



Volume 16 Issue 11

November 2025

All-Breed Horse Parade



Photo by Mabe Media

Ocala Metro CEP to Host All-Breed Horse Capital of the World® Parade

Ocala, FL The Ocala Metro Chamber & Economic Partnership's (CEP) Equine Initiative, presented by Pyranha Animal Health, is proud to announce the All-Breed Horse Capital of the World® Parade, taking place Saturday, October 4, at 10 a.m. in Downtown Ocala.

Presented by Pat Myers Electric, the parade will bring together horses of all breeds and disciplines to showcase the heart of the community and highlight one of the many reasons why Ocala/Marion County is recognized as the Horse Capital of the World®.

Spectators are encouraged to line the official parade route—which will include the Downtown Square and Citizens' Circle—to enjoy a unique and family-friendly celebration of the equine industry.

“Being the only Chamber in the world that we know of that has an initiative like this is pretty special and we believe that this All-Breed Horse Parade through the downtown of ‘the horse capital’ best showcases the diversity of breeds who call Ocala/Marion County home. While always keeping the goal in mind of introducing non-horse

people and the next generation to as many of the over 70 breeds in our community, who make up a 4.3-billion-dollar industry, we are almost certain to also provide the best in equine edutainment,” said Louisa Barton, Director of Equine Engagement at the Ocala Metro CEP.

The Ocala Police Department is partnering with the CEP to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all attendees.

The All-Breed Horse Capital of the World® Parade is part of the CEP's Equine Initiative, presented by Pyranha Animal Health, which works to strengthen the region's position as a global equestrian hub. The CEP would also like to thank

Wilmek Construction for their support of this event.

About the Ocala CEP Equine Initiative

The CEP's Equine Initiative allows partners to get engaged in building the community's farm relationships and support the equine industry. It is imperative to the growth of our community that this industry is healthy and nurtured. To do this, CEP needs to strengthen farm to city engagement and to better integrate equine businesses with the business community at large. The See pages 6 & 7 for more, including photos



The Ocala Metro Chamber & Economic Partnership (CEP) is pleased to announce the appointment of Matt McCormick, IOM, CCE, as its new President & Chief Executive Officer, effective November 10, 2025.

Following a comprehensive national search led by the CEP's Executive Committee, McCormick was selected for his proven leadership, deep expertise in business and community development, and strong commitment to advancing the Ocala Metro.

McCormick brings 27 years of chamber and economic development leadership experience, most recently serving as President and CEO of the Columbia

Chamber of Commerce in Columbia, Missouri. During his tenure, he championed workforce development initiatives, strengthened advocacy efforts at both the local and state level, and expanded the economic impact of the business community.

“On behalf of the board, we are thrilled to welcome Matt McCormick as the next leader of the CEP,” said Charisse Rivers, Chair of the Board. “What excites us most is not only his vision and energy, but his heart for people and community. We believe Matt will inspire collaboration, champion innovation, and carry forward the CEP's mission of making Ocala and Marion County a place where families, leaders, and businesses can thrive for generations to come.”

In his new role, McCormick will lead the CEP's strategic initiatives, partner engagement, advocacy efforts, and economic development programs to support businesses across the region.

“I am honored to be named President and CEO of the Ocala Metro Chamber & Economic Partnership and to have the opportunity to serve this organization, the business community, and the region,” said McCormick. “The CEP has a tremendous foundation of supporting business growth and development, and I look forward to working with our team, partners, and community leaders to build an even stronger economic future for the region.”

The CEP also extends its deep appreciation to Interim CEO and Chief Experience Officer Tamara Fleischhaker for her leadership and guidance throughout the transition.

Thank You, Charlie Kirk

By TomL

I did not know Charlie James Kirk, but what I had heard and what I saw made me curious, so I started researching him. I was watching TV the day he got assassinated. While combing the internet, I was very surprised at what I found. He and his team of believers help Trump get elected by motivating young people into voting and voting for Trump. Millions of people heard him before I did, then I saw him on TV with Trump. I think at the first time I saw him on TV there was doubt that he could deliver the youth vote, HE DID! TRUMP WON!

He was born October 14, 1993. He grew up in Chicago suburbs. He attended Harper college. He dropped out after the first semester. He wanted to pursue a full time political career. It was not long before he was considered an American right Wing

Activist, he was also an entrepreneur and a TV / media personality. Charlie's co-founder of Turning Point USA was Pastor Rob McCoy in 2012. That was when he created Turning Point Faith and was talking about Christian nationalism. He became the executive Director of Turning Point until he died. Charlie was quite accomplished, he published books. He hosted the “Charlie Kirk Show” He became a prominent voice of the Republican Party and Prominent Voice of the MAGA movement as part of the Republican Party! He was considered an icon of American contemporary conservatism.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO THANK CHARLIE KIRK IN PRINT! (IT'S FREE!) Send me a short note and I will use your first name only unless you request otherwise. tloury@att.net subject line “Charlie Kirk”

HAPPY THANKSGIVING NOVEMBER 27, 2025

CEP CHAMBER NEWS

Forward Momentum

'Leadership In Its Purest Form'

Alex Sosa, B.B. Graphics

"Flying influences everything I do in life, including how I run my business."

CEP partner Alex Sosa draws clear parallels between how he runs B.B. Graphics and how he approaches aviation.

"Being a captain teaches you leadership in its purest form," he says, stressing the importance of details. "When people's lives are in your hands, your decisions carry real weight. I approach business the same way—making sure our product is top-quality, our team is well-trained, and every client's experience is seamless."

Away from the office, it's up, up, and away for Alex, who has built an unshakeable bond with the friendly skies starting the moment he received his high school diploma.

"I began my flight training right out of high school and aviation has taken me places I probably never would have seen otherwise."

Flying runs deep in Alex's family, as multiple family members have spent time in the cockpit.

"My dad is my biggest inspiration," confirms Alex. "He flew in the Air Force, then became an airline pilot and spent his life flying around the world with genuine joy every time he took off."

While dad gave Alex his wings, his mom served as the wind beneath them.

"On the roughest days, she reminded me that I was going to make it," Alex asserts. "I wouldn't be here without her support and belief in me. Aviation always felt like the path I was meant to follow. It was what I grew up around, what inspired me, and what I found exciting, so pursuing it was less of a decision and more of a calling."

Learning to fly at an elite level has been a gradual ascension. The journey for Alex is more enjoyable than any specific destination. Some of his stops along the way border on epic.

"Some of the most memorable moments in my flying career have been the most spontaneous. Searching for a hidden grass strip in the middle of nowhere. Landing on the slopes of a volcano. Waking up and deciding to go island hopping just because we could. Carefully planning a landing on a remote grass strip between two connected volcanoes near Lake Atitlán in Guatemala. Flying through the mountains of Hungary is another memory I'll never forget. Honestly, it's hard to think of a flight that wasn't fun."

Alex runs B.B. Graphics with his wife Ana, who when hubby is in the air, keeps everything else grounded.

"I wouldn't be able to balance flying and running a business without my amazing and beautiful wife. She holds the fort down when I'm gone."

The lessons learned through aviation filter directly through to business, especially during key moments.

"It's taught me how critical decision-making is," says Alex. "Sometimes you only get one chance to make the right call."

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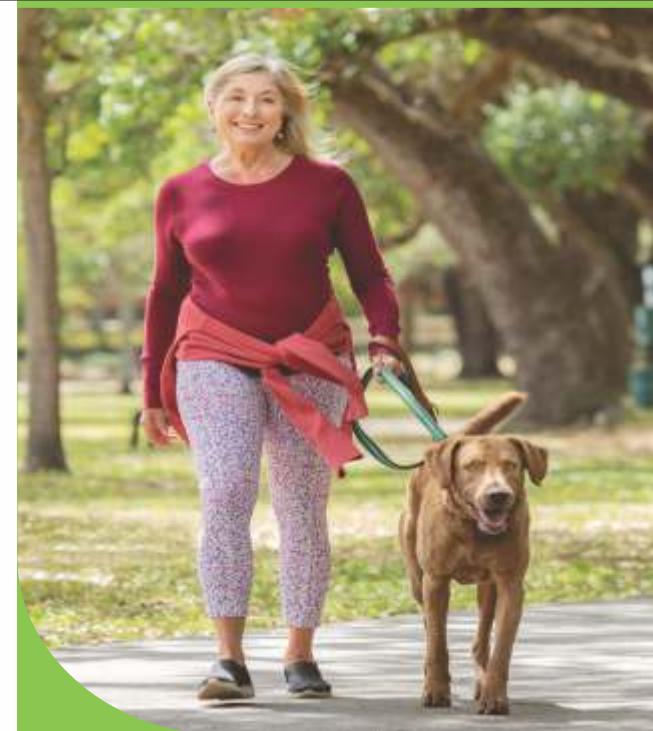
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November Events The Reilly Arts Center

OCALA, Fla. – The Reilly Arts Center welcomes a variety of national and local artists for performances of rock, blues, jazz, classical and more this holiday season. Unless otherwise indicated, events are held at the Reilly Arts Center located at 500 NE 9th St. Ocala, FL 34470. Tickets can be purchased at reillyartscenter.com or by contacting the Reilly Arts Center box office at (352) 351-1606. Box office hours are 10 AM – 2 PM, Tuesday through Friday. Tickets can also be purchased in person at the Reilly Arts Center during box office hours.

Phantasmagoria XVI: Hauntingly Whimsical Tales Saturday, November 1, 2025 at 7 PM | in the NOMA Black Box

Tickets: \$25

Join Phantasmagoria as they celebrate Edward Gorey's 100th Birthday Year with a hauntingly whimsical journey through his most iconic tales. Featuring storytelling, dance, puppetry, music, and more, this Halloween season production brings Gorey's eerie yet enchanting worlds to life on stage.

CMC Fall Recital Sunday, November 2, 2025 at 12:30 PM, 1:30 PM, 2:30 PM & 4 PM | AdventHealth Mainstage

Tickets: GA: \$5 | 10 & Under: Free

Cheer on CMC students as they showcase their semester's skills and talents in an engaging recital! This showcase will feature instrumental soloists and group class performances, with ticket proceeds supporting the CMC scholarship and programming fund.

Reilly Noir Series: Nesto Jazz Quartet Friday, November 7, 2025 at 7:30 PM | in the NOMA Black Box

Tickets from \$28

Experience the vibrant sounds of Nesto's Jazz, led by bassist and bandleader David Ernesto Vanegas, blending North and South American rhythms with modern jazz. From hard bop to bossa nova, this ensemble delivers an unforgettable fusion of world grooves and timeless jazz traditions.

Music Box 2: The Tritium Ensemble Sunday, November 9, 2025 at 3:00 PM | in the NOMA Black Box

Tickets from \$28

Experience the Ocala Symphony's Music Box Series with the Tritium Ensemble, featuring violin, horn, and piano in a dynamic program spanning Mozart to Brahms. Enjoy an intimate evening of world-class chamber music in the Reilly's NOMA Black Box Theatre, complete with engaging stories and insights from the musicians.

Party in the Park Saturday, November 15, 2025 at 12 PM

Free Event

Get ready for a day of live music, local flavor, and community fun! This free outdoor event at Tuscarilla Park brings together great tunes from Steelin' Peaches: Allman Brothers Revue and Harber Wynn, delicious bites from local food trucks, arts and craft vendors, and a showcase of the latest automobiles from Jenkins Auto Group. Bring your friends, family, and lawn chairs for an unforgettable day under the Florida sun!

Presented by Jenkins Auto Group. Support provided by Florida Express Waste & Recycling.

Press Images Available.

Koo Koo Sunday, November 16, 2025 at 1 PM | in the NOMA Black Box

Tickets from \$25

Get ready to dance, laugh, and sing along with Koo Koo, the high-energy duo bringing their infectious positivity and interactive music to the stage. Loved by kids, parents, and teachers alike, their one-of-a-kind dance party is fun for the whole family!

The Music of Bridgerton: Performed by La Primavera String Quartet Friday, November 21, 2025 at 7:30 PM | AdventHealth Mainstage

Tickets from \$28

Step into the world of Bridgerton at The Viscount's Ball, featuring La Primavera

Strings performing modern pop hits in the lush style of the Regency era. Enjoy an evening of elegance, romance, and music — and perhaps even catch Queen Charlotte's eye as the Diamond of the Season.

Alison Brown Saturday, November 22, 2025 at 7:30 PM | in the NOMA Black Box

Tickets from \$40

Join GRAMMY-winning banjo virtuoso Alison Brown for an evening of groundbreaking music that blends bluegrass, jazz, and beyond. Celebrated worldwide for her innovative style, Brown brings her visionary sound and new album *On Banjo* to the stage with dazzling artistry.

Handels Messiah Sunday, November 23, 2025 at 3 PM | AdventHealth Mainstage

Tickets from \$10

Experience the timeless beauty of Handel's Messiah with the Ocala Symphony Chorus, featuring beloved highlights from "For Unto Us a Child Is Born" to the triumphant "Hallelujah" chorus. This inspiring program also includes Bach's *Mein Jesu, was vor Seelenweh* in Stokowski's lush arrangement, promising an unforgettable celebration of music and community.

Sponsored by AdventHealth Ocala

Dueling Pianos Friday, November 28, 2025 at 6 PM | in the NOMA Black Box

Tickets from \$28

Grab a seat at a café table in the NOMA Black Box at the Reilly Arts Center and enjoy dueling pianos, cocktails and an evening of fun with friends. Performing sing along classics of soft rock and pop that spans decades!

Continued page 5



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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. If you want to make contact with the newspaper/Tom Loury email tourney@att.net

PUBLISHER'S NOTES



THANK YOU
CHARLIE KIRK!

Thank you for helping the young and old break away from decades of the Radical Left! He has shown them another way to believe. He would invite them up and

give them a voice to debate with him and he would try to explain his side and some times the other person would see it! The one he did very successfully was showed them Christianity, show them about Jesus and God!

Charlie and his team showed young and confused something the world has lost "belief in GOD". I believe everyone who believes in God will be right about their religion as long as you believe. Some don't believe in God. I have known two people in my life that did not believe. Neither was educated beyond High School. Both are

gone but before they passed they were praying to God to forgive them. When people call me out about God, I ask them questions. How do you think the world was formed and life evolved? One said being came down from outer space and started a colony. I say OK That was God! Then I ask them another question and there are so many story about the creation of our world. There are many things I don't understand. But I try to send them to a scholar that can explain how things happened and what to expect.

It is and has always been the belief of our newspaper "that everyone has the right to see their opinion in print." Keep it short and send it to me. tourney@att.net

One of the things the young have shared is we stoled the land we live on today. That happens in history every day. Here is a question, how does a nomad own any piece of property. They follow the weather and the migration of the animals. When the weather changes 50 or 100 miles north they follow the animal migration and weather. Where

does that land them? Maybe on some farmers land or a ranchers land or in the wilderness? Do they own it? I would usually stay for part of a year!

I am happy sharing information I collect from people, internet about history and books. I feel good when I help someone. I believe that is the way Charlie Kirk his wife and his team feel when they help people. You have to connect with people, believe in people, Family and God. Greed will sometimes grab hold of people. Young people don't ask their family for advice. I learned at an early age that the older you get the wiser you get. So I talk to more mature people than me, that has been in business and experienced family problem especially

Continued page 5



It has been an incredible journey serving the Marion County community and working alongside so many dedicated partners and colleagues.

Tamara ran the CEP Ocala as their Acting CEO while the Board was looking for a new CEO. The new CEO was chosen, after being announced he gave praise to Tamra for the great job she has done and thanked her. She will be missed.

Newspaper Deadlines

Editorial & Ad Copy for December

Seniors Voice & Ocala Downtown

Noon, November 23rd

Lady Lake Magazine & Village Spectator

12am, November 26th

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

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COLUMNS are the opinions of the writer and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the above named newspapers and online products. Writers are chosen to represent a diversity of views on local issues. The editorial on page 4 is the opinion of the Publisher only.

Tamara Fleischhaker

Tamara Fleischhaker has left the CEP Ocala Chamber for a great opportunity. Tamara has been hired by Oak Ridge Chamber of Commerce as their President & CEO in Oak Ridge Tennessee.

She concluded her time with the Ocala Metro Chamber & Economic Partnership after 19 and a half wonderful years. She said

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Field Trips and School Programs

Field trips to Discovery Center are a great way to enhance classroom lessons! We offer field trips for schools, home school groups, day care centers and summer camps.

The Discovery Center hosts field trips Tuesdays through Fridays, between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. The average field trip runs about two hours. All field trips include 45 minutes of free play in the current exhibit with the option to one of our add-on programs. Each program is approximately 45 minutes long. Students are put into a group rotation between the exhibit hall and classroom programs.

Group capacity is 90 people per day. Groups over 90 people will be booked for two or more days. Large groups will be booked for the closest consecutive days available at time of booking.

The Discovery Center serves over 35 schools and organizations in Marion County by providing engaging, hands-on science programming correlated to Florida State Standards.

Please submit a field trip request for more information. All requests must be submitted at least two weeks in advance and are subject to availability.

You have one week before the scheduled field trip date to make any changes to the number of participants in the field trip. After this deadline has passed, the total listed on the invoice is expected to be paid day of the field trip. Please plan accordingly.

Field Trip Pricing

Students: \$7 per person

Chaperones/Teachers: \$7 per person

Add-On Programming: Additional \$5 per student

Nov Reilly Arts

Continued from page 3

[Reilly After Hours presents: Dueling Pianos Uncensored](#) Friday, November 28, 2025 at 9 PM | in the NOMA Black Box

Tickets from \$28

Experience an electrifying night of musical mayhem with our late-night dueling pianos show! Unleash your wild side on the

dance floor as talented pianists engage in hilarious and unpredictable musical mash-ups while our cocktail servers dish up your favorite drinks. Get ready for a night of laughter, outrageous requests, and a high-energy, adults-only atmosphere that'll leave you begging for an encore.

About the Reilly Arts Center

Located just 5 blocks from Ocala's Historic Downtown Square in picturesque Tuscawilla Park, the Reilly Arts Center is Ocala's home for the arts and live entertainment. Featuring state-of-the-art acoustics and production equipment, the 705-seat venue hosts an eclectic assortment of events, concerts, meetings, and parties and has become a hub for the arts in Ocala. In addition to being the home of the Ocala Symphony Orchestra and producing local, regional and national acts, as the new flagship center for arts and culture in Ocala, the Reilly is committed to being an active and accessible venue in our community. The organization also brings live performances, movies, music, and art to Ocala's Marion Theatre in Downtown Ocala. To learn more visit reillyartscenter.com.

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Sally Linder, Marketing Manager

O: 352-351-1606 ext. 106

M: 352-789-5540

Reilly Arts \$300,000 Fund

Stan and Martha Hanson Commit \$300,000 to Establish the "Adam Hanson Bringing Music to the Community Fund" at the Reilly Arts Center

Ocala, FL The Reilly Arts Center and the Ocala Symphony Orchestra are proud to announce a transformative \$300,000 commitment from Stan and Martha Hanson to establish the "Adam Hanson Bringing Music to the Community Fund."

This newly created fund will ensure that everyone in our community, regardless of age, background, or financial means, can experience the joy and power of live music. Through the fund, community members will have the opportunity to attend orchestra rehearsals and performances, and participate in educational programs that bring the music beyond the stage of the Reilly Arts Center and directly into schools,

neighborhoods, and community spaces.

"Stan and Martha have been friends of the Ocala Symphony and the Reilly since we first walked through the old city auditorium together more than 11 years ago. I am so happy that their support through establishing this important fund will advance and create music education and entertainment opportunities throughout our community" shared Music Director and Conductor, Matthew Wardell.

"The Adam Hanson Bringing Music to the Community Fund beautifully reflects our mission to connect people through music and ensure that everyone, regardless of background, can experience the magic of live performance," said Natalie McComb, Executive Director. "We are deeply grateful to Stan and Martha Hanson for their extraordinary commitment to sharing the power of music."

The fund will support several key organizational goals of the Ocala Symphony and Reilly Arts Center:

• Connecting the Community Beyond the Concert Hall

Supporting initiatives such as *Symphony for Schools* and community ensemble performances that bring live orchestral music directly to audiences across Ocala and Marion County.

• Increasing Access and Engaging the Next Generation of Orchestra Lovers

Providing complimentary tickets for veterans, underserved and underrepresented groups, and youth, as well as supporting the *Open Rehearsal* program that offers a behind-the-scenes look at the orchestra in action.

• Expanding Music Education and Access Through the Ocala Symphony Orchestra's Community Music Conservatory

Providing scholarships for students with financial need and expanding opportunities for young people to engage with music in meaningful and lasting ways.

"Martha and I are very pleased to be provided the opportunity to utilize the Adam Hanson Better Communities Fund to support the expansion of music entertainment and education in our county," said Stan Hanson. "Adam's Music Fund will provide access to many individuals and

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Publisher's Notes

Continued from page 4

about GREED and EXPECTATIONS!

One of my sons said to me one day many years ago "If you don't expect anything you won't be disappointed that you did not receive what you DID NOT EXPECT". I thought about for a long time. That means you can't wish for things! I believe you get back what you put into things. Work hard on your FAMILY, JOB, FRIENDS and you will receive. Show love and respect.

I don't like what was said by Corey Booker when he and Cash Patel were debating/arguing, at the end Booker says "I FEAR FOR YOU!" That is a warning. FBI should be all over him for that remark! Someone needs to tone down Booker or investigate him, the people around him and see what he has already done! He is a scary guy.

To go a little further the Democrats and the crime syndicates are trying to intimidate the Republicans and Judges, they worry about their families. They should go to jail for any threats, maybe a ninety day cooling off period and kicked out of politics for life.

I recently heard a guy make a remark that he was not renewing his Concealed Weapons permit since Florida has OPEN CARRY. Think about the difference between Concealed Weapons permit and open carry. BIG DIFFERENCE! You need to rethink that.

REMBER ONE THING! You can't build a successful business on hate. Example look at what is happening to people that tried to make up stories to take down Trump. The FBI is not making it up this time!

What comes next?

Forward Momentum!

Looking into the future!

Is Elon Musk starting another party?

If so Is it to split the vote?

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All-Breed Horse Capital of the World® Parade

CEP will serve as the catalyst to Educate, Connect, and Advocate for the Equine Industry.

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 nearly 11,000 new jobs and more than \$1.6 billion in capital investment and is seeking an additional 5,000 jobs and \$1 billion in investment by 2027. For more information, visit: OcalaCEP.com

Photos by Mabe Media



All-Breed Horse Capital of the World® Parade

Photos by Mabe Media



FAIRTAX



The income and payroll tax system saddles Americans with \$1 trillion of annual illegal evasion and endless loopholes, exclusions, exceptions, adjustments, deductions and credits. The complexity is such that no one can comprehend it fully, not even those who wrote it.

The income tax is notoriously unstable with thousands of proposed Congressional changes made each year with lobbyists behind almost every one of them. The end result is a system that imposes an immense cost on U.S. businesses in both time and

money. Any significant job-producing, economy-cultivating expansion or organic growth investment must first be analyzed by tax attorneys, consultants and CPAs to scenario plan, strategize and model out effects of potential changes to the tax code.

Under the FAIRtax, U.S. businesses will have a consistent, level playing field that treats all businesses fairly with no tax on any business income. Most U.S. businesses are wholesale companies selling products and services to other businesses along the supply chain and under the FAIRtax, there is no business to business tax. Only those businesses engaged in retail sales directly to the consumer will have to collect and remit the FAIRtax. That means that just a few companies (WalMart, Home Depot, Macy's, Amazon, etc.) would bring in the vast majority of FAIRtax receipts. This will drastically reduce illegal evasion by over 90%.

Further, American companies will no longer have an employment penalty. The

current obligation to match each employee's 7.65% Social Security and Medicare tax withholding goes away under the FAIRtax. Also, the built-in embedded (and difficult to see) cost of income and payroll tax along the supply chain, estimated to be over 20% of the cost of all U.S. retail goods

and services, suddenly falls out of the cost buildup of U.S.-made products and services. Given the difference between the current income tax system and the FAIRtax, which do you believe would be better for American businesses?

For more information, please go to FAIRtax.org

Example: I live on a dirt road back in the woods. Long dirt driveway so you can't lose your way. When someone goes off the pavement at 2 am or 4 am something is wrong. I heard a metal rattling sound. Then I could hear a truck. It park out of my field of vision. Then I saw a figure in the door window in our laundry room. So I pick up my 357 magnum and went to the door while I was going there I ask my wife to call 911. She did and I ask the woman what they wanted? It was a very cold night and she was wearing a white fury looking thing full length, black hair. It was a young woman asking for me to let her in. Asking from a locked door are you alone? She said no. Are you in trouble she said no. Then what are you doing here. She said you know what I want? I said well if you are having a problem the police are on their way here, you can ask them to help you! She ran back to the truck and left.

Some time later a year or more there was another time a vehicle showed up in my front yard. Again it was a woman asking to use the bathroom, my wife was talking to her. I was looking from behind a curtain and could see how many there was out there, a second person standing in the shadows. My wife said you will have to take care of it out there and she continued to ask. Finally I

Continued page 12

Be Careful and Always Ready

Going through life we are behind the steering wheel and with God's help we take a choice of what road to take. Some are good and some are not so good. But remember this in this world of ours we are competing with EVIL! We have Al's helping us do that because it understands as we do "if we don't win we have lost it all for ever!"

In looking at what is evil it some times comes as a gentle soul, Challenged by their feelings and manipulated by the bad people or country's. A business that looks like it is trying to help you... I hate to tell you to be skeptical but some not good intentions. Always sit with your back against the wall. Always have something to deter the bad person. Plan what you will do if and when Evil comes and Evil will come in some form. The young lady on the train that a guy stab her in the throat, she was totally relaxed and distracted. The bad guy hit for no reason but the opportunity. Maybe if she had a spray or something to help her fight off the attacker she might have survived.

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Love is just a leash away!!



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

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

How can you help?

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

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

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

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



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



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



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

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



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

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Address: _____

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■ FROM THE DESK OF ■ ATTORNEY GENERAL UTHMEIER ■



Attorney General James Uthmeier's Office of Parental Rights Files Enforcement Action Against Roku

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General James Uthmeier announced that the Office of Parental Rights is filing a civil enforcement action against Roku, Inc. and its Florida subsidiary for violations of the Florida Digital Bill of Rights (FDBOR) and the Florida Deceptive and Unfair Trade Practices Act (FDUTPA).

"Florida families deserve to know what is happening with their children's personal information," said Attorney General James Uthmeier. "Parents—not technology companies—direct the upbringing of their children. We will hold any company that conceals or exploits that information accountable."

Roku is a platform for streaming video content; it acts as a smartphone for your TV, providing access to a vast library of apps for movies, TV shows, live news, sports, and more. Roku is the U.S. market leader in streaming video distribution, reaching 145 million people as of 2024.

The complaint alleges that Roku collected, sold, and enabled reidentification of sensitive personal data—including viewing habits, voice recordings, and other information from children—without authorization or meaningful notice to Florida families. The State contends that

Roku's practices violated Florida's privacy and consumer-protection laws by failing to obtain parental consent before selling or processing children's data and by misrepresenting the effectiveness of its privacy controls and opt-out tools.

The Florida Digital Bill of Rights, enacted to give consumers—and especially parents—greater control over their personal information, requires companies to obtain clear consent before selling or using a child's sensitive data and to provide honest notice about how personal information is collected and shared.

Through this action, the Attorney General seeks civil penalties, injunctive relief, and measures ensuring that Roku provides transparent disclosures, implements lawful parental-control mechanisms, and ceases unauthorized sale or processing of children's data.

This case is part of Florida's ongoing effort to empower parents, protect children, and bring accountability to the digital marketplace.

Attorney General James Uthmeier Announces Arrests and Charges for Multi-County, Multi-State Organized Retail Theft Ring

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General James Uthmeier's Office of Statewide Prosecution, in an operation led by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement, charged seven defendants for their involvement in a

multilevel criminal enterprise centered on stealing smoke detectors from The Home Depot.

"This operation is the result of a great partnership between Florida's Ag Law and our Office of Statewide Prosecution," said Attorney General James Uthmeier. "We are proud that Florida doesn't have stores with merchandise locked behind glass like you see in California, and we intend to keep it that way."

"Today's announcement shows Florida means business when it comes to organized retail theft. Our Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement — working with local and state partners — led a months-long investigation that dismantled a major criminal enterprise stealing hundreds of thousands of dollars of products from Home Depot stores across our state," said Commissioner of Agriculture Wilton Simpson. "While too many states are weakening their laws and turning a blind eye to retail theft, Florida is strengthening its laws and holding criminals accountable. If you steal from Florida businesses and citizens, expect to be caught and prosecuted."

"At The Home Depot, combating organized retail crime is about protecting the safety of our customers, associates, and communities," said Scott Glenn, vice president of asset protection for The Home Depot. "We're grateful for the leadership and willingness of Attorney General Uthmeier and Florida lawmakers to stop these criminals, and we remain committed to working with law enforcement and policymakers to address this growing issue."

"The Florida Retail Federation is grateful

for the leadership of Attorney General James Uthmeier, Commissioner Wilton Simpson, and our law enforcement partners in combating organized retail crime," said Lorena Holley, vice president and general counsel of the Florida Retail Federation. "This cross-agency collaboration not only brings criminals to justice, but also protects Florida businesses, retail team members and consumers, reinforcing our state's reputation as the nation's law-and-order state."

Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement Investigators uncovered at least 44 smoke detector thefts at The Home Depot locations across 17 Florida counties. The Home Depot estimates total losses from this organized theft ring are more than \$800,000. Law enforcement recovered \$78,000 in stolen merchandise during the execution of a search warrant at a storage unit in Hillsborough County. This location is believed to be one of the stops along the trafficking route, before ultimately ending up at a large Houston, Texas, warehouse.

According to Agricultural Law Enforcement, an estimated \$300,000 worth of product was located at the Texas facility during a search warrant execution by the Houston Police. These defendants share a combined total of over 170 prior charges between them.

The thefts were committed at The Home Depot locations in Pasco, Polk, Highlands, Hillsborough, Pinellas, Orange, St. Lucie, Brevard, Lee, Manatee, Flagler, Sarasota, Seminole, Duval, St. Johns, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach counties.

Assistant Statewide Prosecutor Ben Grueschow and Chief Assistant Statewide Prosecutor Paul Dantenville will handle the case.

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FROM THE DESK OF
GOVERNOR DESANTIS



Governor Ron DeSantis Highlights Success of Everglades Python Removal Program

STUART, Fla.— Governor Ron DeSantis highlighted the success of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's Python Action Team – Removing Invasive Constrictors (PATRIC) program in achieving record-setting removal numbers of invasive Burmese Pythons from Florida's Everglades. The governor also called on funding for the program to be continued annually to build off of the state's initial \$2 million investment in 2025.

"FWC's partnership with Inversa has supercharged the removal of invasive Burmese Pythons from the Everglades," said Governor Ron DeSantis. "The new program accomplished more removals in July 2025 alone than in the entire year before. Our \$2 million investment in python removal in the state budget has made this partnership possible, amplifying the success of the PATRIC program. We must now build on their achievements and continue investing in this proven strategy to protect the Everglades for many years to come."

Governor DeSantis Announces Success Academy Is Opening the First Florida Campus in Miami

MIAMI, Fla.— Today, Governor Ron DeSantis announced that Success Academy, one of the nation's highest-performing charter school networks, is opening its first charter school in Miami as part of Florida's Schools of Hope initiative. This represents a major expansion of high-quality educational options for families living in communities served by persistently low-performing schools.

"Florida leads the nation in educational freedom, and today we are adding to that

promise," said Governor Ron DeSantis. "With Success Academy opening in Miami, students will now have access to one of the highest-performing education models in the country. Florida's families deserve world-class education, and we will continue to make it available to every child no matter their zip code."

"Under Governor DeSantis' leadership, parents are empowered to choose the educational path that best suits their children's unique needs," said Commissioner of Education Anastasios Kamoutsas. "Success Academy offers families another high-quality option, backed by a nationally recognized track record of academic excellence and school improvement."

Created in 2017, the School of Hope program was designed to provide students in persistently low-performing schools with a pathway to a world-class education. Hope Operators are nonprofit charter networks with a record of success serving low-income families and ensuring access to a high-quality education without barriers. The goal of the program is to close achievement gaps between low-income students and their peers.

Governor DeSantis has committed to expanding options for students and families by implementing new statutes and initiatives, including:

- Signing House Bill 1 into law in 2023 making Florida the first state to provide universal school choice to all families regardless of income. More than 1.8 million students, over half of Florida's K-12 population, are now enrolled in a school choice option.
- Creating the Personalized Education Program through House Bill 1 to provide flexible funding to parents to customize learning and select the curriculum or tutoring needed to help their student succeed. Florida has more than 150,000 students participating in home education.

• Signing Senate Bill 248 into law this summer, which provides homeschool students the opportunity to play on their local high school football team, join the band, or be part of any activity offered at the school without losing their homeschool status. For more information about the Florida Department of Education, visit www.fl doe.org.

Governor Ron DeSantis Announces Major Advancements for Congestion Relief in Central Florida

Projects include a new express lane on I-4 in Hillsborough County, critical truck parking facility, and the nation's first Advanced Air Mobility aerial test bed

BARTOW, Fla. — Today, Governor Ron DeSantis announced major steps for congestion relief in Central Florida. These include 17 miles of new express lanes on Interstate 4 (I-4) in Hillsborough County and a new truck parking facility along the I-4 corridor in Polk County. The state is also breaking ground on the nation's first infrastructure for Advanced Air Mobility (AAM), an entirely new mode of transportation.

"Florida's conservative policies and sound fiscal management have produced one of the strongest economies in the nation," said Governor Ron DeSantis. "Through our Moving Florida Forward initiative, we are making record infrastructure investments and completing projects ahead of schedule to meet the needs of our growing state."

"Thanks to Governor DeSantis' leadership, we've successfully brought revolutionary congestion relief projects to life for Florida's residents and visitors," said Florida Department of Transportation Secretary Jared W. Perdue, P.E. "Our work to accelerate congestion relief, especially along the I-4 corridor, is a commitment we will continue to deliver on."

Projects included in today's announcement build upon Governor DeSantis' commitment to reducing congestion along Florida's busiest travel and freight corridors through the Moving

Florida Forward Infrastructure Initiative, which has expedited major projects 10-15 years in advance.

As Governor DeSantis continues to take bold action to ensure families spend less time in traffic, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) will be constructing 17 miles of a new single express lane facility on I-4 in Hillsborough County in both directions from Interstate 75 (I-75) to County Line Road. These express lanes will bring significant congestion relief to the traveling public by separating long-distance traffic from local commuter traffic, providing additional reliable travel options and enhancing the quality of life for residents traveling in the area. This project has officially been programmed within FDOT's project pipeline and will be advanced by ten years, with construction expected to begin in 2028.

To further support Florida's freight traffic along the I-4 corridor, which has one of the largest truck parking deficits throughout the state, FDOT will also be constructing a new 100-space truck parking facility in Polk County at the Polk Parkway and I-4 interchange. This advancement reflects the state's commitment to fiscal prudence by maximizing available resources, as the new truck parking facility will utilize existing right-of-way within the interchange. With 75 percent of Florida's total freight moved by trucks, Governor DeSantis has remained committed to expanding critical truck parking facilities throughout the state to support this vital industry.

Additionally, Governor DeSantis announced today that the construction of the first of two AAM vertiports is officially underway at the FDOT's SunTrax testing facility, which will be expanded to a statewide network of interconnected commercial vertiports. This facility will establish the nation's first-ever AAM aerial test bed and dedicated airspace, driving innovative research and development for this emerging technology. Additional announcements related to Florida's role in AAM will be released by FDOT in the coming months.



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Reilly Fund

Continued from page 5

groups that have not had the opportunity to take advantage of the excellent musical presentations available at the Reilly Arts Center."

Through this generous gift, Stan and Martha Hanson will help to ensure that music continues to inspire, uplift, and unite the people of Marion County for generations to come.

About the Reilly Arts Center

Located just 5 blocks from Ocala's Historic Downtown Square in picturesque Tuscarilla Park, the Reilly Arts Center is Ocala's home for the arts and live entertainment. Featuring state-of-the-art acoustics and production equipment, the 705-seat venue hosts an eclectic assortment of events, concerts, meetings, and parties and has become a hub for the arts in Ocala. In addition to being the home of the Ocala Symphony Orchestra and producing local, regional and national acts, as the new flagship center for arts and culture in Ocala,

the Reilly is committed to being an active and accessible venue in our community. The organization also brings live performances, movies, music, and art to Ocala's Marion Theatre in Downtown Ocala. To learn more visit reillyartscenter.com.

Always Ready

Continued from page 8

spoke and said the Sheriff Department is on their way they will help you find a bathroom. She left, the sheriff department pickup a guy walking on the road close by, the woman left him and drove away. The police ask do you want us to do with him. I said tell him how lucky he is because I was armed and turn him loose on the other side of the county.

Two days later a car pulls up in our driveway and two women get out and said they were looking for a purse. The one woman said my sister got a little crazy the

other night and stole my mother's car and purse. I said I think she was probably the one that came here at three AM and wanted in us to let her in to use the bathroom. We did not let her in so you are welcome to look out there where she was at and then leave and don't ever come back. The girl that was at our house two days earlier was in the back seat of the car.

Two weeks later a neighbor was mowing along the road and found a purse. They turn it into the sheriffs office. We were ready but suppose we were not and we let them in????

Our road is a dead end road and usually the bad guys don't like to come down a one way road. One way in and one way out. So Beware! We have a dog in the house now, she is a light sleeper. She growl's in a low tone to let me know there is activity outside and hear her right away.

ALWAYS BE READY! HAVE A PLAN OF ACTION!

Come to a FREE Breakfast Wednesday Mornings and check out this PREMIER networking group.

WE meet at Ocala Golf Club (Muni)
3130 E Silver Springs Blvd, Ocala, FL 34470

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