

The Bay Beacon

Police Blotter, page A-4

10 Pages, 2 Sections, 5 Inserts

Wednesday, September 18, 2013

50¢

**UP
COMING**

Thurs., 7 a.m.-6 p.m.

The **Twin Cities Hospital Auxiliary** will sponsor a \$5 Jewelry and Accessories Sale at the Twin Cities Hospital Wellness Center. Cash and credit/debit cards accepted. All proceeds benefit health-care related scholarships. Sale will extend to Friday, see calendar for details.



Fri., 7-11 p.m.

Please feel free to come in and enjoy a fun **evening of karaoke** with Bill and Rhonda at **American Legion Post #221, 444 E. John Sims Pkwy., Niceville.**

Sat. 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m.

The **Friends of the Niceville Public Library** are having their annual book and bake sale in the **Niceville Community Center**. A members-only presale will be Friday evening for Friends of any Okaloosa County Public Library, see calendar for details. All books half price during presale. Non-members may join at the door. For more info, please call 279-4863 x1504.



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

The **Niceville Community Center** will be open for an **evening of family fun** with games, stories, songs and treats to be shared around the camp "fire." Sponsored by the library and area scouts, all families are invited. To sign up call 279-4863 x1514.

Calendar, B-2

BWB panel opposes cell phone tower

By Mike Griffith and Daniel Elsesser
Beacon Staff

The Bluewater Bay Municipal Services Benefit Unit (MSBU) voted to oppose construction of a proposed 317-foot communications tower in Bluewater Bay. The issue is before the Okaloosa County Commission, which is scheduled to consider it Oct. 1.

The tower would be erected on a tract on Bay Drive which already includes a community

swimming pool and a boat storage lot.

MSBU governing board member Jonathan Tallman made the motion to oppose the tower, which passed 5-0 at a meeting Sept. 10. However, the MSBU, which oversees property maintenance of public areas in Bluewater Bay, has no legal authority over the tower's placement. That question is reserved to the Okaloosa County Commission.

Area residents appeared at a county commission meeting Tuesday to speak against the tower plan. The commission voted to postpone a decision until its next meeting, Oct. 1 in Crestview, to give time for the developer of the tower and neighborhood residents to meet.

At the county commission public hearing Tuesday in Fort Walton Beach, Jack Brooks, of Lido Circle, addressed a tower company suggestion that the

structure would be landscaped to reduce its visual impact. "You can't landscape a 317-foot tower," Brooks said. "There is no way that this will go through without a big fight."

After yesterday's public hearing, county Commissioner Wayne Harris said he saw no reason not to approve the proposed tower.

Tallman, speaking after the MSBU meeting, but before the county commission meeting, told the Beacon: "I am concerned

about property values, and having a tower in your back yard is an eyesore for the community. I believe there are better options out there such as Rocky Bayou State Park or along the bypass road. Apparently in south Florida, state parks are contacting tower companies because it will generate revenue for the state parks."

According to information

Please see TOWER, page A-6

To arms



Members of the local Civil War reenactor group Walton Guard fix bayonets during a drill Sunday in preparation for a reenactment Sept. 19-22 of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War battle of Chickamauga. The national event, to be held in northwest Georgia on part of the battlefield, is expected to draw thousands of Civil War buffs. From left: George Royal, John Mertins, Ethan Rogers and David Cocanaugher. Eight Walton Guard members will attend the reenactment, representing the Confederacy.

Beacon photo by Daniel Elsesser

2 jailed as drug dealers

By Daniel Elsesser
Beacon Staff Writer

Two Niceville men were arrested by the Okaloosa County Multi-Agency Drug Task Force after officers found over a pound of methamphetamine in their house, according to police reports.

Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office reports gave the following account:

Christopher Michael Bagent, a construction worker, 26, of 817 Spencer Place, and Arden Lee Stanley, a boat captain, 38, same address, were charged with trafficking in methamphetamine.

Task force officers discovered that Bagent had bought a box of allergy medication containing

Please see DRUG, page A-5



Christopher M. Bagent



Arden L. Stanley

Niceville set to OK \$12.7 million budget

By Daniel Elsesser
Beacon Staff Writer

The Niceville City Council has tentatively approved a \$12.7 million budget, set for final approval tomorrow, Sept. 19, at a public hearing in the Niceville City Council chambers at 6 p.m.

The tentative budget assumes a millage rate of 3.7 mills, the same as last year's rate. This rate

will bring in \$130,870 more ad valorem taxes than last year, as Niceville's property values increased 4.89 percent since then.

The rolled-back millage rate, or the rate that would garner the same amount of ad valorem tax revenue as the previous year, is 3.6345 mills. The proposed millage rate is a 1.8 percent increase over the rolled back rate.

The millage rate is the amount per \$1,000 charged on ad valorem taxes, or taxes on real estate or business property. On property carried on the tax rolls at \$100,000 after all exemptions, a millage rate of 3.70 would draw a tax payment of \$370.

Glenn Stephens, an advising

Please see BUDGET, page A-3



Okaloosa County garbage collected by Waste Management is dumped at a transfer station in Fort Walton Beach before being loaded into trucks to be dumped in the company's landfill in Marianna. Rates for the use of the landfill are increasing this year.

Beacon photo by Daniel Elsesser

Ground broken for senior complex 95 apartments planned

By Daniel Elsesser
Beacon Staff Writer

Ground was broken Tuesday for Superior Residences at Bluewater Bay, a planned five-story, \$18.5 million living center for residents 55 and older.

The center will be constructed near Bluewater Fitness, southeast of the intersection of White Point Road and State Road 20, Niceville. It is expected to be completed by the end of 2014.

The facility is being developed through a partnership between Superior Residences, which will provide management services for the center, and developer Raimund Herden.

Herden, one of the original developers of Bluewater Bay, said the center is unique

because it will be the only living center in Northwest Florida that caters to seniors who live independently.

"Most places will have maybe 15 percent independent living, and the rest will be on memory care or some other such service," Herden said. "This center is designed for people who are fit and taking care of themselves."

Herden said Superior Residences, which operates a memory-care facility in Niceville, is putting up approximately one-third of the project funding.

The facility will contain 94 either one- or two-bedroom rental apartments (545 and 937 square feet, respectively), each with kitchen, washer and dryer.

Please see COMPLEX, page A-3



Beacon photo by Daniel Elsesser
Developer Raimund Herden analyzes site plans while standing on the land for a planned five-story independent living senior center, for which ground was broken yesterday.



Beacon photo by Daniel Elsesser

Raised for the fallen

A North Bay Fire District ladder truck raises an American flag at a ceremony Sept. 11 in Bluewater Bay in remembrance of the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Firefighters from Niceville and East Niceville, as well as law-enforcement officers, also attended the event, along with about 25 observers.

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Valp. eyes stable millage rate

Hearing set for Sept. 23

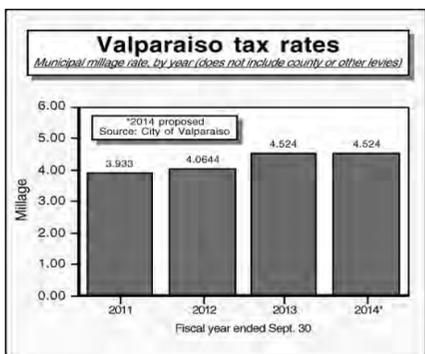
By Daniel Elsesser
Beacon Staff Writer

The Valparaiso City Commission is scheduled to hear a municipal budget on Sept. 23 that would maintain the current millage rate and restructure garbage-collection charges for businesses.

Water, sewer and cable-TV rates will not change, according to city officials.

By keeping the current millage rate of 4.524 mills, as proposed, Valparaiso would levy an additional \$23,407 in ad valorem property tax, due to the city's property values having increased 3.34 percent from last year, the first rise in years.

The millage rate is the amount per \$1,000 charged on ad valorem taxes, or taxes on real estate or business property. On property carried on the tax rolls at \$100,000 after all exemptions, a millage rate of 4.524 would result in a city tax payment of \$452.40.



The rolled-back millage rate, or rate that would garner the same amount of tax revenue as the previous year, is 4.39 mills.

The \$7.4 million budget projects \$6.9 million in revenues and just over \$400,000 in reserves and carry-over funds from the current fiscal year.

The budget includes a 1 percent cost of living adjustment to city employee salaries, as well as a 5 percent increase for worker's compensation.

At the final hearing Sept. 23, the final millage rate will be decided, along with possible raises for city employees.

Public Works Director James Valandingham said that the city was able to absorb the 17 percent tipping fee increase stipulated as part of its sanitation disposal contract with BFI Waste Services without increasing rates for customers.

Valandingham said the 10-year contract will not require another tipping fee increase for at least the next five years. The city of Valparaiso picks up city solid waste and does not have a contract with a private collector.

On Sept. 9, the city commission approved changes to the structure of charges for commercial sanitation users.

Previously, commercial customers were charged monthly based on the size and type of their business. The new rate structure charges based on volume of waste collected, a method which Valandingham says is

more fair.

"The new system is volume based, which is the way all sanitation collection should be charged," Valandingham said.

Under the new structure, businesses will be charged a base rate of \$39.45 per month for the use of one 96-gallon waste cart, and \$19.39 per month for each additional cart used. A \$2.54 tipping fee will be added for each cart, and a 10 percent administrative fee will be added to the total monthly charge.

Businesses not using city sanitation will continue to be charged a base rate of \$26.87 per month plus an administrative fee.

Valandingham said that under the new rate structure, the only businesses that will see a large increase in rates are ones that were charged relatively little based on the size of their business despite the large volume of waste they set out.

Valandingham said that overall, most businesses' rates will be similar to what they were under the previous rate structure.

Valandingham said residential collection and disposal rates will remain the same.

BUDGET

From page A-1

engineer to the city of Niceville, presented recommendations to the council on water and sewer rates for the next year.

Stephens said his rate projections were based on the assumption that Niceville would have 100 more water and sewer customers in three years than they do currently, due to improved economy and increased residential construction in the city.

The proposed rates would increase the rates for a typical, 7000-gallon user 26 cents per month for water and \$1.11 cents per month for sewer.

Sanitary landfill "tipping" fees for city of Niceville garbage customers are set to increase 2 percent, in line with a rate rise by Okaloosa County

awarded Waste Management, the operator of the landfill where Niceville solid waste is shipped.

Tipping fees are fees charged by landfill operators to allow waste to be dumped in the landfill.

Waste Management's contract with the county stipulates that tipping fees increase every year by either the same rate as the increase in the consumer price index, or by 2 percent, whichever is lower.

The landfill, located in Marianna, is operated by Waste Management, the same company that collects Niceville solid waste and owns the transfer station where waste is dropped off and sent to the landfill.

The dump fee increase would raise residential tipping fees from \$13.64 to \$13.91 a month, boosting total monthly

garbage rates from \$27.84 to \$28.11 a month.

The city of Niceville has a contract with Waste Management for garbage collection, but pays the county for waste disposal. The county disposal contract, which includes

the use of a transfer station and landfill, is also with Waste Management.

Garbage is taken to the station in Fort Walton Beach before being loaded into semi-trucks and hauled to the Marianna landfill.



Architect's rendering of Superior Residences at Bluewater Bay.

COMPLEX

From page A-1

The fifth floor of the facility will be occupied by a sports bar, restaurant and theater.

Herden says the amenities are what would distinguish the independent-living facility from assisted-living facilities and regular apartment complexes. He said such amenities are necessary to attract people living in the surrounding area.

"People who have moved here normally live in a nice house," Herden said. "This facility will be like a five-star hotel, but it will be a private home."

Shelly Normand, executive director of Superior Residences, said the facility will offer a shuttle service to cater to seniors who no longer drive.

Superior Residences, a Hernando County-based operator

of senior residential centers, operates a memory-care facility on North Partin Drive, Niceville.

Herden said the living center is his final development project in the community.

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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

Travis James McElroy, a boat technician, 26, of 704 Kumquat Ave., Niceville, was arrested by Niceville police Sept. 7 on a charge of aggravated battery on a pregnant victim.

McElroy allegedly kicked down the door of the victim's apartment and began yelling and cursing at her, eventually pushing her into a footstool. The victim fell, her back landing on the corner of the stool.

McElroy's required court appearance is Oct. 15.

Willie Andrew Wilson, 51, of 903 45th St. Unit A, Niceville, was arrested by Okaloosa County sheriff's deputies Sept. 10 on a charge of battery touch or strike.

Wilson allegedly struck a woman in the face, causing her left temple to swell and her mouth to bleed.

Wilson's required court appearance is Oct. 1.

Jessica Lynn Rizor, a restaurant employee, 21, of 215 2nd St., Niceville, was arrested by Okaloosa County sheriff's deputies Sept. 6 on a charge of battery domestic violence.

Rizor allegedly punched someone with a closed fist while the victim was driving, causing swelling and a laceration above the victim's right eye.

The victim parked the vehicle to get out, but Rizor pulled the victim's seat belt, making the belt go around the victim's neck and preventing the victim from leaving the vehicle.

Rizor's required court appearance is Sept. 24.

Alison Diann Steadman, a student, 20, of 4483 Woodbridge Road, Niceville, and Jeremy Phillip White, a cook, 22, also of 4483 Woodbridge Road, Niceville, were arrested by Okaloosa County sheriff's deputies Sept. 6 on charges of trespassing in a structure or conveyance and loitering or prowling.

While conducting a routine security check, a deputy heard glass break at an abandoned building at 1900 Scenic Highway 98, Destin, and saw two people later identified as Steadman and White enter the bottom portion of a glass door at the building, guiding themselves by lights from their cell phones.

The deputy observed

Steadman and White walk around inside the building for approximately six minutes before back-up arrived, at which point the deputy contacted Steadman and White and detained them.

The property owner updated paperwork for the "No Trespassing" sign at the building Aug. 8, according to the sheriff's office.

Steadman and White's required court appearances are Sept. 24.

Alexandra Hilary Morris, a pet groomer, 20, of 183 Grandview Ave., Valparaiso, Robert Edmund Morris, a cook, 23, also of 183 Grandview Ave., Valparaiso, and Stefan Jade Shauf, a food service worker, 23, of 1618 Date Palm Drive, Niceville, were arrested by Okaloosa County sheriff's deputies Sept. 5 on one charge each of petit larceny.

Shauf, Alexandra Morris and Robert Morris allegedly entered the electronics section of the Walmart at 748 N. Beal Parkway, Fort Walton Beach, and took five ink cartridges.

Alexandra Morris then went to the children's section and placed the cartridges in a plastic Walmart bag she brought with her into the store. The three then went to the store's customer service desk and "returned" three of the cartridges for a total of \$62.91. Alexandra Morris then threw the two other cartridges in a bathroom trash can.

All three allegedly admitted

to the offense. Their required court appearances are Sept. 24.

Richard Scott Chancey, unemployed, 48, of 211 Edrihi Ave., Niceville, was arrested by Okaloosa County sheriff's deputies Sept. 4 on a Brevard County warrant for an unspecified original charge. Brevard County will extradite Chancey.

Harry Cunningham IV, 51, of 341 Cedar Drive, Freeport, was arrested by Walton County sheriff's deputies Sept. 8 on a charge of violation of an injunction for protection against domestic violence. Cunningham violated the "no contact" terms of an injunction effective until Jan. 17, 2014.

Michael Erich Abel, a salesman, 24, of 26 Newcastle Court, Niceville, was arrested by Okaloosa County sheriff's deputies for DUI on Raintree Boulevard, Niceville, Sept. 7 at 3:49 a.m.

Abel's required court appearance is Sept. 24.

A Niceville resident of the 300 block of Goldenrod Court reported Sept. 8 that someone stole two bicycles, a \$200 mountain bike and a \$150 beach cruiser, from his residence.

A Niceville resident of the 300 block of PonteVerda Lane reported Sept. 7 his license plate had been

Please see BLOTTER, page A-5

Fire Department Reports

Niceville

The Niceville Fire Department responded to the following calls from Sept. 09, 2013 through Sept. 15, 2013.

0 Structure Fire	19 Emergency Medical Calls
0 Vehicle Fire	7 Vehicle Crash
0 Other Fire	1 Vehicle Crash with Extrication
0 Illegal Burn	5 Other Emergency Calls
0 False Alarms	2 Hazardous Conditions



Street	Situation	Date	Time
Juniper Ave.	Medical	9/9/13	10:17
Willow Ln.	Medical	9/9/13	22:36
Sweetwater Run	Service call	9/10/13	04:02
Marina Pointe Dr.	Medical	9/10/13	05:14
Spencer Pl.	Hazardous condition	9/10/13	09:43
SR 85 N.	Alarm activation	9/10/13	16:07
W. College Blvd.	Vehicle crash	9/10/13	20:34
S. Palm Blvd.	Smoke scare	9/10/13	23:09
N. Partin Dr.	Medical	9/11/13	03:29
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Vehicle crash	9/11/13	06:56
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Vehicle crash	9/11/13	07:07
Nutmeg Ave.	Medical	9/11/13	09:23
W. John Sims Pkwy.	Medical	9/11/13	13:00
17th St.	Medical	9/11/13	17:45
S. Cedar Ave.	Medical	9/11/13	18:03
Kelly Rd.	Medical	9/11/13	20:29
McEwen Dr.	Medical	9/11/13	20:42
SR 85 N/SR 123	Vehicle crash	9/12/13	01:53
Mullet Creek Run	Medical	9/12/13	08:40
McEwen Dr.	Service call	9/12/13	15:30
Edgewater Dr.	Vehicle crash	9/13/13	00:28
Linden Ave.	Medical	9/13/13	03:25
Elderberry Ln.	Medical	9/13/13	09:02
Balsam Dr.	Medical	9/13/13	09:33
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Vehicle crash	9/13/13	16:39
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Vehicle crash	9/14/13	11:48
Toms Bayou Bridge	Cancelled	9/14/13	13:51
27th St.	Medical	9/14/13	18:38
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Overheated equip	9/14/13	20:04
W. College Blvd.	Vehicle extrication	9/15/13	01:35
Valparaiso Blvd.	Medical	9/15/13	07:49
Elderberry Ln.	Medical	9/15/13	14:10
Paradise Rd.	Medical	9/15/13	15:16

Weekly Safety Tip: "Fire Prevention Week" is October 6-12, 2013. The theme this year is "Prevent Kitchen Fires". Remember to test smoke detectors, develop escape plans for your family and practice safety all year long. Like the Niceville Fire Department on Facebook

North Bay

The North Bay Fire Department responded to the following calls from September 9, 2013 through September 15, 2013.



Street	Situation	Date	Time
N. White Point Rd.	Medical	9/9/13	02:56
Parkwood Ct.	Dispatched & cancelled	9/9/13	11:02
Wright Cir.	Medical	9/9/13	13:44
N. White Point Rd.	Medical	9/9/13	17:24
Oakwood Cir.	No incident found	9/9/13	19:21
Olde Post Rd.	CO detector activation	9/10/13	07:21
Troon Dr. W.	Medical	9/10/13	09:01
N. White Point Rd.	Medical	9/10/13	16:16
Dominica Cir.	Dispatched & cancelled	9/10/13	17:31
N. White Point Rd.	Vehicle accident	9/10/13	17:37
Midland Ct.	Medical	9/11/13	03:25
Highway 20	Medical assist	9/11/13	10:49
N. White Point Rd.	Medical	9/11/13	17:54
Fairway Lakes	Medical	9/11/13	19:26
27th Street	Medical	9/11/13	20:45
Pine Street	Medical assist	9/12/13	04:09
Whitewood Way	Medical	9/12/13	05:10
N. White Point Rd.	Medical	9/12/13	10:27
E. Hwy. 20	Dispatched & cancelled	9/12/13	11:41
N. White Point Rd.	Medical	9/12/13	13:24
St. Andrews Cove	Medical assist	9/13/13	13:53
Pine Street	Medical assist	9/13/13	19:23
Hwy. 20 East	Chemical spill	9/14/13	12:47
Merchants Way	Dispatched & cancelled	9/14/13	14:21
Hwy. 98/Destin	Dispatched & cancelled	9/14/13	19:32
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Hazardous condition	9/14/13	20:05
Bluewater Blvd.	Medical	9/15/13	10:00
W. Choctawatchee Dr.	Medical	9/15/13	14:36
Cat Mar Rd.	Medical	9/15/13	21:47

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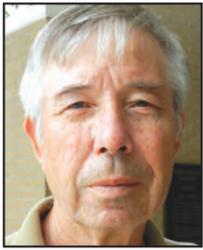


THE INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER —by Mike Griffith



What do you think about Okaloosa County's plans to increase gasoline and property taxes?

Location: Niceville Public Library



"With the state of the economy right now, I don't think they should raise taxes."

Donald Spain, 65, Niceville, retired military



"It's preposterous. People on fixed incomes can't adjust to it."

Levy Lucas, 53, Niceville, disabled



"The local politicians should live within their means, like the rest of us have to do. Their first choice is always to raise taxes. The correct answer is to cut spending."

John Behrens, 66, Niceville, retired Air Force



"I'll support it if they spend the money wisely, but I'm on a fixed income and can't afford extra expenses."

Betty Williams, 68, Niceville, retired



"I'd have to study the issue more in order to give an intelligent answer to that question."

Nancy McGough, 60, Niceville, homemaker



"I don't like it. Everything else is increasing, too. But, it seems like a necessity if the county is to survive and progress."

Doris Camp, Niceville, retired

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

DRUG

From page A-1
pseudoephedrine from the Walmart Pharmacy at 1196 E. John Sims Parkway, Niceville, Sept. 9.

Bagent later told investigators that he used the pseudoephedrine to make methamphetamine.

Bagent stated he is a methamphetamine user and last used the drug three to four days prior to his arrest.

Bagent and Stanley were in the Spencer Place residence when task force officers responded.

Stanley stated he had been "cooking" methamphetamine every day since October 2012

except for three months when he was in jail. Stanley previously was booked at the Okaloosa County Jail June 2 after being charged with possession of a controlled substance without a prescription. Stanley was released Aug. 14. He told officers he was on probation for the possession of a controlled substance charge.

Stanley gave officers a detailed description of his method for cooking methamphetamine and claimed ownership of contraband in his room and in other parts of the house. Deputies found over 500 grams of meth in the house.

Stanley told police he regularly sells methamphetamine and trades boxes of pseudoephedrine for

methamphetamine.

Stanley confirmed that Bagent had purchased the box of medication containing pseudoephedrine Sept. 9.

Bagent and Stanley were booked at the Okaloosa County Jail Sept. 10 and as of Monday were detained there with no listed bond amount. Their have an Oct.

15 court date.

The Okaloosa County Multi-Agency Drug Task Force was formed in 1986 to stop the distribution of illegal drugs. It includes Okaloosa County sheriff's investigators, a Florida Department of Law Enforcement agent and a Niceville Police Department detective.

BLOTTER

From page A-4
The complainant reported that the car was at his residence and in Crestview before he realized the license plate was missing.

A Niceville resident of the

2000 block of Plumosa Palm Drive reported Sept. 6 someone broke into the back door of his residence and stole over \$1,000 of real and costume jewelry from his wife's jewelry boxes, a \$129.88 weed eater from his shed, as well as a blower and chain saw attachment.

A Valparaiso resident of the first block of Jackson Avenue reported Sept. 6 that someone had used her personal information to purchase gas utility service in Ogden, Utah, where the complainant reported she does not know anyone.

The complainant said she found out about the charge when a debt collection agency informed her she owed \$72.17. on an account that was set up Sept. 5, 2012, and discontinued April 22.

The complainant also contacted the Ogden City Police Department.

A Valparaiso police officer saw an interior light on in a vehicle parked in the driveway of the first block of Kelly Way, Valparaiso, at about 2:04 a.m. Sept. 8 and upon approaching the vehicle saw a man run from the vehicle.

The officer chased the man but lost sight of him. An Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office K-9 unit was requested and dispatched.

The dog picked up a scent and tracked it between Kelly Way and Carie Way, Valparaiso, but lost the scent near College Boulevard.

The officer contacted the owner of the vehicle, who said she had parked the car, unlocked, in her driveway at about 8:50 p.m.. All the owner reported missing from the vehicle was approximately \$2 in change.

Other

An employee of Northwest

Florida State College at 100 E. College Blvd., Niceville, reported Sept. 6 a student found a deer's head at the school's observatory site.

The student told the school employee he had seen shell casings near the deer head, but they were gone when he showed the head to the employee.

The deer's body was not found. The case had been transferred to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission.

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The Bay Beacon and Beacon Express, incorporating the Bluewater Breeze, is published every Wednesday by Bayou Enterprises Inc. Free total-market home delivery to Niceville, Valparaiso, Bluewater Bay and Seminole, as well as mid-Walton County from Villa Tasso to Basin Bayou, including Choctaw Beach. Subscriptions: One year, mail, \$104. One year, electronic subscription, \$52.
Niceville's Newspaper

TOWER

From page A-1
 provided by Elliot Kampert, Okaloosa County growth management director, the tower applicant requested that the county commission "allow the cell tower as a permitted use on the subject property."
 The proposed 317-foot self-supporting tower off Bay Drive would replace an existing 317-foot guyed tower at 4901 Nelson Point Road, Niceville, just west of Bluewater Bay. That tower would be removed once the new one is constructed and all antennas re-installed on the new tower, according to county paperwork.
 Kampert told the Beacon that the lease for the land on which the existing tower stands has expired and will not be renewed, making a replacement necessary elsewhere.
 "The proposed replacement tower and related facilities will be located within a 100' x 100' lease area; it will be fenced and

landscaping will be placed around the perimeter of the tower compound," according to county planning documents. "There will be no buildings constructed as part of the tower facility, only equipment shelters or cabinets will be installed to accommodate the tenants on the tower."
 The proposed tower will accommodate AT&T, the antennas of three other wireless carriers and antennas of many law enforcement and other emergency-response entities, according to the county.
 Various state and federal agencies have no objection to the plan, according to the county.
 "The State Law Enforcement Radio System (SLERS) currently on the existing tower is an integral part of the county's emergency communication system," according to the county. "The tower is referred to by the state as the Niceville tower, and it provides coverage to the system users in the Valparaiso, Niceville, and Bluewater Bay



Beacon photo by Daniel Elsesser
A company that wants to erect a 317-foot communications tower just west of Bay Drive in Bluewater Bay says it would replace this tower of the same height off Nelson Point Road, in the Lancaster Road subdivision.

in Okaloosa County, told commissioners: "This tower receives over 389,000 push-to-talk calls per year. If the tower is placed any farther south, there will be problems

in the North County like Crestview causing holes in coverage."
 State users include the Florida Highway Patrol, Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission and the Department of Transportation. Local users include fire districts, county Emergency Medical Services, and law enforcement agencies such as the Okaloosa County Sheriff's office, Niceville police, Valparaiso police and county airport police. "The ability to communicate with personnel via this radio system is vital to the emergency response system to Okaloosa County," according to the county papers.
 The county papers recommending approval of the plan also stated that a state official had sent a letter "stating that the tower site is a critical site for the Statewide Law Enforcement Radio System and for the Okaloosa subscribers using SLERS for law enforcement and first responder communications. The site was selected due to its ability to provide coverage to these areas. Any need to relocate

or build a tower further to the north would adversely impact the radio coverage and the safety of law enforcement, public safety officials and the general population of these areas."
 Correspondence from the Okaloosa County Property Appraiser indicates that his office has not used proximity to a tower as the determining factor for assessing the values of adjacent properties, according to the county.
 County staff members met with the adjacent concerned property owners regarding the proposed tower. Their main concerns include the structural stability of the tower, safety of children who may be tempted to climb the tower or access the compound, and the overall impact on the community, according to the county.
 The tower still is subject to approval by the county board of adjustment, which is scheduled to consider the issue Nov. 13, by the county planning board (Nov. 14), and again by the county commission (Nov. 19).



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Ruckel Middle School students achieving a perfect 500 score on last year's Math and/or Reading FCAT were recognized at the first Pep Rally of the 2013 school year Thursday, Aug 29.

Ruckel's 500 Club

Reading
 Sophia Contratto
 Madeline Dowden
 Cameron Downing
 Mauricio Navarro
 Alison Parkin
 Sara Strunk
 Nicholas Van Nimwegen
 Joshua Riley
 Rachel Hyde
 Emma Ladd

Mariah McClaren
Math
 Marissa Rung
 Kyle Fell
 Lauren Frederick
 Adam Mistretta
 Ryan Erickson
 Geoffrey Hall
 Kaitlyn Hall
 Dylan Hammond

Eileen Landa
 Joshua Mills
 Hannah Schneidewind
 Samuel Stahl
Math and Reading
 Trey Buck
 Matthew Deyong
 Julia Freeman
 Meredith Freeman
 Camille Miles
 Ryan Murphey



Youth group does prayer walk on 9/11

The High School Youth Group from Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Church spent their Patriot's Day evening, Wednesday, Sept. 11, walking around neighborhoods near their church and praying for the families that live there. Holding candles, the group made their way from house to house, stopping to bless each one.

Beacon photo by Angela Yuriko Smith

Edge has teacher of the week

Edge Elementary kindergarten teacher Jenny Taylor, left, is Teacher of the Week Sept. 10. Pictured also is Ansley Thrasher, the student whose mother nominated Taylor. Taylor has been a teacher at Edge for nine years.



Who's News

Brianna Cupp, a student at Collegiate High School at Northwest Florida State College, has been selected to become a member of the National Society of High School Scholars. The announcement was made by NSHSS Chairman Claes Nobel Aug. 21. Brianna Cupp is a resident of Niceville.



Brianna Cupp

BWB dancer to perform in 'The Little Mermaid'

Some of the Northwest Florida Ballet dancers who will perform "The Little Mermaid" take a break during rehearsal for a group photo. Performances will be held at the Mattie Kelly Arts Center, Niceville, Sept. 21 at 7:30 p.m. and Sept. 22 at 2:30 p.m.



Beacon photo by Angela Yuriko Smith

By Angela Yuriko Smith
 Beacon Staff Writer

The Northwest Florida Ballet (NFB) recently announced the first performance of the 2013-14 season, "The Little Mermaid," an adaptation of a tale originally written in 1836 by Hans Christian Anderson for a two show run at the Mattie Kelly Arts Center Sept. 21 and 22. This production is being choreographed by Katia Garza.

One of the dancers, Savannah Crabtree, 12, of Bluewater Bay, considers it a privilege to work with the professionals, like Garza, that the Northwest Florida Ballet brings in.

"Miss Katia from The Orlando Ballet is the choreographer for this one," said Savannah. "She explains and demonstrates the moves then explains the story so our vision is the same as hers."

This production of "The Little Mermaid" is not the first time Savannah has had an opportunity to work with Garza. Garza also

choreographed the NFB production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" March 9-10 earlier this year, in which Savannah portrayed a firefly. "The part I performed in the 'Midsummer Night's Dream,' my character was more for placement on stage," said Crabtree. "and in 'The Little Mermaid' my character has more dance and movement." She portrays a bird in this production.

The vision of recreating an underwater environment on stage is a challenging one. To keep the feeling of fluidity, the dancers are being taught to move differently and emulate fish rather than rely on classic ballet movement.

The set is using video projec-

tions to enhance the ocean experience with images being projected onto a large backdrop.

The cast of this performance will be composed of local dancers from the Northwest Florida Ballet corps de ballet and a line up of international guest artists. Dancers from NFB who will hold principle roles include Courtney Shealy as Princess Ariel, Christa Henry as the sea witch and Ella Brummett as the Ariel's grandmother.

Other guest artists include Ryan Carroll as the sea king, Brent Whitney as the prince and Carlos Madera, David Turnell, Billy Blanken and Jonathan Carter as the prince's friends.

Performances will be held at the Mattie Kelly Arts Center Sept. 21 at 7:30 p.m. and Sept. 22 at 2:30 p.m. Tickets are \$28 for adults and \$14 for children and are available by phone at 664-7787 or online through the Northwest Florida Ballet website, nfballet.org.



Savannah Crabtree



New officers for RBCS Junior Classical League

Rocky Bayou Christian Academy Junior Classical League has elected new officers for the 2013-2014 school year. Pictured from left, Connor Lynch as Quaestor (Treasurer), Mackenzie Davis as Aedile (Parliamentarian), Trever Knie as Censor (Secretary), Izabella Foreman as Consul (President), Kayla Thompson from the Academy Art Club as Ars Laureate (Art Liaison), Ian Kampert as Pontifex (Chaplain) and James Sung as Co-Consul (Vice President).



Petersons win Best in Class

Kirk and Diana Peterson of Niceville won first place in the Emerald Coast Car Show for Best in Truck Class and for Best Paint with their customized 1957 Chevy. The car show was held at the Mullet Festival grounds Saturday, Sept. 7.

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Golf group

Bluewater Bay Ladies 9 Hole Golf is meeting Wednesdays from now until the end of May with a 9 a.m. tee time at the Bluewater Bay Clubhouse, 1940 Bluewater Blvd., Niceville. For more info call Diane Chiquette at 897-4498.

Benefit jewelry sale

The Twin Cities Hospital Auxiliary will sponsor a \$5 Jewelry and Accessories Sale Thursday, Sept. 19 from 7 a.m.-6 p.m. and Friday, Sept. 20 from 7 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Twin Cities Hospital Wellness Center. Cash and credit/debit cards accepted. All proceeds benefit healthcare related scholarships.

Horticulture studies

The Tri-County Horticulture Studies meeting will be Sept. 19 at 10 a.m. at the Valparaiso Community Library, 459 Valparaiso Parkway, Valparaiso. Marie Harrison will give a presentation. Afterwards, the group will go to Emerald Coast Nursery, 1405 Palm Blvd., Niceville, for a guided tour featuring fall blooming plants.

Vendor opportunity

Valparaiso Garden Club is now accepting vendors for the Viva Florida 500 festival to be held on Oct. 26, in Perrine Park, Valparaiso. Contact valpviva500@gmail.com to request vendor applications or download a copy at mariesgardenanddesign.com

Lionfish tourney

The Emerald Coast Reef Association is hosting a Lionfish Tournament, Sept. 14-Oct. 13th. Registration is \$25 per two man team. Grand prize is \$2,500. Video contest is free to enter. Winning video wins \$300. For more information or to register, visit ecreef.org



Bikers benefit Heritage Museum

All are invited to participate in the "Biker's Blast for the Past" motorcycle poker run Saturday, Sept. 21. Having a motorcycle is not a requirement to participate. Start at any six Helen Back locations or the Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida. Stops open at 11 a.m., 1 p.m. registration closes, 4 p.m. the stops close and last bike is due in by 5 p.m. See calendar for complete details.

This program is sponsored by Valparaiso Garden Club. All welcome, no cost. For information contact marieharrison@valp.net or call 678-2842.

Revival service

All God's Children and the Living Word Worship Center, Valparaiso, will host their annual Revival Services Sept. 18-20, nightly at 7 p.m. The guest speaker will be Pastor Alvin Smith of Sonlight Covenant Church of Crestview. For more info call 678-7632 or email allgodchildrenministry@centurylink.net

Free karaoke

Please feel free to come in and enjoy a fun evening of karaoke with Bill and Rhonda Friday, Sept. 20 from 7-11 p.m. at American Legion Post #221, 444 E. John Sims Pkwy., Niceville.

Barbershop harmony

The "Harvest of Harmony" barbershop show will be at the Niceville High School auditorium Saturday, Sept. 21 at 7 p.m.

Tickets \$10, available from Bayou Bookstore, Niceville, or at the door night of the show. For more info call 499-7182.

Bugs on the Bayou

The 2nd Annual Bugs on the Bayou VW car show will be Saturday September 21.

Registration is 9-11. Judging begins 11 a.m. and closes at 1 p.m. Awards ceremony at 2:30 p.m. Dash Plaques for first 100 entrants and trophies for each class.

For more info visit bugsonthebayou.com

One fun run

The 2nd Annual ONE Run 5K run will be held on Saturday, Sept. 21. The run begins at 4:30 p.m. at Perrine Park, directly across from Heritage Museum, 115 Westview Ave., Valparaiso. Post-race party at Tucker Duke's Lunchbox featuring food, drinks, live music and raffle prizes. All funds will be applied towards the ECAC Scholarship Fund.

Friendly book sale

The Friends of the Niceville Public Library are having their annual book



Gamma Epsilon begins year with luncheon

Gamma Epsilon Master Chapter of Beta Sigma Phi held their "Beginner's Day" luncheon and meeting at the home of Mattie Williams in Niceville. Plans were discussed for the cultural programs, service projects and social activities. Pictured in back, Doris Olig, Linda Michalowski, Dora Perano, JoAnne Jones, Beverly Flynt, Mattie Williams and Margaret Holley. Pictured in front, Mary MacDonald, Angela Budden and Helen Martin.

sale Saturday Sept. 21, with a public book and bake sale 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m. in the Niceville Community Center.

A members-only presale will be Friday Sept. 20, 4 p.m.- 6 p.m. for Friends of any Okaloosa County Public Library

All books half price during presale. Non-members may join at the door.

For more info, please call 279-4863 x1504.

Yoga seminar

Free 'Benefits of Yoga' Seminar at the Hammock Bay Community Center, Freeport Sept. 20, 6:30 p.m. For more info contact JRGzenon@aol.com.

Square dance class

Looking for a fun activity that will offer mental, physical and social benefits? Modern Square Dance offers all this and more. New class beginning Monday, Sept. 23, at Niceville United Methodist Church Community Life Center 6-7 p.m. Families welcome. For more info call Kay 865-1341.

Woman's luncheon

Twin Cities Woman's Club welcomes all interested women to the first

monthly luncheon of the 2013-14 club year to be held on Wednesday, Sept. 25, at 11 a.m. at the Bluewater Bay Clubhouse, 2000 Bluewater Blvd. N., Niceville. Please RSVP to Lillian Lewis, 279-4037 by Friday, Sept. 20.

Shooting event

Okaloosa and Walton Counties Cub Scouts are holding their annual "Shooting Sports" day on Saturday, Sept. 21 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Mullet Festival Site, Corner of Hwy. 85 N and College Blvd., Niceville. Age appropriate activities such as BB guns, archery, and slingshot paintball will be conducted by trained staff in a safe environment. Open to all Cub Scouts and their siblings for a cost of \$10. All boys and their families interested in Scouting are welcome.

Motorcycle Poker Run

The "Biker's Blast for the Past" motorcycle poker run will be Saturday, Sept. 21. Having a motorcycle is not a requirement to participate.

Start at any six Helen Back locations or the Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida. Stops open at 11 a.m., 1 p.m. registration closes, 4 p.m.

the stops close and last bike is due in by 5 p.m.

Cost is \$25 per rider and includes t-shirt, swag, buffet and games with \$20 for additional rider, buffet only. To become a sponsor contact 244-1379 or maren@helenbackcafe.com.

Proceeds to benefit the Heritage Museum of NW Florida.

Beach clean up

The Department of Environmental Protection's Henderson Beach State Park and its support organization, The Friends of Emerald Coast State Parks, invites everyone to attend a marine debris educational program as part of National Public Lands Day Saturday, Sept. 21 from 8-10 a.m. and participate in the Florida Coastal Clean-up. Event weather permitting. For more information call 837-7550.

Fairytale ballet

The Northwest Florida Ballet will present a premier production of "The Little Mermaid" set to the music of Antonin Dvořák and choreographed by Katia Garza. Performances will be held at the Mattie Kelly Arts Center Sept. 21 at 7:30 p.m. and Sept. 22 at 11 a.m., 1 p.m. registration closes, 4 p.m.

Please see CALENDAR, page B-4

CHURCH DIRECTORY

IMMANUEL ANGLICAN CHURCH
Sunday Morning Services
9:00am Traditional Spirit-filled Worship with Holy Communion
Nursery, ages 6 wks.-2yrs.; Sunday School, ages 3-7
11:01am Walk In...Worship
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Yard Sales

Saturday, September 28. 7AM-? Swift Creek Community, Multi-family.

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

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Coming off Pine Forest win, Eagles to face Choctaw Friday

By Sarah Clauson
Beacon Correspondent

The Niceville Eagles travelled to West Pensacola Friday, Sept. 13, to face off against the Pine Forest Eagles and brought home a 37-6 victory, and a squeaky clean 3-0 record.

The Eagles haven't just been winning, they have been gaining the reputation as a tough team to beat. Their ranking, in class 7A has jumped to 36th in the State according to Maxpreps.

The Eagles entered Friday night's game with a couple of big wins under their belt, while Pine Forest had a couple of big losses. The Niceville fans filled the visitor side of the stadium, while the home side was quite sparse.

Although the win didn't come as a big surprise, there was still plenty of action, and it started with the very first play of the



Once again the Eagles dominated the field, trouncing Pine Forest in a 37-6 game. Starting strong, Tyree McCants took the ball to the end zone for an 80 yard touchdown just 14 seconds into the game.

Beacon photo by Sarah Clauson

game. Niceville won the toss, and received the ball on the 20 yard line.

In their first play, quarterback Ashton Hooker connected with Tyree McCants who took it to the end zone for an 80 yard touchdown just 14 seconds into the game. Niceville continued on an offensive scoring spree throughout the first quarter, racking up 30 points, while allowing just 6.

A Niceville touchdown midway through the second quarter would be the last scoring of the evening.

The second half slowed down, but it allowed the Eagles to try some different things and some

different players.

The game, primarily the second half, wasn't without mistakes, but head Coach John Hicks is pleased.

"We need to learn while we're winning, we don't need to lose a game to learn our lessons," said Hicks, and that's the message he relayed to his team, and it's one that will hopefully pay off into the post-season.

This week the Eagles hope to advance their winning streak against the Choctaw Indians, who bring with them a 3-0 record of their own. Kickoff is at 7 p.m. Friday, Sept. 20 at Eagle Stadium.

Eagles volleyball wins 3 of 3

Niceville High School seniors Ashley Hagood and Jennifer Smith work in unison to block a shot from the Crestview Bulldogs last Thursday, Sept. 12 during an Eagles vs. Bulldogs home game. NHS has won 3 out of 3 games this season so far. In the last game the scores were 25-17, 25-18 and 25-16.

Beacon photo by Sarah Clauson



NHS girls open race winners, pictured from left, Coach Cindy Janazzo, Karlie Magboo, Addi Martin, Julia Moreno, McKenzie Shinnick, Diana LaFollette, Cenedy Crum, Regan McAllister, Cameron Crum, Catherine Crump, Rebecca Corallo, Coach Eller, Alix Bikker and Claire Crist.

Morken and Howell make elite standard

The NHS cross country team traveled to Mobile for the Challenge of Champions on Sept. 7. The team competed in both the invitational run and the open run. Thomas Howell and Nick Morken took 1st and 2nd place in the boy's invitational with times of 15:59.29 and 16:03.58. These times also earned them recognition for the national elite standard.

Boy's Invitational top 7 results: 1st Thomas Howell (15:59.29), 2nd Nick Morken (16:03.58), 11th Caden Ewing (17:25.62), 18th Jack Massey (17:47.04), 24th Tristan Hamer (17:56.38), 28th Tripp Davis (18:04.80) and 38th Elijah Schneidwind (18:32.08). The boy's placed 2nd out of 16 schools which competed in the invitational race.

Girl's Open Race top 7 results: 1st Mackenzie Shinnick (21:57.88), 4th Claire Crist (22:28.91), 6th Anna Herrera (22:43.79), 11th Catherine Crump (23:21.82), 14th Julia Moreno (23:30.42), 16th Drew Haggerman (23:50.62) and 17th Diana LaFollette (23:59.30). The girl's placed 1st out of 23 schools in the open race.

Boy's Open Race top 7 results: 10th Kyle Ferris (18:42.70), 14th David Bobbitt (18:49.54), 23rd Chris Magboo (19:06.89), 30th Jake Fiske (19:29.40), 35th Jason Nodjoman (19:37.51), 36th Brayton Miles (19:42.02) and D'Angelo Swafford (19:51.84). The boy's placed 6th out of 26 schools in the open race.



NHS boys invitational winners, pictured from left, Coach Janazzo, Nick Morken, Thomas Howell, Tripp Davis, Jack Massey, Caden Ewing, Tristan Hamer, Elijah Schneidwind and Coach Sherman Eller.



Photo courtesy Louann Brechler

NHS swimmer Markwardt wins second meet

Niceville, Fort Walton, Choctawhatchee and Rocky Bayou Christian schools' swim teams met for the second time this season Monday, Sept. 9, at the Destin YMCA pool. Over 150 swimmers competed in three events. NHS swimmer Matthew Markwardt was the overall winner for boys with a combined time of 2:59:98.



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In the Service

Air Force Cadet Christy R. Allen has completed basic cadet training and earned the rank of cadet fourth class at the U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colo.

The cadet completed the rigorous six-week orientation program. The training prepares cadets to enter their first academic year at the academy.

The cadets completed the training in two phases. Phase one consisted of military and physical preparation which focused on the transition from civilian to military life. Phase two involved three weeks of field training on the academy grounds to participate in activities to extend their physical limitations and build self and group confidence.



Christy Allen

The U.S. Air Force Academy curriculum offers education in the basics, engineering and social sciences, the humanities, and 30 other academic majors. At graduation, the cadet receives a bachelor of science degree and a commission of second lieutenant in the Air Force.

She is the daughter of Mike and Gail Allen of Weeden Island Drive, Niceville.

Allen graduated in 2012 from Rocky Bayou Christian School, Niceville.



Project earns Scout Eagle Rank

Matthew Nelson of Niceville, has earned the rank of Eagle Scout. Matt completed his Eagle project for Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Church. He structured a new campfire area and benches, built a fence and landscaped sections of the grounds. Matt has already completed 56 merit badges and currently serves as the Senior Patrol Leader for Troop 52, Valparaiso. For info on scouting call 683-0330.



Beacon photo by Daniel Elsesser

Ground broken for tennis center

Okalosa County School District and city of Niceville officials broke ground for a planned Eagle-Ram Tennis Center on the Ruckel Middle School campus between Palm Boulevard and Partin Drive, Niceville. Pictured from left to right: Niceville High School tennis coach Chris Poate, former Ruckel Principal Debra Collins Goolsby, Deputy Superintendent and former Niceville High School principal Marcus Chambers, former Ruckel teacher Leslie Parker, Niceville Mayor Randall Wise and Ruckel tennis coach Brett Beattie.

CALENDAR

From page B-2

2:30 p.m. Tickets are \$28 for adults and \$14 for children and are available by phone at 664-7787 or online through the Northwest Florida Ballet website, nfballet.org.

Give blood

Sunday, Sept. 22, Christ Our Redeemer, 1028 White Point Road, Niceville from 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m. Donors will receive a T-shirt.

In stitches

The fall program begin for the

Sand Dunes Chapter of Embroiderers' Guild of America at their September meetings. The first day meeting is Monday, Sept. 23, 9:30 a.m.-noon. The first night group meeting is Thursday, Sept. 26, 6-8:30 p.m., room 400 at Niceville United Methodist Church, 214 Partin Dr S., Niceville. Visitors are welcome.

Tea Party meets

The Niceville-Valparaiso Tea Party will meet at Niceville City Hall Sept. 23, at 6 p.m. Butch Karpowich will speak on relationships between political groups. Also, Joe Cobb, Tea Party board member, will speak on the future of Eglin.

Campfire evening

The Community Center will be open for an evening of family fun with games, stories, songs and treats to be shared around the camp "fire" from 6:30-7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 24. Sponsored by the library and area scouts, all families are invited. To sign up call 279-4863 x1514.

Garden Club resumes

The Niceville Garden Club will resume regular meetings following the summer break with their first meeting of the year on Tuesday, Sept. 24, 6 p.m. in the Community Center across from the Niceville Library. All are welcome.

Voter Registration Day

Celebrate National Voter Registration Day (NVRD) by registering to vote at the Niceville Walmart Tuesday, Sept. 24 from 10 a.m.-7 p.m. For more information, please visit the Supervisor of Elections at govte-okaloosa.com or call 689-5600 or 651-7272

Alzheimer's support group

A support group for those affected by Alzheimer's will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 25 at the Niceville United Methodist Church, Chandler Center, 214 S. Partin Drive. The support group is free and limited respite care is available, reserve in

advance by calling 866-478-7790.

Give blood

Wednesday, Sept. 25, Niceville United Methodist Church, 214 South Partin Drive from 3-8:30 p.m. Donors will receive a T-shirt.

Bag swap

Women of all ages are invited to an evening of fellowship, hors d'oeuvres, worship, special presentations and a bag exchange Thurs. Sept. 26 from 6-8 p.m. at Niceville UMC, 214 Partin Drive S. Niceville, in the Sanctuary and Gathering Area.

Bring a gently loved purse to exchange. For more info visit niceville.orgwomen or call 865-4769.



The nine semifinalists for the National Merit Scholarship Program pictured from back row, left, Cody McWilliams, Erin England, Brian Fields, Morgan Ringel and David Bobbitt. Front row, Alise Snyders, Milbrey Parke, Anna Herrera and Meredith Glaze.

NHS has nine National Merit semifinalists

Niceville High School has nine semifinalists for the National Merit Scholarship Program. David B. Bobbitt, Erin E. England, Brian M. Fields, Meredith A. Glaze, Anna M. Herrera, Cody J. McWilliams, Milbrey A. Parke, Morgan J. Ringel and Alise M. Snyders are among the approximately 16,000 Semifinalists in the 59th annual National Merit Scholarship Program. These academically talented high school seniors have an opportunity to continue in the competi-

tion for some 8,000 National Merit Scholarships worth more than \$35 million that will be offered next spring.

"We are very proud to have a record number of talented National Merit Semifinalists representing Niceville High School," said NHS Principal Rodney Nobles.

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation is a not-for-profit organization that operates without government assistance. It was established in 1955 specifically to conduct the

annual National Merit Scholarship Program. Scholarships are underwritten by NMSC with its own funds and by approximately 440 business organizations and higher education institutions that share NMSC's goals of honoring the nation's scholastic champions and encouraging the pursuit of academic excellence.

Students qualify for the National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the PSAT during their junior year of high school.

Twin Cities Hospital gets top marks in Consumer Reports

Twin Cities Hospital, Niceville, was recently ranked near the top of the list of Florida hospitals for surgery performance in elderly patients, according to a national report from "Consumer Reports."



Twin Cities Hospital in Niceville, is a leading provider of quality healthcare to the Okaloosa County area.

The hospital is owned by Hospital Corporation of America (HCA), who currently operates over 70 healthcare facilities in Florida, including Gulf Coast Medical Center in Panama City.

Twin Cities Hospital received the highest rating of "better" — the highest of five categories ranging from "better" to "worse." The report relied on Medicare billing information to examine the percentage of hospitals' surgical patients who stayed longer than

anticipated or passed away in the hospital. Consumer Reports has previously published a number of hospital performance reports, but this is the first time it has singled out surgical procedures for Medicare patients.

The report was based on 86 types of surgeries in 27 categories,

from gallbladder surgery to angioplasty and knee and hip replacements.

Twin Cities Hospital also received the 2012 HealthGrades Outstanding Patient Experience Award and was also given an "A" rating by the Leapfrog Group, an independent organization that rates hospitals on performance, national standards of safety, quality, efficiency and patient satisfaction.

Housing the area's only hospital-based Wellness Center, the hospital offers a variety of community based programs on current health related topics throughout the year. To learn more about their services call 729-9468, or visit TCHospital.com.

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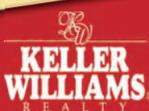
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