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Arts & Entertainment

APRIL 2015

• Student Competition

Valdosta State University Fine Arts Gallery, VSU Fine Arts Building, corner of Oak and Brookwood. VSU Art presents this annual juried show for VSU students. Run dates: March 16-April 10. Free, public reception: 7-8:30 p.m. Monday, March 16. Gallery hours: 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays; 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Fridays. More information: Contact Julie Bowland; call 333-5835; or email jabowlan@valdosta.edu

• Spring Into Art

Annette Howell Turner for the Arts, 527 N. Patterson St. Region's most inclusive art exhibit returns with hundreds of works on display from near and far. Opening date: April 13 (admission cost for opening). Gallery hours: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Tuesdays through Thursdays; 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays; closed Sundays and Mondays. Admission: Open to the public save for this reception. More information: Call (229) 247-2787; or visit www.turnercenter.org.



• Spring Senior Exhibition

Valdosta State University Fine Arts Gallery, VSU Fine Arts Building, corner of Oak and Brookwood. VSU Art presents works by graduating VSU art students. Run dates: April 19 through May 4. Free, public reception: 1-3 p.m. Sunday, April 19. Gallery hours: 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays; 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Fridays. More information: Contact Julie Bowland; call 333-5835; or email jabowlan@valdosta.edu

• "The Wiz"

Sawyer Theatre, Valdosta State University Fine Arts Building, corner of Oak and Brookwood. Valdosta State University Theatre & Dance presents its annual musical. VSU Synopsis: "Ease on down the road! This beloved Broadway musical sets Dorothy's adventures in the Land of Oz to music in a dazzling, lively mixture of rock, gospel, funk, and soul. Featuring the songs 'Believe in Yourself,' 'Everybody Rejoice (Brand New Day),' and 'Ease on Down the Road,' 'The Wiz' won seven 1975 Tony Awards, including best musical." Run dates: April 3-9. More information: Call (229) 333-5973; or visit www.valdosta.edu/comarts

• Fifth Annual Emerging Artists Showcase

Sawyer Theatre, Valdosta State University Fine Arts Building, corner of Oak and Brookwood. Valdosta State University Theatre & Dance presents an alternating program of Student Choreography and Musical Theatre. VSU synopsis: "VSU Theatre and Dance continues the Emerging Artists Showcase tradition. Audiences, who so enjoy watching our student artists develop their talents, can enjoy a performance or two of alternating programs. One program features our students graduating from the musical theatre program, the other performance includes upper-level dance majors presenting choreography of

their own creation. Each performance of the showcase will spotlight our outstanding students." Run dates: April 23-26. More information: Call (229) 333-5973; or visit www.valdosta.edu/comarts

• Concert

Whitehead Auditorium, Valdosta State University Fine Arts Building, corner of Oak and Brookwood. Valdosta Symphony Orchestra presents Beethoven's 9th: Strauss "Solemn Entrance," Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 in D Minor, Op. 125 with Tamara Hardesty, soprano, and Soon Cho, mezzo soprano. Run date: 8 p.m., May 2. More information: Call VSU College of the Arts Outreach, (229) 333-2150; or visit www.valdostasympphony.org

• Gavin DeGraw in concert

Wild Adventures, Old Clyattville Road. April 11. More information: Visit wildadventures.com

• Thousand Foot Krutch, Flyleaf in concert

Wild Adventures, Old Clyattville Road. April 18. More information: Visit wildadventures.com



• Jerrod Neimann in concert

Wild Adventures, Old Clyattville Road. May 2. More information: Visit wildadventures.com

The Greatest Art Show in South Georgia

Region's most inclusive exhibit, Spring Into Art continues to grow

by DEAN POLING

They arrive in carpools.

They come from Tallahassee, St. Simons ... They often come together from out-of-town locations.

Or one comes carrying her works and the works of others from her hometown.

Others come from across town, or Hahira, or Lake Park, or Remerton.

They come. They arrive in great numbers.

They always do. More every year, it seems.

Same as they have for nearly 30 years.

They keep showing up. One after the other.

Artists.

The Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts.

Spring Into Art.

It is the largest, most inclusive, democratic art show in South Georgia.

Hundreds upon hundreds of pieces. They are lined, stacked, arranged, mounted, along the walls of the arts center. Every wall. Every gallery. Art is displayed in throngs throughout the arts center.

It is always a grand spectacle.

Spring Into Art has long been an artistic magnet, attracting not only nearby artists but artists from throughout Georgia, from neighboring Florida towns, from nearby states.

They go to so much trouble, travel from near or far, partly because of the lure of prize money. Yet, possibly, the biggest pull may be the promise of the exhibit.

Unlike many juried exhibits, Spring Into Art displays all registered entries.

Most juried shows exhibit only the works selected by a judge. From those selections, prize winners are culled.

Spring Into Art also invites judges to select prize winners, but judges do not get to decide what will and will not be displayed.

Not with Spring Into Art.

It's all on display with Spring Into Art.

Every artists' works are seen.

That's why they come to the arts center.



>SPRING INTO ART

Annual Spring Into Art
Where: Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, 527 N. Patterson St.
Opening Reception Gala: 6-9 p.m. Monday, April 13.
Ticket: \$45.

Show's public run dates: Through early June.
Admission: Free.
Gallery hours: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Tuesdays through Thursdays; 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays; closed Sundays and non-opening Mondays.
More information: Call (229) 247-2787; or visit turnercenter.org



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Saturday, April 11, 2015

One dollar

GBI: Man died from single gunshot wound in LCSO shooting

BY ADAM FLOYD
adam.floyd@gafnews.com

VALDOSTA — The man shot by Lowndes County Sheriff's Office deputies during a drug arrest Wednesday afternoon died from a single shot to the head, according to a state autopsy.

Dexter Pernell Bethea, 42, was killed Wednesday after two LCSO deputies fired shots in a reported attempt to stop him from striking the officers with his car, according to Special Agent in Charge Steven Turner with the Georgia Bureau of Investigation.

While the official state autopsy report has not been released, Turner confirmed to The Valdosta Daily Times on Friday that a medical examiner has determined Bethea died from a single gunshot wound to the head. Bethea did not sustain any other injuries from the gunfire, said Turner.

The names of the deputies who fired on



Bethea

Bethea's vehicle are still being withheld by the GBI out of concern for their safety, according to Turner.

The incident occurred at approximately 6 p.m. Wednesday during an undercover drug operation in the parking lot between the EconoLodge and the Sleep Inn off Interstate 75 at Exit 18 in the 3000 block of James Road.

Drug agents reportedly arranged to buy drugs from Bethea, who has a criminal record, according to Turner. He was driving a black car with two passengers, Jasmine Riley, 24, and Michael Hendley, 39, both of Valdosta. Officers were reportedly attempting to place all three under arrest when the shooting occurred.

Bethea was fired on after he allegedly attempted

See GBI on 8A

Spring Into Art 2015

Still a big show with fewer artists

BY DEAN POLING
dean.poling@gafnews.com

VALDOSTA — Spring Into Art 2015 will bring a different definition of spring to mind for many viewers.

The art seems to spring from the walls and display columns.

The reason?

There are fewer participating artists and fewer pieces of art on exhibit, said Bill Shenton, the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts artistic administrator.

Even with fewer artists, 212 artists will exhibit hundreds of artworks. The artists are a straight split of 106 Valdosta and Lowndes County artists, and 106 out-of-town artists, said Cheryl Oliver, arts center executive director.

So, Spring Into Art still remains the most inclusive art exhibit in South Georgia. All who registered are guaranteed the art will be displayed.

Likely making a difference this year in the number of artists and works is the increase in registration fees.

In the past, an artist could register two works for a \$40 registration fee. This year, the fee rose to \$60 to register two works. Artists could register one work for \$40.

Fewer artists registered. There are noticeably fewer photographs based on a sneak peek at the 2015 exhibit.

Shenton said 40 artists opted to register only one artwork. With past shows automatically taking two works from each registered artist, the single-entry option decreased the number of entered works by 40 pieces.

In a regular exhibit, 40 works is the standard maximum number of works respectively for the arts center's main



JASON STEWART | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

Bill Shenton, Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts artistic administrator, mounts artwork for the annual Spring Into Art exhibition. The show opens 6 p.m. Monday with a gala reception and runs until June 10.

See Art on 8A

Valdosta's gateway welcomes visitors

BY JOE ADGIE
joe.adgie@gafnews.com

VALDOSTA— Valdosta's first gateway sign, seen on page 8A, has been completed.

The sign is located on North Valdosta Road, and is the first of several signs that will welcome residents and guests to the city.

The project, which was managed and constructed by the City of Valdosta Engineering Department, was funded by a \$19,490 GATEway Grant from the Georgia Department of Transportation, a grant intended to fund the beautification of the city.

According to the city, the sign is decorated by a number of plants and flowers, including 72 Encore Azaleas, six Standard Natchez Crape Myrtles, eight Saucer Magnolias, 10 Nellie Stevens Hollies, six Myrtle Dahoon Hollies, and 120 Big Blue Liriope.

The official ribbon cutting of the sign is scheduled for April 24, which is National Arbor Day.



Valdosta man convicted

BY ADAM FLOYD
adam.floyd@gafnews.com

VALDOSTA— A Valdosta man was convicted Tuesday in an online predator case that stemmed from a special operation conducted by the Lowndes County Sheriff's Office and federal agents at Moody Air Force

Base.

Ashton Mikal Tyus, 20, was convicted of obscene Internet contact with a child, according to District Attorney J. David Miller. The case was prosecuted



Tyus

ated by G. B. district. The arrest was Broke 2014. Involvement in positive female operations.

ART

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

galleries.

But Spring Into Art is no regular exhibit.

The arts center's history hinges on this exhibit. At its inception, the Lowndes/Valdosta Arts Commission had a center that was too small for such a large exhibit. So, for years, Spring Into Art was held in the downtown lobby of the First State Bank & Trust building. When the bank moved to Perimeter Road, LVAC acquired the building with help from the family of the late Annette Howell Turner.

The bank that once hosted Spring Into Art became the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts.

Through the years, the exhibit grew. Spring Into Art fills every gallery of the arts center.

For the 2014 show, a record-breaking 280 artists entered 538 pieces of art.

Shenton had to find space for

each one of the 538 artworks. Art would be mounted from the floor to nearly the vents on each wall. Three-dimensional works formed a gauntlet throughout the gallery floor space. Partition walls were added to mount more paintings, drawings, etchings, photographs.

Now imagine more than 1,000 people walking through these works for the opening gala ...

Even with the reduced number of artists, approximately 800-900 people are scheduled to attend the 28th Annual Spring Into Art's opening Monday evening.

While the crowd gathers to socialize and hear the announcement of prize winners, participants may notice that the gallery walls are not as crowded.

28th Annual Spring Into Art opens with a gala reception, 6-9 p.m. Monday, Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, 527 N. Patterson St. Ticket: \$45. The show will then be on display at the Arts Center through June 10. More information: Call (229) 247-2787; or visit www.turnercenter.org

se

faces one to 10 years in jail and will be required to register as a sex offender.

In a released statement, Brasher noted that the Internet provides predators with more opportunities to exploit children and that stings like Operation Broken Heart "are important so that the predators before harming a real child."

for publication to phone, e-mail or fax. Items are welcomed.

Contact Us: (229) 244-3400

Mail: Box 968, Valdosta, GA 31603

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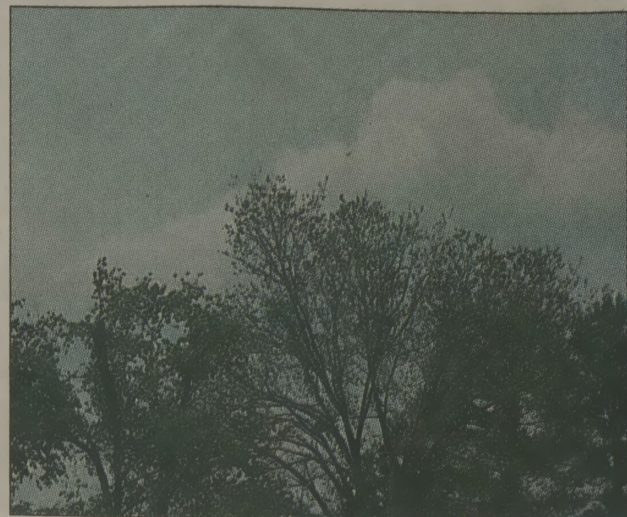
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Tuesday, April 14, 2015

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Rainy week ahead



TERRY RICHARDS | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES
Storm clouds build over Valdosta Sunday.

BY TERRY RICHARDS
terry.richards@gafnews.com

ON THE WEB

National Weather Service, Tallahassee office
<http://www.srh.noaa.gov/th/>

week," said Emma Weston, a meteorologist with the weather service's Tallahassee, Fla., office.

The storms are due to upper level disturbances passing through the area, she said.

Frank Strait, senior meteorologist for the private firm AccuWeather, said a stationary front over South Georgia bringing drenching rain was expected to move north Monday.

In the next few days, Valdosta could get "substantial" rain, with up to three or four inches in spots, he said. Weston said that through tonight, South Georgia could get up

See Weather on 9A

VALDOSTA — The forecast: Rain, rain and more rain. Showers and thunderstorms are likely across South Georgia for the rest of the week, according to the National Weather Service's forecast. There's a 50 percent rain chance today and 60 percent chance Wednesday.

"It's going to be a pretty wet



JASON STEWART | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES
Artist Michelle Corbitt and her guest, Darrell Bradshaw, examine the art at the opening gala for the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts annual Spring Into Art exhibition Monday.

Holton wins best of show at Spring Into Art again

BY DEAN POLING
dean.poling@gafnews.com

VALDOSTA — Pong Holton accomplished a rare feat Monday. The Douglas artist became Spring Into Art's best of show winner two years in a row.

That means his work earned top honors last year above hundreds of entries, and topped hundreds of more entries

again this year for the show's chief honor. All from different judges in both shows.

Like last year, Holton won with a handwoven basket. His Cherokee Storage Basket won the current show's \$1,000 prize.

Holton is one of 212 artists exhibited in South Georgia's largest, most accessible art exhibit. His Cherokee Storage Basket is one of 381 registered pieces of art in the

See Art on 9A



JASON STEWART | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES
Lowndes County Chairman Bill Slaughter chats with State Senator Ellis Black at the opening gala for the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts annual Spring Into Art Exhibit Monday.

Fill up the gas tank

Summer fuel prices expected to be lowest since 2005

STAFF, WIRE REPORTS

Gasoline prices this summer are projected to be the lowest seasonal prices seen in a decade.

Both AAA and GasBuddy.com released statements last week saying the national average price for a gallon of gas is expected to be \$2.35 through the summer driving season of Memorial Day through Labor Day. An Energy Information Administration projection put summer gasoline prices at \$2.45 per gallon.

'We're confident in our projection that the summer of 2015 will see the national average come in at a seasonal level we haven't approached since 2005.'

Patrick DeHaan
Petroleum analyst

In Lowndes County, the lowest gas price listed Sunday on the price tracking website georgiagasprices.com was \$2.08 a gallon for a convenience store on North Oak Street, compared with a low of \$2.04 a week ago. The website listed 58 retailers in Lowndes County on Sunday with prices

See Gas on 9A

ART

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

28th Annual Spring Into Art, which opened Monday evening with a gala reception at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts.

An estimated 900 guests gathered Monday evening at the arts center to see the art, socialize and learn who won the exhibit's top awards.

In the painting category, Thomas M. Thomson, a Havana, Fla., artist won first place. Valdosta artists Karin Murray and M.D. Wagoner won second and third place respectively.

In the drawing, printmaking, mixed-media category, Valdosta artists Joel Dion, Annette Crosby and Grahame Eggleston respectively won first, second and third.

In the digital arts, photography category, Valdosta artist Steven Heddon won first place; Woodbine artist Deborah Baird won second place; Valdosta artist Joe Morgan won third place.

In the sculpture, ceramics, jewelry, crafts category, Valdosta artist Hol-

lis Barnett won first; Hamp Stevens, St. Simons Island, won second; George King Jr., Valdosta, won third.

Honorable mentions: Rosemary S. Ferguson, Tallahassee, Fla.; Marcia A. Flatau, Valdosta; Daniel Hanifan, Quitman; Joe Morgan, Valdosta; Alfred Phillips, Gainesville, Fla.; Brandon B. Powers, Valdosta; Susan L. Richardson, Apalachicola, Fla.; Derek Schaper, Valdosta; Mary O. Smith, Woodbine; Krystle Stotler, Valdosta.

Spring Into Art is South Georgia's largest and most accessible art exhibit.

Most juried shows exhibit only pieces selected by judges. Spring Into Art exhibits every registered piece of art.

The 2015 Spring Into Art judges were Shannon Morris, curator, Georgia College, Milledgeville, and Dr. Susanne Schuenke of Ponte Vedra, Fla., international and national exhibition artist specializing in oils and watercolors.

Spring Into Art continues on display through June 10, Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, 527 N. Patterson St.

roves \$1.1 million for buses

Most of the money, \$1,090,093, will come from SPLOST funds, while \$76,000 will come from four 2008 buses that are being traded in. The buses are powered by Ford Propane engines, and 10 of them are 72-passenger buses, costing \$104,976 per bus.

One bus is a 47-passenger spe-

cial education bus for \$116,333.

All of the buses will come with a five-year unlimited mileage warranty on the transmission, engine, Roush Cleantech fuel system and air conditioning compressors.

The buses are equipped with cameras, air conditioning and a two-way radio system.

Joe Adgie, government & education reporter | Ext. 1237
Adam Floyd, crime & courts reporter | Ext. 1245
Desiree Carver, lifestyles editor | Ext. 1256
Stuart Taylor, business & education reporter | Ext. 1255
Jason Stewart, digital journalist | Ext. 1257

Items may be submitted for publication to The Valdosta Daily Times by phone, e-mail or fax. Photos, story ideas and calendar items are welcomed.

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OUR POINT OF VIEW

A Round of Applause

Here's another round of applause for people and organizations who have accomplished great things in our community this week.

For 50 years, Red Carpet has welcomed Moody Air Force Base personnel to Valdosta and Lowndes County. As the organization's name suggests, local folks roll out the "red carpet" to the community. For most of the past half century, Red Carpet has been part of the Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce. For the past three years, Red Carpet has been an independent non-profit organization. An organization that remains dedicated to letting MAFB personnel know they have a home in South Georgia.

To the local House of Heroes board members and volunteers who spent last weekend repairing the houses and properties of Lowndes County veterans then hosted a ceremony at Lake Park United Methodist Church to honor the veterans and their families.

Brooks County's Alicia Gertman and Lowndes' Taffany Smith were the lone pair of area basketball players named to the Georgia Sports Writers Association's All-State team. Gertman, a senior, was named to the Class AA second team and earned the recognition after a season of averaging 18.9 points per game and helping lead her Trojans to a third-round playoff appearance. Smith, a junior guard, led the Vikes with a 20.8-point, six-rebound per game average.

After "70 dog years" of active-duty service, an 11-year-old German shepherd is now retired. Military Working Dog Liza joined the Air Force at 9 months old and her extensive resume includes 10 years of patrol and explosive detection, four deployments and seven handlers. Her friend, partner and final handler, U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Anthony Cruz, 23d Security Forces Squadron MWD handler, and his family hurriedly adopted Liza after the announcement of her retirement.

The Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts hosted the gala opening to the 2015 Spring Into Art this week. Due to a new registration fee system, the show included fewer artists and pieces of art, but in many ways, this created a stronger show. With every registered piece of art on exhibit, past exhibits threatened to overwhelm the center's galleries. There are still hundreds of works exhibited but visitors have a better view of all works.

Keep Lowndes/Valdosta Beautiful recently awarded two \$500 environmental grants to local schools. Applications were open to schools in the Valdosta and Lowndes County school systems, as well local private/independent schools. The recipients for this round of grants were Pine Grove Middle School (seventh-grade teacher Zach Hurley) and Hahira Elementary School (third-grade teacher Jennifer Lukens).

PointOfView

Thursday, April 16, 2015

RANTS & RAVES

I think we need some marches and protests against people who run from the police. I was always taught to never run from the police whether guilty or innocent. Evidently many people are not taught this. It's the victim's own fault when bad

things come of it. Parents teach your kids "don't run" or fight with the police.

Well, Spring Into Art upped the fees and charges, so down came the artists and guests. But it sure was nice to not have to eat elbow

to elbow. Also you could see some of the art for a change. Just nicer all around. Hope they still make money. Good work. Thanks for a great show.

To submit a Rant or Rave, call 244-3400, ext 418.



JASON STEWART | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

Creative Administrator Bill Shenton walks through the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts examining artwork and speaking on the importance of supporting local arts and culture.

The Business of Art

BY STUART TAYLOR
stuart.taylor@gafnews.com

VALDOSTA — The Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts' 28th Annual Spring Into Art show this past week helps illustrate the economic impact that art centers — non-profit and otherwise — can have on their communities.

Indeed, data from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis finds the non-profit arts industry generates \$135 billion in economic activity, supporting 4.1 million jobs and generating \$22.3 billion in government revenue.

Looking at the art industry as a whole, the National Endowment for the Arts study, "The Arts and Cultural Production

Satellite Account," finds that arts and culture production contributed \$698 billion to the U.S. economy, 4.32 percent of the U.S.'s GDP which is more than transportation or tourism.

This year's Spring into Art features 371 pieces from 212 artists.

Of those 371, 46 pieces were sold at the gala, bringing in about \$5,000 more than last year, said Cheryl Oliver, executive director for the Turner Center.

Oliver estimated that 20 percent of the pieces in each year's Spring Into Art end up selling. "I'd say in the last year, we've sold over 100 pieces," said Bill Shenton, creative administrator for the Turner Center. "Usually about 50 come from Spring Into

Art, the rest from other shows." "It depends on the economy," said Oliver. "We're seeing a slight loosening of pocketbooks when it comes to art acquisition. The recession that Valdosta felt late and is late to recover from really affected the purchase of art."

Along with normal business expenses, the Turner Center has the expenses of an art gallery: insuring work, displaying and protecting it, helping with shipping costs.

The center switches out exhibits every six weeks, often hosting multiple exhibits at once and more than 20 exhibits a year, something the staff is able to accomplish thanks to the size of the Turner Center's galleries.

"When art is shown at a mu-

seum, it's just there for education whereas a commercial gallery depends on art sales to turn on the power and pay salaries," Shenton said. "They depend on the sales of art to survive. We kind of luckily get to play both sides of the field."

As a non-profit, the Turner Center works to support the local art culture as well as educational programs, such as an after-school art program, Art Explorations that teams students from the Boys and Girls Club with Valdosta State University art students.

"Education is high on our priority list and it's going to become increasingly so," said Oliver.

Along with the cultural impact of educational programs

and the direct economic impact of art sales (70 percent goes to the artist, 30 percent goes to the gallery), the Turner Center brings visitors from a wide geographical area to a number of events throughout the year: art shows, the yearly Presenter Series, concerts and book signings, among others.

"We bring hundreds of people directly into town just for the Spring Into Art exhibit," said Shenton.

The visitors create a secondary direct impact as they buy gas, dinner, hotel rooms, etc.

Spring Into Art's opening night usually attracts about 700

See Art on 2C

SPOTLIGHT ON BUSINESS: FRANKLIN AMERICAN MORTGAGE COMPANY

BY STUART TAYLOR
stuart.taylor@gafnews.com

VALDOSTA — Pam Reimers brings 14 years of experience in the mortgage business to her new office, Franklin American Mortgage Company, on Jerry Jones Road.

Q: Tell me a little about yourself and your career. Are you new to the mortgage business or is this a field you've been in for a while?

A: I began my banking career in 1987. I have 28 years of banking experience with 14 years specific to the mortgage industry. Many changes have occurred during this time. I believe that what makes you successful is finding something that you love and then offering it to others.

Q: What do you like about the mortgage business?

A: I love learning new things, which is something that I am able to do routinely in the mortgage business. I enjoy guiding my customers through the mortgage process with ease, ingenuity, and certainty.

Q: When did you first start in the mortgage business? Was it something you thought about for a long time or was it a quick transition?

A: After many years of consumer/retail banking, I was looking for a change. I had a very good friend who was a mortgage professional and she convinced me to join her in the mortgage business. I started my mortgage career in Illinois in 2001.

Q: What's your day to day like at the office?

A: Each day at my office is different. Each customer has a different need, so I am able to custom tailor a product and service that best fits their mortgage requirements.

Q: What services does your office offer? Do you work with buyers, sellers, and homeowners looking to refinance their mortgage?

A: We offer Conventional, Jumbo, FHA, VA, and USDA mortgage financing. Yes, I work with buyers, sellers and homeowners looking to refinance their mortgage.

See Mortgage on 3C



Franklin American Mortgage is located at 2502 Jerry Jones Drive, Suite 3.

JASON STEWART | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

HAHIRA WEATHER FOR THE WEEK OF APRIL 15TH - APRIL 21ST

The Hahira Weather Report Is brought To You By
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WEDNESDAY Apr 15	THURSDAY Apr 16	FRIDAY Apr 17	SATURDAY Apr 18	SUNDAY Apr 19	MONDAY Apr 20	TUESDAY Apr 21
83° 67°	83° 66°	83° 68°	84° 67°	83° 67°	84° 63°	82° 61°
Thunderstorms	PM Thunderstorms	Isolated Thunderstorms	Thunderstorms	Thunderstorms	Scattered Thunderstorms	Partly Cloudy
///80%	///60%	///30%	///80%	///80%	///60%	///20%
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Carolyn Griner Art Work Featured



Congrats to Valwood Student Carolyn Griner

The 28th Annual
Spring Into Art
exhibition

ANNETTE HEWELL
TURNER CENTER FOR THE ARTS

April 13 - June 10, 2015
Opening Night Gala: Monday, April 13
Artist Entry Form due March 18

Artist Entry Form and Gala Tickets are available at the Turner Center for the Arts
127 N. Parkers St. Valdosta / www.turnercenter.org / 229-247-4900

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The Hahira Goldleaf

Wednesday, April 22, 2015

www.TheHahiraGoldleaf.com

Vol. 1, No. 23

Celebrating The Art In Life!

Turner Center Celebrates 28th Annual Spring into Art Show

Article & Photos by
Summer Yates

On Monday, April 13th, over 200 artists showed their works at the 13th Annual Spring Into Art show. Hosted by the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, the event was held from 6:00-9:00pm with over 700 guests.

Of the 212 artists who entered, half were from Lowndes County and the other half traveled from surrounding counties in the North Florida/South Georgia region.

The event was open to any artist, age 18 or older, to submit 1 or 2 works of any medium at a price they set. The selection and awards were announced on the evening of the reception and can be viewed on the art centers website: www.turnercenter.org.



While most art exhibits hosted by the Turner Center are free with light refreshments during opening receptions, Spring Into Art aims to

raise money and served a full dinner with free wine and beer. Around 700 people attended the show to view and appreciate the art!

With a 2-judge panel, \$5,000 in cash awards was given to winners in four categories: Painting, Digital Arts/Photography, Drawing/Printmaking/Mixed Media, and Sculpture/Jewelry/Ceramics/Crafts. The judges also selected outstanding works for honorable mention and merit awards.

Douglas Native Pong Holton won Best In Show—for the second year in a row! Twelve other winners were awarded cash prizes for various works.

Executive Director Cheryl Oliver expressed her gratitude to the many sponsors and patrons, volunteers, and staff that contribute to improving the event each year.

“The show is a unique way for area artists to gain

exposure for their artwork,” says Oliver, who has been with Turner Center since 2008. Oliver explains how the show also provides an opportunity for area businesses to show

support for the arts through sponsorship.

“The Turner Center is proud to make this show available not only to artists, but also art lovers...The beauty of it, is the emerging artists can have work displayed near professional artists – each year we see a lot of new and familiar works.”

Because all pieces are for sale in this show, Oliver explains that it is a great way to start and build an art collection: “Spring Into Art is one of the jewels in our crown; it is an awesome way to find artists and for artists to find us,” she says.

The exhibit is open until June 10, free and open to the public at 527 N. Patterson St. Visit today and explore the wonders of our region through the eyes of these talented artists.

**Pictures Continued
On Page 15**



Julie Smith stands by her pottery at Turner Center for the Arts 13th Annual Spring Into Art show.



Hahira resident Meredith Klapp stands near her photographic work at the art show Monday evening.

Snake Nation hosts poetry workshop

BY DEAN POLING

dean.poling@gafnews.com

VALDOSTA — A South Georgia publishing house hosts a poetry workshop next weekend.

The Snake Nation Press workshop will be in two sessions, one in the morning, the other in the afternoon. The sessions will feature poets Tania Rochelle of Atlanta and Nagueyalti Warren, said Jean Arambula and Roberta George, both of Snake Nation Press.



Warren

“It’s often been said that a picture is worth a thousand words,” George said. “But when the words are poetic — full of imagery, metaphors, and rhythm — they’re much more powerful. The use of the written word can bring healing and personal growth.”

Snake Nation Press publishes numerous types of books from fiction to non-fiction, from poetry and short-story collections to novels, from art books to history books.

Both Rochelle and Warren have won Snake Nation poetry prizes and have been published by Snake Nation.



Rochelle

Rochelle leads the morning session, “Writing as Therapy.” Snake Nation provides a synopsis: “Looking for a way to handle difficult situations or difficult people

with grace and kindness? Have problems you want to erase or solutions that might help someone else? Want to meet a new group of interesting people who share common goals? Ms. Rochelle holds a master’s degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling and an MFA in creative writing. She’s a board member of The Chattahoochee Review and teaches writing at the Portfolio Center. She won Snake Nation’s Poetry Prize for her first collection, ‘Karaoke Funeral.’”

Warren leads the afternoon session. Snake Nation synopsis: “Do you have interesting characters and stories that keep rattling around in your mind? Would you like to preserve family history and write about the ‘ups and downs’ each family experiences. Nagueyalti Warren will be teaching a workshop on Family Stories and what to do with them. Dr. Warren is professor of pedagogy and director of Undergraduate Studies in African-American Studies at Emory University and the winner of Snake Nation’s Poetry Prize for her collection, ‘Braided Memory.’”

Snake Nation poetry workshop is scheduled for Saturday; morning session, 10 a.m.-noon; afternoon session, 1-3 p.m.; Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, 527 N. Patterson St. No fee and light refreshments. Limited seating so please call or email if you would like to attend. More information: snake.nation.press@gmail.com; phone (229) 444-5191 or (229) 562-2884.

Spring Into Art!

Turner Center Celebrates 13th Annual Spring into Art Show



Spring Into Art Winners

A look at the art show's top prizes

BEST IN SHOW:

Cherokee Storage Basket, artist Pong Holton, Douglas.

BY DEAN POLING

dean.poling@gafnews.com

VALDOSTA — Pong Holton's work has caught the eyes of two panels of judges for two years running in the Spring Into Art exhibit at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts.

Both in 2014 and this year, the Douglas artist's exquisite baskets have garnered the coveted best in show designation.

His Cherokee Storage Basket won the \$1,000 top prize in the 28th Annual Spring Into Art.

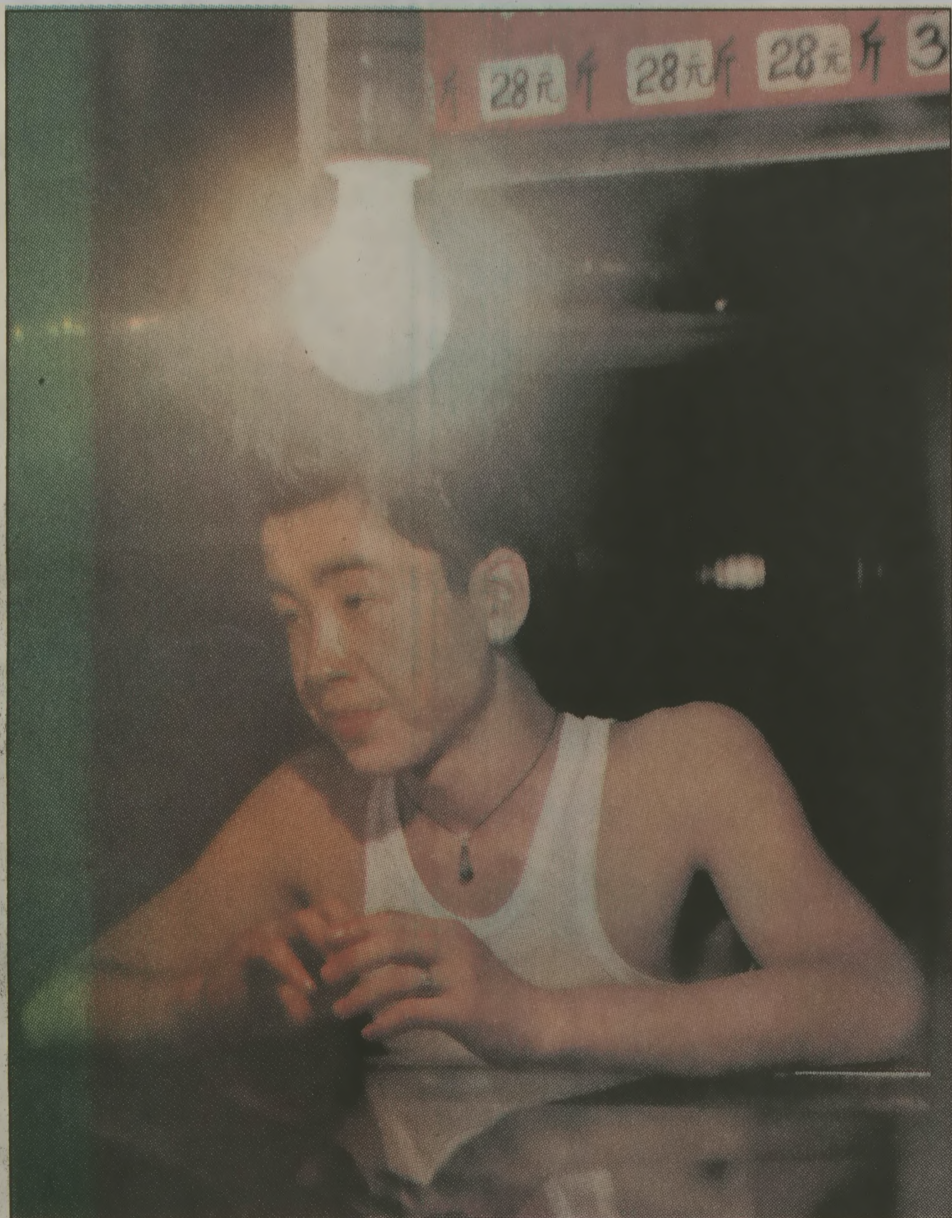
Spring Into Art hosts 212 artists exhibited in South Georgia's largest, most accessible art exhibit.

During the opening reception two weeks ago, the public learned all of the winners.

In the painting category, Thomas M. Thomson, a Havana, Fla., artist won first place. Valdosta artists Karin Murray and M.D. Wagoner won second and third place respectively.

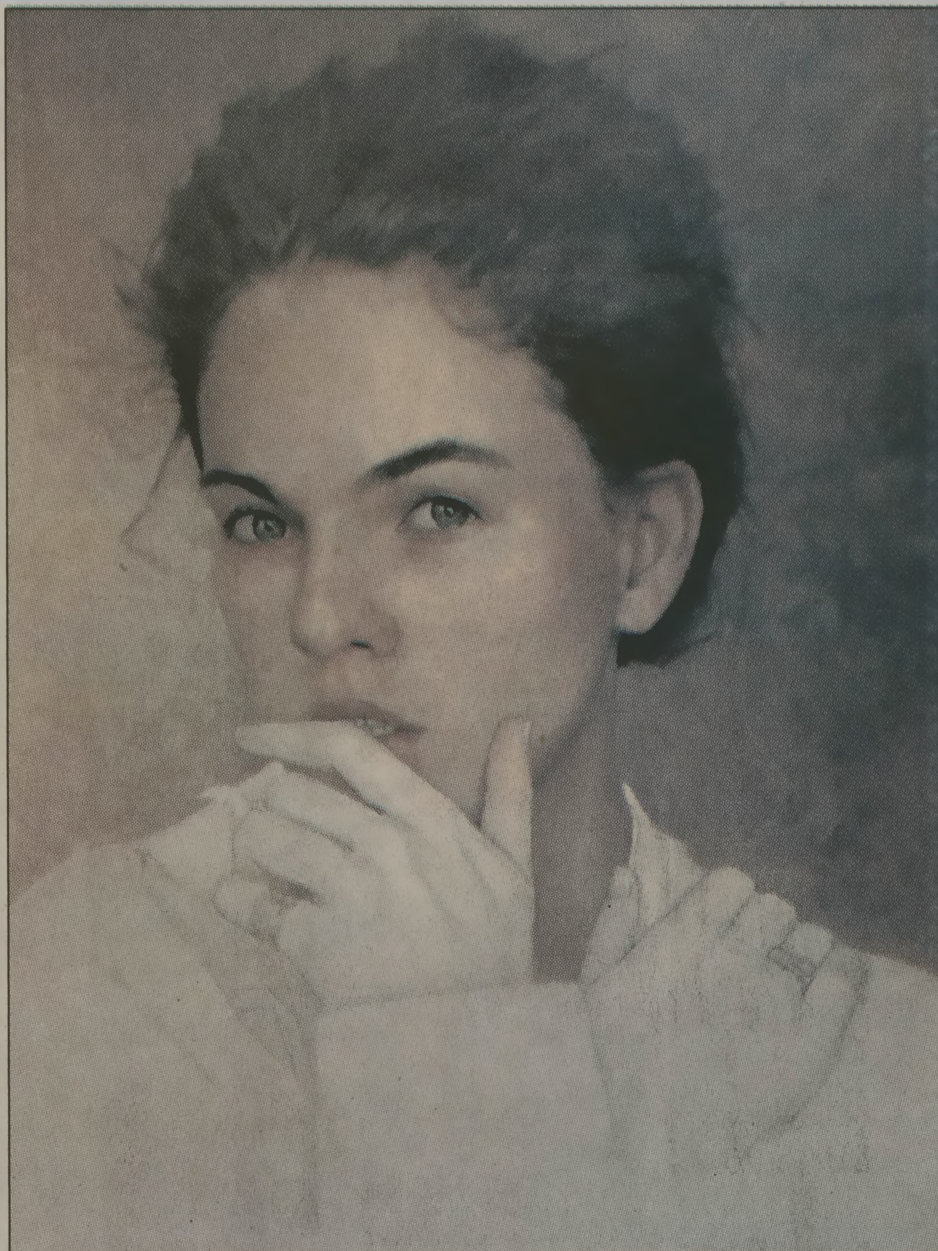
In the drawing, print-making, mixed-media category, Valdosta artists Joel Dion, Annette Crosby and Grahame Eggleston respectively won first, second and third.

In the digital arts, photography category, Valdosta artist Steven Heddon won first place; Woodbine artist Deborah Baird won second place; Valdosta artist Joe Morgan won third place.



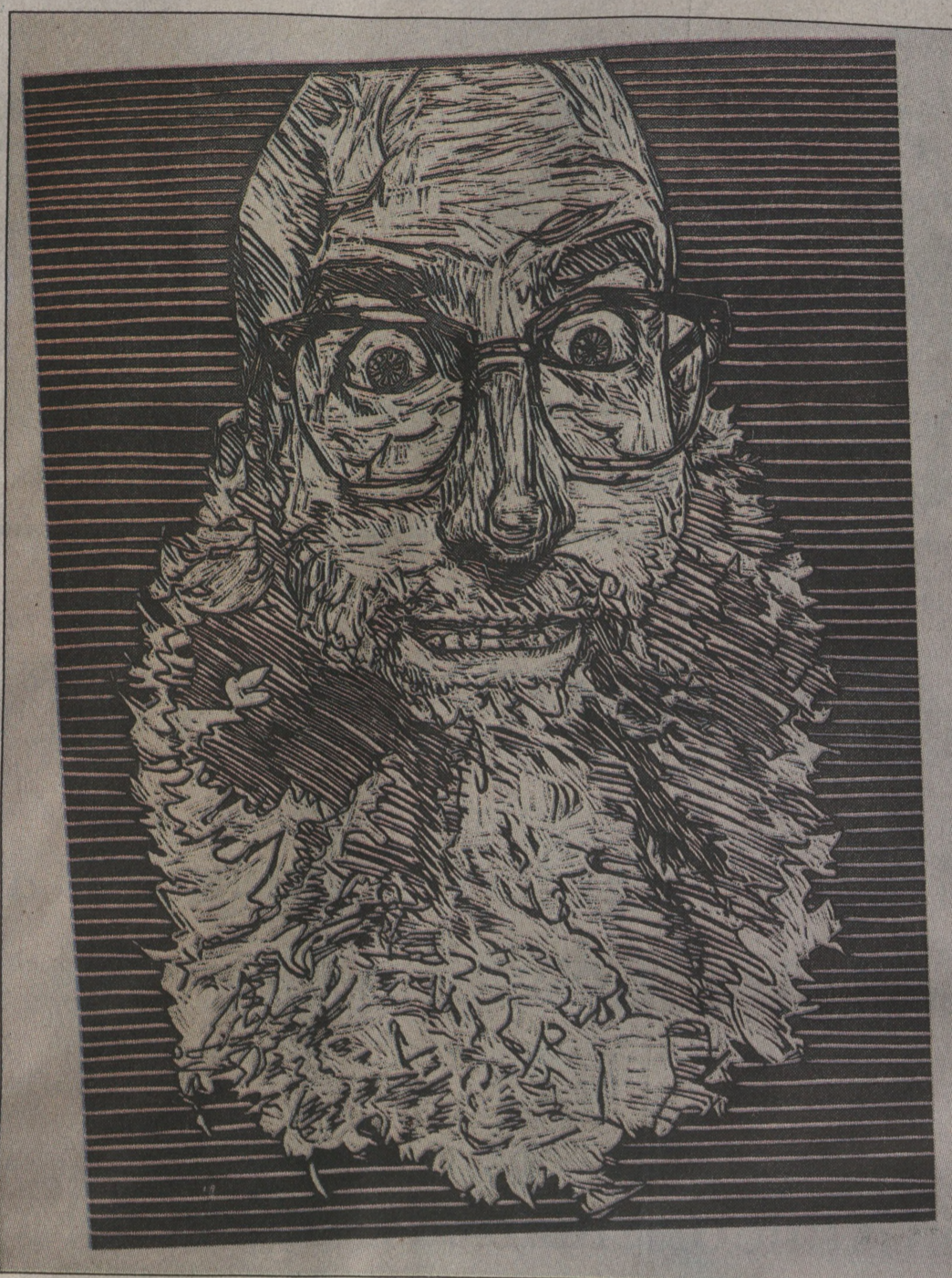
DIGITAL ARTS, PHOTOGRAPHY FIRST PLACE:

'Street Vendor No. 1,' artist Steven Heddon, Valdosta.



PAINTING FIRST PLACE:

'Hester,' artist Thomas M. Thomson, Havana, Fla.



DRAWING, PRINTMAKING, MIXED MEDIA FIRST PLACE:

'Uncle Buck,' artist Joel Dion, Valdosta.

In the sculpture, ceramics, jewelry, crafts category, Valdosta artist Hollis Barnett won first; Hamp Stevens, St. Simons Island, won second; George King Jr., Valdosta, won third.

Honorable mentions: Rosemary S. Ferguson, Tallahassee, Fla.; Marcia A. Flatau, Valdosta; Daniel Hanifan, Quitman; Joe Morgan, Valdosta; Alfred Phillips, Gainesville, Fla.; Brandon B. Powers, Valdosta; Susan L. Richardson, Apalachicola, Fla.; Derek Schaper, Valdosta; Mary O. Smith, Woodbine; Krystle Stotler, Valdosta.

Spring Into Art is South Georgia's largest and most accessible art exhibit. Most juried shows exhibit only pieces selected by judges. Spring Into Art exhibits every registered piece of art.

The 2015 Spring Into Art judges were Shannon Morris, curator, Georgia College, Milledgeville, and Dr. Susanne Schuenke of Ponte Vedra, Fla., international and national exhibition artist specializing in oils and watercolors.

Spring Into Art continues on display through June 10, Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, 527 N. Patterson St.



SCULPTURE, CERAMICS FIRST PLACE:

'Jekyll Island Maiden,' artist Hollis Barnett, Valdosta.

Mother's Day Buffet

Bring your Mom out on her special day, and she'll receive a free carnation in addition to a delicious meal!

Sunday, May 10th from 11 am to 2 pm

Entrées include Southern Fried Chicken, Turkey Tetrazzini, Lemon Pepper White Fish, Stuffed Pork Loin and Roast Beef on the Carver. Enjoy your favorite sides, salads, and desserts and try some new ones like Calico Squash, Napa Style Roasted Vegetables, Berry Fruit Salad.

\$14.95 Adults, \$6.95 Kids 5-12, Under 5 Eat FREE

Our next Sunday Buffet is **Father's Day, June 21st**

Don't forget - our Sunday Lunch Buffets continue on the second Sunday of each month beginning in July, and Ox tails will be on the menu.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!

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(229) 244-1111



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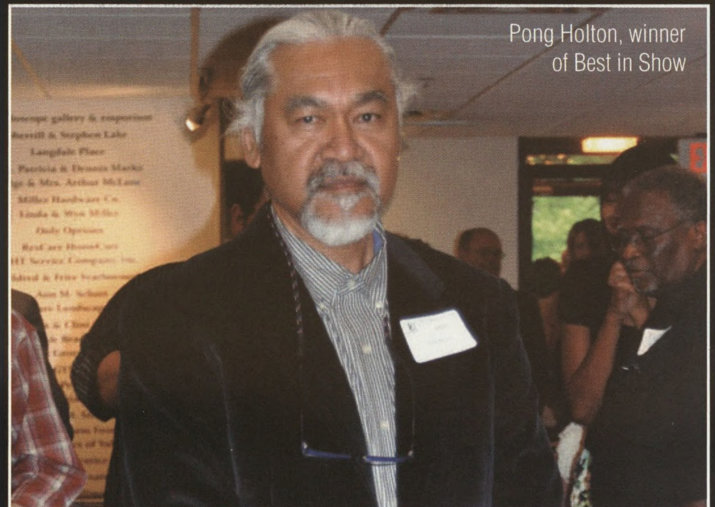
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Spring Into Art

The annual Spring Into Art reception attracted hundreds of artists and guests in April. Through a new registration system, fewer artists participated and fewer works were exhibited, but even with the change, hundreds of works are still on display. Spring Into Art continues through June 10 at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts.

photos courtesy of **REBECCA BROSEMER**



Pong Holton, winner of Best in Show



Arts & Entertainment

MAY 2015

• Spring Into Art

Annette Howell Turner for the Arts, 527 N. Patterson St. Region's most inclusive art exhibit displays hundreds of works from near and far. Continues through June 10. Gallery hours: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Tuesdays through Thursdays; 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays; closed Sundays and Mondays. Admission: Free. More information: Call (229) 247-2787; or visit www.turnercenter.org.

• Spring Senior Exhibition

Valdosta State University Fine Arts Gallery, VSU Fine Arts Building, corner of Oak and Brookwood. VSU Art presents works by graduating VSU art students. Concludes May 4. Free, public reception: 1-3 p.m. Sunday, April 19. Gallery hours: 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays; 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Fridays. More information: Contact Julie Bowland; call 333-5835; or email jabowlan@valdosta.edu

• Concert

Whitehead Auditorium, Valdosta State University Fine Arts Building, corner of Oak and Brookwood. Valdosta Symphony Orchestra presents Beethoven's 9th; Strauss' "Solemn Entrance," Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 in D Minor, Op. 125, with Tamara Hardesty, soprano, and Soon Cho, mezzo soprano. Run date: 8 p.m., May 2. More information: Call VSU College of the Arts Outreach, (229) 333-2150; or visit www.valdostasympphony.org

• Jerrod Neimann in concert

Wild Adventures, Old Clyattville Road. May 2. More information: Visit wildadventures.com

• Foreigner in concert

Wild Adventures, Old Clyattville Road. May 9. More information: Visit wildadventures.com

• Shawn Mendes, Kingsland Road in concert

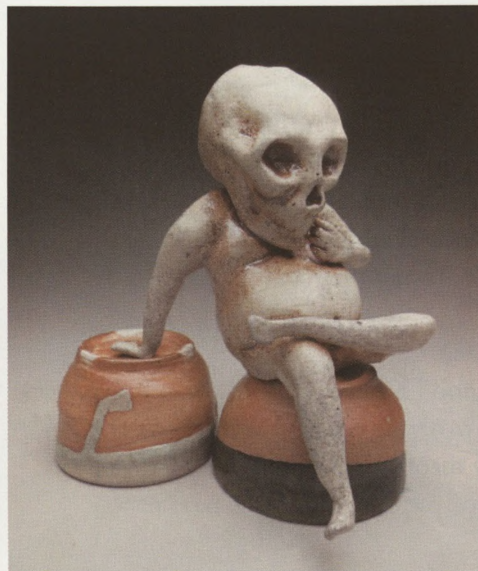
Wild Adventures, Old Clyattville Road. May 23. More information: Visit wildadventures.com

• Justin Moore in concert

Wild Adventures, Old Clyattville Road. May 30. More information: Visit wildadventures.com

• Casting Crowns in concert

Wild Adventures, Old Clyattville Road. June 6. More information: Visit wildadventures.com



VSU Spring Senior Exhibition

LOWNDES COUNTY FOOD SCORES

The following food service establishments were inspected by the Food Service Division, Lowndes County Health Department on the dates indicated. The Division scores each facility on a 100 percentile scale to determine the corresponding letter grade. An explanation of the letter grade system is available below. The inspection report is required to be posted within fifteen feet of the primary door for all establishments and at drive-thru windows for establishments providing them.

Letter Grade System

- A** — The grade "A" means food safety excellence and is applied to numerical score of 90 to 100.
- B** — The letter grade "B" means satisfactory compliance and is applied to numerical score of 80 to 89.
- C** — The letter grade "C" means marginal compliance and is applied to numerical score of 70 to 79.
- U** — The letter grade "U" means unsatisfactory compliance and is applied to numerical score of 69 or less.

Advisory: Consuming raw or undercooked meats, poultry, seafood, shellfish or eggs may increase your risk of foodborne illness, especially if you have certain medical conditions.

If you are considering opening a food service business, please contact the Food Service Division before purchasing or leasing property. To register a complaint against a food service establishment, call the Food Service Division at 245-2314. All food service scores are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week at www.southhealthdistrict.com.

306 North Restaurant

306 N. Patterson St.; May 1

81 - B

Cowboys Firepit Grill

1088 Lakes Blvd.; May 6

100 - A

Dairy Queen

1836 W. Hill Ave.; May 5

82 - B

First Methodist Church

320 N. Patterson St.; May

3766 Old Clyattville Rd.;

May 1

96 - A

Wild Adventures Ice Cap Treats 1

3766 Old Clyattville Rd.;

May 1

96 - A

Wild Adventures Ice Cap Treats 2

3766 Old Clyattville Rd.;

May 1

100 - A

Wiregrass Foundation hosted fifth annual Corks and Forks Fundraiser

VALDOSTA — April came to a close with the fifth annual Corks and Forks fundraiser for Wiregrass Georgia Technical College. In partnership with the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, more than 100 guests attended the event that featured food and wine pairing along with the Spring into Art exhibition.

Chefs for the event included Sue Cox, Owner of Covington's and 306 North; Mikki Hudson, Owner of Jessie's Restaurant and Catering; Keira Moritz, Owner of Steel Magnolias; and Rick Van Hook and Ian Crabill with the Wiregrass Culinary Program. Each prepared a special dish paired with wine for a delightful culinary experience enjoyed by the more than 100 attendees. Several vendors supported the event including Five Points Liquors, Frog-town Cellars, Inland Seafood, Publix, Quality Wines, and US Foods.

Along with the food and wine pairing and the art exhibition, guests were treated to piano pieces played by the talented Ethan Parker. Building on the art theme, some of the creative works of Wiregrass students were displayed and sold with the help of Stuart Mullis of Habitat for Humanity, auctioneer for the event. Several scholarships and other tax-deductible donations were also given during the evening.

Proceeds from the event will be used to purchase books, supplies,

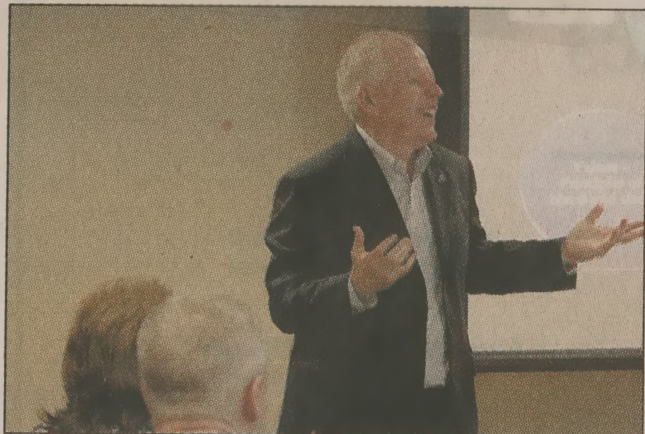


SUBMITTED PHOTO

Local chefs from the community prepared a delightful culinary experience for the guest.

and other education-related items for students and programs at Wiregrass. The Wiregrass staff and trustees said they are greatly appreciative of the community support for workforce development at the College. To discuss ways to give or make a donation, contact Dr. Pene-

lope Schmidt, Executive Director for Advancement, at 229-293-6190 or penelope.schmidt@wiregrass.edu. For information about the more than 130 programs of study at Wiregrass, call 229-333-2100. Free Application Day is on June 25 and Fall Semester begins on August 18.



JASON STEWART | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

Robert Harris outlines the foundational statements of every nonprofit organization Friday during the Building the Best Board interactive workshop at the Country Inn & Suites.

Workshop: Build a better nonprofit board

BY JASON STEWART

jason.stewart@gaffnews.com

VALDOSTA — Robert Harris wants to help nonprofits build and strengthen better trustee boards, and Friday he brought his message, techniques and more than 30 years of experience to Valdosta.

Southeastern Federal Credit Union hosted Harris at the Country Inn and Suites for the Building the Best Board conference for communal organizations such as the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts and Second Harvest of South

Georgia.

The conference room was packed with representatives from regional nonprofit organizations. The room almost ran out of chairs.

Among the many topics vital for trustee board strength, Harris stressed the importance of statements, broken down into mission, vision and values.

The mission statement answers the “what and why” of an organization’s existence and serves as the foundation for the organization’s actions, Harris said.

“Everything we talk about should

be framed by the mission statement,” Harris said.

Every board member needs to know the mission statement and be prepared to recite it at a moment’s notice.

“If everything will be framed by the mission statement,” Harris said, “it should be at the top of our tongue.”

He may have been the center of attention of the three-hour work session, yet Harris made a point to involve the attendees, incorporating

See Board on 10A

BOARD

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

the old adage, “I do and I understand.”

During his presentation, Harris asked Turner

Center Executive Director Cheryl Oliver to read the art center’s mission statement. Without missing a beat, Oliver recited the statement, and Harris gave her an “A” for the statement’s efficacy.

Harris later outlined the importance for the vi-

sion statement, or where the board sees the organization going. As with the mission statement, every trustee board needed to understand the organization’s current vision and know how to devote itself to that vision.

Last, but most certainly

not least, Harris approached the attendees with having value statements and rooting themselves down to a set of core principles.

The principles could be as simple as transparency, taking on the attitude, “We’re not trying to hide

anything from anyone,” Harris said.



'Cross Country,' artist Pam Scruggs.

Spring Year-round

Colson chooses 2016 calendar from Spring Into Art

BY DEAN POLING

dean.poling@gafnews.com

VALDOSTA — Call it the contest within the Spring Into Art competition.

Making the Colson Calendar has become a prestigious part of the region's largest art exhibit.

Spring Into Art shows every work registered for display.

Regional judges select winners in various art categories: painting, three-dimensional, etc.

And Wendy Colson of Colson Printing has selected 13 works from Spring Into Art for several years to publish in an annual calendar. That's a piece of cover art and a piece of art for each month of the year.

He's been creating the calendar since 1992.

Making the calendar ensures an artist's work will be displayed for an entire month the following calen-

dar year. Not just in an art gallery but in homes, businesses, offices, and any place where people hang calendars.

For now, folks can still see the Colson Calendar selections as part of the Spring Into Art exhibit through early June at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, 527 N. Patterson St.

Selected for the 2016 Colson Calendar are artists Jeanne Cowart, Valdosta; Harvie Ann Cox, Moultrie; Mary Ann Cox, Tifton; Rosemary S. Ferguson, Tallahassee, Fla.; Hazel E. Green, Valdosta; Jennifer Buckley McCall, Lenox; H. Arthur McLane, Valdosta; Reg Moore, Pinetta, Fla.; David Retterbush, Valdosta; Susan L. Richardson, Apalachicola, Fla.; Pam Scruggs, Valdosta; Carol Jo Smidt, Woodbine; Elena Tulainova, Valdosta.

The 2016 Colson Calendar will be available at the end of the year.



'Spring Dew,' artist David Retterbush.



'The Path,' artist Carol Jo Smidt.



'Retired,' artist H. Arthur McLane.

Summer Fun



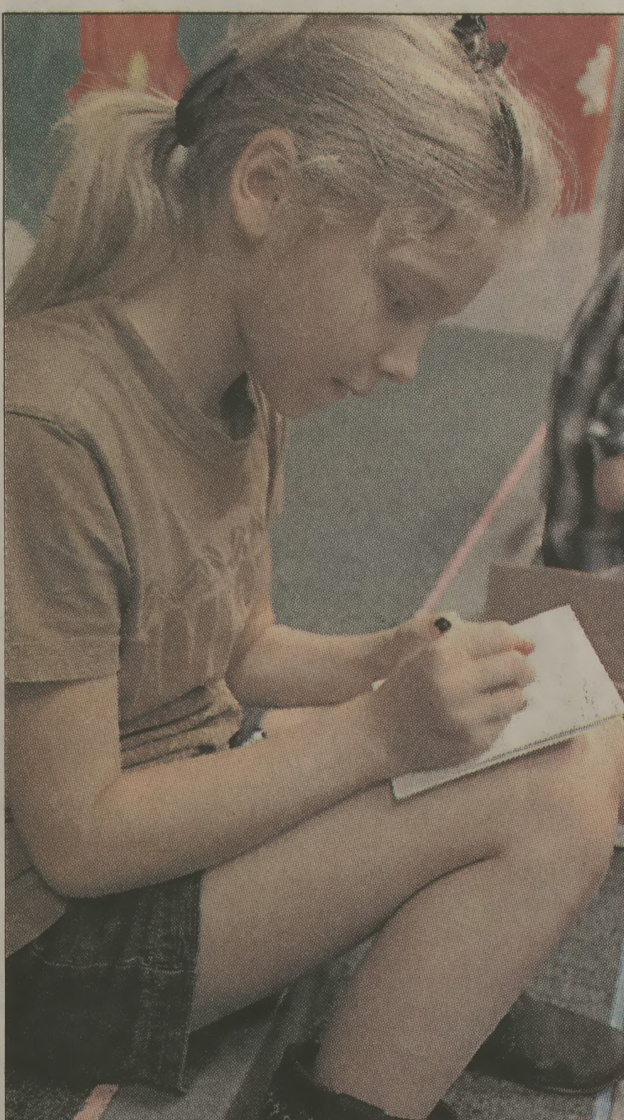
Plenty of summer activities planned for children

BY DEAN POLING
The Valdosta Daily Times

VALDOSTA — School's nearly out for summer. What can kids do with all of that free time during the coming summer weeks? Luckily, several area organizations have planned a summer filled with camps, fun classes, activities, field trips, etc. Here are some of the summer events planned for area youths.

AMANDA'S MODELS & TALENT

Local modeling agency offers its annual Broadway Camp, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., June 1-5, Valdosta High School Performing Arts Center, 3101 N. Forrest St. Ages 5-18 years old. Participants will learn how to sing, dance and act with a performance scheduled for week's end. "Aladdin" and "Pitch Perfect" are the themes. More information: Visit amandasmodels.com



SOUTH GEORGIA REGIONAL LIBRARY

With six branches stretching from Lowndes County to Lanier and Echols counties, South Georgia Regional Library system has numerous programs planned throughout the summer. The program was still being finalized this past week. More information on all of the libraries' summer activities: Visit www.sgrl.org.

BOYS & GIRLS CLUB

With locations at the Lake Laurie Unit, the David S. Waller Unit and the Don F. Reames Teen Center, the Boys & Girls Club of Valdosta's Summer Program offers youngsters recreational activities as well as programs in the arts, character and leadership, education and career development, physical education, social recreation. Swimming, arts & crafts, outdoor activities, field trips, etc., are also offered during the summer program. Summer times: 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Camp runs weekdays June 1 through July 31. More information: Visit bgcvaldosta.org; or call 242-0676, administrative office; Lake Laurie, 247-5437.

ANNETTE HOWELL TURNER CENTER FOR THE ARTS

The arts center, 527 N. Patterson St., has numerous classes planned for the summer months, for various ages. More information: Call 247-2787; or visit www.turnercenter.org. Classes are scheduled for the weeks of June 1-5; June 15-19; July 13-17; as well as some multiple dates during various two-week periods. Classes include Exploring Depth in Drawing, "Up in the Air" Mixed Media Class, ceramics and pottery, the Art of Sewing, culinary class, etiquette, etc. Costs vary. More information: Visit turnercenter.org



LITTLE ACTORS THEATRE

This local organization has headquarters located at 1108 S. Patterson St. LAT's motto is plays by children for children, with adult supervision. LAT has a summer camp scheduled for 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Mondays through Fridays, June 15-26, with workshops in sewing, stage make-up demonstrations, character building. Open to ages 5-19 years old. This year's show: "Slumber Party," written by Frank, Church and Aloura Barnas of Valdosta. More information: Visit www.littleactorsvaldosta.com.

VALDOSTA-LOWNDES COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION AUTHORITY

The authority offers a variety of camps and activities, with swimming, crafts, theme weeks, etc., for an assortment of ages at various locations. This year's theme is Summer Safari, available 7:30 a.m.-6 p.m. Mondays through Fridays, May 26 through Aug. 7 (on break June 29 through July 4), ages 5-12 years old, South Lowndes Rec Center, Lake Park; Mildred Hunter Community Center, Valdosta. Special needs camps also, for ages 13-21, the Craig Center, 1104 W. Gordon St. Kid's Kitchen runs July 20-24. More information: Visit vlpra.com; or call 259-3507.

VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY

VSU Continuing Education, 903 N. Patterson St., hosts its annual series of Camp Discovery kids camps with numerous courses planned for various ages and interests; there are also teen courses scheduled. Course weeks run from May 26 through July 24. Each course lasts a week. Course topics include Lego, art, science, theatre, tennis, poetry, crafts, exploration, games, languages, animals, dinosaurs, music, etc., taught by local experts. More information on camps: Call 245-6484; or visit www.valdosta.edu/conted. Prices vary per course.

YMCA

YMCA, 2424 Gornto Road, offers a summer program featuring numerous activities, such as swimming, field trips, art, computers, etc., for youngsters, 7:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Mondays through Fridays, May 25 through Aug. 6, kids entering kindergarten through 12 years old, Gornto site (pre-K through second grade), Parker-Mathis site (third through fifth grade). More information: Call 244-4646; or visit valdostaymca.org

WHITE TIGER

Summer camp at the martial arts academy runs 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, at the ValNorth Drive site. Program includes games, crafts, bounce house, fitness, martial arts. More information: Call 244-4110; or visit whitetigeracademy.com

OUR POINT OF VIEW

A Round of Applause

Here's another round of applause for people and organizations doing great things in our community.

The Ashley House, King's Grill and The Crescent were recently honored by the City of Valdosta at the Seventh Annual Valdosta Preservation Awards. The awards honor property owners who "go above and beyond the regulations set forth by the City to protect and preserve buildings within our local Historic District," according to the city.

South Georgia Medical Center has been named a recipient of the Women's Choice Award as one of America's 50 Best Hospitals for Stroke Care. The program is successful due to the comprehensive team approach which engages emergency response personnel, emergency department nurses and physicians, Code Stroke Medical Director Brian Dawson, MD, and various medical staff members, according to the hospital. The WCA Seal is the only declaration that integrates clinical excellence and consumer experience to provide women, the family's Chief Health Officers, the ability to make the best health-care decisions for their families, according to SGMC.

Twenty-six residents recently graduated from the Sixth Annual Valdosta Government 101 citizens orientation. The six-week city-operated program allows residents to learn more about the programs and services of their city government. The 2015 class graduates: Mitch Bernier, Thressea Boyd, Bennie Elgin Calloway III, Vivian Miller-Cody, James Edmondson, Annie S. Fisher, Bobby Flowers, Hank Flythe, Steve J. Galor, James I. Garland, Shirley J. Garland, Franchesca Griffin, DeShonda Jenkins, Sony Leo, Isabelle Mazurkiewicz, Martha Mazurkiewicz, Wade McCrae, Preston Poitevint, Amy Ponder, William E. Shultz, Tefe A. Stone, Richard Terry, Jeannie S. Tucker, Sheila B. Wakeley, Gail J. Williams and Essie Wright.

Valdosta's MetroOne recognized four outstanding young professionals under the age of 40 this week in the Valdosta-Lowndes County community at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts. The 4 Under 40 class of 2015 winners are Gerrell Aldridge, New Hire Solutions; Ashleigh Kenny, Hahira Middle School; Justin Purvis, Young, Thagard, Hoffman, Smith, Lawrence, Shenton LLP; and Victoria Copeland, ValdostaSOLD Real Estate Services.