



See Byron Luckey's story on Page 8

### In this issue:

**Higher Trail Recovery Services**

**I'm An Overcomer: Addressing the Stigma of Mental Illness**

**Byron Luckey: Making the Most of My Second Chance in Life**

**So, Who Are You?**

**Don't Fall for These IRS Scams**

**Night of Hope: Honoring Victims and Survivors of Domestic Violence**



### LABOR DAY HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

The City of Ocala business offices will be closed on Monday, Sept. 4 in observance of Labor Day. There will be no residential collection for sanitation, yard waste or recycling routes Monday, Sept. 4.

Residential sanitation collection regularly scheduled for Monday, Sept. 4 through Thursday, Sept. 7, will experience a one-day delay and will be collected Tuesday, Sept. 5 through Friday, Sept. 8.

Waste Pro recycling collection for City of Ocala residents regularly scheduled for Monday, Sept. 4 through Thursday, Sept. 7 will take place Tuesday, Sept. 5 through Friday, Sept. 8.

For more information, please call the City of Ocala Residential Sanitation Division at (352) 351-6697.



# TOWN Talk MAGAZINE

Sharing the good news happening  
in our community.

### Founders

Monica Bryant & Cynthia Wilson-Graham

### Editor

Monica Bryant

### Photography/Editor

Cynthia Wilson-Graham

### Contributors

Scott Hackmyer

Elgin Carelock

Pastor Louis Cherubin

### Let's Talk

#### We want to hear from you:

Email your submissions, events,  
comments or questions to

**Towntalkmagazine@yahoo.com.**

Please include contact information  
(name and phone number) on the  
submission. Deadline is the first  
Monday of each month for the  
following month's publication.

### Policy Statement

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The opinions expressed in this  
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### Contact Us:

Town Talk Magazine  
P.O. Box 6212  
Ocala, FL 34478  
(352) 897-1817

**Towntalkmagazine@yahoo.com**  
**or Towntalkmagazine.org**

## EDITOR'S DESK



In a few days, the United States and other countries will pause to remember the tragic events of September 11, as we observe the 22nd anniversary of the terror attacks that killed 2,977 people from 93 nations: 2,753 people were killed in New York; 184 people were killed at the Pentagon; and 40 people were killed on Flight 93.

Most of us still remember exactly where we were and what we were doing when the first plane flew into the North Tower of the World Trade Center complex. September 11, is Patriot Day and a National Day of Service and Remembrance. On this day Americans across the country are called to volunteer in their local communities in tribute to the individuals lost and injured in the attacks, first responders and the many who have risen in service to defend freedom. **How will you celebrate the day?**

Our community was truly blessed as Hurricane Idalia spared us. As you make plans to celebrate Labor Day on **Monday, September 4, 2023**, with your family and friends, BE SAFE and remember the real reason we celebrate the day, which is to pay tribute to the contributions and achievements of American workers!

September is National Recovery Month, a national observance held to increase awareness and understanding of mental and substance use disorders and celebrate the people who recover. Ocala has a huge recovery community. Come support those in recovery at the Annual Ocala Recovery Fest on **Saturday, September 9, 2023**, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Tusawilla Park, 300 N.E. Sanchez Ave. The event, which is free and open to the public, includes exhibitor booths, recovery resources, entertainment, food and the winner of the annual Recovery Champion Award will be announced.

And finally, if you are not aware, the Ocala Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Center, also known as Creative Services, Inc., has closed as of August 1, and no longer serves the Marion County community.

In collaboration with the Department of Children and Families, the Florida Domestic Violence Collaborative and the Florida Partnership to End Domestic Violence are in the process of transitioning services to another certified center while assisting survivors with safe relocation. The Department is working to ensure that there are no gaps in services or resources for the community. During this transition, resources and services **ARE** available.

Let's Talk!

*Monica*

Monica T. Bryant, Editor

All requests for emergency domestic violence services can be directed to the Florida Domestic Violence Hotline.



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# COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

## HIGHER TRAIL RECOVERY SERVICES

Steve Geohegan's road to recovery started 16 years ago in this community at Unity Place and correctional probation services through Kara Fairbrother at Salvation Army probation.

"Once I asked for help, a lot of individuals and agencies here in Marion County assisted me in getting sober as well as habilitating me. I participated in residential treatment at the Centers (now SMA) with the court's permission," he said.

Geohegan said he started his career in the recovery field because of Sharon Chauncy and Addie Rawls, who continues to support and encourage him. He said they both took a chance on him and he is forever grateful for being in the right room, at the right time, with the right people.

The biggest misconception about people in recovery he said, is that individuals cannot change once addiction has been presented or that abstinence is the only requirement for recovery when it truly is the beginning of it. He said the best advice he received while in recovery was to get connected and pay attention, and that habilitation, instead of rehabilitation, is the key to connecting to people that suffer from addiction.

Now Geohegan is helping others through Higher Trail Recovery Services, an organization he started in October 2021 to address the huge gap in services from residential services to community, something he often saw during his career in the treatment industry. He said addiction has been a moving target over the years, so treating it has to be innovative.

"Individuals need a bridge of safety and clinical/comprehensive case management along with professional coaching to sustain sobriety," he said. "The thought process was based out of the many times I went into detox at the Centers and would notice individuals were graduates of the residential services a week prior or a month ago. There had to be a way that we could continue engagement with individuals post treatment"

While in college, Geohegan created a business plan in the Master of Business program as part of the finals and the response was well received. A few consultations and many prayers later and it came to fruition. The name has a special meaning due to the lack of connection addiction destroys and everyone being on their own path in life. He said recovery is all about being on your own journey.

"We thought being connected physically, mentally, spiritually and socially was the solution and placed individuals on the path to a Higher Trail," he said.

Higher Trail offers Clinical Comprehensive Case Management, Coaching, Housing and Private and Virtual Therapy. All services are self-pay and insurance does not cover Substance Use Disorder (SUD) case management or coaching services. The organization has grown in the past two years and in addition to the four staff members, they also have interns and therapists who provide services. Right now, their greatest challenge is keeping up with the growth by continuing to build infrastructure and creating systems of care that are safe and integrity filled. They are currently working with a few providers discussing options to ensure there is a medical protocol inpatient detox facility in Ocala.

"Detox is the beginning of the most successful recoveries," he said. "We need that here and installing connections during that time is critical."

Future plans include expanding their consulting and possibly intervention services and adding a women's residence by February 2024 to provide individual therapy services for those who are in need but have difficulty with tradition methods of care or prefer services in a safe space.

"This was never in the plans for me," Geohegan said. "I was nurtured and continue to be by great men in my life."

Services are available 24 hours a day by calling (352) 497-5253 or go to [highertrailrecovery.com](https://highertrailrecovery.com). They are also on LinkedIn or you can send an email to [highertrailrecovery@gmail.com](mailto:highertrailrecovery@gmail.com).



Steve Geohegan, founder,  
Higher Trail Recovery Services



The **Community Spotlight** highlights a person, place or event in our community. Tell us what's happening around town so we can share your **Good News** with others. Email submissions to [Towntalkmagazine@yahoo.com](mailto:Towntalkmagazine@yahoo.com).



# I AM AN OVERCOMER: ADDRESSING

*Submitted by Louis Cherubin, Pastor of Kingdom Revival Church*

I am not a survivor. I am not even lucky. But, what I would say... I am an overcomer by the grace of God. My name is Louis Cherubin, currently the Lead Pastor of Kingdom Revival Church (KRC). I am a husband to an amazing, beautiful woman, Danielle, and a father to Uriah, Tatum, Isaiah, Naomi, and Terrace. They are more than my family; they are my support system. They love me and they are there for me. But what's more amazing is that my support system doesn't end there. I have a host of people who I included to be a part of my support system. It's more than I deserve and I am grateful to God.

I want to share my story. If you know me and are around me, you will come to know that I am very transparent. It is not about being brave in sharing; it is about being real and hoping to end the widely stigmatized thoughts regarding mental illness.

I suffer from mental illness and all of its ugly, painful effects. My hope is to inspire others to come out and share their stories without fear and to inspire others to educate themselves and try to understand. This is not my way of trying to get sympathy or play victim. This is the most real I can be in summing up a lifetime of pain, about a subject (Mental Illness) that needs to be discussed openly and publicly in order to save lives and end the stigma. I was diagnosed with severe depression and anxiety, which didn't come from situational circumstances, and I also had suicidal tendencies.

In society today, mental illness becomes a label, a directive of how some people may judge you before even meeting you or knowing anything else about you. Some people resist treatment because they are scared an employer, school, doctor or other important life guide may deny or judge them. Many people do not understand how to deal with a depressed friend, relative or acquaintance. It is easier to pretend it does not exist, title them as the crazy one, or say things that actually minimize the disease, that suggest it will just magically go away. Ex: just work out, eat healthier, do yoga, snap out of it. The cycle begins, nobody feels comfortable hearing about depression or suicide and then the depressed individual hides their pain, fearing judgment, embarrassment or being labeled.

I have dealt with depression since the military. It took years for me to understand what it was and why I was different. I fought it for years, and I never got help. Many never knew I struggled. At the time I was a ministerial leader in the church. I dare not share my experiences of my struggle with others in the church for fear of judgement. I had to carry a certain act of strength, and I would pretend while in my struggle. From the exterior I was perceived to be outgoing, approachable and fun, but it was a facade. I felt like I really wanted to be that person; I pretended to be. I really thought that my personality had taken a scary form and I didn't want anybody to know. Later, I quickly realized that my personality is not my depression. The way I look is not my depression.

I remember my first suicide attempt. It came shortly before I was diagnosed with a thyroid condition, Hyperthyroidism. I was in the middle of a thyroid storm and didn't realize it. I was shaking uncontrollably; I couldn't sleep; I was paranoid; and my behavior was erratic. I was not myself. I felt like I was going to die. My career in the military was in jeopardy and my marriage was hanging on by a thread. My wife was pregnant with our first child and she was labeled "high risk." They thought our baby would have down syndrome or worse. I felt like the world was closing in on me and I needed relief. I remember crying out to God to help me while standing in an empty room at my house. No response. So, I took out my revolver and placed a bullet in the chamber and played Russian roulette. After pulling the trigger several times, I realized that it wasn't my time yet.

For several years I tried to hide my condition. I always tried doing anything to escape the pain of my emotions. I decided to keep myself busy. I thought that doing more and being busy would distract me, so I did more ministry and I was always out of town. The busier I got, the worse I got until I finally got the help I needed.

Fast forward, after years of medication and different types of therapy and reaching a point where the side effects from the medications outweighed the problems they were prescribed for, my life became a slew of side effects and more medications to treat the side effects. Those of us with mental illness like to refer to these as "med cocktails."

I started to get tired of all the doctor, therapy appointments and side effects, while still struggling with low moods regularly. One day, while sitting in the car at work on my lunch break, I heard about a woman who died by committing suicide.

# THE STIGMA OF MENTAL ILLNESS!



All I could think of was how lucky she was that she was finally out of her pain. Impulsively, I took an overdose of sleeping pills and benzodiazepines. I sent a few “I love you texts” to love ones. While laying in the hot car sweating profusely, my coworker found me unconscious. She didn’t know of my struggles until that day. I was taken to the emergency room. It turned out I did not take enough pills to do the job and they actually let me leave. I never shared it with anyone outside of work.

A month later I sunk even lower and I gave up. I was done fighting my inner demons that tried to hold me down and hold me back. I was so tired of fighting. I felt I was a burden and saw no other way out of the pain. It was not selfishness; in my mind it was truly the answer to alleviate my pain and the pain I burdened others with. I attempted suicide again. This time I was coming back from a youth service where I was the main speaker. I held the position Youth Pastor for the State church organization I was a part of. During the service, I had forgotten

about all the things that I struggled with and all the things I faced. It seemed to all disappear. That’s what happens when you enter the presence of the Lord. I hadn’t felt that in a long time. It was amazing.

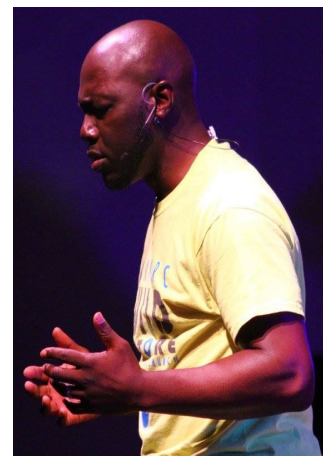
On my three-hour long trip back, something happened. I went from a feeling of being on top of the world, to feeling the lowest of the lows. It came back. I couldn’t believe it. I said to myself, why do I have to deal with this? I heard the voice in my head saying, “No one loves you; your family is better off without you; you are nothing...” The voice would not stop. It got louder and louder and louder. I took off driving on a two-lane road, one of the back roads that a lot of people travel. This road had no street lights and the area had no cellular service. While driving this dark road at 3 o’clock in the morning, I ended up turning my headlights off. My foot got heavier, and my car went faster; 50, 65, 75, 95, 105... I said to myself, this is it! I am finally going to do it and it’s going to be over. Then all of a sudden, my cell phone rings. It surprised me and caught my attention because I shouldn’t have had any service. I answered it out of curiosity without looking at who was calling because I was on a mission and now, I was interrupted. I really was annoyed until I heard my son’s voice. My baby boy said “daddy, when are you coming.” That voice changed me. It lowered the volume of the voice in my head. My foot got lighter and my car came to a complete stop. I am coming home soon, I replied and hung up. I cried and cried. My depression actually got the best of me and I was ashamed. My children almost lost their father. My wife nearly lost her husband. I was afraid and embarrassed by my actions. It was hard looking in the mirror knowing that the person staring back at me tried to kill me. Imagine that. I overcame self-murder.

The most important thing anyone can do for someone expressing suicidal thoughts is to listen and not judge or minimize what they are saying. Open dialogue has to start somewhere and my somewhere started 14 years ago. I am still a good person. I am still kind, intelligent and reasonable. I am also gifted with insight, the ability to forgive and admit wrong doing. I appreciate my ability to relate to others on many levels and be open-minded. My illness does not define me, but it is part of who I am.

I am relieving my conscious of the secret I held due to fear of being judged or misunderstood. I have a lifetime illness and I struggle almost daily in some way and it is real! A suicide note is real. Quiet struggles are real. A beautiful smile may or may not be real. Talking openly is not just real; it is necessary!

Please rethink your ideas regarding mental illness. Ask those you love if they are ok. A simple smile can change another person’s day, and learn the signs and the symptoms. It is not contagious; however, it is deadly. Yes, some suicides are impulsive and due to circumstance, but this is where education can be so helpful.

Thankfully, after 14 years since my attempts, things have really changed. God has given me the strength and courage to share my story since that time and it has been amazing. People have come forward; families are healing; and my community is becoming more aware. The church that I pastor along with other churches in our community has brought awareness to the city of Ocala for years. Our church will celebrate 10 years in 2024. Kingdom Revival Church will be more intentional with the Mental Health and Recovery communities. In 2024, KRC will transition to being a Wellness Center that will serve both communities.





## ROUNDTABLE SET FOR THE BUILDING COMMUNITY

The City of Ocala's Growth Management Department, in collaboration with the Marion County Building Industry Association, will host a roundtable for members of the building community on Thursday, September 7, 7:30 a.m. to 9 a.m. at Ocala Golf Club, 3130 E Silver Springs Blvd.

This meeting will focus on opening lines of communication and collaboration between the City of Ocala, Marion County and professionals in the industry.

This free event is an opportunity for contractors, engineers, architects, and other building industry professionals to connect with city officials to learn more about city grant programs, processes, and resources, share feedback, and collaborate on opportunities for refinement. A complimentary breakfast will be served.

For more information, please contact Growth Management at (352) 629-8287 or email [gmd@ocalafl.org](mailto:gmd@ocalafl.org).

## DON'T FORGET TO VOTE IN THE CITY OF OCALA ELECTION

(Only registered voters who live within the Ocala city limits are eligible to vote in this election.)

Mail Ballot Request Deadline: September 9, 2023  
(Mail ballots must be received by the Supervisor of Elections office by 7 p.m. Election Day to be counted)

### Election Day:

September 19, 2023 ~ Polls open 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.



Your vote  
**IS**  
your voice!

If you  
**DON'T** vote  
**DON'T**  
**COMPLAIN!!**



**IN PERSON DEBATE**

OCALA CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 3  
**2024 ELECTION DEBATE**

MODERATED BY  
**MYLES M. McCONICO**  
*Kit Dillard*

**IRE BETHEA, SR**  
INCUMBENT

**REGINALD LANDERS**  
CANDIDATE

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11th**  
6:00PM AT GREATER HOPEWELL MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH  
REVEREND DR. EDWARD BLAND, PASTOR  
515 NW 6TH TERRACE, OCALA, FL 34475

PLEASE NOTE:  
Attendees will be allowed to ask questions in written form

Streaming Live on Facebook  
[Greaterhopewell515](https://www.facebook.com/Greaterhopewell515)

## LEGENDS OF THE FORT TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

Tickets are now on sale for the Ocala Recreation and Parks Department's second annual 'Legends of the Fort' at Fort King National Historic Landmark, 3925 E. Fort King St., on Saturday, September 30, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Visitors will step back into history to meet the legends of Fort King's past. A one-hour guided lantern tour will present tales from the past while guests learn about the grounds of Ocala's Seminole War historic site. Group tours will depart every 30 minutes. Old-fashioned games such as checkers, horseshoes, cornhole and live music will round out the evening of fun. Parking will be available onsite at Fort King. Refreshments will also be available for purchase.

Tickets must be purchased online. Walk-up ticket sales will not be available on the night of the event. General admission: \$10 per participant.

For more information, visit [www.ocalafl.gov/recpark](http://www.ocalafl.gov/recpark), call the City of Ocala Recreation and Parks Dept. at (352) 368-5517, or follow [@OcalaRecPark](https://www.facebook.com/OcalaRecPark) on Facebook.

Marion County  
FLORIDA  
VETERANS SERVICES

**National POW/MIA Recognition Day**

*Though not here...  
their sacrifice is not forgotten*

Marion County Veterans Park Pavilion  
2601 E. Fort King Street, Ocala  
Friday September 15, 2023 @ 11:00  
Special Curated POW MIA Display

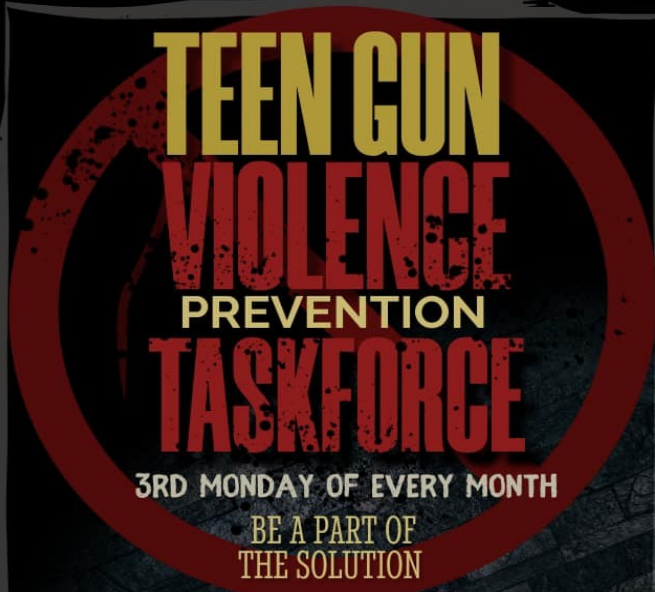


**988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline Available 24 Hours**

Hours: Available 24 hours. Languages: English, Spanish



# WAYS TO GET INVOLVED IN OUR COMMUNITY




**TEEN GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION TASKFORCE**  
 3RD MONDAY OF EVERY MONTH  
 BE A PART OF THE SOLUTION

Community Taskforce  
 Facilitated by the Marion County Children's Alliance

**MARY SUE RICH COMMUNITY CENTER**  
 1821 NW 21st AVE OCALA, FL 34475  
 6:00pm

For information contact: Jeremy Vickers  
 Cell: (352) 512-5276  
 email: Jeremy@mcchildrensalliance.org



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## SHOW OUR SURVIVORS WE CARE SPONSOR A BASKET TO GIVE THEM



for Victims and Survivors of Domestic Violence attending the 2023 Night of Hope September 28, 2023



Choose from one of our themes (Personal Pampering, Italian Dinner, Movie Night, Board Game, A Night Out, Gardening, Summer Time, Scrap Book/Memories, Music, Healthy Living) or **Choose Your Own Theme**



Baskets or supplies can be dropped off at the Alliance Office, 3482 N.W. 10th St., Ocala, FL 34475

Deadline: **September 15, 2023.**

Scan the **QR Code** to purchase tickets to attend the event or for Sponsorship Opportunities

Call Valerie at **(352) 438-5990** for more information.

## SAVE THE DATE

GIVE TO LOCAL NONPROFITS ON MARION COUNTY'S EXCLUSIVE GIVING DAY

**September 19th-20th**



FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT  
 COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR OCALA/MARION COUNTY  
 352-622-5020 EXT 105  
 ASHLEY@OCALAFUNDATION.ORG  
 WWW.GIVE4MARION.ORG



## WEAR YOUR WINGS 5K RUN/WALK Saturday, October 14, 2023

Race Starts and Ends at the **College of Central Florida**  
 3001 SW College Rd., Ocala, FL 34474

(Park in the Dassance Fine Arts (Building 4) parking area)  
 Meet by the Bell Tower for Start

### Register Now:

<http://wearyourwings5k.itsyourrace.com/>



7 AM REGISTRATION AND PACKET PICK UP  
 8 AM RACE | WALK STARTS

Early Registration

\$30 per adult

\$10 per child (under 10)



Day of Registration

\$35

Group Rate: **\$25** for groups of 10 or more  
 Call (352) 438-5990 for team discount code



SHIRTS & FINISHER MEDALS GUARANTEED TO THE FIRST 250 REGISTRANTS

AWARDS: FIRST PLACE OVERALL MALE/FEMALE  
 AND TOP 3 FINISHERS IN EACH AGE GROUP MALE/FEMALE



or Scan QR Code to register

For sponsorship opportunities or if you would like to make a donation call Valerie at (352) 438-5990.



# BYRON LUCKEY: MAKING THE MOST OF MY

Before Byron Luckey's life started going down the wrong path, he remembers creating stories and characters and making illustrations of his friends as characters in Mr. Horne's third grade class at Belleview-Santos Elementary.

Luckey, who grew up in Marion County, said he was always given support. For most of his life, he had been told how smart or how handsome he was and how he had so much potential. His Nana was always his biggest fan and the community around him, including his teachers, family and his doctors, all helped build his self-confidence.



"The thing about encouragement is that without guidance, they were creating a monster," he said. "I had charisma and knew exactly what to say to get out of serious trouble which further enabled my behavior. I needed true guidance, accountability and discipline. I think those are things a father teaches his son."

But Luckey's father wasn't around and he didn't even know who he was until he was 27 years old. He was raised by his mom who ran from Texas and moved to Ocala with her mother to escape an abusive/racist father who forced her to abort three children prior to him because the fathers were black. He has three sisters and met one of them a few years ago because she was given up for adoption early in his life. The family grew up in Section 8 housing and on food stamps. His mom went to jail for a while when he was young and he went to live with his Nana.

"My childhood could be described as a rollercoaster, a lot of ups and downs and over too soon," he said.

As a kid, Luckey was arrested numerous times for fighting and once for growing marijuana. He was 14 years old when he was arrested for the first time for fighting for a silly reason. The other boy claimed to beat him up previously and his young ego didn't know how to handle the situation so when he got off the bus at Fort King Middle School, he found the boy and he said, he put his hands on him. He was expelled, arrested by the School Resource Officer and taken to the Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC). He was given juvenile probation and community service.

Luckey went to nine different schools and never really attended high school even though he was mostly an A, B student. He got his G.E.D. in 10th grade in 2004 and got his first job and was introduced to paying bills at 14 when he helped his mom pay their rent.

"As a teenager, I engaged in all the activities of a parent's worst nightmare. Sex, drugs, guns, money and violence were very prevalent," he said.

He met his first wife when he was 16 years old. She joined the Air Force after graduating from Vanguard High School. On a visit to San Antonio, Tx., she got pregnant and they got married and were stationed in Great Falls, MT.

"I went up there with good intentions but no desire to change," Luckey said. "After about 8 months, I got wrapped up in the same lifestyle up there as I did down here except now my ego was huge. I was making a lot of money and I thought I was the s\*\*\* and the toilet paper."

At age 19, he was arrested in Great Falls, MT., by ICE and the Montana Drug Task Force for possession of a stolen firearm and using and carrying while in commission of drug trafficking. He was sentenced to 27 months in Federal Prison. At age 22, June 23, 2011, a day he will never forget, he was released from a Federal Prison in Victorville, CA., and sent to a halfway house in Ocala.

"The moment that changed me took 298 days to get through. However sad it may seem; prison made me a man. Specifically, the 10 months in the hole helped shape who I am today," he said. "To be clear, I do not think my path is or should be to the credit of a successful criminal justice system. Self-reflection, desire, hope and opportunity; those things are what give me the drive today. I developed skills and those life attributes while on lock down 24/7."



Jackie Shaw and Byron Luckey  
2010 Federal Correctional Institute II, Victorville, CA

When Luckey got home in November 2011, the couple divorced and he struggled to find a job. He got denied when he tried to enroll in college and enlist in the military. He ended up washing dishes at RJ Gators in the Villages and remarried a year later. He completed his parole in 2014 and enrolled in CF (now the College of Central Florida) in 2015, the year his Nana died. In 2016 he was on the honor roll at CF and met his father and brother for the first time during Spring Break.



# SECOND CHANCE IN LIFE: I'M NOT DONE YET!

When he returned home, he found out his wife was addicted to heroin and she went to jail. He ended up homeless with his three children and had to drop out of college.

In April of 2017, Luckey found a place to live in Belleview. He remains single and is enjoying the first bit of stability in his life.

Now Luckey, along with Tiera Gates and Mook Boy, will be guest speakers at a Teen Summit on Sunday, September 3, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Ed Croskey Recreational Complex, 1510 NW 4th St. The event, hosted by the Teen Gun Violence Prevention Taskforce and MEGGA, includes a Live DJ, Bounce Houses, Entertainment, Giveaways and Free Food.



The Taskforce, facilitated by the Marion County Children's Alliance, was formed seven months ago to address the increase in gun violence in the community. Since January 1, 2023, there's been 11 gun violence deaths and seven remained unsolved. The meetings, which are open to the public, are held the third Monday of each month at 6 p.m. at the Mary Sue Rich Community Center at Reed Place, 1821 NW 21st Ave., Ocala, FL.

"My expectations for the Labor Day Jump-off Teen Summit is to hear the voices of our youth pertaining to gun violence through their eyes, and to get an understanding of their need/want to carry guns. Is there an alternative to this type of behavior, if so what is it?" said Taskforce Chair Jeremy Vickers. "What can the community do to make kids feel safer? Ultimately we want to create a safe and healthy space for our younger generation to express themselves without judgement or backlash."

Luckey said he just wants to give back to the community in whatever way he can and if sharing his experience can accomplish that then he's all for it.

"I think events like this can spark things like desire, hope and opportunity in someone. Even if the kid is enlightened and makes an effort to better themselves after this, that has to be considered a success.

Luckey is a full-time student at CF; a part-time server and a local store marketer at Harry's Seafood Bar and Grill. He's a single parent and has custody of three of his four children. He owns a photography business called Legacy 88 LLC aka 88 Productions, a passion of his that he hopes to make into a large business one day.

Currently, he offers basic photography and videography services for weddings, events, portraits and music videos, and crew services (grips, gaffers, audio engineers, etc) for film sets. For now, he is taking things slow with his business, which is why his website is not active. He's used word of mouth for the last two years because one of his challenges is utilizing social media.

"I dream of running a film production company, but I like where I am raising my kids in Belleview and don't want to move for the sake of a job," he said. "I'd rather just build what I can now and when the opportunity presents itself take action."

Luckey has less than a year before he obtains his Bachelor's in Business Management, but his children and the effort they put in are what he's most proud of. He said he's not a perfect parent by any means, but he loves that his kids are not afraid of challenges.

At 34-years old, Luckey said he's not done yet, but just getting started. He said the things he's done up to this point are good and he's very proud of himself, but he really wants to make an impact.

"The most important things in my life right now are integrity and accountability," he said. As long as I hold those two things high, I feel I can achieve all the success I'm looking for despite my past."

The best way to reach Luckey for photography or video work is through Facebook Messenger, by phone or text at **(352) 875-7350** or email **luckeybyron88@gmail.com**.





**KDC & THE  
SUNSHINE  
SLIDERS**



**ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP  
FUNDRAISER**




**BOAS & BOWTIES**  
*Dinner & Dance*

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2023  
SATURDAY | **16** | SEPTEMBER  
6pm - 10pm

ED CROSKEY RECREATION CENTER  
1510 NW 4TH ST. OCALA, FL 34475

**\$30 TICKETS AVAILABLE  
EVENTBRIGHT ONLY**

**NAACP** 5114  
MARION COUNTY BRANCH

The NAACP 5114 Marion County Branch will host its annual **JAZZ & JUSTICE** event the evening of Saturday, September 9th beginning at 6pm. This signature event will honor the recipient of our inaugural [Advance the Cause of Justice Award](#) recognizing an organization or individual whose contributions and achievements in the pursuit of criminal and/or social justice exemplifies the compassion, perseverance, courage, and servant leadership needed toward building Dr. King's "beloved community".

We are thrilled to announce that  
**Judge LeAnn Mackey-Barnes**  
is our 2023 recipient of the  
[Advance the Cause of Justice Award](#).



**September 9, 2023**  
**6:00PM - 9:00PM**  
**FOR PAPER TICKETS: \$35**  
CALL THE BRANCH OFFICE:  
**(352) 351-4560**

ONE HEALTH CENTER  
SW 17TH AVE, OCALA, FL 34471

**DON'T FALL FOR THESE IRS SCAMS  
REPORT AN IRS SCAM**

- Impersonation scams are reported to the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration on the IRS Impersonation Scam Reporting webpage.
- Phone scams are reported to the Federal Trade Commission using the FTC Complaint Assistant. Add "IRS Telephone Scam" in the notes.
- Unsolicited emails claiming to be from the IRS can be emailed to [phishing@irs.gov](mailto:phishing@irs.gov).

**The Economic Impact Payment:** Involves emails with subject lines such as "Third Round of Economic Impact Payments Status Available." In 2021, the third round of stimulus payments occurred and scammers use this tax event to trick people into clicking on a link to complete a fake application on a website that steals people's personal information.

**You May Be Eligible For The ERC" claim:** The Employee Retention Credit, aka Employee Retention Tax Credit, was a pandemic related credit that select employers qualified for. Scammers use this to lure people into claiming eligibility without discussing how they are eligible. The scam encourages people to take immediate action and often targets people through social media, radio, unsolicited phone calls, emails and fake government letters that have fake agency names and urges immediate action.

**Claim Your Tax Refund Online:** Scammers use this scheme to tempt people into thinking they have missed their tax refund. These emails are full of misspellings and urge people to click a false link

**The "Help You Fix-It" Text Scheme:** Scammers target people by telling them there is something wrong with their return, and if they click on a link, they can fix it.

**"Delivery Service" Scam At Your Door:** This mail scam leads people to believe they are owed a refund. The mail arrives in a cardboard envelope from a delivery service and contains a letter with the IRS masthead and wording that the notice is "in relation to your unclaimed refund."





**SPONSORSHIP FORM—COMPLETE AND RETURN WITH YOUR AD BY DECEMBER 31, 2023**

AD SIZES: CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

\$500	(1) Full-Page Color Ad (Back Cover)
\$350	(2) Full-Page Color Ad (Inside-Front/Back Cover)
\$100	Full-Page b/w Ad
\$75	Half-Page b/w Ad
\$50	Fourth-Page b/w Ad
\$35	Business Card b/w Ad
Free	Business Listing

**SPECIFICATIONS**

**FULL PAGE - W 7.5 X D 9.75**

**HALF PAGE - W 7.5 X D 4.75**

**FOURTH PAGE - W 3.5 X D 4.75**

**EMAIL ARTWORK TO:  
 HHP5032C@ICLOUD.COM  
 (.JPG, .PDF, OR .TIFF)**

**All artwork final once received.**

**ADVERTISEMENT POLICY**

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<b>PHONE</b>	<b>EMAIL</b>

**ALL PAYMENTS RECEIVED ARE NON-REFUNDABLE.**

**QUESTIONS CALL: CYNTHIA GRAHAM AT 352-286-1772**

Please send completed form and payment to:

**HHP and Design Publishing Company Inc. (HHP) c/o Cynthia Graham | P.O. Box 6752 | Ocala, Florida 34478**

Check—I have enclosed a check made payable to: H. H. P& Design Publishing. (HHP)

Check Card Payment— Please send invoice to:

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Customer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## ~ SO, WHO ARE YOU? ~

By Elgin Carelock, Chairman of the Greater Ocala Community Development Corporation



Photo courtesy of Min An on Pexels.com of their personal identity.

There is a great quote from Dr. Seuss that reads, "Today you are You, that is truer than true. There is no one alive more Youer than You."

As I began the last iteration of my practice as a leadership coach, I began to realize how many people have not been able to achieve the growth and success they desire because they did not know themselves. Not in the sense of amnesia or any physical disorder, but from the standpoint

One of the first exercises I give new clients is to give me five adjectives that describe who they are. We then look at each word to determine why they chose that word and how it relates to their goals and aspirations.

As leaders, they typically use words that they want others to attribute to them and not ones they believe accurately describe them. Of course, this is partially due to the newness of our relationship, but it is also a result of them not wanting to take a deep dive into who they are because there may be traits that are inconsistent with being an effective leader (at least in their minds).

The "world" would have you believe that leaders are larger than life, strong, all knowing, with no flaws. I am writing this article today to tell you that is not only nonsense, but I wouldn't follow anyone who does not struggle with being human to some degree. We are the sum of every aspect of our existence, the good, the bad and the ugly! We must not only admit who we are, but embrace it, if we are to truly have success in leading our lives, as well as others.

Understanding an addiction to pornography can affect the way you treat others, not because you want to have sex with them, but how it can cause dominant or permissive behaviors when dealing with people you are attracted to or not.

I am not a psychiatrist or psychologist, nor do I play one on TV. However, with more than two decades of management and a decade in leadership coaching and growth mindset, I can tell its okay to be honest with yourself. You may be afraid of making "cold calls" because of the rejection or don't like confronting underperforming team members but being honest about those traits is how you learn to overcome them.

Overcoming them may require help from a license mental health professional and that is great for your long-term sustainability, but in many cases the problem doesn't run that deep. As Morpheus tells Neo in the first Matrix, "you have to let it all go Neo, fear, doubt, disbelief .... free your mind!"

Freeing your mind is giving yourself permission to not be perfect, to understand even the greatest business people have issues.

As we identify our issues we can learn from those who have achieved our desired goals despite their shortcomings. We don't need them to solve our problems but provide a template for moving to the next level. Working with a coach or mentor is also necessary for accountability because it is too easy to revert to old habits when life gets tough.

So how do you get started? I would suggest taking this free personality test at <https://www.16personalities.com/free-personality-test>. Once you have the result, write down why you agree or disagree with each of the four letters. Afterwards, have someone who is very close to you read the letters and their traits and ask them to write down why they agree or disagree.

If you are feeling brave, ask them to tell you which of those traits they like about you the most and the least and what you can do to improve your relationship with them. This may lead to some hard truths, but will start you on the journey to self-discovery, which invariably will make you a better leader and human being.

## Business Spotlight



**LASHES &  
BROWS BY JEN**  
352-229-9247

**Business Name:** Lashes and Brows By Jen

**No. of Employees:** 1

**Business Owner:** Jen White

**Business Address:** 3001 W. Silver Springs Blvd.,  
Bldg. 400, Suite 19, Ocala, FL 34475

**Business Phone:** (352) 229-9247

**What Year Did You Start Your Business?** 2023

**Hours of Operation:**

Mondays (By Appointment Only)

Tuesday - Saturday, starting at 10 a.m - until

Sundays - Closed

**Products and/or Services:**

Provides eyelash application; Brow tint; Brow-chin lip wax; Eyebrow arching; Wig cutting and shaping

**Email:** [scissorladi187@gmail.com](mailto:scissorladi187@gmail.com)

**Website:** N/A

**Are you on Social Media?** Yes

**Facebook:** Jen White

**What or Who Inspired you to start your business?**

I believe timing is everything. I decided to pursue an education in Cosmetology later in life. My grandmother, who owned her own salon "Lady Be Lovely" in Bartow, FL for many years, was my initial inspiration. She was such a pretty woman. She always had her eyebrows done even as she aged well into her 70's. I didn't realize I had the same passion for the beauty industry until I was in my 30's. Once I got over the struggles of being a new stylist, I found my specialty.

**What Makes Your Business Unique or What's Your Specialty?**

Nobody wants an uneven eyelash. Part of the qualities a good lash or brow technician should possess is the ability to make both sides of the eyes even. I have good spatial ability and I can judge when one eyebrow seems fuller or one side is up higher than the other. I envision the finished look before I start the process. My prices are lower than most people in the area. I believe that looking beautiful should be affordable.

I love being on the other side watching my clients' face when they see themselves in the mirror!

*The Small Business Profile is FREE and open to small businesses located in Marion County with less than 25 employees or solo entrepreneurs.*

*To have your business featured in an upcoming edition, please request a form by emailing [Towntalkmagazine@yahoo.com](mailto:Towntalkmagazine@yahoo.com). Completed forms can be returned via email or mailed to P.O. Box 6212, Ocala, FL 34478.*





Hear the opinions and concerns of our youth pertaining to gun violence



TEEN GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION TASKFORCE & MEGGA PRESENTS

LABOR DAY JUMPOFF

**TEEN SUMMIT**

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GIVEAWAYS

LIVE DJ

FREE FOOD

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SUNDAY  
SEPTEMBER 3RD  
4:00-8:00pm

Special Guest Panelist  
Including >>>>

Byron Luckey  
Tiera Gates  
Mook Boy

ED CROSKEY RECREATIONAL COMPLEX

1510 NW 4TH ST OCALA, FL 34475

For More Info Jeremy (352) 512-5276  
Shawn (352) 445-3539

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The City of Ocala, in partnership with Green For Life (GFL), will conduct a special waste amnesty day Saturday, Sept. 9, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. The collection site is located at NE 14th Street and NE Eighth Avenue.

Special waste consists of household hazardous waste and electronics. Neither of these types of waste is permitted to be picked up with the regularly scheduled residential waste collection. Special waste from businesses will not be collected.

This annual collection day allows residents to safely dispose of items from their homes. Previous collection days for the city have resulted in approximately 30,000 pounds of materials remaining out of landfills and city water systems. GFL and the City are committed to protecting the environment through special waste amnesty days throughout the year.

**Examples of hazardous waste items accepted:**

- Lawn and garden chemicals
- Paint, paint thinners and gasoline
- Cleaning fluids
- Fluorescent bulbs
- Used oil and filters
- Auto batteries
- Pool chemicals
- Aerosol cans

**Examples of electronic items accepted:**

- Answering machines
- Battery chargers
- Computers, keyboards and monitors
- Small copiers, printers and fax machines
- CD/DVD/Blu-ray players
- Stereos and televisions
- Cell phones, PDAs and scanners

For more information, please call the City of Ocala Residential Sanitation Department at **(352) 351-6697**.

Ocala Electric Utility (OEU) will host a Customer Appreciation Day Friday, Oct. 6, at Citizens' Circle, 151 SE Osceola Ave., 6 to 8 p.m. Immediately following, Recreation and Parks will host 'After Dark in the Park' with Hotel Transylvania movie playing at 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. Customer Appreciation Day is celebrated and held in conjunction with Public Power Week happening Sunday, October 1 through Saturday, October 7.

To show appreciation for its customers, OEU will provide food cooked by OEU crews, available on a first-come, first-served basis, individually portioned for grab-and-go convenience. The event is free and includes entertainment, family-friendly activities, educational items and giveaways. Appreciation prizes include bill credits to be used on customer accounts. Guests must have a City of Ocala municipal service account to qualify. Customers will spin the prize wheel to win utility vouchers with randomly assigned monetary values. Limit one voucher per household, which must be redeemed within 30 days at the customer service office.

For more information, please contact the Ocala Electric Utility at **(352) 629-2489**.

**The 2023 heat wave is a hot topic. Learn how to keep your family safe.**

Anyone can fall victim to heat illness. But some people are more vulnerable than others. Babies, children and pregnant women are among them.



**Cool tips to beat the heat:**

**Heat Injuries**



**Stay hydrated.**  
Drink more water and avoid sugary beverages and alcohol because they promote dehydration.



**Stay indoors.**  
Limit your time outside and remain in air-conditioned places, including public venues. Take cool baths or showers to cool off.



**Stay alert.**  
Never leave anyone, especially children, in a parked car. Check on family, friends, and neighbors who may be more at risk of heat-related injuries.

**Heat cramps**  
First sign of heat-related illness. *Symptoms:* painful muscle cramps, usually in legs and abdomen, and heavy sweating. *Treatment:* apply pressure on cramps and provide sips of water unless the person complains of nausea.

**Heat Exhaustion**  
*Symptoms:* cramps, heavy sweating, fatigue, clammy skin, nausea or vomiting, headache. *Treatment:* move the person to a cooler environment, loosen clothing, apply cool, wet cloth, offer sips of water. Seek immediate medical attention if the person vomits.

**Heat Stroke**  
*Symptoms:* throbbing headache, confusion, nausea, dizziness, rapid pulse, body temperature above 103 degrees, shallow breathing. *Treatment:* call 911 or get the victim to a hospital immediately. Do not give fluids.

# MONEY SMART TIPS

By Scott Hackmyer

## A BUDGET CAN HELP YOU MANAGE YOUR \$\$



I have a corner of a spare bedroom that looks a little like a grocery store warehouse. There are certain products that I always eat (sadly, mainly snacks) and the regular price ranges from \$3.79 for some to \$4.29 for others.

When I see these on a Buy One Get One Free sale, I check the Best When Used By Date on the package, which is often a year from now, and really stock up. I might buy 10 to 12 bags at a time knowing this will last me two to three months and by then the item is usually back on sale. It is great eating what I like for half price!

This is really hard to do if you struggle with paying all of your bills and fairly easy if you are fortunate enough to be able to pay all your bills on time each month. It just takes self-discipline. I have some major bills that come due every September, October, November and December. Things like car insurance, home owners' insurance, property taxes and others. All of these bills

are over \$1,000. It would really be hard to pay all of these in full on time but what I do is make a payment to myself every month for each of these bills. I have a good idea of what the yearly cost is so I divide that figure by 12. I have separate bank accounts (actually high yield money markets through Capital One, Discover and American Express) that do not charge any fees and each month I make a deposit into each so when that big bill comes I already have almost all of the money put away to pay it. Those monthly payments are automatically transferred from my checking account to the appropriate money market account so I never even see the money, it is just there when it is time to pay the bill.

One thing that makes it easier to do the above is to know your budget. Almost every financial advisor will tell you that you have to do an individual or family budget if you want to take charge of your money. This is easier to do than you might think. On a piece of paper make two columns, one for Money In, one side for Money Out. Under Money In write down your income from work, any Social Security payments you might receive, either retirement, disability or survivors, then add things like child support and any other monthly money you have coming in. For the going out list, write down what you spend on food, over what you get for food stamps if you get those, your rent or mortgage payments, electric, gas, water and trash bills, any insurance you pay such as life, health or property, cable TV, internet, cell phone, doctor, dentist and medication bills, childcare expenses and other purchases such as paper goods, personal products and minimum monthly credit card payments. Compare the Money In side to the Money Out side and this will give you a snapshot on whether you have money you can save or if you have to somehow increase your income or reduce your expenses.

It is hard work staying financially healthy but with some determination and effort it is within your reach.



## LABOR DAY CLOSINGS

The City of Ocala business offices will be closed Monday, September 4, in observance of Labor Day.

The SunTran bus system will be closed for operations Monday, September 4, 2023. Regularly scheduled routes will resume on Tuesday, September 5, 5 a.m. to 10 p.m.

SunTran customer service phone lines will also be closed on Monday, Sept. 4, and will resume on Tuesday, Sept. 5.

SunTran provides a fixed-schedule service on seven routes, Monday through Saturday, 5 a.m. to 10 p.m.

For more information, please call SunTran at (352) 401-6999 or visit <https://www.suntran.org/home>.



## CITIZEN POLICE ACADEMY 2023

October 16 -  
November 20, 2023  
Ocala Police Department  
402 South Pine Ave.  
Ocala, FL 34471  
Community Room

### Monday Nights Only

#### Topics Covered

- ✓ Patrol Operations
- ✓ Use of Force Simulator
- ✓ Criminal Investigations
- ✓ Crime Scene

FREE TO MARION COUNTY RESIDENTS  
MUST BE AT LEAST 21 YEARS OF AGE

Application Deadline:  
Friday, September 8, 2023

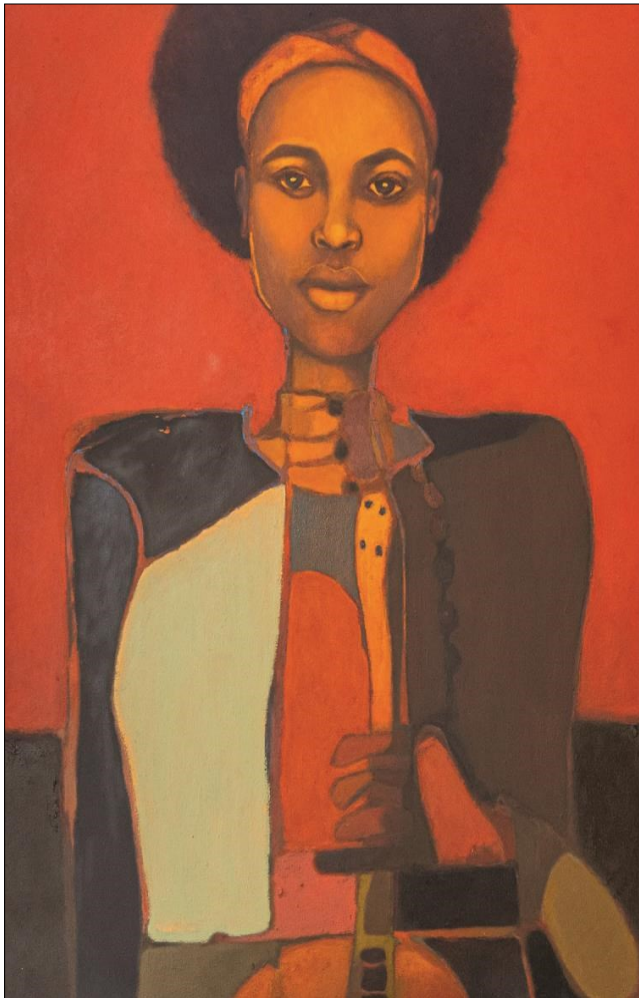
FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS EXCITING OPPORTUNITY, CONTACT COMMUNITY LIAISON TARA WOODS

1-352-369-7182

[twoods@ocalapd.gov](mailto:twoods@ocalapd.gov)

# OCALA POLICE





# THE APPLETON MUSEUM OF ART COLLEGE OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

# UNSCENE SOUTH

**Charles Eady Revisits History**

More than 20 mixed-media works,  
on view through January 28, 2024.



**Appleton Museum, Artspace and Store**

Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sunday, noon-5 p.m.

4333 E. Silver Springs Blvd. | [AppletonMuseum.org](http://AppletonMuseum.org)




## STAY CONNECTED FOR FREE



Easy Wireless offers **FREE** Cell Phone and Service every Monday and Friday, plus the first, third and fifth Wednesday, from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at St. Theresa's Catholic Church, 11528 SE Highway 301, Belleview, FL 34420.

For more information, go to <https://myeasywireless.com/>



**COMMUNITY**  
LEGAL SERVICES

## SEALING AND EXPUNGEMENT CLINIC

Volunteer lawyers will meet individually with you to determine whether you are eligible to seal or expunge your criminal records. If you are eligible, the volunteer lawyer will fill out the forms with you.

To participate in the clinic, your criminal case must have occurred in Marion County, Florida.

If you qualify for sealing or expungement, you may be responsible for a \$75 application fee.

*Not all records can be sealed or expunged.*


Walk-ins welcome.  
Priority given to pre-registered clients

**OCTOBER 6TH, 2023**  
**11:00AM - 2:00PM**

**SCAN ME TO REGISTER:**

Register at:  
[bit.ly/3qil2Aa](https://bit.ly/3qil2Aa)

or by calling:  
(321) 270- 7711



MARION COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
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**SAVE-THE-DATE**

# NIGHT OF HOPE

HONORING THE VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE  
Dinner ~ Music ~ Giveaways ~ Survivor Testimonies ~ Vendors



## Keynote Speaker Dr. Rosalind Osgood

Senator, Florida State District 23  
Community Activist  
Ordained Minister  
President/CEO of non-profit  
Mount Olive Development Corp.



**Thursday, September 28, 2023**

**5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.**

**College of Central Florida,  
3001 S.W. College Rd., Ocala**

For information, sponsorship opportunities  
or to purchase tickets, scan the QR Code  
or call Valerie at (352) 438-5990.