

The Bay Beacon

16 Pages, 2 Sections, 5 Inserts

Wednesday, May 5, 2010

50¢

COMING UP

Thursday, 12:15 p.m.



The Twin Cities Ministerial Association plans an observance of the **National Day of Prayer** in front of **Niceville City Hall** on Partin Drive. It's free.

Saturday, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.



A huge **garage sale and car wash** will help finance **Rocky Bayou Christian School's** mission trip to Belize this summer. Drop by Cain's Air Conditioning and Heating, 500 Hwy. 85 N., for bargains and a clean vehicle.

Monday, 6 p.m.

The **Niceville-Valparaiso Tea Party** will meet at Niceville City Hall. Info: 217-9244.

Monday, 6:30 p.m.



Are you the one that they want? Don't miss auditioning for **"Grease"** at the **Mattie Kelly Fine and Performing Arts Center** or you may find tears on your pillow. Thirty duck-tailed boys and poodle skirt-wearing girls are needed.

More in Calendar, B-5.

Is oil on our horizon?



Beacon photo

Residents and visitors alike are wondering how the giant **Deepwater Horizon** oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico off Louisiana might affect the white-sand beaches and the fishing industry for which the **Emerald Coast** is renowned. The **Okaloosa County Commission** Monday declared a state of emergency to facilitate preparations. Pictured, the oil-free scene at **James Lee Park, Destin**, on Sunday. Story, A-2.

96 WWII vets on Honor Flight to Washington

By **Kenneth Books**
Beacon Staff Writer

Ninety-six World War II veterans will get a chance to see the memorial to their sacrifice and struggle today, Wednesday, as another **Honor Flight** lifts off from Northwest Florida Regional Airport.

With them will be 39 volunteer "guardians" who will help ease their way through the day, as well as the gratitude of everyone who has been touched by their heroism.

Honor Flights carry WWII veterans, free of charge, to Washington, D.C., where they'll see the memorial to their war as well as Vietnam War, Korean War and Iwo Jima memorials in a daylong tour. The veterans' reactions range from elation over the recognition to sorrow for their fallen comrades.

This will be the seventh **Emerald Coast Honor Flight**



Please see **VETS**, page A-5 **Kenneth Harris**

Mayor, chamber to visit Ft. Bragg

Briefing 2,000 Green Berets on impending move to Eglin

By **Del Lessard**
Beacon Staff Writer

Niceville's mayor and a representative of the **Niceville-Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce** plan to go to **Fayetteville, N.C.**, next week to participate in a town hall meeting and welcome thousands of soldiers and family members of the **Army's 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne)** in anticipation of their impending move to **Eglin Air Force Base**.

Thirty organizations from

Okaloosa and Walton counties have been invited to attend and sponsor booths at the **Crown Expo Center** in **Fayetteville**, **May 11 and 12**. "The purpose of the meeting is to help the **7th SFG (A)** soldiers and families gain a better understanding of its new home using seminars addressing employment, education, health care, housing and a host of other issues," said **Maj. James Brownlee**, public affairs

Please see **MAYOR**, page A-4

50¢ toll hike eyed

By **Del Lessard**
Beacon Staff Writer

The **Mid-Bay Bridge Authority (MBBA)** today is scheduled to get a recommendation for a 50-cent toll increase.

An **MBBA** meeting is

set for today, **Wednesday**, at 9 a.m., at **Niceville City Hall**.

A consultant's analysis is expected to recommend a 50-cent, across-the-board bridge

Please see **50¢**, page A-5



Beacon photo by **Emily Kent**

Helping hands

Laura Hudson, Alan Long, Laura Pate and Jacob Emerick, students at **Rocky Bayou Christian School**, load a trash can with leaves as part of the school's annual **Workathon** community-service project. On **Friday**, **RBCS** students tidied the yards of many elderly or disabled people in the **Niceville** area.

2,000 set to get college diplomas

NWFSC class includes 1st four-year teaching degrees

By **Del Lessard**
Beacon Staff Writer

A record number of graduates will be recognized tomorrow evening at the 45th annual commencement ceremonies at **Northwest Florida State College**.

In the academic year just ended, about 2,030 students completed degrees or certificates, including 110 who earned four-year degrees, up from 1,881 last year, and nearly twice the total just eight years ago, according to **Sylvia Bryan**, college spokeswoman.

Among this year's diplomas are the first 16 to complete bachelor's degrees in education at the **Niceville** college, and the first 13 to earn bachelor's degrees in nursing.

A total of 110 baccalaureate degrees were awarded this year, the fifth since the college began awarding four-year diplomas.

Among those graduating with

four-year degrees in education is **Sarah Gifford**, 22, of **Valparaiso**.

Gifford said she has wanted to teach school since third grade in **Tennessee** in **Miss Brown's** class. "That's when I knew I wanted to be a teacher," she said. "I just really liked her and loved going to school. I looked up to her, and I guess I just wanted to be like her."

Gifford graduated from **Niceville High School** in 2006, earning an associate's degree from **NWF State College**, then called **Okaloosa-Walton College**, under its dual-enrollment program.

This year, Gifford interned as a first grade teacher at **Valparaiso Elementary**. She said she worked more than eight hours a day, Monday through Friday, a schedule that came as no surprise. "I knew there was a lot more than

Please see **DIPLOMAS**, page A-4



Northwest Florida State College will award its first four-year teaching degrees **Thursday**. One of those receiving such a diploma, **Sarah Gifford**, 22, of **Valparaiso**, spent her last day as an intern at **Valparaiso Elementary School** **Friday**, reading to first graders.

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State of emergency in oil spill

By Mike Griffith
Beacon Correspondent

Okaloosa County commissioners voted unanimously to declare a state of emergency during a special Monday meeting called to discuss the Deepwater Horizon oil spill and measures to protect local waters and shorelines from harm.

The emergency declaration, commissioners said, is in coordination with an executive order from Gov. Charlie Crist declaring a 60-day state of emergency, which may be extended if necessary, and will help make the county eligible for reimbursement of expected expenses from dealing with the oil disaster.

Officials said the forecasts as of Monday predicted oil might begin arriving along Okaloosa beaches by some time Thursday, while efforts to deploy floating oil containment booms are expected to begin Wednesday. County Emergency Manager Randy McDaniel said such predictions are subject to changes in weather, especially winds and currents in the Gulf of Mexico, but are the best forecasts now available.

Okaloosa County Public Safety Director Dino Villani and McDaniel said initial efforts to deploy oil containment booms in Okaloosa waters will focus on trying to keep oil from entering Choctawhatchee Bay, with a secondary array of booms set up to protect inland bayous and inlets from any oil that gets past initial containment efforts and

enters the bay.

McDaniel said no attempt will be made to protect Gulf-front beaches, as these are too large to effectively protect, and fortunately, beaches are not as environmentally sensitive as the marshes and shorelines of the bay. He also said beaches are relatively easy to clean if they become contaminated with oil, compared with inland shorelines which provide habitat for many local species of wildlife and fish.

Villani said there is no current intent to close the East Pass at Destin, but there is a plan to use booms to channel floating oil into containment areas from which it can be gathered for disposal. Boats will still be able to enter and leave the Gulf of Mexico through the East Pass, although boaters will have to use caution to avoid the boom system. Booms are being provided by BP, the U.S. Coast Guard, Okaloosa County, and Eglin Air Force Base, which is also providing boats and personnel to help. Representatives of the local Charter Boat Association said fishing boat captains and crews are also available to help deploy containment booms if the county requests help.

Villani and Okaloosa Chief Deputy Sheriff Larry Ashley said waterfront homeowners are free to take reasonable measures such as deploying their own booms, if they have any, to protect their own property, as long as they do not cause damage or interfere with

official efforts.

Villani said local efforts to protect, rescue, or clean wildlife caught in the oil spill will be managed by the Emerald Coast Wildlife Refuge, with help from the county and from officials at the Gulfarium regarding marine animals.

Commissioners looked glum as they began the meeting by listening to a conference phone call among state and local officials, including Florida Environmental Protection Secretary Mike Sole and a representative from BP, the company that owned the Deepwater Horizon drilling platform that exploded and burned recently, triggering a massive oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

Villani said the county information hotline has been activated, and residents with questions about the oil spill, or with information they wish to provide county officials, can phone the county by dialing 311 on any local phone. People can also visit the county web site at co.okaloosa.fl.us, and

click on the Public Safety section for information.

Sole said local residents may begin to notice an odor when the oil is still as far as 25 miles from the coast, although there is no public health hazard from the odor or fumes from the oil.

Villani also introduced BP representative Clayton Cochran, who said he will be the local liaison between BP and local officials with regard to the spill and efforts to contain it. Cochran said local expenses from the spill and containment efforts will ultimately be reimbursed by BP, and told the Beacon that anyone with claims resulting from the spill can contact the BP claims center at 1-800-440-0858.

Capt. Scott Ferguson of the U.S. Coast Guard said the main headquarters for national efforts to combat the oil spill is in Mobile, Ala., with a regional headquarters in Pensacola, in addition to coordination of local efforts through the Okaloosa County Emergency Operations Center.

Man arrested after 3 leap from bridge

By Del Lessard
Beacon Staff Writer

On Sunday night reports that three men had leaped from the Mid-Bay Bridge into Choctawhatchee Bay caused authorities to launch a multi-agency search.

Three jumpers, all identified as students at Eglin's Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal School, were later identified and one was arrested after he misled officials about the incident, according to reports from the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office.

Roy Toufic Atallah, an EOD student, 26, of 466 Olde Post Road, Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies May 2 on a charge of obstruction of a criminal investigation, providing false information regarding a missing person or felony, according to sheriff's offense reports and booking documents from the Okaloosa County Jail.

Sheriff's offense report gave the following account:

A couple traveling southbound on the Mid-Bay Bridge about 7:21 p.m., May 2, reported that a northbound Jeep stopped in the emergency lane and that two men got out and jumped into the water. The incident occurred somewhere between the north end of the 3.5-mile toll bridge and its apex. The search effort by sheriff's deputies was joined by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission, the Coast Guard, the Walton County Sheriff's Office, Okaloosa County EMS, Freeport Fire Rescue and Okaloosa County Public Beach Safety.

Deputies went to the Sunpass office at the north end of the toll bridge and determined that Atallah was the

owner of the Jeep. They then went to Atallah's address on nearby Olde Post Road, Niceville.

Atallah allegedly told deputies that he had picked up two individuals from a restaurant in Destin, then said there were three riders, none of whom he claimed to know. Atallah said that the three unknown men asked to get out of his jeep, so he stopped on the bridge and they jumped into the bay.

Deputies took Atallah to show where on the bridge the men had jumped, which was between a quarter- and half-mile from the toll plaza. Atallah continued to say he did not know who the jumpers were.

Separately, three men who are roommates of Atallah admitted to deputies that they were in the Jeep and that two of them had jumped off the bridge with Atallah, while one of the roommates drove the Jeep home. The three jumpers took about 30 minutes to swim to shore, then walked home.

Atallah then allegedly told police he lied about the incident because he was afraid of being kicked out of EOD school. The other men were not charged.

Correction

An April 28 story about two men arrested on charges of robbing a Valparaiso loan business incorrectly quoted Valparaiso police. A witness who followed the alleged robbers get-away car was not able to get the tag number, although he did give authorities a detailed vehicle description.

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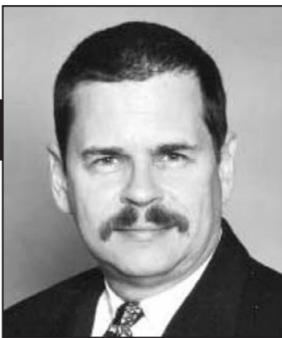
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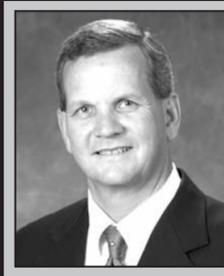


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Bud Day honored in street name

Valparaiso officials not consulted in legislative action

By Del Lessard
Beacon Staff Writer

John Sims Parkway through Valparaiso will soon honor two men, rather than just one.

A bill passed by the Legislature last month designates State Road 397 from Government Boulevard to Eglin Air Force Base as Bud Day Boulevard, after a combat pilot who was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

The designated segment of SR 397 is now called John C. Sims Parkway. That name, along with street signs and addresses, will remain unchanged under the new law, according to lawmakers and the state Department of Transportation.

The Bud Day name, which will be noted in two marker signs at the beginning and end of the 1.5-mile segment, will simply be an honorary designation concurrent with the old name, officials said.



Bud Day

"Our community is honored to be home to America's greatest living military hero," said State Sen. Don Gaetz, a Niceville Republican. "It's entirely fitting that the women and men who work on Eglin will see Colonel Day's name and be reminded of his courage and patriotism every day on their way to protect and serve our country," he said.

But Valparaiso Mayor Bruce Arnold, who was not consulted in the matter, said that it would have been more appropriate to designate a roadway in Shalimar, where Day lives. (The section of John Sims Parkway in Niceville is not affected by the designation, except for a short segment south of Government Avenue to the Valparaiso city limit.)

Day, who also wasn't consulted, said Monday that the bill "was a very kind gesture on the part of the Legislature."

"I was very surprised," he said. Day served in the Marine Corps, the Army and the Air Force during his 35 years of military service, said Gaetz. Day was awarded 10 Air Medals, four Purple Hearts, four Bronze Stars, the Silver Star, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Legion of Merit, the Air Force Cross and the nation's highest military honor, the Medal of Honor, the lawmaker



John Sims Parkway in Valparaiso will be designated Bud Day Boulevard, although the roadway's old name will continue to be used.

Beacon photo by Del Lessard

said, making him "the most decorated member of the military since Gen. Douglas MacArthur."

House District 2 Rep. Dave Murzin, Rep. of Pensacola, initiated the bill in the house in February. He told the Beacon that he wanted to honor Day and chose a road going to Eglin Air Force Base. Although the wording of the bill states the honorary designation of SR 397 extends from Government Avenue to Eglin's "North Gate", Murzin, Gaetz and the DOT said that in fact Bud Day Boulevard will go from Government Avenue to the East Gate.

Murzin said that the DOT will provide appropriate signs designating Bud Day Boulevard and post them at either end of the honorary road during a ceremony to be held in the future.

Murzin said the Legislature probably makes similar honorary designations of state highway or other facilities 25 to 30 times a year. In fact the bill designating Bud Day Boulevard includes a number of other honorary road designations: Orange Bowl Way, Pastor Wilner Maxi Street, Bishop Dr. Randall & Prophetess Sharlene Holts Street, Pastor Dr. Carl Johnson Street, Haitian/American Historical Society Street, Center for Haitian Studies Street, Eufaula Frazier

Street, and Perdido Key Parkway. All but the last, which is in Escambia County, are in Miami-Dade County.

Separately, the Legislature last month designated as "Doolittle Raiders Highway" the segment of State Road 285 in Okaloosa and Walton counties that is north of College Boulevard. In March, 1942, three months after Pearl Harbor, Lt. Col. Jimmy Doolittle and Army Air Force aircrews came to Eglin and secretly trained for the nation's first air raid on Japan, launched April 18, 1942.

Section 334.071, Florida Statutes, provides for legislative designations of transportation facilities for honorary or memori-

al purposes, or to distinguish a particular facility. The legislative designations do not "officially" change the current names of the facilities, nor does the statute require local governments and private entities to change street signs, mailing addresses, or 911 emergency telephone-number system listings.

Apparently, Tallahassee officials failed to coordinate the Bud Day designation with Valparaiso city officials.

Arnold learned about the honorary highway Bud Day Boulevard in a newspaper story last week and sent a letter to Sen. Gaetz asking the Legislature to reconsider its decision. "We are not arguing the fact that Col. Bud Day is a man to be honored. What we do believe is that it makes more sense to name that section of Eglin Parkway from Shalimar to the West Gate in his name," Arnold wrote.

The mayor stated that John Sims "was an important part of the development of Valparaiso and was instrumental in the construction of runways and site facilities for the fledging government testing range called Eglin. His name has stood proudly on that road as a symbol of his accomplishments for more than fifty years."



The Legislature has designated a segment of John Sims Parkway, mostly in Valparaiso (heavy line) as Bud Day Boulevard in honor of the war hero.

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DIPLOMAS

From page A-1

the classroom," she said. Gifford said she hopes to get a teaching job in Okaloosa County in the fall, or at least in a neighboring county, so she can continue to live at home.

The college's charter class of baccalaureate education students was initiated in 2008, according to Samantha Dawson, chairman of the education department. Previously, NWFSC students could take only prerequisite

courses for education, earning a two-year associate's degree before going elsewhere to complete the requirements for a four-year degree.

Each of the first 16 education students getting their diplomas tomorrow will have put in over

700 hours in classrooms in Okaloosa or Walton county public schools before graduation, Dawson said. Three of them will receive degrees in middle school math or science, while the rest have earned degrees in elementary education.

Between 2003 and 2007, students at NWF State could earn a four-year degree in nursing through a cooperative program with the University of West Florida, according to Beth Norton, director of Allied Health and BSN Programs at the Niceville college. The degree was awarded by UWF even though NWF State taught most of the courses. The program turned out 12 to 20 nurses a year, she said.

The Florida State Board of Education approved the school's request to offer the bachelor of science in nursing (BSN) as its third bachelor's program. The first class started in 2008. Nursing students get their clinical experience in Okaloosa and Walton counties, Norton said.

The college, which still chiefly grants two-year degrees, offered its first bachelor's program in 2004. It now offers five baccalaureate degrees: one each in nursing and project management, and three in education (elementary education, middle school science, and middle school math). This is the fifth commencement at which some students will graduate with

Please see NWFSC, page A-5

MAYOR

From page A-1

office for the 7th.

The 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission directed the 7th SFG (A) to move to Eglin by September 2011. The 7th has about 2,200 soldiers in five battalions and a headquarters staff. Also moving to Florida will be about 4,000 family members, according to the Army.

About 100 of the Green Berets in an advance team are expected to move to

Okaloosa County this summer, according to Army officials in Fayetteville, with the bulk of moves the following summer, in time to meet BRAC's Sept. 15 deadline, according to an official at the Army's Special Operations Command, Fort Bragg.

The Army is building a multi-million-dollar facility for the 7th SFG on the Eglin range east of Duke Field, about halfway between Niceville and Crestview. Niceville Mayor Randall Wise hopes that soldiers will also see how close Niceville is to their cantonment and training area.

Wise said he'll be going to Fayetteville to tell soldiers and their families about the advantages of moving to Niceville. The assumption early on was that about 80 percent of soldiers would choose to live in Crestview, he said. But that perception has been changing, the mayor said, as soldiers and their families look at the advantages of moving to the Niceville area, about the same distance from the 7th's new home on Eglin as Crestview.

Top-notch schools, parks and recreational facilities, as well as easy access to the water and to Eglin for jobs, medical care and shopping are among the benefits of living in Niceville that Wise said he plans to underscore. The main campus of Northwest

Florida State College located in Niceville, is another attraction, he said, while there are abundant sports programs available for families.

Wise said he hopes to learn more about the Army personnel, such as whether many families have to sell their homes in North Carolina before being able to buy houses in Florida.

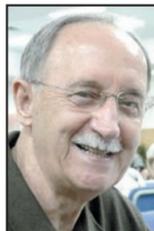
Debbie Carloni, Bluewater Bay, a business owner, will represent the Niceville Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce at the expo. In addition to handouts, maps and other literature, Carloni said, she is eager to meet the families and answer their questions. "I hope to make them feel very welcome," she said. A Niceville resident for over 20 years, her children have gone to school here from elementary grades through college, she said. She plans to focus on the benefits the Niceville area has to offer to soldiers and their families.

Brownlee said the 7th SFG(A) differs from other Army units in that its soldiers typically don't move to other bases every two to three years. It's not uncommon for the Green Berets to spend their entire career at Ft. Bragg, he said. While the soldiers deploy from Ft. Bragg often, Fayetteville has become the only home many of their families have known, he said. The upcoming move to Florida has therefore created a mix of anticipation, anxiety and angst for some families, he said.

The 7th SFG maintains a continuous presence throughout Central and South America, conducting special operations missions in support of the U.S. Southern Command's Regional Engagement strategy, according to the Army. Since early 2002, the 7th SFG has also deployed almost nonstop for five rotations to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.



Debbie Carloni



Randall Wise

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VETS

From page A-1

since the privately supported program began in April 2008.

One of today's passengers, Kenneth Harris, 85, of Niceville, spent 37 years in the Air Force, retiring in 1978 as a full colonel.

"I've been to Washington before and seen the Vietnam memorial, but I've not seen the Korean or WWII memorials," he said. "It'll bring back memories, I'm sure."

Another Honor Flight passenger, Thomas Miller, 84, of Valparaiso spent three years in the South Pacific in the Marine Corps, and ended up in China after the Japanese surrender.

"We had a million Japanese there," he said. "I didn't know if they were going to surrender or shoot us. I was 17 when I went in and came out when I was 21. I couldn't buy a drink. In civilian life, I used the GI Bill to become a pilot."

Then came the Korean con-

flict and Miller reenlisted, this time as a pilot. He retired from the Air Force.

What does he expect from seeing the WWII memorial?

"I don't quite know how to handle it," Miller said. "It isn't really a happy one. It leaves you with a guilty feeling of 'why you.'"

Pondering a bit, he said, "That sums up the Marine Corps in the Pacific, but it's like a vaccination. I think you need to face it."

Richard "Dusty" Rhodes, 90, of Niceville, who served with the Army Corps of Engineers in Europe, expects to enjoy reliving the old days with his fellow veterans during today's Honor Flight.

"There ought to be a lot of good fellowship," he said. "I guess we'll maybe almost shed a few tears from memories of many years gone by."

Rhodes left the Army after the war, but, he said, "They kept sending me letters asking

me to return and I thought maybe I should have some of this peacetime duty."

He reenlisted, stayed in and retired as a colonel.

These veterans and 93 more will find not only memories and camaraderie with fellow soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen, they'll find themselves treated like royalty. The Washington, D.C., Fire Department will salute them with water cannons. Passengers, employees and others at Reagan National Airport will applaud them as they exit the plane. They'll be catered to, honored and saluted virtually everywhere they go.

When they return to Northwest Florida tonight at 7, they'll find another crowd of grateful men, women and children—and possibly some top brass—waiting for them at the airport and celebrating their heroism. The return greeting is open to the public.

The Honor Flights are designed to get as many WWII veterans to their memorial while there is still time to do so. Some 1,135 World War II veterans die each day, according to the Veterans Administration.

File photo

World War II veterans are greeted and a wreath is presented in their honor at the Washington, D.C., World War II memorial during a previous Honor Flight.



Thomas Miller



Dusty Rhodes



File photo

World War II veterans are greeted and a wreath is presented in their honor at the Washington, D.C., World War II memorial during a previous Honor Flight.

NWFSC

From page A-4

baccalaureate degrees.

Commencement ceremonies are scheduled to be held in the college's outdoor amphitheater on the Niceville campus. The event will be moved to the nearby Arts Center in the event of rain.

State Sen. Don Gaetz, a Niceville Republican, is scheduled as the guest speaker.

NWF State College com-



mencement consists of those students who complete studies in either the summer, fall or spring terms. The names of Summer 2009 and Fall 2009 graduates have previously been released. Spring 2010 term names will be released following commencement and official certification of completed studies.

Of the students earning degrees or certificates during the

2009-10 academic year, about 940 completed their requirements in the spring semester, according to Bryan. Another 616 completed their graduation requirements in the fall semester, while 480 students finished last summer.

In addition to the record number of graduates, more than 200 adult students received a state of Florida high school diploma at NWF State College this academic year through successful completion of the GED exam.

50¢

From page A-1

toll increase, Jim Vest, executive director of the MBBA, said Tuesday. It will be up to the authority's five-member board

whether to approve any recommendation, he said.

On April 16, the board heard a briefing from a Goldman Sachs representative, the MBBA's financial adviser, recommending an unspecified toll increase.

The adviser said he would present a more detailed recommendation today.

Currently, two-axle cars and trucks pay a cash toll of \$2.50, or \$1.50 if paying electronically using a SunPass transponder.

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The Inquiring Photographer

What do you think about the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico?

Location: Lincoln Park

—Mike Griffith



"It's sickening. My kids are scared and upset about it. We look forward to swimming and going to the beach during the summer. Now what do we have?"

Charissa Johnson, 33, Crestview, stay-home mom



"I'm in construction, but the beaches are what draws people to live here. If the beaches are destroyed, what becomes of my livelihood?"

Paul St. Vincent, 35, Crestview, construction



"We all have to be accountable, even the manufacturer of a key part like the blow-out valve on an oil rig."

David St. Vincent, 35, Ocala, builder



"It's going to kill the fishing community. I wish they'd do something about it besides talk."

Jacob Small, 27, Niceville, city employee



"I hope it doesn't mess our beaches up too bad."

Wendy Williams, 34, Crestview, student



"I'm not too happy about it. We live on the beach, and don't want to mess up the white sand out there."

Kristy Small, 28, Destin, secretary

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BLOTTER

From page A-7

A Niceville resident from the 200 block of Palmetto Avenue reported April 22 that her recreational trailer was vandalized and that unknown person(s) had entered the vehicle and caused some damage. A small footprint and small fingerprint at the scene led police to several suspects who admitted being in the trailer. Since the suspects were all under the age of 10 no criminal charges were filed and the victim was in the process of getting restitution from the children's parents.

A student at Northwest Florida State College reported that unknown person(s) stole a

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\$1,000 laptop computer April 26. The laptop is owned by the college.

An elderly Niceville couple fell victim to the "grandma scam" April 14, wiring \$2,491 to an address in Canada after being contacted by an individual falsely claiming to be their grandson and another impostor claiming to be a Canadian constable. The "grandson" said he was in trouble for a DUI but did not want his parents to find out. The "constable" offered to contact a lawyer who would keep their "grandson" out of jail and gave instructions on where to wire the money. After receiving the money, the "constable" called back and requested more, claiming the lawyer needed the extra money. The couple contacted police, who informed them they'd been the victim of a scam that has struck the local area several times in recent months.

Other
A 14-year-old Valparaiso boy, a student, was issued a notice to appear by sheriff's deputies April 9 for affray. The boy was allegedly involved in a physical altercation and was seen hitting the other person with a fist during their fight.

Sheriff's deputies have turned over an investigation of an arson fire to the State Fire Marshal's Office. On March 27 a political campaign sign on Forest Road at Ruckel Drive was destroyed by fire. The sign was valued at \$75.

Tonya Marie Kuhn, 20, of 305 Riley Road, Niceville, was issued a notice to appear by Niceville police, April 23, for possession of less than 20 grams of marijuana.

FIRE

From page A-7

N. White Point Rd.....	Dispatched cancelled.....	4/28/10.....	10:31
Merchants Way.....	Dispatched cancelled.....	4/28/10.....	15:58
Oaklake Cove.....	Medical assist EMS.....	4/28/10.....	17:46
N. White Point Rd.....	Medical assist EMS.....	4/28/10.....	18:58
Saint Martin Cove.....	Dispatched cancelled.....	4/28/10.....	19:43
N. White Point Rd.....	Medical assist EMS.....	4/29/10.....	12:42
Parkwood Lane.....	Public service assistance.....	4/29/10.....	15:17
N. White Point Rd.....	Medical assist EMS.....	4/29/10.....	21:01
Pippin Drive.....	Medical assist EMS.....	4/30/10.....	09:44
Oakmont Place.....	EMS excluding vehicle.....	4/30/10.....	11:55
Glenlake Circle.....	EMS excluding vehicle.....	4/30/10.....	15:34
Jamaica Way.....	Dispatched cancelled.....	5/1/10.....	11:11
N. White Point Rd.....	Dispatched cancelled.....	5/1/10.....	12:06
Range Road.....	Power line down.....	5/1/10.....	14:39
Hickory Street.....	EMS excluding vehicle.....	5/1/10.....	15:45
Evans Road.....	EMS excluding vehicle.....	5/2/10.....	07:17
White Point Rd.....	Good intent call.....	5/2/10.....	20:01

Valparaiso

The Valparaiso Volunteer Fire Department responded to the following calls during the month of March:

Location	Situation	Date	Time
N. Bayshore Dr.....	Cardiac Arrest.....	4/1/2010.....	20:15
Edge Ave.....	Sick Call.....	4/3/2010.....	10:17
Edge Ave.....	Fall.....	4/4/2010.....	01:13
Kelly Road.....	Breathing Problem.....	4/6/2010.....	10:19
Washington Ave.....	Fall.....	4/7/2010.....	17:26
N. Bayshore Dr.....	Unconscious.....	4/9/2010.....	11:11
Carolina Ave.....	Assault.....	4/11/2010.....	03:57
N. John Sims Pkwy.....	Motor Vehicle Accident.....	4/11/2010.....	22:11
Washington Ave.....	Fire Alarm.....	4/11/2010.....	22:45
Kelly Mill Road.....	Service Call.....	4/14/2010.....	04:49
Illinois Ave.....	Breathing Problem.....	4/14/2010.....	21:05
Edge Ave.....	Breathing Problem.....	4/15/2010.....	01:31
S. John Sims Pkwy.....	Assault.....	4/22/2010.....	17:59
W. College Blvd.....	Blown Power Transformer.....	4/23/2010.....	21:12
W. College Blvd.....	Power Lines Down.....	4/23/2010.....	21:39
Chicago Ave.....	Fire Alarm.....	4/24/2010.....	23:36
N. Bayshore Dr.....	Sick Call.....	4/25/2010.....	09:49
Chicago Ave.....	CVA/Stroke.....	4/26/2010.....	21:14
Carolina Ave.....	Sick Call.....	4/27/2010.....	14:55
Adams Ave.....	Vehicle Lock Out.....	4/28/2010.....	15:45
Westview Ave.....	Sick Call.....	4/28/2010.....	16:27
S. Bayshore Dr.....	Fall.....	4/29/2010.....	21:22
W. College Blvd.....	Power Lines Arching.....	4/30/2010.....	18:28

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Police Blotter

The following accounts of the activities of police are according to records of the Niceville and Valparaiso police departments, the Okaloosa County and Walton County sheriff's offices, other law-enforcement agencies, and the Okaloosa County and Walton County jails.

Arrests

Mike Eron Mandel, self-employed, 33, of 4095 Rocky Drive, Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies April 19 for shoplifting. Mandel allegedly stole a can of beer from a Fort Walton Beach convenience store, 1096 N. Beal Parkway, after the clerk informed him that because of the late hour state law prohibited the clerk from selling beer. The beer was valued at \$1.89.

Jessica Brooke Miller, 24, of 507 Nelson Point Road, Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies April 20 for failure to appear on a misdemeanor offense.

Patrick Joseph Prestari, 21, of 345 Jamaica Way, Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies April 20 on a charge of violation of probation on the original misdemeanor charge of possession of marijuana.

Kevin Scott Bible, a cook, 24, of 1012 Everglade Drive, Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies April 20 on a misdemeanor charge of violation of probation.

Terry John Hosking, 42, of 315 21st St., Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies April 21 on a misdemeanor worthless check charge.

Michael Cullen Hanley, a business owner, 56, of 3807 Cherrywood Court, Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies April 15 on a charge of workers compensation fraud. On Dec. 18, 2009, Hanley was accused by state inspectors of failing to pay workers compensation for himself or his business employees, receiving his second stop work order within five years.

James Robert Barfield, 35, of 342 Nimrod Circle, Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies April 13 on a Walton County warrant on the original charge of felony driving while license suspended or revoked.

Jason Arthur Denny, 34, of 613 Grenada Way, Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies April 20 for failure to appear for a felony offense, on the original charges of driving while license suspended, habitual.

A 32-year-old Niceville man

who was being treated at Fort Walton Beach Medical Center under the state's Baker Act, March 28, was subsequently arrested by sheriff's deputies April 25 for battery on an officer or firefighter. The man allegedly bit a security guard who was trying to restrain him at the hospital March 28.

Billy Dean Adkins, a driller, 29, of 192 Chicago Ave., Valparaiso, was arrested by sheriff's deputies April 22 on a misdemeanor violation of probation charge on the original charge of DUI.

Herbert Shelton Davis, unemployed, 42, of 204 Niceville Ave., Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies April 22 on a misdemeanor violation of probation charge on the original charge of driving while license suspended or revoked.

Alicia Maxine Rutledge, 29, of 502 Palmetto Ave., Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies April 22 on a misdemeanor violation of probation charge on the original charge of possession of marijuana.

Tiffany Lynn Parry, 35, of 4080 Rocky Drive, Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies April 22 on the charge of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon without intent to kill, domestic violence-related.

Holly Nicole Sharp, 26, of 108 Quince Ave., Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies April 23 on a worthless check charge for an alleged \$200 bad check.

Krista Nicole Trenkle, 25, of 1315 Palm Blvd., Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies April 23 on a misdemeanor worthless check charge for an alleged \$22.49 bad check.

Jonathan David Phelps, 36, of 708 Palm Blvd., Niceville was arrested by sheriff's deputies April 22 on a Leon County warrant for civil contempt and violation of probation on the original charge of felony battery.

Crystal Leigh Reiley, 25, of 304 Reeves St., Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies April 22 on the charges of operating while license suspended or revoked and giving a false name.

On Oct. 27 Reiley was allegedly stopped for speeding in a school zone, told the officer she did not have her Connecticut license and gave a false name, that of a former friend in Connecticut. The alleged deceit caused the former friend problems with her Connecticut driving privileges.

George Funti, 65, of 514 Holly Point Road, Freeport, was arrested by sheriff's deputies April 22 on the charge of possession of a controlled substance without a prescription. On Feb. 12 Funti allegedly dropped a container with approximately 500 mg of suspected cocaine on the floor of a Bluewater Bay gym, 4591 E. Highway 20, an act that was captured on a video surveillance system after the container of cocaine was discovered during cleanup.

Jimmy Ernest Case, 33, of 416 Glendale Ave., Valparaiso, was arrested by Valparaiso police April 26 on the charges of aggravated assault (knife) and battery. On April 11, after the victim asked Case to leave his residence, Case allegedly put a knife to the victim's throat, then hit him with a fist multiple times.

Andrew Joseph Richards, a laborer, 22, of 511 W. Royal Palm Ave., DeFuniak Springs, was arrested by Niceville police April 21 for indecent exposure, which allegedly occurred April 8.

A 17-year-old Niceville boy, a student, was arrested by Niceville police April 25 for disorderly conduct, breach of peace. On March 19 the boy allegedly made arrangements to fight another juvenile boy at a church parking lot. Approximately 20 spectators who had learned of the fight showed up but the fight was moved after it was learned that

police may have been contacted. The two boys did fight the same day in the parking lot of Oak Creek Plaza, with more than 20 spectators present. Police said another warrant has been requested for the other combatant.

Jonathan Michael Hall, a car salesman, 28, of 403 Nathey St., Niceville, was arrested by Niceville police April 25 on the charges of domestic violence battery and violation of a domestic violence injunction.

Shawn Matthew Plemmons, a cook, 27, of 1660 19th St., Niceville, was arrested by Niceville police April 21 on the charges of aggravated battery on a pregnant victim and resisting an officer without violence.

A 17-year-old Niceville boy, a student, was arrested by Niceville police April 21 on charges of criminal mischief and battery. On March 24 the boy allegedly struck another male with his fists in the parking lot of a convenience store, 146 N. Palm Blvd., then punched and dented the victim's vehicle.

DUI arrests

Virgil Carlton Youngblood, 23, of 1280 J.R. Barnhill Road, Baker, was arrested by Niceville police for DUI on Highway 20, westbound, April 23 at 6:25 p.m. Youngblood was also cited for failure to maintain a single lane.

Thefts

A Valparaiso resident from the 200 block of Washington Avenue reported that early on April 6 an unknown male was observed inside her unlocked vehicle, but fled when the witness' headlights lit the suspect. The victim reported nothing appeared to be missing.

Please see BLOTTER, page A-6

Fire Department Reports

Niceville

The Niceville Fire Department responded to the following calls from April 26 through May 2.

0 Structure Fire	10 Emergency Medical Calls
0 Vehicle Fire	6 Vehicle Crash
1 Other Fire	0 Vehicle Crash with Extrication
1 Illegal Burn	5 Other Emergency Calls
0 False Alarms	0 Hazardous Conditions

Location	Situation	Date	Time
Reeves Street	Medical	4/26/10	00:22
Reeves Street	Cancelled	4/26/10	00:46
E. John Sims Pkwy	Cancelled	4/26/10	07:19
W. John Sims Pkwy	Vehicle Crash	4/26/10	16:32
John Sims/Bailey	Vehicle Crash	4/26/10	18:34
E. John Sims Pkwy	Medical	4/27/10	07:30
23rd Street	Medical	4/27/10	08:09
E. John Sims Pkwy	Service Call	4/27/10	09:18
Valparaiso Blvd.	Medical	4/27/10	14:19
Reeves Street	Medical	4/28/10	00:22
Palm Blvd/Beverly Dr	Vehicle Crash	4/28/10	14:49
N. Partin Drive	Alarm Activation	4/28/10	17:14
SR20E/Rocky Bayou	Vehicle Crash	4/28/10	19:05
Alonzo Court	Illegal Burning	4/29/10	15:37
Davis Drive	Medical	4/29/10	16:49
SR20/Palm Blvd.	Vehicle Crash	4/29/10	17:44
SR85 @ MM#17	Vehicle Crash	4/30/10	09:51
13th Street	Service Call	4/30/10	13:21
Davis Drive	Medical	4/30/10	14:56
Reeves Street	Medical	4/30/10	16:14
Hickory Avenue	Medical	5/01/10	07:30
Kelly Road	Dumpster Fire	5/02/10	09:33
Beaver Run Road	Medical	5/02/10	13:26

North Bay

The North Bay Fire Department responded to the following calls April 26 through May 2.

Location	Situation	Date	Time
N. White Point Rd.	EMS excluding vehicle	4/26/10	13:27
White Point Rd.	Medical assist EMS	4/26/10	14:42
N. White Point Rd.	EMS excluding vehicle	4/26/10	14:49
Pine Street	EMS excluding vehicle	4/26/10	16:06
Mid Bay Bridge, North Side	No incident found	4/27/10	18:04
Abaco Cove	Medical assist EMS	4/28/10	07:27

Please see FIRE, page A-6



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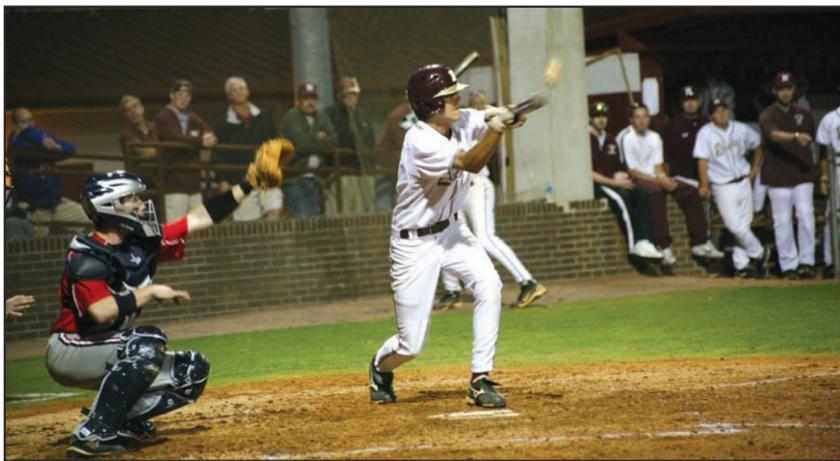
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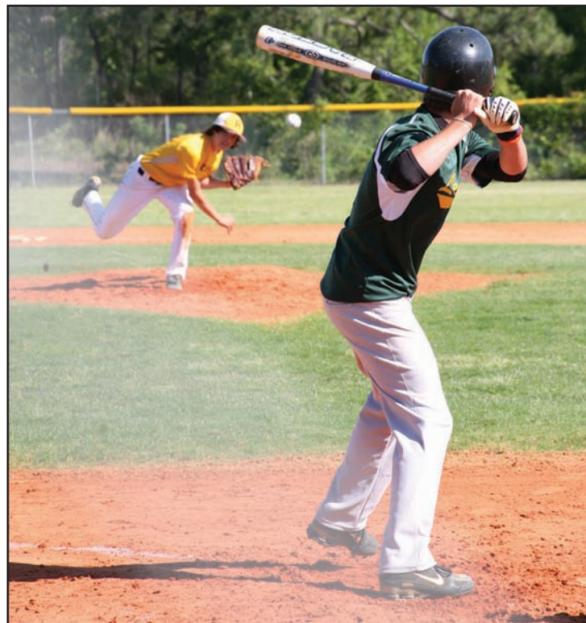
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Beacon photo by Sarah Clauson

Eagles drop district title game

Niceville High School's Cutter Tarpley tries to lay down a bunt during Thursday's 5-1 district championship defeat at the hands of Fort Walton Beach at home. The bunt was caught by an infielder.



Falcon at bat

Ruckel's Andrew Engle pitches to Lewis' Dylan Estep during last Wednesday's baseball game. Ruckel won the game, which was played at Lewis, 12-1.

Beacon photo by Sarah Clauson

Ruckel takes county crown

Ruckel Middle School's Chelsea Wilson gets congratulations from coach Kim Jones during last Wednesday's 12-0 victory over home team Lewis Middle School as Lewis first baseman Tia Donaway returns to her position. The Rams finished the season as county champions with a perfect 9-0 record.



Beacon photo by Sarah Clauson



Beacon photo by Sarah Clauson

Ram golfers finish perfect season

Ruckel Middle School golfer Andrew Smith putts as teammate Stephen Shepherd and Lewis Middle School golfer Zach Mullis watch Thursday at Rocky Bayou Country Club. Ruckel ran its record to 9-0 by defeating the Falcons, 162-184



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Runners-up in cheer contest

U.S. Gold Level 3 All Star Cheerleaders, eight of whom are from Bluewater Bay, took second place at the UCA Gulf Coast All Star Nationals Cheer Competition April 17 and 18 in Panama City Beach. U.S. Gold Level 2 cheerleaders also finished second.



Who's News

Okaloosa County's All-star Academic Team placed sixth in Division 2 at the Commissioner's Academic Challenge in Orlando April 15-17. Among the students competing for Okaloosa were **Jeremy Hsiang**, Niceville High School, **Sarah Hooper**, Northwest Florida State College High School, and **Emily Wilson**, Rocky Bayou Christian School.

SunTrust Mortgage, Inc. mortgage loan officer **Bobbie Jo Burns** has been recognized as the top customer satisfaction loan officer company-wide in 2009.

Her year-end customer service scores were some of the best among all SunTrust Mortgage loan officers. SunTrust's Regional LOB Manager Judy Sullivan presented Burns with the award for her excellent customer service at an awards ceremony held on March 18. ***



Bobbie Jo Burns

Destin Middle School third quarter Accelerated Reader Awards went to **Jacob Eiche**, sixth grade, first place, **Abby Conn**, eighth grade, second place, and **Shay Hullum**, seventh grade, third place. ***

The May 2010 Yard of the Month for the City of Niceville, avoco, is awarded to **Don and Bonnie Hall**, 2400 Dunn Court. Below, the May Yard of the Month for the Valparaiso Garden Club, belonging to **Steve and Charlotte Mays**, 102 Kinsey Court.



Jacob Eiche



Abby Conn



Shay Hullum

Ruckel student aces early ACT

By Kenneth Books
Beacon Staff Writer

Eighty-eight Okaloosa County seventh graders took the Duke University Talent Identification Program (TIP) test, designed to give highly intelligent youngsters a taste of either the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or American College Testing (ACT) exam. Forty-two earned state honors. To take the test, a student must have scored 95 percent or higher on a grade-level standardized achievement test, aptitude test, mental ability test or approved state criterion-referenced test or have scored at or above 125 on an IQ test.

But only one—Sophia Bergmann of Niceville—earned grand recognition, the highest honor available through the program.

Sophia, 12, a Ruckel student who gets straight As, scored in the top 1 percent of all seventh graders who took the test. She scored in the top 5 percent among high school students in Florida and the top 9



Beacon photo by Kenneth Books
Sophia Bergmann in a familiar pose—with an open book and a smile on her face.

percent nationally. Grand recognition students represent about the top 3 percent of the more than 61,000 youngsters who took the test.

Sophia took it in stride.

"It was really easier than what it was cracked up to be," she said. "Instead of seeming like pages and pages of calculus, it was mainly stuff I knew how to do with sines, cosines and tangents."

Elizabeth Bergmann, Sophia's mother, said her daughter decided about two weeks before the test that her father, Lewis, a physicist with Jacobs Engineering, should teach her trigonometry. "I told her not to worry about it, but I think she did some reading on her own," Elizabeth said.

While Sophia pulls straight As in the classroom, studies advanced American history online and takes eighth-grade classes via Florida Virtual School so she has more time next year for electives, she's far from a drudge. In fact, her activities and interests are legion.

She throws the discus on the school track team and has qualified for states in the event. She's enrolled in Destin Junior Lifeguards, learning lifesaving techniques. In the fall, she runs

cross-country and in the winter she's on the swimming team. She's also a second-degree black belt in taekwondo and assembled her own computer last summer.

Academically, Sophia embraces several passions. She's working on her IC3 (Internet Computing and Core Certification) and will probably sit for the test to grant her official sanction. She is the only seventh grader on the varsity academic team, belongs to the Ruckel book club and even reads hieroglyphics, a skill she figured out herself from a chart.

She's also a huge Star Trek fan, so much so that she dressed as Spock for Halloween. And she can give the split-finger "Live long and prosper" sign with either hand.

"She's a voracious reader," Elizabeth said. "Sometimes, that's a problem. I've had a discussion or two with a teacher after a kind note or e-mail that 'I caught Sophia reading during class.' She gets

Please see STUDENT, page B-2

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Docents, ushers honored

The Mattie Kelly Fine and Performing Arts Center at Northwest Florida State College recently honored the more than 100 volunteer docents and ushers who served this past arts season. The Mattie Kelly Arts Center ushers volunteered approximately 7,000 hours this year and the Art Gallery docents volunteered more than 400 hours. Ushers direct patrons to their seats, hand out programs and, most importantly, present a warm welcome to patrons of all events held at the Mattie Kelly Arts Center. Art Gallery docents help enhance the viewing experience of visitors to the center's two galleries by offering information and insight about current exhibitions and the college's permanent art collections. Docents also present a traveling art exhibit in local schools.

Ushers and docents normally commit to serve several times each season, September through July, and receive training. Ushers receive complimentary admission to the show occurring the night they serve. Docents who serve in the art galleries prior to a theater performance may also receive complimentary admission on a space available basis. Additional volunteer docents and ushers are needed. For information on becoming an usher, contact Delores Merrill, house manager, at 729-6065 and for information on becoming an art gallery docent



Mattie Kelly Arts Center ushers backstage with actor Ed Asner, who appeared this season at the center. From left: Leroy Donald, Paul Summitt, Nancy Whitehouse, Asner, Pam Donald, David Pearce, Lynette Pearce, Ann Surmiak.

contact Petra Hartzog at the art galleries at 729-6044.

Twin Cities residents recognized for serving as Ushers during the 2009 - 2010 arts season were:

Niceville: Inge Ackerman, Judy Alley, Darlene Anderson, Eileen and Charles Arpke, Audrey Bailey, Diane Barr, Mindy Barrett, Judi Bernstein, Phil Block, Michele Boles, Joan Bowman, Jane Broestler, Yolanda Byrd, Joy Crimmins, Sandra Darling, Sammie and Stan Davis, Sharol Durrenberger, Jan and Kurt Eichorst, Jean Far, Tom Feick, Lee Fryer, Katie Furby,

Michele Gomez, Marjorie Gray, Dee Gulbranson, Susie Hagwood, Audrey and Bob Hains, Laurie Hardy, Eleanor Harris, Be Hinley, Helen Hooper, John and Marsha Hooten, Sharon Johnson, Carol Lumsden, Gilbert March, Sue and Lee Marion, Dianne Maynard, Cheryl McDermott, Sandra and C.V. Miller, Donna Newton, Joanne Palm, Janet Pandzik, Sharlot Parker, Lynette and David Pearce, Ali Pfeiffer, Bill Readdy, Vicki Richburg, Roxanne Ruckdeschel, Eve Scarborough, George Sebren, Angela Smith, Anne Smith, Paul Summitt, Ann Surmiak, Barbara and Bill Thaler,

Judy Van Rees, David Vaughn, Ann Waters, Gary Wendel, Cathy White, Nancy Whitehouse and Liz Williams

Valparaiso: June Jepson, Marsha Plinske, Edith Santucci and Jean Smith

Recognized for serving as Docents during the 2009 - 2010 arts season were:

Niceville: Tom Feick, Renata Gauvin, Audrey Hains, John Hipp, Marilyn Mefford, Connie Morgan, Janet Pandzik, Neil Reilly, Elizabeth Shwiller, Karen Valdes and Elizabeth Welch

Valparaiso: Kay Harter and June Jepson.

Lewis musicians rated superior

The Lewis Middle School Jazz Band earned all As in each caption and all superior ratings from the judges at Festival of Champions music festival in Panama City April 23. Jazz band members are: Alex Hencinski, Sabrina Keesey, Aidan Hill, Annalyse Hambleton, Ben Huston, Mollee Brown, Andrew Royal, Bre Barclay-Jensen, Njera Frazier, Amanda Mitchell, Amanda Abate, Morgan Muscott, Jonathan Tope and Jessie Mason.

The Lewis Symphonic Band earned all Superior ratings from each of the four Florida Band Association (FBA) judges at Fort Walton Beach High School at the yearly FBA evaluation in March. Each judge had LMS

graded at straight As in every caption graded, including sight reading.

Lewis Middle School students who earned Superior medals at FBA Solo and Ensemble Festival in Gulf Breeze in February are: Solo Superiors—Ben Huston, Madeline Colón, McKenna Dean, Tanner Dean, Marshall Mosley, Katelyn Freisen, Jonathan Tope, Amanda Abate, Andrew Royal Ensemble Superiors were: Amanda Mithchell, Amanda Abate, Njera Frazier, Brenden Scott, Wanya Thompson, Mykael Briley, Breanna Jensen- Barclay, Morgan Muscott, Katelyn Freisen. Band Director is Robert Colón.

STUDENT

From page B-1

bored, especially with material she already knows."

She's also a fast reader. Before Star Trek, Sophia was "obsessed with Harry Potter," her mother said, even knowing the spells and incantations in the books. They went to a book store for a midnight sale when one of the books came out and she had read it all the way through by the next day.

Sophia, who expresses gratitude to her former teachers at Plew Elementary School and current teachers at Ruckel, is looking forward to college.

"I'll probably start off at Northwest Florida State College, and do that for two or three years," she said. "Then maybe FSU or UF for a bachelor's degree and out of state for more advanced study."

She said she's leaning toward studying astrophysics or engineering, "or maybe astronomy."

"She prefers the physical sciences over the biological sciences," Elizabeth said. "I keep trying to nudge her into the biological because I'm a nurse."

Her family has kept Sophia grounded as well. She's one of the few young people who has no cell phone and eschews designer clothing. She stays in shape for sports by running the trails at Northwest Florida State College as part of a summer conditioning program. Because of her wide variety of interests, she shows signs of growing up into a well-rounded woman.

But for now, her main interest seems to be feeding her mind, a goal her parents encourage.

"We have a little expression we like to use," Elizabeth said. "Keep your eye on the prize. The prize is education."

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Rocky students in Olympics

Seven students aged 8 to 20 from Special Services at Rocky Bayou Christian School participated in the Special Olympics at Corey Field, Pensacola, April 10.

Students participated in track and field events along with athletes from Escambia, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa and Walton counties.

Cory Eller, 8, placed second in the 50-meter dash; Jordan Helmstetter, 8, placed first in the 50-meter dash; Ben Hudson placed fourth in both the 50-meter dash and the softball throw; Luke Buckman, 11, placed first in both the standing long jump and the softball throw; Olivia Lorenz, 13, placed third in the 100-meter dash and first in the running long jump; Michelle Sandiford, 15, placed second in both the standing long jump and in the softball throw; and Jonathan Glover, 20, placed first in the 200-meter dash.



Participants in the Special Olympics at Corey Field, Pensacola. Seven students from Rocky Bayou Christian School Special Services competed.



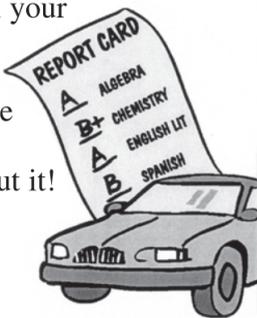
Beacon photo by Sarah Clauson

Song for firefighters

Chris Cadenhead sings during Saturday's Firefighters Appreciation Rally on the corner of Bayshore and Partin Drives, Niceville. The firefighters enjoyed music, had a chance to win door prizes and ate a free barbecue.

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In the Service

Army Pfc. **Daniel J. Merryman** has graduated from basic infantry training at Fort Benning, Columbus, Ga.

During the nine weeks of training, the soldier received training in drill and ceremonies, weapons, map reading, tactics, military courtesy, military justice, physical fitness, first aid, and Army history, core values and traditions. Additional training included development of basic combat skills and battlefield operations and tactics, and experiencing use of various weapons and weapons defenses available to the infantry crewman.

He is the son of Robert and Kim Merryman of Hopper Street, Niceville.

Merryman is a 2001 graduate of Niceville High School.

Air Force Airman 1st Class **Christopher M. Andersen** graduated from basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas.

The airman completed an intensive, eight-week program that included training in military discipline and studies, Air Force core values, physical fitness, and basic warfare principles and skills.

Airmen who complete basic training earn four credits toward an associate in applied science degree through the Community College of the Air Force.

Andersen is the son of Katherine Andersen of

Northgap Street, San Antonio, Texas, and Michael Andersen of Tala Way, Niceville.

Kathleen P. Crockett has been awarded an Air Force ROTC scholarship to attend a host college or university. High school seniors from across the United States are selected after a competitive application process based on comprehensive tests scores, scholastic achievement, school officials' evaluations, extra-curricular activities, and community involvement.

The majority of scholarships cover full college tuition, provide a textbook allowance and pay most laboratory or incidental fees. The scholarship program also pays a \$350 tax-free monthly allowance to each student during the academic year, which increases to \$500 by his

or her senior year. The value of a scholarship may exceed \$100,000, depending on the student's choice of school and the type of scholarship offered.

Upon graduating from college and completing the ROTC program, the cadets are commissioned as second lieutenants in the Air Force. The new lieutenants select and enter various career fields to train as pilots, navigators, engineers, medical, personnel, business management fields, and special operations.

She is the daughter of Dennis K. and Nan P. Crockett of Cash Smith Road, Keymar, Md.

Her grandparents, Clarence W. and Felissa Crockett, reside on Meadowbrook Court, Niceville.

Crockett currently attends Walkersville High School, Md.

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Holy Name marks 50 years in Niceville

Church, land cost less than \$100K in '59

By Del Lessard
Beacon Staff Writer

What started with a dozen families in Niceville half a century ago, today serves more than 650 families, and continues to grow. Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Church celebrated its 50th anniversary during ceremonies held at the church in April.

In 1949, when Edna Kelly was a junior in high school, her family moved to Niceville so her father could work at Eglin Air Force Base's McKinley Climatic Lab. Not only was housing and shopping limited in post-WWII Okaloosa County, worship places for Catholics were also restricted. Those who had base passes would often drive to Eglin to attend Sunday services in the base chapel, said Kelly, where religious training for children was also held on Saturdays. Those without an Eglin connection drove or car-pooled to attend Mass at St. Mary's in Fort Walton Beach, then the only Catholic church in the county.

In 1958, Edna, her husband, RJ, their children and other family members were among 12 Niceville families who met in an effort to establish a Catholic parish in Niceville. Ground was broken on a 25-acre site the next year.

The land was purchased for \$9,375, while the cost of the church was set at \$75,000: \$30,000 from St. Mary's, \$25,000 from the Diocese Holy Name chapel fund, \$2,000 from parishioners and \$18,000 borrowed. Church and annex plans and specifications were drawn by Air Force Lt. Mike Maxwell.



Beacon photo by Del Lessard
Deacon Gary McBride wears a hard hat in the construction area of the new Holy Name gym



The 1959 ground-breaking of Holy Name Catholic Church. Before the church was founded, Catholics had to travel to Fort Walton Beach or Eglin to worship.

Much of the construction was performed by volunteer labor. Ralph Reese did the electrical work and Jerome Bauer was recognized for his engineering expertise.

On Easter Sunday, 1960, the doors to Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Church opened and the first Mass was celebrated. The

liturgy of the Mass was then still in Latin.

"While there has been tremendous changes in the church—as well as society over the last 50 years—we're still a community of believers who work together to gain salvation," said Jim Reese, an altar boy at that first Mass who

moved back to Niceville in 2005. His parents, Ralph and Evelyn Reese, hosted the first organizational meeting to form the church in July, 1958.

In 1964, a full-time priest was assigned to Holy Name, upgrading its status from a mission church to a parish.

The church campus on Valparaiso Boulevard continually expanded over the course of the next five decades. Ground was broken for a new rectory in 1965, and a parish hall was built the next year as a gathering place for social events as well as classrooms for Sunday school classes. In 1967, the church held its first confirmation ceremony for 98 high school students who had attended classes for a year.

"We taught our own children," Kelly said about religious studies once the Niceville church was built and local worshippers no longer had to rely on the Eglin chapel or St. Mary's. Drawing many of its parishioners from Eglin, it shouldn't surprise that in 1976 a 19-year-old airman, Mike Marley, formed the first

Catholic Youth Organization (CYO). In 1981 an education building with eight classrooms and a library was constructed, and an administration building was added in 1995. A 50-seat chapel was built in 1998.

Gary McBride, one of a half-dozen lay deacons at Holy Name, today helps the congregation cope with a nationwide shortage of priests. Lay deacons, which weren't in wide use in the United States until the mid 1970s and 1980s, said that today he and the other deacons can perform baptisms, marriages, burials, as well as preach the Gospel.

McBride said that just as Holy Name began as a mission church sponsored by St. Mary's, the Niceville church sponsored two other mission churches in Okaloosa County,

including what is today Christ Our Redeemer Church in Bluewater Bay, and Our Lady of Victory in Crestview.

Among its community outreach programs, McBride mentioned Cub Scout and Boy Scout units, senior citizen programs, St. Vincent de Paul charity and meetings of AA, to name a few. That community involvement is expected to expand in the near future with a \$1.6 million construction project now under way to build a 10,000-square-foot community life center. The building, he said, includes a gym, which will also be used for functions such as services, community events, guest speakers and dinners.

"It's still a real vibrant community," said Kelly, who is the oldest living parishioner still active in the parish.

Niceville baritone to sing at St. Paul

Baritone Jeffrey Ryne Cherry will present a solo recital at St. Paul Lutheran Church Sunday, June 6, at 6 p.m.

Cherry graduates May 8 from Stetson University in Deland, and is a voice performance major studying under Dr. Craig Maddox. He has performed principle roles in *Die Zauberflote* and *L'italiana in Algiers* and was most recently seen in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* as the title role. He has extensive oratorio experience including



Jeffrey Ryne Cherry

performing the baritone solo in a seven city national tour of Durufle's *Requiem* with the Stetson University Concert Choir.

He will pursue a Masters of Music while attending the University of Cincinnati in the fall.

Cherry, a 2005 graduate of Niceville High School, is the son of Kandy Cherry of Niceville.

St. Paul Lutheran Church is located at 1407 E. John Sims Parkway in Niceville.

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Worship Schedule

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Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Matt 28:19

2010 CALENDAR

Encaustic art exhibit

The Niceville Library is featuring an encaustic art exhibit and display by local artist Sue Tarkin through May 29.

Encaustic art is an art form for anyone. The artist puts wax on an iron and creates. Anyone can make cards and paintings, photo books and jewelry. Her display shows everything you need to get started.

Soccer directors sought

PAL Soccer League is looking for volunteers to serve on the board of directors. Next meeting 6:30 p.m., Monday, May 17, Niceville Police Department conference room. Call Howard Hill at 678-2182.

Library to teach French

The Valparaiso Community Library will offer French classes Wednesday and Friday afternoons, 2-4 during the summer for beginners of all ages. Reservations must be made before June 1. The library also offers the Rosetta Stone language program in Spanish. To reserve the Spanish language computer, call the library at 729-5406.

Artists display works

Area artists from the Local Color Artists Club will feature their latest works of art at the Artful Things Gallery, 1087 E. John Sims Parkway, Niceville, through May 6.

Artists displayed are: Amy Jo Rosati, Bill Stephenson, Gini Simpson, Helen Blair, Lou Kaunzinger, Lynette Miesen, Marie Jackson and Patricia Mauldin. Gallery hours: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Tuesday-Friday and Saturday 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

GOP women slate Lt. Gov.

The Republican Women of Okaloosa Federated will meet Wednesday, May 5, at the Holiday Inn Resort, Okaloosa Island. Socializing will begin at 11:30 a.m. and lunch will be served at noon. To accommodate working women, and those who can only stay for a limited time, there will be a "Dine and Dash" table.

Florida Lt. Gov. Jeff. Kottkamp, who is a candidate for attorney general, will speak.

Reservations: Donna Pattison, 651-5416 or donnapattison@cox.net by noon on Friday, April 30. Cost is \$16 for members and \$18 for guests. Info: rwof.org

Covenant sets yard sales

Covenant Hospice will hold garage sales at 1419 29th St., Niceville Fridays and Saturdays, May 7, 8, 21 and 22, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. to benefit its non-funded and under-funded programs in Okaloosa and Walton counties.

For more information or to donate, call Lill Jennings, 729-1800.

RBCS sets sale, car wash

To help finance its mission trip to Belize this summer, the Rocky Bayou Christian School Missions Club will hold a garage sale and car wash Saturday, May 8, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. at Cain's Air Conditioning and Heating, 500 Hwy. 85 North, Niceville.

The club is accepting donations for

Day of Prayer

The 59th Annual National Day of Prayer will take place Thursday, May 6. A local observance, sponsored by the Twin Cities Ministerial Association, will be held at Niceville City Hall, 12:15 - 1 p.m. May 6.



the garage sale. Drop them off at Cain's. Information: 974-8285 or 678-6233.

Tea party to meet

The Niceville-Valparaiso Tea Party (a non-partisan, non-profit group of concerned citizens) meets at Niceville City Hall the second and fourth Mondays of each month at 6 p.m. The next meeting is Monday, May 10

Info: 217-9244.

Grease auditions planned

The Fine and Performing Arts Division of Northwest Florida State College will hold auditions for the college's summer musical production of Grease Monday, May 10, 6:30 p.m. on the main stage of the Mattie Kelly Arts Center at the NWFSC Niceville campus. Registration begins at 6 p.m. in the lobby. The show will cast approximately 30 appropriately aged duck-tailed, gum-snapping, hip-shaking Burger Palace boys and Pink Ladies girls. Rehearsals begin May 11 and will continue until the scheduled performances of Grease July 14-17 at NWFSC. All audition materials will be passed out the night of auditions, so those who audition do not need to bring prepared material.

Hydrangea program set

The next program in the Growing and Showing series will be held at the Valparaiso Community Library May 10, 9 a.m.

The seminar will focus on different species of hydrangeas and will highlight those that grow well in our area. The lecture and PowerPoint presentation will be given by Marie Harrison, who will discuss growing conditions, pruning, drying, using in floral designs, and other mysteries and characteristics of this popular group of plants.

The program is open and free to the public and reservations are not required. Info: 729-5406 or marieharrison@valp.net.

RBCS Open House

Rocky Bayou Christian School Open House Tuesday, May 11, 7 p.m. or Wednesday, May 12, 9 a.m., at Grace Presbyterian Chapel, 2101 N. Partin Drive, Niceville (at the entrance to RBCS). Learn about high-achievement elementary school and full service college preparatory seventh through 12th grade Academy. Find out about special services programs, including how a McKay Scholarship can give the parents of a student with disabilities more school choices. Find out how tuition assistance can make a RBCS education possible. You're also invited to a campus tour on

Wednesday, May 12, after the 9 a.m. open house.

Outhouse archaeology

As part of the Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida's new History Rocks! spring/summer program series for kids, Outhouse Archaeology for grades 1-5 will be presented Wednesday, May 12, 9 a.m.-noon. Cost: \$15 members, \$20 non-members. For reservations, call 678-2615.

Charity Girls' Night Out

Uniquely Chic, 4591 Hwy. 20 East, Niceville, will hold a Girls' Night Out—A Party with a Purpose, May 13 4-8 p.m. to benefit the Taylor Haugen Foundation. Tickets are 2/\$15. Numerous raffle items will be available during the evening, proceeds of which also go to the Taylor Haugen Foundation. Uniquely Chic is offering ticket holders 15 percent off storewide during the event. Complete your evening if you wish at Helga's Restaurant & Biergarten, where 15 percent of your bill will be donated to the Taylor Haugen Foundation. Tickets are available at Uniquely Chic, 279-6361, or Helga's Restaurant 678-6800, 4504 Hwy. 20 Niceville, or call 687-9734 to purchase tickets or make a raffle prize donation. More details available at shopuniquelychic.com or taylorhaugen.org

Fine arts exhibition

The Arts and Design Society of Fort Walton Beach, Inc., presents the 18th annual Southeast Regional Juried Fine Arts Exhibition in the McIlroy Gallery through June 3. In addition to Best of Show, the juror chooses first, second and third place winners and several honorable mentions. The Holzhauser Gallery will feature 2009 Best in Show (Golden Brush Award) winner Ed Chandler of Fort Walton Beach. Chandler creates extraordinary images in color photography as he juxtaposes extreme close-up shots with vibrant compositions. An artists' reception and awards ceremony will be held Sunday, May 2, 2-4 p.m.

Mail carriers collect food

Mail carriers in Okaloosa and Walton counties will collect non-perishable goods for their annual food drive Saturday, May 8. Place all food-stuffs in a bag near (or tied to) your mailbox and carriers will take your donations to local food banks.

Take Mom to lunch

Immanuel Anglican Church will hold its fifth annual Mother's Day luncheon. All women may participate Saturday, May 8, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. This year's theme is "We are all Construction Sites... building on a firm foundation." Call 837-6324.

College plans Greece tour

Northwest Florida State College plans a tour to Greece with David C. Simmons, Ph.D. humanities, and Professor D. Ann Waters, Ed.S. art history, from May 8-18. The itinerary includes such places as Athens, Olympia, Delphi and the islands of Santorini, Mykonos and Delos. The tour is open to the community. Info: Professor D. Ann Waters: watersa@nwfsc.edu or 729-5302.

Safeguard your child

The Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office and Beach Community Bank will hold a SafeAssured event Saturday, May 8, 9 a.m.-noon at the bank's main office, 17 S.E. Eglin Parkway, Fort Walton Beach.

SafeAssured Digital ID Kits allow parents and guardians to put a child's identifying information and video on a mini-CD that is maintained by the family.

Appointments are being accepted for children ages 5 and up. To schedule an appointment: Jennifer Tallman with Beach Community Bank, 244-9900, ext. 255 or e-mail jennifert@beachcommunitybank.com

Fitness regime offered

If you're looking for a challenging workout or just want to become more physically fit, join the ROTC students at Northwest Florida State College for physical training this summer, and get into shape free of charge as the program opens its workout routine to the public. Youth and adults of any athletic ability, who are at least 16 years of age, are invited to join the students in the college's ROTC program for circuit training, upper body and abdominal training, cardio training, stretching, running and team sports every Monday through Thursday, May 10-Aug. 19, 6-7 a.m. at the Niceville campus. Participants meet by the ROTC building at the west end of campus by the ball fields.

Info: Capt. David Avallone, 729-6022 or avallond@nwfsc.edu.

Chamber breakfast set

The Niceville Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce will hold its *Second Wednesday Breakfast* May 12 at the Niceville Community Center, 204 N Partin Drive, beginning at 7:15 a.m. with coffee and conversation, followed by breakfast at 7:30 a.m. This month's sponsor is Twin Cities Hospital. Chamber members, their guests, and prospective members may attend.

Garden club anniversary

The Bluewater Bay Garden Club will celebrate its 25th anniversary Thursday, May 13 at Rutherfords, 465 in Regatta Bay. Social time begins at 11 a.m. Lunch will be served at noon. All past presidents have been invited. Former club members and those interested in joining are also invited. Reservations and information: Rose Szymanski, 499-3449.

15 women added to Wall of Honor

The Okaloosa County Commission on the Status of Women (OCCSW) honored 15 women, including three from the Twin Cities, who have contributed to the well being of area citizens in the Women's Wall of Honor ceremony held at the University of West Florida Emerald Coast, Fort Walton Beach Campus Tuesday, May 4.

The honorees include Dr. Joyce Gillie Gossom of UWF Emerald Coast; Sherry Harlow and Marie Harrison of Valparaiso; Marnie Tate, Aimee Shaffer, Laura Hussey, Eddie Mae Owens, Joanna Musser and Linda P. Evanchyk of Fort Walton Beach; Rosanna G. McCurry and Patricia Moran of Mary Esther; Carol Koch of Cincobayou; Judith Boudreaux of Niceville; and Karen Lauer and Jean Davis Downing of Shalimar.

Harrison, a retired Okaloosa County school teacher, continues to contribute to the area through her many gardening activities. She is a Master Gardener, nationally Accredited Flower Show Judge, national flower show schools instructor on horticulture, and a floral design instructor. She is the author of four books specific to

Gulf Coast gardening and a contributing writer to Florida Gardening Magazine, Dave's Garden Web site, and various area newspapers.

Harlow, marketing director of Eglin Federal Credit Union, was a founding member of the Emerald Coast Public Relations Organization in 1992 and has served in many roles in both ECPRO and the Southern Public Relations Federation, which named her Practitioner of the Year in 2000.

Boudreaux is dedicated to her community through city government, the Chamber of Commerce, Kiwanis Club, her church and the schools. She has been elected repeatedly to the Niceville City Council; the Kiwanis Club has honored her many times and the Chamber named her Citizen of the Year.

The honorees' names are placed on a plaque located in the library at the Fort Walton Beach campus of the University of West Florida with a nearby book

The Okaloosa County Commission on the Status of Women (OCCSW) was established by the Board of County Commissioners in 1995 to recognize and honor women who have made significant contributions to the improvement of women and citizens of Okaloosa County. For more information, contact Lois Hoyt, lahoyt@cox.net or visit occsw.org.



Sherry Harlow



Judith Boudreaux



Marie Harrison

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Big leaf

Audrey Young of Valparaiso shows off the flower and leaves of an ashe magnolia. According to the University of Florida extension Web site, ashe magnolia is a smaller form of the larger bigleaf magnolia, which is found only in the Florida Panhandle. The ashe variety is a large shrub or small tree that typically grows to about 25 feet high, with leaves close to two feet long and a foot wide, with a 6- to 8-inch diameter flower.

Beacon photo by Del Lessard



Garden club plans silver celebration

The Bluewater Bay Garden Club will celebrate its 25th anniversary Thursday, May 13, at Rutherfords 465 in Regatta

Bay at 11 a.m., with lunch at noon. Founder and first president Betty Burr will attend and all other past presidents have been invited as well.

Betty Burr, founder and first president of the Bluewater Bay Garden Club.

For more information, call Audrey Hains at 897-3624 or to make a luncheon reservation, call Rose Szymanski at 499-3449.



To help finance its mission trip to Belize this summer, the Rocky Bayou Christian School Missions Club will hold a

BIG GARAGE SALE AND CAR WASH

SATURDAY, MAY 8, 9 A.M. TO 2 P.M., at Cain's Air Conditioning & Heating, 500 Hwy. 85 North, Niceville.

The club is accepting donations for the garage sale. Drop them off at Cain's. Information: 974-8285 or 678-6233.

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- End Unit, Marina Cove Townhome, 3/2.5\$199,500
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- Newly Remodeled Family Home, Bluewater, 3/2\$217,000
- Marina Cove Townhome, 3/2.5, Views of the Bay\$219,900
- Townhome Views of the Bay, New Kitchen, 3/2.5\$240,000
- Waterfront, Marina Cove Townhome 3/2.5\$249,900
- Magnolia Plantation, Custom Upgrades, 3/2 \$255,000
- Lido Village, 3/2.5\$279,000
- BWB Magnolia Plantation 3/2, Golf Course, Brick Home, Sunroom, Tile, Stainless, Granite\$359,900
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Local brand hits national spotlight

Advertising Feature

One Hour Air Conditioning and Heating was featured on NBC's, "The Apprentice" May 2.

"We want to thank everyone who tuned in to watch our brand be featured on the show," marketing manager Erik Wyrwal said. "It was a tremendous honor to have the brand on the show and we want to thank everyone who supported us by tuning in."

Along with being on a national television show and with summer fast approaching the Florida Panhandle, One Hour Air Conditioning and Heating recommends taking a long look at the air systems cooling your house and searching for ways to save money.

"First and foremost we respect our customer's time," franchise owner Lenny Siers said. "Most of our calls are handled the same day and as soon as possible. We strive to make ourselves available when the customer needs us."

One Hour makes that commitment clear in its company motto, "Always on time ... Or you don't pay a dime."

"We are in business for our client's convenience, not ours, so we are always on time and available when they need service,"



We're proud to be your local air and heating service provider—look for the big yellow truck.

Lenny said.

When customers call, they are given a two-hour window—if a technician is not on site in that two-hour window, their repair is free. On-site estimates are

always free.

Not only does the company want to ensure quick service, it also wants to ensure quality service as well.

"We will do everything in our power to fix it right the first time," general manager Kenny Sirmans said.

Their highly trained staff services all models of air conditioning systems, and also offers air quality evaluations of new equipment.

This year, the staff of One Hour is introducing insulation blowing as a way to save customers money on their electric bills every month.

"When you increase insulation in your house, you provide a bigger barrier between the roof and the outdoors, keeping the cooler air trapped inside," manager Stacy Hebert said. "You may also qualify to claim up to 30 percent of the work on taxes next year."

Customers can choose between pink fiberglass or cellulose insulation, which is mostly made of recycled paper product.

The key to One Hour Air's success is the emphasis it places on "service to customers and mak-

ing them happy."

"We want to go the extra mile for our customer," Wyrwal said. "Niceville and Valparaiso has given us the opportunity to be the kind of outreaching company we want to be. All our service is for the community."

As a special thanks to the community, this baseball season One Hour is sponsoring a Niceville/Valparaiso Little League team. The workers of One Hour are also doing a company-wide volunteering of their time May 15 to Habitat for Humanity.

"We just want to say thanks to our community and reach out as much as we can," Wyrwal said.

So why wait for the air conditioning system to fail in the middle of summer's first heat wave? Give One Hour Air Conditioning and Heating a call at 398-4443, and schedule an appointment to replace the old, low-efficiency system with a new system that will save energy and work reliably. One Hour serves all Okaloosa County and parts of Walton and Santa Rosa counties. It is located at 95 E. John Sims Pkwy, Niceville.

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