

# The Bay Beacon

14 Pages, 2 Sections, 3 Inserts

Wednesday, October 19, 2011

50¢

**UP  
COMING**

Friday, 11 a.m.



Jennifer Hatler, a crime lab analyst at the Florida

Department of Law Enforcement, will present the **Science Friday Seminar** at Northwest Florida State College. Her topic will be **"Forensic DNA Testing Today."**

The program will be held in room S-110 of the Robert E. Green Jr. Science Building. Info: 729-5376.

Saturday, 5 p.m.



The annual **old Niceville High School reunion** will be held at the Niceville Community Center, 204 N. Partin Drive.

All who **attended the school from 1929-1952** are welcome. Registration at 5 p.m. will be followed by a catered dinner at 6. Bring school memorabilia if you wish.

The cost is \$12.50. Reservations are requested. Call 678-4777.

Tuesday, 5-10 p.m.



The **Northwest Florida Fair** will take place Oct. 25-30 at the Northwest Florida Fairgrounds, 1958 Lewis Turner Blvd. Opening night of the fair, **Oct. 25, entry is free.**

Attractions will include rides and games, musical acts including Jason Thomas, Victoria's Circus motorcycle riders and their globe of death, a high-wire act and livestock.

Info: 862-0211 or nwffair.com.

Calendar, B-2.

## District eyes charter school proposal

By Del Lessard  
Beacon Staff Writer

The Okaloosa County School Board Monday is scheduled to consider whether to start talks with a south Florida company that has proposed to open a charter school, possibly at the site of the recently closed Valparaiso Elementary School.

Somerset Academy, a south Florida charter school company, submitted a pro-

posal last summer to open a new Valparaiso K-5 charter elementary school, as well as a proposal to open a middle school for children in grades 6-8, if demand exists.

Parents in Valparaiso told Valparaiso city officials earlier this year that a charter elementary school would fill a void left in the community after the school board decided to close Valparaiso Elementary,

effective last May, and move students to Lewis School, converting it from a middle school into a K-8 school.

Charter schools, although they receive public funding, are independently operated and generally aren't subject to the union contracts governing work, tenure and pay that apply to most public schools.

There are over 450 charter schools in Florida, of which three are in Okaloosa

County, including Collegiate High School, operated by Northwest Florida State College, Niceville.

In January the Valparaiso City Commission voted to investigate the possibility of attracting a charter elementary school to open and possibly use the Valparaiso Elementary site. Valparaiso

Please see **DISTRICT**, page A-7

## Saluting the Army



Beacon photos

The Niceville High School and Crestview High School bands march together off the parade field during the 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) cantonment dedication and open house Friday at the new Army post north of Niceville. The bands played "The Ballad of the Green Berets" and the "The Army Goes Rolling Along." The event included an open house featuring weapons and gear displays, building tours, and special-tactics demonstrations. Inset: A 7th SFG(A) soldier shows a youngster how to aim Humvee-mounted gun.

## Mullet Fest to open Friday 40,000 expected for food, music, fun

By Kenneth Books  
Beacon Staff Writer

When people think of the Boggy Bayou Mullet Festival, they think of music and the fish that serves as its namesake. But there's a lot more than food and music.

The 35th annual three-day festival will open Friday in Niceville. Some 40,000 people are expected.

Music, map, schedule pages A-4 & A-5.

Gates open at 11 a.m. Friday, 9 a.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. Sunday at the Mullet Site, corner of Highway 85 North and College Boulevard. Admission, which includes all entertainment, is \$10 at the gate and \$9 in advance. Admission

Please see **MULLET**, page A-5

## Early election seen in Valp.

By Del Lessard  
Beacon Staff Writer

Valparaiso voters will likely select two city commissioners Jan. 31, 2012, the date the Florida Legislature has set as the state's Presidential Preference Primary.

The Valparaiso City Commission last week held the first of two public hearings last week on an ordinance that would change the municipal election date next year from March 13 to Jan. 31.

If given final approval as expected Nov. 14, the measure would require that candidates file qualifying paperwork between noon Nov. 21 and noon Nov. 25.

Municipal elections are normally held in March, but city officials said that by piggybacking on the Jan. 31 Florida presidential primary, Valparaiso can

Please see **ELECTION**, page A-6

## Tax collector audit cost \$75,000

By Del Lessard  
Beacon Staff Writer

Okaloosa County Tax Collector Ben Anderson said an audit of his predecessor's last five years cost \$75,825. Anderson said he didn't call for bids on the job because time was of the essence.

The "forensic audit" was performed by the CPA firm of Carr, Riggs & Ingram (CRI) without the

tax office seeking competitive bids.

Anderson and CRI announced results of the audit during a press conference Sept. 28. The forensic audit, which covered the tax collector's office from Oct. 1, 2006, through June 30, 2011, cited "excessive" spending under former Okaloosa County Tax Collector Chris Hughes, but nothing illegal. At that time, Anderson said cost of



Ben Anderson

the audit, paid by public funds, was still being tallied.

Hughes resigned June 30, 18 months before the end of his fifth four-year term of office. On Aug. 8 Gov. Rick Scott appointed Anderson, a Fort Walton Beach businessman, to finish the remainder of Hughes' term of office. Anderson last week pre-qualified for election to the tax col-

lector job in 2012.

Hughes claimed the audit was a waste of taxpayer money and that it failed to follow recommendations of the state's Department of Revenue, and policy of the Okaloosa County Tax Collector, which he said requires competitive bids be solicited for

Please see **TAX**, page A-3

## County won't help pay for Bluewater sidewalks

By Mike Griffith  
Beacon Correspondent

Members of the Bluewater Bay Municipal Services Benefits Unit governing board were disappointed by the Okaloosa County Commission's rejection of a sidewalk project in Bluewater Bay, and discussed how to respond to the county's decision during the board's Oct. 11 meeting.

The sidewalk project would have built a sidewalk along Bay Drive, between the Bluewater Bay Marina and the Chacato

Valp. backs sidewalks, A-8.

Landing subdivision. The sidewalk had been requested by some local residents who said the sidewalk would have made their neighborhood safer for pedestrians and bicycle riders, including children and the elderly, who walk, run or ride along the edge of Bay Drive, where they risk getting in the way of vehicle traffic along the winding two-lane road.

The project, as proposed, would have required the MSBU

to pay for materials—either asphalt or concrete—to build the sidewalk, while the county public works department would have provided labor from among public works employees. During the Oct. 11 MSBU meeting, board member and MSBU treasurer Joe Jellison said the county commission had rejected the proposal when it was brought before the commission for approval.

Jellison said that after previous discussions between

Please see **SIDEWALK**, page A-7



## Bomb scare at police HQ

Niceville police used ropes to remove a suspicious suitcase from the lobby of police headquarters Tuesday morning. A sheriff's bomb dog didn't detect any smell of explosives. The Bay County bomb squad and the State Fire Marshal's office were also called to investigate further.

Beacon photo by Del Lessard

# Niceville plans to fix up 10 private homes

By Mike Griffith  
Beacon Correspondent

The Niceville City Council has delayed action on applications to fix up 10 private homes at public expense.

During a meeting Oct. 11, the council also tentatively annexed a piece of property on Valparaiso Boulevard, and agreed to accept liability for

the annual Christmas parade in Niceville.

The council meeting began with a briefing by Dennis Dingman, a consultant from Summit Professional Services Inc., who manages the city's Community Development Block Grant program. The program allocates funds from Florida Department of

Community Affairs for grants to help selected low-income Niceville homeowners rehabilitate or rebuild their dwellings.

During his briefing to the council, Dingman said the current budget for CDBG rehabilitation projects in Niceville is \$582,000 for rehab and demolishing or replacement, and \$13,000 for temporary reloca-

tion of families whose homes are to be rehabilitated or replaced. "The obligation under this grant," he told the council, "is to complete 10 housing units by the date of grant expiration, May 18, 2013, and to keep the average cost per housing unit under \$59,000."

Dingman said that so far, 11

families have applied to have their homes rehabilitated or rebuilt under the CDBG program, and he presented a rank-ordered list of the applications received thus far. Although a final list of applicants had been scheduled for presentation to the council during the Oct. 11 meeting, said Dingman, one applicant who was known to be

planning to file an application had not yet completed the process, probably because that person has a disability that could have prevented him from completing the process in a timely manner without assistance.

Dingman recommended that the city council delay further processing of the existing applications until that person had time to complete an application, possibly with some help from Dingman or city officials. The council unanimously agreed to the delay, which also allows time for other Niceville residents to apply, if anyone chooses to do so.

During Dingman's presentation, he also told the city council members that they are required to review the list of applicants and publicly disclose any business or family relationships they may have with any of the applicants. The applicants must also disclose any such relationships they have with elected city officials, city employees or Citizen Advisory Task Force members.

"When a relationship such as this exists," Dingman said, "the city is required to obtain a conflict of interest waiver from DCA. As part of this process, the city will need to disclose the names of any participants with a conflict during a city council meeting, provide a legal opinion from the city's attorney and submit a letter from the city to DCA requesting the waiver." Dingman said thus far, two applicants have been identified as needing such waivers, because they are first cousins of city employees.

The city council is expected to re-address the rehab applications and any necessary disclosures or waivers during the next regular city council meeting, scheduled for 7 p.m. Nov. 8.

In other business Oct. 11, the city council approved the first reading of an ordinance to annex a parcel of land located on the north side of Valparaiso Boulevard between Thomas Street and Hopper Street, as requested by Niceville builder Mike Parish. The parcel will be zoned R-1B, if the council gives final approval to the annexation after two more public readings during city council meetings.

The council also approved a resolution accepting liability for closing a state roadway during the annual Christmas parade, scheduled for Dec. 3.

Niceville Library and Children's Park Director Sheila Bishop told the city council the water spray area of the children's park was turned off Oct. 1 for the fall and winter, and will be turned back on again in early May 2012. She said the park is available for rent for such events as birthday parties, but only on days when the children's park would otherwise be closed, so as not to interfere with normal public access to the park.

Bishop also said the library is working on a plan to enable library card holders to download electronic books, including some current best sellers, through the library's website. She did not specify when the new system is expected to become operational.

City Manager Lannie Corbin told the council that the city is currently preparing for the 35th annual Boggy Bayou Mullet Festival, to be held Oct. 21-23.

He also commended the parents of some Niceville youngsters who recently vandalized part of a city park. After learning of the incident, Corbin said, the parents brought their children to Corbin's office to personally apologize for their misconduct, and arranged for the children to clean up the mess they had made, and to perform additional cleaning duties at city parks for the next two weeks. Corbin said, "This reflects well on the sort of parents we have in Niceville."

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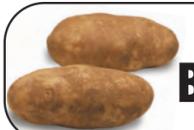
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 <p><b>GENERAL MILLS CEREAL</b></p> <p>TRIX, LUCKY CHARMS, REESE'S PEANUT BUTTER PUFFS, CHEERIOS, 16-18OZ BOX</p> <p><b>\$2.77</b></p>	 <p><b>KELLOGGS ASSORTED SPECIAL K CEREALS</b></p> <p><b>\$2.33</b></p> <p>12-14 OZ BOX</p>		
 <p><b>STAR KIST TUNA</b></p> <p>CHUNK LIGHT, SEL VAR, 5 OZ CAN</p> <p><b>69¢</b></p>	 <p><b>CLOROX LIQUID BLEACH</b></p> <p>96 OZ</p> <p><b>\$1.88</b></p>		
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 <p><b>BLUE BELL ICE CREAM</b></p> <p>1/2 GAL</p> <p><b>\$3.33</b></p>	 <p><b>TOTINO'S PARTY PIZZA</b></p> <p>9-10 OZ</p> <p><b>\$1.15</b></p>		
 <p><b>BORDEN CHEESE</b></p> <p>CHUNK OR SHREDED, 8 OZ</p> <p><b>\$1.88</b></p>	 <p><b>MINUTE MAID ORANGE JUICE</b></p> <p>64 OZ CTN</p> <p><b>\$2.38</b></p>		
 <p><b>BORDEN CHEESE SINGLES</b></p> <p>10-12 OZ</p> <p><b>\$1.88</b></p>	 <p><b>PILLSBURY BISCUITS</b></p> <p>4 PK</p> <p><b>\$1.77</b></p>	 <p><b>FLAVORITE SPREAD MARGARINE</b></p> <p>16 OZ</p> <p><b>88¢</b></p>	 <p><b>DANNON YOGURT</b></p> <p>6 OZ</p> <p><b>59¢</b></p>
 <p><b>BLUE NUN GERMAN WHITE WINE</b></p> <p><b>\$3.98</b></p>	 <p><b>GATO NEGRO WINE</b></p> <p>750 ML</p> <p><b>\$3.20</b></p>		



Beacon photo

## Rocky band competes twice in a day

The Rocky Bayou Christian School Marching Knights won "superior" ratings in all categories Saturday during the 31st annual Little Bighorn competition in Opp, Ala., which included 21 high school marching bands from Alabama and Florida. The RBCS band placed third in its division, in which eight schools competed. Earlier in the day, the RBCS band won "excellent" ratings across the board in Florida Bandmasters Association district competition at Tate High School.

## TAX

From page A-1

expenditures over \$1,000. Commenting on Hughes' assertions, Anderson said he didn't have time to comply with bid procedures because he was dealing with the extraordinary circumstance of Hughes having resigned in mid-term, and in light of previously reported controversy surrounding Hughes' tenure, including his practice of handing out large employee bonuses. Those circumstances, Anderson said, convinced him that it would be in the best interests of the public and his office to commission the audit immediately, without going through a competitive bid process.

Last week Anderson explained why he chose CRI for the forensic audit and did not pursue a competitive bid. He said he chose CRI because they are nationally known, are not the county's auditors and previously were chosen to do a forensic audit of the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office following then-Sheriff Charlie Morris' arrest for misusing public funds.

Because the firm doesn't do audits for Okaloosa County, Anderson said CRI was "totally independent."

Anderson previously stated his motivation for asking for the forensic audit this way: "The community had concerns about the choices and decisions made by the previous tax collector. I considered it necessary to uncover the facts, define or dispel the rumors and finally, put that chap-

ter of the Tax Collector's Office in the history books."

Another of Hughes' critiques of the forensic audits was in an email to the Beacon: "Did anyone ask if an audit had already been conducted after I left office by another firm? No. And, if there already was an audit performed after I left office, why another audit was needed?"

In fact the CPA firm of O'Sullivan Creel did an independent accountant's report on applying "agreed-upon procedures" on June 30. The report documenting their findings, dated July 25, 2011, said the effort was essentially a cash close-out on the day Hughes left and interim tax

collector John Holguin took over. O'Sullivan Creel also checked disbursements, payroll and compared the actual pro-rated operating budget against the tax collector's annual budget. No exceptions were found in the study, which the firm stated was not a formal audit.

Anderson said the O'Sullivan Creel report cost taxpayers about \$10,000.

On a related matter, Anderson last week also reported that another top employee had resigned, increasing the total management savings he was claiming as a result of the audit and his subsequent reorganization of his management team to \$329,000.



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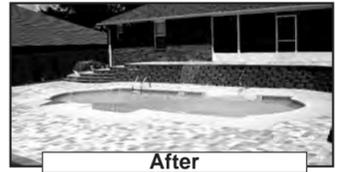
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## Police Blotter

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

Phillip Todd Tucker, 32, of 500 22nd St., Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies Oct. 6 on a felony charge of petit theft, third or subsequent conviction. On Oct. 1 Tucker was allegedly observed concealing \$80 worth of merchandise then leaving the Fort Walton Beach Walmart, 748 N. Beal Parkway, without paying. When store employees confronted Tucker they recovered the merchandise and Tucker allegedly gave his name but then fled the area when learning law enforcement personnel had been summoned.

\*\*\*

Scott Eason Bacheller, 54, with an at-large address and a permanent address of 2425 Roberts Drive, Niceville, was arrested by Niceville police Oct. 7 on a charge of disorderly intoxication that allegedly occurred Aug. 26.

### DUI arrests

Christopher Gene Shearer, 40, of 9831 4th Ave., Orlando, was arrested by Valparaiso police for DUI on Highway 397 (John Sims Parkway) at Chicago Avenue, Oct. 6 at 2:05 a.m. Shearer was also cited for speeding, 51 mph in a 35 mph zone.

### Thefts

On Oct. 11 police in Gainesville, Texas, reported that a possible stolen vehicle from their jurisdiction had given GPS signals for the vehicle's presence in Niceville. Niceville police went to a residence in the 100 block of Poplar Place where the vehicle was located and talked to the driver, who said he was the owner and bought it from his ex-girlfriend in Texas. The ex-girlfriend is still listed as the registered owner and the vehicle was towed from the scene at the request of Texas police.

\*\*\*

An employee at a Niceville store reported that on Oct. 3 unknown person(s) stole a credit card from her wallet which was stored in the break room at the store. The victim noticed the theft when she left work to buy gas and the card was missing. The victim immediately canceled the credit card. The same day someone attempted to use the credit card at another Niceville business, but it was declined. A child found the stolen card in some bushes near the business where it had been declined.

\*\*\*

A Niceville resident from the 1400 block of Cat-Mar Road

reported that unknown person(s) burglarized her home while she took a friend to the hospital near dawn Oct. 10. Stolen were about \$90 worth of jewelry, \$30 cash and a check-book.

\*\*\*

A Niceville resident from the 700 block of Diane Street reported that sometime Oct. 4-5 unknown person(s) pried hubcap covers off her vehicle. The stolen items were valued at \$200.

\*\*\*

Unknown person(s) stole three switches that had been removed and were laying on the ground at a fenced Gulf Power Company compound, 84 Wolverine Ave., Valparaiso, sometime Sept. 7-16. The theft was reported Oct. 4. The switches were valued in total at \$3,924.

\*\*\*

A Valparaiso home in the 100 block of Grandview Avenue was reported burglarized sometime Sept. 16-28. A neighbor keeping an eye on the property while the residents were away entered the home Sept. 28 and noticed several closet doors open. Police also found doors on a curio cabinet and dressers opened and an unsecured rear sliding glass door unsecured that appeared to have been pried open. A VCR was reported missing, pending the family's return.

### Criminal Mischief

Two children, ages 8 and 12, under their parents' supervision, scrubbed graffiti off playground equipment at Meigs Park, Niceville, Oct. 9. Witnesses told police that the youngsters had used markers to write and draw messages and pictures on the equipment. The parents were very cooperative and said the children would complete an apology letter and would be available to perform community service.

\*\*\*

A Niceville resident reported about \$1,500 damage to her vehicle Oct. 7. She said the damage was caused by people in the 4600 block of Range Road "stomping" on her vehicle.

### Other

Kaitlyn P. Mitchell, a crew member, 20, of 4188 Whitetail Circle, Niceville, and Francis E. Foley II, a cook, 20, of 621 Live Oak Drive, Freeport, were issued notices to appear by sheriff's deputies in Bluewater Bay Oct. 12, each charged with possession of less than 20 grams of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia.

## Fire Department Reports

### Niceville

The Niceville Fire Department responded to the following calls October 10, 2011, through October 16, 2011.

0 Structure Fire	18 Emergency Medical Calls
0 Vehicle Fire	2 Vehicle Crash
0 Other Fire	0 Vehicle Crash with Extrication
0 Illegal Burn	0 Other Emergency Calls
0 False Alarms	3 Hazardous Conditions

Street	Situation	Date	Time
Country Club Drive	Electrical problem	10/10/11	09:44
Nathay Avenue	Medical	10/10/11	10:07
Ellis Avenue	Medical	10/10/11	10:41
E. John Sims Parkway	Medical	10/10/11	10:47
N. Partin Drive	Medical	10/10/11	14:38
E. John Sims Parkway	Vehicle crash	10/10/11	15:11
Larkspur Court	Medical	10/11/11	08:20
Niceville Avenue	Medical	10/12/11	01:35
Davis Drive	Medical	10/12/11	02:33
Ivey Terrace	Medical	10/13/11	09:11
Everglade Drive	Medical	10/13/11	16:32
E. John Sims Parkway	Medical	10/14/11	19:43
W. John Sims Parkway	Medical	10/14/11	20:25
Dolphin Point Road	Medical	10/14/11	21:00
27th Street	Medical	10/14/11	21:58
Edge Avenue	Medical	10/15/11	16:09
Black Bear Circle	Natural gas leak	10/15/11	19:40
Kumquat Avenue	Arcing electrical	10/15/11	22:56
Edgewater Drive	Medical	10/16/11	03:02
Bayshore Drive	Medical	10/16/11	10:13
Reeves Street	Medical	10/16/11	22:55
College Boulevard	Medical	10/16/11	23:37
Darlington/Bayshore	Vehicle crash	10/16/11	23:46

Weekly Safety Tip: Sweep gutters, roofs and eaves regularly and remove dead branches from around or near chimneys. By keeping the roof and area surrounding your home clear of debris you reduce your risk of fire during the hot dry season.

### North Bay

The North Bay Fire Department responded to the following calls October 10, 2011, through October 16, 2011.

Street	Situation	Date	Time
Country Club Drive	Dispatched, canceled	10/10/11	09:45
Highway 20	EMS excluding vehicle	10/10/11	13:23
N. White Point Road	EMS excluding vehicle	10/11/11	09:24
Midland Court	Animal problem	10/11/11	12:47
Windward Circle	EMS excluding vehicle	10/12/11	19:46
Pine Street & Range Road	Dispatched, canceled	10/12/11	23:31
N. White Point Road	Medical assist EMS	10/13/11	00:20
White Point Road	Dispatched, canceled	10/13/11	09:33
White Point Road	EMS excluding vehicle	10/13/11	09:50
Parkwood Place	Smoke detector activation	10/13/11	10:21
American Poets Drive	EMS excluding vehicle	10/13/11	20:20
Armadillo Trail	Dispatched, canceled	10/14/11	13:14
Troon Drive West	Assist invalid	10/14/11	13:17
White Point Road	EMS excluding vehicle	10/14/11	13:31
Whitewood Way	Outside rubbish fire	10/14/11	15:58
Tumbarry Place	EMS excluding vehicle	10/14/11	17:10
N. White Point Road	Medical assist EMS	10/15/11	05:47
Bay Drive	EMS excluding vehicle	10/15/11	10:13
Tumbarry Cove	Medical assist EMS	10/15/11	12:32
South Hampton Court	EMS excluding vehicle	10/15/11	13:04
E. Windward Cove	Dispatched, canceled	10/15/11	21:33
Kumquat Avenue	Dispatched, canceled	10/15/11	22:57

Visit northbayfd.org for more information.

## ELECTION

From page A-1

eliminate costly duplication.

Florida officials on Sept. 30 set the primary date as Jan. 30.

Valparaiso's proposed action parallels what happened four years ago when Florida also moved up its presidential primary date to January in order to make the fourth most populous state more important in choosing each party's nominee for president.

Valparaiso would save more than \$1,000 by pairing the two elections, city officials said. The presidential primary date is likely to encourage a much larger turnout, officials said.

A second public hearing final-

izing the election date is scheduled by the city commission Nov. 14.

Up for election next year are the city commission seats currently held by commissioners Tom Miller and Neal Shermer. Both commissioners said they have not yet decided whether they will file as candidates.

Shermer was appointed to his seat two years ago to finish the term of former commissioner Brent Smith, who resigned to run for mayor. Smith lost.

Miller has been a commissioner since first being elected in 1996.

Members of the four-member city commission, who are unpaid, normally serve four-year terms.



Neal Shermer



Tom Miller

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# SIDEWALK

From page A-1

MSBU members and county public works staff members, he had thought the sidewalk project was "a done deal," and was surprised when the county commission "summarily denied" the request when it was brought before the commission for approval. He said four of the five county commissioners voted against the proposal, while James Campbell, whose district includes Bluewater Bay, voted in favor.

County Commissioner Don Amunds, one of those who had voted against the new sidewalk, was contacted Friday by the Beacon, and said he and fellow commissioners had rejected the sidewalk proposal because limited county resources must be devoted to higher priority projects, especially in a time of budget cuts and austerity measures by county government.

"We have cut our public works staff by 18 positions in the last two years," Amunds said. Road paving projects and storm water control projects currently have the highest priority for the county's remaining public works staff, and the county cannot afford to "give away free labor" for lower priority local projects. He said the county cannot provide labor for



Beacon photo by Mike Griffith

**This section near the west end of Bay Drive was proposed for a sidewalk project in which the community's taxing district and Okaloosa County would have shared costs. The county commission rejected the idea as too costly.**

one such project without being swamped with similar requests from other neighborhoods.

During the Oct. 11 MSBU meeting, Jellison said he does not think the sidewalk proposal will simply die after being rejected by the county commission. "There are lots of people walking along Bay Drive, and lots of kids here," he said. "People want to know why" the sidewalk was turned down by the county commission.

Clancy Landon, a Bluewater Bay resident who had been a

leader in the movement to establish the MSBU in Bluewater Bay during the 1990s, said he has had prior experience in dealing with the county commission, and that the MSBU may choose to try and persuade county commissioners to reconsider the sidewalk proposal. "It never hurts to talk to the commissioners," he said, "but always be extremely nice."

Landon added, however, that in his opinion, sidewalk construction is not one of the

responsibilities for which the MSBU was established. The MSBU, he said, should stick to such things as street lights and beautification projects, and leave the funding of roads, streets and sidewalks entirely to the county rather than propose cost-sharing projects.

"I'm not against sidewalks," Landon said, but offering to share the cost of a paving project with the county could "open Pandora's box," by encouraging the county to transfer the cost of future paving projects to the MSBU. The cost-sharing proposal, he said, "could set a dangerous precedent" for diverting the MSBU's limited funding to future paving and road maintenance rather than using it for beautification and maintenance of common areas of Bluewater Bay.

Other visitors at the meeting, however, seemed to favor asking the county commission to reconsider. One visitor suggested that local residents could gather signatures on a petition to present to the county commission. Another said that if the county refuses to provide labor for the project, the MSBU might be able to fund the project itself, including both materials and labor.

In other business Oct. 11, the MSBU board approved the renewal of its annual contract

with Bayou Lawn Services, for about \$163,000, for landscaping services in common areas. MSBU board member Joan McCarthy said the MSBU has a new webmaster for its website, and that the MSBU can now post draft minutes of its meetings on the website about ten days after each meeting. MSBU management consultant Archie Jernigan said that while draft minutes may be posted, the minutes of each meeting do not become official until they are approved by the MSBU board at the next meeting.

Okaloosa County Deputy Sheriff Frank Taylor said that new speed limit signs have been posted along Range Road, allowing him to cite drivers for driving too fast along the road, which passes in front of Bluewater Elementary School. He said some drivers have been clocked at over 60 miles per hour along Range Road, despite

the 30 mph limit. Such drivers, he said, may be confused visitors to Florida, thinking they are still on a main highway after exiting the Mid-Bay Bridge Connector Road.

Taylor also warned local residents to keep doors to their homes locked, as there have been some residential burglaries recently. He said that open garage doors are an especially inviting target for thieves. An open garage full of tools and lawn equipment, he said, is "like a shopper's market" for opportunistic thieves.

The MSBU is a sub-unit of county government, created to provide street lighting, beautification and maintenance of common areas of Bluewater Bay. The MSBU is funded by a yearly fee of about \$60 from all Bluewater Bay property owners, and is governed by an elected board of five unpaid volunteers.

# DISTRICT

From page A-1

Elementary had been within walking distance of a large part of Valparaiso's residential areas since the 1950s.

Last week the commission, on a split vote, threw its weight behind the charter school proposal by rezoning the Valparaiso Elementary site, which is owned by the school district, from commercial to elementary-school use.

School district officials say they fear that such a charter school, which would compete for state funds with the district, would substantially reduce enrollment at Lewis School.

On Oct. 24 Okaloosa County Schools Superintendent Alexis Tibbetts will give the school board her recommendation on a proposal, called "Somerset Academy Valparaiso," to open a new K-5 elementary school. Tibbetts will also give her recommendation on a proposal entitled "Somerset Academy Middle School Valparaiso" to open a charter middle school for children in grades 6-8, if demand exists.

Somerset Academy Inc. is a nonprofit educational organization operating 23 schools programs in Florida and one in Texas, according to Victor Barroso, director of operations for a Miami-based company, Academica, which is helping to develop Somerset Academy.

Its first program, Somerset Neighborhood School, was established in 1997 and was one of the first charter schools to open in Broward County, Barroso said. This school was one of the first charter schools in Florida to be accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS-CASI).

On Sept. 29 a school district committee recommended approval of the charter school proposal submitted by Somerset Academy prior to a Aug. 1 deadline, according to Kaye McKinley, deputy superintendent of schools.

Each of the five members of the school board appointed a community member to sit on the committee that evaluated Somerset Academy's application,



Beacon photo by Del Lessard

**The site of Valparaiso Elementary School, closed by the Okaloosa County School District last May to cut costs, is the proposed location of a charter school favored by the city officials.**

McKinley said, while staff members from the school district advised the committee on technical matters such as state standards.

Until the school board makes a decision about the application, no timeline for opening has been finalized and there are no plans to recruit teachers, Academica's Barroso said in response to a query from the Beacon. The Somerset Academy board has asked Academica to review educational facility options in the Valparaiso area, he said. "Until we get a final decision from the

school (board), no facility decision has been made," he added.

The actual location of Somerset Academy's proposed charter school could be anywhere in Okaloosa County, McKinley said. The proposal, she said, does not state a location but states that the institution would try to attract students from throughout the county.

If the school board approves Somerset Academy's application, the next step would be a meeting between Academica and the school board's attorney to agree on a contract stipulating condi-

tions, McKinley said.

"If the application is approved, Somerset Academy will move quickly to finalize a contract with the school district," Barroso said. "This is standard procedure for new charters. At that time, Academica and the Somerset Academy team will launch several initiatives, including facility selection, community outreach, hiring staff and faculty, and marketing to area families."

Whatever facility is selected for the charter school, statutes require that it meets state standards for building codes for schools at least three weeks prior to opening, McKinley said.

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# Valp. refuses requests to cancel sidewalk plans

By Del Lessard  
Beacon Staff Writer

The Valparaiso City Commission Monday refused residents' requests to cancel plans to build sidewalks along Tennessee and Georgia avenues.

A week earlier, commissioners agreed by a 4-1 vote, with Mayor Bruce Arnold in the minority, to other residents' requests that sidewalks planned for Vine Street and Rose Court be deleted from the list of city streets to get new sidewalks.

Construction of nearly three miles of new sidewalks in city

neighborhoods around Lewis School began Sept. 26 and is expected to take about four months to complete. Cost of the construction is funded with federal tax dollars obtained through a state grant. After agreeing Monday to a contract change order that added \$1,800 for grass seeding and mulching the construction contract currently totals \$373,927.

While promoted for the additional safety sidewalks provide to students and other pedestrians, the project has also attracted its share of critics among residents

opposed to sidewalks in the public rights of way in front of their homes. Residents, who typically maintain the rights of way, often consider them parts of their yards in practice if not in law.

Last November city commissioners bowed to opposition from homeowners in the Indian Shores subdivision and deleted planned sidewalks on Jasmine Avenue in their neighborhood. Commissioners also canceled sidewalks from South Bayshore Drive.

Nearly 60 residents signed petitions in 2010 asking city com-

missioners to cancel sidewalk plans for Montana Avenue, Grandview Avenue, Vine Street, Rose Court, Florida Avenue, Ferndale Avenue and Tennessee Avenue. However, those street remained in the city's sidewalk plans.

At the Oct. 10 city commission agreed by a 4-1 vote to delete sidewalks from Vine Street and Rose Court. Resident Lynwood Knowles argued that the owners on those streets had already petitioned against the sidewalk plan.

Residents Pat and Fred Hess asked commissioners at both the

Oct. 10 and Oct. 17 city commission meetings to remove sidewalks from unpaved Tennessee Avenue, or move the walkways across the street. The Hesses have a driveway that exits onto Tennessee.

Commissioner Tom Miller told the Hesses that it was impractical to move the sidewalks to the opposite side of the road due to a retaining wall. Arnold said construction had already begun and it would be difficult to begin engineering changes.

Resident Jean Smith of

Georgia Avenue asked that sidewalks also be deleted from the city plan because few students used the street and residents had signed petitions last year opposed to the sidewalks. She said Georgia Avenue residents should get the same consideration as other residents who opposed sidewalks.

A motion by Miller to delete sidewalks on Tennessee Avenue died for lack of a second. When Arnold asked if sidewalk plans for Georgia Avenue should be deleted, no commissioner was willing to make such a motion.



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According to Erik Wyrwal, marketing manager, "Our employees are the best in the business. Only 1 of 33 of those who apply actually qualifies to enter our cus-



Kenny Sirmans, General Manager, assures "One Hour Air Conditioning to be Always On Time, Or You Don't Pay A Dime."

tomers' homes wearing the One Hour Air Conditioning uniform."

In addition, service vehicles are regularly well-stocked and prepared for repair visits, often referred to as "warehouses on wheels," which further expedites completion of most appointments.

Services for an array of indoor air quality (IAQ) systems are also available including: central air cleaners, ultra violet lights, HEPA filters, fresh air intakes and elec-

tronic air cleaners. If you have concerns regarding excess dust, dry air, allergens, or airborne viruses and bacteria, One Hour's IAQ services can help.

"With most indoor air being 4-5 times more polluted than outdoor air and the potential for it to be 100 times worse, our IAQ services become more and more of value to your family's comfort and health," Wyrwal said.

Comfort Club is also an option for worry-free indoor comfort. Comfort Club is a membership program that can provide added peace of mind by minimizing overall repair costs to heating and air conditioning systems. According to One Hour Heating and Air Conditioning, biannual planned check-ups have the potential to extend the life of systems to as much as twice as long,

and can greatly save on utility bills. Members receive one precision tune-up, professional cleaning and rejuvenation, plus one safety check directly prior to the main season in use (early spring/summer for air conditioning systems and fall/winter for heating units). In addition, members receive a 20% discount on any repairs.

One Hour Air Conditioning is located on 319 Hwy. 85, Niceville. Customer service representatives are available to take your calls 24/7. Contact the office at 678-1498 for all your heating and air conditioning concerns. Military and senior discounts are available upon request. For more information on One Hour Air Conditioning services, visit onehourair.com or call 888-333-8888.

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## Who's News

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**Jonathan M. Tallman**, financial advisor, The Tallman Group, LLC, has received the NAIFA Quality Award from the National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors, the industry's leading trade association.

The NAIFA Quality Award recognizes professionalism through education and earned designations, production metrics by performance metrics customized for each practice specialty, adherence to



**Jonathan Tallman**

Please see WHO'S, page B-2



## Give thanks when flashing

Rocky Bayou Christian School officially thanked State Rep. Matt Gaetz (red plaid shirt), R-Fort Walton Beach, and officials from the city of Niceville Thursday for their help in getting the Florida Department of Transportation to install overhead and posted school zone signs, both with flashing signal lights, on SR 285 in front of the school. Dr. Mike Mosley, RBCS superintendent, said the private Christian school worked unsuccessfully for years to get the state agency to approve a standard school crossing. That changed after the school enlisted the aid of Gaetz following a serious traffic accident involving a student and another motorist last year. The school zone was installed over the summer. Motorists now face enhanced fines for speeding through the school zone when the lights are flashing.

## Cancer survivors honored by college

Derek Anderson, Chandler Rhoulac, Ben Baltz celebrated



Derek Anderson, above, center, an eighth-grade cancer survivor from Ruckel, is congratulated by the Northwest Florida State College boys' and girls' basketball teams after completing the one-mile fun run at the Twin Cities Relay For Life 5K at Lewis School Sept. 17. Left, NWFSC baseball coach Doug Martin, far left, presented autographed baseballs and running towels to cancer survivors Chandler Rhoulac and Anderson; and J.C. Baltz, father of cancer survivor Ben Baltz. NWFSC girls basketball coach Steve Forbes, far right, was also on hand.

## In the Service

E-mail items to [info@baybeacon.com](mailto:info@baybeacon.com).

Navy Seaman Apprentice **Cedric D. Cross**, son of Anna and Lance Ellis of Niceville, reported for duty at Training Support Center, Great Lakes, Ill.

Cross is a 2010 graduate of Stevens-John Paul High School of San Antonio, and joined the Navy in March 2011.

\*\*\*

Three Navy seamen from Niceville completed U.S. Navy basic training at Recruit Training Command, Great Lakes, Ill.

Navy seamen **Jacqueline D. Medley**, a 2010 graduate of Rocky Bayou Christian School; **Kraig A. Snyder**, a 2003 graduate of Niceville Senior High

School; and **Emily B. Gilley**, daughter of Donna J. and Antonio C. Capitan of Niceville, recently finished the eight-week boot camp program, completing a variety of training which includes classroom study and practical instruction on naval customs, first aid, firefighting, water safety and survival, and shipboard and aircraft safety. An emphasis was also placed on physical fitness.

The capstone event of Naval boot camp is "Battle Stations." This exercise gives recruits the skills and confidence they need to succeed in the fleet. Battle Stations is designed to galvanize the basic warrior attributes of sacrifice, dedication, teamwork and endurance in each recruit through the practical application of basic Navy skills and the core values of Honor, Courage and Commitment.

## RBCS seniors commended

Rocky Bayou Christian School seniors Neely Fawaz, Elizabeth Marshall and Josh Turner have been named Commended Students in the 2012 National Merit Scholarship Program. A letter of commendation from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation, which conducts the program, was presented to these scholastically talented students. About 34,000 Commended Students throughout

the nation were recognized for their exceptional academic promise.

Although they will not continue in the 2012 competition for National Merit Scholarships, Commended Students placed among the top five percent of more than 1.5 million students who entered the 2012 competition by taking the 2010 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.



## Kiwanis Club honors members

The Kiwanis Club of Niceville-Valparaiso held an awards banquet Sept. 29. Two members were recognized with the Legion of Honor, an award for members who have given more than 20 years of service to Kiwanis and the community. Gene Ally, left, received the award for 25 years of service and Jim Lindsay for 30 years of service. With the honorees is Don Pulley, far right.

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\*Source: Salary.com, "Mom Deserves a Raise in 2007", May 2, 2007. Life insurance offered by Allstate Life Insurance Company, Northbrook, IL, and Lincoln Benefit Life Company, Lincoln, NE. In New York, Allstate Life Insurance Company of New York, Hauppauge, NY. © 2009 Allstate Insurance Company

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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



**Coats for Kids drive**

The United Way of Okaloosa-Walton counties will hold the annual Coats for Kids at Christmas drive to help children in need in Okaloosa and Walton counties.

Drop off coats through Dec. 2 at the following locations: Bank of America, Compass Bank, Coastal Bank and Trust, Covenant Hospice, Eglin Chapel, Eglin Federal Credit Union, Northwest Florida State College, Regions Bank, Trustmark Bank, Twin Cities Hospital, YMCA.

Info: United Way, 243-0315.

**Food drive**

Two Niceville doctors' offices will hold a food drive in exchange for services through Oct. 21 to benefit Sharing & Caring, Niceville, Niceville Family Dental Center will double the value of nonperishable food donations, and will take up to \$60 off of your dental bill that week. Zook Family Chiropractic in Niceville will offer a new patient spinal exam, including x-rays if necessary, for \$25 or more of nonperishable food items. Call 729-1223 to schedule with Niceville Family Dental Center, or 678-4155 to schedule with Zook Family Chiropractic.

**Women voters meeting**

The League of Women Voters of Okaloosa County will hold a "Lunch and Learn" Oct. 22, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., at the Two Trees Restaurant, 1955 Lewis Turner Blvd., Fort Walton Beach. Robert McKnight, former representative in the Florida House, will share his experiences in the "Golden Age" of the Florida Legislature. The lunch is \$13. Reservations are required. Contact Mary Blackwell, 621-4088, by Oct. 19 to reserve.

**Trout fishing seminar**

The Emerald Coast Saltwater Seminar Series will focus on the most popular fish in Florida—speckled trout. Starting at 7 p.m. Oct. 19, Northlight Marina in Niceville will be the site of a one-hour fishing seminar to teach anglers how to improve their time on the water when targeting trout. Free food courtesy of Northlight will be served at 6:30 p.m. and free raffles will follow the show. This free event is open to everyone.

Info: Sonny Granger, 850-384-7737; Bethany, 850-497-5230; or saltwater-events.com.

**Libertarian Party meeting**

The Libertarian Party of Okaloosa County will hold a meeting Oct. 19 at 7 p.m., in the Emerald Grande Hotel Grande Vista bar. Registered libertari-

ans from Walton, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa and Escambia counties may appear in person, or vote by proxy, to propose changes to party rules and have them voted on. All are welcome to attend. Reference libertarianpoc.org to see LPOC rules documents. Info: 217-6590

**Science Friday Lecture**

Jennifer Hatler, a crime lab analyst at the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, will present the Science Friday Seminar Oct. 21 at Northwest Florida State College. She will speak on the topic "Forensic DNA Testing Today." The program will be held at 11 a.m. in room S-110 of the Robert E. Green Jr. Science Building.

Info: NWFSC Science Department, 729-5376.

**NWF Fine Arts Show**

The Arts and Design Society seeks artwork for the 28th annual NWF Fair Fine Arts Show to be held Oct. 25-30. Entry dates are Oct. 21, noon-5 p.m., and Oct. 22, 8 a.m.-noon. High school and middle school students are encouraged to participate, and their work will be judged with grade level. Visit [artsdesignsociety.org](http://artsdesignsociety.org) for a prospectus for this show, or call 244-1271 for more information.

**Woman's Club yard sale**

The Destin Woman's Club will hold its annual yard sale Oct. 22, 7 a.m.-noon at Dr. Dennis Lichorwic's parking lot, 4635 Gulfstar Drive, in the Sunsail Plaza on Highway 98 across from entrance to Regatta Bay.

The sale will feature a wide variety of items including furniture, clothing and other household items.

**South Walton bird walk**

Dee Nickerson will lead a bird walk at the South Walton Courthouse Annex Oct. 22. Expect to see brown-headed nuthatches, eastern towhees, yellow-rumped warblers and red-shouldered hawks. Meet at the Winn-Dixie parking lot in Bluewater Bay at 7:15 a.m. Info: Walt Spence, 582-7064.

**Astronomy meeting**

The next meeting of the NorthWest Florida Astronomy Association will be held Oct. 22 at the observatory, S-2, on the Niceville campus of the Northwest Florida State College. The meeting starts at 7 p.m. Weather permitting, telescopes will be set up for viewing by sunset.

Info: Tom Haugh, 678-6483, or [nwfaastro.org](http://nwfaastro.org).

**Old NHS reunion**

The annual reunion of the old Niceville High School is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 22, at the Niceville Community Center, 204 N. Partin Drive.

Students, teachers, spouses, guests and anyone who attended the school from 1929-1952, even for one day, are invited to attend. Registration will begin at 5 p.m., followed by a catered dinner at 6. Bring memorabilia of your school days and activities if you wish. Reservations are requested. The cost is \$12.50 per person. For info and reservations: Louise Lovell, 678-4777.



**Heritage Museum gets TV close-up**

Local TV station WSRE will feature the Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida on "In Your Own Backyard" Oct. 20, 7 p.m. The program is part of a series that showcases interesting places and attractions along the northern Gulf Coast. The show will play on: Cox Cable—channel 9 and HD channel 1009; Valparaiso Cable—channel 11 and HD channel 411; Direct TV—channel 23.

**Archaeology meeting**

The Emerald Coast Archaeology Society will hold its regular meeting Oct. 22 at 1 p.m. in the Lazarus Room of the Indian Mound Temple Museum, 139 Miracle Strip Parkway, Fort Walton Beach.

Maveen Bruner will talk about the 1943 expansion of Eglin Field where the government gave the residents of New Home and Alice Creek 30 days to vacate and took their land by eminent domain. The public is invited to this free event.

**October blood drives**

The following blood drives will be held in October:

- Sunday, 23—Christ Our Redeemer Church, White Point Road, Niceville, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Sunday, 23—Mullet Festival, Festival Grounds Hwy. 85, Niceville, 2-5 p.m.
- Wednesday, 26—Niceville United Methodist Church, 214 Partin Drive, 2-8 p.m.

**ADSO luncheon**

Karen Flesvig Chu will be the guest speaker at the Arts and Design Society's luncheon Oct. 26, 11:30 a.m. Chu will speak on the art of tapestry and hand weaving. Chu will share first-hand knowledge on tapestry weaving at the Art Center Gallery, 17 First Street, Fort Walton Beach. Cost of the luncheon is \$12. Reservations must be made by Oct. 24. Email [adsoluncheon@yahoo.com](mailto:adsoluncheon@yahoo.com) or call Marcy at 585-4967.

**Defense industry event**

The National Defense Industrial Association will hold a Targets, UAVs & Range Operations Symposium & Exhibition at the Emerald Coast Convention Center, Okaloosa Island, Oct. 25-27.

For more information, visit [ndia.org/meetings/2410](http://ndia.org/meetings/2410) or contact Meredith Geary, [mgeary@ndia.org](mailto:mgeary@ndia.org) or 703-247-9476.

**NARFE meeting**

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association, Chapter 1428, will meet Oct. 25 at the Golden Corral, 414 Mary Esther N.W., Fort Walton Beach. Lunch will be at 11 a.m., followed by the meeting at noon. Keith Telemacque, Telly's Auto Repair, Fort Walton Beach, will speak on "Getting Your Car Ready for Colder Weather." This meeting is open to all current and retired federal employees.

**NW Florida Fair**

The Northwest Florida Fair will take place Oct. 25-30. Tuesday-Friday, the fair will be open 5-10 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, all day. Opening night of the fair, Tuesday, Oct. 25, the fair is free. Entry prices: Wednesday, \$2; Thursday, \$3; Friday-Sunday, \$6.

Attractions will include rides and games, musical acts including Jason Thomas, Victoria's Circus motorcycle riders and their globe of death, a high-wire act and livestock. The fairgrounds are located at 1958 Lewis

**Please see CALENDAR, page B-5**

## WHO'S

From page B-1

the NAIFA Code of Ethics, and service to industry.

**Tyler Provost**, a 2006 graduate of Niceville High School, is a first year student of medicine at LECOM-Bradenton, after receiving his degree in molecular biology and microbiology from the University of Central Florida. He will participate in the White Coat Ceremony this winter. Tyler is the son of Denise and Bob Provost and brother of Anthony Provost.



**Tyler Provost**

Gamma Epsilon Masters Chapter of Beta Sigma Phi held its monthly social time at Pandora's restaurant, Destin.

Members and their spouses attending were: Marge and Bob Ballon, Eunice and Les Whitman, Margaret and Roger Holley, Linda and Mike Michalowski, Doris Olig and Angela Budden.

Carr, Riggs & Ingram, LLC, ranked as the 32nd largest accounting firm nationally and third largest in the South, announces the addition of **JoAnn Rocque, Luke Tatum, Tad Jokerst and Taylor Jackson** to the Niceville office.

Rocque joins CRI as a senior accountant. She holds a bachelor's degree from Trenton State College and a master's in accounting from Rutgers

University.

Tatum, Jokerst and Jackson work in the client accounting services department preparing and compiling financial statements and providing various consulting services to businesses of all sizes. Tatum is pursuing a degree in accounting from the University of West Florida. Jokerst holds both a bachelor's and master's in accounting from Missouri State University. Jackson holds both a bachelor's and master's in accounting from Troy University.

**Lawrence "Larry" Lewis** of Valparaiso recently released a book, "Buying Cars, Trucks, SUVs and Vans: Amazing Secrets to Save Thousands," in which he shares negotiation tips with consumers about how to save money when buying a new car.

Lewis is originally from Canton, Ohio, and spent 35 years in the car management and finance industry.

**Daniel Stewart**, son of Dora and William Stewart of Niceville, successfully completed the two-week Norwich University Future Leader Camp at the nation's first senior military college in Northfield, Vt. To qualify for the camp, applicants needed a minimum GPA of 2.5 and had to submit letters of recommendation.

The camp is designed to develop the leadership skills of current high school students by providing a challenging and meaningful adventure camp experience.

Daniel will graduate from Niceville High School in 2012.

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### RBCS donates supplies

Rocky Bayou Christian School's kindergarten and elementary departments started a canned food drive Oct. 3 for Sharing & Caring, Niceville. This drive will continue through Oct. 21. Students donated 913 cans of food with their first delivery to Sharing & Caring Oct. 7. From left, third graders Autumn Ryan and Zoey Cain, and sixth graders Jason McCauley, Thad Dempsey and Hannah Augustin.



### NHS, Choctaw share face time

Niceville High School students communicated via Skype with an Intro to IT class at Choctawhatchee High School, Fort Walton Beach. Students at Niceville gathered around a laptop computer to see and ask questions to their counterparts at Choctaw. NHS teacher Michelle Robinson Cook's Intro to IT students discussed the computer system unit, focusing on hardware and software. Students presented troubleshooting scenarios to the others to see if they knew how to fix the problem.



### Rocky students serve

The Rocky Bayou Christian Academy Junior Classical League acted as volunteer servers for the Blue Jeans Ball, a benefit for Covenant Hospice, held at the Crestview Community Center Oct. 1. Servers included, from left, JCL member Kimberly McMahon, JCL officer Shiloh Johns, member Mandy Hart, JCL President Neely Fawaz and member Michelle Earls.

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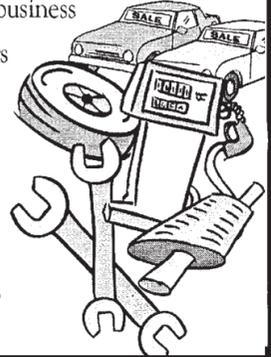
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What do you think about the "Occupy Wall Street" protests?



"I think they can find better things to protest. Better yet, they could go look for work."

William Russell, 69, Niceville, retired military



"They're standing up for what they believe in. At least they're doing something, instead of just sitting and complaining."

Rebekah Richardson, 15, Bluewater Bay, student, Okaloosa Academy



"I think Wall Street is very biased. They set prices for everything, almost like a second government."

Mark Hiller, 34, Niceville, service manager



"I think it's a waste of time and money. We have other problems in our country, like jobs and people facing foreclosure."

Rebecca Madonia, Niceville, maintenance coordinator



"There's a lot of corruption on Wall Street."

Liezele Wtulich, 38, Crestview, bookkeeper



"If people want to protest something, that's their right."

Shawn Jackson, 35, Niceville, soft drink vendor

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



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# East Niceville fire panel discusses accounting

By Mike Griffith  
Beacon Correspondent

The East Niceville Fire Commission Monday discussed options for improving financial accounting and planning methods.

During the meeting at the firehouse on 27th Street, fire commission Treasurer Ed Dunbar suggested some potential improvements to how the commission organizes and presents its budgets and other financial data. No decisions were made.

Dunbar suggested adding more line items to the fire district's budget plans, in order to more closely reflect how professional accountants and auditors prepare or audit budgets of small government entities such as independent fire districts.

The fire district's current budget, said Dunbar, categorizes types of spending into 31 specific categories, or "line items" listed in the budget. Professional accountants, he said, usually divide budget items for local fire districts into as

many as 77 specific line items.

Although Dunbar did not recommend having that many line items in the East Niceville Fire District budget, he did recommend adding up to 30 additional line items, in order to make budget documents more specific about how much is to be spent on what, and to make annual audits of the fire district's finances easier for the accountants who perform them.

Dunbar said adding the additional lines to the budget will not make preparation of fire district budgets more difficult. "Once the spreadsheet is set up, it isn't any harder," he said, to divide spending plans into more categories. Some of the additional line items to be added, he recommended, include specifying contractual services by vendor, listing each utility in the budget separately, such as electricity, water, and gas, and listing fuel for fire trucks separately from other operating supplies.

Other commissioners at the



Beacon photo by Mike Griffith

**Following a meeting Monday, East Niceville fire commissioners and firefighters looked at the new concrete floor of the 27th Street fire station, which was recently installed by firefighters themselves.**

meeting seemed to favor Dunbar's idea. "If it makes it easier for the auditors, it may make it less expensive for us," said Commissioner Matt Schwab.

Adding the extra, more specific line items, said Commissioner Leonard Martin, would help make budget statements clearer than in

the past.

Other items discussed during Monday's meeting included whether to make any changes to the fire district's charter, and whether to continue requiring all checks issued by the fire district to be signed by at least two officials.

Fire commission Chairman

Mike Marcolongo said the fire district's charter was actually an ordinance enacted by the Okaloosa County Commission, so the fire commission lacks authority to change it on its own.

Dunbar suggested that requiring two signatures on checks, although a prudent financial control measure, may be becoming obsolete as more and more businesses and institutions are paying bills by electronic means rather than by paper checks. "Everybody does electronic banking now," he said.

Nevertheless, the other fire commissioners said they prefer to keep the two-signature rule in place for now. Martin said he prefers to keep the two-signature rule as a way of ensuring control over expenditures, and Marcolongo said he thought the two-signature rule is required by the State of Florida.

No votes or formal decisions were made by the fire commission regarding any of the suggestions,

although the commissioners agreed to think them over and discuss them again at the November fire commission meeting.

In other business, Marcolongo said he may arrange for a representative of a health insurance company to speak at the November fire commission meeting, to present a proposal for a health insurance plan that would pay refunds to the fire district for each month in which no fire district employees become sick or injured.

Following the meeting, fire commissioners were shown the new concrete floor of the fire station vehicle bay. Fire Chief Michael Wright said the new floor was recently installed by East Niceville firefighters, saving the cost of having it done by an outside contractor.

East Niceville fire commission meetings are usually held at 7 p.m. on the second Monday of each month, in the fire station at 1709 27th Street.

## CALENDAR

From page B-2

Turner Blvd., Fort Walton Beach. Info: 862-0211 or nwfair.com.

### Social Security seminar

Arbor Wealth Management will host a complimentary seminar entitled "At What Age Should I Begin Taking Social Security Benefits" in the Arbor Wealth Conference Room Oct. 26 at 10 a.m. Snacks and soft drinks will be served. Margaret R. McDowell, ChFC®, AIF®, firm founder and principal, will lead a presentation on social security optimization choices. Call 850-608-6121 to reserve seating. Arbor Wealth Management is located in the Tops'1 Commercial Center, 500

yards east of Sandestin's main entrance.

### Alzheimer's support group

Alzheimer's Family Services will hold a support group meeting for family members or friends coping with a loved one with Alzheimer's disease at 10:30 a.m. Oct. 26 at the First United Methodist Church, 214 S. Partin Drive, Chandler Center. The support group is free and respite care is available.

Support Groups are a means for caregivers and others interested in learning more about Alzheimer's disease to exchange ideas, gather information and discuss their concerns with others who are dealing or have dealt with the same issues. To register

for this support group or for info, call 478-7790 or visit AlzFamServ.org.

### Dinner with Nida

Rosemont Baptist Church will be having one final "Dinner with Nida" from Nida's Thai and More. The dinner will be Nov. 4 at 5 p.m. Make reservations by Nov. 1 for dine in or carry out. All proceeds will go to Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes. Visit RBCNiceville.org for more information. Call the church for information or to make reservations, 678-1611. The suggested donation is \$8. Come and eat before the football game.

### Pine needle basketry

Learn a new skill, experience an

age-old tradition and create something uniquely yours at the Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida, 115 Westview Ave., Valparaiso. Pine Needle Basketry, a three-part class, will be held Nov. 1, 8 and 15 at 4:30 p.m.

Early Native Americans in the region wove abundant longleaf pine needles into beautiful and useful baskets. Join instructor Joe Stoy and learn the original Seminole techniques using modern materials and local pine needles.

The cost, including materials, is \$75, \$60 for Museum members.

Space is limited. Payment is due at registration. Call 678-2615 to register. Ask about a special discount for new members.

### Driver safety course

In November 2011, AARP will offer a free driver safety program for all veterans and their spouses. This class will allow good drivers 55 and older to earn premium deductions from all providers of automobile insurance in Florida. Info: 729-3468.

### Golf fundraiser

The Foxwood Country Club, 4927 Antioch Road, Crestview, will hold a golf tournament to benefit the Christian Thomhave memorial scholarship fund at Northwest Florida State College Oct. 28 at noon. There will be a shotgun start at 1 p.m. The entry fee is \$44. Make and mail checks to

Foxwood. Info: B.J., 682-2012 or 862-2012.

### Mullet festival golf tourney

The Niceville-Valparaiso Rotary Club will host the Mullet Festival Charity Golf Tournament Oct. 28 at the Rocky Bayou Country Club. Proceeds from this tournament will benefit the rotary scholarship fund, which are awarded to local students. Tee off time is noon. Corporate sponsorship is \$350, individual registration is \$90. Prices include green fee and cart, range balls, dinner and award ceremony after the tournament. Hole sponsor signs can be purchased for \$100. Info: Allen Tucker, 678-5141 or email nicevalrotary@yahoo.com. Email for registration form.

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2006 Ford Explorer XLT, 4.0LV6, 79K highway miles, great condition. \$11,500, 863-990-2901.

Service Greeting Cards FWB, Niceville areas. Must have good computer skills. Must have a land line phone. Mon.-Fri. with some flexibility. Approx 15-20 hours a week working hours. Must be able to work the day before and after holidays. Depending on experience \$7.30-\$8.30/hr. Send resume to Richard.wood@amgretings.com

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Looking for a home or a job? Be sure to check the classified section every Wednesday in the Bay Beacon!

### Yard Sales

Lancaster, October 15 and 22. Toys, clothes, furniture, kitchenware, and more.

Moving Sale. Everything big and small. October 22 at 395 Iowa St.

519 Kumquat Ave., Oct. 22, 8am. A lot of everything.

BIG SALE! Halloween and Christmas items up to 50% off. This and That Antiques Thrift Shop Flea Market. 1419 North 29th #2. Open Wed.-Fri. 1PM-5PM, Sat. 10AM-4PM

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1527 Valparaiso Blvd.....MLS#560212 ..\$169,900  
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E-MAIL: Classified@baybeacon.com Type "Classified" in subject field. (Do not include credit card information. We will call you for credit card info. \$5 processing fee.)

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## Despite effort, Central too tough for Eagles Visitors win close matchup, 27-19

By Sarah Clauson  
*Beacon Correspondent*

The Niceville eagles fell to the Central High School (Phenix City, Ala.) Devils last Friday 27-19. The non-district match up was one of Niceville's toughest of the season, against a team with a winning record and several star athletes.

The Eagles won the coin toss and opted to receive the ball and made a statement right out of the gate. The offense entered the game with finesse and rhythm that had the Devils on their heels. The first play of the game was a 10-yard run by Devin Vazquez, followed by a picture perfect completion to Tyree McCants that moved the ball almost 40 yards to the 22-yard line in Devil territory. With 10:25 left in the first quarter, freshman running back Shi Kim Coward moved the ball from the 8-yard line into the end zone and gave the Eagles a 7-0 lead. The momentum continued

when the Devils' very first snap went beyond their quarterback and resulted in a safety, giving the Eagles another two points. Central's speed and athleticism became apparent later in the quarter when it scored its first touchdown off an amazing quarterback keeper to narrow the gap. The Devil's quarterback did it again midway through the second quarter, as the Niceville offense tried to adjust to the tough Devil's defense.

Strong pressure on the Eagle running game forced Niceville to pass more than usual, and although there were plenty of impressive completions, momentum was hard to find. The Eagle defense once again showed off its experience and skill by keeping the pressure strong, and preventing a touchdown on the last drive of the half.

The defense opened the 2nd half with an impressive fumble

recovery that led to an Eagle field goal by Andrew Mitchell, dwindling the Devil lead to 14-12. Less than a minute later the Devils answered with another electrifying possession that resulted in a touchdown, 21-12.

The Eagles did not let the lead scare them, but rather pulled off another fumble recovery, which poised Shi Kim Coward for his second touchdown of the night, and his high school career. The 21-19 held up until late in the fourth, when the Devils managed another touchdown to bring the final score to 27-19.

"We played very well in spots," said coach John Hicks. "We did some really good, positive things offensively. I think we're getting better. Hopefully we won't play many more teams as good as them."

Friday the Eagles, 2-1 in the district, will travel to Fort Walton Beach to take on the Vikings, 0-2.



Beacon photo by Sarah Clauson

Niceville gridders Trey Barnes (11) and Blake Parker tackle a runner to minimize the gain in Friday's 27-19 loss to Central.



Beacon photo by Kenneth Books

### Rams win volleyball crown

Ruckel Middle School's Casey Carr leaps for a spike against Baker Middle School Wednesday, Oct. 12. The Rams defeated Baker to win the county middle school volleyball championship.



Alec Hohnadell speeds around the course during a recent personal watercraft race. Alec, a Niceville High School sophomore, is the youngest champion the sport has seen.

Courtesy photo

## NHS soph making mark as racer

By Kenneth Books  
*Beacon Staff Writer*

Some teenagers have hobbies. Alec Hohnadell has a vocation.

The Niceville High School sophomore is an up-and-comer in the growing field of personal watercraft racing. In fact, he earned a second place in the 30th Anniversary World Finals. In September, he won the world championship in Lake Havasu, Arizona.

Alec is 16. The Hohnadell's budget can be strained from time to time.

"Kuwait's team has a yearly budget of \$6 million and bonus money of \$65,000 per win on each class," Alec said. "The Fazza Team from Dubai had a budget of over \$1 million for this one race and even came with a fleet of Escalades and bodyguards. These foreign countries pour big money into their racing.

It is kind of overwhelming but definitely makes it interesting."

At the World Finals, Alec had a full-speed collision with another racer, which knocked them both off their boats and into the water almost causing both racers to get run over by the pack of racers. Alec was able to get back on and finish the race eighth.

The second heat was much better. Alec managed a first-place finish, which earned him a second.

Alec's next race was in the Stock Class Sept. 25, and this was the race that earned him a World Championship in that

division. He won the qualifying heat race but had a scary moment when he snagged a buoy rope while racing and got pinned under his boat causing him to almost drown. He was able to get loose and get back on and win the Overall World Championship in the Stock Class.

There are about 15 classes, based on a number of factors, such as age, experience, skills and engine displacement.

Meanwhile, his face will become well known among fans. He was chosen as the "Junior Star Award" winner as the most promising young racer, by other racers in the International Jet Sports Boating Association, which oversees the sport.

Alec became interested in racing because "My friend had a motorcross (bike) and invited us to go ride with him. I just like racing and going fast and com-

peting against other racers." He was 13 at the time.

Right now, the enterprise is paying off more in fame than in fortune. Alec estimated a victory gains between \$1,000 and \$1,500 in take home pay.

"If it gets bigger, people can make \$500,000 to \$600,000 per year," Alec said.

A race, Alec said, consists of 10 laps with buoys set up. Racers are required to round the buoys. If they miss one, they must round a black buoy, which is significantly off the track. "It takes some time to get back," Alec said.

His next race will be early in the winter at Daytona Beach. Alec hopes eventually to capture the pro championship. "That's the biggest you can get, so it's going to be my dream for this year and years to come," he said.



Alec Hohnadell



Photo by Scott Schaeffler

### Setup for a Knight

Rocky Bayou Christian School's Lauren Wright sets up the ball in an Oct. 4 volleyball match with Pensacola Christian Academy. Behind her are Amber Smith and Kaitlyn Tiller, with Hannah Barber bringing up the rear. The Knights won the match, 3-2, to bring their record to 2-12.



### Rocky falters on gridiron

Rocky Bayou Christian School's running back, Ben Phillips, tries to evade a Port St. Joe defender as quarterback Caleb McCullough (11) and offensive lineman Jacob Holcomb dash to his defense. The Knights, however, lost the game, 28-0.

Photo by Amie Fonseca