

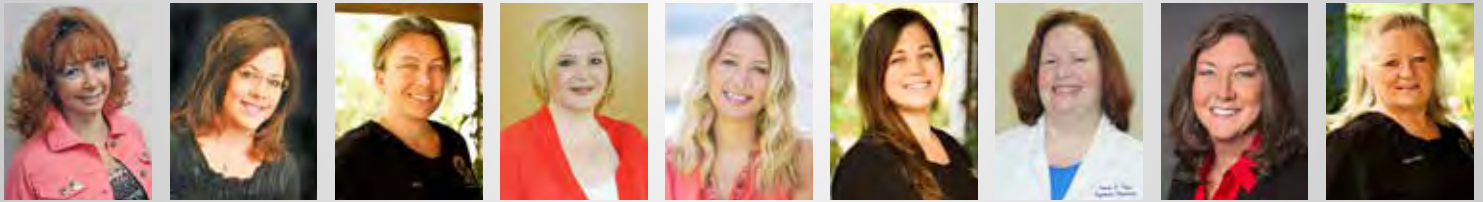
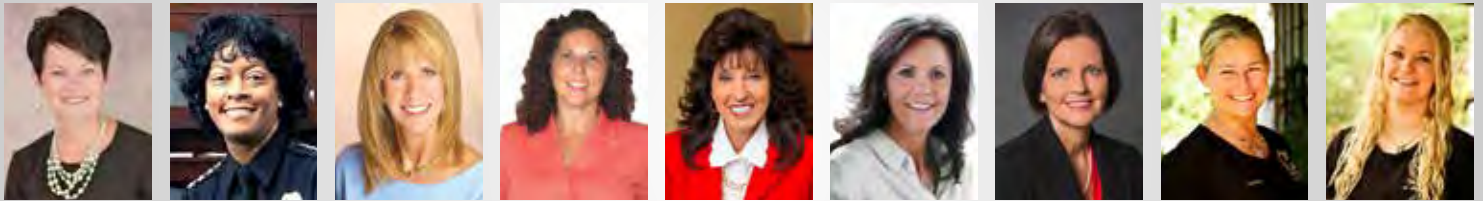
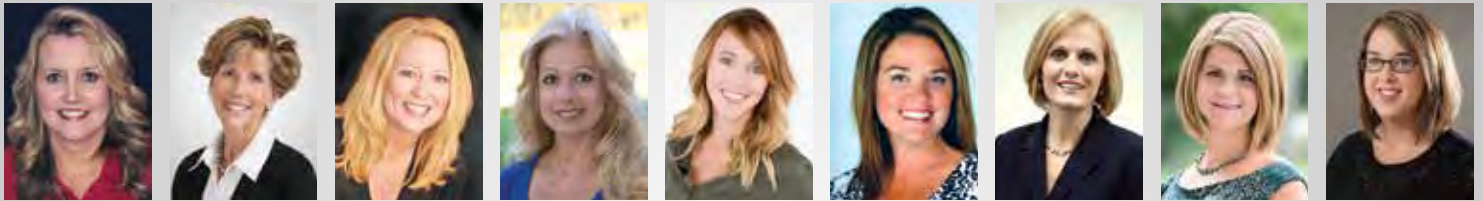
life in natural florida CURRENTS

magazine

VOLUME 11 ISSUE 6 • SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER, 2017
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Letter from the Editor



Women are pillars in the local business community

There is no shortage of successful women here in Columbia County. From small-business owners to CEOs, our area is full of women making their mark on the world.

While trying to decide who to feature in this year's Women In Business issue of Currents, the selection process was lengthy. With so many successful, inspirational women to choose from, narrowing it down was quite a challenge. These stories are about just some of the many powerful businesswomen here in our area.

It's these women who have paved the way for future generations. Their strength, their confidence and their sheer determination to make something happen for themselves is inspiring to us all.

Like The Spa on Marion owner Danette Lewis, who after raising her 10 children decided to start a new journey and open her own business, showing us it's never too late to follow your dreams. Or Cherie Hill, whose passion for teaching children eventually led her to becoming assistant superintendent, proving that hard work really does pay off. And Dr. Celia Martin, who is changing the way children live their lives one smile at a time through her work and her community outreach. These ladies along with the others we've written about are true role models.

When I moved to Lake City a year and a half ago, I was fresh out of college and starting my first full-time job at the Lake City Reporter. When I became the Special Projects Editor and was put in charge of Currents last October, I was excited, but nervous that I wouldn't be able to showcase just how special our little corner of the world is. I quickly learned that when you live someplace special, it's easy to make other people see it too.

With a talented staff, an encouraging boss and an office support system that works tirelessly every day, we make it happen. At Currents, we believe in showcasing just how special Columbia County and Natural Florida really are. It's the people who make it special, and these ladies we've featured certainly are the epitome of this.

As always, this issue of Currents contains a variety of stories. Our feature on women veterans shares the journeys of four local women who bravely served our country. We've included everything you need to know about all the upcoming fall music festivals and festivities in the area, as well as some great fall recipes.

As we continue through our 11th year of publication here at Currents, we want to thank all of you for taking the time to pick up a copy. Thank you for continuing to support Lake City's original magazine, and we look forward to sharing your stories!

Kayla Lokeinsky

Kayla Lokeinsky | EDITOR

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ON THE COVER



The Women In Business issue of Currents features 50 local businesswomen on the cover. Find out more about these prominent women inside.

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The People's Farm

Story and photos by KAYLA LOKEINSKY

Deep Spring Farm invites guests to experience the farm their way

When Leela and Michael Robinson bought the land for their farm three years ago, they didn't just want to grow crops. They wanted to create a peaceful place, somewhere where people from the community could come and enjoy the land too.

From fishing to yoga classes to learning about agriculture, the options of activities are endless at Deep Spring Farm.

"It's like a people's farm," Leela said.

Your Own Private Farm

Deep Spring Farm is a hidden oasis tucked off a back country road in Alachua. This organic farm is a place where you can have your own personalized farm experience.

"Anything's possible," Leela said. "We're open to whatever people want. If people want to host a family reunion

here, great, we'll work with that. If people want to have a picnic, if they want to go fishing with their children, they want to have a date night, all those things."

The 10-acre farm is full of opportunity. Its gem is the 1-acre wide, 35-foot deep, spring-fed pond. It's surrounded by plants and shady trees, and has a small deck for sitting and relaxing. They've even hosted a wedding there before. The pond is available for fishing and paddle boarding.

There's also a large canopy covering a wooden platform near the pond's waterfront. This is where Leela, a certified yoga instructor and licensed massage therapist, offers yoga sessions, massages and bodywork sessions. There is space for event setups, such as weddings and parties, and they have a commercial-style indoor kitchen where they'll be offering seasonal farm-to-table meals and refreshments. They also host events featuring food and live music that are open to the community in addition to offering the space for private rentals.

However, what they mainly offer is a chance for people to come out and experience what it's like to be surrounded by nature on



RIGHT: Deep Spring Farm owner Leela Robinson clips flowers from the farm's flower garden. Deep Spring offers u-pick flowers, where guests can come and choose their own arrangements.

LEFT: Some of the crops that the Robinsons have planted on Deep Spring Farm include blueberries, muscadine grapes, sweet potatoes, okra and peppers, along with flowers and herbs. Everything they grow on the farms is organic.



MORE ABOUT DEEP SPRING

Deep Spring Farm is located midway between Gainesville and Lake City at 16419 W CR 1491, just 10 miles north of Alachua.

Prices for various activities are available online, and custom quotes for private events are also available.

For more information on Deep Spring Farm or to schedule a time to come out and visit, go to www.deepspringfarm.com or send an email mail@deepspringfarm.com.

farmland. Visitors can come to have a picnic, take a tour of the grounds, see the farm's abundance of crops, or just relax in nature.

"So many people would tell us, 'It's my dream to have a farm' or 'I'd love

to live in the country,'" Leela said. "Well, we don't all get to do that, but we can all know somebody who owns a farm and be a part of it. There's no reason anybody can't be a part of this."

However, while Leela and Michael always welcome visitors, they require people come by RSVP, by either texting or emailing them to let them know what it is they're most interested in doing at Deep Spring Farms.

"We're trying to create a place where people feel safe," Leela said. "Yes, we are open to the public, but it's by RSVP. That way we always know who's here, we know your name, we get to know whoever comes to the property so it's a relationship between the visitors and the farmers."

Something Deep Spring Farm offers during the year is u-pick blueberries, a popular activity in North Florida during the spring and early summer months. However, while most u-pick blueberry farms are open to the masses, Deep Spring Farm specifies their u-pick days and hours online, and asks that visitors email or text them telling them which day they would love to come out and pick. This is because Leela and Michael not only want to keep the farm a safe space, but also because they want to make sure that when visitors come to pick blueberries, there are plenty for them to take home.

"It's more of a one-to-one, person-to-person kind of thing," Michael



said. “I don’t know how to get the across very well, but we’re different. We try to be different in a good way.

Creating A Farm

As soon as Leela and Michael bought the land to start their farm, they knew they wanted it to be open to the public.

“We started with the idea for u-pick,” Leela said. “We knew we wanted to create a place where people wanted to visit. That was my feeling. If we’re going to go through the effort of creating a place in the country where we want to be, we want to make it open.”

After falling in love with the natural springs in the area and the proximity to the beach, Leela and Michael moved to Alachua from Tennessee in 2014 and bought their 10-acre plot of land. However, the land they bought was nowhere near ready for farming, and it took a couple years of working full time to get it to the point where it was ready for crops.

“I guess you could say we reclaimed it,” Michael said.

“Reclaiming is a good word because it was just neglected,” Leela said. “When you start a farm, you buy some ground and think, ‘I’m going to start farming.’ Well, unless somebody was farming there already, maybe you can start farming. If it wasn’t a farm it’s going to take it a while to get ready. That’s been our major effort over the past couple years is just getting it ready to farm.

The overgrown land with an algae-covered pond has been transformed into the picturesque farm it is now. Deep Spring Farm just completed its

second season of u-pick blueberries, and Leela and Michael have been focusing on a few other crops that are important to them, like tomatoes, ginger and u-pick muscadine grapes. They’re also establishing peaches, thornless blackberries and persimmons.

“What our focus is on is plants that can be grown organically, reasonably easily,” Leela said. “We’re not focused on crops that are difficult.”

Besides blueberries, the other main crop Leela and Michael are focusing on is organic flowers. Their flower garden is abundant with beautiful flowers ranging from annuals like zinnias to native Florida wildflowers. Visitors can create their own bouquets out of whichever flowers are blooming.

Leela and Michael are planting wildflowers all over the property, focusing on native plants that are not only safe for wildlife but also eye appealing.

“We’re trying to find a balance between what’s good for the people and what’s good for wildlife, and there is a balance,” Leela said.

Michael also grows hydroponic lettuce in a greenhouse on the property, and he offers hydroponic workshops and consultations. You can often find Michael selling some of the Deep Spring Farm crops at the Alachua County 441 Farmers Market on Saturday mornings.

Welcoming Visitors

Leela and Michael have tapped into the market of agritourism, which is agriculturally-based activities that bring visitors to a farm. They hope to create a relationship with the community to show people that they are true to their word about creating organic produce.

“I think it’s about developing trust,” Leela said. “We’re organic farmers and people need to be able to trust that we’re doing what we say that we do. We wouldn’t want anyone to go home and think, ‘I wonder if they really are organic or if they’re using chemicals to control weeds.’ Well, come to the farm and see that we’re out here pulling weeds and that there are no chemicals.”

The couple also welcomes volunteers, especially people who are interested in getting closer to nature and learning about how things grow.

“We have volunteers who come out just to be on the farm,” Michael said. “We had a welcome day where people came out and we planted a lot of flowers. We’ve had people come back and you can really feel how they feel a connection because they helped plant this crop and they can now see it in bloom.”



They hope that by opening the farm to the public, people will realize just how important organic farms are to the community.

“I think that people have to come to the farm and see how much work and how much effort it takes to create a farm for them to realize, ‘Wow that’s really valuable to have organic farms,’” Leela said. “Because if we don’t have organic farms, where do people get organic food? It’s a really valuable thing, but it also needs community support to make it happen.”

“Organic food is a movement and it’s gaining steam but it’s still a minority,” Michael added.

By creating a sustainable farm, Michael and Leela are getting what they need from their business while visitors are getting what they need: organic food, and, most importantly, a peaceful place.

“The experience in nature is the most important thing,” Leela said. “You can go to a state park, but how many places can you go where you can just be?”



LEFT: The focal point of Deep Spring Farm is a large, picturesque pond located in the front of the property. The pond takes up one acre of the property and is 35 feet deep. **ABOVE:** Deep Spring Farm owners Leela and Michael Robinson bought their land in 2014 and since then have turned it into an organic farm that welcomes visitors to enjoy and utilize the space. **RIGHT:** With their industrial kitchen on the property, the Robinsons will offer seasonal farm-to-table meals and refreshments.



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Local female veterans
share their military stories.

By TAYLOR GAINES

Nearly 10 percent of U.S. veterans are women. They serve their country every day, all around the world. Their stories often go untold, until now. These four Lake City women are veterans who sacrificed and

served for our country. They have spoken about the military giving them purpose, meaning and a way forward. Even today, they are still giving back to their community. These are their stories.



Pat Jennings



Pat Jennings didn't intend to make a career out of it when she joined the military. She needed help getting through college, and working part-time with the Army National Guard made perfect sense.

"You had to sign up for six years,"

she said. "At 18 years old, you're thinking six years is forever. Before I knew it, I was over 10, and it was like, 'Wow, this has become something I'm good at.'"

Additionally, Jennings loved what the work taught her about herself.

"I didn't realize what I could accomplish until someone put me in a situation where I had to react or respond and realize I had the strength in me," she said. "I don't think it's something they can give you or teach you. It's just something they have a way of bringing out by putting you in different situations."

When Jennings joined the National Guard in 1981, there weren't as many opportunities for women as today. As the years passed, though, things began

to change. Jennings retired as a Chief Warrant Officer 3.

"I was pretty proud of that because I went into a field where there weren't hardly any women at all," Jennings said.

After 20 years — April 1981 to June 2001 — Jennings retired from the Guard. She had promised her daughter she would get out after 20 to make things more stable for her.

Her daughter, Lauren, is now a law student at the University of Chicago.

"It all worked out pretty good for her," Jennings said.

Sharon Royal

Sometimes, you don't have to physically share an experience to forge a bond that lasts a lifetime.

Sharon Royal served in the U.S. Navy in the 1970s. Today, working at the Lake City VA Medical Center, that experience has helped her connect with veterans of all ages.

"I respect them more than somebody who has not experienced it," she said. "They definitely respect me more than if

I was just some little diddy out there that didn't know what they were talking about half the time."

Royal works in the blood work lab at the VA. She is always blown away by the way shared military experiences allow people to bond, whether they served in Vietnam, Korea, Iraq or anywhere.

"People come in, and they won't know anybody, and they'll start talking," she said. "There's some amazing, amazing stories."

Royal joined the Navy in June 1970 to help her get through college. In addition to paying for her education, her military service also provided her stability in a tumultuous time of increased drug use and protests around the country.

Royal wanted to join the Air Force, but they told her she was too short — 5 feet 2 inches— to reach the compartments in the airplanes.

"Are you serious?" she recalls laughingly. "How many planes am I gonna be in?"

However, the Navy took her in soon afterward and sent her to San Diego. She hasn't looked back

since. There she met her husband, Dave, who also served in the Navy. They've been married 45 years.

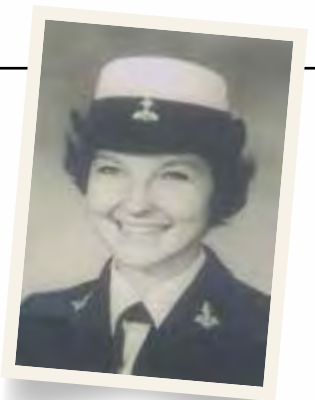
"[Joining the Navy is] something I do not regret, that I'm very proud of," she said.

She said it has been great to see the stature of women in the military increase over the years.

"We were separated back then," she said. "We had our own boot camp. We had our own set of rules."

As she continues her daily work at the VA, Royal tries to care for everyone she can. She is proud of the friendships she's been able to form.

"It makes a lot of difference [having served]," she said. "There's a bond there."



Sharon Royal stands in her home in front of bookcases of memorabilia from her time in the Navy. Royal joined the Navy in 1970 and served in San Diego where she met her husband, Dave.

Amanda Manske

Amanda Manske holds memorabilia from her time in the Army. She enlisted when she was 19 but was injured in Iraq, leading her to take medical retirement. She now works at Guardian Ad Litem as a child advocate manager.



Amanda Manske joined the U.S. Army looking to get away.

“I just wanted something different,” she said. “I’ve always been a very adventurous person. I wanted to get out away from Lake City.”

Manske moved to Lake City from Texas when she was about three years old. She was about 19 when she enlisted.

In the Army, she found something she wasn’t expecting.

“It gave me a sense of purpose really,” she said. “It kind of felt like I didn’t have one before. [Then] I had belonging, duty and loyalty to the country. I was very proud to be a part of that.”

Things weren’t always easy. Manske was injured during a six-month deployment to Iraq that necessitated a trip back to the states. She had a brain injury, a head injury, a broken nose, a

broken wrist and various neck, hip and other injuries. PTSD ended up leading to her medical retirement. She even got hooked on drugs for a little while.

“I was just withdrawn from everything and dealing with everything on my own in the wrong ways,” she said.

However, she’s been clean for five years now and has found a new sense of purpose. She moved back to Lake City in 2006, has a daughter and works as a child advocate manager at Guardian Ad Litem.

“The sense of purpose is back,” she said. “Our purpose is, we’re all here to help everybody on Earth.”

Now, Manske is focused on teaching her daughter, Gracie, how to be a strong woman.

“It’s very important for my daughter to know that she can do what she wants,” Manske said. “When we put our minds to something, we can do it. ... We can keep on going no matter what, including being a mom, a teacher, a doctor, you name it.”

As an example of strength, Manske likes to look back to an experience she had in the Army.

Soldiers were loading up weapons to head out from the base. A commander saw her carrying five guns at once. She said he was so shocked to see how much she could carry that he gave her an achievement award coin for being physically strong.

“Men in the military believe women are weak and can’t do the things they can,” she said. “I’m the one who proved them wrong.”





Karen Houston



Karen Houston always sent half of her U.S. Army paycheck to her mom in Gary, Indiana. She wanted to get her out.

Houston has now worked at the optometry clinic at the Lake City VA Medical Center for more than 20 years. She relishes being able to give back to others, just as she did for her mother.

“She was a single mom, staying in a city that’s really impoverished, to be honest. It helped her get out of the situation she was in,” she said. “I had to sacrifice. That’s what a lot of soldiers do. We sacrifice.”

“I know how I wanna be treated ... so I treat them with respect,” she said. “I can talk them through any frustrations they might have because there’s an understanding there. There’s a respect there.”

The military also offered Houston a way out. She said there weren’t a lot of jobs at the time in Gary for young people.

“I always wanted to work for a living,” she said. “I never wanted a handout or anything like that. Military was the best route.”

Houston was in the Army from 1990 to 1994. She was stationed in Germany, Georgia, South Carolina and Virginia at various times, with a deployment in Saudi Arabia for about six months as well.

She worked in an aviation support battalion, helping with Blackhawks, Chinooks and other fighter helicopters. Her experience in Saudi Arabia was “stressful” and “intense,” but it was all worth it.

Eventually, she was able to help her mom move out of Gary and into Michigan.



Karen Houston's medals from her four years in the Army are on display. She served in Germany, Georgia, South Carolina, Virginia, and Saudi Arabia.

Sherri Cassidy's hard work and dedication has made her a business leader in our organization and in the community.

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PARTY IN THE PINES

MUSIC FESTIVAL

THE INAUGURAL MUSIC FESTIVAL IS SET TO MAKE A SPLASH IN WHITE SPRINGS

By KAYLA LOKEINSKY

After months of planning and preparation, the Bienville Plantation in White Springs will be hosting its inaugural Party In The Pines music festival. Promising to be the largest country music festival in North Florida, this is one party you don't want to miss.

Presented by Bienville Entertainment, Party In The Pines will feature some of the biggest names in country music. Superstars including Keith Urban, Miranda Lambert and Jake Owen are set to perform.

"The enthusiasm is extremely high," said Bienville Entertainment Event Producer Vickie Bass. "People are amazed that we have talent of this level coming to White Springs and North Florida."

The inaugural Party In The Pines will be held on October 20-21. The Bienville Plantation will host several country superstars for the festival and offer various camping accommodations.

Arguably one of coun-

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Party in the Pines Music Festival

Friday, October 20 | 3 PM

Saturday, October 21 | Noon

Bienville Plantation | 16673 SE

81st Drive, White Springs

Advance Cost through October 16:

Two-day VIP: \$650

Two-day Reserved Seating: \$420

Two-day General Admission: \$160

www.partyinthepines.com

try music's biggest female superstars, Miranda Lambert, will be one of the headlining acts at the inaugural Party In The Pines. The singer/songwriter is the reigning ACM Female Vocalist of the Year and has won two Grammy Awards, 12 CMA Awards and 28 ACM Awards. Known for hit songs like "The House That Built Me," "Kerosene" and "Platinum," Lambert released her most recent album, *The Weight of These Wings*, in November 2016, which debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard Country Albums chart.

Country music legend Keith Urban will also be a headlining

act at Party In The Pines. A premier singer/songwriter/musician, Urban has collaborated with everyone from The Rolling Stones to Alicia Keys to John Mayer. The four-time Grammy winner and Grand Ole Opry member has produced four No. 1 songs including "Wasted Time," "John Cougar, John Deere, John 3:16," and "Break On Me." His most recent album, *RIPCORD*, released in 2016, was certified platinum and produced is 22nd No. 1 song, "Blue Ain't Your Color."

Also performing at Party In The Pines is Jake Owen, a Vero Beach, native known for his high-energy performances and laid-back style. Owen is known for several, chart-topping country hits, including "Barefoot Blue Jean Night," "Anywhere With You" and "American Country Love Song." Easton Corbin is also set to perform. His traditional country style and authentic lyrics have left an impression on country music. Some of his more popular songs include "Lovin' You Is Fun" and "All Over The Road."

Singer/songwriter Maren Morris, most popularly known for her fan-favorite single, "80s



Keith Urban



Miranda Lambert



Lanco



Jake Owen



Maren Morris



Brothers Osborne



Raleigh Keegan



Easton Corbin

Mercedes,” and Brothers Osborn, John and TJ, known for their No. 1 smash hit “Stay A Little Longer” will also play at Party In The Pines. More recently-announced artists include Ryan Hurd, a musician who has written songs for famed artists including Party In The Pines performers Jake Owen and Maren Morris and is now venturing out on his own with his debut album “We Do Us,” Lanco, a country band that just debuted it’s self-titled EP, and singer Raleigh Keegan.

Party In The Pines will have continuous music, with national artists performing on the main stage while regional artists perform on the Showcase Stage. More lineup additions will be announced closer to the event.

Party In The Pines will also be hosting a huge giveaway program throughout the two-day event, with over \$100,000 in prizes up for grabs, including a new pickup truck, a boat, a Polaris Ranger, kayaks, vacations, big-ticket coolers and more.

The proceeds from the giveaways will benefit local charities, including Haven Hospice, Love INC and the Stephen Foster Citizen Support Organization.

“We really like the fact that it not only benefits the people coming to the festival but it also gives back to the community,” Bass said.

Party In The Pines is offering a VIP experience, which promises a “never before experienced ambiance, decor and activities.” VIP guests will receive special parking, entry privileges, reserved seating, access to exclusive VIP vendors, meals and three complimentary bears each day and

access to a cash bar inside the VIP tent.

The two-day VIP package costs \$650 and includes all the perks listed above. The two-day reserved seating package, which includes a two-day parking pass, costs \$420 and the two-day general admission package, which includes a two-day parking pass, costs \$160 in advance through Oct. 16.

The military discount two-day general admission price is \$122 and the student discount two-day general admission price is also \$122. Proper identification must be presented at the gate, and the tickets include a two-day parking pass. The two-day child’s general admission package, which is for children ages 6-12, is \$61 and children ages five and under are free. Kids and family activities will be offered in addition to musical performances.

Guests can also enjoy the full Party In The Pines experience with camping. Primitive camping for tents and RVs will be offered at the Bienville Plantation during the festival. For a complete list of prices, visit www.partyinthepines.com.

The star-studded lineup kicks off at 3 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 20 and continues Saturday, Oct. 21. Gates for the festival open at noon.

The Bienville Plantation is located at 16673 SE 81st Drive in White Springs. For more information or to purchase tickets visit www.partyinthepines.com.



PARTY

ON A PLATE

Chef Laura Fowler Goss loves making people happy with her delicious food.

By **KAYLA LOKEINSKY** | Photos by **HOLLY FRAZIER PHOTOGRAPHY**
(Additional photos courtesy of Laura Fowler Goss)

Laura Fowler Goss was feeling sick of her office job at a transportation company, so her boss told her to take a vacation. She took his advice, and went on a year-long vacation to pursue her passion for cooking and entertaining.

“He said, ‘Go somewhere you’ve always wanted to go.’ Well, I’ve always wanted to go to culinary school,” Laura said. “So I took a vacation and went to culinary school.”

After attending culinary school, Laura was eventually able to turn her passion into a career as a caterer. Now, she is one of the most highly sought-after chefs in the area, catering events throughout North-Central Florida and also working on a team with one of the biggest stars in the food industry. With every event, she creates a party on a plate.

Following Her Heart

If you’ve ever met Laura, 32, you’ll know she loves to entertain, especially with food. Laura got her start in the kitchen when she was in middle school. She is the oldest of three children, and when her mom, Lisa, got sick, she cooked for her family. As she grew older, she took those culinary skills and turned them into parties.

“I love to throw parties,” Laura said. “As a young person out on my own I always threw a lot of dinner parties and it was always a bacon-wrapped little smokies kind of thing. It was fun and that’s where I learned to entertain and really learned to enjoy cooking to feed people in a happy atmosphere.”

When Laura graduated high school in 2004, she went straight to work at a transportation company until she took her vacation in 2009 and went to culinary school at Le Cordon Bleu. After graduating in 2010, she went back to the transportation job, managing the company’s operations for five more years. Her position enabled her to travel, go to conferences and manage large-scale events, which gave her an upper hand when it came to planning her catering business. Finally, in 2015, she decided to make her passion her permanent career.

“I said, ‘Well I’ve been doing these side parties and catering on the weekends, let’s see if I can actually make a living at it,’” Laura said. “So far so good.”

After a year and a half of running her own business,



Loaded mini baked potatoes



Laura shows off her Alligator Potstickers while competing on the Blazed \$ Confused cooking competition team at the World Food Championships in Orlando in 2016.



Feta Shrimp Cucumber Canapé



tailgate parties for the Colts. In 2018 she will fly out to Minneapolis for Super Bowl LII.

"Here's what's so crazy is chefs fly in from all over the country to these events and just took their asses off," Laura said. "Like 48 hours solid chopping onions. Like here's 500 pounds of onions, y'all get these things chopped kind of things."

"There's honor in doing the work and it's just really cool to be around all the other chefs doing the work," she added. "Learning from them and sharing in the misery at 3 a.m. It's good stuff."

The Best In The Business



When Laura isn't traveling the country cooking at major sporting events, she's back catering events close to home. The Branford-based chef has catered many events in Lake City, including the VIP tent at the Gateway City Beer and Wine Festival. She does a lot of catering for community organizations and businesses, and has prepared food for countless weddings, parties and other events.

"I like the events business," Laura said. "People eat because they have to sustain their lives and they go to restaurants because it's convenient or for a number of other good reasons, but when they throw a party, it's a happy time, and that's what I really love is the celebration of it."

The food that Laura puts out is based on classic French technique and is customized for the client. Some of her most popular menu items include beef tenderloin, pork loin, sausage-stuffed mushrooms and her famous caramelized onion dip. Her menu is often based around fresh, local ingredients.

"Most clients give me some leeway with that," Laura said. "They say, 'OK this is the protein that we want, we'd rather have potatoes than rice and bring us some vegetables.' So I'm very thankful for that."

However, what Laura is most well-known for is what she calls her "little pretties."

"I love beautiful hors d'oeuvres," Laura said. "I love to fix them, I love to eat them, I love to present them, I love to serve them. I found a really cool niche in appetizer buffets. Fruit and cheese and vegetables and things like that, that nobody takes the time to do. That's super fun for me. Other caterers aren't doing it so that's a special market for me that I've slid into."

Laura's family is actively involved in her catering business. When she's working events in Gainesville, she rents a kitchen there, but when she's catering events close to home she works out of an industrial kitchen on her parent's property just south of Branford. Her mom, Lisa, helps her a lot with the cooking and behind-the-scenes work at events, while

One of Laura's specialties as a caterer is appetizer buffets, like this antipasto display featuring walnut chicken salad and dessert trifles. Laura's meals often focus on fresh, local ingredients. The meal pictured above includes pork tenderloin with blackberry gastrique, crispy parmesan chicken, duchess potatoes and fresh green beans.

Laura feels that by taking her time before jumping into catering professionally, she set herself up for success.

"It's kind of a roundabout way to get anywhere, but now I'm doing three or four events a week and just constantly chopping onions and washing dishes it feels like," Laura said with a laugh. "But it's fun, it's really fun, and I'm thankful for the journey that got me to where I am."

Her connection to the transportation industry actually led to her biggest culinary opportunity: to join the Guy Fieri catering team. A former client of hers from her days at the transportation company recommended her for the

position, and before she knew it she was flying to Houston to cook alongside Guy Fieri, a Food Network star and one of the most well-known chefs in the country, for the 2017 Super Bowl.

"What's on TV is absolutely real," Laura said. "He's loud and kind of bold and crazy. He's cool."

She along with a team of fellow chefs helped cater the 2017 Super Bowl, hosting a party for 2,500 people. She went with the Guy Fieri catering team to the Master's Golf Tournament, cooking breakfast, lunch and dinner for 250 people for six days. She has been in Indianapolis during football season, where Guy caters the

her cousin Jessilen does a lot of the baking for her events. Also part of Laura's team is Wendy Petersen, her event manager who has been working with her for over a year.

"No matter if it's a 13-year-old's birthday party or she's dealing with corporate executives, it's the same quality across the board," Wendy said. "Laura treats everyone the same and that's what's so great about her."

In addition to her role as a caterer and chef, Laura is a wife to Matt and a mother to three-year-old AnnMarie. Although her husband isn't involved in her business, he does have a knack for cooking.

"He has no part of the catering, but what he does is all the cooking at home, which is such a blessing," Laura said. "He's constantly coming up with new things and new ideas that I kind of steal from him."

Laura wants to make sure that everyone can enjoy food made with fresh ingredients. So, she started a charity, Fowler's Fork. With a desire for all children to enjoy fresh, healthy food, she started the outreach program in an effort to teach kids how to plant, grow and harvest simple vegetables and then learn to cook their own healthy meals at her cooking camps.

As Laura continues to grow her business, she has one goal in mind: to be everyone's go-to girl.

"I really just want to be the best in the business, at least in the area," Laura said. "It's hard to compete with ingredients that we can't find locally and that sort of thing, but I really just want to be known to be at my personal top of my game, have a really incredible team and have people say if you want something beautiful and you want something tasty and you want it done professionally, call Laura."

Laura's Ricotta Canoli Pastry with Chocolate Covered Strawberry



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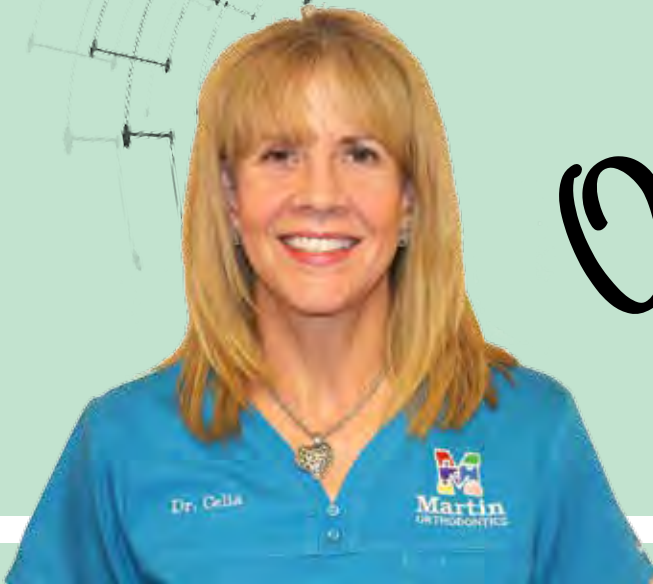
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ONE SMILE AT A TIME

Story and photos by TAYLOR GAINES

Celia Martin shares her passion for making a positive impact on Lake City.

Celia Martin views orthodontics as an art form. It's not just about creating a beautiful smile. It's about building a masterpiece.

"I tell the kids, 'This is like Picasso,'" she said. "I have created — with your help and your parents help — a masterpiece. And if you don't wear your retainer to keep it that way, it's like painting graffiti over the Mona Lisa."

Martin, an orthodontist in Lake

City for about 30 years, is passionate about creating perfect smiles for kids. But she's also interested in influencing the next generation to have healthier lives.

"Any generation needs guidance," she said. "I try to instill certain health values, things that are good to eat, things that are not good to eat. Habits that are good, habits that are bad."

Martin said it's also important

to teach children to chase their dreams.

"Anything you wanna do in life you can do," she said. "Whatever your wish is, by having people mentor you, assist you, you can make it happen. My father would tell me, 'Choose work you love, and you'll never work a day in your life.'"

Martin comes from a family of health professionals. Her parents, Samuel and Ruth, were physicians, her brother, Sam, is a vascular surgeon and her other brother, Bill, runs Martin Orthodontics in Gainesville.



Martin runs Martin Orthodontics and Martin Kids Dental Health in Lake City, where she's been practicing since graduating from orthodontics school at the University of Florida in 1988. They're building a new building in Perimeter Park on State Road 47 that will combine the two. It's expected to be completed by next September.

"It's going to be something Lake City has never seen," Martin said. "It's going to just be an unbelievable conducive facility for treating children and their needs."

Around six people work for

"I have created ... a masterpiece. And if you don't wear your retainer to keep it that way, it's like painting graffiti over the Mona Lisa."

— Celia Martin, orthodontist

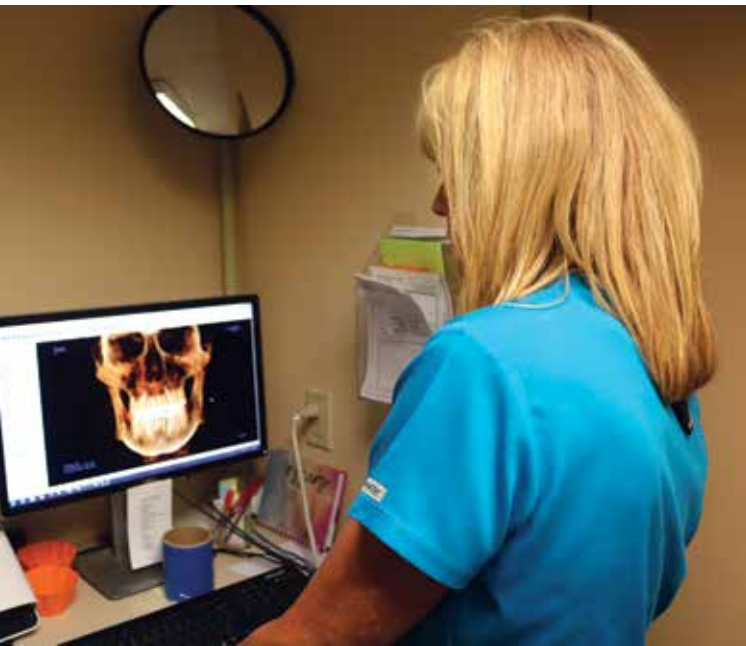
Martin, including Office Manager Lori Green Berry, who has been working with her for about 29 years.

"It says a lot about her as a boss that you have employees last that long," Berry said. "Dr. Martin's a

wonderful orthodontist, a wonderful friend and basically family."

Martin said she relishes her role as a successful woman in the Lake City community.

"There are no boy jobs and girl



Celia Martin looks at an x-ray of a patient's teeth.

jobs," she said. "Whatever your heart desires is what you should strive for. I like being a role model for women. When I started dental school women were in the minority, and now they're in the majority."

Martin loves helping kids fix up their smiles — and loves traveling, her brother and her were the first brother-sister team to cross-country ski to the North Pole — but she also loves helping fix up the community as much as she can. She said she tries to stay involved with as many youth activities as she possibly can.

"I really like making a positive impact on people's lives," she said.

Pam Taylor, founder of Covenant Pet Trust, a local organization that helps place pets in homes when owners pass away, said Martin has been a godsend for them.

"She's our major donor," Taylor said. "We feed over 200 meals a week, and she provides most of it. She provides a lot."

Taylor said Martin supplies all kinds of cat and dog food to Covenant, typically enough to supply more than 200 meals a week.

"Without her support, we really would not be able to maintain the food bank," she said.

Taylor said she's also gotten donations from people saying Martin had encouraged them to donate in lieu of paying their orthodontics bill.

"She's just a caring person," Taylor said. "She likes to see people happy. She likes to be involved. ... I know that if we ever had a pet in need, we can count on her."

As it turns out, the masterpiece Martin is painting is about more than just teeth. She wants to effect change in her entire community, whether it's one smile or one meal at a time.




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TEACHING

and teamwork

Stacie Dupree and Kim Scott work together to mold young minds at Green Acres Learning Center

Story and photos by KATRINA POGGIO

Reach. Teach. Release. That's the philosophy behind Green Acres Learning Center.

When children walk into the center, they can always expect a warm greeting from owner Stasia Dupree and director Kim Scott. Their beaming smiles show their excitement for a new day of growth and learning.

"We don't play daycare," said Dupree, who bought the business 10 years ago.

Running a childcare facility with a rigorous education program is more than just finger painting and singalongs. At Green Acres, early childhood educators focus on the building blocks of learning, setting the children up early for a lifetime of opportunities.

"We believe that children can start young," Scott said. "They're sponges."

They lay the foundation by teaching little ones the alphabet, colors and shapes while also teaching friendship, acceptance, teamwork and more.

"Definitely love," Scott said, who has been with the business for 20 years.

Love and a passion for molding the minds of Lake City's youngest generation are what inspires Dupree and Scott every morning.

New beginnings

After Dupree graduated with a bachelor's degree in business, she decided to follow her heart and pursue a teaching certification. She started teaching Kindergarten at Melrose Park Elementary School in Columbia County during the 2005-06 school year. In her second year at the school, Dupree was recognized for going above and beyond in the classroom. Shocked and honored, she knew she found her path.

"It was one of those things that gave me the confidence to know that I'm good at this," Dupree said.

It takes a special kind of person to teach Pre-K



through first grade, she said.

"Children are still so impressionable and moldable and it's such a delicate time," Dupree said.

In the early education stages, children are at all different levels. In a single Kindergarten classroom, a teacher may have students who do not know how to spell their own name and others who are already reading well.

"It's a struggle for a Kindergarten teacher to be able to differentiate their learning curve so that they are helping each child grow," Dupree said.

After two years in the classroom, Dupree decided to start her own daycare center. When Green Acres went up for sale, she jumped on the opportunity. Since taking over Green Acres, Dupree also takes care of all the bookkeeping, payroll, taxes and accounting, utilizing her degree in business.

When she bought Green Acres, she started working closely with Scott, who had already been working there for 10 years.

As the director, Scott conducts classrooms, trains employees, manages the facility and everything in-between.

"I encourage myself each day to learn something or be better at it," Scott said.

Being raised by a single mom, Scott always knew she wanted to go into childcare. She started



“I have really high expectations because I know children are capable of so much.”



Stacie Dupree



Kim Scott

“I encourage myself each day to learn something or be better at it.”



working part-time at 16 years old and has directed five childcare centers in Lake City throughout her career.

It is more than just a job and she hopes to inspire those she trains, too.

“You have to teach them. You have to lead them. You have to show them,” Scott said.

Beyond babysitting

Coming from a teaching background, Dupree knows how to raise the bar for students. Whether they are 1 year old or 12 years old, she has goals set for them.

Most of the kids in the Pre-K program graduate already reading Kindergarten books, she said.

“I have really high expectations because I know children are capable of so much,” Dupree said.

Seeing the children overcome new challenges never gets old for the duo. They love their jobs because it never feels like work.

Scott said she enjoys kids running up to her to spread love and say they had a fun day. The children and staff are a team and share a close bond.

“They feed us as much as we feed them,” Dupree added.

Almost in unison, they both agreed what pulls them all together. “It’s family.”



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Helping You Make the Transition

**CARETENDERS OF LAKE CITY HAS A VARIETY OF SERVICES
THAT AID SENIORS IN MAKING A LIFESTYLE CHANGE.**

The life changes that come with age can be at once mystifying and frightening. Whether it's something as minor as new glasses or as major as a move to assisted living, Seniors are often concerned that lifestyle adjustments can lead to lack of independence. Thankfully, Mederi Caretenders of Gainesville has a variety of programs aimed at answering questions and easing the transitions that Seniors face.

"As with anyone, when a senior is faced with one or more major life changes - such as a move to an assisted living community where they're changing their lifestyle to accommodate some limitation, or they lose a loved one - this can be very scary and overwhelming and can possibly lead to decline in physical and/or mental health," said Susan Swirbul, a patient care liaison at Caretenders.

Caretenders has a variety of services specifically designed for clients undergoing a stressful period of change. These Seniors might be experiencing new limitations on mobility, cognitive deficits, effects of medication or other challenges that necessitate a change in lifestyle. When combined with declining overall health and other factors, clients can easily become depressed and feel as if they are losing control of their lives.

One such service, the Transitional Care Program, assists in a Senior's transition to an assisted living facility. A physician's order is placed for a comprehensive geriatric needs assessment, which is conducted by a nurse who

is thoroughly trained to identify the imminent needs of the patient.

Once the client is settled in, the program professionals help manage medical needs and communicate with families, assisted living staff and other people involved with the client's care. The program includes a team of psychiatric and medical nurses, therapists and social workers, all of whom have extensive experience and training in working with Seniors in transition.

For patients dealing with loss of mobility or cognitive abilities, Caretenders provides occupational therapists to help them re-learn and perform everyday tasks. They can also ensure that Seniors are using medical equipment correctly - for example, they can demonstrate proper positioning in a wheelchair.

All of these changes can take their toll on a Senior's morale. Psychiatric nurses provide emotional support and teach clients how to deal with their feelings of frustration and helplessness. They also partner with other Caretenders professionals to provide education and moral support to caregivers, as they play a crucial role in a Senior's outlook on life.

"Having an expert team of Caretenders clinicians that specialize in working with senior adults needing transitional support can help seniors sustain good health by incorporating proven techniques, like thorough mental/physical assessments, support counseling and engagement in meaningful activity," said Swirbul.



"I wondered if my family could manage all the care I needed after leaving the hospital."



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The Spirit of the Suwannee Music park is one of the largest outdoor music and festival parks in the South, welcoming thousands of visitors each year.



FROM Marketing to Managing

By CARL MCKINNEY



Teena Peavey was recently promoted to manager of the Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park.

Teena Peavey's job is to get people talking. As the manager of the Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park in Live Oak, Peavey travels across the nation to promote one of the largest music festival venues in the region.

Before she earned a promotion to the park director in June, Peavey served as marketing director for Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park, generating buzz for the venue while traveling to dozens of trade shows annually.

Now in her new role she oversees the Spirit of the Suwannee's entire operations while still handling her old duties. She is responsible for both the park's guests and employees and making sure they have the best possible experience at the SOSMP.

Something Special

For Peavey, there's nothing quite like walking amongst the crowds at the Suwannee River Jam or one of the SOSMP's other major events and seeing a familiar face from her travels.

"That makes you feel overwhelmed that people are coming down here because of your marketing efforts and what a great community we live in," Peavey said.

It's not uncommon for out-of-state festival-goers to find someone special while they're in Suwannee County, Peavey said, hoping she played some role in their decision to check out the area.

"People come out here to a music festival and end up falling in love and coming back here to get married," Peavey said.

Spirit of the Suwannee hosts about 30 weddings annually, many of them resulting from those first encounters taking place at one of the venue's events.

"Happens more than you'd think," Peavey said. "It's heartwarming."

More Than A Music Park

Regardless of whether a visitor meets his or her

future spouse at the park, festival-goers are prone to simply fall in love with the area itself, Peavey said.

When Peavey promotes the park, it's about more than just the venue, she said.

"I tell them about all the amenities that surround us," Peavey said. "I talk about the Columbia County Fair, Live Oak's Christmas in the Square. I let the customers know there's other things to do in the area."

Peavey remembers making that pitch to one family she met while promoting the park at America's Largest RV Show in Hershey, Penn. The family came down to Florida and enjoyed the Spirit of the Suwannee so much they spent their entire winter there.

On numerous occasions, Peavey has seen visitors form new friendships during a festival and make plans to reunite at the venue's next event.

Those reunions quickly become a tradition, Peavey said.

"Festival-goers will come back year after year," Peavey said.

Starting In Sales

Peavey worked as an advertising account executive at the Lake City Reporter for more than 20 years before resigning in 2007.

Peavey became Spirit of the Suwannee's marketing director in 2009 and was promoted to Park Manager on June 5.

In addition to traveling the country to promote the park, Peavey coordinates the venue's social media presence and print and radio advertisements.

Spirit of the Suwannee is located at 3076 95th Drive in Live Oak. Though the park is best known for its country music festival, the Suwannee River Jam, it hosts other notable events, such as Hulaween, which features an eclectic mix of several music genres, and the Wane Music Festival, one of the most popular folk music festivals in the country.



THE QUEEN of relaxation

Danette Lewis loves pampering her clients at The Spa on Marion

Story and photos by KAYLA LOKEINSKY



Danette mixes crushed herbs with Alaskan Glacier mud to infuse the mud with the scent. Danette crushes down herbs to create powders that can be infused into mud, and allows spa guests to choose which herbs they want used with their treatments. One of the services Danette offers at The Spa on Marion is Colon Hydrotherapy. Danette is a certified colon hydrotherapist and has a passion for the detoxifying treatment.

Danette Lewis wanted to make a difference. After going through serious back surgery and getting massage therapy treatments from her husband, Brian Lewis, Danette wanted to help others feel the same relief that she felt.

She wanted to create a place where people could come and have the weight of the world lifted off their shoulders. Thus, The Spa on Marion was born.

What started out as an idea scribbled down on a piece of paper has turned into Lake City's only five-star day spa. The Spa on Marion is where relaxation reigns, and Danette is the queen.

From Mom To Massage Therapist

Before deciding to go into the bodywork field, Danette spent her days raising her 10 children. Once her children were grown, Brian, who was already a licensed massage therapist and hydrotherapist, convinced her to go to school for massage therapy.

"I said it would be cool to work together," Brian said. "Then she went to school and they didn't think physically she could do it. That was the wrong thing to do because that was a challenge."

Danette was more than up for the challenge. She proved those who doubted her wrong when

she graduated from the Florida School of Massage, earning the school record for the most clinical sessions done. She also graduated from Tiller Mind & Body with a certification in advanced colon hydrotherapy

From there, Danette fell in love with bodywork and continued to earn licenses and certifications. She is currently a Florida state licensed massage therapist, a Florida state licensed hydrotherapist, a national board-certified colon hydrotherapist, a certified facial massage specialist, a board-certified body wrapper and a master salt blender.

"I love doing body work," Danette said. "Whether it be relaxation, deep tissue, couple's massage, hot stone, whatever service I'm doing, I always feel so honored to be able to work with our clients, and we have some of the most amazing clients in Lake City."

Danette and Brian moved to Lake City from Fernandina Beach in 2003, and nine years ago they opened their first massage thera-



ABOVE: Danette Lewis stands in front of The Spa on Marion, a luxury spa that she and her husband opened together. After raising her 10 children, Lewis got her massage therapy license and is also a licensed hydrotherapist, certified colon hydrotherapist, facial massage specialist and is a master salt blender.

py location, Integrated Body Work, in a small office off Main Boulevard. They eventually outgrew the space, and moved to their current location on Marion Avenue, where they turned the space into a relaxation destination.

“It was quite a labor of love but absolutely worth it,” Danette said. “We try to create that experience where it’s not just coming in to have a massage or coming to have a facial. You’re coming in for an experience.”

A Luxury Experience

When getting a treatment at The

Spa on Marion, you can always expect five-star service. Spa Finder International has given The Spa on Marion a five-star service rating, and when walking inside it’s easy to see why. The house-turned-spa is filled with the sweet smells of aromatherapy, relaxing music and an atmosphere that instantly makes you feel at peace.

The spa offers a wide variety of massages, including pre-natal, reflexology, couples, orthopedic, deep tissue and aqua massage, among others. The Spa on Marion also offers facials, colon hydrotherapy, body

gommage, wraps, spa parties and hair removal. Each treatment also comes with a complimentary foot soak, a feature that the Danette and Brian have been offering since they first opened their business.

“There’s just not a treatment that we do here at the spa that I don’t have a passion for, because it wouldn’t be on our menu if we didn’t like it,” Danette said. “I love it all.”

Private massage rooms decorated with peacock colors and warm salt lamps create the perfect spa atmosphere. The Spa on Marion also has a large massage room called “The Secret Garden,” where guests walk through a small hallway covered in draped fabric before coming to a large room big enough for six people to get treatments at one time.

Danette also makes sure that each



Danette Lewis poses with her husband, Brian Lewis, in the Secret Garden massage room at The Spa On Marion. Brian is a licensed massage therapist and hydrotherapist, and he and Danette have been married for 38 years.

experience is personal right down to the smell of the mud being put on your face.

"We custom blend and custom design all of our body treatments," Danette said. "I have what I call my treasure box, and in it is about 50 different herbs that I've crushed down to a powder form to where they can infuse into the mud."

Danette also creates all the sugar scrubs and salt scrubs used at the spa, making sure each guest experience is individualized.

"It's not only a body treatment, but it's customized and specialized for that client," Danette said. "In other words, it's an original masterpiece. I always like to say all of the work we do is original masterpieces. It's never duplicated. We allow all our therapists to work freestyle here. We don't do cookie-cutter massage. That's very important to us."

Although she loves all the treatments offered at The Spa on Marion, her favorite is the couples massage, because she gets to do them with her husband.

"I love working with my husband

and I love doing couple's massages with him," Danette said. "That way we get to be in the same room together and work together, so I love that."

Some of their other children have also entered the family trade. Their oldest daughter, Chelsea, is an esthetician at The Spa on Marion and their daughters Destiny and Haley are also estheticians.

"My husband did prenatal massages on our daughters and our grandson had his first massage at seven minutes old," Danette said. "All our grand babies have received massages from us."

A Beautiful Journey

The philosophy at The Spa on Marion is if they can change someone's pain level a little bit to the left, then they've had a good day.

"We don't claim to fix anything," Danette said. "All of my therapists are passionate about what they do, and I think that gives us a unique edge because you can't do this work without having a passion for it and knowing that you're helping someone."

Danette feels that good body work is not a luxury anymore, but a necessity.

"We live in such a stressful world now, just so much stress that the body needs to destress," Danette said. "It just needs to come back into balance, and we hope that we facilitate that a little bit."

At 57 years old, Danette proves that it's never too late to go after something you want.

"I'm so blessed every morning that I get paid for something I'm so passionate about," Danette said. "Obstacles will come in the road, but it's how you choose to go over them that makes a difference."

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TEACHING *and touching lives*



Columbia County Assistant Superintendent Cherie Hill has a passion for education.

“As an administrator, I hope that I influence [students] to aim high and excel in whatever they choose to do.”

Cherie Hill | Assistant Superintendent
Columbia County Schools

A small, wooden frame with the words “to teach is to touch a life forever” sits upon Cherie Hill’s desk. The sign is more than a decoration, but a motto she lives her life by.

Hill touched lives in Columbia County elementary and middle school classrooms for 19 years. Now, she has taken on a larger role to oversee the district’s 14 schools as an assistant superintendent.

Born to Teach

Coming from a family of educators, the public school system is close to Hill’s heart. Giving kids the tools for success opens the door of opportunity for their future.

“It’s important to me that we provide that foundation so that students can make choices,” Hill said.

Her current role allows her to assist school administrators in leading young minds.

“I love being able to help them and in turn help students,” Hill said.

At the start of her teaching career, she never knew the number of opportunities that would come her way. After teaching language arts and social studies at elementary and middle schools for nearly two decades, she took a dual assistant principal position. Hill would split her day between Summers Elementary School and Richardson Middle School.

“It was a great opportunity for me,” Hill said.

She later took on the principal role at Five Points Elementary for three years, Westside Elementary for seven years and Pinemount Elementary for two years. While Hill was in charge, schools soared to A-rated schools. Humble as she is, she attributes all the success to the hardwork of her students and teachers.

“I was so lucky to be surrounded by terrific teachers,” Hill said.

A Chance To Make A Bigger Impact

When the elementary education coordinator position opened up for Columbia County schools, Hill jumped on the opportunity.

“I thought why not? This is an opportunity that does not become available often and I could hopefully have an impact on all of the elementary schools,” Hill said.

Upon his election to office, Columbia County Superintendent Lex Carswell asked her if she would be interested in becoming an assistant superintendent.

“Selecting Cherie as an assistant superintendent over elementary education was a no brainer,” Cardwell said. “No one in our district is more qualified than she is. She has the respect and admiration of us all. She is a team player with a great vision for assisting our principals in making the right decision to inspire our students. I love working with her each and every day.”

Hill said one of her favorite parts of the job is visiting the schools and walking through classrooms.

“That was a lot of fun and so encouraging to see all the great things going on in our district,” Hill said.

A graduate of Columbia High School herself, Hill has a personal interest in the success of Columbia County schools. Her daughter and two sons graduated from CHS, too.

She wants to see the district, currently rated a B, reach new heights.

“I feel strongly that we can be an A district,” Hill said.

Thinking back to her days as a student, Hill remembers two teachers who had a profound influence on the woman she grew up to be. Louis Knudsen and James Montgomery.

The two taught her that learning should always be fun and building relationships is key in whatever you do.

“Students have to know that we care about them before they really care to learn,” Hill said.

Playing a role in a person’s education is a rewarding experience, Hill said.

“I feel like I’m giving back to the community,” Hill said.

Now that she is further along in her career, Hill is seeing some of her former students become teachers and administrators. She hopes that she played a small part in helping them find their calling.

Reflecting on her goals as assistant superintendent, Hill hopes to have a strong influence on leaders in public education.

“As an administrator, I hope that I influence them to aim high,” Hill said. “And excel in whatever they choose to do.”



GOING ABOVE and beyond

Lori Giebeig Simpson serves her community
as Market President of Columbia Bank.

Story and photos by TAYLOR GAINES

Lori Giebeig was sure to keep things professional when showing houses to Matthew Simpson.

But Matthew was hoping for more than just a house.

Matthew, who moved to Lake City in 1996 to work as the Columbia County forester, said he had seen her picture in the paper while he was looking for a place to live.

"I thought, 'Oh my goodness, she's a pretty Realtor,'" he said. "I think I'll give her a call and start my househunting."

"What he says is that he kept the process going as far as looking at houses," Lori said. "I don't know if that's really true. I think he really just didn't find the right one."

Matthew laughed at the suggestion.

"Maybe I delayed the process a little bit," he said.

After they closed on his house, he asked her to dinner, and the rest was history. Two and a half years later, they were married.

"Lori is loving and humble and has lots of integrity," Matthew said. "She's a Christian woman and just the way she conducts herself in pretty much everything that she does is impressive to me. I don't even think I'm biased in saying that actually."

Real estate may have helped bring Lori — now Lori Giebeig Simpson — and her husband together, but it has also played a crucial role in her professional career. She

moved from real estate to banking in 2012 after about 15 years in the field, and she said it has been very useful in the work she does now.

"That experience has been invaluable," said Lori, who works as Market President at Columbia Bank, a local community bank with four branches in Lake City, one in Gainesville and one in Ocala.

Lori has a glowing reputation among her colleagues.

"She's a positive force for our bank," said Columbia Bank Chief Lending Officer Bob Cameron, her boss at the bank. "She's upbeat. She likes people and likes dealing with customers. ... I could find some better adjectives, but she's definitely a pleasure to work with."

John Kuykendall at GulfCoast Financial said he frequently consults with Lori for his customers.

"She's one of the top bankers we work with," he said. "She's very detail-oriented and always calls me back. She's just very professional and very courteous."

Simpson said she makes a point of returning people's calls and assisting her customers as frequently as possible.

"You can build more rapport just by doing what you say," she said. "It's a very easy concept, but I don't know that it's something that people do often. I want customers to be able to talk to me and work through whatever it is. ... I like to be accessible."

“I want customers to be able to talk to me and work through whatever it is. ... I like to be accessible.”

— Lori Giebeig Simpson Market President, Columbia Bank



Lori Giebeig Simpson has worked in the banking field since 2012, now as Market President at Columbia Bank.

Columbia County Commissioner Bucky Nash said he's known Lori most of her life and is a customer at the bank as well.

“She'll go the extra mile for you and is really a detail-oriented person,” he said. “She's always punctual, and she always does what she says she's going to do.”

Lori was born and raised in Lake City before going away to college at Georgia Southern University, where

she got a business administration degree.

“When I went to college, I never expected to come back to Lake City,” she said. “But I honestly could say that when I made the decision to come back — I don't regret it at all. I think it's a great place to raise a family.”

Lori and her family attend Parkview Baptist Church, where her grandparents were founding members. She also has two children: Joshua, 13, and Sarah, 12. Lori says they love going out to go running together.

“They're faster than me, and excited about that piece of it,” she said. “Of course, they have youth on their side.”

Nash said it's been amazing to watch her grow up and become the person she is today.

“She's a genuine person,” he said. “She's just a great mom. Whatever the kids are into, she's all about. She's just a wonderful mother.”



“If a family trusts you enough to call you, there’s a reason they’d like to see you.”

— Debra Lynn Parrish, funeral director

A CARING TOUCH

Debra Lynn Parrish puts families first at her funeral home.

Story and photos by CARL MCKINNEY

Funeral directors used to be called undertakers, but Debra Lynn Parrish would rather be known as a caretaker.

A funeral director's job involves much more than just looking after the deceased, said Parrish, owner of Dees-Parrish Family Funeral Home on Marion Avenue in Lake City. It's also about doing whatever it takes to usher the family through a difficult period, even if it's something as simple as preparing and delivering a home-cooked meal.

"If we can make this process a minute amount easier for this family at this time in their lives, then we've done our jobs," Parrish said.

As a teenager, Parrish believed she'd be natural fit for a funeral director.

"I was nosy, I was inquisitive," she said.

When the 16-year-old started working at a local funeral home, she cherished the feeling that came with aiding clients in their time of need.

"I fell in love with helping the families," she said.

Shortly after graduating John A. Gupton mortuary college in Nashville, Parrish worked at Biggs Funeral Home in Lake City. Eventually, she was ready to start her own business.

"I went into it all by myself," she said.

Parrish's funeral home started in a tiny house on the corner of U.S. Highway 90. Within three years she used her earnings to move the business into the current, much larger building.

Earning the respect of other funeral directors was an uphill battle, Parrish said.

"There weren't very many woman that did this job," she said. "I was the only woman in a man's world for a long time."

Parrish said she earned that respect by doing everything possible to accommodate the grieving families' wishes.

"We try to bend over backwards to have what they see as a celebration of that person's life," she said. "...We don't try to dissuade any kind of request."

That philosophy not only earned Parrish respect among her colleagues, she said, it also fostered life-long relationships with family members of the deceased.



"I've made so many friends, that's probably the best part of my job," Parrish said.

Parrish's hands-on approach landed her in the emergency room in mid-August, after she responded to a family's call and attempted to move a body from their home by herself.

Most funeral directors would send somebody else to do that, she said.

"If a family trusts you enough to call you, there's a reason they'd like to see you," she said.

Candace Guerry, one of Parrish's employees, spoke highly of her boss.

"She's very family-oriented," Guerry said. "That's a real drive in her life."

Parrish has personally delivered food, clothing and furniture to her clients, Guerry said.

"She wants to make sure the families that we service are truly serviced," Guerry said. "... She takes care of their needs."

Southern Sisters

Kayley Nobles and Kristen Dasher turned fashion into a family business.

Story and photos by KATRINA POGGIO

Growing up on a cattle farm in Live Oak, sisters Kayley Nobles and Kristen Dasher were not the type of girls to play dress up. They preferred spending time outside or barrel racing together.

As they became teenagers, they discovered a love for fashion and developed a closer bond.

"We are pretty much inseparable," said Dasher, 28.

In October 2016, they opened Southern Sisters Boutique & Embroidery, a popular women's clothing boutique in downtown Lake City.

"We thought it would be a fun thing to do so we kind of ran with it," said Nobles, 23.

At the time of opening, Nobles had just graduated radiology school and Dasher had already been doing embroidery since 2014. It was per-

fect timing to embark on a business venture.

"Seeing people that did embroidery out of their house and then have grown kind of just inspired me to do a little bit more," said Dasher. "We talked about it and just decided to do it together."

Finding a location was not so simple. Dasher and Nobles searched the town for available storefronts on a





Proceeds from Bridgewater Candle Company candles help feed a child in need.



Southern Sisters is located at 124 North Marion Street in Downtown Lake City.



Kristen Dasher works at her embroidery machine at her store, Southern Sisters Boutique & Embroidery. Dasher embroiders each order the store receives herself.

budget before realizing it would be tough to find a suitable space for their business-to-be. They knew they wanted to sell merchandise at an affordable price point, but that would not be possible with a high rent cost.

“We were almost at the point of maybe this isn’t what we’re meant to do because we just couldn’t find anywhere,” Nobles said.

They were on the brink of ending the search when they peeked into the window of a small storage space filled with boxes and furniture next to a law office in downtown. After knocking down a half wall, painting ceiling tiles, installing new cabinetry, texturing the wall and adding new flooring, Southern Sisters Boutique & Embroidery opened its doors to the public.

They do not have business backgrounds to guide them, but the sisters have learned how to market their business along the way. After the grand opening, it only took a couple months for the store to gain a steady customer base. It has done much better than they expected.

While most of the shoppers who stroll in are locals, others are from other areas such as Alachua, High Springs, Gainesville and Jacksonville.

With the constant traffic into the store, it can be difficult to keep shelves stocked.

“We’re most surprised on how well our clothes have done,” Nobles said. “I think that’s probably our No. 1 seller.”

Nobles originally thought the jewelry and gifts would be the best sellers. She said social media may have played a factor in that. The sisters post photos to their Instagram account to update their 1,400 followers whenever new clothing comes in.

“When we post them, they’re gone,” Nobles said.

Dasher stays busy with embroidery orders, too, adding personalized touches to clothes and other items as requested by customers. Around the holidays last year she had to stop taking custom orders because there was just too many.

“There’s one me. There’s one machine. It just can’t do anymore,” Dasher said.

She stayed constantly busy until the holiday while her custom embroidery orders were gaining popularity.

“I literally finished the last embroidery item the day before Christmas Eve,” Dasher said.

Even with increasing sales, Dasher and Nobles try to keep reasonable prices for the Columbia County market. Dasher said most people think \$85 shirts when they hear “boutique,” but she wants everyone to be able to afford



Southern Sisters Boutique & Embroidery owners Kayley Nobles (left) and Kristen Dasher stand among the racks of clothes at their store. The store offers a variety of women's clothing, including dresses, rompers, sweaters and shirts, among other items and accessories. The sisters

post photos to their Instagram account to update their 1,400 followers whenever new clothing comes in. "When we post them, they're gone," Nobles said.

stylish, fun and unique gifts.

"We're really trying to make sure the price is generated toward the community and not just for a specific, small group of people that have a lot of money," Dasher said. "It's more for everyone."

Customers can also give back through their shopping. Dasher and Nobles sell items that give back to the less fortunate. Bridgewater Candle Company candles help feed a child in need and Never Lose Hope jewelry helps build schools. Nobles said she wants to help others and hopes these items can get others involved, too.

"I think that resonates with people," Nobles said.

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CHRIS SUMMERLIN
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The automotive industry is typically considered a “Man’s World.” The women that are successful in this environment are usually self-motivated, extremely driven and outspoken individuals who are relentless in their approach to achieving their specific goals. Chris Summerlin, the service manager at Rountree Moore Toyota in Lake City, Florida, is certainly one of those individuals.

Chris was born and raised in Lake City and as a single mother of three, set out to create the best possible life for her children in her home town. In July of 2000 she jumped at an opportunity to join the team at Rountree Moore Toyota as a sales consultant. Chris spent her first five years on the sales floor and moved up to the sales manager position by 2005. In 2006 Rountree Moore expanded their growing Toyota franchise and moved to their current location. Chris used this opportunity to move over to the service side of the business as a service advisor and embraced all the challenges that came along with it. Her impressive customer relationships and quick understanding of the service business earned a promotion to the position of service manager in 2008, and she maintained that position until 2011.

Chris left the Rountree Moore family in 2011 and went on to Gatorland Toyota in Gainesville as they expanded their facility. After two years Chris decided to try her hand in the medical field where she spent two years with Lake City Medical Center as an ER billing coordinator. It did not take long for her to realize that her true passion was in automotive service, the customers and the challenges that go along with it. In December 2016 a great opportunity came to rejoin the management team of a newly revitalized service facility at Rountree Moore Toyota where it all began 17 years ago. As the current service manager there she embraces the new daily challenges and is reunited with her ever-loving hometown customers that are so close and dear to her heart.

At this point in her life she is in her “happy place.” Her daughter and two sons are now all settled adults in their own chosen careers, but still continue to be her personal motivation. Her own career is also where she is most beneficial doing the things that she is passionate about, and feeling the personal satisfaction needed to be successful at achieving her long-term goals. Customer service in the automotive service industry is no easy task, but Chris has used her strong will, drive and determination to be successful in this predominantly male environment.

We are sure Chris will have continued success for many years to come!



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“It’s been very
overwhelming in
the best way.”

— Natalie Metzger,
owner of The Music Academy



Natalie Metzger, owner of The Music Academy, plays a grand piano in the lobby area of her business. A generous local donated the grand piano when Metzger opened up shop.



MAKING. music

The Music Academy in Lake City helps students find their sound.

Story and photos by KATRINA POGGIO

Music is a universal language.

With the stroke of a guitar string or a note in a song, music can allow anyone to form a bond. In Lake City, The Music Academy, a private-lesson music studio in the heart of historic downtown, is aiming to build the community through music education.

After more than 10 years of teaching private lessons, Natalie Metzger opened The Music Academy on Marion Avenue in July. As the only studio in Lake City that focuses specifically on private music lessons, it is paving the way for music lovers to find their tune.

The school has only been open for a few months, but both aspiring and established musicians are already pouring in to develop their skills. The

Music Academy currently has four instructors who teach more than 80 music students piano, violin, guitar, singing and more. With a no-wait-list policy, the lesson appointments just keep piling up.

“It’s been very overwhelming in the best way,” Metzger said.

Community Through Music

At The Music Academy, they believe that when it comes to playing music, there’s no age limit. Children can start taking lessons at The Music Academy as early as 4 years old and classes can go on indefinitely.

“Our oldest student right now is in her 70s,” Metzger said.

Once they learn the basic skills, students can continue building on them for the rest of their lives.



Music instructor Bridget Metzger leads Aiden Patton, 8, in a piano lesson at The Music Academy.



Music instructor Emily Johns practices piano in-between music lessons. Johns has been playing piano and violin since she was 5 years old. **RIGHT:** Music student Ryan Trojanowski, 14, plays piano during a lesson at The Music Academy. A natural at playing by ear, Ryan attends lessons to build new skills on the piano.



Music instructor Bridget Metzger teaches Adyson Patton, 5, how to play piano at The Music Academy.

Staying consistent with practice, although important, can be difficult, so The Music Academy offers some incentive.

Metzger encourages her students to stay on track with their lessons with the 100 Days of Practice Challenge. Starting in September, students practice every single day and then celebrate together with a party in January.

“It’s hard. By the time you get to the 30th day, it’s like, ‘I don’t want to do this anymore,’” Metzger said.

Prize incentives on days 10, 25, 50, 75 and 100 keep them going. Parents also share practice tips on a Facebook group as their kids take on the challenge together.

“We try to create a community through that too,” Metzger said.

Reaching goals is one of the main focuses at The Music Academy. It builds confidence and shows music students they can accomplish whatever they set their minds to.

“Learning music kind of translates into learning anything else. If somebody gets to come and learn music, it helps with their whole life,” said Bridget Metzger, one of the piano and violin instructors and Natalie’s younger sister.

Instructors at The Music Academy enjoy watching their students grow and expand their horizons as they gain more experience with an instrument.

“It’s fun to impart knowledge and I especially like teaching the little kids because they are so much fun to be around,” Bridget Metzger said.

Emily Johns, who has taught piano and violin for two years, says her favorite part of teaching is watching the students react to their own progress.

“I get joy out of teaching them and sharing what I know,” said Emily Johns, who started playing piano and violin at 5 years old. “It lights up their faces and it just makes my whole day better.”

Not every student learns the same way. One of the benefits of private music lessons is teachers can adapt the lesson to the student’s learning style.

“The more you get to know each student, the easier it is as a teacher to know how they learn and know how to teach them,” Johns said.

Young singers ages 8 to 17 can also join The Music Academy Youth Choir to have fun singing while learning to read music and sing in harmonies. Metzger wanted to spread her love for performing in a group, especially to kids. Singing in a group is an intimate experience, she said.

“Your instrument is inside you. It’s your voice,” Metzger said.

For her, performing is thrilling. She wants other people to know what it is like.

“It’s literally a flow state... it’s almost like an out-of-body experience.”



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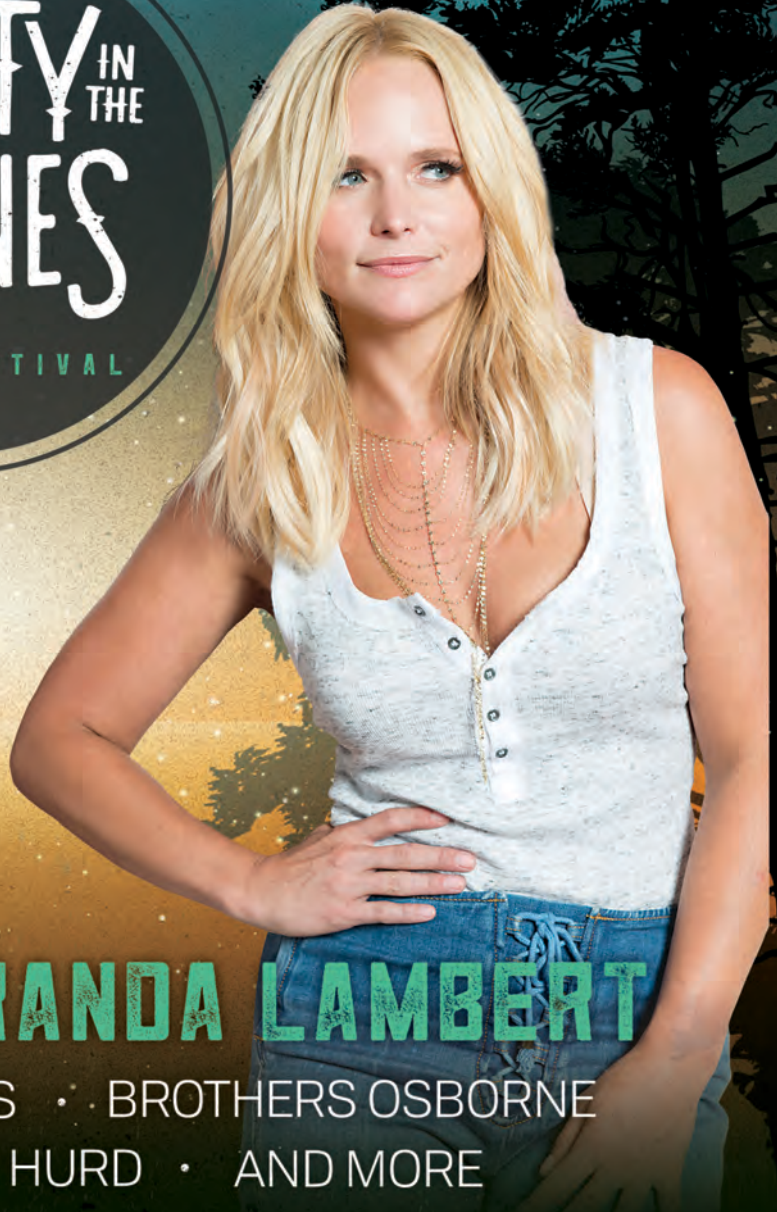


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There's so much to do during the Fall in North-Central Florida

By KAYLA LOKEINSKY

Fall is in the air, and with the cooler weather comes one of the most exciting times of year. With hay rides, pumpkin patches and corn mazes, the fun you can have in the fall is limitless, especially here in North Central Florida. Whether you're looking for something to do on your own, with your friends, your kids or the whole family, these are just a few of the main events taking place this fall.



COLUMBIA COUNTY FAIR

Nothing says fall quite like a fair, and here in Columbia County, the annual fair is one of the most highly-anticipated events of the year. The funnel cakes, the ferries wheels, the games and rides and performances, the fair is a fall staple.

This year's 63rd annual Columbia County Fair will take place October 27 - November 4 at the Columbia County Fairgrounds. Every year the fair brings excitement and anticipation to Lake City, as people from the surrounding area get ready to enjoy all the fair festivities.

In addition to petting zoos, exhibition booths, carnival games, rides and entertainment, there will also be the annual livestock show, where local FFA youth will showcase their prize-winning pigs, cows, goats and other animals.

For more information about the fair and all it has to offer, visit www.columbiacountyfair.org.



TRUNK OR TREAT

Each year on the Friday before Halloween, downtown Lake City is transformed into a Halloween extravaganza during the annual Trunk or Treat event. If you're looking for a night of free family fun during the holidays, this is one event you won't want to miss.

Trunk or Treat, presented by the Lake City - Columbia County Chamber of Commerce and the Lake City Police and Fire Departments, is a fun trick-or-treating events for families. Candy-filled cars and trucks decorated in Halloween fair line up around Lake DeSoto in downtown Lake City, as local business and organizations hand out free candy too all the visitors. Children dressed like princesses, super heroes, cartoon characters and spooky creatures can walk the lake and collect candy along the way. There is also carnival games, food vendors, live music and fun fall activities.

The event is free and open to the public. For more information or to become a part of Trunk or Treat, visit www.lakecitychamber.com

HULAWEEN

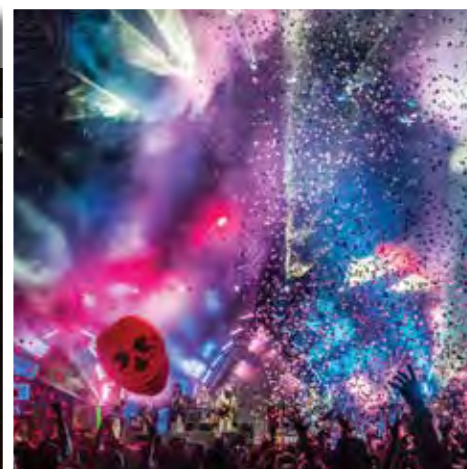
One of the Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park's most popular events is back for its fifth installment this year. Hulaween is a music festival featuring artists from all different genres, including electronic, reggae, funk, bluegrass and jam bands like headliner The String Cheese Incident, which is known for its mix of bluegrass, rock, electronica and jazz, among other style influences.

Since it began, Hulaween has become one of the biggest music festivals in the country, and has music lovers from all over the country and the world who make their way to Live Oak for the spooky weekend.

The festival has more than 60 artists slated to perform, with more to be announced. Some notable performers include Bassnectar, Ween, Griz, Run The Jewels and The Disco Biscuits.

In addition to the music, Hulaween also features its annual rendition of the Spirit Lake, a visual arts extravaganza that includes psychedelic lights, art installations and performance art that transforms the waterfront and surrounding forest into a dream-like space.

There will be a silent disco, dance, yoga and meditation classes, a craft brew corner, carnival-style games in the Recycle Rewards tent and camping. If you're a music lover, this is one event that you will surely not want to miss. For more information or to find out about ticket prices, visit www.suwanneehulaween.com.



ROGERS FARM OCTOBERFEST

If you want to enjoy a true fall in the country, Rogers Farm Octoberfest is an event that focuses on the great things about fall in the south. Rogers Farm, a vegetable farm that also offers U-pick strawberries, is located in Gainesville and welcomes visitors during their annual Octoberfest, offering them an experience unlike any other.

From September 30 to October 29, Rogers Farm will transform into a fall wonderland. The main attraction is a 12-acre corn maze with a theme and maps to help you along your journey. The Rogers family also offers hay rides that will take visitors through the fields of the farm and to a pumpkin patch, where children under 12 can pick a pumpkin to take home with them.

Additional activities include a petting zoo, duck races, a cow train, pony rides, games, children's activities, concessions (including deep-fried Oreos) and more.

Public Hours for Octoberfest are Friday from 5 to 11 p.m., Saturday from 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. and Sunday 1 to 6 p.m. Admission is \$10 to enjoy the attractions or \$10 to go through the corn maze. For \$14 visitors can enjoy both. Children under three are admitted free. The Rogers Farm Octoberfest is also available for field trips and scheduled group outings, and is located at 3831 NW 156th Ave in Gainesville. For more information visit rogersfarmfl.com.



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Suwannee Roots Revival

Music festival returns for its second year

By **CARL MCKINNEY**

Back by popular demand, the Suwannee Roots Revival will return to the Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park for its second year, bringing with it the best in folk, Americana and bluegrass music.

The festival is set for Oct. 12-15 at the Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park.

The Americana, folk and bluegrass festival will take place at the SOSMP October 12-15.

Coming to Live Oak just last year, the festival is the spiritual successor to a similar event that was discontinued about two years ago, said Spirit of the Suwannee Director Teena Peavey.

“Our fans wanted us to continue the tradition of the music,” Peavey said. “They were calling, they were sending emails, they were posting on social media — so Suwannee Roots Revival was born.”

The inaugural Suwannee Roots Revival took place last year, and brought in music lovers and musicians with a passion for folk, Americana and bluegrass music.

“It was a huge success,” Peavey said. “And this year, the lineup is even better.”

In fact, last year’s festival was so popular that the Spirit of the Suwannee added a spring folk, Americana and bluegrass festival, the Suwannee Spring Reunion, to its lineup just this past March.

Star-studded Lineup

So far there are nearly 30 scheduled acts coming to take on the Suwannee Roots Revival, including some of the biggest names in folk and bluegrass music. Among the acts scheduled to perform are Bela Fleck and Abigail Washburn, Peter Rowan Dharma Blues featuring Jack Casady, Steep Canyon Rangers and The Wood Brothers.

There will also be some familiar faces who recently performed at the Suwannee Spring Reunion, including Donna the Buffalo, Jim Lauderdale and Verlon Thompson.

Other acts in the event lineup include: Rev Jeff Moses Band; Joe Craven & The Sometimes; River Whiles; Amanda Anne Platt & The Honeycutters; Rumble Mountain Boys; Grandpa’s Cough Medicine; Belle and The Band; Quartermoon; Habanero Honeys; Shawn Camp; Willie Sugarcanes; Seth Walker; Nation of Two; The Grass Is Dead; Dread Clampitt; The Pine Box Dwellers; The Adventures of Annabelle Lyn; Sloppy Joe; Jeff Bradley; and Tania & Magic Moon Traveling Circus.



Donna the Buffalo will be familiar to festival-goers after seeing them at the recent Spring Reunion held at the Spirit of the Suwannee.



The Wood Brothers are just one of the biggest names in bluegrass scheduled for the Roots Revival October 12-15 at the Music Park.



Jim Lauderdale is another face and voice familiar to the Music Park.



Steep Canyon Rangers are a Grammy Award winning bluegrass band from North Carolina.



Bela Fleck and Abigail Washburn will wow the crowd with their banjo playing.

Music and More

Festival-goers who aren't content to simply see the performers can check out the dance tent, where they will have the chance to sit down with their guitars and play with the talent, Peavey said.

"You see a lot of popular musicians performing, and people are just sitting there picking along," Peavey said.

The festival will also feature music lessons and a dance tent for children.

"This is a big family event," Peavey said. There will also be music workshops, yoga, food and craft vendors and more.

Families that come to the Roots Revival once are likely to come back, Peavey said.

"This festival brings out some of our vested fans that have been coming to the park for years and years," Peavey said.

Four-day advance general admission tickets cost \$175 and general admission at the gate will cost \$195. There are also Saturday/Sunday tickets available at the gate only and cost \$135 each. The four-day and Saturday/Sunday tickets include primitive camping. Single-day festival tickets are also available at the

gate only and do not include camping. Thursday and Sunday tickets cost \$45 and Friday and Saturday tickets cost \$85. Upgraded camping and RV hook-ups are also available for additional prices.

For more information visit suwanneerootsrevival.com or call the Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park office at (386) 364-1683.



"This festival brings out some of our vested fans that have been coming to the park for years and years."

—Teena Peavy | Director, SOSMP

Suwannee Roots Revival: If You Go

When: October 12 - October 15

Where: Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park (3076 95th Drive in Live Oak)

Tickets:

Four-day advance general admission: \$175

Four-day general admission at the gate: \$195

Saturday/Sunday: \$135

Single day, Thursday and Sunday: \$45

Single day, Friday and Saturday: \$85



Martha Ann Ronsonet | GARDENING

gardening

IN THE NORTH-FLORIDA FALL

Every year I think this is the hottest, most humid year we've ever had! When I was a child I'd be outside from morning until dark, coming in for lunch and playing all day with the neighborhood kids and I never complained about the heat. I am so thankful I was able to be part of the fun, creating our own activities, exploring the "Tarzan woods" and swinging on giant vines or building huts out of sticks and branches. We put on plays in the garage and used costumes made from a huge bag of old clothes. We played baseball, Cowboys and Indians and I had my own Red Ryder B-B gun that still sits in the closet. We climbed trees, played Monopoly on rainy days and picked wildflowers in the woods for our Moms. We went on picnics at Ichetucknee when very few other visitors were there. Lake City was much smaller then, as many of you know who grew up here, and there were no other subdivisions except ours which was known as Wilderwood, Lake City's first subdivision.

In my earlier years, we lived on a farm and grew our own vegetables, had chickens and fresh eggs,

raised our own pork and beef and grew tobacco when it was king.

Pleasant memories all, and I treasure those special, happy days. Wonderful parents were one of my biggest blessings. I hope the children of today remember their childhoods with the same enthusiasm.

Those early days of farming probably had some influence on my love of gardening. My mother was a big influence as well because she loved plants with the same excitement as I have over a new or unusual plant and she always had colorful flowers planted near our back door.

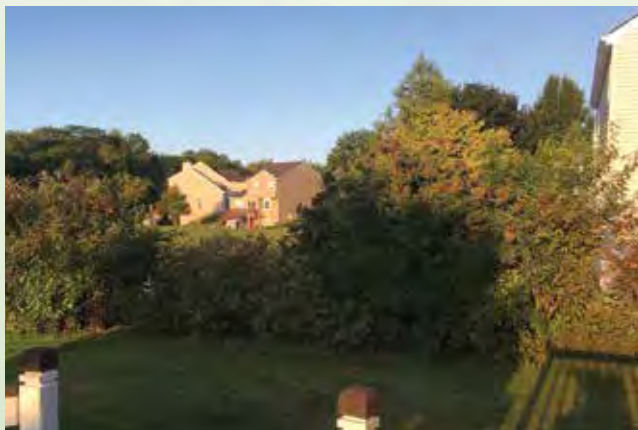
I'm reminiscing today as I often do about my childhood. Our younger days have more influence on us than we could possibly imagine during our youth.

But, I'm supposed to be discussing gardening. With Fall and cooler days almost upon us I thought I would list a few common mistakes gardeners sometimes make in landscaping. Many of us are guilty of some of these, and sometimes learn too late, so if you are new to gardening try to heed these often made problems.

GARDENING MISTAKES TO AVOID

OVER-PLANTING

1. The first one is over-planting. When we bring plants home they are relatively small and we plant them too close for a full look or to make an instant landscape. In a few years we have a crowded garden. Then we must remove some plants or keep them severely pruned to fit the space they're in. Be sure to know the mature size of plants and give them room and time to grow.



HAPHAZARD PLANTING

2. Planting trees and shrubs haphazardly in the lawn areas. This look appears unorganized and also creates maintenance problems with mowing and giving plants the proper amount of water and care they need. It is best to group shrubs and trees in mulched plant beds on the borders of your lawn. Place plants of similar cultural needs in the same areas. The plants are happier and this creates a smooth path for the lawn mower without going around each shrub and tree.



WRONG SIZE PLANTS

3. Shrubs planted around the home are too large. They may cover windows and hide the home rather than enhance it. Many times we compensate by constant pruning to reduce the plant size. Besides being high maintenance this over shearing weakens and disfigures shrubs. It also creates yard wastes to deal with. Select foundation plants with the mature size that fits its location. An occasional clipping of stray shoots is all that is needed.

TOO CLOSE TO HOME

4. Plants planted too closely to the house. This gives a cramped appearance and creates a maintenance nightmare when it's time to paint or repair the house. Foundation or corner shrubs should be planted half their mature width plus one to two feet away from your home. Many times I have had to remove a corner shrub when it outgrew its space.



HAPHAZARD COLORS

5. Too many bright colors scattered in the yard. Brightly colored foliage, flowers or fruit attract attention. When brilliant color is scattered everywhere, it confuses and sometimes overwhelms the appearance. It is better to concentrate color in focal areas such as near the front door or along a border or in containers in selected spots. That said, who doesn't love azalea season where broad sweeps of color is seen in every landscape, but this color saturation only last a couple of weeks.

■ **Martha Ann Ronsonet**

Master Gardener, Garden Clubber and Author of *Gardening in the Deep South and other Hot Pursuits*



Creating
picturesque
gardens,

tips on the
next page.



Revitalize Your Garden

Fall is a good time to plant or revitalize the garden. Roots will have time to become established without competition from the plant trying to put on new growth and survive the summer heat as they are going into dormancy. If you plan on transplanting trees or shrubs wait until January when they are fully dormant for best results. You can plant shrubs or trees anytime of the year if they are in pots.

A few of the blooming plants to enjoy this time of year include so many of my favorites, the yellow and the red Lycoris or Hurricane lilies, the lovely Angel Trumpet, Brugmansia, Firespike, Odontenema strictum, and the yellow blooming Cassia tree, Senna bicapsularis.

The yellow blooms that turn to pink of the Goldenrain tree, Koelreuteria paniculata, lots of roadside Goldenrod, Solidago, Moon Flower, Ipomoea alba and Mandevilla vine and the old fashioned pale pink azalea Chrysanthemums. Coleus are such wonderful summer and fall plants and by now have reached large shrub size, they are also great in containers, take cuttings to overwinter and plant again next spring.

Annuals such as the low growing Torenia and ferns are performing well because of all the rain. My grass however is struggling with fungus for the same reason and the weeds are in their glory.



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LakeShore Obstetrics and Gynecology

falling for PUMPKIN

Who knew you could do so much with this fall staple?

By KAYLA LOKEINSKY

Fall is in the air and that can only mean one thing: pumpkin time. When the air gets cooler and the leaves begin to change, you can expect to find all sorts of pumpkin and pumpkin-spiced-flavored products hitting the shelves. From cereal to chips to gum, pumpkin is everywhere. However, this versatile vegetable can be incorporated into so many different dishes.

These recipes will show you that there's more to pumpkins than meets the pie.

Baked Parmesan Pumpkin Fries

(recipe from wholefully.com)

Ingredients:

- 1 small pie pumpkin
- 2 teaspoons cornstarch
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 3 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/4 cup minced fresh parsley
- 1/2 teaspoon coarse sea salt

Directions:

1. Using a sharp knife, slice the pumpkin in half. Scoop out the seeds and pulp.
2. Slice the two ends off of each half of pumpkin. Then slice each half in half again. Using a sharp vegetable peeler, peel the pumpkin pieces. Then slice the peeled pieces into 1/4" fries.
3. Place the pumpkin fries in a large bowl and



cover with cold water. Let the fries soak for at least 30 minutes, but preferably overnight.

4. When fries are finished soaking, preheat the oven to 425°. Line two or more baking sheets with parchment paper. Set aside.

5. Drain the fries, and then pat dry with paper towels.

6. Fill a large zip-top bag with the dried fries, and then top with cornstarch. Close the bag and shake to cover the fries.

7. Place the fries in a large bowl, drizzle with the olive oil and then toss to coat with your hands. Sprinkle on the paprika and garlic powder and toss again until well-coated. Spread fries in a single layer on the prepared baking sheets.

8. Bake in preheated oven for 10-15 minutes, flipping once halfway through, until the fries are crisp and golden brown.

9. While the fries are baking, toss together the cheese, parsley, and sea salt. As soon as the fries come out of the oven, sprinkle on the Parmesan mixture.



Slow Cooker Pumpkin Butter

(recipe from themagicalslowcooker.com)

Ingredients:

- 1 (29-oz.) can AND 1 (15-oz.) can pumpkin puree
- 2 1/2 cups brown sugar
- 2 cups apple juice
- 1 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp. ground nutmeg
- 1/4 tsp. ground cloves
- 1/8 tsp. ground ginger
- dash of salt

Directions:

1. In a 3-quart or larger slow cooker add all the ingredients and stir. Cover and cook on LOW for 5 hours, stirring once at the 4 hour mark.
2. After the cooking time is complete add the pumpkin butter to a blender, add the lid on and pulse. It will be thick, and you may need to stop and stir the pumpkin butter in the blender to get it moving. Pulse until you have the desired puree.
3. Cool in refrigerator. Serve cold.



Pumpkin Chili

(recipe from theglowingfridge.com)

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup vegetable broth
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 bell peppers, chopped (any color)
- 1 28-oz can of diced tomatoes
- 1 15-oz can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 15-oz can pinto beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 15-oz can pumpkin purée (not pie filling)
- 2 cups vegetable broth
- 2 tablespoons chili powder
- 2 teaspoons cumin
- 2 teaspoons paprika
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- dash red pepper flakes (optional)
- juice from 1 lime



Directions:

1. In a big pot, heat up the vegetable broth.
2. Sauté the onion and garlic until translucent, about 5 minutes.
3. Add in the bell peppers, cook another 5 minutes. Add in the canned tomatoes, beans, pumpkin, vegetable broth and spices (excluding the lime). Stir well.
4. Bring to a slight boil, turn down heat and cover to let simmer about 15-20 minutes.
5. Turn off heat and stir in the fresh lime juice. Serve immediately with your favorite spices.

Pumpkin Pull-Apart Loaf

(recipe from crazyforcrust.com)

Ingredients:

- 3/4 cup pumpkin puree
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar, divided
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
- 1 large egg
- 1 can (8 count) Pillsbury Grands Biscuits (home-style or buttermilk, not flaky)
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- For glaze:
 - 1/2 cup powdered sugar
 - 1 teaspoon cinnamon
 - 3 tablespoons heavy whipping cream or milk

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray an 8×4 or 9×5 loaf pan with nonstick cooking spray.
2. Stir together the pumpkin puree, 1/4 cup granulated sugar, vanilla, pumpkin pie spice, and egg. Set aside.



3. Open the can of biscuits and slice each in half horizontally. Stir together remaining 1/4 cup granulated sugar and 1 teaspoon cinnamon in a small bowl. Coat each slice of raw biscuit dough with the cinnamon sugar mixture.
4. Lay one slice of dough flat. Spread some pumpkin mixture on top, then place another biscuit piece on top. Add more pumpkin mixture and continue stacking, spreading, and layering until you're out of biscuits and pumpkin. Place carefully into the pan.
5. Bake for about 18-24 minutes, or until the top is golden and the center is cooked through. Cool before glazing. Note: the center shouldn't be raw, but will be moist and gooey. If the top starts to brown too fast, cover with foil and reduce oven temperature to 325°F.

6. To make the glaze: whisk the powdered sugar, cinnamon, and heavy whipping cream until a smooth sauce forms. Drizzle over loaf, pull apart, and serve.





WOMEN IN BUSINESS

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Martin Orthodontics
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28 years in business

Awards/Special Achievements:

- National Advisory Committee for 3-M Unitek
- Academy of Women Dentist and Operative Dentistry Award
- Past Faculty of the University of Florida Dental School
- Member of Great Aspirations 1999 an 11-person team that trekked to the North Pole
- Climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro 1999 & went to Antarctica with National Geographic 2007

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- Altrusa Member
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- Member of Professional Photographers of America Since 2012
- Steering Committee Chair for Branford Camera Club
- Voted Best of the Best Photographer 2015, 2016 & 2017

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- Magic Hour Foundation Photographer for Cancer Patients
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- Altrusa International Anna H. Settle Community Leadership Award Recipient 2017

Public Service Involvement:

- Past President, Board Member – Altrusa International of Lake City • The Foundation for Florida Gateway College • Allocations Board Member – United Way • Community Advisor – Haven Hospice • Friend of Columbia County Senior Services • Member – Orchard Community Church
- Past Board Member – Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors



Audrey Sikes
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17 years with City
12 years as City Clerk

Awards/Special Achievements:

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- Lake City Police Department Chiefs Award – 2003
- Certified Municipal Clerk Certification – July 2008
- Master Municipal Clerk Certification – October 2011
- City of Lake City Achievement Award – 2012
- Florida Association of City Clerks- City Clerk of the Year – 2012
- Florida Association of City Clerks- President Award – 2013–2014
- President for the Florida Association of City Clerks – 2014–2015

Public Service Involvement:

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- Autism Speaks – for my nephew Carter
- Childhood Cancer Awareness
- Suwannee River Breast Cancer Awareness
- March of Dimes
- Chamber of Commerce member
- Support local youth in sports & other activities



Chelsea Flores

Agent
Chelsea Flores State Farm

4818 W Highway 90, Ste. 100, Lake City
Since 2017

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Bachelor's Degree in Business Management from Saint Leo University
- Married to Husband Steven Since 2015

Public Service Involvement:

- Guardian ad Litem Volunteer
- Women in Business Member
- Love Inc. Board Member
- Chamber of Commerce Member



Susanna Dicks

Realtor Associate
United Country – Dicks Realty

1286 West US Hwy, Lake City • 386-365-3307
4 years

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Married to Brad for 26 Years
- 3 Children – Sarah, John and Aaron
- Graduate of United Power – 2014

Public Service Involvement:

- Volunteer at Columbia High School



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Awards/Special Achievements:

- Married to Blake for 29 years, and three wonderful children and one amazing grandson

Public Service Involvement:

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- Involved with Women In Business, Pregnancy Care Center, March of Dimes, Love Your Neighbor Project



Assistant Branch Manager
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Public Service Involvement:

- United Way of Suwannee Valley – Board Member and serves on several committees
- Take Stock in Children – Leadership Council Member (2007–present)
- Altrusa International of Lake City – Member (2017–present)



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Awards/Special Achievements:

- Married to Colton for 29 years, and three great children: Elizabeth (26), Nick (21) and Richard (11)

Public Service Involvement:

- Altrusa International of Lake City: – President (2017–2018), Member Since 1995.
- United Way of Suwannee Valley – Board Member (2015–present), Planning Committee (2013–present)
- Take Stock in Children – Founding Member, Leadership Council (2004–present)
- Daughters of the American Revolution – Member Since 2006



Dr. Terri M. Andrews

Dentist/Owner

Oak Hill Dental Group

272 SW Bentley Pl., Lake City

26 years

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Married to Michael 32 Years
- One Son, Matthew
- Dentist – University of Florida
- Photographer – New York Institute of Photography
- Celebrating 25+ Years in Practice – Oak Hill Dental Group

Public Service Involvement:

- Past President – Altrusa International of Lake City
- Volunteer Dentist – Florida Baptist Association Bus
- Lecturer on Professionalism/Ethics – Santa Fe College



Kimberly Nicholson

Co-Owner

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- Columbia County Best of the Best 2010, 2014, 2015, 2016 & 2017
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- Elks Lodge 893 Citizen of the Year

Public Service Involvement:

- Relay for Life/American Cancer Society Board Member
- Altrusa Member Since 2010
- Member of Chamber in Columbia and Suwannee Counties



Dr. Lorrie C. Wheeler

Dentist

Oak Hill Dental Group

272 SW Bentley Pl., Lake City

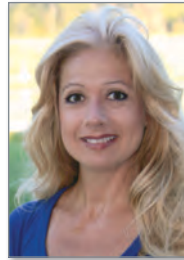
25 years

Awards/Special Achievements:

- University of Florida College of Dentistry 1992
- Celebrating 25 Years in Practice at Oak Hill Dental Group
- Brad Wheeler, Married 27 Years
- Children – Holly (Charlie) Cowen, Haley, BJ, Hanna

Public Service Involvement:

- Volunteer Dentist 10+ Years – Florida Baptist Association Bus
- First Vice President and Service Committee Chair – Altrusa International of Lake City
- School Volunteer – Columbia County Schools
- Church Choir – First United Methodist
- Community Advisory Council – First Federal Bank



Elizabeth “Kathy” Newman

ARNP

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Awards/Special Achievements:

- Honors Graduate With Master’s in Nursing From FSU
- Recipient of Phi Theta Kappa Scholarship
- Member of American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP)

Public Service Involvement:

- Sunday School teacher at Beulah Baptist Church
- Volunteer sports physical exams for local schools
- Volunteer health exams & care for community/church based clinics



Joy L. Lizotte, CPA

Founder

Lizotte CPA, LLC

224 E Duval St., Lake City

6 years

Awards/Special Achievements:

- 2016 Small Business of the Year by Chamber of Commerce
- 2015 Top 40 Under 40 CPAs in the U.S. by CPA Practice Advisor

Public Service Involvement:

- Member and Past President – Altrusa International of Lake City
- Past President – Lake City-Columbia County Chamber of Commerce
- Board Member – Ronald McDonald House Charities of North Central Florida



Mary Goddeyne

ARNP, FNP-BC

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as ARNP • RN since 1986 • 31 years

as RN • Licensed Health Care Risk

Manager Since 2007

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Masters in Nursing from University of Florida
- Board certified Family Nurse Practitioner
- Inducted into Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society for Nurses
- Honored for service to spinal cord injured veterans by Paralyzed Veterans of America

Public Service Involvement:

- Courtesy Professor University of Florida College of Nursing; Preceptor for ARNP students since 2000; Columbia High School Soccer Booster Member



Kathy Milligan

Account Executive

Lake City Reporter

180 East Duval St., Lake City • 386-754-0416

6 Years in Sales & Marketing

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Graduate of Columbia High School
- Graduated Summa Cum Laude at Everest University w/AS in Business Administration/Marketing
- Member of National Honor Society
- Proud Mother of Clae Jones and Hunter Milligan

Public Service Involvement:

- Volunteer at Summers Elementary
- Member of Christ Central



Suzi Abbott

Account Executive

Lake City Reporter

180 East Duval St., Lake City • 386-752-1293

Worked in Lake City since 1985

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Associate of Arts in Agribusiness – Univ. of South Dakota
- Bachelor of Science in Marketing – Univ. of Miami
- Certified Radio Marketing Consultant
- Former National Champion Showing Arabian Horses, and Award-Winning Equestrian Presenter

Public Service Involvement:

- Supports Wounded Warriors
- Supports Catholic Charities
- Actively involved in the Miami Police Veterans Association



Kayla Lokeinsky

Special Projects Editor

Lake City Reporter

180 East Duval St., Lake City • 386-752-1293

2 years

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Bachelor of Science in Journalism, Minor in Digital Media – UCF
- Member – Society of Professional Journalists
- Former Executive Board Member – Delta Epsilon Iota Academic Honor Society at UCF
- Former Collegiate Athlete – UCF Women's Water Polo Team

Public Service Involvement:

- Member at Epiphany Catholic Church
- Supports local charities and community events



Holly Frazier

Owner

Holly Frazier Photography

386-623-3024 | info@hollyfrazier.com

6 years

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Cover Features on North Central Florida Bride and Family Magazine
- Published Photographer
- Member of WPPI
- Student at The International Academy of Wedding Photographers
- Best of the Best Photographer 2013–2014

Public Service Involvement:

- Chamber Member
- Altrusa International Member
- Supporter of Imperial Productions Charity Ball



Kristy Baker

Realtor

RE/MAX Professionals

4255 SW Cambridge Glen, Lake City • 386-623-2315

11 years

Awards/Special Achievements:

- RE/MAX Executive Club 2013
- RE/MAX 100% Club 2014
- RE/MAX 100% Club 2015
- RE/MAX 100% Club 2016
- RE/MAX Lake City Property Manager

Public Service Involvement:

- Active Member of Canvas Church, Alachua
- Active Volunteer for Pregnancy Care Center
- Member of Lake City Board of Realtors
- Member of Gainesville Board of Realtors



Argatha Gilmore

Chief of Police

Lake City Police Department

(Police Dept. Established 1861)

225 NW Main Blvd., Lake City

8 years as Chief, 33 years in law enforcement

Awards/Special Achievements:

- B.S. Degree – Criminology – FSU
- Certified Public Manager (CPM)
- M.S. Degree – Social Science & Public Administration – Florida A&M
- 4th year Doctoral student in Strategic Leadership Foresight – Regent University
- Graduate of FBI National Academy
- Graduate of Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government, State and Local Executive Program

Public Service Involvement:

- Member – IACP (International Association of Police Chiefs)
- Board Director – FPCA (Florida Police Chiefs Association)
- Member – Church of God in Christ
- President – 3rd Circuit Police Chiefs Association
- Featured speaker – Requested by various civic organizations & businesses
- Altrusa International



Lisa Waltrip
Owner
American Family Fitness
 484 SW Commerce Dr, Lake City
 3 years

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Two-time Winner of the Ms. Lake City Gateway Classic Bodybuilding Competition
- Four 1st Place Trophies in Bodybuilding
- Four 2nd Place Trophies in Bodybuilding
- Married 41 Years
- Licensed Cosmetologist for 30 Years

Public Service Involvement:

- School volunteer
- Chamber member
- Donates to schools and city sports



Elaine K. Tolar
Broker/Owner
**Coldwell Banker
 Bishop Realty, Inc.**
 839 SW SR 247, Lake City • 386-365-1548
 Established 66 years

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Certified Real Estate Specialist
- Graduate Real Estate Institute
- Real Estate Broker for 25 Years
- Licensed Georgia Broker

Public Service Involvement:

- Blood Donor Since 1985
- 25 years of meeting the needs of people who need to sell a home and/or find a new home
- Involved in Local Youth Activities & Sports



Patti Taylor
Realtor
**Coldwell Banker
 Bishop Realty, Inc.**
 839 SW SR 247, Lake City • 386-623-6896
 12 years

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Coldwell Banker International Sterling Society
- Cartus Network Affinity Specialist
- USAA Movers Advantage Agent
- Served on Multiple Listing Service Board
- Served on Realtors Political Action Committee

Public Service Involvement:

- Member of Florida & National Association of Realtors
- Supporter of Youth Activities & Sports
- Donates to Local Charities
- Member of First United Methodist Church
- 12 years of meeting the needs of people searching for homes and selling properties



Denise Milligan-Bose
Broker/Owner-Realtor
**Denise Milligan-Bose
 Realty, Inc.**
 2230 SE Baya Drive Suite 104
 25+ years in Housing Industry; Sales,
 Developing, Building, and Rental Management

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Columbia Riding Club Annual Sponsor
- Voted Best of Best 55+ Retirement Community for many years while acting Broker of Real Estate Office.

Public Service Involvement:

- Member of National Fla. Association of Realtors
- Member of Local Board of Realtors
- Member of Local Chamber of Commerce
- Member of Fla. Sheriff's Boys Ranch-Advocate
- Advocate of ACS (American Cancer Society)
- Sponsor of Lake City Middle School Cheerleading
- Sponsor of Columbia High School Cheerleading



Rhonda K. Sherrod,
RN, MSN
CEO
**Shands Community
 Hospital Market**
 (Shands Lake Shore; Shands Live Oak; Shands Starke)

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Master of Science Degree in Nursing – Valdosta State University
- Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing – UF
- Associate of Arts Degree – Florida Gateway College (formerly LCCC)
- Licensed Registered Nurse

Public Service Involvement:

- March of Dimes (March for Babies) Sponsor
- Haven Hospice of Lake City Event Sponsor
- Relay For Life Sponsor
- Pregnancy Care Center Sponsor
- Member of Altrusa International



Julie Owens, O.D.
Optometrist/Owner
North Florida Eye Care
 763 SW Main Blvd., Lake City • 386-752-1722
 17 years

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Honors Graduate of UF
- Luxottica Pediatric Optometry Award to Graduating Senior – Nova Southeastern University
- Honors Graduate of Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry

Public Service Involvement:

- (Former) Columbia County School Volunteer
- NE Florida Optometric Society Board Member & Director (served as)
- Member of Florida Optometric Association & American Optometric Association



Missy Zecher

Realtor Associate CDPE

RE/MAX Professionals

4255 SW Cambridge Glen, Lake City • 386-623-0237

20+ years Housing Industry
10+ years as a Realtor

Awards/Special Achievements:

- No. 1 RE/MAX Real Estate Agent in Florida for Sales 2017
- Ranked in America's Best Real Estate Agents by Real Trends in Wall Street Journal 2015, 2016 & 2017
- 2107 Titan Club
- Lake City Reporter Best Realtor 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016 & 2017
- 2012–2015 RE/MAX Platinum Club
- 2013 RE/MAX Hall of Fame
- 2013 Realtor of the Year
- 2010–2016 RE/MAX 100% Club
- 2013–2016 RE/MAX High Honor of Chairmans' Club
- Certified Distressed Property Expert

Public Service Involvement:

- Children's Miracle Network
- MLS Board of Directors, Past President
- 2017 MLS VP-Elect/Secretary



Lisa Schlink

Clinical Aesthetician

New Skin by Lisa

1009 SW Main Blvd. #105, Lake City

15 years

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Certified in Advanced Chemical Peel Technique
- Recognized by Aesthetics Medical for Identifying Molecular Structure in Peels and Layering
- Certified in Precision Microdermabrasion Techniques

Public Service Involvement:

- Women's Prison Ministry
- Volunteer for Battered Women
- Saved by God's Grace



Patty Register

Owner

Northside Motors, Inc.

1974 E. Duval St., Lake City

25 years

Awards/Special Achievements:

- 2012 #1 Fastest Dixie Chopper Dealer in Florida

Public Service Involvement:

- Proud supporter of CCS and public events



Tricia Delrio

Administrator

Solaris HealthCare Lake City

560 SW McFarlane Ave., Lake City

18 years in Health Care

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Wife to Tony
- Mom to Jenna & Kayleigh
- Licensed Nursing Home Administrator
- Degrees From Hodges University in Business & Health Care Administration
- Lake City Reporter Best of the Best Healthcare Center

Public Service Involvement:

- Church Volunteer
- Altrusa International of Lake City
- Chamber Member



Lori Giebeig Simpson

Lake City Market President, SVP

Columbia Bank

151 NW Commons Loop, Lake City

5+ years

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Bachelor of Business Administration Degree From Georgia Southern University
- Leadership Lake City 2015
- Florida RMA School of Commercial Lending 2014
- Married to Matthew; 2 Children – Joshua and Sarah

Public Service Involvement:

- Member – Altrusa International of Lake City
- Board Member & Columbia County Campaign Chair – United Way of Suwannee Valley
- Director – Lake City-Columbia County Chamber of Commerce
- Member – Parkview Baptist Church



Connie Thomas-Anderson

Portfolio Mgr. – Consumer Lender VP

Columbia Bank

151 NW Commons Loop, Lake City

25 years

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Risk-Based Audit Certification – 2012
- Branch Management Certification – 2011
- FBA Consumer Lending School – March 2017
- Married to Harry; 4 Children – Harry Jr., Cyntaria, Mi'Cal & Aagust

Public Service Involvement:

- Board Chair – Early Learning Coalition of Florida's Gateway
- LCMC Board of Trustees
- United Way Campaign Committee
- Chamber of Commerce
- Altrusa International of Lake City
- Member – New St. James Baptist Church



Kendra Mars, LMT

Massage Therapist, Hydrotherapist

The Spa on Marion

322 S. Marion Ave., Lake City

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Florida State Licensed Massage Therapist, License #MA82069
- Florida State Licensed Hydrotherapist
- Certified Facial Massage Specialist
- Member – FSMTA (Florida State Massage Therapy Association)
- Graduate – Florida School of Massage

Public Service Involvement:



Kasey Redd, LMT

Massage Therapist, Hydrotherapist

The Spa on Marion

322 S. Marion Ave., Lake City

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Florida State Licensed Massage Therapist, License #MA73189
- Florida State Licensed Hydrotherapist
- Certified Facial Massage Specialist
- Certified Prenatal Massage Therapist
- Graduate – Virginia College of Jacksonville
- Associates Degree in Therapeutic Massage

Public Service Involvement:



Katrina Tannachion

Esthetician, Massage Therapist

The Spa on Marion

322 S. Marion Ave., Lake City

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Florida State Licensed Massage Therapist, License #MA78411
- Certified Facial Specialist
- Member – FSMTA (Florida State Massage Therapy Association)
- Graduate – Florida School of Massage

Public Service Involvement:



Dottie Hartman, LMT

Massage Therapist, Hydrotherapist

The Spa on Marion

322 S. Marion Ave., Lake City

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Florida State Licensed Massage Therapist, License #MA60567
- Florida State Licensed Hydrotherapist
- Certified Facial Massage Specialist
- Member – FSMTA (Florida State Massage Therapy Association)
- Graduate – Florida School of Massage

Public Service Involvement:



April Watson, LMT

Massage Therapist, Hydrotherapist

The Spa on Marion

322 S. Marion Ave., Lake City

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Florida State Licensed Massage Therapist, License #MA78728
- Florida State Licensed Hydrotherapist
- Certified Prenatal Massage Therapist
- Member – FSMTA (Florida State Massage Therapy Association)
- Graduate – Florida School of Massage

Public Service Involvement:



Danette Lewis, LMT,

NBCHT, BW, HB, HW

Co-owner

The Spa on Marion

322 S. Marion Ave., Lake City

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Florida State Licensed Massage Therapist, License #MM61220
- Fla. State Licensed Hydrotherapist
- National Board-Certified Colon Hydrotherapist
- Certified Facial Massage Specialist
- Member – FSMTA (Florida State Massage Therapy Association)
- International Association for Colon Hydrotherapy
- Member – AMTA (American Massage Therapy Association)
- Graduate – Fla. School of Massage
- Graduate – Tiller Mind & Body: Advanced Colon Hydrotherapy
- Best Place for Massage 2014, '15, '17

Public Service Involvement:

Sponsor: Lake City Policeman Charity Ball, Gateway Art Gallery Wounded Warrior Toy Soldier Run/Event Volunteers; Donator



Chelsea Rankin

Esthetician

The Spa on Marion

322 S. Marion Ave., Lake City

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Florida State Licensed Esthetician
- Receptionist
- Graduate – Florida Gateway College Facial Specialist Program

Public Service Involvement:



Meryl Muller, LMT

Massage Therapist, Esthetician

The Spa on Marion

322 S. Marion Ave., Lake City

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Florida State Licensed Massage Therapist, License #MA85729
- Florida State Licensed Esthetician
- New York State Licensed Massage Therapist & Esthetician
- Certified Prenatal Massage Therapist
- Member – AMTA (American Massage Therapy Association)
- Graduate – New York College of Health Professions
- Graduate – Long Island Nail and Skincare Institute

Public Service Involvement:



Patricia B. Stuart

CPA/Partner

Odom, Moses & Company, LLP, CPAs

4641 W. US Hwy 90, Lake City • 386-752-4621 x3932

21 years

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Graduated with Honors from UF – 1986
- Received Elijah Watts Sells Certificate for Performance on CPA Exam
- Series 7 Securities License

Public Service Involvement:

- Local Habitat for Humanity Treasurer
- First Presbyterian Church Finance Committee Member



Tammy D Hall

Co-Branch Manager/Partner

Raymond James

4641 W. US Hwy 90, Lake City • 386-752-4621 x3933

22 years

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Honors Graduate of UNF
- CPA/Partner – Odom, Moses & Company, LLP, CPAs
- Personal Financial Specialist
- IIMC Investment Management Consultant
- Holds Series 7, 9, 10, 31 & 65 Securities Licenses
- Licensed Life, Health and Annuity Agent

Public Service Involvement:

- Program Coordinator – Altrusa International, District 3
- Serves on Finance Committee, Foundation for Florida Gateway College
- Supports local charities and community events



Deserrai Goosen Davis

CPA/Partner

Odom, Moses & Company, LLP, CPAs

4641 W. US Hwy 90, Lake City • 386-752-4621 x3934

17 years

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Bachelor of Science in Accounting From UF
- Master of Accounting From UF
- Series 7 Securities License
- 2017 Best of the Best Tax Service/Accounting & Payroll

Public Service Involvement:

- Member – Parkview Baptist Church
- Board Member – Columbia County Senior Services
- Mentor – Take Stock in Children



Cammy Scott

CPA/Partner

Odom, Moses & Company, LLP, CPAs

4641 W. US Hwy 90, Lake City • 386-752-4621 x3931

24 years

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Graduated Magna cum Laude from Univ. of Texas/Permian Basin
- Series 7 Securities License
- Insurance Licensed
- 2017 Best of the Best

Public Service Involvement:

- Board Member – Suwannee Valley Community Foundation
- Treasurer – United Way of Suwannee Valley
- Board Member – Sea of Change Foundation
- CPA for Friends of Heritage Park



**Sandra Saperstein
Robinson**

Owner

Empire Gold & Pawn

2194 W. Hwy 90, Lake City

2 years

Awards/Special Achievements:

Public Service Involvement:

- Donates to local charities
- Donates time to the care of children in need
- CYSA coach
- Member – Florida Pawnbrokers Association



**Jennifer Strickland
Williamson**

Owner

Right Way Automotive

2310 W. US Hwy 90, Lake City

9 years

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Co-owner of Empire Gold & Pawn
- Wife and Mother of 3

Public Service Involvement:

- National Barrel Horse Association Member
- Florida Independent Automobile Dealers Association Member 10+ Years
- Florida Pawnbrokers Association Member
- Supporter of local charities and community events



Stephanie K. Finnell

ARNP/Administrator

Baya Urgent Care

1465 W. US Hwy 90, Lake City • 386-755-2268

17 years of experience

1 year at Baya Urgent Care

Awards/Special Achievements:

- BSN – Valdosta State University
- MSN – University of Phoenix
- Post Masters/ARNP – UF
- Hamilton County High School Graduate
- Multiple Certifications and Accreditations

Public Service Involvement:

- Columbia County School Board Member
- CHS Tigers Baseball and Golf Booster Clubs
- Adjunct Professor of Nursing at Florida Gateway College RN Program
- Mentoring/precepting for ARNP students at multiple universities



Tamra Pope

Staff Pharmacist/Long Term Care

Baya Pharmacy

1465 W. US Hwy 90, Lake City

20 years of experience

2 years as staff pharmacist

Awards/Special Achievements:

- Bachelor of Science, Pharmacy – UF
- Lake City Community College
- Columbia High School

Public Service Involvement:

- Mt. Carmel Baptist Church

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2017 SEASON

Sept. 8	Cape Fear CC	11AM
Sept. 8	Pasco-Hernando State	5PM
Sept. 9	Lake Sumter CC	10AM
Sept. 9	St. Johns River CC	2PM
Sept. 14	Pensacola State	6PM
Sept. 16	Gulf Coast State	2PM
Sept. 19	Hillsborough CC	6PM
Sept. 21	Trinity Baptist College	7PM
Sept. 23	Monroe College	7PM
Sept. 26	Andrew College	7PM
Oct. 3	Pensacola State	7PM/6c
Oct. 5	Florida College	7PM
Oct. 9	Johnson University	7PM
Oct. 14	Hillsborough CC	12:30PM
Oct. 14	Indian River CC	3PM
Oct. 19	Trinity Baptist College	6PM
Oct. 26	Andrew College	7PM
Oct. 27	Edward Waters College	2PM
Oct. 27	Morris College	6PM
Oct. 31	Florida College	7PM

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