

# WEATHER: Lightning strikes GB Lowe's

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and the corridor looked more like a river than a road during rush hour that morning. Maintenance crews worked quickly and much of the overflow receded by 10:30 a.m.

"That's a lot of rain," said the city's Fire Chief and Director of Public Safety, Shane Carmichael. "It just overcomes the drainage system. It's just not designed to deal with that much rain."

City public works crews were dispatched to unclog storm water drains, install sandbags and pump water away from affected areas. Thomas Lambert with South Santa Rosa Utilities System said his department set up trailer-mounted water pumps at Plantation Hill Road, Bay Cliffs Road, Dracena Way and other locations, pumping more than 1,200 gallons per minute to clear the roadways.

"We did receive grant money for storm water upgrades," Lambert said. "Areas that had problems in the April 2005 rains have been greatly improved."

Lambert added that those areas improved by mitigation funding included San Carlos Avenue, York Street, Gilmore

Drive and Bay Cliffs Road.

"At Bay Cliffs, the situation is better than the last time but it still needs some work," Lambert said.

Administrators at GBHS estimated that between 125 and 150 had to be moved from classrooms and portables last Thursday. GBHS Assistant Principal Victor Lowrimore said classes in three rooms within the building were moved because of water encroachment and four portables were evacuated because of tornado warnings. Lowrimore said all classes would meet in their normal locations this week.

"We just had to wait. We didn't really have any damage," Lowrimore said. "Custodial crews did an excellent job getting everything cleaned up."

Rain gauges at Gulf Breeze High School (GBHS) reported 15.33 inches of rain Oct. 18 and 10.23 inches the morning of Oct. 19 for a total of 25.56 inches. Oct. 18 was a record breaking day of rain reported at the Pensacola Regional Airport with 8.95 inches. The last record was 1.08 inches set in 1950, said meteorologist John Werner at the National Weather Service office in Mobile. Werner said



Franklin Hayes/Gulf Breeze News

The playground next to Gulf Breeze Elementary School was flooded Oct. 18.

the average amount of rainfall seen in October is 2.46 inches. As of Monday, Oct. 22, the airport recorded 15.73 inches since Oct. 1. However, despite the abnormal numbers for the month the area's yearly numbers are still down because of dry weather this summer. As of Monday, the airport recorded 45.2 inches for the year. The normal amount of rain for this time of year is 54.18 inches, making the area's recorded rainfall 9.34 inches below normal.

Rain was not the only problem last week. The Lowe's near Tiger Point was struck by lightning around 11:30 a.m. last Thursday and the store closed for several hours before reopen-

ing around 1 p.m., Store Manager Greg Gilmore said.

Midway firefighters arrived on scene to inspect the store with assistance from Gulf Breeze Fire and Rescue. Midway Fire Chief Stephen Demeter, who said his department responded to more than 20 calls last Thursday, said lightning struck the store's generator and traveled up electrical wires before dispersing. Demeter added that the strike did not cause any structure damage. No injuries were reported. The chief also said his department assisted the Holley Navarre Fire Department with a house that was struck by lightning in Navarre.

## CHAMBER: Developers want to keep offices on site

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Brandon, Fla. with an offer of \$1.4 million. The other three are: Moulton Properties Incorporated of Pensacola with a bid of just over \$1.1 million, 1559 Development, LLC of Pensacola for \$610,000, and Tiara of Pensacola, LLC of Gulf Breeze.

Meg Peltier with Gulf Breeze Chamber of Commerce said their

organization was given about a six-month notice that the school board was going to try to sell the property and that the chamber might have to find a new home.

"The chamber has a search committee looking for possible places to move the office, if we need to," Peltier said. "The City of Gulf Breeze pays the school board a dollar a year as a lease fee for use of the property. The cham-

ber had a 20-year lease with the city, and we have 13 years left on that lease. So we have been there about seven years. But everyone understands that the school board needs to sell the property because of funding cutbacks. It is kind of exciting to think of a whole new home for the chamber, whether we go into a new building still on that property or go someplace else, since next year is our 20th

anniversary of the chamber."

Lively said the developer with the highest bid for the property plans to build an office complex on the site.

"We will leave the old building there while we build the new one," he said. "We have a meeting set up with the chamber this week to talk about possibilities and ways to keep the chamber there."

## JAIL: Additional federal prisoners could fund expansion

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cal to what we have now, estimates put the cost at \$3.2 million."

He proposed an open bay dorm, like the tents, with 128 beds. He said the revenue from the additional federal inmates the jail expansion would pay for the cost.

"We would be able to immediately increase our federal inmate population by 50, and that would bring into the budget another \$1.788 million a year. That means we could raise over \$5,365,500 over the first three years after the addition is open," Sheriff Hall said.

County Commissioner John Broxson said, "Of course, we

would need to borrow every bit of this money, since we do not have it in our budget. So we will need to know, as close to the penny as we can get it, what the up front costs on this project would be. This is not a roadblock, it is just saying we really do need to know before we get too far into such a project what the real costs will be."

Sheriff Hall responded with: "I am recommending this even if it means we have to borrow all the money. We are overcrowded at the jail, with or without any federal prisoners. For me, as sheriff, to recommend doing nothing when we are growing 8 to 10 percent a year in jail population is not a solution. The problem is not

going away."

The sheriff said right now there are 575 inmates in the jail, and he said a "good number" for capacity is 480. There are people sleeping on "boat beds" on the floor, he said.

"The jail was opened in 1997, and it has made it 10 years," Hall said "But the county is growing so fast that we are continually overcrowded now."

Broxson asked if the overcrowding could be lessened from some inmates being released with GPS bracelets.

"We have great judges here, and they do what they say they will do," Sheriff Hall said. "And when you have misdemeanor violators sent home on probation and told that if they are seen

in front of the judge again they are going to jail, when they violate in two weeks and are seen before that judge they are sent to jail. And we have to have room for them."

He said the size of the single floor expansion would be 5,300 square feet. If the commissioners decided to build a second story, then the expansion would provide about 10,000 square feet. "And there is room on the other end for a second wing, too, for later expansion. This jail was built with expansion in mind," Hall said.

Commissioners voted to ask for bids from architectural services and construction management services for an addition to the jail.

## Bus: School board officials may stagger class start times

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bachelor's, we are going to hire the one without the master's degree," Gray said. "It's a matter of money."

"The class size amendment is not the only thing squeezing our resources," Gray warned. "Taking the average class size down from 25 to 18 increased the required number of classrooms by 30 percent. But there are other issues affecting us. Unlike other taxing authorities, we do not levy and control millage rates. All funding is mandated per student from the state, according to the FEFP. The money we send to Tallahassee is only about 25 percent of what we get back, and a large portion of the funding from the state comes from sales tax. The sales tax collection number is forever falling

and that downturn means everything's gotta give. The original expectation of 1 to 2 percent budget reductions for the school board is now looking more like 4 to 5 percent."

Gray cited bus service and school schedules are two areas likely to change to provide some of the needed cuts. The state provides funding only for bus routes outside a two mile radius.

"We make too many stops and we serve homes right behind the schools. We will probably need to find a more effective use of tax dollars," Gray said.

Gray sees the possibility of restructuring bus schedules so one bus can run all routes, and bus driving would be a full time job. Staggering school start times and even considering a four by four class schedule are

other cost-saving reductions.

New building codes add significantly to construction costs.

"The new high school we will be building to replace the school in Jay that is crumbling away will have a price tag that exceeds \$18 million because it'll be built like a fallout shelter," Gray quipped. "And if there is ever another storm you will want to go to the new Bennett Russell school. It is built solid as a rock."

"All these expenditures and cuts add up and that's why we are selling properties we don't really need like the Chamber building. The high bid for that was \$1.6 million for that ground and that'll build some classrooms. And when it's built out, it'll go on the tax rolls which again benefits the city and the school board."

Gray sees some of that

money staying local, helping to build the new "Cafetorium" where the old fifth grade pod stands at Gulf Breeze Elementary School, constructing classrooms in place of the old cafeteria and overhauling and refurbishing the decrepit field house at Gulf Breeze High School.

"I am very proud of this county school system," Gray said. "Over 11,000 volunteers support the work done and believe me volunteers make a difference. And our schools have consistently sustained high academic performance and have ranked within the top five counties statewide. And we have raised our teacher pay to be more competitive; we now pay a starting teacher about \$31,000 - not as much as it could be but much better than where we were five years ago."

### Calendar of Events

**Thursday, Oct. 25**  
**Pensacola Symphony Orchestra Guild New Member Coffee**, 10 a.m., 1905 East Strong St., Pensacola. Guild members and prospective members may contact Membership Chair Karen Mick at 850-474-1569 to RSVP.

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

**School Board Meeting**, 10 a.m., School District Administrative Offices, 5086 Canal Street, Milton

**Friday, Oct. 26**  
**Blood Drive**, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Channel 3 TV studio, 4990 Mobile Highway, Pensacola

**Navarre Beach Area Chamber of Commerce Monthly Commerce and Coffee Meeting Featuring Florida Representative Ray Sansom**, 7 a.m., Navarre Conference Center, 8700 Navarre Parkway, Navarre

**Poker Safari to Benefit The Zoo-Northwest Florida**, 5 p.m., My Spayce, 214 East Garden Street, Pensacola. For more information call 850-685-1487 or visit [www.holdemonthighway.com](http://www.holdemonthighway.com).

**Saturday, Oct. 27**  
**Super Mario Brothers Halloween Event**, Santino's

Gulf Breeze, 368 Gulf Breeze Parkway, Gulf Breeze

**Sunday, Oct. 28**  
**No meetings scheduled as of press time**

**Monday, Oct. 29**  
**No meetings scheduled as of press time**

**Tuesday, Oct. 30**  
**No meetings scheduled as of press time**

**Wednesday, Oct. 31**  
**City of Gulf Breeze Executive Committee Meeting**, 6:30 p.m., Gulf Breeze City Hall, 1070 Shoreline Drive, Gulf Breeze

**Thursday, Nov. 1**  
**Education Task Force Meeting**, 11:30 a.m., Oriole Beach Elementary School, 1260 Oriole Beach Road, Gulf Breeze. Call 850-932-7888 for more information or reservations.

Send calendar info to [news@gulfbreezenews.com](mailto:news@gulfbreezenews.com)

**For additional meeting information, visit:**

[www.splashpensacolabeach.com](http://www.splashpensacolabeach.com)  
[www.cityofgulfbreeze.com](http://www.cityofgulfbreeze.com)  
[www.santarosa.fl.gov](http://www.santarosa.fl.gov)  
[www.gulfbreezechamber.com](http://www.gulfbreezechamber.com)  
[sria-fla.com](http://sria-fla.com)  
[www.santarosa.k12.fl.us](http://www.santarosa.k12.fl.us)

## Out of state fugitive caught

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Gulf Breeze News  
[news@gulfbreezenews.com](mailto:news@gulfbreezenews.com)

The U.S. Marshals North Florida Violent Fugitive Task Force arrested Richard Allen Lyon at a residence on East River Drive in Navarre in the early morning of Oct. 16. In 1995, Lyon was convicted on two sex offense charges and sentenced to 15 years in state prison in Missouri.

The 44 year-old Lyon, who spent almost 11 years in jail on that conviction, is wanted in Jefferson City for parole violation after he absconded. The Marshals Task Force had received a tip Oct. 15 that Lyon was living at a trailer on the 9000 block of East River Drive and

planned on moving out soon. The Marshals acted quickly and requested help from its task force members from Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office and Ft. Walton Beach Police Department. Together with the help of the Santa Rosa County Sheriff's Office they snatched him up sitting outside of the trailer at about 8 a.m.

Lyon was taken into custody without incident. Lyon was taken to the Santa Rosa County Jail and booked in as a fugitive from justice where he will await extradition back to Missouri.



Lyon

### Elected Officials CONTACT

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 (850) 994-5446

**DIANE COLEMAN, Dist. 3**  
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**HUGH WINKLES, Dist. 2**  
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**DIANE SCOTT, Dist. 1**  
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**U.S. SENATORS**

**Senator MEL MARTINEZ (R)**  
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 (407) 254-2573

**Senator NELSON, BILL (D)**  
 US Court House Annex, 111 N. Adams St., Tallahassee, FL 32301  
 (850) 942-8415

### Santa Rosa County Sheriff's Office Report

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

<b>Felonies</b>	<b>10/14/07</b> Johnson, Robert Dana, 52, W/M, 8500 block of Laredo Street, Navarre, aggravated battery	<b>10/15/07</b> Cannella, Bruno Dominick, 39, W/M, 1700 block of Shellfish Drive, Navarre, possession of obscene material	<b>10/16/07</b> Miller, Robert Mason, 18, W/M,	<b>1800 block of Anderson Avenue, Gulf Breeze, larceny, less than \$5,000, dealing in stolen property, fraud</b>	<b>DUI</b>
<b>10/14/07</b> Crowder, James Edward, 30, W/M, 1900 block of Flamingo Lane, Navarre, burglary, larceny, less than \$5,000	<b>10/15/07</b> Spearman Jr., William Fletcher, 45, W/M, 3000 block of Wind Meadow Drive, Gulf Breeze, battery	<b>10/17/07</b> Gazoo, Tyler Ross, 18, W/M, 2200 block of Ortega Street, Navarre, larceny, less than \$5,000, dealing in stolen property, fraud			<b>10/14/07</b> Johnson, Robert Dana, 52, W/M, 8500 block of Laredo Street, Navarre, DUI
					<b>10/15/07</b> Rapier, Melissa Lynn, 35, W/F, 1300 block of Greenvista Lane, Gulf Breeze, DUI