



THE WEATHER
High 82° | Low 71°
Mostly cloudy. C2

The Villages®

DAILY SUN



FRIDAY
JANUARY 3,
2020

THE NEWSPAPER OF FLORIDA'S FRIENDLIEST HOMETOWN

LOCAL, C1

Camp Villages kids explore Sharon Rose Wiechens Preserve.

SPORTS, B1

Soccer's Ellis Visits VHS

WHEELS, E4

Corvette keeps Villager busy and happy.

NATION/WORLD NEWS

EMBASSY ATTACK EXPOSES RISING TENSION BETWEEN U.S. AND IRAQ

The New Year's Eve attack on the U.S. Embassy compound in Baghdad offers evidence of a deepening rift between the countries as the Pentagon takes an aggressive approach toward curbing Iranian influence across the Mideast. **A10**

NATION & WORLD REPORT



The Associated Press

Nation: U.S. health officials will crack down on many flavored e-cigarettes that are popular with underage teenagers, but menthol and tobacco-flavored e-cigarettes will be allowed to remain on the market. **A11**

World: Interpol issued a wanted notice Thursday for former Nissan Chairman Carlos Ghosn, who jumped bail in Japan and fled to Lebanon rather than face trial on financial misconduct charges. **A2**

INSIDE

Florida News A5
Lottery A4
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World News A2



Faces in The News Julián Castro

The former U.S. housing secretary dropped out of the 2020 Democratic presidential primary race after a yearlong run.

National News, A11

Top of the News

INSIDE THE ISSUES SHAPING OUR COMMUNITY

Performances Strike A Chord for Causes

ENTERTAINMENT, CHARITY GO HAND-IN-HAND ON STAGE



Michael Johnson | Daily Sun

Country music star Trace Adkins raised money in October for a group that helps veterans with PTSD.



Michael Johnson | Daily Sun

Country music legend Travis Tritt performed a February benefit for Cornerstone Hospice.



George Horsford | Daily Sun

The Villages Theater Company contributes to several charities, including Camp Boggy Creek.



Cindy Skop | Daily Sun

The Villages Pop Chorus also donates to various causes, including the Wildwood Soup Kitchen.



By KRISTEN FIORE | Daily Sun Senior Writer

At the end of the year, Joe Bamford doesn't look at what his company grossed, but who it helped. After a long career in music and entertainment, Bamford and his wife, Fatima, wanted to do some good. So they formed Get Off the Bus Concerts, the company responsible for bringing acts like KC and the Sunshine Band, Ronnie Milsap, Don McLean, REO Speedwagon and Trace Adkins to The Villages. Joe feels like 2019 was a successful charitable year, and it was a successful year for many other benefit concerts in The Villages, too. Get Off the Bus puts on several concerts a year in The Villages, but you don't have to look long to find a benefit concert in the community. Most resident

Please See **BENEFITS, A6**

POLITICS

REGISTRATION DEADLINE COMING UP FEB. 18

Less than 2 months remain to register to vote in the presidential primary.

Feb. 18 marks the last day to register to vote and update or change your name, address or party preference for the presidential primary. Unlike some states, Florida is a closed primary state, which means voters will be able to vote only with the ballot corresponding to the party with which they are registered.
— Alexandria Mansfield, Daily Sun

THAT'S AMAZING!

BUTTER SCULPTURE DEPICTS TEAM MASCOTS

The butter sculpture for this year's Pennsylvania Farm Show was unveiled Thursday, featuring three of the state's professional sports team mascots.

This year's sculpture, crafted from about 1,000 pounds of donated butter, shows Gritty, Swoop and Steely McBeam, mascots for the Philadelphia Flyers and Eagles, and the Pittsburgh Steelers. About 500,000 people attend annually.

The Farm Show in Harrisburg calls itself the country's largest indoor agricultural event, with 12,000 competitive exhibits.

After the show ends, the butter sculpture will be taken to a farm to be converted into energy through a methane digester.

— The Associated Press

EXPLORE & EXPERIENCE

A Worthy Workout

Taekwondo demands a lot from its students, but their rewards go beyond physical fitness and self-defense. The Villages Taekwondo group is proving that Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at SeaBreeze Recreation Center.

By STEVE STRAEHLEY | Daily Sun Senior Writer

Sid Baumann said that when he was 74, he was "looking for something that would be good exercise."

Now, at age 82, Baumann is a black belt in taekwondo and is training for his second-degree belt through The Villages Taekwondo group.

"I watched a class and said, 'I can do this,'" he said. "I did it to maintain good health."

Baumann said that since beginning taekwondo, he's found that he loves the competition and the work ethic.

"This requires a lot of discipline," said Baumann, of the Village Santo Domingo.

Baumann has that. He did miss a recent class for a medical

Please See **TAEKWONDO, A7**

Life In Our Town

What's Happening In The Villages Retail milestone

Chico's women's clothing store remains a favorite after 15 years in The Villages.

Consumer News, C6

Plus

Entertainment: "America's Got Talent" finalist to give benefit concert Jan. 12. **A9**

Religion: First Baptist Church of The Villages welcomes Alabama vocalists for show Jan. 19. **C1**

LOVIN' THE LIFESTYLE

"Jumanji: The Next Level" offers a few surprises. **D1**



from the front page

BENEFITS

Continued from A1

shows support some kind of charitable cause. The following listed are only a few examples of entertainers who have performed in The Villages in support of charity this year.

“(Benefit concerts are) a great way to draw attention to a meaningful cause while also ensuring people have a great time while you promote it,” said Brian Russo, director of entertainment.

Each Get Off the Bus show pairs up with a local charitable organization, and proceeds from meet-and-greet tickets and chance drawings for a signed guitar are donated to that organization.

Representatives from the charity also set up in the lobby before the show to spread the word about what they do.

A lot of it comes together because of the dedication of the artists, Joe said.

For example, when Olivia Newton-John played at The Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center, she was having severe back pain.

“She had previously had a bout of breast cancer, so this show was in support of breast cancer treatments in the Leesburg area,” Joe said. “After she finished her show, she went into the dressing room area and sat in a tub of ice because of the back pain, but there was a meet-and-greet and she didn’t want to miss it. So she got up and went in there and met those people. It’s just special. That’s what keeps me going.”

Many resident entertainers get the rewarding feeling, as well.

The Villages Theater Company raised \$73,420 this year and has donated more than \$103,000 since 2014, according to Judy Prior, president of TVTC.

The group has donated to a number of local causes including Operation Bless Fruitland Park, Camp Boggy Creek, the Melon Patch Player Youth Program, SoZo Kids and more.

“Once we started being successful and realizing, ‘Wow,



Cindy Skop | Daily Sun

The Villages Pop Chorus performs a benefit concert at North Lake Presbyterian Church with proceeds going to Villagers for Veterans and Deliver the Difference.

look at all the money we’re raising and don’t need to put back into our plays,’ we wanted to do something with the money,” Prior said.

So the group became a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Leaders typically get together and decide which charities to donate to around March.

Members of The Villages Pops Chorus found themselves in a similar situation.

“It’s important for us to have fun doing what we’re doing,” said Bill Davis, director of the Pops Chorus. “Then we realized the side benefit of being able to donate a lot of money to charity.”

This year, the group donated \$47,500 to charitable causes, bringing the chorus’ total since 2014 to more than \$161,000.

Members suggest different charities to support, and the Pops Chorus has donated to

causes like Angel Snugs Inc., the Wildwood Soup Kitchen, the Sumter Youth Center, the Girl Scouts Alumnae Pajama and Book Drive and more.

“Members get such a huge rush out of the fact that we’ve been so successful and have been able to give to all of these charities,” Davis said. “It’s become a big part of who we are.”

The Opera Club of The Villages does fundraisers and takes individual donations, but the group’s two annual concerts, “An Enchanted Evening” and “Three Tenors Plus One” bring in the majority, according to Gerri Piscitelli, president of the Opera Club.

This year, the group raised around \$70,000, Piscitelli said.

“Because funding has been cut in many schools, and the funding cut seems to hit the music and arts department first,

we felt that it was necessary to support music in our schools,” Piscitelli said.

The Opera Club pays for private lessons for 10 instrumental and 10 vocal students a year. Each year, the group also awards four hefty scholarships to music students in Lake, Sumter or Marion Counties who aspire to pursue a future in music.

Students send an application,

and the board looks over applications and announces who can audition for the scholarships.

Scholarships are then awarded in the amounts of \$12,000, \$10,000, \$8,000 and \$6,000.

“We are thrilled, proud and delighted that so many of our scholarship recipients have done so well,” Piscitelli said. “We invite them back to perform for us. They become music teachers, professors and aspiring opera stars. We see the results, and this is what motivates our members.”

Tickets are on sale now for the Opera Club’s next “Three Tenors Plus One” concert, which is a tribute to Luciano Pavarotti.

“Maestro Bill Doherty chooses artists who not only sing opera, but Broadway,” Piscitelli said. “They really create the feeling of the original three tenors with Pavarotti, Domingo and Carreras. There is a lot of camaraderie among the three men, and in songs, they try to outdo each other.”

This year’s three tenors are Christopher Macchio, Steven Nanni and Devin Eatmon, with Dawn DiNome as the plus one. Two shows are scheduled for 3 and 7 p.m. on Feb. 15 at the Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center.

Tickets for “Three Tenors Plus One” range from \$15 to \$50 and can be purchased online at thevillagesentertainment.com or at any Villages Box

Office location.

“The program will be uplifting and leave a song in your heart,” Piscitelli said. “It’s very well-attended, because people love the spirit that it’s generated, as well as knowing that they’re contributing to local scholarships for students looking to pursue a career in music.”

Performer Alex Santoriello puts on several shows at Savannah Center every year and donates proceeds to several different causes.

This year, he said he raised around \$27,000.

Santoriello is a Shriner, a Mason and a Rotarian.

“Now I have the time and ability to focus my energy on a lot of charitable causes,” Santoriello said. “A majority of the fundraising I do goes to kids.”

Santoriello’s 2019 appearances include performances in “My Fair Lady,” “Broadway and Beyond,” “Shaken Not Stirred” and “Carols By Candlelight.”

“Our partnering resident groups are incredibly talented and generous,” Russo said.

“Virtually everything that they do goes to a number of charitable causes. So many of them put in tremendous effort to see to it that they are sharing their love of arts with the community while also doing what they can to uplift it.”

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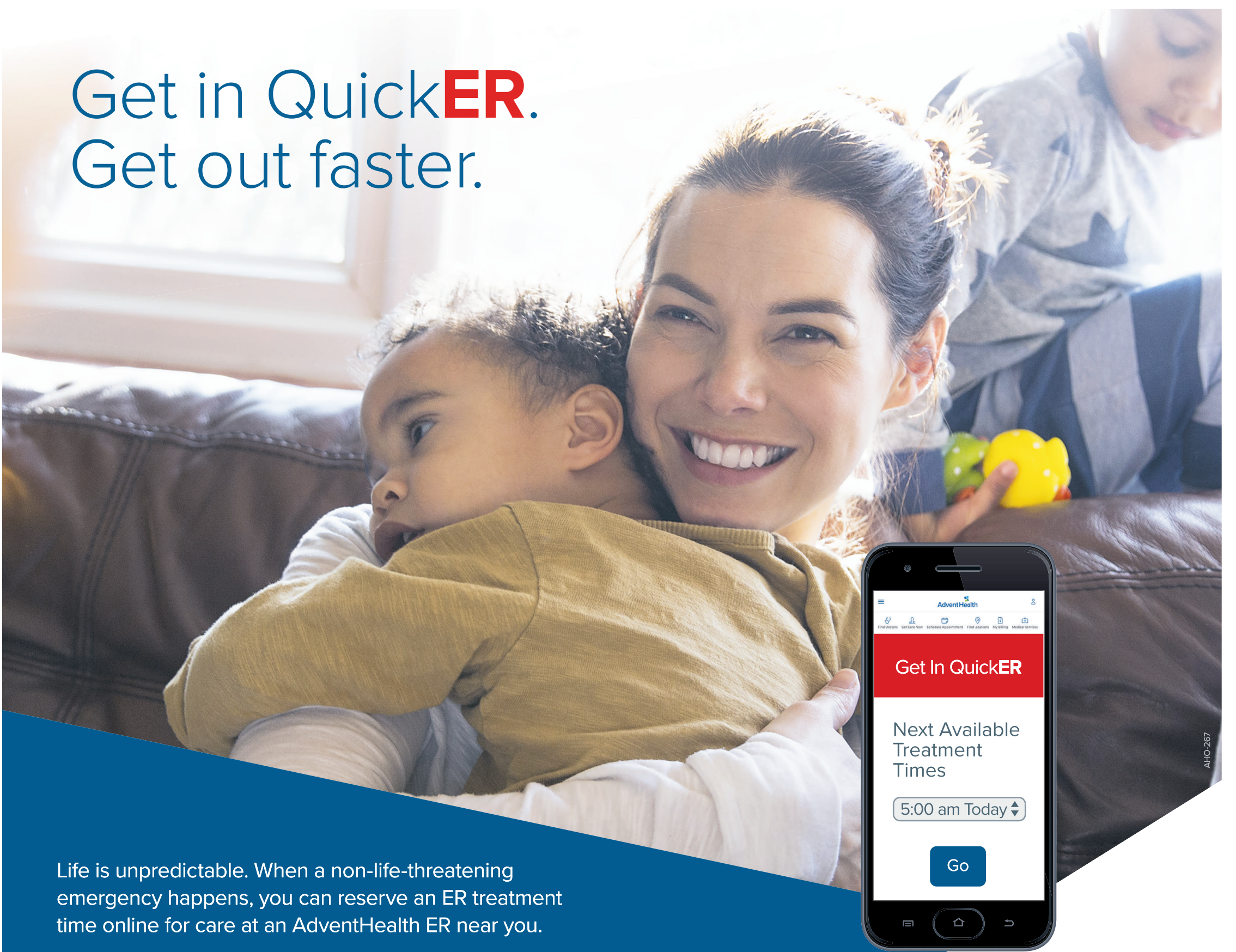
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