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PLANNING A TRIP?

'Touring with the Townies' features reader-submitted photos from travels. Let's see how many places we can go! Send in your picture or questions to newsfp@hometownnewsol.com



VIRUS VACCINATION

Sean answers questions on viruses in this week's column



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One for the home team



The St. Edward's varsity basketball team lost their home non-conference game against West Shore on Friday, January 4 by a score of 61-50. Here, T.J. Kenney (No. 4, left) just barely puts the ball in the basket.

Anthony Inswasty
staff photographer

Improved graduation rates, racial gaps remain

By Mike Winikoff

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INDIAN RIVER COUNTY — The Florida Department of Education announced in late December that Indian River County improved its high school graduation rate by almost five points, increasing from 87.1 percent in 2016-2017 to 92 percent in 2017-2018. This exceeds the state's graduation rate by almost 6 percentage points.

For the first time, all three county high schools are above a 90 percent graduation rate.

Indian River Charter High School had the highest graduation rate, 96.3 percent, followed by 93.2 percent at Vero Beach High School and 91.1 percent at Sebastian River High School.

The improvement was largest at SRHS, which rose 7.4 percent.

"The significant increase in the graduation rate at Sebastian River High School was the result of students' hard work and commitment to completing all requirements and the entire SRHS staff's attention to the needs of those students," said Todd Racine, who was SRHS principal for the 2017-18 school year. "Many systems were put into place to remove barriers of students who face academic and social-emotional issues that can distract them from achieving the goal of graduation. Teachers consistently created motivational rewards for those reach-

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Voting rights restored for some convicted felons

By Mike Winikoff

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TREASURE COAST — Florida Amendment 4, the Voting Restoration Amendment, took effect on Jan. 8. Amend. 4 restores the right to vote for people with felony convictions, except murder or

sexual offenses, upon completion of their sentences, including prison, parole, and probation.

Until now, Florida was one of only four states where convicted felons did not regain the right to vote unless a state officer or board restored the individual's voting rights. That restriction dated

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

See community events on page 2

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