

Community

Gulf Breeze NEWS

County bus drivers to vote on union contract

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Santa Rosa County School bus drivers who work for the contractor Durham School Services will be asked to vote soon whether they want a union representing them.

The drivers and mechanics are represented by Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 1395. The National Labor Relations Board confirmed to Gulf Breeze News that there is a valid petition to try to decertify the union, and an election for possible de certification will be held shortly after school

starts again in August. No date for that election has been set yet.

That means the drivers could start the new school year without a new contract.

The ATU Local 1395 sent letters to all county school bus drivers recently to explain the union's stance on the decertification election. The letter was signed by nine union officers or stewards from both ends of the county. The letter told drivers that the National Labor Relations Board had originally proposed June 18 for the decertification election. But the union's letter said the union did not want the election to be held during the summer

months, since it would be more difficult to get all drivers to the polls with vacations and possible communication problems.

However, with the possible union-busting election pending, the negotiations for the drivers' contract, which ended June 30, are possibly stalled.

Durham representatives told Gulf Breeze News they are just waiting on the union to give them the next date for contract negotiations.

But the union letter said the union did not expect any move toward real negotiations until after the decertification election.

"Our goal continues to be to obtain a contract prior to the start up of school in August," the letter stated. "But clearly this will be difficult with the decertification. With the possibility of an election, we don't see the company negotiating to reach a contract."

The letter said the company made no offers as far as wage increases prior to negotiating sessions.

If drivers start the new school year with no new contract, they would be covered by last year's contract. Any new contract worked out after the start of school would be retroactive.



Submitted Photo

Scouting fun

Gulf Breeze Troop 417 recently traveled to Camp Rainey Mountain, Ga. Activities included white water rafting, rowing, canoeing, sailing, wood carving, metal work, nuclear science, archery, electrical engineering, environmental science, rifle, fire starting and stopping, eating, sleeping and playing!

MEETING: sound ordinance coming?

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who has been addressing the county on the firing range issue since April, told the crowd that he has lived in his home behind the range for 15 years. "I know there has been firing there for several years, and I used to hear a few shots once in a while and it was no big deal," Dillon said. "But there has never been the high powered high caliber shooting until the last about 18 months." Dillon said he has not contacted the range owner by phone or in person with his concerns or complaints.

Lynchard said the owner of the firing range on Soundside told him over the phone that he is willing to compromise on hours of shooting, number of days each month, and even caliber size. But no one has contacted him.

Jerry Utsey, who also lives on Kitty Hawk behind the range, said the residents who are concerned

may need to get an attorney. "We would not really have standing to sue Dr. Howe, the owner of the range, since we live in another neighborhood and 1400 feet behind the range. But we could sue the county," Utsey said.

The new ordinance being proposed says no repetitive discharge of any firearm from a parcel of property is allowed more than five times in any 30 minutes. One resident suggested the county change that to read no more than two times in 24 hours. Lynchard said the public hearing will be Thursday morning, and commissioners will discuss any suggestions raised at that time before they vote.

Vic Bindy, a neighbor of the firing range on Soundside, said he is concerned about the ordinance and opening the door to more restrictions.

"If this is done, then what is next?" he said.

The Blake hosts bake sale to benefit the Ronald McDonald House

Join The Blake at Gulf Breeze on Saturday, July 25 from 1-3 p.m. for a Bake Sale to benefit the Ronald McDonald House of Pensacola.

The Blake at Gulf Breeze is located at 4410 Gulf Breeze Parkway. For more information, please contact Brooke Hicks at 850-934-4306.

The Ronald McDonald House provides the Best Home-Away-From-Home and source of respite and resources for families whose children are suffering a medical crisis. For additional details about the Ronald McDonald House, please call 850-477-2273.

MANNA hosts Super Saturday food drive

To help keep their shelves well stocked, MANNA has

BRIEFS

organized a mid-summer Super Saturday food drive on July 25. Receipts will be available for qualifying tax deductible donations

Donations will be accepted from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. at these area groceries: Apple Market; Ever'man Natural Foods; Super Walmart on Creighton; Super Walmart on Highway 29; Super Walmart in Gulf Breeze; Super Walmart on Blue Angel Parkway; and Winn Dixie on north Ninth Avenue and Creighton Road.

For more information please call Cathy Sowell, 850-432-2053.

OBITUARIES

MARTHA L. ROCHE 1957-2009

Martha Lynn Roche, 52, of Gulf Breeze, died Tuesday, July 15, 2009.

Ms. Roche was born in Cherry Point, NC on April 10, 1957. She received a degree in Business Administration at Kings College in Raleigh, NC. She moved to Pensacola during the mid 1980's. She acquired her Real Estate license and eventually became the office manager for American Realty. She was a hard worker and a valued employee.

Ms. Roche was a member of Calvary Chapel Gulf Breeze and a devote Christian. Her life was devoted to God, her daughter and her dog.

Survivors include one daughter, Jessica Roche of Gulf Breeze; mother, Pasty Widenhouse of Gulf Breeze; brother, Robert Widenhouse Jr of Beaufort, SC and sister, Sarah W. Ellisor of Columbia, SC.

A memorial Service was held Saturday, July 18 at Calvary Chapel Gulf Breeze with Pastor Joe Prestrige officiating. In lieu of flowers, Martha asked that contributions be made to the American Cancer Society.

Rose Lawn Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.

ANDREW GEORGE "DADDY-O" SZLAGA 1928 - 2009

Andrew Szlaga was carried off in the arms of the God he loved so much on July 19, 2009.

Andy was born in Chicago, Ill. on Nov. 30, 1928. He joined the US Navy in 1947 and served for twenty-six years. He was a multi-talented musician and served his country as a good-will ambassador in the music branch of the Navy. He entered as a Seaman and attained the rank of Lieutenant. His tours of duty took him and his family to Virginia, Illinois, Maryland, Washington, DC, France and Pensacola. He served on many vessels including the USS Forrestal where he was the ship's first bandleader. He was also an instructor and training officer at the Navy School of Music in Norfolk, Virginia. He served two years as an associate conductor at the US Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland. Not only was he a bandleader but he excelled at play-

ing the trumpet, trombone, saxophone, clarinet and piano. Andy was very proud to have filled the steps of the great March King, John Philip Sousa as the band-leader at the Naval Training Center, Great Lakes, Ill.

Upon retirement in Pensacola in 1973 he went on to hold positions at Citizen's and People's Bank and Catholic High School. Andy was a very devout man and volunteered for twenty years as the Music Director at the Nativity Catholic Church. Through the years he also taught piano and brass instruments to many children. He opened the world of music to these children by giving them private lessons. In 1974 he formed his own dance/big band-"Andy Szlaga and the Classics" and spent many evenings entertaining at local events. He was a member of the Elks and the Knights of Columbus.

Andy was a humble, selfless, fun-loving man who always put everyone else first. This was so evident in the love that he had for his surviving "bride" of fifty-eight years, Gloria Ruggiero Szlaga, his daughter Cyndey Szlaga Joyner, granddaughters Miranda Joyner and Caitlin Joyner and his great-

granddaughter Ainsley Grace Joyner. He is also survived by his three sisters, Eleanor Martin, Maryann Franczyk, Cathy (Carl) Bahr and numerous nieces and nephews.

Preceding him in death were his parents Martin and Catherine Szlaga, brother Martin Szlaga and, most recently his beloved son-in-law Randy Joyner.

Services for Andy were held Wednesday, July 22, at 11 a.m. at St Ann's Catholic Church, Gulf Breeze with Monsignor Michael Mooney officiating.

The family would like to thank Covenant Hospice for their care and Dr William Howe for his sincere concern, care and kindness to our family.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to Loaves and Fishes.

Arrangements are entrusted to Rose Lawn Funeral Home of Gulf Breeze.

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RESIDENTS

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is a gun we use a lot here," he said. "Let's see what the decibels are." The gun was shot several times, with the decibel reader right next to the gun, and a reading was taken each time. The reading always came out to be between 65 and 68 decibels. "A normal vacuum cleaner registers 70 decibels," Winter said.

A car drove by while Winter was standing on the side of the road, and the decibels of the passing car was 72.

"I just do not believe this is a sound issue," Winter said. "I believe it is driven by fear of the unknown. I would encourage the people who have the concern or the commissioners to come out and take a look at Dr. Howe's range."

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