

KUT from a DIFFERENT Cloth



Eddie Rocker Sr. and Jamie Gilmore Jr. , founders of Kut Different, Inc. ~ See story on page 4

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CF OPEN HOUSE IN JULY

The College of Central Florida invites recent high school seniors and those looking to advance their career to an Open House on Wednesday, July 28, noon to 5:30 p.m. in the Ewers Century Center, 3001 S.W. College Road.

Potential students will get all the information they need to start their journey at the College of Central Florida. Apply for free and meet one on one with staff from Admissions, Financial Aid and more. All attendees will be entered for a chance to win a free 3-credit hour class at CF's standard tuition rate. Guided tours will also be available.

Potential students are also invited to a virtual open house on Tuesday, Aug. 3.

For more information, please visit www.CF.edu/openhouse or call (352) 873-5800.

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

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EDITOR'S DESK

Monica Bryant



I often hear people say they avoid watching the news or reading the paper because there's never anything good on or positive happening.

My response has been while that may be true most of the time, every now and then they sneak in something good that warms our hearts and reminds us that good things are happening despite everything that's going on across the country, in our state and our community.

So often, African American men get painted with the same brush resulting in them, more often than not, being reflected in a negative light. And, while there are many that may never step up to the plate and do the right thing so many others are.

We're excited that we get to highlight the labors of love a few of them are doing in the community in our July issue. We absolutely love the work they are doing to not only impact the lives of our youth but in some cases

These men have stepped up to the plate and we should too. Instead of just cheering them on from the sidelines or talk about the great job they are doing, let's contribute to their success by volunteering our time and our talents, helping spread the word or refer individuals you know who could benefit from their programs or make a donation to support the work they are doing. These are **OUR** children, and **WE** are their village!

Let's Talk!

Monica

Monica T. Bryant
Editor

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GETTING MORE THAN A HAIR CUT AT THE BARBERSHOP



Jaquan High getting his hair cut by Sean Dukes at Sports Cuts

When Dominic McDonald kept seeing youth, especially young black males, go to jail at an alarming rate, he wanted to make a difference and provide those youth some guidance.

McDonald, a project specialist with the Marion County Children's Alliance Supporting Kids Involving Parents (S.K.I.P) program, started holding Barbershop Talks in 2018 at A-1 Barbershop while working with the former Building Better Dads program. Sean Dukes, a barber for nearly 10 years, saw the program and wanted to help the youth that got their hair cut where he worked at Sports Cut. Dukes, who has worked there for seven years, oversees the program and the owner, Arthur Gray, and another barber all pitch in and help out in some way.

McDonald said Dukes was so engaged and helpful that he kept the program at Sports Cut, but would like to hold meetings at other barbershops to reach more youth.

"I'd like to see it expand as much as possible too. We just really want to save these teenagers," Dukes said. "Its to many of them dying and going to



jail. We just want to be there for them and let them know that somebody is here to listen to whatever they need to talk about."

Since its inception, McDonald said more than 100 youth, between the ages of 5 and up, has participated in the program. The Barbershop Talks, held every three months, cover a variety of topics and usually lasts about two hours.

"We feed them and give them prizes," McDonald said. "It's a judgement free zone to talk about anything."

Ty'Shown Phelps has attended the meetings since the beginning. He said when McDonald, who also mentors him, mentioned the program to him, he wanted to go.

"It sounded like fun," Phelps said. "I like talking to the other kids about stuff because we can tell them everything we need or what's going on with us and they listen."

For Phelps, Sports Cut is a safe place. He walks to the barbershop often just to hang out or talk to Dukes, who cuts his hair from free as long as he stays out of trouble.

Dukes said if he knows there's a troubled teen and financially it's a problem or if he knows it's a struggle going on, he'll take care of them.

"But my favorite part is interacting with the teenagers," Dukes said. "Just seeing where their mind frames are and understanding what they're going through."

McDonald said they use social media, word of mouth and walk-ins to recruit young men to participate in the program. Their greatest need right now, he said, is getting parents to be more involved after the youth leave the shop talk.



L to R: Jaquan High and Sean Dukes

The next Barbershop Talk is set for August 21, at 3 p.m. at Sports Cut, 150 S.W. 20th Ave., Ocala. For more information, to host a meeting at your barbershop or to support the program, contact McDonald at **(352) 274-1260**.



The Florida Department of Health in Marion County car seat classes are back. Classes will be held from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month in the Department of Health in Marion County's Auditorium (1801 SE 32nd Ave., Ocala). Class dates for 2021: July 15, August 19, September 16, October 21, November 18 and December 16. **Attendees must pre-register.** To attend an upcoming car seat class, call **(352) 644-2751**.

The classes are meant to help families who need a car seat receive one, whether it's because their current one is damaged or expired or because they cannot afford to purchase a new one. Participants must be receiving some type of aid, cash assistance, WIC, SNAP or Medicaid to attend and receive a car seat.

Attendees will learn about car passenger safety issues, such as the physical impact of car crashes, choosing the right car seat and the proper ways to install car seats. At the end of the class, participants will apply their learned knowledge to install the new car seat in their car. A certified technician will be present to ensure the car seat is correctly installed.

Car seat checks available

The Department of Health in Marion County offers appointments to anyone who would like to have their car seat checked for proper installation. At the appointment, residents meet one-on-one with a certified child passenger safety technician. The technician works to ensure that the child is buckled correctly into the right car seat for the child's size and age. Caregivers will leave knowing how to properly install their car seat in the correct position for their car.

To schedule a car seat check appointment, call **(352) 644-2751**. Appointments can be made for anytime Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the department's main office in Ocala (1801 SE 32nd Ave.)

KUT from a DIFFERENT Cloth

Jamie Gilmore will never forget the call from his mom in June of 2012 while on his way to his last senior gathering to pick up his Class of 2012 shirt.

Gilmore, who was graduating and heading off to college to play football, said the news was disturbing and left him in a state of shock. His mom told him that one of his childhood friends had lost his life the night before due to gun violence.

“We were one in the same,” Gilmore said about his childhood friend. “We did the same things. We went to the same schools. We played on the same sporting teams, and we all had dreams of wanting to make it to the NFL one day.”

The only difference between him and his friend, Gilmore said, was that he had his father in his life and his friend did not.



Jamie Gilmore Jr., Isaiah Dyous and Eddie Rocker, Sr.

“What I had in my father my friend looked for in negative people, places and things. He searched for that connection in negative stimuli,” he said. “It’s safe to say that my friend not having a positive male role model in his life it cost him his life at the age of 18.”

Now Gilmore and his brother, Eddie Rocker, Sr. want to positively impact the lives of young men and fill that gap through Kut Different, Inc., a nonprofit organization the brothers co-founded in 2020. The school and community-based male mentorship/student support and youth development organization creates a school-to-career pipeline with exposure to positive role models.

Gilmore said there are a lot of children who lack hope in the community, and more and more young men are lacking fathers and positive figures in their lives. He said they are being forced to find an identity and learn to navigate through society on their own often receiving ineffective lessons from inexperienced peers through negative stimuli.

“My brother and I knew we wanted to give back to the community. We started volunteering in the school system and seen the lack of African American male representation,” said Gilmore, who is the CEO. Rocker is the president of the organization. “We saw the lack of guidance and motivation for academic success in the young men we were working with. These young men needed someone to restore hope in them.”

The organization’s mission is to guide young men to own their greatness. The brothers believe everyone has greatness within them and having someone who can help youth identify and map out the specific tasks, experiences, resources and skills needed to succeed empowers them to own that greatness.

“In our communities it is evidenced that the lack of education, motivation and love can lead down a path of destruction,” Gilmore said. “Our belief is that if we can reach young men and the community by giving G.A.M.E (Guidance, Attention, Motivation, Education) it will change the mindset of many individuals.” Kut Different fulfills its mission by incorporating those four core components into its programs: **Guidance:** Discovering identity and purpose, **Attention:** Empowerment and awakening to one’s unique abilities; **Motivation:** Fueling passions and skill sets; and **Education:** Exposing and polishing minds.

To qualify for the program, participants must be in fourth through eighth grade. If they meet that requirement, they move on to the onboarding process, which is a three-step process to give the staff time to get parent/guardian commitment, time to get to know the potential participant and see if the young man is a good fit for the program. Once they are accepted into the program, they stay with the participant until he graduates high school, goes to college or gets employed.

Reese Halpin, who has been in the program for two months, said he found out about it from his middle school guidance counselor.

“The program has given me a place to grow and find out who I am as a person,” Halpin said. “I enjoy Kut Different because it’s a great environment for boys. The mentors teach us great life skills and activities to better us as individuals.”

Currently there are 13 young men in the core program and 15 to 20 in the in-school mentoring component. Gilmore said they typically don’t recruit, word of mouth has been their recruitment tool. He said they’ve also built a great relationship with Marion County Public Schools and school personnel refer students to them or have the parents reach out to them.

“At this moment, our maximum number is 15,” Gilmore said. “But as we grow and continue to gain more supporters, mentors and volunteers, we will be able to add more young men to our program.”

To apply, send an e-mail to info@kutdifferent.org and they will e-mail you the onboarding process. Kut Different is located at Central Christian Church, 3010 N.E. 14th St., Building 400. For more information, volunteer opportunities or to make a donation, go to www.Kutdifferent.org.

“In order to meet the needs of our students, funding is our greatest need,” Gilmore said. “Your tax-deductible donations can help us reach our goal of extending our relationships with students all the way to them being employed.”

Business Sen\$e

MAYBE IT'S TIME TO RETHINK YOUR BUSINESS MODEL



I recently read a study conducted by St. Gallen University discussing business model innovation and how to tell when it is time to re-think your current business model. So, what is a business model? In the study, a business model is defined as, "a unit of analysis to describe how the business of a firm works."

In simpler terms, your business model is a list of all the various parts that make up your "secret sauce" and how that is transferred to customers as an item of value.

As a business strategist, my profession is to perform deep analysis to find out what went wrong, determine their origin of the problem, and rebuild strategies to get companies back on track. While we have been successful in accomplishing these goals, most solutions are built around concepts that were unknown or under-developed in our clients' current core strategies, not business model innovation. This realization caused me to examine the difference between building better solutions and re-thinking business models to determine if my firm needed to re-think our business model.

Building Better Solutions

Building better solutions typically results when a current business measure has shown a trajectory other than what the business owners desires. This can include employee turnover, slowing sales, loses in productivity and/or profitability, or team conflict, to name a few. In these scenarios, my team functions like forensic scientists, where they look at every possible cause of the trajectory change and systematically track its origin.

For example, we had a client whose sales were not meeting company expectation. While the natural assumption would be a problem in marketing and advertising, our team found that the problem was with the relationship between the sales manager and the sales team. After coaching sessions with the sales team alone, management alone, and one session with everyone, sales improved 15% in the next quarter. After reading the St. Gall study, I must wonder if the improvements would have been greater if our solutions were used to help the business owner re-think his/her business model.

Business Model Innovation

While building better solutions usually results in changes in processes and practices, it does not require changes to the overall business model. Business model innovation (BMI) occurs when a business owner examines their target audience, value proposition, delivering the value, and the revenue model to capture customers seeking that value, and making changes to two of the four sections. As the study describes, BMI does not have to be an industry changing breakthroughs, it can start as simple as adopting proven strategies from corporations that have achieved the level of success the company desires.

For example, in the tire industry it is common to see sales that offers "buy three, get one free". What if a retail company used the same method, but modified to fit their industry? Imagine the response if a retail store offered, "Spend \$200 in one department, get a \$50 gift card for any another department?" By making this change to the value proposition section of the business model, the business could expand their market reach within existing customers, increase sales in departments that are under performing, retarget customers if the \$50 gift card is not redeemed the same day, and introduce an enticing concept to new customers.

To make the BMI complete, the business owners would also change the revenue model to one that makes the \$200 purchase be in a department where profitability is high (i.e. clothing) and require all customers to register to receive the \$50 gift card, to fortify the sales funnel. Further, using digital marketing and social media customers could be re-targeted based on the purchases in both departments and offered incentives for referring friends and family.

Conclusion

After my analysis I have concluded building better solutions is "a pound of cure" and business model innovation is "an ounce of prevention." Our clients and business owners in general would be better served by looking at the totality of their business model in response to unwanted trending. Make changes to processes and practices to get the business back on track but use those strategies as a measure of the effectiveness of the related business model section. During the re-thinking process if changes are made, the business owner must also examine the effect of those changes on the other three sections and adjust accordingly.



Elgin Carelock is the Chairman of the Greater Ocala Community Development Corporation (GOCD), which was organized by the Marion County NAACP and Labor and Industry Committee in July of 1994 to provide social and economic solutions to West Ocala residents. He is CEO and Chief Strategist of re-View Business Strategies, Inc. (RBS) a growth focused, strategic planning and business development company with over 25 years of professional experience in the areas of sales, marketing, advertising, brand development and customer service. He is the founder of the Build A Better Business Series. Got questions or would like more information, contact Elgin at ecarelock@re-viewyourbusiness.com or (404) 993-7189 or go to www.rbsknowledge.com.

Business Spotlight

Paige Made 352



Business Name:
Paige Made 352

No. of Employees: 2

Business Owner:
Dennis and Paige McFatten

Business Address:
334 Lake Dr.

Business Phone: (352) 857-4938

What Year Did You Start Your Business? 2020

Hours of Operation:

Products and/or Services: Wood Signs and more

Email: paigemade352@gmail.com

Website: N/A

Are you on Social Media? Yes

If yes, what platforms?

Facebook: Paige Made 352

Instagram: paigemade352

What or Who Inspired you to start your business?

The pandemic gave me a lot of idle time to get creative with various types of wood.

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

All of our products are custom made specifically for the customer.

What Advice would you give someone starting a business?

Perfect your craft and always make "Quality Count."

Any additional comments:

Samples of our work



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

To have your business featured, request a form from Towntalkmagazine@yahoo.com.

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

Do You Know the Law?

Ire Bethea is familiar with the attitudes and looks he gets when he shows up to do a presentation on Know the Law. This time when he entered the classroom at one of the local high schools, a young athlete looked at him and in a loud voice said he was not going to participate in the presentation. He put his hoodie on his head and laid his head down on his desk.



"I acted as though I did not see or hear what he said," Bethea said. "Once I was ready to start, I walked over to him and told the class that I was there to share information, I would be there for an hour, and I would respect them and I expected the same from them."

Bethea said he asked the young man to take off his hoodie and to sit up straight in his chair, and he did. During the presentation, he said, the young man was asking questions and sharing experiences. And while he was packing up his materials and equipment, the young man came up to him, shook his hand and said thanks.

Bethea said attitudes are often the hardest obstacles to overcome when teaching the program.

"Today's youth are not accustomed to adults having conversations with them. Most feel like you are getting ready to lecture them, tell them what and what not to do, so they are ready to put a wall between you and them," he said. "But I come to share information with them, talk about character, preparedness and today versus tomorrow."

Bethea, an outreach specialist with the Marion County Children's Alliance, has taught the "Know the Law" program for five years. More than 8,000 youth between the ages of 10 and 18 years old have participated in the program intended to provide youth a guide to better understand the laws. The goal is for them to better understand the rules, regulations, expectations and potential consequences they will face if they break the law.

"The youth know a lot about the law; however, they try to negate or rationalize the part about consequences," he said.

Bethea said he has done presentations at local schools, organizations, churches, juvenile detention facilities, teen court, the Boys and Girls Club, etc., but is looking for other opportunities to share the program in the community. He said they also need funding, more presenters and youth to participate in the program because the grant requires it to be provided to 2,000 youth annually. There are some additional topics covered during the presentation that are not in the guide that should be shared to help prepare youth for the future in every aspect of society.

"Adults are not taking time to converse with today's youth. In schools today, as a parent or grandparent, all I hear is testing. When do they teach?," Bethea said. "I am concerned about building character, adjusting attitudes at a young age, providing positive places, people and things for our children."

"We all must be a part of that. It takes all of us, the village," he said.



The presentation, which includes a copy of the Know the Law Guide and a power point, takes approximately one hour depending on interaction and dialogue that takes place. Each participant receives a copy of the guide to take home.

To schedule a presentation or for more information, contact Ire Bethea at **(352) 208-0819**.

The Florida Department of Children and Families recently launched Our Florida, a program to distribute more than \$800 million in rental assistance.

Applicants Must:

- Be at or below 80% of their county's median income
- Be at risk of losing their home
- Live in unstable or unhealthy conditions
- Have qualified for unemployment
- Lost income
- Faced financial hardship due to the pandemic



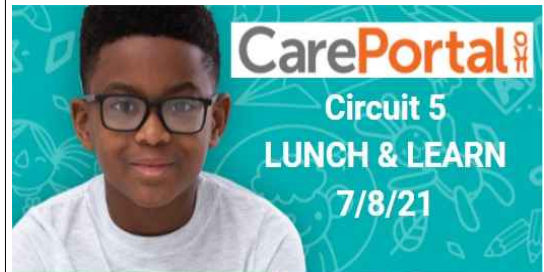
For more information, go to **OURFlorida.com** and at **uwmc.org/cap**.

Faith-Based Organizations: Don't Miss this Opportunity to partner with Child Welfare

CarePortal is growing in collaboration with Kids Central and local churches to minister with the love of Jesus to our children and families in or on the verge of crisis.

Please plan to join us to learn more and partner with us in the local missions work of James 1:27. This may be the largest collaborative church effort in Hernando, Citrus, Sumter, Marion and Lake Counties touching any one need, ever.

We're excited for you to join with us in uniting churches in our area to care for the least of these!



CarePortal and Kids Central, Inc.
Invite you to:

1. Explore and Enroll at [CarePortal.org](https://www.CarePortal.org)
2. Join Live Zoom Meeting Below and Attached
3. Contact With Questions: Danielle Wright (941) 465-1921; Danielle@goproject.org

Live Zoom:
THURSDAY, JULY 8TH, 2021
12:00 - 1:00 EST
<https://zoom.us/j/9496395613>

Please Join us for the Circuit 5 Lunch & Learn Thursday, July 8, 2021 at noon

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://zoom.us/j/9496395613>

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A SENSE OF UNITY IN THE COMMUNITY; PLAYING BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL



Charles McDavid

When Diana Poole-Thomas started playing community ball more than 50 years ago, they didn't have proper equipment, gloves, bases or regular bats. She said they played ball with their bare hands and had to learn how to catch the ball, pick it up and throw it to the mound. Back then, they made their bases and took an old replica of a ball, wrapped it up with tape to make a better ball.

"If it wasn't a soft ball when we started playing, it would be really a softball after we got through with it," she said. "It was a means of entertainment. It gave us something to do and it provided us with a sense of ownership to the community and showed the children a sense of unity."

Poole-Thomas was one of several players that attended the Orange Lake Allstars Baseball and Softball Community teams first annual reunion for former African American ball teams throughout Florida and Georgia on Saturday, June 26. From the 1950's through the 2000's, more than 70 teams

that played ball during that time were identified, but the history of the teams' is very limited.

"We are trying to tell the stories of what happened in our communities years ago concerning baseball and softball," Arthur Smith said. "Today, is the first grassroots meeting and we will have another meeting this time next year. The goal is June 25, 2022."

Smith said in the meantime, teams will have district meetings and each club will have individual meetings to start gathering information.

Thomas Smith Sr., who died when he was 38-years old, started the homecoming games in Orange Lake. He coached men's baseball and Arthur Smith coached women's softball. After Thomas died, Arthur Smith started coaching both.

"Under my supervision, we started getting more players and the teams became more organized," Arthur Smith said. "Then Mitchell Jamerson and Charles McDavid took the club to a higher level and established the Orange Lake Athletic Club."

Arnet and Ella Smith, Solomon Chapel United Methodist Church and Mt. Sinai Missionary Baptist Church were the primary supporters of the teams when they first started playing ball in Orange Lake.

Charles McDavid said the purpose of the annual reunion was to gather former teams and players together to record their history. He wants each team to supply information on how their team got started, when did the team start playing and what organizations or people supported their team.

He said Buster McFatten, Durant Scott, Frankie "Pinkey" Griffin, Michael Collins and several other athletes played ball on one of the small community teams before they started playing professional ball.

The games served as a place to socialize with family and friends and to watch highly competitive semi-pro baseball and softball games.

"Whitfield Jenkins said his daddy was born in 1881 and he would be out there watching games when he was 80 and 90 years old. He said he played in the league when he was 13 years old for a team called Bethlehem on Highway 326.

"I don't think nobody here today is going to make a statement that they started in this league before I did and they ended in this league after I did," he said. "I played 50 years with the league across the spectrum."

Jenkins said they came after the Negro Baseball League, which is now recognized by the National Baseball League.



Minister Tyrone Blue

Poole-Thomas said the Negro Baseball League was the only way they were recognized. She said the Negro league would go to small towns, play ball and people would come from all over to watch the game in the rural areas.

Arthur Smith said they had many players that played ball with them during those years that went on and played professional baseball. He said more of their players could have played professionally, but due to segregation could not play because they did not get the proper exposure.

"We must tell the story because people are dying," Arthur Smith said. "We are following the Negro League. We want to gather as much information as possible on all the players and teams that played with us and give the information to the Florida National Archive."

If you or someone you know played baseball or softball for one of the African American teams in Florida or Georgia, please contact Tyrone Blue at (904) 238-6567 or Charles McDavid, Jr., at (352) 361-5721.



1972 Orange Lake Team Posing in front of Ocala Jai-Alai, first team sponsor



L to R: Whitfield Jenkins, Almetta Mitchell, Arthur Smith, Dollie Strong

Things You Need to Know

CAREERSOURCE EMPLOYABILITY WORKSHOPS BEING HELD IN-PERSON AGAIN

CareerSource Citrus Levy Marion has resumed its in-person employability workshops.



There will be a smaller number of attendees for each workshop to allow for social distancing so anyone interested in a particular workshop should contact them right away and get registered.

Additionally, until further notice, Covid-19 safety protocols remain in place at all career centers, including use of face coverings by staff and visitors and social distancing.

There will be seven different workshops in rotation at the CareerSource CLM career centers in Ocala and Lecanto. For details, visit careersourceclm.com/calendar. There is no charge to attend, but registration is required, Call (800) 434 -JOBS (5627).

The in-person workshops are offered in addition to live Zoom sessions as well as virtual workshops available on-demand. All workshops are free. Those interested in the live Zoom workshops may register online from the event listing on the calendar. The virtual workshops, along with materials, are available at careersourceclm.com/candidates/training/workshops.

Trained career coaches also provide fee-free services to help job seekers leverage what they learn in the workshops.

The following free workshops are available (check the online calendar for details, dates, times, and registration requirements):

In-Person Workshops (typically scheduled each full week of the month)

- Computer Essentials
- Employ Florida Overview
- Interview Strategies that get you noticed
- Job Specific Resume Development
- The Customer Experience
- Today's Job Campaign (Navigating Today's Workplace)
- Your Digital Footprint

Live via Zoom Workshops (typically scheduled each Monday and Friday)

- Job Specific Resume Development
- Interview Strategies that get you noticed

Virtual Workshops (available on-demand)

- Beyond Barriers and Obstacles to Employment
- Employ Florida: so much more than a job board
- Interview Strategies that get you notice
- Job Specific Resumes
- Navigate Today's Workplace

FINAL EVICTION MORATORIUM EXTENDED UNTIL JULY 31

Center for Disease Control Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky signed an extension to the eviction moratorium further preventing the eviction of tenants who are unable to make rental payments. The moratorium that was scheduled to expire on June 30, 2021 is now extended through July 31, 2021. This is intended to be the final extension.

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented a historic threat to the nation's public health. Keeping people in their homes and out of crowded or congregate settings — like homeless shelters — by preventing evictions is a key step in helping to stop the spread of COVID-19.

To view the order, go to:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-eviction-declaration.html>

The Dr. MLK Commemorative Commission invites you to attend its monthly meeting.

The Commission meets the 4th Tuesday of every month at 6 p.m. at the First Responder Campus, (Community Rm.) 340 N.E. 8th Ave. Meetings are open to the public

GIVE4MARION

Marion County's 24-hour Day of Giving presented by the Community Foundation for Ocala/Marion County.



The Community Foundation for Ocala/Marion County is excited to host Give4Marion 2021, coming September 21-22 10 a.m. – 10 a.m.! We stand ready to support our community by bringing nonprofits, donors, and civic partners together during this 24-hour philanthropic initiative. With your help, we can surpass last year's incredible achievements and make an impact in our community once again!



September 21-22, 2021

Visit Give4Marion.org to Register.

POWER HOURS
AND MATCHING
MINUTES TO
MAKE GIVING
GO FURTHER

LIVE ONLINE
AND IN-PERSON
GIVING WITH A
REAL-TIME
TRACKER

PROMOTION ON
THE COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION'S
WEBSITE AND
SOCIAL MEDIA

Marion County Historical Commission
Advisory Meeting
Monday, July 14, 2021 at 6 p.m.
Dr. Percy F. Lisk Memorial Center,
14660 N.E. Hwy. 315, For McCoy, FL.

RETURNING CITIZENS RESTORE YOUR VOTING RIGHTS.

COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES OF MID-FLORIDA
CAN HELP YOU RESTORE YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE.

- Meet one on one with a pro bono lawyer
- Determine your eligibility to vote
- Get your questions answered in real time
- Understand your next steps

To see if you qualify, please complete our intake form here: <http://bit.ly/rightsrestore>



Education Corner

College of Central Florida Educational Opportunity Center

It's simply a fact that having a college degree results in better pay and better career opportunities over the long-term. On average, an individual with an associate degree makes \$7,000 more per year and those with a bachelor's degree make \$26,000 more per year than an individual with a high school diploma (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics). It's too easy to put off building the educational foundation you need for increased future success; but what may seem like a great short-term job now won't allow you to achieve all you can in the long-term.

Fear is the most common reason we hear from people who hesitate to pursue higher education, especially for those who are the first in their family considering that path. We can help address those fears and get you on that path.

Nestled in the corner of the Bryant Student Union on the College of Central Florida Ocala Campus is an exemplary program that assists students with overcoming those fears. The Educational Opportunity Center has been housed at CF for 30 plus years, and it helps students enrolling or re-enrolling in postsecondary education get a jump start on their academic career.

The EOC is a federally funded grant program designed to assist low income and first-generation adults entering or continuing a program of postsecondary education. Services include assistance completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), completing the admission application, tutoring, book loan, financial aid planning, and more. The EOC program also provides activities throughout the year that are motivational and focused on student success (TRIO Day, SET Fridays, County Motivational Day and workshops).

The EOC advises the Club of Educational Opportunity, which provides students with additional opportunities to meet and get the "just in time" support they need to succeed at CF and beyond. CEO members participate in service, fundraising and leadership activities, as well as cultural and social activities on campus, and tours of four-year institutions for transfer information.

How do you join? For information regarding the EOC program, visit our office in the Bryant Student Union, Room 204C, at the College of Central Florida, 3001 S.W. College Road, or call (352) 854-2322, ext. 1316. We look forward to hearing from you and enrolling you in the first step toward a brighter future.

SUMMER BREAK SPOT

at Marion County Public Library System

Enjoy this summer USDA food program at your public library in partnership with Shores Assembly of God. Hot meals are served to children ages 1-18 via curbside pickup service. Guardians must present children's IDs or have the children in the car.

Mondays, 5-6 p.m.
Reddick Public Library

Tuesdays, 5-6 p.m.
Bellevue Public Library &
Fort McCoy Public Library

Thursdays, 4:30-5:30 p.m.
Dunnellon Public Library

Thursdays, 5-6 p.m.
Freedom Public Library

Fridays, 5-6 p.m.
Forest Public Library &
Marion Oaks Public Library

June 1 - Aug. 6



18th Annual BACK TO SCHOOL BASH

DRIVE THRU ONLY

**PARTICIPANTS CANNOT GET OUT OF THEIR CARS
NO WALK UPS ALLOWED!**

**Saturday, July 31, 2021 ~ 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Friends Recycling Center, 2350 N.W. 27th Ave.**

**FREE BACKPACKS AND SCHOOL SUPPLIES
PLUS A FREE MEAL FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN
WHILE SUPPLIES LAST!**

**CHILDREN MUST BE IN THE CAR TO RECEIVE
BACKPACK—NO EXCEPTIONS!**

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

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

Appleton Museum of Art

Virtual Summer Art Camp



Eight weeks of free
online art camps!

Find the camp schedule
and registration
information at
AppletonMuseum.org.

Have questions?
Contact Hollis Mutch,
mutchh@cf.edu, or
352-291-4455, ext. 1613.

Free First Saturdays at the Appleton

Enjoy free admission on the first Saturday of every month!
Upcoming Dates: June 5, July 3, August 7

Appleton Museum and Store

Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. and Sunday, noon - 5 p.m.
4333 E. Silver Springs Blvd., | 352-291-4455 | AppletonMuseum.org



ARE YOU ELIGIBLE FOR THE CHILD TAX CREDIT?



Help spread the word!

The Child Tax Credit in the American Rescue Plan provides the largest Child Tax Credit ever and historic relief to the most working families ever – and most families will automatically receive monthly payments without having to take any action.

Review this key information:

(1) The Child Tax Credit provides major tax relief for nearly all working families.

- All working families will get the full credit if they make up to \$150,000 for a couple or \$112,500 for a family with a single parent (also called head of household).
- The Child Tax Credit has been expanded to \$3,000 per child 6-17 years old and \$3,600 per child under 6.
- Roughly 39 million households – covering 65 million children (nearly 90% of children in the United States) – will automatically receive the new child tax credit.
- Starting on July 15, and through the rest of the calendar year, payments will be monthly (via direct deposit for 80% of families and through the mail for the others) – at \$250 per child between 6-17 or \$300 per child under 6.

The IRS has launched a simplified online tool which will allow families not automatically enrolled in the program to receive the Child Tax Credit – go to [ChildTaxCredit.gov](https://www.irs.gov/childtaxcredit).

(2) There is an easy sign up for low-income families which will help to cut child poverty in half.

- Low-income families with children are eligible for this crucial tax relief – including those who have not made enough money to be required to file taxes.
- If a couple makes under \$24,800, a head of household makes under \$18,650, or a single filer makes under \$12,400, and they have not filed their taxes, there is a simple, easy tool to sign up for the Child Tax Credit.

(3) President Biden's American Families Plan calls for extending this for years and years.

- The new Child Tax Credit enacted in the American Rescue Plan is only for 2021. That's why President Biden strongly believes it should be extended for years and years to come. He has proposed it in his American Families Plan.

How can you help?

Here are some ways to engage in the upcoming weeks and months:

- Host or join events, or Zoom calls at family centers, houses of worship, community centers and other places that families visit and pitch to local media.
- Write/place an op-ed about the importance of the Child Tax Credit in your regional or local media outlet.
- Participate in a webinar with faith and community leaders to tell them about the Child tax Credit and how they can ensure access to the Child Tax Credit for members of their congregations/communities.
- Partner with school districts, education leaders and childcare centers to share information with parents.
- Raise awareness via social media (post, tweet, partner with an advocacy organization for an IG LIVE).
- Join local and national broadcast to discuss the impacts of the CTC and how constituents can access and learn more.

MONEY SMART TAKE ADVANTAGE OF CHRISTMAS IN JULY SALES

By Scott Hackmyer

It seems too hot outside to be talking about Christmas, but let's do that this month. In January and February I usually get a lot of calls from people needing help with their basic bills like rent or electric because they either overspent at Christmas or if they didn't spend more than they budgeted all their bills arrived at once.

A way to avoid this budget shock right after Christmas is to start shopping now. Some stores hold huge "Christmas in July" sales where you can buy cards, gift wrap, artificial trees and toys at greatly discounted prices. Home Depot and Walmart are just two that do this. One warning, if you see a great deal on clothes and shoes remember that children grow quickly and sizes will change between July and late December. Buying a few gifts each month not only extends the fun you get shopping for the special people in your life but paying for a couple of gifts a month is a lot easier than paying for all of them in December or January.

Another secret to avoid a massive bill in one month is to use layaway services. Last year Walmart started layaway on August 28. This year's date has not been announced yet. When you put a gift on layaway you might just pay \$10 and then make payments between the purchase date and Christmas. At whatever store you start a layaway account just make sure there is no service fee or charge of any kind for the service.

Another trick to avoid that big after Christmas bill is to open a Christmas Club/Holiday Club savings account. You make a deposit of whatever amount you determine each month between now and Christmas, but you often cannot withdraw it without a penalty before November. This allows you to build savings between now and Christmas. Although most banks have discontinued this type of account almost all of the Credit Unions in Ocala still offer them.

Saving in advance is always a great way to go. If your goal is to have \$500 by Christmas for gifts if you start the first full week in July you only need to save \$20 each week to have your \$500 by December 25. Most Christmas Club/Holiday Club accounts let you set up a direct deposit from your checking account so you don't even realize you are saving your money.

www.cfcaa.org



NOTICE OF CHANGE OF APPOINTMENT SCHEDULING SYSTEM/PROCESS

Effective June 30, 2021, CFCAA will no longer be using 352-415-3174 to schedule Utility Assistance/LIHEAP Appointments. Please apply on our website. If you are elderly and/or disabled, you may call your local CFCAA office to obtain assistance:

Alachua County: 352-373-7667
Levy County: 352-493-1734
Marion County: 352-732-3008



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— EPISCOPAL —
Children's Services
 BELIEVE. ACHIEVE. SOAR.

Head Start is a free high quality school readiness program providing health, nutrition, disabilities, and family support services to those that qualify. Head Start serves children ages three to five.

ABC Academy

Are you looking for a FREE high quality school readiness program?

NOW ENROLLING 3-5 YRS OLD!

Apply Now!

www.ecs4kids.org

List of locations coming soon!

To request an interview, please call:
1.800.745.4836
1.352.816.8546

Juneteenth Finally a Federal Holiday in 2021

On Thursday, June 17, 2021, President Biden signed legislation making Juneteenth, which commemorates the end of slavery in the United States, a federal holiday.



On Saturday, June 19, Ocala held its first Juneteenth Celebration spearheaded by Sharrington Houston, president of the Ocala Juneteenth Celebration Commission and committee members TiAnna Greene, Marcy Owens, Davida Randolph, Dwan Thomas, Jessica Hadley-Brown, Niki Tripodi, Barbara Fitos, Wantanisha Dawson-Morant and the Rev. Dr. Tanya Hanks.



COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

OCALA'S FIRST ANNUAL JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION

West Ocala Job Fair

July 9, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
 Saint Paul AME Church
 718 NW Seventh St., Ocala, FL 34475

10 employers to be onsite with a wide variety of job openings. For details see our Facebook link.

For a list of employers and to register go to [\(facebook or event bright link\)](#) or sign-up at Saint Paul AME Church. A short orientation will be held on Tuesday, July 6 from 6 to 7 p.m. on zoom to provide tips and information to make your participation successful. Drawings for gift cards and prizes will be done every hour. For more information call 622-8921.

Bring resume and dress appropriately.



Healthy Summer Swaps

Want an easy, cheap and healthy summer recipe that kids and adults can enjoy? Well swap out those sugar filled frozen pops for a simple homemade version! Store bought popsicles often contain large amounts of added sugars and do not offer much nutrition. Using a blender, popsicle molds or paper cups and sticks you can easily make your own popsicles using fresh or frozen fruits and veggies.

Grab your favorite fruit(s) and puree. You can change up the recipe by adding veggies and herbs. Cucumber and mint pair wonderfully with watermelon! If you want a creamier version add low-fat yogurt to the mix.

Healthy summer swap brought to you by:



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.



Senate Bill 90 was passed by the Florida Legislature and signed into law by Governor DeSantis on May 6, with immediate effect. The Marion County Supervisor of Elections published a fact sheet containing a brief summary of changes that may affect voters. The fact sheet can be viewed at: <https://www.votemarion.gov/.../20210609%20SB%2090>

Florida Senate Bill 90 Fact Sheet

In late April, the Florida Legislature passed Senate Bill 90, an Election Administration bill revising certain sections of Florida's Election Law. Governor DeSantis signed the bill into law on May 6, with immediate effect. Here is a brief summary of changes that may affect voters as it relates to voter registration updates, vote-by-mail requests, and ballot drop boxes:

Voter Registration Updates:

Address Changes

Voters must provide their date of birth and their Florida driver's license number or Florida ID card number, or last four digits of their social security number when making an address change by phone or electronically. Alternatively, voters may change their address by submitting a Florida Voter Registration Application or a signed written notice.

Name or Party Affiliation Changes

Voters are required to submit a Florida Voter Registration Application when making a name or party affiliation change and must include their Florida driver's license number or Florida ID card number, or last four digits of their social security number.

Vote-by-Mail Requests:

A voter must have a request on file to receive a vote-by-mail ballot. One request for a vote-by-mail ballot will cover all elections through the end of the calendar year of the next scheduled general election. Existing vote-by-mail requests on file are valid through the end of 2022.

A voter requesting a vote-by-mail ballot for themselves, either in-person or by phone, must provide the following information:

- Voter's name
- Voter's address
- Voter's date of birth
- Voter's Florida driver's license number or Florida ID card number, or last four digits of social security number
- Voter's signature (written requests only)

An immediate family member or legal guardian requesting a vote-by-mail ballot on a voter's behalf, must provide the additional information:

- Requestor's name
- Requestor's address
- Requestor's date of birth
- Requestor's Florida driver's license number or Florida ID card number, or last four digits of social security number
- Requestor's relationship to the voter
- Requestor's signature (written requests only)

A request for a ballot to be mailed to an address other than the voter's address on file must be in writing and signed by the voter including the voter's Florida driver license number or Florida ID card number or the last four digits of their social security number.

Ballot Drop Boxes:

Secure ballot drop boxes must be continuously monitored by elections personnel and will only be available at the Supervisor of Elections office and at all Early Voting sites during Early Voting hours.

Note: The 24/7 Drop Box located outside of the Supervisor of Elections office will no longer be available. However, voters may still utilize the drop box inside the election's office during business hours, M-F 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

It is unlawful for any person to physically possess more than two vote-by-mail ballots per election in addition to his or her own ballot or a ballot belonging to an immediate family member.

www.VoteMarion.Gov ★ 352-620-3290

County Commission Meetings
July 1 and July 15
9 a.m.
McPherson Governmental Campus
Auditorium
601 S.E. 25th Ave.
Ocala, FL 34471

Ocala City Council Meetings
July 1 and July 15
5 p.m.
110 S.E. Watula Ave.,
Ocala, FL 34471

Marion County School Board
July 13 and July 27
5:30 p.m.
School Board Meeting Room
512 S.E. 3rd St.
Ocala, FL 34471