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## Keeping Your Funds On Track

*Railroad & Industrial Federal Credit Union Opens Zephyrhills Branch*

**Staff Report**

Railroad & Industrial Credit Union is opening its ninth branch in Florida at 36239 S.R. 54 in Zephyrhills.

The branch in the building where Center State Bank used to operate represents an expansion of the credit union into the Pasco County market, said Allen Jernigan, a credit union spokesman.

The Greater Zephyrhills Chamber of Commerce will hold a ribbon cutting at the credit union at noon on June 22. There will also be business networking



A grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony for Railroad & Industrial Federal Credit Union will be held on June 22 at the former location of Center State Bank on State Road 54.

*Photo by Joe Potter*

**Credit • Continued on Page 7A**

## McKinney To Focus On Pastoral Duties

*Police Captain Looks Back On Service To City*

**by Dave Walters**



Robert McKinney, pastor of First Baptist Church, is looking forward to spending more time with his wife and children as well as church following his recent retirement as a Captain in the Zephyrhills Police Department. *Photo by Keri McAlpine*

Robert McKinney has closed the book on his 30 years of law enforcement, a career that included spiritual healing during times of crisis.

While he hung up his gun belt, McKinney has plenty on his plate to keep him from becoming bored.

He serves as the pastor of the First Baptist Church of Zephyrhills where he will dedicate even more time now that he is no longer serving the residents of the city as a cop. McKinney became an ordained minister in 1992.

"I have a ton of work to do at the church, so that's keeping me plenty busy," McKinney said.

His career started with the St. Leo Police Department

**McKinney • Continued on Page 6A**

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## Own A Piece Of The City

*Auction Set For Old City Hall Items*

**Story and photos by Keri McAlpine**

As city employees began boxing up office supplies and personal items for the move to city hall's temporary location, they realized just how much stuff they were leaving behind.

The old city council chamber at 5335 Eighth St. is currently filled to the brim with all sorts of left behind equipment and décor to be sold in a public auction

**Auction • Continued on Page 6A**



City Manager Steve Spina walks along the edges of the former city council chamber, which is currently filled with well-worn and unused office equipment to be put up for public auction the morning of June 20.

**INSIDE:** Pg. 3A - Police Chief Could Be Named In September Pg. 7A - Council Discusses Issues Regarding City Charter Pg. 1B - Tractor Collection Keeps Man Busy  
 Pg. 5A - Meals On Wheels Gets Artistic Makover Pg. 1B - 'Bump In The Road' Presentation Well Received Pg. 1B - Driver License Services Unavailable This Weekend

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# Zephyrhills Arrests

## Blood Stained Shirt ID's Burglary Suspect

**Thomas Peter Edmonds Jr.**, 47, of 38832 South Ave., was arrested by Zephyrhills police on May 28 on a charge of burglary. Edmonds allegedly gained access to Carriage Trade Dry Cleaners by going through the roof of the building located at 38225 12th Ave. Once inside, Edmonds allegedly used a t-shirt to wrap his hand prior to breaking the glass on a coin-operated game machine. It was determined Edmonds cut his hand while breaking the glass. The incident was recorded via video surveillance. The shirt was submitted to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement for DNA testing which reportedly resulted in a positive match for Edmonds. During the investigation, it was also determined that Edmonds was a former tenant of a suite located on the premises of the Carriage Trade Dry Cleaners property. Edmonds was booked into the Pasco County Jail.



threatened to throw the can but decided not to do so. Lawson reportedly stated she was then attacked by her sister, but she could not provide any explanation of how she had been attacked. She did not have any visible injuries. Lawson was booked into the Pasco County Jail.

**Joshua Ryan Hunt**, 27, of 5231 Braddock Drive, was apprehended by Zephyrhills police on May 23 on two Polk County warrants charging him with failure to appear – possession of marijuana – under 20 grams and FTA – possession of drug paraphernalia. Police made contact with Hunt at 10th Avenue and 13th Street and he was arrested after the warrants were confirmed.



**Celena Marie Stadolnik**, 23, transient, was apprehended by Zephyrhills police on May 25 on a Pasco County warrant charging her with violation of probation – possession of controlled substance and possession of marijuana. She was arrested after the warrants were confirmed.



**Zachary Tyler Moody**, 22, of 39632 Meadowood Loop, was arrested by Zephyrhills police on May 28 on a charge of simple battery. Police responded to the address regarding a delayed battery com-



plaint. Moody, who had called the police, reportedly said he was involved in a fight with the victim. Moody reportedly told police the victim entered his yard and was threatening to shoot him so he punched the victim in the face. Moody also said the victim swung at him several times but missed. The victim told police he had gone to Moody's residence to break up a fight Moody was involved in. The victim said Moody then turned toward him and began punching him. The victim had a laceration over his left eye and swelling beneath the eye. Moody was determined to be the primary aggressor and was booked into the Pasco County Jail.

**Jerry Roy Bohannon**, 39, of 5428 20th St., was arrested by Zephyrhills police on May 31 on a charge of domestic battery. Bohannon allegedly struck his girlfriend of two months on the face with a closed fist causing her to have a swollen and bloody lip. Bohannon was booked into the Pasco County Jail.



**Holeen Kay Williams**, 36, of 6040 18th St., was arrested by Zephyrhills police on May 26 on a charge of domestic battery. She was allegedly in a verbal altercation that turned physical when she willfully and intentionally pushed the victim, causing him to lose his balance and stumble out of



the kitchen. The defendant and the victim have lived together as a family for about two years. Williams also allegedly admitted to having been in a physical altercation with her sister prior to this incident. Williams' son told police he saw the victim stumble out of the kitchen and he had to restrain his mother at one point to prevent her from further advancing on the victim. An odor of an alcoholic beverage was detected on both the defendant and the victim. Williams was determined to be the primary aggressor and was booked into the Pasco County Jail.

**Rhonda Jean Hood**, 43, of 4755 20th St., was arrested by Zephyrhills police on June 4 on a charge of domestic battery. Hood reportedly told police she got into a verbal argument with the victim and the victim had punched her in the forehead. They reportedly reside together and are in a romantic relationship. A check of Hood's reportedly revealed no visible marks, bruises, cuts or other injuries. The victim told police Hood had bit his arm and his arm had unintentionally grazed Hood as he withdrew his arm. A bite mark was reportedly visible on the back portion of the victim's right arm. Hood declined to answer questions after she was arrested and was booked into the Pasco County Jail.



*The information provided in the Zephyrhills Police report is taken from public record. All parties are considered innocent until proven guilty.*

**Eileen Barbara Lawson**, 52, of 5554 11th St., was arrested by Zephyrhills police on May 23 on a charge of domestic battery. Lawson's biological sister allegedly threatened to throw a can at her. The victim told police Lawson didn't throw the can but that she did grab her and started wrestling with her, causing her to sustain several visible small abrasions to her right arm. The victim also complained of knee pain she said occurred when both she and her sister fell to the ground. Lawson said she had



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# Police Chief Could Be Named In September

## Committee Will Interview Finalists For Position

by Joe Potter

The search for a new chief for the Zephyrhills Police Department will begin soon.

The department's operations captain, Derek Brewer, was named interim chief on June 1 following the May 31 retirement of Chief David Shears, a 25-year veteran of the force.

Shears was police chief from 2008-2017.

"Things are in good hands over there right now," City Manager Steve Spina said, regarding the police department.

The city's human resources director, Sandra Amerson, is currently working on a job description for the chief's position. After that is approved, the position will be advertised nationally, Spina said.

The job will be listed on the websites of the Florida Police Chiefs Association and the National Association of Chiefs of Police.

"I think that's all we will need to do," Spina said.

A four- to five-member committee will be appointed by Spina to interview finalists for the position. Members will include Spina, Amerson, another

city department head and one or two current or former police chiefs.

After interviews have been completed, committee members will rank the finalists and make its recommendations.

Spina said he will then present that individual's name to city council to be considered as police chief.

Spina said the entire process is anticipated to take 90 days to complete.

The city is currently facing some other priorities now including preparation for the 2017-18 fiscal year budget and the pending relocation of city government operations so a new city hall can be built, Spina said.

City council has never previously refused to vote in favor of the person recommended for police chief by the city manager.

Two men from outside the department – Jerry Freeman (2002-2003) and Russell Barnes (2003-2008) served as chief following the retirement of former chief Robert Howell in 2002. Howell was chosen from within the department following the retirement of longtime former chief William R. Eiland, with whom Howell had served for several years.

# May Citizens Of The Month



The May 2017 Greater Zephyrhills Chamber of Commerce Student Citizens for May 2017 with Chamber representatives at the Student Citizen of the Month ceremony, held May 17 at the Church at Chancey Road. Pictured, from left, are Parker Howry, 6, Woodland Elementary School; Melonie Monson, GZCOC executive director; Zelia Betz-Merrill, 9, The Broach School; Kali Deshane, 10, Chester W. Taylor Elementary School; Jose Polo, 15, Hope Ranch Learning Academy; Carolyn Sentelik, president, Chamber board of directors; Katie Aspedon, 17, Zephyrhills High School; Joyla Tenryk, 13, Raymond B. Stewart Middle School; Roxxy Geisenheimer, GZCOC marketing and events coordinator; Aliza Hernandez, 16, East Pasco Adventist Academy; Tristan Geist, 8, Heritage Academy; Eleanor Cornelius, GZCOC membership coordinator; Katy Boyd, GZCOC ambassador chairperson; and Savannah Best, 9, West Zephyrhills Elementary School.

Photo Provided

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## East Pasco Events

**June 15 – Rural Domestic Violence Statewide Institute** – Designed to provide information and resources to address the unique needs of rural community partners serving domestic violence survivors and their children. The intended audience includes direct service advocates, law enforcement officers, legal professionals, health care providers, allied agencies, child protection, social service professionals, students and other individuals who work or volunteer in the field of domestic violence and sexual assault. Held from 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. at SLU, 33701 S.R. 52. Visit [www.fcadv.org/events/20th-annual-rural-domestic-violence-statewide-training-institute](http://www.fcadv.org/events/20th-annual-rural-domestic-violence-statewide-training-institute) for information and to register.

**June 15 – One Event: Two Responses** – Learn how you can retrain yourself so that stress is minimized. Held from 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Florida Hospital Zephyrhills' Creation Health Wellness Center, 38233 Daughtery Road. Program is free, but reservations are required. Call (813) 779-6476 for information.

**June 16 – Piano Dedication** – Thanks to donor Greg Sikosek and volunteer Dr. John Poore, music has returned for patients and families to enjoy at the Gulfside Center for Hospice Care. To celebrate, a Piano Dedication Celebration is being held at 1 p.m. at the Center, located at 5760 Dean Dairy Road, open to staff, volunteers and the public. Call Jan Double at (727) 222-2979 to RSVP by June 9.

**June 17 – BoHo Bazaar** – Come join Rhythm & Brews every third Saturday of the month all summer long for this free event. Held from 12-4 p.m. at 4711 Gall Blvd. We host local artists, crafters and all-around cool people. Door prizes and food vendors will be on site. Have a cold pint and enjoy local bands playing outside. Individuals are encouraged to bring farm fresh items for trade. This is a Hippy Hollow community event promoting artist visions and commerce through good will and energy exchange. Call (813) 395-6957 for information.

**June 19 – Infant Care Class** – Classes for expectant parents and those with newborns are being offered this month

at no charge by The Baby Place at Florida Hospital Zephyrhills. An American Heart Association Family & Friends Infant CPR and choking rescue class will take place from 6:30-8 p.m. This is not a certifying or credentialing class. Call (813) 783-6124 to register and get information about the class location at the hospital.

**June 22 – Summer Education Series** – Rosecastle of Zephyrhills presents a summer education series from 5:30-6:30 p.m. with featured speaker Craig Mayers from Olympian Research, who will present various health topics with a focus on Alzheimer's and memory care. Dinner is included. Contact Jennifer at [jhancock@rosecastle.life](mailto:jhancock@rosecastle.life) for information and to RSVP. Rosecastle is located at 37411 Eiland Blvd.

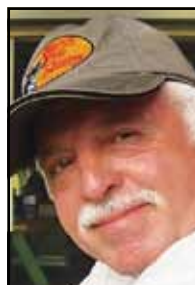
**June 23 – Eight Secrets to Weight Loss** – Are you curious about how to shed pounds? Best kept secrets are shared. Held from 1-2 p.m. at Florida Hospital Zephyrhills' Creation Health Wellness Center, 38233 Daughtery Road. Reservations required by calling (813) 779-6476 for this free program.

**June 24 – Zephyrhills SummerFest** – This family friendly event celebrates summer, families and our great country. Held from 4-9 p.m. at Zephyr Park, 38116 Fifth Ave. Bring your lawn chairs and a blanket. Event will feature watermelon eating and dance contests, a kids area, local food vendors and fireworks over the lake. Family and pet friendly. Entry and parking is free. Proceeds benefit the Samaritan Project of Zephyrhills.

**June 25 - 47th Annual ZHS Alumni, Teachers and Friends Reunion** – Held at the Zephyrhills Lions Club, 5827 Dean Dairy Road. Registration begins at 11 a.m. with covered-dish luncheon at 1 p.m. followed by announcements and recognitions at 2 p.m. This reunion is for anyone who attended, taught or worked at any of the Zephyrhills schools from elementary through high school and their families. Dress is casual and no admission charge. Bring a covered-dish to share. Contact Clereen Morrill Brunty at [Clereen@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:Clereen@tampabay.rr.com) or (813) 782-8763 after 6 p.m. for information.

For more events visit [www.pasconewspubs.com](http://www.pasconewspubs.com)

## Commentary



### First Things First

Greg First

## You Can't Get There From Here

I, like many of you, am excited State Road 56 is finally moving along and it won't be too long before the people in this area have easier access to the awesome shopping and everything the Wesley Chapel area has to offer. The people in that area in turn will have access to what we have. I hope it is a two way street and I am not talking about the number of lanes.

Speaking of lanes, State Road 56 will be four lanes and will cross busy Morris Bridge Road, which has two lanes. As State Road 56 continues east it will wind up at super-busy U.S. 301, which is also two lanes. I have got to wonder if the cart is being put before the horse or what is really going on. I am not sure if I have ever got a straight answer but I am pretty sure they have been surveying this highway, which is also called Gall Boulevard in Zephyrhills, since I was a kid and probably have spent a king's ransom in doing so.

I was going through some old paperwork my dad, Jimmy First, had in his files. It was a notice from the Federal Highway Administration of the Department of Transportation and was prepared by the Florida Department of Transportation under the heading Final Environmental

Statement (EIS). It included several state job numbers and a federal aid project number. The body of the notice said, "The improvement of U.S. Highway 301 to a multi-lane facility from Interstate 4 east of Tampa, north 22.9 miles to 4-lane section north of Zephyrhills." It goes on to say, "This highway improvement is proposed for funding under title 23 USC." Oh, the notice was dated Feb. 20, 1973. That was more than 44 years ago. You got to wonder what happened.

I have to make the trip to Tampa on a regular basis and I usually go one of two ways. Today (Monday) I travelled on Morris Bridge Road and at 7 a.m. it was pretty much backed up from the Home Depot on Eiland Boulevard all the way to Tampa. I was coming out of Dade City so this was my route of choice. State Road 54 and State Road 52 heading to Interstate 75 were not an option and I think you can figure out why without being a mind reader as it is a royal mess out that way with all of the construction in addition to the traffic. I could have taken U.S. 301 but I rolled the dice and came up a loser. In either event both are extremely busy especially first thing in the morning.

Years ago we had some alternatives heading to Tampa. I could take State Road 54 and hang a left on what many called, "The road to nowhere," which is Bruce B. Downs Boulevard. The only problem is if you broke down back then it might be a long time before someone would come along who could help. That's not the case now. Who would have guessed?

I'm hoping the decision makers have a master plan for our roads. I am also hoping we have taken a close look at the infrastructure that needs to be in place to support what is coming to east Pasco County. Talking to several people I don't think it's the case.

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# From Drab To Fab

## Meals On Wheels Gets A Splash Of Color

by Emily Kochanski

The staff at East Pasco Meals on Wheels take great pride in helping those in need and giving back to their community, and now the community is returning the favor. The Meals on Wheels headquarters, located on 15th Avenue, is in the process of having an eye-catching mural painted on their building.

A year ago, Executive Director Beth Aker reached out to the art department at Zephyrhills High School in hopes of finding some students willing to take on a colorful project. Aker believed a mural would draw more attention to their building, as well as help to promote the preservation of the arts in school.

"It's heavily traveled there on Seventh Avenue. You look this way and all you see is this great big white building," Aker said. "We needed to have the vibrancy of what it is that Meals on Wheels does so people driving by could see it."

Aker's request was rewarded with three artists from Zephyrhills High School: Joselee Burgos, Aliyah Wright and Mark

Slacum. Both Burgos and Wright were members of the school's art club before recently graduating.

"I hope that people will have a good time looking at the mural, how bright and colorful it will be," said Wright. "I don't know of any other brightness in the community. Everything is painted the same."

Slacum said the mural would act as a sort of "restoration to humanity." He hopes it will inspire others to follow Meals on Wheels' example and lend a helping hand to fellow members of the community.

Meals on Wheels has been serving Pasco County since 1974, assisting those with health restrictions who are unable to leave their homes by delivering meals. To Aker, Meals on Wheels provides more than just food.

"We deliver not just their meal, they also get a daily check-up," Aker said. "There is a relationship dynamic that has developed because of the Meals on Wheels interaction."

On May 27, Aker and the Meals on Wheels crew hosted an appreciation dinner for individuals and businesses who have returned the generosity.

"Whenever we get a check, whenever we get something donated to us, whenever somebody brings something by, we send them a thank you," explained Aker. "That's all well and good, however, we really wanted them to recognize how much we appreciate that."

The mural is expected to be completed in the upcoming weeks and will feature a whimsical design. Zephyrhills residents are advised to keep their eyes open for a new splash of color appearing in their town. Visit [www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org](http://www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org) to learn more about Meals on Wheels and the services they offer.



Climbing the ladder was no easy feat. The hardest part of the process for most of the students was tackling their fear of heights. *Photo Provided*



Creating the mural consisted of many steps. To ensure the best quality, the students outlined the images prior to painting them. *Photo by Emily Kochanski*



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In addition to modern technological items up for auction, bidders can get a blast from the past with typewriters and other antiquated tools.

**Auction • Continued from Page 1A**

on June 20. Karen Miller, from the city's purchasing department, came up with the idea instead of throwing everything in the trash, according to City Manager Steve Spina. All proceeds from the auction will go toward the city's general fund. Anything not sold at the auction will be chucked, Spina said. An 8 a.m. preview will be held the day of the auction for interested buyers to view the available items prior to the 10 a.m. sell-off. The auction will be handled by Tampa Liquidation Center, LLC. Available items can also be found on TLC's website under 'Zephyrhills City Hall Surplus'. "We just figured it'd be a good way to get a little money back from these items," Spina said. "We've got a lot of old equipment we've had for years." Walking through the old city hall chamber is like walking through time. Dusty typewriters are lined up and the progression of technology can be seen in the collection of old computers, which take up the entirety of the long

council dias. Filing cabinets, office supplies, chairs and even the chairs city council members would sit in on their raised stage will be up for sale. Toy fire trucks and police cruiser emergency light bars were also placed in the room from the local departments. Paintings, shelves and other décor are also available, as well as some kitchen appliances. Some items were deemed sellable during the move, while others were found in city storage units, sitting untouched for some time. The city officially moved its headquarters Monday to a temporary location at 5344 Ninth St. Spina said the move went well, and offices are about 90 percent set up. Since the temporary location is a bit smaller than what city employees are used to, employees are looking forward to the construction of the new city hall, in the same location of the former Eighth Street headquarters. Spina said a meeting will be held next week to determine demolition and construction dates, but he suspects the old city hall will be demolished sometime in July.

**McKinney • Continued from Page 1A**

where he served for six months before his first tour with ZPD started. He was with the Zephyrhills Police Department from 1984 to 1989 before joining the Pasco County Sheriff's Department. He left law enforcement in 2000 and came back as a reserve officer at ZPD after the September 11 terrorist attacks. He became full-time at Zephyrhills in 2006 until his retirement June 2.

On that fateful day in 2001, McKinney was a full-time pastor at Westside Baptist Church and knew he had to return to law enforcement. "When September 11 happened, no one knew what was going to happen, so I knew I had to be back in at least a reserve capacity," McKinney said. Now that his law enforcement career is behind him once again, McKinney

said he will miss being able to have an impact with victims of crimes. "Sometimes you can be on the inside and make decision that you can serve as a preventative to crime," he said. There is plenty in common in McKinney's two career choices of cop and pastor. "It's dealing with people in crisis a lot of times," McKinney said. "Whether it be a crime or a family member who passed away or a child in rebellion or drugs, you deal with that in both realms."

breathing police work." The case has yet to make it to trial. You would think that seeing and dealing with as many terrible things as a police officer that McKinney has, his faith would be a little rattled. Not even close. "Being in law enforcement as long as I have, I have seen a lot of things. You learn to deal with in the fact that you are mortal and we're going to die. If someone dies at the hand of someone else, it's up to you to help find them justice."

"You put aside emotion and you deal with evidence and procedure to find justice for that family. Later you process the emotions. I ask God why he thought I was sufficient to be put in the positions of authority he has put me in, but he knows best." He looks back at his career and recalls the murder case from 2010 that left an impact on him and his career. "That was one of the most intense and complex cases I ever worked and supervised," McKinney recalled. "There were multiple jurisdictions. That took 18-20 hours a day for a month of living

breathing police work." The case has yet to make it to trial. You would think that seeing and dealing with as many terrible things as a police officer that McKinney has, his faith would be a little rattled. Not even close. "Being in law enforcement as long as I have, I have seen a lot of things. You learn to deal with in the fact that you are mortal and we're going to die. If someone dies at the hand of someone else, it's up to you to help find them justice."

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# Council Discusses Issues Regarding City Charter

Story and photo by Dave Walters

On the same night the City of Zephyrhills was commended for its 40 years of a city council/manager form of government, council looked into the possibility of revising its city charter.

Matthew Campbell of the Florida County/City Managers Association presented City Manager Steve Spina with a certificate Monday night honoring Zephyrhills for its governmental success.

Following photos and a light city agenda, members of council met in a workshop session to discuss the charter review process.

Spina explained to council members that the city charter requires a review every five years and the last review was done in 2012 where it was proposed that city council and mayoral terms were increased from two years to three. The charter amendment went before the voters and was approved in 2013.

While most on council were quite content with the current status of the charter, councilman Charlie Proctor tossed a suggestion against the wall to see if it would stick.

"More than 50 percent of the municipalities in the state of Florida have four-year city council terms," Proctor said. "Personally, I don't like running elections. I don't like the whole thing of it. The only thing I would like to address, only if the rest of the council would like to address it, I would like to possibly see us maybe do a four-year term."

Well, it didn't stick as an awkward silence fell over the room.

"I guess I don't think I'm getting a second on that one," Proctor said looking down the table at his fellow councilmen.



**Matthew Campbell of the Florida County/City Managers Association presents a certificate to Zephyrhills City Manager Steve Spina recognizing the city for its 40 years of having a council/city manager form of government.**

Council president Alan Knight sympathized with Proctor's feelings about running a campaign, but Proctor's idea quietly died.

Spina told council that the hiring and firing of both safety chiefs as dictated in charter could deserve a review.

Currently, the city manager proposes that issue to members of city council who need a majority vote for approval.

Spina said the police chief and fire chief are the only department heads that need council approval. He said it would undermine his authority in the city if he recommended the firing of either one to council and they voted against it.

"That is a unique part of our charter," Spina said.

Council will look further into the possibility of charter amendments and involve members of the public to provide input and suggestions.

**Credit • Continued from Page 1A**

at the new branch from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. on June 22.

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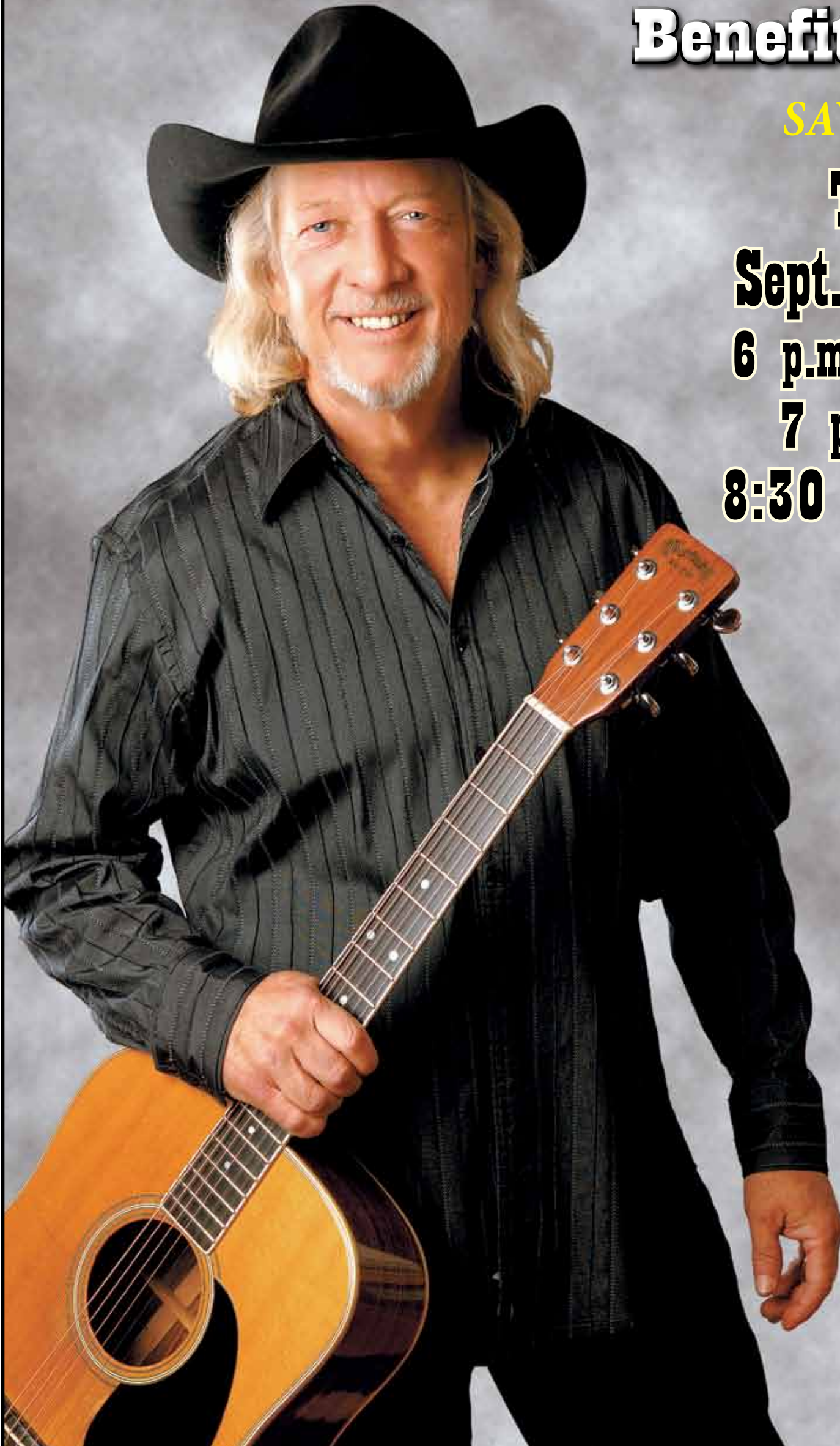
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