

TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

In the News



June 15, 2014 - August 15, 2014



TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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The Fab Five: Women who mean business

HEATHER THOMAS
TALLAHASSEE WOMAN

Tallahassee WOMAN™

COMPLIMENTARY

June/July 2014

WOMEN ON FIRE



Girls Just Want to
Have Fun and Sun!

It's Summer Tea Time

Make Your Bedroom
a Serene Retreat.

The Fab Five: Women who mean business...

continued

KAREN MOORE LEGACY

After ten years in the marketing arena in the Netherlands, Germany and at Florida State University, Karen Moore decided to strike out on her own in 1992 and create Moore Communications Group. She says, "I laugh at the 'group' in the title from back then since it was just the three of us—me, myself and I." Gifted with the innate ability to make lasting connections and a passion for helping others succeed, over the past twenty years Karen has created a deeply respected and well deserved legacy of servant leadership in her field and community that continues to shine bright.

Growing steadily, Moore Communications Group has won numerous national awards and has become one of the largest marketing and public relation firms in

the Southeast, with satellite offices in Washington D.C., West Palm Beach, Florida and in New Orleans, Louisiana. Karen attributes this to creating a business masterpiece of essential attributes that once joined together become an innovative mosaic of networks and services that become integral to a client's success. "We are always stepping back and looking at the overall picture and reassessing how to strategically move forward. This approach has resulted in being recognized by *Inc. Magazine* as one of the fastest growing businesses in the U.S. for three straight years."

Even though the landscape of marketing is constantly evolving, being able to work with her husband of thirty years, Richard Moore, and a long-standing team of loyal and talented employees is something Karen considers to be one of her greatest successes as a business woman. "We have high standards of excellence and I give them the vision and then they are empowered to make that vision a reality." For the past four years, Moore Communications Group has been included in *Florida Trend* magazine's "Best Companies to Work For" list. Once a working mother herself, Karen says, "Our employees come first and we deeply value a work-life balance. They need to know that you respect them,

and I want to lead by example and give them someone that they can respect, to be mentored and be empowered knowing that they are 100 percent supported."

Being supported by the community, Karen feels that because of her success she has a responsibility to give back to say "thank you" and has created a corporate culture in which sharing the company's people, time and resources is melded into the company's framework. "We have fully embraced that this company will be a good corporate citizen and that we will give back to other businesses and non-profits." For many years, Karen has been a board member and volunteers in numerous organizations and created the MCG Impact program in which employees identify volunteer organizations and non-profits that they will personally commit to.

Like a master craftsman, Karen looks at the kaleidoscope masterpiece she has helped to create through a vision of faith, passion and a commitment to leadership integrity. "I go to bed every single night knowing that the people in this building have, in a small way, helped to make the world a better place. Isn't that what you really want as your legacy? That you have had a positive impact on your community, country and your world?"



FLAME OF INSPIRATION

"I'm grounded in my faith and helping others. When you look through that compassionate lens in the way that you do business, the way you treat your family and friends, and the way you raise your children—that is, to me, the way it should be done. Whatever your faith and vision is, let it lead you in your personal life and in your career."

Leading Locations for 2014:

The MSAs with Strongest Prime Work Force Growth

DALE D. BUSS

AREA DEVELOPMENT ONLINE

A yawning gap has developed between millions of potentially available workers and the increasingly sophisticated skills they would require to qualify for today's generally tech-oriented jobs.

Sluggish U.S. economic growth means that the pool of available labor actually continues to expand even as more companies are hiring again. The problem is that a yawning gap has developed between millions of potentially available workers and the increasingly sophisticated skills they would require to qualify for today's generally tech-oriented jobs. Most jobs now require some level of postsecondary education as well as computer skills.

That's where state, regional, and city economic development programs can prove crucial, helping businesses fulfill their needs for highly trained labor pools, either through augmented education on the front end or cooperating with locating and expanding businesses and their specialized workforce needs on the back end.

Consider the role that state and local prime workforce programs have played in helping regions advance in the increasingly crucial biotech industry. Practically every jurisdiction across the country has been actively attempting to build biotech "hotspots" or "corridors" for a decade now, and the emergent winners are focusing on helping biotech startups attract, develop, and retain the technical and scientific talent that is crucial for their success.

Illinois, for example, reimburses employers up to 50 percent of the costs of training graduate-student employees under its biotech training-assistance program. Missouri has spent \$9 million in grants to establish "innovation campuses" where high-school students get extensive training in science and technology fields through apprenticeships with local employers while they also earn college credit.

And, in North Carolina, the legislature has cleverly leveraged the state's tobacco-settlement payments into three separate trust funds, one of them a long-term economic development foundation that committed \$60 million to create a statewide training program for bio-

manufacturing workers. A portion of this grant, along with \$4.5 million from the North Carolina Biosciences Organization, provided North Carolina State University in Raleigh with \$36 million to train workers for the Research Triangle's now-burgeoning life-sciences sector.

Vibrant performance in this criterion stands out for some MSAs, where they rank much more highly for worker readiness in the Area Development list for 2014 than in other categories. Tallahassee, Fla., for instance, ranks only No. 108 in the overall list this year — but No. 6 in the "Prime Workforce" criterion. One key for Florida's capital is that economic development officials effectively harness the wide variety of the city's higher-education network, not just the prominent Florida State University.

So, for example, Tallahassee Community College has taken a leadership role with the opening of its Advanced Manufacturing Training Center, a 16,000-square-foot facility geared toward high-tech and precision-manufacturing training; and the Ghazvini Center for Healthcare Education, an 85,000-square-foot facility that houses programs in diagnostic medical sonography, emergency medical services, nursing, radiologic technology, and respiratory care.

Even places with generally not as helpful reputations can score big economic development successes with the right type of assistance to help companies create prime workforces. Connecticut, for instance, began a Small Business Express Program in 2012 that offered companies help with developing employee skills as a centerpiece of a menu of lures. More than 1,000 Connecticut companies benefited through early 2014, creating and retaining about 14,000 jobs, the state said.

Cherokee Sink plan draws a passionate crowd

JENNIFER PORTMAN
TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

A standing-room-only crowd packed the Woodville Public Library's community room Tuesday night for a public hearing on controversial plans by Tallahassee Community College's Wakulla Environmental Institute to lease state park land for a campground and educational training at Cherokee Sink.

About 90 people — for and against the proposal — signed up to speak and have their comments heard by state park planning officials who will consider the plan in the coming weeks. WEI officials are seeking to lease a 1,850-acre tract within Wakulla Springs State Park to train upcoming park managers in land management and turn Cherokee Sink into a destination with 60-site RV and tent camping sites and 10 yurts. If the lease were to be approved, it would be the largest of its kind ever granted.

"This is just the very beginning of the process," said Lew Scruggs, chief of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Park Planning. "We aren't even at the place where a decision will be made on this idea, but we wanted to get the public's input."

At the outset of the more than three-hour meeting, TCC President Jim Murdaugh said it has been "very painful" for him to hear and read what he called "the innuendo, the rumors and the misinformation" that has circulated about the project and stressed the college's track record of environmental stewardship.

"The things that have been said to me directly are, quiet frankly, in need of clarity," he said. "Our vision of what we intend to do and wish to do in Wakulla County is very, very clear. We have said from the beginning that what we want to do is create a world-class destination that brings together conservation, education and recreation in a manner that stimulates economic development in an environmentally sensitive way."

But many speakers expressed concern about the impact of the campground on the fragile ecosystem and said that park lands should be managed by professional state park managers.

"The proposed campground would occupy a huge footprint and have unintended harmful consequences," said Robert Thompson, who stressed the plan is

inconsistent with the purpose of the land's purchase by the state to protect the water quality at Wakulla Springs.

The WEI campground plan at Cherokee Sink is similar to one pitched in 2011 by DEP, when the new institute's Executive Director Bob Ballard served as the agency's deputy secretary.

That proposal, part of an effort to boost state-park revenue, included 120 campsites on 60 acres, as well as 12 equestrian camping areas, but it was halted following widespread public opposition.

"Mr. Ballard's proposal, unlike fine wine, has not improved with age," said retired park service employee George Apthorp. "If Bob Ballard loves Florida parks as much as he professes, he should leave them alone."

The WEI plan cuts in half the number of proposed campsites and would not allow horses or generators, Ballard said. All the sites and bathhouse facilities would be connected to the county's center sewer and development would be done to the highest environmental standards.

But, Ballard told the crowd: "This isn't about a campground. It's about training the next generation of park rangers."

Public opinion at the meeting was mixed, with detractors and supporters of the plan making passionate arguments.

Robert Sidler said it would be an opportunity for Wakulla County to be known for its natural wonders and be supported by people "with vision and money."

"How much do I support it? One hundred percent," he said. "It's a wonderful thing."

Dallas Marshall, a former DEP employee and owner of Panacea RV Park, said: "I look forward to these people doing what they say they are going to do."

The plan was praised by many Wakulla County leaders, tourism officials, chamber of commerce representatives and other citizens.

"I back this proposal, and have the utmost respect for TCC and WEI," said St. Mark's resident Pamela Shields.

Cherokee Sink plan draws a passionate crowd...

continued

The Big Bend Group of the Sierra Club's Susan Robinson, however, criticized the proposal as "hasty and poorly conceived," and called for something of such magnitude to have a thorough public vetting.

Jack Rudloe, of Gulf Specimen Marine Lab, also decried the plan.

"The Creature (from the Black Lagoon) would be infuriated with this proposal," Rudloe said.

DEP officials will continue to take written comments about the proposal through July 8. Comments may be emailed to lewis.scruggs@dep.state.fl.us

Florida Approves 70-Acre Wakulla County Oyster Farming Zone

JESSICA PALOMBO

WFSU

Large-scale oyster farming is about to take hold in Florida with the state's approval of dozens of aquaculture leases Tuesday. Environmental officials hope growing the bivalves in cages takes pressure off the struggling wild oyster industry in the Florida Panhandle.

Tuesday's vote by the Florida Cabinet marks the first time the state has zoned a large area for oyster farming—70 acres of Wakulla County's Oyster Bay. Of 38 plots available, just under half have been leased for the next decade to hopeful farmers.

State Aquaculture Division Director Kal Knickerbocker says, "It gives them an opportunity to make some business plans."

The oyster farming area southeast of the town of Panacea will provide jobs for area residents, he says, adding it should help the wild oyster population rebound after years of overharvesting and adverse water conditions.

"Seventeen people that received permission to move forward today, instead of them being out there harvesting from the wild, now they're going to be culturing a crop of their own," he says.

The state has reserved 10 of the oyster plots for the inaugural graduating class of the Tallahassee Community College Wakulla Environmental Institute.

Institute Executive Director Bob Ballard says, "The first set of oysters are about to be put into the water."

Ballard says the recently trained oyster farmers will grow 1 million oysters between them. And each oyster filters and cleans 14 gallons of water every day.

"That's an amazing amount of water," he says, "and as far as environmentally friendly, it doesn't get any more environmentally friendly than this."

And Ballard says there's another benefit expected from the oyster farms—for fishermen. Oysters growing in cages are known to attract fish and shrimp. So he says Oyster Bay should soon become a more popular place to drop a line.

Cabinet approves Wakulla County oyster leases

KARL ETTERS

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

The Florida Cabinet approved a measure Tuesday to allow the lease of 38 oyster aquaculture sites in coastal Wakulla County.

The 1.5-acre lease sites in a shallow bay west of Shell Point are open to applicants on a first-come first-serve basis. Of the 17 applicants thus far, 11 are students in Tallahassee Community College's oyster aquaculture program at the Wakulla Environmental Institute.

The other six applicants represent commercial fishing businesses or individuals in St. Marks and Panacea.

Kal Knickerbocker, DACS director for the division of aquaculture, said the idea to add the lease space came from requests from community members along the coast.

At a time when the viability of Apalachicola's oyster fishery is in question because of economic and environmental strains on the shellfish population there, oystermen may be turning to aquaculture to bolster the industry.

"It's a sustainable operation and it takes a little bit of the pressure off of the wild resource," Knickerbocker said following the cabinet meeting. "It puts some people into business of their own and hopefully that will be the beginning of an economic stimulator."

The 10-year leases cost \$53.46 a year and are meant to be a place where fishermen can use a variety of cage styles and deploy spat — juvenile oysters — at different levels in the water column to determine the best way to commercially grow oysters.

The majority of the applicants said they would be using an adjustable-longline method of growing oysters that suspends the cages between two posts that keeps them from fouling and sets them at an ideal water depth.

The WEI got involved with aquaculture of oysters, a relatively new practice in North Florida, at the request of the fishing community.

"They were having such a hard time making a living out of wild oyster harvest," said Bob Ballard, executive director of WEI. "So we said, 'Maybe we can help.'"

The leases acquired by the TCC students included a micro-loan of about \$14,000 each from the WEI for spat, cages and the lease permitting. The effort is part of a 3-hour class on oyster growth, marketing and business plan development.

Ballard said with the loans, each student has the capability to produce 100,000 oysters in the first year, but have to repay the loan at harvest time.

There is room for expansion to turn the class into a real money maker.

"They have a lease for 400,000 oysters," Ballard said. "They could easily go from making \$40,000 a year to \$160,000 a year, and after oysters we're going to be looking at clams and also scallops."

This is the first year the entire water column has been available to oyster farmers after the Cabinet last June approved a request by a Wakulla County family to find the right mix of nutrients, water salinity and protection from predators to grow restaurant-grade oysters.

Prior to that, due to navigation concerns, oyster cages could sit no more than six inches above the sea floor, where clams thrive, but not oysters.

Through four studies of the lease area, DACS has determined that opening the area to aquaculture practices will not affect sea grasses, shellfish beds or natural resources.

Creating a specialized product through cultivating oysters opens the door for other aquaculture opportunities, Ballard said. And it gives back to the community.

"Growing oysters will take a little pressure off the wild harvest," he said. "It isn't our interest to supplant the wild oyster harvest, but we believe with this, the wild oyster harvest will come back even stronger. This is way to give oystermen other options."

TCC proposes campground in Wakulla Springs State Park; public reaction mixed

NICK EVANS
WFSU

Tallahassee Community College's Wakulla Environmental Institute hopes to train a generation of future park rangers, and they believe a tract of land on the west side of Wakulla Springs State Park could be the perfect classroom. The nearly 2,000 acre parcel includes Cherokee Sink, a popular swimming hole closed in 2009.

The plan calls for a 50-year lease on the land to build a campground, conduct ecological restoration, and – of course – re-open Cherokee Sink to swimmers. An initial public hearing Tuesday night drew more than 100 to the Woodville Community Center for public comment.

The Institute's Executive Director Bob Ballard says the planned campground is an opportunity to give students hands-on experience.

"People think park rangers are out in the woods all the time – they're doing prescribed burns, or they're doing invasive plant management, [but] about 80% of their time is spent with hospitality issues, dealing with people that come into state parks," Ballard says.

The project is a scaled back version of a proposal Ballard made in 2011 when he was deputy secretary of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. That idea was scrapped in response to public criticism. The current plan calls for a 60-site campground, two paved parking lots and roads, as well as a boardwalk surrounding Cherokee Sink.

Former president of the Friends of Wakulla Springs, and co-founder of the Wakulla Springs Alliance Ron Piasecki is advising TCC on the project. He says the plan is just a first draft, but he thinks the school can be an important partner for the state parks service.

"Here's an organization that's willing to put up \$3.5 million to do a lot of things that the parks would do if they could," Piasecki says. "This is a concept that is just getting started. Bear with it; let's all work together."

But not everyone was happy with the proposal. Sandy Cook, former manager of the Wakulla Springs State Park, says TCC shouldn't build a campsite on the land.

"I'd like to offer an alternative to this proposal: TCC should talk to Wakulla County about the management of the Newport Campground. It's on trustee's land, it was built with a FRDAP grant, public land public money, and it wouldn't cost TCC \$3 million," Cook says.

TCC's final proposal has yet to be submitted, and there will be further opportunities for public comment.

Bedell excited for 2nd season at TCC

Coach looking to build off strong recruiting class

ST. CLAIR MURRAINE
TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Long before the final buzzer ended his first season as head coach of the women's basketball program at TCC, Franqua Bedell was thinking about the kind of team he wanted to put on the floor.

And he believes he's got it in his first recruiting class.

"I brand what we do as 'chaos 40;' organized chaos for 40 minutes," Bedell said. "However we do it, we are still going to be skilled enough to score at all times."

With his first class of recruits signed, Bedell believes that he's got a team that could be more competitive than the Eagles were last year.

Bedell was hired last June to replace Teresa Atkinson, who resigned last March. Then, midway through the season he realized just how tough that first year was going to be.

The Eagles finished the season with a 12-17 record and were 3-9 in conference play. Considering where Bedell came from, that wasn't quite what he expected.

During his 10-year career, he made stops as an assistant at Virginia Commonwealth, Mississippi State, Southeast Missouri State and Hardin-Simmons. Bedell is just the third head coach in the 20-year history of the TCC women's program.

His only other collegiate head-coaching job also was at the junior college level, when he was at Southeastern Illinois College for a year.

The Fort Smith, Ark., native said he learned more about handling adversity in his first year at TCC than he did at any other job.

"It was probably the best learning experience for me," Bedell said. "I learned a lot about myself; persevering and struggling. I've done a lot of that stuff off the floor, but I've never had that as a coach or a player."

Four players left the team either due to ineligibility, violation of team rules or by their own choice. That left Bedell with just eight players in Panhandle Conference play. Injuries left the Eagles with just six players for their final game of the season.

Bedell could hardly wait to start building his first team.

"We were very eager and aggressive in getting the type of players that we felt could put us on the map here," he said. "I'm confident and very excited. Now we've got to go into the lab, which is the gym, and make some things better."

He will have just five players returning from last year's team. But Bedell expects Division I transfers guards Catherine Wells and Jeremica Edwards, along with post player Wendion Johnson to help make his second year a success.

"He had to go out to get the best and I feel like you're going to get to see that come to fruition this year," athletic director Ron Chaney said. "You are going to see the talent level and we're going to be there in the mix."

"I think the sky is the limit. It may not happen overnight but that's what he is building for."

TCC proposal for Cherokee Sink draws support, concern

Sub-head

By line

PUBLICATION

While Wakulla Environmental Institute is pursuing a 50-year lease from the Florida Park Service for 2,000 acres adjacent to Wakulla Springs State Park to develop a campground at Cherokee Sink, one commissioner, the Wakulla Springs Alliance and Friends are saying, not so fast.

A public meeting organized by DEP to discuss the Cherokee Sink lease proposal was Tuesday at the Woodville branch library (that occurred after press time).

WEI's Plans

The lease would mean the reopening of Cherokee Sink, and the addition of a campground designed in cooperation with the Florida Park Service, containing 60 Tent/RV sites, 10 yurts, two bath houses, pavilions, two guest host sites, maintenance area, playground and a ranger station. The area near Cherokee Sink will have a restroom facility with flush toilets, parking for 30 vehicles, pavilion, picnic area, and a boardwalk around the sink (to prevent further erosion).

Bob Ballard, executive director of Wakulla Environmental Institute, said partnering with the park is a one-stop educational cross-training opportunity, which will also provide management for the land and campground. Wakulla Environmental Institute is an environmental education institution that exists under the umbrella of Tallahassee Community College.

"We want to have a place to train the next generation of park rangers, forest rangers, fish and wildlife (employees) – state and national," he said. "So, not only do park rangers have to do land management training, they also have to do hospitality training. So, with our AS degree in parks and recreation, they would also be trained in hospitality. That means we would have interns coming in to run the campground."

According to a press release, there will be no septic tanks on the 2,000 acres, and the county sewer system will be used. WEI will not build over the subterranean cave system that leads to Wakulla Springs. Equestrian use will be prohibited on the 2,000 acres.

Ballard, who formerly served as deputy secretary for DEP, said he sought advice from WEI board members who are also Friends of Wakulla Springs State Park, about how to proceed correctly so they would be more interested in supporting it.

"The public has a place to camp at one of the best state parks in the country," he said. "And Cherokee Sink gets opened up for swimming for the first time in 14 years."

Ballard added that the Causseaux Family Cemetery, located at Cherokee Sink, will be restored after it was desecrated in the 1970s.

Wakulla Springs Alliance Opposition

Rodney DeHan, Ph.D., is the acting chairman of the Wakulla Springs Alliance. DeHan said the group has major concerns over the lease and plans.

"This land has been designated as a conservation and restoration land," DeHan said. "What the project would do, is turn it into intense recreational area. We feel that what the Environmental Institute is trying to do can be done in Wakulla Springs, (on land) that is already being used. There is no need to isolate other areas designated for conservation for recreation."

From a geological perspective, DeHan said the area is very vulnerable — full of caves and sinkholes, known by geologists as karst, a landscape formed from the dissolution of soluble rocks such as limestone full of caves and channels.

"There is direct interaction between surface water and ground water," DeHan said. "Surface water is of lower quality, and with activities on the surface, all the runoff will end up in the groundwater. That's why people put aside parcels of land for conservation and restoration. You cannot combine exploitation with conservation. I'm not saying that the Environmental Institute is exploiting, but you never know once you start activities."

DeHan said another concern is that a similar plan was submitted by DEP several years ago, and was rejected.

TCC proposal for Cherokee Sink draws support, concern...

continued

WEI requested DeHan's input on an environmental curriculum committee.

"We are all for training and education," DeHan said. "But we don't see reason for taking parcels of land designated for conservation and restoration for recreation. We can strike a balance generating jobs and environmental protection."

Other Opinions

Commissioners Ralph Thomas, Richard Harden, Jerry Moore and Randy Merritt pledged full support of the proposal at the June 16 meeting of the Wakulla County Board of Commissioners following Ballard's outline of the proposal.

"This will be a huge asset to our county," Harden said. "It will additionally raise awareness to the importance of our springs."

Thomas referred to Wakulla Springs as "the crown jewel" of Wakulla County, even though the lodge has struggled.

"This will be done in an environmentally-sensitive way that will supplement that, not take away from it," Thomas said.

Moore said the board has an interest in the planning process, and wants to be involved in decisions going forward.

Commissioner Howard Kessler said dialogue is good, but expressed hesitance. He asked Ballard if a feasibility study has been executed. Ballard said no, but when he worked for DEP, similar "tweaks" to Florida Parks made a positive impact on attendance.

Kessler said the issue of bringing more people into a park has a dual edge.

"There is a capacity that any park can tolerate before it starts degrading," Kessler said. "This land was bought primarily to improve the water quality at Wakulla Springs."

Kessler said ecotourism is the driver of the county, but he is still concerned.

"We need to really learn more about it," Kessler said.

Ron Piasecki, former chairman of the WSA, was an original member of the institute's advisory committee. Piasecki recently submitted his resignation to the alliance as he has been tapped as president-elect of Friends of Florida State Parks, which will interfere with time he can devote to the conservation group, hence his resignation. Piasecki has a different take on the plans.

He said Jim Stevenson, a senior state biologist also known as "Mr. Springs" around Florida, was most concerned that some of the roads would run over the cave system conduits. Ballard agreed, Piasecki said. A hydro geologist furnished a cave map, and plans for roads were planned to avoid the cave system.

"That satisfied Jim's major issue," Piasecki said.

At the BOCC meeting, Ballard said Stevenson requested restraint, with fewer campsites and parking spaces; the compromises are reflected in the proposal. Ballard said there is one-mile distance between the campground and Cherokee Sink.

Piasecki said he sees WEI staffing the operations as another plus, since commercial concession contractors run the lodge after major layoffs by the park service.

"WEI will be a nonprofit to take over management and operations," Piasecki said.

Land management is another asset from which the park will benefit, which will be under the guidance and oversight of the park service.

"They are going to be doing reforestation and prescribed burning to train students," Piasecki said. "The park service didn't have money to do that. And I think alliance was concerned — why 2,000 acres?"

Sufficient acreage, which will be managed piece by piece, is needed to lock up future programs, Piasecki said. As for concern over the 50-year lease, Ballard told Piasecki that \$3.5 million in financing for any less time would be difficult.

"The park service and the Friends of Wakulla Springs don't have that money," Piasecki said.

TCC proposal for Cherokee Sink draws support, concern...

continued

Lastly, Piasecki said Cherokee Sink is a major draw for people who appreciate the natural beauty of Wakulla County.

"WEI will be opening a venue where Wakulla citizens and others have enjoyed swimming for decades," Piasecki said. "It provides an alternative to people if the main park is crowded, they have a place to have a picnic or go swimming."

Piasecki said another public meeting is possible, along with modifications to the plans that include diverse viewpoints.

Friends of Wakulla Springs Weighs In

According to a press release, the Friends cannot oppose or endorse TCC's Wakulla Environmental Institute's application to lease land from the Florida Park Service. As a citizens support organization for the Wakulla Springs State Park, they said there are numerous questions, which were addressed at the public meeting Tuesday.

The Friends are behind reopening the Cherokee Sink tract within the park.

"In fact, with the assistance of park planning in Tallahassee, our organization last year prepared a proposal to reopen and connect to the available sewer line," the press release said. "This proposal is waiting for the Wakulla County administration's guidelines to apply for BP Restore funding. It is uncertain how long this may take."

The press release said it is premature to reject or endorse Phase 3 or the Cherokee tract of the yet-to-be constructed Institute.

Newest LSU signee Collin Strall is anxious to carve

a role once he arrives

RANDY ROSETTA

NEW ORLEANS TIMES-PICAYUNE

Like just about any baseball player would be, Collin Strall was content playing shortstop at the high school level. After all, that tends to be as busy a spot on the diamond as anywhere but catcher. Kind of the eye of the storm.

So when a coach approached him with the idea of seeing what he could do on the mound, you can understand why Strall might've been a little hesitant.

He wasn't, though, and the domino effect since then propelled him on a path to the LSU baseball program.

The Suwanee, Ga., native is the final piece of a highly regarded 2014 recruiting class that will replenish and fortify the Tigers' roster in the fall when work begins toward the 2015 season.

The slightly built (5-foot-10, 165 pounds) right-hander spent last season at Tallahassee Community College where he was a middle and long reliever and finished 7-2 with a save in 24 appearances. He had a 2.54 ERA and 63 strikeouts in 60.1 innings.

Strall is the seventh pitcher in the 12-man class and the first side-arming specialist that the LSU coaches have specifically sought since Paul Mainieri arrived 8 years ago.

That sidearm style is how and why Strall caught a coach's attention when he was at shortstop.

"I played shortstop all the way up until my senior year and then summer before, one of my summer coaches saw I was throwing with a low arm slot and said, 'Let's try that on the mound,'" Strall said. "I was pretty effective the first time we tried it, so I pitched a lot that summer."

How effective? Strall can elevate his velocity to the upper 80-m.p.h. range with an occasional flirtation with the low 90s, and he has mastered a breaking ball and changeup from the sidearm slot.

In pitcher-ese, Strall says "I've got some big movement when I pitch and that makes it hard to hit."

The idea with Strall when he dons the LSU uniform is to tweak his motion and make it more submarine.

"The coaches told me that they had been looking for a sidearm guy for a while and wanted to recruit the right

one," Strall said. "I am up for anything they want to adjust with me. I've heard nothing but great things about (LSU pitching coach Alan Dunn). I want to get to work with him, and whatever he thinks works, I'm going to do."

Like every pitcher on the staff, Strall will have to carve out a role in the fall.

Two weekend starters will be back -- Jared Poche and Kyle Bouman -- with Russell Reynolds and Hunter Newman also returning after missing the 2014 season recuperating from shoulder surgeries. Newcomers Mac Marshall, Alex Lange and Jake Latz are also candidates for starting jobs.

After that, though, the bullpen responsibilities are wide open for the remaining crew, including the closer's spot.

The Tigers pursued Strall after 2014 closer Joe Broussard was drafted and offered a scholarship after Broussard signed with the Los Angeles Dodgers.

"Last year I started, relieved and closed, so I feel comfortable pitching at any point in the game," Strall said. "We can figure that out in the fall."

That versatility and willingness to adjust is part of the makeup of a pitcher that veteran Tallahassee CC coach Mike McLeod said makes Strall so valuable.

"He's one of those kids that's got great focus and will work to be good at whatever LSU wants him to do," said McLeod, a former player and assistant at Florida State. "He's real smart, real athletic and on top of all that, he's got a great arm and can really pitch. That sidearm pitch is deceptive naturally and he has a great changeup and slider off of it."

And now Strall has a new home.

He went to TCC expecting to stay for two years, especially when he didn't hear from any big-name programs during his freshman campaign.

When he got a call from LSU recruiting coordinator Javi Sanchez, though, plans were re-directed in a hurry.

Newest LSU signee Collin Strall is anxious to carve a role once he arrives...

continued

"When Javi called, it got my attention because it's LSU," Strall said. "They knew they might lose some kids in the draft, so they were covering their bases and told me they wanted me to come and visit."

That's when McLeod knew he was in trouble.

"When they invited him over for a visit, I knew that was it," he said with a chuckle. "It's unfortunate for us, but great for him. When one of those big programs call - LSU, Florida State, Mississippi State - it's hard for a kid to turn down. We're very proud of him and happy for him because LSU is such a great program, and it's a feather in our cap as well."

Indeed, once Strall and his family came to Baton Rouge during the NCAA Regional, the sell wasn't a hard one.

Because the Tigers were busy, Strall didn't spend a ton of time with the players, although he was introduced to Alex Bregman, who told him LSU was something special.

A key, though, was that Strall hung out with Tigers' fans and soaked up the atmosphere at Alex Box Stadium.

"When you see how special LSU is to the fans, it's hard to not fall in love with the program and the idea of playing there," Strall said. "I can't wait to get there."

Two TCC pitchers leave for SEC teams

ST. CLAIR MURRAINE

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

They grew up in homes just minutes apart in Georgia, something they didn't know until they came to Tallahassee Community College and walked on to the baseball team.

Logan Elliott and Collin Strall eventually became roommates at TCC, and both side-arm pitchers landed significant roles as freshman relievers this past season.

Now, thanks to the major-league draft, both have one more thing in common — they will be pitching for SEC programs. Elliott is going to Mississippi State, while Strall will play at LSU.

"That's just crazy," Elliott said of the chance that they'll be pitching in the same league. "Going to TCC, I didn't know anybody. We became best friends and now we are playing in the SEC.

"I couldn't have told you that going into my first year in Tallahassee. It just turned out really incredible."

The pitchers found the opportunity to leave TCC after one season when the Rebels and Tigers each lost three pitchers in the recent draft. Neither Strall nor Elliott knows their roles with the Division-I teams, although they expect to be in the pitching rotation immediately.

"I will just do whatever they need me to do," Elliott said. "I've started, done relief and I've closed at TCC. I've done it all."

So has Strall. And both had a hand in helping the Eagles' run to the Florida Junior College state tournament.

Strall was remarkable in two relief outings in the tournament, securing wins over Panhandle Conference champion Chipola College and Mid-Florida Conference champion St. Johns River College.

Strall's 7-2 record was good enough to earn him a spot as an All-Panhandle Conference second-team selection. He pitched 60 1/3 innings, allowing 53 hits while striking out 63 batters. He posted a 2.54 ERA.

LSU had a chance to capture some of that on film for head coach Paul Mainieri, who said Strall made quite an impression on his recruiter.

"He liked what he saw and we liked it as well, so we gave (Strall) an opportunity to come to school at LSU," Mainieri said. "We are hoping he is a strike-throwing machine from a unique angle.

"Every so often, the right junior college player can contribute. In this case, I think Collin will bring a level of maturity to our team that will be a welcomed addition."

Strall's ability as a side-arm pitcher was one of the main reasons Mainieri felt the right-hander could be an asset.

The Rebels' John Cohen sees Elliott bringing the same weapon to Mississippi State.

Elliott demonstrated how good he could be as a starter when TCC coach Mike McLeod needed fresh arms in the final week of the season. Elliott pitched a must-win game over Northwest Florida that kept the Eagles' postseason hopes alive.

He ended his TCC career with a 7-1 record and a 2.19 ERA, earning a spot on the All-Panhandle Conference first team. In 23 appearances out of the bullpen, he recorded five saves.

"We are so happy for them but sad for us," McLeod said. "They could have done some damage this year."

McLeod, who has coached at TCC for more than two decades, said he's come to accept moves like those by Strall and Elliott as the norm for junior colleges. He said he expects to fill the vacancies with redshirt Ryan Murrah and Tyson Albert, a transfer from St. Pete Junior College.

"We in junior college have to worry about the draft ourselves because our guys are draft eligible after the first or second year," McLeod said. "But then we have to worry about the fallout because junior college guys become commodity."

TCC can't justify Cherokee Sink plan

MADELEINE H. CARR

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (LETTERS TO THE EDITOR)

Tallahassee Community College is suggesting there is a need to lease 2,000 acres of Wakulla Springs State Park for 50 years. This land grab is Phase 3 of its yet-to-be constructed Wakulla Environmental Institute. The institute and its many buildings constitute Phase 1 of TCC's "Foundation for Growth."

TCC also declared "it is nearing partnership with the Florida Park Service." This is a regrettable assumption that sets TCC on a path where there is a teachable moment in political maneuvering.

As a retired adjunct history professor at TCC, I am familiar with preparing plans, and writing coherent and demonstrable outcomes. TCC has failed to provide any demonstrated need to push through a sublease of state park land for its use.

TCC needs to be held to the same standards we request from our students: What are the reliable sources that show a need to train park rangers and resource managers? How does TCC establish that there is a shortage of campgrounds in Wakulla County and thus proclaim that the college will run a 60 RV camping area?

The TCC presentations about Wakulla Environmental Institute's use of Cherokee Sink lack details. Thus one can assume that what is presented is not necessarily important or correct.

Where has TCC even attempted to include any expertise in determining the need for such a sublease? Instead, TCC resorts to back-room lobbying and then hopes the public will go along with an emotional appeal to "we will provide money and campgrounds."

This is not one of TCC's shining moments.

Local student pursues master's at Harvard

DOUG BLACKBURN
TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

A Leon High, TCC and FSU graduate will attend the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University beginning this fall.

Adam LaRose, who graduated from TCC in 2010 with an associate's degree in political science, credits his time at TCC with preparing him for success at FSU and his eventual acceptance to Harvard.

During his two years at TCC, LaRose was elected vice president of the Honors Program and served as a United States Senate intern.

LaRose will pursue a master's degree in public policy at Harvard with a specific focus in social policy.

WTXL - June 23, 2014

New scholarships available for TCC students

JADE BULECZA
WTXL

A new opportunity is coming for students looking to attend Tallahassee Community College.

WTXL is partnering with local companies and TCC to provide the Dedicated Companies Scholarship to qualifying students.

First generation college attendees, honorably discharged veterans, and single parents of children under 18 can all qualify for the scholarship.

Four one-time, \$3,000 awards will be given for the fall 2014 and spring 2015 semesters.

To apply, just submit a current FAFSA form by July 18.

The scholarship is made possible through funds from WTXL Dedicated Companies partners, including Gold's Gym, Kraft Nissan, Home Instead Senior Care, Rowe Roofing, and the Tallahassee Board of Realtors.

All funds will be matched by Tallahassee Community College.

Employers have an obligation to address workplace violence

DAVID C. ASHBURN
TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Earlier this month, Tallahassee Community College's campus was locked down by local law enforcement after reports that a man was running around campus brandishing a gun.

Fortunately, no one was harmed, but the incident served as another reminder of the importance of being prepared for potentially violent situations in the workplace.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration estimates that about 2 million U.S. workers are victims of workplace violence each year and about 10 percent of workplace fatalities are homicides. The monetary costs of workplace violence have been estimated by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health to exceed \$120 billion per year, and the human costs are immeasurable.

These statistics illustrate why employers should take the first steps to address workplace violence by adopting policies and procedures that demonstrate to their employees the importance of a safe workplace. Those policies may include substantial disciplinary action or the possibility of termination for harassing or threatening behavior.

Employees should be encouraged to report suspicious or threatening circumstances, and employers must respond swiftly to those reports. Failure to take such reports seriously could result in substantial liability for an employer. Additionally, retaliation against an employee who reports workplace violence may result in a lawsuit not only by the employee, but also by the U.S. Department of Labor, which filed two such suits in 2013.

Domestic violence is not uncommon in the workplace, as that may be the easiest place for an estranged partner to instigate a confrontation. Tragically, about 5 percent of workplace homicide victims had a relationship with the perpetrator.

Providing employees who are victims of domestic violence with time off to seek court protection, or to obtain medical, mental health or victim support services is both good policy and in some circumstances required by Florida law.

Steps should also be taken to limit the access non-employees have on workplace premises. Security measures can be as simple as employee ID badges necessary to access secure areas, or more restrictive systems requiring a password or electronic recognition of biomarkers – for example, fingerprints – to gain access to certain workplace areas.

Data security is often as important as premises security. Breaches of data security may enable a person who intends to commit a violent act to overcome premises security measures or gain access to personal information about an individual employee. Simple steps, such as requiring frequent changes to passwords, can help.

Limiting the harm that may result from an act of workplace violence is not simply a matter of making a quick call to 911. An emergency action plan should be developed that includes making staff aware of emergency exit procedures. CPR and other first-aid training should be made available to employees.

Many employers provide employee assistance programs with resources for workers who suffer psychological injuries, including those arising from workplace violence. EAP services can be provided confidentially and may serve as the path to recovery for victims.

Communication is vital when it comes to both preventing and responding to workplace violence. That communication must include both management and employees to ensure policies are not only implemented but adjusted as necessary to respond to the changing environment. The goal of working together is to keep everyone safe on the job.

David C. Ashburn is a shareholder in the Health & FDA Business Practice Group at the Tallahassee office of international law firm Greenberg Traurig. Contact him at ashburnd@gtlaw.com.

TCC athletes make PC All-Academic Team

DEMOCRAT STAFF REPORTS

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Tallahassee Community College placed 32 students on the Panhandle Conference's All-Academic Team for the 2013-14 academic year.

The PC All-Academic Team recognizes participants in five sanctioned sports - men's and women's basketball, baseball, softball and volleyball - as well as cross country and cheerleading.

In order to be eligible for the PC All-Academic Team, student-athletes must attain a cumulative 3.0 GPA, either over multiple academic years or the current academic year.

Tallahassee's all-academic contingent was led by 11 members of the Eagles' baseball team followed by softball with eight honorees. The list also included five cheerleaders and four from both men's and women's basketball.

Five students earned all-academic honors for the second straight season - baseball's Victor Cole and Will Thompson, softball's Alexis Huss and Te Reo Powhiri Matautia and men's basketball's Michael Sexton.

Baseball's Bobby Rice also earned his second PC All-Academic award, having previously received the honor in 2012.

TCC Softball's Alexis Huss receives NJCAA Exemplary Academic Achievement Award

BRAD DALTON
WTXL

Tallahassee Community College's Alexis Huss received the NJCAA's Exemplary Academic Achievement Award, given to student-athletes who attain a cumulative GPA between 3.60 and 3.79.

"I'm extremely proud of Alexis," said director of athletics Rob Chaney. "She embodies what it means to be a student-athlete and is a tremendous ambassador for Tallahassee Community College.

To be eligible for NJCAA academic awards, student-athletes must have completed three full-time semesters and a minimum of 45 semester credit hours while participating in at least one season at the varsity level.

FSU baseball adds Duke transfer

JIM HENRY
TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Florida State's baseball team has added an established one-two punch into the middle of its lineup for 2015.

Duke first baseman/outfielder Chris Marconcini, a second-team All-Atlantic Coast Conference selection who was the only Blue Devil to start in all 58 games this year, will transfer to FSU for his final season.

As a recent Duke graduate, the redshirt senior from Brentwood, Tenn., is eligible to play immediately for the Seminoles under NCAA rules.

"He's a veteran bat that has been through the rigors of an ACC schedule and is familiar with the pitchers we will be facing – he's a great boost for our lineup," FSU assistant coach Mike Martin said Wednesday morning.

Also, Tallahassee Community College catcher/first baseman Quincy Nieporte has signed with the Seminoles after helping lead the Eagles to the JUCO state tournament this season as a freshman.

Nieporte, a right-handed hitter from Atlanta, led the Eagles in hitting (.347) and RBI (61).

"He is a guy who does nothing but hit," Martin Jr. said of Nieporte.

"He gives you that right-handed thump in the middle of the lineup that every college team is always chasing. He's a proven college bat."

The duo, which expects to help protect returning All-American outfielder DJ Stewart in the lineup and provide needed power, headline the Seminoles' group of six late signees.

(NOTE: Article truncated for relevance to TCC.)

TCC's nonprofit institute opens in former Brogan

TAMARYN WATERS

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Businesses have chambers of commerce. Now think of the new Institute for Nonprofit Innovation and Excellence as a nonprofit chamber offering training never before available in Tallahassee.

The institute debuted Tuesday with a soft launch for more than 120 nonprofit directors, professionals and board members at the Tallahassee Community College Capital Center, located on the bottom floor of the former Mary Brogan Museum of Arts and Sciences.

However, now that a tangled lease agreement shifts control of the former Brogan building from Leon County Schools to TCC, the nonprofit institute will be housed on the third floor. TCC was prepared to launch in its Capital Center if the lease continued to pose challenges.

Years of lobbying for a nonprofit resource center led to Tuesday's debut. Scathing headlines and financial crises at popular nonprofits sparked concern in recent years among nonprofit circles. An ad hoc group of advocates held meetings and TCC stepped out as the leading force to propel the institute from idea to reality.

"We took the time, a lot of time, to hear people and whatever concerns they may have and hear any ideas they may have," Tallahassee Community College President Jim Murdaugh said. "So when we built this, it wasn't TCC building this. It was the nonprofit community building this."

The nonprofit institute will be supported by dues-paying members utilizing services, donations and sponsorship. The idea is to appeal to and offer attractive tools for 700 to 800 Big Bend-area based nonprofits, ranging from small agencies to multi-million-dollar operations.

Offerings include a partnership with the Jim Moran Institute for Global Entrepreneurship at Florida State University through a nonprofit executive program, with the first class offered this September through November. It's tailored to the type of organizations nonprofits manage.

"The best charities and agencies maximize their donors' dollars and client services by fine-tuning their operations and developing a top-notch team of employees and volunteers. Success starts with leadership," said Mike

Campbell, director of The Jim Moran Institute's North Florida Outreach Division. "We are excited about our collaboration with the Institute for Nonprofit Innovation and Excellence."

Tallahassee's new nonprofit institute is the only one in the nation fueled from start to finish by a grassroots effort championed by nonprofit and community leaders, who were candid about what the center needed to offer in order to be effective.

Previous surveys revealed nonprofits wanted more training and better board governance.

"Knowing this, we worked tirelessly to make this a reality," said Kim Moore, vice president for TCC's Workforce Development, the architect behind the center. "It has been a privilege to move this forward."

TCC officials had a vision for the four-floor building. Right up until Tuesday's School Board meeting, the lease issue had not been resolved to shift ownership to TCC, complicated by strings tied to state money used to build the Brogan and requiring it be used for educational purposes.

Murdaugh labeled the lease as "difficult to get through," but noted the school district's support throughout the process.

"We all want to make sure it continues to have an education flair to it," Murdaugh said. "With the nonprofit work, we will make sure that students in this system, students at our college, and students at the universities have employment opportunities and education opportunities related to nonprofits and internship opportunities."

At the launch, guest speakers offered tips on fundraising and crisis management under media scrutiny, which included a top 10 list of approaches provided by the Ron Sachs Media Group.

Liza McFadden, president and CEO of the Barbara Bush Foundation in Tallahassee, offered examples of nonprofits making an impact. For example, Boundless Playgrounds became a nonprofit effort to build playgrounds used by children with disabilities after creator Amy Jaffe Barzach

TCC's nonprofit institute opens in former Brogan...

continued

had a sick son, unable to play and jump around like other children, and noticed a crying disabled girl struggling to get on a swing.

Now the playgrounds are nationwide. McFadden said there are countless examples where nonprofits end up making huge impacts, adding the new institute can help strengthen those efforts.

Nonprofit leaders like Miaisha Mitchell, executive director for the Greater Frenchtown Revitalization Council, said the institute will be a vital resource. When asked if she'll become a dues-paying member, Mitchell said, "You better believe it."

"I'm always interested in growing and helping the community. ... So with this entity, it will serve a great purpose for all of us who've been working in the grassroots aspects of this community," Mitchell said.

Rare pay raise for TCC faculty

DOUG BLACKBURN

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Tallahassee Community College history professor Melissa Soldani did a double-take when she was informed that she would be getting a 3 percent raise starting July 1.

The pay increase, approved earlier this month by TCC's Board of Trustees as part of the school's 2014-2015 budget, is the first one in three years for Soldani and many of her colleagues at TCC.

"We're used to not getting raises. I'm quite excited," Soldani, beginning her 10th year as a full-time faculty member, said. "I know they're trying to get us more money."

TCC is doing some belt-tightening at the same it is giving raises – or one-time bonuses for those full-time employees at the top of their pay category. The budget for the new fiscal year includes a reduction in overall expense budgets by 9 percent and OPS (part-time employees) funding by 10 percent. TCC President Jim Murdaugh informed staff and faculty about the changes in an email letter.

There is no increase in tuition at TCC for the fourth straight year, though students will pay slightly more as a result of one new capital improvement fee approved earlier this year by the college's trustees.

TCC is also projecting a "worst-case" 5 percent decline in enrollment, which would send the student population below 13,000 to 12,952, if it should play out. TCC's enrollment, fast-approaching 15,000 four years ago, was 13,634 in fall 2013.

"Our budget is built off worst-case scenarios based on what we know today," Murdaugh said. "Anything less than 5 percent gives us additional (tuition) cash in hand because we didn't have it in our budget."

Murdaugh added that while he's proud that TCC has been able to hold the line on tuition during the four years he has been president, he believes there needs to be a discussion about the cost of a college degree.

"At some point, we're going to have to have a different conversation about tuition. We cannot continue to hold tuition flat indefinitely," he said. "I think there's a place for students to pay for something that benefits them for the rest of their life."

Cherokee Sink discussed

Wakulla Environmental Institute's proposal to manage the land draws mixed reactions

NICOLE ZEMA
WAKULLA NEWS

A rainbow of opinions were reflected at the meeting to discuss Wakulla Environmental Institute's proposal of a Wakulla Springs campground that would mean the reopening of Cherokee Sink.

Citizen comments ranged from harsh criticism, to mixed thoughts, and full support of the proposal at the public forum that lasted more than three hours at the Woodville Public Library the evening of June 17.

Officials with the state Department of Environmental Protection reported 198 attendees at the workshop with 88 people providing public comments. Of those who spoke, 54 were counted in support, and 33 in opposition with one basically neutral. Notably, about 19 of the 88 speakers were associated with TCC, whether they were staff members, trustees or part of the TCC Foundation.

The office has received additional correspondence on the issue from people who could not attend the public meeting, at this time most of these individuals are in opposition to the proposal by a ratio of 13 to 1.

Lewis Scruggs, DEP chief in Park Planning Division of Recreation and Parks, opened the meeting and said no decisions have been made regarding the lease. Scruggs said public opinion is essential to the proposal review before any plans move forward.

He added the Florida Park Service has quite a few subleases, though none as substantial as the proposal brought forth by WEI, which proposed a 50-year lease of nearly 2,000 acres from the Florida Park Service to train upcoming park managers in land management, and turn Cherokee Sink into an international destination.

Sixty RV and tent camping sites and 10 yurts, two bath houses, pavilions, two guest host sites, maintenance area, playground and a ranger station are included in the plans.

The area near Cherokee Sink will have a restroom facility with flush toilets and sewer access, parking for 30 vehicles, pavilion, picnic area, and a boardwalk around the sink to prevent further erosion.

Tallahassee Community College President Jim Murdaugh said it was painful to hear innuendo, rumors and misinformation circulate about the project.

"I am thrilled to have the opportunity to be here tonight to set to rest some of the misinformation," Murdaugh said. "Thank you for your interest in this. We all want the same thing."

He said TCC's overall vision for Wakulla County was to create an international destination "that brings together conservation, education and recreation in a manner that stimulates economic development in an environmentally responsible way."

Murdaugh listed strides TCC has taken to show it is an environmentally responsible organization so the public is aware of "who they're dealing with."

WEI's Executive Director Bob Ballard said the property has been abused and neglected for decades. Not only will the land be managed, but it will serve as a cross-training opportunity to train up-and-coming park rangers.

He said every campsite will have a sewer, water and electrical hookup, and generators will not be allowed.

"We encourage critics to tell us how to do it better," Ballard said. "This will be the most environmentally friendly, the greenest campground in the United States."

Jim Stevenson, a biologist known around Florida as "Mr. Springs," who coordinated the Wakulla Springs Basin Working Group, said he has known Ballard since his tenure at DEP.

"I agree that TCC has accomplished good deeds for the environment," Stevenson said. "I always come down on the side of our state parks and Florida springs. I can't support Bob's current concept to lease 2,000 acres – one-third of one of the finest state parks in the State of Florida. State parks are treasures, and must be off-limits to being whittled away."

But Stevenson offered a solution that would still provide educational opportunities for upcoming rangers and land management that would benefit the wilderness that makes up most of Wakulla County.

Cherokee Sink discussed...

continued

"How about a restoration partnership?" Stevenson proposed. "WEI could partner with St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge, Apalachicola National Forest, the Wakulla State Forest, Wakulla Springs State Park – all in Wakulla County – with a simple management agreement to conduct restoration. No lease, and only negligible funding. Partnerships are easy, and they accomplish good work. They are popular with agencies, and with citizens that care about sensitive management of their parks, refuges and forests. A partnership is a no-brainer."

Green Guide and master naturalist Nick Baldwin said he has "mixed sympathies."

"I think Mr. Ballard's plan has many good attributes," Baldwin said. "It does have one major fault – location. It's not a good place to be on top of the sink, on top of the watershed of Wakulla Springs. It could be built anywhere else in the county."

Franklin County resident Robert Olin said, "We have a lot of passionate people, a lot of smart people in here, who know what's going on in their backyard. Please collaborate! Inclusion, not exclusion, will be the solution here."

David Murrell of the Friends of Wakulla Springs said that sometimes bold concepts work, and sometimes they do not.

"A proposal like this really needs to be vetted," Murrell said. "The devil is in the details. I hope in the future everyone will work in good faith on this issue."

Wakulla County resident Barbara Powell said she had more questions than information.

"I want to figure out how the money generated by the RVs will be used," Powell said. "How does extending the (sewer) line through rural areas of Wakulla County fit into the comprehensive plan and the overall master plan for sewers? Before we go forward with this, we need to study it. It's an already-stressed system, and it could create more stress on the system."

Wakulla County resident Dana Peck encouraged folks to do their own examination of the facts.

"The smartest thing for all of us to do is to do our research independently, so we're not listening to promises and words," Peck said.

Leon County resident Mathew Bull said he is disappointed that diving will not be allowed at Cherokee Sink. He added he would like to see the size of the project scaled down.

"I'd like to see more tent and primitive camping," Bull said. "That would have a lower impact."

Wakulla resident Victor Lambou said he only sees goals without a plan.

"Where is the beef?" Lambou quipped. "Where are the details? Give us an environmental impact statement."

Sandy Cook, former park manager for Wakulla Springs State Park and volunteer and board member with the Florida Park Service Alumni Association Inc., took offense to comments that park staff did not have the ability to manage the land.

"I'm Sandy Cook, and I'm mad as hell," Cook said. "I, too, am disappointed in some of the statements I've heard."

Cook listed improvements park staff made to the land and Cherokee Sink, and costs associated with the enhancement.

"It's no longer an eyesore, but a place of beauty," Cook said. "When you start saying untrue things, it gets me riled up. Sort of like picking on my kinfolks."

Cook offered an alternative to the proposal, saying TCC should consider managing the Newport campground, since it is on trustee land, and would cost \$3 million.

Many forum participants outright opposed the proposal.

Bob Fulford of Tallahassee said to beware of developers passing themselves off as educators.

Cherokee Sink discussed...

continued

"That's what these people are – developers," Fulford said. "One of the tricks that developers use as this thing goes along... they come in with a plan that is so outlandish, so egregious, that if you can cut them back to half of that, you feel like you've done something. We don't need any part of that."

Jim Meade, who lives near the park, said, "Why are they building something on this land? We need to be working with the environmental institute to protect it – not build on it. There are plenty of opportunities elsewhere to do this. Let's do everything we can to keep this environmentally sensitive area as pristine and long lasting for our descendants as we possibly can."

The three county commissioners and citizens who turned out to state their support said they were thrilled with the proposal and the possibilities it could provide.

St. Marks City Commissioner Chuck Shields brought a petition signed by 200 residents supporting the process.

Bill Mackie said he is all for the proposal. "I've seen the damage," Mackie said. "Clean that craphole up."

TCC Trustee and Crawfordville resident Jonathan Kilpatrick said, "I'm ecstatic about the opportunity this brings for my kids to use an area that has been off-limits. This is an opportunity to give back."

Dennett Rainey said Wakulla County is God's country.

"I've been concerned about the future prosperity of this county," Rainey said. "I hope and pray and think that the future of this county is going to set in environmental growth. Environmental prosperity is part of that future for this county. I have tremendous confidence in Bob Ballard, and I think it will absolutely not damage Wakulla Springs, but improve environmental impact. This is continuing the trend of environmental development."

The deadline for comment is July 11. Comments can be emailed to lewis.scruggs@dep.state.fl.us.

Concerns about Cherokee Sink lease

GEORGE APTHORP

WAKULLA NEWS (LETTERS TO THE EDITOR)

Tallahassee Community College's Wakulla Environmental Institute is requesting a 50-year lease of 2,000 acres at the Cherokee Sink tract at Wakulla Springs State Park. WEI's plan is to conduct environmental training and build a campground.

Many times development proposals are put forth based on incorrect assumptions or for the wrong reasons. It is always appropriate to question development not critical to the park's mission as stated in the Park Unit Management Plan. This is especially true when a long term lease is proposed. Planned uses are often detrimental to the natural resources that the park is required by law to protect and manage for future generations. It is a disservice to our wonderful state parks to award leases for non-park purposes, as in this case, for higher education.

A park's value is not in the number of uses it can make of its resources. It's the priceless resources it can preserve and the high quality recreational opportunities they provide. We should never develop our parks' finite resources for the wrong reasons.

Part of the environmental training proposal is to take over all park management training programs currently provided by the Division of Recreation and Parks. The basic problem with this proposal is that the Florida Park Service has always promoted from within. No amount of classroom training can prepare a student for the very complex job of managing a park. On the job training for such a broad job description, beats classroom training hands down. This OJT is supplemented with the FPS Ranger Academy, established in 1972, and other formal training provided by the Florida Forest Service, the Division of Historic Resources and other agencies with long histories of excellence and expertise in their fields.

WEI Director Bob Ballard proposes to manage the natural resource on the leased property as part of the WEI training program. This would involve prescribed burning, reforestation, erosion control and control of non-native species of plants and animals. Ballard has stated that the park had not conducted any resource management on the Cherokee Sink tract in many years. Nothing could be further from the truth.

He failed to mention that he was the Department of Environmental Protection's Deputy Secretary over state parks until two years ago. A lease of this nature will compromise the management philosophy of the only three-time winner of the National Recreation and Parks Association's Best State Park System award. Great organizations do not reach this pinnacle of achievement and recognition by outsourcing their core mission tasks. Resource management is a signature activity of park systems across the nation.

The Cherokee Sink addition to the park was acquired to protect the water quality in the tunnels leading to Wakulla Springs.

As was made clear at a public hearing in 2011, concerning a proposed campground at Cherokee Sink, the public overwhelmingly felt that camping on this property was inconsistent with groundwater protection. Is anybody listening!

The solution to this problem offered by Ballard is to raise the sewer lines above ground when they cross the main conduit so leaks can be more easily detected and repaired.

Water in the conduit does not all come from some far away source. It receives water all along its course through smaller tunnels and fissures in the limestone. A leak anywhere nearby will impact water quality going to Wakulla Springs. Very few of the area's septic tanks contributing to the Spring's nitrogen load are directly over a main conduit.

Do the facts suggest there is a need for camping at Wakulla Springs? You be the judge.

Florida's state parks currently have more than 3,200 campsites. The statewide year-round occupancy rate for FY09-10 was 57 percent. This percentage is somewhat skewed by very high figures at a few high demand beach parks. Occupancy rates at nearby parks were 47.5 percent at Manatee Springs, 47 percent at Ochlockonee River, 78 percent at St George Island and 29.8 percent at Florida Caverns. Current data was not available at the time of this writing. However, a significant increase over the last three fiscal years is unlikely.

Concerns about Cherokee Sink lease...

continued

Sandy Cook recalls that in her 16 years as park manager at Wakulla Springs, she rarely received requests for camping.

Florida's state parks utilize carrying capacities as a management tool to insure high quality recreational experiences and to protect the resources from overuse. The current capacity for Wakulla Springs' waterfront and picnic areas is 545 visitors at any one time and 1,090 daily.

The proposed addition of camping will add visitors entering the park with no corresponding increase in capacity for the waterfront and picnicking. These areas are already frequently at capacity.

Boat tours are limited by time and the number of boats and operators. Swimming is limited by space. It is easy to see that the quality of the experience will be lessened for the majority of park visitors if camping is provided.

So where is the need or demand for camping at Wakulla Springs? In my view it only exists in the minds of WEI leadership.

Maybe WEI should merely adopt a portion of the park for resource management training purposes. This would not require a lease, only a simple agreement. The only reason for a lease would be to secure a loan necessary to build and operate the campground. I doubt seriously that operating a park-like campground is envisioned in the TCC mission statement.

Besides, why would you want to borrow \$3 million plus to build a campground that would likely have a less than 50 percent occupancy rate?

If Bob Ballard truly loves Florida's state parks, as he professes, he should leave them alone.

Underwater Wakulla: Cherokee Sink

GREGG STANTON
WAKULLA NEWS

Our favorite swimming hole has again become the center of attention over a proposed lease of the surrounding property to the Tallahassee Community College's Wakulla Environmental Institute to be used as a training ground for future park rangers, public land and water managers, and park facility managers. As I listened to proponents and opponents duel over the future of the property, I could not help but reflect upon what Cherokee Sink has meant to me and my family over our residency here in the county.

My wife and I moved to the area to attend FSU in late 1974. My major professor told me to, if nothing else, buy land, so we did. By 1977 we had purchased 5 acres in Beachwood, property on a dirt road that had no power, water or sewer at the time. What it had just down the street was a fabulous swimming hole called Cherokee that we frequented often. On a summer's weekend day the sound of hundreds of people frolicking shoreside, floating on inner tubes out in the middle or swinging from perimeter trees was infectious. We became regulars, bringing our pet dogs, then later our kids, and still later our students to share in the glory. Cherokee epitomized Wakulla County life.

I brought my family to cool off and unwind, a place for the kids to play on the shoreline, then learn how to swim, learn how to dive and socialize with our many neighbors. The music was loud, the water cooled down the area and everyone could be assured of a good time.

I brought my students to Cherokee Sink to conduct underwater training in science diving. In 1984 we trained in surface supplied technology (hard hat diving), only to discover an inverted submerged new BMW. After our report to the police, it was dragged out on its roof (contributing to shoreline erosion) and hauled away, now destroyed. We documented the piles of bottles and beverage cans on the floor of the sink, the motor cycle, and various other probably stolen items contained within, supporting a student theory that most Florida sinkholes represent crime scenes. We built and tested platform designs for deployment to the lakes of Palau, in Cherokee Sink. Left overnight, one was sunk when riddled with bullets by locals with trigger happy fingers. We even trained on early rebreathers in this place. There

are many happy memories many of us "locals" have of Cherokee Sink.

In 1999 the State purchased the property to better manage our swimming hole and preserve the watershed. I supported the purchase even though access was temporarily denied. Decks were built, parking provided away from the damaged banks, erosion control was implemented, and for a short while, it seemed our swim hole would be available again. We returned to using the site for rebreather and other technical training, and the relaxing mid summer's swim.

But Health Department and designated swimming facility regulations soon shut it down again. Austerity measures of our times resulted in a dim forecast to provide the required bathrooms to reopen Cherokee. And there we languished for several years.... until TCC came along with their win-win proposal: build the required bathrooms, manage an ecologically sound best practice policy that future facility managers can be trained under, and not cost the Wakulla Springs State Park precious funds.

As I approach retirement, I'd like to think I can take my grand kids to our local swim hole down the street and cool off in Cherokee Sink. Yea, I know, first I need to get grand kids, but that's out of my control.

Arrest made in TCC gunman incident

DEMOCRAT STAFF

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

A man who gridlocked Tallahassee Community College's campus after he was seen there in early June with a handgun was arrested Friday by the U.S. Marshals Service.

Melchi T. Thomas, 19, faces charges of aggravated assault with a firearm and possession of a firearm on school property. He is in the Leon County Jail.

Thomas, who is a TCC student from Miami, was spotted on campus June 10, prompting the school to issue a dangerous-person alert. No shots were fired on campus, but students, faculty and staff were advised to stay inside during the incident.

A judge has set his bond at \$11,000 and issued an order prohibiting him from being on TCC's campus as the school's internal judicial process reviews the incident.

"I would like to thank the TCC Community members who played an integral part in this investigation and are committed to helping keep our campus a safe place to learn," said TCC Police Chief Chris Summers in a statement.

Hollinger, at least seven others, opted not to run

20-year-old decides to focus on school first

JEFF BURLEW

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Delaitre Hollinger came awfully close to running for the Leon County Commission this year, going so far as to assemble a campaign team, plan a news conference to announce his candidacy and have a name tag printed up at Awards 4 U.

Hollinger, a 20-year-old political up-and-comer who ran for the Tallahassee City Commission in 2012, was planning to run against at-large County Commissioner Nick Maddox.

But, he said during a recent visit to the Tallahassee Democrat, "I got talked out of it."

His mentor, Brent Hartsfield, who became Hollinger's Big Brother when he was 12 years old, urged him to earn his degree before running for office again. And his mom reminded him how tough campaigning can be.

"She knew the stress it would bring – the same stress it brought last time," said Hollinger, who is pursuing an associate's degree at Tallahassee Community College and plans to earn advanced degrees.

Hollinger, whose near-candidacy wasn't widely known because he never filed campaign paperwork, isn't the only would-be candidate who got cold feet this year.

Seven people filed to run for office but either withdrew or otherwise failed to qualify. Some of the names you probably know – Rick Minor, former chief of staff to Mayor John Marks who is now working for the Charlie Crist campaign, and Todd Sperry, a businessman who recently served on the Leon County Sales Tax Committee. Others you probably don't: Keishann Corley, Darren Mason, Patrick Madden, Patty Ball Thomas and Ed Lee.

Lee actually backed out at the last minute – he was filing his paperwork with Supervisor of Elections staff just ahead of the noon deadline June 20 when he changed his mind and left the office.

With Hollinger out of the at-large race, Maddox will be squaring off against Curtis Baynes, a real-estate broker and investor and former state trooper, in the Nov. 4 general election.

Hollinger said he ultimately agreed with the advice from his mother and Hartsfield.

"Some other people tried to talk me out of it, too, but I didn't listen to them," he said.

Hollinger, incoming student-body president at TCC and assistant manager and curator at the Taylor House Museum in Frenchtown, will almost certainly appear on a ballot again sometime.

"Oh, I'll definitely run again," he said. But before he does, he added, "I have to build a movement, and I have to build a better relationship with the community I love."

Many have eyed parks for other uses

NEY LANDRUM

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (LETTERS TO THE EDITOR)

The controversy over alienating property from Wakulla Springs State Park will have a familiar ring to anyone who knows the history of Florida's state parks. Almost from the time the first parks were acquired, in the 1930s, they have been eyed covetously by proponents for a wide variety of other uses.

Preserving the integrity of the state park system is a never-ending battle. Unless the property concerned has paved roads, rest rooms and other user facilities, it unfortunately often is seen as idle land and fair game for conversion to some "legitimate" purpose.

The proposed purpose might appear to be beneficial and desirable, making it more difficult to argue successfully for rejection. Obviously, this is what the proponents of the Wakulla Environmental Institute's proposal are hoping for.

Having dealt with a number of such proposals during my 19 years as state park director, I think it is clearly premature even to consider conveying 3 square miles of state park property for a project that is still in its conceptual stage and for which a persuasive need has not been established. Even if the project does ultimately prove feasible and desirable, it is highly unlikely that it could justify the alienation of such a large tract for such a long time.

The whole matter should be tabled until the institute can produce hard evidence to convincingly justify a need for the huge tract of park land it seeks.

Drop the divisive campground proposal

GEORGE APTHORP

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (LETTERS TO THE EDITOR)

The June 17 public hearing on TCC's proposed long-term lease of the entire Cherokee Sink Tract at Wakulla Springs State Park, for a resource management and park management program, had a polarizing effect on those present.

Leon and Wakulla counties were well represented, and more than 80 individuals spoke. If you take away the 16 or so TCC staff and trustees, two Chamber of Commerce representatives and four Wakulla County commissioners, speakers for and against were about equal.

Only one component of the proposed use separated those for and those against the proposal — a 60-site RV campground built adjacent to major conduits leading to Wakulla Springs. Due to a \$3 million-plus loan for construction, this is the only reason for a long-term lease and the lengthy and tedious review process.

Managing a state park campground is not complicated and easily learned on the job. Only one-third of Florida's state parks have campgrounds. The Florida Park Service Ranger Academy, established in 1972, does not include campground management in its curriculum.

Since the proposed campground is not needed for park management training, it must be envisioned as a revenue-generator to support the rest of this higher-education venture. Should state park lands be leased to other agencies, institutions or private concerns for the purpose of making money? Do we want to set this dangerous precedent?

Tallahassee "Community" College could gain unanimous "community" support by removing the campground from its proposal. The divisiveness this proposed lease for nonpark purposes has caused is totally unnecessary.

Long-awaited institute will benefit area's nonprofits

KELLY OTTE

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

You know that feeling you have when something you've wanted for a really long time finally happens? The feeling of disbelief followed by a beautiful feeling of gratitude and joy and just a pinch of relief?

That's how I felt at the grand opening of the Institute for Nonprofit Innovation and Excellence. It's an idea that is 17 years in the making and has been talked about for hundreds of hours.

The INIE is a management support organization providing quality training and professional development for everyone involved with nonprofits. It's a change agent that will advocate for increased understanding of the importance of the sector and its value to the community.

INIE will be an innovator because it will increase the effectiveness and efficiencies of local nonprofits by creating greater opportunities for dialogue on new ways of accomplishing our work in cutting-edge ways.

INIE wouldn't be anywhere without the commitment of Tallahassee Community College. When Jim Murdaugh was hired as the president of TCC, he said he would do more for the nonprofit sector and he's always a man of his word. And while INIE is truly a community-wide collaboration, Kimberly Moore, TCC vice president of workforce development, has been the driving force to make the launch of INIE a reality, along with her trusted FSU graduate student, Sarah Young.

The grand opening included four speakers who delivered 15 minute teasers illustrating the kinds of training INIE will offer. Alfredo Cruz, Foundation for Louisiana, talked about the importance of everyone in the organization participating in fund development and the components of a solid grant.

Bennett Napier from Partners in Association Management talked about best practices in board governance. Two of the pearls I appreciated were important reminders: (1) Board members need to have a nondisclosure agreement to officially recognize that what is discussed in board meetings needs to stay in the board room; and (2) staff and board members need to operate with complete financial transparency.

The third speaker was Liza McFadden of the Barbara

Bush Foundation. Liza talked about the importance of advocacy and how nonprofits have to be able to fight battles to get done what needs to happen. She said that it's important for nonprofits to understand they can advocate for what they can do and how they do it.

Our final speaker was Erica Villanueva of Sachs Media Group. She gave some media relations tips. She reminded the audience that in the courts, you are innocent until proven guilty but in the court of public opinion, you are guilty if you don't talk.

She gave the wise advice that if something has happened in your organization, follow a general formula. "It happened. We're sorry. We know how it happened and we are making changes. It will never happen again."

I would be terribly remiss if I didn't give a shout-out to Bob Powell and Mark Payne at James Moore & Co. for their rock-solid support of our effort to increase the capacities of nonprofits. They came through yet again as the sponsors of the grand opening.

It's time now for everyone to sign up as members so that you can support INIE, plus benefit from some discounts and other members-only perks. Your investment in INIE will come back to you, your organization and your mission tenfold. If you join before July 15, you save 15 percent in honor of the grand opening.

Visit www.theinstitutefor nonprofits.org to check out all the good things are coming and to join! Enter the promo code INIELAUNCH for your discount. My discount was \$57 and that pleases me.

Long-awaited institute will benefit area's nonprofits...

continued

Getting to this point in INIE's evolution was a monumental feat of hundreds of people and hours over many years. The implementation group incorporates two important leadership teams. Advisory board members are Amanda Thompson, David Berlan, Janeia Ingram, Joy Watkins, Louis Garcia, Ellen Piekalkiewicz, and Marjorie Turnbull. The board of directors includes Barbara Boone, Ben Graybar, Heather Mitchell, Kimberly Moore, Pam Davis, Randy Nicklaus, Rob Renzi, my column-writing partner Alyce Lee Stansbury, and myself. People who came before this phase of planning who made this dream come true include Margaret Lynn Duggar and Ken Armstrong.

In closing, let me state the obvious. Yes, its nickname is INIE. I have already thought of and heard every possible bellybutton joke. It is what it is. Whatever you call it, it's off and running!

Kelly Otte is executive director of PACE Center for Girls.
Alyce Lee Stansbury, CFRE, is president of Stansbury Consulting. Write them at notesonnonprofits@gmail.com.

Don't practice at springs

TARA TANAKA

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (LETTERS TO THE EDITOR)

If TCC succeeds in obtaining a 50-year lease giving it control of one-third of Wakulla Springs State Park, one of its objectives is to construct a campground with 60 RV sites, each having a sewer connection.

Every RV camper knows that sewage spills can and do happen during the dumping process. This will provide 60 locations for sewage spills to occur on extremely porous land that was purchased with public money, with approval of the governor and Cabinet, for the purpose of protecting the water flowing through the caves beneath the property in route to Wakulla Springs.

If you've seen the movie "RV," you know what can happen. Volunteer campground hosts manage most public campgrounds today. However, if TCC believes that it is important to teach students campground management, the campground at Ochlockonee River State Park, only 20 minutes from the proposed institute campus, provides an excellent opportunity to do so.

TCC offers new certificate in sterile processing

STAFF

HAVANA HERALD

Tallahassee Community College will offer a new certificate program in Fall 2014 for students who wish to perform a crucial job in hospital settings.

The Central Sterile Processing Technologist certificate program will train students to work in the medical field as equipment preparers. Central sterile processing technicians are responsible for the cleaning, disinfection and sterilization of instruments and equipment used in the operating room and throughout the hospital.

"The Central Sterile Processing Department is an area of greater emphasis in healthcare," said Shannon Smith, program chair. "These professionals are the first step in preventing the infection cycle in surgical patients. The importance of their role cannot be overstated."

Twelve students will be admitted to the program each semester. Students will also have the option of applying the 30 credit hours earned in the certificate program toward an associate's degree in health science.

"TCC's Division of Healthcare Professions is always excited to work with our community partners in an effort to meet the community's needs," said Smith.

The College will also create an Endoscopy Technician certificate program for Spring 2015. The Tallahassee medical community has expressed great enthusiasm for the new programs.

Both programs will be offered at TCC's Ghazvini Center for Healthcare Education at 1528 Surgeons Drive in Tallahassee.

For information, contact Shannon Smith at (850) 558-4573 or smitshan@tcc.fl.edu.

Transformed (Note: Full text next page)

Toinya Campbell found herself when she found TCC's speech and debate team

DOUG BLACKBURN
TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT



TCC grad Toinya Campbell is about to enter FSU. She found herself once she got involved in TCC's speech and debate team. She will be majoring in Communications while at FSU. [www.tallahassee.com/TC](#)

Transformed

Toinya Campbell found herself when she found TCC's speech and debate team

Toinya Campbell wasn't exactly lost, but she was floundering. She was taking classes at Tallahassee Community College, but she didn't have a goal or a focus. She started out as a nursing major, but that wasn't the right fit.

Campbell, a Miami native, was enjoying an acting class when John Schultz first saw her. Schultz, who oversees TCC's nationally acclaimed speech and debate team, urged her to consider his program, which is a blend of theater and more traditional debate.

What the heck, Campbell said. Why not? It was the equivalent of giving water to a writing plant. Finding the speech and debate team helped Campbell find herself. She blossomed immediately under Schultz's tutelage, winning gold and silver medals at national competitions during the past two years, not to mention a scholarship at TCC.

"It was everything to me these past two years," Campbell, 24, said. "I don't know

See CAMPBELL • 4E

VIDEO
See a clip of Toinya Campbell performing from her piece on women in hip-hop at [Tallahassee.com/TC](#)

Transformed

Toinya Campbell found herself when she found TCC's speech and debate team

DOUG BLACKBURN

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

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It was the equivalent of giving water to a wilting plant. Finding the speech and debate team helped Campbell find herself.

She blossomed immediately under Schultz's tutelage, winning gold and silver medals at national competitions during the past two years, not to mention a scholarship at TCC.

"It was everything to me these past two years," Campbell, 24, said. "I don't know what I would have been doing if I didn't have that. I always knew I wanted to act. I knew that acting was going to be the route I wanted to take. I didn't know how to get there, but once I found this team it was the same thing."

Also called forensics, TCC's speech and debate program combines traditional and contemporary material along with original pieces. It allows students to interpret passages or poems in ways that showcase themselves as well as the material.

It requires students to give up as many as 10 weekends to take part in state, regional and national events. For Campbell, it was also her introduction to flying when the team traveled to Chicago for a tournament.

Schultz has seen countless students come to life thanks to speech and debate, but few have emerged as dramatically as Campbell did.

"This is a young woman I saw transform over two years. She is so smart. She is one of the success stories that is the pinnacle example of what our college and also the

speech and debate team are all about," Schultz said. "This team becomes like an extended family, and she was a perfect fit."

Campbell is now enrolled at Florida State, where she intends to major in communications and earn a minor in film. She is eager for the journey to continue.

This is a marked contrast to five years ago, when she came to Tallahassee for the first time. She offered to help her older brother get settled. He was entering TCC; she knew nothing about the school.

Campbell liked Tallahassee immediately. Compared to her North Miami neighborhood, it offered peace and tranquility.

She decided to take classes at TCC and, like more than half of the entering students at the school, she wasn't ready for college courses. Campbell was directed to a developmental education curriculum that shored up math and science skills that she thought she had mastered in high school.

"That was a wake-up call. I was like, 'Wow, I'm not ready?' I was surprised at first, because I did well in high school," Campbell said.

It took her longer than she would have preferred to get on track. And then there was the matter of not being sure what she wanted to concentrate on once she was cleared to pursue an associate's degree.

Fortunately for Campbell, she caught Schultz's eye early on. One key, he said, was pairing Campbell with the right material. He directed her to a Pearl Cleage play, "Blues for an Alabama Sky," and encouraged Campbell to join forces with a fellow student for a duo interpretation.

Campbell would go on to perform a poetry piece about empowering women in hip-hop. Perhaps her finest performance was a multi-character piece called "Nine Feet Under Water," inspired by Hurricane Katrina and the tragedy it wrought on New Orleans.

"Toinya was extraordinary with that piece. She played multiple characters and they were pristine," he said. "They had emotional precision. She tore up the competition."

Transformed...

continued

Campbell doesn't claim to have the future all figured out. She knows she wants to earn a bachelor's degree. She knows she wants to continue in theater. Thanks to TCC, she now has the confidence to accomplish both.

"I think I got lucky," Campbell said. "I don't know what I would be doing right now if I didn't find the speech and debate team. I don't even want to think about it."

WEI's proposal deserves support

JOHN WALDRON

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (LETTERS TO THE EDITOR)

Quality outdoor recreation depends on quality resources.

Being actively involved in outdoor recreation in Florida for more than 40 years I find the above mantra to be very true. In addition, there is a direct connection between quality of Florida's resources and its economy, particularly with tourism. This is why proper management of our natural resources is so critical and needs immediate attention.

The Florida Outdoor Recreation Coalition, a not-for-profit organization supporting outdoor recreation interests, supports the total package of the Wakulla Environmental Institute (WEI). The institute is being housed in Wakulla County, which is an excellent education and training ground rich in both natural and recreational resources.

The programs and curricula will not only better equip current and future land managers to be better stewards of public lands, but will also be an important conduit to train and educate thousands of volunteers who will be needed to help reverse the decline in the protection and management of our natural resources.

The WEI is also looking to develop and operate a camping complex on existing state park property as part of its curricula. This concerns some, but experience has shown that nothing can get built on state lands without going through an extensive review process that includes public hearings, approval from Florida's Acquisition and Restoration Council and additional reviews and permits from a bevy of local, state and even federal agencies.

In addition, the planned camping complex will allow park professionals to design and develop a state-of-the-art campground. This camping complex, with all the right green initiatives, can be used as a model for this state.

The people of Wakulla County, the Big Bend area, and the rest of Florida need to support the WEI. This institute is one of the best things on the horizon to help generate positive action on critical land management issues as well as focus on the importance of eco-tourism to the state's economy.

WEI proposal is “common theft”

ALBERT GREGORY

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (LETTERS TO THE EDITOR)

I retired recently from the Division of Recreation and Parks after 35 years of public service. One of my responsibilities was to administer sublease requests for state parks such as the request Tallahassee Community College has made for 2,000 acres at Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park. I have seen more of them than I can count, but few can match TCC's request for its sheer greed and audacity.

Taking state park land to make it available for other purposes like colleges or economic development has always struck me as being the same as common theft. In the case of the Wakulla Environmental Institute, it is theft on a grand scale, and what is being robbed is the “estate” of public conservation lands that belongs to all Floridians.

Make no mistake about it; the outcome of this issue will affect state parks and other state-owned lands everywhere in Florida. If it becomes acceptable to do this at Wakulla Springs — one of Florida's finest natural treasures — then is any place off-limits?

The Department of Environmental Protection now must decide whether to send the request forward to the Acquisition and Restoration Council or send it back to TCC. Please write to DEP Secretary Herschel Vinyard and ask him to do the right thing by marking his envelope “Return to Sender”.

Georgia, Florida groups unite to help non-profits

STAFF REPORTS

MOULTRIE OBSERVER

Representatives from Thomas University's Southern Center for Nonprofit Excellence (SCeNE) and Tallahassee Community College's Institute for Nonprofit Innovation and Excellence (INIE) signed an agreement on Tuesday in which the two organizations partnered to provide education and networking resources to community-based nonprofit organizations in the area.

"SCeNE members are excited about our partnership with INIE because of the expanded opportunities it will provide for nonprofits in North Florida as well as South Georgia," said Rick Munroe, TU's Vice President for Advancement and Chair of the SCeNE Advisory Board. "By combining the skills and resources of our two organizations we will see a greater influence and benefit for all involved."

Under the agreement, SCeNE and INIE will collaborate to provide education, advocacy and engagement opportunities for nonprofit organizations and the professionals of those organizations as well as pursue funding opportunities to obtain resources that will help achieve this goal.

"The newly formed partnership between SCeNE and The Institute for Nonprofit Innovation and Excellence (INIE) is symbolic of our shared commitment to strengthening the nonprofit sector through collaboration and leveraging resources," stated Kimberly A. Moore, TCC Vice President for Workforce Development and INIE board member. "Though our partnership nonprofit organizations throughout the North Florida and South Georgia areas will experience a benefit many times over what could be accomplished with a single entity."

Park is indeed managed

TRUDY THOMPSON

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (LETTERS TO THE EDITOR)

The executive director of the TCC/Wakulla Environmental Institute says no restoration has been conducted on the 2,000-acre Cherokee Sink area that is part of Wakulla Springs State Park. He believes that he can accomplish the restoration if he gets a 50-year lease for this land.

The Florida Park Service has managed these 2,000 acres since they were purchased by the state in 1999.

The park staff has conducted restoration with no additional staff or funding, but through volunteers, donations and ingenuity. They have conducted prescribed burning and planted longleaf pine seedlings. There are 49 gopher tortoise burrows on the restored area. Also, considerable restoration has occurred at Cherokee Sink, with erosion control and the removal of trash from the sink.

The park service has decades of experience in ecological restoration. The WEI does not.

Student veteran, Purple Heart recipient finds support at TCC

HAVANA HERALD

Oliver Clemons Jr. doesn't back down in the face of adversity. When he and his team of Marines were engaged by an enemy sniper in Afghanistan, they quickly worked together to neutralize the threat. Moments later, their vehicle hit a roadside bomb that injured his vertebrae and almost cost him his life.

Clemons was awarded a Purple Heart, one of the nation's highest honors, for the wounds he suffered in combat. It was then that he decided to tackle another challenge: adjusting to civilian life and enrolling in Tallahassee Community College's Pat Thomas Law Enforcement Academy.

"I've got to have something different every day, so it was either going to be firefighting or law enforcement for me," said Clemons. "You get to help people and serve people, so that's why I chose it."

Veterans that go from combat to college often face difficulty in the transition to civilian and academic life. Aside from physical or mental injuries, many experience readjustment issues that could potentially hold them back.

"It's a whole different ball game," said Clemons, who served two tours of duty overseas. "It's a culture shock. I just got back from Afghanistan this past October, and a couple months later, I'm sitting in a classroom."

TCC offers support for veterans like Clemons and provides resources to ease the transition. Clemons qualifies for the Purple Heart Waiver, which covers tuition and fees toward a degree or certificate up to 110% of the required hours for the program. He also credits TCC's Veterans Success Center as an invaluable resource for support.

"It's very convenient," said Clemons. "They have computers and counseling just for veterans to hang out. They have a veterans group, they go out to dinners, they help you with employment, and they have recruiters from different companies come out to visit the academy."

Clemons ultimately wants to become a homicide investigation detective, and he believes other veterans with similar goals will find TCC's law enforcement program to be a great fit.

"They have a good program here and a lot of experience from a lot of instructors. I think it's very helpful."

To hear more from Oliver, view his feature below from TCC22. For more information about the Veterans Success Center, contact (850) 201-9812 or vetsuccesscenter@tcc.fl.edu.

Eugene Lamb appointed to FHSAA board of directors

HAVANA HERALD

Eugene Lamb of Midway was recently appointed to the Florida High School Athletic Association Board of Directors as the Representative-at-Large for the northern section of the state. His term is effective July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2017. Lamb will be appointed to one of three committees - Finance, Operations or Governance - by Board President James Colzie, Athletic Director at Miami Christian School.

The aim of the FHSAA is to promote, direct, supervise and regulate interscholastic athletic programs in which high school students, whose schools are members, compete. To accomplish this aim, the Association:

- Establishes and enforces regulations to ensure that all such athletic programs are part of, and contribute toward, the entire educational program;
- Cooperates closely with the Florida Department of Education in the development of athletic programs;
- Promotes the spirit of sportsmanship and fair play in all athletic contests; and
- Enacts policies and guidelines that safeguard the physical, mental and moral welfare of high school students, and protect them from exploitation.

Collin Strall to represent Team USA at NBC World Series

BRAD DALTON
WTXL

Collin Strall will represent Tallahassee Community College as a member of Team USA at the 80th National Baseball Congress (NBC) World Series, scheduled for August 1-9 in Wichita, Kan.

Strall, a right-handed pitcher, was named to the United States' 26-man roster on Thursday. The team is comprised of delegates from 23 different National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) schools.

Strall is one of just three participants from Region 8 (Florida).

"I'm very happy for Collin, and I think he'll help the (USA) team quite a bit," said Tallahassee head coach Mike McLeod. "This puts him on the map with USA Baseball and could open the door to future opportunities."

Strall, a native of Atlanta, Ga., enjoyed a stellar freshman campaign with Tallahassee in 2014, posting a 7-2 record and one save with a 2.54 ERA. Those numbers helped him earn second-team All-Panhandle Conference honors.

A rising sophomore, Strall recently signed a national letter of intent with Louisiana State University and will join the Tigers' program this fall.

The NBC World Series is an annual late-summer tournament that serves as a showcase for some of the best amateur baseball players and teams in North America. This marks the first time since 1999 that a USA national team will compete in the event.

In addition to the NJCAA's USA squad, the tournament field will feature the Puerto Rico National Collegiate team, last year's champions the Seattle (Washington) Studs, the 2007 champion Wellington (Kansas) Heat, six-time champion Fairbanks (Alaska) Goldpanners, and long-time power Prairie Gravel (Illinois).

Meet new Miner Earvin Morris

AARON RICH
KTSM

The old saying goes, "if at first you don't succeed, try, try again." That mantra rings true for one of UTEP's newest basketball players.

Earvin Morris originally signed and played his freshman season at Kent State but after 17 appearances including one start with the Golden Flashes, transferred to Tallahassee Community College. In his one season of JUCO, the 6-foot-4 guard averaged 14.4 points this season at Tallahassee Community College, shooting 50.5 percent from the field and 46.9 percent from three-point range.

"My first situation, it was hard. But the JUCO route, it was good for me. I was glad that UTEP was calling me and wanted me to come here," said Morris. "It feels amazing. I feel like I took the first chance for granted but I'm just very happy to be back."

"Earvin is a very versatile player who can play different positions and score in a lot of ways," Head Coach Tim Floyd said. "He is a very instinctive passer, has the ability to shoot the three and can create his own shot. He played at a very competitive level in junior college. He can come in and help our team score in a variety of ways. We love his ability to post in addition to being able to face the basket. He has a very nice mid-range game, which is rare in today's game."

"Earvin made tremendous improvement from his freshman year to his sophomore year of college under the direction of coach Eddie Barnes. He displayed a willingness to be coached which translated into a great sophomore season."

Morris will have two years of eligibility with the Miners.

TCC hurts its reputation

JOHN OUTLAND

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (LETTERS TO THE EDITOR)

Proposed incompatible uses of our state parks and other conservation lands are nothing new, but the proposal to use Wakulla Springs State Park by the TCC Wakulla Environmental Institute (WEI) for an RV park and ancillary facilities is particularly egregious.

During my 34 years with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, there were numerous efforts to site roads, electric and gas transmission lines, spoil sites, cell towers, etc., on our parks and conservation lands. For the most part, we had leaders who rejected these proposals, as they represented incompatible uses and were inconsistent with the purposes for which the lands were acquired. TCC knows this, too, and knows that there are other options to fulfill its mission to train environmental resource managers. Not only does this controversy get the WEI off to a bad start but it also sets a bad example for its future students. Hopefully, the TCC/WEI leadership will soon recognize this and move on to more practical alternatives. TCC's good reputation is being tarnished by this proposed raid on our Wakulla Springs State Park.

Kimberly Moore "synonymous with workforce development"

DOUG BLACKBURN
TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT
SUNDAY, JULY 13, 2014
A GANNETT COMPANY

Kimberly Moore 'synonymous with workforce development'

TRAILBLAZER

By Doug Blackburn (Tallahassee Democrat writer)

Kimberly Moore began keeping a journal when she was a ninth-grader at Madison High School. One of her first entries may have seemed like the preposterous musings of a teenager. She wrote that her career goal was to be a CEO.

Mind you, this was a girl from Greenville who was working as a dishwasher at Stone Fox, a tiny restaurant 14 miles down the road in Madison. Her closest connection to a CEO might have been J.R. Ewing on the prime-time hit Dallas.

Moore, a hard-working go-getter, has referred to that journal entry more than once over the years.

When Moore took a job at Workforce Plus in the late 1990s, she met that agency's leader, Wyatt Pope, during her orientation.

After exchanging pleasantries, Moore decided to cut to the chase.

"What does it take to be a CEO?" she said.

Pope, one of Moore's mentors, responded with the usual platitudes about hard work, not knowing he was talking to a disciple of long hours.

Moore, quickly promoted to a full-time position as a case manager, moved up the ladder at Workforce Plus at a rapid-fire pace. In 2005, at age 23, Moore fulfilled her dream. She was named CEO of the public-private job-placement agency, overseeing a staff of 73 and a budget of almost \$8 million. It's also noteworthy that she was the first female and first African American to hold the top position at Workforce Plus.

"Kim did a phenomenal job there. It was a natural progression for her to move into the CEO. Nothing that Kim ever did ever surprised me," Pope, now retired and living in Crawfordville, said. "She was surprising maybe in her depth and her commitment and her knowledge. There was never a time when I didn't feel she was up to the task."

BIG BEND WORKFORCE CENTER

ENTRANCE

WHILE AT TCC

NEW INSTITUTES
Leadership Institute
• Women's Day of Dialogue
• Leadership Academy of North Florida
• Leadership Lessons over Lunch
Institute for Nonprofit Innovation and Excellence
new programs
• 10 6R approved programs
• 13 Workforce Award approved programs
• 5 Post Secondary Adult Education programs (Cyber Security, Medical Administrative Specialist, Industrial Machine Repair and Maintenance, HVAC and OAC)

NEW STUDENT PAYMENT OPTION
• Establishes student fund in the State of Florida

NEW PARTNERSHIPS
• AED
• Library Volunteers of Leon County
• Experience Works
• TAMU SMC
Source: TCC Office of Communications

ONLINE
Watch Kimberly Moore talk about her work in a video at tallahassee.com/news

ABOVE: Kim Moore was the CEO of Workforce Plus at age 23 in 2005, the youngest person to lead the job placement agency. www.wfpl.com photo

TOP: Kim Moore leads a meeting discussing the launch of the Institute for Nonprofit Innovation and Excellence on May 7. www.tallahassee.com/news photo by THE DEMOCRAT

See MOORE • 4A

Kimberly Moore “synonymous with workforce development”

DOUG BLACKBURN

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

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No slowing down

Moore, 42, left Workforce Plus in March 2013 to be the vice president for workforce development at Tallahassee Community College. TCC President Jim Murdaugh, in announcing the addition of Moore to his leadership team, said “Kimberly Moore is synonymous with workforce development.”

It has been a good fit. Murdaugh has entrusted Moore with overseeing the creation of two major projects, a leadership institute at TCC and the Institute for Nonprofit Innovation and Excellence.

Missions accomplished. The leadership center got underway last year, the nonprofit center, housed in the former Mary Brogan Museum in downtown Tallahassee, officially opened its doors last month.

Moore does not regard the move from CEO at Workforce Plus to TCC vice president as a sideways step in a career marked by a sharp upward trajectory.

“I view it as a step up. I had already achieved Dream One. This gives me the opportunity to hone my own abilities and skills,” she said. “I get the autonomy of leading a division, but at the same time I feel I’m in a classroom because I get to hear and learn from a leader. President Murdaugh is very strategic in his thought process.”

She has no intention of taking her foot off the accelerator. The nonprofit institute last week formed a partnership with Southern Center for Nonprofit Excellence, based at Thomas University in neighboring Thomasville, Ga., effectively extending the reach of TCC’s new institute beyond the state line.

Awards and recognition continue to pile up for Moore. A graduate of Leadership Tallahassee, she learned recently that she has been named one of 55 members of next year’s class of Leadership Florida, an exclusive statewide group.

“I’m a special projects kind of person. I love making things come together,” Moore said. “The fact that (Murdaugh) trusts me with things that are so important to his leadership at the college means a lot to me. That’s the trust I needed to get these projects done.”

Kimberly Moore “synonymous with workforce development...”

continued

Humble roots

Moore is the middle child of Henry and Janie Moore’s three children, all girls. Her father, now deceased, served two years of active duty with the Army and followed that with 34 years in the Reserves and National Guard. He was a heavy equipment operator at Gilman Paper Co. in Madison. Her mother didn’t work outside the home until the girls were in high school. She’s now retired and continues to live in the house in Greenville where the family has lived for more than three decades.

Neither of Moore’s parents completed college, but it was expected that Moore and her sisters would continue their education beyond high school. All three have college degrees. Her older sister, Sharon Bradley, is at Capital City Bank; Melissa Nolley, the youngest, is at Valdosta State University.

Kim and Sharon were cashiers at the Dairy Shake in Madison during their last years in high school. They would open and close the eatery every weekend.

“I’ve been working forever it seems,” Moore said.

While attending TCC, where she got her associate’s degree in 1993, and Florida State, where she majored in criminology and earned her bachelor’s in 1995, Moore worked full-time at McDonald’s. She would regularly finish an eight-hour shift before noon, change in a back room and head straight to campus for a busy afternoon of classes.

Moore also started her own family during the start of her college career. The marriage didn’t work out, but Moore’s son, 23-year-old Stacey Mitchell, is following in his mother’s footsteps. He’s set to graduate from FSU later this year.

“Becoming a mom at 19 was one of the things that shaped me more than anything. Not only was I responsible for my dreams, I was responsible for someone else’s too,” she said. “My parents taught me, ‘Whatever you do, be responsible for it.’ I was always my boy’s mom — I still am.”

Janie Moore marvels at her daughter’s drive and determination. All three of her girls are successful, she

said, but there’s something a little different about Kim.

“She’s working hard all the time, all the time. The other two will take a break,” Janie Moore said. “Kim, if you don’t talk to her, she’s doing this 24 hours a day.”

Moore realized while she was moving up the ranks at Workforce Plus that Pope and other business leaders had something in common: advanced degrees. She added an MBA to her aims and made it happen, starting at FSU and finishing at Jacksonville’s Webster University, where she was able to complete most of the work online.

“I love business, I love strategy. Why not pursue an MBA?” Moore said.

Community connector

Moore uses a similar approach at TCC to the one she successfully applied at Workforce Plus: Get to know people, develop partnerships and create new ways to strengthen those relationships. She realized while at Workforce Plus that she had established strong networks in Leon and Gadsden counties, but she couldn’t say the same about Wakulla. She decided that had to change.

Moore began attending Wakulla County Chamber of Commerce meetings in order to get to know the men and women in that coastal county and better understand their workforce needs. A year later she was asked to be a member of that organization’s board. The year after that, in 2009, Moore was elected president, the first non-Wakulla resident to head the chamber, the first African American as well. She continues to serve on its board.

Tammie Barfield, another past president of the Wakulla chamber, said Moore had no problems fitting in. As president, Moore developed a series of lunch and learn workshops, put on at no cost to anyone in the county who cared to attend. The series continues to this day.

“Kim’s very organized. She had great ideas, and she had very good follow through on those ideas,” Barfield said. “She had a way of knowing who would be complementary to whatever vision she had.”

Kimberly Moore “synonymous with workforce development...”

continued

Moore had been following the news about the troubles at Florida A&M, where a fatal hazing ritual in fall 2012 had led to the university being placed on probation by its accrediting agency. Moore, who has been on the board of FAMU’s Small Business Development Center, asked Murdaugh if it would be OK for her to apply for a seat on that university’s board of trustees. He liked the idea, she said, and the Board of Governors last year made her a trustee at FAMU.

“I thought it would be helpful to have someone on the board who was not an alumni of the university,” she said. “I thought I might bring a fresh perspective, and I wanted to see the discussion at FAMU focus more on the students going to school there.”

Elmira Mangum, beginning her fourth month as FAMU president, said she welcomes Moore’s input.

“Trustee Moore is an important asset to the FAMU governance structure; I am sure she has experiences that will serve FAMU well in the days ahead,” Mangum said by email.

Moore acknowledges that it’s next to impossible to separate politics from business or education in Florida’s capital city. Her solution: Register as NPA, or no party affiliation. She started out as a Democrat, but decided the independent classification would play better in Tallahassee.

“I have the freedom to vote how I want to vote,” she said. “I think each party has some great things about it, and other things I question. Part of being civic-minded is making sure you understand all of the concerns being expressed.”

When pressed, Moore said she can envision a future in politics. She can see herself in a statewide office of some sort before she turns 50 in 2022.

“I have to say, I don’t know what that role would be. I would never take running for office off the table,” Moore said. “But my mom would probably like me to take that off the table. She thinks politicians take a whole lot of abuse, and she doesn’t want to see her daughter subjected to that.”

Moore is quick to add that she is still growing in her current job at TCC. It’s been less than 16 months. There’s still plenty of reason to put in long hours, she said.

“I don’t tire of things that need to get done. I’ve convinced myself I’m in a phase with long hours,” Moore said. “That’s how you move things. You do what it takes to get things where they need to be.”

It’s that simple.

While at TCC

New institutes:

- Leadership Institute
- Women’s Day of Dialogue
- Leadership Academy of North Florida
- Leadership Lessons over Lunch
- Institute for Nonprofit Innovations and Excellence: new programs
- 10 VA approved programs
- 13 Workforce board approved programs
- 5 Post Secondary Adult Vocation programs (Cyber Security, Medial Administrative Specialist, Industrial Machine Repair and Maintenance, HVAC and CNC)

New Student Payment Option

- (workforce students) First in the State of Florida

New partnerships

- AERO
- Literacy Volunteers of Leon County
- Experience Works
- FAMU SBDC

TCC's land grab is embarrassing

TOM SWIHART

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (LETTERS TO THE EDITOR)

The trustees of Tallahassee Community College are damaging TCC's excellent reputation by pursuing a land grab and RV campground at Wakulla Springs State Park.

Whatever were they thinking when they got Legislative "turkey project" money for a building not in their strategic plan?

Would they recommend that any TCC business student assume responsibility for \$8 million of state property without any management funding? Do the trustees really want to deal with the permitting and management hassles of an RV campground at board meetings? How do they explain to students and faculty that the time they devote to this misguided project does not take away from genuinely important educational priorities?

It makes one wonder: How many other projects are the trustees commencing for which the college has no staff or expertise?

TCC will become a laugh line it pursues this land grab and continues to claim that an RV campground is a perfect fit with the mission of a community college.

TCC collecting photos for new calendar

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

TCC's International Services office has invited TCC students, alumni, faculty and staff to enter the 2015 International Calendar Photo Contest.

The photo competition serves as a precursor to the unveiling of TCC's 2015 International Photo Calendar, a year-long travel adventure of images representing the diversity of life from around the world. International Services will accept photo entries through Sept. 12. An independent panel of judges will select the top 14 photos, all of which will be used in the calendar.

For information, contact Betty Jensen at (850) 201-8258 or jensenb@tcc.fl.edu.

FPSI to host information session

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

The Florida Public Safety Institute will offer a Corrections Basic Recruit certificate program interest meeting from 10-11 a.m. July 21 in Room 214 of the classroom building on the FPSI campus, located on Highway 90 west of Tallahassee.

The meeting is intended for students who wish to become corrections officers with the Florida Department of Corrections or Leon, Gadsden or Wakulla County Jails.

Recruiters from the Gadsden Re-Entry Center, located on FPSI's campus, will be in attendance to discuss the hiring process for DOC. In addition to networking opportunities, this meeting will allow FPSI to gauge student interest in a 13-week Corrections Basic Recruit training program set to start Sept. 8.

For information, contact Andrea Blalock at (850) 201-7659 or blalocka@tcc.fl.edu.

TCC WEI offers five courses

DOUG BLACKBURN
TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

TCC's Wakulla Environmental Institute will offer five courses in the Fall 2014 semester.

The course list includes credit and noncredit offerings and traditional, online and hybrid formats.

Four of the courses offer college credit. Three of those (Natural Resources Conservation and Management, Environmental Regulation and Compliance, and Environmental Sampling and Analysis I) may be used toward the WEI's Associate in Science degree in Environmental Science.

The fourth, Introduction to Professional Diving, may be used as an elective in related areas of study.

For information about the Environmental Science classes, contact Nadine Bradley at (850) 201-7944 or scma@tcc.fl.edu.

TCC's plans for park are good for Wakulla

CYNTHIA WEBSTER

WAKULLA NEWS (LETTERS TO THE EDITOR)

Wakulla County has allocated time, money and talent in the pursuit of tourism, specifically eco-tourism. So why would a vocal few want to jeopardize an opportunity to enhance that industry?

The TCC Wakulla Environmental Institute has extended a seemingly win-win-win proposal to the Florida Park Service. In return for a 50 year lease on approximately 2,000 acres of land (located near Wakulla Springs) purchased by the state in 1999, the institute has stated it will commit to:

- Correcting all the conditions that caused Cherokee Sink to be closed for health reasons; it will also provide at the sink a sewer-connected restroom facility, designated parking, a picnic area and a boardwalk to prevent erosion;
- Constructing a 60 site campground with ranger station, designed in cooperation with the Florida Park Service;
- Providing invasive plant management and a fire program;
- Removing septic tanks in Wakulla Springs State Park and having the park's systems connected to the county sewer system (up to a \$250,000 savings for the Park Service);
- Restoring the area based on a prescription determined by park biologists and the Florida Park Director;
- Allowing no equestrian use of property and no cave diving;
- No construction of any building over the subterranean cave system that leads to Wakulla Springs;
- Not using Florida Park Service personnel for the purpose of day-to-day operation of the site.

In return, under the provisions of the TCC proposal and the Environmental Institute's leadership, the agreement would provide the next generation of Park Rangers and Land Management personnel with an invaluable tool of learning – a tool that many educational facilities do not and cannot provide – onsite training.

A hands-on learning experience goes beyond the classroom, textbook and theory and could make the Institute a sought after educational experience

while providing Wakulla County with much-needed employment, income and tourism opportunities.

Environmentally conscious students, faculty and visitors would discover Wakulla's beauty and lifestyle; Wakulla Springs would benefit from having an outside professional partnership and monetary resource; and, most importantly, our children would have an opportunity to attend a respected educational facility.

Visitors, students, staff would patronize our businesses, eat in our restaurants, stay in our hotels, hire our eco guides and leave with an experience to be shared with friends and colleagues. The planned campground would give travelers an opportunity to experience the natural Florida and develop an appreciation of the importance of balancing nature with growth.

Having said all this, it is difficult to imagine that there would be deniers of the TCC proposal. It might well be only a noisy handful of people who are opposed and of those, some will always fear change, however the danger is that they will cause the state park system to blink resulting in a loss of all that could be gained before it is even tried. Those who are complaining seem to be doing so based on such non-empirical criteria as "it has never been done before" or "when I worked there we did not need outside help" or the doom-and-gloom group are citing a bunch of "what ifs" – i.e., What if the sewer pipes leak or are misplaced? and What if the environmental institute's professional team of biologists are not competent to make important environmental decisions? or What if the RV site is overrun with people who do not respect their surroundings?

When people who have been lauding eco-tourism as the answer to so many of our county's economic and environmental concerns and who have worked hard to put money into the hands of our Department of Tourism cannot get behind an environmentally sound project, established and run by an environmental institute dedicated to environmental issues what will they support?

TCC's plans for park are good for Wakulla...

continued

If you care about the economic future of Wakulla County, if you care about a quality of life that affords our children the possibility of pursuing careers in their own hometown, whether it be as eco guides, the next generation of park rangers and land managers, restaurant owners, hospitality workers, biologists, educators or a multitude of other jobs you will take this question seriously. There can be no balance or growth for our community if a small group of people continually pretend to want our community to flourish yet when something as important as education and as wholesome as eco tourism presents itself they yell "No, No, not here."

To voice support for the TCC Wakulla Environmental Institute's proposal, Floridians can make their voices heard by emailing mackiek@tcc.fl.edu.

Misgivings over TCC proposal

KATHRYN GIBSON

WAKULLA NEWS (LETTERS TO THE EDITOR)

I am writing to express my misgivings about the Wakulla Environmental Institute/TCC proposal to sublease 2,000 acres of Wakulla State Park at Cherokee Sink for the development of a campground.

As a long time resident of Wakulla County, lifelong scuba diver and camper. It would be terrific to have these activities close by for family and friends, but this is not the right location.

The risks to the springs system and aquifer far outweigh any imagined benefits.

The Florida Park Service acted wisely and with vision when they acquired the parcel to help protect the springs and ensure improved water quality to them.

Slowed by budget restraints, they have successfully restored acres of wiregrass and long-leaf pines to the area. The endangered Gopher tortoise has now flourished in this area while becoming decimated in other places as a result of habitat loss.

They are not alone in sharing habitat with other flora and fauna. The park service has cleaned years of debris out of the sink and the surrounding area to help restore it to optimal health.

The proposal states the area has been "unmanaged for decades" which is not accurate.

Providing environmental education for the next generation of park and land managers is an important mission.

TCC has an excellent reputation for community outreach, innovative programming and providing quality education. The institution clearly has experience in managing large-scale endeavors, how does that translate to the kind of enterprise proposed?

It would be a shame to have that reputation blemished by this poorly conceived project.

Why couldn't scientific research, hands-on training and working experience be offered to students while in partnership with Wakulla Springs Park and its exemplary employees at the existing facilities without a campground?

There is a long history of conducting scientific projects at the park.

The scale of this campground proposal is grandiose and unlikely to be fully utilized. Local campgrounds are seldom near capacity.

The proposed campground is a mile from the waterfront. It is doubtful that most people will walk, thereby necessitating additional parking at the Springs and more traffic on the roads.

Why build something to this scale, destroy native habitat, risk increased pollution of our watershed and add pressure on the county and park infrastructure, such as sewer lines and roads, without apparent benefit to the general citizenry and potentially resulting in irreparable harm?

On the surface this appears to be a wonderful idea but there are too many unanswered questions.

In-depth feasibility studies, environmental impact assessments and cost/benefit analysis should be conducted as a first step.

Here in Wakulla County one only needs to drive a few miles to see large parcels of land that have been clear cut and left vacant because someone had a "great idea." It would be tragic if that happened to a place as special and unique as Wakulla Springs.

TCC trio signs scholarships

DEMOCRAT STAFF
TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

A pair of Tallahassee Community College softball standouts recently signed scholarships that will extend their careers.

TCC's Te Reo Powhiri Matautia has signed with Nova Southeastern, while Dominique Davis will continue her academic and athletic career in her home state after signing with Albany State.

Matautia, a native of Mangere Bridge, Auckland, New Zealand, leaves Tallahassee after two seasons. She will have three years of eligibility following a season-ending knee injury in 2013.

TCC baseball standout Bobby Rice has signed with Valdosta State.

Rice, a native of Monticello, played his prep baseball at North Florida Christian.

TCC basketball in brief

DEMOCRAT STAFF
TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Tallahassee Community College men's basketball standout Richard Peters has signed a national letter of intent with the University of Albany Great Danes.

TCC proposal shows a lack of thought

ANN BIDLINGMAIER

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (LETTERS TO THE EDITOR)

I am perplexed that, with all the talent and expertise TCC has at its disposal, the development proposal for Cherokee Sink at Wakulla Springs was so sketchy, ill-founded, and undocumented. A one-and-a-half page letter and a rudimentary drawing for a proposal as huge as this one is inexcusable. I wonder if TCC or WEI reps have even visited the property.

TCC/WEI says development of the RV park would increase revenues to Wakulla Springs Park. Yet none of the rental revenues from the 60 RV sites and the yurts they propose will go back to the park. That money will be used to pay off a \$3 million development loan. The 50-year sublease on the \$5 million publicly owned parcel will return only \$300 per year to the park.

TCC/WEI says the sinkhole is closed and swimming is prohibited due to lack of restrooms. Not true. People swim there daily, despite the fecal coliform readings that frequently exceed safe levels. The sinkhole has a low natural water flow that does not allow it to flush rapidly. It will likely never be able to support a multitude of swimmers generated by 60 RV sites.

TCC/WEI states that all septic tanks will be removed from the park. However, there are only two septic systems remaining in the park, one of which is 4 miles from any possible sewer hookup.

TCC has promised that no development would be done on top of the caves, ignoring the fact that that polluted runoff can reach the cave system anyway.

TCC/WEI avers that, since the state bought the property in 1999, no restoration has been done on those areas clear-cut by St. Joe years ago. Not true. At the public workshop, a former park staffer described several completed restoration projects as well as prescribed burns and location of gopher tortoises.

How can we have any confidence in TCC's ability to be good stewards when this proposal is so flawed and poorly done? TCC says educating future forest rangers is its goal, but this can be done at Wakulla Springs without building 60 RV pads to profit business owners. Is this really about education? I don't think so.

Citizens deserve answers on Wakulla Springs

PAM MCVETY

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (LETTERS TO THE EDITOR)

Since June 6, some of Florida's finest environmental leaders, including retired Florida State Park employees, have written 27 letters (that I know of) to the governor; Secretary Herschel Vinyard of the Department of Environmental Protection; Tallahassee Community College President Jim Murdaugh; Bob Ballard, executive director of the Wakulla Environmental Institute at TCC; and various DEP employees regarding the proposed sublease of 2,000 acres of Wakulla Springs State Park by the institute. Not a single letter received a response.

What is going on? Leaders unable to defend what they have proposed. Paralysis in the face of opposition or something else? Regardless of what it is, it is a government run by officials who are no longer responsive to the people who elected them and pay their salaries. This is shameful and unacceptable. This is the Scott administration brought to you by the people but not for the people. At least not for any people who oppose what they want to do.

Proposed RV park poses a threat to springs

GAIL FISHMAN

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (LETTERS TO THE EDITOR)

Tallahassee Community College has announced its intention to sublease 2,000 acres of Wakulla Springs State Park for 50 years to train students for a handful of resource management jobs. To accomplish this, TCC has proposed developing a campground at the cost of several million dollars on the property. There are two established public campgrounds within a few miles of the Wakulla Environmental Institute's Crawfordville campus — Ochlocknee River State Park and Newport Campground run by Wakulla County.

The Magnolia Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society believes that these two campgrounds are more than adequate to meet the needs of the training program. Since they already exist, there should be minimal cost outlay. Additionally, students should be sent as interns to additional Florida state parks in order to learn about different management activities.

We are concerned about the threat posed to Wakulla Springs State Park by the campground. We are deeply troubled about the precedent this sets for our state parks.

We wholeheartedly support natural resource training. We staunchly oppose the plan to sublease any land owned by the citizens of the state of Florida and the construction of a campground on a state park that was purchased to protect our water supply and wildlife habitat.

INIE to hold training sessions

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

TCC's Institute for Nonprofit Innovation and Excellence's soft-launch event in June led to 19 organizations signing up with the institute in just 14 days.

The INIE's reach already extends beyond the borders of Leon County. Grace Robinson, director of the Gadsden Arts Center, joined for the development of her staff, her organization and the Institute as a whole.

The INIE will begin formal training sessions in August with a pair of instructional seminars licensed by the Association of Fundraising Professionals.

To view TCC22's report on the Institute for Nonprofit Innovation and Excellence, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OOI3vplSZ8U&feature=youtu.be>. For information, contact Sarah Young at (850) 201-9608 or youngsa@tcc.fl.edu

Commission to support WEI land lease proposal

NICOLE ZEMA
WAKULLA NEWS

With only one meeting this month, the Board of County Commissioners had a lot to discuss on July 14 at the meeting that stretched into the 10 o'clock hour. Wakulla Environmental Institute, the Aquatic Science Association grant, charter amendments, rates on solid waste and the county attorney's contract were all topics that garnered discussion.

Letter of support for WEI land lease

Commissioner Jerry Moore presented an agenda item to write a letter of support for Tallahassee Community College Wakulla Environmental Institute's plans to lease 1,850 acres of Wakulla Springs State Park for land and park management education. While four commissioners voted to send the letter, many citizen comments challenged the endorsement.

Citizen Victor Lambou said without detailed plans, the endorsement is premature.

Dana Peck said she used to roam the halls as TCC faculty for more than 15 years.

"There are not enough superlatives to say about their academic offerings for students who come there, especially for the first two years," Peck said. And while WEI's offerings are great, the land lease is not, she said. Peck went on to explain some of the institute's shortcomings.

Commissioner Howard Kessler said, "Before we start supporting a plan that will take one-third of Wakulla Springs land away for 50 years, we should be sure we have protections in place for Wakulla Springs."

Kessler added that he would like to see WEI have success at the campus before any land deal moves forward.

Commissioner Ralph Thomas pointed out that WEI is a state institution with tremendous resources, and has made a commitment to be good stewards of the land, like connecting Wakulla Springs to the county sewer system.

"I was surprised to learn a few weeks ago that Wakulla Springs has access to sewer, yet they still have buildings today on septic tanks," Thomas said.

Moore said there is currently a USDA grant in the works that will run sewer up Spring Creek Highway, which WEI will tie into before they build anything.

Sandy Cook, former park manager at Wakulla Spring State Park, called The Wakulla News to say there is a misconception about the two septic tanks on the property. Cook said the ranger station has a single toilet on a high performance septic system. And the other is at ranger residence trailer on Bloxham Cutoff four miles from the sewer line.

"So when they say, there are septic tanks still there, that is true," Cook said. "However, because of the long distance and low amount of waste generated a force line will not work. There is just not enough effluent to keep the line clear. TCC has agreed to connect the two facilities to county sewer. The estimated cost is about \$100,000."

Thomas said the board is not trying to get into the "nuts and bolts and get into every little detail."

"This is just a letter of support," Thomas said. "They still have to make it viable. All we're asking is to move forward with the idea of supporting this."

The board agreed to send a letter of support, with Kessler opposing.

Questions about candidate Steve Cushman

A workshop to discuss a grant proposal by the Aquatic Science Association was cut short Monday when Colin Irons, vice chair of the ASA, withdrew a board request for a letter of support for an oyster reef restoration grant.

Panacea resident Steve Cushman, who is a District 4 County Commission candidate, chairs the conservation group, whose mission is to acquire land through acquisition and stewardship programs to be held in public trust for conservation and protection of natural resources for extensive scientific research and exploration. Cushman and Irons founded the ASA in 2008 after years of diving together in Texas. Having its roots in cave and cave diving, the ASA expanded to Florida in 2012, with an office in Crawfordville.

Commission to support WEI land lease proposal...

continued

At the June 2 board meeting, the ASA requested a letter supporting its grant proposal to the Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund for the oyster reef restoration project. The board requested that a workshop be scheduled for further discussion of the ASA and its grant proposal.

At the regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners following the workshop, several citizens and acquaintances of Cushman stood to make comments about the candidate, pointing out discrepancies in his record and taking issue with his character.

Cushman was not present for the comments during the initial public comment segment, but came to four-hour meeting later to provide comments himself.

Citizen Charles Hickman, who is associated with the Coast Guard Auxiliary, said when he conducted a review of Cushman's application for the local Marine Advisory Board, he noticed that, "he was pending a captains license," Hickman said. Upon further investigation, Hickman said he discovered that Cushman never applied for a captains license.

"If he is operating a vessel for charter, or going on tours, he needs to have a captains license," Hickman said. "It's something this county looked past when putting him on the marine advisory board. That bothers me."

Michelle Bull said because Cushman owns so many companies within Wakulla County, the possibility of the board supporting the ASA's oyster reef restoration grant proposal would be a conflict of interest.

"There are eight companies or associations he is affiliated with," Bull said. "I assume as a businessman, and an owner of Wakulla Oyster Farms and Wakulla Seafood Processing, that he would participate in future harvesting of these oysters, so I assume this would be a money making venture for him to get a grant from the federal government. I feel like he might be taking advantage of these positions."

Larry Roberts, a former military pilot, said he felt like he and Cushman had something in common when he read about Cushman's military pilot experience in his political announcement in The Wakulla News in March.

"I asked him about his status as a military pilot, and he said he was an F16 instructor pilot for five years in Las Vegas," Roberts said. "I have a copy of Mr. Cushman's Facebook page, stating that he is an Air Force retired pilot. He is not. Bottom line, the man does not speak the truth, and he has no business being on this commission."

Gail Hickman said she is relieved there will be no letter of support for the ASA project.

"Mr. Cushman, as chair of ASA, is fraught with problems of integrity," Hickman said. "ASA earlier this year itself stated it does not want to be involved in this program nor do they want to be involved in politics — yet, he is. Until these problems are ironed out, it is a foolish mistake for any endorsement to be made by this county."

At the meeting, Cushman said he had recently spoken with someone in Tallahassee who was familiar with Wakulla County politics.

"I've got to tell you, I'm a little bit ashamed of what she said about Wakulla County, and the reputation we have about the way things go down here," Cushman said. "It's no wonder we can't get things off the ground."

Cushman declined opportunities to respond to the comments on the record, but said he will speak on the allegations at a later date.

(Note: This article truncated for relevance to TCC.)

Don't be confused by misinformation

SANDY COOK

WAKULLA NEWS (LETTERS TO THE EDITOR)

Editor, The News:

It is unfortunate that I find myself writing again to clarify misleading or incorrect statements made about Wakulla Springs. It is somewhat understanding when citizens who are passionate about an issue make misleading comments since they may not have an opportunity to obtain all the facts. After all it is not unusual for citizens to be given the "run around" when requesting information about a public project.

It is, however, inexcusable for people in elected or official capacities to make statements in a public venue that are false or misleading. The TCC-Wakulla Environmental Institute Executive Director Bob Ballard has stated in writing that the Cherokee Sink property had been mismanaged for decades and no restoration had been accomplished. This is just not true and since he was Deputy Secretary for DEP he should know.

During the July 14 BOCC meeting Commissioner Thomas made comments regarding the sewage system at Wakulla Springs. He stated he was surprised to hear there were septic tanks at Wakulla Springs and that "no one has found it important to get those facilities off of septic tanks." There is in fact two buildings that are not connected to the county sewer system; the ranger station and an employee owned ranger residence located two miles east on Hwy 267. All other facilities are connected to the county sewer system.

In 1996 over a half million dollars was spent on upgrading the park's wastewater collection and treatment system. At the time the county was unable to provide sewer service to the park so a performance based septic system was installed. In 2002 the county extended the sewer line to Spring Creek Highway and the park spent \$200,000 to install the nearly three mile force main needed to connect to county sewer. The desire was to connect all facilities however the ranger station and ranger residence could not be connected. Operationally, a four mile sewer line with the low amount of effluent generated just wouldn't work. Subsequently, both of the septic tanks were upgraded to performance based systems at a cost \$25,000.

So the bottom line, Commissioner Thomas, is that someone has found it important to insure that Wakulla Springs has the best sewage treatment technology available and is leading by example. And Commissioner Merritt, I agree with your comment that it would be good to extend the sewer line to Camp Indian Springs.

TCC parts ways with foundation director

Robin Johnston didn't want to leave, but his contract wasn't renewed

DOUG BLACKBURN

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Robin Johnston, vice president for institutional advancement at Tallahassee Community College since 2006, did not have his contract renewed for the 2014-2015 fiscal year.

Johnston, who also served as executive director of the TCC Foundation, was hired in 2006 by former TCC President Bill Law to replace Marjorie Turnbull. Johnston's last day was June 30.

Ranie Thompson, a longtime administrator with the foundation, is serving as interim vice president for institutional development.

Johnston said TCC President Jim Murdaugh informed him in March that his contract would not be renewed. Johnston concluded a second quarter TCC Foundation video report by noting that his last day at the college would be June 30.

Johnston did not want to leave TCC, he said. "Jim (Murdaugh) decided he wanted to make some changes, to change the team up a bit," Johnston said. "I love TCC. I'm passionate about the college and its mission."

Murdaugh is taking July off and was not available for comment. Al Moran, vice president for communications and marketing, said the alumni association will no longer be part of the foundation.

Moran said he is in the process of starting a TCC alumni and friends association that will focus on networking with the college's tens of thousands of alumni in the Big Bend.

"Jim has created a different business model for the foundation," Moran said.

Johnston has started a home-based company, Motivational Design Group, that he hopes to eventually relocate to a separate office.

Johnston said the foundation raised about \$9.5 million since December 2006, when he took charge of the fundraising operation.

TCC withdraws Wakulla park plan

DOUG BLACKBURN AND JENNIFER PORTMAN
TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Tallahassee Community College notified the state's Department of Environmental Protection on Friday it was withdrawing its controversial request to lease almost 2,000 acres within Wakulla Springs State Park.

Bob Ballard, director of TCC's new Wakulla Environmental Institute, said the college wanted to rethink its plans for the land after a growing chorus of opposition to the proposal. The college had wanted to use the property for an educational training site for future park managers. TCC's proposal included a 60-site RV and tent campground near Cherokee Sink.

Ballard told the Democrat that after talking to TCC President Jim Murdaugh Friday afternoon, they decided it was best to withdraw their request.

"We need additional time to address the questions from the community," Ballard said. "This is not a setback. We want to be part of the community."

Ballard said the college is "leaving the door open" as far as resubmitting a plan to DEP to lease park property. TCC had sent its request to DEP in May. The college received \$4 million from the state in 2012 to build its environmental institute on 160 acres south of Crawfordville, and hopes to have a grand opening in spring 2015.

Environmentalists, officials disagreed on proposal

The campground proposal was widely opposed by environmentalists and conservationists, who worried about its impact on the area's fragile spring and underground cave system. Business leaders and other Wakulla County officials, however, supported the proposal, citing its positive economic benefits and TCC's track record for environmental stewardship.

"We are very pleased to learn that the Wakulla Environmental Institute is withdrawing their request for a lease of a third of Wakulla Springs State Park," said Jim Stevenson, a springs expert and member of Wakulla Springs Alliance. "Although no written plans were available, Mr. Ballard's stated vision for this 2,000 acres of state park land can easily be accomplished through

cooperative agreements with the other federal and state land management agencies in the county. Also, there are two public campgrounds within 20 minutes of the proposed campus where students can learn day-to-day campground management without having to spend a million dollars of public funds to develop an unneeded RV campground. This is a big day for Wakulla Spring and the state park."

WEI officials had been seeking to lease a 1,850-acre tract within Wakulla Springs State Park to train upcoming park managers in land management and turn Cherokee Sink into a destination with 60-site RV and tent camping sites and 10 yurts. If the lease would have been approved, it would be the largest of its kind ever granted.

"Friends of Wakulla Springs believe that TCC saw how irresponsible this idea was to put an RV park on conservation land," the group's president Madeleine Carr said. "We look forward to seeing the Wakulla Environmental Institute begin construction south of Crawfordville on the 158 acres TCC purchased to establish a destination."

The WEI campground plan at Cherokee Sink was similar to one pitched in 2011 by DEP, when Ballard served as the agency's deputy secretary.

That proposal, part of an effort to boost state-park revenue, included 120 campsites on 60 acres, as well as 12 equestrian camping areas, but it was halted following widespread public opposition.

The WEI plan cut in half the number of proposed campsites and would not have allowed horses or generators, Ballard said. All the sites and bathhouse facilities would have been connected to the county's center sewer, he said, with development done to the highest environmental standards.

While Ballard said the college may come back with a modified proposal, DEP said it considers the matter closed for now.

"Due to the withdrawal of the proposal, the department is no longer considering the project," said DEP press secretary Tiffany Cowie.

Scholarship fundraiser held in honor of Pfc. Brandon King

CHRISTINA REZNACK

WTXL

The family of Pfc. Brandon Michael King held their fourth annual scholarship fundraiser today.

It was held from 4:30-8:00 p.m. at the Blairstone at Governor's Square Apartments. Pfc. King was killed on July 14 during an attack by enemy forces at a combat outpost located in Afghanistan.

The fundraiser supports the Tallahassee Community College scholarship named in his honor. The King family has raised more than \$20,000 in scholarship money over the past three years. This year, they're awarding Ian Burse of Wakulla High School and Raymond Peterson who served in the U.S. Army.

Pfc. King's mother Freda King is an alumna of TCC. She established the scholarship program in 2010 just after her son's death.

To donate to the fundraiser, visit www.tcc.fl.edu/foundation.

Family of Brandon King gives back

CHRIS GROS

WCTV

Private First Class Brandon King was only 23 years old when he was killed in combat in Afghanistan in 2010.

Now four years later his family and friends are celebrating his life and doing so by honoring King through a scholarship in his name.

"I believe he's looking down and saying this is amazing. You know this is for me and my honor and to help someone else and one thing to be able to turn a tragedy into something positive is important," said King's mother, Carolyn King.

The award is given to two TCC students where King studied. Over the course of four years more than \$20,000 has been handed out. This year's winners are an 18 year

old freshman and a U.S. Army veteran who graduated high school 24 years ago.

"I'm so grateful that there are such nice people in the world that can go through such a heartbreaking experience and they can grow," said scholarship winner Ian Burse.

"Even more so humbling we're talking about a family that has given the ultimate sacrifice in their son joining the military and giving his sacrifice so we can do what we do today," said U.S. Army veteran and scholarship winner Raymond Peterson.

If you'd like to donate to the Brandon King foundation you can do so by visiting www.tcc.fl.edu/foundation.

Innovation holds the key to nonprofits' further success

ALYCE LEE STANSBURY

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

I've been concerned ever since I learned less funding will be going to meet human service needs in the Big Bend again this year. This is the fourth year of declining dollars for a total decrease of \$829,027.

This is occurring at the same time the community is experiencing increased gun violence, homelessness, poverty and hunger. As I've been thinking about this, I've had a busy schedule of travel, speaking engagements, and stimulating conversations, which got me thinking even more and asking questions.

Is funding falling because there is a lack of confidence in the ability of nonprofits to meet community needs? This is the age of Sarbanes-Oxley and charity watchdogs like Charity Navigator. The public has instant access via Guidestar to the IRS Form 990 of almost every public charity in the U.S. Scrutiny of nonprofits seeking public funds has never been greater.

Charities receiving public funds are required to account for every penny, be transparent in how all funds are spent, operate with appropriate financial controls, be governed by an engaged board of directors, and produce program outcomes, reports on how funds are spent, and a tangible return on investment.

Funders as well as individual donors are holding charities they support to high standards of transparency and accountability. In most cases, nonprofits are meeting or exceeding them.

What about donor fatigue? Last month, Giving USA reported charitable giving is up 4.4 percent in the U.S. and 80 percent of all charitable gifts continue to come from individuals. These gains in philanthropy are attributed in part to a handful of extremely wealthy people making very large gifts. Overall giving is returning to pre-recession levels, which indicates donor confidence is up by people of all income levels making gifts of all sizes.

I've also been thinking about social entrepreneurship. This is a hot topic because it holds high promise as a new way for businesses to solve social problems that can produce a lasting, transforming benefit to society. What if nonprofits had the opportunity to apply for and receive funding to launch a venture that produces a meaningful profit? Could the answer to funding social services exist within the social service sector itself?

This is not a cure-all and will require investments of capital, entrepreneurial thinking among board members and staff, and a willingness by nonprofit leaders to take a calculated risk without the threat of losing donor/funder support.

Joy Watkins, CEO of the Community Foundation of North Florida, and I recently presented a workshop on trends in philanthropy. This got me thinking more deeply about endowed philanthropy. Joy stated \$30 trillion dollars is going to pass from one generation to the next within the next 10 years. If only 5 percent of this wealth transfer were endowed for charitable purposes, \$6 billion would be invested in our 10-county area.

This in turn would generate \$14 million to support local nonprofits each and every year! That's almost three times the annual CHSP allocation and would be a renewable source of revenue for generations to come. What would it take to educate our community about this opportunity, put the tools in place to capture these dollars for philanthropy, promote the idea like mad, and actually make it happen? Even if we captured less than 5 percent of this transfer, our ability to meet community needs would be dramatically improved.

Finally, I've been thinking about innovation. If organizations of every kind are not changing, they're dying. The goal of the new Institute for Nonprofit Innovation & Excellence is to promote, support, and facilitate innovation in nonprofits. This is a tall order. It will take funding and new ways of thinking to make it happen. Too often, a new idea is considered innovation when it's simply an old idea with a new name. What would it take to foster charity-led innovation and enable it to thrive?

Is the community prepared to do what will be needed to make this happen? Are nonprofits ready to take this plunge? INIE has got to deliver on its name and that's going to take buy-in and tangible support from nonprofits and the community at large.

(NOTE: This article truncated for relevance to INIE.)

TCC WEI offers five courses

DOUG BLACKBURN
TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

TCC's Wakulla Environmental Institute will offer five courses in the Fall 2014 semester. The course list includes credit and noncredit offerings and traditional, online and hybrid formats. Four of the courses offer college credit.

Three of those (Natural Resources Conservation and Management, Environmental Regulation and Compliance, and Environmental Sampling and Analysis I) may be used toward the WEI's Associate in Science degree in Environmental Science. The fourth, Introduction to Professional Diving, may be used as an elective in related areas of study.

For information about the Environmental Science classes, contact Nadine Bradley at 201-7944 or scma@tcc.fl.edu.

FCSAA inducts Dana Peck into Hall of Fame

WAKULLA NEWS

The Florida College System Activities Association has selected Dana Peck for induction into the FCSAA 2014 Hall of Fame for her work as an adviser to The Talon, the campus newspaper at Tallahassee Community College.

FCSAA is a statewide non-profit corporation of Florida's 28 colleges which regulates, coordinates and promotes intercollegiate activities in athletics, Brain Bowl, music, student government, student publications and theatre.

Peck is one of 10 student publications advisers to be inducted since 1993; she is the second adviser from TCC following the induction of Judy Jolly in 1995.

Peck's background is the following:

- Retired from Tallahassee Community College as a professor of journalism and English
- Past president of the Florida Community College Press Association
- Former board member of the Wakulla County chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness
- Past president of the Florida Capitol Press Corp
- Former member of the Ohio House of Representatives (appointed)
- Former councilwoman of Jackson City Council, Jackson, Ohio
- Former member of the international executive board of the General Federation of Women's Clubs

The FCSAA induction ceremonies will be held on Oct. 31, at the Hilton Sandestin in conjunction with the Association of Florida Colleges Annual Convention.

TCC pulls Cherokee Sink plans

JENNY ODOM
WAKULLA NEWS

Last week Tallahassee Community College withdrew plans proposing a 50-year lease within Wakulla Springs State Park that would utilize 1,850 acres at Cherokee Sink.

The plan called for the restoration of the land and sink, plus 60 family camping sites, which included spaces for tents, RVs, pop-ups, and yurts.

The goal was to create a land management training center within the Wakulla Environmental Institute to train park rangers.

"Technically we have withdrawn the request, but no way is it gone," said Bob Ballard, director of WEI. "It's just on hold. We've simply hit the pause button."

In an outcry from citizens concerned about the environmental impact on the sensitive ecosystem of Wakulla Springs, Ballard said he and TCC President Jim Murdaugh, are trying to digest what the community wants.

"We pride ourselves in listening to the community. We want to be part of the community," said Ballard, who previously held the position of Deputy Secretary for Land and Recreation for Department of Environmental Protection.

"When people call it an RV campground, that's not really right," said Ballard.

"We are looking to make this an international destination," said Ballard. "We need places for people to stay, things for people to do.

"When we listened to the public, what we heard that they want is to help protect the environment, and they want good quality jobs," he continued. "What we're going to do is to teach about the environment, and train the next generation of land managers."

"Here's the thing," said Ballard, "I met with the director of Florida Park Service and he said you can get more done through TCC, with the opportunity to acquire grant money. He told me we'd love to restore Cherokee Sink, but we don't have the funding to do that."

Jim Stevenson, with Wakulla Springs Basin Working Group, wrote: "This project would have 'taken' 2,000 acres

of the state park that has been managed by experienced park service land managers for 14 years, developed an unneeded RV campground even though two public, underutilized campgrounds are just 20 minutes away, risked contamination of Wakulla Spring from an extensive sewer system which would have negated the reason the Governor and Cabinet acquired this property which cost over \$5 million to protect the caves and water flowing to the spring."

Stevenson, a retired DEP senior biologist, and Ballard met prior to a public meeting regarding the plan that was held on July 17 at Woodville Public Library.

"We made a list of things we must have for him (Stevenson) to agree to this project," said Ballard. "We had a compromise. But then I got an email right before the meeting that explained he had changed his mind. At the last second, he reneged."

Stevenson confirmed that he and Ballard had met twice to create a list of compromises, but in the end he did not feel the plan was right.

"The more I learned about it, I determined that I could not support it," said Stevenson.

"Sewer lines sound great for the most part, but this would be a maze of lines, with over 100 joints, and any breaks would send raw sewage into the water that flows to the springs," he added.

"My bottom line is protecting the springs and protecting State Parks," he said. "If it's going to hurt the springs or the State Park, I won't support it."

"It appears that if TCC truly wants to be part of the community it will learn that not everyone follows the Chamber of Commerce arguments, particularly if those are so blatantly off base as to cause alarm," said Madeleine Carr, Friends of Wakulla Springs and local historian.

TCC pulls Cherokee Sink plans...

continued

"I invite all citizens to inquire for themselves why certain areas are called conservation land. Wakulla County has a precious resource to protect," she said. "It is its fresh water. Wakulla Springs State Park provides healthy buffers to protect our ground water. Anything that imperils that, such as a college campus built on conservation land, would be contrary to its intended use as envisioned by our legislature."

"We don't see people who speak out against the plan as negative, we see them as allies," said Ballard. "We're on the same side."

"We're looking at the whole county to see what makes the most sense," he said. "It is not necessarily going to happen at Cherokee Sink, but it's still an option."

"Wouldn't it be nice if your kids could grow up and could get a good job right here," said Ballard.

"Our community welcomes TCC's Wakulla Environmental Institute," said Carr. "It will be a very good addition to Wakulla County based on its initial idea to provide training to students interested in a sustainable future."

Commissioner Moore on WEI proposal

JERRY MOORE

WAKULLA NEWS (LETTERS TO THE EDITOR)

The Wakulla Environmental Institute will become Wakulla's largest employer. They will promote Wakulla County nationally and internationally. They will hire your children and your grandchildren in years to come. But the CAVE people (Citizens Against Virtually Everything) object to almost everything TCC is trying to do.

Monday night at the Board of County Commissioners meeting four of the commissioners defended the right of Wakulla citizens to use their property without additional restrictions and the taking of their property.

Now, the same group of CAVE people are trying to block the Wakulla Environmental Institute plan to lease 2000 acres of land from the State Parks of Florida to use as an environmental teaching laboratory.

Ladies and gentleman there is no compromise with the Wakulla Springs Alliance group. They are generally the same people who want to take your land to buffer the wetlands around a buffer that already exists.

The State of Florida previously wanted a horse park on the property and relented to pressure by the springs group.

Currently the Wakulla Environmental Institute compromised:

1. There will be no facility for horses.
2. The State of Florida previously wanted a 160 space RV campground. The Institute compromised for only a 60 space RV campground.
3. The Institute compromised with the number of parking spaces at Cherokee Sink and if you can believe only 30 parking spaces at Cherokee Sink swimming hole. Thousands of Wakulla children have used this sink for swimming for over a hundred years. You may as well close the sink if you only allow 30 spaces, which is exactly what the spring's group would like to do?

If all the facilities requested were approved it would occupy less than 20 acres out of 2000, or to be more precise less than one percent of the 2000 acres.

The Wakulla Springs group will not compromise on any issue. It is always my way or the highway.

When Wakulla Springs had the opportunity to join a very successful reservation system that increased reservations of the Florida State Parks from 14 million to 22 million visitors over a three year period, guess what, the spring's group chose not to participate.

I can imagine that sometime in the future there will be an effort to reduce the number of people who swim at the State Park along with at the same time to require all swimmers to wear DIAPERS to reduce the nitrogen the spring's group says contributes to the detriment of the springs.

As your commissioner I will defend Wakulla Environmental Institute, I will defend your property rights from the PhD's, the wealthy, and the radical environmentalists who are almost all from out of town, with the idea "I have mine and let's keep everyone else out."

Thanks for your time.

Our kids deserve to make memories too

MATTHEW HODGES

WAKULLA NEWS (LETTERS TO THE EDITOR)

When I was growing up, Cherokee Sink was one of my favorite places to spend a summer day. The jade-green water promised hours of fun for me, my friends and my family. It was a local paradise for kids of all ages – even those who had grown up but were still young at heart.

It's been years since anyone's gotten to feel that. The Sink has been closed to swimmers since 2009 due to neglect, and a lack of funding to restore its beauty. Bacteria and garbage clogged the Sink unusable for swimming.

Now I have children of my own and they're the most important part of my life, and I want them to have every opportunity in the world.

Swimming in the Cherokee Sink may seem small or even silly compared to other privileges, but they deserve the chance to make those memories just as I had it.

Tallahassee Community College and the Wakulla Environmental Institute are doing their part to make that happen.

The building of a campground at Cherokee Sink is just one part of the WEI's plan to restore the Sink's natural beauty.

The Florida Park Service understands this and will ensure that TCC and the WEI act according to their regulations. This plan will bring money into the county and encourage people to come see what our parks have to offer.

But to me this issue is about bringing back a part of our history that we've lost and making our area a better place for our children and the generations to come.

I still remember the rush of jumping off the rocks at the edge of the spring, of swimming to the surface, of floating on my back and staring up past the towering trees into the summer sky.

With our support, TCC and the WEI will make it possible for my kids – all of our kids, and all of us grown-ups who still remember what it feels like to be a kid – to experience that joy once more.

Concerns about WEI's plans

SARA GLAVEY

WAKULLA NEWS (LETTERS TO THE EDITOR)

I am writing to express concern about the proposal the TCC Wakulla Environmental Institute made to sublease 2,000 acres of the Cherokee Sink area to develop a campground.

While the theory of this campground sounds wonderful for the county because it would attract more eco-tourism, generate more money in the county and provide fun outdoor activities for children and families, the risks to this sensitive environment far outweigh the benefits.

Cherokee Sink is across the street from the well-known Wakulla Springs State park, which already attracts many tourists to the area. Because this area is such an important watershed it is more important that citizens of Wakulla County fight to protect and conserve this area rather than exploit it for recreation purposes.

Developing this area not only threatens the animal habitats in the area but with a sink that serves as a window directly to the aquifer, it poses a threat to the underwater system that connects to Wakulla Springs and our water supply.

Water pollution is a serious problem in the county as is and allowing more opportunity for pollution to enter our waters is irresponsible.

It is our responsibility to ensure we do everything in our power to protect and restore our environmental surroundings.

The King family hosted 4th Annual TCC scholarship fundraiser

CARRIE THOMPSON
TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

The King Family hosted the 4th Annual TCC scholarship fundraiser on Saturday, July 26. The family established this scholarship fund to honor their son, 23-year-old PFC Brandon M. King who was killed in Afghanistan serving in the United States Army on July 14, 2010.

Family and friends traveled from afar to attend this event in honor of Brandon and his family.

The scholarship raised enough money to award two students this year, which will be applied to their studies at Tallahassee Community College.

The 4th annual raised nearly \$5,000 dollars at the event in hopes to raise addition money throughout the year in order to award 3 students during the 5th annual fund raiser.

If you are interested in learning more or would like to donate visit: www.tcc.fl.edu/foundation. Please specify your contribution to the Brandon M. King scholarship fund. All of your generous donations will go directly to the awarded students and are tax deductible.

Lessons hopefully learned by TCC

GEORGE APTHORP

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Now that the dust has settled on Tallahassee Community College's bid for a long-term lease at Wakulla Springs State Park, we need to understand what raised the hackles of the opposition.

Most people assumed this issue had been settled in 2011, when a proposed campground at this same location was pulled by the Department of Environmental Protection because of strong public opposition. Then as now, putting a campground on land purchased to protect groundwater flowing to Wakulla Springs would be a violation of public trust. Also, the campground was not needed for training future park managers. Lastly, state park conservation lands should not be transferred to other agencies for the purpose of making money.

What TCC needs to understand is that the primary concern of the citizens opposed to the proposal was the precedent-setting nature of a long-term lease of park property to any entity for non-park purposes — in this case, for higher education. It makes no sense for the Florida Park Service, with resource management experience dating to 1935, to turn over conservation land to any entity with little or no experience in this field.

TCC said, in withdrawing its request, it was not ruling out future requests for a lease at the park. All land acquisitions since the original purchase have been to protect the spring's watershed. This includes all of the land on either side of Highway 319 containing River Sink, Emerald Sink and many other karst features. No matter which park lands a future proposal might target, it will be met with the same impassioned opposition.

TCC has a great reputation and enjoys enthusiastic local support for its Wakulla Environmental Institute. Hopefully, it will avoid further tarnishing of its image and focus on unmet needs and potential in Wakulla County such as the development of a strong eco-tourism industry. I can't think of any place in Florida with a greater potential for eco-tourism than the Big Bend. I am sure Wakulla Springs State Park would be a proud partner in such an endeavor.

Chamber Community Conference will have record attendance

DAVE HODGES

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

The largest Chamber Community Conference ever gets started Friday at the Omni Amelia Island Plantation, where more than 500 attendees will network, discuss local issues and hear speakers on a variety of business topics.

The annual conference, which continues through Sunday morning, is a program of the Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce, which says this year is the first time the event registration has sold out and the block of 350+ rooms at the resort are all taken. Counting spouses and family members of attendees, the Tallahassee contingent is more than 800 people.

"It is really a unique representation of everyone committed to the success of Tallahassee," said Dan Campbell, owner of the Wash Around the Clock 24 Laundry Mat and Commercial Laundry Service locations in Tallahassee and who is attending the event for the third time.

"I have been extremely pleased with the networking aspect," Campbell said, calling the conference "the best opportunity I have found" to connect with business and community leaders, elected officials, and the heads of the universities, college and school district. "You can walk right up to someone and have a conversation with them."

Every year when planning the event, Chamber President Sue Dick said the organization strives to assemble a program that covers important community projects related to business, and add tools and resources that benefit not just businesses, but other local partners, such as nonprofits and elected officials.

An example is the proposed extension of the county's 1-cent local option sales tax and getting across the message of that issue's importance to the area. That ballot question goes before voters in November.

"Every year we continue to grow our numbers. The fact that for the third straight year we have over 100 first-time attendees is a testament to what we are trying to provide as content, networking opportunities, and a real look into what's coming to our community in the future," Dick said.

"Individuals realize this is the event to go to. If you're looking to grow your business it's a great opportunity to

build for the coming year. It's a wonderful chance to meet someone you might not have met before." Participants, whether they are long-time Tallahassee companies or brand-new ventures, know they will come home with useful information, insights and new contacts made, she said.

CPA Abby Dupree, a partner at accounting firm Carroll and Co., has been to several conferences. "This is probably my fourth year going, although we have had people from our firm attend in years before that," she said.

"The biggest benefit is hearing some of the things that are going on in Tallahassee," Dupree said. She added that the general sessions and the breakouts have been helpful to her and given her information about community projects and developments that she can bring back home.

"It's good to hear it there and talk to other people from Tallahassee and get their thoughts on it as well," Dupree said.

The conference began years ago as a retreat and had maybe 120 attendees at the time. Chamber officials say having it out of town gives participants a chance to mix some recreation and downtime into the schedule.

"I think people are more relaxed," Dupree said. "They don't feel they have to hurry up and get back to work."

"I don't think people would benefit nearly as much if it were held in Tallahassee. I just don't," she added. There are too many distractions, plus the temptation to dart back to the office, run errands or go home for one reason or another.

The keynote speaker Saturday during the main morning session is author, technology pioneer and futurist Michael Rogers, who will give his analysis of future business trends.

"I am going to try to paint a picture of what the business environment will be like in 2020," he said Monday. He will focus on the virtualization of the workplace and the marketplace as the influence of technology and the Internet continue to shape society.

Chamber Community Conference will have record attendance...

continued

"It seems like a lot of it has occurred already, but we are really at the beginning," Rogers said.

For example, the ability to work remotely using such devices as smartphones or tablets will affect the need for workers to be at desks in an office. Automobiles, he noted, will incorporate more technology so that their occupants can be online as they travel. By 2020, most everyone will be connected to the Internet by some device 24 hours a day.

"It has great implications for our cities and the places where we work," Rogers explained.

Also on the conference program are CEO Vic Pemberton of the Pepi Companies and his son Donnie, president and chief operating officer. They will lead a discussion on the dynamics of a family-run business and the transition from one generation to the next.

Gary Ostrander, vice president for research at Florida State University, will be joined by Larry Lynch of FSU's Office of Commercialization to talk about research as a driver of economic innovation in Leon County.

The luncheon keynote speaker Saturday is Florida A&M University President Elmira Mangum, who will give a update on the university and its programs.

Sunday, the sessions include talks by FSU Interim President Garnett Stokes, Tallahassee Community College President Jim Murdaugh, and a closing presentation by Doug Tatum, an expert on capital markets for business and the financing challenges companies face today.

TCC student released on bond after manslaughter charge

ANDY ALCOCK
WCTV

A Tallahassee Community College student accused of killing his classmate by accidentally driving into the Ochlocknee River is out of jail.

Jeffrey Rushing, 20, is free on bond after making his first court appearance Monday.

It all started with what was supposed to be a fun weekend with friends.

According to court records, Rushing first showed up at a home in the 2500 block of Golden Park Lane at about four o'clock Friday afternoon.

Five friends were there including Jordan Nedeau.

"There's usually just lots of friends, I guess people they know all the time over there, driveway is always full," said neighbor Sean Powell.

Rushing told a Leon County Sheriff's detective he drank several beers hanging out at the home then went to a club at about 8 Friday night.

He says the friends returned to the home about 2 Saturday morning for an after party.

At about 4, Rushing says Jordan told him she wanted to leave.

Rushing says following Jordan's directions, he drove down Tower Road and accidentally past the boat ramp into the Ochlocknee River.

He says he was able to escape, but couldn't open the passenger door or break the window to get Jordan out.

A dive team later found the vehicle and Jordan's body.

"It's a terrible tragedy for a family and it's a nightmare for both families," said Tim Jansen, Rushing's attorney.

John Nedeau, a former pitcher for Florida State's baseball team in the early 90's, is Jordan's father.

He says Rushing was friends with Jordan's boyfriend.

He also says Jordan graduated with honors from Chipley High School in Washington County and was attending TCC.

He says Jordan was planning to go to FSU once she was finished at TCC.

John says his FSU baseball family has been very supportive, including when his dad died in his 40's when John was playing for the Seminoles.

He says they're also supportive now as he faces the tragic loss of his daughter.

Rushing told the detective in the roughly 12 hours before the accident, he had one xanax pill, 1 liquor shot, 1 line of powder cocaine, two bumps of powder cocaine and about 14 beers.

Rushing was released on a \$10,000 bond.

As part of the terms of his release, he'll be tested for drugs and alcohol, must live with his parents in Gadsden County and can't drive.

TCC offering STEM Gym field trips

HAVANA HERALD

TCC offering STEM Gym field trips

TALLAHASSEE – Tallahassee Community College invites elementary and middle school students to visit the TCC STEM Gym (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) in Fall 2014 for a spectacular field trip opportunity.

Visitors will work like real scientists to create fun experiments, develop questions and solve problems through hands-on science, math, and engineering activities.

Field trip opportunities are available on Tuesdays and Thursdays and must be booked at least one week in advance. In addition, special groups such as Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops may request visits on Saturdays. All visits

are by appointment only.

The entry fee is \$4 per student and free for chaperones. The hours of operation are from 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays, and from 10 a.m. to noon Saturdays. The lab is located in Room 105 of the TCC Science and Mathematics building.

The STEM Gym features educational activities such as:

- Bee Hummer – recreate the sound of a swarm of bees with a homemade toy
- Black Magic – discover the secret colors hidden in a black marker
- Bottle Blast – create a simple rocket and demonstrate how the finished model will fly

- Cuica Laughing Cup – make a “cuica,” a musical instrument from Brazil

- Cup Speaker – make your own speaker to demonstrate electromagnetism and vibration

- Jitterbugs – interact with the jitterbug, a simple motorized toy made of a recycled CD and a DC motor.

- Paper Helicopters – assemble a simple paper toy that functions like a mini-helicopter

- Sound Sandwich – adjust the pitch of the crowd-pleasing noisemaker to play with sounds

- Stripped Down Motor – explore this easy-to-make version of an electric motor

- Water Bottle Membrane

- use a water bottle and a paper tube to make an instrument like a saxophone, and gain an understanding of how the wind instrument works

- Whirling Watcher – create your own cartoon with a stroboscope

This is an excellent opportunity for schools and teachers who wish to present science and technology to their students in a fun, engaging way. This hands-on field trip will create a memorable, rewarding experience that could spark a lifelong love or future career plans in the sciences.

For information or to schedule a field trip, contact Melissa Spear at (850) 201-6180 or spear@tcc.fl.edu.

Three local oyster programs underway

NICOLE ZEMA
WAKULLA NEWS

All the talk of oysters induced cravings for the regional delicacy at the Aug. 4 meeting of the Wakulla County Board of Commissioners, as three different presentations were given about oyster aquaculture and artificial reefs.

Thomas Manning, Ph.D., a faculty member in the chemistry department at Valdosta State University, presented developments he has made with treated cellulose, or wood, as part of artificial reefs. The wood is specially treated to be more conducive to growing organisms, like oysters.

"We want to put in an experimental small-scale artificial reef and (grow) oysters off the coast of Wakulla County," Manning said. The reef is part of a National Science Foundation project.

An effort to grow organisms on treated cellulose, as part of a program called Drugs from the Sea, led to the realization that other things would grow besides microorganisms or nutrients for medicinal purposes. The cellulose eventually decomposes in the water, which makes the reef a green technology.

Manning showed an illustration of the reef, with wood pieces strung together on a 20-foot line like a big necklace that allows oyster spat to survive and thrive between the wooden "beads," without being picked off by hungry fish. The reef would be installed at least three feet deep at low tide.

Manning said two kinds of oysters can be produced with the reef technology – wild and aquaculture varieties.

"The wood is very easy to handle," Manning said. "When it's done, it just goes away, and you're left with oysters. There is more to oysters than just food. Coastal erosion is a problem in lots of places. With a lot of the physical structures, water can make its way around them."

Commissioner Randy Merritt asked Manning what was the objective on his presentation.

"Are you asking for funding, are you trying to get funding from BP?" Merritt asked.

Manning said he is simply asking for support from local authorities, as directed by the Corps of Engineers.

"But if you want to give us money, we'll take it," Manning joked. "We want to be very open about what we're doing. We are very much a university group, and we want to see how this material works."

Commissioner Jerry Moore, and other commissioners, offered support.

"The coast is our livelihood," Moore said. "We need this."

Bob Ballard, executive director of Tallahassee Community College's Wakulla Environmental Institute, also took time to discuss WEI's oyster aquaculture program.

The students in TCC's first oyster aquaculture class are learning how to raise oysters, and working toward launching their own oyster farming businesses. Two Australian businessmen and oystering experts visited the group in July as representatives of SEAPA, a company that pioneered and sells an adjustable long-line system for "off-bottom" oyster farming.

WEI paid for startup equipment, including 4,000 cages, for the students' oyster farming businesses, and will be reimbursed when the farmers get going on their own.

Ballard said he asked the Australian businessmen what is the best environment in which to cultivate oysters.

"They said the environment here is probably better than any place on the planet," Ballard said. The oystermen said Wakulla's water nutrient levels, weather and tide fluctuation make our coast an ideal oyster environment.

"We have 1.5 million spat that I have actually held in my hand, that in about a month will be ready to go into the water, and start populating near Piney Island," Ballard said. "We're excited about it. The students are excited about it. But they get really disappointed when they hear the rumors that nothing is being done, because they're working their tails off. We have a four-year waiting list for people to get into this class."

Steve Cushman, an instructor of aquaculture at Wakulla Environmental Institute, and candidate for the District 4 Commission seat, stood to respond to comments made at the July commission meeting about the college program.

Three local oyster programs underway...

continued

Public comments indicated that the program was not delivering what was promised, and Cushman said his students are owed an apology, as he displayed a photo of them with the oyster cages in question. Ballard previously showed a video of students assembling the cages.

Capt. Tony Murray, director of the Big Bend Coastal Conservancy headquartered in St. Marks, has been studying and involved with artificial reefs since the 1980s. He presented an outline of a Wakulla County Artificial Reef program and development.

"For every one dollar invested into an artificial reef, the generally accepted number is that it turns into \$138 in economic benefit for the local area by the time you look at the hooks, the line, the bait, the fuel, the tackle, hotels, equipment and the like," Murray said. "It all adds up to that."

Murray also presented a proactive five-year overall goal for the project. This plan supports 10 separate reefs permitted over the next five years: Three near shore, three mid shore, two off shore, and then two conservation reefs.

"This plan would allow for dispersion of species and depth," Murray said. "The idea is formed. The location is identified. The permits are obtained. Grants and funding are found. They are constructed, put in and monitored. Right now, we are somewhere in between the idea and the Marine Advisory Board coming forth to identify and move forward with a location. But you need an accepted, adopted plan to move forward with that. Action is required."

Murray asked the board to approve the draft plan, and request the Marine Advisory Board to critically review and return it to the commission with comments or conditions to proceed.

An agenda item to request a workshop to further discuss artificial reefs was scheduled for the next meeting.

"So long as we're moving forward, and not sitting still," Moore said.

Commission Chair Richard Harden said, "I think it's great we have so many organizations that want to invest

in our county. We've heard three different reefs and oysters presentations tonight. Every one of them, I hope, happens. And so far nobody's asked for money."

Protect Wakulla's natural treasure

JIM STEVENSON

WAKULLA NEWS (LETTERS TO THE EDITOR)

Those who appreciate and support Wakulla Springs State Park are striving to maintain its health for the children of today and generations to come. Some Florida springs have become too polluted for swimming and other springs no longer flow because officials have ignored science and continue to make wrong decisions.

An economic study by FSU found that Wakulla Spring State Park generates \$22 million annually for the local economy. Our "Capital Spring" is an international tourist destination and visitation has been as much as 200,000 per year.

The volunteer guardians of Wakulla Spring have accomplished more to protect our spring than has been accomplished for any other Florida spring. Some voices in the community are quick to place blame for the recent decision to stop an ill-conceived project proposed by the TCC Wakulla Environmental Institute.

This project would have:

1. "Taken" 2,000 acres of the state park that has been managed by experienced park service land managers for 14 years.
2. Developed an unneeded RV campground even though two public, underutilized campgrounds are just 20 minutes away.
3. Risked contamination of Wakulla Spring from an extensive sewer system which would have negated the reason the Governor and Cabinet acquired this property which cost over \$5 million to protect the caves and water flowing to the spring.

The WEI's desire for this proposed project can easily be met by establishing "cooperative agreements" with the national forest, the national wildlife refuge, the state forest, the county park and two state parks all of which are in Wakulla County. Experienced rangers and resource managers can teach restoration and campground management to students while performing their daily work.

An unanswered question is will there be students for such a program if there are no jobs? Lake City Community College dropped their Park Technology Program in 1985 because of a lack of students.

State jobs have been eliminated in recent years. There are commonly more than 100 applicants for a state park ranger position and many of the applicants have four year degrees.

We all hope the Wakulla Environmental Institute evolves into a premier educational center and we commend those who opposed this inappropriate venture before serious mistakes were made and millions of public dollars wasted.

Florida's state parks are valuable in their present condition and deserve the highest level of protection. They are not surplus land for the taking.

(Note: The full text of this letter also appeared in the August 10, 2014 issue of the Tallahassee Democrat as a "My View" column with the headline "We must safeguard a natural treasure.")

New Exhibits: Tallahassee Community College Fine Art Gallery

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Exhibits

EVENTS

Saturday: Gallery Talk: Pam Doffek Leyer, "Quilt and Bind: An Adventure in Quilting," 1-3 p.m., free. LeMoyne Center for the Visual Arts, 125 N. Gadsden St., 222-8800, lemoyne.org.

Thursday: TCC's Art Faculty Exhibit Opening: 5:30-8 p.m., free. TCC Fine Art Galleries, Fine and Performing Arts Center, 444 Appleyard Drive, 901-9889.

NEW EXHIBITS

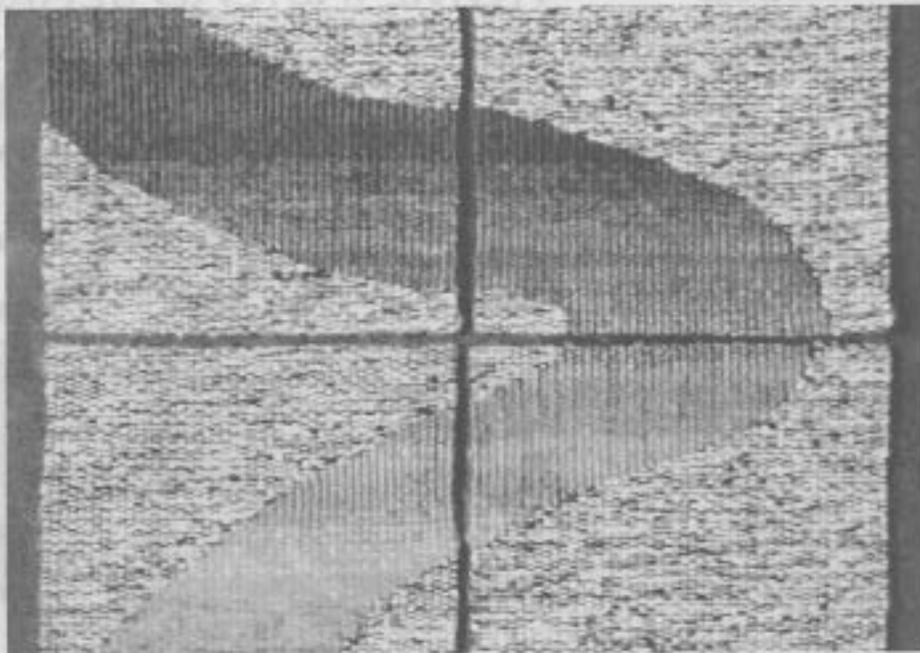
Tallahassee Community College Fine Art Gallery: "TCC's Art Faculty Exhibit." Opens Thursday, through Sept. 25. Hours: 12:30-4:30 pm. Mon.-Fri. Fine and Performing Arts Center, 444 Appleyard Drive, 201-9889.

ONGOING EXHIBITS

1020Art: Summer hours: Main Gallery open daily 8 a.m.-6 p.m., curator hours by appointment only. 1020 E. Lafayette St. 383-1020, 1020art.com.

Anita's Funky Emporium: Wood-turning, jewelry, loom works, stained glass, metal works by 19 local artisans. Hours: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Wed.-Sat., noon-5 p.m. Sun. Frontier Trading Company, 3686 Woodville Highway. 443-4466.

Antique & Design Center: Original oil paintings by Joel Thornton. Hours: 10 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Wed.-Sun. 104 N. Main Street, Havana. 539-1555 or 877-4909.



"Improv Quartet" by Mary Jane Lord is on display at the Artport Gallery as part of the "Threads of Light" exhibit.

COUNCIL ON CULTURE & ARTS



This untitled work by Ljiljana Obradovic-Edmiston is on display at the TCC Fine Arts Gallery.

hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tue.-Sat., 1-5 p.m. Sun. \$15 to tour house, gallery. Pebble Hill Plantation, Highway 319, Thomasville, Ga. 229-226-2344.

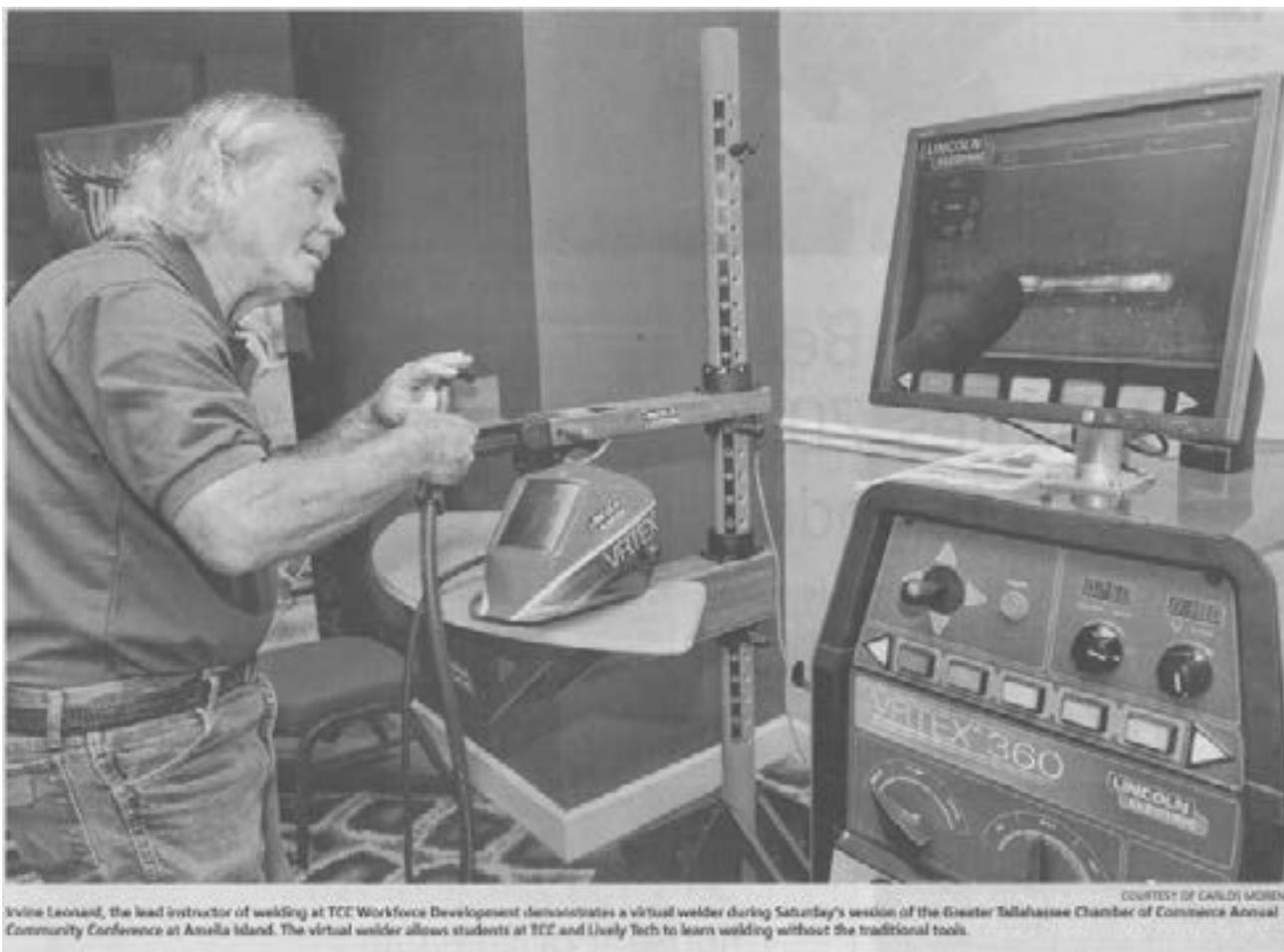
Facility for Arts Research, FAR Gallery: "Quarto: Four Years of Artists' Books by Resident Artists at the Small Craft Advisory Press." Through early September. 3216 Sessions Road, 562-1238, artsresearch.fsu.edu.

Florida Historic Capitol Museum: "Choosing To Participate: The Power of Civic Engagement." Highlights stories of community activists whose local impact

Chamber speaker visualizes business conditions for 2020

DAVE HODGES

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT



(Caption: Irvine Leonard, the lead instructor of welding at TCC Workforce Development, demonstrates a virtual welder during Saturday's session of the Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce Annual Community Conference at Amelia Island. The virtual welder allows students at TCC and Lively Tech to learn welding without the traditional tools.)

Conference speakers talk leadership

Sessions discuss vision, motivation, learning, marketing

DAVE HODGES

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Breakout sessions at the annual Chamber Community Conference got attendees motivated, inspired and informed Saturday on a variety of topics.

Management consultant Elaine Bryant challenged those in her session titled Leadership Necessities for Business Success to lead with vision. "If you want your business to flourish and take off, you have to have vision," she told the audience.

Bryant discussed some of the most innovative companies in the U.S., as reported by Fast Company magazine. Such firms as Google, Bloomberg, consumer electronics firm Xiaomix, Nike, DropBox, NetFlix and Apple keep progressing because they pursue new ideas and test the creative limits of their organizations.

Leaders, she said, are responsible for helping create such an environment by sharing their vision.

Along with visionary leadership should be a desire for learning and continuous improvement, Bryant said. If that's not the case, "you will be left behind," she added. Managers who model the desire for continuous improvement will develop that in their personnel.

At the session Nonprofits: Supporting Efforts to Advance the Local Economy, moderator Marjorie Turnbull led a panel discussion with speakers Heather Mitchell of United Way of the Big Bend, Kimberly Moore of Tallahassee Community College, Bart Wells of Sperry & Associates, and Alyce Lee Stansbury of Stansbury Consulting.

They discussed the dual goals of companies wishing to find meaningful ways to support local community endeavors and meet needs, and nonprofits aiming their talents and resources at solving community problems. Stansbury said the discussion was beneficial to both and helped businesses and nonprofits understand each other's expectations and how they can help each other.

The session also included an update on the newly formed Institute for Nonprofit Innovation and Excellence. The institute and FSU's Jim Moran Institute for Global Entrepreneurship are working in partnership to present the Nonprofit Executive Program. The three-part series starts Sept. 9 at TCC's Capitol Center at Kleman Plaza. Subsequent sessions are Oct. 14 and Nov. 18.

Restaurateur Matt Thompson, the operating partner of Madison Social at College Town, talked about Practical Marketing Campaigns on a Not So Practical Budget. He discussed how companies like his use social media and other tools to gain exposure for their business and relate to customers.

At Madison Social, Thompson said everybody is involved in marketing, and that good customer relations are grounded in listening. He recommended spending more time and energy on current customers than on attempting to attract new ones. Experiences that the restaurant's patrons have are the ones they share, so it's important that their experiences be memorable, he said.

At the session on university research and the impact it has on economic innovation, FSU Vice President for Research Gary Ostrander and Larry Lynch from the Office of Commercialization gave an overview of advances in science and technology that have implications for the future economic diversity of the area.

"We started this all off with the fact that we brought in \$230 million in research just in the last year," Ostrander said later. "The faculty, the culture is changing where folks are interested in taking their research and . . . actually transitioning it to products or transitioning it to services."

Local ADs turn focus to future

Wilcox, Winslow, Chaney discuss their visions

NATALIE PIERRE

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

All three face different challenges, but many of their core visions for their athletics departments are the same.

As Stan Wilcox introduced himself to a packed room here at the Omni Amelia Island Plantation Resort's conference center, the Florida State athletic director smiled as he spoke of his first 12 months on the job.

"My first year was not too bad, we won the national championship," he said Saturday during the Chamber Conference's "NCAA Athletics: The Big Business of Sports" breakout session, as the crowd broke out in laughter. "I have a very good feeling that we're going to do it again this year. Not only in football, but we have a number of great programs that are going to do very well this year."

Wilcox was one of three athletic directors that took part in the panel discussion that was moderated by Leon County Commissioner and former FSU running back Nick Maddox.

Florida A&M's Kellen Winslow Sr. and Tallahassee Community College's Rob Chaney were also a part of the discussion, as they let people in the community know some of their short-term visions for their programs and how they will impact the student-athletes as well as their respective fan bases.

"We're going to take a hard look at working with the city and with the county and with our partners at Florida State and Tallahassee CC on our stadium and the possible relocation of our stadium. To a place that's more accessible to the public," said Winslow, who was named the FAMU athletic director in April. "We all know, I'm just going to state the facts here, you can drive around our campus and not see our campus. We've lost our impressions. I'm looking for a place for our stadium where you can't miss us."

Florida State, on the other hand, already has an eight-year, \$250 million renovation project in the works.

So Wilcox is focused on providing more benefits to his student-athletes. Last week the NCAA Division I board of directors voted 16-2 to allow schools in the top five conferences to write many of their own guidelines.

Wilcox, who spent five years working as a legislative assistant at the NCAA and 11 years working as an associate commissioner of the BIG EAST Conference, refers to the new autonomy as a "market correction."

With the changes, he would like to see some of FSU's student-athletes receive more benefits.

One of the first changes he would like to see is full grant-and-aid move up to the cost of attendance, which varies by school.

Also, with the Seminoles less than three weeks away from their season-opening game against Oklahoma State at AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas, Wilcox would like to see the program keep more of its home games on the schedule, as it brings in needed revenue for both FSU and the local community.

"What we have started getting pressured to do is to play more neutral site games," said Wilcox, who says much of the pressure has come from the program's fan base that lives in places like Atlanta, and Orlando. "We would love to start talking with the business community about how we might be able to keep (travel) costs down for our fan base that is coming from distances. ... We really don't want to take our home games out of Tallahassee."

Winslow's main message at the Chamber Conference, was that he would like to establish a wow factor around the Ratters.

"We realize that we need to give our students a reason to come to the games and that would be Wi-Fi," the five-time NFL Pro Bowler said. "Research shows that they don't want to go anywhere where they can't have access to Wi-Fi."

Chaney, who started at TCC more than 13 years ago as a volunteer that assisted with marketing, spoke about the Eagles potentially adding sports like cross country, soccer and volleyball to create a "year-round athletic program."

Currently the two-year institution has just men's and women's basketball, baseball and softball.

Local ADs turn focus to future...

continued

"Being in a town where you have institutions and athletic programs like Florida State and Florida A&M has always motivated me to want to go above and beyond," said Chaney, who was named the school's first full-time athletic director in April. "We're not FSU and we're not FAMU and there are a lot of things about the three of us that are different, but when you get down to the very basics, we are similar."

What makes the three programs, which compete at different levels, similar is that each A.D. would like to also make sure they are providing their student-athletes with the best resources for them to succeed academically.

"We are a business, but we're more than a business," Wilcox said. "We're about educating our student athletes."

As athletic directors like Wilcox and Winslow move forward in trying to improve their programs, they hope to collaborate more than they have in the past.

"He's new in his role, I'm new in my role," said Winslow of Wilcox. "He's got a great model going. We're going to model as much as we can that is applicable to us at FAMU based on what Florida State is doing. It doesn't make sense to ignore a working model."

STEM Gym at TCC for young students

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

TCC is inviting elementary and middle school students to visit the TCC STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) GYM this fall for a field trip opportunity. Visitors will work like real scientists to create fun experiments, develop questions and solve problems through hands-on science, math and engineering activities.

Field trip opportunities are available on Tuesdays and Thursdays and must be booked at least one week in advance. The entry fee is \$4 per student and free for chaperones.

For information or to schedule a field trip, contact Melissa Spear at (850) 201-6180 or spearm@tcc.fl.edu.

Workshops target nonprofit board members

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

The Institute for Nonprofit Innovation and Excellence, in partnership with TCC, will present a three-part board governance workshop series for nonprofit professionals starting next month at the TCC Capitol Center.

The Developing and Catalyzing Your Board series, supported by the Jim Moran Institute for Global Entrepreneurship, is suggested for board members or individuals who are considering becoming board members, CEOs or executive directors of a nonprofit organization.

The workshops are scheduled for Sept. 17 and Oct. 15 from 9 to 10:30 a.m., and Nov. 12 from 9 a.m. to noon.

For information, contact Sarah Young at (850) 201-9608 or youngsa@tcc.fl.edu.

Board hears WEI campus update, apartment woes

NICOLE ZEMA
WAKULLA NEWS

The Wakulla County Board of Commissioners is still playing catch up after only one meeting in July. On Aug. 4, the board received an update about the construction of Wakulla Environmental Institute's new campus, heard controversy over a new apartment complex and much more.

ENVIRONMENTAL INSTITUTE CAMPUS UPDATE

Wakulla Environmental Institute's Executive Director Bob Ballard said he has good news and bad news about the new campus building, which will be located off US 319, just south of River of Life Church.

"After we got the \$4.5 million for the building, we got another \$1.5 million from the federal government," Ballard said. "The bad news is, we got \$1.5 million from the federal government. It's a double-edged sword. We love having the money, and now \$6 million can be spent right here in Wakulla County. But they want to do it their way, so when we go to bid, we can't do it the way the state's always done it, we have use the federal government's procedures."

Ballard said they are on the verge of placing out a bid for a general contractor, but not until given the green light from the government, which is about a week away.

"It will take 45 days for a bidding process. After that, it has to go before the TCC board of trustees in probably mid-to-late October. Once approved by the trustees, construction can begin.

"I am frustrated it's taken this long," Ballard said. "But it's bittersweet, because I love the fact we got an extra \$1.5 million to spend on this project. If it weren't for the \$1.5 million, we would have already been under construction. I apologize for any delays."

Ballard added that WEI received a national award for the building design — which is reminiscent of a Florida Cracker style house or cabin, with a wrap-around porch, breezy dogtrot, and employment of new technologies that create more energy than it uses.

"We're really excited," Ballard said. "It's a great design."

In other matters before the board:

- Dana Peck was recognized by Kessler and the board for her recent induction into the Florida College System Activities Association Hall of Fame.

(Note: This article truncated for relevance to TCC.)



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These courses are offered through TCC's Wakulla Environmental Institute, in conjunction with the Division of Natural Sciences.

Natural Resources Conservation and Management

Online | Aug. 25 - Dec. 12

Learn about ecology, conservation and management of natural resources

Environmental Regulation and Compliance

Online | Aug. 25 - Dec. 12

Learn about environmental law, regulations and compliance issues

Environmental Sampling and Analysis I

In-class/Online | Aug. 25 - Dec. 12

Learn about Florida Department of Environmental Protection standard procedures for collection of surface water, groundwater, potable water systems and sediment

Introduction to Professional Diving

Tues, 1-6 p.m. | Aug. 25 - Dec. 12 | Rattler Aquatic Center

Earn certifications in SCUBA and NITROX breathing gases

Green Guide Certification Program

Tues/Thurs, 6-9 p.m. | Sept. 2 - Nov. 4 | Wakulla Center

Learn about natural history and wildlife of the Big Bend; employment- and enrichment-focused (includes weekend field trips)

Natural Resources Conservation and Management (EVR1328)

This fully-online course will show you that conservation and management methods go far beyond recycling your bottles, cans and newspapers.

- Learn about the science of our most precious natural resources.
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This fully-online course will provide an in-depth look at legal issues and regulations affecting the environment.

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Environmental Sampling and Analysis I (EVR2892C)

This hybrid course will offer great field skills for students interested in careers as environmental science field technicians.

- Build your knowledge, skills and experience in environmental sampling and analysis.
- Engage in hands-on field activities to learn about water sampling methods.
- Get up to speed on the Department of Environmental Protection's standard operating procedures for sample collection.

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Tallahassee Community College is proud to introduce the Wakulla Environmental Institute. The facility will provide educational opportunities for college students, eco-tourism and over 100 jobs for Wakulla County. New courses are beginning this fall. Learn more!

