



Eighth grader wins college scholarship for governor essay

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Girls finish second in Bishop Snyder tournament

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JANUARY 5, 2012 THURSDAY

THE BAKER COUNTY PRESS

82nd Year, Vol. 36 • Winner of 7 state awards for journalism excellence in 2010



PHOTO BY JIM MCGAULEY

The 5000 square foot Woody's opened in 2008.

Vows that evicted Woody's will stay

Despite a recent eviction notice for non-payment of more than \$30,000 in back rent, the owner of Woody's Bar-B-Que in Macclenny says he has no intention of closing the popular eatery on South 6th Street.

Fred K. Rhoden of Ponte Vedra Beach instead insists he and the property owner, General Real Estate Services of Jacksonville, are trying to work out a lease revision that will lower the rent, keep the restaurant open and further negotiations for more favorable terms with the bank holding the mortgage.

When negotiations to lower the rent came to an impasse, Parker Hudson, president of the real estate company, filed in circuit court to evict Woody's, according to a written statement from Mr. Rhoden. A default judgement was signed in circuit court on December 5 after Mr. Rhoden failed to appear at a hearing.

"Macclenny is my home and I have a tremendous amount of family and friends here," said Mr. Rhoden this week in the statement. "I have put a lot of hard work, money and pride into this restaurant, and I will continue to work through these rough times."

He opened the 5000 square foot Woody's in its present location in 2008 after operating five years next door in the Baker Square Shopping Center. Mr. Rhoden also opened The Swamp in the former barbecue restaurant location in mid-2009 but it closed after just over a year. He blames the recession for that and slumping business at Woody's.

"The restaurant business has been hurt worse than most because

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Felon arrested with meth-making items

A convicted felon with a lengthy arrest and conviction record is back in custody following his arrest the evening of December 27 for possession of ingredients used to manufacture methamphetamines.

Michael Anthony (Tony) Gray, 37, was one of three passengers in a vehicle stopped at SR 121 and Woodlawn Rd. about 8:30 after police had been alerted that he purchased the ingredients from an unidentified store in Macclenny.

Deputy Patrick McGauley said Mr. Gray was in the rear passenger seat of a Nissan sedan with a gallon container of camping fuel at his feet. Also confiscated were a box of Sudafed sinus medicine, two batteries, instant cold compresses and a bottle of Drano cleaner.

Possessing the ingredients is

a second-degree felony.

Department of Corrections records indicate Mr. Gray is

currently serving a five-year probation for burglary and grand theft. He has been out of prison since 2006, and his criminal record dates back to the 1990s with convictions for grand theft, burglary, possession of cocaine and forgery in both Baker and Nassau counties.

He was in a vehicle driven by Samatha Hunter, 25, of Macclenny. She was not arrested, nor were other occupants Cassiti Clyburn, 27, of Green Cove Springs and Deanna Hagan, 26, of Jacksonville.

In another drug-related arrest, the same deputy filed a criminal complaint against Brandon Waters, 18, of Jacksonville with possession of a marijuana smoking pipe, a misdemeanor.

He was a passenger in a 1998 Dodge pickup stopped for speeding southbound on CR 125 just north of Glen St. Mary on New Year's Eve about 11 pm. The driver, Larry Brooks, 18, of Macclenny, was arrested for driving on a license with four prior suspensions and going 79 miles per hour in a 60 zone.



Tony Gray

School board OKs 'step raises,' bonuses with union contracts

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Tainted landfill water confined Show samples near closed Steel Bridge dump

JOEL ADDINGTON
NEWS EDITOR
reporter@bakercountypress.com

The latest round of water quality sampling at the closed Steel Bridge landfill showed nearly all of the contaminants found at the site in late 2009 don't appear to be moving away from the tract north of Macclenny off SR 121.

The county spent some \$36,000 at the demand of state regulators to drill and test four additional wells on the western side of the property and outside the landfill boundary to determine whether contaminants, including benzene, arsenic and others, were migrating away from the facility.

The Environmental Protection Agency [EPA] reports that long-term exposure to such contaminants at concentrations above national drinking water standards set by the federal agency has the potential to increase cancer risk.

More than two years ago, after benzene, arsenic, manganese and iron were detected at monitoring wells inside the landfill boundary at concentrations higher than the standards, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection [FDEP] mandated another series of tests in the same area.

Those tests showed acceptable levels of all contaminants except iron, which exceeded secondary drinking water standards. The state then ordered the four new wells to assess any movement of the contaminants de-

tected previously.

While the Baker County Commission initially resisted the additional steps, even adopting a resolution in support of relax-

milligrams per liter limit recommended by the EPA. The remaining contaminants, however, appeared at concentrations below the standards.

"That's not something that's caused by the landfill," the county's solid waste and road department director Robert Fletcher said of the elevated iron levels. "That's just natural."

The county's Gainesville engineer, Frank Darabi of Darabi & Associates, also noted the presence of so much iron in the samples is not uncommon for the site.

"Iron is a very common, naturally occurring constituent of Florida groundwater, particularly within sand and clay surficial aquifer systems," he wrote in a February 24, 2011 letter to state regulators along with a proposed site assessment plan.

Iron is also not considered a risk to public health, even at elevated levels. It can affect the color and taste of drinking water, however.

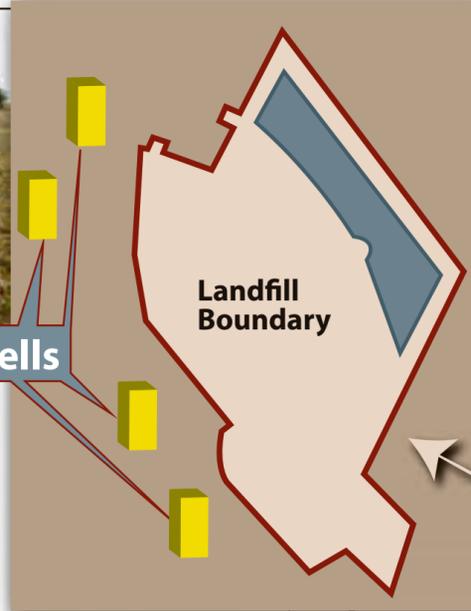
The four new wells tested last August were also needed as part of the landfill's permit renewal. The current permit expires on February 17, 2012.

The unlined Steel Bridge Road landfill was closed in the mid-1980s, but because it lacks a barrier between the waste and groundwater to prevent contamination, the

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Test Wells



ing the applicable water quality standards and limiting testing to inside the landfill boundary, the board eventually relented to avoid thousands of the dollars in regulatory fines.

Water samples taken from the new wells on August 25 and 26 of last year found concentrations of iron well above the federal standard. One well showed iron at more than five times the .3



Rush to shift parties for GOP voting

JOEL ADDINGTON
NEWS EDITOR
reporter@bakercountypress.com

There was a last-minute rush to swap party affiliations at the elections office in Macclenny January 3, the final day to register for the Republican presidential primary election January 31.

Deputy Supervisor of Elections Carol Ruise estimated as many as 75 voters showed up that day to register as a member of the Republican Party.

Florida's closed primary system prohibits Democrats from voting in Republican primaries and vice versa, so only Republicans can cast a ballot in the much-hyped Republican presidential nominee race here.

The winner of the primary will face President Barack Obama in November.

Mr. and Mrs. F.C. Gardener of Macclenny were among those who changed or declared their party affiliation on Tuesday.

Mr. Gardener said his top candidate for the Republican nominee is Newt Gingrich due to the former Speaker of the House's experience in Con-



PHOTO BY JOEL ADDINGTON

Mr. and Mrs. F.C. Gardener of Macclenny change their party affiliation to vote in the Republican presidential primary January 31.

gress, his hostile attitude toward government and his message of change.

"And he's intellectual," added Mrs. Gardener.

Mr. Gardener said he voted for John McCain in 2008 and intends to support the eventual Republican nominee, whom-ever he is, rather than vote for

President Obama.

Ms. Ruise said about 150 voters in all had registered to vote in the primary as of late Tuesday afternoon.

"That's good," she said. "That's a lot."

Early voting for the primary will take place at the elections office, 32 N. 5th St., Suite A, from January 21 to January 28. The office is open 8:30 am to 5 pm and a picture ID with signature is needed to vote early.

All of the county's constitutional officers are up for re-election in 2012, though only school superintendent Sherrie Raulerson had picked up the paperwork needed to qualify as of late Tuesday, Ms. Ruise said.

County commissioners Michael Crews, Gordon Crews and Mark Hartley are also up for re-election. Ms. Ruise said only Michael Crews has picked up the paperwork.

Candidates have until July 26, 2011 to qualify for the 2012 election cycle, either by paying a fee or collecting petition signatures. For more information, please call the elections office at 259-6339 or visit www.bakerelections.com.

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ONLINE POLL RESULTS
Minimum wage is set to rise 36 cents January 1. Should there even be a minimum wage?

58.7% Yes
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2.2% Undecided

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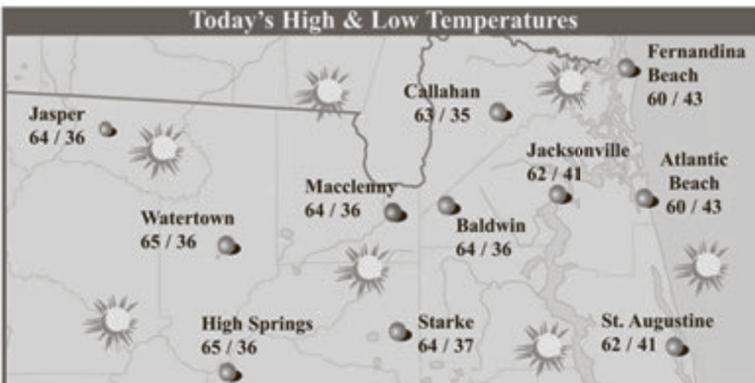


The Baker County Press Weather

Jan. 5, 2012

Seven Day Forecast

	Thursday Sunny High: 64 Low: 36
	Friday Sunny High: 66 Low: 42
	Saturday Mostly Sunny High: 71 Low: 49
	Sunday Partly Cloudy High: 70 Low: 48
	Monday Few Showers High: 67 Low: 49
	Tuesday Partly Cloudy High: 64 Low: 45
	Wednesday Mostly Sunny High: 68 Low: 44



Sun/Moon Chart This Week

Day	Sunrise	Sunset	
Thursday	7:25 a.m.	5:42 p.m.	
Friday	7:26 a.m.	5:43 p.m.	
Saturday	7:26 a.m.	5:44 p.m.	
Sunday	7:26 a.m.	5:45 p.m.	
Monday	7:26 a.m.	5:45 p.m.	
Tuesday	7:26 a.m.	5:46 p.m.	
Wednesday	7:26 a.m.	5:47 p.m.	

Last Week's Local Almanac

Day	High	Low	Normals	Precip
Tue, 12/27	70	48	66/43	0.23"
Wed, 12/28	61	32	66/43	0.00"
Thu, 12/29	64	34	66/43	0.00"
Fri, 12/30	72	32	66/43	0.00"
Sat, 12/31	77	45	66/43	0.00"
Sun, 1/1	72	45	66/43	0.00"
Mon, 1/2	63	41	66/43	0.00"

Data as reported from Cecil Field Airport

St. Mary's River Levels

	Now	Change
Moniac, GA	4.78 ft.	-0.04 ft.
Macclenny	1.72 ft.	-0.02 ft.

Hunting/Fishing Times

Day	Peak Times	
	AM	PM
Thu	8:46-10:46	8:16-10:16
Fri	9:38-11:38	9:08-11:08
Sat	10:30-12:30	10:00-12:00
Sun	11:22-1:22	10:52-12:52
Mon	11:30-1:30	11:00-1:00
Tue	—	11:44-1:44
Wed	12:34-2:34	1:04-3:04

Weather History

Jan. 5, 1982 - A three-day rain-storm in the San Francisco area finally came to an end. Marin County and Cruz County were drenched with up to 25 inches of rain and the Sierra Nevada Range was buried under four to eight feet of snow.

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Minimum wage increase not much, but 'it helps out'

JOEL ADDINGTON
NEWS EDITOR
reporter@bakercountypress.com

Justin Luke of Sanderson got a raise this week along with the estimated 250,000 minimum wage workers in Florida.

As of January 1, the state's hourly minimum wage increased 36 cents to \$7.67 for non-tipped employees and to \$4.65 for those receiving tips like waitresses and pizza delivery drivers.

Mr. Luke, 20, began driving for Dominos Pizza on South 6th Street in Macclenny three weeks ago.

"It's not too bad. It helps out," he said of the raise, which will mean about \$750 more a year.

Mr. Luke said the weekly bump — about \$15 — falls short of the \$20 he needs to gas up for a shift, "but it's another day I can go to work and not have to worry so much about having enough gas to get through the day."

Mr. Luke said most of the time customers tip, but sometimes they don't, and the extra miles



PHOTO BY JOEL ADDINGTON
Justin Luke loads an order into his SUV before departing on a delivery for Dominos Pizza on S. 6th St. January 2.

on his SUV are also a consideration. He's tallied 800 miles since starting the job, his first in pizza delivery.

"If you pay close attention to what your doing and how you spend your money, you can make it work," he said. "But we're really appreciative of [the raise]."

Reactions to the increase from local residents, gleaned from comments on *The Press* Facebook page, were mixed.

Some like Talena Broughman of Sanderson think the raise is too small. "You cannot buy a gal-

lon of milk or loaf of bread or two gallons of gas with that," she commented.

Others thought the minimum wage hike was unfair to higher wage earners or government employees, many of whom have not seen raises in recent years.

Macclenny's Julie Hines is employed at Northeast Florida State Hospital. While she said the minimum wage jump was not large enough, she also noted the last annual salary increase she received was about \$1000 some four years ago.

"And taxes took half of it," said Ms. Hines.

Still others feared that raising the cost of labor would lead to higher prices for goods and services produced by minimum wage workers.

"Is everyone going to get a raise? No. So why should the government dictate what companies are required to pay employees? They shouldn't," said Michael Wilcox, also of Sanderson. "Raising the minimum wage will only cause inflation."

For at least one restaurant owner, however, the higher minimum wage will not mean a pricing adjustment.

"Our menus have already been set so that won't affect us at all," said George Elias of Sixth Street Steakhouse, which employs about 10 waitresses earning minimum wage.

"In our case, we'll just have to fight a little harder with our suppliers. We try to control costs that way," he said.

Mr. Elias expects to see some increase in his vendors' prices, but nothing drastic.

"If you keep them in check like I do — I have three suppliers and play them off each other — they can't take advantage of you," he said.

Mr. Elias kept his menu prices steady last summer too, when the minimum wage rose 6 cents an hour.

Florida law requires the state's Department of Economic Opportunity to calculate a new minimum wage each year on September 30, based on the percentage change in the Consumer Price Index during the previous year.

The CPI increased 4.9 percent between August 2010 and August 2011.

Florida voters passed a constitutional amendment in 2004 to establish the state's minimum wage, something Macclenny resident Anna Bell believes is a necessity.

"If the free market were left to decide wages, people would starve," she commented on *The Press* Facebook page. "The people out there that work for minimum wage are taken for granted too often. My first job paid minimum wage: \$4.20 an hour. So it's only gone up \$3.50 in 20 years! Wow."

Vows that Woody's will stay...

From page 1
people are not able to eat out nearly as much as they were able to do in the past," said Mr. Rhoden.

The current lease is for five years, according to court records, with an option for two extensions of likened time periods.

Mr. Rhoden is listed as guarantor for the corporate owner Macclenny Bar-B-Q. According to the Florida Department of Revenue, he is also in default dating back to 1999 for \$7626 in unpaid sales tax and fees. The DOR warrant was filed in circuit court here in October.

Felicia Stapleton, Mr. Rhoden's daughter and secretary of Macclenny Bar-B-Q, said Woody's currently employs 46 people, a "little less" than previously. She also indicated that remaining workers have had hours trimmed due to sagging business.

Landfill's tainted water tests

From page 1
county must maintain a permit for the facility with the state.

The permit stipulates the county must monitor the site through regular water quality testing, the results of which must be forwarded to state regulators.

Mr. Darabi has applied for a permit renewal on the county's behalf and asked that the county be allowed to limit monitoring to the four new wells and two background wells.

That would eliminate at least a dozen monitoring sites, which Mr. Fletcher said would mean a significant cost savings. "Hopefully we get the gas monitoring reduced or eliminated, too," he said.

Gas monitoring is performed to detect air contamination.

Water sampling was conducted four times a year until 2009, when testing was reduced to twice annually to help the county cut expenses.

Mr. Fletcher said he expects a response from state regulators regarding the permit renewal application and the August, 2011 sampling results within the next month.

Correction

Last week's edition of *The Press* erroneously stated that Erol Carter of Macclenny was arrested in connection with a meth lab bust in the Deerwood Circle neighborhood of the east city.

Mr. Carter is the owner of a travel trailer in which suspect Randy Michael was living.

The newspaper regrets transposing the names.

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65% of all soft drink sales are made by kids under the age of 15

Arrest after police chase 70+ mph on remote tram roads

A Macclenny man faces multiple charges after leading two county deputies on a high-speed chase of over two miles in north Baker County, much of it on unimproved tram roads.

Johnathan Anderson, 20, was taken into custody after his 1997 Dodge pickup became bogged down in a ditch on an unnamed remote road north and west of Moccasin Circle north of Baxter.

Police were called to a residence there after a disturbance between Brandon Hall of Sanderson and a juvenile male, age 17. While talking to Mr. Hall, Deputy Patrick McGauley said the pickup occupied by the juvenile and Mr. Anderson drove by, then sped up as he and Deputy Johnny Hodges gave chase.

The officers at one point lost visual contact with the truck's taillights as Mr. Anderson accelerated to speeds above 70 mph on the unpaved surface dotted with sharp curves.

The juvenile apparently exited the truck unseen by the officers, but his identity was known from the disturbance call. A criminal complaint was filed against him for resisting arrest without violence.

Mr. Anderson was booked for reckless driving, fleeing police, driving on a suspended license, having no license tag and having an open container of alcohol. A rifle was found in the truck cab.

In another reckless driving incident, Deputy Hodges arrested Stephanie Sowards, 43, of Sanderson after police received a complaint that she was northbound on CR 125 in the southbound lane the

evening of December 26.

Witness Christopher Miracle of Glen St. Mary said he observed Ms. Soward's 1995 Chevrolet Blazer run several vehicles off the road as he followed it heading north. Deputy Hodges spotted the SUV near the intersection with CR 127 as it continued in the opposite lane and stopped it about 7 pm.

Ms. Sowards was booked for driving on a suspended license, reckless driving and failure to stay in a single lane.

Passenger Ventura Rodriguez, 51, of Macclenny was charged with resisting arrest without violence for several times interfering with Deputy Hodges and unruly behavior when she was arrested.

Two Baker County men were taken into custody the past week on warrants, one of them Seaf Rhoden, 48, of Baxter, sought under a federal indictment for growing marijuana. He was arrested at his Moccasin Creek Circle residence on December 28.

Mr. Rhoden and two other men from the same neighborhood were arrested by county and state officers in September for growing nearly 1000 plants, most of them in Charlton County, GA.

The others, J.N. Canaday, 65, and David Lee Stokes, 45, were already in custody and transferred from county jail by federal marshals.

The second warrant was served on Todd Sark, 28, of Macclenny at an Eastwood Dr. residence the afternoon of December 30. He was wanted in Clay County for a probation violation.

Steals tools for employer

Police arrested a Macclenny man for stealing \$500 worth of tools from a US 90 wrecker service and garage where he works and pawning them to a Sanderson man for \$50.

Jon Theophile Jr., 39, admitted under questioning that he took the dozen-piece ratchet wrench set on December 27 but intended to reclaim it later and return it to Miracle Towing.

Kirk Miracle, the garage owner, called police three days later when he heard about the missing tools. Deputy Shawn Bishara questioned the suspect and he initially denied involvement, then admitted taking the tools when he learned that the man he sold them to, Dean Holland, was returning to the garage with them.

The wrenches were engraved with identifying numbers and letters.

Mr. Holland told Deputy Bishara that Mr. Theophile approached him to "hold" the tools

for \$50 and initially was unaware they were stolen. He soon suspected they were and arranged to return them to the garage. He was not charged.

Mr. Theophile was booked at county jail for felony grand theft.

In other recent reports on property crimes:

- Selena Roberts of Macclenny named estranged boyfriend William Davis, 41, of Glen St. Mary as the person who entered her residence on North Boulevard and took a ring valued at \$193.

She told Deputy Chris Walker she believes the ring was taken during the early morning hours of December 29 before she returned home. There was no sign of forced entry.

She said Mr. Davis had earlier sent her a text message that he intended to take the ring.

- Manika Northcutt was named by husband William Hand as the person who likely damaged a front window and four solar screens at his rental

trailer on Ivy St. in Macclenny on New Year's Eve or early New Year's.

He told Deputy Johnny Hodges that his 35-year-old wife was intoxicated and they argued that evening before he left about 6 o'clock.

- An attempt was made to enter the school district maintenance office during the Christmas break.

Deputy Steven Smith said door glass was broken and a door warped from attempted prying at the Jonathan St. location. The attempt was discovered when an employee returned to work the morning of December 26.

'Huffing' driver runs into fence

A Lake Butler woman was arrested for reckless driving after her vehicle ran through the busy intersection of South 6th St. and Lowder the afternoon of December 27 onto private property and struck a fence.

The three other occupants of the vehicle, all female juveniles, told Deputy Steven Smith that driver Kora Seay, 18, of Lake Butler was sniffing or "huffing" keyboard duster spray just prior to the mishap at 2:51 pm. They had stolen the two aerosol cans found on the driver's side floorboard from Walmart earlier.

Ms. Seay apparently blacked out at the wheel.

The vehicle crossed busy 6th St. and careened east between Superior Cleaners and the office of physician A.B. Tecson, destroying four sections of a dividing fence in the process. There was no damage estimate.

Ms. Seay and the occupants, ages 14, 15 and 16, were named in criminal complaints for shoplifting, and Deputy Smith said video surveillance at Walmart confirmed they stole the cans. The others are from Lake Butler as well.

Probationer back in jail for domestic battery on his wife

A Glen St. Mary man on probation found himself back in jail the afternoon of December 26 after he was arrested for domestic battery on his wife at their residence off CR 139B.

Cory Lord, 21, is charged with attacking Brittini Sayles, 22, that afternoon about 2 o'clock in the bedroom of their residence during an argument that began over her decision to leave him.

Deputy Robert Simpkins said he observed redness and bruising about Ms. Sayles' arms and back that she said resulted from being thrown to a bed and striking a dresser when both she and her husband fell to the floor.

The officer noted that Mr. Lord had two blackened eyes and a facial laceration at the hands of his wife, who said she was defending herself. Mr. Lord insisted he grabbed his wife in self-defense.

Police were alerted to the dis-

turbance after Deputy Simpkins stopped Earl Lord Sr., the husband's father, speeding near Interstate 10 and SR 228 in Macclenny. Mr. Lord said he was hurrying to his son's residence amid a threat that Ms. Sayles' father was en route armed with a firearm. He never showed up when the officer was there.

Court records do not reflect that the younger Lord is on house arrest as stated by the deputy, but show him to be on a one-year probation for drug possession, disorderly conduct and possession of paraphernalia.

He has a record of mostly traffic offenses, and currently one pending drunk driving charge.

In another domestic violence case, this one minutes into the new year, Joseph Mercado, 36, of Keystone Heights was arrested for striking Carly Brent, 27, with a cell phone and slapping her at the woman's residence on Plan-

tation Rd. south of Glen.

Deputy Patrick McGauley interviewed Ms. Brent at a neighbor's residence where she went to call police just after midnight. She said Mr. Mercado had been drinking wine for hours and was armed with a knife.

He initially refused to exit the residence and was described by the deputy as "highly intoxicated." His report noted redness and swelling on both sides of Ms. Brent's face.

- A criminal complaint alleging battery was filed on Cassandra Amerson, 28, of Glen for slapping bar patron Lori Crawford, 48, of Macclenny during a confrontation about an hour and a half into the new year.

Deputy Chad Montean noted both parties had been drinking at Mac's Liquors in downtown Macclenny.

Guns taken from homes, truck

Police were called to investigate the theft of firearms in three separate incidents the past week, two from residences and the third from a pickup truck.

Several fingerprints lifted from a front window may help determine who entered the residence of Jason Krazewski and Cathy Conrad on B.F. Finley Circle south of Olustee on December 28.

A 9 mm pistol and .22 caliber rifle were taken from a closet, and a .357 magnum pistol from a night stand between the hours of 11 am-9:30 pm. Deputy Daryl Mobley said the second pistol and \$70 in coins were discovered missing after the initial call the next day.

There are suspects.

- Deputy Rodney Driggers was given the names of suspects in the neighborhood of Maple St. in Macclenny, where Freddie Reynolds reported on December

29 the theft of a 9 mm pistol from his garage.

He last saw the weapon in late October, about the time the suspects were on the property.

- James Turner of Macclenny told Deputy Chris Walker that a

.40 caliber pistol was taken from under the driver's seat of his 1997 Chevrolet pickup, likely when he went to two stores in the area on December 27 or the following day.

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Printed in the Feb. 9 edition
DEADLINE: FEB. 2



Overall good performance Say commissioners of manager

JOEL ADDINGTON
NEWS EDITOR
reporter@bakercountypress.com

The Baker County Commission is very pleased with the job performance of its top staffer, County Manager C.J. Thompson, according to recent evaluation forms filled out by board members.

Commissioners scored Mr. Thompson, 30, in more than 40 specific goals or responsibilities using a five-point scale. The scores were then averaged to determine an "overall assessment" score.

Three of the five commissioners, Mark Hartley, Gordon Crews and Jimmy Anderson, gave the manager overall scores of four, while Commissioner Michael Crews turned in an overall score of 4.5.

Commissioner Adam Giddens rated Mr. Thompson's overall performance at the highest level possible, which means that he consistently exceeded expectations.

Scores of three were intended to show that Mr. Thompson met the commissioner's expectations while scores of four were defined as often exceeding those expectations. The manager did not receive scores of one or two — major improvement needed or some improvement needed, respectively — in any area of the evaluations.

The written evaluations were the first for a Baker County manager in recent history, said former county commissioner Alex Robinson, who served on the board for 18 years before losing re-election in 2010.

"We never did it before," said Mr. Robinson. "I think it should've been done in the past and it's a good time to institute an evaluation process."

For his part, Mr. Thompson said he also was pleased with the evaluations and that regardless of the results, "reviews should always be viewed with a positive outlook as a way to continue to improve your job performance."

In addition to the scoring, commissioners were given the opportunity to respond to a handful of additional questions about the county manager.

The questions addressed Mr. Thompson's most significant accomplishments, his strongest qualities and ways in which he could improve his job performance.

Mr. Thompson, who had no employment history in local government before leaving the state's largest health insurance company in late 2010 to assume his current post, was praised for filling the shoes of veteran county administrator Joe Cone, who retired at that time.

"This first year of CJ being in this position has been a learning experience mixed with the list of un-

done or incomplete tasks left by the previous county manager that CJ has handled extremely well," wrote Commissioner Michael Crews.

The commissioner also cited Mr. Thompson's implementation of a public records request policy and his oversight of the continued development of St. Mary's Shoals Park as significant accomplishments.



C.J. Thompson

Among his best qualities, most commissioners noted, are Mr. Thompson's strong people skills and his ability to build good relationships with department heads and the county's constitutional officers.

There is some room for improvement, however.

Commissioners said they hope Mr. Thompson will do a better job of providing backup documents for board meetings.

"Sometimes I feel like the county manager could improve on providing, or having on hand, backup information during meetings. This happened a few times on agenda items where purchasing

was involved ... A lot of these issues have significantly improved in the last several months," said Commissioner Adam Giddens.

When asked about ways for the manager to improve, Commissioner Michael Crews said Mr. Thompson should delegate more to department heads rather than "carrying the complete workload," and insist department heads be more responsible for their subordinates.

Commissioner Gordon Crews offered no constructive criticism, saying instead, "CJ has performed well in all situations he has faced. He interacts well with the press, the public and also this board. He takes direction from the board well, but has not needed any micro-managing. I only expect great things for our county having CJ as our manager."

Mr. Thompson was hired by the commission in November, 2010 after a six-month search. He began on November 29 of that year.

The north Macclenny native left his position as program manager for Blue Cross Blue Shield of Florida in Jacksonville to work for the county.

"I will look at areas where I consistently scored lower among all the commissioners and then develop a plan to improve in those areas," Mr. Thompson said when asked about any changes he may make as a result of the evaluations.

"Depending on the area of focus, that may require day-to-day operational changes or more long term management philosophy and style changes," he said.

The evaluations can be viewed in full at www.scribd.com/doc/77071135/annual-review-2011-2.

Essay on a former governor wins scholarship for 8th grader

KELLEY LANNIGAN
FEATURES
features@bakercountypress.com

Shelbie Martin, an eighth grader at Baker County Middle School, won the 2012 Governor's Recognition Scholarship Essay contest sponsored by Florida PrePaid College Foundation.

Students in three Florida counties were asked to submit essays about one Florida governor.

Ms. Martin is the daughter of Jeni and Shawn Martin of Glen St. Mary. As the winner, she receives a full scholarship to any state college in Florida.

Only 13 years old, Ms. Martin doesn't yet know where she will attend school but says, "It'll be somewhere close to home."

Ms. Martin was working as an assistant in the school's media center December 16 when she received a surprise visit from BCMS principal Sherry Barrett and school district Superintendent Sherrie Raulerson.

The teen was shocked by the news of her award but quickly recovered. Her language arts teacher Greta Elledge, however, who arrived a few minutes after the news, was nearly overwhelmed with excitement.

"Nobody deserves it more," she said, almost tearful as she hugged her student. "I know this girl's potential and now she has the vehicle to pursue it!"

Ms. Martin explained why she chose to write about Governor Fuller Warren.

"He was the one I was most familiar with," she said. "He did a lot of things for Florida that helped the state with forestry and environmental issues."

A model student, Ms. Martin's favorite subject is reading. She received a perfect 500 score on the most recent FCAT reading tests and was the student with the highest Accelerated Reader points while a fourth grader at Keller Intermediate. In 2010 she was the school district's spelling bee winner, which qualified her to compete in the regional spelling bee hosted by *The Florida Times-Union*.

Her hobbies are playing volleyball and dancing as a member of Christian Fellowship Temple's Image Breakers team. She also loves caring for her many pets including a one-eyed gopher tortoise named Franklin.

She hopes to work someday in a veterinarian's office as an accountant.

Ms. Martin's winning essay: "In January of 1949, Florida's 30th governor delivered his inaugural address. Governor Fuller Warren Stated, 'Today I begin carrying out the covenant that I

made with the people during the campaign . . . Florida is faced with many terrific problems. They must be met and mastered.'

Governor Warren inherited many problems in our state, but this was no problem for him; he was a man of humble beginnings and a World War II veteran and was used to overcoming obstacles with hard work.

tribute around \$6 billion annually to the state's economy.

"Also Florida's forest lands provide ecological benefits such as purification of air and water, creation of wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities.

"Why does governor Warren's reforestation effort mean so much to me? I live in a rural community. Many residents of



PHOTO BY KELLEY LANNIGAN
Middle school principal Sherry Barrett hugs Shelbie Martin as superintendent Raulerson makes the school-wide announcement.

"Fuller Warren was born in Blountstown, Florida, on October 3, 1905, and he was one of seven children. He attended the local public school and went on to graduate from the University of Florida. In 1930, he received a law degree from Cumberland University. He served in the State House of Representatives in 1927 and 1939. In 1948 he became Florida's governor.

"During his time in office, Governor Warren faced many challenges and celebrated great accomplishments. Free-grazing on Florida's highways was outlawed and thus reduced automobile accidents and fatalities. He also initiated plans for the Florida turnpike, established quality control for Florida citrus and started Florida's reforestation program. Of all his accomplishments the one that stands out is his efforts to save our state's forests.

"By 1930, Florida's forests had been greatly depleted by companies that did not replant. Within just a few decades, the 19.2 million acres of pine forest had dwindled to 7.5 acres.

"Governor Warren reacted by starting the reforestation program. Our forests were saved and Floridians have benefitted ever since that time in many different ways. Directly and indirectly almost 200,000 jobs in Florida are a result of our forestry system and the forests con-

my county, including family members and friends, are employed in jobs that depend on a healthy forestry system. On a very personal level, I live in an area surrounded by forest lands.

"Every day of my life I get to witness and experience the habitat created by our forests. I start my day with birds calling to each other right outside my window. In addition, my state's well-being is greatly reliant upon a forest system that helps with the pollution created by its inhabitants as it filters our air and helps purify out water.

"In conclusion, I feel Governor Fuller Warren impacted our state and my life in a significant way. Thanks to his reforestation efforts, our state has a thriving forestry system that we enjoy today and that will still exist for future generations.

"Like me, Governor Warren was one of several children and attended public schools. He inspired me because of our similarities. If he can grow up to accomplish such lasting and monumental things, so can I."

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Cyclist critically injured on SR 228

A Middleburg woman was critically injured just before noon on December 31 when she lost control of her motorcycle on SR 228 about three miles south of Interstate 10.

Judith Andrews, 61, was northbound solo on her 2005 Harley-Davidson and failed to negotiate a left-hand curve. She then traveled onto the east shoulder where she lost control and overturned several times, said investigating Trooper D.L. Myers of the Florida Highway Patrol.

Ms. Andrews was ejected into the ditch and was taken to Shands Jacksonville. She was wearing a helmet.

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**CITY OF MACCLENNY
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT
HOUSING REHABILITATION PROGRAM
SOLICITATION FOR APPLICANTS**

The Department of Economic Opportunity has made Community Development Block Grant funding available to the City of Macclenny for residents located in the incorporated areas of the City.

These funds will be utilized to assist low income residents with the rehabilitation or replacement of their homes.

The City will accept Application Packages beginning on Thursday, January 5, 2012 thru Friday, January 20, 2012 between the hours of 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM. Application packages that are received after the deadline will not be accepted. Application Packages may be obtained from Melissa Thompson, Administrative Assistant to the City Manager, 118 East Macclenny Avenue, Macclenny, Florida 32063.

Application Packages should be dropped off with or mailed to Melissa Thompson, Administrative Assistant to the City Manager, 118 East Macclenny Avenue, Macclenny, Florida 32063. If you require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Spencer Nabors at ITC Group Inc. (850) 520-0846.



**CITY OF MACCLENNY
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT
HOUSING REHABILITATION PROGRAM
CONTRACTOR REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**

ATTENTION CONTRACTORS

The Department of Economic Opportunity has made Community Development Block Grant funding available to the City of Macclenny for residents located in the incorporated areas of the City.

The City of Macclenny is accepting Qualifications Packages from contractors who are state certified and interested in participating in the Community Development Block Grant housing program. Minority and women owned businesses are encouraged to submit a Qualifications Package in the program.

Qualification Packages may be obtained from Melissa Thompson, Administrative Assistant to the City Manager, 118 East Macclenny Avenue, Macclenny, Florida 32063.

Qualification Packages should be dropped off with or mailed to Melissa Thompson, Administrative Assistant to the City Manager, 118 East Macclenny Avenue, Macclenny, Florida 32063. If you require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Spencer Nabors at ITC Group Inc. (850) 520-0846.

Qualifications Packages can be obtained on January 5th, 2012 and must be returned no later than January 20th, 2012 between the hours of 8:30 am to 5:00 pm.

The City of Macclenny is a Fair Housing / Equal Opportunity / Handicap Accessible Jurisdiction

'Shaggin' on the (US 90) Avenue'

The Lambs put spotlight on S.C. 'beach music'

KELLEY LANNIGAN
FEATURES

features@bakercountypress.com

To promote and celebrate their love for a dance that originated in South Carolina decades ago, Macclenny resident Danny Lamb and his wife Debbie hosted an event they called "Beach Music 101: Shaggin' on the Avenue" in mid-December.

The Shag is a swing dance that originated along the coast between Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, and Wilmington, North Carolina, during the 1940s. It was adapted by South Carolina as the state's official dance in 1976 and today is recognized in national and international dance competitions held across the United States.

Friends and patrons attended the evening event which included a presentation on the origin and history of the dance, examples of beach music, and dance demonstrations by members of the First Coast Shag Club [FCSC] of Jacksonville.

Guests were also treated to a low country boil dinner which commonly accompanies shag dance events in South Carolina. The Lambs constructed a display of shag and beach music memorabilia including books, art, photographs, newspaper articles and most significant, a copy of the novel Beach Music by the pre-eminent southern author Pat Conroy, who they once met at a book signing in Jacksonville.

For Beach Music 101, the Lambs turned the main room of their car dealership on US 90 in downtown Macclenny into a dance floor for FCSC members to demonstrate the Shag. They danced to beach music tunes by bands like The Drifters, The Embers, The Tams, the Temptations, and The Chairman of the Board.

With the presentation and dinner concluded, FCSC dancers gave free shag instruction to all interested guests.

Earlier, Mr. Lamb recounted his first exposure to the dance, which came on a business trip to Greensboro, North Carolina in 1987.

He was in the company of another salesman when he heard the song "What Kind of Fool" by The Tams on the radio and remarked how much he liked it.

"So you like beach music," the salesman commented. "Then you must like the Shag, too."

Mr. Lamb had never heard of either, but he was about to be introduced to an entire culture he had never known existed.

"Growing up in the 50s and



Danny Lamb gives Janet Teague a whirl on the dance floor.

PHOTO BY KELLEY LANNIGAN

60s, we'd always listened to those songs on radio station WAPE out of Jacksonville," he said. "There was even a relay station out of Baldwin and you could call and request a song and the DJ would say your name on the air and then play it for you. But none of us knew what we were listening to was known as beach music or that there was a dance associated with it."

Ironically, a huge Shag event was about to take place at the hotel where he was staying. The next night, he entered the ballroom and came face to face with the music and dance that would quickly become one of his life's passions.

"I was blown away," he recalls. "The Embers were on stage playing 'Beach Music Medley' and hundreds of people were on the floor dancing with each other. It was the prettiest dancing I'd ever seen to the prettiest music I'd ever heard."

After that night, Danny introduced his wife to the dance and the couple became avid shaggers.

They traveled to take lessons from a shag instructor and

watched instructional CD's to help them learn new techniques.

Over the years, they have frequently attended events such as the bi-annual Society of Shaggers Spring Safari and Fall Migrations held in North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina and attended by shag enthusiasts from all over the country.

Last February, the Lambs performed the dance in the local production of Dancing with the Stars: Baker County Style.

They received so many inquiries about their performance, they decided to plan a party to introduce interested people to the culture of shagging and beach

music.

"I'd wanted to do this event for a while," said Mr. Lamb. "And I'm so glad we could finally make it happen. I wish everyone could have the experience of dancing to this music on a well worn wood floor, out in the open air, with sea gulls flying overhead and the ocean pounding on the shore nearby. There truly is nothing like it."

Anyone interested in learning to shag can attend free lessons taught by First Coast Shag Club instructors each Wednesday at 7:30 pm at River City Brewing Company in Jacksonville. Call 398-2299 for more information.

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Legal Notices

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR BAKER COUNTY, FLORIDA
CASE NO. 2010-CA-000093

BAC HOME LOANS SERVICING, LP
FKA COUNTRYWIDE HOME LOANS SERVICING LP,
Plaintiff,

vs.
EMILY MILLICENT WALKER A/K/A
EMILY M. WALKER, ET AL.
Defendants

NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to a Final Judgment of Foreclosure dated December 21, 2011, and entered in Case No. 2010-CA-000093, of the Circuit Court of the Eighth Judicial Circuit in and for BAKER County, Florida. BANK OF AMERICA, N.A., SUCCESSOR BY MERGER TO BAC HOME LOANS SERVICING, LP FKA COUNTRYWIDE HOME LOANS SERVICING, LP (hereafter "Plaintiff"), is Plaintiff and EMILY MILLICENT WALKER A/K/A EMILY M. WALKER; DWAYNE WALKER; JOHN DOE N/K/A MELVIN OWEN; JANE DOE N/K/A LAURA OWEN, are defendants. I will sell to the highest and best bidder for cash at the EAST DOOR of the Courthouse, 339 East Macclenny Avenue, 1st Floor, Macclenny, at 11:00 a.m., on the 30 day of January, 2012, the following described property as set forth in said Final Judgment, to wit:

A LOT BEGINNING ON THE WEST SIDE OF OCEAN STREET, 270 FEET NORTH OF THE CENTER OF THE RIGHT-OF-WAY OF THE SEABOARD AIR LINE RAILROAD; THENCE RUN NORTH ALONG THE WEST SIDE OF OCEAN STREET, 420 FEET TO CHURCH STREET; THENCE RUN WEST 429.3 FEET OF THE EAST SIDE OF MAIN STREET; THENCE RUN SOUTH 420 FEET; THENCE RUN EAST 429.3 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING, IN THE TOWN OF OLUSTEE, BAKER COUNTY, FLORIDA, IN THE SOUTHWEST 1/4 OF THE NORTHEAST 1/4 OF SECTION 29, TOWNSHIP 3 SOUTH, RANGE 19 EAST.

Under the American with Disabilities Act, if you are a person with a disability who needs any accommodation in order to participate in this proceeding, you are entitled, at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. Please contact the ADA Coordinator at (352) 337-6237, at least 7 days before your scheduled court appearance. If you are hearing or voice impaired, please call 711. If you are deaf or hard of hearing and require an ASL interpreter or an assisted listening device to participate in a proceeding, please contact Court Interpreting at interpreter@circuits.org

Any person claiming an interest in the surplus for the sale, if any, other than the property owner as of the date of the Lis Pendens must file a claim within 60 days after the sale.

Dated this 21 day of December, 2011.

AL FRASER
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
By Julie Combs
As Deputy Clerk

Van Ness Law Firm, P.A.
1239 E. Newport Center Drive Suite #110
Deerfield Beach, Florida 33442
Phone (954) 571-2031
Fax (954) 571-2033
12/29-1/5

IN THE CIRCUIT CIVIL COURT OF THE EIGHT JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA, IN AND FOR BAKER COUNTY
CIVIL DIVISION
CASE NO. 02-2009-CA-000212
DIVISION

BAC HOME LOANS SERVICING, LP
Plaintiff,

vs.
MARY DOWLING AND DAVID SHORT
AND UNKNOWN TENANTS/ OWNERS
Defendants.

NOTICE OF SALE

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to Final Judgment of Foreclosure for Plaintiff entered in this cause no. in the Circuit Court of Baker County, Florida, I will sell the property situated in Baker County, Florida described as:

PARCEL 24
PART OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 18, TOWNSHIP 1 SOUTH, RANGE 21 EAST, BAKER COUNTY, FLORIDA, BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: FOR POINT OF REFERENCE COMMENCE AT THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF SAID NORTHEAST QUARTER OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER, THENCE RUN NORTH 88 DEGREES 52 MINUTES 25 SECONDS EAST ALONG THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID NORTHEAST QUARTER OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER, A DISTANCE OF 979.73 FEET TO THE WEST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF RAULERSON ROAD; THENCE RUN NORTH 14 DEGREES 34 MINUTES 37 SECONDS WEST ALONG SAID WEST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE, A DISTANCE OF 562.83 FEET TO THE POINT OF CURVE OF A CURVE CONCAVED SOUTHWESTERLY, RAVING A RADIUS OF 2619.66 FEET; THENCE RUN ALONG AND AROUND SAID CURVE, A CHORD BEARING AND DISTANCE OF NORTH 15 DEGREES 38 MINUTES 22 SECONDS WEST 97.10 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING; THENCE RUN SOUTH 88 DEGREES 52 MINUTES 25 SECONDS WEST, A DISTANCE OF 560.52 FEET; THENCE RUN NORTH 00 DEGREES 23 MINUTES 33 SECONDS EAST, A DISTANCE OF 260.00 FEET; THENCE RUN NORTH 88 DEGREES 52 MINUTES 25 SECONDS EAST, A DISTANCE OF 466.29 FEET TO SAID WEST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE AND SAID CURVE; THENCE RUN ALONG AND AROUND SAID CURVE, A CHORD BEARING AND DISTANCE OF SOUTH 19 DEGREES 42 MINUTES 08 SECONDS EAST, 274.19 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING, CONTAINING 3.0 ACRES MORE OR LESS.

and commonly known as: 19740 NOAH RAULERSON RD, SANDERSON, FL 32087; including the building, appurtenances, and fixtures located therein, at public sale, to the highest and best bidder, for cash, at the front door of the Baker County Courthouse, on January 31, 2012 at 11:00 a.m.

Any persons claiming an interest in the surplus from the sale, if any, other than the property owner as of the date of the Lis pendens must file a claim within 60 days after the sale.

Dated this 21st day of December, 2011.

Clerk of the Circuit Court
By: Julie Combs
Deputy Clerk

Attorney for Plaintiff:
Kass Shuler, P.A.
P.O. Box 800
Tampa, FL 33601-0800
(813) 229-0900

12/29-1/5

ST. JOHNS RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT GIVES NOTICE OF INTENDED DISTRICT DECISION

The District gives notice of its intent to approve of application(s) for the following applicant(s) :

Thayendanegea Timber LLC, 50 N Laura St Ste 2750, Jacksonville, FL 32202, application #129259. The District proposes to allocate 2.41 million gallons per year of groundwater for irrigation and inundation of 4.0 acres for recreational type(hunting) use. The withdrawals used by this proposed project will consist of Groundwater from Surficial Aquifer via 1 proposed well; Groundwater from FAS Upper Floridan Aquifer via 1 active well; Surface Water from Rim Ditch via 1 active pump in Baker County, located in Section: 4, Township: 3 South, Range: 20 East, known as Thayendanegea Timber.

If you wish to receive a copy of a Technical Staff Report (TSR) that provides the District staff's analysis of a permit application, please submit your request to: Director, Bureau of Regulatory Support, P.O. Box 1429, Palatka, FL 32178-1429. Once a TSR becomes available, you may also review it by going to the Permitting section of the District's website at floridaswater.com/permitting/index.html. To obtain information on how to find and view a TSR, visit https://permitting.sjrwm.com/permitting/html/EP_FAQs.html, and then follow the directions provided under "How to find a Technical Staff Report (TSR) or other application file documents."

A person whose substantial interests are or may be affected has the right to request an administrative hearing by filing a written petition with the St. Johns River Water Management District (District). Pursuant to Chapter 28-106 and Rule 40C-1.1007, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), the petition must be filed (received) either by delivery at the office of the District Clerk at District Headquarters, P.O. Box 1429, Palatka FL 32178-1429 (4049 Reid St., Palatka, FL 32177) or by e-mail with the District Clerk at Clerk@sjrwm.com, within twenty-six (26) days of the District depositing the notice of intended District decision in the mail (for those persons to whom the District mails actual notice), within twenty-one (21) days of the District mailing notice of intended District decision (for those persons to whom the District emails actual notice), or within twenty-one (21) days of newspaper publication of the notice of intended District decision (for those persons to whom the District does not mail or email actual notice). A petition must comply with Sections 120.54(5)(b)(4) and 120.569(2)(c), Florida Statutes (F.S.), and Chapter 28-106, F.A.C. The District will not accept a petition sent by facsimile (fax). Mediation pursuant to Section 120.573, F.S., is not available.

A petition for an administrative hearing is deemed filed upon receipt of the complete petition by the District Clerk at the District Headquarters in Palatka, Florida during the District's regular business hours. The District's regular business hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., excluding weekends and District holidays. Petitions received by the District Clerk after the District's regular business hours will be deemed filed on the next regular District business day. The District's acceptance of petitions filed by e-mail is subject to certain conditions set forth in the District's Statement of Agency Organization and Operation (issued pursuant to Rule 28-101.001, Florida Administrative Code), which is available for viewing at floridaswater.com. These conditions include, but are not limited to, the petition being in the form of a PDF or TIFF file and being capable of being stored and printed by the District. Further, pursuant to the District's Statement of Agency Organization and Operation, attempting to file a petition by facsimile (fax) is prohibited and shall not constitute filing.

The right to an administrative hearing and the relevant procedures to be followed are governed by Chapter 120, Florida Statutes, Chapter 28-106, Florida Administrative Code, and Rule 40C1.1007, Florida Administrative Code. Because the administrative hearing process is designed to formulate final agency action, the filing of a petition means the District's final action may be different from the position taken by it in this notice. Failure to file a petition for an administrative hearing within the requisite time frame shall constitute a waiver of the right to an administrative hearing. (Rule 28-106.111, F.A.C.).

If you wish to do so, please visit http://floridaswater.com/noticofrights/ to read the complete Notice of Rights to determine any legal rights you may have concerning the District's intended decision(s) on the permit application(s) described above. You can also request the Notice of Rights by contacting the Director, Bureau of Regulatory Support (RS), 4049 Reid St., Palatka, FL 32177-2529, tele. no. (386)329-4268.

Victor Castro, Director, Bureau of Regulatory Support
St. Johns River Water Management District
1/5

NOTICE
Invitation for Bids (IFB)
Bid # 12-01
Landfill Gas Blower/Flare System

The New River Solid Waste Association (NRSWA) is extending an invitation for bids to furnish, deliver, and install a landfill gas blower/flare system. The successful Bidder will be responsible for furnishing, delivering, installation, and start-up assistance and training to the New River Regional Landfill (NRRLL) a landfill gas blower/flare system in accordance with the specifications and drawings provided with this Invitation for Bids. All work shall be completed in accordance with the drawings, specifications, and contract documents attached and included as part of the contract documents.

NRRLL is located 2.5 miles north of Raiford, FL on State Road 121 in Union County, FL. Bid packages and other information are available for pick up at the Administration Office at NRSWA, 24276 NE 157th Street, Raiford, FL 32083. All bids must be submitted on the Bid Form provided. Completed bids are to be mailed to New River Solid Waste Association, P.O. Box 647, Raiford, FL 32083 or delivered to the NRSWA Administration Office. After the IFB opening, the bids will be examined for completeness and preserved in the custody of the Executive Director. NRSWA Purchasing Policy will be ensued. All bids received after the specified time and date will not be considered. Contact the NRSWA office at 386-431-1000 for questions concerning the bid packages. The DEADLINE for submittal in response to the above IFB is **January 31, 2012, 2:00 p.m.**
1/5

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Rhoden named top teacher at Westside Elementary for 11'-12'

KELLEY LANNIGAN
FEATURES

features@bakercountypress.com

Westside Elementary's Teacher of the Year for 2011-12 is Cheryl Rhoden.

This veteran teacher of 17 years is originally from Macclenny and attended Lake City Community College and Temple University in Tennessee. She earned a master's degree in childhood education from the University of Florida.

It's the first time she has been chosen for the honor and she says after she got over the shock, she was overwhelmed.

"The principal announced it over the intercom and I cried at my desk," she said. "With all the great teachers here, I thought — why me?"

Her name along with selections from the county's other schools will be considered for the county-wide Teacher of the Year.

Ms. Rhoden is the exceptional student education teacher at Westside but works with non-ESE students as well.

She's committed to what she does. Research, she says, has shown that the ESE [exceptional student education] students do best when included in a regular class. It's her job to provide the interventions they need to help them rise to standards and expectations in that setting.

Ms. Rhoden has always been naturally drawn to teaching people. She views it as a calling and a passion. She's never considered any other career.

When other girls were playing house, she was playing school and always in the role of the teacher. When a fifth grade teacher presented her with an old rule book she had finished



Cheryl Rhoden

with, Ms. Rhoden treasured it.

"I felt like I was on top of the world," she said.

For her, the best thing about being a teacher is that the kids are fun, they keep her young and make her laugh. Then, there is that look in their eyes when they understand what she's trying to teach them.

"Those smiles when they understand and get excited, well that's like winning the Super Bowl for me," she said.

Her only regret is that there aren't more teachers dedicated to the profession. More teachers would mean an even higher chance to increase the rate of success among students, she said.

She encouraged anyone who feels called to teaching to pursue it, but with one caveat: be genuinely committed.

"Kids have a way of knowing if a teacher is just there to collect a paycheck and be off during the summer. They truly know who really cares about them," she said.

BAKER COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD

Teacher contracts inked All district workers to see raises

MIKE ANDERSON
PRESS STAFF

Nearly five months after union negotiations began the Baker County School Board approved new contracts and pay scales for all employees, including teachers and non-instructional employees. All will receive some increase in pay, though for many it will be a modest amount.

Contract talks began just before August, 2011 between school district negotiators and agents representing the Baker County Education Association on behalf of teachers and the Baker County School Related Personnel Association, which represents non-instructional employees.

School district officials said they wished they could've been more generous with employees but were faced with extraordinary financial constraints created by huge cutbacks in state educational funding. Nonetheless, they said they were generally pleased with the contract.

"I'm very pleased," said board member Patricia Weeks, adding that after "all the gloom and doom talk" last year about shrinking educational funding, the board wasn't even sure it would be able to fund step pay increases.

"As long as we have the money to fund the step increases we try to do that," Mrs. Weeks said, adding that Baker County is in better financial condition than many other districts because "we're small and we've had a series of finance directors who have been very conservative with the money."

Teacher salaries are based on a 25-step pay plan in which teachers receive pay increases for each year they've spent with the district. New teachers, fresh out of college with a bachelor's degree, start at step zero and will earn \$34,168 annually under the new contract.

All teachers will receive step

pay increases and the steps are a little higher for those with advanced degrees.

A beginning teacher with a doctorate is paid \$38,966, for instance. A teacher with a bachelor's degree is paid \$59,000 after 25 years on the job, which is the highest end of the pay scale. Their peer with a doctorate will cap out at \$63,798.

However, the new contract provides one-time bonuses of \$700 for each teacher who no longer qualifies for increases in their base salary on the step plan because they have reached the top of the pay scale. Similarly, non-instructional personnel who have reached the top of their step pay plan will receive a one-time payment of \$500.

The bonus money may or may not be available next year, however, said David Davis, executive director of teaching and learning. Bonuses and salaries must be renegotiated annually, he said.

The salary schedule also contains a modest \$425 payment from district funds to six teachers who have achieved National Board Certification. In past years, the state paid teachers up to \$4,000 a year in addition to their regular salaries as an incentive to earn the national certification,

said Marcelle Richardson, executive director for support services and the district's finance director.

Superintendent Sherrie Raulerson praised her staff and the union representatives for all the hard work and long hours they had put in at the negotiating table to produce the new contract.

"We all work together. There's a mutual respect there," Mrs. Raulerson said. "We did come to agreement, unlike a lot of other districts that were unable to reach agreement and are at impasse. We all have a common goal — our children."

In other business, the board:

- Recognized three employees who recently retired after a combined 82 years of service to the district: Mickey Raulerson, a custodian at the PreK/Kindergarten Center described as a "cleaning angel" by the superintendent; Sherilyn Reynolds, a librarian at Keller Intermediate; and Deborah West, a secretary in the maintenance department.

"This is a loss to our school district to say good-bye to you three," Superintendent Raulerson said.

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COUNSELOR

Rosie Nickles

Making sense of your cents

Have the 2011 holidays drained your finances and left you and your wallet exhausted? Did you spend all of your money on Christmas and, when that ran out, spend even more?

If not, good for you! Pat yourself on the back. If the above statements describe your post-holiday financial stress, shame on you! Why did you buy so much? Why did you cause such stress to your financial life? And why did you spend even more than you had?

It will benefit us if we evaluate those questions carefully. Now that Christmas is over, step aside from the dizzying pace of the world we live in and ask yourself if you're happy with the way you handle the holiday season. Did I plan ahead? Did I stop buying when I ran out of money? Did I buy too much stuff? Was my giving from the heart or was I so overwhelmed it was determined simply by what was on sale?

Planning is the key to happy spending for Christmas. Let's make a resolution to plan for the 2012 holiday. How about we also pay cash this year? Guess what? Christmas comes at the same exact time every year. Figure out how much you want to spend on Christmas, write it down and save for it. Setting aside \$90 a month for January through November gets you just under \$1,000 for Christmas spending. That's \$45 per paycheck for most folks, and it hurts a heck of a lot less than forking it all over in December. Plus you've eliminated the dreaded credit card bill that's sure to be weighing down your mailbox come January.

Take a look at what you spent last year on Christmas. Does the amount make you cringe? Do you every year promise yourself you'll rein in the spending on your friends, family and especially children? If so, using cash and a plan for the holidays will help you accomplish that. It causes you to put much more thought into the gifts you buy.

On top of that, it forces you to stop buying when you run out of money. Now there's an idea! If that happens, put your kids to work making crafts for your loved ones, or bake some homemade goodies for gifts. Trust me, any grandparent would much prefer a thoughtful homemade gift from the kiddos than something store bought. And for most of us, paring down what we spend on our children will do them some good.

Get motivated to make 2012 the year for financial change. Resolve to be financially responsible this year. Whether you're deeply in debt, just making ends meet or financially secure, there's always room for improvement. Sit down with your spouse and a pen and paper and write down your financial goals for the year, including a plan for Christmas 2012. There is so much in our lives that we have no control over. Let's plan for what we can predict so that we can remove one more element of stress from our lives and enjoy the holidays when they roll around again.

Look for more articles on personal finance from Rosie, and contact her with topic ideas, questions or for counseling at rosienicklespf@yahoo.com.

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Art, history, food and more on this barrier island town near Savannah

A Day Away

KELLEY LANNIGAN

features@bakercountypress.com

The coast of Georgia has 16 barrier islands, nearly all of which are protected from development.

But on Tybee Island, Savannah's quaint beach front community, development has found an easy balance between the commercial and the uniquely personal.

Just 20 minutes east of Savannah you will find what the town's online visitor's guide boasts as a "uniquely charmed island, where nature lovers mingle with movie stars, bird watchers with good ol' boys, pirate raids are regular happenings, parties take on epic proportions and everyone from townie to tourist, watches out for the sea turtles."

And it's true. My first visit to the island town was the day after Thanksgiving. The weather was beautiful, the streets were filled with visitors and despite the crowds and traffic, the pace was relaxed, friendly and languid, like the breeze that wafts in off the ocean.

Even if you don't have an itinerary, just driving around the island is a pleasant experience. The houses are charming and the town is well maintained.

Like history? The island boasts a rich and colorful past.

Perhaps the most famous landmark is the Tybee Island Lighthouse. For 270 years it has guided ships from the Atlantic into the mouth of the Savannah River.

With all its original secondary buildings intact and lovingly restored, it's one of America's best preserved lighthouse sites. On my visit, throngs of Japanese tourists were climbing the lighthouse's 178 steps to take in the spectacular ocean and coastline panoramic views.

After the lighthouse, you can tour Nearby Fort Pulaski National Monument, a pre-Civil war brick fortification where you can experience a live musket firing.

Tybee offers lots of opportunities for water recreation like kayaking, canoeing, parasailing and jet skiing. Or you can take one of the popular ecological tours that highlight the local beaches, marshes and maritime



PHOTOS BY KELLEY LANNIGAN
Above: The Tybee Lighthouse. Left: Mermaid sculpture at The Fish Art Gallery.

backdrop for showcasing his whimsical sculptures. Mr. Jones started selling his sculptures fashioned from found objects from a tent on the road years ago and today is a major artistic presence in the town.

Tybee citizens and visitors celebrate the coastal community with a variety of seasonal events.

In summer there is the famed Beach Bum Parade which includes patrons shooting each other with giant water pistols in the street and the SCAD Sand Art Festival showcasing giant sand sculpture competitions.

In the fall comes the annual Pirate Festival, followed by the month-long festivities between Thanksgiving and Christmas capped off by midnight fireworks launched from the pier on New Year's Eve. Tybee celebrates Mardi Gras with a masquerade ball and street party and observes St. Patrick's Day with the Irish Heritage Parade where everyone in town dresses in green and white and joins in.

Or, if you prefer, you can simply lay on the beach, soak up the sand and surf, doing absolutely nothing but relaxing in this little piece of paradise where the pace is laid back and the welcome is always warm.

forest habitats, all abundant with wildlife. Captain Mike's Dolphin Tours and other companies offer dolphin sighting and sunset cruises as well as inshore and deep sea fishing trips.

Hungry? No problem. Local eateries abound.

When I asked some of the locals for good places to eat I was told "anywhere."

"You'll find that out about Tybee," they said with conviction. "On Tybee there are no bad restaurants."

Here are a couple of the most celebrated.

The Crab Shack is family and pet friendly and consistently voted "best seafood and outdoor dining" venue by patrons and food critics. Diners can partake on outdoor decks under huge oak trees and even enjoy a souvenir

drink in a carved coconut shell and all within sight of 78 pet alligators, raised in captivity by the Crab Shack's owner Joe.

The Breakfast Club is a Tybee Island institution. Open from 7 am to 1 pm, it's not uncommon to see people lined up and down the street waiting for a seat. This popular morning spot is billed as "The legendary way to start the day."

Downtown Tybee Beach is pedestrian friendly with lots of beach retail shops and cafes. With a thriving arts community, you find plenty of galleries around the town to browse in. No trip to Tybee is complete without a visit to Ralph Douglas Jones' Fish Art Gallery.

The funky, eclectic establishment brims with vintage collectibles that constitute a quirky



Jeff Rowe, Dylan Gerard and Donnie Zarrella sample the product in the Baker County, Fla's moonshining movie.

The county's first 100 years, on stage

After months of planning and rehearsal, the BCHS Drama and Baker County Community Theatre production of *Baker County, Fla: 1861-1961* is ready to open. The play features stories and songs chronicling the first 100 hundred years of Baker County.

The production hits most of the major events that have happened over the county's first 100 years. There are stories from the Battle of Olustee, Baker County's big role in deciding the 1876 presidential election. The yellow fever epidemic of 1885 that wiped out much of the county is dramatized as well as the Baxter Rebellion, the start and proliferation of moonshining in the county and much more.

Though the play is not a musical, there is a lot of music, with 15 songs from the 1860s to the 1950s. The show will also have visiting performers including Southern Joy, the Taylor Church Choir, the Lyons sisters, Gail Moore and many others.

There is also a short film featuring a moonshine run that was filmed on the Glen St. Mary Nursery and is based on a true story of running 'shine.

Baker County, Fla: 1861-1961 has a little of everything. It runs January 12-14 and 19-21 at 7:30 pm and January 15 at 2 pm. Reserved tickets in the first four rows are \$10 by calling 259-6286 and general admission tickets are \$5 and on sale at the door.

Soil board meeting

The Baker Soil and Water Conservation District Board will meet on Tuesday, January 17 at the Baker County Extension Service from noon until 1 pm. The public is invited to attend.

We print obituaries with a picture free of charge.

MLK parade

The Martin Luther King Jr. celebration parade will be held Friday, January 13 at 10 am beginning at Keller Intermediate School, 420 S. 8th St.

Following the parade a ceremony will be led by Macclenny's city manager Gerald Dopson and parade marshal and coordinator Rev. Tommy Rollins.

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Land sales November-December

The following land transactions were recorded in the Baker County courthouse November and December. Values are derived from documentary stamps. Many descriptions are by S(ection) T(ownship) R(ange). If acreage or price are not listed, none were indicated in the documents.

HAIR, TORRANCE M to ONEILL, MILTON H JR in LT 13 ST MARYS RIVER ESTATES, \$71,600

GRAY, SNAPPER L to ROBERTSON, TIMOTHY W in 19-25-22E, \$240,000

JOHNS, JAMES M to JOHNS, NANCY CAROL in 06-35-22E, \$120,000

FARMERS EXCHANGE BANK to WOOTEN, OLIN in 17-15-21-0000-0000-0070, \$1,500,000

GAINEY, JANICE LEE to SHADD, JOHN A JR in LT 5 BLK B EM BROWN SUB, \$25,000

CARPENTER, EDWARD L to CARPENTER, EDWARD L in BLK 28 MACCLENNY, \$10

DUNMIRE, MATT D to MAXWELL, PHILLIP D in LT 8 COPPER CREEK HILLS UNIT II, \$178,600

RITO, ILDEFONSO to RHODEN, GERALD R III in 04-35-22E, \$213,000

CRAWFORD, MICHAEL A to GROSS, LEON W in LT 33 HILLS OF GLEN, \$20,000

BASS EMMA L to ROBERTSON, WAYNE D JR in LT 1 BLK 8 MACCLENNY II, \$147,000

WILDS, DOUGLAS L to WILDS, CANDY L in LT 4 BLK 1 TURKEY CREEK, \$10

SECRETARY OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT to HARVEY, WENDY NICOLE in LT 4 BLK 2 OWENS ACRES, \$52,000

THRIFT, JODY to MEDINA, JOSEPH A in PAR 21 SANDERSON CIRCLE, \$84,900

DEEN, RYAN S to LAURAMORE, JUSTIN P in LG 75 FOX RIDGE ESTATES PHASE 3, \$123,000

DAVIS, ELMUS to DAVIS, RODNEY SCOTT SR in 35-25-20E, \$10

DEESE, GEORGE O SR to DEESE, SHERRILL A in LT 3 RIVERVIEW EST AND 16-35-21E, \$10

US BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION TRUSTEE to LEE, JEREMY in 29-25-22E, \$90,000

CREWS, GLADYS E to HART, GLADYS G in 29-25-22, \$10

NEIDERMEIER, RENE to NEIDERMEIER, JOEL K in LT 11 COPPER CREEK HILLS UNIT 2, \$10

BRADSHAW, ROBERT DAVID to BRADSHAW, MARSHA LYNN in 19-25-22E, \$10

BRADSHAW, ROBERT DAVID to BRADSHAW, MARSHA LYNN in 19-35-21E, \$10

SECRETARY OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT to BYRD, JASON BUREN in LT 5 6 BLK 49 GLEN ST MARY, \$43,000

MARTIN, LACEY ANN to KENT, SAMANTHA J in 09-35-22E, \$119,500

RHODEN, MESHELLE to DINKINS, DAVID L in LT 2 BLK A MACCLENNY II UNIT II, \$110,000

GRIFFIN DEBORAH L to TOMKO MICHAEL in 16-25-21E, \$85,000

COMBS VIRGINIA to SCHMITTLING LEO FRANCIS in 15-35-21E, \$205,000

BRANCH JAMES B III to BRANCH TONIA K in LT 90 OLD NURSERY PLANTATION, \$10

MUSTILLO RHONDA B to MUSTILLO RHONDA B in 19-25-22, \$10

ROYAL JOHN ALLEN to ROYAL JOHN ALLEN in LT 6 7 BLK 66 MACCLENNY, \$10

BROOKS KENNETH E JR to MILTON JOHN in LT 33 SANDS POINTE, \$132,500

STOVER JOSEPH T III to WHG MACCLENNY LLC in 05-35-22E, \$10

MAYHALL ROBERT M to AMERICAN ENTERPRISE BANK OF FLORIDA in LT 14

DEER RUN ESTATES, \$500

MAYHALL ROBERT M to AMERICAN ENTERPRISE BANK OF FLORIDA in 03-5-20E, \$500

LAMB JEFFREY BEAU to AMERICAN ENTERPRISE BANK OF FLORIDA in 36-25-21E, \$30,000

SCOTT EARL R JR to BRIGGS MICHAEL L in 11-25-21E, \$19,000

WEST-JARVIS CAROLYN A to JARVIS DAVID P in 12-25-21E, \$10

JARVIS DAVID P to FEDERAL NATIONAL MORTGAGE ASSOCIATION in LT 4 CANNON HEIGHTS PHASE 1, \$273,837

CREWS RAYMOND L JR to CRAWFORD BOBBY R JR in 36-35-20E, \$270,000

CREWS RAYMOND L JR to HARVEY BRENDA in 36-55-20E, \$40,000

SMITH AUDREY DIANE to WOOLARD JENNIFER in 20/21-35-21E, \$10

SECRETARY OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT to SWORDS HARRY JR in LT 16 BLK 8 ER RHODEN ADD, \$86,000

FEDERAL HOME LOAN MORTGAGE CORPORATION to BEHR SHAUN in 31-25-22E, \$136,000

WILLIAMS VIRGINIA C to WILLIAMS AMOS K in 33-25-21E, \$10

AUTO TRUCK & VALUE INC to SMITH RANDALL E in 32-25-22E, \$10

MANN JIMMIE L to CREWS CALLIE B in LT 26-A 06-35-22E, \$9,000

COBB JASON M to BENNETT JOSHUA T in LT 5 BLK 2 OWENS ACRES UNIT II, \$143,000

KNABB GEORGE W SR to FEDERAL NATIONAL MORTGAGE ASSOCIATION in 07-35-22E, \$10

FANNIE MAE to SNYDER ROBBIE D in 07-35-22E, \$109,900

BLANTON CAMERON LEE TABER TRUSTEE to BULLARD ERIN CHALLEN in 10-35-21E, \$30,000

WARD GERALD E to NANCETABITHA YVONNE in 06-45-21E, \$56,064

ROBINSON MICHAEL S to ROBINSON PAMELA D in 12-25-21, \$10

SECRETARY OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT to KISER BRANDON ASHLEY in 30-25-21E, \$65,000

FANNIE MAE to MEYERS STEPHANIE ANN in 11-45-20E, \$65,000

ORALLS MELISSA to JORDAN TIMOTHY M in 07-15-21E, \$10

ROYAL THOMAS D to RICHARDSON DAVID in 03-35-21E, \$100,260

GRIFFIS CASEY C to LEO CYNTHIA T in LT 33 WHISPERING PINES SUB, \$225,000

ROWAN, ROBERT W III to ERNEST, ERIC in LT 53 OLD NURSERY PLANTATION, \$244,900

ROYAL, JOHN A to CREWS, JAMES DARRRELL in 21-1N-21E, \$382,800

CALL-MARINO, DONNA to YARBOROUGH, CRAIG in LT 87 ROLLING MEADOWS, \$112,000

RAULERSON, SUSIE J to HENDRIX, EDITH H in LT 5 6 BLK 6 SANDERSON, \$13,500

SPARDEES REALTY INC to NNN SOLUTIONS FLORIDA II LLC in 05-35-22E, \$1,652,026

VYSTAR CREDIT UNION to PADGETT, TRACY in 18/19 35-21E, \$155,000

ROYAL, JOHN A to DEAL, DAVID L in 33-25-22E, \$135,500

GREEN TREE SERVICING LLC to RICHARDSON, JAMES E in 30-35-21E, \$45,000

COMBS, TIMOTHY L to SHAFFER, STANLEY K in LT 58 FOX RIDGE ESTATES PHASE 3, \$119,000

P & Y PROPERTIES LLC to BLACKBURN, ANNE M in 05-25-22E, \$125,000

ROBERTS, JOHN to ADAMS, KARI-BETH in LT 104 ROLLING MEADOWS, \$127,000

ROYAL, JOHN A to JOHNSON, JAMES C in 21-1N-21E, \$60,000

DAVIS, JEFFREY C to BRANCH, JAMES B III in 20-15-21E, \$127,500

BRANCH BANKING AND TRUST COMPANY to WEEKS, JENNIFER L in LT 18

LEANING OAKS SUB, \$90,000

BENNETT, PARITIA M to LAWRENCE, JAMES E JR in 29-25-22E, \$105,800

ANDERSON & RAULERSON CONSTRUCTION INC to A & G RENTAL PROPERTIES LLC in 09-35-22E, \$200,000

BAKER COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS to WARNER, MARVIN in 05/08 T52S R22E, \$10

PLUM CREEK TIMBERLANDS LP to HIS LAND LLC in 30-35-21E, \$350,900

BEASLEY, SHELDON R to BEASLEY, SHELDON R in 23-35-21E, \$10

WADDELL, SELINA KAY to WADDELL, SELINA KAY in 17-25-22E, \$10

HARVEY, WINNIFRED JANE to CHESTNUT, LARRY in 25-25-20E, \$50,000

COMBS, GREGORY M to BAXTER COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH INC in 16-1N-21E, \$10

REWIS, O D to REWIS-MCDUFFIE, DEANNA in 32-25-22E, \$10

REWIS, O D to REWIS-MCDUFFIE, DEANNA in 32-25-22E, \$10

REWIS, O D to REWIS-MCDUFFIE, DEANNA in 32-25-22E, \$10

SECRETARY OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT to PAXSON, GARRY R in LT 6 7 FINLEYVILLE SUB, \$31,000

ENCINA, RUBY GORMAN to GORMAN, DERRICK A in 07-35-22E, \$10

TAYLOR, ALVIN GENE to MILLER, JAMMIE L in 3202S022E, \$96,000

FISH, LEO to JOHNS, WILMA DOREEN FISH in 10-35-21E, \$10

FISH, LEO to FISH, ROBERT LEO in 10-35-21E, \$10

FISH, LEO to FISH, FREEMAN LAMAR in 10-35-21E, \$10

REVELS, CLAUDE D JR to BOISCLAIRE, GINA E in 32-25-22E, \$88,000

THEUS, DAVID A to ROYAL, LARRY DANIEL in 25-25-20E, \$28,000

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OBITUARIES

CHURCH AND OBITUARY NOTICE INFORMATION

Obituaries must be submitted in a timely fashion and have a local connection. Pictures are printed with obituaries free of charge. The newspaper reserves the right to publish photos based on quality. It is requested that all news items be typed or emailed to insure accuracy in print.

CONTACT US

By phone at 904.259.2400 or by fax at 904.259.6502. You can stop by our office located at 104 S. Fifth Street, Macclenny, FL or mail your submission to PO Box 598, Macclenny, FL 32063. We are available online at www.bakercountypress.com

Infant Cohen memorial Jan. 5

Brantley William Cohen, 3 months old, of Baldwin died December 30, 2011. He was born in Orange Park to Devan Delano Cohen and Tabitha Elaine Kadlec Cohen on September 10, 2011.



Brantley William

Survivors other than his parents include brother Devan Delano Cohen, Jr.; sister Victoria Lynn Cohen; paternal grandparents Rhonda Sue Brevaldo and Adam Andrews Cohen; maternal grandparents George William (Tina "Grandma") Kadlec, Jr and Wendy Elaine Kadlec; paternal great-grandparents Frank and Mary Wilson; maternal great-grandparents Jimmy and Linda Hembree; aunts Sarah Colbert and Kaylie Cohen; numerous cousins.

A memorial service will be held on Thursday, January 5 at 11:00 am at Taylor Church in Taylor with Pastor Jim Cox officiating. V. Todd Ferreira Funeral Services of Macclenny is in charge of arrangements.

Ulys Davis, 86, funeral January 5

Ulys Davis, 86, of Macclenny died January 2, 2012. He was born in Wakulla, Florida to the late Harney J. Davis and Georgia Williamson Davis on January 25, 1925. He was a lifelong resident of Baker County and a member of the Macclenny Church of Christ.



Ulys Davis

Mr. Davis was a decorated World War II veteran who was awarded the Purple Heart for wounds received 3 days after the Normandy Invasion in 1944.

Mr. Davis enjoyed fishing, farming, traveling to bluegrass music shows and the mountains. His biggest passion was raising cows. He was predeceased by his wife of 61 years Thelma Thrift Davis and infant daughter Sandra Janet Davis.

Survivors include children Leonard Ray (Gail) Davis of Macclenny; Neva Davis of St. Augustine, Edgar (Joni) Davis and Nita D. (Darrell) Crawford, both of Macclenny; grandchildren Stacy (Lewis) Rhoden, Kevin (Rhonda) Davis, Allen Peterson, Julia (Blake) Bullard, Jennifer (Carlos) Victoria; great-grandchildren Marissa and Ridge Rhoden, Bristol Davis and Brayden Bullard.

The funeral service for Mr. Davis will be on Thursday, January 5 at 2:00 pm at his church with Sam Kitching officiating. Interment will follow in Oak Grove Cemetery in Macclenny. The family will receive friends on Wednesday January 4 from 5:00-8:00 pm at the funeral home. Arrangements are by Ferreira Funeral Services, Macclenny.

Mike Gainey Sr., 43, dies Dec. 28th

Kenneth Michael "Mike" Gainey Sr., 43, of Taylor died Wednesday, December 28, 2011 at Orange Park Medical Center. He was born in Macclenny and was a lifelong resident of Baker County and the Taylor community. He graduated in 1987 from Baker County High School, where he played for the varsity Wildcat football team, and then joined the United States Marine Corp.

Mr. Gainey worked for 20 years at Florida Wire and Cable, with 15 of those years at the Sanderson Wiremill. He enjoyed fishing, hunting, golfing, collecting Star Trek and Bald Eagle memorabilia and was an avid Florida Gator fan.

He attended Taylor Church and was preceded in death by paternal grandparents Clayton and Matilda Gainey of St. George, GA and his maternal grandparents Eullie and Edith Richardson of Taylor.

Survivors include sons Kenneth Michael Gainey Jr. of Taylor and Gabriel Johnson of Daytona Beach; parents Chuck and Louise Gainey of Taylor; brother and sister-in-law Greg and Janice Gainey of Taylor; grandchildren Victoria Jayden Gainey and Tyler Chase Gainey; an uncle, aunts, cousins and his longtime dog and friend "Odie."

The funeral service was held Saturday, December 31 at 3 pm at his church with Revs. Mark Woods and Jim Cox officiating. Interment followed at Taylor Cemetery with Marine Corps military honors. Guerry Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements.



In loving memory of Melvin E. Mette 7/31/1943 - 1/4/2011

On January 4, 2011 God sent His angels to take you home. Our hearts still ache in sadness and secret tears still flow.

What it meant to lose you no one will ever know. We know we can't see you but we know you are still there. You're our guardian angel watching over us from up there.

Although our hearts are broken and our tears still fall, we know you are better, no more suffering at all. We love you Daddy and Papa. You will always be in our hearts.

LOVE ALWAYS,
DANA, BRITTNEY, MAKAYLA,
DEANNA AND ARIEL WEDDLE

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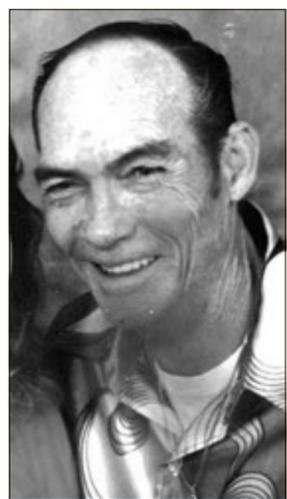
Jerral Johnson, 61, of Starke dies

Jerral Lee Johnson, 61, of Starke died Thursday, December 29, 2011 at Shands at the University of Florida. He was born in Jacksonville on November 8, 1950 to the late Herschel Johnson and Ruby Lee Thompson Dawkins. Jerral was a resident of Starke since 1978 after moving from Jacksonville.

Mr. Johnson was a member of the Sampson City Church of God and he retired after many years as a firefighter and paramedic. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, working in his garage and most of all spending time with his family. He was preceded by his parents and step-father Willis Lee Dawkins.

Survivors include loving wife of 41 years Brenda Joyce Johnson of Starke; children Kimberly Ann (Jeffery Michael) Johnson of Jacksonville and Gregory Michael Johnson, an ag teacher at Baker County High School, of Lawtey; brother Wilbur (Mary Alice) Johnson of Fernandina Beach; step-brother Lee (Yvonne) Dawkins of Jacksonville; step-sister Joann (Lamar) Pierce of Orange Park; granddaughters Abigail and Madilyn Johnson.

The funeral service was held on Monday, January 2 at 11:00 am at his church with Revs. Gene Bass and Alton Coleman officiating. Interment followed at Crosby Lake Cemetery. Archie Tanner Funeral Services was in charge of arrangements.



In loving memory of Melvin Eugene Mette 7/31/1943 - 01/04/2011

It has been a year now since Jesus called you home. He took you into Heaven and put you on His throne. He knew you needed peace and rest and that is why He took the very best.

There is not a day goes by that I don't think about you. You will always be and forever be in my heart and one day we will be together and never have to part. We love and miss you very much.

LOVING WIFE KATHY,
KIDS AND GRANDKIDS

Wilma D. Razo, 88, of Sanderson

Wilma Davis Razo, 88, of Sanderson died at home with her family by her side after a long illness. She was a lifelong member of Dinkins New Congregational Methodist Church of Sanderson. She worked as a waitress and loved going to church and spending time with her family.

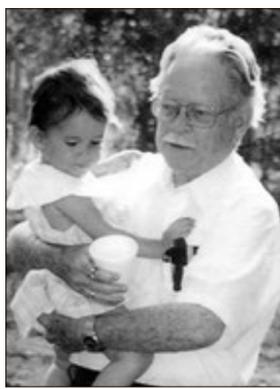


Wilma D. Razo

Mrs. Davis was preceded in death by her parents Albert Bertie Davis and Pearl Raulerson Davis as well as several brothers and sisters.

Survivors include sons Clifton (Betty) Haines of Moreland, GA and Robert Haines of Sanderson; sisters Pearl Shumate and Alice Faye Roaldsen, both of Sanderson; brothers Preston (Miriam) Davis, Elmus "Bud" (Shirley) Davis and Carlton (Margie) Davis, all of Sanderson; 10 grandchildren, 23 great-grandchildren and four great-great-grandchildren also survive.

The funeral service will be held at 2 pm on Thursday, January 5 at her church with Rev. Allen Crews officiating, assisted by Rev. Timothy Alford. Interment will follow at Cedar Creek Cemetery, Sanderson. Visitation will be January 4 from 5-10 pm at her church. Guerry Funeral Home of Macclenny is in charge of arrangements.



In loving memory of Walter Davis Jr 12/11/1927 - 1/5/2006

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\$6.00 cash/check

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Sunday School 10:00 am
Sunday Service 11:00 am
Sunday Evening 6:00 pm
Wednesday Service 7:30 pm
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Sanderson Congregational Holiness Church
CR 127 N., Sanderson, FL
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Morning Worship 11:00 am
Sunday Evening Worship 6:00 pm
Wed. Evening Prayer Serv. 7:30 pm
Pastor: Oral E. Lyons

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Fellowship 10:30 am - 11:00 am
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Wed. Bible Study 7:30 pm
Minister Sam F. Kitching

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CR 229 S., Sanderson FL
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Sun. Morning Worship 11:00 am
Sun. Evening Worship 6:00 pm
Wed. Eve. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Pastor Bob Christmas
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Wednesday Service 7:00 pm
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a few blocks north of Hwy. 90 in Macclenny
www.calvarybaptistmacclenny.com • 259-4529

SOCIAL NOTICE SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Birth announcements, wedding notices and social events (military service notes and school graduations) must be submitted within four weeks of the event. All news and advertising must be submitted to the newspaper office prior to 5:00 p.m. on the Monday prior to publication, unless otherwise noted or arranged. It is requested that all news items be typed or emailed to insure accuracy in print.

CONTACT US

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Stetson Levi Ferguson

Brother is born

Keegan and Dawson Ferguson are pleased to announce the arrival of brother Stetson Levi December 21, 2011 at UF Shands in Gainesville.

Stetson weighed 7 lbs., 12 oz. and measured 20 inches long.

Proud parents are Stephen and Kristy Lynn Ferguson of Glen St. Mary.



Teagan Newmans

A sister arrives

Karsen Newmans is pleased to announce the arrival of sister Teagan Abigail-Lee on December 27, 2011 at St. Vincent's Medical Center in Jacksonville.

Taegan weighed 6 lbs., 13 oz. and measured 19 1/2 inches long.

Proud parents are Jimmy Newmans and Alyssa Graves of Macclenny. Grandparents include Tammy and Dennis Norman of Macclenny, Tina and Elton Stone of Sanderson and Bob and Abby Roberts of Lake City.

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Snack better, lose weight

What's the most popular New Year's resolution among Baker County residents? We turned to the Internet to find out, posting a poll on Facebook last week. The top resolution: losing weight and getting in shape.

One often overlooked avenue to slimming down and toning up is better snacking.

Snacks can either be your worst dieting enemy or your new weight-loss best friend. The difference is all in the choices you make. To help, here are some tips to develop a healthier relationship with snacking.

Portion control

Hand someone a bag of chips and ask them to eat just 100 calories. Sounds impossible, right? Well for most people, it is. Not only is it hard to calculate quickly, our willpower alone will fail us. Soon a few chips become half the bag and the guilt sets in.

Don't even give yourself the opportunity to overeat and instead think portion control. Replace full size snack bags with 100-calorie snack packs. They are the perfect way to know you're only eating 100 calories and resist the urge to eat more. Snyder's of Hanover offers a variety of 100-calorie Pretzel snack packs. Available in mini, snap or pretzel sticks, they're sold in the snack aisle of local grocery store. They are quick and easy and perfect for kids or adults. Plus the best part is, once the snack pack is gone, you're done.

Smart snacks

Making smart snack choices doesn't mean you have to give up flavor or your favorite foods. There are a number of products that are low in fat, and can help satisfy your cravings. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Raisins — One ounce equals 85 calories. You could even cover them with chocolate. Chocolate can be healthy when consumed in small portions.
- Graham crackers — Eight small rectangles is equal to 100 calories.
- Celery with peanut butter — Five pieces of celery with 1 tablespoon peanut butter is equal to 100 calories. This is a very satisfying snack packed with protein and is also gluten-free.
- Unsweetened applesauce — One cup is equivalent to 100 calories, and is a great snack idea for younger children.
- Air-popped popcorn — Three cups or 1 ounce equals 95 calories. Popcorn is also gluten-free.



• Fruit — All types of fruit are full of valuable nutrients and they also contain no gluten.

• Baked corn tortillas with dip — Corn tortillas are a great alternative to potato chips. You can eat them with salsa and/or guacamole for a healthy treat.

• Rice cakes — Rice cakes by themselves aren't really nutritious, but they are gluten-free. Try topping them with cottage cheese and fruit, peanut butter with banana slices, or cheese and tomatoes for a more nutritious snack.

• Fat-free sugar-free pudding — One serving contains approximately 80 calories. Another treat kids really enjoy.

• Lettuce wraps — Fill a big lettuce leaf with tuna, hummus and your favorite vegetables and roll it up. You could even use a ham slice with hummus and vegetables for a change in variety. This is also a gluten-free snack.

Make it simple

Put healthy snacks out so they're easy to grab. Take a bowl and make sure it's filled with fresh fruit. For cold snacks create a healthy snack drawer in your refrigerator. Stock it full of baby carrots cut up veggies and low fat dip or puddings. To give your kids incentive to make healthier choices, give them permission to take any snack from these locations without asking.

Read up

When you're in the store, read the label and look for low fat,

whole grain or organic options when possible. You'd be surprised to see a lot of snacks you might have overlooked before. Even pretzels, like Snyder's of Hanover Organic Whole Wheat Pretzel Nibblers, are made with whole grains and are low in fat.

Set small goals

Creating a healthy lifestyle doesn't just happen overnight but the process shouldn't be overwhelming either. Setting small goals, like snacking on vegetables for a week, can develop into long term eating habits. And it's best to set goals that are obtainable so you see your success early on and you're motivated to continue. Healthy snacking is all about making the right choices. This coming year, it's up to you to make the right decisions.

Out of town & miss your local newspaper?
Read our classified ads, select articles, and take polls!
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School Lunch MENU

January 9 - January 13

Offered everyday:
Cold lunch plate of chef salad with wheat roll or crackers and dessert (when offered) 1% lowfat white milk, 1/2% lowfat flavored milk, orange juice.

Monday, January 9

Breakfast: Enriched cereal with a slice of toast, orange juice and milk.

Lunch: Beef and bean burrito or beef vegetable soup with a grilled cheese sandwich. Choice of 2 sides: baby limas, raw vegetables with dressing, seasonal fresh fruit, milk choice.

Tuesday, January 10

Breakfast: Turkey sausage pancake wrap, orange/pineapple juice and milk.

Lunch: Golden corn dog or ham and macaroni and cheese with homemade whole grain roll. Choice of 2 sides: baked beans, crispy coleslaw, chilled peaches with a schoolmade cookie, milk

Wednesday, January 11

Breakfast: Breakfast sausage pizza, tropical fruit juice and milk.

Lunch: BBQ ribbette on a bun or baked lasagna with a slice of homemade Italian bread. Choice of 2 sides: garden salad with dressing, garden green peas, fresh banana and peach cobbler, milk choice.

Thursday, January 12

Breakfast: Ultimate breakfast round, pineapple juice and milk.

Lunch: Slice of pepperoni pizza or chicken noodle soup with a homemade whole grain roll. Choice of 2 sides: Tossed salad with dressing, mixed vegetables, peach cup, milk choice.

Friday, January 13

Breakfast: Enriched cereal with a slice of toast, orange juice and milk.

Lunch: Breaded chicken patty on a bun or chicken fajitas on a corn tortillas. Choice of 2 sides: sweet potato rounds, lettuce and tomato slice seasonal fresh fruit and a cookie, milk choice.

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DINKINS NEW CONGREGATIONAL METHODIST CHURCH
CR 127 N. of Sanderson
Sunday School 10:00 am
Sunday Morning Service 11:00 am
Sunday Night Service 6:00 pm
Wed. Night Service 7:30 pm
Pastor Allen Crews
Assistant Pastor Timothy Alford

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

January 5

BCHS: Boy's Basketball at Terry Parker, 6 pm, Girl's Weightlifting vs. Middleburg, 3 pm WES: Good Morning Show Club Mtg., 8:00 am

January 6

BCHS: HiQ to Florida Gateway College Brain Bowl, 8:00 am, Football Banquet, Auditorium, 6 pm BCMS: District Spelling Bee, Auditorium KIS: Accelerated Reading Goal #4 Due WES: Positive Behavior Support Club Mtg., 8 pm

January 7

BCHS: Boy's Basketball vs. Keystone, 6 pm

January 8

BCHS: Community-Wide School Prayer, BCHS, 3 pm

January 9

BCHS: Softball Tryouts, 3 pm, AFJROTC Fundraiser Begins BCMS: Boy's and Girl's Basketball at Hamilton, 5 pm, North Florida Honor Band Auditions, 6 pm WES: Family Reading Night, 4 pm MES: Journalism Club Mtg., 3:15 pm PK/K: Kindergarten Accelerated Reader Night, 5:30 and 6:30 pm

January 10

BCHS: Girl's Basketball at Forest, 6 pm BCMS: Semester Exams Language Arts/Reading and Social Studies WES: "Just Say No!" Club Mtg., 8:00 am, Tutoring/After School Reading Club, 3:15 pm KIS: Family Reading Night, 4 pm, School Advisory Council Mtg., 6 pm WES: "Just Say No!" Club Mtg., 8:00 am, School Advisory Council Mtg., 8:00 am, After-school Reading Club, 3:15 pm MES: "Just Say No!" Club Mtg., 8:00 am PK/K: Kindergarten Accelerated Reader Night, 5:30 and 6:30 pm

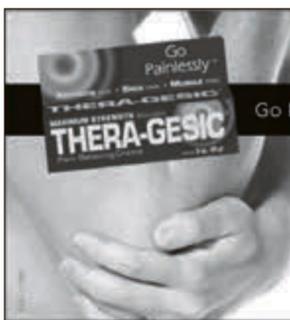
January 11

BCHS: Volleyball Banquet, Ag Center, 7:00 pm BCMS: Semester Exams PE/Band & Science WES: Merrie Melodies Club Mtg., 8:00 am

Happy 35th anniversary Janet.
Thank you for 35 wonderful years.
Love, Charlie

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It was football and more football

So much football, so little column space.

- The Denver Broncos backed into the playoffs but will face Pittsburgh as the No. 4 seed next Saturday.

They looked awful doing it. Tim Tebow threw some ugly passes but his receivers were covered like glue by Kansas City. The defense and running game was excellent but Coach John Fox just didn't look like he trusted Tebow to do what a quarterback has to do in the NFL. He didn't trust him to throw the ball.

If they don't step up their game plan it will be ugly next Saturday and Big Ben and the Steelers will make mincemeat of them. You can't count the Broncos out, but it will be a tough game to win.

- The Jaguars went out on a happy note with Maurice Jones-Drew capturing the rushing title and breaking Fred Taylor's single-season rushing record. Jones-Drew will go to

the Pro-Bowl again this year.

I shake my head a little in wonder at a couple of the Jaguars who never have been Pro-Bowlers. Josh Scobee has been outstanding kicking the ball but has never gotten a whiff from Pro-Bowl voters.

Even more ridiculous is Greg Jones not being selected. You can't have a solid running game like the Jaguars have without a premier blocking back and Jones is one of the best in the league. The former FSU Seminole has been a great full-back for many years.

- Speaking of the Seminoles, they went out with a hard-fought 18-14 win over Notre Dame.

I wish I could say they looked great in the win. Notre Dame controlled much of the game but in the end, EJ Manuel and company came back like champs in the Champs Sports Bowl and Rashad Green, the game's MVP was out-

standing. Green caught a touchdown pass and had the biggest reception of the game, catching a long pass while flat on his back.

- The Gators pulled out a win in what one of my friends called the Urban Liar Bowl over Ohio State. The Buckeyes are winless against the Gators and though they didn't look particularly good doing it, a win is a win.

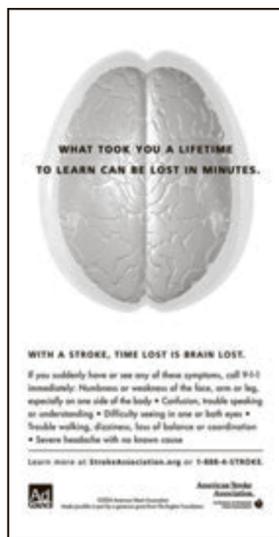
The Gator defense was outstanding as it was in the final game of the season against Florida State.

- Georgia has to be heartbroken after losing in triple overtime to Michigan State. The Dawgs had plenty of chances, but as Wisconsin could tell them, you don't give Kurt Cousins any chances or he will eat you up.

- Hmm. Chrome helmets? Haven't seen that before – ever. Naturally, the team with more uniforms in their lockers than any other – Oregon – would sport them. Though Oregon's uniforms are usually awful, the chrome helmets with the feathers on them is pretty cool.

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ROBERT GERARD



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Host Cats finish fourth

The Wildcat basketball team took fourth place in the Florida First Coast Classic December 27-29 in the BCHS gym.

The Cats lost their opening round match to Interlachen and had to battle back from the loser's bracket to reach the consolation game.

The Wildcats' loss to Interlachen 49-48 was a heartbreaker. Interlachen broke a tie score with two seconds to go on a three-pointer to win the game.

The Cats had erased a 25-17 halftime deficit to claw their way back in the game. The Rams controlled the early run of play, outscoring BCHS 15-9 in the first quarter and steadily building their lead.

Both teams started the third period ice cold and went almost 3.5 minutes without scoring a basket. BCHS narrowed the Ram lead to 6 points late in the third but Interlachen extended it back to 12 points.

BCHS hit some key three pointers and freshmen center CeCe Jefferson made some key defensive plays under the basket to help lead the Wildcats back late in the fourth period. The Cats narrowed the score to 45-41 with 3:45 left and it was a 2-point game a minute later.

Jefferson had two big defensive plays – a block and a tie-up – and Jesse Gardner hit a three pointer to give BCHS the 46-45 lead.

Interlachen tied the score with a free throw and then hit the three pointer. BCHS hit a two pointer at the buzzer but it was too little, too late.

Gardner led the Cats with 13 points. Darryl Johnson had 10, Cameron Mack 8 and Jefferson 6 points.

The boys then won their way into the consolation match with a 65-54 victory over Newberry on December 28. The Cats started fast and were on top the whole way against the Panthers.

The Wildcats took a 25-18 edge into the locker room at half-time. They continued to build on the lead with a rocking third period where they out scored their opponents 23-16. Newberry tried hard to come back in the final period but fell short as BCHS advanced to meet the Bolles Bulldogs.

The Cats couldn't manage much offense in the consolation game, and though Bolles didn't exactly light up the basket either, they were able to eke out a 40-32 win.

Bolles started fast, taking an

early 7-point lead. They built on it in the second period and led by 9 at the half.

Darryl Johnson led the Cats

with 7 points and CeCe Jefferson had 6 for BCHS in the losing effort.



PHOTO BY JUD JOHNSON



Above: Kamoren Mack with a layup against Interlachen during the Wildcats' opening game of the Florida First Coast Classic. The boys fell 49-48 in a close game that came down to the final seconds. Also during the same game, at left, are Wildcats Sean Fogarty (right) and CeCe Jefferson on defense.

Girls second at Snyder Beat hosts, Ed White, loss to Baldwin



PHOTOS BY JUD JOHNSON

Above, Tianna Raysor (right) with a layup during the girl's game against Baldwin in the Bishop Snyder Christmas tournament. Below, Haley Bussell (right) attempts a steal.



PHOTO BY JUD JOHNSON

Chelsey Ruise drives past a defender during the girl's loss to Baldwin in the tournament final, 54-42.

The Lady Wildcat basketball team won its way into the finals of the Bishop Snyder Christmas Tournament before losing to rival Baldwin 54-42. The Cats beat Bishop Snyder in the first round and Ed White in the semi-final game.

Chelsey Ruise had 20 points in the 48-40 win over the White Commanders to lead all scorers. Ruise had 9 points in the final period as BCHS outscored White 16-6 to secure the win.

The game was close throughout the first half with both teams trading basket for basket. But White outscored BCHS 15-7 in the third to pull ahead. BCHS came roaring back however in the fourth to grab the win.

Ruise led all scorers with 20 and Marnae Gaskins had 13.

It was a different story in the final on December 21 as Baldwin used strong outside shooting to win by 12 points.

The Indians went up early 16-11 and steadily built on the lead. But BCHS came back late in the half and trailed by two points, 23-21, at intermission.

Baldwin continued to shoot the ball well and kept the Cats' top scorer Chelsey Ruise in check. She hit 12 points, well below her average.

Ruise nonetheless led the Cats in scoring. Tiana Raysor had 11 and Shanice Paige 7 in the loss.

The girls travel to Forrest on January 10.

Bowden keynotes grid banquet

BOB GERARD | SPORTS

With the turn of the new year, here's a look at what's coming up in local sports.

The BCHS football banquet on January 6 at 6 pm at the First Baptist Church of Macclenny is the place to be, particularly if you are a Seminole fan. It's easy to use the term legend, but former FSU coach Bobby Bowden lives up to the billing. He is the main speaker at the banquet.

In his 34 year career, Mr. Bowden won two national titles, 12 ACC titles, had a pair of Heisman Trophy quarterbacks and is the second winningest coach of all time.

He is a four-time national coach of the year, went to 28 straight college bowls and finished in the top 5 for 14 straight

seasons.

Tickets for the event can be purchased at the door for \$5.

Basketball is into the meat of the schedule as the boys and girls squads wind down to the district tournament in early February.

The girls have been steadily improving as the season's progressed. They will travel to Forrest High on January 10 and return home against West Nassau on January 13.

The boys placed fourth in the Florida First Coast Classic, and though they had a rough start to the season, they've shown some improvement lately. They travel to Terry Parker on January 5 before returning home against Keystone Heights on Saturday.

Wrestling is in full swing, as is girl's weightlifting.

The lady lifters host Middleburg on Thursday at 3 pm and lift in a sub-sectional meet on Saturday at 9 am. The wrestlers travel to St. Augustine on January 12.

Softball and baseball teams throw out their first pitches in early February.

Holland an All First Coast pick

Baker County Wildcat volleyball player Kayla Holland was recently named to *The Florida Times-Union* All First Coast volleyball team. Holland got an honorable mention and was the lone Cat to make the team.

She led her squad in kills with 242 and hit 261 percent on the season. Holland was second on the team in digs with 228. She also had the best serve

reception grade.

"She is an amazing all-around player, which is something you don't find much in volleyball anymore, as most players specialize in either hitting or back row," said Coach Heather Sulkowski. "She was our most efficient hitter and passer. She is the total package and I can't wait to coach her in her senior year. We expect big things from Kayla."

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