

NEW GIGS FOR FORMER FSU QB'S

Clint Trickett expected to start at WVU; Jacob Coker has Alabama job. » **SPORTS, 1D**



USA TODAY DESPITE RISING TUITION, GRADS MAKE MORE THAN NON-GRADS. **PAGE 1B**

INSIDE THE DEMOCRAT



Grand jury clears officers

TPD officers 'justified' in shootings

By **Karl Etters**
 Democrat staff writer
 @KarlEtters on Twitter

Leon County grand jurors on Tuesday cleared five Tallahassee Police Department officers of any wrongdoing in two recent officer-involved

shootings. The panel decided the uses of force were justified after hearing evidence and testimony from the State Attorney's Office, investigators and witnesses for two days. Any time an officer fires his or her weapon in self-de-

fense, a grand jury must assess if the action was justified.

The jury found that officers acted lawfully firing at Duane Strong and Jacoby Hart during the separate incidents outside of Tallahassee night clubs because of the threat posed to officers and bystanders by the two. Internal affairs inquiries by the de-

partment now begin for the officers on administrative leave for a few more days, a continuation of the standard procedure following shootings.

TPD Chief Michael DeLeo said while there has been a rash of violence in the community, the grand jury's find-

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Pons enters DROP program

Schools superintendent would receive \$397K in five years

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Nonprofit Institute sets up at Brogan

Tallahassee Community College Capital Center has soft launch.

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Help feed local families

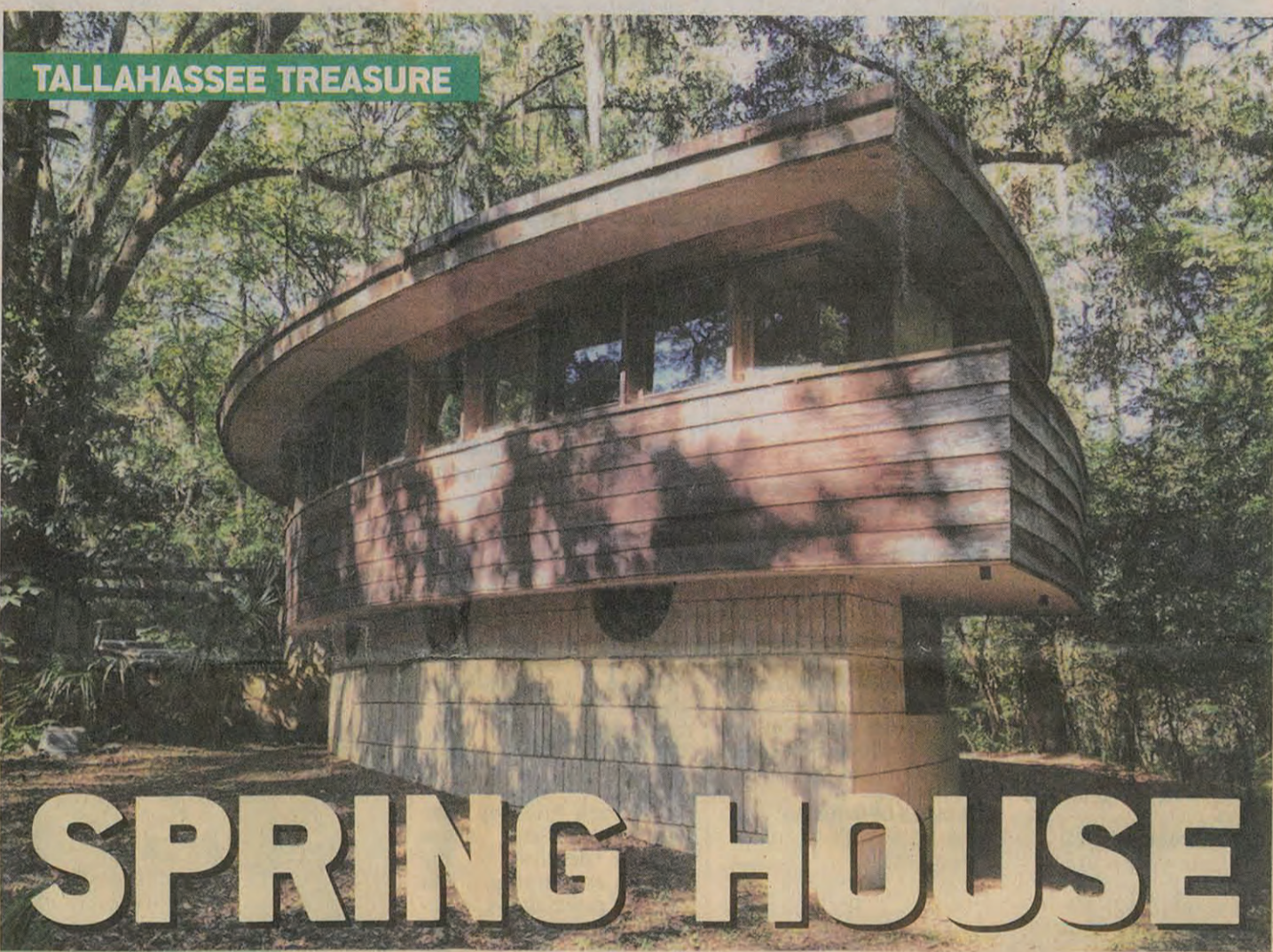


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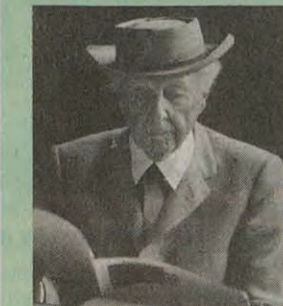
Area residents who would like to support the inaugural Summer Food Drive for America's Second Harvest of the Big Bend may drop off nonperishable food items at the Tallahassee Democrat lobby now through Thursday.

The lobby is open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Summer Food Drive is a project of AMWAT Moving, Warehousing & Storage Inc. and other local businesses to help build up food inventories at Second Harvest during a time when demand is high.



The Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Spring House stands on a wooded lot not far from Interstate 10 in Tallahassee. **DEMOCRAT FILES**



American architect Frank Lloyd Wright. **DEMOCRAT FILES**

It was not built downtown, it wasn't out in the public domain. People aren't aware of it and that's been our goal. Let's draw attention to it."

MARY JO SPECTOR, architect and Spring House Institute board member

Spring House makes national endangered list

Board members hoping for donations to fund restoration

By **Mark Hinson**
 Democrat senior writer

One of Tallahassee's architectural gems, the Spring House designed by famed architect Frank Lloyd Wright, earned a spot Tuesday on The National Trust for Historic Preservation's 2014 list of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places.

"We think this designation will garner lots of donations on a national level," said architect and Spring House Institute board member Mary Jo Spector, during a press conference at Spring House on Tuesday morning.

The annual list shines light on national heritage sites that are at risk of destruction, deterioration or damage. More than 250 sites have made the endangered list in its 27-year history and only a handful of sites have been lost after being named.

Other sites that made the



Spring House board member Olivia Posner speaks at Tuesday's press conference at the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed home. **GERALD ENSLEY/DEMOCRAT**

ONLINE
 See a video about the designation for Spring House at Tallahassee.com

2014 list include the Music Hall in Cincinnati, Ohio, the Palladium Building in St. Louis and Mokuaukaia Church in Hawaii.

Spring House is the only privately owned Wright residence built in Florida. The board members of the nonprofit Spring House Institute

hope the endangered designation will spark donations to raise around \$350,000 and gain a matching grant from the state's Division of Historic Resources. So far, nearly \$30,000 has been raised.

The money will be used to buy the property from the Lewis family, which owns the home, and then begin restorations on it as a public building. A professional appraisal of the house's worth is still being made.

See **HOUSE** » 10A



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WEATHER

Today: 95
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 Rain: 50%
 Full forecast » **8D**





Frank Lloyd Wright's Spring House was built for \$42,000 in 1954. BILL HUMPHRIES/SPECIAL THE DEMOCRAT

House

Continued » 1A

"Structurally, the house is in very good condition," Spector said, but she added it needs much work in areas such as the plumbing, the electrical wiring and the roof.

Constructed in 1954 for \$42,000, Spring House was built by George and Clifton Lewis after they met the architect in Lakeland. The 1,500-square-foot house is an example of Wright's late-period, Solar Hemisphere design. The low-slung, boat-shaped, open-air building is tucked into the woods on Okeehoopkee Drive, which runs off North Monroe Street, just north of Interstate 10.

The house was added to the National Register of Historic Place in 1979. Members of the Lewis family lived there until 2010.

"I spent a lot of time outside and the house feels like you're outside," said daughter Byrd Lewis Mashburn, as she sat Tuesday morning in the house where she was raised. "My room's the smallest in the house, so I went outside a lot."

The colorful and iconoclastic Clifton Lewis,



Visitors mingle inside the Spring House during Tuesday's press conference. The former Tallahassee home of George and Clifton Lewis is the only private home Wright designed in Florida. GERALD ENSLEY/DEMOCRAT

who was also one of the founders of the 50-year-old LeMoyné Center for the Visual Arts and a foot soldier in Tallahassee's civil rights movement of the early '60s, died in late February. She was 94.

Because Spring House is on such a wooded lot in a secluded neighborhood and not easily

visible from the street, many people are unaware Tallahassee is home to a rare Wright house. It is not as prominently located as, say, Wright's iconic Guggenheim Museum across from Central Park in Manhattan.

"It was not built downtown, it wasn't out in the



The Wright-designed Spring House has been named one of the nation's most endangered historic places. GERALD ENSLEY/DEMOCRAT

public domain," Spector said. "People aren't aware of it and that's been our goal. Let's draw attention to it."

The Spring House Institute intends to use the restored house for meetings, receptions, chamber concerts, lectures, poetry readings and "anything remotely connected to the arts," Spector said.

On June 8, Spring House held a fundraiser and party for Wright's 147th birthday. About 240 Wright enthusiasts showed up and paid \$15 per head. Anyone wishing to donate to the Wright restoration can visit www.preservespringhouse.org

Schools

Continued » 3A

Ridge, meaning she'll also assist with improvement plans at other schools. Pons said the position was created within the district by Stu Greenberg, who is divisional director for school accountability.

The contracts for teachers, custodians, school nurses and other staff members were also approved during Tuesday's School Board meeting. Hundreds of contracts for paraprofessionals were also approved by the School Board.

Paraprofessionals assist teachers with lesson plans and interacting with students, particularly at the Exceptional Student Education level. Cox said last school year, the district employed "about 529 paraprofessionals." Of those, 347 worked with ESE students.

He said 25 positions were cut for the 2014-15 school year. Of those, 11 were due to attrition meaning those who filled the positions either retired or moved somewhere else. Cox stressed even though 25 positions were cut over the last month, there are still 48 positions held in reserve. He said those positions can be used to hire new paraprofessionals if need arises within the district.

Last year, the district spent about \$153 million on staffing. This year Leon County Schools is expected to spend \$156 million because of raises to average teacher salaries

"This is important so folks can know they have a job and they can work. That would be important for me to know. It would help for people to know earlier. It helps one to be more relaxed and confident if they know they do have a place to work."

GEORGIA "JOY" BOWEN, School Board member

and benefits.

During a School Board meeting earlier this month, a staffing plan was presented to Board members by Bev Owens, who said the district needed to "be conservative" while planning for the school year. During that same meeting, School Board member Georgia "Joy" Bowen said the district should make swift decisions regarding the rehiring of staff members.

"This is important so folks can know they have a job and they can work," Bowen said Tuesday. "That would be important for me to know. It would help for people to know earlier. It helps one to be more relaxed and confident if they know they do have a place to work."

Pons

Continued » 3A

they can't collect their DROP money or their monthly retirement benefits until they actually leave office.

Pons said he plans to remain in DROP through the entire five-year period, which ends in May 2019. He said he's tentatively planning to run for re-election in 2016.

"My plans are to run

for superintendent again to serve the people," Pons said. "But I always make that decision about a year out. It's a little early to do that."

Pons, 58, joined the district in 1986. He worked as a teacher, athletic director and assistant principal at Rickards High School before becoming assistant principal at Godby High School and principal at Deerlake Middle School. He was first elected superintendent in 2006.

Jury

Continued » 1A

ings are an important check on the actions of his officers.

"It's an important process," DeLeo said following the decision. "The grand jury serves the community, they're representative of the community and it's important for our actions to be reviewed in these types of situations. In these two cases they found that officers acted reasonably and justifiably."

On May 30, officers fired at 18-year-old Duane Strong when they attempted to stop Strong's car after hearing gunshots in a parking lot as Cheeks Sports Bar and Lounge on West Tennessee Street was closing.

Police say Strong "gunned" his car toward them, pinning Officer Clay Fallis between his patrol car and another vehicle and prompting officers Derek Hawthorn and Fallis to both fire their weapons.

Fallis fired nine times and Hawthorn fired three times, striking Strong with one bullet in the upper torso.

Strong continued to speed onto White Drive where a police cruiser rammed his car in an attempt to disable it. The car veered off the road and crashed.

Although an autopsy has not been released, the grand jury presentment says both of Strong's lungs and his aorta were hit and "he died shortly thereafter as a result of his injuries."

Two handguns were located on the driver's side floorboard of the car. It is still unknown if Strong had any involvement in the initial shooting.

Jacoby Hart remains in the Leon County Jail in connection to the second shooting, a June 15 incident outside of Club

"It seems like everybody has a gun and we're having more gun related crimes today than we've ever had before."

WILLIE MEGGS, State Attorney

Pierre on Orange Avenue. According to court records, while patrolling the area police saw and heard Hart firing rounds into the air during a confrontation with another individual.

Officers Derek Braxton and Jason Revenel approached and repeatedly told Hart to drop his gun. He did not comply and led police on a foot chase. During the chase, Hart pointed a gun at Braxton. The officer feared he would be shot and fired at Hart four times, striking him two or three times. Hart survived his injuries.

Grand jurors found "Jacoby Hart presented a threat to the officers as well as nearby civilians when he refused to drop his gun pursuant to the officers' lawful commands, when he ran from police while armed with a gun and when he raised the gun toward Officer Braxton."

State Attorney Willie Meggs said grand juries have taken up police-involved shootings for the past 30 years as a policy and he is troubled by the violence that has marked the past six weeks.

"These citizens took a look at it and said these officers were justified in the actions that they took," Meggs said. "We've had a little outburst of violence here. It seems like everybody has a gun and we're having more gun related crimes today than we've ever had before."

The two incidents addressed by the grand jury are among four in the past

six weeks where TPD officers have fired their weapons at five different suspects. Two have been killed during the confrontations.

All five suspects involved in the shootings are black. Three officers — officers Braxton, Ravenel and Hawthorn — are also black. Fallis and Officer David Keller are white.

"I'm concerned, no matter who is shot, regardless of race, gender, creed or anything else," said DeLeo, who has been on scene following each shooting. "These are tragic events that affect everybody's lives who are involved. Regardless of who is shot, it's a significant event that we have to evaluate."

Officer Doug Clark, who is white, returned to patrol after a grand jury cleared him of any wrongdoing in another incident May 20. In that case, officers shot two suspects, killing one, in a May 12 botched robbery attempt and chase through Florida State University's campus.

As is protocol, a combined five TPD officers were placed on administrative leave following the incidents taken up by the grand jury this week.

DeLeo said after administrative training, the officers will return to full duty within a few days.

On July 14, the grand jury will take up another officer-involved shooting that occurred Thursday on Joe Louis Street, Meggs said. In that case, officers again said they feared for their lives when they gave chase to Broderick Davis and he pointed a gun at them.

DeLeo added the incidents that led to the grand jury review could have been avoided.

"The idea is that if people comply with the officers and listen and talk and communicate then they wouldn't lead to these results," he said.

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