

# Zoo: 9-year-old pledges \$300

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she wants to use her money to print, distribute and sell the stickers, which feature her design, and donate the money to The Zoo. There are also plans to set up a website, her mother said.

"I really love the animals at the zoo and if it wasn't there I'd be really sad," Prezioso said, describing her monthly trips to the facility with Shearer.

Gulf Breeze resident Patti Hutto, a member of the Miraflores Garden Club, is putting together a charity event she calls "Feast with the Beast" at The Zoo Sept. 29. The event will begin around 7 p.m. and guests can partake of an open bar, gourmet food, unlimited Safari Express Line rides, live music, and a raffle, all while perusing the park's grounds until the event wraps up around midnight. Tickets are selling for \$80 per person or \$150 per couple.

"I thought it was a good time to have a party and a fundraiser," Hutto said. "When people call me and ask 'What can I do to help?' I tell them to write a check [for The Zoo]."

Gulf Coast Zoological Society board member Charles A. "Chuck" Emling, who serves as president of the non profit that absorbed operations of the park in 2004, said he was very impressed by the outpouring of support from the surrounding communities.

"To say the response has been positive would be an understatement," said Emling, who also operates The Club athletic complex near Crane Cove Boulevard in Gulf Breeze.

Zoo officials said they've fielded phone calls from concerned residents offering their own fundraising ideas and efforts. Natalie Akin, The Zoo's Director of Visitor Services, said she's received calls from

residents wanting to run a lemonade stand and donate their proceeds, as well as artists and art galleries also looking to donate.

To put the situation in perspective Akin shared a unique look into The Zoo's financial records for 2006 with some members of local media.

All together, Zoo officials said they received over \$2.318 million in total revenue last year and spent \$2.361 million. Akin said those expense numbers included hurricane repairs and mitigation efforts.

The Zoo was required to spend over \$418,000 for animal care in 2006, including food, exhibit supplies, veterinary supplies, medicine and waste disposal. Zoo records show the facility spent over \$18,000 on exhibit repairs and maintenance and over \$53,000 on insurance last year. The Zoo's utility bills, not including telephone service, totaled over \$161,000 last year.

Zoo officials say they switched payroll and human resources companies in 2006 in an effort to become more efficient. Between the two companies The Zoo spent over \$1.15 million, including all employee salaries, benefits and worker's compensation.

Akin said hurricanes in 2004 and 2005 caused The Zoo to close for nearly six months within one year, which caused a loss of \$914,000 in projected revenues. In the recovery process officials said The Zoo received no federal assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) or any other disaster recovery organization and is still fighting for insurance help. The lack of financial support caused The Zoo to rack up nearly \$2 million in debt since the storms.

For more information visit <http://www.thezoonorthwest-florida.org> or call 850-932-2229.

## Calendar of Events

**Thursday, July 26**  
**Books R Fun book sale**  
 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Gulf Breeze Hospital lobby. History books, children's books, games and novelty items.

**Pensacola in the Civil War** at Naval Live Oaks, 10 a.m.

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

**School Board Meeting**, 6:30 p.m., School District Administrative Offices, 5086 Canal Street, Milton

**Friday, July 27**  
**Books R Fun book sale**  
 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Gulf Breeze Hospital lobby. History books, children's books, games and novelty items.

The community will have an opportunity to "Cram the Van" with school supplies as it makes stops at local businesses. Cram the Van is a United Way program that helps ensure that every child starts school with the supplies they need. The van is scheduled to be at the Gulf Breeze Office Depot from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Gulf Breeze Wal-Mart from 4 to 7 p.m.

**Saturday, July 28**  
**No meetings scheduled as of press time**

**Sunday, July 29**  
**Seeing Sea Life** at Naval Live Oaks, 2 p.m.

**Full Moon Walk** at the entrance gate to Fort Pickens, 8 p.m.

**Monday, July 30**  
**Santa Rosa County Constitutional Officers Budget Workshops**, 9 a.m., Commissioner's Board Room, 6495 Caroline Street, Milton

**Tuesday, July 31**  
**Santa Rosa County Budget Workshops**, 9 a.m., Commissioner's Board Room, 6495 Caroline Street, Milton

**Wednesday, August 1**  
**City of Gulf Breeze Budget Workshop**, 5 p.m., Gulf Breeze City Hall, 1070 Shoreline Drive, Gulf Breeze

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

**Thursday, August 2**  
**Apaches of Fort Pickens** at Naval Live Oaks, 10 a.m.

# GIRAFFE: No signs of malice in death

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Lead Zoo Keeper Tom Realing checked on them and their exhibit during routine nightly rounds.

There were no marks on the animal and no external indications of trauma or injury.

Zoo staff found no evidence of projectile wounds or potential toxins, indications of trespassing or encroachment by humans, dogs, foxes or other animals that might have spooked the giraffe.

Zoo staff also contacted the National Weather Service in Mobile to check electrical storm records, which go back for any given 64 hour period, to determine if lightning may have been involved. The Weather Service reported no thunderstorm activity near the Zoo overnight Monday between the hours of 9:30 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. Giraffes have been known to be severely startled or struck and even killed by lightning.

Upon completion of the necropsy by the Zoo's veterinarian, Dr. Gus Mueller, there

was medical evidence that the animal had experienced some trauma to the upper neck area which indicates that it may have been startled and bolted into a post with enough force to cause bruising and possible collapse.

"The apparent cause of death was acute stress along with hyperthermia induced by the event. Grossly, there was pinpoint hemorrhaging in many of the tissues, particularly the heart muscle and pericardial fat," Mueller said. "More will be known in about a week when the myriad of tissue samples are

returned from the lab after evaluation by a veterinary histopathologist."

Sammy, the 10-year-old male giraffe, had been in the same exhibit for eight years and was well acclimated and accustomed to all sorts of road noises, thunderstorms, hurricanes and many other distractions that might otherwise alarm or frighten an animal. Why the adult giraffe may have been startled enough to cause impact trauma on this particular day so far remains a mystery, Zoo officials said.

# WORKERS: Residents concerned for well being

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Darlene Kirk of the U.S. Department of State said her office is looking into the allegations of mistreated workers who are in the U.S. under a J-1 Visa, used for those on the work travel program.

Kirk said the workers are recruited to work here and hold their own visas. The corporations have contracts to employ the workers in the U.S., but these corporations must adhere to the U.S. labor laws, paying minimum wage and overtime as prescribed. The other parameters, such as lodging and transportation, are worked out between the student and the

organization that brings them over.

However, once they arrive, many of the student workers are afraid of reprisals if they seek help from someone outside the organization.

Santa Rosa Shores Margaret Cunningham says she is concerned about the welfare of the young adults who are being housed in her neighborhood, 12 to 15 at a time in one house, again with no furniture except for the inflatable mattresses. She said she thinks the kids are working 17 hours per day, and some of them have bicycles for transportation.

"There's definitely something wrong," Cunningham said of

the situation.

She wants to report what she's observed, but doesn't want to get the foreign workers in trouble. She said their bosses watch them when they are talking to the locals, and she thinks they are being intimidated into keeping quiet about their living and working conditions.

Patricia Smith said she and other neighbors in the Greenbriar area are helping to provide food and shelter to some youths who were fired from their jobs for asking questions about their pay.

She said some of the workers allege they didn't receive pay stubs to document the hours they worked, and that each

worker pays \$250 per month in rent.

She said she's learned from her conversations with the workers that they are lured to the United States to work in the tourist industry, only to find when they arrive that they are expected to work up to 17 hours a day, crammed into crowded living quarters and intimidated by "enforcers" who she's heard scream at the workers inside the apartment complex. She said one of the workers was struck by a liaison.

Kirk said anyone observing questionable treatment of foreign workers should contact the U.S. Department of State at (202) 203-7616.

# Bus: School system prepared for first day

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office. They will soon be available for print, also.

As of this week, Williams said the district has 306 drivers to cover 254 routes from north to south. That means, Williams said, there is a good 'bench' of substitute drivers in place. Dry runs on routes were done the week after school was out in May, but new dry runs will be done Aug. 15. "We understand that things change over the summer," Williams said. "There are some new routes, and some new drivers, so we will run the routes just before school starts again. Then each driver will have a checklist and sign off on the route, saying they have run it and there are no problems. Of course, we can't account for first day problems, like kids not being on time at the stops and such. But dry runs help take

care of a lot of the problems."

Harrell said after the dry runs in May, some routes were changed if drivers found problems with meeting the schedule on time.

There will also be driver meetings across the county the first week in August. "We want to head off as many first week problems as we can," Williams said. "We discovered last year that we needed those first schools to be picked up at the end of the school day to let out a little early those first couple days, so the drivers could make it back to their second school runs on time, so we will request that again this year."

School Board member Diane Coleman of Navarre asked if there was a way for bus drivers to have a checklist to mark off each student as they got off the bus, and where they got off. "We don't want problems like we had last year, when I was

called to West Navarre Primary because a distraught Mom could not get an answer from a bus driver whether her child even got on a bus, let alone of they got off or where."

Coleman said when she was a teacher, each elementary teacher took the students to the bus and had a check list to make sure each student did get on the right bus. "I don't know why each bus driver cannot have such a checklist, or some system, where they could check off when a student leaves the bus and where. it takes a minute or two for students to get their backpacks and make it up the aisle."

Williams said drivers already do have checklists of students who are riding the bus and their stops. "But especially that first day or first few days, there will be students not registered on the bus routes, and new students being added, and our drivers are

already under tremendous pressure that first day or two. And last year we had 16 regular drivers out, with substitute bench drivers having to do their routes, the first few days of school. That adds another level of confusion. They are trying to make sure they get to each stop on time, and get to the next school on time, and it is all pressure packed. To ask each student their name as they get off the bus would be almost impossible."

Transportation Director Harrell said in the future, if the board approves adding to the new GPS system they are putting on some buses this year, they would have been able to track students as they got on and off the bus through a GPS tag system. But until then, bus drivers will need to get to know their students and routes over time, and try to follow the list as they have in the past.

# CITY: Multiple revenue options explored

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rated the ones they liked and didn't like, and asked for more research on some."

The first item on the list was an increase in the Utility Service Tax which was implemented last year at 2 percent; council decided to leave it as is unless totally necessary. Council declined raising a stormwater fee.

Council agreed to raise Interfund transfers to 8 percent from 5 percent and the CRA could be billed for some police expenditures. 2008 proposed budget slides the funding for street lights into the CRA bud-

get.

The City cut \$100,000 from the resurfacing budget of \$150,000 by slating only Daniel Drive for resurfacing in 2008.

Raising the fee for league play on city tennis courts is being considered, along with hosting sports tournaments.

Adding and servicing alarms for businesses and residences are also being reviewed.

"We have all heard about the RV park idea," Eddy said. "But due to community concern, that is on the bottom of the list."

Council also asked for more information on a proposed overnight mooring area off Shoreline Park.

## Elected Officials CONTACT

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## Santa Rosa County Sheriff's Office Report

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

<p><b>Felonies</b></p> <p><u>07/15/07</u>                      Vega, Jose Felix, 47, H/M, 1000 block of Revere Street, Navarre, aggravated assault</p> <p><u>07/16/07</u>                      Anderson, Andrew James, 23, W/M, 5000 block of State Court, Gulf Breeze, violation of probation, possession of drugs</p>	<p><u>07/17/07</u>                      Camacho, Israel, 19, H/M, 1000 block of Justice Circle, Gulf Breeze, failure to appear for felony offense</p> <p><u>07/20/07</u>                      Christian II, Richard Dean, 33, W/M, 5000 block of Capitol Drive, Gulf Breeze, out of state fugitive</p> <p><u>07/21/07</u>                      Erwin, Lacey Donna, 22, W/F, 7000 block of Harvest Village</p>
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<p>Boulevard, Navarre, violation of probation</p> <p>Harrison, Robert Keith, 46, B/M, 2000 block of Villa Woods Circle, Gulf Breeze, larceny greater than \$300, fraud</p> <p>Page Jr., Tony Gurell, 15, B/M, 8000 block of Harrington Drive, Navarre, aggravated assault, battery</p> <p><u>07/22/07</u>                      Minnick, Roger William, 19, W/M, 3000 block of College Court, Gulf Breeze, possession of liquor, distribution of liquor, contribution to the delinquency of minors, possession</p>	<p>of marijuana, possession of narcotics</p> <p><b>DUI</b></p> <p><u>7/16/07</u>                      Kulina, Peter Thomas, 22, W/M, 3500 block of Southwind Drive, Gulf Breeze, DUI</p> <p><u>7/17/07</u>                      Loughrin, Ryan Joseph, 28, W/M, 7700 block of Navarre Parkway, Navarre, DUI</p> <p><u>7/21/07</u>                      Bautel, Mark Geoffrey, 45, 1200 block of Henderson Avenue, Gulf Breeze, DUI</p>	<p>already under tremendous pressure that first day or two. And last year we had 16 regular drivers out, with substitute bench drivers having to do their routes, the first few days of school. That adds another level of confusion. They are trying to make sure they get to each stop on time, and get to the next school on time, and it is all pressure packed. To ask each student their name as they get off the bus would be almost impossible."</p> <p>Transportation Director Harrell said in the future, if the board approves adding to the new GPS system they are putting on some buses this year, they would have been able to track students as they got on and off the bus through a GPS tag system. But until then, bus drivers will need to get to know their students and routes over time, and try to follow the list as they have in the past.</p>
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