



Pictured is the Select Business Associates of Ocala handing a check to Corporal Gary Miller who is in Traffic division. The person that runs the canine division is Sargent Jeremie Nix. Nix was out of town that day. Sgt Nix explains they have 12 dogs and they do three different

job. Six dog are in apprehension that catch the bad guys up close and personal. 2 dogs work at the jail sniffing for drugs, and 2 dogs are for detecting firearms at the schools and public places. When we heard last year we lost a dog we were hoping we could help so we donated \$400. I know it's

not much but maybe we can come up with more later. If you want to help, make a check out to Marion County Sheriff Foundation note at bottom left Canine unit.



Ocala Metro CEP Announces Departure of CEO, Appointment of Search Committee

The Ocala Metro Chamber and Economic Partnership (CEP) announced today that its first CEO, Kevin T. Sheilley, CCE, has submitted his resignation after 12 years. It was simultaneously announced that he has been hired as the new President & CEO of the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce in Charleston, SC.

Sheilley was hired by the CEP shortly after it was formally created in late 2012 with the merger of the Ocala/Marion County Chamber of Commerce and the Ocala/Marion County Economic Development Corporation. Over the last dozen years, the organization led the community's incredible economic rebound and was named national Chamber of the Year in 2020, a finalist for this award in 2017 and 2019, and Florida's Chamber of the Year in 2018.

"The Ocala Metro CEP and the communities it serves have been fortunate to thrive under Kevin's exceptional leadership," said CEP Board Chair Chris Langley. "He will certainly be missed, and the board wishes him well in this next chapter of his career. The organization as a whole is well-positioned to move forward, and with a strong and capable team in place, they will no doubt experience continued success and even greater achievements ahead."

The CEP and its related entities today lead the community's efforts at Business Attraction, Business Retention, Entrepreneurship, Advocacy, and Business Services. It spearheaded both the recent renewal of the Infrastructure Salex Tax and the passage of the ½ Penny for Schools. The organization also embarked on a nationally recognized partnership with Lake County to contract manage economic development.

Incoming CEP Board Chair Charisse Rivers has appointed a search committee composed of herself, three past Board chairs (Doug Cone, Ken Ausley, and Angie Lewis),

Continued page 2

BOI Filing Put On Hold!

By TomL

Interesting while everyone is scrambling to get their CPA or accountant or take the time to follow the very easy to use a 25 page instruction sheet on how to file the BOI, because most of us received warning that if you don't comply before January 1st you will be fined \$500 per day. One company made out pretty good they had a word smith create and send out a notice that really put concern into business peoples minds and lives. They only wanted \$256 by December 6th to file.

I got busy asking for rulings on the filing from Congresswoman Cammack Team, Washington DC! I already filed my LLC what is it for? I made a verbal complaint sent emails asking for written rulings. Congressional rep says she thought

it was just for non citizens. No one told 15 business people that because on the .gov sight it still said it had to be filed. So I had a friend that does some work for me, start filing for the referral lunch club that is an S-Corp. non profit Corp. I had gotten a notice to file that also. The person filing called and said she was answering the questions with the information I had provided and when the question was "did you file your LLC before 2024" she said yes, the whole block of the rest of that section Black out. I think there was something that said that we did not have to file at this time. The filing status was put on hold because of a lawsuit from the Treasury Department. I hope that came from some of my efforts. Anyway I ask the person filing for me to finish it if she could and send the filing. Just to be safe. She could never get

a confirmation of filing. I would like to know who started this when it is easy to tell when the LLC was created.

My business LLC was created in 2016 but I had been in business a while before that. In my business there is always someone wanting to come after or challenge or threaten to sue me. I became a sole proprietor for that reason. So my family would not be attached to the business. It work so far most aggressive actions have been taken just with me. Most were handled quietly by the Sheriff Departments in three County's.

My problem is there is only one way to tell the story, that is the way it happened. So don't say a thing that could get you in trouble. You might have to live with it a long time.

1800s at Fort King



Step into the 1800s at the Festival at Fort King! This two-day event featured historic themed crafts, games, workshops, activities, living historians, vendors, food, drinks and much more. The pinnacle of the festival is a re-enactment of the event that fueled the start of the Second Seminole War.

This year it occurred Saturday,

Dec. 7 and Sunday, Dec. 8, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. at the Fort King National Historic Landmark. Watch for the next event...

Admission is free!

Event Activities: Cast iron cooking; Canoe carving; Archery (Saturday Only); Leather tanning; Combat demonstrations; Seminole Artisans; Craft vendors; Pine needle basket weaving; Living historian re-

Continued page 5

CEP

Continued from page 1
long-time CEP Board Secretary and past Chamber Chair Dwayne Carlton, and Board Vice Chair Todd Rudniansyn. The committee will be chaired by Cone and will conduct a national search for the next President & CEO.

Sheilley's last day with the CEP will be on Friday, 31 January 2025.

About the Ocala Metro Chamber and Economic Partnership

The Ocala Metro Chamber and Economic Partnership (CEP) was created to be a one-stop hub for the community's business attraction, creation and retention efforts. The CEP's mission is to be THE catalyst for a prosperous community. The 2020 ACCE National Chamber of the Year, the CEP has directly impacted the announced creation of more than 13,000 new jobs and more than \$2.3 billion in capital investment over the last decade.

For more information, visit: OcalaCEP.com.

Sunset Songs Series

Date:01/08/2025 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Location:Downtown Square, 1 SE Broadway St., Ocala, Florida 34471

Music lovers of all ages will enjoy Sunset Songs Series! This free concert series on the downtown square brings you the best local and regional artists performing funk, blues, reggae, and country originals as the sun goes down. Kick back and soak in the melodies with the perfect Wednesday night activity. If you love music and sunsets, the Sunset Songs Series is for you! End your day on a melodic high note at these not-to-be-missed community concerts.

Monthly concerts September through May featuring top-notch musical talent

All concerts are 100% free - just bring your lawn chair or blanket!

Unwind and discover great new music in a gorgeous outdoor setting

Grab a bite to eat at one of our many amazing local downtown restaurants

Judicial Watch

Judicial Watch has sued for documents to prove collusion between Fani Willis, Jack Smith, Nancy Pelois, DOJ, FBI, about the Jan 6th so call insurrection.

They were all targeting Donald Trump! Some how a lot of this comes right back to Fulrton Georgia.

There was collusion between the FBI and the DOJ on the raid of Mar-a-Lago and the Trump family. There was collusion between the FBI and social media. Then there was the Biden administration having Tulsi Gabbard put on the terror watch list after criticizing the Biden administration. Two whistle blower Air Marshal's came forward, so they pulled the Air Marshals from the border duty. Well at least the Air Marshals did not have to make sandwiches for the illegals any more.

If you want to follow more of what is going on read Judicial Watch by Tom Fitton. There can of worms is just barely open, massive information to come out!

Turning 65 or new to Medicare?

Big news: There's a 5-star Medicare Advantage plan in Lake, Marion, & Sumter Counties



Easily switch to a top -rated plan

We're proud to offer you our Humana Gold Plus H1036-146 (HMO) plan, which earned 5 out of 5 stars—the highest quality rating—from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. It's available for a premium of \$0.

And from Dec. 8 until the end of the following November, you could switch to this plan during a special enrollment period. More stars in a plan's rating indicates higher quality and performance. Better care begins with listening to the people we serve, and our Star Rating reflects our commitment to doing just that.

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Kevin Sheilley

OCALA/MARION COUNTY CHAMBER & ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP



If you have lived in Ocala for more than a decade, then you probably know our community's story of bouncing back from the Great Recession in 2007-08. If you are newer to the area since

then (and more than 100,000 people have moved here over the last decade), it is important history to know.

In the early 2000's, our community was truly a boomtown. Everyone was a builder, developer, or realtor and we were building and flipping houses like nobody's business. Unfortunately, it was nobody's business. No one was actually living in many of the houses, and we had stopped building a real economy to support the growth. When the Great Recession happened, arguably no community in our country was more negatively impacted than Ocala. Overnight, the County and School System lost 40% of their revenue, wages stagnated, and we began a period of seven years of double-digit unemployment. SEVEN YEARS!

The business community in partnership with local government and education partners made an intentional effort to turn the tide in 2012 with the creation of the CEP with the merger of the Chamber of Commerce with the Economic Development Council. While there were a number of goals, the three top goals were to 1) to create more jobs which 2) pay wages higher than the current county median and 3) resulted in the significant private investment in the community.

Over the last 12 years, those goals have been overwhelmingly met. Just through the efforts of the CEP, more than 13,000 new jobs have been announced in our community from new and expanding primary employers. Not only have we created more jobs but the wages these jobs pay has significantly boosted the area's median wage. Over the last decade, the US median wage has increased 44% but, in our community, it is up 65%. The capital investment by these companies into our community exceeds \$2.3 billion.

Some may ask why the last metric is important. One, it represents dollars spent on land, building, and equipment in our community – dollars which are getting turned over and benefiting other local

businesses who in turn are spending those dollars on additional staff, equipment, and facilities. Perhaps more importantly, it represents investments which lead to increased tax revenue for local governments without increasing property tax rates.

Our community has bounced back and bounced back stronger from the Great Recession. Staying focused on building a diverse, sustainable economy has been the key to our community's resurgence and must continue to be the focus if we do not want to return to the dark days of high unemployment, stagnant wages, and lost revenue.

CEP Receives \$5,000 Grant

Ocala Metro CEP Foundation Receives \$5,000 Grant from Papa John's Foundation to Support Leadership Ocala Marion Youth Program

Ocala, FL – December 9, 2024 – The Ocala Metro Chamber and Economic Partnership Foundation is excited to announce that it has been awarded a \$5,000 grant from the Papa John's Foundation's Building Community Fund. This funding will directly support the CEP's Leadership Ocala Marion Youth (LOMY) program, helping to keep participation costs affordable while also providing scholarships to ensure access for all students.

LOMY is a county-wide program that

brings together a diverse group of students from both public and private high schools in Marion County. Through a series of hands-on activities, leadership workshops, and community service projects, the program helps students build critical skills that will serve them throughout their lives. It also encourages participants to develop a shared commitment to the growth and advancement of their community.

"Thanks to the generous support from the Papa John's Foundation, we can offer more students the opportunity to participate in LOMY and develop crucial leadership skills," said Kevin Sheilley, President and CEO of Ocala CEP. "This funding will ensure the program remains accessible, especially those from underserved communities, have access to the tools and experiences they need to succeed as leaders."

The LOMY program targets high school students entering their junior year in Ocala and Marion County. This demographic represents a critical period in their academic and personal development, making it an ideal time for leadership and career exploration. With approximately 45% of students in the county qualifying for free or reduced lunch, the need for programs like LOMY is particularly urgent. Many students face significant financial challenges that limit their ability to participate in extracurricular activities or explore potential career pathways. Although LOMY is not

Continued page 6

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Tom Loury *Tom Loury Long time member of CEP/Ocala Chamber of Commerce, Past President of the Ocala Business Leaders and current member, Co-Founder and past President of Select Business Associates, Past President of the Lady Lake Chamber and current member. If you want to make contact with the newspaper / Tom Loury email tloury@att.net*

PUBLISHER'S NOTES



By TomL

It looks like everyone is getting in the Christmas Spirit, The Select Business Associates a non profit business referral group has pledged some help. Some of the members have donated

to the Salvation Army 8 children shoes, new clothes, under things and a toys for each needy child. Select Business Associates is also to donating for Canine bullet proof vest for the Marion County Sheriff canine 's. About \$400 and we are setting goals to help another charity in February. We are not a fund raising group but it just happened that way. They are a group of business people who like to help people. If you would like to become a part of the Select Business Associates there are a few category's left open. There is only one business per category, no competition, no exceptions, the

membership has to be 100% agreed to letting a new member in, by invitation only. We have prayer and pledge to the flag at the beginning of each meeting. The business referral Associates empty the bank account at the end of the year to help others. You can see who is in the group by the Happy New Years ad that is in this newspaper. If you would like to find out more about the club, call Tom Loury 352-804-1223

I WONDER WHY?

WHY do we put our worthless junk in the garage and leave our expensive car outside?

Why does the big box store or Grocery's store make the sick and elderly go to the very back of the store for the bathroom or get their prescription filled and they sell cigarettes at the very front? Answer: so they sale of have to be controlled cigarettes.

SETTING Goals for 2025

Be thankful for our GOD!

Be thankful for your family!

Believe in your country!

Be true to your beliefs!

Honor your mother and father and treat them with respect!

Help other!

I don't understand why everyone is just now opening their eyes about how the COVID started. I print the story just as it appears right now, years ago about some of our leaders were sending money to study COVID and the development of it in China. They even went to the trouble of hiding the facts by sending the money to a organization, who then sent it to the research in China. I received several criticism, phone calls saying shame on me! No shame on you for not listening then checking it out! I also wrote a story about all of the students that were coming here from other countries to get educated and then steal our secrets for their country. We stood so proud that other countries were sending their students to colleges here for education AND NOW LOOK! They sent professors who did not like America, now a lot of colleges are corrupt with anti-American foreigners. I say if they burn our flag stop their college education give them six months of detention and teach the American history. If they fail? Give them another six months, mean while their education is on hold! If that don't work deport them, for six months, if that does not work YOUR OUT OF HERE! If you do the above they won't be disrupting other students education.

I think Trump should give the Biden's a Christmas Present "A Uhaul truck"

People that get married and are in the military. Their husbands and wives are getting military allowance for them and the children with free healthcare and many advantages. If they get caught cheating on the spouse while they are in the military cut off the spouses funds. Tax payer should not have to pay for a man or woman that is not true while their spouse is serving in the military! If they don't love them any more fine say so don't sit there collecting my tax money!

ONE MORE THING! The purpose for the Constitution is to limit power of the Government Not the American people!



Newspaper Deadlines

Editorial & Ad Copy for February

Seniors Voice & Ocala DownTown

Noon, January 21st

Lady Lake Magazine & Village Spectator

12am, January 26th

Seniors Voice of Ocala/Ocala Downtown Products of TomL Publishing, LLC

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Phone: 352-804-1223 | Fax: 352-489-7208

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Fort King

Continued from page 1
enactors; And more!

Parking Information: Free shuttle parking was available at the Duke Energy power line field, approximately a quarter mile east of

the fort.

Cannon Firing Notice

During the event, artillery volunteers conducted live cannon firing. Residents in the area may have heard a series of rounds fired multiple times throughout the day during the event.



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CEP Grant

Continued from page 3

free, the grant will help reduce fees and provide scholarships, addressing financial barriers that may otherwise limit participation.

The support from the Papa John's Foundation's Building Community Fund will make a significant impact on the future of Marion County's youth, empowering them to become leaders who will contribute to the long-term success and growth of the community.

For more information about the Papa John's Foundation and its commitment to community development, visit Papa John's Foundation.

About the Ocala Metro Chamber and Economic Partnership

The Ocala Metro Chamber and Economic Partnership (CEP) was created to be a one-stop hub for the community's business

attraction, creation and retention efforts. The CEP's mission is to be THE catalyst for a prosperous community. The 2020 ACCE National Chamber of the Year, the CEP has directly impacted the announced creation of more than 13,000 new jobs and more than \$2.3 billion in capital investment over the last decade.

For more information, visit: OcalaCEP.com.

About the Ocala Metro Chamber and Economic Partnership Foundation

The Ocala Metro CEP Foundation is a not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) organization that supports programs and initiatives to grow talent development, promote entrepreneurship, and cultivate leaders in the Ocala Metro.

To learn more, visit FoundationCEP.org.

Four New Rotarians Inducted



David Shults, Jennifer LeBrecht, Mehul Patel, and Herb Silverman

The Rotary Club of IMPACT Ocala proudly welcomed four esteemed professionals into its membership during an induction ceremony held on December 5 at the Midtown Station in Downtown Ocala. Jennifer LeBrecht, of Thrive Home Therapy & Design, Mehul Patel, with HCA Healthcare, David Shults, from Northwestern Mutual, and Sam Cone, from Cone Farms LLC, took their pledges to uphold the values and mission of Rotary International. The ceremony

was conducted by President-Elect Herb Silverman, with members of both the Rotary Club of IMPACT Ocala and the Rotary Club of Ocala-Sunset in attendance to celebrate this significant milestone. "This induction is a testament to the strength and commitment of our growing Rotary family. These members bring diverse talents and a shared passion for service that will undoubtedly enhance our impact," stated

Antique Stoves for Sale



Three pictures on the left are Antique wood burning stoves. Need cleaning & stove black paint. Not pictured is antique stove square front. I think there are

threaded pipe fittings & assorted other heaters - 1 kerosene and 1 propane buddy. Far right picture is a six foot outdoor heater. **Call Tom 352-804-1223**



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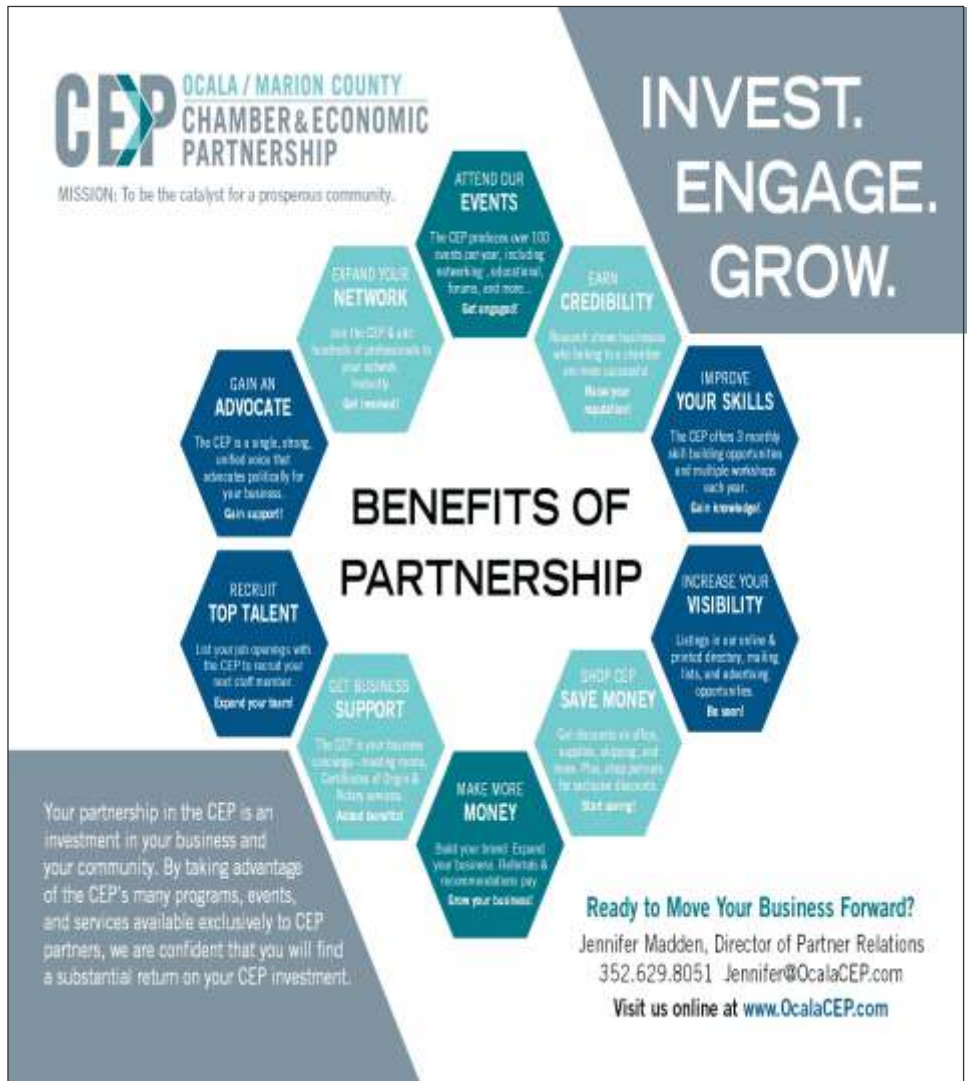
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Save Your Life On The Road

This tip also applies to trucks making turns or backing up. Many cars try to squeeze past or around a truck when the truck driver needs only a few seconds to

Continued page 12



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As we celebrate with loved ones and enjoy the many blessings of the holiday season I look forward to the challenges of the upcoming new year. One of those challenges of course is the enactment of the FAIRtax.

With the inception of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), many citizens are beginning to take notice of our national debt. As I write this article, our national debt has passed the \$36 trillion mark and is increasing by the minute making it the 3rd largest expenditure of the national government behind only Medicare/Medicaid and Social Security. Since the S&P downgraded our debt rating in 2011 from AAA to AA+ we are now spending \$1 trillion in interest alone. By the way, our national debt in 2011 was \$14.8 trillion. We have more than doubled that debt since then. Let that sink in.

Since the topic of debt has received some recent attention, let's see how the FAIRtax would effect the national debt. Although the

FAIRtax only effects inflow and not our out-of-control national spending, it will nonetheless lead to the decrease of the debt in three ways: tax evasion, economic expansion and transparency.

Tax evasion:

The FAIRtax is estimated to reduce illegal tax evasion by 90%, relative to our current income tax system, almost erasing our annual budget deficit. For 2023, the deficit was \$1.7 trillion and our annual tax gap (taxes that should have been collected but we're not due to evasion) was \$1 trillion. Although there is evasion in any tax system, the collection configuration of the FAIRtax changes everything. The FAIRtax is collected by the retailer, passed onto the state and then passed onto the US Treasury drastically decreasing the number of tax collectors (retailers rather than businesses and individuals). The IRS will no longer be necessary and will be eliminated.

Economic expansion:

Decades of research has strongly indicated that the FAIRtax would result in increases in real wages, disposable income, consumption and the US GDP. The FAIRtax would increase the tax base from \$5 trillion to \$9 trillion, with no exclusions, exemptions, deductions or loopholes. With a 0% corporate tax rate, the incentive to hoard trillions of dollars offshore will evaporate and will come rushing back to the US. The criminal underground economy as well as illegal aliens will finally pay their full federal tax burden as they consume at the retail level just like the rest of us. The trade deficit will also shrink when American goods are no longer burdened with the approximate 22% imbedded cost generated by our current income tax system. The resulting surge for American goods will lead to more good paying jobs.

Transparency:

With one national FAIRtax rate and prebate schedule, any changes to the tax system will receive unprecedented sunlight, scrutiny and public interest. A great deal of the smoke and mirrors of our current income tax system will vanish and only true federal spending will be at issue. All of this results in a perfect incubation chamber for reducing the national debt. The FAIRtax will increase Treasury receipts and, by default, bring forth the greatest amount of sunlight to our federal spending. This will undoubtedly lead to a significant curtailment of our run-away federal spending and our ballooning national debt.

For more information please go to FAIRtax.org

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FLEXIBLE SHIFTS AVAILABLE
MON-SAT/8:30-4:30**



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THE YEAR INCLUDING THE
STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL &
SOUTHEASTERN PRO RODEO**

**TYLER STARR
VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR
(352) 351-4663
TSTARR@HABITATOCALA.ORG**



Love is just a leash away!!

The HSMC is here for you and the animals who depend on us. We wanted to share that we will continue to be here to help unwanted pets during this pandemic while following all Marion County and Florida state guidelines.

As this situation is constantly changing, we ask that you continue to visit our Shelter using the safety guidelines in place.

How can you help?

Pet Food Bank: Help stock our Pet Food Bank with pet food and supplies for people who cannot afford them due to job loss or other reasons. You can also bring donations to our Shelter daily from 10-6. Masks required please! If you need help keeping your pet with you during this time, our Happy Paws food program is here for you.

Volunteer: A small number of volunteers have returned to help in various departments. We are accepting volunteer applications but do not yet know when we will schedule orientations for new volunteers. Please contact us for more information about volunteering. We are currently working on a digital orientation.

Opt to adopt: According to the Centers for Disease Control and the World Health Organization, there is no evidence that companion animals such as cats and dogs can spread the virus that causes COVID-19.

Donate: We know there is a lot of uncertainty right now but homeless and unwanted animals still need us. Donate to help the Humane Society of Marion County so we continue our lifesaving work and make them feel safe and loved.



Bilbie

Bilbie is a 14 weeks old male brought to the HSMC with her brother Wombat! We believe they could be Xolaitzcuinli, or Xolo, which is Mexican hairless dog breed.

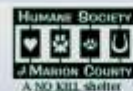


Fuchsa is a 15 week old paralyzed kitten full of love.



Ninja is paralyzed in his hind legs but enjoys runs with his wheels.

Your donations make it possible to provide medical care, food and shelter to animals in need. On behalf of all the animals, thank you for caring.



Humane Society of Marion County
PO Box 1542 Ocala, FL 34478
Mail check or complete the credit/debit card payment form.



Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____ Payment enclosed: \$ _____

Visa ☐ M/C ☐ Discover Card # _____ Exp date: _____ Code: _____

Donations to the Humane Society are tax-deductible. Check with your accountant for more information. No goods or services have been provided to the donor as a result of this gift.

FROM THE DESK OF ATTORNEY GENERAL MOODY



Attorney General Moody Urges Floridians Traveling for Holidays to Be Safe and Never Drive While Impaired

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—In recognition of this National Impaired Driving Prevention Month, Attorney General Ashley Moody is urging Floridians to be safe and never drive impaired. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's [latest nationwide data](#) reveals that someone dies in a drunk driving accident every 39 minutes — that's about 37 people every day. During December, drunk driving accidents increase. Last year, there were [507 alcohol-impaired crashes](#) in Florida during that month alone — more crashes than any other month. Attorney General Moody is sharing tips with Floridians on how to stay safe this holiday season.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “In December, there is an increase in drunk driving accidents. These accidents ruin lives and can destroy families. The good news is they are 100% preventable. It's simple, never drink and drive – instead, designate a driver, or use a ridesharing service. Follow this simple advice and we can all enjoy a happy, safe holiday season.”

Attorney General Moody recommends following these tips for safe travels this holiday season:

- Do not drive under the influence or permit others to drive under the

influence;

- Establish a designated driver, call a cab or use a ridesharing service if planning to drink alcohol;
- Fasten seatbelts when driving or riding in a vehicle;
- Avoid distractions, especially texting, while driving; and
- Beware of the increase in impaired drivers — especially at night.

Since 1998, The American Automobile Association's Tow to Go program provides a free, confidential ride service to impaired drivers and their vehicles, available to both AAA members and nonmembers on most major holidays. For more information on Tow to Go, click [here](#).

Mothers Against Drunk Driving is an organization with a mission to reach a future where there are no more victims of drunk or drugged driving accidents. The MADD website is full of statistics, solutions and helplines for Floridians.

AG Moody's Statewide Prosecutors Obtain Arrest Warrant for Attempted Felony Murder Charge Against Routh for Roadway Tragedy

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody today obtained an arrest warrant for attempted felony murder against Ryan Routh, the would-be assassin of President Donald J. Trump, for a traffic accident that gravely injured a six-year-old girl after he chose to flee the scene.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “Under the leadership of Governor DeSantis, we vowed to bring transparency

and accountability to the investigation into the second assassination attempt of President Trump. Despite the federal government frustrating our efforts, which we continue to challenge in court, we found that Mr. Routh's actions caused catastrophic injuries to a six-year-old girl.

“My heart breaks for the child and her family, and while we continue to seek justice for President Trump, we will fight just as hard to ensure Mr. Routh pays for the tragedy his criminal actions brought on this Florida family.”

Governor Ron DeSantis said, “The federal government has stonewalled Florida's investigation of the Trump assassination attempt at every turn, and I appreciate Attorney General Ashley Moody and her team for plowing forward despite such resistance.

“The tide will turn on January 20th and we fully expect that the federal roadblocks will be removed. The would-be assassin needs to face the full force of justice, and the people deserve the truth about the defendant's history, motivations and plan.”

On Sept. 15, after being spotted by U.S. Secret Service members, Routh fled Trump's West Palm Beach golf course, traveling by vehicle northbound on Interstate 95. Martin County Sheriff's Office deputies followed in order to stop Routh. During the apprehension and arrest of Routh, a car accident occurred that caused serious injuries to the young victim.

In September, Governor DeSantis ordered the state to investigate the criminal violations surrounding the failed assassination attempt. Since that time, the Federal Bureau of Investigation has consistently frustrated and opposed the state's investigation and refused to share evidence, leading Attorney General Moody

to file a federal lawsuit against U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland on Oct. 23.

Despite the FBI's and Department of Justice's attempts to frustrate the state's investigation of the assassination attempt itself, the state has nonetheless been able to investigate and identify other crimes committed by Routh on and around Sept. 15.

Today, Attorney General Moody's Statewide Prosecutors sought and obtained an arrest warrant for an attempted felony murder charge against Routh pursuant to Section 782.051, Florida Statutes. The basis for the arrest warrant is that Routh committed an enumerated felony—here, domestic terrorism—and that felony seriously injured and could have killed a six-year-old girl. The charge carries a sentence of up to life in prison.

To obtain the warrant, Attorney General Moody's Statewide Prosecutors submitted an Affidavit and Complaint in Support of Arrest Warrant. The affidavit, which is 18 pages in length, details much of the information Attorney General Moody's team uncovered regarding Routh and the events of Sept. 15. To read the affidavit, click [here](#).

While the FBI continues to frustrate state investigative efforts, Attorney General Moody will continue fighting in court to vindicate the state's authority to enforce its laws.

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**GOVERNOR
RON DESANTIS
ANNOUNCES 176
SCHOOLS, 5
DISTRICTS EARN
THE PURPLE STAR
SCHOOL OF
DISTINCTION
DESIGNATION**

PANAMA CITY,

Fla.—Today, Governor Ron DeSantis announced that an additional 176 Florida schools have earned the Purple Star School of Distinction designation for their extensive support of military families. There are now nearly 400 schools throughout the state that have earned a Purple Star School designation. Additionally, five school districts have earned the Florida Purple Star School District designation established this year. The five school districts awarded the Florida Purple Star School District designation are Bay, Brevard, Citrus, Okaloosa and Santa Rosa.

“We encourage every school in the state to strive to better serve military families and earn the designation,” said **Governor Ron DeSantis**. “I am proud to recognize these schools and school districts for their efforts to support our military families and earn the Purple Star designation.”

“Congratulations to the schools earning the Purple Star School of Distinction designation,” said **Commissioner of Education Manny Diaz, Jr.** “Thanks to Governor DeSantis’ unwavering commitment to our servicemembers, these schools are going above and beyond to support our military families. This designation will go a long way toward guiding veterans and military families through the challenges they face.”

To earn the Florida Purple Star School of Distinction designation, schools are required to maintain the following:

- A military point-of-contact to serve as a liaison for military families;
- A school webpage for military students and families that includes specifically-focused resources like academic planning, transition planning, and educational opportunities;
- A student-led transition program to assist military students coming into the school;
- Professional development training for staff to identify and respond to the needs of military families;
- 5% open-enrollment seats for military students and families; and
- Three elective opportunities to further support military families, such as participating in a service project to connect the school with the military community, hosting an annual military recognition event, or offering a JROTC program, among others.

The Purple Star School of Distinction program was established by the Florida Legislature in 2021. In the first two years, nearly 200 schools completed all the requirements to earn the Purple Star School of Distinction Designation. All Florida public schools and private schools participating in state scholarship programs are eligible.

The Purple Star School District program recognizes districts that overwhelmingly support the unique needs of military families, help military-connected students navigate critical challenges, and provide resources for military-connected students when transitioning to a new school

environment.

Governor Ron DeSantis has supported active military and veteran families through numerous initiatives and legislation, including:

- Investing in the Heroes in the Classroom Bonus Program through the signing of House Bill 1035 to provide a one-time sign-on bonus to retired first responders and veterans who become a full-time classroom teacher;
 - Establishing the Collegiate Purple Star Campuses Program to support military members, veterans and their families while they are attending a Florida college or university;
 - Re-enacting the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children to ensure a smooth transition for children of active-duty military families by streamlining school placement, enrollment, records transfers and verification of graduation requirements;
 - Signing Senate Bill 896 into law to create the Military Veterans Certification Pathway to help veterans access jobs in education by allowing their military service to count toward the requirements for a temporary educator certificate under the mentorship of a certified teacher;
 - Allowing state agencies to substitute military experience for postsecondary education, so that veterans can use on their experience to apply for upper-level civilian positions; and
 - Facilitating college credit for certain military experience to recognize the value of education and training received while in the service.
- For more information about the Purple Star designations and a complete list of schools, visit

<https://www.fldoe.org/schools/family-community/activities-environment>

[programs / parental-involvement/purple-star.stml](https://www.fldoe.org/schools/family-community/activities-environment)

**FLORIDA AGAIN SHATTERS
TOURISM RECORDS; POSTS
HIGHEST VISITATION NUMBERS IN
STATE HISTORY IN 2023**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Today, Governor Ron DeSantis announced record-breaking visitation numbers in 2023. Tourists to Florida were found to have spent a record \$131 billion in the state—an increase of 5% over 2022—in addition to \$36.9 billion in local, state, and federal tax revenue. Florida remains the premier travel destination of the nation and the world.

“Florida can’t be beat,” said **Governor Ron DeSantis**. “I’m proud of this new record set for the state. Everyone loves the free state of Florida.”

“The numbers speak for themselves: Florida’s tourism industry is unmatched. Thanks to the Governor’s leadership, our state has surpassed expectations year after year,” said **Dana Young, President and CEO of VISIT FLORIDA**. “These incredible achievements reflect the dedication of our tourism partners and the unwavering appeal of Florida as the top destination in the world.”

Highlights from 2023 data include:

- Florida’s tourism industry generated \$127.7 billion in economic impact in 2023, a 5% increase over 2022.
- Domestic visitors to Florida spent \$116.1 billion, while international visitors contributed \$14.9 billion, providing a \$131 billion out-of-state spending stimulus to Florida’s economy.
- For every dollar spent by a visitor, the Florida economy retained 97 cents, with 58 cents supporting worker salaries and 13 cents collected as state and local taxes.
- Tourism contributed \$36.9 billion in local, state, and federal taxes last year.

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FROM THE DESK OF

CONGRESSWOMAN KAT CAMMACK



The Presidential Inauguration Approaches

Dear Neighbor,
Florida's Third is gearing up for the holiday season and the next Presidential Inauguration for

President Trump! If you have any questions or need help making plans for the big day, please call our office in Washington D.C. and ask for assistance. You can reach us at (202) 225-5744. We look forward to providing you with the information you need to plan accordingly.

The National Guard turns 388 years old today—that's over three centuries of unyielding service and commitment to freedom. Thank you to our men and women who are serving, and have served, in the National Guard. Your service is critical to our national defense!

This week in Congress, I voted in favor of approving the National Defense Authorization Act for FY25! This bill will continue to fund our military and support our interests, both at home and abroad. I know under the diligent leadership of President Trump our military will prosper and effectively handle international affairs on the world stage.

Next week is the last week the House is in session before the holidays. We still have so much work to do and look forward to keeping you updated.

With all that's happening this Congress, it is my greatest honor to represent you and hear from you about the issues that matter most. You can read below about what we've been up to this week, and as always, you can stay up to date with us here, on our website, and on X, Facebook, Instagram, and

YouTube.

The next presidential inauguration is approaching!

Here's the latest information you need to know about the upcoming swearing-in of the 47th President, Donald J. Trump!

The National Guard Turns 388!

Happy birthday to the National Guard! We're grateful for our Guard members' dedication to serving and defending our nation.

Bidding Farewell To Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers

I joined my colleagues on the House Floor to say farewell to Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers, the outgoing Chairwoman of the Energy & Commerce Committee, and a model representative for me and my peers in the House.

After many years of service to this institution, she leaves behind a legacy of always doing the right thing, instilling trust, and working hard to serve her constituents in Washington State. We will miss her tremendously and look forward to seeing all she accomplishes in the future.

Thank you for your service, Rep. McMorris Rodgers.

Moving Ocala Offices

Starting next week, we're relocating our Ocala District Office from its current location at 3301 SW 34th Circle, Suite 402, Ocala, FL 34474 to a new location announced soon! Our office contact information will remain the same (phone number of 352-421-9052) and you can reach our team via phone and email in the district just like always!

If you'd like to visit an in-person location

in the interim, our office in Gainesville located at 5550 NW 111th Boulevard, Gainesville, FL 32653 is open Monday through Friday from 9am-5pm.

We look forward to sharing the details of our new Ocala location soon!

Bring Them Home Now!

On Wednesday, I led a press conference with my colleagues demanding the return of the remaining hostages in Gaza. We heard from Aviva Siegel, who, along with her husband Keith (an American), was taken by Hamas on October 7, 2023 from her home. We also heard from Yarden Gonen whose sister Romi is still in Hamas captivity.

It's been 441 days since that horrific day last year and it's time to return the remaining 100 hostages—including seven Americans—home. We will not stop fighting to bring them home NOW!

Receiving The NRF's

Hero Of Main Street Award

I was proud to receive the National Retail Federation's 2024 Hero of Main Street Award from Caroline Reppert, the Director of the Center for Digital Risk and Innovation at NRF! I'm always a proud supporter of the retail industry in Florida's Third and across the country. Thanks for this honor!

Wreaths Across American In FL-03

On this past Wreaths Across America Day, dozens of volunteers from across Florida's Third descended on cemeteries and hallowed burial grounds for our nation's heroes. It was inspiring to see so many paying tribute to the men and women who sacrificed so much for our nation and teaching the younger generations about our military and veterans.

Thank you to everyone who shared part of their Saturday for this annual tradition.

Save Life on Road

Continued from page 7



tire or your own. In fact, the NHTSA tracked more than 550 fatalities in 2022 from tire-related accidents. A single semi-truck tire weighs 500 pounds—certainly not an object you'd want hitting your car. If your own tire blows out, your vehicle may end up under the truck next to you.

“Lingering next to a truck creates a dangerous situation where you may be sideswiped by the truck if it swerves or attempts to change lanes,” explains Gary Falldin, senior director of industry solutions at Trimble and the Minnesota Trucking Association's 2016 Safety Professional of the Year. “Move at a safe and steady speed until you're far enough past the truck to change lanes.”

Tip 4: Stay out of the “no zones.” Due to their large size and height, trucks have four significant blind spots around the truck: in front, behind, and along both sides.

When passing a truck, don't immediately return into the lane in front of a truck. Make

sure you can see the full truck—from its tires on the road to the tip of its roof—in your rear-view mirror first.

Many drivers don't know that the right side of a truck is more dangerous than the left. With the steering wheel positioned on the left, the truck driver has less visibility over the hood and into the right lane. Remember to always pass trucks on the left (as long as it's safe to do so).

Tip 5: Avoid the back of trucks. One of a truck's most perilous “no zones” is located behind the trailer. While it's not smart to tailgate or zip into gaps behind trucks on the go, this rule also applies when a truck is reversing on or off the road. Keep this in mind when driving and walking through parking lots or other roads.

“I can't tell you how many times cars have tried to zip around behind me—it's extremely dangerous,” says Matt Carter, Certified Transportation Professional, a Trimble sales engineering manager who also works as a hazardous material driver on weekends. “Just try to avoid the rear of a semi-truck altogether.”

Learn More

For additional tips, check out the Sharing the Road Program from Virginia Tech Transportation Institute. For information on Trimble, visit

<https://transportation.trimble.com>.

Ocala Events

First Friday Art Walk

01/03/2025

6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Downtown Square
1 SE Broadway St.
Ocala, Florida 34471

Live on the Square

01/04/2025

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Downtown Square
1 SE Broadway St.
Ocala, Florida 34471

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