



Pictured left to right at the November Lady Lake Chamber referral Luncheon. Jeanne Lazo, Leslie DiCesare & Janet Fraley. These ladies who are of the LL Chamber Luncheon. Thank Ladies! See page 8 for more photos.



Jena Sullivan of Edward Jones was recently installed on the Board of Directors for the Lady Lake Area Chamber of Commerce. President, Jeanne Lazo is pictured handing her the lanyard all board members receive. Jena will be filling a seat



The Lady Lake Town Commission unanimously approved a deal that would assist the Lady Lake Police Department to reach full staffing capacity and make it the highest paid department in Lake County. See story inside on page 2.

## My Christmas Story!

By TomL

This is a true story. When I was a little boy we were being raised by my Grand Mother while our parents worked out of town at the Boca Raton Hotel. One day just before Christmas my friend and I were playing near the Railroad tracks. We were bare footed. I jump off a little hill and landed on a broken beer bottle. It cut my heal pretty bad. I could see everything inside, my tendon was almost severed. The other boy piggy back me to the road and ran to the Fire Chiefs house. luckily to the Fire Chiefs home was close by. He wrapped me up and picked me up, put me in his truck and took me to my house where my grand mother was. They could tell they could not fix the wound. So the fire Chief took me to a clinic in the next town Hollywood. If the tendon was almost severed back in them days if it was severed you were crippled. They managed to get clamps on my tendon and pull it back into place and staple it. My parents were called. They picked me up at the clinic and I was told I would not be able to start walking for at least two months.

Christmas school break was a few days away. Christmas was a big thing to me. It was not because of the gifts but the fact that I would see Santa Claus. After all I only saw him once a year. Every year there was a Christmas parade. That night I was very sad

because I could not go, I could not walk. Grandma told my sister she could take my brother and walk two block to where the parade would come down US 1. Grandma could not walk very far. I was sitting next the slide up window listening for the firetruck that carried Santa Claus in the parade, finally I could hear the siren and the horn on the firetruck. I sat there in the window almost crying because I would not see Santa.

The sound of the siren was getting louder as they came down the Hwy. Then it was getting louder and then louder and it came down our residential street. They stopped at my house and Santa got off the truck and brought me a candy cane. He gave me a hug and said Ho Ho Ho Merry Christmas and walked out the door got on the Firetruck and proceeded back to where the had detoured off the hwy. I was beside myself, Santa came to see me.

It's funny that Santa looked kind of similar to the Fire Chief. I wondered until a few years later.

Interesting fact was his son was drowning in whiskey creek and I jumped in and pull him out. He was knock out cold by a speed boat that came to close to where we were swimming.

That's my TRUE Christmas story.



From  
TomL  
Publishing



## Lady Lake Approves LLPD Raise

**Town Commission approves pay increases for Lady Lake Police Department**

**LADY LAKE** – The Lady Lake Town Commission unanimously approved a deal that would assist the Lady Lake Police Department to reach full staffing capacity and make it the highest paid department in Lake County. The new contract with the Florida Police Benevolent Association, the union representing the department, offers a 30% raise across the board and a starting salary of \$62,000 per year.

“The recruitment of qualified and dedicated officers has been a challenge for police departments nationwide,” said Police Chief Steve Hunt. “We are grateful to the Town Commission for their unwavering support of the Lady Lake Police Department and for a community that wholeheartedly backs the blue.”

The department has been operating with just 22 of its budgeted 30 officer positions. According to the FBI's 2019 Uniform Crime Report, the nationwide rate of sworn officers is 2.4 per 1,000 inhabitants. With Lady Lake's population of 16,179, the Town's recommended staffing is 39 officers.

Due to recent staffing shortages, hundreds of thousands of dollars from the department's personnel budget was going

unspent and being returned to the general fund annually. This money will now instead be used to boost salaries, allowing the department to become competitive and grow with the Town's population.

Upwards of 300 new businesses have set up shop in Lady Lake since 2018 and nearly 4,000 new residents are expected to join our community over the next three years. Recruitment efforts include a professional [police recruitment video](#) highlighting the department's commitment to professional standards and community policing, a new website launching in early 2024, and the implementation of the PoliceApp.

The PoliceApp online application and recruitment system is designed for police departments and law enforcement job applicants. The app simplifies the application and recruitment process and eliminates process redundancies and frustration. Applicants may apply at <https://bit.ly/JoinLLPD>.

“Responsible future planning demanded swift and bold measures to draw in qualified police candidates,” said Town Manager Bill Lawrence. “As a result, we are committed to a multi-pronged approach to attract top talent from a nationwide pool. Our residents deserve the best.”

## Lake County Detention Log

**Public Booking Log**

11/17/2023 to 11/20/23

See full list at

<http://tomlpublishing.com/lady-lake-police-chief/lake-county-detention-center-arrests-log/>



## No-Stress Tips Holiday Time



### Three No-Stress Tips for Tidying Up at Holiday Time

(NAPSI)—If the holidays are at your house this year, you may find they can be even more magical when you have a good plan for cleaning up before and after the company comes.

#### Keep Holiday Hosting A Delight, Not A Chore

As you prepare for the season—and all the celebrating it entails—keep these home cleaning tips in mind...and look forward to stressing less and spending more time with your loved ones.

**Treat stains right:** Chocolate. Cranberry sauce. Wine. For every food option on the table, there are just as many stains that could arrive with that delicious meal. Using Ensueño Liquid Detergent, which has both stain-fighting power and color-fading protection, can mean a deep clean that ensures clothes and tablecloths come out bright and stain-free.

**Keep cleanup simple:** After everyone's gone home, there may still be some chores to be done. Make your life easier by wiping down surfaces with Pinalen Multipurpose Cleaner to quickly deodorize and deep clean the house from top to bottom.

**Don't forget a scent:** When your home smells great, people will know it's clean, so don't forget to tidy up with aromatic products such as Pinalen Original. Not only does it freshen, clean, and degrease, but the pine oil smells just like the holiday season.

## Holiday Magic



### This Seafood Item is Spurring Holiday Menu Magic

(NAPSI)—As we start planning holiday menus this season, many of us are looking for familiar favorites and comfort foods to serve to loved ones. The downside is that many of those foods are high in calories and don't provide much nutritional benefit. This year, consider amping up the nutritional value of your spread. One quick and easy way to do so is by adding a versatile and healthy classic: [Latitude 45 Smoked Salmon](#). As the number one selling smoked salmon brand in the nation, Latitude 45 is not only a bona fide crowd-pleaser for holiday events, but it also offers your guests a generous helping of health benefits.

Rich in omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin B12 and other essential nutrients, salmon can help reduce inflammation and improve heart health. Plus, it's packed with protein and integrates perfectly with nearly anything you're serving at your next gathering.

Those preferring a milder fish will love that Latitude 45 salmon is very light on the palette, making it a good option for those who typically aren't seafood eaters. Quick to serve and ready to eat right out of the package, most smoked salmon recipes can be whipped up in under 10 minutes. This year, amp up menus by adding something new and exciting to your salmon repertoire with Latitude 45's new Smoked Salmon Candy Bites. This gastro gem is a fresh and tasty take on a classic!

Whether you're adding it to a quiche for brunch, a warm winter soup, your favorite pasta or your charcuterie board, there are many ways to enjoy Latitude 45. If you're looking for more epicurean inspiration, check out some unique recipes online at [latitude45salmon.com/recipes](http://latitude45salmon.com/recipes).

Straight from Patagonia's glacial fed fjords, Latitude 45 is the only smoked salmon on the market that is fresh to smoked within 24 hours of leaving the water. Not only is it delicious but it's also Kosher certified, Best Aquaculture Practice 4-Star certified, and part of the Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative. So, you know this company's salmon is top-notch. Latitude 45 takes pride in their sustainable practices and certifications, as evidenced by the Dow Jones Sustainability Index listing it among the top 25% of food companies worldwide. Given its high quality, it's no wonder why major retailers like , [Walmart](#), [BJs](#) and carry the line.

This holiday season, add some variety to your menu with flavorful smoked salmon dishes that you can feel good about eating.

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## Florida State Senate

# DENNIS K. BAXLEY



Dear Friends,

As we near the start of a new year, we are also less than one month away from the start of the 2024 Legislative Session. Due to pressing matters, the Florida Legislature decided to start early, holding a special session during the second week of November. We passed four bills, as well as a Senate Resolution expressing our support for Israel and its right to defend itself.

The first bill that we passed during the 2023C Special Session is House Bill 1C: Disaster Relief, by Senator Cory Simon. As demonstrated after Hurricanes Ian and Nicole, the Florida Senate is committed to helping Floridians rebuild from devastating storms in every manner possible. In response to Hurricane Idalia, the Florida Senate passed HB 1C, providing necessary funding and tax relief to the communities who need it most. The Florida Senate is meeting the challenge to support our rural and agricultural communities that have been devastated by Hurricane Idalia. This bill provides critical support to communities impacted by Hurricane Idalia, directs an additional \$170 million to the My Safe Florida Home Program, and extends local government loan programs.

The second bill we passed is House Bill 3C: Family Empowerment Scholarship Program, by Senator Jay Collins. Since HB 1 passed in the 2023 Regular Session, Florida has seen record numbers of families benefit from enhanced school choice opportunities now offered to every Floridian. HB 3C expands opportunities to Students with Unique Abilities, ensuring that all Florida students have access to a full array of school choice opportunities that meet their unique needs. This bill expands access to the Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities and enhances the number of students served by school choice opportunities provided in HB 1, passed last session.

The third bill we passed is House Bill 5C: Scrutinized Companies, by Senator Bryan

Avila. Iran is a state sponsor of terrorism and played a critical role in the horrific terror attacks on Israel by Hamas. This legislation takes a strong stance against the Iranian regime and makes it clear that Florida in no way will support corrupt, tyrannical, and terroristic countries who diametrically oppose American national security and seek to wage proxy war through radical terrorist groups. This bill adds certain companies in business with Iran to the list of scrutinized companies and requires Florida to cease investment with these companies.

The fourth bill we passed is House Bill 7C: Security Grants, by Senator Alexis Calatayud. Through this legislation, the Florida Senate makes it clear that anti-Semitic violence has no place in Florida and we are committed to protecting Jewish Floridians from threats of violence. As the threat of anti-Semitism grows following the horrors of Hamas' attack on Israel, the Florida Legislature is providing critical funding to keep our Jewish community safe. This bill enhances security at Jewish Day Schools and Houses of Worship and provides additional funding to hire security personnel and harden facilities.

We also passed Senate Resolution 8C: Support the State of Israel, by Senator Lori Berman. Florida stands firmly with the people of Israel and our own Jewish communities across the state. This resolution makes it unquestionably clear that Israel has every right to defend itself from the threats facing their people and country, and Florida will stand arm-in-arm with them as they seek victory and peace. This Senate Resolution condemns the unprovoked and barbaric terror attacks on Israel by Hamas and demands the immediate end to any financial support of Hamas or Iran.

These bills and senate resolution are just the beginning and we are looking forward to a promising and successful 2024 Legislative Session for the people of Florida. Thank you to the constituents of Senate District 13 for letting me serve you and work on these unique challenges with you.

Onward & Upward,  
Senator Dennis Baxley

## Lake County Events

DEC 9

### Four Corners Holiday Festival

Here comes the holiday fun! Enjoy a fun, family-friendly event while your child visits with Santa, enjoys a holiday movie on the lawn, cookies and milk station, bounce house, train, and more!

### DEC 9 - Mount Dora School of Ballet presents The Nutcracker

Magic awaits! The Mount Dora School of Ballet returns this Christmas for its annual presentation of Lake Ballet's The Nutcracker. Found in downtown Mount Dora nestled among the warm glow of twinkling lights, this classical ballet offers a delightful story for all ages. Create lasting memories and holiday traditions with your friends and family as you experience the enchanting Land of Sweets alongside Clara, the Nutcracker Prince, and Sugar Plum Fairy. Under the expert direction of the

talented Artistic Director Kathryn Wheeler and guest choreographers, this Nutcracker provides the audience with an impressive performance of expertise and professionalism. Seating is limited. Purchase your tickets today!

### DEC 9 - Christmas Tea with Santa and Mrs. Claus

Bring the entire family to Mission Resort + Club this holiday season for Christmas Tea with Santa & Mrs. Claus. Delight in a festive, seasonal experience marked by indulgent drinks and small bites. Enjoy stories and photos with Santa. RSVP today!

### DEC 9 - Open House at Ellis Acres Reserve

Nature Center will be open with a naturalist on site to answer questions.

### DEC 10 - Nature Craft Fair

Come to Trout Lake Nature Center to see a variety of nature-inspired crafts and artwork. Vendors will have interactive demonstrations at their stations for visitors to try their craft. Many kinds of crafts and artwork will also be available for sale

### DEC 10 - Christmas Concert at First Presbyterian

Christmas at First Presbyterian "The InSpiring Church of Mount Dora" features holiday music from the Chancel Choir, Jubilate Handbell Choir and soloists to put you in the festive mood. Come and see our beautifully decorated church and enjoy!

### DEC 10 - Exploration Hike

Join staff on an early evening adventure to explore the park while getting some exercise.

### DEC 13 - Cooking in an Instant

Learn about cooking in an electric pressure cooker via an Instant Pot. Program includes an overview, tips, cooking demonstration and recipe sampling. To register contact the library at 352-429-5840

### DEC 14 - Friends of the Umatilla Public Library

Support your hometown library by joining Umatilla's Friends of the Library. Friends members raise funds to support library projects, programs and book purchases.

### DEC 5 - Mount Dora Half Marathon & 5K: Packet Pickup & Expo

FL's Most Festive Holiday Race takes place in Mount Dora this December. Participants & spectators will get into the holiday spirit during this 3 day event featuring a registration/run expo on Friday, 5K race Saturday and half marathon on Sunday.

### DEC 15 - Live Music Series at Mission Resort + Club

Join Mission Resort + Club for their Live Music Series this fall. From 6-9 p.m. on the outside patio area of La Margarita and El Conquistador, kick off the weekend with live entertainment from Shaun Williams on Friday, December 15.

### DEC 15 - Explore Historic Downtown Clermont

Explore historic Downtown Clermont while sampling more than 20 wines at participating locations. For more information visit [clermontdowntown.com/events](http://clermontdowntown.com/events)

### DEC 16 - Florida Philharmonia - Home for the Holidays

This outstanding orchestra, made up of 50 professional musicians from around the state and guest musicians of international renown, in addition to guest soloists, is led by acclaimed conductor, Pasquale Valerio.

### DEC 16 - 5K Night Run

Join the fun at this holiday-themed 5K night run in Historic Downtown Clermont. Run through the beautiful Downtown Clermont holiday lights and Enchanted Tree Forest at Victory Pointe! All participants will receive a custom race bib, chip timed results, goody bag & candy cane, holiday shirt, holiday-themed finisher medal, glow sticks for the run, jingle bells for your shoes, and holiday cookies and hot chocolate at the finish!

### DEC 16 - Discovery Gardens - Holiday Schedule for December

Discovery Gardens at UF/IFAS Extension Lake County Office, 1951 Woodlea Rd, Tavares, FL. Our hrs. for Holiday Season are, Monday-Friday & Saturday, 10th, 8am-4pm. Closed Friday Nov 10th - Veterans Day. Closed Thursday 23rd/Friday 24th - Thanksgiving

### DEC 16 - 5K Race for 12th Annual Mount Dora Half Marathon & 5K

Join us Saturday morning for a festive holiday 5K. Complete with a finish line DJ, live entertainment, race photos, participant t-shirts, finisher medals, chip timing, and age group awards. Visit our website or run [signup.com/mountdorahalf](http://signup.com/mountdorahalf) to sign up

### DEC 19 - Naturalist Hike

Brush up on your native and non-native plant identification while hiking the Lake May Reserve trails with rangers.

### DEC 23 - Quarterly Bird & Butterfly Survey

Join park staff in surveying the birds and butterflies at Lake County's conservation lands.

### DEC 24 - Christmas Eve Casual Service at First Presbyterian

Christmas Eve is a special time at First Presbyterian "the inSpiring Church of Mount Dora." You are invited to our Casual Christmas Eve Service with Carols and Cookies following.

### DEC 25 - Christmas Grand Brunch Buffet

Come out to Mission Resort from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. on 12/25, enjoy endless house champagne, mimosas & live entertainment alongside a spirited Grand Brunch Buffet experience. Price is \$65 per guest, plus service charge and tax. Please RSVP to 352-324-3930

### DEC 28 - Holidays with the Dogs

The PAWS Therapy Dogs are coming back to TLNC. The dogs will be all dressed up for the holidays and ready to say hello and play, bring your kids and come for an afternoon of fun with the dogs.

### DEC 30 - The Little Mermen

The Little Mermen are the ultimate Disney cover band for Disney fanatics of all ages! The band's repertoire covers decades of Disney favorites, including songs from "The Little Mermaid," "The Lion King," "Mary Poppins," and "Frozen."

### DEC 30 - Ecology Hike

Come hike with rangers and explore the restoration of the longleaf pine sandhills of Ferndale Preserve.

### DEC 31 - New Year's Eve Gala

Mission Resort + Club is the place to be this New Year's Eve! Enjoy a decadent 5-course meal followed by dancing and champagne toast at midnight! Live Entertainment will have you dancing the night away. This is a Cocktail Attire Event. RSVP today!

### DEC 31 - New Year's Eve Celebration

Ring in the New Year with live music, food & beverages and a spectacular fireworks display over Lake Dora at midnight.



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 apologies  
Our photographer was in the hospital Friday night during the Jenkins Veterans celebration. We tried to get pictures and failed to make the right connection. But friends around town sent us some personal picture so I thought we would share. So in our paper are some interesting photos. Our photographer is on the mend.

We need to get a grip on our school system / Colleges. Not so much here in Florida but look at the Fox News. There are a lot of people are available and will travel at the drop of a hat, that will protest just because they think its cool not knowing why their protesting. Palestine is a victim of Hamas. The are barbaric and kill for fun. There is room for them in our world.

On the internet, on Veterans day a triple amputee was searched extensively while sitting in a wheelchair. He is a Triple

Amputee Purple Heart Veteran! I think it was some airport.

Kamala Harris quote...

"I think that there can be no higher priority than what we have been clear is our highest priority."

SAY WHAT? MORE...

"When we talk about children of the community, they are a children of the community."

PLEASE no more Kamala quotes

Seen on T-shirts across the country.....

What other people was thinking it, I said it in print!

You are about to exceed the limits of my medication!

I have stopped listening so why are you still talking?

If you can't laugh at yourself let me do it for!

I am who I am...Your approval is not needed!

A problem at my bank. First I am a charter member of the bank 23 years, meaning I was a customer when they open 23 years ago. Went to the said bank to deposit checks into my account. I was told I could not deposit one of the check's because they had no record of my newspaper on that account. I reminded the manager that I have been depositing check from that customer for over 20 years. They did not care, they said there is so much fraud going on they had to be careful and refused to deposit the check. I think they were accusing me of fraud. I looking for a new bank and a good lawyer!

## Big Tips for Small Businesses



(NAPSI)—Small businesses are the backbone of our society and play a critical role in our economy. According to the U.S. Small Business Association, firms of 500 employees or fewer make up 99.9% of all U.S. businesses, equating to 61.7 million workers. Small business workers contribute 43.5% of the gross domestic product in the U.S. annually.

Small businesses also face unique challenges. Entrepreneurs, owners and their employees typically wear so many hats that it can be difficult to stay updated on business and consumer trends.

But help is available. Stakeholders can overcome obstacles by taking the following steps:

**Network, Network, Network**—Seek out like-minded individuals and companies within your industry or community to network, share ideas and look at challenges from a different perspective. This could also

include joining a trade organization, subscribing to publications or attending events relevant to your industry.

**Embrace Online Resources**—Results-oriented online tools offer a broad range of helpful materials. At [Synchrony.com](https://www.synchrony.com), one can find advice on financing, sales, human resources, digital marketing, customer experience, data, legal and cybersecurity.

**Commit to Lifelong Learning**—In an era of constant change, there are always new things to learn. To meet this need, Synchrony just launched a digital learning platform: the "Small Business Learning Center," which is geared to help its business owner partners with credit, financing, enhanced customer experiences and compliance. In addition to the Learning Center, Synchrony helps enable nearly a million small business partners to manage, market and grow their businesses by offering:

- Financing programs with a straightforward application process, strong approval rates and loyalty programs.
- Digital tools for retailers and health and wellness providers.
- Grants to small businesses through its Synchrony Pillars program.
- Webinars, podcasts, and one-on-one consulting opportunities; a closed-loop technology network so small businesses can offer private-label credit cards; advertising technology, among other things.

**Take a break!**—While small business owners and employees are by nature invested in the success of their business, research indicates that breaks go a long way for mental health. Breaks are important and help small business owners recharge and tackle the unique challenges in their path.

## Newspaper Deadlines

*Editorial & Ad Copy for January*

**Seniors Voice & Ocala DownTown**

**Noon, December 22nd**

**Lady Lake Magazine & Village Spectator**

**12am, December 27th**

## Village Spectator / Lady Lake Magazine

Products of TomL Publishing, LLC

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## FAIRTax

**FAIRtax**  
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I sometimes hear that the FAIRtax will result in a windfall for corporations since the FAIRtax

eliminates corporate

taxes. Let's make one thing perfectly clear - Corporations are legal fictions that have not, do not, and never will bear the burden of taxation. Only people pay taxes. Corporations pass on their tax burden in the form of higher prices to consumers, lower wages to workers, and/or lower returns to investors. The idea that taxing a corporation will reduce taxes on, say the working poor, is a cruel hoax. The corporate tax only makes what the consumer buys more expensive, costs employees jobs, lowers their lifestyle, or delays their retirement. Taxes are just another line item on the corporation expense

sheet and it's the consumer, employee and investor who pays for it. Under the FAIRtax plan, all the hidden cost created by the income tax disappears and money retained in the business and reinvested to create jobs, build factories, or develop new technologies, pay no tax. But, some believe that corporations will not do these things and will simply keep prices the same and cash in. Although some may try at first, they will soon see their market share drop. After all, if store A and store B are selling the same product but store B is selling it cheaper than store A, which store will you shop in? The FAIRtax is the most honest, fair, productive tax system possible and free market competition will do the rest. For more information please go to FAIRtax.org

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## COVID-19 Antiviral Treatments



(NewsUSA) - In the ongoing battle against COVID-19, vaccines have been successful in helping to reduce illness and contributing to the declining numbers of infections in the U.S. and around the world. But COVID-19 is not gone, and it remains a significant threat. Those with weakened immune systems, chronic illnesses and other risk factors are particularly vulnerable to severe illness from the virus.

While vaccines are still the best first defense against COVID-19, antiviral treatments have emerged as another powerful tool to help fight the virus and protect those who face greater risk of severe illness and hospitalization from COVID-19.

Who's at Risk?

Millions of Americans face a higher risk of developing severe COVID-19, and many may not even know it. Being age 50 or over, or having a host of common health

conditions including cancer, asthma, diabetes, heart disease, and weakened immune systems can make someone more likely to experience severe COVID-19 symptoms.

Treatments Are Available

The good news is that, for many of those at high risk who become infected with COVID-19 and have mild to moderate symptoms, antivirals can be a safe and effective treatment option. Antivirals work by helping to stop the virus from making copies of itself. This can help limit the spread of the virus inside the body — minimizing the severity of symptoms and the duration of the illness.

The need for speed is a fundamental principle underlying antiviral treatments for COVID-19. When someone at high risk becomes infected with COVID-19, the virus can spread rapidly within their body, which can cause severe respiratory problems and complications. This is where antiviral treatments may be able to help. Treatment with COVID-19 antivirals is most effective if it starts within the first five to seven days that the first COVID-19 symptoms appear.

But antivirals are not for everyone. They are not recommended for people who are younger, healthy and not at high risk of getting severely ill due to COVID-19, and there are certain health conditions and medications that are known to cause adverse reactions with antiviral treatments.

*Continued page 7*

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# Lady Lake Chamber Ribbons Cuttings

Lady Lake Chamber Ribbons Cuttings for November went wild. All we could get in is what you see. Lady Lake Chamber has been busy. Lot of events.



Freedom Pointe  
at The Villages





## COVID-19

*Continued from page 5*

Talk with a healthcare provider to know if an antiviral treatment is an option.

### Plan Ahead

For anyone at high risk for severe COVID-19, acting quickly when infection happens, and planning ahead will be key to getting the treatment they may need. Begin by planning:

- Making a list of current medications,
- Talking with a healthcare provider to understand the risk for severe COVID-19 and discuss potential treatment options, and
- Creating a plan to get tested and begin treatment at the first sign of a COVID-19 infection and before the 5–7-day window of opportunity closes.

### Why Speed Matters

• **Stop the Virus from Multiplying:** The earlier someone starts antiviral treatment, the better chance they have to lower the level of virus in their body, which can make a difference in their recovery.

• **Minimize Severe Symptoms:** Quick action can help prevent mild symptoms from turning severe – potentially preventing a hospital stay.

• **Limit the Impact of COVID-19 on Your Life:** Speedy treatment can shorten the time you are sick, easing the burden of the virus on your life and getting you back to usual.

• **Helping to Protect Others:** High-risk individuals not only face danger themselves but can also unknowingly spread the virus to others. Rapid treatment helps break the chain of transmission.

Remember, timing matters in reducing the risks of COVID-19 and planning ahead can make the difference in the lives of those most vulnerable.

Visit [covidvaccineproject.org/treatments](https://covidvaccineproject.org/treatments) to make a plan for yourself or someone that matters to you today.

<https://about.newsusa.com/an-option-for-many-high-risk-individuals-antiviral-treatments-for-covid-19>

## Your Bank, Your Way

**Choosing the Right Bank for Your Needs (NAPSI)**—Even with so many banking options available today, finding the one that fits your needs can be simple. The right bank should be more than a place where you keep your money; it should offer benefits and services that grow with you.

When it comes to finding the right bank, here are common financial scenarios you might consider.

• **If you're a perk lover:** The best checking accounts now offer great everyday benefits such as no overdraft fees. Some banks, like Citi, take these benefits a step further. The bank's Relationship Tiers—Citi Priority, Citigold® and Citigold® Private Client—reward you based on the amount of funds you keep in your eligible deposit and investment accounts. Think of it as the airline loyalty program for banking: as your balance grows, so do your benefits, including waived monthly service fees, access to financial planning guidance,

and more.

• **If you're the entrepreneurial type:** Plenty of banks waive monthly service fees with a direct deposit each month. At least one bank will waive these fees even without a traditional paycheck. Citi will waive the monthly service fee on your personal checking account when you receive \$250 or more in deposits made via Zelle and other peer-to-peer payments when made via ACH using providers such as Venmo or PayPal.

• **If you prefer in-person banking:** Even in today's digital world, speaking with a real person can help change your money mindset for the better. If you prefer face-to-face advice for complex financial matters such as taking out a mortgage or funding a small business, a national bank with welcoming branch locations might be the better choice over a bank that offers online-only services.

No one has the exact financial needs as you. Be sure to choose a bank that meets you where you are today and has the flexibility to grow with you. Depository products provided by Citibank, N.A. Member FDIC.



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**Carols by Candle Light**  
**7th ANNUAL FUNDRAISER**

<https://tickets.thevillages.com/events>  
**Holiday Musical/Fundraiser**

**December 2-4**  
**Savannah Center**



**STARRING:**

Alex Santoriello  
Mary Jo Vitale  
Dawn DiNome  
Vince Morris  
Lee Mueller  
Linda Payne  
Bobbi Steele-Marotta



# Christmas in The Villages




I took pictures of the Vendors before the doors were open. Actually I drove from Dunnellon HWY 40 to Wildwood just to take pictures. I have been making that trip for 5 or 6 years. Two Vendors I did not get pictured one was Hemp Emu (it did not focus) and a motorhome


company which was told they would have to move to a different area or be towed. They took the motorhomes back to the lot where they are on display but not at the exp, I'm sure the motorhome company is mad because they had to call in help on the Saturday before Thanksgiving. Not to mention the expo organizers who lost their revenue. They were not to friendly. I won't be back to that location.







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# Happy(er) Holidays



## How to Keep Your Mental Health in Check This Year

(NAPSI)—While the joy and busyness of the holiday season can take a toll on some people's mental health, that doesn't have to be. There are ways to avoid holiday-related challenges.

People may feel stressed, sad or anxious during the holiday season for a variety of reasons. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, extra stress, unrealistic expectations, sentimental memories and other factors during the season may set some people up for temporary bouts of depression or anxiety.

### Help Yourself to a More Jolly Season

However, mental health experts say there are things you can do to help avoid holiday-related challenges.

"Please remember, this is your holiday!" says Dr. Benjamin Yu, a psychiatrist in Roseville, California. "While there are many expectations and obligations from multiple sources (such as family, occupational, religious, social), this is still your time and you have the right to say yes or no. Chances are, what you would like to do is likely what others really want to do, and most of the time when you relay your desires and dislikes,

this will lead to a more cohesive celebration."

Many experts advise, among the holiday events and merry making, to try to keep up your normal daily routines as much as possible. That includes eating and drinking in moderation, avoiding alcohol if you're feeling down and getting enough sleep. If you find yourself in a stressful situation at a family gathering, they say it's OK to take a break.

"I often tell [patients] that when I used paper prescriptions, I would write a prescription to 'have a migraine' so they could say 'my head hurts...I have to leave.' It allows the person to exit without having their self-image damaged or their PTSD triggered," says Dr. Nan Nelson, a psychiatrist in Beachwood, Ohio.

Taking part in other activities, such as breathing exercises, meditation and moving your body physically—even if it's just off the couch—can also be helpful, according to the experts. Planning ahead may also be worthwhile.

"The winter holidays can bring on positive and negative emotions and memories. Keeping your emotional equilibrium during this time requires a delicate balance between body, mind and spirit. Before the holidays move into high gear, take a look at how you are feeling and make a plan that will keep you on an even keel this season," says Dr. Paul B. Hill, a psychiatrist in Memphis, Tennessee.

Dr. Hill says it's important to continue your current mental health therapies throughout the season.

### Learn More

For further information on how to improve your mental health this year, ask your clinician or visit [GeneSight.com/holidaymentalhealth](https://www.genesight.com/holidaymentalhealth).

# Holiday Menu Ideas

Photo: Erik Bernstein; Food Styling: Brooke Caison

Without fail, [Christmas](#) every year is always a whirlwind of activity. Personally, we can't believe there are only 25 days to set up our tree, find the perfect [gifts](#) for friends and family, and do *all* the baking we want to do (this is THE year we're going to make a [gingerbread house](#) from scratch, we swear!). This holiday season, let us help take some of the stress off your plate (and help you load it up with plenty of easy options). With this irresistible list of family-approved classics, we've got Christmas dinner covered. Here are our top 80 picks to round out your holiday spread—[apps](#), [sides](#), and [entrées](#) included.

We're pretty obsessed with apps year-round, but we've gotta say, our Christmas-themed ones are some of our *best*. We've included a great mix here of cute, like our [pigs in a blanket wreath](#) or our [pull-apart Christmas tree](#); fancy, like our [bacon wrapped dates](#) or our [crab stuffed mushrooms](#); and classic, like our [sausage balls](#) or our [cranberry brie bites](#). They're perfect for cocktail parties, dinner parties, and every occasion in between.

Entrées *are* important (and we've got some incredible ones below), but we'll admit, a lot of the time we're really in it for the sides. We've included our favorite classics here, like our [garlic mashed potatoes](#), our [Ruths Chris Steak House sweet potato casserole](#), our [vegetarian mushroom gravy](#), or our [Crockpot green bean casserole](#). They're the comfort foods you love, with a

little special twist for the holidays.

On to the main event! We've got ideas for you here whether you need something quick and easy to get you and your family through your Christmas to-dos, or are looking for something spectacular to impress guests. [Ham](#) is classic for Christmas dinner, so we've included a number of our favorite recipes here, including our [brown sugar pineapple ham](#) and our [cherry bourbon glazed ham](#). [Pork](#), [turkey](#), and spectacular [beef](#) dishes are also always impressive, so check out our perfect [roast beef](#), our [stuffed pork loin](#), our [turkey roulade](#), or our [beef Wellington](#) for ideas. Want something more low-key? Our [crispy cheddar pork chops with Brussels and apple](#), our [pizza casserole](#), our [shepherds pie](#), and our [chicken pot pie casserole](#) are all one and done meals that your whole family will love, all season long.

Now you've got Christmas dinner all set, check out our favorite [holiday cocktails](#), [cookies](#), and [cakes](#) to fully round out your evening. Merry Christmas, from all of us to you.

Find all the recipes at:

<https://www.delish.com/holiday-recipes/christmas/g2575/classic-dinner-recipes/>



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FROM THE DESK OF
CONGRESSWOMAN KAT CAMMACK



Rep. Cammack Joins Colleagues In Introducing Veterans Day Resolution
WASHINGTON, D.C. — Congresswoman Kat Cammack joined

Congressmen Michael Guest (MS-03) and Henry Cuellar (TX-28) in introducing a resolution in the U.S. House of Representatives to honor the service and sacrifice of America's veterans on Veterans Day, 2023.
Veterans Day was originally called Armistice Day to celebrate the end of the "war to end all wars." The war ended on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918. In 1947, after World War II came to an end, Raymond Weeks organized Veterans Day in Birmingham, Alabama, honoring all veterans; and the idea caught on prompting a bill to change Armistice Day to Veterans Day and to honor all our American veterans who have served our country throughout all time.
Over 16,200,000 veterans live in our great nation and have served our country since World War II. Since the founding of our nation in 1776, there have been over 41,000,000 men and women who have earned the title of veteran.
Veterans throughout our history have fought to preserve Americans' freedoms and protect our liberties. Serving around the world from the Arctic to Japan and from the United States to Iraq, veterans have played a key role in the history of our nation.
Rep. Cammack's Amendment To Rein In Bureaucratic State Passes In Energy & Water Appropriations Bill

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Congresswoman Kat Cammack's language to prohibit funds from being used to finalize any rule or regulation resulting in an annual effect on the economy of \$100 million or more passed in the Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2024.
The amendment would restrict funds at the Department of Energy and related agencies from being used to finalize any rules or regulations with a \$100M+ price tag.
"Under this administration, the regulatory environment has never been worse," said Rep. Kat Cammack. "For too long, the ever increasing regulatory costs have harmed consumers and businesses across the country. Since President Biden took office, the regulatory landscape has deteriorated by numerous new rules and regulations that impact all aspects of our economy. These are regulations that have added hundreds of billions of dollars more in regulatory costs that are ultimately passed down to consumers."
Rep. Cammack delivered remarks on the House Floor about the amendment. H.R. 4394 passed on Thursday, October 26 by a vote of 210-199.
Representatives Cammack, DeLauro, Courtney, Fitzpatrick Introduce Bipartisan Resolution Honoring The Nation's First Responders Day
WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Representatives Kat Cammack (R-FL-03), Rosa DeLauro (D-CT-03), Joe Courtney (D-CT-02), and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA-01) introduced a resolution celebrating October 28 as Honoring the Nation's First Responders Day.
"I'm honored to lead this resolution with my colleagues to honor our first responders.

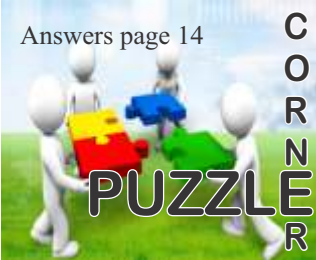
As the wife of a firefighter/paramedic and SWAT medic, this resolution is personal for me," said Rep. Kat Cammack. "The men and women of our first responder community across the nation work tirelessly to keep our communities safe. They run toward danger when the rest of us run away from it and we should be tremendously grateful for their service and sacrifices each day. Imagining a world without them isn't possible, and we thank you for all you do and will always stand with you."
"When Americans find themselves in an emergency and in need of assistance, it is our nation's first responders who stand on the front line ready to respond," said Rep. Rosa DeLauro. "Whether they be firefighters, emergency medical technician, paramedics, or our brave law enforcement officers, first responders hold communities together, protect neighborhoods, and save lives. I am glad to lead my colleagues on a bipartisan resolution celebrating Honoring the Nation's First Responders Day."
"First responders, whether providing support after a natural disaster or caring for communities after tragic events like we saw this week in Maine, are the first on the scene to assist their communities in times of duress," said Rep. Joe Courtney. "I continue to advocate for the necessary resources for our First Responders to carry out their mission and stay safe on the job. This Resolution is merely a display of gratitude and appreciation for our some of our most critical community partners."
"As a formal federal law enforcement officer and former EMT, I know that our firefighters, law enforcement officers, emergency medical technicians, and paramedics are often the first to arrive and the last to leave the scene of any emergency," said Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, co-chair of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus. "Without question, the millions of heroic Americans that serve and risk their lives for our communities in this way each day deserve our appreciation. I am glad to join

my colleagues in recognizing the contribution and public service of our first responders, and remain committed to continuing to secure more resources in support of their missions."

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- Answers page 14
Across
1. What a hog wants
5. Dull-colored
9. In pursuit
14. Inspires reverence
15. 17th of 50
16. More than mislead
17. Some knee-slappers
19. Hardly hidden
20. Clerical abbreviation
21. Aquarium implement
22. Sneaky plots
24. Superhero's secret
27. Stumblebum
28. McShane or Holm
29. Authority on diamonds?
31. Holy image
35. Reeked
38. "Ah, me!"
39. Bookbinder's buy
40. Some executive purchases
43. Hairy humanoid of legend

44. Keep the engine running
45. Get to the other side
46. Some Marvel heroes
47. Prefix meaning "recent"
48. Before, before a word
49. Bolt partner
51. Ghastly
56. Lunar phenomenon
60. Poetic conjunction
61. Confession starter
62. Birds that sound batty
63. Somewhere to sail?
66. "Beetle Bailey" character
67. Fishtail
68. Leer lasciviously
69. You do it if you breathe
70. "Sorry about that!"
71. Partner for means
Down
1. Native New Zealander
2. Had stuff
3. "The Canterbury Tales" character
4. Subj. for some immigrants
5. Slain
6. Clark's Butler
7. It can be hot, thin or cold
8. Give orders to
9. "Welcome to the islands!"
10. Contents of some

- salaries
11. Swarm
12. Raison d'
13. Putrefies
18. Type of valve
23. Thicket
25. Typical baseball game
26. Christmas tradition
30. Medieval club
32. Advertising award
33. Contract loopholes
34. Top Untouchable
35. Mythological river
36. Unnamed ones
37. Comic actor Johnson character
38. Detail handler, maybe
41. Some ice cream units
42. Drive-in feature
48. Uses a blender, perhaps
50. Improbable victory
52. Accelerate sharply
53. Last of a series
54. -mouthed (insincere)
55. Relieves, as pain
56. Otherwise
57. Gently urge
58. Singer or Petty
59. Company that put a tiger in your tank
64. "Telephone Line" rock grp.
65. Porcine mama

Crossword puzzle grid with numbered squares.



## FROM THE DESK OF ATTORNEY GENERAL MOODY



### AG MOODY ANNOUNCES ARREST OF SERVICE PROVIDER FOR DISABLED PATIENTS FOR MEDICAID FRAUD

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit is announcing the arrest of the owner of a home and community-based services company for Medicaid provider fraud. Leslie Diane Minor, owner of Minors Helping Hands Support Services, allegedly caused a loss of more than \$12,000 to Florida Medicaid for billing for services never rendered.

**Attorney General Ashley Moody** said, "This home and community-based services provider overbilled Medicaid by more than \$12,000. Her company billed for services not rendered to disabled adult patients for over a year and a half. Our Medicaid Fraud Control Unit put a stop to her scheme ripping off taxpayers and the Medicaid program."

According to the investigation, Minor owned Minors Helping Hands Support Services, a Jacksonville-based company that assisted with day training for adults with developmental disabilities. During the time period of June 2019 through December 2022, Minor billed for services never rendered to four Medicaid recipients causing a total loss to Medicaid of \$12,335.

The Jacksonville Sheriff's Office assisted in the arrest of Minor, who faces one count of Medicaid provider fraud, a second-degree felony.

Attorney General Moody's MFCU will prosecute the case through an agreement with the State Attorney's Office for the Fourth Judicial Circuit.

### ATTORNEY GENERAL MOODY RECOGNIZES 2022 FLORIDA WOMEN'S HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody is recognizing the 2022 Florida Women's Hall of Fame inductees. The Florida Commission on the Status of Women added Senate President Kathleen Passidomo, Lilly Pulitzer and Audrey Schiebler to the Hall of Fame during a ceremony today for significant contributions to the citizens of Florida.

**Attorney General Ashley Moody** said, "I'm honored to induct three amazing women to the Florida Women's Hall of Fame. Senate President Kathleen Passidomo, Lilly Pulitzer and Audrey Schiebler each play an extraordinary role in our state's history and inspire many Floridians to this day. They have paved the way for the many women who will follow in their footsteps. Their impact on our state will continue to be felt for years to come."

**Chief Financial Officer Jimmy Patronis** said, "For more than 40 years, the Florida Women's Hall of Fame has honored women and the significant contributions they have made to our great state. The members of the Hall of Fame are exceptional leaders, visionaries, and barrier breakers who have helped improve the lives of countless Floridians. They have made a tremendous

impact—from inspiring and educating others to being trailblazers in their fields and working to make Florida a stronger state. It was an honor today to recognize our 2022 inductees, including Senate President Kathleen Passidomo, Audrey Schiebler and Lilly Pulitzer. Congratulations to you all; you are all truly deserving of this special honor."

At a ceremony held by FCSW at the Florida State Capitol, Attorney General Moody inducted Senate President Passidomo, Pulitzer and Schiebler into the Florida Women's Hall of Fame. To commemorate the ceremony, inductees, surviving relatives or an inductee's representative received replicas of the plaques to be placed on the Hall of Fame wall in the Florida Capitol Rotunda in the inductees' honor and an American flag that flew over the U.S. Capitol. The ceremony included celebratory videos and remarks about the legacy of accomplishments and the contributions each inductee has made to the lives of Floridians.

Since its inception in 1982, the Hall of Fame has recognized and honored Florida women that make significant contributions to the improvement of life for all Floridians. Additional inductees include former U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno, singer Gloria Estefan, internationally honored tennis athletes Chris Evert and Althea Gibson, pilot Betty Skelton Frankman, Bethune-Cookman College founder Mary McLeod Bethune, Congresswomen Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Carrie Meek, Tillie Fowler and Ruth Bryan Owen; Florida Trend Publisher Lynda Keever and Everglades advocate and suffragist Marjory Stoneman Douglas.

This year's inductees join current members on the walls of the Florida Capitol and in state-of-the-art video kiosks. Visitors can view all the Hall of Fame members immortalized in the Capitol Rotunda or on the Florida Women's Hall of Fame website by visiting [FLWomensHallofFame.org](http://FLWomensHallofFame.org).

### AG MOODY STANDS UP FOR VICTIM'S FAMILY AND FILES MURDER CHARGES IN CASE WHERE FORMER ROGUE PROSECUTORS WOULD NOT

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Standing united today for justice, Attorney General Ashley Moody, Orange County Sheriff John Mina and State Attorney Andrew Bain announced criminal charges for a man suspected of killing an Orange County teenager. Deandre Eugene Florence now faces first-degree murder, racketeering and other charges for the death of a 15-year-old student, shot while walking to school. Former State Attorney Monique Worrell and former State Attorney Aramis Ayala refused to file charges in the 2018 case. The victim's family and local law enforcement urged Attorney General Moody's Office of Statewide Prosecution to take over the case.

**Attorney General Ashley Moody** said, "In order to protect the public, it is absolutely imperative that we prosecute criminals. Lax criminal justice policies have no place in our state and that is why we are standing up for this victim and filing criminal charges. It is long overdue. We will continue working with our great law enforcement partners and State Attorney Bain to ensure justice for Alex Vargas."

According to the investigation, Florence

was part of a dangerous criminal enterprise known for patterns of racketeering activity. In just a few months, authorities found Florence involved with four grand thefts of automobiles, three commercial burglaries, two murders and one armed robbery. The enterprise used stolen automobiles to target persons and businesses to obtain electronics, including cell phones, computers and more. The suspects then sold the items for profit.

Shortly before Christmas in 2018, the enterprise targeted Alejandro Vargas Martinez while walking to school and talking to his mother on the phone. The suspects tried to steal Vargas' cellphone and, during the robbery, shot the teenager. Florence admitted to being present to the homicide and said the motive for the murder was to rob Vargas for the cellphone. Even with law enforcement's strong investigation and the victim's family requests for justice, Worrell and Ayala did not file charges in the case.

In August, Governor Ron DeSantis suspended Worrell for neglecting her duty to prosecute crime in the Ninth Judicial Circuit. From January 2021 to January 2022, Worrell dismissed or did not prosecute criminal cases against more than 16,000 adult defendants—43% or almost half of all defendants arrested in the Ninth Circuit. Worrell dismissed charges, or did not file cases, against defendants at a higher rate than any other prosecutor in any other circuit in Florida.

Florence faces several criminal charges, including racketeering, first-degree murder, robbery, dealing in stolen property and multiple counts of grand theft. Since the suspension of Worrell, State Attorney Andrew Bain has assisted with the case and cross-designated attorneys with the Office of Statewide Prosecution. Attorney General Moody's Statewide Prosecutor Richard Mantei will handle the case.

### ATTORNEY GENERAL MOODY RECOVERS NEARLY \$3.5 MILLION FOR MILITARY MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Ahead of Veterans Day, Attorney General Ashley Moody is highlighting the millions of dollars in recoveries by the Military and Veterans Assistance Program. Since 2019, MVAP received and provided assistance with more than 2,300 complaints, recovering nearly \$3.5 million for Florida's military members, veterans and families. The program's dedicated attorneys, investigators and other team members help veterans, service members and their loved ones affected by scams and deceptive business practices.

**Attorney General Ashley Moody** said, "Florida takes pride in being a military-friendly state, and we must ensure our service members and their families do not fall prey to scams. Our Military and Veterans Assistance Program has recovered nearly \$3.5 million for affected military members and families. We will continue working hard to assist everyone who has sacrificed so much for our country from fraud and deceptive business practices."

Throughout the last five years, Attorney General Moody's MVAP team has worked daily to assist our service members and veterans, including:

- **Roofing Refund:** The MVAP team helped a Florida veteran, suffering from PTSD, obtain a refund after sustaining substantial damage to his home during Hurricane Ian. A roofing company took the veteran's money and never fixed the damage to the roof. Attorney General Moody's MVAP team

intervened, getting the victim released from the contract and recovering nearly \$19,000 in financial relief, along with a new roof for the veteran.

- **Harris Jewelry:** Harris Jewelry allegedly trained employees to incorrectly tell service members that buying on credit from the company improved credit scores—regardless of credit history or later payment record. The company also failed to comply with consumer financing laws and added unauthorized charges to the amount financed. As part of the settlement in this case, Attorney General Moody recovered and redirected \$50,000 toward educational materials for veterans regarding financial-related scams.

- **Healing Heroes Network:** The organization was accused of falsely promising to use donations to help wounded veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan receive medical treatments. An investigation found that very little of the charitable contributions actually went to further the charitable mission. Most of the money Healing Heroes Network raised allegedly went to professional fundraisers, advertising and salaries. Attorney General Moody, with 10 other state attorneys general, secured \$95,000 to go to a veterans' charity that provides services similar to those Healing Heroes Network represented it would provide. The defendants also agreed to a five-year ban from overseeing, managing or soliciting charitable contributions for any nonprofit organization.

- **American Veterans Foundation, Inc.:** This organization took in millions of dollars in donations by falsely promising that contributions would assist active military members and homeless veterans. Less than 3% of all gathered funds went to helping homeless veterans. Most money went toward fundraising, employee compensation and other overhead with very little money being spent on programs described to donors. Attorney General Moody, with the Federal Trade Commission, secured approximately \$119,000 in funds which were sent to a charitable organization that supports veterans. A portion of those funds were spent to build a specially adapted smart home in Jupiter for a veteran injured in the line of duty.

- **Caring Avenues, LLC and Five Dragon Princesses Holdings, LLC, d/b/a Right at Home:** As a result of these investigations and settlement agreements, all respondents are required to comply with Department of Veterans' Affairs requirements concerning the preparation of and compensation for services related to VA benefits applications. Additionally, \$5,000 was recovered for affected consumers and \$11,804.18 in consumer debts were forgiven.

- **Help the Vets, Inc.:** This organization solicited donations to fund grants, medical care and a suicide prevention program for veterans, but instead used a large portion of donations collected to pay professional fundraisers and compensate the founding director. As a result of this action, approximately \$1.25 million in donations were recovered since January 2019 and redirected to charitable purposes that directly benefited veterans.

Scams or deceptive business practices targeting Florida service members or veterans can be reported at [MyFloridaLegal.com](http://MyFloridaLegal.com), or by calling 1(866)9NO-SCAM.



FROM THE DESK OF

GOVERNOR DESANTIS



**First Lady Casey DeSantis and the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice Announce \$1 Million Investment to Expand Mentoring Services for Florida's Youth**  
**TALLAHASSEE, Fla.** — First Lady

Casey DeSantis and the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) announced the investment of an additional \$1 million to enhance and expand mentoring services for Florida's youth. This investment further builds upon \$12.8 million in mentorship funding at the Department of Children and Families as well as the recent expansion of First Lady Casey DeSantis' Hope Florida initiative to the Statewide Guardian ad Litem Office.

“Investing in mentorship is an investment in Florida's future and one that will empower and strengthen the next generation,” **said First Lady Casey DeSantis.** “Mentoring isn't just about providing guidance to young people; it's about unlocking their unique potential and helping them build skills and resilience that will shape them as our emerging leaders in Florida and our country.”

“I want to thank First Lady Casey DeSantis for her leadership and unwavering support of our work to expand mentorship opportunities for Florida's youth,” **said Department of Juvenile Justice Secretary Eric Hall.** “As we embark on our mission to ensure a stronger, safer Florida, we recognize the transformative impact mentors have on young lives. Mentors help instill confidence and a sense of purpose in youth, giving them hope and paving the way for a brighter, more promising tomorrow.”

The *One Mentor, One Child* initiative was launched last year with the goal of building a statewide mentoring network to serve Florida's youth in their local communities. Since that time, the need for mentors has increased and this targeted investment will allow more youth to be matched with dedicated mentors who can serve as positive role models in their lives.

This additional funding will enhance and expand mentoring services among seven organizations that DJJ has partnered with through the *One Mentor, One Child* initiative. These organizations include Big Brothers Big Sisters Association of Florida,

MaliVai Washington Youth Foundation in Duval County, Marion County Children's Alliance, Unity Family Community Center in Levy County, Girls of Transformation Mentoring Program in Miami-Dade County, Character GPS in Hillsborough County, and the Center 4 Change in St. Lucie County.

**During Apprenticeship Week, Governor Ron DeSantis Awards \$14.4 Million to Expand Apprenticeship Opportunities in Florida**

*~ Funding will support more than 5,000 new apprentices and preapprentices ~*

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla.** — Governor Ron DeSantis awarded \$14.4 million through the Florida Pathways to Career Opportunities Grant (PCOG) to fund 57 proposals to start, expand or operate registered apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs at Florida school districts, colleges, state universities and private training entities. The funding will support over 5,000 participants as they commit to receive on-the-job training and related classroom instruction simultaneously.

“Today's awards help ensure Florida remains the national leader in developing a strong workforce and providing businesses with the talent they need to be successful,” **said Governor Ron DeSantis.** “By investing in education and hands-on career experience, we empower individuals to achieve their full potential and support the continued economic prosperity of our state.”

“This announcement builds upon Florida's historic participation in apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs as the state experienced a 14 percent increase in the number of active apprentices and preapprentices since last year,” **said Commissioner of Education Manny Diaz, Jr.** “Florida's commitment to registered apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs provides students all across Florida a chance to acquire industry-endorsed credentials and postsecondary achievements to prepare for a career with substantial earnings.”

To date, over \$60 million has been awarded through PCOG with 253 proposals funded, over 11,000 participants served and over 250 businesses supported. As a result, students across Florida have access to proven training methods that benefit both job seekers and businesses through apprenticeship and preapprenticeship opportunities and programs. For a complete list of grant awards for 2023–24, visit:

<https://www.fldoe.org/pathwaysgrant/>

Governor Ron DeSantis set a goal of making Florida the number one state in the nation for workforce education by 2030. To make this goal a reality, the Governor has committed more than \$6.8 billion to workforce education and training, making Florida number one in the nation for attracting and developing a skilled workforce.

In Florida, there are nearly 800,000 K–12 career and technical education (CTE)

students — the highest in the state's history — more than 380,000 postsecondary CTE students, and nearly 20,000 registered apprentices engaged in workforce education.

For more information about the Florida Pathways to Career Opportunities Grant Program,

visit [www.fldoe.org/pathwaysgrant](https://www.fldoe.org/pathwaysgrant). To learn more about Florida's apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs, visit [ApprenticeFlorida.com](https://ApprenticeFlorida.com).

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## Be A Holiday Hero



### Get Vaccinated This Season

(NAPSI)—With respiratory virus season in full swing, you may think it's too late for you and your family to get vaccinated against the flu. The good news: it's not.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there's still time to get your flu shot because flu typically peaks in February and can continue into May. Since it takes up to two weeks to build protection against the flu, getting vaccinated now will help protect yourself, your friends and your family from the flu as you gather during the holidays.

### Like Thanksgiving, getting your flu shot is an annual event

It's important to get a flu shot every year because the body's protection from the vaccine declines over time. Also, flu viruses vary from year to year, so receiving the latest vaccine formulation provides optimal protection. It's especially important to protect at-risk populations—such as adults 65 and older—from severe illness.

One-stop shop for immunization and

### illness prevention needs

There are more than 9,000 CVS Pharmacy locations that also offer COVID-19, RSV and more than 15 other preventive vaccines, providing the protection needed as multiple viruses circulate at the same time. CVS Pharmacy is convenient—85% of the U.S. population lives within 10 miles of one. This makes it easy for people to get vaccinated and find items such as over-the-counter cold and flu symptom relief products, immune support supplements and disinfectant cleaning products, and take all the steps necessary to help protect against illness this winter. CVS Pharmacy also carries antiviral medications, which require prescriptions and provide treatment if you do get sick with the flu.

### Advanced scheduling for vaccine appointments

At CVS Pharmacy and MinuteClinic, you can conveniently schedule vaccines for yourself and your family in the same appointment via digital scheduling (through [CVS.com](https://www.cvs.com), [MinuteClinic.com](https://www.minuteclinic.com) or the CVS Pharmacy app), and the pharmacy offers walk-in appointments for people of all ages, seven days per week. As an added bonus, anyone who receives a CDC-recommended vaccine through the end of the year at CVS Pharmacy will get a \$5 off \$20 in-store coupon.

### Learn More

Visit [www.cvs.com](https://www.cvs.com) or [www.minuteclinic.com](https://www.minuteclinic.com)

## Get Started with Your Fitness Program

(NAPSI)—Because physical activity and healthy aging go hand in hand, getting started with a fitness program included in your health plan can do more than help you maintain your health as you age.

“Movement truly is medicine,” says Dr. Jaynie Bjornaraa, physical therapist, fitness professional, adjunct professor, and senior vice president of rehabilitation services and digital fitness solutions at American Specialty Health (ASH).

Dr. Bjornaraa oversees the Silver&Fit® Healthy Aging and Exercise program for ASH, ensuring that its members get evidence-based recommendations when starting their fitness routines. She helped develop the program's onboarding feature, which sets members on individual fitness journeys based on their needs. Fitness levels, exercise goals, and personal preferences all factor into a tailored 14-day workout plan.

“Research has shown that active movement is the best way to prevent and improve chronic disease. And the great thing about exercise is that it benefits your cognitive health—memory and mood—as much as it affects your physical well-being,” according to Dr. Bjornaraa.

She offers this short list of other benefits a thoughtful fitness program can provide:

**1. Improved Health** Being physically active can reduce your risk of disease, strengthen your bones and muscles, help

you manage weight, and boost your mental well-being.

**2. Preventive Care** Physical fitness can help prevent certain high-risk scenarios such as serious injury from falls, which is the leading cause of accidental death in older adults.

**3. Social Interaction** Some programs offer links to connect with clubs and free group fitness classes online for various types and levels of workouts.

**4. Health Rewards** Incentives for tracking your activity through a fitness program can earn various awards as well help you work with your medical provider to better manage any chronic disease.

**5. Personal Coaching** Connecting with a health coach during regularly scheduled sessions through a fitness-focused plan can help you achieve a variety of wellness goals.

**6. Cost Savings** Fitness-focused plans often include low-cost access to fitness centers and exercise videos for a wider variety of workout choices.

**7. Quality of Life** A thoughtfully designed program will help members develop a workout plan, which can help you stay mobile and maintain their independence.

Even for individuals who don't currently engage in fitness activities, Dr. Bjornaraa says it's never too late to start.

Finally, once you've started a fitness plan, make the most of it. Stay committed to a lifestyle of fitness. Regular attendance in exercise classes and engaging in your wellness will go a long way to help you maintain and improve your health.

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