

CLAY TODAY



Remember MOTHER'S DAY Sunday, May 14



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THURSDAY, MAY 11, 2017

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VOLUME 51, NO. 19 75¢

'Slavegirls' ad opportunity for positive change?

By Eric Cravey Managing Editor

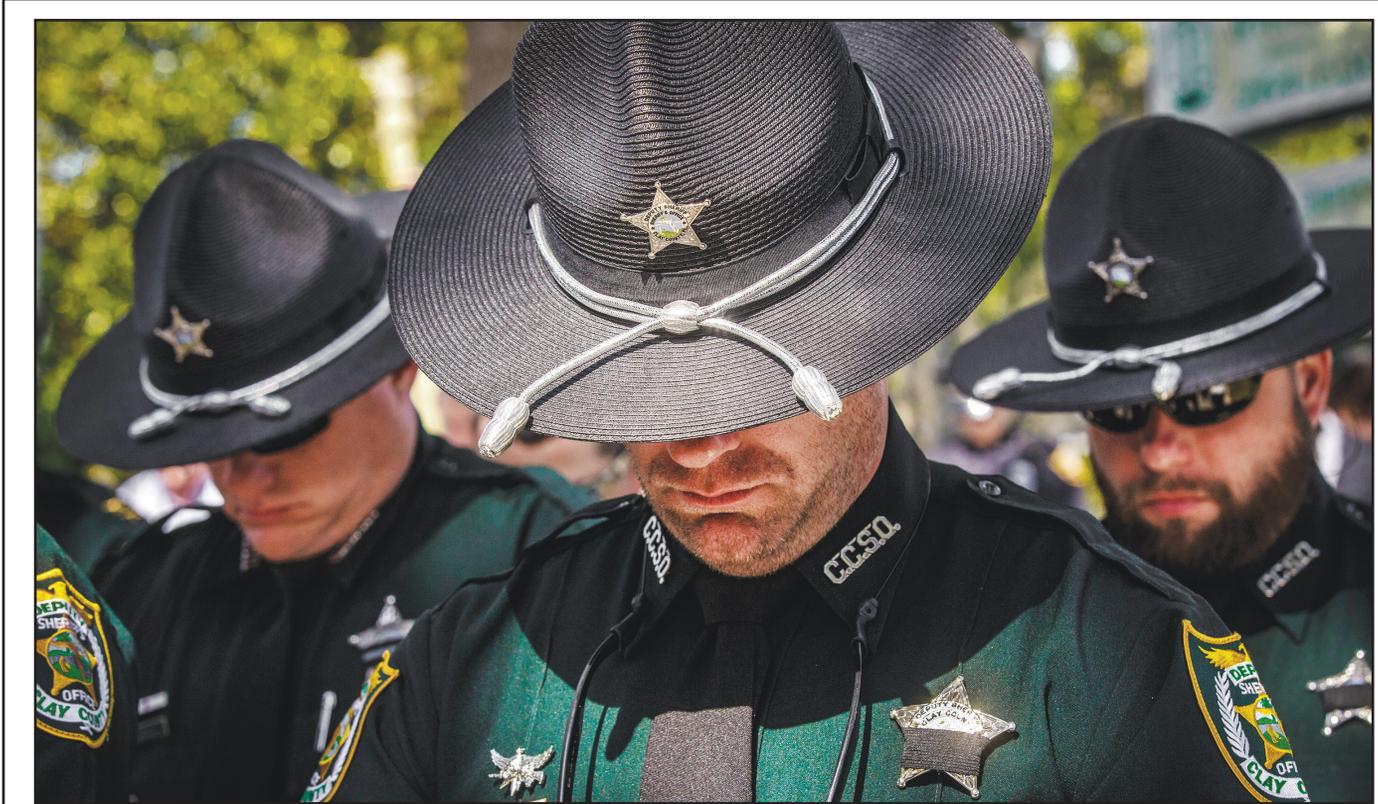
FLEMING ISLAND – School superintendent Addison Davis was preparing to go to bed the night he received a call telling him that a white male Fleming Island High student had posted an ad on Craigslist for two black “slave girls for sale” on April 26. “It’s very disturbing. I remember when I got the picture and the call. It’s unfortunate. It’s sad that any of our kids are sub-

ject to discrimination. I told my wife that we have to continue to be role models for our two kids and then I have to continue to be a role model and problem-solver for the entire district,” Davis said. Then, he immediately turned concern into action. He and other district staff worked together to create a plan that involves sitting students down and having authentic face-to-face discussions about race and all forms of discrimination. He

emailed the plan to each member of the Clay County School Board. “Immediately upon acknowledgement of when a kid made a bad decision, I immediately engaged the leadership team,” Davis said. “One of the things I wanted to do was create focus groups from every ethnic subgroup within the school regardless of gender and then really meet with them to identify what areas of concerns they have as it relates to their culture and climate

and what we can do to break down barriers and create unity.” And while the advertisement touting the caption “Two healthy negro slavegals for sale. Good Condition and hard work ethic! If you need another pair of hands around the farm/house, you’re in luck!” has been taken offline and the student suspended for 10 days, some onlookers believe the pain

SEE CHANGE, 12



STAFF PHOTO BY KILE BREWER

Deputy Chris Padgett of the Clay County Sheriff's Office bows his head during the invocation Tuesday at the Police Officer Memorial Ceremony at the sheriff's office headquarters. See story on page 5.

Burn ban may effect holiday festivities

By Jesse Hollett Staff Writer

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – With two-thirds of Florida in the midst of a drought, Clay County joined more than 30 other counties Tuesday and issued a countywide ban on open fires. The burn-ban comes as citizens prepare for Memorial Day and Fourth of July festivities. But county officials are now currently barring the use of fireworks until further notice. “We will be very conscious of [the holidays] as we move forward...” said County Fire Chief Lorin Mock May 9 addressing the regular Board of County Commissioners meeting. “We will be cognizant of that and move in a way

SEE BAN, 9

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Winners

from page 4

Morgan's face routinely plastered on billboards and TV ads across the Sunshine State, but his colorful, rant at Boots and Buckles (in which he exhorted young people to vote for his Medical Marijuana amendment) is an enduring reminder that his outspoken, charismatic brand of political celebrity appeals to many. He failed in 2014 but succeeded in 2016. Now, he's the front-runner for the Democratic nomination for Governor, even though he may not run.

Again, consider the long game. John Morgan isn't going anywhere, and this Tallahassee setback is merely political fuel; it will empower him to either sue the Legislature, run for Governor or both. Either way, he'll be in the headlines. And to Republicans hoping John Morgan runs because he's said and done crazy things: You must have missed the 2016 election.

Democrats love to hate Rick Scott and Republicans love to hate John Morgan. However, the 2017 legislative session made both men more palatable to those who hate them and more powerful among those who love them. So, what looks like a setback on Adams Street is likely to play well in Paisley, Palatka, Palm Beach or as the saying goes, Peoria — making Rick Scott and John Morgan the biggest winners of the session.

Tre' Evers is a Republican political consultant and communications specialist with Consensus Communications. His column appears courtesy of FloridaPolitics.com.

History

from page 4

- Green Cove Springs City Council approved a measure allowing Magnolia Point to expand its original plan from 550 homes to 740.
- Clay County Health Department Director Ed Stansel was joined by the Board of County Commissioners and health department staff to break ground on a new health department clinic on County Road 218 northwest of Clay Hill Baptist Church.

40 years ago, 1977

- Herbert Alexander Brown Jr. was sworn in as the first black officer at the Orange Park Police Department.
- The Green Cove Springs Planning and Zoning Board denied a rezoning request made by Bess C. Merritt of Jacksonville who wanted to open a psychiatric counseling office in the middle of a residential area at 150 Lester St.
- Orange Park town officials dedicated its new \$108,000 police department headquarters on Stowe Avenue with William A. Toelstrup, commissioner of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, as guest speaker.



STAFF PHOTOS BY KILE BREWER

The Clay County Sheriff's Office Honor Guard participates in the opening ceremony of the 2017 Police Memorial Ceremony held May 9 at the sheriff's headquarters in Green Cove Springs.

Honoring those on the thin blue line

By Kile Brewer
Staff Writer

GREEN COVE SPRINGS — Dozens of men in green uniforms and flat-brimmed hats gathered outside the Clay County Sheriff's Office Tuesday in honor of eight officers who lost their lives while serving their community in Clay County.

Representatives from all area law enforcement agencies attended the annual event, with their respective departments' badges wrapped in the traditional black mourning band, joining several local elected officials and family members of the deceased officers.

The event was held in conjunction with the national Peace Officers Memorial Day and Police Week, a tradition that dates back to John F. Kennedy's presidency aimed at honoring the men and women who have died in uniform across the country. The official national day of remembrance is May 15, but due to scheduling conflicts, the Clay County Sheriff's Office held their event early.

"This event memorializes the lives of men who have fallen in the line of duty," said Darryl Daniels, Clay County sheriff. "Their memories will never, ever, fade away."

The officers honored date back to the first known death of a Clay County peace keeper, Sheriff Josephus Peeler, who was shot while breaking up an argument at a train station. The dates continue through 2012 when a detective, David White, was killed during a drug raid. For his investigation into the illegal methamphetamine trade in Clay County, White was posthumously awarded as 2011 CCSO Deputy of the Year. All eight names are etched into a memorial just outside the sheriff's office where the ceremony was held.

Before the proceedings, including the presentation and retiring of colors performed by the CCSO Honor Guard, the Rev. Tim Martin of the First Baptist



An officer lifts the final rose from a vase of water to place in a wreath in honor of David White, a detective who was killed in the line of duty in 2012 during a raid on a drug house.

Church of Middleburg delivered a welcome speech to the crowd before leading the group in prayer.

"[Law enforcement] is not an easy occupation, although there are many who choose to wear the badge," Martin said. "We can take comfort in the fact that those who have had their watches come to an end now have peace."

Sen. Rob Bradley was originally scheduled to speak, but after some scheduling issues he was "stuck in Tallahassee," according to backup speaker Mike Cella, District 1 Clay County Commissioner.

"We cannot commemorate this day without celebrating their lives," Cella said, urging the crowd to focus on the good these eight men had done in their

lives and to remember the lives they saved and the joy they shared with their families.

Following a wreath-laying ceremony and a 21-gun salute, the First Coast Highlanders pipe and drum corp performed "Taps" and "Amazing Grace" and the ceremony drew itself to a close.

"To these families, I say thank you for sharing your loved one, and remember that they are in our hearts," Daniels said. "For those who have a deputy or officer who still serves, continue to support them in this honorable profession that they were called into. They couldn't be successful without the support and prayers from their family."



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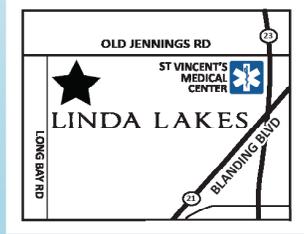
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In Spirit

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Briefs



Mission fund established

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – Clay Countians who have been called to missions work have a possible new resource available.

Keystone Heights United Methodist Church has established The Laura Belle Thrasher Memorial Missionary Fund as a matching fund to support sister churches in Cuba and Peru. Any funds received for this purpose will be matched on a dollar for dollar basis up to a maximum of \$5,000. Here, Cheryl Thrasher Bane presents a check from the Thrasher family to Rev. Jeff Tate of KHUMC in memory of her mother, Laura Belle Thrasher, former “First Lady” of City and the late wife of former Mayor Wil Thrasher.

Spring for the kids

MIDDLEBURG – Annunciation Catholic School holds its annual “Spring for the Kids” dinner and fundraiser on May 12 at Sacred Heart Catholic Church on Fleming Island.

Master of ceremonies will be longtime voice of the Jaguars, Brian Sexton with guest speaker Jacksonville Jaguars linebacker Paul Posluszny.

The event will begin at 6 p.m. with cocktails and hors d’oeuvres, followed with dinner at 7:30.

Funds raised go toward the school’s AngelPlex project, a cafeteria, performing arts and sports complex for Annunciation Catholic School. The groundbreaking on the gymnasium is slated for the Summer of 2017.

Individual dinner tickets cost \$150 payable to Annunciation Catholic School. Table reservations for eight are available for \$1,100 and for four tickets at \$500.

Guests will also have a chance at “Once in a Lifetime” trip for two for 3 nights/4 days to San Francisco/Napa Valley. This

SEE BRIEFS, 14



Where do you take Refuge?

Finding comfort in the midst of troubling times

By Eric Cravey
Managing Editor

FLEMING ISLAND – In the book of Matthew, Jesus responds to his disciples on the Mount of Olives when they asked him about the “end of the age.”

He warned them in Matthew 24:6-7 that “You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places.”

Today, with the unrest in North Korea, the ongoing civil war in Syria, bombings in cities around the world and gun violence and protest marches here in the U.S, it could be easy for Americans to worry about where society – and the world – is heading. But what about Christians and

“When we choose the love of a political party over love of our neighbor, this is a place of false refuge.”

- Heather Harding

the church today? Some area pastors believe the weary can still find comfort in church.



Heather Harding

“A question we are answering in these difficult times is, “Where do you take refuge?” While some believe that the church has lost its relevance in people’s lives, I strongly believe that it is times like these

that our faith matters the most,” said Pastor Heather Harding of Fleming Island United Methodist Church.

Harding also has a few questions of her own when it comes to dealing with difficult times. She asks “What do we cling to? Where do we put our trust?”

“In a time where news comes in different flavors of opinions and Scripture comes with different

interpretations, we find ourselves in need of some absolutes to hold onto in a changing world. I believe that Jesus gave us those absolutes in Luke 10:27, ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself,’” Harding said.

Harding said she often recommends parishioners unplug from the noise, limit

SEE COMFORT, 15

Grants help Quigley House expand victims' services

By Jesse Hollett
Staff Writer

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – Financial and legal strains following a hard break from an abuser can sometimes force victims back into the very household they worked to escape.

With the addition of an attorney and an economic justice advocate to their staff, Quigley House, Clay County's only domestic abuse shelter, hopes to end those reluctant reunions.

In January, Quigley House added the new staff positions to help victims navigate the transition from victim to self-sufficiency. The two new advocates will help victims with job training, legal counsel, and find housing at a time when the help can be altogether difficult services to obtain.

Escaping from an abuser can be an almost insurmountable task, and it's only exacerbated when the victim has been financially dependent on the abuser or has no idea how to navigate various legal hurdles, such as securing a restraining order.

"For many battered women, the perpetrator may have come in and kicked the door in one too many times and they get evicted," said Peggy Payne, Quigley House executive director. "When they try to rent, numerous times that comes up and they're charged more for a deposit or they're turned away because of that."

In that example, Bridgette Davis, the shelter's new economic justice advocate, would help the victim attain stable and affordable housing, as well as cover security deposits where necessary.

The process can be cathartic for victims, some of whom have been told their entire lives they are worth nothing. Davis helps victims discover abilities they didn't know they had, such as meal planning and

budgeting, as well as help them discover what careers might be a good fit for them.

"We have a couple people in the community that can help with resumes and we have a career closet where they can get brand new outfits for their interviews and for their new jobs," Davis said.

"Having people recognize that is very eye-opening for them because it opens up a whole new world," Payne said. "They weren't just a housewife. They weren't just a mom. They weren't just a punching bag. They were the person that held that family together as long as they possibly could no matter how bad things got. Having them recognize that is the biggest thing we do."

When needed, a victim could go to the shelter attorney Winnie Eilert to begin the process of filing a restraining order against their abuser.

Eilert and Davis are paid through two separate grants through the 1984 Victims of Crime Act, which uses fines from federally-convicted offenders to pay for survivor services on a local level at no cost to victims.

Simultaneously, however, Eilert is restricted by the very grant that allows her to work with victims pro-bono. Statutory requirements for domestic abuse remain written very black and white, but abuse is not always so simple. Abusers can torment a victim emotionally through various means.

But to provide injunction assistance, the victim must fall under one of the statutory requirements, whether it be physical domestic abuse, sexual assault or stalking.

Davis and Eilert are bound by the parameters of their grant.

'...They weren't just a housewife. They weren't just a mom. They weren't just a punching bag. They were the person that held that family together as long as they possibly could no matter how bad things got.'

- Peggy Payne



This building is home to Quigley House, which recently expanded services for victims of sexual and domestic abuse to include legal help and economic justice.

In the future, the shelter intends to expand their services further. While Payne would not divulge all of the programs she is currently looking into, she did say the shelter is currently researching how to get a divorce lawyer on staff to walk victims through what is both an emotional and legal barrier to true self-sufficiency.

Likewise, the help they provide can sometimes be stymied by a lack of services available in Clay County.

For example, some victims find themselves without vehicles and must use the county's public transit to get around. Davis said this presents problems for many of her clients due to the hours and days the system operates.

Similarly, the county not only has a shortage of affordable housing, but a short-

age of housing in general. Davis said it's getting harder to find housing in the county for victims, and often she turns to Duval County to meet their needs.

Quigley House's new services provide advocates for victims in a time of need. But they ultimately place the victims on a path of being the advocates for their own future.

"For victims being knocked down figuratively and literally on a regular basis will destroy your self esteem, and you feel like you're having to beg people all the time to help you, to recognize that you're a human being with the same needs that you have and you're just at a position in your life where you need someone to put aside their preconceived ideas, look at you as a single parent and say 'you know what, everybody deserves a second chance,'" Payne said.

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Florida HEALTH

Darling daylilies

By Wayne Hobbs

Environmental Horticulture Agent

GREEN COVE SPRINGS – One common perennial seen throughout the landscapes of the United States is the daylily. They are popular due to their extensive number of varieties to choose from, their grass like texture, and their showy flowers. Often planted in large groupings of 10 or more, these plants make striking landscape statements when in bloom.

Choosing a daylily can be a difficult situation, as there are so many to choose from and some may perform better than others. If you would like to find out more information about Florida daylily societies and varieties, visit <http://www.daylilies.org/AHSreg12.html>.

Overall, there are three main types of foliage growth – dormant, evergreen, and semi-evergreen. Dormant daylilies will die back after frost and regrow, evergreens will remain green throughout the year, and semi evergreens can do either depending on location. With flowers, they can be found in multiple colors and sizes, ranging from a couple of inches up to 10 inches. You can even find some varieties that curl like a rose or have more of a spider lily appearance.

When choosing a location for your plants, they can grow in a variety of conditions based on variety. Light colored daylilies should be planted in full sun while darker colored varieties should have partial shade. A great location for these plants is under the dappled shade of pine trees. Do not plant them in full shade.

When preparing the bed for planting, amend the area with 3-4 inches of peat or compost and add in about ¾ to 1 pound of fertilizer with a 3:1:2 Nitrogen-Phosphorous-Potassium ratio. Soil pH should be between 6.2-6.8 so contact your local UF/IFAS Extension Office for soil testing.

Once the soil is ready, you can plant your daylilies. If bare root, remove foliage 6-8 inches from the crown and trim the plant into an inverted v shape. Next, dig a hole larger than the root mass of the plant and make a mound in the center of the hole which you will spread the roots of the lily over. Finally, place soil back over the roots and make sure the crown of the plant is at ground level. Planting is similar with potted lilies, except you will not need to worry about the mound. Once planted, water well, mulch, and keep the soil moist until the plants are established. The best times to plant are the spring and fall.



"Daylily varieties can range in shape, size, color, and form. Source: UF/IFAS"

Once established, daylilies can be very drought tolerant but extensive dry weather will reduce the vigor and blooming of the plant so irrigate as needed during the summer heat. Fertilizer should be applied fall, early spring, and mid-summer with the same amount and same product as the one used at planting. Some insects, such as thrips, aphids and spider mites may cause some issues in the plants but are usually not severe. There is one disease that can cause loss of quality, Daylily Rust, so look for varieties that are resistant. Another major pest of the daylily is the whitetail deer, so if you have a deer issue, your daylilies may be a favorite food source.

Another great feature of daylilies is that as they grow, they can be separated into more of the same variety and spread through your garden. Seeds can also be used to grow daylilies but it will take around two years until they flower. For more extensive information on Daylilies, visit: edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep006.

If you have any questions about the Master Gardener program, landscape and garden topics, or need plant or pest materials identified, contact the University of Florida/IFAS Extension Office online at <http://www.clay.ifas.ufl.edu>, follow us on Facebook, or call by phone at (904) 284-6355.



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Moncrief fires 6-0 shutout over South Sumter

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS – A four run fifth inning assault led to a 6-0 blowout over South Sumter for the Keystone Heights Lady Indians softball team in their region 2-5A quarterfinal Wed., May 3 at Keystone Heights High School.

The Indians shutout was fueled by a sterling performance on the mound from junior hurler Megan Moncrief who collected four strikeouts and just five hits and one walk.

Keystone Heights (19-9) continues in region 2-5A play to their semifinal with a trip to Eustis (23-1) on Tues., May 9. Eustis won a 2-0 decision over 5-5A runnerup Santa Fe to advance.

In the bottom of the region 2-5A bracket, Nature Coast Tech (20-8) will travel to Hernando (20-9) for their semifinal match also on May 9.

After Keystone Heights spotted South Sumter a walk to put a baserunner in play, Indians' shortstop Molly Crawford and catcher Bailey Story combined forces to shut down a steal attempt to end the inning.

An error on a fly ball to left field from Ashleigh Jennings became Keystone Heights' first run with Story getting hit by a pitch and Shayla Rollins singling.



STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Keystone Heights shortstop Molly Crawford has been stellar clogger for Indians' defense.

Note: Keystone Heights lost 5-1 in region semifinal to Eustis.

In the fourth, Kaitlyn Cline scored after reaching off an error with a Moncrief single to push Keystone Heights up 2-0.

In the fifth, the Indians' scoring barrage started with Jennings bunting for a single with Story getting a field error in front of an RBI single from Rollins to go up 3-0. Crawford singled in Story for a 4-0 score with Bri Wells singling in Rollins and Crawford to push the score to 6-0.



CORRESPONDENT PHOTO BY RAY DIMONDA

Ridgeview High celebrates region playoff win over Paxon. Panthers head to Ponte Vedra in region semifinal on Tues., May 9. Note: Ridgeview 15-0 to Ponte Vedra in region semifinal.

'Dangerous' Panthers head to Ponte Vedra showdown

By Ray DiMonda
Correspondent

JACKSONVILLE – The Ridgeview Panthers took their traveling road show to Paxon School For Advanced Studies in Jacksonville's industrial district to play the Golden Eagles after the Panthers decided to take the longer road to the Championship with their bottom of the seventh inning loss to Ponte Vedra last Thursday. The Panthers didn't disappoint the journeying fans as

they got out to an early lead, allowed Paxon to tie, and once again, went into extra play to finally end the Golden Eagles season with a four-run top of the eighth inning rally that Paxon could not answer. In the end, Ridgeview posted a 6-2 victory, sending the Division 6A, District 3, 10-0 champs home for 2017.

Head Coach Roger Harvey knew

SEE PANTHERS, 34



Oakleaf High third baseman Baylee Goddard is cocked and loaded to throw out a Tallahassee Lincoln batter in Knights' 10-0 region quarterfinal win at Oakleaf High School.

Lady Knights slam Lincoln

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

OAKLEAF – Homers from Baylee Goddard and Angela Agurkis highlighted a 10-0 barrage by the Oakleaf High Lady Knights softball team over visiting Tallahassee Lincoln in the region 1-8A quarterfinal on Friday at Oakleaf High School.

Oakleaf (27-2, region finalist) next plays in the region semifinal against Atlantic Coast High (15-7), the district 2-8A runnerup to Oakleaf a week ago and a 8-6 winner over Tallahassee Chiles in their region opener.

In the bottom of the region 1-8A bracket, also in semifinal play, will be Wharton High (17-5), a 5-3 winner over East Ridge and Strawberry Crest (14-12), a 9-5 winner over Lake Minneola. The region final is set for May 12. In 2016, Strawberry Crest beat Oakleaf in the region final.

In region 2-8A, East Bay (18-9) plays at Plant City (20-2, 2016 region semifinalist) and East Lake (19-4, 2016 region quarterfinalist) plays at Lakewood Ranch (26-2, 2016 region semifinalist).

Against Lincoln, with pitcher Kelsey Sweatt opening on the mound, the Knights rifled to a 5-0 first inning lead off a barrage of hits from Alex Acevedo, Rebecca Koskey, a walk to Agurkis and a long fly from Haley Willis for a 1-0 lead that grew

to 2-0 from a Goddard RBI single, 3-0 off a dropped fly on a Mika Garcia pop to second base and 4-0 on a bases loaded walk to Agurkis.

Oakleaf scored their 5-0 lead off an error on a Katie Kistler line drive to the Lincoln pitcher before Acevedo flied out.

Sweatt punched out three strikeouts in the ensuing inning.

Goddard pounded her homer in the second with Willis at first base after a single through the shortstop hole.

Sweatt punched out two more strikeouts in the third inning.

In their third inning at bat, Oakleaf got one run off singles to Tracy Ferguson and Kistler and a long flyball from Acevedo.

With Madi Davis on the mound for Oakleaf coach Christina Thompson, Lincoln got two walks as their only threat of the day, but a grounder to Goddard at third and a flyout to Destiny Pacetti in left field ended the threat quickly.

In the fourth, Agurkis took the first pitch to the concession stand off the left field fences for a 9-0 lead. Goddard got to third base after being hit in the batter's box and moved by a Garcia single, but Oakleaf failed to score.

In the fifth, Koskey ramped up with an RBI double with Kistler and Acevedo on base to end the game 10-0.



Oakleaf High baserunner Tracy Ferguson, right, gets high five from coach Christina Thompson after getting to third base in Knights 10-0 region playoff win over Lincoln. Note: Oakleaf beat Atlantic Coast 10-0 in their region semifinal on Tuesday.

Fleming Island flag girls win championship thriller

By Ray DiMonda
Correspondent

MANDARIN — A missed extra point by Mandarin High in the flag football district 1-2A championship game proved fruitful to the Fleming Island High Golden Eagles who held to a 14-13 win to advance to the region semifinals on Fri., May 12 against Deland High at Spec Martin Stadium in Deland.

The winners of the Deland vs. Fleming Island semifinal will match up against the winner of Dr. Phillips of Orlando vs. Martin County of Stuart in the region final set for Tues., May 16 with a state semifinal on Fri., May 19 and the state championship on May 20.

"We have great athletes and they are super smart; what could be the best players we ever had in the school," said Fleming Island coach Roger Dailey. "But they were making freshman type of mistakes all



CORRESPONDENT PHOTO BY RAY DIMONDA

Fleming Island defender Megan Rodriguez stretches for tag in 7-0 district semifinal win over Lee. Fleming Island continued to beat Mandarin 14-13 for district title.

along the way." After dispensing with the Robert E. Lee High Generals 7-0 in the first of two semifinals for the night, the Golden Eagles had to wait out and scout Mandarin as they played the Sandalwood Saints. The Mandarin Mustangs would move on and face Fleming Island for the title game.

In their championship match, Fleming Island got ahead early, but Mandarin came back, then missed a point after attempt that would end up being the difference in the end as Fleming went on to win 14-13.

In Game one against the Lee Generals, Fleming scored a first quarter touchdown with a fake pass and run in by Hope Rozier, who also scored the point after. The team then relied on its defense to coast into the Mandarin game.

Going into the Mandarin game, Flem-

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first found wideout Lea Plante all alone on the right side of the Raider defense with a 10 yard strike that Hawkins took 45 yards to paydirt with just 70 seconds off the game clock. A point after pass to running back Alexis Stilianou put the score at 7-0 before the Raiders could get their breath back.

Clay High, ranked in the top 10 of the Pinkos state polls, fended off a strong pass attack by the Raiders led by quarterback Harlee Sharp and wideout Katie Berlin with running back She'najah Williams, a Hershel Walker-type power back for coach Matt Boyack.

After Clay's initial score, the Raiders knocked off nearly the entire first quarter clock with a 15 play drive sprinkled with passes to Berlin and Denise Davis getting the Raiders inside the Clay five yard line. On a fourth and inches to goal play for the Raiders, Clay defender Lynette Quinones chased Sharp into a faulty pass that ended the scoring threat with 1:42 left in the first quarter.

Fogarty, heading to Mississippi State on a soccer scholarship, ran a simple pass-run option attack from coaches Jared Moses and John Stilianou that kept the ball moving downfield.

Into the second quarter, Fogarty kept the pressure on the corners of the Raider defense with a 15 yard scoring run pushing the score to 13-0, 14-0 with a PAT pass to

Kristin Mitchell.

Orange Park continued to stake bits and pieces of the field as Sharp moved the ball downfield with deft passes to Katie Berlin and a nifty lateral to J.C. Ankrom turning into a first down at the Clay 20. From there, Williams powered behind a V-formation blocking attack by the Raiders to set up a first down at the Clay four yard line.

Clay's defense, with a blitz on fourth down stopped the drive just an inch from paydirt.

With 2:00 left in the half, Fogarty took over and hit soccer teammate Brooke Green, one of the fastest forwards in northeast Florida, with a lofted pass downfield that Green hit the jets on and tracked down for a 55 yard scoring play to up the

score to 20-0.

After the half, Orange Park found success in Sharp to Berlin passes on the sideline and figured a way to score with the strategy on fourth and six to close the gap to 20-6.

Orange Park's defense, with Larickya Cummings on one side, started trapping Fogarty in the backfield, but Fogarty, on the first play of the fourth quarter, retaliated with a scramble away from Cummings finding green grass for a six yard score and a 26-6 Clay lead.

Orange Park ended the scoring with three passes to Berlin and a Williams' dump pass giving Sharp position to score on a scramble from the Clay five yard line to end the game at 26-13.

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Knight-fall: Oakleaf loses district final big

By Ray DiMonda
Correspondent

JACKSONVILLE — In a district final marred by errors, the Oakleaf High baseball team lost a 17-4 decision to Fletcher High in the district 2-8A championship game Friday night at Atlantic Coast High School.

"We just couldn't get a feel for it tonight. It looks like we may have had that hang-over from a big game Tuesday (3-2 victory over defending district champion Atlantic Coast in district semifinal)," said Oakleaf High coach Chris Lannom, who repeats as district runnerup. "We moved some guys around, my shortstop made some errors, we made four errors, five errors by the second inning, you can't win like that."

Despite the loss, Oakleaf (18-7) continues into the region playoffs with a trip to Tallahassee Lincoln (21-6), who repeats as district 1-8A champion, on Tues., May 9 while Fletcher hosts 2-8A runnerup Tallahassee Chiles (15-11). In the bottom end of the region 1-8A bracket, 3-8A champion Ocala Forest (15-11, state semifinalist in 2016) hosts 4-8A runnerup Freedom High (4-20) and 4-8A champion Wharton (16-8) hosts 3-8A runnerup Ocoee High (18-8).

From the top of the first inning where Oakleaf hit the second batter with a pitch, the Knights just never got going as Fletcher closed out the game in 6 innings, 17-4.

The frustration really settled in when Fletcher went on a four-run rally in the top of the second inning. With a grounder, deep ball to right and a walk, Fletcher loaded the bases with no outs. Then using all hits, Fletcher put up the four runs. The wind was a major factor and both team's fielders were challenged.

"Well, they hit the ball quite well several times," said Lannom. "Especially tonight, the wind, it just seemed every time they came up, the wind just started blowing out.

So, you know, that's baseball. Sometimes they get hit over your head."

Up 5-1, Fletcher came to bat in the top of the fourth inning and Oakleaf couldn't seem to end the inning. Once they did, Fletcher was up 10-1.

If the Knights wanted to play a full game, they needed something fast. That came in the bottom of the fourth when the Knights had a spark. After a Tristan Adams single, Justin Wager popped out to center. Zach Coon walked, but not before Adams stole second, then stole third, both times head first sliding. It was during these plays when the Adams, the Knights' shortstop, sustained an injury to his hand. Chris Mauloni hit a hard grounder to right field to score Adams. Ty Andrews was next hitting a fielder's choice, getting out but scoring Coon and Mauloni. Now only down by seven, things looked like they could still swing Oakleaf's way.

The Knights held on defensively through the top of the fifth not allowing any more runs.

In the bottom of the fifth, Oakleaf couldn't do anything with the walk and another hit batter on base.

In the top of the sixth, the wheels came off. The Senators put up another seven runs. Without Oakleaf scoring at least three runs, it would be all over. When the leadoff batter, Chris Mauloni was walked, the team saw a glimmer of hope. That was until the next two batters struck out and the final batter grounded out, ending the game due to the 10-run mercy rule.

"We're just going to go back to practice and remind ourselves who we are," said Lannom. "You never want to lose like that in a district championship game. When we get them in practice I'll remind them on Monday, I'll remind them about the things we could have done and opportunities we didn't take advantage of, things like that."



CORRESPONDENT PHOTO BY RAY DIMONDA

Oakleaf High catcher Vinnie Caldas awaits throw as Fletcher baserunner closes in at home.

Note: Oakleaf lost 6-0 to Tallahassee Lincoln in their region quarterfinal.

Spartans lose in district finals

By Ray DiMonda
Correspondent

ST. AUGUSTINE — With a 6-5 lead in the first portion of their Thursday scheduled district 2-3A championship game, the St. Johns Country Day School baseball team had their best shot of downing top-seed University Christian, but 24 hours later, the return to St. Joseph's Academy for the rain-delayed final three innings proved fatal to the Spartans who scored six runs in three innings to fall 11-6 to the Christians.

The unusual circumstance of the game which started on Thursday, and due to the thunderstorms moving through, had to stop midway through the fourth inning and finish the game Friday. St. Johns battled hard with a rally in the second inning scoring five runs. At the weather delay, The Spartans were up 6-5. In the end, University Christian went on a rally of their own in the sixth inning that the Spartans couldn't answer. The final score a day after the scheduled completion was



St. Johns Country Day School pitcher Tyler Grogg settles in in Friday finish of Spartans district final loss to University Christian.

11-6.

"We believe we belong on the field with really good teams like that (University Christian)," said Spartans head coach Tom Lucas. "Our goal was to get

SEE SPARTANS, 29

Indians

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onship over P.K. Yonge Friday night at host Santa Fe High School. Keystone Heights, the district 5-4A champion in 2015, advances to region 2-5A play with The Villages (15-9, the district 6-5A runnerup, 2016 region finalist) visiting Keystone Heights on Tues., May 9 for the region quarterfinal. P.K. Yonge travels to South Sumter for their region opener. In the bottom two region 2-5A games, 7-5A champion Nature Coast Tech (18-9) hosts 8-5A runner Lake Highland Prep (15-8, 2016 region semifinalist) and 8-5A champion Bishop Moore (15-12, 2016 state semifinalist) hosts 7-5A runnerup Hernando (15-12, 2016 region quarterfinalist).

"Our one through nine in the batting lineup all competed with Keaton getting us

off to a good start," said Keystone Heights coach Alan Mattox, now 21-6 overall.

"I can't say enough about Josh (Sheppard) on the mound and Conner O'Steen (reliever in the sixth) coming out and doing what he did. Fantastic. We have more pitching depth than we've ever had."

Hall, the team leader with eight homers, said him and Keaton offer enemy pitchers two choices of who to deal with.

"I love it because I can do whatever I want up there knowing that he comes up next," said Hall.

"We kind of have our own home run hitting contest sometimes out there."

With Josh Sheppard starting on the mound with four strikeouts in six innings and O'Steen slamming the door shut with six strikeouts after entering the game in the fifth inning. With third baseman Nate Gagnon snatching a dangerous sliced hit

just over third base snuffing out a groundout for the Indians' defense, Sheppard settled in after a walk to end the inning with a strikeout.

From there, in the second inning, Keystone Heights added one more run with Tyler Ricketts, a third long ball hitter for the Indians, smashing a ball to the P.K. Yonge third baseman that was too hot to handle and forced a long overthrow that put Ricketts at third base.

Two outs later, Gary Seale ripped an RBI single to centerfield to score Ricketts.

Up 3-0 into the third, Sheppard had a bases loaded scenario off an error by Gagnon, a walk and an error at second base from O'Steen, but answered with a O'Steen to Steve Rodrigues to Keaton double play that allowed one run and a flyout to stave off the threat.

"We came up big on defense when we

had to," said Mattox.

In the ensuing fourth inning, Keystone Heights exploded for three more runs with doubles from Gagnon and Pierson Lewis and an error on a hit by O'Steen putting the score at 5-1 with Hall hitting a fielder's choice grounder for the final 6-1 inning finish. Mattox put O'Steen on the mound who quickly sent fireballs to home plate to seal the game.

**Keystone Heights
(Mattox 1995-present, region
playoffs 14 times)**

3A championship games: 1995 (Lost 3A final to North Florida Christian), 1996 (Lost 3A final to Tampa Catholic), 2008 (lost in 3A state semifinal to John Carroll 5-2), 2009 (lost in 3A region final to Trinity Catholic 10-3, 2-4, 5-3)

Fleming Island defeated in baseball semifinal

4-0 lead turns to 8-7 loss

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

JACKSONVILLE – Fleming Island High baseball held a 4-0 first inning lead in their district 2-8A semifinal against Fletcher High, but mishaps, strong hitting by the Senators and a controversial play at first base that injured Golden Eagle pitcher Billy Schopp allowed the lead to slip away as Fletcher eventually won 8-7 to knock the Golden Eagles out of the championship tournament. Fletcher would continue to beat Oakleaf 17-4 for the district title.

After batting to the 4-0 lead, the Golden Eagles were victimized by two singles and two errors to give Fletcher two runs and a 4-2 deficit into the second inning.

A single by Fleming Island's Willie Campbell was followed by a well-laid bunt by Schopp turned into a near-disaster as Fletcher's first basemen backed into Schopp as he crossed the base and toppled him as he passed the base. Campbell scored on the play to push the score to 5-2.

With both benches clearing and both coaches hurling comments back and forth, officials tried to calm the players as well as the fans behind the fences as tensions rose



Fleming Island High baserunner Cory Solomon scurries back to first base in Golden Eagles' 8-7 district semifinal loss to Fletcher. Fletcher beat Oakleaf 17-4 for district title.

quickly. In the ensuing inning, Fletcher put two more runs on the board with a two run single off Schopp, who returned to the pitcher's mound after the fall.

In the third, Fleming Island opened with a rifle shot to centerfield from Cory Solomon who eventually got caught in a rundown as Fletcher's defense stepped up.

A nifty double play from Schopp to Campbell to Justin Hawkins was the highlight of the third inning for the Fleming Island defense.

In the fourth, a double by Fletcher and a fielding error tied the game at 5-5.

Caleb Lanoux entered to pitch for Schopp in the fifth the game knotted still



Fleming Island batter William Cleveland just misses high riser close to helmet in district semifinal against Fletcher.

at 5-5 and a nifty overhead catch in centerfield by Solomon squelched a Fletcher scoring threat. Both teams put up stiff defense into the seventh inning with Solomon again flagging down a deep centerfield hit to thwart a potential game-breaker from Fletcher as both teams readied for extra innings. In the top of the eighth, Fleming Island got two walks and a single from Justin Stadelmaier to load the bases and set up a two run single by Tyler Hudson that upped the game to 7-5.

Fletcher responded with their own loaded bases scenario off an throwing error, a single and a walk that setup a three run double that ended the game at 8-7.

Spartans

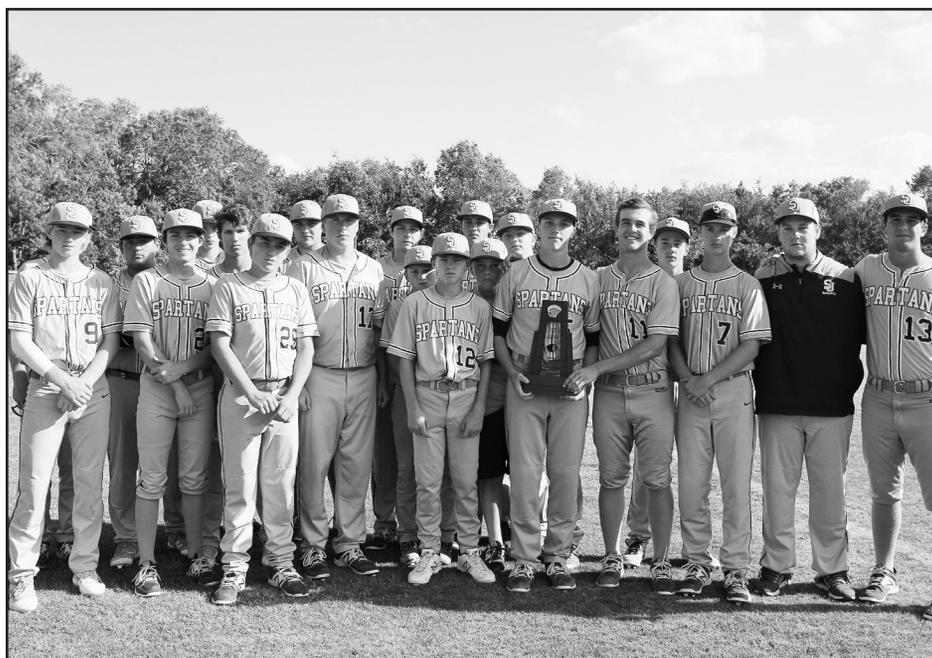
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to the playoffs, second goal is to win the district championship."

St. Johns (16-10) advance to a region 1-3A semifinal at Tallahassee Maclay (17-9, 2016 state semifinalist) on Wed., May 10 with University Christian (18-8) to host North Florida Christian (17-8, 2016 region finalist). In the bottom of the bracket, Highlands Christian (6-12), the 7-3A champion, will host 8-3A runnerup Sagement (9-6, 2016 region finalist) while 8-3A champion Archbishop Carroll (14-3, 2016 region semifinalist) hosts 7-3A runnerup John Carroll Catholic (12-13, 2016 region finalist). The region final is scheduled for May 16 with May 26-27 for the state semifinal and final.

Against University Christian, The Spartans went three and out to start the game and the Christians came out of the box ready. Off a leadoff walk, the Christians grounded out, then took another walk. A fly to center was the second out, but not before a runner tagged up and put the first score on the board. A single to center would score the next run before the Spartans could retire the inning.

Down 2-0, St. Johns opened with a single by Troy Britts, and a walk by Cody Myers to put two on with one out. Jacob Asdot popped up and the pitcher couldn't make the play, loading the bases. After the second out, the Spartans decided they



St. Johns Country Day School's Spartans baseball team earned the runner-up trophy in district 2-3A with their two-day loss to University Christian in the district championships. Spartans travel to Tallahassee Maclay High on May 10 for their region playoff opener.

could not waste the runners on and went to work. Off an Evan Engelbrecht walk, the Spartans were on the board. Troy Myers was hit by a pitch to make it even at two. Jack Hodges was walked to take the lead 3-2. Tyler Grogg singled to the shortstop, who couldn't get a handle on the ball to make the play, bringing in run number four. Troy Myers closed out the second inning scoring giving the Spartans a comfortable 5-2 lead early in the game.

The Christians were not going to just fold up shop that early in the game and

one-by-one in the next three innings, began chopping the lead by one. St. Johns added to their lead in the bottom of the fourth with a walk by Hunter Russell and Jack Hodges. On a wild pitch, Russell took off for third and was safe. Seeing the opening, he then took off for home and was safe, opening the lead to 6-5 to close the inning. In the top of the fifth, the Spartans could do no more than get one runner on. Then, Mother Nature visited and the game was halted due to weather. Both teams would need to come back and finish on Friday.

On Friday, both teams had to start with new pitchers due to the rest rules, and the game had a new umpire staff as the other crew was already assigned a Friday game. Play resumed with the Spartans on defense. The first batter was walked and the second struck out. The next hit looked like it would sail over Jack Hodges head at shortstop. Jack jumped to grab the ball from midflight and quickly hurled it back to first for a double play. The Spartans dugout was on fire and they seemed to have all the momentum swinging their way. The next at bats killed any momentum they started. Jacob Asdot was walked, then a pop-out, a strike out looking, then Asdot got caught stealing to end the inning. Back on defense to try and hold off any attack by UC, Evan Engelbrecht walked the leadoff batter, then gave up three hits in a row.

"That's the only thing where the rain kind of hurt us," said Lucas. "We had to pull some pitchers. We're just not deep pitching wise. We spent our number one in the semi-finals, our number two we spent yesterday so we just didn't have a lot of options on pitching. For the most part in the inning, he was throwing strikes. And he's a senior, so I was going to give him the opportunity."

By the end of the inning, then Spartans found themselves down 11-6 and not much game left to play. With the Spartans finally back at bat, Troy Myers would be the only one of the four batters to find his way on base, ending the game.

Gymnast-turned-diver Farrell snags college scholarship

Injuries spurn new sport

By Randy Lefko
Sports Editor

OAKLEAF – Oakleaf High School diver Jesstina Farrell just got tired of being injured from the rigors of her 12 years of gymnastics and took a shot on the diving team for coach Kate Swartz for her final two years as a Knight athlete.

“I broke my elbow as a sophomore,” said Farrell, who recently inked a scholarship to continue her diving at the University of West Florida. “It was just not fun always having injuries because of gymnastics. It’s tough on the body.”

Farrell stormed into the district and region diving scene as a newby with gymnastics-level skills and posted a district runnerup finish in 2015 behind Bartram

Trail’s Hannah Leahy and a sixth place at regions with Tallahassee Chiles two-time region 1-3A champion Rainey Vause the top finisher. Vause, a sophomore, was third in 3A in 2016 with a 402.30 with Farrell fifth at 355.30.

“When I first started diving, I was a little nervous being the new face, but the other divers were all very friendly and that helped,” said Farrell, who trained with Atlantic Coast High School athletes. “It made the transition easier because we all knew each other. I kind of got close with Vause from Chiles. I think the other girls liked the quick improvements I made from the first year.”

Farrell slowly figured out the scoring of diving and has steadily climbed higher with her overall scores.

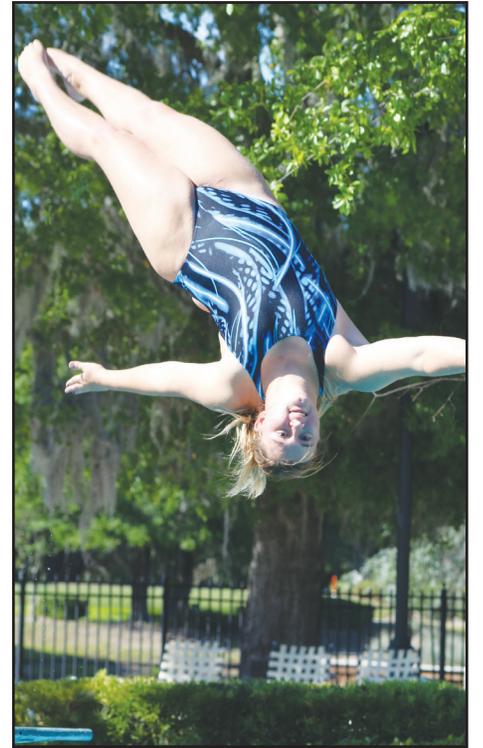
“It’s very much like gymnastics in that as the judges see you at districts, then

regions then states, they expect a lot better performances each time,” said Farrell, who cited the floor exercise and the flips and twists as an advantage for diving. “I posted my best score at this year’s region meet.”

Farrell liked her front double pike dive as her favorite with the region dive her best effort.

“I was not as nervous and had a bit more experience,” said Farrell. “Of course, Rainey (Vause) is in my district and she’s very good.”

West Florida has three NCAA Division II top 10 finishes for swimming and diving with a sixth place finish in 2016. UWF had six national title holders and 22 All-Americans with a diver of the year selection, senior Monica Amaral, who finished off her fourth straight national title and fourth College Swimming Coaches Association of



STAFF PHOTO BY RANDY LEFKO

Oakleaf High diver Jesstina Farrell added valuable points to Knights swim totals.

America (CSCAA) Diver of Year award.

“They have a top notch program so I hope I can improve enough to have some input,” said Farrell. “They seemed very interested in my gymnastics background and quick turnaround to diving.”



Bridgette had two reasons to need help from the NICU

Bridgette had her twins Jada and Jaden two months early. Both needed a little extra help from the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). The babies were in the NICU for two weeks and during that time, Bridgette worked with the nurses to keep the babies on a regular schedule for breastfeeding and bonding. Bridgette says her North Florida OB/GYN physician Dr. Jade Pizarro and the NICU nurses were nothing short of miraculous in how they treated the twins and her needs as a mother.

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MHS ace Maddie Erwin signs with Flagler College

ST. AUGUSTINE – Maddie Erwin, a 5-foot-7 defensive specialist/libero, will join the 2017 Flagler College volleyball team, head coach Matt Affolder announced on Monday. She is the eighth newcomer for the Saints, which includes Victoria Bowrosen, Raquel Kulak, Jessica Lodge, Cadie O’Hern, Karlie Redfern, Regan Swift and Jordan Taylor.

“We are thrilled to add Maddie Erwin to our 2017 recruiting class,” said Affolder. “To have a talented local product (Middleburg High School) join our program is exciting, and we know Maddie can make us better in the back court. She is an experienced player and has received tremendous training from her high school coach, Carrie Prewitt, as well as her junior college coach, Stephanie Skidmore, at Indian River State College. Flagler volleyball fans will see a hard-nosed player with good

ball control and defensive skills, as well as someone with a wicked topspin jump serve. We were fortunate in that Maddie had been evaluated/recruited while in high school by assistant coaches Kelly Pickett and Pete Sproules, and their knowledge of who Maddie is on and off-court was a major factor in her recruitment. I know Maddie will blend immediately with our current team and she has the drive and competitiveness to push for playing time from day one.”

Erwin transfers in to Flagler from Indian River State College in Fort Pierce, Florida. She was a two-time All-Southern Conference selection for the Pioneers. Erwin led the team with 431 digs (4.1 per set) and 38 service aces (0.36 per set). As a freshman, she led the team with 543 digs (4.56 per set) and was second on the team

in service aces with 44. Erwin helped lead the Pioneers to their first-ever conference title. At Middleburg, she helped lead the Broncos to a pair of final four appearances at the state tournament. Erwin played for the Middleburg Volleyball Academy club team.

Flagler finished the season with a 24-7 overall record this season and posted a 16-2 record in the Peach Belt Conference, its most wins in league play since joining in 2009. Flagler is the two-time defending PBC Tournament champions. The Saints advanced to the NCAA Division II Southeast Regional for the seventh time in the last eight years.

Flagler has made two NCAA Division II National Tournament appearances and is the only conference school to win a match at that level.



STAFF PHOTO BY RANDY LEFKO
Middleburg High graduate Maddie Erwin was strong net presence for two Final Fours.

Fleming Island soccer signee

STAFF PHOTO BY RANDY LEFKO

RIGHT: Fleming Island High soccer standout Alex Cruz, center, sits with family members; left to right front, nephew Lucas Cruz, mom Yoriko Cruz and dad Enrique Cruz with, left to right back, brother Manny Cruz, with daughter Ellie and wife Stacy Cruz, and brother Niko Cruz. Alex Cruz was standout member of Fleming Island Class 4A champions and will continue play at Stetson University in Deland, Fla.



Clay High soccer standout Brooke Green, center, sits with parents Angie and Jamie Green, along with coaches Stephanie Waugh, left, of Clay High, and Wale Leyumi, of the Clay County Soccer Club while signing a scholarship to continue playing at Flagler College in St. Augustine. Green led Lady Blue Devils to region playoffs and also scored more than 100 career goals.



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Jump

from page 25

adjust for the wind and rain,” said Carter. “We try not to change too much from practice to the meet and this was the state meet. We just adjusted his run to the pit for the wind.”

Briley adjusted and hit a 47'-2" jump on his third jump and a 47'-1" on his final jump. Kani Falconer, a senior at Miami Killian, finished behind Briley at 48 feet with third and fourth both in the low 47-foot range.

“That first jump was as good a first jump as we could expect down there,” said Carter. “He got that out of the way and put the pressure on the other jumpers.”

In the Class 3A triple jump, Middleburg High sophomore Marcus Floyd finished second with a 45'-11.75" with Sebastian Ridge junior Queshun Watson's winning jump of 47'-11.25".

Floyd also advanced from regions in the 100 and 200 events where he finished eighth in the 100 and 11th in the 200.

Floyd's teammate, junior Kaley Petrosky finished fourth in the high jump at 5'-3.75" with 5'-5.75" winning the event. Petrosky won her district with a 5'-5" high jump.

“I don't worry about her as far as the nervousness of the meet because she is so cool out there,” said Middleburg coach April Martin, who credited her husband Craig, the Middleburg head track coach, with teaching her the intricacies of jump coaching to pass on to Petrosky and sophomore Bryce Quiett, who, though nearly breaking the Middleburg school record of 6'-8" with a region winning 6'-7.5" jump, fell way short at 6'-2" to finish sixth.

“Bryce and Marcus are very young and will only get better at the big meets with more experience. A lot goes on at the state meet that doesn't necessarily happen during the regular season and even districts.”

In Class 4A, Oakleaf High senior Anthony Norris, who advanced from regions in the high jump and the long jump, finished third in the long jump at 22'-5.75" and sixth in the high jump at 6'-3.5" where six high jumpers tied at 6'-3.5" but Norris was sixth on misses. Norris passed until the fifth round of jumps at 6'-3.5", but missed on the first two jumps.

In the long jump, Norris, who best the Oakleaf High school record twice through districts and regions, hit his best jump on his first jump then fouled twice to end up short of the winning 23'-8.75" jump. Norris finished second in the 4A region meet with a 23'-75" jump. In the region high jump, Norris was third at 6'-4.75".

In Class 1A, Sage had the second fastest split in her 300 meter hurdles with Providence's pair of Kendal Johnson and Elizabeth Crosby, who finished 1-2 in the region 1-1A final ahead of Sage, behind her.

In the final, Sage held off Crosby a second time, but Johnson edged Sage for second by just .21 with a 45.52 split to Sage's 45.73. Sage, who ran a season-best of 45.20 in the prelims in a runaway heat

Class 4A

Other state meet performances included, in Class 4A, in the 3200, Fleming Island High junior teammates Andrew Miller and Evan Fuller finished fourth and 10th overall with winner Isaias De La Puente being disqualified for a lane violation at the start giving Miller, who clocked in at 9:37.28, and Fuller, who clocked a 9:53.73, one place up the final finish ranks.

In the Class 4A 800, Fleming Island High senior Cameron Dill, who was second at regions in 1:55, got knocked off his feet in the first 200 to end his career with a 14th place 2:14.38 finish.

In the 4 x 400 boys race, Fleming Island finished ninth with a 3:24.18 after registering at region 1-4A a third place split of 3:21.51.

In the girls 200, Fleming Island senior Ashley Nelson took 15th in 25.79.

Oakleaf sophomore Loren Johnson finished fifth in the long jump at 17'-11.75" and finished 13th in the triple jump with a 36 foot jump with the winning jump at 42'-8". Also in the long jump, Oakleaf senior Jaqueline Thomas finished sixth at 17'-11".

In the girls high jump, Oakleaf High senior Nia Anthony finished 12th at 4'-7.75" with the winner at 5'-7".

Also in the boys triple jump, Oakleaf High senior Khalif Copeland fouled on all his jumps.

Class 2A

Ridgeview High senior Devon Fertil finished eighth in the triple jump with a 45'-1.75" jump with the winner at 47'-8.5".

In the boys 110 high hurdles, Ridgeview High sophomore Glenn Rodgers finished 12th at 15.97 with the winner at 14.44.

Class 1A

St. Johns Country Day School sophomore Jett Isley finished 13th in the 400 with a 53.37 split to the winning time of 50.71.

Distance runner Mackenzie Glenn ran a personal best in the 3200 of 12:04.35 to finish 12th with the winning time at 11:07.94.

first place finish to break a long-standing record by Nikki Aiosa, improved both times from a third place region split of 48.49 in the final and 47.87 in the region preliminaries. Sage also advanced from regions in the 100 hurdles but did not finish in the state prelims.

“Courtney was injured on Monday in a mishap on the track at practice and did not practice on a hurdle until the warmups for the 300,” said St. Johns coach Jay Birmingham. “We decided at breakfast on Friday that her injury, a hamstring, may not hold up in the 100 hurdles so we chose to go for just the 300 hurdles. She ran magnificent in both the prelims and finals to come home with the bronze.”



STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Middleburg High sophomore Marcus Floyd finished second in the Class 3A triple jump, but also competed in the 100 and 200 sprints.



Middleburg High junior high jumper Kaley Petrosky finished fourth in the Class 3A high jump after winning districts and finishing second at regions. Petrosky's high jump teammate, sophomore Bryce Quiett, took sixth at 6'-2" also in the Class 3A high jump.



Fleming Island High's distance duo of Evan Fuller, left, and Andrew Miller, both juniors, had strong state meet finishes in the Class 4A 3200; 10th for Fuller, fourth for Miller.

THE PLAYERS Championship 2017 pre-tournament notes

Dates: May 9-14, 2017
Where: Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.
Course: THE PLAYERS Stadium Course at TPC Sawgrass
36-36—par 72/7,189 yards
Field size: 147
2016 champion: Jason Day
Purse: \$10,500,000 (\$1,890,000/winner)
FedExCup: 600 points to the winner
Format: 72-hole stroke play
Twitter: @THEPLAYERSChamp

- A look back at THE PLAYERS 2016 Final Leaderboard
Jason Day 63-66-73-71—273 (-15)
Kevin Chappell 71-67-70-69—277 (-11)
Justin Thomas 70-68-75-65—278 (-10)
Matt Kuchar 71-67-72-68—278 (-10)
Colt Knost 72-63-74-69—278 (-10)
Ken Duke 74-67-65-72—278 (-10)



STAFF PHOTOS BY RANDY LEFKO

Spain's Sergio Garcia, the 2008 Players Championship winner, recently won his first Augusta Master's championship and returns to The Players Championships as a heavy favorite.

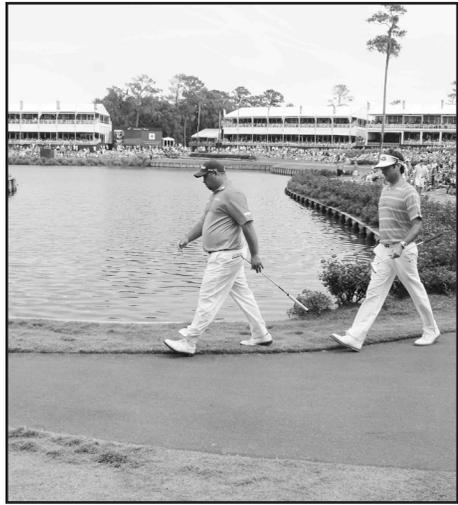
How Jason Day won THE PLAYERS Championship in 2016

After holding sole possession of the lead after each round, Jason Day won THE PLAYERS Championship by four strokes. It marked his 10th career PGA TOUR title in his 181st professional start at the age of 28 years, 6 months, 3 days. Day became the fifth player since 1980 to win 10 or more times on the PGA TOUR before his 29th birthday, joining Tiger Woods, Rory McIlroy, Phil Mickelson and David Duval.

More on Jason Day

Jason Day became the third different player to win THE PLAYERS while ranked No. 1 in the Official World Golf Ranking: Greg Norman (1994), Tiger Woods (2001 and 2013) and Jason Day (2016).

With wire-to-wire wins (no ties) at the 2016 Arnold Palmer Invitational presented by



The infamous 17th hole at TPC Sawgrass is one of more notorious holes in all of golf and the taker of many shots at the Players.

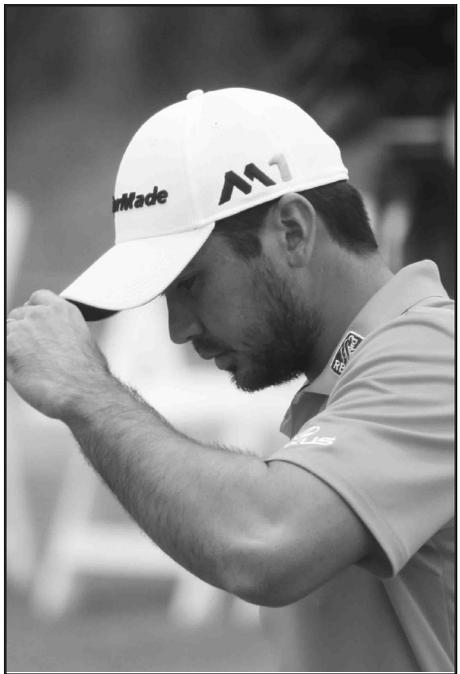


Rory McIlroy, seventh at the Masters, is a crowd favorite and one of more aggressive golfers in the PGA.

MasterCard and THE PLAYERS Championship 2016, Day joined Tiger Woods (2000, 2002), Tom Watson (1980) and Johnny Miller (1974) as players to win wire-to-wire twice in the same season dating to 1970. Mackenzie Hughes (The RSM Classic) and Justin Thomas (Sony Open in Hawaii) are the only wire-to-wire winners this season.

Day became the fifth wire-to-wire winner of THE PLAYERS, and first since Hal Sutton in 2000.

Day tied the Stadium Course 18-hole course record with 9-under 63 in the opening round



2016 Champion Jason Day, 22nd at Augusta, has a slew of challengers for him to become first defending champion to repeat.

last year. Colt Knost matched that record in the second round. Martin Kaymer, Fred Couples, Greg Norman and Roberto Castro are others who share the record.

In six appearances at THE PLAYERS, Day owns an additional top 10 (T6/2011), a T19 in 2013, and he missed the cut three times (2010, 2012, 2015).

Last year, Day played nine events in the season before coming to THE PLAYERS ranked No. 2 in the FedExCup standings. He won to move to No. 1. This season, Day ranks No. 99 in the FedExCup standings after nine events.

In eight starts this season, Day's lone top-10 result is T5 at the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am.

Day will attempt to improve on a record that currently belongs to fellow countryman Adam Scott. Scott, the champion in 2004, was the last PLAYERS champion to post a top-10 finish (T8) while attempting to successfully defend his title. Here's a look at how recent past champions have performed while defending their title at TPC Sawgrass;

Table with 3 columns: Year, Winner, Result while defending. Lists winners from 2004 to 2016.

No player has ever successfully defended their title at THE PLAYERS Championship, with Nick Price's fifth-place effort in 1994 the best finish for a defending champion.

A look at the field

Top 10 in current FedExCup standings and 47 of top-50.

Top 10 in Official World Golf Ranking and 48 of top-50.

111 PGA TOUR winners for a total of 455 PGA TOUR victories.

All winners on the PGA TOUR since THE PLAYERS last year will be at TPC Sawgrass (Wells Fargo winner TBD)

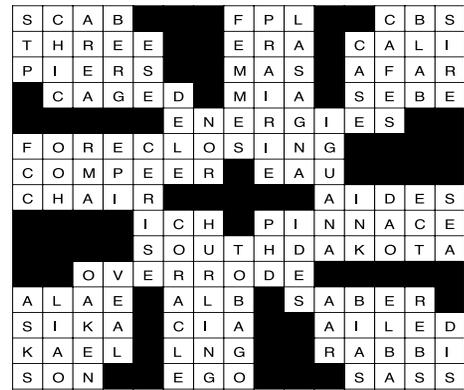
Nine former PLAYERS winners: Jason Day (2016), Rickie Fowler (2015), Martin Kaymer (2014), Matt Kuchar (2012), K.J. Choi (2011), Henrik Stenson (2009), Sergio Garcia (2008), Phil Mickelson (2007), Adam Scott (2004).

A total of 18 first-time PLAYERS Championship participants.

For the third consecutive year, Bernhard Langer (59) is the oldest player in the field after earning an exemption for winning the 2016 Constellation SENIOR PLAYERS Championship. This will be Langer's 26th start in THE PLAYERS. Last year he missed the cut with 72-72-144.

Mark O'Meara holds the best finish by a player who earned a spot via the PGA TOUR Championships victory, finishing 74th in 2011.

Qualified for THE PLAYERS, but not competing are: Brandt Snedeker (wrist), Jon Curran (rib), Colt Knost (wrist), John Senden (family medical issue), Tiger Woods (back) and Thomas Pieters.



SOLUTION:

9x9 grid solution for the crossword puzzle.



Matt Kuchar, fourth at the Masters and fourth at the Players last year, shoots from below ground level in 2016 Players Championship. Kuchar, the 2012 champion, is strong driver and joins list of nine former champions attempting a repeat win.

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 Examine the physics, chemistry, and biology that lie hidden in every bite of food we eat. Understanding the deep evolutionary roots of human reactions and cravings for food offers a new way of thinking about our relationship to the modern diet.



THURSDAY, MAY 18, 8 PM
D-Day: Over Normandy
 Narrated by Bill Belichick, *D-DAY: Over Normandy* tells the personal stories of those who served in WWII. Modern-day aerial footage is accompanied by interviews with veterans and archival footage. Part of WJCT's Stories of Service.

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Panthers

from page 26

coming into tonight, he had one issue his team had to conquer. "The biggest thing this week was trying to hold the pressure off; to negate the pressure. It still got by. I mean, we looked loose, we looked relaxed, but the pressure was there, especially on the seniors, you know it's got to be there on them, but they handled it." The game got off to a great Ridgeview start when the lead-off batter, Sarah Anderson was hit by a pitch and put on first base. Kelsey Solomen bunted to try to advance the runner, was safe on first and advanced Anderson to second. Chloe Chambers was next up and walked on four pitches. After a KK Sutherland fly out, Alyssa Adams grounded to third, scoring Anderson. Paxon would retire the inning with the 1-0 Panther lead. Both teams would go through the top of the third inning without doing any more than getting one runner on base.

In the bottom of the third, the Panthers gave up a line drive double to set Paxon up with a runner in scoring position with no outs. Pitcher Sarah Anderson walked the tying run in. Alyssa Adams had the next ball hit to her and she easily made the out, killing off Paxon's advance.

In the top of the fifth, after an Anderson double and a Kelsey Solomen walk, Chloe Chambers grounded out to second base as Sarah Anderson crossed the plate for the 2-1 Panther go ahead run.

In the top of the eighth with the score 2-2, Ridgeview showed why Head Coach Roger Harvey calls his girls "quietly dangerous."

KK Sutherland got it started with a screaming line drive single to left field to get things going quickly. Alyssa Adams followed right behind with another shot to left field earning a single and pushing Sutherland to third. On a textbook sacrifice bunt by Cheyenne Vincent, Paxon third baseman overthrew the ball to first and brought Sutherland and Adams home as she scored a standup double bunt, putting the Panthers up 4-2. Max Torres followed and ripped a line shot right through the third baseman's legs for a standup single and moving Vincent to third base. Torres stole second and Reggie Boyd popped out. With runners on second and third and two outs, Sarah Anderson hit a fly to right field that dropped in front of the right fielder. Vincent and Torres both scored giving Ridgeview a nice four-run cushion going into the bottom of the eighth

About facing the Sharks once again this season, Harvey said "Well we run back up against our nemesis, Ponte Vedra, over there, on the road which is what we like. Deep down, I feel like they don't want to see us again. We're dying to see them again! We're chopping that tree down, taking a hack every time. They (Panthers) are hungry. They're hungry with their accomplishments this year knocking Clay off early."

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Thriller

from page 27

ing seemed to get their game going early. On the initial drive, Mandarin got one first down before kicking the ball away for Fleming Island's opening offensive drive. The combination of Liz Labas to Aubrey Burke and Hope Rozier worked the ball right down the field. With first and goal, Labas shovel passed to Malory Sinsel, who shoveled it back to Labas, who found Hope Rozier wide open in the end zone for the Golden Eagle's first score. With the good single point after attempt, Fleming was up 7-0 with 4:30 left in the first quarter. Mandarin didn't take it laying down, and drove right back with some deep passes to score with 8:35 left in the half. The point after attempt was broken up by a very alert Fleming Island defense.

"The defense has carried us all year long," said Dailey. "That's where year in and year out, our mentality's been. I think a lot of people around the state, because we've had success, think we're an offensive team. We have an unusual offense, but we're always defensive minded. We choose defense first, to kind of hang our hat on that mentality."

On the subsequent drive, Fleming was moving the ball when a pass and pitch went wrong and ended up in the arms of a Mandarin player who ran the ball back for a Mandarin score. The point after was good and Fleming found themselves down 13-7 in the second quarter.

To start the third quarter, Fleming Island uncharacteristically deferred the winning coin toss to go on offense to start the third quarter.

"You know this is the first time in two years that I chose to go on offense at the beginning of the second half," said Dailey.

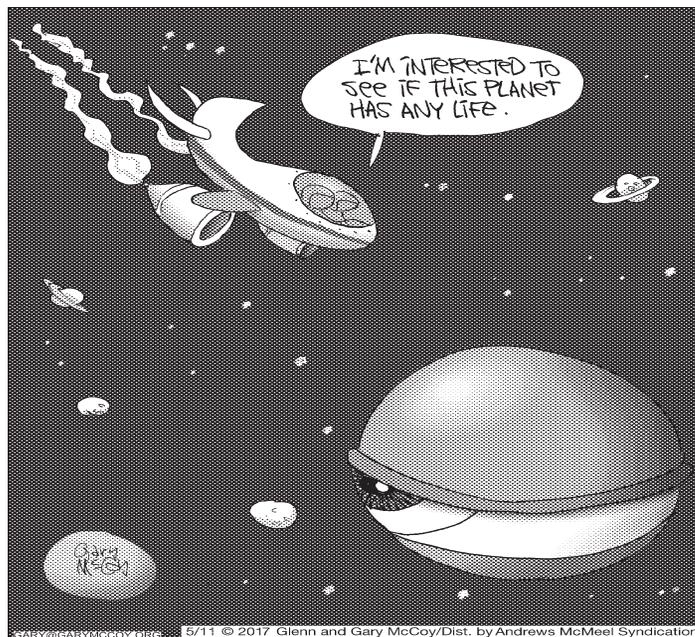
Twice Mandarin intercepted errant passes and twice, the Fleming Island defense held their ground and forced the Mustangs to punt. Four plays later, Labas hit Rozier for the go-ahead score. On the single point after attempt, Labas went to Rozier again, but this time she planned a lateral to Malory Sinsel for the go ahead score. The game would now fall on the backs of the Golden Eagle defense as they would leave Mandarin plenty of time to drive and score.

When the defense once again did their job, Fleming took the ball back with around 1:20 left in the game. Coach Dailey called a time out and shared his plan. Nice short snap, stand still, and wait for Mandarin to run in and pull a flag. Without any timeouts left, all the Mustangs could do was watch in frustration as Fleming Island snapped the ball three times and stood there motionless and wasted the clock down to zero.

Asked about going into the playoffs, does he change anything up, Dailey said, "No because we'll play a team that hasn't seen us before. These teams like Mandarin or Orange Park that see us all the time. We have such an unorthodox approach offensively and we're very difficult to defend if you haven't seen us on tape. Hopefully we pick up a team that has no idea what they're in for and I think defensively we can probably play with anyone."

Fun AND Humor

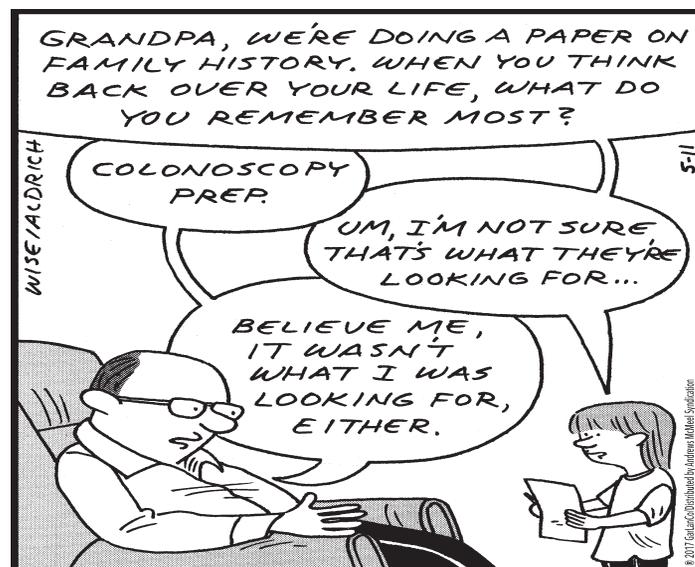
Flying McCoys



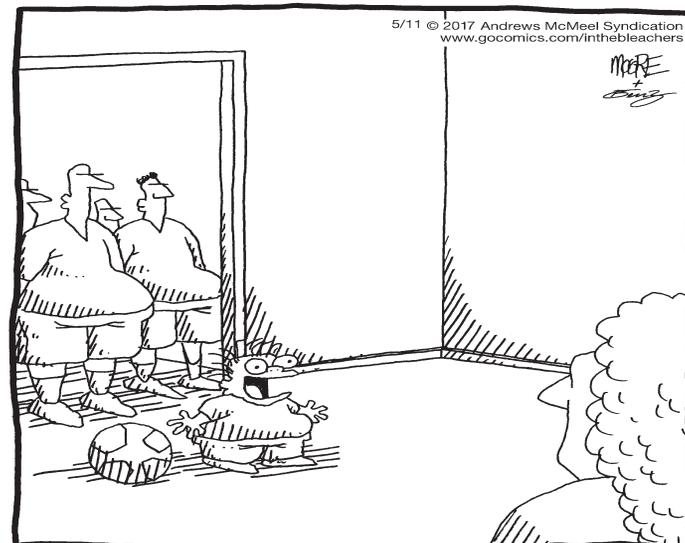
Non-Sequitur



Real Life Adventures



In The Bleachers



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Ziggy



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

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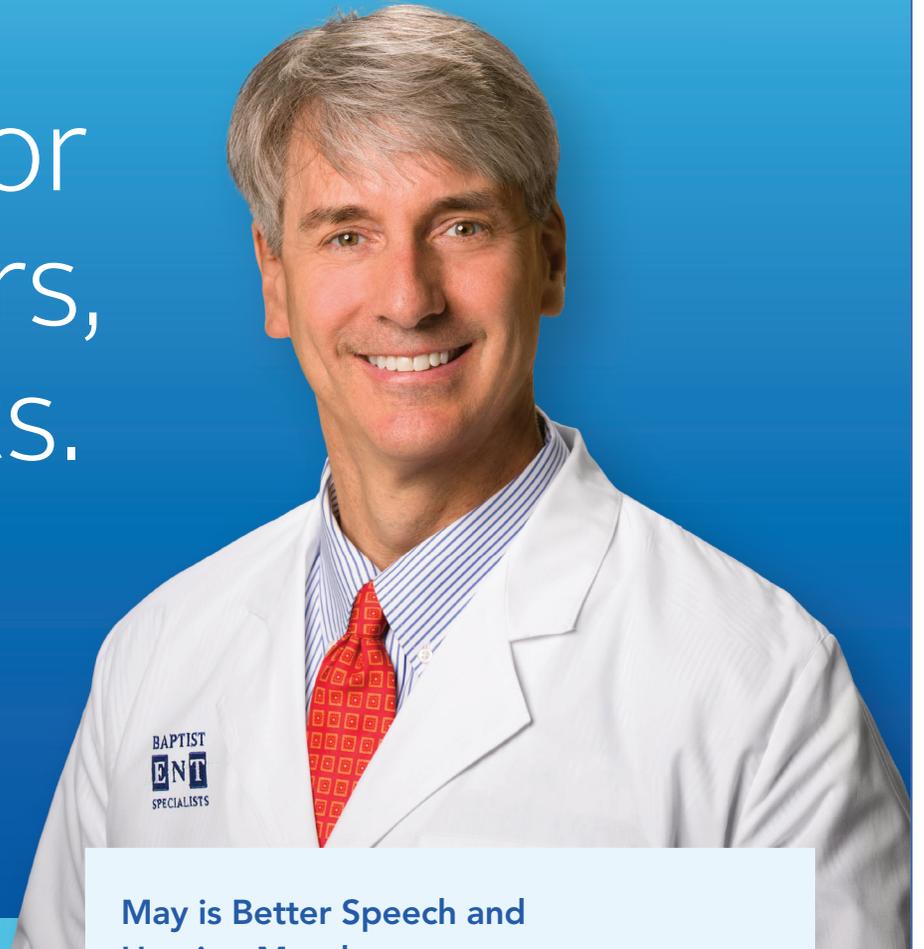
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