

# The Bay Beacon

14 Pages, 2 Sections, 6 Inserts

Wednesday, July 18, 2012

50¢

**UP  
COMING**

**Wednesday, 9:30 a.m.**

The **Genealogy History Class** at the Valparaiso Community Library will have a special program to explore the basics of **genetic inheritance**.

Charlene Grafton, local writer and geneticist, will present the program and discuss genealogy, genes, genomics and gender. Info: 729-5406.

**Thursday, 6-7:30 p.m.**

Stop by the **Niceville Library** and visit local artist and master wood craftsman Paul Putney as he shares **"The Story of Glory,"** a hand-crafted and painted patriotic carousel horse. The horse weighs 300 pounds and stands 55 inches tall.

**Friday, noon**

Authors Nelson Ottenhausen and James Baughman will present **"The Raid of Streight's Brigade"** at the Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida for

**History Sandwiched-In,** a free lunch time lecture. Ottenhausen and Baughman will tell the stories of the Confederate Brigade's four volunteer infantry regiments and their struggles. The lecture is open to the public, but space is limited. Call to reserve a seat, 678-2615.

Calendar, B-2

## N. Bay mulls 1.3% hike in millage rate

By Del Lessard  
*Beacon Staff Writer*

The North Bay Fire Control District Commission set the proposed property tax rate for the upcoming fiscal year at 2.38 mills, a 1.3 percent increase.

The proposed millage rate won't be finalized until the second of two public hearings

scheduled in September, when the tax rate could be reduced, but not increased unless the fire commission notifies every property owner in the district by mail.

If given final approval, the new millage rate would become the sixth straight year that the commission has raised the

**Ex-bookkeeper pleads no contest in thefts, A-3.**

property tax rate in the fire district.

The current millage rate is 2.35, meaning that property owners in the fire district pay \$2.35 in taxes to the fire district

for each \$1,000 of taxable value. For example, the owner of a home valued at \$200,000 after all exemptions are deducted currently pays the fire district \$470 a year, in addition to levies by other taxing authorities such as the county, school board and water management district.

If the proposed millage rate is finally adopted, the same homeowner would see the North Bay levy increase by \$6 to \$476 for the fiscal year that begins Oct. 1.

Jim Miller, chairman of the fire commission, said during a

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

## Painting with a purpose



Beacon photo by Tess Hollis

Young people from Niceville United Methodist Church's Mission Okaloosa fix up the Emerald Coast Autism Center's new facility in Palm Plaza, Niceville. From left, Hatten Huff, Annie James Walsh and Shay Rhodes, all of Niceville, finish a paint job. **Story, page B-1.**

## Local economy seen healthy

By Mike Griffith  
*Beacon Correspondent*

Northwest Florida has survived the national economic recession better than most other communities in the U.S., an economic-development official told the Niceville City Council members during their July 10 meeting.

Kay Rasmussen, vice president of the Economic Development Council (EDC) of Okaloosa County, said that in a recent study of 365 U.S. metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), many still have fewer people working now than they did five years ago. Okaloosa County has been among the exceptions, she said, with an increase in jobs.

Rasmussen said that Okaloosa County is listed among the top 100 "leading locations" in the U.S., and among the top 50 mid-size communities, for economic performance.

Among the characteristics that Okaloosa and the Niceville area share with other top-performing communities, she said, are the presence of major employers and "cashing in on life sciences or technology innovations," as well as being home to universities or colleges that provide technology transfer skills to members of the local work force.

Rasmussen also discussed

**Please see ECONOMY, page A-4**

## Valparaiso reviews city spending outlook

### 38% tax hike 'won't fly'

By Del Lessard  
*Beacon Staff Writer*

The Valparaiso City Commission Monday reviewed a "wish-list" budget that would have called for a 38-percent increase in property taxes.

No decisions were made, but one commissioner said such a steep increase "won't fly." Officials indicated that the draft budget would be pared considerably before becoming final before the fiscal year starts Oct. 1.

The draft budget reviewed Monday was the first time commissioners looked at an entire city budget that included all the wish list items commissioners and department heads had proposed during a monthlong series of weekly budget meetings. The lists generated a general fund budget of \$2,991,983, up from the cur-

rent budget of \$2,463,710.

In addition to the general fund, the first draft budget included funding for stormwater, streets, water and sewer, cable TV and sanitation, bringing the total budget to \$6,918,845, up from this year's \$6,707,955.

Revenue for the general fund budget—which pays for day-to-

day government services such as police, fire, parks, the library, some public works and administration—includes franchise fees and utility service taxes on electric, gas and water, as well as state funding and property taxes.

Among other things, the draft general fund budget reflects an

overall 10 percent rate increase for employee medical care, and a 3.5 percent increase for workers' compensation insurance, said City Clerk Tammy Johnson.

To balance the draft budget as required by law would require the city to raise its prop-

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

## State awards 'A' grades to Twin Cities schools

By Del Lessard  
*Beacon Staff Writer*

Even as Florida raises the bar on student performance, all the elementary and middle schools serving the Twin Cities have earned "A" report cards, again.

Bluewater, Edge, and Plew elementary schools, Destin and Ruckel middle schools and Lewis (K-8) School, all earned A grades on their school report cards for the past school year, the same as the year before.

Overall, 21 Okaloosa elementary and middle schools earned A's, while seven received B's, meaning that Okaloosa County continues to be ranked as a high performing school district.

High school report card grades will be released in December when graduation rates

and AP/ACT/SAT metrics are calculated for this year.

"Okaloosa Schools historically have high grades, but we are especially proud of the hard work of our teachers and students this year," said Okaloosa County School Superintendent Alexis Tibbetts. "This year middle schools were graded using an acceleration component weighting their school grades based on the number of students participating in high school classes and state End of Course Exams such as Algebra I. All middle schools in Okaloosa County earned A's this year due in part to our high number of middle school students taking accelerated high school course work," she said.

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



Student performance at Bluewater, Edge, and Plew elementary schools, Destin and Ruckel middle schools and Lewis School have again earned A grades for the institutions, bringing smiles to many faces, including that of Plew Principal Carolyn McAllister, here with the school's panther mascot. She praised students, parents and teachers for their hard work and success.

Beacon photo by Del Lessard

# MSBU discusses sidewalks, welcomes deputy

By Mike Griffith  
Beacon Correspondent

The Bluewater Bay Municipal Services Benefit Unit (MSBU) is continuing its plans for a cooperative project with the Okaloosa Board of County Commissioners

(BCC) to build new sidewalks in Bluewater Bay. The current plans were discussed by MSBU governing board members during their monthly meeting held July 10 at the Regency Inn. Members also discussed plans

for new street lights, upcoming elections, and met Bluewater Bay's new community police officer. The sidewalk plan, if approved by the county commission, would include building new sidewalks

along various parts of Bay Drive and Southwind Drive. MSBU board member Doug Burgess said he has been in contact with county public works staff members to plan the cooperative projects, in which the MSBU would pay for

materials while the county provides the design and actual construction of the sidewalks, with county employees working on the project as their schedules of other duties permit. Burgess said the BCC would

discuss the plans during its 8:30 a.m. July 17 meeting at the county water and sewer building in Fort Walton Beach. At that meeting, said Burgess, the BCC would decide whether to approve the sidewalk plans, and if so, how much sidewalk will actually be built.

MSBU Treasurer George Jellison said that the MSBU has enough money to pay for both sidewalks during the next two years, at a cost to the MSBU of about \$50,600 in fiscal year 2013, and \$67,154 in fiscal year 2014, for a total of \$102,754, if the county agrees to the plan.

In other business, the MSBU board agreed to work with the Choctawhatchee Electric Cooperative (CHELCO) to install 10 new street lights in Bluewater Bay during FY 2013 and another 10 lights in FY 2014, at a cost to the MSBU of about \$15,000 each year.

According to MSBU management consultant Archie Jernigan, CHELCO shares the installation cost, paying about \$500 per light for installation. The \$15,000 approved by the MSBU board will cover the MSBU's share of installation costs.

In addition, power and maintenance for the lights costs about \$20 per light per month, which is also in the MSBU budget but separate from the \$15,000 approved at the meeting.

This year's lights will be installed in dark areas without sidewalks, along Bay Drive, Southwind Drive, and Woodlands Drive. In addition, two lights will be installed along Bluewater Boulevard; between Antigua and Jamaica, and between Antigua and the golf cart crossing on Bluewater Boulevard.

MSBU member Joan McCarthy said she hopes to post information on the MSBU website, bluewaterbay.org, provided by candidates running for seats on the MSBU board in this year's Aug. 14 election, but is still waiting for each candidate to provide information about themselves.

According to information from the Okaloosa County Supervisor of Elections Office, current candidates for the MSBU board are:

Dist. 1: Judy Griffin, unopposed. (Dist. 1 incumbent Dave Strunk could not be immediately reached for comment.)

Dist. 2: Joan M McCarthy (incumbent), unopposed.

Dist. 3: Joseph H. Bowers and Douglas Burgess (incumbent).

Dist. 4: Joe Jellison (incumbent) and Debbie Stretch.

Dist. 5: Dale Blanchard (incumbent) and Stanley Richard Martin.

Also during the meeting, MSBU board members welcomed Okaloosa County Deputy Sheriff Brian Polson, who is the new "community policing officer" for Bluewater Bay and other nearby communities east of Rocky Bayou. Polson said he has previously worked as a regular patrolman in the Bluewater Bay area, and recently helped solve some major local cases including a home invasion and an organized fraud ring.



Dep. Brian Polson

Polson, who succeeds Deputy Frank Taylor as community officer, said he is beginning bicycle patrols in Bluewater Bay and elsewhere. Such patrols, he said, allow him to make more personal contacts with local residents during daytime patrols, while allowing him greater stealth after dark, in order to catch burglars, vandals and other nighttime criminals.

The MSBU meeting took place in the conference room of the Regency Inn, near the intersection of State Road 20 and White Point Road—a departure from the MSBU's previous practice of holding all its meetings at the Bluewater Bay golf clubhouse at 1950 Bluewater Boulevard. From now on, the MSBU will alternate meeting sites between the Regency and the clubhouse.

The new location for evening meetings was chosen as a quieter place for evening meetings, as the clubhouse tends to attract diners in the early evening, making it too noisy and busy a place to conduct meetings.

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# Fire district ex-bookkeeper pleads no contest in thefts

By Del Lessard and Mike Griffith  
Beacon Staff

Former North Bay Fire District administrative assistant Ralph Banegas entered a plea of no contest Thursday to a charge of grand theft.

Banegas, 59, of 4493 W. Parkwood Lane, Niceville, was a retired Air Force sergeant who had been employed at the North Bay Fire Department since 1995, and at the time of his arrest Feb. 28 on charges of grand theft and uttering forged instruments.

Banegas, who also served as bookkeeper, was earning \$46,417 a year at the time of his arrest. He was fired from his job Jan. 30, after an annual audit discovered he had allegedly misappropriated more than \$81,000 from the fire

district between June 7, 2005, to Sept. 30, 2011, according to sheriff's reports.

Banegas allegedly admitted to stealing the money—which eventually was pegged at more than \$84,000—by writing checks to himself then using the fire chief's signature stamp while the fire chief was out of his office.

According to a statement from William Eddins, State Attorney for the First Judicial Circuit, and



Ralph Banegas

to a phone statement by Chief Okaloosa County Assistant State Attorney Bill Bishop, Circuit Judge John Brown ordered a pre-sentence investigation and set sentencing for 9 a.m., Aug. 29, at the Okaloosa County courthouse annex in Fort Walton Beach.

Banegas faces a possible maximum sentence of 15 years in prison.

An audit last year uncovered that during 2006 through 2011, Banegas systematically misappropriated \$84,292 of the fire district's funds for his own use, according to sheriff's reports.

The audit led to an investigation by the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office and to Banegas' arrest.

Assistant State Attorney John

Reed prosecuted the case.

According to Bishop, Banegas' plea last Thursday included a stipulation that Banegas will repay the money he stole from the fire district. Bishop said prosecutors charged Banegas only with grand theft, since the other charge on which he was arrested, uttering fraudulent checks, was part of the theft charge.

North Bay has not yet been reimbursed for the money stolen by Banegas, but Fire Chief Joe Miller said the fire district is in the process of recovering funds through its insurance company. The fire chief and the chairman of the fire district, Jim Miller, both declined to comment on Banegas' plea.

## SPENDING

From page A-1

erty tax millage rate from the current 4.0644 mills to 5.6 mills, up 38 percent. Meantime, the city's property tax rolls shrank again this year by nearly \$1 million to \$179,361,333, according to preliminary tax rolls.

The draft 5.6 millage tax rate would raise \$956,498, compared with the current millage of 4.0644, which yield property tax revenue of \$698,420.

Commissioner Heyward Strong said "5.6 mills won't fly." In fact, no commissioner thought the budget presented

Monday would stand without reduction. Instead, the document gave the commission a first overall look at the fiscal task it faces.

Mayor Bruce Arnold asked each commissioner to study the draft and be prepared to "pare down" the spending plan at the next budget workshop July 23 at 6 p.m.

They also still have to make decisions on employee raises and cost of living increases. The



Heyward Strong

average city employee earns about \$14 an hour, Johnson said, and costs the city about \$47,518 each when taxes and benefits are added to salary figures.

In two weeks, on July 30, also at 6 p.m., commissioners will vote on a proposed millage tax rate for the upcoming fiscal year. The proposed millage rate is what the city will send to the Okaloosa County Property Appraiser and will appear on Truth in Millage (TRIM) Notices that will be mailed out to all property owners Aug. 17.

Along with the budget cuts to be considered next week, commissioners will hear from the Florida Department of

Corrections on a proposal to use an eight-prisoner labor crew up to 40 hours a week. Valparaiso would have to pay the salary of a corrections officer, as well as purchase a van to transport inmates to and from the prison. In return, the city could cut at least one full-time city employee, and potentially accomplish more tasks with the added manpower.

The mayor pointed out that the draft budget does not call for any customer rate increases next year for water and sewer, cable TV or sanitation, all city enterprises funded with user fees rather than taxes. City residents already saw steep rate hikes in water and sewer this year.

# Judicial candidates trade barbs

By Mike Griffith  
Beacon Correspondent

Some candidates aimed accusations and criticisms at others during a forum sponsored by the Republican Women of Okaloosa Federated, held July 11 at the Holiday Inn on Okaloosa Island.

Incumbent Circuit Judge Terry Ketchel and challenger Thomas Murphy took turns addressing last Wednesday's forum, followed by a similar exchange of views between incumbent Public Defender James Owens and challenger Bruce Miller.

Both races will be decided during the open primary election to be held Tuesday, Aug. 14.

Asked why he chose to challenge an incumbent circuit judge—an unusual move, especially for a fellow lawyer who might later try cases before his former opponent if he loses the election—Murphy, a former assistant state's attorney and chief assistant attorney with the Public Defender's office, told the Beacon he is running because, "The administration of justice can be improved," especially with regard to "case and docket management."

Murphy criticized Ketchel's management of the court docket, saying too many unresolved cases are being carried over, clogging the court schedule with delayed cases. "The docket in Crestview is all backed up," Murphy said. "It's the worst in Okaloosa County."

He also implied that Ketchel talks too much from the bench, saying, "A judge's job is to listen to the litigants, then rule. I don't talk just to hear myself talk."

Murphy also said he had been dismissed from his public defender job by Public Defender James Owens because of his decision to challenge Ketchel. He said Owens did not approve of one of his assistants challenging a judge who hears cases handled by pub-

lic defenders.

While addressing the forum, Murphy emphasized his business experience, as well as his prior experiences as an attorney, both as a prosecutor and a public defender.

"I understand both sides of criminal cases," Murphy said.

Ketchel, addressing the forum, said he has been a judge for six years, and has considerable experience handling family law, dependency, abuse and neglect cases, complex civil litigation, and criminal cases.

"I judge trials," Ketchel said. Ketchel said he is "a devout Christian, and proud to say it," and that he regards his work as a judge as a spiritual calling and an opportunity to be of service to others. He said the fellow jurist he most admires is Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, because of Thomas' "strict constructionist" interpretation of the U.S. Constitution.

Public Defender James Owens told the Republican Women that since his election in 2008, he has cut costs, improved efficiency, and saved money for taxpayers. For example, he said, he has improved collections of legal fees from public defender clients by 75 percent since taking office, and reduced the number of investigators employed by the public defender's office from 12 to 4. He also said he is proud to have the endorsement of Col. Bud Day, a former prisoner of war, Congressional Medal of Honor awardee, and local attorney.

Challenger Bruce Miller cited his experience as a business owner prior to becoming an attorney, saying it taught him how to run things efficiently. He said he has been endorsed by five past presidents of the Florida Bar, as well as by several former public defenders and state attorneys. He criticized Owens, saying, "The truth is not what you have been told." He said that under Owens, costs at the public defender's office have increased 33 percent, that Owens had hired 11 new employees, and had bought an expensive sport utility vehicle for the office.

Owens responded that the

SUV was purchased to replace a previous vehicle that had worn out, and is needed to a l l o w d e f e n s e attorneys to get out into the field when necessary to investigate and prepare for cases. He said some budget increases for his office had been mandated by the state without his approval.

Miller was given the last turn

at the lectern and used it to accuse Owens of hiring his own brother-in-law to work in the public defender's office, and, separately, of hiring an attorney who had previously been convicted of a crime.

Following the forum, the Beacon gave Owens an opportunity to respond to Miller's parting criticisms. He said that the attorney he hired had been convicted 10 years prior to being hired, and had served his sentence, reformed his conduct, and been restored to the bar before Owens hired him. He left for another appointment without addressing any of Miller's other accusations.



Bruce Miller



Terry Ketchel



James Owens



Thomas Murphy

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THE INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER —by Mike Griffith



What do you think is the most important part of preparing for a hurricane?

Location: Walmart



"Have an emergency kit, and when the storm comes, cover your head."

Victoria Brazee, 8, Crestview, Riverside Elementary School student



"Having water, batteries and supplies, and planning a good evacuation route."

Jamie Avery, 32, Niceville, stay-home mom and lawyer



"Having a well, thought-out plan."

James Rothchild, 35, Niceville, pool cleaner



"Having a good plan, knowing where you'll go, and what you're going to do."

Dawn O'Connor, Crestview, hospice care consultant



"Getting food and water."

Fred Womble, 84, Niceville, retired



"Having your emergency supplies ready, being aware of the storm, and having a plan."

Pam Todd, 56, Niceville, child care provider

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

ECONOMY

From page A-1 recent projects by the EDC, which is financed by taxpayers and private sources, to attract new companies and jobs to Okaloosa County, including "Project Pill," an ongoing effort to attract a pharmaceutical company. Rasmussen also mentioned an upcoming "Six Pillars Community Kick-Off Event" scheduled for Aug. 14, which will

be about establishing a "county-wide partnership among chambers of commerce and the EDC for a comprehensive strategic plan" to promote local economic growth. During regular business at the meeting, the Niceville City Council approved annexing and zoning four lots of the "Valparaiso Pine Crest 6" development, as requested by Michael Floyd, who asked the city to annex the lots into the city and to

zone them R-1B. According to the Niceville land development code, R-1B zoning allows for residential single-family dwellings of up to eight units per acre, with lots of no less than 5,000 square feet and widths of no less than 50 feet. Annexation of two of Floyd's lots were given final approval during the July 10 meeting, while the other two lots were approved on the first of three public readings, with final approval to be given at

subsequent meetings. The council unanimously approved the annexations and zonings after hearing no objections from anyone at the meeting. The city council also approved requests from Anna Radford and Grace Prestwood for a waiver of city land development code, to allow a zero rear setback on a lot between John Sims Parkway and Helms Street, east of the intersection of John Sims and Partin Drive. The council agreed to allow the vacant lot to be developed with 30 rather than the required 33 parking spaces for an auto parts store to be built at that location. The requests had been previously recommended for approval by the Niceville City Planning Commission.

One person, Tina Zudel, addressed the council in opposition to the waiver requests, saying the zero setback would provide no room for pedestrian traffic along Helms Street in the residential neighborhood behind the store. She said this would be a hazard to children and senior citizens, and would make it difficult for emergency vehicles to move through the area. Niceville City Manager Lannie Corbin replied that the

waiver would present no obstruction for emergency vehicles, and Fire Chief Tommy Mayville and Police Chief Dave Popwell agreed. Corbin also said the waiver is necessary because the widening of John Sims Parkway several years ago by the state of Florida reduced the size of many lots along John Sims, making it more difficult to build businesses along the city's main road without some easing of setback requirements.

The waiver will allow a new business to be established at a site "that has been on the market for years," and would otherwise be a vacant lot, Corbin said. The proposed auto parts store, he said, "is the first project for that site that has gotten beyond the talking stage." Corbin and representatives of the developer also assured the council that truck traffic to and from the new store will enter and exit the parking lot only via John Sims Parkway, not Helms Street. After hearing from Zudel and Corbin, the council approved the request by a vote of three to one, with Councilman Heath Rominger opposed. In other business, the council unanimously agreed to renew the

contract of city financial advisor Bill Fray for 36 months, and to increase Fray's retainer from \$1,800 to \$2,000 per month. Corbin also announced that Niceville Police Chief Dave Popwell has been selected to attend the FBI National Academy later this year. In addition to training its own agents, the FBI Academy in Quantico, Va., also provides graduate-level courses in various law enforcement subject areas to selected senior members of other police organizations from throughout the nation. Popwell will take such courses. Selection for the academy is considered a significant honor among police officers.

Lane closures

Drivers may encounter overnight intermittent lane restrictions at the intersection of State Road 85 South (Government Street) and John Sims Parkway in Niceville tonight, Wednesday, from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m. Thursday, according to the Florida Department of Transportation.



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**AWARDS**

From page A-1

In the 2011-12 school year, Florida revised the standards and achievement levels used to determine school grades with the roll-out of an updated and more difficult Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test (FCAT). The FCAT 2.0 is a much more rigorous assessment and is based on the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards. In addition, the state's accountability system implemented changes such as the inclusion of all students with dis-

abilities and English language learners. The Florida Department of Education released, July 11, school report card grades on 2,586 public elementary, middle schools and combination schools (without high school grades). The 2012 results showed 257 fewer A elementary schools statewide compared to the 1,026 elementary schools that earned an A the year before. There were also 235 middle schools receiving A report cards this year, down 105 from the previous school year. Florida has graded schools on

an A-F scale since 1999, offering parents, teachers, students and taxpayers a simple way to see how well their schools are doing. High-performing schools receiving "A" report cards have also received additional "reward" money, typically about \$100 per student, which most schools use to give teachers a bonus.



Alexis Tibbetts

"I am particularly pleased that it is the first time that we have included students who are just learning English and students with disabilities in the school grade performance component," said Commissioner of Education Gerard Robinson. "It is important that we measure our schools by the performance of all students, since that is the most accurate and fair way to represent our diverse state." However, based on a recommendation by the Commissioner's Taskforce on Inclusion and Accountability, the State Board of Education in

December approved a policy ensuring that no school would drop more than one letter grade from the previous year. The policy was intended to provide public school leaders, teachers and students a year of transition to the new standards, according to the Department of Education. There were 388 schools, out of 2,513, that benefited from the policy limiting a drop in school grades by more than one letter level, Robinson told reporters in a conference call last week. "We welcome the changes to the assessment and accountability programs that were adopted by

the State Board of Education this year and we understand that though we have seen some school grades lowered, it does not mean that our teacher or student performance has declined," Tibbetts said. "We will continue our commitment to improve writing, reading, math and science skills for all students especially our English language learners, students with disabilities and minority students. Okaloosa County is committed to continuous improvement and accelerating our high achieving students as well as remediating our most challenged students," the schools superintendent added.

# The Bay Beacon's 'Hurricane Watch'

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# Woman nabbed in alleged fraud ring

By Del Lessard  
Beacon Staff Writer

A south Florida woman arrested after trying to cash a forged check at a Niceville bank allegedly said she was part of an eight-member fraud ring, according to an arrest report.

Lisa Marie Emanuele, an unemployed waitress, 36, of 1853 Taft St., Hollywood, Fla., was arrested by Bay Okaloosa County sheriff's deputies in Niceville July 6 on charges of unauthorized possession of a forged or stolen driver's license, uttering a false instrument, swindle to obtain property under \$20,000, criminal attempt to solicit organized fraud and possession of drug paraphernalia.

A sheriff's arrest report gave the following account:

Emanuele drove up to the drive-through window of a Niceville bank, 4500 E. Highway 20, and tried to cash a

check using a forged or fraudulent Florida driver's license for identification.

A teller notified authorities after Emanuele wasn't able to answer questions to verify her identity. Emanuele drove off and left the check and driver's license behind.

A deputy stopped a car matching the description given by the teller in Niceville about 10 minutes later. Emanuele allegedly admitted trying to pass the check and driver's license, knowing both to be fraudulent or stolen.

Emanuele also said she was working with seven other people in an organized effort to commit fraud. A female passenger in the car told deputies that Emanuele was working with six others to commit fraud.

Michele Nicholson, a spokesperson for the sheriff's office, said the passenger was not part of the scheme. Nicholson said investigators don't believe any of the other individuals involved in the alleged fraud are local.

As of Monday, Emanuele was being held at the Okaloosa County Jail in lieu of \$5,000 bail. She is scheduled to appear in court Aug. 7.



Lisa Marie Emanuele

# Valparaiso man accused of stealing from machines

By Del Lessard  
Beacon Staff Writer

A Valparaiso man was arrested on charges of stealing money from two vending machines, and trying to break into a third, according to reports from the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office.

Nelson Lee Oglesby, 28, of 156 Westview Ave., Apt. 16, Valparaiso, was arrested by sheriff's deputies June 29 on charges of grand theft, two counts, and molesting a coin-operated machine, three counts.

On June 20, Niceville police went to a Niceville church — where Oglesby was employed as a dishwasher — to help serve a Crestview arrest warrant on previous, unrelated charges of grand theft, molesting a vending machine, second offense, and criminal mischief. Officers then found four pills of Roxicotin in Oglesby's pocket and arrested him on a drug-possession charge, according to a police report.

After Oglesby was jailed on the previous charges, deputies reportedly listened to a jailhouse phone call he made June 22 in which he allegedly admitted breaking into a vending machine in Destin and getting a "grand." Some \$1,000 had been reported stolen from a motel in Destin.

Three people who worked with Oglesby at the Niceville church identified him from images captured on surveillance videos dur-

ing some of the alleged crimes, according to arrest reports.

Sheriff's arrest reports gave the following account:

—On the night of June 4-5, Oglesby allegedly broke into the coin machine in the game room of a Fort Walton Beach bowling alley, 653 N. Beal Parkway, and stole \$362. A surveillance video showed Oglesby looking in both directions before taking out an unknown tool, screwing it into the lock, popping the lock and pouring all the coins into a tan backpack, then leaving the bowling center.

—On June 8, Oglesby allegedly entered a Holiday Inn, 1020 E. Highway 98, Destin, with a tan or camouflaged backpack. A witness saw him banging on a coin machine in a game room. A video surveillance camera later recorded Oglesby breaking into the coin machine using some type of tool and taking an estimated \$1,000 in coins. He was seen leaving in a tan minivan registered to him.

—On June 20, Oglesby entered CiCi's Pizza, 417-E Mary Esther Cutoff, Fort Walton Beach, and attempted to break into a money-exchange vending machine by using some type of tool with a screw device. He damaged the vending machine, but was unable to get the money because a manager became suspicious. When the manager approached him, Oglesby allegedly pulled out a dollar bill and attempted to straighten it on the side of the machine, which was covering the lock. After Oglesby departed, the manager realized the lock on the coin machine had been damaged.



Nelson Lee Oglesby

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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

Javaris Ralphael Dawsey, unemployed, 26, of 703 Birch St., Crestview, was arrested by Valparaiso police July 5 on charges of possession of a controlled substance, MDMA, tampering with evidence and possession of less than 20 grams of marijuana.

Just before midnight, a police officer noticed Dawsey appeared to be sleeping in a vehicle parked outside a night club, 458 Old Highway 10. Approaching the vehicle to check on Dawsey's welfare, police noticed a bag with a white substance, later identified as MDMA in pill form, and a self-rolled cigar commonly used to smoke marijuana, lying on Dawsey's lap. Dawsey allegedly threw the drugs out the front passenger side window as the officer came around the vehicle.

Shauna Lee Lapan, 34, of 152 Black Bear Circle, Niceville, was arrested by Niceville police June 30 on a charge of aggravated battery, domestic violence. Lapan allegedly used a butcher knife in an attempt to cut the victim as a verbal altercation escalated.

Tarik Cymone King, 26, of 304 Reeves St., Lot F-16, Niceville, was arrested by Niceville police June 22 on a charge of domestic violence battery, second or subsequent offense. King was subsequently arrested at the county jail July 4 on a warrant for felony battery that allegedly occurred in Niceville May 13. As of July 11 King was being held at the Okaloosa County Jail in lieu of \$50,000 bail on each count.



Tarik C. King

Muhammad R. Morris, unemployed, 37, of 2601 26th St., Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies July 5 on a violation of probation charge on the original charges of fleeing/eluding a law enforcement officer, possession of cocaine and child abuse without great harm.

Jeffrey Lynn Johns, 50, of 103 Poplar Place, Niceville, was arrested by Niceville police June 28 on a charge of felony battery, domestic violence.

An 18-year-old Niceville man, who was 17 years old when the alleged crimes occurred, was arrested by Niceville police June 22 on charges of criminal mischief and trespassing. The suspect allegedly cut the tires of a Niceville resident Feb. 15.

Cleire Cristina Carrizo, a housekeeper, 41, of 167 Concert Court, Freeport, was arrested by sheriff's deputies June 29 on Rocky Bayou Drive, Niceville, on a charge of driving without a valid license.

Tony Alan Harkness II, 28, of 186 NE Eglin Parkway, Fort Walton Beach, was arrested by sheriff's deputies at an address in Valparaiso June 28 on a charge of possession of less than 20 grams of marijuana.

Raquel Soto, a restaurant hostess, 42, of 602 Powell Drive, Niceville, was arrested by Niceville police June 28 on a charge of domestic violence battery.

Ryan R. Chin, unemployed, 26, of 5 Mooney Road, Fort Walton Beach, was arrested by Niceville police July 6 on charges of resisting a law enforcement officer without violence, two counts, and one count each of disorderly conduct and possession of drug paraphernalia.

Mark Eric Payne, 52, of 205 Reeves St., Lot 20, Niceville, was arrested by Niceville police July 5 on a charge of aggravated assault on a law enforcement officer. Payne was allegedly resisting treatment by EMTs for an arterial

head injury he said he got from a fall, and ran into his house and slammed the door. When a police officer knocked on the door, Payne allegedly opened the door and encouraged his pitbull dog to attack the officer, and also advanced aggressively himself toward the officer. The officer sprayed the dog twice with pepper spray to disrupt its charge, and also sprayed Payne.

Melvin Duane Thompson, a glass installer, 37, of 1480-D 30th St., Niceville, was arrested by Niceville police, subsequent to a traffic stop for loud music, July 6, on a charge of driving while license suspended or revoked, habitual offender.

Jan Christopher Montgomery, a bar bouncer, 27, of 934 Rue de Palm, Niceville, was arrested by Niceville police, subsequent to a traffic stop for loud music, July 6, on a charge of driving while license suspended or revoked, habitual offender.

Kristopher Arseneau Joyner, 38, of 1912 Oak Ave., Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies June 28 on a charge of violating a domestic violence protection injunction.

Brian David Miller, 48, of 611 Ivy Ave., Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies July 7 on a charge of selling a controlled substance, oxycodone. In April sheriff's deputies using a confidential informant allegedly made a controlled drug purchase from Miller, four, 30 milligram pills of oxycodone at a price of \$33 for each pill.



Brian D. Miller

Kenneth Harry Brixey II, a cook, 28, of 4465 Kingslynn Road, Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies July 7 on misdemeanor worthless check charges related to checks for \$30, \$25 and \$136.39.

Karmen K. Barrett, 67, of 401 20th St., Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies July 6 on a charge of theft, more than \$300 but less than \$5,000.

## DUI arrests

Heather Michaelle Riedel, 29, of 284 Montana Ave., Valparaiso, was arrested by Niceville police on a charge of DUI on Highway 20 at Cedar Avenue, July 4 at 12:25 p.m. Riedel was also cited for failure to maintain a single lane.

Subsequent to a post arrest search of the vehicle, police located a cellophane bag of methamphetamine. Riedel was subsequently arrested on charges of possession of a controlled substance without a prescription, methamphetamine, and resisting an officer without violence.

## Thefts

A Valparaiso resident from the first block of Bayshore Point reported that sometime July 1-6 unknown person(s) stole a cloth bag located in a bathroom cabinet. The bag contained three gold bracelets, three pairs of gold earrings and an emerald ring.

Police were called to a Niceville motel, 101 N. Highway 85, just before 2 a.m. July 3 after one of the occupants heard her car alarm going off and found that someone had attempted to break into the vehicle. Nothing was reported missing from the vehicle.

A Niceville resident reported that sometime between 6:30 p.m. and 9:40 p.m. July 4, unknown person(s) stole the victim's purse from her car. The vehicle was parked at both a Niceville church, 622 Bayshore Drive, and a local grocery store, 1015 E. John Sims Parkway,

# Fire Department Reports

## Niceville

The Niceville Fire Department responded to the following calls from July 9, 2012 through July 15, 2012.

1 Structure Fire	24 Emergency Medical Calls
1 Vehicle Fire	3 Vehicle Crash
0 Other Fire	0 Vehicle Crash with Extrication
0 Illegal Burn	4 Other Emergency Calls
0 False Alarms	0 Hazardous Conditions

STREET	SITUATION	DATE	TIME
State Road 85 North	Vehicle Crash	07/09/12	10:13
Reeves Street	Medical	07/10/12	02:47
N. Partin Drive	Medical	07/10/12	10:00
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Medical	07/10/12	13:14
Roberts Drive	Medical	07/10/12	18:14
State Road 85 North	Vehicle Fire	07/10/12	20:44
N. Partin Drive	Medical	07/11/12	04:52
N. Partin Drive	Medical	07/11/12	08:52
Government Avenue	Medical	07/11/12	15:50
N. Partin Drive	Medical	07/11/12	22:57
Pin Oak Circle	Medical	07/11/12	23:33
Ellis Avenue	Medical	07/12/12	08:20
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Vehicle Crash	07/12/12	11:58
20th Street	Medical	07/12/12	17:49
McKinney Street	Canceled	07/12/12	20:44
State Road 85 North	Medical	07/13/12	00:27
State Road 85 North	Good Intent	07/13/12	06:32
White Street	Medical	07/13/12	10:29
Juniper Avenue	Medical	07/14/12	06:43
N. Partin Drive	Medical	07/14/12	08:49
Gracie Lane	Medical	07/14/12	10:21
N. Partin Drive	Look Out	07/14/12	10:58
Linden Avenue	Medical	07/14/12	13:53
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Vehicle Crash	07/14/12	14:28
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Medical	07/14/12	15:45
E. College Blvd.	Structure Fire	07/14/12	20:38
22nd Street	Alarm Activation	07/15/12	03:00
Bayshore Drive	Medical	07/15/12	09:50
Edgewater Drive	Medical	07/15/12	12:27
N. Partin Drive	Medical	07/15/12	12:27
Pine Court	Medical	07/15/12	16:39
23rd Street	Medical	07/15/12	21:07

Weekly Safety Tip: EDITH, do you know her? Well, it stands for Exit Drills In The Home. Everyone needs to practice this exercise prior to an actual emergency, so the entire family will know what to do should an emergency occur. Visit the Niceville Fire Department's Web page on Facebook.

## North Bay

The North Bay Fire Department responded to the following calls from July 8, 2012 through July 16, 2012.

Street	Situation	Date	Time
North White Point Road	EMS call	07/08/12	15:09
North White Point Road	Medical assist.	07/08/12	17:20
Windlake Court	False alarm	07/08/12	20:44
Saint Croix Cove	Medical assist.	07/08/12	21:05
Ida Coon Circle	EMS call	07/09/12	12:33
Range Road	Bomb scare, no bomb	07/09/12	15:58
North White Point Road	EMS call	07/10/12	08:51
North White Point Road	Medical assist.	07/10/12	17:20
Glenlake Circle	EMS call	07/11/12	03:08
Caribbean Way & Nassau Dr.	Emergency medical service	07/11/12	08:45
West Birkdale Circle	Medical assist.	07/11/12	09:50
Knollwood Road	EMS call	07/11/12	16:01
Bluewater Blvd.	Motor vehicle accident	07/12/12	00:56
Jamaica Way	EMS call	07/12/12	01:13
Highway 20	EMS call	07/12/12	17:40
North White Point Road	EMS call	07/12/12	17:55
Napa Way	EMS call	07/13/12	07:54
Highway 20 East	EMS call	07/14/12	13:06
Glen Eagles Drive	EMS call	07/14/12	16:38
East College Blvd.	Building fire	07/14/12	20:40
Oaklake Lane	Medical assist.	07/14/12	20:57
Evans Road	Dispatched & canceled	07/14/12	23:40
White Point Road	EMS call	07/15/12	10:55
Parkwood Lane	Dispatched & canceled	07/15/12	22:59
Balmoral Drive	EMS call	07/16/12	04:23

Visit northbayfd.org for more information.

## East Niceville

The East Niceville Fire District responded to the following calls during the month of June 2012:

Location	Situation	Date	Time
Kent Court	Service call	06/01/12	15:00
Moore Street	Medical assist.	06/02/12	07:53
Windlake Drive	Detector activation, no fire	06/04/12	09:02
E. College Blvd.	Medical assist.	06/04/12	12:48
N. White Point Rd.	Smoke detector activation	06/04/12	20:05
W. Troon Drive	Building fire	06/09/12	16:14
48th Street	Medical assist.	06/09/12	22:31
Patti Cove	Unauthorized burning	06/10/12	12:19
Bayou Drive	Medical assist.	06/10/12	18:00
Bayou Drive	Dispatched & canceled	06/11/12	05:04
Bayou Drive	Medical assist.	06/11/12	11:00
19th Street	Smoke or odor removal	06/12/12	20:37
Union Avenue	Medical assist.	06/13/12	02:17
13th Street	Medical assist.	06/14/12	08:34
Bay Circle	Medical assist.	06/14/12	17:47
Gingko Avenue	Unauthorized burning	06/15/12	02:45
N. Partin Dr.	Alarm system sounded due to malfunction	06/15/12	15:21
Parkwood Place	Smoke detector activation	06/17/12	18:59
Osceola Bay Drive	Medical assist.	06/17/12	19:53
Reeves Street	Medical assist.	06/17/12	21:56
Ridge Lane	False alarm	06/20/12	15:27
Maple	Emergency medical service incident	06/21/12	13:04
E. State Road 20	Vehicle accident	06/23/12	15:36
Crestview Avenue	Building fire	06/24/12	03:19
48th Street	Citizen complaint	06/25/12	17:50
Boxer Avenue	Dispatched & canceled	06/25/12	22:54
E. State Road 20	Alarm system sounded due to malfunction	06/27/12	16:47
Redwood Avenue	Extrication of victims from vehicle	06/27/12	19:24

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during the time frame, and the victim was unsure if the car had been locked. The \$850 purse contained \$100 cash, a waterproof camera, a video game device and various games, a cell phone, a \$300 wallet and at least four credit cards and various military and miscellaneous IDs. One of the stolen credit cards was used at a bank ATM at 10 p.m. the same night, before the victim could cancel the cards. Total value of the stolen items was \$2,070.

A Niceville automotive business, 1595 E. John Sims Parkway, reported July 5 that unknown person(s) broke into a car on the back lot and stole an expensive instrument cluster. The vehicle had been on the lot for three months.

A Niceville resident reported that someone had fraudulently attempted to use his credit card July 1 on a \$311 transaction unsuccessfully, but then made three successful charges on the card July 2 and 3. Police determined that the fraudulent purchase(s) were mailed to a person in Pensacola. The victim subsequently canceled his credit card and requested a new account.

A Niceville resident from the 1700 block of Oakview Cove reported that sometime June 30-July 1 unknown person(s) stole two, four-foot-tall metal flamingo yard decorations from the yard. The pair of stolen tin birds

were valued at \$200.

A Niceville resident from the 1500 block of Hickory Street reported that unknown person(s) burglarized his unlocked car while it was parked at the residence sometime June 24-25. An Apple iPod, a charger and stereo connector were reported stolen. The stolen items were valued at \$215.

## Criminal Mischief

A man reported that unknown person(s) shattered the rear window of his pickup truck with a beer can July 4. The victim said while he was driving north on Palm Boulevard between 27th Street and Dyer he heard a loud noise and thought a firecracker may have hit his car. He stopped and checked the roof but did not see anything. The next morning he discovered the rear window shattered, but held in place by the tinting, and a half-empty beer can in the bed.

## Other

A 17-year-old Niceville boy was issued a criminal summons by Niceville police, June 26 on a charge of petit theft (shoplifting). The boy was allegedly observed concealing a fishing reel in his pants pocket and consuming barbecue chicken chunks and a soda in the Niceville Walmart, then leaving the remainder of the food in the grocery cart and walking out of the store without paying. The merchandise was valued at more than \$88.

# MILLAGE

From page A-1

meeting July 10 that the fire district had raised the property tax millage rate over the past several years.

"I don't believe we need to go higher than the current 2.35 mills," he told fellow commissioners.

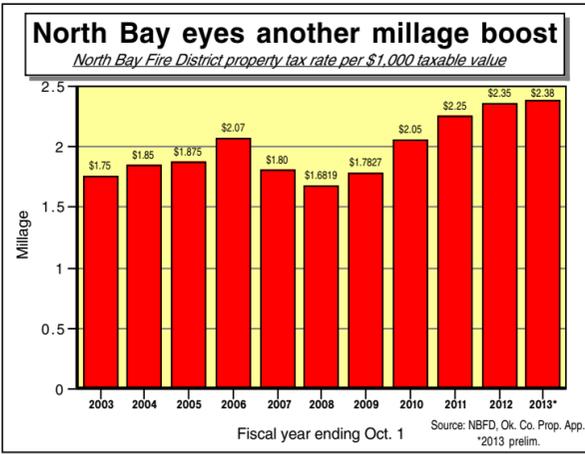
Fire Chief Joe Miller, no relation, suggested that fire commissioners consider setting the tentative millage rate at 2.38 mills, noting that they could lower the rate later, but not go higher, during public hearings in September. The rolled-back rate—the tax rate that would generate the same amount of property tax revenue as the current year—is 2.3585, the fire chief said.

The fire chief has proposed a budget next year, based on the current 2.35 millage rate of \$1,978,189, about \$2,400 less than the current year budget.

Commissioner Lee Wetzell asked the fire chief what the impact would be if the millage rate stayed at the current tax rate.

Chief Miller replied that there was still the unresolved annual pay raises for management personnel, including three captains and three chiefs. The captains recently received authorization to be represented by the firefighter's union as a separate supervisory unit, he said. Because those payroll costs are still unknown, as well as some insurance costs, the chief said shortfalls could result in fire commissioners having to dip into reserve funds, again.

Chairman Miller said the current budget includes extra



funds to bring reserve up to \$150,000, and the current budget currently projects a surplus of \$18,500. That, he said, "gives a lot of flexibility we didn't have in the past."

With the budgetary unknowns, Treasurer Steven Strait said he didn't think the district could go below the rolled-back rate.

Commissioner Janet Santner made a motion to set the maximum millage rate at 2.38 mills recommended by the fire chief.

Wetzell asked what the millage rate was five years ago, in the 2008-09 fiscal year—1.7827 mills—and noted the tax rate had gone up by more than 25 percent since then (actually 33.5 percent compared with the proposed 2013 rate).

By a 5-0 vote, commissioners set the proposed millage rate at 2.38 mills.

The proposed millage rate is typically required of local taxing authorities in July in order to meet an Aug. 4 deadline to send the tax rate information to the Okaloosa County Property Appraiser.

The Property Appraiser will notify property owners about the fire district's proposed millage rate, as well as tax rates from other applicable taxing authorities, when it mails out Truth in Millage (TRIM) notices Aug. 17. In addition to proposed property tax rates, TRIM notices also tell taxpayers the dates of public hearings for each taxing district's budget that levies a property tax on them.

The North Bay Fire Commission will hold the first of two public hearings on the proposed millage and budget Sept. 11 at 7 p.m. at the fire station, 1024 White Point Road. The second hearing is tentatively set for Sept. 19 at 7 p.m.

In other business at their July 10 meeting fire commissioners heard that firefighters responded to 99 calls during the month of May, including five fire calls, 66 rescue calls and 28 miscellaneous calls. The district responded to a total of 600 calls through May 31 this year, compared to 533 calls during the same period last year.

# Niceville man, 81, dies in crash

By Del Lessard  
Beacon Staff Writer

An 81-year-old Niceville man was one of two people killed Saturday in a three-car accident on State Road 4 in Baker, according to authorities.

John Joseph St. John, 81, a Niceville resident, lone occupant of a 2011 Toyota Camry, received fatal injuries and was pronounced dead on the scene at 6:28 a.m., according to a report from the Florida Highway Patrol.

Also pronounced dead at the scene was Racine D. Ison, 87, of Grayson, Ky., one of seven people traveling in a Chevrolet Suburban.

The FHP report gave the following account:

A 2000 Suburban driven by Charlotte F. Black, 62, of Olive Hill, Ky., was traveling

south on SR 4 when, witnesses reported, it drifted into the northbound lane and struck St. John's Toyota head-on, causing both vehicles to spin.

St. John's vehicle overturned and came to rest on its roof in a ditch on the east side of the shoulder of SR 4.

The Suburban overturned onto its right side, then back onto its tires, as it continued to travel south in the northbound lane.

Venia Groves, 55, of Bessemer, Ala., driver of a northbound 2009 Ford Fusion, took evasive action to avoid the Suburban but was unable to avoid colliding into its left side.

Ison, a passenger in the Suburban, was ejected during the crash and pronounced deceased on scene by

Okaloosa County EMS. She was not wearing a seatbelt at the time of the crash.

Black, the driver of the Suburban, was taken to Sacred Heart Hospital in Pensacola with critical injuries. Five other passengers in the Suburban, all Kentucky residents ranging in age from 2 to 64 years old, were taken to North Okaloosa Medical Center with minor injuries.

Groves, the driver of the Ford Fusion, received minor injuries but was not transported.

The Suburban and Toyota were totaled in the crash, while the Fusion received \$10,000 damage, according to the FHP.

An investigation was continuing, according to the FHP report.

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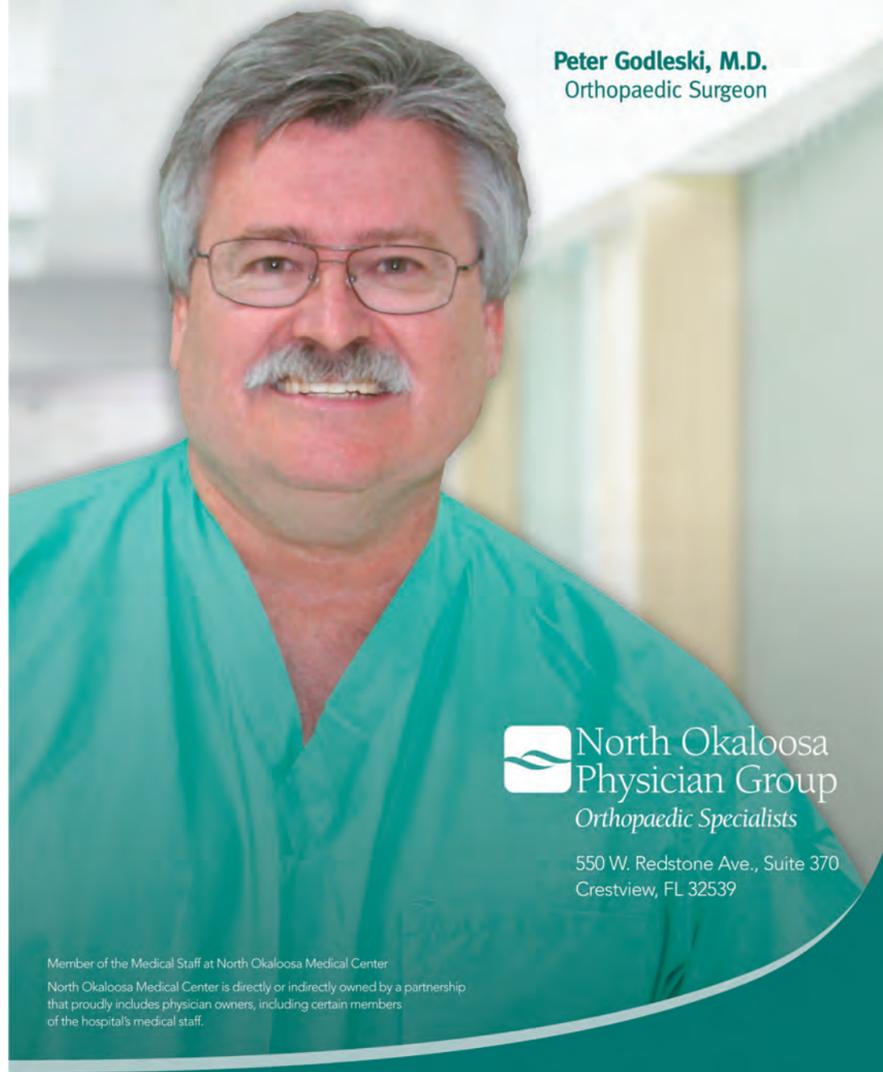
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# E. Niceville fire district eyes boost in tax rate

By Mike Griffith  
Beacon Correspondent

East Niceville fire commissioners are trying to decide how to fill a gap of about \$39,783

between their expected expenses and income for the coming fiscal year, which begins Oct. 1. They began their annual budget process during a meeting July 9.

Whether to balance the upcoming budget by cutting spending or by raising property taxes remains to be decided, although during the meeting the fire commissioners authorized a maximum millage rate of 2.44 for the coming year—up from the current level of 2.37. That rate, however, may be lowered during the August and September com-

mission meetings.

At the current millage rate of 2.37, a taxpayer whose home is appraised at \$200,000 taxable value after homestead exemption and other discounts pays about \$474 in property tax to the East Niceville Fire District. At the possible higher rate of 2.44, the same homeowner would pay \$488.

During the meeting, fire commission treasurer Ed Dunbar and commission chairman Mike Marcolongo said income from property taxes in fiscal year 2013

is expected to be about \$621,772—less than last year's tax revenue of \$625,252. Carry-over funds from fiscal year 2012 will be \$150,000—also down from the fiscal year 2012 figure of \$164,022, while interest and miscellaneous revenue will remain steady at \$3,500.

Expenses during fiscal year 2013, however, are forecast to be \$815,055.20—higher than the fiscal year 2012 figure of \$802,774.45, according to figures presented to the fire commission by East Niceville Fire

Chief Michael Wright. The increase, according to Wright's figures, is largely due to increases in expenses for such things as insurance and personnel costs.

Fire commissioners discussed options for balancing the budget. One option is to cut spending for the coming year, but that could involve cuts to personnel, salaries, or future equipment purchases. Raising taxes would be hard on local taxpayers.

"Things are tough for people out there," said Marcolongo.

Another option would be for

East Niceville's five fire commissioners to cut or eliminate their own salaries of \$500 per month—a move that could save \$30,000 from the fiscal year 2013 budget. That move, however, would still leave a gap of nearly \$10,000 to be filled with other cost cuts or tax hikes.

The budget will be discussed further at the fire commission's next meeting, scheduled for 7 p.m., Aug. 13, in the East Niceville fire station at 1709 27th St., just west of Redwood Avenue and south of State Road 20.



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This expansion supplements the four lifts dedicated to transmission work. That's not the only addition to the business. Senior K9 greeter "Pepper" has taken on a new assistant, year-old "Tony," who is eagerly learning the welcoming trade.

Twin Cities Transmission is independently and locally owned by Adam Marthis. Along with fiancée Brandy Pirc, he prides himself on being a family-owned, hometown operation that has gladly served the Twin Cities area since 2000.

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## Who's News



**Hillary LaMountain**

**Hillary LaMountain**, a Niceville High School student, won first place in Certiport's Adobe Certified Associate (ACA) Championship—a competition that encourages ACA-certified students to showcase their digital communication abilities using Adobe Flash, Photoshop and Dreamweaver. Hillary received a \$1,000 scholarship and the Adobe premium software Creative Suite CS6. In order to compete, students were asked to provide their school information, ACA Certification verification and submit two projects previously created using Adobe Photoshop. Certiport reviewed the submissions and selected the finalists based on their score earned on the ACA certification exam and the techniques shown in their projects. The top students were invited to compete at Certiport's ACA Championship May 5, at Seminole State College near Orlando. Hillary is a student in Christina Sauer's Advanced Photoshop class in the IT Program.

# Mission Okaloosa campers work for a cause

By Tess Hollis  
*Beacon Staff Writer*

Forget the sun, sand and surf—youth from Mission Okaloosa got down and dirty for one week to spread fellowship throughout the community.

The various acts of kindness and hours of volunteer work were all part of Mission Okaloosa, a program started by Niceville United Methodist Church to teach kids what it means to serve others.

The campers were split into nine groups; each with a mission of helping a specific organization in the area. According to the church's middle school minister, Tyler Fuller, 100 area middle-school pre-teens and 30 adult volunteers participated in the program this year. Most of the volunteers who participated were from the Niceville area, with a few from Destin and Crestview.

This year, the sites included the Emerald Coast Autism Center; Grace Rides, which uses horses to help overcome emotional and physical challenges; Choctaw Beach United Methodist Church Vacation Bible School; Harvest Vineyard, a faith-based organization for those struggling with drugs or alcohol; Children in Crisis, which provides homes for abused and neglected children in Northwest Florida; and Youth Village.

This is the program's third year, which is funded by a cost the campers pay to participate, as well as donations made to various Okaloosa County churches.

Fuller said the sites are chosen based on personal relationships with each organization. The exception this year was Youth Village in Fort Walton



Beacon photo by Tess Hollis

**Campers from Mission Okaloosa worked to build cubbies and spruce up the grounds of Youth Village, Fort Walton Beach. From left, back row: Jacob Cyrus, Dirae McMullen and Mark Humes. Front row: Nathan Smith, Holt Agnew, Emily Bennett, Camron Holland, Jordon Brandau, Heiley DeRosia and Lindsay Schmidt.**

Beach.

"We read about Youth Village in The Bay Beacon," he said. "I went and visited Ms. Nellie and just fell in love with her," Fuller said.

Youth Village is a non-profit organization that was formed by Nellie Bogar, of Niceville, to create a safe place to provide various educational and recreational services to children ages 5 through 16. The organization is home to an afterschool program and summer camp.

The group assigned to Youth Village spent the week sprucing up the grounds, building storage cubbies for the children and making new signs to make the organization more visible from the road.

Dirae McMullen, supervisor for the Youth Village group, said they were basically looking to do anything that would

"make the place better."

"This is a good way to start fellowship," she said. "The kids have been phenomenal. They are being exposed to the real world, to the world around them. The main purpose is to watch how God works through these kids."

**"This is a good way to start fellowship."**

—Dirae McMullen, Mission Okaloosa volunteer

meeting the kids at Youth Village."

Bogar said she was most impressed with the tirelessness of the volunteers.

"They helped me show the Youth Village children that we are all here to serve and help one another, and not just look out for ourselves," she said.

Even though the youth worked hard during the day, Bogar said they still had the energy to dance and participate in acting scenes with the Youth Village children.

"I want to keep them all here with us," Bogar said. "A couple of the older kids have agreed to come back and volunteer with us when school begins in August."

After a hard day's work at Youth Village and the other volunteer sites, the Okaloosa adolescents convened at First United Methodist Church

Crestview where they stayed for the entire week. Each night, the youth participated in fellowship activities, in which they discussed their experiences.

"We spend a lot of time during the year teaching about living a life by Jesus, but getting them out there for a week and serving among people different than them helps them learn to live a life that looks like Jesus' more than telling them ever does," Fuller said.

Another group of Okaloosa campers, assigned to the Emerald Coast Autism Center, revamped the organization's new facility in Palm Plaza, Niceville, that will open in August. ECAC is currently housed in St. Jude's Episcopal Church, Niceville.

The center was founded in 2009 to fulfill the need in Northwest Florida for an Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy-based, year-round school dedicated to serving the needs of children on the autism spectrum.

"The youth are helping us open this second facility," said ECAC Director Staci Berryman. "We've just maxed out our space at St. Jude's."

The volunteers tore out old carpet and painted the walls of the new facility bright, friendly colors.

"They took such a burden off our shoulders by helping with this project," Berryman said.

According to Fuller, many of the campers who participate in Mission Okaloosa return the following year.

"This group of kids pays money to work all week, but many do the trip over and over," he said. "These kids are hungry spiritually, and they want to grow in their faith; this is the best way to do that."

# Bluewater Bay surgeon gets Bronze Star

By S. A. Burchett  
*Correspondent*

Lt. Col. Patrick S. Brannan of Parkwood Estates in Bluewater Bay, assigned to the 96th Surgical Operations Squadron, 96th Medical Group, was presented a Bronze Star July 11 for Meritorious Achievement while deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, in Afghanistan during a ceremony presided over by Col. Sal Nodjomian, 96th Air Base Wing Commander.

The Bronze Star Medal is a United States Armed Forces individual military decoration awarded for bravery, acts of merit, or meritorious service. It is the nation's ninth-highest decoration and the fourth-highest combat award of the U.S. Armed Forces. The men provided more than 1,000 surgeries, not just for U.S. service members but also for locals who were innocent bystanders during attacks and also the native children who were



Photo by S.A. Burchett

**Lt. Col. Patrick S. Brannan and his wife, Holly, with their children, Ema Kate and Elle Grace, were all smiles after he received his Bronze Star for lifesaving work while deployed.**

in need of surgical intervention. Brannan completed 604 lifesaving operations on United States and local national patients as part of a forward deployed surgical element at the busiest operating room in the area of responsibility.

After insurgents attacked a market, Brannan directed the surgical care of critically injured patients, 31 of whom required emergency surgery. During this 12-hour mass casualty response, he saved the lives of critically wounded patients, including chil-

dren. Brannan credits his pre-deployment training, preparation and experienced people to rely on for help during the mass casualty.

"Any time you have a situation like that, people who maybe aren't medics will come out to help as well," he said. "If it's a situation like that, it's all hands on deck. You rely on everyone around you."

As for receiving the Bronze Star, Brannan said he feels humbled.

"I had a great team; I was just a part of a team that was doing all this," he said. "The fact that they gave me this is undeserved. I feel blessed; I feel humbled."

Nodjomian also said, "Those types of counter-insurgency operations, the types of things that they did, go so far, as far as good will." They will go on and talk about these great Americans in a much better way than (as a result of) some of the other tactics we've been known to use in the past."

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**UMC Men's Basketball**

Registration is ongoing until Aug. 23 for Niceville United Methodist Church Men's Basketball League, ages 17 and up. Cost: \$50 until Aug. 14. One game per week will be played on a Tuesday or Thursday evening. Registration: nicevilleumc.org/recreation, or the Community Life Center of Niceville UMC.

**Volleyball summer camp**

Niceville United Methodist Church will hold a volleyball summer camp for youth entering grades 6-8. The camp will be Aug. 9-11. Early bird rate is \$55 until July 19, and increases to \$65 July 20-26. This is an intense 3-day skills camp that will prepare participants for further advancement. Lunch will be provided and each player will receive a T-shirt. Registration: nicevilleumc.org, or the Community Life Center of Niceville UMC.

**Co-ed league**

The city of Niceville Recreation Department is now accepting teams for its fall co-ed league. Entry is \$275

per team, plus individual user fees of \$10 for residents, and \$30 for non-residents. Play will begin Aug. 13. Games will be held on Monday nights. Info: Jim Baughman, 729-4062, or jbaughman@niceville.org.

**Soccer referees needed**

Registration is ongoing until Aug. 8 for the USSF Entry Level Referee Course. The Florida State Referees, Inc. (FSR) has established this class for the beginning referee that consists of online education modules and 12 hours of classroom training and participation. The course is offered annually in Okaloosa County. The 2012 class will be held at Comfort Suites, Niceville, Aug. 8, 9, 13, and 14, from 6-9 p.m. You must attend all four sessions. Info: fsr-inc.com. Cost: \$100. Please contact Al Haberbusch, haberp-su64@cox.net, or 678-9084; Howard Hill, 678-2182, or 678-2182; or Bernie Busovne, busovnefamily@cox.net, or 897-9497 if you are interested in this class.

**Writing seminar**

The Niceville Library will host a writing seminar for aspiring authors with full-time author and speaker Dr. Anne Haw Holt July 28, from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. This seminar is for writers at any level. Cost: \$40, cash or check at the door, which includes a packet of helpful handouts. The program will be held at the library. To pre-register, send contact information to aholt@aholt.com, with an attached copy of the first three pages of a piece of your writing (no poetry) typewritten and double-spaced. Dr. Holt will read, comment on how to improve and return the document at

the seminar. You can also register at the door, however you will not receive your document until several days later by mail. Info: Dr. Holt, 576-0721, or the library at 279-4863, ext. 1504.

**'Painting with a Twist'**

Catholic Charities of Northwest Florida is bringing "Painting with a Twist" to the Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Church Aug. 9, at 6:30 p.m. A talented artist will lead the class through step-by-step completion of the painting, while the participants enjoy snacks and beverages. Participants are welcome to bring a bottle of wine. Cost: \$35 per person, which includes snacks and materials. Advance registration is required. Registration: Evelyn or Kelly, 244-2825; mail or drop off a check to Catholic Charities, 11 First St., Fort Walton Beach, FL 32548. Participants must be at least 17 years old. Proceeds from the event will help fund Catholic Charities' emergency assistance programs.

**Spanish class**

The Spanish language class at the Valparaiso Community Library is accepting registration for its new session, which will begin Aug. 9, at 3 p.m. The class is limited to 15 people. Registration: 729-5406.

**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.

**Heritage Museum camp**

Registration is ongoing for the Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida's "Raiders of the Lost Artifact" summer history camp, Aug. 6-10, from 9 a.m.-noon. Cost: \$60 per Raider for the week, or \$50 per Raider for Museum Family Members. Raiders can also participate for \$15 per day, or \$12 for Museum Family Members. Space is limited and pre-registration is required. Info: 678-2615.

**"The Wiz"**

"The Wiz," a seven-time Tony Award-winning Broadway musical version of "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz" will come to the Mattie Kelly Arts Center July 18-21, at 7:30 p.m. Tickets: \$25 for adults, \$20 for youth ages 18 and younger. Info: mattiekellyartscenter.org, or 729-6000.

**Senior activities**

The Walton-Okaloosa County Council on Aging Senior Program will offer the following for people 60 and older at Seminole Community Center, Cedar Street, 833-9291: July 19, bingo, 10 a.m.; July 24, bingo, 10 a.m. The following activities will be offered at the Valparaiso Community Center, 268 Glenview Ave., 833-9291: July 18, monthly birthday party hosted by the Young Women of First Baptist Church of Niceville, 10 a.m.; July 19, Wii bowling, 9:30 a.m.; July 20, bingo, 9:30 a.m.; July 23, dominoes and socializing, 9:30 a.m.; July 24, bingo, 9:30 a.m.

**Job Fair and Expo**

The Workforce Development Board of Okaloosa and Walton Counties will host the North Okaloosa County Job Fair and Military Community Expo July 18, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m., at the Crestview Community Center. There is no cost to attend. Exhibitors at the event will include local employers that will accept resumes, and local military and community partners that will share information about resources, programs and services available on and off base. All jobseekers are encouraged to bring multiple copies of their resume and dress for success. Info: jobsplusonestop.com.



File photo

**'Cram the Van'**

Sharing & Caring, Niceville, will hold "Cram the Van" July 21, from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Niceville Walmart. Volunteers will be at Walmart to collect donations of school supplies for area children.

**Saltwater Seminar**

This month's Emerald Coast Saltwater Seminar Series will be held July 18, at Northlight Marina, Niceville. Dinner will begin at 6:30 p.m., with the presentation at 7 p.m. There will be free raffles. This month's seminar will turn to the shallows to chase the redfish, speckled trout and flounder that make up the region's inshore slam. Experts will explain what to do and where to go to catch all three species in a single day. The seminar is free and there is no need to RSVP. Info: saltwater-events.com, or Joe, 516-0709.

**Genealogy class**

The Genealogy History Class at the Valparaiso Community Library will have a special program July 18, at 9:30 a.m., to explore the basics of genetic inheritance. Charlene Grafton, a local writer and geneticist, will present the program to discuss genealogy, genes, genomics and gender. Info: 729-5406.

**Family Movie Day**

The Valparaiso Community Library would like to invite families and friends to Family Movie Day July 19, at noon. The library will show "The Three Stooges," and snacks and drinks will be provided. Bring a lunch and a friend.

**'The Story of Glory'**

Stop by the Niceville Library July 19, from 6-7:30 p.m. and visit local artist and master woodcraftsman Paul Putney as he shares "The Story of Glory." Glory is a hand-crafted and painted patriotic carousel horse that stands 55-inches tall. She is made of solid wood and weighs 300 pounds. Glory will be on display at the library through July.

**History Sandwiched-In**

Authors Nelson Ottenhausen and James Baughman will present "The Raid of Streight's Brigade" at the Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida July 20, at noon, for History Sandwiched-In, a free lunchtime lecture. Ottenhausen and Baughman will talk about "The Raid of Streight's Brigade," a description in Civil War literature. The lecture is open to the public. Space is limited; call to reserve a seat, 678-2615.

**Paddle trip**

Bring your canoe or kayak and join the Florida Trail Association for a paddle trip on Turkey Creek in Niceville July 21, at 9 a.m. Eglin recreation permit required. Info: 689-8528, 654-1172, or choctaw.floridatrail.org.

**Bluewater Bay bike ride**

Join the Adventure Club July 21, at 9:30 a.m., for a bike ride in Bluewater Bay. Meet at the golf course club house. Lunch after the ride at a nearby

restaurant. Info: Les and Jean, 897-5225.

**Sailing Club regatta**

The Bluewater Bay Sailing Club will host a Wednesday Night Rules on Sunday regatta July 22. All sailboats are eligible. No PHRF certificate or training is necessary. A skippers meeting will be at 1 p.m., with the start at 2 p.m. No fees. This race uses the "fun" rules used on Wednesday nights. The regatta headquarters will be at Bluewater Bay Marina and the racing area will be on Choctawhatchee Bay. Info: Mark Hunter, 897-2837.

**Marching Band camp**

In this camp students will learn discipline, leadership and marching skills, while improving their musical qualities. This camp is mandatory for anyone who is going to be part of the Rocky Bayou Christian School Marching Knights Band or Symphonic Band. The camp will be July 30-Aug. 3, Monday-Friday, from 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Cost: \$77. Grades 7-12. Register and pay by 4 p.m. on July 23 to avoid a \$10 late fee. Info: Rocky Bayou Summer Program Office, 729-7227, ext. 273.

**Marching Rookies camp**

This camp is for first-time members to the Marching Knights Band at Rocky Bayou Christian School, who will be introduced to the basic fundamentals of marching, July 23-27, Monday-Friday, from 9 a.m.-noon. Grades 7-12. Rocky Bayou Summer Program Office, 729-7227, ext. 273.

**Camp College**

This camp is designed for rising seniors to get their college applications completed during the summer to be ready to submit to colleges in the early fall. Camp College meets for three, half-day seminars, July 31-Aug. 2, Tuesday-Thursday from 12:30-4 p.m. Cost: \$77. Grade 12. Register and pay by 4 p.m. on July 23 to avoid a \$10 late fee. Info: Rocky Bayou Summer Program Office, 729-7227, ext. 273.

**Engineering camp**

In this camp, students will build model airplanes, bridges and construct mouse trap cars, July 23-27, Monday-Friday, from 12:30-4 p.m. Cost: \$77. Ages 10-15. Info: Rocky Bayou Summer Program Office, 729-7227, ext. 273.

**Tea Party meeting**

The Niceville-Valparaiso Tea Party will meet July 23, at 6 p.m., at Niceville City Hall. The Tea Party will host a forum for the Superintendent of Schools candidates, Mary Beth Jackson and Alex Tibbetts. Guest speaker will be Clay Williams for American's For Prosperity. Visitors welcome. Info: 729-2874, or emerald-coastpatriots.com.

**Chess Camp**

In this camp, students will learn how to play or improve their game. Openings and end games will be practiced and tournaments will be played, July 23-26, Monday-Thursday, from 12:30-4 p.m. Ages 9-15. Info: Rocky Bayou Summer Program Office, 729-7227, ext. 273.

**Girls basketball camp**

A basketball camp will be held in the Rocky Bayou Christian School gym July 23-27, Monday-Friday, from 8-11:30 a.m. Girls grades 3-7. Info: Rocky Bayou Summer Program Office, 729-7227, ext. 273.

**Drum Line camp**

This camp is required for Rocky Bayou Christian students in the Marching Knight Pit & Drum Line to instill the fundamentals of percussion instruments. Attendance is by audition only. The camp will be July 23-27, Monday-Friday, from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Grades 7-12. Info: Rocky Bayou Summer Program Office, 729-7227, ext. 273.

**Color Guard camp**

This camp is for students in the Rocky Bayou Christian School Knights Color Guard to prepare them for the fall marching season. Attendance is by audition only. The camp will be July 23-27, Monday-Friday, from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Grades 7-12. Info: Rocky Bayou Summer Program Office, 729-7227, ext. 273.

**English PSAT/SAT**

The English PSAT camp is targeted toward 9th and 10th graders, and the English SAT camp is targeted toward 11th and 12th graders, but students may choose the course work that fits their readiness. Both camps will teach English testing strategies. Camps will be July 23-27, Monday-Friday, from 8-11:30 a.m. Info: Rocky Bayou Summer Program Office, 729-7227, ext. 273.

**Trail meeting**

The monthly meeting of the Florida Trail Association will be July 24, at 6 p.m., at Ed's Hometown Seafood & Steaks, Niceville. Visitors welcome. Info: 654-1172, or choctaw.floridatrail.org.

**Niceville Garden Club**

The Niceville Garden Club will meet July 24, at 6 p.m. in the Niceville Library. The special guest speaker will give a presentation on bees and their role in the environment.

**NARFE meeting**

The National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association will have a NARFE candidates meet-and-greet July 24 at Golden Corral, Fort Walton Beach. Lunch will be at 11 a.m. All persons who enter the restaurant will be required to pay for a lunch. Program will begin at noon. Candidates will be given three minutes to tell the audience about themselves and their platforms. Current and retired federal employees are welcome. Info: Ann Andersen, 678-6045.

**Library storyteller**

The Niceville Public Library will present Storyteller Pat Nease on July 25, at 11 a.m., at the Niceville Community Center. Program is free. Info: 279-4863, ext. 1514.

**Wii party**

The Valparaiso Community Library would like to invite children and teens to a Nintendo Wii party July 25, from 3:30-5 p.m. Snacks and drinks will be provided.

**Summer book discussion**

Join Friends of the Niceville Library July 25, at 10 a.m., in the library for a discussion on "Olive Kitteridge" by Elizabeth Stroud. Limited supplies of the books are available through the Okaloosa Library system, readokaloosa.org. To reserve a seat, call the library at 279-4863, ext. 1504.

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# Gary Venuti, Ruckel SRO, named tops in Florida

By Del Lessard  
Beacon Staff Writer

Gary Venuti, the school resource officer (SRO) at Ruckel Middle School, has been named the top SRO in Florida by the Florida Association of School Resource Officers.

Corporal Venuti has been a deputy with the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office for 20 years and a supervisor with the Youth Services Division for more than 15. Currently assigned to Ruckel Middle School in Niceville, Venuti began his career as an SRO at Ruckel in 1997, spent six years as SRO at Choctawhatchee High School in Fort Walton Beach, then returned to Ruckel.

Ruckel Principal Debra Goolsby submitted Venuti for the honor.

"He's a teacher as well as a law enforcement officer," she said, noting that he teaches students about Internet safety and drug use, but also discusses the Constitution and the powers it grants with history students in their classroom. He also coached



Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office Corporal Gary Venuti was named the top School Resource officer in the state by the Florida Association of School Resource Officers. Venuti is pictured with two Ruckel Middle School students, where he is currently assigned.

Courtesy photo

the girls softball team for two years, leading them to a district championship in the 2009-10 school year.

"He wants students to make good choices," she said. "He influences their character to make good choices."

Assistant Ruckel Principal Dennis Samac said Venuti works

with students on their level and is willing to discuss his own difficulties as a youth and how he turned things around for himself.

"He gets on their level," said Samac.

"Walk the halls and ramps with Corporal Gary Venuti at Ruckel Middle School on any given day and it will very quickly

become clear how we feel about our resource officer," Goolsby said in her nomination letter. "Students stop him to talk, high-five, and joke with him. Teachers give him hugs." At athletic events "you will see him surrounded by past and present students wanting to talk to him and tell him how they are doing. He knows Ruckel students by name and by their interests and activities."

"You couldn't find a more deserving officer," said Sheriff Larry Ashley. "Anyone who knows Corporal Venuti and has seen him in action knows that he is as dedicated and compassionate an SRO as you can find. For example, when a new student at his school had his bicycle stolen, he didn't want the boy to focus on this first negative experience, so he gave him his own brand new bicycle, saying he felt the student's need outweighed his own. We are proud to have Corporal Venuti as a co-worker and a friend and congratulate him on this statewide achievement."

## Lending a helping hand

Jacob Cyrus, pictured, works on painting a fence around the playground at Youth Village, Fort Walton Beach. Jacob was one of more than 100 area youth who participated in Niceville United Methodist Church's Mission Okaloosa. Campers spent the week of July 9 volunteering at various organizations throughout Okaloosa County.

Beacon photo by Tess Hollis



# Ross named NWFSC Athletic Director

Special to the Beacon

Ramsey Ross has been named as the Athletic Director of Northwest Florida State College. Ross, who had been serving since March as Interim Athletic Director, was selected from a field of 35 applicants to lead the Raider Athletics program and follow Mickey Englett, the college's longtime Athletic Director and Dean of Students.

"Ramsey was the unanimous selection of the committee and did an excellent job in our selection process—clearly earning the post," said Dr. Ty Handy, NWFSC president. "We are so pleased that Ramsey will be moving into this important leadership role." Ross has been with the college since 2004, in a variety of posts including Coordinator of Student Activities and seven years as the college's Coordinator of Athletics, Health and Fitness. He holds a master's degree from Florida State University in Sport Administration and a bachelor's degree in Business Management.

"I'd like to thank the search committee, college president Dr. Ty Handy, and the NWFSC Board of Trustees for the incredible honor of being named the Athletic Director at Northwest Florida State College," Ross said. "Having been personally and professionally associated with this institution for most of my life, I consider it to be a privilege to lead such a well-respected and successful athletic program."



Ramsey Ross

The Raiders athletic program competes as part of the NJCAA (National Junior College Athletics Association). The 2011-12 season of men's and women's basketball, men's baseball and women's fast pitch softball was the most successful season in 10 years, being topped off with the

men's basketball team finishing second in the entire country at the national tournament.

Ross gave a big nod to the role of his mentor and predecessor Mickey Englett, who served at the college for 22 years.

"The foundation of Raider Athletics that 'Coach' Englett established is absolutely remarkable and I am so thankful and blessed to have had the opportunity to work with him over the past seven years," Ross said. "During that time, I was able to learn from one of the most successful athletic administrators in the history of the NJCAA and his guidance propelled me to where I am today."

Ross said that moving forward, the college's Athletics program will "Continue to maintain a standard of excellence in two-year intercollegiate athletics. We measure excellence by operating with integrity, developing our student-athletes as people, progressing them as students, and advancing them as athletes," he said.

"By doing those four things, in that order, we will be doing our part in fulfilling the college's overall mission of improving lives."

In his new role, Ross will report directly to the college president and will be responsible for all the daily operations of the NWFSC Athletic Department, including budgeting, ensuring compliance with NJCAA/FCSAA regulations, representing NWFSC at Council of Athletic Affairs meetings, leading all fundraising activities for the Raider Club and the Athletic Department, supervising the college's coaching staff and directing the curriculum in the NWFSC Athletics/Health & Fitness Department.

Prior to his service at NWFSC, Ross worked at Florida State University and Tallahassee Community College in various capacities in the athletic departments. Ross resides in Santa Rosa Beach with his wife of five years, Megan.



## Rotary Club gives to Campaign for Autism

President Dave Underwood and former president Dave Swanick of the Mid-Bay Rotary Club made a \$500 donation from the club to the Emerald Coast Autism Center's Scholarship Fund. This donation makes the Mid-Bay Rotary Club Bronze Sponsor's for ECAC's new fundraiser, "The ONE" Campaign for Autism.

Courtesy photo

# Senior lunch menu

The following is the Valparaiso Senior Center lunch menu for July 18-24. Please call the center at 833-9291, or come by, 268 Glenview Ave., to make a lunch reservation. The cost is a voluntary donation, and lunch is served on weekdays at 11 a.m.

### Wednesday

Spaghetti casserole, Italian

green beans, tossed salad, peach cobbler, Texas bread, milk, assorted dressing.

### Thursday

Cranberry Dijon chicken, black-eyed peas, collard greens, cornbread, fresh fruit, milk, margarine.

### Friday

Smoked sausage, baked northern beans, carrot slaw,

hot dog bun, hot peaches, milk, mustard.

### Monday

Meatloaf, tomato gravy, cheesy whip potatoes, garden vegetables, wheat roll, fresh fruit, milk, margarine.

### Tuesday

Turkey salad, carrot/raisin salad, broccoli/tomato salad, fresh fruit, wheat bread, milk, mayonnaise.

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Courtesy photo

### Rocky student wins Boeing award

Connor Lynch, pictured, a student at Rocky Bayou Christian School, received an award from Boeing at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair for his work on "Exploring the Benefits of Lifting Fuselages and Blended Wing Bodies." The fair was held in May, in Pittsburgh. Connor placed second in the Senior Engineering Section, and earned the United States Army Certificate of Achievement for an outstanding science project in the 57<sup>th</sup> IMAGINE! State Science and Engineering Fair of Florida.

### Leadership Okaloosa accepting applications



#### Special to the Beacon

The Costa Leadership Institute at Northwest Florida State College is currently accepting applications for the 2012-13 Leadership Okaloosa program.

The nine month leadership development and community awareness program is presented by the Costa Leadership Institute at NWFS in partnership with the Crestview, Destin, Fort Walton Beach, and Niceville-Valparaiso Chambers of Commerce.

The program is designed to enhance the participants' leadership skills and provide community awareness. The class meets once a month from September to May and participants receive classroom training from a certified instructor and are given opportunities to interact with key community leaders throughout the process.

A highlight of the program is a two day trip to Tallahassee for the Legislative Day meetings. Tours of area businesses such as the Northwest Florida Regional Airport and Eglin Air Force Base provide participants with an understanding of the community. Additionally, each student takes part in a group project to benefit both themselves and the community while focusing on leadership, problem solving and team building skills. Another important aspect of Leadership Okaloosa is the opportunity to network with other current and emerging community leaders.

Tuition for the Leadership Okaloosa program is \$900 and applications are due by July 31. Applications are available online at [nwfs.edu/LI](http://nwfs.edu/LI), by calling 729-688-0100, or emailing [Leadership@NWFS.edu](mailto:Leadership@NWFS.edu).

### Lewis announces band awards

The Lewis Middle School Band recently announced awards for the end of the 2012 school year. Robert Colón is the Lewis Band Director.

Most Outstanding Musician, Symphonic Band—Joshua Banaszak.

Most Outstanding Citizen, Symphonic Band—Bethany Banaszak.

Outstanding Improvement, Symphonic Band—D'Angelo Swafford, Garrett Oden, Brittany Peterson, Faith Fry, Zachary Krouse, Matthew Smith, Andrew Colón, Grayson Kramer, Tacy Colón, Noah Shaw, Madeline Colón.

Most Outstanding Musician,

Jazz Band—Bethany Banaszak.

Most Outstanding Citizen, Jazz Band—Rebecca Havard.

Outstanding Improvement, Jazz Band—Keaton Smith, Andrew Colón.

Most Outstanding Brass, Beginner Band—Bella Devoid.

Most Outstanding Woodwind, Beginner Band—Amethyst Lee and Ashley Corn.

Most Outstanding Citizen, Beginner Band—Andrew Pyryt.

Outstanding Improvement, Beginner Band—Micah Leach, Danielle Davis.

Most Outstanding Brass, 5th grade band—Autumn McClain.

Most Outstanding Woodwind, 5th grade band—Jadyn

Richardson and Grace McIntosh.

Most Outstanding Percussion, 5th grade band—Kenny Ketcham.

Outstanding Improvement, 5th grade band—Xavier Rochester.

Most Outstanding Musician, Intermediate Band—Jacqueline Bowlin.

Most Outstanding Citizen, Intermediate Band—Parker Childress.

Outstanding Improvement, Intermediate Band—Michael McGhee.

Lewis Middle School Band will run a Band Camp for second year level students and above the week of Aug. 6th. Visit [lewismsband.wikispaces.com](http://lewismsband.wikispaces.com) for details.

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### Ospreys take flight

Kelly Edelman, of Niceville, recently caught Ospreys in action by the Rocky Bayou bridge. The nest is inhabited by a mother and father Osprey and their two babies.

Photo by Kelly Edelman

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**Epsilon receives health info**

Gamma Epsilon Masters Chapter of Beta Sigma Phi held their luncheon and meeting at the home of Angela Budden in Niceville. The guest speaker was Jessica Reid, pictured, of the Cardiac Rehab Center, Fort Walton Beach. She presented a lecture on Women/Men Heart disease. Guests attending were Megan Carmical, Janice Jean Brigetta Krasamicas and Dottie Kline.

Courtesy photo



**Tea Party speaker draws crowd**

More than 150 people came out June 25 to Niceville City Hall to hear KrisAnne Hall, pictured, speak to members of the Niceville-Valparaiso Tea Party. Hall is an attorney and former prosecutor, and teaches Tea Party groups about the Constitution and its history.

Courtesy photo

**In the Service**

Kenneth Elliott, of Bluewater Bay, recently graduated from Officer Training School at Maxwell Air Force Base, Montgomery, Ala. As a member of the Air Force Health Profession Medical Service Corp, he will attend medical school at LECOM in South Florida prior to serving in the active duty medical corps.



Kenneth Elliott

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Office hours: 8 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 on form. Include phone number as part of ad. Minimum charge \$11.00\* for up to 10 words. Each additional word 20¢. Attach more paper if needed.

First Word		
\$11.00	\$11.20	\$11.40
\$11.60	\$11.80	\$12.00
\$12.20	\$12.40	\$12.60
\$12.80	\$13.00	\$13.20

\*Base price includes \$5 weekly discount or walk-in or mail-in prepaid ads.

50% discount for additional weeks or papers. Check publications to publish ad:  
 Bay Beacon (Number of weeks) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Eglin Flyer (Number of weeks) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hurlburt Patriot (Number of weeks) \_\_\_\_\_

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**Garage Sale**

Niceville, 2320 Canal Dr., Friday-Sunday, 8-3. Furniture, household, collectibles.

**Help Wanted**

Driver needed for local taxi company, part-time, must be 25 or older; clean driving record, call John at 259-6990.

**Newspaper Delivery**

Earn extra cash of \$45 to \$140 or more each week in your spare time! The Bay Beacon seeks a reliable independent contractor to insert, bag, and deliver newspapers Tuesday night. You must be over 21 and have a reliable vehicle, a good driving record, a Florida driver's license, and proof of current liability insurance. No collecting duties. Earnings vary according to route and work load. Stop by the Bay Beacon for an information sheet and to fill out an application. The Beacon 1181 E. John Sims Parkway, Niceville • 678-1080 (Parkway East Shopping Center across from PoFolks)

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**Help Wanted**

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Beacon Newspapers (The Bay Beacon, The Eglin Flyer, The Hurlburt Patriot, and The Green Beret) seeks an editorial assistant who will work in the office to help compile, write, and edit news items, assist the editor in preparing the newspapers for publication, and perform other clerical and administrative duties under the direction of the editor.  
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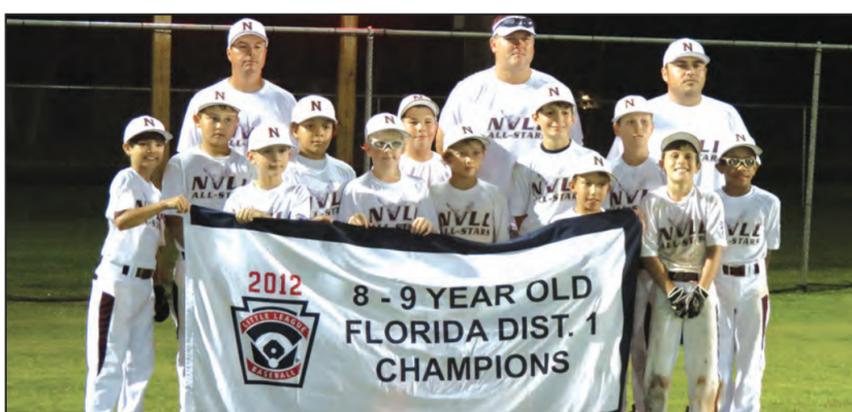
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If you want Niceville, Valparaiso and Bluewater Bay to know, say it in the Beacon  
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### 10-11 NVLL all-stars head to state

The 10-11-year-old Niceville-Valparaiso Little League All-star team won the Florida Section 1 Championship, defeating Chaires Capitola, Tallahassee, 15-8, in DeFuniak Springs Saturday, July 14. The boys also won the first game of the best-of-three tournament, 12-1. The team now heads to the state tournament July 20 in DeFuniak Springs. From left: front, Connor Walsh, Brandon Cromwell, Zach Coldsnow, Coley Embry, Evan Griffith and Rece Hinds; center, Tristan Keith, Derek Vogel, Chandler Plourd, Harrison Dorsett, Owen Williams and Trent Walker; rear, coach Robbie Williams, manager Brian Walsh and coach Berry Drake.



### 8/9 All-Stars win district crown

The Niceville Valparaiso Little League 8/9-year-old All Stars won the district championship June 14 at Shalimar, defeating Destin, 15-5, and DeFuniak Springs, 14-0. From left: front, Brennan Russell, Brady Koger, Travis Fossum, Jax Topel, Owen Hoover, Jay Pope and Dominic Mahoney; middle row, Alex Reichel, Aidan Dark, Luke Loftis, Coleman Dorsett and Jake Runyon; rear, coaches Jim Loftis, John Runyon and Paul Reichel.



Courtesy photo

The Scarecrow, Dorothy and the Tin Man react to their first meeting with the Cowardly Lion in 'The Wiz,' scheduled for July 18-21 at the Mattie Kelly Arts Center.

## 'The Wiz' will come to life at Mattie Kelly Arts Center

#### Special to the Beacon

Northwest Florida State College will present "The Wiz" Wednesday, July 18, through Saturday, July 21, 7:30 p.m., at the Mattie Kelly Arts Center in Niceville.

"The Wiz" is a seven-time Tony Award-winning Broadway musical version of "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz," by L. Frank Baum, and sets Dorothy's adventures in the Land of Oz to a lively mixture of rock, gospel and soul.

The show is a music carnival of fun for the entire family, and includes a cast of more than 25 talented local actors and features songs such as "Ease on Down the Road," "I was Born the Day Before Yesterday," and "Home."

Tickets for the performances are on sale at the Mattie Kelly Arts Center box office for \$25 adults and \$20 youth ages 18

and younger. There is a \$2 per ticket box office processing fee. Tickets may be purchased online at [mattiekellyartscenter.org](http://mattiekellyartscenter.org), or by phone or in-person from the box office at 729-6000.

"This show has everything," said director Dr. Cliff Herron, who serves as the Dean of the Humanities, Fine and Performing Arts division at Northwest Florida State College. "Great music, amazing dance and tremendous heart-warming fun for all ages, not to mention some talented local dogs in the role of Toto." Herron noted that in addition to an award-winning run on Broadway, "The Wiz" was also made into a movie adaptation in 1978 starring Michael Jackson and Diana Ross.

Savannah Lewis, of Fort Walton Beach, captured the role

of Dorothy in the adaptation of L. Frank Baum's classic story. No stranger to the summer musical stage, the NWFS junior has been seen previously in the summer musicals "Big River" and "Grease." Savannah, an active member in the college's Soundations Showchoir and Marigals choir, plans to move to New York City in the spring to continue school and pursue her dreams of being on the stage.

Donovan Black, of Niceville, will play the role of the Tinman; Javonte Coleman, of Fort Walton Beach, will play the Scarecrow; and Hector Delgado, of Niceville, will play the Cowardly Lion. "Scooter," Shires, a Scottish Terrier, and "Rosie" Willa Kedroski, a Cairn Terrier, both of Niceville, will share the role of Toto, Dorothy's beloved dog.

HERE'S TO YOUR *Health*  
2012 Free Community Seminar Series

**Seven Simple Numbers Women Should Know**  
Wednesday, July 18, 11:30 am  
Twin Cities Hospital Wellness Center  
Learn how to un-complicate important health numbers when Jenny Modelski, RN, BSN, MSM, CEN, presents this educational seminar.

**The Gift that Continues to Give**  
Tuesday, July 24, 11:30 am  
Twin Cities Hospital Wellness Center  
Join us to learn about the benefits of tissue donation and how you can give the gift that keeps on giving!

**Don't Skip A Beat**  
Tuesday, July 31, 11:30 am  
Twin Cities Hospital Wellness Center  
Kelly Light, RN, BSN, will review signs of the Silent Heart Attack that can affect women of all ages.

**Health & Humor**  
Monday, August 6, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm  
Twin Cities Hospital Wellness Center  
Amanda Curtis from Emerald Coast Hospice will entertain you while discussing various aspects of healthcare and why it's important to keep your sense of humor.

**Is That Really You?**  
Thursday, August 16, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm  
Twin Cities Hospital Wellness Center  
Ashley Bailey, Okaloosa County Sheriff's Department, will share her expertise on preventing identity theft and the increasing frequency of this crime.

**Reservations required, call 850.729.9463**  
Complimentary lunch provided.

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**Sports Briefs**

**Regatta planned for Sunday**  
The Bluewater Bay Sailing Club plans the Wednesday Night Rules on Sunday Regatta on Choctawhatchee Bay Sunday, July 22, beginning at 2 p.m.  
The regatta will use the "fun" Wednesday night rules.  
Winners will be the boats showing the best start, the first to Marker No. 58, and the first per class to reach the finish line. The prize will be a pitcher of beer for each winner.  
Info: 897-2837.

**League seeks co-ed teams**  
The city of Niceville Recreation Department is now accepting teams for its fall co-ed league. Entry is \$275 per team, plus individual user fees of \$10 for residents, and \$30 for non-residents. Play will begin Aug. 13. Games will be held on Monday nights. Info: Jim Baughman, 729-4062, or [jbaughman@niceville.org](mailto:jbaughman@niceville.org).

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