

The Bay Beacon

12 Pages, 2 Sections, 3 Inserts

Wednesday, July 6, 2011

50¢

**UP
COMING**

Thursday, 1 p.m.



The **Valparaiso Community Library**, 459 Valparaiso Parkway, will offer "Writer's Block," a **creative writing workshop** for middle school, high school and college students.
Info: 729-5406

Saturday, 9:30-10:30 a.m.



The **Fred Gannon Rocky Bayou State Park** will hold a youth day with a **story time and nature walk**.

Kids will discover a world that exists just beneath their feet, and includes ants, flowers and other creatures.

Program is included in park admission fee.
Info: 833-9144.

Tuesday, 11:30 a.m.

The **American Society for Training & Development** will hold "Change management: A seven step model for success" presented by

Dr. David Goetsch at the NWFSC K Building.

The cost will be \$17 for nonmembers, \$12 for chapter members.

For info and reservations: astd-emeraldcoast.org.

Calendar, B-3.

College eyes bid to manage speech

By **Mike Griffith**
Beacon Correspondent

Northwest Florida State College's president has proposed a plan to manage public speech on campus.

The plan, proposed by President Ty Handy, was discussed during a college board of trustees meeting June 29 on the main campus in Niceville.

According to a draft discussed

during the meeting, the proposed rules would establish "designated public speaking areas" on the Niceville campus and at four NWFSC branches in Okaloosa and Walton counties.

People wishing to use such an area would be "required to reserve the space" at least 48 hours beforehand. Also required would be "a brief description of the type of activ-



Ty Handy

ities proposed."

No criteria for granting or denying a request were specified.

No problems arising from public speaking at NWFSC were cited in discussion of the proposal, about which at least one trustee expressed misgivings.

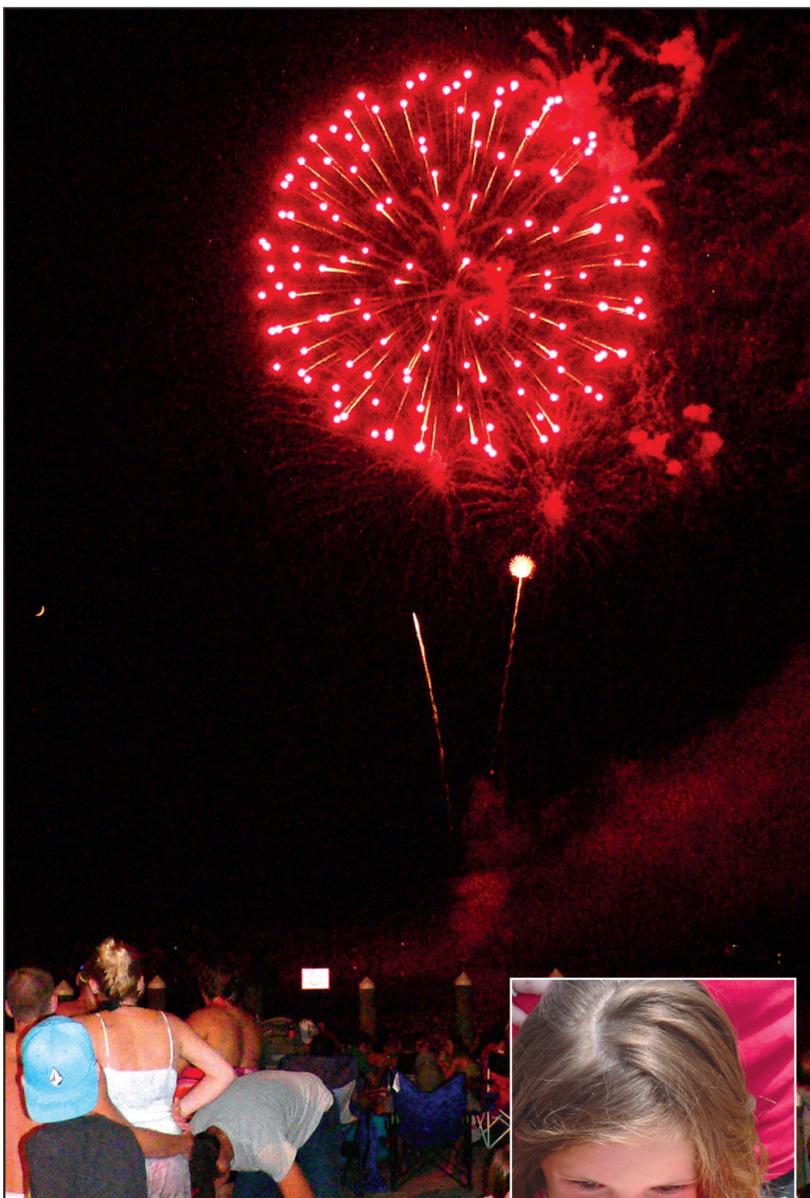
A draft of the proposed policy, which trustees tabled until July 20, states that "such an area is considered

a 'safe haven' where individuals may express their views and challenge existing conventions in any field—art, science, politics, religion, etc." At the Niceville campus, for example, the designated public speaking areas would be:

—In the center of the quadrangle formed by the learning resource

Please see COLLEGE, page A-4

The rockets' red glare



Beacon photos by Mike Griffith
Crowds at Lions Park in Niceville ooh and aah at the annual fireworks display, commemorating Independence Day Monday evening. Inset, a contestant works on a slice of watermelon during the melon eating contest at Lincoln Park in Valparaiso.



Local schools score well in state ratings

By **Del Lessard**
Beacon Staff Writer

Okaloosa County schools continue to shine in comparison with other public schools in Florida.

"It's amazing that teachers and students continue to step up every time they raise the bar," said Alexis Tibbetts, Okaloosa County schools superintendent.

The Florida Department of Education Thursday released grades on 2,547 elementary and middle schools Thursday. Twenty-three of 25 graded Okaloosa schools received "A"

grades; two received "Bs."

Eglin Elementary on Eglin Air Force Base did not receive a school grade this year. School district officials explained that in order for a school to receive a school grade it must have at least 30 students with scores in both the current and prior years. As a K-4 school, Eglin Elementary relies on its fourth-grade population to fulfill this requirement. In 2011 this population was such that it dropped below that minimum cell size

Please see SCHOOLS, page A-3

Gaetz tapped as president of Fla. Senate

By **Del Lessard**
Beacon Staff Writer

Sen. Don Gaetz, R., Niceville, has been designated the Senate President for the 2013-14 term, assuming he is re-elected and that Republicans retain control of the body.

Current Florida Senate President Mike Haridopolos, R., Merritt Island, announced his party's selection June 29. Gaetz will formally be designated in Tallahassee Sept. 19.

"Sen. Gaetz is supported by an overwhelming majority of



Don Gaetz

his colleagues in the Republican caucus," said Haridopolos said. "By his accomplishments and his service to others, he has gained the confidence and respect of the Senate and is more than ready for the responsibilities of leading our chamber and our state."

"I am deeply grateful to my fellow senators for the honor of a lifetime and to President Haridopolos for his example of unwavering conservative

Please see GAETZ, page A-3

Chairman saw opportunity for Richburg to resign

More testimony in college dispute with ex-president

By **Del Lessard**
Beacon Staff Writer

Two former and one current trustee of Northwest Florida State College testified last week in a civil dispute between the college and its former president, James R. Richburg.

Although the three trustees did not vote to fire Richburg, at least two of them testified that, even before he was dismissed, they had come to believe that a change in college leadership was inevitable.

Vercell Vance, Joseph "Jody" Henderson and Wesley Wilkerson testified June 30 in a small conference room on the college's Niceville campus. Other college officials testified the previous week.

None of three men had voted to terminate Richburg at an April 28, 2009, board of trustees meeting at which the college president was fired by a 4-3

vote.

Vance and Wilkerson voted against termination, while Henderson abstained.

Wilkerson, who was chairman of the college board of trustees in April 2009, testified that he felt Richburg's termination was "premature," and instead preferred a suspension. He said one reason he preferred suspension was to give Richburg a chance to resign voluntarily.

In any event, Wilkerson said, he knew that the college could not continue under an interim president for the years that Richburg was expected to need to defend himself. "We had to have leadership," Wilkerson said in his testimony as Richburg looked on from across the table.

Wilkerson also testified that he had been surprised to learn that then-Florida Rep. Ray Sansom, hired by Richburg in

Please see RICHBURG, page A-4



Beacon photo by Del Lessard
Attorneys continued to take sworn testimony from former and current trustees of Northwest Florida State College Thursday in a civil case in which ex-president James R. Richburg, far left, wearing glasses, contends he was fired without proper cause. Pictured, former trustee Joseph "Jody" Henderson, right, listens to a question from Richburg lawyer John Tucker.

Hughes, having quit, names acting tax collector

By Del Lessard
Beacon Staff Writer

Former Okaloosa County Tax Collector Chris Hughes said that the vacancy left by his resignation would be filled, at least for now, by Assistant Tax Collector John Holguin.

"Until the governor announces his choice as to my replacement, John Holguin will serve as the acting Tax Collector beginning July 1," Hughes said in a statement Thursday, his last day in office.

Hughes announced earlier last month that he would resign June 30, well before the end of his four-year term, which ends in late 2012. "God has called me to serve Him in full-time Christian ministry and I wish to spend more time in those pur-

suits," he stated. He also cited family considerations.

"In accordance with Florida statutes, and after discussion with Gov. (Rick) Scott's office, the assistant tax collector shall assume responsibilities of the constitutional officer until a selection is made by the governor from the appointment committee's pool of applicants," Hughes said in his statement.

Holguin, 36, of Fort Walton Beach, said, "I am grateful for the governor's office faith in my abilities to continue offering the exemplary services the citizens of Okaloosa County have grown accustomed to."

On Friday Lane Wright, press spokesman for Gov. Scott, identified the following people as having applied to fill the

vacancy created by Hughes' resignation: Holquin, James "Jim" Bagby, Richard "Dick" Reinlie, William H. G a r v i e , Douglas A. C o n n e l l , B a i l e y " K a b e " Woods and William C. Head.

L a n e said there was no schedule for a permanent appointment, and added that Scott does not choose the person who fills the position during the interim.

Hughes was elected tax collector five times since 1992. In 2009, after his most recent

election, he sparked controversy after it was disclosed he had given employees at least \$1 million in bonuses without reporting the extra payments to state officials as required. More recently, after moving out of his former home in Shalimar, in recent months he declined to disclose his new address.

"With our Crestview office relocating in the coming weeks, it is imperative that we stay focused on the business of transitioning into the sole provider of driver license services in Okaloosa County along with the many other aspects of our office," Holguin said.

According to Hughes, Holguin is a certified Florida collector assistant, a senior

business tax official and holds a chancellor's certificate in public administration as a finance officer. He is a development leader in government collections and efficiency and a member of several associations. He is chairman of the State Board of the Florida Association of Business Tax Officials.

He is actively involved at both the state and local level with the tax collector's office and oversees the operations of over 80 employees in the five offices located throughout the county.

Holguin's wife, Keri, is also employed by the tax collector's office.

The Okaloosa County Tax Collector is a constitutional

office that collects and distributes over one-quarter billion dollars annually in taxes and fees.

The office:
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Chris Hughes

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Celebrating America's birthday

A group of senior golfers at Bluewater Bay, who call themselves the "Gaggle," listen as member Jerome Barnes plays the national anthem on his trombone on Independence Day. Afterward, as they have for 25 years now, they competed in a "flag tournament." First-through fourth-place winners were Jim Musselman, Johnnie Pritchard, Ken Hamilton and Neal McGillicuddy.

Submitted photo

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SCHOOLS

From page A-1

requirement and no school grade was calculated by the DOE.

All public schools in the Twin Cities area whose grades were posted received "As," same as last year.

High school grades have not

yet been released.

Florida public high schools will receive their grades in December, according to a DOE spokeswoman. The department last year changed its rating criteria for high schools, reducing reliance on student performance on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Tests (FCAT), she said. Greater weight is now

placed on graduation rates and the number of students taking advanced courses, for example, she said.

Statewide, even with an increase in writing standards this year, the grades of public elementary and middle schools remained relatively stable according to a DOE statement. As a result, more than three-

quarters of these schools continue to be "high performing" (receiving either an "A" or "B"). Some positive exceptions to this stability include gains in the number of elementary schools graded "A" (82 more this year) and a reduction in those graded "F" (31 in 2011, down from 44). Okaloosa County schools

scored well, with 79 percent of students meeting "high standards" in reading, 83 in math, 82 percent in writing and 66 percent in science. The district as a whole received a grade of "A," as did the Santa Rosa County and Walton County districts.

Walton County students had similar results as 72 percent met

high standards in reading, 80 percent in math, 83 percent in writing and 54 percent in science.

"Our teachers, principals and school district leaders deserve tremendous credit this year for answering the call of higher standards with resounding success," said Florida Education Commissioner John L. Winn.

GAETZ

From page A-1

leadership," said Gaetz said. "Being Republican Senate President-designate is a privilege which I realize must be earned and re-earned every day."

"My hope is to be able to ensure that when state laws are written there is an understanding of Florida's many differences," Gaetz said Friday. "Oftentimes a law is passed because of a certain problem in South or Central Florida," he said. "Northwest Florida and the Panhandle often don't have the same problems as the rest of the state," he said.

Laws tend to be inflexible, he said, and mentioned a controversial new septic tank-inspection law. He went on to say he hopes to ensure North Florida is "treated fairly and equitably."

When Haridopolos assumed the Senate presidency in 2010, he appointed Gaetz as chairman of

the Senate Reapportionment Committee and head of the Senate's appropriations subcommittee with jurisdiction over transportation, trade, tourism and economic development. Haridopolos described the two as "close allies and even closer friends."

The Senate President is a constitutional officer who leads the Florida Senate for a two-year term. The president, who is elected by members of the Senate, manages the operations of the Senate and presides over its sessions. The President's many duties include: selecting a Majority Leader, appointing Senators to standing Senate committees, appointing committee chairs, and appointing citizens to a variety of boards and commissions.

Gaetz was elected in 2006 and re-elected in 2010. His Senate district, No. 4, includes much of Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton and Bay counties.

Because of reapportionment, Gaetz and every other senator

seeking to continue in office must run again in 2012. His assumption of the Senate presidency is, of course, contingent on his re-election, and on the election of enough GOP senators to retain that party's control of the body. Currently Republicans hold 70 percent of the Senate's 40 seats.

Gaetz previously served as Okaloosa County Superintendent of Schools, and before that as a school board member.

Gaetz, born in North Dakota the son of a state legislator, co-founded Miami-based Vitas Healthcare Corp., the nation's largest provider of hospice care, in

1978, four years before Congress enacted Medicare reimbursement for hospice services. He and his partners sold the company in 2004.

Gaetz and his wife, Vicky, live in Niceville and have two adult children: Erin, an editor and sports journalist in New York City,

and Matt, a Fort Walton Beach lawyer elected in 2011 as a state representative from Okaloosa and Santa Rosa counties, including most of the Twin Cities area. Don and Matt are the first father-son, senator-representative team serving simultaneously in the state's history.

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RICHBURG

From page A-1

2008 as a part-time vice president of the college, was paid at the full rate of \$110,000 a year.

Wilkerson said it had been his understanding, based on discussions with Richburg, that Sansom's annualized salary would be pro-rated, or reduced, to reflect that



James R. Richburg

the lawmaker was splitting his time between college and legislative duties in Tallahassee.

Richburg's hiring of Sansom Nov. 18, 2008, the same day the Destin Republican took office as Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives, sparked a controversy that culminated in the indictment of both men over a Sansom-initiated \$6 million state appropriation in the college's name. A state prosecutor dropped all charges midway through a trial in March 2011, but not before both men had lost their jobs.

Vance said there was pressure on the board to take some type of action because of "media hype," and opinions of commu-

nity members, over Richburg's indictment by a Tallahassee grand jury April 17, 2009 (in a case that was dismissed earlier this year).

Vance testified that he had recommended a "conditional suspension" of Richburg in order to give the board more time to evaluate the facts about a controversial "joint-use" building in Destin that was tied to Richburg's indictment.



Wesley Wilkerson

Henderson, who served on the board of trustees 10 years, including three as chairman, before his term expired shortly after Richburg was fired, abstained from voting on the motion to dismiss the president because of a conflict of interest stemming from the fact that the two men were partners in the same real estate venture.

However, under questioning by the college's attorneys, Henderson agreed with a summary of his statements in the minutes of the April 28, 2009, board meeting: that the "board needs to do what is best for the college and the trustees," and that "the board could not afford to wait a year for resolution."

Other trustees gave depositions June 22 and 23.

During the depositions taken over the past two weeks, attorneys for Richburg made a point of getting each trustee to acknowledge that the motion to terminate his employment, as recorded in the minutes, never specified a reason. Nor was a reason specified in the termination letter the chairman sent him after the vote.



Vercell Vance

Richburg's employment contract gave three reasons it could be terminated prior to its stated expiration date: Upon mutual agreement between the board and the president; upon his death; or upon a finding by the board that Richburg, had "without good cause, failed or refused to faithfully perform or diligently execute the duties of his employment."

Richburg is seeking the money he would have been paid through the end of his contract June 30, 2012, a sum estimated to exceed \$750,000. A state administrative law judge is scheduled to hear the case July 26-28 in Niceville.

COLLEGE

From page A-1

center, health building, student mall and science building.

—The courtyard of the performing arts complex, in front of the waterfall.

—The flagpole area in front of the administration building.

The proposed policy does not define "public speaking," nor does it say whether the college would attempt to confine it to the designated areas. It does not specify any penalties for noncompliance.

The plan would allow "exceptions" at the discretion of the president.

"In establishing these areas," stated the draft, "the college acknowledges that the essence of free speech is to allow views to be expressed that some may find offensive, and that the exercise of free speech can become disruptive. The college also recognizes its responsibility to maintain an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning."

The designated speaking area policy would serve the following purposes:

—"Encourage and support freedom of speech."

—"Supplement classroom instruction whereby students learn to put ideas to the test, think broadly, express them-

selves intelligently, defend their ideas, and disagree on issues without being disagreeable."

—"Help individuals learn how to deal peacefully and intelligently with those who express views they find offensive."

—"Protect teaching and learning from disruption."

—"Guard against the creation of obstacles to campus ingress and egress."

—"Ensure the safety of all stakeholders."

The proposed policy also states that, "The freedom to express one's views in the designated campus locations does not extend to those wishing to engage in commercial solicitation or promotion. Such activities are regulated separately and information regarding campus policies and promotion may be found in the college catalogue."

The policy would govern the campuses in Niceville, Fort Walton Beach, Crestview, DeFuniak Springs and Santa Rosa Beach. It would not apply

to the centers on Eglin Air Force Base and Hurlburt Field, which are subject to military regulations.

During discussion of the proposed free speech policy, Handy, who took office a year ago, told the trustees that he is concerned about the problems other colleges have had in balancing the right to free speech against the rights of students and teachers to have a safe and peaceful campus in which to carry on their regular teaching and learning activities.

Handy said the University of Kentucky recently had some difficulty dealing with a "campout" protest. He said that Florida State University established a policy during last winter, similar to the one he proposes for NWFSC. At two other colleges that did not have such policies, Handy said, lawsuits are pending regarding those schools' responses to protests and activism by students.

David Goetsch, vice president for community relations

and workforce development, also spoke to the board, saying that, "If you look at the schools in trouble," the lawsuits were brought by Young Americans for Freedom, a conservative student organization.

In cases where schools prevailed in court against YAF, Goetsch said, they had policies that adhered to the six purposes stated in the proposed NWFSC policy. Goetsch also said that some colleges have been using rules regarding on-campus speech to "restrict and limit conservative and Christian organizations," by restricting such groups' activities to small or remotely located areas of their campuses.

NWFSC, said Goetsch, should have "a policy that promotes free speech."

Trustee Paul A. Foster expressed skepticism about Handy's proposed policy. "It sounds like prior restraint," Foster said. He said the policy appears to limit free speech, something he said schools

should never do.

"Prior restraint" is a government gag on a citizen's right to speak freely. Except in rare instances, typically involving immediate and substantial threats to national security in wartime, or significant threats to the right to a fair trial, U.S. courts have found prior restraint to be unconstitutional.

Trustees Chairwoman Sandy Sims said that she would favor the policy proposed by Handy "if it is evenly enforced."

Vice Chairman Brian Pennington said, "I don't disagree with the policy," but recommended that the board table the matter in order to study what policies have been adopted, and what results achieved, at other colleges, and also to have the draft policy reviewed by an attorney.

After some discussion, the board tabled the matter at least until the next meeting, scheduled for 4:30 p.m. on July 20, at Building K on the Niceville campus.



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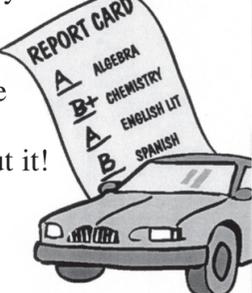


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Submitted photo

An early morning accident Tuesday injured one man, who was transferred by helicopter to Twin Cities Hospital.

One man injured in rollover wreck

Firefighters from Niceville and East Niceville fire departments spent 20 minutes Tuesday extricating a driver from a single-vehicle roll-over crash on West College Boulevard at Sparkleberry Cove.

Niceville received the call at 3:39 a.m., July 5, and was on scene by 3:42 a.m. to find the vehicle lying on its roof in a steep wooded area on the south side of College Boulevard, according to Tony Lohrman, assistant fire chief at the Niceville fire department. The driver and sole occupant of the vehicle, identified by Lohrman as Jarrod Walton, 28, of Huntsville, Ala., was pinned between the roof and the passenger seats, he said.

After being extricated from the wreck, he said Walton was taken by EMS to Twin Cities Hospital, where a helicopter ambulance transferred the victim to Sacred Heart Hospital in Pensacola. His condition was unknown as of press time.

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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

Sabrina Jill Burke, a waitress, 22, of 305 McEwen Drive, Niceville, was arrested by Niceville police June 25 on a charge of battery, domestic violence.

Anthony Scott Barnett, a maintenance worker, 25, of 1405 Cape Lane, Niceville, was arrested by Niceville police June 25 on a Walton County warrant on a charge of failure to appear on the original charge of possession of drug paraphernalia. Barnett was subsequently charged with possession of a forged note, one count, and three counts of theft, after

police found Barnett in possession of three checks stolen from another Niceville man.

John Paul Barnett, a construction worker, 30, of 1430 Cape Lane, Niceville, was arrested by Niceville police June 25 on charges of uttering a false instrument, possession of a forged note and theft. Barnett is alleged to have used a stolen check to purchase miscellaneous items and get cash totaling \$42.

Phillip Todd Tucker, a contractor, 32, of 304 Reeves St., Lot E-6, Niceville, and with a permanent address of 500 22nd St., Niceville,

was arrested by Niceville police, subsequent to a traffic stop for a seat belt violation, June 26, on charges of possession of controlled substance, methadone and MDMA, possession of less than 20 grams of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia.

Jonathan Scott Cook, self-employed, 29, of 105 21st St., Niceville, was arrested by Niceville police June 21 on a charge of battery. Subsequent to a verbal argument Cook allegedly punched another man in the face.

Keiko Marie Kopp, a cook, 22, of 4600 Range Road, Apt. 120, Niceville, was arrested by Niceville police, subsequent to a traffic stop for speeding, June 20, on charges of possession of marijuana with intent to distribute, contributing to the delinquency of a minor and possession of a controlled substance without a prescription.

Alyssa R. McGinnis, 18, of 206 Spencer Place, Niceville, a passenger in Kopp's vehicle, was arrested on charges of possession of less than 20 grams of marijuana and contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

After a police K-9 drug dog "alerted" police found a green leafy substance in Kopp's purse as well as two zip lock bags in the trunk that contained approximately 50 grams of marijuana.

Christopher Allen Small, self-employed, 43, of 527 Matthew St., Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies June 19 on a violation of probation charge on the original felony offense of driving while license suspended or revoked.

Steven William Roberts, unemployed, 23, of 1722 Union Ave., Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies June 19 on a Walton County warrant for charges of burglary and theft. On June 21 deputies also charged Roberts with one count of uttering a false instrument and two counts of resisting an officer without violence.

Joseph William Wilson, 44, of 104 26th St., Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies June 22 on a violation of probation charge on the original offense of DUI.

Jason Parrish Arnold, unemployed, 37, of 518 Linden Ave., Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies June 25 on a charge of failure to appear on the original charge of failure to apply for transfer of boat ownership.

Timothy D. Francis, 46, of 218 Hudson Circle, Niceville, was issued a notice to appear by sheriff's deputies June 17 on a charge of criminal mischief which allegedly occurred in Fort Walton Beach in July 2010.

Julia C. Jackson, a restaurant server, 26, of 1418 Cedar St., Niceville, was issued a notice to appear by sheriff's deputies June 17 on charges of possession of less than 20 grams of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia.

off's deputies June 17 on a charge of criminal mischief which allegedly occurred in Fort Walton Beach in July 2010.

DUI arrests

Daniel Robert Kocher, 31, of 411 James Ave., Valparaiso, was arrested by Valparaiso police for DUI on Andrew Drive, June 25 at 3:17 p.m.

Terri Lynne Arrington, 49, of 5241 Deer Springs Drive, Crestview, was arrested by Niceville police for DUI on Highway 20 at the on-ramp to Highway 85, June 25 at 11:59 p.m. Arrington was also cited for failure to maintain a single lane.

Thefts

A Valparaiso residence in the 300 block of Okaloosa Avenue was burglarized June 21 while the occupants were at work. Reported stolen was \$600 in \$20 bills that one victim kept in a pickle jar stored inside a locked file cabinet in one bedroom and an iPod and a \$40 hat from a second room of another victim. The back door to the locked house appeared to have been pried open, as was the file cabinet and the door to the second bedroom.

Other

Timothy D. Francis, 46, of 218 Hudson Circle, Niceville, was issued a notice to appear by

Okaloosa seeks fugitives

This information is from reports by the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office.

Name: Brad Rodney Doughtie
Wanted for: violation of probation on the original charges of conspiracy to sell narcotics, possession of a controlled substance and possession of drug paraphernalia. Doughtie's last known address was in Niceville.
Height: 6-feet, Weight: 190 pounds
Age: 27
Date of birth: 05-18-1984
Hair: brown, Eyes: blue



Name: Misty Lynn Shelby
Wanted for: a felony order revoking bond for violation of a domestic violence injunction, resisting arrest and battery on a law enforcement officer. Shelby's last known address was on 2nd Avenue in Fort Walton Beach.
Height: 5-feet, 5-inches
Weight: 130 pounds
Age: 29, Date of birth: 11-02-1981
Hair: blond, Eyes: brown



This information is from reports by the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office. A reward is offered by Emerald Coast Crime Stoppers, 863-8477, or 1-888-654-8477. Information can also be provided anonymously by texting "TIP214 plus the message" to CRIMES (274637)

Fire Department Reports

Niceville

The Niceville Fire Department responded to the following calls from June 27, 2011, through June 30, 2011.

2 Structure Fire	8 Emergency Medical Calls
1 Vehicle Fire	0 Vehicle Crash
0 Other Fire	0 Vehicle Crash with Extrication
0 Illegal Burn	4 Other Emergency Calls
0 False Alarms	1 Hazardous Conditions

Street	Situation	Date	Time
Sunset Cove/BWB	Structure fire	06/27/11	09:17
Sasser St./ENFD	Structure fire	06/27/11	13:50
Valparaiso Blvd.	Alarm activation	06/27/11	14:11
Grand Oak Drive	Medical	06/28/11	01:06
Hickory Avenue	Medical	06/28/11	01:42
N. Partin Drive	Medical	06/28/11	04:51
White Street	Service call	06/28/11	08:07
Goldenrod Court	Medical	06/28/11	08:52
Madison Street	Medical	06/28/11	12:50
Bayshore Drive	Gas spill	06/29/11	13:00
SR85N	False call	06/30/11	07:17
Aloma Ct/Edgewater	Vehicle fire	06/30/11	12:27
Edgewater/SR20	Smoke scare	06/30/11	12:29
W. John Sims Pkwy.	Medical	06/30/11	13:03
Pine Court	Medical	06/30/11	13:20
Kelly Road	Medical	06/30/11	18:41

Weekly Safety Tip: EDITH, do you know her? Well, it stands for Exit Drills In The Home. Everyone needs to practice this exercise prior to an actual emergency, so the entire family will know what to do should an emergency occur.

Valparaiso

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

Location	Situation	Date	Time
Davenport Ave.	Chest pain	06/01/11	13:02
Highway 85 South	Unknown problem	06/01/11	17:07
Edge Ave.	Unconscious	06/04/11	17:46
Glen Ave.	Fire alarm	06/06/11	13:16
Hidden Cove Way	Breathing problem	06/06/11	19:01
Old East Gate Road	Hemorrhage	06/07/11	01:20
Gregory Ave.	Sick call	06/10/11	03:27
Brooks Circle	Cardiac arrest	06/12/11	14:46
Lincoln Ave.	Sick call	06/14/11	09:50
Edge Ave.	Assault	06/15/11	03:12
Washington Ave.	Fall	06/17/11	11:06
North John Sims Pkwy.	Traumatic injury	06/22/11	19:41
North Bayshore Dr.	Breathing problem	06/25/11	12:19
South John Sims	Motor vehicle accident	06/25/11	14:45
Glendale Ave.	Fire service call	06/26/11	10:00
Montana Ave.	Assault	06/26/11	18:16
South John Sims Pkwy.	Chest pain	06/27/11	04:46
North Partin Dr.	Station move-up	06/27/11	09:22
North Partin Dr.	Station move-up	06/27/11	13:58
Valparaiso Blvd.	Fire alarm	06/27/11	14:11
Edge Ave.	Unconscious	06/28/11	19:13

Okaloosa County is under a burn ban due to extreme drought conditions. Burning of yard waste and other open burns are prohibited. Please use caution as even a carelessly discarded cigarette could lead to a fire. It is advisable to clear away dead or dry brush from around homes and outbuildings. Call your Valparaiso Volunteer Fire Department at 729-5410 if you have any questions or concerns.

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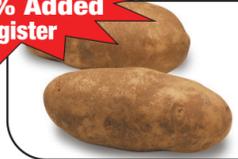
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Who's News

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Donna Tashik of Niceville was named Volunteer of the Year for 2011 by Horizons of Okaloosa County. Her winning efforts have included Christmas shopping for clients, coordinating efforts to renovate Horizons Group homes, and initiating fundraisers to help the disabled.



Donna Tashik

The National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA), Gulf Coast Chapter, announces Jane Bartley as a recipient of a \$1,000 Hubert D. "Hugh" Harris Scholarship Award.



Jane Bartley

Bartley graduated in the top 15 percent of the Class of 2011 from Niceville High School. She was a member of the varsity volleyball team, chess club, rugby club and National Honor Society. She will attend Florida Institute of Technology and pursue a major in astronomy and astrophysics.

Lillie Ann Dawson, daughter of John and Rebecca Dawson of Bluewater Bay, took the crown in the Miss division at the Florida Cinderella Scholarship State

Please see WHO'S, page B-3

Weather Channel embraces Hero Hugs

Hero Hugs, a nonprofit organization which gives "hugs" through care packages to service members, will be featured on Cantore Stories on the Weather Channel July 6 at 5 p.m., July 9 at 2 and 4 p.m., and July 10 at 1 p.m. Pictured are Bailey Reese, Hero Hugs founder, Charles Whittle, who serves on the kid board of directors for Hero Hugs, hurricane expert Jim Cantore of the Weather Channel and "Hero," a huggable teddy bear.



Whiddon to head Shoal River MS

During the June 27 meeting, the Okaloosa County School Board unanimously approved Paul Whiddon as the principal of Shoal River Middle School.

Dean of Ruckel Middle School in 1995 and was appointed as the assistant principal at Ruckel in 1998, a position he has held since.



Paul Whiddon

Whiddon, a current Niceville resident and a 1974 graduate of Niceville High School, received his bachelor's and master's degrees at the University of West Alabama at Livingston. He then worked as a chemistry and biology teacher, coach and athletic director in Alabama from 1979-1994.

After he was appointed at the meeting, Whiddon gave a warm thank you to his Ruckel family, saying, "What a great thing that you have meant to me and my wife. I won't forget it. Thank you for your support and making my job really easy. I appreciate that."

In 1994, Whiddon returned to NHS to teach marine biology and honors chemistry. He became the

Whiddon will replace Bob Jones, who was recently named principal of Crestview High School.

Area folks dig the past

By Mike Griffith Beacon Correspondent

Living in Northwest Florida has its attractions: warm weather, white sand beaches, friendly folks. For those of us interested in history, it has one more distinct advantage—it is rich in archaeological clues about the people that lived here in the days of yore.

Nicole Bucchino and Jim Moorehead are two Northwest Florida archaeologists who have made it their business to protect the archaeological clues from lives past, which is important in Northwest Florida, as it has been inhabited by humans for thousands of years.

The two came to the Heritage Museum's Archaeology Day held June 25. They were on hand to examine and share insight about artifacts of the ancient past,

including arrowheads and pieces of pottery, brought by the public.

Such visitors could also look at some of the artifacts collected by professionals, and see some of the equipment used in the scientific investigation of historic sites, such as ground penetrating radar.

The purpose of the archaeologists' visit, Bucchino said, was "to inform the public about archeology, and bring it from the ivory tower to where people can learn from it. Our public heritage belongs to everyone."

Bucchino, a Public

Archeology Assistant with the Florida Public Archeology Network and a graduate student at the University of West Florida, also demonstrated the use of a ground penetrating radar unit near the Heritage Museum. The device is indispensable in archaeological study because it can reveal discrepancies in soil matter, including objects, voids in cracks and changes in material.

Moorehead, a staff archeologist with Curtis Thomas and Associates, said his company contracts with government agencies and private companies, to do archeological and cultural evaluations of land that is about to be developed or used for construction sites. Such evaluations, he said, locate and identify cultural

Please see PAST, page B-2



Nicole Bucchino, a graduate student at the University of West Florida, demonstrated the use of a ground-penetrating radar unit near the Heritage Museum during its Archaeology Day June 25.

Photo by Mike Griffith

Accepting New Patients!



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Sacred Heart Medical Group is pleased to welcome Dr. Steven Clark, a board-certified family medicine physician. Dr. Clark earned his medical degree from the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences in Bethesda, Md., and completed residency training in family medicine at Eglin Air Force Base. Prior to joining Sacred Heart, he served as a family medicine physician and flight surgeon in the Air Force. Dr. Clark has special medical interests in disease prevention, diabetes, hypertension, and tropical and wilderness medicine.

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Volunteers give wounded new life

By Kenneth Books
Beacon Staff Writer

Six years ago, Brad Strittmatter and several friends looked at their lives and said "What have we done? We haven't really done much."

Since then, they've done plenty.

Strittmatter, 34, a 1995 graduate of Niceville High School, is among the founders of Veteran Outdoors, an organization that takes wounded warriors on adventure trips that include hunting, fishing and other outdoor exploits.

Strittmatter's father, Harry, retired from the Air Force after 30 years. From 1994-97, he served as commanding officer of

the 46th Test Wing at Eglin Air Force Base. His parents, Harry and Suzy Strittmatter and in-laws Mike and Olga Buck still live in Niceville. Strittmatter's wife, Stacey, is a Niceville native as well. They have two children, Joseph, 4, and Sam, 2.

Veteran Outdoors has taken "hundreds and hundreds" of veterans on outings, said Strittmatter.

One of those veterans was Staff Sgt. Shaun Meadows, an air combat controller who served at Hurlburt Field from 2003-2005. Meadows lost both legs above the knee when an improvised explosive device went off in his vicinity. He enjoyed a deer hunt in January.

Each outing is a surprise to the recipient.

"We find out what their dream is from their families or from guys we've taken out in the past, and just show up on their doorstep," Strittmatter said.



Brad Strittmatter

No one involved in the enterprise makes any money on it, Strittmatter—whose day job is that of an aviation salesman in Georgetown, Texas—said. They raise money through the website, veteranoutdoors.com, and through a television show about the project, which airs Tuesdays at 7 p.m. on the Sportsman Channel.

They select 13 of the roughly 100 trips they take veterans on to film for the program which,

according to the website, will move to Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. next week.

The volunteers come from various walks in life. They include those who have never served in the military, such as Strittmatter, wounded warriors, civilians and even retired major league pitcher and current Houston Astros pitching coach Doug Brocail. At first, the group was small, Strittmatter said. "It's kind of grown and a lot of guys we've taken on trips are now part of our team," he said.

"Every trip is special to us because it's another story and it's another friend we get to make," Strittmatter said. "We hear amazing stories of heroism and determination.

"We've seen a blind guy shoot an elk, a double amputee above knee put on a wetsuit and jump into the Pacific with a spear gun and a one-armed guy shoot a pheasant," he added.

Strittmatter said the trips



Courtesy photo

From left, Strittmatter, Staff Sgt. Shaun Meadows and Cody Hirt proudly display a deer harvested during a Veteran Outdoors trip.

often have an enormously positive effect on the veteran.

"What we found amazing is a simple deer hunt or fishing trip can make such an impact in their lives," he said. "They see that people care about them ... we

feel it's up to us as a community to give them the tools to mentally rehab. We've had guys with PTSD whose wives or parents call, saying, 'I don't know what you did with him, but he's back to his old self.'"

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PAST

From page B-1

sites such as American Indian burial or ceremonial mounds, early human settlements, and other items of historical and cultural interest, so that they can be preserved or studied before construction proceeds and possibly damages or destroys the artifacts at the site.

A recent example of the work

his company does, he said, is the Mid-Bay Bridge Connector road now under construction. Moorehead said his company has been working with the Mid-Bay Bridge Authority and officials at Eglin Air Force Base to identify cultural sites in the right of way of the new road, and ensure that such sites are properly investigated or preserved.

Both archeologists said their field of study is similar to the work

of crime scene investigators, except that in their case, they investigate not crimes, but ancient history and cultures, and the evidence they look for is much older. In both cases, however, finding the truth about past events often depends on a careful examination of physical clues, such as fragments of pottery or stone tools, the remnants of buildings or burial sites, or the carbon left by campfires thousands of years ago.

Archeological artifacts, Bucchino said, are everywhere, "including in your own backyard."

Anyone can learn about archeology, said Moorehead. "It's not really rocket science," he said. "Anyone who can dig a straight hole with a level floor can learn to do basic archeology."

Anyone interested in archeology can find out more at fpublicarcheology.org, or by phoning 678-2615.

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In the Service
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Army Sgt. **Mitchel B. Reed** 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.

He is the grandson of Barbara and Wayne Reed of Linton, Ind., and son of Jeffrey Reed of Niceville. Reed graduated in 2003 from Baker High School, and received a bachelor's degree in 2009 from Johnson University, Knoxville, Tenn.

Okaloosa 1st in algebra

Okaloosa County students ranked number one in the state on the new Algebra 1 End-of-Course exam.

Okaloosa had a mean score of 55, greater than the state mean score of 49, on a scale of 20-80. The seventh graders, the youngest students taking the exam, earned a score of 63.

The scores were divided into thirds with students falling into lower, middle and upper categories. The combined percentage of Okaloosa students in the middle and upper thirds was 86 percent, the highest in the state.

The average course grade earned by Okaloosa students taking the exam was 83 per-

cent or a C. All students enrolled in Algebra 1 this year took the test, which replaces the ninth grade FCAT math exam. The 10th grade FCAT will be replaced next year by a Geometry End-of-Course exam.

Next year, the exam will not factor into the course grade; instead students will have to pass the exam to earn an Algebra 1 credit. Scores will be reported the same as for FCAT: Level 1 to Level 5 with a passing score being a Level 3 or higher.

A report of Florida's results by district can be found at fcats.fl DOE.org/mediapacket/2011/default.asp.



WHO'S

From page B-1

Pageant. She will represent the state in the International Scholarship Pageant to be held in Las Vegas, July 25-29.

Cinderella Scholarship Pageants recognize young ladies for their communication skills, self-confidence, humility and inner beauty, charm and personality, strength of character and poise.



Lillie Dawson

Gamma Epsilon Sigma Chapter of Beta Sigma Phi held a 90th birthday party for **Jim Perano**, the Chapter's "Honorary Sister," at the home of Jim and Beverly Flynt in Niceville.

Perano keeps the members' Secret Sisters' names and assists members if they need his help with their Secret Sisters' information.

Members attending were Dora Perano, Marge and Bob Ballon, Margaret and Roger Holley, Ann Jones, Mary and Lee MacDonald, Helen and Jack Martin, Linda Michalowski, Doris Olig, Susan and John Vetter, Mattie Williams and Angela Budden.

Steve Manthey, a financial adviser with MetLife, recently earned MetLife's Leaders level of recognition, an honor bestowed to those who exemplify the highest standards of personal integrity, professionalism and customer service across the company.



Steve Manthey

Members attending were Dora Perano, Marge and Bob Ballon, Margaret and Roger Holley, Ann Jones, Mary and Lee MacDonald, Helen and Jack Martin, Linda Michalowski, Doris Olig, Susan and John Vetter, Mattie Williams and Angela Budden.

Steve Manthey, a financial adviser with MetLife, recently earned MetLife's Leaders level of recognition, an honor bestowed to those who exemplify the highest standards of personal integrity, professionalism and customer service across the company.



Scouts earn Honor Troop award

Scouts from Boy Scout Troop 52 spent a week at Camp Thunder in Georgia receiving the Honor Troop award for the week. Scouts tried climbing, rappelling, zip line and COPE courses while working on more than 50 merit badges and awards. Troop 52 meets Mondays at New Hope Church, Valparaiso, and is sponsored by AMVETS.

2011 CALENDAR
E-mail items to info@baybeacon.com before 5 p.m. Wednesday.

Art exhibit at library

The Local Color Artists Club will exhibit works at the Niceville Library through Aug. 27. The show features 14 artists and includes wood-turned pieces during July. Pastels, wooden flutes, and photography, as well as paintings created using watercolors, oils and acrylics will be on display and will periodically change.

The club meets monthly and welcomes interested parties. Info: Amy Jo Rosati, 678-4813.

School supplies donations

Donations of school supplies are now being collected at Niceville's Sharing & Caring, 104 Bullock Blvd. Supplies will be distributed Aug. 13 to approximately 350 students in our community. Parents/guardians may sign up their children until Aug. 5. Lists of supplies needed may be obtained at Sharing & Caring. Monetary donations will also be accepted. Info: 729-3600.

Free museum admission

The Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida announces the launch of Blue Star Museums, a partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts, Blue Star Families, and more than 1,300 museums across America to offer free admission to all active-duty military personnel and their families through Labor Day. Leadership support has been provided by MetLife Foundation through Blue Star Families. For a list of participating museums, visit arts.gov/bluestar museums.

Referee training course

The USSF Entry Level Referee Course will be held in Niceville for those interested in refereeing. The class consists of online education modules and 12 hours of classroom instruction. Please see CALENDAR, page B-4

Friends for Fun senior club

All singles 60 and older, come join Friends for Fun for laughter and friendly conversation each Wednesday, 3-6 p.m., at the Bluewater Bay Clubhouse. This is an opportunity to make new friends and find joy and companionship. Info: 897-4434.

TOPS morning meetings

TOPS club 0840 meetings will be held Tuesday mornings at the Niceville YMCA. Weigh-in will be at 9, and the meeting will start at 10. These meetings are open to the public. Info: Cindy, 830-5754, or Gerry, 897-3141.

TOPS evening meetings

TOPS club 0111 is a weight-loss support group which meets every Thursday evening at Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Church, Education Building, Room 4. Weigh-in will be at 6:30 p.m., and the meeting will start at 7 p.m. Info: Michele, 678-2863, or Cindy, 279-4847.

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The INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER — by Mike Griffith

Location:
NWFS campus

What do you think about U.S. military action in Libya?



"I'm not a hundred percent for it, but I'm on the side of the U.S. dropping bombs on Kadaffi's side, because I know he has treated his people badly."

Janette Love, 39, Fort Walton Beach, file clerk



"I have mixed feelings. Something should have been done earlier, but now it's gotten out of hand."

T. Kang, 32, Niceville, student



"The U.S. should try to help the Libyan people diplomatically and economically, but should stop short of dropping bombs or sending in ground troops."

Emily Dutton, 18, Niceville, student



"It's a 'damned if you do, damned if you don't' situation. We want to support change, but not overextend our resources."

Lloyd Pichelmayer, Shalimar, 29, student



"I think it's good that the U.S. wants to do something, if it will help overthrow Kadaffi and bring about a more democratic government in Libya."

Nathan Jerome, 17, Niceville, student



"It's fifty-fifty. We want to support democracy and save lives, but we don't want to go to war."

Kayra Zaring, 13, Crestview, Shoal River Middle School student

What should we ask next week? Email your suggested question to: info@baybeacon.com Include "Suggested IP question" in the "subject" field.

CALENDAR

From page B-3

training and participation. After training, you will have the basic knowledge to begin refereeing.

The 2011 course will be held at Niceville City Hall Aug. 22, 6-8:30 p.m.; Aug. 24, 6-8 p.m.; Aug. 27, 9 a.m.-noon; and Aug. 31, 6-9 p.m. Info: fsr-inc.com under the "Become a



Referee" tab. The cost is \$100. Register by Aug. 8. To register or for more information: Al

Haberbusch, habersu64@cox.net or 678-9084; Howard Hill, howard_hill@cox.net or 678-2182; or Bernie Busovne, busovnefamily@cox.net or 897-9497.

Children's music class

A six-week early childhood music class will begin July 6 for babies, toddlers, preschoolers, and the parents and caregivers who love them. The classes will be held at the First Presbyterian Church of Niceville,

1800 John Sims Parkway East. Classes will be held Wednesdays or Fridays at 10 a.m. Register online at SowingSeedsWithMusicTogether.com.



Writing workshop

The Valparaiso Community Library will offer a performance-based writing workshop, "Writer's Block," beginning Thursday, July 7, 1 p.m.

Geared toward students of middle school, high school and college, this activity will focus on self-expression, creative writing and improvisation. Info: 729-5406.

Fred Gannon nature walk

Fred Gannon Rocky Bayou State Park, located off Highway 20 in Niceville, is celebrating National Parks and Recreation Month with a story time and nature walk July 9, 9:30-10:30 a.m. Discover a whole new world of living and non-living things just by exploring the ground beneath your feet. Who knows what you might observe—

ants, butterflies, flowers, or an old log that's become a home for many creatures. Program included in the park admission fee. Info: 833-9144.

Genealogical meeting

The Genealogical Society of Okaloosa County will hold its monthly meeting July 9 at 10 a.m. at the Heritage Museum, 115 Westview Ave., Valparaiso. The speaker will be Beverly Gross, a genealogist who teaches a leisure learning genealogy course at NWFS. Her topic will be: "Tracing Your Family Backwards to Find Their Roots: Migration, Immigration, & Emigration Routes." GSOC meetings are free and the group welcomes all who are interested in family history. Join the society for a Dutch treat lunch at a local restaurant following the meeting. Info: Pat Pruet, 678-2023.

Kids on Campus session 2

The Kids On Campus program at Northwest Florida State College will hold a second session July 11-21 at the Niceville campus. Geared toward third-eighth graders, the program provides opportunities for kids in athletics, art, academics and dance/theater. Classes are held Monday-Thursday. A course list and registration forms are available at all

NWFS campuses and on the college website, nwfs.edu/schedule. Online registration is open for students who have previously participated.

Parents can choose half-day sessions, from 9 a.m. to noon or 12:30 to 3:20 p.m., or full-day sessions, 9 a.m. to 3:20 p.m. For an additional fee, parents may choose extended day, which runs 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Info: 729-6086.

Christian concert and fun

The Emerald Coast Convention Center, 1250 Miracle Strip Parkway, Fort Walton Beach, announces RIOT (Righteous Intentions On Teens) Live. This is a program not just for teens, but for all who want to come together for an evening of entertainment and electrifying Christian praise music. Enjoy competitions, food, refreshments, and live performances by Group 1 Crew, Shonlock and Byron "TalkBox" Chambers from Diverse City Band. Festivities will begin at 3 p.m. Tuesday, July 12, at the Emerald Coast Convention Center. Tickets will be \$15 with a \$3 processing fee. For information, visit EmeraldCoastConventionCenter.com, call 609-3800 or email boxoffice@co.okaloosa.fl.us.



Democrats meeting

Okaloosa County Democratic Executive Committee will meet Tuesday, July 12, at Democrat Headquarters located at 60 2nd St., Suite 305, Shalimar.

The social hour will begin at 6 p.m., followed by the meeting at 6:30. The focus will be on the early campaigning plan to build for the future and energize Okaloosa

County Democrats. All Democrats and friends are invited.

Info: Jerry Mallory, 897-5246.

Business seminar

The American Society for Training & Development (ASTD) will hold "Change management: A seven step model for success" presented by Dr. David Goetsch. Goetsch is vice president of Northwest Florida State College where he also serves as professor of quality, management and business.

The program will be held at the NWFS K Building Tuesday, July 12, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. The cost will be \$17 for nonmembers, \$12 for chapter members.

RSVP by emailing Tracey Tapp at astd.ec.hospitality@gmail.com or visiting astd-emeraldcoast.org.

Blood drives

There will be a blood drive held July 12, 8 a.m.-noon, at the Twin Cities Hospital, 2190 Highway 85 N.

Food Depot, 1015 E. John Sims Parkway, Niceville, will also hold a blood drive Friday, July 15, 3-7 p.m.

Chamber breakfast

The Niceville-Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce will hold its second Wednesday breakfast July 13, at Niceville Assembly of God, 108 Hwy. 85 N. The event will begin at 7:15 a.m. with coffee and conversation, followed by breakfast at 7:30. This month's sponsor is Niceville Assembly of God. Chamber members, their guests and prospective members are invited to attend.

Twin Cities Seniors club

Twin Cities Seniors will meet July 14 at 2 p.m. at 268 Glenview Ave., Valparaiso. Info: 678-8645 or 678-4346. All 50+ are welcome for friendship, bingo and potluck.

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Valparaiso resumes seat on gas board

By Del Lessard

Beacon Staff Writer

When the Okaloosa Gas District Board of Directors met last week, Valparaiso's seat at the table was filled for the first time since March.

Valparaiso City Administrator Carl Scott took his place on the gas board of directors June 29 after being appointed to a four-year term on the board by the Valparaiso City Commission earlier in the month. Scott's

appointment ends the city's absence on the board during the past two monthly meetings of the gas board, which meets at the utility's headquarters in Valparaiso.

Jose Lozano, chief executive of Okaloosa Gas, gave the board a report on the gas district's financial performance at the June meeting.

According to state legislation that created the state utility, the cities of Niceville, Fort Walton



Carl Scott

Okaloosa County Commission appointing the fifth. Gas board

members are unpaid positions although they are reimbursed travel expenses for attending gas industry conventions held periodically around the country.

Valparaiso's seat on the gas board has been empty since March, when the second, four-year term of Valparaiso's former representative, Charles Reid, ended.

Valparaiso had been sued by Reid after the city tried to fire him in 2010, and was able to

finish his second full term in March under a ruling from a county judge that declared city commissioners could not appoint their own members to the gas board.

The city later obtained an opinion from the state's Attorney General saying the judge erred. However, commissioners were unwilling to risk ignoring the judge's order.

Arnold nominated Scott as the city's representative on the gas board June 13.



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