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Parade Opens Fair

Public Outcry From 2017 Absence Brings Back Tradition

Story and photos by **Emily Kochanski**

All of Pasco loves a good celebration and Dade City reinstituted an old favorite on Monday. After a year of missing the beat, the Pasco County Fair parade rolled down Seventh Avenue once again.

“Last year, schools were not out for the first time ever on President’s Day,” said Clark Converse, the fair’s general manager. “We feared no participation; nobody to watch the parade or to be in the parade.”

Once again, days lost to Hurricane Irma cost the district this year’s President’s Day, but school or no school folks demanded the parade return.



Parade • Continued on Page 5A

Members of TECO were ready to set sail on their impressively designed vessel.

Pasco County Fair Schedule

THURSDAY, FEB. 22

6:00 p.m. - The Freemans & The Kingsmen, Gospel Music – Dan Cannon Auditorium (free)

7:00 p.m. - Youth Steer Sale – Barthle Livestock Pavilion

FRIDAY, FEB. 23

6:00 p.m. - Youth Hog Exhibitor Showmanship – Barthle Livestock Pavilion

6:00 & 9:30 p.m. - Fearless Flores Thrill Show

7:00 p.m. - Pasco Showcase of Talent – Dan Cannon Auditorium

8:00 p.m. - Pasco County Fair Championship Rodeo “Tough Enough to Wear Pink Night” for Breast Cancer Awareness – Rodeo Arena (Free with Gate Admission)

SATURDAY, FEB. 24

8:00 a.m. - Youth Hog Show – Barthle Livestock Pavilion

9:30 a.m. - Goat Show – Ag Tent Area

10:00 a.m. - Gates & Exhibits Open

10:00 a.m. - Wade Shows Midway Opens

Noon - Miss Pasco Princess & Mister Pasco Prince (Baby Contest) – Dan Cannon Auditorium

Schedule • Continued on Page 4A

Officials Face Zero Opposition

No April Elections For Dade City, San Antonio Or St. Leo

by **Joe Potter**

The cities of Dade City and San Antonio and the Town of St. Leo won’t hold municipal elections on April 10 because no one filed to run against any of the candidates whose terms are expiring.

Dade City Mayor Camille S. Hernandez and commissioner Scott Black will retain their seats as the Group 2 and Group 1 commissioners, respectively, and will serve for an additional four years.

The Dade City Commission will hold a reorganizational

meeting April 24 during which a new mayor and mayor pro tempore may be selected from among the commission’s five members.

San Antonio Mayor Pro Tempore Elayne Bassinger, water commissioner Eric Stallworth and streets commissioner Sarah Schrader also retained their seats and will serve for two more years.

Schrader’s last name was Thornberry when she was appointed to the commission in 2016. Stallworth was also

Elections • Continued on Page 7A

Sheriff’s Office Maintains Tradition

Saddle Up For Charity Welcomes 100 Riders

by **Keri McAlpine**

Horse lovers woke up bright and early on Saturday for the chance to ride along private trails while raising money for a good cause.

The annual ride put on by the Pasco County Sheriff’s Office welcomed about 100 riders and their horses to raise money for Bridging Freedom and U.S. Institute Against Human Trafficking.

Established in 2008, the rides were formerly known as Ride for Hospice and for eight years raised more than \$150,000 for Gulfside Hospice. However, the ride was then changed to Saddle Up

Charity • Continued on Page 6A



Deputy Margaret Bushell, owner of the Diamond B Ranch, and Paige Mulford, 16, a cadet in the Pasco County Sheriff Mounted Posse, flank the sign promoting Saturday’s ride.

Photo by **Richard K. Riley**

INSIDE:

Pg. 3A - Police Pension Change Proposed
Pg. 7A - Education Takes On Poverty

Pg. 8A - Nuptials Fill Valentine’s Day
Pg. 1B - Roberts Leads Lady Pirates

Pg. 1B - Pasco Struggling To Score
Pg. 3B - Lanterns Light Up Dade City Sky

Pg. 3B - Women Build More Than Homes
Pg. 4B - Drawing Produces Wheel Deal

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Dade City Police Report

Man Allegedly Threatens Another's Life Over \$6 Item

Elmer Thomas Nesspor Jr., 35, of Lacoochee, was arrested by Dade City police on Feb. 3 and charged with petit retail theft. He allegedly entered Dollar General, 14645 Seventh St., and concealed a silver flask valued at \$6.37. He then allegedly confronted a customer who was watching him and told him he would shoot him if he said anything. The customer fled and Nesspor allegedly left the store without paying for the flask. He allegedly continued to say the flask was his after being confronted by the store manager despite the store's tag being on it and one of the flasks being missing from the shelf.

Megan Elaine Lloyd, 25, of Lacoochee, was arrested by Dade City police on Jan. 24 and charged with possession of heroin, possession of methamphetamine, possession or use of drug paraphernalia and driving while license suspended or revoked – habitual offender. Lloyd was stopped after she allegedly ran a red light. She was unable to produce a driver's license. Police learned her license was suspended or revoked three previous times. A syringe was visible in plain view, sticking out from her purse in the passenger seat. She was detained and asked if there were any illegal substances in the vehicle. Lloyd reportedly told police that there were needles in her purse. She did wish for her purse to accompany her to jail and described her purse as being the same purse the syringe was observed sticking out of. A search of the purse led to the discovery of a glass pipe with white residue, a spoon with a brown and black residue and three syringes with a small amount of liquid inside them. Field-tests confirmed the substances were heroin. A plastic bag with a powdery residue and a black bag containing a shoe string and a cotton swab were also located. Post Miranda, Lloyd reportedly admitted the pipe was hers and she used it to smoke meth. She also advised the spoon and needles were hers and she used them for shooting heroin. She added the plastic bag had previously contained meth. The pipe field-tested positive for meth. Lloyd was being held without bond at the Pasco County Jail.

Kenneth Tyrel Steele, 28, of Brooksville, was arrested by Dade City police on Dec. 2 and charged with battery and possession of less than 20 grams of marijuana. A man reportedly observed Steele in a neighbor's yard in the 14,000 block of Canal Street at 5:30 a.m. and confronted him and told him to leave the area. Steele allegedly forced his way through a shut gate and entered a fenced-in yard. Steele then allegedly struck the victim several times about the head and body, causing him to sustain visible injuries, before the victim was able to fight the defendant off of him. Steele reportedly fled the area on foot and was later located in a city park at the intersection of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and First Street. The victim positively identified him. Steele was reportedly found to be in possession of a small cooler containing less than 20 grams of marijuana when he was arrested. He was released from the Pasco County Jail after posting \$650 bond.

Alfred Norman Decena, 21, of 8203 Cindy Drive, Zephyrhills, was arrested by Dade City police on Feb. 5 and

charged with open carry of a firearm. Police stopped Decena at 3:30 a.m. for reportedly driving in a careless manner in the 11000 block of U.S. 301. Three firearms were observed in plain view inside the vehicle in direct reach of the driver's seat. A handgun was sitting between a cupholder and the passenger seat, an AR-15 was sitting on top of its case in the back seat and a shotgun was lying underneath the AR-15 in the suspect's small convertible car. Decena told police he was returning home from a Super Bowl party. He showed police a valid concealed weapons permit. However, the weapons in his car were not concealed and were in plain view and directly accessible. Decena was released with a notice to appear in court.

Kayla Lyn Davenport, 26, of Tampa, was arrested by Dade City police on Feb. 3 and charged with possession of methamphetamine. Police stopped a SUV for reckless driving. Davenport was a rear seat passenger in the vehicle. She allegedly had a syringe and meth in her possession. The meth field-tested positive and weighed 0.3 grams. Post Miranda, Davenport said he had been using meth for a year and was holding it for her boyfriend. Davenport also said she was not addicted to meth but used it because she is a "misfit."

James Bradley Parton, 30, of 38107 Countryside Place, was arrested by Dade City police on Feb. 13 and charged with domestic battery, possession of less than 20 grams of marijuana and possession of paraphernalia. Parton was reportedly involved in a verbal argument with the female victim that turned physical when he allegedly grabbed her by the throat. He quickly let go and the victim left the room and went to her daughter's room. Parton allegedly followed her and kept yelling at her so she left the residence and went to a neighbor's home. Parton then allegedly engaged in a physical altercation with the neighbor as the victim and the victim's daughter were leaving in a car to go to the Dade City Police Department. Post Miranda, Parton said he never touched the victim and only yelled during their argument. There were faint red marks on the victim's throat. They have resided together as a couple for approximately six months. When Parton was searched, he was reportedly found to be in possession of a ceramic pipe with a green leafy residue inside it. Also, he had a small cellophane wrapper containing a green leafy substance. Both substances field-tested positive for marijuana. Parton was booked into the Pasco County Jail after receiving medical clearance from Bayfront Health Dade City for injuries he claimed he sustained during his encounter with the neighbor.

Joshua Jacob Gonzales, 23, of 37239 Gaskin Ave., was arrested by Dade City police on Feb. 7 and charged with aggravated assault and leaving the scene of an accident with property damage. Officers learned Gonzales allegedly left the scene of a traffic crash they were investigating. A photograph of the license tag on his vehicle that was taken at the scene enabled Pasco Sheriff's deputies to locate him at his residence and he agreed to return to the scene. Also, it was learned that Gonzales, who was reportedly at fault for the accident, drove away and into the parking lot of an adjacent store. The victims, who were both in the same vehicle, drove to where Gonzales parked.

Gonzales allegedly drove his car at a man who got out of the other car, causing him to have to dive out of the way and roll on the ground to avoid being struck by Gonzales's vehicle. The female victim called 911 to report the incident and the traffic crash. Gonzales said post Miranda that he left because he was in fear of what the man might do. He added he didn't call police because he figured he didn't need to since he felt he was not at fault in the accident. Gonzales also said he figured the victim got his tag number and that would be good enough.

Celina Jaqueline Valencia, 51, of 36138 Markee Castle, was arrested by Dade City police on Feb. 10 and charged with domestic battery. Valencia allegedly slapped her daughter in the face while she and the daughter were involved in an altercation in the residence. Post Miranda, Valencia said she slapped her daughter because she was frustrated. The daughter told police she pushed her mother away to prevent further physical violence.

Chelsea Marie Owens, 24, of 38321 Ferguson Ave., was arrested by Dade City police on Feb. 13 and charged with criminal mischief. Owens allegedly broke the windshield of the victim's car while she was driving during an altercation between Owens and the father of her child. The windshield sustained approximately \$800 damage. Owens reportedly admitted she punched the windshield, causing it to break. She said she had done so because her child's father was driving off with her child in the car and she was upset due to ongoing circumstances between her and the child's father. She was released with a notice to appear in court.

Marvin A. Whitehead, 36, of 40227 Trotter Lane, was arrested by Dade City police on Jan. 30 and charged with grand theft retail. Whitehead allegedly entered NAPA Auto Parts, 12250 U.S. 301, and took two wrench sets, valued at a total of \$389.98, and walked past all points of sale without paying for the items. The incident was reportedly recorded on the store's security surveillance system. Post Miranda he reportedly admitted to taking the items because he didn't have enough money to pay for them.

Aaron Ross Jr., 26, of the Bahamas, was arrested by Dade City police on Feb. 9 and charged with possession of less than 20 grams of marijuana. The smell of burnt marijuana could be detected coming from inside a vehicle police had stopped. Ross, who was the driver, reportedly told police he had less than one gram of marijuana inside the vehicle. Approximately .5 grams of marijuana was recovered from inside a backpack inside the vehicle and Ross was released from the scene with a notice to appear in court.

Edward Payne, 66, of 14243 20th St., was arrested by Dade City police on Feb. 8 and charged with disorderly conduct. He allegedly walked out of his yard and threatened people in the area with a black air rifle because a loose pig was running through his yard. Payne allegedly continued to curse at people in the roadway and caused numerous people in the neighborhood to walk out onto the street, which disrupted their normal daily routine.

The information provided in the Dade City Police report is taken from public record. All parties are considered innocent until proven guilty.

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Police Pension Change Proposed

Questions Linger About State Retirement System

by Joe Potter

The Dade City Police Department's pension fund currently doesn't have a death benefit for officers should they die in the line of duty, acting chief James Walters told city commissioners last week. It has been a goal of his for more than 20 years to have such a benefit available so the spouse of a slain officer wouldn't miss a paycheck, said Walters, a longtime sergeant with DCPD who was also recently appointed interim administrative captain. Commissioners agreed this was needed and unanimously approved the first reading of a proposed ordinance that would enable the death benefit to be established.

If approved, the spouse would immediately be entitled to 100 percent of the deceased officer's salary for life, payable at the time of death. If there was no surviving spousal beneficiary, but the officer was survived by a child or children under the age of 18, they would be entitled to 100 percent of the deceased officer's salary until the age of 18 or 25, if unmarried and a full-time student.

A non-spousal beneficiary, such as a long-time companion, would also be entitled to the full salary of the deceased officer.

Funding for this benefit would come from increased contributions to the pension fund by members and, beginning Oct. 1, through money provided by Dade City. A second reading of this ordinance has been scheduled for March 13.

In other business on Feb. 13, commissioners continued until May 8 the second reading of a proposed ordinance to have Dade City rejoin the Florida Retirement System. The FRS is the fourth largest public retirement system

in the United States with more than 990 participating agencies and more than 700,000 active members.

Dade City withdrew from the FRS in 1996 and established its own retirement plan for employees.

Some city employees remained within the FRS after the city withdrew from it.

Commissioner Scott Black cast the lone dissenting vote when commissioners approved the proposed ordinance on its first reading during a November meeting.

Black voiced concerns regarding the FRS but said he believes his fellow commissioners have already decided to rejoin it.

"I know staff has indicated it will help them with hiring if we have the FRS," he said. "I don't think we should look at that as one of the major reasons for going into it. I think we have made some good hiring decisions in the past without it."

"There are several things I want us to consider because this is a major change that we are going to have to fund for many years."

Black cautioned Mayor Pro Tem Eunice Penix and commissioners James Shive and Nicole Deese Newlon against rushing headlong into it because the state legislature can make changes to the FRS. Mayor Camille Hernandez was unable to attend the meeting when the ordinance first passed.

Black emphasized Dade City might find "find ourselves in a much less palatable retirement system than we currently have" if some of the changes he had heard about did happen.

Commissioners were originally scheduled to hold a second reading on the ordinance in December. The second reading won't be held until May 8 because funding issues remain unresolved and city staff has requested additional time.

Bayfront Health Dade City Honors First Responders



In celebration of Valentine's Day, Bayfront Health Dade City honored local EMS for their dedication of providing the day-to-day lifesaving services. Donuts were provided throughout the day along with donating comfort bears for pediatric patients. The Teddy Bears were made by the East Pasco Quilters. Pictured, from left, are Tim Reardon, Rescue Chief for Pasco County; Jan Eichenberger, Roxanne Ritter and Sue Sereti of the East Pasco Quilters; Becky Murphy, Bayfront Emergency Room Manager; and Amanda Martin, Bayfront Chief Nursing Officer.

Photo by Richard K. Riley

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East Pasco Events

Feb. 22 – Medicare Answers – A SHINE volunteer will be at the Hugh Embry Library, 14215 Fourth St., at 2 p.m. to answer questions about Medicare. Call (352) 567-3576 for information.

Feb. 22 – Fly Tying – Learn how to tie the basics in one of this free Fly Tying class. Perfect for beginners of all ages. Fly tying will provide you with the lessons on how to tie the perfect fly and catch that monster fish you want. Held from 5-8 p.m. at Flint Creek Outfitters, 14129 Seventh St. Visit www.flintcreekoutfitters.com for information and to sign up.

Feb. 24 – Hittin’ the Road for Hospice – The sixth annual motorcycle poker run will go across Pasco County, beginning in New Port Richey at 5817 S.R. 54 and end in Zephyrhills at 4149 New River Road. Registration is open now at www.HittinTheRoadForHospice.org. Also visit the website for a list of poker run stops. Day of registration will also be available at an increased price.

Feb. 24 – The Lights Fest – The Lights Fest is an experience where thousands of friends and families gather to listen to live music, fill up on food trucks and light up life by sharing personal wishes, dreams and goals. At the perfect moment, everyone ignites their personalized sky lanterns with Tiki torches and lets them take flight. Held at Little Everglades Ranch, 17951 Hamilton Road, from 4-8 p.m. Contact info@thelightsfest.com for ticket prices and information.

Feb. 24 – Parkwide Yard Sale – Florida Estates Park, located east of U.S. 301 on the south side of County Road 54, from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. A bake sale and canteen will also be available at the clubhouse on Connecticut Street.

Feb. 24-25 – Living History and Civil War Reenactments – Held at the Pioneer Florida Museum & Village, 15602 Pioneer Museum Road, from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. both days. Skirmishes emerge from the village and battles will take place at 2 p.m. each day. The public is invited to tour the authentic Confederate and Union camps; reenactors will be in character. Visit www.pioneerfloridamuseum.org for information.

Feb. 27 – Big Brothers Big Sisters Orientation – Find out what it means to be a Big Brother or Big Sister in Pasco County and get a head start in the process. Held from 5:30- 7 p.m. at Wesley Chapel Honda, 27750 Wesley Chapel Blvd. Contact (813) 997-6881 or debk@bbbstampabay.org for information.

March 2 – First Friday – In downtown Dade City starting at 5 p.m. for extended shop hours, specials, sales and live entertainment. Visit the Dade City Merchants Association for information.

March 2-4 – Saint Leo University Musical – Return to the Forbidden Planet is an Olivier-award-winning musical loosely based on Shakespeare’s “The Tempest” and the 1956 science fiction film, “Forbidden Planet”. Performances will be held each night at 7:30 p.m. and on Saturday at 2 p.m. All will be held in the BlackBox Theatre, in the Benedictine Hall, 33701 S.R. 52. Contact stleotheatre@saintleo.edu for information and to reserve a seat. Admission is free with a \$10 suggested donation at the door.

March 3 – Quilt Show – The Oaks Quilters will be hosting a quilt show from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. in Boots Hall at Red Oaks RV Resort, 5551 SW 18th Terrace in Bushnell. Show includes

modern and vintage quilts, raffles, vendors, demonstrations, a boutique, silent auctions and more. Admission is a non-perishable food item or monetary donation for a local charity. Food will be available for purchase. Call (727) 699-9667 for information.

March 3 – Car Show – Held in downtown Dade City from 3-7 p.m. Cost is \$10 per car registration; trophies will be presented. Giveaways to the first cars registered. Activities for kids will also be featured. The public and car enthusiasts are encouraged to visit the fabulous shops and restaurants in Dade City. Call (813) 879-1616 for information.

March 3 – The Market Place – The monthly market place will be held at Hibiscus Park at Seventh Street and Bougainvillea Avenue from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. The pet friendly event is free to attend, open to the public and includes live entertainment. Shop local vendors for a variety of products including honey, home décor, garden accessories, jewelry, bakery items, jellies/jams, homemade soaps and much more. Contact lucyavila707@gmail.com or (352) 424-4972 for additional information or interested vendors.

March 3 – Backyard Fruit Trees – There are many different types of fruit trees that can be grown in your back yard. This seminar covers how to select, plant and care for them so you can “reap the fruits” of your labor. Registration required at Eventbrite. Held from 9-10 a.m. at 36702 S.R. 52. Contact the UF/IFAS Pasco County Extension Office at (352) 518-0156 for information.

March 3 – A Day of Reflection – Facilitated by Ricky Cotton and hosted by the Benedictine Sisters of Florida featuring the fascinating life of Thomas Merton (1915-1968) OCSO. Held from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at Holy Name Monastery, 12138 Wichers Road in St. Leo. Contact (352) 588-8320 or maryclareneu@gmail.com for information.

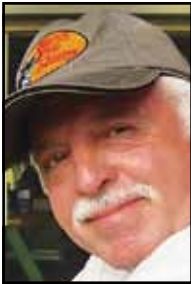
March 3 – Yard Sale – Richland Baptist Church is hosting their annual yard sale from 8 a.m.-2 p.m. at the church, 40443 Stewart Road. Stop by to shop for furniture, household items, tools, clothing and more. Chili dogs and baked goods will also be for sale for lunch. Call (352) 567-2990 for information or to make a donation.

March 6 – Bridge-Breaking Competition – Young children and their families are invited to come watch the Annual Bridge-Breaking Competition held by Saint Leo University’s Department of Mathematics and Science at 6 p.m., in Selby Auditorium, Lewis Hall at 33701 S.R. 52. Admission is free. The competition includes teams of college students who constructed model bridges from lightweight wooden sticks and glue. Vote on which bridge is most attractive and see which one can hold the most weight. Contact thomas.ricard@saintleo.edu or (352) 588-8024 for information and special arrangements.

March 7 – Free Spring Concert – Saint Leo University student musicians and guests will perform “The World Beloved: A Bluegrass Mass,” at the annual spring concert at 7 p.m., at the Saint Leo Abbey Church, 3301 S.R. 52. All are welcome and admission is free. This event will be an evening of modern bluegrass music written for choir musicians with instrumental accompanists. Contact Megan Orendorf at jennifer.orendorf@saintleo.edu or (352) 588-8401 for information, special accommodations or directions.

For more events visit www.pasconewspubs.com

Commentary



First Things First

Greg First



A Stop Sign Means ‘Stop’

Maybe it’s just me but it seems this time of year that everybody doesn’t go by the same set of driving rules. At a four-way stop it’s my understanding that everyone must come to a stop before proceeding. In the last week I have seen more than once someone stopping at a four-way and then when they enter the intersection the person behind them follows them right through the stop sign.

Attention, this is not the way we do it here in east Pasco County. Everyone must come to a stop. If not maybe a ticket will remind you about the rules. How hard is it to figure out?

Here is something else I have noticed. Someone traveling on a two-lane road that is one way decides to make a left hand turn from the right lane in front of traffic next to them. This has caused many fender benders. It really does not have to be confusing.

Have you ever tried to make a left hand turn trying to get onto busy U.S. 301 when all you can see is a line of traffic with no end in sight? Every now and then some good soul will let you out but they are few and far between. If you have lived

in this area for a long time you probably plan your day by making right hand turns. Ultimately when you get done doing all of your errands you can probably cross at a traffic light and return to where you started. You have to be creative in the winter months. It’s a much easier drive around here in the off-season.

And lastly, who really has the right of way at the drive-thru at fast food restaurants where there are two lines for ordering? I saw a guy get out of his car the other day and about got in a fight because he insisted it was his turn to move forward. When he saw two or three cell phones aimed at him he retreated.

All I have to say is to check your order before leaving the window. It’s a bummer to get home with a kids meal and an order you did not want when you had planned on having a feast. It happens all the time.

This time of year there is always something to talk about. It’s fun to look at license plates just to see where drivers are from. In the event of a mishap the standard answer around here is usually, “Well no wonder, look where they’re from.”

Just remember when you are in their neck of the woods that karma can come back and bite you. When you’re out traveling the highways and byways and something stupid happens just smile and keep on trucking. It’s not the response they were hoping to get.

Schedule • Continued from Page 1A

2:00, 6:00 & 9:30 p.m. - Fearless Flores Thrill Show
2:30 p.m. - Pasco County Fair Championship Rodeo, Military Tribute – Rodeo Arena (Free with Gate Admission)
4:45 p.m. - Youth Hog Exhibitor’s Awards Presentation – Barthle Livestock Pavilion
5:00 p.m. - Youth Hog Sale – Barthle Livestock Pavilion
7:00 p.m. - Pasco County Fair Karaoke Contest – Dan Cannon Auditorium
8:00 p.m. - Ranch Rodeo – Rodeo Arena
8:10 p.m. - Viva Pasco Fair Vegas – (Vegas Style Show & Giveaways) – Back Porch Theater
9:00 & 10:10 p.m. - Billy “Elvis” Lindsey

SUNDAY, FEB. 26

One Child Admitted Free with One Paid Adult

Noon - Main Gates & Exhibits Open
1:00 p.m. - Youth Dairy Show – Barthle Livestock Pavilion
1:00 p.m. - Bay Area Bandits Mounted Shooters – Rodeo Arena
1:30, 4:00 & 6:00 p.m. - Fearless Flores Thrill Show
2:00 p.m. - Youth Plant Sale – Joe Herrmann Greenhouse
2:00 p.m. - Fairgrounds Showdown Live Boxing – Dan Cannon Auditorium (Free with Gate Admission)
6:00 p.m. - Gates Close

Each day – Unlimited Midway Ride Special (\$25 Wristband, Gate Admission is Additional); Danny Grant, Cowboy Circus & The Living Tree; Sylvia Fletcher, Comedy Ventriloquist; Robinson’s Racing Pigs & Paddling Porkers; Dan, Dan, The Farmer Man Rainmaking Comedy Show; Purgatory Ironworks Blacksmith

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Serving as grand marshal, FOX News icon and local star Charley Belcher led this year’s parade through the streets of Dade City.



Members of the Pasco High School marching band drummed up some familiar tunes.



This talented cowboy lassoed himself a couple of buckaroos.

Parade • Continued from Page 1A

“We got a lot of flak, a lot of negative feedback from the community,” Converse said. “People were mad. They were blowing up Facebook and our phones.”

Needless to say, he was just as thrilled to reinstate the parade as members of the community were to see it.

This year’s parade featured a quirky and colorful variety of floats, music provided by the Pasco High School marching band, and FOX 13’s own Charley Belcher leading the parade as it’s grand marshal.

“Charley actually emceed one of the Fair’s pageants one year,” Converse said. “He’s been a good friend to us. He went to Hudson High School, so he’s a true Pasco resident.”

Although Pasco County schools were in session again this year, children and parents still arrived in droves to take in the parade, happy to see it cruising through Dade City once again.

“I used to be in this parade as a teenager; marching in the band and various other activities,” said Dade City native Michelle Grant. “Though its absence last year didn’t impact me directly, I still feel that this is

a tradition that we’ve had for many years and I’d like to see it continue.”

The parade marked the opening of the annual Pasco County Fair, which will run through Sunday. If you enjoyed the parade, then don’t miss your chance to go out to the fairgrounds and participate in another popular Pasco tradition.

2018 Pasco County Fair Parade Winners

- Here are the winners from Monday’s “Jam Packed with Excitement” parade.
- Float Best Depicting The 2018 Fair Theme – Zephyrhills High School FFA
 - Best Civic Float – Calvary Assembly of God
 - Best Commercial Float – Tampa Electric Company
 - Best Marching Unit – Zephyrhills High School JROTC Drum Corp
 - Best Mounted Unit – Pasco County Sheriff’s Posse, featuring Commissioner Ron Oakley



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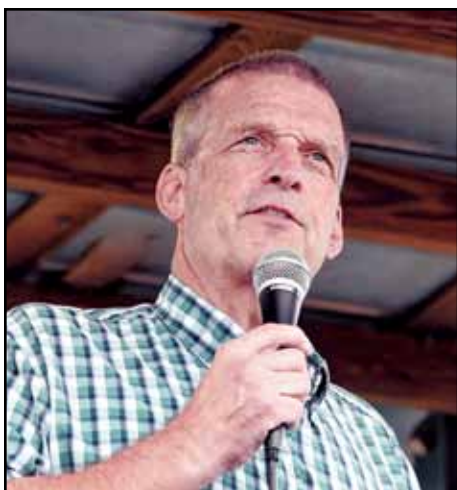
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**Charity • Continued from Page 1A**

While a total of funds raised were not known at press time, Bushell said money raised from this ride would help fund two

Saddle Up For Charity began at Bushell's farm in Dade City, Diamond B Ranch. To accommodate for the six-mile ride, riders crossed over from Bushell's farm into the adjoining Melton family ranches. Bushell said "horse people are always looking for something to do with their horses," and a private trail is a great way to have a good



Poker run stops were set up along the



One of the big prizes, \$400 off a set of Cooper tires, which were donated by Norm & Sons Tire & Auto Repair in Zephyrhills, was won by Donna Black.

Living History and CIVIL WAR

Reenactments

Saturday & Sunday, February 24 & 25, 2018

9 AM - 5 PM



Skirmishes will emerge from the village and battles will take place at
2:00 P.M. BOTH DAYS
(Saturday & Sunday)

"Skirmish at White House"

The public is invited to tour the authentic confederate and union camps; reenactors are in character.

Get a glimpse of how they lived and what it was like during the Civil War. Traditional period craft demonstrations

*All museum buildings will be open!
Sutlers/Vendors, food and fun!*

CASH ONLY EVENT
\$5 ADMISSION EACH DAY
under 5 free



Saturday Schedule
9:00 a.m. - Gates Open, Camps & Sutlers Open
9:30 a.m. - Colors - Battlefield
10:00 a.m. - Ladies Tea (period dress required to participate) spectators welcome

10:00 a.m. Concession Stand Open
11:30 a.m. - Period Fashion Show
1:00 p.m. - Live Music by 7lbs of Bacon
2:00 p.m. - Battle
5:00 p.m. - Camps closed to the public/Gates close

Sunday Schedule
9:00 a.m. - Gates Open, Camps & Sutlers Open
9:30 a.m. - Colors - Battlefield
10:00 a.m. - Church

10:00 a.m. Concession Stand Open
1:00 p.m. - Live Music by 7lbs of Bacon
2:00 p.m. - Battle
5:00 p.m. - Camps closed to the public/Gates close

No outside weapons, bags subject to search.

LOCATION:
1 mile north of downtown Dade City off US Hwy 301
at 15602 Pioneer Museum Road 33523
www.pioneerfloridamuseum.org • 352.567.0262

- * Free Parking
- * No Coolers, outside food or beverages allowed
- * Lawn Chairs Permitted
- * No Pets, service dogs only



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** As required by Kohler, all power levels are stated in gross horsepower at 3600 RPM per SAE J1940 as rated by engine manufacturer.

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Winners of the 2018 Pasco County Fair milking competition were, from left, Hailey Gilmore, 1st place; Trent Rowland, 2nd place; Blake Rowland, 3rd place; and Carson McKendree, 4th place. *Photo by Richard K. Riley*

Election • Continued from Page 1A

appointed the same year.

The appointments were made after only one candidate – Bassinger – filed for the three seats that needed to be filled on the commission in 2016. City Clerk Rick Alley said several San Antonio residents expressed an interest in serving and Stallworth and Schrader were selected from among those who commissioners interviewed.

Members of the San Antonio City Commission serve at large.

San Antonio will also hold a reorganizational meeting during May in which a new mayor and mayor pro tempore may be selected and commissioners’ responsibilities may be reassigned.

No one will be challenging St. Leo Mayor Richard H. Christmas, Sister Donna DeWitt, O.S.B., or Brother James Hallett, O.S.B., so each will serve for two more years.

Christmas represents Seat 5 while DeWitt holds Seat 1 and Hallett holds Seat 3.

Town Clerk Andrea Calvert said St. Leo will also hold a reorganizational meeting in May during which time a new mayor and mayor pro tempore may be selected.

Education Takes On Poverty

Taking Stock In Children Pays Off For At-Risk Students

by Keri McAlpine

Every year only a handful of students are selected to benefit from the services offered by Take Stock in Children, but they are the ones who need it most.

The Pasco County headquarters of the statewide non-profit targets a specific group of students to provide them with the tools to succeed.

Otherwise, they might fall through the cracks, according to Rosanne Heyser, executive director of Take Stock in Children, which is part of the Pasco Education Foundation.

Selected students must have the desire to go to college and learn, commit to the TSIC program, hold a specific grade point average, be income eligible and benefit from the extra guidance, and mentorship, which may be lacking in their home life.

“The ones who are most in need may not have any other resources out there,” Heyser said. “Many don’t have the guidance at home. Sometimes we’re the only ones looking at their report cards and helping them through this process.”

Starting in 8th grade, students can be eligible for sponsorships through TSIC, which are provided through various means including donations from individuals, companies or clubs, or other resources. Every dollar raised through donors is matched by the state department of education and goes toward a Florida Prepaid scholarship for up to four years of college tuition.

The program monitors their grades, attendance and behavior, in and out of the classroom. Students sign an agreement with TSIC to participate in the program and attend mandatory workshops and events. The workshops teach them valuable life skills like how to apply for college or personal financing.

“Our mission statement is to break the cycle of poverty through education,” Heyser said.

Since forming the Pasco County office, more than 700 students serviced have successfully completed the program.

A mentor is assigned to each student who they meet with regularly. A college readiness coach and career readiness resources are made available to the students as they get closer to their senior year.

Throughout the program, a handful of people including TSIC personnel and volunteers, family members and school administration are committed to the child’s success.

“We’re all on the same page to get the student successfully out of high school and, even more, make sure they’re going to be successful in college,” Heyser said.

The availability of TSIC to stick with the kids even past high school is one reason Sherman Milton (PHS 2009) has been successful in his career as a TSIC student, and has since become a mentor himself.

Milton grew up in Lacoochee and benefitted from the support system and financial assistance TSIC offered him.

He graduated from Saint Leo University, which TSIC has a partnership with, and after several different career moves currently is a realtor in Dade City.

He has been a mentor with TSIC for three years now and regularly attends the program’s functions and workshops to keep in touch.

“It’s great to give a kid a scholarship but the mentor teaches you what it means to be successful ... That’s one thing I really appreciate about the program and one of the reasons I’m a mentor,” Milton said. “They didn’t give me a scholarship and forget about me ... It’s almost like a lifelong thing for me.”

Milton said being a mentor can be a challenge at first, but in the end is rewarding and fun.

“It’s something I believe in and that’s one of the reasons I’m still involved in it.”

Many mentors meet during the students’ lunch period to take advantage of the free time; however, scheduling is flexible for varying schedules. By next fall TSIC will have a group of 35 to 40 new students, which means a need for more mentors.

Visit www.takestockpasco.org to learn more about the organization and about becoming a mentor.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

Monitoring Requirements Not Met for City of Dade City

On January 10th, we became aware that our system recently failed to collect the correct number of drinking water samples. Although this incident was not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened and what we are doing to correct this situation.

We are required to monitor your drinking water for specific contaminants on a regular basis. Results of regular monitoring are an indicator of whether or not our drinking water meets health standards. During 2017 we did not complete all monitoring or testing for the following table of contaminants and therefore cannot be sure of the quality of your drinking water during that time.

The table below lists the contaminant(s) we did not properly test for during the last year, how often we are supposed to sample for these contaminants, how many samples we are supposed to take, how many samples we took, when samples should have been taken, and the date on which follow-up samples were (or will be) taken.

Contaminant	Required Number of Samples	Number of samples taken	When samples should have been taken	When samples were taken
1. Stage II Disinfection Byproducts	1. Eight throughout system	None for any set	2017	January 2018
2. Nitrate and Nitrite	2. Three- each source			
3. Primary Inorganics	3. Three- each source			
4. Secondary Contaminants	4. Three- each source			
5. Volatile Organic Compounds	5. Three- each source			
6. Radiological Contaminants	6. Three- each source			

What should I do?

There is nothing you need to do at this time. You may continue to drink the water. If a situation arises where the water is no longer safe to drink, you will be notified within 24 hours.


What is being done?

The City of Dade City took additional samples in January 2018.

For more information, please contact Customer Service at 352-523-5053.

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

This notice is being sent to you by City of Dade City. State Water System ID#:6510424
Date distributed: February 2018.



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**Only one child ages 6-12 admitted per adult ticket purchase. Admission to fair only. Rates \$6.75 included.

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- First National Bank of Pasco

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Nuptials Fill Valentine's Day

Two Dozen Exchange Vows At Historic Courthouse

by **Emily Kochanski**

On Feb. 14, the love in the air in Dade City was almost overwhelming as the 10th annual Valentine's Day wedding ceremony got underway. This year, a whopping 24 couples gathered on the steps of the historic courthouse to exchange "I do's."

"Seeing the couples together and very much in love, it's just the best," said Julie Eccles, who coordinated the event alongside other members of Clerk and Comptroller Paula O'Neil's office.

The couples were given the traditional wedding day treatment, complete with free pictures, cake, and even carriage rides around the block. The nuptials were officiated by Circuit Judge Kemba Lewis.

While it's not the full-blown ceremony that many couples dream of, the simple event marked the perfect day for many newlyweds.

"We couldn't really pick which kind of venue that



The annual Valentine's Day ceremony provides a fun and memorable wedding day experience for lovebirds looking to tie the knot. *Photo by Emily Kochanski*



The couples pose with a kiss on the courtyard steps where Sixth Judicial Circuit Judge, Kemba Lewis and Pasco County Clerk, Paula O'Neil officiated. *Photo by Richard K. Riley*

we wanted, but then this popped up on Facebook and looked like fun," said Tina Barton, who arrived with her husband-to-be Faustino Dominguez.

"Some people have the most grandiose wedding chapel, the fanciest dress, and spend \$50,000 on your wedding," said Dominguez. "Maybe this ceremony doesn't have all the ritzy glitz, but I've never been so in love in my life. That's how I know that this is just fine for me."

"I was talking with my son and he said, 'you're getting married with a whole bunch of people that you don't



Eugene Marcum and Theresa J. Marcum took the opportunity to renew their vows with Sixth Judicial Circuit Judge, Kemba Lewis as the newly married couples look on. *Photo by Richard K. Riley*

know," laughed Barton. "I just said, 'yeah, but how cool is that?'"

The collective "I do's" and first kisses as man and wife made for a truly memorable ceremony. Each couple was expected to receive their official certificate of marriage by mail in the days following the event.

"This is going to be a great story to tell our grandchildren," said Barton.

Now, Mr. and Mrs. Dominguez, along with all the other newlyweds, are hoping to make the honeymoon just as unique as their wedding day.



After the ceremony, Joseph Sanderson and Patrick Knecht, and Tina Barton and Faustino Dominguez congratulate each other. *Photo by Richard K. Riley*

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