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VOLUME XXI ISSUE 8

HOMETOWN PEOPLE...HOMETOWN NEWS

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2024

“THE LORD BLESS YOU AND KEEP YOU; THE LORD MAKE HIS FACE SHINE ON YOU AND BE GRACIOUS TO YOU; THE LORD TURN HIS FACE TOWARD YOU AND GIVE YOU PEACE.” - NUMBERS 6: 24-26

Cockerham Retires from Town of Hilliard



Dawn S. West

Last Thursday at Town Hall, a reception was held to celebrate Myra Cockerham's retirement and honor her for the 30 years she dedicated to the town of Hilliard. Myra was joined by her husband, Jerry, as well as their children and grandchildren. The Hilliard council, staff, employees and lots of friends joined in the celebration. Myra also celebrated working 30 years at Hilliard Town Hall. During her time with the town, she also was an active member of the Hilliard Volunteer Fire Department for four years. Myra became well known as the Hilliard historian for those that stopped by the office with questions about the town. "Myra agreed to continue to be our town historian when we need her," said Town Clerk Lisa Purvis.

Myra began her career in Hilliard when the mayor was Ray Mager. She next served under mayors David Buchanan, Cris McConnell, Floyd VanZant and the current Mayor John Beasley. "There was a lot of blood, sweat and tears throughout my career. I've met a lot of people and made many

friends," said Myra. "As with any job, there have been challenges, but we all worked through them. I've done the best job I could do during my time and I'm proud that I've made it 30 years."

Prior to the meeting, Mayor John Beasley advised the audience that the town wished to honor Myra Cockerham and her service to the town. "This is bittersweet, as it is bitter for the town as we will miss Myra however, awesome for her to enjoy her retirement," said Beasley.

He first presented Myra with a plaque congratulating her on her 30 years of service; then presented her with a plaque signifying her retirement. The retirement plaque included: Enjoy your well-deserved retirement. The high road to service is traveled with integrity, compassion and understanding.

Following, Purvis presented Myra with 30 white roses, representing her years with the town. "Congratulations Myra! I'm going to miss you so much but am so happy for you. Thank you for all your help through the years," said Purvis.



"Tonight was bittersweet, leaving a position after 30 years. Thank you everyone at Town Hall and everyone that has reached out with sweet words, support, calls and the love you expressed. I look forward to the future and I'm grateful to our
See 'Cockerham Retires' on page 3

Congratulations Floyd Vanzant 2024 Jon Gould Florida Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year

Ginger Feagle, Vice President, Florida Tree Farm Program
James Tootle, Nassau County Forester, Florida Forest Service

The Florida Tree Farm Program is proud to recognize Mr. Floyd Vanzant as the 2024 Jon Gould Florida Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year. Each year, one Certified Tree Farm out of the 1,300 tree farms in Florida, is selected for demonstrating exceptional forest stewardship to protect and improve our forest resources and promoting forest stewardship within their community.

The Vanzant property has been in the family since the early 1800's and has historically been used for timber and livestock production. The 400-acre property is owned by Mr. Vanzant and his wife, Mary, who now reside on the property that he once grew up on. Family members pictured left to right below are: Brenton Franklin (grandson), Clay Vanzant (son), Vickie Vanzant Franklin (daughter), Michael Franklin (son-in-law), Floyd Vanzant, Mary Vanzant (wife), and Micah Vanzant (son).



to efficiently graze his cattle while providing timber, shade and forage. Along with the areas he has designated for silvopasture, he thoughtfully considers soil and location to identify areas that he can dedicate to pasture or timber. Because Mr. Vanzant is willing to share his experience, in October 2023, he partnered with the Florida Forest Service and the Florida Tree Farm Program to host fellow landowners on a tour so they could see first-hand the success of his silviculture practices.

Recently, his son-in-law, Michael

Franklin, has assisted Mr. Vanzant by taking an active role with the land management. Along with daily responsibilities of caring for the cattle and conducting tractor work, Michael encouraged Mr. Vanzant to connect with the Florida Forest Service County

Forester so he could develop a written Forest Stewardship Plan to carry Mr. Vanzant's vision forward. Michael's assistance on the land is appreciated by the family.

Active management of the property

See 'Vanzant' on page 3



Mr. Vanzant has increasingly become more involved and interested in the timber aspect of the management of his property, especially in the concept of "silvopasture." Mr. Vanzant has experimented with different configurations of pasture and timber

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A Word From the Publisher

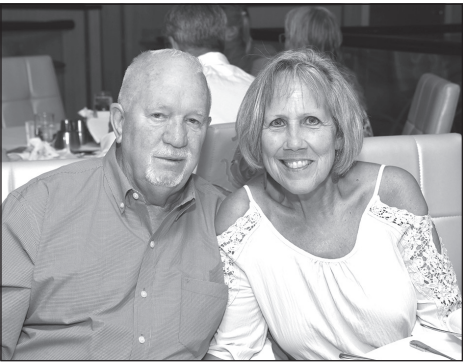
I'm very excited that it is officially Fall, which is by far one of my favorite times of the year! I just purchased my first two pumpkins of the season, as I love to place them all around our yard. We don't carve them, but sometimes the squirrels like to play with them. I've done this for years, however about two years ago my squirrels were obsessed with them. They continued to dig and scratch on them until they made a hole big enough to fit in. Then they began to climb inside and eat the pumpkin! Beats me! Maybe last year's pumpkins weren't as enticing!

Sunday was also my wonderful sister, Marci's, 70th birthday! Happy Birthday, Marci! How thankful I am to have my sister close around. We talk each week and try our best to see each other as much as possible. She is such a treasure and is always there to lean on and vent too. It's so hard to believe that Roger and I celebrated her 50th birthday (that's been 20 years ago...geez) with a cruise with her and David. We had the best time. We traveled to Ft. Lauderdale that year and left from there. I remember the night before we boarded the ship, there was a hurricane around the area we were headed to. David searched his laptop to see where our ports may have changed to, as the cruise was not

canceled. We talked to our parents on the phone and told them we were going to Haiti. Our mom panicked about us going there. When we got to the island it was beautiful and calm. Even my children called and said that they had seen that Haiti had mudslides and massive rain. I calmly told them we had no rain and that it must have been on the other side of the mountains! We didn't realize we had our entire family upset but we had a great time! Sweet memories!

Monday was also a super special day as it was Roger's birthday! I'm so thankful for him and the life we have built. There is nothing more calming than to come home to our house. Somehow the sense of home is so refreshing. Roger has been so good about fulfilling many of my wishes at our home. A few years back, while sitting on the porch, I said, "Don't you think a swing would be nice out here to sit and look at the pond?"

He replied, "Sure!" I thought we'd buy one, but little did I know, he would build a swing! Shortly after that, I had



a beautiful swing in our yard. "What do you think about a firepit?" Yep, the next weekend we were constructing a firepit. "Can we maybe get or build some benches around it?" Yep, and the construction began.

He's quite the trooper but has told me, "I'm pretty sure we're built out unless we buy more land!" I'm thankful for my husband and wish him the best of birthdays!

As October nears, I really want people to understand how serious this general election is. Our country is at stake. We, as Christians, have been taught to follow Christ's example of love and compassion for others. We

also know that God continues to be in control however, we have to do our part. We must express the importance of voting, especially now. Be informed. We, the American people are not stupid, like the media says we are. If you can't see that for more than seven years, Donald Trump has been attacked constantly. He has been accused of numerous crimes, and now has had two assassination attempts on his life. That, for one, is crazy. America hasn't had an assassination in 60 years, now we've had two attempts on the same person in less than 65 days, yet we don't hear anything about it. Why would he continue this fight? Only one reason, because he loves America! Please think and vote!

Have a blessed week!

Dawn S. West

Letters to the Editor



Letters to the Editor may be emailed to news@westsidejournal.net but must include a complete name. Letters should be no longer than 300 words.

NC School Board

Dear Editor,

I don't know who the legal counsel for the Nassau County School District is, but we need better. There are several public interest law firms that will give advice on, or litigate, free of charge, cases where individuals or entities, such as NCSO, are being unfairly pressed to do things that violate their sincerely held religious beliefs or the physical or mental health of our children. Here are five that I know of: Alliance Defending Freedom; First Liberty Institute; Liberty Counsel; Thomas More Society; and American Center for Law and Justice.

Obscene or pornographic books or materials have no place in our public schools. They are a distraction from the purposes of our educational system and an infringement on parental rights and responsibilities. The exclusion of them is not censorship, but common sense.

Melba Harris

In the Kitchen...

2 (8 oz.) packages cream cheese, softened
3/4 cup hot pepper sauce
2 cups diced cooked chicken

Preheat the oven to 350°. Mix cream cheese and hot pepper sauce together in a medium bowl until well blended; stir in chicken, dressing, and Cheddar cheese. Spread into a 9x13-inch baking dish. Bake in the preheated oven until bubbly, about 30 minutes. If oil collects on the top, dab it off using a paper towel. Serve and enjoy!

Chicken Wing Dip

1 cup ranch-style salad dressing
1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese

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Cockerham Retires

Continued from page 1

community,” said Myra. “I hope that I have been able to help in some way. I love this town and those within it. I love my family and cherish their unending love and support. Once again thank you all!”

This was the second meeting of Hilliard Town Council for the month of September. The council will have a special meeting Friday, September 27 for final reading on the 2024-2025 Budget and Millage.

The first order of business was the approval for Fred Fox Enterprises, Inc. to be the Grant Administration Services contract for the FDEM Hurricane/Community Shelter Grant Project in the amount of \$189,900.00.

The next agenda item concerned Resolution 2024-15 authorizing the submission of an application for the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP) to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for State of Florida Fiscal Year 2025-2026 for the Oxford Street

Park Phase V. The council approved the resolution.

The following item concerned the adoption of Resolution 2024-16, authorizing the submission of an application for the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP) to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for State of Florida Fiscal Year 2025-2026 for Town Hall Park Phase II.

The next agenda item included the approval of the council for a Capital Expenditure for the old Town Hall & Volunteer Fire Department Generator Project from Miller Electric Company in the amount of \$35,694.03.

The final item concerned the approval of AECOM Technical Services, Inc. payable of \$8,250 for project Environmental Assessment. This project is at the Hilliard Airpark and is fully funded.

The next regular meeting of the council will be held Thursday, October 3 at 7 p.m.

Vanzant

Continued from page 1

and his understanding of forestry practices has led Mr. Vanzant to take advantage of various cost-share programs offered through the Florida Forest Service. These programs provide for healthy forests and carbon sequestration by assisting with thinning, reforestation harvested areas, and afforesting previously unplanted acres on his property.

Mr. Vanzant is a valued contributor to his community and has served as a Nassau County Commissioner (8 years), Hilliard Town Council member (2 years), and the Mayor of Hilliard (4 years). Notably, he is the Vice President of the Nassau County Farm Bureau of which he has been a board member since

1997, including previous participation with its Forestry Committee.

Mr. Vanzant takes his role as a good steward of his property very seriously and believes that multiple use land management enhances sustainability of timber, livestock, water quality, wildlife, and recreation. Across the U.S., family forest owners like the Vanzants care for the largest portion, more than one-third, of America’s forests. Their efforts are crucial to the sustainability of our country’s natural resources, such as clean water, wildlife habitat, carbon storage and a wood supply for the products Americans use every day.

JUST MY OPINION

Roger R. West

Are we really paying attention? Do we understand the negative consequences to our daily lives and to our flailing country? Maybe this will open some eyes: Minneapolis is Somalia, Ohio is Haiti, Colorado is Venezuela and Dearborn is Syria. We are allowing third world illegal aliens to become the majority in several cities in America. An analogy: when a good girl marries a bad boy and says “I will make him a better person,” 99% of the time it works out just the opposite. These illegal aliens are not going to make America great again. They are actually dragging our country down to their lowness.

Speaking of Venezuela, here is a time line of their demise. In 1992, it became the 3rd richest country in the Hemisphere, 1997 it was the 2nd largest purchaser of Ford F-150s. In 2001 the people voted for a Socialist president on the premise of “income equality.” Three years later in 2004 private healthcare was completely socialized; 2007 all higher education was provided free of charge. In 2009, the Socialists banned private ownership of guns. In 2012, Bernie Sanders praised their “American Dream.” Then in 2014, opposition leaders were imprisoned. In 2016, food and healthcare shortages became rampant countrywide. In 2017, their Constitution and elections were suspended. Which brought them to the 2019, unarmed citizens being massacred by their own government. It took just one generation of Socialist/Progressive leadership to plunge them

into a civil war. America is following their footsteps at a rapid pace. Wake up, Wake Up!

If Kamala Harris and Tim Walz win this election in November, we will become just as Venezuela is today. Socialism has never worked anywhere in the world and it’s not going to work here. How dangerous is Kamala? Well, “Kamala Harris is the first candidate that was created entirely by the media! No accomplishments. No votes in a presidential primary. No policies. No ideas. She was never popular, she never polled well. She was the reason Biden refused to step down earlier in the race. She has been created entirely by media. She is the biggest social psyop experiment conducted on the American people in history. None of the above has changed, the only thing that has changed from 30 days ago is that the media is telling you she is popular.” (copied)

She is just an empty pantsuit with no morals, no leadership abilities, no foreign affairs knowledge. She is full of contempt toward our country.

On the upcoming election, we Floridians have several Constitutional Amendments to vote on I’ll share my thoughts on just one of them today. Amendment 4 concerning abortion. The following is words from a meme I copied on Facebook. “You cannot vote to murder children on Tuesday, then sing ‘Oh how I love Jesus’ on Sunday.” Enough said. Vote wisely.

As always...that’s just my opinion! Trump 2024



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Acts: The Spread of the Gospel

Pastor Benjie Loyd, River Road Baptist Church, Hilliard



The book of Acts is unique for two primary reasons. The book of Acts is the only book that was an intentional sequel. Luke is the author of Acts. Luke’s first volume was the gospel of Luke and his second volume was the book of Acts (Luke 1:1-4, Acts 1:1-4). In the first volume, Luke chronicled the beginning of Jesus and his earthly ministry until the time of the ascension. In the second volume, Luke records the continuation of the ministry of Jesus in his ascended state through the ministry of Jesus’ spiritual body, the church. The second unique feature of the book of Acts is that it is the only historical book in the New Testament. If you remember, the Old Testament had a whole section of historical books (Joshua-II Chronicles). The first historical event in the book of Acts is the ascension of Christ (30 AD) and the last historical event in the book of Acts is Paul’s arrival in Rome as a prisoner (60 AD).

When interpreting and applying the book of Acts, it is going to be critically important to understand how to apply historical narratives in a responsible way. We do not just read the Bible and do what it says. The first command in the book of Acts is to wait in Jerusalem. We are not out of the will of God if we are not waiting in Jerusalem. Apart from the book of Acts, much of the New Testament would be unintelligible. There has been a radical change that has taken place across the testaments and Acts bears witness to these changes. Acts let’s us see why there is a shift in focus from Israel to the church. Acts allows us to see why the food laws and dietary restrictions are no longer in force. Acts shows us how Christianity became a global religion. Acts shows us who the Holy Spirit and how he empowers the church to fulfill the mission.

If you remember, Luke’s Gospel was arranged around a travel narrative. The same is true of the book of Acts. The outline and purpose for the book of Acts is found in Acts 1:8. *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”* The book of Acts is the historical narrative of how the gospel went out from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth. An outline of the book of Acts that follows Acts 1:8 is as follows:

- The Witnesses are Empowered: 1-2: The Spirit is promised (1) and the Spirit is poured out and the church is empowered for mission (2).
- The Witness Begins in Jerusalem: 3-7: This section is marked by a series of firsts. The first clashes with the authorities (3-4), the first internal clashes in the church (5-6a), the first martyr (6b-7), and the first missionary (8)
- The Witness Spreads into Judea and Samaria: 8-12:24. In chapter 9, Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles is converted. In chapters (9:32-11:18), a Gentile, Cornelius, is converted. In the remainder of chapter 11, a large number of Gentiles are converted. In chapter 12, the church is persecuted and begins to spread out to the ends of the earth.
- The Witness Spreads to the ends of the Earth: 12:25-28. This last half of the book focuses primarily on Paul. Paul is presented as a pioneer missionary in 13-21:26. In this section of the book of Acts, Paul takes three missionary journeys. As a result of these missionary journeys the gospel spreads to Asia (12-25-16:5), Europe (16:6-19:20), and eventually to Rome (19:21-28). From Acts 21:27-28, Paul is a prisoner in chains as he finally arrives in Rome in chains, but the Gospel is unchained and Paul preaches the Gospel unhindered (Acts 28:31).



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PLAYER OF THE WEEK





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CES Warriors of the Month



Shown are the Warriors of the Month for the month of August at Callahan Elementary School. Our character trait for August was CITIZENSHIP. Students were chosen for showing great citizenship throughout their school days.

CHURCH NEWS

Bethany Episcopal Church, located across from Hilliard Town Hall, will hold a Blessing of the Animals Saturday, Sept. 28 at 9:30 a.m. Bring your fur babies, preferably on a leash.

Lannie Road Baptist Church, 5998 Lannie Road Jacksonville, will hold their Fall Festival Saturday, Sept. 28 from 12-4 p.m. All are welcome!

Revival Sunday at First Baptist Church of Boulougne, 28226 Church Dr., Hilliard, Sunday, Sept. 29 10:45 a.m. and 5 p.m., Guest speaker Pastor David Harris with musical guest Steve Ladd. All are welcome!

North Hilliard Baptist Church, 552823 US HWY1, would like to invite all men to our Men's Prayer meeting held the 1st Monday of month & the 3rd Saturday of the month, both at 6 p.m.

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NCBOCC Adopts Reduced Millage Rate for Fourth Consecutive Year

On Monday, September 23, the Nassau County Board of County Commissioners held its second public hearing for adoption of the Fiscal Year 24/25 Budget. This was the end of an 8-month budget process which included a public budget workshop and a first public hearing held on September 9, 2024.

This is the fourth consecutive year that the BOCC was able to reduce the millage rate (property tax rate) while continuing to fund the critical public safety needs through investments into the Nassau County Sheriff's Office and the Nassau County Fire Rescue Department, along with critical investments through the Capital Improvement Plan, Pavement Management Plan, and Chip Seal Program. Additionally, the budget provides funding for the staffing and operations of the new Fire Station No. 10 (Tributary) currently under construction.

Understanding the demands of the residents and the future economic pressures, the adopted budget continues to focus on improving the quality of life for residents, while working within the limited and restricted revenues of the

county. The budget is also structured to continue funding for investment into land conservation and management, in line with the request from the community and pursuant to the voter approved referendum in 2022.

As Nassau County continues to be one of the fastest growing counties in both the state and the country, this population growth requires additional service capacity to meet these demands. The BOCC understands these growing demands along with the growing demands of the current residents and has continued to focus on supporting public safety operations through the Sheriff, Fire Rescue, Emergency Operations, Roads and Animal Services.

Following the public hearing, Chairman John Martin stated, "This is the fourth year we've lowered the millage rate to a modified millage rate. I think that's something we can all be proud of."

The adopted budget can be found on the County's website at <https://www.nassaucountyfl.com/>. If you have any questions regarding the adopted budget, contact Chris Lacambra, Director of the Office of Management & Budget, at (904) 530-6010, Option 2.



Micolle D. Rosenberry, Esq.

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New Beginnings and Milestones

Brailee Elizabeth Sipe

Curtis Sipe and Bailee Youmans, of Callahan, are proud to announce the birth of their daughter, Brailee Elizabeth Sipe. Brailee was born on August 3, 2024 at 7:58 p.m. at UF Health in Jacksonville. She measured 19 inches long and weighted 6 pounds 5 ounces. Brailee’s proud grandparents are Matt and Heather Sipe of Yulee, Jeremy Youmans of Callahan and Beth Youmans of Bryceville.



NCSO Teen Driver Challenge Held



Thank you to all who recently participated in our Teen Driver Challenge! The Nassau County Sheriff’s Office is dedicated to protecting our young drivers and significantly reducing traffic-related injuries and fatalities. That’s why they offer the Teen Driver Challenge, a free course designed to help teens improve their driving skills and reduce their risk of being involved in a crash. All instructors are Nassau County Sheriff Deputies. Upon successful completion of the program, students will receive a certificate of completion, which may be presented to your auto insurance company for a possible reduction in your insurance premium. The program includes a combination of classroom instruction and hands-on driver training. Teens aged 15-19 with a valid Florida Operator’s License are eligible. Those with a permit for at least six months and driving experience may also register. The next challenge is Saturday, November 16. To find out more, visit: www.nassauso.com/programs/teen-driver-challenge/.

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NCSO Holds Swearing-In Ceremony



Sheriff Bill Leeper is proud to announce the swearing-in of two new civilian employees and and six new patrol deputies: Civil Clerk Cheri Arp; IT Systems Technician Juan Perez; Patrol Deputies: Kristina Jackson, Corey Herrington, Ronald John Thornburg, Olivia Stephens, Trysten Keeney and Brian Brennan. Congratulations!

Flashes Fall to Crescent City

Coach Matthew Yancey

The Hilliard Flashes fell to 0-5 on the season after a 33-13 loss to Crescent City. The story of the game was six Hilliard turnovers that resulted in 21 Crescent City points. Crescent City wasted little time getting on the board as a blown coverage allowed the Raiders to score on the opening drive. The Flashes moved the ball but were stopped on fourth down to give the ball back to the Raiders. Crescent City would capitalize on the short field and take a 13-0 advantage into the second quarter.

Midway through the second quarter, and the score at 20-0, Ethan Garland was able to provide a spark in the return

game. Garland would take the kickoff to his right, find a hole and outrace the Raiders for a 72-yard touchdown return. Hilliard was able to threaten late in first half down 27-6 with the ball deep inside Raiders’ territory, but the fourth turnover of the half kept the halftime score 27-6.

The Flashes’ defense was able to shut Crescent City out in the second half and also forced four turnovers of their own. The Flashes would get the last score of the game on a short run by DJ Alderman to push the final score to 33-13.

The Flashes are off this week but will return to action on October 4th for the homecoming game against Old Plank Academy.



Festival of Wreaths POSTPONED

Due to expected inclement weather, the Festival of Wreaths that was to take place September 26 at Life Care Center of Hilliard has been rescheduled for Thursday, October 17. The Festival of Wreaths benefits the Pinky Promise Foundation. For more information or if you’re still interested in donating a wreath, call admissions at 904-845-6712.



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Warriors Take Down Hornets

Coach Waylon Cox

The Warriors welcomed their county rival Yulee Hornets to Callahan Friday night. The stadium was packed, and the Warriors came away victorious by a score of 22-21.

The game started with a surprise onside kick from Kevin Sheppard which was recovered by Nick Braddock. The Warriors took advantage a few plays later as Pryce Arnold connected with Skyler Freeman for a 37-yard touchdown. Freeman punched in the two-point conversion to give the Warriors an 8-0 lead. The Hornets would answer on the next drive with a touchdown of their own to pull the score to 8-7. The Warriors were resilient all night and on the next drive put together a 15-play drive that was capped off by an Andi Ataiza touchdown run to make the score 15-7.

The Warrior defense forced a 3-and-out on the next possession and the offense went back to work. Another long 14-play drive was capped off by another Arnold to Freeman touchdown pass. This brought the score to 22-7 at halftime.

The Hornets would make a game of it in the second half after a long touchdown run brought the score to 22-15. The Warrior offense struggled to find rhythm in the second half. The Hornets would score again late in the 3rd quarter to bring the score to 22-21. On the Warriors' next drive, they would drive deep into Hornet territory but lose possession of the ball with a fumble. The Warriors' defense would stand strong one more time to come up with a crucial fourth down sack. The offense



Maegyn LaCross

was then able to run the clock out to secure the win.

Warriors head coach Gunnar Cox stated, "I told the team all week, the most disciplined team is going to win. I'm so proud of the work and effort these kids have put in".

The Warriors were led on the ground by Skyler Freeman who had 19 carries for 69 yards. Avery Griffin added 8 carries for 46 yards and Andi Ataiza added 9 carries for 24 yards and a touchdown. Pryce Arnold was 6 of 8 passing for 85 yards and 2 touchdowns. Freeman also had 2 receptions for 47 yards and 2 touchdowns. Griffin added 2 receptions for 29 yards. Gaven Carter and Colby Gay added receptions.

The Warriors' defense was led by Nick Braddock who had 16 total tackles. Levi Bowler added 11 tackles, Garrett Rica added 8 tackles with Hunter Gentry adding 7 tackles. Rica also added two sacks while Bowler and Bryce Mangum both added half a sack.

The Warriors' Friday night matchup against Fernandina Beach has been rescheduled due to Hurricane Helene. They will travel to Fernandina Beach on Monday, September 30 for a 7 p.m. kickoff.

Go Warriors!



Maegyn LaCross



Maegyn LaCross

Remembering Miss Lavern

Dawn S. West

What a sweet, feisty soul Miss Lavern Meeks was. A few years back, she would regularly drop by and bring us a homemade pound cake. Many times, they were still warm. Around the holidays, she and her sister Viola would get together and bake. Miss Lavern would make fudge, and Miss Viola divinity, and both were out of this world. Miss Lavern would drop by our little bags filled with goodies. We were so excited to see her come. We'd thank her and normally she'd reply, "You're welcome darlin!"

Then there were those times I would see her at the post office and she would stop me just to vent. Something or another had ticked her off and she just wanted to share. She loved people and loved to do things for others. Many times, she would come by the office and ask if we could set up an obituary

for someone who passed into the format for a book mark. We would set it up and email it to Alison who would laminate it for her. It was such a simple task however it meant the world to her.

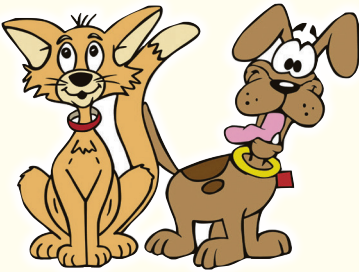


These last few years, I've had the opportunity to spend time with her at the Wednesday Community Dinners. She would drive out to the fairgrounds when they were held there and volunteer, too. She wanted to take part and she did so. When she got tired, she'd tell me to take over and I did. She never held back and shared whatever was on her mind...sometimes good and sometimes not so good.

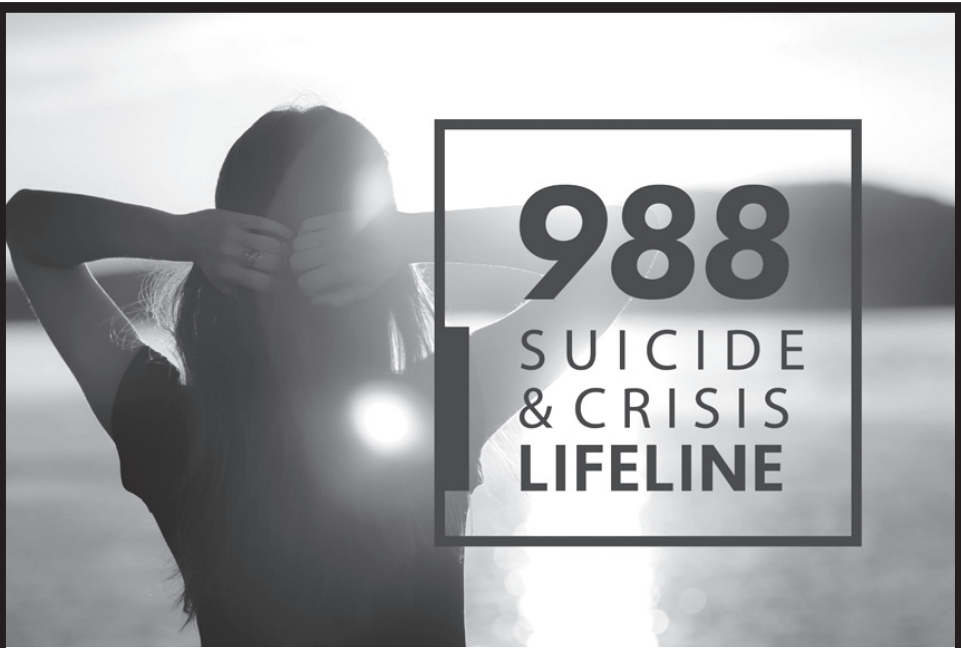
Miss Lavern passed away on September 12 and her absence in our community will definitely be noticed. I felt it an honor to have her as a dear friend. She was one of a kind and will dearly be missed.

Low Cost Pet Vaccination Clinic Saturday

Saturday, September 28 • 9 - 11 a.m.



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September is Suicide Prevention Month

- Suicide is the 11th leading cause of death in the US
- Suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death in ages 15-29
- In 2022, American deaths totalled 49,476 from suicide
- Men died by suicide 3.85 times more than women
- White males accounted for 68.46% of suicide deaths in 2022
- There is one suicide death every 11 minutes
- 13.2 million people have seriously thought about suicide
- 3.8 million people made a plan in 2022
- 1.6 million people attempted suicide in 2022



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AUCTION

FRANKLIN MINI STORAGE of Hilliard is holding a **PUBLIC AUCTION** Saturday, October 5, 2024 at 10 a.m. at CR 108 East, in Hilliard, FL. Units HA8, HB44, and HH140 contain household items and/or tools and will be auctioned. For any questions about the auction please contact Carrol Franklin at 904-945-1707. 92624

FRANKLIN MINI STORAGE of Callahan is holding a **PUBLIC AUCTION** Saturday October 5, 2024 at 11 a.m. at 541468 US HWY 1 North, Callahan, FL 32011. Units CA59, CC145, CB112, CE254, and CE278 contain household items and/or tools and will be auctioned. For any questions about the auction please contact Carrol Franklin at 904-945-1707. 92624

https://hibid.com/company/72370/rolphs-auction-depot **ROLPH'S AUCTION DEPOT ONLINE ESTATE AUCTION.** Items include 1960 Cushman Scooter,1930 model A ford car, 1931 ford truck,1953 MG kit car repo, tools, showcases, China cabinets, 40+ LGB LEHMANN model trains cars in box, glassware, railroad lantern, 100s of dolls Madame Alexander, Effanbee, Ginny, Vogue, Tonner, porcelain, Marie Ormond, Anna lee, story book, Lissi, German, composition cotton ideal, American character, Lee Middleton, Ann Nancy and more, engine stand, trailer hitches, concrete mixer, beds, chairs, artwork, speakers, curio cabinets, model gas RC airplanes, **DIECAST CARS, NASCAR, VINTAGE CAR BOOKS, AND MUCH MORE.** Pickup will be off Pecan Park on Sept. 29th and 30th. 92624

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YARD SALES

O.E.S. ANNUAL BLOOD DRIVE & YARD SALE, this Saturday, September 28, 8 a.m. – 3 p.m., Callahan Masonic Lodge, behind Callahan Town Hall. Homemade Jams, Jellies, Apple Butter, boiled peanuts, jewelry, clothing, crafts & hot dog trio lunch!

FRIDAY, 8 a.m. till 5 p.m.; **SATURDAY,** 8 a.m. till 2 p.m., 37193 Southern Glen Way (off Pine St.), Hilliard. For all you parents **STAND UP** and cheer, another great Yard Sale is finally here. We have the lowest prices you can ask around, spreading enormous savings all over town. So, bring your neighbor, sister, and your mother, too, this super-hot sale is here for you!

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POLICE REPORTS

Names, Addresses and all information appearing in the Police Reports are taken from the Sheriff's Department files and do not necessarily indicate guilt, only that arrests were made or charges were filed.

Sunday, September 15

Samantha Lynn Woodle, 34, Callahan: Use 2 Way Communication Device; Sale of Controlled Substance within 1000ft of Church

Monday, September 16

Crystal Marie Lacey, 44, Callahan: Aggravated Assault with Deadly Weapon; Felony Criminal Mischief

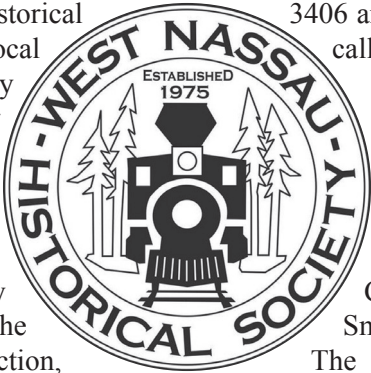
Wednesday, September 18

John James Louis Shiferdek, 37, Callahan: Possession of Drug Paraphernalia with Residue; Possession of Drug Paraphernalia (Production); Possession of Methamphetamine; Possession of Controlled Substance with Intent to Sell

WNHS Seeks Residents for Interview About Our Community

The West Nassau Historical Society is seeking local residents to briefly interview as part of their upcoming Smithsonian Institution exhibit. The focus of the interview, as well as the exhibit, is how our Nassau County culture is influenced by the planting, growing, production, and the gathering together for the consumption of food. Do you have memories of church functions, family gatherings, or meeting friends that were centered around food? What foods are a must have at any particular event or holiday here in Nassau County? What are your favorite foods here in Nassau County?

If interested in sharing your stories, please call John or Emily the West Nassau Historical Society at 904-879-



3406 and leave a message. Your call will be returned.

The exhibit, tentatively titled Nassau + Food: What We Each Bring to the Table, is a pilot program supported by the Florida Humanities Council and the Smithsonian Institution.

The West Nassau Historical Society is among eight cultural groups statewide selected to research, design, and construct the exhibit scheduled for display at the historic Callahan Train Depot in 2026.

The Historical Society is an all-volunteer nonprofit dedicated to the discovery and promotion of the rich and diverse history and culture of Nassau County. Visit <http://www.wnhsfl.org> for more information.

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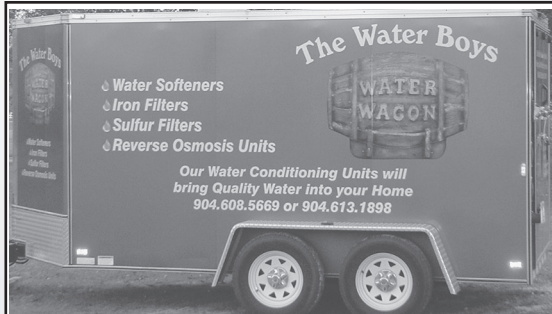
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ROBERT EDWARD ADAMS
Robert Edward Adams, 55, of Callahan, passed away Monday, September 16, 2024. He was born October 14, 1968 in Jacksonville. Robert loved fishing and riding his Harley-Davidson. He is preceded in death by his mom Margaret McKenna; and a son Robert Edward Adams, II.

He is survived by his loving wife, Jeanne Farris Adams; children Savanna (Craig) Cantrell, Kenneth (Destiny) Adams, Amanda (David) Bray and Wesley Bray; grandchildren Ronnie, Acadia, Peyton, Kash, Delayna, Alice, Pria, Ember and Ansley; and a brother Archie (Carol) Adams.

The family received friends Thursday, September 19 at Shepard-Roberson Funeral Home, Callahan Chapel.

Arrangements under the direction of Shepard-Roberson Funeral Home Callahan Chapel, 904-879-2336.

Condolences may be expressed at: www.srfhcallahan.com.

DWAYNE MICHAEL BISHOP
Dwayne “Mike” Michael Bishop, 66, of Hilliard, passed away peacefully September 4, 2024, surrounded by his family at home. He was born June 11, 1958 in Lakewood, Ohio. He was a devoted husband to Lisa; and loving father to Deanna and Dustin. He served in the United States Navy and was a proud Veteran who loved his country. He retired from the Department of Defense after serving many years as a Quality Assurance Electrical Inspector with SWFLANT at Kings Bay, Georgia.

He is survived by his wife of 41 years, Lisa Bishop; children Deanna (Buddy) Brown and Dustin (Amanda) Bishop;

OBITUARIES
grandchildren Gage, Cason, Wyatt, Xander, Elizabeth and Dakota; sister Donna (Matt) Dortch; as well as many friends and extended family members who will miss him dearly.
A graveside service was held Monday, September 23, in his honor, at the Jacksonville National Cemetery.

DONALD EUGENE GIBBONS
Donald Eugene Gibbons, 70, passed away September 15, 2024. A devoted husband, loving father, proud grandfather and a friend to many, Donald will be missed. Donald will be remembered for his boundless energy, work ethic and his unwavering passion for Florida State football. Donald was a guiding light and a source of strength for all who knew him. Born on May 9, 1954 in Corey, Pennsylvania, he lived a full life of love, kindness and compassion. He was preceded in death by his daughter, Tamara Brown.

He is survived by his wife of 45 years, Billie Gibbons, and their six children: Kimberly (Paul) Goolsby, Vicki (Jimmy) Grubbs, Kenneth Paul, Donna (Richard) Bennet, Carrie (Dustin) Doti and Melissa (Antonio) Rodriguez. He was the proud grandfather of 17 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren who brought immense joy to his life. His family was the center of his world, and he leaves behind a legacy of deep love and commitment.

In keeping with Don’s wishes, no formal service was held. Instead, his family, friends and loved ones gathered at his home for a celebration of his life where stories were shared and his memory was honored

in the way he would have wanted.
In lieu of flowers, Don requested that plants be delivered to his wife, Billie, so that his love for the outdoors can continue and thrive. These plants will help carry on the legacy of the life he built with his hands and his heart.

ALICE S. HARRELL
Alice S. Harrell, age 91 of Callahan, Florida passed away on September 19, 2024, in Callahan after a short illness. She grew up in Callahan with her mother, Elmira Andrews and 7 siblings. Alice went to Callahan High School where she played basketball. Owing to her sassy attitude, she earned the title as the wittiest in her senior class. After graduation in 1951, Alice married Orville and raised three boys of her own.

Alice was a well-known and popular Callahan resident whom was loved by everyone. For much of her life, she worked at Ann’s Diner/Linda Jean’s Diner. She was a devout member of the Callahan Methodist Church and served as a Grand Marshal for the Centennial Parade in Callahan.

Alice was preceded in death by her mother, Elmira Andrews; husband, Orville F. Harrell; sons, Charles David Harrell and John Raymond Harrell; siblings, Milton, Thomas, William, Cleo, Sara, Gertrude, Peggy, and R.D.

Alice is survived by her son, Michael (Peter) Harrell; grandson, Luke (Savannah); and great-grandchildren, Sabrina, Layton, and Kendra. She is also survived by a few people who came to call her Grannie Alice or Nanny Alice: Bradley Morgan, Tiffany Conger, Maverick Conger, Ella Conger, and

Alec Koci.
Pallbearers were John Allen Harrell, John Wesley Harrell, Sr., Jeff Hullett, James Morgan, Steve Stitt, and Shane O’Stein. Honorary Pallbearers were Tristan O’Stein, John Wesley Harrell, Jr, and Brody Harrell. Shane O’Stein, Melonie O’Stein, and Jeannie Johnson sang during the service.

A celebration of Alice’s Life was held on Monday, September 23 at Callahan Methodist Church. Pastor Bodie Riddle officiated and Stefan O’Stein delivered the Eulogy. Interment followed at Jones Cemetery. The family received friends one hour prior to the service at the church.

Arrangements under the care and direction of Nassau Funeral Home, 541720 US-1, Callahan, 904-879-1770.

Visit www.nassaufh.com to sign the family’s guest book.

AUDREY EMBERY MEADOWS
Audrey Embery Meadows went home to be with the Lord and reunite with his beautiful bride, Jessie Mae, on Saturday, September 21, 2024. Born kicking and screaming in Beckley, West Virginia on July 27, 1942, he lived a life full of stories worth sharing.

Audrey was a trustworthy distributor of Fudgesicles to all his grandchildren, the giver of ice cream for breakfast on weekend sleepovers, the sneaker of snack cakes, tooth fairy tricker, prank puller, squirrel feeder, bird house builder, chip connoisseur, and the family pumpkin pie eating champion. There wasn’t a single toy that he couldn’t fix, a problem he couldn’t solve or a room that he couldn’t make better just from his presence- especially if he was there to sing you Happy Birthday... sometimes from the top of the garage. There wasn’t a bluegrass cassette tape that Audrey hadn’t heard the A and B side of, Looney Tunes episode he

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hadn't watched on repeat- still laughing like it was his first time seeing it and there wasn't a single western that he hadn't seen half a dozen times. We can only imagine the conversation he's finally getting to have with John Wayne. There wasn't a coffee pot in the world that could keep up with his demand, or a Cracker Barrel within 50 miles that he hadn't graced with his presence. To know him was to love him. Audrey is preceded in death by the love of his life, Jessie; daughter-in-law, Carrin; brothers, Daton, Cody, Donald and Ronald; and sisters, Ethel, Hazel, Pauline, Shirley, and Jule.

Audrey is survived by his son, Michael; daughter-in-law, Becky; grandchildren, Christin, Alex, Curstie, Jimmy, Beckham, Jude; great-grandchildren, Cassidy, Joshua, Annabelle, Trevor, and Bradley; and brother, Darrell.

Audrey left this world having given and experienced more love than most get to in a lifetime. This brief summary can't even begin to do justice to the great man that he really was, but the world will be a dimmer place without him in it. He will be truly missed by all who had the pleasure of knowing him.

A celebration of Audrey's life was held on Wednesday, September 25, 2024 at 2 p.m. at Nassau Funeral Home with Pastor Billy Canterbury officiating. The family received friends one hour prior to the service at the funeral home.

Arrangements are under the direction of Nassau Funeral Home, 541720 US-1, Callahan, Florida 32011. 904-879-1770.

Visit www.nassaufh.com to sign the family's guest book.

OBITUARIES

PETER JAMES RICE



Peter James Rice, 53, of Callahan, passed away September 3, 2024. It's with a heavy heart we announce his untimely passing. He was born

June 17, 1971 in Minnesota and moved to Jacksonville, with his family early in his life. Pete had an unsurpassable work ethic, spending his early years traveling the world as a Merchant Marine until 2001 when he started with Jacksonville Machine and Repair. In 2005, he continued his work in the marine industry with Tote Maritime.

He was a dedicated husband, father, and friend. Pete enjoyed spending his free time with his family and dogs. Pete spent much of his time fixing anything he could find and helping friends and family with their projects. His big smile and bigger heart will be greatly missed by all. He was predeceased by his parents James and Gisela (Bauersfeld) Rice; and his brother Michael Rice.

He leaves behind his wife, Sandy (Whiddon) Rice; his son Joshua Rice (Hannah Sullivan); brother Thomas Rice; aunt, Diane (Rice) Zgodava; uncle, Lawrence Zgodava and many cousins and friends.

A celebration of life will be held at a later date.

Arrangements by Nassau Funeral Home, Callahan, 904-879-1770.

Condolences may be expressed at: www.nassaufh.com.

AMANDA "MANDY" WRIGHT



Amanda Sharree Wright, lovingly known as Mandy, passed away from symptoms related to her heart condition on September 19, 2024, at the age of 51. Mandy's smile was infectious - it glowed from the inside out. She was born in Jacksonville, Florida on December 25, 1972.

Mandy graduated from West Nassau High School Class of '90 and later obtained her cosmetology license. Mandy talked fast and slung scissors even faster. She managed and owned The New Generation Hair Salon and has been a hairdresser for 34 years. Clients who sat in her chair became family. Mandy knew no strangers and never hesitated to help anyone in need. She made the outcasts and the weirdos feel included. Mandy faced many challenges, some that were her own doings, but many that were not. She certainly danced to the beat of her own drum, and she was happy to invite you to dance along with her. Music was Mandy's love language. Her

cousins were her best friends and the girls at her salon were her soul sisters. Mandy deeply loved her family and friends, but most of all, her children, grandchildren, and Jesus. She will be missed dearly. Mandy is preceded in death by her daughter, Melanie Brooke Dover; father, Bobby Maddox; and brothers, Mike Maddox and Craig Maddox.

Mandy is survived by her daughters, Amber Maddox, (Leigh Ann) and Darrian (Hunter) Hall; sons, Blake (Hunter) Wright, Garrette (Anabel) Wright and Canaan Fussell; two grandchildren, Asher Hall and Esmerelda Wright; mother, Kathy Weaver; sister, Aleshia Smith (Brittany); brother, Danny Maddox as well as many nephews, nieces, uncles, aunts and cousins.

A celebration of Mandy's life will be held on Thursday, September 26, 2024 at 11 a.m. at The Anchor Church of God with Pastor Dwight Allen officiating. Interment will follow at Verdie Cemetery. The family will receive friends on Wednesday, September 25, 2024 from 6 - 8 p.m. at Nassau Funeral Home.

Arrangements are under the care and direction of Nassau Funeral Home, 541720 US-1, Callahan. 904-879-1770.

Visit www.nassaufh.com to sign the family's guest book.



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It's hard to believe that two years have passed by since you transitioned from time to eternity. I still think about you often, either reminiscing of a childhood memory or words of wisdom that you'd give. I'm thankful for all that you instilled into my life that I'll never forget as time continues to pass.

Love always,

Your son, Michael E. Taylor, Jr.

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?" John 14:1-2 NIV

Steptoe Family Thank You

The family of Mrs. Jacqueline Steptoe would like to thank everyone who visited, called or sent cards and flowers during the time of her passing. Your heartfelt generosity and prayers will never be forgotten.

Elton Steptoe and Family

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