

Mayor Ed Getting Fun Tatoo



Mayor Ed Freeman seen here getting a fun temporary tatoo. At the Eggtravaganza that was held by the town of Lady Lake. A good time was had by all.

Survivor: Mother-Son

LADY LAKE — The Town of Lady Lake invites courageous moms and their adventurous sons to the second annual Survivor: Mother-Son Edition. This exciting, family-friendly event presented by the Town of Lady Lake Parks & Recreation Department, will take place on Saturday, May 3, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Snooky Park, located at 120 W. Lady Lake Blvd.

Inspired by the hit TV show Survivor, this action-packed day will challenge participants to outwit, outplay, and outlast opposing teams in a series of fun and engaging games. Teams will compete in age-appropriate challenges designed to strengthen bonds, create lasting memories, and have a blast.

“Our inaugural event was such a hit that we knew we had to bring it back,” said Amy Alicea, Events Coordinator for the Town of

Lady Lake. “It’s a great way for moms and sons to team up and enjoy a day in our beautiful park filled with laughter, fun, and friendly competition.”

In addition to the games, each ticket includes a picnic-style lunch and a chance to win exciting prizes. Tickets are just \$10 per person and must be purchased in advance by April 24 at Lady Lake Town Hall, the Lady Lake Library or by calling 352-205-2826. Space is limited to ensure an optimal experience for all participants, so early registration is encouraged.

Don’t miss this opportunity to enjoy a thrilling adventure and celebrate the special bond between mothers and sons. Join the fun at Snooky Park on May 3—and let the games begin!

For more, visit www.ladylakefl.gov and follow us on Facebook at @townofladylake.

Corporal Lidia Maya Named 2024 Officer of the Year

Lady Lake Police Department Names Corporal Lidia Maya 2024 Officer of the Year

LADY LAKE – The Lady Lake Police Department is proud to announce Corporal Lidia Maya as the 2024 Officer of the Year. This week, Corporal Maya was honored at the Leesburg Rotary Club’s 44th Annual Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Program with the “Service Above Self” Award.

This prestigious honor recognizes Corporal Maya’s steadfast dedication, leadership, and exemplary service to the department and the community.

Corporal Maya has consistently demonstrated a high standard of professionalism throughout her career. As a field training officer, she has played an essential role in the development and success of more than a dozen new recruits. Her guidance has helped shape the next generation of officers, earning the respect and admiration of both trainees and colleagues.

“Corporal Maya represents the very best of what it means to serve,” said Chief Steve Hunt. “She leads with integrity, mentors with compassion, and carries out her duties with an unwavering commitment to excellence. It is a privilege to recognize her



contributions with this well-deserved honor.”

In addition to her work in training, Corporal Maya regularly steps into a supervisory role, maintaining a calm, focused, and collaborative environment. Her trusted judgment and integrity make her a vital part of the department’s decision-making processes.



A Place to Call Home

Welcome to Standard441, your dream community where comfort, leisure, and entertainment are designed with your lifestyle in mind. With a prime location and

top-tier amenities, our brand-new apartments in Lady Lake, Standard441, have everything you need to feel right at home. More photos on page 11



NEW FEATURE
TOWN NEWS
See page 2

Town News Lake County Events

Arbor Day



On April 24 in celebration of Arbor Day, the town planted a Live Oak tree, funded by the Orange Blossom Gardens Lions' Club, in front of the Lady Lake Town Hall. Students from the Heritage Christian Academy helped with the planting, along with the Town

Manager Bill Lawrence, Mayor Ed Freeman, Commissioner Ed Regan, and Police Chief Steve Hunt.

This year is particularly special as we celebrate 20 years as a Tree City USA and our Centennial.

Sounds of Spring Concert

The Town of Lady Lake is excited to present the Sounds of Spring Concert Series, a lineup of free live music bringing the community together for an unforgettable season of fun, food, and live entertainment.

Held under the oak trees of Snooky Park, located 120 Lady Lake Blvd., this three-part concert series will feature talented tribute and cover bands, food trucks, and beverages for all to enjoy. Mark your calendars for these performances:

Saturday, May 17 | 11 AM - 2 PM – The Rundown Band will close out the series with electrifying rock and pop favorites.

The concert will feature delicious food trucks and beer & wine for purchase. Attendees are encouraged to bring picnic



blankets and lawn chairs to relax and enjoy the show.

Fall of Saigon Remembrance Day



Mayor Ed Freeman, a Vietnam War veteran, recently issued a proclamation recognizing April 30, 2025 as Fall of Saigon

Remembrance Day in the Town of Lady Lake, marking the 50th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War.

On this day in 1975, the city of Saigon fell, signaling the end of a devastating conflict that claimed the lives of more than 58,000 Americans and hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese soldiers and civilians. The war left a lasting legacy of loss, bravery, and resilience.

Following the war, nearly 800,000 Vietnamese refugees fled their homeland seeking freedom, many eventually resettling in the United States and contributing to our communities with strength and determination.

Mayor Freeman's proclamation serves as a reminder of the cost of war, the importance of honoring those who served and sacrificed, and the enduring power of freedom and democracy.

Let us reflect, remember, and honor all who were affected by this pivotal moment in history

LL Volunteer Dinner



The Town of Lady Lake recognized its wonderful volunteers on April 17 at a volunteer appreciation dinner.

Two of our long-time volunteers – Richard “Doc” Jones and Doris Turlo - were presented with personalized throws.

Our Planning & Zoning Board are volunteers, too, and we thank members Robert Galloway, John Brinson, James “Tim” Saunders and Ronald Auger, and Chairwoman Dorilynn Furch.

A huge thanks also goes to volunteers Fred Weber, Betty Cantelmo, Chryle Lowery, Leonard Ciecniak, Daniel Russell, Bern Case, Priscilla Hazlett, Don Hollenbeck, Marsha Brinson, Lori Miller, Sharon Edwards, Dina Brown, Lily Kliot, Dana Stone, Shirley

Schley, Myra Mervine, Sue Boulais, Anitha Christiansen, Ed Dickinson, Daisy Hodges, Sandy Lauer, Barbara McCarthy, Sharon Prihoda, Frank Dudinski, Rodney Schilling, Jim Knight, Reverend Dr. Paul Harsh, Reverend Debbie Casanzio, Pastor Keith Johnson, Minister Matt Malott, Pastor James Keough, Pastor Tony Omerzu, Pastor Ellen Pollock, Reverence Derick Dimry, Reverend Pat Bromberek, and Pastor Jeff Hosmer.

Also in attendance were Mayor Ed Freeman, Mayor Pro Tem Treva Roberts, Commissioner John Gourlie, Town Manager Bill Lawrence and several department directors.

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”.



CHAIR CHAT

Marion County Republican Executive Committee (MCREC) opposition to CS/SB 1080 (Reconsideration Attempt)

Seems to be an enormous amount of opposition to SB1080 in our communities through out our State, and even after it failed in final committee, there seems to be a move internally to reconsider the bill.

It is with some level of dismay and disappointment that the will of the electorate of the Marion County Republican Party is being ignored by this Bill's sponsor. The Senator again is pushing for passage, despite a public "No" decision by the legislature, as well as prior numerous letters from a number of County Republican organizations. Some of the key factors are noted below, what is most distressing is the disregard of a legislator to support the will of the people.

So the following is our opinion on why we opposed the bill and the following is what we addressed to each Senator. Make up your own minds because this bill is not dead yet.

On behalf of the Marion County Republican Executive Committee (MCREC), representing more than 130,000 registered Republican voters we strongly oppose this bill and recent amendment.

This Bill, in our belief, jeopardizes rural farmland and seeks to require approval of residential development in traditional farming areas as an alternative method to circumvent County control of land development and preserve rural land. We urge Senators to vote "NO" on this bill and solicit the Governor's support, should this bill pass, to "Veto" this action.

As Republicans, and citizens of Marion County, a strong principle is "home rule" with respect to zoning / land utilization, and open space preservation. These Bill's seek to undercut this key principle and the "will of the electorate." It is not clear what constituency is served by these overt draft policies to negate Comprehensive Plans and community input at the County level.

Marion County is undergoing explosive growth and with the "growing pains" of increased traffic / school overcrowding with projections of + \$1B in future infrastructure and +\$1B in school capital / maintenance cost projections. This bill, as amended, now puts in jeopardy generational agriculture lands for expansion into residential developments. This Bill weakens preservation of rural lands, seeks to expand urban use well beyond designated urban areas and also seeks to restrict local government control of development related impacts fees. All these aspects diminish the effectiveness of public input.

A couple of selected provisions in this bill we oppose from the most recent amendment (659760):

- (1) Restricts local government from enforcing laws and regulations on an agricultural enclave that are more "burdensome" - this is never defined and if there is an existing requirement in law or regulation why is the application of such requirements voided if viewed by the undefined term as "burdensome"
- (2) Definition of Agricultural Enclave – this definition is purposely a 2-part requirement that is tied to generational farming > 5-years and to a separated single ownership/control. Therefore, it mandates "Enclave" certification by a local government if the



April Breakfast: Village Veranda in Lady Lake hosted the April Networking Breakfast. Attendees enjoyed a delicious buffet including crème brûlée donuts.

land was farmed for + 5-years, yet the current owner / controller (an undefined term) is not tied to that same timing requirement and therefore could be a single owner / controller that has just acquired the land. These requirements should be linked, the current text, as written it essentially "opens" generational farmland to acquisition by developers ("controllers" in the bill) to expand residential developments well beyond current practice.

(3) Impacts Fees – This bill also seeks to restrict local governments control and implementation of impacts fees and increase thereof. It inserts the following language that applies an overarching restriction to impact fee increases, regardless of local condition and circumstances that lead a local government to declare extraordinary circumstances exist. "A local government may not increase an impact fee rate beyond the phase-in limitations under this paragraph if the local government has not increased the impact fee within the past 7 years."

This text obviates data supporting a local government's action and is also counterinitiative given ~2009 economic downturn and +2019 Covid epidemic that influenced many local governments to "freeze" or even pause impact fees. It also weakens "home rule" and negate the public's input to changes that affect the daily lives / tax burdens of Marion County Florida citizens.

You be the judge!

NEW FRAUD SCAM PLEASE READ!

The Mechanics of the Tap and Glue Scam

Tap and glue scams leverage the convenience of tap-to-pay technology at ATMs, combined with a simple but effective trick involving glue. Scammers first disable the card insertion slot by pouring glue into it, forcing customers to use the tap function. While this may seem like an easy fix, it sets

the stage for the scam.

Once a customer taps their card and withdraws cash, they often forget to log out of their account. This leaves the session open, allowing the scammer to step in and continue withdrawing funds. The scam relies on the victim's unfamiliarity with tap-to-pay procedures, making it a lucrative tactic for fraudsters.

In this world I urge to do business with people not businesses! People you know or someone that is a trusted referral. Take the time to call and get their opinion and or price. Take the time to know the business people around you.

TALK TO STRANGERS! They might be a customer?

WE ENDORSE THESE PEOPLE! These are people who have advertised with me and I trust them!

If you are curious about how to invest your

money Call Nick 352-629-2165 email: nick.navetta@edwardjones.com

If your curious about anything on Health Insurance Call Christine 352-572-8510 email: ccalvert@guidedmedicare.com

If you are curious about Life Insurance Call Eddie 352-634-4793 email: levinlifeinsurance@gmail.com

If you want to create memories Call Walk Don't Run Travel Sue 352-400-1721 email: travel@walkdontrunllc.com

If you are curious about reverse mortgage Call Dan 352-462-0636 email: dan@primepathlending.net

If you are curious about selling your business Call Connie 352-502-3811 email: connie@ocalabusinessbrokers.com

If you are curious about Fair Tax Email: emmaiellaro@icloud.com

If you are curious about advertising Call Tom 352-804-1223 (it is tax deductible) email: tloury@att.net

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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
From the Net: Pope Francis, at the age of 88, has passed away, the Vatican confirmed on Monday. The cause of death was a stroke that led to a coma, culminating in an irreversible

cardiocirculatory collapse. The College of Cardinals is expected to convene in the coming weeks at the Vatican to elect his successor. The announcement of the new pope will be symbolized by white smoke billowing from the Sistine Chapel's ceiling.

Who monitors the language used on National Television?

Who monitor the truth and people who tell lies to harm someone else?

The FCC use to monitor these things but some newspapers got to big and powerful to monitor because they could destroy the monitors. When someone says (Fxxx) him

or (Fxxx) her they need to pay a fine or lose their political office.

Our society should not be allowing this kind of behavior! The people using this language are losers! They should be punished. Free speech is one thing but using fowl language is not part of free speech. They need to respect the people running our country and not preach hate!

Big money people (THE LEFT) are paying protesters to sabotage

Automobiles and Dealerships. Sorros says he is not paying them. But he is donating money to an organization that has been known to pay people for violence! What is happening is stupid! Trump ask an auditor to audit our government which is what the people have been complaining about for years. I don't know how many times in my life I have heard "The man is stealing our money" I would go to bat for government and say "NOT TRUE!" The audit shows it is true! Now the auditors are helping show what we we need to work on

to help save our country. The left is trying to ruin the country, WHY. They want us to be Communist and not think for ourselves. Be like a flock of sheep. Be the Communist laborers! They make accusations about killing Medicare / Medicaid, the only thing they are doing is looking at people who are on medicare to make sure they deserve it. Especially having many children out of wedlock and the tax payers are paying the hospital bill and for their keep. I have seen first hand people who did not desire assistance and they got it any way. The illegals are benefiting from it! They never paid into it. It belongs to the people not the politicians.

Use to be the FCC monitored the newspapers and activities and their content. When a newspaper mistreats a reader or a local person, there is no one to complain to or to take action! I know many times I was misquoted buy the local daily. I went to the reporter and told him not to quote me if he can't get it right, don't use my name. He came to me the next week and ask "did I misquote you this week?" I said I told you not to use my name ever, he said I did not, I said then your quote was fine!

I was unable to attend the Press Conference the Governor had in Ocala. I received a press release about it the next day. I sent an apology to the Governors team and ask for an email address. I got it! Thank You!

Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. has banned petroleum based food dyes! I wonder if it will reverse the affects of what it caused? NO!

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the former head of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, saw his net worth double from approximately \$7.6 million in early 2019 to around \$15 million by the end of 2023.

FOLLOW THE MONEY!



Newspaper Deadlines
Editorial & Ad Copy for June
Seniors Voice & Ocala DownTown
Noon, May 24th
Lady Lake Magazine & Village Spectator
12am, May 27th

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FAIRTAX



Many people have heard that the IRS is working on updating their systems and modernizing their software for a more efficient and secure operation. Unfortunately we have been hearing this same refrain year after year and decade after decade. Sam Corcos with DOGE recently stated "We're now 35 years into this program. If you ask them (the IRS) now, it's five years away, and it's been five years away since 1990. It was suppose to be delivered in 1996, and it's still five years away."

Every hard-working American taxpayer should be beyond frustrated and disgusted with such an antiquated, inefficient and broken tax system. What's sad is that the system has become so large and unwieldy that any attempt to make it better ends up being an exercise in futility- like rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic.

According to the National Taxpayers Union Foundation, our income tax system inflicts an almost unimaginable burden on American taxpayers. Americans spend 6.5 billion hours preparing and filing their taxes each year. In addition, they spend over \$414 billion in annual costs. That's over and above

their actual tax liability. In 2021, IRS commissioner Charles Rettig noted that we have a \$1 trillion annual tax gap. That's money owed but not collected thanks to illegal tax evasion.

There are over 80,000 pages of income tax law, income tax code, and income tax law interpretations that every taxpayer is responsible for adhering to. Furthermore, the vast majority of the 20 million or more illegals in our country do not file or pay federal income taxes. The grievances go on and on. But, there is a solution - the FAIRtax.

The FAIRtax is a 132-paged bill that replaces those 80,000 pages referenced above. There will be no more income tax returns for businesses or individuals, no capital gains, no AMT and no gift or death tax. We simply pay the FAIRtax when we make a retail purchase of new goods and services. Individuals will have no tax reporting obligations and only businesses that sell at the retail consumer level will have to collect and remit the FAIRtax. Under the FAIRtax, illegal evasion is expected to plummet by 90 percent. Everyone consumes which means everyone will pay their fair share including criminals, under-the-table workers and illegals. And best of all, there is no need for the IRS and that corrupt and inefficient organization can

be abolished.

It's time to replace the income tax Titanic before it eventually sinks with a more seaworthy vessel - the FAIRtax.

For more information please go to FAIRtax.org

What Say You?
T.Loury@att.net

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“Symphony for Schools” Program Returns to Marion County Public Schools

OCALA, Fla. (Apr. 17, 2025) – The Ocala Symphony Orchestra Music Conservatory is proud to announce the return of Symphony for Schools, a dynamic outreach program that takes professional musicians into Marion County school for musical presentations that help students learn about the orchestra and hear instrument demonstrations.

Thanks to the generous support of Marion County Community Services through the Community Development Block Grant program, we are bringing live performances and educational workshops to Marion County Public Schools, particularly those schools in rural, underserved parts of the county. Students can also bring information home to their families about opportunities to come to the Reilly Arts Center to see the Ocala Symphony Orchestra prepare for a concert weekend, at our FREE open rehearsals. They can also learn about music lessons and camp opportunities

available at the Community Music Conservatory, including scholarships available to students with financial need.

“Our program creates access points to music education where none exist. By bringing orchestral music out to schools, opening our doors to the public, offering free events, and providing scholarships, we bypass the barriers many students in our community face to experiencing the power of live musical performance and affording music education” shared Natalie McComb, executive director.

This revived initiative is already making an impact. So far this semester, the program has visited five schools, with plans to reach many more throughout the remainder of the year.

Program Objectives:

Inspire young students to discover the joy of music.

Foster a lifelong appreciation for orchestral instruments.

Promote music education and accessibility in underserved communities.

Program Activities:

Classroom visits: Musicians will visit elementary schools to demonstrate various orchestral instruments and perform short pieces.

Instrument demonstrations: Musicians will explain the history, construction, and playing techniques of each instrument.

Musical performances: Musicians will perform classical and contemporary pieces to showcase the versatility of orchestral music.

Symphony for Schools will enhance student curiosity, build excitement, and foster a love of music.

About the Ocala Symphony Orchestra Music Conservatory

The Community Music Conservatory, located at the Reilly Arts Center, features multiple teaching studios, professional staff and faculty, and performance spaces that include the 700-seat mainstage auditorium and NOMA Black Box. Conservatory programming includes group classes and private instruction designed for students of all ages, backgrounds, and skill levels. The Conservatory, which launched programming in Spring 2022, is managed by the team at the Ocala Symphony Orchestra and is committed to fostering an environment of creativity, life-long learning, and quality instruction.

just get out of the house. Some times working a job is how you find out what your skills are!

Do you want to learn a trade?

First there are college preparatory courses you need to have. This is where you lose students Algebra? Trigonometry? Science? and what ever the guidance councilor suggest!

Business Courses If you want to go into Business or study Business you will need some Business Courses to work for big business. Hopefully your High School will offer it. Book Keeping / Accounting (Simple math) By High School your should be good at reading, comprehending is important. If you are weak reader get a Tudor.

High School is important to get a job and learn in school discipline daily chores doing homework. Reading is probably the most important. Reading instructions, reading how things are made, how to make things. Simple math is second most important. We need to eliminate the course that some kids can't learn and will never use. Make sure there is music / band / gymnastics / track and plenty of exercise! Encourage working a job after school. Don't teach subjects that a working man or woman will probably never use in their jobs. Don't make them sign up to fail! They need reading, writing and simple math.

Trade school should be part of regular school courses. Math first / reading second then the student can choose their trade class, welding / electrician / air conditioning / Auto Mechanics / FFA / , etc. These courses are as important or more important than most. It's all about life!

I can give you lots of people making big money that plan and apply themselves. Just go all in with anything you do! Your skills will show themselves.

Education

By TomL
 You ask yourself...
 Do I want to go to college?
 Do I just want a High School education and go out into the world and get a job? Or



I never realized the way the interstates ran in our country. North to South and East to West. The numbers get large in order as you go up. There really is a numerical plan.

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LAKE COUNTY EVENTS

May 01
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.

May 02
Exploration Hike
8:00 AM - 9:30 AM Ferndale Preserve in Clermont
Join staff and explore the habitats and species of Ferndale Preserve. Hike intensity: Vigorous. Reservations required.

May 02
First Friday
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM Downtown Eustis in Eustis
Join us for our Eustis First Friday Street Party from 6 - 9 p.m.! Our family-friendly monthly street parties host a wide variety of food, vendors and more

May 03
Umatilla Garden Club
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Umatilla Public Library in Umatilla
Connect with local garden enthusiasts and cultivate your green thumb!

May 03
Quarterly Bird & Butterfly Survey
7:30 AM - 11:00 AM Ellis Acres Reserve in Paisley
Assist staff with surveying one of Lake County's conservation lands for birds and butterflies.

May 03
Lake County 6th Annual Back the Blue Walk
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Wooton Park in Tavares
Show your appreciation of LC Law Enforcement! Meet at Wooton Park picnic pavilion, enjoy a free breakfast, then the walk starts at 9am

May 03
Survivor: Mother-Son Edition
10:00 AM - 2:00 PM Snooky Park in Lady Lake
Attention all courageous mothers and adventurous sons!

May 03
Umatilla Garden Club
10:00 AM - 11:30 AM Umatilla Public Library in Umatilla
Everyone is welcome to the Umatilla Garden Club meeting. Cultivate your green thumb!

May 03
Weekends at The Winery
12:00 PM - 4:00 PM Lakeridge Winery and Vineyards in Clermont
Welcome to Weekends at the Winery, enjoy our expansive vineyard green, including delicious food, live entertainment, and more

May 03
FBCU MOMCo Annual Indoor Spring Market
10:00 AM - 3:00 PM First Baptist Church of Umatilla in Umatilla
This year we have TONS of vendors that give you the opportunity to purchase the

perfect Mothers Day Gift OR just spoil yourself.

May 04
Exploration Hike
5:00 PM - 6:30 PM P.E.A.R. Park (Gateway) in Leesburg
Join staff on an early evening walk while exploring nature at P.E.A.R. Park. Hike Intensity: Light. Reservations required.

May 04
Swiss Pro Slalom - Water Ski Tournament
8:30 AM - 6:30 AM Swiss Waterski Resort in Clermont
11th edition of Swiss Pro Slalom major Water Ski Pro event featuring the best skiers in the world including many Lake County based champions

May 06
Leesburg Police Department & Dairy Queen Cops N' Cones
3:30 PM - 5:30 PM Dairy Queen Of Leesburg in Leesburg
Join Leesburg Police & Dairy Queen for FREE ice cream, patrol car tours, and family fun! Building community connections in a sweet way.

May 09
Shoreline and Wetland Plants
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM Lake May Reserve in Eustis
Hike with staff while learning about some of our shoreline and wetland plant species. Hiking Intensity: Moderate. Reservations required.

May 09
Discover Leesburg
5:00 PM - 9:00 PM Towne Square, Downtown Leesburg in

Leesburg 5/96/137/118/8 Plus More
Join us every 2nd Friday evening of the month on Towne Square in Downtown Leesburg for an evening of entertainment, shopping, and community spirit.

May 10
Global Big Day
7:30 AM - 11:00 AM Green Mountain Scenic Overlook & Trailhead in Minneola
Join Lake County staff in county birds for Cornell University's eBird Global Big Day in which birders from all over the world will submit checklists

May 10
AdventHealth Girlz on Fire Triathlon & 5k
7:30 AM - 11:00 AM Waterfront Park in Clermont
A Mother's Day weekend event just for the ladies, the AdventHealth Girlz on Fire Sprint Triathlon & 5K at the World Triathlon Destination, Clermont, FL!

May 10
Howey Founder's Day
10:00 AM - 3:00 PM Griffin Park in Howey-in-the-Hills
Come celebrate the Town's 100th anniversary at the Howey Founder's Day! We will have a car show, vendors, food trucks, live music, bounce houses, and more

May 11
Mother's Day Grand Brunch Buffet
10:00 AM - 4:00 PM Mission Resort + Club in Howey-in-the-Hills
On Sunday, May 11th, from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM, enjoy a fabulous Mother's Day Grand Brunch Buffet with live entertainment and more

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Lady Lake Chamber Business Luncheon

Lady Lake Chamber Business Luncheon was a great success. Dozens of business people attended. The Mayor of Lady Lake came. The meeting went well, Plenty of prizes, Meeting new people sitting four to the table you get a chance to meet three new business people and learn more about their business. Of course Glenview Country Club served a great meal. My compliments to the Ladies at the Lady Lake Chamber and their volunteers for the great effort



Lady Lake Chamber Business Luncheon



Why Join The Lady Lake Area Chamber?

- **Networking Opportunities**- Connect with business professionals
- **Visibility** - Get noticed in your community
- **Credibility**- Membership raises your business reputation
- **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!



SkillsUSA Competition

Lake technical college students shine at SkillsUSA regional Competition and prepare for state finals

Lake Technical College is buzzing with excitement as some of the region's brightest and most driven students continue to make waves in the world of workforce education. This year, Lake Tech has once again proven its dedication to excellence by leading in the SkillsUSA regional competition, setting the stage for an even more thrilling showdown at the 2025 SkillsUSA Florida State Leadership & Skills Conference in Jacksonville, FL, from April 28 to May 1.

SkillsUSA is America's proud champion of the skilled trades, with a mission to empower students to become skilled professionals, career-ready leaders and responsible community members. SkillsUSA students hone their hands-on skills against current industry standards in more than 130 occupational areas, from 3D Animation to Welding and nearly everything in between. But for the students of Lake Technical College, it's more than just a hands-on experience, and proudly represent their college on a national stage.

This year, Lake Tech competitors did not disappoint. The results speak for themselves: every single student walked away with a medal at the regional competition, a true testament to their dedication and hard work. And while these students are celebrating their well-deserved victories, they are already setting their sights on an even bigger challenge at the state conference.

Here's a breakdown of our incredible



achievers who earned top honors at the regional event:

- Gold Medal Winners (1st Place)
 - Trevor Rutkoski – Professional Culinary Arts and Hospitality
 - Mya Thomas – Baking and Pastry Arts
 - Madelyn Prado – Cosmetology
 - Tianah Strickland/Carissa Beasley – Esthetics Team
 - Emerson Hulse/Ariana Candelario – Nails Team

- Silver Medal Winners (2nd Place)
 - Cherry Lackey – Cosmetology
- Bronze Medal Winners (3rd Place)
 - Jessica Galinski – Cosmetology
 - Josilyn Montz/Rebecca Carrier – Nails Team

This impressive roster of winners is a reflection of the high-quality training, commitment, and hard work of both the students and their instructors. Their achievements at SkillsUSA showcase the strength of the Lake Technical College programs and stand as a testament to the

dedication of the entire Lake Tech community.

Lake Technical College is a public, post-secondary institution that offers high quality training for over 30 career and technical programs, as well as, adult education classes for GED and ESOL. The main campus is located at 2001 Kurt St., Eustis. The Institute of Public Safety is located at 1565 Ken Bragg Way, Tavares. Visit the website www.lakotech.org, or call (352) 589-2250 for more information.







Adult MAY Lady Lake Library

Hours:
 Monday: 9am-7pm
 Tuesday-Friday: 9am-6pm
 Saturday and Sunday: Closed
 Closed Memorial Day: May 26

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
  			1	2
 Page Turners BOOK CLUB @5:30-6:30 pm Sign Up Required	5	6	7	8
12	Book Discussion @ 2-4pm	SHINE 2-4pm	15	BestBuy iPhone/iPad @ 9:30am
	19	20	Authors Round Table @ 2-4pm	Bingo! @2-3:30pm sign up required
LIBRARY CLOSED MEMORIAL DAY	26	27	28	29
		SHINE 2-4pm		30

Youth MAY Lady Lake Library

Hours:
 Monday: 9am-7pm
 Tuesday-Friday: 9am-6pm
 Saturday and Sunday: Closed
 Closed Memorial Day: May 26

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
 Join Us In Our Monthly Scavenger Hunt! Follow the clues and win a cool prize!				1
5	Tiny Tots @ 10:30am Family Crafting @ 3:30pm	6	Storytime 10:30am Read with Scarlett 3:00pm-4:00pm	7
Craft Kits Available! While supplies last.	12	13	14	15
19	Tiny Tots @ 10:30am Family Crafting @ 3:30pm	Storytime 10:30am Read with Scarlett 3:00pm-4:00pm		Baby Storytime @10:30am Video Games 3:30-4:30 pm
Craft Kits Available! While supplies last.	26	27	28	29
LIBRARY CLOSED MEMORIAL DAY	Tiny Tots @ 10:30am Family Crafting @ 3:30pm	Storytime 10:30am Read with Scarlett 3:00pm-4:00pm		Baby Storytime @10:30am Video Games 3:30-4:30 pm
		Storytime 10:30am Read with Scarlett 3:00pm-4:00pm		Lego Masters @ 3:30-4:30 pm

Grand Opening Luxurious Apartment Complex



Cindy Thiede, Visiting Angels, and Mary Ellen Shae, The Widow Mentor, enjoyed the views and networking by the pool at the Standard 441 Luxury Apartment Grand Opening



Standard 441 Luxury Apartments presented a donation check to Habitat for Humanity Lake & Sumter Counties



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FROM THE DESK OF
CONGRESSWOMAN KAT CAMMACK



Rep. Cammack Celebrates Grand Opening of New Ocala District Office Location

OCALA, FL — Yesterday, Rep. Cammack and hundreds of

constituents celebrated the grand opening of the new Ocala District Office located in the McPherson Government Complex at 2630 SE 3rd Street in Ocala.

Joined by special guests Marion County Sheriff Billy Woods, Ocala Police Chief Mike Balken, members of the Marion County Board of County Commissioners, and leaders from the Ocala Chamber & Economic Partnership (CEP), Congresswoman Cammack and her district staff cut the ribbon for the new facility, which opened earlier in March following the completion of needed renovations.

Congresswoman Cammack, members of her staff, and constituents celebrate the ribbon-cutting for the new office.

"I'm thrilled to have relocated our Ocala District Office back to its original location in the McPherson Government Complex," said Rep. Cammack. "Centrally located with other useful local and state offices for constituents in Marion County, our office is a one-stop shop for folks seeking assistance with federal agencies, including the VA, Social Security Administration, and IRS, along with economic development opportunities, internships for local students, and more. Our team continues to deliver the same excellent service we always have in this new location. We hope constituents will visit us soon in-person or contact us via phone at (352) 421-9052."

The Ocala District Office is located at 2630 SE 3rd Street, Ocala, FL 34471 and is open Monday through Friday from 9am to

5pm. No appointments are necessary to visit with staff.

Rep. Cammack Leads The Charge & Secures Department of Commerce's Withdrawal From 2019 Suspension Agreement On Fresh Tomatoes From Mexico

GAINESVILLE, FL — This morning, Congresswoman Kat Cammack issued the following statement about the U.S. Department of Commerce's announcement of its intent to withdraw from the 2019 Agreement Suspending the Antidumping Investigation on Fresh Tomatoes from Mexico, with termination effective in 90 days.

"This has been a priority of ours for years in Florida," said Rep. Kat Cammack. "For half a decade now, our producers have been subject to an unfair marketplace. In the past five years alone, Mexican tomato producers have violated the suspension agreement over 100 times. The economic impact of these violations has been catastrophic on our domestic tomato producers."

"I've long been a champion of free but fair trade. Since the beginning of 2000 we have dropped from 250 producers to just 25. I'm grateful the Trump administration is working so hard to enforce international U.S. trade laws, and I know our tomato producers in Florida will be relieved to once more have a level playing field. As the only Florida Member on the House Agriculture Committee, I'm proud to work on behalf of our farmers, ranchers, and producers to deliver the support they deserve and keep their industry alive. Food security is national security which is why ensuring our producers are protected from unfair trade practices is critical," Rep. Cammack added.

The Department of Commerce currently maintains 734 antidumping and

countervailing duty orders which provide relief to American companies and industries impacted by unfair trade. These duty orders provide American workers with a mechanism to seek relief from harmful unfair pricing of imports.

"A great injustice to our Florida tomato producers has finally been addressed," said **Jeb Smith, President of the Florida Farm Bureau**. "Thank you to Congresswoman Cammack for heeding the pleas of our growers and leading the charge. Many thanks to Secretary Lutnick, Secretary Rollins, and others in this administration for acting. For decades our farmers have simply sought strict enforcement of U.S. trade law, including the 2019 Tomato Suspension Agreement. At last, we are witnessing such. With the institution of the antidumping duty order resulting in duties of 20.91 percent on most imports of tomatoes from Mexico, fair trade could be attainable. It is an exciting day for tomato growers in the Sunshine State and the broader produce industry!"

"For decades, unfair foreign trade practices have taken their toll on U.S. growers of fresh fruits and vegetables," said **Mike Joyner, president of the Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association**. "The termination of the 2019 Tomato Suspension Agreement is a positive step toward helping tomato growers compete on a level playing field and ensure American consumers are not forced to rely on foreign sources for fresh fruits and vegetables. We sincerely appreciate the support and efforts of this administration and Congresswoman Cammack for effectively implementing U.S. trade laws and protecting domestic tomato growers."

Rep. Cammack & GOP Women's Caucus Members Send Letter To USA Fencing Leadership In Support of Female Athlete Stephanie Turner

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Today, Rep. Kat Cammack (R-FL-03) and members of the Republican Women's Caucus sent a letter to the leadership of USA Fencing expressing

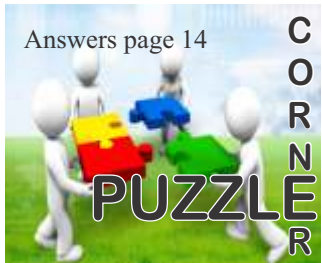
their unwavering support for female athlete Stephanie Turner who made the decision to forfeit her match rather than compete against a biological male opponent in a women's fencing tournament. Following Ms. Turner's principled decision to forfeit the match, she was issued a black card, the most severe penalty available under USA Fencing rules, resulting in her immediate disqualification from the tournament.

"Ms. Turner's stand reflects the deep concerns of countless women and girls across America who seek fairness, safety, and integrity in women's sports—values that we, as a caucus, are committed to upholding," write the lawmakers. "The Republican Women's Caucus was founded to amplify the voices of Republican women in Congress...and ensure women and girls have equal opportunities to thrive. Preserving fair competition in women's athletics is a critical matter that directly impacts the dignity and opportunities of female athletes."

The lawmakers urge USA Fencing to reconsider the disciplinary actions against Ms. Turner and to critically review its transgender athlete policy implemented in 2023.

Rep. Cammack & Colleagues Write Letter To Interior Dept. In Support of Critical Minerals

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Today, Rep. Kat Cammack (R-FL-03), Jimmy Panetta (D-CA-19), and U.S. Senators Joni Ernst (R-Iowa) and Elissa Slotkin (D-Mich.), sent a letter to Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum requesting to reinstate potash and add phosphate – both critical fertilizer ingredients – to the U.S. Critical Minerals List. In the letter, the lawmakers explain this designation will support domestic production and strengthen supply chains, important steps to protecting food security and stabilizing the market for farmers.



Answers page 14

Across

- 1. Cut in two
- 6. Engrossed
- 10. ___ Paulo
- 13. Studio warning sign
- 14. Fruit in a tart
- 15. Ararat lander
- 16. Addams family character
- 18. ATM maker
- 19. Rod's fishing partner
- 20. Toe the line
- 21. D-Day beach
- 23. Ohio "rubber capital"
- 25. Words before uproar or instant
- 26. Toothpaste tube abbr.
- 29. College freshman's parent, maybe
- 33. Burn slightly
- 35. California's Big ___
- 36. Choice for Hamlet
- 37. Sinner's punishment
- 40. Driver's need

- 42. Dr. Frankenstein's righthand man
- 43. Tiny Tim strummed one
- 45. Many an April baby, astrologically
- 46. Danny Kaye classic, with "The"
- 50. Single
- 51. Rome fiddler
- 52. Poke fun at
- 54. Saguars, e.g.
- 56. Pied Piper followers
- 57. Sammy of the Orioles
- 61. Lamb's mom
- 62. Coke-vs.-Pepsi guinea pig, e.g.
- 65. German article
- 66. North Pole crew
- 67. Insinuate
- 68. Letter before tee
- 69. Dems.' counterparts
- 70. Underground dwarf

Down

- 1. Day division
- 2. Novelist Rice
- 3. Spike, as punch
- 4. Country retreat
- 5. Before, to Keats
- 6. Is offended by
- 7. Culturally pretentious
- 8. Destination opener?
- 9. Power of Hollywood
- 10. Alamo site
- 11. Curved entrance

- 12. Gumbo vegetable
- 14. Jazz variation
- 17. "... in no way, shape or ___"
- 22. Top chess player
- 24. "Peachy-__!"
- 25. Cross inscription
- 26. Savory gelatin
- 27. San ___ Padres
- 28. Ball game describers
- 30. Actor Brynner
- 31. "Barnaby Jones" star Buddy
- 32. Baseball's Pee Wee
- 34. Small attic
- 38. King novel about a rabid dog
- 39. Barely make, with "out"
- 41. Train units
- 44. They're divided in wills
- 47. More stale
- 48. French heads
- 49. Sunrise direction
- 53. Krupp Works city
- 54. Give up
- 55. Leaves speechless
- 56. "Let us know," initially
- 58. "Beetle Bailey" bulldog
- 59. Coal streak
- 60. Johnson of "Laugh-In"
- 63. Malt beverage
- 64. "Which came first?" item

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
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68				69					70			

FROM THE DESK OF
ATTORNEY GENERAL OFFICE



Attorney General James Uthmeier Fights to Protect Children Online; Subpoenas Roblox for Child-Protection Policies and Procedures

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.— Attorney General James

Uthmeier issued a subpoena to Roblox, a popular online gaming platform, demanding information about how the platform markets to children, sets age-verification requirements, and moderates chat rooms.

"As a father and Attorney General, children's safety and protection are a top priority," said **Attorney General James Uthmeier**. "There are concerning reports that this gaming platform, which is popular among children, is exposing them to harmful content and bad actors. We are issuing a subpoena to Roblox to uncover how this platform is marketing to children and to see what policies they are implementing—if any—to avoid interactions with predators."

There are numerous concerning reports about children being exposed to graphic or harmful material on the gaming platform, as well as predatory adults being able to message minors on the app freely. The Attorney General's subpoena also demands Roblox to hand over documents related to the platform's collection and processing of children's data.

Roblox features millions of games and interactive environments. The platform develops some of the content, but much of the content is created by users. In 2024, Roblox had more than 85 million daily active users, an estimated 40% of whom being under the age of 13.

Attorney General Uthmeier is demanding Roblox to produce information including:

- Documents sufficient to show the amount of time spent on the platform broken down by age for all users 16 years of age or younger;

- Examples of all marketing materials that relate to the platform's suitability for children;

- Documents relating to the marketing of the platform to young customers or youngest demographic—including but not limited to the use of promotions and giveaways, social media platforms, celebrities, social media influencers, and cartoon images. This specification includes all internal documents, including marketing plans and use of social networks;

- Documents reflecting the steps Roblox take to ensure children are not exposed to mature content on the platform;

- Communications to or from a Florida user reporting abuse to Roblox;

- Communications to or from the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children relating to Florida users;

- Communications relating to parental controls being circumvented by children using the platform;

- Documents sufficient to describe chat and game moderation capabilities;

- Documents sufficient to show the age verification procedures used relating to child users creating accounts on Roblox and any audits thereof;

- Documents sufficient to identify employees who have been responsible for creating and enforcing age verification protocols; and

- Documents relating to any criminal prosecution of which the platform is aware, arising or alleged to have arisen from children's contact with chat room users.

Attorney General James Uthmeier is Fighting to Bring Clean, Reliable Nuclear Power to Florida

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.— Attorney General James Uthmeier announced a major legal challenge against the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), accusing the federal agency of illegally blocking the development of advanced nuclear technologies—technologies that could

revolutionize energy production in America.

"For decades, Washington has made promises about nuclear energy—but then throws up roadblocks when real innovation comes along," said **Attorney General James Uthmeier**. "Florida is done waiting. We're taking action to unleash the full potential of safe nuclear technology, strengthen our energy independence, and secure cleaner water and air in our state."

With its rapidly growing population and increasing electricity demand, Florida faces significant challenges in meeting the energy needs of its residents. Last year, Governor DeSantis signed HB 1645, which directs the Public Service Commission to study the feasibility of using advanced nuclear technologies, including small modular reactors (SMRs), to meet the state's power needs.

However, the NRC's interpretation of its licensing authority over SMRs has created long delays, staggering costs, and hindered Florida's ability to develop nuclear power to meet its growing energy needs. The regulatory roadblock not only impedes the state's energy goals but also affects Florida's ability to exercise its lawful authority to regulate and license these technologies safely and efficiently.

The complaint argues that the NRC's refusal to modernize its regulatory framework is unlawful and harms states' efforts to meet surging energy demand with clean alternatives. Florida and its partner states are asking the court to vacate the NRC's illegal actions and require the agency to adopt reasonable standards that reflect current science and safety advances.

Advanced reactors, including SMRs, are already being explored in Florida and other states for use in industrial settings, rural communities, and areas with fragile electric grids. These technologies offer safer designs, faster construction, lower costs, and reduced environmental risks compared to traditional nuclear plants.

By taking legal action, Florida is standing up for innovation, energy reliability, and the American people, ensuring that the state can explore all avenues to meet its energy needs.

Attorney General James Uthmeier Secures the Return of Millions from

Universal Property & Casualty Insurance Company to the Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General James Uthmeier secured the return of tens of millions of dollars from Universal Property & Casualty Insurance Company (UPCIC) to the Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund (FHCF). The agreement resolves allegations that the company fraudulently submitted numerous ineligible claims for reimbursement in violation of the Florida False Claims Act. This is the first time the Office of the Attorney General has secured repayment related to an insurance fraud case.

"Thanks to the outstanding work of Associate Deputy Attorney General Nicholas Weilhammer, Director Liz Brady, and Assistant Attorney General Andrew Butler, our office secured the return of more than \$30 million to the state's hurricane fund from fraudulent insurance submission allegations following Hurricane Irma," said **Attorney General James Uthmeier**. "As Floridians, we know the impact that hurricanes can have on our state and how important recovery efforts are in a storm's aftermath in helping residents start to rebuild. This office is committed to a healthy and stable insurance market for Florida homeowners, meaning insurance companies must play by the rules."

The FHCF is a tax-exempt state trust fund administered by the State Board of Administration that serves a vital role in stabilizing the Florida insurance market when hurricanes cause widespread or catastrophic damage. FHCF provides reimbursements to residential property insurance companies for a portion of their payments to homeowners for hurricane-related property damage. In the event of widespread, major hurricanes, such as Hurricane Irma, FHCF provides a backstop to the losses faced by insurance carriers.

Following a whistleblower lawsuit filed in Leon County, the Office of the Attorney General launched its own investigation into UPCIC to ensure that the claims submitted by the company were, in fact, caused by Hurricane Irma. During the course of that investigation, numerous unrelated claims were identified in the submissions from UPCIC to the FHCF. As a result, the company agreed not to seek reimbursement

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FROM THE DESK OF

GOVERNOR DESANTIS



Governor Ron DeSantis Awards Bonuses to Law Enforcement Recruits, Reaching 7,800 Total

O C A L A , Fla. — Today, Governor Ron DeSantis announced that Florida has awarded more than 7,800 recruitment bonuses to new law enforcement officers through the Florida Law Enforcement Recruitment Bonus Payment Program. The latest round of bonuses went to officers serving in Marion County, while an additional 660 bonuses have recently been distributed to recruits across the state.

Launched in 2022, this first-of-its-kind initiative underscores Florida's nation-leading commitment to supporting law enforcement. The program provides a one-time \$5,000 bonus—after taxes—to newly employed officers as a show of appreciation and incentive for choosing to serve in Florida.

“When other states were defunding their police, demonizing law enforcement, and kneecapping their criminal justice system, we rewarded our law enforcement for their service,” said Governor Ron DeSantis. “I was proud to be in Marion County to award recruitment bonus checks to Florida's newest law enforcement officers and thank them for their commitment to protecting our communities.”

To date, more than 1,700 law enforcement officers from 49 other states and two territories have relocated to Florida, with more than 500 coming from anti-police states like California, Illinois, and New York. Each of the 7,800 newly recruited officers has received a \$5,000 bonus after taxes, with the program distributing more than \$53 million to date.

“Under Governor DeSantis' leadership, Florida has led the nation in recruiting law enforcement officials and implementing strong immigration policies,” said Florida Secretary of Commerce J. Alex Kelly. “We remain committed to strengthening the resources available to law enforcement and helping in their mission to set the standard for combating illegal immigration.”

In addition to a \$5,000 recruitment bonus, benefits of becoming a Florida law enforcement officer include financial stability, upward mobility, excellent health and retirement benefits, student loan forgiveness programs, home loan programs, and more.

For more information about the Florida Law Enforcement Recruitment Bonus Payment, visit FloridaJobs.org/Recognition-and-Recruitment.

Governor DeSantis Advocates for Law Enforcement

FT. MYERS, Fla. — Governor Ron DeSantis joined Florida Highway and Safety Motor Vehicles Executive Director Dave Kerner to advocate for critical pay raises and funding for Florida State Troopers and other state law enforcement.

“In my Focus on Fiscal Responsibility proposed budget, I advocate for a 20% pay raise for state entry-level officers and 25%

pay raise for veteran officers and all state firefighters,” said Governor Ron DeSantis. “The Florida House is blocking these raises, and other critical resources for law enforcement. We must support and equip law enforcement to be successful in defending our communities.”

Earlier this year, [Governor Ron DeSantis announced his recommendation for massive pay increases for state law enforcement officers and firefighters](#) in his Fiscal Responsibility Budget proposal for Fiscal Year 2025-26.

The Governor's Fiscal Responsibility Budget recommends \$118.3 million in pay increases for more than 4,700 state sworn law enforcement officers and more than 730 state firefighters:

- 20% pay increase for state entry level sworn law enforcement officers.
- 25% pay increase for veteran sworn law enforcement officers and all state firefighters.

These pay increases would build on the support already delivered to support law enforcement and first responders. As a result of these initiatives, Florida continues to have record-low crime rates; continues to be a great place to live, work, and raise a family; and remains the friendliest state in the country for first responders.

More on Focus on Fiscal Responsibility Budget [here](#).

The currently proposed state budget from the Florida House fails to follow Governor Ron DeSantis' recommendations. Instead, it:

- Defunds ballistic armor;
- Fails to replace law enforcement vehicles with over 100,000 miles;
- Fails to fund replacement for in-car cameras;
- Defunds raises for law enforcement officers;
- Cuts 84 current state trooper positions; and
- Cuts 73 current state law enforcement dispatcher positions.

Governor Ron DeSantis Announces Early Completion of Congestion Relief Lanes on I-4

More than 6 miles of added lanes on I-4 will be completed 8 months ahead of schedule

KISSIMMEE, Fla.— Today, Governor Ron DeSantis announced early completion of the congestion relief lanes through one of the busiest sections of Interstate 4 (I-4), delivering on a promise he made last June to open the lanes by the end of 2025. Not only has this commitment been met, but it has been exceeded with these lanes being ready for use eight months ahead of schedule. The new lanes, one additional lane in each direction of I-4 from U.S. 27 in Polk County to World Drive in Osceola County, will be open for use beginning the week of April 28.

“We launched the Moving Florida Forward initiative to accelerate major transportation projects that reduce congestion and improve connectivity,” said **Governor Ron DeSantis**. “With nearly 700 projects underway and \$75 billion in infrastructure investment since 2019, we’re

delivering real results for Floridians and keeping Florida moving.”

Governor DeSantis directed FDOT to deliver immediate congestion relief along I-4. In response, FDOT used an innovative construction approach to open new lanes early—eight months ahead of schedule—improving travel times without waiting for full project completion. These lanes will remain open through all future construction.

To deliver quickly, FDOT launched the Moving I-4 Forward program and introduced a new Modified Phased Design-Build method, accelerating construction through collaboration and innovation. The dedicated I-4 team and its Design-Build partner are working at record speed to complete improvements well ahead of schedule.

“This milestone is a tremendous testament to the continued leadership of Governor DeSantis and the commitment of our industry to deliver for Floridians,” said **FDOT Secretary Jared W. Perdue, P.E.** “The Moving Florida Forward Infrastructure Initiative is a model for the rest of the country and continued investments from the Florida Legislature will keep this momentum going.”

FDOT is also expediting full-build work at the C.R. 532 and World Drive interchanges and preparing to launch more projects along the 14-mile corridor from U.S. 27 in Polk County to S.R. 536 in Orange County. Improvements include two new express lanes and one general use lane in each direction, interchange upgrades, bridge work, resurfacing, and added safety features. These improvements will enhance traffic flow, safety, and regional connectivity—creating a continuous express lane system from Seminole County to Polk County and boosting Florida's economy.

Looking forward, FDOT is advancing three major projects, including the new Poinciana Connector, which will begin construction and finalizing engineering this summer—two years sooner than anticipated. This new roadway connection will link I-4 to S.R. 429 and the future Central Florida Expressway facility, serving one of Osceola and Polk Counties' fastest-growing areas.

For updates, visit MovingI4Forward.com

Florida Breaks Record for the 6th Time as #1 Vacation Destination for Americans

April 7, 2025

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Today, Governor Ron DeSantis announced that Florida has reached a historic milestone in tourism, securing an all-time record 15.5% share of the domestic vacation market in 2024. This marks a nearly one-point increase from 2023 and further strengthens Florida's long-standing leadership as the top travel destination in the United States—a trend that began in 2019 and continues to accelerate. This is the 6th time Florida has broken its own tourism record under the tenure of Governor Ron DeSantis.

“Florida is the world's favorite place to visit,” said **Governor Ron**

DeSantis. “This record tourism is a result of policies that prioritize freedom, public safety, and common sense.”

The state's tourism performance also remains strong on the global stage. In the first two months of 2025, Florida saw:

- A 0.5% increase in Canadian air visitation, outperforming the national trend, which showed a 2.3% decline in Canadian travel to the U.S.
- A 6.5% increase in overseas visitation, with notable gains from the United Kingdom, Brazil, and Argentina.

In February 2025, Governor DeSantis announced that Florida remained the top destination for travelers worldwide, welcoming a record-breaking 142.9 million visitors in 2024. This figure represents a 1.6% increase over 2023, which previously held the record for the highest annual visitation in the state's history. The fourth quarter of 2024 also set a new milestone, drawing 33.1 million visitors—the highest number ever recorded for a Q4 period. This surge in tourism was driven by 29.9 million domestic travelers, 2.5 million overseas visitors, and 742,000 Canadian tourists, highlighting Florida's continued appeal across both domestic and international markets.

Florida's tourism sector remains a cornerstone of the state's economy and a model of sustained success in the global travel industry.

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Letter to Donald Trump

To Donald J. Trump President of the United States

Hi President Trump I am Thomas N. Loury

I was raised as a Democrat in South Florida but Obama help me change my mind. Now I live near Rainbow Springs Fl a small country town called Dunnellon Florida. We live on a small farm. I have 4 digital newspaper that I put out monthly. I use to print and deliver all of them but COVID fixed that.

I endorsed you the day you came down the stair case and announced you were running for President. I recognized it would take a special person to win against the organized crime we had running our country. Even the good guys were bad. So it would take a tuff / and a little bad ass mixed in. I think you are Smart as hell! A person that could stand against all odds. You had a family that stood with you! I respect them all.

You won the election, but you had much to learn, like how powerful the bad guys were and how many there were and how high up in

office they were. As it turns out they were all snakes. They slowed you at almost every turn. Still you were a success.

They stole the election from you and your vice president would not follow your lead. He excepted defeat to quick. You learned again who you could depend on.

Next election was different you surrounded yourself with smart strong family members and legal minds. This time you won the hearts of the American people.

I think Tariffs and FairTax is a perfect combination. We charge them what they charge us is perfect.

The FUND RAISING should slow. The average working person is all tapped out. We are getting hit by every charity local, state and federal.

As one of your followers I ask you to stop telling Governors or Mayors comply or else. That does not have a good look "do it in private not on National TV".

I agree with transporting the criminals out of the country, I agree with the death penalty. I recently received a text from you that said..."I have sent you a black flag with your name on it!" That hurt me something

terrible!

I still Respect you! That is the first time I have ever been BLACK FLAGGED!

Thomas Loury

To Governor DeSantis

Hi Governor DeSantis

I am Thomas N Loury owner and publisher of TomL Publisher of the Ocala DownTown (news) we have four digital newspapers. My apologies for not making the press conference in Ocala I have extreme authorities in my legs. I am 82 years old. I was full blown delivery and digital newspapers eight months ago but the COVID hurt me bad. I would like to get your email address so I can email you. I am currently running a half page in all four newspapers every month. I have been doing that for years. I live on a small farm outside of Ocala in Dunnellon Fl. I am your dedicated voter!

The problem that you were addressing about Seniors paying higher taxes was spot

on but you forgot to mention a very important item. When Seniors get their mortgage a couple of years back it was smart for them to get a low rate of interest so they could survive their monthly payments. BUT when the value goes up and the taxes goes up the Insurance companies knock us in the head. A year ago the Insurance went up \$100 per month and now this year it went up another \$100 per month so now the senior is paying \$200 per month on their loan payment, that is \$2400 per year coming out of their retirement money. Some can't afford the groceries they could buy two years ago. I understand you are trying to get rid of property taxes but what about these Insurance Companies? I think it is unfair to the Seniors, we are a stable economic force in this area but we are being drug down by County/State/Insurance Companies.

What say you? tloury@att.net

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