to attend, however, donations are appreciated. Funds raised for the event will help support the church’s youth ministry, including the youth camps they sponsor.

Dinner will be served during the event, and a cake auction will also be taking place.

For more information, contact Wellborn Baptist Church at (386) 963-2231. Wellborn Baptist Church is located at 4146 Lowe Lake Rd., in Wellborn.

Photo courtesy of EP Continentals
Jim Fields, along with Rowdy Johnson, will be bringing Elvis to Wellborn Baptist Church on Friday, Feb. 7, to support the Wellborn Baptist Church youth ministry.



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Now Hiring: Nursery Workers for First Baptist Church of Live Oak, FL

First Baptist Church is seeking caring and responsible nursery workers to help care for children aged 0-4 years during our Sunday & Wednesday services and occasional church events. This is a paid position.

To apply or learn more, please contact First Baptist Church at **386-362-1583** or go to fbcliveoak.org/jobapplication.



To celebrate Black History Month, *Riverbend News* will highlight a person or location each week that has had a positive impact on our communities over the years.

How Black History Month began

Hailey Heseltine
reporter3.riverbendnews@gmail.com

As February begins, along with it comes the beginning of another notable time—Black History Month.

Black History Month exists as a time to recognize history and culture that has often been historically silenced or less heard and represented in general. The month of February has been officially recognized as Black History Month nationwide since 1976, making 2024 its 48th year.

Its journey to becoming nationally recognized began in the early 20th century, with author and historian Dr. Carter G. Woodson, also known as "the father of Black history;" he founded the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) in 1915.

Dr. Woodson was born to a family of former slaves in 1875. From a young age, he demonstrated an intense passion for gaining knowledge, and though he spent most of his childhood working on the family farm and in coal mines, that passion could not be crushed. He educated himself until he was able to attend high school at the age of twenty, which he was able to graduate from in less than two years. He then began his career as a teacher and principal and decided to advance his education at Berea College in Kentucky, where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in literature. Afterward, he lived a very eventful life, traveling the world and furthering his education all the while. He got his master's degree from the University of Chicago and then became the second Black man in history to earn a Ph.D. from Harvard. Afterward, he was even able to join Harvard faculty as the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Despite his success, Dr. Woodson experienced much injustice firsthand in his career. He noted that it seemed many of his contemporaries in the field of history showed little to no interest in Black history and purposely downplayed the achievements of Black Americans; they were missing the story of an entire people because of their ignorance. Dr. Woodson was determined to make a change, so he founded the ASALH with the specific intention of intensely studying Black history and honoring the accomplishments Black Americans made throughout it.

Part of his vision came into fruition in 1926 with the establishment of Black History Week, which was to be during the second week of each February; the specific week was selected to overlap with the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. During this week, Black history would be taught in schools to educate students on the meaningful contributions Black Americans made throughout history, in the hopes of those Americans finally getting recognition for their works. The goal was for that education to carry over into the population beyond just schools as well.

Though Dr. Woodson did not live to see it, as he died in 1950, Black History Week was later officially expanded to become Black History Month in 1976 by President Gerald Ford.

The tradition of Black History Month has continued to this day, as February is set to be a time of increasing awareness of Black history as well as recognizing the accomplishments of those who had not always gotten the recognition they deserved in the past. There are many interesting and meaningful stories to be found within Black history, and learning those stories is an essential part of forming a complete picture of American History as a whole.

During Black History Month, *Riverbend News* will be highlighting individuals throughout history who have left an impact on our counties in North Central Florida.

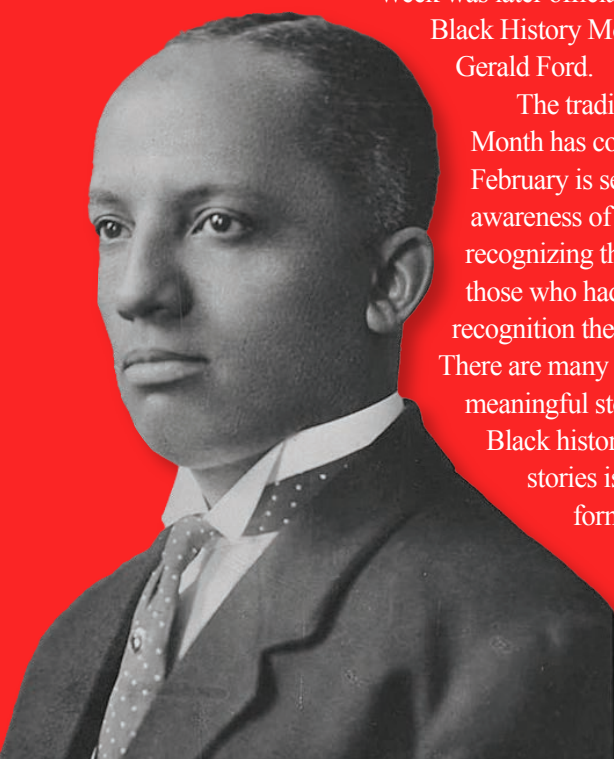


Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

Dr. Carter G. Woodson, known as "the father of Black history," was raised by a family of former slaves. Despite not receiving a formal education as a child, he was determined to grow in knowledge. He educated himself, graduated high school in less than two years and even went on to get a PhD from Harvard. Dr. Woodson created Black History Week, which later became Black History Month.





Photo courtesy of the Suwannee County School District
The Branford High School Beta Club traveled to Orlando to compete in the 83rd annual state convention. Of the 30 students that participated, 25 placed in the top three in their respective categories, advancing them to the national convention in June.

Branford High School Beta Club shines at 83rd Annual State Conference

Jason Futch
reporter2.riverbendnews@gmail.com

The Branford High School (BHS) Beta Club recently traveled to Orlando to participate in the 83rd Annual State Convention. On Saturday, Jan. 18, and Sunday, Jan. 19, 30 members of the club competed in a variety of events, including academic tests, speech, performing dance routines, engineering, performing living literature, art and

cake decorating.
Of the 30 students who participated in the weekend events, 25 placed in the top three in their respective categories. Additionally, BHS made history as Jon Weisner was elected Florida State Beta President, becoming the first-ever state Beta president from the school.
The 25 students that placed top three in their categories now have the opportunity to attend the national convention in June. Weisner will also

have the chance to run for national Beta president, representing Branford and Florida on the national stage. This event will also take place in Orlando.
“We are incredibly proud of our students for their hard work, talent and dedication,” BHS Beta Club sponsor Lindsey Ramsey said. “Thank you to the district for allowing my club and my students to participate in this amazing opportunity to build their character and learn to lead by serving others.”

Melody Christian Academy welcomes first grade teacher



Photo courtesy of Melody Christian Academy
Sophia Baldwin

Jason Futch
reporter2.riverbendnews@gmail.com
On Thursday, Jan. 23, Melody Christian Academy (MCA) welcomed Sophia Baldwin among its ranks. Baldwin comes to MCA with experience in elementary education, having substituted through multiple grades, worked as a small group teacher, and spent time working with MCA's pre-kindergarten class.
Baldwin will be teaching first grade at MCA, a role that she is looking forward to.
"Each experience in education has helped me develop a deep passion for fostering young minds and creating a positive, engaging learning environment," Baldwin said.
She obtained her Associate's Degree recently and is now pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education. Baldwin hopes to grow as an educator and wants to make a meaningful impact in each student's life.

All Our Kidz hosting Literacy Night



Photo Courtesy of the Florida Association of School Safety Specialists
Marjorie Cooks

Jason Futch
reporter2.riverbendnews@gmail.com

The Hamilton County non-profit organization All Our Kidz will be hosting a Literacy Night at McDonald's, located at 2964 CR 136, in White Springs on Wednesday, Feb. 19. The guest speaker for the evening will be Marjorie Cooks, who is a school safety and mental health specialist with the Hamilton County School District.
Kizzie Burch, founder of All Our Kidz, shared that the program is an effort to bring children together to read and improve on their studies. "It's a way for kids to come out, read a book and do their homework," Burch said. She added that the event is also a way to encourage higher test scores.
Symone Cooks, who manages the White Springs McDonalds, allowed the group to host its first Literacy Night in January. Cooks shares Burch's vision, as her partner, Alvin Hawkins, wanted to see more children come together and read. Sadly, Hawkins passed away in 2024. "It's a way to keep his memory alive," Burch said.
During the first Literacy Night event, students got together to honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, while Hamilton County School Board member Johnny Bullard recited Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech. Community leaders were present during the first event, which saw 30 kids from Suwannee, Hamilton and Columbia Counties.
To encourage more attendees, Burch said that McDonalds will be providing free meals to kids who participate in literacy night. Additionally, any student who brings the most "new students" with them will win a Kindle Fire.
For more information about the upcoming Literacy Night, visit the group's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/allourkidzinc.



Hometown Salute

Shalonda Francis

Shalonda Francis grew up in Live Oak, adapting to small-town life before enlisting in the United States Air Force in 2000. She served with pride for 20 years, retiring in 2021 as a Master Sergeant.

Francis began her training at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas, and then went on to serve at various Air Force bases across the country and overseas. One of her first assignments was at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, Ala. From there, she served at Robins, Keesler and Moody Air Force Bases. She also worked at Kunsan Air Base in Gunsan, South Korea, and later as a civilian contractor in Maryland.

While at Keesler Air Force Base, Francis worked as a records clerk, assisting President George W. Bush with intelligence regarding Saddam Hussein. Additionally, she collaborated with the Department of Defense to investigate service members involved in internet crimes.

As an Iraqi war Veteran, Francis was deployed to Iraq, Kyrgyzstan and Dubai. She described her experiences in Dubai as some of the highlights of her career.

“Coming from a small town and then interacting with people from around the world, I gained valuable insights and learned to respect the cultures I encountered,” Francis said. “I owe a special thanks to my first supervisor, Frank Harmon, for mentoring me and providing me with the tools I needed to succeed.”

If you would like to nominate a Veteran, contact Danny Federico at reporter3.riverbendnews@gmail.com.



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SOUND OF SUWANNEE TO PUT ON A SHOWCASE

Christian Peterson
reporter.riverbendnews@gmail.com

The Sound of Suwannee is doing everything it can to spread its love of the arts through the community. However, sometimes the tough work of these students goes unnoticed. This year, the public has another

opportunity to show its support for these kids. On Thursday, Feb. 6, the Sound of Suwannee will be hosting its Solo and Ensemble



Showcase. “Our students have worked diligently to have a great show planned for you,” the band wrote in a Facebook post. The event is open to everyone in the community.

The evening will begin with the auxiliary at 5:30 p.m. in the gym. Just a few short minutes later, the crowd will move into the auditorium for the music showcase. Doors will open at 5 p.m. A donation of \$5 is requested to benefit the program. Suwannee High School is located at 1314 Pine Ave., Sw in Live Oak.

Local students named to SNHU Fall 2025 Dean's and President's Lists

Danny Federico
reporter3.riverbendnews@gmail.com

Two area natives were recently named to Southern New Hampshire University's (SNHU) Fall 2025 Dean's and President's Lists. Richard Putnel, from Live Oak, was named to the Dean's List. This honor is given to full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average (GPA) of 3.500 to 3.699 for the reporting term.

Macy Hill, from Jasper, was named to the President's List, which is awarded to full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum GPA of 3.700 or higher for the reporting term. SNHU serves over 200,000 students worldwide, offering approximately 200 undergraduate, graduate and certificate programs available both online and on-campus. Recognized as one of the "Most Innovative" regional universities by U.S. News & World Report, SNHU is a private, nonprofit, accredited institution with 92 years of history. To learn more about SNHU, visit www.snhu.edu.

HCHS students welcome Dan Hartley, Field Representative for Congresswoman Kat Cammack

Tiffany Quintero
Contributor

Coach Patrick Murphy's seventh-grade Civics students at Hamilton County High School had the honor of welcoming Dan Hartley, Field Representative for Congresswoman Kat Cammack, to their classroom. This special visit provided students with a valuable opportunity to learn more about the nation's government and how it functions. Hartley was deeply impressed by his experience at HCHS, sharing, "The genuine interaction between Coach Murphy and his students showed me so much in one day. It was like watching a master painter create a beautiful picture on canvas. Coach Murphy displayed such genuine care and love for each student, making each one feel as though they were the most important person in the world." Hamilton County High School and the School District would like to thank Hartley for taking the time to meet with its students. A big thank you also goes to Coach Murphy for being such an inspiring teacher and to the students for their excellent behavior during the visit.



Photo courtesy of Hamilton County High School
Dan Hartley, Field Representative for Congresswoman Kat Cammack, spoke to the students in Coach Patrick Murphy's class.

Addison Morgan selected as 2025 SVEC Youth Tour Representative for HCHS



Photo courtesy of Hamilton County High School
Addison Morgan

Tiffany Quintero
Contributor

Hamilton County High School (HCHS) is proud to announce Addison Morgan has been selected as a 2025 Suwannee Valley Electric Coop (SVEC) Youth Tour Representative. Every February, SVEC sponsors an all-expense paid overnight tour of Tallahassee and the co-op's facilities in Live Oak for 10 high school juniors from the SVEC service territory. While in Tallahassee, participants will join students representing other

Florida electric co-ops on tours of important sites such as the State Capitol and the Florida Supreme Court. They will also meet with some state legislators and have an opportunity to engage in a mock bill debate on the floor of the Senate or House of Representatives. Representatives are chosen based on having a minimum 3.0 unweighted grade point average and the strength of their submitted essay on how cooperatives can reach out and engage with people of their generation. Congratulations, Addison!

Tripp Kirkland beats school basketball record

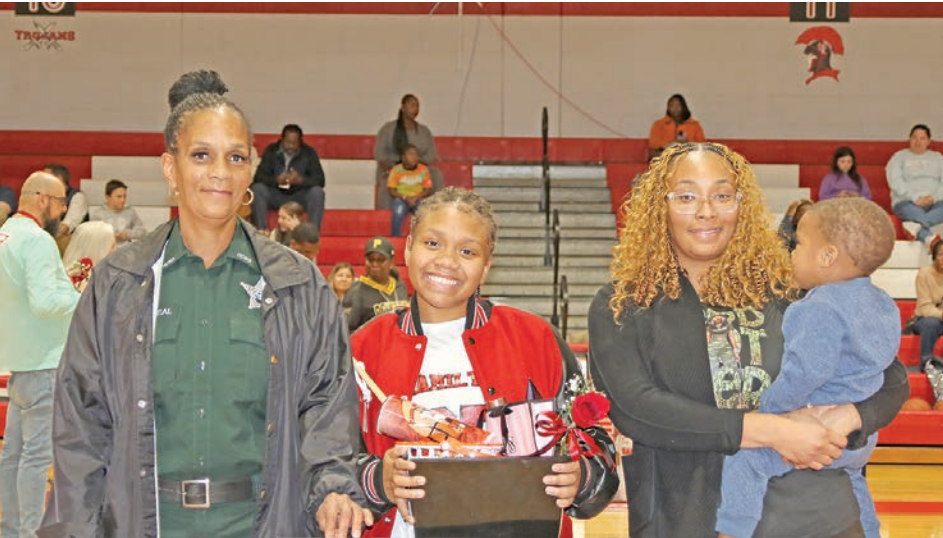


Photo courtesy of Westwood Christian School
Tripp Kirkland recently beat Westwood Christian School's basketball record. On Friday, Jan. 24, he scored 44 points, beating the previous record of 38 points, which was set by Josh Dyer in 2019. On top of that, Kirkland had a double-triple by scoring 44 points, 37 rebounds and 10 assists. “We’re proud of his accomplishments,” said head basketball coach Ben Kurz. “Tripp is a great athlete who is not only leading our team in season points, but also in rebounds, assists and blocks. What I really like about Tripp, though, is his humility. He is a true team player and is quick to deflect attention from himself and praise his teammates and coaches instead.”

Hamilton County High School honors basketball seniors in last home game

Lucy Golub
reporter3.riverbendnews@gmail.com

On Tuesday, Jan. 28, the Hamilton County High School Trojans competed against the Highland Christian Academy Eagles in basketball. The Trojans' girls and boys teams ended the night victorious and honored their senior athletes before the boys varsity game. Coaches and school leaders presented each athlete with gifts and hugs. They were escorted across the court with their close friends and family, while their goodbyes were read aloud to the fans in celebration of their accomplishments.



Riverbend News photo by Lucy Gulob, January 28, 2025
 Ashley Strickland (#25) was recognized alongside her family on Senior Night.



Riverbend News photo by Lucy Gulob, January 28, 2025
 Tyion Cohens (#12) stands with his family on Senior Night.



Riverbend News photo by Lucy Gulob, January 28, 2025
 Garyus Holli (#4) was joined by his friends for Senior Night festivities.



Riverbend News photo by Lucy Gulob, January 28, 2025
 JaMarion Smith (#15) was joined by his friends for Senior Night festivities.



Riverbend News photo by Lucy Gulob, January 28, 2025
 Tramial Jackson (#12) stands with her family on Senior Night.



Riverbend News photo by Lucy Gulob, January 28, 2025
 Brooklynn McCray (#24) was joined by her family on Senior Night.



Riverbend News photo by Lucy Gulob, January 28, 2025
 Cherish Sutton (#10) was joined by her family as she was honored on Senior Night.



Riverbend News photo by Lucy Gulob, January 28, 2025
 Jaylian Gandy (#3) celebrated Senior Night with his family.

This is a paid service announcement

MORSELS FOR ZION'S POOR

Simeon, was given the privilege of prophesying the REDEMPTION of Israel as he held the REDEEMER in his hands. Can any wonder exceed that moment when one whose chief desire in life is to see the deliverance of Israel, holds that DELIVERER and CHAMPION in his own hands and gazes upon HIM with his eyes. CHRIST is the SALVATION of which all of the prophets in every age had declared. *"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people."* The Greek word which is translated "people" means a particular people. *"And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David."* A "horn" in the scriptures is indicative of a "seat of power or authority." Indeed CHRIST JESUS the LORD has come in such power. *"Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end."* HE came to occupy the "throne of David" as the KING of kings and LORD of lords. This is an everlasting kingdom over which HE presently and forever reigns. There has never been an age in which HIS redemption has been untold. Even from the beginning, as the LORD told Satan, the woman's SEED *"shall bruise thy head."* CHRIST is that promised SEED to whom all of the promises of the everlasting covenant are given. *"That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life."* The LORD has made perfect provision for HIS people, not simply in the deliverance of them from all enemies but by imputing HIS righteousness to them and indwelling them by HIS SPIRIT. *"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."* They serve HIM without "fear" of rejection, rather than in a slavish manner. Are you a delighted follower of this triumphant and reigning CHRIST? **-m.a.m.**

forthepoor@windstream.net

Lafayette Basketball celebrates seniors after victory

Christian Peterson
reporter:riverbendnews@gmail.com

On Thursday, Jan. 30, the Lafayette High School Hornets took on the Hamilton County Trojans in a basketball showdown. The first game of the evening was the girls' game. Unfortunately for the Trojans, the Hornets were at the top of their game, winning 70 – 27. The boys' game was next, however, and that was a different story. It was a heated battle between the two teams, but eventually the Hornets came out on top, winning the game 63 – 61.

However, the real highlight of the evening happened between the two games. Each senior was given a moment of honor. They were able to walk with their families, receive gifts, and speak on their plans for the future. The entire evening was a success for the Hornets.



Riverbend News photo by Christian Peterson, January 30, 2025
Jadarius McQuay (#22) smiles with his family on senior night.



Riverbend News photo by Christian Peterson, January 30, 2025
Kiley Beach (#20) smiles with her family on senior night.



Riverbend News photo by Christian Peterson, January 30, 2025
Sabrina Aguilera (#4) smiles with her family on senior night.



Riverbend News photo by Christian Peterson, January 30, 2025
Tristan Campbell (#5) smiles with her family on senior night.



Riverbend News photo by Christian Peterson, January 30, 2025
Jamarcus Smith (#14) smiles with his family on senior night.



Riverbend News photo by Christian Peterson, January 30, 2025
Kelby Lyons (#12) smiles with her family on senior night.



Riverbend News photo by Christian Peterson, January 30, 2025
Joseph Smith (#10) smiles with his teammates and coach on senior night.



Riverbend News photo by Christian Peterson, January 30, 2025
Diane Revels (#22) smiles with her family on senior night.



Riverbend News photo by Christian Peterson, January 30, 2025
Durand Driver (#5) smiles with his family on senior night.



Riverbend News photo by Christian Peterson, January 30, 2025
Destiny Ramirez (#24) smiles with her family on senior night.



Riverbend News photo by Christian Peterson, January 30, 2025
Trevor Mares (#3) smiles with his family on senior night.



Riverbend News photo by Christian Peterson, January 30, 2025
Jordan Murphy (#1) smiles with his family on senior night.

Remembering Suwannee: Summer in the winter time



Photo courtesy of Rob Wolfe
Eric Musgrove, County Historian

Eric Musgrove
Contributor

In my research, it is interesting to find period articles dealing with Suwannee County and the surrounding area. Today, we have television, the internet, and a host of other media that allow us to instantaneously transmit information on a particular subject around the world. Nearly 135 years ago, such was not the case.

Sure, there were some telegraph and telephone lines in the more populated areas, but unless you were in a very large city (i.e., New York City, Philadelphia, Boston), you couldn't just go down to your local chamber of commerce to get information on businesses, recreational facilities, etc. Instead, much information was published and distributed in book form.

Travel guides were one such book form that has persisted even into modern times. In 1891, a book entitled "Summer in the Winter Time" was published by the Ocean Steamship Company (aka, "The Savannah Line"). It was geared primarily to Northerners who wished to travel into the Deep South for the milder winters there. These "snowbirds," as we call them today, used this book as a guide to what was available in Southern communities. Several Suwannee County communities were mentioned, many of which no longer exist. Such travel guides give us a wealth of information regarding the businesses, population and general accessibility (especially by railroad) about

these places, and even tell you who had the most information on the subject. The following paragraphs are quotes from the book; you will notice that it spells Suwannee with only one "n"; this was a common variation of the name up to the 20th Century. My own notes for clarification will be italicized in parentheses.

"Branford (or New Branford), Suwannee Co., Florida – Station on S. F., & W. Ry (Savannah, Florida & Western Railway, EM) from Savannah, Ga. Direct; population, 500; money-order office; Southern Express Co.; telegraph; good drives; boating, hunting, and fishing. D. E. Horn or Ivey Bros. & Co. will give information. Branford House – Mrs. J. H. Horn, Proprietor. Accommodates 20; \$2 to \$3 per day, \$7 to \$10 per week, \$20 per month.

"Emerson, Suwannee Co., Florida – Nine miles from Branford; population of community, 100. A. J. Futch will give information. Futch House – Mrs. A. J. Futch, Proprietor. Near, accommodates 25; \$1 per day, \$4 per week.

"Grover, Suwannee Co., Florida – On Suwanee River, 11 miles from Live Oak. J. R. Melks will give information.

"Live Oak, Suwannee Co., Florida – Station on the S., F. & W., direct from Savannah, also on the Western Division of the F. C. & P. R. R. (Florida Central & Peninsular Railroad, EM); population of community, 3000; money-order, telegraph, and Southern Express Co.'s office; high, healthy, and shady; fine churches, high-school; no bar-rooms. C. H. McGehee, Agent, F. C. & P. R. R., and J. C. Little, Agent, S. F. & W. Ry., will give information. Ethel House – B. B. Blackwell, Proprietor. \$1 to \$2 per day, \$5 to \$12 per week, \$15 to \$40 per month. Live Oak House – J. W. Kennedy, Proprietor. \$1 to \$2 per day, \$5 to \$12 per week, \$15 to \$40 per month.

"McAlpin, Suwanee Co., Florida – On the S., F.

& W. R. R.; population of the community, 200; 12 miles from Live Oak. J. N. Altman will give information.

"O'Brien or O'Brine, Suwanee Co., Florida – Station on the S., F. & W. Ry., 5 miles from Branford. W. F. Shepherd will give information.

"Suwanee (Suwannee Springs, EM), Suwanee Co., Florida – Station on the S. F., & W. Ry., direct from Savannah; population of the community, 200; 7 miles from Live Oak; the location of one of the largest Sulphur springs; a great health resort, in both summer and winter; spring flows 45,000 gallons per minute; telegraph and Southern Express Co.'s office. Suwannee Sulphur Springs Hotel – H. Peek, Proprietor. One mile from the station by street car; accommodates 200; \$2.50 to \$4 per day, \$15 to \$21 per week, \$50 to \$70 per month.

"Suwanee River – This river, being celebrated in song, must not be omitted.

"Away down on the Suwanee River,
Far, far away,
There's where my heart is turning ever;
There's where the old folks stay.'

"One of the largest rivers south-east of the Mississippi, empties into the Gulf of Mexico 12 miles north-west of Cedar Key. Steamers make regular trips on this river between Cedar Key and Luraville from the islands of the Cedar Key group, in the Gulf, to the head of navigation, connecting with the F. C. & P. Ry at Cedar Key, and the S. F. & W. at Branford. The scenery is beautiful. J. O. Andrews, General Passenger Agent, Cedar Key, Florida, will cheerfully give information."

Next week, we'll discuss more of our county's history.

Eric Musgrove can be reached at ericm@suwgov.org or (386) 362-0564.

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A Legacy of Leadership:

J.M. "Buddy" Phillips, Part 1

Jason Futch
reporter2.riverbendnews@gmail.com



J.M. "Buddy" Phillips

1939

Phillips was born on Feb. 7, 1939, to John Marvin and Lillian Phillips in Live Oak.

1956

Phillips was hired by the Suwannee County Sheriff's Office (SCSO) in 1956 as a part-time jailer under then-Sheriff Hugh Lewis.

1960

In 1960, Phillips traded his school books for a military uniform and enlisted in the United States Army Military Police Corps' European Command.

1966-67

Pictured below: Phillips receives the "Jaycee of the Month" certificate for perfect attendance and participation. Phillips was a dedicated member of the Jaycees, which provides leadership training, and maintained his relationship with the organization.

1969

On Jan. 7, 1969, Buddy took the oath of office, becoming Suwannee County Sheriff.



Photo courtesy of Suwannee Democrat

1955

Pictured to the right: Phillips (left) and a couple of his classmates participate in a high school project in 1955.

1957

Following graduation in 1957, Phillips accepted a football scholarship at the University of Florida and left Suwannee County. However, he chose to transfer to South Georgia College in

1966

Pictured to the right: Phillips stands atop a birthday cake float with a Florida Sheriff's Youth Ranch resident during the inaugural parade for Florida Governor Claude Kirk in January of 1966.

1968

This campaign ad from April 1968 highlights Phillips's accomplishments.



John Marvin "Buddy" Phillips, Jr., gave his life to the citizens of Florida as a public servant, leader, and most notably, one of Florida's prominent law enforcement officers. To his colleagues, he was affectionately nicknamed the "Sheriff of Florida," a nod to his service to several counties in the state as the top law enforcement official. To his friends and family, he was known simply as "Buddy."

Phillips was known to give back to the community in many ways. One of the charities close to his heart was the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches (FSYR), an organization that he was able to see come to life while serving as a patrol deputy with the Suwannee County Sheriff's Office (SCSO). Phillips gave his time to the children who entered the ranch and volunteered with them



Photo courtesy of Suwannee High School

on numerous projects. In the 1960s, he was featured in several films that were produced by the FSYR. He also volunteered to take part in Florida Governor Claude Kirk's inaugural parade to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the FSYR by riding on a giant cake adorned with candles.

His career took center stage in 1968 when he ran for and was elected Sheriff of Suwannee County. At the time, he was only 29 years old, one of the youngest elected sheriffs in

Florida history.

As the chief law enforcement officer of Suwannee County, Phillips oversaw the county during an era of transition in pressing times, as civil rights laws began to take effect in the county. Law enforcement practices were starting to progress but still had a long way to go. Phillips, who attended the Federal Bureau of Investigation training in 1967, knew that change was coming. However, the people of Suwannee County spoke in 1972 when he was defeated during a re-election bid against Robert Leonard, who went on to serve multiple terms as sheriff.



Photo Courtesy of Florida Sheriffs Association

Phillips could not implement solid change to the agency but felt his career in law enforcement was far from over. Thus began a storied career spanning six decades and several law enforcement agencies.

Buddy was born on Feb. 7, 1939, to John Marvin and Lillian Phillips in Live Oak. His father was the mayor of Live Oak for 20 years and the founder of Suwannee Laundry Dry Cleaning, which is still in operation and run by Phillips's younger brother, Joe.

"Buddy was my mentor," said Joe, who was the youngest of the four siblings. "Hunting, fishing, Buddy always took me with him and also kept me in check when I needed to be checked."

Phillips grew up in Live Oak, being educated by the Suwannee County School District and ultimately graduated from Suwannee High School. He was on the football team and was active in different clubs.

While attending high school, Phillips was hired by the Suwannee County Sheriff's Office (SCSO) in 1956 as a part-time jailer under then-Sheriff Hugh Lewis.

Following graduation in 1957, he accepted a football scholarship at the University of Florida and left Suwannee County. However, he chose to transfer to South Georgia College in Douglas, where he was coached under future Florida State University head coach Bobby Bowden.

In 1960, Phillips traded his school books for a military uniform and enlisted in the United States Army Military Police Corps' European Command. During his time with the Army, he had begun corresponding with a young woman from Jacksonville named Mary Jo Rogers.

Upon leaving the military, he married Mary Jo, returned to Live Oak, and in 1964, at the age of 25, took a job as a deputy with the SCSO under Sheriff Duke McAlister. This was the beginning of a fruitful, lifelong career in public service.

As a deputy sheriff, Phillips was dedicated to helping families get out of sticky situations but also had a soft spot for children who needed a mentor. He became involved with the FSYR (then the Florida Sheriff's Boys Ranch), and offered his support and mentorship to the children who came through the program. He would also sit on some of the boards within the FSYR.

As the years passed, Phillips continued serving Suwannee County as a deputy. Then, on Feb. 16, 1968, McAlister announced that he would be retiring as sheriff.

During a time when the country was seeing a shift in attitudes, Suwannee County was still slowly progressing. But that did not stop 29-year-old Phillips from throwing his hat in the ring for sheriff on March 14. Though his career as a law enforcement officer was relatively shorter than most county sheriffs in the state at this point, he was dead set on doing anything he set out to do and seeing it to the end. "He felt he could make a difference in the community," his nephew, Joseph Phillips, said. "If he said he was going to do it, he would do it."

Phillips was the first to announce his intent to run for sheriff following McAlister's retirement. He was followed by Cecil Bonds, Laure Roberson and W.A. Nobles. While running for office, Phillips laid out his plan to modernize the agency, including expanding it into Branford-O'Brien.

A year before he chose to run for sheriff, Phillips attended a months-long training at the National FBI Training Academy in Quantico, Va. There, he was exposed to modern technology, investigative techniques and a network of investigators and agency leaders, giving him an edge in his 11-year law enforcement career.

Ultimately, Phillips prevailed, winning the May primary election and clinching the sheriff position early. When he won, he continued to work at the SCSO, shadowing Sheriff McAlister and understanding the duties that the office came with.

From Dec. 2 to Dec. 4, 1968, Phillips went on to join other duly elected sheriffs at the Florida Sheriff's Academy. On Jan. 7, 1969, Buddy would take the oath of office, becoming Suwannee County Sheriff. He was just getting started.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that ANDREW FAY, the holder of the following tax certificate has filed said certificate for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The tax certificate number, the description of property, and the names in which it is assessed are as follows:
TAX DEED APPLICATION NUMBER: 4399/2022-1180
DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: 05882080011 23-02S-13E LEG PART OF LOTS 1 & 2 BLK H ADD NORTHWEST DIVISION MORE PARTICULARLY DESC AS FOLLOWS: FOR POB COMM AT THE NE COR OF SAID LOT 2 THENCE RUN S 24 DEG 54'58 W A DISTANCE OF 36.00 FT THENCE RUN N 64 DEG 54'02 W A DISTANCE OF 80.00 FT THENCE RUN N 24 DEG 54' 58 E A DISTANCE OF 17.86 FT THENCE RUN N 64 DEG 34'38 W A DISTANCE OF 80.00 FT TO THE E R/W LINE OF SCRIVEN AVE THENCE RUN N 24 DEG 54'58 E ALONG SAID E R/W LINE A DISTANCE OF 74.36 FT TO S R/W LINE OF WINDERWEEDLE ST THENCE RUN N 89 DEG 67'06 E ALONG SAID S R/W LINE A DISTANCE OF 65.46 FT RUN S 01 DEG 02'42 W 93.61 FT RUN S 64 DEG 54' 02 E 62.78 FT TO THE POB ORB 732 P 185 WD YR 99
NAME IN WHICH ASSESSED: TIMOTHY TWIGGS C/O CORINE TWIGGS PO BOX 783, LIVE OAK, FL 32064
All of said property being in the County of Suwannee, State of Florida.
Unless such tax certificate shall be redeemed according to law the property described in such tax certificate or certificates will be sold to the highest bidder in the Suwannee County Court House Judicial Annex Bldg., 218 Parshley St., Live Oak, FL 32064 on **Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 11:00 A.M.** or any subsequently scheduled sale date.
BARRY A. BAKER/ CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
SUWANNEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
By: ARYELLA BEEDA, Deputy Clerk

01/29, 02/05, 02/12, 02/19

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that JEFF P PLIMPTON, the holder of the following tax certificate has filed said certificate for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The tax certificate number, the description of property, and the names in which it is assessed are as follows:
TAX DEED APPLICATION NUMBER: 4400/2020-129
DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: 09445060210 03-01S-12E LEG LOTS 21 & 22 BLK 6 SUWANNEE RIVER PARK ESTATES UNIT 2 ORB 1181 P 449 WD YR 06
NAME IN WHICH ASSESSED: PAUL HAYNES 10861 NW 3RD COURT, PEMBROKE PINES, FL 33026
All of said property being in the County of Suwannee, State of Florida.
Unless such tax certificate shall be redeemed according to law the property described in such tax certificate or certificates will be sold to the highest bidder in the Suwannee County Court House Judicial Annex Bldg., 218 Parshley St., Live Oak, FL 32064 on **Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 11:00 A.M.** or any subsequently scheduled sale date.
BARRY A. BAKER/ CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
SUWANNEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
By: ARYELLA BEEDA, Deputy Clerk

01/29, 02/05, 02/12, 02/19

PRACTICE CLOSURE – LEGAL PUBLIC NOTICE

DENTAL PRACTICE CLOSURE: Effective March 31, 2025, the dental practice, Amazing Smiles Dental Center, located at **107 1st Ave SE, Jasper, FL 32052** , will permanently close. Patient records will be transferred to the Amazing Smiles Dental Center Lake City office. Patients may request copies of their records to be sent directly to them or to another dental or health provider by sending a written request to Amazing Smiles Dental Center. **857 SW Main Blvd Ste 105, Lake City, FL 32025.**

02/05

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that JEFF P PLIMPTON, the holder of the following tax certificate has filed said certificate for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The tax certificate number, the description of property, and the names in which it is assessed are as follows:
TAX DEED APPLICATION NUMBER: 4401/2019-460
DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: 01909000010 34-01S-14E LEG 1.00 ACRES FOR POB COMM AT THE SE COR OF NW1/4 OF SE1/4 RUN W 330.00 FT RUN N APPROX 131.00 FT RUN E 330.00 FT RUN S APPROX 131.00 FT TO POB ORB 1603 P 183 TAX DEED YR 2011
NAME IN WHICH ASSESSED: VERONA V LLC 18305 BISCAYNE BLVD STE 400, AVENTURA, FL 33160
All of said property being in the County of Suwannee, State of Florida.
Unless such tax certificate shall be redeemed according to law the property described in such tax certificate or certificates will be sold to the highest bidder in the Suwannee County Court House Judicial Annex Bldg., 218 Parshley St., Live Oak, FL 32064 on **Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 11:00 A.M.** or any subsequently scheduled sale date.
BARRY A. BAKER/ CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
SUWANNEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
By: ARYELLA BEEDA, Deputy Clerk

01/29, 02/05, 02/12, 02/19

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that QUEEN OF THE SEA HOLDINGS LLC , the holder of the following tax certificate has filed said certificate for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The tax certificate number, the description of property, and the names in which it is assessed are as follows:
TAX DEED APPLICATION NUMBER: 4402/2018-2106
DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: 09415180110 04-01S-12E LEG LOT 11 BLK 18 SUWANNEE RIVER PARK ESTATES UNIT 1 ORB 1195 P 374 TD YR 06
NAME IN WHICH ASSESSED: SUMM INVESTMENT INC PO BOX 1149, BRONSON, FL 32621
All of said property being in the County of Suwannee, State of Florida.
Unless such tax certificate shall be redeemed according to law the property described in such tax certificate or certificates will be sold to the highest bidder in the Suwannee County Court House Judicial Annex Bldg., 218 Parshley St., Live Oak, FL 32064 on **Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 11:00 A.M.** or any subsequently scheduled sale date.
BARRY A. BAKER/ CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
SUWANNEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
By: ARYELLA BEEDA, Deputy Clerk

01/29, 02/05, 02/12, 02/19

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that JEFF P PLIMPTON, the holder of the following tax certificate has filed said certificate for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The tax certificate number, the description of property, and the names in which it is assessed are as follows:
TAX DEED APPLICATION NUMBER: 4403/2019-673
DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: 02863001000 31-03S-14E LEG 1.00 ACRES THE S 210.00 FT OF THE N 420.00 FT OF THE W 210.00 FT OF THE SE1/4 OF SW1/4 ORB 361 P 260 WD YR 92 ORB 506 P 363 WD YR 95 ORB 506 P 364 QCD YR 95 ORB 832 P 468 QCD YR 2001 ORB 907 P 211 WD YR 02
NAME IN WHICH ASSESSED: CONSECO FINANCE SERVICING CORP 1400 TURBINE DR, RAPID CITY, SD 57703
All of said property being in the County of Suwannee, State of Florida.
Unless such tax certificate shall be redeemed according to law the property described in such tax certificate or certificates will be sold to the highest bidder in the Suwannee County Court House Judicial Annex Bldg., 218 Parshley St., Live Oak, FL 32064 on **Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 11:00 A.M.** or any subsequently scheduled sale date.
BARRY A. BAKER/ CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
SUWANNEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
By: ARYELLA BEEDA, Deputy Clerk

01/29, 02/05, 02/12, 02/19

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that EVERGLADE EQUITY HOLDINGS LLC , the holder of the following tax certificate has filed said certificate for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The tax certificate number, the description of property, and the names in which it is assessed are as follows:
TAX DEED APPLICATION NUMBER: 4404/2019-2093
DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: 09368100250 04-01S-12E LEG LOT 25 & 26 BLK 10 SUWANNEE RIVER PARK ESTATES UNIT 1 ORB 1368 P 264 WD YR 07
NAME IN WHICH ASSESSED: CONSUMER PROPERTIES INC PO BOX 272018, TAMPA, FL 33688
All of said property being in the County of Suwannee, State of Florida.
Unless such tax certificate shall be redeemed according to law the property described in such tax certificate or certificates will be sold to the highest bidder in the Suwannee County Court House Judicial Annex Bldg., 218 Parshley St., Live Oak, FL 32064 on **Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 11:00 A.M.** or any subsequently scheduled sale date.
BARRY A. BAKER/ CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
SUWANNEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
By: ARYELLA BEEDA, Deputy Clerk

01/29, 02/05, 02/12, 02/19

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that MATTHEW P WINKLER, the holder of the following tax certificate has filed said certificate for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The tax certificate number, the description of property, and the names in which it is assessed are as follows:
TAX DEED APPLICATION NUMBER: 4406/2021-749
DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: 03447110230 13-05S-14E LEG LOTS 23 & 24 BLK 11 SUWANNEE ESTATES SUB DIV. ORB 1597 P 479-480 ORDER YR 2011 ORB 1660 P 332 DC YR 2012 (PERRY JIM BOATRIGHT) ORB 1908 P 151 DC YR 2023 (FRANCES VIRGINIA MOORE)
NAME IN WHICH ASSESSED: BOATRIGHT LAVAGHN 1/3 INT & ESTATE FRANCES V MOORE 1/3 INT & ESTATE PERRY J BOATRIGHT 1/3 INT 13422 181ST RD, LIVE OAK, FL 32060
All of said property being in the County of Suwannee, State of Florida.
Unless such tax certificate shall be redeemed according to law the property described in such tax certificate or certificates will be sold to the highest bidder in the Suwannee County Court House Judicial Annex Bldg., 218 Parshley St., Live Oak, FL 32064 on **Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 11:00 A.M.** or any subsequently scheduled sale date.
BARRY A. BAKER/ CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
SUWANNEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
By: ARYELLA BEEDA, Deputy Clerk

01/29, 02/05, 02/12, 02/19

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that MATTHEW P WINKLER, the holder of the following tax certificate has filed said certificate for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The tax certificate number, the description of property, and the names in which it is assessed are as follows:
TAX DEED APPLICATION NUMBER: 4407/2021-771
DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: 03491080050 13-05S-14E LEG LOTS 5 6 7 & 8 BLK 8 SOUTHEAST SUWANNEE HEIGHTS ORB 82 P 141
NAME IN WHICH ASSESSED: JAMES F & MARY J MCKENNA 353 3RD AVE 111, NEW YORK, NY 10010
All of said property being in the County of Suwannee, State of Florida.
Unless such tax certificate shall be redeemed according to law the property described in such tax certificate or certificates will be sold to the highest bidder in the Suwannee County Court House Judicial Annex Bldg., 218 Parshley St., Live Oak, FL 32064 on **Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 11:00 A.M.** or any subsequently scheduled sale date.
BARRY A. BAKER/ CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
SUWANNEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
By: ARYELLA BEEDA, Deputy Clerk

01/29, 02/05, 02/12, 02/19

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that GEORGE L BURNHAM, JR, the holder of the following tax certificate has filed said certificate for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The tax certificate number, the description of property, and the names in which it is assessed are as follows:
TAX DEED APPLICATION NUMBER: 4408/2022-2121
DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: 09993010090 20-02S-12E LEG 2.51 ACRES LOT 9 BLK 1 GOLDEN GLEN LESS THE N 275 FT THEREOF ORB 2094 P 227 WD YR 2019 ORB 2375 P 48-49 WD YR 2023 ORB 2378 P 188 QCD YR 2023
NAME IN WHICH ASSESSED: CARRIE LEEANN BROWN 18565 CR 136, LIVE OAK, FL 32060
All of said property being in the County of Suwannee, State of Florida.
Unless such tax certificate shall be redeemed according to law the property described in such tax certificate or certificates will be sold to the highest bidder in the Suwannee County Court House Judicial Annex Bldg., 218 Parshley St., Live Oak, FL 32064 on **Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 11:00 A.M.** or any subsequently scheduled sale date.
BARRY A. BAKER/ CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
SUWANNEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
By: ARYELLA BEEDA, Deputy Clerk

01/29, 02/05, 02/12, 02/19

Notice Is Hereby Given that **Warren Averett Staffing and Recruiting, LLC, 2500 Action Rd, Birmingham, AL 35243**, desiring to engage in business under the fictitious name of **Warren Averett Executive Search and Recruiting**, with its principal place of business in the State of Florida in the County of **Lafayette**, intends to file an Application for Registration of Fictitious Name with the Florida Department of State.

02/05

Notice Is Hereby Given that **Warren Averett Staffing and Recruiting, LLC, 2500 Action Rd, Birmingham, AL 35243**, desiring to engage in business under the fictitious name of **Warren Averett Executive Search and Recruiting**, with its principal place of business in the State of Florida in the County of **Hamilton**, intends to file an Application for Registration of Fictitious Name with the Florida Department of State.

02/05

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that GEORGE L BURNHAM, JR, the holder of the following tax certificate has filed said certificate for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The tax certificate number, the description of property, and the names in which it is assessed are as follows:
TAX DEED APPLICATION NUMBER: 4409/2022-2143
DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: 10025005005 24-02S-12E LEG 1.00 ACRES FOR PT OF REF COMM AT SW COR OF SW1/4 OF NW1/4 N 00 DEG 33'50 W ALONG W LINE OF SEC 663.54 FT TO N LINE OF N1/2 OF S1/2 OF SW1/4 OF NW1/4 S 89 DEG 57'09 E 660 FT TO POB CONT S 89 DEG 57'09 E 132 FT S 00 DEG 34'02 E 329.65 FT S 89 DEG 53'39 W 132 FT N 00 DEG 34'02 W 330 FT TO POB & AN EASEMENT ORB 2062 P 39-42 WD YR 2019 NOTE RP #12155384 & 387 YR 04
NAME IN WHICH ASSESSED: JOHN M & SHIRLINE M WESTBERRY 15947 82ND PLACE, LIVE OAK, FL 32060
All of said property being in the County of Suwannee, State of Florida.
Unless such tax certificate shall be redeemed according to law the property described in such tax certificate or certificates will be sold to the highest bidder in the Suwannee County Court House Judicial Annex Bldg., 218 Parshley St., Live Oak, FL 32064 on **Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 11:00 A.M.** or any subsequently scheduled sale date.
BARRY A. BAKER/ CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
SUWANNEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
By: ARYELLA BEEDA, Deputy Clerk

01/29, 02/05, 02/12, 02/19

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that GEORGE L BURNHAM, JR, the holder of the following tax certificate has filed said certificate for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The tax certificate number, the description of property, and the names in which it is assessed are as follows:
TAX DEED APPLICATION NUMBER: 4410/2022-2529
DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: 11666000113 09-03S-11E LEG 2.24 ACRES W 665.50 FT OF LOT 11 SUWANNEE ADD ORB 97 P 554 ORB 181 P 36 & 37 LESS THE N 460 FT ORB 223 P 29-33 L EST WD LESS THE S 200 FT OF W 220 FT W 665.50 FT OF LOT 11 SUWANNEE ADDITION REMAINDER PERSON SANDRA B SHELLS ORB 507 P 218 WD YR 95
NAME IN WHICH ASSESSED: ALICE KAHLE LIFE ESTATE 8335 240TH ST, OBRIEN, FL 32071
All of said property being in the County of Suwannee, State of Florida.
Unless such tax certificate shall be redeemed according to law the property described in such tax certificate or certificates will be sold to the highest bidder in the Suwannee County Court House Judicial Annex Bldg., 218 Parshley St., Live Oak, FL 32064 on **Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 11:00 A.M.** or any subsequently scheduled sale date.
BARRY A. BAKER/ CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
SUWANNEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
By: ARYELLA BEEDA, Deputy Clerk

01/29, 02/05, 02/12, 02/19

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that GEORGE L BURNHAM, JR, the holder of the following tax certificate has filed said certificate for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The tax certificate number, the description of property, and the names in which it is assessed are as follows:
TAX DEED APPLICATION NUMBER: 4411/2022-2599
DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: 11886000000 34-03S-11E LEG 9.74 ACRES SW1/4 OF SE1/4 LESS RD R/W LESS THE E 668.33 FT THEREOF LESS THE N 664.00 FT THEREOF ORB 842 P 267 DC YR 2001 ORB 842 P 268 WD YR 2001 ORB 1843 P 412-13 AMENDED ORDER OF SUMMARY YR 2015 REMAINDER PERSON DAISY RENEE BRITTON TRUSTEE
NAME IN WHICH ASSESSED: SUSAN A TUCKER LIFE ESTATE 1407 WHITE AVE SE, LIVE OAK, FL 32064
All of said property being in the County of Suwannee, State of Florida.
Unless such tax certificate shall be redeemed according to law the property described in such tax certificate or certificates will be sold to the highest bidder in the Suwannee County Court House Judicial Annex Bldg., 218 Parshley St., Live Oak, FL 32064 on **Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 11:00 A.M.** or any subsequently scheduled sale date.
BARRY A. BAKER/ CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
SUWANNEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
By: ARYELLA BEEDA, Deputy Clerk

01/29, 02/05, 02/12, 02/19

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that MATTHEW P WINKLER, the holder of the following tax certificate has filed said certificate for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The tax certificate number, the description of property, and the names in which it is assessed are as follows:
TAX DEED APPLICATION NUMBER: 4405/2021-1770
DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: 09349070130 09-01S-12E LEG LOT 13 BLK 7 SUWANNEE RIVER PARK ESTS UNIT 1 ORB 309 P 314 DC YR 87
NAME IN WHICH ASSESSED: KATHERINE P TRIANO 2801 VINSON RD, WYLIE, TX 75098
All of said property being in the County of Suwannee, State of Florida.
Unless such tax certificate shall be redeemed according to law the property described in such tax certificate or certificates will be sold to the highest bidder in the Suwannee County Court House Judicial Annex Bldg., 218 Parshley St., Live Oak, FL 32064 on **Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 11:00 A.M.** or any subsequently scheduled sale date.
BARRY A. BAKER/ CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
SUWANNEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
By: ARYELLA BEEDA, Deputy Clerk

01/29, 02/05, 02/12, 02/19

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that GEORGE L BURNHAM, JR, the holder of the following tax certificate has filed said certificate for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The tax certificate number, the description of property, and the names in which it is assessed are as follows:
TAX DEED APPLICATION NUMBER: 4412/2022-699
DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: 03380010230 13-05S-14E LEG LOTS 23 & 24 BLOCK 1 SUWANNEE MANOR ORB 1890 P 486-87 QCD YR 2016
NAME IN WHICH ASSESSED: GERALD C CLEMANS 75 CHERRY LAUREL DR, YOUNGSVILLE, NC 27596
All of said property being in the County of Suwannee, State of Florida.
Unless such tax certificate shall be redeemed according to law the property described in such tax certificate or certificates will be sold to the highest bidder in the Suwannee County Court House Judicial Annex Bldg., 218 Parshley St., Live Oak, FL 32064 on **Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 11:00 A.M.** or any subsequently scheduled sale date.
BARRY A. BAKER/ CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
SUWANNEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
By: ARYELLA BEEDA, Deputy Clerk

01/29, 02/05, 02/12, 02/19

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that GEORGE L BURNHAM, JR, the holder of the following tax certificate has filed said certificate for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The tax certificate number, the description of property, and the names in which it is assessed are as follows:
TAX DEED APPLICATION NUMBER: 4413/2022-175
DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: 00924020380 03-05S-15E LEG 4.00 ACRES LOT 38 FLORIDA HILLS PHASE 2 ORB 1102 P 491 WD YR 04
NAME IN WHICH ASSESSED: ERIC K SCHUHMANN 20064 29TH DR, WELLBORN, FL 32094
All of said property being in the County of Suwannee, State of Florida.
Unless such tax certificate shall be redeemed according to law the property described in such tax certificate or certificates will be sold to the highest bidder in the Suwannee County Court House Judicial Annex Bldg., 218 Parshley St., Live Oak, FL 32064 on **Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 11:00 A.M.** or any subsequently scheduled sale date.
BARRY A. BAKER/ CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
SUWANNEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
By: ARYELLA BEEDA, Deputy Clerk

01/29, 02/05, 02/12, 02/19

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that GEORGE L BURNHAM, JR, the holder of the following tax certificate has filed said certificate for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The tax certificate number, the description of property, and the names in which it is assessed are as follows:
TAX DEED APPLICATION NUMBER: 4415/2022-356
DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: 01561630310 32-06S-15E LEG LOTS 31 32 BLK 63 UNIT 2 THREE RIVERS ESTATES ORB 835 P 449 QCD YR 2001 ORB 2111 P 104-108 QCD YR 2019
NAME IN WHICH ASSESSED: GEORGE M KING SR 5235 RIVERTON RD, JACKSONVILLE, FL 32277
All of said property being in the County of Suwannee, State of Florida.
Unless such tax certificate shall be redeemed according to law the property described in such tax certificate or certificates will be sold to the highest bidder in the Suwannee County Court House Judicial Annex Bldg., 218 Parshley St., Live Oak, FL 32064 on **Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 11:00 A.M.** or any subsequently scheduled sale date.
BARRY A. BAKER/ CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
SUWANNEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
By: ARYELLA BEEDA, Deputy Clerk

01/29, 02/05, 02/12, 02/19

A Delegation Meeting will be held on Monday, Feb. 10, at 11:00 a.m., in the Hamilton County Courthouse, located at 207 NE First St., Jasper, Fl. Along with the Annual Delegation Meeting, a local Bill to dissolve the Town of White Springs will be discussed and voted on.

02/05

Subscribe today!

PUBLIC NOTICES

Suwannee Cty Bd of Commissioners is accepting applications for

**Library Aide II • Commercial Truck Driver II • Day Camp Coordinator
Division Chief of Operations & Safety • Firefighter/EMTs
Firefighter/Paramedics • Flagman • Grounds Maintenance Worker I
Inmate Crew Leader • Mine Specialist I • Park Attendant • Recreation Aide
Site Attendant • Staff Assistant • Tractor Operator I**

Application & full details are available online at suwanneecountyfl.gov and Suwannee County Administration, 224 Pine Ave SW, 2nd Floor, Live Oak, FL 32064, (386)364-3400. Most positions remain open until filled. Suwannee Cty Bd of Commissioners is an equal employment opportunity employer that does not discriminate against any qualified employee or applicant because of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, genetics, handicap status, income status, or family status. Spanish speaking individuals are encouraged to apply. Successful completion of a drug test is a condition of all safety sensitive employment, failure to successfully test free of illegal or controlled drugs will result in non-employment of the applicant for a minimum of 1 year.

EEO/AA/V/D
01/29, 02/05

**ADVERTISEMENT FOR PROPOSALS
HAMILTON COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

**HAMILTON COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
WILL RECEIVE PROPOSALS FOR THE FOLLOWING:**

- Tax ID: 6008-000** 102 Hatley Street West, Jasper *subject property is on the State of Florida historic registry
- Tax IDs: 6054-000** 106 1st Ave SW, Jasper and **6056-000**
- Tax IDs: 6047-000** 205 Hatley St. West, Jasper; **6043-000** 203 Hatley St. West, Jasper; **6044-000** 201 Hatley St. West, Jasper; and **6045-005**
- Tax ID: 6030-000** 104 Central Ave NW, Jasper

Date & Time for Receiving Proposals: 2:00 PM, LOCAL TIME
Friday, March 14, 2025
Late Proposals will not be considered.

Deadline for Questions: Friday, February 28, 2025, 4:30 PM

Date & Time for Proposal Opening: Monday, March 17, 2025, 4:30 PM

Place for Receiving Proposals: Hamilton County Development Authority
1153 US Hwy 41 NW, Suite 4
Jasper, FL 32052
(386) 855-1426

Proposal Documents Available from: Hamilton County Development Authority
<https://www.hamiltoncda.org/>
1153 US Hwy 41 NW, Suite 4
Jasper, FL 32052
(386) 855-1426
Contact: Chadd Mathis
(cmathis@hamiltoncda.org)

Deposit for Proposal Documents: None.

Date of Advertisement: January 29, 2025 & February 5, 2025

HAMILTON COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
CHADD MATHIS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

01/29, 02/05

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT TINA CARROLL, the holder of the following tax certificate has filed said certificate for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The tax certificate number, the description of property, and the names in which it is assessed are as follows:
TAX DEED APPLICATION NUMBER: 4416/2020-2229
DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: 07965000000 26-02S-13E LEG A LOT DESCRIBED AS: BEGINNING ON THE WEST SIDE OF R/W OF LIVE OAK & GULF RAILROAD 139.00 FT SOUTH WARD FROM WHERE THE W LINE OF SAID R/W INTERSECTS THE EAST SIDE OF NW1/4 OF SE1/4 RUN W TO THE LAND OF A. LEE HUMPHREYS RUN S 90.00 FT RUN E TO SAID R/W RUN NORTHEAST ALONG SAID R/W TO THE P.O.B. DB FF P 284 ORB 143 P 172 ORB 1080 P 283-84 WD YR 05 ORB 1118 P 163-64 CWD YR 05 ORB 1163 P 407-08 CWD YR 05 ORB 1931 P 190 TD YR 2017
NAME IN WHICH ASSESSED: BLUMENTHAL PROPERTIES 13317 NO 21286 N CR 349, O'BRIEN, FL 32071
All of said property being in the County of Suwannee, State of Florida.
Unless such tax certificate shall be redeemed according to law the property described in such tax certificate or certificates will be sold to the highest bidder in the Suwannee County Court House Judicial Annex Bldg., 218 Parshley St., Live Oak, FL 32064 on **Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 11:00 A.M.** or any subsequently scheduled sale date.
BARRY A. BAKER/ CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
SUWANNEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
By: ARYELLA BEEDA, Deputy Clerk

01/29, 02/05, 02/12, 02/19

**AGENDA
TOWN COUNCIL, TOWN OF MAYO, FLORIDA
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY FEBRUARY 10, 2025
7:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL CONFERENCE ROOM, 276 WEST MAIN STREET**

REGULAR MEETING

1. Adopt Agenda
2. Approve Minutes
3. Citizen Input
4. Old Business
5. Taylor McGrew Municipal Cemetery Postponed from January
6. Resilient Florida Planning Grant Task Assignment to Mott MacDonald
7. Departments
 - a. Sampson Edwards
 - b. Garret Land Building Inspector
 - c. Chamber of Commerce
 - d. Arrow Waste / Deep South
 - e. Sheriff Brian Lamb
8. Miscellaneous Items
9. Pay Bills
10. Adjourn

02/05

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR
LAFAYETTE COUNTY, FLORIDA PROBATE DIVISION**

IN RE: ESTATE OF
JOSEPHINE CARMALITA POTTS
Deceased.

PROBATE DIVISION
File No.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

TO ALL PERSONS HAVING CLAIMS OR DEMANDS AGAINST THE ABOVE ESTATE:
You are hereby notified that an Order of Formal Administration has been entered in the estate of JOSEPHINE CARMALITA POTTS deceased, File Number 61-2022-000197-CP, by the Circuit Court Lafayette County, Florida, Probate Division, the address of which is 120 West main Street, Mayo, FL 32066; that the decedent's date of death was August 6, 2024; that the total value of the estate is \$29,983.75 and that the names and addresses of those to whom it has been assigned by such order are:

NAME
Jules Davenport
ADDRESS
15245 SR 45
Lisbon, OH 44432

All creditors of the estate of the decedent and persons having claims or demands against the estate of the decedent other than those for whom provision for full payment was made in the Order of Administration must file their claims with this court WITHIN THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH IN FLORIDA STATUTES SECTION 733.702. ALL CLAIMS AND DEMANDS NOT SO FILED WILL BE FOREVER BARRED. NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER APPLICABLE TIME PERIOD, ANY CLAIM FILED TWO (2) YEARS OR MORE AFTER THE DECEDENT'S DATE OF DEATH IS BARRED.

The date of first publication of this notice is: Januray 29, 2025

Attorney for Person Giving Notice:
/S/ Karen D. Hatton
E-mail Addresses:
kdhattonlaw@gmail.com
Florida Bar No. 502871
Karen D. Hatton, P.A.
PO Box 446
Mayo, FL 32066

Person Giving Notice:
/S/
Jules Davenport
ADDRESS
15245 SR 45
Lisbon, OH 44432

01/29, 02/05

SECTION 000020 - INVITATION TO BID
SUWANNEE RIVER REGIONAL LIBRARY SYSTEM
GREENVILLE LIBRARY REMODEL

CLEMONS, RUTHERFORD & ASSOCIATES, INC.
2027 THOMASVILLE ROAD, TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32308
PHONE (850) 385-6153

You are invited to bid on a General Contract for the remodel of the Greenville Library located in Greenville, Florida. The project location is 1325 SW Main Street, Greenville, Florida 32331.

Suwannee River Regional Library System will receive sealed bids until 2:00 PM (ET) on Thursday, February 13, 2025 at the office of Clemons Rutherford and Associates, 2027 Thomasville Road, Tallahassee, Florida 32308. Bids received after that time will not be accepted. Bids will be opened publicly and read aloud by a CRA representative at 2:01 PM of the same date.

Copies of the Bidding Documents may be examined at the Architect's office by appointment. Contact Emily Winston at (850) 385-6153 or ewinston@craarchitects.com.

Clemons, Rutherford & Associates
2027 Thomasville Road, Tallahassee, Florida
(850) 385-6153

General Contractors and Mechanical, Plumbing and Electrical Subcontractors may obtain electronic copies (PDFs) of the Bidding Documents from the Architect's office in accordance with the Instruction to Bidders upon receipt of a non-refundable price of fifty dollars (\$50.00). Contact Emily Winston at ewinston@craarchitects.com or at (850) 385-6153.

A Pre-Bid Meeting will be held for General Contractors on Thursday, January 23, 2025 at 9:00 AM at the project site. General Contractors' prime subcontractors may also attend. Subcontractors' experience shall comply with Section 000100, 11.1.

All questions at the Pre-Bid Conference by General Contractors and Subcontractors shall be presented on the "Request for Clarification Form". See Section 000100 – Instruction to Bidders. No questions will be answered at the Pre-Bid Meeting.

Bid Security in amount of five percent (5%) of the Bid must accompany each Bid in accordance with the Instruction to Bidders.

A letter from a bonding company must accompany each bid, stating that the bidder is capable of obtaining all bonds and insurances required by the Construction Documents.

It is the intent of Suwannee River Regional Library System to review the apparent low bidder for any value engineering items and convert to GMP for Contract. The Owner reserves the right to negotiate scope and contracting method with apparent low bidder.

Suwannee River Regional Library System reserves the right to waive irregularities and to reject any and all Bids.

01/15, 01/22, 01/29, 02/05

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR LAFAYETTE COUNTY, FLORIDA
IN RE: ESTATE OF
STEPHEN MICHAEL SCHWEITZER
Deceased.**

**PROBATE DIVISION
File No. 25-05-CP
Division**

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

The administration of the estate of Stephen Michael Schweitzer, deceased, whose date of death was October 19, 2024, is pending in the Circuit Court for Lafayette County, Florida, Probate Division, the address of which is 120 W. Main Street, Mayo, Florida 32066. The names and addresses of the personal representative and the personal representative's attorney are set forth below.

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

The personal representative has no duty to discover whether any property held at the time of the decedent's death by the decedent or the decedent's surviving spouse is property to which the Florida Uniform Disposition of Community Property Rights at Death Act as described in ss. 732.216-732.228, Florida Statutes, applies, or may apply, unless a written demand is made by a creditor as specified under s. 732.2211, Florida Statutes.

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

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

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

The date of first publication of this notice is February 5, 2025.

Attorney for Personal Representative: s/ Lawrence E. Fuentes
Lawrence E Fuentes
Attorney
Florida Bar Number: 161908
Fuentes & Kreischer, P.A.
1407 W. Busch Blvd.
TAMPA, FL 33612
Telephone: (813) 933-6647
Fax: (813) 932-8588
E-Mail: left@fklaw.net

Personal Representative: s/ Christina Marie Hanna
Christina Marie Hanna
8630 Blind Pass Road
Apt. 12
St. Petersburg Beach, Florida 33706

02/05, 02/12

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Lafayette County Commission will be holding a regular meeting on Tuesday, February 11, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. The meeting will be held in the County Commissioners Meeting Room, on the second floor of the Lafayette County Courthouse in Mayo, Florida. Listed below is an agenda for the meeting.

By Order Of:
Anthony Adams, Chairman
Lafayette County Commission

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING:

1. Open the Board of County Commissioners meeting.
2. Invocation and pledge to the flag.
3. Approve the minutes.
4. Requests and comments from the community.
5. Department Heads:
 - A) Marcus Calhoun – Maintenance.
 - B) Seth Jackson – Public Works.
 - C) Garret Land – Building/Zoning.
 - D) Marty Tompkins – EMS.
 - E) Shawn Jackson – Extension Office.
6. Authorize advertisement for the CR 320 project.
7. Consider approving Resolution No. 2025-02-01, an agreement with the Lafayette County Tax Collector.
8. Consider approving the construction and maintenance agreement with the Florida Department of Transportation for the SR 51 over Britt Creek Bridge project.
9. Consider approving Resolution No. 2025-02-02, an agreement with Florida Department of Transportation.
10. Select an engineering firm for Construction Engineering and Inspection for CR 536.
11. Leenette McMillan-Fredriksson – various items.
12. Approve the bills.
13. Other business.
14. Future agenda items.
15. Adjourn.

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

Persons with disabilities requesting reasonable accommodations to participate in this proceeding should contact (386) 294-1600 or via Florida Relay Service at (800) 955-8771.

See www.lafayetteclerk.com for updates and amendments to the agenda.

01/29, 02/05

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Lafayette County Board of County Commissioners will be accepting sealed bids to re-roof the concession stand at the Edward Perry Sports Complex baseball field, DMH, EOC, and the Extension Office. There will be a mandatory walk-thru meeting held on Thursday, February 20, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. meeting at the Lafayette County Courthouse located at 120 West Main Street Mayo, FL 32066. All bids are due by Friday, March 7, 2025 at 3:00 p.m., and will be opened at a regular scheduled Board Meeting on Tuesday, March 11, 2025 at 9:00 a.m., or as soon thereafter as the bids can be opened. If you have any questions, please contact Marcus Calhoun at (386)209-2472 or marcuscalhoun62@gmail.com.

The Lafayette County Board of County Commissioners reserve the right to accept and/or reject any and all bids, with or without cause, to waive technicalities or to accept the bid which, in its judgment, best serves the interest of Lafayette County. Persons are advised that, if they decide to appeal any decision made concerning the award of this bid, they will need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be made.

By Order Of:
Anthony Adams, Chairman
Lafayette County Commission

02/05, 02/12

IN THE COUNTY COURT FOR SUWANNEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
CASE NO. 2024 – CC – 330

JOSEPH F. CHAMBERLAIN, JR.
Plaintiff,
Vs.
AUDREE A. MAQUIRE, Deceased, her unknown spouse, heirs, assigns, successors in interest, trustees or other parties claiming by, through under or against her; d/b/a DESERT VISIONS, and The Florida Department of Motor Vehicles.
Defendants.

NOTICE OF ACTION

TO: DEFENDANTS, AUDREE A. MAQUIRE, if alive, and if deceased, her heirs, devisees, assigns, creditors and all other persons, natural or corporate claiming by through under or against her, AND ALL OTHERS WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

YOU ARE NOTIFIED that an action to establish ownership and title to a motor vehicle being more particularly described as follows:

Make - Cobra; Body - Kit; Type 2 door; Year – 1966; Color -Blue

has been filed against you and you are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, to it on HAL A. AIRTH, Plaintiff's attorney, whose address is Post Office. Box 448, Live Oak, Florida 32064, and file the original with the Clerk of this Court either before service on Plaintiff's attorney or immediately thereafter; within 30 days of the first publication of this notice, otherwise a default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint.

Dated this 3 day of January 2025.



01/15, 01/22, 01/29, 02/05

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR LAFAYETTE COUNTY, FLORIDA
PROBATE DIVISION
File No.
Division PROBATE

IN RE: ESTATE OF ROBERT THOMAS LAW, JR.
Deceased.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

TO ALL PERSONS HAVING CLAIMS OR DEMANDS AGAINST THE ABOVE ESTATE: You are hereby notified that an Order of Formal Administration has been entered in the estate of ROBERT THOMAS LAW, JR. deceased, File Number 34-2025-000003-CP, by the Circuit Court Lafayette County, Florida, Probate Division, the address of which is 120 West main Street, Mayo, FL 32066; that the decedent's date of death was November 7, 2024; that the total value of the estate is \$177,425.79 and that the names and addresses of those to whom it has been assigned by such order are:

NAME
Debra Byrd
ADDRESS
7417 193rd Road
Live Oak, FL 32060

All creditors of the estate of the decedent and persons having claims or demands against the estate of the decedent other than those for whom provision for full payment was made in the Order of Administration must file their claims with this court WITHIN THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH IN FLORIDA STATUTES SECTION 733.702. ALL CLAIMS AND DEMANDS NOT SO FILED WILL BE FOREVER BARRED. NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER APPLICABLE TIME PERIOD, ANY CLAIM FILED TWO (2) YEARS OR MORE AFTER THE DECEDENT'S DATE OF DEATH IS BARRED.

The date of first publication of this Notice is February 5, 2025.

Attorney for Person Giving Notice: /S/ Karen D. Hatton
E-mail Addresses: kdhattonlaw@gmail.com
Karen D. Hatton, P.A.
PO Box 446
Mayo, FL 32066

Person Giving Notice: /S/
Debra Byrd
ADDRESS
7417 193rd Road
Live Oak, FL 32060

02/05, 02/12

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT, THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA,
IN AND FOR SUWANNEE COUNTY**
Case No:2025-CP-03
PROBATE DIVISION
IN RE: ESTATE OF LORRAINE SERVIS, deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
(Iestate)

The administration of the estate of Lorraine Servis, deceased, whose date of death was December 2, 2024, is pending in the Circuit Court for Suwannee County, Florida, Probate Division; File Number 2025-CP-03; the address of which is Clerk of the Circuit Court, 200 South Ohio Avenue, Live Oak, Florida 32064. The names and addresses of the personal representative(s) and the personal representative(s)' attorney are set forth below. All creditors of the decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate on whom a copy of this notice is required to be served must file their claims with this court ON OR BEFORE THE LATER OF THREE (3) MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE OR THIRTY (30) DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF SERVICE OF A COPY OF THIS NOTICE ON THEM. All other creditors of the decedent and other persons who have claims or demands against the decedent's estate, including unmaturred, contingent or liquidated claims, must file their claims with this court WITHIN THREE (3) MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE. ALL CLAIMS NOT SO FILED WITHIN THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH IN FLORIDA STATUTES 733.702 WILL BE FOREVER BARRED. NOTWITHSTANDING THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH ABOVE, ANY CLAIM FILED TWO (2) YEARS OR MORE AFTER THE DECEDENT'S DATE OF DEATH IS BARRED. THE DATE OF FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE IS JANUARY 29th, 2025.

Personal Representative: /s/ Linda Sedell
9501 254th Terrace
O'Brien, FL 32071

Attorney for Personal: Representative; Frank C. Davis
P.O. Box 494
Live Oak, FL 32064
Tel. 386-362-8537
Florida Bar No. 0248606

01/29, 02/05

**Are you moving?
Potty training a puppy?
Starting a garden?
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