

Chamber mixer tonight in White Springs

The town of White Springs is holding a Chamber Mixer tonight (Thursday) from 5:30-7 p.m., at the Nature and Heritage Tourism Center on US 41, right across the street from the Adams Country Store. Please bring your business card for a chance to win a \$100 gift card. Light refreshments will be served. Come out and meet and greet your fellow Chamber of Commerce members and businesses.



Ida Daniels rises in school career, Page 17A



HamCo schools celebrate Black History Month, Page 2A

The Jasper News

nflaonline.com

Today's Weather

High 83° F



Precip: 30%

Partly cloudy skies. High 83°F. Low 60°F. Winds S at 11 mph.

Chance of rain 0%.

UV INDEX: 6 - High

For up to the minute weather go to www.nflaonline.com.

143rd YEAR, NUMBER 10

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2014

1 SECTION 18 PAGES

50¢

OFFICIAL REPORTS: Tom Pierce Jr., 47, Jennings, and Johnnie Young, 54, White Springs, while employed at Hamilton CI, knowingly and willfully diverted monies, financial transactions, wire transfers and other exchanges of currency to introduce contraband such as cigarettes, tobacco, narcotics and cell phones into the prison, which they passed along to inmates in exchange for monetary rewards.

Money laundering arrest



Pierce

Former Hamilton corrections officers arrested for money laundering, bribery and introducing contraband into prison

By Joyce Marie Taylor
joycemarie.taylor@gafnews.com

Two former Hamilton Correctional Institution corrections officers were arrested for money laundering, bribery and introducing contraband

into Hamilton CI, according to arrest reports from the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office.

Reports show that on Wednesday, Feb. 12, Tom Pierce Jr., 47, 1080 Mary St. Jennings, and Johnnie Ruth Young, 54, 16955 Mill St., White

Springs, were both booked into the Hamilton County Jail on \$10,000 bond each on a host of charges after an internal investigation revealed the two were involved in a money laundering operation within Hamilton CI.

Pierce and Young, while employed at Hamilton CI, knowingly and willfully diverted monies, finan-



Young

SEE MONEY, PAGE 2A

Jasper city elections coming March 4

By Joyce Marie Taylor
joycemarie.taylor@gafnews.com

The city of Jasper is gearing up for a March 4 election of one council member, as well as proposed citywide charter amendments.

City Council District 5 Seat will be the only one on the ballot this year. Three people qualified; incumbent Kathy Avriett, Gordon D. Rodgers and Geadon Smith.

Incumbent LaBarfield Bryant was the only one to qualify for Seat 1 by the Jan. 3 closing date, so he is running unopposed and won't be on the ballot.

Four charter amendments will also be on the ballot. 1) Amending language, as well as duties of the mayor. 2) Changes concerning elections. 3) Amending council salaries. 4) Amending city land boundaries.

3 council seats up for election in White Springs

By Joyce Marie Taylor
joycemarie.taylor@gafnews.com

The town of White Springs is gearing up for an April 22 election for three council seats.

Candidates must pick up packets, which will be available beginning Thursday, Feb. 27, in person from town hall. All candidates must open a campaign banking account.

Additionally, candi-

SEE 3 COUNCIL, PAGE 3A



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The Jasper Youth Treatment Center may be scrapped by FDJJ.

-Photo: Joyce Marie Taylor

Jasper Youth Treatment Center could be scrapped by FDJJ

Failed negotiations could put 36 Hamilton County employees out of a job

By Joyce Marie Taylor
joycemarie.taylor@gafnews.com

The Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (FDJJ) after announcing on Thursday, Feb. 13 that they were officially scrapping the Jasper Youth Treatment Center (JYTC), due to failed negotiations with the Hamilton County School District, decided on Satur-



Dwight Pollock, program director for the JYTC.

day, Feb. 15 to give it one more shot, according to JYTC Program Director Dwight Pollock.

"The FDJJ has agreed to try once more to enter into an agreement with the school board as one last ditch effort to save the facility," Pollock said. "We're praying the school board makes the right decision."

Pollock also said his employer, Youth Services International (YSI) has agreed to place all of the JYTC staff on unpaid administrative leave until Friday, Feb. 21.

The FDJJ has been in negotiations with the school district to try to open the JYTC, a 40-bed residential facility for low to moderate risk boys ages 14-18, which is at the same location as the former Panther facility in Jasper. The problem is there is no signed agreement between the FDJJ and the school district because of back and forth arguments about funding for the project. The school district would be responsible for pro-

SEE JASPER, PAGE 8A

White Springs: Thousands in lost revenue discovered

Faulty billing resulted in about \$35-50,000 per year

By Joyce Marie Taylor
joycemarie.taylor@gafnews.com

The town of White Springs recently upgraded their utility billing software and Town Manager Bob Farley said, "We've gotten a lot of positive comments on the way the bills look. They're a lot easier to read and have a lot more information showing."

Farley said the town has also received customer complaints about higher water bills.

The new bills, Farley said, include a graph showing water usage, so that customers can compare current and previous usage. Additionally, town staff can now make corrections immediately and reprint

SEE WHITE SPRINGS, PAGE 3A

SRWMD: \$765,000 for springs protection, restoration

Submitted

The Suwannee River Water Management District (District) Governing Board on Tuesday approved several agreements totaling

approximately \$765,000 to implement cooperative springs protection and restoration projects in key locations

SEE SRWMD, PAGE 2A

Tracy Rodriquenz appointed as new White Springs Police Chief



New White Springs Police Chief Tracy Rodriquenz and her husband Chris.

-Photo: Joyce Marie Taylor

By Joyce Marie Taylor
joycemarie.taylor@gafnews.com

Lieutenant Tracy Rodriquenz of the White Springs Police Department was appointed to the position of White Springs Police Chief at the Feb. 11 meeting of the town council.

Current Police Chief Ken Brookins will be retiring on March 3 and he had recommended Lt. Rodriquenz be his replacement at the Jan. 14 meeting of the council. The position was then posted in-house, as poli-

cy is to hire from within whenever possible, and Rodriquenz was the only one who applied for the job. Brookins presented her resume and application to the

SEE TRACY, PAGE 2A



SRWMD: \$765,000 for springs protection, restoration

Continued From Page 1A

throughout the District. These agreements are putting state appropriations for springs protection and restoration to work.

"Many of these projects will take place in strategic locations to support the recovery of groundwater levels within the Lower Santa Fe River Basin, while assisting with the implementation of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Basin Management Action Plan to improve water quality within the Santa Fe River Basin," said District Executive Director Ann Shortelle. "These projects are only made possible by state appropriations to the District and by cooperative funding through our project partners."

"The Board action will advance projects to reduce nutrient loadings and restore flows necessary to revitalize the Santa Fe Basin," said Tom Frick, Director of DEP's Division of Environmental Assessment and Restoration. "The projects are critical to achieving the nutrient reduction targets the DEP set in 2012, and are an integral part of the overall restoration plan for the Santa Fe River and its many springs."

Aquifer Recharge and Groundwater Withdrawal Reduction

The District is partnering with an aquaculture operation in Alachua County to implement a water reuse

project. The project will offset about 900,000 gallons of groundwater weekly – or 47 million gallons annually – within the Ginnie and Gilchrist Blue springsheds in the Lower Santa Fe River Basin.

The District is also partnering with Gainesville Regional Utilities to construct a recharge wetland in Alachua County. The first phase of the project will provide between roughly 500,000 and 1 million gallons per day in recharge to the aquifer to support spring flows in the Poe Springs Watershed and benefit water supplies within the Lower Santa Fe River Basin.

Water Quality Improvement

The District is partnering with an aquaculture producer in Gilchrist County, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and DEP to reduce nitrate in groundwater within the Ginnie and Gilchrist Blue springsheds of the Lower Santa Fe River Basin. The project involves implementing new technologies that have been shown to remove more than 95 percent of nitrate, with an estimated annual nitrate removal of 7,500 pounds – or four pickup truck loads.

The District is also partnering with a plant nursery in Alachua County to expand a current denitrification system to reduce nitrate loading within the Upper Santa Fe River Basin and to contribute to improved water quality within the springs of the Lower Santa

Fe River Basin. The first phase of the project reduced nitrogen loading by 64 percent annually or 6,105 pounds, which is nearly three and one-half pickup truck loads.

Springs Restoration

The District will partner with Jefferson County, Suwannee County, and

Gilchrist County to conduct restoration activities at Wacissa Springs, Charles Springs, Hart Springs and Otter Springs. The projects will improve water quality by removing sediment within the springs and stabilizing the springs banks to control further erosion.

Tracy Rodriquenz appointed as new White Springs Police Chief

Continued From Page 1A

council for their approval of his recommendation.

Town Manager Bob Farley said, "My recommendation is hand-in-hand with the Chief's."

Farley said he has worked closely with Rodriquenz since he came on board a little over a year ago.

"As I said in the last meeting, it's Ken in a skirt," Farley said. "I think she will fit the town's needs very well."

Mayor Helen Miller said, "I'm in total agreement with that."

Councilman Rhett Bullard made a motion to hire Rodriquenz as the new police chief and Councilman Richard Marshall seconded it, followed by a unanimous vote by all council members.

Marshall said, "There couldn't have been a better person or a better choice. I think we are gaining a wonderful chief."

Rodriquenz was in the audience with her husband Chris, who is also in law enforcement, serving with the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office. Both she and her husband were visibly moved and humbled by the appointment.

HamCo schools celebrate Black History Month

By Joyce Marie Taylor

joycemarie.taylor@gafnews.com

In honor of Black History Month, Hamilton County Schools have a lot planned to honor famous African Americans who have made an impact on society.

At Central Hamilton Elementary, activities will be culminated by participating in the African American Read-In, as well as hosting a program that will utilize student speakers, along with individuals from the community to read to the students, according to Assistant Principal Charles Claridy.

The African American Read-In, Claridy said, is sponsored by the National Council of Teachers of English; a Professional Association of Educators in English Studies, Literacy, and Language Arts.

"The purpose of the activity is to increase students' awareness of African American authors and their contributions to American History," said Claridy.

At the high school, teacher Christopher Combass said, "We have an exciting project that we are working on in my high school So-

cial Studies classes."

The students, he said, have been asked to research a famous African American, and they will be focusing on the economic, political, social, and cultural impacts that those individuals had on American society.

"Students have the option of creating an informative brochure, poster, or PowerPoint and will be presenting their projects on Friday, Feb. 21," Combass said.

Eighth grade teacher Ryan Lamont said his students are also working on an exciting project.

"Each 8th grader has chosen a famous African American from the fields of math, science, literature, and history," said Lamont. "They are to research their backgrounds and create a 'Facebook profile' for this individual. This project combines technology/social media with education in a setting that allows the student to actually enjoy the process of research," he added.

The students will present their profiles when they are completed. Lamont said the kids have really taken off with the project and have been asking to work on them in their free time.

Money laundering arrest

Continued From Page 1A

cial transactions, wire transfers and other exchanges of currency to introduce contraband such as cigarettes, tobacco, narcotics and cell phones into the prison, which they passed along to inmates in exchange for monetary rewards, reports state.

Several of the transactions were utilized via Green-Dot money transfers and were applied to prepaid debit cards owned by Pierce. Evidence also suggested Young used her White Springs post office box to receive contraband and financial transactions in the form of U.S. currency, as well as Green-Dot MoneyPaks (i.e. prepaid debit cards), according to reports.

Reports further state that months before their arrests, Pierce and Young had Green-Dot

bank cards and both were receiving alarming amounts of deposits, which caused Green-Dot to suspend both accounts, after which they prevented either of them from conducting further business with their financial institution.

As the investigation progressed, a cell phone was confiscated from an inmate, which showed text messages between the inmate and Young. The inmate, during a sworn interview, told authorities he had directed his girlfriend to send the cell phone to Young's post office box in White Springs, along with other illicit contraband and a \$500 Green-Dot MoneyPak, which was payment to Young and Pierce for bringing the inmate the cell phone and other contraband, reports show.

A second inmate testified he was involved with Pierce, Young and

a third correctional officer in helping to introduce the contraband into the prison. The inmate stated he paid Pierce thousands of dollars in Green-Dot MoneyPaks as payment from other inmates in exchange for their requested contraband, such as tobacco, synthetic marijuana, cell phones and health supplements. The elaborate scheme involved the inmate texting Young and using code words to communicate, HCSO said.

Additionally, family members of two inmates sent payments directly to Young.

Young and Pierce were charged with money laundering over \$300 and less than \$20,000, offering commercial bribes and smuggling contraband into the prison. They were booked into Hamilton County Jail on \$10,000 bond each and have since posted bail.

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Life in WHITE SPRINGS

By Walter McKenzie

lifeinwhitesprings@gmail.com

I see a lot of activity going on at the Telford Hotel and hope to report in the next week or two what their plans are and what the opening date will be. We all look forward to the re-opening of this historic landmark White Springs hotel. I'm also aware of another business that is relocating to "Downtown White Springs" in the very near future. Other than to say that I think that it will be a perfect fit for White Springs, I'm not going to say much more until it is a "done deal" and then I will fill you in on the details. Changes are happening! You tend to be more aware of changes when you live in a town like White Springs where, on the surface, little seems to change over the years. That can be a good or bad thing, depending on the circumstances. These are some

changes taking place that I am excited about. Merri and I did our first volunteer shifts at the Nature and Heritage Center this past week and we are excited about the plans and changes that are being put into action there too. More emphasis on our regions activities, businesses and opportunities, along with a sprinkling of original regional arts and crafts assure that, given a little time, the energy level of that place is going to really increase! A preview of the future will be presented to the Hamilton County Chamber of Commerce at the Chamber Mixer which takes place at the Nature and Heritage Tourism Center this Thursday, February 20 from 5:30 - 7:00PM! Members will learn about some exciting changes and opportunities that are taking place there for the good of our region and their businesses! I see this as an opportunity for Chamber members to get in on the ground floor of a real effort to better publicize and advertise our regions happenings, businesses and opportunities. If you

are a Chamber member or prospective member, I hope that you will take this opportunity to explore your options. I want to see you there!

Learning the history of White Springs and the surrounding region has been a fascinating experience that has given me a deeper sense of connection and belonging. I'm sure that many of you, both native and newcomer, share this interest. I want to share with you an opportunity to broaden this knowledge. Everyone is invited to the annual black history program at the Beulah Baptist Church in White Springs, Sunday, February 23rd at 11:00 am. Douglas Udell of Live Oak, FL will be the speaker.

"Who? Who? Who are you?" said the owl. If the owl is as wise as legend has it, he knows "who" we are but what do we know about the owl? I feel blessed to live in White Springs where I occasionally spot one of the varieties of owls that are native to our region but seeing them and knowing about them are two different things. Your chance to increase your knowledge about our wise feathered friend is coming this Saturday, February 22 at the River Gazebo at Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park at 6:45pm. Come join a park ranger and some feathered friends for a program about the owls that live here at Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park! Then go for a walk in the woods and try to call some live owls in! This is one of those rare "Only in White Springs!" opportunities that you should really take advantage of. Enjoy the blessings of Mother Nature that we sometimes take for granted. "Who" will be there and I hope you will too.

Here's to your good health! Unusual opportunities for exploring paths to better health have always existed in White Springs and continue to be available. At the Suwannee River Yoga Studio, on the last Monday of every month, hypnotherapist Khrys Kantarze leads a group hypnosis session as a wide variety of topics are administered. This Monday, Feb. 24 the subject will be "Controlling Your Weight / Perfect Health and Wholeness". Sessions start at 6PM, no late admittance. Clients may reserve a reclining chair (Limited) or lie on the floor on yoga mats, pillows and blankets. Call Khrys for more information: 386-234-0846.

I hope to see you out and about, enjoying nature, commerce, culture, health and life in White Springs!
Walter McKenzie
386-269-0056
lifeinwhitesprings@gmail.com

White Springs gets new utility billing software

Continued From Page 1A

a new bill. Old meter usage, Farley said, can also be captured.

"When we changed out meters previously mid-cycle, we lost what water was used by the customer for that period."

Work orders can now be produced within one minute, Farley continued, and can be dispatched immediately. The software also flags meter reader or operator input error, and unusual readings can help identify a faulty or non-functioning water meter.

"We've run across several of those where people have had busted pipes and they're not aware of it," said Farley. "So, we immediately tell the customer, after we've verified that we didn't make any mistakes, that they've got a leak. We're being proactive."

The Waste Pro garbage report, Farley added, is now more simplified. Also, since the bills are now being mailed to customers in an envelope, rather than the old postcard style, the town can stuff flyers inside with important information, rather than doing a separate mailing, thus saving the town money. Additionally, now that the town is using a folding machine and a postage me-

ter that comes with a one cent credit per item mailed, the process is much faster and also saves the town money.

Farley said when they first put in the new billing software, he was adamant that correct information be initially entered into the computer to prevent issues down the road, which included making certain the correct person was being billed at each address.

"We found out that there were customers who were not being billed for garbage," said Farley. "We found customers who were not being billed for sewer that should have been. We found customers that were not being billed at all. There were two of them."

Outside town rates were also incorrect, Farley went on, and weren't being billed according to town ordinance.

"Some in-town commercial and residential customers had an incorrect rate and it was just random," he said. "One of our major customers was not being billed for sewer at all...has never been billed for sewer. That equates to about \$250 per month."

That major customer was Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park, according to Mayor Helen Miller. The park is now being properly billed.

All the issues that were discovered have now been corrected. The loss of revenue to the town from the faulty billing over the years, Farley said, probably amounted to about \$35,000 to \$50,000 per year.

Although the new billing software was expensive, Farley said it is already paying for itself. Town staff, he added, is available for any cus-

tomers questions. He said new administrative assistant Anita Rivers is becoming a whiz on the computer and can easily respond to questions from customers about their bills.

Farley said he is hopeful that the town can take the next step and convert to digital billing via e-mail to their customers.



Ida Daniels rises in school career, Page 17A

3 council seats up for election in White Springs

Continued From Page 1A

Qualifying for the three council seats, currently held by Helen Miller, Walter McKenzie and Richard Marshall, ends at noon on Tuesday, March 18, and books will close on March 24.

dates must be registered Hamilton County voters and must physically reside in the town of White Springs for 12 months preceding qualifying.

ARREST RECORDS

Editor's note: The Jasper News prints the entire arrest record. If your name appears here and you are later found not guilty or the charges are dropped, we will be happy to make note of this in the newspaper when judicial proof is presented to us by you or the authorities.

The following abbreviations are used below:

- DAC - Department of Agriculture Commission
- DOA - Department of Agriculture
- DOT - Department of Transportation
- FDLE - Florida Department of Law Enforcement
- FHP - Florida Highway Patrol
- FWC - Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
- HCDTF - Hamilton County Drug Task Force
- HCSO - Hamilton County Sheriff's Office
- ICE - Immigration and Custom Enforcement
- JAPD - Jasper Police Department
- JNPD - Jennings Police Department
- OALE - Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement
- P&P - Probation and Parole
- SCSO - Suwannee County Sheriff's Office
- WSPD - White Springs Police Department

- ment
- Feb. 10, Khalial L. McCoggle, 18, 10580 Fisher St., White Springs, Fla., hold for MCSO, HCDTF-Brownfield
- Feb. 10, Sean Francis McElroy, 43, 3738 NW US Hwy. 129, Jasper, Fla., forgery, uttering forgery, HCSO-Curry
- Feb. 12, Tom Pierce, 47, PO Box 334, Jennings, Fla., money laundering, unlawful compensation/officer behavior, introduction of contraband into state facility, DOC-Land
- Feb. 12, Johnnie R. Young, 54, 16955 Mill St., White Springs, Fla., money laundering, unlawful compensation or reward for official behavior, introduction of contraband into a state correctional facility, unlawful removal of written communication, DOC-Land
- Feb. 12, Martin Avila, 41, 34782 N. Cemetery Rd., Gurnee, Ill., expired DL more than 6 months, FDACS-Kissing
- Feb. 13, Miguel A. Rodriguez-Pagan, 36, 2262 Victoria Falls Dr., Orlando, Fla., fail to register motor vehicle, attached license/registration not assigned, FHP
- Feb. 14, Lindsay E. Peterson, 25, 1015 King George Blvd., Apt. 321A, Savannah, Ga., dwls, DOA-Nobles
- Feb. 14, Allen Mirt Hughes, 29, 509 Hwy. 135 North, Statenville, Ga., burglary of structure, grand theft motor vehicle, petit theft, HCSO-Williams

LEGAL NOTICE

Deadline, March 1, 2014

The deadline for filing application for 1st time Homestead Exemption and Agriculture Classification is March 1, 2014, if you have not filed your new application with the Hamilton County Property Appraiser's Office, you must do so between now and March 1st to qualify for your Homestead Exemption and /or Agricultural Classification.

.....What is needed to apply for Homestead Exemption?

- (1) FL Driver's License
- (2) FL Vehicle Registration receipt or tag number(s)
- (3) Social Security numbers(s)
- (4) Hamilton County Voter Card (if registered)
- (5) Mobile Home Registration receipts (s)
- (6) Cost of Decals (mobile home only) \$7.85 per side.

We must have your Social Security number for each person claiming Homestead Exemption on your property. Failure to supply your Social Security number will result in Denial of your Homestead. other exemptions : Widow, Widower, Disability, Blind, Veterans' Disability and Senior Citizen Exemption, must be 65 or older with 2013 adjusted gross income of \$29, 994 or less for total household.

If you are unable to come into our office because of extenuating circumstances, please contact us and make an appointment with you.

for further information contact:

The Hamilton county Property Appraiser's office David Goolsby, Jr., Hamilton County Court House, office hours are 8:30a.m until 4:30p.m., Monday through Friday. (386) 792-2791

OPINION Concealing evil

Evil acts are given an aura of moral legitimacy by noble-sounding socialistic expressions, such as spreading the wealth, income redistribution, caring for the less fortunate, and the will of the majority. Let's have a thought experiment to consider just how much Americans sanction evil.

Imagine there are several elderly widows in your neighborhood. They have neither the strength to mow their lawns, clean their windows and perform other household tasks nor the financial means to hire someone to help them. Here's a question that I'm almost afraid to ask: Would you support a government mandate that forces you or one of your neighbors to mow these elderly widows' lawns, clean their windows and perform other household tasks? Moreover, if the person so ordered failed to obey the government mandate, would you approve of some sort of sanction, such as fines, property confiscation or imprisonment? I'm hoping, and I believe, that most of my fellow Americans would condemn such a mandate. They'd agree that it would be a form of slavery -- namely, the forcible use of one person to serve the purposes of another.

Would there be the same condemnation if, in-



A MINORITY VIEW

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BY WALTER WILLIAMS

stead of forcing you or your neighbor to actually perform weekly household tasks for the elderly widows, the government forced you or your neighbor to give one of the widows \$50 of your weekly earnings? That way, she could hire someone to mow her lawn or clean her windows. Would such a mandate differ from one under which you are forced to actually perform the household task? I'd answer that there is little difference between the two mandates except the mechanism for the servitude. In either case, one person is being forcibly used to serve the purposes of another.

I'm guessing that most Americans would want to help these elderly ladies in need but they'd find anything that openly smacks of servitude or slavery deeply offensive. They might have a clearer conscience if all the neighbors were forced (taxed) to put money into a government pot. A government agency would then send the widows \$50 to hire someone to mow their lawns and perform other household tasks. This collective mech-

anism makes the particular victim invisible, but it doesn't change the fact that a person is being forcibly used to serve the purposes of others. Putting the money into a government pot simply conceals an act that would otherwise be deemed morally depraved.

This is why socialism is evil. It employs evil means, confiscation and intimidation, to accomplish what are often seen as noble goals -- namely, helping one's fellow man. Helping one's fellow man in need by reaching into one's own pockets to do so is laudable and praiseworthy. Helping one's fellow man through coercion and reaching into another's pockets is evil and worthy of condemnation. Tragically, most teachings, from the church on down, support government use of one person to serve the purposes of another; the advocates cringe from calling it such and prefer to call it charity or duty.

Some might argue that we are a democracy, in which the majority rules. But does a majority consensus make moral acts that would otherwise be deemed immoral? In other words, if the neighbors got a majority vote to force one of their number -- under pain of punishment -- to perform household tasks for the elderly widows, would that make it moral?

The bottom line is that we've betrayed much of the moral vision of our Founding Fathers. In 1794, when Congress appropriated \$15,000 for relief of French refugees who had fled from insurrection in San Domingo to Baltimore and Philadelphia, James Madison rose on the floor of the House of Representatives to object, saying, "I cannot undertake to lay my finger on that article of the Constitution which granted a right to Congress of expending, on objects of benevolence, the money of their constituents." Tragically, today's Americans -- Democrat or Republican, liberal or conservative -- would hold such a position in contempt and run a politician like Madison out of town on a rail.

Walter E. Williams is a professor of economics at George Mason University. To find out more about Walter E. Williams and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.

The Jasper News

Published weekly every Thursday. USPS #755-980
Office located at 211 Howard St. E.,
Live Oak, FL 32060
Phone (386) 362-1734 FAX (386) 364-5578
E-mail address: jaspernews1@windstream.net

Myra ReganPublisher
Monja SlaterAdvertising Manager
Jeff WatersEditor
Joyce Marie TaylorReporter
Brenda DemaraisSales Representative

Periodicals postage paid at Jasper, FL.
Annual subscription rate is \$18 in county,
\$26 out of county and out of state.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:
The Jasper News, P.O. Box 370, Live Oak, FL 32064

Letter to the editor and Article Policy

Letters to the editor and article submissions can be mailed or dropped off at the news office at 211 Howard St. E, Live Oak, FL 32064, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. until 5 p.m.

Letters to the editor should be typed, brief and to the point, approximately 150 to 200 words or less. Not all letters are published. To be considered for publication, letters to the editor must be signed, include the writer's address and phone number, and in the news office by noon on Friday.

Submissions, 400 or less words, should be typed, brief and to the point. Not all submissions are published.

Letters and submissions may be edited to fit available space. Well written letters/submissions require less editing.

You may fax letters/submissions to 386-364-5578.

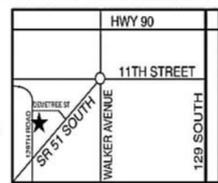
SPRING IS COMING!

We know because the arrival of spring is always preceded by beautiful trees! Have you begun to notice these trees around town? They're already showing their colors. Japanese Magnolia, Red Bud and the native Red Maple are all looking pretty. These great trees are the first to let us know winter's almost over and spring's just around the corner. Your yard can be one of the first to welcome spring by including one of these ornamental trees.

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IN GOD WE OUGHT TO TRUST Let us let God love through us



Hugh G. Sherrill
ems-hugh43@comcast.net

"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for GOD IS LOVE. In this the love of God was manifested toward us that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might love through Him. In this is love, not that we have loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins". (1St John 4:7-10 NKJ)

John was inspired by the Holy Spirit to pen five books in the New Testament. Only Paul wrote more. John was known as the disciple "whom Jesus loved" (John 13:23). John seems to have a very tender spirit about him that ex-

pressed more love than the others. In the Gospel of John he used the word love 22 times. Matthew, Mark, and Luke together only used it 29 times. John used the word love no less than 36 times in the 1st & 2nd John Epistle. The Epistle of 1st John is, with the possible exception of the Song of Solomon, the most intimate of the inspired writings.

We know that the word love is an action word. Love is love because of the actions it produces. God could have said a thousand times "I love you" and we would not have really experienced His love had He not, as Romans 5:8 says, "But God demonstrated His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us". Yes, God so proved He loved you and I He sent His only Son to die in our place.

The whole law (Ten Commandments) is covered by the word love. Love God and love your neighbor as thyself. 1St John 3:23 says "And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment".

Last Friday was the day set aside as Valentine's Day. A day when we are to show our love toward one another, especially those close to us. Wouldn't it be

great if all who are God's children would really show their love for Him and really love the brethren the way we should. Remember, we can say we love, but until it can be seen and felt it is not genuine love.

1St Corinthians Chapter 13 is known as the great love chapter. It has only 13 verses but it explains what true love is and what it is not. Love never fails and it is the greatest of all gifts.

So starting today, remember God is love and if you belong to Him that means the Holy Spirit of God lives in you and all one has to do is let Him out. Let Him love through you. I promise you, you will feel better; you will have a happier family and a closer church family. Think about if God's people loved the way they are suppose to our cities would be changed, our counties would be changed, our states would be changed, and if all the above changed our country would surely change.

Today, if you don't know the love of God all you have to do to receive it is believe that He gave His son Jesus to die on the cross and was buried and arose the third day just for you. If you do this, then you will have the love of God in you. Please accept Him today.



By Angie Land

Almost every commercial I have watched this past week has been for jewelry or candy or something to do with Valentine's Day. So, every guy who has had a remote in his hand for more than five minutes this week had no excuse not to remember his Valentine! I so hope you remembered to cherish your girl.

As I write this column just a few days before Valentine's Day, my husband and I are getting ready to go out of town for a marriage retreat for Valentine's weekend. One thing that we have learned during our 25+ years of marriage is that we still have a lot to learn! It seems about the time we think we have some things figured out, life throws a curve and the season of life we are in changes. And we find ourselves asking, "What do we do about this?"

About a month ago, we packed up our third born and moved her away to college. First girl out of the nest. Needless to say, it was tough. I don't know any other way to describe it but homesick. I was sick for her to be home. But at the same time, I want her to step out, experience life and get an education. All my emotions were colliding at once and when I finally looked up, I decided that I was mad at my husband. Anybody? I know there is no rhyme or reason to explain this, but truth be told, I believe he was also a little aggravated at me for letting her grow up. Needless to say, we had several "discussions" over all of this and finally got things back where they needed to be. And we grew stronger because of the experience.

It is a mystery to me why our first reaction to the curves of life is to push each other away, when what we need most is to come together. In Genesis 2:18, "The Lord God said, 'It

HEART MATTERS

is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." I can't help but think if God had left man alone, he would never have found anything. Can't you just hear Adam: "Eve, have you seen my fig leaf?" A funny thought, but I think we miss God's intention if we read into this verse the idea that a helper is someone of inferior status or skill just helping out or being an assistant.

According to Bible scholar Joseph Coleson, in our English language, a helper refers to someone who assists the master tradesman, such as a "mason's helper or a carpenter's helper." However, in the Hebrew Scriptures, it means just the opposite. The Hebrew word "ezer" translates as helper and it usually refers to God the Helper and Rescuer of those who cannot help themselves. In the context of this verse, helper means that God intended to make someone who would rescue Adam from solitude. It was not good for Adam to be alone, but that was not a problem he could fix on his own. He needed a rescuer, so God designed one in His image. Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible supports this interpretation.

So here we are learning something new! Your wife is much more than just your helper; she is the one who rescued you from solitude. Honor and cherish her as your life long partner and watch God bless your marriage! Because Every Heart Matters!

Blessings, Angie

Heart Matters is a weekly column written by Angie Land, Director of the Family Life Ministries of the Lafayette Baptist Association, where she teaches Bible studies, leads marriage and family conferences and offers Biblical counseling to individuals, couples and families. Contact Angie with questions or comments at angieland3@windstream.net

Fuel up to play 60

North Hamilton Elementary is a proud participant in the Fuel Up to Play 60 program.

This program is a district-wide opportunity for all students. Fuel Up to Play 60 is a program established by the National Dairy Council and NFL, in partnership with USDA, which permits students to take charge in making small, everyday changes at school.

Students are able to earn cool prizes for selecting healthy foods and becoming active for at least 60 minutes each day. The program is designed to bring awareness to the student about

living a healthy and active life, not only at school but in their community.

Coach Allen Tolle and Mr. Patrick Howell are the program advisors of the program at North Hamilton Elementary. Coach Tolle ensures students are physically active and understands the importance of regular exercise.

Mr. Howell is the cafeteria supervisor at North Hamilton where he ensures that all students receive a balanced and



(L-R) Patrick Howell, Food Service Manager; Brittany Hasty; Brad Peacock; Allen Tolle, Coach. Courtesy photo

healthy breakfast and lunch. Mr. Howell helps the students understand the importance of eating healthy at school and in their community. Research has proven that well-nourished, physically active kids can be better students.

To kick off the program, North Hamilton Elementary hosted a school-wide walk titled,

"Walk to a Healthier Life". Two student ambassadors were chosen to be student leaders for the program. Brad Peacock and Brittany Hasty were the two sixth grade students chosen. These two students informed the student body about the program and the benefits of eating healthy and being active.

Sweet as honey - New beekeepers club to form

Submitted

If you are interested in learning more about beekeeping and you live in the Suwannee Valley or surrounding area, your time has come. A local bee club is organizing and opening to the public.

The Florida Gateway Bee Club will hold its first organizational meeting on Feb. 13 from 7-9 p.m. at the University of Florida IFAS, Suwannee Valley Agricultural Extension Center on CR 417 just east of Live Oak.

The meeting will be held in the Center's

farm conference room. You can find the farm entrance to the Center at 8202 County Road 417 or call the Center at 386-362-1725.

The purpose of this new club is to help educate those interested in beekeeping and to conduct some honey bee related research.

Everyone is welcome; beekeepers and non-beekeepers.

For more information and to register for the February meeting, go to www.floridagateway-beeclub.org or email floridagateway-beeclub@gmail.com.

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Church & Family Go Together

ADVENT CHRISTIAN FIRST ADVENT CHRISTIAN N.W. 15th Avenue Jasper Rev. Wayne Sullivan Sunday Sunday School.....10:00 a.m. Morning Worship.....11:00 a.m. Bible Study.....7:00 p.m. 784022	BAPTIST (Southern) FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH "Where Friends become Family" 207 N.E. 2nd Street, Jasper 792-2658 Pastor: Roger Hutto Sunday Sunday School.....9:45 a.m. Morning Worship.....11:00 a.m. Evening Worship.....6:00 p.m. Wednesday Supper.....6:00 p.m. Children, Youth & Adult Programs 6:30 p.m. 784012	METHODIST FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 405 Central Ave., Jasper, FL Pastor - Dale Ames Phone - 386-792-1122 Sunday Sunday School.....9:45 a.m. Morning Worship.....11:00 a.m. Wednesday Family Night Dinner 3rd Wednesday Clothes Closet 4th Saturday 1-5pm 783995	PRESBYTERIAN FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 204 N.W. 3rd Avenue, Jasper 792-2258 Pastor: Shelton Steen SUNDAY Sunday School.....10:00 a.m. Worship Service.....11:00 a.m. WEDNESDAY Choir Practice.....7:00 p.m. 834981
CATHOLIC CHURCH ST. THERESA CATHOLIC CHURCH Three miles north of Jasper U.S. 41 P.O. Box 890, Jasper, FL 32052 Rectory U.S. 90 E., Live Oak, FL (386) 364-1108 Saturday MASS 4:00 p.m. 784014	BAPTIST (Southern) NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH SR 6 West, 6592 NW 48th St., Jennings, FL 32053 784013 938-5611 Pastor: Jeff Cordero Sunday School.....10:00 a.m. Morning Worship.....11:00 a.m. Evening Worship.....6:00 p.m. Youth Happening, Mission Friends, R&A & GA.....6:00 p.m. Wednesday Prayer Meeting, Teen Kids, Youth.....6:00 p.m. Van pick-up upon request	NON-DENOMINATIONAL BURNHAM CHRISTIAN CHURCH 4520 NW CR 146, Jennings, FL 32053 938-1265 Pastor: Johnny Brown Sunday Sunday School.....9:45 a.m. Worship.....11:00 a.m. Evening Service.....6:00 p.m. Wednesday Youth Program.....5:30 p.m. 784003	

To list your church in our church directory, please call Brenda at 386-362-1734

OBITUARIES

Janice Dobeck
Dec. 16, 1937
Jan. 17, 2014

Janice Dobeck, 76 of Live Oak Fla., passed away peacefully to be with our Lord, on Friday Jan. 17, 2014 at her daughters home in Jasper Fla.

She was born in Chicago, Illinois on Dec. 16, 1937 to Earl and Grace Haner. She married Walter Dobeck on January 8, 1955 in Chicago, Illinois.

Mrs. Janice Dobeck loved to travel in her RV, tending her garden, playing bingo, and spending countless hours with her grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her parents, her sister, Jenetta Haner, her son, Scott Dobeck and her husband Walter Dobeck. She is survived by two sisters, Jeneva and Judith and three daughters, Vivian Dobeck of Decatur, IL, Susan (David) Legalley of Wasilla, AK, Patricia (Billy) Daven-

port of Jasper, Fla., and one son, Jeremy (Tammy) Dobeck of Live Oak Fla.; six grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Private family services were held at home.

GATEWAY-FOREST LAWN FUNERAL HOME, 3596 South US Hwy 441, Lake City, Fla. 32025. (386) 752-1954. Please leave words of comfort for the family online at, www.gatewayforestlawn.com

Hazel Jones
Feb. 12, 2014

Hazel Jones a resident of White Springs, Fla. passed away Feb. 12, 2014 in the Lake City Medical Center.

Ms. Hazel Jones is survived by her sister: Mrs. Thelma Whipple; two brothers: Allen Jones and Jimmie Jones and many other relatives and friends.

Funeral service for Ms. Hazel Jones will be held

in the Sweet Home Baptist Church Saturday, Feb. 22, 2014 at 11 a.m. Visitation for family and friends will be held Friday, Feb. 21, 2014 in the Sweet Home Baptist Church from 6-8 p.m. in the White Springs, Black Bay Community. Burial will be in the Ross Cemetery.

D.M. Udell and Sons is in charge of all arrangements. Call D.M. Udell and Sons at 386-362-4189 or cell 386-209-0223 Douglas M. Udell L.F.D. and Douglas M. Udell II L.F.D.

Ethel Mae Lee
Nov. 3, 1932
Feb. 9, 2014

Ethel Mae Lee, age 81, of Jasper, Fla. passed away Sunday, Feb. 9, 2014 at Haven Hospice Center in Lake City, Fla. after a lengthy battle with cancer. Everywhere she went, she told others about her faith in God and her love of his word, the Holy Bible. Ethel was born on Nov. 3, 1932 to Rufus and Mae Metcalf. She was preceded in death by her husband, Nolan R. Lee, and two sons, Richard and Allen Lee.

Survivors include four children: Sonja Smith (Jim), Michael Lee (Melody), Michelle Lee and Theodore Lee (Ruth), of Jasper, Fla.; a daughter-in-law, Deborah Lee Albury (Dan) of Lake City, Fla.; one sister, Edith Cole of Hornersville, MO.; one brother, Thomas "Buddy" Metcalf (Mildred) of St. Louis, MO.; 7 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

Ethel continued her life of giving by donating her body to Science Care for medical research.

A memorial service will be held in her honor at 3 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 22, 2014 in the chapel at Haven Hospice Center in Lake City, Fla.

Harry T. Reid Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements.

Dorothy F. Perkins
Oct. 22, 1934
Feb. 11, 2014

Dorothy F. Perkins, 79, passed away Feb. 11, 2014. She was born to Herman and Katie Fletcher on Oct. 22, 1934, in Pembroke Pines, GA.

Dorothy is survived by her partner, Jack Soderlund; children, Cindi Ferguson, Pat Brown, Carol Lewis and Ted Woodbeck; sister, Helen Rutledge; seven grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

A memorial service was held at 10 a.m. on Friday, Feb. 14, at Ponte Vedra Valley Chapel. In lieu of flowers please make donations to the American Lung Association. Please sign the online guestbook at www.pontevedravalle.com.

Ponte Vedra Valley 4750 Palm Valley Road, Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla. 32082, 904-285-1130 in charge of all arrangements.

Gwendolyn Powell Tuten
May 16, 1920
Feb. 11, 2014

Gwendolyn Powell Tuten, age 93, of Jasper, Fla. passed away Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2014 at Suwannee Valley Nursing Center in Jasper, Fla.

Gwendolyn was a native of Kingsland, GA.

born on May 16, 1920 to the late Ralph and Annie Adicks Powell. Her early years were spent in DeLand, Fla. before moving to North Fla. where she made her home. She attended Stetson University and later graduated from Valdosta State University and the University of Florida with a Master's Degree in Education. Mrs. Tuten is remembered fondly for the many years of teaching elementary education in the Hamilton County School System. She was an active member of Jasper First Presbyterian Church as long as her health permitted.

Mrs. Tuten was predeceased by her husband, J.R. "Buck" Tuten, her parents, Ralph and Annie Powell, a brother, Robert Powell and a sister, Voncile Black. Survivors include her

two sons, Hal Tuten and his wife Dinah of Pensacola, Fla. and Steve Tuten of Jasper, Fla.; one daughter, Anne Tuten Deas and her husband Roger of Jennings, Fla.; 12 grandchildren and 12 great grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to: Teacher's Memorial Scholarship Trust Fund, 207 NE 2nd St. Jasper, Fla. 32052 or Jasper First Presbyterian Church, P.O. Box 329, Jasper, Fla. 32052

Funeral services were held Monday, Feb. 17, 2014 at Jasper First Presbyterian Church, Jasper, Fla. with Pastor Sheldon Steen officiating.

Interment followed at Evergreen Cemetery in Jasper.

Harry T. Reid Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements.

16th Annual Lawn Mower Race

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For details and online registration, visit www.arcnfl.com/LMR or call 386-362-7143.

Proceeds go to support individuals in The Arc North Florida programs to receive the necessary training to function as independently as possible and each client is provided opportunities to participate fully in the community.



Celebrating
BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Ida Daniels rises in school career, Page 17A

HamCo schools celebrate Black History Month, Page 2A



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Around the Banks of the Suwannee

By Correspondent
Johnny Bullard

"You can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time, but you can't fool all the people all the time." (Abraham Lincoln)

Abraham Lincoln, 16th president of the United States of America, born Feb. 12, 1809, and died April 15, 1865, at the hands of an assassin, John Wilkes Booth. He served as president from 1861-65 during a very dark time in the history of our nation, the War Between the States. He was the tallest U.S. president at 6 feet 4 inches tall. He had deep depression, although he would frequently tell jokes and stories to his family.

One week before his death, Lincoln had a dream of someone crying in the White House, when he found the room he looked in and asked who had passed away. The man in the room said the president. When he looked in the coffin it was his own face he saw.

He was an unaffiliated Christian as he never officially acquired church membership. His wife, who was called Mary Todd Lincoln, was brought up in a

very wealthy family. President and Mrs. Lincoln had four children; Robert Todd Lincoln, Edward Lincoln, Willie Lincoln, and Tad Lincoln. Only Robert Todd Lincoln survived into adulthood. Lincoln is probably best known for his famous "Gettysburg Address" that, once, many of us had to recite in school. "Four score and seven years ago," it began. And for the drafting and enacting into legislation, The Emancipation Proclamation which freed the men and women in this nation who were slaves. However, for the sake of this article, I want to concentrate on some of Lincoln's quotes, as I believe they transcend time. I will let you judge for yourself as you read this article.

"America will never be destroyed from the outside. If we falter, and lose our freedoms, it will be because we destroyed ourselves."

"Most folks are as happy as they make up their minds to be."

"Better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to speak out and remove all doubt."

"Sir, my concern is not whether God is on our side; my greatest concern is to be on God's side, for God is always right."

"Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power."

"In the end, it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years."

"Give me six hours to chop down a tree, and I will spend the first hour sharpening the axe."

"This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing government, their constitutional right of amending it, or exercise their revolutionary right to overthrow it."

"All that I am or ever hope to be I owe to my angel mother."

"Character is like a tree and reputation like a shadow. The shadow is what we think of it; the tree is the real thing."

"Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed is more important than any other."

"A friend is one who has the same enemies you have."

"Be sure to put your feet in the right place, then stand firm."

"Am I not destroying my enemies when I make friends of them?"

"A house divided against itself cannot stand."

"I remember my mother's prayers and they have always followed me. They have clung to me all my life."

"Government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the Earth."

"Don't interfere with anything in the Constitution. That must be maintained for it is the only safeguard of our liberties."

And, one of my favorites: "The best thing about the future is that it comes one day at a time."

Reflecting back on this past Monday, I thought about President's Day. I remember the bulletin boards in elementary school. The stories of Washington and the cherry tree, and Lincoln who began his life in a log cabin.

I remember the feeling I had when I saw, for the first time, the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. and walked up those steps. More than impressive, really, to me, almost sacred, but then I am strange, and, as Thomas Wolfe, the great American novelist wrote, "There's a little strangeness in all of us." The things that make me "tear up" might not affect a lot of people; the flag going by in a parade, driving up the hill towards the historic capital in Tallahassee and thinking about the "wonder of the Sunshine State", once in a while, beholding the beauty of our Suwannee River, and the plaintive melodies of Stephen Foster pealing forth from the carillon tower in White Springs, Veterans Day, Memorial Day, these trigger it for me. I don't wet a bed sheet boo-hooing, but all these wonderful events and happenings and sights and sounds trigger something very deep inside of me and so did these quotes that were given by our 16th president, who, in my opinion, was a true "visionary".

Before I close out this week, I want to take this opportunity to pay tribute to a great Hamilton County educator who recently "went on" to be with her Lord. Mrs. Gwendolyn Powell Tuten, Jasper, Florida. I had the wonderful privilege of working with Mrs. Tuten the first year I taught school at Central Hamilton Elementary School in Jasper. It was at the end of that school year, Mrs. Tuten retired from teaching. She was the "real deal", a true professional educator, and I learned a great deal from her, and I held her in highest esteem and respect. She was a great educator and a very great lady. I will never forget her. My prayers and sympathies go out to the family of this great lady.

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

NFCC receives \$737,189 Rural Health Information Technology Workforce Program grant

MADISON, FL – North Florida Community College has been awarded a three-year, \$737,189 Rural Health Information Technology (HIT) Workforce Program grant in partnership with the US Department of Health and Human Services. The grant is one of 15 new Rural HIT Workforce grants awarded in 2013. The overall goal is to develop Health Information Technology (HIT) training programs that will produce a pool of qualified and certified workers to help rural hospitals and clinics transition records from a paper system to a digital format. The HIT Workforce Program was developed in part in response to local need identified through the North Florida Rural Healthcare Workforce Development Network and the North Florida Workforce Development Board.

The North Florida Rural Healthcare Workforce Development Network Board represents NFCC's six-county service district and beyond. Members include Walter Boatright (Suwannee/Hamilton County); Susan Allen (Hamilton County); Scott Frederick (Taylor County); Mollie Hill (Leon County); Deidra Newman (Taylor/Suwannee County/ Advent Christian Village); Sheryl Reyberg (CareerSource North Florida/Six-County District); Elizabeth Schlein (Leon, Madison, Gadsden, Jefferson, Taylor, Franklin, Wakulla and Liberty Counties); Julie Townsend (NFCC/Madison County); and Richard Wisdahl (Lafayette County).

"This grant enables NFCC along with the North Florida Rural Healthcare Workforce Development Network to provide training that is responsive to the current and future HIT workforce needs of our service area," said Julie Townsend, NFCC Director of Allied Health. "NFCC's HIT specialist training will be geared for people already working in healthcare or information technology who need to upgrade their technology skills to successfully transition to the future paradigm of medical services delivery. These trained HIT personnel will be critical to medical providers now and in the future."

North Florida Community College will utilize funding to develop a six-month, non-credit online HIT specialist training program, to hire personnel to implement the program and will offer scholarships for students who successfully complete the courses and pass the national exam (ONC HIT Professional Competency exam). The Rural Health Information Technology (HIT) Workforce Program is focused on training students from our rural areas, providing them apprenticeship opportunities at our rural facilities, and ultimately coordinating with local employment resources to assist with job placement, when necessary, back into our rural communities.

For more information, contact Dani Mays, NFCC Career and Technical Education Center, at (850) 973-1665 or maysd@nfcc.edu.

Don't be confused about taxes Free help is available

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) is available to help low income, elderly, disabled and limited English speaking people at the UF/IFAS Extension Office in Hamilton County.

If you're confused about taxes, don't worry. These volunteers will prepare and file your taxes for you for free. They will also E-File for you, so you can receive your refund faster, and help you find special tax credits that you may qualify for.

Contact Heather Futch at the UF/IFAS Extension Office for more information at 386-792-1276. The Hamilton County Extension Office is located at 1143 US Highway 41 NW in Jasper. You can also visit www.hamilton.ifas.ufl.edu.



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850466

Jasper Youth Treatment Center could be scrapped by FDJJ

Continued From Page 1A

viding certain instructional and educational services out of their FTE dollars that Superintendent Thomas Moffses estimated to be around \$220,000, which would not be reimbursed until a year later.

Moffses says the school district can't absorb the cost as it was not budgeted for. The FDJJ says the funding is not their concern. On Jan. 13, school board members voted against signing the agreement with the FDJJ.

JYTC employees speak out

At the Feb. 10 Hamilton County School Board meeting, Pollock and two other employees of the JYTC addressed their concerns about the impasse between the school district and the FDJJ. About 36 Hamilton County residents, including Pollock, have been hired to work at the JYTC and many of them were in attendance at the meeting.

Pollock said at the Feb. 10 meeting, "I'm here to voice my concerns and disappointment with the Hamilton County School Board."

Pollock said he wanted to meet with the board earlier, but was advised not to because there were so many people involved and so much negotiation going on that it might further delay the process. One of his concerns was that the school board failed to take action for all of the citizens of Hamilton County.

"If we had started getting kids on Jan. 13, as we were supposed to, we would have 25 youth in the program now, and if you requested an alternate FTE count, by that time, you would have all 40 kids registered and admitted to the program," Pollock told the board.

Pollock also wanted to clear up a misconception.

"The idea that we transfer students out of the program during FTE week, and then after FTE week bring them back, that is not true and that is not fac-

tual," said Pollock.

He said he thought he knew where that idea came from, which he said goes back to when Harry Pennington was superintendent. Pollock said the former Panther facility at that time was down by eight students when FTE week came around. He said he was asked by Pennington and the lead teacher if it was possible to hold students in the program longer until the FTE count was completed.

"I informed them then, that is against the law, we cannot do that," Pollock said. "When a kid ends his commitment, we have to release him."

Pollock said there was a question posed by the school board and Supt. Moffses at their January board meeting, where they wondered if there were going to be 40 employees at the new JYTC.

"Yes, there will be 42 employees housed at JYTC," Pollock told the board. "We have an annual operating budget, for payroll only, of \$1.4 million."

Aside from that, Pollock said they spent nearly \$50,000 with Greg Taylor Construction and \$3,000 at Jasper Hardware, and they had contracts with Foodway and NAPA.

"If you're concerned about Hamilton County, then you would allow this facility to open, so that we can continue to be paid for what the state has paid us to do," Pollock told the board.

Dean Smith

Vocational instructor Dean Smith, who is an employee of Home Builders Institute (HBI), a subcontractor for the DJJ, said he is one of the 42 employees who hopes to teach the kids at the JYTC a trade, so that they can have skills to re-enter society.

"I know that this is being held up by a funding issue," Smith said. "These children, unfortunately, somehow or another, have been dropped...been under the radar per se through the school. It would be wrong for us as a community, and us

as a board to allow that to happen again. By not funding this, in retrospect, is allowing them to stay under the radar. As an employee and a member of this tri-county community, I would like to encourage you guys to re-think it and to understand that there's a lot at stake."

Amy Crider

Amy Crider, a 15-year resident of Jennings, was hired to serve as facilities nurse at JYTC. She has been with the DJJ for five years.

"I just want to urge you guys to sign the contract," she said to the board. "I know the positive impact that the FDJJ system has put on Florida's kids. Many of them, they just want a home. They just want parents to love and attend to them. Many of them have come from negative backgrounds, some positive, and they just need the positive reinforcement we can give them."

Crider said the JYTC already had agreements with Amazing Smiles Dentistry, Dr. Rana's office and the Hamilton County health department.

"So, there's more money that will be coming into the county," she said. "The staff at JYTC has been training hard and we're ready to open and start impacting positively the youth of this community and of Florida."

Negotiations continue

Moffses explained that during the negotiations, FDJJ asked to see a breakdown of previous operating costs of the Panther facility, because they didn't believe the school district was losing money. Moffses provided it to them.

In 2009-10, Moffses said there was a loss of \$118,880.93 to operate the Panther facility. He said he sympathized with all the JYTC employees, but he stood firm on his opinion that the contract should never have been awarded until the cooperative agreement was in place.

As a solution to the issue, Moffses said since the FDJJ has the ability to lease, he sent a letter to them asking

them to transfer the property where the JYTC sits to the school district. Once it became school district property, the FDJJ could then lease the property for the cost difference.

"In other words, FDJJ can lease that facility for what we know the loss will be," said Moffses. "We are waiting on a response from them. It's actually a win-win. FDJJ will be able to open the facility and we'll be able to maintain and not lose money. We'll wait and see how that pans out."

Summary

According to Pollock, the FDJJ got tired of all the back and forth negotiations with the school district and made the decision to scrap the project on Feb. 13 and go elsewhere.

"They can't bear it anymore," Pollock said at the time.

At 10 a.m. on Friday, Feb. 14, Pollock made the official announcement to his staff that they no longer had a job. Moffses said by phone on Feb. 14, that he had not yet been contacted by the DJJ on their decision.

"If that's their decision, I'm disappointed," said Moffses. "We've done everything we could to try to get the facility open."

Hamilton County Judge Sonny Scaff also said by phone that he had not yet been notified, but that he was aware of the funding issues the school district was facing.

Sheriff Harrell Reid said he hadn't heard yet, either.

"I thought it was going to be an opportunity for some of our folks to have a job," said Reid. "I'm sorry it's not opening."

On Saturday, Feb. 15, the FDJJ decided to try one last time to come to an agreement with the school district and placed JYTC employees on paid administrative leave until Friday, Feb. 21. If no agreement can be reached between the FDJJ and the school district, Pollock said they may move to an alternate facility in either Hastings or Bristol.

Amazing facts about the human heart

Every Valentine's Day homes and businesses dress up the decor with cupids and hearts to celebrate a day all about love and affection. The heart shape has been used to symbolically represent the human heart as the center of emotion and romantic love. Hearts symbolizing love can be traced back to the Middle Ages.

Those familiar with human anatomy realize that an actual heart bares very little resemblance to the ideographic heart shape used in art and imagery. Similarly, the human heart really has nothing to do with human emotions. Despite this, there are many interesting components of the heart, and a man or woman truly cannot love or live without one.

The heart as an organ is relatively small in size. It is roughly the size of a fist and weighs only 11 ounces on average. Although diminutive, the heart is responsible for pumping 2,000 gallons of blood through 60,000 miles of blood vessels each day. It accomplishes this by beating 72 times a minute in a healthy adult. All of the cells in the body receive blood except for the corneas in the eye.

The heart works harder than any other muscle in the body. In a fetus, it begins beating at four weeks after conception and will not stop until a person's time of death. Even then, sometimes the heart can be revived. A heart can also continue to beat outside of the body provided it has an adequate oxygen supply.

Although many people refer to all of the blood vessels in their body as "veins," they're actually a combination of veins and arteries. Veins carry fresh, oxygenated blood to the body through arteries. The main artery leaving the left heart ventricle is called the aorta, while the main artery leaving the right ventricle is known as the pulmonary artery. Blood traveling back to the heart flows through veins after it has passed the lungs to pick up oxygen. The thumping noise that is heard while the heart is beating is actually the chambers of the heart closing and opening as blood flows through.

While the heart may not be the cornerstone of emotions, it can be affected by feelings. Studies have shown that a "broken heart" is a real occurrence, according to Live Science. Bad news or a breakup with a loved one can put a person at increased risk for heart attack.

This type of trauma releases stress hormones into the body that can stun the heart. Chest pain and shortness of breath ensue but can be remedied after some rest.

Conversely, laughter and positive feelings can be beneficial for the heart. Research has shown that a good laughing fit can cause the lining of the blood vessel walls -- called the endothelium -- to relax. This helps increase blood flow for up to 45 minutes afterward.

Although having a big heart colloquially means that a person is loving and goes out of their way for others, physically speaking, a big heart is unhealthy. An enlarged heart can be a sign of heart disease and compromise the heart's ability to pump blood effectively. Left untreated, it can lead to heart failure.

The heart is an amazing organ responsible for sustaining life. Although it is not directly tied to love and emotions, without the heart such feelings wouldn't be possible.



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Drug Coalition meeting highlights

By Joyce Marie Taylor
joycemarie.taylor@gafnews.com

The Hamilton County Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Coalition met on Tuesday, Jan. 21 at Hamilton County High School. Following are highlights of that meeting:

Traveling meth labs
Executive Director Grace McDonald shared information on the dangers of methamphetamine that she recently learned about in a video presentation, called "The Faces of Meth". McDonald said there has been a recent rash of meth lab busts in Madison County, their next door neighbor.

"That's too close for comfort," she said. "It's very dangerous and volatile and people can be killed."

Law enforcement personnel who have to go into a structure where a meth lab has been set up, McDonald explained, must wear protective gear to prevent them from being exposed to all the dangerous chemicals used in the production of the drug. Even during routine traffic stops, she said, if there is cooked meth in the vehicle, officers risk being exposed to these dangerous chemicals. If they do happen to be exposed, they must undergo blood tests every six months to determine if there are any ill effects from that exposure.

"They showed us these shaker bottles where people were making meth, and they're driving down the road with the bottles between their legs," McDonald said. "Think about it. You're driving along and you don't know what they're doing in the car next to you. They could be making stuff that could blow up and you could be blown up, too," she added.

It was noted that another recent incident in



Hamilton County Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Coalition Executive Director Grace McDonald.

-Photo: Joyce Marie Taylor

Lake City involved a meth lab inside an RV that was parked at Walmart. It was also noted that any building or structure where a meth lab has been set up must be completely destroyed.

2014 Golf Tournament
Laura Dees advised the group that the 7th Annual Signature Golf Tournament is scheduled for Friday, April 25, at Florida Gateway Resort and Country Club in Jasper. This is the coalition's biggest fundraiser of the year.

Hole sponsors are needed, so if interested, please contact any member of the coalition or call Dees at the Supervisor of Elections office.

Northeast Florida Community Coalition Alliance
McDonald and Sergeant Emily Lumpkin worked together gathering data, assessing needs and identifying resources for Hamilton County. The information they gathered was compiled into a single report for all of the Northeast Florida Coalitions.

"In our Circuit Three, the counties included are Hamilton, Suwannee, Columbia, Lafayette and Dixie counties, but at this time we only have coalitions involved with CCA in Dixie and Hamilton," McDonald said. "It gives you general information about stats for our region."

McDonald plans to make bound copies of the report and distribute to all the members of the coalition, as well as to all the partners and leaders in the community.

"We're proud to be a part of this, as it is our means to keep moving forward with our coalition efforts," McDonald explained.

Resource Directory
A new resource directory for the coalition has been completed that offers invaluable information, including names, phone numbers and addresses for different services available, such as

counseling, child services, domestic violence, food sources, emergency housing, legal services, and the list goes on. McDonald said there are plenty of copies to distribute to any and all who wish to have one.

Love INC
Love In The Name of Christ (Love INC), a national ministry that has had a chapter operating in Suwannee County for at least 10 years, is expanding into Hamilton County. Love INC acts as a clearing house for people with needs by offering counseling, food banks, clothing closets and baby needs, in conjunction with local churches. They hope to be up and running in Hamilton County in March. For the first two years it will be operated as a satellite office and calls will go to the Live Oak chapter who will refer people to churches in Hamilton County to pick up their items.

CDS Family & Behavioral Health Services
Counselor and Case Manager Dee Smith, from CDS Family & Behavioral Health Services in Lake City has been assigned to Hamilton County and she offered an overview of services. She will be working with children ages 6-17 who are truant, runaways or have ungovernable behavior problems. The 12-week program will offer individual, family or group counseling.

"We work off of behaviors and we try to fix those behaviors," said Smith. "What I do is, I'm a family action counselor and I work off of referrals."

The objective is to prevent future behavioral issues before the child winds up in the juvenile justice system.

Another program offered is called Interface, a short-term residential shelter for children ages 10-17 who are in crisis. For more information on these programs, contact Smith at 386-487-0190 or log on to www.cdsfl.org.

CJBAT tests

Monday - Thursday at 5 p.m. (by appointment): CJBAT (Criminal Justice Basic Abilities Test) at NFCC Testing Center (Bldg. #16), Madison. CJBAT is required for acceptance into Corrections & Law Enforcement programs. Photo ID required. Pre-registration & scheduling time and date are required. To register please call 850-973-9451.

College Placement Tests

Monday Thursday at 5 p.m. (by appointment): College Placement Test (CPT), NFCC Testing Center (Bldg. #16), 5 p.m., Madison. Register in NFCC Student Services 24 hours before test. For information please call 850-973-9451.

TABE tests

Monday - Thursday at 5 p.m. (by appointment): TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) at NFCC Testing Center (Bldg. #16), Madison. TABE is required for acceptance into vocational/technical programs. Photo ID required. Pre-registration & scheduling time & date are required. To register please call 850-973-9451.

Baseball and softball sign-ups

The Hamilton County Recreation Department is now accepting sign-ups for baseball and softball.
3&4 Tot-Ball \$35
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Deadline is Friday, Feb 28.

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UF receives \$1.97 million NSF grant to develop paleontology network

GAINESVILLE, Fla. --- With the goal of promoting life-long learning, University of Florida researchers will use a four-year, \$1.97 million National Science Foundation grant to create a nationwide network of amateur and professional paleontologists.

Fossil clubs across the country function independently and do not communicate with each other or professionals as most science-hobbyist groups do, according to research by Bruce MacFadden, vertebrate paleontology curator at the Florida Museum of Natural History on the UF campus. The FOSSIL Project--Fostering Opportunities for Synergistic STEM in Informal Learners--will cultivate a network for fossil enthusiasts to collaborate in blended learning, the practice of science and educational outreach.

To facilitate relationship building, amateur paleontologists have been invited to participate in the North American Paleontology Convention to be held in Gainesville beginning Saturday.

"This is the first time that fossil enthusiasts have been invited, and the grant is paying for them to attend," said MacFadden, who is partnering with Florida Museum invertebrate paleontologist Austin Hendy and UF education professionals to develop the project. "There are a lot of wonderful amateur paleontologists in North America and this is a very exciting opportunity."

More than 40 members from 28 fossil groups in 18 states are expected to attend this year's convention. While in Gainesville, amateur and professional paleontologists will attend the project's kickoff meeting, including a live interactive webinar from Nick Pyenson, curator of fossil marine mammals with the Smithsonian Institution and distinguished lecturer for the Paleontological Society.

By building connections with fossil clubs and societies through these types of interactions, scientists and professional educators can help amateur paleontologists with their outreach, said project coordinator Katherine Hendy.

"In the short-term, it's less about benefiting the museum and more about benefiting the community," she said. "But professional paleontologists and museums will see long-term benefits from new relationships with amateurs."

The project's long-term goals include an interactive website where users can

input data, submit requests for information and connect with other paleontologists. The website will also provide links to social media and information about opportunities for training and development, workshops and K-12 outreach to underserved audiences, MacFadden said.

"I had this idea of a web-based education community that connects people with a shared interest in paleontology," he said. "Few members of fossil clubs are students, so this is also a way that people who share an interest and love of fossils can continue to learn outside of the classroom throughout their lives."

Project leaders are hopeful the project will further ongoing national "big data" initiatives making millions of digitized fossil specimens available to the public in the next decade, Katherine Hendy said. As part of this initiative, museum professionals will train amateurs to digitize museum specimens, including fossils at the Florida Museum, she said. Independent enthusiasts and fossil groups will also learn how to create and share digitized personal collections.

Researchers will use knowledge gained from the project to inform STEM educators about effectively engaging the public with scientific data. The goal is to create a set of best practices for a web-based learning program that uses a community model and supports experiences with digital scientific artifacts, said Kent Crippen, UF associate professor of STEM education.

"We will assess the impact of FOSSIL by evaluating the structure of the community over time as well as the participation and perceptions of its members," said Crippen, who is working with Florida Museum education professionals Betty Dunckel and Shari Ellis on the project. "To understand how design influences practice in a learner driven environment, our strategy will be to model the evolution of the community by looking at user characteristics."

Groups and individuals interested in fossils are encouraged to learn more about the project by visiting www.flmnh.ufl.edu/myfossil.

"Anyone who likes collecting fossils and is interested in what's going on nationally will be able to participate and learn," MacFadden said. "Once the project gets going, I'm hoping that folks find this to be so important that we can sustain this activity."

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Renee Poole with her mom, Eleanor Preston

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Hamilton County FFA makes good use of PotashCorp donation

A generous grant of \$10,000 from PotashCorp has allowed the Hamilton County FFA/Ag Department to engage in some cutting edge research in the area of plant nutrition. Once again, PotashCorp has reiterated its commitment to the education of our citizens young and old, and we are thankful to be a part of this worthy endeavor.

Over the past calendar year, the first phase of our project has been implemented, data collected and findings shared.

The premise of our research was to evaluate the effect of the primary nutrients - N-P-K - as they are applied in different forms and amounts. In an attempt to incorporate the concept of sustainable farming into our research project, we included an organic fertilizer component and analyzed growth rates and relative cost

when compared to commercial fertilizers.

We chose to grow a variety of crops that included Cole crops (turnips, mustard, collards and cabbage), Irish potatoes, sugar cane and onions. Four test plots were used: commercial fertilizer only, organic fertilizer only, blended commercial and organic and control (no fertilizer). Vegetables produced in the tested plots were weighed, counted and visually evaluated for comparison, and then they were donated to needy families through the program in our district, as well as private donations.

We would like to extend a special thank you to Mike Williams of PotashCorp. A former teacher himself, Williams shared with us his excitement over the opportunity to be a part of the education process on this

critical issue.

The Hamilton County FFA Chapter's education outreach has included Ag Day, our Annual Awards Banquet, our inaugural Alumni meeting, and at a monthly meeting of the Kiwanis Club. Future presentations will include the school board and a meeting of the Farm Bureau. The educational process also continues in our Ag classroom and will expand to other science classrooms, as well.

Education-real education, not the sensationalized, propaganda-riddled version of the "truth" peddled by the enemies of real sustainable agriculture, is the only way that we can help our community members make informed choices about this most critical of topics.

Findings and observations

Plants respond to both sources of nutrients.

The increased time of collection and application of organic-based fertilizers increased the cost to a level that can exceed the cost of commercial fertilizer.

Organic fertilizer can vary greatly in concentration of nutrients.

When applied properly, commercially formulated fertilizer is the most cost-effective choice.

Considering the necessary volume of food required to feed the world's increasing population, commercially formulated fertilizers will provide the bulk of the nutrient input on our modern farms.

Organic nutrient inventories must be included as supplemental sources to ensure that farm nutrient inputs/outputs approach zero.

Nutrient residues must be managed and used even if handling and processing increase cost.



Produce from FFA test plot. Courtesy photos



Spring test plots.



FFA President Trey Norris and member R.J. Bennett harvest aquatic plants from the project.



Project Manager D.J. Burke directs middle school members during the construction phase.



Members repair damage done to ponds by excess rain.



Loading up the produce to be donated to needy families.



Members process donations.



Chapter officer Louis Newhard harvests aquatic plants.



During summer break, members processed botanically valuable plants.



Time to shovel.

National tour coming to North Florida Community College

NFCC Artist Series presents California Dreaming Feb. 28

MADISON, FL – Take a musical journey through the time when folk music met rock music and gave birth to an explosion of music that was danceable, singable and oh so romantic when the North Florida Community College Artist Series presents the national tour of California Dreaming on Friday, Feb. 28 at Van H. Priest Auditorium, 7 p.m.

California Dreaming celebrates that brief magical moment in the mid-'60s and early '70s when American youth migrated to California by the millions and transformed pop culture forever. When well-groomed folk musicians grew out their hair and plugged in their Fenders and Rickenbackers, the radio began to sizzle with tight harmonies and dreamy lyrics.

California Dreaming features the music of groups like the Mamas and Papas, The Beach Boys, The 5th Dimension, The Byrds and Crosby, Stills & Nash. The show is a tribute to and filled with music that defined an era and introduced the world to the good vibrations of love, peace and summertime fun. Enjoy songs like "What a Day for a Daydream," "I Get Around," "Turn, Turn, Turn," "Did You Ever Have to Make Up Your Mind," "Surfin' U.S.A.," "Our House," "Dream a Little Dream of Me," "Little GTO," "Good Vibrations" and "California Dreamin'."

The show is produced by Springer Theatricals, the national touring arm of the Springer Opera House, a 143-year-old National Historic Landmark theatre in Columbus, Ga.

California Dreaming will be performed at NFCC's Van H. Priest Auditorium at 7 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 28. Tickets are on sale now at the NFCC College Advancement Office. Call (850) 973-1653 for tickets or more information. More information is also available at <http://www.nfcc.edu/community-programs/artist-series>.

Middle Suwannee River and Springs Restoration and Aquifer Recharge project advances

The Suwannee River Water Management District (District) is undertaking hydrologic restoration activities in Lafayette and Dixie counties that will have regional benefits to spring flows and groundwater supplies.

The District is in the data collection and evaluation phase of the project. To date, the District has constructed 16 test wells to assess geologic and hydrogeologic conditions of the area. Site reconnaissance has been completed to determine where flows need to be reestablished along the dredged canals. Also, three surface water gages have been installed to estimate the volume and timing of water available for recharging the aquifer.

Presently, the District is conducting surveys along the canals, hydrologic features, test wells and surface water gages. These surveying efforts will aid in the assessment of aquifer-level data, and to collect elevation data for existing hydrologic structures and surface water gages.

Early estimates indicate that under normal rainfall conditions, 10 million gallons per day (mgd) may be available for recharge. Referred to as the Middle Suwannee River and Springs Restoration and Aquifer Recharge project, the project will rehydrate ponds and wetlands within the vicinity of Mallory Swamp. It also will enhance surface water storage and recharge the aquifer to benefit spring flows along the Middle Suwannee River region including Troy, July, Little River, and Pot Hole springs. Additionally, these efforts will augment domestic and agricultural groundwater supplies in Lafayette and Dixie counties.

The next phase of the project will be permitting and design. Construction of the project is scheduled for later this year and will begin with the restoration of surface water flows to natural systems, primarily in Dixie County.

The Middle Suwannee River and Springs Restoration and Aquifer Recharge project is a cooperative partnership between the District, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and Dixie County. So far, DEP has provided \$1.5 million toward the \$1.9 million project and the District has committed

\$277,000 toward the project. "This project will rehydrate natural systems, recharge the aquifer, and provide far reaching benefits to our springs and groundwater supplies," said District Executive Director Ann Shortelle. "This project serves as a

key example of the District's focus on springs protection and restoration, and it is only possible because of landmark funding provided by the governor and Legislature to DEP and the District for protecting and restoring springs in Florida."



District contractors drill test wells to evaluate aquifer recharge as part of the District's Middle Suwannee River and Springs Restoration and Aquifer Recharge project.

Spay-ghetti FUNdraiser to benefit Humane Society

By Joyce Marie Taylor

joycemarie.taylor@gafnews.com

The Hamilton Humane Society is holding a Spay-ghetti Dinner and Silent Auction FUNdraiser on Saturday, Feb. 22, at the Jasper Civic Center from 6-7 p.m. Dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m.

Katie Rooney announced the fundraiser at the county commission meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 4, and invited everyone to come out and help support the Humane Society.

"We're still plugging along," Rooney told the board. "I think you know that last year we had a land donation fall through, but we're still working on it."

Until they can find a permanent home, the Humane Society is utilizing space at North Florida Paws in Jennings, Rooney explained.

"So, we do have a location temporarily, until we get a permanent one, which will take a while, but we're not giving up," she said. "We're persistent ladies."

Third Judicial Circuit State Attorney Jeff Seigmeister will be the guest speaker at the dinner.

"He and his wife are great supporters of the Humane Society," said Rooney.

The Spay-ghetti dinner will consist of spaghetti and meatballs, bread, salad, dessert and drinks. There will also be door prizes, raffles, music and surprises. Advance tickets are \$10, or \$12 at the door with a reservation. Children under 12 are half price.

For more information, please call 386-938-4092 or send an e-mail to HamiltonHumaneSociety@yahoo.com.

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Jamie Davis and band, Crosstyz Band to perform this weekend at SOS Music Park

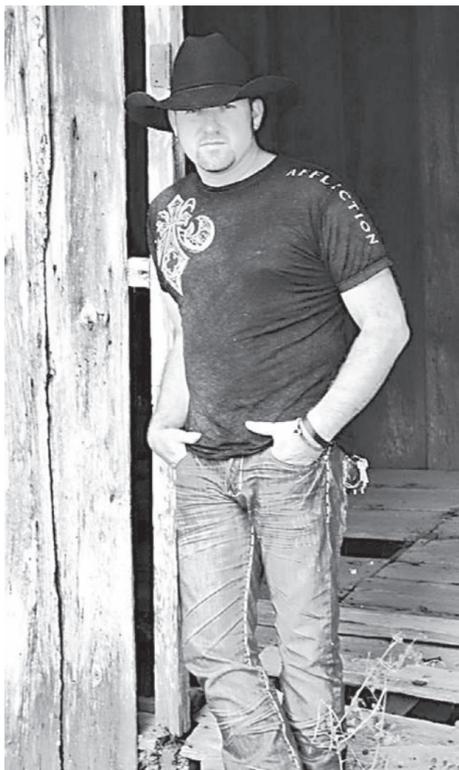
Nashville recording artist Jamie Davis and his band will be in the house at The Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park (SOSMP) Saturday, Feb. 22, for a night of true country music. The weekend will get underway Friday, Feb. 21, as Crosstyz Band of Lake City rocks the house.

Jamie Davis literally began his life sleeping in a guitar case backstage. Today he headlines his own shows. Jamie, a personable singer, songwriter and guitar player, was destined to one day be a country artist, and that he is. Coming from a large network of North Florida musicians, surrounded by music from his mom and dad's family, Jamie learned at an early age he was blessed with the gift of music. One of his most memorable moments is performing for former president George W. Bush. That was a great time in Jamie's life but also time in which he was missing his family. So in 2005 Jamie returned home to North Central Florida. Today, he's booked solid every week, performing all over Florida, including the SOSMP

where he is a regular on the Music Hall stage. It only takes once hearing this band to make you a fan. Come on out Saturday night and bring those dancing shoes, you're going to need them all evening.

Lake City's Crosstyz Band continues to grow in popularity as it crisscrosses North Florida playing the band's brand of country, Southern rock and more. Crosstyz has shared the stage with acts such as Neil McCoy, Diamond Rio, Daryl Singleary, George Jones and Toby Keith to name a few. This band has a great sound and energy that makes it a favorite with fans. The band has also created an interesting side dynamic as four of the members share careers in EMS. This band has a great sound and energy that makes it a favorite with fans. Come on out, bring your sweetie and get out on that dance floor and show off some moves Friday, Feb. 21 in the SOSMP's Music Hall as Crosstyz kicks off the weekend.

Doors to the Music Hall open at 6 p.m., shows begin at 8 p.m. Come enjoy dinner,



Jamie Davis

dancing and great music. Free admission.

For more information about the Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park, call 386-364-1683, email spirit@musicliveshere.com or go to www.musicliveshere.com and see

the dates for all the exciting events coming up such as the RV show, SpringFest, Wane and more. The Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park is located at 3076 95th Drive 4.5 miles north of Live Oak.



Crosstyz Band

RABIES ALERT

William Taylor of the Florida Department of Health in Hamilton County has issued a rabies alert for the East region of Hamilton County. This is in response to a cat that tested positive on 02/11/2014.

All citizens in Hamilton County should be aware that rabies is present in the wild animal population and domestic animals are at risk if not vaccinated. The public is asked to maintain a heightened awareness that rabies is active in Hamilton County. Alerts are designed to increase awareness to the public, but they should not get a false sense of security to areas that have not been named as under an alert.

The recent rabies alert is for 60 days. The center of the rabies alert is an area at East Region and includes the following boundaries in Hamilton County:

- East SR 6 and 12th Avenue
- NE 32nd Street North
- Central Ave West
- SE 3rd Street

An animal with rabies could infect other wild animals or domestic animals that have not been vaccinated against rabies. All domestic animals should be vaccinated against rabies and all wildlife contact should be avoided, particularly raccoons, bats, foxes, skunks, otters, bobcats and coyotes. Rabies is a disease of the nervous system and is fatal to warm blooded animals and humans. The only treatment for human exposure to rabies is rabies specific immune globulin and rabies immunization. Appropriate treatment started soon after the exposure, will protect an exposed person from the disease.

is issued:

- Keep rabies vaccinations up to date on all pets.
- Keep your pets under direct supervision so they do not come in contact with wild animals. If your pet is bitten by a wild animal, seek veterinary assistance for the animal immediately and contact Hamilton County Animal Control at (386)438-0286.
- Call animal control to remove any stray animals from your neighborhood.
- Do not handle, feed, or unintentionally attract wild animals with open garbage cans or litter.
- Never adopt wild animals or bring them into your home.
- Teach children never to handle unfamiliar animals, wild or domestic, even if they appear friendly.
- Prevent bats from entering living quarters or occupied spaces in homes, churches, schools, and other similar areas, where they might come in contact with people and pets.
- Persons who have been bitten or scratched by wild or domestic animals should seek medical attention and report the injury to the Florida Department of Health in Hamilton County at (386)792-1414.

For further information on rabies, go the Florida Department of Health website:

<http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/rabies/index.html> or call the Florida Department of Health in Hamilton County at 386-792-1414 or Hamilton County Animal Control at 386-438-0286.

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Brooks named Haven Hospice for Suwannee Valley administrator



Brooks

Haven Hospice welcomes Joseph Brooks as the new administrator for the Haven Hospice Suwannee Valley Care Center in Lake City. In that role, Brooks' duties will include supervision of daily operations and care services for patients and families, as well as, management of the 16-bed care center.

"I am honored to accept the position of administrator with Haven Hospice," said Brooks who appreciates the services and whole-family focus Haven Hospice provides. "It is truly a privilege to become part of an organization that is widely recognized as a leader and gold standard in the industry."

To be in a leadership position at Haven Hospice, a passion for serving patients and families is both vital and desired along with strong, professional skills which Brooks has demonstrated throughout his career.

"With more than seven years of leadership experience in healthcare, Joseph brings sound financial knowledge and operational experi-

ence to the position," said Haven Hospice Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Pam Saucier.

Brooks most recently served as the market director of finance for the Shands Regional Medical Centers in Lake City, Starke and Live Oak. "This exciting opportunity is sure to be challenging and fulfilling," said Brooks whose mother was a nurse and his grandmother, a certified nursing assistant. "I truly appreciate Haven Hospice entrusting me to champion the ideal of honoring life by providing comfort, care and compassion to patients and families in our community."

In 2007, Brooks became a financial counselor at the North Florida Regional Medical Center in Gainesville, and in 2010, took on the positions of patient access supervisor, financial analyst and interim assistant administrator at Seven Rivers Regional Medical Center in Crystal River. Brooks earned his bachelor's degree in business administration from St. Leo University.

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The kids thank First Lady Ann Scott for coming to their school. Courtesy photos

First Lady Ann Scott visits North Hamilton Elementary during Literacy Week

On Friday, Jan. 17, First Lady Ann Scott concluded her Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida! tour with a visit to North Hamilton Elementary School (NHE) in Jennings.

NHE was the final stop on her statewide tour to promote the importance of reading. This year's theme, "Reading Accelerates Success," encouraged students to connect the value of literacy with careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Principal Lee Zamora, along with students and staff, Superintendent Thomas Moffses and school board members Damon Deas, Jeanie Daniels and Sammy McCoy, welcomed the First Lady to NHE's campus.

Mrs. Scott visited the school to read to the second and third grade students. She read the book "Otis and the Tornado" by Loren Long, then asked questions about the book and the students eagerly responded. She also allowed the students to ask numerous questions, which she graciously answered.

The First Lady traveled almost 800 miles in five days to speak to more than 1,000 students throughout the week. She wanted to promote the importance of reading and to encourage students and their families to set aside time to read together. Mrs. Scott shared her enthusiasm for reading to the stu-

dents at NHE.

"It was an honor to have First Lady Ann Scott visit North Hamilton Elementary," said Zamora. "She was wonderful with our students, and the students really enjoyed having the First Lady read to them."

Assistant Principal Peggy Hasty remarked, "Meeting the First Lady was an awesome experience! She is a very gracious lady, and it was exciting to have her visit with our faculty, staff, and students."

Second-grade student Bailey Driggers added, "The experience of having First Lady Scott come to our school and read to us was amazing and was once-in-a-lifetime! She is very friend-

ly and I am so glad she chose our school because it is a special place. It was an honor."

"Our students had a wonderful opportunity to meet First Lady Ann Scott on her reading tour of Florida," said Moffses. "It was a great experience for our students as the First Lady read to them as part of Florida's Literacy Week."

Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida! is an annual event to commemorate the accomplishments of students and to inspire them to keep reading. As part of the week's festivities, thousands of volunteers visited the schools throughout the state and read to the students.



First Lady Ann Scott reads to the children.



Sammy McCoy, Peggy Hasty, Lee Wetherington Zamora, Ann Scott, Damon Deas, Jeanie Daniels and Thomas Moffses.



Time for a photo op with the governor's wife.



Ida Daniels rises in school career

Elected as only third African American president of Florida School Nutrition Association

By Joyce Marie Taylor
joycemarie.taylor@gafnews.com

Hamilton County resident Ida Lue Daniels has seen her share of racial inequality growing up in the Deep South, but has gone on to great heights of success in her career. Daniels is currently Food and Nutrition Service Coordinator for Hamilton County Schools.

Daniels was born and raised in Albany, Ga. and grew up during the height of the Civil Rights movement. This was the same city where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and others marched for civil rights and were jailed for their efforts, Daniels explained.

She is the youngest daughter of six children; four boys and two girls. She graduated from high school in the early 70s, got married a year after graduation, and moved to Hamilton County in 1981 with her husband, who is a native of Hamilton County. They have four children who all attended Hamilton County schools.

"When our youngest two children were approaching school age I returned to school and earned a diploma in Data Processing and Accounting from (at that time) Valdosta Technical School," said Daniels.

After graduating from Valdosta Tech in the fall of 1987, she began her employment with the Hamilton County School District as a clerk/typist in the Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS) department. She subsequently enrolled at Valdosta State University where she earned an AAS and a BAS in Technical Studies.

"Later, I became only the second person in Hamilton County hired as the food service coordinator (director)," said Daniels. "I continued my education and earned a master's degree in instructional technology."

Her career continued to soar when she was elected president-elect of

the Florida School Nutrition Association (FSNA) for the 2012-13 school year.

"I am currently serving as president for the 2013-14 school year," she said. "I am only the third African American to hold the position of president for FSNA."

Daniels has also served as a region director-elect and region director for FSNA Region II. There are 13 districts in Region II stretching from Gadsden County to Alachua County.

"The opportunity to serve on the board of FSNA has been very rewarding and a most memorable milestone in my life," Daniels said.

When asked who gave her the most inspiration to succeed in life, Daniels gave the credit to her mother.

"She was a great wife, mother, Christian and community leader," said Daniels. "She showed me the importance

of getting involved in your child's education and community. She was also my cafeteria manager working alongside a sister-in law and her



best friend. She never came home complaining about neither her job nor her workers."

Daniels said she is certain her mother, who passed away at age 62, less than a year after retiring from the same industry, would be proud of all the things she has accomplished.

She commented, "The things I do as a food nutrition specialist must meet the standards of the one I think was the best; my mom!"

Daniels said she also holds great admiration for Shirley Sherrod, a prominent African American woman who hails from her hometown of Albany.

"Shirley was abruptly asked to resign after someone took a speech out of context, which led to her dismissal from her position as Georgia state director of development for the United States Department of Agriculture," said Daniels.

Sherrod's book, "The Courage To Hope" – How I Stood Up to the Politics of Fear", is one that Daniels said she had the opportunity to read.

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"As I see it, there still remains inequality all around us in race, gender and age in all areas of society. People of color are most often judged by the color of their skin, not the content of their character. It would be wonderful if the first consideration is that we are all of the "human race" and then Americans."
-- Ida Daniels

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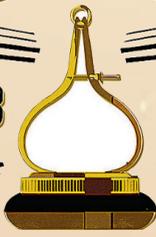
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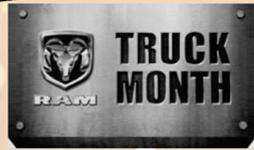
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