

The Florida Times-Union

Saturday

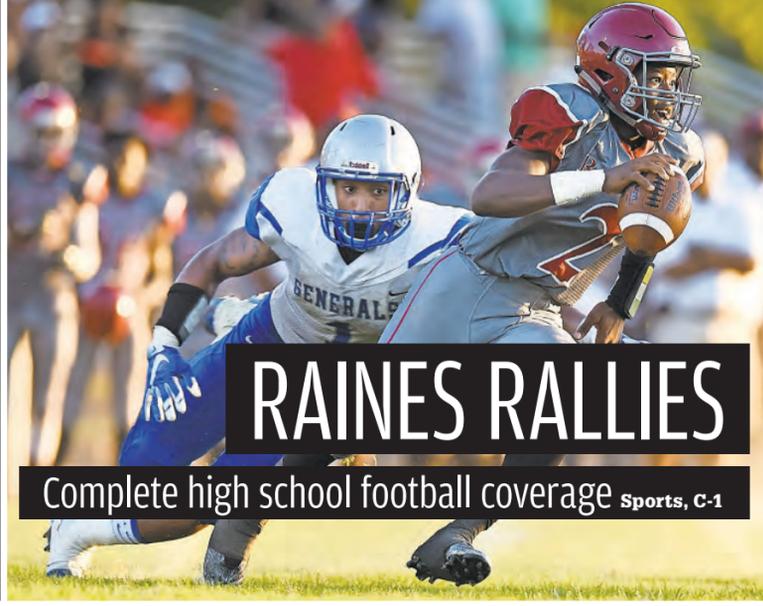
AUGUST 27, 2016

\$2

Special Section Coming Sunday



COLLEGE FOOTBALL
PREVIEW 2016



RAINES RALLIES

Complete high school football coverage Sports, C-1



BLOOD BANKS TO SCREEN FOR ZIKA

Nation, A-9

Poll: Curry's pension tax passing

Republicans' strong support puts approval projections beyond 50%

By Nate Monroe
nate.monroe@jacksonville.com

Mayor Lenny Curry's campaign for voters to approve a first-of-its-kind sales tax to pay down Jacksonville's \$2.85 billion pension debt appears to be on solid footing heading into Election Day, boosted in large part by strong support from Republican voters, according to a University of North Florida/Times-Union survey of 670 likely voters.

Curry, a Republican, has strived to emphasize that his plan has bipartisan back-

ing from the city's political, civic and religious leadership from a broad cross section of the city's many neighborhoods. And yet the survey also shows striking partisan and racial divides among supporters and opponents: White voters are far more likely to support the plan than black voters, and Republicans more likely to back it than Democrats.

Overall, 51 percent of respondents say they strongly or somewhat support his plan, far outstripping opposition, which

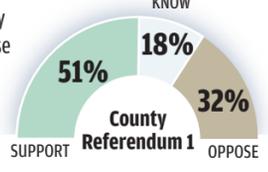
POLL continues on A-3

Majority backs pension plan

Respondents were asked if they support a referendum to impose under certain conditions a half-cent sales tax beginning in 2031 to reduce the city's unfunded pension liability.

Note: The 670 respondents were likely primary voters in Duval County. The margin of error is +/- 3.8 percentage points for the survey. Due to rounding numbers may not add up to 100 percent.

Source: Public Opinion Research Lab at the University of North Florida



Steve.Nelson@jacksonville.com

Election 2016 State Attorney

State attorney candidates differ on youth offenders



Bob.Self@jacksonville.com

Members of the neighborhood accountability board prepare to hear the case of a teen who was before them for a minor theft. The program is an alternative for teens charged with minor crimes.

Despite criticism, Corey says teens can avoid adult court

By Tessa Duvall
tessa.duvall@jacksonville.com

State Attorney Angela Corey's opponents are striving to distance themselves from the top prosecutor on matters of juvenile justice.

Though their plans are sometimes murky, Republican challengers Melissa Nelson and Wesley White promise one thing for sure: They will be different — different from each other, but intentionally so from Corey.

Corey, despite criticism from advocates and attorneys, is clear and resolute in her approach. She insists a mechanism gaining

traction around the state, called civil citation, isn't as good as her own methods. Civil citation handles minor offenses without arrest, but she believes that program lacks the prosecutorial flexibility to adapt to situations.

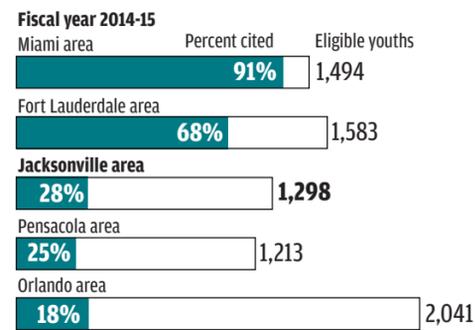
Corey stands by her office's decisions to charge dozens of teens each year as adults, citing her aggressive approach to violent crime. And she dismisses accusations that her prosecutors leverage pleas by threatening adult charges as absolutely untrue.

Should she be re-elected, Corey has said and her op-

JUVENILE continues on A-4

Few eligible offenders get citations

Civil citations, a non-arrest alternative to handling juvenile misdemeanors, are not standardized in their use across the state. Large judicial circuits, denoted here by their biggest city, vary in their use of the diversion program.



Source: Department of Juvenile Justice, Civil Citation Dashboard

MORE ELECTION NEWS ONLINE

Read in-depth stories on all the State Attorney candidates and check out a poll to see who's ahead in the race. Then check out coverage of other First Coast races and the pension tax online at jacksonville.com/election2016

Pastor faces molestation charges in Brunswick

Activist is a controversial figure in Jacksonville politics; turns himself in

By Mike Morrison, Terry Dickson & David Bauerlein
The Times-Union

Kenneth Adkins, a Brunswick pastor in Georgia who doubles as a political consultant in the Jacksonville area, has gotten into his share of controversies and conflicts. But none perhaps as serious as he's facing now.

Adkins, 56, turned himself over to Glynn County authorities Friday morning on charges of aggravated child molestation and child molestation stemming from allegations made by a young male former member of his congregation.

"We are disappointed with what appears to be a rush to judgment by law enforcement authorities in this case," said his wife, Charlotte Stormy Adkins. "We are confident that Kenneth Adkins will be found innocent of all charges."

Attorney Kevin Gough, hired to represent Adkins on Thursday, said a bail hearing could be as early as Monday, but a



Adkins

ADKINS continues on A-4

Third-grade promotion ruling could advance parents' case vs. state

By Brandon Larrabee
The News Service of Florida

TALLAHASSEE | A Leon County judge Friday declined to immediately order that students in a potentially precedent-setting lawsuit be promoted from third to fourth grade, but her rejection of several state arguments could fuel a movement that seeks to allow children to "opt out" of a standardized test.

In a 50-page ruling, Circuit Judge Karen Gievers turned down a request from parents for an injunction against five districts that held students back in the third grade after they refused to answer questions on the Florida Standards Assessment. She ordered a sixth district, Hernando County, to offer an alternative route for students to

TESTS continues on A-4

Weather
A few more showers
Forecast on A-2

88 Today's high

76 Sunday morning's low

DAILY DEAL!

B&G Electrical: \$79 for 2 hours of electrical troubleshooting Details, A-2

Classified D-8 Editorials B-8
Comics D-4 Legals C-8
Crosswords D-4, E-11 Money B-6
Dining D Obituaries B-4

COPYRIGHT 2016
NO. 240
152ND YEAR
6 SECTIONS
70 PAGES

6 5486 00100 4

POLL

Continued from A-1

sits at 32 percent; 18 percent of voters are undecided.

“Being over 50 percent at this point is good, especially because there is still a fair amount of indecision out there,” said Michael Binder, a UNF political science professor and director of the school’s Public Opinion Research Lab, which conducted the survey.

Undecided voters appear to be breaking for the pension tax. When UNF last conducted a survey in June, 26 percent of voters were undecided. That number dropped to 18 percent in the latest survey, while support jumped up from 41 percent to 51 percent this time.

That is “great news for Curry and supporters of this,” Binder said.

The survey, conducted Aug. 21-24, has a 3.8 percentage-point margin of error.

Curry has poured much of his political capital into passing the referendum, which he says would solve Jacksonville’s pension problems once and for all. Success with the results Tuesday would help solidify his standing in City Hall and vindicate his decision to support and put in front of voters an unprecedented tax plan.

The data in the survey indicate that Curry is on the verge of pulling off a remarkable — and counterintuitive — political victory: A Republican mayor convincing a Republican electorate to support a sales-tax plan. And this after convincing a Republican-controlled Legislature and governor to give the city permission to hold the vote in the first place.



Bob.Mack@jacksonville.com

Mayor Lenny Curry, a Republican, has emphasized that his plan has bipartisan support.

Majority support for Curry’s plan is largely anchored by Republican voters: 57 percent back the measure.

Democrats offer more tempered support, though it still enjoys a net positive backing: 45 percent support it versus 35 percent who don’t. Voters with another or no party affiliation back it by a smaller 6-point margin.

The mayor has worked hard to win the support of many influential black pastors and elected leaders who might help make inroads in some of the city’s most heavily Democratic neighborhoods, but his plan is under water with black voters. Forty percent oppose his plan, while 36 percent support it.

Black residents have for months shown up to voice concerns about Curry’s plan at City Council meetings, airing concerns their neighborhoods will be left out of any potential cash windfall resulting from

the pension tax. The local Democratic Party has also come out against Curry’s plan.

White voters show far less hesitation: 55 percent support the mayor’s plan.

Curry’s plan is faring well with voters in the Beaches communities, another constituency thought to be a harder sell for the plan.

Curry wants to enact a half-cent sales tax that would begin after the Better Jacksonville sales tax expires in 2030. The new tax, by state law, could only be dedicated to paying off the city’s \$2.85 billion pension debt. The Beaches municipalities currently get a share of the Better Jacksonville tax; they would get no such money after 2030 if the tax is extended.

But 57 percent of voters in the state House district that includes Atlantic, Neptune and Jacksonville beaches back Curry’s plan.

The survey anticipates an Aug. 30 electorate that

skews Republican — GOP voters make up 52 percent of the survey sample. That seems to fit the trend so far with early and absentee voting: 30,354 Republicans had cast early or mail-in ballots as of Thursday afternoon, compared with 23,886 Democrats.

Binder said it would take a “herculean Democratic turnout” at this point to endanger Curry’s plan. The Sunday before election day — called “souls to the polls” — is traditionally a big day for Democratic early voting.

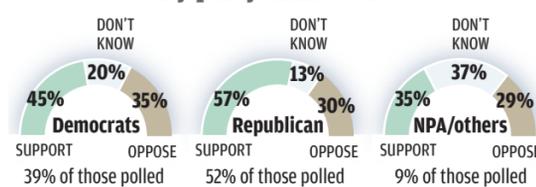
Meanwhile, there has been relatively little paid opposition to Curry’s plan, while the mayor and his allies have raised more than \$1.8 million. Binder said that, combined with Curry’s own popularity and that of the politicians who have backed his plan, appears to have moved the needle.

“I take this as pretty clear evidence of endorsements mattering,” Binder said.

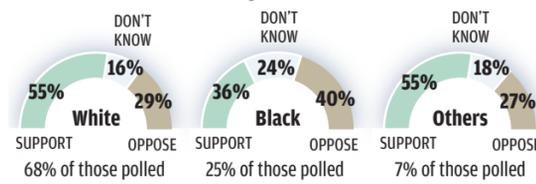
Partisan and racial divides

Respondents were asked if they support a referendum to impose under certain conditions a half-cent sales tax beginning in 2031 to reduce the city’s unfunded pension liability.

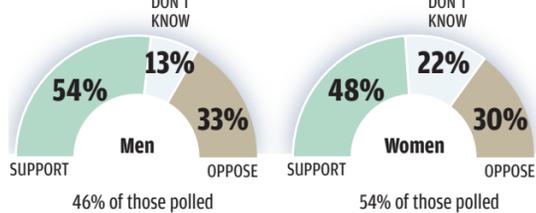
By party affiliation



By race



By gender



Note: The 670 respondents were likely primary voters in Duval County. The margin of error is +/- 3.8 percentage points for the survey. Due to rounding numbers may not add up to 100 percent.

Source: Public Opinion Research Lab at the University of North Florida
Steve.Nelson@jacksonville.com

Curry has nonetheless pushed back vigorously against even the hint of criticism and has complained about media coverage that he says has given too much attention to opponents. But he has faced relatively little skepticism as he asks voters to sign off on one of the largest financial transactions in the city’s history.

The mayor has, for example, often emphasized that his plan amounts only to a tax “extension” rather

than an “increase,” since voters would continue paying the same sales tax they pay now in 2031. A professionally run and well-funded opposition might have sought to challenge that subjective characterization. None has emerged, however, and so Curry has been able to define the terms of the discussion.

The referendum appears on Tuesday’s ballot as “County Referendum No. 1.”

Nate Monroe: (904) 359-4289

New Mexico horrified by rape, slaying of girl, 10

Suspect wasn’t being supervised by probation officers as ordered

By Russell Contreras & Susan Montoya Bryan
Associated Press

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. | The killing this week of a 10-year-old Albuquerque girl who was drugged, raped and dismembered is just the latest horrific child slaying case for New Mexico, which has the nation’s highest youth poverty rate and a state government that has had heavily publicized difficulties protecting children from abuse.

Victoria Martens was not known to have been a victim of previous violent abuse. But officials acknowledged Friday that the man accused of injecting her with methamphetamine before raping her was not being monitored by probation officers or tested for drugs as mandated by a judge last year.

In that case, 31-year-old Fabian Gonzales was arrested for beating another woman in a car with a baby inside it while the woman was driving and ended up pleading no contest to two misdemeanor crimes that kept him out of jail. Corrections department officials said Friday they never got the judge’s order for him to be supervised by probation officers.

Victoria’s death follows May’s 40-year prison sentence for an Albuquerque woman for the 2013 kicking death of her 9-year-old son. That case prompted an overhaul of the New Mexico state agency that investigates child abuse.

That same month, an 11-year-old Navajo girl was taken to a desolate area by a stranger who sexually assaulted her, bludgeoned her and left her to die.

“We have a litany of little angels who are crying at us from the grave,” said Allen Sanchez, executive director of the New Mexico Conference of Catholic

Bishops.

New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Secretary Monique Jacobson said Friday that state records showed no prior cases involving violence or sexual abuse against Victoria. The agency has joined police in the investigation into the death.

Jacobson said she was prohibited by law from disclosing whether the agency had received any other complaints related to Victoria.

The others charged in Victoria’s death are her mother, Michelle Martens, and Gonzales’ cousin Jessica Kelley.

While Martens has no online record of an arrest in New Mexico, she told police Kelley had been released from jail just days before Victoria’s death.

The three face charges of child abuse resulting in death, kidnapping and tampering with evidence. Gonzales and Kelley are also charged with criminal sexual penetration of a minor.

There were conflicting reports from state officials Friday over communication of probation requirements imposed on Gonzales between court administrators and the New Mexico Department of Corrections.

Deputy Corrections Secretary Alex Sanchez said her agency never received a judgment and sentence order mandating supervised probation for Gonzales. It was meant to ensure he committed no crimes and threatened jail time as punishment for violations like illegal drug use.

Second Judicial District Court spokesman Tim Korte said records show the documents were forwarded to the corrections department in February 2015.

New Mexico Gov. Susana Martinez said it was more troubling than all crimes she handled during a 25-year career as a state prosecutor before her election to the state’s top post in 2010.

Dillard’s

LAST DAY!

TODAY, SATURDAY, AUGUST 27

TAKE AN EXTRA 40% OFF

ENTIRE STOCK PERMANENTLY REDUCED

HANDBAGS • JEWELRY • WATCHES
LADIES ACCESSORIES • LINGERIE
MEN’S APPAREL • HOME

TAKE AN EXTRA 30% OFF

ENTIRE STOCK PERMANENTLY REDUCED

- LADIES APPAREL
- JUNIORS APPAREL
- KIDS APPAREL
- LADIES, MEN’S AND KIDS SHOES

No adjustments on previously sold merchandise. Call 1-800-345-5273 to find a Dillard’s near you.

Dillard’s
REWARDS

Earn points toward your choice of rewards when you use your Dillard’s Card.
Visit dillards.com/payonline for more details. *Subject to credit approval.
See store associates for details.

“Car Care With Integrity”

**YOUR Trusted HOMETOWN
AUTO REPAIR CENTER**

EXPERTS IN ALL MAKES & MODELS

ASE
National Institute for
Automotive
Service
Excellence

See our ad in
DRIVE
for
money saving
COUPONS