



Monday, February 21

WESTSIDE JOURNAL

VOLUME XVIII ISSUE 30

HOMETOWN PEOPLE...HOMETOWN NEWS

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2022

"AND BE NOT CONFORMED TO THIS WORLD: BUT BE YE TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWING OF YOUR MIND, THAT YE MAY PROVE WHAT IS THAT GOOD, AND ACCEPTABLE, AND PERFECT, WILL OF GOD." - ROMANS 12:2

Pray
to God for
Our Nation!

WNHS Varsity Cheerleaders World Champions

Congratulations to the West Nassau High School Varsity Cheerleaders for achieving a National and World Championship last weekend in Orlando. The teams competed Friday, Saturday and Sunday at the Disney's ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex in Orlando. The Varsity team competed Saturday and Sunday in the Small Varsity Coed Non-Tumbling Division and won their 4th National Championship title in a row; and the 5th National title in 7 years.



The Varsity team also competed in the World School Cheerleading Championship on Sunday and won their 3rd World Championship title since 2019 (there was no World Championship in 2021 due to Covid). The athletes for the State, National and World Championship titles are: Morgan Kincade, Owen Pijanka, Mackenzie Witt, Payton Blackburn, Kaylee Crews, Kendall Driggers, Kyra Fours, Madison Myers, Kylee Womack, Payton Davis, Madison Green, Austin Johnson, Peyton Platt, Amelya Smith and Head Coach Samantha Beazley.



The Varsity team competed in the Small Coed Varsity Game Day Division for the very first time ever on Friday night, finished first in their primary round and was able to bypass the semifinal round to go directly to finals on Sunday morning. They placed second Sunday morning in Small Varsity Coed Game Day with the following athletes: Chase Geiger, Ella Batrous, Michael Thorn, Chloe Womack, Morgan Kincade, Owen Pijanka, Mackenzie Witt, Payton Blackburn, Kaylee Crews, Kendall Driggers, Kyra Fours, Madison Myers, Kylee Womack, Payton Davis, Madison Green, Austin Johnson, Peyton Platt and Amelya Smith. Congratulations!

WNHS JV Cheerleaders National Champions



Congratulations to the West Nassau High School Junior Varsity Cheerleaders for being National Champions! The JV team competed in the JV Non-Tumbling Game Day Division Sunday, February 13 at Disney's ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex in Orlando. The team made history by becoming the first West Nassau JV team to ever win Nationals after knocking on the door and finishing 2nd in 2020 and 2021! Fun little side note...the top 3 teams in this division were the same top 3 teams from last year and WNHS JV lost by .5. This year, WNHS JV beat the team that won last year by, you guessed it, .5!

Cheer team members are: Kaylee Arreal, Maddison Barnes, Hannah Border, Tisha Burden, Laura Conner, Nicky Cooley, Karlee Dailey, Jaycee Dover, Makenna Jones, Jayden Massengill, Alezia McCoy, Molly Miller, Mary Parret, Aniyah Ross, Leyla Selph, Hanna Starling, Connor Vilett, Haylie Young, David Helmick; and the team coach is Chelsea Alexander.

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A Word
From the Publisher

I went by the grocery store the other day to buy bread and milk and spent \$47. I won't even share with you how much it costs to fill up my car with gas! Yikes! Yes, as we continue to see everything spike to astronomical amounts, it's truly hard to stay positive. However, I have seen a few different incidents where people are starting to wake up and stand up. Now that feels positive. It's past time that we quit cowering down instead of speaking up when we don't agree with some of these things going on. Somewhere along the line, we forgot we live in a FREE country. We can share our beliefs and thoughts in a respectful (not violent) way. One of the many things I learned from my dad is: It's either right or it's wrong. There is no gray area. That goes for a lot of things we have recently gone through.

As I say that, I am also reminded that God feels the same way, right or wrong. I'm not sure why it has taken me so long to really to understand God's love. He is never changing. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. I assure you, He is still working on me. We can try and try to figure out what is going on in our world and make ourselves crazy or we can turn it all over to the Lord and let Him carry the load. People think I'm joking when I say sometimes I have to just take break and walk outside and look up. God is in control through it all...not me. I know I sometimes think I am but He quickly reminds me that He's got this.

As I sit here tonight (Monday) I am so thankful. Roger and I had a wonderful weekend of us. It's been quite some time but we made it happen. It wasn't that we did any spectacular thing, we just spent time together. Monday at work, God provided me time to visit with several different people that passed through the office. I made a new friend, spent time with some old friends and listened when I needed to. You know some people just want to share. They don't really want advice, just someone to listen for a couple of minutes. I'm so thankful that at my job, I have the opportunity to spend time with people. As Roger says, I'm never really short on words! However I do try to listen and enjoy it. Did you know you can learn a whole lot about people when you take time to listen?

As I drift back to the troubles of the world, we can do our part, but we can always pray about it. Prayer can move mountains. I've learned when we pray, we need to pray big and specific. God continues to be on His throne and in full control. After all, we as Christians know how the story ends. I can't think of a better thing than spending eternity in Heaven. There is no better time than today to ask Jesus into your heart. He is patiently waiting. Prayer changes things!

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.

Windstream Service

Dear Editor,

I rate Windstream service on a scale from 1-10 (4). Yes someone needs to come to Nassau County and see what is going on with the Windstream service. I've been a customer for almost 20 years and just in the past 3 years – call after call to them about what is going on? No service! It was certainly not the weather. A week ago, 2 hours, they advised at that time, "They were working on it and should be back on by 8:29 p.m.," at which time it was 1:58 a.m.

My son works from home for a large bank and one can only imagine how these past days have affected his work and paycheck!

So, Windstream, what is your answer? Should we look into another source for service?

C. Hicks

Unlawful Orders

Dear Editor,

I am writing on behalf of the thousands of Florida National Guard Soldiers who will soon be illegally punished and discharged from service for upholding the Constitution and defying an unlawful order. The unethical, unmoral and illegal Department of Defense (DOD) COVID19 Vaccination order is in direct violation of the Constitution of Florida, the United States, the Nuremberg Code (derived from the same atrocities the Nazis committed during WWII) and the God-given laws of nature. The traitors in Washington are attempting to overstep their authority and control the National Guard, who lawfully fall under the governor of their states. Thousands of men and women who have honorably served their country are about to be punished for upholding their oath to defend the Constitution. The continued forcing of servicemembers to get the vaccine or give up their benefits and career are further in violation of federal judicial injunction and Florida law as signed by Governor DeSantis last November. Additionally, DOD whistleblowers identified that service members and their families who have received the vaccine have seen more medical complications to include a 300% increase in miscarriages, a 400% increase in cardiac related issues, and an 1000% increase in neurological issues, among other problems.

The CDC and other countries are also raising warnings to the dangers of the vaccines. All this while the DOD is denying exemptions for religious and medical reasons, in addition to making no allowance for natural immunity for those who have already had the virus. History reminds us that Hitler gave lawful orders to commit similar testing on Jews and subsequently ordered their extermination. Simply because an order may be said to be lawful does not make it morally, ethically or legally right. While the nearly 80 deaths across the DOD from COVID are a sad loss, the more than 600 service members who took their own lives in the same time period shows where the real issue lies. Senior leadership positions who create a military environment where servicemembers feel the only way to escape toxic cowardly leaders is through suicide. The treason of these senior military leaders and those behind them in Washington is crippling our national security and military readiness. President Thomas Jefferson said it best when he stated, "When tyranny becomes law, rebellion becomes duty." It is time to put a stop to this tyranny and take back America.

Joseph Hoover

Talk About Credible

Dear Editor,

When I read a letter replete with distortions and gross generalizations by someone who called the subject "a liar", lacked the courage to name him and dictated the terms of credibility, I am perplexed. By now everyone has decided about the validity of the election and if not, the performance of the Biden-Harris administration has solidified their conclusion.

Staying stuck in election results is a great way to deny gas prices heading toward \$4, double what we paid under the previous administration; the increasing incidents of Covid which Biden promised to curtail; food and product shortages and angry illegal entrants to our country who want what we have, but want them for free.


In little over a year, we have regressed economically and socially, betrayed by an administration that appears totally out of control. That's what's credible!

B. R. Mc Connell

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In the Kitchen... **Dump-and-Go Meatball Lasagna**
8 oz uncooked campanelle pasta 1 1/2 cups water
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(from 22 oz. bag) 1 1/2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
1 jar (25.5 oz) tomato pasta sauce Chopped fresh basil leaves, if desired
Heat oven to 375°. Spray 13x9-inch glass baking dish with cooking spray. In large bowl, mix pasta, frozen meatballs, pasta sauce, water and Italian seasoning. Pour mixture into dish. Cover tightly with foil. Bake 40 minutes. Remove dish from oven; stir mixture thoroughly. Sprinkle with cheese. Bake uncovered 5 to 8 minutes longer or until pasta is tender and cheese is melted. Garnish with basil leaves before serving.

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Keep Nassau Beautiful Hosts Free Adopt-A-Tree Events

Keep Nassau Beautiful (KNB) volunteers and partner organizations will be holding a free-tree drive-through event where residents will pick-up one or two free trees to be planted in Nassau County.

Individuals, businesses, and organizations may reserve free trees by completing a few simple steps; reviewing UF/IFAS Extension tree fact sheets for the available species and viewing an educational video led by UF/IFAS Nassau County Extension. Once the on-line learning is complete residents will be ready to complete the reservation form to select their preferred tree species and pick-up location. Completion of the reservation form is required 72 hours prior to the drive-through event. Nassau County proof of residency is required to pick up one or two of our 3-gallon size trees. Residents are also asked to help the tree get its best chance at a healthy long life by following a watering schedule while their tree gets established.

The Callahan Free tree drive-through event will be held: Callahan, Saturday, March 12, between 9 a.m. – 11 a.m. Details and reservation form at <https://keepnassaubeautiful.org/news->

and-events/.

The project is being generously funded through dedicated grants, fundraising activities and private donations. Liberty Landscape Supply sponsors the supply of up to 5-species of trees for the drive-through events. Up to 500 trees will be distributed and species are available while supplies last. “Trees are essential to addressing the negative effects of climate change, maintaining wildlife habitat, retaining property values and providing aesthetic beauty,” said Mike Cole, KNB Board Chair, “Keep Nassau Beautiful is honored to host these free tree drive-through events which engage residents in keeping Nassau County green and beautiful for future generations.”

For more information KNB@KeepNassauBeautiful.org or 904-261-0165.

Keep Nassau Beautiful, Inc. is working to inspire, educate, and equip individuals, groups, businesses and governments to take action to make Nassau County a place where residents, visitors and wildlife can thrive and experience the beauty of Nassau County, visit their website at: www.keepnassaubeautiful.org.

JUST MY OPINION

Roger R. West

There are many times I wish I could be like the multitude of people that just go about their life enjoying the luxuries provided by this great republic we live in, all the while with their heads stuck in the sand. They are totally oblivious to the fact that their entire life is sitting on a bubble that is about to burst. These people are going to wake up one morning and realize that the party is over and reality is going to hit them square in the face and most will have no clue how to survive. All their toys are going to be worthless. They will not be able to afford hitting the night life every weekend and most won't even be able to afford the necessities of life.

I will admit that it is discouraging to constantly stay informed of the corrupt political unraveling in our once great republic. I get angry at times and want to bury my head in the sand, too, just walk away and not care what happens and pretend we all live in a fairy tale. It involves a curse that I possess along with many of you. It is called common sense. We can see what's happening around us and we know good from evil. Yet, no matter how hard we try to convey the truth to others, all they do is laugh and condemn our facts and label us as racists, radical right wingers, white supremacists or Uncle Toms.

Well get ready, the water in the swamp is beginning to bubble. If you hear anything about it from the mainstream media it will be diluted and twisted.

If you really want the truth on what's happening right now you will only find it from unbiased journalism. I am referring to the Durham Report that was filed last Friday. Special Counsel Robert Durham submitted a portion of his investigation on the Trump-Russia collusion fabricated by the left. There is now solid proof that Hillary Clinton along with the DNC operatives hired a tech company to infiltrate computer servers at Trump Tower prior to the 2020 election and servers inside the White House after Trump was elected. This is just the tip of the iceberg and already makes Watergate seem like a minor bump in a road. The Ex-Director of National Intelligence even claims Biden and Obama knew about the Hillary campaign plot to hack Trump servers. He stated that there is enough evidence in Durham's Russia probe to indict multiple people.

Of course, there is so much information in the Durham papers it is impossible to relay all the information here. How humorous it is to see so many things that President Trump said was happening and the news media basically calling him a liar, now being proven correct. This is wonderful news but just wait until the facts about the 2020 election hit.

My thoughts are “bring them down, every last one of them.” I am sick of the liberal communist democrat party and their ever serving media ruining my country.

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

EVENTS AROUND TOWN


The Callahan Public Library is now offering Technology help on Thursdays from 3-5 p.m. Residents can sign up for a spot on our website: nassaureads.com. We will offer help with basic computer skills, ebook resources, library databases, email/internet basics, social media and more!

Relay for Life 'Crowns for a Cure' Pageant will be Saturday, February 26 at Callahan Middle School. For entry forms and information email: wnrelayqueen@yahoo.com or call 904-237-3944.

HILLIARD YOUTH FOOTBALL AND SIDELINE CHEERLEADING ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, March 6 at 4 p.m.
@ Stein Tompkins Sports Complex
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St. Valentine Who?

Pastor James McFarlane, First Alliance Church, Hilliard



When we think about Valentine’s Day, what thoughts come to mind? Romance, love, excitement, spending time with our sweetheart, are just a few things that I was taught about Valentine’s Day growing up. I later learned that Valentine’s Day has a much deeper meaning.

Most historians believe that St. Valentine, or Valentinus (his Roman name) lived somewhere in the second or third century. Some think that he was an early Christian Pastor that was arrested and martyred for performing marriage ceremonies for Roman legionnaires. This was strictly forbidden as Rome wanted their rank-and-file soldiers to have no ties or obligations. Despite the danger performing these ceremonies and preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ put him, in Valentinus would not be swayed.

Modern culture views Valentine’s Day as a time that we should buy cards and flowers for our spouse or sweetheart and take them out on a romantic night on the town. Dinner, dancing, a walk on the beach are just a few activities that many of us will enjoy this year and in the years to come. This is a wonderful thing, spending time with your sweetheart is necessary for any relationship’s health. Showing your love and appreciation by flowers, a dinner date, or other activity should be done. If we are being honest with ourselves, investing time in our relationships should be something we do more often than once a year. Yet, we should not stop there. We should also think of Valentine’s Day by thinking of Valentinus’ example. The deeper meaning for Valentinus was showing the love of Christ to others through his actions and words despite what this would cost him.

This deeper meaning does not have to apply to this one holiday alone. Just as we can strive to show our love for our sweetheart in our everyday life, we can strive to show the love of Jesus Christ in our everyday life. I know that this may seem to be a daunting task for some. However, it does not have to be. You do not have to run around trying to hand out hundreds of Bible tracks, you do not need to shout at others from a street corner, or even go door to door. Start slow. Find one person that needs to know and feel that Jesus loves them. Just as our sweethearts need to know that we love and value them, people need to know that Jesus loves and values them. Find that one person and love on them with no expectations. Don’t pressure them, don’t push them to go to church. Just love them. They will ask themselves why you are loving them. This may take time, it may happen quickly, but they will ask themselves and you that question. When they do ask, you need only give the simple answer that Jesus Christ is the reason.

CHURCH NEWS

Bethany Episcopal Church will be selling Spaghetti Dinners this Friday, February 18 from 5-7 p.m. for \$8 each. The church is located on CR 108 in Hilliard across from Hilliard Town Hall.

Grace Baptist Church, 13290 Ranch Rd., Jacksonville, invites you to their Sunday worship services at 10 a.m. (Sunday school), 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; and Wednesdays 7 p.m. Pastor Bill Forde.

DOH-Nassau Seeks Volunteers

The Florida Department of Health in Nassau County (DOH-Nassau) was one of eight grantees selected for a Healthy Brain Initiative Grant by the Alzheimer’s Association and the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO). The grant will allow DOH-Nassau and key partners to enhance the capacity to address cognitive health and dementia for the citizens of Nassau County. That includes expanding “observation lens” for planning, implementation, and evaluation of public health actions addressing the needs of our population living with or at risk for Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias, while also helping promote quality of life for their caregivers. Components of this initiative include community dialogues, training of local health officials and key community partners and implementation of public health actions on dementia.

DOH-Nassau is looking for people interested in joining a group that will serve in an advisory capacity for this initiative. Members of this group will review and discuss recommendations made for Nassau County Healthy Brain Road Map that addresses risk reduction, early interventions, and support to caregivers, complementing the clinical model addressing Alzheimer’s and other dementias.

Participants will have the option to attend virtually or in person. Past or current caregivers, health professionals, other human services providers, persons diagnosed with early onset of



Alzheimer’s, members of faith groups, and persons in the community involved in other community impacting groups are invited to join.

Nassau County Council on Aging is a key partner of the Florida Department of Health in Nassau County on this initiative. “Nassau County Council on Aging is proud to be a part of the Healthy Brain Initiative,” said Lili High, Program Operations Director. “We currently have a robust program for both seniors with a form of dementia, as well as the family caregivers who support them 24/7. Additional resources will only increase our capacity to help provide training and education to this growing population.”

People living with dementia and their family caregivers require support as cognitive, behavioral and physical functioning worsens over time. Adults, ages 55 years and older, represent 38.3% of the Nassau County population (2020), an age segment that is at greater risks for developing Alzheimer’s. A strategic public health response is needed to alleviate this impact on all communities.

Our long-term goal is to become a Dementia Friendly Community, one that connects all parts of a community to ensure persons with Alzheimer’s or related dementias and their caregivers feel understood, are given the resources and services they need, are valued and able to contribute to their community.

For more information, or to volunteer to participate, please contact Barb Baptista at 904-753- 1258.

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Family Support Group for People with Mental Health Challenges

NAMI Nassau County introduces a new support group meeting at the Hilliard Journey Church, 550974 US-1, Hilliard, opposite the Winn Dixie shopping plaza. The first meeting is Wednesday, March 2, from 12 - 1:30 p.m. and subsequent meetings will be the first Wednesday of every month at noon at the same location. Anyone 18 years or older is welcome, and meetings are structured, confidential and inclusive.

This FREE support group is led by volunteer facilitators just like you who have "been there and done that" when



National Alliance on Mental Illness

it comes to coping with mental health challenges affecting a friend or loved one. It follows the NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) guidelines to ensure a safe, non-judgmental experience. We provide no treatment or advice but we "get it." It may be difficult to take such concerns elsewhere, especially in this time of fear, uncertainty and isolation. For more information, please e-mail us at contact@naminassauflorida.org, visit our website at www.naminassauflorida.org, or call our Help Line at 904-277-1886, leaving a message.

Fatal Automobile Crash Involving Law Enforcement Officer

Saturday night an Officer with the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Law Enforcement Division, was fatally injured in a vehicle crash on I-95 in Nassau County near the state line. Officer James McWhorter was on duty at the I-95 agriculture inspection station when the accident occurred. According to Florida Highway Patrol reports, McWhorter was attempting to cross I-95 from the north bound station to the south bound station at around 8:33 p.m., utilizing the median break for official use only.

As he proceeded across the southbound lanes, a Ford F-150 with four occupants crashed into the



passenger side of the patrol car. FHP reports that both vehicles came to rest on the right shoulder of the southbound lanes. Officer McWhorter was pronounced deceased at the scene of the accident.

The occupants in the Ford F-150, two adults and two teenage girls, all from Hilliard, were transported to a hospital with minor injuries. The report also states that there was no indication of the truck exceeding the posted speed limit.

Officer McWhorter, 31, of Middleburg, was stationed in Nassau County. He had been in law enforcement for 2 1/2 years. McWhorter leaves behind his fiancée and four children.

ABWA Offers Scholarship

The Eight Flags Charter Chapter of the American Business Women's Association (ABWA) is proud and honored to be offering one scholarship worth \$2,000 funded through the Stephen Bufton Memorial Educational Fund to one deserving West Nassau High School student.



Each year, local leagues of ABWA provide Stephen Bufton Memorial Scholarships (SBMEF) to female students who will be attending accredited U.S. colleges, universities and community/vocational schools. Applicants must be citizens of the United States; residents of Nassau County, Florida; graduating senior of West Nassau High School with a minimum GPA of 3.0, active in leadership roles at West Nassau High

School, and entering college in 2022. Eligible students should submit at least two letters of recommendation-one from someone in the community and one from a teacher or counselor. Students participating in the Women of Influence leadership organization will be given special weight when awarding the scholarship.

Eligible students interested in applying for the scholarship should contact: Jenny Higginbotham - Impact Scholarship Chair of the Eight Flags Charter Chapter or Lillie Rogers, President of ABWA Eight Flags Charter Chapter at abwaboarddirectors@gmail.com; Mailing address: P.O. Box 15164, Fernandina Beach, FL 32035. Applications must be completed by April 15, 2022, at www.sbmef.org. If interested in applying, please contact: Jenny Higginbotham or Lillie Rogers at abwaboarddirectors@gmail.com to begin the application process.

Free Mobile Dental Unit Coming Soon!

The Northeast Florida Baptist Association, 851035 US Hwy 17 N, Yulee, will be doing free dental work for those with no dental insurance and meet the 200% poverty guidelines. To get an appointment for the mobile dental unit you must appear, in person, at this address between the hours of 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. on Tuesday, March 15 and fill out your paperwork. You will then be given an appointment in the unit for the week of March 21-25, 2022, for free dental work. You must be 18 years or older and not be pregnant. We do fillings and extractions ONLY. If you have any questions, please feel free to call us at 904-225-5941.



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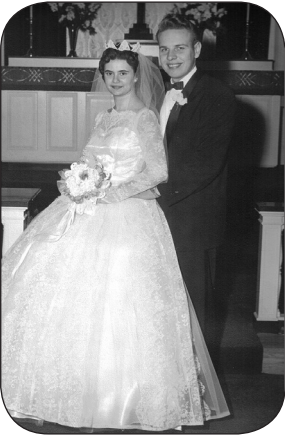
Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Gustafson
to Celebrate 62nd Anniversary



Oscar ‘Gus’ and Elaine Gustafson will celebrate their 62nd wedding anniversary February 20. They were married February 20, 1960 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Lansdale, Pennsylvania. Gus retired from Moore Products Company after 33 years of dedicated service. Elaine was a top seller and owner of several real estate companies. They also managed rental properties that Gus managed to take care of in his spare time.

Elaine remembers one day trying to scrape the snow and ice off of her car so she could get out of it. After fighting with the door, she finally got it open. She went into the house and asked Gus, “Why are we doing this? We have a house in Florida and that’s where our children are!” They immediately put their home on the market, packed up and have been here since 2003! They are very active members of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Jacksonville and love their church family!

They have two sons Jimmy and Sandy Gustafson and Artie and Jennifer Gustafson, all of Callahan. They also have three grandchildren that they are extremely proud of, Reese, Artie VI and Payton.



New NCSO Bloodhound Named

The Nassau County Sheriff’s Office wants to thank everyone in the community who sent us name suggestions for our newest bloodhound puppy, whether it was on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, phone or by mail. We received over a thousand submissions and we loved reading so many creative name ideas. However, we left it up to our K9 handlers to decide which name they liked best out of all the suggestions.

The name chosen is Ol’ Red. Ol’ Red was suggested by Cheri Jones-Arp, in memory of Deputy Josh Moyers. Deputy Moyers was shot and killed in September and he was known for his beautiful red hair so it seemed fitting. Sheriff Leeper spoke to Deputy Moyers parents and fiancé for approval. They



Shown are: Sheriff Bill Leeper with Ol’ Red and his handler, Deputy Justin Blount.

were grateful to see so many name submissions in honor of their beloved Josh. We here at NCSO miss Josh every day and it only seemed right to name this red-haired hound after him. Ol’ Red was gifted to us from the Santa Rosa County Sheriff’s Office. We will keep you updated on his growth and training!

Horseshoe Circle Road Closure
Begins March 10

The Nassau County Road Department is issuing a Road Closure on the following road due to a cross drain replacement, times and dates as listed:

Horseshoe Circle in Bryceville will be closed
March 10 at 8 a.m. until March 21 at 8 a.m.

Proposed Detour: CR 121 to Horseshoe Circle

Please note that any/all dates are subject to change due to weather and/or other conditions. For additional information, contact Darren Marsh, Nassau County Maintenance Operations Supervisor, (904) 753-0097.

FREE Quit Smoking Class
Friday, February 18
12 - 2 p.m.
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The Nassau County Public Library System Presents
The 31st Annual National

AFRICAN AMERICAN READ-IN

The public is invited to attend and may participate by bringing a 1-2 minute reading from any material written by an African American.

The 31st National African American Read-In is the Nation's first and oldest event dedicated to diversity in literature. It was established by the Black Caucus of the National Council of Teachers of English to make literacy a significant part of Black History Month.

Hilliard Library
Thursday, February 24
4 - 5 p.m.

Callahan Library
Monday, February 28
4 - 5 p.m.

Quilt Raffle to Benefit the Pinky Promise Foundation

Okefenoke REMC is holding a quilt raffle through February 28 to benefit the Pinky Promise Foundation. Raffle tickets are \$5 each and can be purchased at any Okefenoke REMC office or at the Westside Journal office in Callahan, 450034 SR 200.



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Sponsors Needed for Woods and Water Family Fun Day



A Family Fun Day is planned for Saturday, March 26 from 9:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. The event will be a fun filled day with activities for children and parents alike. The event is hosted by Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranch at Camp Sorenson, 1023 Retreat Acres Road, located off of CR 121 in Hilliard. The event is being sponsored by local businesses and churches. Sponsors are still needed for the event to make it bigger and better for our community. I think everyone is super ready to get out and have some fun with your family! It will take as many businesses as we can to help sponsor this event. Let's all step up and do our part for a family friendly community event. For more information on sponsoring please call Bob at (904) 845-7286 or email: rlh458@gmail.com.

The purpose of the event

is to promote the importance of quality family time and introduce children (of all ages) and their families to some outdoor fun! Some of the featured activities will be fresh water fishing (fishing poles provided or bring your own), canoeing, archery and various other outdoor games. There will be a presentation given at the top of each hour on topics such as Bass Fishing; Archery, etc. There will be FREE admission and FREE hamburgers and hot dogs for everyone. Everyone who fills out a registration card or pre-registers is automatically entered to win door prizes and there are lots of them! Pre-registered children 16 and under will receive a FREE t-shirt! You can register your children and family by scanning this QR code or visit www.fbcoulougne.org.



The Nest, A Women's Center
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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

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POOLSIDE APARTMENT, 1BR, excellent for retired, single or married couple, no smoking, pets or drugs, \$250/deposit; \$450/month plus electric and satellite TV. Call 904-343-7819 or 904-879-2619. 21722

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Finally, Offers I Can Refuse

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After all the restrictions, mandates, confinements and hoops to jump through, the country is finally seeing improvement in our plight. The grip on our freedoms, or the lack thereof, is loosening its grasp. Just recently we've begun to see evidence of that, with all the push-backs from the draconian government edicts being set aside, or just being wisely ignored by the populace.

Having been extensive travelers, prior to the COVID attack on our country, we are beginning to get out and stretch our legs again. Our communication devices are also reflecting those options that are becoming more and more available on a daily basis. Of course folks are being cautious with their plans, as more and more places around the nation are demonstrating the need to avoid their generous offers. Even modes of travel are being avoided, to escape the demonstrations of a lack of civility and the ridiculous red tape being demonstrated on and with these venues. So making our own arrangements, selecting modes of travel and identifying locations to visit takes a lot of planning to be able to experience hassle free and safe venues for use and enjoyment. To demonstrate this, we recently received communications from an "Honors" program, of which we are members, announcing some exciting news about reduced travel offers in places that once used to be highly desirable locations to experience.

The first offer was 3 days and 2 nights, 15,000 bonus points, up to 12 months to travel with flexible Change Policies, to what used to be known as the "Melting Pot" of immigration (The Legal Kind) for this country. Today it is more likely known as the dictatorship state of the nation, and a place to go at your own risk, New York City. A place where I want to go, if I like random assaults, police being assassinated, and being accosted by the gestapo to produce "Papers" to gain entrance in to those forbidden places like Broadway Shows, restaurants, etc. At \$299.00 per

stay, that would normally cost \$663.00, it was an offer I could refuse.

Then there was the offer for 4 days and 3 nights to what was known once as "The Stockyards" city with that "Magnificent Mile" of shops to explore. That offer too had similar bonus points and travel flexibilities attached to it. If I want to view the self-destruction of a culture, as they murder each other and their children, I'll try and do some time travel back to the coliseums of Rome and watch the Gladiators attempt to destroy the Christians. At \$299.00 per stay in Chicago, that would normally cost \$744.00, it was another offer I can refuse.

Finally there was this offer, for 4 days and 3 nights, to visit what used to be that "Shining City" on the hill. It also offered more bonus points and the travel flexibilities to entice the discerning travel enthusiast. Known for its history and educational opportunities, it is now more known for public officials disrespecting the general populace with their language that, when we were children, would prompt our parents to wash our mouths out with soap. If I want to watch the continuing destruction of what was once the admiration of the free world, I'll put on my bullet proof vest and make the effort to explore what is left of our republic in Washington, D.C. But then someone might find out who I am and arrest me for insurrection and plotting to overthrow the government with my vote. This \$299.00 offer per stay, that would normally cost \$945.00, is again one I can refuse.

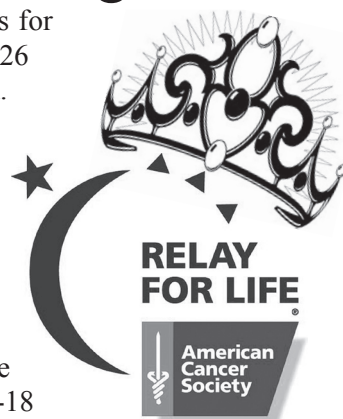
Here the light bulb comes on! All three of these cities have joined California as places where people are departing in droves, just to improve their lives and living conditions. It explains why, in the most recent 12 months, all the new "U-Haul" businesses that have cropped up around northeast Florida. Until January, 2021, there was no need for places to drop off these "One-Way" moving vehicles. Now, there is not enough acreage to find space for all these units being dropped off.

Crowns for the Cure Pageant

The Miss Nassau County Relay for Life "Crowns for the Cure" Pageant will be held Saturday, February 26 in the Callahan Middle School cafetorium at 1 p.m. All proceeds will go to benefit the Nassau County Relay for Life event. For entry application, email: wnrelayqueen@yahoo.com or call 904-237-3944 for more information. Deadline to enter is Tuesday, February 22.

There will be 8 different age categories in the pageant: Baby Miss 0-12 months; Tiny Miss 1-3 years; Little Miss 4-6 years; Jr. Miss 7-9 years; Pre Teen 10-12 years; Jr. Teen 13-15 years; Teen 16-18 years; and Miss 19 years and up.

The Nassau County Relay for Life event will be held Saturday, May 7 at the Callahan Fairgrounds from 3-10 p.m. To enter your team, volunteer or donate please call Relay Chair Wanda Nichols at 904-294-2088.



FSCJ to Host Ribbon-Cutting for the Newly Renovated Dental Clinic

Florida State College at Jacksonville (FSCJ) invites the community to see the recently completed dental clinic renovation at FSCJ's North Campus. This state-of-the-art facility will help expand student capacity for learning and ensure essential dental services

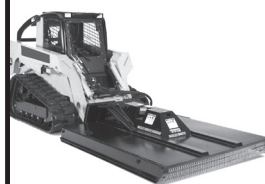
provided to our community continues for those in need.

The Ribbon Cutting will be held Friday, February 25 at 10:30 a.m., at Florida State College at Jacksonville, North Campus, Room A109, 4501 Capper Road.

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GLEND A JUNE ALLEN



Glenda June Allen, 88, of Callahan, passed away on February 7, 2022. She was born in Baker, Florida on July 14, 1933 to the late Grady Hammonds and Dorcas Hobbs Hammonds. Glenda and the love of her life, Virgil Eudonald Allen, shared 47 beautiful years together. She dedicated 25 years of service to JEA as a Customer Service Representative. Glenda enjoyed shopping at thrift stores, going to the gym, reading, putting puzzles together, fishing, hummingbirds, her plants and flowers and vacationing in the Blue Ridge Mountains. She was a longtime member of Thomas Creek Baptist Church where she enjoyed attending and worshiping, but most of all, Glenda loved her family and enjoyed spending time with them. She was preceded in death by her parents; husband Virgil Eudonald Allen; and sister Barbara Carr.

Glenda is survived by her loving children, Donald Allen and Cheryl Donnette (Terry) Bell; brother Frankie (Sharon) Hammonds; sister Connie (Ray) Rountree; grandchildren Dwayne (Creta) Larsen, Debony (Marty III) Johnson, Taryn Bell and Taylor Bell; great-grandchildren Dawson Larsen, Paige Larsen, Mariah Johnson and Marvin Johnson, IV; and granddaughter-in-law Donna Larsen.

The family received friends Thursday, February 10 at Nassau Funeral Home. A celebration of Glenda's life was held Friday, February 11 at The Anchor Church of God with Pastor Dwight Allen, Pastor Jeff Carter and Pastor Ethan Thompson officiating. Interment followed at Jones Cemetery.

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

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

SALVATORE A. BROCATO, SR.



Salvatore Anthony Brocato, Sr., 88, passed away February 4, 2022, peacefully at his home in Jacksonville. He was born June 13, 1933 in North Collins, New York. He served in the US Navy; and retired from the Federal Aviation Administration.

He loved life and took advantage of his time on earth to its fullest. He volunteered often; at his church, the Gator Bowl parade,

OBITUARIES

the library, the local voting precinct, as well as other work. He had a variety of talents, but many people enjoyed the fruit of his skillful hand in upholstery and woodwork. He enjoyed helping people, fishing and playing pool, working in the yard, and spending time with his friends and family. He was a good friend to many and will be dearly missed.

He was predeceased by his parents Joseph and Sarah Brocato; wife Charlotte Brocato; sister Grace Dobson; and two sons Salvatore Anthony "Tony" Brocato, Jr. and Kevin McCorkel.

Survivors include his children Lori (Bruce) Dugan, Amy Brocato, Nita Brocato, Bart (Marie) Brocato and Kerry (Michael) Buccilli; brother Joe (Georgia) Brocato; sister Nina Strasser; seven grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren; and a host of extended family and friends.

A memorial service will be held Thursday, February 24 at 12:30 p.m. at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, 5401 Dunn Ave., Jacksonville. A graveside service will follow at 2:30 p.m. at Jacksonville National Cemetery, 4083 Lannie Road, Jacksonville.

Arrangements by Hardage-Giddens Holly Hill Funeral Home, Middleburg.

Please post words of comfort at www.hollyhillfunerals.com.

DAVID MCARTHUR HARGROVE



David McArthur Hargrove, 37, of Callahan, passed away on Tuesday, December 28, 2021 in Jacksonville. He was born in Jacksonville August 22, 1984. "David Mc" loved cooking, camping, fishing, boating and more, but his main passion was for anything electronic, whether it was computers, gaming, musical instruments, web design or 3D printers. He was often sought out for help and advice with buying, selling, trading, and fixing these and many other devices. His expertise made him a valuable commodity in professional circles across Northeast Florida.

David was an excellent student as a child and was constantly learning more as an adult. He earned a Bright Futures Academic scholarship, and later graduated from UNF

in Jacksonville, with a degree in Computer Information Science. While at UNF, he was privileged to study with his mentor, the legendary Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who sadly died just two days before him. Within his circle of friends, David was regarded as one of the most intelligent people that any of them had ever known.

Music was a big part of David's life from an early age. He played tenor saxophone in school bands for seven years and was also proficient on keyboards, theremin, drums and turntables. Later in life, he found great joy in many musical genres. David loved DJing and performing at venues around the area, and recently enjoyed a great trip to North Carolina to see his favorite group, The Mountain Goats. Almost everyone he knew was gifted with recommendations for music, both old and new. Much of this music has now been archived in playlists on YouTube and Spotify, which we would be happy to share with you.

David is preceded in death by his paternal grandmother Margaret Hargrove; maternal grandparents Garvin and Annie McCurdy; and brother-in-law Robert English.

David is survived by his loving parents, David Gene and Terry Hargrove; sisters Jennifer (Chris) Wright and Heather English; grandfather Arthur Hargrove, Sr.; uncles Arthur (Johnnie) Hargrove and Charles (Peggy) McCurdy; aunt Emily Hargrove (John) Beech; beloved nieces and nephews Haley, Sydney, Ambree, Bishop, Lawton, Benton and Hennley; and hundreds of friends and loved ones around the country, particularly in the Riverside/Five Points area, where he was a beloved member of the arts community for two decades. His death was devastating to all who knew him, but he will never be forgotten. R.I.P.

A celebration of David's life will be held on Friday, February 18 at 6 p.m. at Nassau Funeral Home.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to Gateway Community Services, 555 Stockton Street, Jacksonville, FL 32204.

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

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

MELISSA GAIL LACEY



Melissa Gail Lacey, 49, of Callahan, passed away on February 7, 2022. She was born in Jacksonville on October 24, 1972 to the late Edwin Eugene Wrye and Doretha Clark Wrye. Melissa enjoyed going to the beach, placing bets on card games and watching the Georgia Bulldogs play. Most of all, Melissa loved her family and enjoyed spending time with them. She was preceded in death by her parents.

Melissa leaves behind her son Brian Lacey; daughter Kailey Lacey; brother Buddy (Tina) Wrye; and sister Tina M. Smith.

The family received friends Tuesday, February 15 at Nassau Funeral Home. A celebration of Melissa's life was held Wednesday, February 16 also at the funeral home. Interment followed at Jones Cemetery.

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

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

LISA ANNE SIMMONS



Lisa Anne Simmons, 58, of Callahan, passed away on February 12, 2022, after dealing with heart complications. She was born on November 19, 1963 in Jacksonville, to Harold A. Phillips and Dorothy H. Smith Phillips. Lisa lived the majority of her life in Mississippi however she has been a resident of Callahan for the past 18 years. Lisa's favorite color was mauve pink and her favorite flowers were calla lilies. She enjoyed spending time with her family, making crafts and going on trips to see manatees.

Lisa leaves behind her parents Harold A. and Dorothy H. Phillips; loving husband of 32 years, George T. Simmons, II; children Kaitlyn D. Simmons (Brian) of Tallahassee and Jared H. Simmons (Aleyy) of Callahan; brother Mark A. (Anita) Phillips; cousins Mandy Hartel and Mary (Ron) Bragg; best friend Phyllis (Robert) Herring.

The family will receive friends Thursday, February 17 from 5-7 p.m. at Nassau Funeral Home. A graveside service will be held Friday, February 18 at 11 a.m. at Jones Cemetery, Callahan with Pastor Ken Barney officiating.

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

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RUBY JARRETT SMITH



Ruby Angelina Jarrett Smith, 98, of Callahan, went home to be with the Lord on February 10, 2022. She was born on June 19, 1923 in Elkhurst, West Virginia to Deloring Wyatt Jarrett and Bessie May Vandermark Jarrett. Ruby married Lester Franklin Smith on July 7, 1941 and had two sons Lester Frank Smith and David Denver Smith.

Ruby was predeceased by her parents; her husband Lester Franklin Smith, Sr.; her second husband Ralph Joseph Smith; her son Rev. David Denver Smith; step-son Joseph Franklyn Smith; step-daughter Alexis "Cookie" Hamilton; brothers Wyatt Jarrett and Garland Jarrett; sisters Flora Hayes, Lilly Jarrett and Ruth Thomas; great-grandson Daniel Bradley; and great-great-grandson John S. Westendorf, Jr.

Ruby is survived by her son Lester Frank (Mary Beth) Smith, Jr.; daughter-in-law Lynda Smith; nine grandchildren Trina (Danny) Bradley, David (Karen) Smith, Jr., Corey Smith, Libby (Matt) Kast, Angela (Paul) Domingo and Adrian (Angela) Newcomb, Lester Smith, III; Erika (Scott) Doyle and Andrew (Tiffany) Newcomb. Ruby was Mawmaw to 25 great-grandchildren Meagen (Johnny) Westendorf, Derek (Heather) Bradley, Brittany (Michael) Gerding, Chad Tison, Sydney Bedsole, 2nd LT US Marine Corp Courtney Smith, Dakota Smith, Malia Domingo, Alorae Doyle, Kylee Smith, Hayden Domingo, Nate Kast, Chandler Thomas, Rebecca Kast, Mackenzy Doyle, Bryonna Moran, Scotty Doyle, AJ Newcomb, James Doyle, Kellen Newcomb, Austin Newcomb, Dallen Newcomb, Owen Newcomb, Aaron Newcomb and Liam Doyle; 15 great-great-grandchildren Zachary (Mikayla) Boston, Waylon Boston, Emmy Boston, Allison Gerding, Hank Boston, Emma McCullough, Angel Gerding, Aubree Gerding, Karley Westendorf, Alaina Gerding, Gracie Westendorf, Olivia Bradley, Abel Gerding, Duke Smith and Frankie Westendorf; one great-great-great-grandson Oliver Boston; and many nieces and nephews; as well as her Sunday School class and many friends.

Serving as pall bearers were Derek Bradley, Chad Tison, Dakota Smith, Hayden Domingo, Waylon Boston, Nate Kast,

Zachary Boston and Chandler Thomas.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to FBC Gray Gables in Ruby's memory.

The family received friends Monday, February 14 at First Baptist Church of Gray Gables. The funeral service was held Tuesday, February 15 also at the church with Pastors Cody Page and Justin Hartzell officiating. Interment followed in Jones Cemetery, Callahan.

Condolences may be expressed at www.callahanfh.com.

Arrangements by Callahan Funeral Home, Inc., 879-2336.

JACKSON EDWARD VANN, SR.



Jackson Edward Vann, Sr., 91, of Hilliard, passed away Saturday, February 12, 2022 in Waycross, Georgia, following a lengthy illness. Mr. Jack was

born January 2, 1931 to the late Mack Robert Vann and Dennie Russ Scarbrough Vann. He proudly served his country in the US Air Force for four years. He retired as an Air Traffic Controller in the Hilliard Center, following 30 years of service. He was a faithful member of the First Baptist Church of Hilliard.

In addition to his parents; he was preceded in death by his siblings Mack Robert Vann, Jr., Moody Brooks Vann, Bessie Irene Keister and Mary Ester Turnbill.

He is survived by his wife of 68 years, Ruth P. Vann; his children Kim Howell and her husband Mike, Jackson Edward "Ed" Vann, Jr., and John Kevin Vann and his wife Laurie; seven grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren; and a number of nieces and nephews.

Committal services will be held Thursday, February 17 at 10:30 a.m. at Jacksonville National Cemetery, 4093 Lannie Road, Jacksonville with Military Honors. The family will receive friends Thursday, February 17 from 1:30-2:30 p.m. prior to the funeral service at 2:30 p.m. at the First Baptist Church of Hilliard with Pastor Ryan Mason officiating.

Condolences may be expressed at www.shepardfh.com. Arrangements by Shepard-Roberson Funeral Home, Folkston.

OREMC Accepting Applications for National Washington Youth Tour

OREMC is accepting applications from high school juniors attending school in the OREMC service area: Brantley, Camden, Charlton, Glynn, Ware and Wayne counties in Georgia, and Baker and Nassau counties in Florida, to compete for an all-expenses-paid trip on the 2022 Washington Youth Tour. This inspiring, week-long leadership trip offers participants the opportunity to experience U.S. government and U.S. history first-hand while having fun, making new friends, and developing leadership skills.

Four students will be chosen as delegates sponsored by OREMC and join teens from other electric membership cooperatives (EMCs) across Georgia to represent the state during the 2022 Washington Youth Tour to be held June 16-23. Applications can be found online at oremc.com/youth-tour and all applications must be received by March 3.

The fast-paced, high-energy program is designed to give students a taste of democracy in action, expose them to the nation's rich history through visits to national monuments and museums, and encourage students to become politically aware citizens.

As 2021 OREMC Delegate Jesse Harrell noted, "It was an immersive opportunity to learn about new places, new people, and...even about yourself."

That sentiment, expressed by many former delegates, underscores the significance of the program – making connections with other high-achieving peers while participating in an unforgettable week-long journey in the nation's capital. This includes meeting with state and national leaders,



leadership training, and discussions on important issues with students from other states, all while

learning about our nation.

"The Washington Youth Tour was a chance to experience something bigger than myself and make lasting connections with people all across the county," said 2019 OREMC Delegate Mady Kate Bullard.

The tour begins in Georgia where students get to know each other before boarding an airplane and flying to Washington, D.C. where they connect with over 1,000 students from across the country. While plans are still being finalized for 2022, the agenda typically includes items such as cruising down the Potomac River, laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington Cemetery, meeting with Georgia's U.S. senators and representatives, taking photos outside the White House, touring Mount Vernon as well as the Smithsonian and other museums.

Students will also visit memorials honoring Presidents Franklin Roosevelt, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, and George Washington. They will also visit the Martin Luther King Jr., World War II, Korean and Vietnam Veterans memorials. Plus, they will have the opportunity to see the U.S. Marine Drum and Bugle Corps and the Silent Drill Platoon perform at the Marine Memorial (Iwo Jima statue).

For more information about the Youth Tour, visit: oremc.com/youth-tour or contact OREMC's Youth Tour Coordinator Dewayne Johns at 800-262-5131, ext. 1143 or via email at youthprograms@oremc.com.



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In Palm Beach, well over 90 percent of at-risk seniors have been vaccinated against COVID-19. Now, well into flu season, Dr. Russell and his team remain on-message that people can receive a COVID-19 vaccination and a flu shot at the same time, without fear of complications or severe side effects. “Make no mistake about it – Flu A and Flu B are always out there ready and waiting to pounce, so the best defense is to maintain your health by getting a



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