



See Page 13

# The Wakulla Sun

"It's a New Day"



Weather forecast from Wakulla High School

Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Mostly Cloudy	AM Clouds/ PM Sun	Sunny
Hi: 60° Lo: 50° 40%	Hi: 66° Lo: 29° 24%	Hi: 48° Lo: 26° 1%
Sunrise 7:33 AM Sunset 6:02 PM	Sunrise 7:33 AM Sunset 6:03 PM	Sunrise 7:33 AM Sunset 6:03 PM

Locally Owned & Operated

Our 4th Year 2nd Issue  
Thursday, January 18, 2024



\$1  
One Section

## Election 2024

A number of candidates have already filed to run for local office

By **WILLIAM SNOWDEN**  
Editor

A number of potential candidates are filing to run for local elected office in 2024.

Constitutional officers, three county commission seats, and two school board seats are on the ballot this year.

Candidate qualifying begins on June 10, so it's still early.

Here's how some of the races are shaping up so far:

Incumbent Sheriff Jared Miller has filed to run for re-election and has drawn a challenger in Armand "Army" Reyes.

Supervisor of Elections Joe Morgan has filed to run for re-election, and has not drawn

an opponent.

Other constitutional officers have yet to file. Incumbents are Clerk of Courts Greg James, Property Appraiser Ed Brimmer, and Tax Collector Lisa Craze.

With the announced retirement of Superintendent of Schools Bobby Pearce, that race is shaping up between Rick Myhre and Matt Payne.

Ricky Strickland briefly filed and then withdrew his candidacy, reportedly due to conflicts with his state Department of Education job.

No one has filed yet for the county commission district 1 seat currently held by Ralph Thomas.

County commission district 3 has two candidates so far: incum-

berent Mike Kemp and challenger Valerie Russell. Kemp edged past Russell in the 2020 vote that was a three-way race at one point with then-incumbent Mike Stewart.

In the county commission district 5 race, Josh Lawhon has filed to run for the seat currently held by Chuck Hess. Hess has not formally announced whether he will seek re-election.

For school board district 2, Angie Nichols and June Davis have filed to run. Incumbent Melisa Taylor has not formally announced whether she will run again, but it is expected she will not.

For school board district 4, incumbent Josh Brown is being challenged by Camden Smit.

## Kendyl Byrd is district spelling bee champion



Runner-up Mirri Craig, left, with district winner Kendyl Byrd at Friday's district spelling bee.

By **WILLIAM SNOWDEN**  
Editor

The winning word was "avens." As in "plants of a genus of perennial herbs with pinnate or hyrate leaves and flowers with long plumose persistent styles."

And Kendyl Byrd, a 5th grader at Shadeville, won the district spelling bee by spelling it correctly.

Mirri Craig, an 8th grader at Wakulla Middle School, was runner-up in the spelling bee, held Friday, Jan. 12 at the auditorium in the district office.

Craig was knocked out in the 15th round of the spelling bee by the word "scandium," which is "a white metallic element found especially in various minerals in certain northern European countries."

Other students competing in the bee included Brentley Brannan, 4th grader at Crawfordville Elementary; Emily Costigan, a 5th grader at Riversink Elementary; Mischa Fretterd, a 7th grader at COAST Charter School; Jovier Henderson, 5th grader at COAST; Ehulani Lopez-Logran, 5th grader at Medart Elementary; Emmie Salis, 4th grader at Medart; Isaiah Sims, 7th grader at Riversprings Middle; Jett Smith, 5th grader at Riversink Elementary; Pierce Vearil, 7th grader at Wakulla Middle; and Roedy Wells, 6th grader at Riversprings. Two contestants were absent due to illness, Lydia James, 5th grader at Shadeville; and Evey McNamara, 4th grader at

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## MLK Day observed

About 50 people were on hand for the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial observance held by the Wakulla County Christian Coalition at the courthouse monument on Monday, Jan. 15. Gwendolyn Staten, above, acted as master of ceremonies for the event. Sgt. Major (retired) Derrick Franklin, left, now pastor at Greater Mount Zion Church, was speaker, and he urged attendees to follow Dr. King's lead and recommit themselves to justice, equality and unity. More photos on Page 5. (Photos by William Snowden)



## Tornado passed over Wakulla last week in storm

Emergency Management reports tracking the tornado on radar but it didn't touch down

Staff Report

Wakulla Emergency Management Director Jennifer Nagy's report on the heavy storm that passed through Wakulla last week noted that a tornado tracked across the county but "appears to have not touched down."

"We were fortunate to not have experienced any widespread damage," Nagy added.

The storm on Tuesday, Jan. 9 did see tornados hit Bay and Jackson counties, causing some severe property damage.

## Sewage spill reported on Arran Road

Staff Report

Contractors installing fiber optic cables down the right-of-way on Arran Road reportedly broke a sewer line on Saturday, Jan. 13.

County crews responded to area to repair the line. The county issued alerts on Saturday night that Arran Road was closed due to repairs and excavation, but did not indicate a sewer line had been ruptured.

Repairs were completed and the road re-opened after 1 a.m. on Sunday. It's not clear how much sewage, if any, was spilled. On Sunday morning, county crews were finishing up work, including throwing what appeared to be lime in the ditch in front of Crawfordville United Methodist Church.

### CITY OF SOPCHOPPY

## Edwards steps down as mayor

By **LEGION TAYLOR**  
Reporter

At the Sopchoppy city commission meeting last week, Lara Edwards stepped down as the city's mayor.

Edwards said at the meeting on Monday, Jan. 8, that she had been mayor since 2015, and that it was time for someone else to fill that role.

Commissioner Glenn Rudd, who served as vice mayor, was quickly nominated for the job as mayor. The other four commissioners voted unanimously to appoint him, and he took over the job right then. Roger McKenzie was then unanimously appointed to be vice mayor.

Edwards will continue to serve on the city commission, as she has since her appointment in 2011, after her husband David Edwards resigned to take up his current position as county administrator.

Lara Edwards recently accepted a position as executive director of the Wakulla Senior Citizens



Sopchoppy's new mayor Glenn Rudd, left, took over the post from Lara Edwards, center, and Roger McKenzie will serve as city's vice mayor.

Center.

In another matter, Katherine Van Zant, a representative from Florida Rural Water Association, came to the meeting to give a presentation on Sopchoppy's Capacity Fees. Capacity Fees are one-time fees that are designed to reimburse costs spent on expanding utilities. This would affect

developments that require water hookups, such as new subdivisions, as only new users would need to pay these capacity fees. These fees should also help fund future expansion as the county continues to grow.

The water system must be expanded to prepare for population

Turn to Page 3



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Robert is a true Floridian. He grew up in Miami and moved to Tallahassee for his senior year of high school. Upon graduation, Robert joined the Navy and served this great country with honor, courage, and commitment. He met the love of his life at an event in Tallahassee and shortly afterwards they were married. He has four children, seven grandchildren, and three fur babies. Robert exemplifies the core values of honor, courage, and commitment in his career at the Florida Department of Revenue where he has served for fifteen years while demonstrating exceptional customer service skills which enabled him to climb through the ranks into upper management. Most weekends when the weather is good, Robert can be found fishing, boating, hunting, or playing with his family and friends. He is very active in his local church and has co-sponsored a ministry outreach for the local community. Robert and his family moved to Crawfordville eight years ago and have fallen in love with the community, and outdoor activities. He has gained an abundance of knowledge about the area and can't wait to help you find your way home.

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# Student of the Week

## Brooks Baker – 4th grader at Medart Elementary

Principal: Stan Ward

**Achievements/Reason for Nomination:** Brooks is a perfect example of the type of student every teacher wants in the classroom. He is motivated to learn, works hard, and performs at a high level academically. However, the best characteristic Brooks possesses is how he treats others. He is kind, helpful, and respectful to everyone. In addition, he has competed in our school's Spelling Bee and has a starring role on our morning announcements! Thanks for being an awesome Mustang, Brooks!




**STUDENT OF THE WEEK FEATURES A DIFFERENT SCHOOL EACH WEEK.**

## Flower of the Week at Sopchoppy Depot Park

### Yaupon holly

By **DAVID RODDENBERRY, LYNN ARTZ, and SANDY TEDDER**



Inedible red fruits produced by the female plant.

Yaupon (*Ilex vomitoria*) is a very abundant native holly species and one easily grown, even if it is stuck with the unenviable scientific name. A pleasant hallmark of this shrub species is the crop of lustrous red fruits often produced by the female individual. The somewhat lustrous, non-prickly evergreen leaves give a constancy through all seasons. Though holly fruits are inedible, a tea brewed very simply from yaupon's leaves, dried and toasted, is palatable and caffeine-charged. Pollination is principally by native bees, which are likely to supply pollen from someplace around for female plants installed in gardens. The plant is salt-spray tolerant and often occurs along the immediate coast. Yaupon is used in the east and west hedges of the north gardens of Sopchoppy Depot Park.



SCAN ME for an electronic edition of this

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*Lisa Craze, CFC*  
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 Enacted: 07/01/2004.  
 The "Live the Dream" plate is to be distributed by the Dream Foundation, Inc. When you purchase a "Live the Dream" specialty plate above, a percentage of the proceeds go to Sickle Cell Association of Florida (to distribute to sickle cell chapters throughout Florida)



**Red, White and Blue Bikers Care:** Enacted: 10/01/2003.  
 Purchase the red, white and blue Bikers Care tag, you will help thousands of citizens by funding programs to prevent blindness and provide support for Floridians with disabilities.





# Wakulla High students receive grant for historical travel

American Battlefield Trust will fund field trip to visit National Civil Rights Museum at the Lorraine Motel

Special to The Sun

Wakulla High School's Breonne Murray and 44 students with 8 educators will soon head to National Civil Rights Museum at the Lorraine Motel, thanks to a grant from the American Battlefield Trust's History Field Trip Grant Program. This trip will provide students with an exceptional, hands-on history learning opportunity. Grants are awarded based on a competitive national application process, demonstrating Murray's commitment to excellence in the classroom.

"This experience is unique for our students because not only do they visit sites they've read about in history class, but they get to meet people who lived through these events. The opportunity to hear firsthand information

from members of the community is invaluable. These members share their story to preserve history. We are so fortunate to visit historic places of the Civil Rights Movement," says Murray.

The American Battlefield Trust is the largest battlefield land preservation organization in the country, having saved more than 562,000 acres of hallowed ground across 24 states. Through visiting preserved battlefields and walking in the footsteps of the citizen soldiers who fought there, the Trust aims to provide a foundation of good citizenship for the leaders of tomorrow. The Trust strives to produce excellent educational resources in a variety of formats for both educators and the public alike, ensuring that Americans never forget how their country was forged.

Every year, the Trust receives applications from classrooms across the country to participate in the History Field Trip Grant Program, which offers funding and assistance to K-12 teachers planning field trips to Civil War, War of 1812, or Revolutionary War battlefields and related historic sites. During the 2018-2019 school year, more than 7,500 students from 24 states took part.

"These kids get a chance to go to where history was made, where our country was created and defined," said Trust President David Duncan of the History Field Trip Grant Program recipients, "Battlefields are outdoor classrooms that will teach future Americans about our democratic republic."

Murray has enormous enthusiasm

for teaching history and is excited to utilize National Civil Rights Museum at the Lorraine Motel as an outdoor classroom that will give her students a meaningful and memorable experience. The American Battlefield Trust is proud to support and empower such excellent educators as they inspire the next generation of proud Americans.

The American Battlefield Trust is dedicated to preserving America's hallowed battlegrounds and educating the public about what happened there and why it matters today. The nonprofit, nonpartisan organization has protected more than 54,000 acres associated with the Revolutionary War, War of 1812 and Civil War. Learn more at [www.battlefields.org](http://www.battlefields.org).

## Florida senate passes scaled-back school 'deregulation' plan

By RYAN DAILEY  
News Service of Florida

The Florida Senate on Wednesday passed a suite of bills aimed at "deregulation" of public schools, with one measure undergoing a significant change that nixed a provision related to the state's third-grade literacy policy after it was heavily criticized by former Gov. Jeb Bush.

The legislative package, a priority of Senate President Kathleen Pasidomo, R-Naples, is aimed at what she characterized as "cutting red tape" and taking burdensome regulations off the books for schools.

Included in the plan is a proposal (SB 7004) that would make changes related to state assessments and instruction. For example, the bill would remove a requirement that high-school students pass the state's tenth-grade English-language arts exams in order to graduate. Instead, the exam would count for 30 percent of the students' final course grade.

The measure also would do away with a requirement that students pass an Algebra I end-of-course exam in order to earn a diploma.

Bill sponsor Corey Simon, a Tallahassee Republican, has touted the deregulation effort as a way to let teachers place more focus on classroom instruction, which he has said would benefit students.

"Over the years, our education code has only grown. And there are great ideas from great senators and great House members. But those great ideas have added up over the years, and it's cost our students," Simon said just before the Senate unanimously passed the measure.

One part of the proposal received high-profile pushback from Bush, who nearly 25 years ago championed reforms that the measure sought to — in Bush's words — water down.

A previous version of the bill proposed to remove a requirement that third-grade students score adequately on an English-language arts exam to advance to fourth grade. Instead, the measure would have changed the policy to allow parents to override decisions about retaining students if the parent "determines retention is not in the best interest of the student and approves a good cause exemption" to advance the student.

"Lawmakers have proposed watering down our third grade literacy policy, removing the backstop of retention and paving the way to reinstate social promotion," Bush wrote in an opinion piece that ran in the South Florida Sun Sentinel in November.

That part of the bill was removed through revisions to the bill that were backed by Simon, who told reporters after the measure passed Wednesday that the change was related to a new progress-monitoring system of standardized testing. Under the new testing system, approved by the Legislature and Gov. Ron DeSantis in 2022, students are given exams at the beginning, middle and end of the school year, with the final test of the year being used for accountability purposes.

"We're able to now ascertain at an earlier age for these kids, in kindergarten, first, second grade, if they're on grade level," Simon told reporters. "So because we're able to see those things, we wanted to make sure we weren't just waiting until the last minute to retain those students in the third grade. If we need to, we can retain them in kindergarten or first or second grade."

## Edwards steps down as mayor

From Front Page

growth, according to Florida law. Because the water system that is in place is projected to be outgrown in the next five years, expansions will be necessary, and these capacity fees are designed to ease the burden of such improvements on the city's budget.

If recommendations from Florida Rural Water are taken, then these fees could generate an extra \$15 million in revenue, once 100% capacity is reached on the current system. Along with the updated

rate fees, capacity fees will potentially be officially presented to the commission at the next regular meeting, and should be ready for approval by March.

The task order from BDI for the Phase 1 water system improvements was approved unanimously.

Some problems have arisen due to the gate that stops access to the boat ramp in Sopchoppy, as it opens at 7 a.m. and closes at 9 p.m. Some of the people who use the boat ramp think it should open at 5 a.m., so they can get out onto

the water earlier in the morning. City commissioners felt that this was unreasonable, as these same people who are asking for it to be open earlier aren't paying to use it. They asked the city clerk about the \$30 yearly subscription that's available, which gives anyone who buys it the code to use the gate whenever they please, and the clerk said that only two people have purchased it. The commissioners did not change the hours, and instead stated that anyone who had problems with the existing hours should pay the \$30 fee or come express their concerns to the commission directly.

## Spelling bee

From Front Page

Crawfordville.

Some of the other tough words that knocked competitors out of the bee were "luciferin," "hypocaust," "antechamber," "Erlenmeyer flask."

Byrd will represent Wakulla at the regional spelling bee to be held in Tallahassee. If unable to

make it, Craig would be the district's contestant.

Wakulla Sun Editor William Snowden was one of the judges and presented Byrd with a Merriam-Webster dictionary. Other judges were Megan Smith of English Financial and Sue Anderson, retired from Wakulla County Schools.

School board member Melisa Taylor was the pronouncer. Holly Hardin was the moderator.

## 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.



Wakulla County government proposes to construct a 300 ft. self-support public safety communications tower located at U.S. Highway #98, Crawfordville, Wakulla County, Florida. (30 11' 30.00" N, 84 12' 30.00" W). The anticipated tower lighting application is medium-intensity dual red/white strobes. Interested persons may review the application for this project at [www.fcc.gov/asr/applications](http://www.fcc.gov/asr/applications) by entering Antenna Structure Registration (Form 854) File No. A1273213. Environmental concerns may be raised by filing a Request for Environmental Review with the FCC. The FCC strongly encourages interested parties to file Requests for Environmental Review online at [www.fcc.gov/asr/environmentalrequest](http://www.fcc.gov/asr/environmentalrequest), but they may be filed with a paper copy by mailing the Request to: FCC Requests for Environmental Review, Attn: Ramon Williams, 445 12th Street SW, Washington, DC 20554.

January 18, 2024

Wakulla County government proposes to construct a 300 ft. self-support public safety communications tower located at 30 Park Avenue, Sopchoppy, Wakulla County, Florida. (30 03' 25.00" N, 84 29' 52.00" W). The anticipated tower lighting application is medium-intensity dual red/white strobes. Interested persons may review the application for this project at [www.fcc.gov/asr/applications](http://www.fcc.gov/asr/applications) by entering Antenna Structure Registration (Form 854) File No. A1273210. Environmental concerns may be raised by filing a Request for Environmental Review with the FCC. The FCC strongly encourages interested parties to file Requests for Environmental Review online at [www.fcc.gov/asr/environmentalrequest](http://www.fcc.gov/asr/environmentalrequest), but they may be filed with a paper copy by mailing the Request to: FCC Requests for Environmental Review, Attn: Ramon Williams, 445 12th Street SW, Washington, DC 20554.

January 18, 2024

Wakulla County government proposes to construct a 200 ft. self-support public safety communications tower located at Lonnie Raker Lane, Crawfordville, Wakulla County, Florida. (30 15' 32.00" N, 84 21' 09.00" W). The anticipated tower lighting application is medium-intensity dual red/white strobes. Interested persons may review the application for this project at [www.fcc.gov/asr/applications](http://www.fcc.gov/asr/applications) by entering Antenna Structure Registration (Form 854) File No. A1273192. Environmental concerns may be raised by filing a Request for Environmental Review with the FCC. The FCC strongly encourages interested parties to file Requests for Environmental Review online at [www.fcc.gov/asr/environmentalrequest](http://www.fcc.gov/asr/environmentalrequest), but they may be filed with a paper copy by mailing the Request to: FCC Requests for Environmental Review, Attn: Ramon Williams, 445 12th Street SW, Washington, DC 20554.

January 18, 2024

Wakulla County government proposes to construct a 300 ft. self-support public safety communications tower located at 65 Qualify Lane, Sopchoppy, Wakulla County, Florida. (30 05' 03.00" N, 84 24' 59.00" W). The anticipated tower lighting application is medium-intensity dual red/white strobes. Interested persons may review the application for this project at [www.fcc.gov/asr/applications](http://www.fcc.gov/asr/applications) by entering Antenna Structure Registration (Form 854) File No. A1273207. Environmental concerns may be raised by filing a Request for Environmental Review with the FCC. The FCC strongly encourages interested parties to file Requests for Environmental Review online at [www.fcc.gov/asr/environmentalrequest](http://www.fcc.gov/asr/environmentalrequest), but they may be filed with a paper copy by mailing the Request to: FCC Requests for Environmental Review, Attn: Ramon Williams, 445 12th Street SW, Washington, DC 20554.

January 18, 2024



# 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.”

## On Feb. 1, our website will go behind a paywall

### Subscribers can log in to thewakallasun.com



By WILLIAM SNOWDEN

Starting on Feb. 1, The Wakulla Sun’s website will go behind a paywall. Or at least, the news stories will be. Some content – pretty much anything other than news stories – will still be accessible. That includes obituaries, columns such as Sheriff’s Report or Ethel Skipper’s Buckhorn News can be read for free. Soon, subscribers will receive an email

(if you have an email file) that shows your account – which is the name on the subscription – and will include instructions on creating a password. If you have any problems with this, or don’t get an email, call the Sun office at (850) 962-8019 and someone will walk you through it. And if you haven’t visited our website, go to thewakallasun.com and take a look. The website was designed and built by our graphic artist Eric Stanton. About 18 months ago, he started developing working on it – and it definitely went through a birthing process that required lots of trial and error. The version of the website up now is clean and attractive

and easy to navigate. It is one of those modern day requirements of a newspaper to have a website and, for business reasons, to move it behind a paywall. At the same time, I know there’s a good numbers of our readers who have no interest in the internet, and this change won’t mean anything at all. (Nod to a large percentage of our subscribers in Sopchoppy who put on their subscription form that they don’t have email.) Again, questions concerns or comments, let me know. You can call me at (850) 962-8024 or email me at editor@thewakallasun.com. *William Snowden is the editor and publisher of The Wakulla Sun.*

## Something on your mind?

Email Letters to the Editor to editor@thewakallasun.com; or mail it or drop it by the office at 12 Arran Road, Crawfordville FL 32327.

### LETTERS FROM READERS

## Airport was run into the ground



Editor, The Sun:

I am responding to your airport related Letters to Editor of Thursday January 11, 2024. I was going to come in here like gangbusters and throw darts at everybody but decided this photograph would do. The photo was extracted from video of my filming Mr. Fults shortly after he filed a complaint about me flying my drone. Any questions, Mr. Recker? For some reason, this flood of airport supporters here and elsewhere was never seen at the airport in my past almost 40 years of utilizing the county airport. Before it became the train wreck that it is now under Mr. Fults’ unable leadership, it was a great place with hang glider towing, skydiving, drone flying, sport aviation and just the comraderie of friends and visitors to our hangar. I am not a detractor of the military or the airport. Me and another pilot named Paul Turner were the only ones using it on a regular basis for years. I am, however, a vocal critic of how it has been run into the ground since 2012. As far as military, my brother was a retired U.S. Air Force

Lieutenant Colonel. Our dad, a Marine veteran and survivor of vicious fighting in the Marshall and Mariana Islands in World War II. Vietnam awaited me at 19 years of age. I’d like to thank Mr. Robert Franco for his mention of the entire inventory of Osprey aircraft being grounded recently due to multiple crashes. That’s what I tried to pound into our official’s minds about the danger of that aircraft operating at our county public airport. The airport donor stipulation of a 6,000-pound maximum aircraft weight for which manager Fults fully ignores. If anyone wants to see fireworks, attend the civil trial of Mr. Randall Dick vs Mr. Steve Fults. Pack the courtroom. You’re going to find facts and evidence you never thought existed. The WCSO investigation of Steve Fults’ strangulation of Mr. Dick was a complete farce. From former ASA Brian Miller on down the incompetent chain, their claim of no witnesses and no evidence will be fully explored and exposed. **Bill Catalina**  
Crawfordville

## On the Horizon

### Calendar of events for the week of January 18

#### Thursday, January 18

- The Wakulla County Local Mitigation Strategy Working Group will hold a public meeting at 9 a.m. at the Wakulla County Community Center
- The Wakulla County Cancer Support Group meets in the Education Center of the Crawfordville United Methodist Church at 7 p.m. This group meeting is for men and women, regardless of the type of cancer. Spouses, caregivers, and friends are welcome. For more information, call 850-926-6050.
- Rotary Club of Wakulla meets at TCC Wakulla at 8:30 a.m.
- The VFW Auxiliary Bingo Night will be held at 7 p.m. at 475 Arran Road in Crawfordville, every Thursday. There are concessions and raffles.
- Gentle Yoga at 9 a.m. and Yin Yoga at 6 p.m. with Zoe every Thursday. Classes are \$12, at New Posh on 3079 Crawfordville Hwy. RSVP to newposh3079@gmail.com or text/call at (850) 528-5838.

- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 6:30 p.m. every Thursday at the American Legion, 54 Ochlockonee St.

#### Friday, January 19

- The Florida Federation of Garden Clubs will celebrate its 100th anniversary with tree plantings, including two in Wakulla that will be planted at 11 a.m. at the Medart Recreation Park.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at noon and 8 p.m. every Friday at the American Legion, 54 Ochlockonee St.

#### Saturday, January 20

- KWCB will hold tire amnesty day at 318 Shadeville Road in Crawfordville, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Maximum of 8 per family and proof of residency is required.
- The Arbor Day Celebration will be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Wakulla County Extension office. Two free trees will be handed out to each vehicle that

goes to the event.

- Small Business Saturday of Wakulla will hold their Wakulla Winter Festival in Hudson Park from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- The Wakulla Caregiver Support Group will meet at the Public Library at 10 a.m.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 6:30 p.m. at the American Legion, 54 Ochlockonee St.

#### Monday, January 22

- The Wakulla Recreation Advisory Committee will hold a public meeting at 4 p.m. at the Wakulla Community Center.
- The American Legion Post 114 will be meeting at the Wakulla County Public Library at 6:30 p.m.
- The Wakulla Respite Program is available weekly for anyone with memory impairment at no cost from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Lake Ellen Baptist Church.
- Yoga with Nellie, Restorative yoga at 9:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. Classes are \$12, packages available at New Posh on 3079 Crawfordville Hwy. RSVP to 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, January 23

- Sopchoppy community dinner is held every week at the Towles House at 6:30 p.m.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 6:30 p.m. at the American Legion, 54 Ochlockonee St.
- Yoga with Nellie, Restorative yoga at 9:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. Classes are \$12, packages available at New Posh on 3079 Crawfordville Hwy. RSVP to newposh3079@gmail.com or text/call at (850) 528-5838.

#### Wednesday, January 24

- A line dance class is held at 1 p.m. at the Wakulla Senior Center every Wednesday.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at noon and 6:30 p.m. every Wednesday at the American Legion, 54 Ochlockonee St.
- Gentle Yoga and Stetching Class, every Wednesday, 11 a.m. Wakulla Community Center. Bring a mat. Come early to sign in. Chair Yoga participants welcome. \$2 per class.

## SUPPORT COMMUNITY JOURNALISM

You can support The Wakulla Sun with a tax-deductible donation to help us cover the stories that matter to you. By donating, you help us keep citizens informed, hold officials accountable and cover the most important topics in our community. Your contributions will equip our newsroom to better serve you and all our readers. That means:

- More reporters on the street
- More local news about our community
- More local content on the environment and local businesses

A little bit goes a long way. With your help, we can keep the presses running through hard times. We would very much appreciate your contribution.

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William Snowden  
 Editor & Publisher  
 The Wakulla Sun

*“It’s A New Day!”*

# The Wakulla Sun

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**FACEBOOK:** www.facebook.com/@TheWakullaSun  
**DISTRIBUTOR:** Jessi Smith  
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The Wakulla Sun, Copyright © 2023 is published weekly by Hot Water Publishing, 12 Arran Road, Crawfordville FL. Periodicals postage is pending at Crawfordville FL.  
 POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Wakulla Sun, 12 Arran Road, Crawfordville FL 32327.

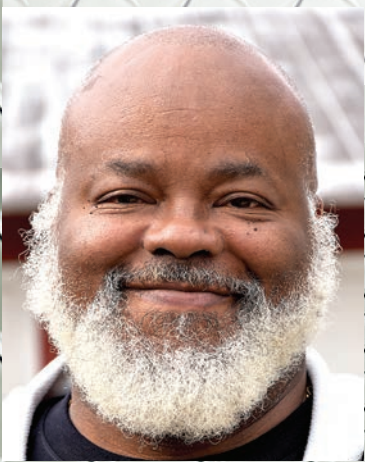
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# < Question of The Week >

– Compiled by Lynda Kinsey

## Polled at Palaver Tree MLK Day Celebration: What is your favorite Martin Luther King quote?



**KENNY HILLS**  
Traffic Engineer

**“ Mine would be ‘I have a Dream.’ ”**



**ZORA FRANKLIN**  
Wakulla School System

**“ Free at last. Free at last. Thank God almighty, we are free at last! ”**



**SAM HAYES**  
Pastor Mt.O live PBC #

**“ I’ve been to the mountaintop. I’ve seen the Promised Land!.. ”**



**VERA HAYES**  
Retired FAMU  
1st Lady of Mt.O live PBC #

**“ The entire ‘I have a Dream’ speech!”**



**CHERYL RANDOLPH**

**“ I have a dream that my children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. ”**

## Wakulla Station News

By **VERNA BROCK**

As I write, I am still swimming in the good vibes from the Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration and prayer breakfast at the Palaver Tree Theater on Monday.

Thanks to the efforts and support of so many dedicated citizens, we were able to fellowship together, commemorate an American hero, and enjoy a delicious breakfast of eggs, grits, bacon, sausage, pancakes and muffins.

The message was brought by Pastor Patrick Wright, who is also an Assistant Principal at Rickards High School. Entitled “A Living Legacy” he really brought it home how we all need to live

the highest and most moral values of our faith. It was an outstanding message for the times we live in today.

Also there was Jenette Nelson, program director for the Sickle Cell Foundation, based in Tallahassee. She is working hard to help educate ALL the people on sickle cell disease and offering free blood tests to help determine who among us may be carriers of the trait. I look forward to working with Ms. Nelson in her mission.

I hope everyone is prepared for the encroaching frigid weather predicted for this week. Pets, plants, and most importantly, people need protection

from the life-threatening temperatures coming all this week.

Please continue to remember the friends and family of James Lannon, as well as those who loved Linda Marsh. Both died recently, and are deeply missed. Also in need of prayer are the friends and family of Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Pittman, who were killed in a crash on Hwy. 267 last week. Their loss was a shock, and their family is understandably reeling right now.

If you aren't attending the second Sunday sings and fellowship suppers at the Woodville United Methodist Church, you are missing a sure thing! This past Sunday we enjoyed the gospel offerings of Traci Starling and Friends, of Live Oak. Staci is an accomplished

singer, musician and songwriter, and it was such a blessing to hear their performance.

Don't forget Arbor Day this Saturday at 10 a.m. The Garden Club is sponsoring a tree giveaway, with a nice selection of native trees to choose from. This is a really nice tradition that helps promote the growth of trees that support the environment.

Coming up on Feb. 16th, there will be a banquet to honor Arthur Andrews, the only casualty of the Vietnam War from Wakulla County. Sponsored by the Christian Coalition, all funds raised will benefit scholarships for Wakulla youth. Watch this space for more details soon.

## Library News

Library News January 18th- 24th:

### January 18th

- Creative Writing 10am
- Veteran's Meetup 11am
- Homeschool History 12:30pm
- Pregnancy Loss Support Group 6:30pm
- Wakulla Amateur Radio Club 7pm

### January 19th

- Quilting Guild 9:30 am

### January 20th

- Coast Guard Auxiliary 9am

### January 21st

- Closed

### January 22nd

- No Programs

### January 23rd

- Book Bunch 10am
- Wakulla County Giving Hands 10am

### January 24th

- Book Babies 10am
- Memoir Writing Class Start Up 10am
- Knitting Group 4pm

### Upcoming Holiday Closings

- February 17th for President's Day

### Save the Date Events

- February 3rd-Friends of the Library Mardi Gras celebration at the community center.
- March 2nd Spring Open House with community partners. Dr Seuss themed.

## MLK breakfast is held



PHOTOS BY GERALD BROWN

Volunteers Robert and Kenny Manning, Gwendolyn Staten, Cheryl Randolph, and Dianne Woodard serve up a big breakfast, cooked by Buckorn Masonic Lodge #354.



After the ceremony at the courthouse, breakfast was served at Palaver Tree Theater and a program was held with speaker Elder Patrick Wright.

**Wakulla Giving Hands, Inc**  
**FOOD Giveaway**  
01/27/24  
9Am until gone  
1349 Coastal Hwy (Panacea Plaza)  
Panacea, 32346  
For More Information:  
FB Wakulla Giving Hands, Inc.  
850-661-0605 Casey  
850-321-7961 Christell

**JOIN THE FRIENDS OF THE WAKULLA LIBRARY FOR A MARDI GRAS Celebration**  
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318 Shadeville Rd.  
Crawfordville, FL 32327



# Outdoors

outdoor sports

## HOME ON THE RANGE

### Some hard and fast rules



By MARJ LAW

I'm not nagatious. Really. There are times when just anyone would give a gentle reminder. Or two. Or even three.

But nag? No. Nagging implies frustration and a certain tone of voice. "Henry! If I told you once, I told you a thousand times, wipe your feet when you come in and Don't Slam the screen door!"

Now that's nagging. But when I'm at the Wakulla County Sheriff's Office range with a person new to shooting, there are a few hard and fast rules Newbie wants to know. These rules are for Newbie's safety and for the safety of everyone else at the range.

There is no fudge factor here. Yes, Matilda can tell Henry to wipe his feet two or ten times. If he doesn't, the most it will do is irritate Matilda, but it won't physically harm either of them. At the range? A few rules are absolute. Take "hot" and "cold."

When the range is cold, that means nobody touches a gun. Since handguns don't magically fire by themselves, that means that no one will get shot by accident.

The pistol range has a red line painted in the concrete floor. The line is located between the seating bench and the shooting bench. The shooting bench is

really like a counter. It's the spot where you load and shoot.

When the range is cold, you stand between the low seating bench and the red line. Your gun(s) are on the higher shooting bench. What? You can't reach your guns from behind that red line when the range is cold? Great! And nobody else can, either.

Everyone on the pistol range cooperates when the range is cold. All put down their guns and step back behind the red line.

What if someone absentmindedly fumbles with his gun when the range is cold?

Then, everyone else at the range must be sure to remind him in no uncertain terms that the range is cold, because the life of everyone is at stake should someone shoot when the range is cold. Once in a blue moon it happens that someone accidentally crosses that red line, and another shooter will yell: "Frederick! The range is Cold!" and that's enough to have him put his gun right back down and step behind the line. Cold is an absolute.

When the range is declared "hot," your "eyes" and "ears" must be in place. Eyes are ANSI-rated protective eyeglasses. These are inexpensive and can be purchased at department, hardware, gun stores and in many other places.

You'd think casings coming from the right-side ejection port would fly to the right. And that's true.

Most of the time. But casings can fly in many directions. If they should fly back towards your face, the glasses will help to keep your eyes safe from the hot metal. This is why you always have your eyes



on when the range is hot.

Ears means protective hearing. The least expensive ears are squishy cushiony plugs you squeeze and place in your ear canals. Then they expand and reduce the noise around you. Loud sounds of shooting can damage your hearing. Who wants that?

Most of the time, you'll see shooters with something that looks like cold weather ear muffs. These are also ears. They reduce noise, as well. If you really want to protect your ears from loud noises, you can wear those squishy ear plugs at the same time as ear muffs. Together, they do a very good job.

Some of the muffs are electronic. They can muffle loud sounds and still allow you to hear people speaking nearby.

When you're at the

WCSO range, you must wear both eyes and ears. Okay, it does happen that people may forget to put either eyes or ears back on after the range has been cold, but quick reminders and the shooter puts them right back on. Eyes and ears go on when the range is hot, but may be taken off when the range is cold.

When the range is "hot," you can move in front of the red line and place your guns and ammunition on the high shooting bench. It's called a shooting bench, but it looks like a counter with divisions in each stall. Your gun stays in its pouch until you reach the shooting bench, so you're never carrying around a "naked" gun. You bring your gun in a gun pouch here and you can shoot now only at the target in front of you.

"Hot" and "cold" are absolutes. The range is

either hot or it's cold. I'd put these concepts at the top of the list of things Newbie must internalize.

Next, eyes and ears are necessary at the WCSO range. It's true that some ranges don't make you wear eye and ear protection. Guess they don't care if you lose an eye or if your hearing goes bad. But at the WCSO range, you gotta wear them. They care.

Hot, cold, eyes and ears are four concepts Newbie will want to learn right away. Learning these thoughts even before visiting the WCSO range is a fine idea. The Wakulla County Sheriff's Office is all about safety.

Two other concepts help with range safety. One is to remember to keep the muzzle of the gun pointed downrange at all times. Whether you're taking it out of its pouch or placing a

magazine into the gun, make sure the muzzle stays pointing downrange.

The other? It's natural to slide your index finger onto the trigger. Don't do it! Until you are actually ready to shoot, your index finger is placed along the frame of the gun; not on the trigger. This prevents an accidental firing.

You can see that these two concepts, muzzle downrange and finger off the trigger, are for the safety of everyone.

And for the sake of Newbie shooting a semi-automatic?

Watch that Newbie doesn't cross thumbs at the rear of the gun. When the slide flies backward, Newbie can get a very painful gash from the force of the slide. This can be avoided when Newbie places both thumbs on the same side of the gun. Unfortunately, it just feels natural to cross your thumbs when shooting. It takes a while before Newbie remembers and puts those thumbs on the same side.

I doubt this last one is a life-or-death issue, but we try to avoid any harm at the WCSO range.

So, today, for all those residents who found a handgun under the Christmas tree, remember "hot," "cold," "eyes," "ears," "muzzle downrange," "finger off trigger," and "don't cross thumbs."

If you hear those words, Newbie, we're not nagging.

We're helping you be safe.

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



LINED SEA HORSE  
(*Hippocampus erectus*)

This larger seahorse species lives in sea grass and coral reefs feeding on tiny crustaceans using its long tongue. All sea horses are "marsupium" with the father taking eggs from the mother and carrying the babies until they are ready to swim free. Sea horse males will spar for a female with tail wrestling and head snapping. Seahorses form monogamous pair bonds after an elaborate courtships dance that lasts for three days before mating. The female stay with the male throughout his pregnancy.

Eukarya, Animalia, Chordata, Actinopterygii, Gasteroteiformes, Sygnathidae, Hippocampus erectus



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## WEEKLY WILDLIFE PHOTO



Retired Wakulla Springs State Park Ranger Bob Thompson, on his weekly wildlife survey at the park last week, took this photo of an osprey on a perch overlooking the river.

FOLLOW THE SUN.



# Water Ways

a peek into life on and under the water

Local writers share their experiences



## 24/7 PRIORITY ON-WATER ASSISTANCE

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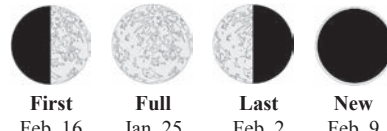


### Gulf Coast Weekly Almanac

Jan. 18 - Jan. 24



Tide charts by tides4fishing.com



Best fishing days this month January 11-25

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	1:30 am ▼ 0.0 ft	8:04 am ▲ 2.0 ft	12:45 pm ▼ 1.2 ft	6:54 pm ▲ 2.9 ft
Fr	2:57 am ▼ -0.4 ft	10:02 am ▲ 2.1 ft	1:40 pm ▼ 1.8 ft	7:49 pm ▲ 2.9 ft
Sa	4:20 am ▼ -0.4 ft	11:35 am ▲ 2.1 ft	3:00 pm ▼ 1.8 ft	9:06 pm ▲ 2.9 ft
Su	5:28 am ▼ -0.6 ft	12:31 pm ▲ 2.3 ft	4:28 pm ▼ 1.8 ft	10:27 pm ▲ 2.9 ft
Mo	6:23 am ▼ -0.8 ft	1:11 pm ▲ 2.5 ft	5:37 pm ▼ 1.7 ft	11:33 pm ▲ 3.0 ft
Tu	7:08 am ▼ -0.9 ft	1:44 pm ▲ 2.6 ft	6:30 pm ▼ 1.7 ft	
We	12:25 am ▲ 3.1 ft	7:47 am ▼ -0.9 ft	2:14 pm ▲ 2.7 ft	7:14 pm ▼ 1.2 ft

#### City of St. Marks

Th	2:34 am ▼ 0.0 ft	8:40 am ▲ 1.9 ft	1:49 pm ▼ 1.1 ft	7:30 pm ▲ 2.7 ft
Fr	4:01 am ▼ -0.1 ft	10:38 am ▲ 1.8 ft	2:44 pm ▼ 1.5 ft	8:25 pm ▲ 2.7 ft
Sa	5:24 am ▼ -0.4 ft	12:11 pm ▲ 2.0 ft	4:04 pm ▼ 1.7 ft	9:42 pm ▲ 2.7 ft
Su	6:32 am ▼ -0.6 ft	1:07 pm ▲ 2.1 ft	5:32 pm ▼ 1.7 ft	11:03 pm ▲ 2.7 ft
Mo	7:27 am ▼ -0.7 ft	1:47 pm ▲ 2.3 ft	6:41 pm ▼ 1.5 ft	
Tu	12:09 am ▲ 2.8 ft	8:12 am ▼ -0.8 ft	2:20 pm ▲ 2.4 ft	7:34 pm ▼ 1.3 ft
We	1:01 am ▲ 2.9 ft	8:51 am ▼ -0.8 ft	2:50 pm ▲ 2.5 ft	8:18 pm ▼ 1.1 ft

#### Shell Point, Spring Creek

Th	1:53 am ▼ -0.1 ft	8:12 am ▲ 2.1 ft	1:14 pm ▼ 1.0 ft	7:30 pm ▲ 2.9 ft
Fr	3:13 am ▼ -0.2 ft	10:02 am ▲ 2.1 ft	2:04 pm ▼ 1.4 ft	8:21 pm ▲ 2.8 ft
Sa	4:34 am ▼ -0.5 ft	11:41 am ▲ 2.1 ft	3:12 pm ▼ 1.7 ft	9:29 pm ▲ 2.8 ft
Su	5:45 am ▼ -0.7 ft	12:49 pm ▲ 2.2 ft	4:37 pm ▼ 1.8 ft	10:45 pm ▲ 2.8 ft
Mo	6:43 am ▼ -0.9 ft	1:36 pm ▲ 2.4 ft	5:55 pm ▼ 1.8 ft	11:50 pm ▲ 2.9 ft
Tu	7:32 am ▼ -1.0 ft	2:12 pm ▲ 2.5 ft	6:52 pm ▼ 1.6 ft	
We	12:43 am ▲ 3.0 ft	8:14 am ▼ -1.0 ft	2:44 pm ▲ 2.5 ft	7:37 pm ▼ 1.4 ft

#### Alligator Point, Ochlockonee Bay

Th	1:41 am ▼ 0.0 ft	7:56 am ▲ 1.5 ft	12:56 pm ▼ 0.9 ft	6:46 pm ▲ 2.2 ft
Fr	3:08 am ▼ -0.1 ft	9:54 am ▲ 1.5 ft	1:51 pm ▼ 1.2 ft	7:41 pm ▲ 2.2 ft
Sa	4:31 am ▼ -0.3 ft	11:27 am ▲ 1.6 ft	3:11 pm ▼ 1.3 ft	8:58 pm ▲ 2.1 ft
Su	5:39 am ▼ -0.5 ft	12:23 pm ▲ 1.7 ft	4:39 pm ▼ 1.3 ft	10:19 pm ▲ 2.1 ft
Mo	6:34 am ▼ -0.6 ft	1:03 pm ▲ 1.9 ft	5:48 pm ▼ 1.4 ft	11:25 pm ▲ 2.3 ft
Tu	7:19 am ▼ -0.7 ft	1:36 pm ▲ 1.9 ft	6:41 pm ▼ 1.0 ft	
We	12:17 am ▲ 2.3 ft	7:58 am ▼ -0.7 ft	2:06 pm ▲ 2.0 ft	7:25 pm ▼ 0.9 ft

#### St. Teresa, Turkey Pt.

Th	1:49 am ▼ -0.2 ft	8:18 am ▲ 1.5 ft	1:04 pm ▼ 0.9 ft	7:15 pm ▲ 2.2 ft
Fr	3:08 am ▼ -0.4 ft	10:28 am ▲ 1.5 ft	1:56 pm ▼ 1.3 ft	8:01 pm ▲ 2.2 ft
Sa	4:22 am ▼ -0.7 ft	12:34 pm ▲ 1.6 ft	3:21 pm ▼ 1.5 ft	8:59 pm ▲ 2.2 ft
Su	5:27 am ▼ -0.9 ft	1:38 pm ▲ 1.7 ft	4:53 pm ▼ 1.6 ft	10:04 pm ▲ 2.3 ft
Mo	6:21 am ▼ -1.0 ft	2:14 pm ▲ 1.8 ft	5:55 pm ▼ 1.5 ft	11:06 pm ▲ 2.3 ft
Tu	7:07 am ▼ -1.0 ft	2:41 pm ▲ 1.8 ft	6:40 pm ▼ 1.4 ft	
We	12:00 am ▲ 2.4 ft	7:48 am ▼ -1.0 ft	3:01 pm ▲ 1.7 ft	7:17 pm ▼ 1.3 ft

#### Dog Island West End

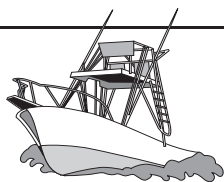
Th	2:22 am ▼ -0.1 ft	9:21 am ▲ 1.1 ft	12:38 pm ▼ 0.9 ft	7:17 pm ▲ 1.9 ft
Fr	3:37 am ▼ -0.4 ft	10:05 am ▲ 2.0 ft		
Sa	4:47 am ▼ -0.6 ft	11:02 am ▲ 2.0 ft		
Su	5:54 am ▼ -0.8 ft	12:06 pm ▲ 2.0 ft		
Mo	6:46 am ▼ -0.9 ft	1:06 pm ▲ 1.6 ft	6:30 pm ▼ 1.5 ft	10:51 pm ▲ 2.0 ft
Tu	7:27 am ▼ -1.0 ft	2:00 pm ▲ 1.6 ft	7:10 pm ▼ 1.4 ft	11:51 pm ▲ 2.0 ft
We	8:02 am ▼ -1.0 ft	2:49 pm ▲ 1.6 ft	7:40 pm ▼ 1.2 ft	

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



## Coast Guard Auxiliary Reports

By Carolyn Brown Treadon



In past articles, we have covered hypothermia. The following comes from the Please Wear It campaign.

If you fall into cold water, you must try not to panic and catch your breath in the first minute. You only have 10-minutes of meaningful movement for self-rescue. Hypothermia takes approx. 1 hour to occur. Wearing a life jacket especially if worn over a dry suit increases your chances of survival so #PleaseWearIt. This is the 1-10-1 rule.

The Army offers additional information on cold water immersion.

Hypothermia is when your body loses heat faster than it can produce it. During this third stage of cold-water immersion, it's best to keep as much of your body out of the water as possible. For example, if there is a capsized boat, floating cooler, or anything you can climb up on it will increase your chances of survival. If that's not possible, there is a position, aided by wearing a life jacket, called H.E.L.P. or Heat Escape Lessening Posture that can

**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

reduce the rate of losing body heat. This position involves drawing your knees up towards your face, grasping your arms around your lower legs, and holding yourself into a floating ball. If you're with anyone else and everyone is wearing a life jacket, there is another position called Huddle. It involves staying upright in the water and circling your arms around the shoulders of others and holding on as close together as you can.

The specific amount of time you can survive these three stages of cold-water immersion depends on the water temperature, clothing, body type, and your behavior. This may be the one time

in your life where body fat could actually help you. Wearing clothing is another key factor in surviving and cotton is not the best, but it still helps insulate your body. The best thing to wear is layers of clothes, made of wool or other water-resistant materials. Clothing can help trap air and increase your ability to float for longer periods of time. Even shoes or boots can help insulate your feet from losing heat. There's a misconception that people can drown from the weight of their wet clothes in the water, but wet clothes or shoes are only heavy out of the water. It's a simple physics concept, but unfortunately many

people have to experience it themselves before they will believe this.

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](http://www.uscgaux.net) follow us on Facebook @ Apalachee Bay Flotilla 12 or contact our Flotilla Commander Phil Hill at [pnkhill2000@yahoo.com](mailto:pnkhill2000@yahoo.com)

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](mailto:steve.hults@uscgaux.net).

*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.cgaux.org](http://www.cgaux.org).*

## FWC Law Enforcement Report

### From FWC

This report represents some events the FWC handled Dec. 22-28 in the Northwest Region. (No cases were reported in Wakulla County)

### ESCAMBIA COUNTY

- Officers Burkhead, Mullins and Wilkenson and Lieutenant Berryman as well as deputies from the Escambia County Sheriff's Office and K-9 unit located an individual trespassing on private property without permission and appeared to be hunting. The subject they located was arrested a year

prior for hunting on the same property without permission. The officers were able to obtain a trail camera photograph of the subject trespassing and they located clothing and shoe prints that matched what the subject was wearing in the photograph. The officers placed the subject under arrest for trespass after warning. The subject was transported and booked into the Escambia County jail.

### SANTA ROSA COUNTY

- Officer Roberson was traveling on Quinette Road when he noticed a vehicle in front of him

operating without a tag. Officer Roberson conducted a stop on the vehicle. When the officer made contact with the operator of the vehicle, he showed several obvious signs of impairment. The driver agreed to perform standardized field sobriety tasks. The subject performed poorly on the tasks. Officer Roberson arrested the driver and transported him to the Escambia County Jail.

- Officer Roberson found a treestand site baited for deer on the Yellow River Wildlife Management Area. Officer Roberson followed a trail from the site to a

nearby home. He spoke to the owner of the residence who after a short interview admitted to placing the bait. Officer Roberson issued a notice to appear citation for the violation.

### WASHINGTON COUNTY

- Officer E. Fowler was on patrol and focusing on duck hunting through the week. The officer had encountered three different locations where the hunters were attempting to take ducks after legal hours. He addressed shooting after legal hunting hours, littering and license violations.

## Underwater Wakulla

By Rusty Miller

It's probably past the service due date on your regulators.

I hope everyone has recovered from all the Hollidays celebrations. It's 2024, I can remember when I was a teenager we thought that by 2024 we would be living in space and on the moon as well as Mars, also we would be driving flying cars. Sometimes I will see a movie on the streaming services that will be a science fiction about the dystopian world in 2024.

Well none of that has happened and in my upper 60s I doubt I will live to see any of it.

What I do know is that the diving industry has really changed over the last 50 years. A few articles ago I mentioned the equipment changes as well as the skills have adapted to the new equipment. Though the equipment has greatly improved and is a bit safer to use we still have to maintain it and be diligent about getting it serviced.

I know several divers who service their own regulators and quite honestly they are taking their lives in their own hands. Then there is the liability issue that comes along with people servicing their own regulators. Let's say you serviced your own regulators and you let another dive buddy use them and something goes horribly wrong and they get hurt or even die as a result of a tiny error where you did the service then you are personally responsible and liable for the following lawsuit. Let's say if you get hurt or die because you took a shortcut then neither you nor your family can sue the manufacturer.

Believe me I have seen this happen throughout my career. They may get away with doing their own service but with the new regulators they have changed slightly on how they are disassembled and assembled. Most have very strict torque requirements and specialized tools required to perform even the simplest rebuilds.

I mention this because it's probably past the service due date on your regulators. It is a little costly but it's your life or the life of a loved one and that you cannot put a price on. I would guess that most of you have stored your regulators in a dive bag and or regulator bag since your last dive at the end of summer or longer. I have said this before and I'll say it again, never use your dive bag or regulator bag for long term storage, you will do far more damage to them overall.

Always store them hanging up in a cool dry place in your house. Most dive shops sell the special hangers that you can put your BCD and regulators on.

The bottom line is please get your equipment serviced by a trained reg tech and then you will not have to worry whether they work or not. Keep making bubbles.

Russell Miller #59999



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## Is our love sincere?

By **SHERYL H. BOLDT**

How thrilling would it be if a mountain moved at your command – even only a fraction of an inch?

Would you feel powerful?

Would you love the attention you receive when every talk show host on TV booked you to discuss your amazing feat?

Yet if you neglected to show love to those around you, you could move every mountain on the planet and you wouldn't impress God. Consider 1 Corinthians 13:2 (ESV): "And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing."

Even if I, your beloved columnist, could

explain the mysteries of the supernatural and answer your deepest life questions but didn't have God's love dwelling inside me, the Amplified Bible, Classic Edition would describe me as "a useless nobody."

The next verse, 1 Corinthians 13:3, says we don't profit if we don't have God's love in us. "If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing."

Every day, we busy ourselves with countless activities, many that we do for others. But how often are we doing these

tasks for our own glory? We can fool ourselves into thinking we're sincere, but if we could peer deep into our hearts, our true motives might tell another story.

Even if we give all we have – every bit of our energy and every hour of our lives – to serving others, if our main objective is to earn points with people (or with God), we gain nothing.

Don't get me wrong. Many serve with genuine hearts. I know some of these extraordinary people. Their actions model a Christlikeness I envy. But I wonder what the

rest of us might discover about ourselves if we asked God to examine our true motives regarding the "good" works we do at church, at work and in our community.

How differently might we serve others if we saw ourselves as we are – representatives of Christ? How would it change people's perspective about God if they saw His goodness in us? Perhaps they'd see God differently if they experienced God's love for them when they see us (those who claim to be Christ-followers) genuinely caring about

their needs.

Let's pray:

Father, help us love others with a sincere love. Give us the desire and grace to serve others in Your name so we can move mountains of distrust, annoyance and jealousy in our churches and in our communities – a fraction of an inch at a time. Amen.

*Sheryl H. Boldt is a sales executive for Wave 94 and author of the blog, [www.TodayCanBeDifferent.net](http://www.TodayCanBeDifferent.net). Connect with her at [SherylHBoldt.Wave94@gmail.com](mailto:SherylHBoldt.Wave94@gmail.com).*

## Riches discovered with new boots

By **CHERYL CRUCE**

As it is in all large families, hand-me-downs are a common occurrence.

The younger one always benefits from the growth of the older one. I benefitted a lot, sometimes more than I wanted. Three girls shared one room, the boys shared their room, and seven people shared a single bathroom. We were family, and personal space had not

been invented.

It was the mid-60s when Nancy Sinatra appeared wearing a pair of white Go-Go boots on the cover of her album "These Boots Are Made for Walking." I remember it like it was yesterday, seeing my older sister dancing the "pony" to the song as her bouffant hairdo bounced with each head tilt. Dressed for a date, she wore a pair of blue jeans with a blue and white pinstripe shirt that buttoned down the front. She was practicing her dance steps. I was holding the album cover.

I believe the memory is so vivid because of my strong desire for a pair of white Go-Go boots. They would make the perfect school

shoes as I started my second-grade year. I took the album cover to Mom, telling her how much I needed a pair of my own, and then I returned to watch my sister finish getting ready for her night out.

As summer ended and a new school year emerged, Mom and Dad budgeted their money for our new school clothes. One day, Mom came home with a bag just for me. I could not believe my eyes; Mom had bought me a pair of black cowboy boots with red trim. They were a far cry from the ones Nancy Sinatra wore, but they were mine and the first pair of brand-new shoes I remember owning.

Growing up, we may not have had our de-

sires, but we always had our needs. I polished those boots every evening, preparing them for the next day.

Looking back throughout my life, I cannot remember a wealthier time than that of my childhood. We were sheltered, fed, and clothed. We learned to be content with what we had because we were loved.

The Apostle Paul wrote of such contentment. He was often persecuted for his faith; many times, he was beaten and imprisoned. Nevertheless, he never wavered in believing God would care for him. Whether hungry or well-fed, Paul trusted God would meet all his needs. Paul realized his strength would be

found through his faith in Jesus (Philippians 4:10-19). The Heavenly Father would be the source of Paul's life.

There is no source greater than that of the Heavenly Father. The birds that fly above us never sow, reap, or store away food in the barns, and yet God continues to feed them. Our fields are covered in lilies, their beauty exceeding the splendor of King Solomon. The birds nor flowers are as valued as we are (Matthew 6:26-30). The Father loves us; we are His children (John 3:1). Nothing can pull us from His hand when our salvation is found in Jesus (John 10:29).

I do not know where life has brought you; even so, the Heavenly

Father's ultimate desire is to meet your needs according to His riches in Christ. You will find the actual difference between want and plenty when you place your hand in His. By making the Lord your source, you will understand that the color of your boots never mattered as much as the love they represented.

Psalm 37:25 I was young, and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging for bread.

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

### OUT TO PASTOR

## Energy, O energy, wherefore art thou

By **JAMES SNYDER**

Since I have reached a certain age (I cannot reveal that age) my energy seems limited. I don't have the energy I once had. Where it has gone, I have not discovered yet.

I once inquired of The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage where my energy went, and she replied, "Silly boy, you're over the hill, and so is your energy."

I almost asked her what that meant, but I didn't have the energy, and I didn't have the energy to climb back up that hill.

Not having enough energy does have its good side. One thing is that it is an excellent excuse for not doing something. For example, when my wife asks me to do something that I really don't want to do, I say, "My Dear, I just don't have the energy or I would do it."

Of course, she scowls at me because I think she knows exactly what I'm saying.

I have discovered that the word "retired" is something I didn't understand before. It means that I am tired over and over again. How I long for those pre-tired days of long ago.

I didn't understand how tired I was until recently.

A little over a year ago,

our great-granddaughter entered our lives. When that happened, the great-grandmother opened "Grandma's Playtime Center." Now, the great-granddaughter is at our home during the week while her parents are working.

Seeing how much this little rascal grows within a year has been interesting. Somebody thought they were teaching her how to walk when, in reality, she learned how to run.

Hardly a step goes by with her that she's not running here and there.

I open my office door, and before I fully open it, she ran inside before me. My challenge is finding the energy to get her out of my office.

Watching her running all day long it is a very tiring experience. I'm not sure where she gets all her energy but she seems never to run out. If only I could borrow some of her energy, it would be great. It would serve both

of us well.

Since she's been staying with us throughout the week, I've realized how truly tired I was. Every day is a new level of tirement for me. I'm beginning to believe that there is actually no end to this tirement cycle.

I still come back to that question: where did my energy go? If I can answer that question, I might solve some of my retirement problems.

Thinking back on my former years, I remember how much energy I had when I was younger.

As a young kid, my parents made me go to bed early, and sleeping early was difficult. I sought ways to convince my parents to let me stay up longer. No matter when I went to bed, I still had energy that I hadn't used that day. Oh, if only I could tap into that energy today.

Now, as I am older and in that tirement cycle, I look for excuses to go to bed earlier.

It has become a game between The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and me. We try to find new excuses to convince us to go to bed earlier.

Sitting in my chair, I will begin to fake a yawning session. Looking at me, my wife asks, "Are you ready for bed already?"

Looking at my watch and seeing that it's not even 9 o'clock, I respond by saying, "Oh, no not yet!"

"You will tell me when you're ready for bed, won't you?"

I'm not too fond when she puts all the responsibility on me. If I had the energy, I would challenge her, but where do I get that kind of energy?

Occasionally, I will sneak a peek in her direction, and sometimes, I will see her eyes closed. I then say, "You're not asleep are you?"

She would quickly open her eyes, looks at me, and says, "No, I was just praying."

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# Obituaries

## DEATH NOTICES

- **John Edward Booth**, 86, of Crawfordville, died January 9, 2024.
- **Michael Reaves Flanagan**, 83, of Crawfordville, died January 10, 2024.
- **Brantley Gavin**, 2 months, of Crawfordville, died January 7, 2024.

- **Frances Gordon Herring**, 81, of Woodville, died January 13, 2024.
- **Winfred Register**, 92, of Eastpoint, died January 14, 2024.

Deaths reported by Family Funeral Home at Harvey Young Chapel. 850-926-5919 Familyfhc.com

## BEREAVEMENT COLUMN

# Children at funerals



By **TRACY RENEE LEE**

When I was a relatively young child, my great-grandfather died. Back then, families brought their loved ones home for a week and placed them in what we call today the living room. My great-grandmother, however, called it her parlor. Nevertheless, upon his death, my great-grandfather was in the living room/parlor for an entire week in a hot, non-air-conditioned, and highly humid Louisiana home.

I don't know for certain if my great-grandfather had been embalmed, but I assume he had been. As a funeral director, I can't imagine we could have borne his presence otherwise. In some cases, embalming is not required by law; however, modern regulations state that should a body be without refrigeration and/or unburied for longer than 24 hours, embalming becomes a legal requirement. I certainly hope it was the same back then.

As an almost 3-year-old, my memories are somewhat vague. I have clouded recollections of his casket in my great-grandmother's parlor, but it didn't seem unnatural at all. He was there with us, albeit deceased, while my little cousins and I were in and

out playing as though nothing unusual was going on at all. Additionally, on our way in and out of the house for a drink of water or a sandwich, we'd pop over to say an endearment or lightly touch our PaPa's hand.

Sometime later, when I was about 6 years old, my aunt passed away from a cerebral hemorrhage. She was survived by my young uncle and their almost 2-year-old daughter. Families no longer brought their decedents back home for a week by then. Therefore, I saw my aunt at the nearby funeral home. The scene was quite different from my previous experience. Not only was the territory (funeral parlor) unfamiliar, but the level of grief seemed more significant.

A few years later my

grandfather was murdered. As a 10-year-old, his death was devastating. I remember my mother calling out as she fell to the floor, writhing in anguish and grief as she received the news over the phone. By then, my family had left the southern U.S. and was living in the west. We boarded a plane and immediately flew back to Louisiana.

My grandfather's funeral was an eye-popper for me. His death changed the way I understood life in general and changed my level of trust toward others in great measure.

The question then becomes, was going to funerals beginning at age 2 too much for me? Well, I did become a funeral director, so in my mind, I think it probably helped me understand more

about the tragedies and the natural sequences and recoveries we experience in life. My exposure to death as a child did not frighten me nor mar my inner balance. However, it instilled in me the absolute knowledge that life is a gift, a precious time to enjoy companionship, family relations, and friendships. It is a time to be kind and accept kindness, to love and serve others in need, and to grow and develop oneself into a being who makes life on earth a better experience for everyone you meet.

If you are faced with a death and are fearful of the impact it will have on children, please analyze the situation. If you feel the child is able to handle this reality, and if you are stable enough to present and assist

them through it, follow your instincts. However, if you are unstable or you fear for the child's mental welfare, take a moment and review your motives. In some cases, children may not be ready for such a reality, especially when the accompanying adult or the child's coping skills are compromised.

*Tracy Renee Lee is a Certified Grief Counselor (GC-C), Funeral Director (FDIC), published author, syndicated columnist, Podcaster, and founder of the "Mikey Joe Children's Memorial" and Heaven Sent, Corp. She is the American Funeral Director of the Year Runner-Up and recipient of the BBB's Integrity Award. It is my life's work to comfort the bereaved and help them live on.*

# Weekly Roundup: Full steam ahead

By **RYAN DAILEY**  
News Service of Florida

TALLAHASSEE — The 2024 legislative session kicked off this week, as Gov. Ron DeSantis urged lawmakers to "stay the course" and House and Senate leaders agreed to use gambling money to fund the further expansion of a state wildlife corridor.

DeSantis, who has spent much of his time in Iowa trying to sway voters in his campaign for president, made a pitstop in the Florida Capitol to deliver his annual State of the State address. The governor's speech in the state House chamber formally launching the 60-day session came six days before the crucial Iowa caucuses.

Without directly discussing his bid for the White House, DeSantis repeatedly tried to contrast Florida with other states and the federal government on a variety of issues, such as public safety, financial management and immigration enforcement.

"Together, we will keep Florida free and provide hope for a revival of the American spirit throughout these United States," DeSantis said as he closed the 35-minute speech.

Much of DeSantis' remarks focused on what he described as accomplishments — some of which have proven controversial — such as restricting abortion rights, revamping election laws and dramatically expanding school vouchers.

"My message is simple: Stay the course," he said.

Democrats slammed DeSantis, saying he has focused on the presidential campaign instead of the state's needs. House Minority Leader Fentrice Driskell, D-Tampa, called him the "absentee governor."

"I was surprised that there was no real vision for Florida. I came away feeling, OK, so where

do you want to take us next?" Driskell told reporters. "I felt like he said, 'We've done all these great things, let's keep doing these same great things.' There was nothing fresh. That was surprising to me. Because it was an opportunity for him to make his case to the people of Florida as well, and I think he missed it."

Senate President Kathleen Passidomo, R-Naples, and House Speaker Paul Renner, R-Palm Coast, gave more defined previews of what Floridians can expect from the Republican-dominated Legislature during the session.

Lawmakers are expected to make health-care changes including Passidomo's Live Healthy legislative package that is designed, in part, to shift patients away from emergency rooms and expand medical residency programs. Renner also pointed to a potential focus on mental health and bringing more transparency about health-care prices.

The two head honchos are in agreement about one big issue — using money from the state's gambling deal with the Seminole Tribe of Florida to provide money for land acquisition and management.

"Using these new revenues to acquire and manage conservation lands and invest in our clean water infrastructure will be a phenomenal return on investment for our state," Passidomo said in remarks to the Senate. "I hope the legislation will earn your support."

Renner also backed the idea of using part of the money for conservation-related projects, saying that "Florida's long-term infrastructure needs far exceed current funding."

### CUTTING RED TAPE

The first measures to pass in either chamber came Wednesday in the Senate, as members

approved a scaled-back plan to take regulations off the books for public schools.

The legislative package, a priority of Passidomo, consists of three wide-ranging bills that are aimed at what she characterized as "cutting red tape" for the state school system.

One measure underwent a significant change that nixed a provision related to the state's third-grade literacy policy, after it was heavily criticized by former Gov. Jeb Bush. The bill (SB 7004) would make changes related to state assessments and instruction. For example, the bill would remove a requirement that high-school students pass the state's tenth-grade English-language arts exams in order to graduate. Instead, the exam would count for 30 percent of the students' final course grade.

But part of the proposal received high-profile pushback from Bush, who nearly 25 years ago championed reforms that the measure sought to — in Bush's words — water down.

A previous version of the bill proposed to remove a requirement that third-grade stu-

dents score adequately on an English-language arts exam to advance to fourth grade. Instead, the measure would have changed the policy to allow parents to override decisions about retaining students if the parent "determines retention is not in the best interest of the student and approves a good cause exemption" to advance the student.

That part of the measure was removed through revisions to the bill that were backed by its sponsor Corey Simon, R-Tallahassee.

Simon has touted the deregulation effort as a way to let teachers place more focus on classroom instruction, which he has said would benefit students.

"Over the years, our education code has only grown. And there are great ideas from great senators and great House members. But those great ideas have added up over the years, and it's cost our students," Simon said just before the Senate unanimously passed the measure.

### POWER TAKES REINS

The state Republican Party's executive com-

mittee Monday removed embattled Chairman Christian Ziegler and elevated Vice Chairman Evan Power to lead the party as the 2024 election year gets underway.

Power said after the meeting the party is "moving forward." While acknowledging a pause in fundraising, he said he didn't anticipate lingering effects from the scandal surrounding Ziegler, who has been under police investigation because of an alleged sexual assault.

"I think it's a blip on the radar," Power said. "I think we're going to be able to pick up today fundraising-wise and move the party forward. So, I don't think there's going to be a long-term impact. I think you're going to see us win big

again in November."

**STORY OF THE WEEK:** Legislative leaders pitched the use of gambling money to help pay for further expansion of a state wildlife corridor and other environmental projects as they kicked off the 2024 legislative session on Tuesday.

**QUOTE OF THE WEEK:** "I would suspect that if you asked parents across our state what the number one challenge is, what the number one issue is, facing the well-being and health of their child, social media would be one of the primary concerns." Rep. Tyler Sirois, R-Merritt Island, referring to a bill he's sponsoring to curb minors' social-media use.

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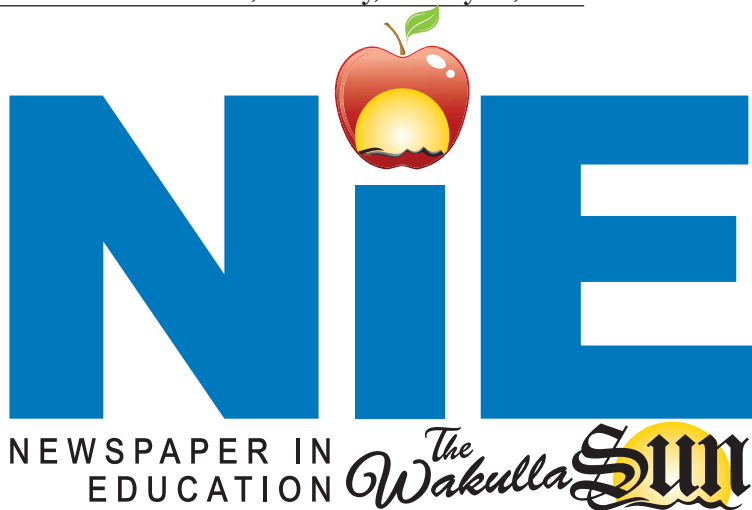
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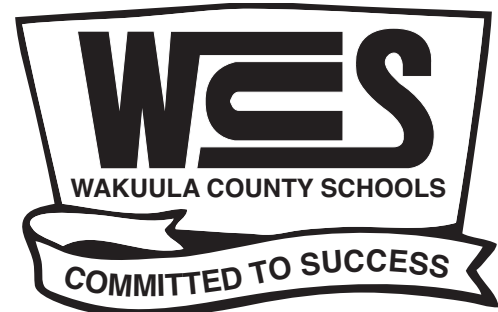
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## USE THE NEWS

### 1. NAME GAME

The television network most people tune into for sports, ESPN, had to apologize recently. Some of the people that appear on the network won Emmy Awards for their sports broadcasting, but they shouldn't have been eligible to win. The Emmys have a category for "outstanding weekly studio show," which are meant to recognize the behind-the-scenes people who help create the show. Hosts and reporters could win individual awards for their work but aren't supposed to be included in the group awards. However, some ESPN team members had submitted fake names (that had the same initials as on-air hosts) as part of the group of people they nominated. These awards are meant to recognize the people behind the camera who help put a show together. Think about why it's important to celebrate the whole group and their teamwork, not only one person. Write a paragraph about why you think awards like that are important.

### 2. WORLD'S UGLIEST LAWN

Many parts of the world have faced extreme drought, or periods of time with very little or no rain, in the past few years. This has caused water shortages and led people to think of ways they can reduce how much water they use. To encourage people to use less water on their landscaping and watering their lawns, the town of Gotland, Sweden, started an "ugliest lawn" competition two years ago. It was originally just for locals, but this year, they opened it up to anyone in the world, and people from the United States, Canada, Germany, France, and several other countries entered. The winning lawn was in Sanford, Tasmania — a state in Australia about the size of West Virginia. The

town of Gotland says its residents have used 5% less water since the competition was created. What are some ways you, your family, and your community use water that might be wasteful? What could you do to encourage people to think about the water they use and maybe use less of it? Write down one habit of using water that you'd want people to change. Then, write down how you would get them to change that habit — would you teach them about water shortages? Show them a different way to do something that uses less water? Then, write out or draw an example of the strategy

you came up with to help change minds and save water!

### 3. RECYCLED TREES

Elephants and bison at the Berlin Zoo in Germany are taking care of some of the waste from the holiday season: unsold Christmas trees. The zoo takes fresh, unsold Christmas trees that are free from chemicals and decorations and gives them to some of the animals that eat and play with them, including European bison, reindeer, and elephants. In the United States, some farms take discarded Christmas trees for goats to munch on. Write

a story about one of the animals listed here eating leftover Christmas trees. Draw a picture to illustrate your story.

### 4. WORD WARRIORS

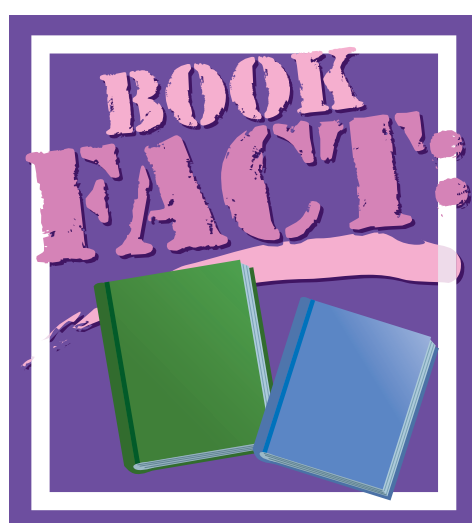
For the last fifteen years, Wayne State University in Michigan has released a list of "long-lost" words, words that aren't commonly used anymore. The Word Warriors program (named for Wayne State's athletics teams, the Warriors), aims to bring these interesting, old-fashioned words back into use. Among the words this year are blatherskite, a person who talks a long time but doesn't make much sense; curglaff, the shock you feel

when you jump into cold water; dollop, a shapeless blob of something; thunderplump, a heavy fall of rain during a thunderstorm; and petrichor, or the pleasant smell when it rains after a long period of warm, dry weather. Write a story that correctly uses as many of these words in sentences as you can! Share your stories with your classmates.

### 5. TREES WITH STORIES TO TELL

A group of people in Romania are working to save a forest of historic beech trees, some of which are hundreds of years old. The area is now protected land, but before that, generations of villagers would

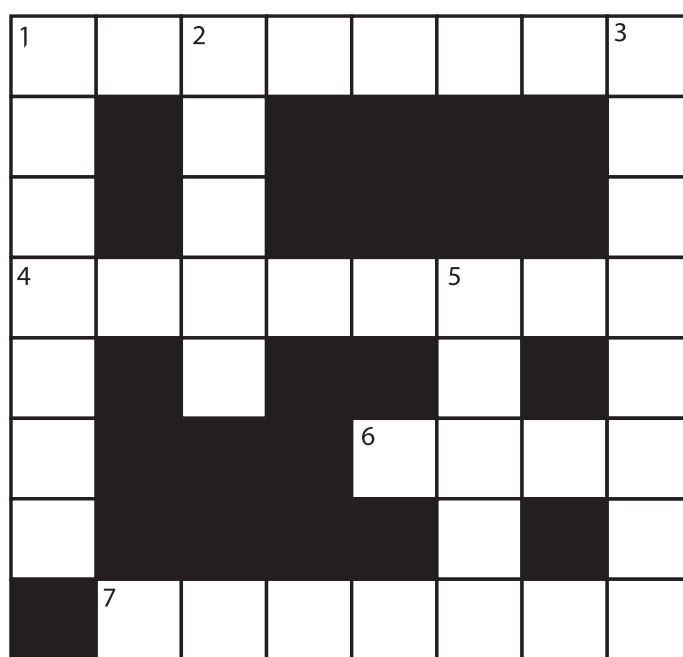
cut the branches they could reach to use the trees for firewood. The cutting and regrowing gave them a unique shape, like an upside-down broom. In an effort to protect the trees from people who would cut them down for lumber, an organization created the Forest of Immortal Stories. They gave each tree a number on a plaque and photographed the trees through the seasons. For a fee, people can "adopt" one of the five thousand trees and put their story with it for people to find via QR code. What would you write about if you were to put a story on a tree for all to read when they walk by it? Write out what you would say.



A CHILD BETWEEN THE AGES OF 6 AND 11 WHO READS THIS MANY BOOKS IN A YEAR IS CONSIDERED A FREQUENT READER.

ANSWER: 44

## Crossword Puzzle



### ACROSS

- Resting
- Represented
- Food enjoyed on Tuesday
- Short novel

### DOWN

- Enjoying a book
- Illumination providers
- Type of flower
- Path

Answers:  
Across  
1. Relaxing 4. Depicted 6. Taco 7. Novella  
Down  
1. Reading 2. Lamps 3. Gladiola 5. Trail

## THIS DAY IN...



## HISTORY

- **1759:** THE BRITISH MUSEUM OPENS TO THE PUBLIC.
- **1870:** A POLITICAL CARTOON DEPICTS THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY WITH A DONKEY FOR THE FIRST TIME.
- **1889:** THE COCA-COLA COMPANY, THEN KNOWN AS THE PEMBERTON MEDICINE COMPANY, IS INCORPORATED IN ATLANTA.

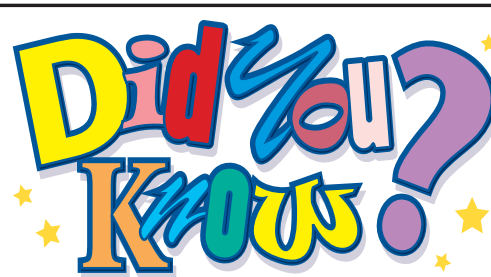


## GLOSSARY

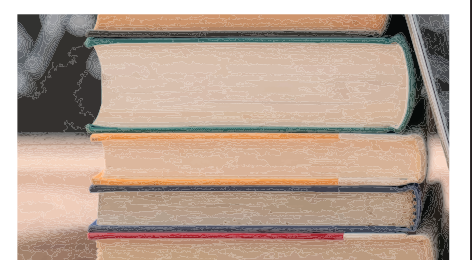
alphabetical list of terms in a book



- ENGLISH:** Page
- SPANISH:** Página
- ITALIAN:** Pagina
- FRENCH:** Page
- GERMAN:** Seite



THE FIRST BOOK TO SELL ONE MILLION COPIES IS BELIEVED TO BE "UNCLE TOM'S CABIN" BY HARRIET BEECHER STOWE. IT WAS WRITTEN IN 1852.



Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

ANSWER: STACK OF BOOKS







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# New Chamber officers, board installed



The 2024 Chamber officers and Board of Directors. Seated at the table are officers: Vice President Megan Smith, President-Elect Frank Messersmith, Past President Amy Geiger, President Jeanie Booth, Secretary Niraj Patel, and Treasurer Jessica Revell. Standing are directors: Kinsey Miller, Kacey Britt, Greg James, Audrey Frazier, Katie Taff, Shelly Bell, Leslie Weiss, Mary Wallace, Tonya Hobby, Rachel Pienta, Tanner Pafford, Julia Whited, BOCC Liaison Ralph Thomas, Zoe Mansfield, Marva Preston, Samantha Morse, Doug Gove, Missy Gainer, Bill Snowden, Chris Russell, Kevin Vaughn, and Josh Brown. Not pictured: Steve Cushman, Bob Ballard, and Tiffany Hartsfield. County Judge Brian Miller, center, administered the oath of office earlier. (Photo by Heather Bryan of the Chamber)

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MAKE A TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATION TO  
SUPPORT THE WAKULLA SUN THROUGH  
THE FLORIDA PRESS FOUNDATION.



Your donation will help  
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## SOPCHOPPY OPRY

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Saturday, Jan. 27 • 7 p.m.

Historic Sopchoppy High School Auditorium



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25th Annual  
Valentine's Day  
Festival & Parade

AT HUDSON PARK SATURDAY, FEB. 10, 2024

A Family Friendly Day Packed Full of  
FUN and LIVE ENTERTAINMENT!

Line-Up 9 a.m.  
starts at 10 a.m.

- Cash Prize awarded for 1st Place \$200.00
- 2nd Place \$150.00
- 3rd Place \$100.00

Does your business want to participate in our Valentine's Day Festival?  
Go to [www.wakullarotary.org/Valentines](http://www.wakullarotary.org/Valentines) for all forms to participate.

Want to participate  
in the parade?  
Registration is FREE!

Vendors Needed!

WakullaRotary@yahoo.com

Want a great way to advertise your business?  
You can get your business name out there by sponsoring the Valentine's Festival!

All proceeds to benefit High School Scholarships the Rotary Club of Wakulla Provides!



SPORTS

WAKULLA HIGH WRESTLING

# War Eagles dominate at Gator Brawl

By WALT JACOBS  
Special to The Sun

Wewahitchka High School welcomed 19 teams from Georgia, South Carolina, Alabama, and Florida to compete in their annual Gator Brawl wrestling tournament.

The War Eagles dominated from beginning to end as they won almost 80% of their matches throughout the tournament.

Wakulla's exceptional performance that yielded 534 team points, would prove to be more than enough to secure the Gator Brawl championship.

Ridgeview placed a distant 2nd with 416.5 points, followed by Waccamaw (SC) at 3rd with 411.5, Episcopal of Jacksonville at 4th with 402, and Mosley at 5th with 366 points.

Individually, seven Wakulla wrestlers advanced to the championship finals and five of those were crowned Gator Brawl champs. Matthew Thaxton, Troy Thaxton, Brady Jackson, Aaron Robinson, and Nate Jacobs all placed first in their respective weight classes.

Brady Wilson and Adleigh Caquimbo placed 2nd.

Others placing in the top 5 were Bricyn Kennedy (3rd), Kane Watford (4th), David Culley (5th), and Gavin Mitchell (5th).

On Wednesday, Jan. 24th, the War Eagles will travel to Chiles High to compete in a dual meet at 6 p.m.

On January 26th and 27th Wakulla will host the Annual Wakulla FCA Invitational. Wrestling will begin on Friday at 1 p.m.



The War Eagle wrestling team, above, after winning the Gator Brawl in Wewahitchka.



Three of the podiums taken by Wakulla wrestlers: above, Brady Jackson 1st at 138; left, Troy Thaxton 1st at 126; far left, Brady Wilson 2nd at 106.



PHOTOS BY WALT JACOBS



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Join the **Wakulla County Garden Club** to celebrate **Florida Arbor Day** & the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs

Friday, January 19<sup>th</sup>  
11:00 – 11:30 a.m.  
Medart Recreation Park

Cheer the planting of 2 live oaks. Enjoy leaf- and tree-shaped cookies.

Wakulla County Garden Club, Duke Energy Foundation, & Florida Federation of Garden Clubs with The Wakulla Sun & Wakulla Living.

**Tired of old tires??**

**Bring them to the KWCB Tire Amnesty Day and lets keep them out of our forest and waterways!!**

We will be accepting maximum 8 tires per resident with proof of residency. Tires from commercial shops will not be accepted. Tires must be off of the rim. Photo ID must be presented.

**Saturday, January 20, 9 am – 1 pm**  
318 Shadeville Rd., Crawfordville, FL 32327

Call 850-745-7111 or email to keepwakullabeautiful@gmail.com for more information

**20th Annual Free Trees!**  
CRAWFORDVILLE  
**ARBOR DAY**  
Saturday, January 20<sup>th</sup>  
10:00 am - 1:00 pm

**84 Cedar Avenue**  
Wakulla County Extension Office  
Rain or Shine

**Hundreds of young trees (in pots) will be given away!**

Parsley Haw, Eastern Mayhaw, Live Oak, Pignut Hickory, Possumhaw, Southern Red Cedar, Rusty Black Haw, Dahoon Holly, Chinquapin, Redbud, Overcup Oak, Red Maple, River Birch, Sweet Shrub, Longleaf Pines, & more.

**Drive-Thru Giveaway 2 Trees per Vehicle**

*From Courthouse (Arran Rd.), drive north on Ochlockonee St., pass Hudson Park on right, turn left onto Cedar Ave., follow signs, turn right onto circle drive at Extension Office.*

Wakulla County Garden Club, Florida Forest Service, Sarracenia Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society, UF/IFAS Extension & Master Gardeners, & National Wildlife Federation with Florida Wildlife Federation, Just Fruits & Exotics, The Wakulla Sun & The Wakulla News.