

# TOWN Talk

Volume 3, Issue 1 ~ January 2023

MAGAZINE

## ~ BEAUTY FOR ASHES ~



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Celebrating Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's Birthday

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New  
Year

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*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

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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



Most of us can't wait for 2022 to be in our rearview mirror believing that 2023 will be a lot better. Be careful what you wish or ask for because some of us had that same thought in 2020 when the world practically shut down as a result of the Covid pandemic. We couldn't wait for the year to end, but we soon realized that 2021 in some ways turned out to be much worse.

A new year often represents new beginnings, opportunities, blessings and favor, but it can also be filled with trials, tribulations and challenges. When the hard times come, and they will, don't put your faith in man to help you get through it, but trust God and remember that although the weapon may form, it will NOT prosper! Reflect on the good, the bad and the ugly you experienced in 2022 and find ways to do things better in 2023. It may require a lot of us to come out of our comfort zone and step out on faith!

On January 16, once again we will gather as a community to celebrate the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. I was four years old when Dr. King was assassinated, but his sacrifice continues to impact my life. I don't remember what was happening in our community 23 years ago when I wrote the poem below, but as I look around, it seems like not much has changed. I'm reminded daily that regardless of how far we have come and the progress we have made, we still have a long way to go for Dr. King's dream to become a reality for all of us. At some point, we have to stop doing things out of tradition, but do them because it's the right thing to do!

### "Why We Still March?"

Every year we gather together to march, the place is the same Martin Luther King's Park. But why do we march I wondered aloud, do we believe in the dream or just march with the crowd?

In search of an answer I undertook a great task, I looked back in history for answers from our past.

First comes to mind Dr. Martin Luther King, he said in his speech, "I Have a Dream."

But does his dream still live on in you, or when Martin died did his dream die too?

Have we reached a point where we're all judged the same, or do we still live in a world where things haven't changed?

As time goes on and we continue to March, I remember the courage of the brave Rosa Parks.

Whether tired or weary from standing on her feet, she refused when asked to give up her seat.

Has our struggle for equality all been in vain, I reflect once again to Harriet Tubman's name. She risked her own life to set the slaves free, she paved the road to freedom for you and for me.

A turning point in time one small victory won, for what she did, would you also have done?

Then there comes a time we must stop looking back, and look to the future to find where we're at.

I wonder if we look around are we able to see evidence of Martin's dream alive in you and me?

We're still being tortured and dragged through the streets. We're still denied service in places we try to eat.

Young kids selling drugs and killing one another. For a five-minute high, some would kill their own mother.

Children shooting siblings saying the devil made them do it. Parents left behind wondering how to get through it. Are kids being educated to know right from wrong or must they learn in the streets what they aren't taught at home.

Who's raising who in our society today? We must never allow our children to stray. Martin's dream was for all there's no color of choice. He died believing we should all have an equal voice.

So I tell you today after searching my own heart, the reason we gather and continue to march:

We're marching for the lives lost in our fight. We're marching for all the wrongs never made right.

We're marching for injustice and prejudices too. We're still marching for the right to be treated like you.

Why must we be judged by the color of our skin? When Jesus died on the cross he paid for our sins.

I march because I too have a dream, for everyone to know what being free really means.

So I ask each of you to search your own heart and answer the question,

### **Why Do You Still March?**

Make plans to attend the activities planned in honor of Dr. King.

See the back page for a list of dates and times.

Let's Talk!

*Monica*

Monica T. Bryant, Editor

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# COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

## LAUNCHING SOON ~THE BOOKSPOT READ2REEL

Ruby Boddie wasn't planning on writing a book, she just wanted to share her view of the world with others and it evolved into her publishing her first book. Now she's doing research for another one.

On Monday, January 16, Boddie will launch Read2Reel and host a Book Signing Show for her book "Mama's Hair," from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Cantina Tex Mex Tequila Bar, 35 S.E. 1st Ave., Ocala, FL 34471. The free event includes steel pan performances, readings by Boddie and a representative from the Marion County Literacy Council and poetry performances. The Cantina will also offer Caribbean-themed menu items for sale. Autographed copies of the book will be available for \$12 or books can be purchased on Amazon for \$14.95.

The bio on the back cover reads: Lavinia the main character in "Mama's Hair" transforms her life and assumes a new name, "Love." Take a page from Love and be inspired to manifest the person you aspire to be. Make your move. Why hesitate? Join us. Be inspired.



**Ruby Boddie**



"The Book Spot "Read2Reel" will be launched and the first book for this innovation in "book clubbing" is "Mama's Hair," Boddie said. "Read2Reel is an initiative that promotes literary arts and visual communication in terms of digital and stage documentation in Ocala, which is known for its visual arts. Other fields are in need of development for the benefit of community growth and understanding."

Boddie, a seasonal tax-preparer, said Read2Reel is not your usual book club, She said they read, write, voice and stage. It's an opportunity to join a family where youth and maturity pair up to empower individuals and collective dreams, creations and intentions.

At the launch, Boddie said they will engage those who attend to ask for feedback on suitable days and times for future Book Spot meetings,

which will be held at the Marion County Literacy Council, 120 S.W. 5th St., Ocala, FL 34471.

Boddie said she grew up in the tradition of Biblical stories with their references to the importance of birthrights, and the title of the book is a metaphor for the bequeath of our mothers. The inspiration to write the book, she said, came from her observation of women over decades, which made her a champion of regaling their strength and struggles.

"I also wanted to add a positive voice into the general narrative about Cuba ... a beautiful island that has been politicized in a way that has impacted development of its creative peoples," she said.

After reading the book, Boddie said she hopes people will have more curiosity and appreciation for women, immigrants and self-discovery.

RSVP's are not required, and walk ins are welcome, but Boddie encourages anyone planning to attend to reserve a seat since the event takes place on the birthday observance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and they expect a great turnout.

To RSVP, email [read@read2reel.org](mailto:read@read2reel.org), go to [facebook.com/groups/read2reel](https://www.facebook.com/groups/read2reel) or call (914) 258-9513.

For more information, go to [www.read2reel.org](http://www.read2reel.org) and like and share the Read2Reel group page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/read2reel>.



### About the Author

Ruby Boddie was born in the tiny village of Santa Cruz on the island of Trinidad in the southern Caribbean. With parents of Afro-Trinidadian and Afro-Barbadian extract, the cultural diversity within her family nurtured a curiosity about histories and folkways that grew deep roots in the New York melting pot, where she attended Brooklyn's Midwood High School and Ithaca's Cornell University.

During the global economic turbulence of the 1980s, she returned to Trinidad, where she lived and worked until the 2000s. While traveling the wider Caribbean and the world, Ruby fed her appetite for storytelling. Her short stories and poems are featured on her YouTube [channel@Wordsmovepoetry](https://www.youtube.com/channel/Wordsmovepoetry) and on Instagram at [wordsmovepoetry](https://www.instagram.com/wordsmovepoetry).

### Community Advisors

**Ruby Boddie**  
Poet/Writer

**SeanTMusic Global**  
Musician

**Kathy Rothenberger**  
Editor

**Joseph Rothenberger**  
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**Shelly Pena**  
Program Coordinator

**Yamila Acosta**  
Director of Programs and Services,  
Marion County Literacy Council

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).

# A 'GAMBLE' THAT PAID OFF FOR OUR COMMUNITY



Rev. Dr. Jerone A. Gamble has served in the Second Bethlehem Baptist Association (SBBA) as long as he's been in the ministry.

Gamble, pastor of Mt. Canaan Missionary Baptist Church, has been in the clergy for 32 years, and 29 of those years have been spent pastoring at Mt. Canaan, a position he's proud to have.

"It is probably the highest honor a clergyman can have is to be a pastor," he said. "It's a more intimate kind of relationship with a congregation of folks than in other broader kind of positions."

Rev. Dr. Jerone Gamble

During his personal and professional career, Gamble, a community leader and advocate, has served on a variety of boards and held numerous leadership positions including being the Director of the Theological Seminary and Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Florida General Baptist Convention. His first pastor was Rev. Dr. O. Van Pinkston, Moderator for 32 years, was his first pastor, and he was a seminary student under Rev. Dr. Fred Maeweathers, Moderator for 12 years after Pinkston. Gamble also served as Maeweathers' administrative assistant while he was president of the Florida General Baptist Convention.

As a child, Gamble said he aspired to be the Moderator of the SBBA, so when the opportunity came for him to serve, he threw his name in the hat as a candidate. He was elected to the position in October 2012.

"For some reason, that kind of rested in my spirit," said Gamble, moderator for the past 10 years. "He (Maeweathers) was kind of my mentor and my teacher. A lot of the things I bought to the moderatorship were things that came from him."

Due to term limits implemented under Gamble's administration, the SBBA held elections recently to elect a new moderator. On December 11, at 3 p.m. at New St. John Baptist Church, the Rev. Keith Blunt, Pastor of New Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church, became the youngest moderator in the history of the Association.

"If they choose you, there is a reason why they chose you to be apart of this great work." Blunt said during the installation service. "I'm praying that every place and every person would not just know us for our name, but they will know us because of what we have helped them with their needs, from church needs, to pastor's needs, to deacon needs and layman needs. We are able to impact in a positive way to help in the faith and prayerfully it will help us move forward. We will continue to pray that we will stay focused on things to the extensions of the care of Christ."

Blunt, one of three local pastors who applied for the position, said being Moderator became a desire as he thought of how all the churches of the SBBA can make a bigger difference by uniting all of them in this great commission God has called them to. There are approximately 42 churches in the SBBA, which was founded in 1874. Blunt said his top two priorities are to make sure the focus is on what God wants and to make sure they are doing them.

"I'm looking forward to doing all I can do," he said. With this in mind, we build better together. For the harvest is plenteous, but the laborers are few."

Rev. Eric Cummings, Pastor of New Zion Missionary Baptist Church, is looking forward to their new moderator being able to bring in that component, the segment of the church that's been missing, those between the ages of 25 - 55. He said they are gearing some activities and events towards that group to make them want to come back.

"For us to have a young moderator that's more progressive and that's able to change with the times, that's a good thing," said Cummings, also President, Congress of Christian Education in the SBBA. "We like to sing that song, A Charge to Keep I Have .. To Serve This Present Age, we have a moderator now that can help serve this present age."

Gamble said one of the things he was always concerned about is that the church goes on. He said in order for the church to go on, you have to work with and develop young people to carry on.

"What I see happening is a kind of changing of the generation of leadership in the Association where there are younger pastors and younger folks that are coming into leadership positions in the Association," he said. "I think that's a wonderful thing. That's what gives it longevity."

## Second Bethlehem Baptist Association



**Rev. Keith E. Blunt**  
Moderator

**Rev. Standley Gillings, Sr.**  
Vice At Large

**Rev. Jason Sims**  
1st Vice Moderator

**Rev. Joe Wright**  
2nd Vice Moderator

**Rev. Ronald Sutton**  
3rd Vice Moderator

**Rev. Victor Boynton**  
4th Vice Moderator

1205 N.W. 4th St.,  
Ocala, FL 34475

**Email:**  
email@sbba.name

**Website:**  
www.secondbethlehem.org

## ~ About The Moderator ~

- 1997 ~ Accepted the Call ~ Licensed Second Bethlehem Baptist Association
- 1999 ~ Installed as the 10th Leader of New Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church
- 2001 ~ Bachelor in Theology, United Theological Seminary
- 2010 - Present ~ President, Young Pastors & Ministers Auxiliary, Florida General Baptist Association
- 2014 - 2022 ~ President, Local Congress of Christian Education, SBBA
- 2019 ~ Joined in Holy Matrimony to Lady Trish Blunt
- 2022 (October) ~ Elected Moderator, Second Bethlehem Baptist Association



**Rev. Keith Blunt, Pastor,**  
New Jerusalem Missionary  
Baptist Church and Moderator

# Congratulations Rev. Keith Blunt



# THE MARY SUE RICH COMMUNITY CENTER AT REED PLACE

The most Ruth Reed and members of the Neighborhood Citizens of Northwest Ocala, Inc., (NCNWO) hoped to accomplish when they started fighting against the Royal Oak Charcoal plant in 1996 was to find a way to make the community and city officials aware of the detrimental problems that the plant was creating in the community surrounding the facility.



The Mary Sue Rich Community Center at Reed Place

What they got, was Beauty for ashes!



Ruth Reed

Reed and the NCNWO, a nonprofit organization, led the efforts to hold the charcoal plant accountable for its negative impact on the community and its effects on the environment and human health. The group participated in surveys with the health department to lobby against the plant, collected air and soil samples and proved that toxic levels of Polynuclear Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs) samplings existed in the soil. Other health impacts found as a result of the toxic human carcinogens included skin irritations, irritations and burning of the eyes, damages to developing fetuses, birth defects and reproductive impacts.

Reed recalled the time she was presenting their appeal during a City Council meeting and heard former City Councilwoman Mary Sue Rich tell her: "I can't do it like you Mrs. Reed, but if you (and the neighborhood residents) are out there, meaning in the council meetings, I can help you to move forward, but not without representation."

From that point on, she said, they tried to attend as many council meetings as possible, even if it was only one of them.

"We wanted to have a face of concern in the meetings to show that we were serious about changing our area for the better," she said.

The efforts of Reed and the NCNWO, Rich and others paid off. The Royal Oak charcoal plant finally closed in 2006 after 30 years of operations. Reed got to drive the excavator to kick off the demolition.

"It was fantastic. Absolutely thrilling, awesome and unbelievable," she said. "Being in the seat of the demolition excavator was a dream that came true. It was an exciting experience and my adrenaline was flowing all through my mind."

As she drove the excavator through the metal frame building, Reed said it thrilled her to watch the black ash, soot and metal frame come crashing down. As she watched the spectators run in the opposite direction to keep the black dust from falling on them, it was a reminder of the soot that blanketed the neighborhood for 30 years.

The ribbon cutting ceremony for the brand new Mary Sue Rich Community Center at Reed Place, named in honor of Reed and Rich, is set for Tuesday, January 10, 2023, from 11 a.m. to noon at the facility located at 1812 N.W. 21st Ave. The event is free and open to the public.

"I am most humbled to be given the honor of Reed Place during my lifetime. It's an accomplishment of how a group can come and work together to accomplish a goal which seemed impossible," she said. "If God hadn't allowed this accomplishment to move through us, he would have found another channel, but I'm so glad he chose us (NCNWO) to lead the way through much suffering, pain, agony and disappointment until daylight came through the dark tunnel."

Reed said they all had a part to play and former City Councilwoman Mary Sue Rich had been their representative in office the same number of years that they were getting the problems at Royal Oaks solved.



Ruth Reed drives demolition excavator  
\*Source: Youtube



Ruth Reed at the ground breaking ceremony for the Mary Sue Rich Community Center at Reed Place

(Continued on page 6)

# BEAUTY FOR ASHES

Continued from page 5



**Mary Sue Rich**

“Term after term, she stayed in office to represent the West Ocala community,” Reed said. “The Mary Sue Rich Community Center at Reed Place is about where you place your heart.”

Rich served on the Ocala City Council for 24 years. In 2019, when she decided not to seek re-election, at her final meeting that year, her fellow Councilmembers voted to name the new community center, located at the site of the old Royal Oak Charcoal Plant, in honor of her extensive civic and community service.

“This means everything to us. To see her hard work and dedication to the City of Ocala be honored in such a way as this center, our hearts are full,” said Brittani Griffin, Rich’s granddaughter. “She is Love. She is Light. She is a Legend. The humble humanitarian. I am honored to share her lineage. To MY grandmother, The Honorable Mary Sue Rich, I love you.”

Rich, who was born and raised in Ocala and lived here her entire life, said she wants Ocala to flourish and be a place where families are happy and successful. The achievement she’s most proud of is being on the City Council because she was able to make decisions to improve the lives of the community. Rich said she wants to be remembered for doing what was fair and enhancing the lives of the people in the community.

Griffin said what she admires most about her grandmother is her FIGHT! She said she’s watched her in so many arenas and with so many different battles, whether it was city business or her own personal business, and she has this fight that is unwavering.

“When she’s for something, when she wants something, when she needs something, she’s going to fight and she’s not going to give up, she said. “She’s such a strong lady. If I could be half of who she is, I will have done well.”

Rich never stopped fighting for what was best for the citizens of Ocala while serving on the City Council.

“I didn’t give up because I wanted to do what was best for the citizens of the community,” she said. “I know there were some that didn’t agree, however, I had to follow my heart.”

While she is not expected to follow in her grandmother’s footsteps, Griffin believes that someone must carry on her legacy.

“It just might be me .... But I’ll keep praying about it,” she said.

Rich said she believes she’s had a positive impact on her family and shown them that anything is possible if you work hard and believe in your vision even if no one else does. She said they have been held to a higher standard, which is instilled in them, therefore it’s not a problem for them.

The ground-breaking was held in January 2021. The 41,750 square foot, two-story building, estimated to cost \$10.3 million, includes a gymnasium, fitness center, library, meeting rooms, child play area, auditorium kitchen and much more.

Rich said the library is her favorite feature in the center because it will afford members of the community an opportunity for endless resources and learning opportunities, but she said West Ocala also needs a bank, a grocery store and a medical facility.

“The impact of the community center will provide greater opportunities for activities which will enhance the lives of our citizens,” Reed added. “The health of the community will improve with the inside exercise tracks, various sports, community events, library activities. It will be a gathering place for families.”

Reed said looking at the big picture of what is offered, she would love to enjoy everything in the center. She’s impressed by the fact that there are so many choices, and she’s pleased to have the community center that offers opportunities for all ages.

“The center location and structure is an awesome idea. The design is amazing,” Griffin said. “My hope is that when the center doors finally open up, the hearts and minds of our community will open up as well so that the center will be a place of community, family, fellowship and a bridge to the gap between generations.”



Mary Sue Rich at the ground breaking ceremony for the Mary Sue Rich Community Center at Reed Place



**Mary Sue Rich**



Howard Academy Community Center  
presents their annual

*Black History  
Museum Archives  
Awards Gala*

Friday, February 24, 2023

7:00 pm

Mary Sue Rich Community  
Center at Reed Place

1812 N.W. 21st Avenue  
Ocala, Florida 34475

This will be a night to remember! This formal gala will acknowledge the accomplishments of several individuals who have made contributions to the Ocala/Marion County Community.

Nomination forms are available at our office and can be picked up from 8:30am to 4:00pm or emailed.

For more information, please call (352) 671-4175



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Hosted by Marion County's Human Trafficking Task Force at Ocala Police Department Community Room

January 12, 2023  
6:00 PM to 07:30PM

## DISCUSSIONS AND INSIGHTS

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Learn tools that will help identify digital dangers, signs of Human Trafficking, online safety and parent resources.

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By educating the community, we are providing knowledge to hopefully help prevent Human Trafficking from ever happening in the first place.

### CASE STUDIES

Hear the real life stories of victims and what steps were taken by different agencies.

RSVP to this FREE event via Eventbrite. Limited registrations. Only for 18 years and older. Light refreshments will be provided.

## REGISTRATION

[link eventbrite](#)



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For more information email [Cblanton@ocalapd.gov](mailto:Cblanton@ocalapd.gov)

# Business Spotlight



**Business Name:** Shawn's Blingdom

**No. of Employees:** 1

**Business Owner:** Shawn Blocker  
(Independent Consultant Papparazi)

**Business Address:** Ocala, Florida

**Business Phone:** (352) 454-2445

**What Year Did You Start Your Business?** 2019

**Hours of Operation:** 24/7 via website

**Products and/or Services:** earrings, necklaces, bracelets and hair accessories

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

**Website:** [www.shawnsblingdom.com](http://www.shawnsblingdom.com)

**Are you on Social Media?** Yes

**Facebook:** Shawn Christopher Blocker

**Instagram:** Shawn's Blingdom

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

I needed an outlet and wanted to find something to do to help me inspire women and build their confidence.

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

I provide accessories that compliment and help women complete any outfit.

**What Advice Would You Give Someone Starting A Business?**

Be consistent! Be Visible! Be You!

**Samples:**



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

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

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Session 2 5:00-7:00pm  
Choose ONE Session  
Preregistration Not Required

Expecting a baby? Come to our community Baby Shower!  
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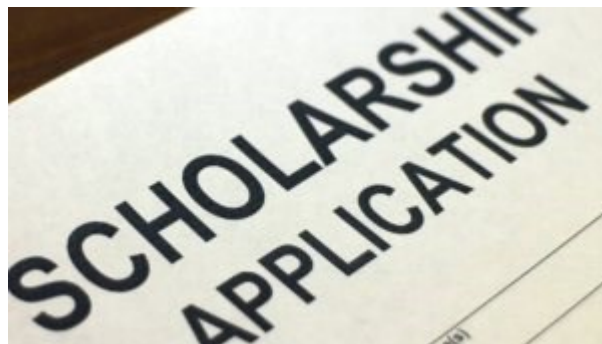
The scholarship requires recipients to teach in the State of Florida for one year for every year the scholarship was awarded. If not, any scholarship money received must be repaid.

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To apply, go to:

<https://kpmgfutureleadersapplication.wufoo.com/forms/sl8tyc19h3e3s/>

Applications must be submitted by February 1, 2023.

An independent selection committee will select and notify the 22 recipients by April 14, 2023.

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## PROJECT WEATHER SCHOLARSHIP

Every Spring, Spectrum News 13 presents a Project Weather Scholarship to nine high school seniors, who excel in science, so apply today.

One qualified high school senior from each of our nine area counties: Brevard, Flagler, Lake, Marion, Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Sumter and Volusia will be awarded \$1,000. Project Weather Scholarship is granted as part of Spectrum News 13's commitment to educating children about science and weather.

All entries must be received by Monday, January 9, 2023.

## PROJECT WEATHER SCHOLARSHIP CONTEST

Spectrum Bay News 9 is proud to present the Project Weather Scholarship Contest. A \$1,000 check will be awarded to seven high school seniors in public, private or parochial schools who excel in science.

The \$1,000 check will be presented at Spectrum Bay News 9.

Each eligible student will be asked to provide the following:

- Completed application
- Written Essay
- Letter of Recommendation from a current high school teacher
- Current copy of high school transcript for proof of GPA.



To apply, go to:

<https://kpmgfutureleadersapplication.wufoo.com/forms/sl8tyc19h3e3s/>

Scroll down to the middle of the page for contest rules, an application and contest essay form.

# MONEY SMART

By Scott Hackmyer

## START YOUR NEW YEAR OFF BEING SMART WITH MONEY

Happy New Year. Many of us make New Year's Resolutions at the start of the year and my goal for you is to become Money Smart in 2023. Let's start with gift cards. If you received some gift cards at Christmas please remember to treat them as carefully as cash. If they get lost you cannot get a refund or replacement, that value is just gone.

Another suggestion is to take an inventory of any gift cards that you have had, used and now have a small balance on them. The amount of unused gift card balances in this country is over 21 Billion dollars.

Surprisingly the least expensive place to buy gas near my home is a Shell/Circle K station. The other day I spent an extra few minutes at the station using up the balances on my old cards. Yes, I had to start the pump and put in a new card four times but I finally used these cards that had remaining balances from 49 cents to \$11.28. When I finished my dashboard showed I had a driving range of 370 miles, basically a tank full of gas just sitting on old, partially used cards. I buy these Shell gift cards when Publix has a \$10 off coupon when you spend \$50 in their weekly ad, and then when I shop at Publix I only buy what is on sale or Buy One Get One Free. I am now going to remember to use the balances on my other gift cards from Home Depot, Lowe's and some local restaurants that I bought when they were previously on sale. If you have a Target charge card remember that when you buy gift cards there you get a 5% discount.

The next tip is about automatic renewals on certain subscriptions you may have. I stream one music/news service and paid \$123 for the year. It just came up for automatic renewal and the new price is \$278. I called the company, explained that I needed to cancel because the price was too high and after about five minutes of discussion we agreed on a renewal price for this year of \$127. Not bad for a five minute phone conversation.



Another company to watch for this is if you have virus protection on your computer. They always automatically renew at a much higher price than you originally signed up for but a phone call usually will bring the price right back down to where it was. Many companies with automatic renewals operate the same way so keep a careful watch on these.


Companies are in business to make money. When they come up with a new idea to make things easier for you they have done the calculations to know it is also going to help them make money. The new "favor" they are doing you is Buy Now Pay Later. The no interest sounds great but the penalties are steep if you are late or miss a payment. You might be tempted to use this if something bad happens but truthfully some new bad stuff will happen that you will have to pay for while you still are obligated to pay off your old bad stuff that happened. Stay away from this new "favor" of theirs.

I was in the checkout line at Walmart and watched person after person buy a bottle of soda out of the cooler case they have at the check-out line. The cost of one bottle was \$2.39. Tell yourself you can wait just a few minutes to get home to get that drink. On sale you can usually buy a case of 12 drinks for about \$4. Don't spend more than half of that on just one drink. It is also a great lesson to teach your children, often it is the right thing to do to "delay gratification", waiting a little while to get what you want can be the smartest decision you can make.

Last thought for this month. When you are brushing your teeth turn off the water until you need it. Doesn't seem like a lot of wasted water but a dollar here and a dollar there all add up these little dollars to big dollars. Money Smart for the New Year, that is your goal!




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Make checks payable to MCTC Employee Fund \$15.00 Pre-registration by February 15th, 2023 \$20.00 at the gate  
 Mail to: PO BOX 63 all vehicle and car part swap spaces same price.  
 Ocala, FL 34478

Name \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Vehicle Make \_\_\_\_\_  
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By execution of this form I hereby release the Marion County Tax Collector's Office from any or all damages during this event.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 For more information contact Jacob Wicklein at 352-368-8206 or e-mail at jwicklein@mariontax.com



# United Theological Seminary and Bible College

Ocala Extension, 1205 NW 4th Street, Ocala, Florida 34475 ~ (352) 369-0998 or (352) 454-5720

The Spring term at the Ocala Extension of the United Theological Seminary and Bible College (UTS7bc) begins January 17, 2023. All spring term classes will be offered online due to COVID 19.

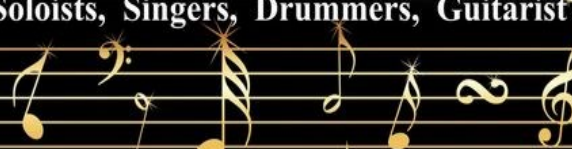
UTS&BC will offer coursework for students pursuing the Bachelor of Theology degree. Students interested in attending UTS&BC should text their email address and phone number to Dr. Nathan Sommon (352) 234-5058 in order to receive the online Information and attend the Orientation Session on January 9 and 10, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. Late registration ends January 24. For private appointments or consultations, please contact Dr. Nathan Sommons or Dr. Jerone Gamble at (352) 454-5720.

According to Dr. Sommons, the assistant extension director and chief academic officer, "individuals who are serious Bible students, and those who desire an understanding of the deep things of God, will benefit most from a seminary education at UTS."


The Ocala Extension of the UTS&BC has prepared students in Ocala since 1986; and has expanded the horizons of seminarians and Christian education for hundreds of students pursuing the bachelor's and master's degrees in Theology and Religious Education. The main campus of the United Theological Seminary and Bible College is located in Monroe, Louisiana; which was established in 1950. Currently UTS&BC operates Extension Campus throughout the United States and is fully accredited by the Accrediting Commission International. Dr. Robby Williams, is the National President of the United Theological Seminary and Bible College.

For additional information, contact Dr. Jerone A. Gamble, Extension Director, at (352) 454-5720 or send email to [jagpray1@cfl.rr.com](mailto:jagpray1@cfl.rr.com).

**WE NEED YOU!**  
**Soloists, Singers, Drummers, Guitarist**



**The Martin L. King, Jr. Commemorative Committee**  
is soliciting your help in forming a Community Choir for the Ecumenical Worship Service, which is scheduled for Sunday, January 15, 2023 at Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church.



**MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.**

The rehearsals will be as follows:  
Thursday, January 5th - 6:30 p.m.  
Thursday, January 9th - 6:30 p.m.  
Thursday, January 12th - 6:30 p.m.

All rehearsals will be held at:  
Mt. Moriah MBC  
55 S.W. 3rd Ave. - Ocala, FL 34471

For more information:  
Bro. Darren Robinson - 352-690-0685  
Sis. Toni Grimsley - 352-361-7891



## DEEP: DIABETES EMPOWERMENT EDUCATION

DEEP™ is a free 6-week education series designed to help people with pre-diabetes and diabetes gain a better understanding of self-care.

1/11/2023 - 2/15/2023

1:30pm-3:30pm

The program will cover topics like:

- Understanding the human body and how to monitor it,
- The importance of meal planning and physical activity.
- Identifying and preventing diabetic complications.

To register for the next class call us at  
352-671-4186

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**Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.**  
**Commemorative Commission Committee**  
**THE DREAM IN ACTION! UNITY IS UP TO ALL OF US!**  
**Schedule of Events**

*Prayer Breakfast*

Saturday, January 14, 2023 - 9:00 a.m.  
Mary Sue Rich Center at Reed Place  
1812 NW 21st Ave., Ocala, FL 34475  
Contact: Loretta Jenkins - (352) 351-0824

*Wreath Ceremony*

Saturday, January 14, 2023 - 11:30 a.m.  
Martin L. King Jr. Park  
500 SW MLK Jr. Ave., Ocala, FL 34471  
Contact: Cassandra Boston - (352) 209-2973

*MLK Youth Day*

Saturday, January 14, 2023 - 1:00 p.m.  
Mary Sue Rich Center at Reed Place  
1812 NW 21st Ave., Ocala, FL 34475  
Contact: Dwanette Dilworth - (352) 207-6036

*Ecumenical Services*

Sunday, January 15, 2023 - 5:00 p.m.  
Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church  
55 S.W. 3rd Ave., Ocala, FL 34471  
Contact: Shirley Wright - (352) 732-0097

*The Historic March*

8:00 a.m. (line-up downtown)  
9:00 a.m. (the march begins)  
Downtown on the square to the  
Dr. MLK Complex  
Contact: Ire Bethea  
(352) 208-0819 or [ibethea2008@cox.net](mailto:ibethea2008@cox.net)

Buses and vans will be running  
from the MLK Complex  
raquetball court  
to downtown 7:00am - 8:30am  
Contact: Kelvin B. Richardson  
(352) 207-9558

*Day in the Park*

*(Activities & Vendors)*  
Contact:  
Dr. Dwanette Dilworth  
(352) 207-6036  
[drdilworth@gmail.com](mailto:drdilworth@gmail.com)

*(Performance Space)*  
Derek Ponder - (352) 857-4118  
[derek.pondero@gmail.com](mailto:derek.pondero@gmail.com)  
Te'Sha Jackson - (352) 426-0861  
[entconsultantbyteshaj@gmail.com](mailto:entconsultantbyteshaj@gmail.com)