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Santa Rosa: State eyes derelict boat, students excel in career academies

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The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission is investigating a derelict sailboat near Gulf Breeze, Santa Rosa County's career academy students achieve more academically than their peers, and Trees Plus owner Rob Williamson has been recognized for his professionalism.

State investigates derelict boat

1 The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the law enforcement agency for state waters, is investigating a derelict sailboat sunken in a canal in the Santa Rosa Shores subdivision near Gulf Breeze.

The boat is in a canal behind its owner's home on Seabreeze Lane. Oscar A. Meyer, 82, owns the vessel. Neighbors say the boat is not only an eyesore but also poses a hazard to others who use the canal.

Students achieve more

2 The Santa Rosa County School District's career academies are helping students achieve more, Ildi Hosman reported to the TEAM Santa Rosa Economic Development Council board of directors on Monday.

A career academy is a specialty program within a school intended to provide concentrated training in specific career fields, like construction and culinary arts.

Hosman serves as TEAM's representative to the Workforce Escarosa employment agency.

"TEAM is working on a workforce development strategic plan with the school district to increase the number of people in the labor pool that can go to work for our targeted industries," she said after the meeting.

"A well trained workforce helps us to attract companies to the area," she added. "We aim to increase the number of certifications next year and introduce two new advisory councils for Santa Rosa County to determine the industry needs in the areas of logistics and renewable energy.

Hosman reported these statistics about Santa Rosa schools to the board:

n General graduation rate: 84.9 percent n Career academy student graduation rate: 87.46 percent n

Average student grade point average: 2.89 n Average career academy student GPA: 2.98

n In the 2009-10 school year, 139 students earned industry certifications, 72 of which were in targeted industry sectors like information technology and health.

Businessman tops in his field

3 Rob Williamson, owner of Trees Plus in Navarre, has been named as a finalist n the International Society of Arboriculture's True Professionals of Arboriculture Award for the second consecutive year.

Williamson was one of 21 finalists out of more than 20,000 ISA-certified arboricultural professionals from around the U.S., Trees Plus announced on Monday.

He also was named Florida's 2009 Outstanding Professional by the Florida Urban Forestry Council earlier this year.

Williamson is an ISA-certified arborist. His professional affiliations include the ISA, the Tree Care Industry Association, the Florida Urban Forestry Council, the Nursery Growers and Landscape Association and the Society of Municipal Arborists.
