

# KEYSTONE HEIGHTS HERALD

PRSTR STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Orange Park, FL  
Permit #650

WWW.CLAYTODAYONLINE.COM

VOL. 9 NO. 3 THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2022



Once completed, the waters at Lakes Geneva and Brooklyn will be restored to their original levels, bringing the shoreline 70 yards closer to Keystone Beach seawalls.

## After 40 years, Black Creek project to revive Keystone Heights lakes

By Don Coble  
[don@claytodayonline.com](mailto:don@claytodayonline.com)

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – Lake Geneva served as a backdrop to the formal announcement the Black Creek Water Re-

source Development Project was a reality. Once filled nearly to a small seawall, water from the lake had receded nearly 70 yards to remind residents and dignitaries why they were there.

In about two years, water levels are

expected to be returned at Geneva and nearby Lake Brooklyn to the levels that made the tiny city a paradise.

"What a journey," said former Florida Sen. and Chairman of the St. Johns River

SEE RESTORE, 12



Chandler Rozear wanted to make sure the project was a reality.

## Construction underway for long-awaited Black Creek project

By Don Coble  
[don@claytodayonline.com](mailto:don@claytodayonline.com)

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – Chandler Rozear parked his car just inside the entrance to Seamark Ranch Monday afternoon and he followed the loud, grinding sound of trees being ripped to pieces.

Once down the crudely-cut path, he stopped and uttered the words: "Absolutely amazing."

The wide swatch was far from pristine. It was filled with ankle-turning chunks of tree limbs and ground-level stumps that easily could snap the suspension from a monster

SEE PROJECT, 13



## Let Us Turn Your Dream Home Into Reality!

Call or Text (352) 494-1829 • [mpelleritorealtor@gmail.com](mailto:mpelleritorealtor@gmail.com)

MeLissa  
Pellerito  
REALTOR®



Florida Homes  
Realty & Mortgage

OFFICE: 352-478-SOLD • 352-478-7100

275 S. Lawrence Blvd. Ste 1, Keystone Heights





# Crossword Puzzle

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	26	27		28							
					29			30			31		32						
					33		34		35										
36	37	38			39			40		41									
42				43		44			45										
46									47		48								
49					50	51				52		53	54	55					
	56						57		58									59	
					60				61										
						62							63						

**CLUES ACROSS**

1. Greek mountain  
5. One dependent on something  
11. Gratitude  
14. Glazed ceramic ware  
15. Paddling  
18. Step  
19. More greasy  
21. Upper-class young woman  
23. Light beige  
24. Belief in a supreme being  
28. Indigenous people of Scandinavia  
29. A beloved princess  
30. Transfer property  
32. Field force unit  
33. Automated teller  
35. When you hope to get there  
36. Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)  
39. Politicians Fischer and Conroy are two  
41. Blood type  
42. Stringed instrument  
44. Curses  
46. Barbary sheep  
47. Belonging to a thing  
49. Supporters

**CLUES DOWN**

1. Klutz  
2. Relaxing places  
3. Expel saliva  
4. The extended location of something  
5. Certified  
6. Cease to exist  
7. Powerful legal pro  
8. The OJ trial judge  
9. Popular greeting  
10. '90210' actress Spelling  
12. \_\_\_ Blyton, children's author  
13. 'This Is Us' star Fitch  
16. Battery cell with a nickel alode  
17. Full of bacteria  
20. Remains of an old building  
22. Exist  
25. It gets you into places  
26. Witness

52. Leaf-footed bug  
56. A shower of water  
58. Attribute to  
60. Intermittent  
62. Soda waters  
63. Scottish island

27. The spreading of a disease to another part of the body  
29. Father  
31. Touch gently  
34. Licensed for Wall Street  
36. Herring-like fish  
37. Lute used in N. Indian music  
38. Mirabel shouldn't talk about him  
40. Atomic #62  
43. Religious  
45. Silvery-white metal (abbr.)  
48. Influential civil rights organization  
50. Acknowledgment (abbr.)  
51. Turn away  
53. Kidney disease (abbr.)  
54. Smooth-feeling fabric  
55. Competently  
57. Sea eagle  
58. General's assistant (abbr.)  
59. It helps you see  
61. Emerging technology



Joan Jones was a “firecracker” who was passionate about honoring the military.

## Keystone Height’s Wreaths Across America founder dies

Joan Jones, 95, organized patriotic salute at cemetery 12 years ago

By Don Coble  
don@claytodayonline.com

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – Joan Jones was relentless about her favorite causes, particularly the military. More importantly, she wasn’t apologetic.

Joan, who organized the city’s Wreaths Across America program, as well as founding the Veterans Memorial Pathway at the Keystone Heights Cemetery, became a community leader who was revered by everyone in the Lake Region. The gentle woman with vivacious energy and passion died on Oct. 26. She was 95. She was born in Australia and she married a soldier who fought in World War II.

Jones met her future husband, a Navy officer, in Melbourne, Australia, in 1945 at an amusement park. She married Larry F. Jones, “the love of her life,” in 1946. They came back to the United States later that year and Joan became a U.S. citizen 76 years ago. The Joneses moved to Florida in 1990.

“My life changed forever (as) I became known in Clay County for the work I did for the United States Veterans,” Joan said in an interview with Clay Today in 2018.

She had a revelation in the middle of the night that changed her life – and the lives of hundreds of local veterans.

“I had a dream in the middle of the night. I went out to the kitchen and started writing all of this stuff down. It was the dream telling me what to do for the GIs,” she said.

Joan pushed the construction of the Veterans Memorial Pathway in 2005. She then brought Wreaths Across America to the same cemetery in 2011. Wreaths were placed on crosses in the cemetery bearing the flags of the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard, Merchant Marines and POWs/MIAs.

Each live, balsam veteran’s wreath was a gift of respect and appreciation, donated by a private citizen or organization and it is placed on graves by volunteers as a small gesture of gratitude for the freedoms Americans enjoy, according to the national organization. For

centuries, fresh evergreens have been used as a symbol of honor and have served as a living tribute renewed annually.

Joan’s husband died in 2013, but Joan remained resilient in bringing attention to the military. “She was a firecracker. She was a very determined woman,” said city councilman Tony Brown. “She had a goal for veterans and Keystone Heights and she stuck to the plan. And she saw it through.”

School board member Tina Bullock took the reigns of the Wreaths Across America last year. The ceremony included the unveiling of a plaque on the pathway honoring Joan’s work. Bullock said there will be special recognition of Joan’s work and life at this year’s ceremony on Dec. 17 at noon.

“What she did with Wreaths Across America was just phenomenal,” Bullock said. “She was a tremendous mentor to me. I couldn’t have done it without her. And in fact, I was amazed at her age and how much she could do and get donated and coordinate all of that, considering her lack of physicality at that time. It was amazing.

“She worked on that Wreaths Across America year-round. I mean, when January came around, she was already calling people to ask them for donations. She was there because there was no rest for her. She did it all the time. You know, she wanted to make sure that they (the military) were honored properly.”

Joan also was the president of the Garden Club of the Lakes which helped establish the Butterfly Garden, which is located at the Keystone Heights Natural Park, and she was a founding member of the Garden Club of Green Coves Springs.

In addition to her husband, she was preceded in death by daughters Barbara Ann White and Donna Kay Allen, and she is survived by sons Myron C. White and his wife, Trish, Dennis Green and Rodney Green, along with grandchildren Anny Webster, Sean Allen, Myron White Jr. and Erine Steichen and great-grandchildren Tylor, Myles, Lily and Elaine.

According to her family, “Though small in stature, she was large in Energy and Inspiration!”

Welcome to North Florida Pharmacy! Serving Lake City and the surrounding areas since 1993. Our simple formula of courteous customer service and our quick prescription turn-around time has enabled us to grow and reach out to the North Florida region with eight total pharmacies.

North Florida Pharmacy offers drive-through service, a trained Dr. Comfort shoe specialist, and in-pharmacy vaccines for the flu, shingles, and more!

## North Florida Pharmacy of Keystone Heights

405 S. Lawrence Blvd • Keystone Heights, FL 32656  
(352) 478-2057 • northflpharmacy.com  
Hours: Monday-Friday 8:00am-6:00pm • Saturday 9:00am-1:00pm



# Chemours breaks ground on massive titanium, zirconium mining operation

Trail Ridge South facility will bring 50 new jobs to Lake Region area

By Natalie Gilstrap  
For Clay Today

STARKE – Chemours Company, a global chemistry company, recently held a ribbon cutting for their new Trail Ridge South facility near the Bradford-Clay county line.

Key community stakeholders, U.S. Rep. Kat Cammack, Florida Rep. Bobby Payne and Clay County Commissioner Betsy Condon participated to show their support for Chemours' efforts to provide a sustainable world.

Operation Co-Director Jody Sciance shared information about the new facility during the ceremony and booths about Chemours' mining process were provided for the guests.

"It was an amazing event. I mean you think about how much they do for the community, you think about how much this is going to do for the community for years to come, this is a shiny example of American ingenuity and that can do gritty attitude," Cammack said.

The Trail Ridge South facility, a \$93 million investment, will be used as a mining operation in which titanium and zirconium minerals are mined for titanium dioxide. To mine responsibly and adhere to environmental concerns, the facility is using Mobile Mining Units with traditional dredge mining. This process will allow the site to have



Government officials, including U.S. Rep. Kat Cammack, Florida Rep. Bobby Payne and county commissioner Betsy Condon joined Chemours workers in opening the plant on Treat Road.

lower emissions, reduce dust levels and safety improvements. Chemours will also be recycling 98% of the water used in their operation.

The job is expected to take eight years. Once completed, the company will restore the land to its original state by returning

97% of the sand, recreating wetlands and ponds and planting native grasses and tree seedlings.

Lastly, the facility will create 50 new job opportunities for the locals in the area.

"We hire 50 new employees, but to run all of this it really takes about 80 employees,"

Sciance said. "So, we deploy some of our team that we were working with in other places to here and hire 50 new."

As of now, Chemours is a global leader in Titanium Technologies, Thermal & Specialized Solutions and Advance Performance

**SEE CHEMOURS, 8**

**BIG  
CHRISTMAS  
SALE**

## Gifts for the whole family

## SHOP LOCAL THIS SEASON

**TREES  
HERE NOW!**

You will find big sales now through Christmas for everyone in the family ...  
Clothing, Tools, Knives, Plants, Corinthian Bells, Home Accessories, Boots, Guns  
and Ammo, Yankee Candles and thousands of items for you to make shopping  
easy this year.

OPEN FRIDAY AFTER THANKSGIVING

### Bryan's ACE

251 East Walker Dr.  
352-473-4006  
[www.bryansace.com](http://www.bryansace.com)

### Sweet P's

FLOWERS  
& GIFTS

352-473-0352  
800-255-6959  
[www.sweetpsflorist.com](http://www.sweetpsflorist.com)

### KEYSTONE

Gifts & Guns

155 S Lawrence Blvd.  
(352) 473-8684



## Local insurance expert: Expect changes in Social Security, Medicare in 2023

By **Bill Green**  
*Green Insurance Agency*

ORANGE PARK – Bill Green advises Medicare beneficiaries that two historic announcements for next year with Social Security and Medicare include an expected Social Security increase of approximately 8.7%, the largest increase in the program's history. Also, the Medicare Part B premium and Part B deductible will cost less with coverage for physician services, outpatient hospital services, durable medical equipment and other medical and health services not covered by Part A.



Bill Green

According to Green, president and owner of Green Insurance Agency in Orange Park, the standard Part B premium in 2023 will reflect a decreased amount of \$164.50 from this year's cost of \$170.10. The annual deductible for Part B will be \$226, a decrease of \$7 from \$233.

"In 2022 we saw a huge increase in the Part B premium due to the estimation of the cost of a new Alzheimer's medication called aducanumab with the brand name of Aduhelm," Green said. "The cost and usage were still unknown going into 2022, so to get ahead and create extra reserves for the Medicare trust fund, the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services increased the premiums significantly."

"However due to a lower cost and usage than anticipated, the premium reduction is an attempt from CMS to pass some of the reserves back to people with Medicare Part B coverage."

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services is part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

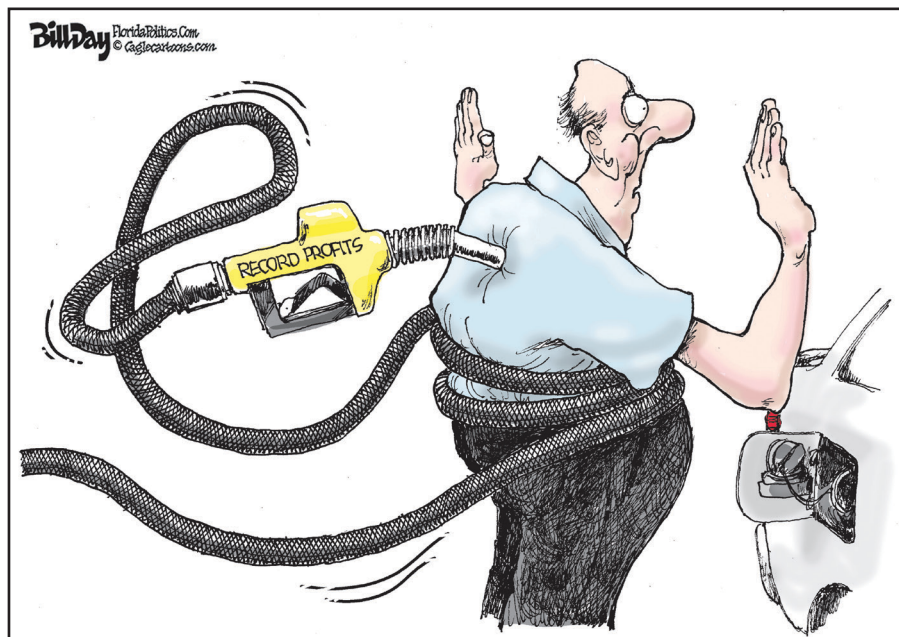
The Medicare annual enrollment period for 2023 is underway and will end on Dec. 7.

"This is the time when people eligible for Medicare can compare the upcoming 2023 coverage between original Medicare, Medicare Advantage, and Part D prescription drug plans," Green said. "Medicare health and drug plan costs and coverages can change each year, so people with Medicare should look at the coverage options annually to decide on the options that fit their health needs."

Additionally, while Part A covers a portion of hospital costs for beneficiaries, the deductible for 2023 is increasing from \$1,556 to \$1,600, a small \$44 increase. Green said the second part of Part A is a stay in a Skilled Nursing Facility following a hospital stay. Medicare covers at no cost for

SEE MEDICARE, 5

## OPINION



## With election completed, where do we go from here?

By **Don Coble**  
*Managing Editor*

It's now safe to return to our regularly scheduled programs. Instead of watching political ads, we can now turn our disdain to Mike Lindell's effort to sell pillows and sheets, accident injury lawyers commercials and that crabby woman with the square glasses who argues against Medicare plans.

The election is done. But now in the great words of the Alan Parsons Project, "Where do we go from here?"

We should be ready to move to the next election cycle, but we're left with more questions than answers.

In Pennsylvania, the Senate candidate said the mail-in ballot was filled out incorrectly with the wrong dates or no dates should. Pundits claim to throw those ballots out hurt Democrats, but it begs the question: why are problems with ballots seem to involve Democrats? Are Democrats proportionally unable to fill out ballots? Why do Republicans find it easier to fill in their votes, sign the ballot and write the date of the ballot on the envelope as requested?

But let's move on.

We have a policy here not to stray into politics. But the election is done, and it's fair to think ahead.

Most of us would agree that a split government – the president from one party, the legislature from the other – is a good



Don Coble

Pundits claim to throw those ballots out hurt Democrats, but it begs the question: why are problems with ballots seem to involve Democrats? Are Democrats proportionally unable to fill out ballots? Why do Republicans find it easier to fill in their votes, sign the ballot and write the date of the ballot on the envelope as requested?

thing. It's less likely either party will steer our policies over the cliff. (Yes, that was an old line used by Democrats years ago.)

I'm happy Ron DeSantis will continue to be our governor. I'm equally happy Marco Rubio will serve in the Senate for the next six years. They were good candidates who could fend off baseless claims of reducing Social Security and Medicare claims. After all, would politicians from Florida be so stupid as to deny or reduce benefits to seniors? I'm one of those seniors, and I pay attention.

Again, where do we go from here?

Former President Donald Trump said he will announce on Tuesday if he intends to run for the presidency in 2024. While I embrace many of his policies, I hope he does not run. Trump is a damaged person, and it will be too easy to expose his flaws. Too many Twitter blunders. Too many mean comments. Too many nicknames.

If I could vote on his policies, I may be first in line to cast a ballot.

Unfortunately, what's the answer on the other side? Joe Biden? You can't be serious. Kamala Harris? Even more of a train wreck.

We have to move beyond divisiveness and discord to find common solutions to serious problems.

It's clear inflation, the economy, crime and open borders didn't resonate with enough voters – especially in New York

SEE WHERE, 5

## Word OF THE MONTH

Word of the Week is a feature that aims to help readers boost their vocabulary in a meaningful way that has practical application. Each week, our editorial staff presents a word, its definition and its use in a sentence.

**Reify:** (REE-uh-fi) a verb that means turning something abstract into something more concert or real.

"The ad department was asked to reify their pitch ahead of their meetings with the clients."

## THIS MONTH in History

### Five years ago, 2017

- The Clay County School Board decides to rename "Y" school, which is under construction, Discovery Oaks Elementary.
- Former students return to S.B. Jennings Elementary to celebrate the school's 50th anniversary.
- Fleming Island High students participate in a virtual tour of a U.S. Navy rescue.

### 10 years ago, 2012

- Baptist Health announces it plans to build Baptist Clay, a small campus-like setting with medical offices and an emergency room.
- Fourth Circuit Court Judge McCarthy Crenshaw Jr. is forced to leave the bench after 20 years due to age restrictions set in state law.
- Johnna McKinnon defeated one-term incumbent Frank Farrell for Seat 4 on the Clay County School Board.

### 20 years ago, 2002

- County officials are worried they won't get enough money from the Department of Transportation to make significant road improvements in the Branan Field area.
- The Orange Park Athletic Association Mighty Mite Cyclones (9-year-olds) finish the football season with a 9-0 record.
- Former Clay Today Publisher Robert Wayne Hoff, 71, dies.

### 30 years ago, 1992

- The Board of County Commissioners led a public workshop on whether it should buy three privately-owned water and sewer companies.
- The BCC passes a special \$64 a year tax for waste disposal in the unincorporated areas of Clay County.
- A grand opening is scheduled for the new Orange Park Library.

### Send us a letter ...

We'd like to hear from you. Perhaps you are concerned about the county commission, the school board or your city council or commission, sit down and take a few moments to write us

a letter. All we ask is that you keep it civil, no name-calling and write no more than 600 words. All we ask is that you stick to local issues, be clear and make a point. We reserve the right to edit for AP Stylebook errors, grammar and spelling. In your

email, type Letter to the Editor in your subject and send it to Managing Editor Don Coble at don@claytodayonline.com. We look forward to hearing from you!

### Opinions ...

The views and opinions expressed on this page are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Clay Today.



# Free, low-cost spay, neutering available in Clay County

## For The Herald

CLAY COUNTY – Clay County Animal Services is now offering free and low-cost spay and neuter dog surgeries and free rabies vaccinations for income-eligible Clay County households, thanks to the Florida Animal Friends Specialty License Plate Program.

To apply for spay and neuter surgeries, call Clay County Community Services at (904) 529-4256, and staff members will guide applicants through the income eligibility requirements.

Spayed and neutered pets can live longer, healthier lives, and the surgery can alleviate the overpopulation of animals in our communities.

Now, thanks to a grant from Florida Animal Friends, households earning less than \$70,000 annually can qualify for low-cost, or in some cases no-cost, spay and neuter surgery and free rabies vaccinations for their family dogs.

To apply for spay and neuter surgeries under this grant, call Clay County Community Services at (904) 529-4256. Community services staff will guide applicants through the income eligibility requirements and coordinate with Animal Services to schedule their surgery appointment. Questions can be directed to [ClayCares@ClayCountygov.com](mailto:ClayCares@ClayCountygov.com).

Animal Services Shelter Veterinarian Dr. Jennifer Broadhurst said, “Spayed and neutered pets live longer healthier lives.



“Spayed and neutered pets live longer healthier lives. Neutered dogs are also less likely to roam, bite, or get into fights with other dogs.”

—Animal Services Shelter Veterinarian Dr. Jennifer Broadhurst

Neutered dogs are also less likely to roam, bite, or get into fights with other dogs.”

Preventing unwanted litters of puppies and kittens is also better for the community. “Communities spend millions of dollars to control unwanted animals and animal shelters are already overburdened with a surplus of animals. Irresponsible breeding also contributes to the problem of dog bites and attacks,” said Animal Services Director Ernest Hagen. “The health and community benefits of spaying and neutering dogs and cats are well-known, and thanks to the Florida Animal Friends’ Specialty License Plate Program, we now have the ability to further serve our residents.”

If you would like to support the life-saving efforts of Florida Animal Friends, purchase a Florida Animal Friend specialty license plate and \$25 goes directly to fund organizations that offer free or low-cost spay and neuter services in Florida, like Clay County Animal Services. By purchasing the plate or donating to show your support, you are helping animal welfare organizations to become one step closer to ensuring that all animals can have a safe, happy, and loving home. Supporters like you are our best defense against Florida pet overpopulation. Purchases can be made online, by mail, or in person at the tax collector’s office.

For more information or to order a plate, Visit Florida Animal Friend specialty license plate.

## Where from page 4

and Pennsylvania – in this week’s election. You also have to wonder if John Fetterman will put on big-boy clothes when he goes to the Senate, or will he continue to dress like one of Spanky’s friends from “Our Gang?”

What this country needs are a new wave of candidates. But this time – and I admit this is completely selfish – I hope it’s not DeSantis, and it’s not why you think. As a Florida resident, he’s far too important to me as my governor. Besides, who would fill his void? So far, there haven’t been any Republicans who have asserted themselves as a viable replacement for DeSantis. Until then, I want him to stay.

So that leaves us with a difficult, make that impossible, situation. We have a sincere lack of good candidates for the top job in America. I don’t know about you, but I’m getting tired of having to pick from either mustard or mayonnaise on my cow patty sandwich when I’m in the voting booth.

## Medicare from page 4

the first 20 days in a SNF. That is a slight increase from \$194.50 to \$200 a day after day 20.

“Part A is no cost for the majority of Medicare beneficiaries, however, if they or their spouse do not have at least 40 quarters of work credits then you have to pay for Part A. That cost is based on the number of quarters you have reported,” said Green. “For those with at least 30 quarters, the premium to buy Part A is \$278, a \$4 increase from 2022. Those with less than 30 quarters pay the full premium of \$506, an increase of \$7.”

Green offers more information

about Medicare in his recently published book that helps baby boomers and seniors navigate the complex insurance process with advice and tips for better decision-making. “Medicare Breakdown, The Alphabet Soup of Medicare,” is offered for free to those interested in learning more at [medicarealphabetsoup.com](http://medicarealphabetsoup.com). Green and his team have helped thousands of people in the Medicare and insurance coverage industry. Green attends numerous conferences and seminars in the Medicare and insurance field each year. Green is a member of the National Association of Health Underwriters, Jacksonville Association of Health Underwriters, Baker County Chamber of Commerce and the Clay Chamber.

For more information, call (904) 717-1176 or email [bill@greeninsagency.com](mailto:bill@greeninsagency.com).



Well Road - Orange Park - 904-272-8430

Visit our showroom for the best selection, prices & customer service!

## FREE ESTIMATES

1988 Wells Road Orange Park, FL 32073 | 904-272-8430

Mon-Fri 9-6pm | Sat. 9-4 pm  
Sun 12-4 pm

## www.CarpetMan.biz



**CELEBRATE WITH THE GIFT OF FLOWERS!**

*Friend's Flower Bouquets!  
Holiday Centerpieces....  
just to name a few!*



**Full service florist serving,  
Keystone, Melrose, Starke,  
Hawthorne, Waldo, Hampton  
and surrounding areas.**

## 352.473.9201

370 S.E. Sylvan Way Keystone Heights, FL  
[Sandy@FlowerPetalsInc.com](mailto:Sandy@FlowerPetalsInc.com)  
**[www.FlowerPetalsInc.com](http://www.FlowerPetalsInc.com)**



**Clay Electric Cooperative, Inc.**  
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

*Competitive rates, not-for-profit,  
right here in your community.*

**Keystone • (352) 473-4917  
Orange Park • (904) 272-2456**

**[clayelectric.com](http://clayelectric.com)**



# One pill can kill

## Clay County mother shares her painful story of losing a son to drug abuse

By Kylie Cordell  
For Clay Today

CLAY COUNTY – “It was Friday night. He had just gotten off work and he looked at me – I was on the phone talking to my sister – and he said I love you, mom. I’ll see you tomorrow. That was the last time I heard from him because he never came home.”

Middleburg’s Tina Baker will never forget the night she lost her youngest son to a fentanyl-laced cocaine overdose and she wants to make sure others don’t go through the same pain.

Jacob was a soccer player at Middleburg High. He battled months of addiction after being prescribed Oxycontin following two major knee surgeries.

“At the time we didn’t know that Oxycontin was so addictive,” the mother said. “Eventually, it got so bad I had to kick him out of the house. He ended up staying with some friends. Unfortunately, the addiction was so tough that he stole checks from a family and forged their names to pay for his drug habit.”

After serving time behind bars, Jacob went through rehabilitation and detox.

“He began to be drug tested regularly. He had a stable job. He was receiving counseling. He was going back to school,” said Baker. “But he started using again. He tried to beat it but he couldn’t.”

This time, it cost Jacob his life.

“Jacob and a friend he graduated high school with met in Orange Park. They had gone out and bought some cocaine. I don’t know if he knew it was laced. I don’t think he would have,” Baker said. “It may not have been the cocaine that killed him, but the

fentanyl did.”

Now, Baker shares Jacob’s story to warn others of the dangers of experimenting with opioids.

“It’s on our streets, here in Clay County. We have to be preventative across the board. Our school districts, our business leaders, our churches, and our parents,” she said. “We have to be able to talk freely about this. Not that we become afraid, but we become more aware.”

Jacob was not alone in his struggles. Last year, 8,000 people died of an overdose in Florida. According to the CDC, 107,375 people in the United States died of drug overdoses and drug poisonings in 2021. A staggering 67% of those deaths involved synthetic opioids like fentanyl.

Project Opioid Jax’s TJ Ward was the event moderator of the Overdose Awareness Seminar recently at First Baptist Middleburg. Panelists included Clay County Sheriff’s Office Director Wayne McKinney, Clay County Fire Rescue Battalion Chief Glenn East, Clay County District Schools Superintendent David Broskie and HCA Florida Orange Park Hospital Director of Pharmacy Dr. Jodie A. Graves. The Panel discussed the global effects of opioid use and overdoses, as well as the Opioid crisis here in Clay County.

“In 2020 alone, there were 108,000 deaths, a 12% increase from the previous year. Florida represents 6.2% of those deaths,” said Dr. Graves. “For perspective, nationally, that would be one-half of Clay County, and for the state of Florida, that would be Orange Park.”

According to Broskie, 31% of Clay County’s school-age children are being



The expert panel and an audience hear the gripping story of how Middleburg’s Tina Baker lost her son to a fentanyl-laced heroin overdose.

raised by grandparents, in large part by the drug epidemic. “That’s why we have to bring awareness to students when it comes to the overdose crisis,” said Broskie.

If you or someone you know is at increased risk for opioid overdose, especially those struggling with opioid use disorder, you should carry naloxone and keep it at home.

“Narcan is an opioid antagonist. Opioids bind to the receptors of the brain and when those receptors get filled up, that’s what causes symptoms. Narcan interrupts those signals because it knocks off and replaces the opioid molecules. It cleans the receptors, so they are not stimulated to shut down,”

East said.

East has given away more than 700 Narcan kits through the Community Paramedicine program.

McKinney agrees that it will take a group effort to make a difference.

“We’re trying to partner with these other groups to help attack the issue because we know that it takes a community. No one alone can fix this problem,” he said.

If you want to learn strategies to reduce access to opioids, and resources for treatment and recovery available in the county, go to Clay Action Coalition and visit their resource page, or email [community.paramedicine@claycountygov.com](mailto:community.paramedicine@claycountygov.com).

## What to know about sustainable investing

You may have heard about “sustainable investing.” But if you’re not familiar with it, you might wonder if it’s a good option for you.

You can follow a sustainable strategy in different ways. You could choose an approach known as “ESG,” which stands for environmental, social and governance. Examples of an ESG approach include investing in businesses that work to improve their waste management, stress gender equality, diversity within their own ranks and/or follow transparent financial and accounting procedures.

You could also consider a strategy known as values-based investing. Examples of this approach include refraining from investing in segments of the market, such as tobacco or

firearms. Or you could specify investments in certain industries, such as solar power.

If you consider sustainable investing, too many exclusions may lower your portfolio’s diversification and potential returns. And, of course, choose investments that are suitable for your goals, risk tolerance and time horizon.

If sustainable investing interests you give it some thought – you may find it rewarding to match your money with your beliefs.

Member SIPC

*This is Courtnie Douglas, your Edward Jones financial advisor located at 131 S. Walnut Street, Starke, FL 32091, phone number (904) 964-1486.*

Investment strategies. One-on-one advice.



**Edward Jones**

*Courtnie Douglas*

CFP® | AAMS® | CRPC®

131 South Walnut St.  
Starke, FL 32091  
(904) 964-1486

[www.edwardjones.com](http://www.edwardjones.com)

Member SIPC



# TEAL TILE

**CARPET ONE** FLOOR & HOME

*Your Flooring Specialists*

**Sales • Service • Installation**  
**COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL**

• Vinyl • Carpet • Ceramic Tile  
• Hardwood & Laminate Floors

**904-964-7423**

**BUYING POWER OF  
OVER 1,400 STORES!!**

131 N. Cherry St., Starke, FL 32091  
Mon-Fri 8:30 am - 5:30 pm





# Families opting out of traditional funerals

By Kylie Cordell

For Clay Today

CLAY COUNTY – It's often said funerals are not for the dead, but for the living, a way of saying goodbye to a loved one. Although this may be true, funerals don't serve just one thematic end.

"Funerals usually have negative connotations and celebration of life a positive one, but it doesn't have to be one or another. It can be both," said Craig Seaton, planning director at Broadus-Raines Funeral Home and author of "Some Perfect Tomorrow: True Stories of Hope in Loss, Love in Grief, and Life in Death."

In the last decade, more people are opting out of traditional funerals. Resources are becoming available to help people when they're dealing with loss that allows people to try to personalize a significant ritual moment after death and try to figure out the best way to memorialize their loved one.

You might recognize the myriad of ways in which funerals have gotten more personalized to the deceased: requests for mourners to wear nonblack clothes, video collages for the families, personal items to be displayed, music liked by the deceased playing at funerals and tombstones that pay homage to the person's hobbies.

The etiquette for funeral ceremonies is evolving. People are searching for new ways to celebrate the lives of their loved ones.

"Our society has changed. Every single profession reflects the society in which it operates, whatever it is. I think what it has done, essentially, is react to those changes," Seaton said. "The services haven't changed apart from technology, but the ceremony has definitely changed."

So how are they changing? For one, many are turning to alternative, non-traditional ceremonies that focus on celebrating the life of the deceased, rather than mourning their deaths.

"Having the space to share stories, to laugh, cry and smile gives people a gamut of different ways, different options, to grieve," said Mary Denard, director of Hardage-Giddens Rivermead Funeral Home. "Because again, everyone in the room may be at a different stage of grief. It just opens up a lot of communication to talk about the loved one."

Another significant difference is the physical setup of the ceremony.

"We are starting to see more people opting for round tables instead of pews. This way makes the ceremony more liked, and airier. You might be sitting with someone you may not know, and it spurs a conversa-



tion. You can talk about the loved one in a way that you wouldn't be able to in a pew, where you might be sitting three spaces down from someone not making eye contact," Denard said.

Another prominent change in funeral and memorial services is the music played during the ceremony. Music influences the mood and attitude and is a meaningful way of honoring the dead. Although gospel music is commonly used in funeral services, Denard said more people are opting for nontraditional music tailored to the preferences and needs of the deceased, rather than a given religious or spiritual tradition.

"As more Americans are coming out as spiritual rather than religious, more people are shying away from the Judeo-Christian or even the Muslim or Jewish religious ceremony," Seaton said.

Denard agreed and said: "It [non-

traditional funerals] just opens up a lot of communication to talk about the loved one and not a pastor or minister of any kind, in a sense, they are not the main focus."

According to the National Funeral Directors Association, cremation has surpassed traditional burial, and by 2040, four out of five Americans are predicted to choose cremation over casket burial.

"You can also have your ashes pressed into a coral reef or sent to space. You can form them into diamonds or tattoos and things like that," Denard said.

Not only are funeral services more open to alternative burials and ceremonies, but Seaton believes people are also becoming more comfortable with planning their funerals, which further drives the trend toward personalization.

"You just have to be willing to say that you want it," he said.



# \$500

## NO LIMIT HOLD'EM TOURNAMENT

### November 19 | 12 pm



**455 PARK AVENUE | ORANGE PARK, FL | 904.646.0001 | BESTBETJAX.COM**



## Lake Area Watersports wins Nautique's Excellence in Market award

For The Herald

MELROSE – Lake Area Watersports won the North America Excellence in Market award from Nautique Boats during the 2022 Nautique Dealer Awards.

The award includes the Market Share Leader of the Territory, Highest Response Rate in Surveys, and Excellent Dealer Grade on Surveys.

Lake Area Watersports was founded in 2004. It specializes in both new and pre-owned vessels, including top brands such as Nautique, Axis, Bennington and more.

They are proud to be a part of the local Melrose community. Lake Area Watersports founder and CEO, Chad Hovsepian, was reared in Keystone Heights. Both he and his wife, Tera, attended Keystone Heights Junior/Senior High, where Tara currently teaches.

After graduation, both Chad and Tera attended the University of Florida, continuing the tradition of staying local. They have two children who both also graduated from Keystone Heights Junior/Senior High and are now attending the University of Florida and Santa Fe College.

Receiving Nautique's prestigious North America Excellence in Market award is an honor and Lake Area Watersports is happy to represent the Gainesville, Ocala, Orlando, Tampa and Keystone Heights territory. Bringing high-quality vessels and



service to the local community is of utmost importance to the Lake Area Watersports family, as is encouraging a love of boating, wakesurfing, and outdoor water activities to people and families across the area.

They strive to continue to provide award-winning services to their community and encourage both veteran and novice boaters and wakesurfers to join them at their showroom, centrally located in Melrose.

Lake Area Watersports hosts an annual wakesurf competition, drawing competitors from across the United States, including both nationally ranked and sponsored athletes and novice wakesurfers alike. The next competition is scheduled for June 10, 2023 at WW Motocross Park in Jacksonville.

They also host boat shows across the territories of Jacksonville, Gainesville, Keystone Heights and Ocala.

Upcoming shows include Nov. 5 at the Orange Blossom Cafe in Keystone Heights; Jan. 6 at the World Equestrian Center in Ocala; and, Jan. 27 at the Prime Osborn Convention Center in Jacksonville.



From left, Rick Skinner, Nautique Global Vice President of Sales; Robby Sherrill, LAW Sales Representative; Wendy Baxley, LAW Office Manager; LAW CEO and Founder, Chad Hovsepian; Carrie Carter LAW Sales Assistant; Thom Jones LAW Shop Foreman; and Greg Meloon, President of Nautique Boat Company, take a moment after award presentation.

## Chemours

from page 3

Materials. They provide solutions for their 3,200 customers in 120 countries with their innovations and aim to provide a sustainable world through chemistry. Based in Wilmington, Delaware, the company has 29 manufacturing sites and three other mining operations. The company also is heavily involved in communities by donating to food donations and STEM programs, creating job opportunities and volunteering.



In an effort to enhance productivity and safety, most of the mining will be done by mobile units.



Chemours' Trail Ridge South facility is a \$93 million investment that will bring at least 50 new jobs to the Lake Region.

## NOBODY OFFERS MORE DISCOUNTS THAN FARMERS

- Automobile insurance
- Homeowners insurance
- More options, providing you more discounts



**Lyndel M. Hale**  
Your Local Agent

2751 BLANDING BLVD STE 105  
MIDDLEBURG, FL 32068  
LHALE1@FARMERSAGENT.COM  
<https://agents.farmers.com/lhale1>



**Call 352.612.4154 today!**

Let me help you get the most value out of your insurance coverage.

Restrictions apply. Discounts may vary. Not available in all states. See your agent for details. Insurance is underwritten by Farmers Insurance Exchange and other affiliated insurance companies. Visit farmers.com for a complete listing of companies. Not all insurers are authorized to provide insurance in all states. Coverage is not available in all states.

State License  
#7112

State License  
#7361



- Well Drilling
- Annual Service & Maintenance
- Water Testing
- Water Softeners
- Pump Repair

Locally Owned & Operated Since 1989

**352.473.0534**

969 SE State Rd 100  
Keystone Heights, FL

[www.broncodrillinginc.com](http://www.broncodrillinginc.com)



# Clay Electric Trustee Carl Hagglund dies

## For The Herald

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – Carl Hagglund, a member of Clay Electric Co-op's board of trustees since 2013, passed away.

A resident of Keystone Heights, Hagglund represented Clay Electric members in District 1, which encompasses portions of Clay and Putnam counties. Hagglund was elected to the District 1 trustee seat in 2013. When he was elected, he listed his family and church as his main areas of involvement. He served

as president of the board in 2019. In 2020, he earned the NRECA's Director Gold Credential Certification. This is the highest level of achievement in NRECA's Director Certificate programs.

As a trustee, Hagglund attended many of the check presentations for Operation Round Up. He



Carl Hagglund

also frequently attended the annual Legislative Cookout in Tallahassee. Employees often saw him at retirement gatherings as well. Hagglund was also a Clay Electric retiree. He began his career at the co-op in 1958 as a groundman. One year later he was promoted to lineman. Other positions he held were utility serviceman, breaker maintenance, meter and OCR repairman, utility service equipment repairman and substation foreman. For 27 years until his retirement in 2007, he was a substation maintenance foreman. At

the time of his retirement, he had the most years of service among any active employee with 49 years.

Survivors include his wife, Pat; four children; and eight grandchildren.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with the Hagglund family," said Ricky Davis, Clay Electric's general manager/CEO. "Carl was a very active and valued member of the board of trustees for the past nine years and an involved retiree before that. No one loved Clay Electric more than Carl."

**Palagio**  
Senior Living

**Fall in Love**  
with a new way of **Living!**

Call us at **904-639-4700** or email  
**Hello@PalagioSeniorLiving.com**  
to schedule an appointment for a tour!

**Palagio**  
Senior Living  
Live the Good Life®

1525 Kingsley Ave | Orange Park, FL 32073 | 904-639-4700 | [www.PalagioSeniorLiving.com](http://www.PalagioSeniorLiving.com)

Assisted Living Facility  
License #13475



# Connelly-Eiswerth leads USA to Women's PGA Cup victory

Special to The Herald

**SANTA ANA PUEBLO, N.M. – Stephanie Connelly-Eiswerth** was disappointed following her opening round score of 7-over par 80 at the 2022 Women's PGA Cup at Twin Warriors Golf Club.

Connelly-Eiswerth, a Teaching Professional from Fleming Island and a North Florida PGA Section Member, responded in a big way for the United States on both Friday and Saturday, as she was the team's top performer during the second and third rounds.

Connelly-Eiswerth recorded her second consecutive 3-under par 70 to help the United States (1-under par, 656) win the second Women's PGA Cup by two strokes over Canada (1-over par, 658).

Great Britain & Ireland (662) finished in third place, followed by Australia (686) in fourth, Sweden (698) in fifth and South Africa (753) – playing in the PGA Cup for the first time – in sixth.

The Americans rallied after being down by five strokes to the Great Britain/Ireland team after the turn on the final day.

The U.S. has captured both Women's PGA Cups after also winning the inaugural event in 2019 at Barton Creek Resort in Austin, Texas.

The United States Team began the third and final round with a one-shot lead over first-round leader Team Canada.

"Nobody panicked," said PGA President and U.S. Captain Jim Richerson. "Everybody just played their game, concentrating on what we talked about all week, which was one shot at a time, one hole at a time."

Connelly-Eiswerth's par on the par-4, 395-yard 18th hole clinched the title. She was immediately mobbed by teammates as the celebration began.

"It's everything and more," said Connelly-Eiswerth. "I really wanted to qualify for this. To qualify and also to win it, it's not just



Stephanie Connelly-Eiswerth gets drenched by her teammates after her par putt at the 18th hole clinched the Women's PGA Cup in New Mexico. The Fleming Island professional was part of a five-player team in the international competition.

being here and being part of the team. You want to win with the team. It's truly incredible."

Philadelphia PGA Section Member Joanna Coe, the Director of Instruction at Merion Golf Club in Haverford, Pennsylvania; and Middle Atlantic PGA Section Member Ashley Grier, an Assistant Golf Professional at Yingling's Golf Center in Hagerstown, Maryland, were the U.S. team's next two lowest scorers.

Coe registered an even-par 73, while Grier shot 1-over par 74 to help the U.S. record a 2-under par 217 on the final day.

"All week, I hit it really about as well as I could have asked for," said Grier. "We stayed

patient, didn't try to force anything, and made a few birdies here and there. That was the difference."

The 10th, 11th and 12th holes at Twin Warriors Golf Club proved challenging throughout the week due to their extreme elevation changes and sightlines and winter-like weather conditions on Thursday.

The U.S. team's top three scorers combined for even-par through that three-hole stretch on Saturday. Meanwhile, Canada recorded a pair of back-nine bogeys that proved pivotal.

"That really helped," said Richerson. "We picked up a couple of shots there. The ladies played fantastic down the stretch to retain

the Cup. I'm just so proud of the way they played."

Connelly-Eiswerth's 1-under par 35 on the back nine helped close out the win. She birdied the par-4 350-yard 14th and the par-5 542-yard 16th. Grier also birdied the 16th to help the U.S. hold off Canada.

"I was hitting the ball really well," said Connelly-Eiswerth. "I was getting on the green. I kept giving myself chances. The biggest thing is that I stayed on the shot that was in front of me. I was happy to mentally stay in the moment."

For Canada, Caroline Ciot shot 3-under par 70, while Christine Wong posted an even-par 73, and Casey Ward registered a 2-over par 75 to help their team finish at 218.

Great Britain & Ireland (224) was led by Heather MacRae (3-under par 70), Suzanne Dickens (2-over par 75) and Alison Gray (3-over par 76) on Saturday.

Coe thinks the competition this week is a strong testament to the state of women's golf across the world.

"I'm just so proud of the PGA of America and proud of women's golf for another team to be added to this event," said Coe. "For us to end up under par as a team after that craziness of round one, we got a squad for sure. For the other countries to be right there with us, that means women's golf is in a really good place."

Winning the 2022 Women's PGA Cup as U.S. Captain will be a lasting memory for Richerson.

"When you're fortunate enough to be elected as an Officer and represent PGA Members, you get to be involved in some really cool things," said Richerson. "The things that stand out for me the most are those that are memories with PGA Members. Being involved with this team with five unbelievable PGA Professionals, five ladies that are unbelievable players, it'll be a memory that I have for a long time."

## GET YOUR MEDICAL MARIJUANA CARD TODAY!

**DO YOU HAVE STRESS AND ANXIETY**  
due to the Coronavirus?  
Call today for a PTSD evaluation.

Re-Certify by phone- No need to leave home!

**\$150** RECERTIFICATIONS

EDIBLES NOW AVAILABLE.

**No Medical records? NO PROBLEM.**  
Visit us at [www.CMMDR.com](http://www.CMMDR.com)

## CERTIFIED MARIJUANA DOCTORS

**920 Blanding Blvd., Suite 4**  
**Orange Park, FL 32065**

**904-420-0044**



# Ridgeview’s High School’s Becky Murphy selected principal of the year

For The Herald

ORANGE PARK – Clay County District Schools selected Ridgeview High’s Becky Murphy as the 2022- 2023 Principal of the Year. Murphy was nominated by other administrators in Clay County and Superintendent David Broskie presented the honor by surprising Murphy at the school on Oct. 26.

Murphy has worked in public education for 23 years and has been an administrator for the past eight years. She has led both Ridgeview High and Lake Asbury Junior High as a principal and is known by her colleagues and staff as a passionate and driven leader that cares for all students.

“My favorite part about being a principal is seeing our students grow into amazing young men and women with bright futures ahead. Our most significant role as educators is to help our students reach their full potential socially, emotionally, and academically while supporting their endeavors,” Murphy said.

“Principal Murphy is a wonderful representation of Principal of the Year for Clay County District Schools. Ms. Murphy truly cares for all students and staff and has spent the last four years at Ridgeview High focused on building a great culture where students are not only involved in their school community on campus but involved with their surrounding community outside of schools,” Broskie said.



Front from left, Chief Academic Officer Roger Dailey, Ridgeview’s Becky Murphy, Superintendent David Broskie and Chief of Statt Kelly Watt, join (back) Director of K-12 Academic Service Treasure Pickett for the surprise Principal of the Year announcement.

As the award recipient, Murphy will represent Clay County District Schools in the state competition. In November, Murphy

will be formally recognized at the monthly school board meeting.

## Middleburg Elementary’s Amanda Strickland wins Assistant Principal of the Year

For The Herald

MIDDLEBURG – Clay County District Schools selected Amanda Strickland from Middleburg Elementary as the 2022- 2023 Assistant Principal of the Year. Strickland was nominated by other administrators in Clay County and Superintendent Broskie presented the honor by surprising Assistant Principal Strickland on campus on Oct. 27.

Strickland has worked in public education for 12 years and has been an administrator for the past three years at Middleburg Elementary. Her colleagues describe her as passionate, data-driven, and caring.

“Making MBE the place to be for all students is my favorite part of my role as an

SEE STRICKLAND, 17



**KEYSTONE  
LAKE REGION**  
BUSINESS ASSOCIATION  
Means Business

Join  
**KEYSTONE  
LAKE REGION**  
Business Association  
KLRBA.com

WATER WELL CONTRACTING

**NORTH FLORIDA  
WELL DRILLING  
& PUMP  
SERVICE LLC**

Family Owned & Operated Since 1979  
Eddie & Diane Smith  
State Lic# 2173 & 7021

**We Are Your Local  
Water Experts**

Come by The Office For A  
Water Quality Analysis And  
A Free Treatment Estimate

105 Commercial Drive  
Keystone Heights, FL  
352-473-3204

PARTNERS WITH CAPITAL CITY BANK

PUMP REPAIRS • NEW SITE CONSTRUCTION

PUMP SERVICE • WATER TREATMENT

# Healthier Pets Through Best Medicine

- Digital X-ray
- Dental X-ray
- Dental cleanings and Oral Surgery
- Ultrasound
- Therapeutic Laser
- Vaccine packages
- Surgery
- Microchipping
- House and Farm calls
- Euthanasia and Hospice services
- Boarding
- Grooming
- Pet Pig Spays and Neuters
- Emergency/Critical Care
- Orthopedic Surgery

## Reserve your space for the holidays!

Boarding Facilities

**CALL NOW Dates are booking fast!**



### Lake Area Animal Hospital



**Full Service Hospital with Boarding & Grooming**

Mon-Fri  
7:30am - 5:30pm  
Saturday  
8:00am - 2:00pm

## Amber Rea, DVM & Associates

**MELROSE**  
8762 State Road 21  
352-475-2326

**HAWTHORNE**  
7410 SE US Hwy 301  
352-481-4333

**www.LakeAreaVets.com**





# Restore

from page 1

Water Management District Rob Bradley said.

Indeed.

After decades of irresponsible use, state, county and local officials finally forged a plan to siphon unneeded water from Black Creek and sending it to the lakes in Keystone Heights. As the population grew in the Lake Region, so did the demands for water. After decades of taking, residents, particularly the Save Our Lakes Organization, created a mission to put a plug in draining the lakes while demanding water levels be replenished.

"This has been four decades or more journey," said SOLO President Vivian Katz-James. "It's a big day for a lot of people, not just me, but a lot of people."

Essentially, the Black Creek project, which was created in 2017, will divert as much as 10 million gallons of water from the South Fork of the Black Creek near the Clay County Animal Control Services on State Road 16, move it through a 17-mile pipeline and filtering system, and dump the water into Alligator Creek, which flows into Lake Brooklyn.

The Keystone Heights lakes recharge the Upper Floridian aquifer and Lower Sante Fe basin through the lake bottom, so the benefits will be felt in surrounding counties

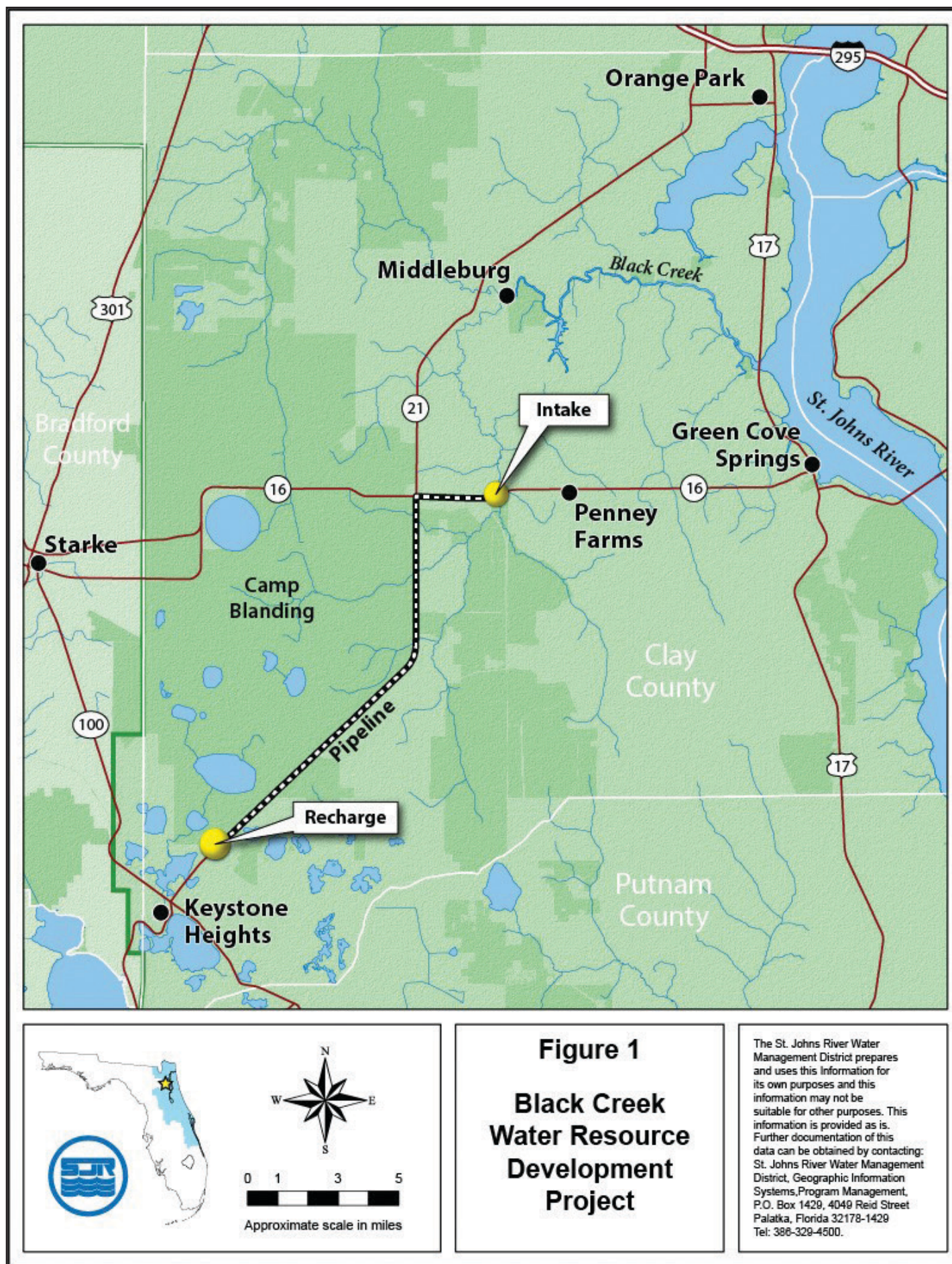


Former state senator and current Chairman and the St. Johns River Water Management District was one of the driving forces behind the Black Creek project.

as the aquifer improves.

The project, however, took years of debate, negotiating and planning. State and Keystone Height officials, along with the Clay County Board of Commissioners, St. Johns River Water Management District, SOLO and four local utility companies – Clay County Utility Authority, Gainesville Regional Utilities, St. Johns Utilities and JEA – all had to find common ground. The completed project is expected to cost \$100 million, and Bradley, Florida Reps. Bobby Payne (Palatka) and Travis Cummings (Fleming Island) helped appropriate more than \$48 from the state. The utility companies agreed to pay a total \$19.2 million.

Construction of the pump station started on Monday, Oct. 24, just a few yards from Black Creek.



"There were people who really didn't want this to happen," Bradley said. "But we brought everybody together. It didn't matter if you're Republican, Democrat or Independent. We didn't care. We just wanted to save the lakes, right?"

SOLO members started attending SJRWMD meetings nearly 30 years ago. They all wore red shirts and sat in the front row, and each time, they had the same message – save the lakes. They were persistent and unapologetic, but their passion finally made a difference.

"Whether you live here, or you live in Jacksonville or you live somewhere down

in Putnam County or somewhere else, you depend on Keystone being a functioning aquifer recharge area for your water every day," Bradley said. "So this is going to ensure this project from an environmental standpoint that we have appropriate water supply for future generations that are going to be able to come here enjoy Florida and other places, not just our lakes."

Former SJRWMD Chairman Douglas Burnett was an early advocate to save the lakes. He faced difficult challenges of getting the money and uniformed support to make the project a reality.

"This is a way, not the commotion you

see on TV every day in Washington, of elected leaders working for their people and their local groups like Save Our Lakes, working for the good of the community," Burnett said.

"I'm 78 years old, but I used to ski barefoot right out here (on Lake Geneva). You can't now. I can assure you, the was water coming down. This has been a journey of teamwork.

"We all got together and came up with the plan. I just can't believe we're here today."

And once the water starts flowing back into the lakes, generations to come will still be in the Lake Region.



# WATER WARRIORS:

Success buoyed by Save Our Lakes' determination

## 'Red shirts' win 40-year fight to revive Lakes Geneva, Brooklyn

By Kylie Cordell  
For Clay Today

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – They were a force that wouldn't be ignored. They filled the front row of every St. Johns River Water Management District meeting and most Clay County Board of Commissioners meetings.

No matter how frustrating their pleas to stop the dramatic drop in water levels at Lakes Geneva and Brooklyn – and their demands to replenish water lost by decades of abuse – they weren't deterred.

On Friday, Oct. 21, their vigil was rewarded when the four-decade-long project was recognized by local and regional partners, residents and community leaders. Details of the project have been finalized, consisting of constructing a water pump station between Penney Farms and Camp Blanding off State Road 16. Construction already has been started.

"This has been four decades or more journey," said Save Our Lakes President Vivian Katz-James. "It's a big day for a lot of people. Not just me but a lot of people."

The project came to fruition after 40 years of collaboration between the water



STAFF PHOTOS BY DON COBLE

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS - Members of Save Our Lakes Organization, including president Vivian Katz-James (right), were relentless against government officials and the St. Johns River Water Management District to replenish the water in Lakes Geneva and Brooklyn.



district, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, local governments, utilities and other interested stakeholders like the Save Our Lakes Organization, who became known as "red shirts" because they all wore red shirts to meetings.

While the primary goal of the project is to increase the recharge to the Upper Floridan aquifer, it will also improve water levels across the Etonia Chain in Putnam and Clay counties. This includes Lakes Brooklyn Geneva in Keystone Heights, two major recharge sites for the Florida Aquifer. To accomplish this, water from Black Creek will be pumped through a 17-mile pipeline, eventually discharging into a passive treatment system that will remove color and minor nutrients.

"The Black Creek Project will bring excess water through the pipeline to an area

just North of Brooklyn. From there it will be distributed in an area that will flow into Alligator Creek, which will feed into Lake Brooklyn and then to Lake Geneva. As the lake levels increase, it benefits the recharge to the Floridan Aquifer," said Katz.

Not only will the pipeline help the lakes recover, but the communities around it.

"I grew up on Lake Brooklyn, and it was a weekend place. Every weekend we were down here. I used to play in a band that would play at this very pavilion, way back in the day, every Thursday and Friday night. So this is where I grew up. This is where all my childhood memories are," said SOLO's Dewitt Gibbs. "There are a lot of people like us who grew up on the lakes here, who have our childhood memories here, and want to

**SEE WARRIORS, 15**

## Project

from page 1

truck, along with deep and sandy ruts. But it was everything Rozear hoped to see after waiting decades for the Black Creek Water Resource Development project to become a reality.

He was so willing to see action to follow promises, he was willing to drive past the no-trespassing sign in front of the ranch.

"I'm from Gainesville, but I have a house on Lake Geneva," Rozear said. "I'm in Save our Lakes (Organization). I had to come here to see if this was really happening. They say seeing is believing."

Rozear wanted everyone in Keystone Heights to believe it, too. Monday's brush clearing was to make way for a pump station a few yards away from the South Fork of Black Creek.

Once done, the pipeline will send Black Creeks' excess water through a pipeline to Alligator Creek. Once there, the creek will replenish the water that's been recklessly drained from Lakes Brooklyn and Geneva. Engineers said it may take up to two years for the lakes to be replenished, but Rozear said it's worth the wait since it took two generations for the project to start.

State, county and local officials joined representatives with the St. Johns River



STAFF PHOTO BY DON COBLE

Less than three days after the formal announcement, work was underway to clear land for a pump station in Green Cove Springs for the Black Creek Water Resource Development project.

Water Management District on Friday, Oct. 21, to announce after nearly 40 years of pleading and negotiating would lead to the immediate construction of a 17-mile

pipeline that will divert as many as 10 million gallons a day from the South Fork of Black Creek that eventually will end up in Lakes Geneva and Brooklyn. Residents in

the Lake Region appeared at every St. Johns River Water Management District meeting to demand their lakes be returned to levels that used to attract out of town visitors. Water levels have dropped because of overuse, SJRWMD Chairman Rob Bradley said.

Less than three days after the announcement at Keystone Beach, a landscaping company was clearing heavy brush and woods to make room for the beginning of the pipeline and the pump station.

The diversions will only be made when there is sufficient flow available to ensure the protection of natural resources within the creek.

The water will be pumped through a transmission system before eventually discharging into Alligator Creek. Alligator Creek flows into Lake Brooklyn, which will increase recharge to the Upper Floridan aquifer through the lake bottom, according to SJRWMD.

The project is also expected to contribute to regional minimum flows and levels recovery and may help improve water levels in lakes and the Alligator Creek system, including drought-stressed lakes Brooklyn and Geneva. Restoration of the lakes is a secondary benefit of the project.

The current cost estimate for the construction of the system, including the pump station, pipeline and treatment system, is approximately \$100 million.



# Arrests & Bookings

(Name, age, location of arrest, charges). Key: FTA-Failure to Appear; DWLSR-Driving Without a License-Suspended or Revoked; DUI-Driving Under the Influence; VOP-Violation of Probation; BAL-blood alcohol level. There are no assumptions or representations about guilt or innocence. Anyone arrested or booked is presumed innocent.

## Tuesday, Nov. 8

William C. Kahakua, 46, Keystone Heights, battery, resist/obstruct/oppose law enforcement

## Sunday, Nov. 6

William R. Walker, 27, Keystone Heights, aggravated battery  
Tony S. Wills, 30, Keystone Heights, domestic battery

## Saturday, Nov. 5

Makyla M. Gilley, 18, Keystone Heights, battery

## Friday, Nov. 4

David D. Long, 51, Keystone Heights, felony

battery by strangulation

## Tuesday, Nov. 1

Kady L. Freeman, 30, Keystone Heights, possession-controlled substance, possession-drug paraphernalia, trespassing

## Thursday, Oct. 27

Gary E. Boyd, 42, Keystone Heights, violation of injunction for protection against domestic violence

## Wednesday, Oct. 26

Joshua K. Hartwell, 35, Keystone Heights, failure to post bond and pay civil penalty

## Tuesday, Oct. 25

Travis W. Westberry, 31, Keystone Heights, two counts violation of injunction for protection against domestic violence, two counts written/electronic threat to kill/do bodily harm

## Saturday, Oct. 22

Michael D. Andrews, 48, Keystone Heights, VOP-community control, resist/obstruct/oppose law enforcement, trespassing

## Friday, Oct. 21

Lisa M. Arnett, 41, Keystone Heights, DWLSR

## Thursday, Oct. 20

Brandon L. Bailey, 37, Keystone Heights, FTA

## Saturday, Oct. 15

Christopher A. Coldiron, 48, Keystone Heights, DUI, refusal to submit to BAL test

## Sheriff's Office lieutenant fired following second DUI arrest

By Don Coble

don@claytodayonline.com

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – Having already served the longest suspension in Clay County Sheriff's Office history for driving under the influence last December, a lieutenant with the agency was fired Monday after being suspected of being drunk again behind the wheel.

Christopher Allen Coldiron, 48, was arrested by the Florida Highway Patrol on Oct. 15 after a CCSO deputy found Coldiron behind the wheel of his pickup truck after it ran off the road and over a four-foot-high concrete culvert on State Road 21 just north of Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park. The sheriff's office deputy then requested FHP to investigate after she said the driver showed "indicators of impairment."

According to FHP's arrest report, Coldiron refused to submit to field sobriety tests

SEE POLICE, 16

## ~Enjoy Retirement~

A Christian Continuing Care Community with a golf course, indoor pool, community garden, tennis courts, bike and walking trails, and newly constructed pickleball courts! See for yourself why so many retirees call Penney Retirement Community home!



Independent Living • Assisted Living • Memory Care • Skilled Nursing • Rehabilitation

Call 904-284-5994 today for lunch and a tour.

3495 Hoffman St. | Penney Farms, FL 32079 | VisitPRC.org



## GORDON

CHEVROLET • ORANGE PARK

### Your Fall Maintenance Checklist

According to AAA roadside data, "vehicles 10 years and older are twice as likely to be stranded at the roadside, and four times more likely to require a tow." The top reasons for requiring a tow: battery and electrical systems issues (23%), engine cooling system failures (11%) and tire damage that cannot be repaired or replaced at the roadside (1%). With the average vehicle age exceeding 11.5 years, an inspection is especially important to avoid a hassle: **Check the battery** - replace if necessary. The electrical system should charge at the correct rate. **Check the AC** - proper cooling performance is critical for interior comfort. **Check the tires**, tire pressure, tread, bulges and bald spots. **Check all fluids** - engine oil, power steering, brake, transmission, windshield washer solvent and antifreeze/coolant. **Check the wipers & lighting** so that you can see and be seen. If you have questions about your vehicle's maintenance, please give us a call or stop by.

**Jim Beaudry, Director**

### OIL CHANGE PACKAGE

## \$79<sup>95</sup>

6-Quart ACDelco GM OE DEXOS1® Full Synthetic Oil Change and Tire Rotation

\*Tire balancing, tax, and more than 6 quarts of oil extra. Excludes diesel engines. See owner's manual for specific oil grades recommended by vehicle model. Expires 11/30/22.

### MOST ACDELCO GOLD 30-MO (ACDelco PROFESSIONAL) BATTERIES INSTALLED 30-MONTH FREE-REPLACEMENT LIMITED WARRANTY\*

## \$159<sup>95</sup>

\*Tax extra. Installation extra on some vehicles. Some ACDelco Gold parts may have formerly appeared as ACDelco Professional. \*\*Please see your Dealer to learn more about exclusions and the warranty part details and qualifications. Expires 11/30/22.

### FRONT BRAKE PADS INSTALLED

## \$239<sup>99</sup>

Most ACDelco Gold (ACDelco Professional) Front Brake Pads Installed 24 Months/Unlimited Mile Warranty\*\*

\*Installation and rotor inspection included. Turning or replacing rotors, all other services, and tax extra. Excludes high performance brake pads and some vehicles. Some ACDelco Gold parts may have formerly appeared as ACDelco Professional. \*\*Please see your dealer to learn more about the warranty part details and qualifications. Expires 11/30/22.

1166 Blanding Blvd.

Orange Park

272-2200

www.gordonchevy.com



# Warriors

from page 13

see the lakes restored before we die.”

Many Keystone Heights residents have seen firsthand the drastic changes in the lake levels over the past few decades. The Black Creek project not only will protect the integrity of the lakes, but help preserve the memory of the community that lives on it.

“It only took four decades. It’s all about having the right people come together. It’s exciting to see the government doing some good. Doing some things for the people, giving back to the people. We know a lot of them and they are truly good people and they’ve made a difference. They’ve brought the lakes back,” Gibbs said.

Not only are the lakes a precious water resource, but the restoration of the lakes will also boost tourism and provide the community with recreational activities that will help boost the local economy. “I remember the water was so high you couldn’t even boat on it unless you were in a canoe,” said SOLO’s Carol Rozear. She grew up on Lake Brooklyn and went to Keystone Heights High.



“You got in your power boat. You got your skies. And you just hit it, water skiing all over the lake. I love it. I can’t wait to do it again,” she said.

Rozear will be excited to see boats returned to the waters where she learned how to swim as a girl. Many remember the boats on the water on hot summer days.

“In the early days, it was full and beautiful and not as crowded. Well, it would be on some of the holidays, Fourth of July and Labor Day,” said SOLO Board Member Web Farber. “You wouldn’t want to launch your boat because there are too many crisscrossing all over the place. It truly was picturesque. It was a high-quality lake, above ordinary, with clear water and the sandy bottom. It was a paradise, it really was.”

“There used to be signs for the lakes coming in on (State) Highway 21 coming in from Gainesville, saying “Welcome to Keystone: The Lake Community. And it really was just that. On the road, you could see the high water and the people on it. It was a destination. Now when people drive through they say, that’s too bad. Just too bad. But here is a chance to put it back in a good condition.”

Another resident, Carolyn Moody, shared her memory of the lakes growing up. “I’ve lived on the lake since 1952. I remember when the water was over where this bridge is, for Lake Brooklyn. There were maybe four houses on the whole lake. It’s changed a lot,” Carolyn Moody said.

Carolyn’s father, Chester Moody, was



one of the founders of the Lake Brooklyn Civic Association, now Save Our Lakes Organization. For Carolyn, the pipeline is a reminder of her father’s dedication to restoring the Lakes, a dream he passed down to her.

“Moody was one of the first to realize there was a problem in the late seventies, and he went to the water district and said, there was something wrong and the science couldn’t figure it out. The water district said it was just the rain for years. But it’s not all rain. We knew better than that. The old-timers that lived here day in and day out, they knew something was off,” Katz said.

*Wishing you and your family a Happy Thanksgiving!*

**KEYSTONE DENTAL**

**TODD D SHOCKLEY DMD PA**

**Todd D. Shockley, DMD**

**260 S. Lawrence Blvd. Suite 102**

**Keystone Heights, FL 32656**

**Phone: 352-473-0707**

**Fax: 352-473-5187**

**drshockley@hotmail.com**



## Police

from page 14

at the scene. He also refused to provide a breath sample. Deputies and troopers said they found several empty and opened alcoholic containers inside his truck. He stumbled several times and his speech was slurred, according to the arrest report.

Saturday morning's arrest was the second in nine months for Coldiron. He was convicted of DUI in Bradford County after he ran a stop sign and slammed into the side of another vehicle. A judge sentenced him to time served – two days – and he was demoted from commander to lieutenant at the Clay County Sheriff's Office. That drop in rank also came with a 24% pay cut.

This time, Sheriff Michelle Cook said Coldiron won't get a third chance.

"In the law enforcement world, when an officer is arrested, we have to allow the criminal investigation to completion," she said. "He goes through the court system just like any other citizen. He receives his sanctions from the court, which included license suspension and some other stuff. Once that happened, we began our internal investigation. Our internal investigation also found him guilty, and he was given by me the longest suspension in recorded history here at the Clay County Sheriff's Office – a 45-day suspension."

Coldiron was driving his vehicle, Cook said, and he wasn't on duty.

"Lt. Coldiron is no longer a member of our agency, and I'm holding him accountable for his actions," Cook said Monday. "I



Christopher Coldiron

hope all of us will stop for a moment and wish him the opportunity to recover from these demons that are plaguing him right now. Here's a man who had an over 23-year career with the Clay County Sheriff's Office. And although I do not condone his actions, and he was given a chance. Even though he did take a 45-day suspension, he violated the second chance and so he is no longer a member here.

"I will continue to hold the members of our agency to a higher standard, as we should be."

Coldiron, who posted bond shortly after the arrest, is scheduled to be arraigned on Nov. 7

## Keystone Heights encourages residents to Shop Small on Nov. 26

By Natalie Gilstrap  
For Clay Today

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – The City of Keystone Heights plans to encourage support for small shops.

Jennifer Ford, owner of the Learning Wheel, was chosen by City Manager Lynn Rutkowski to head Keystone Heights Shop Small Neighborhood Champion.

"I have participated in Shop Small Saturday for years as a consumer, but now to be a business owner, it is both exciting and an honor to help organize Shop Small Saturday right here in my neighborhood," Ford said.

As the Shop Small Champion for Keystone Heights, she plans to visit local small businesses to encourage them to participate. In addition, she plans to make the event publically known within the community to encourage others to attend and show their support for small businesses.

The event will be held on Nov. 26 at City Hall and Keystone Beach from 8 a.m.-7 p.m. The local community can expect to see local vendors in their booths lined in front of City Hall presenting

SEE SMALL, 22



PHOTO FROM NATALIE GILSTRAP

Jennifer Ford was selected to lead Keystone Heights Shop Small program to support local businesses.

## Wellness from A to Z

MEDICAL • MENTAL HEALTH • PHARMACY



We've shortened our name, but not our list of services!

We're now Aza Health! We still have you covered from A to Z with quality primary and preventative healthcare services for the entire family!

Our team of healthcare professionals will tailor your care to meet your needs!

Call Today for an Appointment!

(352) 473-6595

100 Commercial Dr., Keystone Heights

**Aza Health**  
Wellness A to Z

Discounted pricing for Eligible Patients  
Learn more about our "sliding fee scale"  
[www.azahealth.org](http://www.azahealth.org)





# Clay to boost tourism by offering unique 15-month bass tournament

By Don Coble  
don@claytodayonline.com

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – To attract more people to the county, officials with the tourism department and Airstream Ventures announced a plan Monday to highlight Clay's greatest attraction – waterways.

The Kayak Bass Fishing Tournament soon will be offered as part of the strategic plan from the convention, sports and leisure committee.

"This one is not your average tournament," said Airstream's Kennedy Grayson. "It's a 15-month-long marketing campaign, basically. And so what that means is for 15, really 14 months, they will be marketing Clay County as they have competitors to qualify for the tournament in Clay County.

"They have to come here and catch a fish to qualify, and then in November of 2023 – we haven't set the final date, sometime in November, December or January of 2023 or 24. We will have a fun tournament that everyone will be qualifying for and that will be the other time that they come."

"As always, fishing is always on the top of our list," said Clay County Commissioner and Tourism Committee Chairman Mike Cella.

The tournament will have fishermen catch and tag largemouth bass. Organizers said renowned fisherman Chad Hoover will participate once the final details are worked out in the next three months.

"For those of you who don't know Chad Hoover, he has his own kind of bass fishing TV show," Grayson said. "He has at



Chad Hoover

least five million followers on every social media platform. So we're going to hit the ground running with being a kayak bass fishing destination because he's going to be here."

Airstream Ventures was hired by the Board of County Commissioners with a 5-0 vote in 2020 to bring more sporting events to the county by identifying new and creative ways to use existing facilities.



Front from left, Superintendent David Broskie, Middleburg Elementary's Amanda Strickland and Chief of Elementary Education Heather Teto celebrate Strickland's selection as Assistant Principal of the Year with (back from left) Middleburg Principal Becky Wilkerson and Chief Academic Office Roger Dailey.

## Strickland from page 11

assistant principal. I greet over 300 students each morning as they leave breakfast in our cafeteria and tell them "See you tomorrow" as several hundred boards their buses in the afternoon," Strickland said.

"Amanda Strickland is an amazing assistant principal who has a bright future in leadership within Clay County District Schools. She actively participates in mentoring others, provides professional development to both leaders and teachers, and truly cares that every student on her campus has the resources needed to

ensure success," said Superintendent David Broskie.

As the award recipient, Strickland will represent Clay County District Schools in the state competition. In November, Strickland will be formally recognized at the monthly school board meeting on Nov. 3 at 6 p.m. at the Teacher Training Center at Fleming Island High.



Sunday, January 8th

*Always...  
Patmy Cline*

 THRASHER-HORNE  
CENTER  
THCENTER.ORG

Local Artisan Wares

Collectibles

Repurposed

Vintage

Antiques

Books

Retro

Housewares

Home Decor

Touch of Grace Galleria



352-478-1764

956 SE State Rd., 100 • Keystone



MARGARITA MONDAYS \$4 DOLLAR SPECIAL

SERVING LOCAL MEXICAN FOOD SINCE 1991



904-276-2776 • WWW.LANOPALERAKINGSLEY.COM • 2024 KINGSLEY AVE. • ORANGE PARK



# CB Isaac Realty



## VIRTUAL PROPERTY TOUR



<https://bit.ly/3eD1k7p>

**\$337,500**



**7699 White Sands Ave  
Keystone Heights, FL**

**\$275,000**



**6685 CR 214  
Keystone Heights, FL**

**\$649,000**



**9.08 ACRES**

**147 Price Road  
Hawthorne, FL**

**\$359,000**



**NEW  
CONSTRUCTION**

**556 SE 49th St  
Keystone Heights, FL**

**\$239,900**



**6051 Hillcrest Road  
Keystone Heights, FL**

**\$149,999**



**234 N Helmers Ave  
Interlachen, FL**

**\$975,000**



**Black Creek**

**2359 Sandy Run Dr N  
Middleburg, FL**

**\$879,000**



**LAKE SANTA FE**

**1972 SE SR 21  
Melrose, FL**

**\$255,000**



**DEERSPRINGS  
LAKE**

**7034 Deer Springs Road  
Keystone Heights, FL**

**352-475-2199 | 352-481-4436**  
**www.cbisaacrealty.com**

*"We Make It Happen"*



# SPORTS

## KEYSTONE HEIGHTS

# Indians finish season with loss

By Ray Dimonda  
Correspondent

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS - In the battle of 2-7 teams looking to close out 2022 on a high note, the P.K. Yonge Blue Wave brought an air assault into the Keystone Heights Indians' back yard. Through 191 passing yards, including a second play on offense flea flicker touchdown that covered 53 yards, the Blue Wave used all their weapons to hit the Indians. Not rolling over, the Indians countered with what they had, but a lack of any air threat allowed the Blue Wave to shut down Homecoming and Senior Night with a 35-22 season ender that did not close the book on 2022 the way Head Coach Chuck Dickinson wanted.

"We couldn't stop them and we just weren't tackling very well," said Dickinson. "They scored five of seven possessions; we scored three of six. You have to answer when they score. We had one series that was not very good. Other than that, I thought they fought hard all night. You always want to win for the seniors and underclassman going into the off season. We have a lot of work to do to prepare for next year."

The Indians lost the coin toss and were on offense to open the game. Using a steady dose of Cartez Daniels and Tyler Sapp pounding the rock, the Indian hallmark of grind it out in the trenches went to work and ate up the clock using over half the quarter to go the 63 yards putting the first score on the board with a Sapp touchdown from a short first and goal from three yards out. Daniels ran in the two point conversion to get ahead 8-0.

On the return, two plays later and using



Fleming Island Dreadnaught linebacker Gavin Boysen runs for interception pick six score in first half action in 44-0 win over Palatka.

only :25 seconds off the clock, the Blue Wave tried and hooked up with the flea flicker, a double reverse pass that found a wide open receiver deep down the right side, caught the ball, spun and ran the last few yards into the endzone. The missed point after left the score 8-6. Back on offense, the Indians were working the ball well into Blue Wave territory when they failed to convert a fourth down pass, handing the ball back to the Blue Wave with :33 seconds left in the quarter.

The Blue Wave used their ground game highlighted by senior running back Rashuan Walden who led the Yonge ground attack of 247 yards. After the mix bag of run pass to drive to the Keystone 17 yard line, the Blue Wave found Deldrick Goston in the endzone to go up 13-8 with 7:02 remaining until half.



CORRESPONDENT PHOTO BY RAY DIMONDA

Keystone Heights running back Cartez Daniels offers bright future for returning football squad for coach Chuck Dickinson.

The Indians went right back to work with their tank battalion attack marching down the field to the four yard line. On first down and goal to go, Sapp got the ball and the entire team swarmed him using a rugby scrum to cross the goal line with 2:16 left until the half. The point after attempt was no good, 14-13 Indians with the lead. Keystone used a high pop-up kick to get the coverage under the ball and stop a Yonge runback, forcing them to go to work on the 41 yard line. Again, the deep pass was the key to driving the field, finishing with a corner touchdown pass to put the Blue Wave ahead 20-14 with :20 seconds until the half.

The third quarter was a Blue Wave highlight reel with a 60 yard run by Walden which brought the score to 27-14 at 10:32, and another four yard run for touchdown, 35-14 with 7:04 to play in the third.

Keystone never quit and finally picked off

a Blue Wave pass in the fourth quarter. Sam Ulsch read the play and gave his Indian team new life with over 8:00 still to play. Keystone reached deep into the bag of tricks and pulled out a hook and ladder, pass and lateral to net over 30 yards. On a first and 10 from the 23 yard line, Daniels broke our another run and notched the final Indian score at 5:04 to get the 35-22 final score. The Indians executed an onsides kick to try one last attempt to get their hands on the ball, but the Blue Wave covered the play and ran the clock out on the ground.

"We only had 10 seniors this season," said Dickinson. "We started four or five, had some injuries, but started four freshman tonight. We had a lot of kids that had to step up. They did well and these kids got a lot of experience this year. Hopefully that will transfer to next year, some experience we can build on."

From our family  
to yours...  
Happy Thanksgiving!



## Homegrown ~ Local ~ Trustworthy



Boat



Life



Home



Auto

- Barbara Franklin
- Buddy Saucer
- Robin Brown
- Jake Elliott

### Keystone Heights Insurance

Serving the  
Lake Area Region  
for Over 40 Years!



Two Convenient Locations:

7388 State Rd. 21  
Keystone Heights  
352-473-4881

300 State Rd. 26  
Melrose  
352-218-4036



# Gold for FIHS's Brinkman, McDade

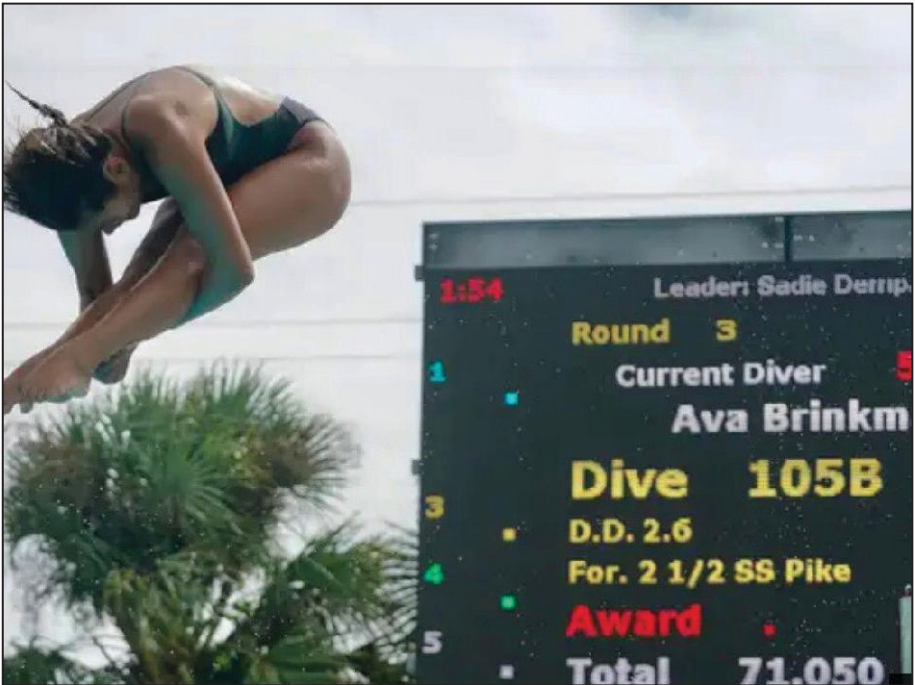
By Randy Lefko  
Sports Editor

STUART - Fleming Island High bagged two gold medals at the FHSAA state swimming and diving Class 3A championship meet Friday in Stuart with junior freestyler Maryn McDade successfully defending her 50 free state title and sophomore diver Ava Brinkman overcoming a horrific diving accident

to return to the top tier of her sport. Brinkman, who as a freshman registered one of the top scores statewide in her district championships last year, had a diving accident in the week prior to regions that ended her spectacular climb as one of the top upcoming divers in Florida. "It was definitely a surreal experience especially with everything that I went through with the accident," said Brinkman,



CORRESPONDENT PHOTOS BY SONDRASANTANA/FIHS  
Fleming Island gold medal 50 free sprinter Maryn McDade explodes from start block en route to superfast 23.07 winning split in Class 3A championships.



CORRESPONDENT PHOTO BY SONDRASANTANA/FIHS  
Fleming Island High sophomore diver Ava Brinkman soars en route to Class 3A title at FHSAA Swimming and Diving Championships held Friday in Stuart.

who scored 448.85 points for the gold with runnerup Hadley Futch of Winter Springs keeping chase with a 441.80. "I think it was incredible to see how I grew up within myself and made my way back to win the state championship." For Andrea Brinkman, Ava's mom, the anxiety of watching the year of recovery, the return to national level diving competition and the training to return to the state high school diving ranks was somewhat relieved by daughter Ava's precision through the three rounds of state meet competition. "I guess the year past really fast, from the hospital to not going to state to working hard to return and then, all of sudden, we are at state," said Andrea Brinkman. "It all hit me when she did the last dive and I knew there were three other girls that could have caught her but I knew they were not able to score enough with their dives to catch her. I knew she had won." Ava Brinkman was unaware of her position on the leaderboard until the very end when mom Andrea motioned to look at the scoreboard behind her. "Throughout all of my competitions, I hardly ever look at the scoreboard except to see my scores," said Ava Brinkman, who was also district and region champion. "After my last dive, I looked to see who was

in position to possibly catch me." Brinkman's clutch dive that separated her from her two chasers; Hutch and St. Thomas Aquinas' Kaitlyn Raby (third at 438.60) was her final dive. "I felt like they were both ahead of me before that last dive and I scored an 8 and an 8.5 on my back one and a half half," said Brinkman. "When I hit that one, I felt good that they were not going to catch me." McDade, who quietly last year blitzed the pool to her first state title in her specialty; the 50 freestyle, warded off all challengers; mainly a pesky duo from Ponte Vedra High School, to complete the mission a second time only this time with a bit more tension involved. In her prelims, McDade had to fend off Ponte Vedra sophomore sensation Penelope Zarczynski, a district and region rival in the prior two weeks. McDade smoothly ripped her fastest 50 of the season with a 23.39 with Zarczynski just off at 23.42 and Seminole's Mahya Golubovic third at 23.47 in one of the tightest races up to that point. In the final, the 1-2-3 stayed the same with McDade hitting the turbo to knock her time down to 23.07 to win with Zarczynski runnerup at 223.36 and Golubovic third at 23.49 as the trio delivered one of the tightest races in recent history.

SEE SWIM, 21



**Carpet  
Laminate  
Hardwood  
Tile & Stone**

**Customer Satisfaction  
is our Priority**

1813 Reid Street, Palatka  
386-325-0440  
[www.palatkaflooringcenter.com](http://www.palatkaflooringcenter.com)

Family Owned & Operated



[jonesgallagherfh.com](http://jonesgallagherfh.com)


**Helping Families and Friends Honor Their Loved Ones with  
Affordable Funeral, Cremation Services  
Pre-Need Planning Available  
On-site Crematory - Your Loved One Never Leaves Our Care**

**Joe Gallagher** - Owner/Licensed Funeral Director  
**Kelli Parks Moreland** - Licensed Funeral Director  
**Laura Crews** - Office Manager,  
Licensed Pre-Need Counselor

**Austin Gaver** - Licensed Funeral Director  
**Melody Kay Abercrombie** - Funeral Assistant;  
Licensed Pre-Need Counselor  
**P. Steven Futch** - Licensed Funeral Director

**Jones - Gallagher Funeral Home - Starke**  
620 E. Nona Street • Starke, FL  
904.964.6200


**Jones - Gallagher Funeral Home - Keystone Heights**  
340 East Walker Drive • Keystone Heights, FL  
352.473.3176



**(352) 473-0555**  
**FAX: (352) 473-0402**  
**CopyCabana255@gmail.com**  
**255 S Lawrence Blvd.**  
**Keystone Heights, FL 32656**

**SERVICES:**

- UPS shipping & drop off • Notary
- Fax • Scan • Copies • Printing
- Email • Office/school supplies
- 2 self service computers & printers







Orange Park's Sebastian Lopez finished 12th in 100 free and 22nd in 100 breast in Class 3A championships.

Swim  
from page 20

Zarczynski turned the tables on McDade in the 100 free with a gold with McDade fourth. McDade was tied for second last year in the 100 free.

In other races, Fleming Island junior Dylan Ducut finished 16th in the Boys 50 free in 22.33. Ducut was disqualified in the 100 butterfly as well.

In the 500 free, Fleming Island freshman Elizabeth Loehr finished 18th with a 5:18.34 effort. The winner's time was 4:59.30.

McDade teamed with Kelsey Bright, Katelyn Moore and Rielly Hurley in the 200 free relay that finished 16th and the 400 free relay that finished 13th.

In the 100 backstroke, Fleming Island's David Goodwin finished 16th in 56.73 with the winner at 48.47.

Fleming Island finished 13th in women's team scores with Ponte Vedra winning the top spot.

For the boys, Nease won the state title with Fleming Island at 43rd.

Orange Park's Sebastian Lopez finished 12th in the 100 free with a 48.46. The winner was at 45.17.

Lopez also finished 22nd in the 100 breaststroke.

Lopez later teamed with Gavin Dobson, Aston Danninger and Kaden Danninger to get 11th in the 200 free relay in 1:31.33. The winner was 1:25.72.

For Oakleaf, sophomore Peyton Loving finished 12th in the 100 breast stroke at 1:08.98 with a prelim split of 1:07.77. The winner was at 1:01.94.

Loving also finished 19th in the 50 free at 25.25.

Loving teamed with Olivia Votava, Delicia Coleman and Jazzmine Moore to get 14th in the 200 medley relay and 13th in the 200 free relay.

# HANDI-HOUSE OF STARKE

"PROUDLY SERVING YOU FOR 43 GREAT YEARS!"



COME GOBBLE YOUR WAY DOWN  
TO STARKE FOR HUGE SAVINGS



3 STALL CARPORT



ROUNDED STYLE CARPORT



RED BARN



UTILITY GARAGE



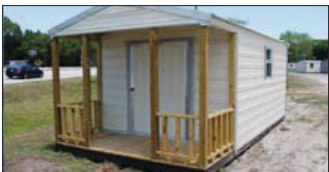
CARPORT & GABLE



ENCLOSED GARAGE



WOOD STYLE

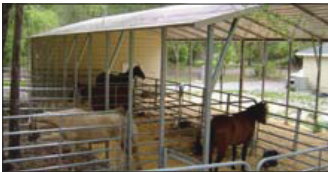


UTILITY WITH PORCH

WE PULL PERMITS • FLORIDA CERTIFIED

150 MPH WINDLOADS

WARRANTY PACKAGES • CONCRETE PACKAGES • HIGH QUALITY STEEL



HORSE BARN



RED BARN



SIDE DOOR PORTABLE



CEDAR PORTABLE



RV CARPORT



UTILITY CARPORT



LOFT BARN



WOOD WITH END BARN DOORS

\$99<sup>00</sup>

DOWN DELIVERS  
EVERYTIME

FREE  
DELIVERY

RENT  
TO OWN

NO CREDIT  
CHECK

Located in Starke, Florida  
1670 South Walnut Street (Hwy 301)  
Call Dena - 904-964-3330

REPOS  
AVAILABLE



**from page 16**

"Not all businesses are the same. Some of our local businesses have one-of-a-kind locally made products, crafting items, handmade gifts, and, etcetera. You never know what little treasure you might pick up or try in one of these stores."

"Shop Small encourages small businesses to foster a stronger sense of community which promotes better economic and social relationships. Which is great, because community events and local causes are supported more wholeheartedly."

Santa and Sheriff Michelle Cook. Guests also can participate in the Christmas tree lighting and sing holiday carols.

Though Shop Small is a nationwide shopping event to promote smaller businesses, everyone attending can expect to receive benefits from this event. Shop Small will not only provide a chance for visitors to purchase unique holiday gifts, but it will also provide quality time with friends and family. The event will give the local vendors an increase in customers and more visibility. Lastly, it will bring the community together as a whole and increase the sense of unification, too.

"Shop Small encourages small businesses to foster a stronger sense of community which promotes better economic and social relationships. Which is great, because community events and local causes are supported more wholeheartedly," Ford said.

For more information on Shop Small,  
call Ford at (352) 535-8510.



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

Level: Intermediate

# CRYPTO FUN

☐ ☾ Ω \* ♂ ≍ ≈ ★ +  
Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Each number corresponds to a letter.

(Hint:  $7 = T$ )

**A. 26 1 10 15 13 22 19 26 15**

Clue: Oversee

**B. 26 1 10 10 25 13 7**

*Clue: Assist*

**C.    3   5   13   19   20   8**

Clue: Sensitive

**D. 5 7 7 15 20 7 19 25 20**

Clue: Focus

Answers: A. supervise B. support C. caring D. attention

## WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to caregiving.

# AHLTHE

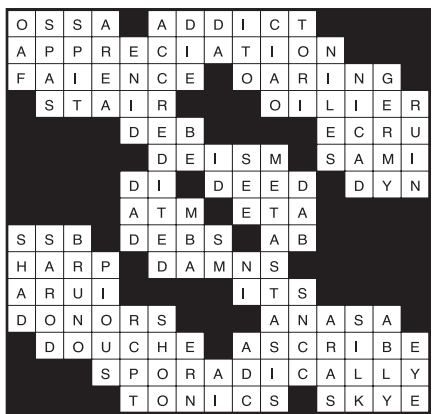
--	--	--	--	--	--

*Answer: Health*

## Guess Who?

I am an actress born in California on November 15, 1991. As a young star, I appeared opposite Harrison Ford and was nominated for a Young Artist Award. I am best known for a role on an ABC Family show about teenagers.

*Answer: Shaileene Woodley*



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

# CAREGIVER WORD SEARCH

N	Y	V	V	Y	C	B	V	O	A	S	I	X	N	N	S	D	A	F	M
C	Y	O	I	Y	O	V	S	I	I	N	D	E	P	E	N	D	E	N	T
O	Y	N	F	C	E	A	U	P	X	A	V	M	F	Y	L	I	M	A	F
M	Y	R	I	N	X	S	P	I	R	R	O	D	T	A	H	I	T	C	H
O	U	L	T	E	S	E	E	H	N	L	L	H	Y	U	A	T	O	O	S
R	E	A	C	G	T	C	R	S	C	B	F	S	R	E	P	M	M	E	M
B	V	I	D	A	H	N	I	N	O	F	I	Y	D	P	P	E	V	E	E
I	I	D	E	M	T	E	S	A	Y	P	V	A	N	A	H	I	A	M	E
D	T	O	D	F	T	I	I	I	R	T	C	H	A	E	T	M	O	E	Y
I	S	T	U	R	Y	P	O	D	O	Y	Y	I	E	C	R	H	D	I	H
T	S	S	U	U	I	M	N	A	M	M	O	L	F	O	L	I	Y	S	O
Y	S	A	C	D	L	O	P	U	E	H	I	R	V	U	S	X	G	A	S
A	R	T	S	P	C	C	P	G	A	D	I	S	H	C	T	Y	O	B	P
X	E	P	T	M	A	B	D	I	C	I	V	A	R	H	E	U	B	I	I
E	R	P	C	A	A	P	P	U	V	D	R	O	L	I	P	R	C	L	C
V	T	U	A	H	F	E	X	D	E	I	N	I	X	N	V	B	R	I	E
I	V	U	C	A	X	N	R	C	E	G	B	O	R	M	G	I	S	T	H
X	S	G	D	A	Y	R	G	O	C	O	R	G	V	I	G	C	U	Y	O
O	R	O	T	C	N	V	A	X	M	P	I	H	G	H	N	A	F	X	N

**Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.**

## WORDS

ACUTE  
AGENCY  
ASSISTIVE  
CARE  
CHRONIC  
COMORBIDITY  
COMPANION  
COMPETENCE  
CUSTODIAL  
DIRECTIVES  
DISABILITY  
DISCHARGE  
FACILITY  
FAMILY  
GUARDIANSHIP  
HOME HEALTH AIDE  
HOSPICE  
INDEPENDENT  
INFORMAL  
MEMORY  
MOBILITY  
PROXY  
SUPERVISION



# Classifieds for Clay County

Serving Keystone Heights, Orange Park, Fleming Island,  
Green Cove Springs, Oakleaf, Penney Farms & Middleburg

**904-579-2154**  
**3513 U.S. Hwy 17**  
**Fleming Island, FL 32003**

## MESSAGE TO ADVERTISERS

All ads are non-refundable. Please check your ad copy the first week of publication. We will only apply credit for the first run and credits are subject to approval of the publisher. If ad is canceled prior to the first insertion cancellation must be made by classified deadline of Monday by noon. Ads must comply with Federal, State a

local laws. We are not responsible for ad content. Ads are subject to approval by the publisher.

## DEADLINE MONDAY NOON

## LINER ADS

All line ads are 4 lines, 20-25 characters per line. Additional lines may be purchased. All rates are NET.

## PRIVATE PARTY COMMERCIAL

1 week \$14.50	1 week \$21
2 week \$24	2 week \$40
3 week \$32	3 week \$32
4 week \$40	4 week \$72

## EMPLOYMENT SPOTLIGHT

Ads are \$27 per column inch with a minimum of 2"

## ESTATE & GARAGE SALES

\$23

## BUSINESS & SERVICE DIRECTORY

1.5" x 2" \$80 for 4 weeks  
1.5" x 3" \$160 for 4 weeks

Cost includes online at:  
**claytodayonline.com**



**CARPET RESTRETCHING & REPAIRS**



**Pet Repairs**  
**Call 805-506-9980**

**Health Service/ Medical**

TRAIN ONLINE TO DO MEDICAL BILLING! Become a Medical Office Professional online at CTI! Get Trained, Certified & ready to work in months! Call 855-738-9684. (M-F 8am-6pm ET). Computer with internet is required.

## Miscellaneous

DISCOUNT AIR TRAVEL. Call Flight Services for best pricing on domestic & international flights inside and from the US. Serving United, Delta, American & Southwest and many more airlines. Call for free quote now! Have travel dates ready! 866-245-7709

DONATE YOUR VEHICLE to fund the SEARCH FOR MISSING CHILDREN. FAST FREE PICK-UP. 24 hour response. Running or not. Maximum Tax Deduction and No Emission Test Required! Call 24/7: 866-471-2576

**Prepare for power outages today**

WITH A HOME STANDBY GENERATOR

**\$0 MONEY DOWN + LOW MONTHLY PAYMENT OPTIONS**

Contact a Generac dealer for full terms and conditions

**REQUEST A FREE QUOTE**  
**CALL NOW BEFORE THE NEXT POWER OUTAGE**  
**(866) 643-0438**

\*To qualify, consumers must request a quote, purchase, install and activate the generator with a participating dealer. Call for a full list of terms and conditions.



**FREE**  
7-Year Extended  
Warranty\*  
A \$695 Value!

Bob's  
**BASEBALL** Tours

**Washington DC**  
*DC Cherry Blossom Tour*  
**March 31 - April 4, 2023**  
Home games for the Washington Nationals, New York Yankees and Boston Red Sox. Tour begins in Washington DC and ends in Boston, Ma.

**East Coast Tour**  
**August 18 - August 27, 2023**  
Home games for Washington Nationals, Aberdeen Iron Birds, Baltimore Orioles, Philadelphia Phillies, NY Yankees, NY Mets & Boston Red Sox.  
**Little League World Series!**  
Guided tours of NYC, Philadelphia, DC & Baltimore. Tour begins in Washington DC & ends in Boston.

Each starting/ending location is near a hotel with free shuttle to/from major airport  
Tours include deluxe motor coach transportation, addl. sightseeing opportunities and quality game tickets/hotels  
**www.bobsbaseballtours.com | 507-217-1326**

**Are you receiving SSDI/SSI benefits?**

**You may be eligible for additional benefits.**

**CALL US TODAY**  
**888-490-6616**

**CITIZENS DISABILITY** SINCE 2010 CITIZENS DISABILITY.COM

## Medical Supplies

Attention: VIAGRA and CIALIS USERS! A cheaper alternative to high drug store prices! 50 Pill Special-Only \$99! 100% guaranteed. CALL NOW: 866-259-6816

## Home Improvements

NEED NEW FLOORING? Call Empire Today® to schedule a FREE in-home estimate on Carpeting & Flooring. Call Today! 855-919-2509

BEAUTIFUL BATH UPDATES in as little as ONE DAY! Superior quality bath and shower systems at AFFORDABLE PRICES! Lifetime warranty & professional installs. Call Now! 888-460-2264

UPDATE YOUR HOME with Beautiful New Blinds & Shades. FREE in-home estimates make it convenient to shop from home. Professional installation. Top quality - Made in the USA. Call for free consultation: 866-636-1910. Ask about our specials!

BCI Walk In Tubs are now on SALE! Be one of the first 50 callers and save \$1,500! CALL 888-687-0415 for a free in-home consultation.



**To inquire about placing an ad in this section, call 579-2154**

## Financial

Personal & Business Loans. Up to \$500,000 unsecured. Personal, Emergency, Auto, Business Startup, Debt Consolidation, Home Improvement, etc. Visit:

EasyLoanNetwork.com

Health & Fitness

VIAGRA and CIALIS USERS! 50 Generic Pills SPECIAL \$99.00. 100% guaranteed. 24/7 CALL NOW! 888-445-5928 Hablamos Español

Dental insurance- Physicians Mutual Insurance Company. Covers 350 procedures. Real insurance- not a discount plan. Get your free dental info kit! 1-855-526-1060 www.dental50plus.com/ads #6258

Attention oxygen therapy users! Inogen One G4 is capable of full 24/7 oxygen delivery. Only 2.8 pounds. Free info kit. Call 877-929-9587

## Miscellaneous

Prepare for power outages today with a GENERAC home standby generator \$0 Down + Low Monthly Pmt Request a free Quote. Call before the next power outage: 1-855-948-6176

Eliminate gutter cleaning forever! LeafFilter, the most advanced debris-blocking gutter protection. Schedule free LeafFilter estimate today. 20% off Entire Purchase. 10% Senior & Military Discounts. Call 1-833-610-1936 BATH & SHOWER UPDATES in as little as ONE DAY!

Affordable prices- No payments for 18 months! Lifetime warranty & professional installs. Senior & Military Discounts available. Call: 855-761-1725

Donate Your Car to Veterans Today! Help and Support our Veterans. Fast- FREE pick up. 100% tax deductible. Call 1-800-245-0398

HughesNet- Finally, super-fast internet no matter where you live. 25 Mbps just \$59.99/mo! Un-limited Data is Here. Stream Video. Bundle TV & Internet. Free Installation. Call 866-499-0141

Become a published author. We want to read your book! Dorrance Publishing trusted since 1920. Consultation,

production, promotion & distribution. Call for free author's guide 1-877-729-4998 or visit dorranceinfo.com/ads

Put on your TV Ears & hear TV w/unmatched clarity. TV Ears Original- originally \$129.95- now w/this special offer only \$59.95 w/code MCB59! 1-888-805-0840

DISH TV \$64.99 For 190 Channels + \$14.95 High Speed Internet. Free Installation, Smart HD DVR Included, Free Voice Remote. Some restrictions apply. Promo Expires 1/21/23. 1-866-479-1516

The Generac PWRcell solar plus battery storage system. Save money, reduce reliance on grid, prepare for outages & power your home. Full installation services. \$0 down financing option. Re-request free no obligation quote. 1-877-539-0299

Safe Step. North America's #1 Walk-in tub.

Comprehensive lifetime warranty. Top-of-the-line installation and service. Now featuring our free shower package & \$1600 off- limited time! Financing available. 1-855-417-1306

Protect your home from pests safely and affordably. Pest, rodent, termite and mosquito control. Call for a quote or inspection today 844-394-9278

Switch and save up to \$250/yr on talk, text & data.

No contract or hidden fees. Unlimited talk & text with flexible data plans. Premium nationwide coverage. 100% U.S. based customer service. Limited time get \$50 off any new account. Use code GIFT50. 1-855-903-3048

Attention Homeowners! If you have water damage and need cleanup services, call us! We'll get in & work with your insurance agency to get your home repaired and your life back to normal ASAP! 855-767-7031

MobileHelp, America's premier mobile medical alert system. Whether you're home or away. For safety & peace of mind. No long term contracts! Free brochure! 1-888-489-3936

**REACH 20 MILLION HOMES  
NATIONWIDE WITH ONE BUY!**

**The Classifieds**  
measuring up to your  
expectations one ad at a time.

Are you searching for a better job or a more reliable car? Have you outgrown your apartment? Are you looking to get rid of that old couch and chair sitting in your garage? Whether you're buying or selling, the classifieds has it all. From automobiles and employment to real estate and household goods, you'll find everything you need in the classifieds.

Put the classifieds to work for you, and inch even closer to your goals.

**CLAY  
TODAY**

3513 US Highway 17  
Fleming Island, FL 32003  
904.579.2154



# Blessed Beyond Measure!

*During this Thanksgiving Season,  
I'm especially grateful to everyone  
who allowed me to turn their dreams  
into an address. Thank you for  
another amazing year!*

**Over \$22 Million  
Sold in 2022**

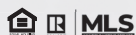
**Multi-Year  
Multi-Million Dollar  
Producer**

**Turning your dreams  
into an Address!**

275 S. Lawrence Blvd. Ste 1,  
Keystone Heights

Call or Text

**352-494-1829**



**MeLissa  
Pellerito**  
REALTOR®



**Florida Homes  
Realty & Mortgage**

**(352) 478-SOLD**  
**MeLissa Pellerito**  
**mpelleritorealtor@gmail.com**



**Community Involvement • First Time Home Buyers • Veterans • Investment  
Residential • Commercial Property • Land & Building • Retirement Homes**