

CELEBRATING OUR CONTRIBUTIONS

In this issue:

Ollin Women International Celebrates International Women's Day

The Real Story About the Marshall Plantation Raid

The Bridges Project Sponsors Essay Contest

BE
THE KIND
OF WOMAN
THAT MAKES
OTHER WOMEN WANT
TO UP THEIR GAME

Empowering our Own



THINKING ABOUT GOING TO COLLEGE?

The College of Central Florida invites anyone thinking about college to attend its upcoming Preview Night event:

- **Ocala Campus,**
Tuesday, **March 1,** 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.
- **Jack Wilkinson Levy Campus,**
Thursday, **March 3,** 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.
- **Citrus Campus,**
Thursday, **March 10,** 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

The \$30 application fee is waived for anyone who applies at Preview Night.

Attendees who complete a survey will receive a CF T-shirt and will be entered to win free tuition for one 3-credit undergraduate class at the in-state tuition rate.

For more details, visit CF.edu/PreviewNight



Ocala City Manager Sandra Wilson will be the guest speaker for an International Women's Day Celebration on Tuesday, March 8, from noon to 1 p.m. at Saint Leo's Ocala Education Center, 1930 S.W. 38th Ave., Ocala, FL 34474.

Wilson, an alumna of Saint Leo, has worked for the City of Ocala for 22 years. She was appointed city manager in June 2020.

This is a free event for Saint Leo students and alumni. Please RSVP to ocala@saintleo.edu to attend the celebration.

Our mission is to record the rich history of the people, places and events in the community and share information that impacts the lives of residents in Marion County.



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

Bruce Seaman

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

All submissions become the sole
property of Town Talk Magazine.

The opinions expressed in this
publication do not necessarily reflect
the views of Town Talk. All articles,
announcements and advertisements
submitted are subject to refusal and
editing at the editor's discretion.

Contact Us:

Town Talk Magazine

P.O. Box 6212

Ocala, FL 34478

(352) 897-1817

Towntalkmagazine@yahoo.com
or Towntalkmagazine.org.

EDITOR'S DESK



After attending the College of Central Florida's Ministerial and Leadership Alliance meeting recently, I wanted to devote this space to helping get the word out about the awesome opportunity below.

Although a parent is their child's first teacher, it's equally as important for our children to be able to see "somebody" i.e a teacher, police officer, doctor, lawyer, etc. that looks like them in any profession they choose. Seeing is believing!



Scholarships for CF Early Childhood Education Minority Students

College of Central Florida minority students enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education program are eligible to receive the Minority Teacher Education Scholars Program scholarship. The award amount is \$2,000 per semester for fall and spring.



COLLEGE of
CENTRAL
FLORIDA

Office of Financial Aid
CF.edu | 352-873-5801

Scholarship Requirements

- Be a Florida resident and a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen.
- Have less than 18 hours of upper-division courses in education at the time of application.
- Be one of the following: African American/Black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian American/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaskan native.
- Be enrolled full time in the Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education program at CF.
- Have a cumulative 2.5 grade point average.

Visit the Florida Fund for Minority Teachers at » www.ffmt.org for application deadlines.

For additional rules and requirements, download the PDF at www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/SSFAD/factsheets/MTES.pdf

College of Central Florida does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, religion, gender, pregnancy, age, marital status, national origin, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran status or disability status in its programs, activities and employment. For inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies contact Dr. Mary Ann Begley, Director of Diversity and Inclusion - Title IX Coordinator, Ocala Campus, Building 3, Room 117H, 3001 S.W. College Road, 352-291-4410, or Equity@ccf.edu.

If you or someone you know meet the scholarship requirements, please apply and share the information with others!

**Knowledge
is power!**

Let's Talk!

Monica

Monica T. Bryant, Editor

Subscribe with Us:

To receive a **free** copy via e-mail, subscribe at

Towntalkmagazine.org

Annual subscription (printed copy) via mail: \$50

**Advertise with Us: Business card: \$35 ~ Quarter-page: \$65
Half-page: \$100.** Ads are black and white and must be submitted in
Jpeg or Pdf format and sent to **Towntalkmagazine@yahoo.com.**

Payments can be made via Cash App (**\$Towntalkmarion**)
or make check payable to Town Talk Magazine and mail to
P.O. Box 6212, Ocala, FL 34478

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

NEW DIRECTION REENTRY CENTER CHANGES LIVES ONE CLIENT AT A TIME

For nearly eight years, Laresa Scott has been involved in prison ministry and mentoring women in Central Florida. Scott said during that time she met a lot of women who were repeat offenders. When she asked why, although their stories were similar, a lack of resources was one of the main reasons.

Four years ago, she met a young lady who had been incarcerated for five years. While she was in prison, she started thinking about her reentry into society and how or if her family would accept her when she got out. She also wondered if she would be able to find a job, etc., which are barriers people who have been incarcerated face on a daily basis. To help her out, Scott started meeting with her weekly to work on a case plan for six months to a year.

"Her passion was to own her own business, but she knew that there were barriers and she didn't know how to maneuver with the barriers," Scott said.

In November 2019, Scott launched New Direction Reentry Center of Marion Inc. The nonprofit organization provides a wide range of services to female ex-offenders to help them transition back into their families, their communities and their lives before incarceration. The ultimate goal, she said, is to build sustainable lifestyles and break the cycle of recidivism.

Scott said she asks God daily to give her the wisdom she needs to help someone whether its with a phone call, text, a visit or a smile.

"Women who have previously been incarcerated need to be reminded that the poor choice they made doesn't define the rest of their lives even with a felony that follows them the rest of their life," she said. "Our program inspires women by simply reminding them that they are fearfully and wonderfully (full of respect, honor and awe) made, Psalms 139: 13-14."

For Scott, there wasn't just one, but many women (her grandmother, her mom, aunts, teachers, neighbors, community leaders, supervisors, colleagues and those who are and were incarcerated) who inspired and gave her the urge to make a difference.

"These phenomenal women gave me the urge to do something worthwhile," she said.

Many of their referrals, Scott said, come by word of mouth and from community partners. They also utilize several social media platforms. She said each client is different and they follow a client for a year. They can serve 10 to 15 women daily.

The organization provides:

- **Free Health Screenings** – They partner with local physicians and health clinics to provide preventative health screenings
- **GED Prep Education** – Each individual is pre and post tested in various academic and non-academic areas. They are also provided free GED study guides and given access to computers to complete online exams.
- **Drug Treatment Support** – Referrals to outpatient substance treatment counseling is provided for individuals who are in need.
- **Life Skills** – Conflict resolution, anger management, interpersonal skills and soft skills development, etc.
- **Court Ordered Parenting Classes** - General parenting skills and development of positive relationships with their children
- **Employment Readiness** – Assists with gaining employment, dressing for success, completing job applications, resumes, etc.

Scott said their greatest challenge right now is funding.

"There are many other programs, workshops, classes that we would like to offer to empower women, but materials, venues, presenters or teachers require more money than we have," she said.

The young woman Scott helped four years ago is doing well.

"Guiding her through she now owns her own business as a closing specialist," she said.

For more information, call (352) 509-7344. To make a donation to support the organization, visit www.newdirectionreentry.org.

New Direction Reentry Center of Marion, Inc. is located at 5100 W. Hwy. 40 Ste. 1100, Ocala, FL 34482.



Laresa Scott, CEO and Founder,
New Direction Reentry Center of Marion Inc.



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.

THINGS TO DO IN OUR COMMUNITY

The Estella Byrd Whitman Wellness Center is sponsoring a Weight Challenge, for the team with the Greatest Weight Loss from May 1, 2022 to July 31, 2022.

Registration opens April 1 and closes on April 31. Teams can consist of 3 to 5 people. The cost for a 5 person team is \$250.

The top 3 teams will receive monetary awards:

First Place - \$500

Second Place - \$150

Third Place - \$100

Participants receive information and nutritional tips and fun activities and incentives are included.

For more information or to pick up registration forms or contest rules, please contact Carolyn Adams at (954) 562-2617; Pamela Lewin at (352) 208-3151 or stop by the Estella Byrd Whitman Center, 819 NW 7th St., Ocala FL 34475.



THE OCALA JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION COMMISSION

presents the **2nd Annual**

Juneteenth
FREEDOM DAY

Celebration

Saturday, June 18, 2022
10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Webb Field
1501 W. Silver Springs Blvd.
Ocala, Florida 34475

Food - Vendors - Entertainment & More!

For more information, contact
Sharington Houston at
ocalajuneteenth2020@gmail.com

Save the Date





MARION COUNTY DAY
2022

MARCH 26
10 A.M. - 2 P.M.

McPherson Governmental Campus
601 SE 25th Ave.
Ocala, FL 34471

Business Spotlight



Business Name: UNIQUE LINGERIE, INC.

No. of Employees: 2

Business Owner: Edna Turner-DeGeneste

Business Address: 202 S.W. 17th St., Unit C.
Ocala, FL 34471

Business Phone: (352) 877-8700

What Year Did You Start Your Business? 2007

Hours of Operation:

Monday - Thursday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Friday by Appointment Only

Products and/or Services:

Our primary specialty is serving women who have experienced Breast Cancer by providing Post Mastectomy and Breast Form products in a private and caring atmosphere.

Email: uniquelingerie@embarqmail.com

Website: www.TheUniqueLingerie.com

Are you on Social Media? Yes

Facebook: Unique Lingerie, Inc.

What or Who Inspired you to start your business?

A family member, who had a Lingerie Boutique in Bermuda, inspired me to open a similar business in the U.S. after I had worked in her store for one year and helped her build and expand her customer base twofold.

What Makes Your Business Unique or What's Your Specialty? There are a very limited amount of businesses in the U.S. that provide Post Mastectomy and Breast products in a non clinical, specialty boutique setting.



I CAN CERVIVE



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, request a form from Towntalkmagazine@yahoo.com. Completed forms can be returned via email or mailed to P.O. Box 6212, Ocala, FL 34478.

RENTAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE: APPLY NOW!



UNITED WAY MARION COUNTY
COVID ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

United Way
United Way of Marion County

ARE YOU BEHIND ON YOUR RENT DUE TO COVID-19?

The United Way of Marion County COVID Assistance Program (CAP) helps renters who suffered disruption and/or loss of income due to the COVID-19 pandemic by assisting with past due rent and utilities.

Residents are encouraged to apply beginning April 1, 2021, and will be considered on a first-come, first-qualified and approved basis.

Assistance is available for financial obligations incurred after April 1, 2020.

People with language and/or physical or related challenges can request assistance with application submission.

VISIT MARION-CAP.COM

CAP Qualifications:

-  Marion County Resident
-  At or below 80% of the average median income
-  Experienced hardship due to COVID-19
-  Valid form of ID

 Apply online at www.marion-cap.com

Seeking access to a computer or assistance accessing the application?

PLEASE CALL:

352-820-3700

CELEBRATING OUR ACHIEVEMENTS AND RECOGNIZING

It's been more than four years since Manal Fakhoury woke up one morning with this thought: "Things have to change. We can do better."

So Fakhoury, who believed it was time for women to step up and shift the culture towards peace, put a message on her personal Facebook page looking for women leadership. She received more than 400 responses from women all over the world who believed they could affect change.

That was just the beginning! More than 100 women attended the first meeting at Fakhoury's home a month later in January 2018, which resulted in the creation of Ollin Women International (OWI), whose mission is "Creating a Culture of peace by transforming the way we interact with and see one another."



Ollin Women International's Women In Science honorees at the International Women's Day Celebration in 2021.

"Ollin Women International was intentionally organized to be "international" at its core for the very reason on inclusivity and diversity," said Barbara Fitos, a member of OWI. "We represent probably one of the most diverse women's groups in terms of not only ethnicity but background, experience, cultures and the causes in which we engage individually and collectively as Ollin Women."

On Tuesday, March 8, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Ollin Women International will be hosting its 5th annual International Women's Day Celebration at the Webber Center on the campus of the College of Central Florida, 3001 S.W. College Rd., Ocala, FL 34474.

OWI has celebrated International Women's Day (IWD) since its inception. The first event celebrated the extraordinary accomplishments of women's groups throughout Ocala Marion County. In subsequent years, they honored Women Trailblazers in the community, Women in the Arts, Women in Science and this year's focus is on Women in Education.

Founded during the Suffragette movement in 1911 and celebrated annually on March 8th, International Women's Day recognizes the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. This year's IWD theme is #Breakthebias.

Fitos, the 2022 chair of Ollin Women's International Women's Day event, said the relevance of a global theme of breaking the bias and striving toward gender equity could not be more timely as more and more women are rising to leadership positions in all sectors of our community from elected office to journalism to philanthropy to arts and culture to faith based organizations to the corporate and civic sectors. She said there is still a great deal of work to be done to eliminate the religious, culture and gender biases that are still alive and well in all our community conversations.

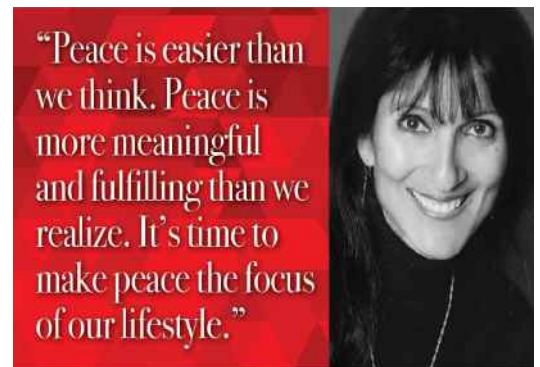
"Break the bias asks us to imagine a gender equal world. A world free of bias, stereotypes and discrimination," she said. "A world that is diverse, equitable and inclusive. A world where difference is valued and celebrated."

Fitos said one can substitute "world" for community, our local community and the recent gender issues that have surfaced i.e the hateful Mayoral campaign against a Muslim woman challenger, the attempt to terminate a black female city manager over her decision to terminate a key executive staff member or an outcry over a recommendation for long overdue "gender neutral" language in the city charter. She said the stereotyping bias against women, especially women in leadership roles, is something that needs to be challenged and changed in Marion County.

"It's far more than equity, but speaks to the actual safety and health of women in our community as evidenced by the still escalating domestic violence that continues," she said.

Fitos said OWI continues to evolve and define itself and the scope of its outreach has grown not only in membership but also in community engagement. They launched an OWI Book Club, Peace Pulse, which is a monthly check in hosted by members and features a variety of guest speakers and they distribute Peace Journals encouraging all to jot down aha moments, memorable quotes, etc.

In September 2022, OWI will host its first Peace Summit - "All-in for Peace."



Dr. Manal Fakhoury, Founder of Ollin Women International

LOCAL WOMEN WHO MAKE AN IMPACT IN OUR COMMUNITY

Fitos said if we are to achieve gender equity in the home and in the larger society, it begins with acknowledgement and mutual respect - acknowledgement of equal partnerships, acknowledgement of accomplishments, acknowledgement of innate biases, acknowledgement of the need for ongoing education and elimination of barriers to advancement. She said it is changing the mentality of "either/or" to both/and."

"The collective voices of women's organizations and the causes they represent can, should and must be a catalyst for the systemic change needed in the safety, health and well being of not only women in the community but parity for all," Fitos said. "As more and more women assume leadership roles in our community, these collective voices can no longer be ignored or denied as the change in the existing status quo can no longer be denied."

Registration and ticket purchase (\$25 per person) is available via Ollin Women International Facebook page or go to <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/ollin-women-iwd-celebration-luncheon-tickets-251599008407?aff=ebdssbdestsearch>.

~ LOCAL WOMEN IN OUR COMMUNITY WHO HAVE A PASSION TO EMPOWER AND HELP OTHER WOMEN SUCCEED ~



**April McDonald, Executive Director,
Project Hope of Marion County**

As all of us know, it's not easy balancing the many roles we as women serve in on a daily basis. Being a "Proverbs 31" woman in today's world can be ever so challenging, yet something we should all strive to be. There is such reward in lifting another woman's spirit, empowering them to be who God has created them to be and walking alongside them with grace and acceptance.

Leading an organization that is committed to serving women as they journey to become self sufficient takes both grace and accountability. Encouraging them to be authentic and true to themselves is always a goal, just as it is for me in personal relationships with women.

Women are beautiful beings full of wisdom, love, and an innate ability to nurture others. I can't imagine my life without the amazing village of women I have who help me – help other women... be all God created us to be!



**Davida Randolph, Business Owner,
Randolph's Family Affair**

Empowerment is such a powerful word and should be used delicately. Empowerment to me means equipping other women, such as myself, to succeed, not just in our families, but in our community.

As a black, female business owner, I believe it's important to share the knowledge I have from a business aspect with others, which includes counseling them, providing advice and sharing my successes as well as my failures because knowledge is power. I strive continuously to build other women up by encouraging them and being a cheerleader for them as they climb their ladder of success.

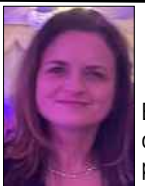


**Precious Swain-Peaks, Owner,
Anointed For Prosperity Bookkeeping and More**

It's my passion to coach and empower women to operate with a proper business structure. Anointed for Prosperity offers coaching and business formation at cost to assist those trying to move from welfare to entrepreneurship.

We started a program for nonprofits last year that empowers them to be able to hire people from their community to earn the money needed to keep their programs going. We teach them how to prepare taxes and supply them with the professional tax software needed so they can operate efficiently throughout the season.

While in ministry and in my personal life, I work to empower victims of domestic violence and those that are survivors of childhood trauma and molestation by not only donating money, but also my time and books to help them continue healing.



**Donna Guinn, Victim Advocate Supervisor,
Ocala Police Department**

Building people up is what it's all about. Many may feel discouraged from what they have been through. I believe when you provide hope and support, it can lead to positive changes in their life.

When people sense that you really care about them, it can make all the difference. God gives me the strength everyday to continue to help others. People I encounter at their worst times are often part of the biggest blessings I receive.



**Maribel Rosa, Founder and Director, Mujeres De Fe En
Jesuscristo, Inc. (Woman of Faith in Jesus Christ)**

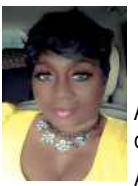
I've always been the kind of woman to achieve my goals, no matter the challenge. Finding the good in my life for myself and for my family is a priority, but there was a need in my heart to help other women who were abused due to domestic violence because I was a victim too.

During that time, there was so much suffering that I didn't know if I could bear the pain, until one day I changed my life.

In 2010, I started Women of Faith in Jesus Christ, Inc. Surviving the attacks with the grace of God and the faith to move mountains, I committed myself to help other women who were abused and needed support to move on. I make myself available to help all women no matter what situation they are in, whether they're homeless, need food, clothes or help with their children. Do not set limits for yourself because we are here to help. Walk with faith, peace, love and joy because we are warriors and we must protect ourselves and unite to help others. There is hope.

Be determined to transform yourself into the beautiful beings that we are. Each woman is valuable, for we serve a purpose in life, family, church and society.

Together, in faith, we can achieve a strong chain that will not be broken.



**Ramona Williams,
Community Engagement Coordinator, City of Ocala**

As an Ocala native, I feel strongly about serving the community where I was raised.

As the Community Engagement Coordinator, a role I consider very fulfilling because it allows me to constantly bridge the gap between the residents and resources available in the City.

I'm blessed to be able to assist not just women, but all residents in getting back on their feet by finding housing, jobs and basic necessities such as food, clothing and furniture, or just being the voice of reason, someone who just listens or a shoulder to cry on.

But most importantly, I enjoy just being able to reassure women that "they got it" and to keep pushing and striving because nothing is impossible with God!



THE TRUTH, THE WHOLE TRUTH AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH

Featured article written by Bruce Seaman and submitted to Town Talk Magazine

At nightfall on March 7, 1865, a 30-man Union raider team left Jacksonville on pontoon boats on the St. Johns River. Besides beginning a wildly risky mission going 100 miles behind enemy lines, and with the war only weeks from ending, this mission was also exceptional because it was planned, led, and executed by Black soldiers and scouts (with one White infantryman). It was the last planned Union mission in Florida of the Civil War.

It took the raiders several nights to secretly reach Fort Gates, south of where the Ocklawaha River meets the St. Johns River, the site of a ferry established in the 1850s. They hid their pontoon boats and went southwest through the scrub to the bridge at the Ocklawaha River, near where the Sharpes Ferry Bridge is today on County Road 314 (NE 7th Street) east of Baseline Road. When it was fully dark with a full moon shining, the raiders went to cross the bridge. Three armed locals were on the bridge, likely hunters. The raiders charged them and all three were shot and killed.



**Company E 4th United States Colored Infantry Regiment
at Fort Lincoln, Washington, D.C. c. 1864**

The raiders went to the Marshall Plantation, a sugar operation, setting fire to all the buildings including hundreds of barrels of sugar, syrup and whiskey ready to ship, taking several prisoners, freeing 95 slaves and taking three wagons plus horses and mules. The whole caravan crossed to the east side of the bridge before the bridge was set ablaze.

A nine-man detachment went to the Holly Plantation, a much smaller target, but the unit was ambushed by its defenders. A Sergeant was killed, two scouts captured and another scout wounded, who returned to the caravan along with the five other soldiers. The raider caravan then headed into what maps called "Extensive Scrub" on a narrow sandy road and headed northeast toward Fort Gates. Someone from the plantation escaped and rode to Ocala, alerting the Home Guard. A telegraph message was sent announcing there were Union raiders at the Marshall Plantation in Marion County. A Home Guard unit was hastily assembled, maybe 20-25, mostly old men and boys with scant combat experience. They went east, finding the bridge still on fire, forded the river and pursued the raiders. About 12-15 miles from the bridge, the Home Guard caught up to the caravan.

Sergeant Major Henry James, the mission commander, Company B, 3rd US Colored Troops, took 17 soldiers and scouts to defensive positions to stop the Home Guard while the rest of the caravan kept moving. A gunfight occurred in the moonlit scrub as the Home Guard charged the Union soldiers tucked behind whatever trees were available. While the militia's aim was capable, the Union soldiers killed four and were able to return fire quickly causing the Home Guard to break and scatter into the scrub. The Union soldiers had two wounded and took with them numerous mounts left behind by the Home Guard.

The raider caravan reached Fort Gates around midnight on March 11. They recovered their pontoons, fetched a hidden flatboat known by the scouts and began ferrying across the St. Johns River to the east side. The lone white soldier among the raiders may have been the flatboat operator. Meanwhile, camped in Waldo, Confederate Captain J.J. Dickison of Company H, 2nd Florida Cavalry received a telegraph about a raid in Marion County. Before midnight, Dickison had a unit of 50-cavalrymen racing over 50 miles to Silver Springs.



Map of the movement of the two groups from the start of the Raid until the next day

A Marion County plantation owner himself, Dickison used guerilla tactics against superior Union forces with great effect. He was the scourge of Union operations in Florida appearing out of nowhere and disappearing after an ambush. The Union command could neither defeat him nor capture him.

The Black Union raiders explicitly sought to do what their White commanders had failed to do – beat Dickison. Their mission strategy centered on Dickison. Let's see how this plays out. As dawn rises on March 11, the raider caravan completed crossing the St. Johns River at Fort Gates.

Dickison came from Waldo to Silver Springs as the dawn light emerges when he is met by a messenger. He learned the raiders were headed to the Fort Gates river crossing. Dickison now realized what was happening. He had been played. Now he is 50 miles southwest of Palatka; where he needs to be and not in Silver Springs. But Dickison is just where the raiders want him to be, far out of position south and west of the St. Johns. The raiders are on the east side of the river and

heading northeast. Fit to be tied, Dickison's unit headed 50 more miles to Palatka, where a single flatboat was moved from hiding, to get his men and their horses across.

By noon on March 11, Dickison arrived in Palatka on the west side of the St. Johns where a March windstorm made the river impassable. At that time, the raider caravan on the east side approached opposite Palatka. Only a mile or so separated them, but it included a mile of water.

THE REAL STORY ABOUT THE MARSHALL PLANTATION RAID

Like the biblical Exodus, the slave chaser was held in check by a wall of water as the liberated slaves escaped on the other side. It's about 9 p.m. by the time Dickison could cross the river with his cavalry. The raider caravan was now about 15 miles from the safety of the St. Augustine Union garrison. Dickison picked up a few freed slaves on the road who could not continue the arduous trek.

The raiders were around Fort Peyton, about 7 miles from St. Augustine, when they saw Dickison's cavalry approaching in the distance across the flat scrub in the moonlit darkness. Maybe a half-hour away from them, the raiders thought they might not make it to safety. Dickison's veteran unit was not like the inexperienced Home Guard. The Union soldiers and scouts could fight, but they would be outnumbered and have to deal with nearly 90 freed slaves and prisoners amid a firefight. They would have to surrender, and mission commander Sergeant Major James shared his concern.

At this point near Fort Peyton, 19 freed slaves dropped out and was left behind with a wagon and six horses. They were certainly exhausted, hungry and cold with sufficient reason to give up. But why? They traveled over 70 miles and had just a few more miles to the Union picket lines. Given the size of the group, plus the added wagon and horses, it seemed to have been a deliberate decision by the freed slaves to sacrifice their freedom, delay Dickison and help the rest of the caravan make it to St. Augustine.

Dickison's cavalry found a wagon across the narrow road, a half-dozen loose horses and the contrived chaos of 19 freed slaves. Even his veteran unit was flustered by this, and took precious time to sort it all out and bring some semblance of order to the mess. Leaving some men behind, Dickison resumed the pursuit.

The Confederate cavalry came within a mile of the Union picket lines when Dickison realized the raiders had gone too far and his unit was too close to the enemy pickets. He was unlikely to gain much and risked casualties. It wasn't worth it; even Dickison knew the war would effectively be over in a matter of weeks. He returned to the re-captured slaves, accepted them plus the wagon and horses as a consolation prize and tried to claim success. It rung hollow. He had been beaten, nonetheless by Black soldiers.

In the early morning darkness of March 12, after an 80-mile journey from Marion County, the Union raiders, their prisoners, 74 freed slaves, a wagon, five horses and nine mules emerged from the scrub to the surprise of the Union pickets. Mission accomplished. With a strategy planned by the raiders, led by a Black non-commissioned officer (White officers had always led missions in the Union Army), carried out by an almost all-Black unit of soldiers and scouts, having traveled 100 miles behind enemy lines and returned 80 miles on foot, the raid was a huge success. Moreover, the raiders did what their White officers had never been able to do. They beat Dickison.

The County's Historic Marker on County Road 314, east of the bridge, is a great example of "whitewashed" history, too interested in the otherwise unnoteworthy plantation and its (absentee SC) owners while portraying the raid as a bust with Dickison appearing to save the day and restoring everything taken. This is not true at all.

This audacious mission was a resounding success, a significant piece of Black history made in Marion County.

The Marshall Plantation Raid by Black Union soldiers on March 10, 1865 was the only time the Civil War came to Marion County.



Marshall Plantation Historical Marker

WANT TO HEAR MORE MORE? REGISTER TO ATTEND THE UPCOMING WORKSHOP

Instructor: Bruce Seaman
Course #: HIS467
Time: 10:30 a.m. - noon
Thursday, March 3, 2022

Members: \$3; Non-Members: \$8
Location: Cypress Hall
Seats Available: 29



8415 S.W. 80th St. Ste 2, Ocala, FL 34481

When Black Soldiers Raided Marion County: The Story of the Daring Marshall Plantation Raid

The Marshall Plantation Raid by black Union soldiers on March 10, 1865 was the only time the Civil War came to Marion County. Misrepresented and inaccurately portrayed historically, this presentation tells the untold story. This crazy raid had a unit of black men travel 100 miles behind enemy lines. The story of their exodus-like journey is gripping. Hear the truth!

To register, go to <https://www.campusce.net/mtp/course/course.aspx?C=2720>

MONEY SMART TIPS

STOP WATCHING YOUR MONEY GO DOWN THE DRAIN

By Scott Hackmyer

A lot of money experts tell you that financial security starts with doing a monthly budget. I agree that this is very helpful but almost think



that doing a financial diary is even more important. Money tends to just disappear and keeping a diary, ideally for a month but at least for a week, will give you even more insight as to where your money is disappearing. If you have a smart phone just start a page in your Notes section and every time you spend even a dime make an entry on that page and save it. At the end of the week or month add up what you have spent. Pay particular attention to those money grabbing places; fast food restaurants can be a real money drain, convenience store purchases, lottery tickets and cigarettes are all potential culprits in taking your money. There are lots of free resources to help you quit smoking, visit www.tobaccofreeflorida.com or call (877) 822-6669. Reducing money spent at these places can be a great start to keeping more money in your pocket.

Doing a budget starts with adding up all the money you have coming in every month. Paychecks from work, child support, Social Security payments and food stamps are potential sources of income. Now look at what you spend. Things to count would be what you spend on food over what you receive in food stamps, rent/mortgage payments, gas/water/electric bills, health and property insurance, cable TV, internet, cell phones, car payments, insurance, gas, doctor, dentist and medicine bills, childcare expenses and household expenses like paper products, shampoo and other personal hygiene products. Hopefully the money coming in column is higher than the expense column. Now you have to plan for those unexpected emergencies, be it a car repair, illness, home repair or any number of things that just come up. Clothing and shoes also come up, particularly if you have children. To cover these emergencies and living costs you MUST put money into savings every month.

Our grandparents used to call it a rainy day fund. Find a credit union or bank that doesn't have a monthly service charge and a small balance requirement to open an account and get started. If it pays interest that is even better. Now it takes discipline. You have to stick to this budget, save as much as you can knowing that things like birthday and Christmas presents come around yearly and always pay your bills on time so you don't get hit with a \$35 or \$40 late fee. Preparing your budget should take no more than an hour, well worth the time. You CAN do this and I urge you to start today.

Applications Still Being Accepted for Annual Scholarship. Apply Now!

Men Working to Better the Community (MWTBTC) is accepting scholarship applications for the Class of 2022 graduating high school seniors. Request an application from Wayne Rush, Scholarship Chairman, at Post Office Box 312, Ocala, Florida, 34478.

MWTBTC is a non-profit tax exempt 501c3 community based organization located in Ocala, FL whose mission is to annually award deserving graduating seniors from local high schools with scholarships, provide help for the elderly and assistance to needy or less fortunate families within the community. Since 1997, MWTBTC has awarded more than \$40,000 in scholarships to graduating high school seniors in Marion County.

To be eligible to apply, students must be graduating from an accredited high school, pursuing a post-secondary education and have a demonstrated financial need.

To make a tax deductible charitable contribution to MWTBTC, contact Rush or Chris Hagins, Scholarship Committee Member at Men Working to Better the Community, Post Office Box 312, Ocala, Florida, 34478.

Lake Weir High School Class of 1982 40th High School Reunion

Save the Dates: June 10-12, 2022,
Ocala, Florida

Are you from the Lake Weir High School Class of 1982? Are you a teacher from Lake Weir High School? If so, we are in the process of planning the 40th Year Reunion. If you are interested in attending and receiving periodic updates to stay informed, please send your name and contact information lakeweirclassof1982@gmail.com.

You can also follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/95563872241>.

FIRST FRIDAY ART WALK PRESENTS

RETRO SOUNDS

DOWNTOWN OCALA



FRIDAY
MARCH 4
6 - 9 P.M.

For more information visit www.ocalafl.org/performingarts.



FREE ADMISSION
on the first Saturday
of each month.



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



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR ANNUAL LEVITT AMP MUSIC SERIES

Levitt AMP Ocala is looking for volunteers for the fifth annual Ocala Music Series. The free concerts, presented by the Marion Cultural Alliance, Inc., in partnership with the City of Ocala, will take place each Friday from April 22 - July 1 (except May 27) beginning with a preshow at 6 p.m. The main show starts at 8 p.m. at the Martin Luther King Jr. Recreational Complex Webb Field, 1501 W. Silver Springs Blvd., Ocala.

The concert series will move indoors to the E.D. Croskey Recreation Center, 1510 N.W. 4th St., Ocala if inclement weather occurs.

For more information or volunteer options, contact Jennifer Normoyle, Grants and Outreach Manager, at jnormoyle@ocalafl.org.

The College of Central Florida will showcase the talent of its Visual Arts and Digital Media students in the annual show that provides student artists an opportunity to present their work in a professional environment.

The exhibition will be on display at the CF Webber Gallery at the CF Ocala Campus, 3001 S.W. College Rd., from March 28 - May 5. An opening reception will be held Wednesday, March 30, at 12:30 p.m. in the Webber Center.

In a press release, Dr. Mark Paugh, vice president for Academic Affairs, said student works will be selected for purchase awards, and one student artist's work will become part of CF's permanent art collection through the People's Choice Purchase Award, which is voted on by the CF student body.

The Webber Gallery is open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday -Thursday. Admission is free. For more information, call (352) 854-2322, ext. 1664.

THERE'S STILL TIME TO SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION

AABE National has re-opened the high school scholarship application until **Friday, March 4, 2022 at 11:59 p.m.**

If you or your network know of a graduating high school senior that plans to major in business, one of the physical sciences, technology, engineering or mathematics, please encourage them to apply.

All applications must be submitted via the online portal at <https://apply.mykaleidoscope.com/scholarships/AABEScholarship> by the deadline.

Encourage students to get their applications completed (including transcripts and letter of recommendations) by the new date!

After Dark in the Park Movie Series: Dreamgirls

March 25, 2022 ~ 8 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Tuscawilla Art Park, 213 NE 5 St., Ocala, FL 34470

Join us for FREE movies throughout the year at different City of Ocala parks. Bring a blanket or chairs to sit on. Snacks, popcorn and soda available for purchase. Registration not required.



Movie is Rated PG-13.

For questions or more information, please call (352) 368-5517.

Town Talk Magazine
P.O. Box 6212
Ocala, FL 34478

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
OCALA, FLORIDA
PERMIT NO. 748

ECRWSS

BRIDGES PROJECT INVITES STUDENTS TO ENTER ESSAY CONTEST



Bridges Project Ocala Essay Contest Entry Form

Prizes:

High School:

- 1st Place – \$100 Barnes and Noble Gift Card
- 2nd Place – \$50 Barnes and Noble Gift Card
- 3rd Place – \$25 Barnes and Noble Gift Card

Middle School:

- 1st Place – \$100 Barnes and Noble Gift Card
- 2nd Place – \$50 Barnes and Noble Gift Card
- 3rd Place – \$25 Barnes and Noble Gift Card

In preparation for your role as informed and responsible citizens and future leaders in our democracy, Bridges Project Ocala invites middle and high school students to explore aspects of bullying on an individual level as well as on communities, society, the nation, and the world.

Fourth Annual Essay Contest Theme:

“Bullying: its pervasive nature and how to resolve it”

As you create your essay, consider the following questions:

What is bullying? What bullying have you experienced or witnessed?

What were your responses?

What tools and resources help to break the cycle of bullying?

You are our future. We value you. We need you. We ask that each of you do your own research, using your own words and critical thinking skills to respond to the prompting questions. Consider including what books, websites, news media, interviews, or any source material that you use to develop your essay.

Guidelines:

- ◆ Essays must be between 300-600 words in length, submitted in English and typed, with student’s name, grade, and teacher’s name on the upper right corner of the first page.
- ◆ A completed entry form must accompany each essay.
- ◆ Only one entry per student is allowed. That entry must solely be the work of that named student.
- ◆ Essay entries cannot have already been published.
- ◆ Any essays found to be plagiarized will be automatically disqualified.

Student’s Grade Level _____

Name of Student _____

School _____

Teacher’s Name _____

Email essays to: BridgesProjectEssay@gmail.com

Winners are expected to attend the awards ceremony to read their essays and receive their award. Date and location of the awards ceremony to be determined.

Entries must be received by 5:00 PM on March 31, 2022.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY:

Date Received

Received by