



New Miss Wakulla

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The Wakulla Sun

"It's a New Day"



Weather forecast from Wakulla High School

Thursday

Friday

Saturday



Mostly Cloudy
Hi: 78° Lo: 66° 15%
Sunrise 7:09 AM
Sunset 6:32 PM

Mostly Cloudy
Hi: 81° Lo: 63° 19%
Sunrise 7:09 AM
Sunset 6:33 PM

AM Clouds/PM Sun
Hi: 80° Lo: 61° 9%
Sunrise 7:07 AM
Sunset 6:33 PM



\$1 One Section

Locally Owned & Operated

Our 2nd Year 8th Issue
Thursday, February 23, 2023

Charges dropped against Mirko Ceska

The allegations of sexual abuse gained international attention in 2019, but case presented problems for prosecution

By WILLIAM SNOWDEN
Editor

Felony charges against Mirko Ceska were dropped by the state attorney's office after determining there was not sufficient evidence to prosecute.

The Wakulla case garnered national and even international attention about "doomsday preppers" - Ceska and wife Regina - who were abusing twin foster daughters. One of the girls alleged she was sexually abused by Mirko Ceska. Both girls claimed they were treated as farm labor, beaten, and escaped from

the Ceska home. Ceska was arrested and charged in July 2019 with sexual battery, sexual assault, and neglect for alleged abuse of the girls. Regina Ceska was arrested and charged with two counts of neglect and two counts of failure to report abuse, but those charges were dropped within a month of being filed.

Former Wakulla Chief Prosecutor Brian Miller, now county judge, drafted a memo before leaving office at the end of the year on why the charges against Mirko Ceska were being dropped, but didn't have time for State At-



Mirko Ceska

torney Jack Campbell to review it. The memo was subsequently filed by Miller's replacement,

Wakulla Chief Prosecutor Jon Fuchs on Jan. 18.

Defense attorney Don Pumphrey said the case ruined the lives of the Ceskas. He said when he called Ceska to let him know the charges were being dropped, "He was very emotional, and so was his wife."

Pumphrey praised State Attorney Jack Campbell, Miller and Fuchs for dropping the case, along with praise for co-counsel Fred Conrad, who initially represented Regina Ceska and then came on board to represent Mirko Ceska.

In the seven-page

memo filed by the state attorney's office dropping the charges, it was noted that the Ceskas were arrested without an arrest warrant back in July 2019 as the Wakulla County Sheriff's Office "appeared to make their decision to arrest (Ceska) without a warrant due to concerns for the safety of the victim, (Name redacted), and her twin sister, (Name redacted)."

The case garnered extensive media attention, but the memo notes that subsequent investigation revealed that "the reality of the case bore little resemblance to the

initial reports. For example, there were initial reports that the defendant and his wife were some sort of 'doomsday prepper' couple due to the presence of multiple firearms and some meals-ready-to-eat (MREs)." The memo notes that Wakulla County is rural and it is not uncommon in rural communities for people to choose to possess multiple firearms or to have food, sometimes in the form of MREs, in case of emergencies.

The memo notes that initial reports said there was possible child abuse.

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AFRICAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE GALA



Arthur Lee Andrews donation

Family members of Arthur Lee Andrews, who was the only Wakulla resident killed in the Vietnam War, donated items to the Wakulla County Christian Coalition on Friday night at the African-American

Heritage Gala. The items donated included Andrews' service medals, including his purple heart. More photos of the weekend's Black History Festival on Page 13. (Photo by William Snowden)

Todd Williams named to All-State team

Staff Report

Wakulla football player Todd Williams, who recently signed a scholarship to play at Delaware, was named to the All-State team on first team defense, according to floridahsfootball.com.

Williams led the War Eagles in sacks this year with 13. He had received attention from other Division 1 schools and had initially committed to Tulane before decommitting and going with Delaware.

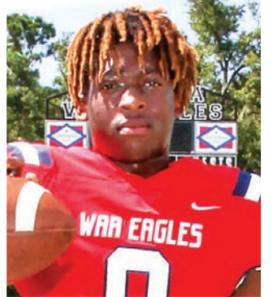
Three other War Eagles made the All-State list:

- Wide receiver Samron Brinson, a junior, was named to second team offense. He led the team in touchdowns this year with 14.

- Deondre Strong, a senior, was named to second team offense as an offensive lineman.

He has signed to play at St. Thomas University.

- Kicker Chase Linville was named as an honorable mention. He was named All-Big Bend Special Teams Player of the Year. Linville kicked 30 extra points this year, and ranked 13th in Division 2S this year.



Todd Williams

Jack Rudloe turns 80

Birthday celebration is held Friday at Gulf Specimen Marine Lab



Jack Rudloe gets a hug from son Cypress as grandson Kai looks on.

St. Marks discusses RVs in the city

By RIDDHI PATEL
Correspondent

The St. Marks City Commission held a workshop on recreational vehicles following their regular monthly meeting on the evening of Thursday, Feb. 9. Mayor Paul Sheddan said that he envisioned the workshop to be an educational forum as three new commissioners were sworn-in last month.

The workshop, which mainly focused on recreational vehicles located on residential or vacant residential lots, began with City Attorney Ron Mowrey sharing some rules and regulations for RVs in St. Marks.

"In the City of St. Marks," Mowrey said, "we are bound by certain state and federal laws and codes that we have to comply with." The city can make decisions regarding RVs, but there are limitations on what can be done - for example, flood ordinances must be followed for all properties in St. Marks.

Regarding residential properties, Mowrey mentioned that generally, citizens can store RVs on their residential properties, but they cannot live in them - this includes not being able to hook up to sewer, water, and electricity. Mowrey and Sheddan did note that case-by-case, temporary

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Rudloe talking to the crowd.



Jack Hanway and Frank Lindamood enjoy some gumbo.

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Flower of the Week at Sopchoppy Depot Park False Rosemary

By LYNN ARTZ and DAVID RODDENBERRY



The flowers on the evergreen shrub.

False rosemary (*Conradina canescens*) is a small evergreen shrub with showy lavender flowers and gray-green foliage. This lovely shrub grows to 3 feet tall and wide. Native mainly to the western panhandle of Florida, it thrives in dry, sandy soil in full sun. False rosemary blooms mainly in the spring but continues to bloom through the summer and fall. The charming flowers attract many pollinators, especially bees. This member of the mint family has needle-like leaves with a mint fragrance when crushed. Sometimes called wild rosemary or beach rosemary, this long-lived shrub should be used more in home landscapes. Plants can be purchased at the Sarracenia Chapter tent at the Worm Gruntin' Festival in April. False rosemary is blooming now in the northwest gardens at Sopchoppy Depot Park.

Student of the Week

Makenzy Coring, 6th grader at Riversprings Middle School

Principal- Josh Sandgren

Makenzy is a member of the Bear Band where she plays the Euphonium. When she isn't practicing her instrument, she is practicing for the school drama club while maintaining A honor roll even with a schedule filled with advanced classes. Makenzy's favorite part about being at RMS is being with her cousin and the friends she has made here. RMS is a better school because of students like Makenzy! Go Bears!

STUDENT OF THE WEEK FEATURES A DIFFERENT SCHOOL EACH WEEK.



Wakulla County Tax Collectors Office

Lisa Craze, CFC



SPECIALTY TAGS
 \$20 - \$30 additional to cost of tag.

Wakulla County Tax Collector

NEW LICENCE PLATE COMING SOON.



This new license plate features the slogan "Don't Tread On Me" accompanied by a black coiled rattlesnake over a yellow background. Funds from the plate will benefit the Florida Veterans Foundation.

Currently this plate is not in stock as we are awaiting arrival of the plates from the state. If you would like to pre order then please complete the 0 dollar purchase and you will be placed on the waiting list.



SCAN ME for an electronic edition of this



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Isabella Taff is crowned Miss Wakulla

Special to The Sun

Isabella Taff was crowned the 2023 Miss Wakulla County on Saturday, Feb. 11th at the Wakulla High School Auditorium.

Isabella is the granddaughter of Dale and Dennis Litchfield. She competed in the areas of scholastic and community achievement, short essay, personal interview, personal introduction, on-stage question, evening gown and an on-stage finalist question. Isabella also won Best Interview and was voted on by her peers as Miss Congeniality.

Along with being crowned Miss Wakulla County, Isabella has won a \$1,000 scholarship. 1st Runner Up is Hailey Sandberg, 2nd Runner Up is Riley Davis, 3rd Runner Up is Emma Dykes.

Hailey Sandberg also won the Scholastic and



Junior Miss Wakulla Mckey Nunn, Tiny Miss Wakulla Brooks Loper, Little Miss Wakulla Olivia Compton, Miss Wakulla Isabella Taff, and Young Miss Wakulla Harli Spence.

Community Achievement Award.

Mckey Nunn was crowned Jr. Miss Wakulla County. She is the daughter of Kip

and Tina Nunn. 1st Runner Up is Braelyn Weeks. 2nd Runner Up is Cameron Byrd.

Harli Spence was crowned Young Miss

Wakulla. She is the daughter of Trish Donaldson and Buddy Spence. 1st Runner Up is Hayleigh Blackshear. Olivia Compton was

crowned Little Miss Wakulla. She is the daughter of Jessica and Jeremy Compton. 1st Runner Up is Lilly Ann Smith.

Brooks Loper was crowned Tiny Miss Wakulla. She is the daughter of Bunni Calloway and Dustin Loper. 1st Runner Up is Emory Thomas. 2nd Runner Up is Aurora Noble. 3rd Runner Up is Lorelei Chisler.

Thank you to the Wakulla High School Theatre Troupe 5036 for all their assistance this year. Special thank you to our emcees Molly Jones and Tia Unsell and this year's judges.

Thank you to all the contestants for their participation, their families, and Wakulla County for making this pageant a success.

We look forward to a great year with our 2023 Queens!

If you would like to have Miss Wakulla County attend your event, please contact us at misswakullacounty@gmail.com or 850-510-4897.



Sopchoppy Opry is Saturday

Anna Wescoat, singer, songwriter and instrumentalist will make her Sopchoppy Opry debut Saturday, Feb. 25 at 7 p.m. in the historic Sopchoppy

School Auditorium in the Opry's first ever all girl musical set!

Anna, a guest performer at Nashville's famed Blue Bird Cafe, will be joined for an

hour of musical fun by Kay Kaye, Cindy Carter and Glenda Bradley. Ticket office and Opry Cafe open at 5:30 p.m. on the show date.

Tickets are \$15 and

may be reserved at (850) 962-3711 or purchased at the door.

For more information about this show and upcoming events visit sopchoppyopry.com.

Wakulla assistant coach John Cooper is named head coach in Franklin County

Staff Report

Wakulla Assistant Coach John Cooper has been named head football coach in Franklin County.

Cooper has been offensive line coach for the War Eagles since 2017. Before that, he was an assistant coach at Franklin County under then-head coach Tony Yeomans for five years.

When contacted by The Sun, Cooper had just held his first meet-and-greet with his new players, and said he was looking forward to the experience.

He praised Wakulla Head Coach Scott Klees and his time coaching under Klees.

Klees said he was excited for Cooper to have the opportunity.



John Cooper, center, with some of his War Eagle offensive line from last season. He has been named head football coach at Franklin County.

St. Marks

From Front Page

(6-month, potentially renewable) exemptions to the restrictions can be granted by the commission for medical reasons or during the construction/renovation of a home, and that an emergency resolution can be made to loosen restrictions in the case of a natural disaster. Individuals can only live in an RV on property zoned as a commercial travel trailer park (CTTP), and no RVs can be stored or lived in on vacant residential lots.

Sheddan noted that historically, some individuals and their RVs were approved for non-conforming uses prior to the regulations being created, but that the approval does not transfer to another person.

Sheddan and City Manager Zoe Mansfield said those not in compliance are sent a letter and fined. Mansfield said that usually there is no response to those letters and fines often go unpaid.

Many citizens asked questions and shared their concerns during the standing-room only workshop. Some common

threads throughout the conversation included requests that regulations for RVs in St. Marks be clearly defined in writing, any non-conforming exceptions be evaluated and potentially noted in writing, and rules and regulations be applied and enforced consistently for all residents.

In other news, topics discussed during the regular meeting included:

- Stan West, owner of Riverside Café, shared plans for a farmer's market-style Community Day event that a committee of St. Marks residents came up with to help bring more people to St. Marks. The committee plans to start the Community Day in May – potentially Saturday, May 13 or consistently the fourth Saturday every month, and eventually be able to organize a larger event, like a Beer Fest. The group plans to form a 501(c)3 called Discover St. Marks with the goal of organizing multiple events throughout the year and donating funds raised to community organizations.

- Mansfield gave an update on various projects including the improvements being made to the Wakulla River Park.

The city has the funding for the project, but it is waiting on the state to send a notice to proceed. Planned improvements to the park include a children's playground, a water fountain, and a walking trail.

- Some residents expressed concern about speeding along the main road. Options proposed

included notifying the sheriff's office to get a flashing speed limit sign placed by the road. City Commissioner Steve Remke asked if the Department of Transportation could potentially be approached in regards to installing traffic calming devices as the road is a state road.

PUBLIC NOTICES:

For our readers' convenience, The Wakulla Sun provides this Public Notice Section for all Public Notices not published in the Legal Notice section of the newspaper.



BID #22/23-02
Wakulla County School Board
Request for Architectural Services
 For
THE SPECIAL CATEGORY GRANT FOR THE PROJECT OF SOPCHOPPY HIGH SCHOOL
 The Wakulla County School Board is accepting proposals for Architectural Services for The Special Category Grant Project of Sopchoppy High School. All those interested should submit four (4) copies of the following: Resume, forms 254, SF 330 and a list of references and qualifications to Robert Pearce, Superintendent of Wakulla County Schools, P.O. Box 100, 69 Arran Road, Crawfordville, Florida 32327 by 10:00 a.m., on March 17, 2023. Contact person is Michael Barwick, Director of Facilities and Maintenance at (850) 926-0065.
 February 16, 23, March 2, 2023

WAKULLA COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
 PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT FOR
 CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT AT RISK SERVICES
 Project Name: **WAKULLA WAR EAGLE CAREER ACADEMY**
 Project Location: **3237 COASTAL HWY, CRAWFORDVILLE, FLORIDA 32327**
 Bid Number: **21/22-02**
 The Wakulla County School Board, Department of Facilities and Construction, requests qualifications from construction management at risk firms to provide services for this project. Construction budget estimate for this project is **\$16,000,000.00**. Construction start is TBA. Applicant must be a **licensed general contractor in the State of Florida** at the time of application. Further, if a corporation, the applicant must be registered by the Department of State, Division of Corporations, to operate in the State of Florida at the time of application.
 The selection will be made in accordance with Section 287.055 Florida Statutes, the School Board Policies, SREF rules and procedures and criteria which may be obtained from **Michael Barwick**, at the address and phone number below.
 Firms interested in being considered for this project may attend a Pre-request for Qualification meeting at the **Board Room at the Superintendent's Office on February 16, 2023 @ 3:00 p.m.** Request for Qualification Procedures may be picked up prior to meeting at the **Wakulla County School Board/Facilities Office from Donna Chatham located at 126 High Drive, Crawfordville, Florida 32327**. In addition, interested firms must submit an application with the following information:
 1. A letter of interest detailing the firm's qualification to meet the above referenced selection criteria.
 2. An Experience Questionnaire as referenced in RFQ, which may be obtained at the Pre-request for Qualification meeting from **Michael Barwick**, phone number **(850) 926-0065**.
 3. The vendor must provide a current Florida Professional Registration Certificate for a Florida General Contractor License.
 Submit 4 copies of your application to the Wakulla County School Board, **Robert Pearce, Superintendent, 69 Arran Road, Crawfordville, Florida 32327**. Deadline date is **March 14, 2023 at 2:00 p.m.** The results of this selection will be posted at the Superintendent's Office **69 Arran Road, Crawfordville, Florida 32327**, during regular business hours starting **April 17, 2023**. Any protest on the selection must be made within 72 hours. Contract negotiation and award will proceed with the selected firm.
 Published Feb. 9, 16, 23, 2023

Opinions

THE FIRST AMENDMENT

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

Noticing Eden: The last 50 miles with no McDonalds

By **ROBERT SEIDLER**

There is a place, just one place that's uncharted, uncivilized, original and culturally intact, it is known as the Forgotten Coast.

The way Florida fit on a roadmap wasn't the standard way, the western panhandle of Florida was put on the backside of the roadmap and seldom noticed...it was forever severed and forgotten from view and still is.

From Sopchoppy to Apalachicola there remains 50 miles of coastal highway without intervention of civilization or a McDonalds.

It's a part of the Big Bend Scenic Byway – it roams uncharted territories with histories of native peoples that lived easily for hundreds of generations on coastal gatherings of foodstuff and botanical housing.

They produced the finest pottery and hand knapped points at a time

when other peoples game was eaten raw and killed by stones. They had fire, oysters, clams, fishes, crabs, conchs and fruit. This was in abundance and along this drive, still is.

They left gigantic mounds of organic waste composed of the shells of the creatures they ate.

Mounds often up to 30 feet high and a mile long. Those mounds became the safe haven during storms and hurricanes and some remain today. Sadly most were used as roadway base in the early 1900s when autos replaced feet and horses as the way to travel, explore and exploit.

50 miles remain.

A diverse and cranky population inhabits the area now, descendants of a sorts of the Aboriginal peoples. Time morphs all things and all things forever change. Nature still leads us onward yet awkwardly we believe we are the ones in control.



Point parts from along the drive from Sopchoppy to Apalachicola.

I have been traveling this 50 miles for almost 50 years and still notice new wonders invisible at highway speeds but ever present to hikers, kayakers or cyclists who know how to Notice Eden.

Present civilizations have put stamps on this area but hurricanes and

waves, wildland fires, bugs and plants still own it all. Sometimes they all work together and all the present day stamps of this time just breakup and disappear. We call it devastation, nature calls it process.

I have a partner and companion at one end of

this journey and travel the 50 back and forth at all times and in all conditions.

Nature owns the conditions, I just endure them as those native peoples did for hundreds of generations. I see those native people in the wind, the waves and the sand.

They haven't left and will never, their stamps are all of those natural elements still working with perfection, not houses that flee to parts when hurricanes arrive but the sand of pottery, the fronds of cabbage palms waving wildly in hundred mile winds then resting calmly afterwards.

The decomposed shells that create the sand and dirt, they were a part of it all not a part from anything. Resilient and durable by design, made from what existed within reach that was proven by place and time again and again.

We can learn much in these 50 miles if we slow, look and listen.

We can learn enough to prosper properly again but first we must learn to Notice Eden.

Robert Seidler is a filmmaker who lives in Sopchoppy.

Seeking due process from FWC

Editor, **The Sun:**

In my previous letters, I wrote about the 24 straight years of the complete lack of “adequate due process” for those whose lives depend on the marine resource. In the minutes of the Constitutional Revision Committee, there is an important point that was made during the creation of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC).

From the minutes: COMMISSIONER THOMPSON; “So we couldn't hear, our successors in 20 years, and members of the Legislature and others wouldn't hear that they didn't have the opportunity to be heard, and more importantly, that they didn't have the right to challenge on a scientific basis what was being done about the resource that their livelihoods depend upon. At the same time, we wanted to be sure that those that make those decisions did that on the basis of scientific research and data and that they didn't just make arbitrary and capricious types of decisions.”

As shown in previous letters, the above feared scenario is exactly what happened, despite the Constitution, Statutes, Codes and Framer's intent to prevent it.

Secondly, Current Florida Administrative code 68-1.008 states - Due Process Procedures : As to rules promulgated under the FWC's constitutional authority, there are adequate judicial remedies to adjudicate such rules and provide due process of law.

If the above statement is correct, the courts, including the Florida Supreme Court, have a lot of explaining to do as to why the FWC has been allowed to get away proclaiming that no one is allowed to question their “wisdom” at every judicial step for the last 20+ years when their contested rules are completely arbitrary, capricious and lack any scientific basis what-so-ever. Additionally, why did the Florida Supreme Court refuse to interpret FWC jurisdiction as stated in Art 12. Sect 23? In our case to the Supreme Court late last year, two 1st DCA judges stated that it was vitally important for the Supreme Court to do so. The case was simply “denied.”

Hopefully, the Governor and/or Legislature will intervene before we take this and so much more proof that there is a complete lack of due process under the FWC to Federal Court.

David Grix
Boynton Beach

Local GOP endorses constitutional carry

This week the Wakulla Republican Executive Committee unanimously adopted a resolution in support of House Bill 543 which would allow anyone who legally possesses a firearm to carry it concealed without a permit. The resolution also supports the Florida Legislature to include provisions for other state reciprocity including ‘open carry’ for anyone who legally possesses a firearm.



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Out of State - \$60/yr. - \$35/6 mo.

On the Horizon

Calendar of upcoming events for the week of Feb. 23

Thursday, February 23

- The Rotary Club of Wakulla County meets at the TCC Wakulla Center at 8:30 a.m.
- English Financial Group will hold a Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting at their new office at 139 Council Moore Road from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
- The VFW Auxiliary Bingo Night will be held at 7 p.m. at 475 Arran Road in Crawfordville, every Thursday. There will be concessions and raffles.
- Hatha Yoga with Zoe at 9 a.m. and Yin Yoga with Nellie at 6 p.m. Classes are \$12, packages available at New Posh on 3079 Crawfordville Hwy. Please RSVP email at newposh3079@gmail.com or text/call at (850) 528-5838.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 6:30 p.m. at the American Legion, 54 Ochlockonee St.

Friday, February 24

- Wakulla Community Theater Presents: Highway Natives concert at the Sopchoppy Auditorium at 6:30 p.m. Show openers are Brandon Autrey and Rockulla Music. Food trucks will be there at 5 p.m. and doors open at 6 p.m.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at noon and 8 p.m. every Friday at the American Legion, 54 Ochlockonees St.

Saturday, February 25

- A Murder Mystery Dinner Show will be held at the Wakulla Moose Lodge in Panacea at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$45 and proceeds will benefit Palaver Tree Theater and the Wakulla High School Drama Club.
- Intro to Tai Chi held at the Community Center from 9 to 10 a.m. All ability levels are welcome; please wear comfortable clothing. For questions call Rich or Terri Bushman at 850-228-9214.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 6:30 p.m. at the American Legion, 54 Ochlockonee St.
- Keep Wakulla County Beautiful will hold their 2023 Apalachicola National Forest Clean-up from 8 a.m. to noon.
- Sopchoppy Opry at the Historic Sopchoppy High School Auditorium featuring Anna Westcoat & The All Girls Band starting at 7 p.m. Individual show tickets are \$15 each.

Monday, February 27

- The Sopchoppy Lions Club meets the 4th Monday of each month at the historic Sopchoppy High School at 6:30 p.m.
- Intro to Tai Chi held at the Community Center from 9 to 10 a.m. All ability levels are welcome; please wear comfortable clothing. For questions call Rich or Terri Bushman at 850-228-9214.
- The Wakulla Respite Program will be available for anyone with memory impairment at no cost from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Lake Ellen Baptist Church.
- Hatha yoga at 9 a.m. and Restorative Yoga at 6 p.m. with Zoe. Classes are \$12, packages available at New Posh on 3079 Crawfordville Hwy. Please RSVP email at newposh3079@gmail.com or text/call at (850) 528-5838.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. at the American Legion, 54 Ochlockonee St.

Tuesday, February 28

- The Veterans Town Hall Meeting will be held from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the Crawfordville Room at the Wakulla County Community Center.
- Sopchoppy Community Dinner is held every week at the Towles House at 6:30 p.m.
- Yin Yoga at 10:30 a.m. and Flow Yoga at 6 p.m. with Nellie. Classes are \$12, packages available at New Posh on 3079 Crawfordville Hwy. Please RSVP email at newposh3079@gmail.com or text/call at (850) 528-5838.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 6:30 p.m. at the American Legion, 54 Ochlockonee St.

Wednesday, March 1

- The Wakulla Senior Center Fundraiser Dinner featuring local dignitaries serving dinner will be held at the Seinyard at Wildwood. Social hour begins at 5 p.m. and dinner begins at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$50. For tickets, contact Sue Anderson at 850-567-5408.
- Intro to Tai Chi held at the Community Center from 9 to 10 a.m. All ability levels are welcome; please wear comfortable clothing. For questions call Rich or Terri Bushman at 850-228-9214.
- A Line Dance class will be held at 1 p.m. at the Wakulla Senior Center.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at noon and at 6:30 p.m. at the American Legion, 54 Ochlockonee St.

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You can support The Wakulla Sun with a tax-deductible donation to help us cover the stories that matter to you.

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Send it to Florida Press Foundation at 336 East College Avenue, Suite 304, Tallahassee FL 32301.

◀ Question of The Week ▶

– Compiled by Lynda Kinsey

Polled at Jack Rudloe's 80th birthday party at Gulf Specimen Marine Lab: What's your favorite sea animal?



ROBERT SEIDLER
PERSONABLE PERSON

“Mermaid!”



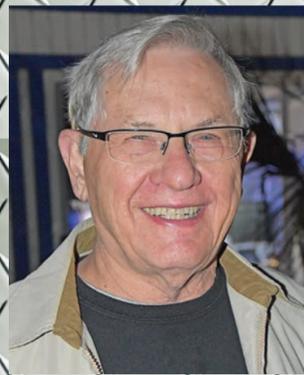
JOSH THOMPSON
JUST A GEEK

“One hundred percent the Seahorse. Did you know they can change colors?”



CHRIS PARKINSON
RETIRED

“The Fiddler Crabs, I like the way they move in unison like the seas waves.”



SAM ALLEN
RETIRED

“I never really thought about it. They are all just fascinating.”



CHUCK HESS
COUNTY COMMISSIONER

“A tropical Spotted Drum, their babies are just elegant.”

COMMUNITY NEWS

Wakulla Station News

By **VERNA BROCK**

Hello again, prayer warriors! So many folks continue in need of our prayerful support.

Please keep Shelby Sloan and Hunter Peacock in your prayers, as they struggle with the imminent loss of their newborn baby girl, Emer-syn. This young family welcomed their baby knowing she faced deep odds against survival. As I write this, Emersyn is struggling to live, and is surrounded by her loving extended family even as they prepare to say goodbye. I know they all sense the support and love of each prayer, and welcome your loving care.

Also, please continue to lift the family of Sebastian Mosley, as he awaits a heart transplant in Gainesville. This baby is dependent upon a special device to keep his blood circulating, and his family is doing their

best to manage a home life and still be with him. I can only imagine the stress of this, and my heart aches for them. Heather, Sebastian's mother, welcomes all of our prayers with deep gratitude.

Those of you who knew and loved Mr. Ernest Newberry, his service will be this Friday, at noon, at the National Cemetery. He was one of the sweetest people I have ever known. Please keep Ms. Betty and his family in your prayers.

I'm happy to report that Louis Hernandez is doing well following surgery, and on his way to a great recovery. My dad, who will be 91 years old in less than a month, is now Covid NEGATIVE! After a five day separation, I'm making tracks back to Tapestry to see him in the flesh. Heartfelt thanks to all who prayed for him (and me!) during this time. Dad is still weak, but doing much better.

What a great weekend the Christian Coalition had, celebrating African American History! Saturday's parade turnout was the best I have ever seen, and the weather was flawless. I was so happy to be able to recruit vendors for the Woodville Founders Day Festival (Saturday, March 18th at the J. Lewis Hall Recreation Park), as well as enjoy all the family fun during the parade and performances! Thanks to all the volunteers who work so hard to make this annual event a success, and especially to my dear friends Robert and Kenny Manning. The dedication and enthusiasm of all of these volunteers is inspiring.

The Woodville Founders Day Festival is happening March 18th, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the J. Lewis Hall Recreation Park in Woodville. Vendors are welcome, and the fee of \$25 goes directly to the Woodville Volunteer Fire Department to support

services for the entire Woodville/Wakulla area. Check out the Festival Facebook page for vendor info and registration forms.

Some of the re-enactors and presenters coming are Finley's Brigade; a half-scale replica of the Hunley (a Confederate submarine); the Colored Troops; Dr. Richard Blaney and his amazing Gallecenos horse (a heritage breed from the Spanish Conquistadors' era); and performances by Our favorite North Florida storytelling troubadour, Ernest Toole. Don't miss out on this family fun day that is free to the public.

Wakulla Wonderful, an annual day of celebrating Wakulla County, will be the Saturday before on March 11th, in downtown Crawfordville. There is no vendor fee, and the Extension Office is seeking participation from folks who make items themselves, as well as all agencies that provide services to Wakulla citizens. I will be sharing more news about these celebrations as we move closer to their dates.

Library News – Feb. 23

UPCOMING EVENTS!

Thursday, February 23

Understanding File Management 9am
Microsoft Excel: Beyond the Basics 11:30am
Best FREE Online Sources for Genealogy 2pm
Advanced Kids Coding Sign Up 5pm
Friends of the Library General Meeting 6pm
Wakulla Democratic Executive Committee 6pm

Friday February 24

Quilting Guild 9:30am
Zeta Phi Zeta 4pm

Saturday, February 25

VITA/Tax Prep 9am
Zeta Phi Zeta 9am
READ Therapy Dogs 10am

Monday, February 27

No Programs Today

Tuesday, February 28

Book Bunch 10am
Memoir Writing 10am

Dungeons & Dragons 2pm
The Parks HOA Covenant Review 6:30pm

Wednesday, March 1

Book Babies 10am
Knitting Group 4pm
Virtual Reality Coding 5pm

Thursday, March 2

Understanding File Management 9am
Microsoft Excel: Beyond the Basics 11:30am
Best FREE Online Sources for Genealogy 2pm
Advanced Kids Coding 5pm
The Flowers BOD/ACC Committee 6:15pm

AFTER HOURS SPEAKER SERIES

Our new speaker series has been CANCELLED due to lack of attendance.

TECHNOLOGY CLASSES!

Our technology classes are FREE and open to all Wakulla County residents. REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED. Please call 850-926-7415 to register. All classes are taught by instructor Deanna Ramsey.

- Understanding File Management (Windows Users) Thursdays, February 23 & March 2, 9, 16, 23, & 30th from 9-11am (Six-Part Class)
- Microsoft Excel Beyond the Basics - Thursdays, February 23 & March 2, 9, 16, 23, & 30th from 11:30am - 1:30pm (Six-Part Class)
- Best FREE Online Resources for Genealogy - Thursdays, February 23 & March 2 & 9 from 2-4pm (Three-Part Class)

SPRING OPEN HOUSE AND COMMUNITY PARTNER FAIR

Join us for a day of fun and learn all about your library! Explore the

library, get a library card, meet the staff, enjoy refreshments, get your face painted, play some games, make a craft, and so much more! Also, don't miss the opportunity to meet some of our other Community Partners and learn about all of the activities and services they have to offer. Saturday, March 4, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Interested in setting up a table or booth as a Community Partner? Email rddrummond@mywakulla.com for more information.

UPCOMING HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

- Friday, April 7th and Saturday, April 8th for Easter
- Saturday, May 27th for Memorial Day
- Tuesday, July 4th for Independence Day
- Saturday, September 2nd for Labor Day

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Habitat for Humanity®

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940 Shadeville Rd.

Wakulla Lawn Ranger
Gene Darby
850-251-9122
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Sidewalk/Driveways
Pressurewashing
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Great Prices - Great Work

Wakulla Community Theater
FRIDAY FEB. 24, 2023
\$15-ADV
\$20-DOOR
PRESENTS an acoustic evening with
Highway Natives
BRANDON AUTREY
ROCKULLA MUSIC
Food Trucks: 5pm
Doors: 6pm
Show: 6:30pm
Tickets can be purchased at:
McIver Flooring
The Wakulla Sun & Highwaynatives.com
Historic Sopchoppy Auditorium
164 Yellow Jacket Ave. Sopchoppy, FL

Outdoors

outdoor sports

HOME ON THE RANGE

Little facts that matter, Part 1



By MARJ LAW

Did you ever notice that no gun seller hands you the gun you choose out of the case? Not immediately.

SHOWING A GUN

First, the seller pulls it from the display. He points the muzzle of the gun away from any person. His finger never touches the trigger. Then he drops the magazine. Then he pulls the slide back, looks inside, and finally turns it so you can see inside too. Every time.

This is safety. Safety is most important. You should always perform these actions, too. Every time you “look” at a gun.

You always always point the muzzle of the gun in a safe direction. Doesn't matter where you are. Make sure that gun does not point towards any person. In the rare case of an accidental discharge, no one will get hurt.

There's a reason why sellers drop the magazine and then show you the empty port. Many guns can fire if there is a round in the chamber, even when the magazine is out of the gun. That's why the seller pulls back the slide, looks for himself (or herself), and then shows that there is nothing in the ejection port or the chamber.

When you show your gun to your friend, or anyone else, remember to keep your finger off the trigger, point safe, drop magazine, and show empty chamber. So far, people will think you

know what you're doing!

HAMMER VS. STRIKER-FIRED HANDGUNS

It's easy. Hammer fired guns have a hammer in the back, right? Many do. However, you can't tell there's a hammer just by looking at the back of the gun.

Some hammer fired guns are “bobbed,” “shrouded” or “partially shrouded.” You might not even be able to see a hammer. That's tricky!

And it doesn't mean there is no hammer. So how do you know if you have a hammer or striker-fired gun?

Aim your muzzle in a safe direction. Lock the slide back. Turn the gun upside down so you can see the underside of the slide.

If you are holding a hammer-fired gun, you'll see the round end of the firing pin. Remember, the hammer whacks the firing pin in a hammer-fired gun. The firing pin whacks the primer in your round and: Bang!

If you have a striker-fired gun, you'll see this rectangular piece of metal with a hook on one end. That's the striker. A spring grabs the hook and pulls the striker back. The striker whacks the primer and off we go! Bang!

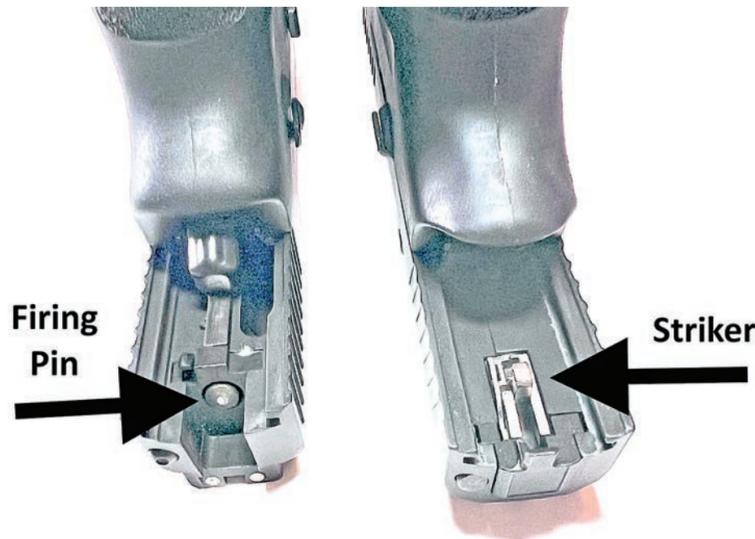
SINGLE VERSUS DOUBLE ACTION

“It's a double action/single action gun,” says Seller. You nod like you understand completely.

Well, maybe not. How do you know? What is this action thing? Is a gun single action, double action or both?

Single or double action refers to how much work that trigger has to do. Double means two. Double action means you're making the trigger do 2 jobs: cocking the hammer and then releasing the hammer.

In single action you're asking the trigger to do



Sig Sauer P250: Hammer Gun

Sig Sauer P320 Striker-Fired Gun

A Tale of 2 Sigs:

The underside of the slides locked back

only 1 job: releasing the hammer.

In a single action gun, you pull back or “jack” the slide. Jacking the slide results in both loading a round and cocking the hammer. Pull the trigger and the gun fires.

In a double action gun, you jack the slide to load it, but this time, jacking the slide does not result in cocking the hammer. Go figure. Because the hammer is not yet cocked, you're telling Trigger to both cock the hammer and then release it. And because Trigger is working harder, in most cases, you'll find it's more difficult to pull him.

Some guns are double action/single action. In the first shot, Trigger both cocks the hammer and then releases it. That's double action. However, after this first round, the act of firing cocks the hammer for the next round. That's now single action.

Naturally, it is easier to shoot those subsequent shots because you aren't making Trigger do 2 jobs.

Some guns are always double action. Trigger always both cocks and then releases the hammer. In these cases, the first shot does not result in cocking the hammer. The trigger has to do that all over again for the next shot and it also has to release the hammer again. Every shot will be double action.

I once bought a Sig Sauer double action/double action gun. Pulling the trigger at the store wasn't too hard. However, when I got to the range, I discovered that although the trigger wasn't too hard, once I shot the gun several times, the trigger seemed to be a lot of work. Double action all the time can seem like work. It did to me. I sold the gun.

Why would anyone make a double action only gun? Apparently, these guns are often used for police officers. Since pulling the trigger once is a job, and pulling it twice is a job again, then the officer really means to shoot the gun. Second and third shots requiring hard pulls

are deliberate shots. You do want your officers to be sure that they mean to shoot.

Striker-fired guns are a different animal altogether than hammer-fired guns. Their engineering is different. You still have to jack the slide to load your first round.

According to hinterlandoutfitters.com, “Striker-fired actions mimic a double-action pull, but with lighter pressure and little movement of the trigger to discharge the pistol.”

Because of this, the terms single-action or double-action are generally not applied to striker-fired handguns.

BUY IT OR DON'T BUY IT

Now you know that double-action triggers having 2 jobs can be harder to pull than single-action triggers with only 1 job. Most single-action triggers and striker-fired triggers can be easier, but this isn't the case every time. You have

to find what gun's trigger works for you.

Some guns are mostly made of metal. They're heavier than polymer-framed handguns. Generally, a heavier gun holds steadier in your hands. That's good when you want to hit the target. And, often they have pretty wood grips. I like pretty.

However, do you want to tote around a heavy gun? Lug it in your purse? Hook its holster onto your pants and sag your pants down?

You can choose a lighter polymer-framed handgun. Some fit nicely into a carry purse. Some have short barrels and you can wear them in sticky holsters inside your waistband.

Often, polymer-framed guns have nice palm swells, finger grips, and stippling to keep your sweaty hands from slipping when you fire the gun. Hanging onto a gun makes for more accurate second shots. You might need this one day.

So, how do you choose one gun over another when you're a newbie at the gun shop?

First, select several guns that feel good in your hands. Write down their makes and model numbers.

Next, go to a range that rents handguns. Find the ones you had chosen earlier. Shoot each one. How does it feel when you shoot it? Will you be able to practice shooting many times without tiring?

Will it fit in your purse or pants? Do you have money for the holster you'll need? Have you checked the price of ammunition for the gun you like best?

These are some thoughts for finding your first new gun. Next week, we'll discuss other factors to help you choose which one will work for you.

Marj Law is the former director of Keep Wakulla County Beautiful who has become an avid shooter in retirement.



GREEN SEA TURTLE (*Chelonia mydas*)

Green sea turtles adults graze on the vast sea glass beds of the tropics. Florida's coastal waters are an important feeding grounds. Juveniles hunt crabs jellyfish and sponge. Each year they will swim thousands of miles to return to their birthplace to mate and lay eggs. Artificial lights on beaches confuse them and prevent them from laying eggs. Sea walls block their path. This turtle is called “green” because it was favored for soup and the fat is greenish. Hunting for the turtle meat and eggs and habitat destruction means this turtle is now endangered. This is the one of the largest of the living sea turtles and can grow to 700 pounds.

Eukaryota, Amalia, Chordata, Reptilia, Testudines, Cheloniidae



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Wakulla Diving Center
 WAKULLADIVING.com 850 745-8208
 2784 COASTAL HWY., CRAWFORDVILLE

WEEKLY WILDLIFE PHOTO

Retired Wakulla Springs State Park Ranger Bob Thompson, on his weekly wildlife survey at the park last week, snapped this photo of a Pie-billed Grebe with a crayfish.



Water Ways

a peek into life on and under the water

Local writers share their experiences

Thursday 23	
Sun rise/set 7:09AM 6:31PM	Moon rise/set 9:25AM 10:26PM
Moon Illumination 14%	
Friday 24	
Sun rise/set 6:32PM	Moon rise/set 9:57AM 11:29PM
Moon Illumination 22%	
Saturday 25	
Sun rise/set 7:06AM 6:32PM	Moon rise/set 10:30AM -----
Moon Illumination 32%	
Sunday 26	
Sun rise/set 7:05AM 6:33PM	Moon rise/set 11:08AM 12:30AM
Moon Illumination 42%	
Monday 27	
Sun rise/set 7:04AM 6:34PM	Moon rise/set 11:49AM 1:31AM
Moon Illumination 52%	
Tuesday 28	
Sun rise/set 7:03AM 6:34PM	Moon rise/set 12:34PM 2:29AM
Moon Illumination 61%	
Wednesday 1	
Sun rise/set 7:02AM 6:35PM	Moon rise/set 1:25PM 3:25AM
Moon Illumination 70%	

Gulf Coast Weekly Almanac

Feb. 13 - March 1

Tide charts by tides4fishing.com

Best fishing days this month
February 20-28, March 1-7, 21-31

For tides at the following points add to Dog Island Listings:

	High Tide	Low Tide
Carrabelle	28 Min.	25 Min.
Apalachicola	1 Hr., 53 Min.	2 Hrs., 38 Min.
Cat Point	1 Hr., 13 Min.	2 Hrs., 31 Min.
Lower Anchorage	1 Hr., 36 Min.	2 Hrs., 3 Min.
West Pass	1 Hr., 26 Min.	2 Hrs., 39 Min.

St. Marks River Entrance

Th	4:02 am ▲ 3.2 ft	9:59 am ▼ 0.2 ft	3:59 pm ▲ 3.3 ft	10:35 pm ▼ -0.3 ft
Fr	4:50 am ▲ 2.8 ft	10:22 am ▼ 0.7 ft	4:20 pm ▲ 3.3 ft	11:22 pm ▼ -0.2 ft
Sa	5:44 am ▲ 2.3 ft	10:42 am ▼ 1.1 ft	4:39 pm ▲ 3.2 ft	
Su	12:19 am ▼ -0.1 ft	6:57 am ▲ 1.9 ft	10:58 am ▼ 1.4 ft	5:01 pm ▲ 3.0 ft
Mo	1:37 am ▼ 0.1 ft	5:29 pm ▲ 2.8 ft		
Tu	3:23 am ▼ 0.2 ft	6:18 pm ▲ 2.6 ft		
We	4:52 am ▼ 0.1 ft	12:26 pm ▲ 2.2 ft	3:16 pm ▼ 2.1 ft	9:28 pm ▲ 2.4 ft

City of St. Marks

Th	4:38 am ▲ 2.9 ft	11:03 am ▼ 0.2 ft	4:35 pm ▲ 3.1 ft	11:39 pm ▼ -0.3 ft
Fr	5:26 am ▲ 2.6 ft	11:26 am ▼ 0.6 ft	4:56 pm ▲ 3.0 ft	
Sa	12:26 am ▼ -0.2 ft	6:20 am ▲ 2.2 ft	11:46 am ▼ 1.0 ft	5:15 pm ▲ 3.0 ft
Su	1:23 am ▼ 0.0 ft	7:33 am ▲ 1.8 ft	12:02 pm ▼ 1.3 ft	5:37 pm ▲ 2.8 ft
Mo	2:41 am ▼ 0.1 ft	6:05 pm ▲ 2.6 ft		
Tu	4:27 am ▼ 0.2 ft	6:54 pm ▲ 2.4 ft		
We	5:56 am ▼ 0.1 ft	1:02 pm ▲ 2.0 ft	4:20 pm ▼ 1.9 ft	10:04 pm ▲ 2.3 ft

Shell Point, Spring Creek

Th	4:22 am ▲ 3.3 ft	10:30 am ▼ 0.0 ft	4:30 pm ▲ 3.4 ft	11:01 pm ▼ -0.3 ft
Fr	5:09 am ▲ 3.0 ft	10:54 am ▼ 0.5 ft	4:53 pm ▲ 3.4 ft	11:47 pm ▼ -0.3 ft
Sa	6:00 am ▲ 2.6 ft	11:17 am ▼ 0.9 ft	5:17 pm ▲ 3.3 ft	
Su	12:39 am ▼ -0.2 ft	7:01 am ▲ 2.2 ft	11:40 am ▼ 1.3 ft	5:42 pm ▲ 3.1 ft
Mo	1:45 am ▼ 0.0 ft	8:27 am ▲ 1.9 ft	12:08 pm ▼ 1.3 ft	6:13 pm ▲ 2.9 ft
Tu	3:12 am ▼ 0.1 ft	10:33 am ▲ 1.9 ft	12:53 pm ▼ 1.8 ft	7:04 pm ▲ 2.7 ft
We	4:45 am ▼ 0.1 ft	12:05 pm ▲ 2.1 ft	2:49 pm ▼ 2.0 ft	9:23 pm ▲ 2.5 ft

Alligator Point, Ochlockonee Bay

Th	3:54 am ▲ 2.4 ft	10:10 am ▼ 0.1 ft	3:51 pm ▲ 2.5 ft	10:46 pm ▼ -0.2 ft
Fr	4:42 am ▲ 2.1 ft	10:33 am ▼ 0.5 ft	4:12 pm ▲ 2.5 ft	11:33 pm ▼ -0.2 ft
Sa	5:36 am ▲ 1.7 ft	10:53 am ▼ 0.8 ft	4:31 pm ▲ 2.4 ft	
Su	12:30 am ▼ 0.0 ft	6:49 am ▲ 1.5 ft	11:09 am ▼ 1.1 ft	4:53 pm ▲ 2.3 ft
Mo	1:48 am ▼ 0.1 ft	5:21 pm ▲ 2.1 ft		
Tu	3:34 am ▼ 0.1 ft	6:10 pm ▲ 1.9 ft		
We	5:03 am ▼ 0.1 ft	12:18 pm ▲ 1.6 ft	3:27 pm ▼ 1.5 ft	9:20 pm ▲ 1.8 ft

St. Teresa, Turkey Pt.

Th	4:09 am ▲ 2.4 ft	10:14 am ▼ 0.1 ft	4:12 pm ▲ 2.4 ft	10:46 pm ▼ -0.3 ft
Fr	5:05 am ▲ 2.1 ft	10:42 am ▼ 0.5 ft	4:37 pm ▲ 2.5 ft	11:35 pm ▼ -0.4 ft
Sa	6:05 am ▲ 1.8 ft	11:05 am ▼ 0.9 ft	5:04 pm ▲ 2.5 ft	
Su	12:31 am ▼ -0.4 ft	7:19 am ▲ 1.6 ft	11:21 am ▼ 1.2 ft	5:35 pm ▲ 2.4 ft
Mo	1:39 am ▼ -0.3 ft	6:14 pm ▲ 2.3 ft		
Tu	3:06 am ▼ -0.2 ft	7:16 pm ▲ 2.1 ft		
We	4:34 am ▼ -0.2 ft	2:01 pm ▲ 1.7 ft	4:13 pm ▼ 1.7 ft	9:03 pm ▲ 2.0 ft

Dog Island West End

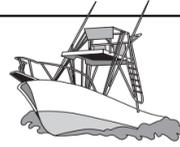
Th	4:26 am ▲ 2.0 ft	10:32 am ▼ 0.2 ft	4:31 pm ▲ 2.1 ft	11:11 pm ▼ -0.2 ft
Fr	5:18 am ▲ 1.7 ft	10:58 am ▼ 0.6 ft	4:53 pm ▲ 2.1 ft	11:57 pm ▼ -0.2 ft
Sa	6:12 am ▲ 1.5 ft	11:16 am ▼ 0.9 ft	5:16 pm ▲ 2.1 ft	
Su	12:47 am ▼ -0.2 ft	7:42 am ▲ 1.2 ft	11:18 am ▼ 1.1 ft	5:40 pm ▲ 2.1 ft
Mo	1:50 am ▼ -0.2 ft	6:08 pm ▲ 2.0 ft		
Tu	3:14 am ▼ -0.1 ft	6:51 pm ▲ 1.9 ft		
We	4:43 am ▼ -0.1 ft	8:43 pm ▲ 1.8 ft		

Best hunting and fishing based on solar times: MAJOR feeding periods are 2 hours long, centered on the solar time. MINOR feeding periods are only 1 hour long, again centered on the solar time.



Coast Guard Auxiliary Reports

By Carolyn Brown Treadon



The following additional information comes from Jim McGraw at the U.S. Coast Guard Heartland Safe Boating group about inflatable Personal Flotation Devices.

An automatically activated inflatable PFD is a wonderful thing. However, as a complex mechanical device, things can go wrong. If automatic inflation is Plan "A"... What are plans "B" and "C"?

There are THREE ways to inflate an automatically activated inflatable PFD:

- Automatically, triggered by immersion.
- Manually, triggered by pulling the handle.
- By mouth, blowing air into the oral inflation tube.

Some experts advocate the idea that these PFDs are "manual with automatic back-up." This approach sets the expectation in the user's mind that they will pull the manual handle if

Boating Emergencies

Coast Guard Station
Panama City (850) 234-4228

Coast Guard Station
Yankeetown (352) 447-6900

Coast Guard Auxiliary
Apalachee Bay (Flotilla 12) (850) 942-7500
or (850) 284-1166

they end up in the water, rather than waiting for the automatic inflation.

If you are in the water and automatic and manual inflation fail, oral inflation becomes Plan C. I suggest that you practice oral inflation while wearing the PFD.

Start this practice by reading and following the manufacturer's instructions about oral inflation of your PFD. Typically, you will have to first release the bladder from its stowed position (releasing the hook and loop fas-

teners or the zipper) to access the oral inflation tube. You may have to remove the dust cap from the oral inflation tube in order to inflate the vest orally. It will likely take several breaths to inflate the bladder.

While a double failure of the inflation system is unlikely, knowing and practicing the oral inflation technique provides you another way to stay alive!

If you would like to learn more about vessel safety checks, please

contact Steve Hults, Staff Officer for Vessel Examinations at steve.hults@uscgaux.net.

Thanks to Sherrie, we will always remember safe boating is no accident!

Please contact us for more information about our safe boating classes or learning more about getting involved in the Auxiliary, check out our website at www.uscgaux.net follow us on Facebook @ Apalachee Bay Flotilla 12 or contact our Flotilla Commander Phil Hill at pnkhill2000@yahoo.com.

The Coast Guard Auxiliary is the uniformed civilian volunteer component of the U.S. Coast Guard and supports the Coast Guard in nearly all mission areas. The Auxiliary was created by Congress in 1939. For more information, please visit www.uscgaux.org.

Underwater Wakulla

By Rusty Miller

First open water class of 2023.

We just had our first open water class this past weekend at Vortex Springs in Ponce De Leon. If you're new to Crawfordville or the surrounding area and have not heard of Vortex Springs then you're missing one of the jewels of north Florida springs. It's what I have referred to as one of the west side springs, meaning you are headed towards Pensacola in order to get there.

It is a nice place to relax and take in some really beautiful north Florida wildlife. I would recommend you to look on the internet and their website to get all the information for a fun weekend.

We arrived at Vortex at 9 a.m. EST (8 a.m. central) and the temperature was a balmy 35 degrees with winds about 19-20mph which made it a bit colder with a high of about 40 degrees.

We got all the students registered at the dive shop and then my assistant instructor took them to the edge of the spring basin to give them the briefing on what was planned for today's diving skills.

Did I mention it was cold? After the briefing it was time to get our wetsuits on and our equipment set up. Normally I have the students do the 450 yard snorkel swim but with the wind cutting through a wet wetsuit I decided to wait until the next day when it was supposed to be a bit warmer and far less windy.

Once we all had our equipment on and we were ready to head to the water. Believe it or not, the 68 degree water seemed warmer to the touch especially when it's 35 and blowing cold air around.

While my assistant instructor was watching the students go through their skills on the underwater platform, I was working with a couple of my rescue diver students to get them certified for their rescue card. We went through various rescue scenarios and after a while we completed what was left on the skills.

After they were done I moved over to watch the open water students finish the first part of their skills. We surfaced but did not get out of the water yet. After about 10 minutes we submerged and then they completed the second set of skills.

Then the time came to get out of the water - did I mention it was cold?

We hurriedly got out of the water and made it back up the hill to our staging area. We got the equipment disassembled and everyone got some dry clothes on then we loaded up the trucks.

After the debriefing the one thing everyone agreed on was that it was cold.

We still had one more day of diving to do at Vortex springs. After looking at the forecast for Sunday, my assistant instructor suggested we meet a little later in the morning so the temperature wouldn't be as low as it was Saturday morning. I said OK and that we would meet at 9:30 a.m. central time (10:30 a.m. EST) because the forecast was supposed to be around 50-55 degrees with a high of 72 degrees.

I will let you know if the weather forecast was true and how the Sunday dive went in next week's article. Until then keep making bubbles.

Governor's budget promotes natural resource restoration, law enforcement

From FWC News

Gov. Ron DeSantis released the proposed Fiscal 2023-24 "Framework for Freedom" Budget, solidifying his commitment to support the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWC) mission to protect Florida's natural resources.

The budget is evidence of Gov. DeSantis' continued commitment to ensuring Florida's natural resources will be abundant for future generations to enjoy.

Included in the governor's proposed budget

are high-priority conservation items including eradication and control of pythons and other nonnative fish and wildlife species, enhanced protections for Florida's manatees and sea turtles, statewide seagrass restoration support, and support for law enforcement.

"Since day one, Governor DeSantis has made conservation one of his top priorities, and we are grateful for his continued support," said FWC Chairman Rodney Barreto. "Because of his steadfast leadership, residents, visitors and

future generations will enjoy Florida's natural resources for years to come."

Budget highlights include:

- \$2.6 million in new funding for nonnative fish and wildlife eradication and control
- \$1.4 million for Burmese python population control and assessment
- \$16.9 million for 41 new law enforcement positions for patrol and investigation
- \$8.4 million for boating access and boating improvement projects
- \$11.1 million for habitat restoration ini-

tiatives

- \$750,000 for initiatives focused on maintaining Florida's reputation as the Fishing Capital of the World
 - More than \$900,000 for manatee population assessment and management enhancements
 - Over \$750,000 for enhanced protections for Florida's sea turtles
 - \$600,000 for artificial reefs
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Observing National Eating Disorders Awareness Week



By **SHERYL H. BOLDT**

I wasn't allowed to eat. At least, that's what I believed. But who was making the rules?

National Eating Disorders Awareness Week (observed during the last week in February)

has special significance for me. For most of my early adult life, anorexia nervosa and bulimia controlled me. My sole purpose in life during those years was to lose another pound. Anorexia and bulimia cost me my family, my friends, my jobs, my health, my sanity – and almost my life.

If you're struggling with an eating disorder, please seek professional help. I thank God for the doctors, counselors and dieticians He used to help me.

An eating disorder is a serious mental health issue. But I discovered it's also a serious spiri-

tual health issue.

Being an eating disorder patient and a Christ follower conflicted and embarrassed me. For years, I was taught I could "overcome in Jesus' name." But I wasn't overcoming.

Still, when I followed my counselor's advice to meditate on God's Word, I noticed my love for God and His Word grew stronger than my "need" to lose weight.

I became more aware that I had choices. And with each choice, I could decide to dishonor God by skipping another meal – or when I did eat, taking more laxatives

and/or forcing myself to vomit. Even though I knew I could pray for God's help (grace) to make right decisions regarding my health, I foolishly chose not to.

Years passed before I realized that each time I resisted God's grace and refused to surrender my will (desires) to Him – I was choosing to disobey Him. When I finally recognized this sobering truth, I made progress.

But it wasn't easy. I suffered many setbacks. Although I remained under professional care for several years, God's mercy and grace sustained me. I can now testify

that I've been free from anorexia and bulimia for almost 20 years!

Romans 6:13 (ESV) says, "Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life."

The weeks leading up to Easter will be a good time to reflect on the significance of Calvary and the empty tomb. Over 2,000 years ago, Jesus suffered, died and rose again so that today I can live – and eat – free from oppression. The same power that enabled

Jesus to triumph over the grave continues to empower me to triumph over the sin that tried to destroy me so many years ago.

What sin, addiction or bad habit controls you? If you haven't totally surrendered it (or your heart) to Christ, what better time to do so than now as we prepare our hearts for Good Friday and Easter Sunday?

Sheryl H. Boldt is a sales executive for Wave 94 and author of the blog, www.TodayCanBeDifferent.net. Connect with her at SherylHBoldt.Wave94@gmail.com.

Seek after Him



By **CHERYL CRUCE**

Our home on Cedar Island, in Taylor County, was a never-ending vacation spot for my older siblings and me. The red beach house nestled on the shores of the Gulf of Mexico was a little tropical paradise. As the youngest of seven children, I would often be left behind when the older ones walked to the surf hut after the evening meal. The hut housed pinball machines, pool

tables, and an old jukebox with outdated music. On quiet nights you could hear the melodies drifting on the waves.

As my siblings often walked away for their evening of fun, Dad and I would sit on the front porch to watch the sunset. He often handed me a brown paper bag with a Butternut candy bar tucked inside. I miss those naive days of sitting in his lap and watching the big yellow-orange fireball slip from the sky into those waters that mirrored the colors of the sky.

With childhood innocence behind me and the life lessons of 63 years ingrained in my spirit, I still seek those moments of quiet reflection. My parents are no longer

present in this world; however, the teachings of faith and the seasons of the church calendar still hold great importance in my life. Today we are in the season of Lent.

Lent represents the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness after His baptism (Matthew 4:1-11).

Jesus fasted and prayed during His wilderness experience because He understood the ministry before Him. He understood the scorn, rejection, and anger that would soon impel His spirit. He knew His friends would love Him, and one friend would betray Him. During this period of fasting and temptation, I believe Jesus felt the weight of

Calvary because Satan tempted Him with the Kingdoms of the World. However, Jesus' purpose was for the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 4:6-9). And Jesus overcame the temptations of the world for us.

Often during Lent, people fast chocolate, sugar, or some other craving for the 40 days. Some are successful; some are not. Nevertheless, Lent is not about the fast but about reflecting on your purpose and drawing near your Heavenly Father. Therefore, enjoy your chocolate, cornbread, and sweet tea. Refrain from concentrating so much on the fast and build upon your relationship with the One who has redeemed you.

Allow this season leading up to Easter to be a season of drawing near to Him. Find your place of quiet reflection and praise Him for the sunsets in your life; thank Him for each sunrise. Look for 30 minutes in your day to sit quietly in His presence. Join a place of worship. Sing the old hymns from your childhood. Pray daily for yourself and your neighbor. Fast those ill thoughts you hold toward your brother, toward your enemy. Speaking highly of both will bring healing to your heart, changing your thoughts. Pray for the ministry He is adding to your life.

Looking back, I realize Dad gave me more than a brown paper bag with

a candy bar. There was the gift of his time and ensuring I did not feel alone and left out. It is the same with the Heavenly Father. He desires a quiet place with you when all distractions are removed, and it is just you and Him alone on an old front porch. I believe we will find that is the true meaning of the Lenten season. Seek after Him.

Jeremiah 29:13 You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you," declares the Lord,

Cheryl Mixon-Cruce is Pastor of Ochlockonee Bay United Methodist Church and Sopchoppy United Methodist Church.

OUT TO PASTOR

If I'm not crazy, nobody is



By **JAMES SNYDER**

Last Sunday, we were driving to our Sunday morning church service and encountered a lot of crazy drivers. As The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage was driving, I kept my cool and, more importantly, my mouth closed.

Every once in a while, she would say, "What's wrong with these crazy drivers?"

I could tell she was a little agitated by these drivers swaying in and out of the lanes.

"Why are people so crazy when they are driving? How did they get a driver's license?"

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage has often looked at me and said, "Are you crazy or what?"

You don't know how often I wanted her to define what she meant by "or what." But, of course, I'm not sure I would have liked her definition at that time.

I'm unsure if I was born crazy or just learned

it as I grew up. But the facts remain that I am crazy in a variety of ways.

It would be nice to sit down with The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and get her to explain how she thinks I am crazy. I'm not sure she could ever stop talking about it if I did.

Some people's crazy is another person's lifestyle. So I'm leaning towards the latter.

Not long ago, she had to go thrift store shopping which would take up most of her day. I was rather excited because I've been thinking about getting an Apple Fritter for several weeks. These are not on my diet, and I'm not allowed to bring them into the house.

A few minutes after she left, I jumped in my truck, went, got an Apple Fritter and brought it home. I was in Apple Fritter heaven.

On my third bite of that Apple Fritter, I heard the front door open, and in walked The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. She stopped, looked at me with both hands on her hips, and said, "Are you crazy or what? You're not allowed to have Apple Fritters, especially in this house."

Well, when you're crazy, I guess you're crazy.

I've been thinking about this, and the thought that has dom-

inated my thinking is, what's so wrong about being crazy? Some of the best people I know are crazy.

Driving home from church about three weeks ago, some old man on a motorcycle was weaving back and forth, passing cars. When he passed us, he was smiling like a really crazy man.

When my wife saw him, she looked at me and said, "What is wrong with that crazy man?"

I laughed and wanted to say, but I didn't, "Well, that crazy man is just having fun. He's enjoying his life."

Looking at me, she might have said, "He better enjoy it now because that crazy guy isn't going to last very long."

I would have loved to stop him and query him, "Sir, what does your wife think of your driving like a crazy man?" I would

have loved his answer about that. I probably could have learned a lesson or two about being crazy myself.

The wise man was pretty close to accurate when he said, "Crazy is as crazy does."

I remember once getting in trouble with The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. I was in my easy chair reading a book, she came in very anxious and said, "Have you seen my glasses? I can't find them."

I looked at her and assumed this was a trick question and she was setting me up for something because her glasses were on the top of her head. I didn't know where this "joke" was going, but I thought I would just play along.

Looking at her, I said, "Are you crazy or what?" Then I laughed hysterically as she stared at me.

"I am not crazy; I just

cannot find my glasses." She wasn't laughing.

Looking through the living room, she finally reached to the top of her head and said, "Oh, here they are on top of my head. Why didn't you tell me? Are you crazy or what?"

It's crazy people like me that have all the fun in the world from people who don't think they're crazy. There's not a day in the week that I would ever suggest to The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage that I thought she was crazy. I do think that way, but I will never expose that thought to her because I love my life as it is.

What would life be without a little bit of craziness?

From my long experience with being crazy, I have concluded that being crazy is an art. It

takes a long time to learn how to be crazy, and I think I am very close to a Ph.D. in crazyology.

I couldn't help but think of my favorite Bible verse. Proverbs 3:5-6, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

No matter how crazy the world around me is, I can trust God to lead me in the right direction..

Dr. James L. Snyder lives in Ocala, FL with the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. Telephone 1-352-216-3025, e-mail jamesnyder51@gmail.com, website www.jamesnyderministries.com.

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Obituaries

Linda Louise Williams Hooker

Linda Louise Williams Hooker, 80, of Tallahassee, Florida, passed away on Friday, February 17, 2023, at her son's residence.

Born in Fort Myers, Florida on January 21, 1943, she was a daughter of Leroy "Roy" Jackson Williams and Ada Margaret Dyess Williams, of blessed memory. Her husband, Clarence Stevens "Steve" Hooker, also preceded her in death.

She was a retired Administrative Professional, was a Southern Baptist, and in her free time, enjoyed creating stained glass artwork, ceramics, painting and gardening.

She is survived by her sons, Marc Hooker (wife, Erica) and Steven Hooker (wife, Lori); Marc's children, Sylvia and Haley; Steven's children,

Corey, Trent, Curtis and Madison; great-grandchildren, Wyatt and Kinsey; sister, Margie Rae Williams; aunt, Dea Jean Hooker; Steven's first wife and mother to his children, Rhonda; and her extended family in South Florida. She is also survived by her precious canine companion, Rascal.

Visitation is 1 p.m., Saturday, February 25, 2023, at Abbey Funeral Home, with the funeral service beginning at 2 p.m. Interment follows in Tallahassee Memory Gardens, Garden of the Christ.

Flowers are being accepted or memorial donations in her memory may be made to Big Bend Hospice. The live stream service and online guestbook can be found at www.abbeyfh.com.

DEATH NOTICES

• **Richard Ray Crumbliss**, 90, of Crawfordville, died Feb. 19, 2023.

• **Thomas Ryan Lytle**, 51, of Crawfordville, died Feb. 4, 2023.

• **Brenan Scott Flint**, 29, of Crawfordville, died Feb. 20, 2023.

• **Thomas Ronald Lytle**, 23, of Crawfordville, died Feb. 4, 2023.

• **Linda Jane Good**, 70, of Crawfordville, died Feb 17, 2023.

• **Lawrence John Rezabek**, 74, of Crawfordville, died Feb. 19, 2023.

• **Charles W. Hubbell**, 89, of Crawfordville, died Feb. 16, 2023.

All of the death notices submitted by Family Funeral Home at Harvey Young Chapel. 850-926-5919 Familyfh.com

• **Dennis Michael Luhn**, 70, of Sopchoppy, died Feb. 19, 2023.

Sheriff's Report

Activity reported for the week of Feb. 10 to 16:

FRIDAY, FEB. 10

• Susan Fulater reported receiving an email advising she needed maintenance done on her computer. A subject named Peter had Fulater log into her bank account advising they needed \$400 for the services. Her computer was remotely taken over by the suspect where he typed \$4,000 instead of \$400. Fulater ceased the transaction in which the suspect made her computer inoperable and needed \$400 to unlock it. Fulater contacted her bank and had her account frozen. Fulater was not out any funds as of the time of her reporting the incident. Deputy Wade Wright investigated.

• Scott Howell re-

ported his vehicle had been burglarized. Howell woke up and discovered his wallet missing out of his vehicle. Taken were several cards and \$80 in cash. Howell stated he had already canceled the stolen cards. Lt. Gibby Gibson investigated.

SUNDAY, FEB. 12

• Jean Crozier advised she had parked her car near Bob Miller Road and the St. Marks Bike Trail for a bike ride. Crozier stated she left the keys inside the vehicle. When she returned the vehicle was gone. Deputies attempted to locate the vehicle but were unable to do so. Crozier's white Nissan Frontier was entered into FCIC/NCIC as stolen. This case has been sent to detectives for further investigation. Deputy Dakota Haddock investigated.

• Deputy Michelle Stripling responded to Coastal Market in reference to shoplifting. The owner of the market stated two juvenile females came into the store and took several snack items without paying. The store owner provided video of the incident to Deputy Stripling. This case has been sent to detectives for further investigation.

MONDAY, FEB. 13

• Janice Ellington reported finding a firearm in her vehicle. Ellington stated she did not own the weapon and she had no idea how the weapon could have got in to her vehicle. The weapon was seized and placed into evidence for safekeeping. Deputy Arturo Cordoba investigated.

• An employee with Dentistry By The Sea reported discovering \$1,300 cash missing from an office envelope. Employees were asked

about the missing cash and none are suspected by the company of taking the cash. The employee was able to provide a possible suspect in this case. This case has been sent to detectives for further investigation. Deputy Dylan Causseaux investigated.

TUESDAY, FEB. 14

• Arianna Clevinger reported being out at Wakulla Beach when two suspects showed up looking for a fight. Clevinger advised she got back into her vehicle after one of the suspects brandished a tire iron. While inside her vehicle, the suspect began banging on her vehicle rims and subsequently caused damage to the passenger side front rim. The suspects left the scene prior to deputies arriving. The estimated cost to repair the rims is \$1,800. Digital images were taken at the scene and a recorded cell phone

video was provided by Clevinger. This case has been submitted for an arrest warrant review by Deputy Rudolph Hinson.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 15

• Adam Plouffe reported theft of multiple items from his home and shed. Plouffe stated the fishing equipment, jewelry, electronics, misc. coins and a firearm had been taken. Plouffe estimated all items had a value of \$15,000. This case has been sent to detective for further investigation. Deputy Dakota Haddock investigated.

THURSDAY, FEB. 16

• A traffic stop was conducted on a vehicle for faulty equipment on Bloxham Cutoff Road. The driver, Joanna Ross, was discovered to have a suspended driver's license with multiple prior convictions for driving on a suspended license. Ross was placed under arrest

and transported to the Wakulla County Jail without incident. Deputy Dakota Haddock investigated.

• Deputy Michelle Stripling observed a vehicle with an expired tag and initiated a traffic stop. The tag attached belonged to a different vehicle. During the stop, Deputy Stripling discovered crack cocaine on the driver's seat and in the driver's bra during a search of her person. Amanda Kelly was taken into custody. The passenger, Jessica Carter, was found to have a warrant out of Leon County. During a search of her person at the jail, a small bag containing methamphetamine was found in her bra. Carter's 3-year-old son was in the vehicle therefore she was also charged with child neglect as well.

Report suspicious or illegal activity at 850-745-7100, or call 911 for emergencies.

Court shorts

Riley Attridge, who faces a murder charge for the shooting death of Preston Gage Pitman at a graduation party in 2018, was set for trial in March, but Wakulla Chief Prosecutor Jon Fuchs asked the case be heard in September to give him more time to depose the defense's experts.

At a hearing on Feb. 9, Wakulla Circuit Judge Layne Smith set the cash for docket sounding on Sept. 6 with jury selection on Sept. 18.

According to police reports, Attridge and Pitman had exchanged social media messages about a girl.

Attridge, who was 20 at the time of the shooting, also faces charges of carrying a concealed firearm, possession of more than 20 grams of marijuana and paraphernalia.

Attridge is represent-

ed by Tallahassee attorney Tim Jansen. It appears that the defense will argue that Attridge acted in self-defense.

Attridge reportedly said he knew Pitman intended to confront him at the party held at St. Marks Rise after graduation and so armed himself with a .22 handgun.

Attridge reportedly pulled the .22 and shot Pitman. Other partygoers disarmed Attridge and reportedly beat him.

Because of where St. Marks Rise is located, there was initially confusion among law enforcement responding to 911 calls – deputies from Leon County answered the call then determined it was a Wakulla case.

In other court cases: • A man facing trial on charges of armed burglary of a dwelling with a firearm discharged, a



Riley Attridge

first-degree felony punishable by life in prison, took a plea to aggravated battery with a firearm discharged, a second degree felony, and was sentenced to nine months in the Wakulla County Jail with credit for 36 days time considered served, followed by 24 months of community control, plus court costs and fines.

Nick Roberts, 52, was set to go to trial on Monday, Feb. 20, with jurors standing by when the plea deal was reached.

Roberts was arrest-

ed in June 2021 after he shot another man in the leg in a trailer where he had formerly lived with a woman, Tammy Vaillancourt.

Roberts had left the home about two weeks earlier after he and Vaillancourt had argued. She told deputies that, a day earlier, Roberts had texted her that he intended to knock her teeth out. She said she invited Jarred Harrison into the home so that she would have some protection.

Roberts showed up at the home in the middle of the night and she confronted him in the front yard. He left but came back. He called her and told her to take her 11-year-old son and leave the house. She later told deputies she was terrified that something sinister was about to happen, so she started to leave with Harrison behind her. Seeing Roberts, Harrison retreated into the house.

Roberts opened the

door with a firearm in his hand, looking for Harrison, who bull-rushed him. Roberts told deputies he intended to fire into the ground but hit Harrison in the leg.

When deputies arrived on the scene, they found Roberts in the front yard holding a handgun. He was ordered to drop the weapon and get down on the ground. He did, and told deputies he had a second gun, a Derringer, in his pocket.

Harrison was found inside the trailer sitting against a wall bleeding from the leg wound in obvious agony.

• Christopher Rodgers was sentenced to a year and a day in prison after being arrested nine times for driving while license suspended or revoked (DWLSR).

"Driving infractions typically don't invoke jail terms, but that's typically one or two times," Judge Smith told Rodgers. "Not nine times."

Rodgers had entered a plea on his eighth charge of DWLSR habitual offender and been sentenced to probation when he was stopped two days later driving without a license.

At a hearing on Feb. 8, Rodgers entered a straight-up plea to DWLSR plus the violation of probation for the new offense.

Assistant Public Defender Matt Ream, who represented Rodgers, noted his client had the chance to do plumbing work in Panama City at a complex being developed, and asked for leniency.

Fuchs asked the court to sentence Rodgers to 24 months in state prison, saying Rodgers is "unable to follow the law or unwilling to."

Judge Smith took a break and then returned to the courtroom to pronounce sentence.

"At some point there has to be consequences," Smith said.

Mirko Ceska

From Front Page

"While there may have been sufficient evidence of child abuse at one point, (the alleged victims) were over the age of 21 when (the Ceskas) were arrested. The statute of limitations for any act of child abuse... is three years." Additionally, the memo notes that (Ceska) and his wife recorded some of their

disciplinary measures on (the sisters)... The defendant yelled at (the sisters) but did not beat them." One incident the girls were punished for was stealing candy from their grandmother and then lying about it. That behavior appeared to be prevalent with the girls – stealing and lying – and the Ceskas meted out punishment "that some might consider exces-

sive, but not necessarily criminal, but also bring (the girls') credibility into question as regards the serious offenses in this case."

None of the evidence seized of photos and videos constituted child pornography, as it was referred to in the probable cause affidavit and property receipts.

There were also reports that the sisters were forced into labor at a plant nursery in the county. But subse-

quent investigation determined that the sisters had accompanied the Ceskas to the nursery and, while there, began to pick weeds. One of the owners saw this and offered to pay them if they wanted to weed and help out in other ways at the nursery. After they began working at the nursery, the sisters told co-workers about the "difficult, but not necessarily criminal" treatment by the Ceskas, and the nursery workers assisted the girls

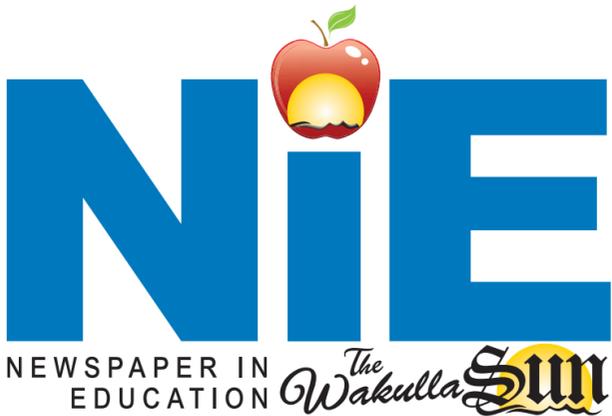
in leaving.

The memo notes that the girls did have traumatic childhoods that included sexual and physical abuse in another home. It was initially reported that the girls were intellectually disabled adults, but an evaluation by the state determined they were not disabled but reacted as survivors of abuse. Actually, evaluation of the girls showed they had higher than average scores in Math and could speak German

with the Ceskas. The doctor examining the girls determined they were socially developmentally delayed but that could be remedied by proper socialization.

The girls were reunited with other siblings and now live in another state.

To Pumphrey, the case serves as a reminder to the public that just because someone is charged with crime does not mean they're guilty. The Ceskas, he said, were innocent.



USE THE NEWS

1. Enormous Eagle

The Steller's Sea Eagle is one of the largest eagles in the world with a wingspan of up to eight feet, a length of 3 feet or more, a weight of 20 pounds and a giant orange beak that gives it a fierce appearance. It is native to northeastern Asia, living mostly on the coast of the northern Pacific Ocean in Siberia, northern Japan and South Korea. For the last two winters, however, a lone Sea Eagle has been a celebrity visitor to the U.S. state of Maine more than 5,000 miles from its native area. No one knows why this giant black-and-white bird has taken up residence there — it likely was blown out over the ocean in a storm and couldn't find its way back — but it has thrilled bird-watchers. Hundreds have traveled great distances to see the Sea Eagle, its distinctive white tail and the white markings on top of its wings. They also have been drawn to see the Sea Eagle's enormous size, which dwarfs the bald eagles it has been roosting and hunting with. The Steller's Sea Eagle was named for a German naturalist Georg Wilhelm Steller, who worked in Siberia and was one of the first to see the giant bird. Many people have traveled great distances to see the Steller's Sea Eagle in Maine. What wild animal or bird would you travel a great distance to see, if you could? In the newspaper or online, find and study stories and photos of this animal or bird. Use what you find to write a letter to a friend telling what attracts you about this wildlife species, why you would want to see it in person and how that would make you feel.

Goals: Producing clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization and style are appropriate to the task; citing specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions.

2. A Favorite Smell

What is your favorite smell? Is it a pizza delivered to your home? Fresh-baked cookies or brownies? A chicken roasting in the oven? The state of New Mexico may soon become the first in the nation to choose a favorite smell — and it will have a group of fifth graders to thank. The students have teamed up with a state senator to propose a law that would make the smell of roasting green chile peppers the "official aroma" of New Mexico. The law was proposed

by Senator Bill Soules after he met with fifth graders at Monte Vista Elementary School in the city of Las Cruces. The students asked if New Mexico had an official state smell, and noted that the spicy smell of roasting green chiles is something everyone enjoys in the summer and fall. Chiles are already one of New Mexico's official state vegetables, because they are popular with the state's large Latino and Mexican population. Soules asked the students if they would like to help make the smell the official state aroma, and they jumped into action, the Washington Post newspaper reported. They researched how an official aroma would benefit the state's economy and tourism, wrote letters to legislators and even testified before a committee of the legislature. The law is now one step away from approval, and the students can take a lot of credit. In the newspaper or online, find and

closely read stories about things that have been chosen to "officially" represent your state. With a partner, read a complete list and propose something you would like to add. Write a paragraph explaining why your choice would be valuable to the state or its residents.

Goals: Conducting short research projects that build knowledge about a topic; writing informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

3. Gettysburg Battle Shell

The Battle of Gettysburg in the state of Pennsylvania was one of the most important of America's Civil War. When the Union Army prevailed, it prevented rebellious Confederate forces from invading the North and becoming an independent nation. The battle took place in the summer of 1863, and historians are still discovering

new evidence of what happened. Just this month a researcher working with a metal detector found an unexploded artillery shell buried in one of the fields where the battle was fought, CNN News reported. The 7-inch, 10-pound shell was found in the area of Little Round Top, where Union troops beat back an attempt by the Confederates to attack the Union line from the left flank. Gettysburg experts believe it was fired by the Confederate forces and fell short of its target due to a miscalculation. It may have fallen in the middle of Confederate soldiers as they struggled to reach the top of Little Round Top, exposing them to "friendly fire." Due to safety concerns, the 160-year-old shell was exploded by experts for fear it might still be "live." The Gettysburg battlefield has been preserved as a significant historic site. In the newspaper or online, find and closely read stories about a historic site or building that has been preserved in your state or

community. Use what you read to write a letter to the editor telling why it is important to preserve this site or building and how it makes history "come alive" for visitors.

Goals: Writing opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information; reading closely what a text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it.

4. Healthy Trees

There are many things people can do to live longer and healthier lives. At the top of the list are eating better foods, getting exercise and avoiding sweets, smoking and alcohol. Now scientists have come up with another way to live longer: Plant trees. A recent study conducted in the city of Portland, Oregon has found that in neighborhoods where more trees were planted, fewer people died, the Washington Post reports. Using a mathematical model to control for factors such as race, income, age and education, researchers

from the U.S. Forest Service found that for each 100 trees planted, there was roughly one fewer non-accidental death a year. There are several reasons trees may boost health, including better air quality, reduced stress, increased physical activity and lowering the temperatures of global warming. "Across the board, the benefits of trees are astounding," one tree expert said. "And they come at a lower cost than many other solutions." Health studies and discoveries are often in the news because they affect so many people. In the newspaper or online, find and closely read a story about a health study or discovery that affects children or families. Use what you read to prepare a short oral report telling why the discovery is important.

Goals: Reading closely what written and visual texts say and to making logical inferences from them; citing specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions.



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ANSWER: SUET

What's the Difference?

There are four differences between Picture A and Picture B. Can you find them all?

A



B



Answers: 1. Bird has white spot 2. Missing icicle 3. Peanuts in dish 4. Second cardinal

THIS DAY IN...



HISTORY

- **1836:** THE SIEGE OF THE ALAMO BEGINS IN SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS.
- **1903:** CUBA LEASES GUANTANAMO BAY TO THE UNITED STATES IN PERPETUITY.
- **1954:** THE FIRST MASS INOCULATION OF CHILDREN AGAINST POLIO BEGINS IN PITTSBURGH.



AVIARY

a large cage, building or enclosure to house birds

How they SAY that in...

ENGLISH: Nest

SPANISH: Nido

ITALIAN: Nido

FRENCH: Nid

GERMAN: Nest

Did You Know?

YOU SHOULD SET A FEEDER A GOOD 10 FEET AWAY FROM TREES, FENCES OR ANYTHING THAT A SQUIRREL CAN JUMP FROM.



GET THE PICTURE?



Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

ANSWER: BIRD FEEDER



At the gala on Friday night at Sherlock Springs, the Wakulla County Christian Coalition set the theme of Celebrating the Arts and honored local artists: Lauren Holley, dancer and owner of Studio 88; Bakari Hines, a songwriter, drummer and producer professionally known as Bakari Vashon, was the keynote speaker; Dr. Dewayne Harvey, a pastor and inductee in the Florida Gospel Music Hall of Fame; Cayla Simone Pennywell, a singer-songwriter; Herb Donaldson, actor, director and owner of Palaver Tree Theater; and author Artigua Kilpatrick.

African-American Heritage Celebration



The Color Guard led the parade on Saturday.



Dr. Dewayne Harvey performing in Azalea Park.

Mardi Gras fundraiser for the public library



Music by the Thursday Night Music Club.



The Community Center was decorated and attendees were dressed up.



Librarians Patricia Owens, Rebecca Sahar and Suzy Bennett in the photo booth.



Linda Oaks, Sheriff Jared Miller, Desiree Gorman. Below, Steve Sanabria and Andy Riddle.



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