

The Bay Beacon

12 Pages, 2 Sections, 4 Inserts

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

50¢

Slain Niceville G.I. 'loved the Army'

By Kenneth Books
Beacon Staff Writer

A memorial service will be held for Niceville native Sgt. Joshua Born, 25, one of two soldiers killed Thursday in Afghanistan when an Afghan soldier turned his gun on them outside a U.S. base in Nangarhar Province.

He was among four U.S. troops, two of them from Northwest Florida, to have been

slain in recent days in Afghan violence apparently spawned by outrage over the burning of Muslim holy books in the war-torn nation.

Born was assigned to the 385th Military Police Battalion, 16th Military Police Brigade (Airborne), XVIII Airborne Corps, Fort Stewart, Ga.

He was the son of Craig Born of Niceville and Elizabeth Croft of Fort Walton Beach.

Born was one month into a yearlong deployment. He joined the Army six years ago, shortly after graduating from Niceville High School.

Also killed was Sgt. Timothy J. Conrad Jr., 22, of Roanoke, Va.

Born's wife, Megan, who lives in Olive Branch, Ill., told reporters that she



Joshua Born

found out about her husband's death via a text message, rather than through normal military channels.

"It's crazy how I found out," Mrs. Born is quoted as saying.

Finally, a major called to tell Mrs. Born her husband had been shot and didn't make it out of surgery.

The Army is investigating how information about Sgt. Born's death was leaked. Apparently, the text came from an Army spouse at Fort Stewart.

"She's doing really well,"

Megan Born's mother, Cindy Parker, said of her daughter Monday. "It had been a little rough. She's doing a little better today. His squad members from Afghanistan are staying in constant touch with her. His captain

and lieutenant from Afghanistan have called. The Army has assigned someone to her and they are at her beck and call. They're making all the phone calls, all the arrangements."

Born's mother, Elizabeth Croft, said her son was "very, very loyal to his family and friends. He liked to be the best in everything and he was the best in

Please see G.I., page A-3

'From the Halls of Montezuma . . .'



"The Marines' Hymn" echoed through an Eglin hangar Friday during "rollout" ceremonies for the F-35B, the vertical-landing version of the new Joint Strike Fighter. District 1 Congressman Jeff Miller, Lockheed Martin Chairman Robert Stevens and Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. Joseph F. Dunford Jr. spoke at the ceremonies honoring the Eglin's VMFAT-501, the first Marine squadron to operate the F-35B. The "Warlords" have three F-35B jets and are awaiting Defense Department permission to begin flying training "soon," an official said. Eglin's 33rd Fighter Wing also has received six copies of the Air Force version of the triservice strike fighter. Navy versions will also be based at Eglin. Eventually 59 F-35s will operate from Eglin to train pilots and ground crews. Above, the Marine band from Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, N.C.

Beacon photo by Del Lessard

Niceville wins \$4M to expand park

By Del Lessard
Beacon Staff Writer

Niceville has been approved for a \$3.45 million grant by the tax-funded Florida Communities Trust to help add 64 privately owned acres to Turkey Creek Walk Park.

Niceville is also in line to get up to \$640,000 from Eglin Air Force Base to create a perpetual conservation easement on the property the city will acquire to expand the park. The Air Force grant would be the first of its kind for the city.

Niceville has been working on the acquisition program with Eglin and the state's Florida Communities Trust, part of the state-funded Florida Forever program, for the past two years, according to Lannie Corbin, Niceville's city manager.

In the city's Jan. 17, 2011, application for the state grant, Corbin said that the project, Turkey Creek Walk Park Phase IV, included the proposed purchase of 43.5 acres owned by Ruckel Properties, eight acres owned by Safe Mini-Storage of Niceville, 1.5 acres already

Please see \$4M, page A-3

UP
COMING

Wednesday, 10:30 a.m.

The **Alzheimer's Family Services support group** will meet at First United Methodist Church, 214 S. Partin Drive, Niceville. The group is for family members or friends coping with a loved one with Alzheimer's disease. Respite care is available. Info: 478-7790.

Thursday, 1:30 p.m.

The **Valparaiso Community Library** would like to invite children and families to

Family Movie Day. "Puss and Boots" will be shown, and drinks and popcorn will be served. All ages are welcome.

Friday, 5-7 p.m.

Edge Elementary School will hold its annual **Spring Fling** at the school, 200 Highway 85 North, Niceville.



The community is welcome to enjoy the festivities. Admission is **free**, and tickets and armbands will be sold for games and bounce houses.

Calendar, B-2

College seeks to add more 4-year degrees

By Mike Griffith
Beacon Correspondent

Northwest Florida State College is seeking to begin two more bachelor's degree programs.

Primarily a two-year community college, NWFSC in recent years has added five four-year degree programs.

The college board of trustees last week approved proposals for new bachelor's programs in early-child-

hood education, with an emphasis on ages birth to 5, and in supervision and management, with areas of emphasis in public safety and health care management.

Although approved by the NWFSC board of trustees, the proposals must be approved by the Florida Department of Education.

State-level approval may be a lengthy process, NWFSC President



Ty Handy

Ty Handy told college trustees at the Feb. 21 meeting at the Niceville-based college's satellite campus in southern Walton County. The process begins with a 100-day public comment period, he said, which will include opportunities for state universities to comment on NWFSC's proposals, and to object if they think the proposed programs would compete with similar programs at the universities.

Then, the proposals must be reviewed by the state board of education, Handy added. However, he said, the proposals have already been coordinated with the University of West Florida, Pensacola, the closest state university to NWFSC, and UWF has not objected.

Handy said the proposed degree in

Please see COLLEGE, page A-2

2 schools propose tennis complex

Backers seek to raise \$300K

By Tess Hollis
Beacon Staff Writer

Niceville High and Ruckel Middle schools are one step closer to having their own tennis courts, after the Okaloosa County School Board, on Monday, unanimously approved the Eagle Ram Tennis Center project.

The proposal sought "approval of a self-help joint project between Niceville High School and Ruckel Middle School to build eight tennis courts on the Ruckel Middle School property." The courts, expected to cost at least \$300,000, would be built by January 2013 at the north end of the Ruckel athletic field, at the intersection of Partin Drive and Palm Boulevard, across the street from Niceville City Hall.



The proposed Eagle Ram Tennis Center would feature eight courts, lighting, a concession stand and restrooms. An artist's conception of the courts was presented to the Okaloosa County School Board Monday.

Please see TENNIS, page A-2

Bridge panel opposes new state takeover bill

By Mike Griffith
Beacon Correspondent

The Mid-Bay Bridge Authority has sent a resolution to the Florida Legislature opposing a proposed state takeover of the authority and the bridge itself.

The proposed takeover is similar to a proposal made last year by Sen. Don Gaetz, R-Niceville, who suggested consolidating management of the Mid-Bay Bridge and its approach roads would make more efficient use of state resources, and would add the MBBA's borrowing authority to that of the state, allowing more

Please see BRIDGE, page A-3

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COLLEGE

From page A-1

supervision and management is designed to provide firefighters, emergency medical technicians, and other public service workers with a path to advancement to managerial levels.

According to Handy, the college anticipates sending a letter of intent for the two new baccalaureate degrees to DOE by today.

"Once that letter is received, an established process of review begins, and the minimum is about six months until we might obtain approval to begin offering a program," said Handy, who told the trustees that he had been in contact with UWF president Judy Bense about NWFSC's proposed programs.

"We are not duplicating degrees that are already readily accessible, but rather proposing work-force-oriented baccalaureate programs that provide a career ladder for current Associate of Science or certificate programs," said Handy.

NWFSC Trustee Rachel Gillis said she supports the new programs, especially the supervision and management degree. Her own experiences as an organizational leader have taught her, she said, that to succeed in transitioning from operational to management levels in nearly any field, people must acquire such key skills as the ability read and understand laws, regulations and government contracts pertaining to their organizations.

"Otherwise," said Gillis, "they'll be overwhelmed and drown in it." In April 2003, the Florida State Board of Education authorized the college to develop baccalaureate degree programs for the first time. Accreditation by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools as a level II baccalaureate degree-granting institution followed in 2004.

Since then, NWFSC has implemented a bachelor's of applied science in project management, a bachelor's of science in nursing, and bachelor's of science programs in elementary



Beacon photo by Mike Griffith

The South Walton Center satellite campus of Northwest Florida State College opened in 2010.

education, middle grades math education, and middle grades science education. It has awarded more than 400 four-year degrees. The college serves 17,000 students a year, mostly in two-year degree and certificate programs.

Prior to the regular business portion of the meeting, the trustees were given a campus tour and briefing by Julie Terrell, director of the college's South Walton Center. Terrell talked about the educational programs offered at the center, which is the college's newest branch campus and its second campus in Walton County. The other is in DeFuniak Springs.

The South Walton campus,

which opened in 2010, occupies about 16 acres of a 30-acre site owned by NWFSC, located off State Highway 331, north of U.S. Highway 98.

Terrell said college credit classes offered at the center include courses in computers, economics and business, mathematics, biology and physiology, humanities, English and Spanish.

The South Walton Center is also the headquarters of the Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance, a college-sponsored organization of academic, scientific, business and government personnel that promotes research and other activities to understand and preserve the natural environment of Choctawhatchee Bay and its surrounding watershed. Terrell is the director of the CBA, as well as the head of South Walton Center

The South Walton campus, she said, includes a native plant garden, wetland area, and other features that help people study,

understand and demonstrate methods of protecting natural plants, animals, and environments.

In other action, trustees also approved a retirement resolution honoring the 22 years of service of Mickey Englett, the college's Dean of Students and Athletic Director. The resolution recognized Englett's distinguished career, and named Englett as a life-long emeritus director of athletics and dean of students at the college. Englett will retire April 30 from the college.

At the business meeting trustees also approved college and Collegiate High School calendars for 2012-13 and other items related to the operation of the college and Collegiate High School.

At the end of the meeting, Chairwoman Sandy Sims announced that there will be not be a March meeting of the board of trustees.



Julie Terrell

TENNIS

From page A-1

Debbie Goolsby, Ruckel's principal, and Marcus Chambers, Niceville's principal, recently signed a usage agreement for the joint tennis facility.

Niceville High and Ruckel Middle schools' tennis teams do not have tennis courts on their campuses to use for practices or matches, and have used courts throughout the community and on Eglin Air Force Base.

"It has become increasingly difficult to schedule these courts so the parents and community of the two schools have joined forces to create this self-help project," the proposal stated.

The Eglin courts are "undesirable due to distance, and highly restricted base access," and "Northwest Florida State courts are in very poor condition," according to a letter from RMS tennis coach Leslie Parker and NHS tennis coach Chris Poate.

"The college courts have not been resurfaced in many years and have many cracks in them," Poate said.

Poate said the junior varsity team practices at the college, while the varsity team practices at Bluewater Bay.

"Because the Bluewater Bay Club is so busy, they can't guarantee enough courts for the high school to play and the team must split up," said Lisa Lewis, spokeswoman for the project campaign.

According to Lewis, funds to build the project would come solely from donations and fundraising events.

"We are not expecting to get any money from the school system or the taxpayers," she said. "We are building this because we were frustrated and saw the need, and so that kids in the future know they have a place to go."

Lewis said the campaign committee is modeling the project after other high schools.

"This is being done around the country because schools are running out of money," she said.

The estimated cost of the initial project is \$300,000, with an additional \$90,000 for lighting in a second phase. The goal is to raise all of the funds by Sept. 15, Lewis said. The campaign committee will then be required

to present the school board with the funds and a construction plan before they break ground on the courts.

"We need to be up and running by next tennis season," Poate said. "We can't pave in December because of freezing, so we need to get in construction before the weather gets really cold."

According to the letter, the committee is working to secure grants from the U.S. Tennis Association and other organizations, however a majority of the project will need to be funded by the local community.

"We will depend on support from area businesses and families for the success of this campaign," the letter stated.

Once built, the Eagle Ram Tennis Center will allow students access to practice after school, and to host matches against other schools.

Lewis said the project has been drawing its own interest.

"Tennis is a lifelong sport, and there's so many people who have kids who play tennis, or they play tennis, and it's just a passion," she said. "Most people are into kids being productive, healthy and enjoying a

sport."

The new center would allow a "more affordable" way for kids to learn how to play tennis, Lewis said.

"Private lessons at a club are not really an option for everyone, but we hope to have a facility nearby, that is within walking distance of most of Niceville."

The committee hopes that the new center will allow public access, but Lewis said that decision will be made by the school board.

"There might be liability the school board does not want to take on," she said. "The courts at the college are public, and they have not been vandalized and there have not been any lawsuits. The school board is very concerned about that aspect of it, with good reason."

If the courts are made public, Lewis said the committee would like to see affordable lessons offered by professionals during the summer.

"The main mission here is that this will serve the schools and the students through PE, as well as middle school and high school teens, and the public," Lewis said.



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\$4M

From page A-1

acquired from the Neal family, 0.66 acres to be donated by the Florida Department of Transportation and 10.4 acres to be donated by Safe Mini-Storage.

All the parcels are contiguous to the city's Turkey Creek Walk Park, he wrote, and would expand the municipal nature park while enacting an easement against future development. Land acquisition costs were estimated at \$4.45 million, plus costs for surveys, appraisals and other activities estimated at \$150,000. The required 25-percent local match would be met by the three parcels already acquired or donated to the city.

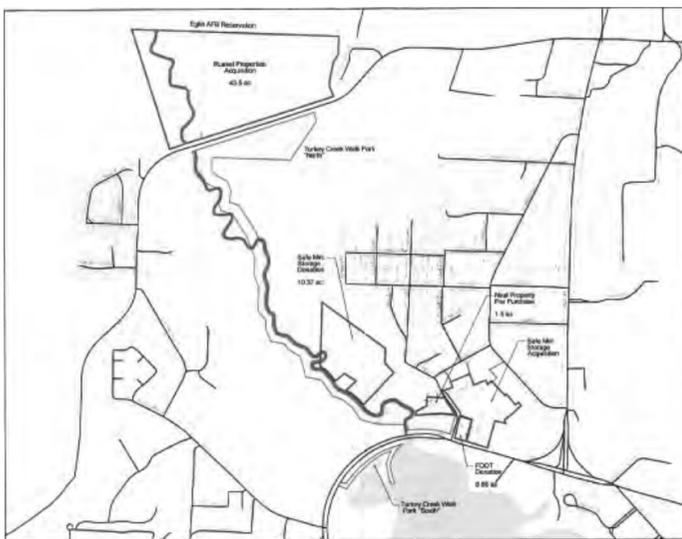
The governing board of the Florida Communities Trust approved the project Aug. 25, 2011, said Cheri Albin, an environmental planner with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. Niceville was one of eight projects approved by the agency last year out of 56 applications. It received

the second highest grant award.

Albin said Niceville's grant proposal earned extra points in the competition because the proposal includes a perpetual environmental easement against future development and that would provide a buffer around a military base, the Eglin reservation. The proposal also gained points because Turkey Creek is a stream inhabited by the once-endangered Okaloosa darter, she said.

Niceville has also been working on an agreement with Eglin Air Force Base under a Defense Department program known as the Readiness and Environmental Protection Initiative (REPI), said Marion Cook, Eglin's Community Planner. The REPI program is aimed at cost-sharing partnerships between the military services, private conservation groups and state and local governments to protect military test and training capabilities and conserve land.

Cook said Eglin received \$450,000 from REPI for Niceville's Turkey Creek easements in fiscal year 2011, and another \$190,000 toward the project during the current fiscal year.



Eglin competes for REPI grants each year against proposals submitted by the Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force. The Air Force has received less than \$11 million of the \$480 million obligated under the program since 2005. No REPI money has yet been disbursed to Niceville, she

said, pending approval of an agreement now being finalized. A fair-market appraisal of the property is also required before money can change hands, she said.

Corbin said the new agreement with Eglin could be completed by May. He also said Ruckel Properties had agreed to sell the

city 35 acres along Turkey Creek, north of College Boulevard. The purchase is subject to an appraisal before the deal can be inked, he said.

Niceville is looking at developing a possible camping park on the Ruckel property, the city manager said, although the plans have not

Niceville plans to expand Turkey Creek Park through the state-funded acquisition of several adjacent parcels (labeled) totaling 64 acres. The purchases will be safeguarded by Air Force-funded perpetual conservation easements.

been firmed up. Likewise, the city is looking at possible tennis courts, a nature trail and/or tennis courts on the nine-acre property at the south end of the park on land it plans to buy from Safe Mini-Storage, he said. That land is behind the former Hardee's restaurant site.

Albin said the state grant of \$3.45 million was based on the estimated acquisition prices submitted by the city. Those estimates have to be validated by a fair market value appraisal, she said, before the city can receive the state grant money.

Eglin Air Force Base benefits from the proposed agreement with Niceville, Cook said, by keeping future development out of the Accident Potential Zone II, an off-base 3,000- by 8,000-foot area north of Eglin's north-south runway 01/19. The APZ II designation means there is a statistically higher chance of an aircraft crash in that area by military and civilian planes using the north-south runway.

REPI was created in 2005, and in its first five years has provided more than \$480 million.

G.I.

From page A-1

everything. He had so many natural talents."

Parker said Born was "full of life, very spunky. He had an awesome sense of humor."

He was also a "Star Wars" addict, she said, "even to the point that, as a joke, he put on his dog tags for his religion "Jedi."

The Army was the ideal place for Born, Parker said.

"He was extremely proud to be a soldier," she said. "He was very competitive. He wanted to be the fastest runner and was the fastest

runner in his battalion. It was very important to him to excel."

Croft agreed.

"He loved the Army," she said. "He loved what he did and he firmly believed in what he was doing."

Born attended Lewis Middle School and graduated from Niceville High School in 2005. There, he played soccer, played in the band and performed on stage. He was a member of Cub Scout Pack 52 and Boy Scout Troop 546, as well as the Order of the Arrow. He also performed in several plays for Stagecrafters, his mother said.

Many Afghan Muslims have

been up in arms in the past week over the disposal of discarded copies of the Quran, Islam's holy book, in a burn pit at Bagram Airfield, outside of Kabul.

Violence quickly spiraled, leaving more than 30 people, including four U.S. service members, dead since the burning was revealed on Feb. 21. According to Born's father,



Timothy J. Conrad Jr.

Craig, the sergeant was shot in the chest by an ally. He said his son was training Afghan soldiers, when one opened fire, killing the two Americans and wounding four others.

On Saturday, two U.S. Air Force officers, including Lt. Col. John Darin Loftis, Navarre, deployed to the 866th Air Expeditionary Squadron from Hurlburt Field, were found dead from gunshot wounds in the heavily guarded Afghan Interior Ministry. The Taliban claimed the killings were in retaliation for the burning of the Quran.

Separately, a memorial service

was held Tuesday at Hurlburt Field for four airmen who died in plane crash near a U.S. base in the east African nation of Djibouti Feb. 18.

Officials have said the unarmed, single-engine, propeller-driven plane, which was engaged in operations supporting Operation Enduring Freedom, the war in Afghanistan, apparently was not downed by hostile fire.



John D. Loftis

Born's and Conrad's bodies were returned Saturday to the military mortuary at Dover Air Force Base, Del.

Born will be buried in Mound City National Cemetery, Ill. Funeral arrangements were pending at press time.

A memorial service will be held in late March in the Niceville area at a time and place to be determined, according to his family.

Born was posthumously promoted to sergeant and awarded the Purple Heart, Bronze Star Medal, Combat Action Badge and NATO Medal.

BRIDGE

From page A-1

funding for state road-building projects. The 2011 proposal did not pass.

Gaetz, who is slated to become president of the Florida Senate next year, did not renew his proposal this year and it was thought to be almost dead. However, the proposal was renewed on Feb. 3 when Sen. Lizbeth Benacquisto, a Palm Beach County Republican, introduced an amendment authorizing such a takeover to Senate Bill 1866, which deals with transportation.

Currently, the Mid-Bay Bridge, a 3.5-mile toll span between Niceville and Destin that opened in 1993, is owned by an independent state authority run by a local board of unpaid volunteers appointed by the governor of Florida. Though operated by the Florida Department of Transportation under agreement with the authority, the bridge is not governed by the state.

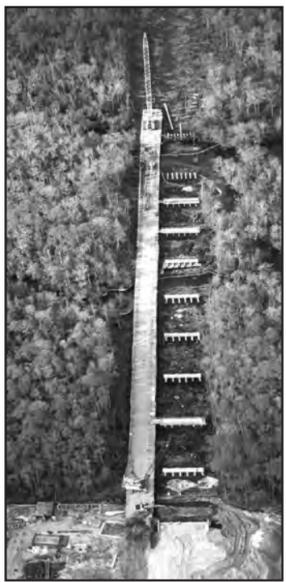
At a meeting in Destin earlier this month, MBBA board members said they were surprised by Benacquisto's amendment. The said it was approved in committee without seeking input from the bridge authority. The board members approved a resolution to be drafted and sent to the legislature opposing the takeover.

According to MBBA members, the takeover proposal must still be addressed by the Florida House of Representatives and agreed on by a House-Senate conference committee before a bill can be passed and sent to the governor for signature.

Board members discussed who within the Florida Legislature might help them oppose the proposed takeover. Finding such support may not be easy for the MBBA, as the local legislators are Gaetz, who originally proposed the state takeover, and his son, Rep. Matt Gaetz.

Two other tollway authorities that were included in last year's unsuccessful takeover bill were not targeted in this year's. These are in the Orlando and Tampa areas, whose powerful legislative delegations opposed last year's measure.

Members of the MBBA, on Feb. 16, adopted Resolution 2012-06, which opposes the proposed transfer of governance and control of the assets and legal rights of the Mid-Bay Bridge Authority. The legislation would transfer governance



Mid-Bay Bridge Authority

A measure before the Florida Legislature would, if approved, result in a state takeover of the locally governed Mid-Bay Bridge and an 11-mile approach road, now under construction east and north of Niceville (aerial photo, above).

and control of the assets and legal rights of the MBBA to the Florida Department of Transportation's business unit, the Florida Turnpike Enterprise, which operates in Orlando.

The resolution stated that the

transfer of assets from the local authority to a large state enterprise would run counter to the reasons that the MBBA was established in 1986—to address local needs and projects.

In other business during a meeting Feb. 16, the MBBA board heard a briefing from James VanSteenburg, an engineer with HDR Engineering, which is managing construction of the Mid-Bay Bridge Connector, that will link the bridge with State Road 85, north of Niceville. VanSteenburg said the project is on schedule and within budget and is expected to be complete by the end of December 2013.

MBBA Executive Director Jim Vest told the MBBA board that January traffic over the Mid-Bay Bridge was at the same level as January 2011. He expects increased traffic and revenue this year, as tourism appears to be climbing in Northwest Florida after a multi-year slowdown induced by recession and the BP oil spill.

Vest also said that the MBBA has submitted its claim to British Petroleum (BP) for toll revenue lost in 2011 due to the BP oil spill in the summer of 2010. Vest said the 2011 claim is \$440,000, but the amount actually received from BP may be subject to negotiation. Vest said much of the lost revenue during 2011 was probably the result of

businesses that closed permanently because of the oil spill, leading to loss of jobs and a reduction of commuter traffic over the bridge in 2011.

Following the meeting, Vest was asked what impact he expects currently rising gasoline prices may have on tourism, bridge traffic and revenue. He replied that he expects little or no impact, despite forecasts that gasoline prices may climb to between \$4 and \$5 this summer.

"Once someone plans to come here to spend a couple of thousand dollars on their vacation," Vest said, "they won't be stopped by an extra \$50 for the gas to get here."

Correction

A headline Feb. 22 inadvertently inflated the value of a proposed acquisition of Okaloosa County's share of the regional sewage-treatment plant by the city of Niceville. As the story noted, it is \$2.3 million.

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THE INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER —Mike Griffith

What, if anything, should the United States do about Iran's nuclear program?

Location: Walmart



"We have nuclear weapons to protect ourselves, so why shouldn't they?"

Stephen Gee, 18, Crestview, food service



"If we put enough economic pressure on them, they won't be able to fund their nuclear program."

Jessica Borella, 26, Niceville, stay-home mom and full-time student



"It's something I'm very concerned about, but I don't want to get into another situation like Afghanistan or Iraq - a Middle East war that we can't afford."

Sally Lay, 42, Bluewater Bay, mom



"I don't think we'll have to do anything. The Israelis will handle it. When they do, it will probably mess up the world oil market even more than it is now."

Phil Niswander, 62, Crawfordville, firefighter



"Get rid of it. They have a nut running the country. Bombing it works for me."

Pam Bradford, 52, Mossy Head, housewife



"Get rid of them. Invade them if necessary."

Greg Kline, 41, Freeport, carpenter

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FOUND

From page A-6

came by Sharing and Caring every Friday to receive a bag lunch and always asked if she could help.

Saez also helped whenever the cold night shelter was opened at the First Presbyterian Church in Fort Walton Beach, and attended church services there, Franklin said.

"She was a fine lady, a fine person and a good friend. I'm

going to miss her so much," Franklin said.

A memorial service is planned Thursday at Davis Watkins Funeral Home, 8 Racetrack Road, NE, Fort Walton Beach tomorrow from 6-8 p.m.

Sharon Schuler, secretary at the church, said Saez would participate in Feed the Hungry, a program that prepares lunch each Saturday at 11 a.m. for those in need.

Schuler said a memorial service would be held for Saez.

2012 CALENDAR. E-mail items to info@baybeacon.com before 5 p.m. Wednesday.

Dance for Life benefit

The Fred Astaire Dance Studio, Crestview, is hosting Dance for Life, an evening of ballroom dance to benefit Covenant Hospice, March 10, 7 p.m., Crestview High School Auditorium. The event will feature Edyta Sliwinska and Alec Mazo from ABC-TV's "Dancing with the Stars" and will also showcase amateur and professional dancers from across the Emerald Coast. Tickets are \$25 for general admission and \$50 for VIP admission, which will include premiere reserved seating for the event and an exclusive post-event cocktail party with Sliwinska and Mazo. Tickets can be purchased at Fred Astaire Dance Studio, 301 N. Main St., Crestview, or at fredastairecrestview.com.

Poker Run

Paws on the Throttle Poker Run will be March 10, 9 a.m., at the Panhandle Animal Welfare Society, 752 Lovejoy Road, Fort Walton Beach. Last bike out at 11 a.m. and last bike in at 2 p.m. Cost is \$15 per hand. Prizes for hands will be based on points, and will be awarded at 3 p.m. Info: 243-1525, or paws-shelter.org.

Gospel concert

Libby and Friends Gospel Concert Ministry will present the Brown's of LeMars, Iowa, in concert, March 10, 6 p.m., Central Baptist Church, 951 S. Ferndon Blvd., Crestview. Info: LibbyAndFriendsGospelConcerts.com, or Libby White, 496-7106.

Law Office of SAMUEL M. PEEK. Estate Planning & Probate, Wills & Living Trusts, Powers of Attorney, Health Care Directives, Business Corporations & LLC. Samuel M. Peek, J.D., LL.M. Tax 678-1178, 222 Government Avenue, Niceville, FL 32578.

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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

Tammy Ann Stroppel, unemployed, 43, of 157 Windfield St., Niceville, was arrested by Valparaiso police Feb. 18 on charges of theft, obtaining a credit card through fraud, and fraudulent use of a credit card. Stroppel allegedly visited a Valparaiso residence for a short time Oct. 19, after which the resident reported his wallet missing. The victim learned Nov. 1 that his debit credit card had been used at a Niceville gas station Oct. 19 for \$59 of gas, and an attempt made to use the card inside the store for \$16, but the second transaction was declined. After viewing surveillance video inside the gas station, the victim identified Stroppel as the person attempting to use his credit card without his permission.

A 14-year-old Niceville boy was arrested by Niceville police Feb. 13 on charges of battery on a law enforcement officer and resisting an officer with violence. Police were called to the boy's residence after it was reported he was destroying his room. After refusing officer's requests that he exit the room and talk to officers, the boy allegedly struck one of the officers in the shoulder when the police entered the room.

Darryl Ty Friedlund, unemployed, 21, of 1277 Whitewood Cove, Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies Feb. 13 on a charge of soliciting a person under the age of 16 to commit a sexual act. Friedlund is alleged to have used text messages to solicit a 13-year-old girl in January. The victim's mother became aware of the text messages and allegedly began role-playing as her daughter, on her daughter's cell phone, and replied on Jan. 25 to Friedlund's text messages. The mother called deputies when he suggested they meet for a sexual act.

Amber Wynne Odom, 30, of 509 23rd St., Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies Feb. 11 on a violation of probation charge on the original violation of injunction charge.

Jason Aaron Kee, 32, of 107 Kelly Road, Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies Feb. 10 on a violation of probation charge on the original charges of battery and providing false information to a law enforcement officer.

Julian Frank Kalivoda, unemployed, 26, of 101 Friar Tuck Drive, Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies Feb. 11 on a charge of battery, domestic violence.

Andrew Brendon Dwyer, 28, of 206 Bur Oak Circle, Crestview, was arrested by sheriff's deputies during a traffic stop on Highway 293 in Niceville, Feb. 17, on a Bay County warrant for felony theft.

Julietta Isabel Stalnaker, a restaurant server, 28, of 1453 Pine St., Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies Feb. 19 on a charge of battery, domestic violence.

Stephen Anthony Ainsworth, 28, of 305 Glen Ave., Valparaiso, was arrested by sheriff's deputies Feb. 17 on a charge of failure to appear on the original charge of driving while license suspended or revoked.

Rebecca Elizabeth Sailer, unemployed, 25, of 73 Easter St., Freeport, was arrested by sheriff's deputies in Niceville Feb. 18 on charges of possession of a controlled substance and possession of drug paraphernalia. Deputies responded to a fast food restaurant, 4570 E. Highway 20, where Sailer had

reportedly been passed out in a booth for more than two hours. After refusing medical treatment, the deputy recognized Sailer exhibited common physical characteristics often associated with methamphetamine users. During a consensual search, deputies found a plastic container containing methamphetamine inside a plastic bag in Sailer's purse.

John Christopher McCauley, 22, of 1015 Partin Drive, Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies Feb. 16 on a violation of probation charge on the original charges of criminal mischief with property damage and grand theft.

Marcus Jon Ridgway, 36, of 412 Pelham Road, #1, Fort Walton Beach, was arrested by sheriff's deputies Feb. 12 on a charge of aggravated assault and domestic violence battery. Ridgway allegedly pulled out a double-bladed six-inch knife and put it next to the throat of a Valparaiso man and threatened to kill him. The victim was trying to aid a woman who had allegedly been battered by Ridgway.

DUI arrests

Joan Michelle Williams, 32, of 636 Crestview Ave., Niceville, was arrested by Niceville police for DUI on Highway 20 at Bayshore Drive, Feb. 16, at 12:40 a.m. Williams was also cited for failure to maintain a single lane.

Shaun Lee Foster, 32, of 1912 Redwood Ave., Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies for DUI on Highway 293 at the Mid-Bay Bridge toll plaza Feb. 17, at 12:46 a.m.

James Alan Ritteman, 56, of 146 Wildwood St., Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies for DUI at the Bluewater Bay Whataburger drive-thru, Feb. 12, at 6:13 a.m.

Thefts

A Niceville resident from the 1300 block of 23rd Street reported that sometime Feb. 16-19, while the victim was out of town, unknown person(s) broke into the home and left the back door unlocked and the garage door open. A safe was discovered on the bathroom counter along with assorted tools from the garage. It appeared the tools had been used, unsuccessfully, to gain entry into the safe. The door to the safe had significant damage, and the locking mechanism dismantled, but it did not appear the safe had been opened. Nothing appeared to be missing from the home.

A Niceville resident reported that unknown person(s) stole her purse from her unlocked vehicle while the victim was working at her business, 1187 E. John Sims Parkway, Feb. 18. Police searched the area and found the victim's purse in a dumpster behind the business. Police also found and returned the victim's checkbook, driver's license, credit cards and makeup. The victim said the only thing missing was \$300 cash from the purse.

A Niceville resident from the 1800 block of Edge Avenue reported that when she returned home Feb. 18, she found the front door she had locked open, and a woman sitting on the floor in her kitchen with several bags of her belongings. The woman on the floor allegedly stated she had been kicked out of her own residence and didn't have anywhere else to go, then rushed to get out the door. Police said the front door dead bolt appeared to have been pried open. The victim found several jewelry items and \$205 in cash missing. The missing jewelry was valued at \$670.

Fire Department Reports

Niceville

The Niceville Fire Department responded to the following calls from February 19, 2012 through February 26, 2012.

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

Street	Situation	Date	Time
Everglade Drive	Medical	02/19/12	12:13
W. John Sims Pkwy.	Vehicle Crash	02/20/12	12:33
Reeves Street	Medical	02/20/12	16:13
N. Partin Drive	Medical	02/20/12	18:03
Bailey Drive	Medical	02/21/12	03:15
N. Partin Drive	Medical	02/21/12	13:22
W. John Sims Pkwy.	Medical	02/22/12	16:58
W. John Sims Pkwy.	Medical	02/22/12	18:05
Dogwood Avenue	Canceled	02/23/12	09:52
Crestview Avenue	Medical	02/23/12	23:05
Friar Tuck Drive	Medical	02/24/12	08:08
Ellis Avenue	Medical	02/25/12	10:55
SR85N	Canceled	02/25/12	11:54
SR85N	Vehicle Crash	02/25/12	12:01
17th Street	Medical	02/25/12	20:11
S. Partin Drive	Medical	02/26/12	13:53
Ellis Avenue	Medical	02/26/12	20:20
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Other Fire	02/26/12	21:21

Weekly Safety Tip: Sweep gutters, roofs, and eaves regularly and remove dead branches from around or near chimneys. Burning firebrands or embers can collect in the same space that leaves and pine needles do. Remove leaves and needles from corners and crevices around the outside of your home. By keeping the roof and area surrounding your home clear of debris, you reduce your risk of fire. Please look at the Niceville Fire Department web page on Facebook.

North Bay

The North Bay Fire Department responded to the following calls from February 19, 2012 through February 27, 2012.

Street	Situation	Date	Time
Ardmore Court	EMS excluding vehicle	02/19/12	18:23
E. Highway 20	EMS excluding vehicle	02/19/12	22:45
Sailboat Drive	Dispatched canceled	02/20/12	09:23
Huntington Road	EMS excluding vehicle	02/20/12	09:27
Glenburn Court	Dispatched canceled	02/20/12	11:28
E. Dominica Circle	Chimney or flue fire	02/20/12	21:48
Olde Post Road	EMS excluding vehicle	02/21/12	16:33
Sunset Beach Circle	EMS excluding vehicle	02/21/12	17:22
Range Road	EMS excluding vehicle	02/22/12	00:15
Highway 20	EMS excluding vehicle	02/22/12	10:05
Highway 20	Motor vehicle accident	02/22/12	14:53
White Point Road	EMS excluding vehicle	02/22/12	16:11
Blue Pine Lane	EMS excluding vehicle	02/22/12	17:32
Pembroke Court	EMS excluding vehicle	02/23/12	01:50
N. White Point Road	Medical assist EMS	02/24/12	02:00
Wright Circle	Medical assist EMS	02/24/12	08:28
White Point Road	Assist invalid	02/24/12	11:31
White Point Road	EMS excluding vehicle	02/25/12	00:23
S. Midway Bridge	No incident found	02/25/12	10:09
Ide Coon Circle	EMS excluding vehicle	02/25/12	14:00
N. White Point Road	EMS excluding vehicle	02/26/12	12:17
N. White Point Road	Medical assist EMS	02/26/12	18:54

Visit northbayfd.org for more information.

A Niceville resident from the 1900 block of Benton Avenue reported that unknown person(s) stole his power saw from the laundry room sometime Feb. 16. A witness told the victim that a male in a minivan pulled into the driveway at 11:30 a.m., and a male in shorts walked to the rear of the victim's residence and returned with some type of "equipment."

A 77-year-old Niceville grandfather is out \$1,500 after being contacted by a scam artist Feb. 17 claiming to be his grandson. The "grandson" said he was traveling in Peru with friends, was arrested and needed money for bail. The victim was also given a phone number of a man who claimed to be with the U.S. Embassy with instructions to call after the money was wired. After wiring the \$1,500 through a Western Union branch in Niceville, the victim called the "embassy" contact. Afterward the victim "Googled" the phone number and learned it was a California area code. The victim called his daughter who stated her son, the victim's grandson, was not out of the country, but in Washington D.C. on business.

An 86-year-old Niceville man told police he received a letter stating he had won a Reader's Digest contest. Enclosed was a \$2,800 check that was supposed to be deposited, then most of the money sent back to pay "fees" before his winnings would be sent to him. The victim said he deposited the check as directed, and then called the person listed in the letter and questioned why he was being asked to send most of the money back. The victim then checked with his bank and learned the check bounced. When the victim tried to contact the sender of the letter, they hung up on him. The intended victim did not lose any money by sending money to pay for "fees," according to police.

Criminal Mischief

Unknown person(s) caused an estimated \$100 damage to a Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida sign located at the corner of Okaloosa Avenue and John Sims Parkway Feb. 17.

A Niceville resident from the 500 block of 22nd Street reported that someone slashed the tires on his pickup truck Feb. 18.

Other

Danielle Beauchamp, unemployed, 28, of 515 Nassau Drive, Niceville, was issued a criminal summons by sheriff's deputies Feb. 12 on a charge of petit theft. Beauchamp allegedly concealed \$78 of merchandise without paying for it at the Destin Walmart, 15017 Emerald Coast Parkway.

Police responded to a residence in the 600 block of Crestview Avenue after a resident reported someone outside her window, Feb. 14, a few minutes after midnight. Police searched the area and did not find anyone. The resident said she was in bed with her daughter when she saw lights through her bedroom window. She proceeded to get a gun, and walked into the hallway where she saw the light coming through a window in another bedroom. The resident said she saw the curtains moving and feared someone was coming into the bedroom, so she fired two shots at the window. The woman said she saw two people run away. The resident returned to her own bedroom and saw a shadow at her bedroom window and fired a third shot. No one was injured in the shootings. The resident was cautioned to be careful about firing a gun to prevent hitting any innocent bystanders.

A hunter from Crawfordville told deputies in Niceville that he was in a tree on a deer stand on the Eglin reservation north of Duke Field Feb. 18 when he heard a loud bang coming from the direction of his parked truck. When he returned to his vehicle the driver's side rear window was lying on the ground with a hammer next to it. Stolen from the truck was a brief case full of tools valued at \$400, a medicine bag with medications, \$680, \$1,800 pair of binoculars, an antique knife valued at \$400, a drill valued at \$160, a set of hearing protection valued at \$260, a \$134 battery charger and multiple medications with an unknown value. Damage to the truck was estimated at \$900.

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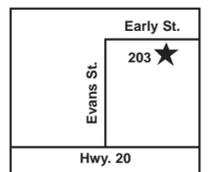
The North Bay Fire Control District is currently accepting Letters of Intent for the position of Fire Commissioner. The requirements are: (1) be a Florida registered voter and (2) live within the jurisdiction of the North Bay Fire Control District. The North Bay Fire Control District is a Drug Free Workplace and an Equal Opportunity Employer. For more information, contact the Administration Office at (850) 897-3689. Please submit your Letter of Intent to the North Bay Fire Control District, 1024 White Point Road, Niceville, Florida 32578 by Monday, March 5, 2012. All applicants must be present for consideration at the next Board of Fire Commissioners' meeting to be held on Tuesday, March 13, 2012, at 7:00 p.m., at the North Bay Fire Control District.

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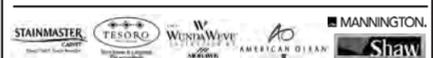
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Woman found dead in her car at park

By Del Lessard
Beacon Staff Writer

A 55-year-old woman was found dead in her car Feb. 22 at a park in Niceville. Police identified the deceased as Kathryn Mary Saez, 55, of Fort Walton Beach. There were no signs of foul play or trauma, according to a report from Niceville police. A Niceville police report stated that numerous items in

the vehicle made it appear as if Saez, who had been evicted from her Fort Walton Beach dwelling three months ago, was living in the car. Her body was found in the driver's seat of the car, which was parked at Turkey Creek Park, just off John Sims Parkway, at 5 p.m. by park employees who had come to tell her that it was closing time. Saez slept in her car at the

Turkey Creek parking lot two or three times a week during daylight hours, park personnel said. They said she never caused problems or talked much. She would leave the park at closing and would sometimes be seen driving to a nearby area, according to park personnel. A Niceville police investigator said Saez had been evicted from a trailer in Fort Walton Beach about three months ago.

"She was a great friend of mine," said Yvonne Franklin, a Fort Walton Beach volunteer for the homeless. She said she had last seen Saez three days before her death. She said Saez had a bad cough about a week before she died. The state Medical Examiner's office said that no autopsy was planned in the case because the death was not viewed as suspicious.

Saez had a job cleaning offices at night in the Niceville area, Franklin said, and "felt safe at the (Turkey Creek) park." Franklin has worked with the homeless for the past 13 years, volunteering at Sharing and Caring, Fort Walton Beach, and helped start the cold night shelter program in Fort Walton Beach in 2002. She said Saez

Please see FOUND, page A-4



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Advertising Feature

Northwest Florida's warm sunny climate and white sandy beaches attract many people to live here, but sun, rain, and salt spray from the Gulf of Mexico can damage the surface of your home and its roof. That's where Rhino Shield comes in. While you may already be familiar with Rhino Shield, the special coating that lasts longer and protects better than conventional paint, you may not know that Rhino Shield's new Super Shield Ceramic Roof coating can now protect your roof as well as your exterior walls.



Dotson Gwinn proudly shows off his Rhino Shielded home.

"Super Shield is a unique product," said Mike Redmond, owner of Rhino Shield Gulf South. "This system is ideal for all kinds of roof surfaces such as asphalt, tile, aluminum, steel, copper, plywood, shakes, Styrofoam, concrete and clay." "With Super Shield, you can make your old roof look more modern, and can change the color of your existing roofing

material, such as shingle, metal or tiles, while protecting it and adding years of life to your roof." Where your roof has been repaired, you can ensure a uni-

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mint-green color that couldn't be matched with new roof tiles," Gwinn said, "but with Rhino Shield, we were able to use different color roof tiles, then coat them with Rhino Shield to color the roof a shade of brown that perfectly coordinates with the Rhino Shield coating applied to the walls of the house."

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"Super Shield Ceramic Roof Coating offers substantial waterproofing and insulation benefits by creating a layer of protection with the benefit of ultra-violet ray reflectivity," he said. "Super Shield not only aids in the reduction of energy consumption, but also prevents mold, mildew and staining, eliminates granule loss with a shingle roof and increases resale value extending the life of your roof."

The new exterior of his home, Gwinn said, "cleans extremely well," and provides excellent protection from the elements.

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Gwinn was also pleased by the workmanship and professionalism of the Rhino Shield installation crew. "They did an exceptionally good job, on a timely basis, and left no mess. Later, they came back to touch up wherever I asked them to. They were extremely polite, and did an efficient, high quality job. I am completely satisfied."

Dotson Gwinn, who lives in nearby Miramar Beach, recently had his home renovated, to include Rhino Shield protection for both his roof and exterior walls. "My original roof was a

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Niceville woman celebrates 105th birthday

Ruby McArdle, center, of Niceville, celebrated her 105th birthday on Feb. 16, at The Manor at Bluewater Bay with her family. Born in 1907, she has lived at The Manor since 2008.

Niceville native reaches out to children in Uganda

By Tess Hollis
Staff Writer

People often tell Laura Jones she is brave for having the courage to help children in need.

"I don't see it as brave," she said. "I'm doing what I've been called by God to do, and I'm doing what I love."

The central African country of Uganda and its children have been a passion of the Niceville native since she was just 17 years old. Now, at the age of 20, Laura will finally have the chance to travel, for the first time, to the place that she says has been in her heart for the past three years.

Laura, a student at Northwest Florida State College, will spend a week and a half of her summer with the Florida Baptist Children's Homes in Uganda on a mission.

"We will be ministering to orphans and widows, and continue the construction of an orphanage," Laura said. "We want to raise awareness and show them the love of Jesus. We want these people to have the best life and give them hope, but also meet their physical needs."

The Florida Baptist Children's Homes is a faith-based non-profit organization that provides Christ-centered services to children and families in need. The project Laura will work on is Orphan's Heart, Uganda, under the Florida Baptist Children's Homes.

Orphan's Heart "works with Hines Ugandan Ministries to help bring a message of hope by ministering to the spiritual and physical needs of widows and orphans in Kamokolia, a village in eastern Uganda."

Once the orphanage is complete, Laura said, it will house close to 200 children. Children will be served three meals a day, with a heavy emphasis on nutrition and vitamins.

"Teams will continue to travel over there to finish the orphanage," she said. "Each team will bring suitcases full of supplies



Laura Jones has traveled on mission trips to Guatemala and Jamaica to help children in need. Laura will be taking her fourth mission trip in May to Uganda, Africa, to help build an orphanage.

until the orphanage is filled. Each team takes it a step further and further."

Laura first knew there was a special place in her heart for Uganda when she was in high school, after a youth group weekend at First Baptist Church of Niceville.

"We lived in cardboard boxes in the parking lot to mimic how the children live there," she said. "We learned about what they go through on a daily basis. I knew then that's what God called me to do. I never doubted it."

Following the youth group weekend, during her senior year of high school, Laura participated in mission trips to Guatemala,

twice, and Jamaica. Those experiences, she said, helped her prepare for Uganda.

Learning about the way children are forced to live in Uganda has driven Laura's passion even further.

"The children there are abducted and kidnapped, and turned against their families," she said. "There's this different life they could have if they had Jesus and had hope."

Uganda, the third poorest country in the world, is home to the longest running civil war in Africa's history and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA),

Please see UGANDA, page B-3

Who's News

E-mail items to
info@baybeacon.com.

Rebecca Weaver, daughter of Ian and Esther Weaver of Crestview, has been named to the University of Florida College of Agricultural and Life Sciences Dean's List in recognition of outstanding academic achievement during the fall and spring semesters of the 2010-11



Rebecca Weaver

school year, and the fall semester of the 2011-12 school year. A graduate of Rocky Bayou Christian School, Rebecca is pursuing a degree in animal science.

Andres Poveda of Niceville was named to the Dean's List at Spring Hill College, Mobile, Ala., for fall semester 2011. Students at Spring Hill College must earn a minimum of 3.5 grade point average out of a possible 4.0. Andres is majoring in management and marketing.

Margaret Schladenhauffen of Niceville was named to the Dean's List at Spring Hill College, Mobile, Ala., for fall semester 2011. Students at Spring Hill College must earn a minimum of 3.5 grade point

average out of a possible 4.0. Margaret is majoring in pre-nursing.

Lisa Morris, a fourth grade teacher at Edge Elementary School, recently published an educational book, "Awakening Brilliance in the Writer's Workshop." The book shares the most successful ways to apply the workshop model to a classroom.



Lisa Morris

Several schools are using the book as a study tool for teachers. Her second educational book will be published in May 2012.



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Softball League teams
The Niceville Recreation Department is now accepting teams for the men's and women's Spring Church Softball League. Play will begin April 17. Info: cityofniceville.org, or Jim Baughman, 729-4062, jbaughman@niceville.org.

Library story time
Join Ms. Karen and Ms. Christina Feb. 29 and March 1, 10:30 a.m., for Story Time in the Youth Services Program room at the Niceville Public Library. They will read "Box it Up!" The program is free for ages 3-5. Info: 279-4863, ext. 1514.

Alzheimer support group
Alzheimer's Family Services provides monthly support groups for family members or friends coping with a loved one with Alzheimer's disease. A support group will be held at 10:30 a.m., Feb. 29, First United Methodist Church, Chandler Center, 214 S. Partin Drive, Niceville. The support group is free and respite care is available. To register for this group or for information, call 478-7790, or visit AlzFamServ.org.

OCPLC meeting
The Okaloosa County Public Library Cooperative (OCPLC) Governing Board will meet Feb. 29, 4 p.m., in the Niceville Library Conference Room. The meeting is open to the public. Info: readokaloosa.org, or 609-5102.

Adventure Club bike ride
The Adventure Club will enjoy a bike ride in the Gulf Breeze area, Feb. 29, 10 a.m. Meet at the Gulf Islands National Seashore Visitors Center, Highway 98. Bring a picnic for lunch after the ride. Info: Clarice, 581-4591.

Joint replacement class
The Joint Replacement Program at Sacred Heart Hospital will host a class to help people learn more about the joint replacement process. The next class will be Feb. 29, 10 a.m., Sacred Heart Hospital Resource Center, suite 3 conference room. Info: Linda Ledford, 278-3646, or sacredheart-merald.org.

Book discussion group
The Constant Reader book discussion group will meet at 10:30 a.m., March 1, Valparaiso Community Library. The book for discussion will be "Open House" by Elizabeth Berg. The group will meet at the same time, March 8, to discuss "Innocent" by Scott Turow. Each book discussion will be informal, with Jill White serving as moderator. Info: 729-5406.

Movie day at library
The Valparaiso Library would like to invite children and families to Family Movie Day, March 1, 1:30 p.m. The library will be showing "Puss and Boots" and serving drinks and popcorn. All ages welcome.

Audubon Society meeting
Learn how to get along with native black bears at the March 1 meeting of the Choctawhatchee Audubon Society. "Living with Florida Black Bears" will be presented by Andrew Jernigan of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. The meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m. in the new Student Services Center, Room 132 of the Niceville Campus of Northwest Florida State College. The meeting is free and open to the public. Info: Walt Spence, 582-7064.

Multi-Chamber Expo
The Chambers of Commerce in Okaloosa County will present the Multi-Chamber Business Expo and Taste of Okaloosa County, a marketing and networking opportunity. The event is free and open to the public, March 1, 4-7 p.m., at the Emerald Coast Conference Center.

Quilt retreat and show
Flying Needles Quilt Guild will present the 2012 Quilt Retreat and Show, Emerald Coast Conference Center, March 1, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; March 2, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; March 3, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. All quilters are invited to participate, and quilts have to be made within the last two years. Admission is \$7 for adults, \$2 ages 12 and under. Children under 6 are admitted free. Advance tickets are \$5 at The Sewing Center, Fort Walton Beach, or Yards N Yarn, Freeport. Info: flyingneedlesquiltguild.org, or Linda Scoggins, 689-3905.

Edge hosts Spring Fling
Edge Elementary will hold its annual Spring Fling, March 2, 5-7 p.m., 200 Highway 85 North. The community is welcome to enjoy the festivities. Admission is free, and tickets and armbands will be sold at the event for games and bounce houses.

Mattie Kelly Arts exhibit
The galleries at the Mattie Kelly Arts Center at Northwest Florida State College, Niceville, will present two new exhibitions March 2-April 20:



Festival of Four concert Friday

The final First Arts Concert of the season will showcase Festival of Four, March 2, 7:30 p.m., at First United Methodist Church, Fort Walton Beach. Following the concert an Afterglow will be hosted at Magnolia Grill. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$8 for students in advance. Tickets can be purchased at: firststartconcerts.org; Pavlic's Unique Florist; Kitchenuique; Bayou Book; Playground Music; P.S. Gifts; and in the church office, 103 First St., SE, Fort Walton Beach. Info: firststartconcerts.org, or 863-2436.

Arnie Hart Juried Student Exhibition and NWFSC Faculty Exhibition
An opening reception honoring the artists will be March 2, 5-7 p.m., and awards will be presented at 5:30 p.m. Info: 729-6044.

8-mile hike
Join the Florida Trail Association, March 3, 8 a.m., for an 8-mile hike on Eglin near DeFuniak Springs. Eglin recreation permit required. Info: 826-3605, or choctaw.floridatrail.org.

Opening day ceremonies
The Valparaiso-Niceville Girls' Softball Association will hold its opening day ceremonies, March 3, 9 a.m., at the Niceville City Softball Complex. The public is invited.

Animal educator
E.O. Wilson Biophilia Center will present Nonie Maines, educator and animal enthusiast, March 3, 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Nonie will give a hands-on approach to understanding the important roles animals play in our environment. Standard admission rates apply. Info: eowilsoncenter.org, or 835-1824. E.O. Wilson Biophilia Center is located at 4956 State Highway 20 East, Freeport.

Yarn weaving
Learn how to weave coasters, small baskets, or bowls out of yarn,

March 3, 10 a.m.-noon, with Phyllis Hunt. Cost: \$15 for the public and \$12 for Friends of the Museum members. You must bring a skein of yarn to the class. Class will take place inside the Indian Temple Mound Museum, Fort Walton Beach. Advanced registration and payment by cash or check is required.

Navarre Poker Run
Navarre CERT will hold its annual Poker Run fundraiser, March 3. The cost is \$15 per person. Teams of 2-4 people will solve clues to visit local businesses, and will collect envelopes with playing cards inside. The highest hands will win up to \$500. Sign-up sheets are available at the Navarre UPS store in the Winn-Dixie shopping center. Info: Mark Pokroy, 396-6811.

Community health fair
Sacred Heart Hospital on the Emerald Coast will host its 9th annual community health fair, March 3, 8-11 a.m., in the main colonnade of the hospital. Community members are encouraged to take advantage of free health screenings. Info: 278-3600, or sacredheartmerald.org.

Bluewater Regatta
Bluewater Bay Sailing Club will hold its kick-off Regatta, March 3. Registration, 10:30-11 a.m., Captain's meeting (at Bluewater Bay Marina),

11 a.m., start, noon. Fees: Membership in U.S. Sailing and/or Bluewater Bay Sailing Club or other sailing clubs \$20, otherwise \$25. Free to Captains who attend the annual Sail Club spring meeting the night before. Sail Club hats awarded to winners. Class participation will be determined on number of entries. Sailing instructions will be available at registration. The Regatta headquarters will be at the Bluewater Bay Marina, the racing area will be located on Choctawhatchee Bay. Info: Charlie Mauck, 499-5734.

Relay hold 'em tourney
The fourth annual Relay for Life Texas Hold'em Tournament will be March 3, 7-11 p.m., at Christ Our Redeemer Catholic Church. Prizes to the top eight players. Pizza, snacks and drinks will be provided. Info: Donna Clark, 259-0482, or Marc Stalnaker, 543-1510.

Eagles tribute
The Emerald Coast Concert Association will present "Hotel California—A Tribute to the Eagles," March 3, 7:30 p.m., at the Mattie Kelly Arts Center, Niceville. Tickets, \$30 in advance, \$35 at the door, are available at Mattie Kelly Arts Center box office, or by calling 729-6000. Info: 362-9356, or emeraldcoast-concerts.com.

Vessel safety checks
The Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 1-4 will be conducting free Vessel Safety Checks (VSC), March 3, at Joe's Bayou boat ramp in Destin beginning at 6:30 a.m. The VSCs are conducted by certified Coast Guard Auxiliary examiners and are not a law enforcement action. Info: flotilla14.org or John Ryan, Public Affairs Officer, ryanjohnj@hotmail.com, 623-980-8782.

Rosemont Homecoming
Rosemont Baptist Church, Niceville, will hold its 55th anniversary celebration, March 4, 10:45 a.m. The Rev. David Throckmorton will be the guest preacher. RSVP at: rbc-niceville.org, or 678-1611.

World Help presents choir
World Help will present the Children of the World International Children's Choir, March 4, 9 a.m. and 10:45 a.m., at Niceville Assembly of God, 108 Highway 85. The choir is comprised of orphaned and disadvantaged children from several different countries. Info: worldhelp.net, or 800-541-6691.

Student art show
The Arts and Design Society will host its annual Van Porter Student Art Show March 5-16. The exhibit showcases outstanding 8th and 12th grade art work. The opening reception will be March 8, 5-7 p.m. The Gallery, 17 First St., SE, Fort Walton Beach, is open noon-4 p.m., Tuesday-Friday, and 1-4 p.m., Saturday.

Silver point classes
Kayla Camp will offer two classes in silver point, March 5 and 12, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., at the Arts and Design Society's Art Center Studio, Fort Walton Beach. Cost for each session is \$55/ADSO members, \$65/non-members. Materials fee, \$10/student. Students may take one or both classes. Info: artsdesignsociety.org, or 244-1271.

Better Listening
Dr. Jeremy Ribando, NWFSC professor, will discuss "Musical Composition (for the layman)" at the Valparaiso Unitarian Church music study series, Better Listening, March 6, 7-9 p.m., at 1295 Bayshore Drive. Info: Lou Johnson, musicstudy@uufec.com.

Mental illness course
NAMI Emerald Coast and the Mental Health Association will present "Family to Family," a 12-week course for family members and loved ones of those with serious mental illness. The class will meet March 6, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Mental Health Association of Okaloosa/Walton, 571 Mooney Road, NE, Fort Walton Beach. The class is free, but reservations are required. Info and reservations: Mental Health Association, 244-1040. NAMI Family Support Group meets the fourth Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Mental Health Association.

Weather course offered
A seven-week weather course will begin March 7, 6:30-9 p.m., Anchorage Building, 404 Green Acres Road, Fort Walton Beach. The meetings will be held on Wednesday nights. Tuition is free, but there is a \$65 cost for materials. Info: Wil Hughl, 863-0874, or fwspcs.com.

RWOF meeting
The Republican Women of Okaloosa Federated will meet March 7, Holiday Inn Resort, Okaloosa Island. Socializing will begin at 11:30 a.m., and lunch will be served at noon. The speaker will be Henry Kelley, a member of the Fort Walton Beach Tea Party. To make a reservation, contact Donna Pattison, 651-5416, or donnapattison@cox.net by noon, March 2. Cost is \$16 for members and \$18 for guests. Info: rwof.org.

FWB Aglow
The March 8 speaker for Fort Walton Beach Aglow will be Sherry Anderson. The meeting will be at Marina Bay Resort, 80 Miracle Strip Parkway, Fort Walton Beach. Coffee and fellowship, 9:30 a.m., and the meeting, 10 a.m. Info: Barbara Williams, 678-1335, or fwbaglow@yahoo.com.

Spanish language class
The Valparaiso Community Library will offer a beginner Spanish language class, March 8, 3:30 p.m. This class will meet every Thursday afternoon and will be taught by Ruth Trott. Cost: free, except the textbook, \$12. Info: 729-5406.

Officer to speak to teens
Lieutenant Macon, Niceville Police Department, will be a guest speaker in the Teen Space area of the Niceville Public Library, March 8, 2:45 p.m. All area teens, ages 13-17, are invited to hear Macon speak about relevant issues that affect the lives of teens. Refreshments will be served. Info: Youth Services Department, 279-4863, ext. 1514.

Groundbreaking ceremony
Groundbreaking of the University of Florida-Okaloosa County Extension Office Building will be March 8, 10 a.m., Bob Sikes Airport.

ASMC/NCMA training
The Gulf Coast Chapter of the American Society of Military Comptrollers (ASMC) and the Northwest Florida Chapter of the National Contract Management Association (NCMA) will host a training event March 8, at the Emerald Coast Conference Center, Okaloosa Island. The one-day itinerary includes more than 14 workshops and a CDFM test site. Cost is \$110. Register at gulfcoastasmc.org/rpds/AAC/EBS. Info: Angela Godwin, or 883-0439.

Garden Club meeting
Master Gardener Margaret Stewart will entertain the Bluewater Bay Garden Club, March 8, 9:30 a.m., with recycled floral design for fun and profit. The meeting will be at the Bluewater Bay Club House. Info: bluewaterbaygardenclub.com.

Gambling lecture
Dr. Klaus Meyer-Arendt will present "Casino Gambling: Lessons from Mississippi," March 9, 6 p.m., at Heritage Park and Cultural Center, 139 Miracle Strip Parkway, SE, Fort Walton Beach. The lecture is free and open to the public, and will discuss the process of legalizing casino gambling, geographic restrictions of gambling, Indian gambling and the social impacts of gambling.

FWB Auditorium show
"The Devil and Daniel Webster," will open March 9 at the Fort Walton Beach Civic Auditorium on Miracle Strip Parkway. The show runs additionally on March 10, 11, 16, 17 and 18. Curtain times will be 7:30 p.m. for the Friday and Saturday night shows, and 2 p.m. for the two Sunday matinees. Advance tickets may be purchased for \$15 at P.S. Gifts, Fort Walton Beach, or Bayou Book, Niceville; tickets are available for sale at StageCrafters.com. Discounted student tickets are \$10 and will be available at the door of performances only. Info: 243-1101.

3-day backpacking trip
Join the Florida Trail Association, March 9-11, 9 a.m., for a 23-mile backpacking trip on Eglin near Crestview. Eglin recreation permit required. Info: 585-5150, or choctaw.floridatrail.org.



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Lewis holds festive fundraising competition

Lewis School recently held a king and queen of hearts fundraising competition among its middle school students. The students who raised the most donations were crowned king and queen. From left: Amber Lee (third place), Autumn McClain (second place), T'Yanna McCoy (queen), Mike Emigh (king), Russell Fayson (third place) and Rory Venuti (second place). Overall, 14 students ran for king and queen and raised more than \$200 for Lewis School's yearlong efforts to raise money for Children in Crisis.

Local school bands earn accolades at music festival

Lewis and Rocky Bayou Christian school bands participated on Feb. 17 in the Florida Bandmasters Association's District 1 Solo and Ensemble Festival in Gulf Breeze.

Lewis
Lewis Band members brought home 34 medals at the festival. Earning the highest grade, superior, in the ensemble category were: Brass Quintet: Kyle Allman, Andrew Colón, Jonathan McClain, Keaton Smith, Matt Smith; Flute Duet: Jackie Bowlin, Faith Fry; Flute Trio: Kinley Childress, Madeline Colón, Mindi Dennis; Trumpet Duet: Zack Fralish, DeAngelo Swafford.

Earning the highest grade, superior, in the solo category were: Kyle Allman, tuba, Bethany Banaszak, clarinet, Josh Banaszak, tuba, McKenzie Bentley, clarinet, Jackie Bowlin, flute, Andrew Colón, tuba, Tacy

Colón, clarinet, Madeline Colón, flute, Taylor Duncan, clarinet, Faith Fry, flute, Rebecca Havard, clarinet, Justin Haymond, tuba, Jacob Hohman, xylophone, Jessica Jones, saxophone, Grayson Kramer, clarinet, Zach Krouse, French horn, Ronell Lile, saxophone, Garrett Oden, xylophone, Jasmine Richardson, clarinet, Noah Shaw, clarinet, Keaton Smith, trumpet, DeAngelo Swafford, trumpet. Lewis Band director is Robert Colón.

RBCS
Rocky Bayou Christian School had several students who performed at the festival and earned high ratings. Jared Porrata, Grace Stoner, Christian Yun and Jeffrey Sober each received "superior" ratings, and Alex Mayer received an "excellent" rating. Jared Porrata is qualified to go to the All-State festival in April in Gainesville.

Obituaries

Jack Lewis Langille 1934-2012

Jack Lewis Langille, Maj. USAF (ret), 77, took his last flight from his home on Saturday, February 25, 2012, after a mercifully short battle with cancer.

For our Niceville friends, there will be a memorial service with military honors on Monday, March 5, 2012, 2 p.m. at the Bob Hope Village Chapel, 92 Sunset Lane, Shalimar, Florida.

Full obituary in the Northwest Florida Daily News, Tuesday, Feb. 28.

Robert Lawrence "Robby" Quimby

Robert Lawrence "Robby" Quimby, 45, of Niceville, Florida, formerly of Atmore, Alabama, passed way Thursday, February 23, 2012, in Houston, Texas. He was a Computer Scientist with Eglin Air Force Base, born in Monroeville, Alabama, on September 17, 1966, to Robert E. and Julianne Johnson Quimby.

Robby was a graduate of Troy University; he loved hunting and fishing, and was an avid Auburn fan.

He is preceded in death by his grandparents, Lawrence and Minnie Lee Quimby, and Julius and Sybil Johnson.

Survivors are: His wife, Beth F. Quimby of Niceville, FL. His parents, Bobby and Julie Quimby of Atmore, AL. One daughter, Lauren Sanchez and husband, Nestor of Ocala, FL. One granddaughter, Soraya Grace Sanchez of Ocala, FL. One brother, Toby Quimby and wife, Maggie of Atmore, AL. Three nephews, Blake, Brad and Bryant Quimby all of Atmore, AL., and a host of friends.

Services were Monday, February 27, 2012, at 2 p.m., from the Johnson-Quimby Funeral Home Chapel with the Rev. Dr. Woodrow Hudson and the Rev. Jim Reece officiating. Interment followed in Oak Hill Cemetery. Active Pallbearers were Chew Smothers, Richard Burdine, Sammy Lee, Glenn Wilson, Blake Quimby, Brad Quimby, Bryant Quimby, Scott Fuller and John Fuller.

Family received friends, Monday February 27, 2012, at Johnson-Quimby Funeral Home from noon until service time.

Johnson-Quimby Funeral Home, Inc. is in charge of all arrangements, Atmore, AL.

County schools receive grant

Okaloosa County Schools recently received \$5,145 from the Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation. The foundation awarded 49 Lowe's Toolbox for Education grants in Florida, totaling more than \$212,000. These schools received grants during the fall 2011 grants cycle, which

encompassed more than 585 schools and parent organizations that were awarded a grant for parent-initiated school improvement projects benefiting K-12 public education across the U.S.

Grant money will be used for projects including outdoor classrooms, community gardens, playground refurbishment,

gymnasium repairs and other needs identified by the schools.

"Through Lowe's Toolbox for Education grant program, we are acknowledging parent-initiated efforts that enhance the learning environments of children in the communities we serve," said Marshall Croom, chairman of Lowe's Charitable

and Educational Foundation. "By supporting schools in Florida, we are rallying behind a cause that is important to both our customers and employees, and we're helping to build a stronger foundation for the children who will be tomorrow's employees, homeowners and community leaders."

UGANDA

From page B-1
although many of the soldiers have moved their efforts into the neighboring countries of the Republic of Congo and Sudan. According to Laura, the children are forced to become LRA soldiers and turn on their families. As a result, girls and women have been brutally raped and entire families have been murdered, leaving many children orphaned.

The AIDS epidemic in Uganda also continues to leave many children orphaned. There are an estimated 1.2 million people living with the virus in the country.

"Many people there aren't aware they have it, or if they are they just don't care," Laura said. "They see other people around them dying, and they can't see hope."

Malaria also poses a major threat.

"Rather than the LRA soldier's activities, the biggest threat to our safety is disease," Laura said. "Uganda is the malaria capital of the world."

With the high threat of dis-



Beacon photo by Tess Hollis

Karen Jones, Laura Jones' mother, is supportive, but worried about her daughter's decision to travel to Uganda, Africa for a mission. Laura will leave for the trip in May.

ease and violence in Uganda, Laura's mother, Karen, has her own fears.

"I know she will go with the proper precautions, and the Florida Baptist Children's Homes has laid the foundation for safety," Karen said. "The conditions there worry me, but our faith is strong and I can't argue with her if that's what

God wants her to do."

The language barrier, as well as a Ugandan distaste for westerners, are hurdles Laura will have to overcome during her mission.

"It does worry me to an extent," Laura said, "but I pray to God I can change people's hearts. They can't just change immediately, and naturally they

are very hesitant about westerners because of the mindset 'we do everything right' and they feel westerners are arrogant. I just hope our team will allow Christ to shine through them."

Because she is majoring in education, Laura hopes to teach in Uganda indefinitely after she graduates from college.

"Once I graduate I will research various mission organizations and see where teachers are needed," she said. "I want to help give these children an education and give them hope that they've never had, so they know there is a better life for them."

In the meantime, Laura is preparing for her trip by receiving immunizations and materials from the Florida Baptist Children's Homes that will prepare her on everything from items to pack, to interacting with the people of Uganda. She is also working two jobs while she attends college to pay for her travels.

To make a donation toward Laura's trip, contact First Baptist Church of Niceville, 678-4621. Laura and her family are also asking for support through prayer.

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Niceville's Newspaper



BEACONSPORTS



Briefs

Softball teams needed

The Niceville Recreation Dept is now accepting teams for Spring Church Softball and Spring Women's Softball leagues. Play will begin April 17. Info: cityofniceville.org or Jim Baughman, 729-4062 or jbaughman@niceville.org.

Lewis School gym dedication

The Lewis School Gymnasium will be dedicated as the Taylor Haugen Gymnasium on March 10 at 3 p.m. at the outside entrance to the gym. Taylor attended Lewis as a middle school student and was actively involved in athletics, band and service projects.



Knights fall to Hoboes

Rocky Bayou pitcher Sam Holcomb fires a fastball Thursday at home against Laurel Hill. The Knights lost the game, 4-2.

Beacon photo by Norman Wolf



Beacon photo by Norman Wolf

Eagles drop 6-4 game to Mosley

Niceville High School catcher Gerrod Voigt tags a Mosely runner out at the plate after recovering a wild pitch Thursday at home. The eagles lost the game, 6-4.

Gulf South tourney set for NWFSC Arena

The Gulf South Conference Men's and Women's Basketball Championship Tournament will be played this year at the Arena at Northwest Florida State College 1-4.

The event will tip-off with a FanFest party at the HarborWalk Village on February 29, from 5:30-8 p.m., featuring the teams, dignitaries, Eglin AFB Color Guard, music, free food, the national champion Valdosta State University Dance Team and a host of giveaways.

On Thursday, the women play four quarterfinal games, scheduled at 12:30, 2:45, 5:30 and 7:30; Friday, the men do the same.

Saturday, March 3, the women play their Semi-Finals at 12:30 and 2:45, followed by the men at 5:30 and 7:30 p.m. The finals are slated for Sunday, March 4, with the women tossing it up at 11 a.m. and the men approximately 35

minutes after the women's game ends.

All-sessions tickets are \$30 for adults and \$20 for students, seniors and active/retired military with appropriate IDs. Daily admissions are \$10 for adults and \$7 for students, seniors and active/retired military with appropriate IDs. Children 5 and under are free at all times.

The Gulf South Conference dates back to 1970, and currently has eight member universities: West Florida, Valdosta State, West Georgia, West Alabama, Alabama-Huntsville, North Alabama, Delta State and Christian Brothers. This is the first time that the GSC has ever conducted a championship event in the Emerald Coast area; the expected economic impact is in the \$250,000 range, with all teams housed at the beach and all staff and officials in Niceville itself.



14U Mustangs win tournament

The 14U Florida Mustangs won their age division's championship in the Traveling Eagles Presidents Day Challenge by defeating the Gulf Coast Bulldogs 7-2 in the final game Sunday, Feb. 19, at Twin Oaks. From left: front, Grant Stewart, Jacob McDorman, Corey Armstrong, Wesley Brooks, Jake Smith, Travis Wiljakaenin and Jake Daffin; rear, coach Bill West, Denver Dangerfield, Andrew Howell, Colby Mullins, Blake Johnson, Matthew French, Will West III and manager Mike McDorman.



Niceville freshmen top Milton, 6-3

Andy Kelleher throws a pitch for Niceville High School's freshman baseball team vs. Milton High School Feb. 23 at the P.A.R.A sports complex in Pace. He came into the game in the second inning in relief with the bases loaded and one out and got the last two outs, allowing only one run to score. He then pitched the third inning, allowing only one hit and striking out one batter as he recorded his first win of the season with a final score of 6-3.



The Ruckel Middle School county champion boys swim team, from left: bottom row, Daniel Jordan, Harrison Frazier, Cole Brown, Shane Gauthier, George Welch and Hatcher Martin; second row, Nathen Martin, Cameron Vallin, Evan Frazier, Andrew Halladay, Drew Knebl, Kellen Broaderick, Alex Fletcher and Brooks Alexander; top row: Principal Dr. Debra Collins Goolsby, Gabriel Preston, Oscar Ordenez, Payden Walls, Nathaniel Cain, Michael Bartley (holding trophy), Weeston Smith, Dylan Hammond, William Medina, Seth Witt, Jackson Betts, Nick Kartvedt, coach Kathy Ritacco and Cheryl Duty, school sponsor.

Ruckel swimmers take county championship Boys, girls break five records

The Ruckel Middle School boys swimming team brought back the county championship trophy again. The entire team had a great season and broke records since the start of the season.

During their first meet against Bruner the boys broke the 200 Freestyle Relay record (Kellen Broaderick, Garrett Olds, Michael Bartley and Chaz Brechler), as well as the 200 Medley Relay record (Matt Nelson, Chaz Brechler,

Michael Bartley and Garrett Olds). At the meet against Meigs Michael Bartley broke the 50 Fly record.

For the girls team, Tatum Hackler broke a 12-year-old record in the 200 Free and Carmen Little broke the 25 Free record during the last meet of the season.

On Feb. 15, at the timed finals meet, pitting all the county middle schools against one another, the Ruckel team won 19 of the 29 events.

Advertising in the Bay Beacon gets results! Here's proof!

Dear Bay Beacon:

I would like to take this opportunity to say THANK YOU for listening to my goals and objectives for the Niceville Hearing Center. As I'm sure you are aware, in today's economy a business must manage their cash flow wisely.

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SUMMARY: You work with some very creative people. The Beacon is one of the best I've seen and read and it is definitely working for me. I must say that of all the other places I have advertised, The Beacon has produced the most response which I have been able to translate into deposits. I thank you for all your help this past year and look forward to a mutually profitable business relationship.

Should you want to have any of your prospects give me a call I would be glad to tell them that advertising in the Bay Beacon is a great investment.

God Bless and have a successful new year.

Sincerely,

S. Grant Williams, Owner
Niceville Hearing Center



Ram cheerleaders national champs

Ruckel Middle School cheerleaders were recently named National Champions of the Advance Junior High School Cheer division at Jamfest in Mobile, Ala. The squad also had the highest scores of their session at the two-day competition. From left: back row, Rachel Ross, Jillian Malone, Hayley Griggs, Kristin Holley, Mimi Taylor, coach Brittany Mosley, Jaycee Malone, Serrena Cowell, Mary Kate Cary, Kirsten Cecil, Britney Davis, Catherine Reid and Katie Kennedy; front row, Skylar Schoener, Kaitlyn Trawick, Bailey Propps, Hannah Griggs and Summer Lange.

Obituary

Avery Alis Ogburn
February 16, 2012

Our beautiful daughter Avery Alis Ogburn was born at 9:51 a.m. on February 16, 2012. She was perfect in every way. She cried squeaky little cries and opened her beautiful blue eyes. She had a full head of curly black hair and weighed in at 3 pounds and 13 ounces.

Our little miracle lived for a little over an hour before she passed peacefully from our arms into the loving arms of God.

Avery is survived by her parents Carey (Brunson) Ogburn and Jeffrey Ogburn; grandparents Dewitt and Wanda Brunson and Denis and Kathy Ogburn; her aunts and uncles Chris and Lindsay Brunson, Brian and Kelly Ogburn and Laura and Chris Casconi; her two big cousins Wyatt and Jackson, and numerous other family members.

Funeral service for Avery was held on Monday, February 20, 2012, at 10:30 a.m., at Ratterman and Sons Funeral Home, 3800 Bardstown Road, Louisville, KY, 40218, with burial following at Calvary Cemetery. Memorial contributions may be made to the family in care of the funeral home. Contributions will be donated to a charity of choice, to be determined at a later date.

In the Service

Lt. Col. Julie A. Staats was the recipient of the Bronze Star Medal from Gen. Norton Schwartz, Air Force Chief of Staff, on Jan. 18 Moody Air Force Base, Ga., for exceptionally meritorious service as the Chief, Medical Staff, Craig Joint Theater Hospital, while deployed in



Lt. Col Staats

support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Her leadership and dedication to duty were instrumental to the unit's mission during combat operations. Staats' actions reflect distinct credit upon herself, Task Force 44 Medical and the Air Force. Staats and her husband, Christopher, have a home in the Bluewater area of Niceville. She is the daughter of Richard and Flora Weaver of Niceville.

Navy Seaman Anthony B. Coon, a 2004 graduate of Niceville High School, recently completed U.S. Navy basic training at Recruit Training Command, Great Lakes, Ill. During the eight-week program,

Coon completed a variety of training which included classroom study and practical instruction on naval customs, first aid, fire fighting, water safety and survival, and shipboard and aircraft safety. An emphasis was also placed on physical fitness.

Navy Seaman Daniel R. Dickerson, son of Dwight R. Dickerson, of Niceville, was recently promoted to his current rank upon graduation from recruit training at Recruit Training Command, Great Lakes, Ill. Dickerson received the early promotion for outstanding performance during all phases of the training cycle.

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Annual golf tournament to benefit Children's Neighborhood



From left: Ken Hair, president and CEO of Children in Crisis, Kim Jarvis and Olen Holston of Sam's Club, and Diane Biancanello.

The sixth annual Children's Neighborhood Charity Golf Tournament will be held Friday, March 16, at the Fort Walton Beach Golf Club, Pines course.

The day will begin with a 10 a.m. check-in and shotgun start at noon. The tournament was established in 2007 to raise vital funds to help feed, clothe and care for the kids of the Children's Neighborhood.

Sam's Club is the tournament's major sponsor, who pre-

sented a check to Children in Crisis for \$5,000.

"We opened the Children's Neighborhood in 2008 and since then we've provided a home, love and care to almost 300 children and keep all of our brother and sibling group families together," said CIC President and CEO Ken Hair, Niceville. "That works out to over 22,000 days and nights of care for at-risk foster children. We must find the funds to continue to keep the Neighborhood

open and sustain operations. Our annual golf tournament helps with that important challenge."

Participants will enjoy lunch prior to play, refreshments on the course and heavy hors d'oeuvres at the awards party. There will also be a Mercedes-Benz hole-in-one prize, trophies for the top three foursomes, door prizes, free golf shirts and much more. Please call the CIC at 864-4242 to enter a team, or for more information.

Sterling House receives deficiency-free survey

Sterling House Bluewater Bay, an assisted living community in Niceville, recently received a deficiency-free survey from the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) for January, 2012.

The recognition indicates that Sterling House is meeting all health care, operational standards and regulations. The AHCA conducts a bi-annual,

unannounced inspection of each assisted living facility to ensure that healthcare services are provided to residents in a safe and clean environment that meets their physical, mental and psychological needs.

"We are especially proud of all the associates at Sterling House Bluewater Bay for achieving this tremendous honor," said Tami Miles, execu-

tive director of Sterling House. "Every single staff member has worked exceptionally hard to achieve this goal. The deficiency-free survey is rare in our industry, but I am not surprised because our team works diligently and demonstrates a high level of resident-centered care when dealing with the complicated issues faced by residents and their families."



The USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park will host, on March 31, a Vietnam veterans salute event. The event is free, and will honor Vietnam veterans across the Gulf Coast region.

VA, Gulf Coast community salutes Vietnam veterans

A Vietnam veterans salute event will be held March 31 to honor Vietnam veterans across the Gulf Coast region, and provide veterans the opportunity to connect with one another.

The VA Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System, USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park, VA Vet Centers and many community partners from the Gulf Coast region will host the free event.

An honor ride parade, led by Rolling Thunder Alabama Chapter 1 and motorcyclists from the Gulf Coast region,

will kick off the event at 10 a.m. in downtown Mobile, Ala., and the opening ceremony for the salute will begin at 11 a.m. at Battleship Memorial Park. Other features of the event include: Veteran reunions, resource and family tents, vendors, live music and presentations by Vietnam veterans.

This event is open to everyone in the Gulf Coast community. Additionally, Battleship Memorial Park is providing Vietnam and Vietnam-era veterans with free museum tickets.

Vietnam and Vietnam-era veterans should register with their nearest VA Center to receive free tickets. The ticket registration will end on March 9, Okaloosa County Vet Center, 651-1000.

For more information and event updates, visit: biloxi.va.gov/vietnam.asp.

Battleship Memorial Park is located at 2703 Battleship Parkway (Highway 90/98), just off Interstate 10, exits 27 or 30. More information about the park can be found at ussAlabama.com.

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WAC, Financing provided by Okaloosa Gas. Finance amount not to exceed \$600 with payment option as low as \$9.99 per month with a term up to 60 months. Price includes replacement of electric or natural gas water heater. Installation terms – home must be one story, up to 42 feet of gas piping if replacing an electric water heater, water heater cannot be located in a bathroom, and attic installation is acceptable if floor platform is installed by customer to meet code. Price is for an AO Smith water heater only.

