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stated Sherry Zipperer, Vice President and Branch Manager for the bank's main office. "We felt that this would ensure its use into the next century."

But, during that time, a lot happened to make this idea a reality including a philanthropic gift to honor a local patron of the arts who had died in 2000 but had strong connections with the bank as well. Annette Howell Turner, the wife of then State Senator Dr. Loyce Turner, grew up in a family of art lovers. In fact, she had been secretly supporting local artists throughout the years without even her husband's knowledge. "After her death an artist told me that Annette had been helping local artists for years," Dr. Turner explained.

Patti Girardin, then chair of the Lowndes/Valdosta Arts Commission, approached Dr. Turner, who was chair of First State Bank at the time, about a private philanthropic gift to help purchase the bank building. Turner liked the idea of honoring his wife in this way and their children, Sally Turner Querin, Dr. Susan A. Turner and L. Warren Turner, Jr, agreed. The family wanted one assurance, "...that it would be funded properly and maintained in a respectable manner," Dr. Turner explained.

So, that's how the former First State Bank became the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts. But the story is about so much more than just a building.

Dr. Loyce Turner and the family still support the arts center, including serving as board members. "This has been a great thing for Valdosta. It has gone beyond my expectations in the number of people it has touched from children to adults. There has also been



Above: Dr. Loyce Turner with the portrait of his wife, Annette Howell Turner, which hangs in the Turner Center. Annette Howell Turner, daughter of Rudolph and Lilli Howell, played the organ at Lee Street Baptist Church and grew up in a family of art lovers. "I didn't know about art. I grew up on a farm. I knew about cows and hogs. Annette introduced me to art. She was an outstanding person who supported people from all walks of life. She was a great Mother, Grandmother, and a lady who was loved by all." - Dr. Loyce Turner
Photography by Wes Sewell

Below: (l-r) Cheryl Oliver, Executive Director of the Turner Arts Center, Mayor John Gayle, County Commission Chair Bill Slaughter, and State Senator Ellis Black. Mayor Gayle addresses the guests at the opening reception and gala that kicks off the annual Spring Into Art Exhibition.





Right: Bill Cowart and Sherry Zipperer with First State Bank & Trust, Dr. Loyce Turner, and Cheryl Oliver, Executive Director of the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, in the art center gallery.
Photography by Wes Sewell Photography

"The fact that the Spring Into Art show is in First State Bank's former main office, is open to the entire community and past bank leadership has been so intimately involved helps makes our involvement even more important to First State Bank & Trust." – Bill Cowart, President – First State Bank & Trust, which has served Valdosta and Lowndes County for 110 years.



Top: Barbara Hacker, Sally Gaskins, Judith Joseph, Pam Akins, and Sue Martin.

Above: Wendy Colson (center), with Colson Printing, and four of the artists whose works were selected for the 2016 Colson Calendar. (L-R) Tallahassee artist Rosemary Ferguson, Valdosta artist Judge Mac McLane, Colson, Apalachicola artist Susan Richardson, Valdosta artist Pam Scruggs.

Right: Devon Martin, Dana Boruff, and Darby Boruff.

**The 29th Annual Spring Into Art
Exhibition • April 11 – June 8**
*Annette Howell Turner Center
for the Arts*

527 North Patterson Street – Valdosta
Opening Reception & Gala

April 11 – 6 – 9 pm

Tickets - \$45

Exhibit Open and Free to the Public
April 12 – June 8

For tickets to the opening gala or for more
information:

turnercenter.org or 229-247-2787




at cooperation between Valdosta State University and the center. Community leaders, the volunteers, board members staff have been a tremendous asset," he explains.

Bank & Trust is still very supportive of the art club that began in their lobby in 1987.

to select community events that we think will make difference. Spring Into Art has been one of the main events we enjoy sponsoring. A lot of art is sold at the show. Some artists have no other way to sell their art," explained Bill Cowart, current president of First State Bank & Trust.

"It touches a huge part of the community. So many of our customers and friends enjoy the show," said Sherry Zipperer.

"The arts center does a great job by coordinating visits for school children and by offering weekend hours to allow more people to experience it," Cowart added.

"We're proud of our affiliation with First State Bank & Trust, and we're grateful to their leaders for the enduring partnership we enjoy," stated Cheryl Oliver. It's a classic example of what can happen when various groups work together to embrace something as vital as the arts to enhance our community. Everybody wins!! 



Spring Into Art *shines*

by DEAN POLING photos courtesy of THE ANNETTE HOWELL TURNER CENTER for the ARTS

Spring Into Art remains the most inclusive art exhibit in South Georgia. All who register are guaranteed their art will be displayed.

Judges will award cash prizes to top choices. Thirteen pieces will be selected for inclusion in the 2017 Colson Calendar.

The 29th Annual Spring Into Art opens in April.

Hundreds of artists and hundreds more artworks are expected to fill all of the galleries in the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts.

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.

Last year, the arts center increased the registration price for submitting the traditional two entries. The center also offered a discounted price for registering one work. The change led to the more manageable number of entries in 2015.

Even more artists have entered works this year, according to the arts center. **VS**

The **29th Annual Spring Into Art** opens with a gala reception, **6-9 p.m., April 11**, Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, **527 N. Patterson St.** The show will then be on display free to the public at the Arts Center, **April 12 through June 8.** More information: Call **(229) 247-2787**; or visit **www.turnercenter.org**.

Spring Into Art remains the most inclusive art exhibit in South Georgia.

1. Patrons enjoying the Spring Into Art opening night gala.
2. 2015 Spring Into Art design contest winner Carolyn Griner with her parents Dr. and Mrs. Brian Griner, her art teacher Meredith Nuckols, and Turner Center board member Dr. Stephen Lahr.
3. Wendy Colson of Colson Printing with four of the artists whose work was selected for the 2016 Colson Calendar. Tallahassee artist Rosemary Ferguson, Valdosta artist Judge Mac McLane, Wendy Colson, Apalachicola artist Susan Richardson, Valdosta artist Pam Scruggs.
4. Barbara Hacker, Sally Gaskins, Judith Joseph, Pam Akins, Sue Martin.
5. Billy and Joanna Nijem with Valerie and Ben Smith.



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Valdosta

APRIL 2016

Scene

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Valdosta Scene

Spring
Into Art

Remaking
Disney

South GA
Wineries

Feed the
Cats

ON THE COVER:
Talley Lerstang and Libby Carroll, second graders at Valwood School, at last month's Youth Art reception at the Turner Center for the Arts.
Photo by Terry Richards

Spring INTO ART VALDOSTA

Story by John F. Riddle

The region's most prestigious art show and sale didn't just happen overnight. It was developed through community partnerships with First State Bank & Trust leading the way.

What do banks and art have in common? Traditionally, not a lot. But, First State Bank and Valdosta's Annual Spring Into Art Exhibition are synonymous with each other and have been since the first exhibition in 1987. The relationship weaves a tapestry of a love of art, civic duty, philanthropy and community partnership that has helped create one of the finest arts centers in the Southeast and the region's most prestigious art show and sale.

As spring rolls around and the citizens of Valdosta are, once again, offered the opportunity to experience a truly unique art exhibit, it seems natural to share the backstory about how it came to be with a glimpse into the thoughts and aspirations of those who helped make it possible.

The Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts began as First State Bank's main office. In fact, it was a red brick building that didn't take on its notably recognizable stucco façade until an expansion in the early 1980's. Eddie Norris, an artist himself, was president of the bank at the time, and he decided on the appearance. People even joked that it looked more like an art center than a bank, which were fortuitous thoughts that eventually became reality.

Soon after that, in the mid-1980's, the Lowndes/Valdosta Arts Commission (LVAC) was organized and, with the help of First State Bank, bought its first building on North Patterson Street as an office and gallery. Through those connections, the bank and LVAC quickly became partners to promote a new spring art exhibit, Spring Into Art, which was the "brainchild" of the bank's marketing director at the time, Merry Jo Kurrie, with support from others at the bank.

Having been patrons of the arts in Columbus, Eddie Norris and his wife, Ann, were very instrumental in the early success of the Lowndes/Valdosta Arts Commission. Eddie was an accomplished artist who was chosen as Artist

of the Year in 1999 by Georgia Citizens of the Arts. Ann eventually became a member of LVAC.

Dr. Loyce Turner, one of the original members of First State Bank's board and president from 1977 until 1983, said of Eddie Norris, "Art was his main love. He had the idea to invite the arts commission to host the first Spring Into Art Exhibit at the bank. I give him credit for that."

So, the first Spring Into Art Exhibit was held in the lobby of First State Bank and was a big success that raised awareness of art in the community, provided a venue for local and regional artists to show their works and raised substantial funds for the newly formed arts commission to continue the show. For 15 years, the Valdosta community would "spring into art" in the lobby of First State Bank, which doubled as an art gallery for the annual exhibit.

"I remember attending Spring Into Art events when the bank was chock-full of artwork, hung from floor to ceiling," states Cheryl Oliver, the current executive director of the Turner Center for the Arts. "Who could have known back then that the First State Bank building would become the Turner Center for the Arts?"

In 2002, First State Bank & Trust moved to their current location and the bank located on Patterson Street would be vacant. The bank's leadership had an idea of who might be interested in filling it – the Lowndes/Valdosta Arts Commission, which already needed a larger space.

Within six months, the Lowndes/Valdosta Arts Commission had purchased the bank building, and the Annual Spring Into Art Exhibit had a permanent home without ever having to move.

"We were so thrilled when we learned that the Lowndes/Valdosta Arts Commission would purchase the building,"

Celebrations & Lifestyles

www.valdostadailytimes.com

Sunday, April 3, 2016

5C

Creating People's Choice Photo contest taking entries

BY DEAN POLING

dean.poling@gafnews.com

VALDOSTA — The city needed photos for brochures, websites and other promotional campaigns.

Sementha Mathews, the City of Valdosta public information officer, had the idea of a city photo contest. People could take photos of locations within the Valdosta city limits and the city would have a portfolio of images for use.

The idea was successful but the idea also became an annual event in its own right.

The Eighth Annual Valdosta People's Choice Photo Contest is seeking entries now, Mathews said. More than a hundred entries are expected.

The first year of the contest attracted about 40 entries, Mathews said. There were no sponsors.

By the second year, the city partnered with the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts to exhibit the works. One-hundred-twenty-eight images were entered the second year.

The show-contest has grown ever since.

Following the arts center exhibit, the public voting for favorites, the reception to announce winners, the winning photos travel to be exhibited at various locations throughout Valdosta. Valdosta Regional Airport, for example, always exhibits the contest during the holidays which is the peak travel season.



'Southern Silhouette' by H. Aaron Strickland. A past honorable mention in the Valdosta People's Choice Photo Contest.

developed categories and Mathews has secured sponsors for the \$100 cash prize for each category.

The 2016 categories are:

- Planes & Trains (and other transportation in the city). Sponsored by the South Georgia Regional Commission & MPO.
- Paws & Claws (for animal lovers). Sponsored by the Lowndes County Animal Shelter.
- Trees & Bees (and other nature wonders). Sponsored by Georgia Power.
- Faces & Places (photographers' favorites). Sponsored by Valdosta Main Street.
- Sites & Lights (potential film & movie locations in the city). Sponsored by the Valdosta-Lowndes County Tourism Authority.

The contest also awards a \$200 cash prize for Best of Show. Mathews seeks a sponsor for the Best of Show award.

One thing that has not changed since the contest

the photographs.

All photos must be taken within the Valdosta city limits, Mathews said. Participating photographers do not have to live in Valdosta but the photos must be within Valdosta, she said.

Deadline for photographs is May 31.

Voting will occur June 13 through July 13 at the exhibit at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts. Winners will be announced during a public reception, 5-7 p.m., July 18. Photos will remain on exhibit through July 22 at the arts center's Tillman Gallery.

A complete list of contest rules is available at www.valdostacity.com/valdosta-peoples-choice-photo-contest. More information: Call the arts center, (229) 247-2787; or the city public information office, (229) 259-3548. Anyone interested in sponsoring the Best of Show award may also call the



'Purple Passion' by Leo Soilea. A first-place winner in the Valdosta People's Choice Photo Contest.



Untitled image by Joshua C. Lynch. A past first-place winner in the Valdosta People's Choice Photo Contest.

ART: Bill Shenton highlighting Dave Richards at the Annette Howell Turner Center

DEAN POLING | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

Bill Shenton, Turner Center curator, holds artwork by Dave Richards, in the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts. Shenton finished mounting the 29th Annual Spring Into Art exhibit last week. The show opens Monday evening.

system culled the works to a more manageable number.

Shenton said more artworks were entered this year compared to last year, but the number is still 150 pieces fewer than the 2014 show.

There are usually about 130-140 works filling the galleries during the regular exhibits, Shenton said referring to the center's non-Spring Into Art offerings. With 150 fewer works for Spring Into Art, the center has decreased the number of works in the show by the number of what's normally on exhibit.

Still, even with the registration changes, Spring Into Art remains the most accessible show in South Georgia.

As Shenton noted, 90 percent of competitive art exhibits require artists to pay the fee and submit slides of their works. Judges view the slides and select the pieces that

will be included in the show as well as the award winners. Pieces not selected are not exhibited while exhibit organizers keep the registration fee.

Spring Into Art is different.

As long as an artwork is registered and meets all requirements, each piece is exhibited. It is the region's most inclusive and democratic of shows. Spring Into Art judges select winners from all of the registered works. Thirteen images used in the annual Colson Calendar are also selected from all of the works.

Award winners will be named about an hour into the three-hour opening reception Monday evening.

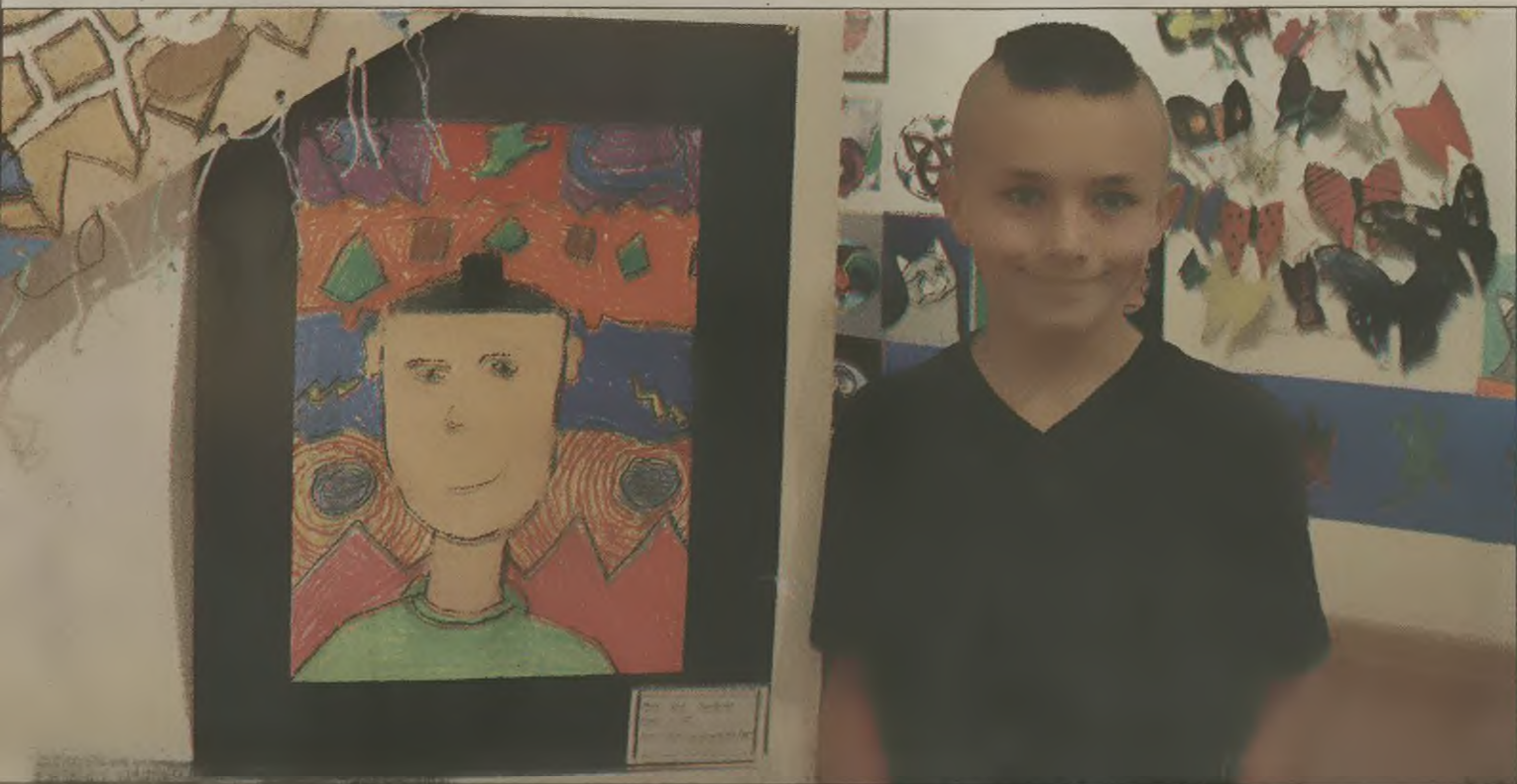
While the exhibit has more space and the works have been mounted days in advance, once the winners are named, then Shenton can breathe easy that his work for another Spring Into Art is done.

Sunday, April 3, 2016

ANNETTE HOWELL TURNER CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Youth art shines

A photo for the Youth Art Month exhibits at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts published last month misidentified the student. The student is Ben Hardman, a fourth-grader at Pine Grove Elementary.





JASON A. SMITH | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

Best in show winner, Alfred Phillips, next to his award winning acrylic painting, "Kenny's Dock."

Valdosta 'springs' into art

BY JASON A. SMITH

jason.smith@gafnews.com

VALDOSTA — The 29th Annual Spring Into Art exhibit was held at the Annette Turner Center for the Arts Monday, April 11.

The exhibit hosted 388 artworks by 211 artists. The works were categorized into four different categories: Painting, drawing/printmaking/mixed media, digital arts/photogra-

phy and sculpture/ceramics/jewelry/crafts. There was also a stand alone category for best in show, with the winner receiving \$1,000.

The best in show winner was Alfred Phillips from Gainesville, Fla. His piece, "Kenny's Dock", was an acrylic painting. This was his third time entering into the Spring into Art exhibit. The first year he entered he was a recipient of the calendar selection. His second year Phillips received an

honorable mention.

"This is a fabulous way to showcase art in the South Georgia and North Florida," Phillips said. "I am so pleased to be a part of it and fortunate to be an award winner."

In the painting category first place went to Nicole Rosseland from St. Marys for her oil painting titled "Untitled." Second place went to Mary O.

See Art on 8A

Loyce Turner's veterinary career honored

BY DEAN POLING

dean.poling@gafnews.com

VALDOSTA — Loyce Turner has been cited for his South Georgia service as a state senator, his acumen as an area banker, his providing the substantial seed money to fund the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, but recently he was honored for the work that started him in his career.

Turner received Auburn University College of Veterinary Medicine's Wilford S. Bailey Distinguished Alumni Award, which is "the highest honor the college bestows on its graduates," said Janet McCoy, Auburn's communications and marketing director.

"The Wilford S. Bailey Distinguished Alumni Award is given to Auburn alumni who have distinguished themselves by promoting animal health, advancing the veterinary profession, and serving their communities," she said. "It is named to honor the late Dr. Wilford S. Bailey, who held a 50-year continuous faculty appointment at Auburn, serving in positions ranging from instructor to university president."

Fellow veterinarians nominate candidates for the award.

Turner said he is honored by the prestigious award.

He has recalled his early career as a veterinarian, visiting area farms and helping with livestock from before the sun rose till past sunset most days.

Born Dec. 2, 1927, to father Warren Turner and mother Willie Young Turner in Turner County, young Loyce knew his career goal at an early age.

"I decided to be a veterinarian at 4 years old," Turner said in a past interview. "I learned horse and mule trading with my daddy, which would also be good practice for the State Senate."

He earned his veterinary degree in 1948. He also graduated from the University of Georgia's Banking School.

Through the military and private practice, Turner loved working as veterinarian, working with both the animals and area farmers. He made sacrifices to provide for his family.

"I would often be up and gone before the kids got up in the morning," he said, "and I got home when the kids were already in bed."

Turner served in the Army Veterinary Corps during the Korean War, entering as a lieutenant in 1951 and being discharged as a captain in 1953.

He was involved in the founding and development of First State Bank and Trust. He was a state senator for the region for a quarter of a century. He served on the state Board of Natural Resources for 13 years until stepping down in 2013.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Dr. Calvin Johnson, dean of the Auburn University College of Veterinary Medicine, right, awarded Dr. Loyce Turner with the college's highest honor.

Arts & Education

Tuesday, June 23, 2015

City of Valdosta and Annette Howell Center for the Arts receive state recog

A — Valdosta is
Georgia cities selected
a Municipal Associ-
to showcase how it
public art and cul-
for community and
elopmen, city offi-

Featuring the city's

partnership with the Annette
Howell Center for the Arts and
their collaborative local arts ini-
tiatives will be on display at the
GMA 2015 Convention in Savan-
nah in late June.

"The city is proud of our part-
nership with the Annette Howell
Turner Center for the Arts and

for their unwavering commit-
ment to provide quality of life
events and opportunities for our
community, whether it be per-
forming or visual arts." said Val-
dosta City Manager Larry Han-
son. "With an excellent staff and
a visionary Arts Center Board,
the organization creatively em-

loys all resources to add beauty
to our community and positively
impact the lives of all our citi-
zens."

"It is an enormous privilege
to receive enduring support from
the City of Valdosta to serve our
community with the arts," said
Annette Howell Turner Center

ART: Annual Spring Into Art names winner

Smith from Woodbine for her oil painting titled "Walking the Bank." Third place went to Jeanne Cowart from Valdosta for her oil painting titled "Edge of the Woods."

In the drawing/print-making/mixed media category, first place went to Annette Crosby from Valdosta for her mixed media work titled "Tribal Dance." Second place went to Brandon Blain McMillan from Hahira for his mixed media resin work titled "Sister." Third place went to Travis D. Simmons from Valdosta for his mix media work titled "Dance of the Dying."

In the digital arts/photography category first place went to Deborah Baird from Woodbine for her photography work titled "Quarry." Second place went to Alan Sifuentes from Valdosta for his inkjet enlarged silver gelatin photograph titled "Light Bleed 4." Third place went to



JASON A. SMITH | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

Art connoisseur reading the artist's tag at the exhibit.

Joe Morgan from Valdosta for his photography work titled "Not Your Mother's Airforce."

In the digital sculpture/ceramics/jewelry/crafts category, first place went to Ron Borders from Valdosta for his glass and wood work titled "Pride." Second place went to Donald Penny from Hahira for his stoneware work titled "Moon Vessel." Third place

went to Debi Davis from Valdosta for her jewelry work titled "Turquoise Defined."

The Spring into Art exhibit is an annual event with a \$35 registration fee. The exhibit allows two works per artist.

The exhibit will be hosted at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, 527 N. Patterson St. and will run through

June 8.

Gallery hours: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday; 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays; closed Sunday and Monday with the exception of opening reception dates.

Admission is free during normal gallery hours.

For more information, call (229) 247-2787 or visit turnercenter.org.



DEAN POLING | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

American Legion Post 13 honor guards doff their caps Friday during a ceremony dedicating a marker at Sunset Hill Cemetery to Army Staff Sgt. Sidney Beck, who was killed overseas during World War II.

Our Soldier

World War II soldier honored at home, overseas

BY DEAN POLING

dean.poling@gaffnews.com

VALDOSTA — Seventy-one years after his death fighting the Nazis in Europe, a marker was dedicated Friday afternoon in a South Georgia cemetery to the memory of Army Staff Sgt. Sidney Beck.

Beck grew up in Valdosta. He survived landing at Normandy on June 10, 1944, a few days after D-Day. He survived a wound at Cherbourg. He helped in the liberation of the Netherlands. He crossed the bridge at Remagen. There, in Germany, shortly before the war ended, Sidney Beck was killed April 5, 1945, likely by a single bullet from a German sniper, according to his military records.

He is buried in Margraten, the Dutch cemetery dedicated to thousands of American soldiers who died in Europe during World War II.

Beck had one child, a small son who was dead by his second birthday, just weeks before the Dec. 7, 1941, Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

He has several nieces, women born after his death overseas, women who never knew their Uncle Sidney save through the stories of



DEAN POLING | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

Hub and Nel Bessems of the Netherlands stand with the nieces of Army Staff Sgt. Sidney Beck who was killed overseas during World War II. The Bessems care for Beck's grave in the Netherlands. A ceremony dedicated a marker to Beck Friday in Valdosta.

See Soldier on 10A

SOLDIER: "These stories are suppose to inspire us and motivate us in our daily life. We must not forget them."

their parents — his siblings, through the nieces' research in recent years.

Hub and Nel Bessems of the Netherlands joined Beck's nieces and an American Legion Post 13 honor guard at the marker planted next to the graves of Beck's parents and his son in Sunset Hill Cemetery.

For the past several years, the Bessems have cared for the grave where Beck is buried in the Netherlands.

Hub Bessems spent the past few months learning to speak

English for the moment. On

the draft of his speech, he spelled some English words phonetically so he would pronounce them correctly as he stood at the head of Beck's memorial marker.

The emotion in his voice needed no translation.

"We are the Dutch adopters of Sidney Beck and visit his grave in the Netherlands several times a year," Bessems said. "We do that to show our gratitude for our liberation and to thank Sidney for his courage and for his sacrifice.

"The adoption program in the Netherlands, in Margraten to be precise, started in 1945 and has existed for

71 years. Last November, all 10,023 American soldiers (buried at the cemetery) were adopted. ... The adoption program links adopters in Holland and next of kin in the United States of America. It unites two countries in remembering. It unites two countries in celebrating freedom and peace. It unites two countries in telling the stories of the great offer made by all the American soldiers during the Second World War.

"These stories are supposed to inspire us and motivate us in our daily life. We must not forget them."

The Bessems adopted Beck's grave in Margraten in 2007.

The Bessems' daughter, Ingrid, is a professional videographer who films documentaries. She wanted to tell the story of the Netherlands program of caring for the graves of Americans who died during World War II. She decided to illustrate the program through her family and the story of Sidney Beck.

Ingrid Bessems visited Valdosta two years ago. She met with the nieces who include Betty Gene Birdwell, Jenny Howard, Mary Jane Rekel and Anne White.

Several months ago, In-

grid Bessems' documentary, "Our Soldier," aired on national television in the Netherlands and is scheduled to air again in May for Memorial Day.

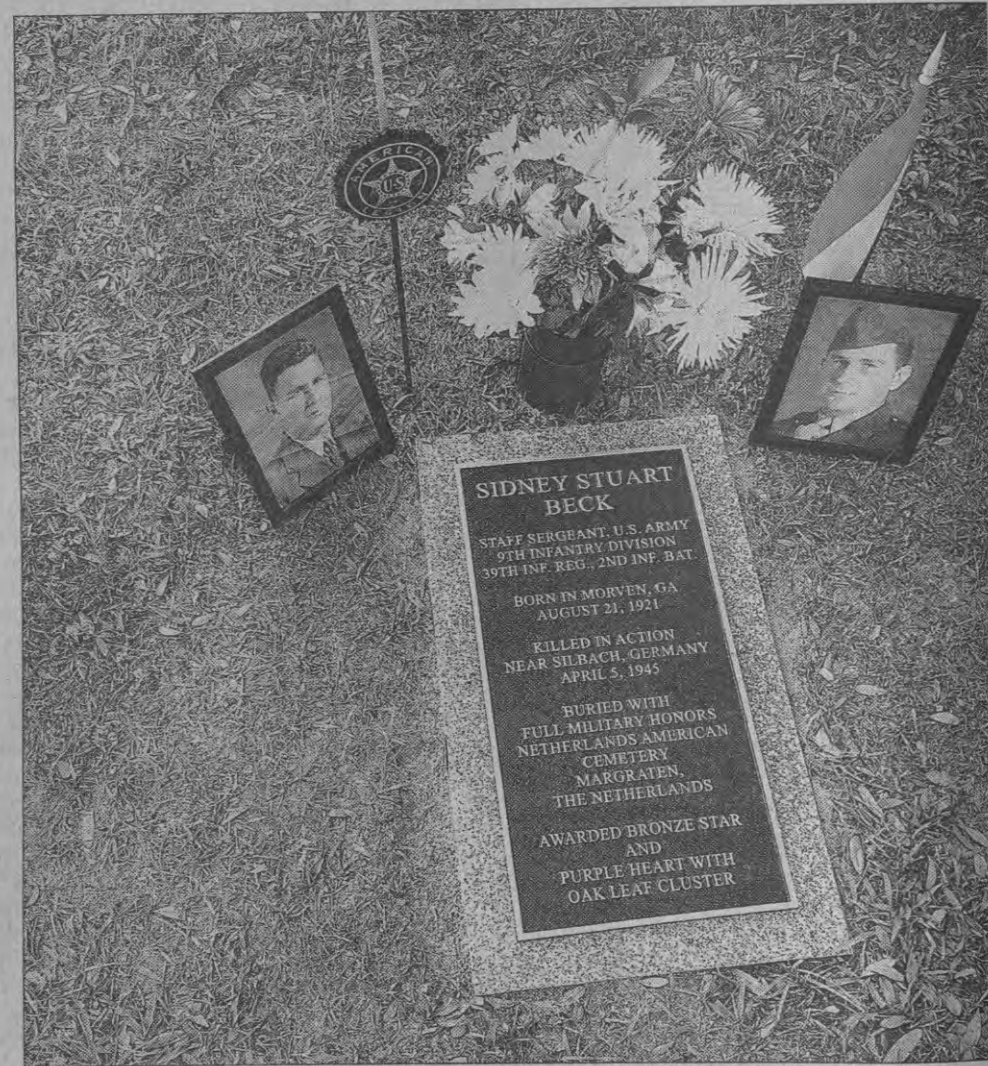
The documentary was screened and nominated a few months ago in the United States for best heritage feature documentary in the Tribute Film Festival for Real Worthy Stories in Abilene, Texas.

Caring for the graves is a national, personal and even a family cause in the Netherlands, the Bessems said Friday.

They said they believe future generations will continue caring for the Margraten graves. The Dutch people remember the sacrifices that purchased their liberty.

Jenny Beck Howard is among the Beck nieces to visit the Bessems in the Netherlands. She said the connections of the grave adoption run even deeper.

"When we visited them, I asked their two teenage grandchildren if I came back to Holland in 20 years, would my uncle Sidney still be in their care," Howard said, "and their grandfather Hub was moved to tears when both teens said yes. We all cried a bit as Hub said, 'We are family.'"



DEAN POLING | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

A marker was dedicated Friday to Army Staff Sgt. Sidney Beck at Sunset Hill Cemetery in Valdosta. Beck was killed overseas in World War II. His body is buried in the Netherlands.

Musician returns 'home' for arts center concert

BY DEAN POLING

dean.poling@gaffnews.com

VALDOSTA — For St. Augustine, Fla., singer songwriter guitarist Sam Pacetti, playing a concert for the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts this week is like coming home.

Pacetti lived here for about six months in the early 2000s. In some ways, in some circles, it feels like he's still part of the area music scene.

Some musicians who either live in Valdosta or have ties to South Georgia regularly mention Pacetti in reference to his influence, talent or friendship. Facebook and the connection between several Valdosta residents and Pacetti's stomping grounds of St. Augustine also makes it seem like Pacetti still has deep local roots.

On the phone, Pacetti quickly shared the reality.

He hasn't played Valdosta since 2006. Ten years. A decade.



SAMPACETTI.COM

Sam Pacetti performs Thursday at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts.

That's why, for him, playing the arts center's latest SCORE concert, feels like a long-delayed visit to his second home.

Earlier this year, the arts center added the musical SCORE series to its mission of providing all facets of the arts to the community.

SCORE is "not an acronym, but is so named because that's what a composer writes, and it's something a sports-minded community can relate to," Cheryl Oliver, arts center executive director, said in January. "Don't we all like to score at whatever game we're playing?"

Though he has received numerous stellar reviews for what is described as his American/British songwriting and his guitar abilities, Pacetti described himself as "a non-musician musician. A reluctant artist. I play but I never set a lot of stock in what I do. ... I stay practical about it."

Pacetti referred repeatedly to making and performing music as "the work." He applies discipline, time and effort to his craft.

He does not care for self promotion. He said he could have a bigger career. He has mostly quit touring preferring to play mostly St. Augustine and North Florida venues.

Instead of thinking about his next career move, Pacetti said he prefers thinking about "when can I catch my next big redfish? Is the surf up today?"

He's more concerned about having a bigger life.

"Living a good life is a virtue in an arguably insane world,"

he said, referring to the Roman philosophies of Marcus Aurelius.

If there's an ambition to the work, Pacetti said he wants it to capture such virtue, to translate it then to transcend it.

Asked to describe how his work has progressed since playing Valdosta 10 years ago, Pacetti said, "If I exam it, I can't see how my music has really progressed or changed since then. I do what I do."

CONCERT

Who: Sam Pacetti, a St. Augustine, Fla.-based musician, plays as part of the SCORE Concert Series.

When: 7:30 p.m. Thursday, May 12.

Where: Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, 527 N. Patterson St.

Tickets: \$25, reserved seating; \$15, general admission.

More information: Call (229) 247-2787; or visit www.turnercenter.org.

Wednesday, May 11, 2016

THURSDAY

Brown Bag Lunch Concert Series, 11:30 a.m.- 1:30 p.m., May 12-13, Downtown Valdosta. Each day a different band will perform live music from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on the Lowndes County Courthouse lawn. Visit www.valdostamainstreet.com for details, or call the Main Street office at 229-259-3577.

NARFE meeting, 12:30 p.m. May 12, Chow Town Restaurant, Baytree Rd.

Free Diabetes Education Class, 5 p.m. May 12, Adel-Cook Rec Community Center, 506 S. Gordon Ave., Adel. Sponsored by Chancy Drugs. For more information, call 245-9922.

Free Diabetes Education Class, 5 p.m. May 12, Johnston Lakes Library, 720 Lakes Blvd., Lake Park. Sponsored by Chancy Drugs. For more information, call 245-9922.

Sam Pacetti in Concert, 7:30 p.m. May 12, Turner Center for the Arts, 527 N. Patterson St. For tickets, call 247-2787.



JASON A. SMITH | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

The pink team with the first new membership for the afternoon session of the Valdosta Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Conference Center.

Chamber seeks new members

BY JASON A. SMITH

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VALDOSTA — Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce hosts a membership drive Tuesday through Thursday at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Conference Center.

The chamber hopes to break 100 new members by the first day, said Director of Marketing and Membership Leslie Harris. Last year, the drive obtained 155 new members for the whole week.

The system is set up where there are six teams and each team has a chair member, said Board Chairman Michael Lee.

The chair member is required to find a team captain to help recruit team members, he said. Once the teams are made, each team will come at specified times throughout the day to receive a

short training session before beginning the actual drive.

The training session will be presented by Vice President of Your Chamber Connection Jimmy Cusano.

The session focuses on economic development and growth, but the drive itself is a variation from traditional membership drives.

"It's a storytelling event," said Cusano. "It's all about relationships. You listen to your best friend."

Rather than having teams call various businesses that were pre-selected, each member is encouraged to scour through their contact lists and call businesses and business owners they work with on a regular basis.

The chamber functions on four principles: Advocate, build, connect and

promote.

To advocate small business on the state and local level, the Chamber helps pass pro-business legislation and stop anti-business legislation, said Lee.

The advocacy of small businesses is fortified by helping build small businesses with programs like the SEEDS Resource Center.

Sowing Entrepreneur and Economic Development Success is what the SEEDS center aims to do by being a source of up-to-date information for aspiring entrepreneurs, start-up businesses, existing businesses or individuals searching for custom market data, industry profiles, demographic reports, competitor information and targeted sales leads, according to its website www.seedsbusinessresourcecenter.com.

Connection with the

Chamber is provided by events like Business after Hours, said Lee.

"Even the drive is a connection event," he said. "Members sit next to other businesses and have a chance to get to know each other."

The chamber helps promote business by performing email blasts to all members and by using the Progress, Connection and Moody Link magazines to target specific audiences, said Lee.

The drive was held Tuesday. Wednesday, the drive will be held from 8:30-11:30 a.m. and on 5:20-6:30 p.m. Thursday.

There are 4,000 issued business licenses in Lowndes County, Lee said. The chamber has 1,200 members. More information on the Valdosta Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce, visit www.valdosta-chamber.com.