

LOCAL & STATE

CALENDARS | B2

WHAT'S HAPPENING

From farmers markets to dance lessons to help filing your taxes, we can tell you where to go and when to be there

New teen Advisory Board makes 1st pitches

Graphic novels, author visits on library wish list

By Amanda Banks
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PANAMA CITY — Some local students are getting involved at the library, with the inaugural meeting of the new Teen Advisory Board held last Monday.

The board is led by the Bay County Public Library's teen librarian, Sam Hudson, who refers to it as TAB. Hudson hopes board members will give her great new ideas for teen content and activities at the library.

"I feel like I'm going to learn a lot from what they have to tell me," she said.

While the students started off a bit shy, after a round of ice breakers the six students who attended were offering ideas, such as adding more comic books and graphic novels to the library's collection.

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GOVERNMENT | B6

ROLL CALL

Want to know how your legislators are voting in Washington? We have the report

University leaders preparing for 'block' tuition

By Lloyd Dunkelberger
The News Service of Florida

TALLAHASSEE — Florida university presidents said they are ready to deal with a developing legislative mandate to have block tuition on their campuses by the fall of 2018, but warned the new system won't come without challenges.

In interviews at the Florida Board of Governors meeting this week, a half-dozen of the university leaders expressed reservations about the cost, the impact on part-time students, and the unique characteristics of their schools as they switch from charging students on a per-credit-hour basis for classes to charging a flat, per-semester fee.

The basic idea behind

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'INSPIRATION, PERSONAL TRIUMPH AND SURVIVAL'



Athletes help a woman climb up a wall on Saturday at the Bay County Jail campus. [PATTI BLAKE PHOTOS / THE NEWS HERALD]



Theresa Anglin navigates a set of monkey bars on Saturday.

Diverse group trains to become Spartans

By Zack McDonald
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Some people use their Saturday mornings to lounge, but a group of "average people" has been spending those mornings enduring grueling training for weeks in the hopes of becoming Spartan-level athletes.

The training has been taking place at the Bay County Jail for the past few months in preparation for the Spartan Sprint in Fort Benning, Georgia on April 8. While the group is composed of 50 participants, 10 of those are employees of the Bay County Sheriff's Office. It is the largest team to participate in this year's Spartan Sprint and is composed of a diverse group of survivors and strivers.

Sheriff Tommy Ford

applauded the program and the employees for taking the initiative to stay healthy.

"It's a stressful job and with that comes physical issues," Ford said. "It partly is a wise business decision; more importantly, it's because we're a family and want each other to have a healthy and long life."

The training started when local sports nutritionist J.T. Thompson decided to challenge himself as a trainer by taking 50 "average" people, with an above average will and desire to get fit, and turn them into Spartan Race-level athletes in a three-month time period.

Several BCSO employees got word of the challenge and decided to get on board.

"A group of us at the BCSO knew we had to be a part of that," said BCSO

See ATHLETES, B3

Girl bitten by shark in Destin

"She was bleeding pretty good. She was lucky it didn't get her femoral artery, because that could have been really serious."

Francis Thelen, a bystander

By Kelly Humphrey and Brian Perdue
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DESTIN — A 17-year-old girl from Louisville, Kentucky, was taken to Fort Walton Beach Medical Center after being bitten Sunday by a shark witnesses said was about 5 feet long.

At approximately 3 p.m., first responders answered a call to SunDestin Beach Resort & Hotel at 1040 Highway 98 reporting a shark attack. The girl was visiting the Emerald Coast on a trip with her high school softball team, and had been swimming near the

second sandbar when the attack happened.

"The helicopters have been flying over all day, but I noticed one started circling around," said Francis Thelen, a Michigan resident who is visiting Destin for the first time. He was sitting on the beach when the attack happened. "I thought that was kind of odd, so I stood up and saw a young lady coming out of the ocean being supported by two of her friends."

At first, Thelen thought the teen might have been pulled out by a riptide, since she looked

See ATTACK, B3



FOOD | B3

ZAXBY'S IS OPENING

The long-awaited restaurant will open its doors today at 10:30 a.m. And yes, there will be deals for early birds!

LOCAL & STATE

ATHLETES

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spokeswoman Ruth Corley. "We've been training every Saturday at one of the two BCSO obstacle courses."

Thompson said the group consists of Diabetic/pancreatectomy survivors, anorexia survivors, substance abuse/drug addiction survivors, people who have lost 150+ lbs., ranging in age from early-20s to mid-60s and weigh from low 100s to mid 300s. He calls the diverse group of participants "Team Evolve."

"We are about inspiration, personal triumph and survival," he said. "We are about deep-seeded change through mental and physical improvement."

"Each and every

member of our team, from sheriff's deputies, teachers and community volunteers to students, nurses, parents and grandparents were all individually chosen because they are each fighting to overcome their own personal battles and consistently continue to demonstrate the spirit of a true Spartan."

Team Evolve received the support of Jail Warden, Major Rick Anglin. He refurbished the obstacle course and created new obstacles with inmate labor. The inmates sign up to work under a program at the Jail that helps them learn skills to become employed after they are released.

These inmates are learning construction work by building things. Afterward, the jail's C.E.R.T. team is also going to use the improved obstacle course to train.



Erika Shanks and Josh Barber carry buckets full of rocks at the Bay County Jail campus. [PATTI BLAKE | THE NEWS HERALD]

TUITION

Continued from B1

block tuition is to provide a financial incentive for students to take more classes and earn undergraduate degrees in four years. For instance, they could pay a flat fee representing 12 credit hours but take 15 or more credit hours in classes each semester, more quickly reaching the 120 credit hours needed for most baccalaureate degrees.

Tying to apply the block-tuition system to a 12-university system with more than 400,000 students involves many nuances and complications, the university presidents said.

"I support block tuition as long as it doesn't hurt part-time students and as long as it doesn't hurt working students," said Mark Rosenberg, president of Florida International University.

FIU — with 55,000 students, the second-largest school in the system — classifies 41 percent of its student body as part-time. And Rosenberg estimated 85 percent of his students are working part-time or full-time.

He said those students may not be able to take advantage of a block tuition plan, which would drive down costs for students who load up on credit hours.

"In essence, they will not be able to benefit from the block tuition because they have to work," Rosenberg said.

And, like the other presidents, Rosenberg is worried about the financial consequences of a tuition plan that allows students to take more classes than they pay for.

An analysis of a plan where students paid a flat fee representing 12 credit hours per semester but enrolled in 15 or more credit hours would represent a \$40 million cost for Florida State University. It would mean the loss of \$20 million in tuition and fees and result in a \$20 million cost to expand classes and add faculty to accommodate the heavier student class loads.

"The issue is how much more will it cost in terms of the additional overhead we will have to take on? We will definitely have to schedule a lot more classes," Rosenberg said. "Overall, I like the idea. But let us try to fit what works for our demographic. One size will not fit all."

Zaxby's to open Monday in Callaway

News Herald staff report

CALLAWAY — The wait is finally over for Zaxby's fans in Callaway.

The city's first Zaxby's location will open at 10:30 a.m. Monday at 217 N. Tyndall Parkway.

City officials had said the restaurant would

open in January, leading several residents to ask over the last few months when their chicken fix would be arriving.

"We had a couple of weeks of bad weather that delayed us," licensee Ken Clark said Friday.

"And we had a little bit of a problem with the

(Department of Transportation) permit for our driveway.

"But we're glad to now be in Callaway," he added.

Clark said Monday's opening is a soft opening, but the restaurant will be giving a "deck of deals" to the first 100 customers.

The deck of cards includes one coupon a week for 52 weeks.

Clark is also the licensee for Zaxby's locations in Panama City Beach, Lynn Haven and Americus, Ga.

The new Zaxby's will be open 10:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily.

IN BRIEF

Severe weather likely today

A cold front across the Southeast is expected to cause severe weather on Monday.

The National Weather Service (NWS) is warning about storms with the potential for destructive straight line winds in excess of 70 miles per hour and tornadoes. The storms are expected to sweep through Bay County between 2 and 5 p.m.

The main impacts of the storm could include snapped trees, downed powerlines and structural damage. A high surf advisory with surf up to 8 feet is in effect for Walton, Bay and Gulf County beaches.

2 BCSO Wilderness Camps set for summer

PANAMA CITY — Registration is open for this summer's Bay County Sheriff's Office Wilderness Camps, scheduled for June 12-16 and June 19-23.

The camps are open to boys ages 12 to 15 who reside within Bay County. Among camp activities are swimming, survival skills, canoeing, gun safety, archery and fishing. Participants also will tour two local military bases, learn about money management and career choice, and learn the value of



Severe weather may be possible this afternoon. [SPECIAL TO THE NEWS HERALD]

cooperation and conflict resolution as they work together to complete an obstacle course.

School resource deputies comprise the staff. The camp is free.

Registration forms are available at www.bayso.org or at BCSO's front desk at 3421 N. State 77 in Panama City. Registrations forms also are available from any BCSO school resource deputy.

Coast Guard Auxiliary to offer free vessel checks

The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary will offer free vessel safety exams during April, May and June.

The vessel check for mandatory safety equipment helps ensure vessel and passenger safety. Vessels that pass the exam

will get a vessel check decal, which reduces the odds of being cited by law enforcement for discrepancies.

The exams will be conducted from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at two locations:

St. Andrews State Park: April 8-29, May 13 and 27, June 10 and 24

Tyndall Air Force Yacht Club: April 15, May 20 and June 17

The Coast Guard Auxiliary is the uniformed civilian component of the U.S. Coast Guard. Find more information on the Auxiliary and vessel safety checks at www.cgaux.org.

GCSC to offer life guard training

Gulf Coast State College will offer lifeguard training

ATTACK

Continued from B1

exhausted.

"Then I looked down, and you could see blood coming from her thigh," he said. Thelen added that while the bite radius on the girl's leg didn't look very large, "she was bleeding pretty good. She was lucky it didn't get her femoral artery, because that could have been really serious."

First responders at the scene initially requested a medical helicopter to evacuate the victim. Officials planned to use the Morgan Sports Center — approximately 1 mile away on 4200 Indian Bayou Trail — as a landing area, but the helicopter request was cancelled at

approximately 3:20 p.m. by officials at the scene. By 3:35 p.m., the victim had been placed in an ambulance bound for the FWBMC emergency room.

Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office Sgt. Jason Fulghum reported the girl suffered puncture bite wounds to her right leg and scrapes to her left leg. What kind of shark was involved in the attack was not immediately known, Fulghum said.

Single red flags were flying at the time of the attack. Purple flags are normally flown when dangerous marine life is known to be in the water.

The teen's teammates were too emotionally shaken by the incident to comment following the attack.

OCSO spokeswoman Michele Nicholson said

she was not aware of any plans by safety officials to close the beach to swimmers following the attack.

Beachgoers in the immediate vicinity did not appear to be deterred by the reports of a shark attack Sunday afternoon. Thelen said that while it was a little unnerving to hear the news on the first day of his vacation, he wasn't overly concerned.

"We haven't seen any sharks near the beach," he said. "I don't think it will stop us from going in the water."

According to the Florida Museum of Natural History, which documents shark attacks worldwide, Sunday's incident in Destin is only the fourth documented attack off of Okaloosa County beaches since 1882.

this month. The classes are open to the public. The next class will be held April 6-17 from 6 to 10 p.m. at GCSC's Panama City Campus pool. The class size is limited to 25 participants. To register for the course, participants must possess the following prerequisite swim abilities:

1. Swim 300 yards continuously, demonstrating breath control and rhythmic breathing. Candidates may swim using the front crawl, breaststroke or a combination of both but swimming on the back or side is not allowed. Swim goggles may be used.

2. Tread water for two minutes using only the legs. Candidates should place their hands under the armpits.

3. Complete a timed event within one minute, 40 seconds.

The course is \$150 and the book is available for free in a digital format. Participants who successfully complete the course receive Red Cross certification. Students must register in person in the Enrollment Services building and be 15 years old on or before the last day of the class. For more information, contact Carl Kleinschmidt at 850-872-3832 or ckleinschmidt@gulfcoast.edu.

News Herald staff reports

The most recent incident was in July 2014, when a Tennessee man was attacked while fishing in waist-deep water off of Okaloosa Island. None of the shark attacks off of Okaloosa County beaches was fatal.

According to the museum's website (www.flmnh.ufl.edu), Santa Rosa and Walton counties each have had one attack. In Florida, Volusia County — home to Daytona Beach on the Atlantic Ocean side of the state — has the most documented shark attacks with 290 attacks (as of Jan. 23, 2017).

With 62 attacks (63 counting Sunday's incident), April ranks fifth as the month with the most shark attacks in Florida, trailing September (103), August (84), July (73) and October (72).

OBITUARIES

BILLIE BARNES

Billie Barnes, 79, of Panama City, died Friday, March 31, 2017. A visitation will be held at 1 p.m., Wednesday, April 5, 2017, at Heritage Funeral Home,

with services beginning at 2 p.m. Interment to follow at Forest Lawn Cemetery. Those wishing to extend condolences may do so at HeritageFHLCC.com.

OSCAR M. BATEMAN

Funeral services for Mr. Oscar M. Bateman, of Port St. Joe, will be held at 1 p.m. EDT on Tuesday, April 4, 2017, at First Baptist

Church. The family will receive friends at the church for an hour prior to the service. Services are provided by Comforter Funeral Home.

IVETTA N. FLAIG

Ivetta N. Flaig, 87, of Panama City Beach, died Thursday, March 30, 2017. A visitation will be held from noon to 4 p.m., Tuesday,

April 4, 2017, at Heritage Shores Funeral Home. Those wishing to extend condolences may do so at HeritageFHBeach.com.

JAMES SWEARINGTON, JR.

James Swearington, Jr., 70, of Panama City, died Friday, March 31, 2017. A visitation will be held from 6-8 p.m., Tuesday, April 4, 2017, in the chapel at Heritage Funeral Home.

Funeral services will take place at

10 a.m., Wednesday, April 5, 2017, at the funeral home.

Interment will follow at Salem Baptist Church Cemetery in Jackson County.

Those wishing to extend condolences may do so at HeritageFHLCC.com.

Guidelines and deadlines

Obituary notices are written by funeral homes and relatives of the deceased. The News Herald reserves the right to edit for AP style and format. Families submitting notices must type them in a typeface and font that can be scanned into a computer. Deadline for obituaries is 3 p.m. daily for the following day's newspaper. Obituaries may be e-mailed to pcnhobits@pcnh.com or delivered to The News Herald, 501 W. 11th St., Panama City. View today's obituaries and sign the online guest books of your loved ones at news Herald.com/obituaries.



Share your memories of a special friend or loved one. Add music, text, your own voice and photos to create a Moving Tribute.

Email info@legacy.com