



The January luncheon was hosted at the brand-new restaurant oh my guac. Local businesses enjoy delicious food, networking, and door prizes. More photos on page 8.

911,000 Jobs That Never Existed

The Bureau of Labor Statistics revised their job numbers downward by 911,000.

That's not a typo.

911,000 jobs that everyone thought existed... never existed.

The largest revision in 25 years.

Now ask yourself: How does that happen?

Here's what Louis Navellier believes:

AI is already replacing workers faster than the government can track.

Companies report "hiring" when they're actually deploying AI to do work that used to require humans.

The jobs show up in the data... until they don't.

And here's the proof:

The federal government just eliminated 71,000 workers.

- VA disability claims: Used to take MONTHS, now process in MINUTES
- Treasury fraud detection: 500% improvement
- IRS processing: Cut in HALF

That was the test case.

If the government—the most bloated organization in America—can do this, what do you think corporations are doing?

- Intel: 22,000 layoffs
- Microsoft: 9,000 layoffs
- Jamie Dimon: "AI will lead to massive layoffs"

But here's what nobody's talking about:

While jobs disappear, \$90 billion in government infrastructure spending is flowing into ONE sector.

Not the AI companies everyone's

buying...

But the POWER infrastructure those AI companies need to operate.

Louis's grading system shows institutions quietly accumulating these stocks. Companies you've never heard of. Sectors the media ignores.

This is the wealth transfer.

And you have a choice: Position ahead of it, or watch it happen without you.

Click here to learn more about the 7 stocks for FREE.

Jeff Remsburg^{SEF}, Editor, InvestorPlace Digest

P.S. - Louis rang the opening bell at the

Drain the Swamp

Staff writer

Drain the Swamp OR Clean the swamp! Donald Trump's elected to Clean the swamp of terrorist, drug dealers, gangs, dishonest politicians and this is currently in the process. It will be hard to address but he is walking right into it, facing it with "True Grit!" A Modern Day John Wayne! I'm not sure how all this will end up but I'm sure the United States will be in a better place. As we race forward a great speeds with the internet and the cell phones, communications is instant, Knowledge is instant. The internet cost the newspapers a lot of money over night. The biggest money maker for paid newspapers was the classified pages, the

Internet did it free. Some times progress hurts. Antique business had a change, buyers use to go to auctions and antique stores buying and part of the price of the product was to find it. I had some Flo Blue plates worth \$100 per piece over night they dropped in half. Because they were easier to find.

Yes we are living and traveling at the speed of light, we are breaking the sound barrier every day. You can talk to your cell phone and get information in seconds! I really think that would be considered "Warp Speed!" I would like it to slow just a little. Give us time to think and make good decisions.

Voting By Mail Changes

TomL

From the net!

I believe the voting by mail is the second best voting process. I myself challenged whether or not the mailing was safe, I had large mailings going into the Villages. There they own their own postal centers, their own streets, their own security and etc.

USPS continues to recommend that voters who plan to vote by mail send their ballots at least seven days before Election Day to ensure receipt by election officials.

If you want to make sure ballot is postmarked on the date it is received you may go to any post office and request a manual postmark free of charge.

The new postmarking guidance from USPS should serve as a guarantee to election officials that returned Ballot Mail

with a postmark dated on or before Election Day was cast by the voter and transmitted to USPS on that date at the latest.

Voting by mail is a safe, secure and accessible way to vote that has been used in the United States for more than 150 years. Voters should be confident that their vote, no matter how they cast their ballot, will be counted.

You need to vote, I prefer got go to the voting booth and vote in person!

Congresswoman Kat Cammack

Peaceful Protest is a Right, Violence is Not

Washington, D.C. — The Office of Congresswoman Kat Cammack supports the constitutional rights to free speech and peaceful assembly, cornerstones of our constitutional republic. We recognize the fear, frustration, and pain many Americans are feeling, and those concerns deserve to be expressed peacefully.

What is unfolding in Minneapolis has moved beyond peaceful protest. Leaders at every level must lower the temperature, enforce the law, and protect public safety. In the days ahead, we will work to ensure a full and transparent review of events.

Florida has shown that constitutional freedoms and law enforcement can and must go hand in hand. Violence, intimidation, and lawlessness are never acceptable. Disagreement with policy does not justify threats or harm to law enforcement or fellow Americans.

Town News Lake County Events

Police Promotions

The Lady Lake Police Department is proud to officially welcome and swear in our newest Police Officer, Michael Godigkeit — and we're even more excited to share that our department is now fully staffed, which is a major milestone for our team and our community.

Following the ceremony, we also celebrated outstanding internal promotions, highlighting the hard work, dedication, and growth happening within the department:

Corporal Lidia Maya was promoted to Sergeant

Officer Amanda Hayes was promoted to Corporal

Officer Jean Cintron was promoted to Corporal

These promotions are a true reflection of the strong leadership, mentoring, and commitment to developing talent within the Lady Lake Police Department under the guidance of Chief Steve Hunt.

Congratulations to Officer Godigkeit and to all of our newly promoted officers.

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.

A credit card was recovered on Oct. 30, 2025, on Avenida Central. If unclaimed, it will be purged on Jan. 28, 2026.

On Dec. 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 Dec. 19, 2025, on LaGrande Boulevard. If unclaimed, it will be disposed of on March 29, 2026.

U.S. currency was recovered on Jan. 16, 2026, on Bichara Boulevard. It is scheduled to be purged on April 16, 2026, unless claimed.

A bracelet was recovered on Jan. 22, 2026, on Bichara Boulevard. If unclaimed, it will be disposed of on April 22, 2026.

A key fob with keys was also recovered on Jan. 22, 2026, on Avenida Central. It is scheduled for disposal on April 22, 2026.

Meet the Mayor

LADY LAKE - Residents are invited to connect with Lady Lake Mayor Ed Freeman during a special "Meet the Mayor at the Market" event on Tuesday, Feb. 3, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Lady Lake Farmers & Crafts Market, located at 250 Rolling Acres Road.

This casual gathering provides an opportunity to discuss local topics, share

ideas, and hear updates about news and events in the community directly from the mayor.

While there, visitors are invited to peruse the market, which features a wide range of offerings including fresh produce, baked goods, preserves, handmade crafts, and artisanal products. Food truck vendors will serve options such as barbecue, hot dogs, and international cuisines.

The market is accessible by golf cart via The Villages at Palermo Place through Chula Vista or Del Mar Drive.

The Lady Lake Farmers & Crafts Market is held every Tuesday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Visitors are encouraged to support local vendors while enjoying a vibrant community atmosphere.

For more information, visit www.ladylakefl.gov or contact market@ladylake.org.

Cold Weather Water Utility Tips

From Supervisor Butch Goodman
With freezing temperatures possible, Water Utility Supervisor Butch Goodman reminds all Town of Lady Lake water customers — including apartment communities, medical facilities and commercial properties — to take a few simple steps to protect their plumbing and avoid service interruptions.

Follow the "4 P's" of cold weather preparation:

Protect your pipes

Cover or insulate any exposed pipes, outdoor fixtures and hose bibs. Unprotected lines can freeze, crack and lead to costly damage and temporary loss of water service.

Pay attention to backflow devices

Backflow preventers are especially vulnerable to freezing if they are not properly insulated or protected. A frozen backflow device can interrupt water service until temperatures rise and may require repairs or replacement.

Prepare ahead of time

Don't wait until temperatures drop. Taking precautions early can prevent emergencies, property damage and disruptions to your water service.

Prevent problems before they start

A little preparation now can save time, money and inconvenience later. Customers with questions about protecting their backflow devices or plumbing should contact their certified backflow tester or a licensed plumber for assistance.

The Orange Blossom Gardens

Lady Lake, FL – The Orange Blossom Gardens (OBG) Lions Club has announced a commitment to fund monthly truck rental costs for the Community of Gratitude Food Pantry for one year, ensuring the organization can continue securing large-scale food donations from Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida.

The funding will provide \$500 per month for 12 months to cover rental fees for a

moving truck required to transport pallets of food from Second Harvest's Orlando distribution center to the pantry's local facilities. The initiative addresses a critical logistical barrier that has limited the pantry's ability to obtain high-volume donations needed to meet growing community demand.

Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida is one of the largest hunger-relief organizations in the region, distributing millions of pounds of donated food each year to partner agencies across more than half of Florida's counties. Many of its most impactful donations are distributed by the pallet, requiring recipient organizations to have access to box trucks or similar vehicles for safe and efficient transport.

Community of Gratitude Food Pantry serves families and individuals throughout the Lady Lake and surrounding areas, providing groceries and essential food items to households experiencing food insecurity. Without reliable access to a suitable vehicle, the pantry risks losing consistent access to bulk donations that can supply hundreds of families each month.

"This partnership is about more than just transportation. The truck helps bring dignity and stability so families don't have to wonder where their next meal will come from," said Barbara Crewell, President of the OBG Lions Club. "By covering this expense for the next year, we're giving Community of Gratitude the breathing room they need to focus on serving people today while planning for a permanent solution tomorrow."

The long-term goal is for Community of Gratitude to purchase its own truck through auction at an estimated cost of \$20,000. The Lions Club's one-year commitment is designed to provide time for the organization to raise funds toward that purchase while continuing uninterrupted food pickup operations.

"Reliable transportation is the difference

between helping dozens of families and helping hundreds," said Robert Vass, member of the OBG Lions Club. "This funding bridges an immediate gap, but the real victory will be when the pantry owns its own truck and can expand its reach even further."

Community members, businesses, and organizations are invited to support the truck purchase fund. Donations can be made online at www.obglions.com or by check payable to "OBG Lions Club" and mailed to:

R. Vass
938 Orchid Street
Lady Lake, FL 32159

The Orange Blossom Gardens Lions Club is part of Lions Clubs International, the world's largest service organization, dedicated to improving health, supporting communities, and serving those in need. Locally, the OBG Lions are actively involved in food security initiatives, vision care support, disaster relief, youth programs, and other community-focused service projects throughout the region.

OBG Lions Club Scholarship Award

OBG Lions Club Honors Lake Tech Student Kyra Spivey with Scholarship Award

Lady Lake, FL —The Orange Blossom Gardens (OBG) Lions Club is proud to announce Kyra Spivey, a student at Lake Technical College, as a recipient of a Scholarship Award, honoring her academic excellence, dedication to career education, and commitment to the animal care field.

Spivey was selected as a scholarship recipient based on her outstanding performance in a highly competitive academic environment and her demonstrated passion for veterinary science.

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& Ribbon-Cutting

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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26
3:00 - 5:00 P.M.
RIBBON CUTTING AT 3:30

CHAIR CHAT

Conversation Vie (Part 2)

MCREC's Impact in Action: Legislative and Election Achievements

The MCREC's dedication translates into tangible results, influencing policy and protecting our community's interests. While each achievement offers a unique perspective for those seeking to understand our value, here are some key areas where the MCREC has made a significant difference:

- **Baby Boxes Legislation:**** We successfully advocated for legislation that provides a compassionate and realistic alternative to abortion, offering a safe haven for newborns and supporting maternal choice.
- **Advancing Medical Freedom:**** Our sustained efforts have strengthened patient rights, leading to ongoing progress in opposing mandatory vaccination and safeguarding individual autonomy in healthcare decisions.
- **Protecting the Unborn:**** We led local opposition to defeat proposed state constitutional changes that would have drastically increased abortion access and funding. Additionally, we actively supported legislation to decouple Florida from any potentially overreaching World Health Organization (WHO) pandemic requirements, prioritizing state sovereignty and individual liberties.
- **Insurance and Tort Reform:**** We've tirelessly advocated for crucial

reforms aimed at reducing frivolous litigation, thereby working to stabilize and reopen Florida's insurance market. While incremental changes have been made, this remains a critical work in progress.

- **Preserving Our Heritage:**** The MCREC has actively opposed legislation that threatened the preservation of our vital farmlands and the character of our cherished rural neighborhoods.

- **Direct Legislative Influence:**** Our members have provided impactful oral testimony to Senate and House Committees in Tallahassee on critical bills, frequently gaining support and influencing beneficial changes.

- **Strategic Advocacy:**** We maintain consistent engagement and meetings with State Senators and Representatives to advocate for issues specific to Marion County, ensuring our local concerns are addressed at the state level.

- **Election Integrity Enhancements:**** The MCREC championed legislation for improved county voter rolls and enhanced ballot box security, including more rigorous ID verification, to ensure fair and transparent elections.

- **Leadership in Advocacy:**** Our MCREC is widely recognized as a leader among county RECs for coordinating legislative advocacy letters, amplifying our collective voice across the state.

- **Local Governance Impact:**** We

are deeply involved in local activities, engaging with the County Commission and School Board on crucial issues.

- **Fair Impact Fees:**** We successfully advocated for the fair reinstatement of transportation and school impact fees, a measure designed to alleviate taxpayer burdens and ensure responsible growth.

We invite you to learn more and become

an active participant in these vital efforts.

MarionCountyRec.com

We meet the third Monday of each month at the Ocala Golf Club, 3130 E Silver Springs Blvd starting at 6:30pm.

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Your Chair,
Brigitte

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www.VillageSpectator.com

www.SeniorsVoiceOfOcala.com

www.OcalaDowntown.com



Connect with us on
Facebook at
[OcalaVillagesNews](https://www.facebook.com/OcalaVillagesNews)



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



H O R S E COUNTRY

By TomL

Marion County is "Horse Country"! I was always pushing for the people of Marion County to recognize the Cattle men's Association. After all

it's the cattle industry that is suffering now! I remember a great horse farm on hwy 40 on the way to Ocala from Dunnellon. "Ocala Stud Farm" I think was the name. In Ocala, FL, the area is famous for its numerous horse farms, with many families like the O'Farrell Family it's is generational, the father and his son and his son's son. The family bringing Quarter Horses and Thoroughbreds from Texas in the 1960s It seems that the limestone-rich soil was ideal for bone development, establishing Ocala as the "Horse Capital of the World,"!

Horse Country one horse at a time. My wife and I lived in south Florida and we had

a horse and pastured it in Davie Fl which was South Florida's Horse country. The price of land was out of our reach so we decided to move and find land that we could afford. We won d up in Dunnellon Florida. We bought 20 acres and bought 20 more, at one time we had 55 acres and we decided we did not need that much for the Horse, a riding mule that someone gave us and a Shetland pony and Rhodesian Ridgeback dogs we were raising. We sold 15 acres. But you see if we did not have a horse we may have never moved, so Marion County grew into the name Horse Country a long time ago probably in about 1950's. Now to put the icing on the cake now we have the World Equestrian Center. It is growing to one of the biggest industries in our Country. Everything you can think of for horse showing and riding competition. Stall and horse care and elaborate hotels to stay in. With the best restaurants, entertainment and large meeting room bringing large numbers of visitor for industrial shows.

So I worn you if you love horses you will

really enjoy Ocala. By the way you have Silver Springs attraction in Marion county and Rainbow Spring 's Dunnellon Florida the natural park with beautiful blue water coming out of the ground. I think the price is \$2 per person. Walk the nature trails and have something from the snack bar or go to downtown Dunnellon and have snacks at the Dunnellon Coffee Co in the Aldi's grocery shopping center. My son and his wife own that coffee shop.

Boy is there ever unrest in our nation and across the world. How about that the man that is running our country and his team are making progress in the world. The oil industry will Never be the same. I hope we can share and help the people in Guatemala. Maybe the same in Iran with their leader saying from the river to the sea, now a new spokes person has rose up and said that is no longer their goal they want peace but only when they were force into it! You the saying say uncle when you give up well now it say "Uncle Sam"!

Our leader is a modern day John Wayne, wow what a leader. "TRUE GRIT!" I'll vote for him in 2028, I would rather we follows the political laws but if we still need a strong leader I will help him! I also like JD Vance he is giving the president the respect he deserves!

I love then CEP Marion County Metro Chamber of Commerce. You can go to a partner meeting and not hear any politics.

They are dedicated to help the growth of Growth and planning. The kind of people you want too talk to at a meeting, I call it social/business.

"Where friends meet and business prospers!" They have a new leader in Matt McCormick. He has a column in this newspaper on page two.

Many years ago an American Agent Aldrich Ames betrayed us. Giving up over a 100 American Agents to the Soviets. He was found guilty and recently died in federal prison while serving a life sentence. We should look closely at our agents today and our higher ups.

The Supreme Court addresses the mail in Election Laws. You can no longer count ballots that come in late!

Newspaper Deadlines

Editorial & Ad Copy for March

Seniors Voice & Ocala DownTown

Noon, February 20th

Lady Lake Magazine & Village Spectator

12am, February 25th

Village Spectator / Lady Lake Magazine Products of TomL Publishing, LLC

P.O Box 1698, Dunnellon FL 34430

Publisher: Tom Loury

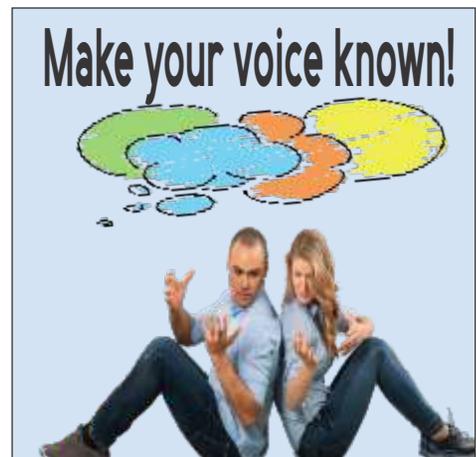
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FAIRTax



U.S. taxpayers know that the FAIRtax eliminates the income tax/payroll tax and replaces it with a national

retail sales tax. However, many don't fully comprehend the enormous positive impact the FAIRtax will have on the economy - especially in terms of attracting foreign investment to the United States.

The Tax Justice Network estimates that \$21 trillion to \$32 trillion in financial assets are sitting offshore in tax havens (estimates can vary due to the secrecy that pervades the tax haven system). They also estimate that \$427 billion in tax revenue is lost every year because money is sitting in these offshore accounts.

The Tax Justice Network explains how this is commonly done: one of the most common ways people hide their wealth in tax havens is by setting up a legal vehicle (like a corporation or trust) to hold their wealth or assets without disclosing information about their identity or about wealth or assets held by the legal vehicle. These secretive structures serve as a curtain or firewall between the owner and their wealth, obscuring the owner's identity and helping them hide the true value of their wealth and, ultimately, pay less tax than they should.

This "secret" money is being invested all

around the world. Investment managers are always looking for ways to maximize net returns. Minimizing tax liability is a significant part of maximizing net returns. Consequently, a lot of this "secret" money is invested in countries with the lowest tax rates.

So let's consider this scenario. The FAIRtax is the law of the land in the United States making the income tax rate zero. Meanwhile, the tax rate in Germany is 30%. That means that an investor could realize a 30% higher return if he makes his investment in the United States rather than in Germany. Under those conditions, where do you think a prudent investor is going to invest his money? It's a no-brainer.

The influx of foreign capital invested in the United States will mean that more money will be available for businesses to hire more people, raise wages, purchase more equipment and become more productive allowing our economy to soar. For more information go to FAIRtax.org

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

Ocala Chamber

Fundraising Gala

The College of Central Florida Foundation will host its annual Night at the Farm fundraising gala on Saturday, March 7, 2026, from 6-8:30 p.m. at the CF Vintage Barn, 4020 ... Continue reading "CF Foundation invites community to Night at the Farm fundraising gala"

AdventHealth cuts ribbon on new freestanding emergency department meant to bring faster, expert emergency care to Ocala

Access to emergency care is about to get

easier for families in Ocala. AdventHealth leaders, local government officials and community members joined together to officially cut the ribbon on the new AdventHealth Heathbrook ER, designed to provide quick, compassionate care when every second counts.

Marion Graduation Rate Continues Climbing

Marion County's high school graduation rate continues climbing and is now at 85%, a four-year high. The graduation rate is based on a cohort, defined as a group of students on the same schedule to graduate together.

**Want to Kill the Death Tax?
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HABITATLS.ORG

Why Join The Lady Lake Area Chamber?

- **Networking Opportunities**- Connect with business professionals
- **Visibility** - Get noticed in your community
- **Credibility**- Membership raises your business reputation
- **Discounts**- Take advantage of member- only discounts
- **Learning**- Member only speaker series on business topics
- **Give Back**- Volunteer on committees to help the community

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



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

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



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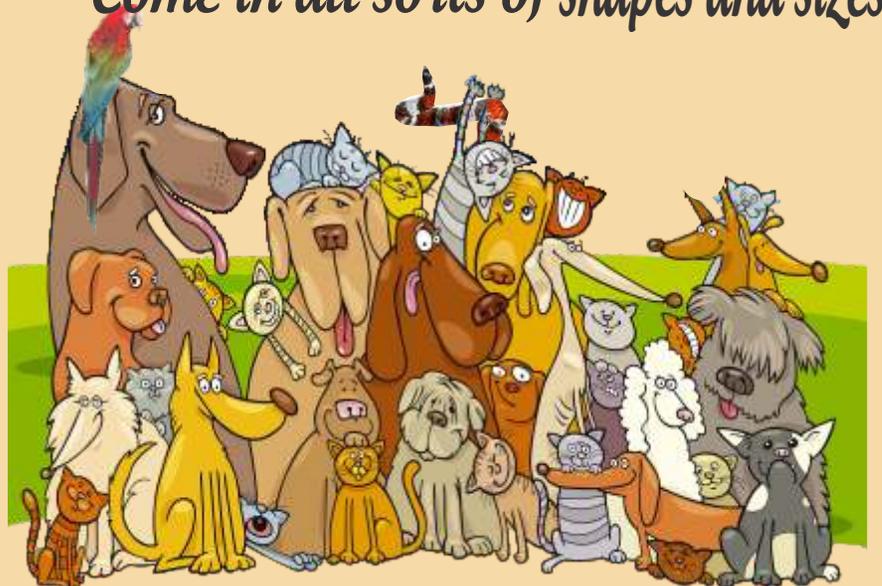
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Good Beef

Good Beef Depends on the Processing

Dear Editor

When we allowed the Chinese to buy Tyson Meat plants I knew it was just a matter of time and they would try to Hurt us. They are closing Nebraska and calling back meat from Texas, driving beef prices up. Cattle numbers have dropped to a 70 year low. Trump will have to rebuild the ranching industry doing something to increase the size of the herds and the size of the cattle. Then build more processing plants. There is one in Gainesville called Grandma's meat processing plant. I have talked to them and they sound like they know what they are doing. One of the things some Processing houses don't take into effect is when the animal is stressed from the trip to the processing plant their adrenaline is peaking they need to calm down before processing. Grass fed beef is bad about that, I talk to a lady that sold Grass fed beef. She had to credit several people because of the stress when they were processed, NOT GOOD! Aging beef can ruin the meat if the fat goes bad way before there beef is effected, so they have to watch that, if they get behind it could ruin the rest of the meat.

There are a lot of small ranchers raising beef, not enough to fill the void but can help a little. We are going to have to open to Mexican beef or some other close country, maybe bring the cattle into the US and feed them a good balanced food plot for a couple of months before processing.

This sound callused but that is part of our food. We are already bringing in vegetables and meat from foreign countries. When going to the meat Department at WD watch for black trays that is USA beef.

The Reilly Arts Center

February Events

OCALA, Fla. (January 15, 2026) – The Reilly Arts Center welcomes a variety of national and local artists for performances of rock, jazz, classical and more. 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.

As the Reilly Arts Center celebrates its 10th anniversary, we're proud to continue our Celebration Series! A special lineup featuring performances from six nationally acclaimed artists and bands - leading up to our 10th birthday party on February 28, 2026. This series leads our community into a milestone year, honoring a decade of growth, creativity, and unforgettable performances at the Reilly. The Celebration Series is sponsored by Angie Lewis State Farm.

Yellow Brick Road – A Tribute to Elton John ^{SEP} **Sunday, February 1, 2026 at 7:30 PM | AdventHealth Mainstage**
Tickets from \$23

Experience an unforgettable evening as Brann, the incredible Elton John tribute artist, takes the stage with his talented five-piece band! From his spot-on vocals and piano playing to the iconic costumes and signature glasses, Brann brings Elton's music to life, performing hit after hit. Sing along to 'Rocket Man' and 'Your Song,' sway to 'Candle in the Wind,' and dance to 'Crocodile Rock' in a high-energy show that captures the magic of the Piano Man himself!

Preservation Hall Jazz Band ^{SEP} **Friday, February 6, 2026 at 7:30 PM | AdventHealth Mainstage**
Tickets from \$40

Celebrate the rich, ever-evolving sound of New Orleans with the Preservation Hall Jazz Band, torchbearers of the city's legendary music for over 60 years! On their latest album, *So It Is*, PHJB bridges the past and present, drawing from Afro-Cuban roots, Afrobeat, and Fire Music while connecting with modern icons from Stevie Wonder to Beck. Experience a vibrant, living history of New Orleans music that continues to inspire audiences from Coachella to Newport.

Sponsored by Showcase Properties of Central Florida & supported by Marion

Cultural Alliance.

Celebration Series sponsored by Angie Lewis State Farm.

The Sixties Show ^{SEP} **Saturday, February 7, 2026 at 7:30 PM | AdventHealth Mainstage**

Tickets from \$46

Step into a high-energy time machine with *The Sixties Show*, the award-winning Off-Broadway spectacle that recreates the greatest music of the 1960s with stunning authenticity. Featuring former members of legendary bands and powered by immersive multimedia, vintage gear, mod costumes, and live note-for-note performances, this unforgettable concert-theater experience brings the sights, sounds, and spirit of the '60s roaring back to life.

Golden Anniversary Gala ^{SEP} **Thursday, February 12 at 6 PM | Reilly Arts Center**
General Admission: \$150

Join us for an elegant evening of exceptional entertainment at the Reilly Arts Center! Help us meaningfully impact our community through the arts. Celebrating 50 years of the Ocala Symphony and 10 years of the Reilly Arts Center.

Film Music Spectacular ^{SEP} **February 14-15, 2026 at 7:30 PM & 3 PM | AdventHealth Mainstage**

Tickets from \$10

Experience the magic of Hollywood with an evening of unforgettable film music! From the sweeping romance of Tara's Theme from *Gone With the Wind* to the thrilling adventure of *Pirates of the Caribbean*, this program celebrates the power of the silver screen.

Sponsored by Canopy Oaks Real Estate

Marty Stuart and His Fabulous Superlatives ^{SEP} **Friday, February 20, 2026 at 7:30 PM | AdventHealth Mainstage**

Tickets from \$40

Join five-time GRAMMY® winner and Country Music Hall of Famer Marty Stuart & His Fabulous Superlatives for an unforgettable night as they bring their new cosmic instrumental album *Space Junk* to life, blending surf-soaked guitar, soulful steel, and their signature high-octane artistry. With support from the wildly original Hogslop String Band and an

optional VIP experience featuring a private mini-performance, Q&A, and exclusive merch, this is a one-of-a-kind country celebration that's as bold, authentic, and adventurous as Marty himself.

Chris Botti ^{SEP} **Saturday, February 21, 2026 at 7:30 PM | AdventHealth Mainstage**

Tickets from \$65

GRAMMY-winning trumpeter Chris Botti returns to his jazz roots with *Vol. 1*, a lush and intimate reimagining of classic standards that showcases his unmistakable tone, virtuosity, and cinematic expression. After decades of global acclaim, superstar collaborations, and performances on the world's greatest stages, Botti steps into a new artistic chapter with a small acoustic ensemble and a renewed focus on pure, elegant musicianship. Join him for an evening of breathtaking beauty, emotional depth, and timeless jazz brilliance.

Celebration Series sponsored by Angie Lewis State Farm.

Community Event: Bruce Kaplan Memorial Golf Tournament ^{SEP} **Friday, February 27 at 11 AM | Stone Creek Golf Club | 9676 SW 62nd Lp, Ocala, FL 34481**

Join us for the second annual Bruce Kaplan Memorial Golf Tournament at Stone Creek Golf Club, benefitting the Reilly Arts Center, home of the Ocala Symphony Orchestra and Chorus. Click the link above to register for the tournament, purchase an award ceremony ticket or select a sponsorship opportunity.

Dance Alive National Ballet presents Swan Lake ^{SEP} **Friday, February 27, 2026 at 7 PM | AdventHealth Mainstage**

Tickets from \$15

The most beautiful ballet of all time! Swan Lake is the story of a Prince whose fiancée has been transformed into a swan by the evil sorcerer Von Rothbart. Featuring Dance Alive National Ballet Principal Dancer, Carla Amancio, as the Swan Queen, the stage is transformed into a world of beauty and artistry.

Bringing our community together..

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

Ocala Downtown Seniors Voice of Ocala Village Spectator Lady Lake Magazine

Lady Lake Business Luncheon



Over 40 local businesses attended the Lady Lake area Chamber of Commerce January networking breakfast at First watch Join us the first Tuesday of the month from 8 to 9 AM to meet your next referral.

Our Treasurer, Jean, attended an event at Hotel Eastport. Attendees were able to tour the new hotel located in The Villages.

Adult

FEBRUARY

Lady Lake Library

Hours:

Monday: 9am-7pm
 Tuesday-Friday: 9am-6pm
 Saturday and Sunday: Closed
 Closed: February 16th

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday

					
2 ESL @10-11:30am Sign Up Required	3	4 	5 Estate Planning 101 @10-11am Lisa's Arts & Crafts @ 2pm Sign up Required	6 Crochet Club @ 3-4:30pm	
9 ESL @10-11:30am Sign Up Required	10 Book Discussion @ 2-4pm	11 SHINE @2-3:30pm	12	13 Love Letters: A Play @2-4pm	
16 Closed for President's Day	17 	18 Authors Round Table @ 2-4pm	19 Abraham Lincoln Presentation Rm 219 @10-11am	20 Movies at the Library! Showing: DROP (PG-13) @ 3-5pm	
23 ESL @10-11:30am Page Turners Book Club Reading: <i>The Battle of the Bookshops</i> by Poppy Alexander @5:30pm	24 BINGO @2-3:30pm sign up required	25 SHINE @2-3:30pm	26	27 Apple Support iPhone, iPad, iMac @ 10:00-11:30am	

Youth

FEBRUARY

Lady Lake Library

Hours:

Monday: 9am-7pm
 Tuesday-Friday: 9am-6pm
 Saturday and Sunday: Closed
 Closed: February 16th

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday

		Join Us In Our Monthly Scavenger Hunt! Follow the clues and win a cool prize!			
2 Alphabet Adventures @11:30am Movie: <i>Flow (PG)</i> @ 4pm Craft Kits Available! While supplies last.	3 Tiny Tots Toddler Sensory Play @ 10:30am Storybook Studio (Craft and a Story!) @ 3:30pm	4 Storytime 10:30am D&D with Grand Mage Miranda Grades 6-12 @2:30 Read with Scarlett 3:00pm-4:00pm	5 	6 Little Sprouts Playtime (Up to 18 months) @10:30-11:30am Kid's Bingo! @3:30pm 	
9 Alphabet Adventures @11:30am Movie: <i>Elio (PG)</i> @ 4pm Craft Kits Available! While supplies last.	10 Tiny Tots Toddler Sensory Play @ 10:30am Storybook Studio (Craft and a Story!) @ 3:30pm	11 Storytime 10:30am Read with Scarlett 3:00pm-4:00pm	12 Valentine's Day Card Swap and Craft (All Ages) @10:30-11:30am	13 Little Sprouts Playtime (Up to 18 months) @10:30-11:30am Tournament of Games @3:30-4:30pm 	
16 Closed for President's Day	17 Tiny Tots Toddler Sensory Play @ 10:30am Storybook Studio (Craft and a Story!) @ 3:30pm	18 Storytime 10:30am Read with Scarlett 3:00pm-4:00pm	19 Toni and Yoto Community Exchange! @10:30am	20 Little Sprouts Playtime (Up to 18 months) @10:30-11:30am Bricks & Beyond @ 3:30-4:30pm Pokemon Trading Event. Bring your Cards or Nintendo Switch! @4:00pm	
23 Alphabet Adventures @11:30am Movie: <i>Jujutsu Kaisen 0 (PG-13)</i> @ 4pm Craft Kits Available! While supplies last.	24 Tiny Tots Toddler Sensory Play @ 10:30am Storybook Studio (Craft and a Story!) @ 3:30pm	25 Storytime 10:30am Read with Scarlett 3:00pm-4:00pm	26 	27 Little Sprouts Playtime (Up to 18 months) @10:30-11:30am Tournament of Games @3:30-4:30pm 	

LAKE COUNTY EVENTS

SEE MORE ABOUT PARKS & TRAILS IN LAKE COUNTY

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

Feb 01 Exploration Hike
5:00 PM - 6:30 PM PEAR Park Gateway in Leesburg
Join staff for an early evening walk to get some exercise and take in the sights and sounds of nature.

Feb 03 Who Lives Here?
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM Lake May Reserve in Eustis
Explore the natural communities and plant species which support the animal life at the preserve.

Feb 06 Exploration Hike
8:00 AM - 9:30 AM Ferndale Preserve in Montverde
Join staff as we explore the habitats and species of Ferndale Preserve.

Feb 07 Wetland Excursion
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Sawgrass Island Preserve in Umatilla
Join us for a fast paced guided hike at Sawgrass Island Preserve to explore the diverse ecosystems within the preserve, including the plants and animals...

Feb 07 Quarterly Bird & Butterfly Survey
7:30 AM - 11:00 AM Pine Meadows Conservation Area in Eustis 2/74/48/2910/3
Assist staff with surveying one of Lake County's conservation lands for birds and butterflies. These surveys assist with the long term management...

Feb 08 Nature Study
9:30 AM - 11:30 AM Twin Lakes Park in Leesburg
Explore the boardwalk and ephemeral wetland to view the birds and herps as well as the native plant communities.

Feb 11 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-...

Feb 13 Jane Austen Fest
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM Donnelly Park in Mount Dora 2/132/142/15
In an atmosphere welcoming to all levels of interest, The Jane Austen Fest strives to educate by presenting an array of workshops, programs...

Feb 13 Winefest 2026
10:00 AM - 5:00 PM Lakeridge Winery and Vineyards in Clermont 2/132/142/15
Winefest celebrates last year's harvest with award-winning wines from dry to sweet, live outdoor music all weekend, local artists and crafters, food and more

Feb 14 Native Plant Propagation and Cultivation
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Ellis Acres Reserve in Paisley
Native plants are good for wildlife and

people. Learn a few tips on how to incorporate more natives into your landscape.

Feb 14 Tracks and Scat
9:00 AM - 10:30 AM PEAR Park Nature Center/WCA in Leesburg
Who goes there and who left that? Join park staff on a discovery of animal evidence. Bears to bugs leave their signs of living and passing

Feb 14 5th Annual Strawberry Festival at Amber Brooke Farms
10:00 AM - 6:00 PM Amber Brooke Farms in Eustis 2/142/152/212/22 Plus More
Looking for things to do in Mount Dora or Eustis? Visit the Strawberry Festival at Amber Brooke Farms in Central Florida for fresh strawberries,...

Feb 20 Antique Extravaganza
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM Renninger's Antique Center in Mount Dora 2/202/212/22
Come and shop hundreds of vendors both indoors and outdoors with antiques, collectibles, vintage items, and much more. Admission is charged. Free Parkin...

Feb 21 Paddling Adventure
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Crooked River Preserve in Clermont
Paddle Crooked River to Lake Louisa, then hike a scenic loop around a sinkhole lake, spotting rare scrub and sandhill species in Crooked River Preserve'...

Feb 21 124th Annual Georgefest
5:00 PM Ferran Park and Downtown Eustis in Eustis 2/212/222/232/24 Plus More
Happy Birthday George! Georgefest is the

longest running celebration of George Washington's Birthday in the State of Florida

Feb 21 EcoExpo 2026 Celebrate and Protect Real Florida from LCCC, SECO, LCWA & Lake County
10:00 AM - 3:00 PM Hickory Point Recreation park in Tavares
Celebrate and Protect Real Florida Real Close. Learn how Environmental NonProfits, Government Agencies, and Businesses can help you protect wildlife,...

Feb 25 Nature Study
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM Lake Jem Park & Boat Ramp in Tavares
Explore the nature trails within the park, observing the native plants, wetland fauna and birds as well as butterflies and dragonflies.

Feb 27 Stories of Water - Crooked River Preserve
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Crooked River Preserve in Clermont
Join us for a casual guided hike as we share the Story of Water at Crooked River Preserve. Limit 15 participants. Hike intensity: Moderate. Reservations...

Feb 28 Shameless Namedroppers LIVE at Oasis Saloon
9:30 PM - 11:55 PM Oasis Saloon in Sorrento 2/284/256/138/28 Plus More
Megan McCauley and Mark McDowell are SHAMELESS NAMEDROPPERS and are ready to entertain your pub, bar, restaurant or party in the Central Florida area.



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AI's Evolving Role

AI's Evolving Role in Space Strategy

01/13/2026

(NewsUSA) - Artificial intelligence is poised to be a game-changer in managing the increasingly congested and potentially contested domain of space, from Earth's orbit to the Moon and beyond, according to a new podcast from the Special Competitive Studies Project (SCSP), a nonprofit and nonpartisan initiative with a goal of making recommendations to strengthen America's long-term competitiveness in AI.

At the recent AI + Space Summit hosted by SCSP, General Jay Raymond (U.S. Space Force, Ret.) joined SCSP's NatSecTech podcast host Jeanne Meserve to discuss the future of space as a warfighting domain. They explore how AI can improve space traffic management, surveillance, acquisition, and data fusion;

the growing role of commercial partnerships; and the need for stronger norms, faster capabilities, and a technically skilled workforce.

Many Eyes in the Sky

Launching satellites or anything else is becoming more complicated because of the volume of objects in the Earth's orbit, said Gen. Raymond. "You have to make sure you don't launch something into something else," he noted. The increased number of satellites and other objects have made the world a more transparent place, as a lot of the current objects in space are intelligence surveillance reconnaissance satellites, he added.

In some cases, objects that appear to be space debris have been identified as something else because they maneuver in a defined way, Gen. Raymond said. Ideally, AI could be used to track debris and determine whether it is maneuvering, he

Continued page 12

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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Environmental Education



Innovating for the Planet Through Environmental Education

(NAPSI)—Here's something students, parents and teachers in New York and New Jersey may be glad to learn: A group of experts has come up with a way to make environmental education easier for students to understand—and to act on.

This first-of-its-kind effort, called the Environmental Education Initiative (EEI), helps students engage in environment science, and make informed decisions that support healthy environments.

Powered by worldwide edtech leader Discovery Education, the Environmental Education Initiative supports civic engagement with standards-aligned resources that explore contemporary topics in environmental studies.

Who is Involved?

Experts at Stanford University carefully reviewed a body of academic literature over 20 years to measure the effect of environmental education for K-12 students. Then the National Environmental Education Foundation, Nucor, Honeywell, Itron, LyondellBasell, Subaru of America, Inc., and Niagara Cares all helped create the Environmental Education Initiative alongside Discovery Education.

Why Environmental Education?

Research by the North American Association of Environmental Education reveals that environmental education helps students:

- improve overall academic performance
- enhance critical thinking skills
- develop personal growth and life-building skills

What Do the Students Learn?

Topics include energy, forestry, clean

water and region-specific content through Excursion Across America, a series of five animated videos and ready-to-use activities introducing students to regional facts and environmental topics. The accompanying educator resources and activities showcase how students can have a positive effect on the planet.

Why NY and NJ?

The New York Board of Regents has made education on the environment a requirement for high school graduation. The Environmental Education Initiative curriculum, which can be integrated into existing courses or be a stand-alone course, teaches students about an array of topics related to the environment.

New Jersey integrates environmental education into K-12 across all subjects (Science, ELA, Math, Arts, etc.) through mandated standards (NJSLs) and resources from the NJDOE and the NJ Climate Education Hub. The state offers professional development workshops and webinars to help teachers integrate concepts including greenhouse effects, sea-level rise, and local effects, sample lessons, and support for districts, aiming to build climate literacy and resilience, preparing students for a clean economy, with initiatives also from groups such as This Is Planet Ed.

It all leads to a roadmap that helps schools take action, adapt, and educate on climate change.

How it Works:

Standards-Based: Resources align with NJ Student Learning Standards (NJSLs).

Teacher-Focused: Provides tools (guides, activities, supply kits) for teachers in elementary, middle, and high school.

Community & Resilience: Aims to connect learning to local impacts (like flooding) and build school sustainability.

How To Get It

All the standards-aligned resources are available to K-12 educators and students at environmentaleducationinitiative.com.

AI's Evolving Role

Continued from page 11

said. The vast majority of people currently experience space through data or observations, said Gen. Raymond. Harnessing that data and applying AI to it can facilitate problem solving by speeding up analysis, he said.

Implications of AI

One of the greatest risks associated with AI and space is that adversaries of the United States will get ahead of us and use technology to their advantage, Gen. Raymond said. Although the original stated goal of the U.S. Space Force re-mains one of deterrence, it is important to improve AI literacy and stay aware of the potential need to be prepared to fight, if necessary, while working to maintain stability, he added. However, deterrence related to space may occur in other domains, he noted. "If someone did something in space, you wouldn't have to respond in space," he said. The concept of integrated deterrence involves multiple domains and capabilities in partnership with allies, Gen. Raymond emphasized.

Visit scsp.ai to learn more about the SCSP's AI + Space Summit and other ways in which AI is driving space industries.

Article Link

<https://about.newsusa.com/ais-evolving-role-in-space-strategy>

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Answers page 14

CORNER PUZZLER

Across

1. Fight a shadow?
5. Carillon sounds
10. First in a long line?
14. Theater seating
15. Chilean pianist Claudio
16. Pedometer unit
17. "Don't dawdle!"
18. Seize illegally
19. "___ and out!"
20. Picnic event
23. Put away dishes?
24. Go wrong
25. Grew wide
29. South American capital
34. It may lose or gain electrons
35. Edible tuber
37. "The Old ___ Bucket"
38. Trattoria specialty
42. ___ Haute, Ind.

Down

1. Bed support
2. Fit for a king
3. Seaweed extract
4. Prohibition ender
5. "Modern Times" co-star, Goddard
6. Highland dialect
7. Cut ___ (dance)
8. Clothing size
9. Sterling
10. Valentine's Day figure
11. La Scala star
12. Author Waugh

13. A ___ bagatelle
21. Fraternity letter
22. Hang downward
25. Loved excessively
26. A way to habituate
27. St. Louis bridge
28. Not look forward to
30. Hoedown partner
31. Rubber-stamps
32. Dogma
33. Six-footers on a hill
34. Comparison phrase
36. Grimm baddie
39. Abbreviations in real estate ads
40. "Twelfth Night" clown
41. Tony Soprano, notably
46. Special vocabularies
48. "The way," philosophically
49. Strong impression
51. Plumed wader
53. Studio head
54. In great shape
55. Leprechauns' land
56. Quick meal
57. Henry VIII's 2nd
58. Pink wine
59. At any time
60. Nevada gaming site
61. Superficially cultured

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FROM THE DESK OF
ATTORNEY GENERAL OFFICE

Attorney General Stop Antitrust Violations



Opinion: State Law Overrides Local Shopping Cart Ordinances

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General James Uthmeier issued an opinion concluding that state law expressly p r e e m p t s

municipalities from requiring shopping cart retention plans, approving or denying those plans, imposing penalties, or mandating shopping cart retention systems with the exception of local ordinances imposed between January 31, 2002 to June 30, 2002. This opinion was requested by Allan T. Weinthal, attorney for the town of Davie

Attorney General Opinion: State Laws Requiring Racial Discrimination are Unconstitutional

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General James Uthmeier issued an opinion concluding that state laws requiring race-based state action are presumptively unconstitutional under the Fourteenth Amendment's Equal Protection Clause and Article I, section 2, of Florida's Constitution.

Attorney General James Uthmeier Leads Multistate Coalition Warning 'Climate Cartel' Ringleader, Ceres, to

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General James Uthmeier led a coalition of Attorneys General from Alaska, Georgia, Idaho, North Dakota, and South Dakota in issuing a warning letter to climate activist group Ceres over concerns that its coordinated actions violate State and Federal antitrust and consumer protection laws.

“Ceres—a ringleader of the “climate cartel”—is open about its notorious goals to achieve net-zero carbon emissions,” said **Attorney General James Uthmeier**. “The assault on American families and businesses through what Ceres calls a “Global World War” to achieve net zero must stop. Failure to do so will result in a multi-state barrage of anti-trust enforcement.”

The letter outlines concerns that Ceres has acted as a central coordinator for efforts designed to pressure financial institutions and corporations to steer capital away from certain investments. Ceres coordinates these efforts to pressure corporations by engaging with their stakeholders and shareholders. In one instance, Ceres went as far as participating in a plan to replace the entire board of ExxonMobil to send a message to other corporations of what could happen to them if they do not cooperate.

The letter goes on to explain that Ceres openly promotes efforts to “transform industries,” achieve “systemic changes,” and “change business practices.” The way Ceres goes about coordinating these efforts

raises concerns of coordinated action among market participants, which constitutes unlawful collusion, a violation of antitrust laws.

In addition to concerns over antitrust violations, the letter explains that companies who do not comply with Ceres' unrealistic agenda risk facing claims of “greenwashing” which would be misleading to their potential customers. This could trigger violations of consumer protection laws.

The coalition has requested that Ceres provide an explanation as to how its behavior does not violate antitrust and consumer protection laws, along with supportive documentation.

Attorney General James Uthmeier Announces 46 New Investigations, Subpoenas Smart & Safe Florida in Criminal Probe of Marijuana Petition Fraud

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General James Uthmeier today announced a major escalation in the Office of Statewide Prosecution's ongoing election fraud investigation, including the opening of 46 new criminal investigations and the issuance of four criminal subpoenas seeking records from Smart & Safe Florida and its contractors and subcontractors.

“Recently obtained documents show that Smart & Safe Florida knew about dozens of fraudsters turning in over 21,000 petitions and failed to inform law enforcement,” said **Attorney General James Uthmeier**. “Florida's Constitution is not for sale, and

we will not allow a mega marijuana corporation to hijack our state's governing document.”

The Office of Statewide Prosecution (OSP) reviewed records showing that approximately 50 petition circulators associated with Smart & Safe Florida were registered and actively collecting petitions on behalf of the organization supporting 25-01, Adult Personal Use of Marijuana. Those circulators submitted more than 21,600 petitions; of those, over 14,500 raised significant concerns, including mismatched signatures or other indicia of fraud, and were as a result invalidated by election officials. However, more concerning, approximately 7,100 petitions submitted by these fraudsters were verified as valid by Florida Supervisors of Elections.

During the past several months, nine petition circulators have been arrested or had warrants issued, with at least six more actively pending. OSP anticipates additional arrests in the coming weeks as several investigations near completion.

The four criminal subpoenas being issued will require Smart & Safe Florida, their contractors, and their subcontractors, to produce documents relating to the alleged fraud to determine whether criminal liability extends beyond individual circulators and into broader organizational conduct.

Statewide Prosecutor Brad McVay sent a formal letter to the Special Agent in Charge at the Florida Department of Law Enforcement outlining the scope of the investigation and the required records.

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FROM THE DESK OF

GOVERNOR DESANTIS



GOVERNOR RON DESANTIS CELEBRATES FLORIDA'S \$485 MILLION INVESTMENT IN NURSING PROGRAMS

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — Today, Governor Ron

DeSantis celebrated Florida's continued investment in high quality nursing programs with more than \$485 million awarded through the Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE) and the Prepping Institutions, Programs, Employers, and Learners through Incentives for Nursing Education (PIPELINE) programs since their inception in 2022. LINE and PIPELINE funding strengthen nursing programs across Florida by providing scholarships to students, supporting the recruitment of additional faculty, funding the purchase of equipment and enhancing simulation centers.

Governor DeSantis also awarded over \$20 million in LINE funding, \$14.5 million to state colleges and private postsecondary institutions and \$6 million to state universities. More than \$85 million has been awarded through the LINE program, with \$61.5 million to state colleges and private postsecondary institutions, and \$24 million to State University System (SUS) institutions. In addition, the PIPELINE program has awarded \$400 million, with \$240 million to state colleges and school districts, and \$160 million to SUS institutions.

"Today, I was proud to award more than \$20 million in LINE funding with \$14.5 million awarded to state colleges and private postsecondary institutions, as well as \$6 million to state universities," said **Governor Ron DeSantis**. "Florida is investing at scale to expand nursing programs and strengthen the healthcare workforce. Since launching the LINE and PIPELINE programs in 2022, Florida has invested more than \$485 million in nursing education."

"Governor DeSantis has made nursing education a top priority in Florida, recognizing the critical role nurses play in keeping our communities healthy and safe," said **Commissioner of Education Anastasios Kamoutsas**. "Through strategic investments like the LINE and PIPELINE programs, we are supporting the next generation of nurses by expanding opportunity to high-quality education and ensuring Florida's healthcare workforce is prepared to meet growing demand."

"Florida's continued investment in nursing education demonstrates our state's unwavering commitment to strengthening the healthcare workforce and expanding opportunities for students across the State University System," said **SUS Chancellor Ray Rodrigues**. "The LINE and PIPELINE programs deliver real results and empower institutions to recruit talented faculty, enhance professional training, and graduate highly skilled nurses prepared to meet the needs of communities statewide."

About LINE

The LINE program is a competitive, dollar-for-dollar matching grant that

supports partnerships between participating educational institutions and health care providers. The LINE program provides scholarships for students who meet residency requirements for tuition purposes, supports the recruitment of additional faculty, funds the purchase of equipment and enhances simulation centers to advance high-quality nursing education. For more information about LINE and a list of FDOE's awarded institutions, visit <https://www.fdoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/funding-opportunities/linefund/>.

About PIPELINE

The PIPELINE program rewards performance and excellence among postsecondary nursing programs. PIPELINE provides funds based on the number of nursing education program completers, first-time National Council of State Board of Nursing Licensing Examination passage rates, and excellence among nursing education programs based on the average of first-time passage rates above the national average.

ICYMI: FIRST LADY CASEY DESANTIS JOINS FOX AND FRIENDS WEEKEND TO DISCUSS THE HEALTHY FLORIDA FIRST INITIATIVE

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — Today, First Lady Casey DeSantis joined Fox and Friends Weekend to discuss the results of infant formula testing as part of the Healthy Florida First Initiative. Through independent testing, conducted by certified laboratories, the Florida Department of Health collected 24 infant formulas across 7 brands, purchased from multiple locations, both online and in stores, and tested them for arsenic, cadmium, lead, mercury, and pesticides. "Today, I joined Fox and Friends Weekend to discuss the Healthy Florida First initiative," said **First Lady Casey DeSantis**. "In light of the Florida Department of Health's findings of toxins in infant formula, Florida is leading the charge to do independent testing of our food supply to help ensure it's not tainted with harmful chemicals. We are asking other states to join forces to utilize their assets to test products. Our goal is to hold companies accountable through testing and to provide transparency to the consumer. Ultimately, we would like products to be tested before they hit the market, which unfortunately, for various reasons, is not happening. We cannot allow food companies to prioritize profits over the health and well-being of the people, even if it's inadvertent. With support from our federal MAHA partners, now is the time to drive change—and as a cancer survivor and mother, I pray this can hopefully contribute to making Florida, and ultimately America, healthier."

This initiative examined infant formula, a product families rely on and trust. The testing results are intended to give parents clear, accessible information and ensure accountability in products marketed to infants.

The full infant formula testing results are available at:

[ExposingFoodToxins.com](https://www.exposingfoodtoxins.com)

GOVERNOR RON DESANTIS AND FIRST LADY CASEY DESANTIS ANNOUNCES MAYO CLINIC JACKSONVILLE WILL LAUNCH ONLY CARBON ION THERAPY PROGRAM IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE

JACKSONVILLE, Fla.—Today, Governor Ron DeSantis joined First Lady Casey DeSantis and Mayo Clinic President and CEO Dr. Kent Thielen to announce that Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville is launching the first carbon ion therapy program in America and the only carbon ion therapy program in the Western Hemisphere.

"Our administration is committed to fighting cancer by making targeted investments in innovative therapies that have the potential to save lives," said **Governor Ron DeSantis**. "During my time as governor, we've increased funding for cancer research and treatment programs by more than 114 percent. The Casey DeSantis Cancer Research Program has strengthened Florida's position as a national leader in cancer research and innovation. We're proud that Mayo Clinic chose Florida as the home for this groundbreaking initiative, and we look forward to seeing how these cutting-edge therapies give hope to patients fighting some of the most aggressive and treatment-resistant cancers."

In June 2025, Mayo Clinic opened the 228,000-square-foot Duan Family Building in Jacksonville to expand cancer treatment and research. The new facility will be uniquely designed to deliver both carbon ion therapy and proton therapy, including the ability to treat the same tumor with either approach for greater precision.

"Under the Governor's leadership, Florida continues to lead in innovation, and today at Mayo Clinic Jacksonville, we are proving that this leadership extends beyond our state, transforming not only how we care for Floridians, but also how the rest of

America approaches cancer treatment," said **First Lady Casey DeSantis**. "This state-of-the-art technology was made possible, in part, through funding from the Casey DeSantis Cancer Research Program."

Mayo Clinic expects proton therapy to begin in 2027 and carbon ion therapy to begin in 2028. Patients will benefit from expanded care well before then through additional services already being offered at the facility, including photon therapy, immunotherapy, CAR-T cell therapy, advanced imaging, and other specialized cancer services.

Carbon ion therapy is one of the most advanced radiation treatment technologies in the world, designed for hard-to-treat and treatment-resistant cancers. Until now, the therapy has only been available at a limited number of centers in Asia and Europe. Florida continues to invest heavily in cancer research and treatment. Since 2019, Florida has invested more than \$1 billion, increasing cancer program funding by more than 114% and committing nearly \$218 million for cancer research in 2025 alone.

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Patent Trolls for Hire



The New Threat to American Innovation: Patent Trolls for Hire

(NAPSI)—In local communities across America, the “next big idea” often takes shape in a garage, a small startup office or a community college lab. New American inventors and entrepreneurs are the backbone of our nation. They are responsible for turning bold ideas into products that create jobs and make life easier for all of us. They are often the lifeblood of local economies.

But in recent decades, a particular kind of legal threat has emerged that puts that engine of entrepreneurial innovation at risk. These lawsuits come from shell companies that are commonly known as patent trolls. Patent trolls don't invent things or make products but exist solely to pursue lawsuits related to patents they buy. Patent troll litigation costs U.S. firms an estimated \$29 billion annually in direct legal expenses, and approximately \$60 billion when accounting for lost firm value and diverted resources. Patent troll litigation surged 22% from 2023 to 2024 alone, making it a fast-growing issue for American business.

Patent trolls have been at work for decades. But now, in a new twist, patent trolls are being hired to file lawsuits against others in the industry. The aim isn't to defend a real invention, but to make it harder for rivals by driving up legal costs, scaring off customers, delaying product launches, or pushing for monetary settlements. This puts more pressure on the price of everyday technology products.

This legal warfare acts like a hidden tax on local innovation. Money that could be spent fueling research and development of promising new ideas instead gets diverted to paying legal bills. A product that could have shipped in spring slips to the fall—or launches with fewer features. Over time, those suits have a chilling effect on small-business innovations and growth, in communities throughout the US.

Economists and consumer advocates warn that these tactics could stifle growth in key industries like semiconductors, artificial intelligence and clean energy—fields that depend on fast-moving innovation and open competition. Each time an inventor or startup is forced to settle or shut down, another potential breakthrough gets delayed or disappears entirely.

This troubling legal trend is not just hurting startups and small businesses. Patent trolls clog the courts with frivolous filings, overloading judges and regulators who could be spending their time on real cases. It's a drain on innovation and public resources.

The good news is that policymakers are beginning to push back. Over the past year, 15 governors—Republicans and Democrats alike—have signed new laws to curb abusive patent litigation. More than thirty

U.S. states are now taking action to make it harder for shell companies to weaponize the legal system against innovators. In states like Massachusetts, lawmakers are even debating fresh measures to crack down on the rise of patent trolls that file lawsuits not to protect innovations, but to sabotage.

Across the country, Americans are taking note. In a recent national poll on the topic, 90% of Americans agree that the U.S. must ensure a fair legal playing field so smaller businesses can innovate and compete without fear of costly, frivolous lawsuits. Nearly nine in ten are concerned that smaller companies would be harmed as larger companies benefit from patent troll abuse, and 82% worry about the impact on jobs at small, innovative companies.

The United States has always been defined by invention. But that only works when the system rewards creators, not manipulators. Patent trolls for hire may be an invisible problem to most Americans, but the costs are real; they show up in lost jobs, shuttered startups and innovations that never reach the market.

Innovation should be a race toward the best ideas. Instead, it's quickly becoming a race to the courthouse. It's time to ensure that our legal system serves those who build, not those who bully. Because when deep-pocketed corporations and hired patent trolls win, America's innovators and entrepreneurs lose.

Understanding Thyroid Health



(NAPSI)—An estimated 20 million Americans have some form of thyroid disease.¹ During January, recognized as Thyroid Awareness Month, YARAL Pharma is raising awareness of thyroid disease, particularly hypothyroidism, a condition in which the thyroid gland does not produce enough thyroid hormone. Despite its prevalence, thyroid disease remains widely misunderstood, with many people unaware of its signs and symptoms.

The Role of the Thyroid

The thyroid, a small butterfly-shaped gland located in the neck, plays a vital role in regulating metabolism, energy levels, and overall hormonal balance. Conditions such as hypothyroidism, hyperthyroidism, and thyroid nodules can significantly impact health and quality of life. However, up to 60% of individuals with thyroid disease are unaware of their condition, often due to a lack of awareness about the signs and symptoms, leading to delays in diagnosis and treatment.¹

Signs and Symptoms

Thyroid disorders can manifest in various ways, including fatigue, weight changes, mood fluctuations, and cognitive difficulties. These symptoms often resemble common day-to-day ailments, making them easy to overlook. As a result, many patients live with thyroid conditions for years before

seeking treatment.

What Can Be Done

Treatment for thyroid disease varies depending on the type and severity of the condition, as well as the patient's age and overall health. Some common treatments include:²

- **Antithyroid drugs:** These medications stop the thyroid from producing hormones.

- **Radioactive iodine therapy:** A widely used and effective treatment involving the oral intake of radioactive iodine. Most patients who undergo this therapy eventually develop hypothyroidism.

- **Beta-blockers:** These medications don't affect the thyroid but can help manage symptoms such as rapid heart rate, tremors, and nervousness.

- **Surgery:** In rare cases, a healthcare provider may recommend surgically removing the thyroid. Patients undergoing this procedure will need to take synthetic thyroid replacement hormones for the rest of their life.

- **Thyroid hormone replacement:** For hypothyroidism, patients typically take a daily dose of synthetic thyroxine (T4), a hormone that replaces what their thyroid can no longer produce.

Take Control of Your Thyroid Health

If you're experiencing symptoms of thyroid disease or have concerns about your thyroid health, don't wait—talk to your healthcare provider to learn more about diagnosis and treatment options.

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Quit Tobacco for Good

By Lacoadia Burkes, Acting Bureau Chief, Tobacco Free Florida

(NAPSI)—New Year's resolutions often focus on health, finances, and fitness, but quitting tobacco might be the one change that unlocks them all. According to recent research, nearly four in five New Year's goals involve improving health. Other perennial favorites include things like having a better financial outlook and being more active. One thing these and many other self-improvement goals have in common is—quitting tobacco is one of the best and most impactful ways to achieve them.

Connection Between Resolutions and Quitting Smoking

When you quit smoking, your body will start to reward you almost immediately. Within days, your sense of taste and smell improves. Within weeks, your breathing becomes easier, and your circulation improves. And over time your risk of heart disease, stroke, and cancer drops significantly.

Financially, the impact is equally dramatic. A pack-a-day smoker in Florida spends over \$2,000 a year on cigarettes. Think about what that money could mean

for your family—a vacation, a down payment on a car, simply more breathing room in your monthly budget. If saving money is part of your resolution, keep a visual reminder of your goal, like a picture of that dream vacation or new car, in your wallet or on your mirror to stay motivated.

Why Resolutions Fail—and How to Succeed

Of course, we all know that even the most well-intended New Year's resolutions often fail. Studies show that nearly half of people abandon their resolutions by the end of January. But here's the important part: when it comes to your resolution to quit tobacco, you don't have to go it alone—there is help.

Quitting without help can be extremely difficult, and for many people it takes several attempts to succeed. The good news is that evidence-based tools like nicotine replacement therapy—including gum, patches, and lozenges—can significantly improve your chances of keeping your resolution. Tobacco Free Florida, provides these products to free to all Floridians, regardless of insurance status.

Tools and Support to Help You Keep Your Resolution

If you plan to quit tobacco in 2026, Tobacco Free Florida offers a variety of free Quit Your Way services designed to meet you where you are. Group Quit classes are available both in-person and virtually, offered in English and Spanish. These sessions provide peer support and expert guidance as you navigate your quit journey. Phone Quit and Web Quit offer personalized coaching and support tailored to your schedule and preferences.

Your doctor or pharmacist can be an important part of your quit plan too. They can offer medical guidance and help you determine which quit tools may be most effective for sticking to your resolution.

Set Yourself Up for Success

Beyond using proven quit tools, there are practical steps you can take to help your resolution stick. Set a specific quit date and mark it on your calendar. Tell friends and family about your plan—their support and understanding can make a real difference. Remove triggers from your environment by getting rid of ashtrays, lighters, and any other items associated with smoking. Keep your “why” front and center. Whether it's your health, your finances, or your family, remind yourself daily why you're making this change.

Learning from Slip-Ups

Finally, remember that a slip-up doesn't mean your resolution has failed. Just as many people restart their exercise or diet resolutions after a setback, you can get back on track with quitting tobacco. Use slip-ups as learning opportunities. What led to the slip-up? Do you always crave a cigarette in a certain place or while doing a certain activity? Understanding your triggers allows you to develop better strategies for your next quit attempt. Each attempt brings you closer to success.

With the right tools, support, and mindset, your 2026 resolution to become tobacco free can be the one that finally sticks. You can do it. We can help.

For more information about Tobacco Free Florida's free Quit Your Way services, visit TobaccoFreeFlorida.com/QuitYourWay or call 877-U-CAN-NOW (877-822-6669).