



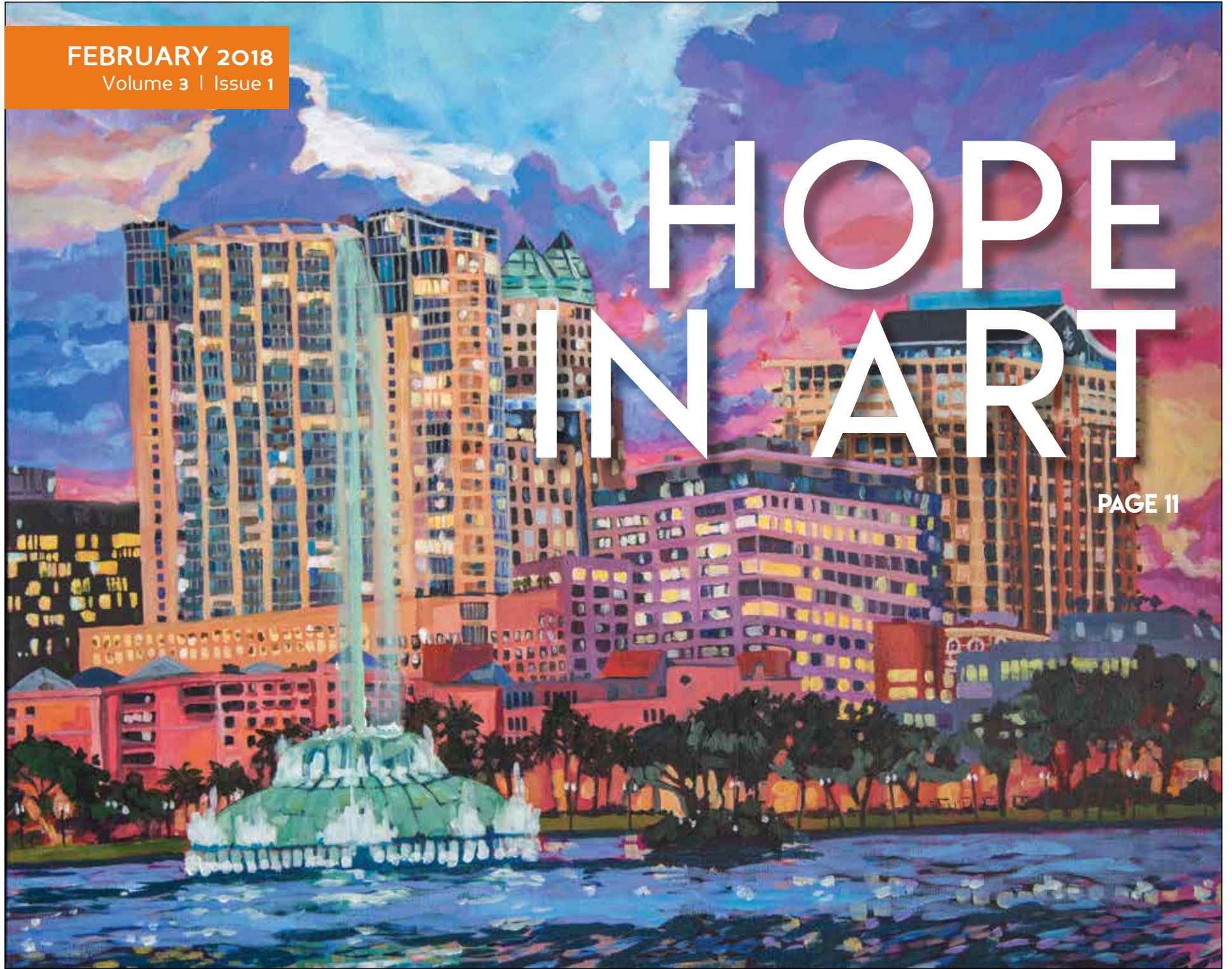
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HOPE IN ART

PAGE 11



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PUBLISHER'S DESK

Two Years Of Nonohood News!

BY RHYS & JENNY LYNN

February is an important month! In addition to one of the most romantic holidays in the universe, we are also celebrating two very special anniversaries. The first: as of this February edition, Nonahood News is officially two years old! It feels hard to believe that Nonahood News is only two. So many amazing stories and incredible announcements have been packed into the last 24 months it's almost like living in fast-forward. The best thing is that we're just getting warmed up.

The next anniversary we are celebrating is our own - this year marks our 12th wedding anniversary and 17 years together. Time sure does fly when you are madly in love. In a way, our time with Nonahood News has been a similar blur of time. Running a business is definitely not always easy (and neither is marriage!), but both are incredibly rewarding and we wouldn't change a thing.

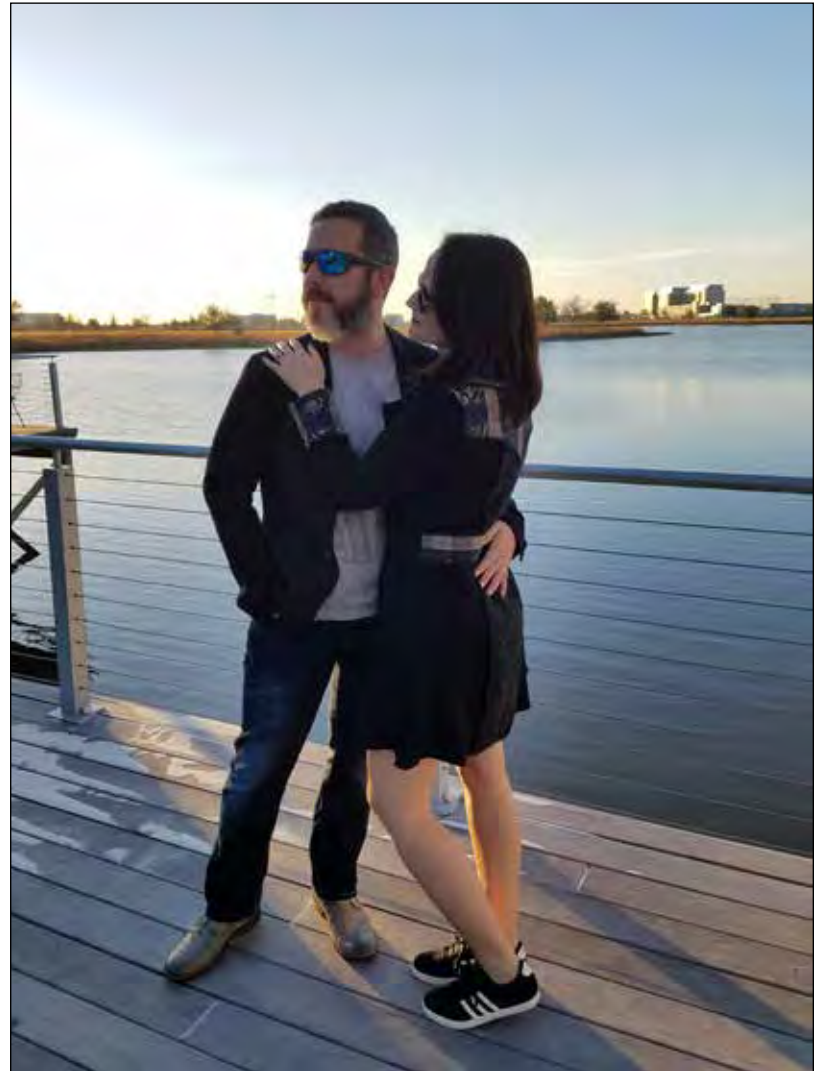
Our neighbors and good friends, Jason and Lindsay, started the paper two years ago and when we agreed to take over we had no idea what we were getting ourselves into. Since taking on the role of publishers, we have seen many changes, some good and some bad. We have a publication that has grown beyond our expectations. Our community continues to grow and businesses are popping up all around us and it's great to be able to offer a service that can help them connect with our community.

An anniversary is a time to not only celebrate but to also think back about the moments that got you to this point. We have experienced many failures and many more accomplishments. In order

to successfully navigate towards the future, it is important to look at the trials, misadventures, mistakes, and lessons learned in the past. Nonahood News has been nothing short of an adventure for us, and we're excited to see what year three will bring!

Thanks for being such a great community, and sticking with us, Nonahood! We are honored to be a part of it all.

Love,
Rhys & Jenny



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LOCAL LEADERS

Actors Provide Med Students With Real-World Training

BY DR. DEBORAH GERMAN



Dr. Deborah German

We call them “SPs,” everyday people who play a key role in helping our students become outstanding, compassionate physicians. SP stands for standardized patient, actors who help educate UCF medical students in our Clinical Skills and Simulation Center in Lake Nona. They pretend to be patients with conditions such as chest pain, a rash and depression. By caring for actors, our students learn how to take patient histories, do physical exams and, most importantly, to communicate effectively and empathetically with people who are ill and injured.

Simulation has been used for a long time to train professionals such as airline pilots. As a medical school, we use simulation to give our students real-world experiences in a safe environment long before they ever reach hospital wards and clinics. When I was in medical school years ago, our learning process was “see one, do one, teach one.” You learned a skill, you did it, and then you taught someone else. There was little time for practice or repetition before you were caring for real patients. That always upset me because I believed there had to be a better way to train future physicians and provide the highest quality of care.

Today at UCF, students learn, practice and develop their clinical skills from their first weeks of medical school.

They learn how to take vitals by working on computerized mannequins that can speak, sweat and react to hundreds of different drugs. They develop their bedside manners. Working with actors also helps students learn the art of breaking bad news to a patient and caring for sometimes difficult patients and their family members. With the simulation center, students can make mistakes in a safe environment – and learn from those mistakes. We record their interactions so they can see how they responded and how other students might have performed better. And, in the center, students get ongoing real-time feedback from their faculty physicians. Unlike my medical school training, UCF students “see one and do many.”

Our 104 standardized patients range in age from 20 to 79. SPs are trained and paid and follow a script when they work with medical students so learning objectives are met. They also evaluate our students – providing feedback on how well the student did a physical exam, engaged with the patient and communicated. Some of our SPs are actual community actors. Some are former healthcare professionals. Others are retirees who want to give back.

Recently, David Shaheen, a standardized patient who has helped UCF medical students since we started classes in 2009, was honored for his efforts in building a healthier community. A retired NASA bookkeeper, Shaheen is

known as “SP Dave” at the med school. He received a “Boldy” award from Growing Bolder, an Orlando-based media group dedicated to inspiring people to live extraordinary lives as they age. As he received the “Building a Better Community Award” presented by the College of Medicine, Shaheen said he became an SP after retiring because he loved watching students grow from young, uncertain first-years to mature, confident doctors. He’s even attended graduation to honor our Physician Knights as they take the next step on their journey.

It takes a village to create a physician. At UCF, that village includes people of all ages and all walks of life who pretend to be sick so our students can become healers.

To learn more, visit <http://bit.ly/UCFmedSP>.

Dr. Deborah German is the Vice President for Medical Affairs and Founding Dean of UCF College of Medicine. To learn more, visit <https://med.ucf.edu>.



Lake Nona Veterans Club

BY CAMERON RICE

Let’s just face it – Lake Nona is one of the most happening places to be in America right now. Besides the amazing housing growth, new shopping experiences, and businesses seemingly opening up each day, things such as a performance resort, a water park, and an Amazon distribution center are all ready to go in the next few years. Needless to say, right now is a great time to be in Lake Nona; yet, the community still needs something else.

For any newcomers to the Lake Nona area, one of the largest communities in the area is the veteran community. Whether they served in the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, or Coast Guard, the veterans in the Lake Nona area are many and are always looking for their brothers and sisters in arms to come join them and, perhaps, relive some of the camaraderie they had within the services. Sadly, this has been rather difficult outside of happenstance meetings at other organizations such as the Rotary Club of Lake Nona Lunch or Chamber of Commerce meetings. For this reason, a new organization is forming within the Lake Nona area focused on veterans and their families.

Modeled after the Celebration Veterans Club, the Lake

Nona Veterans Club is an organization that desires to promote awareness and interests in veterans affairs as well as participate in community and civic activities. Basically, the organization is a common place for veterans to meet up, find new friends, and also give back to the Lake Nona area, whether that service is through helping at the Fisher House, which is set to open on Feb. 14, or by being available for other events such as Memorial or Veterans Day. Regardless, the Lake Nona Veterans Club is filling a much-needed void that currently exists locally.

In addition to providing a common meeting space for veterans, the Auxiliary of the Lake Nona Veterans provides a place for spouses, widow/widower, partner, or adult child of a veteran to meet, find new friends, and also organize events to support the Lake Nona Veterans Club. For those interested, membership in the Lake Nona Veterans Club is open to any veteran who has served honorably in any branch of the United States military, National Guard or Reserve Forces, regardless of race, color, creed, gender or ethnic background. Also, membership in the Auxiliary is open to any spouse, widow/widower, partner or adult child of any active duty or honorably discharged United States military veteran, regardless of race, creed, gender or ethnicity.

Currently, monthly meetings of the Lake Nona Vet-



erans Club are held on the second Thursday of each month (next meeting February 8) at 5:00 p.m. in the cafeteria meeting room within the Orlando VA Medical Center at Lake Nona. Monthly meetings of the Auxiliary are held at the same time in another location TBD within the Orlando VA Medical Center. If you are interested in joining the Lake Nona Veterans Club, please contact the group commander, Cameron Rice, at commanderLNVC@gmail.com for more details.



The Power of Healing: One Bear, One Child at a Time

BY BRITTANY BHULAI



Due to an outreach from the Orange County Police Department, the Lake Nona Lunch Rotary Club is calling all teddy bears for donations. Officers hand out the bears when they are on duty to act as a gesture of comfort in a situation.

Local Rotarian Deanna Roberts earned the name Mama Bear as she took on the project once it was brought to Rotary's attention. After the Pulse shooting in 2016, the police experienced a dry spell in the number of bears they had since the incident had exhausted their supply. A speaker from the sheriff's office came to one of the Rotary meetings and asked for their help to collect bears from the community. Roberts immediately jumped on the task due to her thirst for helping others.

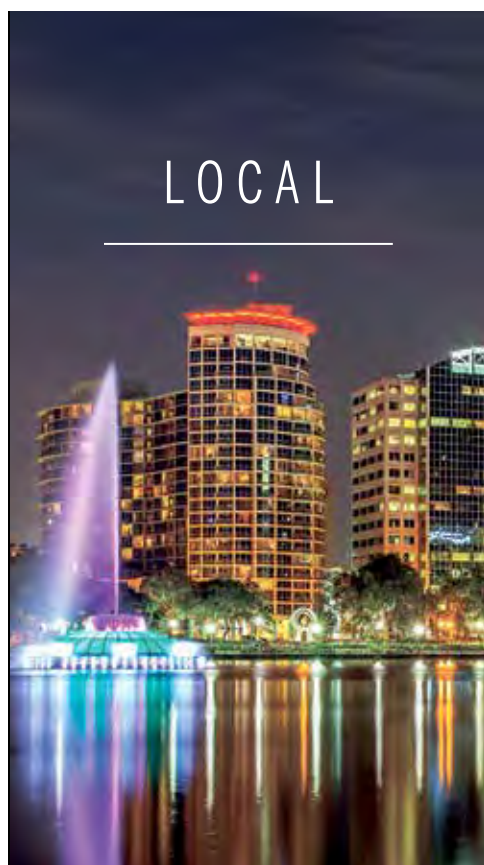
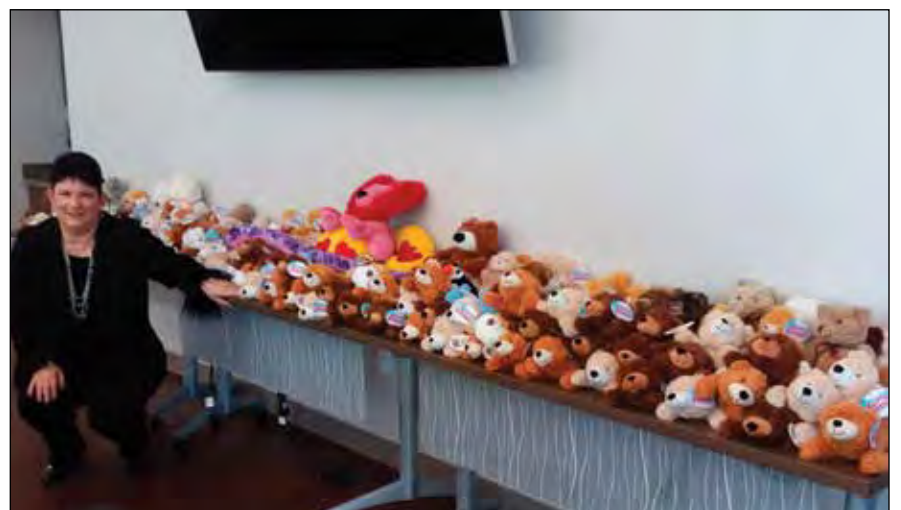
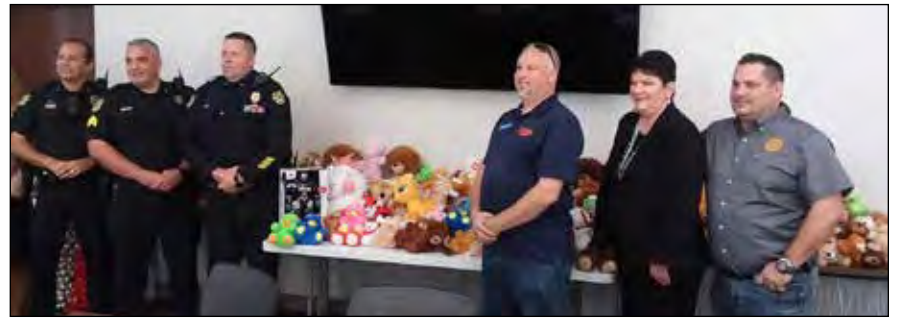
"I've always been someone who believes in giving back – it's just part of who I am," says Deanna. Her parents were that way, therefore she was raised that way. After

being employed with Disney for 27 years, she took up real estate. However, at the same time, she needed to tend to her parents as a full-time caregiver. To help connect her to the community again, she became a Mary Kay sales associate. The experiences connected her with the people around her, and she was able to serve clients and take care of her parents at the same time.

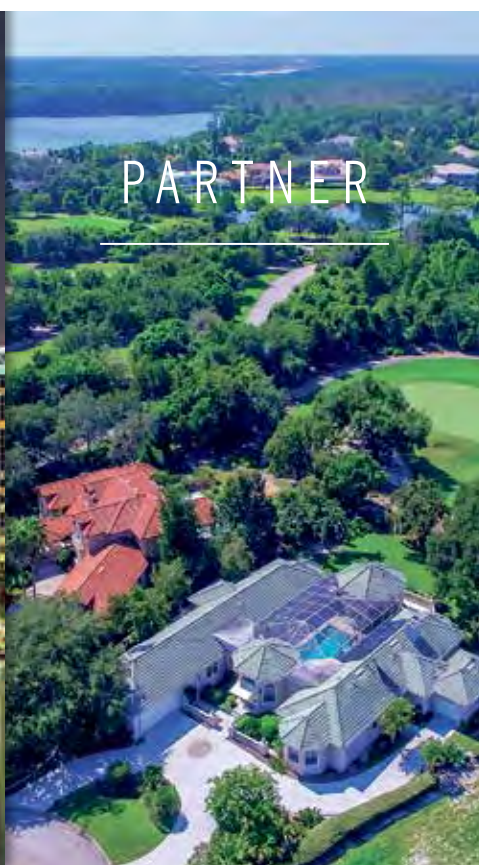
As for Rotary, Deanna was able to generate about 300 teddy bears from the public to give to the police department. The bears are seen as especially useful in domestic incidents where the cops are involved. For a child, it can be a bit intimidating seeing a police officer called to their home. However, after giving the child a stuffed animal, the child's tensions are broken and it helps take the edge out of the situation for them.

Anyone can donate teddy bears to Rotary by coming to the meetings at the Ronald McDonald House on the second Tuesday of every month at noon. Deanna asks that the bears appear good as new. She also says that smaller bears work better than huge ones. Not only do the smaller bears fit better in a police car, but the normal-sized toys are more inviting to the child's eye regarding the situation they may be in.

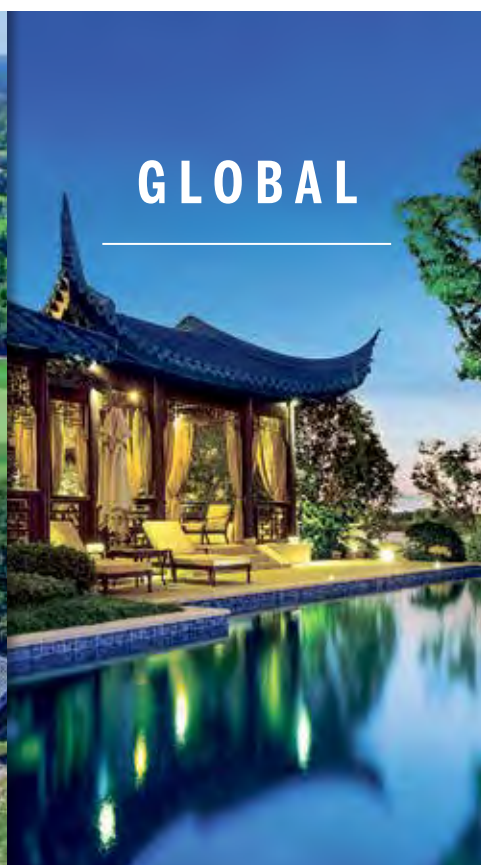
The Rotary Club is an international organization that is built off of bettering humanity as a whole through community service and projects. Deanna has been a member for a little over a year now. She says that if she can give back to the community in any way, she will do it in a heartbeat.



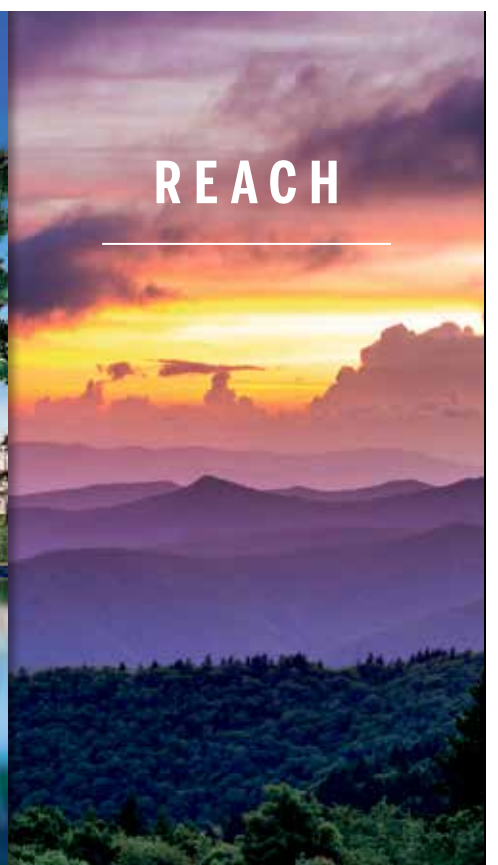
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Lake Nona Rotary Gift of Life

BY SONYA LABOSCO, PRESIDENT, LAKE NONA LUNCH ROTARY CLUB

It's a wonderful time to celebrate in Lake Nona. Our community partnerships are thriving. The Lake Nona Lunch Rotary Club, the Rotary Club of Orlando-Downtown, Nemours Children's Hospital, the Gift of Life Central Florida, and the Ronald McDonald House helped to save the lives of two beautiful children from Belize, Adriana Naj, 3, and Firhan Linares, 9. Adriana and Firhan arrived at Orlando International Airport on Dec. 14 accompanied by their mothers, Elizabeth Santiago and Randisha Estero.

What Is the Gift of Life?

gift of life Central Florida Rotary District 6980
Gift of Life is a Rotarian-based organization that has evolved over the past four decades into a global network of caring. Our traditional model for providing care to children with heart disease from emerging countries was to bring one child at a time to the United States for treatment. For the first 30 years of our existence, this was our primary means of providing hope to children who were not able to receive treatment in their country of birth. Although this remains an important part of the Gift of Life Global Network, we have now evolved, enabling us to help address the crisis that exists today for children with heart disease throughout the world who lack access to treatment. Adriana underwent open heart surgery on Dec. 18, and Firhan underwent open heart surgery the next day, both at Nemours Children Hospital. Special thanks to Nemours Cardiac Team, Dr. Peter D. Wearden, Dr. Gul H. Dadlani and Genny Lee-Dickson. Both surgeries were 100% successful. Adriana and Firhan spent several weeks recovering at the Ronald McDonald House. On Jan. 5, both children were medically cleared for all activities, and their first stop was Gatorland.

Training Visits and Missions

The concept of a "mission" has taken on new meaning to Gift of Life International. As we have evolved, the need to send expert teams of healthcare professionals to the countries we work with has become greater. There are now three distinct types of "missions" that Gift of Life International sponsors and coordinates. A cardiac team from Nemours Children's Hospital traveled to Belize in

August. Adriana and Firhan were selected as recipients for the Gift of Life during this mission as both children had life-threatening heart issues.

Our Partners

Maximizing our impact through partnerships, our efforts to save children around the world need significant support from individuals and organizations. Over the years, Gift of Life International has been fortunate to have support from governments, corporations, foundations, Rotary Clubs and districts, like-minded organizations and healthcare professionals such as those mentioned below.

Special Thanks

Our thanks to those who donated their time, provided funding, and opened their homes throughout this recent three-week journey. Gatorland President and CEO Mark McHugh provided a unique one-of-a-kind, behind-the-scenes tour with animal encounters for the Gift of Life children, their families, and hosting Rotarians. Gatorland's Julia Baross and Jennifer Negron made this an unforgettable experience for all on this very special day. Ciaran McArdle (XL Soccer) donated Christmas gifts – Adriana and Firhan loved opening these precious gifts on Christmas morning. Robin and Ivy Fivey provided the one-of-a-kind train experience at One Stop Shop Consulting, while Marty Johnson arranged a tour of Johnson Family Christmas Lights, including making s'mores. Page Leindecker, Green Cleaning for a Cause and #Survivor Soap gave Adriana and Firhan hand-crafted individual survivor soaps at the Leindeckers to take home to Belize. Jason and Sylvania Palinkas, JP Capital Realty, took both families into their home for a holiday celebration with gifts and hot chocolate. Maurita Sutton Brown visited Nemours each day to support the families, while Kristina Buhl of Edward Jones took the families on sightseeing adventures and provided gifts. Gem Micheo hosted a New Year's Eve celebration in her home for the Gift of Life families that included fireworks – this was Firhan's first time lighting a sparkler! Sadia Marsch, BB&T took the families to Disney Springs for the day. Gift of Life Central Florida President Denny Kuirr and Alan Shafer spent countless hours at Nemours before, during and after each open-heart surgery, attending all follow-up medical appointments, arranging meals, transportation and financial support.

Join a Mission Team:

If you are interested in joining one of our mission teams, please send us an email at lakenonarotary.org or call (407) 733-6700.

The Lake Nona Lunch Rotary Club and the Gift of Life Central Florida would like to thank all community partners for participating in saving the lives of two beautiful children, Adriana and Firhan. We are forever grateful to Nemours Children Hospital, the Ronald McDonald House, the Gift of Life, the Rotarians who volunteered for this life-saving journey and community members who quickly assisted with vigor.

For additional information on the Lake Nona Lunch Rotary Club, visit www.lakenonarotary.com or call (407) 733-6700. Meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesdays at 11:45 a.m.



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BUSINESS & REAL ESTATE

Florida House Puts the Brakes on Red Light Cameras

BY VANESSA POULSON

Due to an overwhelming vote in the Florida House, red light camera usage is going to be prohibited in counties and municipalities by local ordinance beginning in 2021. This new passage is expected to save Florida drivers \$159 million annually.

If you've spent any time driving in the state of Florida over the past few years, you're likely to have come face to face with a red light camera. These covert cameras are used to help police and report those who run red lights and traffic stops in the state and capture their license plates to send the driver a costly ticket.

Recently in Tallahassee, Speaker Richard Corcoran and Republican Party Chairman/ Representative Blaise Ingoglia released the following statements after the passage of HB 6001, which pertains to traffic infraction detectors, including red light cameras. Speaker Corcoran said, "The failure and corruption of red light cameras has been

well documented. Having reviewed years of data with Representatives [Bryan] Avila and Ingoglia, it is clear that red light cameras are more about revenue than public safety."

Representative Avila said, "Red light cameras have had the opposite effect of their original intent. In essence, the public was misled and basically robbed of their money to the benefit of government and a few private companies. These cameras have been unevenly implemented on a statewide basis and, as a result, unjustly impacted the rights of thousands of Florida's drivers. The time is now to undo this unfair and unjust system and develop alternative means to make roads safer in our state."

Representative Ingoglia said, "Red light cameras do not benefit the public – they only benefit local governments addicted to the revenue they generate and the companies that provide the services. If red light cameras were really about public safety, local governments would not be getting rid of them once their revenues decline. It is further proof they are nothing but taxation by citation."

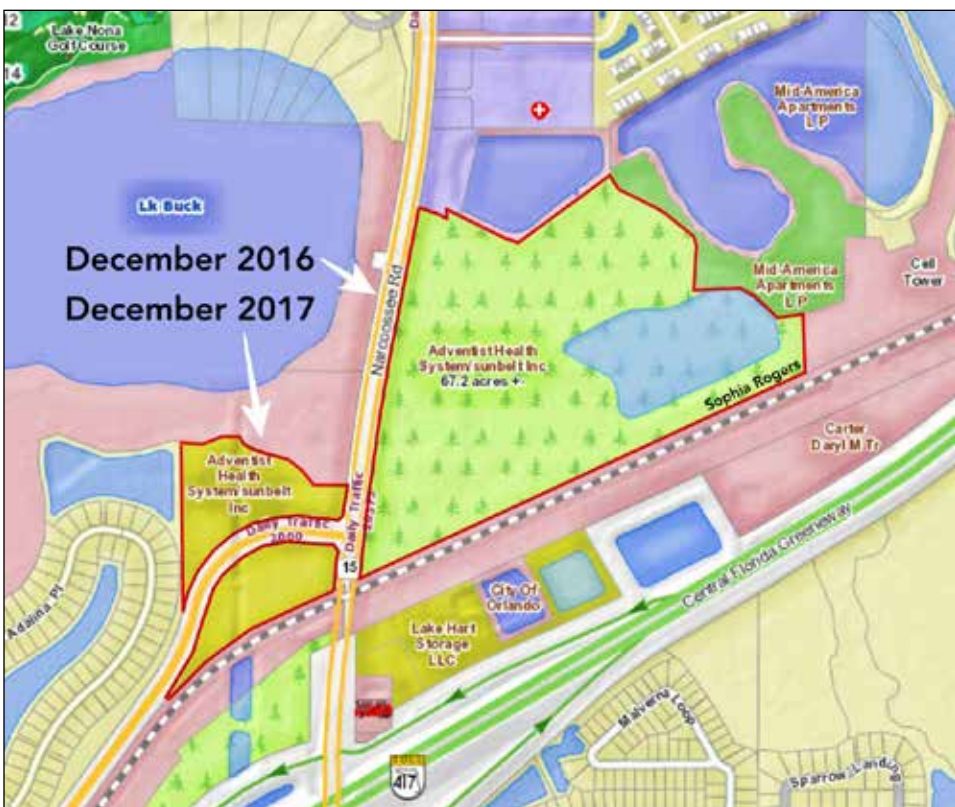
The votes regarding HB 6001 resulted in the following:

2017: 91-22 (floor vote)

2018: 16-10 (committee vote)

2018: 83-18 (floor vote)

These votes have met head on all the controversies surrounding red light cameras and their usage, from privacy concerns to the exploitation and cost behind the devices.



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Florida Hospital Expands in Lake Nona

BY SOPHIA ROGERS

Adjacent to Top Dog Express Car Wash & Detail, ExtraSpace Self Storage, and Orange County Fire Station 76, Adventist Health System, parent company to Florida Hospital, purchased 14.96 acres of land on Dec. 15 for \$8.975 million. Lake Nona Land Company, LLC was the seller.

Potential uses include a free-standing emergency department and/or an outpatient surgery center. The property is located on the north and south sides of Lake Nona Boulevard and on the western side of the Narcoossee Road intersection (see map for details). This adds to the 12 developable acres on the eastern side of the Narcoossee Road intersection purchased in December 2016. In total, that parcel is a 64.24 acre site.

Florida Hospital provides primary, specialty and sports medicine care in the Gateway building at the intersection of Tavistock Lakes Boulevard and Narcoossee Road in Lake Nona. Should this come to fruition, locals will no longer have to travel 13 miles to Florida Hospital East Orlando for emergency services.

The most recent land sale deed includes use restrictions that limit Adventist to developing the property solely for mul-

iple medical offices up to a maximum 145,000 square feet of conditioned area, an ambulatory surgery center, emergency department, counseling services, health and wellness services (e.g. chiropractic, physical therapy and rehabilitation), radiology services and related support departments.

Ancillary, or secondary, uses that are in alignment with Florida Hospital's "CREATION Health" mission focused on health and wellness also would be allowed. This includes a mix of retail, casual dining, bike and fitness equipment sales, spa and/or hair salon, a church, pharmacy, vitamin and nutritional supplement retail sales, and daycare center.

Prohibited uses include real estate sales or brokerage offices, insurance agencies, gymnasium/fitness facility that is not incidental to a medical use, hotel, manufacturing, industrial, residential, non-healthy dining, and any other retail uses except those permitted in the ancillary uses.

The deed also states and recognizes that clinical care and wellness programs will evolve over time, and that Lake Nona Land, LLC agrees to consider amending the Permitted Use in the future to allow additional uses that are consistent with the "logical evolution" of clinical care and wellness services that are directed to health, healthy living, and healthy lifestyle.

Sophia Rogers is a six-year Lake Nona area resident and Realtor/Founder of NewHomeSalesCFL.com. A wife and mom of 4, family, relationships, real estate, and business are her passions.

The Measurements Of a Winning Culture

BY TRAVIS JACOB

and essential to success at every level. Each one has its own unique style, but there are three measurements they all have in common. These measurements can be applied equally to any organization when considering the strength of their culture. As you have observed in these organizations, the methodologies vary, while at the same time, the results tend to be the same. Any organization can use the following three measurements while building the framework for their unique winning culture. How your organization is doing with each is determined by answering specific questions for each measurement.



Over the past several issues, I have highlighted companies that do business in the Lake Nona area that are considered to have a strong and healthy culture. I call it a "winning culture." The list of companies I have interviewed is diverse. They range from large, national companies to young but growing companies. I consider this a list of the best of the best, and that includes: Publix, PDQ, USTA, Maven Creative, Marriott Courtyard and Residence Inns, and Heritage Park Realty.

Although each of these great organizations practices a different approach to building and maintaining culture, they all consider a winning culture to be a top priority

Growth

How are our employees growing? What are we doing to support and encourage growth opportunities for our employees? Are we investing in the leadership development of our employees at every level? Are we helping our employees reach personal goals as well as business goals? Are we giving our employees the training they need to perform their jobs at the highest level possible? The answers to these and other questions regarding the growth of your employees will tell you how much you value and trust your employees at every level of the organization.

Engagement

How engaged are our employees in their jobs? Do we see them going above and beyond to perform at the highest level possible, or do they just show up every day and do the least amount to collect a paycheck? How do we find out exactly what our employees think about their jobs? Their co-workers? Their superiors? The answers to these and other questions regarding the level of engagement in your employees at every level can be found only by giving them a safe way to express their thoughts. This can be done very effectively through an engagement survey that works for your organization.

Experience

What kind of experiences do our employees have on a daily basis when they come to work? Is work a good experience or a bad experience? Do our employees have strong relationships with their co-workers, or are they distant from each other? Are employees comfortable talking to subordinates, colleagues and supervisors alike? The answers to these questions provide the relational context of your organization. Building strong relationships is the essential building block of a winning culture.

The questions I pose with these three measurements are by no means exhaustive. However, they can give you a starting point when considering what kind of culture you might be trying to build in your organization. When assessing the current business landscape, one thing is clear – a focus on culture has become one of the most important issues facing organizations of any size and industry. The current workforce is not only asking for it, they are demanding an environment that has its foundation built on a healthy, winning culture. And why not? It is a win/win in any industry!



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**Creator Mindset:
Is the Truth
Too Risky?**



BY NIR BASHAN

I took woodshop in 8th grade – not because I particularly wanted to take woodshop, but because I had taken sewing the year before. I was the only boy in the class, and I was quite awkward at the time. So, suddenly woodshop seemed like a fantastic, manly idea.

The guy who taught woodshop was Mr. Furness. He was a character, to say the least. He was famous around the school for having some pretty clever sayings. I remember two of them. One was that sometimes the best helping hand is found at the end of your own arm. Good stuff. The other was that a half truth is often a whole lie. I'm sure these quotes don't originate from him – but, boy, was he the embodiment of them. He demanded we admit our faults. Our mistakes. The error in our ways. And, yes, all this was in woodshop.

It was sort of like boot camp with the woodshop projects as microcosms for life. I think I made a skateboard, a plant holder and a small chest if memory serves right. But it didn't matter what we were making. Mistakes would surely be made along the way. Mr. Furness was not judging our wood-working skills, he was developing our skills as human beings. He was building character.

So, fast forward many years later. I found myself at a company that could have used Mr. Furness' class. There had been an error made by several execs (mostly C-level) on a building spec. It was for a cheap part hidden deep within the building. Was the building going to collapse? No. But it just wasn't what the client had paid for.

The cynic in me would say, "Hey, they won't even notice, so why go there?" But the graduate of Mr. Furness' 8th grade woodshop in me would say, "Tell the client the truth. And do it immediately. They had paid for a much more expensive part. They deserve to know the truth."



I wonder how many times in your career you have encountered these moments. In a life-and-death case, I think it's easy to tell the truth. It's black and white. It's easy to make the honest choice. But what about the grey areas – what happens then? What happens when there is no clear-cut solution? What is the right thing to do when there is so much grey?

I convinced the company at the time to just tell the client the truth. Of course, they were not pleased – both the company and the client. It really did seem like a lose-lose situation there for awhile. But then something happened that surprised me. And it's a lesson I carry to this day. The error became quickly forgotten and began to slowly build trust on both sides. No one felt cheated. The client knew that we were human and that mistakes can happen. And with that came forgiveness.

I wish I could tell you the company I was with learned a lesson. But I don't really think so. I left shortly thereafter. They felt that telling the truth was just too risky. And I felt that the truth would always be safe.

Nir Bashan is an executive creative director/managing director with more than 18 years of advertising, entertainment and business development experience. He helps teach folks in non-creative fields how to think creatively to solve problems. He leads workshops and lectures on topics relating to *The Creator Mindset*. He is publishing a book on the *Creator Mindset* that will be released soon. www.nirbashan.com/lectures-workshops/

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FEATURES

Hope in Art

BY NICOLE LABOSCO



Art is a way to express oneself, and there are various forms of how one might do so. There's music, dance, photography, painting, etc. Our featured artist of the month dabbles in the latter two. Heather Nagy says every painting has a story, but so does every artist. Let's hear hers.

Heather Nagy grew up in Michigan and reminisces about her time spent there. "I remember

summers spent going camping to different spots around the state with my family. I've always loved art. In high school, my walls were covered with my work, and I loved trying different mediums. I was drawn to impressionists like Degas, Monet, and Van Gogh, but I also loved Michelangelo and was in awe of the scale at which he painted and how he could make cold marble look alive."

While working, Nagy would find a way to incorporate time to draw or paint to further her passion and creativity. "I'd bring my oil pastels along with me on babysitting jobs, drawing animals. And for a short time while working at McDonald's, I was commissioned to make portraits of the employee of the month."

Nagy graduated with a Bachelor in Fine Arts in Graphic Design from Western Michigan University in 1998 and moved from Michigan to Orlando in 2000 to follow two things she loved: creating art and designing, and her faith. "I loved creating art and designing, and my understanding and love for Jesus grew in college. I spent a summer in Orlando in 1995 as an intern for Cru. I loved that it combined my skills as a designer and that I was able to help share the hope we have in Christ with others. Upon graduation, I spent a year in Asia and then moved to Orlando in 2000 to work with Cru as a graphic designer."

In Orlando, Nagy eventually met her husband, David, and they've been married for 15 years and have two children. The family moved to the Lake Nona area 10 years ago.

What drove you to become an artist?

"My artwork aims to reflect my deep belief that we are all created in the image of a creative God. The Bible says we are made in God's image, meaning we share attributes of God such as being relational, intelligent, creative and loving. It's in our nature to create."

How long have you been an artist?

"I've loved being creative for as long as I could remember. I watched Bob Ross paint happy little trees, got his oil set and tried it myself as a kid. In high school, I soaked up my art classes, drawing portraits of myself, my friends and celebrity crushes. In college, my focus was design, but I also was required to take a number of fine art courses like drawing, printmaking, photography, painting and sculpture. For the past 17 years, I've worked full-time and then part-time as a graphic designer for Cru. During that time, I've continued to make art for myself. Oil pastel landscapes of the Southwest, mixed media pieces that were more conceptual, and some portraits. Then, this past year, I've been painting more intentionally and regularly with acrylics."

How often do you find yourself creating art?

"The amount of time I've spent creating art has varied over the years as life circumstances saw changing capacity of margin. However, this January, I transitioned from my job to create art full-time. Last year, I completed close to 50 pieces working at it part-time. This year, I hope to create at least one painting a week."

Which of your artwork would you consider your favorites? (Pick a top three)

"One favorite is *Lake Eola Grand Finale*. I did a series of 15 paintings all centered around the Lake Eola downtown. It was an exercise in finding beauty in the familiar. This really did feel like a finale to the series. The scope was bigger – more buildings, bigger canvas, and it captures the heart of The City Beautiful.

"Second would be *Observation Point, Zion*. I love the southwest United States, and I'm inspired by the mountains, canyons, rock formations and the grand vistas of the area. Our family has vacationed in the area several times. This summer, I was thrilled to return to Zion National Park. I'd been reading about hikes to take and wanted to complete one to Observation Point, but it seemed impossible. (Long hike, extreme heat, kids, having to take a

shuttle bus, carrying food and water... .) However, with some online research and help from a few locals, we found an alternate route that was much easier and were able to do it. Standing at the lookout was breathtaking!

"My third favorite would be *Shalom*. This is part of the Lake Eola Series. I ended work on this as Hurricane Irma was blowing through Orlando. We did all our prep and then waited, wondering if the eye would go over us and how much damage would result. My natural tendency is to worry, to wish that everything was as calm as this painting. However, I think God is teaching me that peace (shalom) is possible even as the storm rages around us."

Which of your projects was the most time-consuming/challenging and why?

"The most time-consuming piece I did is called *Canyonlands Triptych*, which took several weeks working part-time. It's the largest piece I've ever done – three canvases each 30x40 inches put together. It was also a challenge because I was using several photographs I took and combining them, so I had more decisions I needed to make. It was my jumping in with both feet painting as I hadn't painted very much in acrylics, so that was a learning curve as well. I was learning how to manage blending and how to work without the paint drying out. I was also determining what style, how much detail to have, and how vibrant I wanted to go with my colors. And it was a challenge being three paintings, wanting each one to be interesting, but they needed to match up as well. As I've painted more, I find that my cityscapes take longer than pure landscapes without the marks of man. Landscapes are more forgiving."

What are some of your dream projects?

"[I have] lots of dreams. I work from photographs, and to get the composition and angles I want as well as to avoid any copyright conflicts, I take my own photos. I would love to travel internationally to Italy, France, Budapest and a number of other places to take photos.

I love our national parks, and some of the parks have an artist-in-residence program. I would love to be an artist in residence at one of the parks a few years down the road. To have a month in a park to explore, off-season, leisurely getting painting subject material sounds ideal."

What serves as your inspiration on a day-to-day basis?

"I can get lost in Pinterest, looking at what different artists around the country and world are doing. I enjoy seeing what different artists are doing through local venues and art fairs. I follow different artists through Facebook as well; it's educational and motivating to see what they are doing art-wise and how they are marketing their work. It guides me to keep creating, sharing and searching for opportunities, local, online and elsewhere.

"I have hundreds of photos that I've taken this past year that are just waiting to be painted. I will look up paintings that have similar subject matter to mine and see how they handled the composition, details, color. I found this past year that I no longer lack for inspiration, instead it's carving out the time to paint. I've got dozens of ideas waiting to find their way on canvas."

Which artists would you say you share a vision with?

"One artist that has been a big inspiration is Erin Hanson. She is a contemporary painter who paints vibrant, expressive landscapes. I love her compositions and use of color. She has a lot of work featuring the Southwest, and I love studying how she handles the subject matter, keeping it fresh. I was able to see some of her work in person that was displayed at Zion National Park.

"Another artist I found through a Pinterest search is Rene Wiley. She is based out of Galveston, TX, a seaside town. I love her expressiveness, and how she thrives in finding beauty where she is that goes beyond palm trees and the ocean."

What style/form of art is your favorite to create?

"I've worked with oil pastels, mixed media, encaustic, watercolor, oil and acrylics. Currently, I'm enjoying working

in acrylics. I appreciate that they dry quickly, and I can achieve fine detail when wanted and a more expressive interpretation as well. As far as subject matter, I'm enjoying landscapes and cityscapes. It's been a challenge to find new ways of showing the familiar, with pieces that show local scenes."



Future goals/plans?

"I've been creating art for years and occasionally getting to show in local venues. Recently, I've transitioned from my job to pursue being an artist full-time. So, in some ways I'm just launching out, attempting to sell my work. I want to not just make work but hopefully create pieces that bring people hope and joy. I hope my work encourages people and helps people tap into the longings they have that are ultimately fulfilled in a loving, good, relational Creator.

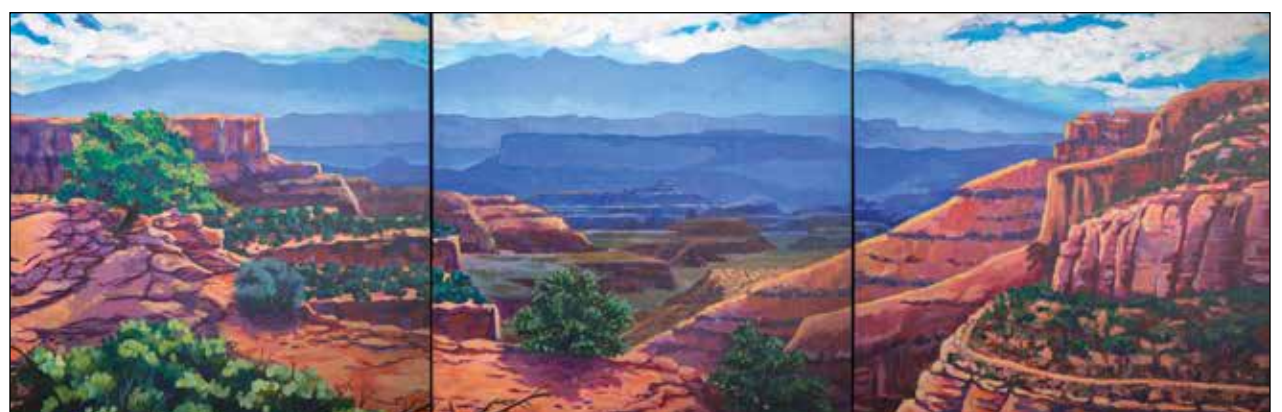
Right now, I'm actively painting and seeking places to show and sell my work. As with any artist, I want to be able to make a living producing work that connects with people. I have pieces up in a few local venues, and I'm looking for more places. I will have a solo show at the Mayor's Gallery in City Hall from April through August (it's open weekdays, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.). Since I was a child, I've dreamed of having solo shows, selling work and having my work hang in museums."

Those interested can read about the individual paintings' stories and inspiration in Nagy's blog: HeatherLNagyArt.wordpress.com. You can also visit her Facebook page, where she posts in-progress photos and the day-to-day of being an artist – search for Heather Nagy Art. If you are interested in purchasing any of Nagy's artwork, prints and some originals can be found at fineartamerica.com/profiles/heather-nagy, and you can contact Nagy for details about selling. Her contact information can be found in her blog.

"As we're faced with the brokenness of our world, man-made and natural disasters, one needs a source of hope. We all want there to be more, a paradise waiting, redemption. We respond to beauty, as it hints at the redemption. Redemption available now, through healed relationships and rebuilding after destruction. Redemption that will be, as promised that God will in the end make all things right. I believe that's why we are touched by beauty, whether it be a smile, a piece of music, or a painting. Beauty is a source of hope. It takes us beyond the grind of the day-to-day, to appreciate life and persevere through hard times. Beauty brings out God-given longings for peace, joy, and significance that's planted in our hearts. We were made for more than just surviving. Painting allows me to slow down and reflectively ponder the beauty around me. I seek to reflect that beauty, that hope through the paintings I create."

NOMINATE AN ARTIST

We are looking for interesting artists who live in the Nonahood to be featured. If you or someone you know should be nominated to be a Nonahood News Featured Artist, send your nomination to nonahood.to/artist.





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USTA National Campus Celebrates One-Year Anniversary

BY SOPHIA ROGERS

On a beautiful, sunny, chilly day, the USTA celebrated its one-year anniversary at its world-class facility in Lake Nona. Fans, dignitaries and tennis legends were present.

With 100 courts spread across the 64-acre site, the USTA National Campus is one of the largest tennis facilities in the world. Everything from adult and youth programming to collegiate tennis and elite player development is hosted here. A key component of Lake Nona's Sports and Performance District, the USTA National Campus has put Lake Nona on the map and has caught the attention of the tennis community. "The USTA National Campus has truly exceeded our expectations and delivered on our vision," said Katrina Adams, USTA chairman of the board and president. "The facility was built to elevate industry standards and expand opportunities. We are excited to see how it will continually thrive and support the next generation of players and providers."

USTA Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer Gordon Smith said the facility allows the USTA to pursue its mission to grow the game and help the next generation of American players. As part of his pledge to build on the campus' growth in 2018, Smith announced that

Tennis Channel will be building its own broadcast center at the National Campus to broadcast events on-site. In the words of ESPN's Chris McKendry, the event emcee, "Every level of player has a home here." And that was evident, even during the ceremony. Nearby courts had players of all ages at 10:30 a.m.

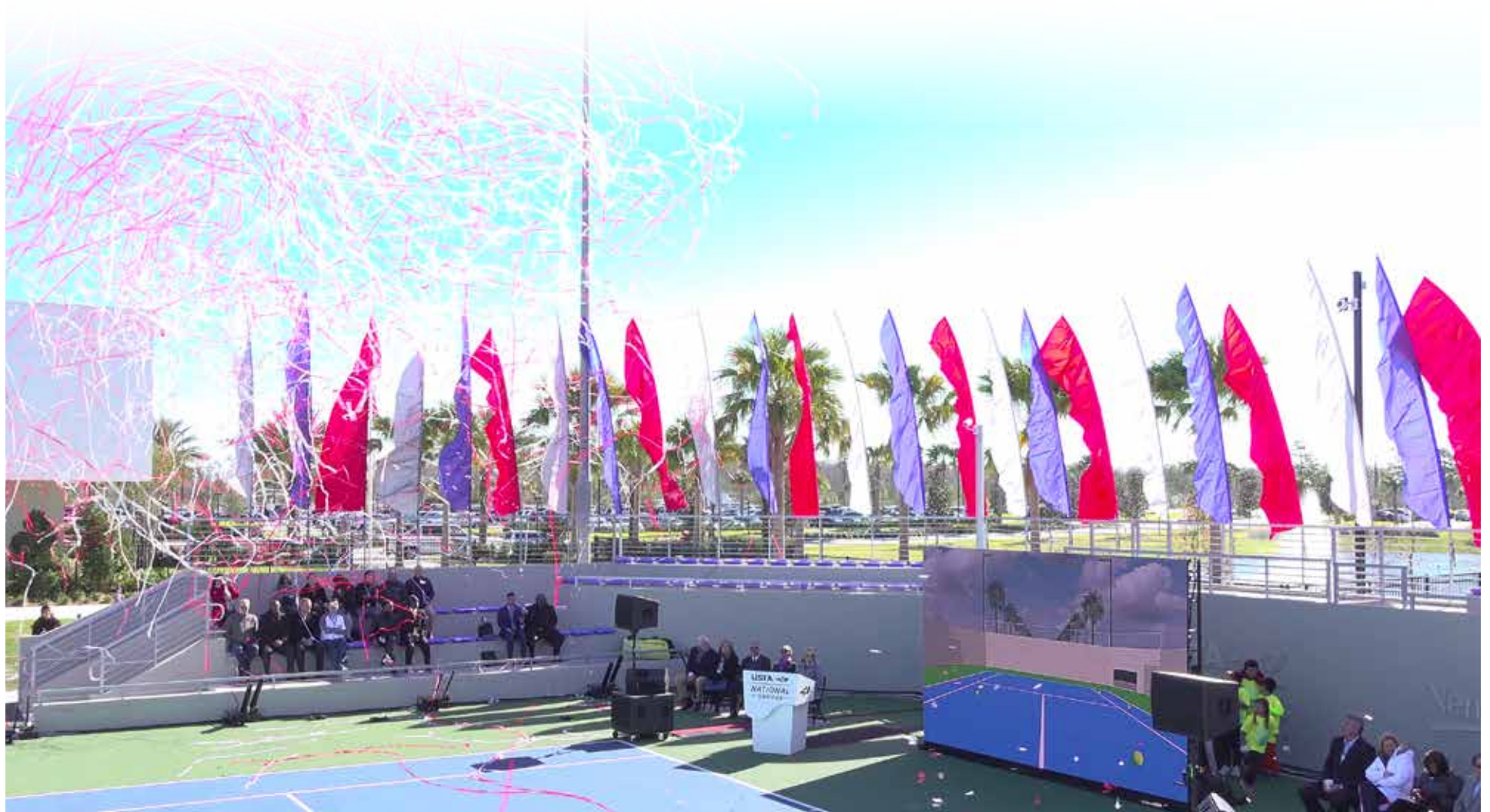
Closing the ceremony, Orange County Mayor Teresa Jacobs heartfully stated, "Tavistock, Lake Nona, USTA – thank you for giving us the opportunity to have you." Jan. 4 has been declared National USTA National Campus Day.

Congratulations, USTA National Campus! We can't wait to see what 2018 will bring!



NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2017:

- 100 local, regional, national and international events.
- More than 500 children under the age of 18 participated each week in the campus' youth programs.
- More than 600 top American current and aspiring professional tennis players were assisted by Team USA coaching, training and medical staff.
- More than 150,000 hours of court time were booked to players of all ages and abilities.
- More than 300 colleges and universities played at the campus.
- More than 200,000 players and visitors.
- More than 17,000 tournament participants.
- 540 Pro Circuit matches held.





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Fisher House Dedication and Grand Opening

BY BRITTANY BHULAI

On Feb. 14, the National Fisher House Foundation will be hosting the grand opening of the much-anticipated Fisher House located at the Orlando VA Medical Center. The Fisher House dedication is open to the public, and about 300 attendees are anticipated. The ceremony will begin at 10 a.m., featuring guest speakers such as Lou Holtz, who is the honorary chairman for the Friends of Fisher House Orlando, and Thomas Bowman, the VA deputy secretary.

By 11 a.m., there will be a ribbon-cutting ceremony that will kick off the official opening of the Fisher House doors to the public. Attendees will be able to tour the house until 1 p.m. Notes will be placed throughout the inside explaining design elements and the overall goal the building hopes to meet. There also will be a tent set up outside providing food and beverages along with an informational booth on how to donate to the organization.

Fisher House manager Terri Turner says that about \$6 million was put into crafting the structure. As the public will see, it is a two-story house with 16 bedrooms and basic necessities such as a formal living room, dining room and patio. The couches and tables are set up in a manner that encourages guests to communicate with one another. For example, the dining room has a handful of tables with about five chairs at each. This enables the guests to offer each other support during their time there. There also is a fully-equipped gourmet kitchen that acts as the heart of the house. It is said to contain \$12,000 worth of kitchen equipment from Crate and Barrel.

Construction began on the house on Nov. 30, 2016, and it has come a far way. "I think there will be a real buzz about it. I anticipate a lot of interest from the community," states Turner. She also adds that being in charge of the Fisher House has brought many new experiences to her life, and it has aided her growth as a person. Since getting involved with the project, she has gained more networking within the community and has experienced what it is like to truly help others.

The foundation will send a couple of ambassadors once a year to check on the Fisher House to make sure it is up to par. Turner says there should be no problem in this

department as she will do the best that she can to make guests feel at home and to maintain the house. She definitely looks forward to the grand opening as that is the day Dave Coker, the president of Fisher House, will be handing the keys over to her.

There is no cost to stay at the Fisher House as long as one is staying to accompany their loved one who is checked in at the VA as a patient. Currently, no one is on the list to stay at the house, but guests are expected to begin arriving this March.



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^{*} U.S. News & World Report, 2017-18 Best Hospitals.

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HEALTH & FITNESS

Impacts to Your Vision As You Age – What's Normal?

BY MEHUL PATEL, MD, MSC – UCF
 HEALTH OPHTHALMOLOGY



Dr. Mehul Patel

It's no secret that your vision changes as you age. However, oftentimes people experience this shift in eyesight gradually, making it hard to distinguish between what are normal, age-related changes and when those changes are pathologic. When it is the latter, you certainly want an eye surgeon to evaluate you because a myriad of treatable or irreversible processes might be hampering your quality of life. Let's briefly discuss three common conditions: cataract, glaucoma, and dry eye syndrome.

Cataract

A cataract is a medical condition in which the lens of the eye becomes cloudy, causing blurry vision and glare. Often patients develop a fear of car accidents and falls because of their decreased vision. Everyone develops cataract, and if you have cataract it means you have eaten your share of birthday cake and are probably nearing retirement. The good news is that it is treatable. In fact, this common condition affects millions of people, and cataract surgery is the most common procedure performed in U.S. operating rooms with more than three million surgeries per year.

Patients ask me almost every day, "Do you think it is time for me to have my cataract removed?" I smile politely and

tell all of my patients that it is actually you, and not me, the eye surgeon, who will tell me when it is time to have the cloudiness in your vision removed. Surgery is a great option when you are not able to engage in your favorite activities as a result of decreased vision or you have trouble doing everyday tasks. For example, not being able to read the print in books when you are a book lover or a halt to going out at night because the glare from lights is too daunting to your vision.

The recovery period for cataract surgery is relatively quick; most patients see clearly within a few days after the 10-minute surgery. With the advanced technology I use today, the risks for complications are very low, and patient satisfaction is at an all-time high. If you are interested in cataract surgery, start a dialogue with your eye doctor about how your vision is affecting your daily life and whether this procedure will help you.

Glaucoma

If you have been experiencing a gradual loss of sight, you could have glaucoma – a disease that affects the cable that carries the message from the eye to the brain. This can be a result of poor blood flow, unique anatomy, genetic risk factors and/or intraocular pressure that is higher than what the eye can tolerate, making it a risk for people of all ages. Glaucoma is a leading cause of irreversible blindness, the most common type being Primary Open-Angle Glaucoma (POAG).

Although there is currently no cure for glaucoma, steps can be taken to halt the progression of vision loss. These steps include using eye drops, receiving laser surgery or sometimes large filtering surgeries when less-invasive methods are not working. If you have a family history of glaucoma, it is extremely important that you and your loved ones get an eye exam, especially because glaucoma is generally a painless disease. Lastly, glaucoma comes in many flavors, such as angle closure and secondary open angle, some of which require different therapies than just eye drops but are often managed by comprehensive eye surgeons.

If you believe you are at risk, visit an eye doctor to check whether you have glaucoma or are at risk to develop glaucoma.

Dry Eye Syndrome

Dry eye is a very common condition in both men and women, with symptoms including tearing, red eye, blurry vision that improves with blinking, and sand-in-your-



eye sensation. It is caused by the inability for the body to produce enough tears to protect the surface of the eye or when your eye is unable to hold on to the tears that it makes. Tears are crucial for nourishing the eye and keeping the front part of your eye, called the cornea, in optimal condition – think of it as wanting to keep the camera lens smudge-free to have the best picture possible. There are several factors that can make you more susceptible to dry eye, such as age, gender, eyelid conditions, poor makeup removal technique, increased computer/tv/smartphone time and environmental conditions.

If you believe you might be suffering from dry eye, the first step would be to receive a comprehensive eye exam. If you are diagnosed with this condition, there are many steps you can take to lubricate the eye moving forward. Some of these options include the use of preservative-free artificial tears, blocking the tear ducts with small silicone inserts, surgically closing them to conserve natural tears and/or taking an omega-3 supplement to improve the ocular surface.

If you believe you are at risk, visit an eye doctor to assess your eyes and discuss your risk factors. We are here to help you improve your quality of life, and often conservative therapies are extremely helpful in improving your vision.

Dr. Mehul Patel is an ophthalmologist at UCF Health in Lake Nona focused on preserving the eye health of his patients through both non-surgical and surgical techniques. Learn more at ucfhealth.com.



Ladies, It's Time For a Heart-to-Heart

BY DR GUERRERO
 Women have unique heart-health needs.



Dr. Guerrero

Heart disease is the leading cause of death among women over the age of 65. In this age group, *heart disease kills more women than all cancers combined*, and women are four to six times more likely to die of heart disease than breast cancer. Patricia Guerrero, MD, a board-certified cardiovascular disease specialist in Orlando, points out that while women have about the same risk of heart attack as men do at age 65, they are less likely to survive. This is largely due to a lack of awareness of risk factors and signs of heart disease.

"If you're 50 or older, it's time for a heart-to-heart with your doctor, to assess the status of your future cardiovascular risk and the measures you can take to reduce them," says Dr. Guerrero.

The first order of business is to take a look at the lifestyle changes you can make. These simple steps can make a big difference.

If you smoke, stop. More than half of all heart attacks in women under the age of 50 are related to smoking, and women who quit smoking today will reduce their risk of a heart attack by a third in just two years.

Know your numbers. An annual physical can reveal some truly vital statistics. Your blood sugar, blood pressure and blood cholesterol levels are all extremely important. "An easy blood test can give you insight and motivation to make necessary changes," says Dr. Guerrero. "Some illnesses can be improved by losing weight and modifying your diet, others can be addressed with medications. The important thing is to have a clear picture of your health so you can make a plan to avoid diabetes, heart disease and stroke."

Watch out for chest pain: While chest pain isn't always caused by heart disease, better safe than sorry. If you're having chest pain, go to the emergency room, especially if you experience shortness of breath or nausea that comes on quickly.

Know your family history: If you have a close family member with heart disease, especially heart disease that developed before age 55 (in men) or 65 (in women), tell your doctor. "Every piece of information helps your doctor help you," says Dr. Guerrero.

Patricia Guerrero, MD, FACC is a cardiologist with Florida Heart Group. She is director of the Women and Cardiovascular Disease program. Dr. Guerrero is board certified in cardiovascular disease, clinical cardiac electrophysiology, nuclear cardiology, and cardiovascular computed tomography. Her main clinical interests are the evaluation of patients with arrhythmias and prevention of cardiovascular disease. She is a national speaker For Awareness of Women and Heart Disease. To learn more or make an appointment, visit FHMedicalGroup.com or call (407) 894-4474.



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Habits You Didn't Realize Could Cause Varicose Veins

BY KAREY FREEMAN

In some cases, leg vein health can be negatively affected by things that are out of your control: age, genetics and major body changes such as pregnancy. However, some daily habits can also lead to venous issues, and changing these habits can reduce your risk of developing unhealthy veins. The vascular surgeons in Orlando at Central Florida Vein & Vascular Center are here to outline a few common habits worth examining more closely.

Prolonged Standing



Your job may require you to stand for long periods of time. The effects of gravity combined with hours of standing puts tremendous pressure on the veins—which, as we know, is something you'll want to avoid, as it can harm the veins. Now, we're not suggesting that you start interviewing for a job where you're not on your feet for eight hours a day, but it's simple to find small ways to change up your work routine. Can you take a short walk? Can you get

a break to sit? Just a little bit of extra movement during the day will help take pressure off your veins. Compression hose can also be used to help counterbalance the pressure build-up from the gravity effect.

Crossing Your Legs

You may have heard to not cross your legs, as it causes varicose veins. This isn't entirely true. Crossing your legs doesn't put so much pressure on your veins that you'll develop varicose veins—but you may put yourself at risk of spider veins. When you cross your legs, the major veins behind the knee



get compressed and prevent venous drainage of the leg veins. Similarly, crossing legs puts pressure on the veins in the groin, also preventing venous return and increasing venous congestion. Crossing your legs for a few minutes here and there won't hurt. But, similar to standing, try not to do it for hours a day. Keep two feet flat on the floor instead—or, if you're often sitting at a desk for work, you can try having your feet elevated on a small stool for some additional comfort.

Allowing Leg Muscles to Weaken



Exercise is good for just about everything—including varicose veins. When you stay stagnant for long periods of time, you can lose muscle mass. This causes veins to dilate and varicose veins to form. This happens most commonly in injured athletes, who have large amounts of muscle that they're suddenly unable to maintain. While maintaining muscle is important, building muscle is critical as well. This doesn't mean you have to start running marathons. You don't have to

set aside long periods of time for the gym, either. Just take a short walk every day. Short walks are ideal for those who spend much of their day sitting or standing and will help to keep the calf muscles strong. One of the strongest pumps driving venous return is the calf muscle pump. The veins are inside the calf musculature, so when strong calf muscles contract, there is forceful propulsion of venous blood back to the heart.

Too Much Salt

Eating a low-sodium diet isn't just a trend—eating too much salt certainly has some bad effects on your health, including an increased risk of developing varicose veins. A high-sodium diet can cause your body to retain water, which puts more pressure on your veins. This pressure, as we've established, harms the vein valves and can create varicose veins. A little bit of salt isn't bad for you. We all like our food to have a little flavor. It's important, although, to take a quick look at the food labels before you pick something up from the grocery store. Some foods can have a surprising amount of sodium—and there's often a low-sodium option available.



If you've already developed varicose veins, help isn't far away. The vascular surgeons in Orlando and Kissimmee at Central Florida Vein & Vascular Center have dedicated themselves to treating venous insufficiency. Their specialists understand that varicose veins can be painful, frustrating, and make some feel self-conscious. Their goal is to make you happy and comfortable with your legs again. You can call them today at 407-545-3385 or visit them online at cfvein.com to set up a consultation.

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Collegiate Tennis Returns to USTA

BY DANIEL PYSER

February marks the triumphant return of collegiate tennis to the courts of the USTA National Campus with a number of marquee matchups slated to be showcased in Lake Nona.

First and foremost, the USTA National Campus will once again serve as the home courts for the UCF men's and women's tennis programs, both of which are looking to maintain momentum from successful 2017 campaigns. The men's team, led by head coach John Roddick, reached the final of the American Conference championship and received its first-ever at-large bid to the NCAA Championships. Both the men's and women's team return key players from their 2017 rosters and will hope to defend their home courts in Lake Nona.

College MatchDay returns to the USTA National Campus in 2018 after an incredible 2017 slate that saw almost 6,000 fans attend six premier neutral-site matchups featuring some of the nation's top programs. This year, College MatchDay expands to eight matches, taking place on six dates throughout the spring, starting with a rematch of the Florida-Florida State showdown that drew more than 1,700 fans a year ago. The two men's teams will face off on Saturday, Feb. 3, at 7 p.m., this year joined by each school's women's programs as well. The Florida women are the defending national champions. As was the case last year, each College MatchDay is free to the public and will feature kids' activities, live music, specialty food and drinks, games and giveaways.

On Saturday, Feb. 10, the men's teams from Georgia and Georgia Tech will bring their in-state rivalry to Lake Nona for the second College MatchDay of the year, also squaring off under the lights at 7 p.m. The Oklahoma and Texas A&M men will conclude the February slate of College MatchDay at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, Feb. 25.

In addition to a full slate of home matches for UCF, the National Campus will play host to a variety of Florida schools, including Florida Atlantic, North Florida, and nearby Rollins College throughout the month of February. The National Campus also will host a number of Lake Nona High School matches.

A new offering at the USTA National Campus that local residents can take advantage of in February is training camps with International Tennis Hall-of-Famer and 17-time Grand Slam doubles champion GiGi Fernandez. Players will have the opportunity to learn the "GiGi Method" from Fernandez herself, who will be joined by USTA National Campus professional staff to administer these camps that are designed for an intimate and personalized learning experience with no more than four players per coach. The camps are offered as either one- or two-day options that include extensive on-court training, classroom discussions, and a behind-the-scenes tour of the National Campus. Lunch is provided, and those interested are encouraged to visit www.ustanationalcampus.com for pricing and availability. February dates for the one-day camps are Friday, Feb. 16, and Wednesday, Feb. 28, and there is a two-day camp being offered Monday and Tuesday, Feb. 12-13. Additional dates will be available throughout the spring.

In addition to the GiGi Fernandez camps, traditional USTA National Campus adult camps also are being offered, similar to those that debuted in the fall of 2017. Spring 2018 dates can be found on the campus website.



Photos Courtesy USTA



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EDUCATION

Lake Nona High School

FOOTBALL

We had two players sign on early national signing day for football: Anthony Queeley, wide receiver – Syracuse; and Anthony Manning, wide receiver – Wake Forest.



THEATER

BY DANY OLIVEIRA, STUDENT

Happy New Year from troupe 7434! We are starting the year off right with a benefit that will feature all of the superior-rated events from our District V Thespian Festival, as well as a medley of our spring musical, Elton John and Tim Rice's Aida. The Benefit will be Monday, Jan. 29, at 7 p.m. For this event, all proceeds are going right back to the students to help them pay for our Florida State Thespian Festival in March. At the door, we will ask you who you are supporting, and the money goes straight to that person. If you don't have a specific person in mind, the money will help the entire troupe! Tickets are \$5 at the door, and we hope you come support!



TENNIS

BY TOM BEARD,
 HEAD COACH - BOYS
 TENNIS



The Lake Nona High School tennis program is coming off another great season in 2017 and about to hold tryouts for 2018. Last year, our girls were regional semifinalists as a team, and our top singles player and top doubles team advanced to the state finals. Our boys' team was district runner-ups and had a school record 12 wins. We hope to continue that success in 2018.

Our 2018 tryouts are open to any high school student zoned for Lake Nona High School. This includes, with the appropriate paperwork, home-schooled athletes. Any student-athlete trying out will need to have the appropriate school physical on file and maintain a cumulative 2.0 GPA, although we push every athlete to have above a 3.0, and bring their own racquet. Tryouts will take place the week of Jan. 22 at 2:30 p.m. on our practice courts at the school.

If you have any questions about tryouts or how you can support the 2018 Lake Nona Tennis program, please reach out to Coach Beard at Thomas.beard@ocps.net. Hope to see you at a match this season.

Sun Blaze Elementary School

BY TAMI TURNER, PRINCIPAL

In December, during their field trip to the Kennedy Space Center, our fifth-grade students and teachers were able to watch the Falcon 9 rocket launch. Students also had the opportunity to come face to face with Space Shuttle Atlantis, explore the massive 363-foot-long Saturn V moon rocket at the Apollo/Saturn V Center, tour NASA's spaceflight operations, interact with science exhibits and so much more. What an amazing opportunity for our fifth-grade Stingrays.



K-Kids is a service club for students in elementary school. Students in this club learn the value of helping others by developing community service projects. K-Kids provides numerous opportunities to develop self-esteem, leadership skills, morals and standards and respect for others. Our Sun Blaze club consists of 52 students. Their community service projects this year have included collecting books for the Nemours Children's Hospital in Lake Nona, gathering food for sheltered animals, and recently leading Sun Blaze students in a canned food drive, collecting more than 240 pounds of canned goods. The items were donated to the Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida. I look forward to seeing their continued impact on the Lake Nona community.



As Sun Blaze continues to grow, we continue to see campus improvements. I am excited for the completion of our parking lot expansion and how this has brought some relief to the residents of Randal Park. I also am proud of our new stairwell math facts decals that were installed over the winter break. Our students love the look, and we are encouraged to see them practicing their math facts as they walk through the building. Thank you, PTA, for your continued support and generosity.



Eagle Creek Elementary School

BY ROB MCCLOE, PRINCIPAL

Each month we recognize two safety patrols for their hard work and dedication to ECE. For the month of December, Sophia Gonzalez and Luke Heidelman were awarded ECE's Safety Patrol of the Month.

On Monday, Jan. 8, our school honored the University of Central Florida for their perfect season in football. Students, faculty and staff members wore their black and gold to show their UCF pride.



Eagle Creek Valentine Project

Eagle Creek Kiwanis Kids are excited to bring Valentine greetings to residents of the Watercrest Assisted Living facility in Lake Nona. K-Kids made beautiful Valentine cards for the residents at their January meeting. They are currently collecting hand and foot lotions, pocket tissue packs, and chocolates to make goodie bags to distribute with the cards on a visit to Watercrest on Feb. 13. Eagle Creek K-Kids are looking forward to their visit to wish a "Happy Valentine's Day" to all Watercrest residents!



Elementary Orchestra at NorthLake Park Community School

BY SALLY SHUMAN

Only 35 Orange County Public Schools (OCPS) elementary schools are fortunate enough to host an elementary string program, and NLP Community School is one of the privileged few! The string program is taught by OCPS employee Shona McFayden.

Violin class begins in 4th grade, and the students are recruited at the end of 3rd grade via an assembly that includes a 4th grade violin class performance/demonstration and 4th grade violin class applications being made available to 3rd grade students. Classes are restricted to 28 students, so prompt submission of applications is important.

Once in 5th grade, 4th grade violin students may choose to switch to viola, cello or string bass in order to create a balanced string orchestra. Two students will be chosen to represent NLP Community School at the prestigious Elementary Honors Music Festival, usually held in February.

The long-term intention is for string students to continue with orchestra classes throughout middle school and high school. String players are in great demand at the university level. This is such a wonderful addition to be able to include in your college application!



Innovation Middle School

BY 6TH GRADERS
MACKENZIE ANDREW
AND AVERY REISS

Did you hear about the new middle school that opened in August? If not, here are some of the details:

Innovation Middle School is a completely digital school, and the students', or "Phoenixes," eyes were opened to a new spectrum of things to do digitally and physically. To start off, there have been two school plays, multiple concerts, two school dances, and many different sporting events.

The Student Government Association has done so much for our school, like organizing the dances, raising around \$400 for Puerto Rico by selling wristbands, and also donating and organizing clothes that were generously given to the new Puerto Rican students.

Student Government is not the only club that plans to do much more in the future. There are a multitude of other clubs students participate in. For example, Coding Club, Theater Club, Builders Club, and the Engineering Club. Along with clubs to help students build their skills, there are classes that students can take to enrich their skills: Journalism, AVID, Art, Band, Orchestra, Chorus, Spanish, Technology, and so much more. If students or their parents ever feel that they need a little more help in school, Phoenix Flight Academy is offered every Saturday for the first semester for civics, math, science, and language arts.

As for sports, students can participate in official school sports such as basketball (which will be starting shortly), volleyball, track and field, and soccer. Additionally, the school offers intramural sports, which are sports that occur before school and change every few weeks. Let the Phoenixes Soar!



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STEM Focus: How to Prepare For Grad School

BY ANDRE GARCIA

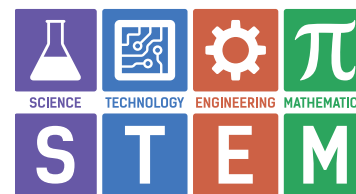
A recent LinkedIn Workforce Report indicated that hiring in December 2017 was 24.2% higher than in December 2016. The sectors with the biggest year-over-year gains were the financial services and insurance sector, aerospace, automotive, and architecture and engineering. In a previous article, I highlighted the high-tech transformation the finance industry is going through. The insurance industry is going through a similar transformation with advanced analytics going into their predictive models and actuarial sciences efforts. Seen through that lens, every single industry mentioned above that has seen the greatest year-over-year gains in employment growth are fundamentally science, technology, engineering, and math focused. A closer look at the industries with significant job growth demonstrates a subtle inclination for new and emerging fields such as advanced manufacturing, advanced data analytics and big data, machine learning, and a number of other fields as discussed in a number of prior *STEM Corner* columns. A number of these fields require an advanced degree, which is the purpose of this column, to discuss graduate admissions in STEM disciplines in the 21st century.

The path to getting into a college or university for undergrad is a lot different than for graduate admissions. For undergrad, a high school student begins by studying for a standardized test like the SAT or ACT, working diligently on maintaining a high GPA throughout high school, and getting involved in a number of extracurricular activities such as clubs and athletics, all in an effort to demonstrate

to the admissions staffs that they are a well-qualified and well-rounded individual. Thousands, if not tens of thousands, apply for undergraduate admissions to a single university for a few hundred or a few thousand admissions slots. Depending on the size and competitiveness of the university, the acceptance rate can be as little as a few percent for some of the smallest and most elite academic institutions to acceptance rates of more than 50% to some of the largest and less competitive universities. Usually, as long as you meet certain thresholds in GPA, standardized test scores, and a few other factors that can help with admissions, there's a decent probability that a student will find admission to at least one of the schools they have applied to, assuming they have applied to a variety of schools ranging in competitiveness (which is a strategy of its own).

This model for the undergraduate application and admissions process is not exactly the same for the graduate admissions process. In graduate admissions, usually the specific college within a university (e.g. College of Engineering within X University) and, even more specifically, the individual departments (e.g. Department of Electrical Engineering within the College of Engineering) have nearly all of the authority to grant admissions to grad school. This differs from the undergraduate admissions process of most schools, particularly large state schools, which have a centralized admissions department for the whole university. There are obviously individual differences between each university depending on its size and available resources, but for the most part, the individual colleges and departments are making the final admission decision for grad schools once a centralized office of graduate admissions staff has determined you meet at least some minimum thresholds and standards set by the university. For this reason, making individual connections with faculty from universities to which you wish to apply for grad school is critical. Your chances of gaining admission to a graduate program go up significantly if you have communicated with and established a rapport with a faculty member whom you'd like to work with at the graduate level.

Grad school, for the most part, is a more personalized and intimate experience with your colleagues and professors. You often work on research and papers together, student-teacher ratios are far smaller than at the undergraduate level, and professors often turn into colleagues in the future. For this reason, professors like to get to know aspiring students who would like to enter their graduate program and make sure they are a good fit for the program, not only academically but also interpersonally. Also of critical importance to the graduate admissions process are letters of recommendation from professors with whom you got to work in undergrad. Professors within the same discipline often know each other and will recommend students to each other not only by writing them a letter of recommendation but by making a personal phone call to an old colleague with whom they've probably collaborated. For this reason, it is critical for undergrads to get involved with research and collaborating with professors during undergrad to get know your professors better and earn a letter of recommendation from them. This also gives the undergrad student a better understanding of the field and a chance to see what is expected of life as a grad student.



Dr. Andre Garcia is a human factors scientist/engineer in the defense industry and owner of EduCoach Orlando. He has previously worked as a research scientist at the Army, Navy and Air Force and in the Statistical Research Division of the U.S. Department of Commerce. Through EduCoach Orlando, he coaches high school and early college students on STEM fields and education and career planning, including how to navigate the college prep, application, admission, and selection process, and also performs this for pro-bono cases. To learn more, please visit EduCoachOrlando.com.



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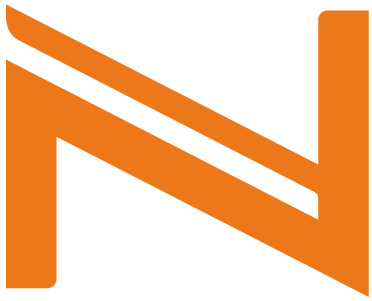


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EVENTS

Family Fridays

BY VANESSA POULSON

In a month dedicated to love, it can often be difficult to find fun events for the whole family. Luckily, Central Florida is constantly bustling with plenty of exciting options for family members of all ages. Check out some exciting event options below!

Orlando Museum of Art's 1st Thursday: Unhinged! Feb. 1.

An exciting exhibit based on windows and doors, openings and closings, and beginnings and endings. Admission is \$15.

Orlando Magic vs. Washington Wizards! Feb. 3.

Watch our local Orlando Magic take charge against the Washington Wizards. Tickets available on the Amway website.

Central Florida Strawberry Picking: Throughout February.

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Interfaith Yoga At Spring of Life Methodist Church

BY NATALIA FOOTE

"When we let freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, 'Free at last! free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!'" (Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., "I Have a Dream.")

On Martin Luther King Day 2018, Interfaith Yoga Project held a free yoga class at Spring of Life Methodist Church. The event was attended by more than 45 participants ranging in age, faith and various levels of yoga experience. "The point of Interfaith Yoga Project is to bring people together who normally wouldn't come together," said Candace Martin, an organizer of Interfaith Yoga Project. "We meet new people and find our commonalities."

The evening began with Mrs. Martin joyously welcoming all the participants. She was warm and inviting, and it placed new yogis at ease. Pastor Josh Bell then welcomed everyone to his congregation and briefly explained the meaning of being a Christian and Methodist and welcomed all to Spring of Life.

The evening continued with the resonating voice of Dene Gainey as it projected across the room. He sang *Lift Every Voice and Sing*, the black national anthem, and the hairs on my arm began to rise as I heard the powerful lyrics on a day to remember a man who fought for those ideals. Mr. Gainey then sang *This Little Light of Mine*, and the participants began to sing along.

The participants were led in a gentle yoga class with live guitar played by Edwin White. The focus was breath and opening the heart or chest. Everyone was guided to move at their own pace and level. Bodies of all shapes, sizes and abilities breathed as one and moved in a way their body allowed them to. During the practice, Julia Chinnock and Joanmarie Seacord, organizers of Interfaith Yoga Project, adjusted and demonstrated modifications for the various levels. For savasana, or the final resting pose, Natalie Ford sang *We Shall Overcome*, and once again, the participants sang along in what felt like a magical union of souls.

"The meaning of yoga is to

join," said Candace Martin, who is of the Jewish faith. The Interfaith Yoga Project was born after the Jewish and Muslim communities were creating interfaith dialog two years ago. Yoga is simply a vehicle to meet new people and gain a better understanding. "It's a welcoming activity where we are taught to simply hold space for one another."

Pastor Josh along with Spring of Life have been participating in interfaith programs for two years as well, holding a forum for Christians to learn about Muslim and Jewish faiths. The project began after a Spring of Life member became friends with a neighbor who was Muslim. The member and Pastor Josh were invited to the mosque, where they met the imam, or worship leader. From there, Pastor Josh was introduced to Rabbi Skolnik through the Interfaith Council of Central Florida, and thus he has pursued interfaith awareness at his congregation.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., said, "I have a dream that one day...little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls and walk together as sisters and brothers." Shortly after singing, Natalie Ford said to me, "Seeing the diversity in the group and seeing the blonde boy in a Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., shirt made me think, his dream has become reality."

To learn more about Interfaith Yoga Project, visit www.InterfaithYogaProject.com.



Natalia Foote leading yoga practice and Guitarist Edwin White



Natalie Ford and Child Participant



The Participants of Interfaith Yoga Project on MLK Day



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FOOD & DRINKS

Food Challenge: The Dentist's Worst Nightmare

BY MATT TROY JONES AND AARON FERG

Ladies and gentlemen, your local food challengers are back with another edition after a very long two-month hiatus. Why the wait? Well, after Aaron broke new records at the blood pressure machine, and the doctors told us to take a six-month cleanse to let our bodies settle back down, we decided to listen, so we're back...four months shy of our directives. The show must go on! For this article, we also have a very special announcement. We have officially made it "BIG TIME." Meaning, we now have a professional photographer on board to document our excursions. On top of that, our new professional has a name, AND she is also going to be contributing to our article from a more...foodie-istic sense. Without further ado, let us introduce Victoria Putzeys. Victoria is a professional food photographer and graduate of Florida State University.



So, now that we have our dynamic trio of food professionals complete, and fully introduced, let us present to you this month's order of business. We decided to poll our followers on Facebook about their favorite post-dinner delights, and the suggestions came pouring in (another reason we felt we needed a third person to help us dine). The order was tall, the list was long, but nothing is beyond the budget our producers at Nonahood News will allow us to fully commit to an edutainment article (I thought I made up that word, but apparently Webster's does recognize educational+entertainment). Desserts, people! I'm talking about desserts! The best way to finish a fantastic dinner, or the best way to be sure you fall asleep as soon as you finally choose a Netflix show. We wanted to try the best in the area and tell you our absolute favorites.

Our first stop was our local hangout, Canvas. Chef Bryan Thoman highly recommended his new seasonal cheesecake. Pretzel crust, peanut butter cheesecake, chocolate cake, caramel, peanut butter icing, pretzel crumbs, chocolate drizzle and a hunk of peanut brittle (yes, this is the description of one item), the cake looked as crazy as it sounded. If gluttony is your favorite sin, this cake is for you – rich, decadent and completely worth the obscene amount of calories it surely contains. The cheesecakes here are seasonal, and this one is worth a stop at Canvas. We also tried Canvas' Key Lime Toasted Meringue Tartlette. This has been on the menu since day 1 for Canvas, and there is a reason why. A classic, creamy key lime pie, the flavors are bright and the balance between sweet and tart is spot on.

Stop number two was a short trip down the road, Chroma. Chroma's desserts follow the small plates theme of their menu; it's best to get a few and share with the table. There are five desserts to choose from. We decided to stick to just three, as we had a long adventure ahead of us. Dessert number one was a hit with all of us. Butter-



scotch Bread Pudding, served warm with a brown sugar sauce and a side of caramel ice cream, this (spoiler alert) was decidedly Matt's favorite of the night – comfort food at its finest. Second choice was the Chocolate Pot de Creme – luxurious smooth texture, rich chocolate flavored with an orange liquor. This one was also a winner.

Choice three was Banana Pudding...Nilla wafers are awesome.

We took the short walk from Chroma to Bosphorous for stop number three. Two desserts was our limit here. One of the most unique desserts of the night was the Kunefe: Turkish sweet cheese baked in shredded filo dough topped with a citrus syrup and crushed pistachios. This was one of Aaron's favorite desserts of the night. The second offering from Bosphorous was the baklava cheesecake. The cheesecake was light and had a wonderful lemon flavor, although it could have used more baklava in order to be called a baklava cheesecake.



For our next stop we headed down Narcoossee, as one of the recommendations submitted to us was the Zepopolis from Nona Tap Room. As usual, the staff at one of the neighborhood's favorite watering holes was welcoming, friendly and ready to pour a beer from their abundant selection. The Zepopolis came out of the kitchen piping hot. They were stuffed with brownie batter and covered in a raspberry sauce. Bring a friend to share them with because there's plenty, although one could tackle this dessert alone if you weren't planning to have actual dinner.



Off to Piazza Italia. The staff and atmosphere are always great. It feels like you're family inside this authentic Italian ristorante. We ordered two classic Italian desserts here, Tiramisu and a cannoli. When our server discovered we were in for dessert only, he was very insistent that we order the profiteroles as well. The made-in-house Tiramisu was spot on – lady fingers with just enough espresso and lightly sweetened whipped cream. The cannoli was classic. The shell was fresh and crunchy, and the creamy filling was sweet and dotted with chocolate chips. The profiteroles, basically a cream puff topped with chocolate, were very nice as well – light and flaky with a sweet cream filling and a generous amount of chocolate on top. The desserts here definitely match the ambiance of the location, like you just finished dinner at your Italian grandmother's home, and she just brought over a big plate of sweets, "C'mon, have another!"



On to the most highly recommended dessert from our facebook friends, Nona Blue's carrot cake. We were skeptical that a carrot cake could really live up to all the hype, but even during our travels we had another recommendation that night that we "have to go try it." The slice delivered to us was huge, easily enough for three people. There was a reason this cake had so many fans; it was fantastically awesome. It was warm, and perfectly moist, definitely the best carrot cake any of us has had. The layer of frosting on top was perfect, enough to add some sweetness without overdoing it. If you've lived in Nona for years, and like us, never had Nona Blue's carrot cake, you need to get in your car and drive directly there because now you have no excuse.

Our last stop came at Matt's insistence, Wendy's french fries dipped in a Frosty and eaten while driving down the road. Matt was the only one who had stomach left to partake in this apparent ritual and seemed to stay quiet for the rest of the drive home, so let's all just assume he knows what he was talking about.

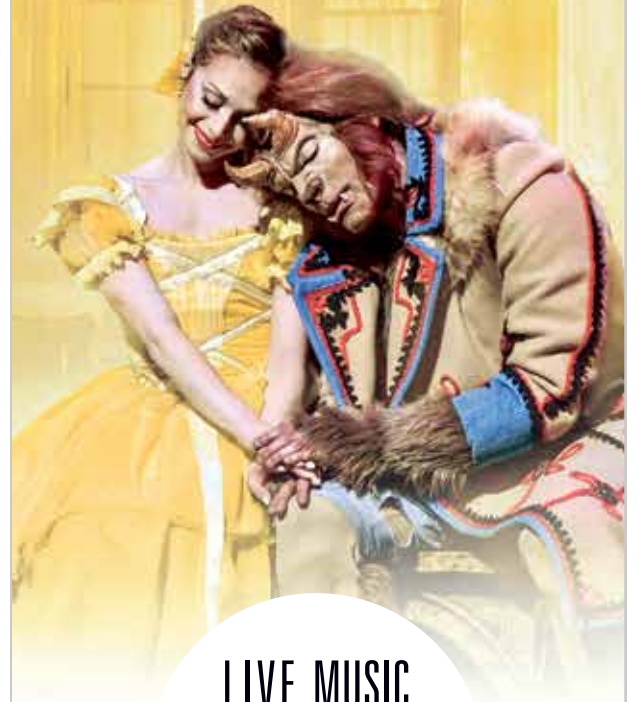
So, you're probably thinking this is dessert information overload, way too many desserts to try, and you're sort of right. Don't do it all in one day, but they are all very well worth your attention. However, we have decided to each pick a favorite and leave you all with that. As stated before, Matt's pick: the Bread Pudding at Chroma. Aaron's pick: Baklava Cheesecake at Bosphorous. Finally, Victoria's pick: the Key Lime Toasted Meringue Tartlette.

If you have a food challenge you would like us to try, please submit it at: <http://nonahood.to/foodchallenge>.

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Back to Basics: Sweet X's and O's

BY NICOLE LABOSCO AND
 VANESSA POULSON

Welcome to Back to Basics, where we classy ladies try to establish just how basic one can be in the Orlando area. Each month, we'll be taking on a new theme, and we'll be searching for the best in basic trends. We've all heard some of the most recent popular foodie trends: charcoal, galaxy and unicorn, as well as familiar classics such as pumpkin spice and peppermint. We hope we can inspire the rest of the Nonahood to embrace their inner basic.

The month of love is here! Check out some of these sweet snacks and hopefully you'll fall in love with them just as much as we did!

-XOXO Nicole and Van

Place: Le Macaron Celebration

Order: Gingerbread Macaron, Matcha Tea Macaron, Colombian Coffee Macaron, Rose Macaroon, Basil White Chocolate Macaron, Lavender White Chocolate Macaroon



Final Review Nicole: *Oui! Oui! Oui! Les macarons sont magnifiques!* (Yes! Yes! Yes! The macarons are magnificent!) The texture of these French delicacies is literal perfection! A slight crunch of the hard exterior is followed by the soft and smooth texture of the inside cream. The Basil White Chocolate was nice with a light and sweet flavor. The Rose was so delicious! The perfume aftertaste was apparent, which I love! The Lavender White Chocolate was the perfect, delicate delight with a perfumey aftertaste. The Matcha Tea was tasty and light. What's better than the French culture of love, a little romance and some perfectly light sweet treats? So what are you waiting for?! Grab your boo (or a friend) and treat yourself to this celebration in Celebration!

Final Review Vanessa: *J'aime les macarons!* (I love macarons!) How fitting that in the month that is socially dedicated to love, we stop at a store with sweet treats from a country where the language is one of the most romantic on the planet?

I love French macarons. How could you not? Between the color, texture, taste, and their petite size, it's hard not to fall in love with the appeal of them. I definitely missed France while I was sitting here enjoying the macarons. The environment and look of Le Macaron is already enough to make you feel sweet, comfortable, and right at home. In my opinion, it's a great place for a date night or fun afternoon out for coffee (I'm looking at you, boyfriends everywhere!).

Taste: 8/10

Aesthetic: 9/10

Environment: 9/10

Price: 5/10 (a bit on the expensive side)

Proximity to Nonahood: 5/10
 (Celebration is a bit of a drive)

Place: Kilwin's Creamery Celebration

Order: Double Dark Chocolate Fudge, Sea Salt Caramel Fudge



Final Review Nicole: If you've read any of our previous articles, you know my obsession with sea salt caramel. This fudge was good but way too sweet. I guess you could say I'm not the biggest fudge fan. I took like three bites and then called it quits.

Final Review Vanessa: Fudge is great! I love chocolate and the sweet richness of it, however, fudge can also be a bit overwhelming as far as how much I can handle in one sitting. After four or five bites, I felt I had enough of the sweetness for the day. Though it is definitely a great Valentine's Day treat, I don't think that I could eat too much of it at once – I feel like I'd go into a sugar coma. Kilwin's has always been a sentimental place for me, as I spent most of my childhood living in Celebration, and this was a frequent ice cream stop for my family and me. Overall, I liked the fudge and the environment of Kilwins, I just need it in small doses.

Taste: 6/10

Aesthetic: 7/10

Environment: 7/10

Price: 6/10 (BOGO-\$5.62 for 2 large chunks)

Proximity to Nonahood: 5/10
 (Celebration is a bit of a drive)

Place: Vespr Coffeebar

Order: Godiva Chocolate Mocha

Final Review Vanessa: I tackled this mocha all on my own for this issue! I've been a chocolate fanatic for most of my life, and this mocha never disappoints (it's one of my favorite things to order at Vespr, with almond milk instead of dairy). The mocha is rich and creamy with real chocolate (not the kind of fake syrup that some coffee chains rely on). It's good both hot and iced, so whatever you feel for the warm Florida February, know that, served either way, it will taste just as good. I would drink a thousand of these. Easy.

Taste: 9/10

Aesthetic: 10/10

Environment: 7/10

Price: 6/10

Proximity to Nonahood: 6/10

Place: Cooper's Hawk

Order: Vin Chocolat Noir Wine

Final Review Nicole: Chocolate and wine lovers rejoice! Are you feeling fancy? This red is a perfect dessert wine. It has aromas of cherry and raspberry intertwined with chocolate. This pairing creates a delicious, intriguing and mouthwatering combination. It tastes like chocolate covered cherries and raspberries. The palate is rich and sweet with ripe red fruit flavors and leads to a long chocolate and berry finish. It was so smooth, I felt like a million bucks drinking it. It pairs well with anything and everything chocolate, according to Cooper's Hawk, which might be a little overkill on the chocolate for me. The wine was just enough! The Vin Chocolat Noir wine is class in a glass. I'd enjoy this in small doses over and over!

Taste: 9/10

Aesthetic: 8/10

Environment: 8/10

Price: 8/10

Proximity to Nonahood: 6/10

Place: Gideon's Bakehouse

Order: Chocolate Chip Cookie and Cookies and Cream Cookie



Final Review Nicole: Holy crap, this is one killer cookie. No, seriously, this is diabetes in one bite. At first glance, this is just a giant out-of-control oreo and I'm not complaining. The cookies and cream overpowers the actual cookie and honestly, I forgot it was even there! At half a pound, taking more than one or two bites is difficult enough, but it's no wonder Gideon's is getting noticed and they sell out nearly everyday!

Final Review Vanessa: THESE COOKIES ARE HEAVEN! I see now why the line was out the door when we got here, and why there is a limit of only six cookies per customer! I have never tasted a cookie that is such a balance of biting into soft cookie dough, while also being the perfect salty treat. They are QUITE the hefty cookie as well, weighing in at half a pound! From the first bite, you are met with intense sweetness and just the right amount of salt from a light sprinkle of sea salt on top. I can totally see why this place was featured on the YouTube channel Insider Dessert – they combine a classic aesthetic appeal with an interesting market idea for cookies. The rest of East End Market is just as easily an aesthetic wonderland, with plenty of cute spots for photo opportunities and some savory snacks after you've satisfied your sweet tooth.

Taste: 10/10

Aesthetic: 10/10

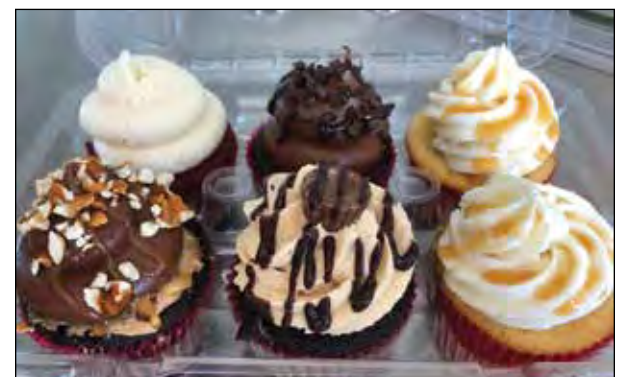
Environment: 10/10

Price: 6/10

Proximity to Nonahood: 5/10

Place: The Naked Cupcake Food Truck

Order: Salted Caramel Cupcake and Peanut Butter Cup Cupcake



Final Review Nicole: I'm not normally one who wants her dessert craving fulfilled by a cupcake, but that Salted Caramel cupcake is to die for. The salted caramel cream filling breaks up a normally dry cupcake and keeps it moist. The topping of caramel drizzle and a sprinkle of sea salt made my mouth water. I'm a HUGE advocate for the salty/sweet combo and can honestly never have enough of it. The variety of flavors that The Naked Cupcake provides is great for all preferences and the best part is that you can create your own cupcake, too!

Final Review Vanessa: I had the pleasure of enjoying a Reese's in cupcake form and it was 10 out of 10, DELISH! My sweet tooth and cravings have been satisfied!

Taste: 10/10

Aesthetic: 10/10

Environment: 10/10

Price: 7/10

Proximity to Nonahood: 10/10
 (Food Truck=Mobile)

Next month, we feature everything green (with some Reubens, too) for that Saint Patrick's Day flair!



Katie's Cucina: Cajun Shrimp and Andouille Skillet Dinner

BY KATIE JASIEWICZ, KATIESCUCINA.COM

I hope everyone enjoyed my meal planning 101 article last month. I've received a lot of comments from people who enjoyed learning how I meal plan, and most have put the tools to use. They have also requested some easy, healthier dinners that they can add to their weekly meal rotation. I love sharing a decadent chocolate dessert or a mouth-watering filet mignon recipe in ode to Valentine's Day, but this year I'm sharing a Cajun-inspired recipe to honor Fat Tuesday, and of course an easy skillet recipe to get dinner on the table a little quicker. Of course, it doesn't have to be Fat Tuesday to cook Cajun food.

I love how quickly this meal comes together. The rice will cook while the sausage and fresh vegetables reduce down in the skillet. Add in the fresh shrimp and a few fresh herbs and, voila, dinner is done. Best of all – it's under 35 minutes from start to finish!

Of course, you can skip the King Cake and instead of white rice make quinoa, brown rice, or even spiralize zucchini to make zoodles. This will make the meal that much healthier without lacking flavor. Depending on what side dish you decide to make, your cooking times will vary, so keep that in mind. If you're looking for a quick and easy meal with a little more spice and flavor, this recipe for Cajun shrimp and Andouille skillet dinner needs to be placed on your weekly meal plan!



Prep time: **15 minutes**

Cook time: **20 minutes**

Total time: **35 minutes**

Yield: **4**

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 red onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 Andouille sausage links, sliced
- 1 green bell pepper, diced
- 1 yellow bell pepper, diced
- 1 orange bell pepper, diced
- 2 tablespoons Cajun seasoning
- 5 plum tomatoes, diced
- 24 extra-large shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 2 cups cooked rice
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

DIRECTIONS:

1. Place the olive oil, diced red onion, minced garlic, and Andouille sausage in the skillet. Cook on medium-high heat for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
2. Add in the diced bell pepper and Cajun seasoning. Mix well and cook with the lid on for 5 additional minutes.
3. Once the peppers begin to soften, add in the plum tomatoes, mix well and reduce the heat to medium. Cook for 5 minutes with the lid off. Then add in the shrimp and cook for 5 minutes with the lid on.
4. Divide the rice between 4 plates, then divide the Cajun shrimp and Andouille sausage between the plates. Top each plate with minced fresh parsley, enjoy immediately.

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LIFESTYLE

Fashion Dose: Dinner Fashion Trends In Lake Nona

BY ABIGALE LEWIS

As winter is around us, Lake Nona, Florida is experiencing a chill that might require a few extra layers. It's January-February, and night time chills can reach as low as the 30s or 40s. Don't let the drop in temperature discourage your weekend plans. Whip out your knitted cardigans and throw on a pair of thigh-high boots while I walk you through a few simple chic, cozy trends that'll make Friday dinner reservations into a memorable family photo shoot. Looking good while eating well are becoming mutually inclusive in the hot spots of Lake Nona restaurants.

Here are a few good tips to staying warm while enjoying dinner.

First things first, anything white is out of the question! Leave your Chanel and Free People white blouses in your closet and slip into a neutral silk long-sleeve blouse. It'll keep your body warm and lessen the number of layers. For dessert, they're serving chocolate layer cake, but you won't realize the layers you're wearing while you're eating. According to texeresilk.com, with this material, "It's natural temperature-regulating properties give silk this paradoxical ability to cool and warm simultaneously. Silk garments thus outperform other fabrics in both summer and winter. Silk worn as a second layer warms without being bulky."

So, let's wear something different while having your regular go-to dishes. If you favor bold colors, gold or copper tones are great alternatives for any complexion. "People of Lake Nona, spice up your life!" As fashion trends make full circles, the '90s are back, and the influential style of the Spice Girls is coming to dinner.

As parents set dinner times, the kids are setting trends at the dinner table. Crop-top turtlenecks and sporty basketball tear-aways are the ultimate ways to show off your girl power. Not to mention staying warm and comfort-

able throughout the night. Expressing your inner girl power heats up the night in creative selfies on Snapchat with confused parents in the background. Get your mom to bring out the authentic originals hidden for years because of the warm climate. I know she's dying to wear that burgundy velour two-piece that only has rights at the dinner table or walking in Disney Springs.

For any inquiries finding the best Sporty Spice attire, UrbanOutfitters.com has authentic Adidas tear-away track pants that give high quality '90s vintage appeal. I had the pleasure of meeting a young fashionista in Lake Nona patiently waiting for her family to arrive at their favorite dinner spot at Chroma. Channeling her inner girl power,



Laura Martinez was eager to snap a few candid shots prior to dinner time. To see more #NonaFashion #thefashionistasdiary #thefashionistastories trends, follow her



intricately styled Instagram [@laurasmq](https://www.instagram.com/laurasmq).

PSA: Floridians – you might need boots this season, so turn in those Old Navy flip-flops. UGGs are in full effect, and so are those designer thigh-high boots hidden in your closet.

On the eclectic high-fashion site, theblondesalad.com, Francesca Zaccagnini prominently displays fall/winter 2018 looks that are walking into the mountain-wear trends. I can always rely on this site to show what's exclusively trending all over the world! Suede and jacquard style or '90s-style fancy materials with minimal buckles are showing within brands like Prada, Antonio Berardi, Dolce & Gabbana. The only side effect is early starts to lace up those fancy materials by dinner time. So, compliment dinner with a few extra layers of style and enjoy a picture perfect cozy evening.



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Menswear... Is It a Thing?

BY ZAC CHAMBERS

I'm not one to dawdle. I'd rather be straightforward. So let's cut to the chase...menswear IS a thing. And it's powerful.

I truly felt the weight of this in the fall of 2012 when I moved to New York City and was on the job hunt. New Yorkers need only a moment to decide whether or not they're going to take you seriously. I quickly learned that if you walk into an interview and don't dress the part, even with all the qualifications in the world, you are immediately fighting an uphill battle. However, if you walk in and are put together, looking like you already have the job, you've won over the interviewers before you've even sat down. They just need to confirm you have the qualifications.

Whether you like it or not, people judge you and formulate opinions on you based on your appearance. It's called first impression and is a fact of life. Beyond being important for the professional world, how you dress is a representation of who you are as an individual. When figuring out your personal style, there are a few factors to consider: Where do I live? What is my profession? What are my hobbies? What cultures have impacted my life? What is my personality? A summation of influences like these should determine what your personal style will be. It's important to be intentional in how you present yourself so you may be perceived accurately.

Men are finally realizing this again. I say "again" because society's value in menswear tends to come and go in waves. We're once more at a time when men are becoming more aware of how important their clothes are in presenting themselves to society. In the past 10 years, there has been a major spike in men's interest in apparel. They're no longer begrudgingly being dragged into stores by their significant other. Miraculously, they're walking in of their own accord. All jokes aside, men are making decisions and purchases for pieces and looks that make sense for them and not just blindly following tradition or trends.



How you dress and how you're perceived is important. Whether you're confident in your style, trying to find your style, or searching for insights for the man in your life, we're speaking to you. We hope to be a menswear resource of information, tips, encouragement and creativity. This is only the first of many columns on menswear, so if you have a question, concern, or you'd like us to address a specific topic, let us know by filling out this form:
<http://nonahood.to/menswear>



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Travel: Munich and Selva Val Gardena, Dolomites, Italian Alps

BY DEBORAH BULLEN

Do you remember a blip on the news about the blackout in Atlanta, where all air traffic was halted for a day? The day was Dec. 17, and we were scheduled to fly from Orlando to Atlanta to Munich. But instead of flying to Atlanta, we sat around the Delta Sky Club all day trying to find the best alternate route. I know the Sky Club is a much better place to be stuck, but still...thank God for Delta. Unlike cut-rate airlines, they have connections with lots of other airlines and were able to find us a flight out of Orlando that night.

So, later that night, off we went on Virgin Air for Manchester, England – not exactly close to our final destination and not exactly a good international airport, but Virgin Air, I can tell you without reservation, is a very good airline. After many weather-related delays in Manchester, we finally reached Munich around 5 p.m. the next day.

Munich was only several hours from our real goal of reaching Selva in the Italian Alps and the closest international airport. We planned to stay in Munich for only a couple days anyway, so once we recuperated from the flight delays, it was easy. We spent the next day wandering the Marienplatz, with its many Christmas market stalls filled with wonderful Christmas ornaments and other handcrafted goods as well as stalls dedicated to serving *Gluhwein*, a hot mulled wine that is pretty seriously wonderful on a freezing cold winter night. It's a staple in German-speaking countries but is also traditionally served in England and called *glogg*, mulled wine or some variation. Whatever it's called, it's welcome on a winter night.



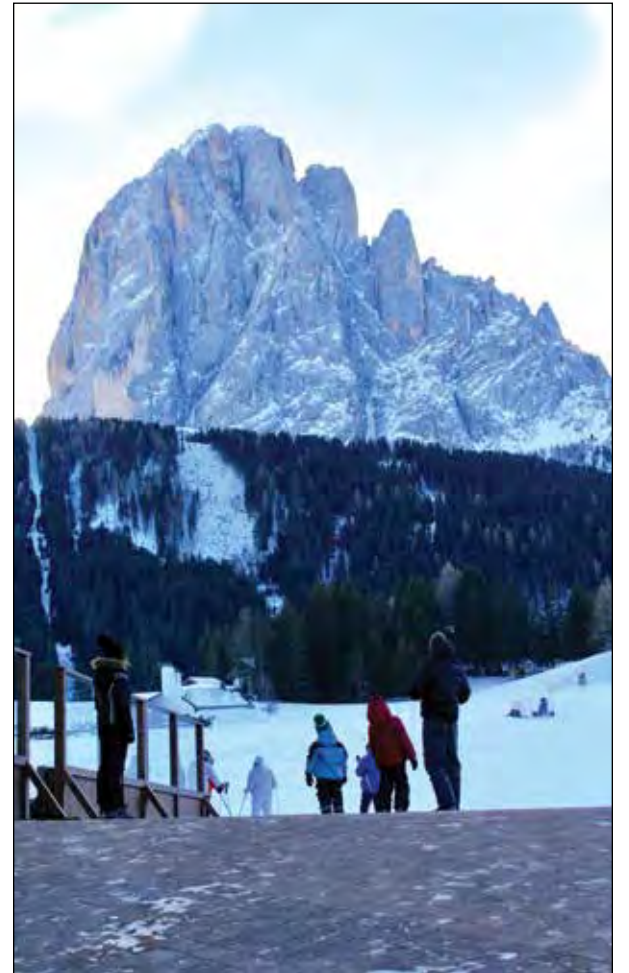
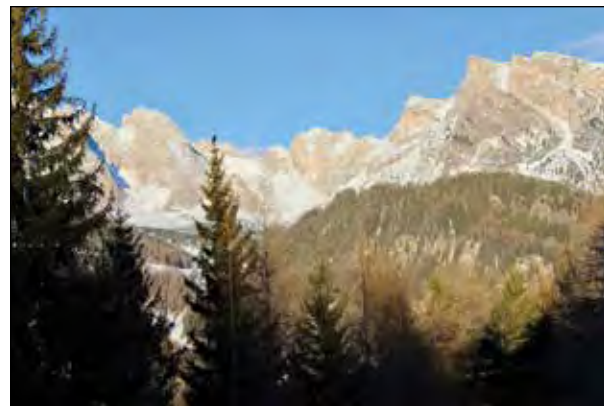
Now Selva. Not exactly a household name to most Americans. And in fact, most Europeans we encountered said, "Where is that?" Selva is one of three small towns in Val Gardena, an area in the Dolomites, along with St. Christina and Ortisei. It's a couple valleys over from Cortina d'Ampezzo, which you might have actually heard of as it's a more popular ski destination. But assuming you're still lost, as I would be were I not the intrepid traveler I am, it's as beautiful a place as I'm ever likely to encounter. I'm also absolutely sure we would never have ventured there were it not for my son, who is living in Italy. He had previously hiked there a year ago and said we really needed to plan a family ski vacation. Thus, a trip to an exotic location was born.

I'm all about exotic locations. I would easily spend my life, or at least the next 20 years, exploring every inch of the globe – the more hidden or unknown the location, the better. Meanwhile, back on planet earth, I have to take my adventures when I can get them.

We rented a villa on Airbnb that was a short, steep walk from the main town. The three villages (including St. Christina and Ortisei) are a few miles apart, each charming in its own right. Our vacation house was big enough to hold our three families with a large living area and kitchen and two dining areas. I had long discussions at night with my two grandsons, aged 2 and 3, about the

snow cats we could see on the mountain right outside our window at night. Snow cats, machinery and pretty much all methods of transportation inspire awe and lengthy discussions, in case you haven't been around a 2- or 3-year-old for awhile.

The whole area is famous for skiing the Sellaronda. As the name implies, it is the ski circuit around the Sella group and offers all degrees of difficulty, though skiers of limited expertise will find it easy to get around from even the highest drop-off points. These rock formations literally rise vertically from atop the mountains, creating a spectacular and dramatic effect. We didn't do it, but you can ski the entire circuit in a day (or in summer, you can bike it). We also ventured to Ortisei one day, where we took a funicular (uphill, on rails) to the top of the mountain ded-



icated just to sledding. Similar to ski areas, you could rent or bring your own sled, the trail was groomed, and there was a restaurant at the top. Sledding is a more organized activity and definitely more expensive.

In town, we found the usual ski shops and restaurants and the not-so-usual (at least in the U.S.) wooden Christmas market stalls with a faux gondola, reindeers and snowmen along the way for added photo and shopping opportunities. While Italian is mainly spoken here, the area of south Tyrol is a combination of German and Italian culture and cuisine. We had delicious, hearty meals. One of the most memorable was at Refugio Comici, where reservations for fine dining between chairlifts are a must. Only in Italy. Another was a wonderful meal on Christmas night, made even better by my two sons (one is my son-in-law) who footed the bill that night!

There is more because we continued on to Austria, but I'll save that for next month. Arrivederci for now!



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Nona Motors Ride Of the Month: Tweet Coleman's Tesla Model X 90D

BY BRITTANY BHULAI

Make: Tesla
Model: Model X 90D
Year: 2017
Horsepower: 417

For this month's Ride of the Month, in correlation with Valentine's Day, we found just the right car to feature: A red, multi-coat Tesla Model X.

Features:

The Tesla Model X isn't only an SUV that can achieve zero to 60 mph in about 3.2 seconds, it is also classified as the safest SUV that has been made. From the outside, the Model X might seem like a normal all-wheel drive, but it bursts at the seams with surprises. Being an all-electric vehicle, the Model X helps to protect the environment because it doesn't produce any fumes. The seats also appear to be leather but are actually a plant-based material – vegan seats. It seats five comfortably. Another unique feature is the falcon-wing doors.

Since the car is not designed like a traditional gasoline consumer, one would question what under the hood looks like. If you popped it open, you would find a convenient front trunk. That's right, a "frunk." This luxury vehicle also has a large glass windshield that Coleman describes as a "helicopter-like panoramic windshield." In the center of the car, to the right of the steering wheel, is a 17-inch touchscreen where the car's controls can be accessed.

Backstory:

Dr. Tweet Coleman first caught the Tesla bug on a visit

to Oslo, Norway, in 2016. A friend named Bjorn had introduced her to the make since Tesla was quite popular in Norway. Soon enough, Coleman urged her husband, Patrick, to check out the dealer in Oslo. Tweet first saw the Model X in a sleek black color being pulled out of the showroom. "I sat in the driver's seat and felt like I was in a pilot's seat of a small jet. This is the main reason why I instantly wanted a Tesla Model X," says Tweet.

It is safe to say Coleman has a soft spot for flying. She earned her doctorate degree in Aerospace Aviation Education and is a professor at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. "I spent years in an airplane teaching others to fly and as a Continental Airlines pilot flying Boeing 727's and Boeing 747's around the globe," Tweet says. Not only does sitting inside the Tesla feel like the cockpit of a plane, some of the functions are alike. The cockpit of a plane could have access to the same features in more than one place, and the Model X is like that, too. The dashboard also offers an electronic screen that shows a picture of the vehicle and where it sits on the road as it drives. Tweet says this is just like an airplane, especially when you are trying to land and the plane will show exactly where you are.

Tweet claims her Model X makes driving enjoyable and has a great feel. "I look forward to my next car being a flying car. I hope Elon Musk has that on his radar screen because I have been very happy with the services from Tesla," she says.

For Valentine's Day, Tweet has provided 14 reasons as to why she loves her Model X:

1. It makes driving fun, an awesome feel.
2. Safest car on the road.
3. Falcon Wing doors.
4. Helicopter-like panoramic windshield.
5. Good for the environment, no CO2.
6. Developed in the USA.
7. Made in Fremont, California.
8. All electric, all-wheel drive.
9. Minimum annual maintenance.



10. 17-inch touchscreen for all controls.
11. HEPA filtration system for clean air.
12. Frunk (front) trunk.
13. Eight-year warranty on battery.
14. Vegan interior, no leather, yet soft like leather.



In the Garden: Who's Ready for a Spring Garden?

BY AMBER HARMON

Spring is right around the corner: Who's ready to plant a vegetable garden and take full advantage of the spring season? First, decide what to plant. The success of a garden will be largely dependent on selecting seasonal varieties of plants that are meant to be grown in the spring in our Central Florida planting zone, 9b. It is important to select seeds that are heat tolerant and pest resistant to ensure they will grow well in our area. Many seed packages will tell you the zone and any resistance the plant has to heat, pests and disease, so take the time to read the packet. For a comprehensive list of which vegetables to grow in a season, you can visit the University of Florida IFAS Extension website and search for the Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/vh/vh02100.pdf>.

In the springtime, we have an amazing variety of vegetables and herbs to plant in this region. There's anything from tomatoes, eggplants and peppers, which practically grow all year round in Florida, to squash, zucchini, cucumbers, basil, and cilantro, just to name a few. Spring is a very exciting time out in the garden.

When to plant is crucial for the spring. It is important to wait until the last frost is gone to plant delicate seeds and starter plants out in the garden. It can be tricky in Florida to project the last frost or freeze date. Farmer's Almanac states that Feb. 10 is historically the average date for the last frost in our area. However, in 2017 we had a final freeze in the last week of February, so anyone who planted earlier than the 10th might have needed to replant their spring garden. A pretty safe bet is waiting until the first week of March to plant. It just depends on how much you like to gamble. Then the spring grow season typically lasts until June. The more heat tolerant plants like okra, swiss chard and kale can continue to grow into the summer months.

Where to plant is another crucial component to your gar-

den's success. A garden with southern exposure will benefit from the most hours of sunlight in the day. Vegetable gardens need a minimum of six to eight hours of sunlight each day for all vegetables to be successful. Tomatoes, eggplant, squash and okra are all plants that need this direct sunlight to be productive. Greens like romaine and arugula as well as many herbs can grow successfully in partially shaded areas. Keep this in mind when deciding what to plant and where.

Florida soil lacks many nutrients necessary to successfully grow healthy vegetables. When choosing the soil amendment you will use, be sure to include compost and worm castings to create a diverse selection of nutrients for the plants to draw from throughout the season. Side dress your plants with a compost fertilizer every four to six weeks throughout the season to continuously revitalize the plants and encourage maximum vegetable yield and nutritional value.

Make sure to design a garden based on the amount of time it takes to tend to the garden. Manually watering a garden can be a daily task. Setting up a drip irrigation system is a way to automate the watering of the garden and reduce the overall work required.

I know it seems like a lot, but that's why February is the time to plan so when the beginning of March is here, the planting can begin. Happy gardening!

Amber Harmon is the founder of My Nona's Garden, an organization with a mission to bring health, promote growth and provide education to local communities, one garden at a time. Visit www.MyNonasGarden.com for more information. "We make organic vegetable gardening easy!"



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A New Kind Of Walk

BY ODETTE VACCARO

When most people think of mindfulness, they tend to think of sitting in meditation. While this is without a doubt a great tool to include in your mindfulness practice, it is certainly not the only option.

There are times when I “catch” my mind full of a train of thoughts that has taken me out of the present moment. At times such as these, it might be difficult to stop and sit for meditation. In these moments, a mindful walk might be just the thing to help my mind come back home. This practice can really help me break free of the “chatter” that my thoughts have created and that can easily interfere with my ability to discern, think creatively and problem solve.

Mindfulness is simply our ability to become aware and pay attention to what is going on both inside and around us. With a few tweaks, your next walk can become a key piece in your mindfulness practice.

Making the conscious choice to really pay attention on your next walk, it can easily become a moving meditation. I suggest an outdoor walk whenever possible, due to the added benefits of spending time in nature. However, any walk, whether it’s moving from one floor to another within a building, walking down a city street, or going for a hike in the woods, can be an opportunity to move out of the autopilot we can so easily find ourselves in. When left to its own devices, our mind can easily return to its constant chatter, filling our brains with non-stop thinking. As a result, when we choose to take a walk or a run, it’s easy to check out or use the time to go through our to-do list. Instead, we can consciously choose to practice awareness.

Here are some simple suggestions to make your next

walk a practice in mindfulness:

1. Walk at a comfortable pace and keep your hands wherever they are most comfortable.
2. Pay attention to each step you take, noticing the lifting of the foot and how it feels when you place it on the ground. Notice the movement of your legs, your arms, and any shifting from side to side. Really pay attention to how your body feels.
3. Notice your breath. Feel the inflow and outflow of your breath. Pay attention to your belly and chest expanding when you inhale and releasing when you exhale.
4. Once you feel fully present in the body, bring your senses into play. First, feel the temperature, the wind or maybe the warmth of the sun against your skin as you walk.
5. Then, let your sense of vision take in your surroundings. Notice the objects around you. Really see their colors, shapes and textures – maybe flowers, plants or trees if outdoors.
6. Next, for a few minutes, allow yourself to turn your attention to sounds around you. Regardless of your surroundings, just notice each sound without trying to label it or decide if it’s pleasant or unpleasant. Just let your mind become aware of them.
7. Move on to your sense of smell. How does the air smell? Do you recognize any scents?
8. Keep open awareness to everything around you and within you. There is nothing to fix, nothing to do, nothing to change.
9. In the last moments of your walk, come back to the physical sensations, regardless of wherever else your mind found itself during your walk.

When you are ready to end your mindful walk, pause and breathe deeply. Then spend just a moment considering how you can maintain this sense of presence and extend it to the rest of your day.



Pet of the Month



Chappie was just the special addition we needed in our life

after our yellow lab unexpectedly passed away in 2015. His spunk, snuggles and purrs helped get us through a very difficult time. Now, we are expecting our first child in June, and Chappie has been a wonderful stand-in model for Mommy’s knitting projects for the baby. We know he will be a great fur-big brother!

Do you have the cutest / weirdest / smartest / coolest pet in Lake Nona? Let’s hear about it! Your pet could be featured in an upcoming issue! Submit your pet of the month nomination at <http://nonahood.to/pet>.



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Mama's Turn: Learning to Step Back

BY SHARON FUENTES

While making dinner one night, my then-12-year-old daughter came into the kitchen and informed me she had the sniffles and was sneezing. I did a quick inventory to make sure it was nothing serious. Cheeks a nice shade of rosy red, not flushed or pale; hand to forehead – no fever. “Say Ahh” – tonsils looked normal. By my unscientific mom standards, she seemed fine, so I told her to take some over-the-counter medicine from the cabinet. She looked at me confused and said, “I don’t know what to take.”

Now at this point, I knew I had two choices: I could hand her the spoon and tell her to stir my stir-fry while I got her the medicine, or I could step back, allow her to be more independent and learn a very important life skill by getting the medicine herself. I chose option two.

Yes, I told my very surprised tween daughter to think about her symptoms, read the boxes and figure out which of the shelves full of cough syrups, antacids and cold medicine was right for her...and to consult with me before taking anything, of course. With an eye roll and a foot stomp, she made her way reluctantly to the medicine cabinet.

As I sautéed the onions, I periodically glanced over my shoulder to see how she was doing. I could see her struggling as she tried to decipher if a decongestant was the

right choice. “Relieves sinus pressure, fever and nasal congestion,” she read out loud. “But I don’t have a fever, I’m just sneezing,” she said to herself while making sure I could hear. “When I’m like that, it’s usually allergies and not a cold,” I threw out there, hoping she would consider my unsolicited offering of information.

She rolled her eyes at me and then put the box of wrong medicine down. I secretly let out a sigh of relief and continued to fight every urge in my body to go over there and help my poor little runny-nosed, sneezing baby girl. “Step back, Sharon!” I told myself. “She can do this.”

AND SHE DID DO IT, TOO! After much inner debate, my girl held up a box with the non-drowsy antihistamine in it and said with a huge smile on her face, “This one, right?” “That is it!” I said with an even bigger smile. She took her medicine and was about to leave when she skipped back over to me and kissed my cheek. “Thanks, mom for, well, not helping me!”

I was so proud of us both that night. I had successfully helped my girl by...not helping! I took a step back, let my child struggle a little and did not bail her out. I’ll admit it was hard, but that smile on her face when she figured it out on her own, the confidence in her step when she walked away...that is what it is all about.

Learning to step back is not just about giving your child more freedom and space...it’s about allowing yourself a chance to pause and reflect. It’s about watching your child dig through the medicine cabinet knowing it is



going to be okay because she knows, without you ever saying a word, that you are right there stirring the stir-fry, ready to help, without really helping!



Sharon Fuentes is an award-winning freelance writer, special-needs parenting advisor and the author of the book, [The Don't Freak Out Guide to Parenting Kids with Asperger's](http://TheDon'tFreakOutGuide.com). You can reach her at sharon@sharonfuentes.com.

Nona Your Neighbor: Vanessa Rivera

BY VANESSA POULSON

This month, we interviewed Vanessa Rivera, house manager at the Ronald McDonald Children’s House at Nemours Children’s Hospital in Lake Nona. Vanessa not only exemplifies what it means to be an active member of the local community but also a steller source of support for families across the nation.

Check out our conversation with Vanessa below!

NHN: What do you do for work?

VR: I am the house manager at the Ronald McDonald House on the campus of Nemours Children’s Hospital. We provide temporary lodging for families that have children receiving medical treatment. I oversee and ensure the daily operation of the house, which can range from in-taking new families, hosting meetings in our community meeting room, and facility maintenance! The families I serve are going through an emotional roller coaster – taking care of your ill child is never easy, especially when you are trying to juggle and maintain support and consistency with the rest of your family! I like to think that our Ronald McDonald Houses are a beacon of comfort and stability for our families – self-care is what one needs to re-energize and continue to help their child fight his/her battle.

NHN: What brought you to Lake Nona?

VR: My job! I have been a volunteer for Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central Florida for five years and have been on staff for six years. So, with my 11 years of experience, I wanted to have the opportunity to help oversee the opening of a new Ronald McDonald House, which is a rare experience! We have been open for almost 18 months, and it makes me proud to see the house serving so many amazing families.

NHN: How long have you lived here?

VR: Technically, just over a year, but I feel like it has been a lot longer!



NHN: Where are you from originally?

VR: I was born and raised here in Orlando. I’m a Floridian! I grew up in the west side of Orlando. I went to Bishop Moore Catholic High School (Go, Hornets!), and I graduated from the beloved University of Central Florida (Go, Knights!).

NHN: What is your favorite thing in Lake Nona?

VR: I love the strong sense of community that Lake Nona has. Ronald McDonald House is so blessed to have the ongoing support from the Lake Nona Community – it has made my job a lot easier and a lot more fun. I enjoy meeting everyone in Lake Nona – everyone is so warm and supportive, which helps validate my decision for making the move down here. Also, I must say that I am OBSESSED with the raspberry iced tea at Chroma!

NHN: What are you most excited to have in the Nonahood?

VR: The unique restaurants that are settling in the area. I’m a foodie, so I am always looking for places to explore and try new dishes.

What do you think the future is for Lake Nona?

VR: Innovation immediately pops in my mind when I think of Lake Nona. I know there are going to be a lot of new and unique businesses and opportunities that will flourish in this community.

NHN: If you could tell one thing to someone considering moving here, what would that be?

VR: Prepare yourself: You will be graciously welcomed with open arms!

Do you want to nominate someone for Nona Your Neighbor? Visit [this link](http://nonahoodnews.com) or send an email to vanessa@nonahoodnews.com, tell us about your nomination, and you could be featured in the next edition of Nonahood News! <http://nonahood.to/nonaneighbor>



Nona Alumni: Lucas Holiday

BY NICOLE LABOSCO

In this recurring monthly special, *Nonahood News* will be featuring those who've graduated from Lake Nona High School and will recognize the achievements they've made since. Some will have been a part of the first graduating class. Others graduated a few years later. Few have stayed in the Lake Nona area, and many have explored the world or are still doing so. Let's see where life's journey has taken them so far!

Name: Lucas Holiday

Age: 23

Year Graduated: 2012

Occupation: Police Officer

Current Location: Maitland, Fla.



This month, I caught up with one of my close friends from high school to see where life has taken him. Lucas Holiday moved to the Lake Nona area in 2002 with his family and lived here for about 16 years before moving to Maitland. While at Lake Nona High School, Holiday played football as a safety and linebacker.

"I don't think I ever really thought about life after high school. I lived in the moment and focused on what I had in front of me. I did reach every goal I had made when it presented itself to me. I became a manager of a parking company's valet area after high school. At the age of 21, I believed this showed that I was mature and responsible beyond my years."

Transitioning from a valet manager to a police officer is one of those situations where one couldn't be any different from the other. Why did Officer Holiday choose to become an everyday hero? "I became a cop because it was something new every day. I enjoy the adrenaline rush of the situations I find myself in. I also enjoy being a part of the community and interacting with the citizens of my city."

Officer Holiday will officially reach his one-year anniversary of becoming a cop on Feb. 20. Before actually getting to hit the streets and stop crime, Holiday had to get the appropriate training in order to receive his badge and gun. "The academy lasted approximately nine months. I went to night classes for the academy. I worked every day Monday through Friday, had school Monday through Thursday and Saturday all day. I met my wife in the academy as well. After graduating, I was lucky enough to get hired by the Maitland Police Department."

Officer Holiday doesn't necessarily have any specific goals for the next five years, however he's pretty adamant about living in the moment and focusing on his career by becoming the best police officer he can become by attending specialized classes. "I have become a police officer. I have been given a great opportunity with the career I've chosen. I can go and do anything I have ever wanted. It also led me to my wife and has blessed me with many other opportunities."

How could one complain with the progress he's made? I'm looking forward to seeing where life takes him in the upcoming years.

Written for current and future Lake Nona alumni by a Lake Nona alumna. Check back in our March issue to learn about our next Nona graduate(s)!



ReThink Life A Conversation About Life, Leadership and Relationships

Your Pain May Not Be Your Problem

BY RODNEY GAGE, LEAD PASTOR

When I was in high school, I had a serious motorcycle accident while attempting to race motocross. At the time, I didn't realize the impact it would have on my neck, ultimately causing me to suffer from three herniated discs. Over time, I developed chronic neck and back pain. I found myself going to the chiropractor on a consistent basis. Most of the time, my pain was in the upper-middle part of my back between my shoulder blades. However, when the doctor gave me an adjustment, he would work on my neck. I would argue that my pain was being felt between my shoulder blades. He described my situation as "referred pain." I was feeling pain in one area that was actually being caused from another area. I was out of alignment. He would give me an adjustment in my neck that would relieve the pain and discomfort in the upper-middle part of my back.

I meet a lot of people who feel pain and discomfort in different areas of their lives (struggling marriage, poor health, stress at work or in other relationships, financial problems, etc.). One of the things I have learned in my own life as well as working with so many people is that often the pain we feel is not actually our problem. The pain is a symptom from another cause or root problem. Most of the time, the pain is due to a misalignment with their purpose. They need an adjustment to get back in proper alignment with their purpose. So how do you do that?

1. Decide What Is Important.

Unfortunately, most people's lives are not defined by what's important, but by what's urgent. The tyranny of the urgent gets us out of alignment with the things that

matter. Author John Maxwell says, "Everything worthwhile is uphill." The reason why the worthwhile things are uphill is simply because they don't come easily. We have to fight for them. We have to ultimately decide what is important to us and fight to protect those things that will ultimately bring purpose, joy and fulfillment to our lives.

2. Give Calendar Time to Important Things.

Whatever you value must be put on the calendar first. Author Michael Hyatt says, "What gets written down gets done." If you need to work on your marriage and discuss what is most important in your marriage, then put it on the calendar. If you need to adjust your diet or start exercising more, put it on your calendar. If you need financial



help, set up a time to get advice. We can talk about it all day, but at some point, we have to take action and put it on the calendar and guard it at all cost.

3. Eliminate the Non-Essentials.

The co-founder and CEO of the Keller Williams real estate company wrote a book called *The ONE Thing*. The book is centered around the question: What's the one thing I can do, such that by doing it everything else is easier or unnecessary? This is a great question that can be applied to almost any situation. It is a question to discuss with your spouse, coworker, kids and, most importantly, yourself.

4. Regularly Take Inventory.

Create a "time block" at the first of each month to reflect, review and evaluate your progress. Are you in proper alignment with the things you say are important? If not, you may need an adjustment so that your life is in proper alignment with your purpose. Life is too short not to live it on purpose.



Rodney Gage is an author, speaker and the founding pastor of ReThink Life Church. His passion is to help people live life on purpose. To learn more, check out rethinklife.com.

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Nona Ventures: Alaskan Expedition

BY NICOLE LABOSCO

We all have that one friend who is a die-hard adrenaline junkie who loves to discover their next greatest adventure. That friend is me! This feature is all about uncovering Lake Nona and Orlando's greatest activities, especially if you enjoy living life on the edge!

It's the morning of Christmas Eve, and I've found myself in Anchorage, Alaska. I'm here visiting my boyfriend, Andrew, as he's working up here for a month. I'm watching the sun begin to rise from beyond the snow-capped Chugach Mountain Range at 9:30 a.m. as my hands clasp around a toasty cup of hot chocolate. It's 17 degrees outside. I'm still trying to comprehend the fact that I'm in the 49th state, the Last Frontier and, other than Hawaii, the farthest state possible from Florida. I'm in such disbelief that I'm actually in a new state that I have to keep reminding myself where I am until it finally hits me. The first two days I spent in Alaska, lots of places were closed for the holidays, but I took that time just to drive around in the five hours of daylight. I should mention here that I've never driven in the snow or ice, so that was a fun and slightly terrifying experience. It wasn't as bad as I thought it would be, but I won't lie, I slid around turns a few times. Luckily, the streets are cleared pretty quickly to prevent any accidents.

Andrew and I visited Moose's Tooth for dinner. It's a pizzeria and brewery named after one of the mountain peaks in the Alaska Range. This is a restaurant that lots of locals recommend, and I can understand why. Moose's Tooth is usually so popular they have an entire outdoor section surrounding a fire pit just for waiting (and enjoying a freshly-brewed beer). Fortunately, we didn't have to wait as most people were home enjoying Christmas Eve. We ordered the Call of the Wild, which featured reindeer sausage, mushrooms and red bell peppers, and it was delicious! Moose's Tooth is one of those places where the crust is even begging you to eat more. I left full and satisfied.

Being able to say I experienced a white Christmas in Alaska was one for the bucket list. Although it didn't snow while I was in the town, the streets stayed icy and the blanket of white remained on the ground.

It's 4:15 p.m. With a warm cup of glacier green tea and the breathtaking sunset peeking over the awe-inspiring mountains, one can say I'm perfectly content. Honestly, these picturesque views are everything to me. I can stare at the landscape here forever and still not feel like I'm able to take it all in. How does anyone get used to these views?! Every time I look away, my eyes revert to where they were...admiring the mountainous beauty. The golden hues fill the sky, and the terrain pops with contrast against the backlit blue canopy of the sky. It's a crisp 7 degrees this morning. In the blink of an eye, ice fog rolled in, coating the trees in white. I've entered a winter wonderland. There's nothing more serene than taking in the views of the sunset – those vibrant colors pop even more in the white surroundings.

With stores opening back up now that the holidays have passed and before the year ends, I decided to go for a walk to some local shops. That thought didn't last long. At the first intersection I walked into, I slipped on some black ice and landed flat on my back. I wasn't surprised it happened, but I was laughing so hard at myself by myself.

Before the sun set, we made our way to a lookout called Flat Top Mountain, where we drove through winding roads as we gained elevation. The journey up was almost unreal, and as we reached the lookout, the sun began to set, and that was a view I will never forget. The lookout was right above where the ice fog covered everything below like a thick blanket of clouds. The sky transformed into a flame with its warm hues of vibrant yellow, orange and red. We snapped some quick photos to catch the dropping sun and made our way back down the mountain.

Back at the hotel lounge as night fell, I looked out at where the mountains were (even though you can't see them in the dark). I noticed a shape light up from the side of a mountain and realized it was in the shape of a star. I did some research and discovered that the star was a unique holiday tradition in Alaska. Called the "Star on the Mountain," the star spreads its light to everyone in Anchorage through the long and dark winter nights. It's a man-made symbol of hope and is intended to shed a little light on those lives who need it as holidays can be lonesome for some. The star also shines for the men and women who serve overseas while their loved ones wait for their safe return. It began in 1958 and has expanded in size (over 300 feet) to this day. The star shines on September 11th and then throughout the winter beginning the day after Thanksgiving and ending once the last musher finishes the Iditarod sled dog race in March. If it's foggy, it looks like the star is floating, and that's pretty cool.

After researching some local and one-of-a-kind eats, I

discovered IHOH (the International House of Hotdogs). This quaint shop was listed at number 31 for Yelp's Top 100 Places to Eat for 2017 and received UrbanSpoon's award for Top 40 Franks in America. Naturally, I was intrigued and took Andrew there for lunch. We ordered at a cute little food stand, which is parked right next to a small indoor seating area. I ordered a dog called the Denali, which was a buffalo sausage with sautéed onion and the secret chipotle crème. Talk about gourmet dogs! This little, unsuspecting stand supplied one of the best-tasting hot dogs I've ever had the pleasure of enjoying. And it was so good, I really wanted to order another from their extensive menu because pretty much all the hot dogs made my mouth water, but I was stuffed. The two employees provided some of the best customer service I've ever experienced. It truly seemed like they loved what they were doing and wanted nothing but the best for each and every customer they called "friends."

A few other noteworthy restaurants include:

Snow City Café – ranked number one out of the 15 Best Places for Brunch in Anchorage by Foursquare (try the Salmon Cakes and the Snow City Mocha).

Glacier BrewHouse – Alaska's first choice for wild Alaskan seafood, rotisserie roasted meats and handcrafted ales (try the Beer Fondue, Herb Crusted Halibut and the Rockfish; an added bonus: beautiful interior design).

49th State Brewing Company – award-winning beer brewed on site (try the NY Oscar with Blue King Crab and the Parmesan Halibut).

Due to full bookings or the weather conditions, I was unable to enjoy some of my bucket list adventures as I had planned. For those of you who are curious, that consisted of dog sledding, seeing the Northern Lights and skating on a frozen lake. I was bummed to find out some of my Alaskan dreams wouldn't happen this visit, but I have no doubt that I'll experience those adventures another time. I spent the entire visit tracking the Northern Lights and had a good chance of witnessing the spectacle on New Year's Day, but it was just too cloudy.

The real adventures began as we trekked through a winding road along the mountains and inlet to reach Alyeska Ski Resort, about 45 minutes outside of downtown Anchorage. This had to have been one of the most scenic routes I've ever been on. With majestic peaks surrounding you and signs warning of avalanche areas and falling rocks, just as we were watching the car's thermostat drop lower and lower, snowflakes began to fall so delicately. We've arrived. Surrounded by snow-covered spruce trees and elegant mountains, I was ready to snowboard for the first time. We rented our gear and were off. Since neither Andrew nor I had any snowboarding experience, we started off on a super easy baby hill (more like a mound) and had no issues. As a child, I skateboarded a lot, and snowboarding seemed to be pretty familiar territory. My only issue was nailing the true way to stop while gliding across the snow...I went for the quicker and probably more dangerous option of bailing out and just throwing myself to the ground – definitely not a good idea. I had some rough impacts, and my body was not happy the next day.

From the training wheels to what felt like the big leagues, I found myself on a ski lift up to a larger mountain with Andrew convincing me that I was ready. I was not ready. As I fell getting off the ski lift, I found myself facing Blueberry Hill, and I was completely out of my comfort zone. I'm pretty sure I even asked where the guardrails were, even though I knew that was certainly more dangerous to those snow sport enthusiasts. I discovered the hard way that my board was clearly more waxed than Andrew's as I zoomed past him every time. I'd throw myself to the ground to wait for him to catch up. Andrew would pass me and then fall. It was like a domino effect. As I rose back up to hit the slope some more and snap a quick video, I heard Andrew yell, "Watch!" but it was too late. I was slammed into and knocked back down. Turns out a young boy didn't see me and ran right into me, knocking his ski poles out of his hands, and my phone and GoPro went flying. It was like a scene straight out of a movie, and I was so upset I didn't catch the accident on video. The poor boy was just lying there with his legs bent awkwardly repeatedly saying, "Ow," as he writhed in pain. I was so scared that I was going to find his legs broken or worse. He apologized, and I helped him up, placing the ski pole back in his hand and telling him to be careful but to get back out there. I thought I was unscathed until I stood back up. Wow, my back was sore! That kid almost body slammed me off the mountain! I'm still laughing about that situation! Blueberry Hill felt like it was about 200 to 300 feet tall, and I'm not going to lie, I was scared. It literally felt like it just dropped off and went straight down, but it didn't. This was rated an easy trail, but for someone like me who hadn't mastered the stopping motion, it felt like a black diamond. I sent Andrew down first because I was too chicken and figured I should catch whatever madness was about to happen on video. As soon as he got about two feet down the hill, I lost sight of him. That terrified me even more. I swallowed my fear and took on the slope and immediately psyched myself out because of how fast I felt I was going. It seriously felt like I was going 50 mph, so I threw myself down again and I flipped, whacking my head and then sliding head first down the hill. I had to

dig my board into the snow hard to stop and felt my ankle pop. Immediately, I thought that was it, my ankle was broken. I clipped my board off and before I could stand up, the medic arrived to ask if I was okay. With a few tears rolling down my face, I said yes and stood up to begin my descent via foot. I was relieved to know I could put some pressure on my foot, but it still hurt.

I made the mistake of stretching my foot at dinner that night, and that irritated the tendon. I was in pain, in tears, and I couldn't even put any weight on it. My ankle had blown up like a balloon. The thought of going to the ER crossed my mind, but I couldn't waste my time in Alaska.

The absolute highlight of this expedition was our visit to Eklutna Lake our last full day in the 49th state. About 50 minutes in the opposite direction of Alyeska comes the absolutely breathtaking vision of a turquoise lake encircled by the mountains. If you've ever seen photos of Banff, Alberta, Canada, this is its U.S. twin. The drive was slightly unnerving as the road was covered in ice. You're driving along the edge of the mountain, then once you turn the corner and see the lake peek out from behind the spruce trees, life is nothing but a dream. We walked down to the opening, and I was at a complete loss for words. The absolute natural beauty silenced me, and I began to take in all of the wondrous views. We made our way out onto the frozen lake, where locals flocked to skate, play hockey and ice fish. I could've spend the rest of my life just sitting there, and I still wouldn't get sick of those views.

If you're wondering if I saw any bears or moose, I did not. Believe me, I'm just as surprised as you are. I expected to see some Alaskan wildlife. With all of the "Moose XING" signs I saw, I started to joke that the wildlife hid because they heard I was coming.

So there you have it, I traveled to the Last Frontier and fell in love, injured myself in more ways than one and created many memories to truly last a lifetime.

Have a suggestion? Send an email to nicole@nonahoodnews.com or fill out our Nona Ventures column form at <http://nonahood.to/nonaventure>. What do you want to see me review next?



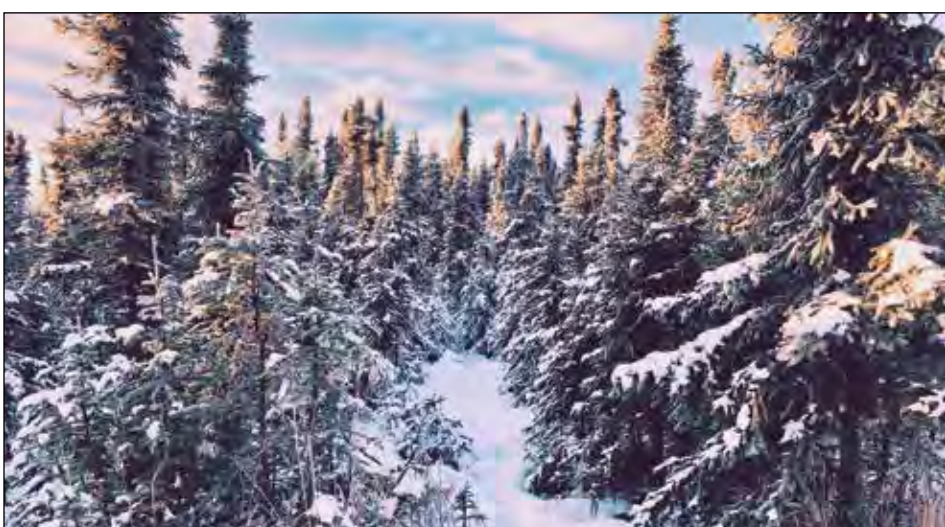
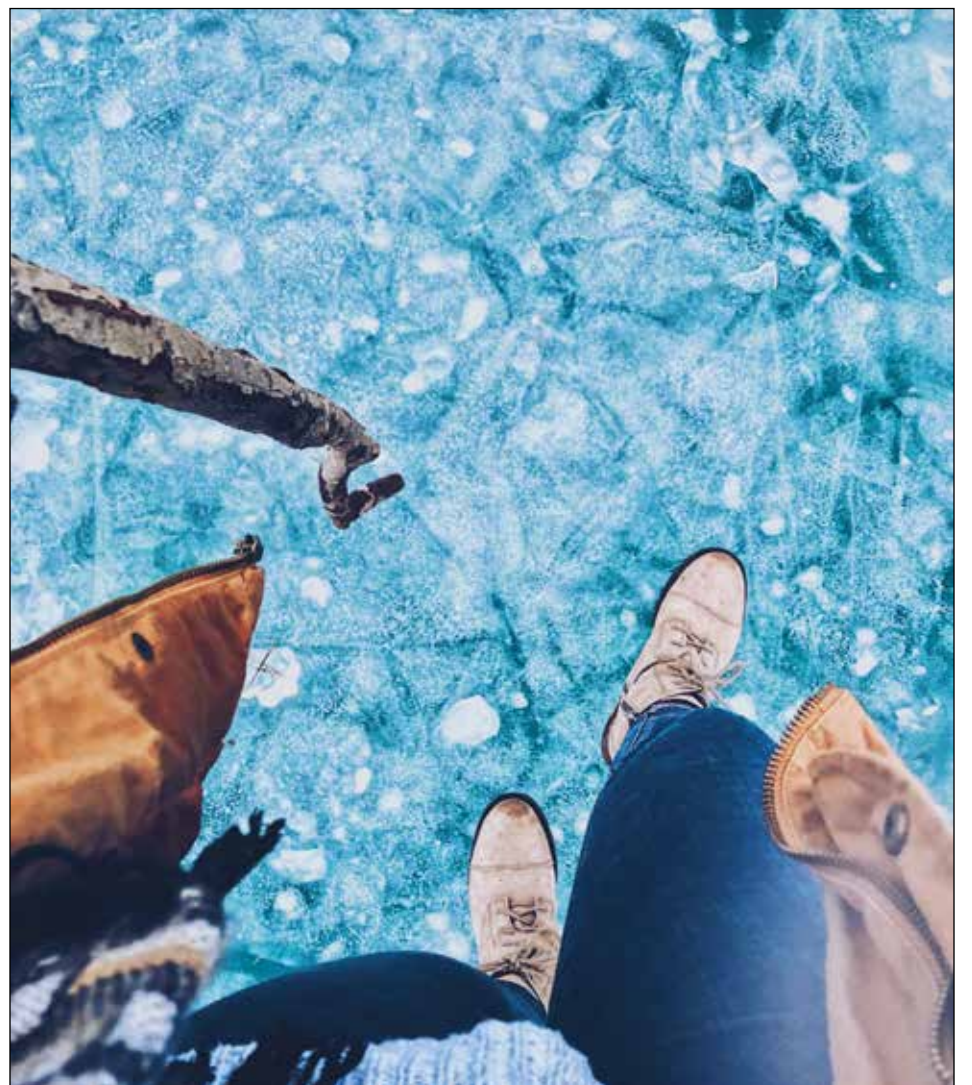


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Nona Heroes: Wounded Vet Run

BY NICOLE LABOSCO

In this recurring special feature, Nonahood News recognizes and honors those everyday heroes who have served or are currently serving our country and making a difference in our community. Those who reside in the Lake Nona and surrounding area are our Nona Heroes.

Engines revving and kickstands up, the motorcade prepped for miles of bikers who flooded the streets of Orlando. On Saturday Jan. 20, hundreds of veterans and motorcycle riders took to US 17-92 in support of two wounded veterans of Central Florida: U.S. Marine Sergeant Stephen Tovet (Tillman) and U.S. Navy Corpsman Kelly Smith. The Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association hosted the event and proudly boasted its motto of "Veterans Helping Veterans."

The Wounded Vet Run originally began in Boston in 2011 and has raised more than \$500,000 for 13 veterans. Since the run began, the original Boston Wounded Vet Run has grown from 300 bikes to more than 5,000 participants, which include both riders and non-riders, as well as thousands of spectators who line the route. This was the inaugural vet run in Orlando.

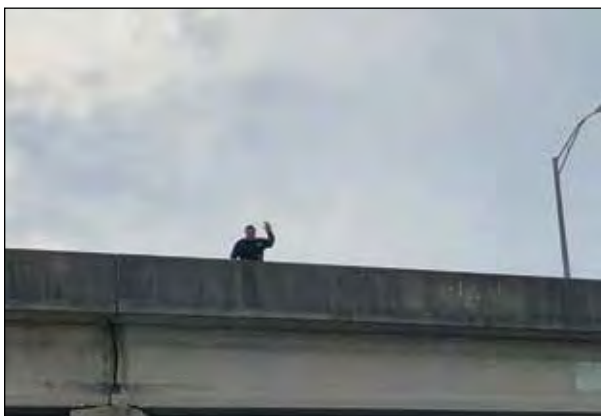
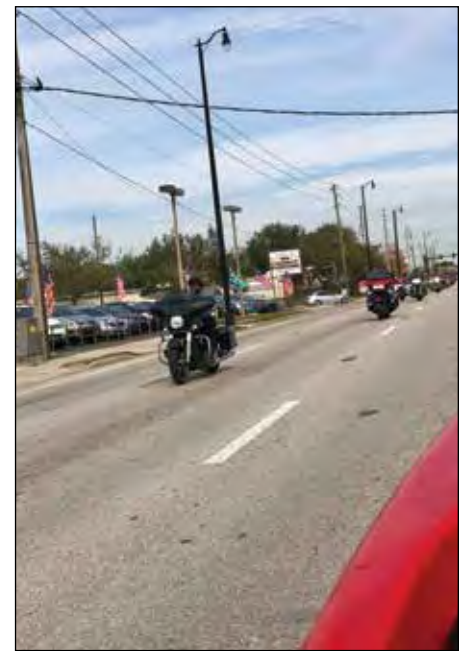
It was a spectacle to see so many people show up in support of local heroes. Bystanders lined the streets and waved as the vets and bikers rode on by. The route began at the Seminole Harley Davidson and wrapped up at Ace Cafe in downtown Orlando where more people gathered to join those who rode. Vendors and entertainment were set up to help raise more money for Tovet and Smith, and all enjoyed their time.

Donations can be sent to:

Combat Veterans Motorcycle Assn.
2880 Southland Rd, Mount Dora, FL 32757

Hopefully, this year's run will be the first of many successful runs to come to benefit Central Florida's local heroes.

If you would like to nominate someone for our next Nona Heroes feature, please send an email to nicole@nonahoodnews.com or complete the form here: <http://nonahood.to/nonaheroes>.



SPORTS

Local Coach Inspires Lake Nona's Young Athletes

BY VALERIE SISCO

Most Saturday mornings, you'll find Scott Gillum and his wife, Daniela, on the athletic fields cheering on their three young children who play on teams with Lake Nona Youth Sports. The Gillums live in the Northlake Park neighborhood and are passionate about kids and sports.

Scott, who played college football at William and Mary, is the director of football for Lake Nona Youth Sports. He coaches a team of 31 kids, ages 7-8, along with his son, Grady, age 9, on the 8U Lake Nona Jr. Lions team. Daniela was an All-American goalkeeper at the College of New Jersey and has coached soccer for both Lake Nona Youth Sports and the Lake Nona YMCA. "We both love introducing kids to sports to help build their skills and confidence," Scott says. "I am a huge fan of team sports. Focus and effort are the buzzwords I use to remind kids that if they pay attention and try their best, good things will happen. Those are the kind of real-life lessons they can take with them as they mature into adults and become active members of our community."

This year, the 8U team won the Florida Youth Football and Cheer League (FYFCL) East Division and qualified to play in the AAU National Championships, and the Lake Nona Jr. Lions 14U team won the FYFCL Super Bowl and finished as runner-up at the AAU National Championships.

Members of AAU and USA Heads Up Football, FYFCL has AAU clubs throughout Northern and Central Florida. Recognized in 2014 by the NFL and USA Football as one of the country's top youth football leagues, the FYFCL helps to develop the athletic skills of boys and girls ages 5-14. "I get to see kids grow and improve from year to year, like Eagle Creek student JJ Kleiner, who has played in our program for the past four years," Scott says. "This

year, he really elevated his game, became a defensive starter and made the FYFCL 8U All-Conference Team. Seeing his hard work to make that achievement a reality makes me want to continue coaching and being a part of youth sports."

The Lake Nona Youth Sports, Inc., organization was formed in 2004 with some local visionaries who had a passion for sports and kids. "Our goal is to provide the youth of our community the ability to participate, learn and excel in sports," says CR Dunnivant, president, Lake Nona Youth Sports. "We're a non-profit organization, supported by community volunteers, parents, coaches, and the generosity of local businesses. We look forward to continuing the winning tradition in Lake Nona."

Along with young Grady Gillum, Scott and Daniela's son, Lake Nona Youth Sports serves more than 300 young athletes in the southeast Orlando community each year. Learn more at LakeNonaYouthSports.org.



Valerie Sisco lives in Lake Nona, where she writes the blog, *Grace with Silk*

www.gracewithsilk.com

Follow her journeys via Twitter

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Merrill Lynch is proud to support Lake Nona Youth Sports.

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LakeNonaYouthSports.Org

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- Fundraising

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- Cheer Fall 2018**

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Lacrosse equipment Goal \$14,500: Status \$8,500



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Nona Cycle: Tour de Cure Lake Nona

BY TOMMY REECE

to see how Nona Cycle and Seminole Cyclists as well as other teams are doing with their fundraising. There are corporate teams such as Oracle Riders, Lockheed Team Andiamo, David'sWorld Cycle and more.

How do I prepare? Join Nona Cycle's Facebook group page and meet your new cycling friends. Absorb the information on cycling being posted on the Facebook page. Ask questions as everyone is very supportive in helping

each other. Participate in the Saturday beginner rides or Sunday Signature rides with A and B group riders. There are plenty of other rides that the Nona Cycle members create Facebook events for. Have fun and enjoy the rides as you train. Stay tuned as there will be more information coming on the Nona Cycle page.

What is the event like? It is a very festive environment! The start is from the Lake Nona Town Center. There will



As we ride into warmer weather, Nona Cycle is gearing up for our first big event of the year, the 2018 Tour de Cure Lake Nona on March 25. The Tour de Cure Lake Nona is one of the events in a series of fundraising cycling events held across 40 states nationwide to benefit the American Diabetes Association. The cycling events help to raise money for diabetes research, advocacy, programs and education.

So how long is this cycling event? Ten miles, 25 miles, 50 miles, 63 miles, 101 miles, and in 2018 they have also added a 5K Run & Walk. The event organizers have planned for all levels of riders and runners/walkers to enjoy the event.

What is Nona Cycle doing to get ready for the Tour de Cure? Nona Cycle has created a team on the Tour de Cure Lake Nona website called Nona Cycle. All of the teams have a personal fundraising webpage to help with their fundraising. Each individual rider, called a team member, has a "Donate" button so friends, family and others can contribute to the team member's donations. There also is a link to donating to the Nona Cycle team. With 400-plus members and growing on the Nona Cycle Facebook Group, Nona Cycle's fundraising goal this year is \$54,321.00. There also is a friendly fundraising competition with the Seminole Cyclists. You can follow the Local Team Leaderboard



be many vendor and team booths set up as well as the Tour de Cure booths with volunteers to help all participants. It is always fun to see the teams and cyclists along with their new team jerseys for the year. You might see cyclists, runners, walkers who have Red Rider jerseys or shirts. These participants, who have diabetes, are the heroes of the day. There are plenty of friendly people you will meet along the way, seeing old friends and making new ones. As the course maps become available, you will see aid stations that will have friendly volunteers who help to hydrate you with plenty of Gatorade or other drinks, and plenty of food, peanut butter sandwiches, cookies and more. The courses vary in length, and many cyclists will ride with their friends and teams or make new friends and ride with new teams. There is a lot of fun and bonding along the way. At the end of the course, there will be lunch provided by Tijuana Flats and a celebration party. You don't want to miss this great event for a great cause.

Do you like to cycle or want to learn how? Join the Nona Cycle group for weekly rides: nonahood.to/nonacycle.



N

ETCETERA

At the Movies: *The Greatest Showman*

BY A&A RODENBACH

Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, step right up and witness what was, and is again, "The Greatest Show on Earth!"

Academy Award season is once again upon us, and 20th Century Fox has delivered a musical sensation making big-top noise at the box office. *The Greatest Showman*, which already took home six nominations and two wins, including Golden Globe Awards' Best Original Song in a Motion Picture for "This is Me" and Heartland Films' Truly Moving Picture Award, is expected to be nominated in several categories at the Academy Awards later this month.

The Greatest Showman tells the story of the historic rise of Phineas Taylor (P.T.) Barnum (played by Hugh Jackman) from the orphaned son of a tailor, living on the streets and forced to beg for food, to the successful visionary who brought us the most popular traveling show of all time. Director Michael Gracey delivers an inspiring glimpse into the imagination and genius that was P.T. Barnum, from the inception of his wax museum to his ultimate claim to fame, the circus. Hugh Jackman wins over audiences embodying his character full of passion and amazement, craving riches and luxuries previously out of his reach, becoming obsessed with the approval of high society and gambling all his success on one act, an opera singer, Jenny Lind. Soon, Barnum finds himself risking everything – the show, his reputation, and the very people he loves most: his wife, children, and performers.

Hugh Jackman describes this role as a "dream project" and claims to have read three dozen books on P.T. Barnum just to prepare for the role. Jackman is joined by an all-star cast, including Zac Efron playing Philip Carlyle (Barnum's protégé and partner), Academy Award nominee Michelle Williams playing Charity Barnum (P.T. Barnum's wife), Rebecca Ferguson playing Jenny Lind, and Zendaya playing Anne Wheeler.

In January 2017, the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus announced that their doors were closing for good, with a farewell performance held at the end of May 2017. *The Greatest Showman* brings audiences back, one last time, to a show full of magic and wonder created by death-defying performers, larger-than-life animals and the powerful music of P.T. Barnum's circus. Though critics were initially skeptical of the film, Rotten Tomatoes' audience gave it a score of 90%. I found myself fully immersed in the story, enamored by the characters, and entranced by the song and dance. The chorus of the main number, "This Is Me," stuck with me as an empowering and inspiring anthem that I can still hear:

*When the sharpest words wanna cut me down
Gonna send a flood, gonna drown them out
I am brave, I am proof
I am who I'm meant to be, this is me
Look out 'cause here I come
And I'm marching on to the beat I drum
I'm not scared to be seen
I make no apologies, this is me*

P.T. Barnum poured his passion into a show for the world, allowing audiences everywhere to share a night under the big top and witness some of the greatest acts performed by those who otherwise might have been cast aside due to their beautiful imperfections. Thank you, P.T. Barnum, for giving us more than 150 years of the Greatest Show on Earth! And hats off to *The Greatest Showman* for bringing it all back to life!



The Lake Nona Book Maven Review

Title: *Uncommon Type, Some Stories*

Author: Tom Hanks

Genre: Fiction/Short Stories

Hardcover, 416 pages

Tom Hanks is considered a great actor. He is certainly successful and even beloved by many. Based on his 2017 collection of short stories, I'd say he is a pretty good writer, too – not great, but pretty good. He can tell a good story, which is what he's been doing in the movies all these years, after all.

Tom Hanks collects typewriters, and the 17 stories in *Uncommon Type* are linked, thematically, by typewriters – some are about typewriters, some just mention them. Tom's voice comes through as well, and in many of the stories I could "hear" segments of dialogue as if he were speaking them himself. They carry the same unassuming, "nice guy" characteristics that Tom Hanks projects in his interviews and in many of his movies. Some readers might find the stories and characters old fashioned or even corny. In a way they are, but I found many of them a pleasant distraction from our too-busy, 50-second sound bite pace of life.

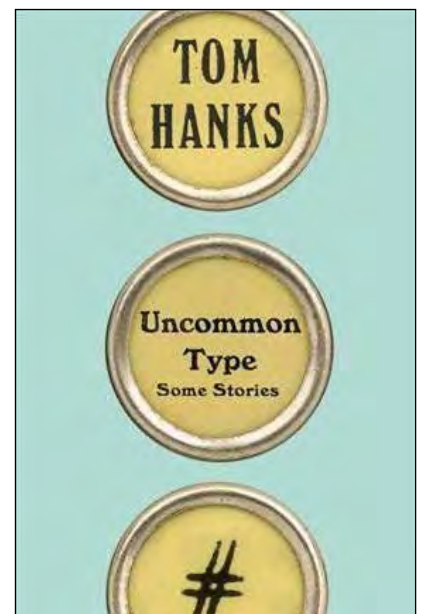
All that said, *Uncommon Type* is a bit quirky – some of the stories, like "Three Exhausting Weeks" about an unassuming middle-aged single guy and the girlfriend, who temporarily spins his life like a top, are really funny. Some, like "Stay With Us," although written like a script, step back and look at the characters and their lives with real insight, while "Christmas 1953" and "Welcome to Mars" are similarly slice-of-life stories and insightful

character studies. But others, like "Alan Bean Plus Four, a Story," originally published in *The New Yorker* in 2014, seemed oddly surrealistic.

In a few cases, the characters and even storylines reappear, but this in no way implies the stories are repetitive. I have to give Tom Hanks credit for creating stories and characters that, for the most part, are quite different from each other. And often I think he is insightful in the way he portrays realistic women characters such as Bette Monk in "A Month on Greene Street" or the unnamed main character in "These Are the Meditations of My Heart."

Tom Hanks' stories display real insight into human relationships and emotions – good qualities for both an actor and a writer. His descriptions and settings are good, but it is the motivations of and interactions between characters that make the good stories good and most of the mediocre stories at least interesting.

Short stories are great to pick up and read when time is short. And some of these stories are just good, plain stories in an almost old-fashioned style. Some readers might find the stories hokey, and I guess that's the link between the stories themselves and the idea of typewriters – they both seem a little 20th Century. Kudos to Tom Hanks for putting together this collection of short stories, but don't give up your day job.



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Behind the Scene: Chroma Modern Bar + Kitchen

BY SOPHIA ROGERS



Maurice O'Donahue
 General Manager

On a cool Saturday afternoon, I meet up with Maurice O'Donahue before Chroma opens. The restaurant is crisp, quiet and spotless. Maurice greets me with that infectious smile I've known for years. In 2001, "Mo" and I worked together at Planet Hollywood Downtown Disney. Fast forward 17 years – I now sit across the table interviewing him for Nonahood News.

That accent! Where are you from?

I am from Dublin, Ireland, and have lived in four countries; England, Canada, Ireland, and the U.S. My family lives in Ireland. I travel to see them every year, and they visit often.

What do you do for fun?

I am a season ticket holder of Orlando City Soccer since Day 1.

Are you excited about the training facility open-

ing in Lake Nona?

Yes! Hopefully, we get to see the team hanging out here eating nice, delicious, fresh food.

How has your high-volume restaurant experience attributed to Chroma's success?

All the experience I have from every company, working in different areas of Orlando, prepared me for this. Chroma is very much community driven.

What does Chroma have in store for us in 2018?

Happy Hour will continue from 3:30-6:30 p.m. Monday-Friday. On Saturday nights, a DJ from 9 p.m.-close. We might be doing a post-brunch Sunday featuring a DJ and Bloody Marys at the outside lounge. Stay tuned.

Is the attention to detail different with tourists vs. locals?

It's the same. The goal is to increase guest visits. We want guests to come for lunch, then come for grandpa's birthday, or come for family visiting from out of town. This is what we're doing here.

Do you see Chroma as an amenity in Lake Nona?

Yes! We are here to serve the residents of Lake Nona. We want to provide them with great service, great food and a great atmosphere.

What challenges have you faced in this first year?

Our team has been blessed to have success straight off the bat. It's about maintaining the standards. Look at our Yelp reviews. We're in the high 4's, which is very hard to maintain.

What do you mean by 'maintain the standards?'

Maintaining standards like keeping the restaurant clean, keeping an eye on the tempo of the server staff, making sure they're positive, making sure tables are greeted on time. Looking after our guests' needs. We put a heavy

emphasis on teamwork, sanitation, menu knowledge, approachability, friendliness and positivity.

You are known for your coach-like management style. What's that like?

It's about developing your team and coaching them on a consistent basis, monitoring what they're doing. Always watching, analyzing and figuring things out. Your brain is always ticking. Thinking ahead. What if a party of 20 walked in? Could we accommodate them and how?

What qualities do you look for in your staff?

Positivity. Friendliness and positivity are key.

What would you say the crowd is at Chroma?

We get a lot of locals. I would say 40-60% are Lake Nona locals. After that, we have the USTA tourney players and business travelers. Then, we have people from farther out that found us on Yelp or heard about us from a friend.

Do you have time to speak to guests?

I do table visits often. Table visits for me and my managers are very important. That's how we know what's going on. We solve tiny problems before they get bigger. We want to help the guests with their experience and make it more pleasurable.

What is your favorite meal on the menu?

The fish and chips. That is my go-to. It's really good! The fish is coated with a very light tempura batter, and the chips we make fresh daily from whole potatoes.

What would you like our readers to know?

It's all about the people we have hired. Our team. In the words of Vince Lombardi, "Perfection is not attainable, but if we strive for perfection we can catch excellence."

Our guests frequent often, and we love it. Thank you.



Meet the Press: Jenny Lynn

BY VANESSA POULSON



Jenny Lynn is the co-publisher for *Nonahood News* and one of the coolest ladies on the Nonahood staff! From her witty personality to her smarts and spirit, we most certainly love having her around (Rhys especially does!).

NHN: What brought you to the Nonahood?

JL: A new beginning with my family.

NHN: Where are you from originally?

JL: Depends. I was born in Porte Alegre, Brazil. I lived in MO, TX, AZ, LA and ended up in Florida in 1995. I lived in the St. Petersburg/Tampa Bay area for 20 years before moving to Lake Nona.

NHN: What's your favorite hobby?

JL: I love to sit in a comfortable spot in my room and read.

NHN: What's your biggest dream?

JL: Peace, love and prosperity for everyone! – Is that too much?

NHN: Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

JL: In 10 years, I will be 50 years old, so hopefully I am celebrating all year round with the ones I love.

NHN: What are you most excited about in Lake Nona?

JL: This is a tough one because I have seen so many new things come up in Lake Nona throughout the 4+ years we have lived here. I get excited every time something new pops up. It all excites me!!

NHN: Who's your biggest inspiration?

JL: I have many inspirations that come to me daily. But if I must name a person, it would be my five children: Kyle, Chloe, Michael, Bryanna and Sylvia. My children have inspired me to become the best I could be not only as their mom but as a human being.

NHN: What's your favorite book?

JL: I love all historical romance and novels.

NHN: What's something you've done that scared you the most or brought you out of your comfort zone?

JL: Drag racing.

NHN: Describe one of your most memorable experiences.

JL: I have many memories that will have to be written down one day so I can leave somewhat of a journal for my kids. But the most memorable would be the day Rhys and I got married. Not trying to be cliché or anything, but this was seriously one of the happiest days of my life. The setting was our backyard, my oldest son walked me down the aisle, my daughters were flower girls, and all my friends and family were there. While walking towards Rhys, I couldn't take my eyes off him. I kept thinking I would trip on a leaf or something and that would be the end of it. I didn't trip, though I think it was because I was barefoot...lol. This year will be 17 years together and 12 years married. Is this really life?

Rapid Fire Questions

NHN: Extrovert or Introvert?

JL: A little bit of both depending on my mood.

NHN: Indoors or Outdoors?

JL: Indoors for sure.

NHN: Sun or Snow?

JL: Being in Florida, I must like the sun. But if it snowed here I would like that, too.

NHN: Dogs or Cats?

JL: Neither....I do have two cats, though.

NHN: Vans or Converse?

JL: Neither...I am a loafer kinda gal or barefoot. I do have to wear socks when going outside, though.

NHN: Coffee or Tea?

JL: I love a nice warm cup of tea anytime of the day. I recently had some crème coconut tea, and I highly recommend it.



NHN: Adventurous or Laid Back?

JL: I love a very laid-back sort of adventure.

NHN: Canon, Nikon or Sony?

JL: Apple iPhone? Lol. I have a Sony but never use it. This would be a photographer's sort of question.





March 23 – 25
KISSIMMEE, FLORIDA

Nemours Children's Hospital
A portion of all tickets support the children and families of Nemours

Florida Georgia Line, Brantley Gilbert, Darius Rucker and more!

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FEBRUARY events

Visit www.nonahoodnews.com/events for updated events and detailed information.

- 3 Children's Farmers Market (9:30-11 a.m.)
- 6 LNRCC First Tuesdays (5:30-8 p.m.)
- 7 UCF Seminar: Partial Knee Replacement Surgery Info (6-7 p.m.)
- 8 Lake Nona Veterans Club (5 p.m.)
- 14 LNRCC Breakfast Connections (8-9:30 a.m.)
- 14 Fisher House Dedication Ceremony (10 a.m.)
- 20 LNRCC Contagious Connecting Seminar (8-9:30 a.m.)
- 22 EOCC Coffee Club Nona (8:30-9:30 a.m.)
- 23 LNRCC Business Luncheon (11:30 am-1 p.m.)
- 26 EOCC Coffee Club Nona (8:30-9:30 a.m.)
- 26 LNRCC Business Luncheon (11:30 am-1 p.m.)
- 27 District 1 Community Meeting (7-8 p.m.)
- 28 District 1 Community Meeting (7-8 p.m.)

Stay tuned... DRIVE SHACK Grand Opening Coming First Quarter!

<p>THE MONDAY MARKET at Lake Nona YMCA Mondays 4:30-8 p.m. YMCA of Central Florida (Lake Nona) 9055 Northlake Parkway facebook.com/Lakenonaymcafarmersmarket/</p>	<p>YOGA NONA Sponsored by Lake Nona Life Project Saturdays 8-9 a.m. Crescent Park in Laureate Park 8374 Upper Perse Circle facebook.com/learnlakenona/</p>
<p>ART AFTER DARK Fridays 7-10 p.m. Lake Nona Town Center facebook.com/artafterdarklakenona/</p>	<p>BTN LAKE NONA SATURDAY MARKET Saturdays 9 a.m. Valencia College Lake Nona Campus 12350 Narcoossee Rd. facebook.com/Lakenonaymcafarmersmarket/</p>

ADD YOUR EVENT TO OUR CALENDAR
 To add your Nonahood Event to our calendar, visit <http://nonahood.to/calendar> or email the details along with your contact information to info@nonahoodnews.com.

PIG RUN OF LAKE NONA

presented by

B. A. C. O. N.
 Big Awesome Charity Of Nona

March 31, 2018
9:00 am
 Lake Nona YMCA
3.1 miles

Donald D. Mateer Est. 2001 Foundation

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www.PigRunofLakeNona.com

LAKE NONA REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESENTS



SATURDAY
MARCH 10TH

NONA CHAMBER FESTIVAL

VALENCIA
COLLEGE
Lake Nona Campus
10am - 4pm

Presented by
Lake Nona
REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY



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