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McElwain speaks on Callaway
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More injuries at Columbia
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TUESDAY, AUGUST 16, 2016 | YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER SINCE 1874 | \$1.00

Lake City Reporter

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Examining truth vs. fiction in attack ad

Candidates in judge's race at odds over advertisement.

By **CARL MCKINNEY**
cmckinney@lakecityreporter.com

The controversial claims made in a political attack ad are disputed by



Bryan

one Third Circuit judicial candidate and repeated by the other.

Incumbent Judge Paul Bryan said the ad is full of "half-truths," while chal-

BRYAN continued on 3A

Weekend storms down trees in Country Club area



SAM BURROUGHS/Lake City Reporter

A tree rests on the roof of a home off Southeast Forest Terrace on Monday. It was downed during a storm that moved through the county on Sunday. Owner Libby Green says she is thankful no one was hurt. **See story on Page 3A in today's edition.**

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

The overall assessment: 'We rocked it'

Smooth sailing for public schools as classes start for 10,000 students.

Ego Nwadike (left) takes photos of her son Chidera Nwadike before he starts his first day of kindergarten at Westside Elementary. "The first day ... is always the most exciting day of the year," said Westside Principal April Vinson said.



Photos by **KAYLA LOKEINSKY/Lake City Reporter**

By **KAYLA LOKEINSKY**
kloekinsky@lakecityreporter.com

MONDAY MARKED the first day of school in Columbia County, and as students walked through the halls, some for the very first time, it was clear they could hardly wait to get started.

"I'm just so excited!" Westside Elementary kindergartner Fallon Starling said as she jumped up and down outside her new classroom.

Westside Principal April Vinson was just as happy to be back as her students, as she spent Monday morning greeting her Wildcats as they walked onto campus.

"The first day of school is always the most

SCHOOL continued on 2A



Fallon Starling (left) and Kate Horn talk about how excited they are to start kindergarten at Westside on the first day of school. The two girls attended day care together and are in the same kindergarten class.



Hailey Denney (clockwise, from left), Sy Duval, Ashton Bouck and Christopher NeSmith talk and color before class on their first day of first grade at Westside Elementary.

Drug bust nets \$1M bond for suspect

CCSO: Half-kilo of meth seized; no bond set for second man in case.

By **CARL MCKINNEY**
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An eight-month investigation led to the arrest of two men and the seizure of more than half a kilogram of crystal meth early Saturday morning, according to the Columbia County Sheriff's Office.

Leroy Valdez, 36, and Leroy Haynes, 38, were captured near Interstate 75 around 1 a.m. by the Columbia County Multi-Jurisdictional Drug Task Force.

The task force stopped Valdez and Haynes after they came off I-75.

Valdez ran from the vehicle but was caught about a block away at the Steak 'n Shake on Southwest Commerce Drive.

Haynes was arrested on a warrant from Georgia.

Valdez tried to get rid of the drugs by throwing them out of his bag, according to the report, but a team of 10 law enforcement officers recovered them within 30 minutes.

Detectives recovered 556 grams of crystal meth, with an estimated street value of around \$25,000, the report states.

Valdez is believed to be a major trafficker of high-quality crystal meth in Columbia County, CCSO stated.

Both men were taken to the Columbia County Detention Facility.

Valdez faces charges for manufacturing amphetamines, resisting an officer, possessing equipment to transport drugs, destroying evidence and using



Valdez



Haynes

According to CCSO, detectives recovered 556 grams of crystal meth, with an estimated street value of around \$25,000.

ARRESTS continued on 3A



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SCHOOLS
Columbia Bank collects school supplies, 5A.



Photos by KAYLA LOKEINSKY/Lake City Reporter

Students at Westside Elementary wait outside their classrooms on the first day of school on Monday.

SCHOOL

Continued From 1A

exciting day of the year," Vinson said. "It's great to see all the new students and all the familiar faces."

In the midst of all the excitement, chaos can arise. However, this year in Columbia County, the first day of school went off without a hitch.

According to Superintendent Terry Huddleston, the first day of the 2016-2017 school year couldn't have gone better.

"Today has been a great day," Huddleston said. "It's been just as smooth as can be. I thought it was exceptional."

Huddleston said that aside from a couple of school buses running late, the first day of school was one of the best he's seen.

"I've been through a lot of first days, and none have been this smooth," Huddleston said.



Dominic Mazola (left) and Trace Midyette talk about their new backpacks at Westside Elementary on Monday.

Eastside Elementary Principal Trey Hosford agreed, saying that his office staff told him today was "the best first day ever."

"If this is any indication of how the rest of the year will be, it's going to be a

great year," Hosford said.

Donna Darby, who experienced her first day as a first-year principal at Pinemount Elementary, agreed that it was also a great day for her school.

"I didn't get a lot of sleep last night. I was up wor-

rying," Darby said. "But thanks to our staff, we rocked it."

At the end of the school day on Monday, Huddleston said the total attendance for the district was a little over 10,000 students.

QUICK HITS

Scripture of the day

"For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's" (Romans 14:8, KJV).

Thought for today

It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.

— Frederick Douglass (1818-1895), African-American abolitionist, orator, writer and statesman. His book, "Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass," details his escape from slavery.

Winning lottery numbers

Cash 3: (Monday) 3-4-0
Play 4: (Monday) 0-7-0-6
Fantasy 5: (Sunday) 6-20-27-30-36

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- **SUBMISSIONS:** Send your announcements to eransburg@lakecityreporter.com or U.S. mail to Eleanor Ransburg, c/o Lake City Reporter, 180 E. Duval St., Lake City, FL 32055. Fax items to 752-9400. For more information, call 754-0424.

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Search for attorney on track

Lake City officials hammer out interview process for city attorney.

By TONY BRITT
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The next city attorney will be determined by an oral presentation and an interview with the city council. The council is scheduled to interview its top three choices for city attorney at the end of the month.

During Monday's council meeting, city officials reviewed and discussed their final rankings of the five responses received after issuing a Request for Proposals to fill the position earlier this summer.

Herbert Darby, 96, who has been the city attorney for the past 60 years, plans to retire at the end of the fiscal year, Sept. 30.

Responses were submitted by:

- Marks Gray P.A., Lawyers for Enterprise, a firm from Jacksonville.
- Dell Graham, a Gainesville firm.
- Folds & Walker LLC, a Gainesville firm.
- Koberlein Law Offices, a Lake City firm.
- Paul Smith of Lake City.

Laurette Burks, city procurement director, gave a composite (or average) of the five firms. The rankings were not announced.

Under state public record law, none of the responses to the Request for Proposals are public record for 30 days, or until a recommendation has been made to begin negotiations with one of the responding parties.

The three top-ranked firms will be contacted by the city's procurement department today to set up interview times. The interviews will be conducted in council chambers at 5:30, 6 and 6:30 p.m. Aug. 31. The interviews are exempt from state open meeting laws and will not be open to the public.

The third-ranked candidate will have the 5:30 p.m. interview slot; the second-ranked will get the 6 p.m. interview slot, and the 6:30 p.m. interview slot will go to the highest-ranked firm.

"Our intention is to go 30 minutes, but we may go a little bit over," Burks said.

Each of the council members plans to submit at least two questions and the questions will be submitted to the procurement department by Aug. 24 so a list of questions can be compiled for the interviews.

Each of the firms will be allowed to make a 5- to 10-minute oral presentation. The remainder of the time will be allotted for questions and responses. All firms will be asked the same established questions, unless a council member asked for additional information about their presentation.

The individual evaluations used to determine the three top-ranked firms will not be used to determine city attorney.

Council members will provide individual rankings from the presentations and interviews, and the information will be used by procurement department representatives to develop a composite top three ranking.

The council will then discuss their evaluations and determine whether they want to begin negotiations with the top-ranked firm.

City officials will know whom they will negotiate with on Aug. 31.

'Scoops of Hope' ice cream social set

From staff reports

The Holiday Inn & Suites in Lake City will participate in the "Scoops of Hope" ice cream social from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Aug. 28.

The national campaign will benefit Give Kids The

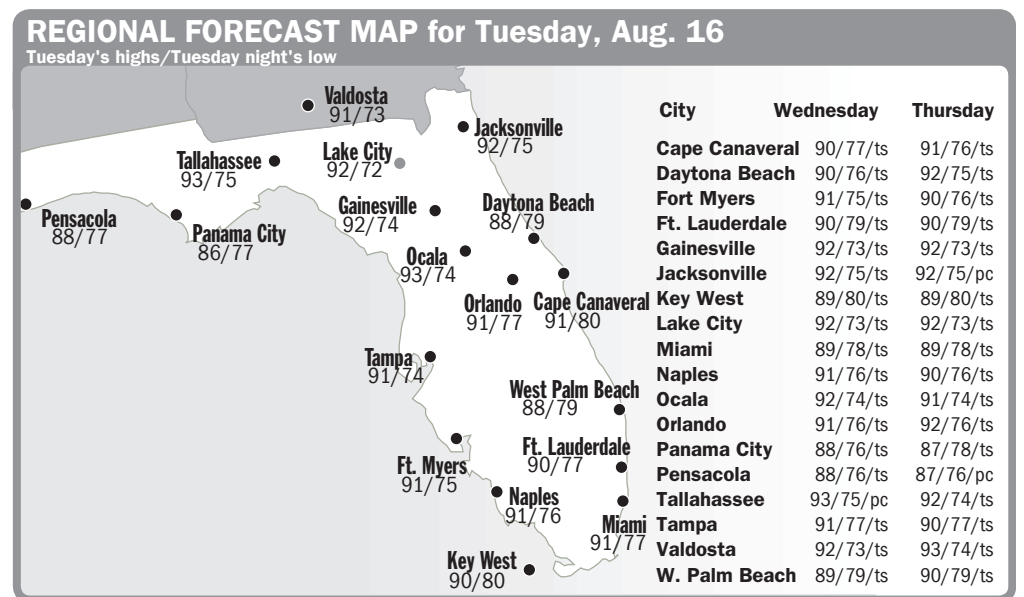
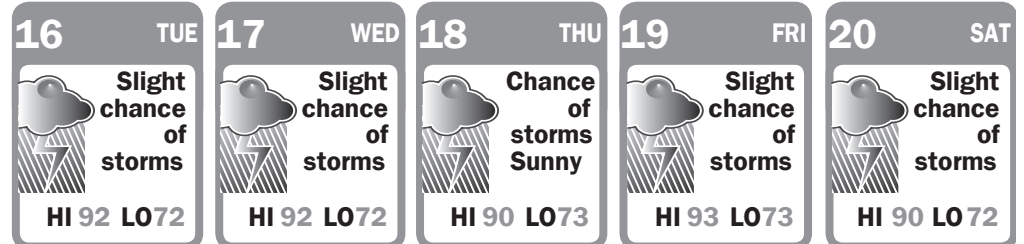
World Village for children with life-threatening illnesses. This year's event is sponsored by Esha Patel.

In exchange for a donation of \$5 or more, attendees are encouraged to tap into their childhood desires and indulge in a make-your-own

sundae bar while celebrating life with their community. Entertainment includes a bounce house provided by Space Walk and facepainting provided by Nada Meeks.

For more information, call Katheryn Porter at 487-1078.

THE WEATHER



LAKE CITY ALMANAC

TEMPERATURES
High Monday: 95
Low Monday: 72
Normal high: 90
Normal low: 72
Record high: 103 in 1915
Record low: 66 in 1904

PRECIPITATION
Monday: Trace
Month total: 2.25"
Year total: 28.67"
Normal month-to-date: 3.07"
Normal year-to-date: 32.25"

SUN
Sunrise today: 6:58 a.m.
Sunset today: 8:10 p.m.
Sunrise tom.: 6:59 a.m.
Sunset tom.: 8:09 p.m.

MOON
Moonrise today: 6:56 p.m.
Moonset today: 5:07 a.m.
Moonrise tom.: 7:42 p.m.
Moonset tom.: 6:06 a.m.

Aug 18 Full, Aug 24 Last, Sept 1 New, Sept 9 First

UV INDEX

9
Very High
15 mins to burn
Today's ultra-violet radiation risk for the area on a scale from 0 to 10+.

FYI
An exclusive service brought to our readers by The Weather Channel. weather.com

WEATHER BY-THE-DAY

WEATHER HISTORY

The weather played a big part in helping America gain its independence. The Battle of Bennington was fought on this date in 1777, after a one day delay due to rain. British reinforcements were delayed due to the rain, thus allowing the Americans to defeat two smaller armies rather than one large army.

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