

The Bay Beacon

Police Blotter
Page A-4

10 Pages, 2 Sections, 6 Inserts

Wednesday, March 13, 2013

50¢

**UP
COMING**

Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.



The Northwest Florida State College presents the theatrical version of Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" in the **Sprint Theater**, at the Mattie Kelly Arts Center, Niceville.

Thursday, 3:30 p.m.



Enjoy a scenic **bike ride** with the Adventure Club along the **Bluewater Bay Resort**, Niceville.

Saturday, 7-11 a.m.

Eat breakfast at the Niceville-Valparaiso Kiwanis Club's **pancake breakfast and silent auction** at the **Niceville High School** cafeteria.

Saturday, 7:30 p.m.



See the pianist Yue Chu return for a private **piano recital** in the **Tyler Recital Hall** of the Mattie Kelly Arts Center, Niceville.

Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.



Celebrate archeology with a free **history lecture**, "Talking Smack: The Sailing Vessels of Pensacola's Fishing Industry," at the **Niceville Community Center**, 205 N. Partin Drive.

See Calendar, B-2.

Opposition mounts to golf course plan, critics say

Daniel Elsesser
Beacon Staff Writer

Many Bluewater Bay residents oppose a plan by the Bluewater Bay Resort to convert four of the resort's Magnolia golf course holes to residential areas, according to critics of the plan.

The resort submitted a proposed change to Bluewater's development of regional impact (DRI) to Okaloosa County. The

Okaloosa Board of County Commissioners is scheduled to review the change at a meeting April 16, set for 6 p.m. at the county water and sewer building, 1804 Lewis Turner Blvd., Fort Walton Beach.

Manfred Meine, a resident of Bluewater's Magnolia Plantation subdivision and former president of the neighborhood's homeowners' association, said he will

attend the commission meeting to show opposition to the proposed change. Meine said he expects many other residents to attend in opposition as well.

"I think you're going to have standing room only," Meine said.

Raimund Herden, one of the original developers of Bluewater Bay, said he expects around 500 people from all over Bluewater to show at the April 16 meeting in

opposition to the change.

Meine, a professor at Troy University, said many Bluewater residents moved to the neighborhood because of the environment provided by the golf course.

"I think part of why most of us moved here is because the golf course gives you a park-like feel," Meine said. "I think that's going to be damaged."

Meine said he is concerned

that property values will decrease as a result of adding high-density housing to areas previously occupied by the golf course. He said he is also concerned about increased traffic congestion and general deterioration of the golf course, and said he is certain numerous Bluewater homeowners join him in his sentiments.

Please see PLAN, page A-2

Straight and narrow



Beacon photo

Workers contracted by the city of Niceville lay concrete for a sidewalk on 27th Street, just east of Palm Boulevard, March 5. The job is one of several to add concrete sidewalks or asphalt walkways in the city. Public Works Director Bruce Price said Niceville awarded a \$226,000 contract in October to Gum Creek Farms, a DeFuniak Springs paving company. The contract also includes orders for concrete sidewalks on Kildare Circle and asphalt pathways on Valparaiso Boulevard and Rocky Bayou Drive. The work is expected to be completed by mid May, with a total of 5,500 to 6,000 feet of new walkway.

Commissioner reports on county actions in TDC scandal's wake

By Mike Griffith
Beacon Correspondent

At a Niceville Valparaiso Rotary Club meeting Thursday, Okaloosa County Commissioner David Parisot did what he could not do three days before at a legislative hearing in Tallahassee.

Parisot presented a PowerPoint briefing entitled "A Commissioner's Viewpoint," in which he discussed the events of the Okaloosa County Tourist Development Council (TDC) scandal, and the county commission's role in trying to solve the problems that made the scandal possible.

Parisot had submitted, and attempted to present, the same PowerPoint to the Joint Legislative Auditing Committee (JLAC) during the panel's hearing in Tallahassee March 4. However, his briefing had been

Please see SCANDAL, page A-3



David Parisot

Valp. panel wonders whether it is subject to open-meetings law

By Mike Griffith
Beacon Correspondent

In its third meeting, a new citizens panel advising the Valparaiso City Commission spent much of its time discussing whether it was required to continue to meet in public.

The Valparaiso Visioning Committee held its third meeting Thursday.

Attending for the first time was Jill White, co-chair of the committee and a professor at Northwest Florida State College. Also in attendance was Valparaiso City Clerk Tammy Johnson, in an advisory role.

The main order of business was a speakerphone discussion with Valparaiso City Attorney Hayward Dykes. The committee members asked Dykes for his advice as to whether the visioning committee is subject to the Florida Sunshine Law, which requires members of government boards that make laws or policy or advise the government to announce meetings in advance and to admit the public.

Please see VALP., page A-3

Intersection update confuses motorists

Attempts continue to revamp White Point Road as 'local' street

By Daniel Elsesser
Beacon Staff Writer

County traffic engineers have reduced the left-hand turn lanes from White Point Road to State Road 20 from two lanes to one, but many motorists are apparently finding the new pattern confusing.

More changes are planned to make the new flow easier to follow, according to county officials. Meantime, many motorists are still using the center of three lanes as a left-turn

lane, despite traffic engineers' recent efforts to designate it as a straight-on lane.

Jason Autrey, manager of the Okaloosa County Public Works engineering division, noted that traffic on White Point Road has decreased dramatically after a bypass opened to the east in September 2011. At that time White Point Road reverted to county-road status; it has been a state highway since the bridge opened in 1993.

The Florida Department of Transportation counted an average of 18,700 vehicles a day at a point on White Point Road 500 feet south of SR 20 in 2010, the year before the connector opened. In 2011, the FDOT counted an average of 7,500 a day.

The decline means that northbound motorists on White Point Road who wish to turn left at SR 20 no longer need two left-hand turn lanes to ease congestion at the intersection, Autrey said.

Autrey said the intersection is currently a "split-phase" intersection, meaning traffic from



Beacon photo by Daniel Elsesser

The left turn lane from White Point Road to State Road 20 was reduced from two lanes to one because of a perceived decrease in traffic turning off the road resulting from the construction of the Mid-Bay Bridge Connector. But old habits die hard, and some motorists, such as the one pictured (center left), are still turning left from the center lane.

White Point on either side of SR 20 cannot turn left at the same time. He said the signals will eventually be changed to allow simultaneous left turns by traffic heading west on SR 20 from White Point Road and traffic heading east on SR 20 from North White Point Road, a spur that ends at the Bluewater Manor.

Autrey said forward-pointing arrows intended to guide vehicles in the center lane were

added to the pavement and the traffic-light mast in late January. However, recent observations show that many motorists are still turning left, or west, from the center lane.

Autrey said this will increase the efficiency of the intersection by lessening downtime, or time when traffic is not moving. By not making traffic on opposite sides of SR 20 wait for each other to turn, Autrey said, about four seconds of red light time

can be cut from each 100-second cycle at the intersection.

Autrey said that a dotted "skip" stripe that still suggests to motorists that they may turn left from the center lane will be removed at the expense of the Mid-Bay Bridge Authority.

Autrey said that signal changes, which will disable the turn arrow from the center signal facing White Point Road, should be completed within six months. He said this only requires a pro-

gramming change and will cost virtually nothing.

"We will be monitoring this intersection," Autrey said. "If it does not work, we can alter it."

Autrey said recent adjustments have been made to White Point Road to lessen the volume of through traffic headed to and from the Mid-Bay Bridge, including a four-way stop at the roads intersection with

Please see CONFUSES, page A-5



New arrow on traffic mast indicates traffic flow from northbound center lane of White Point Road at SR 20.

PLAN

From page A-1

Resort general manager Tom Hanks said the resort has submitted the proposal to generate funds to keep the golf course running.

Meine said Bluewater residents do not want to lose the golf course. He said he did not have any specific alternatives on how to raise the money to save it, but he believes other residents will likely have alternatives to present at the county commission meeting.

Meine said he wants to maintain the greenery of the golf course, even if that means ceasing its operation as a commercial course and keeping it as maintained landscape.

The Magnolia Plantation homeowners' association hired Jill Crew, a Fort Walton Beach attorney, to represent the neighborhood in the matter.

Crew said Magnolia Plantation homeowners bought into an idea of a neighborhood with areas designated for recreational open space, and the proposed change would alter the neighborhood plan that they paid for.

"There was an expectation and reliance that [the presence of an open recreational area] would continue in perpetuity," Crew

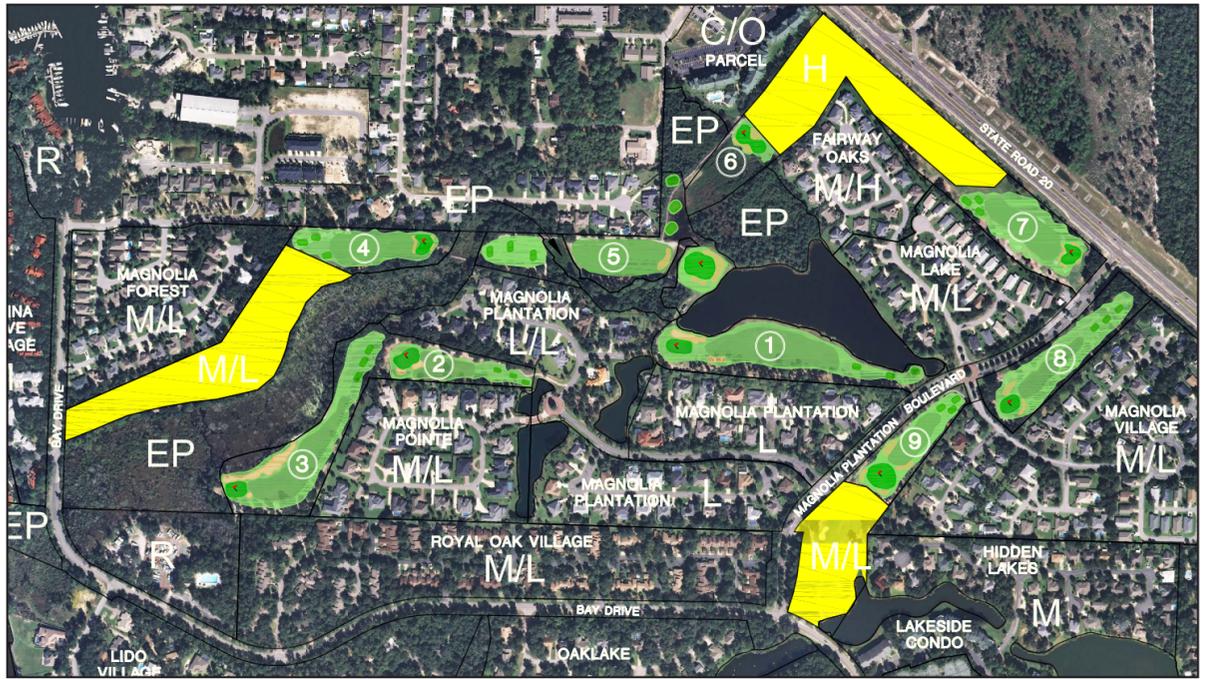
said. "And it has, until recently." Crew said Magnolia Plantation homeowners also object to the proposed change because they feel the addition of high-density housing to the area will hurt it environmentally and aesthetically, and will diminish property values.

The proposal submitted by the resort to the county, West Florida Regional Planning Council (WFRPC) and the state's Department of Economic Opportunity (DOE), calls for holes 4, 6, 7 and 9 to be shortened, with the land remaining zoned for residential development.

The plans call for high-density development, or 13.5 dwelling units per acre, on 7.41 acres currently occupied by holes 6 and 7, potentially allowing the development of 100 units on the plot.

Holes 4 and 9 would each be changed to allow for medium/low density development, or 4 units per acre. This would allow 28 units on 7.11 acres currently occupied by hole 4 and 20 units on 5 acres currently occupied by hole 9.

Terry Jernigan, planning manager for Okaloosa County, said the county commission has final say over whether to approve the change. While the Regional Planning Council and the DOE will decide whether the



Bluewater Resort
Holes 4, 6, 7 and 9 of the Magnolia golf course at the Bluewater Bay Resort would be shortened to create room for the development of houses and apartments, according to a resort proposal submitted for government approval. The proposed residential areas are marked in yellow.

change constitutes a substantial deviation from the original DRI, the commission must decide this and also whether to approve the project itself.

Jernigan said if the DOE decides that the change is a substantial deviation and the county does not, the issue will be reviewed by the state's Land and

Water Adjudicatory Commission, consisting of Gov. Rick Scott and his cabinet.

If that commission decides the change is a substantial deviation,

Jernigan said, the resort would have to submit a revised DRI change to the county, WFRPC and DOE, a process that could take months or years.

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VALP.

From page A-1

The visioning committee consists of volunteer citizens appointed by the Valparaiso City Commission to provide advice to the commission on how to chart the city's future.

Dykes advised the committee that as long as the committee acts merely in a fact-finding role, that it would not be subject to the Sunshine Law and regulations concerning open meetings and records. However, said Dykes, if the committee provides recommendations such as providing rank ordered lists of alternative proposals to the city commission, then the committee could become subject to the Sunshine Law. This would require the committee to hold meetings in public, to publish agendas and announcements of meetings in advance, to keep minutes, and to make all of its records open to public scrutiny.

After hearing from Dykes, the committee members seemed to agree that following the Sunshine Law would be the best course of action.

White said that based on her prior experience as an interim president of Northwest Florida State College, that she had found that complying with the Sunshine Law is not really all that difficult.



Beacon photo by Mike Griffith

Members of the Valparaiso Visioning Committee discuss whether they are subject to Florida's Sunshine Law Thursday.

Committee chairman Rob Holloway said that he believes the committee's mission will involve more than mere fact-finding. He said that the committee will be expected to make specific recommendations about future policies of the city. "If we are not expected to make specific recommendations, then I think we would be wasting our own time and that of the city commission," Holloway said.

"I prefer to be on the safe side," Holloway said, and said that the committee's activities should avoid raising a red flag regarding the Sunshine Law.

City Clerk Tammy Johnson suggested that the visioning committee members attend the city

commission meeting on Monday, March 11, and discuss with the commissioners what their view is of the Sunshine Law and the visioning committee.

Holloway said that he encouraged all of his fellow committee members to attend the commission meeting.

Committee member Bryan Campbell said he also planned to ask the commission to explain the difference between the role of the visioning committee and that of the city's planning board, so as not to confuse the roles and missions of each body.

In other business at Thursday's meeting, committee member Les Chambers showed fellow committee members a draft list of poten-

tial questions that might be asked in a survey of city residents in order to help determine the visioning committee's future recommendations. The committee has been considering creating such a survey and sending it out to city residents along with copies of their city utility bills.

Chambers' suggested survey questions are:

—In your opinion, are our elected leaders sensitive to the needs of Valparaiso and its people?

—What is the best way to stimulate the city of Valparaiso?

—As a resident of Valparaiso, would you give freely of your personal time to enhance the quality of life in our community?

—What do you feel is one of the strongest attributes in our town?

—In your opinion, are our elected leaders responsive to the needs of Valparaiso and its people?

—What should be done to build a stronger coalition with the military and its leaders?

At Monday's city commission meeting, Rob Holloway addressed the city commission, and it was agreed that the visioning committee will meet again at 6 p.m. Thursday, March 14, at which time Hayward Dykes will meet face-to-face with the committee.

SCANDAL

From page A-1

scheduled for the end of the three-hour hearing, and time ran out.

During that and two previous JLAC hearings, state lawmakers grilled Okaloosa County officials on the scandal, in which a rogue TDC director, Mark Bellinger, stole, misused or squandered hundreds of thousands of tax dollars under the jurisdiction of the county commission, according to law enforcement authorities and state auditors.

Parisot told the Rotarians that he was disappointed that the legislators did not allow him to present his briefing as the first item of the hearing. Had he been allowed to present his PowerPoint to the JLAC at the beginning of the March 4 hearing, he said, "I would have been able to answer about 90 percent of the questions that they asked during the rest of the hearing."

In his briefing Thursday, Parisot discussed the financial misbehavior of Bellinger, including Bellinger's alleged misuse of a debit card program funded by BP oil spill recovery funds, the purchase of a 2008 Porsche sports car and a 2011 Subaru, Bellinger's purchase of \$747,000 house in Destin, the purchase of two custom motorcycles, the purchase of a Dodge Durango, the funding of an American Wind Symphony performance that never took place, and other allegations.

According to Parisot, Bellinger instructed TDC advertising firms to make purchases or wire funds, and then to bill Okaloosa County, using invoices worded by Bellinger to say that the money was being spent for marketing. Those invoices were sent to the county commission chair for approval, according to county records. No one at the ad firms has been accused of wrongdoing, and representatives of the firms have testified that they had no reason to believe that public money was being diverted for private gain.

In none of these cases, said Parisot, did any county employees appear to have direct complicity in Bellinger's activities.

Parisot disagreed with a finding by a recent Florida Auditor General report, which alleged that TDC-purchased debit cards valued at \$200 each were found in the possession of 46 Okaloosa County employees. In fact, said Parisot, the 46 cards were found in Bellinger's possession, after his death by his own hand.

Regarding his own role in supervising the TDC, Parisot said that he joined the Okaloosa County Commission in November 2010. He served as the commission's liaison with the commission-appointed TDC from January 2011 through December 2012.

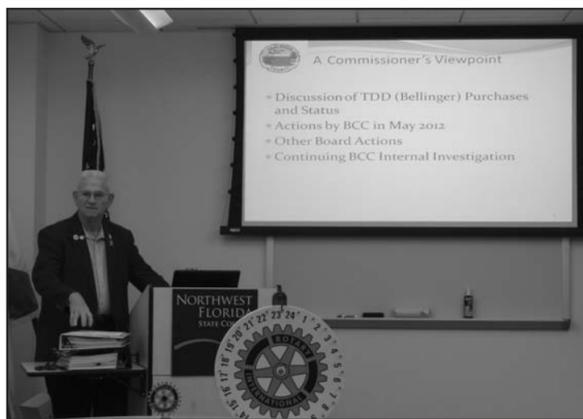
The county commission hired Bellinger as director of the TDC in May 2010, and, on paper at least, he reported directly to the chairman of the county commission, who at that time was Wayne Harris.

In January 2011, said Parisot, James Campbell became chairman of the county commission and therefore Bellinger's supervisor, until December 2011. Don Amunds became chairman of the county commission early in 2012.

Bellinger's alleged theft and misuse of county and BP funds allegedly occurred between 2010 and May 2012, when his purchases of the yacht and house came to light, and an arrest warrant was issued for him on theft charges. He soon thereafter committed suicide.

As to whether county commissioners should have done a better job of supervising the TDC's finances, Parisot said that he never saw the invoices issued by the TDC or the checks issued by the county. He also said the commission could only discuss the TDC during public meetings. These factors, Parisot said, contributed to the failure of him or any of the county commission chairman to learn what Bellinger was doing.

Parisot said that as soon as Bellinger's activities were dis-



Beacon photo by Mike Griffith

Okaloosa County Commissioner David Parisot, the commission's former representative to the county Tourist Development Council, explains official actions taken in the wake of the 2012 TDC scandal. He spoke to the Niceville-Valparaiso Rotary Club Thursday in Niceville.

covered, the county commission began to investigate and to take actions to prevent further misuse of funds. However, the commission's internal investigation was put on hold to make way for criminal investigations by law enforcement authorities. On Feb. 1 of this year, Parisot said, the commission received the go-ahead from authorities to begin its own probe, now underway.

However, Parisot added, the county has been taking corrective actions ever since commissioners learned of Bellinger's activities. These include:

—Requiring the TDC director to report directly to the county administrator rather than to the county commission chairman.

—Requiring all contracts and expenditures of the TDC to be done in conformity with county procedures and the county purchasing manual.

—Replacing the TDC ad agencies.

—Requiring approval by the county purchasing director for task orders up to \$25,000, county administrator approval for those between \$25,000 and \$50,000, and county commission approval for those over \$50,000.

—Forbidding advertising

agencies from buying anything on the county's behalf before receiving written authorization.

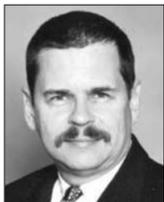
Parisot also said that the county commission is preparing legal action to seek reimbursement for money lost or misused by Bellinger, from those organizations from whom Bellinger had made unauthorized purchases.

Parisot was asked what he thought of state Rep. Matt Gaetz's recent declaration that "Some heads need to roll." Gaetz, a Fort Walton Beach Republican, recently said that some Okaloosa County officials, such as the county attorney and county administrator, should be fired or asked to resign for their failure to properly supervise the Tourist Development Council.

Parisot replied that the county commission is still conducting its own investigation. He said that in such an investigation, the first rule is "get the facts." He said that if the facts warrant the dismissal of any county employee or official, then that decision would be made based on those facts.

Parisot added, however, that he has seen no evidence that any county official or employee was deliberately complicit in any of Bellinger's activities.

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



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Wanted for: VOP-Worthless Checks
Height: 5-feet, 11-inches
Weight: 185
Age: 42
Date of birth: 11-19-1970
Hair: Brown
Eyes: Blue



Name: George Paul Gorman
Wanted for: Fraud
Height: 5-feet, 10-inches
Weight: 170
Age: 39
Date of birth: 05-17-1973
Hair: Brown
Eyes: Hazel



Name: Daniel William Smith
Wanted for: VOP-Burglary and Grand Theft
Height: 5-feet, 7-inches
Weight: 140
Age: 23
Date of birth: 12-26-1989
Hair: Brown
Eyes: Blue

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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

Stephen Alan Shaw, a waiter, 27, of 4258 Shadow Lane, Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies March 2 on a Walton County warrant for misdemeanor violation of probation on an original charge of possession of drug equipment. Shaw's required court appearance is scheduled April 5.

Michael Dewayne Robertson, a landscaper, 21, of 1481 Pine Street, Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies March 1 on charges of battery domestic violence and burglary with assault or battery. Robertson allegedly kicked the locked door of a residence until it opened and grabbed someone by the hair, threw her down and bit her on the cheek. Robertson's required court appearance is scheduled April 9.

Rebekah Elizabeth Bridge, 23, of 104 Ridge Lane, Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies Feb. 28 on a charge of driving while license suspended first offense. Bridge's required court appearance is scheduled March 19.

A 17-year-old Valparaiso boy was arrested by Niceville police March 2 on a charge of retail theft shoplifting. On Oct. 8, the boy entered the Walmart at 1300 E. John Sims Parkway, Niceville. He was allegedly empty handed when he entered the store. The boy was captured on the store's video surveillance footage selecting different types of merchandise of an unspecified value and leaving the store without making an attempt to pay for the merchandise. The boy's required court appearance is scheduled April 11.

Mark Johnathan Howell, a stucco worker, 39, of 505 Johnson St. Apt. A, Valparaiso, was arrested by Niceville police March 1 on a charge of child abuse without great harm. Howell's required court appearance is scheduled April 9.

Janise Stribling, unemployed, 45, of 101 Aspen St., Freeport, was arrested by Niceville police March 2 on a charge of driving while license suspended or revoked habitual offender. An officer observed Stribling driving on Bullock Boulevard, Niceville, without wearing a seat belt, and the officer stopped her at 28th Street and Bullock Boulevard. Stribling said she did not have her driver's license with her, and the officer had a dispatcher check Stribling's driver's license information. This search revealed that Stribling had been designated as a habitual traffic offender, according

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Fire Department Reports

Niceville

The Niceville Fire Department responded to the following calls from March 04, 2013 through March 10, 2013.

0 Structure Fire	14 Emergency Medical Calls
0 Vehicle Fire	4 Vehicle Crash
0 Other Fire	0 Vehicle Crash with Extrication
0 Illegal Burn	2 Other Emergency Calls
0 False Alarms	0 Hazardous Conditions

STREET	SITUATION	DATE	TIME
22nd Street	Medical	3/4/13	15:52
W. John Sims Pkwy.	Medical	3/4/13	23:01
Bayshore Dr.	False call	3/5/13	06:58
S. Partin Dr.	Vehicle crash	3/5/13	09:10
N. Partin Dr.	Medical	3/5/13	14:18
Roberts Dr.	Medical	3/5/13	16:56
Mulry Dr.	Medical	3/5/13	17:05
Mulry Dr.	Medical	3/5/13	21:27
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Vehicle crash	3/6/13	10:33
N. Partin Dr.	Medical	3/6/13	21:50
Linden Ave.	Medical	3/7/13	05:06
N. Partin Dr.	Medical	3/8/13	13:17
SR 85 N.	Vehicle crash	3/8/13	13:48
Coolwater Ln.	Cancelled	3/9/13	01:52
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Vehicle crash	3/9/13	12:51
Mulry Dr.	Medical	3/9/13	17:52
Karen Ct.	Medical	3/9/13	19:38
Ginko Ave.	Medical	3/9/13	20:34
Kelly Road	Medical	3/10/13	12:46
Goldenrod Ct.	Medical	3/10/13	22:07

Weekly Safety Tip: If there are smokers in your home, make sure ashtrays are large and deep and won't tip over. Never throw them in the trash. Make sure they are completely out. Douse cigarette and cigar butts with water before discarding them. Like the Niceville Fire Department on Facebook

North Bay

The North Bay Fire Department responded to the following calls from March 04, 2013 through March 10, 2013.

Street	Situation	Date	Time
Hwy. 20/Bluewater	Vehicle accident	3/4/13	13:26
N. White Point Rd.	Medical assist	3/4/13	15:45
N. White Point Rd.	False alarm	3/5/13	03:45
Fairway Lakes Dr.	Medical	3/5/13	08:32
E. Hwy. 20	Medical	3/6/13	01:05
E. Hwy. 20	No incident found	3/6/13	12:28
Range Rd.	EMS call	3/6/13	14:47
Pine Street	Medical	3/7/13	11:40
Bay Drive	Medical alarm activation	3/8/13	09:02
N. White Point Rd.	Medical	3/8/13	14:57
N. White Point Rd.	Medical	3/8/13	16:30
Lake Drive	Medical	3/9/13	06:57
E. Hwy. 20	Dispatched & cancelled	3/9/13	11:00
Hidden Lakes Dr.	Medical	3/9/13	13:49
William Faulkner Dr.	EMS call	3/10/13	00:20
Glenlake Circle	CO detector activation	3/10/13	05:51
Troon Dr. W.	Medical	3/10/13	09:14
Hickory St.	Public assist	3/10/13	12:07
N. St. Andrews Cv.	Medical	3/10/13	14:57
Area of Merchants Way	No incident found	3/10/13	15:48
White Point Rd/Samana	Vehicle accident	3/10/13	16:55
Glen Eagles Dr.	Medical	3/10/13	19:46

Visit northbayfd.org for more information.

to the record kept by the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. The officer issued Stribling a verbal warning for failing to wear a seat belt.

Edward Lamar Adkins, a construction company employee, 38, no address (homeless), was arrested by Walton County sheriff's deputies Feb. 27 on a charge of simple assault domestic violence. Adkins allegedly made an intentional, unlawful threat when he told someone he was going to hit her in the face while at 83 Winfield St., Niceville.

Adam Blake Stephens, 31, of 101 Owen St., Niceville, was arrested by Walton County sheriff's deputies for failure to appear for a misdemeanor offense for the original charge of possession of cannabis less than 20 grams.

Joe Alan Reeves, 54, of 164 Eastern St., Freeport, was arrested by Walton County sheriff's deputies Feb. 22 on a charge of dealing in stolen property. Reeves allegedly sold property to a metal recycler that had been reported stolen sometime Nov. 11-18, 2012. The property was a metal dog box. Reeves allegedly sold the box doors Nov. 28, and the box Dec. 12.

Brittany Nicholle Bell Weeks, a cashier, 17, of 1212 S. Cedar Ave., Niceville, was arrested by Niceville police Feb. 27 on a charge of possession of marijuana with intent to distribute. The complainant, also a resident of 1212 S. Cedar Ave., reported to police she found marijuana and drug paraphernalia in the house. The complainant said she confronted Weeks, who showed her a clear container holding approximately 14 grams of alleged marijuana in three separate bags, along with two packages of Ezy Dose bags. The complainant said Weeks told her she had paid for half of the marijuana and was going to sell the rest to make a profit. The complainant said someone who lives next door reported receiving a package addressed to Weeks, which contained a digital scale. Weeks' required court appearance is scheduled April 10.

Kedreem Deshown Andrews, a cook, 25, of 101 Sasser St., Niceville, was arrested by Niceville police March 3 on charges of aggravated battery, burglary and resisting an officer without violence. Andrews allegedly slapped someone and hit her with a baseball bat at a residence on Evans Street, Niceville. When police responded to the residence, Andrews ran into a wooded area. Police eventually found Andrews hiding under a deck on Big Oaks Lane. Andrews' required court appearance is scheduled April 9.

Melissa Lynn Custer, 31, of 8216 Gulf Blvd., Navarre, and Joshua Timothy Nelson, a construction worker, 35, of 390 Edge Ave., Valparaiso were arrested by Walton County sheriff's deputies March 6 on charges of possession of a controlled substance without a prescription, possession of marijuana less than 20 grams and possession and/or use of narcotics equipment. A deputy stopped a truck occupied by individuals later identified as Custer and Nelson



Kedreem Deshown Andrews

Please see BLOTTER, page A-5



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THE INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER —by Mike Griffith

What do you think about furloughing federal civilian employees at Eglin Air Force Base for one day a week, without pay, under the US budget sequestration law?

Location: Niceville public library



"I think there are a lot of other ways the government could cut spending."

Kelli McGinnis, 43, Valparaiso, homemaker



"They don't need to take a day's work from anyone. People need the money. Everything's starting to go up."

Lisa Johnson, 34, Niceville, food service



"I don't agree with that. If someone agrees to take a job, they should be fairly paid for it. I also don't agree with President Obama sending our tax money to help the Muslim Brotherhood."

Joyce Mancera, 64, Niceville, janitor at Eglin AFB



"It seems unfair. If employees want to work, they should be allowed to work."

David Jones, 29, Niceville, sales



"I'm not a federal employee, but I think it's unfair for federal employees to bear the brunt of spending reduction. We need to reduce our debt, but the burden should be shared. Federal employees are taking a heavy hit."

Jim Howard, 80, Niceville, retired



"I'm sure people on Eglin would have an opinion about it. Before trying to cut hours, the government should look for other ways to cut spending. I think this is a political way to push back the deadline for balancing the budget."

Aaron Banister, 48, Niceville, framer

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

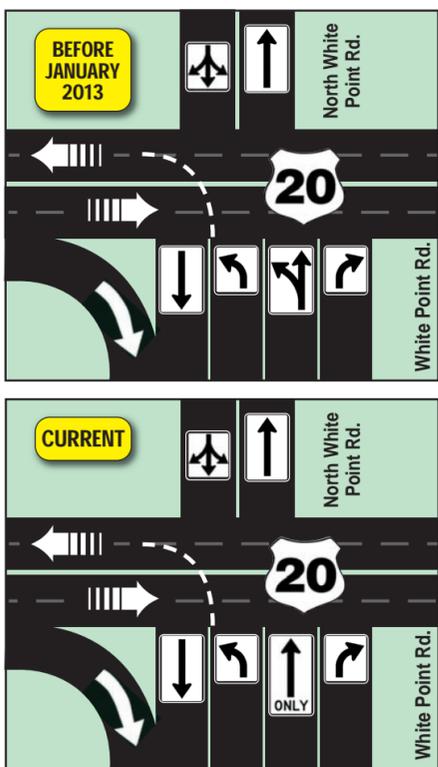
CONFUSES

From page A-1

Woodlands Drive. He said these measures were taken to emphasize that White Point Road is now a "local" street, not the busy

thoroughfare it was before the bypass opened in 2011.

He said a reduction of traffic at the road's intersection with SR 20, and by extension the reduction of left-turns, is an indication that these modifications have been effective.



Beacon graphics by Candice Legge

Motorists on White Point Road, Niceville, may only turn left on to SR 20 from one lane as opposed to two. The center lane at the intersection of the two roads, which before January allowed forward and left-turning traffic, now only allows drivers to travel forward.

BLOTTER

From page A-4

for driving on the Eglin Reservation, at 16000 W S.R. 20, after dark.

After a police dog alerted the deputy to search the vehicle, the deputy searched it, finding Custer and Nelson to be in possession of methamphetamine, marijuana less than 20 grams and drug paraphernalia.

Custer and Nelson were also suspended from range privileges with citations for trespassing after dark.

Anthony Raymond Klein, 21, of 2020 Mary Ann Court, Niceville, was arrested by Walton County sheriff's deputies Feb. 29 on charges of possession of marijuana less than 20 grams and possession and/or use of narcotic equipment.

A deputy stopped a truck driven by Klein at 901 S.R. 20, Freeport, and a police dog alerted deputies to search the truck.

Deputies found marijuana, joints and forceps in the compartment area surrounding the driver's seat.

Thefts

Niceville police received a call March 4 from someone reporting that they attempted to file their tax return but that it had been rejected. The complainant said the IRS told her someone had used her social security number.

A Valparaiso resident reported Feb. 24 he was defrauded by

someone selling a truck over Craigslist.

The complainant said someone posted a 2002 Toyota Tacoma for sale on Craigslist. The seller told the complainant the transaction would be done through eBay, and she instructed him to wire \$1,980 to an eBay "agent."

The complainant sent the money order, which was picked up Feb. 23 at a Walmart in Kissimmee by a person whom the seller identified as the eBay agent. The complainant has not been able to contact the seller since.

A Niceville officer contacted an eBay representative, who said the company does not deal with Craigslist and the company does not have transaction agents.

A Niceville resident reported Feb. 22 his iPhone, worth approximately \$500, was stolen from the First United Methodist Church at 214 S. Partin Drive, Niceville.

Criminal mischief

A Niceville resident reported Feb. 25 someone popped the tires on his pickup truck while it was parked at the business at 406 W. John Sims Parkway, Niceville.

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Letters to the Editor

Letters to the editor on any subject are welcome. To allow room for all views, please keep your letters short. Also, don't forget to sign them and include your phone number. We reserve the right to edit or refuse any submissions. Please send items to:
The Beacon • 1181 E. John Sims Parkway, Niceville, FL 32578 Fax: 1-888-520-9323 • Email: info@baybeacon.com

Communities oppose houses on golf course

By Manfred F. Meine
Bluewater Bay

As a Bluewater Bay resident of some 14 years, one attracted by the beauty of the golf course community, after reading the article about the potential Bluewater Bay golf course changes ("Plan to build on part of golf courses eyed," Page A-1, March 6) I was a bit disappointed because I thought it was a one-sided description of

the situation.

While your article did include comments by Raimund Herden, the statement, "Several Bluewater Bay residents have expressed opposition..." is rather misleading since it suggests limited opposition.

In fact entire Bluewater Bay communities are mounting formal opposition initiatives and are contacting the county commission, so I really think a more complete and balanced discussion would be appropriate.

I think you will see the level of opposition when the commission meets.

Editor's note: The article failed to mention that the Beacon was unsuccessful in its attempts to obtain additional comment from others.

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Above, Leslie Walker and Arcenio "Arc" Peralta smile for a photo during a Hat Party at Bee Hive Homes.



Right, Katie Stephensen demonstrates during her speech at the Hat Party that we wear many hats in life that shape us, contribute, and leave a legacy.



Owners, Steve and Leslie Walker.

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Niceville High School's chorus group Opus One, will perform with other chorus members in the 2013 European Tour March 22-April 1.

Niceville High Chorus to perform in Europe

By Anna Kavanaugh
Beacon Staff Writer

More than 50 Niceville High School chorus members, known as the Niceville European Singers, will travel to Europe to perform four free concerts as part of its European tour March 22-April 1.

Michael Dye, NHS chorus director, has planned international concert tours every other year for the chorus, to include Spain, China and Italy. This year he added two stops to include performances at the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center and Ramstein Air Force Base in Germany to honor wounded warriors and their medical staff, as well as all military families serving the nation.

A total of 74 travelers, to include 52 students, two choral staff and 20 chaperons will make stops in Austria, Germany and France during the tour.

Students from the six choruses, Select Women, Bel Canto, Kantorai, Camerata, Niceville Singers and Opus One, will sing a capella in venues and on streets while they visit historical landmarks along the way. NHS choral assistant Jennifer Vest will accompany the chorus on the keyboard/piano in venues where it's appropriate, Dye said.

"Depending on the concert venue, you will be able to hear anything from the music of the Italian Renaissance composer Palestrina to 'Coney Island Baby,'" Dye said.

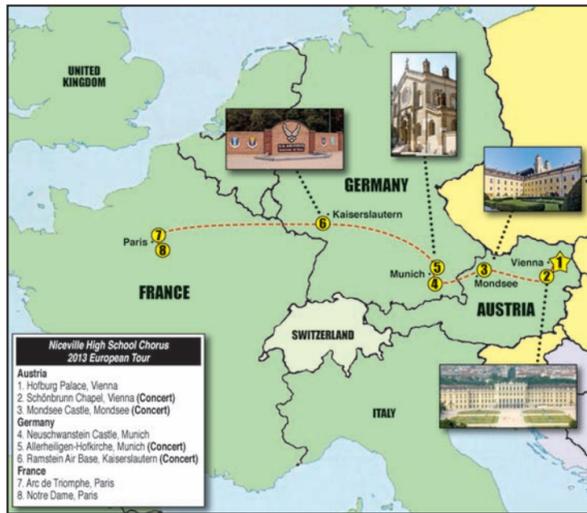
Jessica Gunn, a NHS sophomore and member of the Bel Canto Chorus and the Niceville Singers, has been practicing some German and French phrases to prepare for the trip.

"Right now all I can say correctly is 'Do you speak English?'" Jessica said. "I'm also trying to figure out my absolute essentials so that my luggage doesn't go overweight."

The group will arrive in Vienna, Austria. After a well rested night the chorus will travel by bus to the Schönbrunn Palace and perform later in the Schönbrunn Chapel.

The next stop will be in Mondsee, Austria. Students will change into their concert attire, then rehearse and perform in the Mondsee Castle.

Next up is a day of sight-seeing in Salzburg and rest for the chorus' voices. The next day the group will visit the famous Neuschwanstein Castle that was the inspiration for



Disneyland's "Sleeping Beauty" castle. Later that day they will perform a concert at Allerheiligen-Hofkirche, All Saints' Court Church, in Munich, Germany.

From there the group will take a scenic drive to Kaiserlautern, Germany. The chorus will visit and sing with the Ramstein High School Chorus at Ramstein Air Force Base, Germany. Then, they will travel to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, the overseas military hospital that serves as the nearest treatment center for wounded soldiers coming from Iraq and Afghanistan. The chorus will perform a short vocal salute for the staff and soldiers at the hospital.

"Both of my parents are

retired military of 30 or more years," Jessica said. "I've grown up with both of them telling me about times when they went overseas and all the adventures that they had.

They've always told me about how people may be different everywhere you go, but the second you step on a base it's like you never left home."

The last part of the trip will be spent sightseeing in Paris. The chorus will tour the Arc de Triomphe, Notre Dame, Opera Garnier and Square, and the Eiffel Tower. Even though there are no scheduled performances in Paris, the chorus will most likely perform on the streets.

"While we do not have a formal concert scheduled in

Please see CHORUS, page B-3

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COMING SOON to Crestview & Destin

Ballroom dancers compete

Step By Step Ballroom's "Dream Team Dancers" of Niceville competed at the Dixieland Invitational Dance Competition Feb. 23, in Birmingham, Ala.

The Dancers, ages 11 to 13, placed first and second in multiple categories in the Latin and smooth dance divisions. John Hencinski and Lauren Householder received recognition as the "Top Dance Couple" in the junior amateur division.

The dancers who competed were Skyla Markham, Destin Middle School; Marcus Larson, John Hencinski, Camille Miles, and Aidan Ferrell, Ruckel Middle School; Lauren Householder, Rocky Bayou Christian Middle School; and Ginger Gore, Bruner Middle School.



Dancers from Step by Step Ballroom of Niceville competed at the Dixieland Invitational Dance Competition Feb. 23, in Birmingham, Ala. From front to back: Skyla Markham, Marcus Larson, Ginger Gore, John Hencinski, Camille Miles, Aidan Ferrell and Lauren Householder.

Edge choir to perform

Edge Elementary selected its singers to perform in the Twin Cities Fifth Grade Honor Choir Concert March 19 at Rocky Bayou Baptist Church in Niceville. From left: back row, Ky Donahoo, Heather Adams, Abigail Jinks, Savannah Hill, Madi Frisby, Anna McCoy; middle row, Josh Garcia, Mattie Bryan, Brianna McKenna, Sophia Contratto, Tori Thorson, Skylar Lee, Patrick Harrington; front row, Gianna Freiler, Tyler Humpert and Abigail Atwell. Not pictured are Colby Pruitt, Britney Fulghum, Peyton Chambers and Mikayla Ernsberger.



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Niceville. Contact Pastor Harley Moyer Jr. at 678-2970.

Garden club meeting

The Valparaiso Garden Club will meet March 13, 9:30-11:30 a.m., at the Valparaiso Library, Room 3. A plant auction will be held where members can donate plants and the proceeds will be donated to charities of the club's choosing. Visitors are welcome, contact marieharrison@valp.net.

Twin Cities Seniors meeting

The Twin Cities Seniors, 50-plus, will meet March 13, 1 p.m., at 268 Glenview Ave., Valparaiso. There will be Bingo and an entrée provided. Bring a covered dish to share. Contact 543-0869.

'A Midsummer Night's Dream'

The Northwest Florida State College presents the theatrical version of Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" March 13-16, 7:30 p.m., in the Sprint Theater, at the Mattie Kelly Arts Center, NWFSC, Niceville. Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$10 for youth ages 18 and younger. To purchase tickets contact the box office at 729-6000 or visit www.mattiekellyartscenter.org.

DAR meeting

The Choctawhatchee Bay Chapter National Society Daughters of the American Revolution will meet March 14, 10 a.m., at the First Presbyterian Church, 134 Beal Parkway SW, Fort Walton Beach. Randy Bergeron, retired USAF and civil service, will speak on military archives. The DAR is open to all women who are lineally descended from a Revolutionary War Patriot.

Bike ride

The Adventure Club will host a bike ride March 14, 3:30 p.m., in the Bluewater Bay Resort/Subdivision, Niceville. Meet at the golf course club house parking lot. Dinner will be at a nearby restaurant following the ride. Contact Bob and Audrey Hains at 897-3624.

Ruckel chorus concert

The Ruckel Middle School Chorus will perform a concert, "Sweet Sounds," directed by Megan James March 14, 6:30 p.m., at the school



Ruckel chorus concert

The Ruckel Middle School Chorus will perform a fundraising concert, "Sweet Sounds," March 14, 6:30 p.m., at the school gymnasium, Niceville. Admission is \$5 per person.

Indoor soccer registration

The Niceville United Methodist Church Youth Indoor Soccer League for ages four through fourth grade is accepting applicants. Practices begin in May and games will be played in June and July. Registration cost is \$70 and \$85 after March 28 until the deadline April 7. Registration can be made in person at the Community Life Center of Niceville United Methodist Church or nicevilleumc.org/recreation.

Ruckel cheer clinic

Ruckel Middle School cheerleaders will host a cheerleading clinic for girls K-6 grade April 13, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., in the Ruckel Middle School gymnasium. Participants will learn jumps, dance, cheers and chants. Grades 4-6 will participate in a mock tryout and receive a critique sheet to help improve their skills. The cost is \$25 by April 1, and \$35 until April 13. Contact rmscheer@ymail.com for more information.

Community Market Day

The Niceville Community Guild is looking for vendors for its Niceville Community Market Day, held April 13, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., an outdoor market in the parking lot behind Niceville City Hall. It's open to crafters, garage sales, produce stands, fundraisers, food vendors, home businesses, or individuals who would like to sell their car, boat or motor home. Spaces are \$15. Contact 678-7595 or Nicevillechristmas@cox.net to reserve a spot.

First United revival

First United Pentecostal Church of Niceville will host a revival featuring evangelist Mike Easter March 13, 14 and 15, 7 p.m., and March 17, 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m., at 1217 Finck Road,

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gymnasium, Niceville. Admission is \$5 and dessert and coffee will be served. Elementary students and younger are free. The proceeds will benefit the Ruckel chorus program.

BWB Garden Club meeting

The Bluewater Bay Garden Club will its monthly meeting March 14, 9:30 a.m., at the Bluewater Bay Clubhouse, Bluewater Bay Boulevard, Niceville. Karen Williams, Okaloosa County master gardener, will give a presentation on spring and summer plants for the Florida Panhandle. New members and guests are welcome, contact Karen Williams at 897-5560.

Women's Conference

The 2013 Shine On Women's and Teen's Conference will take place March 15-16 at the Emerald Coast Convention Center on Okaloosa Island. The event will feature acclaimed Christian women speakers, such as Dee Chernicky and Ruth Graham, daughter of the acclaimed Rev. Billy Graham. Scholarships, early bird and group rates are available to help with cost. Tickets range from \$25 for teens to \$139 for a two-day ticket. Purchase tickets at www.shineconference.com.

Traveling Eagles golf tourney

The 2013 Traveling Eagles golf tournament will take place April 5, noon registration, 1 p.m. shotgun start, at the Bluewater Bay Country Club. The cost is \$350 for a team, \$90 for an individual. Register at www.travelingeagles.com.

Art walk

The Downtown Fort Walton Beach Merchants Association will host a free, public spring kick-off party and art walk March 15, 5:30-8:30 p.m., starting at the foot of Brooks Bridge (west end of Publix Plaza) and ending at the Indian Temple Mound Museum, Fort Walton Beach. There will be live music, and art, jewelry and photography for sale.

NFSO piano recital

Pianist Yue Chu, the featured guest

soloist at the NFSO's 25th anniversary Celebration and Transfiguration concert in September, returns for a private recital on March 16, 7:30 p.m., in the Tyler Recital Hall of the Mattie Kelly Arts Center, Northwest Florida State College, Niceville.



Purchase tickets for \$20 by contacting the box office at 729-6000, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., on weekdays. Yue is noted for his extraordinary skill as the 2011 Gold Medal winner of the prestigious Wideman International Piano Competition in Shreveport, La., and has won numerous awards in his short career.

Museum fundraiser

Malibu Jacks will host a "Spring Break Beer Taste" to benefit the Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida, March 16, 1-4 p.m., at 517 Harbor Boulevard, Destin. Sample a variety of beers, enjoy great music and fun door prizes. Admission is \$15 or \$12 for museum members.

Spring fling fundraiser

Edge Elementary's Spring Fling Picnic on the Lawn fundraiser will be held March 16, 1-5 p.m., at the school, 300 Hwy 85, North, Niceville. The event will include music by Three Bean Soup, a build it workshop by Home Depot, crafts, activities and games. Tickets will be sold for inflatable slides, bounce houses and giant hamster bumper balls. Grilled food, baked goods, popcorn and snow cones will be available for purchase. The children's pie eating contest entry fee is \$5. Bazaar booth rentals are still available for \$30, contact Kellee Dali at edgeto@mail.okaloosa.k12.fl.us

Kiwanis pancake breakfast

The Niceville-Valparaiso Kiwanis Club will host a pancake breakfast and silent auction March 16, 7-11 a.m., at the Niceville High School cafeteria. Tickets are \$4 and will be sold at the door.

Audubon nature walk

The Choctawhatchee Audubon Society will host a free bird and nature

walk at Topsail Hill March 16, 7:55 a.m., or at Winn Dixie, Bluewater Bay, 7:30 a.m. Ross Hamilton, a biology professor, will lead the walk. Contact Walt Spence at 582-7064.

Rosemont Baptist Church will host a community yard sale, rain or shine, March 16, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., at the church across from Plew Elementary, 1601 27th St., Niceville. Table and space are. Contact the church at 678-1611 to reserve a table and two chairs.

All God's Children service

All God's Children & the Living Word Worship Center will offer a special service March 17, 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., at 40 John Sims Parkway, Valparaiso. Pastor's Walter & Barbara Williams will celebrate their fourth anniversary with speakers Winfred Gilbert of Tree of Life Worship Center at 11 a.m., and Pastor Benjamin T. Randolph of the Evelyner Baptist Church of Crestview. The Daughters of Zion and the Eglin Brotherhood will render the music. Dinner will be served prior to the service and all are invited. Contact Victor King 313-585-0415 or allgodschilrenministry@centurylink.net.

St. Patrick's Day fundraiser

Magnolia Grill will host a St. Patrick's Day fundraiser, "Raisin' of the Green," to benefit Catholic Charities of Fort Walton Beach and the Fisher House of the Emerald Coast March 17, noon-4 p.m., at 157 Brooks St., Fort Walton Beach. The event will feature a traditional St. Patrick's Day meal of corned beef, cabbage and potatoes, live Irish music, and a 50/50 donation drawing. Advance tickets are \$8 and \$10 at the door.

Republican meeting

The Okaloosa County Republican Party Executive Committee (OCREC) will hold its monthly meeting March 18, 6 p.m., at the Niceville City Council Chambers, 208 N. Partin Drive, Niceville. All registered Republicans are welcome to join.

OCREC is the governing body of the Republican Party in Okaloosa County and its members are representatives of their precinct in the county. Contact 863-2301.

Fifth grade choir concert

The Twin Cities Fifth Grade Honor Choir Concert will be held March 19, 7 p.m., at Rocky Bayou Baptist Church, Niceville. Edge Elementary singers will join selected fifth grade singers from Bluewater and Plew Elementary and Lewis School to perform. Also performing will be choruses from Ruckel Middle School, Niceville High School, and Northwest Florida State College.

Better listening series

Jeffrey Rink, the Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra conductor and director, will speak at the "Better Listening" community classical free, public, music study series March 19, 7-9 p.m., at the Valparaiso Unitarian Church. He will share concert notes on Beethoven's Ninth Symphony for the upcoming NFSO concert. Contact Lou Johnson at musicstudy@uufec.com.

Women's history workshop

Northwest Florida State College will host a free workshop in honor of Women's History Month March 21, 5-7 p.m., in Room 302 at the Student Services Center, at the college in Niceville. The keynote speaker will be Anna Rodriguez, long-time women's activist and founder of the Florida Coalition Against Human Trafficking. The event is free and open to the public. RSVP at www.occs.org/history no later than March 19.

History lecture

The Florida Public Archeology Network will host a free lecture, "Talking Smack: The Sailing Vessels of Pensacola's Fishing Industry," to celebrate March as Florida's archeology month March 19, 6:30 p.m., at the Niceville Community Center, 205 N. Partin Drive. The event is free and open to the public and will be presented by Nicole Bucchino. Contact 279-4863 ex. 1504.

Gospel concert

The Niceville Christian Church will host a gospel concert featuring Lowell Mason, known as the world's smallest gospel singer, March 20, 6 p.m., at the church, on the corner of John Sims Parkway and Pine Avenue, Niceville. He will perform a variety of "Old Time" songs. The concert is open to the public and free, although an offering will be received.

Area job fair

The Northwest Florida State College and University of West Florida will host a career and job fair March 20, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., at the joint campus, 1170 Martin Luther King Blvd., Fort Walton Beach. Contact the NWFSC Career Resource Center at 729-5227.



Ruckel student places third

Ruckel Middle School seventh grader Eve Glenn placed third in the District 1 Regional Veteran's of Foreign Wars Patriot's Pen Essay Contest Feb. 23. She received a \$100 prize and ceremonial medals for her essay on "What I would tell America's Founding Fathers."



Plew choir chosen

Plew Elementary announced its 2013 Honor Choir members for the Twin Cities Honor Choir Concert March 19 at Rocky Bayou Christian Church, Niceville.

Collegiate Cox Tournney champs

The Cox Communications-Okaloosa School District Academic Tournament held its semi-final round Feb. 19 in the media center at Choctawhatchee High School.

The Niceville High School Academic Team beat Choctawhatchee High School 235 to 200 and advanced to the championship round against the Northwest Florida State College Collegiate High School Feb. 26. Collegiate beat Niceville 195 to 175 in the final round and

was named the 2013 Cox/Okaloosa Schools Academic Tournament champions.

Amanda Brady and Justin Reichard coached the Niceville High School team: captain Sabrina Valenti, Alex Fager, Ciara Ordner, Tory Marks and Georgia Pearce.

De Cook coached the Collegiate team: captain Matthew Crabtree, Braden Corkum, Alex Russ, Danielle Trotman and John Chapman.



Northwest Florida State College Collegiate High was named champions of the Cox Communication-Okaloosa School District Academic Tournament Feb. 26. The team from left: Danielle Trotman, Matthew Crabtree, Alex Russ and Braden Corkum. Not pictured is John Chapman.

CHORUS

From page B-1

Paris, you can bet Facebook will feature video of our singers performing in Notre Dame, outside the Louvre and

on the steps of the Paris Opera House," Dye said. "The thing to remember is that our group is a portable concert just looking for a place to perform. As long as we have a pitch pipe, we can organize our choir and be per-

forming in less than a minute." The cost for each traveler was \$3,850. Every dollar spent on the tour was provided by the traveler, either out-of-pocket or through smaller fundraising efforts, Dye said.

The Niceville High School European Singers will perform four scheduled concerts in Europe while visiting historical landmarks during its 2013 European Tour March 22-April 1.



Pack 52 plants tree

Three Pack 52 Tiger Scouts from Valparaiso planted a tree at Rocky Bayou Baptist Church Feb. 14 for their service project.

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Stemm Academy to receive F100 engine

By Anna Kavanaugh
Beacon Staff Writer

The Okaloosa Stemm Academy will receive an F100 jet engine donated from the U.S. Air Force 331st Recruiting Squadron at Maxwell-Gunter Annex Air Force Base March 15, according to Stemm director Rick Soria.

There will be a ribbon cutting ceremony at 2 p.m. in the school's cafeteria, Valparaiso, unveiling the engine. CDR Joel Tessier, commander of the 33rd Maintenance Squadron at Eglin Air Force Base, will speak to stu-



The Okaloosa S T E M M Academy will receive an F100 jet engine donated from the U.S. Air Force March 15 in the school's cafeteria, Valparaiso.

dents before the ceremony.

The academy plans to show how engines work in its curriculum with the jet engine. The electric motor engine, coated in a

plastic casing with cutouts, will be plugged into the wall where students and visitors will be able to see all the pieces turning in the engine, Soria said.

Lady Knights dominate the competition

The 2013 Rocky Bayou Christian School Lady Knights softball team sits at a record of 4-0-1. From left: back row; Liz Gadzinski, Coach Eaves, Casey Orr, Hannah Barber, Rachel Mosley, Morgan Milam, Claire Gunter, Maria Denbow, Coach Ring, Coach Holcomb, front row; Mariah Colvin, Keegan McSheehy, Samantha Holcomb, Kaylee Orr, Meredith Milam, Alicyn Grete, Rebecca Hancock, Amber Grete.



Photo by Lisa Downing

The Rocky Bayou Christian School Lady Knights softball team opened its season Feb. 26 with a 3-0 win against Central High School. Freshman pitcher Sam Holcomb had 11 strike outs and gave up three hits while holding the Lady Jags scoreless. Holcomb also was one for three at the plate with a homerun. Casey Orr was two for three at the plate with two doubles.

On Feb. 28 the girls faced Walton High School and came away with a 6-2 victory behind another strong performance from Sam Holcomb in the circle. She pitched 14 strikeouts and gave up three hits. Morgan

Milam led the team offensively going three for four.

At the Feb. 29 first district contest against Maclay School the girls came away with a 6-2 win behind a career high strike out performance from Holcomb who fanned 16 Maclay batters. Casey Orr was one for three with a home run and Sam Holcomb was three for four at the plate.

The Lady Knights traveled to Pensacola March 4 and shut out Pensacola High School with a 10-0 victory. The girls had 11 hits, but the big blow came off freshman Casey Orr's bat as she smashed a grand slam over the centerfield fence. Senior Rachel

Mosley was three for three and freshman Sam Holcomb pitched 14 strike outs and gave up two hits.

The girls faced off against district rival North Florida Christian March 5. In a classic pitchers duel, the game was called due to darkness with the score tied 1-1. Sam Holcomb threw a one hitter and struck out 15, but the Lady Knights offense was shut down by junior pitcher Lindsey Bert. The game had a combined total of 31 strike outs and one hit. Both teams scored an unearned run. After five games the Lady Knights are 4-0-1.



14U Eagles win tourney

The Niceville 14U Traveling Eagles won the All-Star Production's March Madness Tournament March 2-3, in Pace. From left, front row: Devin Hemenway, Austin Lawniczak, Brandon Edelman, Drew Grandgenett, Brady Smith, back row, Coach David Smith, Logan Taylor, Tyler Russell, Judd Barth, Jacob Jenkins, Christian Huff, Nick Hazama and Manager/Coach Rod Taylor.

NHS track takes 5th

The Niceville High School track team competed in the First Annual Steven Garst Memorial Track and Field Invitational March 2. The team competed against 15 schools from across the Panhandle, with both the boys and girls teams taking fifth place.

In the face of the frigid weather, the team still put forth tremendous effort. The immense team spirit and sportsmanship was evident in the 1-2 finish of the 1600 meter run when Thomas Howell threw his arm over Nick Morken's shoulder as they crossed the finish line together.

The NHS athletes that

secured top three placements are: Hannah Schroeder, third place in the triple jump with a



distance of 32-10.00; the girls 4x800 track team, Marsel Mosley, Annie Serpa, Nickie Anderson, and Drew Hagerman, in second place with a time of 10:29.63; the boys 4x800 track team, Thomas

Howell, Nick Morken, Jack Massey, and Tripp Davis, in first place with a time of 8:24.13; Aubrey West, third place in the 100 meter dash with a time of 13:28; Marsel Mosley, first place in the 1600 meter run with a time of 5:26.92; Thomas Howell, first place in the 1600 meter run with a time of 4:36.26 and first in the 3200 meter run with a time of 9:37.44; Nick Morken second in the 1600 meter run with a time of 4:36.27 and first in the 800 meter run with a time of 2:04.99; the girls 4x400 team, Marsel Mosley, Katelyn Friesen, Nickie Anderson and Drew Hagerman placed third with a time of 4:32.87.



Little League season opens

The Niceville Valparaiso Little League season began Saturday as 4-to-12-year-old players took the field for the first games of this year. This year's season includes 66 teams, up from 62 teams from last year. Participation this year is at 812 players, 10 more than last year. The season runs through mid-June.

Beacon photo by Mike Griffith



10U girls win championship

The Niceville High Intensity 10U Girls Softball team won the "Break Out the Bats III" annual tournament 4-1 for their division March 2, in Donalsonville, Ga. From left: front row, Bailey Phillips, Emma Langston, Kelby Barfield, Michaela Brocato, Mary Beloat, back row, Coach April Chapel, Blakeleigh Eslinger, Lindsey Mayo, Mikhala Hampton, Hope Summerlin, Kasey Seeling, Paige Ryleigh Whitaker and Coach Scott Summerlin.

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