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Thursday, September 28, 2017

Vol. 4 • No. 9



STAFF PHOTO BY KILE BREWER

Employees from JTA, JEA, and members of the Jacksonville City Council took part in a ceremonial groundbreaking for a Collins Road widening project funded by the city of Jacksonville the morning of Sept. 19 at Argyle Church of Christ.

Collins Road to get high-tech upgrade

By Kile Brewer
The Oakleaf

ARGYLE – In about three years, residents in the northern reaches of Clay County should notice a reduction in traffic along Collins Road. Until then, residents should prepare for ongoing construction now that the Jacksonville Transit Authority has broken ground on the project.

“When we’re finished, you will have an improved, four-lane road,” said Isaiah Rumlin JTA board chairman during his introduction of the agency’s CEO on Sept. 19. “We will

fit the demand of this growing community.”

Construction will consist mainly of converting the portion of Collins Road that runs between Middleburg Road and Rampart Road from two-lanes to four. The addition of the new Walmart, and the Costco which is still under construction, will bring thousands of jobs to the area, and with it, according to JTA, more traffic on an already-busy roadway. The project is expected to start soon and will be completed in June 2020.

“You can hear the traffic behind me right now, and this is after

rush hour,” said Nat Ford, JTA chief executive officer, during the mid-morning press conference.

The new roads will feature concrete medians, bike lanes and a revamped sidewalk system to allow residents to pick their preferred mode of transportation. According to Ford, the future will include another mode of travel along their 13 new roadway projects – autonomous or self-driving vehicles – but that’s still just a concept in the forward-thinking minds of the JTA upper echelon.

SEE COLLINS, 9

Officials get governor's ear post-Irma

By Jesse Hollett
The Oakleaf

ORANGE PARK – Public officials made their cases Sept. 19 to Gov. Rick Scott on how they would like to see post-Irma restoration efforts look like in Clay County.

The meeting at the Town of Orange Park council chambers brought together elected officials countywide to receive updates on how the state has coped with the destruction caused by Hurricane Irma as it tore through the state last week.

“I know everybody’s worked hard to get through this hurricane,” Scott said. “The flooding was horrible up here...it’s unbelievable how much flooding we got.”

While Florida has to contend with devastation and strained resources statewide, the county’s primary concern at this point is recovery.

Hurricane Irma came as municipalities proposed their budgets for the next fiscal year. The countywide damages are expected to turn budget



Gov. Rick Scott

SEE IRMA, 11



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Fossa has his eye on every new housing development

By Jesse Hollett
The Oakleaf

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – As Clay County expands and new housing developments come online, the county inevitably has to build new schools to accommodate the influx of new students.

But how a school district goes from soil to new school house is often shrouded in mystery to outsiders, and mired in red tape, studies, maps and projection upon projection for insiders.

That's where James Fossa comes in.

Fossa, referred to colloquially as Jim, is the Clay County School District's planning and intergovernmental affairs coordinator.

His position represents an imperceptible and often underappreciated aspect of the district that connects

the school system to county, state and federal governments.

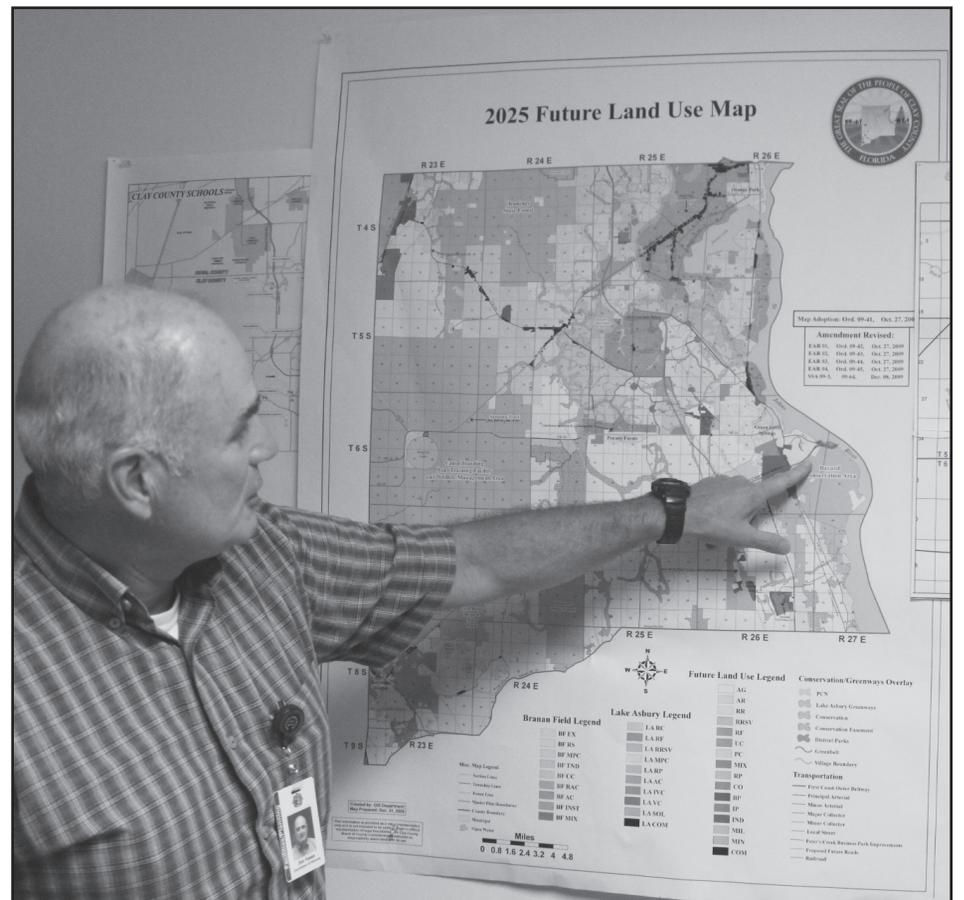
Fossa's position also ropes him in as an intermediary between builders, which makes his role indispensable for the district. He has to track up-to-date school occupancy numbers and prevent a long-held desire to place students in portable classrooms.

And for two years his chair sat empty.

Development slowed following the Great Recession, and according to Fossa, his position took a sideline. In those two years, his position was filled by other employees who undertook his role in roles split across district staff.

The school district decided to refill the position after former Superintendent Charlie Van Zant Jr. was defeated in last year's elections. Fossa said

SEE EYE, 11



STAFF PHOTO BY JESSE HOLLETT

Jim Fossa tracks every current and future housing development for the Clay County School District to help the district plan for future school building needs.

Lightning strikes hit school district budget

By Eric Cravey
The Oakleaf

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – Lightning strikes at a number of Clay County schools have caused hundreds of thousands of dollars in damage in recent weeks during a time the school district's budget is experiencing shrinking state capital funds.

"We've been on average receiving \$1.29 million a year in PECO, [Public Education Capital Outlay]. This year, it was cut to \$868,000, so let's take that and divide that by 50. What is that – \$15,000 a school for the year barring no major failure of a mechanical system [or other issues]. It's just not logical," said Michael Kemp, assistant superintendent for operations.

A lightning strike at Keystone Heights Junior-Senior High School's baseball field damaged the electrical panel inside the dugout.

"We've had Montclair... a \$15,000

compressor blew up. We put another one in and we've had problems with the line with metal parts in it, so we called timeout. We put portable [A/C] units in the classrooms, so we're problem-solving this as much as we can," said Superintendent Addison Davis.

A lightning strike at Doctors Inlet Elementary school "fried" a new \$159,000 fire alarm system that was in the middle of being installed.

"It wasn't finally completed, so it was still under contract," said Bryce Ellis, project manager for the operations department.

Because the fire alarm installer was still under contract, the damaged system will be covered under the contractor's insurance policy and will be re-installed in full at no cost to the school district. That news was met with cheers and elation at the Aug. 29 monthly school board agenda-setting workshop.

Another lightning strike took out the power to a wing at Ridgeview High, which forced school district staff to act quickly for a solution. Davis said a portable generator is the fix for now.

"Where's there's air conditioner problems, we're trying to bring in spot unit coolers, temporarily to get them fixed," Kemp said.

At Lake Asbury Elementary, a portable generator was brought in to provide power to eight portable classrooms.

Kemp said one of the two 80-ton chillers – a key part of the air conditioning system – just "died" at Orange Park High.

"With every storm that rolls in, there's another one. I just want everybody to understand – in triple-digit heat, it's just this constant fight," Kemp said.

Aging building and shrinking budgets become a recipe for failure.

Davis said some buildings in the school district that are 30-plus years old are showing their age and are costly to operate due to their aging infrastructure.

"If we had 45 to \$50 million, we could replace everything. The majority of these units are 20-plus, 30-plus years old we're just trying to put a band aid on them. So, we had Ridgeview last week, up-down, up-down, up-down and then, enough. Dr. Kemp, great problem-solver, brought in a portable unit to get it up and running," Davis said.

Davis said the administration building's air conditioning was out last week, but "kids are first," so he delayed crews from working on the admin building while classrooms were prioritized.

"We've had Montclair... \$15,000 compressor blew up. We put another one in and we've had problems with

SEE BUDGET, 8

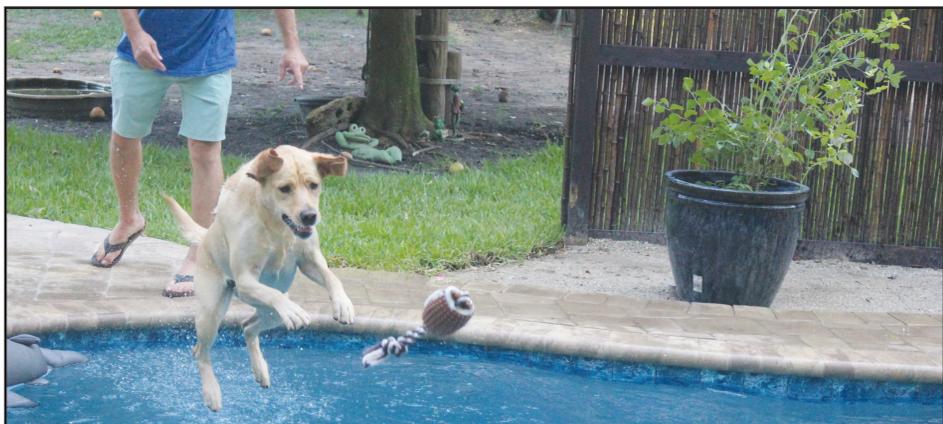


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Cleo, a therapy dog, leaps after a toy thrown into Denise and Mark Umphress' pool.

Therapy dog expo offers opportunities

By Jesse Hollett
The Oakleaf

JACKSONVILLE – Budding therapy animal trainers can often find themselves with more questions than answers.

Luckily, as this niche form of volunteerism grows in popularity, nonprofits and advocates are now making it easier to answer those questions.

On Oct. 7, the Therapy Animal

Coalition, a nonprofit that assists both new and veteran therapy animal teams hone their skills, will host its second annual Therapy Animal Expo at The Schultz Center for Teaching and Leadership.

The expo will give both new and old therapy animal trainers the opportunity to find volunteer positions and information before they jump

SEE DOGS, 8



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Survivor walks to promote heart health

By Kile Brewer
The Oakleaf

OAKLEAF – Jenna Coleman woke up with the stomach flu on New Year's Day 1999. The 10-year-old went into cardiac arrest three times before being taken to the hospital. Once there, she stayed in the intensive care unit for a week before doctors could figure out what had caused the malady.

Coleman, now 28, was diagnosed with Sick Sinus Syndrome, meaning her body's natural pacemaker, the sinoatrial node, can't work fast enough. Coleman was set up with an electronic pacemaker, something she will have for the rest of her life.

In addition to the pacemaker, Coleman makes bi-annual visits to the cardiologist to make sure everything is still functioning properly. So far, Coleman has avoided any further complications and lives comfortably in her Oakleaf home with her family.

In addition to regular medical checkups, Coleman attempts to fight ongoing hypertension by limiting her sodium intake and eating healthy foods. Though it isn't always easy, Coleman understands how delicate the heart is and does everything she can to keep hers pumping.

"I really focus on what I eat," Coleman said. "It can be really hard,

especially eating out."

She started an Instagram account, @hearthealthymama, to incite an attitude among her followers that it's possible to manage a career, a family, and still stay active and healthy.

"You can be a mom, and you can be healthy," Coleman said. "I'm out there to tell people how important heart health is."

Coleman uses the account to help other moms realize that their health is their responsibility. She said most women know their weight, and their BMI, but more women should be asking their doctor for their blood pressure numbers and knowing what those numbers mean. She also advocates for CPR certification among all moms, seeing it as a potential saving grace in a medical emergency.

"Moms need to realize how life saving that can be," Coleman said. "My mom performed CPR on me when I had cardiac arrest. I don't know if that's what saved me, but it obviously didn't hurt."

Coleman now works as an ambassador for the First Coast American Heart Association where she works to inform people on the risks of heart disease.

"Heart disease is so broad, I don't think people realize," Coleman said. "I really just stay healthy for my fam-



STAFF PHOTO BY KILE BREWER

First Coast American Heart Association ambassador Jenna Coleman sits in her Oakleaf home. Coleman, who was fitted with a pacemaker at age 10, will be participating in this year's heart walk in the survivor's tent.

ily, you have to find that 'Why?' and you'll find your way."

Through this ambassadorship, Coleman has attended several events through the Heart Association, and will be participating in this year's First Coast Heart Walk volunteering in the survivor's booth.

"The walks themselves are a great form of exercise," Coleman said, "but at the events there are so many booths and you can become so knowledgeable about heart health."

The event encourages participants to get out and walk, not only at the event, but throughout the year. This year, the theme is "Healthy For Good," which reiterates that push to get people active and eating right all year long. The American Heart

Association also pushes for youth involvement, with a focus being on informing future generations about heart disease before they become adults and their risk for heart conditions increases.

"It's for the whole family, my kids will be going," Coleman said. "In 2015, my son was two and a half and he walked the whole thing and had a really good time."

The walk has been rescheduled for Nov. 19 at 8 a.m. at Metropolitan Park in Jacksonville from its original September date due to Hurricane Irma. The Heart Association hopes to raise more than \$1.7 million. For more information on the walk, visit firstcoastheartwalk.org, or find their page on Facebook.

Augusta Savage Festival planning underway

By Kile Brewer
The Oakleaf

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – After 25 years, the Augusta Savage Festival will return to Green Cove Springs.

The festival will be a standalone event, with the event's original chairperson, Eugene Francis, back at the helm.

"We're trying to put Green Cove and this festival on the map," Francis said. "It's our history and our culture. This will not be a typical festival, it is a series of events that will be capped off with a one-day street festival in Spring Park."

Francis led the charge from 1991 until 1993, organizing the first three

years before a promotion took him to Tallahassee. The festival was then turned over to the Green Cove Springs chapter of the NAACP, who ran the festival for another year before calling it quits.

After 20 years, Francis moved back to Green Cove Springs.

In the last few years, he has been receiving calls from schools and organizations in Baltimore and Harlem, as well as attention from local media outlets with an upcoming Augusta Savage exhibit at the Cummer Museum in Jacksonville. This attention led him to seek out support for a reinvigorated version of the festival



Here, Augusta Savage gives a miniature version of her famous piece "The Harp" to Grover Whalen, who was known in New York City circles as a politician, public relations guru and businessman in the 1930s and 1940s.

SEE SAVAGE, 7

Library has upgraded space to wonder

By Eric Cravey
The Oakleaf

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – In the award-winning children’s book “Frog and Toad Together” by Arnold Lobel, frog and toad had a friendship in which they did, well, everything together.

In her more than seven years as a children’s librarian at the Green Cove Springs Library, Michelle Kreitzer and fellow librarian Marie Bain’s friendship grew to a point where they jokingly referred to each other as frog and toad.

Last weekend, Kreitzer’s memory and love of books and nature was honored with the official dedication of a new set of murals installed in the children’s section of the library on Ferris Street. It’s phase one of a \$10,000 remodeling project for the children’s section.

“Michelle was a tremendous asset to Green Cove Springs Public Library and a fine representative of the Clay County library system as a whole. In the company of her fellow children’s librarian Marie Bain, she labored tirelessly in the service to the children of our community and inspired a lifelong love of reading in all those who attended programming here,” said Van Royal, Green Cove Springs city council member.

Kreitzer worked at the library until she was diagnosed with cancer and later died.

Royal said those who knew Kreitzer will be reminded of her each time they look at the murals, which depict the natural beauty of Clay County and the city.

“Michelle will always be here with us in spirit,” Royal said.

The murals – painted on wood panels – allow children to imagine what it would look like if they were sitting inside the spring at Historic Spring Park looking out into the park. One mural also portrays the iconic frog as an homage to both the book “Frog and Toad Together” and Kreitzer.

Library Branch Manager Jennifer Parker said that Kreitzer would love the new murals because she loved nature and she loved Florida.

“If y’all notice, it’s in effect, that we’re standing in the spring looking out into the park and onto the river and the spring really is the heart of Spring Park and our town just like, in the same way, that our library is the

heart of this community too,” Parker said.

Royal said Kreitzer used her artistic talents to create displays, props and fun craft projects that enhanced the library-goer’s experience along with providing caring and compassionate service to patrons of all ages.

“She was known for her warm smile and good sense of humor,” Royal said. “Even in the face of great personal hardship, she was extremely supportive of all her coworkers and she maintained a strong commitment to the library in its mission to the community.”

Jacksonville artist Anthony Rooney was commissioned to create the panels in his home studio in Rover-side. He created the painting using artwork that had been used in the children’s section, but this time gave it an upgrade merging the art with local history.

“I didn’t know Michelle personally, but I was kind of given a little bit of her story and just to be able to paint a mural to recognize her beautiful artwork and just to kind of commemorate her is an honor. It’s amazing,” Rooney said.

Rooney has also been commissioned to paint the murals for phase two, which won’t kick off until Friends of the Library can raise another \$5,000. They are jump starting their campaign on Sept. 29 at First Presbyterian Church of Green Cove Springs with a \$10 spaghetti dinner. They also plan a book sale at the library in October.

“The artwork, first of all, is beautiful. It’s going to add great ambiance here to the children’s section and hopefully inspire some imagination and some other things in our young folks, some artists who go on to do other things, but hopefully they’ll use the library and enjoy it that much more,” said Mike Cella, Clay County Commission member.

Pat Coffman, director of libraries

SEE LIBRARY, 6



Anthony Rooney's murals tell a story at the Green Cove Springs Library.



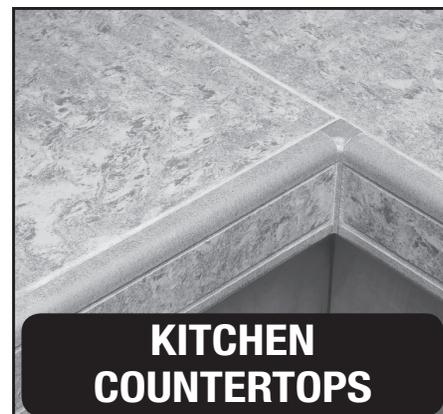
PHOTOS BY ERIC CRAVEY

Frog sits inside the spring at Historic Spring Park reading and getting lost in a world of imagination, the same thing the library urges children to do – read and imagine.

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Library

from page 5

for Clay County, thanked the Friends of the Library and the county commission for all each group does to support the libraries.

"This day is a special day here and we will go boldly and enjoy it every day," Coffman said. "It does take a community to support a small space like a library, but that's what we are – we're here to support our community, our children and it takes all of us together."

Having grown up in libraries as his

mother is a head branch librarian in Jacksonville, Rooney said this, ironically, was his first ever mural for a library.

"We're talking about giant frog who reads books, so he doesn't live in this world, he lives in Michelle's world, so I kind of tried to keep it in that realm just to honor her and to keep the frog looking very similar to his original look," Rooney said.

Tickets for the spaghetti dinner are \$10. Order yours by calling Shirley Youngerman, (904) 284-3849 on Sept. 29 at 6 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church of Green Cove Springs.

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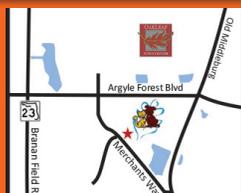
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One of the Augusta Savage's most famous pieces is The Harp, shown here.

Savage

from page 4

he created in the 1990s.

The exhibit will start in early October and remain at the Cummer for six months. This is the first time in decades that a Savage exhibit of this size and duration has been on display anywhere near her hometown of Green Cove Springs.

“Having a six-month showing of Savage material is a big deal, they’ve never done that at Cummer before,” Francis said. “Since they’re having the Savage exhibit I thought it would be a good time to bring the festival back.”

The timing of the festival’s reincarnation will also place Francis and those involved in a good place to have an extra special event by their third year.

Savage was born in a leap year, on February 29. Francis plans to hold the actual street festival during the last weekend in February so that when 2020, the next leap year, rolls around they will be able to hold the event on Savage’s actual birthday.

In addition to the festival, Francis hopes to produce a booklet featuring historical photographs, archival photos of her artwork, and historical writings by and about Augusta Savage to help tell her whole story and inform residents of Green Cove Springs and the rest of Clay County. This will include a writing by W. E. B. Du Bois about Savage, as well as excerpts from FIGHT magazine that was published jointly by Savage and Langston Hughes.

Francis will look to a pre-existing nonprofit organization to help with tax-deductible funding, the Friends of Augusta Savage. If the organization is able to come to an agreement

for a partnership between the festival and the organization, fundraising and advertising will begin as Francis starts recruiting volunteers to produce a festival that the city and county can be proud of.

The festival will also provide Francis with a platform in which to educate the youth in his community. During the early days of the festival, Francis used volunteers from area junior high schools and high schools

who, through their involvement in the festival, learned important life skills. During a recent brainstorming meeting, Francis listed off the names of former volunteers who are now successful contributing members of society.

“It’s personal to me that this is not just about Savage,” Francis said. “I hope to involve young people, teach them this skill set and how to pull something like this off.”

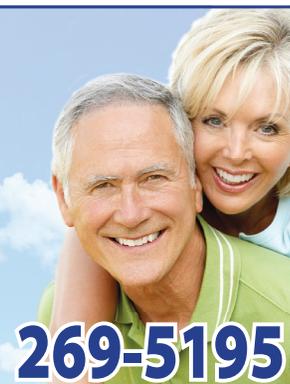
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Dogs

from page 3

into this particular brand of volunteering.

According to Coalition Secretary Kathy Burns of Jacksonville said, prior to the expo and events like it, “there was no toolkit” on how to begin training a therapy animal.

Volunteering with therapy animals is on the rise in Northeast Florida. Coalition estimates that there are roughly 200 therapy teams actively operating in the area, up 50 from last year.

Leaders in the field say not only are more volunteer teams actively participating, but more businesses and organizations have begun to realize the benefits a therapy animal can have on the human psyche.

“Without question” there’s been



Mark and Denise Umphress carress their dogs, Cleo and Buddha.

an increase, said Rev. Elizabeth Teal, an Orange Park resident who has worked with therapy animals and ministry animals since 1985. “When I first started this – now, I’m old, I’m not that old, but I’m old – I was on the phone begging people to accept one animal into their facilities, just a single animal on at trial basis. Now,

just last week, I got a facility that wanted 30 teams for their facility.”

Now, Teal said, Northeast Florida has the reverse problem from what she encountered when she was just beginning in her career. Now, the supply cannot meet the demand.

It’s why, she said, it is vital that there is an organization that can arrange expos like these – to inform newcomers and provide ongoing training to veteran teams.

“There simply isn’t enough teams,” Burns said. “And that’s what TAC is all about. It’s there to serve the needs that are growing exponentially in our community.”

Denise and Mark Umphress, who live in Oakleaf, attended the expo

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Kathy Burns
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kburns@therapyanimalcoalition.org

last year to gather more information about how they could go about volunteering with their two dogs, Buddha and Cleo.

The couple registered both their dogs as therapy dogs in under a year after attending the expo.

Early on, the two knew their Labrador Retrievers had a knack for therapy work. She recalls one instance where Cleo pulled on her leash to get to a veteran who no longer had legs.

“She jumped up in the man’s lap, in his wheelchair, I was horrified, I said ‘I’m so sorry,’ Denise said. “He said ‘no, no, please let her stay,’ and he was crying. She knows who needs her. The man’s wife came out and said ‘he has not showed any emotion since he came back from war.’”

Cleo just qualified to soothe patients at Wolfson Children’s Hospital. Buddha is adept at calming children who live with autism. Mark said it’s important for a therapy dog to have no reaction if they’re touched anywhere on their body, no matter how hard.

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So, what are these lessons? Here are a few to consider:

• **Be consistent.** The most successful workers are the ones who show up, day after day, and strive to overcome the inevitable obstacles that crop up. As an investor, you, too, need to be consistent in your habits – which means you should keep investing in all types of markets. If you take a “time out” every time the market drops, you might end up missing opportunities when the next rally begins.

• **Be flexible.** When good workers see that something is not going well, they change what they’re doing. And when you invest, you also may need to make adjustments. If an investment has consistently underperformed, or if you have too many others very similar to it, or if it just doesn’t meet your needs anymore, you may be better off by selling it and using the proceeds to invest elsewhere. This doesn’t mean you should constantly be buying and selling — in fact, you’ll likely be better off by purchasing quality investments and holding them for the long term. But you need to be flexible enough to make the appropriate moves at the appropriate times.

• **Be informed.** The best workers are those who regularly update their skills and acquire knowledge that helps them do their jobs better. As an investor, you should also keep

learning – about the investment world in general and about new opportunities for you to explore. And you should always understand what you are investing in – and why. Even if you work with a financial professional, you need to inform yourself about every aspect of your investment portfolio – after all, it’s your money and your future.

• **Be farsighted.** Good workers not only know what they’re doing – they also can visualize the desired outcome of each task. And, of course, people who are in charge of a particular endeavor, or who are responsible for the fortunes of a business, have a clear view of what they want to accomplish, even if the achievement of that goal is many years in the future. When you invest, you also need to see where you want to go. If you can constantly keep in mind your long-term goals – such as the type of retirement lifestyle you desire – you will likely find it easier to stick with an investment strategy that’s appropriate for your needs and risk tolerance. Conversely, if you lose sight of your destination, you might be more prone to taking short-term detours, which could work against you.

Labor Day reminds us to appreciate the skills and dedication of all workers – and as an investor, you can put these same attributes to good use.

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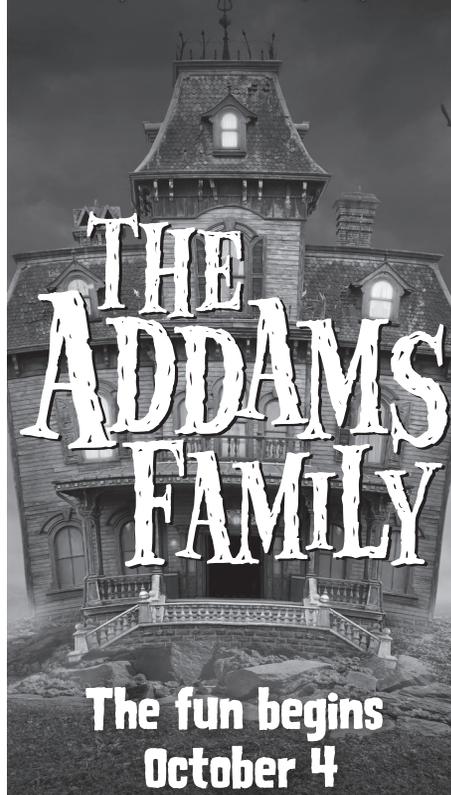


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Budget

from page 2

the line with metal parts in it, so we called timeout. We put portable [A/C] units in the classrooms, so we’re problem-solving this as much as we can,” Davis said.

Kemp indicated the district needs a new revenue stream dedicated for facility upkeep and the patch, fix and repair for now model just isn’t working anymore.

“We do have our LCIF dollars, our Local Capital Improvement Fund dollars, that we have, but you, that has to be used for certain things. We made a decision not to raise the millage rate, we did not increase impact fees, so we really need to start looking at a revenue stream because, like I said in the meeting today, our newest schools are 12-to-14 years old. It’s time to replace all the major mechanical systems. We have not been in a position to replace mechanical systems along the way so therefore, it’s to be expected,” Kemp said.

No action was taken at the workshop to address the air conditioning systems and needed repairs.

Collins

from page 1

JTA will also be installing a vastly superior drainage system, and, in partnership with JEA, the project will also include utility upgrades. With the JTA Mobility Works program, the organization is using its lengthy construction times as opportunities for JEA to come in when things are already dismantled to upgrade electric power infrastructure and improve hookups in neighborhoods bordering the new road project.

“This was part of the Better Jacksonville plan, but it fell off the shelf, we didn’t have the money. “Well, we found the money.”
– Jim Love, District 14, Jacksonville City Council member

With bids coming through earlier this year, the project was awarded to J.B. Coxwell Contracting in June and will cost the city of Jacksonville about \$19.8 million. This will be paid for mostly through a voter-approved gas tax enacted in Duval County.

“This was part of the Better Jacksonville plan, but it fell off the shelf, we didn’t have the money,” said Jim Love Jacksonville District 14 city council member. “Well, we found the money.”

Ford also announced at the groundbreaking that JTA would be adding a new stoplight along Collins Road as part of the road widening project.

“[Residents] have expressed their concerns, and we’ve listened,” Ford said. The light would be located at the intersection of Collins and Westport Roads, something that was requested by motorists who have had trouble with traffic preventing them from getting off Westport during rush hour. The new road will also serve as a quicker route for Clay County Oakleaf residents who prefer staying off Blanding Boulevard.

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Storm surge floods historic riverfront homes

By Jesse Hollett
The Oakleaf

ORANGE PARK — The unimaginable happened last week for 35 families along the St. Johns River.

As Orange Park firefighters rescued residents trapped in two condominiums on Club Continental using ladders and a 14-foot Jon Boat last Monday, the crashing waves of the St. Johns River river scooped out the foundation of their homes.

A three-and-a-half-foot storm surge combined with four-foot waves and torrential rainfall from Hurricane Irma caused the St. Johns River to rise more than eight feet and breach the bulkhead on the property. Rescuers navigated roads that had turned into lakes, dodged the tops of stop signs and avoided the roofs of cars submerged by the storm surge from Hurricane Irma.

Residents of River Oak and The Villas Continental who were either rescued or had evacuated Sept. 10 and Sept. 11 would make their way back to their homes only to learn that their buildings were unstable.

Orange Park Fire Chief Al Barker said two buildings at River Oak, 2099 Winterbourne, and the Villas Continental at 2223 Astor St. have been rendered hazardous until residents hire a structural engineer to assess damages. In total, 24 condo units in River Oaks and upwards of 16 units at the Villas Continental have been labeled uninhabitable.

"It wasn't safe," Barker said. "Because of the damage we saw wash out of there, we were concerned about the buildings themselves not being structurally safe and had [Clay Electric] turn the power off."

Floodwaters rose above and damaged the bulkhead protecting the buildings. When Barker was assessing the foundational damage to the buildings, he said he still could not even see the bulkhead, which sat submerged in the St. Johns River.

Power lines in the floodwaters halted Barker and other rescuers until utility companies could shut down the power to lessen the risk of electrocution.

"I couldn't even tell you how many [evacuations] we did," Barker said. "We evacuated 24 units out of the Winterbourne address and the others we did multiple, I can't even tell you how many there were."

Doug and Paula Shepherd evacuated to a hotel near the Jacksonville Airport on Sept. 10, which was the



PHOTO PROVIDED BY ORANGE PARK TOWN MANAGER JIM HANSON
Orange Park Fire Department employees rescue two residents from The Villas Continental on Sept. 11 after Hurricane Irma and storm surge caused the St. Johns River to flood condominiums on the north side of the Club Continental property.

only hotel available at the time.

When power went out at their hotel, they decided they would trek back to their condo to assess the damage.

Doug, who lives in a second floor condo in River Oak, said erosion damage caused a first level home's floor and patio to collapse and caused a wall to crack.

He said residents have hired a structural engineer and a general contractor through their Condo Owner's Association. Insurance adjusters are also assessing the damage to the buildings.

"It's 24 families displaced," Doug said. "We want to get everybody back in as quickly as possible."

In the future, "I'll see a better, stronger building that's going to hold up," Doug said. "I can't tell you how strong it's going to be, but our hope is to make it a bit stronger and make our bulkhead a bit more robust and take a lot more than it did this time around. We're not planning on leaving, let's put it that way. We're staying here."

Record flooding from storm surge caused by Hurricane Irma also damaged homes along Doctors Lake Drive on Dogwood Lane and other roads according to Barker. Assistant Town Manager and Town Clerk Sarah Campbell said five homes in total had damage from falling trees and others had flooding damage.

Flooding also infiltrated the town's public works headquarters on Ash Street.

"Employees woke up and put their feet in eight inches of water," Campbell said.



Clay County reading volunteer Ken Prest is reading "Pete the Cat and His Magic Sunglasses" to students at O.P. K. preschool in Orange Park.

Coalition needs more reading volunteers

ORANGE PARK — The start of a new school year means it's time to read to children enrolled in reading and literacy programs with the Early Learning Coalition of North Florida, which needs more volunteer readers.

Managed by the Coalition, volunteers are screened and trained before setting foot in the classroom. There are three kinds of ways to volunteer for the Coalition. The Coalition provides weekly volunteers who read for 30 minutes to an hour to groups of three-to-five year olds in daycares and preschools. Volunteers also provide literacy outreach in monthly literacy-themed programs. Volunteers may participate in one or both programs.

Themed monthly outreach programs are based on either popular children's books such as "Pete the Cat" and "Clifford" or themes that follow the school's curriculum such as the ocean, jungle, senses or arts. Volunteers assist with storytelling and leading activities, often donning costumes or props to enhance the stories. Each child also receives a free book which is reflective of the theme.

The ELC has a well-stocked lending library with books and literacy materials for the volunteers to check out and use. Weekly readers are also able to create relationships with the children through their consistent appearances.

"Our volunteers are that extra-

special person coming in to see them each week who exposes our preschoolers to new books and shares their love of reading," said Joan Whitson, ELC early literacy coordinator. "The school staff has told me the children look forward to greeting the readers and go right to them when they arrive."

Early literacy is key to brain and developmental growth, according to Whitson.

"Studies show that the best opportunity to influence our children's lifetime learning is before kindergarten when their most rapid period of brain growth occurs," Whitson said. "Reading to children early sets the groundwork for their future ability to read and learn. We are so grateful for our volunteers who make this impact for our children and future."

The ELC of North Florida is seeking more volunteers to join this wonderful program. There will be a kick off informational meeting Sept. 21 from 10 a.m.-noon at our Clay County office located at 1845 Town Center Blvd., Ste. 150 (inside the Career Source building). To register or for more information to become a weekly volunteer or literacy outreach volunteer please contact Sandi Dunnavant with the ELC of North Florida at (904) 213-3999 and at sdunnavant@elcnorthflorida.org.

Eye
from page 2

his role has to be aware of the past while looking to the future.

“We want to be better prepared,” Fossa said. “I think in the past the way we’ve been doing things is moving portables around, that’s been sort of our way of doing things, and I think we want to get away from being in the business of moving portables. We want to have more of a permanent fixture in some areas. It’s a better way of doing business I think.”

Fossa tracks state, federal and local housing development plans to guide him in decision making. For example, Green Cove Springs and Lake Asbury are expected to explode in population over the decade. This increase in density will require new schools be built.

The boom is expected in part from the construction of the First Coast Expressway. However, before the February announcement that the district would build a new school in Oakleaf, named Elementary School ‘Y,’ it had been 10 years since the district had built a new school.



Currently, Fossa said, Clay County boasts the dubious title as having the fourth highest number of portable classrooms in the state. Clay currently operates 942 portables of which 780 are more than 20 years old.

‘School Y’ is proposed to meet the current needs for growth in the area without the need for portables. Fossa said proper planning helps insure that, as the county grows, it can do so without as much future reliance on portable classrooms.

His school district job requires Fossa to sit on county government’s Development Review Committee where he gets to see neighborhoods when they are mere ideas on a piece of paper. The district uses a projection formula that supposes there will be 23 children per 100 homes built.

The formula allows the district to plan more accurately when the need for a new school will present itself.

The district is currently examining properties for school construction on Tynes Boulevard and another on Magnolia West that he expects will be hotspots of growth within the next seven years.

“His role is critical in the planning aspect and making sure that we’re looking at the right properties,” said Michael Kemp, assistant superintendent of operations for the Clay County School District. “Picking a property, it’s not like throwing a dart at a map. It’s not a guess.”

“It’s about making sure our schools stay as balanced as we can... as schools start getting more students we start addressing them as needed,” Kemp said.

When those properties are identified and the area matures to meet the need of a new school, Fossa’s work truly begins.

To build a school, the district must first prove a need exists in the community. Fossa acts as the emissary in this conversation. The state will want what’s known as a spot study, a report with data that proves there is capacity based on population projec-

tions and a throng of other data sets.

For example, if an area expected a growth of 1,000 housing units, the school district can assume that there will be 26 children per 100 homes. In this example, the officials could expect an additional 260 students.

Using that data, and other projections like it, the district can help make its case to the state that a new school is needed.

Fossa calls the process “legal gymnastics” that help ensure school boards are good stewards of taxpayer money.

But there are times when expectations don’t meet up to reality. For example, Shadowlawn Elementary was built on County Road 218 with the expectation that housing developments would pop up around it.

The Great Recession hit shortly thereafter, and those developments never came. With the recovery of the economy has come the resurgence of possibility that the school will be more utilized.

With an average of 67 new home-building permits being issued per month, the school district is more vigilant than it has been in 10 years in terms of watching out for the need to build new schools.

Irma
from page 1

surpluses into shortfalls as municipalities expect the financial worst.

Orange Park officials estimate that in the town alone damages could range between \$350,000 and \$500,000.

The town has already nearly spent as much in emergency spending and payroll alone than it did cleaning up after last year’s Hurricane Matthew.

Despite being prodded by Scott Orange Park Mayor Scott Land did not ask for state help for any restoration project. Scott said because this is his seventh and final year as governor, this would be the perfect time to ask. Other municipalities gladly accepted the offer to let the governor know their troubles. Penney Farms Mayor Adrian Andrews said their infamous oak tree canopy along State Road 16 was felled in the storm and fallen limbs have caused the community to open its wallet more than it would like.

Green Cove Springs Mayor Mitch Timberlake said the city’s primary concern was telephone companies.

“Green Cove has fared well, we are right at 100 percent restoration and power, utility services...The one area we could use some help is that we are getting tremendous pushback from the cable companies and the



Florida Gov. Rick Scott, third from left, discussed Hurricane Irma restoration efforts Sept. 19 in the Orange Park Town Council chambers.

telephone companies to take care of their downed cables...It’s dangerous, it’s a public health hazard,” Timberlake said.

Clay County Commissioner Gavin Rollins expressed concern about the closure of the County Road 218 Bridge. Bridge inspector divers uncovered “potential safety issues” with the bridge and closed it as a matter of caution.

County Manager Stephanie Kopolousos said the bridge sustained scour damage from the flooding along Black Creek during Hurricane

Irma and was among the hardest hit part of the county.

Bridge scour occurs when fast moving water lifts sediment layers from bridge abutments. Bridge scour can scoop out holes near bridge support columns and compromise the integrity of the structure.

Although it is not clear when a fix will arrive, current traffic should instead travel to State Road 16 to Blanding Boulevard to reach their destinations. John Ward, Clay County director of Emergency Management, said a big concern is ensuring resi-

dents have access to the all of the help the Federal Emergency Management Agency can provide.

Scott said 90 percent of Floridians who have signed up for benefits through FEMA have done so online, but said more FEMA representatives need to have their boots on the ground throughout the state.

Although not asked during the discussion, all county governments and municipalities in the state suffer from the same reality – they are spending dollars for Hurricane Irma restoration while FEMA has yet to reimburse governments for the money they spent cleaning up last October’s Hurricane Matthew.

Scott said last Wednesday, after a tour along Black Creek, that he would reach out to FEMA administrators to see how to best expedite the reimbursement process.

“I talked to the administrator of FEMA about this last week,” Scott said. “They can do advance payments...What they’ve said to me is that they’ll work with counties or cities, whoever, to do advance payments.”

If the county receives an advance payment and is later denied through the normal reimbursement process, Scott said, then the county will need to repay the money received. “All of us have a lot of work to do,” Scott said.

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OAKLEAF FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

District 3-7A*

Sept. 29: @ 7A Fleming Island*
 Oct. 13: 4A Raines

Oct. 20: 7A Buchholz*
 Oct. 27: @ 7A Creekside*
 Nov. 3: 6A Vanguard



Oakleaf High's volleyball team, coached by Jennifer Meyer and Scott Conklin, show off second place trophy from River City Classic Tournament held recently in Jacksonville.

Knights continue historic season

By Randy Lefko
The Oakleaf

OAKLEAF – Oakleaf High volleyball continued its astounding ascension to the ranks of teams to be reckoned with after placing second over the Hurricane Irma transition at the River City Classic Tournament held Sept. 15-16 at the JJVA Headquarters in Jacksonville.

The Lady Knights, after losing a three game match to district 4-8A foe Fleming Island before the Irma hiatus, rebounded with wins over Pedro Menendez, Effingham (GA), University Christian and Stanton Prep to get the runnerup trophy at the River City Classic. The Knights faced off and lost the deciding third set 15-13 to Menendez in the championship game after beating Menendez in the first round of play 20-25, 25-13, 15-13.

“Words cannot describe the happiness I have with these girls right now!” said Meyer, who coaches



Oakleaf High libero Andrea Merced is a veteran on the back line able to find her net hitters for scoring shots.

alongside assistant Scott Conklin. “They fought this weekend harder than I’ve ever seen them fight.”

Oakleaf, now 10-3 overall and in

their best-ever season start since the school opened, got the championship match in a second faceoff with Menendez, a strong candidate to win the district 5-6A title with Clay and Ponte Vedra also putting 5-6A as one of the strongest districts in north Florida.

“This team has what it takes to be successful and that was proven this weekend, especially after not having practiced for a whole week,” said Meyer.

Oakleaf’s schedule has district 4-8A leader Bartram Trail on Mon., Sept 18 after their September 12 match was postponed by Hurricane Irma.

Prior to Hurricane Irma, Bartram Trail led district 4-8A with Buchholz, Fleming Island, Creekside and Oakleaf filling out the roster with Bartram Trail and Buchholz both 2-0 in district games. Fleming Island was 2-2. Oakleaf and Creekside 0-2.

Liberty U. 42, Indiana State 41

Clay County grads face off in college ball

By Randy Lefko
The Oakleaf

LYNCHBURG, Va.– Indiana State University football went nearly shot-for-shot with Liberty University with the Sycamores falling a point short, 42-41 in the Saturday clash between a former Oakleaf High wideout and a former Clay High defensive back.

Oakleaf High graduate Rontrez Morgan, a mean and lean wide receiver for the Knights under coaches Derek Chipoletti and Steven Reynolds, handled the ball in three different positions for the Sycamores of Indiana State, now 0-3.

In the final drive of the night, Morgan, a true freshman, was instrumental in putting his Indiana State offense in position for a game-winning field goal with a 25 yard pass play to the Liberty six, but the field goal attempt was blocked by Liberty.

For the Liberty defense, senior defensive back Jeremy Peters, a Clay High graduate, was in charge of the patrolling the secondary for the Glames (3-0). Peters would

SEE COLLEGE, 15



Oakleaf High graduate Rontrez Morgan, a freshman, had his top day for Indiana State University in a 42-41 thriller won by Liberty University.

Knights lose second game to Central Florida Glades

By Mike Zima
The Oakleaf

OAKLEAF – Strong showings by the defense and special teams were not enough for Oakleaf, as the Knights fell to 1-2 on the season with a 13-12 non-district loss to visiting 4A-Glades Central Sept. 1 here.

Due to Hurricane Irma, Oakleaf's schedule game with district leader Bartram Trail is now postponed to Oct. 6. Oakleaf next plays Friday, Sept. 22 at 5A-Clay High School.

Against Glades, the Oakleaf defense forced three turnovers, two of which led to field goals, and held the visitors scoreless over the final two quarters. In the second quarter, cornerback Tristan Brown stepped in front of a quick hitch pattern, intercepted a throw by the Raiders' Jaeze Tracey and returned the ball 55 yards to the Raiders' 20 yard line. The interception was Brown's second in three games. The Knights mustered only five yards in three plays after the pick, settling for a 27 yard field by Mason McKenney. McKenney was wide left on his first attempt, but an offsides penalty against Glades Central gave him a second chance.

Oakleaf safety Demonte' Stephens intercepted Tracey at the Glades Central 38 yard line with less than a minute remaining before halftime. A 32-yard bomb from Tre Simmons to Jakari Williams brought the ball to the six, and McKenney connected from there as the clock expired to cut the Knights' deficit to 13-12.

Oakleaf's special teams forced

another turnover, blocked an extra point attempt, converted both field goal attempts and scored a touchdown.

On the kickoff following Tracey's second touchdown pass of the game, Keshawn King gathered the ball in at the 13 yard line, ran toward a wall of blockers to his right, shot through a crease, made two Raiders miss tackles, weaved his way back to the left sideline and outran the kicker to the end zone. King had returned a kickoff for a touchdown the week before at Orange Park.

Yet, the plays made on defense and on special teams were not enough to offset an offense that simply could not move the ball on the ground or through the air against their Class 4A opponents from Belle Glade.

"Both teams played great defense. And we played excellent special teams," said Oakleaf head coach Steve Reynolds. "We just can't turn the ball over twice."

One of Oakleaf's two turnovers was a turning point. In a game that became a defensive struggle after some early fireworks, Stephens gave the Knights a golden opportunity to take the lead when he recovered a muffed punt at the Raiders' 14 yard line in the waning moments of the third quarter. But three plays later, Central defensive tackle Milton Rhoden stood King up, stripped him of the ball and recovered the fumble to preserve the visitors' lead.

As impressive as the Knights' defense was, Glades Central's was even



Oakleaf High wide receiver Jakari Williams pulls in sideline pass ahead of two Glades Central defenders.

better. The Raiders limited Oakleaf to just 18 yards of total offense and four first downs. King, who entered Friday's context averaging 143.5 rushing yards per game, gained only 37 yards rushing—28 on one play—on 16 carries. The Raiders played seven men within three yards of the line of scrimmage, and frequently there were two white shirts with a hold of King's jersey as he took a hand-off. Led by linebacker Maceo McClain, who had two sacks and two tackles for loss, the Raiders sacked Simmons five times for losses totaling 70 yards. Harassed virtually every time he dropped back to pass, the freshman completed only four of 17 throws, with one interception.

McClain squelched the Knights' final legitimate chance to rally. On a third down from the Knights' 33 yard line with 2:33 remaining, the rangy linebacker blitzed from the left side and hit Simmons in the chest, forcing a fumble that was recovered after a mad scramble by the Knights at their own 4 yard line.

"We have played with five different guys [on the offensive line] each week, so that is on me and the coaching staff," said Reynolds on his offensive line's struggles. "They have got some talent, and I think they will jell."

The game did not have the makings of a defensive struggle at the outset. It took the Raiders just four plays to travel 58 yards for a score on their opening possession. On first play, Tracey found fellow junior Kamare Stephens up the right sideline for a 47 yard gain. Three plays later, the Raiders scored when Tracey hit Odieu Hilaire in the end zone from four yards out. Oakleaf blocked the extra point attempt after the first score.



Oakleaf High School Principal Treasure Pickett shares celebration with state track triple jump champion Melvin Briley during halftime ceremony. Pickett also presented state championship rings to the Oakleaf High softball team.

Tracey, who was the offensive star of the game, hooked up with Kamare Stephens on a slant pattern for a 40 yard score early in the second quarter. Tracey finished with 17 completions in 33 attempts for 267 yards. Stephens led all receivers with five catches for 120 yards.

"We still have every chance to win our district," said Steve Reynolds. "The big part is controlling what we can control—attitude and effort."

After a bye week, the Knights return to action September 15 when they host Bartram Trail in a District 3-7A game.



Oakleaf High linebacker Dexter Moore chases Glades Central ball carrier.



Oakleaf High graduate Rontrez Morgan, now a freshman at Indiana State, exploded for yardage on the ground, through the air and on kick returners to play a major role in a 42-41 loss to Liberty University on Sept. 16.

College from page 13

finish with six tackles against Indiana State; two for loss and one pass breakup.

"Maybe once or twice did I get with Rontrez one on one," said Peters. "They do a lot of motions and shifts throughout the game. I got to talk to him after the game."

In Liberty's second game of the season, a 58-17 win over Morehead State, Peters had four tackles and two pass breakups.

In Liberty's season opening upset of 48-45 over Baylor, Peters had seven tackles with two pass breakups including a pass breakup in Baylor's final drive of the game.

"I feel like we are closer as a team that in previous years," said Peters. "I had the final breakup of the game, but we just executed the whole game."

Against Liberty, Morgan had three kick returns for 68 yards with a 30 yarder the longest of the day. Morgan also caught two passes for 26 yards with a 25 yarder the highlight for that stat. And, finally, Morgan carried three times for two yards as a slot back with a four yarder the best of the carries.

In the first quarter, Morgan got caught in the backfield for a one yard loss.

With 11:35 left in the first, Morgan returned a Liberty kickoff 26 yards from the Sycamore goal line with the score tied at 7-7.

As the second quarter started, with Liberty up 14-7, Morgan had a four yard run on a second and eight situation.

Indiana State took a brief lead of 31-28 in the third period, but Liberty answered quickly to regain the lead



Clay High graduate Jeremy Peters, right, reaches for Indiana State ball carrier in Liberty University's 42-41 Sept. 16 win. Peters is a senior defensive back for Liberty.

at 35-31 with 11:31 left in the third period. Morgan returned the ensuing Liberty kickoff 12 yards to the Sycamore 12, but Indiana State could only get to their own 18 before a punt.

In the final drive of the game, Morgan caught a 25 yard pass to the Liberty six yard line with 16 seconds left in the game, but the field goal attempt by Indiana State was blocked to end the game at 42-41.

Indiana State lost 22-20 to Eastern Illinois in their season opener and 42-7 to Tennessee in game two. Morgan had one rush for two yards against Eastern Illinois and two rushes for three yards against Tennessee.

Also on the Indiana State roster is Khalif Copeland, an Oakleaf High graduate defensive back, who is a redshirted freshman.

Local alums: University of Idaho

Vandals fall in 18 point fourth quarter

Special to The Oakleaf

KALAMAZOO, Mich. – Idaho led 28-19 entering the fourth quarter, but Western Michigan scored 18 unanswered points to claim a 37-28 victory Saturday, at Waldo Stadium. The Vandals (1-2) committed three turnovers, which the Broncos (1-2) turned into 13 points.

"I thought we were way better for three quarters, but we have to find a way to win that game in the fourth quarter," said head coach Paul Petrino. "The first three quarters was by far the best football we've played, but it doesn't mean anything if you don't finish it off in the fourth quarter."

Idaho running back Aaron Duckworth, an Oakleaf High School graduate, led the way on the ground for the Vandals with 97 yards on 13 carries. Duckworth ripped off a career-long 74-yard run in the second quarter. It was the longest by a Vandal since 2011 and the 18th longest in program history. He also caught a 60-yard pass in the first quarter that set up Idaho's first score. Last week, Idaho football suffered a 44-16 loss Saturday, against UNLV. The loss snapped a six-game winning streak, dating back to last season.

UNLV broke things open early in the third quarter, scoring on a

60-yard run by Lexington Thomas to go up 17-3. The Rebels (1-1) later scored on plays of 62 and 94 yards. They rushed for 357 yards as a team, led by Thomas' 190 and three touchdowns.

Duckworth had 82 yards rushing on 18 carries with a 12-yarder his longest of the night. Duckworth also caught one pass for 36 yards from the Idaho 17 to the UNLV 47 that led to a one yard score for Duckworth that put the game at 27-10 for UNLV.

Idaho opens Sun Belt play next week, with a game at South Alabama. Kickoff is slated for 1 p.m. CT/11 a.m. PT and the game will be available on ESPN3.

Area players at South Alabama include defensive tackle Sean Grayer, a Clay High graduate and a former Clay Today defensive player of the year; Tyler Gimsley, an offensive lineman from Clay who transferred to South Alabama after committing to University of Miami and Oakleaf High graduate Nelson Santiago, an offensive lineman. Coaching for the South Alabama offense is former Middleburg High standout Richard Owens, an NFL tight end for multiple teams. Owens is in his third year with South Alabama after five years in the NFL followed four years at Louisville.



PHOTO COURTESY IDAHO ATHLETICS

Oakleaf High graduate Aaron Duckworth is top ball carrier for University of Idaho Vandals football team. Vandals are now 1-2 with an away game at the University of South Alabama on Sept. 23.

University of West Georgia women's soccer

OHS' Conte first goal a game winner

By Randy Lefko
The Oakleaf
With UWGAthletics.com

CARROLLTON, Ga. – It was a good night at University Field for head coach Stacey Balaam and the Wolves soccer team as UWG defeated Union 1-0 in both team's Gulf South Conference opener, giving Balaam her first career win as a head coach.

It was a pair of freshmen who stood out on the pitch on Sept. 8 as Nikki Conte's 75th minute goal was the difference offensively. Goalkeeper Jackie Donaldson made six saves on her way to her first career clean sheet in just her second collegiate start.

"Nikki Conte made an impact coming off the bench the other night to rescue the game and score the

winning goal for us to win our first conference game of the season," said Balaam, after the Oakleaf High School graduate scored her first goal, a 75th minute game winner, for West Georgia.

Conte has played in the Wolves first three games with the game winner against Union off three shots on goal, her first college score. Conte has game playing minutes of 46 in 3-2 loss to University of North Georgia on Sept. 6, 11 in 1-0 win over Union University (Tenn.) on Sept. 8 and 33 minutes in 2-1 loss to Christian Brothers on September 10. West Georgia will travel to Valdosta State on Oct. 15 for a 1 p.m. contest.

"Nikki has a lot of talent and can be a good attacking threat for us," said Balaam. "She is very technical



PHOTO COURTESY OF UWG ATHLETICS

Oakleaf High graduate Nikki Conte celebrates with teammate after scoring game winner for her first college goal in West Georgia's 1-0 win over Balaam College Sept. 8.

and I am sure will contribute either by scoring or assisting many more goals for us this season."

The Wolves' offense was attacking all game long, rattling off 19 shots and putting 12 on target, forcing Union's Kristen Francis to make 11 saves on the night. The one shot Francis couldn't save came in the 75th minute as junior Rachael Lane sent a cross in that found Nikki Conte, who buried it into the net for her first career goal and a game winner for the Wolves.

Conte, who came off the bench, provided the extra spark that got the Wolves into the win column, all part of Stacey Balaam's plan.

"We knew we would probably run out of some legs today, which we were relying heavily on the bench to make an impact," said Balaam.

"You know Nikki came off the bench today, and immediately first touch got a goal for us, which was the winning goal," she added.

With the win, West Georgia gets their first victory of the season, improving their record to 1-1 with a 1-0 mark early in GSC play. Union falls to 1-1 and starts off conference action at 0-1.

West Georgia remains home for the weekend, hosting Christian Brothers on Sunday afternoon.

"We've got a quick turnaround with Christian Brothers and they're going to be a hard team to play against and they always are," Balaam said after the win.

Sunday's game is set for a 12 noon kickoff from University Field.



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Florida Gulf Coast University women's soccer
Patton part of historic Eagles' soccer

By Matt Fischer
 FGCUAthletics.com

TUCSON, ARIZONA. – A tremendous effort in net from goalie Melissa Weck along with an opportunistic strike from Varin Ness gave Florida Gulf Coast University's womens soccer team a 1-0 victory over Arizona Fri., Sept. 8.

Weck's 10 saves and Ness' goal helped FGCU defeat Arizona, to fuel only the fourth time in program history that the Eagles have beaten a Power 5 school.



Lindsey Patton

Oakleaf High graduate Lindsey Patton nearly scored a second goal for Gulf Coast in the 69th minute as she almost scored off a header on a set play.

In wet and rainy conditions, the Eagles (6-2) earned yet another win over a Power 5 program and their second overall against the Wildcats (1-2-2) to extend their winning streak to five matches despite, on Sun., Sept 10, losing to Arizona State 2-1.

"This is a phenomenal result and a testament for how well our kids battled," said head coach Jim Blankenship, who coached FGCU to a win over a Power 5 program for the fifth-straight season. "Weck was absolutely fabulous as always and led a bend-don't-break defense. These kids were outstanding defensively today. I'm just really proud of the kids' effort and this is a great result against a really good team. This is a great win for the program."

FGCU's last Power 5 victory came over Miami last season.

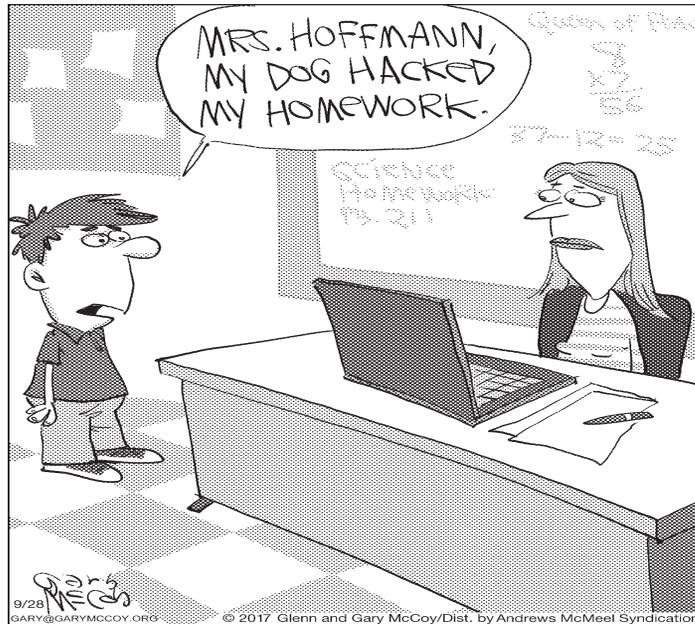
Patton, in eight games, has two goals, one assist and three two shots on goal. In 2016, Patton earned an A-Sun conference second team nomination and was named to the All-Freshmen team for the conference with 20 starts for the Eagles.

SOLUTION:

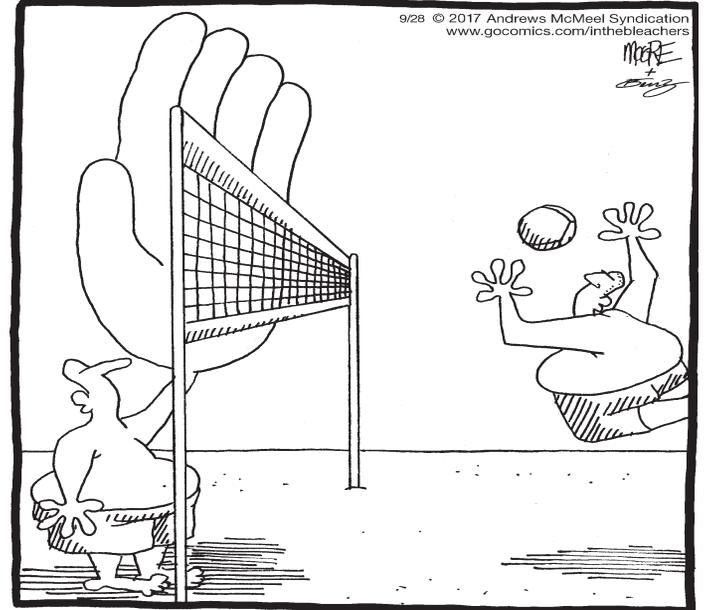
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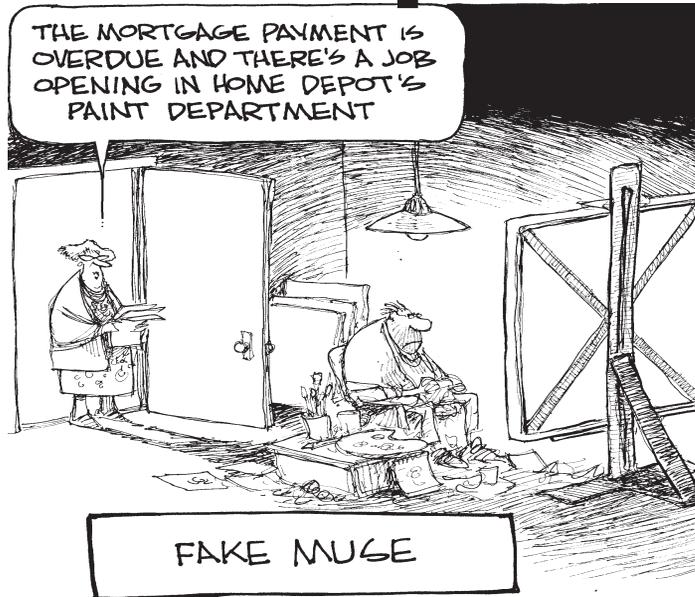
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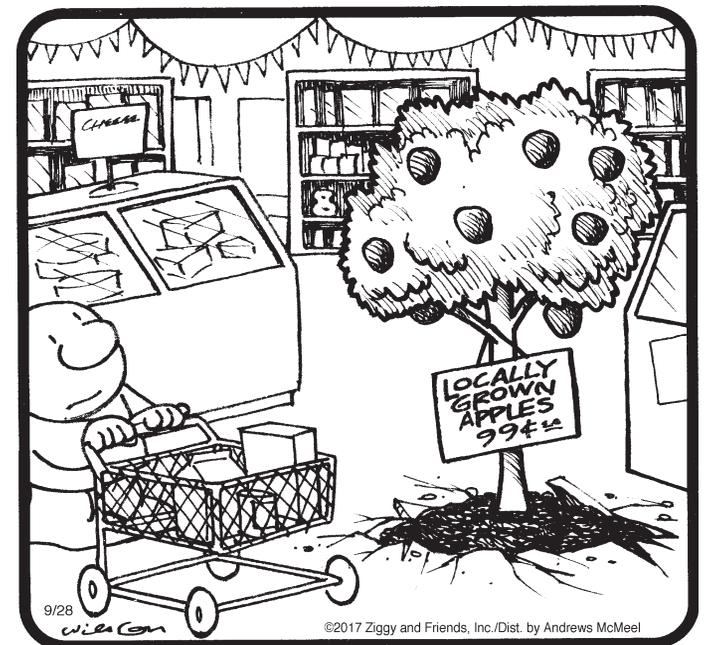
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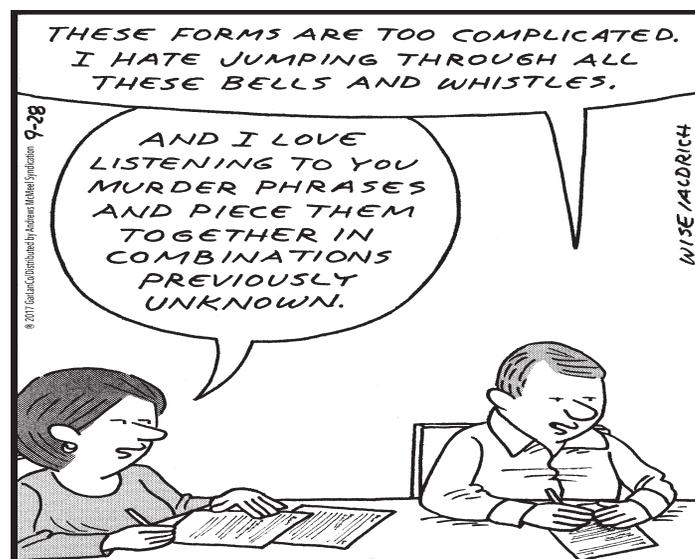


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Real Life Adventures



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6	2		5					7
		9	4	3	5			8
	6			8				1
			7					
3			1				2	
9		4	7	2		3		
8			3				5	2
			8					4

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Animal clinic holds pet food drive

By Kile Brewer
The Oakleaf

ORANGE PARK – After last week’s storm, areas throughout Clay County faced power outages and flooded homes. Residents sprang into action, helping friends and neighbors with food and supplies, but there is still another group of county residents who are in need – pets.

As flooding caused evacuations at animal shelters throughout Clay County, and other pets evacuated with their owners to avoid flooding in their homes, the need for pet care and supplies increased.

Clay Humane, a nonprofit based near Orange Park, decided to do what it could to gather donations and provide free assistance for pet owners and others who are fostering pets in their home while they wait to return to flooded shelters or homes.

“As soon as the disaster happened, as soon as [Clay County]Animal Control flooded, the community immediately started with an outpouring of support, mostly in the form of food and supplies,” said Christian Broadhurst, Clay Humane’s senior staff veterinarian.

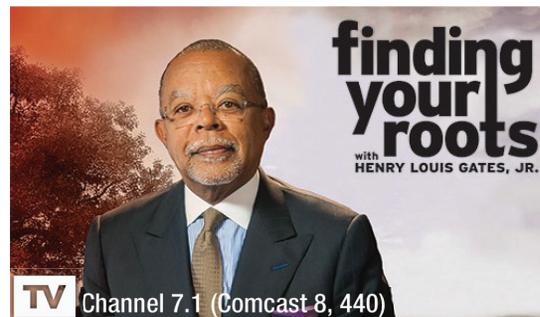
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TUE, OCTOBER 3, 8 PM

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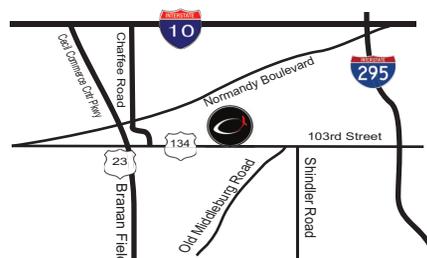
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Oakleaf burglar nabbed

OAKLEAF – A Jacksonville man was arrested following a string of car burglaries in the Oakleaf neighborhood early on the morning of Sept. 19.

The Clay County Sheriff's Office arrested Javonta Jeffery Graham, 21, after he was found in possession of multiple stolen items while driving a stolen car.

Police said Graham and an unnamed passenger engaged in a series of car burglaries, centering on Thoroughbred Drive in Oakleaf early that Tuesday morning. During the burglaries,



Javonta Graham

the men stole a few wallets, a purse, and about \$3 in change. After being stopped by deputies who observed the men travelling at less than 10 miles per hour with their lights turned off, the stolen items were recovered along with about eight grams of marijuana.

Graham was arrested and transported to the Clay County Jail where he faces four felonies, one for grand theft auto and three for the car burglaries, along with four misdemeanors, including two for petit theft, one for possession of marijuana and one for driving on a suspended or revoked license. He is being held on \$155,000 bond and was scheduled to appear in court Wednesday morning.

Pedestrian in serious condition after crash

MIDDLEBURG – The Florida Highway Patrol reports that a 17-year-old boy was injured seriously during an early morning crash on Tynes Boulevard near Pine Ridge Parkway.

FHP said Samuel Patterson, 17, of Middleburg, was walking eastbound in a marked crosswalk on Sept. 18 at 6:30 a.m. on Tynes Boulevard when he was struck by a 2005 Ford Focus driven by Priscilla K. Gipson, 28, of Middleburg.

FHP said Gipson failed to see Patterson when she came upon him. Patterson was transported to Orange Park Medical Center for treatment, while Gipson was treated at the scene for minor injuries.

Driver strikes, kills pedestrian

JACKSONVILLE – The Florida Highway Patrol reports that an Orange Park woman struck and killed a pedestrian alongside Interstate 295 on Sept. 12 at 8:13 p.m.

Police said Natasha Atkinson, 27, of Orange Park was driving southbound on I-295 in a 2017 Toyota Camry when, according to witnesses, the pedestrian's dog somehow jumped out of the car she was traveling in. When the pedestrian, Sylvia Taylor, 56, of Jacksonville, got out of her vehicle to rescue the dog, she was struck by the right front of Atkinson's vehicle.

FHP said charges are pending and two passengers in Atkinson's vehicle were not injured nor was Atkinson.

Man charged with cutting power line

MIDDLEBURG – The Clay County Sheriff's Office arrested a Middleburg man on one count of criminal mischief of public utilities after a brief investigation.

Police arrested Mark Albert Lamb, 58, on Sept. 1 at 11:40 a.m. after obtaining a warrant for his arrest.

According to the warrant, on Aug. 30, Lamb cut the lines to a power pole that supplies power to a home at 3822 Main St. in Middleburg. Clay Electric officials said Lamb and the power company have "been involved in a dispute...because [Lamb] says the pole does not belong on his property," states the warrant. Lamb's home is on an adjacent lot at 3824 Main St.

According to Steven Hollingsworth, public relations supervisor for Clay Electric, the power pole is in Lamb's yard because Clay Electric has a utility easement on the property "but Mr. Lamb fails to recognize the easement."

Lamb was booked into the Clay County Jail, but has since been released on \$7,503 bond.



Mark Lamb



STAFF PHOTO BY KILE BREWER

Christian Broadhurst, the senior staff veterinarian at Clay Humane, sorts donated food items at the organization's headquarters near Orange Park. Following Hurricane Irma, Clay Humane began accepting donations and offering any donated items to those with pets who were in need of some assistance.

Pet

from page 19

Broadhurst has been helping the low-cost shelter evaluate animals from area shelters – to see if they are healthy enough to be moved to another state – as the shelters that remained open have exceeded capacity. This trend has changed the focus of Clay Humane's food drive.

He said the original intention was to gather items and give them to Animal Control, but Animal Control has managed to move many of its animals out of state through a collaboration with the Jacksonville Humane Society. And it was this transfer of pets that caused the change in direction for Clay Humane's relief work.

"The shelter itself does not have a need for all these supplies, but a lot of people in the surrounding environments do," Broadhurst said. "So now we're going to turn around and return the favor."

The organization received and continues to receive unexpected support from the community, resulting in a stockpile of food and supplies for every type of pet or animal that might live in the county. The temporary food bank is open to the public, no questions asked, and will be continuously available until it

runs out.

"This is for everyone," Broadhurst said. "If you have had your house flooded, if you have lost supplies, don't be too proud to take it."

The food bank opened Sept. 18 and will operate weekdays from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m., and from 8 a.m. until 1 p.m. on Saturdays. The clinic is also still accepting donations to keep the food bank going longer as efforts to repair homes and shelters continue. The shelter can be reached at (904) 276-7729. "We want to say how proud we are of the community for coming together," said Linda Welzant, executive director of Clay Humane.

Broadhurst also mentioned that they have received calls from residents who have found pets wandering around after the storm, and encourages those people to foster the pets until they can be returned to their owners or a shelter.

"There are now animals that people are finding on the road and they aren't able to take them to a shelter, so we're absolutely encouraging them 'Please keep these [animals] in your homes,'" Broadhurst said. "And if those people need pet supplies to help with that, we're here, come and get them."

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October 11, 2017

The Orlando Museum of Art

Details: floridafaf.org

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For more information:
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 - 3 Weeks - \$57 4 Weeks - \$72

Garage Sales

\$21 - 4 lines of text (20-25 characters per line)

Ad Copy One Letter, Number, Punctuation Mark or Space Per Box

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25

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