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"The little paper"

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Sunny Chancy

The school district's assistant superintendent is focused on students

By RIDDHI PATEL
Reporter

From science teacher and Assistant Principal of Curriculum and Instruction to Chief Academic Officer and Assistant Superintendent, Sunny Chancy has held many roles during her 22 years in the field of education. Though becoming an educator may not have been her initial goal, Chancy says "teaching is a calling; it's very rewarding."

Chancy attended Chadron State College in Chadron, Nebraska where she got her bachelor's degree in 1998 and her Master's in Education in Mathematics



Sunny Chancy outside the district office.

and Science in 2000.

Following the completion of the master's degree, she married John

Chancy and they moved to Florida.

Chancy began her career in education at

Jefferson County High School in 2000 where she taught a variety of

Turn to Page 9

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Real life controllers, abusers, manipulators, and users



By GREG GAST

cally damages their children.

As an acquaintance or friend they are the ones who are irresponsible, selfish, unreliable, dishonest, and are always creating problems in our lives.

As neighbors, they spread rumors, create disharmony in the neighborhood.

They're the criminals, con artists, and people-users who damage others on purpose, then quickly move on to avoid detection. In romantic relationships, they are controlling, abusive, manipulative people who can ruin not only the relationship, ones self-esteem, finances, and reputation.

In practice the majority of emotional victims are actually victims of an individual with a "Personality Disorder". These are individuals with a long history of personality, behavior, emotional, and relationship problems. An enduring pattern of inner experience and behaviors that are significantly different than those in our normal families or culture.

Personality Disorders are divided into three groups, or "clusters". Cluster A are individuals with odd, eccentric behaviors. Cluster B are individuals that are highly dramatic, emotionally and behaviorally, Anti-social, Borderline, Narcissistic, and Histrionic Personality are in this group. Cluster C are individuals that anxious and fearful. Avoidant, Dependent, and Obsessive-Compulsive types.

The Cluster B individuals create the most damage to social and personal relationships.

This where the controllers, abusers, manipulators, and users are found. Let's focus on these four.

- **ANTISOCIAL PERSONALITY:** Clinically, they are near-total selfishness and typically have a pattern of legal problems, lying and deception, physical assault and intimidation, no regard for the safety of others, unwillingness to meet normal standards for work/support/parenting, and no remorse.

- **BORDERLINE PERSONALITY:** They show a pervasive pattern of intense yet unstable relationships, mood, and self-perception. Impulse control is severely impaired. Characteristics are panic fears of abandonment, unstable social relationships, unstable self-image, impulsive/self-damaging acts such as promiscuity, substance abuse, alcohol use, recurrent suicide thoughts/attempts, self-injury and self-mu-

tilation, chronic feelings of emptiness, inappropriate yet intense anger, and fleeting paranoia.

- **HISTRIONIC PERSONALITY:** A pervasive pattern of excessive emotional display and attention seeking. They are often seen as drama queens. They are often sexually seductive and highly manipulative in relationships.

- **NARCISSISTIC PERSONALITY:** A pervasive pattern of preoccupation with admiration, entitlement, and egotism. They exaggerate their accomplishments/talents, have a sense of entitlement, lack of empathy or concern for others, are preoccupied with envy and jealousy, and have an arrogant attitude. All unrelated to real talent or accomplishment. They feel entitled to special attention, privileges, and consideration in social settings. An entitlement that produces a feeling they are allowed to punish those who

do not provide their required respect, admiration, or attentions.

Personality Disorders are present in 10 to 15 percent of the adult population. It is important to identify these individuals in our lives. While most of our contact with these type of people may be brief, the more involved they are in our lives, the higher the risk of emotional, social, and other damage. For this reason it is helpful to identify some of the characteristics of a personality disorder.

Let me know what you think...

Send your questions to Real Life Counseling, 3295 Crawfordville Hwy., suite #4, Crawfordville FL 32327 in care of Gregory E. Gast, MS, LMHC, NCC. Your name will be changed and the answer to your question will appear in an upcoming issue of The Wakulla Sun.

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Sheriff's office will hold Project Graduation



By **JARED MILLER**
Wakulla Sheriff

As the school year winds down, students and parents alike are beginning to prepare for the end of the school year. Typically for our community the start of summer is marked by the Wakulla High School graduation ceremony. However, for us here at the Wakulla County Sher-

iff's Office we mark the start a day earlier every year with our Project Graduation event. The WCSO Project Graduation is a long-standing event that predates my time as sheriff, but one that I am happy to be able to continue for our community. This month I wanted to take some time to talk about Project Graduation and what it is.

For more than 20 years the Wakulla County Sheriff's Office has held our annual Project Graduation ceremony/party for the graduating seniors of Wakulla County. The idea is simple: provide a safe space for the seniors to gather and celebrate with their friends. At each event the Sher-

iff's Office makes sure to have plenty of food, soda, ice cream and of course entertainment. There's also thousands of dollars worth of door prizes we give away to some of the lucky students in attendance. All of which is paid for by the funds raised by the WCSO charity golf tournament. The event also serves as an opportunity for me and members of the Sheriff's Office such as the School Resource Officers to say goodbye to the students who they've gotten to know.

One of the main goals of both the School Resource Officers and the deputies in the Community and Youth Services Unit is to develop positive relationships within the

community. Events such as Project Graduation help WCSO further those goals and help us to get to know the community, and our young people to get to know the people behind the badge.

However, it is important to know that Project Graduation is more than simply a large party for graduating seniors. We know that this time in a young person's life is very exciting for them, and they want to celebrate with their friends. By holding Project Graduation, we hope to provide students with a safe drug and alcohol-free venue to celebrate. We also take time at the event to help educate students on the dangers

of drinking and driving, because we know that in the days and weeks ahead many of them will be presented with opportunities to do so. Unfortunately, there will always be young people (and old people as well) who when presented with the choice will make the mistake to drink and drive. However, it is our goal to help educate as many students as possible. It is our hope that through relationships and education we can minimize the number of students who choose to drink and drive in the future. We also invite many of our community partners to come out and help provide other educational information to the grad-

uating seniors. Our goal is to help them make informed decisions as they step into adulthood.

This year's Project Graduation will be held at Wakulla Springs on May 26th and is open to any graduating senior from Wakulla County, no matter which school they attended. It is one of my favorite events to put on for the community. If you have a senior graduating this year, please encourage them to attend we'd love to have them.

Your Sheriff,
Jared F. Miller

*Jared Miller is
Wakulla County Sheriff.*

On the Horizon – A monthly calendar

Sunday, May 1

- May Day

Monday, May 2

- The Board of County Commissioner's meeting will be held at 5 p.m. in the Commission Chambers.
- The Wakulla Respite Program will be available for anyone with a memory impairment at no cost from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Lake Ellen Baptist Church.
- The Wakulla Caregiver Support Group will meet at 12:30 p.m. at Lake Ellen Baptist Church.

Thursday, May 5

- Cinco de Mayo.

Saturday, May 7

- The annual Miss Wakulla County Scholarship Pageant will be held at 4 p.m. in the Wakulla High School auditorium.

Sunday, May 8

- Mother's Day

Monday, May 9

- The Planning Commission meeting will be held at 6 p.m. in the Commission Chambers.
- The Sopchoppy City Commission Meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m. in Sopchoppy City Hall.
- The Wakulla Respite Program will be available for anyone with a

memory impairment at no cost from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Lake Ellen Baptist Church.

Thursday, May 12

- The St. Marks City Commission meeting will be held at 6 p.m.

Saturday, May 14

- The Wakulla Caregiver Support Group will meet at 10 a.m. at the Wakulla County Public Library.

Monday, May 16

- The Board of County Commissioner's meeting will be held at 5 p.m. in the Commission Chambers.
- The Wakulla County School Board meeting will be held at 5:45 p.m.
- The Wakulla Respite Program will be available for anyone with a memory impairment at no cost from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Lake Ellen Baptist Church.

Monday, May 23

- The Wakulla Respite Program will be available for anyone with a memory impairment at no cost from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Lake Ellen Baptist Church.

Friday, May 27

- The Wakulla High School graduation ceremony will begin at 8 p.m.

Monday, May 30

- Memorial Day
- The Wakulla Respite Program will be available for anyone with a memory impairment at no cost from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Lake Ellen Baptist Church.

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The Senior Center is growing again



By JOHN SHUFF and SANDI McDANIEL

We would like to begin this month's article by introducing two new employees that we have added to our staff to accommodate the return to pre-Covid levels of

use of our programs. It has been wonderful to see the daily increases in attendance at our Monday through Friday programs with 30-50 seniors attending and getting the opportunity to catch up with their friends and avail themselves of our services. It is impossible to overstate the importance of these folks being able to interact with each other.

Demand for our transportation and before school after school programs has also grown; all of this created the need for more staff and we are lucky to have found **Jennifer Miller** and **Jackie**

Flowers to help care for our seniors.

Let's begin with **Jackie Flowers** who is our new Transportation Scheduling and Billing Manager. This is a very important job as transportation needs change hourly, and we need to bill accurately for the service rendered. This is what keeps the service working for the citizens of Wakulla. Many of the trips are getting people to doctor's appointments or getting disadvantaged people to the grocery store, helping them to remain independent. Jackie comes to us with 6 years of accounting experience at another non-profit

and many years in the property management industry in Tallahassee. Jackie has 2 sons and 6 grandsons and a father that recently moved to Tallahassee.

Jennifer Miller comes to us after many years working in the customer service field with several different businesses. She is our Client Advocate now and will be helpful in expanding programs for our seniors as we continue to grow. Jennifer is married, has two daughters, and originates from Lloyd Florida. Jennifer has been living in Wakulla for the past 7 years.

The Wakulla Senior Citizens Council is proud to announce that our Medicaid in-home healthcare certification has just been extended for the next 5 years. Thank you, **Sandi McDaniel**, for seeing this through!

If you need services that we offer, please call **850-926-7145** for assistance. Our **before and after school program** at the four elementary schools are inexpensive, flexible, and are garnering testimonials to the great job Debbie Van Horn and her staff are doing. Same goes for our Transportation department, so if you need

help getting around give us a call!

Please remember to save the date of July 22 at the senior center for our annual **Christmas After Dark** fundraising event. Tickets are now on sale and sponsorships are available if you want to be recognized as a supporter of our senior community, 850-926-7145!

Also, visit our Thrift Store in Sopchoppy for some great bargains! We are open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday. If you have items to donate, please stop by the store during our business hours.

Student loan forgiveness



By SAMANTHA KENNEDY Extension Director

I recently received some welcome news from the Federal government: the balance of my student loans has been forgiven!

When I first opened the email telling me the news, I wanted to print it out and frame it. The relief and elation that washed over me were intense. I have been paying on my student loans since I finished graduate school in 2002, so to finally have that debt cleared is an immense weight off my shoulders.

What allowed me to enjoy this windfall? The U.S. Department of Education's Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program.

According to the Federal Student Aid website, "The PSLF Program forgives the remaining balance on your Direct Loans after you have made 120 qualifying monthly payments under a qualifying repayment plan while working full-time for a qualifying employer."

In other words, as long as you have made 10 years of on-time payments on your loans while working full-time in a public service job, you may be eligible to have the remainder of your loans forgiven.

There are, of course, restrictions. Not all repayment plans qualify. Your employer must fall within certain categories to qualify as public service. Your loan must be in good standing and not in default.

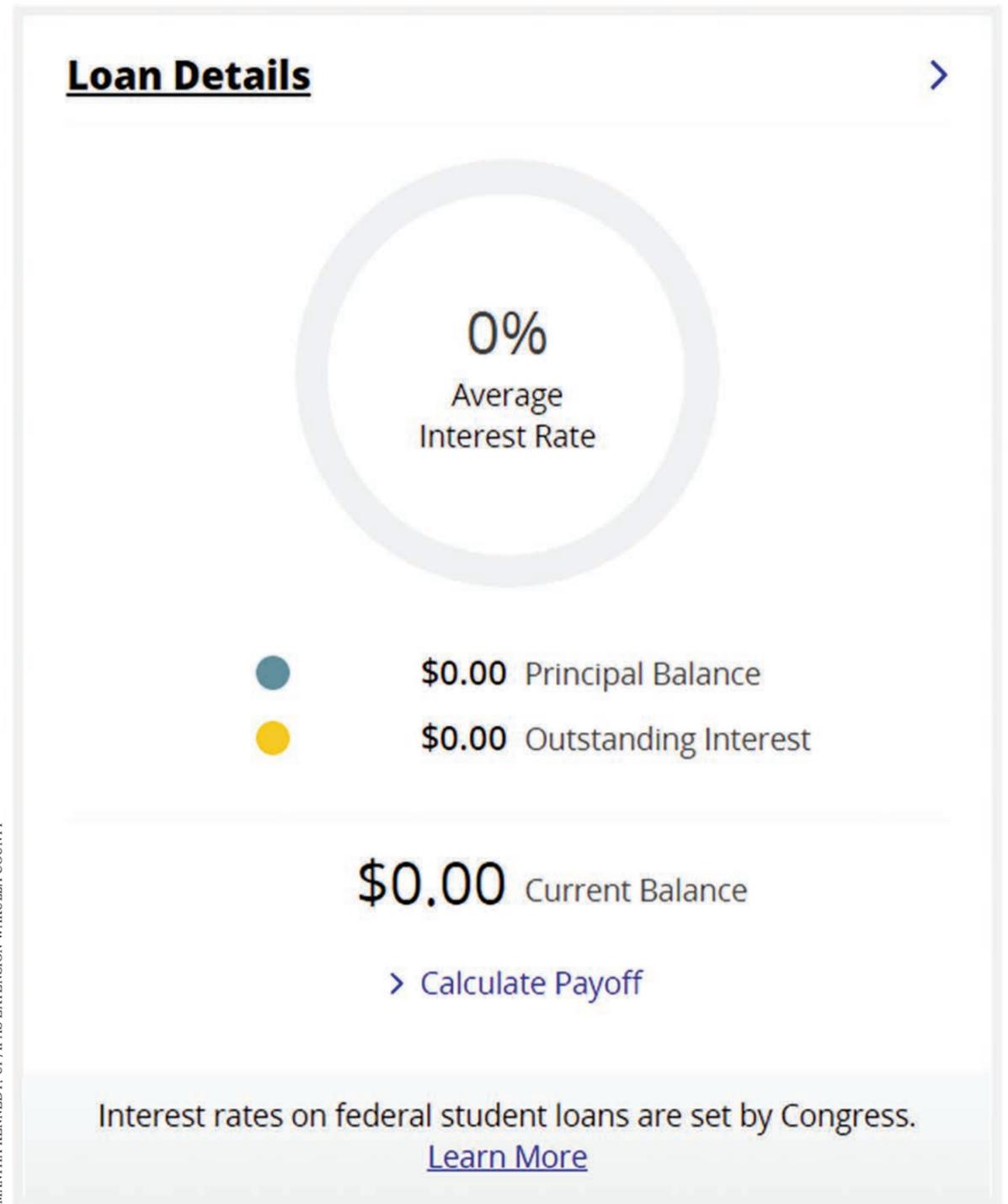
To be honest, I did not initially qualify for loan forgiveness.

I was denied the first time I applied because even though I worked for a qualifying employer (the University of Florida), I was told that all those payments I had made over the previous 10 years did not count because they were not made under the proper repayment plan.

However, on Oct. 6, 2021, the U.S. Department of Education announced a temporary period during which borrowers may receive credit for payments that previously did not qualify for PSLF. After doing a little research about the new rules, I thought I would give it another try. What did I have to lose? And it paid off (no pun intended).

The payments that previously did not count towards PSLF now counted and I had met all the obligations to have my loan balance forgiven.

After you have determined that you may fit all of the PSLF qualifications, you will then need to submit a form certifying that your employment qualifies under the rules. This is done with the help of your employer's Human Resources department. You will then need to make sure your payments qualify by contacting your loan service provider.



Debt cancellation through the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program can provide relief to many people struggling to pay off their student loans. Seeing that zero balance is a welcome sight.

It is not a quick process, but it is definitely worth the effort. All the information necessary to get the process started is available on the Federal Student Aid website, studentaid.gov.

Just choose "Public Service Loan Forgiveness" under the "Manage Loans" tab to get

started.

There are other types of forgiveness and discharge programs available as well, so there may be one that better fits your situation.

For many people working towards a college degree, this goal is only achievable with the help of loans from the U.S. government.

However, the accrued debt can definitely be a challenge to deal with, especially for new professionals just starting out. But depending on your circumstances, there may be an opportunity to have that debt forgiven, helping to alleviate some of the burden.

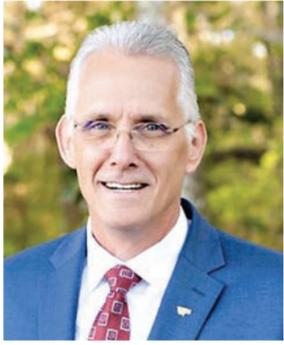
If you think you may

qualify, I encourage you to check it out. You may be pleasantly surprised!

For more information about student loan forgiveness, please contact Samantha Kennedy, Wakulla County Extension Director, at (850) 926-3931.

FROM THE PROPERTY APPRAISER'S OFFICE

Property values see record increases!



By **ED BRIMNER**

2021-22 has seen a surge in local real estate values. Virtually all properties have increased in value; homes, businesses, and vacant land.

“The increase in taxable property values that will show up in milage notices in August is likely to be the largest in the past 10 years. This is due to new construction and ever-increasing property values,” said Wakulla County Property Appraiser Ed Brimner. “Overall values in Wakulla County could increase by 15 to 20 percent or

more.”

By Florida Statute, the property appraiser must assess property at current market value. Taxable value is the current market value minus any applicable exemptions. For this reason, it is vital that all citizens know and claim all exemptions they are eligible for. All citizens who are eligible should immediately visit or call the Property Appraiser's office to take advantage of all exemptions possible. Our number is (850) 926-0500.

Thank God for Homestead and Save our Homes legislation! Most property owners — particularly homestead property owners — will be shielded from paying taxes on most of this year's property value increase because of statutory limits on the annual increase in taxable value of property. The tax-

	Taxes with no Homestead Exemption	Taxes with Homestead Exemption
2021 market value of \$100,000	\$1,410	\$851
2022 with 20% increase in market value to \$120,000	\$1,551 (10% cap)	\$894 (3% cap)

able value of homestead property can only increase by 3 percent. The taxable value of commercial and non-homestead property can only increase by 10 percent.

One mil is equal to \$1 of tax per \$1,000 of property value. The following table shows the value of Homestead using the approximate 2021 Wakulla County milage rate of 14.1 mils.

However, new homeowners, new businesses, and businesses that sold in 2021 will be very hard hit. Because of the way Save Our Homes homestead exemptions work, recent homebuyers will be hit hardest. By law, taxable values are reset to the full

market value when property changes hands or major changes to land use are approved. Besides new purchases, higher market values will be triggered by such things as renovations to existing property, new construction such as a guest house or new pool, or a change in land use for vacant property.

Homeowners won't be the only residents feeling the pinch. If you're a renter, the property increases could also impact your monthly rent rate as landlords will pass increased taxes along to renters.

To make matter worse, on top of increasing home values there is ballooning insurance costs

and runaway inflation.

It must be emphasized that, by law, the property appraiser must appraise property at full market value. The amount of tax owed is then determined by the milage set by taxing authorities — county commissioners and the school board as well as the St Marks City Council for those who live in St Marks. In addition, the Northwest Florida Water Management District add a small milage to all property taxes.

Hopefully, all taxing authorities will consider lowering next year's milage rate to prevent tax bills from soaring as values increase. Residents need to get in-

involved when county, school board, and city leaders are making decisions about their tax dollars. Milage rates are set by the taxing authorities and only they can help to lessen the tax burden by reducing milage rates.

Unless the taxing authorities reduce last year's tax rate, residents could get sticker shock when they get their property tax notices later this summer. Taxing authorities should consider reducing their tax rate to compensate for increasing prices and new development.

Please call or visit your Property Appraiser's office if you think you may be eligible for any exemptions—it could save you hundreds of dollars a year.

Ed Brimner is Wakulla County Property Appraiser.

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FROM THE CLERK OF COURTS

What does the Clerk of Courts do?



By GREG JAMES

Hello from the Clerk's Office! When I was campaigning for the elected position of the Clerk of Court & Comptroller, there was an occasion when I had just introduced myself to someone and I told this person what elected office I was running for and this person look at me and asked "What the does the Clerk of Court's office do?" It took a few minutes to answer that question and, if you are wondering what all we do, I am going to answer that in this month's article.

2021 was a milestone for the Clerk's Office – it marked the 200th anniversary of the Clerk's Office in the State of Florida. Since 1821, the Clerk's Office has fulfilled many important responsibilities and, while the history of the Clerk's Office is interesting, I don't have the space to cover the history of the Clerk's Office today. But I will cover the responsibilities of the office... and there are many. In fact, it has been estimated that there are

over 1,000 duties of the Clerk's Office enumerated in the Florida Constitution, Florida Statutes, Laws of Florida or the Rules of Judicial Administration.

The Florida Constitution, Article VIII 1(d) states, in part, "There shall be elected by the electors of each county...the clerk of the circuit court shall be ex officio clerk of the board of county commissioners, auditor, recorder and custodian of all county funds."

Chapter 28.12 and 125.17, Florida Statutes states, in part, "The clerk of the circuit court shall be clerk and accountant of the board of county commissioners. He or she shall keep the minutes and accounts and perform such other duties as provided by law or as the board may direct".

As the ex officio clerk of the Board of County Commissioners (BoCC), the Clerk ensures you have convenient access to all public records regarding the official actions of the BoCC. Records such as county ordinances, resolutions, contracts, grant agreements, budget documents, miscellaneous agreements and the minutes of each board meeting are preserved as the permanent record. The ordinances, minutes and videos of the Board of County Commissioners are available on our website at <https://wakullaclerk.org/clerk-to->

the-board/.

As the accountant and custodian of county funds, the Clerk acts as the bookkeeper of all accounts, custodian of all bank accounts and assets, and performs financial related activities associated with processing invoices, tracking and collecting revenues, processing employee payroll, grant accounting, asset management, treasury and investment management, debt management and financial reporting. This important role is often titled "Comptroller" or "Chief Financial Officer". Many of these reports are available at <https://wakullaclerk.org/county-financial-reports/>. It is my hope to add many more financial related reports to our website for public viewing in the near future.

As the auditor of the BoCC, the Clerk performs "pre-audits" of all proposed expenditures, contracts, grants and other financial documents or agreements. The Clerk is also responsible for performing "post-audits" of financial activities or functions for all County departments. For many years, this function was performed through the Finance & Accounting Department of the Clerk's Office. This year a new department, the Internal Audit Department, was created to perform this important function. The internal

audits performed by the Clerk's Office are separate from, and in addition to, the external audit that is performed annually by a certified public accounting firm. A final important piece of the audit function is the Fraud Hotline that has been established to allow for anonymous tips on improper or illegal activity within County government. The Fraud Hotline number is 850-926-0356.

As the county recorder, the Clerk "shall be the recorder of all instruments that he or she may be required or authorized by law to record..." (F.S. 28.222). These records include all instruments related to land transactions including deeds, mortgages, liens, satisfaction of liens, etc. We are also required to record official court actions including orders of dismissal, probate orders, final judgments in civil actions, family law, foreclosures, final judgments for injunctions for protection and other records as ordered by the Courts. The Clerk's Office is the preserver of these public records and historical documents. Property records are available back to 1842 and most can be accessed at <http://wakullaclerk.com/landmarkweb>.

As the clerk of the circuit and county courts (F.S. 28.211 and 34.031), the

Clerk is responsible for opening new cases, re-opening cases in certain situations, attending court sessions, hearings and trials and managing case filings and documents in ten different court divisions – Circuit Criminal (Felony), County Criminal (Misdemeanor), Criminal Traffic, Traffic, Circuit Civil, Circuit Family, County Civil (Small Claims), Probate & Guardianship, Juvenile Dependency & Juvenile Delinquency. The Clerk maintains a progress docket that notes all case pleadings, motions or other paperwork pertinent to any action, appeal or other proceeding that come before the Courts. The Clerk is also responsible for management of the jury system, maintains and preserves the evidence submitted in court, ensures the collection and distribution of child support and alimony payments as directed by the Courts, processes restraining orders for injunctions against domestic and other violence, injunctions for vulnerable adults and orders related to mental health and substance abuse cases.

For those citizens who want to represent themselves (called Pro Se or "For Oneself") in a court matter, the Clerk is required to provide certain ministerial assistance. The Clerk provides a "DIY Shop" online which can be accessed at

<https://wakullaclerk.org/turbo-court-diy-forms/>. It is very important to note that the Clerk's Office does not employ attorneys so we are not permitted to provide legal advice or legal assistance and, even if some of our employees were attorneys, we must be impartial in our assistance to both sides or parties to a case. Simply put, we are not attorneys and we are not your attorney so we must limit the assistance we provide to remain independent to both parties.

Other miscellaneous duties of the Clerk include being clerk of the value adjustment board, issuing marriage licenses, process passport applications, processing public records requests, maintaining all public records, protecting sensitive or confidential information in any of these documents, holding tax deed and foreclosure auctions and providing human resource services to our employees.

I hope you have a little bit better understanding of the role of the Clerk of Court and the many important activities we are involved in that affect the lives of Wakulla County citizens!

Greg James is Wakulla County Clerk of Courts and Comptroller.

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Conquering your financial fears

A short guide to overcoming your worries



By BRIAN ENGLISH

An unusually helpful bit of pop psychology holds that we should worry only about things we can control or affect and put aside anxieties we cannot. That advice holds true for worrying about money and investing. Although some fears cannot be controlled by the individual or have little likelihood of happening, addressing a related fear that can be controlled may alleviate some of the anxiety.

FEAR: STOCK MARKET CRASH

While visions of the 2008 market crash still haunt some of us, the reality is, your biggest worry should be following your instinct instead of your logic. People often abandon the buy-low, sell-high principle when they need it most. Good markets make many investors feel in-

vincible, so they don't sell or rebalance. When markets decrease and prices are low, investors get scared that they will lose out on potential gains. They jump ship figuring a small return is better than none but ignoring the potential upside if the stock price rises again.

Diversification and dollar-cost averaging may help address some risks of market volatility and keep your investment plan on an even keel. Diversification is a strategy designed to reduce exposure to risk by spreading your investment dollars over a variety of asset classes. By making sure your portfolio is invested for the long haul across a variety of markets, countries, and investment vehicles, you may reduce your risk exposure. Although diversification is designed to reduce risk, it does not guarantee greater returns nor protect against loss in a declining market.

Dollar-cost averaging simply means putting the same amount of money to work at regular intervals. For example, an individual might choose to invest \$250 or more on the first of every month. Regardless of whether the investment is doing well or poorly, the person continues to

invest \$250 at the same time each month. The idea is to invest consistently and take advantage of market fluctuations. In effect, this method allows people to purchase some shares when the prices are low and some when share prices are high and some when the price is in the middle. This technique can reduce the risk that a person will repeatedly purchase shares when the price is high by attempting to time the market. Purchasing shares only when the price begins to show growth may mean missing out on lower prices.

When choosing an investment strategy, it is important to remain focused on your goals and objectives. Dollar-cost averaging requires an individual to adhere to a disciplined approach of investing on a regular basis, even in a declining market. One also needs to consider their ability to continue to dollar-cost average through changing market cycles. Of course, this strategy does not ensure a profit or protect from a loss.

FEAR: IDENTITY THEFT

Americans greatly fear identity theft and for good reason. It can wreak havoc on your

personal finances. Mistakes on your credit report, however, are far more likely and can severely damage credit ratings.

One in five consumers identified an error in a credit report issued by a major agency according to a recent study by The Federal Trade Commission. The study found that as many as 40 million people have a mistake listed on their credit report, and 20 million have significant mistakes. Mistakes can range from minor to inaccurate or false delinquencies that can ruin your credit. Be cautious about giving out your Social Security number and check your credit report once a year for inaccuracies.

FEAR: A FAILING ECONOMY

High energy prices, terrorism and natural disasters are all enough to make Chicken Little look rational. With our penchant to view the future as a continuation of the past, it's no surprise that many Americans fear another 1930s-style depression or worse.

By investing in a wide variety of investment vehicles, you can help increase the chances that if one major world economy starts to sputter, you're gaining in another one that is booming. For those in retirement, where income distribution is so important, having a strategy that generates income in good times and bad is critical.

Many of us fear the worst on a consistent basis, and we all face risks every day. The

real task is rooting out which financial fears can be controlled and then working with your financial professional to reduce your risk.

Brian can be reached at 850-926-7487.

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Sunny Chancy

From Front Page

science courses including physics, chemistry, and biology. In 2001, she began teaching science courses like environmental science and AP Biology at Wakulla High School under then-principal Randy Newland.

She said she went back to school around 2008, attending Florida State University where she earned a modified Master's in Educational Leadership. After Riversink Elementary School opened, the Assistant Principal of Curriculum and Instruction position at the high school also became available. Chancy applied for the position and was hired – she worked as the Assistant Principal of Curriculum and Instruction at Wakulla High School for about six years.

Around the time when former Wakulla Superintendent of Schools David Miller retired and current Wakulla Superintendent Bobby Pearce was elected, Chancy says she moved from the high school to the district office where she worked under Beth Mims as Director of Curriculum. Following Mims's retirement, Chancy became Chief Academic Officer – supervising curriculum and instruction for K-20 students.

Chancy recently completed a doctoral program in Educational Policy and Leadership at Florida State University. She became Assistant Superintendent around July 2020 and completed her doctorate in 2022.

Chancy's work at

the district office has mainly focused on the Instructional Services department. The Instructional Services suite was renovated during Pearce's tenure as superintendent, and Chancy felt this was beneficial because it allowed the team to better work together and not be segmented throughout the district office. "We, in this office and really in the school district, have a great reputation and a culture for working as a team," says Chancy.

According to Chancy, the responsibilities of the Instructional Services team include setting the school calendar, overseeing curriculum, summer school, career and technical education, handbooks, grant writing and more. She says she specifically does some of the grant writing; and ultimately, she oversees a team of individuals who excel at their respective tasks. "I love coming to work every day, I love my job, and I love the people I work with" says Chancy. "We are a very fortunate community, a very fortunate school district, in which we talk amongst teams and we all get along."

One of the major projects that Chancy and the Instructional Services department have been working towards is the War Eagle Career Academy. Earlier this year, the school district received an over \$20 million grant from Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. to be put towards a career and technical education academy that will be located on the Wakulla High School campus. "We are going to expand what



Sunny Chancy, center, with her Instructional Services team.

we already have now," says Chancy. "We are responsible for earning 7,450 certificates in 12 years through this newest grant that we've earned." While the school district already offers many vocational programs and certifications, Chancy notes that this grant will allow the district to offer students access to more IT certifications, including in topics like coding and cloud computing.

Chancy says current focuses of the Instructional Services team include the career and technical academy as well as other projects like keeping up with education-related policy decisions at the state level, financial literacy requirements, textbook adoption, and more.

"Everything is so fluid, and there's no start or stop point," says Chancy. "You're always moving forward." She says accomplishments in education at all levels are often a team effort. She notes that accomplishments like receiving grant funding are often the result of work done by multiple

people and that even student and teacher accomplishments are the result of mutual efforts put into the learning process by both individuals. Chancy says that the school district has worked through challenges like changing standards and dealing with the pandemic.

Prior to the pandemic, in June 2019, Chancy was invited to attend the Leadership for Professional Learning international symposium in Cambridge, England to speak about Wakulla's Teacher Coaches program. "It's a cycle of feedback and problem-solving with

a certain teacher or about a certain area," she says about the program.

"There are so many similarities globally on what education looks like, but then there is a lot of different things people do that we can learn from each other," says Chancy. "One thing that I brought back is that people want to know what other systems look like so we can make systems globally better for education."

"One of my favorite reoccurring memories in the school system is when school starts – its just very exciting," says

Chancy while reflecting on students being excited about going back to school. She says that she is involved in the community, but that most of that involvement is school related like helping with or attending plays, the Honor Court banquet, youth sporting events, and more. "Its not necessarily part of my job to do that type of stuff, but its just stuff that we do."

According to Chancy, raising her family in Wakulla has been memorable. "John and I are incredibly blessed," she says. The Chancys have two children – Annabelle who is graduating this year and John Richter who is in sixth grade.

"My daughter wants to be an elementary school teacher, so I'm very excited about that because it's a fulfilling, rewarding career," says Chancy. "I tell her, you got to do what makes you happy."

Chancy has been an educator and leader within Wakulla County Schools for many years and as someone who has worked with local youth, her advice for them would be: "Dream big – whatever you want to do, do it. Nothing can stop you."

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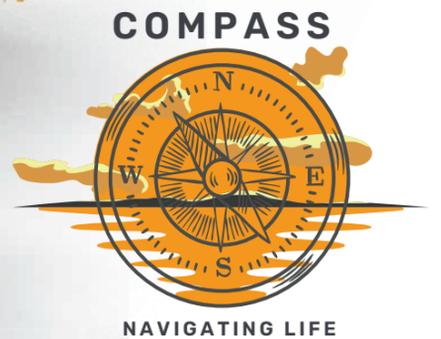
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Animal Shelter: Make sure your dog has a collar



By JOANN SPEARS

“Dogs have given us their absolute all. We are the center of their universe. We are the focus of their love and faith and trust. They serve us in return for scraps. It is without a doubt the best deal man has ever made.” – Roger Caras
Anyone who has

ever loved a dog will likely agree with the above sentiment. Short of the relationship between a parent and child, there may not be another love as pure as the one that exists between a dog and his owner.

Our dogs depend on us to keep them happy, healthy, and safe, and making sure your dog always wears a collar with an ID tag is one of the greatest ways you can express your love for him!

Statistics show that the less time he spends on the streets, the less likely it is that he will run into the perils associated with running at large, such

as being attacked by another animal, or hit by a car.

With the proper identification, it will be a simple matter for the finder to return him safely to you. However, in the event your dog isn't wearing the proper tags, the finder will have no alternative but to bring him to the animal shelter.

During the subsequent five-day stray hold, shelter staff will attempt to locate the owner through social media posts. There will also be impound fees and/or fines related to the impounding of your dog, an inconvenience that can be avoided altogether if the finder is able to

bypass animal control and contact you directly.

But what if your pet is only allowed outside into a confined area, such as a kennel, or fenced-in yard? Are collars and tags still necessary?

The answer is a resounding yes! Unforeseen circumstances like an unexpectedly violent storm can result in your dog running away from home and potentially ending up in harm's way. A fireworks display can cause great anxiety for pets and is a leading cause of shelter intakes, with more animals being brought in as strays on New Year's Eve and July 4th than at

any other time of the year.

Even a loose window screen, or a door inadvertently left open can spell disaster for your beloved pooch if he manages to escape.

A well-fitting collar with the proper identification greatly increases the odds that he will be returned to you, safe and sound.

As for selecting a collar, there are many types and styles to choose from, everything from basic to blingy! Some even have extra safety features that allow the collar to unsnap should your dog become snagged on a fence or tree limb.

However, the most essential component

of any collar you choose should be the ID tag. Without it, the collar is rendered useless.

If you don't want to purchase a metal tag, writing your name and phone number on your dog's collar – a permanent black marker will do the job and make it easy for someone to contact you should the need arise.

Wakulla Animal Services is always ready to assist you if you've lost a pet or found a stray, and can be reached at 850-926-0902.

Shelter hours are Tuesday-Friday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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By **AL HARTMAN**

First off, I would like to hope you had a very nice Easter with family and friends.

The FWC is asking for you to be alert as the weather changes. Alligators that are mostly dormant

when the weather is chilly are starting to be a lot more active as the weather warms up. Coupled with the breeding season starting now. Be aware of your surroundings as you approach any body of water. Keep your distance from gators. They look clumsy, but can move very quick for short distances, faster than you! Don't take chances. And never feed them!

Bats are more active as the weather warms up and you will start seeing more of them in the evening hours. When the temperature drops below 50 degrees, some bats migrate further south, and others will

go into hibernation until the weather warms up. Bats can ingest thousands of bugs and mosquitoes in a night. There are 13 species of bats in Florida and they are all protected by Florida law. Their breeding season starts in April and lasts through mid August.

Bears are on the prowl now. Bears in Florida do not hibernate, but do go into a dormant stage and just sort of lounge a lot. With the coming of spring, bears become more active as the food takes over the landscape. They will come into your yard and raid your trash looking for easy food. Never feed them! Keep an eye out

when hiking or camping. They are not slow and run to speeds of 35 miles per hour.

Manatees are on the move as the weather warms the water. They move out to the coast to feed and breed. So boaters should wear polarized sunglasses to help spot manatees in the water. Look for snouts sticking up from the water and watch for large circles of water as the manatees move. Most are killed by boaters, but 2021 marked a record number of deaths, many from starvation as the grass they eat died off in many places. The FWC is trying to replant these areas.

The human popu-

lation has had a real battle with the Covid crises, but the animals are having a time of it too! Avian flu has come into Florida's mostly east coast by the spring migration and any bird can get struck by it. In the western states millions of chickens and turkeys have been put down by farmers because of the flu. Looks like poultry prices will plummet!

Not to be left out, the turtle population has been struck by a fatal virus. It is called Turtle Fraservirus. Several turtles have been found by the FWC in Florida so far this year. The FWC asks if you see a turtle with its head screeched out and flat

on the ground or crusty swollen eyes, or acting sluggish, call FWC at 352-339-8597 to report its location. Do not pick it up or relocate it.

Rabies has shown an increase lately. A man was bitten by a fox in Tallahassee. Several cases have been reported in the state this year. If approached by a fox or a racoon, keep your distance. And be careful when be approached by a stray dog also!

Don't forget to go online and sign up with MyFWC.com. It will send you emails of game and fish openings and closings.

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