

# metro

## WILDFIRE SPREADS

West Mims blaze approaches 100,000 acres

Story, B-6



# New city hires won't get pensions, but 401(k)

Option to enroll in state plan still open to elected leaders

By David Bauerlein  
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Jacksonville City Council members applauded last week as Mayor Lenny Curry declared that closing the city's three pension plans to new hires means "we are out of the pension business."

But even with enactment of that historic change, one small but powerful group of future city employees will still

be able to enroll in pension plans.

The elected offices of mayor, City Council, sheriff, clerk of courts, tax collector, property appraiser and supervisor of elections are all in the Florida Retirement System (FRS), which is separate from the three city-managed pension plans that are closing Sept. 30 to future hires.

The FRS offers the option of enrolling in a pen-

sion plan or a 401(k)-style investment account.

When Curry took office in July 2015, he rejected participation in both the pension plan and the investment account, fulfilling a campaign pledge to forgo those retirement benefits.

But his successor as mayor will have the option of enrolling in the state's pension plan, as



Jacksonville City Council members applaud as Mayor Lenny Curry signs pension legislation that closes the city's three pension plans to new hires after Sept. 30. (Bob Self/Florida Times-Union)

**PENSIONS** continues on B-3

# Sheriff's office reassigns sergeant

Decision comes after complaint about role in sting

By Ben Conarck  
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The Jacksonville Sheriff's Office has moved an embattled sergeant out of its narcotics unit following at least one complaint questioning his role in a February buy-bust drug sting that ended in a fatal police shooting.

Sgt. Clayton Short was reassigned to Zone 4, the sheriff's office revealed in response to a public records request. Lauri-Ellen Smith, the sheriff's office's senior spokeswoman, declined to give a reason for the move.

"It is within the purview of the administration to move personnel, any time," Smith said.

Smith acknowledged the office had received an anonymous complaint about Short's role in the narcotics operation that preceded the shooting. She said the department investigates every complaint it receives.

The sheriff's office refused to say whether Short had any involvement in the operation, instructing the Times-Union to file a public records request for that information. The request was filed Tuesday and hasn't yet been filled.

A copy of Short's time sheet, obtained through a records request that took five weeks to fulfill, shows he was on duty the night of the shooting.

**SHIFTING ASSIGNMENTS**

The sheriff's office made several personnel moves following the fatal shooting of Jerome Keith Allen, a 22-year-old black man who was shot and killed by former narcotics detective Brian Turner on Feb. 6.

Police said Allen pointed a replica handgun inside a vehicle occupied by Turner and two other detectives, Lance Griffis and Kyle Kvies, who were participating in an undercover drug sting.

Immediately after the shooting, Turner was placed on administrative leave in accordance with sheriff's office policy. Griffis and Kvies were moved to the Teleserve unit, a phone-answering section within the sheriff's office, according to the unit roster. Teleserve often houses officers who are injured or under some sort of disciplinary review.

Shortly after their reassignments, Kvies and Griffis were arrested and charged with felony counts of tampering with a crime scene by removing cans of beer from their undercover vehicle after the shooting.

Though undercover de-

**SERGEANT** continues on B-3

# Rocking at Rockville



Rock fans crowd-surf to the band I Prevail during the seventh annual Monster Energy Welcome To Rockville event, a two-day, three-stage, 42-band festival that opened in Metropolitan Park on Saturday. The festival continues today with 20 bands playing throughout the day until headliners Def Leppard take the stage at 8:35 p.m. to close the show. (Photos by Bruce Lipsky/Florida Times-Union)

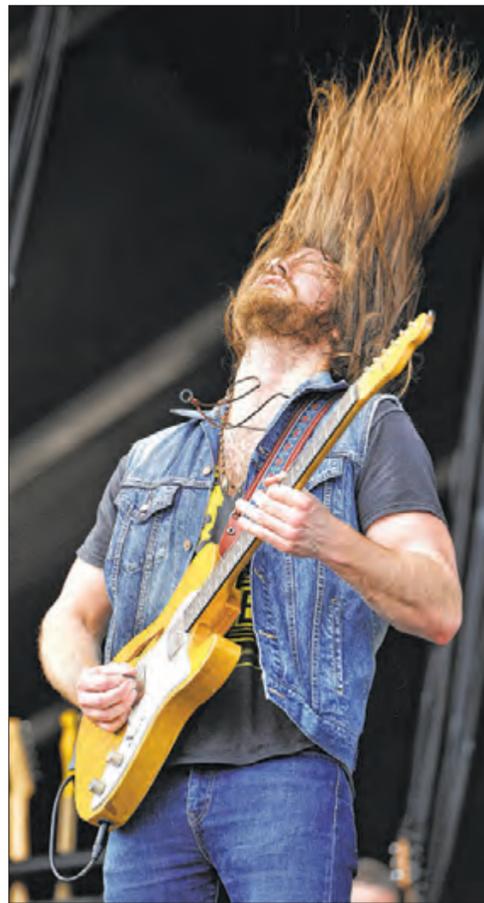


**Above:** Roy Olson returned to his hometown from Georgia to see some of the bands at Welcome to Rockville.

**Right:** Brandon Qualkenbush, rhythm guitarist for the power trio Goodbye June, plays on the Monster Energy Stage.

**MORE PHOTOS INSIDE**

**The crowd goes wild:** Bruce Lipsky captures concertgoers at Welcome to Rockville. **B-2**



# New Navy security system causes confusion

Few are able to follow transition between the new and old systems

By Joe Daraskevich  
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An abrupt change by the U.S. Navy in the middle of April that immediately altered the way commercial vendors get on and off bases around the country caused confusion among many that led to an eventual delay in the elimination of the previous security system.

Instead of using the plastic identification cards outsourced through private security company SureID since 2010 to ac-

cess each facility, the Navy announced a piece of paper will now be sufficient, until at least October. The paper pass is linked to the new security program — the Defense Biometrics Identification System (DBIDS) — until a permanent badge is issued.

The last-minute announcement came April 12 when the Navy issued an advisory outlining what was set to happen and the change went into effect April 17.

Navy officials said the



Kelly Haley checks a truck driver's ID at the Yorktown Gate at Jacksonville Naval Air Station on April 21. All naval installations are changing ID credentialing to the Defense Biometric Identification System. (U.S. Navy)

paper pass, with a barcode and picture of the authorized user, is meant to alleviate the potentially lengthy process of obtain-

ing new security credentials. It's also meant to avoid long lines at gates to

**NAVY** continues on B-3

# Find your park, before it's too late

*The fifth in a series of columns about our local pieces of the National Park System.*

My wife, Toni, and I headed to St. Augustine last weekend for "Castillo by Candlelight."

As part of National Park Week, Castillo de San Marcos National Monument was open after dark, with free admission. (Yep, I'm a big spender.)

We watched the sun set from atop the oldest masonry fort in the continental United States, then wandered around, looking at exhibits.

Throughout the fort, National Park Service staff and volunteers talked about the history of the place and their role in preserving and protecting it today. In one room, brochures for other area NPS sites were spread out on a table. I eavesdropped as a ranger told some visitors from the Northeast about the national monument 30 miles to the south, Fort Matanzas.

He explained it's a much smaller fort and ferry service remains stopped because of Hurricane Matthew damage. But, he said, other parts of the nearly 300-acre park remain open and are worth visiting.

He told them it's a beautiful piece of old Florida. "B.C.," he said. "Before condominiums."

Everyone laughed.

When I thought about this a few days later, it didn't seem quite as funny. Because a few days later, the future of some national monuments was in question.

President Donald Trump signed an executive order Wednesday calling for a review of about two dozen national monuments created since 1996 by the last three presidents. The executive order applies to monuments that are at least 100,000 acres, or where the secretary of the Department of the Interior "determines the designation or expansion was made without adequate public outreach and coordination with relevant stakeholders."

He specifically put a crosshair on national monuments created by Barack Obama, calling his predecessor's use of the Antiquities Act "an egregious abuse of power," saying it was a land grab (mostly of existing federal land), pledging "now we're going to free it up."

Just last year, the slogan for the National Park Service centennial was "Find Your Park."

Are we headed to a new era when the slogan should be "Lose Your Park"?

Yes, I'm exercising hyperbole. The two North Florida national monuments — established by President Calvin Coolidge in 1924 — are safe. For now and, I'd like to believe, forever. But even when it comes to pieces of the National Park System, forever is tenuous.

A little background: There are 417 NPS sites. More than 150 started as national monuments, established by presidents using the Antiquities Act, starting with Teddy Roosevelt and Devils Tower National Monument in 1906.

(Other local NPS sites — Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve, Cumberland Island National Seashore, Fort Frederica National Monument — were established by acts of Congress.)

One reason given for a review of national monuments was the idea that, until recently, the Antiquities Act only was used to preserve small pieces of land. This is hardly true.

**WOODS** continues on B-3

## WOODS

Continued from B-1

While it often was used to create relatively small, historic parks, it also was used to create large parks. For instance, in 1925, the year after Coolidge created the St. Augustine national monuments, he established Glacier Bay National Monument, a nearly 1.4 million-acre park which eventually became Glacier Bay National Park.

The other day, I looked at the list of places I visited when I spent a year working on a project about the future of our parks. Many started out as national monuments and later, by acts of Congress, became one of the 59 places with the highest designation: Grand Canyon (Teddy Roosevelt), Acadia (Woodrow Wilson), Saguaro (Herbert Hoover for one half, John F. Kennedy for the other), Dry Tortugas (Franklin D. Roosevelt), Grand Teton (FDR), Olympic (Teddy Roosevelt).

I also have fond memories of visiting some remarkable national monuments, including, before it became a national monument and the center of this



Castillo de San Marcos National Monument is one of two area national monuments established by a president using the Antiquities Act. (Mark Woods/Florida Times-Union)

controversy, Bears Ears in Utah.

It is not unprecedented for one president to reduce the size of a national monument created by a predecessor. Presidents Wilson, Coolidge, Taft, Truman and Eisenhower all did it. Wilson cut more than 300,000 acres from Mount Olympus National Monument (now Olympic National Park).

But in the 111-year history of the Antiquities Act, few presidents have talked

about such a dramatic reversal of prior designations and no president has ever attempted to revoke a national monument designation.

The review is in the hands of Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke. I'd argue one of President Trump's best decisions in his first 100 days was the selection of Zinke — intelligent, cut from the Western mold of conservatism, with a genuine love and appreciation of the

American outdoors.

But it was disappointing to see Zinke tweet about the executive order: "Today @POTUS fulfilled a promise to give rural America a voice by reviewing monuments that don't have local support."

It is hard to get more rural, more local or more American than the Native American tribes who have called Bears Ears home for generations.

A coalition of tribes supported the establishment

of a national monument. Members were involved in the creation of it. They said it was a celebratory moment in their history, an example of *their* voices finally being heard. So while many of Utah's top politicians opposed the national monument and applauded the executive order, many Native Americans were among the locals who were outraged.

"Bears Ears National Monument is more than just mere federal land to us, as it may be to many other stakeholders — it is a living landscape, it has a pulse," said Shaun Champoos, chairman of the Ute Indian Tribe Business Committee and the tribe's highest elected official. "It is offensive for politicians to call Bears Ears National Monument 'an abuse.'"

In theory, this is about "economic growth" — jobs, energy development, etc.

But for whom? Some of the recent battles fought around the Grand Canyon involve foreign companies that want to mine uranium and an Italian developer who wants to build near an entrance.

The executive order talked about reviewing national monument designations that "curtail economic growth." The irony

is this comes on the heels of a press release from the interior department that said, "Ryan Zinke announced that 2016's record visitation of 331 million visitors at America's 417 National Park Service sites contributed \$34.9 billion to the U.S. economy."

The release went on to talk about the "tangible economic benefits" of the parks, including more than 300,000 jobs in hotels, restaurants, transportation and recreation.

I'm glad to see people trotting out economic figures in defense of our parks. As a whole, they are a powerful economic engine. But even if they weren't — even if some could produce a bigger economic impact if they were developed or mined — isn't it possible for us, as a country, to save some things just because they're beautiful or historic? Because they're pieces of old America?

If not, maybe we should start tearing down Fort Matanzas. It's just a small fort with some prime Florida real estate, right? And did Coolidge really do adequate outreach with relevant stakeholders?

If not, maybe it's time to make it A.C.

After condos.

## First Coast Happenings

Compiled by Cindy Holfield

The Times-Union

### SUNDAY

**Florida's Birding and Photo Fest**, 6:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., various venues and GTM Research Reserve, 505 Guana River Road, Ponte Vedra Beach. Includes workshops, seminars and Eco-Tours. Keynote speaker is Lewis Kemper, Canon Explorer and Light Emeritus, on "My Stretch of the River." (904) 209-4422 or floridastretchoftheriver.com.

**Heal Autism Walk**, 8:30 a.m., Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens, 370 Zoo Parkway, off Heckscher Drive. Includes zoo animals, music, an interactive live show and, following the walk, a "Bubble-Goo Party with Nick" (John Travolta's stunt double). (904) 757-4463 or jacksonvillezoo.org.

**Welcome to Rockville Festival**, doors open 11 a.m., Metropolitan Park, across from EverBank Field. Acts appear on three

stages. Includes vendors. welcometorockvillefestival.com.

**Kilted Golf Tournament**, a George Landess Memorial, to benefit Homes for Our Troops, registration 11 a.m., shotgun start 1 p.m., Marsh Landing Country Club, Ponte Vedra Beach. Includes prizes, contests, drawings, a silent auction and awards dinner. Kilts optional. \$125 a person. (904) 725-5744 or nrflgames.com.

**Experience Israel**, Yom Ha'atzmaut Celebration, noon to 3 p.m., Jewish Community Alliance. Includes Israeli culture in fun activities, arts and crafts, music, dancing, and food. Free. (904) 730-2100, ext. 271.

**Library Book Sale**, noon to 5 p.m., University Park Library, 3435 University Blvd. N. Buy two bags of books, get a third bag free both days. (904) 630-2304 or fjpl.org.

**Home Tour** final day, to benefit Riverside Avondale Preservation, noon to 5 p.m., RAP Headquar-

ters, 2623 Herschel St. Features 11 homes, three commercial locations and multiple featured locations, like Riverside Arts Market and Willowbranch branch library. Raffle tickets, \$5 each, three for \$10 or six for \$20. (904) 389-2449 or riversideavondale.org.

**"Dreamgirls,"** meal 12:15 and 6:30 p.m., show 2 and 8 p.m.

Sundays; meal 6:30 p.m., show 8 p.m. Tuesdays-Fridays; meal 11:15 a.m. and 6:30 p.m., show 1:15 and 8 p.m. Saturdays; Alhambra Theatre & Dining, 12000 Beach Blvd. Bring new underwear and socks for the Undie Campaign "Drop Your Drawers" through Sunday. Show runs through May 21. Reservations, (904) 641-1212 or alhambrajax.com.

**"A New Brain,"** 2 p.m. Sunday, 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, The 5 & Dime, 112 E. Adams St. Show concludes 2 p.m. May 7. \$25. (904) 637-5100.

**"Hello, Dolly,"** 2 p.m., Northeast Florida Conservatory Theatre,

11363 San Jose Blvd., Building 200. \$20. (904) 206-1986 or showtixnow.com.

**"I Ought to be in Pictures,"** 2 p.m. Sunday, 7:30 p.m. Thursday-Saturday, Lighthouse Theatre, 11 Old Mission Ave., St. Augustine. Show continues 2 p.m. May 7, 7:30 p.m. May 11-13, 2 p.m. May 14. (904) 825-1164 or lighthouse-theatre.org.

**North Florida Women's Chorus**, "Food for Body and Soul: A Musical Feast for the Ears," 3 p.m., Beaches Chapel Church, 410 Florida Ave., Neptune Beach. Free. Bring canned goods for the food bank. womenschorale.org.

**"Beauty and the Beast Jr.,"** final junior performance, 3 p.m. Sunday; teen performances, 6 p.m. Friday, 3 and 6 p.m. Saturday, 3 p.m. Sunday; Orange Park Community Theatre, 2900 Moody Road. \$7. (904) 276-2599 or showtixnow.com.

**"Mr. Toad's Wild Expedition,"** 3 to 5 p.m. Sunday, 7:30 p.m. Thursday-Saturday, Christ

Episcopal Church, 400 San Juan Drive, Ponte Vedra Beach. \$20. (904) 285-6127 or christepiscopalchurch.org.

**Jacksonville Jumbo Shrimp** vs Mobile BayBears, 3:05 p.m. Sunday, 12:05 p.m. Monday, Baseball Grounds of Jacksonville. Promotions: Sunday, Bugs Bunny Day with face painting and Looney Tunes characters; Sunday Funday with families playing catch before the game, and kids 12 and younger run the bases after the game; Monday, Business Persons special, City Skip Day and VyStar Credit Union "Charity Begins At Home" with funds raised through ticket sales. \$5 general admission, \$9 reserved, \$18 dugout box seats; \$5 military for reserved or general admission seats with ID; \$2 hot dogs all season. (904) 358-2846 or jaxsuns.com.

**Fax to (904) 359-4478 or email events@jacksonville.com. To put your event in the online calendar, go to events.jacksonville.com.**

## SERGEANT

Continued from B-1

tectives are allowed to use beer cans as props, the officers were charged with removing them without permission.

Short's reassignment was a development the sheriff's office only recently confirmed. The Times-Union had obtained a copy of an emailed complaint dated Feb. 23 that had been submitted to the sheriff's office's integrity unit. Smith verified that the sheriff's office had also received the complaint.

The police sergeant's reassignment also followed a mid-April settlement agreement of a civil lawsuit stemming from a separate police shooting in 2012. Allegations in the lawsuit implicated Short's professional behavior.

Before the settlement was reached, former Jacksonville Sheriff's Office patrolman Jeff Edwards — who fired the fatal shots in the 2012 police shooting of Davinian Williams — claimed Short, who was his supervisor at the time, made racist comments immediately following the shooting.

Specifically, Edwards claimed during a deposition that Short said he was "glad (Edwards) shot that n——." The city agreed to settle the case for \$1.9 million.

An internal sheriff's office document showed a lengthy history of both in-house and citizen complaints against Short, who was hired in June 2002.

In his deposition, Edwards complained of nepotism within the department, specifically claiming that the sheriff's internal disciplinary reviews were biased toward certain officers.

### RESPONSE TO SHOOTING QUESTIONED

The complaint questioned what it said was Short's supervision of the narcotics operation and how long it took him to respond on the night of the shooting, citing an unverified computer-assisted dispatch timeline.

Because the complaint contained unverified allegations, the Times-Union has decided not to immediately publish it.

In a follow-up email on April 1 to the integrity unit, the complainant questioned whether the sheriff's office was taking the allegations against Short seriously, or if his connections to the office shielded him from scrutiny.

The sheriff's office said it could not comment on an ongoing investigation.

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## NAVY

Continued from B-1

exchange current security badges.

"We're basically going back to a government solution," said William Holden, program manager for base access control at Navy Installations Command.

Originally, the Navy issued a mandate that anyone with credentials through the RAPIDGate program provided by SureID had to exchange their identification cards by July 15. But after several conversations between SureID and the Navy, that date was pushed back another 30 days into August, said Capt. Wendy Snyder, director of public affairs for Navy Installations Command.

That's when the Navy Commercial Access Control System (NCACS) becomes obsolete and DBIDS will be the only system recognized by gate security.

The DBIDS system was first implemented in the Navy in November 2015 for active duty and civilian personnel, but the commercial implementation came without much warning.

"We weren't given a lot of time to make a transition on this," said Capt. Anthony Calandra, director of security and public safety for Navy Installations Command. "That's why we allowed such a long period of time to go in and get a paper pass."

The transition is happening at every Navy installation in the country, but in Jacksonville alone there were over 3,200 companies using the previous system — NCACS —

to access Mayport Naval Station and Jacksonville Naval Air Station.

According to SureID, the RAPIDGate program facilitated more than 1.7 million entrances and flagged more than 9,000 ingresses at Mayport and Jacksonville NAS combined since 2010. They credentialed more than 57,000 vendors for the two installations over that time.

The lack of warning ahead of the change made it difficult for those SureID customers to understand what was going on.

"We were caught completely off guard, as were our customers," said Jim Robell, president and chief operating officer for SureID.

He said their volume of calls increased dramatically the day the change went into place, but they didn't have all the answers about what was going to happen to their customers.

One RapidGate customer said she was "shocked" when her employees told her about the changes when they tried to get through the gates at Mayport April 17. She said the attendants at the pass and decal building hardly had any information themselves.

Authorities at Mayport and Jacksonville NAS would not comment on traffic backups after the change and referred all inquiries to national Navy offices.

"The installation we work with had no clue, so their people weren't even informed," the SureID customer said.

She said the change put her in a hole because the company had put in multiple badge requests for the rest of the year. Luck-

ily, the Navy has now extended the timeframe for NCACS users to replace their credentials, but the customer said she was still concerned about the new vetting process under the DBIDS program.

Calandra and Holden said the DBIDS vetting system is state-of-the-art, but they did not say why the change had to come without any warning.

That's where SureID had an issue.

The company filed a bid protest with the U.S. Government Accountability Office to initiate an automatic stay, but withdrew the filing a week later.

"The Navy informed SureID on the morning of April 24 that the Navy was going to reinstate RAPIDGate/NCACS services. SureID then immediately withdrew its bid protest," the company said in a statement late Friday.

Snyder said it wasn't a full reinstatement of the program, but rather an extension to allow the users ample time to make the transition.

"The opportunity here is we are giving them a little longer to continue to use NCACS," Snyder said. She insisted the Navy will be using DBIDS exclusively by the end of the year.

Calandra said the Navy was trying to make the transition as smooth as possible, but Robell said things could have been handled differently.

"We are trying to bring order to this chaos," Robell said.

He admitted filing the bid protest with the government caused even more confusion, but he said it was important to do everything to provide a reasonable solution for their customers.

## PENSIONS

Continued from B-1

will all others who win election to the local offices covered by the Florida Retirement System. In contrast, that ability to go into a pension plan option won't be available to other future city employees.

Changing that arrangement with the FRS would require an act of the state legislature, according to the city's Office of General Counsel.

During collective bargaining sessions earlier this year, unions pushed for moving all future city workers into the Florida Retirement System, where participants have a choice between enrolling in pension plans or 401(k)-style investment accounts.

But Curry ruled out that option at the start of collective bargaining talks. Unions eventually agreed to labor agreements that say employees hired after Sept. 30 will get investment accounts for their retirement benefits.

Steve Zona, president of the local Fraternal Order of Police, said current elected officeholders should be able to keep pensions "like they were promised," but people elected to those offices in the future should reject pensions and opt instead for the investment accounts in the FRS.

"If it is good enough for the employees of the city of Jacksonville, then it should be good enough for their elected leaders," Zona said. "Unless, of course, they want to introduce and pass new legislation return-

ing pensions for public safety workers in Jacksonville."

Randy Wyse, president of the International Association of Fire Fighters, said he's fine with the elected officials continuing to have a choice between pension plans and investment accounts in the FRS.

"For those people, that's a great option and I think they ought to have that," Wyse said.

He said he remains convinced other city employees should, likewise, have the same flexibility.

"The options they have now are good in the Florida Retirement System, and us not having that option is going to cause some serious, serious issues in the future as it relates to retention and recruitment," Wyse said.

Curry and Sheriff Mike Williams have said the city's investment accounts will be generous enough to attract and retain public safety employees.

Jacksonville's elected leaders used to be in the general employee pension plan, but in 2004, City Council authorized moving them into the FRS' "elected officer class" after a state attorney general opinion determined those officeholders are eligible for FRS under state law.

City General Counsel Jason Gabriel said when local government decides to participate in the FRS for any particular class of employees, as it did in 2004 for elected officials, that decision is irrevocable unless the state legislature agrees to make the change.

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