

# Voters renew half cent tax

BY PAM BRANNON  
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Santa Rosa County Schools were awarded by county voters at least \$7 million a year for the next 10 years to use for new school construction and improvements. Even though only 9.6 percent of the county's registered voters cast ballots last Tuesday, March 27 at the special election to extend the 1/2 cent sales tax for another 10 years, 77 percent of those voting said "YES."

Sales Tax Election results	
For:	7,408
Against:	2,216

Santa Rosa County School District Supt. John Rogers said, "The sales tax is not something any of us in the district take for granted. We are very, very appreciative of those who took the time to go to the polls and vote for its renewal. It will mean a lot for the future of Santa Rosa County schools."

Several Santa Rosa County Elections officials voiced surprised at the low turnout, saying it was probably the lowest ever in the county's history. A total of 7,408 votes were cast across the county in favor of extending the sales tax, and 2,216 votes were against.

Gulf Breeze voters were overwhelmingly in favor of the measure. The four Gulf Breeze precincts registered more than clear majority in favor: Gulf Breeze City on Shoreline Drive registering 618 saying yes and 130 voting no; Midway's precinct registering 309 votes in favor and 93 against; Oriole Beach registered 252 for and 73 against; and Tiger Point precinct showing 266 for the measure and 68 against.

The largest precinct in the county is Holley-By-the-Sea at Hidden Creek precinct, which has 8,000 voters registered, but only had less than 800 show up with 535 voting in favor and 155 against.

The 1/2 cent sales tax currently brings in an average over the past 10 years of \$7-million a year, all used for new school and classroom construction and improvements. Reports show at least one-third of that money is paid by tourists or people driving through the county.

## CORRECTIONS

According to Gulf Breeze Dog Lovers, the Keyes family donated a total of \$3,500 and \$500 of their funding will go toward lighting at the Shoreline Bark Park.

In an article about the Santa Rosa Island Authority, board member Kelly Robertson's name was misspelled.

Gulf Breeze News strives for 100 percent accuracy and we regret any errors in our publication.

# BENSON: Will stipulates land will become museum

Continued from page 1A

Historical Society. The Bensons built the Mark X. Benson Complex in phases.

The "Benson Building" is where much of what is Gulf Breeze today got its start. Many of the Churches, Civic and Social Clubs, the first pharmacy, the

first weekly newspaper and even the Gulf Breeze Volunteer Fire Department had their first meetings at the Benson Building with no cost to these organizations.

Eloise and Mark Benson have passed on: Ella Louise (Eloise) Benson died on October 9, 2006 and Mark X. Benson died on March 27, 1994. But the her-

itage of Bensons will live on through the Mark X. and E. Louise Benson Museum and will affect the quality of lives in Gulf Breeze long after their death.

# ABATEMENT: County is still trying to clean up after hurricanes

Continued from page 1A

see if the house is over 50 percent destroyed," Gomillion said. "That rule also applies if the cost of construction is 50 percent of the property value. Valuation has to be defined and it can be debated."

Building Official Tim Tolbert said his department uses a formula loosely based on values

ascribed by the county's property appraiser.

"We're looking for properties that are substantially damaged over 50 percent from their market value," Tolbert said. "[In some cases] we take the property appraiser's estimated value and add 20 percent and come up with a figure for the structure only."

Tolbert said his department

also uses a piece of software developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) called the Residential Substantial Damage Estimator (RSDE) to determine a substantially damaged property's repair costs.

For more information about the county's building department, visit <http://www.co.santa-rosa.fl.us/>.

# CHINERY: Former information officer bids 'aloha' to county

Continued from page 1A

After realizing the weaknesses in EOC communication infrastructure, he spent the next year training volunteer public information teams and implementing an in-county program to disseminate information among emergency staff during a storm. By the time Dennis struck ten months later, the EOC was prepared.

"When Hurricane Dennis came through, everything worked. That gave us the opportunity to prove ourselves," said Chinery.

Chinery boasts a colorful career including the military, world travel and American Bandstand. He said while being raised in Lakehurst, N.J. and left home at the age of 17 to join the Navy. He said prior to that, he traveled to Philadelphia, Pa. often participate in American Bandstand. Chinery spent the first three years of his Navy life in Japan then upon returning spent time performing in rock bands. After his third trip around the globe, he sang in a band in New Zealand. He then did six tours in Vietnam and witnessed the fall of Saigon.

"We saved a lot of refugees, and I'm very proud of that," he said. After becoming a Chief Petty Officer, he obtained his Merchant Marine license enabling him to finish his Naval career in 1981 as a divorced, single parent Navy Officer. He then became the officer in charge of the correctional custody at NAS Pensacola and retired as Lieutenant Commander.

He began writing letters to the editors about serious subjects sending them to several area newspapers. But his voice wasn't being heard so he began writing satire.

"I wrote what I considered funny letters to the editor. They were printed and I got feedback," said Chinery. "I still didn't have the community involvement I thought we needed."

That's when he turned his attention toward zoning.

"Zoning in 1985 was a big, heated issue. You could see where we were going to grow, but it wasn't that bad at the time, so people had mixed emotions about it," he said. He explained that a city hall meeting at a packed Oriole Beach Elementary School housed a community split down the middle regarding zon-

ing. Zoning was granted to form Sandpiper Village where Chinery became president of the homeowners' association. After a great deal of community involvement with area homeowners' associations, the self-proclaimed "Mayor of Halfway to Midway" involved himself in local publications such as the Santa Rosa Sun where he worked from 1992 to 1995. The publication was eventually bought out by the Santa Rosa Press Gazette and Chinery went to work for the Gulf Breeze Sentinel between 1998 and 2001 before assuming his position at the county. Chinery also became the face of Countyline, a countywide program that started in 1989 while he was writing letters to the editor.

"A friend of mine told me about this local cable channel that was looking for anyone to go on the air," said Chinery. "I said I might do something like that."

Now, after 18 years, Chinery will be signing off as host of Countyline.

After post-hurricane turmoil and insurance company battles, Chinery has recently purchased a coffee bean farm in Hawaii where he plans to retire.

## Santa Rosa County Sheriff's Office Report

Information provided by the Santa Rosa County Sheriff's Office.

- FELONIES**
- 3/25/07**  
McCoy, Glenn, 30, W/M, 6800 block of East Bay Boulevard, Navarre, larceny, less than \$5,000
- 3/27/07**  
Hass, Jill Suzanne, 39, W/F, 3300 block of Green Briar Circle, Gulf Breeze, possession of a controlled substance without a prescription
- 3/28/07**  
Colbert Jr., James Murray, 36, W/M, 2000 block of Truman Drive, Navarre, cruelty toward child
- Trull, Mitchell Scott, 23, W/M, 1300 block of Redwood lane, Gulf Breeze, larceny, less than \$5,000, fraud
- Pasanen, Michael Scott, 33, W/M, 1600 block of Green Briar Parkway, Gulf Breeze, kidnapping
- 3/29/07**

- Floyd Elizabeth Ann, 27, W/F, 1600 block of Oak Hill Road, Gulf Breeze, possession of cocaine
- Logan, Robert Andrew, 18, W/M, 190 block of Camelia Street, Gulf Breeze, violation of probation
- Moore, Jessica Kay, 18, W/F, 7200 block of Manatee Street, Navarre, larceny, less than \$5,000
- 3/30/07**  
Meaux, Stevie Rae, 20, W/F, 3300 block of Laleyenda Court, Gulf Breeze, larceny, less than \$5,000
- Pierce, Bobby Brandon, 21, W/M, 3300 block of Laleyenda Court, Gulf Breeze, larceny, less than \$5,000
- Phan, Billy, 37, A/M, 2100 block of Bellmeade Circle, Navarre, aggravated assault
- Champion, Ruth Cheryl, 55, 4300

- block of Carmona Street, Navarre, hit and run
- 3/31/07**  
Wagner Jr., Gregory James, 20, A/M, 2200 block of Estates Circle, Navarre, possession of more than 20 grams of marijuana
- Bussey, Roman Williams, 23, W/M, 2200 block of Estates Circle, Navarre, possession of more than 20 grams of marijuana
- DUI**
- 3/27/07**  
Gudinas, Andrew Simon, 19, W/M, 3300 block of Green Briar Circle, Gulf Breeze, DUI
- 3/31/07**  
Champion, Ruth Cheryl, 55, 4300 block of Carmona Street, Navarre, DUI and property damage

### Sales Account Executive

Gulf Breeze News, Inc. is now accepting applications for the position of Sales Account Executive.

Qualified candidates should have a bachelor's degree from an accredited college; 3 to 5 years experience in media sales or the equivalent; and be proficient in Microsoft Outlook.

Job duties will include working with clients to design effective advertising in the Gulf Breeze News and Splash! Magazine; prospecting new accounts, managing accounts and interfacing with other departments to maximize the client's return on investment.

Benefits include a group medical plan, life insurance; optional dental, vision and supplemental insurance; and paid vacation.

Interested applicants should submit qualifications to:  
[karen@gulfbreezenews.com](mailto:karen@gulfbreezenews.com).

Gulf Breeze News, Inc. publishes Gulf Breeze News and Splash! Magazine. Gulf Breeze News, Inc. is and Equal Opportunity Employer.

### Managing Editor

Gulf Breeze News, Inc. is now accepting applications for the position of Managing Editor.

Qualified candidates should have a bachelor's degree in Journalism from an accredited college; 3 to 5 years experience working as a journalist and/or editor; be proficient in Quark XPress and PhotoShop software; and be motivated to provide excellent community news on deadline.

Job duties will include reporting on news and human interest topics; managing reporters, writers and columnists; doing weekly page design and layout; appearing on the weekly Gulf Breeze News TV show; helping to coordinate special editions and other duties as assigned by the publishers.

Benefits include a group medical plan, life insurance; optional dental, vision and supplemental insurance; and paid vacation.

Interested applicants should submit qualifications to:  
[karen@gulfbreezenews.com](mailto:karen@gulfbreezenews.com).

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## Calendar of Events

**Thursday, April 5**  
**Zoning Board of Adjustments**, 5:30 p.m., Commissioner's Board Room, 6495 Caroline Street, Milton

**Friday, April 6**  
**Northwest Florida Blood Center's Easter Lily Blood Drive**, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Blood donors will receive an Easter Lily to commemorate each life saving donation along with Easter Eggs. All blood types are needed. Details: 850-473-3853.

**Saturday, April 7**  
**Easter Egg Hunt**, 10 a.m. at Swenson Park in Santa Rosa Shores. Details: (850) 932-2914.

**Easter Egg hunt**, 9 a.m. at Pensacola Beach Community Church at Avenida 18. It is for children through the fifth grade and each child will receive a prize in addition to many candy-filled eggs. Details: (850) 932-6628

**Sunday, April 8**  
**No meetings scheduled as of press time**

**Monday, April 9**  
**Santa Rosa County Commission Meeting**, 9 a.m., Commissioner's Board Room, 6495 Caroline Street, Milton

**Tuesday, April 10**  
**No meetings scheduled as of press time**

**Wednesday, April 11**  
**Executive Committee Meeting**, 6:30 p.m., Gulf Breeze City Hall, 1070 Shoreline Drive, Gulf Breeze

**Santa Rosa Island Authority Board Meeting**, 5 p.m., SRIA Administrative Office, 1 Via De Luna, Pensacola Beach

**The National Active and Retired Federal Employees (NARFE) Association luncheon**, 12 p.m., at the Bayview Senior Center. The program will be presented by the Suter Elementary School Chorus. All federal employees (former, retired or active) and their spouses and guests are welcome. Contact 850-457-3088 for more information

**Thursday, April 12**  
**Santa Rosa County Commission Regular Meeting**, 9 a.m., Commissioner's Board Room, 6495 Caroline Street, Milton

### Circulation Coordinator

Gulf Breeze News, Inc. is now accepting applications for the position of Part-Time Circulation Coordinator. Job duties will include inserting preprints into the newspaper, affixing address labels, sorting newspapers for mailing and coordinating bulk drop locations with circulation staffers.

Interested applicants should submit qualifications to:  
[karen@gulfbreezenews.com](mailto:karen@gulfbreezenews.com).

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## Elected Officials CONTACT

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**JOANN J. SIMPSON, Dist. 4**  
(850) 994-5446

**DIANE COLEMAN, Dist. 3**

(850) 939-5538

**HUGH WINKLES, Dist. 2**  
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**DIANE SCOTT, Dist. 1**  
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