



# WESTSIDE JOURNAL



VOLUME XX ISSUE 45

HOMETOWN PEOPLE...HOMETOWN NEWS

THURSDAY, JUNE 13, 2024

"OUR GOD, WILL YOU NOT JUDGE THEM? FOR WE HAVE NO POWER TO FACE THIS VAST ARMY THAT IS ATTACKING US. WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT TO DO, BUT OUR EYES ARE ON YOU." - 2 CHRONICLES 20:12

## Fireworks Approved for July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration

Dawn S. West

The Hilliard Town Council met Thursday night for their first meeting of June. The first order of business was the second and final readings and Public Hearing on two ordinances. The first, Ordinance 2024-02, which concerned amending Chapter 62 Zoning and Land Development Regulations; Amending Section 62-1: Definitions; Amending Section 62-36: Regulations; Adding Section 62-386: Wireless Telecommunication Facilities. The Town desires modernizing Chapter 62 of the Town Code to reflect the practical realities for the need for a wireless telecommunications facilities code section to regulate and allow cell towers within the Town's limits. The council approved the ordinance.

The second Public Hearing and Final Reading was Ordinance 2024-03, which concerned adding a section to the Code of Ordinances regarding Trespass Warnings on Public Property and other property generally open to the public. The Town of Hilliard desires the Nassau County Sheriff's Office to issue trespass warnings to individuals who are acting in violation of any Town Ordinance, rule or regulation, or state law while on or within a town facility, building, or outdoor area. The council approved the ordinance.

The next agenda item concerned the approval of the waste removal contract service agreement between Meridian Waste and the Town of Hilliard. "I contacted Waste Management several months ago about our contract with them. We (the town) wanted to change waste removal companies," said Town Clerk Lisa Purvis. "We never heard back from them. One morning when we arrived to work the dumpsters were gone. I called Meridian Waste, as they are always willing to donate their services to our 'Clean Up' day. Meridian brought dumpsters immediately upon

me calling them. I just need approval of the contract."

The council approved the contract with Meridian Waste.

The next agenda item concerned the approval of the Kynex, Inc. contract with both the Town of Hilliard and the Town of Callahan, splitting half the cost of the fireworks with Nassau County. "This year the Fourth of July Fireworks will be held Thursday, July 4th at the fairgrounds," said Mayor John Beasley. "The cost of the fireworks is \$60,000 with Hilliard and Callahan paying \$15,000 each and the county paying the other \$30,000. This will be the Westside Bicentennial Celebration. This year there will be live entertainment, pie baking contest, watermelon eating contest, food trucks and so much more! The event is planned for 4 p.m. until dark when the fireworks begin. It's going to be a great celebration!" The council approved the Kynex, Inc. fireworks contract.

The following item concerned approval of the Town Clerk's office staff new position descriptions. The changes are as follows: Kim Corbett, will move into the main portion of Myra's position and take on a leadership role in oversight and supervision of the front office staff as well as training. Alicia Head, will move into the main portion of Kim's position and with information and events coordinating being added into her position description. Position Process to be on the June 20, 2024, agenda for approval. Calen Burnette, duties have been added and/or moved based on the current duties she is responsible for and to spread the workload more evenly. Elise Earnest, duties have been added and/or moved based on the current duties she is responsible for and to spread the workload more evenly.

The following three agenda items were payables. The first payable to Manzie & Drake Land Surveying for

## Be Informed About Upcoming Elections!

We all need to be informed and prepared to vote for the best candidates who represent your values. In June and July, Nassau Citizens Defending Freedom is focused on getting you connected to candidates. Organizations around the county are hosting events you should consider attending. You can also work with our CDF team in many ways. Your community needs your help:

- Look online at the candidates: [www.votenassaufl.gov](http://www.votenassaufl.gov).
- Call the candidates and talk to them (numbers at: [www.votenassaufl.gov](http://www.votenassaufl.gov))
- Get your church registered to vote (call CDF 1-470-295-4365 to help)
- Help others know the candidates by helping with our Nassau CDF candidate questionnaires
- Help with questions and sharing results
- Support good candidates who share your values
- Sign up as election poll watcher – very flexible to simply visit polling places on election day
- Talk to your pastors about the importance of talking about elections and voting
- How can you get involved? Call 470-295-4365 or email Nassau CDF or signup at: [www.citizensdefendingfreedom.com](http://www.citizensdefendingfreedom.com) select Nassau County.
- As our Biblical Citizenship course has reinforced, upholding the US Constitution requires choosing the right leaders to make wise decisions.



"We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed..." Declaration of Independence

Get informed and involved in local elections. If you want to know how, contact us at: [nassauCDF@gmail.com](mailto:nassauCDF@gmail.com) or visit: [counties.citizensdefendingfreedom.com](http://counties.citizensdefendingfreedom.com).

FDOT land north in the amount of \$6,750. This is a FDOT 100% grant funded item.

The next payable was to Site Savvy, Inc. for Sewer Rehabilitation in the amount of \$18,500. This was a capital funded project.

The final payable was for 2024 IT Town Hall Park Expansion in the amount of \$32.95.

The next item was brought up by Councilman Kenny Sims. "We need to appoint someone to the Nassau County Economic Development Board, as

former Mayor David Buchanan was our representative," said Sims. "We need to fill that position."

The council recommended for Councilman Kenny Sims to fill the NCEDB seat. Sims accepted.

In closing comments, Public Works Director Joel Hall P.E., advised the council that the repair on Shady Lane should be happening within two weeks, with a road closure on Pine Street.

The next council meeting will be held Thursday, June 20 at 7 p.m.

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# Property Value Increase Slowing for 2024 in Nassau County

Mike Hickox, Property Appraiser

The primary responsibility of the Property Appraiser's office is to produce a tax roll which is fair and equitable. Florida Statutes require we identify and appraise every parcel in the County to a "Just or Fair Market Value" each year. This is the starting point for Florida's property tax system and the funding source for local government. Due to the large increase in market value over the previous few years, I feel it necessary to further define and clarify the roll of the Property Appraiser in the State of Florida. First, we are not the tax assessor. The office of Property Appraiser is an independent Constitutional office. I do not work for the City or County commission or any other taxing authority. I am an elected officer of the State of Florida sworn to uphold the Constitution.

Florida Statutes require all 67 Property Appraisers to locate, identify, and estimate the "Fair Market Value" of all real estate in the County every year. Real estate values are a function of supply and demand factors, and Florida is a 100% assessment state. This means we are required by law to estimate a "Fair Market Value" as of January 1st each year, based on market activity from the previous twelve months. While the real estate market has started to cool off due to interest rate increases, there are still a record number of people migrating to Florida from other states. The record level of appreciation we have experienced over the previous few years was a direct result of limited supply and increased demand, which is simple supply and demand economics. Tracking and trending sales through

2023 and into the first quarter of 2024 indicate values are stabilizing into a more moderate level of appreciation in most market segments and somewhat flat in others. The reported increases in taxable value does not mean that your property's market value increased that amount. The increase being reported here is a year over year increase which includes over \$600 million in new construction coming on the tax roll for the first time.

We are often asked, "How do you determine the market value of my home?" The estimated market values are based on sales ratio studies and statistical analysis of all property types, market areas, and neighborhoods. The Department of Revenue requires us to be within a range of value to receive tax roll approval and our statistical analysis must fall within accepted ranges. Our statistical analysis measures the PRD (price-related differential), COD (coefficient of dispersion), COV (coefficient of variation), PRB (price-related bias), measurements of central tendency (mean, median, mode), and standard deviations. These statistical measurements tell us if we are being "fair and equitable", and our 2024 tax roll reflects that we are.

Due to the appreciation of real estate values and new construction, the total market value for the County has reached a record high over \$27.8 billion, which is an increase of about 8% from the previous year. The county taxable value has surpassed the previous year, exceeding \$16.4 billion, or about 11.5% above last year. School taxable value is up 8.8% from last year, or roughly an estimated \$18.4 billion.

The City of Fernandina Beach is projected to see a taxable value increase over 9%, bringing their taxable value to about \$4.3 billion.

The Town of Callahan is estimated to have its taxable value increase to over \$185 million, up over 14% from last year.

The Town of Hilliard is expected to see about an 11% increase in taxable value as well, bringing that value to about \$175 million.

We will provide the 2024 estimated values to the taxing authorities by June 1st, so they may begin their budget process using these preliminary figures. They will use these values to help determine their tax rates for the property owners of Nassau County for this tax year. Property Appraisers in Florida have NO control over the actual amount of taxes levied. The amount of the taxes levied is controlled by the taxing authorities and is determined by the millage rate needed to support their

annual budgets. I would encourage you to participate in this process. Increases in taxable values will result in higher taxes "IF" taxing authorities increase their current tax rate or keep their millage rates the same as last year.

The "official" preliminary tax roll is expected to be released to the taxing authorities and the Department of Revenue by July 1st. Property owners are encouraged to visit the Property Appraiser's website at: [www.nassaupla.com](http://www.nassaupla.com) in late July to review their 2024 property values. We will send out your notice of proposed taxes on the Truth in Millage (TRIM) Notices in mid-August, which will advise you of your estimated value, exemptions, and proposed taxes for November 2024. If you have any questions, please contact us at (904) 491-7300.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your property appraiser for the previous 12 years. It has truly been an honor and a privilege.

## FREE FOOD DISTRIBUTIONS

**Barnabas @ NEFL Fairgrounds 543378 US Hwy. 1 • Callahan**  
**Monday, June 17 • 9:30 - 10:30 a.m.**

**Callahan First Baptist Church 45090 Green Ave. • Callahan**  
**Thursday, June 20 • 4:30 - 6:30 p.m.**

## In the Kitchen... Saucy Grilled Pork Chops

1/2 cup butter, cubed  
 1/2 cup packed light brown sugar  
 1/2 cup lemon juice  
 8 bone-in pork loin chops (3/4" thick)

Microwave butter, covered, until melted; add brown sugar and lemon juice, stirring to dissolve sugar. Reserve 2/3 cup for drizzling. Brush pork chops with remaining sauce. Grill, covered, on an oiled rack over medium heat or broil 4 inches from the heat for 4-5 minutes on each side or until a thermometer reads 145°. Let stand 5 minutes before serving. Stir sauce to combine and gently reheat if necessary; drizzle over pork chops.

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# Letters to the Editor



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

## Jurors

Dear Editor,  
According to your most recent editorial, all the jurors in Trump's trial came from a district that voted 87% for Biden in 2020. Well, that also happens to be the district where Donald Trump lives! None of the jurors live more than 10 miles from Trump's address and the courthouse. All of the jurors are employed in respectable jobs, many of which require a degree. This was truly A JURY OF HIS PEERS as required by the Constitution. (Why do I keep having to teach you Civics?)

Shari Gulley

## Kudos, Kudos!

Dear Editor,  
With our appreciation to the Nassau County Fire Rescue Station 90 on CR 2, for their exceptional response time and medical care with one of our neighbors. Within minutes of our 9-1-1 call, they were at his home with care. They had him evaluated, stabilized and ready for transport to the emergency room. Because of their excellent teamwork and compassion, our neighbor was home in a few days.

We want to thank you for ALL you do for our community! Incredible job! You all are the Best of the Best!

Thank you again,  
Jean Hodges

## Westside Senior Life Center Afternoon Activities

Join us for our afternoon activity program at Nassau County Council on Aging's Westside Senior Life Center, 37002 Ingham Rd., Hilliard. All programs are free of charge. Questions? Contact Missy Snead, Activities Coordinator, 904-675-9833 or [msnead@nassaucountycoa.org](mailto:msnead@nassaucountycoa.org).

Monday, June 17 • 2-4 p.m. • Memory Game Day: Checkers, Connect 4, etc.

Tuesday, June 18 • 1-3 p.m. • Crocheting Class with "Hilliard Hookers"

Wednesday, June 19 • 2-3 p.m. • YouTube Tai Chi

Thursday, June 20 • 1:30-3:30 p.m. • Line Dancing with Tanya

Friday, June 21 • 2-3 p.m. • Movie & Popcorn

Monday, June 24 • 2-4 p.m. • Memory Game Day: Checkers, Connect 4, etc.

Tuesday, June 25 • 1-3 p.m. • Crocheting Class with "Hilliard Hookers"

Wednesday, June 26 • 2-3 p.m. • YouTube Crafts

Thursday, June 27 • 1:30-3:30 p.m. • Line Dancing with Tanya

Friday, June 28 • 2-3 p.m. • Q&A with the VFW

# JUST MY OPINION

Roger R. West

Has the heat got to you yet? Or are we falling for the media hype and we assume they are right about it being so hot? My take on it is, I have lived here my entire life and every year it has been hot. There have been very few new records set thus far, but what are records for except to be beaten. This weather is really nothing new. In June 1931, a record was set in north Florida that would have the climate geeks screaming. On June 29, 1931, the temperature reached 109 degrees. I guess that's when climate change was born.

They are also predicting a busy hurricane season this year, as they do every year. I'm not a scientist but I can also predict that there are going to be hurricanes this year. Always have been and always will be. The reason behind so many named storms come from the fact that technology has advanced. Last year there were several named storms that just a few years ago would not have been detected. One of the named storms didn't even last 24 hours but it got a name and went in the count as a Tropical storm. Yes, I do believe the climate change army are trying to gas light us into total zombie mode and believe all they say. We may very well have a bad hurricane season but it has nothing to do with what they predict. God still controls the weather. Being as I mentioned that, perhaps the liberal

climate army should rename climate change to fulfilled prophecy. God's word tells us that in the last days there will be changes.

As I watched the D-Day ceremony I actually cringed at the sight of the acting President of the United States of America. Let me just say, that man is sick and should not be in the position he is in. His mental and physical health are in shambles and those that are placing him in this situation are evil, especially his wife. This brings me to the conclusion that Joe Biden will not be the Democratic nominee for the 2024 election. There is no way that man can function for another four years just as this nation cannot function with the Democrats in power for another four years. No one with just an ounce of intelligence can truly believe that Joe Biden is the one running our nation. Nor could one believe that he is mentally competent. Jill Biden needs to get her husband home and let him enjoy his dirty money for his last few years of life. I personally have no use for the man as our leader, however as a fellow human being I actually feel sorry for the man. I have often prayed for him because of his medical condition and for him to see his need for Jesus. What a dilemma the democrats have created for themselves.

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

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## EVENTS AROUND TOWN

The Country Star Quilt Guild meets the second Monday of each month at The Anchor Church in Callahan at 7 p.m. All are welcome!

If you or a loved one has been a victim of Domestic Violence, FREE Domestic Violence Support Group. For time, date and location, call (904) 548-7312.

# Keep the Flag Flying High



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# Navigating Grief

Pastor Walter Cooper, He Changed My Mind Ministries, Callahan



Grief is a natural emotion of loss and can be caused by the loss of anything or anyone you love. The more significant the loss, the more intense the grief is. Grief can be caused by other losses, such as loss of health, divorce, relationship break-up, or loss of a job. As a pastor navigating the waters of grief, I have learned to depend totally on God for strength and comfort when ministering to people who are experiencing loss and grief. It's never easy. The word of God offers us a profound insight into grief and loss, reflecting on the life and death of Jesus Christ. We can draw important lessons on how to navigate these challenging waters.

Grief is a part of love. Jesus wept at the tomb of Lazarus showing that grief is a natural response to loss. In John 11:35, his tears remind us that to love is to risk grief, but it is also to live fully in the moment of loss. It takes our love that gives depths of grief we feel is a testament to the depth of our bonds. It's never easy; losing someone you love, no matter the length of time. Navigating grief is a process. It starts on the inside, choosing to live despite your pain or suffering at that moment.

Despite his anguish on the cross, Jesus' story did not end with his death. The resurrection in Matthew 28:6, "He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay." It offers a powerful message about hope and life beyond the pain of grief when we lose someone we love. This does not diminish the reality of our grief. Still, it provides a personal perspective that there is a future beyond the immediate pain or condition we find ourselves in navigating grief. We should find consolation in God's word to be absent from the bodies to be present with the Lord. The word of God gives us great hope beyond the grief we are in at this moment.

When Jesus felt overwhelmed on the path to the cross, he turned to his Father in prayer Matthew 26:39, "And he went a little further and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." In our moment of loss, we should turn to God, pouring our hearts into him; it can bring peace and strength in the darkest times when we're navigating the waters of grief. Reaching out to God can provide us an anchor, comfort, and a path to begin our healing journey. When confronting grief, it is essential to remember that this journey is often without a clear map; each person's path through grief is unique and different. However, the lessons from the holy word tells us that through our faith in God and leaning on our community, we can find support and strength to move forward as we navigate the waters of grief.

Navigating grief, let us take to heart the lessons from the life and death of Jesus Christ. May they guide, comfort, and ultimately lead us toward healing. Let us walk this path not alone but together, supporting and loving one another in our moments of need. Always remember the greatest commandment is to love. Love that lies in



## FREE Red Wigglers!

David Hébert

Looking for some fishing worms or composting worms this summer? Make an appointment to stop by the fairgrounds, 543350 US Hwy 1, Callahan.

Our local County Extension Agent, David Hébert, has been producing compost for some time now and has lots of extra red wiggler worms for anglers and composters. Please bring a small container (2-3"x 2-3") or sandwich bag to receive the worms.

By the way, the fish waste leftover after cleaning your fish makes GREAT worm food. David can teach you how to start your own composting bin at home if you choose! Call the extension office for more information or to set up an appointment to get your worms at (904) 530-6356.

## Summer Reading is Here!

The Nassau County Public Library is kicking off an epic reading adventure for people of ALL ages! Read for 15 minutes a day, every day for 10 weeks or a total of 1,050 minutes before August 9th and you can enter to win prizes from our amazing sponsors! All you have to do is download the Beanstack app and track the minutes you've read! If you need help signing up, visit us at any library branch and we will be happy to get you started.

Prizes include products, services, and gift cards from a variety of local sponsors including A1A Axe Throwing, Adventures with Mel, The Book Loft, Cinnamon Bear Country Store, Connie's Pizza, Fantastic Fudge, Fernandina Beach Cycling, Five.5 Grille, Friends of

the Bryceville Library, Friends of the Callahan Library, Friends of the Fernandina Beach Library, Friends of the Hilliard Library, Town of Hilliard, Friends of the Yulee Library, Grumpy's Wildlight, Hampton Inn & Suites Amelia, The Happy Tomato, HERS Boutique, Hilliard Donuts and Kolaches, Island Time Frozen Yogurt, Jaybird Hammock Farm, Lovely You Beauty Parlour, Moon River Pizza, Paisley Grace Makery, Pizza Hut of Yulee, R&R Wings, Residence Inn by Marriot Amelia, Smoothie King Yulee, TD Nails Hilliard, Tractor Supply Yulee, Traders Hill Farm, and Villa Villekulla Toys!

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the heart of our grief will enable us to make it from where we are today and where God wants us to be fully restored. And the loss of our loved one there will always be a purpose behind the plan of God, even when we are not sure or understand in this moment of grief, but leaning and dependent on God, resting with the Father. We can find healing for our souls, and there will never be a day that we forget the ones we have lost. Grace and peace from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

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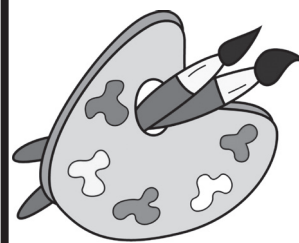


## Kids' Art Classes

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**SATURDAY, JULY 13**

- ✦ Ages 5 - 8 • 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. • \$12
- ✦ Ages 9 - 13 • 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. • \$12
- ✦ Ages 14-18 • 1 - 3 p.m. • \$12



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Some classes may be combined or  
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Finished works of art will be displayed at the Ice  
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# REJOICE WITH US!

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# Scholarships Awarded

Maria Paula Hernandez

Fernandina Beach's Nelson and Associates Insurance awarded five students from two Nassau County schools \$20,000 worth of scholarships. The company's CEO Kimberly Branham-Nelson and its dental and vision insurance agent Morgan Wilson presented the scholarships at Fernandina Beach High School's and West Nassau High School's senior award ceremonies. These scholarships are awarded to students pursuing a career in a health and safety-related field and demonstrate academic excellence, leadership qualities and commitment to their community and peers. Each student scholarship equates to \$4,000.

To apply for this student scholarship, the students had to include a letter of recommendation from one of their high school teachers and a personal reference letter.

Branham-Nelson says she continues to be impressed by the high level of excellence she has seen among the students. She prides her health insurance agency on providing exceptional customer service and knowledge in the health insurance industry, all while giving back to the community. "We enjoy hosting community events, supporting local non-profit organizations, and helping those that we live and work with," said Branham-Nelson.

The 2024 scholarship recipients were: from Fernandina Beach High School Seniors Libby Alvarez and Lillian Dye; and West Nassau High School Seniors Baylie Cruce, Emma Murphy and LeeAnn Purvis. These



students were recommended by members of the community including members of Congress, members of the City of Fernandina Beach, Board Members of local non-profit organizations, a Nassau County School Superintendent and esteemed teachers and mentors.

Among all the students' accomplishments is Baylie Cruce, who serves as the president of a non-profit organization. This organization encourages women undergoing hardships by providing them with tote bags filled with hygiene items, a journal, pens and a Bible.

Nelson and Associates Insurance is committed to helping students in their pursuit of higher education, recognizing the importance of supporting our community's future. If you are interested in contributing to the Nelson and Associates Insurance Scholarship for 2025, you can find out more information on their website at: [www.nelsonandassociatesinsurance.com](http://www.nelsonandassociatesinsurance.com).

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<p><b>USDA Whole T-BONES</b></p> <p><b>\$6<sup>95</sup> lb.</b></p> <p>U.S.D.A. INSPECTED (BEEF) Cut the way you like! Expires 6-18-24 WJ Limit 2 With this Coupon</p>	<p><b>LEG QUARTERS</b></p> <p><b>\$7<sup>95</sup> 10 lb. Bag</b></p> <p>Expires 6-18-24 WJ Limit 2 With this Coupon</p>
<p><b>10 lb. Bag FRYER DRUMSTICKS</b></p> <p><b>\$7<sup>95</sup></b></p> <p>Expires 6-18-24 WJ Limit 2 With this Coupon</p>	<p><b>Bone-in COUNTRY STYLE RIBS</b></p> <p><b>\$1<sup>99</sup> lb.</b></p> <p>Family Pack Expires 6-18-24 WJ While Supplies Last With this Coupon</p>
<p><b>Lee's Smoked SLAB BACON</b></p> <p><b>\$4<sup>99</sup> lb.</b></p> <p>WHOLE OR HALF Expires 6-18-24 WJ With this Coupon</p>	<p><b>BREADED POPCORN SHRIMP</b></p> <p><b>\$1<sup>00</sup> 8 OZ. BAG</b></p> <p>Expires 6-18-24 WJ While Supplies Last, With this Coupon</p>
<p><b>6 lb. Bag Breaded CHICKEN BREAST PATTIES</b></p> <p><b>\$7<sup>95</sup></b></p> <p>Expires 6-18-24 WJ While Supplies Last, With this Coupon</p>	<p><b>15 lb. Case OX TAILS</b></p> <p><b>\$112</b></p> <p>Cut the way you like! Expires 6-18-24 WJ While Supplies Last, With this Coupon</p>

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## Westside Journal Visits Romania!

Gail and John Bowen, of Callahan, recently enjoyed a trip to Romania. Lucky for us, they also took along a copy of the Westside Journal with them! They are shown standing outside Corvin Castle in Hunedoara, Romania. Corvin Castle was designed as a defense fort against the Ottoman Empire and one of the most beautiful castles in Romania. It is also one of the largest in Europe. Rumor has it that Vlad the Impaler was imprisoned here.

## ‘JUMP ON THE STUMP’ CANDIDATE FORUM SATURDAY

**SATURDAY, JUNE 22 • 10 A.M. - 1 P.M.**



Nassau County Farm Bureau will host a ‘Jump on the Stump’ Candidate Forum at the NE FL Fairgrounds Livestock Pavilion in Callahan. This non-partisan event aims to connect local candidates with the community. During the forum, each candidate will deliver a 3-minute ‘stump speech’. There will not be a Question & Answer session, however you will have the chance to engage with candidates afterward. Plus, the first 300 adult attendees will receive a \$5 voucher for food trucks. Join us as we celebrate democracy and enjoy good food and fellowship. For additional information, call 904-879-3498.

## 4-H Teen Leadership Council Receives Community Pride Grant

The Nassau County 4-H Teen Leadership Council (TLC) recently received a 4-H Community Pride Grant? In December, TLC applied for and successfully secured a \$500 community service grant. With these funds, they launched a project called "Teens Helping Teens".



This initiative aimed to provide support and encouragement to their peers during the summer break. The summer care kits included hygiene products, beach towels, sunglasses, sunscreen, snacks and more. These donations were given to Family Support Services of Duval and Nassau Counties. TLC 4-H members managed to create 20 care bags for this project. What is TLC? TLC is a youth 4-H club for teens, 13-18 years old. The youth meet once a month to plan events, complete community service projects and develop life skills to grow as young leaders. For more information about Nassau County 4-H Teen Leadership Council program, contact 4-H Agent Spencer Hewitt at 904-530-6353 or [spencer.hewitt@ufl.edu](mailto:spencer.hewitt@ufl.edu).



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# Tourists Pay, You Benefit. Tourist Development Tax.



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## Nassau Tourism Works

We have a unique opportunity to enhance the quality of life in Nassau County. The Tourist Development Tax (TDT) is a 5% user fee tourists pay when they stay overnight on Amelia Island. This fee, paid only by tourists, funds community cultural events, promotes local small businesses, outdoor recreation activities and pays for beach cleaning.

As the county experiences rapid growth, voters in Yulee, Wildlight, Callahan, Hilliard, Bryceville, and off-island Fernandina Beach will soon decide whether to expand the TDT user fee. This new revenue ensures that visitors contribute to maintaining and preserving the natural beauty of Nassau County, benefitting all local residents.

Your participation is essential as we strive to improve our community's amenities and safeguard our environment. To learn more or share your thoughts, please visit [NassauTourismWorks.com](http://NassauTourismWorks.com).








Paid for by the Amelia Island Convention & Visitors Bureau.

# 4-H Love A Horse Camp Held



Ye-Haw! Day one of horse camp flew by. Our campers were led by our AMAZING team of five counselors in activities teaching grooming, anatomy, safety, colors, and more! An extra shout out needs to go to our two camp volunteer horses, Brady & Merrie, for letting some friends have their first horse experience.

camp was filled with a trail ride/lesson, painting ponies, grooming, sharing snacks, and even helping with some barn chores at the amazing Prince Equestrian Sports, LLC! Our campers also got to present their painted horse models and have a model horse show this morning. We are so thankful to partner with local lesson barns, veterinarians, and volunteers to make this week special for all of our youth. We would also like to give one big final "Thank You!" to our five wonderful counselors who were dedicated in leading the best camp possible for our kids.



We're starting to put all the "bits and pieces" together at this year's Love A Horse camp! Our campers had their first riding lesson, learned all about how bits work, got a hands-on understanding of the horse digestive system, tie-dyed shirts and so much more!

Until next year, ya'll!

Our final day of Love A Horse





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**EXPERIENCED MECHANIC NEEDED** at Conner's Service Center, Callahan. Apply in person to: 449645 US Highway 301 or call 904-879-3459. 62724

**THE TOWN OF HILLIARD** is seeking a highly motivated, qualified individual to serve as an **ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT** to perform specialized administrative work under the general direction of the Town Clerk. Qualified applicant will assist with professional and administrative work such as: customer service, cash collections, utility system, proofreading and editing, having effective oral and written communication skills, ability to complete assignments within stringent deadlines, excellent follow-up skills, ability to be sensitive to political issues, responding to citizen inquiries regarding official actions; knowledge of Public Information and Records Laws, and have the ability to take on additional municipal duties as required. High School Diploma or equivalent required, associate degree in business preferred and at least two years' experience in the public sector or equivalent work experience required. Individuals must be proficient in Microsoft Word & Excel computer programs and have knowledge of Florida Statutes. This is a non-exempt (hourly) full-time position. The Town offers extensive benefits programs. Salary is Grade 3: ranging from \$16.23 - \$24.36. The Town of Hilliard is an Equal Opportunity Employer and a Drug Free Workplace. Post-offer physical required. Applications and a complete position description may be picked up at Town Hall located at 15859 West County Road 108, Hilliard, Florida from 9am until 5pm Monday through Friday, or printed from the Town's website [www.townofhilliard.com](http://www.townofhilliard.com). Applications with resumes will be accepted until the position is filled. 62024

**THE TOWN OF HILLIARD** is seeking a highly motivated, qualified individual to fill the part-time temporary position of **CLERICAL ASSISTANT** to perform specialized administrative work under the general direction of the Town Clerk. Qualified applicant will assist with professional and administrative work such as: customer service, cash collections, research, general clerical office duties and providing support within the Town Clerk's Office. A High School Diploma or equivalent required and at least two years' experience in the public sector or equivalent work experience. Individuals must be proficient in Microsoft Word & Excel computer programs and have knowledge of Florida Statutes. This is a non-exempt (hourly) part-time temporary position that will be scheduled to work Monday through Friday, 20-30 hours per week. This position is for a period not to exceed six months at which time will be evaluated for the need to move into a regular position status. While part-time positions do receive all legally mandated benefits (such as Social Security and workers' compensation), they are ineligible for all the Town's other benefit programs. Salary is Grade 2: ranging from \$13.96 - \$20.94. The Town of Hilliard is an Equal Opportunity Employer and a Drug Free Workplace. Post-offer physical required. Applications and a complete position description may be picked up at Town Hall located at 15859 West County Road 108, Hilliard, Florida from 9am until 5pm Monday through Friday, or printed from the Town's website [www.townofhilliard.com](http://www.townofhilliard.com). Applications with resumes will be accepted until the position is filled. 62023

# CLASSIFIEDS

Classified Deadline is Tuesdays at Noon  
879-4180 • [news@westsidejournal.net](mailto:news@westsidejournal.net)

## YARD SALES

**VFW Post 10095 YARD SALE:** Saturday, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., located across from the Hilliard Airpark. \$5 Bag Day! Lots of new donations! Help support our Veterans!

## AUTOS

**1998 JEEP WRANGLER SE**, cold AC, 4-cylinder, manual transmission, 156K miles, newer soft-top, asking \$6,000. Call 904-882-4160. tfn

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**STUDIO APARTMENT**, small cabin, good work and personal references needed, electric, garbage & water included; \$175/week; first & last week plus \$250 deposit (\$600 total) to move in. Call 904-635-0737. 61324

**3BR/2BA FOR RENT**, off Old Dixie Highway, Callahan. Call 904-507-9580 for more information. 61324

## AUCTION

**ONLINE ESTATE AUCTION:** Starts Saturday, June 15 ends Friday, June 21; Nickel Slot Machine, Rock OLA jukebox, 1890's oak Koken Barber chair, 22" Glo-Dial neon clock, Jacksonville Bank Pam clock, 5 cars: 2001 Oldsmobile Intrigue GLS, 2004 Thunderbird convertible, 1989 Ford E350 Diesel Van, 1996 Ford Explorer XL, 2008 Nissan 4WD Pathfinder, original Porcelain Western Airlines Arrowhead double sided sign, neon signs, Barber light pole, Silver dollars, pocket watch, Atlantic porcelain pump sign, badges, door pushes porcelain, Vintage porcelain pan scrapers, Seiko break away musical clock new, trunk moonshine copper still, steel train engine, 1907 Art Nouveau Bryant lamp, Railroad traffic light, 1920's pressed steel trucks, tin and porcelain signs, 1980 Mayport all pressed steel trucks, tin and porcelain signs, 1980 Mayport All that Jazz poster, Antique oak Armoire, Antique hotel dresser 1920's, inlaid Antique occasional table, Coke trays, Coke cooler, Coke signs, large Marlboro sign, pocket knives, art glass, Zippo lighters, HOBONickels style dollars, National cash register, watches, costume jewelry and box, silverware, tools, Troll dolls. Pickup will be on Sunday, June 23 on North Main Street, Jacksonville. Link takes you to auction: <https://hibid.com/catalog/553191/online-estate-consignment-auction-north-jacksonville>

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## Keiter Announces Candidacy for Clerk of Court

After 19 years of service with the Nassau County Clerk of Court and Comptroller's Office, Mitch Keiter, the Chief of Staff and Operations, announced his candidacy to succeed John A. Crawford. Keiter has earned the endorsement of



current Clerk of Court and Comptroller John A. Crawford, along with State Representative Dean Black and State Senator Clay Yarborough. "I am excited and honored to begin my campaign strong, with endorsements from our county's strongest conservatives and defenders of the public trust," said Keiter. "The Clerk of Court and Comptroller is both the 'watchdog for the taxpayers,' as well as being responsible for administrative support to the County and Circuit Courts. I have already been doing the job for 19 years alongside Mr. Crawford and will continue to move the office forward as your elected Clerk."

In announcing his endorsement, Nassau County Clerk of Court and Comptroller John A. Crawford said,

"I am extremely proud to endorse my Chief of Staff and Operations, Mitch Keiter, as our next Clerk of Court and Comptroller. His unquestionable integrity, proven leadership, unwavering dedication, and deep understanding of our organization have prepared Mitch to lead the Clerk's office. Mitch Keiter has proven experience you can trust."

Mitch, a second-generation Nassau County native, has dedicated his life to improving the Clerk of Court and Comptroller's Office. Beginning as an IT professional, Mitch has held major Chief Deputy positions that resulted in innovations and process improvements on everything from developing award winning financial reports, to making many of the Clerk's services available online and accessible.

To learn more about Mitch Keiter and his campaign for Nassau County Clerk of Court and Comptroller contact the campaign directly at Facebook.com/VoteKeiter.



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**FRANCES FOERMAN CREWS**



Frances Foerman Crews, was welcomed into the loving arms of her Lord and Savior, the Precious Son of God - Jesus Christ, Thursday, June 6, 2024. She was born April 23, 1935 in Homerville, Georgia to the late Frank Charles Foerman and Elma Agnes O'Neal Foerman. She was a member of Buford Grove Baptist Church in Hilliard. In addition to her parents; she is preceded in death by her loving husband, Rufus Carroll "R.C." Crews; and a son Carl Crews.

She is survived by her four children Cindy (Bill) Russ, David (Sheila) Crews, Mark (Tami) Crews and Joy Clark; three siblings Ruth Ross, Odetha Driggers and Paul Foerman; nine grandchildren Kamaran (Bert) Vance, Jennie Sharfner, Lathan (Allison) Crews, Byron (Kristen) Crews, Brandon Crews, Ethan Crews, Miranda Crews, Stephen (Grace) Perreira and Jacob (Brittany) Perreira; seven great-grandchildren; and one great-great-grandchild.

The funeral service was held Monday, June 10, at Buford Grove Baptist Church with Bro. Mike Pruitt officiating. Burial followed at Bachlott Cemetery in Brantley County. The family received friends prior to the service.

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

Arrangements by Shepard-Roberson Funeral Home, Folkston, 912-496-7388.

# OBITUARIES

Miller. She retired from the Duval County Public School System after 37 years. In addition to her parents; she was preceded in death by her husband William J. Decot; four sons Stephen Decot, Martin Decot, John Decot and Daniel Decot; four brothers and five sisters.

Mrs. Doris is survived by her daughter Margaret Wilcox; three grandchildren Debbie, Stephanie (Bryan) and Yolanda; five great-grandchildren Brittany, Amber, Kaleb, Bryson and Carter; son-in-law Thurman; daughters-in-law Rose and Kitty; a brother Paul E. Miller; and many nieces, nephews and friends.

The family will receive friends Friday, June 14 from 6-8 p.m. at the Shepard-Roberson Funeral Home - Callahan Chapel, 617365 Brandies Avenue, Callahan. A graveside funeral service will be held Saturday, June 15 at 10 a.m. in Jones Cemetery, Callahan.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to: Community Hospice and Palliative Care, 4266 Sunbeam Road, Jacksonville, FL 32257; or online at: [www.support.communityhospice.com](http://www.support.communityhospice.com).

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

Arrangements by Shepard-Roberson Funeral Home - Callahan Chapel; 617365 Brandies Avenue, Callahan, 904-879-2336.

born January 3, 1947, to Irvele and Esther Harrington in Holland, Michigan. After graduating from Holland High School, he began what would become a 58-year career in the ministry. While attending a wedding in Bessemer City, North Carolina, he met Marjorie Gail Harrington, the sister of the bride. Curtis and Gail married in 1970 and began a journey together that would lead them to churches across four states. Over three decades, Curtis served as a music minister at Calvary Baptist Church in Holland, West Lenoir Baptist Church in Lenoir, North Carolina; Calvary Baptist Church in Connerville, Indiana; and Normandy Baptist Temple in Jacksonville. During a second stint in Lenoir, Curtis earned a Bachelor of Divinity at the West Lenoir Baptist School of Ministry before joining Buford Grove as senior pastor in 1995.

When he wasn't at the pulpit, ministering to members of his congregation or doting on his grandchildren, Curtis was a fisherman, a golfer and an avid fan of the New York Yankees and Michigan Wolverines. In addition to his parents; he is preceded in death by his loving wife Gail.

He is survived by his children Shannon (Deborah) Harrington, Dawn (Doug) Colley and Todd (Adrienne) Harrington; and 12 grandchildren Daniel, Rosa Maria, Martha Isabel, Abigail, Jude, Isaac, Amber, Ethan, Brayden, Cadence, Alexis and Kellen.

The family will receive friends Thursday, June 13 from 6-8 p.m. at Buford Grove Baptist Church in Hilliard. The funeral service will be held Friday, June 14, at 3 p.m. also at the church.

Arrangements by Shepard-Roberson Funeral Home, Folkston, 1-912-496-7388.

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

**MARY CHRISTINE OSWALT**



Mary Christine Bell Oswalt, 94, of Hilliard, passed away Thursday, June 6, 2024 at her home. She was born September 14, 1929 in Fayetteville, WV, to the late Christopher Skaggs and Verdie Bell. She was a member of New Life Baptist Church in St. George. She lived in Hilliard for the past 23 years.

Mary owned a restaurant, Lucky's Café in Virginia Beach, where she met her future husband, Charles. She put him to work and the rest is history. Mary was a wonderful wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. In her early days as a mother, she made her daughters' clothes as she was an accomplished seamstress.

She is survived by her loving husband of 64 years, Charles Oswalt; four daughters Garvin (Ray) Nelson, Bobbie Karasik, Sandy Austin and Kimberly Perno; son Randy Lowery; brother Paul Bell; 10 grandchildren Travis, Brandy, Megan, Shane, John, Kevin, Clay, Blake, Shawn and Daysha; 18 great-grandchildren; and a brother Paul (Deborah) Bell; and numerous extended family members and friends.

In addition to her parents; she is preceded in death by three brothers Billy Bell, Bobby Bell and Charles Bell, Jr.; three sisters Trudy Long, Hazel Sermons and Anna Mae Sorey; granddaughter Shannon Beth Austin; and a great-grandson.

A memorial service will be held Friday, June 14 at 11 a.m. at Shepard-Roberson Funeral Home - Callahan Chapel. The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Community Hospice, 4266 Sunbeam Road, Jacksonville, FL 32257; or New Life Baptist Church, 1058 Wheeler Street, St. George, GA 31562.

Condolences may be expressed at [www.srfhcallahan.com](http://www.srfhcallahan.com). Arrangements by Shepard-Roberson Funeral Home Callahan Chapel, 617365 Brandies Avenue, Callahan.

**DORIS J. DECOT**



Doris J. Decot, 89, of Callahan, went home to be with the Lord Friday, June 7, 2024 at the Hadlow Center for Caring Community Hospice. Doris was born October 11, 1934 in Somerset, Ohio to the late Jonah Andrew Miller and Elizabeth Blanche Dupler

**REV. CURTIS D. HARRINGTON**



Rev. Curtis Dean Harrington, a beloved father, grandfather, and the pastor of Buford Grove Baptist Church for 28 years, went to be with his Lord and Savior Saturday, June 8, 2024. He passed away peacefully at his home in Hilliard, surrounded by family. Curtis was

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# OBITUARIES

## MADELINE BETH RENTZ



Madeline "Beth" Rentz, 63, of Callahan, passed away June 3, 2024. She was born November 15, 1960 in West Palm Beach, Florida, to Billie Ratliff Kiser and Eleanor Jeannie Gilson Kiser.

*"The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the path of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."* Psalm 23:1-6

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

Visit [www.nassaufh.com](http://www.nassaufh.com) to sign the family's guest book.

## HENRY C. RHODEN, SR.



Henry C. Rhoden, Sr., 83, passed away May 25, 2024. He was born January 26, 1941, in Jacksonville, to Frazier Rhoden and Lourine Higginbotham. At the age of 18, Henry married the love of his life, Frances. Shortly after, he joined the United States Army as an Automotive Mechanic.

After his years of service came to an end, Henry and Frances proudly built a wonderful life together, full of love, laughter, and joy. He loved family gatherings and was the most generous man, with both his time and knowledge. Henry loved being outdoors. He enjoyed hunting, fishing and gardening and he took great pride in growing food for his family. Henry loved singing in the church choir, old western movies, dogs and sharing stories about his baseball and Army days. He will be remembered by those who loved him as a man who would go above and beyond for his family. Henry held strong to his faith and found great comfort being surrounded and cared for by those he held dear to his heart. He is preceded in death by his loving spouse, Frances.

Henry is survived by his devoted son, David, as well as many other loved ones.

The tribute above was prepared by Henry's loving granddaughters, who will miss him very much.

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

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# WNHS Class of 1978 Holds Reunion



Dawn S. West

Two weeks ago, the West Nassau High School Class of 1978 held their 46th year class reunion. I know, 46 is kind of crazy! The thing is, our class has lost three more classmates in the last 2 years and a couple of our classmates decided we needed to try to get together now. The last reunion we had, just as our class, was our 30th, which was 16 years ago. So, the planning quickly began. We were so happy to see the response from classmates wanting to come. We had a total of 53 classmates come and

eight that paid but couldn't make it at the last minute. We were thrilled! It was such a great night of eating together, and lots of conversations among classmates. Many people exchanged addresses and phone numbers to keep the lines open. We do plan to have our 50th in four years and hope to have a better turnout. The hardest part of the evening was everyone taking a look at our tribute table and realizing we have lost 17 class members, that we know of. It's so important to stay in touch! Thank you all for a great night of catching up!

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