



Carrie Van Hooijdonk

Teaching is the essence of life

Editor's note: This is the third story in a series featuring Sumter County Teacher of the Year nominees for the 2019-2020 school year. Darlene Lanham is the focus of this week's feature.

"Teaching is the essence of life. We are taught from the time we are born until we choose to stop learning," said Bushnell Elementary School Inclusion teacher Carrie Van Hooijdonk of her profession.

"I hope that I can encourage other people to educate, because even though it is difficult, it has to be the most rewarding. As a teacher, you have the power to change someone's life and that is a big responsibility."

VanHooijdonk said her philosophy is "don't be afraid to show yourself."

"Students think that teachers aren't people. I think it is important to show students that you make mistakes too and shown them how you learn from those mistakes.

"When they realize you don't know 'everything,' it shows them you are human, just like them.

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Looking for a cushion on Reverse One

Volunteers have found success in obtaining enough signatures to get Reverse One Sumter on the ballot, but are hoping for another 1,500 as a cushion.

The total is just over 10,000 signatures right now.

Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, signatures can be collected via email.

About Reverse One Sumter - the effort to reverse One Sumter:

Prior to 2004, each Sumter Please see **REVERSE/Page 2**



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Time has come to town



A Bushnell Public Works employee makes a final adjustment to the clock head before its anchored into place and the electrical wiring is completed.

Family donates clock to honor Maddox for "lifelong devotion" to hometown

BY MARTIN STEELE
Staff writer



Barbara Maddox and her brother David Tally donated the clock to the city as a memorial to her late husband Warren Maddox who served on the Bushnell City Council for 15 years.

For the half dozen volunteers of Bushnell's Park Committee, there was one day last week that was almost like bringing home a new baby ... one very big baby.

After months of anticipation, folks from the committee watched in awe last Tuesday morning, as city staff and a south Florida contractor carefully erected a 16 ft.-tall post (or street) clock in Bushnell's Downtown Park. It is the most recent addition to the sculptures, fountain and other aesthetic features of the park.

The clock was produced for the city by the Verdin Company, an Ohio-based

maker of large, public clocks, bells and other aesthetic items for businesses, colleges, churches, communities and such.

The ornate, 16-ft.-tall timepiece, with four 36-inch faces now stands between Bushnell City Hall and the park fountain and is viewable from multiple directions.

As one city worker noted, the clock adds a bit of "class" to the park.

While the citizen's committee supported the project with the blessings of the Bushnell City Council, it was the efforts and generosity of two individuals that resulted in the city getting the clock.

Barbara Maddox - a Bushnell resident Please see **CLOCK/Page 5**

Times takes five Florida Press awards

The Sumter County Times took five awards in this Florida Press Association Weeklies Contest, including two first place and three second place honors.

The first place awards were in Community Service and Faith and Family Reporting.

The Community Service honor was awarded for a series of promotions and final story by Brenda Locklear on saving the home of Grant Grogan and his roommates, SCARC, Inc. clients, as they faced a funding crisis.

The other first place was awarded to Locklear for Spreading the word,' a story on a

"rolling revival" that was hosted at different churches around the county.

Martin Steele took second place in the Photo Series in One Issue category, for his 'Seminole battle comes to life' photos. Images from the annual Dade Battlefield Historic State Park reenactment, Steele captured a collection of images to tell the story.

Among the top coveted awards in the contest, is the General Excellence award - an evaluation of the newspaper as a whole. The Times took second place in the General Excellence category.

The entry requires that the newspaper send two to three issues, with one date specific. Judges evaluate general and departmental news, mechanical excellence and advertising enterprise; editorial page; general appearance; makeup and style; photography and promotion of community interest.

Overall Graphic Design was another second place honor for the newspaper. The category evaluates use of graphics, including typography, use of photography, line art, effectiveness of presentation and page design.

Couple arrested in store robbery

A man and woman were arrested Sunday evening, Aug. 16,

after reportedly robbing the Family Dollar in Lake Panasoffkee, according to Sumter County

sheriff's reports.

Based on their arrest warrants,

Dwight Hertz, 50, and Ashely Lavally, 29, were arrested Sunday night, in connection with the robbery.

The following is the chain of events, according to the

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Face coverings, ID needed to board bus

The school district provides bus transportation for children living beyond walking distance of the schools. Beginning this year all students must wear a face covering, and scan their student ID card as they enter and exit the bus. Student ID cards may be picked up by students at school orientation. Bus information such as stop location, bus

number and arrival and departure times may be obtained by attending orientation, checking the e-link on the Transportation tab of the district website, or parents may call the Transportation Department at 793-5705. It is recommended that all children ride the bus on the morning of the first day of school to assist the driver in locating bus stops.

Parents may meet the bus at school or follow it along the route. Superintendent Shirley has a recommendation for parents, "On the first day of school, young children in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and first grade should wear identification tags with first and last name, telephone number(s), home address

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Overcoming the Hurdles of Life...

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A towering 16-foot clock, the latest addition to Bushnell’s Downtown Park, stands among trees, a fountain, sculptures, a gazebo, a pergola and other aesthetic features of the park and is framed by Bushnell City Hall.



Workers move the cast iron base into place with the help of crane. The clock is featured in Bushnell’s downtown park on the plaza, located directly across from Sumter County’s historic courthouse.



Bushnell resident Barbara Maddox is shown with Bushnell’s new street clock, installed last week in the city’s downtown park. Maddox and her brother David Tally of Alexandria, Va., funded the purchase to establish a memorial to her late husband Warren Maddox, a life-long resident of the city and Bushnell City Council member for 15 years.



Bushnell Public Works staff and contractor for the Verdin Company guide the 700-pound cast iron base and post assembly into place as the clock installation gets underway.



Ornamentation on the clock include the curlicue and gold ball fixtures at each end of the city name placards.

*Photos by
Martin Steele
Sumter County Times*

CLOCK

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and widow of the late Warren Maddox, who served on the Bushnell Council from 1999 until his death in 2014 - and her brother David Tally of Alexandria, Va., For decades, Tally has been a frequent visitor to Bushnell and his sister’s home. They paid approximately \$27,000 for the clock.

The project stemmed from her desire to honor her late husband’s “life-long devotion to his hometown of Bushnell and his commitment to making it a quality place to live,” she said.

Warren “was instrumental in the development of the park at Bushnell Plaza, as an oasis of beauty and enjoyment for all,” Maddox said. “I’m fortunate, along with my brother David, to be able to present this beautiful clock to the city in Warren’s memory.

“My heartfelt thanks also go to my fellow Park Committee members, the City of Bushnell staff

- especially Mike Eastburn and the Public Works Department, City Manager Jody Young and the City Council for their indispensable input and support in making my memorial to Warren a reality.”

Her enthusiasm was shared by members of the Park Committee, most of whom were on site to observe the clock installation. Member Marge Theis said her sentiments were almost beyond description.

“It’s beautiful, awesome,” she said. “It’s more than I could ever have expected to have in our little park. It’s a beautiful asset to what I consider a city park should be. It’s finally becoming what we envisioned.”

Barbara and her brother were instrumental in getting this for the city, she noted.

Maddox presented her idea to the committee about a year ago. “I love clocks and thought it would be a great thing,” she said, noting that she was really struck by the positive reaction of the committee.



Sculptural lion reliefs decorate each of the lower corners of the clock head.

It took a while to get things going. One of the first issues was an almost

total lack of response from clock vendors, from inquiries by Public Works Director Mike Eastburn.

When a connection was eventually established with Verdin, numerous discussions followed with the committee on design elements, size and such. After the order was placed, there was more delay as the Covid-19 virus impacted the Verdin factory’s production.

But, under sunny skies and the watchful eyes of a few Park Committee members on hand to observe the installation, the clock components were uncrated and very carefully set into place by city crews and Verdin sub-contractor Ken Trolenberg.

Committee members on hand noted that it’s something special to have in a relatively small community. Bushnell is among places such as Leesburg, St. Augustine, Clearwater, Havana (Fla.), Palm Beach, Bonita Springs, the University of Florida and many others across the U.S. having these Verdin clocks.

In Bushnell, the clock stands among trees, flower planters, a fountain, gazebo, pergola and a handful of colorful sculptures.

“I’m very happy with it,” Maddox said while visiting the park on a recent morning as the workday was beginning. “It’s so beautiful with the sun on it from the east.”

The clock leaves no doubt as to the location - “Bushnell” appears on placards above each face of the device. Also, each clock face is imprinted with “Est. 1885” to commemorate the founding date of the city.

The clock head - somewhat of a rounded cube-shape - has some distinctive embellishments. Each end of the Bushnell name placards feature sculptural curlicues tipped with gold balls. The underside corners of the clock are decorated with lion-head sculptural reliefs, each mouth clutching a hoop. The assembly is elevated on a rectangular, cast iron base and slightly tapered fluted column.

And, for those who might be out and about evenings, the clock has softly illuminated dials.

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