



IN BRIEF

Judge Carney pre-files candidacy to retain judgeship

Citrus County Judge Bruce Edward Carney is looking to hold onto his judgeship for another term.

According to the county election's office, Carney on Tuesday, March 22, pre-filed his candidacy in the 2022 election for the second county judge group, which Gov. Ron DeSantis appointed Carney to in October 2019 after Florida lawmakers funded the position.

Judicial candidates must qualify their campaigns between noon, April 25, and noon, April 29.

Withlacochee-Dunnellon trail grand opening

The Florida Department of Transportation will host a grand opening event for the new Withlacochee-Dunnellon Trail Connector at 10:30 a.m. on March 24 at the new trail underpass, located on the west side of Highway 41 at County Road 39 in Citrus Springs.

For more information, contact Kris Carson at 813-975-6202.

Clerk offering savings event

For those with overdue traffic or criminal fees and fines, the Citrus County Clerk of the Court annual Operation Greenlight savings event will be occurring the week of March 28 to April 1 at both the Courthouse in Inverness and the Clerk Customer Service location at the West Citrus Government Center (WCGC) in Crystal River.

To participate, go to the Citrus County Courthouse, 110 N. Apopka Ave., Inverness, or Clerk Customer Service at WCGC, 1540 N. Meadowcrest Blvd., Crystal River. Customers can also call 352-341-6424, option 8.

There are three different payment methods: visit in person, go online at citrusclerk.org/payonline or call 352-341-6424, option 1.

To learn more, visit citrusclerk.org.

Kayak ramp reopening at Mullet Hole

Crystal River Preserve State Parks is opening the kayak ramp at Mullet Hole after a complete overhaul. The ramp is open 8 a.m. to sunset and is accessible from Sailboat Road.

The community is invited to the official ribbon cutting at 9:30 a.m. on March 23 at the Mullet Hole located at the Crystal Cove Trail Head, 3100 N. Sailboat Ave., Crystal River.

Pride displays hot topic at library board

Board takes no action, says it's up to county commission

By MICHAEL D. BATES
Chronicle Reporter

Emotions ran strong at Tuesday's Citrus County Library Advisory Board meeting where members were asked to reconsider putting Pride Month displays inside libraries.

After two-and-a-half hours of debate, the board took no action on this hot-button issue and said it's up to county commissioners to put it on their agenda if they choose to discuss it further.

Board member Neale Brennan reminded the crowd that advisory members do not make policy and serve only as liaison between county commissioners and the public. The public expressed their views, she said, and that fulfills the

board's duty.

The library group Tuesday almost took action. Member Elaine Leid's motion to have Library Services Director Eric Head update and clarify the current policy regarding displays, with a specific focus on the LGBTQ display, was defeated.

Board Chairwoman April McLaughlin said the group will likely discuss at its next meeting whether to go ahead with another Pride

Month this June.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender and Questioning (LGBTQ) month occurs in June. Last year, two libraries had displays designed to educate people and bring awareness to the month.

Those displays prompted a firestorm of controversy from people who believed the library was using taxpayer dollars to promote an inappropriate sexual lifestyle and was indoctrinating

children.

Many of the 70 people who showed up at Tuesday's advisory board meeting expressed those views. Others said the displays were innocuous, were not injurious to children and were meant to educate, not promote.

The request for the advisory board to reconsider putting up future Pride Month displays came from John

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CHS band tunes up for state contest

By HANNAH SACHEWICZ
Chronicle Reporter

Citrus High School's band has two rules: Be nice. Be prepared.

"Everything else falls into those two rules," CHS band director Kaleb DuBose said. "Anything you could ever think of."

With a combination of hard work and a positive environment, the CHS concert band is preparing to compete at the state level for the second time in approximately 30 years.

On April 23, they will travel to University of Florida's Phillips Center for the State Concert Music Performance Assessment (MPA).

This competition follows their "A" performances at the District MPA. DuBose explained the scope of the district competition.

First, the band played three pieces, judged by three professional music educators. After playing on stage, the band entered a separate room with another judge, where they were shown brand new pieces.

The band was allotted just a few minutes to look over the piece before playing. "They have to look at it — they can't play it," DuBose said.

During biweekly practices, the band rehearses their three performance pieces and once per week, DuBose said he gives the band a piece to sight read.

During practice, "I like to pick harder music," DuBose said. That way, competitions are much easier.

Seventeen-year-old senior and band captain Amber Losciale plays alto saxophone for the concert band. "It was very nerve wracking," she said about districts.

Losciale said she had a solo in "Songs of Old Ken-



Photos by Jeff Bryan / Chronicle staff

Citrus High School sophomore and band member Lucas Delgado practices on a euphonium Monday in the Citrus High band room. Delgado and his bandmates are preparing for the State Concert Music Performance Assessment April 23 at University of Florida's Phillips Center.



Citrus High freshman Mahaela Sleeper, playing a French horn, follows the notes on her sheet music Monday, March 21, during a band rehearsal.

tucky," one of their district pieces.

"I was really scared because I didn't want to be the reason we didn't go to states," Losciale said. "From the recording off the judges tapes, I feel like I did a good job."

As band captain Losciale

said her job is to be the representation of what the band should act like. "I need to be as best of an instrumentalist as I can be."

During marching band season, 18-year-old senior Emily Watts is the drum major. During concert band season, she plays trombone.

When Watts found out the band was going to states, she said she couldn't believe it — she never thought she'd see the day. "It just felt really good — like the hard work did matter."

Watts said band is one of

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LifeStream inches toward Baker Act facility

Organization will still need hospital board help

By FRED HIERS
Chronicle Reporter

LifeStream Behavioral Center is making progress in establishing a Baker Act facility in Citrus County.

That was the assurance from the nonprofit's Tallahassee lobbyist and Citrus County's mental health advocate to the Citrus County Hospital Board from which it

will ask for funding to pay for the bulk of the project. But in the same breath, lobbyist Gene McGee also told the hospital board LifeStream had fallen short when it came to keeping the hospital board routinely informed about its work towards building the facility in Citrus County.

"We've done a really poor job ... at keeping you (informed)," McGee said, during the board trustee meeting this week.

LifeStream's plan is to build a Baker Act facility at its new Lecanto campus with funding from both the Citrus and Hernando county commissions. McGee told the Chronicle it was important to keep communicating with the hospital board because LifeStream will ask the board for financial help later in the process.

But for positive news, McGee told the board that LifeStream now has commitments from both the Hernando County Commission and Citrus

County's mental health advocate to the Citrus County Hospital Board from which it will ask for funding to pay for the bulk of the project.

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