Candidates test for Fire Rescue slots

Several candidates underwent a grueling test process to see if they have what it takes to become a firefighter paramedic for Flagler County Fire Rescue.

“We have a very stringent testing process,” said Fire Rescue Deputy Chief Mike Bazanos. “Both the EMS (emergency medical services) and the fire practical sections are very important to us. It’s a big deal.”

Four out of the latest batch of seven candidates who tested are in the interview process. There are currently three open Fire Rescue positions.

The test included 120 written questions that covered both fire and paramedic knowledge with 20 of the questions specific to electrocardiogram (EKG or ECG) tests that check for problems with the electrical activity of the heart. Candidates were required to recognize and properly treat respiratory and cardiac issues for the practical portion of the test.

“Everything carries equal weight, but we really need to see that the candidates can recognize the problems and treat them appropriately,” Bazanos said.

After making it through the EMS practical, candidates traveled from the Emergency Operations Center to the Flagler County Fire Academy. There they were required to put up a ladder within 4 minutes, climb to the top of the tower while carrying a 50-pound length of fire hose, hoist a second hose from the ground to the top of tower, climb back down with the first hose, carry a 180-pound dummy 100 feet to simulate a rescue, among other tasks.

The testing standard is one each firefighter paramedic must pass annually – the entire course timed.

“Some of the guys can do this in 2 minutes 50 seconds,” Fire Marshal Joe King said. “Some are a little competitive, but it’s a good test of fitness.”

Despite the fast times made by some of the seasoned firefighters, running is not allowed.

“One foot has to be on the ground at all times,” King said.

For the test candidates, accuracy is more important than overall speed.

“It’s great that such strong standards are set,” said Human Resources Director Joe Mayer. “We want to hire the very best people to serve our residents.”
Spend the day honoring and remembering the heroes of September 11, 2001 during the 9th Annual 9/11 Memorial Ride and Ceremony. All are welcome to participate in this respected event.

**Event Schedule**

**Sunday, September 13, 2015**

**Rain or shine!**

**REGISTRATION:**

8:30am-9:30am
Flagler Government Service Building
1769 E. Moody Blvd. in Bunnell, FL

**CEREMONY:** 9:30am

**KICKSTANDS UP:** 10:30am

**Ride End & Social:** 12:00pm
Beachfront Grille in Flagler Beach

*The ride will start at the Court House then will head west on SR 100 to US 1*

*North on US 1 to SR 206*

*East on SR 206 to A1A*

*South on A1A to SR 100*

*West on SR 100 to John Anderson Hwy (201)*

*South on John Anderson Hwy (201)*

*West (right) on Walter Boardman Lane*

*South (left) on High Bridge Rd*

*Follow High Bridge Rd to A1A*

*North on A1A to the Beachfront Grille located at 2444 S Ocean Shore Blvd in Flagler Beach*

For more information and updates please visit the event site at: MemorialRun911.com
**Others’ News**

**Counties save on employee prescriptions with foreign drugs**

By Charles Taylor
Senior Staff Writer

Flagler County, Fla. commissioners have approved a plan to import prescription drugs through a Canadian broker that officials say could save employees 50 percent to 80 percent on some medications.

The company, CanRx, will supply brand-name maintenance medications—such as those for high blood pressure or to lower cholesterol. Participation in the program will be voluntary, according to Joe Meyer, the county’s director of community services. And the county will continue to offer another prescription benefit through its onsite employee health clinic or retail pharmacies for generics.

“Any of our employees that are on those types of (maintenance) meds can choose to participate,” Meyer said. “They would get that five percent off, and the county health plan wouldn’t pick up the cost.”

Flagler is projected to realize savings of 54 percent, he added, which will be passed on to the county. The company makes a profit on a “small” markup for free generics.

Flagler’s program, said Mark Mouton, the county’s purchasing director, is “the same program” CanRx provided to the Flagler County Board.

Mouton said the product is for the continuation of treatment began in a foreign country and “generally, not more than a 30-day supply of the drug is imported.”

Mouton said counties would be able to import medications for group popualtions, such as local residents and jail inmates. CanRx said “because that wouldn’t be personal use.”

U.S. pharmaceutical companies have not yet said they will sell generic drugs imported from other countries.

Flagler County, N.Y. has a similar program since 2004. CanRx President and County Attorney Christian Gardner said as a result, the county is spending less on prescription drugs than in 2003. Back then, prescription costs were lower.

John Anderson Highway Widening and Resurfacing

On January 3, 2013, the Flagler County Board of County Commissioners approved the Small County Road Assistance Program (SARAP) Agreement with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to design and construct the widening (adding bike lanes) and resurfacing of County Road 21/John Anderson Highway from State Road 100 to the Volusia County line. The project length is approximately 3.95 miles in length.

The $1.74 million design and construction project is being completed using in-house staff and equipment from the Road and Bridge division of Public Works, with the exception of the asphalt surfacing and thermoplastic striping, which was awarded to Halifax Paving, Inc. for $305,000.

Historically, John Anderson Highway once connected Miami to Jacksonville, Florida, until it was absorbed into the longer Dixie Highway around 1915. Portions of John Anderson Highway still exist in Flagler, St. Johns and Volusia Counties.
EMERGENCY MANAGER prepares businesses for disaster recovery

Businesses need to be prepared for disaster not only to reduce their own recovery time, but to help bring the community back to normalcy.

“Emergency management is the sum of all its parts,” said Public Safety Emergency Manager Kevin Guthrie. “We are all part of emergency management.”

Guthrie was the keynote speaker Flagler County Department of Economic Opportunity and the Flagler County Chamber of Commerce “Think Flagler First” luncheon. Helga van Eckert, Economic Development director, introduced him.

“We hear everything about the storms when they are coming,” van Eckert said. “What we don’t hear about is what happens after something happens.”

The goal is to meet the basic needs of residents in the short-term and to return the affected area back to normalcy as quickly as possible.

“In Joplin, Missouri, they kept their economic engines running,” Guthrie said of the May 22, 2011 catastrophic tornado that caused $2.8 billion in damage. “You need to know what you need to have for social restoration on a day-to-day basis.”

Depending on the size of the event and the amount of damage, social restoration could take six to 10 years to complete.

“We want to keep the money here, generate it from within,” Guthrie said. “Responders need to be fed and Sally’s (Ice Cream in Flagler Beach) needs to get back to business. Can we move Sally’s temporarily into a strip mall business so that business can continue by making hot dogs and such for our responders.”

The bulk of business in Flagler County — upwards of 80 percent — is small business. “I’d be willing to bet that most of these small businesses already provide some sort of service that we could use during an emergency,” Guthrie said. “We’ll need things like businesses to clean and disinfect schools from top to bottom.”

Realtors can help with short-term leases of vacant houses to families who have been displaced from their homes.

“Community makes a difference,” Guthrie said. “It behooves all of us to keep people here in Flagler County.”

We Are Flagler County!

Richard Gordon has been an engineer with Flagler County for 27 years, but he’s a little reticent about talking about himself.

His wife of 44 years, Shelley, said Richard is truthful to a fault.

“Any hint of impropriety is unacceptable to him,” she said.

And clearly everyone who works with him knows how diligent he is.

“He’s a really good engineer,” said co-worker Travis Terpstra. “He’s very wise, too.”

Richard hasn’t always worked for Flagler County government. He worked for ITT and made the commute from Cocoa from 1976 to 1980 before moving to Palm Coast.

“He also worked for Greiner Engineering in Tampa,” Shelley said. “He was quality control and oversaw the building of the Space Shuttle runway.”

Richard and Shelley met at Brevard Community College. Richard continued his education at the former Florida Technical University, which is now the University of Central Florida.

The Gordons have two adult children and a 5-year-old granddaughter, Rylee.