

## Jackie Tuggerson: Remembering My Pops on Father's Day



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### **~ HELP FOR HOMETOWN HEROES ~**

The Florida Hometown Heroes program makes homeownership more affordable by providing down payment and closing cost assistance to income-qualified, first-time homebuyers who are frontline community workers. More than 50 professions may be eligible for assistance when buying their first home beginning June 1, including:



- Veterans, Active-Duty Military and surviving spouses of deceased veterans
- Teachers
- Sworn Law Enforcement Officers
- Law Enforcement Officers taking part in the Recruitment Bonuses program
- Child Care Operators and Daycare Instructors
- Paramedics, EMTs, 911 Public Safety Operators and Firefighters
- Registered Nurses, LPNs, CNAs, Home Health Aides and Health Care Practitioners
- Correctional Officers and Correctional Probation Officers, Juvenile Detention Officers and Juvenile Probation Officers

Eligible homebuyers will be able to receive 5% or up to \$25,000 of their mortgage loan amount and can begin applying through their lenders on June 1.

For more information, please go to <https://floridahousing.org/hometownheroes> to view the eligibility categories and determine if they qualify.

*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

### Let's Talk

#### We want to hear from you:

Email your submissions, events, comments or questions to [Towntalkmagazine@yahoo.com](mailto: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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## EDITOR'S DESK



Did you know there have been 33 mass shootings in the US since the start of the month of May, including in Buffalo, New York, and California, according to Gun Violence Archive data?

But the recent tragedy at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas shocked me and left me completely heartbroken. How could someone just shoot and kill all those innocent children and two of their teachers. It doesn't matter that I didn't know any of the victims personally, as a parent, I can't even imagine what those parents, who lost their babies, are going through. They will never be able to hold their child again, see them graduate from high school or college, help them through their first heartbreak, get married or become parents themselves. They're life ended before they truly had a chance to live.

These days it seems like we can't go ANYWHERE, not to church, send our children to school, go to the grocery store, go to work, walk down the street in our own neighborhood or sit in our home without something tragic happening.

A few years ago, a group of community leaders spent weeks meeting at the Ocala Police Department in response to so many young men, mostly African- American, losing their lives too soon as a result of gun violence. At the time, everyone at the table agreed something needed to be done, Enough was Enough!

Although these recent mass shootings happened somewhere else, something just as tragic could happen right here in our community too. We are not exempt!

Now community leaders are meeting again at the Ocala Police Department in hopes of addressing gun violence in our community.

The Ocala Police Department, in partnership with various organizations in our community, are hosting "Who's in the Box," a play based on real life occurrences that happen far too often in our community as it relates to gangs, guns and our youth.

In January, the Gainesville Police Department, churches and other community organizations, presented the play to address a spike in gun violence they were experiencing in Alachua County. It made an impact on those who attended. We're hoping it will do the same here in Ocala/Marion County.

The play is designed to educate teens on the serious consequences of gun violence and raise awareness to our youth in hopes of deterring them from making bad choices that will impact them for the rest of their lives.

Gun violence not only impacts the shooter and their family, but also the family of the victim and in some instances, the entire community.

### How can you help? I'm glad you asked!

We want parents to come and bring your teens to see "Who's in the Box" on Thursday, June 23, 2022, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Marion Technical Institute, 1614 E. Fort King St., Ocala. It may not only change a child's life, it may save one too!

Refreshments will be available and community organizations will be on hand to provide families with resources and services that they may need after the play is over. Transportation is available.

Let's Talk!

*Monica*

Monica T. Bryant, Editor

Register online at <https://whosinthebox.eventbrite.com>  
beginning Friday, June 3, 2022.

**Together, we CAN and Will make a Difference!**

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# COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

## ~ OCALUMNI CORPORATION ~



When a group of friends took their annual trip in the summer of 2018, they all decided they couldn't keep having fun without giving back to their community.

Malcolm-Omari Davis, Travis St. John, Cameron Livingston and Natrell Jamerson decided they would do just that. But it wasn't until they attended Jamerson's preseason game in Jacksonville and ran into Drayton Florence, an Ocala Alumni, how they would give back became clear. Davis said a friend who was tagging along had never met Drayton, but after the two introduced themselves, they found out they were both from Ocala and had attended Vanguard High School.

"An epiphany happened that evening. We knew it was time to close the age gap in Ocala," Davis said.

After months of planning and praying Ocalumni Corporation was founded January 14, 2019. Its mission is to instill a positive outlook on our immediate community by way of Mentorship, Leadership and Fellowship. Davis is the CEO; St. John is the President; and Livingston and Jamerson are both Directors. Davis said the meaning behind the name is simple. They just merged Ocala and alumni together.

"We are officially called Ocalumni, but we don't cringe when people refer to us as Ocala Alumni," he said.

Davis said we all love to watch the feel good movie or read the fairytale novel, but somehow we forget real life is what truly affects us.

"Ocalumni was started because we want our peers to fully understand that change starts from within," he said. "We 100% believe we have the power as well as the responsibility to change the direction of many youth and their families lives. Our commitment to better our community goes further than words. We model ourselves around action."

St. John said the organization is funded 75% by them and the other 25% comes from sponsors that see their vision and want to be part of the change in the community. He said the hardest obstacle they've had to overcome is realizing that people didn't take them serious in the beginning, but once they saw how consistent and hungry they were, they gave them a chance to show they knew what they were doing.

Right now, he said, their greatest need is getting full support. He said they get a lot of support from people sharing their posts about events, but when it comes down to actually showing up, that was the problem.

"If social media support and in person support were on the same level, I believe that would help us out tremendously," he said. "We may lack full support at the moment, but we'll get where we need to be."

Additionally, he said they are always looking for volunteers to help out with food, to solicit donations and prizes and help with games for their events.

Davis said Ocalumni hosts several community events annually such as its Marion County Alumni Weekend, which is their biggest event and the one they are well known for. The fundraiser and scholarship awareness weekend is meant to benefit and be spent with the entire family, he said.

*Ocalumni Corporation held its Alumni Luncheon in April: The 2022 award recipients were:*

- **Cynthia Graham:** Frank G. Pinkston Humanitarian of the Year Award
- **Dominic McDonald:** Anita Ann Ivey Davis Person of the Year Award
- **Debra Lipphardt:** Educator of the Year Award
- **Ambitious Boys Becoming Ambitious Men:** Non-Profit of the Year Award

Davis said their next event, Ocalumnights Summer Series, will be finalized once they find a location that can accommodate 10-15 kids for an evening. He said the event is a way to get the youth off the streets and into a safe environment to play and learn for one night during the summer. E-mail Davis at [ocalumnicorp@gmail.com](mailto:ocalumnicorp@gmail.com) if you can help or know someone who has a facility they can use.

For more information, to support or volunteer with Ocalumni Corporation, go to [www.ocalumni.com](http://www.ocalumni.com).



Natrell Jamerson and Malcolm-Omari Davis



Travis St. John and Cameron Livingston

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).



# AMBITIOUS BOYS BECOMING AMBITIOUS MEN

When Brett Stanley moved back to Ocala in 2018, he thought it would be an amazing opportunity to give back to the community he grew up in.

Two years later, Stanley, founder of Ambitious Boys Becoming Ambitious Men (AB.B.A.M) walked the streets with other members of the organization and saw a growing need for male leadership and guidance in their community. He presented his vision to the well-rounded men of AB.B.A.M and they were all on board 100%.

AB.B.A.M, which means using our past as a guidance to our future, is a mentoring group that takes pride in helping youth during their developmental stages of becoming a man.

In recent years, Stanley said, they've seen the output of men in their community and it's extremely admirable. He said his organization is not filling a need that wasn't being filled, but instead just stepping up to the challenge and being a helping hand.

"We take pride in mentoring. Being a mentor serves as a way to give back and is an important development and learning experience," he said. Teaching others is the best way to learn yourself. In the same way, mentors become more competent as leaders and communicators as they guide and help rising talent.

Stanley said the most interesting thing about the organization is the seven dynamic men with countless stories of how they've used their past to guide the future of young men. Their motto, he said, is M.A.D. (Make a Difference), and that is the expectation!

Co-founder, Glen Stanley Jr., is one of those men. As an adolescent, he grew up without a father figure in his life and at times, found himself trying to fill that void. In doing so he ended up making a plethora of bad decisions during that season of his life. Now, he said, his past experiences has molded and guided him to be an advocate for our youth.

"AB.B.A.M has given me the platform to be the voice, a leader and positive role model in my very own community," he said. "I am now in a position to go M.A.D. and those are my daily goals.

The organization, which is primarily funded by community donations and family and friends, serves young men between the ages of 5 - 18 years of age. AB.B.A.M hosts "Guy Talk" via Zoom, which is open to the public. It allows them to help those in need. Referrals also come from school board members, who reach out to them to recommend young men for the program.

Since its inception, AB.B.A.M has served nearly 300 kings (members and nonmembers). Brett Stanley said their goal is to help guide the young men through those steps of becoming a man. Some participants, he said, may only be in the program for a season and that's okay, but they want to nurture them for a lifetime and make them feel that they are always home away from home.



## **To participate in the program, participants should:**

- have a need to interact with positive adult role models
- come from a family that is living in poverty or experiencing severe financial stress
- lack particular academic or job skills necessary for self-improvement or greater life options
- be experiencing failure at school or poor attendance
- have a physical or mental disability or behavior problems that are not beyond the capabilities of an adult mentor, but that may inhibit daily, positive interaction with adults or peers

The hardest obstacle for the organization to overcome is gaining the support and resources needed to further equip members of AB.B.A.M. Their greatest need is commitment both internally with the members and from the parents of the mentees they mentor.

"We need social capital as well as resourceful people. Individuals we can look to for event space and funds. We also need active members, those that have a desire to make a difference in the

community, said Vice-President Dezmon Wheeler."

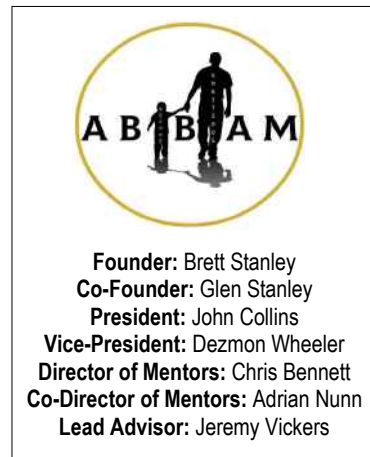
Izaiah Guy said being involved in sports helped him find his way to the program. Guy, who has been in the program for nearly two years, said just being able to make an impact on other peoples lives means a lot to him.

"That's the biggest difference maker to me," he said. "The way I see things in this life by being a part of this program has changed. People truly go through rough times in this life. Helping someone or even complimenting someone can show how great a character you have and it also says a lot about you."

Anyone interested in being involved with AB.B.A.M or would like more information about the organization can call (352) 207-4073, send email to [meninthecommunityabbam@gmail.com](mailto:meninthecommunityabbam@gmail.com) or contact them via Facebook at [@abbam2020](https://www.facebook.com/abbam2020).

"Were a resource to the young men of our community," Brett Stanley said. "There will never be enough mentors in our community that can help guide the youth."

**"Ambitious Boys Becoming Ambitious Men: "Using Our Past As a Guidance to Our Future"**



# ~DRAYTON FLORENCE: STILL MAKING IT HAPPEN~



Drayton Florence wasn't planning on playing football on a national level growing up, his dream was to play professional baseball.

"I wanted to be a pitcher in the MLB (Major League Baseball. I knew at a very young age sports was my passion," he said.

But when the first college he attended after graduating from Vanguard High School didn't have a baseball team, he stopped playing baseball and started playing football instead. At the end of his sophomore year at Tuskegee University, Florence realized playing football at the next level could become a reality after scouts started watching him practice and visiting the their practices on a weekly basis.

He made it happen!

Drayton Florence, NFL Veteran

Florence was drafted by the San Diego Chargers in the second round, 46th pick, in the 2003 NFL Draft. He played cornerback in the NFL for 11 years before retiring in 2015. He graduated from the University of North Florida with a bachelor's degree in Sports Management.

On Friday, July 1, 2022, 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., Florence returns to his alma mater to host his extremely popular "Make It Happen" Football Camp. Now in its 18th year, the free camp, organized by the NFL veteran and the Drayton Florence Foundation, is open to youth between the ages of 8 - 18.

"I always wanted to share the blessing of being drafted with my community," he said. "The camp helps me continue to show kids that come from Ocala your dreams of playing on the next level can become a reality. That's why the camp is named "Make it Happen!"



During the camp, Florence said they challenge the kids in competition drills and pour into them to boost confidence. He said the football is the bait to get them there to ensure they know academics are more important than anything they will do at the camp and without it, their ability to play sports in high school or college depends on their success in the classroom.

Florence said his parents, family and most of his youth coaches did a great job taking time with him and saw his potential at a young age. He said it helps to have coaches that care about your success on and off the field.



Since its inception, he's touched the lives of more than 5,000 youth who have participated in the annual camp. He has too many memories to pick a favorite one, but said it's very cool to see guys come from his camp and make it to the NFL like PJ Williams, Natrell Jamerson, Freddie Swain and Tyree Gillespie to name a few.

When things got tough, Florence said his faith in God kept him focused and motivated. His advice for anyone hoping to play a competitive sport on a national level is preparation, that's the one factor that can keep you separated from your competition. He said being a three sport athlete definitely helped him, and the strong family support system he had also played a huge role in his success and development as a young athlete.

"You have to be willing to give up everything you love to dedicate your time and focus to put yourself in position to play on the next level, which is a lonely path, but it takes 100% sacrifice to commit with no guarantee that you will even make it," he said. "You have to get lucky as well because injuries are a big part of careers being derailed."

Florence, now a successful Business Owner, Entrepreneur and Coach, said he's blessed to be able to continue to give back.

"I do them (camps) to make an impact, not to be remembered," he said.

**\*Unfortunately, this year's camp is FULL and not accepting anymore registrations!**

For more information about the Drayton Florence Foundation, which was established to educate, motivate and stimulate youth empowering them for a lifetime of success, and other programs, visit [Draytonflorencefoundation.com](http://Draytonflorencefoundation.com).





# REMEMBERING MY POPS AND THE LESSONS HE TAUGHT ME ON FATHER'S DAY

Jackie Tuggerson does remember his father, Freddie Honor, being in his life as a child, although it was very sporadic. The earliest memory he said he has was when he was around eight or nine years old and his mother had got him a train set for Christmas and his father was there to help him open it and put it together.

"Whenever he came to see me, he was bigger than life because he was super tall with an afro," he said. "He had a big smile that would make you feel good. That was my Pops."

Tuggerson said his father not being there was not by choice, but by circumstance. When he was younger, he said, he didn't understand his father's absence was partly due to him working hard and having another family, but he tried to do his best to meet the needs of him and his siblings. He said when he was younger, he resented him, but now he understands what his life was like and no longer holds any resentment and has forgiven him for all of it.

"In my childhood mind, I felt that he only showed up every now and then, however, that was far from the truth," he said. "When I became an adult, he explained that he had multiple commitments and responsibilities. He tried his best to meet his kid's needs."



Jackie Tuggerson II and Jackie Tuggerson Sr.

Despite his absence, Tuggerson always looked forward to Father's Day as a child because it was a time when his dad received a little love and gifts. Even though he mostly got him socks and t-shirts, he said, his father acted like it was the best gift he had ever received.

"Now that I am a father, I understand why my dad responded the way he did," said Tuggerson, who has three children of his own. "Like me, he was probably just grateful for his kids to love on him. It's not about appreciation, it's simpler. It's a father's love."

On Father's Day this year (June 19, 2022), Tuggerson is remembering the times they spent together and the impact his father, who passed away in 2005, had on his life, while others may celebrate the day that's set aside to recognize and honor father's or father figures for the contributions they've made in their children's lives.

"I strived to be like him in so many ways and I do my best to meet my kids needs and be there on important days and for special moments," he said. "Now that I know what it means to be a father, I realize that perhaps he did the best he could."

Tuggerson said he wants his children to know the man their grandfather was and he wants them to know and honor him too because that's what his mom taught him before she died. He said his mom spoke well of his dad, but to keep it real, she did curse him out from time to time, but she wanted him to honor both of them.

Just because his father wasn't around much, Tuggerson said, he didn't have a terrible childhood because he had some awesome substitutes that stepped in. Before his brother-in-law, Jimmy McNair, passed away, he taught him how to fish and took him fishing often. He also kept him busy with chores and taught him how to fix things around the house. His Uncle Billy, who has also passed way, taught him work ethic and responsibility and about money. It was his uncle who encouraged him to save money to buy his first car.

"But it was my father who taught me how to repair it (the car). He was a certified mechanic. Some would say he was the best," he said. "It took a village because I had a hard head. But seriously, my dad held that role even in his absence, but my brother-in-law and uncle had a lot to do with it too."

Tuggerson said he use to watch movies and listen to music with his dad, who liked listening to the oldies. He said that stuck with him because it's what he loves most next to Gospel music. Now with his children, they sing old songs too by artists such as Marvin Gaye, Teddy Pendergrass and the O'Jays.

"You name it, we listen to it," he said.

Tuggerson said he started building a closer relationship with his dad when he was a teen. More specifically when he learned to drive because he didn't have to wait for his dad to come to him, he could just go to his house. Out of the many lessons he learned from his father, he said, the one that's most important is for him to always be himself.



Sydnee, Erica, Jackie II, Jackie Sr., and Skylar Tuggerson



Sydnee, Jackie II, Skylar Tuggerson

"Learning how to accept that I am who I am and that I'm not broken just simply a work in progress," he said.

Tuggerson said he was never afraid to be like his father, in fact, his father's absence made him want to be present in his children's life. Naturally, he said, he wants to be the best father he can be, however, just like many fathers, he fell short at that from time to time.

In one of the last conversations he had with his father, Tuggerson said, he talked about the relationship he had with his mom, the ups and downs and how much he loved her and how proud he was of the man he was becoming. He said he learned to forever honor his father and knows exactly what he would say to him if he had another chance.

"I'd tell him I love him and let him know how grateful I was to have an awesome Pops like him," he said.

# ~JUNETEENTH: COMMEMORATING THE END OF SLAVERY~

Juneteenth will never be just another day for Julia Dennis.

Dennis, a member of Concerned Citizens for Chatmire (CCFC), said the day represents a time of reflection on the status of Black citizens in these yet to be “united” states. She said while the holiday itself provides opportunities to express joy and gratitude for freedom from slavery, the celebrations across the nation are over-shadowed by the overt acts of racism fueled by hate filled hearts of numerous groups throughout the nation.

Juneteenth is celebrated annually on June 19. The day commemorates the liberation of the last slaves in Texas, two years after the Emancipation Proclamation had abolished slavery in the Confederate States in 1863. It became a federal holiday after President Joe Biden signed into law on June 17, 2021. Many observe the date with local celebrations, including parties, parades, picnics and festivals.



Dennis and CCFC, in partnership with Cathy Redd and members of the 360 Walking Club of Dunnellon, will host a Juneteenth Celebration Program on Saturday, June 25, at 6 p.m. at First Bethel Missionary Baptist Church, 11849 North Williams St., in Dunnellon. The program includes a variety of exhibits including African-American Inventions, the African-American Children’s Traveling Book Library, African Drum Display, the African-American Quilt and an African-American artist will be displaying Stained Glass Creations. Books will be available for purchase and autographed by local artists.

Juneteenth fills my heart with hope as I review our past, ponder our present and ruminate upon our future,” she said.

CCFC held the first Juneteenth festival 23 years ago at the Old Booker T. Washington High School (formerly the old Dunnellon Middle School) football field. The festival was held annually until 2001 and then again in 2004 - 2006. In 2017, the two organizations formed a partnership to revitalize and educate on the significance of Juneteenth.

“I consider Juneteenth an excellent opportunity to appreciate and celebrate ourselves as industrious, loyal, contributing American citizens whose contributions to the growth and development of this country make us equal to all citizens and every bit as worthy to be respected and treated as fellow Americans,” Dennis said.

CCFC, an all volunteer 501 © 3 non-profit organization, was formed March 1992 to promote community improvement, safety and most importantly to dispel the perception about a neighborhood most people believed was a hopeless case and destined for continuous failure. The 360 Walking club was organized in May 2017 by 20 women to encourage and promote healthy living while having fun, promoting fitness and enjoying fellowship.

Redd said anyone who wants to showcase their talents through Poetry, Spoken Word, Story Telling Dancing or Singing, can call her or Julia at (352) 489-2677. The deadline to sign up is Wednesday June 22, 2022.

“Hopefully, this is the new beginning of many more Juneteenth celebrations in Dunnellon,” Dennis said. “We will work diligently to make this an exciting and enlightening experience, not an event, but an experience.”

## Other Juneteenth Celebrations Include:

**SAVE-THE-DATE**

**JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION**

Juneteenth Emancipation Celebration  
Empowering Freedom Forward

**Juneteenth Celebration Dinner and Dance Fundraiser**  
**Saturday, June 18, 2022**  
7 p.m. to 11 p.m.  
One Health Center, 1714 S.W 17th St., Ocala, FL 34471

Event includes:  
Soul Food Dinner, Live Entertainment, DJ, Dancing, Spoken Word,  
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For event details and sponsorship information,  
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R.A.M.A.I Educational and Social Service, Inc.



**THE OCALA JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION COMMISSION**  
presents the 2nd Annual

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FREEDOM DAY

**Celebration**

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

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**Sharington Houston at**  
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### To Qualify

When applying for assistance, you must submit the following documents with your application:

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All of the above documentation is **REQUIRED** to process applications for LIHEAP services. An application submission is not a guarantee of service.

# 8TH ANNUAL Ocala Youth Energy Academy



A TWO-DAY EVENT OF CAREER EXPLORATION THROUGH INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES AND ENGAGING DISCUSSIONS DESIGNED TO EXPOSE YOUNG PEOPLE TO CAREERS IN ELECTRIC UTILITY INDUSTRIES AND RELATED STEM FIELDS.

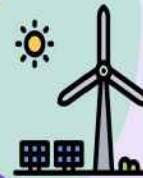
June 16th & 17th @ 8:00AM

[Click here to register](#)

(DAY 1) COLLEGE OF CENTRAL FLORIDA (HAMPTON CENTER) - 1501 W. SILVER SPRINGS BLVD, OCALA, FL 34475  
(DAY 2) Ocala Electric - 1805 NE 30TH AVE. BLDG 400, OCALA, FL 34471

## INTERACTIVE HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES

BE EMPOWERED AS YOU NAVIGATE THE ENERGY INDUSTRY WITH US



WORKSHOPS ON "A DAY AS A LINE TECH", ELECTRIC VEHICLES (EV), CYBERSECURITY, PANEL DISCUSSIONS WITH INDUSTRY EXPERTS, COHORT-BUILDING GAMES, AND MUCH MORE

## OCALA AREA YOUTH IN GRADES 8TH - 12TH ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE

REGISTRATION WILL BE ON A FIRST-COME, FIRST-SERVE BASIS.



## THE YOUTH ENERGY ACADEMY WILL DO THE FOLLOWING:

- EDUCATE AND SPARK THE INTEREST OF A DIVERSE POPULATION OF THE EMERGING WORKFORCE IN THE ENERGY ARENA.
- ALIGN EDUCATION WITH WORKFORCE NEEDS.
- ADVANCE THE IMPORTANCE OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN THE UTILITY INDUSTRY.



TO ENSURE YOU RECEIVE YOUR SPECIAL YEA PARTICIPANT SWAG PACKAGE, REGISTER TODAY! EARLY REGISTRANTS (BY FRIDAY, 6/3) WILL BE ENTERED INTO A SPECIAL DRAWING FOR A \$50 GIFT CARD!

- 8:30AM - 4PM each day, (Continental Breakfast 8:00AM - 8:15AM)
- Registration and permission slip required
- Continental breakfast, snacks and lunch provided
- Bring your mobile phone to participate in various activities
- Closed toe shoes required
- Transportation will not be provided

GIFT CARDS & PRIZES WILL BE AWARDED THROUGHOUT THE DAY!

CLICK THE REGISTRATION LINK ABOVE OR GO TO [YEA2022OCL.EVENTBRITE.COM](https://www.yea2022ocfl.eventbrite.com) BY 6/11/2022

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:  
MKLE GORDON @ 813.525.6569, [MKLE.GORDON@DUKE-ENERGY.COM](mailto:MKLE.GORDON@DUKE-ENERGY.COM)  
OR  
KATHY JUDKINS @ 352.303.6470, [KATHY.JUDKINS@SECSTATEENERGY.COM](mailto:KATHY.JUDKINS@SECSTATEENERGY.COM)





**TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THESE SALE TAX EXEMPTIONS BEFORE THEY'RE GONE**

# 2022 STATE OF FLORIDA SALES TAX EXEMPTIONS & HOLIDAYS



## MAY 14, 2022 - AUGUST 14, 2022 | CHILDREN'S BOOKS

TAX EXEMPTION ON CHILDREN'S BOOKS INCLUDES BOARD BOOKS (AGES 0-2); PICTURE BOOKS (AGES 2-7); BEGINNING READER BOOKS (4-8); CHAPTER BOOKS (AGES 5-10); MIDDLE-GRADE BOOKS (AGES 8-12).



## MAY 28, 2022 - JUNE 10, 2022 | DISASTER PREPAREDNESS



THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE EXEMPT FROM THE STATE SALES TAX AND COUNTY DISCRETIONARY SALES SURTAXES: PORTABLE SELF-POWERED LIGHT SOURCE (\$40 OR LESS); PORTABLE SELF-POWERED RADIO, TWO-WAY RADIO, OR WEATHER-BAND RADIO (\$50 OR LESS); A TARPAULIN OR OTHER FLEXIBLE WATERPROOF SHEETING (\$100 OR LESS), AND SUPPLIES NECESSARY FOR THE EVACUATION OF HOUSEHOLD PETS INCLUDING PORTABLE KENNELS OR PET CARRIERS (\$100 OR LESS); BAGS OF DRY PET FOOD WEIGHING 15 OR FEWER POUNDS (\$30 OR LESS); CANS OR POUCHES OF WET PET FOOD (\$2 OR LESS PER CONTAINER).

## JULY 1-7, 2022 | FREEDOM WEEK

EVENT ADMISSIONS, BOAT AND WATER ACTIVITY SUPPLIES, CAMPING, FISHING, AND GENERAL OUTDOOR SUPPLIES, RESIDENTIAL POOL SUPPLIES, AS WELL AS SPORTS EQUIPMENT IF PURCHASED DURING THIS WEEK ARE EXEMPT FROM THE STATE SALES TAX AND COUNTY DISCRETIONARY SALES SURTAXES.



## JULY 25, 2022 - AUGUST 7, 2022 | BACK-TO-SCHOOL

SALES TAX EXEMPTION ON ALL QUALIFIED SCHOOL SUPPLIES, SHOES, AND UNIFORMS.

## SEPTEMBER 3-9, 2022 | TOOL TIME

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE EXEMPT FROM THE STATE SALES TAX AND COUNTY DISCRETIONARY SALES SURTAXES: HAND TOOLS (\$50 OR LESS); POWER TOOLS (\$300 OR LESS); POWER TOOL BATTERIES (\$150 OR LESS); WORK GLOVES (\$25 OR LESS); SAFETY GLASSES (\$50 OR LESS); PROTECTIVE COVERALLS (\$50 OR LESS); WORK BOOTS (\$175 OR LESS); TOOL BELTS (\$100 OR LESS); DUFFLE/TOTE BAGS (\$50 OR LESS); TOOL BOXES (\$75 OR LESS); TOOL BOXES FOR VEHICLES (\$300 OR LESS); INDUSTRY TEXT BOOKS AND CODE BOOKS (\$125 OR LESS); ELECTRICAL VOLTAGE AND TESTING EQUIPMENT (\$100 OR LESS); LED FLASHLIGHTS (\$50 OR LESS); SHOP LIGHTS (\$100 OR LESS).



## JULY 1, 2022 - JUNE 30, 2023 | ENERGY STAR

A ONE-YEAR SALES TAX EXEMPTION ON ALL CERTIFIED ENERGY STAR APPLIANCES AND PRODUCTS.

## JULY 1, 2022 - JUNE 30, 2023 | BABY & TODDLER CLOTHING; DIAPERS

A ONE-YEAR STATE SALES TAX EXEMPTION FOR THE RETAIL SALE OF CHILDREN'S DIAPERS, AS WELL AS BABY AND TODDLER CLOTHING AND SHOES, PRIMARILY INTENDED FOR CHILDREN AGE 5 OR YOUNGER. DOES NOT INCLUDE WATCHES, WATCHBANDS, JEWELRY, UMBRELLAS, OR HANDKERCHIEFS.



## JULY 1, 2022 - JUNE 30, 2024 | IMPACT-RESISTANT DOORS AND WINDOWS

A TWO-YEAR STATE SALES TAX EXEMPTION ON THE RETAIL SALES OF IMPACT-RESISTANT WINDOWS, DOORS, AND GARAGE DOORS.

### MARION THEATRE SUMMER KIDS FILM SERIES

June 1 through August 5, 2022  
every Wednesday, Thursday and Friday  
10 a.m. and 11 a.m. at the Marion Theatre,  
50 South Magnolia Ave.

Tickets are \$3 for children 12 and under and includes summer snack pack with a small popcorn, gummy snacks and a Capri Sun.

**Movies include:**

- June 1 - June 11 ~ Shrek
- June 1 - June 13 ~ Aladdin (2019)
- June 15 - June 26 ~ James and the Giant Peach
- June 15 - June 25 ~ Madagascar
- June 29 - July 9 ~ Sing 2
- June 29 - July 10 ~ How to Train Your Dragon
- July 13 - July 24 ~ PAW Patrol
- July 13 - July 23 ~ Where the Wild Things Are
- July 27 - August 7 ~ The Lorax
- July 27 - August 6 ~ Gnomeo and Juliet



NO NEED TO COOK - ST. PAUL AME CHURCH SONS OF ALLEN IS SPONSORING FISH

ST PAUL AME CHURCH  
SONS OF ALLEN  
718 NW 7TH STREET OCALA, FL 34475

# FISH FRY

\$10 FISH DINNER FRIDAY JUNE 3, 2022 @ 4PM

Meal includes:  
fresh fish, grits, fries and homemade hush puppies



# MONEY SMART TIPS

By Scott Hackmyer

## SOMETIMES TO SAVE MONEY, ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS ASK

Just Ask! With things being so expensive these days and money being tight sometimes we have to make an effort to keep others from taking our money. I know a woman who recently made a deposit at her bank and then wrote a check. Somehow the check cleared the bank before they credited her with the deposit so the bank charged her a \$37 Insufficient Funds fee. Not being willing to accept this, she went to the bank and asked if they would refund the \$37 back to her. They did.



Most banks will give you back a late fee or insufficient funds fee if you have been a customer for more than just a few months and only ask for this forgiveness once or twice. There are many places where you spend money that if you just ask for a better price or a better deal you will get it. I recently bought a large bag of dog food at Target. I noticed the price was \$7 higher than the same bag at Walmart. I showed the cashier the Walmart price on my phone and asked if she could match it. She did.

Many stores will not match Amazon but will match the price on the same exact item sold at a different local store, you just need to ask. I use Norton on my computer to guard against viruses. They sent me a notice they were renewing it at a price that I knew I could beat at a local store so I declined the online renewal. It immediately popped up with an offer for the same protection but at a 50% discount. I saved \$60 with just one computer click. Often you just have to not accept full price and ask for that discount.

An elderly woman I know was proudly showing me her brand new car. I asked her if she got a good deal and she said yes, she paid exactly what was on the window sticker. She was a recent widow and somehow never knew that you could bargain with car dealers for a lower price. I have a subscription to the Ocala Star-Banner. It seems like at least twice a year I get a letter from them telling me my rates are going up. If you get this same letter call the circulation department and tell them you can't afford the higher rate. After just a few minutes of putting you on hold they will come back on the line and offer you a lower rate. I finally gave up my Century Link landline but still use them for my internet connection. They have what they call a Loyalty Discount but you have to ask for it. The savings are significant but again one phone call and some time on hold and you will save on every monthly phone or internet bill.

Even when shopping at consignment stores, most consignment managers have the authority to reduce the price by 10% without asking the seller's permission. If you want an even larger discount you can ask them to call the seller with your best offer. Sometimes even if you can't get a better price you can get the store to throw in an item for free. When buying a new bed that price is almost always negotiable but in addition many times you can get them to throw in bed pillows or a mattress protector for free just so they can make the sale. Remember the key is you have to ASK!



### Florida Senate Campaign Launch And Fundraiser Reception For Rodney Long (D) For Florida Senate District 9

Host Committee: "Marion County Friends of Rodney Long"  
Wednesday, June 8, 2022  
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Webber Center, College of Central Florida,  
3001 SW College Road, Ocala.

Attire:  
Business  
Casual

Light refreshments will be served  
**RSVP by Monday, June 6, 2022**

Whitfield Jenkins (352) 875-5071 or Loretta Pompey Jenkins (352) 208-8666

Donations accepted at [www.rodneylongsenatedistrict9.com](http://www.rodneylongsenatedistrict9.com).

## ARE YOU REGISTERED TO VOTE? 2022 Primary Election\*

Voter Registration Deadline:  
July 25, 2022



### Early Voting:

August 13, 2022 to August 20, 2022,  
10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

### Mail Ballot Request Deadline:

August 13, 2022 by 5 p.m.

Mail ballots must be received by the Supervisor of  
Elections office by 7 p.m. Election Day to be counted

### Election Day:

August 23, 2022: Polls open 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

## 2022 General Election\*

### Voter Registration Deadline:

October 11, 2022



### Early Voting:

October 27, 2022 to  
November 5, 2022, 8 AM to 6 PM

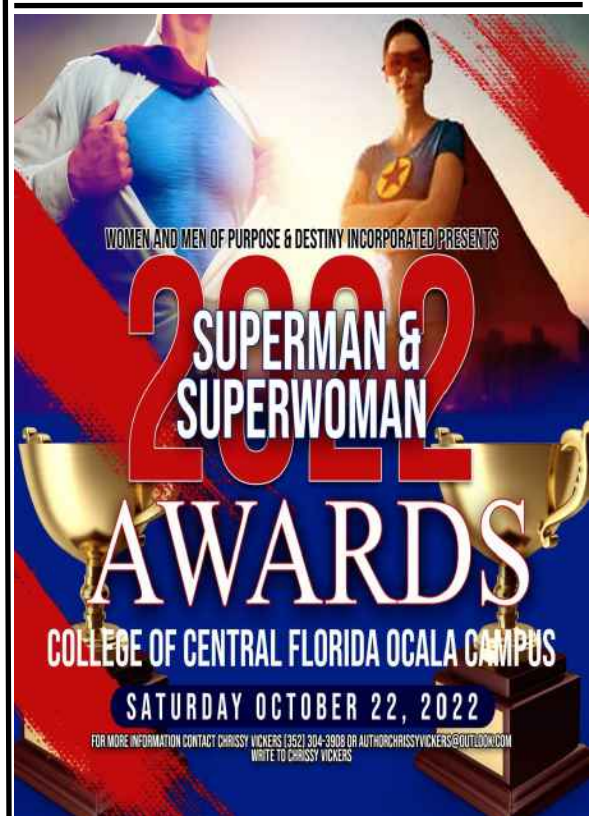
### Mail Ballot Request Deadline:

October 29, 2022 by 5 PM

Mail ballots must be received by the Supervisor of  
Elections office by 7 p.m. Election Day to be counted.

### Election Day:

November 8, 2022 - Polls open 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.





**FRIDAYS**  
 APRIL 22 - JULY 1\*  
 7 - 9 P.M.



**WEBB FIELD**  
 1510 NW 4TH ST.  
**RAIN LOCATION:**  
 E.D. CROSKY  
 RECREATION CENTER

\*excluding May 27

MUSIC



**2022 SERIES LINE-UP**

FUN

April 22, Davina and the Vagabonds with West Port High Real Teal Jazz Combo | April 29, LPT with Denis Vasenin  
 May 6, Indigenous with Sheba, the Mississippi Queen | May 13, The Byrne Brothers with Scott Jackson  
 May 20, The Drifters feat. Rick Sheppard with Billy Buchanan | June 3, Reggae Force with Nostaljah  
 June 10, Bette Smith with Ecliff Telford | June 17, Natu Camara with UF Afropop Ensemble  
 June 24, Melvin Williams with Gospel Echoes | July 1, Miles Nielsen & the Rusted Hearts with the Ocala Symphony Orchestra

FOOD

For more information visit [ocalafl.org/levittamp](http://ocalafl.org/levittamp) or call 352-629-8447.



19th Annual

# BACK TO SCHOOL BASH

Free Backpack and School Supplies

**SATURDAY, JULY 30, 2022**

**DRIVE THRU ONLY EVENT**  
 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
**Friends Recycling Center**  
 2350 N.W. 27th Ave., Ocala

Registration NOT Required! Children must be in the car to receive Backpack - No Exceptions!


Free Meal for Adults and Children SWAC3 Bags with Community Resources for Adults Whoop Supplies Least!

For more information, to donate supplies or sponsorship opportunities, call (352) 438-5993 or (352) 509-9279

Sponsored by Marion County Children's Alliance, Community Legal Services of Mid-Florida, Inc., City of Ocala in partnership with Marion County Public Schools

## Brazen Bash '22

# REACHING FOR THE TOP






Join us and meet Rashad Jones, owner of Big Lee's BBQ and a star of the Food Network. Hear Rashad share how he found success by staying focused on his goals.

In addition to meeting Rashad, those who come can enjoy

- rock wall, bungee run, obstacle course
- pizza & sno-cones
- music
- t-shirts
- and more!

**Free event for kids 11 to 18**

10 A.M.-2 P.M. • THURSDAY, JUNE 30  
 SOUTHEASTERN LIVESTOCK PAVILION  
 2232 NE JACKSONVILLE RD, OCALA, FL 34470  
 FOR INFORMATION, VISIT [BRAZENBASH.ORG](http://BRAZENBASH.ORG) OR CALL 352-644-2687

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## REGISTER TO ATTEND! IT'S A MUST SEE



# WHO'S IN THE BOX?

A dramatic theatrical performance that educates teens  
on the serious consequences of gun violence.

**June 23 | 6–8 p.m.**  
**Marion Technical Institute**  
**1614 E Fort King St., Ocala**

For ages 13+  
Teens must be accompanied by an adult.

Transportation is available for families.  
For more info, call 352-369-7182