

# The Bay Beacon

14 Pages, 2 Sections, 3 Inserts

Wednesday, October 26, 2011

50¢

**UP  
COMING**

**Thursday, 9 a.m.**



The **Flying Needles Quilt Guild** will host a **Quilt of Valor workshop** at the Niceville Church of Christ, 801 E. John Sims Parkway.

The Guild's annual goal is to make 12 Quilts of Valor for injured service members, in addition to dozens of lap quilts and Christmas stockings for children's charities.

Info: FNQG@cox.net.

**Friday, 5:30 p.m.**



Join **Toastmasters** at Cafe Bienville, 314 Bayshore Drive, Niceville, for a special **open mike night** event.

In just one fun-filled night, you'll meet friendly members and hear exciting speeches. In addition, there'll be door prizes and the fun is free.

Info: 834-2378.

**Saturday, 10 a.m.**



The Heritage Museum's **Old-time Saturday** Oct. 29 will be "Mullet Mania—A Day in the Life of a Mullet Fisherman."

Through hands-on activities and authentic historic collections, kids will learn how local mullet fishermen made a living in Boggy Bayou long ago.

Cost: \$7 per child or \$5 per child for museum family members. Chaperones are free. Space is limited. Reservations: 678-2615.

Calendar, B-2.

## College board rejects speech curbs

By Mike Griffith  
*Beacon Correspondent*

Trustees of Northwest Florida State College last week rejected the college president's proposal to restrict political and social demonstrations to certain areas of campus.

Meeting Oct. 19 in Crestview, the NWFSC Board of Trustees unanimously voted down the previously tabled proposal

by President Ty Handy, who described it as an attempt to balance speech rights with the rights of students and teachers to carry on regular activities.

During the discussion prior to the vote, Trustee Paul Foster said he opposed the measure because it could be seen as a policy of restricting, rather than encouraging, free speech on campus. "It violates the First Amendment to the Constitution,"

said Foster. "It does not serve students or this college."

Foster said that in his opinion, "The entire United States is a free-speech zone," and should remain so. Any policy that could be interpreted as restricting free speech on campus, he said, would invite lawsuits against the college from such organizations as the American Civil Liberties Union.

Foster said that according to his own research, 177 colleges in the U.S. have enacted policies attempting to control demonstrations and other free-speech activities, and 43 percent of them have faced lawsuits as a result. "We all know how much fun lawsuits are."

"If someone here ever has a reason to

Please see COLLEGE, page A-8

## Mullet Festival pleases crowds



Beacon photo by Mike Griffith

Crowds enjoyed three days of bright blue October weather at the 35th annual Boggy Bayou Mullet Festival last weekend in Niceville. This year's event, like many before, offered rides on everything from a Ferris wheel to both live and carousel horses. There was also music from country-music headliners like Trace Adkins and Brantley Gilbert, and from lesser-known groups like The Blasters and the Sleepy Man Banjo Boys. Other attractions included craft booths, face painting and clown shows for children, Army Ranger reptiles, games at a carnival midway, and a wide variety of food, including, of course, mullet. Estimated attendance was between 45,000 and 50,000 for the three-day event, according to Niceville City Manager Lannie Corbin.



## Court clerk now refuses most checks

Too much time was spent in collection, Howard says

By Del Lessard  
*Beacon Staff Writer*

There's a new downside to getting a traffic ticket. Offenders may no longer pay the fine by mail in Okaloosa County.

The Okaloosa County Clerk of Court's office now won't accept personal checks for any transaction, except for child support. Cash, cashier's checks, money orders, business checks



Don Howard

Please see COURT, page A-5

## Homebuilding starts to revive

By Del Lessard  
*Beacon Staff Writer*

After a four-year slump, home construction in Niceville appears to be on the upswing.

Two developers are requesting preliminary approval of a pair of residential developments in the city of Niceville that contain a total of 50 residential lots. Niceville planning commissioners will consider those requests Tuesday, Nov. 1.

Valparaiso Realty requested preliminary approval of Magnolia Woods, Phase II, a 42-residential-lot Planned Unit Development (PUD) on

Please see REVIVE, page A-4

## Churches will shelter homeless on cold nights

By Del Lessard  
*Beacon Staff Writer*

Churches and volunteers are forming a cold night shelter program for the homeless in the Niceville-Valparaiso area.

Under the program, scheduled to start Dec. 1, homeless people will be offered shelter in one of at least three area churches if the night temperature falls below 40 degrees.

Under the direction of the Okaloosa Walton Continuum of Care, the program will join similar programs in Fort Walton Beach, Crestview and DeFuniak Springs, according to Judy Byrne Riley, Niceville, new chair of the organization.

Please see CHURCHES, page A-3

## Charter school plans clear hurdle

By Mike Griffith  
*Beacon Correspondent*

The Okaloosa School Board Monday approved the start of negotiations with Somerset Academy Inc., an education company that has applied to open a charter elementary school and a charter middle school at the former site of Valparaiso Elementary School.

Meeting in Crestview, the school board followed the recommendation of a committee of school district staffers and community members previously appointed by school board members to review the applications.

Committee member Kaye McKinley reported to the school board that the applications from Somerset met standards of the state of Florida, and therefore recommended approval of the applications and the initiation of contract negotiations between the school district and Somerset. School district attorney Jeff McInnis told the board members that the school district has 75 days in which to negotiate a charter with Somerset.

Although the school board members voted unanimously to

Please see SCHOOL, page A-4



## The Great Pumpkins

With trick-or-treaters by the hundreds set to roam local streets in costume Monday evening, this pumpkin-headed couple in a yard on Eastview Avenue, Valparaiso, can only grin in anticipation. See story on page A-2 for Halloween hours and alternative activities.

Beacon photo by Del Lessard



Beacon photo by Del Lessard

### Upsy-daisy

Two drivers were treated and released from Twin Cities Hospital after a rollover crash on John Sims Parkway at the entry to the Kmart parking lot, Oct. 19 at 5 p.m. Annie Watts, 83, of Niceville, was charged with failure to yield the right of way after she turned her eastbound 2008 Jeep left into Kmart and was struck by a westbound 2007 Toyota Camry driven by Carrie Bryant, 49, of Freeport. Damage to each of the vehicles was estimated at \$8,000. Pictured, emergency workers right the Jeep after Watts and Bryant were sent to the hospital.

## Man, 88, steps into path of car

By Del Lessard  
Beacon Staff Writer

An 88-year-old Niceville man was flown to a Pensacola hospital Thursday after being struck by a vehicle as he tried to cross six-lane John Sims Parkway on foot.

James Silas Derrick, 88, of Niceville, was struck by a vehicle as he tried to cross John Sims, from south to north, just west of Elm Street Oct. 20, about 10:30 a.m., according to Lt. Steve Gaiser, Niceville Police Department.

Derrick had already crossed halfway and was standing in the

median, head down, when he stepped out in front of traffic, according to a witness, Gaiser said.

There will be no charges against the driver, Luverne Whitaker Williams, 82, of Valparaiso, Gaiser said.

Derrick was taken from the scene by EMS ambulance to Twin Cities Hospital, and then flown by helicopter to Sacred Heart Hospital in Pensacola.

As of Monday afternoon Derrick was listed in serious condition, according to Mike Burke, spokesman for Sacred Heart Hospital.

## Twin Cities set 'treat' hours

By Del Lessard  
Beacon Staff Writer

Officials have announced "trick-or-treat" hours for Halloween in the Twin Cities. Halloween, Oct. 31, this year falls on Monday.

Niceville and Valparaiso officials set the hours for trick-or-treat between 5:30 p.m. and 8 p.m. on Halloween within city limits.

Unincorporated areas, such as Bluewater Bay, do not have any official Halloween hours, according to Okaloosa County officials.

Alternatives to traditional Halloween trick-or-treat include Orange Fest, a family friendly community celebration that has drawn thousands in previous years. Orange Fest takes place Oct. 31, 5:30-8 p.m., on South

Partin Drive at the First Baptist Church of Niceville, 622 Bayshore Drive. Activities include inflatables, carnival games, trunk-or-treat, live music, food for purchase, Army reptiles, Nonies Ark animals, crafts, a balloon artist, and much more.

The Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office offered the following "goodies" for enjoying a safe Halloween:

—Children should stay in groups, with an adult or responsible older child present to supervise at all times.

—Select costumes with safety in mind. Avoid masks that restrict vision. Long, flowing costumes may become snagged or cause the wearer to trip.

—Make sure the costume does not impair mobility for safe walking or driving.

—When out at night, carry a flashlight with strong batteries.

—Make certain all materials used in the costume are fire retardant.

—Trick-or-treaters should stay in familiar neighborhoods.

—Not everyone participates in Halloween. Bypass houses that are dark and not decorated.

—Carefully inspect all food items prior to consuming them.

—Keep pets indoors.

—Motorists should exercise special caution in residential areas. Adult party goers should make "designated driver" arrangements if alcohol will be served.

### Lane closure

The city of Niceville announced the following road-lane closure.

The westbound outside lane of John Sims Parkway at the intersection of Cedar Avenue will be closed for the installation of utilities Thursday, Oct. 27, 8 p.m.-4 a.m., weather permitting.

If you have any questions, call the Niceville Public Works office, 729-4064.

# Food Depot

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 <p><b>ANGUS BEEF SHOULDER ROAST</b> <b>\$2.75</b></p>	 <p><b>LARGE SHRIMP</b> 31-40 CT <b>\$5.98<sup>LB</sup></b></p>	 <p><b>ROYAL SLICED BACON</b> 12 OZ PKG <b>\$2.48<sup>EA</sup></b></p>	
 <p><b>CALIFORNIA RED GLOBE GRAPES</b> <b>\$1.28<sup>LB</sup></b></p>	 <p><b>WASHINGTON STATE RED &amp; GOLDEN DELICIOUS APPLES</b> <b>88¢<sup>LB</sup></b></p>		
 <p><b>BLUE BELL ICE CREAM PINTS</b> <b>\$1.09</b></p>	 <p><b>COCA-COLA AND ALLIED PRODUCTS</b> 2 LTR <b>\$1.38</b></p>		
 <p><b>FLAVORITE CEREAL</b> BRAN FLAKES, HONEY NUT TOASTED OATS, COCOA CRUNCHIES, 11-17 OZ, SEL VAR <b>\$1.37</b></p>	 <p><b>KELLOGG'S CEREAL</b> MINI WHEATS - BITE SIZE SEL VAR, 16-18 OZ <b>\$2.35</b></p>		
 <p><b>PETER PAN PEANUT BUTTER</b> 13-16 OZ <b>\$1.88</b></p>	 <p><b>KELLOGG'S CEREAL</b> RAISIN BRAN CRUNCH OR FROSTED FLAKES 15-18 OZ <b>\$2.35</b></p>		
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**Niceville's Newspaper**

# College to privatize dining ops

Red ink exceeds \$30,000 a year

By Mike Griffith  
Beacon Correspondent

The Northwest Florida State College Board of Trustees approved a plan to privatize the college's money-losing dining operations.

Officials said the plan would preserve the jobs, pay and benefits of its 11 food workers at the Niceville campus.

During a meeting in Crestview Oct. 18, trustees approved a competitive proposal from Aladdin Food Services to assume control of the college's food services operation starting with the opening of the college's new student services center in January.

The new contract moves management and operations of dining and catering services on the college's Niceville campus from college staff to Aladdin, a Wheeling, W. Va., company. Aladdin was



Beacon photo by Mike Griffith  
The Northwest Florida State College Board of Trustees met last week at the institution's center in Crestview.

selected from among several companies that submitted proposals to the college.

NWFSC President Ty Handy told the trustees that the college has been losing between \$30,000 and \$35,000 per year running its own food service, but that Aladdin expects to make a profit. Aladdin, he said, runs food serv-

ices at many other colleges, hospitals, and other institutions around the U.S., buying food in large enough quantities to be able to obtain it at discount prices, lowering costs.

Following approval of Aladdin to operate the college's food services operations, trustees approved a series of end-of-serv-

ice benefits for the college's current three full-time and eight part-time employees who work in the college's dining operation. All the employees will become employees of Aladdin.

Gary Yancey, NWFSC vice president for administrative services, said that the Aladdin proposal calls for the firm to hire all current NWFSC food services employees at their current pay level, with the opportunity for advancement within the Aladdin company and the opportunity for some part-time employees to qualify for the benefits of full-time employees—benefits which they do not now have from the college itself.

Trustees also approved a payout schedule for accumulated annual and sick-leave benefits for current full-time college food services staff, along with continuation of other college benefits such as ID card privileges and free or discounted admission to certain cultural and athletic events at the college.

## CHURCHES

From page A-1

"It is time for our area to realize that we have homeless men, women and families in our area," Riley said.

"Don't think because you don't see homeless people on our streets that we don't have homeless people living here," said Riley. "They are living in tents in the woods and they are sleeping in their cars. This is a hard time and those who can need to give back to those in need."

The nonprofit organization held a first meeting with a group of ministers and community activists at the end of June, Riley said. At the second meeting a few weeks later there were over 25 in attendance.

Niceville resident Sam Hays agreed to be the volunteer coordinator for the program, a critical position, Riley said.

Currently, at least six churches are involved in the planning, Riley said. They are Niceville United Methodist Church, First Baptist Church of Niceville, Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Church, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, First Presbyterian Church and St.

Paul Lutheran Church. Three of them have committed to be shelters, two others are considering operating shelters, and all are soliciting volunteers, she said.

"The hope is to have seven locations that the homeless can go to on any night that the temperature drops," said Riley. Only one of the seven would be open on a given night.

The group hopes to have volunteers shelter staffed trained by Nov. 30, with the program to begin Dec. 1.

"When the temperature is forecast to be at 40 degrees or below," explains Hays, "I put our plans into action." Calls will go out to the designated church representatives; they will assemble the necessary mats, which are donated by United Way, blankets and other necessities. "Our volunteers will provide a dinner that night and a breakfast the next morning," noted Hays. A minimum of two people will be on site for each of three shifts. The shelter would be open 6 p.m. to 6 a.m.

"The community as a whole jumped on this," said Don Tipton, who with his wife, Sue, are the volunteer coordinators for the First Baptist Church of Niceville. In the past the community supported the homeless with just monetary con-

tributions, he said.

"Experience tells us that we will probably have just a few homeless spending the night, six to 10," said Riley. Historically, Crestview has an average of 12 and DeFuniak Springs has less. "Fort Walton has an average of 60 but the larger population and the location of the city make a huge difference," she said.

Niceville police estimated that about three homeless people live in wooded areas of the city. Valparaiso police said they only see homeless people occasionally as they pass through the area. An estimate from the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office wasn't immediately available.

A Cold Night Shelter program started in Fort Walton almost 10 years ago. The Crestview program began three years ago and

the DeFuniak program began last year, Riley said.

Announcements of the shelter program in Niceville will be posted at churches and at Sharing & Caring, Riley said. She said she believed that news of the program would spread by word of mouth among those who may need it.

Volunteers are still needed for the program, as are locations for shelter. Hays asked that any church or citizen who wants to volunteer call him at 729-1260.

The Continuum of Care is a two-county organization which is dedicated to the elimination of homelessness, through prevention, intervention, assistance toward self-sufficiency, the provision of housing options and advocacy. For more information go to [okaloosawaltonhomeless.com](http://okaloosawaltonhomeless.com).



Judy Byrne Riley



Sam Hays

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**REVIVE**

From page A-1

the west side of South Palm Boulevard. The proposed development is directly south of Magnolia Woods 1, a previously approved 29-lot subdivision for single-family homes that is also being developed by Valparaiso Realty, but has not yet started construction.

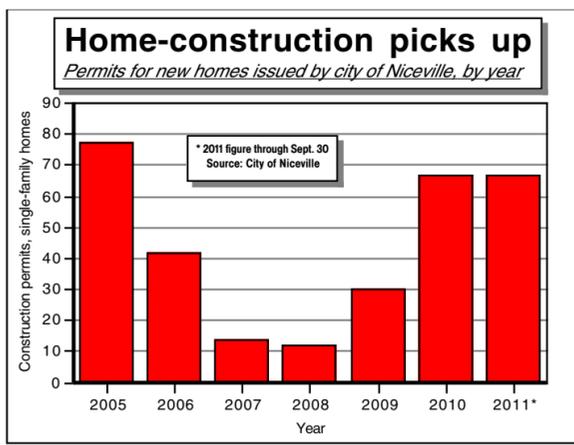
Meantime, Niceville builder Mike Parish has requested preliminary approval of Parish Waterview, an eight-lot subdivision located south of 29th Street and zoned R-2. The development had been submitted to the planning commission a few months ago but had subsequently been withdrawn to resolve some issues, according to the

city building department.

Parish is also requesting the planning commission grant a special exception to Niceville land development codes to allow for a 40-foot right of way, as opposed to the required 50 feet, for a road associated with the proposed Parish Waterview development.

While the housing market across the country has suffered during the recent economic downturn and weak recovery, permits for new homes in Niceville has seen an uptick the past two years.

Asked why the apparent pickup in building permits for single family homes, Niceville Building Inspector Darcey Chancy mentioned that there were a few new subdivisions



opened in the last couple of years, that interest rates are at historic lows, and that the city is attracting more Army personnel

from the 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne), which recently moved from North Carolina.

New subdivisions with recent

home-building activity include the 31-lot Arrowhead subdivision on Highway 85 North near Edge Elementary and the 35-lot Hawks Landing off West College Boulevard.

A spokesman for Valparaiso Realty also pointed to low interest rates, the military influx, including Air Force personnel attached to the F-35 training center, as reasons for increased activity. In addition, the company spokesman said the Niceville area has worked its foreclosure housing stock to about 10 percent of the local housing market, compared with 30 percent of available housing in other areas.

Kelly Murphy Redd of Ruckel Properties noted a rise in demand for new homes in the past few weeks. For example,

she said, a military member now renting, and another person with a new, stable job, are both now thinking of building homes in Niceville.

Builders, she said, still want to build and are even constructing a few homes "on spec" (without previously lining up buyers) in Ruckel Properties developments such as 392-lot Swift Creek subdivision and the smaller Hawks Landing subdivision. She said about 70 percent of residential activity goes back to the military—active, retired or connected in some way, such as defense contractors.

The Niceville Planning Commission meeting Nov. 1 will take place in the Council Chambers, 208 N. Partin Drive, at 7 p.m.

**SCHOOL**

From page A-1

approve the company's applications, at least one board member expressed doubts about the idea of putting a charter school in Valparaiso, and others questioned the idea of a new charter school in general.

Charter schools are independently operated institutions that compete with county school districts for students and public education funds. There are three such schools in Okaloosa County already, and 450 statewide.

The school board has no obligation to lease its vacant

Valparaiso Elementary School site to Somerset even if a charter school contract is executed. The board is at odds with the city of Valparaiso over future use of the site.

"We have no choice" but to approve contract talks with Somerset, said board member Cindy Frakes, since the state rules governing charter schools require local school districts to at least attempt to negotiate a contract with a charter school if the proposed school's application meets state standards.

School board members made it clear during Monday's meeting, however, that merely beginning

negotiations does not guarantee that a charter school will be opened, that it would be located at the former Valparaiso Elementary site, or that if such a school is opened, that it will continue operating for long.

"I am not advocating a charter school," said Frakes. "I think it will negatively impact our school in Valparaiso." She was referring to Lewis School, a K-8 institution to which elementary school students were rezoned when the school board closed Valparaiso Elementary earlier this year in a cost-cutting move.

Some parents in Valparaiso had strongly objected to the closure of

Valparaiso Elementary, saying it was important to have a neighborhood elementary school within walking distance from the homes of many young families in Valparaiso. City Commissioner Neal Shermer had led a movement to establish a charter school, preferably at the former elementary school building. Somerset Academy, which is affiliated with the Academica chain of charter schools in Florida, Texas, and elsewhere, expressed interest in putting charter schools in Valparaiso or nearby, either at the former Valparaiso Elementary

Please see HURDLE, page A-6



Beacon photo by Mike Griffith  
Doug Wyckoff, lawyer for the city of Valparaiso, addresses the Okaloosa County School Board Monday about a dispute between the city and the board over future use of the vacant Valparaiso Elementary School site.

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**COURT**

From page A-1

or credit cards are the only payments now accepted by the clerk of court, officials said.

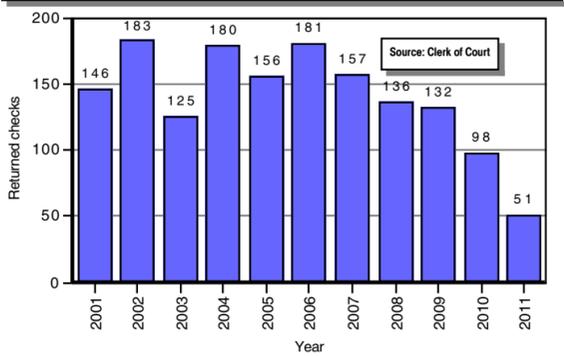
The policy change, which occurred Aug. 1, means that over 10,000 people a year must find a different way to pay traffic fines or other Clerk of Court business.

The change stemmed from the number of uncollectable checks received, according to the court clerk's office. The hours the clerk of court's personnel spent in preparing notices, affidavits, and the accounting required to collect on bad checks, also had a bearing on the decision, said Okaloosa County Clerk of Court Don Howard.

"I don't want to inconvenience anyone, but it's a cost issue," Howard said. The office received about 140 bad checks a year over the past dozen years. However that number declined markedly in the past two years.

**Where the rubber meets the road**

*Bounced checks for traffic fines received by Okaloosa County*



"After legal notification to the maker, our only recourse for collection is to turn the (bad) check over to the State Attorney's Office for prosecution," said Laura Peacock, an employee at the Clerk of Court. "The banks are now returning checks to us stamped with reasons, such as refer to maker, stop payment, endorsement canceled, unau-

thorized signature, etc. which are not accepted by the State Attorney, as well as any check in the amount of \$5 or less."

Assistant State Attorney Bill Bishop said his office prosecutes cases which comply with the state's statute for criminal charges.

Peacock continued: "We also have individuals who have had their driver's licenses sus-

pending for nonpayment of a traffic fine, who would pay with a personal check the outstanding amount due to clear their license, get their driver's license cleared and the check is returned insufficient funds. These reasons plus the hours of personnel time in preparing notices, affidavits, and the accounting required also had a bearing on our decision."

The new policy came to the Beacon's attention earlier this month when a Niceville motorist who tried to pay a traffic fine was surprised when his mailed check was refused.

The new policy was announced a month before implementation Aug. 1, according to Kathy Henley, a Clerk of Court worker. The notice was posted on the Clerk of Court's website, on the doors of the clerk's offices, and in notices sent to law enforcement personnel and the local Bar Association, she said.

For the fiscal year which ended Sept. 30, the Okaloosa



Beacon photo by Del Lessard  
**People who get a traffic citation in Okaloosa County no longer may pay the fine by personal check, under a new rule by county Clerk of Court Don Howard.**

County clerk's office received 13,112 checks—totaling \$1,823,215—in the traffic division alone, according to the office. Of that, 51 checks bounced, totaling \$9,954. The

amount that had to be written off as uncollectable amounted to \$1,794, or less than one-tenth of one percent of traffic fines paid by check, according to the clerk's office.

According to the clerk's office, in the 11 most recent fiscal years, there were 1,545 bounced checks totaling \$232,258, or an average of about 140 a year, in the traffic division. About one-third of those returned checks ended up as uncollectable, for an average write-off of \$2,631 a year.

"We do have an option for payment by credit card through MyFloridaCounty.com," said Peacock. Payment by credit card will incur a 3.5-percent surcharge to the payer, she said.

"We also have an ATM located in our offices in Crestview and Fort Walton Beach," Peacock said.

The Santa Rosa County Clerk of Court accepts personal checks. The Walton County Clerk of Court accepts personal checks drawn on a Florida bank.

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THE INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER —Mike Griffith

Location: Boggy Bayou Mullet Festival

What do you think about President Obama's announcement that all U.S. armed forces will pull out of Iraq by December 31?



"It broke my heart! There will be so many Iraqi children left unprotected when we leave them to the mercy of the militants."

Tracy Lowery, 29, Foley, Ala., nanny



"I just got out of the Army last January. We should have pulled out sooner. The people of Iraq are more than likely incapable of embracing democracy."

Nicholas Wilson, 30, Fort Walton Beach, unemployed



"Hallelujah! Bring them home yesterday!"

Boyd Cameron, 77, Bluewater Bay, retired Air Force



"I'll believe it when I see it. There's a whole lot of work for our military to do there still."

Nicole Edelman, 26, Mary Esther, teacher



"I hope it actually happens. I'll believe it when I see it. The war is actually over as far as I'm concerned."

Angela Marnett, 41, Destin, administrative assistant



"He better do it this time. That was his promise when he came into office."

Jeff Smith, 20, Valparaiso, landscaper

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

HURDLE

From page A-4

site, or at another location if necessary.

Okaloosa Schools Superintendent Alexis Tibbetts said there will be many issues to be resolved during negotiations between her, the school district's attorney, and Tibbetts' staff as they negotiate with Somerset representatives.

"We will meet to discuss details of curriculum, transportation, financial matters, and other things," Tibbetts said. "We have an A-Plus school district. We are very particular about who educates our students, and we won't take this lightly." She told the school board, "I will maintain communications with you and keep you informed" throughout the negotiation process.

School district attorney Jeff McGinnis said Somerset had planned to send a representative to Monday's meeting, but the representative was in the hospital and could not attend. He said the Somerset representative will probably address the board during a future meeting.

School board members questioned the charter school proposal. "I will want to know more about the management of Somerset," said Melissa Thrush of Niceville. "How are they organized? How will they communicate with families? What other operations do they have in Florida? I think our contract can stipulate standards for them to meet."

"I know of many charter schools that have lasted for less than a year," said Rodney Walker. "Once the money passes through us to them, it is out of our control.

They must be held accountable for how they use the state money they receive, via the contract process."

Charter schools are funded, at least in part, with state education money on a per-student basis, with funds that would otherwise have gone to the local public school district. Charter schools, although considered public schools, operate independently and are exempt from many of the union rules and other regulations that govern regular public schools.

"We must keep Valparaiso residents informed and involved," said Cathy Thigpen.

In a separate but closely related move, the school board also agreed to proceed with an inter-governmental conflict resolution process with the City of Valparaiso, regarding the school board's challenge to the

Valparaiso City Commission's recent decision to rezone the former site of Valparaiso Elementary School solely for use as an elementary school. The school district owns the land on which the former school stands, and contends that the city commission cannot legally deprive the school district of alternate uses of its land merely to support establishing a charter school there.

Before an actual lawsuit can begin over the matter, however, both parties are required to participate in a less formal conflict resolution process as an alternative to going to court. Neither party, however, seemed optimistic Monday that a resolution will be reached outside of court. The school board has engaged attorney Greg Stewart to represent them in the proceedings, as well as McGinnis, and Valparaiso city attorney Doug Wyckoff

addressed the board at Monday's meeting, saying, "I have already researched the law applicable to this matter," and is confident that the city is on firm legal ground.

School board member Rodney Walker told Wyckoff, "I would like to remind you that both sides represent the taxpayers."

Following the meeting, Tibbetts told the Beacon that she will begin the contract negotiation process with Somerset as soon as possible, but expects it to be a long process, possibly lasting into February or March.

Valparaiso city commissioner Neal Shermer also spoke with the Beacon, saying he is optimistic that Somerset and Academica can successfully negotiate a contract with the school district. "Academica is very experienced at such negotiations with local school districts," he said. "They have 67 schools in Florida, and

90 throughout the United States. They have never closed a school they have opened, and all their schools operate with a financial surplus. The Okaloosa School District is ranked 6th among Florida school districts. The Academica chain, ranked as a school district, is 5th."

In other business during Monday's meeting, the school board approved appointing former Niceville High School valedictorian Julie Perry as the district's new director of budgeting.

The board also approved an adjustment to the residency rules for school board members, to reflect the latest population figures from the 2010 U.S. census. "My district 5 will pick up Eglin Elementary School from Cathy Thigpen's district," said Melissa Thrush, "and Rodney Walker's district gets Baker School in the north part of the county."

BLOTTER

From page A-7

large rock at a vehicle parked in the first block of Kelly Way sometime Oct. 14-15, leaving two baseball-sized dents behind the driver's side rear window and breaking a rear window on the driver's side of the vehicle while

it was parked in front of the victim's residence.

Sometime between 12:30 a.m. and 3:55 a.m., Oct. 15, vandal(s) damaged the front and rear windshield of a car parked on the side of the roadway in the 200 block of Edge Avenue, Valparaiso. A pump-

kin with glass fragments was found on the ground in front of the vehicle and a paving stone that had the same curve that was in the damaged rear windshield was found behind the vehicle.

In the early morning hours of Oct. 15 police found a two-

door Chevy parked in the 300 block of Chicago Avenue that had its left taillight damaged by a pumpkin. The victim estimated damage at \$500. Police also found several more pumpkins along Chicago Avenue that had been broken and were lying in the front yards of residences.

Fire Department Reports

Niceville

The Niceville Fire Department responded to the following calls October 17, 2011, through October 23, 2011.

- 0 Structure Fire
0 Vehicle Fire
1 Other Fire
1 Illegal Burn
0 False Alarms
31 Emergency Medical Calls
5 Vehicle Crash
1 Vehicle Crash with Extrication
3 Other Emergency Calls
1 Hazardous Conditions

Table with columns: Street, Situation, Date, Time. Lists various fire department calls and response times.

Weekly Safety Tip: Test smoke detectors every month, following the manufacturer's directions, and replace batteries twice a year or whenever a detector "chirps" to signal a low battery.

North Bay

The North Bay Fire Department responded to the following calls October 17, 2011, through October 23, 2011.

Table with columns: Street, Situation, Date, Time. Lists various fire department calls and response times for North Bay.

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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

Kara Lee Decker, 29, of 233 23rd St., Niceville, and Matthew James Packard, a construction worker, 35, of the same address, were arrested by Niceville police Oct. 11 on Walton County warrants, each charged with one count of battery. On Aug. 28 Decker and Packard allegedly battered a woman at an address on Howard Street in Villa Tasso.

Shannon Leigh Adrianson, a student, 38, of 6305 Matador Road, Milton, was arrested by sheriff's deputies Oct. 7 on a charge of domestic violence battery that allegedly occurred at an address in Niceville.

Adrian Rey Peralta, 30, of 1101 Hickory Ave., Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies Oct. 13 on a charge of failure to appear on the original charge of driving while license suspended or revoked.

Phillip Todd Tucker, 32, 500 22nd St., Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies Oct. 14 on a contempt of court charge.

Colten Daniel Griffin, a restaurant server, 20, of 324 Ohio Ave., Valparaiso, was arrested by sheriff's deputies Oct. 15 on the charge of possession of controlled substance without a prescription, approximately 71 grams of marijuana. Subsequent to a traffic stop a deputy smelled the odor of marijuana in the vehicle. Griffin admitted smoking marijuana recently and gave the deputy three baggies containing marijuana. Griffin allegedly told the deputy he had paid approximately \$900 for three ounces of the marijuana.

Jerriel Kasai Drones, 30, of 304 Reeves St., Lot B-7, Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies Sept. 28 on a violation of probation charge on the original charges of felony battery and misdemeanor assault.

Linda Karen Thomas, 39, of 817 Spencer Place, Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies Oct. 7 on a felony violation of probation charge.

Jonathan Lee Yates, 25, of 30 Newcastle Court, Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies Oct. 11 on a violation of probation charge on original charges of fraud, grand theft, passing a forged or altered instrument, and fraudulent use of a credit card.

Ryan William McCowen, 31, of 228 Chicago Ave., Valparaiso, was arrested by sheriff's deputies Oct. 10 on a charge of obtaining a controlled substance by forgery.

Christina Marie Ellis, 33, with a booking address of 514 Wilkerson Bluff Road, Holt, and Amanda Michelle Hagan, 24, of 304 Reeves St., Lot A-15, Niceville, were both arrested by Niceville police Oct. 14 and Oct. 16, respectively, each charged with passing counterfeit currency.



Christina Marie Ellis

Ellis, who allegedly borrowed \$50 from Hagan, is alleged to have knowingly passed two fake \$20 bills and a fake \$10 to a witness for the purchase of two narcotic pills Sept. 8. Hagan allegedly tried to pass counterfeit monies at a gas station Sept. 8 but was denied and told the bills were fake. Hagan then allegedly lent \$50 in phony money to Ellis. Hagan



Amanda Michelle Hagan

allegedly had \$180 in counterfeit \$20 bills when she was interviewed by police.

Bryan Michael Sperry, 28, of 1405 22nd St., Niceville, with a permanent address of 122 Crestview St., Villa Taso, was arrested by Niceville police Oct. 16 on charges of retail theft and resisting property recovery by a merchant. On Aug. 29 Sperry allegedly removed a \$20 LCD photo viewer from its original packaging and concealed it in his pocket at Kmart, 1140 E. John Sims Parkway, and left the store without paying. When confronted by an employee outside, Sperry allegedly dropped the merchandise and fled.

## DUI arrests

Andriadora Joi Coman, 30, of 615 Powell Drive, Niceville, was arrested by Niceville police for DUI on State Road 20 at Cedar Avenue, Oct. 12 at 11:58 a.m.

David Albert Bores, 64, of 309 Curacao Way, Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies for DUI on Highway 98 at Beach Drive, Destin, Sept. 26 at 2:44 a.m.

## Thefts

A Niceville resident who left his pickup truck in the parking lot of Palm Plaza overnight, Oct. 14-15, returned to find that unknown person(s) broke out the rear passenger side window and stole a fire safe containing personal papers, including mortgage papers, a Social Security card and birth certificate.

A Niceville resident reported that she left her purse and medication inside her car when she stopped at a convenience store, 1001 Valparaiso Blvd., Oct. 16. When the woman exited the store she saw an unknown male in her passenger side window who put something in his pocket and then drove away in a white vehicle. Less than two hours later, when the woman got ready to take her hydrocodone medication, she

noticed it was missing from her purse.

A Niceville resident reported Oct. 15 that someone called him from overseas and wanted him to turn on his computer and provide his driver's license number. The man said his computer software advised him to call police.

Niceville residents from the 4500 block of Boca Drive left their kitchen and bedroom windows open to let fresh paint on the walls air out Oct. 16. Returning to the home about three hours later the couple found window screens torn open and a privacy fence gate open. Inside the home keys to two vehicles were found missing, and a night stand drawer open with \$100 of sentimental jewelry, a \$1,000 strand of pearls, current and expired passports, and a Social Security card stolen. Two types of medications valued together at \$75 were also stolen from the master bedroom.

A Valparaiso automotive business, 60 S. John Sims Parkway, reported Oct. 15 that someone stole the stereo, front and rear speakers, and the amplifier from a locked vehicle that had been stored at the property since Oct. 1 pending the owner's payment for work on the vehicle.

## Criminal Mischief

A Niceville resident from the

100 block of Buddy Phelps Drive reported that unknown person(s) slashed the front driver's side tire and rear passenger side tire on his vehicle while it was parked in his driveway early Oct. 15. Damage was estimated at \$500.

A Niceville resident from the 400 block of Paradise Road reported Oct. 15 that unknown person(s) struck and damaged the victim's mailbox by throwing a pumpkin from a moving vehicle.

A Niceville resident from the 300 block of Reeves Street reported Oct. 17 that someone had slashed the tires on his truck. The victim said he didn't want to file a report.

On Oct. 16 it was reported that someone busted a window in a vacant double-wide mobile home on Bailey Drive.

Unknown person(s) caused an estimated \$200 damage to the men's restroom at Florida Park in Valparaiso sometime Oct. 12-13. The normally locked door was found open about 7 a.m. Oct. 13 with the lock from the door laying on the floor of the bathroom and the door frame cracked in two places. There was no damage inside the restroom.

Unknown vandal(s) threw a  
**Please see BLOTTER, page A-6**

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**COLLEGE**

From page A-1

protest," Foster said, "we should listen."

Handy said the proposed policy "is not an attempt to abridge free speech." Instead, he said, the proposed policy would merely designate areas where demonstrations, protests, and similar activities could be carried out in full view of college personnel and the public, without disrupting classes or interfering with the rights of nonparticipants to attend classes or engage in their own legitimate activities on campus.

Handy said a previous part of the policy requiring 48 hours advance notice to the college from organizations planning demonstrations or protests had already been dropped from the proposal.

Handy also said he and David Goetsch, NWFSC vice president

for academic affairs, had researched the policies of other colleges, and had modeled the proposal after those which had successfully withstood legal challenges. He said that without a policy, the college would have to allow demonstrations anywhere on campus, and if such activities became disruptive of the rights of others, the college would have to call police for assistance, and would then have to justify any arrests that resulted. Establishing a policy in advance, he said, would help clarify what activities are and are not lawful, and perhaps avoid police action and subsequent legal battles. He said he had also discussed the policy with Niceville police Chief David Popwell.

NWFSC attorney Joe Lorenz declined to offer a legal opinion concerning the proposed policy, saying that he had not been asked to research it, although board of trustees chair Sandy Sims replied



Beacon photos by Mike Griffith

**College Trustee Paul Foster, right, and President Ty Handy exchanged views on the proposed free-speech policy during a meeting last week.**

that she believed the board had made such a request of Lorenz.

Despite Handy's explanation, the trustees voted unanimously to drop the free-speech policy proposal.

Trustee Bruce Pennington said the proposed policy could create as many problems as it solved. "You can't win this game, no matter what we do," he said.

Enacting such a policy, he said, would only create controversy and "focus attention on a place we don't want it."

"I don't want to be on ABC News," Pennington said. "For all good intentions, the worst of this will come out."

Pennington said that if a political demonstration or protest ever does occur at an NWFSC campus,

the best approach would be to call a special board meeting to decide how to deal with that specific event.

Board member Marijo Strauss said she is concerned that a new policy on free speech could actually attract protesters, and asked Handy how he would handle a disruptive demonstration if one occurred now.

Handy replied that he would do his best to accommodate the protesters as long as they respected the rights of others. If such an event became disruptive or dangerous, he said, he would ask the demonstrators to leave, and if that failed, he would call police in accordance with existing Florida statutes.

Sims said that she remembered one past incident of a demonstration on the main campus in Niceville, and in that case, officials asked the demonstrators to move to a highway location outside the

main entrance of the campus, which they did.

Sims apparently was referring to a request by then-President James R. Richburg in February 2004 concerning demonstrators protesting the school's sale of the Mattie Kelly Estate to a developer.

Board member Esteena Wells said she did not want to do anything that might involve the college in a lawsuit. "God knows we don't need another one of those," she said.

Sims, however, said, "The threat of lawsuits does not enter into my decision."

Board member Dale Rice said he was unaware that there had ever been a problem with free-speech activities on campus.

Board member Wesley Wilkerson said existing state law is sufficient, as it allows college officials to "use common sense" in dealing with campus disruptions, should they ever occur.



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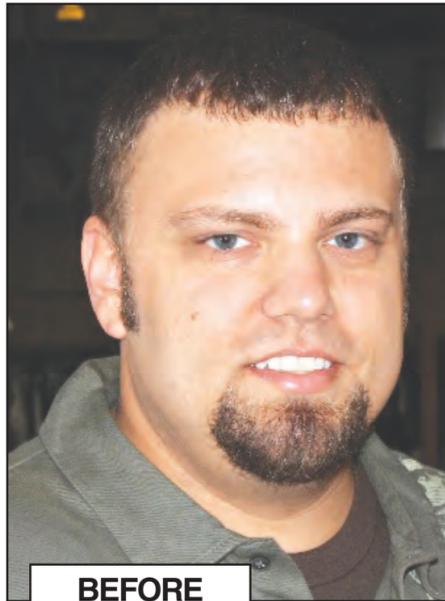
**Emerald Coast Family Medicine**

Dr. Castaneda takes care of families from newborns to seniors

*Advertising Feature*

Dr. Castaneda of Emerald Coast Family Medicine is a board-certified family physician dedicated to the comprehensive health care of the entire family. For more than 10 years, Dr. Castaneda has been ensuring the health of his patients, from newborns to seniors. During the past four years, he has developed an ongoing relationship with patients in Bluewater Bay, Valparaiso, Niceville and other surrounding communities. With an emphasis on disease prevention and health promotion, Dr. Castaneda aims to provide personal, inclusive and continuing care for individuals during all stages of life. Currently, his practice is accepting new patients.

As a physician who provides care for entire families, Dr. Castaneda goes above and beyond expectations to develop a respectful and trusting patient-doctor relationship. His sincere warmth, kindness and engaged commitment toward his patients enables him to connect to them on a personal level. Dr. Castaneda and the entire staff at ECFM get to know their patients by thoroughly listening to medical concerns and



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following through by assisting with health care decisions.

Trained in family medicine, Dr. Castaneda can provide diagnosis

and treatment for a full range of health conditions and concerns. These include, but are not limited to, diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, cardio vascular screening, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, skin ailments, thyroid disorders, and mental health issues related to anxiety, depression or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. On-site ultrasound services provide added convenience to patients. In addition, well-child and adolescent check-ups are also available, to include school physicals, sports physicals and immunizations. Flu shots are also available for patients of ECFM.

According to Dr. Castaneda, "Obesity leads to heart disease and diabetes and is closely approaching smoking as the leading cause of many cancers." For this reason, helping his patients with weight management is an important concern of Dr. Castaneda's. ECFM provides weight-loss management under his careful supervision. Dr. Castaneda has been successful in assisting patients achieve weight-

loss goals through individually customized programs. Mike is a patient of Dr. Castaneda's who recently lost 90 pounds between July 2010 and February 2011. Now, eight months later, he maintains a healthy physique at 160 pounds through proper diet and exercise. This physician-supervised weight-loss program Dr. Castaneda provides is an individually tailored, healthier alternative to yo-yo dieting on your own.

ECFM accepts most forms of insurance and will process the paperwork for patients. Same-day appointments are available for acute care concerns, providing a time-effective alternative to long waits at the emergency room.

Emerald Coast Family Medicine is located at 143 S. John Sims Parkway in Valparaiso between Lincoln and Washington avenues. Office hours are Monday and Wednesday 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Tuesday and Thursday 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m., and Friday 7 a.m.-11:30 a.m. Contact Dr. Castaneda's courteous and friendly staff at 729-3300 to make an appointment.

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## Who's News

E-mail items to:  
info@baybeacon.com

**Amy E. Miller**, daughter of Skip and Debbie Miller of Niceville, has become a member of Phi Sigma Theta National Honor Society at Florida State University. Phi Sigma Theta is a national honor society dedicated to recognizing and rewarding academic achievements in undergraduates at institutions of higher learning.



Amy Miller

Amy is a 2010 graduate of Niceville High School.

Local artist and retired teacher **Nancy Jurgens** hosted the October meeting of the Bluewater Elementary School Dinosaurs, a group of retired and resigned educational professionals.



Nancy Jurgens

The potluck luncheon gave Jurgens an opportunity to showcase her art and describe her

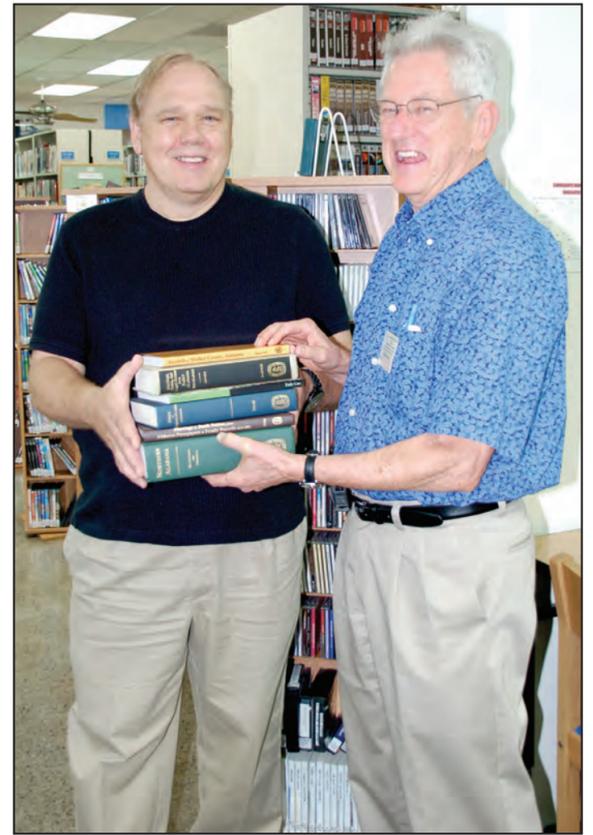
Please see WHO'S, page B-3

## Elementary students go green



Some 870 fifth-graders at Edge, Plew, Eglin and six other Okaloosa County elementary schools partnered with the Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance and Americorp volunteers from Northwest Florida State College to study environmental science. Top, from left, Katherine Bartley, 10, Madie McCormick, 10, and Malia Volza, 11, set trays of seagrasses in a pool of salty water at Edge. Students will maintain the grasses through next spring, then transplant them to oyster beds in Choctawhatchee Bay. Right, Edge student Chandler Stallings, 10, uses a refractometer to test the salinity of water.

Beacon photo by Del Lessard



Beacon photo by Del Lessard

## Passing down family history

Valparaiso Library Director David Weatherford accepted a donation of books from Malcolm Flanagan, president of the Okaloosa County Genealogy Society, Oct. 8. Weatherford gave a presentation about how to pass on family history. He also gave a brief tour of the Valparaiso Library's genealogy collections, which hold more than 7,000 volumes, from every state, immigration records, numerous family histories, and free online access to Ancestry.com.



Beacon photo by Kenneth Books

## Niceville High royalty

The Niceville High School Homecoming Court relaxes in front of the school. From left, seated: Shelbi Cooley, Hannah Clapp, Shelby Russell, Kathryn Kilbey, Thuyvi Luong, Janna Greeno, Paula Abilio and Stella Kim; standing, Brandon Sheppard, Chandler Farrell, Thor Schaeffer, Kyle Kozuta, Anthony Provost, Tolga Acayan, Brock Schaeffer and Zach Jones. Homecoming is scheduled for Friday, Oct. 28. During halftime of the football game between Niceville and Auburn, the king, queen and their court will be introduced.



## Walk to End Alzheimer's held

Superior Residences of Niceville held the area's first Walk to End Alzheimer's Oct. 15. Participants received flower pinwheels to show how Alzheimer's has affected them. Blue represented those who have Alzheimer's; yellow, those who care for someone with the illness; purple, those who have lost someone to the disease; and orange, those who support the cause and have a vision of a world without Alzheimer's. The canvas flowers were personalized with messages, then "planted" in the "promise garden." Funds raised were given to the Alzheimer's Association.

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**2011**



**CALENDAR**

**Friends for Fun senior club**  
All singles 60 and older, join Friends for Fun for laughter and friendly conversation each Wednesday, 3-5 p.m., at the Bluewater Bay Clubhouse. This is an opportunity to make new friends and find joy and companionship. Info: 897-4434.

**Math, science tutoring**  
Free mathematics and science tutoring is available at the Valparaiso Community Library on Monday afternoons from 3-5. The tutoring is for elementary school students and is taught by Dr. La Vergne Thatch. If your child needs help with a science fair project or needs individual instruction with their math assignments call the library at 729-5406 to set up an appointment.

**NW Florida Fair**  
The Northwest Florida Fair will take place through Oct. 30. Through Friday, the fair will be open 5-10 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, all day. 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 Turner Blvd., Fort Walton Beach. Info: 862-0211 or nwffair.com.

**Sign language club**  
Lewis School Sign Language Club has partnered with Niceville High School's American Sign Language Club to provide a learning experience for the students at Lewis School. This club will give students the opportunity to have a head start on learning this language, which will also give students the vocabulary and skill to communicate with deaf and hard of hearing students at Lewis, and in the real world. The club will meet Wednesdays, beginning Oct. 26, 2:20-3:05 p.m., at Lewis. Info: Cathy Wood, club sponsor, 833-4130.

**Homeless shelter info**  
Niceville churches will team up with the Okaloosa-Walton Continuum of Care/Opportunity Inc. to provide shelter for area homeless when temperatures are forecasted below 40 degrees on a given night. Work for the Cold Night Homeless Shelter Implementation Concept is all done by volunteers. All interested can attend an information session Oct. 26 at Niceville City Hall, 208 N. Partin Drive, at 10 a.m. Volunteer training will begin in November, the project will start in December. Info: Sam Hays, 729-1260.

**Adventure Club events**  
The Adventure Club will hold a bike ride in Niceville and Bluewater Bay Oct. 27, 4 p.m. Meet at the parking area for the Bluewater Bay Clubhouse. Supper after the ride at a nearby restaurant. Info: Clarice, 581-4591.

**Quilts of Valor workshop**  
The Flying Needles Quilt Guild will host a Quilt of Valor workshop from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Oct. 27 at the Niceville Church of Christ, 801 E. John Sims Parkway, across from Niceville High School. The Guild's annual goal is to make 12 Quilts of Valor, in addition to dozens of lap quilts and hundreds of Christmas stockings for children's charities. Interested quilters are encouraged to

attend the workshop, and may contact FNQG@cox.net for more information.

**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.

**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, 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 nicevalrotary@yahoo.com.

**Toastmasters' open mike**  
Join Toastmasters at Cafe Bienville, 314 Bayshore Drive, Niceville, for an open mike event Oct. 28, 5:30-7 p.m. In just one fun-filled night, you'll meet friendly members and hear exciting speeches. In addition, there'll be door prizes and the fun is free. Dinner is Dutch Treat. Costumes are welcome, but not required. Info: Dianna Van Horn at 834-2378.

**Niceville film screening**  
Documentary film "Niceville: A Fish Story" will be shown at the Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida, 115 Westview Ave., Valparaiso, Oct. 28 at 7 p.m. The film reflects on Niceville and Valparaiso during the 1920s, the mullet fishing industry, struggles and the beginnings of the world's largest air force base. Popcorn will be served and drinks will be available. Space is limited, doors open at 6:30 p.m. A \$5 donation will be collected to benefit the Heritage Museum.

**Republican women meeting**  
The Republican Women of Okaloosa Federated will meet Nov. 2 at the Holiday Inn Resort on Okaloosa Island. Socializing at 11:30 a.m., lunch at noon. The speaker will be Okaloosa County Tax Collector Ben Anderson. Contact Donna Pattison at 651-5416 or donnapattison@cox.net by noon Oct. 28 for reservations. Cost is \$16 for members, \$18 for guests. For RWOFF info, rwoff.org.

**FWB ghost tours**  
The City of Fort Walton Beach Heritage Park and Cultural Center, 139 Miracle Strip Parkway SE, will present Haunted History Tours based on local history, folk stories and spooky downtown historic sites. Three tours per night will be held Oct. 28 and 29, at 6:30, 7:30 and 8:30. Early sign-up and ticket purchase is encouraged. Pre-sale tickets are available during regular museum hours at the Indian Temple Mound Museum at a cost of \$8 per adult and \$5 per child. Info: Jennifer Lamott, 833-9595.

**Fairy tale luncheon**  
A Fairytale Luncheon will be held Oct. 29, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., at the Niceville Community Center, 204 N. Partin Drive. Play games and win prizes, enter the costume contest, and pose for pictures with favorite fairy tale characters. Don't forget to wear a costume and bring a camera. Advanced tickets may be purchased at the Niceville Public Library and Water Department for \$5, buy at the door for \$6. Info: Connie Naftel 678-7595 or Lynne Waltz 678-3593.

**Movies at Uptown Station**  
Uptown Station will host a show-

**Engagements**

E-mail items to info@baybeacon.com.



**Christopher Shawn Hill and Meagan Elizabeth Sittler**

**Sittler-Hill**

Jay and Shannon Watson of Niceville and Brian and Suzanne Sittler of Ellsworth AFB, S.D., announce the engagement of their daughter, Meagan Elizabeth Sittler, to Christopher Shawn Hill, grandson of Wayne Rodgers of Destin. Meagan is a 2009 graduate of Niceville High School. She is a manager at Del Sol in Destin. Chris is a 2007 graduate of Fort Walton Beach High School. He is employed by Publix and is a part-time firefighter with the Ocean City-Wright Fire District. He is currently pursuing his EMT certification. The wedding will take place Nov. 12, 2011, at the Palms of Destin.

**McNew-Westermann**  
Larry and Coline McNew announce the engagement of their daughter, Jennifer Leigh, to Lt. j.g. Dennis Randall Westermann of Orlando. Jennifer is a 2002 graduate of Niceville High School, a 2005 graduate of the University of Central Florida, and is a defense analyst for the U.S. Pacific Command in Honolulu, Hawaii. Dennis is a 2002 graduate of Lyman High School, Orlando, a 2008 graduate of Troy University, and is a helicopter pilot in the United States Coast Guard stationed at USCG Air Station Barbers Point, Hawaii. The wedding will be held March 3, 2012, in Destin.



**Masons donate to Sharing & Caring**

Bob Taylor, representing Okaloosa Lodge 312 Free and Accepted Masons, Niceville, presented a check to Sharing & Caring to help stock their shelves. Pictured, Taylor, center, with Jim Vohs and Susan Magerman of S & C.



**Lily Hall is Grand Champion**

Lily Hall, 12, daughter of Steve and Sherry Hall of Niceville, and her horse Heart of Gold, "Puck," earned the title of Junior/Young Rider Grand Champion for Dressage Training in Lexington, Ky., Sept. 9-11 at the 2011 National Dressage Pony Cup Championships. Lily also won the overall High Point Award for the show for "Current Pony Club Rider." Dressage requires great skill to make a horse move fluidly and ballet-like.

**Weddings**

E-mail items to info@baybeacon.com.



**Shannon Lynn and Travis Kyle Cambridge**

**Sutton-Cambridge**

Shannon Lynn Sutton, daughter of Madonna Olroyd of Crestview and Don Olroyd of Niceville, and Travis Kyle Cambridge, son of Marion Webster of Gilman, Ill., and Bob Cambridge of Paxton, Ill., were joined in matrimony Dec. 21, 2010. The bride is a graduate of Niceville High School, and the groom is employed at Hurlburt Field. The couple was married during a private ceremony in Newport, Tenn., and resides in Gulf Breeze.

**What Do I Need to Know... About My Cancer Diagnosis and Treatment?**

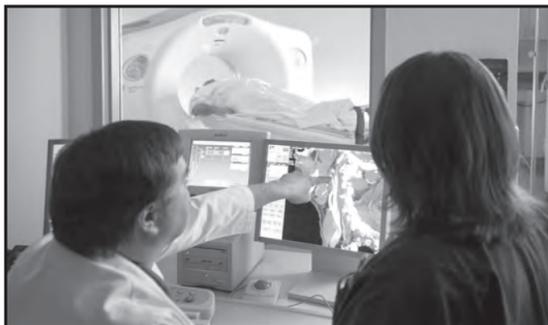
Normally the cells in our body go through a life cycle, die, and are replaced with new cells. This normal exchange occurs in a controlled pattern. When a person has cancer, genetic material in their cells (DNA) are damaged and normal cell division, growth, and death are affected. Cells in people with cancer do not die when they should, so when new cells form, the body does not need them and they accumulate. These new cells often grow in clusters, called tumors. Growth of cancer cells is uncontrolled. There are over 100 different types of cancer that are most often named by the organ or type of cell in which they start.

Certain factors can increase your risk of developing cancer: sunlight, age, tobacco, certain chemicals, ionizing radiation, family history, poor diet, lack of exercise, being overweight, and consuming alcohol. It is important to avoid all possible risk factors. Early detection and screening (Pap test, mammogram, colonoscopy) can help with factors that cannot be avoided, such as age or family history.

Researchers are constantly looking for and finding new ways to treat, manage, diagnose and hopefully prevent cancer. The most important thing to know about cancer is that there is always HOPE.

Remember to ask your healthcare provider any questions you might have about cancer causes, prevention or needed screenings.

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# CALENDAR

From page B-2

ing of the "Rocky Horror Picture Show" at Uptown Station, Fort Walton Beach, Oct. 29, 10 p.m.

The movie is free, and guests are invited to bring lawn chairs, blankets and coolers. Pets and glass containers are not allowed.

## Old-time Saturday at museum

The Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida announces Old-time Saturdays for children and families. These programs will engage kids by utilizing authentic historic museum collections with hands-on activities sure to entertain and educate. Cost: \$7 per child or \$5 per child for Museum Family Members. Chaperones are free. Space is limited. Reservations: 678-2615.

The program Oct. 29, 10 a.m.-noon, will be "Mullet Mania—A Day in the Life of a Mullet Fisherman."

## Grand Finale sailing race

The Bluewater Bay Sailing Club will hold its Grande Finale race Oct. 29. Registration will be at 10 a.m., followed by a captains' meeting at 11, and the start at noon. There will be two race courses, with a central start/finish line, in two classes: spinaker and nonspinaker. At approximately 5 p.m., there will be a dinner and awards ceremony at Helga's Restaurant & Biergarten. The entry fee of \$60 includes two T-shirts, four dinner and four drink tickets.

## Scouts' Haunted Tent

Scout Fun Day and Haunted Tent, sponsored by Bass Pro at Destin Commons, will take place Oct. 29. Fun and games will start at 1 p.m., and the Haunted Tent will open at 6 p.m. in the Bass Pro East parking lot. Dracula, Frankenstein, the Wicked Witch, Wolfie and a few more ghoulish characters will welcome all.

## UUFEC Coffeehouse Live!

Musicians, artists, poets and performers will showcase their talents at Coffeehouse Live! Oct. 29, 7-10 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of the Emerald Coast, on the corner of John Sims Parkway and Bayshore Drive, Valparaiso. Come for fun, refreshments and entertainment. New talent is invited to sign up for open mike. Halloween attire is encouraged and may be rewarded with prizes. Info: 217-8481.

## NFSO presents opera

The Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra will present "The Barber of Seville," a popular comic opera, 7:30 p.m. Oct. 29, at the Mattie Kelly Arts Center, Niceville.

Tickets are \$32.50 and are available for purchase at the Mattie Kelly box office, weekdays 10 a.m.-4 p.m., online at mattiekellyartscenter.org or by calling 729-6000. Info: nfsymphony.org.

## Festival of Grace

St. Paul Lutheran Church, 1407 E. John Sims Parkway, will hold a

# Church to hold bazaar benefit

The Niceville United Methodist Church, 214 S. Partin Drive, will hold its World Bazaar and Benefit Oct. 29 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. The bazaar will include many great items for purchase, a bake sale, silent auction and a lunch counter. All proceeds will be used for the missions fund.



"Festival of Grace" Oct. 30 and the community is welcome. There will be a festival service at 10 a.m. with choirs and a variety of musical instruments. The afternoon will start with a German dinner. Tickets, available at the event, includes meal, music, inflatables for the children and a petting zoo. Cost: children, \$4; adults, \$8; or family, \$22. Info: 678-1298.

## Orange Fest set

Orange Fest will be held Oct. 31, 5-7 p.m. on South Partin Drive in Niceville.

This family friendly event is free, with a nominal fee for food. There will be inflatables, crafts, carnival games, fire department, Army Rangers reptile exhibit, Nonie's Ark Animal Encounters, Build-A-Bear, Davy the Pirate balloonist/illusionist, live Christian music, and others; along with lots of food vendors.

## 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 to make reservations, 678-1611. The suggested donation is \$8.

## 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.

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 new member discount.

## Library book discussion

The Valparaiso Library will offer two books discussion groups beginning in November. The first group, the Constant Readers, will meet Nov. 3 at 10:30 a.m. to review "The Great Man" by Kate Christensen. The second group, the Mystery Lovers, will meet Nov. 10 at 10:30 a.m. to discuss "Booked to Die" by John Dunning. Participants are urged to attend regularly, but are welcome to choose sessions that meet their schedules. Discussions will be informal, with Jill White serving as the moderator. Selections will be determined with an eye to a monthly theme or the works of a particular author. Info: call the library at 729-5406 or visit vcl.valp.org.

## November blood drives

The following blood drives will be held in the Niceville area in November:

Thursday, Nov. 3, Niceville City Hall, 204 N. Partin Drive, 6-11 a.m.  
Sunday, Nov. 6, St. Jude's

Episcopal Church, 200 Partin Drive, Niceville, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Tuesday, Nov. 15, Twin Cities Hospital, Niceville, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

## Business workshop

"Starting a Business Workshop" will be held Nov. 3, 1-4 p.m., at the UWF/NWFSC Fort Walton Beach campus, 1170 Martin Luther King Blvd., Building 1, Room 156. This workshop will review business planning areas such as financing, selecting a business legal structure, identifying your market, record keeping and identifying risks that can challenge success. The fee is \$35. To reserve your seat and pay online, visit sbdc.uwf.edu. Space is limited. Info: 850-833-9400.

## Audubon Society meeting

Nov. 3, birders and nature enthusiasts will enjoy a program by Barb Almario of the Florida Wildlife & Conservation Commission, "Demographic Monitoring of the Bachman's Sparrow in the Blackwater Wildlife Management Area." Learn about efforts to study and protect this celebrated, but declining, species whose song is one of the sounds most identified with the pine forests of the Florida Panhandle. The meeting will be held in Room 128 of the Learning Resources Center of the Niceville Campus of Northwest Florida State College. Refreshments, socializing, and announcements will begin at 6:30 p.m., with the program at 7. The meeting is free and is open to anyone with an interest in birds and nature. Info: Walt Spence, 582-7064.

## Children's health seminar

The Healthy Start Coalition of Okaloosa and Walton Counties will host a free half-day seminar, "Kids Who Bounce Back." The featured speaker is Judy Manning, Ed. D. Manning, operations director with Children in Crisis, is an advocate for children's issues. She will address two topics: Resilience in Children and Family Traditions.

The event will be held Nov. 4, 9 a.m.-noon at Shalimar United Methodist Church, 1 Old Ferry Road. Light refreshments will be provided. Registration is required. Call 833-9284 or visit healthystartokawalton.org to register.

## Intertribal Powwow set

The Thunderbird Intertribal Powwow will be held Nov. 4-6 at the Mullet Festival grounds, at the corner of Highway 85 and College Boulevard. The festivities will kick-off Friday with a children's day, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, the Powwow will open at 10 a.m. and last into the night. Adult tickets are \$5, \$3 for 12 and younger. There will be something for everyone, with Intertribal dancing, storytelling, traditional drums and singers, authentic native crafters, exhibits and demonstrators. All are welcome. No drugs or alcohol are allowed.

Info: thunderbirdpowwow.org or call Kirby Locklear, 863-5311, or Glenn Farmer, 678-7714.

## ADSO Art Week

Arts and Design Society will host Art Week Nov. 4-11. Many two-hour classes will be offered in a variety of

mediums. This week is geared for adults and children with classes such as painting with a palette knife, painting on YUPO paper, making paper cloth, block printmaking, family clay class, and more. The cost is \$25 for the first class, \$20 for additional classes. All materials will be supplied.

Art Week will take place at the ADSO Art Center, 17 First St. S.E., Fort Walton Beach. Info: call 244-1271 or visit artsdesignsociety.org.

## Art Foundation 5K benefit

The Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation and Destin Health & Fitness Club invite all runners and walkers to participate in a 5K Race for the Arts Nov. 5 starting at 8:30 a.m. to benefit youth development in art education. A one-mile Kids' Fun Run will begin after the 5K. The race course features an out and back course beginning near the entrance of the Mattie Kelly Cultural Arts Village, 4323 Commons Drive W.

Registration is \$25. Late registrations after Nov. 1 are \$30. The Fun Run is \$10 and for families, each additional child is \$5. To register, visit active.com/running/destin-fl/race-for-the-arts-5k-and-1-mile-fun-run-2011. Info: MKAF, 650-2226.

## Alzheimer's benefit walk

Crystal Bay Destin, Wellington Place Fort Walton, Sterling House of Bluewater Bay and Panama City will host the Walk to End Alzheimer's Nov. 5 at 9 a.m. at the Baytowne Marina, 9300 Emerald Coast Parkway, Miramar Beach. Info: Jennifer Smith, 267-1600, or search the Destin Walk to End Alzheimer's at alz.org.

## Arts & Crafts Fair

The 37th annual St. Simon's Episcopal Arts & Crafts Fair will be held Nov. 5, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., and Nov. 6, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

The fair will take place at 28 Miracle Strip Parkway, Fort Walton Beach.

## Audubon Society field trip

Gary Parsons will lead a field trip to the Taminco/Air Products Wildlife Refuge in Milton Nov. 19. Many species of shore and wading birds will be on display in this unique preserve which is unrivaled in the western Panhandle. Dress for the elements and bring binoculars and cameras. Meet just inside the College Boulevard entrance to the Twin Cities Sports Complex at the corner of College Boulevard and Hwy. 85 North, Niceville.

Call Gary, 678-1461, for more information and to sign up. Because of security considerations, participants must RSVP by Nov. 5.

## AIDS fundraiser

OASIS, the Okaloosa AIDS Support and Informational Services, will hold its Style fundraiser Nov. 5 at the Ramada Beachfront Resort, 1500 Miracle Strip Parkway SE, Fort Walton Beach. The evening will feature fashion, live entertainment, a buffet and a silent auction. Save the date, and contact Paul at OASIS to purchase tickets, donate auction items, or volunteer. You can reach Paul at 850-314-0950 or at oasis9@cox.net.



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### Rams finish undefeated season

The Ruckel Rams cross country team was undefeated during the regular season this year, and finished a close second to Destin in the county meet Saturday. Pictured, earlier this year, Ruckel's Hunter Brake led Calvin Blackford and Cannon Crum in a cross country meet against Destin earlier this season.



### Lewis upsets Ruckel

Ruckel Middle School's Nate Johnson is pursued by Lewis School's Jeremiah Gamad during Thursday's 26-24 Falcon victory over Ruckel.

Photo by Dave Shelkoff

### District soccer champs

The District-level competition for the Knights of Columbus Soccer Challenge was held recently at St. Mary's school in Fort Walton Beach. Winners were, from left: Kayla Griffin, Shalimar, Tiffany Simmons, Mary Esther, Michael Roberts, Navarre, K of C District Deputy Joe Purka, Geoffrey Hall, Bluewater Bay, and Drew Knebl, Bluewater Bay.



### Sports Briefs

#### Knights golfer to regionals

Rocky Bayou Christian School competed in the district golf tournament at Oseola Golf Club in Pensacola recently, finished fifth out of seven teams. Knights' scores were: Jason Rogers, 78; Logan Hughes, 101; Dillon Dwyer, 110; and Asher Bechtold, 114.

Jason Rogers also qualified for regional competition, which was to have been played at A.C. Read golf course in Pensacola. He is only a sophomore and this will be his fifth consecutive trip to regionals.

#### Traveling Eagle tryouts

Registration is now open for the 2012 NAYB Traveling Eagles spring baseball tryouts.

Tryout dates and times are tentatively set: Saturday, Nov. 19, 13U and 14U; Sunday, Nov. 20, 8U to 12U.

Location and times will be announced shortly.

Age Groups: 14U—birth dates May 1, 1997, to April 30, 1998, or in eighth grade; 13U—Birth dates May 1, 1998, to April 30, 1999, or in seventh grade; 12U—Birth dates May 1, 1999, to April 30, 2000, or in sixth grade; 11U—Birth dates May 1, 2000, to April 30, 2001, or in fifth grade; 10U—Birth dates May 1, 2001, to April 30, 2002, or in fourth grade; 9U—Birth dates May 1, 2002, to April 30, 2003, or in third grade; 8U—Birth dates May 1, 2003, or later.

The board is preparing the

spring 2012 budget and fee structure.

#### Rocky, NHS swim meet

Rocky Bayou Christian School and Niceville High School competed in a freestyle swim meet Tuesday, Oct. 11. No scoring was kept. The four fastest swimmers were:

Girls, 1—Suzi Sober, RBCS; 2—Elizabeth Sober, RBCS; 3—Elizabeth Fagundez, NHS; 4—Rachael Houston, NHS.

Boys, 1—Aden Makenzey, NHS; 2—Austin Fairchild, NHS; 3—Teddy Vaughn, NHS; 4—Brad Ringler, NHS.

Honorable Mention: Rocky Bayou—Doug Linder, Colin Frazier, Morgan Milam and Wesley Bowers; Niceville—Elizabeth Sagundes, Rosie Partain, TJ Brown and Vinny Squara.

#### More sports, B-6

#### USO golf tourney set

The Northwest Florida USO plans a golf tournament at Foxwood Country Club on Veteran's Day, Friday Nov. 11. Tee time is 8 a.m., so you can still attend other Veteran's Day events later in the afternoon. Funds raised will support local USO efforts to serve the needs of service members and their families. Play will be the standard Florida scramble, with prizes awarded to the top four teams. A hole-in-one could win a 2012 Chevy pickup from Award Chevrolet. Lunch and refreshments on the course included. E-mail Bob Davis at bobbyz55x@gmail.com or call 651-3034 or 685-4759 for more information or to sign up.

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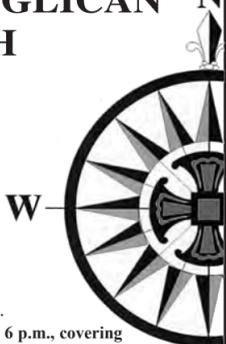
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# Eagles roll over Vikings, go 3-1 in district

## Young offense beginning to click; defense stays strong

By Sarah Clauson  
Beacon Correspondent

More sports, B-4

The Niceville Eagles triumphed over district rival Fort Walton Beach High School last Friday night. The 23-7 victory gave the Eagles a 3-1 district record along with momentum entering the final weeks of their regular season. The defense lived up to its self-set standards of excellence, and the offense, which has shown much promise throughout the season, played with an improved sense of cohesion.

The defense got the ball rolling during the Vikings' first possession by recovering a fumble and giving possession to the Eagles. The offense played off of the momentum and began to move the ball down the field. A couple of runs by freshman Shi Kim Coward and another by senior Jon Hudson put the ball on the 5-yard line.

Niceville ran the ball into the end zone, not once, but twice, only to have the touchdowns declined due to penalties. On their last flag-free attempt, the Viking defense held strong and prevented the fourth and goal.

The game went scoreless until well into the second quarter when the Eagles scored on a run by Coward after a four-minute possession and Niceville went into halftime with a 7-0 lead.

The Vikings received the ball in the second half and once again the defense recovered a Viking fumble. The first play of the possession was a touchdown completion from quarterback Andrew Mitchell to Tyree McCants, to widen the gap to 13-0. The Vikings put seven on the board late in the third quarter.

Niceville's offense answered with another big completion from Mitchell to McCants, which led to a field-goal, making it 16-7 with seconds remaining in the third.

Mitchell connected again with McCants early in the fourth for the final touchdown of the night to give the Eagles the final score of 23-7. The defense continued to play strong throughout the quarter to ensure the victory, including an interception by Denzel Applewhite with seven minutes remaining in the game.

"I thought we played well on both sides of the ball," said coach John Hicks. "They are a pretty good defensive team. We knew it would be a battle."

Niceville and Choctaw share the top spot with 3-1 district records. Friday the Eagles celebrate Homecoming against Auburn High School.



Beacon photo by Sarah Clauson  
Eagle Tyree McCants shakes off a Fort Walton Beach defender as he gains enough ground to allow a Niceville field goal.

# Ruckel bids fond farewell to a running legend

## Dale Eiriksson calls it a career after 29 years and 79 titles

By Kenneth Books  
Beacon Staff Writer

All good things, it's said, must come to an end.

Dale Eiriksson, the winningest coach in the history of Okaloosa County scholastic sports, called it a career Friday, 29 years after he first donned the whistle.

Eiriksson, 55, coached cross country and track for Choctawhatchee and Baker high schools and, most recently, Ruckel Middle School, winning an unprecedented 79 county titles in the process. He won 21 girls and 28 boys cross country titles, four girls soccer crowns and 16 girls and 10 boys track championships in his 29 years, all while also teaching physical education.

Running and running sports

are Eiriksson's first love, largely because he's a dedicated runner himself, having competed in marathons, half-marathons and various races all over the United States. Three times he ran the Boston Marathon barefooted.

"He's a true running legend," said Ruckel assistant principal Dennis Samac. "He ran in middle school, high school, OW and college. He was part of the original running craze of the '70s. He still has his first pair of running

shoes." He said Eiriksson puts cardboard in them to cover the holes.

"Running's pretty easy—all you've got to do is run," Eiriksson told the Beacon Thursday after a Ruckel pep rally partly dedicated to wishing him farewell. "I was blessed with a lot of very, very talented runners."

At one point, his girls cross country teams had won 10 of 11 county titles while his boys team won 14 in a row.

It hasn't been an easy road for Eiriksson, though. Twice he suffered from non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. Twice he beat the disease. Had he not been in superlative condition from all that running, the result could well have been otherwise.

But Eiriksson is more than an incredibly successful coach. He has touched the hearts of many students and fellow teachers.

"He's a very caring guy," said Samac. "He cares a lot about the kids."

Kim Radford, a math teacher who used to teach phys ed with Eiriksson, illustrated Samac's point.

"He always had extra shoes," she said. When a youngster wanted to run competitively but couldn't afford running

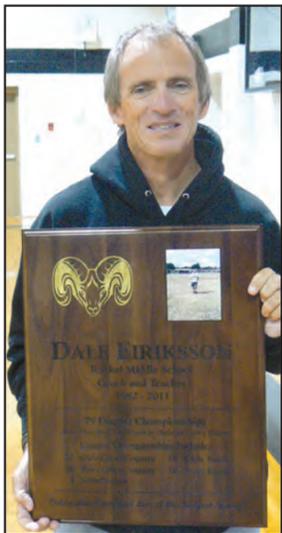
shoes, Eiriksson would provide a pair free.

Eiriksson isn't going to settle down in a recliner and watch daytime TV now that he's retired.

"Now I can run in races," he said. "I never could in the past. You could always take days off as a teacher, but not as a coach. So many people I know retire and die. I plan to live to 100."

Still, he's obviously proud of his years as a coach and happy that he could touch the lives of so many youngsters.

"The big thing with these kids is they'll never forget what they accomplished here," he said. "I have so many memories. That's why I never left. Why leave the best school in the country?"



Beacon photo by Kenneth Books  
Dale Eiriksson displays the plaque honoring him on his retirement. It was presented to him Thursday during a pep rally.



Dennis Samac



Kim Radford

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