

# Middle school kicks off anti-bullying campaign

## Dealing with bullies

By **DOUANE D. JAMES**  
*Sun staff writer*

**AT A GLANCE**  
 Fort Clarke Middle School showed a "Dr. Phil" video on the topic to each student, and teachers discussed with students methods of dealing with bullying behaviors.

Fort Clarke Middle School began an "anti-bullying" awareness campaign Monday, putting students on notice that the behavior is not acceptable. The northwest Gainesville school showed a "Dr. Phil" video on the topic to each student Monday morning, and teachers discussed with students methods of dealing with

Asked if they had been bullied, almost all the students in one Fort Clarke homeroom class raised their hands.

bullying behaviors. Asked if they had been bullied, almost all the students in one eighth-grade homeroom class raised their hands. Many of the students, boys in particular, said they are

reluctant to report being bullied because, "if you tell on them, they will get you." Eighth-grader Rashad Hines said "rough-housing" between boys often relates to the insult of being called "soft." Rashad

said the threats and intimidation usually remain verbal but occasionally become physical. Maggie Paxson said even as an eighth-grader, she hears nasty comments daily because of her "non-conformist" ways. "I'm teased about the way I dress because I wear all black," she said. It does hurt her feelings, Maggie said, but mostly she makes a joke out of things and

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# City looks at ban on front-yard parking

The commission voted 4-3 to consider banning front-yard parking for recreational vehicles longer than 16 feet.

By **JANINE YOUNG SIKES**  
*Sun staff writer*

Gainesville boat and camping enthusiasts who park their larger watercraft or trailers in the front yard may have to find an alternative place to store them in the near future.

The Gainesville City Commission voted 4-3 Monday to consider banning front-yard parking for recreational vehicles longer than 16 feet, including boats, trailers and campers.

Any changes would strengthen existing regulations that require boats and trailers in neighborhoods to be stored in enclosed structures or in side or rear yards — when possible.

Some proposed changes to the city's current codes are:  
 ■ Prohibit front-yard parking;  
 ■ Require homeowners to obtain a permit for guest parking for no more than 14 days a year; and  
 ■ Limit front-yard maintenance, loading and unloading activities to 24 hours in a seven-day period.

A Gainesville resident unhappy with a neighbors' idle motor home brought the issue to the City Commission earlier this year, and her complaint struck a chord with a majority of the board.

"I have a hard time wiping

**PARKING** on Page 4B



LARA NEEL/The Gainesville Sun

Inside the University of Florida's computer science engineering building, a 500-square-foot "smart house," complete with four rooms fitted with experimental adaptive technology linked by a computer network, has been built. Matilda is the robot mannequin who lives in the space. Behind her, in the doorway, are Andi Sukojo, from left, Hicham Elzabadani, Carlos Giraldo, Youssef Kaddoura and James Russo, some of the graduate students working on the project.

# House with a brain

## UF researchers develop house for aging people

By **DIANE CHUN**  
*Sun staff writer*

In her print housedress and schoolmarm spectacles, gray wig slightly askew, Matilda may not look too welcoming when a visitor rings the doorbell at her cozy little campus abode.

Perhaps it's the permanent squint built into her latex face, but Matilda the robotic mannequin is a pretty effective stand-in for a frail and forgetful 85-year-old woman surprised at home. "Home" for Matilda is an

**'SMART' HOUSE TECHNOLOGY:**

- Turns on lights, stereo, television, will open and close curtains with a voice command to a mobile phone.
- Turns on the television and tunes it to the proper station in whatever room the resident visits.
- Checks that the doors are locked and reports back by voice.
- If water leaks onto the floor, alerts the resident by cell phone.
- If a visitor comes to the door, a camera beams the visitor's picture to a TV screen in the room the resident occupies.
- Resident can unlock door with a voice command into the cell phone.
- Reports delivery to the outside mailbox.
- Can prompt resident to drink water, check food cooking in microwave or call family member.

experimental 500-square-foot "smart house" at the University of Florida. The house melds the latest computer and sensor technology to provide automatically the assistance at home that many people need as they age.

Consisting of a furnished living room, kitchen, bedroom and bathroom, the house takes up the better part of a fourth-floor computer laboratory in UF's computer science engineering building.

**SMART HOUSE** on Page 8B

# DISPLACED KENNEDY RESIDENTS Housing workshop short on specifics

By **BOB ARNDORFER**  
*Sun staff writer*

Three days before Thanksgiving, a workshop to assist displaced residents of troubled Kennedy Homes was short on specifics about finding alternative housing to the hotels in which many of them have been living for six weeks.

Because of a Gainesville City Commission meeting and other commitments, some of the key players could not attend the Monday afternoon meeting sponsored by the Alachua County Ministerial Alliance at Showers of Blessings Harvest Center Church, a few blocks from Kennedy Homes. And other agency representatives who were there could do little more than reassure about 70 residents who attended that they are not left on their own.

"The city has made clear that everybody is to be provided for," said William Wright, operations specialist with the Jacksonville office of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. "No one is going to be left out on the street. That's the bottom line."

HUD provides rent subsidies to Aimco, owner of the 174-unit Kennedy Homes, 1721 SE 8th Ave. Aimco said last week it wants out of its contract with HUD, which HUD said would enable the company to sell, demolish or repair the complex.

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## Housing residents

**AT A GLANCE**  
 More than 170 Kennedy Homes families — about 500 residents — have been living in hotels since an Oct. 6 fire destroyed eight apartments.

# Alachua drops police study

The City Commission decided an assessment of the department's needs was unnecessary.

By **CINDY SWIRKO**  
*Sun staff writer*

ALACHUA — A motion to take a first step toward a comprehensive study of the space, personnel and equipment needs of the Police Department was killed in a close vote of the City Commission Monday night with opponents saying it was unnecessary and a waste of money.

Commissioner James Lewis praised the department as doing a fine job, and said Chief Robert Jernigan and city staff are capable of figuring out what police need for future growth.

Vice Mayor Tamara Robbins, however, said the commission must show its support of the

**POLICE** on Page 2B

# Dateline Florida

## MIAMI: Teachers union chief gets 27 months for fraud

Miami teachers union chief Pat Tornillo, a force for organized labor in Florida for four decades, was sentenced Monday to two years, three months in federal prison for cheating teachers out of \$650,000 in union dues.

The American Federation of Teachers calculated that Tornillo actually stole \$2.5 million from the largest union in the Southeast.

## WEST PALM BEACH: Boca man charged in prankster's death pleads not guilty

A Boca Raton man pleaded not guilty Monday to charges that he fatally shot a teenager who was playing a midnight prank at his home. Jay Steven Levin, a 40-year-old accountant who is under house arrest, is charged with manslaughter with a firearm in the death of 16-year-old Mark Drewes. He could be sentenced to probation or up to 30 years in prison if convicted.

— Compiled from The Associated Press



The Associated Press

**PONCE INLET**  
**A lighthouse lined with lights**  
 Adam Vatrano staples Christmas Lights along the roof of the gift shop at Ponce Inlet Lighthouse Monday morning.



## HOPE FOR THE HOLIDAYS FYI: What they need

Repair work on their 1996 Dodge Ram van; small adult diapers for Betsy; dental care for Reeta; educational computer programs for Katie, a third-grader; a spiograph art kit for Katie; a wooden puzzle of animals or ABCs for Betsy; and a touch-screen computer screen compatible with a Hewlett-Packard computer for Betsy.

# Health woes follow family

By **KATHY CIOTOLA**  
*Sun staff writer*

Loren and Reeta Kendall had already raised three boys to adulthood when they decided to go a second round.

It started in 1995 when Reeta Kendall saw a picture of an 18-month-old girl in need of foster care. Though Loren was looking forward to some leisure time, Reeta Kendall convinced her husband that Katie would be a great addition to their family.

"She beat my defenses down," joked Loren Kendall, 57. "It was empty-nest syndrome."

When Katie, who has cystic fibrosis, was put up for adoption, the Kendalls were first in line.

Now the girl with an impish grin is thriving as a third-grader at Metcalfe Elementary School, said her father, who calls her a "daddy's girl."

But the Kendalls of Gainesville weren't done yet.

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LARA NEEL/The Gainesville Sun

Reeta Kendall, 55, from left, Betsy Kendall, 6, Loren Kendall, 57, and Katie Kendall, 10, in front of their broken black van in their driveway.

**RAINFALL WATCH**  
 in Alachua County  
 Rainfall to date: **45.79"**  
 Normal rainfall: **45.80"** (through November)  
 Chance of rain: **N/A**  
 More weather data on **PAGE 12B**

# ANTI-BULLYING: Study finds most boy bullies become criminals

Continued from 1B

ignores the insults. "I try my hardest not to pick on anyone else," she said, referring to how it's tempting for bullied students to pick on other kids. In the Dr. Phil video, an edited version of a show that aired this summer, both bullied students and their tormenters were profiled, with the show concluding that bullies attacked others to compensate for feelings of inferiority or powerlessness. On the show, the mother of a boy who had been driven to suicide because of bullying at

school confronted a girl who had picked on her son. Bullying is defined as aggressive behavior by one person or group carried out repeatedly, over time and targeted at someone less powerful. Fort Clarke Principal Donna Kidwell said the effort is not necessarily because the school has a problem with bullying behaviors but rather an awareness campaign aimed at students, parents and school staff. "Bullying just exists in our society," she said. "We don't want to pretend nothing's happening. It's never too soon to

empower individuals how to deal appropriately with violent situations." The school's effort to stem schoolhouse harassment is part of a trend spreading nationwide. Most of the school shootings in recent years were carried out by students who had been the targets of bullies. Schools no longer can accept bullying as a natural part of growing up, Kidwell said. Though Fort Clarke's reported fights and violent behaviors are generally below par compared with the district's other middle schools, Kidwell said she wanted to start the

campaign after she received a touching letter from a parent of a bullied student. For the rest of the year, lessons will be taught in class, and anti-bullying artwork will be posted throughout the building. "We want to increase the awareness of what is bullying behavior and what to do" about it, Kidwell said. "You wouldn't believe the number of kids intimidated and afraid to tell on other kids." Kids and even their parents sometimes don't recognize the bullying behavior for what it is. Many students who experience bullying behavior at home bring

it to school, school guidance counselor Carmen Hester said. "It's very important we take every opportunity to let them know it's not right to hurt other people physically or emotionally," Hester said. A recent study by Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, a national advocacy group, documented how bullying spawns loneliness, depression and suicidal tendencies among its victims, and foreshadows crime and violence by perpetrators. The report said for children in grades six through 10, nearly one in six, or 3.2 million, were victims of bullying each year,

and 3.7 million were bullies. Nearly 60 percent of boys whom researchers classified as bullies in grades six through nine were convicted of at least one crime by the age of 24; 40 percent of them had three or more convictions by 24, the report said. Monday, Fort Clarke students also were asked to sign and recite an anti-violence pledge. The "Bully No More in 2004" campaign was scheduled to continue Monday night with a Parent Teacher Association event featuring the Chris McCarty Band and informational speakers.

# SMART HOUSE: May be available to home buyers within next 20 years

Continued from 1B

Built into this living space is a mind-bending array of experimental assistive-living devices, from a microwave that recognizes entrees and automatically determines how long to cook them, to sensors that track an elderly person's whereabouts in the home. For a growing number of Floridians, such technology offers the promise of continued independence at an age when they might otherwise have to move into an assisted living facility or nursing home. "What this home demonstrates is the evolution from assistive devices to assistive environments," said Sumi Helal, an associate professor of computer and information science and engineering. Helal also is director of technology development for the UF Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Technology for Successful Aging. Helal said he hopes to see the wireless mobile technology of UF's "smart home" available to home buyers within the next 20 years, much as high-tech security and entertainment systems can be built into a new home today. Making that happen, he emphasizes, will require partnerships with the industries that

make cellular phones, microwaves, computer monitors and sensors. All must be melded into a centralized computer network to deliver electronically coordinated assistance. The technology within the "smart house" is hidden so as not to be intimidating to an older user, Helal said. These devices are linked by a computer network and keep tabs on each other. They also keep track of Matilda, the home's resident, through a pair of sensors in the shoulders of her vest. "We are working on a new technology for a smart floor," Helal said. "Then we'd be able to take off her vest, but the house will still be able to keep track of her location." A cellular phone is the bridging instrument that will link the elderly resident with the technology of the smart home. "A phone is a phone, the older person will have had it for a long time, and the technology involved in using it should not frighten them," Helal said. With voice commands delivered to the phone, a resident can turn on the lights, stereo and television, and open and close the window curtains. He or she can ask if the house is secure, and the phone then checks the doors and reports back by voice.

Wherever Matilda is looking within the house, she will be watching TV and can change channels through the phone's keypad. The TV monitor also can be used to deliver messages to her — an electronic reminder to take her medicine, check on the food in the microwave or phone her son because he hasn't heard from her. "These displays are particularly important for elderly patients who may have dementia problems, because you want to be able to cue them at any place and time — whatever the message, from the need to drink more water to the fact that someone is at the door," Helal said. **Aging population** Such technology is needed now, and will be even more necessary in the next decade or two, as America's baby boomers continue to grow older, Helal said. The UF rehabilitation center, funded most recently with a \$4.5 million grant from the National Institute for Disability, Rehabilitation and Research, seeks to help people live alone longer and lower the cost of their care. Although only 10 percent of people in their 60s require assistance in their daily lives, half of men and women 80 or



LARA NEEL/The Gainesville Sun Security cameras are part of the features of the "smart house" at UF.

beyond, Mann said. "The real problem for how we're spending health care dollars is going to occur in 20 years, but many people will need assistive care before then," he said. The need for such assistive-care solutions is particularly acute in Florida. Nearly 9 percent of the state's population — about 1.5 million people — is 75 or older, the highest in the nation. The need is only increasing: The state's 85-plus population is projected to almost double by 2020, when Florida will be home to almost 650,000 people age 85 or older, according to Florida State University's Pepper Institute on Aging & Public Policy's 2002 report, "Florida's Aging Population." Mann, who has spent more than a decade studying how technology can help alleviate disabilities associated with aging, said his work revealed elderly people have a "tremendous need" for assistive devices. His studies show that elderly people who obtain and use the devices tend to decline more slowly than those who remain unassisted. They also cost the system less for care, he said. Helal said the "smart house" technology on display in Matilda's home is intended as more

than a laboratory experiment. To take the technology further, he said, will require partnerships with industry. "We'll be presenting it at a number of national conferences, trying to convince various industries of the viability and marketability of this concept," he said. The laboratory mock house, built with a \$38,000 grant from the College of Engineering, will shift to a real setting soon. A \$200,000 donation from UF alumni will put smart technology in a unit at Oak Hammock, a retirement living community now under construction in southwest Gainesville. "It should be completed in June 2004 and will be a real-scale house," Helal said. "We'll recruit subjects through the University of Florida who will actually live in the house and learn to employ this technology on a much wider scale." That human input is a key component in the project's success, he emphasized. "As engineers, we may think we've developed some killer applications here. But we have not gotten a real person to try it and tell us that it works for them." Diane Chun can be reached at 374-5041 or chund@gvillesun.com.

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(Pravachol)	Pravastatin	40 mg	100	\$ 416	\$ 181	57%
(Nolvadex)	Tamoxifen	20 mg	100	\$ 390	\$ 54	85%
Celebrex	n/a	200 mg	100	\$ 256	\$ 156	39%
Vioxx	n/a	25 mg	100	\$ 307	\$ 145	53%
Fosamax	n/a	70 mg	4	\$ 66	\$ 56	15%
Coumadin	Warfarin	5 mg	100	\$ 69	\$ 42	39%
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Drug Name	Generic Version	Strength	Count	Average U.S. Cost	Our Price	You Save
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Depo Medrol Inj.	Methylprednisolone	40 mg/mL	5 mL	\$ 32	\$ 24	25%
Synthroid	n/a	0.1 mg	100	\$ 41	\$ 16	61%
Prevacid	n/a	30 mg	100	\$ 422	\$ 232	45%
Flomax	n/a	0.4 mg	100	\$ 197	\$ 109	45%
Nexium	n/a	40 mg	28	\$ 112	\$ 83	26%
(Zoloft caps)	Sertraline	50 mg	100	\$ 233	\$ 118	49%
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