

# 20th Year Anniversary Celebration



Thank you Ocala/Marion County Chamber and Economic Partnership for helping Ocala Business Leaders, Inc. celebrate 20 years of connecting Ocala Business Leaders with everyone we meet.

## Magnolia Family Urgent Care Open House



Pictured are some of the attendees at the Magnolia Family Urgent Care Open House. Not pictured were hosts Dr. Miguel Cruz MD and Stacy Edmondson Cruz, ARNP. The event was well attended by the Ocala

Business Leaders and the CEP/Ocala Chamber of Commerce. They are located at 1490 SE Magnolia Extension Ocala FL 34471 Phone 352-512-9703

## State Attorney's Office Strikes Again

By TomL

The State Attorney's office was not satisfied that they took down Sheriff Blair, taking down the Lake County Sheriff, and in addition putting four Marion County Sheriff deputies in prison. Brad King tried to prosecute the fifth officer that plead innocent. Now the State Attorney's Office has ruined another innocent Deputy's career. Deputy Parker, a 14 year veteran of the Marion County Sheriff's Department, one of the World Winning Swat Team and a Canine Officer, was called into court to testify in a case. His testimony was different than his supervisor's who was part of the Billy Woods transition Team. He gave his testimony to the best of his recollection and his written statement reflected the same as his testimony. The records show he was accurate. The State Attorney's office lost the case against the fifth officer and then it started... Deputy Parker, a Sheriff Deputy, just a witness in the case had his career ruined because he remembered something different than another witness.

The State Attorney. Brad King released a

statement that his office would no longer trust Officer Parker's testimony in any case from this time forward, which is critical in a Deputies job. Just a little harsh don't you think? Of course the Press Release was printed by the Ocala Star Banner without collaboration, **NO PROOF OF WRONG DOING!** Flat out ruined Deputy Parker's career. Sheriff Billy Woods called Parker in with the intent to fire him, but Parker handed him his written resignation. Parker was raised in the Agricultural World. He will come out of this because he has a lot of friends. Remember they are voters. Parker has a wife, two children and third on the way. "What a shame!"

I made contact with Ex-Officer Parker, who took the man's way out! He said **"Nothing good would come of anything I would say", Parker said. So I put it behind me and am moving on! I am not guilty of any wrong doing!"**

I wonder why our new Sheriff Billy Woods did not stickup for his Deputy. I find it interesting when I use the name Brad King to an Officer. They lower their voice and are

Continued on page 4

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Kevin Sheilley  
**OCALA/MARION COUNTY CHAMBER & ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP**



There are so many incredible things happening in our community. The coming months will see the announcement of new primary employers and major expansions by existing primary employers. The

Power Plant Business Incubator continues to help innovative and scalable startups primarily in the areas of technology, health care, and communications. The downtown area continues to generate enthusiasm with the new midtown plan, an ever-growing line up of restaurants and stores, and the long awaited hotel project set to break ground by the end of summer. All of this excitement and growth is in large part the result of our partners. Thank you for your engagement and investment in moving Ocala and Marion County forward.

Leadership Ocala Marion

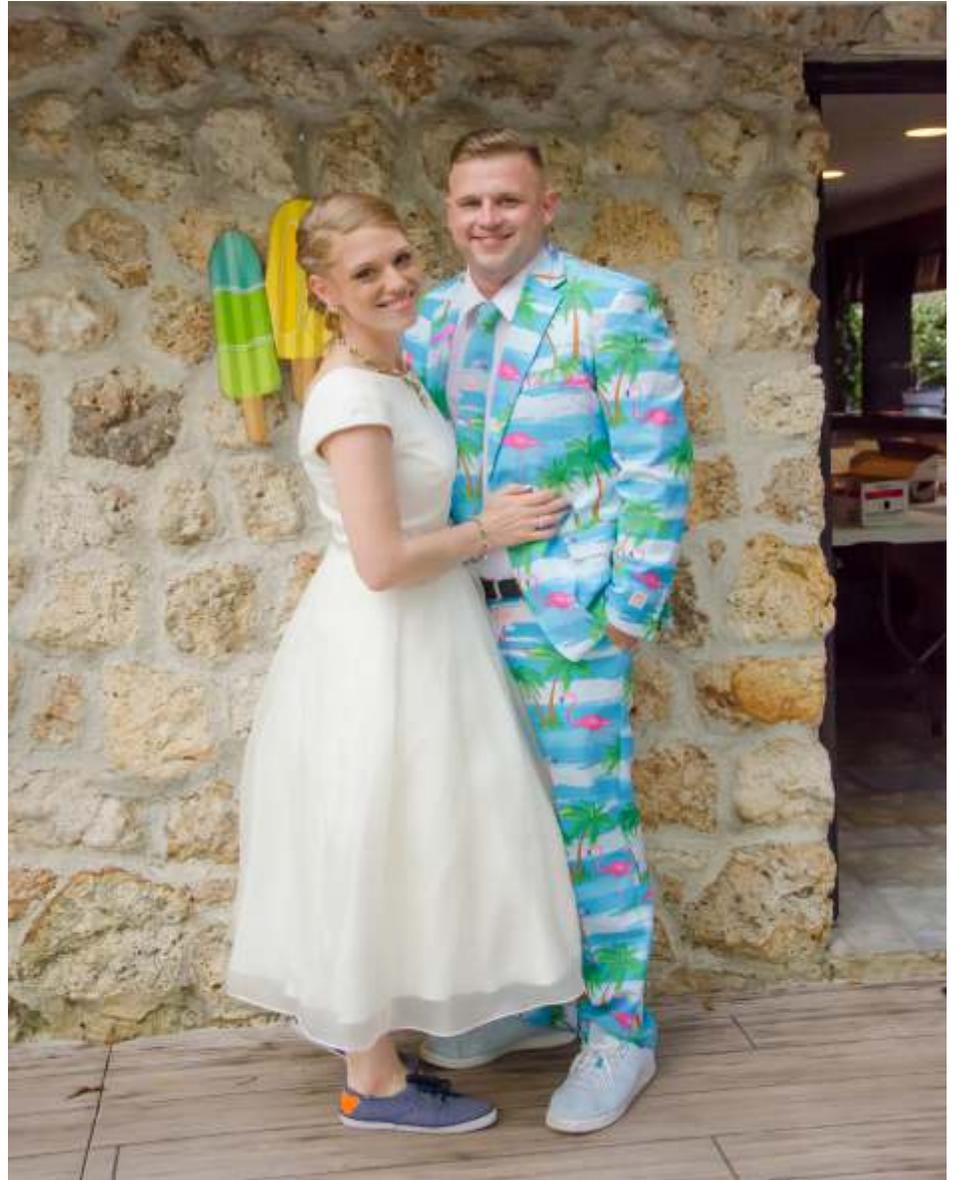
Spring brings warmer weather, high school proms and graduations, and the beginning of planning for the CEP's amazing leadership programs. For 30 years, Leadership Ocala Marion (LOM) has been training and providing opportunities to train new generations of leaders on the needs of this community and how they can engage.

In mid-May, the 35 members of Class XXX will graduate from Leadership Ocala Marion. The program's beginnings can be traced back to Mr. Frank Stafford who was serving as President of the Board of the Chamber in 1986 when the decision was made to hire a consultant to help the Chamber start a leadership program. The first class began in the fall of 1987. While the methods and details have changed over the years, the principles and mission remain the same: *Leadership Ocala Marion (LOM) is designed to engage, develop, and inspire developing leaders in our community. LOM seeks to prepare, involve and sustain leaders from diverse backgrounds who are committed and competent to address community challenges and improve the business climate, economy and quality of life in Ocala and Marion County.*

For those unfamiliar with LOM, the program is engaging yet rigorous. After an application and selection process, the leaders embark upon the program which includes an orientation retreat and once a month, all-day sessions. Each session focuses on a different area of community life and seeks to help the leaders understand the inner-workings of those areas including economic development, human services, government, justice, agriculture and education. The LOM calendar runs September through May.

The deadline to apply for Class XXXI is July 1st. For more information on applying, please visit the CEP's website—[OcalaCEP.com/supporting-business](http://OcalaCEP.com/supporting-business)

It has been said that everything rises and falls on leadership. Investing in and building up leaders is essential for our community to be the best choice to live, work and play.



Kelsie Ruff & Chris Smith married at the Bellemoor Plantation in Ocala. Photo credit: Michelle Vazul

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## Region's Jobless Rate Continues To Fall

### Ocala Metro Posts Third Fastest Job Growth Rate In Florida

OCALA, Fla. (April 21, 2017) – If not yet in full bloom, the economy is certainly growing stronger in the CareerSource Citrus Levy Marion region.

According to today's employment summary by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), the unemployment rate in March for the CareerSource CLM region was 5.2 percent, down 0.7 percentage point since February

and 0.6 percentage point lower than the area's rate a year ago of 5.8 percent.

Out of an expanded labor force of 201,238, there were 10,556 unemployed, a drop of 1,281 over the month and 915 less than a year ago. Significantly, there were 190,682 people with jobs throughout the three counties, an increase of 1,893 over the month and 5,882 more than in March 2016.

Additionally, the DEO reports that the Ocala metropolitan statistical area (MSA) posted 103,700 nonfarm jobs in March, an

Continued on page 3

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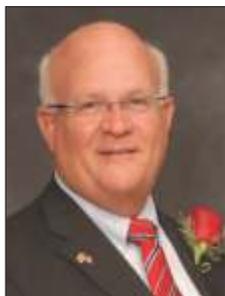
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We are closing in on the finish line of the 2017 Legislative Session. We have worked this session to better our state and its residents, and to protect faith, family, freedom, and opportunity.

This session, The Florida Senate passed Senate Bill 10, authorizing a significant increase in southern water storage to further the goal of reducing, and eventually eliminating, harmful discharges from Lake Okeechobee. This bill dramatically expands southern storage by leveraging existing water infrastructure, and utilizing a combination of state, local, and private land, in a manner that respects the interests of the agricultural community and private landowners.

We also passed Senate Bill 374, the College Competitiveness Act of 2017. This legislation will further elevate Florida's nationally ranked community colleges through a renewed focus on their core mission, which is promoting on-time completion of vital associate degrees and workforce credentials that prepare students for jobs in communities across our state.

Additionally, the Senate unanimously passed Senate Bill 78, Public School Recess. The legislation requires each district school board to provide at least 100 minutes of supervised, safe, and unstructured free-play recess each week for students in kindergarten through 5th grade. Such recess must involve at least 20

consecutive minutes of free-play per day in the public elementary school setting. Senate Bill 78 ensures that recess time is kept separate from standard physical education course time.

We will continue to work hard for the good people of Florida. We will land the plane and ensure that all Floridians are cared for and protected.

## Region's Jobless Rate

Continued from page 2

increase of 4,000 new jobs for a 4.0 percent growth rate over the year. That's the third fastest rate among all Florida's metro areas.

For the third consecutive month, the Ocala MSA continued to hold the fastest annual job growth rate compared to all metros in Florida in professional and business services, at 11.0 percent. The Ocala MSA had the third fastest job growth rate in mining, logging and construction at 10.4 percent.

Kathleen Woodring, CareerSource CLM's executive vice president, said that the region is gaining momentum when it comes to positive economic indicators.

"This is exactly what we like to see: expansion of the labor force fueled by strong job growth," she said.

Levy County continued to post the lowest jobless rate in the region dropping from 5.0 to 4.5 percent; followed by Marion County

at 5.1 percent, down from 5.9 percent; and Citrus County at 5.9 percent, dropping from 6.8 percent. Florida's not seasonally adjusted rate was 4.3 percent, down over the month from 4.7 percent; and the nation's rate was 4.6 percent, down from 4.9 percent.

Woodring said the March report shows that career seekers continue to have optimism as a result of growing job opportunities. She noted that in March, 50 employers recruited candidates at career fairs in Ocala and Lecanto, and that hiring events – such as the four next week for Rural King – take place on a regular basis.

"How do we know the economy is improving? By seeing that those who enter the labor force are finding employment," she said.

Citrus County's labor force increased by 277 to 48,058, the number of employed rose by 682 to 45,230, and the number of those without jobs fell by 405 to 2,848 over the month. The number of unemployed was down 338 from March 2016 when the rate was 6.6 percent.

Levy County's labor force expanded by 22 to 16,937, the number of employed increased by 110 to 16,176 and the number of unemployed dropped by 88 to 761. That's 308 more employed and 84 fewer unemployed compared to a year ago when the jobless rate was 5.1 percent.

Marion County's labor force grew by 313 to 136,243, the number of employed increased by 1,101 to 129,296 and the number of jobless decreased by 788 to 6,947. That is 5,520 more with jobs over the year and 493 fewer unemployed than in March 2016 when the jobless rate was 5.7 percent.

Among the counties, Citrus County continued to hold the third highest rate behind Sumter County at 6.1 percent and

Hendry County at 6.4 percent; Marion County dropped from 10<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>; and Levy County was 26<sup>th</sup>.

The Villages MSA continued to post the highest rate among the states metros at 6.1 percent, Homosassa Springs (Citrus County) was second and Ocala fell from fourth to fifth.

Much of the region's strong job gains continue to be fueled by jobs in the Ocala/Marion County metro area, which posted 103,700 nonfarm jobs in March, adding 4,000 new jobs over the year for a job growth rate of 4.0 percent. That outpaced the statewide growth rate of 3.0 percent and was the third fastest job growth rate among all of the state's metro areas.

Industries gaining jobs over the year were trade, transportation and utilities (+1,000 jobs); professional and business services (+1,000); mining, logging and construction (+700); education and health services (+700); manufacturing (+300); leisure and hospitality (+100); other services (+100); and government (+100).

Professional and business services (+11.0 percent); mining, logging and construction (+10.4 percent); trade, transportation and utilities (+4.4 percent); and education and health services (+3.9 percent); and manufacturing (+3.8 percent) industries grew as fast or faster in the metro area than statewide over the year.

Information and financial activities were unchanged.

The Homosassa Springs MSA had 33,500 nonfarm jobs in March, an increase of 100 jobs over the month and a decrease of 200 jobs over the year.

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New/Used Vehicle..... 11%	Placed Ad on Craigslist..... 17%
Home Contractor..... 3%	Responded to Craigslist Ad... 21%
Job change ads..... 12%	

\* Survey Conducted June 30, 2013

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Tom Louny Long time member of CEP/Ocala Chamber of Commerce, Past President of the Ocala Business Leaders, Co-Founder of Select Business Associates, Past President of the Lady Lake Chamber.

## PUBLISHER'S NOTES

### State Attorney's Office

Continued from page 1

By TomL



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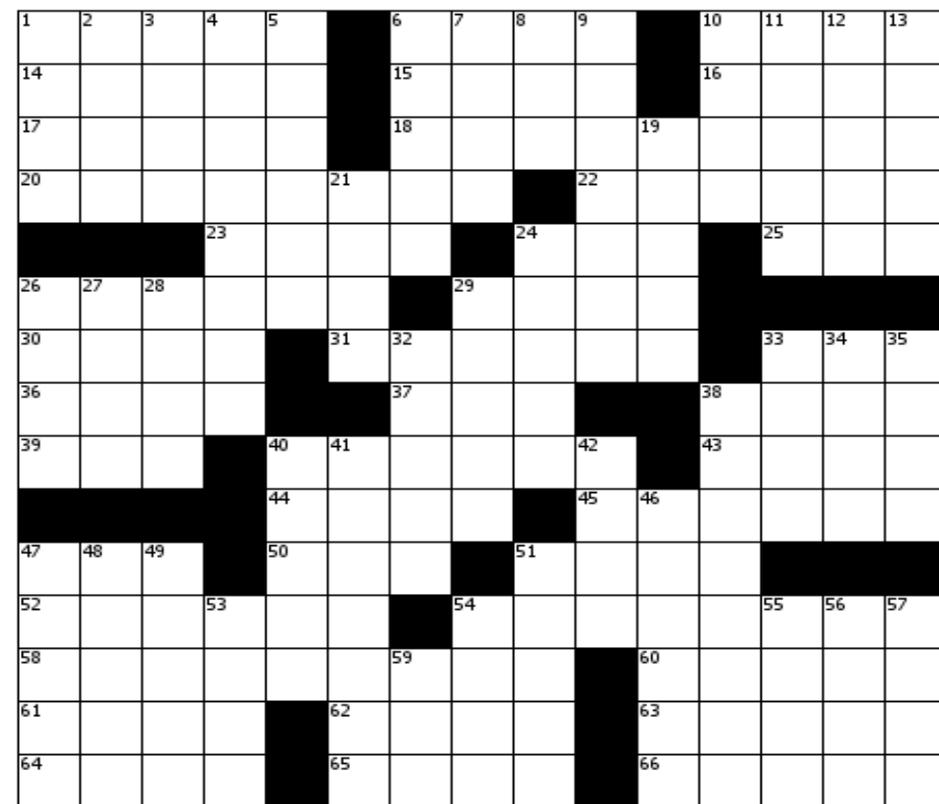
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## Crossword Puzzle

- Across**  
 1. Highway exits  
 6. Mr. Gershwin et al.  
 10. Ewes' mates  
 14. In flames  
 15. Designate  
 16. PDQ's kin  
 17. Beauty shop  
 18. Happen  
 20. High blood \_\_\_\_  
 22. Achieve  
 23. Mexican money  
 24. Amtrak depot (abbr.)

25. Fish trap  
 26. Hinder  
 29. Vegas machine  
 30. Powder mineral  
 31. Go to bed  
 33. Psychic letters  
 36. Thicken  
 37. Free (of)  
 38. Ground grain  
 39. "You there!"  
 40. Hi-fi system  
 43. Model \_\_\_\_  
 Macpherson

44. Circle segments  
 45. What Moses parted (2 wds.)  
 47. Maple's fluid  
 50. Pecan, e.g.  
 51. Surrealist painter Salvador \_\_\_\_  
 52. Warnings  
 54. Transmit a TV show  
 58. Change  
 60. A la \_\_\_\_  
 61. Give forth  
 62. Shade trees



63. Staircase part  
 64. Part  
 65. If not  
 66. Scorches

**Down**

1. Grating sound  
 2. Not nearby  
 3. Distance measure  
 4. Possibility  
 5. Felt  
 6. Beginning part  
 7. Seldom seen  
 8. Doctors' org.  
 9. Ted Kennedy, e.g.  
 10. Entranced

11. Chinese, e.g.  
 12. \_\_\_\_ Antoinette  
 13. Paid out  
 19. Declare  
 21. Operator  
 24. Glide  
 26. Restless desire  
 27. Gender  
 28. Scheme  
 29. Mixes  
 32. Upright  
 33. Slithery swimmers  
 34. Shopper's delight  
 35. Guilty, e.g.  
 38. Government health program

40. Yule visitor  
 41. Board member  
 42. Voiced  
 46. Votes in  
 47. Screen \_\_\_\_  
 48. San Antonio shrine  
 49. Hazard  
 51. Thickly populated  
 53. Ceremony  
 54. Cruise and Hanks  
 55. Vicinity  
 56. Celebrity  
 57. Williams and Koppel  
 59. Unwell

Answers on page 11

## Newspaper Deadlines

*Editorial & Ad Copy for June*

**Seniors Voice & Ocala DownTown**

**12am, May 17th**

**Lady Lake Magazine & Village Spectator**

**12am, May 24th**

## Seniors Voice of Ocala/Ocala Downtown

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## SENIOR SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**EARLY BIRD DINNER THEATRE** | AGES 50+ Charter bus departs Eighth Avenue Adult Activity Center at 8:30 a.m. and returns from Clearwater at 7 p.m. Thursday May 18

Greg and Kate are empty nesters who moved to Manhattan. Greg's career as a financial trader is winding down and Kate's career as an English teacher is beginning to offer her more opportunities. Greg finds a dog in the park, which becomes a major bone of contention between Greg and Kate. A modern romantic comedy about a marriage and a dog.

Fee is \$65/person. Registration open through May 12 by calling Grace at 352-629-8357.

**LUNCH N' LEARN SERIES**  
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**WISHES, ADVANCED CARE PLANNING**

May 25 | 5 Join professionals for informational discussions on topics that may affect the lives of our adult community. Complimentary lunch! To pre-register, call 352-401-3916

### LET'S ALL GO TO THE MOVIES!

Reservations must be made at the hosting center. Seating is limited to eight persons/movie.

**"LOVING" STARRING:** JOEL EDGERTON, RUTH NEGGA, MARTON CSOKAS, NICK KROLL AND TERRI ABNEY  
Eighth Avenue Adult Activity Center | 830 NE Eighth Ave. | 352-629-8545  
Tuesday and Wednesday | May 2 and 3 | 1:30 p.m.

Barbara Gaskin Washington Adult Activity Center | 210 NW 12<sup>th</sup> Ave. | 352-629-8357

Wednesday and Thursday | May 3 and 4 | 1:30 p.m.

Interracial couple Richard and

Mildred Loving fell in love and were married in 1958.

They had grown up in Central Point, a small town in Virginia that was more integrated than surrounding areas in the American South. Yet it was the state of Virginia, where they were making their home and starting a family, that first jailed and then banished them. Richard and Mildred relocated with their children to the inner city of Washington, D.C. While relatives made them feel welcome there, the more urban environment did not feel like home to them, and ultimately, the pull of their roots in Virginia would spur Mildred to try to find a way back. Their civil rights case, "Loving v. Virginia," went all the way to the Supreme Court, which in 1967 reaffirmed the very foundation of the right to marry. Richard and Mildred returned home and their love story has become an inspiration to couples ever since. Based on a true story. Rated PG-13

**"BEAUTY AND THE BEAST" STARRING:** VINCENT CASSEL, LEA SEYDOUX, AUDREY LAMY, SARA GIRAUDEAU AND EDUARDO NORIEGA

Eighth Avenue Adult Activity Center | 830 NE Eighth Ave. | 352-629-8545  
Tuesday and Wednesday | May 16 and 17 | 1:30 p.m.

Barbara Gaskin Washington Adult Activity Center | 210 NW 12<sup>th</sup> Ave.

Wednesday and Thursday | May 17 and 18 | 1:30 p.m.

After the sinking of his ship, a merchant is forced into exile in the countryside with his six children. Among them is his youngest daughter, Belle. While on a journey, the merchant ventures into a magical realm and is condemned to death by the Beast for stealing a rose from his garden. Belle offers herself up in her father's place, but, at the castle, it is not death that awaits her but a strange and beautiful life. Over time, Belle learns of the Beast's tragic past as a prince and, courageously, sets out to release Him from his curse. Rated PG



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# Spring 2017 Home Garden & Lifestyle Expo

Spring 2017 Home Garden & Lifestyle Expo was held April 22 at the Klein Conference Center in the Ewers Century Center at the College of Central Florida Ocala.

The event was put on by the Ocala/Marion County Chamber & Economic Partnership,

The Marion County Building Industry Association (MCBIA) and the Ocala/Marion County Association of Realtors (OMCAR).

TomL Publishing (this paper) had a table there and enjoyed meeting vendors from last year and some new vendors. We heard from

some of our readers encouraging us to continue telling it like it is. I would guess about 40 vendors.

They had a drawing every hour for a door prize and plenty of give-aways.

I learned some interesting stuff as I always do at these Expo's.

There were free seminars and a couple of food vendors, some outside vendors with plant life and the Master Gardeners were inside answering questions asked of them by the visitors.

The flow of visitors was steady, giving the vendors time to talk to each one. We have a couple of Vendors we will be talking to Monday AM.



# EQUESTRIAN MAGAZINE Host 2017 Horse and Pet Expo

Bill and Noele Vander Brink, pictured on the left, hosted the 2017 Horse & Pet Expo. There were a lot of events for the whole family. They had animals, demonstrations, vendors, food. The children enjoyed miniature horses, dogs and the shows. The Royal Horses put on a show and educated the onlookers why the horses were trained to do certain maneuvers for Ancient war times. The expo was enjoyed by a large number of people and Bill says they will start getting ready for next year.

Equestrian Magazine has a large circulation which reaches far beyond Florida. They follow the horse circuit when possible.

Don't miss next year! Watch in this newspaper for ads.



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# Horse and Pet Expo

Continued from page 7



## CEP OCALA / MARION COUNTY CHAMBER & ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

*To be the catalyst for a prosperous community.*

The Ocala/Marion County Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Corporation are **Moving Forward!** and have unified to create the Ocala/Marion County Chamber & Economic Partnership (CEP).

The CEP will serve as the central resource for all businesses in Marion County: new, relocating, existing, large, small and budding entrepreneurs!

The forward momentum of this vibrant organization will focus on economic growth while maintaining the beauty and quality of life in Ocala and Marion County.

*We invite you to get acquainted at a complimentary, no-obligation*  
**“GET GOING! New Partner Orientation”**

This 60-minute overview is a casual format for you to learn more about the CEP and how partnership in this progressive organization will provide you with additional resources, connections, and advocacy to help in YOUR business development and growth initiatives.

For more information and the date of the next session, please contact:  
 Felecia Prather at 352-629-8051 or felecia@ocalacc.com

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# Parade of Senior Services



# Bee's Knees!

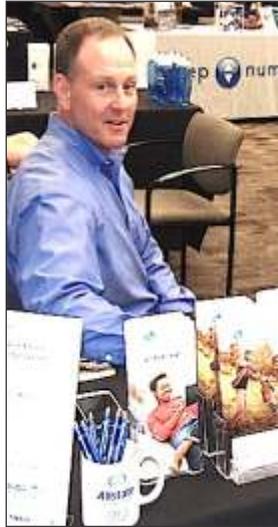
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Marion County's Internet Marketplace

# Spring 2017 Home Garden & Lifestyle Expo

Continued from page 6



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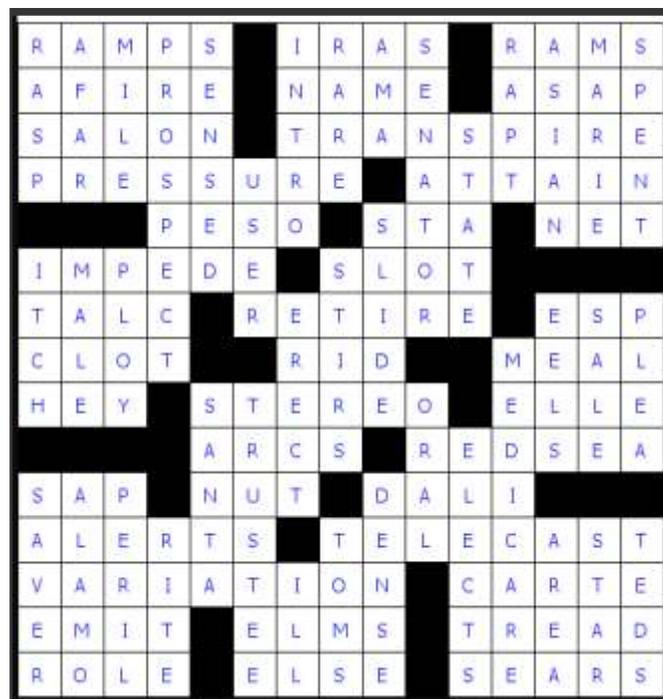
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