

Bay Beacon

14 Pages, 2 Sections, 6 Inserts

Wednesday, July 4, 2012

50¢

**UP
COMING**

Wednesday, 10 a.m.



The **Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida** has opened "Vote Okaloosa," a new exhibit featuring voting equipment and Okaloosa County voting documents dating back to 1917. The exhibit will be open to the public. Cost: \$1 per person on opening day, otherwise \$5 adults; \$4 seniors and military; \$3 children; children 4 and under are free.

Friday, 6 p.m.



The **Emerald Coast Reef Association** will host a **free lionfish workshop** at Northwest Florida State College Student Services Center, Room 302, Niceville. Speakers will discuss how lionfish are the most serious threat to local fisheries.

Saturday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.



Sharing & Caring volunteers will be at the Niceville Walmart for "Cram the Van," a United Way sponsored program. Volunteers will accept donations of school supplies from shoppers in support of area children.

Calendar, B-3

At 19, bridge notches 100 millionth trip

By **Tess Hollis**
Beacon Staff Writer

The Mid-Bay Bridge has reached a milestone as the 100 millionth vehicle crossed the Mid-Bay Bridge.

The historic vehicle drove the 19-year-old, 3.6-mile toll span on June 7, according to bridge Director Jim Vest. The bridge over Choctawhatchee Bay connects the Niceville and Destin areas.

The driver never knew the import of his trip, however, because there was no ceremony or recognition.

"There never was a goal to hit 100 million cars, but it is a very good number," Vest said. He added that nothing special was done when the vehicle crossed the bridge.

Although the Mid-Bay Bridge traffic report for June will not be released until mid-July, the Florida Turnpike Enterprise estimates 630,000 vehicles will have crossed the bridge during the month.

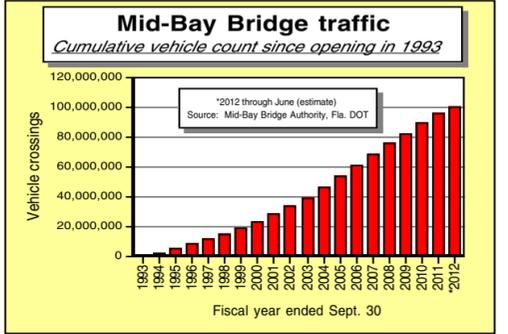
"June and July are always our heaviest months, because of tourism," Vest said. "June will be a

very good month for us."

According to a May traffic and revenue report from the MBBA, an average of 20,174 vehicles crossed the bridge daily. In May, the bridge collected more than \$1.5 million in tolls. The one-way cash toll across the bridge is \$3 per two-axle vehicle. The SunPass toll is \$2.

The bridge, which opened in June 1993, 19 years to the month before the 100 million mark was reached,

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



Festive Fourth for Twin Cities



Beacon photo by Del Lessard

A used riding mower purchased for \$100 has been transformed by the ingenuity of Valparaiso city workers into a tiny replica of a steam engine that will debut today by giving kiddie rides at Lincoln Park during Independence Day festivities. Shop worker Sam Glover, dotting an engineer's hat in the cab, welded and combined water pipes, a barrel, garbage can lid and other odd pieces to create the nostalgic choo-choo. The daylong festivities will begin at 7 a.m. with the 34th annual July Fourth Duathlon. The patriotic celebration will be capped by the Twin Cities fireworks display over Boggy Bayou at 8:45 p.m. Story, page B-1.

Valparaiso faces tough decisions on spending

By **Del Lessard**
Beacon Staff Writer

Facing a challenging fiscal environment as its tax rolls shrink the fifth year in a row, the Valparaiso City Commission is drafting a municipal budget for the fiscal year that will begin Oct. 1.

Since peaking at \$241 million in 2007 at the height of the U.S. real estate bubble, the taxable value of property in Valparaiso has plummeted more than 25 percent, to an estimated \$179.4 million this year. For 2012, the city was the only local taxing jurisdiction in the Twin Cities area to suffer a value decline, according to preliminary figures from the Okaloosa County Property Appraiser.

This week and last, the city commission, in budget-planning workshops, considered proposed spending for the police department, fire department, public works department, library, general fund, cable system and sanitation department.

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

\$18 million in spending seen for TDC

By **Mike Griffith**
Beacon Correspondent

During a four-hour meeting June 27, the scandal-dogged Okaloosa County Tourist Development Council discussed a complex, 36-page draft budget of \$17,945,473 for fiscal year 2012-13.

The TDC Advisory Board members also decided to vacate the TDC Visitor Center at Harbor Walk in Destin; heard a briefing on Florida's Government in the Sunshine Law from TDC Attorney Steve Hall; took in a briefing on beach cleanup activities; reviewed proposed changes to the county's beach maintenance ordinance; and discussed with interim TDC Director Greg Donovan a plan for using oil spill mitigation funds from British Petroleum (BP), as well as the TDC's regular bed tax revenue, to continue marketing the Emerald Coast as an attractive vacation destination.

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

North Bay eyes stable tax rate

By **Mike Griffith**
Beacon Correspondent

The North Bay Fire Commission has begun its annual budget process by discussing a proposed property tax millage rate of 2.35, unchanged from this year's rate.

Also proposed is a budget of \$1,949,014 for fiscal year 2013, which will begin Oct. 1, if

approved by the fire commission later this year.

During a commission meeting June 26, North Bay Fire Chief Joseph Miller presented his recommendation for the budget to the elected fire commissioners, and said the proposal is slightly smaller than the current fiscal

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

Niceville planners OK land-use changes

By **Mike Griffith**
Beacon Correspondent

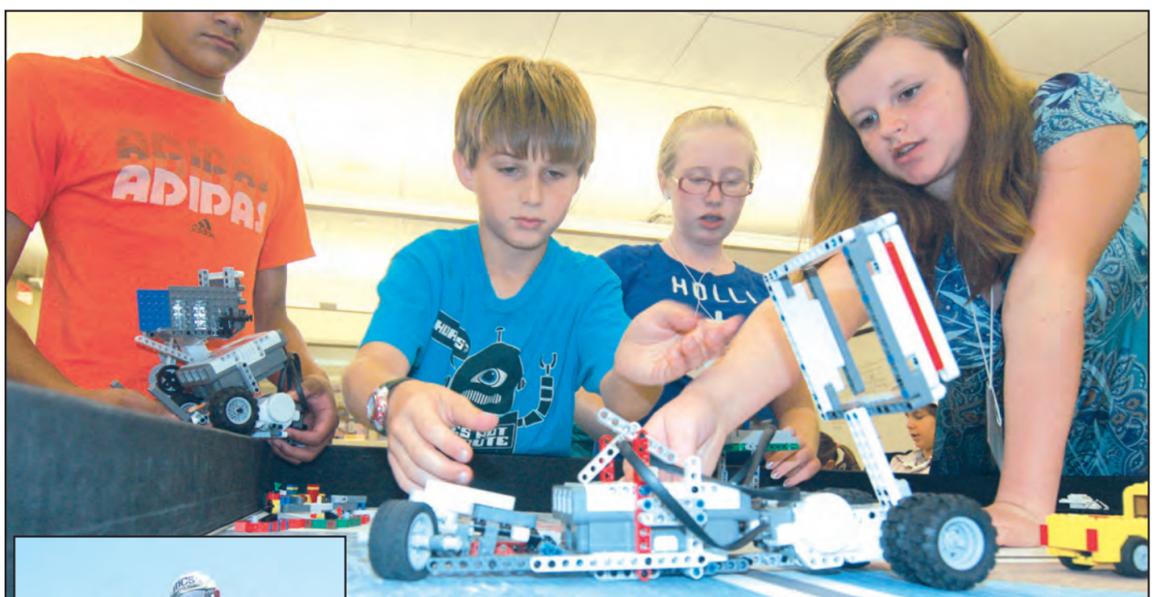
The Niceville planning commission approved several requests at a public meeting Monday, July 2, including plans for some family housing developments and a new auto parts store.

The planning commission is an appointed advisory board for the elected city council, and

reviews requests for such things as zoning changes, exceptions to city building codes and development regulations, and approval of housing developments and construction projects.

The requests approved Monday will now go forward to the Niceville City Council for final consideration before being

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



Beacon photos by Del Lessard and Tess Hollis

Summertime learning a blast

Summer is no time for kids to stop learning—especially if it's fun. Left, middle school campers at Northwest Florida State College's Kids on Campus program used Legos, motors and computers to make robots, then competed to see which machine could collect the most "fish." From left, Micah Corbin, 13, Niceville, Joseph Filek, 11, Navarre, Emery Keen, 11, Destin, and Elizabeth Adams, 12, Niceville. Below, students gathered at the Howard Hill Community Soccer Complex June 29 to launch the Estes rockets they made during Rocky Bayou Christian School's Crazy Rocket Scientist summer camp. Here, camp director Ray Allen helps Caleb Clark prepare to launch his rocket.



Commission, defender candidates speak

By Mike Griffith
Beacon Correspondent

Members and guests of the Republican Club of Okaloosa County heard from candidates for the District 3 seat on the Okaloosa Board of County Commissioners, as well as from a pair of candidates for Public Defender, during a supper and candidate forum held June 28, at the American Legion Hall in Fort Walton Beach.

The forum began with brief statements from the public defender candidates, incumbent James Owens and challenger Bruce Miller. Owens said that since being elected in 2008, he has kept promises to turn the public defender's office around, and to use resources more efficiently.

The First Judicial Circuit Public Defender's office, based in Pensacola, defends indigent clients in criminal cases at public

expense in Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa and Walton counties.

The two-way race for Public Defender will be decided Aug. 14 in a universal primary. Both candidates are Republicans, but voters of any registration may cast ballots in the contest, since no one else is running.



James Owens

Owens said collection of legal fees from clients of the public defender's office is up by 75 percent, that most cases are being resolved within 180 days, and that since taking office, he has saved taxpayers about \$2 million by cutting costs. He also said he has promoted the use of laptop computers by attorneys within his office, reducing the need for voluminous paperwork usually associated with trials and legal proceedings.

Miller, however, said, "Mr. Owens' numbers are not correct," and that the cost per case at the public defender's office has actu-



Beacon photo by Mike Griffith

Candidates for Okaloosa County Commission, District 3, spoke at a forum in Fort Walton Beach June 28. From left: Clint Aden, Nathan Boyles, Dennis Reeves and Bill Smith.

ally increased by more than 30 percent. "I promise you that I will bring accountability to the public defender's office, along with trust, professionalism and civility in the courtroom."

Both candidates were asked about whether it would be preferable to privatize most legal defense of indigent defendants, with the public defender reduced to the role of administering and supervising such cases, while private attorneys took turns defending indigent clients. Neither candidate favored that idea.

Owens said there is already a process for handing such cases to private attorneys, especially when two or more defendants are accused of conspiring to commit the same crime, requiring each to have a separate defense attorney to protect their individual interests. Such privatized cases, Owens said, typically cost taxpayers about \$750, compared to an average of \$250 for cases handled by regular public defenders.



Bruce A. Miller

Miller agreed, saying that cases handled by regular public defenders cost less for taxpayers, and that clients claiming to be unable to pay for their own defense are required to fill out financial disclosure forms to verify their indigence, or must pay for their own defense.

Most of the evening was devoted to a forum of candidates for the District 3 seat on the Okaloosa County Commission. District 3 encompasses most of the western half of the county, including large parts of Valparaiso and Niceville.

Although county commissioners from each of the county's five districts must reside in the district they represent, all county commissioners are elected "at large" with voters from throughout the county voting for candidates from all five districts.

All four District 3 commission candidates are Republicans, meaning they will face one another in a countywide universal primary election Aug. 14 open to all registered voters. The candidate with the most votes, even if not a majority, will win.

District 3 Commissioner Bill Roberts, Fort Walton Beach, is not running for a fourth four-year term. He is running for county tax collector.

Candidate Clint Aden, of Fort Walton Beach, cited his business management experience in construction and mortgage lending, as well as his service as an elected member of the Ocean City-Wright Fire Commission, and his service as chair of the nonprofit Horizons Foundation. He said that if elected, he plans to cut costs, improve efficiency in county government and reduce the county budget by 5 percent.

Candidate Nathan Boyles, of Holt, said he is an attorney, has also worked as a real estate broker, and is a licensed civil engineer. He said, "Government is not a job creator" in its own right, but the best way for government to help create jobs is to "get out of the way" of entrepreneurs by eliminating unneeded regulations and taxes.

Candidate Dennis Reeves, of Fort Walton Beach, said he has had experience in business, as well as having been a member of the Fort Walton Beach City Council. If elected, he said, he will "keep government doing the people's work, and make county govern-

ment as efficient and honest as we can."

Candidate Bill Smith, a Niceville city councilman, and a school district administrator, said a key part of a county commissioner's job is to listen, and to put into action the ideas of his constituents. He said Okaloosa County "needs better jobs for our young people, to hold the line on taxes, and to protect our senior citizens."

Smith said he envisions the county's Bob Sikes Airport as a "nucleus for creating jobs," especially in the aerospace industry. He said his experience on the Niceville City Council has convinced him that taxes can be held down while improving the quality of life for a community.

Candidates were asked how they would manage the county budget if property taxes, state aid and other revenue sources continue to decline as they have been doing since 2008.

Aden said the solution is for the county to "live within our means." He said he would "rely on county department heads" to look for ways to cut costs and to "bring services to a higher level."

Boyles replied, "I am an optimist, and I think the economy will improve. I think the real estate market will rebound, and that revenue will stabilize." If not, he said, "We will hold the line" on spending.

Reeves said that in Fort Walton Beach, he has dealt with shrinking revenue every year. He said he will "apply what I have learned" as a city councilman to "provide the same services with less money."

Smith said, "I hope the real estate market has bottomed out," but "my greatest fear is unfunded mandates" from the state level. He said that as state sales tax revenues have fallen during the recession, the Florida legislature has solved its own financial problems by passing the bill for government services to cities and counties. "We must all fear whenever the legislature is in session," he said.

The candidates were also asked how to attract new businesses and jobs to Okaloosa County.

Boyles repeated his earlier statement that government is not itself a job creator, but must stay out of the way, reducing tax and regulatory obstacles to permit the private sector to create jobs. If elected, he said, he will review county ordinances in order to streamline them and allow for faster permitting of new businesses and construction.

Reeves said he supports tax

abatements to attract new businesses to the county, and that he has worked on "Project Pill," an effort to attract a pharmaceutical company to the county. "We must make it easier for new businesses," he said, but admitted, "I'm not sure how."

Smith agreed that government does not create jobs directly and must stay out of the way of those who do. He added, though, that Bob Sikes Airport can become a hub for job creation and that the county "owns the land" there. He said that Project Pill is a good example of how the county can attract jobs, and that the aerospace industry should also be attracted, especially because many county residents already have aerospace-related job skills.

Aden said that the best help the county can offer for job creation is not county tax abatement, but to streamline the permitting process for new businesses and construction. He cited a project he had been involved with in which, he said, it took two and a half years to obtain all the required permits from the Department of Environmental Protection, the Army Corps of Engineers, and other regulatory agencies, to develop a 1/10 acre piece of land.

The candidates also spoke about how to improve county infrastructure such as roads.

Reeves said he favors more efforts to pave roads in the northern parts of the county, where school buses often have difficulty reaching students who live along soft, badly rutted dirt roads.

Smith said that to fund infrastructure improvements, he favors seeking state and federal grants whenever possible, to reduce the burden on local taxpayers. "We should get every dime we can," he said.

Aden, however, said "Grants can be a dangerous thing—they usually come with strings attached." He said he favors growing the tax base in the northern half of the county to produce more revenue.

Boyles said, "I learned to negotiate in law school," and that he will work with other parties, such as the state legislature, Department of Transportation, and other agencies, to form partnerships for long-term infrastructure improvements. He cited the construction of new sidewalks in Bluewater Bay as an example of an effective partnership between the county and the Bluewater Bay MSBU, in which the county would provide labor and expertise while the MSBU would pay for the materials to build the sidewalks.

Candidates were also asked whether they would dissolve the county's Tourist Development Council, which recently suffered a scandal of financial mismanagement and alleged theft by its previous director.

Aden was the only candidate to reply, "Yes."

Boyles said he could not give a simple yes or no answer—"I'm a lawyer," he said.

Reeves and Smith both said they would continue the TDC, but with greater oversight by the county commission.



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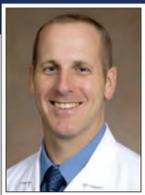
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PLANNERS

From page A-1

officially approved, or denied, by the council, which is scheduled to meet Tuesday.

Requests approved by the planning commission Monday include:

Michael Floyd requested his two lots on Sycamore Avenue be annexed into the city limits and be zoned R-1B single family dwelling district. Floyd is expected to build two single-family homes on the property according to Niceville building officials. R-1B zoning allows for lots sizes of at least 5,000 square feet versus a minimum of 10,000 square feet for R-1 zoning and minimum 7,500 square feet for R-1A zoning. R-1B also allows smaller setback requirements on the rear and side yards.

Valparaiso Realty requested a revision of its preliminary approval for Magnolia Woods II, a planned 42-lot, single-family residential development to the west of Palm Boulevard, between Valparaiso Boulevard and Bayshore Drive.

Construction of the infrastructure for the first phase of Magnolia Woods, a 31-lot single family residential development with homes between 2,000 and 2,500-square feet, is already underway with roads to be paved by the end of summer, according to a company

spokesman. The development will be accessed by a single entry/exit road from Palm Boulevard.

The second phase of the project adjoins and is directly south of the first phase. Phase 2 received preliminary approval from the city last year. A Valparaiso Realty executive said the request was to allow both Magnolia Woods phases I and II to use the single entry/exit road from Palm Boulevard, rather than two separate entrances.

During Monday's meeting, company engineer Alan Tucker told the planning commission that having a single entrance to the development "will be safer and more efficient, and will protect the neighborhood" from excessive traffic or disturbance.

The planning commission also approved requests from Anna Radford, who had resubmitted two requests for special exception to allow a zero rear setback for a commercial zoned parcel at 751 E. John Sims Parkway. The parcel is between John Sims Parkway and Helms Street, just east of the intersection of John Sims Parkway and State Road 285. Both of Radford's requests were tabled last month because the legal information on the property needed to be changed.

At Monday's meeting, representatives of Ogburn Realty

and Alday-Howell Engineering presented maps and other information to the planning commission. They explained that Radford was selling part of the parcel in question to Ogburn Realty, while Grace Prestwood, now deceased, who owned a corner of the lot, also sold her land to Ogburn Realty, making a single piece of property which Ogburn and Aldey-Howell plan to develop as an O'Reilly auto parts store.

Existing land development codes call for a 30-foot rear setback because the commercial property abuts a residential district, while the code also calls for a 10-foot rear setback for commercial property. The O'Reilly store is planned for the property and city officials said the special exceptions were requested to allow more room for delivery trucks to maneuver within the parking lot surrounding the store.

During their presentation, the Ogburn and Aldey-Howell representatives said no trucks will enter or leave the property via Helms Street, but will enter and leave solely via John Sims Parkway. They also said a privacy fence will be built along the southern side of the property facing Helms Street. Across Helms there are houses.

Radford and Prestwood each submitted requests for a

special exception to the same commercial property, 751 E. John Sims Parkway, to allow for 30 parking spaces on the property, as opposed to the required 33 spaces. During Monday's meeting, the Ogburn and Alday-Howell representatives said the part of the land that could have been used for the 31st through 33rd parking spaces may be required for a stormwater control facility.

The planning commissioners approved the request, contingent upon completion of an exchange between Ogburn Realty and the City of Niceville, of some small bits of land along the south side of the parcel. The exchange will straighten the existing property line to match the edge of Helms Street.

All of the requests were approved unanimously by the planning commission. Commissioner Judy Byrne Riley, a member of the family that owns Valparaiso Realty, abstained on the matter concerning that company.

The requests approved by the planning commission will now be forwarded to the elected Niceville City Council, which will hold a public hearing on the same matters during their regular monthly meeting July 10, at 7 p.m., also in the city council chambers at Niceville City Hall at 212 North Partin Drive.

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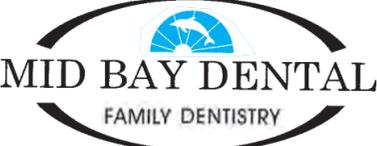
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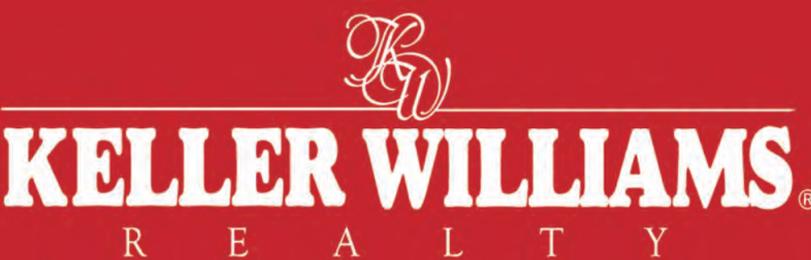
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TDC

From page A-1

The draft budget of \$17,945,473 is larger than the fiscal year 2011-12 budget of \$16,980,000, reflecting increased revenue from the county 2 percent "bed tax" on resort lodgings that funds the TDC.

According to Donovan and TDC Accounting Technician Dave Reavis, the past year has seen an increase in tourism in Okaloosa County, providing more bed tax revenue than in some previous years when tourism was suppressed by such events as hurricanes and the BP oil spill in the spring and summer of 2010.

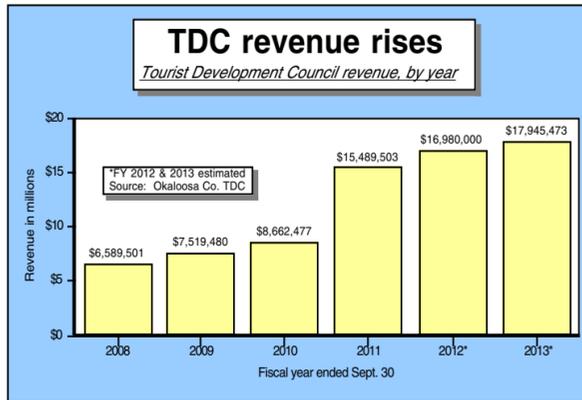
Also, the 2011-12 TDC budget was reduced by \$2,007,449—an amount refunded to Okaloosa Island residents after a planned municipal services benefit unit (MSBU) was disbanded, after originally being established to help fund beach sand restoration following hurricanes in recent years.

Donovan said he hopes the TDC will approve the proposed

budget at the July 18 meeting, in time for it to be presented to the Okaloosa Board of County Commissioners (BCC) for approval during the BCC's July 31 meeting. The proposed budget, Donovan said, "is very conservative, and is designed to set the stage for the future permanent TDC director." He said that more than 176 people have applied for the TDC director post.

TDC Chairwoman Kathy Houchins told fellow board members that the selection committee which she heads is working to narrow the field of applicants down to a "short list" by July 3, with final selection of the new director to be made by the TDC board, subject to approval by the Okaloosa County Commission. Houchins said her goal is to have the new permanent TDC director in place by some time in the coming fall—by the end of September or early October if possible.

In other business, the TDC heard briefings from Okaloosa County Parks Operations Manager James Puckett, and Taylor Ward of Sandman LLC, the



contractor in charge of public beach maintenance for the county. They presented proposed changes to the county's beach maintenance ordinance. The revised ordinance, said Puckett, will require beach vendors to remove temporary structures and items such as tents from the beach each night, to allow easier beach cleaning by Sandman, and will prohibit overnight parking at James Lee Park, with illegally parked vehicles to be towed away at owner's

expense. Ward spoke about beach cleaning procedures, and said that it is not always practical to remove all the seaweed from the beach, as it is a natural phenomenon and part of the beach ecosystem. He added, however, that his crews do remove as much trash from the beach as possible, including trash that has intermingled with seaweed. The TDC Board also decided, after some discussion, to vacate the TDC's Visitor Center at

Harbor Walk Village in Destin by July 31. The visitor center facility had been leased to the TDC at \$1 per year by developer Peter Bos, but unknown to the TDC, the previous TDC director had also committed the TDC to pay Bos about \$42,000 per year in additional fees if the TDC used the facility. Donovan told the TDC that Bos had agreed to release the TDC from that commitment if it vacates the property.

TDC Attorney Steve Hall briefed board members on the Florida Sunshine Law, especially as it pertains to emails sent by or among public officials related to official business.

"Every time your finger touches a computer key to discuss TDC business," Hall warned the board members, "you are creating a public record that must be made available to anyone who requests it." That level of public scrutiny "takes some getting used to," Hall said.

Donovan also told the TDC Board that he is in the process of putting all TDC financial documents on the county's TDC website, to allow greater transparency

of financial transactions and to let the public see how TDC funds are actually spent.

Donovan was appointed to the TDC directorship in May of this year, after the previous director, Mark Bellinger, died in an apparent suicide after being confronted with accusations that he had mis-spent TDC tax funds on unauthorized things, including a yacht and a house. Bellinger's actions are being investigated by federal and county law enforcement authorities.

Donovan also briefed the TDC Board on some of the marketing projects and programs planned to market the Okaloosa beach front to potential vacationers. Some current plans include TV and radio advertising, billboards, social media messages and promotional events. He said he plans to create an ad-hoc task force of business and community leaders to help plan future marketing strategies.

The next TDC meeting is scheduled for 1 p.m., July 18, at the Emerald Coast Conference Center on Miracle Strip Parkway (U.S. Highway 98).



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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

Levy Houston Lucas III, a tree service worker, 28, of 609 29th St., Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies June 22 on a violation of probation charge on the original charge of domestic violence battery.

Heather Michaelle Riedel, unemployed, 29, of 284 Montana Ave., Valparaiso, was arrested by Niceville police, subsequent to a traffic stop for running a red light, June 22, on charges of possession of a controlled substance without a prescription, two counts, for single pills of both Xanax and Lortab, and one count each on charges of destroying evidence, possession of less than 20 grams of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia. Riedel allegedly tried to destroy evidence by eating one-and-a-half Xanax pills.

Riedel was also arrested the same day on a warrant charging possession of a controlled substance. On April 18, during another traffic stop by Niceville police for an extinguished tag light, a partial pill collected from Riedel's vehicle was later identified by a state crime lab as amphetamine.

Johnathan Earl Hartley, unemployed, 54, of 9112 Untreiner Ave., Pensacola, was arrested by Niceville police, subsequent to a traffic stop for not using his turn signal, June 23, on charges of possession of a controlled substance, methamphetamine, and driving while license suspended or revoked. Hartley was also cited for

driving without vehicle insurance. Alexandria Grace Farstad, unemployed, 20, of the same address and a passenger in Hartley's vehicle, was also arrested the same date and time on a charge of possession of drug paraphernalia.

Nelson Lee Oglesby, a dishwasher, 28, of 154 Westview Ave., Apartment #16, Valparaiso, was arrested by Niceville police June 20 on a charge of possession of Schedule II controlled substance. Police went to the church where Oglesby was working as a dishwasher in order to serve a Crestview arrest warrant on charges of grand theft, molesting a vending machine, second offense, and criminal mischief. During a subsequent search police allegedly found four pills of Roxicotin in Oglesby's right front watch pocket.

Jared Martin Butler, unemployed, 30, of 500 Nutmeg Ave., Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies June 22 on a misdemeanor worthless check charge related to a \$30.70 check.

Bradley James Thomason, 42, of 379 S. Bayshore Drive, Valparaiso, was arrested by sheriff's deputies June 12 on charges of burglary and grand theft. Nearly five years ago, on Nov. 23, 2007, a suspect cut himself during a burglary at a collectibles store, 418-A Racetrack Road, Fort Walton Beach. The burglar stole a large quantity of coins valued at

Okaloosa seeks fugitives

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

Name: Frances Marie Johnson
Wanted for: violation of probation on the original charges of fraudulent use of a credit card and forgery.
Height: 5-feet
Weight: 116 pounds
Age: 40
Date of birth: 04-21-1972
Hair: brown
Eyes: brown



Name: Cody Alexander Friend
Wanted for: violation of probation on the original charge of felony battery.
Height: 6-feet, 1-inch
Weight: 250 pounds
Age: 27
Date of birth: 03-06-1985
Hair: brown
Eyes: hazel



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

\$20,975. On June 23, 2011, a state crime lab reported that DNA from a blood sample from a broken glass at the burglary scene matched the DNA of Thomason.



Bradley J. Thomason

Billy Joe Bramlett, 22, of 214 Marquette St., Niceville, was arrested by Valparaiso police June 26 on a charge of failure to leave information about a crash with an unattended vehicle and property damage. Bramlett allegedly crashed into a parked vehicle in a driveway on North Bayshore Drive then drove off. Damage to both vehicles, as well as damage to a garage, two trees and a mailbox was estimated at \$15,000.

DUI arrests

Nathan A. Smith, 27, of 518 23rd St., Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies for DUI on Highway 98 and Palmetto, Destin, June 24 at 2:25 a.m.

Alicia Fawn Chessher, 25, of 503-A Johnson St., Valparaiso, was arrested by Niceville police for DUI at the entrance to Turkey Creek North off College Boulevard, June 26 at 5:44 p.m.

Thefts

A foreman for an Alabama roofing company reported to Valparaiso police June 20 that a company credit card had been used four times without authorization by an employee. The suspect made four charges totaling \$260 on the credit card, and attempted 11 other fraudulent transactions after the company canceled the card, the foreman alleged.

A Valparaiso resident reported receiving 20 Express Mail envelopes in the mail, each with a

\$950 personal money order from Bay Coast Bank. The recipient subsequently received a \$359 bill for three "Bill Me Later by PayPal" transactions at a U.S. post office. Investigators found a fraud alert about the personal money order fraud on the home page of Bay Coast Bank. The victim, who did not have an account, called PayPal and had the transactions canceled.

Other

Dakota Ryder Lee, 18, of 1130 Coral Drive, Niceville, was issued a criminal summons by Niceville police June 24 on a charge of possession of less than 20 grams of marijuana.

Kamen K. Barrett, 67, of 401 20th St., Niceville, was issued a criminal summons by sheriff's deputies June 19 on a charge of retail theft. Barrett was allegedly observed concealing store merchandise without paying for it at 15003-B Emerald Coast Parkway, Destin, including sterling silver jewelry, sunglasses, handbags, a ladies top, hat, a pair of ladies shoes and ladies bottoms. Total value of the items was \$519.

On June 22 and 23, Niceville police received calls from three residents—from the 500 block of 27th Street, the 300 block of Reeves Street and Bailey Drive—all reporting sightings of a raccoon with a jar on its head. Police were unable to locate the animal.

Fire Department Reports

Niceville

The Niceville Fire Department responded to the following calls from June 25, 2012 through July 1, 2012.

0 Structure Fire	29 Emergency Medical Calls
0 Vehicle Fire	5 Vehicle Crash
0 Other Fire	1 Vehicle Crash with Extrication
0 Illegal Burn	3 Other Emergency Calls
0 False Alarms	1 Hazardous Conditions

STREET	SITUATION	DATE	TIME
Peachtree Way	Medical	06/25/12	00:28
Rocky Shores Drive	Medical	06/25/12	08:50
Juniper Avenue	Power Line Down	06/25/12	14:46
N. Partin Drive	Vehicle Crash	06/25/12	16:59
Bullock Blvd.	Medical	06/25/12	19:16
McEwen Drive	Medical	06/25/12	22:26
State Road 85 North	Alarm Activation	06/25/12	22:47
Boxer Avenue	Medical	06/25/12	22:53
Park Avenue	Medical	06/26/12	09:55
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Service Call	06/26/12	10:33
N. Partin Drive	Vehicle Crash	06/26/12	16:31
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Alarm Activation	06/26/12	17:51
Government Avenue	Medical	06/26/12	20:27
W. John Sims Pkwy.	Vehicle Crash	06/27/12	07:27
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Medical	06/27/12	08:12
Fairway Drive	Medical	06/27/12	08:33
Juniper Avenue	Medical	06/27/12	11:11
Crestview Avenue	Medical	06/27/12	12:44
W. College Blvd.	Medical	06/27/12	13:41
E. College Blvd.	Medical	06/27/12	15:33
Regwood Avenue	Vehicle Extrication	06/27/12	19:21
17th Street	Medical	06/27/12	02:52
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Medical	06/28/12	04:20
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Medical	06/28/12	08:22
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Medical	06/28/12	15:50
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Medical	06/28/12	16:12
N. Partin Drive	Medical	06/28/12	16:25
N. Partin Drive	Medical	06/28/12	16:34
23rd Street	Medical	06/28/12	17:06
Spencer Place	Medical	06/29/12	03:44
Hickory Avenue	Medical	06/29/12	05:35
N. Partin Drive	Medical	06/29/12	14:46
State Road 85 North	Vehicle Crash	06/29/12	15:54
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Medical	06/29/12	21:06
N. Partin Drive	Vehicle Crash	06/29/12	21:46
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Medical	06/30/12	10:45
23rd Street	Medical	06/30/12	14:12
N. Partin Drive	Medical	07/01/12	05:52
Linden Avenue	Medical	07/01/12	19:22

Weekly Safety Tip: Have a safe and happy Fourth of July. Enjoy the fireworks demonstration along the shores of Boggy Bayou, but for your safety, and the safety of others, please no personal fireworks. Visit the Niceville Fire Department's Web page on Facebook.

Valparaiso Volunteer

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

Location	Situation	Date	Time
Judith Drive	Fall	06/02/12	04:18
Montana Ave.	Abdominal Pain	06/02/12	08:05
Charles Drive	Diabetic	06/03/12	22:53
Highland Street	Traumatic Injury	06/04/12	19:01
Hickory Lane	Breathing Problem	06/07/12	04:15
East John Sims Pkwy.	School Shooter Exercise	06/08/12	09:01
South John Sims Pkwy.	Child Locked in Car	06/08/12	10:50
South John Sims Pkwy.	Breathing Problem	06/08/12	17:22
South John Sims Pkwy.	CVA/Stroke	06/08/12	17:25
South John Sims Pkwy.	Overdose/Poisoning	06/08/12	18:02
Glen Ave.	Fall	06/09/12	06:45
Magnolia Ave.	Fall	06/11/12	22:53
Lincoln Ave.	Back Pain	06/12/12	18:42
Kelly Mill Road	Structure Fire	06/12/12	20:48
Hickory Lane	Unconscious	06/13/12	04:37
Edge Ave.	Sick Call	06/13/12	12:35
Chicago Ave.	Psychiatric	06/15/12	15:34
Nordberg Ave.	Motor Vehicle Accident	06/18/12	14:15
North Partin Drive	Fall	06/20/12	15:36
North Bayshore Drive	Seizures	06/21/12	04:19
Lincoln Ave.	Sick Call	06/22/12	13:51
Hickory Lane	Breathing Problem	06/24/12	05:15
Government Ave.	Unlawful Burning	06/26/12	20:50

The Valparaiso Volunteer Fire Department is seeking the return of a lost portable radio. The radio may have been lost in the area of Perrine Park. If found please return it to City Hall or the Fire Department. No questions will be asked upon its return. Contact the Valparaiso Volunteer Fire Department at 729-5410 if you have questions or concerns.

North Bay

The North Bay Fire Department responded to the following calls from June 25, 2012 through July 1, 2012.

Street	Situation	Date	Time
Hickory Street	Assist invalid	06/25/12	02:34
Pine Street	Electrical wiring	06/25/12	10:37
Saint Anne Cove	Medical assist	06/26/12	10:43
Tron Drive West	EMS call	06/26/12	10:58
Commercial Drive	Motor vehicle accident	06/26/12	15:10
Tron Drive West	Assist invalid	06/26/12	19:14
Tron Drive West	Medical assist	06/26/12	21:22
Fairway Lakes Drive	EMS call	06/27/12	08:07
Parkwood Place	EMS call	06/27/12	10:15
Tron Drive West	EMS call	06/27/12	13:33
Range Road	Bomb scare, no bomb	06/27/12	14:27
North White Point Road	Dispatched & canceled	06/27/12	16:30
Parkwood Lane	Unintentional transmission	06/27/12	16:39
Calinda Lane	Alarm system sounded	06/27/12	16:47
E. Highway 20 & Redwood Ave.	Rescue or EMS standby	06/27/12	19:22
North White Point Road	EMS call	06/27/12	22:21
Highway 293 & N. Lakeshore	Motor vehicle accident	06/28/12	03:29
East Highway 20	Dispatched & canceled	06/28/12	11:14
Bluewater Boulevard	Motor vehicle accident	06/28/12	16:20
Parkwood Place	EMS call	06/28/12	18:12
North White Point Road	Medical assist	06/30/12	13:04
Meadow Woods Lane	Medical assist	07/01/12	00:54
Blue Pine Lane	Medical assist	07/01/12	08:35
North White Point Road	Medical assist	07/01/12	18:00
Highway 20 East	Dispatched & canceled	07/01/12	22:25

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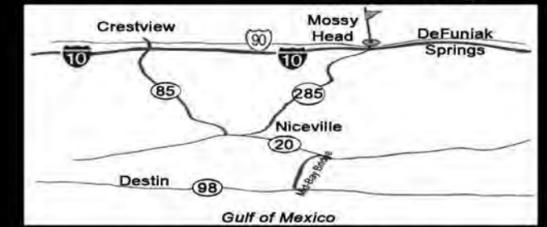
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 Niceville's Newspaper

RATE

From page A-1
 year budget of \$1,963,732.

Miller said he expects the coming year's personnel costs to be less than those of the current year, dropping from \$1,465,415 to \$1,449,107, and recommended that the fire district keep its current tax rate.

The district has recently received conflicting information as to whether its tax rolls increased slightly, or decreased slightly, this year, according to Miller.

Miller recommended keeping the current millage rate, which would be levied in Bluewater Bay, Seminole, and the nearby communities served by the fire district. At a rate of 2.35 mills, property owners in the district would pay \$2.35 in tax for every \$1,000 of appraised taxable value of their property. For example, a homeowner with a house appraised at \$200,000 taxable value after homestead exemptions would pay \$470 in property tax to the North Bay Fire District, along with other taxes collected by the Okaloosa County Tax Collector, such as county and schools levies.

Part of the reason for reduced personnel expense in the coming year, said Miller, is that the fire

district expects to cut one firefighter. The district also laid off two firefighters and another employee this year, which should cut costs next year, he said.

Miller also told the fire commission that insurance costs for the coming year are not yet certain, so that his budget recommendation may change during the weeks ahead, as more definite information on insurance costs becomes available.

Miller also said that the proposed budget includes a savings fund for the eventual purchase of a new fire truck, and that he hopes to have enough money saved by the time such a truck is needed to be able to pay its estimated \$250,000 cost outright, eliminating the need to obtain a loan and pay interest. He said the proposed budget also includes money for new personal firefighter equipment, or "bunker gear," as well as a reserve fund of about \$18,000.

The budget proposal will be discussed again at the next regular meeting of the North Bay Fire Commission, scheduled for 7 p.m. Tuesday, July 10, at the North Bay fire station on White Point Road, south of State Road 20.

Fire Commission Chairman Jim Miller (no relation to Chief Miller) recommended that

between now and then, he and fellow fire commissioners review Chief Miller's proposal, and bring any questions or recommendations of their own to the July 10 meeting. He also said the fire commission will welcome any suggestions from fire district residents, who are invited to attend fire commission meetings. Commissioner Miller offered some recommendations of his own: —The fiscal year 2013 budget should include enough reserve funding to provide a "buffer" in case of unforeseen events such as a hurricane.

—Do not increase local property taxes. Miller reminded his fellow commissioners that North Bay property taxes have increased in each of the last three budget cycles, and that it is time to hold taxes at or below the current level.

Commissioner Miller also congratulated Chief Miller for preparing the proposed budget without any tax increase.

"You have done it once again," the commission chairman said. "You have gotten blood out of a turnip."

"I don't see any fluff in this budget," he continued, "and it will help build our long-term capability."

At the July 10 fire commission

meeting, the commissioners expect to finalize their budget, which would then require two public hearings in September, before being approved.

NOTCHES

From page A-1

has seen traffic decline each year since peaking in 2006 at 7.6 million, just before the U.S. housing market crashed and the economy pitched into recession. Last year it was 6.5 million, as the housing and tourism economy continued to lag. The rate of decline has slowed markedly, however, and bridge officials hope that fiscal year 2012, which will end Sept. 30, will post an increase overall.

In future years, more traffic will be funneled to the span by the Mid-Bay Bridge Connector project. The 11-mile expressway now under construction will connect the north end of the bridge with State Road 85 just north of Niceville, allowing tourists and other motorists to bypass Niceville and Bluewater Bay en route to and from the bridge. The \$174 million project is expected to open for traffic in early 2014.

THE INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER —by Mike Griffith

What do you think about the Supreme Court upholding Obamacare, including the requirement that Americans without health insurance must buy it?



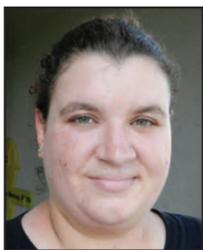
"I'm for limited government. Vote for Romney so he can repeal Obamacare."

Carol Benningfield, 62, Niceville, retired



"I think it's a little bit ridiculous, because insurance is so expensive now that most families can't afford it."

Melanie Griffith, 42, Niceville, store clerk



"I don't like it. Obama is already taking too much of peoples' money, and he's the reason our soldiers are still in the Middle East."

Megan O'Neal, 29, Niceville, self-employed

Location:
Niceville children's park and civic complex



"If it allows everybody to have decent health care, then I'm always for it."

Marc Jenkins, 50, Shalimar, retired military



"We need to pray for our leadership."

Richard Buesinger, 74, Destin, retired



"If people can't afford the health insurance, how can they afford the fine for not buying it?"

Shelli Pierson, 42, Niceville, homemaker

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

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FACES

From page A-1

The police department's proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year that begins Oct. 1 includes \$47,000 to add a full-time police officer. The department had not filled the vacant position last year due to reduced revenues.

Police Chief Joe Hart told commissioners that he was not asking for a new patrol car because the current budget includes money for one this year.

Life and health insurance costs for the police department will increase by \$14,400 to \$158,400, Hart said, prompting Commissioner Kay Hamilton to ask if the city periodically compares insurance quotes from different companies.

Commissioner Heyward Strong said that the city gets its insurance from the Florida League of Cities, where Strong sits on the insurance committee. He said the League periodically looks at different providers in the policies it offers member cities.

The proposed police budget, including the money for another officer but no new car, totaled \$1,081,865, up more than \$31,000 from the current budget.

Library Director David Weatherford proposed a budget of \$268,325, up \$35,795 from this year's budget. Weatherford said the library was enjoying tremendous growth, adding 600 new patrons during the current year. The library seeks \$26,500 to add a full-time employee and \$4,000 for new computers used by patrons. The library's 18 computers are antiquated, he said. The library is also asking for \$1,000 for more chairs and tables for its popular story time programs for young children.

Funding from the Okaloosa County Public Library Cooperative was \$37,000 this year, Weatherford said, down significantly from \$119,000 when Valparaiso joined it.

Commissioner Joe Morgan told fellow commissioners that he had met with firefighters to



align the department's budget for personnel and operating expenses line with its actual needs. Wages and benefits will rise by only \$775 from the current budget, he said, to a total of \$194,450. Operating expenses will increase by \$275, although it included an increase of \$4,000, to \$7,000, for uniforms for the department's 11 part-time employees and 17 volunteers, according to Morgan.

The fire department's current budget of \$318,134 included several capital expenses not repeated in the proposed budget of \$266,950, Morgan said, including furniture, building remodeling, new bunker gear and cleaning equipment.

Public Works Director James Valandingham provided draft budgets for several departments, including cemetery, parks, shop, streets, stormwater and sanitation departments.

Receiving the most discussion, Valandingham gave city commissioners two options for replacing a departing employee who works in both the parks and streets departments. Either the city could hire a new employee at \$36,000 annually, or, at additional expense, it could contract with the Florida Department of Corrections for an eight-inmate work force that would be available eight hours a day, five days a week.

To receive the potential huge gain in prisoner labor, the city would have to pay about \$60,000 a year for a supervising corrections officer, plus one-time purchases of \$23,000 for

radios and a city van to transport the work squad.

A specialized inmate construction crew would also be available, if requested, Valandingham said.

Mayor Bruce Arnold and Morgan expressed reservations about the reliability of convict labor.

City Clerk Tammy Johnson requested \$27,000 in increases for administrative functions, including merit raises for outstanding employees and conversion of a part-time employee to full-time status.

In the face of continuing annual increases in cable TV programming and Internet vendor charges, city Communications Director Burt Bennett projected a drop of \$55,000, or 3.4 percent, in annual revenue. Bennett blamed the revenue shrinkage on too-rosy projections of how many city residents would pay for Internet phone service or expanded video services. He suggested that the city could make up a projected \$36,110 shortfall in next year's \$1,522,560 cable budget by dipping into reserve funds.

The mayor set the next budget workshop for July 16 at 6 p.m. in the city commission chambers. During the meeting, an overall proposed budget will be presented, as well as proposed millage rates needed to fund it, Arnold said. At that time, the commission will also consider the effect of contemplated employee raises on the spending plan. All the budget meetings are open to the public.

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3 owners will get new homes under U.S. grants

By Del Lessard
Beacon Staff Writer

The Niceville City Council last month approved the contract award to replace three aging mobile homes under a federal Community Development Block Grant for housing rehabilitation.

Dennis Dingman, a consultant from Summit Professional Services in Panama City, provided a status report regarding the

Community Development Block Grant Housing Rehabilitation Contract 11DB-C5-01-56-02-H02.

Sealed bids were received and opened May 15 for demolition/replacement of three housing units in Niceville, he said. The goal of the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) program, he said is to ensure people have a healthy, safe place to live.

The low bidder on all three home replacements, and winner of the contracts, was U.S. Mobile Home Sales of Florida Inc., Marianna.

According to city records, the homeowners who will receive new mobile homes under the grant, including the amount of each grant, are:

—Paula Barfield, of 205 Reeves St., Lot 21, \$47,992.

—Marcella Ward, 304 Reeves St., Lot A-12, \$49,871.

—Janet Nice, of 304 Reeves St., Lot G-9, \$44,987.

To qualify for the grant, applicants had to meet HUD income limits, Dingman said, with additional points if they were over 62 or had disabilities. Recipients also have to own and live in their own home, and be a permanent resident of the city. It is not a requirement

for mobile home owners to own the land their home occupies, he said.

Recipients who do receive a HUD grant to renovate or rebuild their homes have a five-year lien placed on their property that depreciates 20 percent each year, Dingman said. The owners don't have to pay for the zero interest lien as long as they occupy their home and don't sell or transfer it

during the five-year period, he said. The owners must also carry homeowner's insurance for the five-year period, he added.

Under the \$700,000 federal grant awarded the city last year Dingman told the council that construction is underway to renovate three homes and demolish and replace two others. There may be enough money left to rehabilitate or rebuild up to four more homes.



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Niceville's brand new Spa La La offers a resort spa and salon feel on the bay side of town. Whether it is a massage, facial, body treatment, manicure, pedicure, or haircut, color and styling, Spa La La has it all!

Spa La La, formerly known as Cool Stylz Studio, underwent major renovations in March thanks to new owner Renee Hill. Renee created a new look and feel to accommodate the need for a relaxing resort atmosphere in Niceville.

"Thank you for my wonderful experience at your spa! I have been to 'world class' spas, both in and out of the country, but my massage was the best I have ever received! I look-forward to this month's day at Spa La La," client Linda Davis recently wrote in an un-solicited 'thank you note.'

The Spa offers newly-remodeled and freshly-painted private and dedicated rooms for body treatments, massages, manicures and pedicures with new equipment, and even waxing services. Showering facilities are also available on-site.

"We are the only salon and spa in Niceville where one can get a couples massage, haircut, mud wrap body treatment, manicure and pedicure, all in one day," said Spa La La esthetician and massage therapist, Jessica Olson.

Spa La La offers several unique spa services to the Niceville area, such as microdermabrasion and chemical peels performed by certified estheticians; couples massages performed by licensed massage therapists; "Extreme Eyelash" extensions by a certified eyelash specialist; and body treatments including a detoxifying French clay mud wrap or an exfoliating Salt Glo treatment.

"I want people to realize that they can get great, or even better spa services here in Niceville rather than going across the bridge," said Renee, owner of Spa La La.



Follow the signs toward the airport on 85 South. Spa La La is the ecru mediterranean building tucked off the road about 200 yards up on the right. 306 Government Ave. You can't miss the bright turquoise and black Spa La La Dayspa and Salon sign inviting you in.

Spa La La also offers salon services. If needing a haircut, color, hair extensions, or keratin smoothing treatments, Spa La La is the place to go. Their knowledgeable hair stylists not only make their clients look good, but also teach them how to maintain their style by educating them on products such as Moroccan Oil, Aquage and Mixed Chicks to continue their hair care at home.

"There is something for everyone. My whole family comes here for everything because it is clean,

convenient and they make us feel special when we are here," said frequent Spa La La client Charlie Agnew.

For frequent spa-goers, Spa La La offers spa memberships which allows customers to receive extra services at a discounted price for those who desire or need multiple spa services monthly.

Visit Spa La La in-person at 306 Government Ave. in Niceville; walk-ins are welcome. Call (850) 279-4620 for an appointment or more information.

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Fireworks to light up the Bayou

By Tess Hollis
Beacon Staff Writer

If a patriotic end to Fourth of July festivities is what you're after, look no further than the Twin Cities' annual fireworks display.

Area residents can start their day with Valparaiso's Independence Day activities, beginning with the 34th Annual Duathlon at 7 a.m. Activities for children, food, and music will round out the day at Lincoln Park, which will wind down with the fireworks show at 8:45 p.m. over Boggy Bayou.

The fireworks display will be put on by Pyro Shows, of LaFollette, Tenn. Pyro Shows is responsible for more than 1,000 fireworks shows in the United States, including the Fourth of July display in Washington, D.C., on the National Monument lawn.

"Many of the fireworks we use in Niceville, we will use in



File photo

The Twin Cities' annual fireworks display will begin at about 8:45 p.m. over Boggy Bayou. The best places to view the fireworks are Lincoln Park in Valparaiso, Lions Park or the Turkey Creek area.

the national show on the Mall," said president of Pyro Shows Lansden Hill. "The show in Niceville falls into the category of a pretty large show, and it's one of our bigger shows in the Destin area. This is probably the biggest

show we've done for the city so far."

Hill said that more than 2,000 pounds of fireworks will be fired electronically through the course of tonight's show. Pyro Shows has been providing fireworks for Niceville for the past three years.

New this year, the fireworks will be fired from a floating platform that was fabricated by the city specifically for the Independence Day celebration. The platform is 80 by 48 feet, and is capable of carrying more than 100,000 pounds.

Don Ory, director of the City of Niceville's Youth Center, designed the platform with City Manager Lannie Corbin.

"The primary function of the platform is to assure availability of a platform for fireworks each year," Ory said, referring to the fact that the city has had to rely on

Please see **FOURTH**, page B-2

Who's News

Alexandra Black, of Niceville, recently graduated with a bachelor's degree in marketing from the University of Central Florida. She accepted a job with a large, multi-national corporation, and for now, is living and working in Tallahassee.



Alexandra Black

Alexandra is the daughter of Leith and Randy Black, of Niceville, and a graduate of Niceville High School.

The recipients of the 2012 Knights of Columbus Council 13527, Christ Our Redeemer Catholic Church, college scholar-

ships are **Erika Tuttle**, Niceville High School, and **Sarah Lynch**, Rocky Bayou Christian School. The winners recently graduated, and will each receive \$500 toward college tuition, fees and/or books. Erika and Sarah were selected because of their outstanding record of achievement in academics, school and community activities, church service and future potential.



Erika Tuttle



Sarah Lynch

Robbie D. Cocchiarella, of

Niceville, was recently named to the Dean's List at Boston University for the spring semester.

Katherine Wainwright, of Niceville, received a bachelor of arts degree from Wake Forest University on May 21. She was also among the more than 1,900 students from Wake Forest who made the Spring 2012 Dean's List. Wake Forest is located in Winston-Salem, N.C.

Blake Jones, of Niceville, and **Christina McCool**, of Niceville, each received a master of science in systems engineering from Southern Methodist University during the May 2012 Commencement ceremonies. Southern Methodist is located in Dallas.

William Davis, of Niceville, was among 12 students inducted

Please see **WHO'S**, page B-2

Patriotic horse arrives at library

"Glory" the patriotic horse will be on display at the Niceville Library through July. Paul Putney, pictured, a 72-year-old artist and master wood craftsman from Niceville, hand-carved and painted the carousel horse. Glory is 55-inches tall and 300 pounds. The horse is made of solid cypress and basswood.



Beacon photo by Tess Hollis



Photo by JoAnn Brake

Mural shows off red, white and blue

Marge and Clark Rayborn, owners of Read It Again, Niceville, proudly display the patriotic mural that fills a window at their store. Madison Brake, center, a Niceville High School student and volunteer at the store, painted the mural that faces John Sims Parkway.



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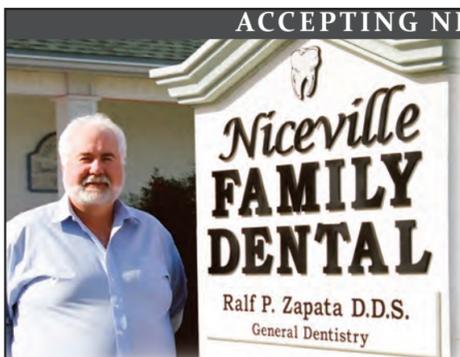
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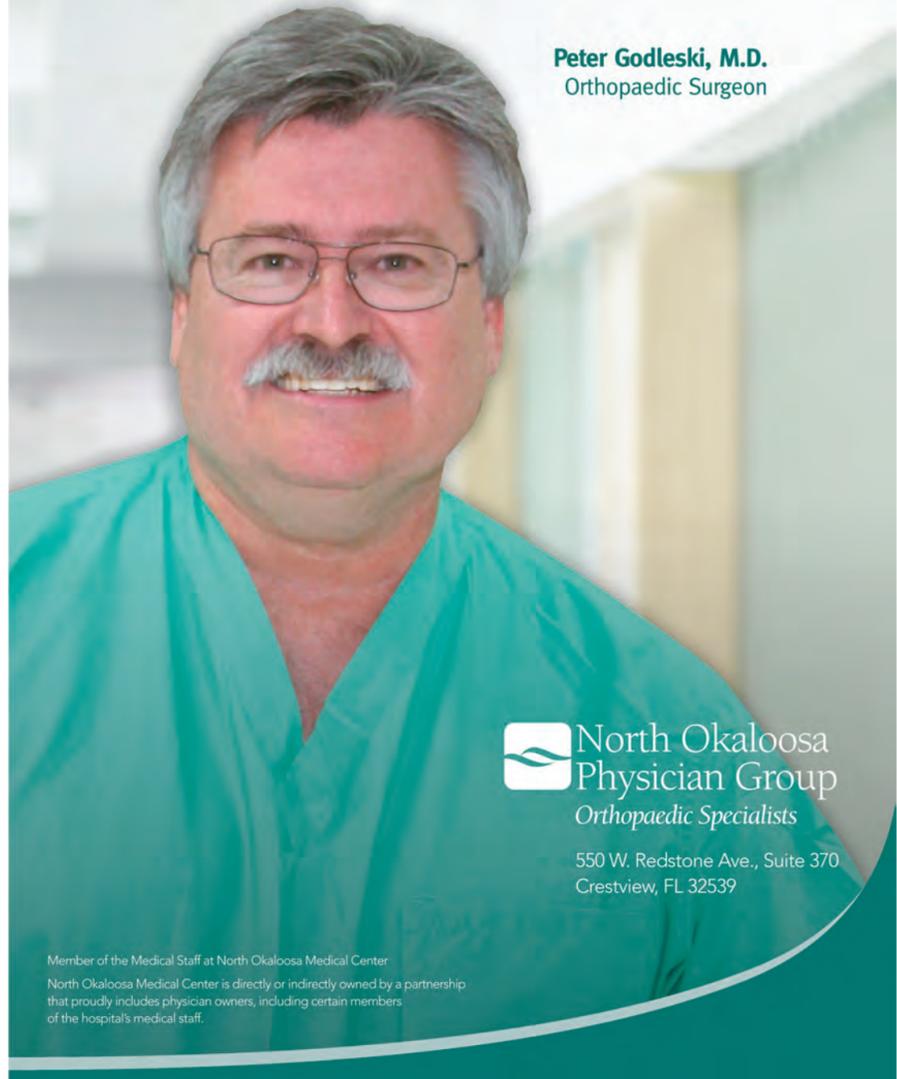
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FOURTH

From page B-1 availability of rental barges in years' past.

The platform cost the city \$38,000, and was purchased with donations from aluminum can collections, fireworks T-shirt sales, private donations and fundraising events.

Hill said Pyro Shows did a test run on the platform three weeks ago.

"We took the platform into the bayou and shot a few shells," Hill said. "The platform handled the recoil beautifully and it is strong enough, sturdy enough and meets regulations."

The platform, which will be stored at North Light Marina and rented for other events such as large parties, will float in the middle of Boggy Bayou during the fireworks show. Corbin said there is no "exclusion zone" for tonight's show, except private property.

"To get the real view you need to be around Lions Park, Lincoln Park or the Turkey Creek area," he said.

The show will last about 30 minutes, Corbin said, and will be displayed to a patriotic soundtrack. It will go on as scheduled rain or shine.



Courtesy photo

The new platform, above, that the City of Niceville purchased to use during the annual Fourth of July fireworks display. The platform was purchased through fireworks fundraisers and donations. Fireworks will be launched at about 8:45 p.m. from the platform in the middle of Boggy Bayou.

For those who want to get a head start on Fourth of July events, the city will sell food from concession stands at Lincoln Park around 4 p.m. At 6:30 p.m. there will be a flyover from Eglin Air Force Base.

Corbin suggests parking away from the various parks near Boggy Bayou and walking to view the display.

Although area residents will have to wait until next year to see the fireworks show again, the city will continue to raise money to fund the patriotic festivities for years to follow.

The fireworks show cost about \$28,000, Corbin said, which was paid for through the city's "Fireworks Fund."

"We are not using city taxes to

do this, we do it with donations," he said.

The City of Niceville and the City of Valparaiso both have an aluminum recycling program to raise money. Also, both cities give residents the option of donating each month through their water bill.

"Just from Valparaiso recycling the aluminum cans we get about \$6,000 to \$7,000 a year with their help," Corbin said.

Fundraising has also included fireworks T-shirt sales, steak dinners, sponsorships and donation jars at local businesses. Money raised for the fireworks is put into a trust fund and can only be used for the fireworks show, Corbin said.

IMPACT 100 boasts 128 members

Special to the Beacon

IMPACT 100 Northwest Florida, a group of women aiming to make a difference in Okaloosa and Walton counties, recently announced that they exceeded their goal of 100 members in its inaugural membership campaign.

The group was formed in February, with the goal of recruiting 100 women to give \$1,000 to create an annual \$100,000 grant.

When the membership closed June 1, the group boasted 128 members. The members are from across Okaloosa and Walton counties and are from all walks of life—business leaders, stay-at-home moms, grandmothers, young career women and more. A listing of current members can be viewed at impactnwfl.org.

"We are so proud of the response from the women in our community—they exceeded our hopes and

expectations," said Michelle Anchors, president of the IMPACT 100 board of directors. "These 128 women of Okaloosa and Walton counties have stepped up to embrace this initiative. We will make an impact in our communities with a \$128,000

Florida at the annual meeting to be held in November.

Non-profit organizations interested in applying for the grant can download the information online. A grant workshop was held June 7, and more than 50 organizations were represented. The deadline for the 2012 grant is Aug. 1. The grant application and additional information can be found at impactnwfl.org.

The membership dues of IMPACT 100 will be used solely to fund the \$128,000 grant. This group of women is looking to make a difference by helping at least one non-profit organization jump-start an initiative that will have a significant impact on the community.

Membership in IMPACT 100 is open to all women in the community, no invitation is required. Membership will re-open Jan. 1, 2013.



grant to an organization this year."

The \$128,000 grant will be awarded in December to a local organization to fund a project that will have significant impact on our community in one of five focus areas: family, health and wellness, education, arts and culture, or environment, recreation and preservation. The grant award winner will be decided by a vote of all of the women in IMPACT 100 Northwest

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Niceville Grand Knight fills big shoes

By Tess Hollis
Beacon Staff Writer

At the age of 24, Stephen Erickson can add Grand Knight to his resume.

Erickson, of Niceville, assumed the role as Grand Knight of the Knights of Columbus Council 13527 Christ Our Redeemer Catholic Church after a March 15 small-plane crash near Ruckel Airport took the life of 59-year-old Don Marco. Erickson served as Deputy Grand Knight under Marco, who was the Grand Knight—the highest position on a Knights of Columbus council—at the time of his death.

"Don Marco left a huge void to be filled, and as Deputy Grand Knight, I was essentially named Grand Knight," Erickson said. "It's not the way you want to be given a job like that. Don had some really big shoes to fill—he was an amazing Knight, father, friend and pillar of the community."

"He wasn't just filling a position," he said. "He really became a Grand Knight and took it to heart, and that's such a hard thing to replace."

Erickson, a 2006 Niceville High School graduate, is the



Stephen Erickson is the Grand Knight of Knights of Columbus Council 13527 Christ Our Redeemer Catholic Church, Bluewater Bay. At 24 years old, Erickson is the youngest Grand Knight of Council 13527.

Beacon photo by Tess Hollis

youngest Grand Knight of Council 13527, and there has been chatter that he could be the youngest Grand Knight in Florida, and even the United States. However, Larry Mitchell, director of membership records for the Knights of Columbus, said the Order does not generate a report that compares Grand Knights' ages—to do so, they would have to access the records of more than 14,000 councils.

"The Knights of Columbus

has many councils established at both Catholic and secular colleges and universities in several countries," he said. "Typically, the Grand Knights of those councils would be younger than 24 years."

The Knights of Columbus was formed in 1882, in New Haven, Conn., as a fraternal benefit society, with founding principles of charity, unity and fraternity. According to its website, the Order has helped families obtain economic security and stability through its life insurance, annuity and long-term care programs.

Currently, the Knights of Columbus has more than 14,000 councils and 1.8 million members throughout the United States, Canada, the Philippines, Mexico, Poland, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Panama, the Bahamas, the Virgin Islands, Cuba, Guatemala, Guam and Saipan.

In the beginning of his term as Grand Knight, Erickson admitted he felt as if he would "go insane." Because Erickson was installed as Grand Knight during the last third of the Knights of Columbus Council year, his term will end this month.

"All the brother knights kept telling me 'Don't feel like you have to do this.' I wanted to do it, but I felt like in the early stages I was doing a terrible job. The other knights were very supportive after I took the reins."

"I knew I had to put my nose to the grind stone and get things done," he said. "After I hit my stride it became very enjoyable."

Larry Falk, a long-time member of the Christ Our Redeemer Council has served

as a brother knight with both Erickson and his father, who served as Grand Knight before Don Marco.

"Regardless of his age, I don't think anyone could have done it as well as he did it, and he handled it magnificently," Falk said. "He has a great upbringing with his mother and father, and he's just such a nice man—he's so reliable and so compassionate, and was willing to work with older gentleman like myself."

The role of Grand Knight, according to Erickson, is such as a president or CEO. There is a hierarchy of jobs within the council, which meets once a month, he said.

"The Grand Knight is basically in charge of making sure everything gets done," he said.

Erickson first joined the Knights of Columbus when he was 18, the minimum age requirement to join.

"My father has always been involved and I saw the great things the organization did for him and other people," he said. "It was inspiring to me, so by the time I was 17 I was chomping at the bit to join."

As a previous member-at-large, Erickson said he didn't have the insight on the council that he now has.

"This has given me a peek behind the curtain at all the amazing things the council does," he said. "It gave me a good look at the things we are doing in the community and it just blew my mind."

Erickson said he has been most impressed with the council's many fundraisers, namely the annual Tootsie Roll Drive, in which the council sells Tootsie Rolls and donates the money to the Special Olympics, Horizons, and Resources for Human Development. The council also gives away scholarships, holds annual food drives and supports various community projects.

"Being the Grand Knight makes being a member of the council so much more profound," he said. "I've been able to give back to the council, as well as the community."

As for Erickson's future, he chose not to retain the title of Grand Knight, because of plans to move to Orlando later in the year. The move will force Erickson to become a member of a new council, but he said the Knights of Columbus is something he will always be a part of.

Engagements

McCain-Martin

John and Kim McCain, of Niceville, announce the engagement of their daughter, Hayley Shea McCain to Tod Alan Martin, son of Scot Martin, of Abilene, Texas, and Ann Baskett, of Winters, Texas.

Hayley is a graduate of Niceville High School and Troy University, and is employed at Plew Elementary School. Tod is a graduate of Abilene High School and the U.S. Navy Nuclear Power



Tod Martin and Hayley McCain

School. He is a Nuclear Reactor Operator stationed with the U.S. Navy onboard the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69).

An April 2013 wedding is planned. The couple will reside in Norfolk, Va.

In the Service

Air Force Airman **Connor S. Henner**, a 2011 graduate of Niceville High School, graduated from basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas.

The airman completed an

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

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

Henner is the son of Jeremy Henner, of Detroit, Mich.

WHO'S

From page B-1

into the Huntingdon College Circle of the international leadership honorary Omicron Delta Kappa, this spring. The Society recognizes achievement in scholarship, athletics, campus involvement, community service, religion activities, campus government, student media, and the creative and performing arts.

Huntingdon is located in Montgomery, Ala.

Carl Mignacca, of the financial services firm Edward Jones, Niceville/Bluewater Bay, recently won the firm's Spirit of Caring Award, designed to recognize financial advisors who exemplify the values, culture and spirit of giving back. He also received the firm's Ed Armstrong Award for his

achievement in building client relationships.

Luke Ausley, of Valparaiso, has been named to the President's Honor Roll at the University of Central Florida for the spring semester, 2012. To be named to the President's Honor Roll, a student must have achieved a 4.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale. Luke is majoring in electrical engineering.

Julia Anna Denney, of Valparaiso, recently qualified for the Dean's List of Honors at Huntingdon College, Montgomery, Ala., based on the academic grade point average earned during the spring semester 2012. The Dean's List of Honors recognizes those who have achieved semester averages of 3.6 to 3.79. Julia is majoring in political science.



School supplies needed

Niceville Sharing & Caring is collecting school supplies for children of families who are not able to purchase necessary back-to-school items. School supplies or monetary donations can be dropped off at 104 Bullock Blvd., Niceville. The office is open from 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Monday-Thursday, and 9 a.m.-noon, Friday. The drive will end Aug. 3, and supplies will be distributed to the students Aug. 11. Students may register for supplies until Aug. 3. Students must be registered for the 2012-13 school year and have identification on file at Sharing & Caring. Info: 678-8459.

Boy Scout auction

Valparaiso Boy Scout Troop 52 annual online auction is ongoing until July 18. Bids are being accepted for a two-night stay at the Ramada, free dinner coupons, gift certificates, jewelry and items from local supporters. Final bids will close at the Troop's spaghetti dinner on July 20 at AMVETS, Valparaiso. Info: troop52.valp.net/auction.htm, or 678-8014.

Patriotic horse on display

During July, a patriotic horse named "Glory" will be on display at the Niceville Library. Local 72-year-old artist/master woodcraftsman Paul Putney recently completed "Glory" as his first hand-carved and painted carousel horse. Glory is 55-inches tall, is made of solid wood and weighs almost 300 pounds.

'Night at the Museum'

The Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida is accepting reservations for "Night at the Museum," a guided tour with food and wine tasting. The tour will be July 14, at 7 p.m., at the Museum, 115 Westview Ave., Valparaiso. All proceeds will benefit the collection and exhibits of the Heritage Museum. Cost: \$30, or \$25 for Museum Members. Group packages are also available: 6 for \$168; 8 for \$216; and 10 for \$260. Info and reservations: 678-2615, or heritage-museum.org.

'Vote Okaloosa' exhibit

The Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida will present "Vote Okaloosa" a new exhibit featuring voting equipment and Okaloosa County voting documents dating back to 1917. The exhibit will open to the public on July 4, at 10 a.m. Admission: \$5 adults, \$4 senior and military, \$3 children, and children 4 and under are free.

Valp. Fourth of July

The City of Valparaiso will host a day of events on the Fourth of July at Lincoln Park on Boggy Bayou. At noon, Nonie's Ark Animal Encounters will present an educational program where children can experience a close



Sailing Club to host Regatta

The Bluewater Bay Sailing Club will host a Ladybug Regatta on July 7. Registration will begin at 10:30 a.m., with a Captain's Meeting at 11 a.m., and the first boat start at noon. Cost: \$30, or \$5 credit to U.S. Sailing members or members of a GYA club. There will be one class, non-spinnaker. The regatta headquarters will be at Bluewater Bay Marina and the racing area will be on Choctawhatchee Bay. Info: Scott Pursell, 897-7150, or PHRF-Fleet-Captain@bbssc.com.

File photo

encounter with animal friends. At 1 p.m., children's games will begin with a dozen planned events. The games will be open to kids ages 5-12. A miniature train ride around Lincoln Park and a bounce house will also be available. At 4 p.m., D.J. Glen from Life Tunes will offer a variety of music. The city will also have a food booth with snacks and soft drinks, which will stay open until the fireworks show at 8:30 p.m.

Valparaiso duathlon

On July 4, the City of Valparaiso will host its 34th anniversary of the July 4th Duathlon (5K run/200m swim). It will begin at Lincoln Park and participants should assemble around 6:45 a.m., with the race beginning promptly at 7 a.m. Rules and instructions will be given just prior to the race. The course will be along the shoreline of Boggy and Tom bayous. A few minutes after the runners depart Lincoln Park, the walkers will begin their 5K course. Both runners and walkers will have overall winners, with the duathlon winners divided between first-through third-place, with four age-group categories. All winners will receive an award. All participants will receive a T-shirt. Registration is \$25 the day of the race.

Family Movie Day

The Valparaiso Community Library would like to invite children, families and friends of all ages to join them for Family Movie Day on July 5, at noon. The Library will show "Mirror, Mirror." Bring your own lunch; drinks and snacks will be provided.

Lionfish workshop

The Emerald Coast Reef Association will host a free lionfish workshop July 6, at 6 p.m., at Northwest Florida State College Student Service Center Room 302, Niceville. Lionfish are the most serious threat to local fishery, and unchecked, this invasive species could severely impact native fish. Speakers will be Scott Bartel, with hunting, handling and filleting tips; and Bill Horn, FWC, who will give a historical review of the lionfish invasions in Florida's waters. Info: ECreef.org.

RWOF meeting

The Republican Women of Okaloosa Federated are taking reservations until noon, July 6, for their meeting at the Holiday Inn Resort on Okaloosa Island. The meeting will be on July 11, at 11:30 a.m., beginning with socializing and lunch will be

served at noon. To accommodate working women, there will be a "Dine and Dash" table. There will be a forum of candidates for public defender and judicial candidates. As part of the club's Americanism project, attendees are asked to bring individual packets of popcorn for the USO. Empty ink cartridges will be accepted, as well, which will be recycled for cash, then turned over to the USO. Reservations: Donna Pattison, 651-5416, or donnapattison@cox.net. Cost: \$16 for members and \$18 for guests. Info: rwof.org.

'Cram the Van' drive

Sharing & Caring volunteers will be at the Niceville Walmart on July 7, from 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m. for "Cram the Van," a United Way sponsored program. Volunteers will accept donations from shoppers in support of area children.

Math PSAT/SAT

The Math PSAT camp is targeted toward 9th and 10th graders, and the Math SAT camp is targeted toward 11th and 12th graders, but students may choose the course work that fits their readiness. Both camps will teach math testing strategies. Camps will be July 16-20, Monday-Friday, from 8-11:30 a.m. Cost: \$77. Grades 9-12. Register and pay by 4 p.m. on July 9 to avoid a \$10 late fee. Info: Rocky Bayou Summer Program Office, 729-7227, ext. 273.

Candidate forum

Niceville's Silver Sands Republican Women will host a public forum for the Republican candidates for Okaloosa County Commissioner District 5 on July 9, at 5:30 p.m., at the Bluewater Bay Clubhouse. Dinner will be served at 6 p.m. for \$15. Guests are welcome. Reservations and info: Libby Hill, 618-2182.

Cheerleading camp

There will be a cheerleading camp in the Rocky Bayou Christian School gym July 9-13, Monday-Friday, from 8-11:30 a.m. Grades K5-6. Info: Rocky Bayou Summer Program Office, 729-7227, ext. 273.

Soccer camp

A soccer camp will be held on the Rocky Bayou Christian School field July 9-12, Monday-Thursday, 2-4 p.m. Boys/girls grades 3-8. Info: Rocky Bayou Summer Program Office, 729-7227, ext. 273.

First Baptist VBS

Registration is ongoing for First Baptist Church of Niceville vacation Bible school July 9-13, from 8:45

a.m.-12:15 p.m. The theme this year is "Amazing Wonders." Ages 4-completed 5th grade. There will be worship, music, recreation, snacks and crafts. Info: fb-niceville.org/vbs, or 678-4621.

Environmental Class

Lessons in a variety of outdoor activities such as fresh and salt water fishing, bay fishing, boat safety, hunting skills and techniques for small game and deer, tree stand safety, training in GPS systems and Boat Smart certification will be offered as part of a new Environmental Education course at Northwest Florida State College. The course is open to adults of all ages, or to youth age 16 and older. Youth younger than 16 must have a parent or guardian enrolled in the course along with them. The session will be July 9-20. The class will meet on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 6-8:30 p.m. Cost: \$50. Info: NWESC Continuing Education Division, 729-6085.

Beginner Band camp

Rocky Bayou Christian School will hold a beginner band camp July 16-20, Monday-Friday, 12:30-4 p.m., to introduce children to an enriching, musical experience. Beginning band is for incoming 5th graders and any other student new to the RBCS band, regardless of their grade level. Cost: \$77. Grades 5-12. Register and pay by 4 p.m. on July 9 to avoid a \$10 late fee. Info: Rocky Bayou Summer Program Office, 729-7227, ext. 273.

Family Movie Time

Niceville Public Library will present Family Movie Time on July 12, at 6 p.m. The library will show "Monsters Inc." Info: cityofniceville.org/library.html.

Road closure

The 2300 block of Canal Drive will be closed intermittently for installation of a new storm drain. This will start July 9, and will take two weeks to complete, weather permitting. Info: Niceville Public Works, 729-4064.

Breast cancer poker run

Brothers Forever Post will host a "Bikers for Boobies" poker run to raise money for breast cancer awareness. The poker run will be July 14, with registration beginning at 9 a.m., and the run at 10 a.m. Last bike in will be no later than 2 p.m. The run will leave from AMVETS Post 78, 910 Valastics Ave., Valparaiso, and end at VFW 7674, Fort Walton Beach. Cost: \$10 per rider, \$5 per passenger. There will be a 50/50 raffle and drawings for big prizes.

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Niceville student to compete in NAACP competition

By Tess Hollis
Beacon Staff Writer

For one Niceville High School student, playing in a local concert and preparing for a national NAACP competition are all in a week's work.

Marshall Mosley, 15, of Niceville, will travel to Houston to the national Afro-Academic, Cultural, Technological and Scientific Olympics (ACT-SO) competition, sponsored by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), July 5 through 7. But this is not Marshall's first go at the national competition—he attended last year in Los Angeles.

The competition dubbed "The Olympics of the Mind" will include categories such as, science, humanities, performing arts, visual arts and business. Each category contains sub-categories that students, grades 9 through 12, compete in.

Marshall, whose specialty is playing the clarinet, will compete in the performing arts category in front of a panel of six judges. He will compete for a \$1,000 scholarship, that will be matched by \$1,000 from the international restaurant chain, McDonald's.

"I really don't get nervous about playing," he said. "Since I went last year, I feel like I know what to expect, and there won't be that shock."

Although the judges will decide Marshall's fate at the

national competition, his peers will have a chance to hear his talents. The judging will be in a concert-style setting, with an audience.

"It's definitely interesting to see what other teens across the country are doing," he said. "There are a lot of really good musicians there."

To make it to the national competition, Marshall first had to compete in the Okaloosa County ACT-SO competition, held April 28. As a member of Men of Tomorrow, he was approached by the organization's leader to participate.

Men of Tomorrow prepares young African American and other minority males for successful transition from youth to adulthood by helping them develop awareness and skills based on economic, social, cultural and spiritual components.

Marshall competed in the performing arts, classical music category, and took home a gold medal for playing Mozart's Clarinet Concerto. Five other Okaloosa County students will travel to Houston with Mosley for the national competition.

But Marshall didn't get this

far without some help. When he first learned he would compete in the Okaloosa County ACT-SO competition, he enlisted the help of Bonita Clark, a pianist at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Niceville.

"It was obvious from our first rehearsal that he was serious about his music and that he had a gift," Clark said.

Clark accompanied Marshall on the piano, and played Mozart's Clarinet Concerto for the local competition. Although Clark will not be in Houston to accompany Marshall, she recorded her part of the piece onto a CD, which Mosley will play along with.

After working with Marshall for the competition, Clark asked him to perform in concert on June 15 at St. Paul.

"Not only did he agree to do this, but he went to other students and asked them to participate in this concert," Clark said. "It shows a great deal about his enthusiasm and determination in what he's doing."

Marshall rounded up several Niceville High School students to sing and play other instruments including the violin, viola, flute, oboe and trumpet.

"He's a great performer and has a great deal of musicality about what he's playing, which is a bit unusual in a teenager," Clark said. "He's just a great soft-spoken kid with a great musical gift, and you see that in a lot of musicians. His talent really

comes out and he shines when he's playing."

Since he began playing clarinet as a student at Lewis Middle School, Marshall said it has been his passion, although it started out as a chance encounter with the wind instrument.

"When they had instrument tryouts in middle school it was the only instrument that I could get a sound out of," he said with a laugh.

He has been playing for the past four years, and practices 30 minutes to an hour each day. That same passion already has Marshall looking at a future involving music.

"I would like to play professionally and maybe one day own a music business," he said. He added that after high school he would like to obtain a degree in business, with a minor in music.

In addition to playing the clarinet, Marshall is also involved in marching band and the wind ensemble at Niceville High School. He runs track and field as a sprinter and finds time to maintain a 4.2 weighted grade point average.

As to how he manages his grades and his extracurricular activities, Marshall said "I just have to take it one thing at a time."

Marshall said he will continue performing on the clarinet and also hopes to compete at the ACT-SO competition his junior and senior years of high school.

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Beacon photo by Tess Hollis

Many thanks on Edge principal's last day

Shelly Arneson, principal of Edge Elementary School, was taken by surprise and fought back tears June 27 as students, teachers and parents cheered her on as she walked out of the school building for the last time. Arneson, 46, stepped down as principal after eight years because she and her husband, Dave, a defense contractor, will move to Tucson, Ariz., where he has a new job. Effective July 1, Samantha Dawson will take Arneson's place at Niceville's oldest school.



Beacon photos by Tess Hollis

Kids go crazy for rockets

Eight students gathered at the Howard Hill Community Soccer Complex on June 29 to test the Estes rockets they made during Rocky Bayou Christian School's Crazy Rocket Scientist summer camp. The Estes rocket is a solid propellant model rocket engine that the students put into a cardboard rocket. The launch was the conclusion of the week-long camp. The campers, pictured, show off their rockets.



Courtesy photo

St. Paul children 'Dare to Care'

St. Paul Lutheran Church's Vacation Bible School children recently donated 287 pounds of non-perishable food items and school supplies to Sharing & Caring, Niceville. The collection and donation of items was part of "Operation Overboard," which encouraged the students to "choose to follow" and "depend on God." Ninety children and more than 40 volunteers participated in this year's VBS the week of June 18.



Courtesy photo

Woman's club gives to college foundation

Twin Cities Woman's Club presented \$3,600 to the Northwest Florida State College Foundation for scholarships for the 2012-13 academic year. TCWC has supported the Foundation for 18 years, providing more than \$100,000 in scholarship assistance for adult women with financial needs. From left: Carol Morris, TCWC Education Committee Chair; Dr. Ty Handy, President, NWFSC; Dale Fuqua, TCWC President; Kay Litke, TCWC Vice President; and Cristie Kedroski, NWFSC Foundation.

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 Part Time washer/dryer tech needed. Retired, military encouraged to apply. Call 915-490-5895 or email: FleeStar@flee.com

Looking for a job? Check the classified section every Wednesday in the Bay Beacon.

Homes for Rent
 2bd, 1.5ba duplex apartment, 1400 SF, \$950. Call 678-2324 or 830-7879

3 bedroom, 2 bath, M.H. No pets. Inquiries call 850-897-3953

Lost & Found
 Found: Kayak in Tom's Bayou. Missing one? Email serial number and phone number: seifers432@yahoo.com

Bluewater Bay Resort Realty - RENTALS -

Marquette Street - 2/1 Unfurnished - \$685
 Quiet neighborhood, across from park, duplex community, washer & dryer included

Marina Villa - Studio Furnished - \$850
 Top floor, includes cable, internet and utilities, waterfront, wood patio/deck Available 6/27/12

Long Term Rentals Needed
 Homes: low/mid income, patio homes, condos needed in Bluewater Bay Resort for our booming long-term rental program. Experienced, professional real estate management program available to meet your investment/involvement needs.

850-897-1443

RENTALS AVAILABLE!

Niceville, Crestview, Fort Walton and Navarre!

One bedroom to five bedrooms from \$450-\$2500!

Search online at: OurLocalRental.com

Century 21 Wilson Minger Agency
 Niceville's Top Selling Real Estate Office
729-6504

Get the Bay Beacon, Eglin Flyer, Hurlburt Patriot or Green Beret Online!

We'll deliver the paper to your computer!

The Bay Beacon Payment per paper for 1 year: \$32*
 The Eglin Flyer (Price includes any applicable taxes)
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Name: _____
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Please send coupon and payment to: The Bay Beacon, 1181 E. John Sims Parkway, Niceville, FL 32578. For more information, contact: Deborah Newstead at 850-678-3050 or info@baybeacon.com

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Niceville Valparaiso
 CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

PROFESSIONAL HELP WANTED

Full or Part Time Position available immediately. Preferred Candidate has lived in the greater Niceville area for a minimum of 2 years with a working knowledge of the community and has 3-5 years of work in a professional organization.

Publication & Writing Experience
 Microsoft Word & Excel Proficient
 Events Coordination Experience
 General Office Experience
 Positive Attitude
 Energetic
 Professional Demeanor
 Internet Savvy
 Website Experience

Submit resume & references in person or by email no later than Monday, July 10, 2012. References and qualifications will be checked. Niceville Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce, 1055 East John Sims Parkway, Niceville. info@nvalparaiso.com

Carriage Hills Realty, Inc.

would like to wish everyone a **HAPPY 4TH OF JULY!**

Thank You to Our Troops and Our Veterans!

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1821 John Sims Parkway | Niceville, Florida 32578
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CONVENIENT WAYS TO PLACE YOUR BEACON CLASSIFIED AD!

MAIL: Beacon Newspapers, 1181 E. John Sims Pkwy., Niceville, FL 32578. Please include check.

DROP IN: The Bay Beacon, 1181 E. John Sims Pkwy., Parkway East Shopping Center. Office hours: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. M-F. After hours, use mail slot in our door.

E-MAIL: Classified@baybeacon.com Type "Classified" in subject field. (Do not include credit card information. We will call you for credit card info. \$5 processing fee.)

BEACON CLASSIFIED AD DEADLINE
 2:00 P.M. FRIDAY FOR WEDNESDAY

Please write ad or form, include phone number as part of ad. Minimum charge \$11.00* for up to 10 words. Each additional word 20c. Attach more paper if needed.

First Word	\$11.00	\$11.20
	\$11.60	\$12.00
	\$12.50	\$12.60

*Base price includes 88 weekly discount for walk-in or mail-in prepaid ads.

50% discount for additional weeks or papers. Check publications to publish ad.

Bay Beacon (Number of weeks) _____ Price of First Run _____ \$
 Eglin Flyer (Number of weeks) _____ + Price of subsequent runs \$
 Hurlburt Patriot (Number of weeks) _____ Total Price _____ \$

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Please make checks payable to the Beacon Newspapers

Beacon Newspapers, 1181 E. John Sims Pkwy., Niceville, FL • (850) 678-1080

Free Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten



4 & 5 - Year Old Children Eligible

2012 Summer VPK Program and

2012-2013 VPK School Year Programs



The Early Learning Coalition of Okaloosa and Walton Counties reminds parents that four and some five-year old children are eligible for free Voluntary Pre-kindergarten (VPK) for the Summer 2012 or School Year 2012-2013. For Summer VPK 2012, the child must have become **four years of age before September 1, 2011**. For pre-kindergarten children to qualify for 2012-2013 School Year VPK Program, they must be **four years of age, on or before September 1, 2012**. Parents must be willing to sign the program application, provide proof of the child's age (birth certificate or other documentation), prove Florida residency, and transport the child to the Certified VPK Provider of the parent's choice.



Florida residency may be verified by the following documentation bearing the parent/guardian's name & address as submitted on the VPK Application:

- Utility Bills
- Residential Rental Agreement
- Pay Stubs
- Government Documents (Tax Return, Military Orders, etc.)

The VPK Program is free early education funded by the State of Florida. The VPK Providers should not charge registration fees that are non-refundable once the VPK child has attended the program. Providers are encouraged to provide services to as many children for the limited hours of VPK as possible.

Sign-up! Call 833-9330 for an appointment

Registration is occurring at Okaloosa-Walton Child Care Services.
Classes are limited. First Come - First Serve No Income Requirement
Walk-In hours available as follows

Fort Walton Beach Office
Walk-ins Welcome!
Monday through Friday
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM and
3:00 PM - 4:00 PM
107 Tupelo Avenue

Crestview Office
Walk-ins Welcome!
Monday Only
9 AM - Noon
804 N. Lloyd Street

DeFuniak Springs
Walk-ins Welcome!
Monday through Friday
8:00 AM - 9:00 AM and
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM
10 South 4th Street

See the local Early Learning Coalition website for details about the VPK Programs at www.elc-ow.org
Certified Summer 2012 Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Providers
(Programs begin June 2012 and end August 2012)

The Early Learning Coalition encourages parents to contact certified providers in order to determine if the program is appropriate for their child(ren) and to determine if the provider has space available. Register at school districts sites listed below:

Provider Name	Address	City	Zip	Phone	Type of Facility
<i>Childcare Network #132</i>	1040 Farmer Street	Crestview	32539	683-1680	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Horizons Children's Center</i>	343 Holmes Blvd.	Ft. Walton Beach	32548	244-9187	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Elliott Point Elementary School</i>	301 Hughes Street	Ft. Walton Beach	32548	833-3100	Okaloosa County School
<i>Freeport Elementary School</i>	15381 US 331	Freeport	32439	892-1100	Walton County School
<i>Shoal River Learning Center</i>	5190 South Fendon Blvd.	Crestview	32536	682-4700	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Southside Elementary School</i>	650 South Pearl Street	Crestview	32539	833-3100	Okaloosa County School
<i>Van Butler Elementary School</i>	6694 W. Co. Hwy. 30-A	Santa Rosa Beach	32459	892-1100	Walton County School
<i>WISE Center</i>	555 Walton Road	DeFuniak Springs	32433	892-1100	Walton County School
<i>Wright Elementary School</i>	305 Lang Road	Ft. Walton Beach	32547	833-5860	Okaloosa County School

Certified School Year 2012 - 2013 Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Providers
(Programs may begin August 2012 and may end June 2013)

Check Program Dates on the Early Learning Coalition Website at www.elc-ow.org

The Early Learning Coalition encourages parents to contact certified providers in order to determine if the program is appropriate for their child(ren) and to determine if the provider has space available.

Provider Name	Address	City	Zip	Phone	Type of Facility
<i>Benlah Christian Academy</i>	109 McGriff Street	Ft. Walton Beach	32548	243-8452	Faith-Based Private School
<i>Children Development & Education Center - NWFC</i>	100 College Blvd.	Niceville	32578	729-5386	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Childcare Network #39</i>	412 Government Ave.	Valparaiso	32580	678-9476	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Childcare Network #40</i>	644A Anchors Street	Ft. Walton Beach	32547	664-2865	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Childcare Network #41</i>	800 Falcon Place	Ft. Walton Beach	32547	862-6328	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Childcare Network #105</i>	502 Benning Drive	Destin	32541	654-7832	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Childcare Network #132</i>	1040 Farmer Street	Crestview	32539	683-1680	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Childcare Network #142</i>	108 NW Jet Drive	Ft. Walton Beach	32549	244-0942	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Childcare Network #183</i>	405 Brookmeade Drive	Crestview	32539	398-8806	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Discovery Learning Academy, LLC</i>	4565 Commercial Drive	Niceville	32578	379-3077	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Docie Bass Recreation Center</i>	54 Ferry Road NE	Ft. Walton Beach	32548	833-9580	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Elliott Point Elementary</i>	301 Hughes Street	Ft. Walton Beach	32548	833-3100	Okaloosa County School
<i>First Baptist Church of Niceville</i>	622 Bayshore Drive	Niceville	32578	729-6915	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>First United Methodist Preschool</i>	103 First Street SE	Ft. Walton Beach	32548	243-0431	Licensed & Faith-Based
<i>God's Garden of Grace</i>	4325 Commons Dr. West	Destin	32541	654-1440	Licensed & Faith-Based
<i>Happyland Pre-School</i>	1018 Whitepoint Road	Niceville	32578	897-3400	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Holt Academy</i>	422 Highway 90 West	Holt	32564	537-8299	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Horizons Children's Center</i>	343 Holmes Blvd.	Ft. Walton Beach	32548	244-9187	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Kid's Discovery #1</i>	240 Green Acres Road	Ft. Walton Beach	32547	301-9409	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Kid's Discovery #2</i>	2265 Highway 98 West	Mary Esther	32569	243-5794	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Kid's Discovery #3</i>	2101 P. J. Adams Pkwy	Crestview	32536	423-0449	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Kid's Discovery #7</i>	74 N. John Sims Pkwy	Valparaiso	32580	678-0600	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Kid's Place</i>	321 NE Racetrack Road	Ft. Walton Beach	32547	864-5014	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>La Petite Academy</i>	4400 Highway 20 #710	Niceville	32578	897-3547	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Laurel Hill Elementary</i>	8078 4th Street	Laurel Hill	32567	833-3100	Okaloosa County School
<i>Lt. Gators Learning Center, LLC</i>	5800 Washington Street	Baker	32531	537-2100	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Little Angels Preschool</i>	703 Miracle Strip Pkwy.	Mary Esther	32569	243-7522	Licensed & Faith-Based
<i>Little Schooner Preschool</i>	154 Calhoun Avenue	Destin	32541	837-6425	Licensed & Faith-Based
<i>The Montessori School for the Arts</i>	410 Fir Ave.	Niceville	32578	678-7011	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Oak Tree Child Development Center</i>	102 Tooke Street	Ft. Walton Beach	32547	862-9031	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Our Little School House, Inc.</i>	505 E Hollywood Blvd.	Mary Esther	32569	664-6141	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Pam's Lighthouse Learning Center, Inc.</i>	1209 47th Street	Niceville	32578	678-0550	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>The River Academy</i>	100A Hart Street	Niceville	32578	729-8600	Licensed & Faith-Based
<i>The Roane School</i>	4465 Legendary Drive.	Destin	32541	650-0137	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Rocky Bayou Christian School</i>	2101 N. Partin Dr.	Niceville	32578	678-7358	Faith-Based Private School
<i>Roehm Preschool and After Care Center, Inc.</i>	1595 Highway 83 North	DeFuniak Springs	32433	951-2002	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>St. Paul Lutheran Church Pre-School</i>	1407 John Sims Pkwy.	Niceville	32578	678-1298	Licensed & Faith-Based
<i>Shoal River Learning Center</i>	5190 South Fendon Blvd.	Crestview	32536	682-4700	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Southside Elementary</i>	650 South Pearl Street	Crestview	32539	833-3100	Okaloosa County School
<i>TLC Recreation Center</i>	502 Schneider Drive	Ft. Walton Beach	32547	862-0018	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Trinity United Methodist Church of FWB</i>	403 Racetrack Rd. NW	Ft. Walton Beach	32547	862-9307	Licensed & Faith-Based
<i>Twin Hills Learning Center West</i>	837 West James Lee Blvd.	Crestview	32536	689-1663	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>The Village Preschool</i>	101 Matthew Blvd.	Destin	32541	582-5771	Licensed & Faith-Based
<i>Wesley Academy</i>	214 South Partin Drive	Niceville	32578	678-4411	Licensed & Faith-Based
<i>Wesleyan Childcare Center</i>	599 E Eighth Ave.	Crestview	32536	682-7319	Licensed Childcare Facility
<i>Wright Day Care Center, Inc.</i>	136 Patrick Drive	Ft. Walton Beach	32547	864-5123	Licensed Childcare Facility