



Oak House ribbon cutting Oak House is in Water Oak community Lady Lake



Lady Lake Police Department and The Fruitland Park Police Department helping children Shop! More on page two.



2026 and 2027 Lady Lake Chamber Board and Lady Lake Chamber Ambassador the meet at Eaton Beach



Reflections

By TomL

Some years back I went to a senior fishing derby to take pictures for my Seniors Voice of Ocala newspaper.

It was being held at Lake Tuscaawilla and seniors were out in force. Every body had a spot and they would maneuver to get where they wanted to fish. Here is what happened. The lady that was coordinating the fishing Derby back then was Mary Filer one of the Parks and Recreation employees. I started taking pictures and went to interview Mary Filer and as I ask questions she said this might be the last Senior Fishing Derby My sponsor for the Derby said they will not be doing it any more. I ask how much does it cost to put on a fishing derby. She explained different ways of feeding the seniors. I went out and priced a few things. I went to a restaurant supply place and price the big all beef hotdogs, chips, drinks, worms for bait. Then I find out that the Florida Game Commission loaned the fishing poles over a hundred. The price fit my budget!

I called Mary and ask do you still need a sponsor? She said yes I said thats me! The first one we had I had so much fun that I ask how about having two per year. She got

back to me and said as long as you want to sponsor it YES! I ask the members of Ocala Business Leaders for door prizes. BJ Trophy's came in with three trophy's, I would go to Walmart and buy three to six fishing poles for grand prizes We bought the fishing worms there also. After that I sponsored 17 Senior Fishing Derby. Dianne Leaf was the supervisor for thee Senior Center, she is also known for her work with Charity's. When Mary Filer retired her super took over with the help of Grace Huff on the fishing derby.

First the Assisted Living people loved us. They came by the transport buses. They got the seniors out in the sunshine, some were in wheel chairs, so Ocala City Parks and Recreation built a badly needed dock so family's could enjoy it all year. The Seniors had fun, we fed them, they won prizes for fishing and just for drawings we had. Door prizes galore! Here are a few of the stories.

I was watching a guy with a big Cowboy hat on and a woman was telling him to pull. I took their picture then, I ask the lady what was going on? She said he is blind and wanted to fish. WOW! Wheel Chair people fished mostly off the dock and they had first choice to use the dock. All of them had helpers from the home that they came from

Continued on page 3

Town News Lake County Events



Lady Lake Chamber supports the Silver Tree Project



From page one: Lady Lake Police Department and the Fruitland Park helping children shop for Christmas!

Lady Lake Police Use Drone

Lady Lake Police use drone to locate driver who fled serious crash

LADY LAKE — Lady Lake police officers used drone technology Saturday night to locate a driver who fled into a wooded area after a two-vehicle crash on U.S. Highway 27/441.

Around 7:40 p.m., officers responded to a crash where a Chevrolet Tahoe was seen driving at a high speed before rear-ending a Ford F-150 on U.S. Highway 441 near Longview Avenue in Lady Lake. Officers found the Tahoe unoccupied and discovered ammunition, an empty prescription bottle, and personal property inside the vehicle linking it to a local man. The Tahoe's driver had left the scene on foot, according to witnesses.

Witnesses reported seeing a man run into nearby woods. Officers searched the area and deployed the department's drone, which detected a heat signature in dense brush. Sgt. Heather Couch and Officer Steven Johnson located a man lying on the ground. Davis appeared impaired and was treated for injuries before being transported by EMS to Ocala Regional Medical Center. The suspect will face several charges upon his release from the hospital and pending blood alcohol testing, including failing to stop for a crash involving bodily injuries and possession of ammunition by a convicted felon.

Chief Steve Hunt praised officers for their swift response and effective use of new department technology.

"Our officers showed exceptional professionalism during a chaotic scene,"

Hunt said. "Their decision to deploy the drone allowed us to quickly locate the individual and bring this situation to a safe conclusion. This is exactly how technology enhances public safety."

Found/Abandoned Property

The Lady Lake Police Department is in possession of the following found or abandoned property. Unless ownership is claimed and verified, these items will be disposed of in accordance with Florida State Statute 705 on their scheduled purge dates.

If you believe any of these items belong to you, please contact the Evidence Section at (352) 751-1576 with proof of ownership.

An iPhone was recovered on October 16, 2025, on West Lady Lake Boulevard. If unclaimed, it will be purged on January 14, 2026.

A credit card was recovered on October 30, 2025, on Avenida Central. It is scheduled to be disposed of on January 18, 2026.

On December 15, 2025, an iPhone, identification cards, a passport, credit cards, and keys were recovered along U.S. Highway 27/441. These items will be purged on March 13, 2026, unless claimed.

A bicycle was recovered on December 19, 2025, on LaGrande Boulevard. If unclaimed, it will be disposed of on March 29, 2026.



Reflections

Continued from page 1

and some caught fish, when they caught a fish they would holler FISH and they got a ticket for a drawing for door prizes and volunteers would take the fish off and measure it. After the first hour the fish would wake up and you could hear people hollering Fish. The prizes for Biggest fish, second the most fish and the oldest fisherperson, always in their 90's. We went over a hundred once or twice. The next year as time went on they would bring the fishing pole they won. We had one lady who fell in the lake, well she actually slid in the lake on her butt. Two or three of us were there to get wet also. There was a volunteer Life Guard on duty also. When the lady fell in twice on the same day. We went to the person that brought her that

they had to make sure they watched her. She like the attention she was getting and we could not take chance of her getting hurt. In other words keep her out of the water or don't bring her back.

For years Clay Electric would bring a cooker from the plant and cook hundreds of hotdogs and hamburgers. They got a quality meat hamburger and a good beef hotdog and and most ate both with chips and a drink and you can have a picnic without beans. By the way the Ocala Star Banner came and took pictures 17 events and mentioned that I was the sponsor once! Petty petty petty!

It was not unusual for someone would say thank to the City Parks and Recreation, the FI Game Commission and the Seniors Voice. One day I was shopping in Wall Mart and a little Korean lady came up and hugged me and said I remember you from the

Fishing Derby. It made me feel good!

It got to the point that I could not afford it. Two weeks ago a lady came up to me at a craft show and said hi she was part of almost every event. She is now 95 and has Race horses. I hope she goes past 150. I still go when I can and take pictures. It is a fun event.

**What Say You?
TLourey@att.net**

**Lake County
Detention Center
Public Booking Log
page 6**



This is the last Networking event for 2025 at GlennView Country Club. Thank you to Glenview Country Club

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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



Our journey brings us into the elderly category. Healthcare problems, high insurance rates, high Doctor bills, ruthless Doctors trying to build a practice. My wife has a primary doctor she was sent to, a specialist

worked at the expense of my wife health. Lot's of procedures on her legs and they put her on a maintenance program NO IMPROVEMENT! And we are not allowed to come back! They made their money.

I was happy that the METRO CEP Ocala Chamber Partners were commenting to me about the Ocala DownTown newspaper. They said they saw all the great CEP information in it! Thanks for the Comments. I still have not met Mark McCormick the new CEO but I will, I'm looking forward to it.

Why did 14,000 Amazon Big Tech employees lose their jobs? Very large lay offs from New York, California, New Jersey, and Washington represents nearly half of the layoffs were engineers. Someone from Amazon said they need to get rid of the Bureaucracy in their company. That might be but, I don't believe that! Here is what I think.

Remember the story about Henry Ford

for a work up, she was OK while there the doctor said she needed some test on her legs. She was tested and the recommendation was made to close off the vein's, that was done After many trips, her in pain, months of travel, she was getting worse, then she had a stroke in her eye, what caused that? Maybe clot from her legs? We kept going back and suddenly we realized she has two primary doctors, hmmm. We decided to cancel the second one and she was told at that she could not come back??? I think the doctor was taking clients from our small town and sending into her main off in the large city close by. I am not happy! I think we were

wanting to make unbreakable glass. Many people were dyeing in wreck's because of the glass in the first Fords.

Ford called all his engineers in one at a time and ask "Why can't we make unbreakable glass and they all would give him all these reasons that made sense. After eight or ten he came upon this new engineer recruit in his company and ask why can't we make unbreakable glass and the young man said oh please Mr. Ford I just started and I don't know why we can't make unbreakable glass, Ford said you are the one to make our unbreakable glass. Because you are half way there, you don't know why you can't. So let's start right now. Ford put him in charge of that division and monitored him daily. They went through many trials until they laminated two pieces of glass together with a clear double sided adhesive material. They found it would brake but held together. It has been improved on many time since then and it is not the major cause of deaths. If you don't know why something can't be done, you have taken your first step to greatness, work hard a create something new an innovative. You will see new and exciting things from the new engineers!

Why did this terrorist that use to help the United States in Afghanistan come to Americas to kill American Troops. Did he do it for the love of his country. Hatred for the people who left him and his family to die when we made that last run from Afghanistan airport. Actually I think I heard

the Americans went back and got him out! He was on the last load or something like that. He did not hate us for no reason, Biden or the people with the Biden signature stamp pulled us out of that country without helping the people that helped us. So they send the worst of their people here to do harm us! News flash...The shooter had an article (Propaganda piece) informing the shooter that our military was shooting American people? I don't believe that for a minute!

A simple conversation can help you create strategies that lead to true financial freedom for saving, budgeting, and managing expenses and invest in something, I suggest you talk to Edward Jones (Nick Navetta).

Newspaper Deadlines

Editorial & Ad Copy for February

Seniors Voice & Ocala DownTown

Noon, January 23rd

Lady Lake Magazine & Village Spectator

12am, January 28th

Village Spectator / Lady Lake Magazine

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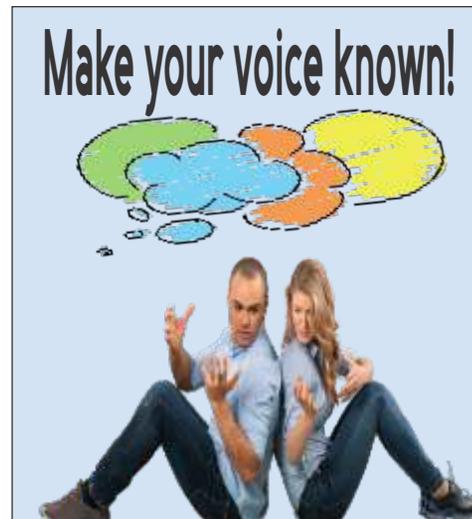
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FAIRTAX



Artificial intelligence is still a relatively new technology. Still more and more people are using it to

toward the FAIRtax for its simplicity, transparency and potential to boost economic growth by untaxing productivity. The income tax system's complexity and inefficiency (ie., hours spent on tax prep, loopholes favoring the wealthy) are major drawbacks. The FAIRtax prebate could address regressivity if well implemented, ensuring low-income households aren't disproportionately burdened. However, I'd want a clear transition plan to avoid price shock and protections against evasion (e.g., strong auditing of retailers).

That said, the income tax's progressively and stability are strong arguments, especially for those prioritizing redistribution. My preference assumes a well-designed prebate and enforcement system, which isn't guaranteed."

ChatGPT:

"If I were an American taxpayer, I'd like the FAIRtax system over the current income tax, though with some reservations. The FAIRtax is a national sales tax that replaces most federal income taxes, including payroll taxes for Social Security and Medicare.

In summary, I'd prefer the FAIRtax because of its simplicity, potential to stimulate economic growth and fairness in how it taxes individuals based on consumption rather than income. It would provide a fresh start with fewer

questions or look up information. Bob Paxton, a FAIRtax advocate in Ocala, is a former radio personality as well as a retired computer programmer. He is the founder of FAIRtax Power Radio, a weekly podcast and video stream, who decided to ask three separate AI application services to compare the current income/payroll tax system to the FAIRtax and then choose which system they would like to live under if they were a typical American taxpayer. Not surprisingly, all three chose the FAIRtax. Below are some excerpts that Bob received from those inquiries.

CoPilot:

"If I were an American taxpayer weighing the income tax system against the FAIRtax, I'd lean toward the FAIRtax - for some compelling reasons, though without caveats, if you're someone who values economic freedom, simplicity and transparency, the FAIRtax is attractive. But if you prioritize stability, predictability and targeted redistribution, the income tax feels safer.

Grok:

"If I were an American taxpayer, I'd lean

complexities, though the regressive nature of the tax and it's potential impact on the cost of living for low-income families would need to be added effectively."

I found it interesting that all three AI applications chose the FAIRtax, noting it's simplicity, transparency and potential economic growth. However, I take exception to the idea that the income tax system is stable or predictable since Congress proposes 1,500 to 2,000 changes

to the tax code each year. Also, worth noting is that although the Fairtax removes Social Security and Medicare obligation from paychecks, the bill requires a certain percentage of all FAIRtax collected to go to those programs making them much more stable than they are today. I am convinced that, once sufficiently explained, most living, breathing, thinking human beings would arrive at the same conclusions.

For more information go to FAIRtax.org

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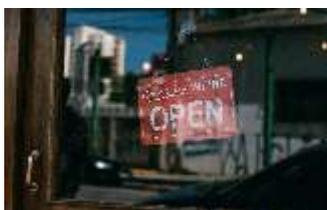
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Contact us today to be added to our email list and stay connected to local businesses & events!



Lady Lake Chamber



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

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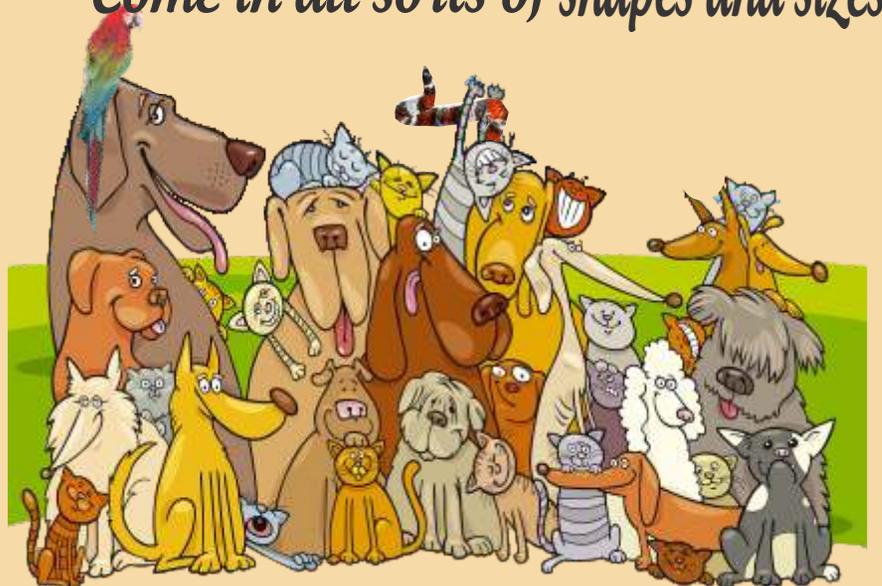
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LAKE COUNTY EVENTS

SEE MORE ABOUT PARKS & TRAILS IN LAKE COUNTY

<https://lakecountyfl.gov/parks-and-trails>

Jan 01
Open House
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM Ellis Acres Reserve in Paisley

Nature center will be open and a naturalist will be on site to answer questions.

[Event Website](#)

Jan 02
Exploration Hike
8:00 AM - 9:30 AM Ferndale Preserve in Montverde

Join staff on a morning exploration of habitats and species at Ferndale Preserve.

[Event Website](#)

Jan 03
Wetland Excursion
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Lake Norris Conservation Area in Eustis

Ring in the New Year with a hike at Lake Norris Conservation Area. Limit 15 participants. Reservations required. No facilities. Hike intensity: Moderate.

[Event Website](#)

Jan 04
Exploration Hike
5:00 PM - 6:30 PM PEAR Park (Gateway) in Leesburg

Joint staff on an early evening hike to get some exercise while exploring nature at P.E.A.R. Park.

[Event Website](#)

Jan 05
Take Flight, Birds of Winter
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM Lake May Reserve in Eustis

Many bird species use Florida in the fall, winter and spring as they refuel and rest

along migration routes.

[Event Website](#)

Jan,10
Paddling Adventure
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Lake Norris Conservation Area in Eustis

Considered one of the best paddles in Lake County, join staff as they guide participants on a tour of the renowned Black Water Creek. Ibis, wood stork, and more

[Event Website](#)

Jan,14
Watershed Wednesday
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM Hickory Point Preserve Pavilion in Tavares

Join us monthly for Watershed Wednesdays to learn how lakes, streams, wetlands, and uplands connect, with rotating presentations on shorelines

[Event Website](#)

Jan,15
Scrub Ecosystems
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM Pine Forest Park in Deland

The scrub, scrubby flatwoods and ephemeral ponds of Pine Forest Park are home to many native plant and animal species.

[Event Website](#)

Jan,17
Tracks and Scat
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM Ellis Acres Reserve in Paisley

Who goes there and who left that? Join staff on a hike of discovery to decipher what animals, from bears to bugs, left signs of their passing.

[Event Website](#)

Jan,17
An Evening with John Brown
5:00 PM - 8:00 PM Mission Resort + Club in Howey-in-the-Hills

Join FOX 35's John Brown at Mission Resort + Club for an entertaining look at Central Florida's hidden gems from his book Secret Orlando.

[Event Website](#)

Jan,18
Exploration Hike
9:30 AM - 12:30 PM Palatka River Park and Boat Ramp in Clermont

Join staff while we explore the sandy trails of remnant ecosystems of xeric scrub, sandhill and flatwoods on ancient dunes along Lake Louisa

[Event Website](#)

Jan,18
Songs of Broadway
4:00 PM - 5:00 PM First Presbyterian Church Mount Dora in Mount Dora

Experience an unforgettable evening of show-stopping music as five dynamic vocalists and a brilliant pianist bring the magic of Broadway to life.

[Event Website](#)

Jan,18
So Funny Sundays
3:00 PM - 7:00 PM Hideaway Performing Arts Theater in Eustis

Join us for So Funny Sundays on January 18th, 2026, at the Hideaway Performing Arts Center in Eustis, FL! Doors open at 3 PM, with laughter kicking off.

[Event Website](#)

Jan,23
Stories of Water
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Scrub Point Preserve in Clermont

Join us for a casual guided hike as we share the Story of Water at Scrub Point Preserve.

Limit 15 participants. Hike intensity: Moderate.

[Event Website](#)

Jan,24
Keep Lake Beautiful Community Cleanup in Mascotte
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Mascotte City Hall in Mascotte

Volunteers are needed to help pick up litter in the community. KLB provides safety gear, bags, grabber, and water. Visit www.keeplakebeautiful for more information.

[Event Website](#)

Jan,24
Keep Lake Beautiful Community Cleanup in Groveland
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Groveland Downtown Festival Park in Groveland

Volunteers are needed to help pick up litter in the community. KLB will provide supplies. Held alongside the Mascotte Community Cleanup.

Bringing our community together...

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CHAIR CHAT

Conversation Vie (Part 1)

Dear Friend,

We are delighted to share an in-depth look into the Marion County Republican Executive Committee (MCREC) – your local Republican Party, powered by your neighbors and dedicated to upholding the principles that strengthen our community, state, and nation. The MCREC is a vibrant grassroots organization, a cornerstone of the Republican Party in Florida, committed to shaping a brighter future through principled leadership and active civic engagement. At its heart, the MCREC is composed of everyday citizens – your friends, family, and neighbors – who are united by a common set of core beliefs and values. We firmly believe in:

Protecting Constitutional Freedoms:

- Upholding the fundamental rights endowed to every American, from the sacred right to bear arms to ensuring a limited government that respects individual liberties.
- Securing Our Elections:** Championing the integrity of our democratic process by advocating for robust measures that ensure only eligible U.S. citizens cast votes, strengthening public trust in our electoral system.
- Empowering Responsible Energy Solutions:** Promoting energy independence and economic prosperity through the strategic and responsible expansion of America's abundant natural resources, including oil, natural gas, coal, and nuclear power.
- Defending Life and Faith-Based Values:** Standing unequivocally for the protection of the unborn and advocating for policies that reflect and honor our community's deeply held faith-based principles.
- Upholding Lawful Immigration:** Advocating for secure borders and a just, orderly immigration system rooted in the rule of law, ensuring the safety and sovereignty of our nation.
- Championing Medical Freedom:** Protecting individual autonomy in healthcare decisions, opposing government mandates, and ensuring patients have the right to choose their treatments and vaccinations without coercion and vaccinations without coercion.

The Power of Grassroots Action: Your MCREC Members

Our strength lies in our Precinct Committeemen and Committeewomen – dedicated volunteers who serve as the direct link between our party and your neighborhood. These are party-elected officials who embody the spirit of community service, working tirelessly to represent Republican values at the most local level. They are the backbone of our efforts, actively engaged in:

- Electing Republican Leaders:** From local municipal races to state and federal elections, our members are on the front lines, canvassing neighborhoods, organizing fundraisers, and providing essential support to elect officials who share our vision.
- Maximizing Voter Turnout:**

Spearheading "Get Out the Vote" initiatives to ensure every eligible Republican voice is heard on Election Day.

- Active Participation:** Attending monthly meetings, representing the Republican Party at various local and state events, and fostering a strong, connected network of like-minded individuals.
 - Committee Engagement:** Contributing their time and expertise to vital committee activities, including:
 - Recruiting New Members:** Expanding our reach and inviting more citizens to join our mission.
 - Providing Feedback:** Offering valuable insights and comments on pending state, county, and school board actions and legislation, ensuring local voices are amplified.
 - Strategic Decision-Making:** Voting on MCREC Board members and crucial party actions, directly influencing our direction.
 - Direct Advocacy:** Meeting with and advocating to local and state officials, ensuring the MCREC provides an effective platform for "Your Voice" to be heard on key issues.
- We are building a legacy, a sustainable future for Marion County, our beloved State of Florida, and our great Nation. Your involvement is crucial to this endeavor.

Unlicensed Businesses

From the publisher - This is one persons opinion and they have the right to see it in print!

Draft Letter to the Editor — The Villages & Local Newspapers

Subject: Concerns Over Promotion of Unlicensed Businesses in "The Villages Word of Mouth" Facebook Group

To the Editor,

I am writing out of deep concern for the safety and fair treatment of residents in The Villages, particularly regarding the growing issue of unlicensed businesses being promoted—and in some cases protected—within one of the community's largest online recommendation groups.

"The Villages Word of Mouth," a Facebook group with tens of thousands of members, has become a primary resource for residents seeking trustworthy referrals for contractors, and other service providers. Many Villagers, especially older residents, rely on these recommendations believing they come from an unbiased, community-driven platform. Unfortunately, recent experiences suggest the opposite.

As a long-time contributor to the group and a licensed business owner, I have watched administrators selectively allow certain businesses to be recommended while deleting legitimate concerns or negative experiences posted about others. Several businesses, despite being unlicensed or uninsured, are freely promoted—sometimes aggressively—while licensed competitors are silenced or removed without explanation. In my own experience, I was blocked from the page after pointing out that a promoted company was operating not in compliance with licensing and insurance requirements in the state of Florida.

Meanwhile, the unlicensed business was permitted to continue advertising to unsuspecting residents.

To be clear, a private online group is within its legal right to set its own rules. But with such an enormous influence over consumer decisions in a 55+ community, the lack of transparency and inconsistent enforcement of standards poses a significant risk. Many Villagers assume they are receiving honest information from their peers, not filtered recommendations that may reflect personal relationships or conflicts of interest among the group's moderators.

The State of Florida has strict regulations regarding contractors, and other service providers. These laws exist for a reason: unlicensed or uninsured operators not only undercut legitimate businesses who follow the rules, but they also leave consumers completely unprotected. Should damage, injury, or loss occur, the homeowner can be held liable—often at great financial cost. This is especially troubling in The Villages, where older residents are more frequently targeted and more vulnerable to misleading advertising.

The larger issue is not about any single business or individual. It is about the responsibility of influential community platforms—formal or informal—to avoid misleading those who depend on them. When a group representing itself as a trusted, unbiased resource begins filtering out legitimate warnings while, by extension, tacitly legitimizing unlicensed or unqualified providers, residents deserve to know.

My hope is simply that this issue receives the attention it warrants. Transparency matters. Accountability matters. And the tens of thousands of Villagers who rely on online recommendations deserve to make informed decisions based on complete, accurate, and fairly presented information.

Thank you for your time and for helping shed light on a matter that impacts the safety and trust of our entire community.

Faith Leaders Coalition

Byron Donalds for Florida Governor Launches Faith Leaders Coalition

65 Florida faith leaders have already signed up to support Donalds' campaign.

NAPLES, FL - Today, the Byron Donalds for Florida Governor campaign launched a Faith Leaders Coalition consisting of individuals who lead their community in prayer, volunteer at their church or faith community, serve as clergy, or lead a faith-based organization. 65 faith leaders have already signed up to be a part of the coalition, which will hold weekly prayer calls led by rotating faith leaders.

"God calls us to pray for our leaders. This is not about politics. It is about standing in the gap and covering Byron Donalds' leadership in prayer as we seek God's best for our state of Florida," said **Pastor J, Jearlyn Dennie, Founder of She Leads Florida.**

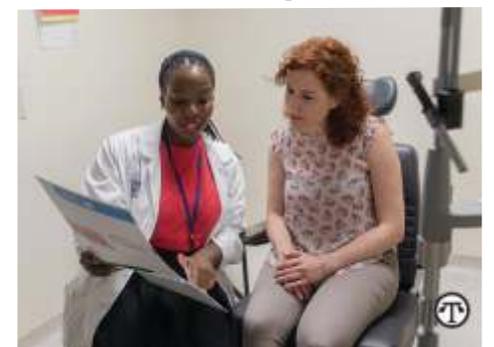
"We are called to pray for our leaders, and Congressman Byron Donalds is a fearless leader who shares our values and needs our prayers. In order for Florida to continue succeeding, common sense values of faith, family, and freedom must be reflected at the highest levels of state government in order to serve the public good," said **Anthony**

Verdugo, Founder of the Florida Christian Family Coalition. "Policy decisions impact the lives of everyday Floridians from vulnerable communities to houses of worship, and our state needs a proven leader like Congressman Donalds who listens and leads with the conviction of a man on a mission to strengthen our state. He respects the critical role faith institutions play in our state to help shape our culture and character, thus, this coalition exists to lift up Florida in prayer and support for a leader who shares and practices our values."

The Faith Leaders for Byron Coalition follows the launch of the [Veterans for Byron Coalition](#), co-chaired by elected officials who have served our country as part of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, and Navy JAG.

In [polling](#) and in [fundraising](#), Byron Donalds is the clear front-runner in the race for Governor with endorsements from President Trump, Elon Musk, [75% of the Florida House Republican Caucus](#), [top Florida sheriffs](#), 17 members of Florida's congressional delegation, U.S. House Leadership, and leading Florida and national conservatives.

The Quiet Epidemic



(NAPSI)—For the nearly 40 million Americans living with diabetes, the threat to their vision unfolds quietly, often without warning. [Diabetic retinopathy](#), a complication that damages blood vessels in the retina, has become the leading cause of blindness among working-age adults in the United States. Yet what makes this epidemic particularly tragic is that it doesn't have to be this way.

"The vast majority of severe vision loss from diabetic retinopathy is preventable," said Janice C. Law, MD, retina specialist in Tennessee. "Studies show that regular eye examinations and timely interventions can reduce the risk of severe vision loss by [90 percent](#)."

Still, many Americans are falling through the cracks. Only about [60 percent](#) of people with diabetes receive the annual dilated eye examinations recommended by the [American Academy of Ophthalmology](#), a shortfall driven by lack of access, awareness, and time.

Expanding Access to Care

If you or someone you care about has diabetes, schedule a dilated eye exam today. Uninsured or underinsured? See if you qualify for a no out-of-pocket cost medical eye exam through [EyeCare America®](#). This public service program matches volunteer [ophthalmologists](#), physicians who specialize in medical and surgical eye care, with eligible patients aged 18 and older who need eye care. Visit [www.aao.org/eyecare-america](#) to learn more.

Continued on page 9

The Quiet Epidemic

Continued from page 8

When to See a Doctor

In its early stages, diabetic retinopathy often presents no symptoms at all—a fact that underscores the importance of preventive screening rather than waiting for problems to emerge.

“Even if your vision seems fine, a yearly dilated eye exam is important,” said Dr. Law. “By the time patients notice flashing lights, blurred vision, floating spots, or other warning signs, the disease may have already progressed significantly.”

When should a person with diabetes have an eye exam?

If you have type 1 diabetes, you should have eye examinations at least yearly beginning 5 years after being diagnosed with diabetes. Your ophthalmologist may recommend more frequent examinations.

If you have type 2 diabetes, you should see an ophthalmologist at least yearly as soon as you are diagnosed, regardless of your age. Follow your eye doctor's recommendation about how often you should be rechecked, as this varies for every individual. You may need to have your eyes checked more often than once a year.

But diabetes isn't the only reason to see an ophthalmologist. All healthy adults should have a comprehensive eye exam by age 40 when early signs of [cataract](#), [glaucoma](#), and a [ge-related macular degeneration](#) may begin to emerge. “Forty is typically when subtle signs of eye disease begin to emerge,” Laura C. Fine, MD, chair of EyeCare America, explained. “Many times, people don't even notice any changes to their vision during these early phases of disease. However, vision-saving treatments are most effective when the disease is caught early.”

The Treatment Gap

Ophthalmologists have more tools than ever before for diagnosing and treating eye diseases. But these innovations cannot help patients whose disease goes undiagnosed or who remain unaware of their condition's severity.

The message is clear: The technology to save sight exists. What's needed now is making sure that everyone who needs it can access it in time.

If you're uninsured or underinsured, [EyeCareAmerica](#) may be able to help you, too. See if you qualify for a no out-of-pocket cost medical eye exam at www.aao.org/eyecare-america.

Finish Accredited College Degrees

Smartphone App Offers Flexible, Affordable Way for Working Adults to Finish Accredited College Degrees

(NewsUSA) - A Michigan university unveils SOAR™, a new smartphone-based degree program that brings college within reach for busy adults — at half the cost.

For millions of adults, finishing college was never about ability — it was about circumstances. Jobs, family responsibilities and rising tuition costs often forced higher education onto the back burner.

About 750 adults leave college every day in the United States. Most don't fail academically; they simply run out of time, money, or both. For those who still dream of completing their degrees, the barriers can feel insurmountable.

That's where the SOAR™ by Cornerstone University app comes in.

Launched in 2025, SOAR is the nation's first fully accredited bachelor's degree

designed to be completed entirely on a smartphone. The program currently offers a Bachelor of Science in strategic business management, preparing students with leadership and business skills employers consistently demand.

SOAR stands out for three reasons. It's half the cost of the average accredited business degree, making it one of the most affordable in the nation. It's flexible, with new classes starting every two weeks and lessons delivered in short, smartphone-ready modules so students can learn on the go. And it's respected, carrying full accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission.

For adults in the workforce, that means finishing a degree without stepping away from their jobs or families. For many parents, SOAR also removes the difficult choice between investing in their children's tuition and finally finishing their own. With radically affordable tuition, both become possible.

“For too long, adults who wanted to go back to school were forced to choose between their education and their responsibilities,” said Dr. Gerson Moreno-Riaño, president of Cornerstone University. “SOAR was built to remove those barriers — it's a degree that works with your life, not against it.”

Take Alicia, a single mom in Michigan who enrolled this year. “I like to SOAR when I'm getting ready in the morning and driving to work,” she said. “I often log into the SOAR app after dinner when my little one is settled or in bed.”

Her story reflects the core mission of SOAR. It makes higher education accessible to those who thought the door had closed.

With looming retirements creating leadership gaps in the workforce, programs like SOAR aren't just helping individuals



— they're preparing the next generation of business leaders. And this is just the start. New disciplines and advanced degrees are already in development, expanding options for learners who wish to continue their studies beyond a bachelor's degree.

For adults ready to reclaim their dream of finishing college, SOAR offers a path forward: half the cost, fully accredited, and designed for real life.

Learn more about SOAR™ by Cornerstone University at go.cornerstone.edu/SOAR1.

Article Link

<https://about.newsusa.com/smartphone-app-offers-flexible-affordable-way-for-working-adults-to-finish-accredited-college-degrees-0>

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UF Health Building Hybrid Emergency/Urgent Care Center in Sumter County

Last Wednesday, Dec. 10, 2025, UF Health broke ground on its

third emergency and urgent care center in the region, near the intersection of U.S. HWY 301 and CR 466 in Oxford.

Adult

JANUARY



Lady Lake Library

Hours:

Monday: 9am-7pm
 Tuesday-Friday: 9am-6pm
 Saturday and Sunday: Closed
 Closed: January 1st and 19th

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
ESL @10-11:30am 5	Genealogy Help 6 (Bring a Tablet or Laptop) @ 10-12pm	7	8	Crochet Club 9 @ 3-4:30pm
ESL @10-11:30am 12	Happy, Healthy 13 New Year Presentation @10-11am Book Discussion Group @ 2-4pm	SHINE 2-4pm 14	15	16
Closed for Martin Luther King Jr Day 19	20	Authors Round Table @ 2-4pm 21	Let's Talk Books @ 2pm 22	Movies at the Library! Showing: Fantastic Four: First Steps (PG-13) @ 3-5pm 23
ESL @10-11:30am Page Turners Book Club Reading: The Friend Zone by Abby Jiminez @5:30pm 26	27	SHINE 2-4pm 28	Cyber Security Awareness Sign up Required @ 2-3pm 29	30

Youth

JANUARY



Lady Lake Library

Hours:

Monday: 9am-7pm
 Tuesday-Friday: 9am-6pm
 Saturday and Sunday: Closed
 Closed: January 1st and 19th

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Alphabet Adventures @11:30am Craft Kits Available! While supplies last. 5	Tiny Tots Toddler Sensory Play @ 10:30am Storybook Studio (Craft and a Story!) @ 3:30pm 6	Storytime 10:30am Stories with Scarlett @3:00pm Anime Film Fest! SpyxFamily (PG-13) @4:00 7	Senpai Squad Ages 12-17 @4:00pm 8	Little Sprouts Playtime (Up to 18 months) @10:30-11:30am Tournament of Games @3:30-4:30pm 9
Alphabet Adventures @11:30am Craft Kits Available! While supplies last. 12	Tiny Tots Toddler Sensory Play @ 10:30am Storybook Studio (Craft and a Story!) @ 3:30pm 13	Storytime 10:30am Stories with Scarlett @3:00pm Anime Film Fest! Ride Your Wave (NR) @4:00 14	Page Masters Tween Book Club Front Desk by Kelly Yang @4pm 15	Little Sprouts Playtime (Up to 18 months) @10:30-11:30am Tournament of Games @3:30-4:30pm 16
Closed for Martin Luther King Jr Day 19	Tiny Tots Toddler Sensory Play @ 10:30am Storybook Studio (Craft and a Story!) @ 3:30pm 20	Storytime 10:30am Stories with Scarlett @3:00pm Anime Film Fest! Suzume (PG) @4:00 21	Pokemon Trading Event Bring your Cards or Nintendo Switch! @4:00pm 22	Little Sprouts Playtime (Up to 18 months) @10:30-11:30am Bricks & Beyond @ 3:30-4:30pm 23
Alphabet Adventures @11:30am Craft Kits Available! While supplies last. 26	Tiny Tots Toddler Sensory Play @ 10:30am Storybook Studio (Craft and a Story!) @ 3:30pm 27	Storytime 10:30am Stories with Scarlett @3:00pm Anime Film Fest! Penguin Highway (NR) @4:00 28	29	Little Sprouts Playtime (Up to 18 months) @10:30-11:30am Tournament of Games @3:30-4:30pm 30



Matt McCormick: New President and CEO of Ocala Metro Chamber & Economic Partnership

associated with Shapiro will be fully unmasked for voters in Pennsylvania and around the country to see.

"Twilight Justice," features an investigator who works in the shadows searching for evidence, including from experts, victims, and previously undisclosed documents, that bring to light the troubling actions of Shapiro.

For his entire career, Josh Shapiro has presented a sanitized and distorted story regarding his actions and his record. "Twilight Justice" will expose the truth.

It's time for Josh Shapiro to buckle up!

Stay tuned... "Twilight Justice" is coming early 2026. To stay up to date on "Twilight Justice's" upcoming releases, visit: <https://www.twilightjustice.com/>.

Cattle Herds are Low

American families are being crushed by skyrocketing beef prices that have surged 14.7% in just one year, while ranchers face a devastating perfect storm of drought, soaring costs, and the smallest cattle herd since 1951.

Story Highlights

Beef prices jumped 14.7% from September 2024 to 2025, nearly five times the overall food inflation rate America's cattle herd has shrunk to its smallest size since 1951, creating severe supply shortages Rancher input costs have exploded over 50% in five years, squeezing family farms nationwide Drought conditions and international trade disruptions are worsening the crisis for consumers

Twilight Justice

Believe It or Not! Twilight Justice

HARRISBURG - The Garrity for PA campaign announced the release of the trailer for the campaign's upcoming web series "Twilight Justice," a docudrama exposing the years of corruption and scandal surrounding Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro. This will be the first time the litany of character issues

For Sale An Email (Barter Business)

Ocala DownTown Agencies MAKE OFFER!

It is a member with \$8900 trade available in ITEX Barter network organization see below!

ITEX is a company that operates a large barter network where businesses and individuals can trade products and services using ITEX dollars instead of cash, as detailed on Yahoo Finance and ITEX. It provides a marketplace for members to buy and sell and handles the record-keeping and transaction processing for this non-cash exchange, as shown on Prime Trade NW. This service helps businesses turn idle assets into new sales, according to ITEX

They offer : Barter network / Business

support / Membership / Transaction process (ITEX checks) to spend on many things, places and items.

Purpose is to help businesses and individuals leverage assets that would otherwise be idle (like spare inventory or empty seats) into a new revenue streams, reports ITEX.

- ITEX is the largest marketplace for B2B cashless transactions in the USA and Canada.

- ITEX processes millions in sales for thousands of member businesses everywhere!

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FROM THE DESK OF
CONGRESSWOMAN KAT CAMMACK



Cammack Applauds Oversight Committee Passage of USA Act

Washington, D.C.
 — Today, U.S. Congresswoman Kat Cammack (FL-03) released the following

statement after the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform passed her bill, the *Unauthorized Spending Accountability (USA) Act*:

"I'm grateful to Chairman Comer and my colleagues for advancing this critical bill," said Congresswoman Cammack. "For too long, Washington has allowed billions of taxpayer dollars to flow to programs that haven't been reviewed or reauthorized in years—sometimes decades. The USA Act restores accountability by forcing Congress to do its job: examine these programs every three years, determine whether they are effective, and ensure that federal funds are being used responsibly. This is a commonsense, necessary step to rein in wasteful spending and return real oversight to the American people."

Chairman James Comer (KY-01) praised the legislation, saying: *"It is not too much to ask that Congress provide the appropriate level of scrutiny over the federal programs it has established and find the time every three years to ensure that federal funds are being used responsibly and effectively. The timeframe under the USA Act forces that to happen. Ensuring that every federal program is properly authorized gives Congress the oversight and budgetary tools to increase government efficiency, improve the effectiveness of federal agency programs*

and missions, and help reduce government spending."

The USA Act puts all unauthorized programs on a pathway to sunset in 3 years and requires any new authorizations or reauthorizations to include a sunset clause. This means every government program will be routinely scrutinized and updated by the People's representatives.

In its latest report, CBO found 1,264 authorizations that expired before fiscal year 2024 began and 251 that are set to expire before the end of the fiscal year. Additionally, it reported that \$516 billion in appropriations for 2024 is linked to 491 expired authorizations. Two decades ago, this figure was \$35 billion marking an 1,374% increase of unauthorized programs and agencies that are still taxpayer funded.

Congresswoman Kat Cammack represents Florida's Third Congressional District, covering 12 counties across North Central and Northeast Florida. She serves on the House Agriculture and Energy and Commerce Committees and chairs both the Republican Women's Caucus and the Republican Study Committee's Emerging Tech Task Force.

Cammack Secures Key Legislation to Strengthen National Guard Readiness in FY26 NDAA

Washington, D.C. — Congresswoman Kat Cammack (FL-03) released the following statement after House passage of the Fiscal Year 2026 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), landmark legislation that advances President Trump's Peace Through Strength agenda and delivers critical support to America's warfighters, military families, and defense

industrial base. The legislation includes Congresswoman Cammack's amendment to ensure National Guard units have the equipment they need to execute homeland defense missions.

"From strengthening deterrence to rebuilding our industrial base, the FY26 NDAA restores America's military advantage and ensures our servicemembers have the tools, training, and support they deserve," said Congresswoman Cammack. "America relies on the National Guard every single day—whether in natural disaster response or homeland defense. They cannot do their jobs without the right equipment, and this provision gives Congress the transparency needed to address these shortfalls and ensure our Guard is fully prepared to meet any mission."

The FY26 NDAA fulfills several major priorities:

- **Implementing Peace Through Strength:** Reinforces President Trump's strategy of deterring conflict by maintaining overwhelming U.S. military superiority; strengthens nuclear capabilities, expands missile defense, and invests in countering threats from China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea.
- **Transforming Defense Acquisition:** Cuts red tape, streamlines procurement, and accelerates delivery timelines so warfighters receive the capabilities they need when and where they need them.
- **Improving Quality of Life for Servicemembers:** Supports the Administration's 3.8% pay raise and enhances military housing, education benefits, and childcare access to improve recruitment and retention.
- **Accelerating Innovation:** Prioritizes cutting-edge technologies—hypersonics, AI-enabled systems, autonomous platforms—to ensure the U.S. maintains a decisive technological edge in future conflicts.
- **Revitalizing the Defense Industrial**

Base: Expands U.S. production capacity, provides stability for contractors, and encourages new and innovative entrants into the defense marketplace to strengthen economic and national security.

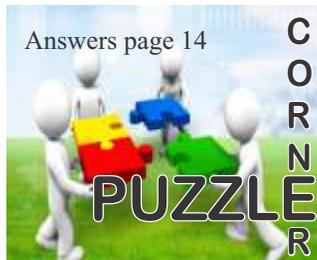
Congresswoman Cammack's provision strengthens oversight of the National Guard's ability to conduct homeland defense missions and response to natural disasters.



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Answers page 14

CORN PUZZLER

Across

1. Some may be cold
5. Landed
9. Fervidness
14. "Doctor Zhivago" character
15. Seat of Irish kings
16. Regional animals
17. Straightforward
20. Type of blanket
21. Appearance
22. Names in publishing
23. Not quick on the uptake
25. Civil rights worker Medgar
27. Rightmost column, typically
29. Samara source
30. Fissure
33. Young cod
36. Viscount's superior
38. Vronsky's love
39. Straightforward
42. Party servers
43. Like a Marine's bed,

- usually
 44. Genesis
 45. Hold out one's paw?
 46. Parked oneself
 47. Homestead's county
 49. Light sleeper
 51. Peruse again
 55. Part of F.D.R.
 58. PC screen image
 60. Born
 61. Straightforward
 64. Jerk one's knee, perhaps
 65. Picked-on instruments, for short
 66. Basic bit
 67. Princess of Colchis
 68. Jane of literature
 69. Invigorates (with "up")
- Down**
1. Shortcomings
 2. Backing for an exhibit
 3. Muse of poetry
 4. Cap with a pompon
 5. It suits you
 6. Type of edition
 7. Castle with many steps?
 8. Feather bed?
 9. Maintain to be true
 10. Balsa vessels, e.g.
 11. Type of citizenship
 12. Story start

13. Opposite of "yippee!"
18. Makes improvements to
19. 1887 La Scala premiere
24. Low barks
26. Knowledgeable
28. Group with a lot of bills
30. Black wildebeests
31. Cost for a deal?
32. Bygone era
33. Give the brush-off
34. Place for seeds
35. Bilbo Baggins' find
37. Explain further
38. Dogpatch denizen
40. Scythian warrior
41. Gnawing mammal
46. Musical composition
48. Wake from sleep
49. Terpsichore's forte
50. Daring
52. Growing outward
53. Fabulous fabulist
54. Judges to be
55. Where students may go at night
56. Fencing tool
57. Take charge on the dance floor
59. A Witch of Eastwick
62. Expected
63. Insignia spot

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FROM THE DESK OF

ATTORNEY GENERAL OFFICE

Attorney General their personal devices. Some of the child



James Uthmeier Announces Arrests and Prosecutions of Three Central Florida Predators for Possession of Child Sexual Abuse Materials

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General James

Uthmeier announced the arrests of **Jorge Armando Nieto**, 39, **Martin Theodore Cassady**, 61, and **Joel Orellana**, 25, all from the greater Orlando area, on a combined **81 felony charges** of Possession of Child Pornography.

“The depraved individuals who choose to engage in and trade content showing the sexual abuse of children will be caught and prosecuted to the fullest,” said **Attorney General James Uthmeier**. “Protecting our kids is my utmost priority, and I am confident in our Statewide Prosecutors’ ability to hold these predators accountable for this abhorrent behavior.”

The investigations were launched by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement’s Cybercrimes Task Force following tips from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. The executed search warrants revealed graphic sexual abuse materials involving children and animals on

appear to be under two years old.

These cases will be prosecuted in the Ninth Judicial Circuit of Florida by Assistant Statewide Prosecutor Rodrigo Caruco.

The investigations are ongoing, and further charges may be added once the information is filed.

Attorney General James Uthmeier Announces Guilty Verdict for Illegal Alien who Stole Disaster Aid from Hurricane Ian Victims

FORT MYERS, Fla.—Attorney General James Uthmeier announced that the Office of Statewide Prosecution secured the conviction of **Ivan Gutierrez Miranda** for stealing and reselling trailers meant for recovering hurricane victims who lost and were rebuilding their homes. Miranda is a Cuban national who entered the United States illegally in 2022.

“This illegal alien was allowed in by the Biden administration, and he targeted critical resources during a disaster when many Floridians needed temporary housing,” said Attorney General James Uthmeier. “Thanks to Assistant Statewide Prosecutors Paul Thomas and Tim Donnelly, this criminal will stay behind bars for a long time before we send him back to where he came from.”

The investigation, conducted by the

Charlotte County Sheriff’s Office and Florida Highway Patrol, revealed that **Miranda** and his codefendants operated in the early morning hours as well as late evening in an attempt to blend in during the state of emergency where RVs/Campers were being moved daily to aid displaced Floridians in need due to Hurricane Ian.

After a week-and-a-half-long trial, the Office of Statewide Prosecution secured a guilty verdict against **Miranda**. A key piece of evidence in the trial was a video **Miranda** filmed, in which he advertised the features of the stolen trailers.

The jury found the defendant guilty on the charges below:

- RICO
- Conspiracy to Commit RICO
- Organized Scheme to Defraud
- Dealing in Stolen Property – 5 counts

Sentencing is scheduled for January 26, 2026. **Miranda** faces up to 165 years in the Florida Department of Corrections, with a mandatory minimum of eight years. After serving his sentence, **Miranda** will be deported.

Attorney General James Uthmeier Announces Seizure of \$1.5 Million in Cryptocurrency from Chinese National who Defrauded Floridian

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General James Uthmeier announced that the Office of Statewide Prosecution’s Cyber Fraud Enforcement Unit successfully seized

cryptocurrency valued at \$1.5 million USD in a money laundering case against a Chinese national.

“While scammers are changing their methods, I am proud of our Statewide Prosecutors’ ability to adapt and deliver justice,” said **Attorney General James Uthmeier**. “I want to thank our Cyber Fraud Enforcement Unit and the Citrus County Sheriff’s Office for their continued dedication and for making this fraudster’s victim whole again.”

The investigation started in July 2024 after a report was filed with the Citrus County Sheriff’s Office. The victim, a Citrus County resident, reported he had been scammed out of \$47,421 USD through an internet-based investment scheme.

As a result of the investigation, **Tu Weizhi**, of China, was charged with **Money Laundering, Grand Theft, and Organized Scheme to Defraud**. If **Weizhi** ever attempts to enter the U.S., he will be arrested. The seizure was conducted under the Fugitive Disentitlement Act.

A seizure warrant was filed in the Fifth Judicial Circuit to recover **Weizhi**’s entire cryptocurrency wallet, valued at approximately \$1.5 million, which contained **AVAX** (Avalanche), **DOGE** (Dogecoin), **PEPE** (Pepe), and **SOL** (Solana) cryptocurrency tokens.

Cryptocurrency-related crimes are on the rise. If you believe you have been the victim of fraudulent activity, you may file a complaint at MyFloridaLegal.com or by calling 1-866-9-NO-SCAM.

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FROM THE DESK OF

GOVERNOR DESANTIS



Governor Ron DeSantis Awards Over \$29 Million for Biscayne Bay Water Quality Improvement Projects and Coral Reef Restoration

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.— Governor Ron DeSantis awarded

\$20 million across eight projects through the Biscayne Bay Water Quality Improvement Grant Program to bolster continuing efforts to improve water quality in the bay. The Governor also announced \$9.5 million across 11 projects that advance the state's long-term strategy to restore Florida's Coral Reef—the only living barrier reef in the continental United States.

“It was great to be in Miami this morning to announce new investments of almost \$30 million to improve Biscayne Bay water quality and support the long-term recovery of Florida's Coral Reef,” said **Governor Ron DeSantis**. “Protecting and restoring Florida's waterways is essential to our way of life. To-date, my administration has awarded over \$3.5 billion to over 1,000 local projects aimed at protecting Florida's water resources. Now, we are building on those historic investments to ensure that our state's natural treasures are preserved for generations to come.”

“Biscayne Bay is Florida's largest estuary and home to an array of important species of plants and wildlife,” said **Florida Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Alexis A. Lambert**. “By making strategic investments in the bay's water quality, we are revitalizing waters that support not only our wildlife but also our economy and way of life.”

Governor DeSantis has prioritized revitalizing Biscayne Bay since taking office, and since 2019, the state of Florida has invested \$90 million for targeted water quality projects in the bay. Biscayne Bay plays a key role in Florida's economy and the health of the state's waters. In 2021, [Governor DeSantis signed legislation](#) to expedite water quality improvements to Biscayne Bay. This legislation established the [Biscayne Bay Commission](#), which ensures that objective and sound science informs decision-making regarding the bay.

Biscayne Bay Water Quality Improvement Grant Program funds projects that reduce harmful nutrients in the bay. Selected projects include wastewater improvements (including septic-to-sewer), stormwater management and other projects that will support anticipated population growth while helping improve water quality in Biscayne Bay.

Additionally, \$9.5 million is awarded to support Florida's Coral Reef Restoration and Recovery Initiative (FCR3). This funding will support a total of 11 projects which were prioritized and awarded based on their impact on scaling up land-based coral propagation infrastructure and capacity and increased data management capabilities. In January 2023, Governor DeSantis signed [Executive Order 23-06](#), which established this initiative, aimed at developing the infrastructure,

technology, skilled workforce and logistics necessary by 2050 to support the long-term recovery of Florida's Coral Reef.

For a full list of Biscayne Bay Water Quality Improvement Grant projects and Florida Coral Reef Restoration Recovery Initiative Grant projects selected for Fiscal Year 2025-26 visit ProtectingFloridaTogether.gov/Grants.

Governor Ron DeSantis Announces Proposal for Citizen Bill of Rights for Artificial Intelligence

THE VILLAGES, Fla.— Governor Ron DeSantis announced a proposal to protect consumers by establishing an Artificial Intelligence Bill of Rights for citizens. Additionally, Governor DeSantis announced a proposal to protect Floridians from footing the bill for Hyperscale AI Data Centers and to empower local governments to reject their development in their communities.

“Today, I proposed new legislation on artificial intelligence and AI data centers to protect Floridians' privacy, security, and quality of life,” said **Governor Ron DeSantis**. “Our AI proposal will establish an Artificial Intelligence Bill of Rights to define and safeguard Floridians' rights—including data privacy, parental controls, consumer protections, and restrictions on AI use of an individual's name, image or likeness without consent.”

The Artificial Intelligence proposal will establish an AI Bill of Rights to provide consumers with protections.

- Reenact protections Florida has already passed against “deep fakes” and explicit material, including those depicting minors.
- Prohibit any state or local government agency from utilizing DeepSeek or any other Chinese-created AI tools to protect American data.
- Prohibit AI from using an individual's Name, Image, Likeness (NIL) without their consent – tie it to harm or sale of a product (political ads, schemes to defraud already in law).
- Require a notice to consumers when interacting with AI (Company chatbots).
- Prohibit entities from providing “licensed” therapy or mental health counseling through artificial intelligence. This can be expanded to include use of AI to imitate a licensed professional.
- Provide parental controls for minors which will allow parents to access the conversation their child has with a large language model, set parameters for when the child can access the platform, and notify parents if their child exhibits concerning behavior.
- Ensure data inputted to AI is secure and private.
- Prohibit companies from selling or sharing personal identifying information with third parties (deidentified) and mirror data privacy protections in current law.
- Limit insurance companies from using AI for insurance claims. Require that AI cannot be used as the sole determination in adjusting or denying a claim. Insurers that use AI for claims must detail the use and

allow the Office of Insurance Regulation to inspect the AI model to ensure it does not violate unfair insurance trade practices.

The Data Centers proposal will protect Consumers from footing the bill for AI Data Centers. The proposal will:

- Protect Ratepayers—Prohibit utilities from charging Florida residents more to support hyperscale data center development, including electric, gas, and water utilities.
- Protect Taxpayers—No taxpayer subsidies for Big Tech.
- Protect Local Control—Allows local government to prohibit data center construction/development.
- Protect Florida's Water Resources—Ensure that water resources are not utilized to the detriment of the public.
- Protect Natural Florida— Prevent the construction, siting, or operation of a data center by foreign principals or on land classified as agricultural and/or lands under a greenbelt exemption, and require setbacks and vegetative buffers. Requires FDOT to complete noise abatement reviews to protect natural Florida from noise pollution.

Governor Ron DeSantis Announces Proposal to Protect Puppies in Florida

LOXAHATCHEE, Fla.— Governor Ron DeSantis announced proposal to protect puppies in Florida. In partnership with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the state will develop standard practices to ensure ethical dog breeding. Through this proposal, the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation will be directed to license dog breeders and hold accountable puppy mills that abuse dogs, whether by overbreeding them, leaving them out in extreme weather, cramming them into small cages, or limiting their access to water.

“In Florida, we will always fight to protect man's best friend,” said **Governor Ron DeSantis**. “The proposal we announced today will end unethical puppy mills, hold accountable abusive breeders, and help shelter dogs find loving homes.”

Additional proposal actions includes:

- Establishing a hotline for individuals to call and report abuse by breeders to better crack down on these bad actors.
- Requiring pet stores to offer their space to local shelters for adoption before they use that space to sell dogs from puppy mills. As shelters across the state face overcrowding, offering animals for adoption at pet stores will help save them from being euthanized.
- Developing additional legislation that provides for increased penalties for individuals who abuse or torture animals in front of a minor.

Earlier this year, Governor DeSantis signed Trooper's Law and Dexter's Law:

- Trooper, who is now happily living with his new family, was abandoned on the side of the road as Hurricane Milton was barreling down. If not for the Florida Highway patrol, he would have most likely died. In Florida, it is now a felony to abandon and restrain a dog during a state of emergency.
- Dexter's Law was passed after a dog was brutally killed just days after adoption. Florida now has a sentencing multiplier for anyone torturing, mutilating, or killing a dog. A database was also created of those convicted of animal abuse, so shelters know not to let these evil people adopt pets.

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Town of Lady Lake Celebrates

Celebrating Years of Service – Thank You, Team Lady Lake!

We proudly recognize and congratulate our dedicated Town of Lady Lake employees for

their years of service to our community. Their commitment, professionalism, and institutional knowledge help ensure the high level of service our residents expect and

deserve.

Years of Service Honorees:

- 5 Years Kourtney Fehr
- 10 Years Jacob Jackson

- 15 Years Brad Weeks
- 20 Years Johnny Gosneigh Van Kao
- 25 Years Adam Cronk, Travis Lacey
- 30 Years Debbie Lopez

