

VERO BEACH 32963

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Andrew Coffee Jr. on trial for attempted murder. P10

'Hank Williams': A tale compellingly told. P34

Security is top priority for Beach Town Music Festival. P12

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MY VERO BY RAY MCNEULTY

Hard to believe! No arrest likely in Grove Bar shooting

It's difficult to believe a man could be shot in front of multiple witnesses in the middle of the street – along the main drag in Vero's Old Downtown – without the thug who pulled the trigger being positively identified.

It's even more difficult to comprehend why the victim, shot repeatedly at close range by a man standing in front of him, would not have the image of the gunman's face embedded in his memory.

But, according to police and prosecutors, that's exactly what happened in the aftermath of the shocking incident that occurred in the wee hours of March 31, outside The Grove bar on 14th Avenue.

That's why, seven months later, no one has been arrested for shooting Andy Capak, one of The Grove's co-owners,

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Maeva Reicher rides hoy while practicing on new Windsor polo practice field. STORY, PAGE 10 PHOTO BY CAROL WATSON

Vero visitor to Cuba ponders symptoms similar to diplomats

BY MICHELLE GINZ
Suffolk

Island resident and Merrill Lynch financial adviser Scott Morton is trying to figure out if the persistent numbness in his legs and feet he has suffered

since visiting Cuba last year is related to the mysterious attacks on U.S. embassy personnel that injured two dozen people stationed in the island nation.

First reported in August, the embassy-related victims' complaints of hearing loss, brain

injury and other symptoms date back to the fall of 2016.

Some who fell ill early on described hearing a piercing cricket-like noise outside their residences. After extensive investigation, U.S. officials be-

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Jennifer Benjamin: Pet columnist

BY A STAFF WRITER

Jennifer Benjamin, a dog lover who originated the pet column in Vero Beach 32963, last week lost a valiant four-decade battle with type 1 diabetes. She was 53.

Jennifer, daughter of 32963 publisher Milton Benjamin

and his wife Tina, moved to Vero Beach from Washington, D.C., in 1996 after undergoing a pioneering kidney-pancreas transplant.

That time, after being medevacked on a snowy winter night from Georgetown Hospital in Washington to

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No bail for surgeon being held on drug trafficking charges

BY BETH WALTON
Suffolk

Vero Beach spine surgeon Dr. Johnny Benjamin Jr. will have to stay in jail as he awaits trial on federal drug trafficking charges after a judge in

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Halloween Parade attracts a bunch of characters. P24

NEWS

Windsor expands equestrian center with polo practice field

BY RAY MCNULTY
Staff Writer

Riding a resurgence of local interest in polo, Windsor has expanded its Equestrian Center facilities with the installation of a new 170-yard-long stick-and-ball field that can be used for practice, three-on-three matches or other horseback activities.

"This is an exciting time for us," said Max Secunda, Windsor's director of equestrian operations. "Windsor is very supportive of polo, and the addition of this multi-use field enhances and expands our capabilities while injecting new energy into the place.

"Not only do members have a place to practice their polo on a regular basis, but we also expect it to attract beginners – and especially children – to the sport," he added. "And while the popularity of polo is growing again, this field can be used for other equestrian disciplines, too.

"There are a number of people who love to just ride horses. That's a big part of life at Windsor."

Windsor's Equestrian Center,

equipped with 22 stables and 14 paddocks, is a unique amenity on the barrier island, offering boarding, maintenance, riding lessons, recreational riding and a full-sized polo field for exhibition matches.

The new practice field, which was completed earlier this month, is located in front of the stables and was sodded with a Bermuda grass hybrid proven to withstand the rigors of some of the world's premier international polo tournaments.

"It's the same grass they have at the International Polo Club in Palm Beach, and the field has been engineered to drain quickly, so it can be used for practice even during the rainy season," Secunda said. "This field is so green, so finely manicured and so beautiful that it really enhances the aesthetics and feel of the place.

"Our members are going to love it." The new field also provides a large space for other activities, such as soccer, equestrian exhibitions and outdoor parties.

Secunda said Windsor currently has "seven or eight" members who play

polo regularly, but exhibition matches held at the club draw enthusiastic crowds. And with many members being accomplished riders, he expects the new field to entice some of them to give the sport a try.

"The new field and our horses are ready for play, and I look forward to introducing this new amenity to Windsor members and their guests this season."

Secunda, who moved to Vero Beach from Wellington 12 years ago and managed John Walsh's polo team from

2004 through 2014, became Windsor's full-time director of equestrian operations last year.

He previously managed the Vero Beach Polo Club, and he still plays professionally in Wellington.

"It's a privilege to be here," Secunda said. "The support the Windsor management has given me has been fantastic, and this expansion shows a strong commitment to the Equestrian Center. It's also a really nice addition to the polo community." ■

ANDREW COFFEE JR. GOES ON TRIAL FOR THE ATTEMPTED MURDER OF A DEPUTY

BY BETH WALTON
Staff Writer

gan in an Indian River County courtroom.

Andrew Coffee Jr., a man accused of attempted murder of a law-enforcement officer, sat quietly in a maroon shirt and tie Monday as jury selection for his high-profile trial be-

One by one prospective jurors came into the fourth-floor gallery to discuss what they had heard about the case. Many had read about the charges in the newspaper or seen it on TV. Several had seen online dashboard camera

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