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By M.S. Butler
Crow’s Nest Correspondent

University of North Florida student Alexandria Lainez would like to pack more than books and a lunch when she leaves home for school every day—she would like to pack a gun.

The Jacksonville resident, along with an organization called Florida Carry, is suing UNF for violating her Second Amendment right to carry a gun on campus. The lawsuit has revived a dormant debate about a university student’s right to bear arms on campus and a school’s right to dictate public safety policy to its students.

UNF has a policy against weapons of any kind in its student handbook, much like USF St. Petersburg. USFSP’s reads: “The commission, aiding, abetting, attempting, or inciting of any of the following actions constitutes an offense for which a student or a student organization may be subject to the student conduct process … The unauthorized possession, storage, use or sale of any weapon (lethal or non-lethal), firearm, or any incendiary, explosive or destructive device.”

Florida Carry filed the suit on behalf of Lainez, a single mother, to force UNF to allow the student to keep a weapon in her vehicle on school property. University officials worry this is a first step toward complete elimination of the school’s weapons ban and would expose their students to undue risk and leave the university vulnerable to legal liability.

“No public college or university has the right to prevent students from having a firearm in their car as long as the firearm is legally possessed under state law,” Florida Carry said in a released statement. The organization claims Lainez worries “that she has to choose between her family’s safety and her education on a daily basis” when attending UNF. Currently, eight of Florida’s universities, including the USFSP, have policies prohibiting possession of a firearm on campus.

Florida law forbids possession of a firearm in any educational institution within Florida’s school districts. USFSP cites it in its student handbook: “Florida State Statute 790.06 (T2) forbids the carrying of firearms on a university campus. Firearms are not allowed in USF facilities, except when carried by law enforcement officers.”

The lawsuit, however, argues UNF, and other state universities, do not qualify for that exemption because they are state universities and not “local school districts”—the specific wording in the bill.

“UNF is always first and foremost concerned about the safety of our students,” the university said in a released statement. “We do not allow students to bring weapons on campus and we do not allow students to keep weapons locked in the trunks of their cars. We believe that we are following the law and we believe this is the best policy for a safe campus.”

Proponents of lifting the ban in Florida were buoyed when the Colorado Supreme Court ruled its ban violated a 2003 state law allowing concealed firearms. Currently, 24 states leave the policy up to the individual universities, and five states—Oregon, Mississippi, Wisconsin, Utah and Colorado—now permit concealed weapons on campus.

Many gun rights advocates assert a lift on the ban is needed to protect themselves from outbreaks of violence, such as the Virginia Tech shootings in 2007 in which 32 people died. They argue that easing the restrictions could prevent future assaults. Ken Stanton, a Ph.D. student at Virginia Tech at the time of the shootings, now believes if concealed weapons are permitted on campus students and faculty will be safer.

See GUNS pg. 3
News Briefs

Trip no more! The wonky sidewalk in Poynter Park between Harbor Hall and the Nelson Poynter Memorial Library is being torn up in favor of... well, something less wonky.

An email from external affairs announced the city of St. Petersburg is working in a coordinated effort with USF St. Petersburg to enhance campus safety and pedestrian flow. New lighting will also be installed. We’re hoping it’s green neon.

Speaking of the library, get ready for a barking good time on Dec. 12. A group of therapy dogs from Therapy Dogs International will be on paw to destressify the exam-takers, project makers and constant movers and shakers at USFSP.

Paws for a moment and stop terriifying yourself over all the ruff stuff you’ve been dealing with. You’ll leave wondering how you’ll ever deal without them. Woof!

As the new year nears, pledge to give up duped grouper with some help from the College of Marine Science.

The college unveiled its QPyre Handheld Sensor on Wednesday—a device that can verify whether the delicious fish is a phony or the real deal. Some local restaurants illegally advertise other species as grouper and charge cut-rate prices, putting legitimate businesses in a bind. Previous tests to weed out the fishy fakes cost thousands of dollars and took weeks to complete.


Got a pocket full of cash and an aching desire to stay in your dorm room? Good news!

Students living in Residence Hall One and the University Student Center have until 11 p.m. on Dec. 15 to pack up their necessary goods and leave. Those who fail to vacate will be charged $50 per hour until they leave.

Next semester’s move-in is scheduled for Jan. 6 at noon, meaning it would only cost a student $26,450 to stay here for the entirety of break. Might as well pick up a QPyre while you’re at it.

“Great effort, lot of enthusiasm, and guys being disciplined,” said Willie Taggart, as he accepted the job to coach the USF Bulls football team. “Discipline is the key to success.”

BY MIKE HOPEY

The exhaustive search for South Florida’s next football coach took less than a week. Six days after Athletic Director Doug Wooldard fired Skip Holtz he stood at the podium to introduce Willie Taggart as the Bulls’ third head coach on Dec. 8.

USF President Judy Genshaft opened the press conference before handing things over to Wooldard. “This is a great day for USF athletics,” he said. “We have a winner in Willie Taggart. His career is filled with success and achievement.”

Wooldard joked about the relatively short time since he was last in front of the press to announce the firing of Holtz on Dec. 2. Last Sunday, he announced his plan to find USF’s third ever head coach.

“We cast a very wide net,” he said. “As I anticipated our pool of candidates was excellent. It was wide and it was diverse.”

Taggart joins USF after three seasons as the head coach of the Western Kentucky University Hilltoppers. From 2010 to 2012, WKU went 16-20 overall and 13-11 in the Sun Belt Conference.

“There was opportunity to do great things here,” Taggart said. “Do something special. I said I’d never leave WKU unless I had a chance to go and win a national championship and I really believe that can get done here.”

Taggart plans to build a team that is tough. A team that no one will want to play. Taggart says they won’t bow to anybody.

“If you want to come build a bully,” Taggart said, “this is where to get it done.”

The first step, he said, is to sell his system to current USF players.

“What we have to do is get everyone on the bus. Get them in the right seat and have Coach T drive the bus,” Taggart said to loud cheers from the fans in attendance.

His second step is to find the best players the Bulls can recruit. At Stanford, he was so successful with recruiting that Jim Harbaugh put him in charge of the southeast.

“Recruiting is like brushing your teeth and combing your hair,” Taggart said. “Once you stop you start to look bad.”

Taggart took time at the beginning of his press conference to thank the Harbaugh family for their support in his career. He was excited to be close to his mother and father, who he has only seen once or twice a year since leaving for Kentucky in 1994.

See TAGGART, pg. 8

Defensive tackle Todd Chandler meets with new coach Willie Taggart after the press conference announcing his hire.
Funk said he did not know the percentage of hires drawn from committee-vetted lists compared to the finalists vetted by his firm. For aiding in the selection process, the firm will earn $50,000. Funk is like the "six degrees of Kevin Bacon" of higher education, he said, for all the college and university administrators he has helped place.

The off-the-record nature of that concurrent process allows for better candidates, Funk said, as many experienced administrators would rather not advertise to their employer they are looking for another job.

Michael R. Lane, one of the semifinalists, stepped down as president of Emporia State University in 2011 after it was discovered he was seeking a position elsewhere. "Some important constituents were unable to accept my decision to explore another opportunity, and it became difficult to continue to be effective in making progress for the university," he wrote in his application letter.

The previous chancellor, Margaret Sullivan, resigned during the summer, a year before the end of her contract. Sullivan, an accreditation specialist, had been brought out of retirement to fix USFSP’s flagging status with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. After one year in the position, Genshaft offered Sullivan a five-year contract, which was to expire at the end of this academic year. This decision, following the removal of former leaders Karen White at the end of the 2008 fall semester and Bill Heller in 2002, caused animosity between leaders in the Faculty Senate and the university president.

Senior faculty members close to Sullivan said she would have stayed if offered an extension to her contract.

The day his selection as interim chancellor was announced, Hogarth told The Crow’s Nest he had no intention of pursuing the permanent position. Though since then, he called the chancellorship "the best job I’ve ever had," in a blog post published to the university’s website.

news@crowsneststpete.com

Guns ‘not force field but we can defend ourselves’

"It is not a force field, but it just means that if something bad does happen we can defend ourselves," Benton said.

Marion Hammer, former National Rifle Association president, emphasized a concealed weapons law would ensure not every student would be able to bring a gun on campus. A state law would allow residents who are 21 years old, who take a training class and pass a background check, to obtain permits.

"Nothing about a university or college campus should take away an individual’s right of self-defense," Hammer said.

Just last year, the Florida State Senate introduced Senate Bill 234, which would have allowed the open carrying of firearms throughout the state, including on college campuses. In February, however, St. Augustine Republican Senator John Thrasher stripped the bill of its provision allowing weapons on campus. His decision followed an accident involving the daughter of his friend, Bob Cowie. On Jan. 9, Ashley Cowie, a 20-year-old interior design student at Florida State University died in her sorority house. A friend was showing her a variant on an AK-47 rifle when the gun accidentally discharged.

The other nine

These candidates all have administrative experience at colleges and universities of comparable size to USFSP, though some are not in this role currently. Several, too, work at universities with arrangements similar to USF’s system-within-a-system. Candidates are listed alphabetically and with their current or most recent position.

- John Anderson: President, Alfred State College, Alfred, N.Y.
- Linda Bradley: Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs, University of Central Florida, Orlando, Fla.
- Ron Brown: Provost, Wayne State University, Detroit, Mich.
- Yash Gupta: CEO, SDP Telecom, Montreal, Canada.
- Michael R. Lane: professor of accounting, Emporia, Kan.
- Michael Renner: professor of biology and psychology, Drake University, Des Moines, Iowa.
- Ralph Rogers: Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Purdue University Calumet, Hammond, Ind.
- Jeff Sneses: Vice President for Academic Affairs, Johnson & Wales University, Miami, Fla.
- Sophia Wisniewska: Chancellor, Penn State Brandywine, Media, Penn.

USF St. Petersburg’s highest achieving journalism students were inducted into the Kappa Tau Alpha honor society on Friday, gaining recognition among the country’s most promising young journalists.

Before graduating in August, 22-year-old Malory Spier worked tenaciously to make the KTA chapter a reality. With the help of Robert Dardenne, then director of the journalism department, Spier succeeded in getting USFSP approved as the society’s newest chapter.

“I thought it would be beneficial for myself and other students to have access to the organization,” Spier said, explaining that members in KTA means being part of a prestigious group that represents the top 10 percent of journalism students nationwide.

“It adds something extra to your resume and hopefully gives students that competitive edge they need to land an internship or job,” she said.

Journalism has never been easy,” Dardenne said. “Everyone has ideas about what is true and what the news should say, but the program from the beginning has tried to teach and uphold the highest values of journalism, no matter how our graduates end up using their degrees.”

This chapter of KTA gives the school a chance to recognize students who have reached the highest level of academic achievement, while working towards bettering journalism and journalism education, he said.

Founded in 1910 at the University of Missouri, KTA is the nation’s seventh oldest national honor society. Of about 400 journalism programs in the United States, only 95 have established KTA chapters, adding to the society’s prestige. The Greek letters of KTA mean “The Truth Will Prevail” and represent the English words “Knowledge, Truth, Accuracy.”

Spier, a Pinellas County native, wrote freelance for The Crow’s Nest, New Roots News and the Tampa Bay Times during her four years at USFSP. She graduated magna cum laude after completing an internship with a PBS station in San Jose, California, where she currently resides. Although she graduated before official inductions, Dardenne said Spier’s hard work was the driving force in getting the chapter under way.

news@crowsneststpete.com
Students transferring away say
USF Tampa is bigger, not better

By Ryan Ballogg
Staff Writer

For some students transferring to Tampa, USF St. Petersburg isn’t the right fit.

For others, USFSP is a stepping-stone—a place where they can get a feel for what they want out of college. For at least one student, the grass actually looks greener on the other side.

Kelly Romero is transferring next year because USFSP does not offer telecommunications, her major of choice. But she doesn’t regret starting her college experience here.

“I like this campus, and the smaller campus atmosphere,” Romero said. “It was a perfect place to adjust to college life. I think it’s important to think about education first, and then think about what kind of experience you want out of campus life.”

Like Romero, many students transfer for academic reasons. Tampa currently offers 89 undergraduate majors, compared to only 22 at USFSP.

“I personally think the small, close-knit atmosphere here at USFSP is golden, and if we had more majors to offer, more people would be willing to stay as well as transfer over here,” said Aziz Batihk. Batihk is a sophomore and biology major who is switching campuses next semester. He is also considering contact since I'm not at that campus every day,” she said.

For others, USFSP is a stepping-stone. "It was slightly complicated and stressful mostly because I have limited contact since I'm not at that campus every day,” she said.

Batihk also found the transferring process to be precarious. "Timing and preparation is key. I personally found it difficult to transfer over in a timely manner for the spring semester when I was only about to meet the requirements at the end of the previous fall semester,” he said.

Wolffert also found her work-study was temporarily dropped because she wasn’t registered at her new home campus.

Having spent time at both campuses, Romero feels that there are characteristic differences in the mindsets of students at the two campuses—though the differences aren’t enough to stop her from transferring.

"Kids here are really mature and smart in my experience. There's something different they want from life,” she said.

Ahmed described USFSP as the perfect school for freshmen.

"A lot of people aren't ready to make the full blown transition into a college setting. This campus at St. Pete makes it a lot easier because the class size is smaller and there is a much higher chance of being in communication with your professor,” he said.

Students have a lot of opinions about why one campus is better than the other, but all of the transferring students agree that they both have their merits.

I wouldn't change going here first,” Romero said.

The transferring students will miss USFSP, but are excited for the experiences that await them on the other side of Tampa Bay.

"Honestly, I think I will miss my roommates the most,” Wolffert said.

"We've gotten so close over this past semester that I know we'll have to keep in contact even when I leave. Other than that, I've had my heart set on Tampa from the beginning, and I'm ready for the right change.”

life@crownsneststpete.com
The island of misfit Christmas songs

From some music-forsaken place sprang the idea that any song with jingle bells constituted good holiday music. Unfortunately for us, record labels everywhere agreed. At least now we can appreciate a good one when we hear it. Spike some eggnog and brace yourself for an earful of snowy sludge.

Wonderful Christmastime  
By Paul McCartney  
'Somebody got a little overconfident with his songwriting. Paul could have at least been more convincing with this commercial sellout song; there’s not enough emotion here to excite a toy robot.

Happy Christmas (War is Over)  
By John Lennon and Yoko Ono  
Beatles members seem to have a tradition of fizzling out when it comes to carols. Then again maybe this one was just part of Yoko's plot to destroy the band’s legacy and eat John’s soul.

Christmas Time is Here Again  
By Ringo Starr  
'Oh Ringo, say it ain’t so. The hits just keep on coming from the Fab Four. He even takes the time to spell out the word “Christmastime” for us, bless his soul.

Christmas Song  
By George Harrison  
'He doesn’t actually have one! Hallelujah, my sweet lord.

Dominic the Donkey  
By Ray Allen, Sam Saltzberg and Wandra Merrell  
'Once, there was an Italian donkey that helped Santa deliver Christmas presents. This is one of those songs you’ll listen to again out of sheer disbelief that you heard it the first time.

Last Christmas  
By George Michael  
'Last Christmas when George Michael gave somebody his heart, they gave it away the very next day. SO WHY IS HE SINGING ABOUT IT AGAIN THIS YEAR? Teach us how to grow new hearts, George.

Christmas Shoes  
By Newsong  
'Fathoming the amount of trees that must have died to procure an ample amount of sappiness for this song is truly horrific. Seriously, it’s dripping in corny syrup.

Same Old Lang Syne  
By Dan Fogelberg  
'What’s worse than receiving a big fat bag of coal for Christmas? Can’t tell you, but it starts with “F” and ends with “ogelberg.”

Vincent Rescigno hangs an ornament handmade by students earlier in the day during the Winter Wonderland party in the University Student Center. Students could stuff their own animals, decorate holiday cookies and drink hot chocolate. A Chanukah menorah lighting ceremony is planned for Monday night at 5 p.m. at the Waterfront dock.

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Editorial

Already home for the holidays?

Boomerang Generation (origin: Western Culture) – phrase that refers to the current generation of young adults who leave their childhood home, go out to the world... and then move back.

Parasite Single (origin: Japan) – phrase that refers to the current generation of young adults who live with at their parents’ home to enjoy a comfortable life.

Wاث (origin: Middle East and North Africa) – term to describe unemployed college graduates between adolescence and adulthood who financially depend on their parents.

Emerging Adulthood (origin: Jeffrey Arnett, Ph.D.) – a growing experience characteristic to people 18 to 29 in industrialized societies, marked by personal instability and self-exploration as they try different career possibilities and romantic relationships (while avoiding marriage and parenthood and, usually, financial stability).

Adultescence (origin: Writer Sally Koslow, who thought Arnett was polishing a turd) – young, educated, capable adults still living at home. It’s no news that 18 to 34 year olds across the globe are staying close to their roots—either moving back in with their parents or never leaving. For parasite singles/those in wathood/emerging adults/adulstenents under 25, a startling 43 percent were estimated to live with their parents as of 2009. Maybe 18 to 34 year olds living at home are heeding advice they grew up hearing: Enjoy it while you’re young, and don’t grow up too fast.

The Boomerang Generation is hesitant when it comes to marrying and starting families, which contributes to this everlasting under-commitment. And good for them. They’re proven to be less willing to rush into marriage, remain in bad unions, or press into parenthood. There’s also the “I-moved-back-home-just-to-save-some-money” factor, which, given the circumstances, sticks.

Florida unemployment is currently at 9.2 percent, with underemployment at 17 percent. For young adults starting college, college dorms are a pricey toss-up. Off-campus housing offers freedom, but also the unknown: rent and roommates and landlords and security deposits and utilities.

The Boomerang Generation has the wind at their wings when it comes to justifications for living at home. But have we thought about what happens to the full-grown bird that doesn’t leave mama bird’s nest?

“For me, I felt right back into the role of being a child,” said Angela Mulligan, 24, who moved back home for a brief stint when she was 21.

Mulligan was a student majoring in engineering at Georgia Tech at the time, and went home for emotional stability during an “existential crisis.” After two months, she left again.

USF graduate Katelyn Sbani, 24, took longer to move away from home. “I had little motivation to move away to college because my social life existed at home,” Sbani said.

She lived in her hometown of Port Richey for her first two years at USF, and made the hour commute regularly.

In her junior year, she moved to an apartment near campus. “I became engrossed in a new social life and realized what I had been missing.”

She regrets living at home until 20, saying it perpetuated her adolescence.

The subject of living at home has proven its logic: young adults today are less likely to have financial support of a spouse, and underemployment and unemployment during this economy makes money tight. But at what expense are young adults missing out on personal growth if they still go home to mom and dad?

No Idea

a series by Elizabeth Malley

The Grammys are Wrong. Gangnam Style Deserves a Nomination.

The subject of living at home has...
My own Christmas story

By Ren Lafortune
Staff Columnist

I won’t be home this Christmas, but if I was, here’s what would happen:
My brother would wake me up at 4:30 a.m. Or my dad. They both get really excited. I’d slowly peel away at the half dozen blankets keeping me warm in the Buffalo cold, being careful to look for the stocking my mom put at the end of my bed (I used to pretend to be asleep, Sorry, Mom!).
I’d crawl out of whatever room I was sleeping in—my childhood bedroom existed across two states and seven houses, the last one is long-gone—and rub my eyes so I could see TBS’s “Christmas Story” marathon. My dad keeps it on all day long.
My brother and I would open the stockings first, setting the inevitable gum and toothbrushes and chocolate to the side. We would wait for my grandparents to arrive, the smell of coffee hanging in the air like a cheery Folgers commercial. Then we’d crack in on the big gifts. Mom made sure we opened our socks at the same time so we could turn and look each other in the eyes and throw them over our shoulders. I’d shower as the rest of my family ate breakfast, and then we’d all head to my grandmother’s house to open more gifts. I liked to wonder about how other families were celebrating as we drove over.
We weren’t a rich family, but my parents always made sure we had enough to keep the wonders of childhood alive. I’ll always be thankful for that. That’s why I scrounged enough money together to fly home this year even though I’m flat broke—not for Dec. 25, I’ll be here in St. Petersburg that day. But I will see them for a while beforehand.
Maybe we’ll watch that movie about the Red Ryder BB gun. My mom might still make coffee and let me open a few gifts early. I won’t see my grandpa, but my grandma will still be happy to give me a hug and wish me a merry Christmas. And as I’m flying back to St. Petersburg on Dec. 24 to spend time with my girlfriend and the friends I’ve made here, I’ll be wondering how you all are spending your day and hoping you get to spend it with the people you love.

On behalf of the entire staff of The Crowe’s Nest, I wish you and your family a safe and happy holiday season. And, for Pete’s sake, don’t shoot your eye out.

By Lauren Reilly
Guest Columnist

Aside from this being the magical time of year for exams and holiday cheer, it’s also time to head back home, which is always a little weird. A total family immersion really contrasts to college classes and friends.
Having been so committed to school, there’s no good reason to stop now and all kinds of reasons to share what I’ve learned with my family and friends.
As far as gifts go, it’s definitely possible to be sustainable. Wrap presents in old newspaper, worn out clothes or even old assignment printouts. Be creative! As long as the gift is from the heart, no one will care what it’s wrapped in.
Another good way to keep gift exchanging sustainable is to buy people gifts that promote sustainability. Last year I bought my brother’s girlfriend a handmade tote bag. She’s a physical therapist and said she still uses it every day to bring a change of clothes to work. This helps eliminate the need for plastic bags. Reusable coffee cups, kitcheware made of bamboo or even homemade soaps and perfumes are other good sustainable gifts.

When going to a holiday party, forget relying on a Solo cup and bring your own. Solo cups are No. 5 plastic, which isn’t recyclable in every city (not even St. Petersburg!). Reduce your waste and amp your style—rock a cup from your own home.

Then there’s the most awkward part of the holidays: actually sitting down with your family and having a conversation. Something I’ve learned over the years is it’s OK to share your views with your family. Sustainability is sort of a new thing. My parents are always impressed when I talk about my global understanding of how the world works. They can really see that I’ve grown into a person with whom I talk about my care for humanity.

So use this holiday to the full potential. Talk with your family about your life decisions and encourage them to think of ways to improve. Not only does it reduce trash but it can also be an enjoyable creative process.

By Wendy Joan Biddlecombe
Staff Columnist

Lack of campus center works for serendipity

By Frank Kurtz
Staff Columnist

After over two months of delay our Student Union has finally been completed.
In case you were not aware, student services that were supposed to go into what became the University Revenue Building (my name for the University Student Center) got shipped across the street to the old Campus Activities Center (now known as the Student Life Center).
We all know how I feel about the whole URB, so I took the opportuni-
ty to rethink the situation and try to find the positives. I found one. At USF St. Petersburg, we don’t have a traditional Student Union. We don’t have the Marshall Center, which can be found at the main campus, or the J. Wayne Reitz Union at University of Florida, or the Ogleby Union at The Florida State University. All of these places have multiple student services, are large, have food courts and stores where you can purchase anything from computers to the new campus tree.
We are unique here at the old commuter school. Our Student Union is spread out all over campus.
First, there is what the administra-
tion calls our “student union.” The University Revenue Building has a dining hall, and sometimes people gather there when they ain’t eatin’. I reckon that these folks pre-
dominantly are resident students, which is not a bad thing (I’m a red sticker too). Davis Lounge is another place where students tend to gather. This is where students find features that are available in the student union: vending machines, television, tables for billiards and ping pong, air hockey, pianos and couches for students to study, converse, or not study. I hope that this lounge area stays the way it is for years to come, but if must be changed in the name of campus expansion, I hope it all gets moved to the old Chick Fil A.
Behind Davis Hall is the beauti-
ful harbor, which is a nice place to sit and pass time. The Tavern at Bayboro could be considered part of our student union. It’s a place where can find a frosty beverage and burger with friends and share some laughs after class... never a dull moment.
That brings me to the Student Life Center, now home to Student Government, the wellness center, health center, student newspaper, and other various student life ser-
dices. Every day, students will be in and out of the building due to the vast array of activities located in this building. Perhaps there will be couches and tables in the atrium so students can relax or study or just pass some time with friends; I recall there being couches in there before.
I think the fact that there is no “center of campus” makes this place unique and charming. If you want to go play pool or take a dip in one, you can. Everything on campus is all in spitting distance, and there’s a good chance you’ll run into some one you know.

Dispatch from the other side

Week one, day seven (as a reporter in the real world): I made two people cry today.
The day started inauspiciously, as I tried to figure out how to wrangle a story out of a Christmas parade that has happened every second Saturday in December for nearly 40 years. My most promis-
ing lead was nowhere to be found (how do you miss a Marine riding in tiny cars). Instead, I snapped away, capturing chubby cheeked babies in red wagons, Civil War re-enac-
tors packing muskets and Shriners riding in tiny cars.
Later, back in the newsroom, I learned it was a big problem I didn’t get a good shot of Santa.
Task two du jour: interview the parents who lost their teenage son 10 years ago in a jet Ski accident in the gulf. A crab trap got caught up in their motors, and the boy and his friend succumbed to hypothermia, their bodies discovered the next day long.
I purposely drove past the purple crowsneststpete.com
From Texas A&M to Jay-Z, 2012 was a great year for sports, fans

By Nicholas Forrester
Crow's Nest Correspondent

The New Orleans Hornets announced last week that they will be changing their name to the New Orleans Pelicans. New owner Tom Benson, who also owns the NFL’s Saints, has been committed to a name change since buying the team in 2011. The Pelican is the state bird of Louisiana and appears on the flag. Pelicans are also ruthless killing machines that only eat meat that they personally hunted.

The sides have not publicly announced any plans to meet this week would have saved the hockey season but negotiations fell through.

From Texas A&M to Jay-Z, 2012 was a great year for sports, fans

By Mike Hopey
Staff Columnist

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The Army-Navy game can be a difficult thing to watch and support if you lean left. That’s the side of the aisle that tends to decry the inflated defense budget that keeps funding from infrastructure and education. I’m inclined to engage but there is something to remember.

The Army-Navy game is the only football game where the players on the field are willing to die for all Americans.

Support the military or not, the young men on that field aren’t in it for NFL contracts—they are out there for us.

People are drawn to the game for so many reasons. Many serve or are serving. A lot love someone who has served.

The Army-Navy game is the one time of the year where our country can get together and show anyone who cares our very best—not our best football or football players but the best of our spirit.

The world can be a difficult thing to understand. There are a lot of in and outs. But the respect and empathy we have for each other is easy enough to grasp.

I started watching as a way to bond with my stepfather Kevin, who served 26 years in the Navy. The game meant a lot to him and along the way it started to mean a lot to me, too. I used to hide my support for the Naval Academy from my liberal friends. But I realized a long time ago that it doesn’t make me a warmonger; it makes me a patriot.

Army had a chance to win last Saturday. Trent Steelman, the first Army quarterback to start four games against Navy, fumbled the ball on the Navy 11 yard line ending the game. Kevin texted me right away.

“What a sad ending for Army! I have tears watching the turnover and ultimate score/win. Steelman will live with that forever. Sad. But the best football game I have seen all year.”

Army-Navy isn’t a sea of red. It’s a mix of red and blue. It’s American.

hopey@mail.usf.edu

Taggart: ‘Much respect for Holtz’

Taggart also thanked his predecessor.

“I’d like to thank coach Holtz for leaving great young men behind for us, leaving the foundation we can build off,” Taggart said. “I have so much respect for coach Holtz.”

Originally from Bradenton, Taggart played for WKU from 1995-98 as a quarterback. After graduating, he served as an assistant coach with the Hilltoppers under his old coach Jack Harbaugh. In 2007, he began a stint as the running backs coach at Stanford under Jack’s son, Jim, who now coaches the NFL’s San Francisco 49ers.

As the running backs coach for the Cardinal, Taggart helped current Minnesota Vikings running back Toby Gerhart develop into an All-American. Under Taggart, Gerhart won the Doak Campbell Award for the nation’s best running back, and was runner up to Mark Ingram Jr. in the Heisman Trophy voting.

Taggart left Stanford to take over for Jack Harbaugh as the head coach of the Hilltoppers in 2010. He took over a WKU team that had lost 20 games in a row. In just three years he turned that team into a bowl team.

As a quarterback at WKU, Taggart was the only third player in Hilltoppers’ history to be a four-year starter. In his junior and senior seasons he was a finalist for the Walter Payton Award given to the best offensive player in Division 1-AA. After graduating, Taggart became one of four students to have his jersey retired.

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SPORTS BRIEFS

The New Orleans Hornets announced last week that they will be changing their name to the New Orleans Pelicans. New owner Tom Benson, who also owns the NFL’s Saints, has been committed to a name change since buying the team in 2011. The Pelican is the state bird of Louisiana and appears on the flag. Pelicans are also ruthless killing machines that only eat meat that they personally hunted.

Officials for the Beef ‘O’ Brady’s St. Petersburg Bowl invited the Ball State Cardinals of the MAC and Central Florida Golden Knights of Conference USA to participate in this year’s game at Tropicana Field. The game will be held on Friday, Dec. 21. Kickoff will be at 7:30 and the game will be broadcasted on ESPN.

The USF Women’s Basketball team is undefeated at 8-0 after a 92-52 walloping of the Jacksonville University Dolphins on Dec. 8. The Lady Bulls will be back at it in the Sun Dome on Dec. 16 when they host Nebraska. USF will head to Cancun, Mexico for the Caribbean Classic on Dec. 21-22.

NHL owners and players appeared to be close to a deal last week that would have saved the hockey season but negotiations fell through. The sides have not publicly announced any plans to meet this week but several reports are that they will likely return to the bargaining table.