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CREATIVELY AND INDEPENDENTLY PRODUCED BY THE RESIDENTS OF LAKE NONA

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# BEAUTY IN OBSCURITY

PAGE 10



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# PUBLISHER'S DESK

## Spring Into Intentions

BY RHYS & JENNY LYNN

**Intention to Learn**

Listening and observing the needs and wants of our readers, our community and our clients has helped us to learn and create processes for the success of *Nonahood News*. We had little knowledge of publishing when we purchased the paper, but the lessons we have learned so far have been a growth experience for us these past few months. Once we started listening, we were able to maintain our focus on our growth, our team and our product. We're proud of what we create and we want to make it the best it can be. The best way we can do that is to stay true

to our principals and to learn from our mistakes!

**Intention to Grow**

Owning *Nonahood News* has been a great blessing. We weren't content to let it sit still, though. In order for us to see the growth we wanted, we first grew our team - we are shaping up to have an incredible group! There are three important facets to *Nonahood News*: Our team, our clients and partners, and most important of all: our readers. Without any of those three things, *Nonahood News* would not exist.

**Intention to Adapt**

While we're continuing to grow the content we print each month, *Nonahood News* is also adapting to create media suited to the digital world. One of the most exciting things that we're working on is video content. We want to stay on top of our game and offer the most compelling way for our audience to stay in the loop on what's going on in Lake Nona. We have some great plans for weekly and monthly video content and would also love to hear what you'd like us to cover.

**Intention to Give**

We'll soon be offering our clients the option to produce great videos to showcase their stories. To kick that off, we are looking for two subjects to cover at no cost: a local charity in need of exposure and a local business owner with a great story. Send us an email at [publisher@nonahoodnews.com](mailto:publisher@nonahoodnews.com) if you know someone who would be a great fit!

**Intention to Love**

We love watching our community grow along side of us and to be a part of this has been enjoyable. We didn't realize what we were getting into when we moved here, but we've loved every moment since then. The best is yet to come for everyone in Lake Nona and we can't wait to see what the future brings.

Love,

Rhys and Jenny



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## LOCAL LEADERS

### Thank You to the Doctors in Our Lives

BY DR. DEBORAH GERMAN



Dr. Deborah German

As a child, I wanted to be a veterinarian, but a guidance counselor told me I was too small to care for cows, horses and hogs. As I became older, my desire to care for others developed into a desire to treat patients and educate the physicians of tomorrow. I'm not alone in that spirit. People who enter medicine – and other healthcare fields – do so because they want to serve others. And while the public might believe people become doctors to make money, my 40+ years in the profession have taught me something much different.

Students enter medical school for one of three reasons. Some want to provide wonderful, individualized care to every person they meet. These are our future Mother Teresas. Others go into medicine because they want to find the cure to cancer, AIDS, heart disease – the diseases that

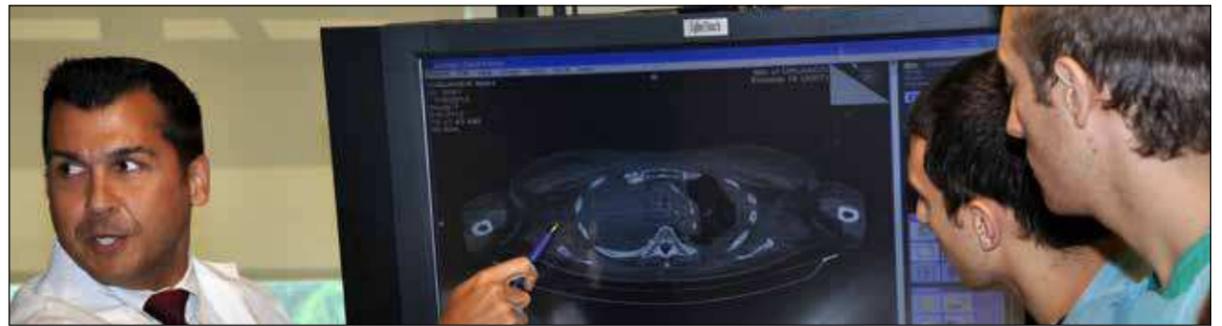
plague all of us. These are our future Nobel Prize winners. The third group wants to improve care for entire populations – medically underserved people across our country and the world. These are our future surgeons general.

The best medical schools help make each student's dream take flight.

March 30 is National Doctors' Day across America, a time to thank the doctors in our lives for their knowledge and care. At UCF Health, our College of Medicine practice, we'll be celebrating the entire month of March, not just one day. As we do that, let's take time to remember that the word doctor comes from the Latin, meaning "teacher."

I am honored to work every day with doctors across Central Florida who are taking care of you and teaching our students. They are in every hospital system across our community and many clinical practices. I want to thank them for the selfless care they provide to their patients and to the education of our future Physician Knights.

*Dr. Deborah German is the Vice President for Medical Affairs and Founding Dean of UCF College of Medicine. To learn more, visit [med.ucf.edu](http://med.ucf.edu)*



### Orlando Attorney Seeks to Bring Compassion, Efficiency and Experience to the Bench

BY VANESSA POULSON



Laura Shaffer of Orlando is running for the 9th Circuit Court Judge Group 41. Shaffer's law experience and expertise have fueled her campaign, while her passion for maintaining a compassionate view and plethora of knowledge are aspects that she brings to the bench.

**NHN: What position are you running for?**

LS: 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court Judge Group 41. Circuit judges are elected every six years on a nonpartisan basis. They preside

over cases in Orange and Osceola counties. These cases include criminal felonies, all areas of domestic relations and family law, juvenile delinquency and juvenile dependency, and civil lawsuits.

**NHN: What inspired you to run?**

LS: I have served this community in various legal capacities throughout my career. From my early years as a prosecutor to supervising attorney at the Department of Children and Families to representing individual clients in my law firm, I have been inspired and motivated by different judges I have encountered. As an attorney who practices daily in court, I know the qualities that comprise a good judge. Based upon my experience, I can add the patience, compassion and knowledge of the law and bring that to the bench. Circuit court judge is a natural progression where I can best serve the most people.

**NHN: What do you hope to bring to the position?**

LS: I am one of only 95 attorneys in Florida who are Florida Bar Certified in Juvenile Law. There are currently no judges who are Board Certified in Juvenile Law within the state of Florida. I have the depth and breadth of experience in that I have tried jury and non-jury trials. I have represented the citizens of the state of Florida, children, parents and grandparents. I represent children who are victims of human trafficking, have developmental disabilities in dependency court, or who are in residential treatment facilities in the dependency court system.

**NHN: How long have you been interested in law?**

LS: Early in my childhood, I became fascinated with the judicial system. I honed my skills on the debate team in high school and entered college and majored in pre-law studies. Upon graduation, I entered Stetson University College of Law and began my legal career as a prosecutor in Orange and Osceola counties.

**NHN: What does justice mean to you?**

LS: I believe justice is an equitable remedy between parties, based upon impartiality and objectivity. To have justice, all parties must know they have been treated fairly under the law. Having been raised in a military

family, I understand the importance of protecting each individual's constitutional rights.

**NHN: How do you hope to change the judicial system for the better?**

LS: I would like to incorporate technology to increase accessibility and efficiency in the court system. In speaking with the community, I have heard the frustration of citizens who are trying to get their cases heard in front of the court in a timely manner. I believe expedited communications and technology can create increased efficiency within the system to help the community with one of the most important days of their life.

**NHN: Anything else you'd like to add?**

LS: I would like the voters to visit [shafferforjudge.com](http://shafferforjudge.com) and "Shaffer for Judge" on Facebook for additional information about my candidacy and to remember to vote on Aug. 28. I would humbly ask for their consideration in their vote. I will always work hard to make sure everyone is treated with fairness and respect.



## Rotary Update: Pioneer Medical Group Mobile Medical Unit

BY SONYA LABOSCO, PRESIDENT ROTARY CLUB OF LAKE NONA-LUNCH

Another big win! The Rotary Club of Lake Nona - Lunch is pleased to announce our newest community partnership with Pioneer Medical Group. What does this partnership mean for the local community? Mobile Health Services will be provided at no cost, with a mobile medical unit. The mobile medical unit will provide medical care services for homeless individuals as well as underserved and underprivileged members of the community. The Rotary Club of Lake Nona - Lunch will take the lead to coordinate areas in Orange and Osceola counties to be serviced starting in March 2018.

### Who is Pioneer Medical Group?

Pioneer Medical Group is a Florida-based hospitalist group driven by a single mission: to treat patients with compassion, using a multidisciplinary approach to the health care needs of patients. Pioneer was founded by a team of physicians with a common belief: people heal better and faster when healthcare providers lead with respect and compassion. At Pioneer, your health is a top priority. Pioneer's primary focus is your meaningful recovery.

### Pioneer's Mission in the Community:

Providing mobile health care with an experienced team of physicians, nurses and other staff who dedicate their pre-



Mobile Medical Unit

vious time to providing care for the weak, underserved and underprivileged members of our communities at no cost.

### Our Partners:

Partnerships are a key component for all Rotary clubs. Rotary is where neighbors, friends and problem solvers share ideas, join leaders and take action to create lasting change. Identifying and pairing with community partners leads to long-lasting success. Each day, Rotarians, with the help of all our partners, pour their passion, integrity and intelligence into completing projects that have a lasting impact. We persevere until we deliver real, lasting solutions.

Special thanks to Pioneer Medical Group Founder, S.Irfan Ali, M.D., Chief Operating Officer Ana Gonzalez, and Darling Giordani, Pioneer Medical Foundation Director, for donating their time, provided funding, and opening their hearts with Rotary on this journey.

### Join Us on a Medical Mission:

If you are interested in joining one of our medical missions or have a suggestion on locations for the mobile medical unit, please send us an email at [lakenonarotary.org](mailto:lakenonarotary.org) or call (407) 733-6700.

For additional information on the Rotary Club of Lake Nona - Lunch, visit: [lakenonarotary.com](http://lakenonarotary.com) or call (407) 733-6700. Meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesdays at 11:45 a.m. at the Ronald McDonald House, 13551 Nemours Pkwy., Orlando 32827.



Dr. S. Irfan Ali  
Founder of Pioneer Medical Group



Ana Gonzalez  
Chief Operating Officer for PMG



Darling Giordani and staff of PMG

## Neighborhood Watch: #9PMRoutine

BY LINDA THIERRY

Many of you might have heard about this latest national effort to reduce the number of burglaries and larcenies in communities. This program was started by the Pasco County (Florida) Sheriff's Office in August 2017. The goal was to use social media to remind people to create a routine at the end of each day to secure their property. Almost instantly, it has become a national effort by law enforcement departments. And communities have found success in reducing crime in their neighborhoods by implementing this program.

The routine recommended is at 9 p.m. each day (or pick a time at the end of your day that works best for you – after putting kids to bed, before heading upstairs to bed, etc.) and allows you make sure you have secured your home and vehicle(s):

1. Is the garage door closed?
2. Are all car windows up?
3. Are the car doors locked?
4. If you have a garage remote in your car, remove it.
5. Are all items in your car removed? Remember, it might be only an empty store bag, but the thief sees a bag that "might" contain something valuable. Those cheap sunglasses looked expensive in the dark through the car window.
6. Is the door between your house and garage locked?
7. Are all home windows closed and locked?

### 8. Are all doors locked?

While this will NOT guarantee that a thief/burglar will not steal your property, it will deter them. Many petty criminals look for easy crimes of opportunity. They will run up to vehicles/homes and check the doors/windows looking for one that is unlocked/open. If they find the vehicle/home secure, they move on. Many law enforcement agencies have reported 30-40 percent reduction in vehicle theft and home burglaries after starting the 9 p.m. routine program in their communities.

Create a routine that you and your family follow at the end of each and every day to confirm your home and vehicles are secure to the best of your ability. Hopefully, if everyone does this, the bad guys will find it is not worth their time to come to your neighborhood.

Stay safe, be alert and call 911 if you see suspicious activity or person(s).

### Laureate Park Neighborhood Watch Area Coordinators

Larry Albert  
Mary Fenton-Lee  
Gene Thatcher  
Linda Thierry



## CFX Keeps Southeast Orange Moving At the Speed Of Accelerated Growth

BY COMMISSIONER JENNIFER THOMPSON



As my final year as an Orange County commissioner winds down, I feel a great sense of urgency to do everything I can to leave my home district better off than it was the day I entered office. Over the last eight years, District 4 has gone through dramatic transitions, going from bust to boom in what now seems like the proverbial blink of an eye. Honestly, it's bittersweet to leave at a

time when southeast Orange is poised to realize its potential as an economic juggernaut.

Propelled by a surge of residential and commercial development in the Lake Nona area, District 4's rebound from the real estate crash has been nothing short of miraculous. Barely a day goes by that you don't hear of a corporate headquarters, sports or medical facility, new business or residential community coming to the county's southeastern border with Osceola County. District 4 is a whirlwind of dynamic growth, leaving a plethora of economic opportunities and myriad challenges in its wake.

Helping our area capitalize on opportunities and respond swiftly to challenges is the Central Florida Expressway Authority (CFX), whose governing board I joined as Orange County's representative in 2017. Like my county commission post, my term on the CFX Board comes to an end later this year, but the short time I've spent with CFX has helped me gain a greater understanding of how vital the agency's expressway system is to Central Florida's economic mobility and overall quality of life.

For example, on March 9, CFX opens the new Innovation Way/Sunbridge Parkway Interchange that intersects with State Road 528 (Martin B. Andersen Beachline Expressway) about 10 miles east of Orlando International Airport. Paid for with toll revenues and built on land Orange County donated to CFX, this \$62.5 million project exemplifies the toll road agency's commitment to improving connectivity and travel efficiencies among the five counties it serves. The interchange is also a showcase of CFX's intentions to build roads that accommodate multimodal systems, in this case the Brightline rail service connecting Orlando International Airport (OIA) with South Florida. CFX built the overpass spanning 528 to allow room for trains traveling parallel to the expressway's eastbound lanes.

East and southeast Orange stand to benefit from CFX's \$1.6 billion, five-year (Fiscal 2018-22) work plan, too. An outline of systemwide upgrades, the work plan calls for making such capacity improvements as widening SR 408 (Spessard L. Holland East-West Expressway), 417 (Central Florida GreeneWay) and the 528, corridors that offer alternatives to congested roads leading to residential communities and employment, education and health-care centers.

As massive developments like the 24,000-acre master planned community Sunbridge spread from county to neighboring county and attract private and public investment, the need for new corridors will arise. Looking to stay ahead of growth, CFX has already studied the feasibility of building an east-west route south of 528, linking southern Brevard with southeast Orange and Osceola counties. If you're wondering how much current and future expressway projects might cost you as a taxpayer, the answer is not a dime – that is, unless you travel on CFX toll roads.

It's reassuring to know that by every economic metric, District 4 is better off today than it was in 2010 when I joined the county commission. We are on the road to vibrant economic growth, thanks in no small part to partners like CFX helping pave the way forward.





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# BUSINESS & REAL ESTATE

## Nona Growth: Osceola Parkway Extension Update

BY SOPHIA ROGERS

For years, talk about the Osceola Parkway Extension eastward has been a topic of concern for many residents. Questions about where the extension will go, how it will affect current housing, and what natural green spaces will be impacted have Friends of Split Oak Forest and the Lake Mary Jane Alliance petitioning Central Florida Expressway Authority (CFX) for alternate routes.



On Feb. 15, the second of three public meetings was held at Lake Nona Middle School. Hundreds of residents were present to learn and comment on their position.

There are four corridors being studied, which, if and when complete, would create a "loop" from the new Osceola Parkway Extension east through Tavistock's proposed 24,000-acre development called Sunbridge, south toward Harmony, north to the Turnpike in St. Cloud, then west to the Poinciana parkway connecting to I-4 and State Road 429 (see diagram). The overall goal is to improve roadway conditions. For those of us who travel Narcoossee Road, we probably all could agree that road conditions have room for improvement.

Friends of Split Oak Forest and the Lake Mary Jane Alliance were present at the Feb. 15 meeting. Located in front of the cafeteria at Lake Nona Middle School, the first group I met was the Friends of Split Oak. In the words of Dave Wegman, vice president of Friends of Split Oak, "Split Oak Forest Wildlife & Environmental Area (WEA) is a mitigation park owned by both Orange and Osceola counties. For more than 20 years, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FFWCC) has managed the area through prescribed burns, removing invasive species, and bringing in relocated gopher tortoises. The area is also home to Florida scrub jays, sandhill cranes, Sherman's fox squirrels, gopher frogs, white-tailed deer, wild turkeys, indigo snakes, and bald eagles."

Friends of Split Oak oppose any route that would cut through the Split Oak Forest. In the words of president Valerie Anderson, "In Split Oak, there were four controlled burns last year that sent smoke south, north and east. If you put an expressway through Split Oak, you're eliminating the need for controlled burn days. With a road through Split Oak, you can't have a southerly wind shift. As the road gets closer and closer, it will lead to degradation of the habitat in the long term."

Next, I met with Suzanne Arnold, communications chair for the Lake Mary Jane Alliance. Their group works beside the Friends of Split Oak. "I totally respect their position – don't go through the forest, it's conservation land and a mitigation area purchased with money used to entomb gopher tortoises. Unfortunately, putting an expressway through a conservation area is not a precedent-setting issue, and it's important to respect homeowners in surrounding communities as well. If a road must go through, an alternative route has been created that has the least impact to Split Oak and includes additional conservation lands to buffer Split Oak, Moss Park, and Isle of Pines Preserve. In the bigger picture, this would benefit Central Florida."

Once inside, I met with Mary Brooks, public involvement coordinator. "There are varying studies for each of the proposed corridors. What we have been asking folks to do is give us their school grade for the different alternatives and why. We have people inputting those comment forms and inputting that data as we speak." At the back of the room, there were computer stations set up as she mentioned.

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concerns at a March 8 hearing. This would be the final cutoff before alternatives are either accepted for more studies or redacted for lack of support. Mary Brooks can be reached at [ConceptStudies@CFXway.com](mailto:ConceptStudies@CFXway.com)

For more information, please visit:  
[FriendsOfSplitOak.org](http://FriendsOfSplitOak.org)

[TheLakeMaryJaneAlliance.com](http://TheLakeMaryJaneAlliance.com)

[cfxway.com/agency-information/plans-studies/project-studies/osceola-parkway-extension/](http://cfxway.com/agency-information/plans-studies/project-studies/osceola-parkway-extension/)





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## All Flooring USA's New Location in St. Cloud



BY BRITTANY BHULAI

Many folks in the Lake Nona area know of All Flooring USA located on Narcoossee Road as it has been in business since 2015. What many residents do not know is just 10 miles away, down near the St. Cloud area, a new location has opened. Hector Torres, founder of All Flooring USA, finished a military career in 1988 and immersed himself in the world of flooring. For the next 30 years, he worked for manufacturers, wholesale, direct sales through distributors, managed stores and worked his way up to owning his own stores.

Sharing a newly-constructed building with a Domino's Pizza and Building Brains Academy, the new All Flooring USA opened in January this year. Torres says he chose that location because he noticed there was no flooring company near the Moss Park and Eagle Creek areas. It is also a great spot because there are a lot of new houses and businesses being built within the store's proximity. He and his wife, Sylvia, also live in the St. Cloud area. This is their fourth store opening. The first location was opened 14 years ago on East Colonial Drive followed by

the locations in Lake Nona and Altamonte Springs.

Getting the store up and running was not too much of a challenge since Torres had already been through the process with his prior shops. They rented out the space and had a cabinet designer come in to help create the layout. Colors and palettes were put together along with granites, backsplashes and displays designed to set up. The store's layout is tastefully pieced together to showcase the variety of options customers can install in their home. Their items range from wood to porcelain tiles with fixed gloss levels to carpets and cabinet selections. All Flooring USA also offers luxury vinyl. These flooring planks are completely waterproof and clip together like laminate. Bathroom and kitchen remodeling are additional services provided.

Since Torres served in the military, his company qualifies to be a part of the Veteran Owned Business group, a directory of more than 300,000 veteran businesses across the country. All services, goods and operations produced by the organization are from United States military veterans, active duty military and reservists.

"Meeting new people is the most exciting thing about opening a new store," said Torres. Flooring itself is an art that Torres will never regret. It is always such a rewarding experience to help people and give them the finished look they desire in their homes. He stated they are looking to expand even further in the Central Florida area.



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## Creator Mindset: Why I Hire Vets

BY NIR BASHAN



My wife and I were having lunch at a nice burger place in Disney Springs not too long ago. The restaurant was packed and there was nowhere to sit. So, we ended up sharing a table with a few other folks. After exchanging pleasantries, we found out that everyone at our table was either active duty or retired military. What are the chances? I told them I

like to hire vets – they seemed interested – so I told them the following story.

I explained to them that I used to make a lot of mistakes hiring. I had a very narrow view of who would be a good candidate. My philosophy was something I was falsely proud of at the time. My approach? I used to look for people who were just like me – literally. Similar education. Similar background. Similar career trajectory.

I figured that if I could find someone just like me, then I would find a great candidate. Right? The problem with that approach is that we tend to evaluate ourselves in an ideal light with no flaws, no shortcomings, no weaknesses. In essence, it turns into a search for perfection which does not exist. So, after many years of suffering through this type of hiring, I stopped. It wasn't working. I couldn't fill positions. I felt like I was always settling for second best. I decided to flip the whole thing around and try to hire on soft skills – you know, the kind of skills you can't learn in school, skills such as empathy, caring, listening, hunger, passion, reasoning, patience.

Their faces lit up across the table. I could see I was striking a nerve. I went on to tell them that this shift to soft skills led me to start hiring veterans. They did not necessarily fit into my particular creative field. There was literally no previous work experience relevant for my

openings. And, on paper, their resumes did not fit the job description. But life is not lived on paper, so I took a chance, and something started to click.

What I found was an inherent discipline in U.S. military vets that allows them to achieve extraordinary accomplishments in the creative field. It was absolutely a lightbulb moment. It is this discipline coupled with soft skills that made any objective possible, almost like completing a mission, and so much so that I am certain it will work in any field, not just creative fields like mine.

The unemployment rate for vets stands at 4.0% based on the latest data from the Department of Labor released on Dec. 7. And, in my opinion, that is 4.0% too high. Because not only have vets and their families given the highest sacrifice for our country, they are infinitely employable in the private sector – a hidden asset, an untapped resource. Even if a candidate is not perfect on paper, I will often scan down to see if there is any military service record. And if there is, there is at least an initial conversation. Many conversations have led to interviews. Many interviews have led to hires.

I thanked the nice couple at my table for listening to my long and boring story. As we were gathering our things to leave, one of the Marines stopped us. She shared a story

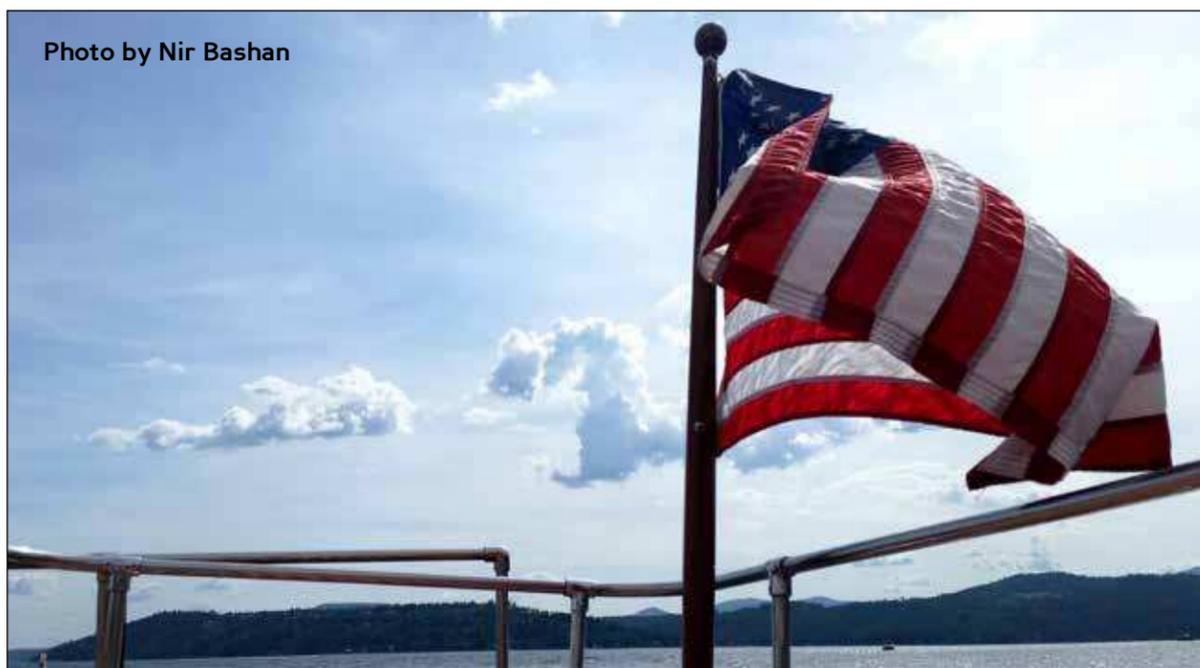
about how hard it was for her friends who just got out of the service to find gainful employment. And what she said next completely caught me by surprise – she thanked me. I told her that I was undeserving of the praise because I felt like I haven't done much compared to what she and her family have done. But she then told me something important – something that stuck with me – something simple yet profound: She said that every little bit helps. I have been thinking about it for weeks now. And it's still profound in its universality.

*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.*

[nirbashan.com/lectures-workshops/](http://nirbashan.com/lectures-workshops/)

Photo by Nir Bashan



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# FEATURES

## The Artist: Beauty In Obscurity

BY VANESSA POULSON



“There is beauty in obscurity,” said artist Samantha Shumaker in our email interview, which was also obvious in the time I spent leafing through her website and portfolio observing the intricacy she maintains in each and every one of her pieces. Shumaker lives in the greater Orlando area, and she holds Lake Nona near and dear to her heart as a place for not only inspiration but also as an intense connection with the artistic and creative community through the Nonahood’s diversity.

As far as inspiration is concerned, Shumaker traces her inspiration back to a variety of different points in her life where she felt struck by a particular set of feelings and emotions that led to an artistic release. “I find inspiration seeps through from my emotions and life experiences. I used to despise the fact that I was such an emotional child; even while watching the happiest of movies, my shirt was always soaked in tears. Little did I know the cracks and crevices of my life experiences would offer me such a powerful form of creativity!” said Shumaker.

“Painting these emotions as visual stories provides me with the emotional release. I still paint soaked in tears, though! I am also largely driven by my interest in mythology and psychology. I love exploring some of the most deeply rooted cross-cultural stories in my own perspective. By being a visual storyteller, I seek to understand humans better and their most deep-rooted fears or desires and the ‘why?’ behind them. Inspiration is everywhere, when I look hard enough.”

This ability to be incredibly observant and in touch with her personal emotions has led Shumaker down a variety of independent creative pursuits and artistic projects, with her current favorite being her piece entitled “Doomsday Clock.” The piece depicts a woman draped in gold and other items correlated with wealth, greed and power. This, as Shumaker describes, is the reason for the current downfall of modern society and the reason that the Doomsday Clock, which was created by scientists to represent how close we are to global catastrophe, currently stands at just 2½ minutes until midnight.

“Being terrified with nuclear threat, every airplane that passed over me made me cower in fear,” said Shumaker. “Painting this persistent threat was my way of coping, and now I have a painting I can look in the eye every day as a reminder.”

Entering the art world and maintaining a presence in the community has not always come easily to Shumaker, who recently finished her first solo show this past March. “It was my first test of discipline – having to finish 14 paintings in just a few months and working on the many challenges of putting together a show with a curator was an insane feat,” said Shumaker. “I barely saw the light of day, and I still think I am recovering from Vitamin D deficiency as a result! But having so many people come out and show support, knowing that everyone takes home the experience and inspiration, was extremely rewarding and reminds me that anything is possible.”

Shumaker’s accomplishments extend far beyond just her work with individually handcrafted oil paintings. She hopes to continue to branch off into different areas of artistic pursuit, including sculpture work, with a dream project to create a massive painting with a hand-sculpted frame. “Something like the 80-inch mammoth of a painting by Peter Paul Rubens that lives in the halls of the Ringling Museum in Sarasota,” Shumaker commented.

To keep up with Shumaker’s work, interested art enthusiasts can follow her on a variety of social media networks, including YouTube, where she posts videos of the process on each of the projects she is working

on. You also can find Shumaker’s work in Bloomingdale’s at The Mall at Millenia, along the roadside for an art drain project at Mills 50, or through her website, [shumakerart.com/events](http://shumakerart.com/events), which details all of her upcoming art events, including this April’s event at Orlando’s CityArts Factory Third Thursdays, where she will be unveiling one of her latest paintings alongside some of Orlando’s other talented artists.

Keep up with Samantha here:  
[Facebook.com/samanthashumakerart](https://www.facebook.com/samanthashumakerart)  
 Instagram: @shumakerart  
[youtube.com/shumakerart](https://www.youtube.com/shumakerart)

### NOMINATE AN ARTIST

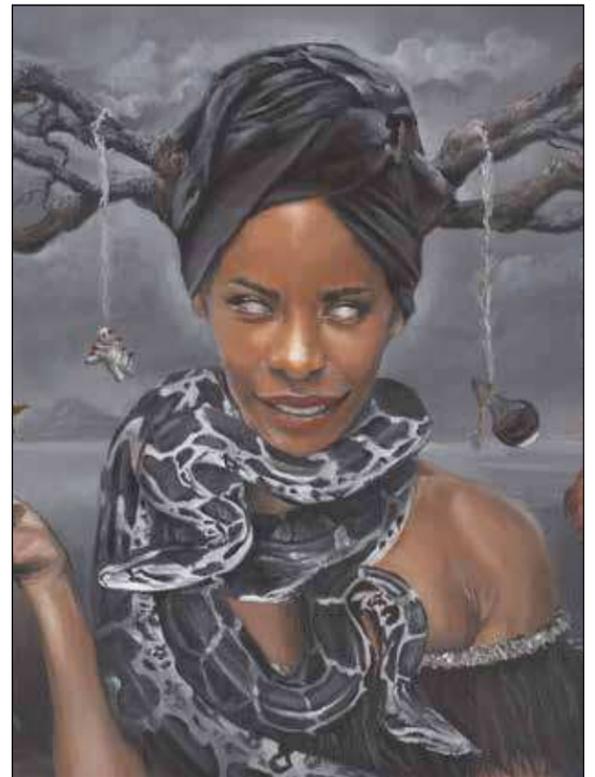
We are looking for interesting artists who live in the Nonahood to be featured. If you or someone you know should be nominated to be a Nonahood News Fetured Artist, send your nomination to [nonahood.to/artist](http://nonahood.to/artist).



Maiden Of Alcazar



Doomsday Clock



Marie Laveau



Cathedral Woman



La Lechuza

# Tough Things To Talk About: Firearm Safety and Life in the Aftermath of Tragedy

BY VANESSA POULSON

According to an article published in *The Washington Post*, there was a recent study of World Health Organization data published in the *American Journal of Medicine* that found that, among high-income nations, 91 percent of children younger than 15 who were killed by bullets lived in the United States. And the trends are only growing more dire. On average, two dozen children are shot every day in the United States, and in 2016 more youths were killed by gunfire – 1,637 – than during any previous year this millennium.

Within the course of the past month, Florida has witnessed its own share of violent and disturbing incidents with weaponry in schools. On Feb. 14, 30 students were injured and 17 died at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland when an expelled student pulled the fire alarm to lure students out of classrooms and opened fire on the campus.

On Feb. 15, a student was found with a knife and BB gun just off the Lake Nona High School campus and was promptly arrested. And, earlier in the month, a loaded handgun was found near a bus stop in Laureate Park.

There's a lot that can be said about gun violence, and with the frequency of these kinds of events happening not only in Florida schools but also in schools and communities across the United States, it is important to have discussions about the best ways to keep you and your family safe should you find yourself near an incident.

Michael Dorn, the executive director of Safe Havens, a non-profit organization that consults schools about campus safety issues, told *USA Today* that Parkland was the fifth school shooting in the U.S. where a fire alarm was triggered. When the fire alarm is pulled in a school, it can make it very difficult for students to follow standard practice for keeping themselves safe in the incident of a school shooting. Safe Havens offers a variety of tips for students and teachers should they find themselves in a dangerous situation involving a firearm in school, particularly if the fire alarm gets pulled as it did at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School:

- Have police officers respond to all school fire alarms.
- Have teachers conduct a “quick peek” before they exit the classroom with students when a fire alarm goes off and during drills. Teachers are taught to look and listen before they open the classroom door and to rapidly visually scan the hallway before they exit the

classroom. Students prepare to evacuate while the teacher is doing this.

- Teach students not to get too spaced out when evacuating, to keep line of sight and verbal communications open with the teacher.
- Do “reverse evacuation” drills so students and staff can turn students around more rapidly and smoothly.
- Make sure that school employees have whatever keys, cards or fobs needed to enter the school rapidly in an emergency. Dorn said some schools shut down access with cards or fobs during a lockdown. The Parkland shooting is an example of why that approach could be dangerous, Dorn said.

Other options for dealing with these kinds of situations also include the standard “lockdown” method, where students and teachers are taught to shelter in place. Though this method has been proven to be partially effective, Dorn warns that teachers should remember to think on their feet and tackle situations on a case-by-case basis so that they can stay cognizant of all factors of the situation. Staff should be taught using “scenario-based training” so that they can learn to react and deviate from the plan in place “when what they see and hear suggests that following the plan would be more dangerous,” Dorn said to *USA Today*.

The most important thing that students can do is stay vigilant and speak out to a teacher, administrator, or School Resource Officer (SRO) when they feel that they have seen something that makes them uneasy or suspicious. Lake Nona High School Vice Principal Adele Salazar praised the student who spoke up when they saw the student with the BB gun and knife. “Someone saw something and spoke up, and school administration and OPD officers were able to act swiftly to ensure the safety of students on campus,” a police spokesperson said in a statement.

The other important question to be asked in the face of violence and tragedy is how do we as individuals move forward and live our lives without fear but with awareness of what 2018 currently looks like. This thought can be scary and often incredibly uncomfortable for those who have witnessed violence in their past and suffer with the punishment of those memories in their daily lives.

I do not have an answer for those questions, and I do not believe that many people do. This new age of the world that we are entering is littered with rocky waves and uncharted territory, so it can be easy to shut down rather than speak out on these kinds of controversial issues. When tragedies like this happen, our social media feeds are often the first to blow up with images of black and white text across the square photo with phrases like “Pray for Orlando” or “Pray for Las Vegas.” After a few weeks, these photos are deleted from the same social media profiles where they first appeared, and the shooting itself seems to disappear from memory just the same.

What we have to be able to do as a society is learn how to prepare, how to take action, and how to prevent ourselves from forgetting about these tragedies and to build a better society from the ashes of the situations that make us the most afraid. As individuals, we have the power to stay vigilant, both prior to the event and in the aftermath, and that is the most powerful tool we have to take down those who seek to harm us and our loved ones.



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## Thriving on Diversity

For this Lake Nona family, the American Dream is built on the belief that as long as you work hard, you will achieve your dreams.

BY TERRY O. ROEN

Frank Rudzik fled his native Czechoslovakia clutching a pair of suitcases, his wife, and two young sons. He was just 29 and had \$800 in his pocket. He knew only a few English words but managed to transform his American dream into a successful family-run business servicing the Lake Nona area.

The patriarch of the family is now president of ACS Fire & Security Company, and his sons, Roman and Martin, are his partners. The company has grown to provide security to thousands of businesses in Central Florida. "I only knew how to say hello and goodbye in English, but that didn't stop me from building my American dream because I wasn't afraid to work hard and take risk," Rudzik said. "I had already put everything on the line to come here; I had nothing to lose."

People like the Rudzik family are the face of entrepreneurship in America today. U.S. Census data and U.S. Department of Labor data show that the most entrepreneurial people in the United States weren't born here. Further, the Kauffman Foundation's annual Index of Startup Activity shows that immigrants were almost twice as likely as native-born Americans to start new businesses in the U.S. in 2016. Almost 30% of all new entrepreneurs were immigrants despite accounting for only 13 percent of the population. And there's more. A separate report from the Partnership for a New American Economy found that in 2016, 40.2% of Fortune 500 firms had "at least one founder who either immigrated to the United States or was the child of immigrants".

The Lake Nona area is brimming with businesses launched by non-natives. From popular eateries like Pig Floyd's Urban Barbakoa and 407 Café to dry cleaning, dentists, CPAs and carpet cleaning services, one need not look very hard to find plenty of good examples.

The Rudziks' road to success was paved with plenty of difficulties, but they didn't give up. To escape the reli-



Photo by Luis Bonetti

(From left to right) Roman, Frank and Martin Rudzik.

gious and political persecution in their homeland, they packed for what was supposed to be a long camping trip and fled to Hungary, then Yugoslavia, Italy and finally Austria, where the United States granted them political asylum. They landed in New York in 1981 and then moved to Cleveland, Ohio. The family spent nearly four years there before visiting friends in Orlando and deciding that was their next move. "We came for one week and immediately fell in love," said Frank, who was hired in 1985 to work on computers (the same type he worked on in Czechoslovakia) at Orlando International Airport. Frank was promoted to supervisor of the electronics shop at the airport while also working a second part-time job as a maintenance manager at an apartment complex. He worked two jobs for nine years to help pay for his sons' college educations.

Frank retired from the airport in 2001 and started ACS Fire & Security the same month. Its first contract was to build the communications system for new runways at the airport. During the past 15 years, ACS has grown to include fire and burglar alarms, security and fire alarm monitoring, access control systems and video surveillance. "I always dreamed of working with my sons, and now we are partners," said Frank, 63, president and tech-

nical expert at ACS. Martin, 38, is vice president, and Roman, 41, is the chief financial officer. "You carry all those childhood memories," Roman said. "We started working very early. From age six, I was always in a work environment, and watching my parents work so hard developed a strong work ethic for me and my brother."

Working together also has built strong family bonds. Roman said he moved to Lake Nona to live close to Martin and his wife and their two children. Roman was attracted to the new community because of the young professionals and their energy. He said the small town was the perfect fit for their business because they can give one-on-one attention to their customers.

The brothers said they hope their children will learn the same work ethic, love for their community and entrepreneurial spirit their parents passed down to them. "We're very proud of how well we get along as family and as business partners," said Martin. "We hope our kids value the journey that brought us to Lake Nona and Central Florida and emulate those principles to be successful right here at home."



## Dan Green of Feeding Children Everywhere Named Central Floridian of the Year

BY VANESSA POULSON

"Together, we really can solve the root causes of hunger, but it takes commitment and collaboration," said Dan Green of the Longwood-based nonprofit organization Feeding Children Everywhere. Green was recently honored as Central Floridian of the Year. He was recognized for his intensive and dedicated work to the cause of eradicating world hunger, with specific focus on his work in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico.

Green's list of accomplishments is steller. It includes delivering 600,000 meals for those in Texas impacted by Hurricane Harvey, providing 1.5 million meals to people across Florida and Georgia after Hurricane Irma, and – perhaps the icing on the cake – the recruiting of more than 54,000 volunteers over the course of 19 days to help package 4.4 million meals for the people of Puerto Rico.

Born in Gainesville, Green grew up in an impoverished and inconsistent home. He left at 16, moving in with a teenage friend and bumming change at school so he could hustle up enough for a vending-machine lunch. Though

he started drinking young, he still managed to earn good marks in the classroom and won a math scholarship to the University of Florida. However, he dropped out after only one semester, according to his recent interview in *The Orlando Sentinel*.

Instead of continuing with college, Green took a minimum-wage job with a pool company and started working his way up, first to a sales job, then to management. By the time he was 21, he was general manager of a \$2 million-a-year business and paying his own way to earn a college degree in business, according to *The Orlando Sentinel*. It wasn't until a life-changing hike through the 2,650-mile Pacific Crest Trail, from Mexico to Canada, that he realized he could turn his whole life around and make something better for himself, which led him to Feeding Children Everywhere.

Green was nominated for the Central Floridian of the Year award by readers of *The Orlando Sentinel* before being selected as one of five finalists by the editorial board.

"At the annual banquet, the winner was announced, and I was shocked to hear that it was me," said Green in an email interview. "It was a surreal and humbling experience."

Lake Nona has helped play its own role in the success of Feeding Children Everywhere. The Nonahood is home to a variety of partners for the nonprofit, specifically the Griffin family. Conner and Evelyn and their two children have been incredible hunger hero partners over the last five years. Volunteers from Lake Nona also were part of the massive 54,000-person group that helped to pack meals for Puerto Rico.

As far as the upcoming year goes, Green has big plans for Feeding Children Everywhere. "Big initiatives for 2018 include opening a regional warehouse in Salt Lake City, expanding our Fed 40 program to more states, and providing more than 20 million meals to children and families in need. Personally, I'm launching a program to teach entrepreneurship skills to low-income-meal recipients, and I'm excited to be getting that launched soon," said Green.

If you're looking to get involved with Feeding Children Everywhere, check out their website – [feedingchildreneverywhere.com/](http://feedingchildreneverywhere.com/) – in order to sign up to volunteer, make donations, or for other means of helping the organization continue to do good in the state of Florida and far beyond.





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## HEALTH & FITNESS

### Nemours Lake Nona Urgent Care Expands Their Hours

BY VANESSA POULSON

With the number of flu cases across the United States and in the state of Florida on the rise this year, parents and teachers are searching for ways to help keep students healthy and happy.

Families who want care from a Nemours board-certified pediatrician for their child's flu symptoms will now find it even easier to be seen at a Nemours Children's Urgent Care thanks to expanded hours that recently went into effect. Locations in Lake Nona, Kissimmee, Melbourne, Sanford and Waterford Lakes are now opening earlier. The change comes at a time when many emergency departments are filled with people seeking care for the flu. "I believe the new hours are a great way to extend the availability of pediatric physicians to children in need of acute or urgent care," said Dr. Robert Cooper, medical director of the five Nemours Children's Urgent Care locations in Central Florida.

Nemours' new urgent care hours took effect on Feb. 1. Locations in Kissimmee and Waterford Lakes are now open from noon until 10 p.m. daily. The Lake Nona location is open from 4-10 p.m. every weekday and noon to 10 p.m. on weekends. The Melbourne and Sanford locations are open from 5-10 p.m. every weekday and noon to 10 p.m. on weekends.

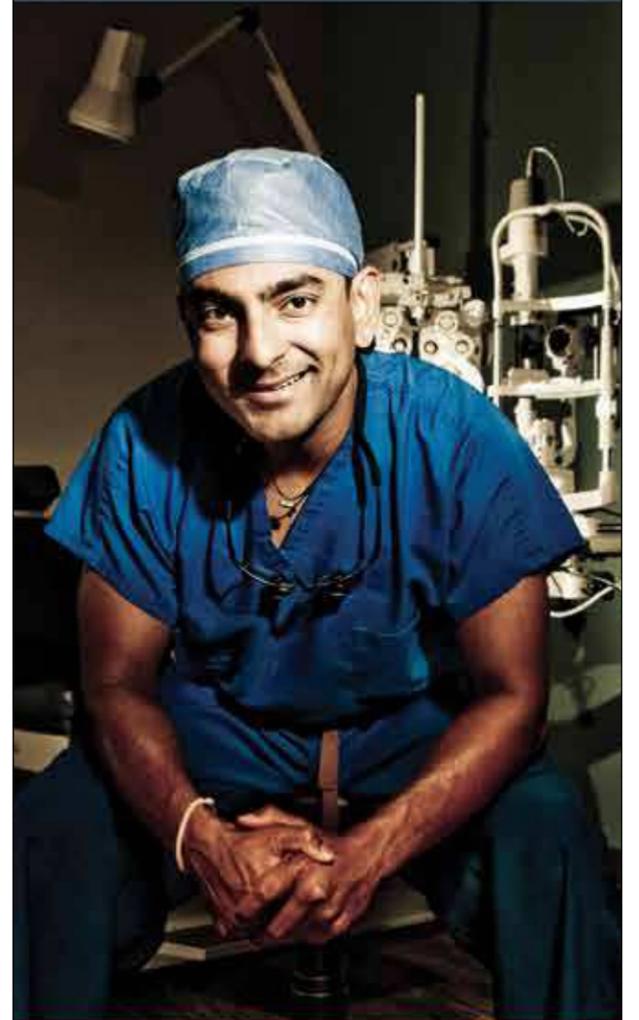


While Dr. Cooper encourages parents to take their children to their regular pediatrician when possible, the large number of children who are ill has filled pediatricians' schedules and caused longer-than-usual waits at hospital ERs. "And when your child is sick, any wait is very difficult," said Dr. Cooper.

The Nemours Urgent Care locations, and their expanded hours, will not just be useful for treatment during the flu season – which is expected to last until possibly April or May – but also for the treatment of other ailments, such as playground and sports injuries, animal and insect bites, sprains, strains and broken bones, as well as headaches and asthma. With on-site X-ray and labs at every Nemours Children's Urgent Care location, doctors can provide a fast and accurate diagnosis as well as write prescriptions or recommend needed follow-up care. All doctor's notes, lab results and images are sent to the child's regular pediatrician, including non-Nemours pediatricians, to ensure seamless care.

As for future changes for Nemours, Dr. Cooper adds, "We are in the process, on a regular basis, of researching and planning improved delivery of care. As these develop and solidify, we will share them with the community. It is always our goal to provide convenient quality care utilizing the most recent and advanced tools at our disposal."

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BY FLORIDA HOSPITAL MEDICAL GROUP



Dr. Teresa H. deBeche-Adams

March is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. According to the American Cancer Society, the colon cancer death rate in this country could be cut by more than half if all Americans simply followed recommended screening guidelines. Early detection and treatment are critical. If caught early, colorectal cancer is highly curable. If precancerous polyps are found during screening, the disease is often altogether preventable.

Because colorectal cancer can develop with no signs or symptoms, a colonoscopy could serve as a life-saving test.

#### Who Should Be Screened and When?

Men and women are affected equally by colorectal cancer. Unlike other cancer screenings, which can only detect a problem, colorectal cancer screening with colonoscopy can prevent colorectal cancer by removing precancerous polyps during the exam. For patients of average risk with no family history, it is widely recommended that screenings for colon cancer begin at age 50,

or 45 for African Americans, with follow-up screenings every five to 10 years, even for people who feel perfectly healthy. If you do have a family history of cancer, are experiencing pain or bleeding, or a previous screening revealed polyps, your doctor might recommend an earlier screening and that you be screened more frequently.

#### What Is the Screening Process Like?

There's no need to feel embarrassed or ashamed during a colonoscopy. It is your doctor's job to perform these lifesaving screenings, and every effort is made to help patients feel comfortable during this painless procedure.

- You'll be asked to follow a clear liquid diet the day before your procedure. This means only water, clear broth, soda, tea, coffee (without milk/creamer), clear juice (without pulp), Jell-O, popsicles and other flavored drinks.
- You'll be given instructions on using a laxative mixture to empty your bowel so that your colon can be viewed clearly during the procedure.
- During the colonoscopy, your doctor will look at the inner lining of your large intestine (which includes your rectum and colon). A thin, flexible tube called a colonoscope is inserted while you are semi-sedated.
- Most patients have very little awareness that the procedure is taking place. You're done within an hour.

Along with functioning as a screening test to check for cancer or precancerous polyps in the colon or rectum, a colonoscopy also can help find ulcers, tumors and areas of inflammation or bleeding. It is important to be screened for colon cancer even if you are not currently experiencing symptoms or signs of the polyps or cancers.

#### Who Performs Screenings in My Area?

Teresa H. deBeche-Adams, MD, FACS, FASCRS is board certified in general surgery and in colon and rectal surgery, expertly treating diseases and disorders of the colon and rectum – from the common to the complex. With regular participation in specialized medical and surgical conferences such as pelvic floor, pathology and GI tumors, she promises a true collaborative approach to solve problems of the colon and rectum with the most advanced technology and innovative techniques.

For more information on colorectal cancer, visit [GetScreenedToday.com](http://GetScreenedToday.com) or to schedule an appointment with Dr. deBeche, call 407-499-8211.



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## Hope Can Be Provided...One Dress at a Time

BY NICOLE LABOSCO

As a little girl, I remember having the privilege of running around playing with dolls and wearing dresses. In other countries, not every girl is that lucky. A local volunteer group, Dressed in Hope, ensures young girls don't ever have to feel left out by hand-sewing dresses and matching pocket dolls and sending them to impoverished countries. The dresses and dolls are hand-delivered by mission and humanitarian groups to where they are most needed. This ensures that those girls who are in need actually receive the dresses.

The group was originally created in 2011 by one woman named Joanne O'Connell, who was watching the nightly news and saw a segment about a woman who was attempting to change the world "one dress at a time." That segment inspired O'Connell to do the same, and now Dressed in Hope has grown to about 40 to 50 women, most residing in the Lake Nona area, specifically VillageWalk. These women currently meet every Thursday morning at the VillageWalk Town Center for a few hours. In that time, the Dressed in Hope women are sewing together dresses, matching fabrics, painting on doll faces and styling hair made of yarn. One doesn't need to know how to sew to join and help spread hope with this group because there are so many different jobs to tackle.

Roughly one yard of fabric can make a small dress, about a yard-and-a-half for a medium dress and about a yard and three-quarters for a large dress. Karen Arruda has been a member of Dressed in Hope since the beginning, acting as inventory control and updating the volunteers with brief speeches about the progress the group has made. "It's really very rewarding. Very motivating. I think to everyone here...some of us have been here from the beginning when it was 450 dresses [made in 2014 and seven countries], now to see that's over 5,000 dresses [in total to 18 different countries], that's pretty impressive! I think just talking about that motivates us even more. It's just like, 'Wow, did we really do that?! Did we really help to distribute 5,000 dresses?! Yeah, we did.'"

When asked what inspired these ladies to continue to volunteer their time and what their favorite part was,

the answers had an underlying and consistent theme: selflessness and camaraderie. Monica McNertney, the sewing group coordinator for Dressed in Hope, has been with the group since its inception as well. She describes her favorite part of being in the group. "Well, you know it's...you're always thinking about the girls, of course. You know, you hear about things that are happening around the world and how girls are, in a lot of cases, at a disadvantage, so that's the main purpose that drives me. [Also] the socialization. Just to make friends, a lot of us, you know, [it's] a fairly new community, so a lot of people are new here and it's a really great way to reach out to other people, make new friends to help you settle and adjust in the community."

It takes about an hour or two to make one dress from start to finish, but that little time spent volunteering makes such a great impact on these little girls' lives.

Chris Kraus has been an ambassador for Dressed in Hope since 2013, and she hates to miss a weekly meeting. Kraus had originally started attending once she moved to VillageWalk as a way to make new friends, but joining the group turned into so much more than just friendship. "It's so fun to see one of the dresses you made in one of the pictures they send back to us. Knowing that I can use my talents, whatever they happen to be, to help these girls around the world and also the friendships that I've made and the enthusiasm of the group."

The most striking response was from Karen Arruda. She said, "This, right here." She was pointing to a picture of the smiling girls receiving their dresses and dolls. "I think that's self-explanatory," stated Arruda. "I love seeing, I love contacting people, meeting different people and listening to them when they talk about their stories and what they're doing to help other children, other girls. Just to see that photograph...you know, we never ask for anything in return for the hundreds of dresses that we give away. I only ask them, 'Please send me a photograph.' That means so much to us. It's an inspiration."

That right there left an enduring impression on me. It's pretty sad to say that most people volunteer or do nice

things for others expecting something in return or even a thank you nowadays. These ladies of Dressed in Hope truly help out of the goodness of their hearts. The joy on the faces of the girls who receive their dresses means everything to these women, and that has to be one of the most gratifying moments ever.

Hope really can be provided one dress at a time.



If you are interested in volunteering or donating materials, you can visit [dressedinhope.org](http://dressedinhope.org) or email [dressedinhopeinfo@gmail.com](mailto:dressedinhopeinfo@gmail.com).



## Orlando Fisher House Dedicated To Bringing Hope And Comfort to Veteran Families

BY BRITTANY BHULAI



The Orlando Fisher House celebrated its grand opening on Feb. 14 with more than 300 people in attendance. Special guests, such as the honorary chairman for Friends of Fisher House, Lou Holtz, and President of the Fisher House Foundation, David Coker, gave motivational speeches to the crowd. Lake Nona Middle School's orchestra

and jazz band also came and performed during the ceremony. The national anthem was sung by Julie Rattley who works at a VA herself as an OEF/OIF case manager in Gainesville.

The Orlando VA Medical Center officially has full ownership of the house and should have guests already settled in as of March. The Fisher House manager, Terri Turner, could not have been more pleased with the outcome. It was better than what she had expected. Feelings of accomplishment and joy overwhelmed her from before the

ribbon cutting to finally allowing the public to walk through and see this essential amenity to the VA that she helped to create.

After spending over a year monitoring the building process of the house, she finally got to soak in the finished product. "It's like when you plan for a wedding. You plan, you plan, and then bam, before you know it, it's over with," said Turner. She accepted this new chapter of welcoming guests and building connections with them. Turner has been impressed by all the support Fisher House Foundation has received from the community so far and she is anxious to see the continuation of support in the future.

Holtz mentioned that families of veterans have saved more than \$370 million thanks to Fisher House since families stay at the houses free of cost. "Because enough people genuinely care, this has become a reality," said Holtz.

This is the 76th Fisher House that has been completed. The two-story facility has 16 suites with private bathrooms, a kitchen area, dining, laundry, and living and family room. There also is a patio area in the backyard. As long as the family member of the veteran lives 50 miles or farther from their loved one receiving care at the VA, they are welcome to stay at the Fisher House. There is also no time limit as to how long the guest can stay. There are more houses under construction in Alaska, California, Connecticut, New York, Ohio, Maine and South Florida.

According to the Fisher House Foundation, they have aided more than 277,000 veteran families, and they are spreading their development to other parts of the world, such as Germany and the United Kingdom.





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## Horse Chestnut: The New Medication You Don't Know About

BY KAREY FREEMAN

Horse chestnut is a homeopathic way to boost your venous health—and it's one that's rarely talked about. The Central Florida Vein & Vascular Center's vein specialists would like to share the ways horse chestnut can help improve the current state of your venous health. First, let's look at what horse chestnut does.

### Fights Blood Pooling

Horse chestnut seeds and leaves are packed with many impressive benefits for your veins. It's 600 times more powerful than a common vein treatment, Rutin, when fighting edema. Edema is also known as "blood pooling," meaning the breakdown of vein valves that weaken circulation and cause blood to pool in the vein. The power of horse chestnut makes this an ideal medication to help treat varicose veins, chronic venous insufficiency, and leg swelling.

### Improves Blood Flow

Varicose veins can form from poor blood flow, so any remedy that can improve circulation can also help symptoms. Horse chestnut improves blood flow within the veins by reducing the number and size of the pores within the capillary membrane. This restores the vein's ability to contract properly and helps relieve the inflammation of the vein. Horse Chestnut also contains the Key Ingredient Escin. Escin is one of the key reasons horse chestnut is a huge benefit for venous insufficiency, it counteracts inflammation in the capillaries. This helps to prevent vein valve deterioration and further lessen the symptoms of varicose veins.

### Helps Fight Signs of Aging

When people are looking to fight signs of aging, they can turn to surgery or other, more dangerous procedures. Luckily, horse chestnut has anti-aging effects, making it a less dangerous way to slow down the everyday signs of aging. Skin, over time, loses its natural elasticity, which causes wrinkles and creases to develop, horse chestnut can slow this process by strengthening that elasticity. It does this by slowing the breakdown of hyaluronic acid, which helps to hold collagen fibers in place. It also counteracts free oxygen radicals that damage the skin. An additional benefit is that it helps to stabilize connective tissue and provide structural support in your skin. As you can see, if signs of aging are one of your concerns, horse chestnut can be a natural way to give your skin some extra support.

### Why Take Horse Chestnut?

#### Reduces Varicose Vein Symptoms

Varicose veins come packaged with several symptoms that can cause unneeded pain and frustration. Blood pooling in the vein causes them to swell, and those with swollen, varicose veins can feel pain, tiredness, tension or heaviness in the leg. Horse chestnut's anti-inflamma-

tory properties help to address these symptoms so that you can go about your day-to-day activities feeling less pain in your legs.

#### Improves Circulation

Varicose veins, over time, can lead to bigger problems due to the lack of proper circulation. When blood pools in the vein, the vein can break down and ulcer. Because horse chestnut improves circulation, it can help slow down this ulceration process. Of course, it's ideal to treat the varicose vein before it has the chance to ulcer—but horse chestnut can slow the process until you're able to get treatment.

#### Inhibits Diminished Oxygen Supply

The lack of proper circulation can also lead to diminished oxygen supply within the vein. This creates a cascade of degeneration in the vein walls. Horse chestnut works to inhibit factors that break down the vein's cell wall—which can lead to larger issues that will require more than a simple, natural varicose vein treatment. Although venous insufficiency may not seem like a big problem at first, it can become one over time. Blood pooling in the vein can potentially lead to ulceration and blood clots, which take considerably more time and effort to treat—as well as being much more dangerous for your overall health. If you have venous issues, it's important not to ignore them. A mixture of professional, specialized health care and medication can be an ideal way to treat both the symptoms and the causes of venous insufficiency. Best of all, treating an issue like varicose veins can be quick and easy with modern procedures and skilled, knowledgeable physicians.

*If you want to learn how the combination of expert health care and new helpful medications like horse chestnut can impact your vein health, you don't need to look far. The vascular physicians in Orlando at Central Florida Vein & Vascular Center are here to craft a treatment plan that will work best for you and your venous health. As a patient-centered private practice, we care about making sure you get the best possible treatment so that you can enjoy your life without heavy, painful legs due to venous insufficiency. You can contact us today to schedule a consultation with one of our specialists by calling 407-545-3385 or 352-658-5547. And, if you want to want to learn about more ways to improve your venous health, you can also look through our blog for tips and information about treatment.*



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## Don't Discount The Effectiveness Of a Flu Shot

BY AISHAH ALI, MD, ALLERGIST AND  
IMMUNOLOGIST - UCF HEALTH



Aishah Ali, MD

This flu season has reminded us of the importance of getting a flu vaccine. While we might be approaching the end of flu season, cases of flu are likely to persist until as late as May. Getting your flu shot yearly, even now, is the best way to protect yourself and others from the flu.

### Types Of Flu Vaccines

Any flu shot will offer you protection from the flu, but there are two specific types recommended by the CDC for the 2017-2018 flu season: a trivalent vaccine and a quadrivalent vaccine. Both will offer you adequate protection from the flu, so get whichever option is available.

### Who Should Get a Flu Shot?

According to the CDC, people with medical conditions such as asthma, lung disease, and diabetes, those who are pregnant, and those 65 years or older have the highest risk of complications from the virus and should make getting an influenza vaccination a priority. Pregnant females can and should get the flu vaccine to protect themselves and their baby.

Children younger than 6 months and those with life-threatening allergies to ingredients in the vaccine should not receive a flu vaccine. Having an egg allergy, per CDC guidelines, does not mean you cannot get the flu vaccine. Your doctor should be able to administer the flu vaccine to you even if you have a history of an egg allergy.

Contrary to rumors, the flu vaccine does not cause influenza. You might experience mild side effects after receiving

the vaccine, such as soreness at the injection site, a low-grade fever, headache and muscle aches. These side effects should resolve in a day or two. It takes about two weeks for your body to build up the antibodies from the flu vaccine, so it is still possible to contract the flu during this window of time. To reduce the likelihood of this occurring, get your flu shot early in the flu season – ideally in October or earlier if available. Getting the vaccine late in flu season is still better than not getting it at all.

### Benefits of the Flu Vaccine

1. It can decrease your risk of getting the flu.
2. If you do get the flu, it can reduce the risk of severe flu symptoms, flu-related medical complications, hospitalizations and deaths.
3. It can protect others around you who are at greatest risk for complications as a result of getting the flu: the elderly, children, and pregnant women.
4. Getting a flu vaccination also reduces the risk of the virus spreading among people around you.

If you come into contact with someone who has been proven to have influenza, you may fit the criteria to receive Oseltamivir (Tamiflu). It might help to decrease

your chances of getting influenza after the exposure. Contact your healthcare provider for details.

### Other Vaccinations

Like influenza, there are other diseases and illnesses that can be prevented by receiving a vaccination.

Recommended vaccinations include the shingles vaccine for those 60 or older, the HPV vaccine for females 26 or younger and males 21 or younger, and the Pneumococcal vaccine for those 65 or older. Those with chronic lung disease, heart disease, liver disease, kidney disease or other high-risk groups should also get the pneumonia vaccine. Please see your doctor if you are unsure about your vaccination history.

Vaccines have been important in helping eradicate dangerous diseases such as polio and smallpox. Although a vaccination never guarantees 100 percent prevention, it's your best option to stay healthy and protect yourself from disease.

*Dr. Aishah Ali is a board-certified allergist and immunologist at UCF Health in Lake Nona. She helps patients live a better quality of life by diagnosing, treating and educating patients about their allergies.*



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# March Marks One Of the Busiest Months of the Spring at the USTA National Campus

BY DANIEL PYSER

Most notably in March, the USTA Pro Circuit returns to the courts in Lake Nona with a \$15,000 women's event. This will be the second USTA Pro Circuit event held at the USTA National Campus, as a \$25,000 women's event was held in January.

The USTA Pro Circuit, the largest developmental tennis circuit in the world, is the pathway to the US Open and tour-level competition for aspiring tennis players, and also frequently serves as a battleground for established professionals. The USTA Pro Circuit is comprised of approximately 90 tournaments hosted annually throughout the country, with prize money ranging from \$15,000 to \$125,000. This \$15,000 event will play host to a number of young, up-and-coming American players, including top juniors players who are beginning to gain experience at the professional level. Included in the draw will be a number of players who regularly train with USTA Player Development at the USTA National Campus.

Much like the event in January, March's event will feature a weekend of family fun as a number of community events will surround the final days of completion. On Saturday, March 10, a Net Generation Kids' Day will be held prior to the start of the singles semifinals and will feature a free kids clinic led by USTA National Campus teaching professionals. The matches will feature live music as competitors vie for a spot in Sunday's final. The doubles final will follow the pair of singles finals.

Prior to the singles final on Sunday, March 11, there will be a Net Generation Team Challenge, another free opportunity for local youth to pick up a racket prior to a champion being crowned.

College tennis also continues its strong showing at the National Campus as the UCF men's and women's programs hit the heart of their 2018 schedules. The men, coming off their first-ever at-large NCAA tournament appearance in 2017, play nine home matches in March. They kick off the month with a College MatchDay showdown against a nationally-ranked Michigan program on March 3. The match will be broadcast live on Tennis Channel and also will feature a number of free community activities.



Other notable matches include a matchup with the defending national champion Virginia Cavaliers on March 11, a rematch of last year's College MatchDay thriller against Penn State on March 7, and a faceoff with in-state foe Miami on March 18.

The women's program, which already owns two Top-25 wins this season, also has nine home matches in the month of March. They will be playing alongside the men on March 3, also taking on a nationally-ranked Michigan women's team. Also on tap for the UCF women are conference matches against East Carolina on March 4 and Memphis on March 10.

Lake Nona also will play host to a number of neutral-site matches throughout March as part of the USTA National Campus Collegiate Series. Nationally-ranked men's programs, including Duke, TCU, Oklahoma, and Florida State, which will take on rival Miami alongside the two women's programs, as well as Duke's Top 10 women's program, will all play matches at the USTA National Campus during the month.

Finally, "Spring Break Tennis," a program that arranges for colleges and universities from around the country to play matches in Orlando, will bring hundreds of collegiate matches to the USTA

National Campus. Colleges and universities from Division I, II, III and the NAIA will travel to Central Florida throughout the month to compete.

Last year, the National Campus hosted more than 300 total colleges and universities, with that number expected to grow this year.



Photos Courtesy USTA

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## EDUCATION

### Eagle Creek Elementary School

#### SCHOOL UPDATE

BY ROBERT MCCLOE, PRINCIPAL

ECE had a busy month for our students! We conducted our annual Spelling Bee and Oration contest. Congratulations go out to our schoolwide winners (Shawn Ganeshram-Spelling Bee and Dhillan Salh-Oration). We also had the opportunity to recognize our Support Person of the Year, Ms. Carmen Ortiz Rodriguez. We are very proud of our ECE Panthers!!!!



#### YEARBOOK CLUB

BY GIANNA CONDELUCI,  
YEARBOOK SPONSOR

The Panther Yearbook Club is a brand new after-school club at Eagle Creek Elementary for students in 4th -5th grades. Our club consists of 15 fourth- and fifth-grade students who were selected to be in the club based on answers to application questions, teacher input forms, and high achieving academic records.

Our yearbook staff members of the Panther Yearbook Club have been working hard on projects throughout the school year that have involved activities of a journalistic nature. Students have been taking part in creating our 2017-2018 school yearbook by taking photographs of events, interviewing students for stories, quotes and polls, and assisting in planning the overall design of the yearbook. This experience has allowed for opportunities of leadership, teamwork, computer editing skills, and creativity across grade levels.

Our 2017-2018 yearbook, themed "Don't Let Your Memories Melt Away," is currently in the design phase and will be submitted for printing in early March. Yearbooks will arrive in May and be distributed to students! We're very excited for our classmates to see our inaugural club yearbook!

### EAGLE CREEK PANTHER CHORUS NEWS

BY DARLENE B. GRANDE, MUSIC TEACHER  
& CHORAL DIRECTOR MS.ED/CPAE

The ECE Panther Chorus performed for the Pro Circuit tournament on Jan. 20 at the USTA campus. The chorus performed the National Anthem and was able to watch the pro circuit game at the Lake Nona National Campus. Our most recent performance was the National Anthem for the Orlando Solar Bears vs. Norfolk Admirals hockey game on Feb. 25 at Amway Arena. You also will be able to see the chorus perform a selection of songs from our upcoming musical *Little Mermaid Jr.* at the Lake Nona Regional Chamber of Commerce's annual signature event, Nona Chamber Festival, on March 10 at Valencia College.

Three ECE Panther Chorus students (Chloe Houghton, Armani Lebron, and Jade Daloisio) participated in the 2018 OCPS All-County Elementary Honor Chorus under the direction of LNMS Choral Director Ashley Majka. It was a beautiful night of music.



### Sun Blaze Elementary School

BY TAMI TURNER, PRINCIPAL

Sun Blaze Elementary School has been recognized as an "A" school by the Florida Department of Education since 2014 for demonstrating a high level of performance on state assessments. Last month, I received a letter of recognition from our governor, Rick Scott. The letter showcased the academic achievements the school had last year. Sun Blaze was in the top 8% among all schools in the state of Florida with 25% or more English Language Learners in English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, and Science achievement. This is a great honor for our community.

For more than 60 years, the Modern Woodmen of America School Speech Contest has provided students with a valuable personal and academic experience. Today, the contest is an important event with more than 100,000 students competing. This year's School Speech Contest asked contestants to imagine a world without the invention of their choosing and speak about how this invention has improved the quality of life. Speeches had to be between three and five minutes long and in the student's own words. This year, we had nine talented finalists from more than 200 students who participated. I want to congratulate our winner, Rheanna Eltaghriny. Her speech was about the internet and how it has changed the world and improved quality of life. I would like to thank our guest judges - Dr. Jara, Dr. Fritzler, and Ms. Gibson - for their time and involvement.

On Feb. 8, our second- and third-grade students performed A Tribute to Dr. Seuss at the Lake Nona High School Performing Arts Center. What an amazing evening as more than 400 students performed a song and dance for their family and friends. The evening began with all of the classes singing our national anthem and concluded with an encore tribute to Dr. Seuss and our Sun Blaze school song. This was the second of three grade-level performances planned for the year. Our special area teachers have been outstanding as they instruct and prepare our students for these performances. I want to thank these teachers for their com-

mitment, along with the parents and family members who were in attendance.

I would like to invite our Lake Nona Community to Sun Blaze Elementary's Drama Club performance of *The Wizard of Oz*. This performance is free and will take place Friday, March 2, from 6-7 p.m.

Our kindergarten students were excited to celebrate the 100th day of school recently. It was wonderful to see many of them participate in the 100th day theme by dressing up, engaging in activities such as counting to 100 by 1's, 5's, 10's, and 20's, and working on their 100 sight words. It is always exciting to see our students engaged in learning the standards through creative and challenging activities.

I would like to invite our Lake Nona community to follow our social media links to stay connected with all that is happening at Sun Blaze Elementary. The website address is [SunBlazeES@ocps.net](mailto:SunBlazeES@ocps.net). You can follow us on Facebook, at [SunBlazeES.ocps.net](http://SunBlazeES.ocps.net) and on our new Twitter account, [SunBlazeElem](https://twitter.com/SunBlazeElem).

Go, Stingrays!



### NorthLake Park Elementary

**Celebrating Literacy Week at NorthLake Park Elementary: The S'more You Read, The S'more You Know!**

BY SALLY SHUMAN

Jan. 22-26 was the 10th annual Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida! This annual event is to promote literacy and a love for reading. This year, the Florida theme was *Find Yourself in a Book!*

NorthLake Park Community School celebrated Literacy Week through themed days. There was "Read My Shirt" day and "Get Wild about Reading," where students wore animal print clothing. There also was "Reading is My Superpower," where students and staff wore superhero shirts, and, to end the week, students wore sports apparel to "Score With a Good Book."

The main event for Literacy Week was "Camp Read-a-Lot" Literacy Night where students and parents engaged in fun and exciting reading experiences. The primary teachers along with resource teachers developed literacy stations for students and parents to enjoy. There was a camping-themed photo booth, Principal Parker read campfire stories, and the music teacher, Mrs. Rutan, sang campfire songs in a camp setting. Students and parents participated in a scavenger hunt through the school, collecting letters to spell out a secret word. Stations also included students fishing for opposites, making "S'more" rhyming words, and spelling words with rocks. Students loved reading the "stars words" with a flashlight while inside in a tent.

This was a night where many parents made lasting memories with their children. Families that read together can learn together and build a lifelong love of reading.



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## Laureate Park Elementary

BY SUZANNE E. WORKUM, PRINCIPAL

2018 has already been a busy and engaging time for Laureate Park Elementary. In February, we held our first 5th Grade Level 1 Oration Contest. The classroom finalists delivered powerful speeches about "Inventions That Have Improved the Quality of Life." We are proud of each of our finalists and are proud to announce our top three winners. Congratulations to our third-place winner, Alannah Lower, our second-place winner, David Rodriguez, and our first-place winner, Peter Dang.

Thirty-five 4th and 5th graders were honored in early February as they were officially inducted into the first chapter of the Laureate Park Elementary School National Elementary Honor Society. Students were selected for membership based on the four pillars of Honor Society: scholarship, leadership, service, and responsibility.

In January, Laureate Park Longhorns celebrated Literacy Week with lots of fun activities. Some of the activities included meeting Sunshine State author Taryn Souders; *Drop Everything and Read* (DEAR) Reading Buddies, where the older grades are paired with the younger grades to read together; creating bookmarks for the library; and a performance by professional storytellers. Throughout the week, our Longhorns logged more than 20,000 minutes of extra reading time and had a great deal of fun doing it.

Our first Spelling Bee took place in early January. We are proud of each of our classroom finalists who did a commendable job! Congratulations to our school-level finalist, Olivia Venezia. She represented LPE at the Orange County Public Schools (OCPS) Spelling Bee on Feb. 23 at Windermere High School.

In our classrooms, the students are finding creative ways to learn. In third grade, students donned surgical masks and conducted a text feature surgery. The students had a blast searching for text features in their *Science Weekly* magazines.

Our first-grade students put their informational text skills to use! The students first picked an animal to research. Then, they used a variety of technology tools, such as Lightbox books and online tools, to help research animals and their habitats. This will prepare them to build their animal exhibits.

Using STEM skills, fifth graders created a unique way to deliver their valentines this year. During the February Einstein hour, valentine carriers were made, using limited supplies, to be delivered via a zipline.



## LNHS Theatre Department Updates

BY DANY OLIVEIRA, JUNIOR

As we approach spring, Thespian Troupe 7434 is getting busy with some upcoming performances. In March, we are taking our award winning one-act, *When The Hurly Burly's Done*, to the Florida State Thespian Festival along with six individual events. While working on putting the one-act back on its feet, we are currently producing our spring musical *Aida*, a timeless love story. Performances will be April 20-28, and tickets will be available on [teachtix.com](http://teachtix.com) starting on March 26. See you at the show!



## Innovation Middle School Soars!!

BY CHRIS CLARK

Even though Innovation Middle School just opened in August in Story Park, the students, staff and PTSA are soaring with many accomplishments!



Students have adapted quickly to the digital learning platform. They have started many new clubs, including a Student Government Association, Builders Club, Art Club and National Junior Honor Society. The Athletics Department is building many strong programs, including soccer, basketball and volleyball. The Drama Department will present their second production, *Suessical, the Musical*, on May 10, 11 and 12.

Teachers and staff are excited to be in a new state-of-the-art facility! Their enthusiasm and support of the students is amazing. They are working hard, even offering an on-going "Phoenix Academy" on Saturday mornings to help



## STEM Focus: The State of Innovation

BY ANDRE GARCIA

Bloomberg recently released its 2018 Innovation Index on the most innovative countries in the world. The United States dropped out of the top 10 for the first time in the index's six-year history. A deeper dive into the index's metrics highlight that the U.S. has fallen behind on key measures such as R&D (research and development) investment as a percentage of GDP (gross domestic product), manufacturing value-added as a percentage of GDP and per capita, and, most importantly, a measure the index called "tertiary efficiency," which is a measure of the share of the labor force with an advanced degree and annual new science and engineering graduates as a percentage of total graduates and as a percentage of the labor force. In sum, we're not investing enough in innovation, and we're not investing enough in innovators. While the U.S. still leads the world in patents, journal publications, and various other innovation metrics on an absolute basis, we've fallen behind on many of these measures on a per-person basis. So what can be done about this?

From a non-partisan perspective, the new tax code will incentivize companies to invest in R&D with their ability to fully expense investments immediately. Furthermore, the new tax law incentivizes companies to repatriate significant amounts of cash, in which case at least some of that cash will be used for R&D and new product development. This will create the top-down demand the U.S. has been missing for many years. But, what about the bottom-up creation of a new labor supply of innovators to satisfy the top-down demand from industry? We have to educate more innovators to supply this new wave of R&D investment if we are to compete on the global stage on innovation, and we should strive not only to compete but also to be the most innovative country in the world.

The Boston Consulting Group recently released a report on the most innovative companies in the world. The results indicate that the companies that have invested the most in digital transformation are the companies that are thriving the most. Said differently, the companies that are investing most in technology that solves people's problems, creates efficiencies in people's lives, and improves society's quality of life are the companies that are differentiating themselves from their peers. The top companies on this list include a number of household names such as Apple, Google, Microsoft, Amazon, Samsung, Tesla, Facebook, IBM and Uber, just to name a few. Each

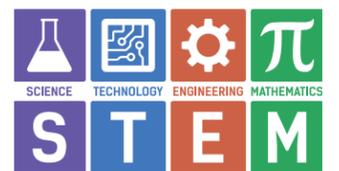
students perfect skills in preparation for state-wide testing that will happen later this spring. The team is led by Dr. Hector Maestre, who was just recently recognized as Middle School Administrator of the Year by the Orange County School Counselor Association.

Before the school opened, the PTSA Board of Directors quickly organized last spring and met almost weekly over the summer. They hit the ground running, selling spirit wear, discount cards and offering other services before the school opened. They have been awarded grants and organized many fun events for the students, including dances, spirit nights and an event at the Orlando Eye. Many students and parents went with the Orange County PTSA to the Rally in Tally to meet with state legislators and tour the Capital. The PTSA will be distributing funds later this spring that will benefit student programs for years to come at IMS.

Innovation Middle appreciates the warm welcome and support they've gotten from the community. They are always looking for new ways to partner with local businesses. Available opportunities include banners around the school, sponsoring PTSA events, or advertisements in the Playbill for the spring musical. Contact the PTSA president at [President@innovationmiddleptsa.org](mailto:President@innovationmiddleptsa.org) if you have ideas or want to support the school.

With so much going on, it might be hard to keep up with the busy IMS Phoenix. You can follow all the action on the PTSA website or PTSA Facebook page.

of these companies has innovated in ways that make our lives easier or more efficient in some way. Take Uber, for example. They have created a consumer-centric market to connect those seeking transportation with those who can supply transportation services. AirBnB accomplishes the same thing in the hospitality market. These markets weren't as efficient before, and the innovators who started these companies saw an opportunity to create more efficient markets through innovation in these domains.



So what's to be done to improve on our country's innovation? As previously mentioned, the government has acted in ways that will open the floodgates on innovation and corporate investment in R&D. It is in our best interest to create more innovators and STEM practitioners. For many decades, the vast majority of job growth and, more importantly, wage growth has been in STEM fields, and this trend will no doubt continue for many decades to come. It is in our country's best interest and our youth's best interest to pursue these fields. The education required to obtain these jobs is not easy, but it is the most rewarding and positions the person to truly have an impact on the world. The innovation environment is better than it's been in 30 years in terms of policy, regulation and corporate investment. The opportunity for our future innovators has never been better to have an impact on society and change the world, one new scientist, technologist, engineer, or mathematician at a time.

*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](http://EduCoachOrlando.com).*





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## EVENTS



### Family Fridays

BY VANESSA POULSON

Spring has sprung in the Nonahood! Check out some awesome upcoming events around Central Florida that you can experience with your family!

**Friday, March 2:**

**The Lion King**  
**Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts**  
Fall back in love with the Disney classic turned world renowned musical!

**Friday, March 2:**

**Orlando Magic vs. Detroit Pistons**  
**Amway Center**  
Watch our very own Orlando Magic face off against Motor City's Detroit Pistons.

**Saturday, March 3:**

**Orlando City vs D.C. United**

**Orlando City Stadium**

See Orlando City's season opener against D.C. United.

**Saturday, March 3:**

**Seven Seas Food Festival**  
**SeaWorld Orlando**

Sip and sample your way around the world of international street food traditions and enjoy live performances music artists.

**Wednesday, March 9:**

**Fashion Rewind Exhibit**  
**Osceola County Welcome Center**  
Experience fashion from the days gone by! Step into the past of the Old South with a tour through the old fashions of the previous decades.

**Saturday, March 10:**

**Nona Chamber Festival**  
**Valencia College, Lake Nona Campus. 10 a.m.-4 p.m.**  
Come check out the Burger Showdown, local shopping, games and activities, as well as live entertainment!



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## FOOD & DRINKS

### Food Challenge: Feed Me, I'm Not Leaving The House.

BY MATT TROY JONES AND AARON FERG

Let's start this article with an explanation. We had every intention of going on another time-crunched food expedition again this month. However, because of some unforeseen circumstances, we all decided it was best to stay inside. The night before just happened to be one of our friends' birthday outing and we all partook – until 2 a.m., maybe later – so let's just say our Uber driver had to stop at Taco Bell on the way home. Needless to say, none of us wanted to volunteer to drive, nor did we have the vitality to enjoy such a trek. So, what's a gluttonous food-group supposed to do? The same thing you would do – order delivery!

This decision ended up being a pretty awesome revelation in disguise. We realized quickly that none of us really knew of many options for delivery in the Lake Nona area other than pizza. And, since no one has the same amazing taste in pizza with pineapple as Matt has, we decided to dig a little deeper, a.k.a. poll the audience on Facebook again. We started to realize that there really are some unique and satiable selections, as well as a variety of delivery methods to choose. We decided to redirect this month's story to highlight some of these choices, just in case you come down with a "one day cold" someday as well. So, how do we win over the *Nonahood News* producers with this idea? With the promise of "good content." Readers of *Nonahood News*, we present to you the most expensive article of our food challenge series thus far: **Feed Me, I'm Not Leaving the House.**

To do this article properly, we decided we must order from every delivery service we could find aside from pizza joints – because everyone knows pizza joints deliver. So, we needed to place an order with Uber Eats, EzeDining.com, and Instacart. Please note that Shipt also has delivery service in our area but requires a membership, which was too much to handle when all three of us had the "day-after-party ailment." It's also worth mentioning that since this event took place, Dickey's BBQ now of-

fers delivery to homes and businesses via their website, so check that out.

Our first order was placed at 5:56 to NY Kennedy Fried through Uber Eats. The order was expected to arrive at 6:24 and arrived at exactly 6:24. We are all pretty certain the driver waited outside for one minute to be perfectly punctual. So, was the food from our first location as perfect as the delivery service? We ordered a four-piece chicken, a biscuit and a burger. The food was still hot and fresh. The chicken was flavorful, and the biscuit was flaky and buttery. As for the burger, if the place has fried chicken in the title, stick to the fried chicken.

Order two, also through Uber Eats, was Larry's Giant Subs, the longtime local favorite sub shop. The order was placed at 5:58, ETA 6:34. Actual arrival time 6:38, four minutes late, but we hadn't finished eating our chicken, so we were not bothered. We ordered a sandwich called The Destroyer, mostly because it was called The Destroyer – ham, prosciutto, salami, capicola, pepperoni and provolone – pretty much the perfect toppings for a sandwich. Add on two cookies, and we were good to go. We gave it two thumbs up for both the food and the delivery service.

Next up was Loop Gyros, our last delivery from Uber Eats. Ordered at 6:04, ETA 6:44, actual delivery at 6:43, one minute ahead of schedule, and we are starting to notice quite an accumulation of food on the island counter. The lamb gyro is a perfect food for delivery and for our current, slightly rundown condition. The food was still fresh despite traveling from Hunter's Creek. The gyro was classic, shaved lamb, fluffy pita and a creamy tzatziki sauce. The gyro was devoured quickly and was a great choice for delivery.

After exhausting our dining options from Uber Eats, we turned to Eze Dining, a local delivery company that has been in business for some time. Whilst ordering at 6:04, our ETA for delivery was showing between 9:37 and 9:47?! This couldn't be right; we suspected this might be a glitch...so, we ordered from four different stops, all in the same order, just to make things more complicated. Thankfully, our suspicions were correct, and the order arrived at 7:13, just under a half hour for four different stops – our driver deserves a medal, a raise, and possibly a few speeding tickets.

Of the four stops we ordered, two are actually the same restaurant. However, Mr. K's Chinese and Mr. K's Sushi are listed as two different locations. Our orange chicken was full of flavor. The batter wasn't perfectly crispy anymore, but that is to be expected with delivery. Chinese takeout always hits the spot, and Mr. K's has always cooked some

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good food.

Next restaurant was Piazza Italia. Could a delivery entree be as good as the desserts we tried last month? Yes! The chicken parm was awesome. The marinara was thick and loaded with a rich tomato flavor. The breading was loaded with herbs and the chicken moist and tender. This one was a winner for delivery.

Last stop for Eze Dining was Durian Durian and some Pad Thai noodles. This dish also held up well during the drive to the house. The sauce had a wonderful peanut taste, however, a little more spice would have been nice. I'll remember to ask next time.

Lastly, we had a craving for one of Florida's finest delicacies, the Publix sub. For this, we turned to Instacart, the delivering partner for Publix. While this delivery service is meant for getting your week's foodstuffs without having to worry about fighting for a parking spot at your local grocery store, it worked just fine to get food from the Publix deli to our counter. After agonizing over which sub to order, we settled upon the Italian sub with provolone, upgraded to Boar's Head, of course. To complete our order, we need some sweets – a dozen Publix chocolate chip cookies and a quart of Publix Premium Chocolate Cookie Quarry Frozen Yogurt (Matt's favorite) were two solid choices. As per usual, the Publix offerings delivered (pun intended) and were a great way to finish off the most lazy food binge of all time.

So, the next time you're feeling under the weather, or just not motivated to spend six hours smoking ribs or 15 minutes heating a frozen pizza, use your smartphone, tablet, computer or Alexa to order some delivery. Relax, you deserve it, you haven't done anything all day, why start now? Tune in next month when we outdo ourselves again with the College-Style Pantry-Treasure Cook-off Challenge.

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 Dreams and Green Queens

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.

This month, with Saint Patrick's Day just around the corner, we're taking on the classic Reuben sandwich and all things green and sweet. Don't forget to pinch your least favorite co-worker for not wearing green! Happy Saint Patrick's Day!

**Place:** Jersey Mike's

**Order:** Grilled Pastrami Reuben (hot)



**Final Review Nicole:** I'm a reuben fan, and this one was good, but I wouldn't go out of my way to order it with all of the options they offer. The rosemary bread was a nice addition to the sub, but it was a little excessive in the sense that the bread-to-meat ratio wasn't that proportional until the middle of the sandwich. I had to request more sauerkraut as there wasn't any included, but c'mon, what makes a reuben? All four components are essential to the sandwich.

**Final Review Vanessa:** I'm not much of a meat eater, so reubens aren't really up my alley, but for the sake of the holiday, I gave it a go. It was fair, in my opinion. I'm not a big sandwich fan, but I definitely see the appeal with this sandwich. The first time, the classic sauerkraut on the sandwich was not included, which was a bit of a bummer, as that's what makes a reuben a reuben.

**Taste:** 6.5/10

**Aesthetic:** 7/10

**Environment:** 6/10

**Price:** 8/10

**Proximity to Nonahood:** 10/10

**Place:** Starbucks

**Order:** Green Tea Latte



**Final Review Nicole:** Okay, ladies and gents, this is my go-to order at Starbucks, and I'm never disappointed. Whether it's hot or iced, I swoon over my matcha every single day. I love to order mine with coconut milk so I can enjoy the best of both worlds and fulfill my obsession. Co-

conut + matcha = HAPPY NICOLE! I honestly can never get tired of this wonderful drink, and I will always want more. If you've never tried matcha, you've yet to live (in my opinion). Give it a go next time and let me know what you think! Are you on the matcha train with me!?

**Final Review Vanessa:** Starbucks offers a really great green tea latte for when you're on the go and need something refreshing as a pick me up. I'm never against a good tea break, and Starbucks is the current king of coffee and tea convenience (sorry, Dunkin'!). The latte was especially good with soy milk, which in my opinion gives an extra layer of creaminess and fullness to the latte.

**Taste:** 8/10 (Nicole gives it a 10/10)

**Aesthetic:** 8/10

**Environment:** 7/10

**Price:** 7/10

**Proximity to Nonahood:** 10/10

**Place:** Vespr Coffeebar

**Order:** Matcha Green Tea Latte

**Final Review Vanessa:** I love this latte! It's been one of my favorites at Vespr for a long time now, and I still love this latte! It is by far my favorite green tea latte in the Central Florida area, and it is one of the many things that keeps me coming back to Vespr. I love the frothy taste of the matcha and milk combination. I totally recommend Vespr for a coffee stop and for their variety of teas, friendly staff and very chill vibe. They actually didn't have any when Nicole and I went, and I'm pretty sure I heard her heart break, but she trusts my judgment on my previous visits.

**Taste:** 9/10

**Aesthetic:** 10/10

**Environment:** 10/10

**Price:** 6/10

**Proximity to Nonahood:** 6/10

**Place:** Chibi's Boba

**Order:** Green Tea Lavender Boba (slushed and iced) and Island Curry Coconut Chicken Panini



**Final Review Nicole:** Alright, I know I say this a lot, but this is literally heaven in a cup! I had always wanted to try this combination of flavors, but it was too hard for me to stray from my usual mixture. This time, Van convinced me, and I pretty much owe her my life at this point. This has got to be the most amazing flavor of boba, hands down. Being that I'm obsessed with both green tea AND lavender, it'll be difficult for me to want to order anything else, especially since Chibi's has such amazing flavors and you can combine them. Life is difficult...first-world problems.

The panini was absolutely amazing! It was so tasty, and the first time I've ever ordered food from Chibi's. I'll definitely order food from now on! Chibi's just never disappoints me. The coconut curry was so flavorful, and the cheese was melted to perfection! The sandwich was generous in all forms.

**Final Review Vanessa:** If you didn't know, you can mix chibis flavors! This has to be one of my BEST creations to this point, because, DUH, lavender and green tea? What's NOT to love!

I love this creation because the two flavors totally compliment each other and give the drink a wonderful flavor. One of my favorite things we've had!

**Taste:** 10/10

**Aesthetic:** 10/10

**Environment:** 10/10

**Price:** 8/10

**Proximity to Nonahood:** 8/10

**Place:** Krungthep Tea Time

**Order:** Matcha Emperor & Green Curry Signature Sandwich



**Final Review Nicole:** OH MY GOSH, GUYS, I think I just died and went to matcha heaven. This dessert is BEAUTIFUL!! I could get carried away with how gorgeous this is, but let's talk about what's more important: Taste. Wow, honestly at a loss for words. This has taken the first-place trophy for me over anything I've ever tried. I think a tear is falling. For a moment, I forgot I was eating toast and not French toast. The sweet red beans add a nice, light sugariness and break up the flavors of all things matcha. The sweetened condensed milk adds a delicate and sweet touch, but this matcha ice cream?! Can I get an infinite container of it to go, please?! I could eat this literally all day, every day. If I'm being honest, I could've licked the plate until it was ready to go back into the cabinets. #sorrynotsorry. The sandwich comes with your choice of bread, and I chose sunflower bread because why not?! Wow, this is so flavorful! My palette is going crazy with all the flavor notes! There's the little kick of curry, the sweetness of the bell peppers and the savoriness of the chicken and eggplant. Leaving completely satisfied and more from Krungthep. Can't wait to return.

**Final Review Vanessa:** THIS WAS HANDS DOWN ONE OF THE BEST THINGS THAT WE HAVE EVER EATEN ON BACK TO BASICS. HOLY WOW.

This takes first place on the list of weird/basic/amazing things that we have been able to try in the history of this column. I was in shock and in love from the first taste. For starters, I've never had red beans before, and I didn't realize how sweet they were. The paste on top of the sweet toast and matcha ice cream \*major heart eyes.\*

Every texture, every flavor was a perfect complement to the other, and they all made such sweet music in my mouth. Even though I got only four bites since Nicole took most of it (she was REALLY into it).

**Taste:** 10/10

**Aesthetic:** 10/10

**Environment:** 10/10

**Price:** 8/10

**Proximity to Nonahood:** 5/10

Yo, I-4 blows, man.)

Next month, we'll break out our flower crowns, and Vanessa will probably lose Nicole somewhere in a field of flowers or in a floral coma as we embrace lavender and rose notes.

## Katie's Cucina: Strawberry Balsamic Grilled Chicken

BY KATIE JASIEWICZ, KATIESCUCINA.COM

Our Florida strawberry season is slowly starting to wrap up. But before it comes to an end, you have to make my recipe for Strawberry Balsamic Grilled Chicken. Spice up the basic grilled chicken with a strawberry caprese salad on top. Top the grilled chicken with a drizzle of balsamic reduction to make this quick and healthy dinner complete! I'll be honest, I wasn't sure if my husband would be good with fruit on his chicken. After his first bite, he was hooked. He loved it and actually went for seconds and even thirds of the strawberry mozzarella topping. Who knew pairing chicken with strawberries would taste so good?

I bet you didn't realize that when you select fresh Florida strawberries, you are getting an abundance of nutritional benefits. Did you know that just eight medium strawberries contain more vitamin C than one orange.\* So, just think, you're getting a nice little immunity booster while you eat dinner (or lunch). Which, let's face it – with this intense cold-and-flu season we need all the help we can get with boosting our immune systems. A few more facts about strawberries: They are virtually fat free, they contain no cholesterol, and they are an excellent source of folic acid that helps the body metabolize protein.\* They are a good source of potassium, too.

Let's talk about this chicken dish a little more. I found that drizzling a little balsamic reduction sauce on top of the strawberry mozzarella topping added the perfect extra zing to the dish! Balsamic vinegar complements strawberries very well. This recipe calls for a balsamic reduction sauce. You can make it from scratch by bringing equal parts balsamic vinegar and white granulated sugar to a boil, then simmering until it becomes thick (stir it frequently so it doesn't burn). However, it can be a very stinky process. I've stopped making my own and just buy



Prep time: **15 minutes**

Cook time: **15 minutes**

Total time: **30 minutes**

Yield: **3**

it from the store. You can find the already made glaze in the vinegar aisle at your local Publix. It comes in a black squeeze bottle and is worth every penny. Once you own it, you'll find yourself drizzling balsamic glaze on just about everything! Embrace the fruit of the season and change up your dinnertime (or lunchtime) routine. Run (don't walk) and grab strawberries fresh from Florida and make my Strawberry Balsamic Grilled Chicken.

\*Facts provided by the Florida Strawberry Growers Association

### INGREDIENTS:

- 3 skinless, boneless chicken breasts
- 2 tablespoon olive oil, divided
- 1 tablespoon McCormick Garlic & Herb Seasoning
- 1 pint strawberries, stems removed and diced
- 1/2 cup fresh mozzarella cheese, diced
- 1/4 cup fresh basil leaves, chiffonade
- Balsamic reduction for topping

### DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the grill on high heat.
2. While the grill heats, rinse and pat dry the chicken breast. Drizzle with 1 tablespoon olive oil on top and season with McCormick Garlic & Herb Seasoning. Set to the side.
3. Rinse, slice stems, and dice strawberries. Place in a bowl. Then add the diced mozzarella cheese and chiffonade basil leaves. Drizzle 1 tablespoon olive oil on top and mix well. Place in the refrigerator until ready to eat.
4. Reduce the heat on the grill to low; grill chicken for 15 minutes, turning once until internal temperature reaches 165 degrees Fahrenheit. Remove from the grill and let rest for a few minutes.
5. Place chicken on a platter. Top with strawberry mozzarella topping and drizzle balsamic reduction over strawberries and chicken. Enjoy immediately.

Notes: You will have some strawberry mozzarella topping left over. Divide evenly among plates.

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## LIFESTYLE

## Fashion Dose: Shimmering Spring Trends

BY ABIGALE LEWIS



Marching into Spring of 2018 with style, let's spring into action with new trends that'll bring a pep to your step. As you take long walks around the neighborhood, enjoy your Lake Nona endeavors and shimmer it up! Signs of great weather patterns allow the sweet lilac, duck yellow, and smitten green pastels to flourish into your apparel. Let's go over a few considerable trends that will have heads turning.

I always like to start with "what not to wear," and I'm sorry, traditional florals aren't coming back this season. Trending this spring are uber amounts of checkered two-pieces, similar to the hit movie "Clueless" from the '90s, a fashionable classic. Leap out of your normal blazer attire and try a satin suit two-piece from Celine or a plaid-on-plaid suit from Victoria Beckham. Let's add a fashion dose of bold, futuristic, daisy-print blouses from Marc Jacobs to create a fresh summery look. Switching up brands is no longer a taboo, and mixing patterns is still on a style high. You can view a snippet from [WWD.com](http://WWD.com) NYFW Spring 2018 where designers did a remarkable display of infinite trends like checkers, pastels and sequins within their ready-to-wear looks.

Fringe out your blouses and go for the pastels and boldness of pinks and blues for lunch dates. Delpozo, a luxury couture fashion brand under Josep Font, illuminates pastel silhouettes and illusions of romanticism on the runway for spring 2018. [LAIRD BORRELLI-PERSSON](http://LAIRD BORRELLI-PERSSON) examines Delpozo's 2018 spring collection, praising its sun-shone images on [vogue.com](http://vogue.com). She states, "The music and the silhouette easily communicated a sophisticated Swing Era charm, and the pastel palette suggested blissful summer days lolling by an aquamarine pool as cotton candy clouds float in the azure sky." I don't know about you, but every chance I get to peek or run to see the sunset, which is approximately 5:30 p.m., it's like cotton candy puffs in the sky. So, wind down in your pastel or bold fringe tops and stylishly embellished slacks or jeans; simple aesthetic additions are a hit for multi-tasking styles.

Strapping up your heels before strapping in that car seat is springing into trends. Find easy flats or heels that come with a zipper and straps of no end near. The wedge platform was scarce this season. It's all about the extravagant American vintage look. A popular figure on Instagram [@madison.utendahl](http://@madison.utendahl) tells *Glamour* that you can find sky-high heels in different colors with tie-ups. I love a two-tone heel; it adds a color to help complete a date night out. Also, agreeing with Utendahl's idea to complete the look, "add a statement piece like an embellished jacket that can wear from the office to dinner."

I definitely recommend checking out premium designers like Chanel, Gucci, Louis Vuitton, and Alexander Wang for satin-sleeved embellished jackets and even pants. Yes, ladies, you can bejewel those jeans again! Sheer dress-like shirts are soft and light to wear on those heat wave days, but throwing on that extravagant jacket adds charm.

So, head right down from your Tavistock office or just nearby with a client and share your new trends while enjoying happy hour in the local hidden gems of Lake Nona.

If you're interested in optimizing your style, follow my Instagram [@Aystrawberry](http://@Aystrawberry).





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## Central Floridian Launches Fashion To the Future

BY VANESSA POULSON



Lake Nona local Jolene Taracatac is the founder and CEO of a new fashion app, *Style Squad*. This app allows users to take a photo of their outfit on their smartphone, upload it into the app, and get instant feedback from other users about the outfit and how they would rate it. Currently, the app is available only on iPhone IOS, but there are plans for *Style Squad* to launch on Android later in the year.

Taracatac is no stranger to the fashion industry,

having more than five years of experience in the management of clothing stores as well as through her studies at The Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising. With help from her developer, Scott Hanlon, who she found at a digital conference, the maturation of an idea to a tangible iPhone application began.

"There was actually quite a period of time between the conception of the idea and development. When I came up with the idea, I had the fashion and business expertise but no tech background. I was living in LA at the time, and shortly after I came up with the idea, I totalled my car and was struggling financially," said Taracatac in an email interview. "I ended up moving back with my dad and had a lot of free time, so I decided to take some on-line coding classes. I knew it would be a long time before I would be able to code the app I had in mind, so I started



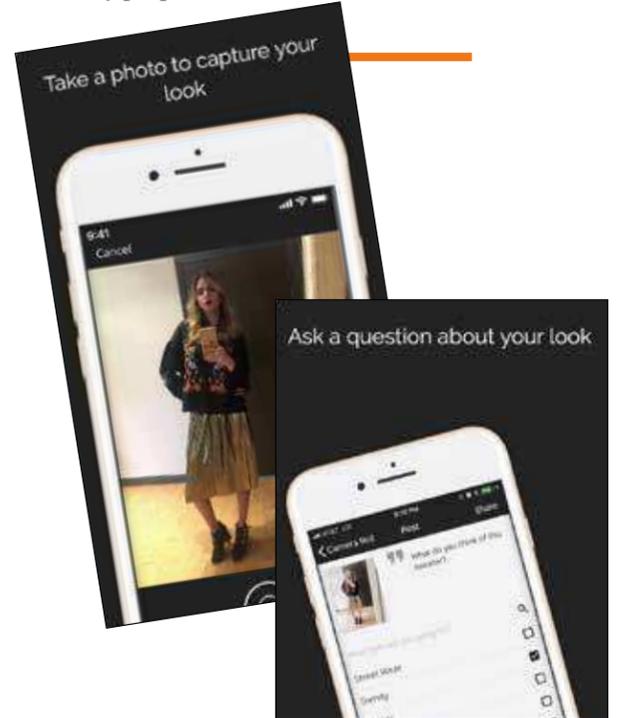
researching other options. I researched different development firms, but they were very costly. That's when I started to really put myself out there in the business and tech communities of Orlando."

Once the app hit the ground running, Taracatac found herself struggling to work through the kinks that arise when building a startup from the ground up and working through some of the more technical aspects of establishing an IOS application. "To get where I am, I've had to overcome a lot of fears and obstacles. Being an entrepreneur requires you to stretch yourself and to constantly put yourself out there. It is especially a struggle as a natural introvert. But if I can do it – anyone else can, too!" said Taracatac.

As *Style Squad* develops, users can look forward to updates that include having an affordable access to a larger network of wardrobe stylists and, of course, the launch



of the app on Android products in the near future. "For me, fashion is a form of art and self expression. I love how clothes have the ability to tell stories about people," said Taracatac. "I want to live in a world where people own who they are in everything they do, and [they] love themselves for who they are. I think fashion and style is one way people can do this."



## Choosing Mindfulness Over Multitasking

BY ODETTE VACCARO

For the longest time, I thought I was so productive because I was great at multitasking. Doing two or three things at a time helped me do more things quickly and blast through my to-do list. With time, I have come to understand that while I might appear to do more faster, I am not necessarily being more efficient.

With more mindfulness practice, I have learned that multitasking can actually be counterproductive. While mindfulness suggests we give our full focus to anything we are doing at any given time, multitasking is more like juggling. While all the balls might be in the air at the same time, the juggler isn't really looking or paying attention to a single one.

I have caught myself watching a TV show while checking social media. I also have been guilty of sitting to chat with my family while writing an email. I have been helping a customer and at the same time responding to a co-worker's inquiry. So, yes, I might be DOING more, but the truth is I am not all in, 100% THERE. When we multitask, our attention is inevitably divided and scattered. While we might be investing enough energy or attention to complete a task, we are not fully committing to every single thing we choose to do. This can result in completing a task satisfactorily, but not necessarily to the best of our ability. More importantly, it can cause us to miss important details, moments and satisfaction in the process. While we might be getting checks on a list, how much are we really paying attention to, enjoying and processing what we are doing?

Research shows that our brains cannot actually "multitask." Instead, our brains shift rapidly back and forth between the tasks we are attempting to do at the same time. Each time we switch from hearing music to writing a text or talking to someone, there is a stop/start process that goes on in the brain. That back-and-forth process can be rough: rather than saving time, it costs time (even if they are tiny microseconds). It's less efficient, we make more mistakes, and over time it can drain our energy.

If I were to read a book while playing music in the background, the quality of my reading, or even my listening of the music, would be totally different than if I only read or listened to music.

Trying to multitask really takes away from our journey, from savoring each moment, each conversation, each piece of information. While we may do many things at once, we lose the *fullness* of each experience. The delicate details of life are not heard, felt or understood. When we race through life, we fail to experience it completely. In that sense, even if we fit more into our day, what we get out of it is much less.

Practicing mindfulness doesn't mean we will never get distracted. Rather, it means we will become better at identifying when we HAVE gotten distracted and choosing to come back to focus. In the end, it really is just a matter of deciding to fully dedicate your attention and your energy to a single thing at a time. This paradigm shift will help us not only complete our tasks more successfully but also enable us to be fully present in what we are doing. With mindfulness, we are better able to appreciate our feelings, sensations and ideas about the person or task before us. It allows to live more fully and aware.





## Travel: Innsbruck and Kitzbuhel, Austria

BY DEBORAH BULLEN



Innsbruck

This is a continuation of last month's article. We left Selva Val Gardena, went through the Brenner Pass and arrived in Innsbruck about an hour and half later. The Brenner Pass, for the most part, is a lovely view of mountains and valleys that has been in use since prehistoric eras and is still an important route in Europe today.

I'd been told Innsbruck was just a big city (it's the capital) that also happened to be in the mountains, but that Kitzbuhel or Garmisch was where we should go for a more charming mountain experience. We'd been to Garmisch, so that was out, and we'd already decided to spend a few days exploring Kitzbuhel. The real reason was that our kids wanted to extend their trip and visit Innsbruck, so of course that was an easy decision.

We stayed at a Hilton for a couple of reasons: its proximity to the old, historic section of Innsbruck, and I got a great rate on booking.com. I love the more charming local hotels that dot the avenues of the old part of the city, but the practical part of me thought that at this point in the trip, it might be okay to just soak up the culture in restaurants, on streets and in conversations rather than lodgings.

Our weather was cold but crystal clear. Christmas stalls still occupied the center of the pedestrian main street of Old Town and were filled with different and unusual gifts from what we'd seen in either Germany or Italy. I found great gifts to take home and found the people to be extremely friendly. We asked around and were told the Stiltskeller for lunch was a favorite (sort of a Hofbrauhaus style restaurant – touristy, but still fun). It was noisy, the food was Austrian, the beer was spectacular, service was average and the meal was hearty – pretty much everything you need when arriving with a noisy group of nine people with three who are age three and under.

One thing you learn when traveling with toddlers and babies – historic tours of churches and houses are not a big hit. You are lucky to read the plaque on the door and snap a few pictures. This was pretty much our modus operandi for the entire trip. Thus, we did not enter the Golden Door, go on a historic walk, enter the church off the main square or do any of the things we would have done if it had been the two of us. I love doing those things,

but I love being with my grandkids more. We strolled, saw narrow, winding, historic streets and broad avenues, shopped, enjoyed each other – it's kind of the definition of a great trip. We also pointed out the giants and fairy-tale figures adorning all corners of buildings to our toddlers, but fairy tales are the stuff of my childhood while Richard Scarry's books define the childhood of my kids and their kids.

We said goodbye to our family and left Innsbruck for Kitzbuhel, a small, medieval town about 60 miles from Innsbruck in south Tyrol that is also a renowned ski resort. It's the Aspen or Vail of Austrian resorts in that it's pricey, scenic, chic and offers some of the best skiing in the Alps.

Although there are many lodging options right in Kitzbuhel proper, my attempt to book them in October was a month or two too late. By the time I started checking, only very high-end accommodations were still available (\$1,200-\$1,500 per night). But about 5km outside of town, in Aurach bei Kitzbuhel, I found Heike's Pension on Trip Advisor (pictured). Having stayed in a similar place in Garmisch several years ago, I had no qualms about booking a room there. It was nothing fancy but comfortable and clean, and Heike, the owner, was friendly and helpful. If you don't mind a no-frills place to rest your head and a short drive, I would recommend it.

We tacked this portion of the trip onto the last two days, and though I'm glad we saw Kitzbuhel, the trip began to feel a bit long, probably due to the prolonged cough and cold I'd developed and couldn't shake. Due to this, we opted to hike rather than ski on our one full day there. We took the Hahnenkamm lift to the top and hiked the two miles to the restaurant, had a lunch of goulash and hiked back. While I appreciated the beauty, I regretted not skiing even with a cold. The snow was perfect, and the trails were just right for us.

We had good meals in Kitzbuhel proper, but the best was Hallerwirt, a charming, authentic Austrian restaurant in Aurach, approximately one mile from Heike's Pension and recommended by Heike. The building has been around for 300 years but has only been a restaurant since the 1800's. It was a great note to end our trip on. We headed back to Munich the next morning to fly home the following day. *Auf Wiedersehen!*



Hallerwirt restaurant in Aurach bei Kitzbühel



Innsbruck



Morning fog



Pension Heike



Scene in downtown Kitzbuhel

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# Nona Motors Ride Of the Month: Sarah Mahavir's 2015 Fiat 500 Sport

BY BRITTANY BHULAI

**Make:** FIAT  
**Model:** 500 Sport  
**Year:** 2015  
**Mileage:** 40,000  
**Horsepower:** 168

**Mods:** The first tweaks were mostly cosmetic. Some parts on the car that were chrome have been wrapped in carbon fiber. She is going for a red and black color scheme. Since the car is a sport package, it comes with black rims, red callipers and black interior. She has added blacked-out taillights with deflectors. She has added decals on the car that are mostly from her sponsors, such as Top Label, SoScare, Sickspeed and Exclusive. She also has her car group name on it, which is "Take-Out Crew." Additionally, there are under-dash LEDs, a new sound system with new speakers, and a new radio. The shift boot also has been changed out with a galaxy-themed boot installed. The only under-the-hood mod that has been made is a cool-air intake, but there is definitely more to come.

**Future Mods:** There will be new suspension added to the car with a 2.5 drop. Mahavir wants to get a short shifter and add an extension on it with a new shift knob. She would like to use a diamond-shaped knob. A galaxy headliner will be fitted in to match the galaxy boot, and tiny LEDs will be installed on the headliner as well. Halo eyes in the headlights also are on the list with a deep yellow overlay on top. Down the road, she would also like to install a custom turbo and get the car tuned. Spiked lug nuts also are planned along with a new exhaust and a go pedal.

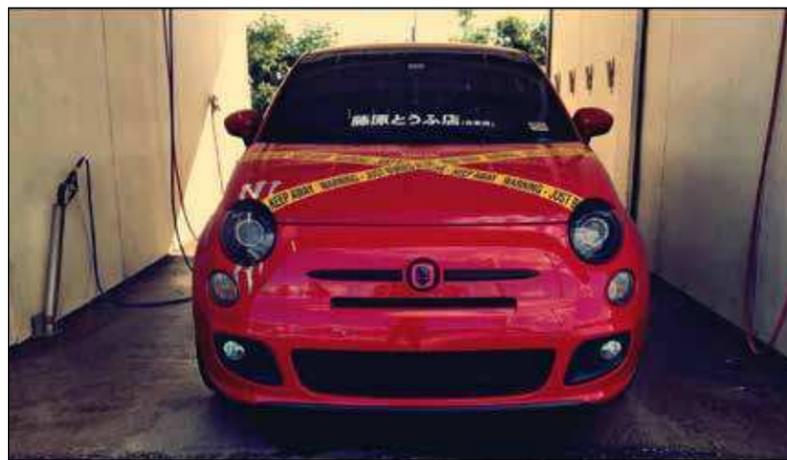
**Background:** "I drive a lot, so I needed something that was good on gas, and I also wanted to modify it," says

Mahavir. She feels as though not a lot of people modify the Fiat drastically. She was going to get a Mustang, but it wouldn't have been as efficient on gas and maintenance. Her first car was a 2001 Mini Cooper. Afterwards, she swapped it out for a green 2012 Fiat that was a base model. After awhile, she felt as if the green Fiat did not suit her well. Mahavir claims it was too innocent-looking. She ended up trading it with her current Fiat.

"I've always been into cars since I was a little kid," she claims. The only person in her family who had much influence on her interest would have to be her uncle. They used to go to car shows together when she was little. Besides that, gravitating toward the car culture was mostly a natural tendency for her. Classic muscle cars have always been her favorite. "I've always wanted to take a classic car and make it run like new but keep it looking original." She would modify the engine and suspension, but keep the original look and feel of the classic vehicle.

Mahavir is currently attending Universal Technical Institute as a full-time student to pursue her goal of becoming a car designer. She also attends Valencia College and is majoring in mechanical aerospace engineering. When asked the question with which car she first got her hands dirty, she answered in a smile, "Actually it wasn't a car, it was a scooter - I made it go faster." Mahavir purchased an electric scooter, like a moped, and went to work on it. She messed with the air intake and put a new carburetor on it. A new ECU was inserted. For the electrical aspect, she looked online, but most of it was self-explanatory for her. She also bought a non-working motorcycle; she redid the wiring, changed the battery and sold it for more than what she spent.

As for her Fiat, she intends on putting the elbow grease into it. "I want it to be the most badass Fiat anyone has ever seen."



# Menswear: It Doesn't Have to Be Complicated

ZAC CHAMBERS - @CHAMBERSZAC

With a few hundred million people in the United States, there are about...mmm, a few hundred million opinions on what's fashionable for a man to wear. So, where do you even begin? Let's start with the basics. I've outlined three versatile pieces that I think almost everyone can agree are core staples for every man's wardrobe.

1. On the first hanger, the white Oxford. The Oxford shirt originated in the 19th century in Scotland, a country known for its strength in textile mills. One mill's innovation brought about a unique weave that turned into a fabric dubbed "Oxford." Throughout its history, the Oxford style shirt found fame for multiple reasons. It made a great formalwear piece. You could throw on a tie and a blazer for a dressy look. It also was a major hit in sporting (pun intended) - often used by polo players. Tucked or untucked, the white Oxford is important because it looks spectacular with everything.
2. On the second hanger, or possibly folded, is a quality pair of blue denim. Denim began as a durable worker pant - something that could withstand all the stresses of work from the farm to the factories. What Jacob Davis and Levi Strauss didn't know when they designed denim jeans is that the pant would become one of the most popular items in today's closets, as well as an iconic fashion piece worldwide.
3. Definitely not on a hanger, but the third staple piece nonetheless, is a good pair of brown leather dress shoes. There's a reason that leather dress shoes have been around for hundreds of years and are still completely relevant today. Whether Oxfords or Derbies, brown leather dress shoes provide a perfect primary pair of shoes for any man's wardrobe.

What do all of these pieces have in common and why are they so important?

**They're timeless:** All of these pieces have been around for a long time, and they're not going away anytime soon.

**They're versatile:** Dress them up or dress them down. These items make sense for formal and casual wear, pairing well with nearly everything. So, you can wear them often and be complimented for them without people realizing the frequency of use (we'd advise an occasional wash, though).

**Above all, they're sensible:** No matter where you live, what your job is, or what your hobbies are, these clothing options are appropriate, relevant, and practical for a classic or modern gentleman.

Every day, you will find me wearing at least one of these pieces. If I were limited to wearing only one outfit for the rest of my life, it would include a white Oxford button-down, a good-fitting pair of blue denim pants, and brown leather Italian dress shoes. If you're stepping into finding your own style or on a mission to revamp your wardrobe, consider these three staples as a strong place to start.

*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. 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>.*



Photography by Kirk Chambers

## Why Grow Vegetables in A Community Garden?

BY AMBER HARMON

As a society, we are trending toward healthy, clean eating. There are many motivations that cause families to question their eating habits and overall health. As people understand more about how environmental factors and foods affect the body, we are questioning the standards that have been deemed acceptable. Is it acceptable for there to be a paragraph of ingredients in a product? Is it acceptable for that product to contain ingredients that can't be pronounced?

Families are questioning what's in their food, and it is just natural to want to get back to basics. I laughed at myself the other day when I said, "Organic vegetable gardening is an emerging industry." How is that possible? It is the "real" oldest profession, wink, wink. As a society, everyone wants to have a better understanding of where food comes from. There is a desire within households to grow their own food, either to be sure they know what's in it or to learn how food is really produced. The fact of the matter is, whatever motivates someone to get out in the garden, the benefits are profound. That is why one in three households is food gardening. Why not do it together as a community?

In areas where growing vegetables is a challenge either due to poor soil quality, not enough space, or a desire to grow together, community gardens are on the rise. A community vegetable garden offers a unique experience for members of that community to grow together in the truest sense of the words. It helps families teach their children about nutrition in a way that inspires them to try new foods that are whole, nutritious and delicious.

Food gardening also is a form of therapy where the world just slows down. It's almost like a vacation, where the stress of the day can melt away when you turn the cor-

ner and see your first tomato on the vine or harvest your own salad. You see the actual fruits of your labor. Now, don't get me wrong, there are challenges in the garden, too. That's why vegetable gardening is an emerging skill that will soon be an accredited, respected profession in the community.

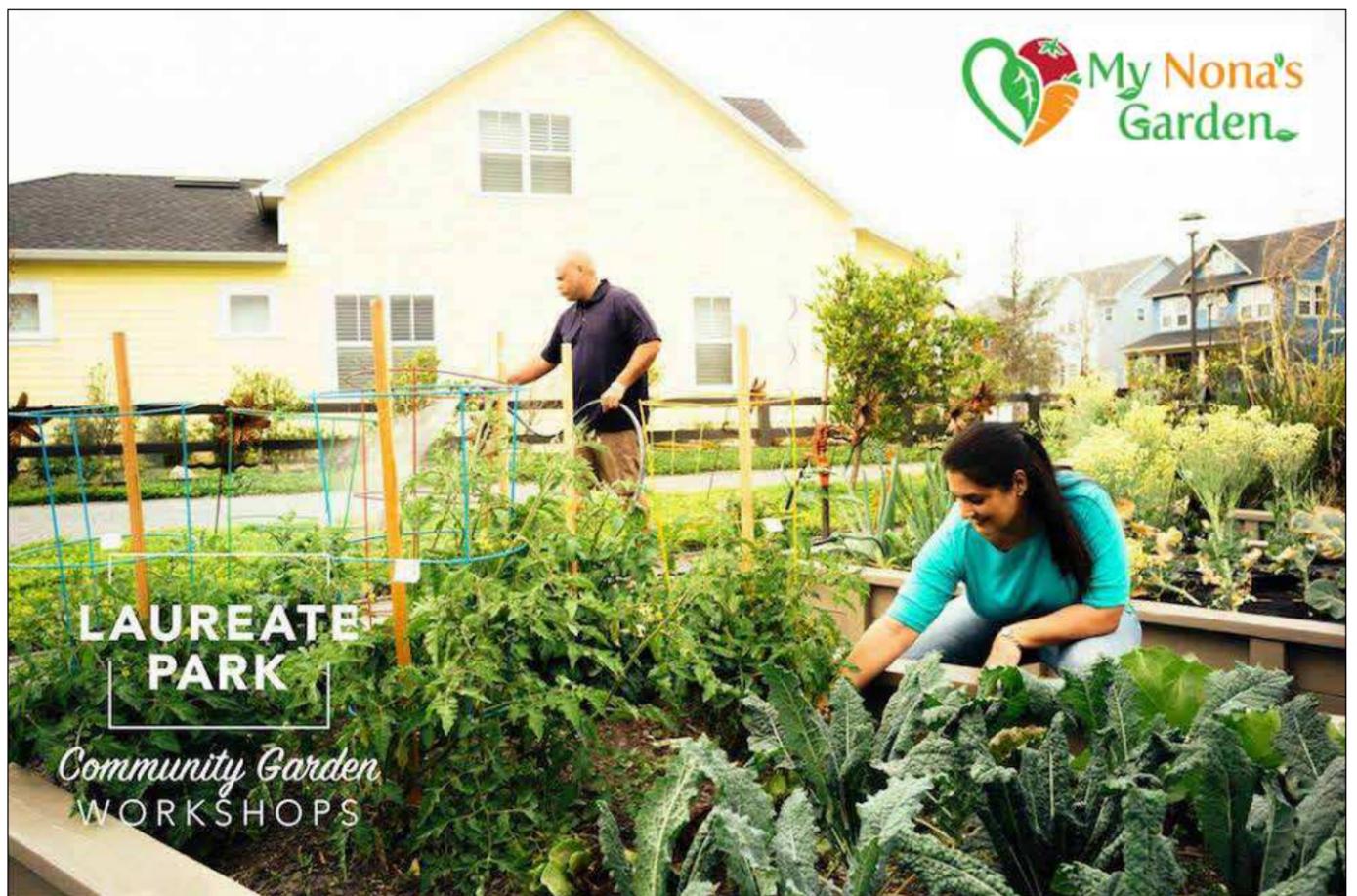
After some trial and error, the challenges and benefits of growing your own vegetables become clear. In a community garden, there is a level of collaboration and support for each other that provides a path to overcome gardening challenges. There is nothing like grabbing your shears, and someone you love, and heading out to the garden to harvest your side dish or main course for dinner that night. In this life, you might be poor, but if you know how to garden, you will never be hungry. Gardening is a means to feed ourselves and get back to nature. That is a true self-sustaining food supply.

When you grow your own vegetables, you know that what goes in is what comes out. Using nutrient-rich organic compost and Florida-friendly seasonal plants, you will

get the freshest, nutrient-rich vegetables right from your own garden. The Laureate Park Community Gardens are an excellent example of a community coming together to educate and grow vegetables in their two community gardens. They offer vegetable gardening workshops to residents who are new to gardening as well as seasoned gardeners who just need some occasional gardening tips. Laureate Park encourages its residents to learn and grow together in the garden.

Don't forget to plant your spring garden in late February or early March to miss the last frost and get the most out of the season before the summer heat creeps in. 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 [MyNonasGarden.com](http://MyNonasGarden.com) for more information. "We make organic vegetable gardening easy!"*



## Pet of the Month

**Owner's Name:** Lisa Sitterley  
**Pet's Name:** Teddy  
**Pet's Age:** 2 years, 4 months  
**Type of Pet:** Bichon/poodle mix



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## Teddy

was rescued from a shelter in Los Angeles. My sister was the director at the shelter, and she knew we were looking to adopt a puppy. We saw his picture and fell in love with him right then and there. My brother-in-law flew Teddy (just weeks old) out to us first class!! He has been super spoiled ever since. He is so very sweet and loves everyone. He has never met a person or a dog that he doesn't like. We couldn't have asked for a better dog. He is our pride and joy!!

*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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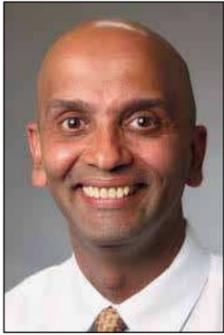
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## Nona Your Neighbor: Giri Venkatraman

BY VANESSA POULSON



Born in India, Giri Venkatraman's story is one of richness and the overcoming of many difficulties to get where he is today. Venkatraman is dedicated to many very important causes and is passionate about Lake Nona and Central Florida, making him an ideal candidate for this month's edition of Nona Your Neighbor.

**NHN: What brought you to Lake Nona?**

GV: I was an ENT (ear, nose

and throat) surgeon and one of two associate quality officers at Dartmouth University in New Hampshire. I was diagnosed with a medical condition and gave up medical practice. I was familiar with Orlando, as I vacationed here often, and the Lake Nona area in particular because of Medical City. I decided to move away from the ice and snow in New Hampshire, and living here has been emotionally and physically terrific. Part of my hope was to join the VA or UCF or Guidewell and be involved in the wellness and healthy living that makes Lake Nona so unique.

**NHN: How long have you lived here?**

GV: A little more than 2 years.

**NHN: Where are you from originally?**

GV: I was born in India and moved to the USA when I was 15. I have been a citizen of the USA since 1988. [I] did my college, medical school, residency and practice in the U.S.

**NHN: What do you do for work?**

GV: I am a non-practicing physician and currently have several part-time jobs. First, I am the Director at PotentiaMetrics, a startup health IT firm. Second, I work at the research faculty at UCF, focusing on wellness and the impacts of sesame oil extract. Third, I work in real estate. I have started a LLC and a real estate offering: @LNWPCreality. I am "re-discovering" myself. I joined the Rotary and Chamber of Commerce to interact with and learn from other small business owners.

**NHN: What is your favorite thing in Lake Nona?**

GV: Lake Nona is a lifestyle, not just where one lives: the focus on wellness [and] awesome neighbors. My own personal wellness and health story: I used to love to run. My illness made it hard for me to do so, but I have been able to resume it after moving here. I am genuinely happy about being here, and my goal is to serve the community, [which is] part of the reason I joined the Rotary, since their mission is service.

**NHN: What are you most excited to have in the Nonahood? What do you think the future is for Lake Nona?**

GV: My entire family – wife, two daughters and me – are thriving. I predict Lake Nona serves as a model for smart, sustainable growth for the country.

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

GV: Your life will change for the better. There will be so many positive changes in your life.

Want to nominate YOUR neighbor (or yourself) to be featured? Follow this link:  
[nonahood.to/nonaneighbor](http://nonahood.to/nonaneighbor)



## Nona Alumni: McKenzie Trujillo

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 might have 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:** McKenzie Trujillo

**Age:** 24

**Year Graduated:** 2011

**Occupation:** Registered Nurse

**Current Location:** Orlando

This month, I caught up with former classmate McKenzie Trujillo. When we went to school together, she was McKenzie Loomis, but now she's got a ring on her finger and a husband by her side.

"Since Lake Nona High School was not built until 2009, I attended Boone High School my freshman and sophomore years where I met the love of my life, Baylin. Looking back, I cannot believe the guy I met (but didn't exchange names or numbers with) at Polyester Paradise (a school dance) my sophomore year would become my husband nine years later! The Monday after the dance, we both found out each other's names and phone numbers through mutual friends. Ever since October 10, 2008 (our first date), I knew there was something special about Baylin."

Once Mrs. Trujillo transferred to Lake Nona High for her junior and senior years, that led both her and Baylin to go their separate ways. "Although we were not together during my last year and a half of high school, or throughout my college years, I still considered Baylin to be my best guy friend during these years of my life. He was always the one. I just didn't know that at the time! A year after graduating college, our paths crossed again, and I finally realized that God had put Baylin in my life eight years prior for a reason. My high school sweetheart was the one I was supposed to marry. I knew with no doubt that I wanted to spend the rest of my life with him. Three months after getting back together, Baylin proposed, and seven months after that, on June 3, 2017, we became husband and wife! I am very thankful that I get to spend the rest of life with my best friend; June 3rd will always be a special day. So now I am a wife and a nurse, as well as a fur mom to our golden retriever fur baby Miss Bella."

McKenzie and her family originally moved to the Lake Nona area in October 2003, the beginning of her fifth-grade year. "We moved to Orlando for my dad's job as he is a Southwest Airlines pilot, and Orlando is one of the bases my parents were interested in at the time. I lived

with my parents throughout my college years. After graduating, I moved out of my parents' house but still chose to stay in Lake Nona until getting married last June!"

While a student at Lake Nona, Trujillo's post-high school goals were to attend college, earn a degree and have a career within five years. "At the time, I did not know specifically what I wanted to do for a living, but I did know I wanted to make a difference in the lives of others. I remember questioning going into the medical field after taking biology at the college level my senior year, and for a period of time, I thought I wanted to study early childhood education. It didn't take long to discover that I don't have enough patience to be a teacher, and I later realized that becoming a nurse was what I wanted to do."

Once she figured out that becoming a nurse was what her heart was set on, Trujillo did not delay. "After graduating from Lake Nona in 2011, I was able to achieve the goals I had set for myself! I was accepted into Florida Atlantic University, but I decided instead to stay in Orlando and attend Valencia College, where I completed my prerequisites for nursing. In 2013, I applied for and was accepted into University of Central Florida's College of Nursing, where I spent my last two years of college, graduating with my Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Before graduating in May 2015, I accepted the position I have now as a RN at Winnie Palmer Hospital contingent upon passing the NCLEX. On July 1, 2015, I passed my boards (NCLEX), earning my license as a registered nurse! Later that same month, I began working at Winnie!"

The Winnie Palmer Hospital is for women and babies, and Trujillo loves her job as a Registered Nurse there. "I work on a mother/baby postpartum unit. I love caring for new mommies, babies, and their families during one of the most special times in their lives. This was definitely a 'dream job' of mine when I was applying; two and a half years later, I couldn't ask for anything better."

Some of her current goals in life are to purchase a home and to apply for graduate school. When asked about where she sees herself in the next five years, she reminisces a bit before responding. "Wow, it is crazy to think that five years from now Lake Nona Class of 2011 will have been graduated for almost 12 years. I hope to have celebrated a 10-year reunion with all of my former classmates. Depending on our jobs, I see myself either moving to a new city or staying in Orlando to raise a family. I would love to see myself become a mother in the next five years. I have always dreamed of having little ones running around. Baylin and I have discussed having children in three to four years from now, Lord willing.

We would love to have three healthy kids; I know Baylin definitely hopes to have a boy someday. I also see myself growing in my career as a nurse. I would like to attend graduate school and become a Family Nurse Practitioner within the next five years."

With lots of accomplishments taking place in her life within the last couple of years, Trujillo plans on having even more in her future, all with her husband by her side. "At work, I became the Chair of our Unit Nurse Practice Council, which is a group on our unit that has the mission to address issues that significantly impact the quality, safety, and effectiveness of nursing practice. I became a wife. Marriage is not always easy and, from what I have heard from other married couples, the first year is the most difficult. Being only eight months into marriage, I have already learned that having God at the center is the most important key along with having patience, selflessness and communication. But even though marriage is challenging at times, it is the greatest happiness! I am most looking forward to all of the adventures we have yet to share together and then looking back and reminiscing on everything 60 years to come as we share those memories with our children and grandchildren."

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



## ReThink Life: A Conversation About Life, Leadership and Relationships

### Just Own It! The Leadership Principle of Taking Ownership

BY RODNEY GAGE, LEAD PASTOR

I recently read a story about a lady who went to a jewelry store to buy a watch. She had previously been to the store by herself and identified a watch she wanted. When she returned to the store a few days later with her husband, her plan was to purchase the watch she had found. Not realizing the store closed at 5 p.m., the couple arrived a few minutes before 5. Since she knew what she wanted, she told the lady in the store, "I'm here to buy a watch." The sales clerk in the store said, "I'm so sorry, I have already closed out the cash register since we're about to close. I can't sell you anything right now." Needless to say, the customer was disappointed and told the sales clerk they would have to figure out another time to come back. The couple left the jewelry store with no watch. As they got back into their car, the lady told her husband, "It's obvious she wasn't the owner."

The owner of the store would have accommodated the customer regardless of what time it was or the inconven-

ience it might have caused. The owner of a jewelry store is in business to do one thing – sell jewelry!

What does it mean to take ownership? Below are four ways to take ownership to new levels and inspire others to do the same.

#### 1. Have a Spirit of Excellence.

What would it look like if everyone in our workplace, family or community carried a spirit of excellence in everything they did by taking ownership of their roles and responsibilities? Employees would come prepared for meetings and show up on time. Kids would clean up their rooms without having to be told, and students would turn in their assignments without making excuses. Having a spirit of excellence propels us to exceed expectations because we take ownership of our responsibilities and what is expected of us.

#### 2. Go the Extra Mile.

What would have happened if the sales clerk I mentioned earlier would have "gone the extra mile" to accommodate the customer who came into the jewelry store to buy a watch? Rather than being personally inconvenienced by having to stay a few extra minutes past store closing, she could have had the mindset of an owner and gone the extra mile to make sure the sale was made and the customer was satisfied. Imagine what kind of customer rating and 5-star review the store and employee could have received had the employee gone the extra mile by taking ownership.

#### 3. See It Through.

John Maxwell, best-selling author and leadership expert, says, "Leadership is taking responsibility while others make excuses." It's easy to point the finger, to find fault, or to cast blame when things don't work out or the ball is dropped. Taking ownership not only means you finish what you start, but if the ball is dropped, you take full responsibility for your mistakes. If you do not take ownership of your actions, your actions will eventually own you.

*"If you do not take ownership of your actions, your actions will eventually own you."*  
- Rodney Gage -

#### 4. Check Pride at the Door.

What does pride have to do with ownership? Taking ownership is an attitude. An ownership mindset doesn't say "that's not in my job description" or "that's not my responsibility." No job or task is beneath a person who takes ownership. They understand that it takes teamwork to make the dream work.



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](http://rethinklife.com).



## Mama's Turn: A Letter to My Children

BY SHARON FUENTES



Dear Children,

Let me first start off by saying, "I am sorry!" I am sorry for forgetting sometimes that while you may look like adults, you are still far from being men and women. While you have many moments of maturity, I forget that those are the exceptions, not the norms. Your teenage brains are still developing, and you are still trying to figure out who you are and where your place in this giant world is, and all the unknowns can be frustrating and downright scary at times.

The thing is, believe it or not, I too was young once and went through the exact same thing with my parents. Sure, times were different back then, but the confusion and anxiety you are feeling about having to grow up and be responsible people – I felt them, too. Heck, I still am feeling them. So, I truly am sorry for not remembering this and not being more patient and understanding.

All that said, I need to remind you both of something. While I love laughing and joking around with you, I am not here to be your friend. I am your mom. My job is to guide you, to offer you unsolicited advice that you will no doubt ignore, and to make sure you have the tools you need to become the best versions of your unique selves as you can be! Before you know it, you will be out there in the real world having to navigate uncharted waters all alone, and I need to make sure you can swim without your floaties on. It's not an easy job. I don't want my babies to sink! So, please remember this when I nag you about practicing your strokes or the value of flip turns. It is because I care and want to keep you safe when you are out of my arm's reach, or I am no longer standing by the pool.

Growing up is hard business, but I am doing the best I can! They did not give me a book of instructions when you were born. So, yes, I admit it, I am winging this. For the most part, I think we are both doing a great job at this growing-up business, too. But as you get older and are faced with more difficult situations, the consequences become much more serious. It is a constant battle for me to figure out when I should step back and let you learn a lesson on your own, and when I should stick my big nose in! And when I do stick my nose in, please know it is nothing personal. It does not mean I do not think you are smart, or capable, or that you are doing a bad job. It just means that there is something I feel I need to point out that perhaps you are not seeing. I will try to do my pointing out in a better way if you promise to be more open to it. It will be hard for both of us, but I think we can do it.

Most of all, I need you both

to always remember that I SEE YOU! I mean I truly SEE YOU! I see your courage and compassion. I see how hard you work and how deeply you care. I see the difference you have already made in the world, and I am so excited to see what the future holds for you both.

I know I may not always act like it, but I am your biggest fan, and I am so proud to be your mother! But if you could somehow manage to remember to wash off your dirty plates and put them in the dishwasher, I would be even more proud. Just saying!

XOXOX,

Mom



Sharon Fuentes is an award-winning freelance writer, parenting advisor, author of the book, *The Don't Freak Out Guide to Parenting Kids with Asperger's*, and a mom who is just winging it! You can reach her at [sharon@sharonfuentes.com](mailto:sharon@sharonfuentes.com). You can reach her at [sharon@sharonfuentes.com](mailto:sharon@sharonfuentes.com).

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# Nona Ventures: Orlando Slingshot

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!*

I'm pulling up to Magical Midway and the giant, neon-colored slingshot is all I see. I have this overwhelming knot in my stomach. Things like this fall into a category I classify as fun and adventurous, but most say "no way" when it comes to handing over their control of a situation. This is the exact reason I've been called crazy every so often. One of the only people crazy enough to experience the slingshot with me was, of course, my boyfriend, Andrew. I've always wanted to experience the slingshot, but I've always chosen other activities over it – until now – mostly because I was worried about the infamous flip riders experience when they reach the maximum height and begin to make their descent. I've gotten to that point in my life that most children dread – when twists and turns and spins and flips begin to make you nauseous. Welcome to adulthood. (Throws imaginary glitter from my pocket in celebration.) Yay!

Pricing is a bit expensive at \$25 per person for just the ride, \$15 for a t-shirt and \$20 for a video of your ride, but there are package options available as well. Package A is for one person at \$50 and includes one t-shirt and one video, while Package B is for two people at \$75, including two t-shirts and one video. It's one of those activities where it's hard to justify not getting a video, especially when this is not something you do every day, and some might never do again! Riders also receive a card that allows those in the original video to ride again at the special price of \$15 per person, and a free video will be included.

As soon as I walk up, I'm immediately asked if I'm ready to strap in and launch. I hesitate for a brief moment. I swallow my pride and hop in. Let's go for it! Go big or go home, and I'm not going home until I've experienced the tallest slingshot in the world.

I sat down, made sure my restraint was tight, and had a death grip. No, seriously, it was a white-knuckled grip. Our restraints were checked by the attendant, and he locked us into the launching position – leaning back and facing your destination, the abyss of the night sky. We find ourselves in the pit of the volcano, with fog obscuring our vision and sound effects of bubbling lava and dripping liquid providing the full cave ambience. The anticipation is building, and I'm not sure when we're going to launch. The attendant asks if we're ready, and I yell, "Yeah, let's do it!" and off we go! I think, internally, I was screaming, and out came a weird noise, but hey, that's just me. We peaked and did a flip, and, luckily, I didn't feel sick. We bounced a bit and gradually made our way back down to the launchpad.

The attendant asked if we wanted to go again, and with no hesitation, I agreed. I asked to loosen my restraint a bit because I wanted to experience the weightlessness, and that's when he decided to say the second-time challenge was that our hands had to be up the entire time. Of course, I couldn't back down from this challenge. We go for round two, and this time was so much better. We flipped one and a half times, and as we rotated toward the crowd below, all I heard were screams. That was unnerving, and immediately my thoughts turn dark and I'm thinking, "Oh my gosh, we're going to die!" I was still laughing and having the time of my life, however. Once we got back down, the attendant asked if we had noticed a difference this time around, and we definitely did. Turns out, he cranked up the pressure, so we had launched much more quickly. Now that's what I'm talking about!

Joe was our attendant for the

ride, and after the fact we discussed a few pretty interesting stats about the ride. The slingshot reaches speeds anywhere from 85 to 100 mph, and riders have been as young as four and as old as 86. There's also an acceleration of six G's. When I asked Joe how often he rides the slingshot, he said it had to be well over a thousand times. Can you imagine!? He even mentioned how he and the other slingshot operators have a competition on who can do the most flips in one ride because you can manipulate the ride with how you rotate your body and legs – and it's around 22 times. No way! That's something I'd have to sit out on. I'd be so sick.

So there you have it; I was launched more than 390 feet in the middle of the night, and I actually enjoyed it. Call me crazy. After all, it wouldn't be the first time. I won't be surprised if I find my way back to the Orlando Slingshot for a quick dose of adrenaline. If you're looking for an excuse to try something new and need an adventure buddy, you've got one in me. I definitely recommend everyone experience that feeling of adventure. As the Orlando Slingshot's motto says, the sky really is no limit.

*Have a suggestion?*  
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 What do you want to see me review next?





## Nona Heroes: Kevin Ketchens

BY NICOLE LABOSCO



Teddy Boatright and me on the island of Grenada - Oct 1983

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.

This month's hero was born in North Palm Beach and has lived in Orlando and the Lake Nona area for more than 15 years. Meet Kevin Ketchens, a former Army soldier who had hoped to follow in his father's footsteps by serving our country.

"I joined the U.S. Army out of high school in 1981. I wanted to be a Ranger or Green Beret, like my Father, Bill Ketchens, but at the time the only option available was Airborne-Indirectfire Infantryman (11C) – I chose the Army as my dad had served in World War II and fought before the D-Day invasion, by being part of the 2nd Ranger Battalion that fought through Sicily, Italy, and then into France. The Invasion of Sicily occurred in July of 1943, so my father and his buddies were fighting as Rangers almost a full year ahead of the Normandy invasion. As my father told me, the Allies were trying to make the Germans think that the invasion of France would come through Italy, and the Axis had strengthened the coasts, so it was terrible fighting. The Allies had hoped to create a 'pincer movement' by having forces in the south of France and later in the north of France to force the Germans out. I guess the stories of WWII and the pictures around the house of my dad in the Army kind of planted the seed of which branch of service I would join. He liked to say the best memory of WWII was the day he met my mother, Eliane!"

After enlisting, Kevin Ketchens would go through Basic Training in Fort Benning, Ga. Then he would serve with the 82nd Airborne Division, 1st Battalion/505th Air-

borne Infantry (1/505th) in Fort Bragg, N.C. He began as a Private (E-1) and left the service as a Specialist 4th Class (Spec 4/E-4). "I never bothered looking to get promoted as I was enjoying my life as an enlisted man."

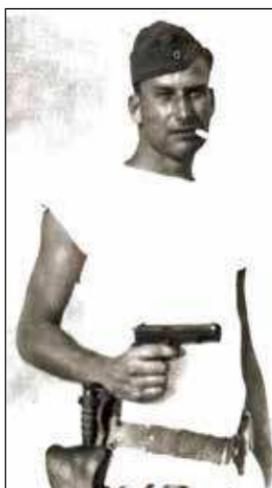
Ketchens served for three years active and another three years of inactive duty. He reminisces on when he first joined at such a young age. "I was 17 when I joined as my parents had to sign for me to go in the Army. I think they were just happy to have someone else feed and clothe me for awhile! I turned 18 in basic training. I remember we were out in the woods doing training, and it was raining hard. I had managed to sneak away and buy a small package of Oreos (we weren't allowed to use the vending machines right by our barracks – they called that type of food 'Pogey Bait'). I had hidden the pack in my socks in my rucksack, and that night on guard duty, in the middle of the night, in a poncho under a down-pour of rain, I celebrated the worst birthday I ever had by eating crushed and soggy Oreos! Happy Birthday to me! Yet, it also was one of the best birthday memories I have."

Although Ketchens hadn't celebrated his 18th birthday like most teenagers-turning-adults would plan, he had some hope from his father's military experiences. "My father was the driver of one of four halftracks that had a 75mm cannon on the back. They were like mobile artillery for the infantry. During his time in France, he had pulled into a driveway in Cagnes Sur Mer (near Nice, France). The driveway was cut out of a mountain/hill and provided great protection for the halftrack and crew. It was also in front of a house where my mother and her family lived. During that time in France, they met, fell in love, and later married, so I guess I had a 'romantic' view of the military. But truthfully, my father (and mother) raised us with these values: God, family and country. So, I always felt that it was my duty as a citizen to give back in some form to my country – the fact that I would have adventure and also get benefits for the future didn't hurt, either!"

Serving for the United States comes with many memories, good and bad, but Ketchens focuses on those that furthered his future. "While I only had three years active duty, the memories of that time in the military take up a large



Kev's Dad, Bill Ketchens - 1945



Kev's Dad Bill Ketchens - Italy 1943

part of my life. I was able to graduate from Florida State University thanks to the G.I. Bill and savings I earned during my enlistment. That led me into law enforcement (I was a police officer for eight years with the Vero Beach Police Department and two years with the Indian River County Sheriff's Office) and then into my current job. I would say the best memories I have from the military (besides jumping out of planes and shooting machine guns and mortars) was being part of the American Forces that took part of the invasion of Grenada in 1983. I was fortunate to serve with some great men and helped to liberate an island under hostile control and to help rescue American medical students that were studying on that island. Being in the 82nd Abn. Div. also afforded me the chance to visit Panama (for Jungle School), Israel and Egypt and even see the Sphinx and Pyramids!"

What is this hero up to nowadays in the Nonahood? Kevin Ketchens continues being a hero, both to the public and to his family. "Currently, I work for the Department of Homeland Security. Without getting into specifics, my job is demanding but vital, and I do enjoy that every day is different. I always had a fear that I would get bored sitting behind a desk and doing the same thing day in and day out. The military and police work are the solution to that problem. I am also currently trying to help my wife, Laura Shaffer, with her campaign as she is running for the Circuit Judge position (9th Judicial Court-Group 41) in Osceola and Orange County."

Some of the best advice Ketchens received during his enlistment was from a Sergeant Major, whose job was to talk to servicemen and women about re-enlistment before exiting the service. "I told him that I didn't know what I wanted to do but was getting out [of the service] to go to college and get a degree in 'something.' He basically told me this: There's people that do what they love but may not get paid a lot – musicians, actors, teachers, etc. Then there are people who get paid a lot doing something they might not love doing – plumbers, sanitation workers, etc. He said the happiest people are those that are doing what they love and getting paid well to do it – so find what 'that' thing is and let that be your guide. Because of that, I am now in a place where I am doing what I love and getting well paid!"

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



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**SPORTS**

## New Sport Makes Splash At Local YMCA's

BY NICOLE LABOSCO

The YMCA of Central Florida (YCF) has introduced beginner water polo programs for the younger generations. The programs are being called Splashball, as it has an adapted set of rules that allows younger children to easily learn the basic skills and rules.

"Splashball is an incredibly fun route for children to become strong, confident swimmers. Much of the instruction in practice comes through game play and travel to other YMCA family centers for competition adds to the excitement. Those that continue with the sport can look forward to joining YCF water polo's competitive teams, which compete in local, national and international tournaments," said Andrew Gordon, the director of YMCA of Central Florida. Splashball is currently only available at a handful of YMCA locations across Central Florida, but several other locations will start the water sport in spring and summer. Our Lake Nona YMCA will be one of those locations to begin the program in the spring or summer.

Water polo is dubbed one of the fastest-growing sports in America, and having the Splashball programs available at such a young age will allow kids to develop skills before the typical high school age when most begin playing. Gordon looks forward to children further enhancing

their skills and adds, "Above all else, I want this program to add positively to participants' lives. I hope all athletes enjoy their time playing and end up as faster swimmers and stronger tread-ers. Over time, the CFYMCA splashball program has the potential to drastically elevate the level of water polo play in Central Florida. We currently lag behind other areas in the U.S., like southern California, since most athletes here don't start playing until high school."

The YMCA of Central Florida received more than \$3,000 through the USA Water Polo grant program to purchase youth-sized equipment. The Splashball format also had to be adopted, prohibiting athletes from making contact with one another and permitting the use of floats where needed. "In Florida, water polo is an excellent way to exercise outdoors since athletes have some protection from the summer heat, but it is much closer than other aquatic sports (e.g. swimming, diving) to popular mainstream sports like basketball or soccer. It is the perfect sport for kids who love the water but crave the social or tactical elements of team sports. Water polo proficiency also helps prevent drownings since athletes learn to reflexively perform the eggbeater kick, which can efficiently keep one's head out of the water for extended periods of time," Gordon stated.

*If you have any questions about the upcoming Splashball programs, you can contact Ramana Lewis, the aquatics director at the Lake Nona YMCA, at [RLewis@cfymca.org](mailto:RLewis@cfymca.org).*



Photos Courtesy YMCA of Central FL (YCF) Water Polo





## Floridians Take Plunge for Special Olympics

BY NICOLE LABOSCO

Cold Water? Check. Warm hearts? Hundreds. Zany costumes? Absolutely. Florida sunshine? You've got it.

The Ninth Annual Polar Plunge took place at SeaWorld's Aquatica on Saturday, Feb. 10. The plunge benefitted Special Olympics Florida, which is a non-profit organization that offers life-changing opportunities for both children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Special Olympics Florida currently serves more than 44,000 athletes.

In this year alone, just under \$250,000 was raised. Currently, 79% of the 2018 Polar Plunge goal has been met with \$246,092. The overall goal is \$310,173. Participants (myself included) were "freezin' for a very good reason" as they ran toward the roughly 70-degree water. With the temperature outside being in the mid- to upper 80s, the water felt pretty great. There were around 750 plungers who experienced the "thrill of the chill."

As I rushed toward the water, I thought about how much courage the Special Olympics athletes must have on a daily basis. The Polar Plunge encourages all ages to come out and show support, and the event called participants "change agents" as they can make a difference.

In nine years, the Polar Plunge has raised about \$2 million overall. It was an amazing sight to see so many participants who have spent time fundraising to support such a wonderful cause. Some participants were supporting family members, others were supporting friends, but all came together to support those Special Olympic athletes.

Also announced at the plunge was that in 2022, Florida has been selected to be the host of the National USA Games for the Special Olympics.

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# Lake Nona Youth Sports: Getting on The Stick to Build Lacrosse in Lake Nona

BY VALERIE SISCO

Just three years after a youth lacrosse grassroots movement began in Lake Nona, the Lake Nona Junior Lions are fielding competitive full-contact teams this spring for boys in grades 1-8. With a 10-year perspective to create a winning culture, John Chin, director of Lacrosse for Lake Nona Youth Sports, is dedicated to building a stronger lacrosse presence in the community.

Coach Chin, a Level 1 U.S. Lacrosse certified coach and former Air Force club player, and his passionate coaching staff are preparing 40 Junior Lions athletes for the competitive field game this spring season played with full pads and helmets, while offering them a fun and safe environment to develop their skills.

"Lacrosse has struggled to take hold in the community and at Lake Nona High School due to the lack of familiarity with the game," he says. "Unlike more mainstream sports like baseball, football, soccer or basketball, not many parents grew up playing lacrosse, so it's been difficult to find coaches with a lacrosse background to own the growth of the sport in our community."

In 2015, Lake Nona Youth Sports, with the help of some parent enthusiasts, put in place elements of a lacrosse program, offering clinics and practices for new and experienced players. Now, with John's leadership, Lake Nona Youth Sports has finally ignited a fire of interest in the sport, evidenced by an unprecedented 40-player roster for their inaugural field lacrosse season that's now underway. The program also incorporates SPEED Lacrosse, a co-ed, fast-paced development game. "We think SPEED Lacrosse offers a broader opportunity for more kids – both boys and girls – to play the sport since they don't need as much equipment and teams are much smaller" (3 vs. 3 instead of 10 vs. 10 for the boys' field game), he says. "It also appeals to kids who've never played lacrosse since the rules are simpler, as well as more experienced players aiming to hone their passing and ball-handling skills. I personally love to play both versions of the game



and take advantage of every chance to suit up and play with our kids."

A Lake Nona resident, John grew up and played high school lacrosse in the Baltimore area and continued playing club ball while serving in the U.S. Air Force. After his military service, he served as the assistant coach for Decatur High School in Ocean City, Md., and began coaching the boys' varsity lacrosse program at Lake Nona High School in 2016. He's passionate about the game and building players in the Lake Nona area, emphasizing growth over achievement. "In just the two years we've been working with these kids, I've seen struggling players blossom into leaders and contributors on the field, and it's obvious which kids put in more practice reps on their own because they come back every season so much better than they were the prior season," John says. "The best part is seeing new levels of confidence in them that carries over off the field. That's what makes it worthwhile to me and the other coaches."

Coach Chin believes lacrosse is more than a sport – it's

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# Seminoles Break Gators in College MatchDay

BY NICOLE LABOSCO

I'm a UCF alumna covering College MatchDay between FSU and UF on February 4th. Excuse me while I look down and quickly realize I'm wearing black and gold(ish) attire. I didn't plan that (at least not consciously). I arrive at the USTA National Campus to fireworks being shot off. The nice, chilly weather made for a pretty perfect night of sports. This was virtually a sold-out MatchDay with a record crowd of almost 2,000 fans. The match also was aired live on the Tennis Channel to a national television audience. The orange and blue clashed with the gold and garnet in the stands.

It was a bit of sensory overload with six doubles matches going at once: three women's and three men's. Florida was up in two out of three women's matches, whereas the men were much closer with UF and FSU practically tied in all three matches within the first 30 minutes.

### Men's matches:

- First men's game-UF 6 FSU 2
- Second men's game-UF 4 FSU 6
- Third men's game-UF 6 FSU 7

This was the closest game and went to a tie breaker after 6-6. The third men's game was the last one being played. All eyes were on this game. It was all tied up. The tension was building. I'm sure the athletes had sweaty palms. Tennis balls were zooming through the air. FSU was not letting UF take anything. FSU was up 00-03, UF scores 01-03, now 02-03; 02-04 FSU's serve...02-05, great light hit by FSU, nice and quick reflexes by UF, not enough... FSU scores again 02-06, out of bounds, 03-06, but 03-07 as UF missed the rebound of FSU's serve. FSU wins.

### Women's matches:

- First women's game-UF 6 FSU 4
- Second women's game-UF 2 FSU 2
- Third women's game-UF 4 FSU 6

The Seminole were up 1-0 in both men's and women's games. Next, they took on the Gators in singles matches with 12 happening at once; six men's and six women's. Each match consisted of three games with a best-of-three format.

### First Men's Match:

- Game 1-UF 10 points in the final game (6 games) FSU 12 points in final game (7 games)
  - Went to a tie breaker at 6-6
- Game 2-UF 3 FSU 6

FSU WINS

### Second Men's Match:

- Game 1-UF 6 FSU 7
  - Went to a tie breaker at 6-6
- UF 6 FSU 7
  - Went to a tie breaker at 6-6

FSU WINS

### Third Men's Match:

- Game 1-UF 6 FSU 4
- Game 2-UF 6 FSU 3

UF WINS

### Fourth Men's Match:

- Game 1-UF 6 FSU 1
- Game 2-UF 4 FSU 6
- Game 3-UF 2 FSU 6

FSU WINS

### Fifth Men's Match:

- Game 1-UF 6 FSU 3
- Game 2-UF 6 FSU 0

UF WINS

### Sixth Men's Match:

- Game 1-UF 6 FSU 2
- Game 2-UF 7 FSU 5

UF WINS

The men at FSU were ranked at number 22 and rallied from a 3-1 deficit, knocking off the Gators for the second year in a row, who were ranked at number eight, with a score of 4-3.

FSU men win and win College MatchDay.

### First Women's Match:

- Game 1-UF 6 FSU 4
- Game 2-UF 10 points in final game (6 games) FSU 10 points in final game (6 games)
  - DIDN'T FINISH DUE TO MAJORITY WINS ALTOGETHER

### Second Women's Match:

- Game 1-UF 6 FSU 3
- Game 2-UF 6 FSU 3

UF WINS

### Third Women's Match:

- Game 1-UF 1 FSU 6
- Game 2-UF 3 FSU 6

FSU WINS

### Fourth Women's Match:

- Game 1-UF 6 FSU 4
- Game 2-UF 3 FSU 6
- Game 3-UF 2 FSU 4
  - DIDN'T FINISH DUE TO MAJORITY WINS ALTOGETHER

### Fifth Women's Match:

- Game 1-UF 2 FSU 6
- Game 2-UF 3 FSU 6

FSU WINS

### Sixth Women's Match:

- Game 1-UF 3 FSU 6
- Game 2-UF 6 FSU 3
- Game 3-UF 2 FSU 6

FSU women win and stopped all other matches. Seminole women win College MatchDay.

The Florida Gators women were the defending national champions, ranked at number three in the country for only the second time in program history. 4-1 WIN.

USTA's College MatchDay will continue with:

- UCF vs. Michigan men and women on Saturday, March 3rd at 12:30 p.m. ET
- Florida vs. Texas women on Sunday, April 1st at 5 p.m. ET
- UCF vs. South Florida men on Sunday, April 15th, at 5:30 p.m. ET

For more information on the USTA's College MatchDay series, visit here:

[www.ustanationalcampus.com/collegiate](http://www.ustanationalcampus.com/collegiate)

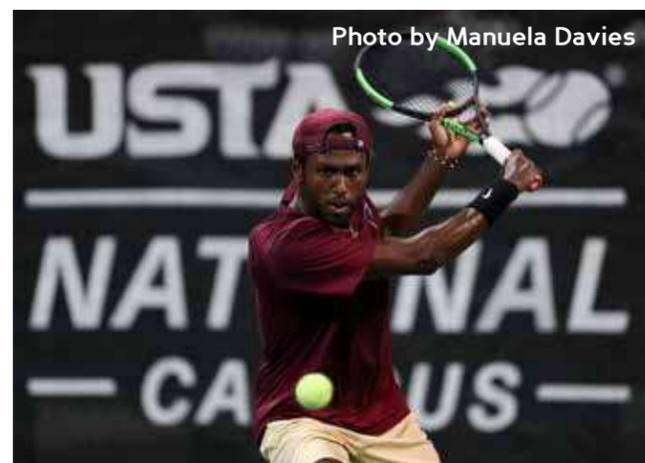


Photo by Manuela Davies



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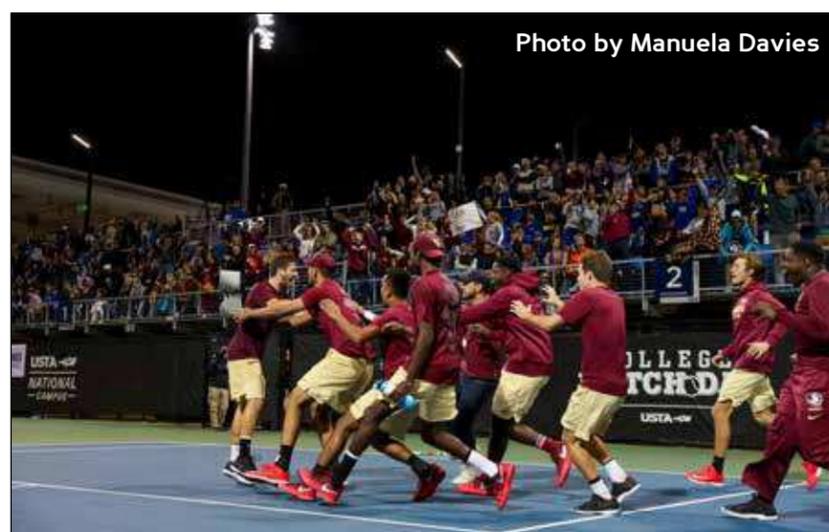


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# Nona Cycle: Tips to Ride Faster And Longer

BY MARY LU WILLIAMS

While Nona Cycle has expanded in size, we also have seen the ability to ride faster and longer. All of this requires optimal health and proper nutrition. The tips below are for all healthy athletes and good to remember when increasing activity.

## 1. Consume the Right Number of Calories

The great news about taking up cycling is the ability to consume more calories. Unfortunately, many cyclists reward themselves above and beyond the calories burned on a ride. Try not to forget to make healthy choices and watch the portion sizes. A good way to estimate your additional calorie need is to multiply the distance travelled in miles by 40-50 calories. Therefore, if you've been out for a 30-mile ride, you can estimate an extra calorie need of between 1,200-1,500 calories, erring toward the bottom end of this range if you're a slower or lighter rider and toward the top end if you're faster or heavier.

Of course, having a GPS device that estimates calories burned will give you a more accurate indication. If you're seeking a little weight loss, then aim to leave a shortfall in calories replaced to create a deficit that will encourage some fat loss, but limit this to a maximum 250 calories-a-day deficit if you want to continue to ride strong.

## 2. Carbohydrate: The Body's Fuel Supply

Carbohydrate is the body's primary energy source for cycling. Stored in the muscle, any excess in total carbohydrate intake above the body's calorie needs will be stored as fat (the same is true for protein and fat). Large servings of carbohydrate lead to a peak and trough of energy that can leave you feeling very lethargic, therefore avoid large meal portions and increase eating to five to six smaller meals per day.

It's worth noting that all carbohydrates are not equal and will have a different impact on energy levels and health. Indulging too many sugary carbohydrates in the regular dai-

ly diet can have a negative impact on recovery, energy levels and health. It's always best to opt instead for whole grain, slow-release carbohydrates and fruits and vegetables that are packed full of nutrients rather than refined sugar.

## 3. Are You Eating Enough Protein?

Getting adequate protein into your diet will support your health, immune function and recovery. Approximately .5 to .8 grams per pound of body weight is needed and should be consumed throughout the day rather than large portions at one time. With recent research highlighting that protein is also more filling than an equal calorie measure of carbohydrate or fat, increasing your intake just a little can help to keep your appetite under control, too.

## 4. Good Fats, Not Bad Fats

The type of fat you select is critical to health, performance and weight maintenance. Fats are grouped into "good" fats and "bad" fats. Good fats include polyunsaturated fats (Omega 3 and Omega 6 fats) and monounsaturated fats (Omega 9 fats). Whereas saturated fats found in meats and processed foods are to be limited, Omega 3 and 6 fats are vital to maintaining health and are found in nuts, seeds, fish and oils such as flaxseed, borage and starflower oil.

## 5. Make Sure You Drink Enough to Perform at Your Best

Drinking enough fluid will not only support better riding but also will result in better energy levels. If you have experienced that foggy-head feeling after a long ride, it's usually a sign to drink up. In addition to drinking approximately 64 ounces of water a day, cyclists should ideally be drinking additional fluid to match any loss during riding. With just 2% dehydration resulting in a significant reduction in performance, it's important to hydrate during your ride and after completion.

## 6. Fuel Your Ride Properly

If you are eating adequately during the day, easy-paced rides of less than 90 minutes don't always need additional fuel support. Your carbohydrate stores will provide plenty of fuel over this period. If you are heading out for a longer or more intense ride, topping up your carbohydrate stores will support better performance so that you still have plenty of strength toward the end. Studies indicate that a fueling plan delivering between 30g and 60g of carbohydrate per hour of riding is optimum. You can

opt for a carbohydrate drink, a mix of water and gels or bars, or a mixture of all three.

## 7. Recovery Food: When and What to Eat After You've Ridden

The first 20 minutes after a ride is known to be the optimal refueling period where nutrients are taken up more efficiently and transported to the muscle stores. A milk-based drink, a whey or soy protein-enriched smoothie, potato and beans, or a specialized recovery formula all make good, sensible options.

## 8. Caffeine: Good or Bad?

Some people avoid caffeine. If you're a fan, studies show that 1-3mg of caffeine per kilogram of body weight can result in enhanced performance, increased power output and improved mental focus, with larger doses generally offering no additional benefit.

## 10. Get Your Pre-ride Nutrition Timing Right

If you eat small, regular meals throughout the day, downsizing your three main meals to make room for a mid-morning and mid-afternoon snack, it makes it easy to ensure you are fueled before you head out. Instead, choose a low-fat, carbohydrate-dominant meal or snack with a small amount of lean protein since it will be digested a lot more rapidly than fatty or protein dominant meals.



Mary Lu Williams has been a registered and licensed dietitian. She is currently the chief of nutrition and foodservice at the Lake Nona VA Medical Center. She is a member of Nona Cycle and has been an avid cyclist for more than 20 years.

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

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**Behind the Scene**

BY SOPHIA ROGERS

Courtney Felton, Veteran Owner/Operator  
Detailing Express LLC



Detailing Express LLC is an exclusive mobile detailing company currently serving the greater Lake Nona area. They provide exterior auto detailing, interior cleaning, engine detailing, headlight restoration, in-home carpet cleaning, and pressure washing (just to name a few). What many don't know is that the owner/operator is also enlisted in the Air Force Reserves. Currently stationed overseas, Courtney Felton was able to communicate with me via email for this interview.

I met Courtney at a networking event, and after our first conversation I quickly realized he is a different kind of entrepreneur. Courtney's story is unique and one worth sharing.

He represents the valued traits our military personnel exhibit: discipline, resourcefulness, boldness, leadership, and accomplishment.

**NHN: Tell me about your military service.**

CF: I am a Senior Airman in the world's greatest Air Force, the U.S Air Force, and a proud Security Forces Defender. Patrick Air Force Base is my home station. I enlisted in 2014.

**NHN: How do you manage and operate a**

**successful business from overseas?**

CF: I am blessed with an amazing team. They are very passionate and energetic. We have a rule that everyone has to make at least one client smile a day. Customer satisfaction is important since most of our business is by referrals. As for managing, we have bi-weekly meetings via video conferencing or communication by email.

**NHN: What disciplines carry over from your military service to business ownership?**

CF: The mission must go on. In other words, when times are tough, we must always push forward. Just like in the Air Force, I believe in empowering my team. Even as the lowest-ranking airman, you are trained to be a leader from day one. I am only as good as my team because they are the true measurement and reflection of my success. We strive for excellence in all we do!

**NHN: What advice do you have for veterans wishing to embrace entrepreneurship?**

CF: The military demands a lot from you, but at the same time it gives you everything you need to succeed. Follow your dream and don't be afraid to fail! You will have your ups and downs, but it will be well worth it. Always remember it's not what you do – it's how you do it.

**NHN: Any tips for the DIY car washers?**

CF: As for as the weekend warriors that love to detail their own vehicles, I would say always remember to hand wax your car often. We live in Florida; it's very important that you keep some type of protection on it. A wax does more than make it shine. I know it's easy and cost effective to run your car to the car wash, but it could damage your car in the long run.

**NHN: Any final thoughts?**

CF: Opening Detailing Express six years ago was one of the best things I have done – it's been an amazing experience that I do not take for granted. I would be remiss if I did not thank God for all the blessings and opportunities He has given to us.

I am very excited for everyone to see what we have in store for you in the near future. I can honestly say that I would not trade my list of clients for anything – because they all have shown me so much support year after year. So, thank you all.

The community seems to echo this sentiment. In the words of customer Brad Houchen, "Great service is difficult to find in today's business landscape. I've been a client of Detailing Express for over 4 years and without fail Courtney and his crew are head and shoulders above the rest. Where I especially value their service is with their communication and follow up." Marc Hyzens states, "Detailing Express is very professional and always on time. We have been using their services for multiple years. The guys are very pleasant to work with and take great care of our cars!" And from customer Sarah M., "The local owner, who is also currently serving in the military, even checks in from overseas to see if I am happy with services!"

Thank you for your service, Courtney!

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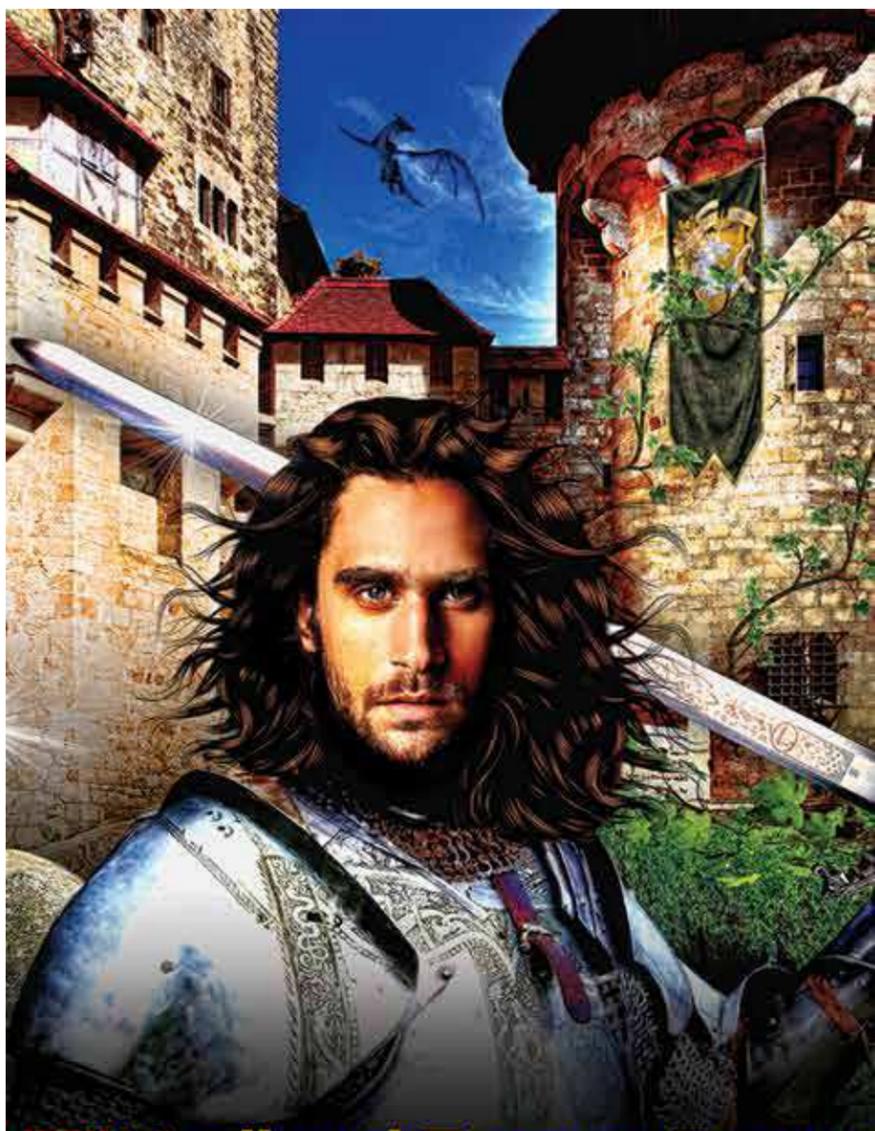
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# At the Movies: The Oscars

BY JORDAN EICHENBLATT



It is a gold statue of a naked, bald man with a sword covering his privates, and he is the most important thing a filmmaker or an actor could own: an Oscar.

Every year, I watch the show, and I root for the actors who deserve it, and I boo the bad jokes and the try-hards. So, ladies and gentlemen reading *Nonahood News*,

I present to you Jordan's Oscar predictions.\*

(\*Only certain categories because – come on – do you know the difference between sound editing and sound mixing? No.)

If I were to give out an award for Best Picture for this year, I would give it to *The Disaster Artist*. But it wasn't nominated, so we can't do that. Instead here are the nominees:

## Best Picture:

- Call Me by Your Name*
- Darkest Hour*
- Dunkirk*
- Get Out*
- Lady Bird*
- Phantom Thread*
- The Post*
- The Shape of Water*
- Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*

And the winner... WELL, WAIT.

I think *Phantom Thread* is only in there because the greatest actor of all time is in it, and it is his final movie since he announced his retirement, and yes I am speaking of Daniel Day-Lewis. *Dunkirk* VISUALLY was cool, but it wasn't a great movie. I mean, yeah, I enjoyed it, but it just, hmm, it just couldn't get over the hill. SO...

I think the best picture award will go to... drum roll please... *CALL ME BY YOUR NAME*. Or *Three Billboards outside Ebbing, Missouri* or *The Post* because Spielberg, Hanks and Streep, COME ON! Either one, you pick.

Moving on. (Get it? MOVIE-ING on...anyway...)

## Director:

- Christopher Nolan, *Dunkirk*
- Jordan Peele, *Get Out*
- Greta Gerwig, *Lady Bird*
- Paul Thomas Anderson, *Phantom Thread*
- Guillermo del Toro, *The Shape of Water*

A great competitive category, all well deserved, and all should win an Oscar. I think this is going to be a surprise with Greta Grew winning OR Paul Thomas Anderson or Jordan Peele, which would be amazing: "Welcome to Key and Peele starring an Oscar winner."

## Adapted Screenplay:

- Call Me by Your Name*, James Ivory
- The Disaster Artist*, Scott Neustadter & Michael H. Weber
- Logan*, Scott Frank & James Mangold and Michael Green
- Molly's Game*, Aaron Sorkin
- Mudbound*, Virgil Williams and Dee Rees

Great movies here. You need to see all of these movies right now. Safe bets here are *The Disaster Artist* or *Call Me by Your Name*.

## Original Screenplay:

- The Big Sick*, Emily V. Gordon & Kumail Nanjiani
- Get Out*, Jordan Peele
- Lady Bird*, Greta Gerwig
- The Shape of Water*, Guillermo del Toro, Vanessa Taylor
- Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*, Martin McDonagh

*Lady Bird* all the way. Not even close. BUT I am rooting for *The Big Sick*.

Time for the fun stuff. Time to play pretend, ladies and gentleman, once again my picks for best actor and actresses!

## Supporting Actress:

- Mary J. Blige, *Mudbound*
- Allison Janney, *I, Tonya*
- Lesley Manville, *Phantom Thread*
- Laurie Metcalf, *Lady Bird*
- Octavia Spencer, *The Shape of Water*

Honestly, there only need to be two nominees and two winners. Lesley Manville was great, don't get me wrong, but would she have been that great without Daniel Day-Lewis? Most likely not. Laurie Metcalf in *Lady Bird* was amazing, BUT Allison Janney was unreal in *I, Tonya*. Like UNREAL. It was amazing how great she was in this movie. Allison Janney deserves this. She should win it, and if she doesn't I will send a Tweet of disapproval. But, I will be okay when Laurie Metcalf wins.

## Supporting Actor:

- Willem Dafoe, *The Florida Project*
- Woody Harrelson, *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*
- Richard Jenkins, *The Shape of Water*
- Christopher Plummer, *All the Money in the World*
- Sam Rockwell, *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*

How about this! A movie filmed in Orlando's very own backyard got an Oscar nomination! And look at this, Woody Harrelson the stoner is nominated. And Richard Jenkins, the dad from *Step Brothers* nominated. Christopher Plummer (who filmed his parts replacing Kevin Spacey) in *9 days* is nominated. One of my favorite actors of all time, please see *The Way Way Back*, Sam Rockwell is nominated. Honestly, hard to choose here. So, I am putting the names in a hat and I have picked...Sam Rockwell!

## Lead Actress:

- Sally Hawkins, *The Shape of Water*
- Frances McDormand, *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*
- Margot Robbie, *I, Tonya*
- Saoirse Ronan, *Lady Bird*
- Meryl Streep, *The Post*

Each one of these actresses has been robbed of an Oscar nomination or an Oscar win before. Margot Robbie should have been at least nominated for *Wolf of Wall Street*. And sadly, she will be robbed here. She should win for her performance in *I, Tonya* because it was great. Keep in mind she is AUSTRALIAN, not redneck! And she learned to figure skate! But it will go, and deservedly so, to Saoirse Ronan for *Lady Bird*. Oh, and Meryl didn't deserve to be nominated.

And, finally, the men.

## Lead Actor:

- Timothée Chalamet, *Call Me by Your Name*
- Daniel Day-Lewis, *Phantom Thread*
- Daniel Kaluuya, *Get Out*
- Gary Oldman, *Darkest Hour*
- Denzel Washington, *Roman J. Israel, Esq.*

I want it on the record that the Academy played it safe by not allowing James Franco to be nominated for his performance in *The Disaster Artist* due to the allegations against him of sexual harassment. James Franco would have won the Oscar. Instead, Timothée Chalamet or Gary Oldman will.

OH, AND FUN FACT! Kobe Bryant, the basketball player, is nominated for Animated Short. GO, KOBE!

Enjoy the popcorn.

## The Lake Nona Book Maven Review: *A Piece of the World*

Book: *A Piece of the World*  
Author: Christina Baker Kline  
Genre: Fictional Memoir  
Hardback, 309 pages

A friend loaned this book to me with a positive recommendation. I had not read *Orphan Train*, Christina Baker Kline's #1 *New York Times* Bestseller, or any of the five or six other books she has written. So, with curiosity and some familiarity with the painting described in the book, I was happy to give it a try.

In *A Piece of the World*, Kline gives us an intimate look into the life of the subject of Andrew Wyeth's famous painting *Christina's World*. It was in 1939 when Christina Olson first met a 22-year-old Andrew Wyeth. Christina was then in her 40's and suffered from a progressive and debilitating but then unknown ailment that would eventually leave her arms wasted and her legs all but useless. Although the novel is not about Andrew Wyeth, he does appear from time to time when he summers in Cushing, Maine, near Christina's home. He often paints in an upstairs room in Christina's house and eventually includes her in his famous painting.

Kline focuses her story on Christina, the fever that struck her at age three, and her circumscribed life afterward. It

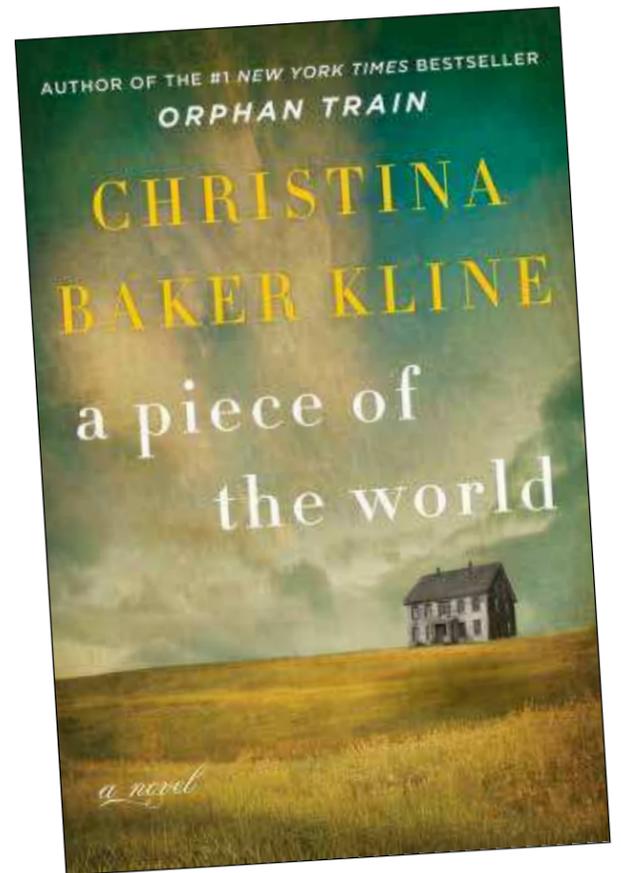
is a portrait of a determined and independent woman for whom we sometimes feel immense compassion and at other times absolute frustration. In this first-person account, Kline follows her subject throughout her life, from 1896 to 1948, occasionally skipping forward or backward in time to provide background that adds dimension to the story. Fortunately, the years covered in each segment are noted when there is a change, so I didn't find the time shift too distracting.

At one point, we are introduced to Walton, a young man bound for Harvard who spends two summers nearby and sadly is responsible for Christina's one thwarted opportunity at romance. But it is with Walton that we see Christina exhibit her intelligence and resourcefulness. Through her interactions with her brother, Al, and most of the other characters, we see her stubborn independence and her ability to live her entire life in the same house with no improvements and no modern conveniences. Christina's physical world is limited, but she pays close attention to her surroundings, often noting descriptions of other characters, the weather, or her surroundings both inside and outside the house. She is a fascinating character, as unusual a subject for the painting as for the story.

I was impressed with Kline's writing style, especially her ability to allow us to see the world through Christina's eyes and her descriptions of Christina's immediate environment. Also, even with the abrupt changes in time, the plot moves the story along at a good pace, something I always appreciate.

The painting, which is reproduced at the end of the novel, pictures Christina in a pink dress, seen from behind, seated in a field, with her house and barn off in the distance. Christina is leaning off to one side on one thin arm looking up toward the house. Many have wondered over the years who Christina was and why she seemed so frail, not to mention why she was seated in such a peculiar way in a field so far from the house. For those who are already familiar with Andrew Wyeth's famous painting, this story

will bring it to life and give it a dimension we are not often privy to in a work of art. For those unfamiliar with the painting, this novel will introduce the artist, his work and the subject.



## Meet the Press: Linda Carvin, Editing/Proofreading

BY NICOLE LABOSCO



Linda Carvin is an editor/proofreader here at *Nonahood News*. She's originally from the Philly suburbs despite a brief seven-month move to Massachusetts.

**Extrovert or Introvert?**  
Introvert.

**Indoors or Outdoors?**  
Indoors, mostly.

**Sun or Snow?** Neither, but I'd love a moderate temperature, a lovely breeze and some peace and quiet.

**Dogs or Cats?** Dogs – I don't mind cats, but I love dogs.

**Vans or Converse?** Clarks.

**Coffee or Tea?** Depends on the time of day and my mood – I grew up drinking tea, though.

**Adventurous or Laid Back?** I have certainly had some pretty adventurous experiences, but generally laid back.

**Canon, Nikon or Sony?** iPhone.

**Books or TV?** Books if they're compelling, otherwise I'll turn on the TV.

**What brought you to the Nonahood?**

My son and daughter-in-law were in Orlando, and I got tired of shoveling snow in Pa. They thought we should go together on a house with an apartment (for me) over the garage. It is the perfect arrangement.

**What's your favorite hobby?**

I'd have to say reading.

**What's your biggest dream?**

To see more of Europe, especially the art, architecture, culture and food, of course.

**Where do you see yourself in 10 years?**

I'm already retired, so no big plans other than to continue to enjoy time with friends and make some new acquaintances along the way.

**What are you most excited about in Lake Nona?**

Coming from such an established region, it's exciting to see the Lake Nona area grow. I'm hoping to learn my way around a bit better and also hoping for a few more cultural venues.

**Who's your biggest inspiration?**

I think people in general. It's interesting to see what people do, what they're passionate about, what they're reading, discussing, following, eating, creating, etc., and then choose from those insights to broaden my own world. I'm trying to simplify my own life and at the same time choose only what makes the most sense to invite into mine.

**What's your favorite book?**

I have been reading as a pastime most of my life and took up English as my major. So many books, so little time. I don't have one favorite. Last year, my favorite was *A Gentleman in Moscow*, but I like Charles Dickens, Louise Penny, and so many others.

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

I'd have to say whitewater rafting in West Virginia in the spring in class five rapids. I fell out and, in those conditions, it's really hard to get a soaked person back in the raft!

**Describe one of your most memorable experiences.**

I think being at Gibraltar and seeing where the Mediterranean meets the Atlantic. Also, being in the UK and Europe as a young person and realizing my U.S. was not the center of the universe – things are different all over the world, and some of the things that are different turn out to be better.

*Check back next month to get to know another Nonahood News staff member!*





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# Inaugural Longhorn Stampede 5K Family Run

BY NICOLE LABOSCO

It was dawn on Feb. 24 and a stampede was forming in the Nonahood.

The Longhorn Stampede had been planned by Angela Palacio, the Vice President of Events for the Laureate Park Elementary PTA and the organizer of the 5K, and several others since September of 2017. The money raised would benefit the students and teachers and the overall school needs for Laureate Park Elementary. "We work with the teachers to provide grants and other supplies that will enhance the school experience of the students," Palacio stated about the PTA.

As Lake Nona is being shaped and molded by living a healthy lifestyle, a 5K was the perfect way to get lots of attention and involvement for a school fundraiser. "Living a healthy lifestyle has become an important part of today's society and leading by example is just as important. We wanted to provide a fun event that would bring the whole family together," said Palacio.

This 5K sure did bring families together as I saw plenty of parents running with their children, biking or running alongside them and an abundance of strollers. Palacio told me there were over 100 spectators as well, so if the whole family wasn't running, they were cheering on the sidelines.

"It was important for us to create an event of this size that was organized, but also fun! We wanted this event to be something the entire community would get involved with both as participants in the run and entertainment during the race. We were able to involve many of our school clubs and bring focus to our awesome Longhorn students! The chorus sang the national anthem, the safety patrols and

student government helped cheer along the course and the dance and karate after-school programs provided entertainment after the race. We did not have any specific financial goals. We were more focused on creating an event that would bring families together," said Palacio.

Creating the first of a future annual event can be pretty challenging, but Palacio and her team were able to manage and turn out a quality event. "It was a perfect blend of nervousness and excitement! There was a lot of pressure to make our first 5K a success - something that people would want to attend and would have a good time when they were there. We have an extremely supportive community and lots of helping hands. It was our goal to keep this first event manageable and to be able to evaluate what areas worked well and how we can add to it for fu-



ture years. We already have our list started for 2019 on how we are going to take it to the next level!"

The best way to write about an event is to take part in it yourself and that's exactly what I did. I arrived at Laureate Park Elementary fully aware of what I was getting myself into, but also forgetting how long it's been since I ran. It's been awhile, folks, and I'll be the first to admit that I am in fact, not a runner, but I'll always try my hardest. I received my race number of 278 and my Longhorn Stampede t-shirt and officially looked the part. Runners/walkers were gathered to do stretches to loosen up a bit and prepare our bodies for the long journey ahead.

Nine AM neared and we gathered by the starting line right behind the school. Younger children had the option to ride their bikes and scooters, and boy was I wishing I had one...The countdown commenced and I, as well as the other 200+ runners/walkers, was off. I was hoping my upbeat music would help me push through, but eventually my struggling to breathe took precedence. I nearly completed the first mile when I had to stop and walk to gather myself again. From that moment, it became a stop/start method where I'd pick a house or sign in the distance and set that as my new stopping or starting point. I was going to get through this 5K one way or another.

My legs were burning and so were my lungs. It was 77 degrees out and I, just like every other participant, was dripping in sweat. Our hard work was evident through the sopping wet t-shirts. Have I mentioned that I hate running in general, but running in FL is so much worse? Because it is in my opinion.

The path took 5Kers all the way to right behind the Publix at Lake Nona Plaza and had us circle right back to return to the elementary school. I gradually passed the mile 2 sign and was ready to see that final mile 3 sign. I turned back into the school parking lot and the finish line was officially in sight. I made sure I finished the 5K running. It was the least I could do. I was awarded my medal and was handed a freezing cold towel, a water bottle and a banana. What a great way to end my exhaustion.

Upon returning home, I could feel the pain in my knees. My body was not used to this and the next couple of days would be rough and I would be sore. Well readers of Nonahood News, as I write this, it's the next morning and I can barely walk. My knees are better, but my thighs are on fire. Would I do it again? Absolutely.





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## March Events

Visit [www.nonahoodnews.com/events](http://www.nonahoodnews.com/events) for updated events and detailed information.

- 3 Central Florida Children's Home Spring Fever 5-10K run and walk (7:30-11 a.m.)
- 3 UF/IFAS Orange County Master Gardener Plant Sale & Garden Festival (9:00 a.m.-8 p.m.)
- 7 OPD Hosting Citizens Police Academy
- 8 Lake Nona Veterans Club (5 p.m.)
- 9 Eagle Creek Elementary PTA Spring Carnival (4:00-8:00 p.m.)
- 10 Nona Chamber Festival (10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.)
- 10 Synapse - Summer Workshop Open House (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)
- 14 LNRCC Breakfast Connections (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.)

Stay tuned... April Health Chat Series Every Monday and Friday 2-3PM at Watercrest!

**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/](https://facebook.com/Lakenonaymcafarmersmarket/)

**ART AFTER DARK**  
Fridays 7-10 p.m.  
Lake Nona Town Center  
[facebook.com/artafterdarklakenona/](https://facebook.com/artafterdarklakenona/)

**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/](https://facebook.com/learnlakenona/)

**THE SATURDAY MARKET**  
Saturdays 9 a.m.  
Valencia College Lake Nona Campus  
12350 Narcoossee Rd.  
[facebook.com/LakeNonaFarmersFreshMarket/](https://facebook.com/LakeNonaFarmersFreshMarket/)

**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](mailto:info@nonahoodnews.com).

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