



MAYOR-ELECT BEN MARCIANO: MY PASSION IS SERVING PEOPLE



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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

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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.

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EDITOR'S DESK



The holiday season is right around the corner and many people are excited, but for families who are struggling to get by, facing a serious illness or grieving the loss of a loved one, getting in the holiday spirit is the last thing on their minds.

The Marion County Children's Alliance gets many calls from individuals everyday looking for assistance to help with their rent, mortgage, electric bill or pay a few more days in a motel to keep them and their children off the streets. The calls never stop! The sad part is many of them wait until the last minute to ask for help and then act surprise when we tell them we can't assist them. Many are looking for us to pay the first, last and security deposit they need to move into a new place and they don't have anything to contribute or they're unemployed and have no income. If I had a nickel for every time I hear, "I just need help getting in; I'll figure something out for next month."

To be fair, it's not always their fault. The state of our economy has made it difficult for many families to find affordable housing or meet the landlord's requirements to move in. Unfortunately, it's only going to get worse. While this is definitely a community crisis that we can't fix right now, here's something you can do to help your family. If you "think" you might need help for Thanksgiving and Christmas this year, whether it's food, toys for your children or both, the time to sign up is NOW! Please don't wait until the last minute because you thought you had it taken care of and miss out on getting help, that will just make things more difficult for your family. See page 4 and 5 for agencies offering help this holiday season and how to apply.

Don't let the demands of the holidays overwhelm you or add additional stress to your life. Try these simple tips to help calm your stress: 1. Acknowledge Your Stress; 2. Listen to Music, Laugh, Smile or Hug Someone; 3. Mute Your Phone Notifications and Avoid Distractions; 4. Invest in a Diffuser; 5. Take a Break.

Despite what you and your family may be going through right now, remember, it could always be worse even if you don't think so. This Thanksgiving, I challenge each of you to find at least four things you are thankful and/or grateful for.



1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Let's Talk!

Monica Bryant

Monica T. Bryant, Editor

*Give Thanks not just on Thanksgiving Day,
but every day of your life. Appreciate and
never take for granted all that you have.*

Happy Thanksgiving from Town Talk Magazine

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COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

PROTECT OUR CHILDREN PROJECT



Bishop John Jackson has been making every effort to create more awareness about the Protect Our Children Project (POCP) in Marion County.

Jackson, who started as the Marion County Chapter Director two years ago, became the CEO in June of 2023.

“I became involved because I connected with the purpose of this organization, which is to protect the innocence, privacy and quality of education for all children,” he said.

According to the organization’s website, the vision of the POCP is to provide every child with the protections necessary to develop a healthy person in spirit, mind and body. Their purpose is to protect our children through educating and empowering the local community to have a positive, life-changing effect on the entities that influence our children and impact their futures.

Pastor Ernie Rivera and Terry Kemple, who live in Tampa, founded the organization four years ago because they felt the need to stop the actions that many felt were harmful to children and went against the moral and ethical principles our country was founded on. The first chapter was started in Tampa, and now they have chapters in Marion, Lake, Polk, Broward, Duval, Pasco, Broward, Dade, Lee Collier, Hillsborough, Pinellas, Orange, Monroe, Sarasota, St. John’s, Osceola, Hernando, Manatee and Palm Beach, and in 10 more counties that are not in Florida.

The POCP provides families with Child Advocacy Training, which trains individuals on how to hold a town hall meeting or approach the county commission, school board, etc. They also offer parent awareness workshops, which trains attendees on how to safeguard their families against trafficking at all levels.

Jackson said their greatest success story is their Cell Porn campaign in Polk County with Sheriff Grady Judd. Through PSA’s and other community involvement, they were able to increase public education and awareness that more missing and abused children’s cases are being solved and traffickers are being exposed and brought to justice. They also collaborated with the producers of the “Sound of Freedom” movie and helped promote it throughout the state.

The organization is funded by individual donations, monthly memberships, corporate sponsorships, galas, auctions and grants, but their biggest challenge right now is getting the churches involved.

“Pastors tend to shy away from controversial issues,” he said. “All we ask of the churches is to give us 15 minutes to speak to their congregation about the dangers confronting children on a daily basis and set up a table in their church to recruit volunteers.”

Jackson said membership to their organization is free, but they have three additional levels based on their monthly giving, which includes benefits. He said they need volunteers to fill six categories: Research, Prayer, Event Planning, Membership, Outreach and Marketing. Currently they have 15, but their goal is to recruit 120 volunteers per county in order to maximize their impact.

The organization, which is located at 3400 N.E. Jacksonville Rd., Ocala, FL 34479, has a YouTube channel and a Facebook and Instagram Page under Protect Our Children Project. For more information, to volunteer or become a member, visit <https://www.pocp.org>, send e-mail to info@pocp.org or call (813) 469-8930.



Bishop John Jackson, D.D., CEO

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.

NEED HELP THIS HOLIDAY SEASON?

Deadline to submit an application for Thanksgiving is **November 6**. The Deadline for Christmas assistance is **December 1, 2023**. Applications available at Greater New Bethel during office hours Monday - Thursday, from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Call the Church at **(352) 622-3815** for questions or more information .



GREATER NEW BETHEL MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH OF OCALA, INC.
612 NW 4TH PLACE**OCALA, FL 34475
PHONE: (352) 622-3815**FAX: (352) 622-3101
Bishop Dr. Tanya M. Hanks M. Div., Pastor

2023 Thanksgiving Signup

Name _____ Phone Number _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Household Size _____ Application # _____



'Tis the Season of Giving and Serving
Saturday, December 16, 2023



The Ascension Project of Ocala, Florida will be accepting applications for food and toy distributions for families in Marion County.

ALL Applications will be accepted on a first come- first served basis and must be completed at and turned in to the

**Administrative office of
Greater New Bethel M. B. Church
612 NW 4th Place * Ocala, Florida**

Office Hours: Mon- Thurs: 8:30am -1:30pm

Must Provide the following copies with application:
❖ State Issued ID
❖ Proof of Residency


**For More Information
Contact us at:
352-622-3815
MON-THURS (9AM-2PM)**

Applications accepted October 9 -December 1, 2023

**COMMUNITY DISTRIBUTION & PICKUP
DECEMBER 16, 2023
11 :00AM -1:00PM
GNB MINISTRIES
612 NW 4TH PLACE**

TO ENSURE THE HEALTH SAFETY OF RECIPIENTS AND VOLUNTEERS, WE MUST ADHERE TO THE COVID-19 CDC GUIDELINES. PLEASE REMAIN IN YOUR VEHICLES AND OPEN THE TRUNK WHEN VOLUNTEERS ARE READY TO LOAD IT. WALK-UP RECIPIENTS PLEASE REMAIN 6 FEET APART, WHILE WAITING IN LINE. PLEASE WEAR A FACE-COVERING.

SIGN UP NOW OR PLAN TO ATTEND



"Do the good that presents itself to be done."
- St. Vincent DePaul

2023 Holiday Help Drives

Information for Applicants

Each year, Blessed Trinity and Brother's Keeper helps hundreds of families during the holiday season. **Eligible families receive food for Thanksgiving and food & gifts for children 12 and under at Christmas.** This year we are partnering with Toys for Tots. It is only through the generosity of many others in our parish and community that we're able to provide this assistance each year.

Holiday Sign-Ups: **Monday, October 9 through Friday, December 1***
Mon. & Fri. 9am -11:30am and Tues., Wed., Thurs. 9am-2:30pm
*Cut-Off for Thanksgiving food applications is Fri. November 10

Who's Eligible: **THANKSGIVING FOOD & CHRISTMAS FOOD:** Families with at least one child under the age of 18 residing in Marion County.

CHRISTMAS TOYS: Families with at least one child 12 and under living in one of the following zip codes 34433, 34434, 34470, 34473, 34475, 34477, 34478, 34479, 34481

Applicants Need: Photo ID with Marion County address, Social Security cards for adults and children, Birth Certificates for all children, Lease and Utility Bill to prove residency and zip code Proof of food stamps qualification (if eligible)

GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD FOR HE IS GOOD
PSALM 107

OH HOLY NIGHT!

Pick-Up Dates/Times: Thanksgiving: **Tuesday, November 14** from 9:00am-4:00pm
Christmas: **Tues., Dec. 12 or Wed., Dec. 13** from 9am-4pm
*Clients will be assigned a pick-up time/day

Pick-Up Location: Knights of Columbus Hall | 1510 SE 3rd Ave, Ocala, FL 34471
Located at the north end of the Blessed Trinity parking lot
*Bring Photo ID of the applicant when picking up

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE 320 NW 10 th St., Ocala (352) 622-3846	THRIFT STORE 320 NW 10 th St., Ocala (352) 732-7988	SOUP KITCHEN 435 NW 2 nd St., Ocala (352) 789-8139	MAIL TO 5 SE 17 th St., Ocala, FL 34471
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Howard Academy Community Center presents our first

Thanks GIVING OUTREACH

Sunday, November 19, 2023
3:00pm to 6:00pm


Howard Academy Community Center
306 N.W. 7th Avenue
Ocala, Florida 34475

Free Food * Free Coats * Free Care Packages
(While supplies last)

Join us as we give back to our community for the Thanksgiving holiday. We have teamed up with several agencies and organizations to provide our community with information on services available to you if you are experiencing homelessness or are in need of a helping hand. Come out and enjoy a free meal and hear from the agencies below. For more information, please call (352) 671-4175.

We are also in need of the following items:
*To go boxes
*Plastic forks & napkins
*Canned drinks & bottle water
*Desserts (cakes, pies, etc.)
*Packaged snacks

Items can be dropped off at:
Howard Academy Community Center
306 N.W. 7th Ave.
Ocala, FL 34475
Monday-Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm




New Direction Reentry Center of Marion, Inc.

2023 Holiday Help for Zip Code 34482

Sign-up by Appointment Only!
352*509*7344

November 14-16
Tuesday-Thursday 9:00am - 11:30am and 1:00pm - 4:00pm
November 28-30
Tuesday-Thursday 9:00 am - 11:30 am and 1:00pm - 4:00pm
December 2
10:00am-1:00pm

Pick - Up Location:
5100 W HWY 40 Ste. 1100 Ocala, FL 34482

Who's Eligible:
Families with at least one child under the age of 12

APPLICANTS NEED:
* Photo ID with Marion County address
*Social Security cards for adults and children
* Birth Certificates for ALL children
* Lease and Utility Bill to prove residency and zip code
*Proof of assistance(SNAP or TANF Benefits)

EMAIL: NDIRECTION2018@GMAIL.COM
WEBSITE: <https://ndirectionrc.wixsite.com/families>

TOYS FOR TOTS

*A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL FREE 080435-7352 WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE. REGISTRATION #C88038



Please join Kingdom Revival Church for a **FREE**

Drive Thru Community Christmas Lunch

with all the trimmings!

Saturday, December 16, 2023, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
3318 E. Silver Springs Blvd., Ocala, FL 34470

For information, please call Rose at (352)361-5044

COMING ATTRACTIONS

MC MUSEUM OF HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY
307 SE 26th Ter, Ocala, FL 34471
(352) 236-5245

All programs held on the 3rd Sunday of odd months at 2 p.m. in Green Clover Hall, 319 SE 26th Terr., Ocala.

Reception following the program in the museum itself.
Admission free to members, \$5 to nonmembers.
Individual and family memberships available for sale at events.

Sunday, November 19, 2023: Annabelle Leitner
"Did you know? Speaking on early Marion County history and little known facts.

Sunday, January 21, 2024: The Groveland Four,
Bill Gladson, State Attorney TBD.



Arts and Crafts for Adults

Every Friday from 10-11:30AM

Free Program!

All Supplies Included



With AIHOM Artist
Carmen Rojas Gines

REGISTER WITH US NOW!

info@aihocala.org or
call (352) 723-5444

507 NE 8th Ave, Ocala,
Florida 34470



CEREMONY TO HONOR VETERANS



Second Bethlehem Association, Layman Department will hold a Veterans Appreciation Program on Saturday, November 11, from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Theological Seminary, 1205 N.W. 4th St., Ocala.

The event will celebrate the men and women who answered the call to serve our country, some in war and others in peace, but they all stepped up.

For information, contact Deacon Henry Tyler (U.S. Army) at **(352) 816-2283** or Brother Fred Cyprian (U.S. Air Force) at **(352) 351-8652**.



HIRING ALL HEROES

The 2023 Paychecks for Patriots Job Fair connects veterans and their spouses to veteran-friendly businesses interested in hiring now. This event is open to all job seekers but priority will be given to US veterans, active service members, and their families.



Thursday, Nov. 9 | 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Marion County Public Library Headquarters
2720 E Silver Springs Blvd., Ocala, FL

REGISTER TODAY:

bit.ly/HIRINGHEROES

NEED HELP? CALL: 800-434-5627, EXT. 2225



CareerSource Citrus | Levy | Marion is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids services are available upon request to candidates with disabilities and in Spanish. Phone numbers may be reached using TTY/TDD equipment. Florida Relay at 711. For accommodations, call 800-434-5627, ext. 2025. Programs funded by CareerSource CSW in partnership with the U.S. Department of Labor and Florida's 15th Century 50th Anniversary, in cooperation with the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity. A proud partner of the American Job Center network and member of CareerSource Florida.

DO BAD EMPLOYEES REALLY EXIST?

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

I was on my way to meet a client the other day and decided to grab some coffee and a hashbrown from a local fast-food establishment. When I pulled around to the window, the person asked for payment and handed me my receipt. They did not say “Good Morning” nor “Thank you” when I rendered payment. The person at the pickup window was the same, they just handed me my coffee and closed the window.

I have a colleague whose business has 3.7 stars out of 5 on Google reviews and when I asked him why that was, he replied, “I have crappy employees, so the service is terrible, what am I supposed to do?” That statement could have led to a deep conversation about how wrong he was, but instead I shared with him the same principles I’m sharing with you today.

There’s no such thing as a bad employee!

My statement would be incorrect if a store manager opens the doors each morning and whomever walks in is allowed to put on a uniform and serve customers. However, if the server went through an onboarding process, training, and was there because the manager put them there, then their behavior is only a symptom of a deeper problem.

The first principle has to do with setting clear management expectations, outcomes and accountabilities. Whether the establishment is a franchise or family-owned business, there must be a clear understanding between the owners and the management team. Holding your management team to revenue and budget goals isn’t enough. They must recognize how those goals are achieved.

For example, if an analysis was run on the days when the store achieved the desired revenue level, it would invariably show things like how many transactions occurred, units sold during that time, which products and staffing levels.

The store manager could take that information and build a metric around achieving the same outcome on a consistent basis. First by training all the other managers and key holders on the design of the metric, as well as the functionality of what makes it work. The better they understand the key roles in reaching the desired outcomes, the better they will be at sourcing employees that can execute their strategies. This includes analyzing what changes as they implement the metric across other shifts.

The second principle is to hire with precision. With a detailed understanding of what makes the strategy work, the management teams need to hire for the individual functions rather than general “warm body” accumulation.

If the research showed customers responded better on days when the drive-thru functioned at a certain pace, then hire people who come from backgrounds that had high volume interactions. However, the manager needs to look at that high volume background in context to what they need.

For example, they may interview a short order cook who worked in a restaurant that served 500 people a day. While the natural tendency would be to put him/her on the grill, I would consider putting them at the drive-thru window, because they would be strong at coordinating with those who provide the food for the customers, both from helping the existing cooks getting it done more efficiently, to making sure the customer has everything they ordered.

Using this type of purposeful hiring will expand the range of people to be considered and the managers can simply choose the right person for each function. This will also help the store manager develop employee modeling based on the consistencies observed from their top performers, which allows for peer-to-peer training and accountability.



What is most interesting is once I began implementing this strategy during my 20+ years of retail management, I found two things to be true. First, the top performers always brought their friends in for interviews and second manager turnover was virtually non-existent.

Therefore, if your company is suffering from “bad employees”, it’s because of poor planning and leadership. I don’t say that as a criticism, but as a wake-up call to examine your house if you are not meeting revenue expectations or suffer from poor customer reviews.



MEET MAYOR-ELECT BEN MARCIANO



Mayor-Elect Ben Marciano never had a desire to run for a political office, nor did he ever think that one day he would be Mayor of the community he loves, the City of Ocala.

Born in Queens, New York, after his parents divorced, the 3-year-old and his mother followed his grandparents to Citrus Springs, FL. Marciano graduated from Lecanto High School and Central Florida Community College (now the College of Central Florida) with a degree in criminal justice. He had planned to follow in his grandfather's footsteps and become a police officer because he was passionate about protecting and serving people.

But things didn't go as planned. While attending Florida State University, he advanced from drinking to using drugs. One night after leaving a party, he was arrested for drug possession and charged with a felony, which ended his dreams of becoming a police officer. In 2005, he hit a low point in his life and struggled with alcohol and substance abuse addiction. He moved back to Ocala in February of that year and checked himself into the Centers (now SMA). He completed drug court and had his record expunged.

Mayor-Elect Ben Marciano

"That program saved my life," he said.

On Tuesday, December 5, Marciano will be sworn in as the Mayor of the City of Ocala, along with Councilmembers Ire Bethea, who represents District 2, and Kristen Dreyer, who represents District 4, at the Ocala City Council Meeting at 4 p.m. at Ocala City Hall, 110 S.E. Watula Ave. Ocala.

"I truly feel it is a calling," said Marciano, who owns Zone Health and Fitness. "I believe everything I have been through in my life uniquely qualifies me to help some of our communities' biggest struggles."

As mayor, Marciano will serve a two-year term and earn \$550 monthly. Council members Bethea and Dreyer will serve four-year terms and earn \$200 a month. Although Marciano will be responsible for overseeing the Ocala Police Department, his other duties are mostly ceremonial, but he plans to continue being active in the community.

"I have already started spending time throughout all of Ocala and I have thoroughly enjoyed it," he said. "My slogan when I ran was to be a Mayor that will serve the whole community. I will continue to be present and be available for all the citizens of Ocala."

Marciano said some of the biggest concerns in our community stem from mental illness and addiction and with his experience and leadership he believes we can put together a plan that engages the whole community to positively address this issue. He said the homeless issue will be a big challenge while at the same time it will be a major opportunity to really help people rebuild their lives since we have a lot of resources and programs in our community.

Marciano is married to Danielle and they have three children.

"My passion is serving people. It (being the Mayor) is the perfect position to live out my purpose," he said. "Ultimately, I would love for our community to come together to work on all issues. I am hoping to be the bridge to make that happen."



Mayor-Elect Ben Marciano, wife Danielle and their 3 kids



Councilman Ire Bether, Sr.

Councilman Ire Bethea, Sr., who was elected to represent District 2 on the Ocala City Council in 2020, is grateful for the opportunity to continue serving the residents in West Ocala.

"I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for re-electing me as your city councilman for another four years," he said. "It is truly an honor to serve this amazing community."

Betha said being involved with your community doesn't start when you run for, are elected to or hold a position. He said he has always been active in the community prior to being elected and during the last four years.

Some of his accomplishments include:

- Ocala Recharge Park (September 2020): Purchased three acres north of the Mary Sue Rich Community Center at Reed Place for future development in 2021.
- Ocala International Airport Terminal opened in February 2020.
- Poinciana Heights neighborhood sidewalk and light poles (near Dr. N.H. Jones Elementary School) were added in 2021.
- MLK First Responder Campus opened in the Summer of 2021.
- Elevation 89, the restaurant located at the Ocala International Airport opened in October 2021.
- The Mural painted on the E.D. Croskey Recreation Center was completed in 2022

Continued on page 9

BETHEA AND DREYER RETAIN THEIR SEATS

- Established new traffic patterns (Downtown Ocala), which created more sidewalk space, bike lanes & additional parking in 2022.
- Closed on property owned by Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church in 2022. The property is intended for the construction of a new City parking garage.
- Resurfaced 61 centerline lane miles of roadway from 2020 to 2022.
- Obtained \$8 million in state funding for the Southwest/Northwest 44th Avenue Extension in 2022.
- Mary Sue Rich Community Center opened in January 2023.

Bethea said he wants to emphasize that this journey is not just about him, but about all of us, and together, we can accomplish great things and make Ocala an even better place to live, work and prosper.

“Your support and involvement are crucial, and I am committed to listening to your voices and working collaboratively to address our shared goals and challenges,” he said.

Bethea is married to Gloria and they have seven children.

Bethea said over the next four years, with your help, he plans to focus on Public Safety, Affordable Housing and City Infrastructure, which includes bike lanes, trails, roadways, sidewalks, stormwater and lighting. He said we all can be a great asset by getting involved and attending City Council, School Board, County Commission and Chamber of Economic Partnership meetings and familiarizing ourselves with the processes that these organizations utilize in providing the strategic planning that is necessary to accomplish the City’s goals and priorities.

“Thank you once again for your trust and confidence in me,” Bethea said. “I’m humbled and excited to continue serving as your city councilman and working hand in hand with each and every single one of you.”



Councilwoman Kristen Dreyer, who initially won the District 4 seat in a runoff election in November 2021, is also deeply honored and humbled and wants to express her heartfelt gratitude to everyone for re-electing her for a second term on the Ocala City Council.

“Your trust and support mean the world to me, and I am committed to continuing to work tirelessly on your behalf,” she said. “Over the past two years, I have witnessed the strength and resilience of our community, and I am excited to outline my plans for the next term as your councilwoman.”

First and foremost, Dreyer said, she wants to emphasize the importance of open and transparent communication. She said she will continue to seek your input on key issues, and actively listen to your concerns. An informed and engaged citizenry is the bedrock of a thriving city.

**Councilwoman
Kristen Dreyer**

Dreyer is a devoted mother of three children. Her priorities for the next four years include:

1. Economic Prosperity: Ocala has had significant economic growth. In the next four years, I will continue to support initiatives that attract new businesses, support existing ones and create job opportunities for our citizens. My goal is to ensure that Ocala remains a city of opportunities for all.

2. Public Safety: The safety and security of our citizens are paramount. I will continue to support our police and fire departments, ensuring they have the resources they need to keep Ocala safe. Community policing and engagement will continue to be our focus to build trust and collaboration.

3. Education and Youth Development: Our children are our future which is why I am the City Liaison to the Marion County School Board through the Technical Working Group. I will advocate for quality education, afterschool programs and mentorship initiatives. By investing in our youth, we invest in the long-term prosperity of Ocala.

4. Affordable Housing: I understand the challenges many of our residents face when it comes to affordable housing. Over the next four years, as a member of the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee, I will work on policies and initiatives to make housing more accessible and affordable for all, so that Ocala remains a place where everyone can thrive.

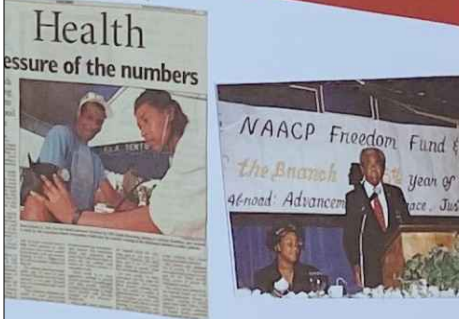
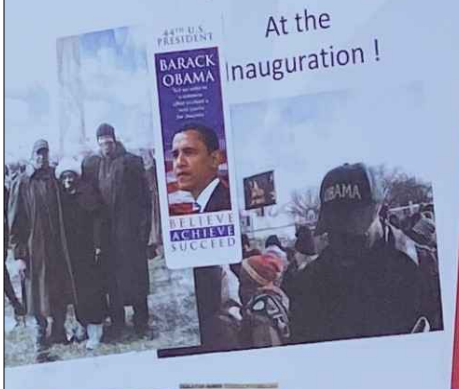
5. Infrastructure and Transportation: Our city’s infrastructure is the backbone of our daily lives. As the Co-Chair of the Ocala-Marion TPO, I will continue to work on improving our roads, public transit and other vital services to make life in Ocala even more convenient and efficient.

6. Civic Engagement: Ocala is a community that thrives on its citizens’ involvement. I will promote civic engagement at all levels, from neighborhood associations to city-wide initiatives. Together, we can build a stronger, more inclusive Ocala.

“I am eager to collaborate with my fellow council members, city officials, and, most importantly, you, the citizens of Ocala, to turn this vision into reality,” Dreyer said. “The challenges we face may be great, but so is our determination to overcome them. Together, we can make Ocala an even better place to live, work, and raise our families.”

NAACP

Marion County History At A



Save the Date for our Celebration of a Historic Milestone!!

1923 Represents 100 Years of operating as an NAACP Branch and 80 Years as a Chartered Branch

WHERE: New Covenant MBC, 606 SW Broadway Street, Ocala, FL 34475

SPEAKER: Rev. Stanley M. Jacobs, Sr., Pastor

WHEN: Sunday, December 10, 2023

TIME: 5:00PM

The Historical Celebration Committee is collecting as much Marion County NAACP history as possible. If you know of an event or situation about our NAACP, please write a SHORT description and email to sarah_greene2008@yahoo.com. Also, please add the name of the NAACP President at the time.

If you have a picture or newspaper article you want to share, please mail to NAACP Marion County Branch, P. O. Box 2274, Ocala, FL 34478.

We must have all responses as soon as possible, but no later than Nov. 24, 2023. This date is critical for adding to the history journal and souvenir book.

The Committee is planning an exciting program with special recognitions. Please plan to attend!

**BISHOP JAMES D. STOCKTON, III
BRANCH PRESIDENT**

Strategic Community Alliance presents

Gentiva Ocala Diwali Celebration

November 19, 2023 from 11:30 am to 6:00 pm
Citizens' Circle, Downtown Ocala

Indian cultural performances • Indian food • Indian handicrafts
Henna art • Wear a Saree • Indian Fashion Show • Indian Trivia Quiz
Cross-Cultural Fun Family Event to Share and Learn

Free Event! Everyone is Invited!



We Thank Our Proud Sponsors:



For more information or to volunteer : www.sacomunities.org
Email: shenimeghani@yahoo.com Phone: 267.575.1227
Kut Different, Inc. is our local partnering nonprofit organization.

Download a Copy of the Scholarship Directory at:
<https://www.marionschools.net/cms/lib/FL01903465/Centricity/Domain/23513/2023%20-%202024%20%20Scholarship%20Directory.pdf>

2023 - 2024 Marion County Area Scholarship Directory



SCHOLARSHIPS Student Copy

YARD SALE

BENEFITING UNITED WAY

**SATURDAY
NOV. 4 | 8 AM-NOON**

**OCALA POLICE DEPARTMENT
402 S. PINE AVE., OCALA**

Come join us for some thrifty fun for a good cause! Your purchases will help United Way improve the lives of those in need.

If you would like to sell items at the yard sale, there is a \$10 donation per table.

To participate, contact Community Liaison
Tara Woods at 352-369-7182
twoods@ocalapd.gov



NOW of Greater Marion County

Wishes you Happy Holidays
and a Wonderful New Year

Join us to bring peace and love
to all members of this community.

Chapter Meetings:
First Thursday of the month
5:30PM
NOMA Gallery, 393 N. Magnolia Ave.



DEADLINE FOR ADS NOVEMBER 17

Building Back Generational Wealth

2024 TOWN Talk

SMALL BUSINESS AND
COMMUNITY
RESOURCE DIRECTORY



SPONSORSHIP FORM—COMPLETE AND RETURN WITH YOUR AD BY NOVEMBER 17, 2023.

AD SIZES: CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

\$500	(1) Full-Page Color Ad (Back Cover) NOT AVAILABLE (NA)
\$350	(2) Full-Page Color Ad NOT AVAILABLE (NA)
\$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

ALL ADS AND LOGOS FOR ADVERTISEMENTS MUST BE SENT CAMERA-READY. PAGE SIZE WILL BE ADJUSTED FOR MARGINS AND BINDING. THE PUBLISHER RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REFUSE ANY ADS OR PHOTOS SUBMITTED. THE PUBLISHER IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST OF MISDIRECTED MAIL

SPECIAL NOTES:

- GOLD SPONSOR \$1000** Sponsorship includes company and logo featured on social media platforms, signage on promotional materials; special media recognition leading up to the launch of the Directory; log recognition on the front cover of the Directory and a Full Page Color Ad.
- SILVER SPONSOR \$500** Sponsorship includes company name and logo featured on social media platforms, social media recognition leading up to the launch of the Directory, logo recognition on the front cover of the Directory, and a Half-Page Color Ad.
- OTHER** I would like to support the directory, please accept my donation of \$_____.

CONTACT PERSON (Please Print)	COMPANY NAME
ADDRESS	CITY STATE ZIP
PHONE	EMAIL

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:

Zelle or Cash App Payment - I have sent my payment to \$HHPHOTOANDESIGN OR ZELLA 352-286-1772

Customer Signature: _____ Date: _____

Business Spotlight



S. D. O.

Hands Over Compressions Basic Life Support (BLS) Training

Business Name: S.D.O. Hands Over Compressions

No. of Employees: 1

Business Owner: Shameeka Osbourne, LPN

Business Address: Mobile

Business Phone: (352) 659-7389

What Year Did You Start Your Business? 2023

Hours of Operation: By Appointment Only

Products and/or Services: CPR for Healthcare Providers and Students

Email: Dosebourn83@gmail.com

Website: N/A

Are you on Social Media? No

What or Who Inspired you to start your business?
I have been a nurse for more than 15 years and I've learned that time can mean life or death. CPR can help save a life during a cardiac arrest or when the heart isn't beating effectively. If I can teach someone to save one life, my mission will be complete.

What Makes Your Business Unique or What's Your Specialty? I'm mobile so I can teach at doctor offices, schools, churches or individual homes.

What Advice Would You Give Someone Starting A Business ?

Do something you love, make a meaningful impact and give back to your community.

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. Completed forms can be returned via email or mailed to P.O. Box 6212, Ocala, FL 34478.

THE UNSCENE SOUTH



Charles Eady Revisits History

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



Charles Eady, "Colonial Jockey," 2020, Mixed media, 36 x 48 in.



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



FORMAL CEREMONY FOR UNVEILING OF THE STREET SIGN DESIGNATED FOR FRANK WASHINGTON JR.



MONEY SMART TIPS

By Scott Hackmyer

ONE MAN'S JUNK CAN BE ANOTHER MAN'S TREASURE ~ TURN YOURS INTO CASH!

Someone I know recently said "If it has to live in a box you don't need it." I thought this was a brilliant statement and also a great way to help you gain some additional money. Particularly if you have lived in the same home for a long time take a good look around, including inside your closets. What treasures can you find that at one time you used or enjoyed but for the last number of years has just "lived inside a box?" Recently I started cleaning out my house and have taken items to Carriage Trade, Renaissance Room and one out of town consignment store. What had become items that were just taking up space and causing clutter in my home has now turned into hundreds of dollars. Have you been stashing your change in a big jar in the closet? Perhaps it is time to cash in these coins and if you are lucky, you might have some with extra value. A number of places in Ocala will purchase valuable coins or old gold or silver such as broken necklaces or bracelets that you haven't worn in years. A small bit of 14K gold will bring you a surprising amount of money. For electronics, tools and other items don't forget that pawn shops also buy items from you. I don't have the computer smarts to sell things online but many people make lots of money just selling their belongings that they just don't want. It surprises me how many people I visit who need assistance and there is a car or truck in the back yard that hasn't run in years and is never going to run again. There are companies that will buy these "junked" vehicles for the scrap metal money they can get. Take a good look at what you have, perhaps the money to pay this month's electric bill is sitting in your closet or backyard right now.

If you read this column on a regular basis, you know I preach about using coupons, getting discounts, buying Buy One Get One Free items and using no fee credit cards that pay you a percentage back. You get in the habit of shopping this way and it just becomes effortless. The day I am writing this was a rewarding day for me. I shopped at Target where because I have their app on my phone, I received 15% off my entire purchase as they were having "Target Days." I then checked out and used by Target charge card which always gives you a 5% discount. I had a \$5 off coupon to boot. I then went to Publix where I bought a number of BOGO items including ketchup and hotdogs. Hard to beat half price but I also have a charge card that until the end of the year gives you 5% cashback on grocery store purchases. My shopping trip ended with a rare visit to Subway to get a sandwich for lunch. I always swipe my Subway Club card just to earn rewards and today my footlong sandwich was half off. I only eat half a sub at a time so lunch and dinner combined totaled \$4.50. It was a good day shopping and this just becomes normal with minimal effort required. Start cutting those paper or digital coupons, look for Buy One Get One deals, have a no fee credit card that pays you cash back and make your money go further than ever.

:txt-a-tip|

See something? Say something! Text keyword "Marion" to:

352-900-3161

Sometimes doing the right thing is hard.
We're here to help.

Marion County's Anonymous Tip Line for Teens

Marion County's anonymous youth tip hotline available 24/7 for reporting illegal activity or concerning behaviors such as:

- Theft
- Abuse
- Bullying
- Drug sales/use
- Underage drinking
- Emotional concerns
- Concerns about the safety of friends or others



SCAN ME



Provided To The
Community By:



FIRST FRIDAY ART WALK RETURNS FRIDAY, NOV. 3

First Friday Art Walk will be held in downtown Ocala on Friday, Nov. 3, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. First Friday Art Walk occurs on the first Friday of each month, September through May.

The following activities will be included in November's event:

- Hands-on art activities and demonstrations for all ages provided by local non-profit arts and cultural organizations.
- Local artists selling their works throughout downtown
- Participating businesses with extended hours.
- Live intermission performance by *The Falcon Band* of Fort King Middle School.
- Buskers stationed throughout the downtown area, including *Diorella Dailey*, *My Uncle's Friend*, *Prestine Allen*, and *Sean T Music*.
- Live musical performance on the Downtown Square, featuring *The Mudds*.

In the event of inclement weather, the First Friday Art Walk will be canceled.

For more information, please contact the City of Ocala Cultural Arts at (352) 629-8447 or artinfo@ocalafl.gov; or visit www.ocalafl.gov/artwalk.

MARION THEATRE

friday night

DONE RIGHT

NOVEMBER 3 | 7 PM

HOSTED BY
MARION COUNTY CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE & COMMUNITY COUNCIL AGAINST SUBSTANCE ABUSE

RESERVE YOUR SEAT AT MARIONTHEATRE.ORG

FREE ADMISSION






50 S MAGNOLIA AVE | MARIONTHEATRE.ORG | 352.820.3049

"Mama, they didn't mean it"

CAST MEMBERS

 Deja Jackson (Keesha)	 Angeline Wiggins (Flirty girl)	 Brian Houston (Sedrik)	 Alaina Banks (Child Keesha)	 George Phillips II (First Love)
 Marietta Frinkley (Grandma Clarabell)	 Julie Wimbush (First love Mother)	 Zaria Ligon Penn (Flirty Girl)	 Josiah Wiggins (That Guy)	 Jacqueline Marshbanks (First Lady Rivers)
 Dominic McDonald (Friend Girl Brother)	 Toni Dewese (Grandma's Friend)	 Tye Samone (Guidance Counselor)	 Quan Freeman (Friend Girl)	 Moysé Edouard (Neighborhood Man)
 Jaye D Jones (Nice Guy)	 Jerry Middleton (Sedrik Friend)	 Jerome Robinson (Pastor Rivers)	 Cherelle Evans (Sister)	 Antonio Hinton (Teenager Boy)

Location:
 Marion Technical Institute
 1614 SE Ft King St, Ocala, FL 34471

4PM Prompt

Saturday November 11 2023

Ticket Sale
 VIP: \$65
 General: \$35

Tickets can be purchased @ KeeshaRiversENT.com



You are invited to
 Ocala Steel Orchestra's

GRAND Opening

5:00-6:30pm
 4th November, 2023





Lillian F. Bryant Community Center
 2200 NW 17th Pl, Ocala, FL 34475

Free bites and beverages

RSVP by Nov 1st:
oso@ocalasteelorchestra.org
 or 352-201-3397



"I Am FlaVore Productions 2023"

 Surg. Tech BRIAN HOUSTON	 Pastor KENNETH & JULIE TOMPKINS	 Judge LEANN MACKEY-BARNES	 Di. JOHNNY AND MILDRED DOWNING
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COMMUNITY HONOREES

A Surprise Honoree! YOU Must be there to know who.

MARION TECHNICAL INSTITUTE
 1614 E FORT KING STREET
 Ocala, FL 34471

4PM PROMPT

Saturday 11th NOVEMBER 2023

VIP: \$65
 General: \$35

Tickets can be purchased @ KeeshaRiversENT.com

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

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**NAACP 5114 MARION COUNTY
BRANCH PRESENTS**

Taste OF SOUL MARION

December 3, 2023 2pm-4pm

One Health Center
SW 17th Ave, Ocala, FL 34471

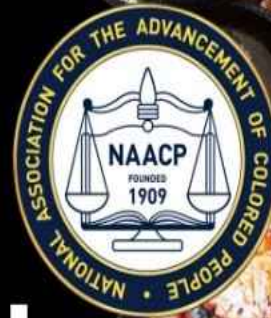
Early Bird Tickets \$40

Ends November 24, 2023

**e Register on
Eventbrite**

Paper Tickets : **352-351-4560**

\$50.00 by Ticket or in person at the door



Local Cuisine

Wine Tasting

Mobile Vendors

