



Lady War Eagle wrestlers compete/Page 14

The Wakulla SWM

WAKULLA WeatherSTEM
Weather forecast from Wakulla High School

Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Partly Cloudy	PM Showers	Partly Cloudy
Hi: 59° Lo: 35° 5%	Hi: 61° Lo: 35° 54%	Hi: 41° Lo: 21° 2%
Sunrise 7:29 AM Sunset 6:12 PM	Sunrise 7:28 AM Sunset 6:13 PM	Sunrise 7:28 AM Sunset 6:14 PM



\$1
One Section

"It's a New Day"

Locally Owned & Operated

Our 5th Year 6th Issue
Thursday, February 5, 2026

Sopchoppy Opry ends its run

After 25 years, the Opry will no longer have regular shows

Story By
LINDA ANN McDONALD
Photos by
GERALD BROWN

The Sopchoppy Opry performed its last scheduled performance to a huge audience in the Historic Sopchoppy High School Auditorium, on Saturday, January 30th, proving it will always be "The little Opry that could."

After almost 26 years and over 300 shows later, the Sopchoppy Opry is no longer maintaining its last Saturday of the month scheduled performances.

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The Opry's house band, Southbound: Reggie Bradley, Lamar Brock, Larry Bullock, Johnny Calloway, Wayne Martin, Jay Newsome and Ashton Evans.

Deputy agrees to deferred prosecution

Deputy Don Newsome was charged with supplying information to then-commissioner Mike Kemp

By **WILLIAM SNOWDEN**
Editor

Wakulla Sheriff's Deputy Don Newsome entered into a deferred prosecution agreement with the state on Jan. 23 – meaning the felony charges against him will be dropped if he has no new law offenses.

As part of the deal, Newsome must also testify against former County Commissioner Mike Kemp, whose case is set for trial in March.

Kemp rejected a deferred prosecution agreement with the state, electing to go to trial on felony charges of criminal use of a public record to harass and tampering with a witness.

Newsome has been suspended as a deputy and on administrative leave with pay since the charges were filed in August of last year. He is still subject to an internal investigation by the sheriff's office and a review of his credentials as a law enforcement officer.

Newsome has been represented by Tallahassee attorney Don Pumphrey.

Kemp and Becky Whaley, former administrator of the Wakulla Citizens Facebook page, were attempting to out an internet troll known as "Thunder Lightning" (sic) by using voter registration records and mistakenly named the wrong person.

The troll had posted comments critical of Kemp and Whaley on Facebook, and had also made a post complaining about a white truck in a parking lot nearly hitting his wife. Kemp had Newsome look up the case, but instead came up with a different case with similar facts. County Commissioner Ralph Thomas used WebElect, a site for use by candidates to allow them to contact registered voters for political activity, such as canvassing and mailers, and gave the name to Kemp.

On May 6, Whaley sent a text message to Kemp that read: "Tell me Thunder guy's real name about to bust him out." Kemp sent her the WebElect information on the person.

Whaley posted on Wakulla Citizens page the WebElect printout of the name, birth date, mailing address, voter ID number and party affiliation of the person, with a post: "Introducing Thunder Lightning to you all from public records, registered to vote in 2022 according to the records and data shows he's never voted! ... Show your face and own your truth. You still have time to register to run for office!"

It was not the person behind the Thunder Lightning account.

They requested that Whaley take down the post,
Turn to Page 5

FUNDRAISER FOR FOOD



Empty Bowls held

An Empty Bowls event was held on Thursday at Wakulla High School to raise money for Wakulla Giving Hands. Music, culinary, and art teachers collaborated with volunteers to make soup as well as handmade bowls. Above, Becky Whaley, Petra Shuff, Dr. Christopher Mrofczak, Ryan Warner, Principal Michele Falk, Sherrie Posey, and Emily Strickland. At right, handmade bowls. (Photos by Gerald Brown)



Cold-stunned turtles treated at Gulf Specimen

By **WILLIAM SNOWDEN**
Editor

Dozens of people were set up on Thursday to receive the incoming sea turtles – 25 had been cold-stunned by the icy temperatures and picked up from St. Joseph Bay in Gulf County and brought to Gulf Specimen Marine Lab in Panama for treatment.

The animals were sorted between those with fibropapillomatosis, a disease that causes cauliflower-like tumors, and those were taken to quarantine tanks.

Others were in tanks around the Gulf Specimen campus, including in a tent labeled "Sea Turtle M*A*S*H," which wildlife biologist Allen Foley said with a chuckle that it stands for "Mobile Aquatic Sea Turtle Hospital."

A couple dozen tanks were set up to treat cold stunned sea turtles, which are treated by staying in water with a

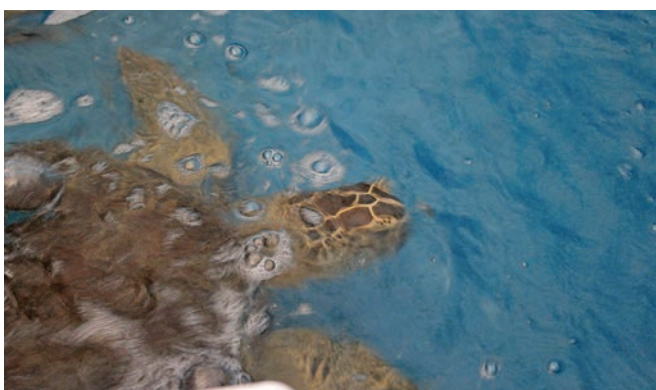


Jack Rudloe of Gulf Specimen with Allen Foley, an FWC wildlife biologist, inside a tent with tanks set up to treat cold-stunned sea turtles. Below, one of the turtles.

temperature of at least 60 degrees for a couple of days to recover.

The marine lab already had about 20 turtles being treated when the additional turtles were brought in.

On Friday, some of the earlier treated turtles were being released in open water.



Candidates file for 2026 election

Staff Report

Several candidates have filed to run in the 2026 election, all of them incumbents seeking re-election.

All three school board members whose terms expire this year have filed to run:

- Eddie Hand, District 1
- Cale Langston, District 3
- Laura Lawhon, District 5.

County Commissioner for District 2 Fred Nichols has filed to run for re-election.

Quince Messersmith, county commissioner for District 4, has yet to file.

None of the incumbents has yet to draw an opponent.

Other local elected positions up this year include two seats on the Wakulla Soil & Water Conservation District.

Since Congressman Neal Dunn, R-Panama City, has indicated he will not seek re-election, several candidates have filed to run for that seat.

On the Democratic side, Yen Bailey, Amanda Green, and Nicholas Zateslo are running in the Democratic primary for U.S. House Florida District 2.

Republicans Keith Gross, George Hensarling, Nicholas Lewis, and Evan Power are running in the Republican primary which will be held in August.

Back in October, Chad Smith filed to run in the 2028 election for Wakulla County Commissioner District 3, the seat currently held by Valerie Russell.

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Student of the Week

Emily Zak – 11th grader at Wakulla High School

Principal: Michele Falk
Achievements/Reason for Nomination: This week, we are thrilled to shine a spotlight on an exceptional student who consistently demonstrates dedication and a strong commitment to her school community. Our Student of the Week is Emily Zak, a remarkable individual who embodies the spirit of excellence. Emily has achieved an impressive weighted GPA of 4.35, a testament to her hard work, intellectual curiosity, and consistent academic performance across her subjects. Her commitment to learning is evident in her outstanding grades and her proactive approach to her studies. Emily is a valued and dedicated member of the National Honor Society (NHS), where she exemplifies the pillars of scholarship, service, leadership, and character. Her involvement in NHS showcases her commitment to both academic rigor and community engagement. Emily's talents extend to the arts, as she is also a proud member of the school Band. Her participation in Band highlights her discipline, teamwork, and passion for music, enriching our school's cultural landscape. Emily's positive attitude, willingness to support her peers, and her balanced involvement in both academics and extracurriculars make her an inspiring role model.



STUDENT OF THE WEEK FEATURES A DIFFERENT SCHOOL EACH WEEK.

Students perform at All-District



Some Wakulla band members were in Tallahassee over the weekend for the All-District performance at Chiles, conducted by Dr. Rodney Dorsey. (Photo by Perry Dissmore)

The Wakulla Sun
Readers' Choice
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Wakulla County's Visitors Guide

Things to do!

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Full Page - Get listed on Map to show your location..... \$25

1/2 Page..... \$300
1/4 Page..... \$225
2 x 3 \$125

- Nature Trails & Wildlife!
- Fishing Charters, Beaches & Rivers
- Lodging & Restaurants

Wakulla County Tax Collectors Office

SPECIALTY TAGS
\$15 - \$30 additional to cost of tag.

Lisa Craze, CFC
Wakulla County Tax Collector



AMERICA IS TURNING 250 NEXT YEAR

FLORIDA SAMPLE
IN GOD WE TRUST

America is turning 250 next year, and the state of Florida is giving residents a chance to commemorate the occasion! The Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles just announced that a new license plate, the America 250 license plate, is now available. Executive Director Dave Kerner said, "This commemorative plate reflects our shared pride in America's history and is a symbol of our state's connection to America's past." Unlike other specialty plates, the America 250 is an alternative to the standard plate and carries no additional fees.

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Sopchoppy man pleads guilty to federal charges of armed trafficking of methamphetamine

From U.S. Attorney's Office

Howard Neil Martin, 46, of Sopchoppy, pleaded guilty in federal court to three counts: possession with the intent to distribute 50 grams or more of methamphetamine; carrying a firearm during a drug-trafficking offense; and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. The plea was announced by John P. Heekin, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Florida.

U.S. Attorney Heekin said: "When President Donald J. Trump and Attorney General Pam Bondi launched Operation Take Back America to deploy the full might of the Department of

Justice toward eliminating the threats to our community posed by violent felons and drug traffickers, this was precisely the kind of criminal they had in mind. I am extremely proud of this successful prosecution that will keep a dangerous, drug-peddling felon off our streets, and we will continue to aggressively prosecute offenders like this defendant until our communities are drug-free and safe."

"This case highlights the serious danger posed by repeat violent offenders who continue to traffic drugs and carry firearms," said Wakulla County Sheriff Jared F. Miller. "Thanks to the alert response of our



Howard Neil Martin

deputies and the strong partnership with our federal law enforcement partners, a significant amount of drugs and a firearm were taken off our streets."

Court documents reflect that deputies with the Wakulla County Sheriff's Office responded

to a report about a burglary in progress at a residence. When they arrived, the defendant was parked in the driveway and was engaged in a verbal dispute with someone watching the residence for the homeowner. Officers could see a firearm in plain view inside the defendant's truck and, upon running his criminal history, learned that he was a convicted felon. Officers ultimately searched the truck and located approximately half a pound of crystal methamphetamine.

Martin faces up to life imprisonment, as well as a sentencing enhancement because he had previously been convicted of a serious vi-

olent felony, specifically, aggravated battery with a deadly weapon.

The case involved a joint investigation by the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Wakulla County Sheriff's Office, with assistance from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney James A. McCain.

Sentencing is scheduled for April 3 at 10:00 am at the United States Courthouse in Tallahassee before Chief United States District Judge Allen C. Winsor

This case is part of Operation Take Back America a nationwide initiative that marshals

the full resources of the Department of Justice to repel the invasion of illegal immigration, achieve the total elimination of cartels and transnational criminal organizations (TCOs), and protect our communities from the perpetrators of violent crime, human and drug trafficking.

As part of its PSN strategy, the United States Attorney's Office is encouraging everyone to lock their car doors, particularly at night. Burglaries from unlocked automobiles are a significant source of guns for criminals in the Northern District of Florida. Please do your part and protect yourself by locking your car doors.

Sopchoppy Opry

From Front Page

"There will still be occasional special performances in the future," Opry Manager Jesse Quigg said. "We don't have any dates set at this time, we'll see where the future takes this."

Quigg shared the history of the launch of the Opry: "We started this on a hot July day with 95-degree weather with 100% humidity, with lightning that blew out a transformer that almost canceled our very first show. Thanks to the hard work and quick thinking of all our volunteers, we were still able to hold our debut show, giving us the name, 'The little Opry that could.' Now, we get to end it with extreme cold."

Volunteer Steve Middlekauff, emcee of the Opry/raffle announcer, along with Andrew and Amanda Addington of Gideon 300 Security and Protection said, "This is

heartbreaking, it's like a family reunion here." The Addington couple volunteered security services for the Opry.

Speaking of security, Quigg said, "Although there was never any trouble at the Opry, I wanted our guests to feel safe and be able to have a good time while visiting us."

When asked about the decision to end scheduled performances, Quigg said, "I'm 80 years old and Callie (Quigg) is 84. Brother Steve Ingram (a long-time volunteer) is 75. We are tired. It's time for us to step back, catch our breath and maybe do some special shows in the future. We've got to stop and rest."

Callie Quigg said, "I have mixed emotions, I plan on staying busy and I have two great-grandchildren who live in the house next to us. There has been a lot of memories made here; we could not have done any of this

without the help of our volunteers."

The Opry had a long list of season ticket holders who hardly ever missed a show.

"My mother was 97 years old and had the start of Alzheimer's disease. She could not remember much, but she could sure remember she had to attend the Opry the last Saturday of the month," said Georgianne Meets about her mother, Gladys Thrift.

"We are friends with a retired judge from Minnesota. When they found it was the last show, they came down from Minnesota early just to see this

show," said Meets.

Dianne Anderson, daughter of season ticket holder Vergie Anderson said her mother never missed a show if it all possible. "She sat in the second row in her seat and looked forward to the performances every month."

"I guess you won't need me anymore," said Jim Chidester to Quigg. Chidester is a volunteer for the Opry with the responsibility of distributing promotional posters as far as Carrabelle. "My mother came to enjoy the shows, my aunt and uncle did too. You let me know when you get spe-

cial promotion posters and I'll be here."

"I want to thank the Southbound Band for all their dedication and hard work," said Jesse Quigg. "Reggie Bradley has been with us 20 plus years, Lamar Brock, Johnny Callaway, Wayne Martin, all were with us 20 plus years, Jay Newsome, guest musician, many, many years, Larry Bullcock from Georgia, he has been with us many years. I want to thank them."

Quigg mentioned, "I want to say thank you to our sound man, Mike Sherlock, from St. George Island. He really knows sound and equipment."

"It's been a real project of volunteers that has lasted as long as this. We raised a lot of money, and we are still working hard to finish off the Vause wing of the building. I want to see it all completed before I pass away," said Quigg, laughing.

"It's been a good run for us and I'll be happy to share what I know if anyone wants to take and run with this; I have stories and pictures from the beginning."

The Sopchoppy Opry is an activity of the Wakulla County School Board and the Sopchoppy High School Restoration Fund.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING CONCERNING AN APPLICATION FOR CHANGE OF ZONING

The Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners propose to consider the following application and/or adopt the following by ordinance and has scheduled a Public Hearing before the **Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners on Tuesday, February 17, 2026, beginning at 6:00 PM**, or as soon thereafter as the matter can be heard. All public hearings will be held at the County Commission Chambers located west of the County Courthouse at 29 Arran Road, Crawfordville, Florida 32327. Interested parties are invited to attend and present testimony.



AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE WAKULLA COUNTY LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE, ORDINANCE NO. 85-4, AS AMENDED; CHANGING THE ZONING DISTRICT CLASSIFICATION AND OFFICIAL ZONING ATLAS FROM R-1 TO CC FOR PROPERTY DESCRIBED AS ATTACHED EXHIBIT "A" TO THE ORDINANCE; REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, IN CONFLICT HERewith; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

1. Application for Change of Zoning: R25-09
Applicant: Randall C Pelt, as Trustee of Randall Cager Pelt Revocable Trust
Agent: Edwin Brown & Associates, Inc./Wade Brown
Proposal: rezone from single-family residential to cottage commercial
Tax ID Numbers: 00-00-077-017-10532-001 and 00-00-077-017-10530-008
Existing FLU Map: Urban Fringe (FLUE Policy 1.2.7)
Current Zoning: R-1 (Section 5-30, LDC)
Proposed Zoning: CC (Section 5-65, LDC)
FEMA Flood Info: "X" zone on Panel 0225E
Parcel size: 1.94 +/- acres
Location: 25 Sabal Palm Drive and 33 Sabal Palm Drive

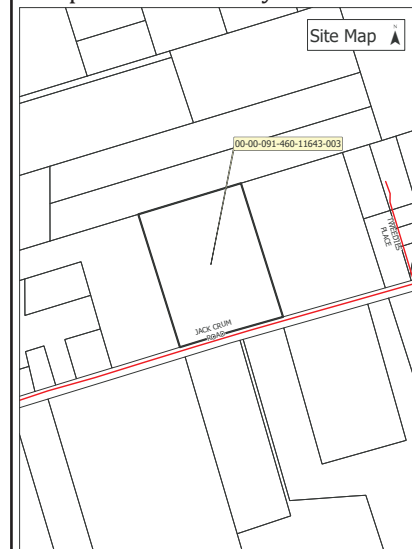
Hearings Required: BOCC: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 @ 6:00 PM

Copies of applications, draft ordinances, and any related public record files may be viewed at the County Planning Department located at 11 Bream Fountain Road, Crawfordville, FL 32327, 8 AM to 4:30 PM M/F; Phone (850) 926-3695. Any person desiring to appeal a decision of a County Board must ensure a verbatim transcript or copy is made of the testimony and exhibits presented at said hearings. Persons with a disability needing a special accommodation should contact the Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners Administration Office at least two (2) days prior to the meeting at (850) 926-0919; Hearing and Voice Impaired at 1-800-955-8771; or email at ADARquest@mywakulla.com.

February 5, 2026

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING CONCERNING ADOPTION OF A LARGE-SCALE MAP AMENDMENT TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners proposes to consider the following application and/or adopt the following by ordinance and has scheduled a Public Hearing before the **Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners on Tuesday, February 17, 2026, beginning at 6:00 PM**, or as soon thereafter as the matter can be heard. All public hearings will be held at the County Commission Chambers located west of the County Courthouse at 29 Arran Road, Crawfordville, Florida 32327. Interested parties are invited to attend and present testimony.



AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF WAKULLA COUNTY, FLORIDA, AMENDING, REVISING, AND REPLACING IDENTIFIED PORTIONS OF THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP AS ADOPTED BY ORDINANCE NUMBER 2018-23, AS ADOPTED BY THE BOARD

OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ON JUNE 18, 2018, AS AMENDED; PROVIDING SEVERABILITY AND FOR FILING; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

1. Application for Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment: CPM25-04
Applicant: Golden Construction Company, Inc.
Proposal: Adoption of Amendment to Future Land Use Designation

Tax ID Number: 00-00-091-460-11643-003
Existing FLU Map: Agriculture (FLUE Policy 1.2.3)
Proposed FLU Map: Rural 1 (FLUE Policy 1.2.4)
Current Zoning: Agricultural (Section 5-25, LDC)
FEMA Flood Info: "X" and "A" zones on Panel 0380E
Parcel size: 30.42 +/- acres
Location: Jack Crum Road, approximately 0.85 miles east of Coastal Highway, Lot 3, Gray's Estate Subdivision

Hearings Required: BOCC: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 @ 6:00 PM

Copies of applications, draft ordinances, and any related public record files may be viewed at the County Planning Department located at 11 Bream Fountain Road, Crawfordville, FL 32327, 8 AM to 4:30 PM M/F; Phone (850) 926-3695. Any person desiring to appeal a decision of a County Board must ensure a verbatim transcript or copy is made of the testimony and exhibits presented at said hearings. Persons with a disability needing a special accommodation should contact the Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners Administration Office at least two (2) days prior to the meeting at (850) 926-0919; Hearing and Voice Impaired at 1-800-955-8771; or email at ADARquest@mywakulla.com.

February 5, 2026

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.



THE SCHOOL BOARD OF WAKULLA COUNTY ANNOUNCES THE FOLLOWING:

EVENT: School Board Meeting
DATE: Tuesday, February 17, 2026
TIME: 5:45 pm
PLACE: School Board Room, 69 Arran Road, Crawfordville, Florida
PURPOSE: Monthly School Board Meeting

For further information please contact:
Superintendent's Office
Wakulla County Schools
Post Office Box 100, 69 Arran Rd
Crawfordville, Florida 32326
850-926-0065

February 5, 2026

WAKULLA COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD PRE-QUALIFICATION NOTICE

The School Board of Wakulla County is requesting Proposals for Pre-Qualifying for Construction Services for Wakulla County School Board projects for the 2026 year. Pre-Qualification packets are available at the School Board Office.

WAKULLA COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD/FACILITIES OFFICE
126 High Drive
Crawfordville, Florida 32327
Telephone Number: 850-926-0065

Interested parties may pick up packets between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Completed packets and a Public Entity Crime Statement must be returned to the office of Richard Myhre, Superintendent, Wakulla County School Board, 69 Arran Road, Crawfordville, Florida 32327. **Attention: Michael Barwick by 2:00 p.m. February 20, 2026.**

There will be a Pre-Qualification Meeting at 2:00 p.m. February 5, 2026 in the Wakulla County School Boardroom.
January 22, 29, February 5, 2026

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.”

LETTERS FROM READERS

Robert Manning will speak at Historical Society program on Feb. 10

Editor, The Sun:

At its February 10th monthly meeting, the Wakulla County Historical Society will host a program highlighting the contributions of some of its lesser-known African-American residents. The focus will be on early to mid twentieth century residents from the several Wakulla County African-American communities.

While their names may not be familiar and their deeds not chronicled



in annals of Wakulla County history, many of the communities would be much different without the leadership they exhibited. The common traits characteristic to nearly each one was minimal education, admirable, work ethic, strong sense of family and deep and abiding Christian faith.

Theirs is a proud legacy most often evidenced by the outstanding accomplishments of their offspring.

The presenter will be Robert Manning, a 1974 graduate of Wakulla

High, and a community leader who retired after a 47 year career at St Marks Powder.

Manning has presented at prior Wakulla Historical programs and is always enjoyed by the attendees.

The public is invited and the meeting will be held Feb 10, 6 p.m. at the Wakulla County Public Library.

Brent Thurmond
Wakulla Historical Society

Something on your mind?

Email Letters to the Editor to editor@thewakullasun.com; or mail it The Wakulla Sun, 12 Arran Road, Crawfordville FL 32327; or drop it by the office on the courthouse square.

Author of letter was proven right

Editor, The Sun:

Concerning last week's letter entitled "Wait for investigation in deaths of protesters," I would like to extend my most sincere appreciation to Mr. Franco.

Thank you, Robert Franco, you have been proven right.

Tim Caldwell
Panacea

Library News

By **LINDA OAKS**
Library Director

Library News February 5th– February 11th

Thursday, February 5th
• Tiny Tummy Time 9:30am

- Creative Writing I 10am
- Wakulla County Democratic Party 5pm
- ALA Unit 114 Executive Committee 6pm

Friday, February 6th
• Quilting Guild 10am

Saturday, February 7th

- Girl Scouts 9:30am

Sunday, February 8th

- Closed

Monday, February 9th

- American Legion Post 114 PEC 5:30pm

Tuesday, February 10th

- Book Bunch 10am
- Creative Writing II 10am
- Historical Society Meeting 4pm

Wednesday, February 11th

- Book Babies 10am
- Wakulla County Garden Club 11:30am
- Mahjong 1pm
- Knitting Group 4pm

On the Horizon

Calendar of events for the week of February 5

Thursday, February 5

- The Rotary Club of Wakulla County meets at the TSC Wakulla Center at 8:30 a.m. on Thursdays.
- Coastal Optimist Club meets at noon at Myra Jean's on the first and third Thursdays.
- Gentle Yoga and Stetching Class, every Thursday, 11:30 a.m. at First Baptist Church. Bring a mat. Come early to sign in. Chair Yoga participants welcome. \$2 per class.
- 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.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 6:30 p.m. every Thursday at 54 Ochlockonee St.

Friday, February 6

- "Falling off the Edge," a play by Paul Donnelly, will be performed at Palaver Tree Theater at 8 p.m. Tickets \$15 advance, \$20 at the door.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at noon and 8 p.m. every Friday at 54 Ochlockonee St.

Saturday, February 7

- St. Marks Chili Cookoff will be at the

St. Marks Community Market from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. \$25 entry fee; \$10 tickets for sampling. Email DiscoverStMarks@gmail.com to register

- Show Me the Proof, artist spotlight at Palaver Tree, doors open at 5:30 p.m., with show from 6:30 to 10 p.m. Tickets are \$10 online or \$15 at the door.

Sunday, February 8

- Wakulla Giving Hands holds a food giveaway every Sunday from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. at the facility across from Medart Elementary on Highway 98.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets every Sunday at 6:30 p.m. at 54 Ochlockonee St.

Monday, February 9

- Planning commission meets at 6 p.m. in the commission chambers.
- Sopchoppy City Commission meets at city hall at 6:30 p.m.
- VFW Post 4538 and Auxiliary holds monthly meetings on the second Monday of the month with fellowship at 6 p.m., meetings at 7 p.m.
- Crawfordville Woman's Club monthly meeting is the second Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at 64 Ochlockonee St., in Crawfordville. Call (850) 566-5727 for more information.

- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 6 p.m. for women and 8 p.m. for men every Monday at 54 Ochlockonee St.
- Gentle Yoga and Stetching Class, every Monday, 11 a.m. Wakulla Community Center. Bring a mat. Come early to sign in. Chair Yoga participants welcome. \$2 per class.
- Line Dancing Class is held at Wakulla Dance Academy every Monday from 7 to 9 p.m. \$5 per person. Wear dance shoes or tennis shoes.

Tuesday, February 10

- Wakulla County Historical Society will present a program on local Black history at the Wakulla County Library at 6 p.m.
- Sopchoppy community dinner is held every week at the Towles House at 6:30 p.m.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets every Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. at 54 Ochlockonee St.

Wednesday, February 11

- Wakulla County Garden Club meets at the Wakulla County Library from noon to 2 p.m. Program will be Fun with Flowers with Gina Jogan, an award-winning flower show judge and instructor, on Make and Take Valentine

design. Cost is \$20 for members, \$25 non-members.

- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at noon and 6:30 p.m. every Wednesday at 54 Ochlockonee St.

UPCOMING
Saturday, February 14

- VALENTINE'S DAY
- Rotary Valentine Festival begins with a parade at 10 a.m. followed by entertainment and vendors in Hudson Park.

Friday, February 20

- Arthur Andrews Memorial Scholarship Gala will be held at the community center beginning at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are \$50 and will not be available at the door.

Saturday, February 21

- African American History Festival kicks off with a parade at 10 a.m. followed by entertainment and vendors in the park.
- Mardi Gras, a fundraiser for Friends of the Wakulla County Public Library, will be held at the community center from 6 to 9 p.m. The event features dinner, live jazz and a cash bar. Tickets are \$60.

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William Snowden
Editor & Publisher
The Wakulla Sun

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"It's A New Day!"


The Wakulla Sun




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Polled at the Wakulla Senior Center:

– Compiled by Lynda Kinsey

What was good advice that your parents gave to you?



KATHY MORGAN
Retired

“My father said if you take care of your pennies, the dollars will take care of themselves. We heard this over and over and over again.”



SHARON MCCLENDON
Retired, 30 yrs. in Tupperware

“Waste not, want not. You didn’t waste food, if you have leftovers make them into plan-overs. We were taught to repurpose everything. They grew up during the Great Depression.”



BRIAN O'DONNELL
Tour Bus Driver

“I mostly learned by example. Smile at the world because you get back what you give. My mom and dad were always smiling, laughing, and joking.”



ROBERT O'DONNELL
Retired Pharmacist Assistant

“They taught us a lot, but mainly to be nice to others and never be rude.”



MARG O'DONNELL
Retired Nurse

“To walk with God was No. 1. My father stressed faith and that if you walked with Jesus, you’ll always be in the right place at the right time.”

Wakulla Crossroads

By **VERNA BROCK**

A theme filling much of literature, is the nature of life in a small town. Often, small communities are portrayed as stifling or backwards. Residents are often drawn as caricatures of nosy gossips and mean-spirited, jealous harpies. We’ve all seen the Hallmark specials, read the novels, and maybe even felt a chord re-

sounding within us now and then.

But I am so grateful to live in our small community. Last Thursday night, more than 100 people came together to support Wakulla 4-H. Volunteers were recognized and honored for supporting youth and children in our county. Many of our elected officials turned out on a chilly weeknight to enthusiastically cheer our kids on, while family and

friends celebrated their accomplishments. The enthusiasm was genuine and heartfelt.

One of the best things about living in a small community is the warm support offered in good times and bad. Wakulla County is unfailing in its generous support of its neighbors. Every child is our child. Each achievement is honored, every loss is grieved. We are blessed with an extended family that cares, prays, shares and shows up for one another.

Add to these blessings the natural

beauty that surrounds us every day, and it’s no wonder we have to guard against pride of place! All of these gifts are granted by the grace of God, and we must never take them for granted. I hope we always offer the hand of brotherhood in difficult times.

May we choose to offer grace for the grace we’re given, and work together to welcome the stranger, the newcomer, the neighbor we’ve yet to meet.

After all, we grow stronger when we stand together.

Sopchoppy News

By **DJ BUTCH**

The new year is here! Lots of festivals coming:

- Mudbugs and music in Panacea Woolley Park February 21;
- Beer and Oysters in Panacea Woolley Park on March 21;
- Worm Gruntin’ in Sopchoppy April 11th.

Also The Freedom Jam concert is February 14th at the Sopchoppy Auditorium. So many cool events headed our way!

The weather warmed up a little. It was awesome! Comfortable and beautiful! annnnd then it’s freezing cold....

The New Year is here and I’m excited about what it may bring!

The Sopchoppy Community Market will not be held in January or February. There will be a short winter break and then the market will resume in

March at Depot Park in downtown Sopchoppy.

When it returns, you can once again enjoy a wonderful selection of homemade and homegrown treasures, support local vendors, and gather with friends and neighbors at Sopchoppy Depot Park, 33 Rose Street.

The Community Market is proudly hosted by Discover Sopchoppy, and they look forward to welcoming everyone back this spring.

Loafers Bench closed. They put out a message saying it was closing temporarily. I already miss the turkey and bacon sandwich.

Sopchoppy BakeHouse has awesome quiche and amazing sweets. They are getting ready to serve espresso coffee and I’m super excited about that.

Sopchoppy Feed Store has all kinds

of feed. They also carry local honey, chickens and other cool stuff like my Yella Fly shirts.

I saw online a new honor system bakery has come to town.... check out Essentials with Love at 8183 Smith Creek Road. Check online for hours and menu. It looks really cool!

I noticed the historic Sopchoppy gym has a new roof. It looks awesome. I just love the historic school and property. That is our history and part of our local charm.

I took a walk today and the weather was amazing. It has been really cold lately so it was good to feel some warmer weather. It was a beautiful day in Sopchoppy. I ran into a neighbor and they gave me a locally grown orange. It was absolutely delicious.

My Facebook has been doing really well. It’s Corey Benedict on Facebook. I enjoy posting nature and our local history. It is growing fast.

I really enjoy seeing the undocumented history in the comments. I

love when people comment personal experiences and stories in the comments. We all learn so much. It’s very entertaining.

If you drive in Sopchoppy or through Sopchoppy please stop at the stop signs. Please drive slow in the city. We have children, pets, golf carts, bicycles and skateboards cruising around. Thanks!

It’s going to be a great year! I’m thankful for many blessings. We are very blessed. I’m working on a song about our beautiful town with a six-time Grammy nominated producer. I’m super excited about this song.

Sopchoppy is a special place. It must be respected and protected. I have seen what too much growth can do and it’s not pretty.

I love easy living. I love the small town charm. Don’t try to change that. If you want something different they have that in other areas. We love our small town charm.

The real Sopchoppy!

Deputy agrees to deferred prosecution

From Front Page

but Whaley initially declined. The wrongly named individual and his wife were both shocked at the name being posted – they were fairly recent residents of Wakulla, having moved here only a couple of years ago, and were only vaguely familiar with local politics. The victim and his family were also fearful of potential repercussions since the wife had formerly worked at Illinois Department of Corrections directly with inmates.

The next day, May 7, 2024, at 6:38 a.m., the victim called the sheriff’s office to file a complaint. A deputy arrived around 7:30 a.m.

Apparently hearing about it, Kemp called Newsome around 8:20 a.m., and Newsome, on his day off, went into the sheriff’s office management system and accessed information about the victim and provided it to Kemp.

Around 8:45 a.m., Kemp drove by the victim’s house while the deputy was there taking the report – Kemp’s truck was captured on the deputy’s body camera. That is the basis for the tampering with a witness charge, that Kemp went by the victim’s house and intended to talk with him.

Newsome told investigators that he believed providing police reports and other information

to Kemp was helping with the relationship between the sheriff’s office and county commission.

By the end of the interview with detectives, Newsome acknowledged that he had been manipulated by Kemp into divulging information.

The full 77-page report concludes with “But for Deputy Newsome’s reckless actions, this entire incident would never have happened.”

The investigation was completed in June 2024, but Wakulla Chief Prosecutor Andrew Deneen held back charging Kemp until after the August election because he did not want it to appear the state attorney’s office was attempting to influence the election.

Kemp ultimately lost

his bid for re-election to challenger Valerie Russell.

As part of the deferred prosecution agreement, Newsome must pay \$500, report to pre-trial intervention and pay \$50 a month for supervision.

He also signed an allocation that states:

“I have been charged by Information with Offense Against Users of Computers, Computer Systems, Computer Networks and Electronic Device pursuant to 815.06(2)(a) Florida Statutes.

“On or prior to May 6, 2024, I was contacted by an individual known to me as Mike Kemp. Kemp contacted me with the intent of obtaining information which he knew I had access to (sic) to my position with the Wakulla County Sheriff’s Office. I obtained the

personal identification information for the victim, C.R., and passed it along to Kemp, who was not authorized to obtain said information.”

Newsome’s signature appears under the allocation.

Kemp was a major at the Wakulla County Sheriff’s Office prior to retiring and running for county commissioner, and he worked with Newsome for years.

Becky Whaley signed a deferred prosecution agreement in August 2025 to resolve her case. She was represented by Crawfordville attorney David Kemp, who is no relation to Mike Kemp.

In October 2025, Wakulla Circuit Judge Wayne Smith recused himself from the Kemp case after some intemperate remarks he made

from the bench directed at attorneys in a civil case – asking if he should direct the bailiff in the courtroom to shoot the attorneys and expressing his frustration with them. One of those attorneys was Stephen Webster, who is Kemp’s defense attorney.

Circuit Judge Ron Flury was appointed to the Kemp case in November.

Judge Flury has been the circuit judge assigned to Wakulla in the past, and served as chief prosecutor in Wakulla before he was appointed to the bench in 2012. Flury is currently assigned to Gadsden County, which prompted some people on social media to post that Kemp’s trial would be moved there, but that is not the case.

Outdoors

outdoor sports

HOME ON THE RANGE

Evolution of Army Handguns



By MARJ LAW

Joe and I are at the Wakulla County Sheriff's Office (WCSO) range. With .44s out and a biting wind, do you think I'm going to shoot?

Heck, no! I'm watching Joe shoot.

Today, he's shooting a Colt Single Action Army Revolver. It's also known as the Peacemaker or the M1873. Then he will shoot the semi-automatic M1911. Both guns were used in the U.S. Army.

The ownership of handguns evolves.

Take Joe and me, for example.

One Christmas, he surprises me by gifting me his cherished Charles Daly shotgun. What a beautiful surprise!

The wood grain of the stock was absolutely gorgeous. I'm a sucker for pretty wood.

Unfortunately, when I hold it up to my shoulder, my finger can't reach the trigger.

The Charles Daly is a great gun, but it isn't the gun for me.

Next, he thinks a Ruger Mark III would be something I'd like and can handle.

Yes, it works for me. Because it is a .22 caliber

gun, it has an easy trigger pull, practically no recoil, and is very accurate.

Then I knew enough to find a handgun for myself. It turns out to be the Kimber Mako with a green red dot.

The Kimber makes for a better defensive gun because it's a 9mm instead of a .22. If it comes to personal safety, the Mako has much greater take-down power to neutralize the threat. The Mako also has an easy trigger, little recoil, and is very accurate.

So, my evolution in guns has gone to a great gun I can't shoot, to an easy shooting gun with little take-down power, to a very accurate gun with good take-down power, easy trigger, and pretty easy recoil.

The same is true of the handguns used in the military. They, too have evolved tremendously over the years.

Imagine, shooting the Colt Army 1860 Percussion .44 today as a defensive gun. The bad guy would get you even before you could begin to try to defend yourself. This is because loading the six-shooter would take so long.

First, you have to half-cock the hammer to be able to turn the cylinder. Turn the cylinder to the first chamber, pour in 30 grains of black powder into that first chamber. Then, place a lead ball over the chamber and take the loading lever that's under the barrel to swage that lead ball into the chamber. Put the lever back into place. Now, place a tiny per-



Colt Army 1860 Percussion .44 Caliber

Colt Single Action Army, also known as the SAA, Model P, Peacemaker, or the M1873

M1911 or the Colt 1911 .45 ACP

Army Guns Evolve:
Percussion
Revolver
Semi-Automatic

cussion cap onto the nipple above the chamber. Recalling that this is a six-shooting revolver, you have to perform those same actions six times.

What a pain! And unloading takes a while too. Clear every percussion cap that might still be on the gun.

Naturally, today we'd see all this work as inefficient. And it was. So then the Colt Single Action Army, also known as the SAA, Model P, Peacemaker, or the M1873 replaced the percussion revolver.

With the M1873, you didn't have to worry about measuring your powder or keeping it dry. Instead, half-cock the hammer to allow the cylinder to spin. Open the loading gate to one of the six chambers and pop in your .45 Colt caliber round.

Once all six chambers are loaded, you shoot, and then you'll have to open the gate and remove each brass casing after shooting with the ejection rod. Again, this is pretty involved, and who wants to take all this time to load and unload when someone else is shooting at you?

Naturally, the 1911, also known as the M1911, was much less cumbersome to load and unload.

Instead of six shots, you could now have seven in the magazine and one

in the chamber. Sure, eight is better than six when your life is at stake.

The 1911 is a cartridge gun: a sure upgrade from the percussion revolver or the six-shooting Peacemaker.

Now, you can load several magazines in advance. Pop a magazine into the grip. Pull back the slide, aim and shoot. Once all eight are discharged, push a button to make the magazine fall out and push in another.

Presto! Loading and unloading a magazine is 'way easier than loading and unloading each of the 1873's six chambers.

The 1860 percussion gun was followed by the 1873 Single Action Army revolver. The 1873 was followed by the 1911, which was formally adopted by the Army on March 29, 1911. After this, in 1913, the U.S. Navy and the Marine Corps adopted the 1911 in .45 ACP.

In 1985, the military moved to a Model 92 9mm Beretta. So, the 1911 lasted as the preferred military handgun from 1911 to 1985, although some 1911s "are still in use by some units of the U.S. Armed Forces," according to Wikipedia.

Out of curiosity on this frigid Wednesday, Joe is shooting both the M1873, the .45 Colt (the Peace-

maker), and the M1911 or the Colt 1911 .45 ACP. The .45 Colt is a rimmed cartridge and is a longer than the .45 Colt ACP, which is not a rimmed cartridge. The .45 Colt is a slightly stronger round.

What's the difference between shooting the gun used from about 1873 and the one used after 1911?

Both guns are shot in single action, which means the trigger only does the one job of releasing the hammer.

Joe finds both to have easy trigger pulls and short trigger pull travel. Recoil is about the same. The grip on the 1873 is short, so the 1911 is more comfortable for someone with large hands.

Some major differences in the 1873 are: loading and unloading is very cumbersome, it has a 7.5 inch barrel, is 10.25 inch long and it shoots only six rounds. When the gun is in the half-cocked position, it cannot fire.

Sights on both seem crude. The 1873's front sight is a high-profile blade with a long groove in the frame as a rear sight.

The 1911 is 8.5 inches long with a 5.03 inch barrel. It used to be able to shoot seven rounds, but with new magazines can shoot eight rounds (7+1) or more. The 1911 weighs 39 ounces. The 1911 has

both a manual and a grip safety.

Sights on the 1911 are also very basic, with a low-profile front sight and a half-square cut out on a fixed rear sight. Sights on both guns are fixed. Modern sights are enhanced with tritium.

On this frigid day at the range, Joe shoots five rounds from both handguns. Four of the Peacemaker's bullets hit the 8.5 inch target at 21 feet. The fifth bullet hits the very edge of the target.

Three of the 1911's bullets hit the target. They are in a tight grouping just to the lower left of the x-ring. The other two bullet holes are probably rushed shots as they are pretty far from the target.

This was really a terrible day to visit the WCSO range. Since conditions were pretty awful, hitting the target at all is a feat.

But no wonder these guns have been used by the military for so many years. From the 1860 Percussion Army, to the 1873 .45 Colt caliber Peacemaker, to the semi-automatic 1911 Colt in .45 ACP, handguns have evolved tremendously.

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



PIGFISH
(*Orthopristes chrysoptera*)

Pigfish are named for the grunting sound they make by rubbing the teeth in their throat together when caught. By night, pigfish use their throat teeth to grind up shellfish and other food. They are found warmer temperate regions along the east coast. They prefer bays and canals with mud bottoms to search out their diets of amphipods, mollusks, crabs and shrimp. Their maximum size is 19" and 2-3lbs although they are usually caught when under 1lb as bait fish. They live 2-3 years.

Eukarya, Animalia, Cordata, Actinopterygii, Perciformes, Haemulidae



WEEKLY WILDLIFE PHOTO



Retired Wakulla Springs State Park Ranger Bob Thompson, on a recent wildlife survey at the park, took this photo of a White Ibis.

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Thursday 5

Sun rise/set: 7:25 AM / 6:17 PM
Moon rise/set: 9:19 PM / 9:33 AM
Moon Illumination 84%

Friday 6

Sun rise/set: 7:24 AM / 6:18 PM
Moon rise/set: 10:17 PM / 10:01 AM
Moon Illumination 76%

Saturday 7

Sun rise/set: 7:23 AM / 6:19 PM
Moon rise/set: 11:14 PM / 10:29 AM
Moon Illumination 67%

Sunday 8

Sun rise/set: 7:22 AM / 6:20 PM
Moon rise/set: 12:11 AM / 11:00 AM
Moon Illumination 58%

Monday 9

Sun rise/set: 7:22 AM / 6:21 PM
Moon rise/set: 1:08 AM / 11:35 AM
Moon Illumination 48%

Tuesday 10

Sun rise/set: 7:21 AM / 6:21 PM
Moon rise/set: 2:05 AM / 12:14 PM
Moon Illumination 39%

Wednesday 11

Sun rise/set: 7:20 AM / 6:22 PM
Moon rise/set: 3:02 AM / 12:59 PM
Moon Illumination 30%

Gulf Coast Weekly Almanac

Feb. 5 - Feb. 11

GO FISH!

Tide charts by tides4fishing.com

Best fishing days this month
Best fishing day(s) is in the center of date ranges.
Jan. 29-Feb. 4, 9, 14-20

Thursday 5

Major Times: 2:30 AM / 2:51 PM
Minor Times: 9:03 AM / 8:49 PM

Friday 6

Major Times: 3:12 AM / 3:33 PM
Minor Times: 9:31 AM / 9:47 PM

Saturday 7

Major Times: 3:55 AM / 4:16 PM
Minor Times: 9:59 AM / 10:44 PM

Sunday 8

Major Times: 4:38 AM / 5:00 PM
Minor Times: 10:30 AM / 11:41 PM

Monday 9

Major Times: 5:23 AM / 5:47 PM
Minor Times: 12:38 AM / 11:05 AM

Tuesday 10

Major Times: 6:11 AM / 6:36 PM
Minor Times: 1:35 AM / 11:44 AM

Wednesday 11

Major Times: 7:01 AM / 7:27 PM
Minor Times: 2:32 AM / 12:29 PM

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	3:50 am ▲ 3.0 ft	10:01 am ▼ 0.1 ft	4:13 pm ▲ 3.1 ft	10:33 pm ▼ 0.0 ft
Fr	4:32 am ▲ 2.6 ft	10:20 am ▼ 0.5 ft	4:31 pm ▲ 3.0 ft	11:17 pm ▼ 0.0 ft
Sa	5:18 am ▲ 2.3 ft	10:38 am ▼ 0.8 ft	4:49 pm ▲ 2.9 ft	
Su	12:08 am ▼ 0.1 ft	6:16 am ▲ 1.9 ft	10:56 am ▼ 1.1 ft	5:08 pm ▲ 2.8 ft
Mo	1:16 am ▼ 0.3 ft	7:48 am ▲ 1.7 ft	11:15 am ▼ 1.4 ft	5:33 pm ▲ 2.7 ft
Tu	2:50 am ▼ 0.2 ft	6:14 pm ▲ 2.5 ft		
We	4:22 am ▼ 0.1 ft	8:22 pm ▲ 2.3 ft		

City of St. Marks

Th	4:26 am ▲ 2.8 ft	11:05 am ▼ 0.1 ft	4:49 pm ▲ 2.8 ft	11:37 pm ▼ 0.0 ft
Fr	5:08 am ▲ 2.5 ft	11:24 am ▼ 0.4 ft	5:07 pm ▲ 2.8 ft	
Sa	12:21 am ▼ 0.0 ft	5:54 am ▲ 2.1 ft	11:42 am ▼ 0.7 ft	5:25 pm ▲ 2.7 ft
Su	1:12 am ▼ 0.1 ft	6:52 am ▲ 1.8 ft	12:00 pm ▼ 1.0 ft	5:44 pm ▲ 2.6 ft
Mo	2:20 am ▼ 0.2 ft	8:24 am ▲ 1.6 ft	12:19 pm ▼ 1.3 ft	6:09 pm ▲ 2.5 ft
Tu	3:54 am ▼ 0.3 ft	6:50 pm ▲ 2.3 ft		
We	5:26 am ▼ 0.1 ft	8:58 pm ▲ 2.2 ft		

Shell Point, Spring Creek

Th	4:15 am ▲ 3.0 ft	10:34 am ▼ -0.1 ft	4:39 pm ▲ 3.1 ft	10:58 pm ▼ 0.0 ft
Fr	4:57 am ▲ 2.8 ft	10:55 am ▼ 0.3 ft	5:00 pm ▲ 3.1 ft	11:40 pm ▼ -0.1 ft
Sa	5:42 am ▲ 2.5 ft	11:17 am ▼ 0.6 ft	5:22 pm ▲ 3.1 ft	
Su	12:27 am ▼ 0.0 ft	6:36 am ▲ 2.1 ft	11:41 am ▼ 0.9 ft	5:47 pm ▲ 3.0 ft
Mo	1:26 am ▼ 0.1 ft	7:49 am ▲ 1.9 ft	12:10 pm ▼ 1.2 ft	6:18 pm ▲ 2.9 ft
Tu	2:45 am ▼ 0.1 ft	9:37 am ▲ 1.8 ft	12:54 pm ▼ 1.5 ft	7:03 pm ▲ 2.7 ft
We	4:18 am ▼ 0.1 ft	11:26 am ▲ 1.9 ft	2:14 pm ▼ 1.8 ft	8:28 pm ▲ 2.5 ft

Alligator Point, Ochlockonee Bay

Th	3:42 am ▲ 2.2 ft	10:12 am ▼ 0.1 ft	4:05 pm ▲ 2.3 ft	10:44 pm ▼ 0.0 ft
Fr	4:24 am ▲ 2.3 ft	10:31 am ▼ 0.3 ft	4:23 pm ▲ 2.3 ft	11:28 pm ▼ 0.0 ft
Sa	5:10 am ▲ 1.7 ft	10:49 am ▼ 0.6 ft	4:41 pm ▲ 2.2 ft	
Su	12:19 am ▼ 0.1 ft	6:08 am ▲ 1.4 ft	11:07 am ▼ 0.8 ft	5:00 pm ▲ 2.1 ft
Mo	1:27 am ▼ 0.2 ft	7:40 am ▲ 1.3 ft	11:26 am ▼ 1.0 ft	5:25 pm ▲ 2.0 ft
Tu	3:01 am ▼ 0.2 ft	6:06 pm ▲ 1.9 ft		
We	4:33 am ▼ 0.1 ft	8:14 pm ▲ 1.8 ft		

St. Teresa, Turkey Pt.

Th	4:03 am ▲ 2.2 ft	10:19 am ▼ -0.1 ft	4:25 pm ▲ 2.2 ft	10:47 pm ▼ 0.0 ft
Fr	4:54 am ▲ 1.9 ft	10:44 am ▼ 0.3 ft	4:48 pm ▲ 2.2 ft	11:33 pm ▼ -0.1 ft
Sa	5:48 am ▲ 1.7 ft	11:06 am ▼ 0.6 ft	5:13 pm ▲ 2.3 ft	
Su	12:24 am ▼ 0.2 ft	6:51 am ▲ 1.5 ft	11:24 am ▼ 0.9 ft	5:42 pm ▲ 2.2 ft
Mo	1:26 am ▼ -0.1 ft	8:19 am ▲ 1.3 ft	11:32 am ▼ 1.1 ft	6:18 pm ▲ 2.1 ft
Tu	2:45 am ▼ -0.1 ft	7:10 pm ▲ 2.0 ft		
We	4:12 am ▼ -0.2 ft	8:31 pm ▲ 2.0 ft		

Dog Island West End

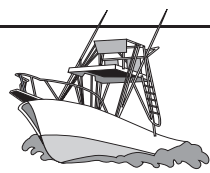
Th	4:11 am ▲ 1.8 ft	10:33 am ▼ 0.0 ft	4:44 pm ▲ 1.9 ft	11:09 pm ▼ 0.1 ft
Fr	4:59 am ▲ 1.6 ft	10:57 am ▼ 0.3 ft	5:03 pm ▲ 1.9 ft	11:51 pm ▼ 0.0 ft
Sa	5:46 am ▲ 1.4 ft	11:15 am ▼ 0.6 ft	5:24 pm ▲ 1.9 ft	
Su	12:35 am ▼ -0.1 ft	6:44 am ▲ 1.1 ft	11:25 am ▼ 0.8 ft	5:46 pm ▲ 1.9 ft
Mo	1:31 am ▼ -0.1 ft	6:13 pm ▲ 1.9 ft		
Tu	2:49 am ▼ -0.1 ft	6:51 pm ▲ 1.8 ft		
We	4:15 am ▼ -0.2 ft	8:19 pm ▲ 1.8 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 Emory Smith



The Rule of 3s & 7s

As we leave the holiday season behind us, we wish to use all the new gifts others have given to us. For some this could include kayaks, canoes, or other water related items. While water related activities evoke thoughts of excitement, adventure, and pure joy, these activities should also make us think of survival during emergencies. Survival is not just about equipment. It is about understanding our situation. When the situation around you is descending into chaos, there is a formula that could help save you from poor decision making. It is the Rule of 3s and 7s.

The military has the motto that you do as you are trained. They consider this muscle memory. In a true emergency, you will not suddenly become a survival guru. More than likely you will fall back to your training and the things you have practiced. This is where the Rule of 3s

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or (850) 284-1166

and 7s can provide a framework on how to prioritize steps and when to act on these steps.

The Rule of 3s can be considered a timeline for decision making in an emergency:

- 3 minutes without air,
- 3 hours without shelter in harsh conditions,
- 3 days without water,
- 3 weeks without food.

The Rule of 7s adds depth to decisions made by following the Rule of 3s:

- 7 seconds to make a decision,
- 7 minutes to secure safety,
- 7 hours to establish shelter,

7 days to build stability.

Use these rules to help stay calm and focused during an emergency. Use these rules to determine the type of survival gear you may need to bring on your next adventure. These rules matter because they are a framework of what the body needs to survive.

The essence of survival is staying calm, making decisions and responding to events as they arrive. There is military saying: you can survive a good decision, you may survive a bad decision, but indecision is a killer.

As Sherrie says "Safe Boating is no

accident."

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

Please contact us for more information about our safe boating classes or learning more about getting involved in the Auxiliary, check out our website at www.uscgaux.net follow us on FaceBook @ Apalachee Bay Flotilla 12 or contact our Flotilla Commander Norma Hill at njhill@ballstate.bsu.edu.

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.



Underwater Wakulla

By Gregg Stanton

A practical comparison.
April 26, 2012

Monday, Travis and I went for a typical dive. We drove 100 miles to Jackson County to their Meritt's Mill Pond, to a cave called Jackson Blue. There we paid for the privilege to dive their cave system, a dive to a depth of 95 feet and a penetration of 2,500 feet one-way, or 5,000 feet roundtrip taking us 141 minutes, including decompression.

I make these dives on the average of once a week, exercise for my good health and mental improvement, not unlike a brisk stroll in the park. I dive a Closed Circuit Rebreather (CCR), while Travis dives Open Circuit (OC).

Our very different configuration on today's dive is called mixed team diving and is common these days. The opposing philosophy believes both divers must dive exactly the same configuration, and preferably OC.

On our way home this evening we began to compare the challenges we each faced with our different technology and realized this would make a great topic for this column.

To safely complete this dive, Travis consumed 230 cubic feet of breathing gas over the 141 minutes. He breathed Nitrox 32 percent to minimize decompression stress and 100 percent oxygen above 20 feet to reduce decompression time.

For safety reasons he carried 80 cubic feet of gas as a bail-out option, should his primary gases fail, since he could not rely upon my rebreather as a reserve supply.

He also used two-thirds of his primary breathing gas keeping the rest, or 160 cubic feet, for emergencies. If you add this all up he carried 510 cubic feet of breathing gas to safely complete this dive. That volume of gas translated into seven diving cylinders. Had he consolidated his cylinders better, he might have been able to get the number down to six or even five cylinders, but not today. Each cylinder has a regulator and harness totaling \$4,000 for the lot. The gas cost \$65 but the gas used was about \$25 as there was ample reserve.

We both wore dry suits to keep warm in the 67-degree water, carried very bright lamps rendering the cave spectacularly beautiful, computers for safe decompression and reels to help map our exit and carried matching back up supplies each costing the same at about \$6,000.

I made this same trip breathing from a CCR, recirculating the gas, and adding consumed oxygen. I took two 20 cubic foot cylinders attached to my CCR, one with 100 percent oxygen and one with air (21 percent). I used one-third of the oxygen and 1/10th of the air during the 141 minute dive. I also carried one 80 cf cylinder of Nitrox 32 percent as bail-out and consumed about 10 percent as make-up gas.

I left a 30 cf cylinder of 100 percent oxygen at 20 feet as a precaution, which I did not use. My gas taken cost \$15. I also used one-fifth of my Carbon Dioxide filter (called the scrubber) at a cost of \$5, so round out my gasses taken at \$20 for the 141 minute dive. My rebreather cost \$8,000 to purchase, about twice that of Travis' OC rig. Both systems require about the same investment in yearly maintenance assuming Travis, as a reg tech, services his own equipment.

Assuming both rigs last as long, when will our investment equal each other? Call me at (850) 545-9198 if you can figure it out!

One thing we did agree upon after the dive: I was much more relaxed not hauling so many cylinders as Travis. My footprint (as they call it) weighed 100 pounds while his weighed 225 pounds.

Editor's Note: This is a repeat of a column from 2012.



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Did you make it to Quitter's Day?

By **SHERYL H. BOLDT**

Quitter's Day?

I can't afford another year of failed resolutions. Can you?

Each January, we list the habits we're determined to tackle because we genuinely want to become better people. But after failing to keep those resolutions year after year, we often enter another new year with fading hope. We wish real change was possible. We pray for a miracle that in the new year we'll have fewer reasons to hate ourselves because of the choices we made.

Our regrets may stem

from decisions we made decades ago – or perhaps only moments ago. Some of those choices quietly grew into bad or even sinful habits.

Yet here is the hope we often overlook: we don't have to keep making the same choices over and over again.

If yesterday was disappointing, today can be different. With God's help, we can overcome destructive and sinful patterns.

What if, instead of overwhelming ourselves with a long list of resolutions, we asked God, at the beginning of each

month, to show us one area of our lives that is displeasing to Him? Just one. Then let's spend the rest of that month doing whatever it takes (through prayer, Scripture meditation, accountability, etc.) to overcome that behavior. And repeat this process month after month throughout 2026.

To be clear, this isn't about willpower. It's about staying focused and trusting God – with expectation – to bring real change as we seek to become more like the Christ-follower we sincerely want to be.

Each time I yield to God's grace and choose obedience instead of defaulting to ingrained behavior, my confidence grows. I start to believe I can change.

As my hope increases, my anxiety decreases.

The first step is repentance – turning away from wrongful behavior and accepting God's mercy for our unwise and sinful yesterdays. Then we move forward, just as the apostle Paul described in Philippians 3:13 (ESV): "Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: for-

getting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead."

With God's help, let's commit, one month at a time, to one area of growth. Minute by minute, choice by choice, through the power of the Holy Spirit, let's reach toward what lies ahead: a different way of thinking – and a different way of living.

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

Button up your overcoat

By **CHERYL CRUCE**

a soft, furry collar. Inside, a fleece lining held back the chill. Large buttons marched down the front, each one different, as if chosen on purpose. The fabric itself was printed with images of multicolored buttons, and at the sides were extra-large pockets – big enough to carry all the things a child believes are important.

I can still see my mother fastening the buttons of my coat, one by one, making sure I was protected from the cold. I did not know then how much love was being sewn into that small, ordinary moment. With a kiss on the cheek and an "I love you," I was sent into the day, big pockets filled

with a few small necessities.

It was a child's simple overcoat, and yet today it is so much more. It is a reminder of the love that once shielded me, and an acknowledgment of the love that shields me still – not so much from the cold of the elements, but from the storms of the spirit.

Paul reminds us to clothe ourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience (Colossians 3:12-14). He also urges us to clothe ourselves in Christ, letting His character guide us rather than the impulses of the flesh (Romans 13:12-14). Like my coat many years ago, these virtues cover and protect us, preparing us

to step into the world – ready to give and receive love, ready to face the day, completely covered and buttoned in His love.

Did you know each button on our spiritual overcoat fastens us to Christ and reflects His image in us? Compassion buttons us to our neighbors, kindness, humility, and gentleness to those who struggle, while patience – a virtue we all need – is tucked in an extra-large pocket, ready for the days when the wind blows harder than we expect. When we fasten each button with the Word of God, we step into the world fully clothed, connected to others and reflecting Christ in all we do.

However, some days the buttons slip, the coat loosens, and the cold wind sneaks in. We become chilly and unprepared, but we are still clothed by mercy, by love, by the One who never lets go. It's OK to feel the chill, to stumble, or to lose a button or two. As long as we remember the way back and fasten a new button, each day becomes another chance to step bravely into the world, giving and receiving the blessings God has entrusted.

The coat, the buttons, the pockets – they are more than childhood memories. They are a picture of the care and provision that surrounds us every day, often unseen. What

buttons will you fasten today? Which virtues will you tuck into your pockets and carry with intention? As we step into the world, may we be clothed not only for protection, but for purpose – to walk in Christ's love, to receive His grace, and to offer it freely to all we meet. In this simple, spiritual attire, we find strength, warmth, and direction for the journey ahead.

Galatians 3:27 – "For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ."

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

OUT TO PASTOR

Punxsutawney Phil is no politician, or is he?

By **JAMES SNYDER**

I'm talking about. So, I just replied by saying, "I'm just saying what other people are saying. I don't have any clear proof."

I paused and said, "According to the statistics, Punxsutawney Phil has been right almost 60% of the time."

"Well," she replied firmly, "this Punxsutawney Phil you talk about has been right more times than you have. Is that really true?"

Someone once told me, "You can tell when a politician is lying by their lips moving." I'm not going to comment on that, but it might have some element of truth to it.

Thinking along these lines, I wondered how nice it would be if the politicians did what Punxsutawney Phil did.

They could make a declaration, and then go back into their hole. I'm not very political, but I just can't understand how politicians can do what they do. How can they say one thing one year and in two years say something exactly the opposite? But they never go into a hole.

When Punxsutawney Phil sees his shadow, he makes a prediction and goes back into his hole.

I should learn from that. Everything that Punxsutawney Phil says is based on a shadow. I think that's rather interesting. He sees a shadow and then makes a declaration. I'm not quite sure what his shadow has to do with predicting the future, but it's interesting.

After supper, my wife said, "Do you think Punxsutawney Phil will

see his shadow? How much are you willing to bet on it?"

There's no way that I'm going to bet against The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. Later, as I thought about it, it did seem like an interesting proposition. Because what if I win? That one win would last for the rest of my life. Imagine beating her on some bet.

Although it was tempting, I declined for several personal reasons.

While researching Punxsutawney Phil, I realized how much influence we give to animals and politicians, often trusting what they say without question.

In giving this some thought, I realized how vital honesty is. Without it, most people would have little to say, and that thought makes me value sincerity more. As a high school student, I put a lot of trust in him. I assumed that what they said about Punxsutawney Phil was absolutely correct. Why would people lie about something like this? I realized how import-

ant lying is for some people. If it weren't for lying, most people wouldn't have anything at all to say.

I know I have been caught up in some lies. Some of them are unintentional, but there's also a side of lying that helps you get out of trouble. At least I think it will.

I have tried Punxsutawney Phil's strategy on The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. Although he can get away with lying, I have yet to get away with lying. Lying to The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage opens the door for some unfortunate times. She does not like lying and usually does something to the person who is lying... Me.

I was reminded of what the Apostle Peter said along this line.

"For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it" (1 Peter 3:10-11).

As a Christian, I have a serious responsibility

to "refrain his tongue from evil." I am the only one who can control my tongue. If it's out of control, I will suffer tremendously, and I have only myself to blame.

Not only will my tongue create evil for me, but also those people around me. I must be aware of the damage I can do to family and friends.

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



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Obituaries

DEATH NOTICES

- **Fred Wilkerson Martin Jr.**, 76, of Crawfordville, died January 30, 2026.
- **Ronald Sinclair**, 87, of Crawfordville, died January 24, 2026.

Family Funeral Home at Harvey-Young Chapel, 850-926-5919, www.familyfhc.com.

4-H Clover Gala draws a big crowd



Attendees included County Commissioner Quincee Messersmith, Commissioner Josh Lawhon and wife Niki, and Sheriff Jared Miller at the Wakulla Springs Lodge.



Members of the Wakulla County Coalition for Youth were Organization of the Year for support of 4-H. Karen Zak, second from right, was volunteer of the year.

PHOTOS BY LYNDA KINSEY

Sheriff's Report

This report is for activity Jan. 23rd to 30th. There were 1,186 total calls for service during the week.

FRIDAY, JAN. 23

- Deputy Jeremiah Post responded to Walmart in reference to a delayed theft. Approximately \$755 worth of merchandise was stolen.

SATURDAY, JAN. 24

- A citizen reported a burglary of a mobile home. The home is vacant due to the owner passing away. The reporting party taking care of the home noticed items moved around. Several cigarette butts were discovered and turned in for evidence. Case forwarded to Criminal Investigations Division.

- A citizen reported his paycheck did not deposit into his account. He stated his check was deposited into an unknown bank account. He stated he needed a report written for refund purposes by his employer.

- An unknown subject passed all points of sale at Walmart without purchase. Taken was a comforter valued at approximately \$68. Case forwarded to CID.

SUNDAY, JAN. 25

- A citizen was clocked traveling 103 mph in a 55 mph zone. The subject was taken into custody and transported to the jail facility.

- Sgt. Heather Will conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle for no license plate displayed. The driver had an active warrant out of Leon County. The driver was placed under arrest and transported to the Wakulla County Jail. The vehicle was towed

from the scene by rotary wrecker.

MONDAY, JAN. 26

- A citizen reported getting harassing phone calls from an unknown female subject. She advised that she has no idea who the female could be and she just wanted this incident documented for information.

- Deputy Ashton Williams responded to Elie Carter Lane in reference to an animal incident. Contact was made with the reporting party who advised her dog was attacked by another dog during a walk in her neighborhood. As she attempted to separate the dogs, she was bitten on her hands by a gray pit bull. Animal Control responded and took custody of the pitbull. She advised she would have her injuries evaluated at the hospital.

TUESDAY, JAN. 27

- A citizen reported an unknown subject entering his property in a vehicle and spinning out causing ruts in his yard. He was able to provide video footage of the incident occurring; however, no information was able to be obtained from the video.

- Deputy Jonathan Kilbourn conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle due to excessive speed. The driver reportedly admitted knowing his license was not valid. During the investigation it was discovered that he had multiple suspensions dating back a few years. Due to these discoveries, he was placed under arrest for Driving While License Suspended or Revoked (DWLSR) with knowledge. He was then transported to the county jail without further incident.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 28

- Deputy Terry Marshall responded to the front lobby and took possession of a found cell phone. The phone was placed in evidence for safekeeping.

- Deputy Ian Kilbourn and Deputy Zachary Godwin responded to the storage buildings behind Myra Jeans due to several storage units being burglarized. Once on scene, seven units were discovered with forced entry. Case forwarded to CID.

- Deputy Joshua Parker responded to River Plantation Road in reference to a citizen stating money had been taken from her account without her permission. She stated a check she had not written had been signed and cashed. The value of the check was \$250.

THURSDAY, JAN. 29

- Deputy Jeremiah Post responded to the ACE Laundromat and made contact with a citizen who stated an unknown suspect forced entry inside the laundromat office and stole a large amount of U.S. currency. The suspect was identified. The investigation is ongoing with CID.

- Deputy Ian Kilbourn and Deputy Zachary Godwin were looking for a burglary suspect from a previous case (mentioned above), when the deputies observed a male matching the suspect description go behind a residence upon sight of their patrol vehicle. Deputies Godwin and

Kilbourn exited their vehicle to investigate and located the subject hiding behind a fence. While detaining him, he was asked if he had anything on his person, which he answered by stating he had "Ice." The Ice (2.2 grams) was tested and determined to be suspected methamphetamine. He was placed under arrest.

- A citizen reported her shed and home had been burglarized. The home in question is extremely old and had not been lived for years. She stated there was nothing taken and she did not wish to pursue charges.

- A citizen reported his vehicle had caught fire. It was unsure of how the fire started and there were no signs of foul play. The vehicle and all equipment were deemed a total loss of \$30,000.

FRIDAY, JAN. 30

- A citizen reported a known subject was stealing her work clothes. She advised the two were involved in an altercation earlier in the day which resulted the end of their relationship. She advised she also had to terminate his employment at Sonic due to his behavior. After leaving work, she headed home and discovered him driving away with her belongings. She stated the total amount lost was approximately \$1,313.69.

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

Man charged with animal cruelty

From the Sheriff's Office

Ellis Oaks Jr., 59, was arrested on Jan. 23 and charged with animal cruelty under Florida Statute § 828.12 in connection with the death of a dog named "Bear."

The investigation began on Jan. 15 when deputies with the Wakulla County Sheriff's Office and Wakulla Animal Services responded to a report of possible animal cruelty involving Bear, who was owned by Oaks, at a residence in Wakulla County.

Animal Control Officers had prior contact with Oaks on Jan. 9 following reports of dog fighting. Arrangements were later made for Bear to be transported for updated vaccinations.

However, when officers returned to retrieve the dog, they observed that Bear's condition had significantly worsened. The dog was suffering from multiple traumatic puncture wounds and lacerations to the head and legs, which were actively bleeding.

A witness reported that Oaks had been observed tying Bear to a pole and beating the dog prior to the worsening of the injuries. A veterinarian later determined Bear's injuries were consistent with blunt force trauma. On Jan. 14, Bear succumbed to his injuries.

Oaks was taken into custody on Jan. 23 and issued a \$10,000 bond



Ellis Oaks Jr.

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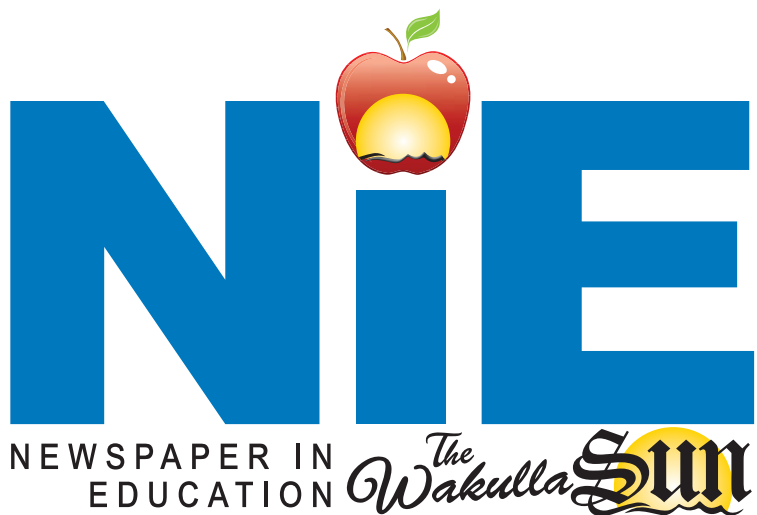
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USE THE NEWS

1. "MELANIA" DOCUMENTARY

A new documentary called "Melania," about First Lady Melania Trump, was released in theaters around the world and quickly earned about \$7 million in ticket sales during its first weekend. The movie follows about 20 days of her life leading up to President Donald Trump's second inauguration, and it was shown in 1,778 theaters. Even though some movie critics did not like the film, many of the people who bought tickets said they enjoyed it. A big premiere was held at the Kennedy Center, and many government leaders attended. The movie is also expected to be available to watch on Prime Video after it finishes its time in theaters. Imagine your school is making a short documentary about something important that happens in your community, like a big event, a problem that needs fixing, or a celebration. Choose one topic, and write a few sentences explaining what your documentary would show over a short time period, who would be interviewed, and what you would want viewers to understand by the end. Then write one more sentence describing what you would do if some people said they did not like your documentary, but other people said it helped them understand the topic better.

2. N.A.S.A. MOON SHOT

NASA started a practice countdown to get ready for a major moon mission with astronauts for the first time since 1972. The test is important because it helps NASA practice the steps needed to fuel the giant moon rocket and make sure it is ready for launch. Four astronauts will ride in the Orion capsule on top of the rocket, travel around the moon, and then come back to Earth without landing. The trip is expected to last almost 10 days and end with a splashdown in the Pacific Ocean. Cold weather delayed the schedule, so Feb. 8 is the earliest possible launch date if the fueling test goes well. Pretend you are part of the NASA team that has to practice before

a big launch. Write a short paragraph explaining why practicing is important for a mission like this, and include at least two specific things NASA is practicing or checking before the astronauts can fly.

3. KNITTING IN PROTEST

In Minnesota, a group of people who like knitting and crocheting began making red hats as a way to protest Immigration and Customs Enforcement, also called ICE. The hats are called "Melt the ICE" caps, and the pattern to make them has been ordered many thousands of times since mid-January. People wore the hats during a large march in Minneapolis, and some craft stores even ran

low on red yarn because so many people wanted to make them. The shop that created the pattern said it is giving the money it earns to groups that help immigrant communities. Some people argued that making hats is not enough to help, but others said the hats can keep people warm and help them feel supported. Think about a time when you wanted to help with a problem but you were not sure what you could do. Write a short paragraph describing one peaceful way kids can show they care about something, such as using art, writing, music, or a helpful school project. Then write a few sentences explaining how a handmade object, like a hat, a card, or a poster, could make someone

feel less alone during a hard time.

4. ICY IGUANAS

A powerful winter storm brought very cold temperatures and heavy snow across a large part of the United States, from the Gulf Coast to New England. In North Carolina, some places got more than a foot of snow, and there were many car crashes and flight cancellations, especially near Charlotte. In south Florida, it got so cold that iguanas were falling out of the trees! (This happens when they get so cold, they become temporarily paralyzed until their bodies warm back up.) In some states, many people were still without electricity from an earlier ice storm, and warming centers were opened to help families stay safe. Imagine you are

School distribution sponsored by



in charge of giving a short safety message to families before a big winter storm. Write a paragraph explaining three ways people can prepare for dangerous cold, snow, or power outages, and make sure you explain why each step helps. Include a detail from the story that teaches you about how weather can affect humans, animals, and/or plants.

5. OFF-COURSE ALBATROSS

Scientists on a research ship off the coast of central California saw a waved albatross, a rare bird that usually lives near the Galápagos Islands, about 3,000 miles away. This was only the second recorded time the bird has been seen north of Central America. The albatross has a yellow bill, dark eyes, and a huge

wingspan, and it can spend a lot of its life flying over the ocean. Scientists are not sure why it traveled so far, but they think it could have been pushed by storms or wandered while searching for food. The bird is considered critically endangered, which makes the sighting even more unusual and important. Pretend you are a scientist who is trying to solve the mystery of why this bird flew so far from home. Write a short paragraph naming two or three possible reasons the albatross might have traveled north, and explain how each reason could make sense. Then write two sentences describing one question you would want to investigate next, and explain what kind of clue or information could help you answer it.



Holiday FACT:

This holiday occurs each winter and is widely celebrated among Asian communities.

Answer: Chinese/Lunar New Year



- English:** Dragon
- Spanish:** Dragón
- Italian:** Drago
- French:** Dragon
- German:** Drache

Math Blocks

Fill in the missing blocks with numbers between 0-20. The numbers in each row add up to the totals on the right. The numbers in each column add up to the totals on the bottom.

6		19	27
	8	11	22
15	1		16
24	11	30	

0	1	51
11	8	3
61	2	9

Solution

Get Scrambled

Unscramble the words to determine the phrase.

R F E I H S E R O

Answer: Fire Horse

THIS DAY IN HISTORY



1778: New York becomes the third state to ratify the Articles of Confederation.

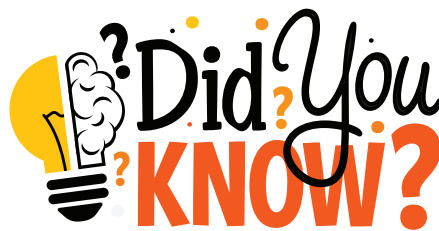
1840: The signing of the Treaty of Waitangi establishes New Zealand as a British colony.

1951: The Canadian Army enters combat in the Korean War.

NEW WORD

LANTERN

a lamp with a transparent case



The Chinese New Year is a 15-day festival that is very important for bringing families together in celebration and to foster good luck.



Get the PICTURE?



Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

Answer: Chinese lanterns

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FICTITIOUS NAME
Notice under Fictitious Name Law, pursuant to Section 856.09, Florida Statutes. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the undersigned, Oak and Pine Ventures, desiring to engage in business under the fictitious name of **OAK & PINE KITCHEN**
Located at 434 Parkside Circle, Crawfordville, FL 32327
In the County of Wakulla
Intends to register the said name with the Division of Corporation of the Department of State, Tallahassee, Florida.

Published on February 5, 2026

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR WAKULLA COUNTY, FLORIDA
PROBATE DIVISION

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF
KATHRYN L. GOODFELLOW,
DECEASED

File No. 2025 CP 171

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

The administration of the estate of Kathryn L. Goodfellow, deceased, whose date of death was August 3, 2025, is pending in the Circuit Court for Wakulla County, Florida, Probate Division, the address of which is 301 S. Monroe St., Tallahassee, FL 32301. The names and addresses of the personal representative and the personal representative's attorney are set forth below.

All creditors of the decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate on whom a copy of this notice is required to be served must file their claims with this court ON OR BEFORE THE LATER OF 3 MONTHS AFTER THE TIME OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE OR 30 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF SERVICE OF A COPY OF THIS NOTICE ON THEM.

All other creditors of the decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate must file their claims with this court WITHIN 3 MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE.

The personal representative has no duty to discover whether any property held at the time of the decedent's death by the decedent or the decedent's surviving spouse is property to which the Florida Uniform Disposition of Community Property Rights at Death Act as described in ss. 732.216-732.228, Florida Statutes, applies, or may apply, unless a written demand is made by a creditor as specified under s. 732.2211, Florida Statutes. The written demand must be filed with the clerk.

ALL CLAIMS NOT FILED WITHIN THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH IN FLORIDA STATUTES SECTION 733.702 WILL BE FOREVER BARRED.

NOTWITHSTANDING THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH ABOVE, ANY CLAIM FILED TWO (2) YEARS OR MORE AFTER THE DECEDENT'S DATE OF DEATH IS BARRED.

The date of the first publication of this Notice is January 29, 2026.

Attorney for Personal Representative: /s/ John A. Grant Attorney Florida Bar Number: 0946532 2121-C Killamey Way Tallahassee, FL 32309 Telephone: (850) 702-9400 Fax: (850) 702-9410 E-Mail: john@johngrantlaw.com	Personal Representative: /s/ Kristine M. Carroll 130 Dreamwood Stables Rd. Crawfordville, Florida 32327
---	--

January 29, February 5, 2026

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF WAKULLA COUNTY, FLORIDA
PROBATE DIVISION

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF
JAMES MONROE HIGH, SR.,
DECEASED
DIVISION: PROBATE

CASE NO: 2026-CP-11

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

The administration of the Estate of James Monroe High, Sr., deceased, File 2026-CP-11 is pending in the Circuit Court for Wakulla County, Florida, Probate Division, the address of which is 3056 Crawfordville Hwy., Crawfordville, FL 32327. The name and address of the personal representative and the personal representative's attorney is set forth below.

All creditors of the Decedent and other persons having claims or demands against Decedent's Estate including unmatured, contingent or unliquidated claims, on whom a copy of this notice is required to be served must file their claims with this Court WITHIN THE LATER OF 3 MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE OR 30 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF SERVICE OF A COPY OF THIS NOTICE ON THEM.


All other creditors of the Decedent and persons having claims or demands against Decedent's Estate, including unmatured, contingent or unliquidated claims must file their claims with this Court WITHIN 3 MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE.

ALL CLAIMS NOT SO FILED WITHIN THE PERIODS SET FORTH IN SECTION 733.702 FLORIDA STATUTES, WILL BE FOREVER BARRED.


The date of the first publication of this Notice is February 5, 2026.

Attorney for Personal Representative: Frances Casey Lowe, Esq. Florida Bar No. 521450 Frances Casey Lowe, P.A. 68-A Feli Way Crawfordville, Florida 32327 (850) 926-8245	Co-Personal Representatives: Patricia H. Langford 185 Fulton Harvey Rd. Crawfordville, FL 32327 James M. High, Jr. 197 High Dr. Crawfordville, FL 32327
--	---



February 5, 12, 2026



Susan Schatzman
Broker Associate



Mobile: 850-519-2292
SchatzmanSusan@gmail.com


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Agency
Manager



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NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE

0129-0205 TWS NOFS
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR WAKULLA COUNTY, FLORIDA
GENERAL JURISDICTION DIVISION

WILMINGTON SAVINGS FUND SOCIETY, CASE NO. 25000096CAAXMX
FSB, NOT IN ITS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY
BUT SOLELY AS TRUSTEE OF LODO TRUST I,
Plaintiff,
vs.
CERISSA F FONDO A/K/A CERISSA FRANCINE FONDO, et al.
Defendant(s)

NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to a Final Judgment of Foreclosure dated December 09, 2025, and entered in 25000096CAAXMX of the Circuit Court of the SECOND Judicial Circuit in and for Wakulla County, Florida, wherein WILMINGTON SAVINGS FUND SOCIETY, FSB, NOT IN ITS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY BUT SOLELY AS TRUSTEE OF LODO TRUST I is the Plaintiff and CERISSA F. FONDO A/K/A CERISSA FRANCINE FONDO ; UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, ACTING ON BEHALF OF THE RURAL HOUSING SERVICE; RONALD S. FONDO; ANNA G. FONDO are the Defendant(s). Greg James as the Clerk of the Circuit Court will sell to the highest and best bidder for cash at 3056 Crawfordville Hwy., the Front Lobby, Wakulla County Courthouse, Crawfordville, FL 32327, at 11:00 AM, on February 12, 2026, the following described property as set forth in said Final Judgment, to wit:

LOT 18, BLOCK "E" OF SONGBIRD SUBDIVISION PHASE I, A SUBDIVISION AS PER MAP OR PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 3, PAGES 88-92 OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS OF WAKULLA COUNTY, FLORIDA.

Property Address: 10 CARDINAL CT, CRAWFORDVILLE, FL 32327
Any person claiming an interest in the surplus from the sale, if any, other than the property owner as of the date of the lis pendens must file a claim in accordance with Florida Statutes, Section 45.031.

Dated this 20th day of January, 2026.

{{County Court Seal}}


Greg James
As Clerk of the Court
By: /s/ Rachel Howard
As Deputy Clerk



IMPORTANT

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT: If you are a person with a disability who needs any accommodation in order to participate in this proceeding, you are entitled, at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. Please contact: ADA Coordinator; 301 South Monroe Street; Tallahassee, FL 32301; 850.606.4400; at least 7 days before your scheduled court appearance, or immediately upon receiving this notification if the time before the scheduled appearance is less than 7 days; if you are hearing or voice impaired, call 711.

January 29, February 5, 2026

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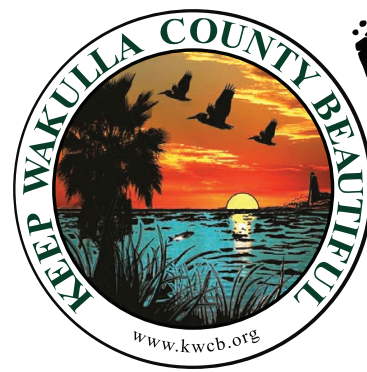


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NOTICE OF ACTION

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR WAKULLA COUNTY, FLORIDA

PAFFORD PROPERTIES & CONSTRUCTION, LLC, A FLORIDA LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY, PLAINTIFF, CASE NO. 2025-CA-000137 V.

DARRYL MOORE, SHELDON M. STONE AND TED EDWARDS, IF ALIVE, AND IF DECEASED, UNKNOWN SPOUSES, HEIRS, DEVISEES, GRANTEEES, CREDITORS, ASSIGNS, AND ALL OTHER PARTIES CLAIMING BY THROUGH, UNDER OR AGAINST THEM, DEFENDANTS.

NOTICE OF ACTION

To: **TED EDWARDS; if alive, and if deceased, unknown spouses, heirs, devisees, grantees, creditors, assigns, and all other parties claiming by through, under or against him**

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that a Complaint for Quiet Title on the following property in Wakulla County, Florida:

LOT 4, BLOCK 4 OF WAKULLA GARDENS UNIT 2, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF AS RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 1, PAGE(S) 42, OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS OF WAKULLA COUNTY, FLORIDA.

Wakulla County Parcel ID No. 00-00-034-009-08216-000

Address: Spokane Trail, Crawfordville, FL

has been filed against you and others, and you are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, to it on **ANDREW J. POWER, ESQUIRE, SMITH, THOMPSON, SHAW, COLÓN & POWER, P.A.**, Plaintiff's attorneys, 3520 Thomasville Road, Fourth Floor, Tallahassee, Florida 32309-3469, no more than thirty (30) days from the first publication date of this Notice of Action, and file the original with the Clerk of this Court either before service on Plaintiff's attorneys or immediately thereafter; otherwise, a default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint or petition.

DATED this 29th day of January, 2026.

{{County Court Seal}}

Greg James
As Clerk of the Court
Wakulla County, Florida
By: /s/ **Rachel Howard**
As Deputy Clerk



February 5, 12, 19, 26, 2026

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR WAKULLA COUNTY, FLORIDA

PAFFORD PROPERTIES & CONSTRUCTION, LLC, A FLORIDA LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY, PLAINTIFF, Case No.: 2025-CA-000169 V.

ROBERT D. WILLIX, JR., IF ALIVE, AND IF DECEASED, UNKNOWN SPOUSES, HEIRS, DEVISEES, GRANTEEES, CREDITORS, ASSIGNS, AND ALL OTHER PARTIES CLAIMING BY THROUGH, UNDER OR AGAINST HIM, AND REGIONS BANK D/B/A REGIONS MORTGAGE, DEFENDANTS.

NOTICE OF ACTION

To: **ROBERT D WILLIX, JR.; if alive, and if deceased, unknown spouses, heirs, devisees, grantees, creditors, assigns, and all other parties claiming by through, under or against him**

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that a Complaint for Quiet Title on the following property in Wakulla County, Florida:

LOT 4, BLOCK P OF SURF, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF AS RECORDED IN DEED BOOK 17, PAGE 222, OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS OF WAKULLA COUNTY, FLORIDA.

Wakulla County Parcel ID No. 03-6S-02W-035-03792-004

Address: Surf Road, Panama, FL

has been filed against you and others, and you are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, to it on **ANDREW J. POWER, ESQUIRE, SMITH, THOMPSON, SHAW, COLÓN & POWER, P.A.**, Plaintiff's attorneys, 3520 Thomasville Road, Fourth Floor, Tallahassee, Florida 32309-3469, no more than thirty (30) days from the first publication date of this Notice of Action, and file the original with the Clerk of this Court either before service on Plaintiff's attorneys or immediately thereafter; otherwise, a default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint or petition.

DATED this 21st day of January, 2026.

{{County Court Seal}}

Greg James
As Clerk of the Court
Wakulla County, Florida
By: /s/ **Rachel Howard**
As Deputy Clerk



January 29, February 5, 12, 19, 2026

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR WAKULLA COUNTY, FLORIDA

PAFFORD PROPERTIES & CONSTRUCTION, LLC, A FLORIDA LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY, PLAINTIFF, Case No.: 2025-CA-000170 V.

ROBERT D. WILLIX, JR., IF ALIVE, AND IF DECEASED, UNKNOWN SPOUSES, HEIRS, DEVISEES, GRANTEEES, CREDITORS, ASSIGNS, AND ALL OTHER PARTIES CLAIMING BY THROUGH, UNDER OR AGAINST HIM, DEFENDANTS.

NOTICE OF ACTION

To: **ROBERT D WILLIX, JR.; if alive, and if deceased, unknown spouses, heirs, devisees, grantees, creditors, assigns, and all other parties claiming by through, under or against him**

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that a Complaint for Quiet Title on the following property in Wakulla County, Florida:

LOT 5, BLOCK "P", SURF, FLORIDA, A SUBDIVISION AS PER MAP OR PLAT THEREOF AS RECORDED IN DEED BOOK 17, PAGE 222, OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS OF WAKULLA COUNTY, FLORIDA.

Wakulla County Parcel ID No. 03-6S-02W-035-03792-005

Address: Surf Road, Panama, FL

has been filed against you and others, and you are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, to it on **ANDREW J. POWER, ESQUIRE, SMITH, THOMPSON, SHAW, COLÓN & POWER, P.A.**, Plaintiff's attorneys, 3520 Thomasville Road, Fourth Floor, Tallahassee, Florida 32309-3469, no more than thirty (30) days from the first publication date of this Notice of Action, and file the original with the Clerk of this Court either before service on Plaintiff's attorneys or immediately thereafter; otherwise, a default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint or petition.

DATED this 21st day of January, 2026.

{{County Court Seal}}

Greg James
As Clerk of the Court
Wakulla County, Florida
By: /s/ **Rachel Howard**
As Deputy Clerk



January 29, February 5, 12, 19, 2026

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VALENTINE'S WORD SEARCH

C H E R I S H U R Q A D O R A T I O N C
Q L C P O N R E P W Q P E U K U H D Q D T L
A W W H F T C L R M T E U Q U O B A H T G
D R A C W A H S O F V E L V E T P S G V
W B U G R R O O P H I F D I P U C E I V
N T M B O L C F O Q N L N W A M V K L T
P G M S K H O A S A F F E C T I O N E G
P E E E L B L O A L M D G V L M Q G L N
A S I H E L M A L L T T I L V F L V B D T
S T R A E H T E E W S R P N W O R U N E
K E O P M T E T N E M I T N E S C S A A
M A K R A W M C M T A U F N M K H O C R
S S F A V S B Q U M N O I T O V E D T O
C O K L S H S G F T R I L F O A V U P M
E A U O H T P W I L S T R A E H V L P V A
G O E L H T E F I O B M H A D M I R E R N
O H P U M I D E M N W F A H G E V O L C
G E N R T A C V K I B N G W B G N W P E
N O E M H G T I M Q T N D H C E G T O K
L E T T E R S E I G H U W W I T W W V W

WORDS

- ADMIRER
- ADORATION
- AFFECTION
- BOUQUET
- CANDLELIGHT
- CARD
- CHERISH
- CHOCOLATE
- CUPID
- DEVOTION
- EMBRACE
- FLIRT
- HEART
- KEEPSAKE
- LETTERS
- LOVE
- PASSION
- PROPOSAL
- ROMANCE
- ROSES
- SENTIMENT
- SOULMATE
- SWEETHEART
- VELVET

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

CROSSWORD

CLUES ACROSS

1. Native American group of N. California
5. Geological times (Brit. sp.)
10. Tool to remove
12. Rods
14. One who renews
16. They precede C
18. Chatter incessantly
19. __ King Cole, musician
20. Insect parts
22. One from Utah
23. The world of the dead
25. Singer Redding
26. NBA legend Nelson
27. Indicates wrongly
28. Unhappy
30. Anger
31. Dark brown
33. Some are in kitchens
35. Made a mistake
37. Damp
38. Type of fuel
40. Actor Damon
41. What thespians do
42. One's mother
44. Disallow
45. Swiss river
48. A banana has one
50. Philippines lake and volcano are two
52. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
53. Agave
55. Journalist Tarbell
56. One-time tech giant

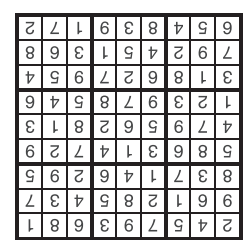
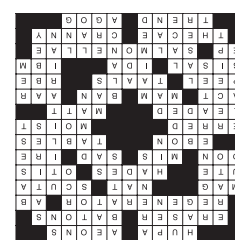
57. Indicates upon
58. Intestinal bacteria
63. Loose sheaths around the spinal cord
65. It goes with nook
66. A fashion
67. Very eager to hear or see

CLUES DOWN

1. Witch
2. Utilize
3. Writing utensil
4. Where rockers go to work
5. Subsides
6. Consume
7. Greek mythological figures
8. California mountain town
9. Tin
10. Muse of lyric and love poetry
11. Animates anew
13. Humorous criticisms
15. Cool!
17. Worst
18. Wet dirt
21. Designed to be useful
23. Hebrew unit of liquid capacity
24. High schoolers' test
27. Computer device
29. Indian territory __ and Diu
32. A place to sleep
34. AI tool
35. Pass or go by

	4			9			8	1	
			1	2	8		4	3	7
8	3			1	4				5
			6						9
		7			5	6	2	8	1
1	2							5	
			8			7	9	5	
				4			3		
6	5			8	3				

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36. Indicates a purchase
39. A digital tape recording of sound
40. More (Spanish)
43. Disfigured
44. White (Spanish)
46. Church building
47. Georgia rockers
49. Type of surgery
51. Much __ about nothing
54. Make by braiding
59. Local area network



60. Unit of work or energy
61. Member of indigenous people of Thailand
62. Liquefied natural gas

			1	2	3	4			5	6	7	8	9			
		10	11							12					13	
			14						15						16	17
18								19				20		21		
22						23					24		25			
26					27					28		29		30		
			31	32							33		34			
35	36											37				
38						39					40					
41					42		43			44				45	46	47
48			49			50		51							52	
53					54		55								56	
57				58		59					60	61	62			
	63	64								65						
										67						

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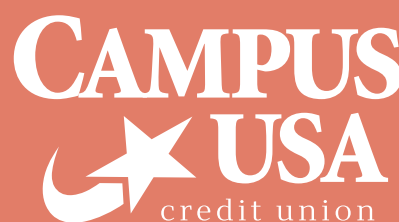
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WRESTLING

Lady War Eagles compete at Lady Trojan Invitational

By **WALT JACOBS**
Correspondent

On January 31st, the Lady War Eagle wrestlers competed in the Lady Trojan Invitational at Lincoln High School. The tournament served as a preview of the upcoming FHSAA District 1 Championship which will be held on February 14th in Niceville. Of the 25 teams in the district, 14 were represented on Saturday in Tallahassee.

Coach Jon Sanchez commented that freshman Rose Cooper “showed a lot of heart throughout the tournament.” Sanchez said, “She lost a close match to Natalie Durance from Lincoln to go to the placement round.” Cooper went 2-3 on the day, earning her a 12th place finish.

Kameron Easter went 3-2 en route to a 9th place finish. Sanchez commented, “It was really nice to see Kameron start becoming more relaxed in her matches. When she’s able to do that, she can really pour it on whoever she’s facing.” He added, “I’m really hoping that she can continue to do that in the postseason. I really think she could pull off some upsets.”

Julia Baggett placed third in the 125 pound weight class. Sanchez said, “Julia wrestled tough the whole tournament going 4-1.” Sanchez continued, “Her only loss came to Amelia McKnight, who is currently ranked 7th in the state.”

Sanchez was also pleased with the performance of freshman Sophia Barron. Sanchez said, “Sophia didn’t have the showing she would have liked, but

PHOTO OF THE WEEK
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The Lady War Eagles wrestlers at the Lady Trojan Invitational.

she faced every opponent with her best effort.” Sanchez elaborated, “Her first two rounds were against tough wrestlers.” He continued, “It’s hard to mentally stay in it after going 0-2 and finding a way to keep pushing forward, but that’s exactly what she did.” Sanchez raved, “Her best match was against Emily Smith from Columbia. She was putting together the different pieces that she has learned, and just let it fly.” Sanchez explained, “She was winning 10-5 and even had her opponent nearly pinned, but somehow Smith was able to fight out of it and reversed Sophia to get the fall.” Sanchez went on, “Sophia didn’t care about the loss, but was so pumped about how well she did. That’s the kind of thing that makes it a win for a coach.”



Sophia Barron vs. Emma Torres of Choctaw.

Eagles will travel to Niceville to compete in the FHSAA District 1 championship on February 14th.

Next, the Lady War

WRESTLERS of the WEEK

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– Coach Jon Sanchez



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Florida Wild Mammal Association

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