

# The Bay Beacon

Police Blotter  
Page A-3

14 Pages, 2 Sections, 4 Inserts

Wednesday, March 27, 2013

50¢

**UP**  
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Through March 30



Artist Lou

**Kaunzinger's** art is on display at **Niceville Library**. Come view her watercolors and acrylics during regular library hours.

Wed., 6-7:30 p.m.



Meet the five finalists for the position of **Okaloosa County Administrator** during a **meet and greet** at **Emerald Coast Convention Center**. Light hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar available.

Friday and Saturday



Three **Easter egg hunts** will keep the little ones happy all weekend long, Niceville and Valparaiso.

Mon., 6:30 p.m.



**Anne Hornstein** will show how to make flyers, format a book and make greeting cards using **Pages application** for Mac, NWF State College.

Calendar, B-2

## Valp. mayor mulls retirement

By Daniel Elsesser  
Beacon Staff Writer

Valparaiso Mayor Bruce Arnold said he is "not planning" to run for reelection next year, but that he might change his mind.

Arnold said he was "getting tired" and would likely not seek another four-year term.

Arnold, 83, was elected mayor of Valparaiso in January 1964 and will have

served 50 years by the time of the next election in March 2014, the longest unbroken tenure by a currently serving elected mayor in Florida.

A representative of the Florida League of Cities said Apopka's John Land has served the longest as an elected mayor in Florida—63 years and counting. But Land's tenure, which



Bruce Arnold

began in 1950, was broken for three years from 1968 to 1971.

Arnold, whose mayoral position also makes him a voting member of the five-member city commission, said he had not intended to run for reelection in Valparaiso's 2010 election, but was persuaded to run by members of the Valparaiso community.

"I wasn't going to run last time, but I did because so many people asked me to," Arnold said. "If I hadn't had so many people coming to my house and begging me to run again, I would've retired."

Arnold said that for this election, any such requests would not figure in his decision whether to seek office again.

Please see MAYOR, page A-8

## Spring swim



Beacon photo by Mike Griffith

After a series of thunderstorms on Friday and Saturday, ushering in the official start of spring like a lion, Twin Cities residents welcomed bright blue skies and warm temperatures on Sunday, which gave people the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors, especially near local waterways. Valparaiso's Lincoln Park was a busy place Sunday afternoon, as the sunny weather brought people out to the beach.

## Housing agency takes applications for 18 dwellings

By Daniel Elsesser  
Beacon Staff Writer

The Niceville Housing Authority opened its waiting list March 5 for zero-and one-bedroom housing for the first time since September 2010.

Dottie Avery, the authority's executive director, said nine people dropped off the list in the last six months, dropping the expected wait time for housing down to about two years. Avery said she had reason to believe as many as six more will drop off in the next six months.

Of the authority's 111 units, only 15 are one-bedroom and three are zero-bedroom, Avery said. A one-bedroom dwelling is about 600 square feet, while a zero-bedroom unit is 550-square-foot efficiency apartment with a bed "nook" instead of a bedroom with a door.

Avery said that the waiting list for the 18 units stands

Please see HOUSING, page A-7

## Bridge agency rules out wall to block noise

By Daniel Elsesser  
Beacon Staff Writer

The Mid-Bay Bridge Authority (MBBA) has ruled out building a wall to reduce road noise that bothers residents who live near the south end of the bridge approach highway.

The authority said a noise study of the neighborhoods White Point Village and Chardonnay Estates found that it wouldn't be cost effective to build the wall, which was requested by the residents.

The study was commissioned at a meeting Jan. 31 between the MBBA, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), and residents of the neighborhoods, many of whom had complained that traffic noise from the connector was harming their quality of life.

MBBA Executive Director Jim Vest the MBBA will accept the results of the study.

"We conducted the noise study at the request of the

Please see BRIDGE, page A-2

# Arson blamed in blaze that destroyed SUV

By Daniel Elsesser  
Beacon Staff Writer

The Florida Fire Marshal has determined that someone set an early-morning fire that destroyed a motor vehicle parked in a front yard in Valparaiso March 17.

Spokeswoman Deborah

Jamison said the fire marshal's office has determined arson to be the cause of the blaze. She said the agency was trying to determine who was responsible.

Estimated damage to the 2002 Jeep Grand Cherokee was \$15,000.

On March 17, Valparaiso Fire Chief Mark Norris informed police that he suspected foul play as the cause of a vehicle fire which firefighters had just extinguished, according to a Valparaiso police report. Norris said the unoccupied SUV, found on the first

block of Edge Avenue, was engulfed in flames upon firefighters' arrival.

The Jeep was parked in the middle of the front yard away from the house. A police officer reported the car is usually backed in close to the house to the right of the front porch, and

he said he had seen the car its usual position at approximately 1 p.m. March 16.

Investigating the fire, the officer contacted other residents of Edge Avenue who have a home video surveillance system.

The officer viewed surveil-

lance footage and saw a flash of fire in the vehicle and a figure running away from it at 4:29 a.m. March 17.

Norris said his department worked with a fire marshal investigator who took debris from the burned car for inspection.

## In security move, schools curb access via Old Coastal Hwy.

By Daniel Elsesser  
Beacon Staff Writer

Niceville High School administrators plan to close Old Coastal Highway, the street between NHS and Ruckel Middle School, to through traffic from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on school days, starting Monday, as a security measure.

Grant Meyer, an assistant principal at Niceville High School, said the east entrance to Old Coastal Highway at Palm Boulevard North will be blocked by a locked gate every day school is in session.

School safety eyed, A-7.

Meyer said the entrance to Old Coastal from Partin Drive North will remain open at all times.

Meyer said he brought the idea up to other Niceville High School administrators at a meeting called to identify ways to make the campus safer.

A March 13 letter from Principal Rodney Nobles to Niceville city officials cited,

Please see SECURITY, page A-5



The east gate of Old Coastal Highway between Niceville High School and Ruckel Middle School, which connects to Palm Boulevard North, will be closed from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on school days starting April 1. The idea was proposed by Assistant Principal Grant Meyer, pictured at the gate.

Beacon photo by Daniel Elsesser



### Publix inks lease

A lease for a planned Publix supermarket in Niceville has been signed, according to Valparaiso Realty, the landlord. Construction of the store on an already-cleared site east of Rocky Bayou Drive and north of John Sims Parkway is expected to begin in late spring. It will likely open in early 2014, according to Valparaiso Realty. The landlord has told city officials that it expects the grocery store, Niceville's fifth, to eventually anchor a shopping center including perhaps a dozen smaller retailers, which have not been identified. A service road will connect the center with Rocky Bayou Drive to the east, and the Walmart shopping center to the west.

Valparaiso Realty

### BRIDGE

From page A-1

residents," Vest said. "The study said the area doesn't warrant a wall, and the authority is going to go by the criteria the FDOT set out."

The study, conducted by HDR Engineering and acknowledged by the FDOT March 18, calculated the predicted change in noise levels at 28 residences in the neighborhoods near the connector, on Napa Way, Laura Lane and Sandalwood Circle.

The study used a baseline noise level of 52 decibels, recorded in 2007, before the connector's construction, and predicted what the noise level would be at the 28 resi-

idences in 2030 at peak traffic time.

A decibel is a standard unit that indicates the ratio of sound intensity. A three-decibel increase means that the sound level has approximately doubled.

The study used Federal Highway Administration software to predict the traffic noise, and factored in field conditions, elevations and roadway alignment through a virtual model of the area.

The report states that in order to be a candidate for noise abatement, the affected property must be expected to suffer a noise increase of at least 14 decibels.

The study showed two of the 28 residences, 1059 and 1061

Napa Way, were predicted to receive an increase of 14.2 decibels and 14.4 decibels by 2030, respectively. Therefore, simulations were conducted to determine whether it would be reasonable to build a wall to abate noise for these and nearby residences.

The report states that noise abatement is considered effective if it achieves the design goal and is cost effective. For this project, FDOT selected a 7-decibel noise reduction at one of the benefited residences as the design goal, and cost effectiveness at no more than \$42,000 per benefited residence, using a cost of \$30 per square foot. Benefited residences include all residences potentially benefited by noise abatement, not just ones predicted to receive the 14-decibel increase. The study identified 14 benefited residences.

The study shows two barrier designs which were investigated. One calls for a 1,775-foot-long, 8- to 12-foot-high barrier costing

\$802,112, or \$50,132 per benefited residence. The second calls for a 1,440-foot-long, 8-foot barrier costing \$635,500, or \$45,393 per benefited residence. Both of these designs were predicted to reduce noise by 7 decibels at one or more of the benefited receptors, but neither was cost effective, and thus no noise abatement was recommended.

The designs assumed the cost of the wall at \$30 per square foot, plus costs of a guard rail, asphalt, new signs, traffic maintenance and construction inspection.

Darren Rich, resident of 1061 Napa Way, one of the residences predicted to receive a noise level increase of over 14 decibels, said the MBBA should look into the design for the barrier that would only cost \$45,393, hoping there would be a way to lower the cost into the reasonable range.

Vest said the cost estimates were very conservative, and there was little possibility that construc-

tion would cost any less than the predicted amount.

Darlane Landsberger, homeowners' association manager for Chardonnay Estates, said she accepts the findings of the study even though she was hoping for a different result.

"I am disappointed in the outcome," Landsberger said. "I'm not disappointed in the due diligence of the authority."

MBBA Chairman Gordon Fornell said the study does not mean the conversation between the authority and the neighborhoods is over, and said he encourages discussion between the two groups to work out more reasonable solutions to any problems.

At the MBBA's meeting March 21, Vest announced that the FDOT would be reimbursing the MBBA for funds lost when they suspended tolls on the Mid-Bay Bridge to accommodate increased traffic resulting from the temporary closing of the Brooks Bridge. The

bridge closed after a barge hit it March 20. Mid-Bay Bridge tolls were suspended shortly after the Brooks Bridge's closing and reactivated March 21 around 6 a.m.

At the meeting, Vest also announced Florida Senate Bill 1132, which contains language which would place the MBBA under the control of a newly created regional tollway authority, had passed in two senate committees and was scheduled to go before two more before potentially reaching the Senate floor. Vest and the MBBA have been monitoring the bill through Southern Strategy Group, a lobbying firm hired to assist the interests of the MBBA in the Florida legislature.

The board voted unanimously at the meeting to pass a resolution stating its opposition to the language in the bill that would transfer their control to a regional tollway authority, and instructed Vest to send copies of the resolution to local chambers of commerce.



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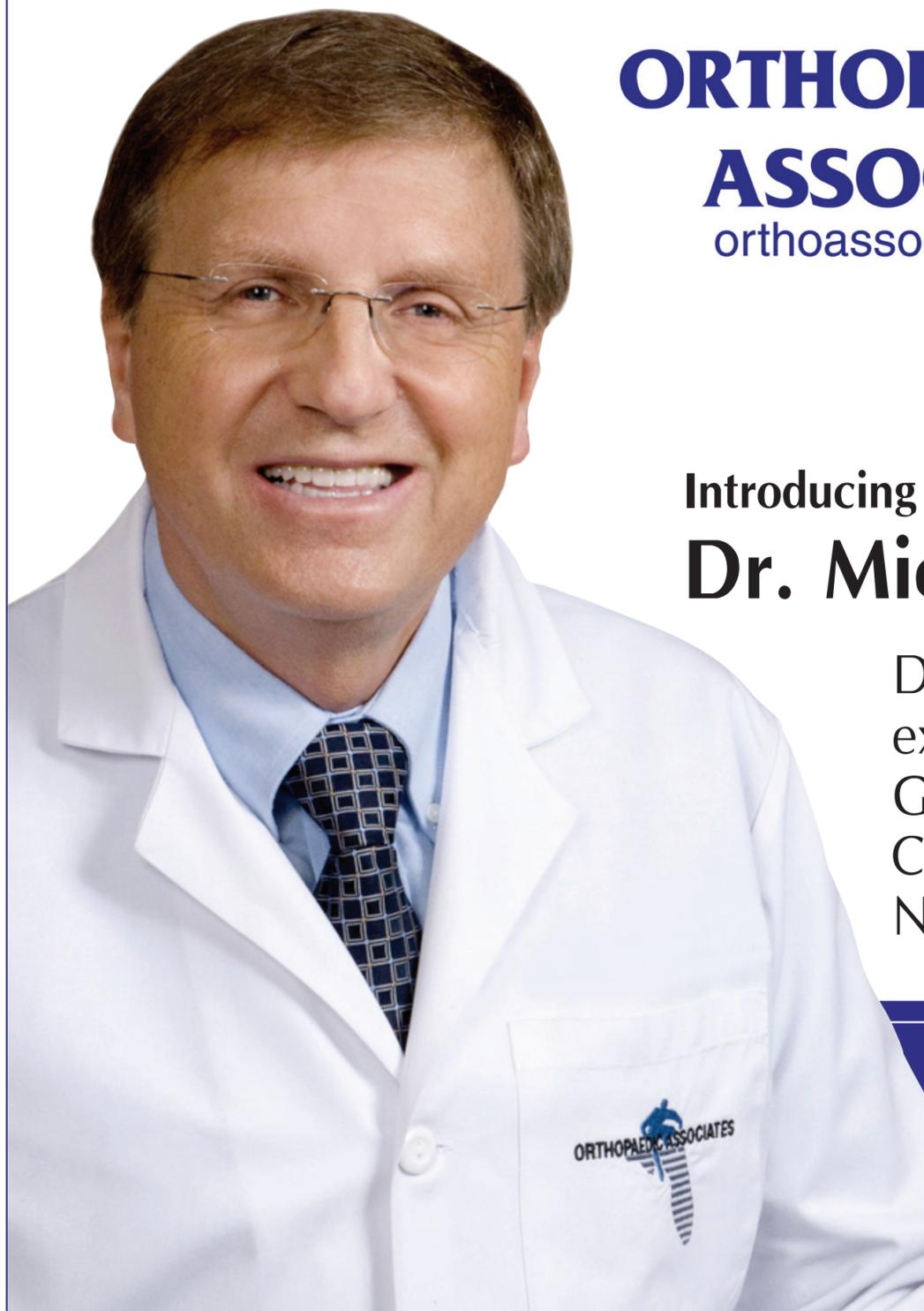
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# Police Blotter

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

Samuel Lamont Brown, a cook, 23, of 1415 29th St. D, Niceville, was arrested by Niceville police March 18 on a charge of battery domestic violence.

Brown allegedly grabbed someone with both hands and slammed her against a wall, leaving red welts on the victim's back and redness on both arms where Brown had grabbed her.

The victim was 10 weeks pregnant at the time of the incident.

Brown's required court appearance was scheduled April 23.

Tristan Matthew Wittwer, 29, of 1050 N. Partin Drive Lot 9, Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies March 19 on a charge of battery domestic violence.

Wittwer allegedly grabbed someone by the throat with both hands and threw her to the ground. Wittwer's required court appearance is scheduled April 9.

Justin Robert Hamblin, a retail employee, 28, of 4600 Range Road Apt. 124, Niceville, was arrested by sheriff's deputies March 17 on a charge of driving while license suspended first offense.

A deputy stopped a car driven by someone later identified as Hamblin on Highway 293 at SR 20, Niceville. Hamblin provided a Florida driver's license upon

request, and a check of the license through the driver and vehicle information database showed the license had been suspended since August 2.

Hamblin said he didn't know whether his license was valid, but later admitted he knew the license had been suspended due to several traffic citations he had received and failed to pay in the past year.

Hamblin's required court appearance is scheduled April 2.

Jonathan Wayne Brown, unemployed, 27, of 127 Center St., Freeport, was arrested by Walton County sheriff's deputies March 19 on an Okaloosa County warrant for the original charge of misdemeanor possession of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia.

## DUI arrests

Christian Ian McCowen, 27, of 1701 23rd St., Niceville, was arrested by Niceville police for DUI on South Palm Boulevard at 21st Street, Niceville, March 13 at 10:52 p.m.

McCowen was also cited for failure to obey a stop sign, failure to exhibit driver's license on demand and driving with an open container.

McCowen's required court appearance is scheduled April 2.

William Brett Stewart, 30, of 2 Cedar Ridge Way, Niceville, was arrested by Niceville police for

DUI on 1st Street at Park Avenue, Niceville, March 14 at 11:15 p.m.

Stewart crashed his motorcycle and was air lifted to Sacred Heart hospital in Pensacola. A copy of Stewart's medical records was forwarded to the Niceville police department. The records indicated Stewart's blood alcohol content was over the legal limit.

Stewart's required court appearance is scheduled April 2.

Thomas Charles Edge, 22, of 108 3rd St., Niceville, was arrested by Walton County sheriff's deputies for DUI at 9300 W. U.S. Highway 98, Miramar Beach, March 17 at 2:32 a.m.

A deputy observed a pickup truck exiting a parking garage at the entrance to Baytowne Wharf without its lights on. A Sandestin Security officer stopped the truck, driven by a man later identified as Edge, once the truck had stopped the deputy approached it.

Edge admitted to the deputy that he had consumed "a couple of drinks" prior to driving.

The deputy asked Edge to perform several field sobriety tests, and the deputy arrested Edge after Edge failed several of the tests.

## Thefts

A Niceville resident of the first block of 3rd Street reported March 13 someone stole prescription medication from her house.

The complainant reported an unidentified amount of Percocet and MS Contin was missing, and she reported the window from her backyard to her bathroom was not locked.

A Niceville resident reported March 18 someone took her debit card without her permission.

A Niceville resident of the 800

block of Linden Avenue reported March 15 someone took his UPS boxes from his front porch and threw them in a ditch. The complainant said nothing was missing.

A Niceville resident of the 800 block of Linden Avenue reported March 16 someone took a license tag from her vehicle.

Niceville police received a report March 16 from someone stating their credit card had been stolen while traveling from Atlanta to North Carolina.

A Valparaiso resident of the first block of Nordberg Avenue reported March 14 someone stole a red BMX bicycle and red scooter from her back yard.

The bicycle is worth \$80 and the scooter is worth \$40.

## Criminal Mischief

A Niceville resident of the 1400 block of Cape Lane reported March 16 someone had broken her window.

## Other

A Niceville resident reported March 18 she saw two people vandalize a car outside of the Walmart at 1300 E. John Sims Parkway, Niceville. The complainant reported the car's windshield was smashed. Niceville Paint and Body responded to tow the car.

An employee of the Twin Cities Hospital at 2190 N. Highway 85 reported March she saw a bear in the area and that the creature ran into the woods. A Niceville police dispatcher informed the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

A Niceville resident of the first block of Azalea Drive reported March 16 his dogs had chased a bear into a tree. A Niceville dispatcher talked to a representative of the state wildlife commission, who told her to tell the complainant to take his dogs inside and leave the bear alone.

## Fire Department Reports

### Niceville

The Niceville Fire Department responded to the following calls from March 18, 2013 through March 24, 2013.

0 Structure Fire	13 Emergency Medical Calls
0 Vehicle Fire	5 Vehicle Crash
0 Other Fire	0 Vehicle Crash with Extrication
0 Illegal Burn	3 Other Emergency Calls
0 False Alarms	1 Hazardous Conditions

STREET	SITUATION	DATE	TIME
Bayshore Dr.	Medical	3/18/13	13:11
Lincolnshire Dr.	Medical	3/19/13	07:13
Reeves St.	Medical	3/19/13	08:18
College Blvd.	Medical	3/19/13	09:17
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Cancelled	3/19/13	14:02
N. Partin Dr.	Vehicle crash	3/19/13	18:19
N. Partin Dr.	Medical	3/20/13	09:21
Bayou Lane	Medical	3/20/13	14:06
Brooks Bridge	Hazard	3/20/13	15:26
Government Ave.	Vehicle crash	3/20/13	18:40
31ST Street	Medical	3/21/13	02:10
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Medical	3/21/13	12:48
S. Palm Blvd.	Vehicle crash	3/21/13	14:37
Ivy Ave.	Medical	3/21/13	20:44
Madison Ave.	Cancelled	3/22/13	13:40
Bayshore Dr.	Medical	3/22/13	16:38
SR 85 N.	Vehicle crash	3/22/13	21:18
Linden Ave.	Medical	3/23/13	05:02
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Medical	3/23/13	12:27
Lincolnshire Dr.	Medical	3/24/13	06:49
28th Street	Cancelled	3/24/13	13:47
SR 85 N/College Blvd.	Vehicle crash	3/24/13	14:19

Weekly Safety Tip: Keep all lighters and matches up high and out of children's sight and reach...preferably in a locked cabinet.

Like the Niceville Fire Department on Facebook

### North Bay

The North Bay Fire Department responded to the following calls from March 18, 2013 through March 24, 2013.

Street	Situation	Date	Time
Marina Cove Dr.	EMS call	3/18/13	14:04
Parkwood Place	Public assist	3/18/13	17:34
Caribbean Way	Public assist	3/18/13	19:55
Olde Post Rd.	Overheated motor	3/18/13	20:14
Hickory St.	Public assist	3/18/13	23:07
St. Kitts Cove	Medical	3/19/13	03:18
Northridge Rd.	Medical	3/19/13	10:36
Ida Coon Circle	Medical	3/19/13	17:29
N. White Point Rd.	Medical	3/19/13	22:30
Abaco Cove	Medical	3/20/13	05:17
N. White Point Rd.	Medical	3/20/13	17:53
Hickory St.	Medical	3/20/13	21:51
Parkwood Ct.	Medical	3/21/13	06:04
Muirfield Way	Medical	3/21/13	18:47
Live Oak St.	Public assist	3/22/13	02:58
White Point Rd.	Medical	3/22/13	09:19
Calinda Lane	Dispatched & cancelled	3/22/13	20:56
Bay Drive	Public assist	3/23/13	07:13
N. White Point Rd.	Medical	3/23/13	13:05
Castlewood Ln.	Medical	3/23/13	22:35
Oakmont Place	Medical	3/24/13	09:33
Bay Drive	Medical	3/24/13	16:28
Rosewood Way	Public assist	3/24/13	23:01

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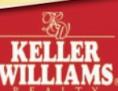


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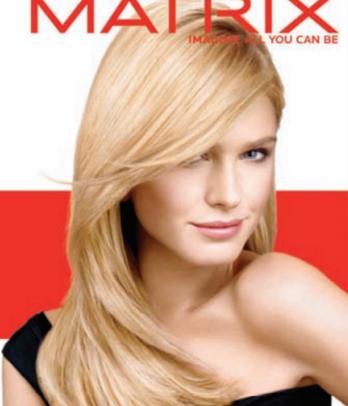
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**SECURITY**

From page A-1

among other factors, "the tragic events around the country," an apparent allusion to the Dec. 14 massacre of 26 schoolchildren and adults at an elementary school in Connecticut by a gunman.

Bill Smith, facilities director for Okaloosa County School District, said the school district owns Old Coastal Highway and does not need approval from any governing board to close it.

In his letter, Nobles wrote: "We often encounter trespassers that use either vehicles or bicycles to gain access to school grounds through Old Coastal Highway. More often than not, when illegal activity such as vehicle burglaries and car tag theft does occur, it happens along Old Coastal Highway by individuals with no legitimate business on school grounds. Additionally, this thoroughfare provides easy access for sexual predators, estranged or dangerous family members, or any other per-

son with bad intentions to drive through and survey or video students or attempt to make contact with students. Also, we regularly interact with former students attempting to get on campus to conduct illegal activities or picking up students to skip class."

Nobles also said closing the gate would be a proactive measure "in light of the tragic events around the country."

In his letter, Nobles acknowledged that many members of the motoring public use Old Coastal Highway as a shortcut between Palm and Partin, but said school security must come first.

"Though the closure might be a minor inconvenience for some, it will be a major safety feature in our mission to keep students and staff safe," Nobles said in the letter.

Meyer said the end of Old Coastal Highway that will remain open is closer to the school's administrative offices and is easier to monitor.

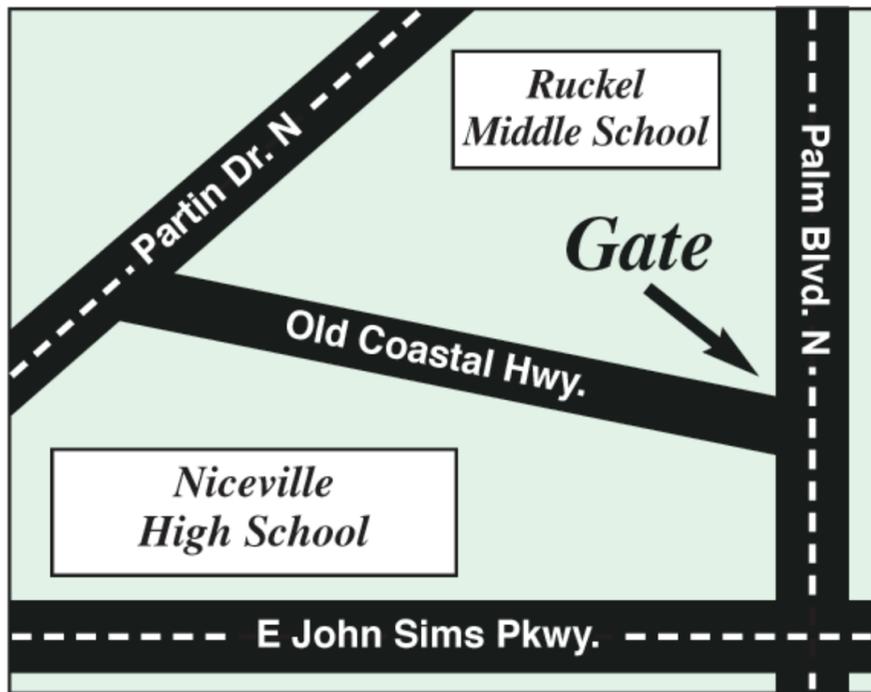
The gate will be opened by the

same master key used for doors inside the school. Meyer said the Niceville Fire Department and East Niceville Fire District have copies of this key and will thus be able to open the gate themselves in case of emergency.

According to Meyer, the gate's 1 p.m. opening is well before afternoon schoolbuses serving Ruckel arrive and leave via the Old Coastal entrance.

Niceville High School will begin closing a gate at the east entrance of Old Coastal Highway at Palm Boulevard North starting April 1. The gate will be locked from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on school days, stopping through traffic on the road between Niceville High and Ruckel Middle School to increase student safety.

Beacon graphic by Candice Legge



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# School district eyes safety measures

By Mike Griffith  
Beacon Correspondent

Bill Smith, director of facilities for the Okaloosa County School District, gave a presentation March 21 to the Okaloosa Emergency Management Committee on the school district's safety and security committee.

The Okaloosa Emergency Management Committee is an informal monthly meeting of representatives of local police, fire, medical, public utility and other agencies dealing with emergencies and disasters in Okaloosa County. The monthly meetings give the representatives the opportunity to eat lunch together and discuss topics of mutual interest.

In his briefing, Smith said that the school district safety and security committee was made up of members of the school district staff, as well as three principals, one each from an elementary, middle and high school within the school district. The safety and security committee met to discuss how to improve procedures for safety of students and faculty at schools in a variety of situations ranging from shooting incidents and bomb threats to ordinary,

day-to-day crimes or accidents at school.

Smith said the school committee members discussed their own experiences, the results of recent research, and other ideas indicating what works and what does not in improving school safety. For example, said Smith, adding large fences around each school is not the answer to school security. "We don't want our schools to be mistaken for prisons," he said.



Bill Smith

In some cases, said Smith, putting fences around schools merely provides a more secure environment for graffiti writers who vandalize schools after dark. A better solution, according to Smith and the safety committee, is to improve lighting around schools. Experience has shown, he said, that improved lighting reduces incidence of graffiti and other vandalism.

With respect to fencing, Smith said one case where fencing improvements are actually helpful

is to increase the heights of fences around elementary schools. For example, in cases where a child may be the subject of a custody dispute, a six-foot fence, as opposed to a three- or four-foot fence, can prevent a child from being easily lifted over the fence and abducted from the schoolyard by the noncustodial parent.

Other potential security measures discussed by the committee, said Smith, included such things as panic buttons in classrooms, securing points of entry to schools, whether book bags should be allowed in schools and if so, whether clear book bags should be required, whether students should have lockers, and whether students should be required to wear ID badges.

The consensus of the committee, he said, is that neither book bags nor lockers pose much of a security or safety problem in Okaloosa schools. School ID cards, the committee decided, are costly and difficult to enforce, especially among younger students who tend to lose them. If America ever adopts a universal all-purpose ID card or personal electronic ID device, Smith said, then those may be useful for

school security.

One idea suggested by committee members, said Smith, is to standardize school checkout procedures throughout the school district, rather than having different student checkout procedures at different schools. Another key element of school safety and security, he said, is rapid response when emergencies do occur.

When asked his opinion about whether selected teachers should be allowed to carry concealed firearms to help protect their schools, Smith replied that he would prefer that any weapons in schools be carried by uniformed school resource officers. Arming teachers, he said, would pose the problem of teachers trying to teach while armed.

Such a dual role is not very workable, he said, and would pose an additional risk of teacher's weapons being accidentally mislaid, pilfered or even forcibly taken from teachers by students or intruders intent on violence. Uniformed school resource officers, said Smith, can focus their full attention on security, as well as helping with traffic and other safety issues around the school.



## HOUSING

From page A-1

at about 20 applicants, though she had nine people submit applications to be placed on the list the day the zero-and one-bedroom rolls were reopened.

According to Avery, the zero-and one-bedroom units are sought primarily by the elderly and disabled. She said people drop off the list for various reasons; some have passed away, others have moved out of the area. She said she does not credit an improved economy to the shortening of the waiting list.

Before the recent shortening of the waiting list, Avery said the expected wait for housing was nearly five years. She said the authority closed the list to avoid giving people false hope about getting a unit.

"We could have kept taking applications and let the list grow longer and longer," Avery said. "But why would you want to keep accepting applications and letting people think they have a chance to get a unit soon?"

Avery said the authority would keep the zero-and one-bedroom list open until it accepts 25 applications, of which it has already taken 16 since reopening the list

Beacon photo by Daniel Elsesser  
**Public housing on Boyd Circle, Niceville, owned by the Niceville Housing Authority. The authority opened its waiting list for smaller dwellings March 5 for the first time since September 2010.**

March 5.

The authority will then advertise the closing of the list 30 days in advance. She said the authority would consider any applications submitted within the 30-day window between advertisement and closing.

Avery said due to the applicants' changing situations, she could not estimate how long the list will remain open.

Avery said the zero-and one-bedroom list is the only one the authority has ever closed, primarily because for the two, three and four-bedroom units, supply is more proportional to demand.

The authority provides subsidized rents to residents based on

income, updated quarterly.

"We bill according to people's situations," Avery said. "If something changes and you get a job, your rent goes up. If income goes down, rent goes down."

Avery said, because of these fluctuations, she couldn't accurately give average rents for the units.

In February 2007, the average rents reported by the authority were:

- \$124 per month for an efficiency.
- \$140 for a one-bedroom.
- \$197 for a two-bedroom unit.
- \$274 for a three-bedroom.
- \$307 for a four-bedroom unit.

According to Avery, the housing authority serves approximately 225 people. She said the total waiting list for all units stands at about 75 people.

Of the 111 total units, 61 are older units constructed in the 1960s. Those include the 18 zero- or one-bedroom units, 23 two-bedrooms, 16 three-bedrooms and four four-bedrooms.

Avery said the authority also constructed 50 two-bedroom units in the 1980s.

Avery said the authority receives funding from the federal government through subsidies and capital funds, the latter of which Avery said has decreased in recent years. Those funds, along with rents, pay for the maintenance of the units.

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6:00 p.m. Contemporary • Community Life Center

**Sunday, March 31**  
8:00 a.m. Traditional • Sanctuary  
9:30 a.m. Contemporary • Sanctuary  
9:32 a.m. Contemporary • Community Life Center  
9:45 a.m. Contemporary • Fellowship Hall  
11:00 a.m. Traditional • Sanctuary  
11:02 a.m. Contemporary • Community Life Center

**Saturday, March 30**  
4:00 p.m. Children/Family • Sanctuary  
5:00 p.m. Easter Egg Hunt & hors d'oeuvres  
6:00 p.m. Children/Family • Sanctuary

**Sunday, March 31**  
9:00 a.m. Traditional • Sanctuary  
10:15 a.m. Contemporary • Sanctuary  
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Nursery and special Easter programming is available for all Niceville Campus services, birth through 5th grade, except at the 8:00 a.m. hour, which offers childcare through preschool only. Adult, student and children's regular Sunday school classes are cancelled Easter Sunday.

Nursery and children's programming at the St. Mark Campus is provided on Saturday for age 3 and under. On Sunday there will be special Easter programming for birth through 5th grade.

**MAYOR**

From page A-1

But Arnold stated that other factors may change his mind before the candidate-filing deadline in early 2014. "I can't say for certain what I'll do, but I wasn't planning on running," he said in an interview. Two other seats on the Valparaiso City Commission will also be up for election in the 2014 contests. One will not be defended, according to its current hold-

er. The holder of the other seat has not made up his mind. Commissioner Hayward Strong said he is unsure whether he will run again in 2014. "The deadline's still a ways off," Strong said. Strong, 81, is the longest-serving Valparaiso commissioner, having first taken office in January 1970.



Diane Kelley

Commissioner Diane Kelley, who is serving her first term, said she does not plan to run again. Kelley, 55, a public-school principal, said she entered the Florida Retirement Service's deferred retirement option program (DROP) two years ago, and believes that she will be required to stop working for the city for a six-month period starting in three years. Since that

would require her to leave office during her next term if reelected, Kelley said, she sees no point in seeking election. However, a spokesman for the state pension agency said the DROP program would not affect Kelley's eligibility to serve a second term in its entirety. Valparaiso city commissioners serve for a symbolic \$1 a year.



Hayward Strong

With the exception of Niceville, municipal elections in Okaloosa County are typically held the second Tuesday of March. Ray Bolden, an official in the Okaloosa County Supervisor of Elections office, said balloting and candidate-filing dates have not yet been set for the 2014 elections. He said city balloting will likely be held in March, with the window for candidate filing like-

ly being open from the last week in December to the first week in January. Brent Smith, a former Valparaiso city commissioner who challenged Arnold in Valparaiso's 2010 mayoral election, said he would not run for the job in 2014. Smith said one reason he does not want to run is that in the previous election, ethics complaints were filed against him for what he believes to be unfounded reasons.



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

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## Hunt for eggs this Easter

By Anna Kavanaugh  
Beacon Staff Writer

The Twin Cities area will host three free Easter egg hunts this week for children ages 0-12 in multiple age categories.

The Valparaiso Library will start the festivities with a special Easter story time March 29 for children ages 5 and under at 10:15 a.m. followed by an egg hunt at 11 a.m. in the library.

On March 30 the City of Valparaiso will host its annual Easter egg hunt at Lincoln Park from 9 to 11 a.m.

Children will be split up into five age categories—3 and under; ages 4-6; ages 7-9; and ages 10-12. The youngest group will hunt first, then each age group will follow after the

next in 20 minute intervals.

Nathan Kelly, Valparaiso's public works director, said parents of children ages 3 and under are allowed to help their children during the hunt. The only other parents allowed on the field in the other age groups will be those of special needs children.

Most of the more than 2,500 plastic eggs scattered throughout the grass will contain candy, stickers and small toys but five special prize eggs, one for each age group, will be redeemable for an Easter basket. Two of the baskets will be sponsored by the Ceramic Shop.

In addition to the egg hunt, Kelly said there will be free bounce houses and train rides. Directly following

Valparaiso's Easter egg hunt, children can head over to Niceville for the 26th Annual Egg Dash at the softball complex on North Partin Drive.

The dash will begin at 11 a.m., but parents are encouraged to have their children at the starting line by 10:30 a.m.

Children will be broken up into four age groups—2 and under; 3- and 4-year-olds; 5- and 6-year-olds; and 7- and 8-year-olds. Lynn Waltz, coordinator of the Egg Dash, said there will be a separate field for each age group.

The grassed areas will be covered with 2,000 plastic eggs. Most eggs will contain candy or a small toy but a few will contain slips of paper redeemable for a larger prize at the end of the hunt.



Three free Easter egg hunts will be held this weekend in the Twin Cities area starting with Valparaiso Library on Friday. Children will have opportunities to gather goodies on Saturday as well at Lincoln Park and at the softball complex on North Partin Drive for the 26th Annual Egg Dash.

## Rocky Bayou students excel in Special Olympics



Ten Special Services Rocky Bayou Christian School students participated in the Special Olympics March 9, at Choctawhatchee High School. From left: back row, Tanya Barnick, Naldi Fonseca, Jared Owen, Bryan Davis, Lelia Trippe, William Lupella, front row, Ben Hudson, Annalynn Cline, Nerea Jeanne Agnew, Noah Garbo, Tyler Wicker, Alek Dixon and Mikayla Berner.

Ten special services Rocky Bayou Christian School students, ages 9-19, participated in the Special Olympics March 9, at Choctawhatchee High School. Students participated in track and field events and competed in groups according to gender and age.

Annalynn Cline, 9, placed first in the 25 meter walk and second in the tennis ball throw; Noah Garbo, 9, placed first in the 50 meter dash and second in the tennis ball throw; Nerea Jeanne Agnew, 10, placed first in the 50 meter dash and first in the tennis ball throw; William Lupella, 11, placed second in the 50 meter

dash and first in the tennis ball throw; Ben Hudson, 12, placed second in the 50 meter dash and second in the tennis ball throw; Alek Dixon, 13, placed first in the 50 meter dash and first in the tennis ball throw; Tyler Wicker, 13, placed third in the 100 meter dash and third in the running long jump; Bryan Davis, 16, placed first in the 50 meter dash and second in the softball throw; Mikayla Berner, 19, placed second in the 50 meter dash and first in the tennis ball throw; Naldi Alvarez-Fonseca, 19, placed second in the 50 meter dash and third in the softball throw.

## NHS places at art show

The Okaloosa County School Board hosted the annual Van Porter Student Exhibition March 4-15, at the Arts and Design Society center in Fort Walton Beach. Six Niceville High School seniors participated and received four awards.

Robin Berntsen received the ADSO award for her charcoal piece entitled "Alter Ego." Anna Price received an honorable mention for her photograph "Shocking, isn't it?"

Colby Detwiler received an honorable mention for his mixed media piece "Porcelain," and Kelsey Joyner received an honorable mention for her mixed media piece "Sealife Splendor."



Six Niceville High School students competed in the Van Porter Student Exhibition March 4-15, Fort Walton Beach and four students received awards. From left: back row, Robin Berntsen, Kelsey Joyner, Anna Price, front row, Emily Bennett, Colby Detwiler and Hannah Moore.

## Happy Easter!

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### Rodeo fundraiser

The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast and the Professional Cowboy Association Bo Campbell Productions will host a rodeo fundraiser April 5-6, 5:30 p.m., at the Freeport Sports Complex in Hammock Bay. There will be riding, roping, and racing from cowboys and cowgirls from all over the country.

Participants can sign up for rodeo events, such as bareback, saddle bronco riding, calf roping, barrel racing, steer wrestling, breakaway and team roping. There will be food available for purchase from Nick's Seafood and 4 C's BBQ. Kids can enjoy face painting, rodeo games and clowns. The proceeds will benefit the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast.

Purchase tickets for adults at \$12, and \$6 for children under 12 at bgce-roddeo.eventbrite.com. Contact Yvonne Freeman at 217-4007 or yvonnefreeman@cox.net.

### 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.traveling eagles.com.



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Monday - Thursday 7:30am-5:30pm  
Friday: Closed





**Lou Kaunzinger exhibits**

The Niceville Library is featuring the artwork of Lou Kaunzinger, a local artist who paints in watercolors and acrylics. She also teaches watercolors at Artful Things. Her work is on display at the Niceville Library during their regular hours for the month of March.

**Chamber to meet and greet**

The Greater Fort Walton Beach, Destin Area, Niceville Valparaiso and Crestview Area Chambers of Commerce invite the public to meet the five finalists for the position of Okaloosa County Administrator. The "meet and greet" affair will be held at the Emerald Coast Convention Center on Wednesday, March 27 from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

There will be a brief program introducing candidates. Light hors d'oeuvres will be served. Cash bar available. Sponsored by Emerald Coast Convention Center and the chambers of commerce. For more information contact The Greater Fort Walton Beach Chamber at 244-8191

**Blazing youth revival**

The youth of All God's Children & the Living Word Worship Center are hosting their 1st Annual Youth Revival to be held nightly from March 27-30 starting at 6:00 p.m. Open to all area youth. This is a "dress down event" Jeans/shorts and t-shirts! Inviting local youth groups, choirs, drill/step teams etc., to be included on the program. Please contact Sis. LaSheika Copeland at 757-968-0533 for more information.

**Donate blood**

Northwest Florida Blood Services will host a blood drive March 27, 3-8:30 p.m., at Niceville United Methodist Church, 214 S. Partin Drive, Niceville. Snacks and drinks will be provided to donors as well as a free t-shirt. Contact Lynda Krupka with questions, 862-4216 or Lynda.Krupka@oneblood.org.

**Alzheimer's meeting**

Alzheimer's Family Services will hold its monthly support group meeting for family members or friends coping with a loved one with Alzheimer's disease March 27, at First United Methodist Church, 214 S. Partin Dr. The support group is free and respite care is available. To register contact 866-478-7790 or www.AlzFamServ.org.

**Library Easter egg hunt**

The Valparaiso Library will host a story time and Easter egg hunt March 29, story time at 10:15 a.m., egg hunt at 11:00 a.m., in the library for ages 5 and under.

**Valparaiso Easter egg hunt**

The City of Valparaiso will host its annual Easter egg hunt March 30, 9-11 a.m., at Lincoln Park, Valparaiso. Ages 12 and under are welcome to hunt for more than 2,500 eggs filled with candy, stickers and toys. There will be five age groups competing at staggered times. Three Easter egg basket prizes will be available for ages 3-9. Children can enjoy a free bounce house and train rides as well

**Niceville Egg Dash**

The City of Niceville will host its annual Egg Dash March 30, 11 a.m., at the Niceville Softball Complex. There will be four fields filled with 2,000 eggs. Each field will be for a different age group from 0-8. Arrive 30 minutes prior.

**Animals with Nonie's Ark**

The Biophilia Center presents Nonie's Ark Animal Adventures, a hands on learning experience this Saturday, March 30th from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Admission to the center is \$5 per person. Children ages 6 to 12 are \$2. Children 5 and under are free. Visit the website for more information at www.eowilson.org

**Pirate invasion**

The Niceville Valparaiso Rotary Club, Bluewater Bay Marina, Paradise Paddle Boards and Extreme Concepts present "Invasion on the Bayou" Saturday, March 30th. Boats are to be anchored at 9 a.m. on the west side of Rocky Bayou Bridge. Photos of the invasion will be taken from the bridge at 9:30 a.m. after which all pirates and patrons will rejoin at L.J. Schooners Dockside Restaurant and Oyster Bar beach for a presentation by the Coast Guard Auxiliary. There will also be a T-shirt sale by the Niceville Valparaiso Rotary Club. Later that evening L.J. Schooners Dockside Restaurant and Oyster Bar is hosting the a pirate party

to kick off the season starting at 7 p.m. Pirate costumes encouraged at all events.

**Boat safety course**

The USCG Auxiliary Flotilla 1-4 will offer a boat safety course March 30, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., at the Coast Guard Station, 2000 Miracle Strip Parkway, Destin. Pre-register by March 25 for \$35, which includes which includes the course, book, exam, FWC Safe Boating ID Card, lunch, line handling and knots demo, tour of the station and safety whistle. Contact Stan Smith at 865-9130 or auxman14@gmail.com to register.

**Sunrise service**

The churches of Valparaiso will host a sunrise service on Easter morning, March 31, 6:15 a.m., in Lincoln Park, Valparaiso. Bring lawn chairs and blankets. The service will follow a free pancake breakfast at Trinity Presbyterian Church, 44 Southview Avenue, Valparaiso. Participating churches are Trinity Presbyterian, All God's Children, First Baptist, First Assembly of God, New Hope Baptist, Korean Full Gospel and Sovereign Grace.

**Annual Cobia Tournament**

The Bluewater Bay Marina will hosts its 18th Annual Cobia Tournament April 1-30. There will be a small boat division, 29 feet and under, and an open division, 30 feet and above. To register contact the marina at frontdesk@bwb-marina.com or 897-2821. Sponsorships are available. There will be a captain's meeting and awards dinner at LJ Schooners Dockside Restaurant and Oyster Bar, Bluewater Bay.

**Mac enthusiasts**

The April meeting of the Mac Users Group will be held on Monday, April 1st at 6:30 p.m. at the NWF State College Student Services Building - Room 132. Anne Hornstein will be covering some of the capabilities of the Pages application. She'll demonstrate how to make eye catching flyers, how to format a book and how to make your own greeting cards. She'll also give a few hints on how to make your own web site on iWeb. Attendees will be given an opportunity to share information and/or ask questions about their computer, iPhone or iPad. There are no fees nor is a reservation required. For

Please see CALENDAR, page B-3

**Soccer team wins division**

Real Athletic Development FC of Niceville won the 10U boys gold division 2013 Fudpucker's Battle by the Beach soccer tournament March 2 and 3 in Destin. From left: front row, Theo Cross, Devin Vondenstein, Zeke Oswald, David Mejia-Martinez, Austin Paugh, Ashlyn Fernandez, Daniel Fadida, back row, Carson Hickock, Coach Kevin Brink and Sam Sheffield.



**Boy Scouts shoot in tourney**

Boy Scouts of America shotgun instructor Randy Bundy, left, provides Nick Lacy from Niceville Troop 157 safety instructions prior to shooting clay targets in the BSA shooting tournament March 4, on the Spanish Trail Scout Reservation shotgun range, DeFuniak Springs.

**Plew pays tribute to Dr. Seuss**

Plew Elementary Second Graders performed "A Tribute to Dr. Seuss" musical in honor of Dr. Seuss' birthday March 6. Michelle Tredway directed the musical and the "Cat in the Hat" was played by Shawna Crist, media specialist at Plew.



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**HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

**MAUNDY THURSDAY, March 28**  
 7:00pm Holy Communion  
 Stripping of the Altar

**GOOD FRIDAY, March 29**  
 7:00pm Tenebrae Service-Seven Last Words - Sealing of the Tomb

**EASTER SUNDAY, March 31**  
 6:00am Lutheran Sunrise Service  
 Beasley Park, Okaloosa Island

**8:30 am Festival Worship**  
 9:45 am Bagel Breakfast  
 Children's Easter Egg Hunt

**10:30 am Festival Worship**

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**HOLY WEEK 2013**

**Holy Thursday - March 28th**  
 Morning Prayer at 8:30 a.m.  
 Mass of Our Lord's Last Supper at 7:00 p.m.

† † †

**Good Friday - March 29th**  
 Morning Prayer at 8:30 a.m.  
 Passion of Our Lord & Veneration of Cross at 7:00 p.m.

**Holy Saturday - March 30th**  
 Morning Prayer at 8:30 a.m.  
 Easter Vigil at 8:00 p.m.

† † †

**EASTER Sunday - March 31st**  
 Mass of the Resurrection of Our Lord at 7:30 a.m. & at 10:30 a.m.



THE INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER —by Mike Griffith

Location: NWFSC student services center

What are your plans for spring break?



"Catching up on school work, to get it finished."

Candace Tousignant, 21, Niceville, student



"Getting more tanned at the beach."

Michael Hass, 20, Shalimar, personal trainer



"I'll be celebrating my 19th birthday - in style."

Michael Roth, 18, Fort Walton Beach, student



"I'm going to beach it 24/7, sleep in, and not think about school - living the bum life."

Heather Anderson, 19, Santa Rosa Beach, food service



"Nothing - my car is broken. I'll just be staying home with the kids."

Sandra Galbraith 32, Crestview, student



"Absolutely nothing. Read some books, watch some movies, do chores."

Joey Proctor 31, Niceville, IT staff member

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

CALENDAR

From page B-2 more information, visit www.FWBMug.com or contact Jean Dutton at jeandutton@mac.com or 862-3327.

'Rock of Ages'

Enjoy the '80s with "Rock of Ages" April 1, 7:30 p.m., at the Mattie Kelly Arts Center, Northwest Florida State College, Niceville. The Broadway hit is about a rock-n-roll love story told through the hits of Journey, STYX, REO Speedwagon,

Twisted Sister, Poison, and more. Tickets are \$45 each with a group discount of \$5 off per ticket. Group sales are by phone or in-person only. Contact the box office at 729-6000 or www.mattiekellyartscenter.org to purchase tickets.

AARP driving course

The Niceville Public Library will host a two day AARP Drivers Safety Course April 2 and 3, 8:30-11:30 a.m., ages 50 plus, at the Niceville Community Center classroom, next door to the library. The cost is \$14 and \$12.00 per person for AARP members. Please make your checks out to



AARP. Space is limited, sign up at the reference desk or contact Lora Glass at 279-4863 ext. 1504.

FREE Chair Yoga classes

Starting April 3 there will be free yoga classes for those with Multiple Sclerosis Wednesdays from 9:00 a.m.

- 10:00 a.m. at Johnson Chiropractic Clinic 600 E. John Sims Parkway. For info, contact instructor Candace Miller at (812) 599-2887. Supported through a grant from the Multiple Sclerosis Foundation

Audubon Society meeting

The Audubon Society will hold its free, public, monthly meeting April 4,

7 p.m., 6:30 p.m. refreshments, in Room 132, Student Services Center, Northwest Florida State College, Niceville. Walt Spence will present a program on his award-winning bird photography featuring both his recent work and that of his photo-paddling buddy, Douglas

Buck. Contact Walt Spence at 582-7064.

Early release movie day

The Valparaiso Community Library will host an early release movie day on April 4, 1:30 p.m., at the library. The featured movie will be "Rise of the Guardians" and popcorn will be served.

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Annual Meeting
March 28, 2013

Niceville Community Center
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Registration 6:15 PM
Meeting Begins 7:00 PM

For More Information Call 862-0111 Ext. 1302

# Trek through Florida's swamplands at Turkey Creek

Enjoy native plants and animals such as shorebirds and turtles

The term "swimmin' hole" brings to mind images from novels by Mark Twain or paintings by Norman Rockwell—warm, lazy summer days of barefoot boys with bamboo fishing poles and little girls in pigtailed dresses. In other words, it makes people think about the 'good old days.'

city actually has some swimmin' holes of its own, here and now. In fact, it has several and they are a lot safer and better cared for than the swimmin' holes of yesteryear. The Turkey Creek Walk includes several well-maintained swimming platforms along the shore of Turkey Creek connected by a broad boardwalk and equipped with restrooms, picnic areas and changing rooms as well

## DAY TRIPPER



Turkey Creek pavilion is a great place for an intimate picnic or a reunion of an extended family.

as places to launch a canoe, kayak or inner tube for a pleasant drift or paddle through pristine Florida wilderness.

Constructed over a period of several years, Turkey Creek walk is an ideal place to get a glimpse of what Northwest Florida looked like before it was paved over by folks like you and me. It also provides an easy way to see what genuine Florida swamp country looks like without getting your feet wet, wading through mud, or having to resort to an air boat, canoe, or machete to get into the deep, dark depths of Boggy Country.

The wooden boardwalk winds along the shore of Turkey Creek with frequent stopping places where you can sit on a park bench, read a placard describing nearby plants and animals or stop at a swimming platform to take a dip in the cold, clear water of Turkey Creek itself.

The park is patrolled by city employees and volunteers. Security cameras see what the park rangers miss, enhancing the safety of visitors.

The main and oldest section of Turkey Creek Walk begins at a large picnic pavilion located on John Sims Parkway in the center of Niceville's business district. The picnic pavilion has a big roof to shelter people from sun and rain as well as ample seating for large

gatherings and even an outdoor fireplace for colder times of the year.

The boardwalk that starts there takes people almost a mile into the swamp, passing three swimming areas and ending at a combination swimming platform and canoe launch. About midway along the trail, one can also find a secluded pavilion dedicated to families whose children have died before their time.

To find more information on placing a plaque representing a lost child please contact Joanne Young at 243-6253.

In 2008, the city added a new section to Turkey Creek Walk located just south of College Boulevard between State Road 85 and Government Drive and west of the emergency entrance driveway to Twin Cities Hospital.

Like the first phase of the Turkey Creek Walk, the new park features restrooms, picnic areas, and a wide, 870-foot-long boardwalk through natural swamp and forest leading to the shore of Turkey Creek.

Visitors can swim and snorkel in the cold, crystal-clear water of the creek, or launch a canoe, raft, kayak, or inner tube and go floating down the creek toward any of several similar swimming platforms in the first section of the park. There are plans in the future



Turkey Creek Park is the perfect place to spend a sunny afternoon. Here Jayden and Micah Stiles enjoy an afternoon of exploration with their grandparents, Dawn and Blair Markus visiting from Michigan.

to connect the two sections eventually, but for now each section must be accessed separately.

Paddlers can travel from the new section downstream to the older part of the park and from there they may continue down the creek, under the John Sims Parkway bridge, and out into Boggy Bayou. Thus they can reach other docks, beaches or pickup points such as the public

dock across John Sims Parkway from Doolittle Park or beaches and docks at Lions Park in Niceville, or at Valparaiso's Lincoln Park, Florida Park, or the T-pier along Bayshore Drive at Toms Bayou.

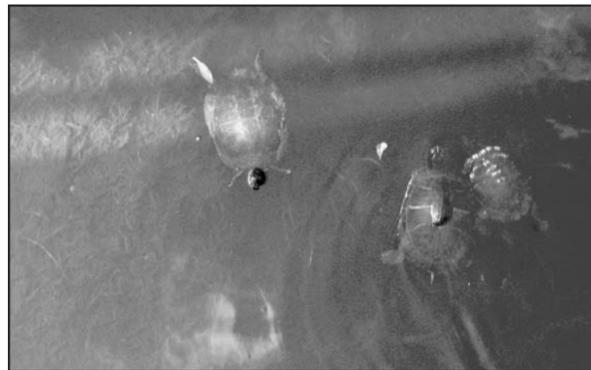
Water in the spring-fed creek is nearly always clear and the water temperature is usually in the 70s. The creek is shallow enough in most places to allow many people to stand up on the sandy bottom, although there are also deep spots and areas of swift current.

Along the shore tree roots and plants provide habitat for fish, turtles, and other wildlife and all sorts of birds roost in the trees overhead from hummingbirds to hawks, owls and even the occasional buzzard. The park is an ideal place for snorkeling, bird-watching or simply sitting on a park bench and watching nature all around you.

Micha and Jayden Stiles have been lucky enough to grow up within walking distance of the park and have many happy memories of exploring there. "We like to catch the dragonflies, lizards and fish there," says Micah smiling. Her brother Jayden agrees. "I like the very end where we can climb trees and go in the water," he adds.

The two recently visited with their grandparents, Blair and Dawn Markus from Michigan. Visiting the park as a family has become a family tradition. "I've got pictures of them practically growing up here," says Dawn.

So, as the summer gets hotter and muggier remember that you are only a short distance from a place to cool off and get away from the daily grind. Like Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn, you have a swimmin' hole.



Among the wildlife found in Turkey Creek are box turtles, which swim along the water looking for food.

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**MARCH MADNESS MEMBERSHIP SPECIAL**

Recreation Services Inc., located in Bluewater Bay, is offering a great membership special. Join either the Swim or Hard Court Tennis Membership from now until March 31, and receive a 50% discount on the enrollment fee! Membership includes 4 pools (1 heated) and 3 Tennis Courts. We also offer Water Aerobics, Facility rentals, RV/Boat Storage, swimming and tennis lessons.

**50% OFF ENROLLMENT**

Recreation Services, Inc. office is located at 1050 Bay Drive (Bay Drive Pool). For more information call 897-3664.

The Swim and Hard Court Tennis Memberships are not exclusive to Bluewater Bay Residents. **EVERYONE** is welcome to join!

**In Service**

Army Cadet **William W. Morgan** has received the George C. Marshall Award during an awards ceremony at the Marshall Center, Virginia Military Institute in Lexington, Va.



**William W. Morgan**

The award is presented annually to the most outstanding senior Army Reserve Officer Training Corps cadets in military science studies and leadership values in each battalion at host universities or colleges. This is a national award and the highest award an ROTC cadet can receive.

William is an Embry-riddle Aeronautical University student and the son of Joe and Heidi Morgan of Valparaiso, and grandson of Joe Morgan of Pensacola. He is a 2009 Niceville High School graduate.

\*\*\*  
Army Pvt. **Tanner M. Hansen** has graduated from basic combat training at Fort Jackson,

Columbia, S.C.

During the nine weeks of training, the soldier studied the Army mission, history, tradition and core values, physical fitness, and received instruction and practice in basic combat skills, military weapons, chemical warfare and bayonet training, drill and ceremony, marching, rifle marksmanship, armed and unarmed combat, map reading, field tactics, military courtesy, military justice system, basic first aid, foot marches, and field training exercises.

Tanner is the son of Jennifer and Shawn Keen, and grandson of John Keen, all of Valparaiso. He is a 2010 graduate of Niceville High School.



**8U Traveling Eagles take first**

The 8U Traveling Eagles baseball team placed first in the "Spring Training at the Beach Bash" tournament March 2 and 3, South Walton. From left: front row, Jake Hill, Frankie Lupella, Christian Sweat, Aiden Morales, back row, Coach Michael Wells, Kaden Bateman, Aaron Jenkins, Braden Holcomb, Camden Chambers, J. T. Lupella, Brody Bankston, and Manager/Coach Tyler Hastings.

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### NHS track teams second

The Niceville High School Eagles track and field team competed against nine regional schools and placed second for both the boys and the girls teams March 9, at the Rutherford Ram Relays, Panama City. The boys 4x800 meter relay second place winners are, from left: Caden Ewing, Jake Fiske, Nick Morken, David Bobbitt.



### Ruckel starts off season

The Ruckel Middle School baseball team holds a record of 2-0 after defeating Shoal River Middle School March 5, 15-1, and Davidson Middle School March 12, 8-2. Logan Taylor pitches during the face off against Davidson.

### Rocky Bayou beats Pensacola

The Rocky Bayou Christian School baseball team beat Pensacola Christian Academy 9-2 March 1. Senior Jacob Holcomb protects first base.

Photo by Lisa Downing



### Cheerleaders win championship

Beach Elite All Star Cheer Mini Level 1 won the American Cheer and Dance National Championship, for the second year in a row, in New Orleans, La. From left: Lilymar Torres, Savannah Bowling, Kalyn Solley, Ava Floro, Skye Snyder, Kaia Floro and Layla Seaton.



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