

# WESTSIDE JOURNAL

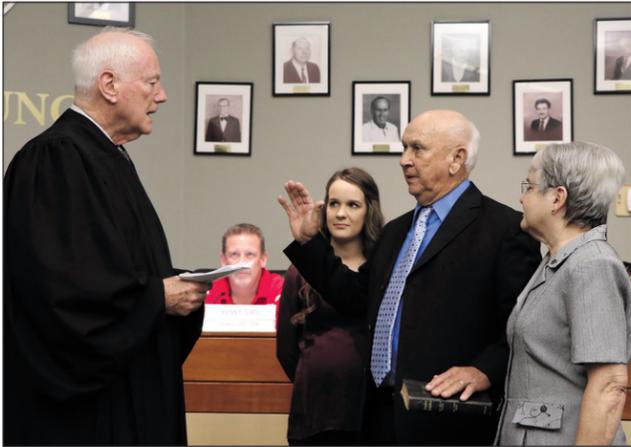
VOLUME XV ISSUE 27

HOMETOWN PEOPLE...HOMETOWN NEWS

THURSDAY, JANUARY 10, 2019

"THEREFORE, IF ANYONE IS IN CHRIST, HE IS A NEW CREATION; OLD THINGS HAVE PASSED AWAY; BEHOLD, ALL THINGS HAVE BECOME NEW" - 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

## Hilliard Swears in New Mayor and Councilwoman



Dawn S. West

The Hilliard Town Council met Thursday night for their first meeting of the New Year and began the meeting wishing farewell to the former leaders and swearing in the new. Councilman John Beasley and Town Clerk Lisa Purvis presented both outgoing Councilman Jack Bailey and Mayor Cris McConnell plaques in appreciation for their years of service to the town.



Dawn S. West

The Town Council of Callahan met Monday night for their first meeting of the New Year. The first order of business was to approve the Citizens Advisory Task Force (CATF) members for the Depot Park Grant. Approved members to serve on the CATF will be: John Knagge, Caleb Bryan, Doris Perona, Alice Harrell and James Jacobs.

The next agenda item was first reading on Ordinance 2018-006 which concerned amending Chapter 40 of

Judge Steven Fahlgren (former Hilliard Town Attorney) did the honor of swearing in Councilman John Beasley. Judge Robert Foster did the honor of swearing in new Councilwoman Callie Kay Bishop followed by the swearing in new Mayor Floyd Vanzant.

Following the oath of offices, Mayor Vanzant recommended for Councilman Kenny Sims to take over the Council President position and Councilman John Beasley to be Pro Tem. "I know Councilman Beasley has held the president seat for a while and I don't have any problem with that," said Mayor Vanzant. "I just thought maybe a little change would be different."

"Thank you for the nomination Mayor however, I would prefer to leave things as they are," said Councilman



Sims. "Do to my work schedule, I can't always be available."

The council approved leaving the positions as they were with Beasley as Council President and Sims serving as Pro Tem.

The next order of business was



the organization of departments as follows: Councilman Kenny Sims, Street Department Commissioner; Council President John Beasley, Recreation Department Commissioner; Councilman Jared Wollitz, Fire Department Commissioner; Councilwoman Callie Kay Bishop, Airpark Department Commissioner; and Councilman Lee Pickett Water & Sewer Department Commissioner.

Resolution 2019-01 was approved by the council which concerned the Town of Hilliard holidays for 2019. There were no changes in any of the holidays for the town.

In other business, Town Clerk Lisa Purvis requested setting up a workshop for the Advanced Metering Infrastructure. "I've been in contact

with the company and they would be available January 28 for another presentation and workshop," said Purvis. "Would this date be acceptable for you (council) all?"

The council agreed to have the workshop Monday, January 28 at 6 p.m.



A workshop was also set for Thursday, January 17 at 6 p.m. (prior to the next regular meeting) to discuss another soccer team to use the Parks & Recreation soccer fields when they are not in use.

In closing comments, Mayor Vanzant advised the council and audience that he talked with all departments and showed his appreciation for their dedication. "Things are going well in the town and with God's help, we will continue," added Vanzant.

"I just want to thank the citizens for your vote of confidence in me," said Councilwoman Bishop. "I look forward to serving to the best of my ability."

The next meeting of the council will be Thursday, January 17 at 7 p.m.

## Callahan Awarded \$5 Million Grant

the Personnel Policies and clarifying definitions. The council approved first reading.

Next on the agenda, Mayor Marty Fontes provided three bids concerning the upkeep of two ponds in the town: Robinwood Circle and Brinkley Way. "One of the bids was extremely high however the other two are comparable," said Mayor Fontes. "Lake Doctor requires \$500 for the first treating and \$160 per month for upkeep. Aquagenix requires \$200 for the first treating

plus \$130 per month for upkeep. They (Aquagenix) also suggested adding fish to take care of the mosquito larvae. I recommend Aquagenix." The council approved Aquagenix.

The next item was a request for an equipment purchase. Mayor Fontes, filling in for Public Works Director Mike Williams who was dealing with a water issue, advised the council of the desperate need for a new excavator. "The mini trackhoe the town currently has is running on its last leg," said

Fontes. "Through the FL Sheriff's Association state bid we can purchase a new excavator, with all the accessories we need for \$36,359. I recommend we make this purchase. It will be funded through both the general and water/sewer accounts." The council approved the purchase.

The next item was also from Mayor Fontes to change financial institutions for the town. "After doing some research and talking with Ameris Bank,

See 'Callahan Awarded' on page 2

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# Callahan Awarded

I recommend we switch our banking from Wells Fargo to Ameris Bank," said Mayor Fontes. "I've provided a small spreadsheet comparing the two banks and their services. Clearly you can see, we can make money with Ameris versus paying fees with Wells Fargo."

"Can we talk to someone if we have an issue," questioned Councilwoman Shirley Graham.

"They (Ameris) have a department strictly for governmental accounts a phone call away. They are located in Jacksonville," added Fontes. "There are no banking fees, provide online banking, credit card fee transactions are lower and they offer interest on checking. It's a no-brainer!"

The council approved moving the town's banking business to Ameris Bank.

The final agenda item, probably the largest, Mayor Fontes announced that the town had been awarded the \$5,000,000 Department of Economic Development Opportunity Grant from the state. Once the paperwork is received, the attorney has looked over it and approved, the mayor will sign it and return it, the project will begin. This grant is for the infrastructure of the water and sewer lines to be constructed

*Continued from page 1*

to the Crawford Diamond area along with other infrastructure needs. Currently, Florida Power & Light owns the property and is now in the designing stage of a 74.5 megawatt Energy Center on a portion of the property. This is a huge impact for the town of Callahan.

"Congratulations to the Town of Callahan!" said Laura DiBella, Director of the Economic Development Board. "This is a turning point for the town of Callahan and the surrounding areas. This is the beginning of something big!"

In closing comments, Mayor Fontes gave the council many issues to consider for the upcoming year including: there are 4 applications for Code Enforcement Officer and all will be interviewed; the sanitation contract comes up this year, we need to think about what we want to do; now is the time to purchase the remainder of the new Christmas lights; WN JROTC Col. Kline offered the cadets for community service hours to use for a clean-up day; and we are offering yoga in the fire station community room on Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.

The next meeting of the council will be Tuesday, January 22 at 7 p.m. due to the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday on Monday.

# Letters to the Editor

## Evil World!

Dear Editor,

New Year's Eve is celebrated around the world with different traditions for each country. One common tradition, however, is loud noises and bright lights on the night before the New Year. This particular tradition began with ancient society. The people believed that the devil and evil spirits would try to sneak into the New Year and ruin it for everyone. Therefore, the people would celebrate with loud noises and bright lights to scare the devil and evil spirits to stop them from entering into the New Year. Hmmm, I don't think it's working, do you?

Deborah Blair

## Unspeakable Gift

Dear Editor,

As I looked at many of the commercials during this Christmas season, it is obvious that our society is unaware of God's role in our lives. The average person thinks of Santa

Claus as the man in the red suit with a long white beard.

Please don't stop reading! Christianity is only one generation from extinction. We need to teach the next generation about the real Santa Claus! Surely you get the perspective! The Bible says: "For God so loved the world, he gave His only begotten Son...", John 3:16. Christ is God's great Christmas gift to the world. The scripture says, "...thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift," II Corinthians 9:15.

Also, we who are of full age, need to be reminded of what He did for humanity. Let's go ahead and say it; through Jesus Christ we gain acceptance with God. This is a Christmas gift that keeps on giving however we have to accept Him as our Savior and Lord. It's not automatic! We have responsibility as well.

Just thought I would share this unspeakable gift.

In Jesus' Name,  
Jack Lewis

**Letters to the Editor may be emailed to news@westsidejournal.net but must include a name.**

# Country Star Quilt Guild News

The Country Star Quilt Guild will hold its January meeting, Monday, January 14 at the First Baptist Church of Hilliard beginning with social time at 6:30 p.m. before the evening meeting begins at 7 p.m. This month's meeting will host Jenny Thompson with Thirty-One who will speak about the company and the storage bags and totes that can be used by quilters and crafters.

In addition, Bruce and Rhonda



Wilkerson, owners of Scrappy Rooster Quilts in St. Marys will speak about their dream of owning a shop and demonstrating techniques using some of the products they supply in their store.

The Guild holds a monthly meeting on the second Monday of each month. All those interested in quilts are welcome to attend. For further information, visit the Guild's website at www.CountryStarQuilters.org.

## In the Kitchen...

- 1 (32 oz.) package frozen hash brown potatoes, thawed
- 2 cups shredded Cheddar cheese, divided
- 1 (1 oz.) package ranch dressing mix

## Loaded Crack Potatoes

- 1 (16 oz.) container sour cream
- 8 slices cooked bacon, crumbled
- cooking spray

Preheat oven to 350°. Grease a 13"x9" baking pan with cooking spray or butter. Combine hash browns, sour cream, bacon, ranch mix, and 1 cup Cheddar cheese in a large bowl; stir until well mixed. Spread into baking pan; cover with aluminum foil. Bake in the preheated oven for 45 minutes. Remove foil; sprinkle remaining Cheddar cheese evenly across potatoes. Bake until cheese is bubbly and lightly browned around the edges, about 15 minutes.

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### WESTSIDE JOURNAL STAFF

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- Roger West ..... Owner/Reporter
- Jessie Pickett ..... Graphic Designer

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# Fish Talk

## Make Time for Fishing!

Chris Cockerham, Reel Habit

I was just looking over this weekend's forecast. It appears as of right now that we may have a slight chance of rain on the way for Saturday and Sunday. Don't let that detour you from getting out! Grab you a pair of Frogg Toggs from Callie Kay's General Store and avoid a missed opportunity. Some of my best days have been on the dreary rainy days.

Let's talk about some striped bass! Where do you look for them? What kind of baits do I throw and what are the best tides? Well, just like most predatory fish, you need tidal movement and structure. Funnels, rip rap, trees and rubble of any sort is key. Pay attention for the slightest flickering of bait and look for fleeing fish as the tide recedes the grass. All of these items are huge in being successful for catching what I call the Ghost Fish of Northeast Florida. They are on the surface one minute and gone before you can make your next cast.

As far as baits go, I mainly target Striper with artificials. With that said, I throw a variety of hard baits like Rapala's. Whether it be top water or sub surface you can't do wrong as long as you adjust to the conditions. Natural colors are good but I love throwing the 4 3/8" skitter walk in red head during the early morning. Bomber lures, in the Pro Long A Sliver Flash/Blue back are great for subsurface applications as the day progresses. I will also use large paddle tails with weighted chartreuse jig heads to compensate for the tidal current you're fishing.

Lastly, where are we catching them? Well, because they move so much, I'd start around the I-95 bridge and work my way back to the ocean. The Nassau or the St. Mary's Rivers both provide great fisheries for the illusive fish. Small feeder creeks that dump into the larger bodies of water are a must. Striper like deeper drop offs and holes where these small creeks dump out which in return make ambushing bait very easy.

Hope you all have the opportunity to enjoy your weekend. Until next time, be safe out there!

## EVENTS AROUND TOWN

Starting Thursday, January 17, the Hilliard Library will offer a **Conversational Spanish II Language Class**. The class is scheduled to meet in the library conference room for a total of ten Thursday evenings from 6-8 p.m.

By opening your heart and home to a youth in Foster Care, you can help forge a lifetime of success and happiness for a child right here in Nassau. Your support can open a world of possibilities. Are you ready to learn more? Contact [recruiter@fssnf.org](mailto:recruiter@fssnf.org) or 904-421-5864 for information.

The West Nassau High School Advisory Council will meet Monday, Jan. 14 at 4 p.m. in the media center at the school.

The American Legion Post 401 will play BINGO every Thursday at 6 p.m. at their post, 37405 Henry Smith Rd., Hilliard. Everyone welcome! For more information call 845-7300.

## JUST MY OPINION

Roger R. West

Let me begin with saying that I fully support President Trump's "partial" shutdown of the government over securing our borders. I also would support him declaring a national emergency to bypass Congress in order to appropriate the needed funds to "build the wall." The massive influx of illegals is a national security issue. An invasion and threat to national security does not solely mean an armed invasion of foreign troops. It is all encompassing on every aspect of our nations well-being. The southern border invasion is jeopardizing our over-all security in two major ways.

First, the fiscal strain it places on "we" the tax payers. According to several sources, it costs the American tax payer billions of dollars each year to care for the estimated 12 million illegals in our country. Watchdog.org states that according to the most recent analysis by the Federation for American Reform (FAIR), each illegal immigrant costs U.S. citizen taxpayer about \$8,075. In total, illegal aliens cost American taxpayers \$116 billion per year.

Secondly, the influx of millions of illegals can and will reshape our democracy in the near future. The Democratic Party knows that by their support of open borders and their master plan of blanket amnesty they will gain full control of Congress and the Presidency of America for decades,

thus accomplishing their master goal of total socialism. If Pelosi and Schumer thought for one second that the illegals flowing into our country were going to be future Republicans, they both would be at the southern border building a wall themselves. This is why the Democrats currently have no problem with Sanctuary Cities, they know there are thousands and thousands of illegals registered to vote and a majority if not all, vote democrat. They also know that after the 2020 census thousands and thousands of illegals will be counted as citizens. The number of U.S. House of Representatives per state is based upon the census count. Even though in 1911 the number of Representatives was capped at 435, if a particular state has a great increase in population, those states could acquire more Representatives and other states could lose Representatives seats.

So, they (the Democrats) are totally content with spending \$116 BILLION per year to accommodate illegals in our country, but are dead set against spending \$5 billion to stop the invasion of even more illegals into our country. It sounds too stupid to believe, but in all actuality it's ingenious on their (Democrats) part. It's stupid if we the people allow them to get away with it.

**Build the wall!**

As always...that's just my opinion!

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Thursday, Jan. 10 • 6 - 8 p.m.

Saturday, Jan. 12 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 15 • 6 - 8 p.m.

Thursday, Jan. 17 • 6 - 8 p.m.

All paperwork and payments are due at time of registration.



CLL board members can assist you during these dates/times.

<https://tshq.bluesombrero.com/callahanlittleleague>

**MUST** bring child's original birth certificate, 3 proofs of Callahan residency.

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# Happy New Year!

Pastor Arlie Johns, Hilliard First Assembly of God



Happy New Year! Here we go with the start to another New Year. We are only a few days into the year 2019 and off and running hard. It's hard to believe that it's been ten years since we were talking about the Y-2-K (2000) issues that we were facing back then. Rumors had it that the computers would stop working at that the stroke of midnight on December 31, 1999. There was supposed to be multiple problems across the world at that time. But nearly twenty years have come and gone since then, and yes, our world has seen problems but it wasn't because of the year 2000 computer failures. A lot of the problems we face today are the result of the increase of sin. However, the bible teaches us in Romans 5:20 "...where sin increased, grace increased all the more." (NIV84)

One thing is for sure, God's love and His grace is still reaching out to the lost souls of this world in the year 2019. Over the years I have seen books published stating why Jesus is coming back in a certain year (ex. "88 Reasons why Jesus is coming back in 1988", "89 Reasons", "90 Reasons" etc.). The Bible teaches us in Matthew 24:36, "No one knows about that day or hour; not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father." (NIV84) But know this, Jesus' return is coming. According to 2 Peter 3:9 "The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance." None of us know how much longer God might tarry before he sends Jesus...it could be at any time. That's why we must pay close attention to the words of the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 6:2, "I tell you, now is the time of God's favor; now is the day of salvation." (NIV84)

As we start out this New Year, let me encourage you to receive God's free gift of Salvation. The Bible tells us in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." So, if Jesus is the Lord and Savior of your soul, you don't have to be concerned or worried when Jesus will return. You have the promise of eternal life and when He comes we will go to be with Him forever. 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, "For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever." (NIV84)

Why don't you start out the New Year with the peace of knowing God? 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (NIV84)

Attend the church of your choice this Sunday.

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## Honoring First Responders Saturday



This Saturday, The Anchor Church in Callahan will host a First Responders luncheon from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. A FREE barbecue lunch will be provided to all of our local First Responders, active and retired (Sheriff's Office, Fire Rescue, Forestry, etc.) in Callahan, Bryceville and Hilliard. The event will be held in the church fellowship hall.

## Rayonier Advanced Materials Donates to Barnabas

Rayonier Advanced Materials presented a donation of \$1,500 to Barnabas Center on December 20. The check represents funding to support families in need in Nassau County during the holidays. The board and staff at Barnabas are grateful for the support from Rayonier Advanced Materials that will benefit so many in our community. For more information about Barnabas' programs, visit [www.BarnabasNassau.org](http://www.BarnabasNassau.org).



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## CHURCH NEWS

St. George Church of God will host Evangelist Tracy Swanson from Fitzgerald, Georgia Sunday, Jan. 13 at 11 a.m. & 5 p.m. and Monday-Friday at 7 p.m. Rev. Swanson will preach on prophesy, the Rapture, Day of the Lord and more! Join us!

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**Thursday, January 10 • 5 - 7 p.m.**  
**Saturday, January 12 • 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.**  
**Tuesday & Thursday, January 15 & 17 • 5 - 7 p.m.**  
**Saturday, January 19 • 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.**  
**Tuesday & Thursday, January 22 & 24 • 5 - 7 p.m.**  
**Saturday, January 26 • 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.**  
**Tuesday & Thursday, January 29 & 31 • 5 - 7 p.m.**  
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# Genealogy Tidbits

Claude Arpen

There are some genealogy podcasts on the internet that may be of interest to you. They are a source of news about genealogy. Technical tips, articles, new websites, interviews with prominent researchers and genealogists.

Here is a list of the sites. Just Google Genealogy podcast or Google the individual site:

Extreme Genes: weekly; The Genealogy Guys: bi-monthly; Family Tree Magazine: monthly; Genealogy Gems: monthly; Genealogy Happy Hour: 1-2 times a month; Genealogy Gold: weekly; and Genealogy News: bi-monthly.

The Genealogical Societies guest speaker for Monday, January 14, 2019 will be Sandra Dowling. Her topic will be Missions and Beyond.

To learn more, come and join us at the West Nassau Genealogical Society meetings, the second Monday of each month at 10:30 a.m. at the Callahan Lions Club, located on US 1 north of the fairgrounds. Visitors are always welcome!

## Thomas Selected as District Winner

CMS has a Nassau County School's District Winner! Kamryn Thomas was selected as the Nassau County representative for the Art in the Capital competition! Kamryn was first selected to compete in a local school competition and then went on to compete in the district art competition finals. She was selected to have her art displayed with other county winners from all over the state in Tallahassee.



Kamryn is in 8th grade at Callahan Middle School and has taken art and yearbook with Mrs. Larrimore.

## KEN BARNEY BOOK SIGNING

Ken Barney, local author of Inspirational Nonfiction, will discuss his recently published title *Not in Vain* on Tuesday, Jan. 15, at 6 p.m., at the Callahan Library. Signed copies will be available for purchase following his presentation from 6:45-7:45 p.m. The Callahan Library is located at 450077 SR 200, Suite #15, Callahan, 904-530-6500 (#3).



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Expires 1-15-19 WJ

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- 2 New York Strip Steaks
- 5 Chopped Sirloin Steaks
- 1 Package Sliced Bacon
- 1 2 lb. Pack Ground Beef
- 3 lb. Fryer Drumsticks
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## ADT Supports Volunteer Firefighters



ADT Inc. (NYSE: ADT), the leading provider of monitored security and interactive home and business automation solutions in the United States and Canada, today announced a \$100,000 contribution to the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) to help raise awareness for recruitment of volunteer firefighters. Callahan Volunteer Fire Department was only one of several departments receiving donations. CVFD happily accepted a check for \$5,000 for their department.

"Emergency calls have more than tripled over the past few decades and volunteer firefighters are needed to meet the increasing call volume and demand," said Heather Schafer, CEO, NVFC. "We are grateful ADT is partnering with us and sharing its resources to help volunteer fire departments across America."

According to the NVFC, volunteers comprise 70 percent of all firefighters in the U.S. and collectively donate

an estimated \$47 billion in services to their communities every year. Those communities depend on volunteers to be their first line of defense for many emergencies. Unfortunately, many local fire departments are struggling to meet staffing levels. More awareness about the benefits of being a volunteer firefighter can increase recruitment.

"With October being National Fire Prevention Month, it was a perfect time to recognize these brave men and women who selflessly save lives by rushing into burning buildings," said Jochen Koedijk, Chief Marketing Officer, ADT. "Millions of ADT customers rely on first responders during emergencies, and we believe our partnership in protection with the NVFC can showcase these unsung heroes and enhance fire department recruitment."

With seven out of ten firefighters and emergency responders serving as volunteers, there are many opportunities to join. Find out more at <http://www.makemeafirefighter.org/ADT>.

"It takes commitment and dedication to be a volunteer first responder, but the rewards are overwhelming. I encourage everyone to volunteer; our fire departments are open," said Kevin D. Quinn, NVFC Chairman.



## Hallie Bennett Named Miss High School Sweetheart

Hallie Bennett, daughter of Heath and Heather Bennett of Bryceville, represented West Nassau High School on December 15 in the Miss High School Sweetheart Pageant. Hallie won Best Fashion Wear, Best Formal Wear and took home the crown as Miss High School Sweetheart 2018-2019. Hallie won a \$1,000 scholarship, designer evening gown from Jonathan Kayne, interview lessons from Christine Jump, a photo shoot from DKeller Designs and much more!

The Miss High School Sweetheart Pageant, directed by Cathy Wilensky and Dortha Albert, is a not for profit organization providing scholarship money and a second chance for young women who competed in their local high school pageant and placed 1st runner-up, giving them a chance to become Miss High School Sweetheart. The pageant provides the 1st runner-ups from local high school pageants to compete for a chance to win scholarship money, represent their high school, participate in parades, and perform community service. Their goal is to mentor young women in the local high schools, build confidence, poise and grace, instill interview skills, boost their community service activities and provide them with scholarships. *Photo by Delisa Keller*



## Christmas Program Held at HES

The second grade classes at Hilliard Elementary presented their annual Christmas Program. Christmas poetry, prose and songs were enjoyed by friends, family and students.



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**BURGESS GEIGER ROAD** - Remodeled & super cute, this spacious 2,900 sf Hilliard home with a pool sits on 2.25 acres. Upstairs bonus room with walk-in closet, wood laminate floors. MLS #82661 **\$250,000**



**WEAVER CIRCLE** - Move in ready Callahan home with new carpet and paint. Home has fenced back yard, Florida room, two-car garage on a corner lot. Open and spacious home! MLS #82580 **\$220,000**



**SOUTHERN GLEN WAY** - Nicely remodeled low-maintenance concrete block & stucco home has all new stainless steel appliances, new paint and carpet throughout. Large 12 x 18 ft back porch. MLS #82555 **\$164,800**



**CHURCH ROAD** - This large DWMH on a corner lot in Callahan features a wood-burning fireplace and a large open floor plan. Lot is almost 1.5 acres. Island kitchen with lots of cabinets! MLS #82249 **\$145,000**



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# HHS Softball Player Signs With St. John's River State College

Holden McMillen

It is one of the most emotional and important moments in any high school teacher's, parent's or student's life. A freshly printed document titled "Letter of Intent" to the college of choosing. The athlete, with family and coaches in the frame, all gather around to see where the athlete is attending school for the next four years of the athlete's life. This moment in time is what is known as "National Signing Day" and one of Hilliard High School's seniors is taking the quantum leap of faith into the biggest decision of her life.

Senior Softball player Brealyn Holley has signed her letter of intent to play softball at St. John's River State College in Palatka. "It's exciting," said Brealyn. "Definitely an eye opener for sure, playing with other girls I'll have to get to know."

Holley is a three-sport athlete. She has participated in volleyball, softball and basketball. She was looked at by Saint Leo University in Tampa for basketball, but ultimately chose softball, where she was offered a scholarship by St. John's River State College. "I picked St. John's because I'm a home body and did not like the idea of being far from home," added Brealyn.

In his first year as head softball coach for Hilliard High School, Michael Bryant saw firsthand what Holley is capable of while being the middle school coach. "She always had a high softball IQ, that's something you cannot coach," said Coach Bryant. "Knowing what to do, knowing the situations under pressure."

When talking about the coaching staff during her four years of playing



softball, Holley was greatly appreciative of pushing her to become her greatest. "The coaching staff is everything," said Brealyn. "They made me a better person, pushing me and getting the word out."

Holley has developed a knack for the defensive side of the ball. She played second base until her junior year and was moved to shortstop. Still, she gave everything she had and laid it all on the diamond. "Leadership...she's not outspoken and leads by example," added Coach Bryant. "She knows when to steal a base and when to make the right play at the right time."

When talking about the impact she will make at college, Coach Bryant gives a few characteristics of Holley's play on the field. "Defensively sound, has the speed to cover ground," Coach Bryant begins. "Offensively, bunting wise she's good. She has a few flaws, but she can correct them. She's very coachable."

While Holley excels on the softball diamond, she also excels in the classroom. She is an honor roll student and a member of the Senior BETA Club and National Honor Society. Still, Holley will never forget the faculty and staff at Hilliard High School for helping her reach her goal and striving

for greatness in the classroom. "It's like coaching," said Brealyn. "They have encouraged me to go the extra mile in the classroom."

While excelling in both the classroom and on the field, however, Holley could not get to this moment in her life without the love and support of her parents and grandparents. She knows that without their support, she

would not get to where she wants to go in life.

"We're very proud of her," said Brealyn's parents Brenton and Julie Holley. "She's always had a strong head on her shoulders and can do anything when she puts her mind to it."

"It's been rewarding and a pleasure to watch our grandchildren grow up, go to school, do sporting activities and to be able to further their education by attending a junior college of her choice," added Vivian and Linwood Holley, Brealyn's grandparents.

"Be your best, education first," added Brealyn's parents. "Always keep God first, stand strong on your strong foundation and have fun."

"Always play with your heart," said Coach Bryant. "Trust your instincts. Trust your heart. Always follow your dreams."

## Quilt Winner Announced



The Country Star Quilt Guild held a drawing for a beautiful Patriotic handmade quilt. The drawing was held and Laurie Despres of Hilliard was the winner. Laurie is shown (far right) with members of the Country Star Quilt Guild, including Betty Jeffreys who made the quilt.

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**Thursday, January 24 • 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.**

**LAST CHANCE SIGN-UPS Sat., Jan. 26**

January 26 and after, fee increases to \$110

\$20 Volunteer Deposit per family due at registration.  
 Refunded at end of season once volunteer duties are fulfilled.

Sign up online at [sports.bluesombrero.com/hilliardlittleleague](http://sports.bluesombrero.com/hilliardlittleleague)

Must provide: Child's BIRTH CERTIFICATE AND REPORT CARD or 3 Proofs of Residency.

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Life Care Center of Hilliard now hiring **RNs and LPNs**, must have FL License. Please apply in person to: 3756 West 3rd Street, Hilliard or fax resume to 904-845-9487, or email to: Loren.Reddish@lcca.com<mailto:Loren.Reddish@lcca.com>. tfn

**LOOKING TO HIRE a PAINTER,** experience required, must have transportation, good work ethic, part-time to start; good pay! Call (904) 333-3262. tfn

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**CANTEBURY OF HILLIARD** is an Equal Housing Opportunity with Rental Assistance for Elderly (62 or older), Disabled and Handicapped (regardless of age), with or without children. Eligible applicants should come by the office at 37119 Canterbury Drive, or phone (904) 845-4496 TDD 1-800-374-4463. 2BR apartment available. This institution is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer. Tfn

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## Keep Nassau Beautiful Visits CMS



Are you familiar with the four R's? If not, you can ask the gifted students at Callahan Middle School and they will inform you they are reduce, reuse, recycle and refuse. Keep Nassau Beautiful Executive Director Lynda Bell and board member Ashley Powell visited Mrs. Thien's sixth, seventh and eighth grade classes to emphasize how these students can assist in their organization's efforts. Keep Nassau Beautiful has a partnership with White Oak and they teach middle school

students how to convert feed sacks into reusable bags. Callahan Middle School is the fourth school in the county who has had the opportunity to partake in this learning experience. Prior to learning how to convert the sacks into reusable bags, the students sorted a variety of items that were both recyclable and not. Keep an eye out for these young people as they look forward to sharing what they learned with others in our community.

## Ask the County Manager Meetings

As a reminder, County Manager Mike Mullin will be holding two meetings per month to make himself available to anyone wishing to ask County related questions and/or address County related issues.

These meetings are typically held on the second Tuesday and the fourth Thursday of each month from 3-4 p.m. however, dates can change due to unforeseen circumstances. Residents are urged to visit the website at: [www.nassaucountyfl.com](http://www.nassaucountyfl.com) for current meeting information. Meetings are held in the Commission Chambers located at the James S. Page Governmental Complex, 96135 Nassau Place, Yulee.

Below is the tentative meeting schedule for the next quarter:

Tuesday, January 8; Thursday, January 24; Tuesday, February 12; Thursday, February 28; Tuesday, March 12; and Thursday, March 28.

If you have any questions, call the County Manager's Office at (904) 530-6010.

## 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.

### Tuesday, January 1

Vincent Scott Ashcraft, 52, 19293 Ashcraft Lane, Hilliard: DUI Refuse Test

### Thursday, January 3

James Austin Bray, 36, 372180 Kings Ferry Road, Hilliard: Failure to Appear Violation of Condition of Release Domestic Violence

### Friday, January 4

James P. Logue, 41, 27105 W. First Avenue, Hilliard: DUI Normal Faculties Impaired

Ashley Nicole Lewis, 30, 54097 Charles Street, Callahan: Failure to Appear Battery Domestic

### Saturday, January 5

Samantha Lynn Woodle, 28, Possession of Methamphetamine

### Clarification:

The name of Hugh Obrian Holton, shown in the arrest reports on December 13, 2018, was a case of stolen identity.

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- Operate forklift or pallet jack in a safe and efficient manner
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- Ensures forklifts are properly checked, used and maintained daily
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- Identify safety hazards in the workplace

### Requirements:

- High school diploma/GED preferred
- Ability to work in a cold environment
- 2+ years' experience operating forklifts or pallet jack
- Proficient in mathematics
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- Possess a high regard for safety in the workplace
- Able to lift 50 pounds unassisted

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The 2018-2019 tax season begins in earnest this month and eventually ends (if you file an extension) on Tuesday, October 15, 2019. There are ALSO other form filing deadlines that you might not yet even know about. Whether you are just filing an individual tax return or small business tax return, things have changed considerably. If you go to someone who is not truly skilled in federal taxation or attempting your own tax chores yourself, either effort may be costly financial folly for too many taxpayers. Don't be one of them.

No more Forms 1040EZ or 1040A; but instead, everyone files a 1040 return this year. At first, this may appear very simple, but isn't. There are six additional pages with lists of the various supplemental calculations and forms this year. The design is simple: It is very easy to use the new 1040 IF you only have one or two W-2 earnings statements, but if you have just one or more "minor or major tax complications" be prepared to read IRS Publication 17 (available at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)) before you tackle that chore yourself this year. If the return is incorrect, you will have to face the consequences and the IRS alone ... and those "complications" can also cost you hundreds, perhaps even thousands, of dollars in penalties and interest.

**DON'T GO IT ALONE!** COUNTRY LAW and TAX SERVICE, INC. stands ready with the skill and education to guide you through the 2018 tax changes. We are scheduling NOW for the 2018 tax season. Schedules fill up quickly, so call ASAP to secure an appointment with one of our tax professionals.

## COUNTRY LAW & TAX SERVICE, INC.

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**PEARLIE B. BARRENTINE**



Pearlie B. "Pearl" Barrentine, 103, of Jacksonville, went home to be with the Lord on December 31.

Pearl was born on January 22, 1915 in Twiggs County, Georgia, to Cicero and Margaret Blackshear. She retired from Stockton Whatley and Davin and later volunteered at Lannie Road Baptist Church. She was preceded in death by her parents; grandson Danney L. Barrentine; and daughter-in-law Betty Joyce Barrentine.

She is survived by her son Danney L. Barrentine, Sr.; grandson James Robert Barrentine; great-grandsons Andrew L. Barrentine, Joey W. Barrentine and Chad Ponder.

A viewing was held prior to the funeral service Friday, January 4 in the Nassau Funeral Home Chapel with Pastor Buddy Wimberly officiating. Interment was held in Stone Creek Baptist Church Cemetery in Macon, Georgia.

Condolences may be expressed at [www.nassaufh.com](http://www.nassaufh.com).

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

**JOHN WILSON BOYD, SR.**

John Wilson Boyd, Sr., 53, went home to be with the Lord Sunday, December 30. He was a loving father, son and brother. John enjoyed working for Green Technologies. He will be missed by many.

He is survived by his daughter Tabatha (Bryan) Sloan; and his son John Wilson Boyd, Jr.; father Marshall Bruce (Tina) Boyd; mother Emily Christine (Carl) Millington; siblings Margie Crocker, Mark (Carolyn) Boyd, Vera (Kenny) Koon, Matthew (Sherry) Boyd and Christi (Jason) Tuttle; his step-siblings Kim (Rhonda) Broughton, Barbara Blount, Sharon (Sonny) Harris, Chad George, Annalisa (Nathan) Deen, Jason Intravia; and many aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews. He is preceded in death by his step-father George Broughton; and his step-brother Norman Broughton.

Services were held Tuesday, January 8 at Callahan First Baptist Church.

Condolences may be expressed at [www.nassaufh.com](http://www.nassaufh.com).

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

**OBITUARIES**

**TAMMI LYNN BOYD**

Tammi Lynn Walker Boyd, 52, went home to be with her heavenly Father on Sunday, December 30. She was dearly loved by everyone who knew her and she will be deeply missed by many. She was a Registered Nurse at Wolfson Children's Hospital in Jacksonville for over 17 years where she touched many lives.

She is survived by her children, Tabatha (Bryan) Sloan and John Wilson Boyd, Jr.; her mother Velva Walker; sisters Joyce (Lewis) Bennett and Susan (Bill) Durham; sister-in-law Darla Walker; many aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her father William Walker; and her brothers Bill Walker and Robert Walker.

Services were held Tuesday, January 8 at Callahan First Baptist Church.

Condolences may be expressed at [www.nassaufh.com](http://www.nassaufh.com).

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

**ARTHUR MACON CARTER, SR.**



Arthur Macon Carter, Sr., 55, of Bryceville, went home to be with the Lord, surrounded by his family, Thursday, January 3.

Arthur Carter was known to always put a smile on your face, treat everyone with respect and could make you feel like you were the only person in the room. His positive energy was contagious and he was easy to fall in love with. He loved with his whole heart and wasn't afraid to show it. He was a family man who loved his family dearly and never failed to show it, through his actions and words. He was a hard worker, dedicated to his job and his crew. He always treated them with respect and made sure the job done right. If there was just one word we could use to describe Arthur it would be, loving. Everything he did in his life was based solely on love.

He will be sadly missed by his parents Marion Carter and Velma Carter; lifelong partner and wife of 37 years, Donna Carter; children Arthur Carter, II, Priscilla Carter and Candace Stowe; grandchildren Cannon Carter, Jimmy Magill, Jr., Kendall Magill and Maddison Stowe; siblings Randy Carter, I, Kirt Carter, Jeffery Carter, I (Cathy Carter),

Jane Cauley (John Cauley); nieces Misty Petteway, Kayla Carter, Patricia Carter, Jodi Carter, Kelsey Cauley, Christina Reyes and Neicca Moody; nephews Randy Carter, II, Jessie Carter, Jeffery Carter, II, Johnathan Cauley, Karsen Cauley, Lance Colbert, Aaron Colbert and Michael Moody.

The services in memory of Arthur will be held Thursday, January 10 at Nassau Funeral Home. The viewing will be held from 5-7 p.m. with a service following at 7 p.m. Those who so desire may make memorial donations in memory of Arthur are encouraged to make them to the American Lung Association at [www.lung.org](http://www.lung.org).

Condolences may be expressed at [www.nassaufh.com](http://www.nassaufh.com).

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

**DANIEL A. CONNER**



Daniel A. Conner, 84, of Jacksonville, passed away Friday, January 4. He was born April 9, 1934 in Nassau County, Florida to the late Hampton

Lee and Myrtle G. Conner. Dan had made his home in Jacksonville for the past several years.

Dan graduated from Callahan High School in 1952; attended Georgia State College in Atlanta, where he received a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in 1960. He served 2 years in the United States Army where he served his country proudly and received an honorable discharge.

Survivors include his brothers James Rayford (Frances) Conner of Callahan and Lee (Marcene) Conner of Folkston; several nieces, nephews and devoted friends Marty and Samantha Ahrens. Dan was preceded in death by his parents; sisters Kathleen Herrin and Geneva Zelner; brother Robert H. Conner, Sr.; and dear friend and business partners Dr. David Bennett, Jr. and Edsel Higginbotham.

The family received friends Tuesday, January 8 in the Nassau Funeral Home Chapel. Funeral services were held Wednesday, January 9 at the funeral home with Pastor James Conner officiating. Interment followed in Mills Creek

Cemetery.

Pallbearers were Brant Gay, Robert H. Conner, II, Eddie Herrin, Tommy Herrin, Curtis Bray and Drez Bennett.

Condolences may be expressed at [www.nassaufh.com](http://www.nassaufh.com).

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

**BRANTON AUBREY CREWS**



Branton Aubrey Crews, 18, of Hilliard, passed away January 3. He was born January 12, 2000 in Fernandina Beach.

He was a recent graduate of Hilliard Middle-Senior High School class of 2018. He was a member of the First Baptist Church of Boulougne. He was looking forward to begin his career at D Ray James Correctional Facility in Folkston. He was preceded in death by his grandparents Aubrey Crews and Donna Manning; and great-grandparents Avery and Lucille Lee and Jessie and Gwendolyn Hodges.

He is survived by his mother Crystal Lee Crews; his father Allen Dale Crews; his siblings Clayton Crews, Jacob (Dezeree) Crews, Kayla Guinn and Cheyenne Crews; his grandparents Clinton and Patsy Lee; his girlfriend Katie Baker; and a number of aunts, uncles, cousins and other relatives.

The family received friends Sunday, January 6 at Shepard-Roberson Funeral Home in Folkston. Funeral services were held Monday, January 7 also in the funeral home Chapel with Rev. Paul Lucas officiating. Burial followed in Oakwood Cemetery.

Condolences may be expressed at [www.shepardfh.com](http://www.shepardfh.com).

Arrangements were under the direction of Shepard-Roberson Funeral Home in Folkston.

**WILLIAM ALVEN GRANTHAM**



William 'Bill' Alven Grantham, 84, of Callahan, passed away peacefully at his residence Saturday, January 5, 2019.

Bill was born on April 2, 1934 in Perry, Florida to the late Buddy and Beulah Johnson Grantham. Bill and his wife, Joyce, lived in Hilliard, for over 20 years and then resided in Valdosta, Georgia before moving to Callahan to be close to

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*Tamara's Message*

Listen closely, my Spirit is Speaking.

When you see a blooming rose, it is me dancing with Angels singing.  
When you hear whispers of the wind, it is me speaking to you in the Spirit.

When you hear the sounds of laughter, it is me enjoying Freedom.

When you see a twinkling star, that is me winking.

When you see the sun rising, it is me shining.

When you see me in a dream, that is me believing.

It's me, Tamara, sending all a message from the Heavens!

My Memory and Spirit Live FOREVER!

*In Loving Memory of  
Tamara Sue Tucker*

November 20, 1972 - October 22, 2013



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY  
DONNIE CREWS, JR.**

January 7, 1971 - January 24, 2000

You would have been 48 this year. I think of you and miss you everyday. I bet you and your daddy are having a good time fishing in Heaven.

Love,  
Mom and family



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family. He served in the US Marine Corps from 1951-1955. He attended Forestry school in Lake City and made a career in the timber industry. Bill had a passion for outdoor life...especially fishing and hunting. He was a wonderful and much-loved husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather, along with being a friend to many. He touched many lives and will never be forgotten by those who loved him.

Bill is survived by his daughters Sandy (Michael) Carroll of Callahan and Brenda (Steve) Shambach of St. Augustine; grandchildren Brian (Jeanna) Carroll, Tiffany (Josh) Baker, Jennifer (DJ) Willard and Brett Shambach; seven great-grandchildren; and a sister Shirley (Dave) Houchin. He was preceded in death by his wife Joyce Lee (Williams) Grantham.

The family will receive friends Thursday, January 10 at 11 a.m. with the funeral service to follow at 12 p.m. at the First Baptist Church of Callahan. Graveside services will be held at 2 p.m. at the Jacksonville National Cemetery.

Flowers are being handled by Carrie's Florist of Callahan.

Condolences may be expressed at [www.nassaufh.com](http://www.nassaufh.com).

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

**PAULA ELLIS NIGHBERT**

Paula Mae Ellis Nighbert, 86, of Hilliard, passed away January 6 at Lakes Crossing Assisted Living in Kingsland, Georgia. She was born February 27, 1932 in Stanton, Texas to the late Paul Stadler Ellis and Mазzie Mae Wright Ellis. She, along with her late husband, was a member of the National Camping Travelers Club.

Along with her parents; she is preceded in death by her husband Maynard Stockton Nighbert; a son Paul Nighbert; a sister Margaret Sanders; two brothers Charles

**OBITUARIES**

Ellis and Alvin Ellis; and a daughter-in-law Glenda Nighbert.

She is survived by her children Stockton Nighbert, Neil (Denise) Nighbert and James (Kristi) Nighbert; a daughter-in-law Penny Nighbert; seven grandchildren Chad (Greta) Nighbert, Michael (Kelli) Nighbert, Audrey Nighbert (Brad) Shuler, Courtney Nighbert (Aaron) Petty, Dylan Nighbert, Erica Nighbert and Stephen (April) Kriete; 10 great-grandchildren Paul Nighbert, Ross Nighbert, Adrian Nighbert, Adalynn Petty, Taylor Petty, Peyton Messenbeck, Zoie Kriete, Eli Kriete, Madalyn Shuler and Brendon Shuler; a brother Jimmy (Neva) Ellis; two sisters-in-law Clare Ellis and Joyce Ellis; a brother-in-law Jim Sanders; and a number of nieces, nephews, and other relatives.

Memorialization will be by cremation.

A Celebration of Life Service will be held Friday, January 11 from 5-7 p.m. at Shepard-Roberson Funeral Home.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to Georgia Hospice Care of Brunswick, Georgia.

Condolences may be at [www.shepardfh.com](http://www.shepardfh.com).

Arrangements were under the direction of Shepard-Roberson Funeral Home in Folkston.

**JOHN H. STALVEY**

John H. Stalvey, 89, of Callahan, went home to be with the Lord on January 2. He was born October 26, 1929 in Dupont, Georgia to Ezekiel and Rachel Stalvey. He was a member of First Baptist Church of Callahan. He served in the United State Marines from

1949-1951. John was hired at the Atlantic Coast Railroad on June 4, 1945 and retired on June 30, 1994. He enjoyed 24 ½ years of retirement with gardening, hunting and fishing. John was a master Mason of Woodstock Park of Jacksonville. Raised to sublime degree of Master Mason on October 25, 1983 and was active in Masonic services for 25 years. John was married on September 17, 1955 to Shirley Faye Colley Stalvey from Blackshear, Georgia.

John is survived by his wife, Shirley; and two children Deborah L. Stalvey and John C. Stalvey; and several nieces and nephews.

A viewing was held Sunday, January 6 in the Nassau Funeral Home Chapel. A funeral service was held Monday, January 7 at First Baptist Church of Callahan with Pastor Lynn Hyatt officiating. Interment followed in Jones Cemetery.

Condolences may be expressed at [www.nassaufh.com](http://www.nassaufh.com).

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

**STEPHEN GERALD TAYLOR**

Stephen (Steve) Gerald Taylor, 60, of Folkston, Georgia, passed away December 31 at his residence. He was born October 5, 1958 in

London, England, to the late James Wesley Taylor and Helen Kathleen Taylor. He became a naturalized citizen in 1980. He was a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. He is preceded in death by his parents; and one brother.

He is survived by his wife Doris Loraine Taylor; three children Merrill (Lauren)

Taylor, Tasha (Tracy) Guinn and Tyler (Emma) Taylor; four grandchildren Ryland and Fenton Taylor and Cayden and Dylan Guinn; and two brothers.

Funeral services were held Saturday, January 5 at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Hilliard. Private interment services were held at the Jacksonville National Cemetery with Military Honors.

Condolences may be expressed at [shepardfh.com](http://shepardfh.com).

Shepard-Roberson Funeral Home in Folkston assisted the family.

**VERA LLOYD WEST**



Vera Faye Lloyd West, 73, of Folkston, Georgia, passed away December 30 at her home. She was born November 14, 1945 to the late Willie Willis Lloyd and Rose Irene Duggan Lloyd. She was a faithful member of the Folkston Church of God. Along with her parents; she was preceded in death by her sister Joan Lloyd.

She is survived by her husband Louis West; four children Patty (Danny) Hinson, Dennis (Amy) Huggins, Dawn West and Johnny (Gabriella) West; a sister Virginia Barber; two brothers Donnie (Nancy Lloyd) and Wilson (Tammy) Lloyd; 10 grandchildren; and 11 great-grandchildren; and a number of nieces and nephews.

The family received friends Wednesday, January 2 at Shepard-Roberson Funeral Home in Folkston. Funeral services were held Thursday, January 3 in the Shepard-Roberson Funeral Home Chapel with Rev. Rob Gillis officiating. Burial followed in Homeland Cemetery.

Condolences may be expressed at [www.shepardfh.com](http://www.shepardfh.com).

Arrangements by Shepard-Roberson Funeral Home, Folkston.

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**Q: How can you identify an animal by scat? CV**

A: This is not my area of expertise but UF has a publication to help. Basically, here what the article



says: "Although some animals are active during the day and highly visible (i.e., many birds and a few mammals), most wildlife is fairly secretive. In cases where observations of the animals themselves are challenging, you may be able to identify the culprit by the droppings it leaves behind. The size, shape, and color of wildlife droppings can provide important clues. Small feces pellets, the size of rice grains could be from rats, mice, chipmunks, or bats. Rounded, pea-sized pellets with rough texture are likely from rabbits. Slightly larger, smoother, oval droppings are likely from white-tailed deer, whereas smaller oval pellets could be from squirrels. Fox and coyote scat is typically 2 inches long and 1/2 inch in diameter, segmented, with tapered (pointed) ends. It usually contains hair and often bits of bone. Bobcat scat is usually about 4 inches long, segmented and blunt at the ends. Raccoon scat has blunt ends and is uniform in thickness (1 inch in diameter). Feces from wild hogs

# Garden Talk

*Rebecca Jordi, UF/IFAS Nassau County Horticultural Extension Agent is a University of Florida faculty member. Mail questions to: Garden Talk, c/o Rebecca Jordi, Nassau County Extension, 543350 US Hwy. 1, Callahan, FL 32011 or email [rjordi@ufl.edu](mailto:rjordi@ufl.edu)*

is variable in size and shape (depending on the recent diet of the animal) but tends to be similar in shape and consistency to that of dogs. The color of feces can indicate how long ago it was left behind: fresh feces are usually moist and shiny whereas older feces tend to be dry, dull, and grayish. Take photos of the scat you find in your yard and compare your photos with photos of scat from known species of wildlife on the internet. For more complete information consider reading the full article published by the University of Florida titled, "How To Identify the Wildlife Species Responsible for Damage in Your Yard" by Holly K. Ober and Arlo Kane.

**Q: I am concerned about a leaning tree and want to know if it is a risk. CH**

A: There is a special arborist certification just for risk assessment (Tree Risk Assessment Qualification (TRAQ) and you can find those by looking it up through the International Society of Arboriculture



listing. I have given you a link to certified arborist in the Jacksonville area and a few of them have this special risk assessment certification too. You can feel comfortable contacting any of them. But, let's talk about a few things every homeowner needs to know. Simply because a tree is leaning does not make it a risk tree. Generally, look for uplifting roots on one side of the tree which could indicate the tree has lifted from the ground. Exposed roots are not the same thing. If there are uplifted roots, there may be a depression in the landscape on the opposite end of the risky leaning tree. Extensive flooding, which removes the oxygen from the soil, can cause the roots to uplift and potentially cause the tree to decline and this can result in a risky tree. The older a tree is the less likely it can adjust to disruptions around the tree roots. So, no digging and planting ornamental shrubs around trees especially close to the trunk. Keep as far away from the tree trunk as possible. The larger and older the tree, the farther away any plants should be, including lawn grass. Grass and trees are terrible partners. Allow an area of

several feet away from the trunk of the tree to be just soil and air then mulch (2-3 inches deep) several feet outside the plain soil area. Let's start giving our trees the best chance to survive which means as little competition with other plants as possible. If we start showing how to best take care of trees, maybe others will follow our example.

**Q: I think we may have a warm winter and I want to prune my plants before I leave for vacation. What are your thoughts? JB**

A: I know it is tempting to prune things early, but honestly, I am certain we will experience more freezing temperatures between now and the end of February. So, our recommendation would be to wait until the chance of freezing temperatures is diminished which would be around the beginning of March. Here is the downside, if you prune now there is a strong chance for new growth to occur and when the freeze does come the new growth will die causing you to want to prune again. Take your vacation and have fun. Consider waiting to prune, the plant will thank you and so will I.



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