



In partnership with Target and the Kiwanis Club of Lady Lake, the Lady Lake Police Department brought holiday joy to 62 children in the community through the annual Santa's Heroes and Helpers event on Saturday at Target in Lady Lake. Local schools played an essential role in identifying families who could use a little extra help this holiday season.

The Lady Lake Police Department provided 14 dedicated helpers, including both sworn officers and support staff, as well as two incredibly generous Town of Lady Lake volunteers who stepped into the roles of Mr. and Mrs. Claus. The Kiwanis

Club of Lady Lake and Target contributed more than 50 \$100 gift cards, while additional funding was covered by unused cards from last year's event. PetSmart also joined in the spirit of giving by donating stuffed animals for all participating children.

Again this year, the Lady Lake Police Department was honored to be joined by the Fruitland Park Police Department, which contributed funding, staff, and participants. The two departments work closely together, not only in public safety efforts but also in community-focused events that bring joy to area families.



MERRY CHRISTMAS

The Lady Lake Library had Mr. & Mrs. Santa Claus greeting children. My favorite picture is this one. It is always touch when you see and infant and a young child in a

Christmas setting. They are all excited about Santa coming to town. (Ho Ho Ho Merry Christmas) Thank you Lady Lake Library. **Photo by CKJ-13 Kay Johnson**

HOPE DEDICATION! BELIEVE!

By TomL

MY VIEW! I keep hearing our politician's say we paid into social security....Our employers matched the same amount we did for our SS so don't decide that is yours!!! Now you are saying we are living longer than we use to, today on the news they say we are not eating healthy and dyeing young. I want to ask a question of Washington DC. I don't remember how many politicians said to me I did the Stand your ground law. One person introduced it and hundreds passed it but Dennis Baxley did that bill, You guys and Gals don't get it. You owe the people of the United States a massive debt. Your paid to help the COVID experiments in the

Wuhan Lab. You are responsible for the deaths of millions of people. I have not heard one of you apologize. Obama you knew about the money that was sent for COVID experiment, you approved it. I have not heard one of you tell us where the the Social Security money went that was collected for those who died of COVID and did not get SS money any more. There should have been massive amount of money in our Social Security fund, if you would keep your hands out of it!

The leaders of yesterday are responsible for the Chinese infiltration. Now we are going to have to fight in the streets to get our country back. Biden is a trader and so is the democratic heads at least seven of his top administration. They have been caught Red Handed! They should be tried as traders! Now it is all coming out and the constitution has prevision for them and it is not getting off with a pardon. If Biden is deemed incompetent then he should not be able to pardon anyone. They would not prosecute

him because he was incompetent. LOOK WHO HE IS PARDONING? He is pardoning convicted killers! People who killed some of their own families. People who raped, tortured and killed children. I wonder if he is doing any of this. Maybe it is Clinton / Obama / Pelosi / Schumer / FBI head / Department of Justice / and a number of other. Tom Fitten reports, he has sued the administration / bad guys and is releasing court documents and concealed files from his finding.

I want you to look at Fauci, Bill Clinton, Obama, Schumer, Pelosi, Hillary Clinton, Biden's brother, son, wife, all of them, and many others, their pocket are full of our tax money and bribery money. Our FBI our CIA, our DOJ and all those military leaders who has let us down. Some are honest but they are covered up with un-trust worthy people. They need leadership!

- WE NEED HOPE!
- WE NEED HONOR!

- WE NEED HONEST LEADERSHIP!
- WE NEED MILITARY (WARRIORS) WHO BELIEVE IN AMERICA!
- WE NEED POLICE (WARRIORS) THAT ARE ALLOWED TO FIGHT CRIME!
- WE NEED TO BELIEVE IN EACH OTHER!
- WE NEED TO HONOR OUR MOTHER AND FATHER!
- WE NEED MORE PEOPLE TO BELIEVE IN GOD! You know he is coming!
- WE NEED THE PEOPLE OF THIS GREAT COUNTRY TO STAND WITH THE POLICE,
- MILITARY IN OUR CITIES STATES AND OUR COUNTRY!
- WE NEED CRIME FIGHTERS LIKE TRUMP!

Have you ever ask why do gangs start and survive? It starts in grade school when a child is bullied and he says something the

Hope

Continued from page 1

teacher and the teacher says poor baby. GROW UP! Then they have to look for another alternative, so they surround themselves with friends. That is how a gang starts.

One little kid is looking for protection and a family atmosphere or brotherhood! Someone they can rely on keeping them from getting the crap beat out of them all the time or being intimidated every day.

I am endorsing Kat Cammack / Ashley Moody / Governor DeSantis / President Trump / Vice president JD Vance, but I'm afraid for Trump. Every human being that believe in our country needs to stand with Trump! He loves this country and has a big job to fix what the bad guys & Gals did to the United States of America.

For the future of our country Kat Cammack is my favorite. She is a ball of fire, she is every where and is into everything. One day she is in Gainesville that night she is Washington DC voting on a bill. She will be our first female president in about eight or twelve years. I won't be around but I will do what I can while I'm above ground. To end this story for the day we need.....

HOPE!

and DEDICATION!
and BELIEF!

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!

Government Is Not Always Our Friend!

By TomL

Well where do we start? If you are trying to keep up with criminal activity good luck. It's going on in the streets, government federal and state. Florida seems to be clean but there are many states that are not. I will give it to you in bits and pieces.

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Festival of Trees

LADY LAKE—The Lady Lake Library is thrilled to announce the winner of its 2nd Annual Festival of Trees contest: Sheltering Hands! With more than 250 votes cast, this year's event was a resounding success, drawing new visitors to the library to admire the beautifully decorated trees.

Festival of Trees

Congratulations to Sheltering Hands for their outstanding display, which captured the hearts of the community.

The Festival of Trees is a beloved annual tradition that invites families, schools, non-profit organizations, and businesses to showcase their holiday spirit by decorating Christmas trees, which are displayed at the Lady Lake Library throughout the holiday season. This year's trees will remain on display through Jan. 3, 2025, giving everyone an opportunity to enjoy the festive décor.

“The Festival of Trees is a fantastic opportunity for the community to come together, get creative, and spread holiday cheer,” said Aly Herman, Director of the Lady Lake Library. “This event allows participants to share their joy while promoting their organization. We invited everyone to highlight their unique talents and bring a touch of holiday magic to Lady Lake.”

About the Lady Lake Library

The Lady Lake Public Library provides materials and services to help community residents of all ages continue their pursuit of lifelong learning. The library serves as a resource center for the residents of the community to enhance and enrich their quality of life. Mission: The Lady Lake Library strives to enrich lives, build community, foster success, provide entertainment, and promote lifelong learning.

About Sheltering Hands

Sheltering Hands is a non-profit organization based in Ocala that provides low-cost spay and neuter services, adoption



programs, and ongoing medical care for cats. Annually, the organization performs over 4,000 spay/neuter surgeries and facilitates the adoption of more than 300 cats and kittens. They also provide continuous care for over 130 senior cats through their Love for a Lifetime foster program. Recently, Sheltering Hands opened a thrift store on Teague Trail in Lady Lake to further support its mission of feline wellness and community outreach.



Ocala Villages News

Lake County Detention Center

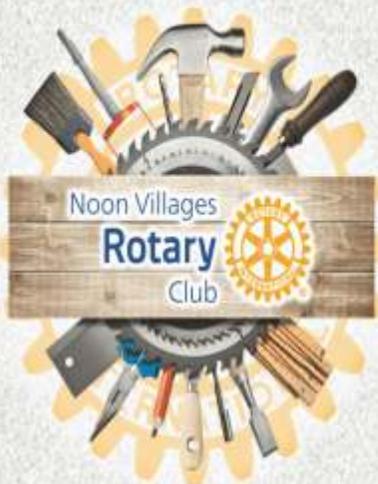
Public Booking Log

See the frequently updated public booking log of those recently charged in Lake County. Go to:

<http://tomlpublishing.com/category/villages-news/lady-lake-police-dept/>

Or go to Tomlpublishing.com and click on Lake County Sheriff on right side under “Contributing Editors”.





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Reputable businesses
Serving The Villages
and surrounding
communities

SATURDAY, APRIL 12, 2025

WILDWOOD COMMUNITY CENTER

6500 Powell Road Wildwood, FL

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.

Antinque Stoves for Sale



Three pictures on the left are Antinque wood burning stoves. Need cleaning & stove black paint. Not pictured is antinque

stove square front. I think there are threaded pipe fittings & assorted other heaters - 1 kerosene and 1 propane buddy.

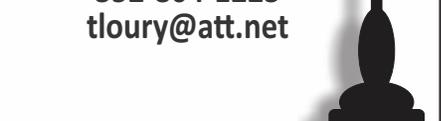
Far right picture is a six foot outdoor heater. Call Tom 352-804-1223



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**Ocala Downtown
Seniors Voice of Ocala
Village Spectator
Lady Lake Magazine**

**Call/Email Tom:
352-804-1223
tloury@att.net**



ART IN THE PARK

AT SNOOKY PARK

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1ST, 2025
& SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2ND, 2025
9:00AM - 3:00PM

Join Evelyn Stetler for the 18th Annual "Art in the Park" Festival, held in the new Snooky Park, nestled in the heart of Lady Lake FL - just one block off CR466 behind the historic Log Cabin!

FEATURING

ARTS + CRAFTS • LIVE MUSIC
FOOD VENDORS • STUDENT ART SHOW
FREE DOOR PRIZES

Interested in Becoming an Exhibitor?

Art/Craft Vendor Booth: \$175
Business Booth (Member): \$550
Business Booth (Non-Member): \$650



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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.

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!

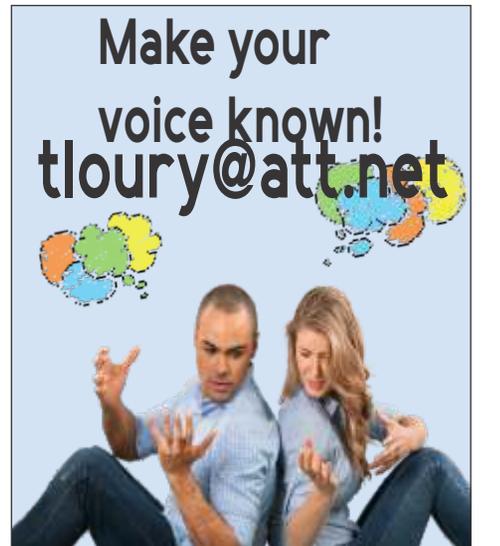
I don't understand why everyone is just now opening their eyes about how the COVID started. I print the story just as it appears right now, years ago about some of our leaders were sending money to study COVID and the development of it in China. They even went to the trouble of hiding the facts by sending 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

Village Spectator / Lady Lake Magazine
Products of TomL Publishing, LLC
 P.O Box 1698, Dunnellon FL 34430
Publisher: Tom Loury
Phone: 352-804-1223 | Email: tlourey@att.net

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 All ads are 4 color! All ads Photos, clubs, events, etc, must be in PDF format Jpeg submitted must be in focus and clear. No guarantees to get them in but we will try!
 when you change sizes. When you send a PDF ad the fonts are embedded and will not change. Run of editorial

Tap Home Equity for Financial Security
Tuesday, Jan 7, 12:30pm
 The Standard Coffee Lounge, 1552 Bella Cruz, The Villages
Register: 352-462-0636 or www.RMexplained.com
Wednesday, Jan 22, 12:30pm
 Bob Evans, 360 Colony Blvd, The Villages (near 466a & Morse Blvd)
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 Lunch provided with Reservation
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God Bless our Troops Support Our Veterans We Endorse The Constitution

FAIRTax



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 \$1trillion 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

Want to Kill the Death Tax?
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Go to: FLfairtax.org or Call 352-804-0007

Testament my wish

FAIRTax
FL FAIRTAX EDUCATIONAL ASSN

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**Saturday
January 11 * 11a-2p**

Have a Rockin' good time while we help you stay on top of your resolution:

- To Travel More
- To Start a Hobby
- To Go Back to School
- To Improve your Financial Health
- To Improve both your physical and mental health
- To Stay Active
- To Volunteer

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Snooky Park 120 W. Lady Lake Blvd.

4TH ANNUAL

THE BILLY BERG MAC-N-CHEESE FESTIVAL & BUSINESS SHOWCASE

PRESENTED BY: THE LADY LAKE AREA CHAMBER

SATURDAY, MARCH 8, 2025

10 AM - 2 PM

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LADY LAKE, FL**

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- **Discounts**- Take advantage of member- only discounts
- **Learning**- Member only speaker series on business topics
- **Give Back**- Volunteer on committees to help the community

Contact us today to be added to our email list and stay connected to local businesses & events!



CEP Announces Departure of CEO

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

Continued page 11

LADY LAKE COUNTY EVENTS

Jan 1
Happy New Year Hike
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Wolf Branch Sink Preserve in Mount Dora
Ring in the New Year with a hike at Wolf Branch sink. Hiking intensity : vigorous.

Jan 3
Exploration Hike
8:00 AM - 9:30 AM Ferndale Preserve in Montverde
Join staff on a morning exploration of habitats and species at Ferndale Preserve. Hike intensity: Vigorous. Reservations required.

Jan 4
Umatilla Garden Club
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Umatilla Public Library in Umatilla
Connect with local garden enthusiasts and cultivate your green thumb!

Jan 4
Big Sit
7:30 AM - 11:00 AM McDonald Canal Boat Ramp in Mount Dora
A "Big Sit" is a semi-competitive birding event where participants count all the birds they can see or hear within a 17-foot circle.

Jan 5
Exploration Hike
5:00 PM - 6:30 PM P.E.A.R. Park (Gateway) in Leesburg
Join staff on an early evening hike to get some exercise while exploring nature at P.E.A.R. Park. Hike Intensity: light Reservations required

Jan 6
Take Flight, Birds of Winter
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM Lake May Reserve in Eustis
Many bird species use Florida in the fall, winter and spring as a stop to rest and refuel on their way to some place else. Hike with staff to see if you...

Jan 8
Choo-Choo Babies
10:00 AM - 10:30 AM Umatilla Public Library in Umatilla
Bring your baby, aged 0-15 months, to the library for a sweet and simple lapsit program featuring Every Child Ready to Read pre-literacy.

Jan 8
Toddler Train
11:00 AM - 11:30 AM Umatilla Public Library in Umatilla
Quick-moving storytime for quick-moving toddlers aged 16-36 months featuring Every Child Ready to Read pre-literacy.

Jan 8
Water Wednesday
10:00 AM - 11:30 AM Hickory Point in Tavares
Learn about wetland mammals and the ecosystems they call home. Sustainable activity: Identify and match wetland mammals with their adaptations. Reserva...

Jan 8
Kids Crafts

3:00 PM - 4:00 PM Umatilla Public Library in Umatilla
Relax with crafts. After-school enrichment for KG-5th.

Jan 9
Storytime Station
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM Umatilla Public Library in Umatilla
Ride the reading train into Storytime Station. This literature rich experience will bring books to life through story and song. Storytime Station is b...

Jan 10
Umatilla Literary Society
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM Umatilla Public Library in Umatilla
In Literary Society book lovers get together and discuss whatever they are reading. They compare notes, make lists of new titles to try, and encourage e...

Jan 11
Quarterly Bird & Butterfly Survey
7:30 AM - 11:00 AM PEAR Park - WCA in Leesburg
Assist staff with surveying one of Lake County's conservation lands for birds and butterflies.

Jan 11
Paddling Adventure - Lake Norris
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Lake Norris Conservation Area in Eustis
One of the best paddles in Lake County, join staff for a guided tour of the Black Water Creek, part of the Wekiva Wild and Scenic River System.

Jan 15

Kids STEM
3:00 PM - 4:00 PM Umatilla Public Library in Umatilla
Fun after-school enrichment for grades KG-5th.
Jan 16
Wildlife of Pine Meadows
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM Pine Meadows Conservation Area in Eustis
Pine Meadows is composed mostly of wetland habitats which attracts a number of species which rely on these ecosystems to survive.

Jan 17
The New York Rockets - Mount Dora Music Hall
7:30 PM - 9:30 PM Mount Dora Music Hall in Mount Dora
The New York Rockets are coming back to MOUNT DORA THEATER Quite possibly the best 120min of 50's, 60's music

Jan 17
Zeroing in on Specific Soft Skills for the Workplace
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM
In this training we cover communication, teamwork, emotional intelligence, customer service, conflict resolution, respect & civility.

Jan 18
Tracks and Scat
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM Ellis Acres Reserve in Paisley
Who goes there and who left that? Join staff on a discovery of what animals left their signs, from bears to bugs.

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Lady Lake Chamber Business Luncheon

Lady Lake Chamber has it's last business referral luncheon for 2024. Approximately 50 business people attended. Many businesses attending bring a door prize, those that do put their business card in for the drawing. Everyone had a chance to introduce themselves and tell what they do. We draw out of another basket when we come in that tells us what table we will sit at. People love to bunch up with the same

people, this way it is random. I met three new people sitting at my table this month. We ate at Glenwood Country Club. The room is nice, the food is good, not too expensive, service was good and I won a door prize. It was fun for me. I took pictures of everyone that was at the assigned table. I come from Dunnellon to the Villages so it's about hour and a half or less. I have several clients in the Lady Lake Chamber.



Lady Lake Chamber Business Luncheon



Youth JANUARY

Lady Lake Library

Hours:
 Monday: 9am-7pm
 Tuesday-Friday: 9am-6pm
 Saturday and Sunday: Closed
 Closed: January 1st and 20th

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
 <p>Join Us In Our Monthly Scavenger Hunt! Follow the clues and win a cool prize!</p>		<p>Closed for New Years!</p>		<p>Baby Storytime @10:30am Video Games @3:30-4:30pm</p>
<p>Craft Kits Available! While supplies last.</p>	<p>Tiny Tots @ 10:30am Family Crafting @ 3:30pm</p>	<p>Storytime 10:30am Read with Scarlett 3:00pm-4:00pm</p>		<p>Lego Masters @ 3:30pm</p>
<p>Craft Kits Available! While supplies last.</p>	<p>Tiny Tots @ 10:30am Family Crafting @ 3:30pm</p>	<p>Storytime 10:30am Read with Scarlett 3:00pm-4:00pm</p>		<p>Baby Storytime @10:30am Video Games @3:30-4:30pm</p>
<p>Closed for Martin Luther King Jr Day</p>	<p>Tiny Tots @ 10:30am Family Crafting @ 3:30pm</p>	<p>Storytime 10:30am Read with Scarlett 3:00pm-4:00pm</p>		<p>Lego Masters @ 3:30pm</p>
<p>Craft Kits Available! While supplies last.</p>	<p>Tiny Tots @ 10:30am Family Crafting @ 3:30pm</p>	<p>Storytime 10:30am Read with Scarlett 3:00pm-4:00pm</p>		<p>Baby Storytime @10:30am Video Games @3:30-4:30pm</p>

Adult JANUARY

Lady Lake Library

Hours:
 Monday: 9am-7pm
 Tuesday-Friday: 9am-6pm
 Saturday and Sunday: Closed
 Closed: January 1st and 20th

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		<p>Closed for New Years!</p>		
<p>Chair Yoga @10am & @11:30am ESL @10-11:30am Sign Up Required</p>		<p>SHINE 2-4pm</p>		<p>BestBuy iPhone/iPad @ 9:30am</p>
<p>Chair Yoga @10am & @11:30am ESL @10-11:30am Sign Up Required</p>	<p>Book Discussion @ 2-4pm</p>	<p>Authors Round Table @ 2-4pm</p>	<p>Bingo! @2-3:30pm sign up required</p>	
<p>Closed for Martin Luther King Jr Day</p>	<p>Crochet and Knitting Hangout @ 3-4:30pm</p>	<p>SHINE 2-4pm Board Games Meetup! @2-4pm</p>	<p>Let's Talk Books @ 2pm</p>	<p>BestBuy iMac @ 9:30am</p>
<p>Chair Yoga @10am & @11:30am ESL @10-11:30am Sign Up Required</p>				

CEP *Continued from page 6*

renewal of the Infrastructure Sales 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), 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.

Relief For Cancer Patients

Profound Relief For Cancer Patients Facing Oral Side Effects

(NAPSI)—According to the National

Institutes of Health (NIH), more than two million new cases of cancer are diagnosed in the United States a year. If you or someone you care about is among them, take heart: These days, the vast majority of people with cancer survive the disease.

What You Can Do

There are several approaches you can take, the NIH goes on to say, to combat cancer. These include: chemotherapy, hormone therapy, hyperthermia, immune therapy, photodynamic therapy, radiation therapy, stem cell transplant, targeted therapy and surgery.

What About Side Effects

While side effects can vary with treatment and patient, it's not uncommon for cancer patients to develop mouth sores, dry mouth, oral pain, and ulcer.

Fortunately, ioTech International has developed an advanced oral rinse called ioRinse MR™ specifically to provide substantial relief for cancer patients whose oral symptoms affect their quality of life and overall comfort, and impose a significant cost burden.

Leveraging ioTech's proprietary molecular iodine technology, ioRinse™ MR offers a pleasant taste and provides immediate, lasting relief without causing tooth staining.

Transformative Relief from Cancer Treatment Side Effects

“Chemotherapy and radiation therapy can cause painful mouth and throat ulcers so severe that eating, drinking, and speaking become incredibly difficult, often necessitating feeding tubes,” explained Dr. Herb Moskowitz. “ioRinse™ MR provides a major benefit by supporting healing and providing instant relief while rapidly mitigating the severity and duration of these

oral mucositis symptoms, enabling patients to resume their daily activities.

“We're thrilled to offer ioRinse™ MR to support the well-being of cancer patients,” added Dr. Moskowitz. “ioRinse™ MR stands for Maximum Relief, aptly named for its breakthrough effectiveness in managing the painful side effects of chemotherapy and radiation therapy. This product underscores a commitment to enhancing the quality of life for those who need it most.”

Oncologists and dentists who have recommended ioRinse™ MR to their patients report dramatic results. “Typically, patients find ioRinse™ MR more effective and faster acting than any other product they've tried,” Dr. Moskowitz shared.

Among the benefits of ioRinse™ MR are the following The rinse is:

Safe and easy to use

Tested and proven effective in providing substantial relief from mouth sores, dry mouth, oral pain, and ulcers

Not a cause of microbial resistance, non-staining and pleasant tasting

Cost-effective preventative care

A long-lasting breath freshener

Learn More

For further facts, visit www.iotechinternational.com or call 561-509-0205 Ext. #5.

Save Your Life On The Road

5 Tips That Could Save Your Life On The Road

(NAPSI)—The next time you're commuting to work, taking the family on a road trip, or even just learning to drive, chances are you'll be sharing the road with

large trucks; fortunately, there are safe ways to do so.

Sharing the road means also sharing the responsibility to drive in a way that keeps everyone safe. Poor driving habits or driving while distracted puts everyday drivers, truckers and others such as highway maintenance workers at risk.

So how to coexist safely?

Try These Tips

Tip 1: If you can't see the truck driver, they can't see you. Can't spot the truck driver in their side mirror? This means you're following too closely in the truck's blindspot and need much more space. Keep a safe distance (the length of half a football field) between your car and a truck.

Tip 2: Be patient. Many trucks have a speed limiter that prevents them from traveling more than 65 miles per hour. Tailgating won't make a truck driver go any faster and instead puts you both in dangerous positions.

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 complete a maneuver. The truck isn't leaving a lane or space open for other drivers—it's leaving room for the back trailer to follow. Why risk injury or damage to your vehicle when it only takes a few seconds for a truck to clear the intersection or enter a loading dock?

“I've had incidents where I was backing into a loading dock and a car drove down into the dock and out again just to get around me,” says Tom Blad, hardware technician at Trimble and former truck driver. “Simply because I was going to block their path for three or four seconds.”

Continued page 13



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FROM THE DESK OF
CONGRESSWOMAN KAT CAMMACK



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.

Facebook Live Updates On Inauguration Tickets

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

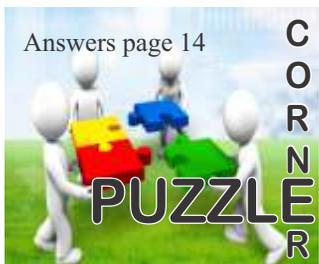
Hero Of Main Street Award

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.



Answers page 14

Across

- 1. Chocolate substitute
- 6. Meerschaum, e.g.
- 10. Has the title
- 14. Greek marketplace
- 15. Mr. Roberts
- 16. Pull for
- 17. Gibberish!
- 19. Columba
- 20. Wheelhouse dir.
- 21. Sultanate of Arabia
- 22. Portable chair
- 23. Tiff
- 24. Breaks out
- 26. Boring thing to hear
- 30. Set out for display
- 31. Jelly for germs
- 32. Where truckers sleep
- 35. It has feathers and flies
- 36. Legal addendum
- 38. Predatory sea bird
- 39. Royal Leamington feature
- 40. Rollers with corners

- 41. Exhausted
- 42. Unsolicited opinion
- 46. Plays the ace
- 48. Pressure, in slang
- 49. Ransacks
- 50. Like many a winter sky
- 51. Psychic power
- 54. It may be drawn in the sand
- 55. Batman and Robin
- 58. Wing-shaped
- 59. Hardly illusory
- 60. Zenith's opposite
- 61. "The Laughing Cavalier" artist
- 62. Two-master
- 63. Prepare parmesan, e.g.

Down

- 1. Motor trailer
- 2. Literary conflict
- 3. Cad
- 4. Christmas bulb, e.g.
- 5. Nonsense
- 6. Non-computer chip?
- 7. Zagros Mountains locale
- 8. Chum
- 9. Reindeer's kin
- 10. Difficult experience
- 11. Boring thing to hear?
- 12. Astronomical phenomena

- 13. Brens' cousins
- 18. Radiate
- 22. Traumatize
- 23. Ella's music
- 24. Stropping result
- 25. Galactic bit
- 26. Youngsters
- 27. Envelop
- 28. Not reasonable
- 29. Weighted down
- 33. Rhody, in an old song
- 34. Cleansing vessel
- 36. "The Vampire Lestat" author
- 37. Readies the bubbly
- 38. Lady Macbeth's bane
- 40. Morse code symbols
- 41. Swinging from side to side
- 43. Irrigates
- 44. Slavery
- 45. Garment line
- 46. Islamic deity
- 47. All done!
- 50. Eat like a mouse
- 51. Old Norse poetry collection
- 52. Diamonds, e.g.
- 53. Dermal opening
- 55. Thirsty
- 56. Aye
- 57. Mercury or Saturn, but not Mars

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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.

Attorney General Moody Urges FEMA to Ease Burden on Families Recovering from Hurricanes Helene and Milton

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody is calling on the Federal Emergency Management Agency to ease the burden on Florida families still recovering from Hurricanes Helene and Milton. In the aftermath of the storms, strict regulations by the National Flood Insurance Plan are preventing many families from rebuilding or repairing homes. Attorney General Moody is calling on the federal government to ease these regulations and consider making variances available to help Floridians rebuild.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “Florida was recently devastated by Hurricanes Helene and Milton, leaving some Floridians with only debris in the places where homes once stood. While the recovery process has begun, burdensome regulations are making it so people cannot afford to repair damage and could force them to leave the communities they love. I'm calling on FEMA to ease the burden on these families who are struggling to rebuild on limited budgets.”

In a letter to Acting Federal Insurance Assistant Administrator Jeffery Jackson, Attorney General Moody states, “While the rebuilding process continues, a disturbing issue has come to light. Many homes affected by Hurricanes Helene and Milton are participants in the National Flood Insurance Plan (NFIP), which is administered by FEMA. According to multiple reports, NFIP regulations are preventing many of these homes from being rebuilt or repaired. According to NFIP regulations, homes that need 'substantial improvements' must be rebuilt to specific flood-resistant building code standards...Essentially, this means that if a citizen has any damage to their home that would cost half the pre-storm value of their home to be repaired, no other work on the home can be performed without updating the entire home to NFIP's specifications.”

Attorney General Moody also points out, “While it is preferable for any home to be built to the most current standards, many of those suffering most from the storms lived in older homes in low-income areas and do not have the resources to fundamentally rebuild their homes...In circumstances like this, many people will simply abandon their home and, possibly, have no choice but to leave the community they love altogether.”

Attorney General Moody is asking FEMA to consider making variances available in more circumstances and increase the money available to bring homes up to FEMA's NFIP standards.

On the Road

Continued from page 11

Tip 3: Spend as little time driving beside a truck as possible. Traveling alongside or pacing a truck can be very dangerous due to the risk of a tire blowout—either the truck's 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>.

Backyarding Trends for 2025

(NAPSI)—The popularity of backyarding will continue to increase in 2025, says the [TurfMutt Foundation](#), which has encouraged outdoor living and caring for green spaces for the last 15 years. Backyarding is the act of moving everyday activities such as dining, entertaining, relaxing, and working to outdoor green spaces including family yards, parks, sports fields, and other green areas.

Things are always changing economically, culturally, and in terms of what people prioritize in their lives; however, the importance of the family backyard and community parks remains consistent. People have come to appreciate the many health, well-being, environmental, and economic benefits of the green space around us, and the TurfMutt Foundation says that communities should be making it a

Continued page 16

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FROM THE DESK OF

GOVERNOR DESANTIS



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-programs/parental-involvement/purple-star.stml>

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR JEANETTE NUÑEZ ANNOUNCES FOURTH ANNUAL SPRING 2025 FLORIDA SPACE ART CONTEST FOR K-5 STUDENTS

MIAMI, Fla.—Today, Lieutenant Governor Jeanette Nuñez announced the launch of the 2025 Florida Space Art Contest. Students in grades K–5 are encouraged to create an art piece inspired by the theme: *Liftoff! Florida's Spaceship of the Future.*

"I am thrilled to announce the launch of the Fourth Annual Lieutenant Governor's Space Art Contest," said Lieutenant Governor Jeanette Nuñez. "Over the last three years, Florida's students have shown their overwhelming support and excitement for space through this art contest. This year's theme gives students creative control to engineer the spaceship of tomorrow. Florida's rich history of rocket ships and astronauts helped put the first man on the moon, and in the near future, we'll see others travel to deep space and one day land on Mars. Florida serves as the launch capital of the world, and we are seeing rockets launch

at an incredible rate. I am excited to see the innovative and futuristic designs our young artists will bring to life."

"The Florida Space Art Contest has become an inspiring tradition, celebrating the creativity and talent of Florida's students as they envision the future of space," said Rob Long, president and CEO of Space Florida. "This year, we're inviting students to design the spacecraft that could one day journey to the Moon, Mars, and beyond. I'm excited to see how our young artists bring their visions to life, showcasing not only their imagination but Florida's leading role in space."

"The space industry has played a large role in the success of our state, and it is important for students to learn about the history of space exploration," said Commissioner Manny Diaz, Jr. "I encourage all students to participate in the Space Art Contest."

About the Florida Space Student Art Contest

Lieutenant Governor Jeanette Nuñez's Space Art Contest is open to all K–5 grade students in Florida. Each student will submit an original, two-dimensional artwork based on this year's theme. Submissions will be broken down into two categories: K–2 and 3–5. Six art pieces from each group (12 total) will be selected as finalists. Finalists will win two tickets to the Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex. *Two lucky grand prize winners, one selected from each group, will have their artwork launched into space on an upcoming mission!*

Forms and Guidelines
Student contest rules and guidelines can be found online at www.FloridaSpaceArt.com.

Submit artwork to the address below:
Space Florida
ATTN: Space Art Contest
505 Odyssey Way, Suite 300
Exploration Park, Florida 32953
All entries must be received by 5:00 PM on Friday, May 23, 2025.

For more information about the contest please visit www.FloridaSpaceArt.com.

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. Visitors spent an average of \$359 million per day in Florida.

Tourism was responsible for 9.5% of jobs in Florida, with the industry supporting 2.1 million jobs and providing \$76.4 billion in wages and salaries to workers across the state.

In 2023, tourism supported around one in every seven private sector jobs.

Tourism activity resulted in \$1,910 in tax savings per household in Florida.

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Trends 2025

Continued from page 13



greater priority.

Here are the top backyarding trends for 2025:

The need for urban backyarding will

increase. Homebuyers moved to the suburbs in droves during the pandemic, but mandates to return to in-person workspaces continue driving people back to city centers. This means greater importance on making the most of small urban backyards, balconies, or patio gardens. There will also be an increased desire for “public backyarding” spaces, like neighborhood parks, pocket parks, community gardens, dog parks, and more.

Cities investing in green space will be sought after. Community investment in spaces for “public backyarding” as a keystone amenity has proven to produce happier residents. Green space makes cities more livable, creates wildlife habitats, and improves environmental conditions within city corridors. The city of Louisville is ahead of this trend with Mulligan's Bark Park and The TurfMutt Foundation Great Lawn, both in the city's historic downtown.

Outdoor activity areas will accommodate all ages. According to the [National Association of REALTORS®](#), there are now more multi-generational households than ever before. This is largely because of the cost of homeownership and the need to pool money to afford housing. Other factors are an aging population that requires care or young adults “boomeranging” back home due to high housing costs. Backyards will be revamped for flexible activity zones that accommodate all manner of activities.

Backyards will become wellness retreats. The focus on improving mental health in big and small ways will continue to gain steam in 2025, and the backyard and public green space will play a pivotal role. People will set up calming spaces in their yards to support a slower lifestyle, seek out opportunities to disconnect from technology, and reconnect to the natural

world right at their back door and in neighborhood parks.

Pet-friendly spaces will level up. More than 66 percent of American households own a pet, and more millennials are choosing pets over having kids. Expect greater pet pampering in the backyard with water fountains, digging areas, and at-home agility courses. Pet lovers also will seek out communities that cater to their canines with dog parks such as Mulligan's Bark Park, agility courses, splash pads, pet-friendly shopping and dining corridors, and more.

To learn more about the [TurfMutt Foundation](#), download the [TurfMutt Foundations International Backyarding Fact Book](#) and sign up for Mutt Mail, a monthly e-newsletter with backyarding tips and all the news from the TurfMutt Foundation, visit [TurfMutt.com](#). You can see Mulligan the TurfMutt on the CBS Lucky Dog television show on Saturday mornings.

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