

# The Bay Beacon

Police Blotter, page A-4

10 Pages, 2 Sections, 3 Inserts

Wednesday, January 22, 2014

50¢

**UP COMING**

**Thurs., 6 p.m.**



Award-winning children's author Jeff Nathan will present "The Silly Laughing Musical Fun Poetry Show" at Plew Elementary School, Niceville, a free family program based on his books of children's poetry. There will be a book signing afterwards.

**Sun., 6 p.m.**



The Great Night of Methodist Singing, a performance by choirs from local Methodist churches, will perform at the Mattie Kelly Arts Center, Niceville. Free of charge, donations accepted.

**Mon. 5-6:30 p.m.**



Members of the Okaloosa County state legislative delegation will hold a public hearing at Niceville City Hall, 208 N. Partin Drive. Comments will be heard on proposals for the 2014 regular session of the Florida Legislature.

**Tues., 6 p.m.**

The Niceville Garden Club will present "Valentine's Floral Design," a free demonstration, in the Niceville Community Center. All meetings are open to the public.

Calendar, B-3

## Niceville OKs \$15,500 in aid to groups

By Mike Griffith  
Beacon Correspondent

The Niceville City Council has approved \$15,500 in payments to non-profit organizations in the Niceville area.

City Clerk Dan Doucet and City Manager Lannie Corbin briefed the council during a meeting Jan. 14 on their recommendations for city aid to the organizations. The organizations had requested a total of \$23,000 in such funding during the city's budget process last summer and fall, said Doucet, but the staff recommendations were postponed until early this year, to allow

- Shelter House Inc.: \$500 (\$500).
- Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra at Northwest Florida State College: \$500 (\$500).
- Children's Advocacy Center: \$1,500 (\$3,000).
- Sharing and Caring: \$2,000 (4,000).
- Okaloosa County Comprehensive Head Start: \$1,500 (3,000).
- After a brief discussion, the city council unanimously approved the recommendations.
- Also during the meeting, Niceville Public Works Director Bruce Price told

- Economic Development Council: \$3,000 (\$3,000).
- Bridgeway Center (Crisis Line and Meals on Wheels): \$1,500 (\$3,000).
- Okaloosa-Walton Childcare Services: \$1,000 (\$1,000).

the council that a Publix supermarket now under construction is expected to open during mid-February, if fire and building inspections of the new structure, at John Sims Parkway and Rocky Bayou Drive, go as expected. Price said that traffic lanes are being rerouted near the intersection of John Sims and Rocky Bayou, as new pavement, a traffic circle and lights are installed there. He also said that a new bridge is under construction over Swift Creek, as part of a 1.5-mile service road

Please see OK, page A-3

## 3,900 vehicles a day use new highway



Beacon photo

Traffic on the new Mid-Bay Bridge Connector around Niceville so far is running about 25 percent of levels on the bridge itself.

## Bridge connector seen as Niceville bypass

By Mike Griffith  
Beacon Correspondent

Over 3,900 vehicles a day have used the new Mid-Bay Bridge Connector since the 11-mile expressway began charging tolls on Jan. 7, according to the Mid-Bay Bridge Authority. MBBA Executive Director Jim Vest told the authority's governing board during a meet-

Services held for Walter Spence, a bridge founder, A-2.

ing Jan. 16 that 1,800 vehicles drove over the new connector road on Saturday, Jan. 4, after a ribbon-cutting ceremony opened the route to toll-free traffic that afternoon. Vest said that on Sunday, the second day of the toll-free weekend, 49,043 vehicles drove the route between State Road 85 north of Niceville and the north end of the Mid-Bay Bridge, which connects the Niceville area with Destin and other communities along the shore of the Gulf of Mexico. Vest said that on Monday, Please see CONNECTOR, page A-4

## Niceville builder gets 6 years in bank fraud

Pamela C. Marsh, U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Florida, announced Jan. 14 that Lawrence Allen Wright, 46, of Niceville, was sentenced by Federal District Court Judge Lacey A. Collier in Pensacola to 75 months in prison and ordered to pay over \$3.7 million in restitution for a mortgage-fraud conviction.

Wright's sentence is a result of his guilty plea last October to a seven-count complaint charging: one count of conspiracy to commit bank fraud, one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering, two counts of bank fraud, one count of mail fraud, one count of aggravated identity theft, and one count of making a false state-

ment to federally insured financial institution, according to Marsh. In pleading guilty, Wright admitted to conspiring with other individuals to commit bank fraud and money laundering, according to Marsh. As a part of that scheme, Wright solicited individuals to act as "straw" buyers to purchase

unimproved lots located in Walton County, using loans from Countrywide, so Wright could build homes on the lots, according to the U.S. Attorney. While soliciting the straw buyers, Wright promised to make payments on the fraudulent loans and pay the earnest money deposit and closing costs for the straw buyers,

according to Marsh. Wright told the buyers that he would be able to sell the properties for a profit after he built homes on them and that he would then share a portion of the proceeds with the straw buyers, according to Marsh. In addition to the conspiracy Please see FRAUD, page A-5

## Sen. Gaetz speaks on impending session

By Mike Griffith  
Beacon Correspondent

State Sen. Don Gaetz addressed an enthusiastic audience Monday as the Niceville-Valparaiso Tea Party and the Okaloosa County Republican Executive Committee hosted him as guest speaker at a joint meeting of the two organizations at Niceville City Hall. As he began his address, Gaetz, a Niceville Republican, joked that despite his current position as President of the Florida Senate, in recent years he has become best known as "the father of Matt Gaetz," his son and a member of the Florida House of Representatives. The District 1 senator spoke about his son in glowing terms, endorsing the Fort Walton Beach Republican in his reelection bid

to the Florida House in 2014, and his planned run for a seat in the Florida Senate in 2016. The senator praised Matt for his work on the House Criminal Justice Committee, where Matt has worked to streamline the appeals process for death row inmates, creating what the senator called "an express line for them to meet justice." He also praised Matt for his efforts to enact 50-year minimum sentences for serial sexual predators. "We are the only father and son team in the Florida Legislature in state history," said the senator, adding that he and Matt are mindful that, "If we're not careful, we'll be the last." Although Rep. Matt Gaetz, who attended Monday's meeting, stated that he intends to seek

Please see GAETZ, page A-3



Sen. Don Gaetz, center, spoke to a joint meeting Monday in Niceville of the Niceville Valparaiso Tea Party and the Okaloosa County Republican Executive Committee.

Beacon photo by Mike Griffith

# Services held for Walter F. Spence, civic leader

Funeral services were held Tuesday for Walter Francis Spence, of Niceville, longtime businessman and civic leader,

who died Jan. 16.

Following services at First United Methodist Church, Niceville, burial was at Sunset

Cemetery, Valparaiso.

Spence was born in 1926 at the original Bolton Village on Rocky Bayou. He graduated

from Niceville High School in 1944, where he was center on the school's first football team. He then served in the Navy during and after the end of WW II as medical officer on a merchant marine ship. Upon discharge, he studied pre-engineering, mathematics, physics and chemistry at Tulane, and took advanced courses in probability theory, sampling and statistics at the University of Florida. He went on to study infrared radiation physics, and its applications, at MIT.

In 1950 he was employed as a civilian engineer by the Air Force at Eglin Air Force Base. He quickly rose to head both the Physical Science Division and Target Development Branch of Eglin's Armament Center. He received numerous commendations from the commanding gen-



Beacon photo

Walter F. Spence acknowledges applause during a dedication ceremony Jan. 4 of the Mid-Bay Bridge Connector, an 11-mile highway built by the Mid-Bay Bridge Authority, of which he was a founder in 1986. Spence, of Niceville, died Jan. 16.

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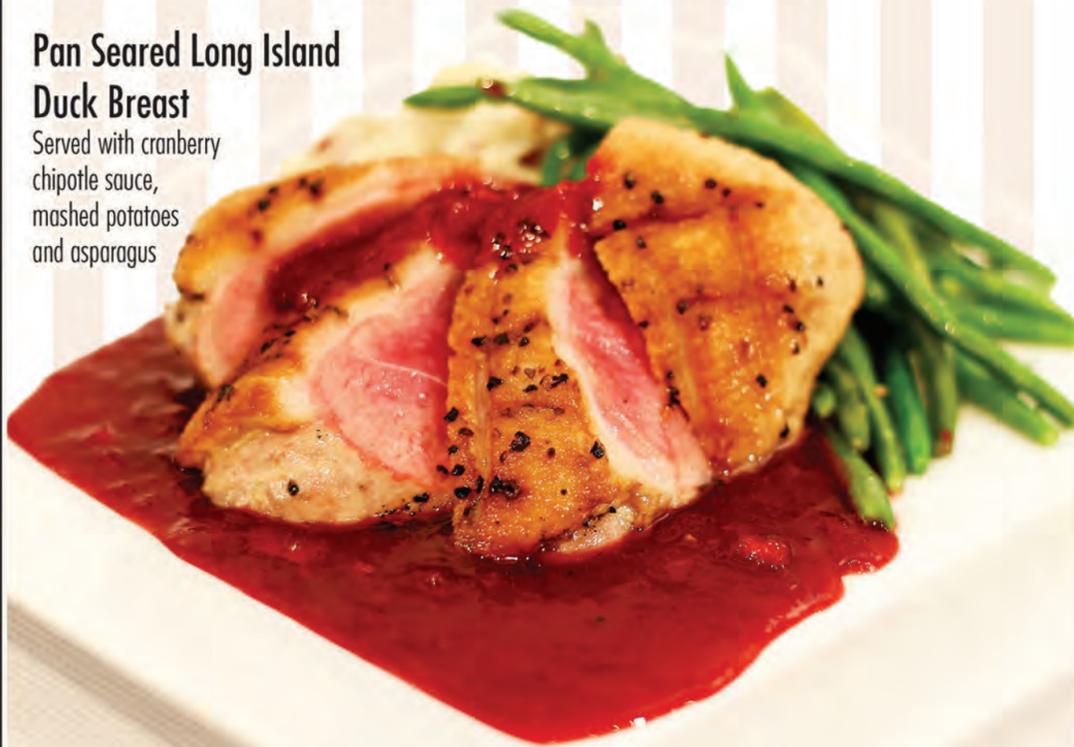
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eral for services performed outside normal duties, such as organizing an annual fish camp seafood cookout for the Air Force Technical Advisory Group, and performing a study on the effects of DDT on local fish populations.

In 1963, Spence left Eglin to join a large defense contractor, Hayes International Corp., in Birmingham, Ala. In a few years he advanced to become corporate director of plans and assistant to the executive vice president. While at Hayes, he chaired both the Air Targets & also the Chemical and Biological Weapons Sections of the American Ordnance Association.

Spence returned to the local area in 1973 to found Spence Brothers Properties Inc., a family-owned commercial real estate holding company, of which he was president until he died. Under his leadership nearly 250,000 square feet of retail and office space, including Bayou Plaza, Niceville, was developed, with most still owned by the extended family.

He also helped operate Spence Bros. Fish Co. and Spence Bros. Ice Co. during the 1970's and 80's, and owned a trucking company, Southern

Express. He continued to work in defense contracting as a consultant; first for Sperry, and more recently for Honeywell, until 2012. Honeywell recognized his service with a special Leadership Award for "mentorship and vision resulting in over \$1 billion in USAF business."

He also dove into community service. Spence served as president of the Niceville-Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce in 1975 and 1976. He hatched the idea for the Boggy Bayou Mullet Festival, and was central to its organization and success through the decades to follow. He facilitated the relationship between the 33rd Fighter Wing and the Mullet Festival, resulting in substantial fund raising results for the Nomad Association. In 1977, he sponsored more Vietnamese refugees (about 75 families) than any other person on the Emerald Coast, placing most in jobs in the seafood industry.

Spence also devoted considerable attention to economic development, transportation, and environmental issues in Northwest Florida. He served as chairman of Okaloosa County's Overall Economic Development

Please see SPENCE, page A-6



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**OK**

From page A-1

connecting the Publix shopping center with the Walmart and Oak Creek (Kmart) shopping centers, to allow traffic to move between the shopping areas without having to use busy John Sims Parkway. Price said that the service road will include a pedestrian and bicycle path.

Separately, Price said that land is being cleared by Ruckel Properties for a 24-lot subdivision between the Heritage Gardens Cemetery and Rocky Bayou Christian School, on North Partin Drive.

In other business, the council approved the second of three readings of an ordinance to rezone a property at 717 Bayshore Drive from R-2, one or multiple family, to R-3, multiple family, for the purpose of establishing a professional office. The new zoning, if given final approval at the February council meeting, will allow the property owner to open a dentist office on the second floor of the structure.

The council also approved a resolution establishing a new voting membership reapportionment plan for the Okaloosa-Walton Transportation Planning Organization (TPO). The apportionment plan, which had also been approved by the Valparaiso City Commission during its meeting the previous evening, calls for the TPO voting membership to be:

- Four members of the Okaloosa County Commission.
- Three members of the Walton County Commission.
- Three members of the



Beacon photo by Angela Yuriko Smith

**The Niceville Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce was among nine organizations sharing \$15,500 in financial aid from the city of Niceville.**

Crestview City Council.

—Two members of the Fort Walton Beach City Council.

—One member of the Niceville City Council.

—Two members of the Destin City Council.

—One member of the DeFuniak Springs City Council.

—One member of the Valparaiso City Commission.

—One member of the Freeport City Council.

—One member of the Mary Esther City Council.

According to Valparaiso City Commissioner Joe Morgan, who represents Valparaiso on the TPO and discussed the apportionment changes with his fellow city commissioners Jan. 13, the new apportionment changes Okaloosa County's voting representation on the TPO from five to four, changes Fort Walton Beach's representation from three to two,

changes Crestview's representation from two to three, and changes Freeport's representation from zero to one. Morgan said the changes are due to changes in population and economic growth. The cities of Niceville and Valparaiso retain their current one member each.

Morgan said the plan is subject to approval by the TPO itself and Florida's governor.

The TPO does planning for road building and other transportation projects in Okaloosa and Walton counties, in cooperation with other regional, state, and federal entities such as the West Florida Regional Planning Council and the Florida Department of Transportation.

Also during the meeting, Niceville Library Director Sheila Bishop said that the Friends of the Library organization is taking over some training activities for library staff that had previously been cut

from the city budget. She also said the Friends of the Library plans a community fish fry in the Niceville Community Center on Feb. 20.

Bishop also said that the city's fireworks committee is expanding its membership from 13 to 15 members, in order to keep up with the work required to do planning and fundraising for the annual joint Niceville-Valparaiso fireworks show over Boggy Bayou each Independence Day.

Corbin reported to the council that he has directed Niceville Police Chief Dave Popwell to do a traffic study to determine the effect the recently-opened Mid-Bay Bridge Connector road is having on traffic along John Sims Parkway. The new highway is expected to reduce traffic congestion along John Sims, and the study is expected to quantify the actual effect.

**GAETZ**

From page A-1

reelection to the Florida House in 2014 and follow up with a run for the Florida Senate in 2016, his father, 66, said that when his own term in the Senate is up, he plans to assume what he called "the highest position in American government—private citizen." He also said that he has advocated a Florida Senate resolution urging Congress to adopt term limits for its own members.

Sen. Gaetz urged his listeners to pay close attention to what happens in this year's session of the Florida Legislature, whose two-month regular annual session will begin March 4, and to not be shy about letting their representatives know what they think about issues facing the state. Gaetz is in his second year of a two-year term as Senate President, one of the two or three most powerful political positions in the state.

"Tallahassee can be like a sealed environment," he said, "and it is easy for legislators to confuse their own voices with the voice of God." The cure for this, he said, is for constituents to communicate with their senators and representatives to let them know what the folks back home really want them to do.

A key issue in this year's legislative session, said the senator, will be an attempt to roll back vehicle registration fees that were raised in 2009 in an attempt to raise extra revenue for state government in the midst of a national recession. As the state's economy has improved since then, said Gaetz, now is the time to roll the vehicle registration fees back to their previous level.

Sen. Gaetz also said that he plans to help defend Second Amendment gun ownership and "stand your ground" rights during this year's session. He said that there are those who will try to exploit "a very, very unfortunate act in Sanford," as an excuse to curtail the self-defense rights of Florida citizens. The senator said that he had gone to Sanford during the 2013 murder trial of George Zimmerman, and met with "people whose lives had been ripped apart" by the shooting death of Trayvon Martin, who died in a confrontation with Zimmerman.

G a e t z said he had also met with the judge and prosecutor in the case and verified that neither the defense nor the prosecution had raised Florida's "stand your ground" law as an issue in Zimmerman's trial, which ended in his acquittal.

Another key issue facing the state, said the senator, is "whether we make Florida a place people want to come to, or a place people want to flee from."

He said that currently, people and businesses are coming to Florida because they view it as a favorable place to live, find a job, or start a business. He contrasted that with the situation in some other states, such as New York and Illinois, where state governments continue to raise taxes and enact more and more regulations, which have the effect of driving people and businesses out of their states. He said that New York recently

enacted a \$141 billion "bare bones" budget, while Florida, which faces most of the same issues as New York, and whose population recently surpassed New York's, gets along well with a budget half that size.

Gates said that as New York loses population and Florida gains population, this has also resulted in New York losing two seats in the U.S. House of Representatives, while Florida has gained two.

In Illinois, said the senator, state government has raised business taxes 60 percent, with the result that Republican Gov. "Rick Scott is on the phone daily with Illinois business leaders, telling them about the warm weather and friendlier business climate in Florida," where many Illinois businesses are now choosing to relocate.

Another issue facing the state, said Sen. Gaetz, is litigation reform. He praised his son, Matt, for sponsoring a bill to reduce the amount of frivolous lawsuits in Florida. He also criticized former Republican Gov. Charlie Crist, who he said is Scott's likely Democratic opponent in this year's gubernatorial election, as "a man whose moral compass consists of a wet finger in the wind."

"If Crist wins the election," said Gaetz, "he will owe his election to the Florida plaintiffs' bar," and other special interest lobbyists. He said that if Crist again becomes governor, Florida could revert to losing rather than gaining population, as it did the last time Crist was governor.

During a question-and-answer session following his initial address, Sen. Gaetz was asked about Rep. Matt Gaetz's efforts to

legalize the medical use of CBD, a non-intoxicating chemical found in a certain special breed of marijuana plant. Matt Gaetz answered that question, saying that he emphatically does not favor the sort of broad "medical marijuana" legalization that took place in California, where it is now easy to buy marijuana for recreational drug use, using "medical" reasons as an excuse.

What he actually favors, said Rep. Gaetz, is legalization of a specific type of marijuana plant, which is specially bred to minimize the amount of THC, the chemical that causes intoxication, to a level well below that needed for anyone smoking the drug to get "high." He said a common nickname for the type of plant he favors, is "hippies' disappointment," but that this type of plant maximizes its content of another chemical that is very effective in treating very severe cases of epilepsy, especially in young children.

Rep. Gaetz said that children in Florida are dying every day from intractable epilepsy, but that this non-intoxicating component of the special breed of marijuana has been shown in many cases to make the difference between a child in a "catatonic" state, and a child who can ride a bicycle, go to school, and live a fairly normal life.

Sen. Don Gaetz said that he is less certain than Matt about whether the new type of marijuana plant will be effective in treating epilepsy, but added that "if we do nothing, another bill sponsored by John Morgan and Charlie Crist will probably pass, and that one is the kind of legalization that really will lead to intoxicating marijuana being sold in strip malls."



Rep. Matt Gaetz

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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

On Jan. 8, Niceville police arrested Jennifer Ann Tomlinson, 30, a self-employed home cleaner, 32 Santa Rosa St., Santa Rosa Beach, on one count each of possession of a controlled substance without a prescription and possession of drug paraphernalia.

An officer responded to a call of a female wearing pink and black on the Meigs Bridge, which carries State Road 20 over Rocky Bayou. The caller said the woman crawled over the edge of the bridge and may have jumped.

Upon arrival, the officer observed a female walking west on the bridge. The officer made contact with her to conduct a

welfare check, and identified her as Jennifer Tomlinson. During the conversation, Tomlinson consented to a search of her purse, which yielded two hypodermic needles in a small bag along with a contact lens holder. A small amount of methamphetamine was located inside the contact lens holder. Tomlinson said the substance was methamphetamine, and it field tested positive for the presence of the drug.

On Jan. 8, Niceville police arrested Ronald Jerome Ragin, 35, of 304 Reeves St., #B4A, Niceville, for obstruction by a disguised person. Officers responded to a call that a man on

a bicycle in the Walmart parking lot was riding between vehicles and attempting to gain entry to them.

Officers stopped Ragin at the nearby HelenBack parking lot, and attempted to identify him. With no photographic identification, he identified himself as "Jerome Ronald Penington," and gave the officers a false Social Security number, date of birth, and state of residence. Police stated that he was given three occasions to provide his true identity and failed to comply until he was placed under arrest.

On Jan. 8, Valparaiso police arrested Clifford David Dreading, 35, of 191 Highland St., Valparaiso, for knowingly driving with a suspended license. According to the police report, an officer saw Dreading run a stop sign at the intersection of Okaloosa Avenue and John Sims Parkway. The officer conducted a traffic stop, at which time Dreading stated, "I am driving to Santa Rosa to get my driver's license reinstated." When the officer asked Dreading if his license was suspended, Dreading responded that he knew it was suspended. He was placed under arrest, and also cited for failure to stop at the stop sign.

On Jan. 9, Niceville police arrested Steven Ray Boulden, 36, an electrician, 614 Ivy Ave., Niceville, for possession of marijuana, less than 20 grams.

On Jan. 11, Valparaiso police arrested Angelina Hicks Cumins, 48, of 28972 Post Dr., Florala, Ala., on one count of being a fugitive from justice. She was located in Valparaiso and arrested on a warrant from the Covington County Sheriff's Office in Andalusia, Ala., for a sex offender registration violation (failure to verify offender residence).

On Jan. 16, investigators with the Walton County Sheriff's Office Vice/Narcotics Unit raided two neighboring residences in DeFuniak Springs, 46 and 108 Jim Cotton Drive, after deputies determined that several people at both residences were involved in the use, distribution, and manufacture of methamphetamine.

Ten people were arrested, including Theresa Lynn Williams, 53, a painter, 304 Reeves St., Lot F3, Niceville, who was charged with possession of marijuana less than 20 grams and possession of drug paraphernalia (rolling papers).

Seven of those arrested were from DeFuniak Springs, one

from Ponce de Leon, and one from Oakwood Hills.

## Bear jumps fence

On Jan. 13, Niceville police responded to a report that someone had heard a noise and seen a figure jumping a fence, which had been broken, at an address on Niceville Avenue near Nathey Street. According to a police report, officers determined that, "It was the bear that patrols that area." An officer saw the bear in a nearby area about one block from the house, and the complainant had heard it rummaging through her trash can.

## Other

On Jan. 4, an Okaloosa County deputy sheriff responded to an address on Lancaster Drive for a report of a vehicle burglary that had already occurred.

On Jan. 10, an Okaloosa County deputy responded to a theft that had occurred between Jan. 4 and Jan. 7 at an address on Muirfield Way in Niceville.

On Jan. 6, Niceville police responded to a report that a trailer had been taken from someone's front yard at an address on 23rd St.

On Jan. 6, Niceville police responded to an address on Rue de Palms Drive, where a complainant said that his 2008 Yamaha Grizzly four wheeler had been stolen from his driveway during the previous night. He said the four wheeler had three flat tires and was not operational.

On Jan. 6, Niceville police received a report of an alleged simple battery. According to the police report, two juveniles were walking down 37th Street when they were approached by four other boys walking from the Forest Lake Baptist Church parking lot. One of the group of four allegedly challenged one of the first two boys to a fight, resulting in some punches and kicks being thrown. No arrests were made, although the mother of the alleged victim, while not pressing charges, asked to obtain the names of the alleged assailants in order to get an injunction for protection against them.

On Jan. 8 a Niceville officer responded to an address on Limestone Creek Cove in reference to a report of burglary and theft. The homeowner stated

# Fire Department Reports

## Niceville

The Niceville Fire Department responded to the following calls from Jan. 13, 2014 through Jan.16, 2014.

0 Structure Fire	11	Emergency Medical Calls
0 Vehicle Fire	2	Vehicle Crash
0 Other Fire	0	Vehicle Crash with Extrication
1 Illegal Burn	6	Other Emergency Calls
0 False Alarms	0	Hazardous Conditions



STREET	SITUATION	DATE	TIME
3rd Street	Medical	1/13/14	07:41
Nutmeg Ave.	Medical	1/13/14	08:52
Tala Way	Medical	1/13/14	11:36
Kildare Cir.	Medical	1/13/14	11:45
Willow Ln.	Cancelled	1/13/14	20:22
N. Partin Dr.	Medical	1/13/14	21:23
22nd Street	Medical	1/13/14	23:42
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Vehicle vs Pedestrian	1/14/14	09:30
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Medical	1/14/14	11:02
Hickory Ave.	Illegal burning	1/14/14	14:27
N. Partin Dr.	Medical	1/15/14	00:03
Linden Ave.	Cancelled	1/15/14	01:04
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Vehicle crash	1/15/14	14:42
2nd Street	Cancelled	1/16/14	00:53
N. Palm Blvd.	Cancelled	1/16/14	03:16
Valparaiso Blvd	Medical	1/16/14	06:09
17th Street	Medical	1/16/14	10:30
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Cancelled & cancelled	1/16/14	13:04
E. John Sims Pkwy.	Cancelled	1/16/14	14:36
17th Street	Medical	1/16/14	20:07

Weekly Safety Tip: Frozen water pipes? Never try to thaw them with a blow torch or other open flame. The pipe could conduct the heat and ignite the wall structure inside the wall space. Use hot water or a laboratory tested device such as a hand held dryer for thawing.

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## North Bay

The North Bay Fire Department responded to the following calls from Jan.13, 2014 through January 16, 2014.



Street	Situation	Date	Time
Capri Cove	Medical	1/13/14	03:48
E. Hwy. 20	Vehicle accident	1/13/14	12:42
E. Hwy. 20	Medical	1/13/14	14:51
Chadwick Ln.	Excessive heat	1/13/14	20:18
Northridge Rd.	Medical	1/14/14	00:09
Hwy. 293/Hwy.20	No incident found	1/14/14	07:08
Hwy. 20 E.	Medical	1/14/14	16:37
Yacht Club Dr.	Medical	1/14/14	19:00
Parkwood Ln.	Medical	1/14/14	21:34
Pine St.	Medical	1/15/14	00:38
Hwy. 20/White Point	Vehicle accident	1/15/14	13:05
Hampton Ct.	Dispatched & cancelled	1/15/14	18:38
Hickory St.	Police matter	1/16/14	02:53
N. White Point Rd.	Medical	1/16/14	08:48
N. White Point Rd.	Medical	1/16/14	16:22

Visit northbayfd.org for more information.

that during the previous night the house he was building was broken into. He walked the officer through the house, and pointed out where copper pipes had been stolen along with some tools. The homeowner estimated that over \$5,000 worth of copper was taken from the home. The most identifiable thing taken was a copper coil that had 90 feet of copper tubing and weighed approximately 250 pounds. An alarm on the property also appeared to have been pulled out.

On Jan. 12, Valparaiso police responded to an address on Jasmine Avenue in reference to a reported theft that had already occurred. When police arrived, the complainant said that an acquaintance had removed an ultraviolet light from the complainant's garage on Jan. 7 with the understanding that he would

return that afternoon and pay \$220 for the light. The complainant said the acquaintance had yet to return with the money or answer any of the complainant's text messages or phone calls.

On Jan. 13, Niceville police responded to a report that someone had broken the front windshield of a car parked in Oak Creek Plaza.

On Jan. 13, Niceville police responded to a report that a mailbox had been destroyed twice within the past week at an address on Hickory Avenue.

On January 14 Niceville police responded to a business on John Sims Parkway where a complainant said he had received a fake \$10 bill at the store.

# CONNECTOR

From page A-1

Jan. 6, the first day on which tolls were charged, 3,291 vehicles used the \$140 million route. Since then, he said, an average of 3,947 vehicles a day have been using the connector road, about one-quarter of the average crossing the bridge itself. Most of the connector motorists, he said, were apparently heading to or from the bridge, although some may be using the new 55 m.p.h. highway as a shortcut around Niceville as they drive between such places as Crestview and Freeport.

By contrast to the traffic count on the connector, an average of 16,420 vehicles a day crossed the toll bridge itself in December.

Vest said he will provide the MBBA board with regular revenue reports from the new toll road, and said that most of the current traffic appears to be commuters going to and from work, and using Sunpass transponders, which provide a discount on tolls, although higher-paying tourist traffic is expected to increase during spring break and the upcoming summer tourist season.

Two-axle tolls for the connector, which are assessed automatically by cameras and SunPass receivers between the Forest Road and Range Road exits, are \$1 for SunPass and \$1.50 for others.

Vest also told board members that although the Air Force does not allow any advertising signs to be posted along the connector road, some generic signs are



The 11-mile Mid-Bay Bridge Connector (in white) runs north and east of Niceville, connecting the bridge with Highway 85 North.

being installed near exits to the route, indicating the presence of fuel, food, and lodging near those exits. The generic signs, he said, are blue, with white symbols of a fuel pump, a knife and fork, and a bed, indicating the presence of such accommodations. For most of its length the road runs through the Eglin reservation.

In other business during the meeting Jan. 16, members of the MBBA governing board heard a "clean" audit report on the authority's annual financial statements.

Bruce Nunnally, of the Carr, Riggs & Ingram accounting firm, told board members that his firm's audit produced an "unmodified" or "clean" opinion for the fiscal year ended Sept. 30, what he called "the same good report you always have been looking for."

According to the audit, the bridge authority had toll revenue of \$15.9 million last year, up slightly from \$15.8 million the previous year. After expenses,

net operating income was \$12.1 million, down from \$12.8 million.

After non-operating income and expenses (chiefly interest paid on bond issues), the authority posted a "change in net position" (an increase in net assets) of \$4.3 million, versus \$6 million the previous year.

The MBBA also heard from Jon Vannoy, of HDR Engineering, the contractor managing the design and construction of the Mid-Bay Bridge Connector. Vannoy talked about the status of environmental restoration projects and local road improvements being made by the MBBA as part of an agreement with the Air Force, allowing the MBBA to construct the connector route across Air Force controlled land. One such project, said Vannoy, includes culvert reconstruction over a creek under Rocky Bayou Drive, between Edgewater Drive and Huntington Circle, where utility relocation has recently been underway.



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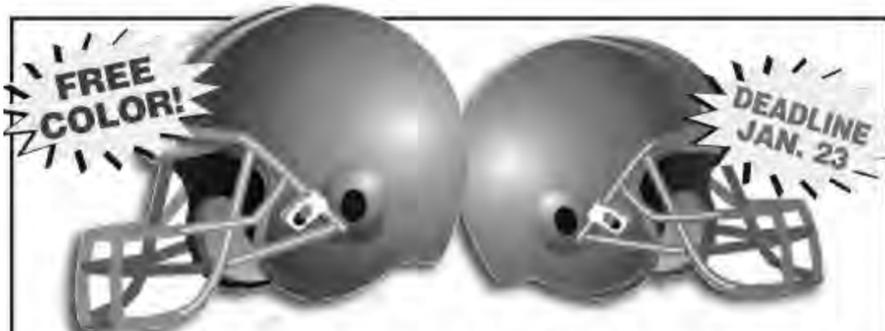
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THE INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER —by Mike Griffith

What do you think about the U.S. Postal Service decision to raise the price of a stamp three cents, to 49 cents?

Location: US Post Office in Niceville



"I guess they wouldn't raise it if they didn't need the money. Compared to other countries, the price is reasonable."

Bill Neel, 65, Fort Walton Beach, retired



"It won't stop me from mailing my bill payments, rather than running all over town to pay them in person."

Kay Graham, 71, Crestview, retired



"Any business must sometimes raise prices to cover expenses."

Fred Vogler, 82, Niceville, retired Air Force pilot



"They could raise it to a dollar, and it would still be one of the best values on the market."

George DeVito, 61, St. Augustine, sales



"Instead of raising the fee, I'd rather go back to General Delivery, where you could pick up your mail at the post office."

Rick Scott, 35, Niceville, self-employed



"If it helps them make a profit or cut costs, it's a good idea, but if not, leave mail delivery to private industry."

Lyden Simmons, 18, East Niceville, Niceville High School student

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

FRAUD

From page A-1

charges, Wright pled guilty to defrauding Regions Bank, Beach Community Bank, and GulfSouth Private Bank, according to the U.S. Attorney. Three of the counts concerned Wright causing another individual to sign his ex-wife's name on legal documents without his ex-wife's knowledge or permission, Marsh stated. The legal documents included mortgage loan documents, promissory notes, and tax returns, according to Marsh.

The case was investigated by IRS-CI, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation-Office of Inspector General, U.S. Treasury, Office of the Special Inspector General for the Troubled Asset Relief Program, and the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office as part of the Northwest Florida Financial Crimes Task Force.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Tiffany H. Eggers.

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**SPENCE**

From page A-2

Plan (OEDP) group. In 1984, he was appointed by Gov. Bob Graham to the Regional 380 Committee, the group that formulated the basis for every comprehensive plan now in place with local governments in Okaloosa and Walton counties.

He was the driving force behind the establishment of the Mid-Bay Bridge Authority, and

served two terms as its treasurer. He served on the boards of the Northwest Florida Water Management District and the Northwest Florida Regional Planning Council.

In 1989 Gov. Bob Martinez appointed Spence to the Governor's Commission of the Future of Florida's Environment. He helped craft the initiative creating the Florida Forever Program which has preserved many thousands

of acres of environmentally important Florida habitat.

Spence continued to be active in the local area until his passing, serving the Air Force Armament Museum Foundation as its vice president for development. He was working on promoting and strengthening the foundation's Engineers for America program in partnership with the Okaloosa County School District.

He was a member of the Okaloosa-Walton Metropolitan Planning Organization and of Okaloosa County's Defense Support Initiative group. He was a member of the Emerald Coast and the Niceville-Valparaiso chamber's Military Affairs committees.

He was an active Honorary Commander for the 33rd Wing, and was a member of the Air Force Association and the National Defense Industry

Association. In 2005 Eglin's Armament Center bestowed the James E. Plew Outstanding Community Ambassador Award on him for many decades of service to the base.

Spence was preceded in death by his wife, Ann Ventress Spence, by his parents, Walter S. Spence and Edith Elizabeth Reynolds, and by his brother, Gerald S. (Buddy) Spence. He is survived by two sons, Walter F. Spence III, and wife,

Maxine; Jerry M. Spence and wife, Karen; by his honorary son Nghiep Tran; and by grandchildren Victoria Rayborn, Charles Spence, Loren Boyer and Richard Allison.

He is further survived by his sister-in-law, Harriet Blilie and nephews, Charles, Jim, and Jon Blilie of Minneapolis, and by many cousins, including Jean Richey, Ferrol Spence, Carole Apfel, Freida Spence, Jerry Reynolds, and Rebecca Caske.



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*Advertising Feature*

For all your floral needs, visit Flowers from the Heart, where "We turn flowers into works of art," says Janie Castillo FSMD, owner of a floral studio with a name that reflects her passion for flowers and floral design. Janie's love of flowers began at age eighteen when she worked part-time in a family owned business while attending college in Alabama.

In 2000, Janie and her family moved to Eglin AFB where she worked at the Flower Shop there. Later she decided to work beside the area's most unique designer, Michael Redman, at the time, owner of Florals by Michael where Janie worked for six years. In 2007 Michael stepped down as owner and Janie took over the business and Flowers from the Heart was born. Together with more than 30 years experience, Michael and Janie make a perfect designing duo and continue working side by side. Janie was accredited Florida State Master Designer in 2004.

As you walk into Flowers from the Heart you will come to an open work area where you can watch the designers create your floral design. The studio includes a large cooler full of fresh cut flower arrangements ready for pick up, a wedding



With more than 30 years experience, owner, Janie Castillo and Michael Redman, make a perfect designing duo.

section, including tuxedo rental, with a sitting area to comfortably plan your special day, a large lush green plant selection room with the sound of a water fall and, the most

recent addition, a sympathy section.

Despite today's challenging economy and online competition, customers love their creativity and overall service. Flowers from the Heart is a growing company, expanding and incorporating additional services to become the most renowned flower shop on the

Emerald Coast.

What's new at Flowers from the Heart?

"Tributes," the newest addition, is a showroom with a large selection of affordable pre-made cemetery arrangements, stands and baskets, ready for pick up at anytime.

"Floral Design Classes." Every Tuesday a class for adults will be offered from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. starting March 18. And, this summer, a class for the younger ones, "Fun Floral Designs for Children" is planned. Call the studio for details.

Prom is coming up, make this the most memorable school event with a beautifully custom designed corsage and boutonniere. You can also rent a tuxedo for this very special occasion.

Call in an order or just stop by the studio and choose from the variety of fresh cut flowers ready for you to take home. Serving the areas of Niceville, Valparaiso, Shalimar, Fort Walton Beach, Crestview, Destin and Sandestin, worldwide delivery through wire service is also available.

As Janie says, "God made flowers beautiful, and blessed us with the talent of using his works of art to create our own works of art, just for you!" So if you care to send the best, call Flowers from the Heart, (850) 729-0004 located at 1603 John Sims Parkway, Niceville. Genesis 22:14

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## Niceville-Valp. Relay gets ready

The Niceville-Valparaiso Relay For Life will hold a planning meeting Monday, Jan. 27, at 6 p.m. at the Community Center in Niceville next to the library. Last year 46 teams raised \$82,577 to help fight cancer.

Team captains, potential teams, cancer survivors and any volunteers interested in being involved in the May 9 American Cancer Society event are invited to attend. The relay will take place at Niceville High School's Eagle Stadium.

Relay For Life is a volunteer-driven team event to help raise money for fighting cancer. It's an overnight activity made up of businesses, families, clubs,

schools, churches, and health care professionals coming together.

A person who decides to be a team captain recruits 10-15 friends, family members, or co-workers to form a team.

Following the first "victory" lap led by the cancer survivors, at least one member of the team must be walking the track during the 12 hours of track time.

Team members decorate their campsites and spend the night out on the Niceville High School stadium grounds.

After dark, a very special luminaries ceremony takes place where candles are lit in memory of those who have lost the battle

with cancer, and in honor of those who continue the fight.

Throughout the event there is free entertainment, children's activities area, food, special events and good-natured competition between the teams.

Teams contribute a \$10 registration fee to register and each team member additionally agrees to raise a minimum of \$100 to earn a 2014 Relay For Life event T-shirt.

Teams need spirit, good walking shoes, and the desire to stomp out cancer. For more information please call 244-3813 or go to relayforlife.org and find more Niceville-Valparaiso event details.



Walkers from the 2013 Relay for Life event cheer for the cause as they prepare for a long night on their feet. Last year, 46 teams raised \$82,577 to go towards fighting cancer. The event is held at Niceville High School's stadium May 9 this year.

## Eagles dominate Tate 53-12

The Niceville High School varsity basketball team won Friday's non-conference game against Escambia's Tate High School by a score of 53-12. Pictured, Chance Smith powers forward with the ball. The Eagles will play Pensacola Catholic High School Thursday at 7 p.m. in another home game.

Beacon photo by Sarah Clauson



## Ruckel teacher plays piano for All State

Ruckel Middle School Choral Director Michelle Tredway, pictured right, was the piano accompanist for the 2014 Florida Music Educators Association Middle School All State Treble Chorus in Tampa on Saturday, Jan. 11. Tredway's accompaniment was under the direction of Robyn Lana, Cincinnati Children's Choir Director.

## 'Bring It On: The Musical' in Niceville

"Bring It On: The Musical" is coming to Niceville for a high-flying journey through friendship, forgiveness and determination when the national touring production hits the Mainstage of the Mattie Kelly Arts Center on Thursday, Jan. 23 at 7:30 p.m.

The musical features a colorful cast of characters, an exciting fresh sound, explosive dance with aerial stunts and an all new story loosely based on the 2000 film of the same name that focuses on the competitive world of cheerleading.

The musical comedy made its Broadway debut in 2012.

The production earned Tony nominations for Best Musical and Best Choreography.

Tickets to "Bring It On: The Musical" are on sale now from the Mattie Kelly Arts Center's Box Office and a special group discount is available.

Tickets are \$40 each and \$35 for groups of 10 or more tickets purchased together. Call 729-6000 Monday to Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. or purchase tickets online at mattiekellyartscenter.org.

The box office is also open from 6 to 7:30 p.m. the night of the show for at-the-door sales of any remaining seats.

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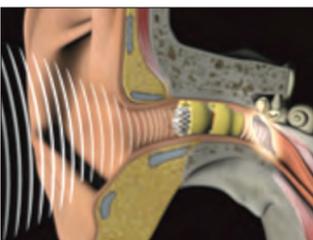
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**Collegiate celebrates Blue Ribbon with pizza party**

Collegiate High School students enjoyed the sweet rewards of their efforts during a special pizza lunch to celebrate the school's 2013 Blue Ribbon School recognition. Students were welcomed by the president of Northwest Florida State College, Dr. Ty Handy, and then treated to pizza and ice cream which was provided by the Blue Bell Ice Cream company. Each student was recognized with a custom made Blue Ribbon School t-shirt. Pictured from left, Paige Cromer, Audrey Berberena, Emily Gennaro, Luis Melecio-Zambrano, Emily Radomski and Naomi Campagne have a senior moment.

**Teacher, staff of the year for STEMM Center**

Michele Allard, left, has been selected as Okaloosa STEMM Center's Teacher of the Year and Belinda Sadler has been selected as STEMM's Educational Support Person of the Year.



**Lewis lauds staff of the year**

Eva Ratley has been selected as Lewis School's Teacher of the Year and Lisa Lee has been selected as Lewis' Educational Support Person of the Year.



**Legionnaires deliver Christmas stockings**

Members of the American Legion Post 221 made spirits bright on Christmas Eve when they delivered stockings full of treats to elderly residents at the Manor, Sterling, Pavilion, Superior and Bee Hive communities, all in Niceville. Pictured from left, Alan Clineman, Glenn Payne, Larry Unser and Ronnie Grover made the deliveries. Extra stockings were delivered to the "Animation in Motion" display in the former Food World building on John Sims Parkway where Santa was to arrive in the evening hours for his visit with the children.



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**Back from Afghanistan, G.I. gives brother surprise visit**

Niceville High School freshman Michael McMahon was surprised on Dec. 19 by his brother, U. S. Army Specialist Jacob Peterson, who recently returned from Afghanistan. Michael was extremely happy when his brother and other family members surprised him at Niceville High School.



**NHS seniors make Merit semifinals**

Nine seniors from Niceville High School were among the approximately 16,000 semifinalists in the 59th annual National Merit Scholarship Program. Pictured 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.

**2014**  
CALENDAR  
E-mail items to info@baybeacon.com

**Art exhibitions**

Mattie Kelly Fine & Performing Arts Center Galleries at Northwest Florida State College in Niceville present two new art exhibitions from now through March 14 for the 22nd Southeast Regional Juried Fine Arts Exhibition and the 2013 ADSO Best-in-Show Winner, Heather A. Mitchell. Both exhibitions are free of charge and open to the public.

For information or directions, contact Gallery Director KC Williams at 729-6044 or visit the art center's website at MattieKellyArtsCenter.org.

**Auxiliary opportunity**

Opportunities exist for men and women with smiling faces to apply for membership in the Twin Cities Hospital Auxiliary. Must be able to pass background check. Leave name, address and phone number at the front desk. Contact 729-9481.

**Laughter and literacy**

The James E. Plew Elementary School, Niceville is hosting Boston's award-winning children's author, Jeff Nathan as he presents "The Silly Laughing Musical Fun Poetry Show," a fun-filled evening family program based on his books of humorous children's poetry on Jan. 23 at 6 p.m., in the Plew cafeteria. There will be a book signing afterwards.

**VA benefits seminar**

A free seminar for seniors on VA benefits will be Thursday, Jan. 23 at 6 p.m. at the Sterling House Bluewater Bay, 1551 Merchants Way, Niceville. Please RSVP to MaryAnn at 729-3323.

**Embroiderers meet**

The Sand Dunes Chapter of Embroiderers' Guild of America will have their evening meeting Thursday, Jan. 23, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. in room 400, First United Methodist Church of Niceville. Visitors are welcome. 496-3466.

**Home ownership seminar**

There will be a free seminar on what it takes to become a home owner Jan. 23 from 6-8 p.m. at the Niceville Community Center. Subjects covered will be credit, obtaining mortgage loans, down payment assistance, home inspections and closing and title transfer.

Complimentary refreshments will be served. For more info, call Jallene Dixon at 664-9580.

**Republicans meet**

The Okaloosa County Republican Club will host a special guest speaker at their monthly meeting on Jan. 23 at American Legion Post 235, 105 S.W. Hollywood Blvd., Fort Walton Beach.

Social hour will begin at 7 p.m. and dinner served at 7 p.m. The Honorable William "Bill" Eddins, State Attorney for Florida's 1st Judicial Circuit will speak and give insight into the judicial process and the priorities of his office.

The public is encouraged to attend. Price of dinner is \$15. For information about the Republican Club or to RSVP call Don Adams at 586-1325.

**Parrot Heads meet**

The Emerald Coast Parrot Head Club will have its "monthly PHlocking" Jan. 24 from 5:30-8:30 p.m. at Sago Sports Bar and Grill, Palms of Destin Resort on Hwy. 98, Destin.

Visit ecparroheads.org for the club event calendar and membership information. For more information, contact John Koser 920-246-5622.

**Charity buffet**

The Holy Name of Jesus Catholic

Church will sponsor a charity buffet dinner at the Life Center Hall on Jan. 25 at 6 p.m. Filipino dishes and desserts will be served. All our welcome, please invite family and friends. Price will be posted at the door and includes entree, dessert and beverage. Proceeds go to the aid of Typhoon Haiyan survivors. For more information please call 678-3000.

**Picture the birds**

Local bird photographer, Walt Spence will lead a tour of the shorelines of the Niceville and Valparaiso area Jan. 25. Expect to see wintering water birds such as mergansers, coots, grebes, cormorants, loons, and ducks.

Bring your camera or scope as this is an opportunity to gain tips from an expert. Meet at the Badcock store in Bayou Plaza, Hwy 20, Niceville, at 7:30 a.m. Call Walt at 582-7064 for more info.

**NHS Dance Clinic**

All girls, ages 5-14, are invited to attend the Spotlight Dance Clinic and Showcase hosted by the Niceville High School Eaglettes Dance Team Saturday, Jan. 25 at Niceville High School.

The clinic will be from 9 am-noon and the Showcase Dance Performance will be at 6 p.m. The \$25 fee includes lunch.

Attendees will learn a dance routine and enjoy lunch with the NHS Eaglettes and then return that evening to perform at the Okaloosa County Dance Showcase.

**Gospel concert**

Libby and Friends Gospel Concert Ministry presents Guy Permod of Tenn., on Jan. 25, at 6 p.m. at the Central Baptist Church, 951 South Ferdon Blvd., Crestview. A suggested \$10 donation is requested at the door and a love offering will be received. All invited. For more information visit libbyandfriendsgospelconcerts.com.

**Free performance**

The Great Night of Methodist Singing, a performance by area choirs from local Methodist churches, will be singing Jan. 26 at 6 p.m. at the Mainstage Theater, Mattie Kelly Arts Center, Niceville. Free of charge, donations accepted.

**Public hearing**

Members of Okaloosa County state legislative delegation will hold a public hearing on Monday, Jan. 27 from 5-6:30 p.m. at Niceville City Hall, 208 N. Partin Drive.

Public comments will be heard on proposals for the 2014 Regular Session of the Florida State Legislature. Any member of the public is welcome to attend and participate.

**Foreign film screening**

The NWFSC Film Club will meet Jan. 27 in J-328, the film classroom in the Mattie Kelly Arts Center on the Niceville Campus, for a screening of the foreign film "Toto the Hero," rated PG-13.

Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for introductions and the selection of the next film. The movie will screen shortly thereafter, with a discussion to follow. Everyone is welcome and admission is free.

**Embroiderers meet**

The Sand Dunes Chapter of Embroiderers' Guild of America will have their day meeting Monday, Jan. 27, from 9:30 a.m.-noon in room 400, First United Methodist Church of Niceville. Visitors are welcome. 496-3466.

**Garden club meets**

Niceville Garden Club presents "Valentine's Floral Design" demonstrated by Mary McCan on Jan. 28 at 6 p.m. in the Niceville Community Center across from the Niceville Library.

All meetings are open to the public. Contact nvgc1@cox.net with questions.

**Crash glass mosaics class**

Thalia Newton shares the exciting medium of crash glass mosaics, which incorporates broken tempered glass with found objects at the Arts and



**Film club to show foreign film**

The NWFSC Film Club will have a free screening of the foreign film "Toto the Hero," rated PG-13, Jan. 27 in J-328, the film classroom in the Mattie Kelly Arts Center on the Niceville Campus. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Public welcome.

Design Society's (ADSO) Art Center Studio, 17 First Street, SE, Fort Walton Beach. The eight-session class dates are Jan. 28 and 30, Feb. 4, 7, 12, 13, 18 and 20 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Cost of the class for members is \$140, non-members \$170, and a supply fee of \$35. To sign up for this workshop visit the ADSO website at artsdesignsociety.org or call 244-1271 Tuesday through Friday, 1-4 p.m.

**Movie event**

The Valparaiso Community Library invites teens to a special showing of "The Lone Ranger," rated PG-13, on Jan. 29 at 3 p.m.

Children under 13 must be accompanied by an adult. For questions, call 729-5406.

**Alzheimer's support group**

A support group for those affected by Alzheimer's will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 29 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.

**All County performance**

The All County Band, musicians from various local High School bands,

perform in an All County Band concert Jan. 31 at 7 p.m. Event is free at the Mainstage Theater, Mattie Kelly Arts Center, Niceville.

**Bird walk**

Master birder, Bruce Purdy, will lead a bird walk to the Okaloosa County Landfill and Ft. Walton spray fields on Feb. 1. This location consistently produces the highest species counts in our area with wintering shorebirds, raptors, ducks, songbirds and more. Wear good shoes, bring water and insect repellent. Meet at Coach and 4 Restaurant at 1313 Lewis Turner Blvd., Fort Walton Beach at 7:30 a.m. Call Bruce at 305-359-5334 for more info.

**Watercolor workshop**

Don Andrews, nationally known watercolor artist, will present a "Beginning Landscape" class at the Arts and Design Society's (ADSO) Art Center Studio, 17 First Street, SE, Fort Walton Beach on Feb. 1 from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. This class is for beginning through advanced watercolor students. Cost is \$120 for ADSO members, \$130 for non-members. Students provide their own materials.

To sign up for this workshop visit the ADSO website at artsdesignsociety.org or call 244-1271 Tuesday through Friday, 1-4 p.m.

**History weekend**

Make history part of your future with "Home School Fridays" and "Hands-On History Saturdays," a monthly program based on the Florida core standards for education for children ages 5-12 at the Heritage

Museum of Northwest Florida, Valparaiso. Each month, from now until June a different program will be presented related to Northwest Florida history for children and families.

February's program will be "Bayou Living" on Feb. 1 and 7 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

\$7 per child or \$5 for museum family members. Special deal for new family members. Groups welcome, space is limited so please pre-register at 678-2615.

**Classical commentary**

The "Better Listening" series combines commentaries on classic music and related CD selections each Tuesday evening from Feb. 4 through March 25 from 7-9 p.m. at the Unitarian Church Fellowship Hall, 1295 Bayshore Drive, Valparaiso. All sessions are free and open to the public. No reservations required.

Feb. 4 will be Dr. David Ott, internationally recognized composer and conductor, will open the Unitarian Church sponsored community classical music study series with his program, "Mostly Mozart." For more info, contact Lou Johnson at musicstudy@uufec.com.

**Read to Baci**

Baci, a Bichon Frise therapy dog, loves a good book. If you are age five or older and would like to read a story to Baci, join him in the Youth Services program room Wednesday, Feb. 5, at 3:30 p.m. This is a first come, first served program. You may bring a book or choose from the library collection.

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33x22 double basin stainless steel kitchen sink with Delta faucet. Asking \$87.00. Call 897-2937 Choctaw Beach.

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*Kiwanis does it all, you do nothing but look proud!*

The modest \$42 a year supports Niceville-Valparaiso Kiwanis Club's numerous children's programs throughout our community.

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Call Bill at 897-4396 or Jim at 897-3068 & order a flag.

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**Niceville/Valparaiso Kiwanis Club**

**SEE NEWS HAPPENING?**

Call the Beacon Newspapers at 678-1080.

### NHS, Bluewater and Destin Middle pick teachers, staff of the year



Michelle Strickland, right, has been selected as Bluewater Elementary's Teacher of the Year and Deanna Regans has been selected as Bluewater's Educational Support Person of the Year.

Amy Meyer has been selected as Niceville High School's Teacher of the Year.



Becky Holland has been selected as Niceville High School's Educational Support Person of the Year.

Jill McNamara has been selected as Destin Middle School's Teacher of the Year.



Karen Ewing has been selected as Destin Middle School's Educational Support Person of the Year.

### Republican Women give to Opus One

Following the performance of Niceville High School's Opus One chorus at the December meeting of Republican Women of Okaloosa Federated, a check for the organization was presented to their director, Michael Dye, by past president Hulda Mahlum.



## Aging Is a Fact of Life, But Having to Look Your Age Isn't.

Join Board-Certified Dermatologist George vonHilsheimer, MD for a free presentation on "New Technologies for Battling the Effects of Aging on Our Skin"



**DATE:** Thursday, February 6th  
**TIME:** 5:00-7:00 pm  
Light food and wine, Presentation, Question & Answer session  
**PLACE:** Bluewater Bay Golf Resort Clubhouse  
2000 Bluewater Bay Boulevard, Niceville

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RSVP to **877-231-3376**, ext 1100 by January 31st to reserve your seat – **space is limited.**

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### Adult volleyball sign ups

Registration is now open for Adult Co-Ed Volleyball League for ages 16 and up.

Register until Feb. 21. All games will be played on Monday evenings at the Community Life Center.

Cost is \$45 per player.

Register and pay in person with cash or check at the Community Life Center or online with credit card at nicevilleumc.org/recreation.

For more information, please contact the Recreation Ministry at 678-4411 ext. 145.

### The Bay Beacon & Beacon Express

1181 E. John Sims Parkway, Niceville, Florida 32578 (850) 678-1080 info@baybeacon.com Fax 1-888-520-9323

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.

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