



Little league update

Page 15



Rockin' out with kids

Page 11

THE BAKER COUNTY PRESS

\$1.00

89TH YEAR | VOLUME 09

JUNE 21, 2018

AT A
GLANCE

THINGS TO DO

June 22

Movie in the park – Star Wars 'New Hope' screening

8:30 p.m. - 10:30 p.m.

Heritage Park Village, Lowder Street

The Baker Prevention Coalition's Summer Movie Series at Heritage Park starts with the original Star Wars film, "New Hope," on June 22. Gates at 7 p.m. with the movie at 8:30 p.m. "The Empire Strikes Back" and "Return of the Jedi" will be July 13 and July 27, respectively.

JUNE 23

Mega sports camp

8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

First Assembly of God

First Assembly of God in Macclenny will host a "Mega Sports Camp" on Saturday, June 23. Registration is 8:30 a.m. for 9 a.m. start. Goes

See page 5

MORE SPORTS



Staples stays put

See page 14

Go vote ...

What does downtown Macclenny need most?

- 31% Restaurants
- 21% Bars/entertainment
- 17% Parking
- 17% Beautification
- 7% Community events
- 5% Housing
- 2% Office space

bakercountypress.com

Behind bars for sexting teen

Page 6

SUV flips after a blown tire



A UF Health Gainesville helicopter lands on Interstate 10 west of Sanderson Tuesday morning to transport one of two women who were seriously injured when a 2002 Ford Explorer overturned. Photos by Jon Shumake

Two women airlifted

JON SHUMAKE

Interstate 10 was briefly closed in both directions the morning of June 19 after a westbound 2002 Ford Explorer overturned in the tree line just west of Sanderson.

Driver Tiffany Davis, 26, and passenger Linda Brown, 55, both of Sanderson, were airlifted to UF Health Gainesville with serious injuries after the vehicle's left rear tire blew out

about 10:15 a.m., causing the driver to lose control.

The Ford veered to the right off the roadway and through a shallow ditch before striking a tree and overturning about three miles west of U.S. 90.

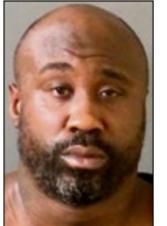
Both Ms. Davis and Ms. Brown were not restrained. A second passenger, Susan Brown, 42, of Sanderson, who was wearing a seatbelt, was taken by EMS to Fraser Hospital with minor injuries.



The 2002 Ford Explorer overturned when it hit a tree following a blown tire.

Inmate bites jail sergeant

A federal inmate at county jail is being held this week in confinement charged with felony aggravated battery on a jail deputy whose right pinkie finger was nearly bitten off



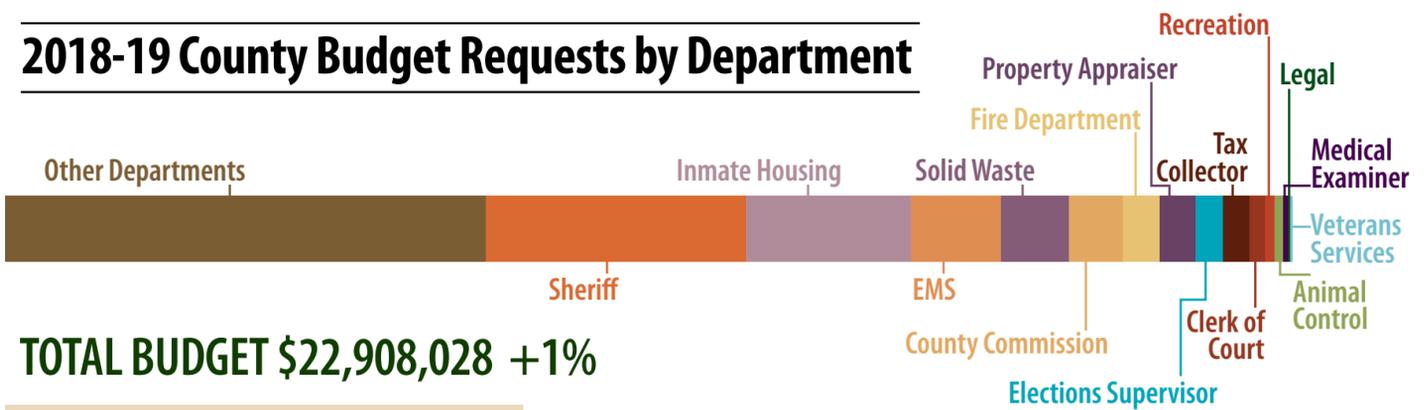
Ira King

during a struggle with several officers on June 11.

Ira King, 39, of Savannah, housed in Baker County as a U.S. Marshal inmate, became belligerent and uncooperative early that afternoon, according to the incident report, and attacked Sgt. Adophus Warren, 47, and two others as they removed handcuffs after placing him in a private cell due to his behavior.

See page 3

2018-19 County Budget Requests by Department



TOTAL BUDGET \$22,908,028 +1%

Fire Department	\$669,592	+145%
Animal Control	\$172,015	+69%
Solid Waste	\$1.2m	+56%
County Commission	\$977,015	+14%
Recreation	\$172,785	+11%
Legal	\$60,000	+11%
Elections Supervisor	\$502,682	+9%
EMS	\$1.6m	+7%
Veterans Services	\$35,296	+7%
Sheriff	\$4.3m	+5%
Clerk of Court	\$296,252	+2%
Medical Examiner	\$100,000	+1.8%
Property Appraiser	\$648,217	-2%
Tax Collector	\$479,991	-31%

Sheriff seeks a 5% budget hike

MIKE ANDERSON
PRESS STAFF

During the first half of a nonstop budget workshop from early afternoon until late in the night on June 12, county commissioners devoted about 90 minutes to the first complete budget from Sheriff Scotty Rhoden since he took office in January, 2017.

The sheriff wasn't able to attend the meeting in person because he had been subpoenaed to testify in a federal court case in Jacksonville, so he sent finance director Jeffrey Cox in his place.

"This is a case that involved something before he even became sheriff," Mr. Cox said, adding that Sheriff Rhoden hoped to make it back to Macclenny in time for the 1 p.m. workshop but as of 11 a.m. he was still waiting to be called to testify.

See page 2

Balks at \$10K for vets council

JOEL ADDINGTON
MANAGING EDITOR
reporter@bakercountypress.com

There was tension, laughter and a heavy dose of confusion during the first half of nearly nine hours of discussion among county commissioners, officials and staff last week on budget requests for 2018-19.

But when the marathon budget workshop ended, the county's spending plan for the coming fiscal year starting October 1 had

See page 3

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Budget: BCSO spending proposed at \$10.8M

From page 1

Nonetheless, Mr. Cox said he would do his best to answer questions and explain all budget increases to the board, as he directed their attention to a summary page containing proposed expenditures for the fiscal year 2018-19 starting October 1.

"As you can see, we did have a 5.5 percent increase overall in our budget," he said. "That's \$224,000 (\$224,069 to be exact). Some of it is in operational expenses; some of it is in personnel services."

He also reminded the board that Sheriff Rhoden had only been in office about six months when he presented his first budget last year, whereas, "The budget you're receiving now is after at least a year and a half in office, so I would ask that you just keep that in mind as we go through this."

The budget for the sheriff's office under county control would increase about 5 percent to some \$4.3 million in 2018-19, which includes dispatch, courthouse security, home detention and county law enforcement, according to the department's budget request.

But the total budget to run the entire department next



County commissioners James Croft, Jimmy Anderson and chairman Bobby Steele during Tuesday's budget workshop.

year is an estimated \$10.8 million, a 6.74 percent increase.

That's because the department is responsible for several different functions — law enforcement and corrections — and receives funding from different sources to carry out its overall mission.

Funding comes from county commissioners, Macclenny city commissioners, federal and state grant programs, the school district for school crossing guards and school resource officers

and the Baker Correctional Development Corporation (BCDC) — the nonprofit owner of the county jail and sheriff's administration building.

Schools to fund SROs

"We didn't have a whole lot of changes in most of those departments or funds but we did have changes in some of them," Mr. Cox said. "One big change that we had is with our school resource deputies."

Because of the recent school shooting in South Florida, following a string of similar incidents throughout the country in recent years, state lawmakers have allocated millions of dollars to put armed officers in all schools throughout Florida, including four additional in Baker County, which presently has only two.

"The school system has always funded \$60,000 a year for those two deputies and you have supplemented the salaries and benefits for those deputies at about \$52,000 a year," said Mr. Cox. "Starting July 1, we have a new agreement with the school system and they're

going to be funding 100 percent of the salaries and benefits for those six deputies."

The proposed budget shows the funding for school deputies jumping from \$60,000 this year to \$384,466 — a 541 percent increase — but "overall, there's going to be no cost to you,"

The bills are being paid but they're not being paid in as timely a manner as they need to be paid.

BCSO finance director Jeffrey Cox.

he told commissioners.

"This really is just for informational purposes only? What you're showing actually has no effect on our overall budget, is that correct?" asked Commissioner James Bennett. "All you're showing is that you're hiring officers and the school board's paying for them?"

"That is accurate," said Mr. Cox. "Where you see that big change I just want you to be aware of it."

Next, Mr. Cox went on to a relatively small item in the budget that he said could generate some controversy because it involves the loss of a federal grant due to "so-called sanctuary cities."

The U.S. Justice Department has partially funded \$38,909 for one detective position through a Justice Assistance Grant matched by a supplemental appropriation from the county every year of about \$17,328.

Mr. Cox said the sheriff's office had budgeted \$56,237 for the position next year but recently was notified that the federal grant program had been halted pending the outcome of litigation with sanctuary cities.

"The sanctuary cities are in the process of suing the federal government for those funds so what the justice department has decided to do is just to hold all of the funds until all of the cases are resolved."

What the sheriff's office is asking the county to do, Mr. Cox said, is pay the entire \$56,237 next year if the grant doesn't come through and, if it does, the money would be repaid to the county. However, he said he has heard through a reliable source that the grant probably will not be funded next year at all.

"This is impacting our budget by a considerable sum of money," he said.

Commissioner Jimmy Anderson, never one to stick to politically correct terminology, said it disturbed him that "idiots in these sanctuary cities are causing everyone (in counties throughout the U.S.) to be punished" by the loss of federal funding.

"Basically, they're breaking the law," he said, by not doing what the federal government tells them to do (turn over illegal immigrants to federal authorities) "and then we're all punished for it."

"That's right," said Mr. Cox.

Police in sanctuary cities, however, argue that federal law enforcement agencies are charged with rounding up illegal immigrants, not local or state police.

BCSO requests 5 percent more for policing

As the discussion continued Mr. Cox said, "We're slowly working our way to the meat of the budget," meaning the big-ticket items of law enforcement, corrections, dispatch and judicial services, which totaled an increase averaging 5.75 percent based on the following funding requests:

Dispatch costs would increase from \$428,202 to \$441,818, or 7 percent. But overtime pay has dropped greatly in the past year since two additional dispatchers were hired, bringing the total number of dispatchers up to 10.

"Our overtime pay is tracking to be about \$19,000 a year, which is really good when you look at previous years when we were tracking at \$50,000 to \$60,000 a year in overtime ..." Mr. Cox said.

Judicial services would jump from \$291,334 to \$319,529, up 10 percent largely due to increases in life and health insurance costs for four deputies assigned to the courthouse.

Law enforcement would increase 4 percent, from \$3,354,405 to \$3,502,336, and would include additional incentive pay encouraging deputies to enroll in college courses or seek additional training toward becoming a detective.

Corrections, which employs about 73 employees, including 56 corrections officers at the jail — 14 on each of four shifts — would increase overall about 2 percent from \$5,068,498 to \$5,173,380, again largely due to health insurance and retirement benefits.

"This is our corrections budget, which until last year we never really submitted to you (commissioners) at all," said Mr. Cox. "But Sheriff Rhoden wanted to show you everything that we get and everything we send out."

The sheriff also submitted a copy of BCDC's budget for next year, showing total revenue of \$14.4 million, including the county's flat fee of \$2.8 million for housing local inmates and \$11,293,100 in federal revenue for housing inmates detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the

U.S. Marshall's Office and the U.S. Bureau of Prisons.

When the subject of BCDC and its shaky financial history came up Commissioner James Croft mentioned his concern for the board's continued practice of being late making as much as \$600,000 in payments due to the sheriff's office.

"I'm just curious, how in the world can you float \$600,000 owed to you?" the commissioner asked Mr. Cox.

"It's a tough job. We just have to do what we can to make it work," said Mr. Cox. "We have to watch our spending very closely and how we pay our bills. It's a delicate balance."

He said it probably would be an impossible balancing act without the county's monthly inmate housing payment, which equals about \$233,333.

Mr. Croft continued to press Mr. Cox about how the sheriff's office can continue to pay its bills while having to wait for late payments of hundreds of thousands of dollars from BCDC.

"The bills are being paid but they're not being paid in as timely a manner as they need to be paid," Mr. Cox replied.

"So, you're just robbing from Peter to pay Paul," commented Commissioner Cathy Rhoden.

"That's a good analogy for it," Mr. Cox said.

Later in the discussion Jack Baker Jr., one of the county commissioner's appointees to the BCDC board a year ago, told commissioners that BCDC faces an uncertain financial future that could cost the county more money to house local inmates than the current \$2.8 million a year if the board is unable to secure a low-interest loan from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to pay off high-interest bond debt.

"We are proposing at this point in time to maintain the \$2.8 million contribution from the county," he said. "I do want to prepare you for the fact that if this USDA financing doesn't go through I don't see any way that that's going to stay at that number."

"We built the budget on 367 federal inmates and from October through March we only had one month that we reached that threshold. Every federal inmate for 365 days is \$30,000 in revenue."

Right now, Mr. Baker said, based on a daily average number of local inmates in the jail, 123, during the first eight months of the current fiscal year the "effective daily rate is \$62.37." He said it may not be possible to keep it that low.

Commissioner Bennett thanked Mr. Baker and his fellow BCDC board members for their hard work and dedication this past year, adding his gratitude that the county's \$2.8 million payment each year is "a whole lot less than it was a couple of years ago."

"We fully understand that there continues to be challenges ahead with the USDA loan, but we're holding out hope that you guys can pull it off yet."

"Well, we've done all we can do," Mr. Baker responded. "The last check box is in your court."

In opening remarks, County Manager KENNIE DOWNING stated that all department heads had been told to keep their requests "as close to a no-change budget as possible over last year."

Most did, a few didn't, and none had any control over rising personnel expenses such as health insurance and retirement benefits.

She also noted that no pay raises were included in the proposed budget at this time.

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The Baker County Press Weather

Five Day Forecast

Thursday
Few Showers
High: 93 Low: 76

Friday
Scattered T-storms
High: 91 Low: 78

Saturday
Scattered T-storms
High: 93 Low: 76

Sunday
Scattered T-storms
High: 94 Low: 77

Monday
Scattered T-storms
High: 93 Low: 76

Tuesday
Few Showers
High: 101 Low: 78

Wednesday
Few Showers
High: 97 Low: 80

Today's High & Low Temperatures

Jasper 92/78, Callahan 94/77, Fernandina Beach 91/80, Jacksonville 93/79, Atlantic Beach 91/80, Macclenny 93/76, Baldwin 94/77, Watertown 91/77, High Springs 91/77, Starke 92/76, St. Augustine 91/79

Sun/Moon Chart This Week

Day	Sunrise	Sunset
Thursday	6:27 a.m.	8:33 p.m.
Friday	6:27 a.m.	8:33 p.m.
Saturday	6:27 a.m.	8:33 p.m.
Sunday	6:28 a.m.	8:33 p.m.
Monday	6:28 a.m.	8:34 p.m.
Tuesday	6:28 a.m.	8:34 p.m.
Wednesday	6:28 a.m.	8:34 p.m.

Full 6/28, Last 7/6, New 7/12, First 7/19

St. Mary's River Levels

Location	Now	Change
Moniac, GA	7.29 ft.	+0.18 ft.
Macclenny	6.65 ft.	+0.06 ft.

Weather History

June 21, 1987 - A tornado destroyed 57 mobile homes at the Chateau Estates trailer park northwest of Detroit, killing one person and injuring six others. Damage was estimated at 1.7 million dollars.

Vets: \$10K request cut in half

From page 1

grown by less than 1 percent compared to the current budget and remained nearly \$23 million.

Commissioners started staking out their respective fiscal positions, however, identifying spending priorities and rejecting others. Commissioner James Bennett in particular heavily scrutinized the budget requests from department heads and constitutional officers.

As the meeting wound down about midnight on June 12 Mr. Bennett and other commissioners thanked county staff for their efforts in preparing the requests, which totaled hundreds of pages of documents that measured up to some 4 inches when stacked together.

"I prefer this to doing it every single week," Mr. Bennett said of the lengthy workshop that kicked off at 1 p.m.

"It's not perfect," said county finance director Cheryl Lewis, "but we'll get there."

She had just reviewed a series of corrections to the budget figures or changes sought by commissioners she said totaled more than \$606,000 and took the budget from a proposed 2 percent decrease to a 2.6 percent increase.

There were departments or grant programs for which accurate figures were not yet available, Ms. Lewis said, including the tax collector's budget request, revenue figures from the state that she didn't expect until sometime next month, how much the City of Macclenny would pay the sheriff's office and others.

Commissioners balk at \$10K for vets council

Nonetheless, among the requests generating the most discussion were those from the county fire department and the Baker County Veterans Council, which sought \$10,000 from the board.

Commissioners Bennett and James Croft balked at the request, citing their lack of oversight in how the money would be spent and the need for making the county's veterans administrator a full-time position.

Currently, the administrator, Tony Esterling, works four days per week.

"I have a concern that we don't invest enough in veterans services administration ... but yet we [may] give \$10,000 to a private organization," said Mr. Bennett, referencing the nonprofit veterans council. He also noted there have been some "disconnects" between Mr. Esterling and the nonprofit.

"They don't always see eye to eye," Mr. Bennett said.

While commissioners applauded the work of the veterans council in the community, commission chairman Bobby Steele, Mr. Bennett

and Mr. Croft agreed at least some of the money should be spent elsewhere in the budget.

"They're super ... They've done a lot for us," said Mr. Steele, who suggested allocating money to the veterans administration office, which could then be distributed at Mr. Esterling's discretion.

Mr. Bennett, meanwhile, said while the veterans council "does do a phenomenal job" he would rather consider funding requests

"I don't know it's always government's job to step in," said Mr. Croft while acknowledging some would see that view as anti-veteran. He said several of his immediate family members are veterans or currently serving in the military and his lack of support for the expenditure shouldn't be seen as a slight against veterans.

"I'm up here dealing with finances — John Q. Public's taxes that are entrusted to us," said the commissioner. "Government

the fire chief for not knowing how much repairs could cost.

"Who's getting the benefit? ... It's reasonable to know we should have a plan for these other stations and I'm hearing that we don't," said the commissioner, who would later apologize for his tone.

Chief Marfongella pledged to survey the seven stations other than Sanderson and get quotes for needed repairs, but reminded commissioners his requests in recent years for additional funding, including for building repairs, were turned down.

As they attempt to install a much higher fire assessment fee, other commissioners are aware how important it will be for residents to see upgrades at their nearest fire stations.

Mr. Anderson recommended splitting up \$25,000 among the outlying stations so the public "can see money going back into their community ... That means a lot." Plus, he said, better facilities should help recruit more volunteers, whose numbers have dwindled.

"People paying assessment need to see what they're getting," he said.

"I have a concern that we don't invest enough in veterans services ... but yet we [may] give \$10,000 to a private organization."

-Commissioner James Bennett



from the group on a project-by-project basis rather than once annually.

Without a full-time veterans affairs administrator, "this is one [request] I cannot support," said the commissioner.

Commissioner Jimmy Anderson strongly advocated for granting the \$10,000 request. He said he's worked with the veterans council on many projects that have benefited the county just as much as other groups making donation requests, like the Council on Aging.

"What they do for veterans and to keep our parks up and stuff they've done in the community. They step up every time we've asked them to step up," said Mr. Anderson.

Not supporting the group financially would be a "slap in the face," he added.

County manager Kenie Downing cautioned the commission that including the donation could lead other nonprofit organizations to seek similar annual allocations.

"You could be opening up the floodgates," she said.

Finance chief Ms. Lewis added that county employees view such donations negatively since they have been placed under strict budgeting constraints for years.

"We're just tired of things falling down around us," she said.

Mr. Anderson responded that commissioners are attempting to address the needs of departments and staff while also helping community groups.

"What's to say we can't do both," he said.

Commissioner Croft was next to weigh in but prefaced his comments by warning commissioners about speaking on the record at such a late hour. He said while Mr. Anderson may be passionate about the veterans council, he's just as passionate about taxpayers and the trust they place in commissioners to spend public money wisely.

has gotten out of hand funding everything. We're trying to dig ourselves out of years of not properly funding the fire stations and other departments ... then we're hit with other smaller requests ... We get put in positions you have to vote for this because you'll be cast as something terrible ... I'm thinking where's the extra \$10,000 coming from? ..."

Commissioner Cathy Rhoden agreed the veterans council does "a good job" but called the \$10,000 request "excessive."

Commissioners may choose to fund a portion of the request as budget talks continue, however. County staff kept a \$5000 donation to the group in the budget, according to a list of budget changes released Tuesday.

Fire department budget in flux

The fire department requested the largest budget increase from about \$273,000 to some \$645,000, presumably funded but a much higher county fire assessment on property owners, and hopefully, grant money.

The \$372,000 jump, or 136 percent increase, is envisioned to help replace the Sanderson fire station, hire two full-time firefighters and buy new vehicles and equipment. Two grants are also being sought to offset the costs for the additional personnel and station.

However, commissioners have yet to set the amount of the new fire assessment and fire chief Steven Marfongella has not yet received approvals on the grant applications, both of which will drive spending in the department in 2018-19.

Board members, especially Mr. Bennett, were displeased that sorely needed repairs at other stations, including those in Cuyler and Taylor, were left out of the fire chief's budget request.

Then after the county manager suggested adding \$25,000 to the repairs and maintenance line item, commissioner Bennett chastised

"I absolutely agree," said chief Marfongella. "Commissioner Bennett is absolutely correct and I'll bring that back to you — a list of stuff that needs to be done and improvements that are needed ..."

He warned commissioners, however, that the price tag will surely be high.

Save the date!

Alumni and friends, mark your calendars for Saturday, September 29 and the Taylor School reunion. A meet and greet starts at 5 p.m., followed by a 6 p.m. dinner at Eric and Sherrie Raulerson's barn north of Glen St. Mary.

The event is also a fund raiser for the Taylor School scholarship given to a Baker County High senior.

Sergeant is bitten

From page 1

The bite did not sever the finger, but was serious enough to require surgery. Sgt. Warren as of this week is still on leave and recovering, said Major Randy Crews. The other officers, Thomas Dyal Jr. and Lonnie Norman Jr. were not injured.

The charge is a first degree felony.

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Published June 14, 21 & 28, 2018

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- Property Parcel Number (PPN) Example: (PPN) 01-1S-22-1001-0102-0010
- 01- Represents the Section where the property is located.
 - 1S- Represents the Township where the property is located.
 - 22- Represents the Range where the property is located.
 - 1001- Represents the Subdivision where the property is located.
 - 0102- Represents the Block where the property is located.
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2	\$748.03	02352100000000026	GLEN PROPERTY LLC	14	\$277.37	112S2100000000031	RHODEN THOMAS R & ETAL	26	\$128.57	29252202200000180	MAE LILLIES LLC	38	\$133.81	29252202200000840	MAE LILLIES LLC
3	\$58.42	02352100000000027	GLEN PROPERTY LLC	15	\$266.12	142S2100000000060	RHODEN THOMAS J & ETAL	27	\$123.36	29252202200000230	MAE LILLIES LLC	39	\$175.54	29252202200000880	MAE LILLIES LLC
4	\$652.89	03152200000000183	PADGETT HARRY L & MELINDA	16	\$355.50	252S2100470000190	RHODEN THOMAS R & TINA M	28	\$133.81	29252202200000290	MAE LILLIES LLC	40	\$165.11	29252202200000900	MAE LILLIES LLC
5	\$576.31	04352100000000051	HUTCHINS LEONARD DANIEL &	17	\$495.18	262S2000000000027	LAND TRUST	29	\$139.02	29252202200000350	MAE LILLIES LLC	41	\$107.71	29252202200000940	MAE LILLIES LLC
6	\$948.49	04352102040001140	GLEN FOREST LLC	18	\$527.98	281S21014300010190	BAIN JAMES & LORI	30	\$139.02	29252202200000370	MAE LILLIES LLC	42	\$232.94	29252202200000980	MAE LILLIES LLC
7	\$868.93	04352102040001310	GLEN FOREST LLC	19	\$161.36	291S20003604030100	OSCEOLA LAND TRUST #10CD1011DD	31	\$118.14	29252202200000410	MAE LILLIES LLC	43	\$154.66	29252202200001010	MAE LILLIES LLC
8	\$846.99	04352102040001320	GLEN FOREST LLC	20	\$252.38	291S20003604030120	OSCEOLA LAND TRUST #12CD	32	\$149.45	29252202200000450	MAE LILLIES LLC	44	\$109.25	29351900590000010	DUNCAN PATTY DIANNE
9	\$5,286.73	05352200000000020	APEX FABRICATION INC	21	\$61.29	291S20003604050120	OSCEOLA LAND TRUST #12 ED	33	\$133.81	29252202200000320	MAE LILLIES LLC	45	\$67.79	31252200990000010	DAVIS MYRNA ROWE
10	\$14,209.08	05352200000000034	J PARKER PROPERTIES LLC	22	\$133.81	29252202200000010	MAE LILLIES LLC	34	\$196.42	29252202200000550	MAE LILLIES LLC	46	\$114.82	33252101750000020	RHODEN MESHELLE D & ETAL
11	\$109.60	091N2100000000010	RHODEN THOMAS R & TINA M	23	\$133.81	29252202200000050	MAE LILLIES LLC	35	\$123.36	29252202200000690	MAE LILLIES LLC				
12	\$118.55	101S20000200000310	LAND TRUST #31 OSCEOLA	24	\$133.81	29252202200000090	MAE LILLIES LLC	36	\$175.54	29252202200000740	MAE LILLIES LLC				

MACCLENNY CITY COMMISSION

Main breaks getting more frequent

Latest collapse MN Ave.

MIKE ANDERSON
PRESS STAFF

Macclenny city commissioners are getting used to receiving bad news about crumbling sewer lines and setbacks in efforts to find a permanent solution to getting rid of liquid sewage sludge from the municipal sewer plant.

Last week was no exception.

Near the end of the commission meeting the evening of June 12, City Manager Phil Rhoden announced that another sewer line had "caved in four or five feet deep," this time in a residential area on Minnesota Avenue not far from where a sewer pipe collapsed a few weeks earlier at the corner of South Sixth Street and South Boulevard.

"We have multiple problems in this area," Mr. Rhoden told the board. "These lines are anywhere from 50 to 70 years old."

Old lines have deteriorated so much over the decades that it's virtually impossible to predict when one will rupture and cause the ground to cave in, as has happened

numerous times in the past few years.

"We have a very, very fragile, delicate system," the city manager said, noting that so many aging sewer pipes are cracked and leaking that "they could collapse at any time."

Weather, particularly summer thunderstorms, is a big factor, he said.

"We've got to do something. We're on borrowed time," Mr. Rhoden said. "Rains are worsening it."

The good news, he said, is that engineers have recommended a solution that could reduce the wastewater flow through some of the worst areas and relieve the pressure on weakened lines. The bad news is the work will cost up to \$150,000, about twice as much as budgeted for emergency repairs.

"We still think we should be able to come in with a balanced budget (for 2018-19) even with this," he said.

Meanwhile, Mr. Rhoden said the city is "still probably two years off" from getting a state grant to fund a major sewer pipe replacement project as part of an extensive overhaul that could cost up to \$15 million over the next several years.

Moving on from the sewer pipe collapse on Minnesota Avenue, the city manager told commissioners that the city's sewage sludge disposal site on Wassie Fish Farms land north of Glen St. Mary had been "shut down" by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

Unbeknownst to the city, he said, a state permit authorizing the spraying of biosolids material, more commonly referred to as "sludge," on the site expired in February, catching the city completely off guard.

"We have no source for our sludge," he said, "and we haven't found a viable solution."

"We have multiple problems in this area. These lines are anywhere from 50 to 70 years old."

—City manager Phil Rhoden
Macclenny

Mr. Rhoden said he was trying to get state environmental authorities to reevaluate Fish Farms and issue a temporary permit to allow the city to continue using the property as a sludge disposal site awhile longer.

In six months the city should have completed a plan to end spraying of biosolids on farmlands for a more environmentally-friendly disposal method using dewatering boxes and polymers to turn the sludge into a dry material that can be hauled to New River Regional Landfill.

The conversion project was awarded in a \$225,000 contract in March to SGS Contracting Services in High Springs, FL.

City officials hope to get an answer from FDEP soon on the temporary permit request. As of June 15, there was still no response from the agency's regional office in Jacksonville, according to Assistant City Manager Mike Griffis.

All the while, Mr. Griffis said, a sewage sludge storage tank at the municipal wastewater treatment plant is inching closer and closer to the full mark.

In other business during last week's board meeting commissioners:

- Received a report from the city manager on a request from Glen St. Mary Mayor Juanice Padgett to consider fire and rescue services in the town, which is facing the prospect of having to pay annual county fire assessments for the first time on every residence and busi-

ness starting this fall.

"It would take an inter-local agreement," said Mr. Rhoden, adding the city fire and rescue department would have no problems taking on Glen St. Mary and its 200-250 residences as an additional coverage area.

"There would be no negative impact to us," he said. "It would primarily be medical calls. No additional staff or equipment would be needed and it would be extra revenue for the city. It could be a win-win."

Commissioners directed the city manager to pursue the matter.

- Took action on two voluntary annexation requests from families in the Owens Acres subdivision seeking to become tax-paying residents of Macclenny in exchange for municipal utilities. The requests continue a trend in the neighborhood that began a couple of years ago evidently stemming from water pressure problems.

"It's the same old story," Mr. Griffis told commissioners. "It's another home in that area wanting city water."

"Wells are malfunctioning or going dry," said Mayor Mark Bryant. "There's definitely something going on in that area regarding the aquifer."

- Entered into an agreement with the Florida Department of Transportation for the relocation of water and sewer facilities on SR 228 (Fifth Street) prior to the resurfacing of the road in the next year or so.

Glen man jailed for DUI after swerving on I-10

JON SHUMAKE

A Glen St. Mary man was arrested the night of June 17 for DUI and refusal to submit a breath test after he was stopped for driving recklessly on Interstate 10.

Florida Highway Patrolman A. Brannon learned of a truck traveling westbound on the interstate that was failing to maintain a single lane and spotted the vehicle near the 238 mile marker just before 8:40 p.m. The trooper noted the vehicle, driven by 30-year-old David Harter, crossed the solid white line several times before exiting at CR 229, where the traffic stop occurred.

Trooper Brannon smelled a strong odor of alcohol coming from the vehicle and Mr. Harter was unsteady on his feet after being asked to exit his vehicle. He had to use the officer's car to maintain his balance. The suspect's breath smelled of alcohol and he had bloodshot, watery eyes, the trooper said.

Mr. Harter, who admitted to drinking "four tall boys" that day while deep sea fishing, performed poorly during a field sobriety test at Cuz's One Stop Shop. He was emotional during the exercises, going from crying to anger and using profanity, Trooper Brannon reported. Mr. Harter initially refused to provide a breath sample but agreed after being told about implied consent.

Trooper Brannon and another trooper had to assist Mr. Harter into the back of the patrol car due to him not wanting to put his legs or feet into the car, and he once again became emotional on the way to county jail, according to the report. Once there he again refused to give a breath sample.

In another incident, a Macclenny man was jailed for violation of probation after it was determined during a traffic stop just before midnight on June 12 that he had consumed alcohol.

Richard Whiting III, 40, was stopped by Deputy Jeffrey Higginbotham about 11:45 p.m. after he was caught driving with only one operational headlight. Deputy Higginbotham smelled alcohol on Mr. Whiting during the stop, which took place in the Smoker Friendly parking lot on Sixth Street. The deputy also found empty bottles of an alcoholic beverage in the backseat of the vehicle, according to police.

Mr. Whiting was initially unable to locate his driver's license, instead grabbing cash from his wallet. He eventually located his license, which was in plain view, Deputy Higginbotham reported.

The deputy learned Mr. Whiting was on probation that prohibited him from drinking alcohol.

Although the suspect had consumed alcohol, it was determined his impairment was not sufficient for a DUI charge, Deputy Higginbotham noted.

- James Cameron, 34, of Lake City was arrested about midday June 15 on a Columbia County warrant for failure to appear for drug possession during a traffic stop.

Leaves scene of overturned truck

JON SHUMAKE

A Macclenny man who was driving on a suspended license was arrested just before midday on June 10 for leaving the scene of an accident after his truck overturned on U.S. 90 east of Macclenny.

Deputy John Taylor returned suspect Michael Bennett Jr., 41, to the crash scene, reported Trooper J.S. Smatt, who noted the truck was on its rooftop in the eastbound ditch against several trees.

Mr. Bennett said he was a passenger in the truck, but changed his story about the driver while speaking with the trooper. The suspect first said he didn't know who was driving the vehicle before saying a man named "Black" was behind the wheel, according to Trooper Smatt's report.

Witness William Claxton, who was traveling behind Mr. Bennett, said he watched the truck overturn several times. He said Mr. Bennett exited the truck

and asked Mr. Claxton if he could take him home, Trooper Smatt reported.

Mr. Claxton and fellow witness Henry Claxton both said they could tell there was only one occupant in the truck and identified Mr. Bennett as the driver.

In another incident, a Hilliard man was jailed the morning of June 16 for driving on a license with five suspensions and misdemeanor possession of marijuana after he was pulled over for traveling north in the southbound lane on CR-125.

Sgt. Chris Walker reported he saw driver Robert Weinberg Jr., 21, and passenger Mason Taylor, 20, of Glen St. Mary switch seats before stopping the vehicle. Mr. Weinberg told the officer he changed seats because he didn't have a valid license, and a check revealed his suspensions.

The sergeant also found less than 20 grams of marijuana in the suspect's possession.

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Window closing on USDA loan

JOEL ADDINGTON
MANAGING EDITOR
reporter@bakercountypress.com

The Baker Correctional Development Corporation (BCDC) may be just a month away from getting a long-sought low-interest loan from the USDA to ease its cash crisis by slashing debt service payments by some \$2.7 million annually.

The final piece to the loan application is a letter from county commissioners regarding the county's commitment to financially back repayment of the loan. Negotiations have been ongoing between the USDA and the county through the county and BCDC's attorney Rich Komando.

Ed Barber, chairman of BCDC's board of directors, declined early this week to reveal the commitment language being floated to both parties but said during a June 13 board meeting that property tax revenue does not have to be pledged.

He said any public use of the sheriff's office complex would also "sweeten the deal."

The current draft of the county letter is the second effort after the USDA rejected the initial language. At issue is how much liability the county would assume for repayment of the debt, said



BCDC board members (from left) Sharon Padgett, Ed Barber and Mark Broughton

Mr. Barber after the meeting.

He feared this week that revealing the proposed commitment language, which could change in the coming weeks as talks continue, could negatively impact the negotiations and jeopardize the loan.

Without the new USDA financing — which could cut BCDC's annual interest rate by half — the nonprofit would likely default on its more than \$30 million in bond debt. Should that happen the jail and sheriff's office headquarters could be placed under new ownership from outside the county.

However, Mr. Barber expects the county commission will vote on the commitment letter soon, perhaps early next month.

Last week Mr. Barber informed fellow board members of the nonprofit corporation that owns the north Macclenny jail and sheriff's office complex, that while USDA officials in Gainesville have relayed that the loan money is available now, it could vanish within a month or two.

"The window is close to closing on the USDA loan. While we've said in our conversations that the USDA loan is not the ultimate solution to our business model, it's the immediate solution to the financial stress we find ourselves in," said BCDC's accounting consultant Michael Givens.

He was alluding to hundreds of thousands of dollars in back payments due to the jail medical services provider, Armor Correctional Health, and the sheriff's office, which manages the facility.

"We've done everything that's required of us," said Mr. Barber, citing the formation of a new corporation, environmental studies, surveys and an updated feasibility study on repayment of the loan. "The only thing left on the table is the county commitment language ...

"I believe we have a few weeks to get this done ... There won't be a next year."

Looming on the horizon in 2020 is also a roughly \$33 million balloon payment on the current bonds, which were renegotiated last year to avoid more than \$2 million in penalties from the IRS.

After a roughly year-long inquiry by the federal agency, the IRS ruled that the original tax-free bonds issued by BCDC to build the facility in 2008 should have been taxable.

BCDC auditor, Lyons & Lyons of Macclenny, will have to include language in its audit report regarding the enormous liability, Mr. Givens said, if the USDA loan is not secured in short order.

He said the testing portion of the audit is complete.

"They have growing concern whether or not this organization as configured — with our revenue streams and resources — would survive the May, 2020 balloon payment of some \$33 million," said the accountant, which elicited some laughter from board members.

"They're that smart, they figured that out," added Mr. Barber sarcastically.

"We have a concern, too," said member Mark Broughton.

"It's not devastating language," Mr. Givens said, adding that similar language was found in the initial audits of the corporation. "But it raises the concern. It says BCDC is facing a balloon payment of \$33 million and has not demonstrated the approach they would use to survive that."

There is also an ongoing dispute with bondholders about when an interest rate increase included in the new bond deal, which added some \$700,000 in principle to the debt as well, took effect.

Mr. Givens said the deal wasn't finalized until May 1, 2017, but bondholders contend the higher rate took ef-

fect February 1 of last year. In other business last week, the board:

- Approved a roughly \$62,000 budget amendment to buy new radios for vehicles and deputies transporting inmates. The radios have a 10-year life expectancy.
- Learned that a mediation meeting is scheduled for July 10 in Fort Lauderdale in BCDC's lawsuit against its former bond counsel, Sell & Melton of Macon, Ga.

The firm issued an opinion that the initial bonds could be issued as tax-exempt bonds and declined to have that opinion verified by a judge in court.

Mr. Barber said the firm settled a similar lawsuit with the Glades County corporation after which BCDC was modeled. He said he was "pretty sure" the law firm's insurance company paid the settlement but the amount was kept private.

The BCDC board is scheduled to convene again July 18 at 2 p.m.

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From page 1

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Baker County Barracudas YMCA swim meet

9 a.m.
YMCA pool, Lowder Street

The newly-rechristened YMCA swim team makes its home debut at 9 a.m.

JUNE 25
Teen sex assault survivors support group

3 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Family Service Center

The Women's Center of Jacksonville's Rape Recovery Team will provide a Summer Support Group for teenage survivors of sexual assault in Macclenny. Teens must be between the ages of 14-17 to attend. A parent or guardian must be present to sign for permission to attend the group and you must have transportation to and from the group. If teens or parents/guardians have any questions regarding group or services, please contact Emily Linder at 904-259-2427.

JUNE 30
Independence Day Celebration

5 p.m. - 10:30 p.m.
Memorial Park/Duck Pond Park Macclenny

The 2018 Independence Day Celebration will be held on Saturday, June 30, 2018 at Memorial Park/Duck Pond Park (160 West Boulevard in Macclenny). The celebration will begin at 5 pm with vendor booths and entertainment as well as a game truck. The fireworks will begin around 9 p.m. and then immediately after the fireworks there will be a movie in the park. For more information or to reserve a vendor booth, please contact the Baker County Chamber of Commerce at (904) 259-6433.

Subdued at gunpoint

JON SHUMAKE

Deputies arrested a Lake City man in the early hours of June 18 on numerous charges, including felony burglary and grand theft of a motor vehicle, after he was stopped by the victim at gunpoint before attempting to hide from police.

Victim Eugene Murriell Jr. told police he was alerted by his 13-year-old son that someone was in the driveway because headlights were shining through the front windows of their West Michigan Avenue residence. He said he saw his wife's vehicle backing out of his driveway and armed himself. He then exited the residence to see the suspect, later identified as Emmanuel Reed, 52, pulling the vehicle back into its spot in the driveway.

Mr. Reed then exited the vehicle and complied with Mr. Murriell's commands to get on the ground. The victim lowered his firearm after seeing the suspect wasn't armed, which prompted Mr. Reed to stand and walk away. The suspect entered Mr. Murriell's neighbor's yard when police arrived, according to Deputy Jeffrey Higginbotham's report.

Deputies Higginbotham and Tim Griffin searched the area of Minnesota and Michigan avenues before Deputy Griffin located Mr. Reed at gunpoint. Police found a pipe commonly used for smoking crack and a brillo pad in the suspect's possession.

In addition to the two felony counts, Mr. Reed was also jailed on misdemeanor counts of trespassing, resisting without violence, loitering or prowling and possession of drug equipment.

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Breathes new life into key downtown corner

Foreclosure results in new look, shops

JOEL ADDINGTON
MANAGING EDITOR
reporter@bakercountypress.com

About three years after a downtown Macclenny business owner closed up shop to take care of her aging father, Lin Adams returned to the same intersection to start a new business just a few steps from her former shop and cafe at the northwest corner of U.S. 90 and Fifth Street.

She and her late father, who died three weeks ago at age 89, purchased the building across the street at the southwest corner of the intersection May 1, one year after the more than 5400-square-foot, two-story built in 1940 fell into foreclosure.

Ms. Adams is opening a home decor, furniture and art shop known as Brick and Mortar very soon and another shop, the Weathered Wheel by Stephanie Johnson, is already open for business.

She has plans for an art gallery on the second floor, where she also hopes to reside someday.

"But to do it right, I need to put in an elevator," said Ms. Adams early week as she continued work on her shop, which will be open 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

She retired in 2015 but

recently wanted to return to the city's core business district.

"My dad got well enough that we got bored. After a while cruises become monotonous. We went on five altogether. We had fun but there's only so much," she said.

Then they started having garage sales, which her father, Ramiro Casanas, better known around town as "Poppy," enjoyed very much "because you get to see people and talk to people. My dad was very social."

They had plans to open a business at another property further to the east on the south side of U.S. 90.



The downtown building that recently changed hands through foreclosure.

PHOTOS BY JOEL ADDINGTON



Business owners Lin Adams (left) and Stephanie Johnson.

"It was ideal. It was huge beautiful house ... Behind it was had a rundown building ... and I thought we could buy the house, fix it up for us and have our business in the backyard," explained Ms. Adams, adding that was last year.

The sale didn't go through on the house, but they successfully bought the building downtown for \$198,000, less than half of what the property sold for in 2008.

"We bought it so I could put in a mercantile," she

said, adding there was a lot of work the building needed, including maintenance on the air conditioning, new fixtures in the bathroom and others.

"We've upgraded the look and feel of the inside," said Ms. Adams. "The Weathered Wheel is extremely modern and chic. I'm the same as always. They [customers] walk in and think it's super expensive, like a boutique in Avondale or San Marco, then they see the prices and hit the floor."

Battery arrest after eviction

A Sanderson man was jailed early on June 17 for battery on his mother after she asked him and his family to leave her residence on Friendship Place because they weren't getting along.

Tavares Donaldson, 38, was taken into custody by Deputy Jeffrey Davis, who responded to the address just before 2 a.m. on a report that he threatened to kill anyone who tried to enter the house.

Annette Donaldson,

56, told the deputy her son became angry at her and slammed a door on her leg after she ordered him, his girlfriend and their children to vacate. The mother said they had been staying there for some time and that the children continuously "trashed" her residence. She made the eviction demand after returning that night to find it "in complete disarray."

Mrs. Donaldson further said her son threatened to

kill her when she said she was going to a relative's house next door to call police.

Both the suspect and his girlfriend appeared to be intoxicated, Deputy Davis noted.

In a domestic battery arrest that took place early the previous evening, Jennifer Davis, 28, of Sanderson was charged with striking Robert Vandenhouten, 51, in the back of the head as he held one of their two young children during an argument at a residence on Verdier Dorman Road.

Mr. Vandenhouten said he returned to the county from working out of town earlier that day and found Ms. Davis passed out in a vehicle in the Walmart parking lot in Macclenny amid various items of drug paraphernalia. He told Deputy Jeffrey Higginbotham her physical condition had deteriorated due to drug use.

After he awakened her in the car he took the keys and attempted to get someone to take her home. She apparently had another set and drove to the Davis Road address where the couple argued in the presence of the children.

Ms. Davis was also charged with having a glass smoking pipe with meth residue in her purse prior to being taken to county jail.

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Macclenny coach is charged with sexting teen player

A Macclenny man turned himself in at county jail on June 12 and remains there this week charged with having obscene communication via Facebook with a 14-year-old girl and child cruelty.

Detective Robert Simpkins said he was contacted on June 8 by the girl's mother alleging her daughter had been receiving inappropriate messages from Timothy Weathers, 28, who she knew from his role as an assistant coach of her Little League team.

The suspect had been blocked from her page as a result, and the detective after viewing the posts then requested that he be unblocked and communication re-established with the officer posing as the girl.

Over the next two days, Detective Simpkins traded messages with Mr. Weathers that were described as sexual in nature and included the suspect requesting the girl send lewd photos.

He then allegedly posted a nude photo of himself, the report notes, before detectives attempted to set up a "sting" meeting with the teen at a Macclenny residence the evening of June 10.

Mr. Weathers did not show up and indicated at the last minute he could not risk getting caught.

A warrant was then issued for his arrest.



Timothy Weathers

Meth and syringe found on intruder

Police arrested a Macclenny man early on June 13 and charged him with having baggies and a small jar of meth, along with a syringe when he was taken into custody for attempting to enter a Crews Road residence by banging on a rear door.

Celinda Long, 38, called police about 3 a.m. and reported Ira Thompson III, 45, was attempting to gain entry, and Deputy Jeffrey Davis said he was also advised that the intruder was rummaging through a vehicle and storage shed nearby.

The officer described Mr. Thompson as "very nervous" and sweating profusely when confronted, and "barely making sense" when asked why he was on the property. He claimed he was there to take a shower and go to sleep and admitted he had needles on his person.

Deputy Davis said he also had a small black bag with the two baggies with a crystal-like substance he said was "ice."

Mr. Thompson has a lengthy conviction record dating back to 1993 for offenses ranging from burglary and theft of both a vehicle and firearm, sale of controlled drugs and aggravated assault.

In another drug-related arrest, Detective Ricky Crews charged John Bailey Jr, 49, of Macclenny with possession of a glass pipe, two cut straws and a small tin with meth residue in his Dodge pickup when he stopped it on Deerwood Circle the early evening of June 15.

The officer said he followed the truck from downtown Macclenny just before 7 p.m. after recognizing passenger Dustin Crawford, 33, of Glen, wanted on warrants for multiple forgeries.

Det. Crews also said a loaded .38 caliber pistol was lying on the driver's seat, but the report does not indicate any firearms offense.

Garrett reunion

The Garrett Family will gather for its annual reunion on Sunday, June 24 at the Baker County Ag Center. Lunch is served at noon; bring your special dishes and hope to see you there!

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Glen prowler arrested

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JON SHUMAKE

A Glen St. Mary man who appeared to be under the influence of narcotics was arrested the morning of June 15 after he allegedly attempted to enter a Grover Lane residence.

Daryl Norman Jr., 36, was taken into custody on charges of trespassing and loitering or prowling, both misdemeanors, after he was found in the yard of a residence of complainant Caytlyn Peters and her mother Susan Peters.

Deputy Morgan McDuffie reported the suspect was extremely fidgety and profusely sweating upon her arrival. Mr. Norman admitted to taking two Adderall pills but he was unsure if he had taken anything else because "he did not feel normal" and "he was having a hard time keeping his eyes open," Deputy McDuffie reported.

Caytlyn Peters said she woke up to her dogs barking about 7 a.m., looked out the window and saw Mr. Norman sitting underneath a shed on the ground, at which point she called police. She said the suspect then tried to enter her and her mother's parked vehicles without success before attempting to make entry into the home, causing her to hide in the bathroom.

Susan Peters gave a similar account to her daughter, adding she saw Mr. Norman sitting underneath the shed rocking back and forth hitting himself and acting as if he was under the influence of narcotics.

Mr. Norman, who earlier stated his father lived in the residence in front of the address and that his father was in the yard, told Deputy McDuffie he thought he was at a friend's residence and must have gotten them confused. When questioned about the residence in front of the complaint's, he said he must of been dreaming because his father lives in Taylor, police said.

Caytlyn Peters and her grandparents live in the front residence and she had never seen Mr. Norman before, Deputy McDuffie reported.

In other incidents:

- Christy Collins, 32, of Sanderson was jailed the morning of June 13 for resisting without violence after cursing at police and stepping backward when she was ordered to

turn around to be handcuffed.

Deputy Shane Dickens reported Ms. Collins called for a standby of belongings from her mother's house. She did not have transportation, and became belligerent toward the officer after he informed her he couldn't transport her due to being a K-9 unit.

He told her to remain at her Memory Lane residence, and retrieved her belongings from her mother's residence. Deputy Dickens found Ms. Collins walking toward the residence, at which point she repeatedly screamed profanities toward the deputy.

He attempted to place her in handcuffs and Ms. Collins stepped away from him before being apprehended.

- Chyna Parker, 18, of Macclenny was arrested the evening of June 17 for misuse of 911 after she called police with false information about her vehicle being stolen.

The sheriff's office received a call stating a 2006 Toyota Corolla had been stolen by unknown perpetrators. The complainant said her name was Amanda Raulerson and she would be at the intersection of Quail Lane and South Boulevard.

After about 15 minutes of searching, a call was received from a Jerry Circle residence saying that the car had been reclaimed and police were no longer needed.

Deputy Jeffrey Higginbotham noted that over the period of about a week there have been several calls involving a complainant on foot in the area of South Boulevard, Ninth Street and Quail Lane that police were unable to make contact with.

He located a Corolla matching the description at the Jerry Circle residence. Ms. Parker, the sole occupant of the vehicle, gave an incomplete and inconsistent story about the car being taken by unknown males, Deputy Higginbotham reported.

She admitted to calling 911 as an intimidation tactic to get her car back, but continued to state she didn't know who took the car. She didn't have an answer when Deputy Higginbotham questioned her about how the person who took her car would know she called 911 since she wasn't in the car.

Amanda Raulerson was not present at the Jerry Circle residence nor was she involved in the incident, Deputy Higginbotham noted.



Photo courtesy of Thomas Gainey
From left: Buzz TV's Stephen Strum, Mike Spivey and Thomas Gainey on set.

Backpack giveaway planned

JON SHUMAKE

Thomas Gainey of A Day of Hope Inc. and Michael Spivey of Teen Challenge recently sat down with Buzz TV for an interview discussing A Day of Hope and the upcoming Back to School Fun Day.

The two were interviewed by Stephen Strum for Buzz TV, which is part of a Jacksonville news, entertainment and music website — iwantabuzz.com — and magazine called Jax Buzz. The nearly five-minute interview was posted on June 7 and can be viewed at <https://bit.ly/2M69YfO>.

Mr. Gainey said he learned of the opportunity from former co-worker Jessica Cone, who had also been interviewed for Buzz TV.

"What I hope to gain out of the exposure of that opportunity is that somebody will see it that would like to

come in and be a sponsor of A Day of Hope events and give us that annual jump every year," he said. "... I really would like to see the A Day of Hope events grow from a Baker County thing to a north Florida thing."

Mr. Gainey and Mr. Spivey promoted the inaugural Back to School Fun Day scheduled for July 21 at Heritage Park. A Day of Hope Inc. has partnered with the MLK Committee, Project Street Sweepers, Baker Community Church and the Baker Prevention Coalition for the backpack and school supply giveaway, which will be available to students from kindergarten through 12th grade.

The event, which is scheduled to run from 9 a.m. to noon, will also feature music from Christian rapper Brinson, three bounce houses, a video game truck and Baker County Rocks.

Mr. Gainey said the goal is to give away 500 back-

packs loaded with school supplies.

"That's our personal number that we'd like to have," he said. "If we have 400 then great. If we have 300 great. It's going to be a fun day at the park for students and families in our community."

School supplies and backpack donations can be dropped off to Michele Hodges at Heritage Park, Raiford Road Church and Legacy Kutz. Teacher supply donations are also being accepted, Mr. Gainey said, and will be dropped off at the school board to be distributed.

For more information, contact Mr. Gainey at (904) 251-5433 or by email at adayofhope319@gmail.com.

"We just want to make sure the kiddos have backpacks and school supplies before they go back to school," he said.

Named pageant runner-up

JOEL ADDINGTON
MANAGING EDITOR
reporter@bakercountypress.com

Macclenny teen Georgia Weeks was named the runner-up in the National American Miss talent competition held in Jacksonville June 10 and is now preparing to compete at the national level in November.

She sang Nina Simone's "Feeling Good."

"The experience was fantastic! I made a lot of new friends. I got more experience singing on stage and it was exciting to win," said Ms. Weeks, 15, who has previously performed at the county fair during a sixth-grade pageant at the middle school.

She was still very nervous, however.

"I had to kind of force myself to do it, but once I got on stage it was just natural to me I guess," said Ms. Weeks.

She also competed in the formal wear and most photogenic contests at the pageant, held inside the Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront downtown over three days. The first day, she said, was all preparation and organization. The second day was the talent competition and the third was the pageant and awards ceremony.

"It's basically going to be the same thing, just bigger with a lot more people ...," Ms. Weeks said of the na-



PHOTO BY JOEL ADDINGTON
Georgia Weeks shows off her trophy from the National American Miss talent competition on June 10.

tional pageant in California. "They have this pageant in every state and so nationals is every state competing together."

She plans to prepare with a lot of singing practice and "trying not to get sick" come show time.

"She worked really hard, got up at 6 a.m. each day to

get down there and wrote her own speech," said the teen's mom, Rachel Weeks. "She really put some effort in this."

Her father is Eddie Weeks. The family seeks sponsors for the trip to nationals. Mr. Weeks can be reached at (904) 669-9132.



Mr. and Mrs. Higginbotham

Wed 60 years!

Carolyn P. and Edwin W. Higginbotham Jr. of Jacksonville are pleased to announce their 60th wedding anniversary. They married on May 31, 1958 in Baker County.

Mrs. Higginbotham is the former Carolyn Padgett. Their daughter is Lisa Higginbotham of Jacksonville, and they have three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

The couple celebrated with a family dinner.

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THE BAKER COUNTY PRESS

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STOP IN FOR OUR Sunday Special

OPINION

Miss America now best fit for the radio

I'm in my seventh decade here on earth, and truly can't remember ever sitting down to watch a Miss America Pageant.

I might just do that when it rolls around again in this, its 97th year (check your local television listings), and no doubt could be joined by perhaps millions of other guys who have never checked it out either.

We'll want to see what it looks like without a swimsuit (read: "bikini") competition. They're shelving the evening wear portion as well, but America's men never cared much for that. Evening wear never showed much of anything, if you will.

How do we know? It's not from sitting in front of the TV or watching YouTube, but because each year media outlets managed to include still photos or videos of the "gals in suits" in the next day's news. Of course we gave that a glance.

And before early this month when the "new" pageant hit the news, about the only things American men might know about modern day pageants would be the swimsuits that, like much of female fashion, got skimpier, or that contestants droned on about world peace and global warming (now climate change) if they wanted a chance at winning, and that Donald Trump at one time or another owned the pageant rights.

So the "new" pageant welcomes women of all sizes, in the words of manage-

ment, and contestants will be judged on "interaction with judges" about their goals in life, etc. Instead of evening gowns, they can

pretty much wear anything they want. That should be interesting, especially if one of them happens to opt for a skimpy bikini.

Does she (or someone "identifying" as a female) dare?

Is this about the "defeminization" of women or the "demasculinization" of men? Methinks both, and it's been a long time brewing.

Dennis Prager is my favorite radio talk show host, and his take on all this is probably why I became aware of the new "Miss America." Ever watchful of social trends and armed with thoughtful observations thereon, Mr. Prager suggested the best median for the new pageant is ... the

radio. Since there's nothing to "see" anymore, aficionados may be best served sitting around listening to all the astute musings of "women of all sizes" with ears turned to the speakers.

The ever-critical TV ratings will tank. Other pageants adhering to the "old" formats that over nearly a century earned the name "beauty pageants" will still be around for the traditionalists. And maybe Miss America of the future will morph into "Miss Intellec-

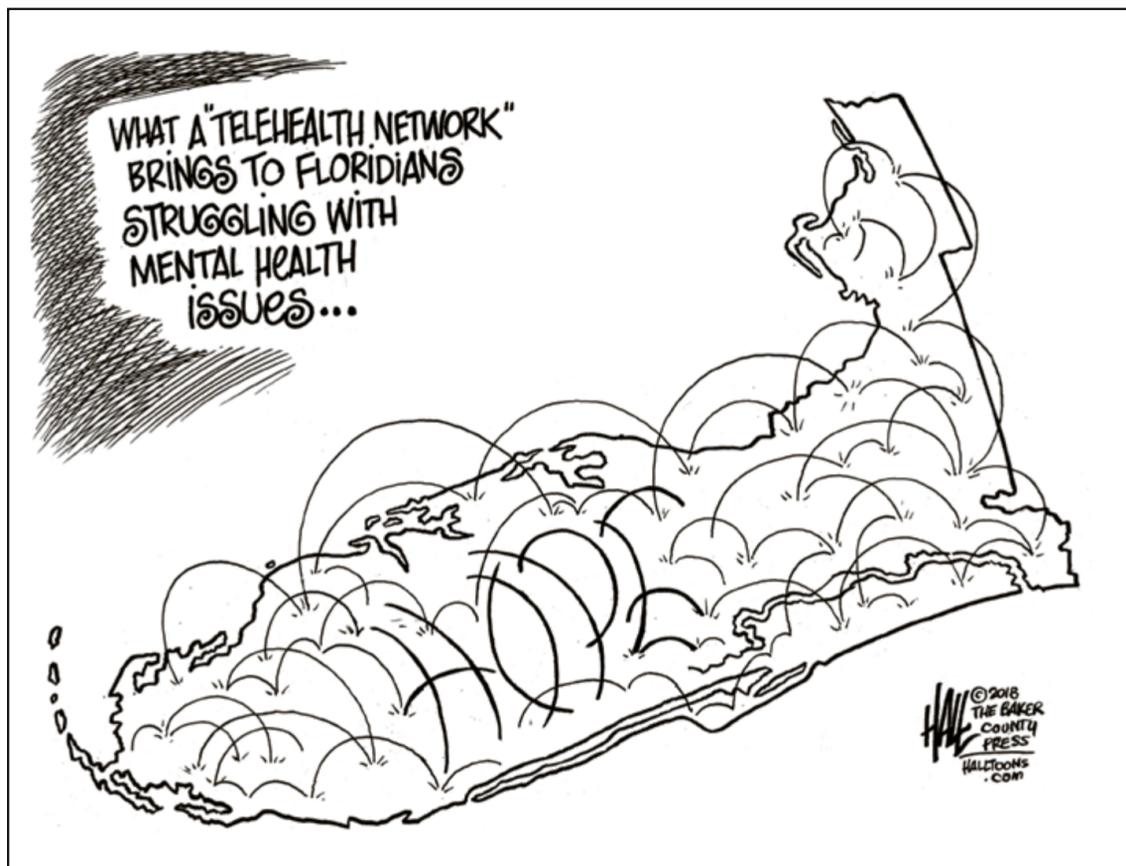
tual America."

Nothing wrong with that; in fact maybe we should have had it decades ago. Just don't expect a TV audience or the revenues to support the scholarships on which the events have anchored themselves over the years.

On second thought, I'll cling to tradition and not watch the "new" Miss America this year after all. Maybe Mr. Prager will and tell us all about it.

Impressions

Jim McGauley



Lessons learned from kids

Father's Day has just passed and it got me to thinking about things I learned from my children. Certainly, around Father's and Mother's Day you find all sorts of things kids are supposed to learn from their parents, but the inverse is also true. I have learned a lot from my three kids.

1. Play Doh is a food group. Kids ingest lots of Play Doh over the formative years and it never seems to harm them in any way, so why not? Doesn't matter which color, Play Doh must be pretty tasty because any kid worth his or her salt will try it.

My kids had one of those Play Doh machines that you press the handle and out comes a pink dog. They made the animals and then gleefully bit the head off. They learned that from animal crackers. The first time I saw it, I was sure they'd spit it out. Wrong.

I decided to give it a try. It's surprisingly tasty—chewy and salty. Not bad. I'm not going to serve it with green beans and Kraft macaroni and cheese, but it doesn't seem to hurt.

2. Not only drunks walk around with their underwear on their heads. My boys wandered around the house with their underwear on their heads. Don't know why. Maybe they were drunk on Enfamil.

One day Kelley and I went to a movie and when we got back the baby sitter was standing on the porch looking like a deer in the headlights. We'd only been gone for three hours but it was clear that she would

MY SIDE OF THE MATTER

ROBERT GERARD

never be back.

"Where are the kids, Wendy," Kelley asked calmly. She threw up her arms and gestured wildly. "Somewhere in the yard. I can't ... stop them."

"They are 4 and 2. Sure you can."

"No I can't." She took her money and was gone. Sure enough, the boys came out from the back yard, naked except for their underwear, which was on their heads. They were happily singing some song they had made up and that was that. Kelley gave them a half-hearted swat on the butt and they went inside, singing nonsense.

3. Kids learn to curse early, only they have no idea what they are saying. Spencer, who has a bad temper and is very competitive, was forever getting mad at his brother. One time, Dylan had taken one of his toys and Spencer was fuming about it.

"Dylan ... you ... you're ... you ... you're a ... a ... Buttsniffer!"

Dylan was wide-eyed with indignation and yelled, "Dad, Spencer called me a Buttsniffer!"

I could hardly keep from laughing as I put on my "Dad face" and said, "Spencer, why did you call Dylan a ... Buttsniffer?"

Spencer, close to tears at this point, said, "Because he is a Buttsniffer! And he

took my red Power Ranger."

"Dylan, give him his red Power Ranger and Spencer, don't call your brother a Buttsniffer."

The transaction happened, but as they left room Spencer said under his voice, "Dylan, you're still a Buttsniffer."

4. The hearth plays double duty as a Broadway stage. To my daughter, it was all about performing from an early age. She was Woodstock in *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* when she was two and got the stage bug. We always had to listen to a wide variety of Disney songs and show tunes and applaud loudly from age 3-6. She would also give "a show" to anyone who showed up at the house whether they liked it or not.

5. Six-year-olds can be master negotiators. Sara Beth moved on from being hearth performer to being playwright and director. She wrote plays and coerced her brothers into playing major roles. She was always the female lead, but I do remember a Cinderella where Dylan was forced to be the evil stepmother and Spencer was Prince Charming.

Neither of the boys wanted any part of it, but she would elaborately negotiate to get them out of chores or let them drive her Barbie car or ... something. She would usually renege on her agreement though in the long run.

I was convinced that she would wind up a CEO somewhere, but she never lost the theatre bug.

BAKER

SOCIALIZING



Liked by thelucascos, karlee_nelson, and 17 others
stephanie.bechtel These are two examples of amazing men... one I call daddy and the other my husband! I am blessed to have you both... thank you for all you give to our family! Happy Father's Day! I love you!



Liked by camrynkey18, reagenogriffis and 115 others
cansoncrawfor1 Beach days



Liked by teague_abby15, emmaleekatee and 93 others
ryleighcoombs I went to the original Click-fila & I'm proud of this accomplishment!

Press Ad Deadline: Monday 5:00 PM

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

More cash for dog shots

Dear Editor:
The recent headline on the "parvo puppies" seemed to imply Animal Control deliberately adopted out sick puppies. While we might disagree with Georgia [Monfort] on some things, we are absolutely positive she would never put sick puppies up for adoption.

We cannot find much agreement on how long after puppies are exposed to parvo before they present symptoms. No one mentioned how long the puppies were at animal control; how long after adoption did the puppies present symptoms?

Apparently the puppies had been exposed to many people the day of their adoption, and the same people likely handled other dogs at the two adoption venues — a great chance to pass around various infections. We investigated the cost of five-way puppy shots from Jeffers Pet Supply. In addition to parvo, the puppies would be protected from four other puppy diseases. After adding up the cost of vaccines, needle syringe combos, a foam shipping cooler with extra ice, we came out at approximately \$4.60 a shot for 25 shots and syringe combos left over.

Georgia has had to euthanize dogs for years. She would have no problem vaccinating puppies. The problem is raising money for the vaccines and other necessities. Perhaps a brain storming session with people writing or calling in their various ideas?

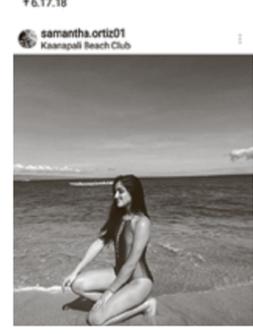
Mr. and Mrs. Ron Vinson Baxter



Liked by kim_bur, Lee Gracy's Recital and 99 others
#gaysbigday #balletjazz #mymiris



Liked by johnsongracea, endunba9503 and 135 others
teague_abby15 washed by the water... 16.17.18



samantha.ortiz01 Kananali Beach Club

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters are welcome, but must contain the signature of the writer, a phone number and city of residence. Letters must be concise and reflect opinions and statements on current issues to the general public. The newspaper reserves the right to reject any material which in the newspaper's judgement does not meet standards of publication.

CONTACT US

By phone at 904.259.2400 or by fax at 904.259.6502. You can stop by our office located at 104 S. Fifth Street, Macclenny, FL or mail your submission to PO Box 598, Macclenny, FL 32063
Online at www.bakercountypress.com or email editor@bakercountypress.com

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This newspaper is printed on recycled paper.

Happy Father's Day sentiments



Kali Taylor: My husband deserves a huge shout out. Not only is he an amazing father to our son but he chooses to love my daughter from a previous relationship as his own. He didn't have to love her, didn't have to wipe her tears or even tuck her into bed, but he chooses too. Step-dads don't get enough recognition for choosing to love someone else's child. Quite often we forget that they made the decision to love them, when they didn't have to. He goes above and beyond for both of our babies and I don't think he truly understands he is our superhero. We love you! Happy Father's Day to all the dads and step-dads.

needed to be. I remember all of our family trips and our family time. Mud racing, fishing, beach trips and hunting trips. You made our lives an adventure. I also love to see how you are with my boys. You're one awesome grandpa too! We love you to the moon and back.

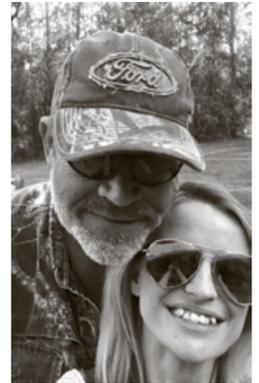


Jessica Hagan Rhoden: Thank you daddy for all of your hard work and sacrifice throughout the years. We didn't have a ton of money growing up, but we never went without and we always had fun. I will forever cherish the memories made, whether we were at the hunting camp, gone to the beach for the weekend and everything else in between ... even days spent picking corn that seemed they would never come to an end. Our family was always together. Thank you for always being there for us! I love you! Happy Father's Day! Love Fred.

Dawn Murphy: I love my dad, James Murphy. He is a hard worker for our family. I love spending time with my dad especially when we go fishing or go shoot my BB gun together. I love my dad! Happy Father's Day, Dad. Love, Isaiah.



Mike Spence: My father was a good man he worked every day for his family and showing me how to be a good person. Mr. Eldon Spence was a Navy vet. Rest in peace daddy.



Krista Hignens: Happy Father's Day daddy! You always have are best interest at heart. You are caring , loving and firm when you



Dawn Murphy: My dad, Alvin L. Barger, has always been there for me and my family whenever we have needed him. We love him very much and hope he

has a wonderful Happy Father's Day because he deserves it! Love you dad.

Skylar Murphy: My papa is an amazing man. He is always there for all of his family. He loves his children and grandchildren very much. He is always willing to help out or give you advice or whatever you may need. Thank you for everything you do. Happy Father's Day, Alvin Barger. We Love You!



Skylar Murphy: My dad, James Murphy, is an absolutely amazing man. He is extremely hard working and does so much to provide for his family. He inspires me and everyone to work hard and be a better person. I love him very much. Happy Father's Day daddy! Love Skylar.



Tabby Collingwood: To my step-dad Robert Force words could never express how blessed we are to have you in our lives! I am forever grateful for the way you treat our mom and my babies! They sure do love their papa! Thank you for everything, love you and happy Father's Day!



Taren Martin: My dad was a dad he didn't have to be. He got with my mother when I was about 2 years old and I am very thankful for him. He has been the father to me and my sisters that our real dad's couldn't be. He has taught me everything in life from driving a stick shift (and was very patient with us, lol) to helping us with our home work. He loves each and every one of our children to the end of the world. He has never looked at any of us as if we wasn't really his and you would never be able to tell it. I love you Joey Manning and I truly do thank you for being the man my father could never be and always being there for us! If it wasn't for him I don't know where our lives would be at today.

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LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR BAKER COUNTY, FLORIDA. CASE NO.: 02-2018-DR-11

Erika Canion, Petitioner, and Arron Canion, Respondent,

NOTICE OF ACTION FOR DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE

TO: Arron Canion
LAST KNOWN ADDRESS: 6108 Mackneal Trail, Watauga, Texas 76148

YOU ARE NOTIFIED that an action for dissolution of marriage has been filed against you and that you are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, to it on Erika Canion whose address is 527 South Ninth Street, Macclenny, Florida 32063 on or before June 29, 2018, and file the original with the clerk of this court at 339 E. Macclenny Avenue, Macclenny FL 32063 before service on Petitioner or immediately thereafter. **If you fail to do so, a default may be entered against you for the relief demanded in the petition.**

Copies of all court documents in this case, including orders, are available at the Clerk of the Circuit Courts office. You may review these documents upon request.

You must keep the Clerk of the Circuit Courts office notified of your current address. (You may file Notice of Current Address, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915.). Future papers in this lawsuit will be mailed to the address on record at the clerks office.

WARNING: Rule 12.285, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure, requires certain automatic disclosure of documents and information. Failure to comply can result in sanctions, including dismissal or striking of pleadings.

Dated: May 29, 2018.

Clerk of the Circuit Court
By: Julie B. Combs
Deputy Clerk

6/7-6/28p
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR BAKER COUNTY, FLORIDA
CASE NO.: 02-2008-DR-306

Sherman R. Yonn, Petitioner, and Amy Kreger, Respondent,

NOTICE OF ACTION FOR PETITION TO ESTABLISH HOME BASE, TIME SHARING AND ADOPT PARENTING PLAN

TO: Amy Kreger
LAST KNOWN ADDRESS: 203 Magnolia Avenue, Baldwin, FL 32234

YOU ARE NOTIFIED that an action for time sharing and parenting plan has been filed against you and that you are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, to it on Sherman R. Yonn, whose address is 185 SE Hanover Place, Apartment 101, Lake City, FL 32025, on or before July 11, 2018, and file the original with the clerk of this court at 339 E. Macclenny Avenue, Macclenny FL 32063 before service on Petitioner or immediately thereafter. **If you fail to do so, a default may be entered against you for the relief demanded in the petition.**

Copies of all court documents in this case, including orders, are available at the Clerk of the Circuit Courts office. You may review these documents upon request.

WARNING: Rule 12.285, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure, requires certain automatic disclosure of documents and information. Failure to comply can result in sanctions, including dismissal or striking of pleadings.

Dated: June 12, 2018.

Clerk of the Court
By: Melissa Haines
Deputy Clerk

6/14-7/5p
Miracle Automotive & Truck Service Center Inc.
10510 Duval Lane
Macclenny, FL 32063

Notice of Public Sale: Miracle Automotive & Truck Service Center Inc. gives Notice of Foreclosure of Lien and intent to sell these vehicles on July 6, 2018, 12:00 pm at 10510 Duval Lane, Macclenny, FL 32063, pursuant to subsection 713.78 of the Florida Statutes. Miracle Automotive & Truck Service Center Inc. reserves the right to accept or reject any and/or all bids.

2008 Suzuki MC
VIN# JS16R7LA282100192
2002 Kia Spectra
VIN# KNAFB121825137139

6/21c

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR BAKER COUNTY, FLORIDA CASE NO.: 2016-CA-00089

TD BANK, N.A., a national banking association, as successor by merger with Carolina First Bank, as successor by merger with Mercantile Bank, as successor by merger with CNB National Bank, Plaintiff,

vs.

ESTATE OF ENOCH N. FRASER, JR.; CLERK OF COURT OF BAKER COUNTY, FLORIDA; ENOCH N. FRASER, III; JENNIFER SAPP WALTER KELLY CREWS; BRANDI BRANTLEY; SHERRY GASCH; LAURIE HUNTER; TENANT #1; and UNKNOWN TENANT(S) IN POSSESSION, IF ANY. Defendants.

NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to the In Rem Final Judgment of Foreclosure dated June 7, 2018, entered in Case No. 2016-CA-00089 of the Circuit Court of the Eighth Judicial Circuit in and for Baker County, Florida wherein TD Bank, N.A., is Plaintiff, and Estate of Enoch N. Fraser, Jr., et al., are Defendants. The Clerk of this Court shall sell to the highest and best bidder at the Baker County Courthouse, 339 E. Macclenny Ave., Macclenny, FL 32063 on August 23, 2018, at 11:00 a.m., the following described property as set forth in said In Rem Final Judgment of Foreclosure, to wit:

TRACT 9, BLOCK A, MACCLENNY WOODS, ACCORDING TO PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 2, PAGE 62 OF THE CURRENT PUBLIC RECORDS OF BAKER COUNTY, FLORIDA.

TOGETHER WITH 1990 PALM DW MOBILE HOME ID#PH093125A AND PH093125B

PROPERTY ADDRESSES: 13723 NORTH CR 23A, MACCLENNY, FL 32063

ANY PERSON CLAIMING AN INTEREST IN THE SURPLUS PROCEEDS FROM THE SALE, IF ANY, OTHER THAN THE PROPERTY OWNER AS OF THE DATE OF THE LIS PENDENS MUST FILE A CLAIM WITHIN 60 DAYS AFTER THE SALE.

DATED this 15th day of June, 2018.

Stacie D. Harvey
Clerk of the Circuit Court

By: Tina Carrington
Deputy Clerk

Danielle Rundlett Burns, Esq.
Duane Morris LLP
Boca Center Tower II
5100 Town Center Circle, Suite 650
Boca Raton, FL 33486-9000
Email: DRBurns@duanemorris.com

6/21-6/28c

NOTICE OF LAST DATE TO CLAIM OKFENOKE RURAL ELECTRIC MEMBERSHIP CORPORATION CAPITAL CREDITS:

In compliance with O. C. G. A. Section 44-12-236 "The Disposition of Unclaimed Property Act of Georgia," Okfenoke Rural Electric Membership Corporation is attempting to locate former members whose capital credit checks were issued in prior years, but which have been returned by the U. S. Postal Service as "undeliverable" or have otherwise been unclaimed.

A current list of these members, with their last known addresses and instructions for claiming these funds, is posted on our website at www.oremc.com and at our corporate office located at Nahunta, Georgia and at each of our district offices located at Kingsland, Georgia and Hilliard, Florida. Office hours at all locations are Monday through Friday from 8:00am until 5:00pm.

The last possible date to claim these funds is October 1, 2018. If these funds are not claimed by this date, they will be donated for charitable uses, as permitted by O. C. G. A. Section 44-12-236.

To claim a refund you may download the application form from our website or contact Customer Service at 800-262-5131 to request an application form.

6/21c

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

First Coast Workforce Development, Inc., (DBA CareerSource Northeast Florida), intends to release a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) on Monday, June 25, 2018 for **Fiscal and Programmatic Monitoring Services** to be performed September 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019 with an annual option to renew for up to four additional years based on performance and funding. A copy of the request will be available beginning Monday, June 25, 2018 at http://www.careersourcenefl.com/partner_vendor/request_for_proposals.aspx or at 1845 Town Center Blvd., Suite 250, Fleming Island, FL 32003. For additional information contact: D. Nevison 904/213-3800, x-2010. DEADLINE TO SUBMIT 2:00 p.m. (EST) July 19, 2018.

6/21c
A, R&R, Inc.
11837 N SR 121
Macclenny, FL 32063

The following vehicles will be sold at public auction on July 6, 2018 at 10:00 am at A, R&R, Inc. 11837 N SR 121, Macclenny, FL 32063:

2003 Saturn
VIN# 1G8JU54F9Y548440

6/21c

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OBITUARIES

Ralph Creekmore, 58, dies June 15

Ralph Emmanuel Creekmore Sr., 58, of Glen St. Mary died on June 15, 2018 at the Acosta Rua Center for Caring in Jacksonville with his loving family by his side. Ralph was born in Lake City on April 18, 1960 to the late Marvin Emmanuel Creekmore and Deloris Faye Good Creekmore, and was a lifelong resident of Baker County. After attending school, Ralph met the love of his life, Lita Ann Pringle, and married her on November 26, 1979. They were happily married for 34 years and enjoyed raising their three children and attending Sanderson Congregational Holiness Church together. Ralph also enjoyed his longtime career as a truck driver. He was employed at Ray's Nursery for 17 years and later by the Baker County Road Department as a lawn maintenance technician. When Ralph wasn't working he enjoyed fishing, stock car racing, hunting, traveling to the mountains and going to Gator softball games, but mostly he loved his family. He was preceded in death by his parents and his wife of 34 years, Ann Creekmore.



Ralph Creekmore

Mr. Creekmore is survived by his children John Creekmore and Johanna (Adam) Dyer of Raiford, Ralph Emmanuel "Bean" Creekmore Jr. of Glen St. Mary; brothers Jeffery (Rose) Creekmore of Sanderson, Louie (Amy) Creekmore of Macclenny and Stacey Creekmore of Orange Park; sisters Tammy (Lee) Cochran of Sanderson, Robin (Johnny) Harris of Raiford, Marie (Glenn) Brown of Glen St. Mary; grandsons Dustin, Brandon and Kyler Burnsed, and Brody Ray Creekmore; many nieces and nephews.

A celebration of Ralph's life was held Monday, June 18 at his church with pastors Justin Griffis and Oral Lyons officiating. V. Todd Ferreira Funeral Services of Macclenny was in charge of arrangements.

Funeral Wednesday for Vera Cullen

Vera D. Cullen, 91, of Jacksonville died on Wednesday, June 13, 2018 in Glen St. Mary. She was born February 4, 1927 in Baker County to Dan Davis and Vetrica Pearce Davis. Vera enjoyed a lengthy career in accounting and switch services at Southern Bell. She retired in 1982 after 37 years of service. Her number one passion was gardening, but she also loved fishing, canning fruits and vegetables and watching Gator football. Vera was predeceased by her parents and husband of 51 years, Archie B. Cullen Sr.



Vera Cullen

Mrs. Cullen is survived by children Archie (Angie) Cullen Jr. and Alyson McDaniel (Barry Brown), both of Glen St. Mary; brother Avery (Barbara) Davis of Live Oak; sisters Fairy Lee (Algie) Davis of Sanderson, Carlis Harvin of Interlachen, and Eveline Lyons of Macclenny; grandchildren Brooke (Jeremiah) Robinette and Ashley (George) Cullen; five great-grandchildren.

A celebration of Vera's life will be held on Wednesday, June 20 at 2 p.m. at Ferreira Funeral Services in Macclenny with Pastor Wilford McCormick officiating. Interment will follow at South Prong Cemetery.

Funeral Friday for Angie Farris, 39

Angelina "Angie" Delp Farris, 39, of Glen St. Mary died on June 18 at St. Vincent's Hospital Southside. She was born to Duane and Beki Watson Delp on July 16, 1978 in Jacksonville and lived most of her life in Baker County. She was a country girl at heart and loved anything to do with the woods. She loved to fish, hunt, run dogs, camp and loved to get on the boat and go scalloping. Above all, Angie loved being with her family and especially her kids.



Angelina Farris

Mrs. Farris is survived by her husband Michael Farris of Glen St. Mary; daughters Brittany Delp, Marley Lucas and Olivia Delp, all of Macclenny; son Maverick Farris of Macclenny; grandson Easton Delp; her parents of Macclenny; brother Michael Delp of Moniac, GA and sister Michele (Pee Wee) Harvey of Sanderson; mother-in-law Lucille Farris of Glen St. Mary; brother- and sister-in-law Heather and Darren Vaughn of Callahan; many nephews, nieces, aunts, uncles and cousins.

A visitation will be held the evening of Thursday, June 21 from 6-8 p.m. at Guerry Funeral Home in Macclenny. The funeral service to honor the life of Mrs. Farris will be held on Friday, June 22 at 11 a.m. at the funeral home. Interment will be at Macedonia Cemetery, Macclenny.

Service Friday for Nathan Harris

Nathan Scott Harris, 60, of Macclenny died on Tuesday, June 19, 2018. He was born July 28, 1957 in Macclenny to the late L.C. and Laverne (Combs) Harris. Mr. Harris was a heavy equipment operator for many years driving a track-hoe, a job in which he took great pride. He was a loving father, brother and friend, and will be remembered for his joking personality. In his spare time, Nathan enjoyed hunting, fishing and riding his four-wheeler. He could often be found spending time under the "old oak tree." He also enjoyed taking trips to the Smokey Mountains.



Nathan Harris

Mr. Scott is survived by his daughters April Marie Griffis and Lisa (Chris) Harris, both of Macclenny; son Jesse Griffis of Macclenny; brother Anthony (Tonya) Harris of Moniac, Georgia; grandson Nathan Harris of Macclenny; special cousins Michael and Melissa Harris of Macclenny; niece Rachel Stewart of Macclenny and nephew Samuel Stewart of Macclenny; numerous other family and friends.

A funeral service for Mr. Harris will be held Friday, June 22 at 11 a.m. at Road to Calvary Church in Glen St. Mary with Revs. Tommy Anderson and Wendy Floria officiating. Burial will follow at South Prong Cemetery, Sanderson. The family will receive friends Thursday, June 21 from 5-7 p.m. at the church. Forbes Funeral Home of Macclenny is in charge of arrangements.

Cheryl Jordan, 61, of Macclenny

Cheryl Elaine Jordan, 61, of Macclenny died on June 13, 2018 at Macclenny Nursing and Rehab after an extended battle with diabetes. Mrs. Jordan was born on August 19, 1956 in Charleston, South Carolina to Joe Pearce and Charlotte Fulks Pearce. She married John "Pee Wee" Henry Jordan and they moved in 1983 to Macclenny, where she was a homemaker. She and Pee Wee loved antique car shows and traveled to see them. She also enjoyed the beach and you could always find her singing a tune. She was always a jubilant spirit and pleasure to be around. Her family was the most important thing in her life. She had a genuine heart of compassion and was a constant source of strength and encouragement to all who knew her. The love she showered upon others is reflected back in the outpouring of love her friends and loved ones have shown during this time of loss. She will be greatly missed. She was preceded in death by her mother and her grandson Zacharia "Zack" Jordan.



Cheryl Jordan

Other than her husband of 41 years, Mrs. Jordan is survived by sons Shane (Soledad) Jordan of Orange Park and John Earl Jordan of Jacksonville; daughters Lynn Vollick of Orange Park and Tammi (Kelly) Buirge of Mandarin, FL; her father and her brother Earl (Mari Lou) Pearce of Fayetteville, NC; grandchildren Angel Prescott, Jessica Vollick, David Bowers, John "Scooter," Christopher, Ethan, and Nathan Jordan, Rachael Smith, Jacob and Nathan Peterson, and Andrew and Parker Jordan; six great-grandchildren.

A funeral service to honor Mrs. Jordan's life was held on Tuesday, June 19 at 2 p.m. in the chapel of Guerry Funeral Home in Macclenny with Rev. Joel Griffis of Raiford Road Church officiating. Interment was at Woodlawn Cemetery in Macclenny. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to the American Diabetes Association.

Funeral held Monday for John Keene

John William Keene, 51, of Glen St. Mary died on June 10, 2018. He was born in Houston, Texas on December 31, 1966 to Harley Keene Sr. and Sally Annie Mae Hindman. John lived most his life in the Jacksonville area and was a land surveyor. In his time off, John loved to go fishing, especially salt water fishing on the Gulf. He enjoyed being outside and built a passion for planting and gardening. He also enjoyed watching NASCAR, especially his favorite driver Mark Martin. He was always having a good time telling jokes, and would crack himself up the hardest. Most importantly, he loved his family. He was a loving father, son, brother and uncle. He is preceded in death by his father.



John Keene

Mr. Keene is survived by daughter Sara Ann Keene of Macclenny; his mother of Glen St. Mary; brother Harley Keene Jr. and sister Cindy (Ricky) Jenkins of Glen St. Mary; nephew Jeremy Jenkins of Macclenny and niece Jessie Jenkins of Macclenny; other numerous family members.

A funeral service to honor the life of Mr. Keene was held on Monday, June 18, at 6 p.m. in the chapel at Guerry Funeral Home in Macclenny with Curley Wheeler officiating.

Dale Wiggins, 74, enjoyed nature

Dale Cedric Wiggins, 74, of Sanderson died on June 11, 2018 at Ed Fraser Memorial Hospital in Macclenny. He was born in Vidalia, Georgia on October 29, 1943 to the late Lamar Wiggins and Ammie Elefair Wiggins. Dale was raised in Duval County and enjoyed being out in nature. He was a talented man and let his talent show through his passion of painting and playing the guitar. He was preceded in death by his parents, brothers Jerry Wiggins, William "Billy" Wiggins, Tony Wiggins and son Dale Cedric Wiggins Jr.

Mr. Wiggins is survived by his sisters Laverne Arnold of Goose Creek, SC, Jacquelyn Nabers of Callahan, Dianne Peterson of Jacksonville and Amy Joe King of Kingsland, GA; several nieces, nephews, relatives and friends.

V. Todd Ferreira Funeral Services of Macclenny was in charge of arrangements.

Obituaries and a photo are printed for free.

Community Full Gospel Church
12664 Mud Lake Rd.

Sunday School 10:00 am
Sunday Morning 11:00 am
Sunday Evening 6:00 pm
Tuesday Evening 7:30 pm
Pastor Tommy Richardson || 904-275-2949

Sanderson Congregational Holiness Church
CR 127 N., Sanderson, FL
Sunday School 10:00 am
Morning Worship 11:00 am
Sunday Evening Worship 6:00 pm
Wed. Evening Prayer Serv. 7:30 pm
Pastor: Oral E. Lyons

The Road to Calvary
Corner of Madison & Stoddard
Glen St. Mary
Rev. Tommy & Doris Anderson
Youth Director Rebecca Lauramore
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Wednesday Night 7:30 pm

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YOUR FAMILY

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Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.
Evening Services 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday
Prayer Meeting 7:00 p.m.
Associate Pastor: Shane Conner

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Wednesday:
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7:00 Adult Service
7:00 Youth Services

CHURCH AND OBITUARY NOTICE INFORMATION
Obituaries must be submitted in a timely fashion and have a local connection. Pictures are printed with obituaries free of charge. The newspaper reserves the right to publish photos based on quality. It is requested that all news items be typed or emailed to insure accuracy in print.

CONTACT US
By phone at 904.259.2400 or by fax at 904.259.6502. You can stop by our office located at 104 S. Fifth Street, Macclenny, FL or mail your submission to PO Box 598, Macclenny, FL 32063
Online at www.bakercountypress.com or email editor@bakercountypress.com



Photos by Joel Addington

Library summer program kicks off with rock-n-roll cover band

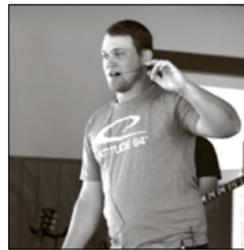
The weekly children's program sponsored by the Emily Taber library this summer began this week at the Woman's Club with a short concert by the band Mixtape, consisting of three young adults who've been entertaining kids here and in other counties in the New River Library Co-op for several summers now. "These library programs are special to all of us up on stage," said drummer and singer James Brown. He was joined by brother Matt Brown on guitar and Terry Martin on bass. They performed several cover tunes for a few dozen youths and parents starting at 10 a.m. Tuesday. The show ended with dancing, children trying their hand on the drums and photos with the band. The music-themed summer program will repeat at the same time on June 26, July 10 and July 17. The program is free and open to the public thanks to grant funding by the state's Division of Library Information Services. Pictured above from the show this week is Emily Lutz on the drums. Below (front from left) are Kinlee Crews, Karlee Crews and Caeden Crain interacting with the band, who also encouraged children to read this summer.



Renee Crews of the Union County Public Library.



Bassist Terry Martin



Drummer and singer James Brown

The vanishing fireflies

JERRY WALLS
PRESS NATURE
COLUMNIST

It is the time of year for fireflies, sometimes called glowworms or lightning bugs, to announce their



Jerry Wall

nocturnal forays. At least in some areas where they remain in stable populations.

Fireflies are not really flies but are actually winged beetles. These "flying stars" intermittently flash an area below their abdomen that can be visible from quite a distance. Scientists believe that these nocturnal beetles flash to attract mates as well as to announce their bad taste to potential predators. Some believe that some species of fireflies imitate the flashes of other species. When the unsuspecting firefly arrives on

the flashing scene, he or she may be eaten by the imitating flasher!

The light organs of a firefly are located under their abdomen. The organ(s) take in oxygen and combine it with a substance called luciferin to produce their flashing light signals. Their production process is very efficient with the resulting energy production producing mostly light but little heat! Each species is believed to have their own flash patterns.

There are approximately 2000 species of fireflies. Their lifespan, depending on the species, is about two months.

The life cycle of fireflies is very interesting. Females deposit their eggs in the ground. The larvae feed on slugs, snails, worms and other subterranean creatures. They subdue their prey by numbing them with the injection of a special fluid. Some species have larvae that can glow under the earth. Hence the name "glowworm."

Some adults feed on nectar or pollen. Some species, as adults, do not feed at all. It is believed that a few species may have an aquatic

stage as eggs and larvae.

As a child, I remember fireflies being very common on warm summer nights. They intermittently glittered as shining little flying stars all over the landscape. Over the past 15 years or so I have not observed near as many of them dotting the evening horizon. Is this due to rampant pesticide application? The general distribution of herbicide over the landscape? Light pollution from growing subdivisions, businesses, etc.? Habitat destruction? Perhaps it's a combination of all these possibilities.

It is generally believed that firefly populations are easily decimated by development. If a firefly field is paved over, they do not migrate away from the area. They just disappear forever!

So, if you are fortunate enough to have fireflies where you live, consider yourself lucky. I miss seeing them as I did as a child years ago! Good memories from days gone by.

Enjoy your nature trails.

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Classified ads and notices must be paid in advance, and be in our office no later than 4:00 pm the Monday preceding publication, unless otherwise arranged in advance. Ads can be mailed provided they are accompanied by payment and instructions. They should be mailed to: Classified Ads, The Baker County Press, P.O. Box 598, Macclenny, FL 32063. We cannot assume responsibility for accuracy of ads or notices given over the telephone. Liability for errors in all advertising will be limited to the first publication only. If after that time, the ad continues to run without notification of error by the person or agency for whom it was published, then that party assumes full payment responsibility. The Baker County Press reserves the right to refuse advertising or any other material which in the opinion of the publisher does not meet standards of publication.

FOR SALE

Silver King Sweet Corn for sale. Derek Harvey, 904-509-6720, 904-259-5828. 5/31-7/5p

Washer/dryer combo, \$100 for the pair. Nice laptop computer, \$150 OBO, Rival microwave, \$15. 904-259-2271, 904-408-1598. 6/21p

Sawmills from only \$4397. Make and save money with your own bandmill. Cut lumber any dimension. In stock, ready to ship. Free info/dvd: www.NorwoodSawmills.com 1-800-578-1363 Ext. 300N. 6/21p

MISCELLANEOUS

Alterations: basic hemming, zipper repair, and basic alterations, next day service on some items. Marva Williams, 904-868-8604, 904-275-2770. 5/17-11/8p

Lung cancer? And Age 60+? You and your family may be entitled to significant cash award. Call 855-259-0557 for more information. No risk. No money out of pocket. 6/21p

We install 6" seamless gutters, pressure washing. 259-7335. 8/11tfc

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AUTOMOBILES

2014 Leprechaun 319DS Class C by Coachmen, 32' foot, 2 slides, low miles, many extras, \$70,000. Call for details, 904-536-1844. 6/21-7/12p

ANIMALS

Dogs: all types from puppies to adults. Animal Control, \$65 adoption fees will apply. Call 259-6786. 11/20tfc

We pick up unwanted animals for free: horses, goats, and cows. Live-stock transport services available, reasonable. 904-222-5054. 5/31-6/21p

HELP WANTED

Notice to readers:

The newspaper often publishes classified advertising on subjects like work-at-home, weight loss products, health products. While the newspaper uses reasonable discretion in deciding on publication of such ads, it takes no re-

sponsibility as to the truthfulness of claims. Respondents should use caution and common sense before sending any money or making other commitments based on statements and/or promises; demand specifics in writing. You can also call the Federal Trade Commission at 1-877-FTC-HELP to find out how to spot fraudulent solicitations. Remember: if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. - The Baker County Press

Part-time mechanic or good mechanic helper to rebuild mini excavator. Mickey, 904-571-8679. 6/21p

The Baker County Board of Commissioners is accepting applications for Director of Community Development. This person provides a wide range of functions relating to the Baker County Land Development Code and Comprehensive Plan through interpretation and implementation; performs plan review and coordination and other comprehensive planning, development and code enforcement activities. Minimum Bachelor's degree in urban/regional planning, economic development, community development or a related field from an accredited college or university and two years of planning, zoning or building is required. Must have an approachable personality and the ability to learn quickly. Excellent typing and computer skills with ability to operate Microsoft applications, such as excel, outlook, and word proficiently. Application and complete job description is available at the Baker County Administration Office located at 55 North Third Street, Macclenny Florida 32063 or www.bakercountyfl.org/jobs Deadline for submitting applications is Thursday, July 12, 2018 at 4:00pm. Applications may be submitted in person or via email at cathy.williams@bakercountyfl.org Baker County is a drug free work place and EO employer. Salary- \$50,000 - \$60,000 annually DOQ. 6/14-6/21c

Laborer with good drivers license needed for construction company. 904-339-1860. 6/21-6/28p

Now Hiring: Gibson Truck & Equipment is hiring CDL drivers with a Class B license. Must have no less than 2 years experience. Must have a clean MVR and pass drug test. Please contact Joy at 904-289-9549 for details. 6/21-6/28p

28 year established contracting firm with full benefits is now accepting applications for qualified applicants. Gateway Contracting, Inc. offers health insurance, vacation, paid holidays and 401k benefits, and provides stability, training, and growth for our employees. We are growing and have the need to fill the following positions. If you are interested and qualify, please apply online at www.gatewaycontractinginc.com. FULL-TIME POSITION AVAILABLE: Parts/Material RUNNER. Qualified applicants must have good driving record and pass background check. DFWP Call (904) 388-4799. 6/21-7/12c

Fabulous Footwork Dance Studio: Looking for new teachers for piano and other instruments, voice, and art. Contact Phoebe Nipper, 904-259-1818, email resume and references to dance@fabulousfootworks.com 5/17-7/5p

Macclenny Nursing & Rehab is seeking RNs & LPNs full/part time. Day and Night shifts available. CNAs full/part time. Shifts available for 3-11 and 11-7. New wage scale! Must pass a criminal background check! Apply in person at 755

South 5th Street, Macclenny or call 904-259-4873 or email Masdc@southernltc.com. EE/AA/Employer/M/F/V/D. 11/16tfc

HELP WANTED-Accepting applications for electrician and AC duct installer. Must have experience and valid driver's license. Apply in person at Dependable located at 203 E. Macclenny Avenue. 904-259-6546 or submit application on our website at dependableacandelectric.com. 1/21tfc

Experienced painters needed. Peacock Painting. Call 904-259-5877. 2/21tfc

Wayne Frier Macclenny. Looking for service repair man. Mobile Homes. Vehicle/Driver's License required. Jared, 904-259-4663, jm_martin23@yahoo.com. 1/18tfc

Wayne Frier Macclenny. Need T&T Contractors. Mud / Paint / Trim. Jared, 904-259-4663, jm_martin23@yahoo.com. 1/18tfc

REAL ESTATE

Notice to Readers

All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Fair Housing Act which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status or national origin, or an intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination." Familial status includes children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians, pregnant women and people securing custody of children under 18.

This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination, call HUD toll free at 1-800-669-9777. The toll free telephone number for the impaired is 1-800-927-9275.

Wayne Frier Macclenny, I buy land. Cash paid immediately. Call 904-259-4663. 3/9tfc

2.25 acre lots, set up with power pole, well, and septic. \$25,000 each, owner financing. Call 912-843-8118. 3/22tfc

FOR RENT

2 BR, 1 BA house, CH/A, has a front porch and garage, \$850/month plus deposit. 904-259-6849. 6/21p

2 BR, 1 BA MH, \$200/deposit, \$400/month. 904-259-6391. 6/21p

2 BR, 1 1/2 BA, nice, \$500/deposit, \$600/month. 904-339-1860. 6/21-6/28p

4 BR, 2 BA historical home for rent in downtown Macclenny, 407 College Street. Formal dining room, washer/dryer hook up, fenced back yard, hardwood floors, first/last/\$600 deposit required for move in, \$1200/month. Service animals only. Call 904-259-8444 or email vtfpropertymanagement@yahoo.com for more information or to get an application. 5/31tfc

2 BR, 1 BA MH, \$500/month. 3 BR, 2 BA, \$600/month, first/last/security deposit. 912-843-8118. 5/17tfc

4 Lot for rent. Ready for a mobile home. Call 904-259-6735. 2/9tfc

COMMERCIAL FR

Office space on US 90, near the courthouse, \$535/deposit, \$535/month. 904-259-6546, 904-759-3818. 6/21tfc

Commercial office or retail space, 1800 sq. ft., CH/A, new paint and flooring, rent well below market value, no first/last required. 904-259-6271, 904-591-8200. 1/18tfc

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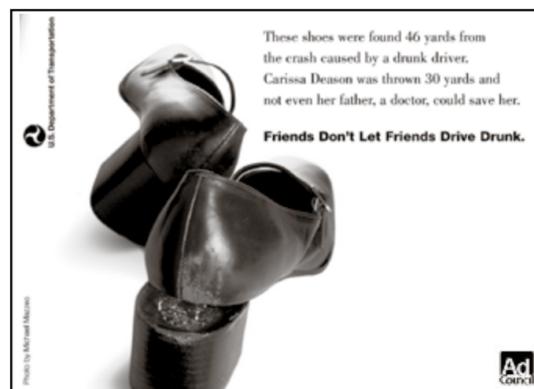
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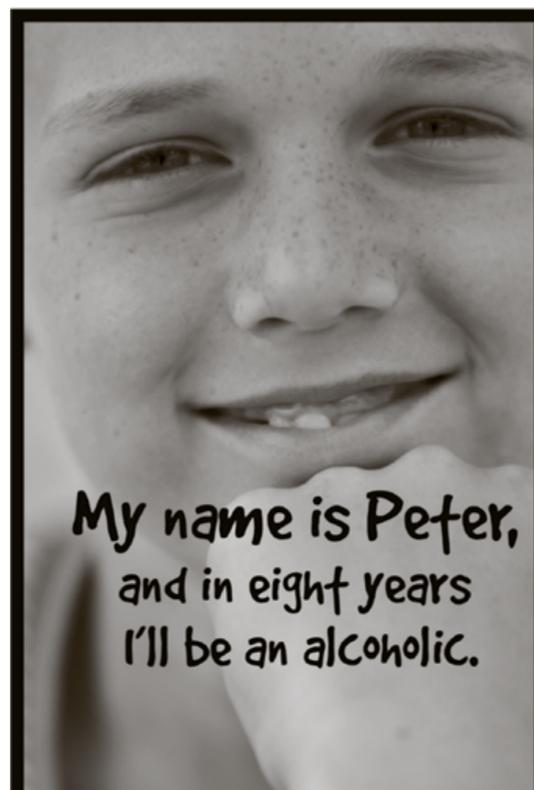
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FAMILY FEATURES

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Combine sweet and salty flavors to create something delicious to devour like Coconut Popcorn Crunch Pie or delightful Down Home Apple Pie Popcorn.

To better serve a crowd, try these Perfect Picnic Popcorn Squares, Popcorn S'mores or Key Lime Popcorn Clusters at your next family pool party or summertime barbecue with friends.

For more creative, DIY popcorn recipe ideas, visit popcorn.org.

Down Home Apple Pie Popcorn

- Yield: 10 cups
- 3** tablespoons melted butter
 - 1** teaspoon vanilla extract
 - 2** tablespoons brown sugar
 - 1** teaspoon ground cinnamon
 - 1/8** teaspoon ground allspice
 - 1/8** teaspoon ground nutmeg
 - 8** cups popped popcorn
 - 1** cup dried apple chips, broken into large pieces
 - 1/4** cup toffee bits

Heat oven to 300 F. Whisk melted butter with vanilla. Toss brown sugar with cinnamon, allspice and nutmeg.

Toss popcorn with butter mixture. Sprinkle evenly with brown sugar mixture. Stir. Transfer to baking sheet lined with parchment paper.

Sprinkle apple chips and toffee bits over top. Bake 15 minutes, or until toffee bits start to melt. Cool before serving.

Tip: Add chopped pecans for extra crunch.



Down Home Apple Pie Popcorn

Pop Up Sweet Treats



Key Lime Popcorn Clusters

Key Lime Popcorn Clusters

Yield: about 32 clusters

- 8** cups popped popcorn
- 4** whole graham crackers, finely chopped, divided
- 1** jar (7 1/2 ounces) marshmallow creme
- 1/4** cup butter or margarine
- 2** tablespoons grated lime peel
- 1** tablespoon key lime juice

Line 9-inch square pan with foil.

In large bowl, combine popcorn and all but 2 tablespoons graham cracker pieces.

In large glass bowl, microwave marshmallow creme and butter on high 1 minute. Stir until butter is melted. Stir in lime peel and lime juice.

Pour marshmallow mixture over popcorn, mixing thoroughly.

Using damp hand, firmly press mixture into prepared pan. Sprinkle with reserved graham cracker pieces. Refrigerate 2 hours until firm.

Lift foil from pan. Break popcorn mixture into clusters.



Popcorn S'mores

Popcorn S'mores

Yield: 20 pieces

- 1** cup firmly packed light brown sugar
- 1/2** cup (1 stick) butter or margarine
- 1/2** cup corn syrup
- 1/2** teaspoon baking soda
- 10** cups freshly popped popcorn
- 1** package (10 1/2 ounces) miniature marshmallows
- 2** cups mini graham cookies
- 1** cup chocolate chips

In medium saucepan, combine brown sugar, butter and corn syrup.

Cook over high heat 5 minutes; remove from heat and stir in baking soda.

In large bowl, combine popcorn and marshmallows.

Pour sugar mixture over popcorn to coat.

Gently stir in graham cookies and chocolate chips.

Spread mixture evenly into greased 15-by-10-inch pan.

Let cool completely. Break into pieces.

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SPORTS

Staples reverses move

JON SHUMAKE
SPORTS EDITOR
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A week after being announced as Bradford High School's new head baseball coach, current BCHS assistant coach John Staples informed the Tornadoes he has decided to remain with Baker County.

"It's nothing against Bradford. They did everything they needed to do to get me there," coach Staples said. "In the end this is just where I belong. I enjoy the school system here, the work environment, my friends and family are here. This is where I need to be."

He said he had been in negotiations with Bradford for several weeks before he was announced as the program's head coach on June 11. Coach Staples attended a public meet-and-greet at Bradford on June 14, but he said he told his wife afterward that his heart wasn't in it.

After sleeping on the decision for a few days, he informed Bradford athletic director Lamar Waters of his choice to stay with the Cats the morning of June 18.

"Bradford gave me a pretty sweet setup and I jumped at it without thoroughly thinking it through," he explained. "... My heart wasn't in it. I wanted to stay in Baker County. I love working



Assistant BCHS Wildcat baseball coach John Staples

with the kids here."

Coach Staples returned to the baseball program in 2016 as the volunteer hitting instructor and third-base coach after previously stepping down as the head coach in 2010 to become the high school's assistant principal. He coached current head coach Jarrell Rodgers in his stint at the helm of the program.

Coach Staples, a Macclenny resident whose coaching career began at Brevard Community College in 1985, said the strong bond

he has with the Wildcat players was one of the largest driving factors behind his decision to stay. He said he initially planned on helping coach Rodgers a couple days a week when first asked to work with the hitters, but that plan quickly changed.

"I showed up first day and I'm not sure if I've missed a day since," coach Staples said. "... Being an assistant coach has been very, very enjoyable for me. I've done head coaching and don't need that anymore."

Barracudas win 18 events in their 2018 debut meet

JON SHUMAKE
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The Baker County Barracudas YMCA swim team had a successful debut on June 16 at Fernandina Beach's McArthur YMCA as 10 swimmers combined to win 18 events.

Seven Barracudas topped multiple individual events, and the team was led by Paul Richmond's three individual victories in the Boys 7-8 division.

He came in first place in the 25-yard backstroke (31.32 seconds), 25 freestyle (21.09) and 25 breaststroke (28.97). Teammate Alexander Sweet finished third in all three events, swimming a time of 42.93 in the backstroke, 26.59 in the freestyle and 36.14 in the breaststroke.

River Neri, Peyton Rosepiller and Natalie Taylor each won a pair of individual events and were members of the first-place Girls Open 200 freestyle relay team. Katilyn Small joined them on the relay team, which clocked in a time of 2:29.30.

Neri (1:18.80) and Small (1:30.14) opened the meet by finishing one-two in the Girls Open 100 freestyle. The two also swept the top two spots in the division's 100 breaststroke as Neri (1:38.00) beat out Small (2:15.28) for first.

Small won the division's 100 butterfly, clocking in at 2:02.90.

Rosepiller (55.57) eked out a tight victory over Taylor (56.00) as they finished first and second in the Girls 11-12 50 breaststroke. Rosepiller also swam a first-place time of 44.47 in the division's 50 backstroke.

Taylor (31.45) took first and Rosepiller claimed third (36.59) in the age group's 50 freestyle. Taylor also came in first in the divi-

sion's 50 butterfly with a time of 38.78.

Ashlyn and Payton Thomas took the top two spots in three events in the Girls 6 and under age group. Ashlyn Thomas won the 25 freestyle (28.97) and 25 breaststroke (42.50), while Payton Thomas clocked in at 32.70 in the former and 43.72 in the latter. Payton Thomas won the 25 butterfly with a time of 36.92, while Ashlyn Thomas took second with a time of 41.50.

Collin Richmond won both the Boys 11-12 50 breaststroke (53.31) and 100 individual medley (1:41.15). William Nickles took third in the IM, clocking in at 2:05.00.

Nickles and Quentin Canaday finished one-two in the division's 50 backstroke with respective times of 49.32 and 59.18.

Canaday topped the 50 butterfly with a time of 1:04.41.

Collin Richmond (36.13), Nickles (42.39) and Canaday (42.44) finished second through fourth, respectively, in the age group's 50 freestyle.

Anthony Sweet claimed second in three events in the Boys 9-10 division. He posted times of 1:04.18 in the 50 breaststroke, 53.87 in the freestyle and 1:16.79 in the 50 backstroke.

Claire Nickles took second place in the Girls 9-10 50 breaststroke (1:00.88) and third in both the division's IM (1:56.00) and 50 freestyle (44.38).

Teanna Dinkins finished sixth in all three of her events in the Girls 9-10 age group. She swam times of 1:25.00 in the 50 breaststroke, 1:21.15 in the 50 backstroke and 59.25 in the 50 freestyle.

The Barracudas are scheduled to make their 2018 home debut at the YMCA pool on Lowder Street on June 23. The meet is set to start at 9 a.m.

FORMER CATS

Crews' SwampDogs 7-7 after road loss

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Pitcher Jared Crews' Fayetteville SwampDogs sat at 7-7 overall on June 18 following their 5-2 road loss to the Morehead City Marlins, which snapped the team's three-game winning streak.

Crews pitched one no-hit inning with one walk allowed on June 13 in Fayetteville's 7-2 win at Wilmington. He allowed three runs — two earned — on four hits on June 17, but the SwampDogs topped the visiting Wilmington Sharks 6-5.

Through three appearances, Crews has pitched six innings with a 12 ERA and four strikeouts.

• Linebacker Bear Woods was placed on the Toronto Argonauts' six-game injury list due to offseason back surgery prior to the defending Grey Cup champions' first game. The Argonauts lost their regular-season debut 27-19 to the hosting Saskatchewan Roughriders on June 15.

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Costly error for all-stars

JON SHUMAKE
SPORTS EDITOR

sports@bakercountypress.com

A second-inning error by Baker County ignited a five-run, two-out rally for Navy Ortega League, which pulled away with a 14-2 win on June 18 in the 8-10 Little League all-star baseball tournament.

Baker County dropped to the elimination bracket in the tournament in Calhoun due to the loss. The boys were scheduled to play in an elimination game on June 20 against the winner of Tuesday's game between Hilliard and Highlands. Baker County's game was set for 7 p.m. at Field 2.

After cutting Navy Ortega's League's four-run lead in half with Parker Rodgers' RBI triple and Jack Rauch's run-scoring single in the bottom of the first inning, Baker County appeared poised to claw back into the game.

With two outs and the bases loaded in the top of the second inning, relief pitcher Rauch forced NOL's James Gibbs' to hit a pop fly to second base to seemingly end the jam. Baker County's first and second basemen collided, however, and the ball fell to the clay, allowing Reed Krueger to score from third and the inning to continue.

Jay Futch added a two-run single and Baker Eller and Sam Ogletree both had RBI base hits to extend the lead.

Eller went 2 for 3 with two RBIs to lead NOL, which took advantage of five Baker County errors.

Rauch threw three strikeouts in three innings, and none of his five allowed runs were earned.

Rays Jordan managed Baker County's lone hit after the first inning with a one-out single to left field in the second inning. He advanced to third with walks by Cale Starling and Pierson Moran, which loaded the bases.

The team left the bases loaded to end the inning, and NOL's Jesse Huber got out of the jam by throwing one of NOL's seven strikeouts. Three NOL pitchers combined to allow four hits, and Dan Exline threw three strikeouts in the bottom of the fourth inning to end the game.

NOL score also five runs in the top of the fourth inning to take the 12-run lead.

The loss came two days after Baker County opened the double-elimination tournament with an 18-3 blow-out over Arlington.

In other Baker County Little League all-star results:

- The 9-10 softball team staved off elimination from



Rays Jordan winds up for the pitch.



Baker County players await the start of the game.



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Hudson Hodges snags the pitch behind the plate.

Photos by Jon Shumake



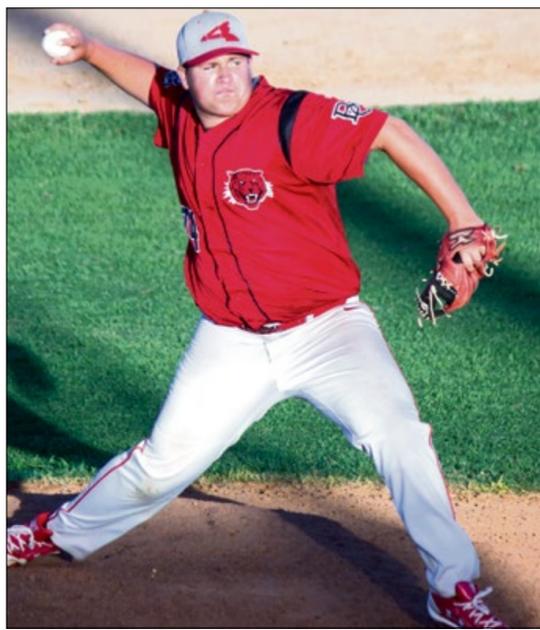
Jack Rauch pitches the ball.

its tournament in St. Augustine on June 18 with an 18-8 victory over the host team. The ladies lost their tournament opener 14-4 to Yulee on June 16.

Baker County was scheduled for a rematch against Yulee, who fell 8-4 to San Mateo on Monday, in an elimination game on Tuesday.

- The county's Major all-star baseball team is scheduled to begin its tournament run on June 23 against Navy Ortega League. First pitch is scheduled for noon at Highlands.

Commits to Trinity Baptist



Michael Davis on the mound.

JON SHUMAKE
SPORTS EDITOR

sports@bakercountypress.com

Rising senior BCHS Wildcat baseball player Michael Davis committed last week to continue his athletic and academic careers at Trinity Baptist College.

He made his decision on June 14 while attending a camp at the school located on Jacksonville's Westside. He opted with Trinity Baptist College over other programs with which he had been in contact, such as Indian River State College, because it offers a degree in youth ministry.

"Coach [Jon] Copeland told me they'd like me to come play baseball for them and that is a dream come true for me," Davis said on June 18.

"... It's a close-knit Chris-

tian college, which is something I've been looking for since I was pretty young. It's the right fit for me."

The 17-year-old Macclenny resident became the second Wildcat baseball player in the Class of 2019 to commit to college already. He joined Colby Kennedy, who committed to Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in April.

Davis said he was happy to make his decision early.

"It feels like a lot of stress is just lifted because the recruiting process is a lot of work, a lot of stress, a lot of emailing," he explained. "Now that I've got it out of the way I can focus on winning more ball games this year."

Davis first got in contact with Trinity Baptist College in the summer of 2017 when school representa-

tives attended one of Baker County's summer baseball events. He then attended a showcase camp in November before returning for last week's camp, where he hit and played catcher.

He said the camp also involved infield and outfield work in addition to the hitting, and his ability to play multiple roles impressed the coaches.

"We hit and he said that he really liked my hitting and the skills I could bring to the team. We pitched, but he didn't want me to pitch because he has seen what I can do," said Davis, who pitched well in limited appearances as a junior for the Cats. He threw 7.2 innings over five games with a .913 ERA and six strikeouts, and allowed just two runs — one earned — on eight hits, two walks and three hit batters.

"... He really admired that I had the versatility to pitch, play infield and catch."

Davis said he has also been working on his hitting, and has a .800 on-base percentage for his North Florida Baseball League travel ball team.

But before he joins the Eagles, who finished 23-30 in 2018, he still has another year of high school baseball. And he has big goals for his final year in Baker County.

"My goals for senior year is to win the district championship and hopefully go a little bit further," said Davis, who thanked God, his parents and everyone who supported Wildcat baseball. "I want to enjoy the time left in high school and enjoy playing with my friends and bringing what I can to table to be the best we can possibly be."

Kickoff changes much-needed

The NFL recently announced a set of new rules that could lead to even more drastic measures in the future.

No, not the new National Anthem policy. I'll leave that mess alone and #sticktosports, as many sportswriters are told to do on social media.

Instead, the seven changes to the kickoff rules announced in late May will undoubtedly have a major impact from the opening kickoff of the 2018 season. Among the changes: Players on the kicking team will have to line up within one yard of the 35 yard line, effectively eliminating the running start; players on the receiving team are moved closer to the ball to reduce speed and pace on the play; and wedge blocking is now illegal.

The rule changes are absolutely necessary to improve player safety.

NFL players are five times more likely to suffer a concussion on a kickoff compared to a normal play from scrimmage, reported *The Florida Times-Union's* John Reid in an article about how Jaguars special teams coordinator Joe DeCamillis is adjusting the schemes to fit the new rules.

By its nature, football is always going to be a dangerous sport, but measures to ensure player safety have to be taken. The NFL has a track record of taking half-measures — reducing overtime by five minutes, moving the kickoff to the 35 yard line, etc. — that don't have much of an impact. The new kickoff rules are a step in the right direction.

But what if the changes don't reduce the risk of concussions? Could the NFL completely do away with kickoffs?

It's not entirely out of the question. And one proposed football league has announced it has already taken that step.

The Alliance of American Football, which is slated to begin in February, 2019, has completely removed kickoffs from the game. Teams will instead begin their possessions at their own 25 yard line, the same as NFL and collegiate touchbacks. In lieu of onside kicks, teams will be able to attempt a play from their own 35 yard line that must gain at least 10 yards for the team to maintain possession.

The single-play concept as a replacement to the onside kick is a brilliant idea, and I'm looking forward to how it impacts the game.

How will the sport look without kickoffs? What impact will it have on the game? Will it improve player safety? I'm excited to find out.

One thing for sure, though, is that the NFL needs to pay close attention to the experiment. It could be looking into its own future.

If the elimination of kickoffs does work (make the game safer) all levels of football, including the NFL, should adopt similar rules. There is no reason to put players of any age at an increased risk for concussions.

Eliminating kickoffs could have negative effects. Players on NFL roster bubbles would have a harder time making teams, and special teams coordinators would become nearly irrelevant.

We've come a long way from celebrating bone-rattling hits — remember ESPN's segment "Jacked Up" — or having players in the original XFL scrambling for possession of the ball, which resulted in at least one injury.

The game has to continue to evolve and take increased measures for player safety. And I'd rather watch football without kickoffs than no football at all.

The Extra Point
Jon Shumake

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POWER

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 119277/78
 POWER Glider Recliner

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FREE **49" TV or RECLINER**
 WITH PURCHASE OF MATTRESS SET

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LG Life's Good
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JUST IN TIME FOR FATHER'S DAY
 JUNE 17, 2018

Free TV and Recliner quantities may vary by store.

**701 S 5th Street
 MACCLENNY, FL
 904-259-2275**

STORE HOURS: MON. - FRI. 9AM - 7PM; SAT. 9AM - 6PM; SUN. 12PM - 5PM

*Certain restrictions and exclusions apply. Applicants must meet all State and Federal identification verification requirements and State age requirements. Offer not available to applicants in default on a Badcock account, in an active bankruptcy or have a discharged bankruptcy within the past two years. Prices and offers effective June 12- June 25, 2018 at participating stores only.



Andy & Lori Johnston, Owner