



*He is not here;
He has Risen!*

After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it.
Matthew 28:1-2

Praise be to the God

The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; He has risen, just as He said. Come and see the place where He lay."
Matthew 28:5-6

Hilliard Town Clean-Up Huge Success

Dawn S. West

The Town of Hilliard held their annual Town Clean-Up last Saturday. The weather was a little questionable first thing in the morning, which I'm sure held some people back from coming and it was the end of spring break, however, the turnout was great. It is always wonderful to see so many people of all ages coming to this fun community event to clean up the town! The event began at Town Hall Park where residents registered and were treated to donuts from Hilliard Donuts & Kolaches, coffee provided by Roasted Rooster and milk, chocolate milk and orange juice. They then received their gloves and garbage bags to begin their work. There were over 200 people that registered to take part in cleaning up Hilliard. Lots of families, friends, old and young joined in to make a difference in our town. From the Town Hall Park, people went all different directions walking down roads, getting in the ditches picking up trash. Once their bags were full, they were picked up by trucks collecting them and people were provided with another bag to continue their mission. At Town Hall, three Meridian garbage trucks waited for residents to pull through and load their trash in the

trucks. All collections had to be back at the park by 11 a.m. for the trucks to leave.

Once people returned to the park they could donate blood, as OneBlood was on site until the afternoon. Residents were also allowed to bring any items that needed shredding for free. Back at the park, everyone enjoyed looking at the new mural on the maintenance building. Residents enjoyed a meal of hamburgers and/or hot dogs chips and a drink. The Daily Tea, of Hilliard, was also at the park giving people a taste of their loaded teas (and it sure was yummy)! While everyone enjoyed their lunch, Hilliard Mayor John Beasley began drawing tickets to give out prizes! It was a fun and successful day!

Congratulations to the Town of Hilliard, Keep Nassau Beautiful and the many others that continue to help make this event one of the best every year!



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Progressive FARMER READER INSIGHTS

A Word From the Publisher

It's hard to believe that Sunday is Easter and also the last day of March! How did we get here so fast? It's unbelievable how fast time is going. One more reminder to make each day the best it can be...as we don't know what tomorrow will bring.

I can't help but think back to when I was a young child. For years, our family would travel to South Carolina to spend Easter with my mom's parents (Granddaddy and Grandma) and mom's sister (Aunt Barbara and Uncle Roscoe). Daddy was a teacher and Easter break was a few days so we would take off and go visit. The thing about it is, I don't really remember 'celebrating Easter' there, I just remember lots of time playing with my cousins. I don't think we hunted Easter eggs but I could be wrong and will be corrected later. I know from the time we got out of the overloaded car, we were playing, laughing, running through the woods, jumping off the porch...you know, having fun! Oh yeah, that was way before cellphones and tablets, we played outside until dark! Those were great memories!

Years later, when spending time with my mom, I asked, "Why did we always go up to South Carolina each

year, sometimes twice a year (don't forget there were five of us children in that car)?"

"Because me and Daddy wanted you all to know your grandparents and cousins and spend as much time with them that you could. It was very important to us," she said.

That wasn't the only time we traveled. During the Christmas holiday, for many years we would load up the car again, leave about 7 or 8 p.m. and head to Arkansas to see my dad's parents and siblings. They traveled at night because we (children) would sleep most of the way. Once we woke up, Daddy would pull the car off the side of the road (literally, as there weren't any rest areas in those days) divvy out the little boxes of cereal and fill them with milk for our breakfast. Somehow, I always got stuck with regular Cheerios while the others got the sugar coated cereal. Downfall of being the youngest! We'd eat our little breakfast then get back on the road. And just imagine, the same thing

happened in Arkansas. As quick as we arrived, our cousins showed up and off we went playing on the little mountain near their house, running around playing hide-n-seek, just playing and having fun. I don't really remember any amazing Christmas gifts from that time, but I guess we knew the trip was our gift. Once again, our parents sacrificed a nice quiet Easter and Christmas at home; to allow us (their children) to spend time with our grandparents, aunts and uncles and cousins. What a precious gift!

This year Easter will be a little different again, as our grandchildren are growing up. There really won't be any need to dye eggs as they think they are too old for that. They still like to come and eat and play in the yard, but not hunt eggs. Now they will eat some eggs, that didn't change! I can't stress to them enough the importance of spending as much time as possible with their great-grandparents and grandparents as they can. I never had great-grandparents, but I know I loved my grandparents so much and still remember so much about them, thanks to my parents.

As I close, I can't help but to share the sacrifice Jesus made for us on that cross. He didn't have to take the sins of us all upon himself but he did. I am reminded of a song and video, "Watch The Lamb", that I like to share with my children, grands and family on Easter. The song portrays Jesus wounded and bleeding and carrying his own cross, when a soldier hits a man in crowd and tells him, "You, Carry His Cross." As the song continues the man picks up the cross from the Lord and the blood that Jesus had been bleeding came running down his cheek. Every time I watch that video, I am filled with emotion of the love that Jesus had for me. He did this for me (and you).

I feel like we get so wrapped up in this world that we believe in Jesus but can't really fathom that He was actually walking around on the earth and there were horrible people (just like today) that hated him. But He was on this earth, just like you and me. He was crucified on a cross and died. However, that's not the end of the story. Three days later He rose from the grave and is alive today... thank you Jesus. I pray that you will find the mercy and grace that only God can give this Easter season.

Have a blessed Easter!

Dawn S. West

In the Kitchen...

- 1 large clove garlic
- 1 teaspoon coarse salt
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper

Spicy Grilled Shrimp

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- 2 pounds large shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 8 wedges lemon, for garnish

Preheat a grill for medium heat. Crush garlic and salt together in a small bowl with a fork. Mix in paprika and cayenne. Stir in olive oil and lemon juice to form a paste. Combine garlic paste and shrimp in a large bowl and toss until shrimp are evenly coated. Lightly oil the grill grate. Grill shrimp until opaque, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Transfer to a serving dish, garnish with lemon wedges, and serve.



TOWN OF CALLAHAN, FL 2024 ELECTION

Interested Candidates must be registered to vote in the Town of Callahan and live within the town limits.

Qualifying Period Begins: August 2, 2024 at 8 a.m.

Qualifying Period Ends: August 23, 2024 at 3 p.m.

Candidate Petitions for Verification: July 12, 2024 at 3 p.m.

Required Number of Valid Petition Signatures Needed: 20

SEATS UP FOR ELECTION 2024:

**FIRE COMMISSIONER
WATER WASTEWATER COMMISSIONER
TOWN ZONING DEPARTMENT**

QUESTIONS: Please contact Callahan Town Clerk
Shawna Gugliuzza at clerk@townofcallahan-fl.gov.

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APRIL

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Pine Forest Alumni Meeting 5 p.m. Bethel A.M.E. Church Callahan Town Meeting 7 p.m.	2 Torah Club 9 a.m. & 6:30 p.m. Callahan Methodist Church Westside Republicans 6 p.m. Hilliard Comm. Center NAMI Family Support 6:30 - 8 p.m. Alachua Club, Fern. Bch.	3 Callahan Garden Club 10 a.m. Free Community Dinner 5 p.m. Callahan Methodist Church Parents of Addicted Loved Ones (PAL) 6 p.m. Hilliard Library	4 Food Giveaway @Callahan First Baptist 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Hilliard Town Meeting 7 p.m.	5 NAMI Support 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Fernandina Council on Aging	6
7	8 WN Genealogical Society 10:30 a.m. Lions Club Country Star Quilt Guild 7 p.m. Anchor Church Ch. 154 Order of Eastern Star 7:30 pm @ Masonic Lodge	9 Torah Club 9 a.m. & 6:30 p.m. Callahan Methodist Church Callahan Lions Club 7 p.m.	10 NAMI Support 12-1:30 p.m. Hilliard Journey Church Free Community Dinner 5 p.m. Callahan Methodist Church PAL 6 p.m. Hilliard Library	11	12 NAMI Support 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Fernandina Council on Aging American Legion & Auxiliary Post 401 Hilliard 7 p.m.	13
14	15 Westside Optimists 7 p.m. Lions Club Sons of Confederate Veterans 7 p.m. The Pig Callahan Town Meeting 7 p.m.	16 Torah Club 9 a.m. & 6:30 p.m. Callahan Methodist Church NARFE Nat'l Active & Retired Federal Employees 11 a.m. The Pig NAMI Family Support 6:30 - 8 p.m. Alachua Club, Fern. Bch.	17 Free Community Dinner 5 p.m. Callahan Methodist Church PAL 6 p.m. Hilliard Library West Nassau High School SAC Meeting 3:15 p.m.	18 Food Giveaway @Callahan First Baptist 4:30 - 6:30 p.m. Hilliard Town Meeting 7 p.m.	19 NAMI Support 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Fernandina Council on Aging	20
21	22 Barnabas Food @NE FL Fairgrounds 9:30 - 10:30 a.m. Ch. 154 Order of Eastern Star 7:30 pm @ Masonic Lodge NC Beekeepers Association 7 p.m. Multipurpose Building	23 Torah Club 9 a.m. & 6:30 p.m. Callahan Methodist Church Callahan Lions Club 7 p.m.	24 Free Community Dinner 5 p.m. Callahan Methodist Church Parents of Addicted Loved Ones (PAL) 6 p.m. Hilliard Library	25 Historical Society 6:30 p.m. @ Depot	26 NAMI Support 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Fernandina Council on Aging	27 R. Niel Hampton Memorial Golf Tournament West Nassau Prom
28	29	30 Torah Club 9 a.m. & 6:30 p.m. Callahan Methodist Church	 <p><i>April showers BRING May flowers</i></p>			

JUST MY OPINION

Roger R. West

Remember the old soap-opera “As the World Turns”? They should do a remake and name it, “As the World Crumbles”. If there are any of you that have not seen the video released last week at our southern border, please find it online and watch it. It is less than a minute but the impact will last for decades. The video captured a group of illegal (immigrants) invaders of young military aged men storming the razor wire fence and breaking through, they literally overpower the Texas National Guard members with force and invade our country. This may sound cruel, but it’s a shame that the guardsmen’s rifles had no bullets. They should have been given the ability to wreak havoc upon the adversaries storming our country and also protect themselves. How on God’s green earth can any citizen of America justify in their minds that this invasion is good for our country? We are at war with people from all across the world with a lame leader and a lame Congress that daily commit treason by allowing this invasion to occur. The video is actually sickening to watch.

Acting President Biden boldly (ha ha) announced that an Israeli invasion of the city of Rafah would cross a red line. Prime Minister Netanyahu responded very clearly to Biden’s threat by saying, “We’ll go there! We’re not going to leave...You know, I have a red line. You know what the red line is, that October 7th doesn’t happen again.” With that said, acting President Biden’s red line faded just as his mind has. Even Netanyahu’s political opponents in Israel know invading Rafah is a requirement of lasting peace. Israeli War Cabinet member Benny Gantz stated, “Finishing

the war without demilitarizing Rafah is like sending firefighters to put out 80% of a fire.”

The case for total destruction of Hamas is just common sense. Something America has very little of. Hamas’ official founding document calls for the complete destruction of Israel. One of its most important leaders announced publicly, “not a single Jew will remain.” So yes, Israel needs to take total control over Rafah and destroy the terrorists of Hamas and America better keep supporting our greatest ally, Israel.

One more short “never underestimate Trump” moment. For the last two years, the lame stream media has been mocking Donald Trump’s social media platform known as Truth Social. CNN, in November 2023, ran a headline stating, “Substantial doubt Trump’s Truth Social will survive, accountants warn.” The New York Magazine ran a headline the same month, “Trump’s Truth Social is an unmitigated Failure.” Slate magazines headline was, “Truth Social’s Harsh Truth Donald Trump’s Twitter alternative is flailing.” The Guardian ran this headline in September, “Trump’s Truth Social platform faces uncertain future as key test looms.”

Well guess what! Last Friday, a merger was approved between Truth Social and an SPAC unlocking significant resources for the expansion of Truth Social and also the potential for Trump himself with a major payday worth several billion dollars. Not the outcome the left was hoping for. I can almost visualize the leftists crying over their beers, lol. I sure love watching true capitalism success.

As always...that’s just my opinion!

CLASS REUNION

West Nassau High School Class of 2004

WNHS Class of 2004 20 Year Reunion will be held Saturday, April 20 from 10 a.m. – 1p.m. at Ewing Park for a Family Picnic in Callahan; and Night Out, April 20 at 8 p.m. at Sandbar at Amelia Island. Questions: email Joshua Murphy at fuprez.08@gmail.com or Heather Waters at wath0001@gmail.com.

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The Gift and Loss of the Land- Old Testament Historical Books: Part #1

Pastor Benjie Loyd, River Road Baptist Church, Hilliard



In the previous article, we overviewed the first five books of the Bible. The first five books of the Bible are called the Torah (law of God). The Bible begins with the creation of the world in Genesis. Then Moses zooms in on giving the first couple paradise (the gift of land) in Genesis 2. In Genesis 3, the first couple sins and they are expelled from the land. Adam and Eve experience an exile and they are in need of restoration. God does not throw in the towel on his purpose for mankind. In Genesis 12, God promises Abraham that he will be a great blessing, a nation will emerge from him, that God will give his descendants a land, and that the whole world would be blessed through his descendants. The pattern of giving land and the experience of exile because of disobedience is repeated in the historical books. The historical books under consideration this month will be Joshua-II Kings. The rest of the historical books (I Chronicles-Esther) will show how God graciously puts his people back in the land. That is the story for next month's article. Let's see the story of how God gives his people the promised land and how his people experience exile from the promised land this month. Remember, this is a repeat of Genesis 1-3.

Joshua: God Gives the Land: The book of Deuteronomy comes to a close with Moses giving the people the law of God as they prepare to take the land. Moses prepares the people for a time of transition to Joshua's leadership. Under the leadership of Joshua, the people are given the land as a gift. In Joshua, the promised land is claimed (1-5), conquered (6-12), and colonized/divided (13-22). The end of the book of Joshua makes it very clear that staying in the land is contingent upon keeping the covenant (23-24).

Judges: Chaos in the Land: Joshua shows how Israel got the land and the book of Judges shows how chaos erupts in the land. Judges is the darkest book in the Bible. The most often used phrase in Judges is that in those days, there was no king. Everybody did what was right in their own eyes. Judges chronicles this chaos. Judges is a book of apostasy (1-2:5), apathy (2:6-16), and anarchy (17-21).

Ruth: The Fix for the Chaos in the Land: The problem in the book of Judges is that there was no king. The book of Ruth shows us how God is going to correct this problem through an unlikely family. The book of Ruth closes with a genealogy that shows how God's king is going to come from the family of David and his descendants. The book of Ruth begins with grief (1), moves to hope (2), God graciously provides a redeemer for a family (3-4:17), God graciously supplies a redeemer for the nation of Israel and the world (4:18-22).

I-II Samuel: A Kingdom in the Land: Ruth has given us clues that God's king is going to come from David's household. When we come to the books of Samuel, we see Israel in the land, but they still do not have a king. I Samuel is a time of transition. Samuel is the last of the Judges (1-7). In chapter 8, Saul becomes the

first king in (8-15). Saul is not David and Saul is not a king after God's own heart. The rest of the book of I Samuel deals with the self-destruction of Saul and the rise of David (16-31). The book of II Samuel chronicles the life of David. In chapters (1-10) we see David's finest years. In chapters (11-19) we see David's failures and their fallout. As the book of II Samuel comes to a close, we see David's final years (20-24).

I-II Kings: The Loss of the Land/Exile from the Land: The books of I-II Kings deal with division of Israel into two kingdoms and the loss of both of the kingdoms. As a result of covenant unfaithfulness, the kingdom of Israel is divided and the land is lost. I Kings begins with Israel united under the reign of King Solomon (1-11). The kingdom is divided into two kingdoms (Israel Northern Kingdom and Judah Southern Kingdom). The story of how this all unravels is given in I Kings (12-22). II Kings tells the story of the decline and fall of the Northern Kingdom/Israel in (1-17). The remainder of II Kings (18-25) tells the story of the decline and fall in the southern kingdom.

We leave the historical books with the people experiencing the pain of exile because of covenant unfaithfulness, like Adam and Eve and the rest of us in Genesis 1-3. Is the exile final? We will look to the rest of the historical books to answer that question.

Easter Happenings

Easter Eggstravaganza at Life Care Center of Hilliard, 3756 West 3rd Street
Friday, March 29 at 3 p.m.
Refreshments, photos with the Easter Bunny and prizes!

Easter Celebration at Bryceville First Baptist Church, 7732 US Highway 301
Saturday, March 30 at 11 a.m.
Enjoy an egg hunt, bounce house, candy and more!

Easter Community Fun Day at North Hilliard Baptist Church, 552823 US Hwy. 1
Saturday, March 30 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Games, prizes, hot dogs, snow cones, Easter egg hunt, etc.

Community Easter Egg Hunt with First Baptist Church Hilliard
at the Hilliard Recreation Center, Oxford Street
Saturday, March 30 from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Food, games, bounce houses and more!

Giant Easter Egg Hunt at Hilliard First Assembly of God, 550920 US Hwy. 1
Easter Sunday, March 31, following 10 a.m. service.
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Callahan Garden Club News

Paula Schutte, President

Welcome Spring from the Callahan Garden Club! We hope your plants made it through the winter weather and the ones that appeared to be dead are bursting in buds and new growth. Now is the time to complete garden bed preparations and start your seeds and seedlings outside. When using an old bed from last year follow these preparation tips before planting:

1. Clear the bed of all weeds and dead plants.

2. Turn the soil and work in fresh dirt and compost/manure, about 6" - 8" deep. The desired texture of soil should be fine for seed germination and root growth. Note-if using animal manure, use only that of herbivores and make sure it has rested over the winter so it is not steamy fresh, as it will burn your plants. You can also make a manure tea (not for human consumption).

3. Check the seed packets for instructions on planting, i.e. required sunlight and when to plant in your zone. Nassau County is zone 9a/9b. Remember our sun gets hot in the late spring and summer. Plants requiring full sunlight should receive sun in the morning and early afternoon, with shade

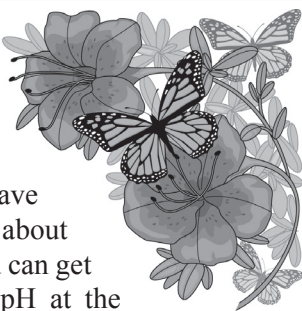
protection in the late afternoon.

4. If you have questions about your soil, you can get it tested for pH at the UF/IFAS extension offices in Yulee and Callahan.

5. Get out there and work the earth, get your hands dirty and grow green.

Speaking of getting your hands dirty, Master Gardeners Sarah McCullough and Lynn West will be presenting information and a hands-on workshop on plant propagation at our Wednesday, April 3 meeting at 10:30 a.m. There will be a fee of \$5 for materials. If this interests you, please join us at our clubhouse, 45251 Fourth Avenue, Callahan. Also, our club will have a booth at the Callahan Railroad Day that will be held Saturday, April 20.

At last month's meeting, Steve Davies, assistant director of District IV, FFGC (Florida Federation of Garden Clubs), came and spoke to the club members about the upcoming FFGC Convention in Jacksonville and discussed ways to maintain our clubhouse.



Hilliard Town News

Dawn S. West

The Hilliard Town Council met Thursday night for their final meeting of March. The first order of business was Resolution 2024-05, which concerned accepting a Florida Department of Transportation offer of a state funded grant agreement and authorizing and directing the Town Council to accept such agreement. The funding grant is in the amount of \$750,000 and will be for the contract, engineering and design for the 6th Street paving project. The council adopted the resolution.

The next item was the approval of a capital purchase, from the Parks & Recreation Department for a Kawasaki Rebel, 72" FX1000, 35hp mower in

the amount of \$9,463.30 from Franklin Equipment Sales. The budget for this item was \$10,000, making the purchase below the budgeted amount.

The following item concerned a payable to Core & Main for the Ingham Road project, Culverts and Drainage Improvements in the amount of \$36,501.98. The council approved the payable.

The final item concerned the council approval of a payable to Energy Engineering Systems, for project Waste Water Treatment Plant Panel View in the amount of \$1,537.00.

The next meeting of the council will be Thursday, April 4 at 7 p.m.

Author Talk with Sheila Athens!



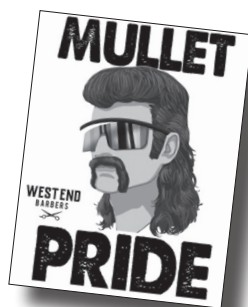
as Sheila will be selling and signing books at this event.

Join us Friday, April 5 at 1:30 p.m. at the Hilliard Library for an author talk with Sheila Athens, local author of *Neena Lee is Seeing Things*. Sheila Athens writes smart fiction, set where the South meets the Sunshine state. Her stories are about women seeking to find the peace we all deserve—whether they're battling an external foe or an internal one (or both). Readers are drawn to her work because they believe that everyday heroes can make a difference in our world. Join us



Mullet Contest & Party This Friday!

Westend Barbers' Mullet Contest and Party will be held this Friday, March 29 at 5:30 p.m. Style your best mullet and come be a part of the contest! Enjoy refreshments, prizes, trophies and bragging rights for the top mullets! Westend Barbers is located at 450061 SR 200, Ste. 4 (beside Junior's Seafood).



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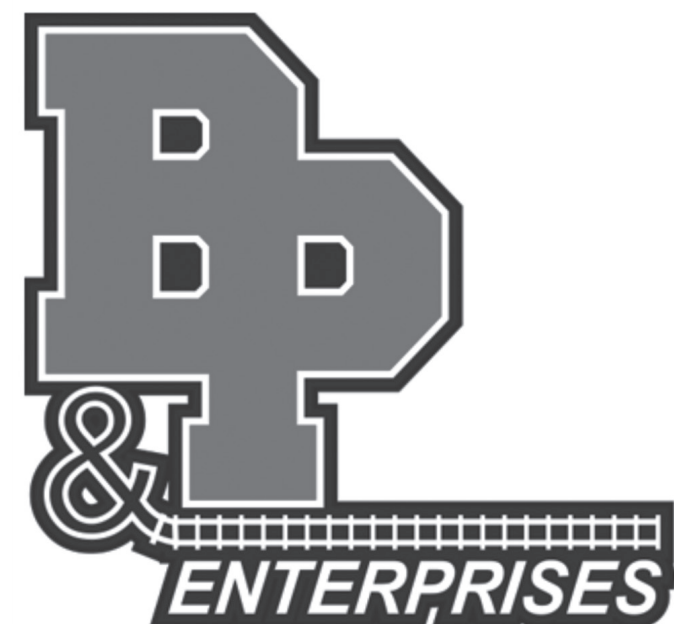
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Beware of Unlicensed and/or Inexperienced Contractors

Dear Editor,
 In early March 2024, I hired a landscape company to wash the exterior of my home. The contractor suggested using his pressure washer. I asked him not to use a pressure washer on my property. He went behind my back and used it on my concrete porch slab and damaged it. I contacted him, he denied causing the damage and said the damage already existed. When I asked for his license number and insurance information he refused. My home is a new build and less than 3 years old. This company was advertised as licensed and insured. I am currently seeking legal actions against this contractor.

Hiring an unlicensed and/or inexperienced contractor to save a buck can bring great risks to you and to your family home. While embarking on a home improvement project can be an exhilarating endeavor, doing so requires you to place your trust, future happiness, and well-being in the hands of strangers. That is why it is essential that you choose a contractor carefully and without cutting corners. Saving a dollar in the short run, can cost you dearly in the long run.

Unlicensed contractors and/or inexperienced contractors tend to be unreliable and perform work in a shoddy fashion. An unlicensed and/or inexperienced contractor is unlikely to follow your instructions leading to inferior and substandard workmanship that can end up costing you significantly more than if you had hired a licensed contractor at the outset. An unlicensed and/or inexperienced contractor is unlikely to possess liability insurance. That means that if your neighbor is injured or its home becomes damaged as a result of your contractor, you can be held personally liable for any such damages or injuries. Since your homeowners' insurance policy likely excludes claims arising from unlicensed construction practices, you face the risk of financial ruin to satisfy such liability. Even if it is your own home that is damaged and damaged as a result of a later casualty, your insurer may deny your claim if it can be shown that unlicensed work was performed on your home. As unfair as it sounds, you may

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.

also be responsible for the medical bills, lost wages, and other damages sustained by your unlicensed and/or inexperienced contractor if he or she is injured while working unlawfully on your home.

Be careful to protect yourself. Confirm that your contractor possesses liability and worker's compensation insurance, and the requisite licensure from the State of Florida. In addition, make sure that your contractor has been in business for a significant period of time. The contractor that I mentioned, also has a fulltime job which means that his business is not his meat and potatoes so he doesn't have to take his side business seriously, it is just extra money on the side.

Being prepared from the outset is often the difference between being an exhilarating home improvement experience and a nightmare. To verify licenses, unlicensed activity and file a complaint with the State of Florida visit: www.myfloridalicense.com.

Jeanette Cooley

The Year of the Vote

Dear Editor,
 Listening to callers on CSPAN regarding their voting choices for the November election, I am befuddled by the burgeoning number of callers who don't like one candidate or both. I was not aware that voting for a president was a personality contest. Naively perhaps, I had been brought up to believe that after reviewing the relevant information, the voter chooses the candidate most qualified based on past performance.

Instead, the callers had already made up what sounded like their emotional choices, a little early in the game isn't it? In addition, a startling find, many callers, rather than choose someone they favor are voting against a candidate, not realizing a no vote actually nullifies their voice. When the smoke of this kind of vengeful thinking is cleared away, what emerges is a clear reflection of the

ubiquitous anger and fear that is destabilizing America. It is a malignant negativity that not only poisons our choices, but our daily lives.

Until we stop stoking our denial with our escapes through money, sports or some other distraction, our votes and, consequently, our government, will continue its march downward into deeper dysfunction as we suffer the consequences.

We have time before the election to look to ourselves, stop depending on them to do "IT" for us. Yours may be only one vote but a tide of informed voters can change the world.

B.R. McConnell

A Fair America

Dear Editor,
 1. Money limit in campaigns. Winning should not be because you have the most money. This will level the playing field so we can focus on the issues. 2. Create term limits and end pensions and endless health insurance for members of government. This will end the process of people not caring if they are working during their time in office. 3. Popular vote instead of electoral vote. That's how everyone's vote counts. 4. Healthcare should be available the same for everyone. People should not die because they don't have a lot of money. 5. Education should be available the same for everyone. This will level the playing field between the rich and poor students until out of college. 6. We the people need to show that entertainers and professional sports players are not worth millions and millions of dollars for entertainment. 7. Corporate gouging greed needs to be eliminated. Making

profits is fine, but corporations have made record profits even as Americans can barely afford groceries. 8. There has to be a better way to curb inflation than to raise interest rates, which the Fed is very aware only hurts the lower income populations. I believe most Americans would agree that things need to change. Get involved. And on Trump: The Emperor has no clothes.

Bonita Collins

Thank You!

Dear Editor,
 A couple weeks ago we hired a tree service to cut some large branches and haul the debris away. The last day there was debris left and branches that hadn't been cut. We attempted to contact them and finally did get a message. They felt they had finished the job.

In the meantime, a post was put on Nassau Rants and Raves. In less than a day we had offers to come and pick up the debris and haul it away at no charge. Then two men contacted us and asked if they could come out and look at what had happened and what needed to be done. They looked it over and said they would be back Monday when the weather was better.

Kyle Nagle and Keith Jones of 1 Above Tree Service and Landscaping, showed up Monday with their climbing gear and trailer. They cut the branches and loaded up all the debris and refused payment! We were told they grew up here and were determined to bring good and honest work to the community.

God certainly blessed us with these men and their willingness to finish an unfinished job that we were unable to do ourselves. You don't see that very often.

These are two fine and honest men who will do the job and finish it. Please keep 1 Above Tree Service and Landscaping, in mind when you need something done right!

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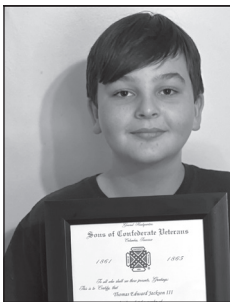
Driggers Wins Junior Angler Title

Darren Driggers, 14, of Callahan, was named the Junior Anglers Division Champion in the El Cheapo Sheepshead Tournament based out of Mayport. Darren won with an 8.21 pounds Sheepshead. Darren is in the 8th grade and attends Callahan Middle School. He the son of Stephen and Abbie Driggers of Callahan!

New SCV Members Inducted



Kirby-Smith Camp 1209, Sons of Confederate Veterans, inducted two new members at their recent monthly meeting. Hamilton McElroy comes in on the service record of his ancestor, 1st Lieutenant Reuben Frazier Mayo, Company B, 28th Georgia.



Thomas (Tommy) Edward Jackson, III enters on his ancestor's service record, Private Henry Morrison McKenzie, Company B, 16th Cavalry Battalion. The minimum age for membership in the SCV is 12. Tommy has the distinction of being the youngest member in the entire organization, having entered on his 12th birthday. Congratulations to both!

For more information on the SCV Kirby-Smith Camp 1209, visit: www.scv-kirby-smith.org.

Presidential Primary Voter Turnout

Nassau County Supervisor of Elections Janet H. Adkins shares voter turnout from the March 19, 2024, Presidential Preference Primary. After completing 11 days of Early Voting, 8 of which are statutorily mandated, followed by Election Day on March 19, Nassau County had a 22.5% voter turnout during the Presidential Preference Primary. This represents 3,554 Vote-by-Mail ballots, 3,570 Early Vote ballots, and 2,838 Election Day ballots.

Supervisor Adkins applauds Nassau County voters for having one of the highest voter turnout rates in Northeast Florida for the Presidential Preference Primary

Election. Voter turnout for surrounding counties are as follows: Baker 20.58%, Clay 16.5%, Duval 19.27%, Flagler 25.3%, and St. John's 18.88%. "We are working diligently to build trust and transparency in our Elections Process in Nassau County," said Adkins. "That starts with providing more opportunities for our voters to cast their ballots."

For more updates and information, visit our website at: www.VoteNassauFL.gov or download the Vote Nassau FL elections mobile app to check your voter information and status.

OREMC Announces Rate Increase Effective April 1



Okefenoke REMC has announced a base rate increase effective April 1. While the co-op issued wholesale power cost adjustments (increases in 2022 and a decrease in 2023), this will be the first base rate increase in over three years. As a result, residential rates will increase by 3.11 percent resulting in a \$5-\$6 increase on members' monthly electric bill depending on usage. "We understand this is not welcome news for our members given how the cost of living has increased in so many other aspects of life—groceries, fuel, dining out, clothing, vehicles, housing," acknowledges OREMC General Manager John Middleton, "But the utility industry is no less immune to inflation, which has resulted in significant prices increases in materials necessary to maintain and build our distribution system to enhance reliability."

Materials and labor costs are the leading drivers of OREMC's cost increases, followed by system growth and improvements, and cost of power. With system growth, development and improvement comes the need for more plant and material: poles, wires, transformers, reclosers, etc. Availability of materials, long-lead times and labor shortages in manufacturing have resulted in large cost increases for many

components. Along with growth on OREMC's system due to the ongoing real estate boom, new technologies are being invested in, and integrated into, the system to improve reliability and minimize the number of members affected for the shortest amount of time when an outage does occur.

Additionally, the cost of power generation has increased. While OREMC had power cost adjustments in 2022 and 2023 to adjust for an unprecedented increase in natural gas, and then a subsequent reduction and leveling off, natural gas isn't OREMC's only source of power. The power supply mix also includes renewables, coal and nuclear.

The timing of this rate increase is the result of OREMC's most recent rate study. Rate studies are scheduled every two to three years to evaluate changes in costs and revenue, determine if rates are under-collecting, over-collecting or neutral, and adjust accordingly. OREMC's last base rate increase was in November 2020.

For a complete breakdown of OREMC's residential rates and a more detailed explanation of the cost of service, OREMC members are encouraged to visit oremc.com/news/rate-change-april-1. For questions or concerns about your OREMC bill, please contact OREMC Member Services at 800-262-5131. They can review your bill, explain usage and discuss billing/payment options.

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Two NCSO Reserve Deputies Retire



Sheriff Leeper and Jimmy Hall

Recently, two Nassau County Sheriff's Office Reserve Deputies retired. Officer Jimmy Hall has been working for 41 years for NCSO. Records show he began with the Sheriff's Office in May of 1982. Jimmy has always been a smiling face that people would see at the gate at football and basketball games, the NE FL Fair and many times in the middle of the road directing traffic. No matter when, Jimmy was (for the most part) always



Sheriff Leeper and Stephen Johnson

smiling and friendly! For the last 29 years, Officer Stephen Johnson has been doing much of the same. Always a friendly face and smile at football and basketball games and the NE FL Fair. They both were always willing to be available whenever needed. Sheriff Leeper would like to wish our reserve deputies, Jimmy Hall and Stephen Johnson a happy retirement! We will miss you guys!

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4-H'er of the Month Jasper Strickland



Meet Jasper, an enthusiastic and active 4-H member from Nassau County. Recognized as the February 4-Her of the month, Jasper's love for learning and leadership has set him apart. Jasper is a member of Zooming in Photography 4-H Club. Although Jasper is a Cloverbud he is making strides to participate in various activities outside of his club such as observing forest ecology meetings, attending leadership trainings and showcasing his photography skills during club field trips. Jasper told his 4-H agents that in the future he would like to be a Florida 4-H State Officer. Great job, Jasper, your 4-H spark is inspiring!

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Hilliard Mural Unveiled Saturday

Last Saturday, the Hilliard Mural, located on the maintenance building behind the Hilliard Town Hall Pavilion, was officially unveiled. "The project was a desire in Hilliard, when I first met the Hilliard town staff 2 years ago, but they didn't know how to go about it," said Richard Restiano, President, Nassau Council of Arts & Culture, Inc. "I introduced myself as the Arts and Culture Organization, and the town, of course, had never heard of us. From there, I put together the players as well as a small grant to get it started."

The community was surveyed for their ideas about a mural. School art students also participated. The images



are historic ones of the old town buildings, and there is a nod to the Florida Air Traffic Control Center. Arts and Culture Nassau and the Town of Hilliard partnered with the foundation, Hearts for Minds (www.hearts4minds.org), who designed and painted the mural. This foundation provides the assistance in return for placing a QR code in the mural that speaks to the community about Mental Health and how they support and offer resources and information for care and related mental health issues.

Arts and Culture Nassau is a 17-year-old best kept secret in Nassau County. During its original formation by the County in 2007 they took the arts council on Fernandina Beach and made them the Arts and Culture Nassau group with the explicit dictate that they represent the

entire county. Well, that didn't work out very well except for Callahan and the Westside Historical Society. "After leading the group for the last 3 years

I decided that if the only source of revenue was going to be from the sale of the State of the Arts license plate, then this organization cannot meet the mission," continued Restiano. "We were not allowed as a City Commission to accept donations, apply for grants or get any funding from the city. Since we were staffed by the City of Fernandina Beach Parks and Rec Department and because of the Florida Sunshine Laws, this only complicated the ability we had to make a difference."

The new 3-year-plan called for Arts and Culture to have 4 strategies: Sustainability; Relevance county-wide, Impact and Awareness. Ultimately the board decided in December to dissolve the city maintain commission and create a nonprofit 501(c)3.



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Transparency in the School District

Jean Lamar, Ed.S.
Instructional Coach, Nassau County

Recently, I read an article about the importance of transparency in our public school system, and I could not agree more. However, I thought it would be pertinent for readers to understand transparency from the viewpoint of an educator within the system. For 20 years, I had the privilege of teaching English to middle and high school students, and I will soon enter my 15th year as an instructional coach, all within the Nassau County School District.

I remember years of working long, arduous hours after school and on weekends, desperate to understand my profession in my efforts to impact students' lives. Often, that meant locking up school gates long after others went home. I loved every minute of those 20 years, but I worked in solitude. Today in our school district, I see teachers working collaboratively to design curriculum maps, teaching units, and daily lesson plans explicitly guided by state standards (no, not a hidden agenda) to better instruct students and prepare them for the world of tomorrow. When I began my teaching journey, these practices were not in place. Today in our school district, I am thankful (although admittedly, no one relishes higher taxes) that the beginning teachers with whom I work can feel a little less stress regarding personal finances since learning how to teach along with trying to meet weighty state certification requirements are frequently overwhelming and cause many to exit the field faster than they entered.

Today in our school district, with a total population of 104,911, we have had to embrace growth whether we like it or not. While my brain has been hyper-focused on instructional pedagogy and supporting teachers and students, I know that others have had to strategize and plan for the future of an expanding district in an inflationary economy. I remember our district mission defined

in 2000 by a long-range planning team: "...to develop each student as an inspired life-long learner and problem-solver with the strength of character to serve as a productive member of society." This was the mission under which former Superintendent Dr. John Ruis operated.

Today in our school district, under Superintendent Dr. Kathy Burns, that mission is still in place. As an instructional coach, I go into secondary classrooms daily to observe and coach teachers trying to accomplish this mission. Is it easy? Absolutely not! Do they have it all figured out immediately? Absolutely not. Teaching is far too complex for there to be an easy solution, but we are making continual progress, and our district score reports prove it.

I remember the year I was fortunate to be chosen to represent all the amazing teachers in our district and state as the 2009 Florida Teacher of the Year. As I traveled across our state and nation, I often met people who had never heard of Nassau County. I still chuckle when I recall their queries: "Is that in New York or the Bahamas?" Today, when I go outside our school district, people KNOW Nassau County. The mere mention of where I live and work invariably sparks comments such as, "Oh, I've heard great things about your school district." Remarkable, for sure, but those successes did not happen by accident. They happened because our school district worked together to accomplish our district mission for the 12,731 students in Nassau County, led by a smart, strong, God-honoring superintendent who loves education and most importantly, kids.

Instead of our district reflecting the dissension that unfortunately characterizes today's politics, I, for one, would love to see our district and community join hands with each other to support the strong school system I am fortunate to serve in daily.

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, March 19

Mark Hinson Kidd, 65, Callahan: Sale of Methamphetamine

Saturday, March 23

Duane Dyal Hodges, 45, Hilliard: Tamper Destroy Evidence; Possession Drug Paraphernalia with Residue; Possession Weapon by Convicted Felon (x 2); Possession of Methamphetamine

Sunday, March 24

Amy Melissa Freeman, 40, Callahan: Battery, Touch or Strike Domestic Violence

John Patrick Moore, Sr., 47, Callahan: Out of County Warrant

Monday, March 25

Brock Hand, 43, Callahan: Violation of Probation Community Control

Amanda Jean-Bishop Ream, 44, Callahan: Battery Touch Strike Domestic Violence

Tuesday, March 26

David Alan Grant, II, 34, Hilliard: Possession of a Weapon by a Convicted Felon; Discharge Firearm in Public; Resist without Violence; Battery Touch Strike Domestic Violence; Battery on Officer, Firefighter, EMT, etc.; Aggravated Assault with Deadly Weapon

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ALMA MARIE CALDWELL



Alma Marie Caldwell, 98, of Callahan, passed away March 21, 2024. She was married to the late Harrie Caldwell of Callahan. Alma moved from the mountains of West Virginia with her family to Jacksonville at the young age of 20. After several years of "city life," they migrated to Nassau County, to slow down.

Alma enjoyed "going". It didn't matter where you went she wanted to "ride". She loved a good cheeseburger, with Krystal's being her favorite and never turned down dessert. She was immensely proud of her family and told everyone she met about her granddaughter, Shelby. She could remember more than the average person until the time was no longer her friend. Even as her health declined, she never once thought it was because of her age. Doctors and nurses alike often remarked, "There's nothing against her but time."

Alma is survived by two sons Elba H. Caldwell and Dewey P. (Mary) Caldwell, all of Callahan; a granddaughter Firefighter Shelby Caldwell of Gainesville; daughter of love Sheryl Caldwell; and two brothers Fred (Silvia) Spaulding and Bobby (Gloria) Spaulding, as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

A funeral service was held Monday, March 25 in the chapel of Cedar Bay Funeral Home, Jacksonville, with Chaplain Jackie Hayes officiating. Interment followed in Evergreen Cemetery, Jacksonville. The family received friends prior to the service.

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

Arrangements by Cedar Bay Funeral Home, Jacksonville, 904-714-1110.

OBITUARIES

TERRENCE A. DiPERNA, JR.



Terrence A. "Terry" DiPerna Jr., 45, of Jacksonville, passed away March 5, 2024. Terry was born November 22, 1978 in Jacksonville, and raised in the Arlington area. He was a 1997 graduate of Terry Parker High School. The most important things in his life were his daughter, his dogs and his family.

He is survived by his daughter Meilani DiPerna; father Terence (April) DiPerna, Sr.; mother Gayle (Wendell) Cooper; sisters Jennifer (Greg), Crystal (Paul) and Kim (Larry); brother Curt (Erica); and many extended family members and friends. He was preceded in death by his infant brother; grandparents, uncle and aunts.

The funeral service was held Saturday, March 16 Corey-Kerlin Funeral Home, Jacksonville, with Pastor Virgil Jarrel officiating. The family received friends prior to the service. Terry was laid to rest at Arlington Park Cemetery.

Condolences may be expressed at: www.corey-kerlin.com.

Arrangements by Corey-Kerlin Funeral Home, Jacksonville.

TOM RON HAWTHORNE



Tom Ron Hawthorne, 47, of Callahan, passed away unexpectedly March 14, 2024. He was born February 8, 1977 in Temple, Texas, to Kim Noel and Yong Sun Son Hawthorne.

Tom was a United States Army Veteran, his MOS was 68W. He was injured while serving in Iraq in 2006 and almost lost his life, but Tom beat the odds and survived. Tom was an honorable man. Everything he did was done with intensity

and dedication. Tom's passion for the world and humanity was unmatched, it was truly inspiring. His capacity to learn was infinite, he craved knowledge and those who knew him would call him nothing short of a genius. Even through all his personal battles, Tom lived his life always putting others first and helping those he could. Tom walked this earth with such a strong force and will be missed dearly by his family and so many friends. He is preceded in death by his nephew, Isaiah Hawthorne.

Tom leaves behind his parents; brother Ty Hawthorne; and niece Crystal Hawthorne.

A celebration of Tom's life was held Tuesday, March 26 at Nassau Funeral Home with Chaplain Jim Cox officiating. The family received friends prior to the.

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

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

JEREMIAH BRANDYN HONEA



Jeremiah "Bullfrog" Brandyn Honea, 45, passed away unexpectedly Friday, March 22, 2024. He was born February 2, 1979 in Warner Robins, Georgia. Jeremiah was a gentle giant. He would give his last dollar to anyone in need. Jeremiah enjoyed riding his motorcycle, going to the beach, traveling with his fiancé and spending time with his grandchildren. Jeremiah will be missed deeply by all.

Jeremiah is survived by his son Brandyn Honea; fiancé Doneva Thompson; mother Ronda (David) Dochterman; father Darrell (Rita) Honea; grandchildren T.J., Jude, Remi, Everly, Charlotte and Riley;

siblings Michelle, Jesse, Matthew and Gabrielle; nieces Ariana Alexander, Samara and Alessandra; bonus children Timmy (Kasey), Jacob, Jason (Layza), Grace (Will) and Jeremiah (Jaydn); and several other family members and special friends.

The family will receive friends Thursday, March 28 at 12 p.m. at Nassau Funeral Home prior to the celebration of life service at 1 p.m. with Pastor Buddy Wimberly officiating.

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

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

JOSEPH DOUGLAS INGHAM



In loving memory of Joseph "Joey" Douglas Ingham, 23, who departed from this world March 21, 2024. Joey was born May 15, 2000. Joey's heart overflowed with love for his children and he found solace and joy in the quiet serenity of fishing. Though Joey has cast his final line in this world, his memory will forever ripple through the waters of our hearts. He leaves behind a legacy of love, laughter and cherished moments shared with those he held dear. Joey is preceded in death by his mother Tiffany Ingham; and great-grandfather Earl Crosby.

Joey is survived by his granny Loretta Crosby; papa Doug Crosby; his beloved children Delilah Ingham and Greason Ingham; their mother Sierra Scott; brothers Skyler Ingham and Donovan Silcox; father Robert Ingham; and many aunts, uncles and cousins.

Joey's family and close friends will come together to honor and celebrate his life Saturday, March 30 at 11 a.m. at Callahan Church of Christ, 45137 S. Mickler Street, Callahan.

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

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They may be emailed to news@westsidejournal.net.

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OBITUARIES

HELEN JOHNSON
 Helen Johnson, of Callahan, left this life Sunday, March 24, 2024, following a lengthy battle with cancer. She was a devoted wife and caring mother, with an infectious laugh, positive attitude, and deep love for all of her family. Helen's fight against cancer was a valiant one and an inspiration to so many. She always had a smile and could frequently be seen walking outdoors, living her life to the fullest.

The oldest of three children, Helen was born January 4, 1944 in Jacksonville, to Wanda and Jim Milligan. She grew up in Callahan, right next door to her future husband, Alan Johnson. Helen graduated from Callahan High School and attended Georgia Southern, where she majored in Education. In June 1965, Helen married her sweetheart, Alan Johnson, and had two children, Ken and Ron.

She was a well-loved science teacher in Nassau County for 35 years and was a lifelong member of Callahan Methodist Church. Helen supported her sons by always attending their sports events and cheering them on through t-ball, basketball and football. She loved to walk! Helen could be seen walking up and down Stratton Road all the time - even up to a few weeks ago, you could find her walking in Ewing Park. She was always laughing and loved colorful hats and handbags and fun jewelry! Anyone who knew Helen could tell when she was in the grocery store because you could hear her signature laugh from anywhere in Winn Dixie! She enjoyed driving her new blue Mustang, Sunday afternoon NASCAR, listening to Elvis, reading a book and traveling all over the US and Europe. Helen truly lived a rich and fulfilling life. She is preceded in death by her father Jim Milligan; and mother Wanda Argo Milligan.

Helen is survived by her husband, Alan Johnson; sons Ken (Robin) Johnson and Ron Johnson; brother George (Charlene) Milligan; sister Claudia Milligan; niece Crissy (Chris) Spicer; grandchildren Tyler (Baleigh) Johnson, Austin Johnson, Emily (Bailey) Moore and Ben Johnson; great-grandchildren Judah and Sammy Johnson;


sister-in-law June Goforth; brother-in law Randy Johnson; as well as many nephews and nieces.


The family will receive friends Monday, April 1 at 11 a.m. at Callahan First Baptist Church prior to the celebration of Helen's life service at 12 p.m. with Pastor Bodie Riddle and Dr. Lynn Hyatt officiating. Interment will follow at Jones Cemetery in Callahan.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations made to: The Patient Assistance Foundation of Cancer Specialists of North Florida: <https://pafcsnf.org/#donations>.

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

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

MICHAEL L. WORTH
 Michael L. Worth, 52, of Folkston, God called home, Sunday, March 17. Michael was born July 28, 1971 in Jacksonville. Michael was

 a 1989 graduate of Englewood High School in Jacksonville. He also attended A.F. Community College and Florida Community College of Jacksonville. While attending college, Michael enlisted in the United States Air Force as a Security Journeyman from 1989 - 1996. During his enlistment, Michael was also a member of the United States Air Force Honor Guard. He was the recipient of many awards while serving in the Air Force. Michael was recently a staff member at Gerber Collision and Glass as a Parts Department Manager.

Michael was known for his love of family and friends, as well as his love for Jesus and being a member of Sand Hill Baptist Church. He also enjoyed fishing, watching sports, loving Star Wars, and loving the Florida Gators. Michael is predeceased by his mom, Jonan Worth Leopard.


Michael leaves behind his loving wife, Amanda Worth of Folkston; his children


Troy Worth and Jewel Worth, both of Jacksonville, Grace and Taylor Worth, of Folkston; brother James (Ann) Leopard of Jacksonville; grandchildren Galaxy and Galileo (Leo) Morales, both of Jacksonville; and several nieces and nephews.

A celebration of life service was held Saturday, March 23 at Shepard Roberson Funeral Home with Pastor Trent Long officiating. The family received friends prior to the service.

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

Arrangements by Shepard-Roberson Funeral Home, Folkston.

ARNOLD WAYNE ZOLLER
 Arnold Wayne Zoller, 95, passed away peacefully March 22, 2024 and heaven gained a pretty cool dad, husband, grandpa, great-grandpa and

 aviator. Dad traded in his Delta wings for his Heavenly wings and is now praising and worshipping God with our mom in heaven. Just like our mom, dad taught us the real meaning of family and the importance of keeping God and family first in everything we do. We were so blessed to have godly parents as our role models.

After serving in the US Army during the Korean War, dad was a hardworking man, who always provided for his family, and was never afraid to take risks to follow his life passion of aviation when he made a career change to attend Embry Riddle to learn aviation. Upon graduating with top honors, he was so proud to be selected by Delta Airlines where he worked for more

than 30 years. Dad had many hobbies, and his favorite by far was flying his airplane and his flight simulator. He also was a master gardener, copper tooler, mechanic of anything and everything, loved playing ping pong and going fishing and much more. He was good at just about everything he did and loved to turn it into a competition.


Dad and mom faithfully attended and worshipped God at Victory Baptist Church for over 50 years, and they were both instrumental in the launch of Victory Christian Academy. There's no doubt that dad was a man of God and there's no doubt that he is now singing and dancing in heaven with our mom and Jesus and the loved ones who have gone before him. While we are heartbroken to lose our beloved dad, we are steadfast in our faith that we will see him again. Rest in peace, dad, we will always love you! He is preceded in death by his wife Faith Zoller; his parents Edward and Lulu Zoller; and brother Robert Zoller.

He is survived by his six children Bruce (Jan) Zoller of Phoenix, Arizona, Judy (Tom) Morris and Eric (Lisa) Zoller, all of Jacksonville, Tom (April) Zoller of Bethlehem, Georgia, Philip (Christina) Zoller and Daryl (Sharon) Zoller, all of Jacksonville; 20 grandchildren Brandi and Brandon, Ashley and Emily, Kaila, Dylan and Logan, Heather, Jordan, Holly, Noah, Kristen, Chelsea, Kaitlyn, Hannah and Caleb, Preston and Alexis and Amber and Ashlyn; and 16 great-grandchildren Jade, Camden, Gracie, Brayden, Brantley, Andrew, Samuel, Ruth Anne, Daniel, Jax, Thora, Sommer, Dawsyn, Drake, Crimsyn and Aspyn.

The family will receive friends at 9 a.m. Tuesday, April 2 prior to the funeral service at 10 a.m. at Victory Baptist Church, 10613 Lem Turner Road, Jacksonville. Private burial will follow for family at Jacksonville National Cemetery with Military Honors.

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The Westside Journal would like to pay tribute to all the brave servicemen and women. Please take time to remember each of these service members in your daily prayers.

Gabriel Albert (Hawaii), Jacob Ash-Medina (Japan), Jewel Rene Barron (Virginia), Timothy Beasley (Cuba), Cody Beaver (Virginia), Jessica Bell (Hawaii), Chad E. Black (South Carolina), Kevin & Brooke Blanton (Georgia), Sgt. Caleb Bohannon (Oklahoma), Israel Marcos Bonilla (Missouri), Derek Borden, Benjamin Black (Iraq), Conrad Braawn (Afghanistan), Ryan Brooks (Connecticut), John Brookshire (North Carolina), Aaron Brown (Japan), Branden Brown (USS Nimitz), Anthony Broekema (Virginia), Ethan Bulford, (Virginia), SSGT Thomas W. Burnette (North Carolina), Ahmad Butler (Japan), Brayden Lamar Carroll (North Carolina), Allen L. Carter (Alaska), Samuel S. Clemons (Japan), John Coltrane (NAS Jax), Scott Cooper, Trevor Corum (Nebraska), Charlie I. D. Cox (South Korea), Quinn Coxwell (Georgia), Gavin Crews (Germany), Tison J. Crews (Korea), Charles 'CJ' Cribbs, III (Washington, DC), Dennis L. Davis II (Alabama), Joshua M. 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Gaus Announces Candidacy for School Superintendent

My name is Curtis Gaus, and I am asking for your support for my candidacy for Superintendent of the Nassau County School District. As a Navy Veteran, educator of 26 years, and the current District 3 Nassau County School Board Member, I understand the importance of having a fiscally responsible leader within the K-12 system to safeguard the interest of all of the district's stakeholders. Nassau County deserves a superintendent that will challenge and serve our students while developing and supporting our teachers, staff and leaders. Taxpayers value a quality education system, but want a leader who will be fiscally responsible, transparent and willing to work with all stakeholders. Teachers and staff, who are also taxpayers, deserve a district leader who values their family time, professionalism and dedication while allocating resources wisely to protect their long-term financial health.



Adult Education, Career and Technical Programs, and Dropout Prevention. Preparing students for college and careers was a cornerstone of my school-based and district leadership. Currently, I am serving a 4-year term as a Nassau County School Board Member for District 3.

I believe my experience, vision and leadership skills make me the best candidate to address the current challenges facing the school district and provide a vision to prepare our students to compete in an ever-changing world. I have witnessed firsthand the transformative power of education in shaping the lives of our students and I have been deeply committed to fostering an environment where every student can thrive academically, socially and emotionally.

As your next Superintendent, I pledge to prioritize: **Budget/Financial Transparency and Accountability to the Taxpayers:** Hold regular budget transparency meetings for community understanding. **Increase Student Success and Safety:** Focus on holistic student success beyond state test scores. Ensure students are well-prepared for various career paths. **Improved Communication, Collaboration and Partnerships:** Foster open communication and collaboration with community organizations. **Professional Development and Training:** Provide ongoing professional development for teachers to include emerging technologies to help reduce time spent on paperwork.

In the last two years, I returned to the classroom in Charlton County, Georgia - a position that allowed me to serve on our school board. This experience has given me valuable insights into the challenges teachers face daily. I am deeply invested in the success and well-being of every student in our district and I am dedicated to leading with integrity, compassion and vision.

My platform reflects the diversity of my career experience that includes all of the following: Middle and High School Science Teacher, Assistant Principal (Fernandina Beach High School), Principal of West Nassau High School and Bronson Middle/High School, and Nassau County Coordinator in charge of

Thank you for considering a donation to support my vision. With your help, we can build a district focused on creating a world-class education for our students. Donations can be made by check to: 85228 Johnson Lane, Yulee, FL 32097; or through Venmo @ gaus4superintendent2024.

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It is our honor to recognize our local Armed Service members. We would like to update our 'Pray for our Troops' list, adding those who have recently joined our Armed Services or removing those who no longer serve. Please read over the list. If you need to make a correction, addition or deletion, just give us a call, 879-4180. You may also email changes to news@westsidejournal.net.

God Bless our Troops!



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The Town of Callahan's Volunteer Fire Department is looking for a qualified individual to serve as the

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Letter of Interest with a List of Qualifications and/or Resumé may be emailed to Callahan Town Clerk at: clerk@townofcallahan-fl.gov.

Man Nabbed in Multi-County Robbery Spree

Alicia Tarancon, Public Affairs Officer

Raheem Davis, Jr., 22, and another suspect allegedly carried out a scheme to defraud Home Depot stores across multiple locations in Palm Beach, Nassau, Miami-Dade, Duval and Martin Counties between November 21, 2023 and December 1, 2023. The suspects are accused of using counterfeit bills to attempt to purchase merchandise from these locations. In several incidents, the suspects took off with cash and merchandise from various Home Depots throughout the state.

On December 1, 2023 an attempted robbery occurred here in Nassau County at the Home Depot on State Road 200 in Yulee. A Nassau County Sheriff's Office detective with the Criminal Investigations Division (CID) reviewed surveillance video of the robbery and identified the suspect as Raheem Davis, Jr. The footage showed the suspect attempting to purchase several items in the Garden Center of Home Depot using counterfeit money. While the cashier called for a manager, Davis Jr. tried to forcibly open the cash register. Although the victim managed to push the suspect away, the suspect ran from the store leaving the merchandise behind.

A detective with the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office determined that Davis, Jr. was also implicated in similar criminal cases with the Miami Dade Police Department,

Stuart Police Department, Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office, Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, and Nassau County Sheriff's Office. Surveillance video and fingerprints linked Davis, Jr. to the crime scenes across multiple jurisdictions. "Cooperating with other law enforcement agencies allows us to solve cases more effectively," said Sheriff Bill Leeper. "If criminals are committing crimes here, they're likely committing crimes elsewhere too."

On December 15, 2023, Davis Jr. was arrested on outstanding warrants in Fulton County and subsequently booked into Camden County jail in Georgia. He faces charges including three counts of Burglary with Assault or Battery; one count of Robbery with a Weapon; one count of Robbery; three counts of Attempted Robbery; Battery on a Person over 65; and one count of Organized Scheme to Defraud (less than \$20,000).



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<p>5 lb. Bag Fully Cooked Chicken PARTY WINGS</p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em; text-align: center;">\$10⁰⁰</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Expires 4-2-24 WJ Limit 4 Bags With this Coupon</p>	<p>OYSTERS!</p> <p>\$75 50 LB. BUSHEL</p> <p>\$40 1/2 BUSHEL WE HAVE PINTS</p> <p>\$25 PARTY BAG</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Expires 4-2-24 WJ With this Coupon</p>
<p>LEG QUARTERS</p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em; text-align: center;">\$7⁹⁵</p> <p>10 lb. Bag</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Expires 4-2-24 WJ Limit 2 With this Coupon</p>	<p>4 lb. Box Headless, Peeled & Deveined SHRIMP</p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em; text-align: center;">\$11⁹⁵</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Expires 4-2-24 WJ While Supplies Last With this Coupon</p>
<p>USDA Whole T-BONES</p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em; text-align: center;">\$5⁹⁵ lb.</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Expires 4-2-24 WJ Limit 2 With this Coupon</p>	<p>Lee's Smoked SLAB BACON</p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em; text-align: center;"><i>Sliced the way you like it!</i></p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em; text-align: center;">\$4⁹⁹ lb.</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Expires 4-2-24 WJ WHOLE OR HALF With this Coupon</p>
<p>Meaty Pork SPARE RIBS</p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em; text-align: center;">\$1⁷⁹ lb.</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Expires 4-2-24 WJ With this Coupon</p>	<p>WHITE CASTLE CHEESEBURGERS</p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em; text-align: center;">\$5</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Expires 4-2-24 WJ While Supplies Last, With this Coupon</p>
<p>Meaty Beef NECKBONES</p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em; text-align: center;">\$2⁰⁰ lb.</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Expires 4-2-24 WJ While Supplies Last, With this Coupon</p>	<p>10 lb. Bag FRYER DRUMSTICKS</p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em; text-align: center;">\$6⁹⁵</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Expires 4-2-24 WJ With this Coupon</p>

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Nancy Lee Bethea

This fictional column features an inside look into the lives of John and Bethany McNair, a couple who live and work in Nassau County. The McNairs have three children, John Jr., 19, Brianna, 15, and Jacob, 5. Mr. McNair is a transplant from Chicago, Illinois, who teaches art. Mrs. McNair is a Nassau County native who works as a forester and has deep roots here.

Hard to believe it's already Spring Break, but here we are finishing the first quarter of 2024! The excitement in our household rose as we prepared for a week-long trip to the mountains of North Georgia this week to spend time with friends in their cabin. Sadly, a death in their family changed their plans and ours. So, John and I scrambled for something else to do. Should we rent a condo in St. Augustine? Plan a trip to Savannah? Eventually, we decided to stay right here in Nassau County.

John, Jr., arrived Sunday afternoon from college with three bags of dirty laundry. He had already made plans to meet friends in Fernandina early in the week. Brianna seemed relieved when we told her we'd be staying home. "Good," she exclaimed. "I can study for my driver's ed test." Little Jacob jumped up and down and said, "Video games!" seventeen times.

Even my husband, John, Sr., was thankful to spend a week at home. He's been working on a series of Florida-themed paintings, and he wants to finish and sell them at our local arts market this spring. Seems I was the only one who was disappointed to be staying home over Spring Break. After all, isn't Spring Break the traditional time



Naturally Nassau

Our Family's Retake on Spring Break



for adventure and memory-making in beautiful, warm locales? I thought back to my own college days when several friends and I traveled from Nassau County to Miami for a week. I remembered the hot pink striped bikini I wore there. If only I could fit into it now!

For a moment, I thought of calling my girlfriend, Kayla, and asking if she wanted to plan a last-minute girl trip. Then, I realized I had a week in front of me where I could spend time with my whole family without work or school commitments. So, I started researching what we could do in and around Nassau County. I smiled when Ft. Clinch State Park, one of my favorite places on earth, popped up in my search. I checked the weather, then I started planning a bike ride and picnic for Tuesday. Next, I saw the Fernandina Beach Skate Park highlighted. Both John, Sr. and John, Jr. love to skateboard, and the rest of the us have roller blades. That would be fun

for Wednesday. Then, I saw the link for the West Nassau Historical Society housed at the Train Depot in Callahan. I thought we could learn some Nassau County history and eat chicken nuggets from Callahan Barbecue (a.k.a. The Chicken House) on Thursday while we watched trains go by on River Road.

That left Friday. Should we stay home or plan a day at the beach? I opted for the latter, and put "Beach Day at Peter's Point" on the calendar. Feeling better about the week in front of us, I prepared lunch and called the family to the table. I shared the plan and watched them. After a few minutes, I noticed a gleam in their eyes. Even Brianna, our 15-year-old, showed excitement about the week.

"And I'll still have time to paint," John, Sr. said.

"This week's gonna be awesome!" Jacob said as he finished his sandwich.

After lunch, I folded some laundry and started delivering it around the house. When I got to Brianna's room, I noticed her standing in front of her mirror in a hot pink bikini. "Is that...?" I stammered.

"Yeah, mom!" she said. "I found your bikini in the old clothes basket. Isn't it cute?" She filled it out quite differently than I had at her age! "You're



gonna need to wear your cover-up!" I responded. "I know, but it's so cute!" she said.

Until next time, we will be enjoying Spring Break right here in Nassau County as we live our Naturally Nassau life.

Nancy Lee Bethea is a local writer who leads the Creative Writing Department at LaVilla Middle School of the Arts in Jacksonville. She is married to Stan Bethea and they live in Callahan with their teenage daughter and their rescue cat.



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