

“MAY THE GOD OF HOPE FILL YOU WITH ALL JOY AND PEACE AS YOU TRUST IN HIM, SO THAT YOU MAY OVERFLOW WITH HOPE BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.” - ROMANS 15:13

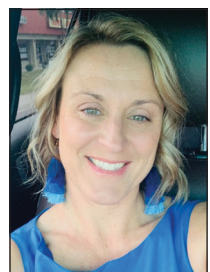
New Appointments at Schools for the 2020-2021 School Year

Dr. Kathy Burns, School Superintendent

At the April 9, 2020 school board meeting, the Nassau County School Board took action to approve the following new leadership appointments for the 2020-2021 school year.



Melissa Johnson was appointed as Principal of Callahan Elementary School to replace Mrs. Sabrina Faircloth who is retiring at the end of the 2019-2020 school year. Melissa accepted the position of Principal at CES for the 2020-2021 school year. She is looking forward to continuing her work with students, staff, and the community. Mrs. Johnson walked the halls of CES 31 years ago as a kindergarten student and little did she know what the school would mean to her and how much a part of her life it would become. She began her teaching career in 2007 at Hilliard Elementary where she taught 4th grade for 10 years. During this time, Melissa received her master's degree in educational leadership from Saint Leo University. In 2017, Mrs. Johnson accepted a position at CES as the Assistant Principal. While at CES, she was awarded County Assistant Principal of the year for 2020. She feels honored to give back to a community that ignited the fire that drives her passion for leading and educating others. She is more aware of how important it is to inspire children to make the world a better place by leading and supporting those around her.



Kristy Collins was chosen as the Assistant Principal of Callahan Elementary School. Kristy is looking forward to starting a new adventure at Callahan Elementary School as the Assistant Principal for the 2020-2021 school year. Her experience working with students in grades Kindergarten through 8th has prepared her for this position. Mrs. Collins started her teaching career in Nassau County in 2010 where she taught 5th grade at Yulee Elementary School. After receiving her master's degree in educational leadership,

she discovered her passion for working with teachers. Mrs. Collins served as the Reading Coach at Hilliard Middle Senior High School and Wildlight Elementary School. She is excited to be a part of the Callahan community and looks forward to working with teachers, students and stakeholders.

Danielle Loudermilk as Principal of Hilliard Elementary School to replace Mrs. LeeAnn Jackson who will be retiring at the end of the 2019-2020 school year. Danielle has always been passionate about making a difference in the life of a child. Recognizing the power a quality education provides for children is what led her to this profession. She attended the University of Central Florida where she graduated with a bachelor's degree in early childhood education. After graduation, She began her teaching career at Callahan Intermediate School in 2006. She was a 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade teacher in the 11 years she worked at CIS. During this time, her passion for curriculum and leadership grew. In 2011, she obtained her master's degree in educational leadership from the University of North Florida. In January of 2017, she accepted the position of Assistant Principal at Yulee Elementary School, where she attended school as a child. As an administrator, Danielle recognized the importance of building positive relationships with students and staff while providing innovative curriculum to maximize student achievement. She is a believer that with a positive work ethic, collaboration and a consistent support system there is no limit to what a school can accomplish. She is ecstatic about beginning the 2020-2021 school year as the Principal of HES. She cannot wait to work collaboratively with teachers, students, parents and all other stakeholders to ensure the continued success of Hilliard Elementary School.

Amber Bovinette was chosen as Principal of Wildlight Elementary School to replace Scott



Mrs. LeeAnn Jackson who will be retiring at the end of the 2019-2020 school year. Danielle has always been passionate about making a difference in the life of a child. Recognizing the power



Hodges who has been promoted to Director of Human Resources. This year marks Ms. Bovinette's 18th year in education and every school, family and student remains near and dear to her heart. Most recently, she served as the Principal at Bryceville Elementary School, an "A" rated school. Previously, she served as the Assistant Principal at Yulee Primary School, Summer Learning Academy administrator and teacher at Hilliard Elementary School. She graduated from Jacksonville University with a bachelor's degree in elementary education and from UNF with a master's degree in educational leadership. She states that her first love is for our students, and always considers herself a teacher first. She looks forward to extending her school family at Wildlight Elementary School.



Kerri Boatright was chosen as Principal of Yulee Primary School. Kerri is looking forward to another incredible year at YPS as she has accepted the position as Principal for the upcoming school year. She is devoted to her students, staff and families and is grateful to continue to be a part of the team at Yulee Primary. Ms. Boatright grew up playing school and always wanted to be a teacher. She graduated from UNF and began her teaching career as a 5th grade teacher at Hilliard Elementary in 2006. While teaching, she received her master's degree in educational leadership. After 11 years of teaching in Hilliard, she was honored to be selected as the Assistant Principal at Yulee Primary School in 2017. Daily, she is reminded of why she chose the path of an educator as she knows the importance and benefits of creating a learning environment that is student focused. As the Principal, she will continue to lead and serve alongside the YPS family!

Tracy Miller was chosen as Assistant Principal of Yulee Primary School. Tracy has proudly accepted the position of Assistant Principal at Yulee Primary School. Tracy has been a teacher



of students identified with disabilities, a new teacher mentor, a reading coach, a professional development leader, a co-writer of our inclusion program, a co-writer of the differentiated reading materials used throughout our county, a technology lead, a member of numerous school advisory councils, as well as a parent. She has been mentored by, what she considers, some of the best educators in the state of Florida, and it has all occurred in the great school district of Nassau County! Tracy began her career at Yulee Primary in January 1994. She later took on the role of Reading Coach that took her back to Callahan Elementary and then to Yulee Elementary. Tracy is excited about going back to her original roots at Yulee Primary.



Tammy Smith was chosen as Principal of Bryceville Elementary School to replace Amber Bovinette who is moving to Wildlight Elementary School. Mrs. Tammy Smith is a longtime Nassau County resident and a graduate of West Nassau High School. She has an undergraduate degree from the University of North Florida and a master's degree in education from Jacksonville University. She began her teaching career in 1995 and has been in school administration for the past 13 years. She loves seeing the excitement in children when they are learning to read.

Vicki Grubbs was chosen as Assistant Principal at Yulee Elementary School. Vicki's teaching career began in 2002 in Nassau County. Her first teaching assignment was 5th grade at Hilliard Elementary. She completed her master's degree in educational leadership in May of 2019. She is excited about the opportunity to move into the Assistant Principal position at Yulee Elementary School and looks forward to serving the students, teachers and community.



Congratulations on your next endeavors in education!

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Fish Talk

Kids Fishing for Fun!

Chris Cockerham, Reel Habit

I asked for some kids pics and received almost 150 submissions. I know we've had some depressing times lately and I figured it'd be cool to give the kids a little highlight. Maybe it'll brighten their day.



Will Wiggins



Tru and Trinity Armstrong



Copen Hagan



Hunter Bentley



Hunter and Tucker Williams



Kinlynn Higginbotham

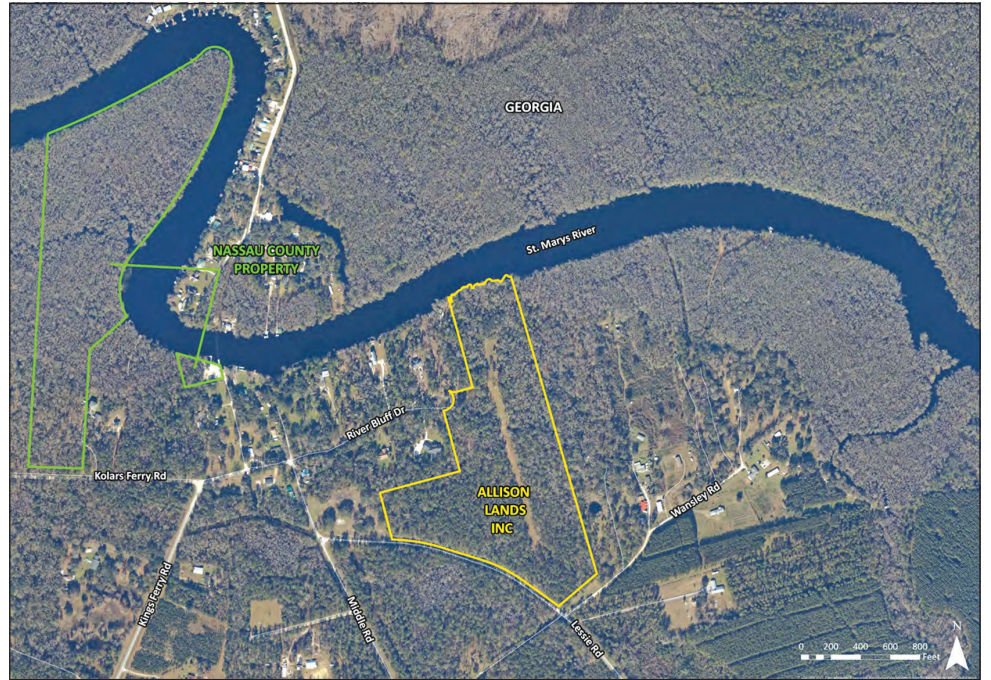


Hannah Steedley



Anna Newhoff and Emma Cravey

County to Consider Kings Ferry Property Purchase



At Monday's Board of County Commissioners meeting, the Board approved entering into a purchase and sales agreement giving the County a 120-day period to consider purchasing a 36-acre property located on the St. Marys River near the Kings Ferry community. The property is accessed from Lessie Road and will be used as a public park providing additional access to the St. Marys River.

It's important to note that if the BOCC were to execute the purchase of the property, no advalorem revenues would be used. The purchase would be 100% funded from Recreational Impact Fees which were collected from developers/builders when issuing residential building permits for new homes. In accordance with Florida Statutes, these funds must be used on recreation and cannot be used for any other purpose.

The County's Comprehensive Plan, Recreation and Open Space Element, encourages acquisition of property to meet the future recreational needs of the residents. The Comprehensive Plan defines regional parks as a site

with 30+ acres, containing water-based recreation opportunities such as boating and fishing.

The 36-acre site has 627 feet of frontage along the St. Marys River. There is an existing 60-foot dock which was constructed in 2018, providing deep water access. The property has mature hard-wood trees and native vegetation making it very aesthetically pleasing. The property also has historical significance as it once contained the "little mill" owned by Jackson and William Mizell in 1870, as well as the docking facilities for ships that carried finished products around the world.

The Board discussed the acquisition of the property at the February 19, 2020 meeting and authorized County staff to negotiate with the property owner, Allison Properties, Inc. Negotiations were held on March 5, 2020. According to an appraisal performed by Colliers International, Inc., the property has an As-Is Market Value of \$970,000. The property owner, Allison Lands Inc., has agreed to a less than market value sales price of \$875,000.



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A Word From the Publisher

I think the phrase I have heard the most recently is, "I've never seen anything like this in my life," when people are talking about the 'virus' situation. What's really scary is when my parents (88 years old) say that. They have certainly seen a lot more in their lifetimes than I have. I have learned many things from this experience. To use common sense (which I think I did anyway) about not touching my face so much. I'm a pretty good planner and obviously I don't need to go to the grocery store as much as I used to. I've also learned again to take advantage of opportunities when they are presented because you don't know what tomorrow may bring. Mostly, I've learned to rely on God for direction versus my own direction. It's much easier when He takes the reins.

I'm so thankful we took some of our grandchildren off the beginning of spring break...I think that was their spring break. We sure had a blast! But come the next Monday morning things changed quickly! This is the first time in 14 years (I think) that we had to cancel our Stearn Meeting, when my siblings and spouses and cousins stay the weekend with my parents. It's our annual get together but not this year!

Our office has remained open but our parking lot is empty. It's pretty scary when you look around. I'm really ready to get things going again. The business world has been rocked...okay everything has been rocked, even us. As you know, our paper is supported by our advertisers. And let me just shout out how thankful I am to have so many faithful advertisers that believe in us. My faith was faltering quickly last week when I was reminded to look up...God is in control. He's got this! First, I called Roger and received some much needed encouragement. Later, our printer (Mark) stopped by the office and gave me some options I

hadn't considered. See, God directed those people into my path. I entered the weekend with positive thoughts and somewhat of a plan of attack to keep our paper going. Monday things were going well when I was reminded that God has a sense of humor! One of our customers reminded me, "Just make a plan and sometimes you'll see God chuckle!" Well, He was having a good laugh on me as I thought I had the perfect plan when God reminded me...He has the perfect plan!

As we, as Americans, continue to struggle through the trials that each day may bring, we must find hope in the Lord. I know I refer to my devotions often, but that is because they are providing the strength I need for each day. And the titles...oh my goodness, it's like God



knows what's going to happen tomorrow. Oh yeah...He does! Monday, one of my devotions was titled New Hope. Oh my...is that what we're looking for or what? Here are a few sentences from the reading: It's when we can't do anything that God does everything.

Is your strength gone? All options exhausted? If you have trusted Jesus as your Savior, God will strengthen you to keep on believing. As you trust Him, He'll give you not only joy and peace, but also hope when all hope is gone. Is that not we're dealing with every day? Just know that God is there just waiting for us to look up to Him and trust Him.

I'm praying that we will all be back to 'normal' very soon. Just remember, God is ultimately in control! Another wise saying: When life knocks you to your knees, you're in a good position to pray. Pray without ceasing!

Have a blessed week!

Dawn S. West

JUST MY OPINION

Roger R. West

President Trump is a great leader of our country. He is also a savvy business man. However, he is not a physician, he is not a scientist and he is not a fortune teller. With that said, we must all realize that he is dependent upon people within the medical field to advise him concerning this COVID-19 outbreak. I feel as if he is being dubbed by some of his advisers. Dr. Anthony Fauci is the very first one I would get rid of. He has too many close ties with Bill Gates, the Clintons and world organizations that I despise. Fauci has been given unquestioned freedom by nearly all the press and citizens to be the "expert" in what we should all adhere to. His powers of influence have led to the closings of many businesses, choking the life out of our economy, closed our educational system down, is practically forcing people to stay in their homes and has everyone scared to be around other people, even family members. Who elected this guy to steal our freedom? USA Today said; "Anthony Fauci is a coronavirus hero in a time of great public need." I will say more on Fauci later.

Then there's Bill Gates, he also gets a free ride from the media because of his enormous wealth and the billions of dollars he is giving (investing) toward developing a coronavirus vaccine. Vox hit the nail on the head by stating: "Offering sober, apolitical analysis, Gates has been on a ceaseless media tour, preaching a stay-the-course message when it comes to social distancing and full steam ahead when it comes to coronavirus treatment and

vaccine development."

Dr. Anthony Fauci just happens to be a member of the Leadership Council for the Global Vaccine Action Plan developed by none other than Bill Gates. Could this be why the huge push for keeping America locked down until a vaccine is developed with Gates' money? Could Fauci benefit from this development, you darn skippy he will. Sadly we do not have a clear picture on the coronavirus cases and deaths. Most hospitals are counting patients as coronavirus deaths regardless of pre-existing unrelated conditions if the patient had tested positive for the virus. This causes the real coronavirus death count inaccurate and over inflated. It's good for sensationalism though.

Both Gates and Fauci have stated in the past and now more recently concerning the need for some type of digital ID's. Gates wants everyone to have some sort of digital certificate showing "who has recovered", "who has been tested" and who has been vaccinated, when we have one."

Politico reported Fauci stating, "Coronavirus immunity cards for Americans are being discussed." As the Washington Times states, "Show me your papers or stay quarantined! Is that the direction America is headed?"

America is being destroyed by the likes of these two unelected and unaccountable men who show no concern with our God given rights provided to us through our Constitution. Keep your eye on these two.

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

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I'm On My Way!

Pastor Ted Heglund, First Alliance Church, Hilliard



This past Sunday was another first for us. We have celebrated Resurrection Sunday in formal church settings, remote tribal village churches and outside services. This was the first time we celebrated virtually over the Internet – unheard of just a few years ago.

The temporary necessity of social distancing has affected most areas of our lives. This has mandated not meeting together in church. It also means not being able to visit friends around the table in a restaurant, enjoying co-workers at work and visiting loved ones in the hospital or health care facilities. For many, these times can be discouraging and we need words of encouragement.

In John 11 is the event of Lazarus being sick and eventually dying. His sisters, Mary and Martha, sent word to Jesus that Lazarus was sick. When the word reached Jesus He said, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it." John 11:3 (NIV)

It was a strange answer in light of the fact that Lazarus died! Even after receiving the news about Lazarus being sick and knowing the sisters fully expected Jesus to come and heal Lazarus, Jesus waited two more days before He went. Then we read in verse 11 Jesus says, "but now I will go" (NIV) or "I'm on my way" (HCSB) to awaken him.

A friend of mine, Dr. Mark O'Farrell, president of Trinity College of Florida, wrote a letter of encouragement in his monthly president's letter. I was encouraged by his thoughts from John 11. I would like to share some of what he said.

"COVID-19 has brought challenge, fear, and uncertainty. However, encouragement has been coming from churches who are utilizing online presentations. The best of medical services and strategic planning along with prevention such as social distancing is attacking this unseen enemy. Something is being done...is it enough?

And then the words, "I'm on my way," appear. Who said that? Who is that? What is the circumstance? What are the issues? What is the hurt, the fear, or the pain associated with this statement? Does it have application for me?

Well, who said that? Jesus said it! Lazarus died, they were disturbed and disillusioned, people were mourning, it could not have been worse. But Jesus said, "I'm on My way!"

There is an application for all of us. This is what is happening to us now... questions abounding, what is God doing, what does He want, what will happen next, will He protect me, will I get through this pandemic, and what is really behind all the physical challenges and circumstances?

It is a time to think. What really is important? What really are the important decisions I need to make? Am I doing what the Lord wants me to do? Am I using His resources that He has entrusted to me wisely, efficiently and purposefully for the Kingdom of God?

Be assured: He is in Control. He is working. He is leading. He is speaking LOUDLY to many on many platforms of influence. He says, "I'm on My way!" He is coming...He really is coming! He is coming to heal, fulfill and to help. He is coming this moment spiritually. He is coming to calm your fears, energize your thinking and encourage your spirits. He is coming to do what needs to be done for you!

Jesus will come and encourage your heart and life if you have believed in Him as your Savior. As we live in West Nassau County look for ways to encourage each other because He is still the Sovereign God and in control. "Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die: and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?" John 11:25-26 (NIV).

How Barnabas is Helping

As the safety net organization for Nassau County residents in need, Barnabas Center is on the front line of helping residents in need during the COVID-19 crisis. Services offered to Nassau County residents with low to moderate incomes include food programs, crisis financial assistance and urgent medical and dental care.



Food Assistance:

- Food Pantry – Hours of Operation – Monday, 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.; Tuesday & Wednesday, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.; Thursday & Friday, CLOSED. (1303 Jasmine Street, Suite 101, FB, FL)
- Hilliard Food Distribution – 3rd Monday each month – drive through style – Next distribution April 20th – Arrive no earlier than 10:30 a.m. – First Baptist Church (15850 CR 108, Hilliard, FL)
- Weekly Food Assistance: Hilliard – Every Wednesday – 4 p.m. – 6 p.m. – First Baptist Church (15850 CR 108, Hilliard, FL)
- Weekly Food Assistance: Callahan – Every Wednesday – 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. – First Baptist Church (45090 Green Avenue, Callahan, FL)
- Weekly Food Assistance: Fernandina Beach – Every Thursday – 12 p.m. – 2 p.m. – First Baptist Church (1600 8th street, FB, FL)

Crisis Financial Assistance:

- Short-term payment assistance with rent, mortgage and utilities (electric, water, gas, etc.)
- Assistance in applying for public benefits programs, ie. food stamps and Medicaid
- Referrals & information for additional services

Urgent Medical and Dental Care:

We provide urgent medical and dental care to adults who are uninsured and do not have a primary care doctor or a regular dentist. Please contact us for more information.

For information about available assistance and eligibility, contact Barnabas at (904) 261-7000, or visit www.BarnabasNassau.org. For your safety and others, please call us for a telephone pre-screening for crisis assistance, food stamp and/or Medicaid applications before visiting our office.

Callahan Water Bill Notice

Due to the "Safer at Home" Executive Order and the Town's Declaration of Emergency, the Town of Callahan will not disconnect any water accounts for non-payment. Also, for the month of April we will not charge a late fee.

I realize that some of our customers are financially stressed or cannot leave their homes to pay their bills. There are

many agencies with links on our website for help with many different problems, financial, physical and emotional.

Once the Executive Order and State of Emergency has been lifted customers with balances will have five (5) business days to satisfactorily address their bills or their services will be disconnected.

Thank you,
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Water Commissioner
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Remembering Zach!

Callahan will be a different place without seeing the smiling face of Zach Baxley and his mom Brenda around town! Zachary 'Zach' Joel Baxley passed away March 11, 2020. Zach was born June 27, 1978 in Jacksonville. Zach was born with cerebral palsy and autism.

He could be seen many times in McDonald's as that was his favorite place! He loved the sausage egg McMuffin and extra hash browns. He loved music of any kind. "When Zach was born I made sure to play music. Little did I know he would grow to love it," said his mother Brenda. "He liked any kind of music but mostly rock so he could dance!"

His favorite holiday was Halloween as he loved to dress up and get candy. One year he dressed up like a pirate and also dressed his dog up. They were so cute together. Watching television



was another favorite of Zach's. He loved all the police shows with all the excitement. He had numerous patches from several police and fire rescue departments. He was a collector of patches and loved to visit the stations. He loved and respected what they did but he really like their sirens!

Zach had a love for life that showed through his explosive smile. He enjoyed time with his family and getting out and doing things. He loved people and interacting with them. There was never a time that you didn't see him that he didn't share a smile and a sweet, 'hey'!

He is survived by his mother Brenda (Bill) Ferguson; his dad Eldon Baxley; and his brothers Jeffrey Higgs of Texas and Jeff (Beth) Baxley of Jacksonville; and his little dog Alie. A private service with family was held for Zach.

Veterans Helping Veterans!

Recently the family of Evelyn and the late Albert Owens received a much needed new driveway, tree trimming, property clean-up and a new front porch. The gift was donated courtesy of members of the American Legion Post 401; the AMVETS Post 2007; and the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 1088, in a successful effort to show gratitude to the family of Albert Owens.

It was also a tribute to his dedicated service to our country in Vietnam. Mr. Owens passed away last year from complications of Dioxin/Agent Orange and his property was in dire need of repair and restoration. Some of the Veteran workers and Owens family are shown standing on the new completed front porch.

Not pictured are workers and Veterans: Dave Lewis of VFW 10095,



Shown (l to r) are: Commander Wes Baker, American Legion Post 401, Tammy Baker, Bill Callan, VVA 1088, Wyatt Owens, Evelyn Owens, Donna Owens and Axel Owens with Randy Zakrzowski, Commander AMVETS Post 2007.

Larry Mohl, Roger Allen and Tracie Herbertson of VVA 1088; and John Scherer, a Vietnam Veteran who was stationed with Albert Owens at the same time and place in Vietnam along with local Vietnam Veteran Don Lyons.

Helping Others with a New Roof!

Dawn S. West

This world has changed so much in just a month! Large and small businesses are struggling to come up with creative ideas to keep our businesses running and our neighbors afloat. Scott and Laurie Anne Huggins, owners of Florida Coastal Construction & Roofing, based in Callahan, feels this is the time to give back to a hurting community. The construction and roofing company wants to give away a roof to a deserving family. "We know there are many people who are struggling through this pandemic," said Laurie Anne. "Some people from job layoffs, others perhaps from a medical illness or other problems. We just want to help! Our family has been in Nassau County for countless generations, it means a lot to us to be able to help out a community that means so much to us."

We all may know someone that has gone through some really difficult times, maybe before the

pandemic even surfaced and now they are really in dire shape. There are some guidelines for such a project as this one: Persons must be nominated by someone else and provide a brief summary of why this person/family should receive a

free roof; The person must be less fortunate (fallen on hard times); Single family home; Recipient/dwelling must be in Nassau County; Nominations will be accepted until Monday, May

4; Nominations can be emailed to: 879roof@gmail.com or mailed to PO Box 1180, Callahan, FL 32011. See their ad on page 7!



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New Beginnings and Milestones

Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Seeley to Celebrate 65th Anniversary



Raymond and Margaret Seeley, of Hilliard, will celebrate their 65th wedding anniversary Friday, April 17. They were married in a country church in Columbus, Ohio on April 17, 1955. He is a Korean War Veteran that served in the US Army. Mr. Seeley worked for Buck Buchanan at the docks in Fernandina, was an insurance agent, finance officer, worked at Widco Carpets in Hilliard and served as a Veterans Affairs Officer. Mrs. Margaret retired after years of service from the Florida Department of Transportation

where she worked at the Hilliard Weigh Station. The Seeleys have been a longtime Hilliard name. Mr. Seeley still remains the 'Voice of the Flashes' and he has always been involved in both Little League and high school sports.

They have three children, Karen Seeley of Yulee, Ken and Peggy Seeley, and Eric Seeley, all of Hilliard. They also have seven grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.



Isabella Marie Douglas



Jonathan and Amanda Douglas, of Bryceville, are proud to announce the birth of their daughter Isabella Marie Douglas. Isabella was born February 25, 2020 at 3:47 a.m. at St. Vincent's Hospital in Jacksonville. She weighed 7 pounds 12 ounces and measured 19.75 inches.

Paternal grandparents are Brian and Karen Smith of Palm Coast.

Maternal grandparents are Bruce and Christine Burns of Bryceville. Isabella was welcomed home by her big sister Victoria!

Happy 1st Birthday Branson Glenn Bishop



Branson Glenn Bishop celebrated his first birthday March 1. He celebrated his special day with a party held in his honor with his big sister Rilynn Cale and lots of family and friends joining in the fun! His proud parents are Wayne and Callie Bishop of Hilliard!

Proud grandparents are Michael and Vickie Franklin of Hilliard; and David and Glenn Bishop of Callahan. Proud great-grandparents are Dewey and Theresa Franklin; Floyd and Mary Vanzant, all of Hilliard; and Margaret and the late Glenn Bishop of Callahan. Proud great-great-grandmother is Emily Conner of Hilliard.

Happy 1st Birthday Sawyer Grace Tison



Sawyer Grace Tison will celebrate her first birthday April 17. She will be celebrating this special milestone with her loving family! Her proud parents are Sarah and Kyle Tison of Hilliard!

Proud grandparents are Billy and Cindy Keen of Callahan; Randy and Becky Tison of Hilliard; and Steve and Debbie Nechvatal of Jacksonville.

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Hilliard Volunteer Fire Department Refurbished



Dawn S. West

The Hilliard Volunteer Fire Department is located right in the middle of town at the corner of CR 108 and Pecan Street. Previously, the department only used the back half of the building that incorporated the bays and the upstairs area. Now, the department has the entire building and they have updated and refurbished most of it. The first thing you definitely notice is the new paint job on the entire building. It took some work but with the support of the town of Hilliard, they got the job completed. There was a lot of rotted wood behind the siding which was all replaced. Once the repair work was done the building was painted. The red stripe just sets the place off. The department now has a conference room where all



a command vehicle (donated), which also remains at the station in the bay.

The upstairs was also completely renovated with new appliances (stove, refrigerator and microwave) along with new flooring throughout. As a volunteer station, all members are volunteers. This allows members a comfortable place to stay as they await the next call. During state or county emergencies, the station is normally manned all the time as to why they also have bunk beds in the station.



of their meetings are held along with some training and testing. New floors were placed in the conference room and the front area of the building is for storage. The bays house their bunker gear, equipment, fire engine, brush truck and tanker. Recently, they acquired

The Hilliard Volunteer Fire Chief is Jerry Johnson and the Assistant Chief is Dallas Hunter. "We constantly are looking for grants to help with the purchase of new equipment or vehicles," said Johnson. "Dallas writes all the grants for us. We received a grant from Firehouse Subs that payed for many

of our new radios. We have a great relationship with the town and also the Forestry Service."

The station currently has 10 active volunteers on the roster and is looking for more. "We can take members at 16-years-old which is a great opportunity for students," said Hunter. "They can do structure training and get CPR certified. All of our instructors are certified.

Students can also accumulate community service hours. It's a win-win situation."

Johnson is on a Structure Incident Management Team that travels to wildland fires. He has been out to California numerous times to work. Hunter is employed with Jacksonville Fire-Rescue as a Firefighter Paramedic. "I started in the fire service as a volunteer. It's one of those things...you either love it or you hate it," said Hunter. "I loved every minute of it. I continued my education and then was hired as a career firefighter/paramedic. I hope we can encourage other students to try us out."

In 2019, the volunteer station responded to 119 calls, which 90% were fire calls. They respond to accidents, traumas, structure fires and wood fires. One of the most important things with the fire service is training, training, training and maintenance of the station and vehicles. Three more members of the department were also at the station when I visited. They are: Tommy Lee, Captain HVFD and also an EMT/Firefighter; Owen Merwarth, volunteer and recently graduated as an EMT/Firefighter; and Maria Sharkey, volunteer. Smokey (the



Dalmatian) is the firehouse dog that is available for parades! Both Tommy and Owen have already applied for permanent positions with departments. Both plan to continue to also serve as volunteers on their days off. "These guys put in all the time. They're building a life. I've done my time," added Johnson. "This (volunteering) has to be part of your recreation. This is a good station with great support from the town and great role models training you!"

If you are interested in joining the Hilliard Volunteer Fire Department, call the Hilliard Town Hall at 845-3555 and request an application. Return it to town hall and someone will give you a call. It's a great opportunity if being a firefighter is what you always dreamed of!



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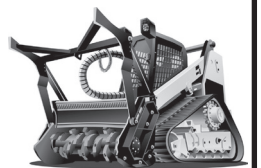
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Sheriff's Department Update

The NCSO Administration Office Lobby is closed to the public until further notice. Citizens are being advised to visit www.nassauso.com or call 904-548-4009 for Employment Applications; Incident Reports; Traffic Crash Reports; and Background Check Requests.

The NCSO Civil Process Office Lobby is closed to the public until further notice. Citizens can visit www.nassauso.com or call 904-548-4038 or 904-548-4004 for Civil Processing or Arrest Warrants.

The Jail/Detention Center lobby is also closed and all family visitation has been suspended. Inmates still have the ability to make phone calls to family members. Signs are posted on the lobby doors to inform anyone who needs to enter.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been participating in regular conference calls with the Nassau County Health Department, the Florida and National Sheriffs Associations, the Governor's Office, Florida Emergency Management Office and White House officials in the federal government to stay informed on the latest guidance on keeping our employees and our community safe from COVID-19.

This is all new and decisions and policies are being developed and implemented as the need arises. We all kind of know what to do when a storm approaches our area, but this is different. We are continually taking precautions to ensure everyone, including our employees are as safe as possible. We are working to make sure we have enough disinfectant spray,

hand sanitizers, and respiratory masks. Currently we have enough masks for our operations, but we are continuously evaluating our inventory to make adjustments as may be needed.

We still have to provide services to our citizens, but we are asking our deputies to give special consideration to utilizing all the safety precautions they can, to include wearing gloves when necessary, washing hands regularly, applying hand sanitizer and using disinfectant in their vehicle. As of this date no one within our office or jail has been tested positive for COVID-19. We continue to clean our facilities regularly and take as much precautions as possible.

We all understand that law enforcement and first responders play a critical role in protecting our community. Our officers not only enforce the law but are also expected to perform a wide variety of tasks, such as preventing crime, providing services, and maintaining order. Although our law enforcement and first responders face difficult circumstances every day, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in new and tremendous demands on our law enforcement and first responders.

Because of the duties that law enforcement and first responders are required to perform; they are at considerable risk of being infected by the COVID-19 virus. Just like healthcare practitioners, law enforcement and first responders on a daily basis are faced with the reality that they are likely to come into contact with an infected individual. In addition to the potential

Masks for Detention Deputies



safe as possible from the deadly virus. Deputies at the jail are shown displaying the masks outside of the detention facility.

First Baptist Church Callahan Pastor Lynn Hyatt and church members were so gracious to assist us in the endeavor to keep our Detention Deputies and inmates safe from COVID-19 by hand making 400 face masks. The masks were delivered to the Nassau County jail on Easter weekend and will be used as the need arises to keep NCSO employees and inmates as

health hazards related to contracting the COVID-19 virus, law enforcement officers and first responders are also experiencing considerable stress due to these increased pressures and obligations both inside and outside of work.

We have seen an increase in the number of domestic calls we have received since the pandemic started. From January 1 to the end of February domestic calls went down -1.47 % from this time last year. Then in March domestic calls rose 37% from the prior month. Additionally, Mental Health calls were up 61.8 % over last year. More people are out of work, more people are staying home in close quarters with those they live with, kids are out of school trying to deal with new school procedures creating a lot of stress and there are less things to do or

places to go. Some are near the breaking point. If someone feels they are getting close to exploding, please take a walk, call another family member or friend or call the Crisis Hotline at 800-273-8255 or simply dial 211 on your cell phone. Violence is never the solution.

Since this is all new, our community is on edge because of the unknown and uncertainty when we may all get back to our regular daily routine. We just have to all be patient and adhere to the guidelines that have been put in place by executive orders from the county as well as the Governor. We must all do our part.

We will get through this, but until then please be as safe as you can by practicing social distancing, washing your hands regularly and not touching your face.



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OBITUARIES

CAROLYN BROOKS BERGERON

Carolyn Brooks Bergeron, 81, of Jacksonville, passed away at her home on April 12, 2020. The Lord saw you getting tired and a cure was not to be. So he put his arms around her and whispered, "Come with Me." With tearful eyes we watched her and saw her fade away. Although we loved her dearly, we could not make her stay. A golden heart stopped beating, hard-working hands to rest. God broke our hearts to prove to us he only takes the best.

Carolyn was born on June 22, 1938 in Jacksonville, to John Carl Brooks and Frances Baldwin. Carolyn was a lifelong resident of Jacksonville. Carolyn married the love of her life, Frank Bergeron in 1959. She enjoyed cooking, shopping and going to the beach and to the mountains. She enjoyed spending time with her family and friends but most of all she enjoyed spending time with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was an active member of Garden City United Methodist Church. She is preceded in death by her parents.

Carolyn is survived by her loving husband of 60 years, Frank Bergeron of Jacksonville; daughters Peri (Johnny) Crosby of Callahan and Sheri (Phil) Adams of Little River, South Carolina; brother Johnny (Marcia) Brooks; sister Mary Walker (Stan Naugle) of Hilliard; grandchildren Garrick (Leah) Crosby and

Shelby Crosby; great-grandchildren Caden Hagan, Brelynn Crosby and Cash Crosby.

A private service will be held on Friday, April 17 in the chapel of Nassau Funeral Home, Callahan. Interment will follow at Jacksonville National Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, please make donations in honor of Mrs. Carolyn Bergeron's life to her church, Garden City United Methodist Church, 3057 Dunn Avenue, Jacksonville, FL 32218.

The family will plan a Celebration of Life that will be announced at a later time and date due to the current restrictions on large gatherings.

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

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

SYBA JEAN GIBSON

Syba Jean Gibson, 73, of Callahan, passed away on April 10, 2020. She was born on February 16, 1947 in Tabor City, North Carolina to Galde Watts and Jessie Booth Watts. Syba was a resident of Callahan for 35 years. She enjoyed quilting, painting for the residents



SHIRLEY SELDOMRIDGE



Shirley Cribbs Seldomridge, 66, of Hilliard, passed away peacefully Thursday, April 9, 2020 at her residence. She was born May 13, 1953 in Homerville, Georgia, to the late William Cribbs and Bessie Williams Cribbs. She retired from White Oak Plantation and attended North Hilliard Baptist Church.

In addition to her parents; she was preceded in death by her husband Jimmy Seldomridge; and siblings Blanche Hightower, James Cribbs, William Cribbs and Louise Cribbs.

She is survived by her children Sha Chapman (Mark Hill), Tony Palmer and Staci (Stacy) Worth; grandchildren Jocelyn, Lorilei, Jonathon, Alana, Tristan, Gavin, Jace, Keagan, Levi and Caleb; a great-grandson Carson Shea Feliciano; her life partner Robert Carver; siblings Doris Johnson, Vester Herrin, Mary Ann Steedley, Dewayne Cribbs, Bruce Cribbs, Charles Cribbs, Lester Cribbs and Cecil Cribbs; and a number of nieces, nephews and other relatives.

Memorialization will be by cremation.

A memorial service will be held at a later date.

Condolences may be expressed at www.shepardfh.com.

Arrangements by Shepard-Roberson Funeral Home in Folkston.

of nursing homes, and making pillows and blankets for babies. Syba had a big heart and loved her family dearly, especially her grandchildren. She is preceded in death by her parents.

Syba is survived by her husband, Charles Gibson of Callahan; daughter Rhonda Robinson of Chadbourn, North Carolina; son Dewey Norris of Callahan; step-son Charles Gibson, Jr. of Washington; step-daughter Jennie Gibson of Oklahoma; sister Betty Jo Norris and her brother Jerry Watts, both of Whiteville, North Carolina; 10 grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

A graveside service was held Wednesday, April 15 at Jones Cemetery with Dr. E. Winson Butler officiating. The family received friends Tuesday, April 14 at the funeral home. Family and friends were encouraged to attend and observe social distancing.

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

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

Obituaries are published free of charge. They may be emailed to news@westsidejournal.net.

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NCCOA Accepts Delivery of Meals



Independent Living Systems (ILS), the NCCOA food supplier, delivered 6,000 more frozen meals for Nassau County Council on Aging's (NCCOA's) "Boots on the Ground" effort, April 8. This is the second sizeable food shipment as NCCOA continues to deliver free meals to area seniors (age 60+) during the COVID-19 pandemic. Volunteers from around the area, including a crew from Nassau County Public Works, unloaded the delivery to the kitchen freezer, newly constructed outdoor freezer unit and NassauTRANSIT bus bound for the Hilliard Life Center. This is in addition to the rental freezer truck used for the first delivery.

Any Nassau County senior may request five meals at this time. Additional meals will be available upon

request. Just follow these steps: Call NCCOA at 904-261-0701 and tell our staff member you would like to request meals. We will complete an intake form with this information: Name, Address,



Phone number, Birthdate and your meal delivery will be scheduled.

NCCOA is grateful to our generous community, with donations and pledges from the City of Fernandina Beach, Bank of America, Florida Blue, Wells Fargo and Florida's First Coast Relief Fund. The Nassau County Board of County Commissioners made the first donation to this county-wide effort. To contribute, contact Wallace Bennett, Development Director, wbennett@nassaucountycoa.org or 904-775-5481.



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Virtual Relay for Life April 25

Wanda Nichols, Chairperson, Relay for Life

From the American Cancer Society and the Relay for Life of West Nassau, we hope everyone is staying safe during this crazy time. We are following the CDC guidelines about social distancing. With that being said, our actual physical Relay has been cancelled, however, we will be having a Virtual Relay for Life on Saturday, April 25 at 8 p.m. on Facebook Live at: Relay for Life Nassau. You can join on Facebook and comment, or just view the activities. This is totally new to us so please bear with us as we tread these unknown waters. There are certain things that you can do if you would like to participate.

First, we are selling luminaries for the luminary service which will be at 9 p.m. that evening. You can purchase a luminary from our website at: www.relayforlife.org/westnassaucounty. We will make sure the luminary will be displayed at the luminary service. Second, our teams are still fundraising.

You can go on our website and make a donation to a certain team or join a team. Third, if you would like to show support for our relay, you can go to our website and sign up as a participant or just make a donation. We will put out an itinerary of our events next week.

Our relay is a celebration of life for our survivors and a time for remembrance of our loved ones who have passed. To show our appreciation for our survivors and caregivers we will be having a Survivor Caregiver banquet at a later date. Having cancer is hard but help should not be.

If you have any questions about our relay, or know someone who has cancer and needing assistance please text or call (904) 294-2088 or American Cancer Society help desk at 1-800-227-2345. Also for assistance, visit: www.Relayforlife.org. Again, thank you for all your support for our relay during this time. Please stay safe!



Okefenoke REMC Closes Drive-thru

All drive thru operations at each of Okefenoke REMC's three office locations: Nahunta, Kingsland and Hilliard, will be closed until further notice. Payments and paperwork can be left in the night drop boxes at each office and will be processed by customer service representatives on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

OREMC consumer-members can still connect online at oremc.com, using

the MyOREMC mobile app on your phone or by calling Customer Service at 800-262-5131 from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

More details about OREMC's current operations can be found at oremc.com/covid-19. The site also provides tips on managing energy use, links to financial assistance for paying utility bills and advice on avoiding scams.

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We again want to thank the many customers that have recently shopped in our 'Ole Fashion' Meat Market! We have truly been blessed with patient and courteous customers, as many times the store was full and our selection was low. We are fully stocked again and ready to serve our customers with quality meats at a valuable price. We are able to again run some specials so make sure to come by and check out the super deals we have to offer!

The pandemic has caused quite a change in everyone's life but we are happy that we have been able to take care of the majority of your shopping needs. The store is back to our normal hours and we look forward to seeing you soon! Make sure to check us out on Facebook for specials!

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Many of our local business have utilized social media to
promote specials, hours, etc. Be sure to check their Facebook
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