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## THE ARTIST: ALEJANDRA TOBON

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# PUBLISHER'S DESK

## Publisher's Note: Come What May

BY RHYS LYNN

We can't be the only ones feeling like this year is *flying* by. May already!? In an informal poll, five out of five Laureate Park residents said they agreed. The school year is almost over, summer is nearly upon us, and Lake Nona is heating up! And when we say heating up, it's not just the sun. Everywhere we look there are buildings going up and cranes on the horizon; the construction is truly in full swing going into summer.

As May begins and our summer starts, what are your plans? Are you planning a vacation? A small getaway? Just hanging out and enjoying the amazing things we have in Lake Nona? We often joke that we don't like leaving our 'bubble' - the great thing is that there are more and more things to do here all the time. Drive Shack is finally open and we've already had some great times there with friends.

Several projects are due to be complete before year's end, which I'm sure will come sooner than we expect. Right now the one we are most excited about is the Nona Adventure Park - scheduled to open around the end of summer. There are whisperings of some very exciting things coming to the Lake Nona Town Center, as well - but we can't talk about them just yet. Don't panic, *Nonahood News* will keep you in the loop so you don't miss any of the exciting new things coming into Lake Nona.



Rebecca Lynn

One of the most important things that happens in May is Mother's Day - a day where we get to honor those special people in our lives that none of us can do without. There are two mothers in particular that I am thankful for: my mother, Rebecca and my wife, Jenny. I have to thank my mother for pretty much form-

ing me into the person I am today; without her guidance, I can't imagine where I'd be. My mom always worked hard and taught me to always treat people with respect and to be the best person I can be. Thanks for everything, Mom.

Finally, as for my wife and co-publisher, Jenny, I am at a loss for words about how much of an impact she's made on me. When we met, I was just a 21-year-old who had no idea what I was doing or where I was going. By her side, I learned how to be a husband, a father (and grandfather!), and she's taught me so much about life. She's one of the best people I know and she makes me want to be a better person. We've had a great time journeying through this adventure called life together. I can't think of a better person to go through life with, and we can't think of a better place to live.



Rhys and Jenny Lynn

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## How Food Can Be 'Thy Medicine'

BY DR. DEBORAH GERMAN



Dr. Deborah German

UCF medical student Emily Freisen carefully measures out a teaspoon of mustard that will go into salad dressing. At other workstations, her classmates are chopping carrots and peeling onions. The group of 13 students has traded in their white coats for chef's whites as part of a six-week collaborative culinary medicine course run by UCF's College of Medicine and the Rosen College of Hospitality. The elective is designed to help future physicians learn about preparing food for the best nutrition and taste so they can educate their patients on better eating habits.

Dr. Robert Karch, a pediatrician at Nemours Children's Hospital and an assistant professor for the medical school, leads

the course based on a culinary medicine program started at Tulane University. It includes class time, kitchen time and community outreach, where students help area residents learn about healthy foods such as fruits, vegetables and grains. Recently, they went to the Hebni Nutrition Center in downtown Orlando's Parramore community to show residents how changes in diet can help conditions like diabetes and high blood pressure.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report that 70 percent of people over age 20 are either overweight or obese. That's an estimated 160 million Americans. Our unhealthy eating habits cause multitudes of preventable and potentially deadly diseases, including heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and certain cancers.

As physicians, we can help our patients prepare and eat healthier foods. And thanks to this UCF-Nemours partnership, we are giving doctors-in-training specific tools and skills they can share with their patients.

At a recent class, head chef Robb Seltzer from the Rosen College explained to our students why fresher produce tastes better and is better for you. "The produce that you buy at your local grocery store on average was harvested eight weeks ago," he said, "and many of the nutrients are lost during that time."

Many consumers never see produce until it reaches the grocery shelves, so on the first day of class, students traveled to nearby farms in Mount Dora to understand the process of growing and harvesting vegetables.

"Low fat foods can still taste good," said Seltzer, who blames some of our bad eating habits on our limited palates. "We need to be willing to try new foods, and when we do it's usually, 'Oh, wow, that tastes good.'" To prove his point, the medical



students learned to cook spaghetti in different ways from low fat and vegetarian to traditional spaghetti with meat sauce. "No one is going to make healthy food choices if it doesn't taste good," said Seltzer as he demonstrated how to enhance flavors with spices and by using alternative healthier ingredients like more fruits and yogurts in desserts.

Brian Nagle is in his fourth year of studies at the College of Medicine. He started a food blog in 2010 and said he's always been interested in food. He also holds a master's degree in public health, so the culinary medicine course was of great interest.

"Originally, the blog was a place to share family recipes, and when I became a busy med student, I began sharing time-saving cooking tips," he said. "And with what I'm learning in class, I hope to incorporate nutrition when I'm talking to my patients to make positive changes to their lives."

*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)*



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# Neighborhood Watch: 2018 Hurricane Season - Planning and Preparing

BY LINDA THIERRY

A reality of living in Florida is the possibility of hurricanes. Mention hurricane to a long-term Florida resident, including those living in Central Florida, and they will all have a story to tell. Most recently, Hurricane Irma came to town and wreaked havoc on our neighborhoods.

The 2018 hurricane season in Florida officially begins June 1 and ends Nov. 30. The Climate Prediction Center is predicting an above-average hurricane season in the Atlantic. Exactly how that will affect us is anybody's guess. Many of us experi-

enced the unpredictability of a hurricane with Irma as she bobbed and weaved toward Orlando.

As is usually the case, the best offense is a good defense. Planning and preparation are critical.

## Plan:

Where will members of your family be safest when the hurricane is expected to arrive? Many people choose to button up their homes and head out to safer parts. Keep in mind if you choose this route, it is critical you prepare your home in the same manner as if you were going to stay home. All outdoor furniture, trash cans, planters and décor must be brought into your home/garage. Anything loose left outside is a potential projectile. The earlier you make this decision, the better since the roads will quickly become congested and gasoline will become scarce. Be sure to bring food, water, medication and important family documents with you. Plan your route and know which roads are designated. Let a trusted neighbor know your plans and share phone numbers.

If you choose to stay home, make sure there is enough food, water and medication for all family members and pets for a minimum of a two-week period. Make sure all family members know any expectations and are prepared to go to the designated emergency space/room with minimum notice. Often, tornadoes will pop up and wreak havoc on neighborhoods during/after a hurricane. Visit [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org) for more hurricane emergency planning ideas. NOTE: If

authorities issue a mandatory evacuation, comply as directed. Every family member, including pets, should have a "bug out" bag ready.

Make sure you know how local authorities will keep you updated in your specific area. The NextDoor App is a popular tool. Most counties in Florida have automated communication methods so that you can sign-up to receive emails and/or texts informing you about emergency information, including location of shelters in your area and which accept pets. Any neighborhood Facebook pages can be extremely useful.

Also, share your plan with your extended family members. We think sometimes they worry more than we do, so be sure and keep them abreast of your plan and status.

## Prepare:

Take time during the month of May and early June to make an emergency kit. If you have one, be sure and check it to make sure it has everything you might need. Do you have food and water supplies for your family (check expiration dates)? Check flashlights and other portable lighting to make sure they are readily handy with fresh batteries (and extra batteries of the correct size). An emergency solar powered/crank/wind-up NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) weather radio is an extremely valuable item to have in your hurricane emergency kit. Portable power phone chargers are great to have if you lose power. Be sure these are fully charged and stay fully charged throughout hurricane season. A first-aid kit should be part of your emergency kit. Include some board games, cards, dominoes and books/magazines to pass the time.

Florida residents enjoy a "Tax Free Weekend" every year on certain products for emergency preparedness. In 2018, "Tax Free Weekend" starts at 8 a.m. on Friday, June 1, and ends at 5 p.m. on Sunday, June 3. It is important to note businesses cannot deviate from this timeline. In previous years, items that qualified included batteries, portable generators, tarps, fuel containers, portable self-powered light sources, and reusable ice packs. Note: There are limitations to the cost of these products and number of products an individual can buy at one time, so be sure to read the small print. You can get more details and

updates at [www.freetaxweekend.com](http://www.freetaxweekend.com).

Educate yourself on the different watches and warnings issued by the National Weather Service. These watches and warnings are to help you plan your strategy and will give you time to prepare. Visit [www.nhc.noaa.gov](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov) for detailed definitions (go to the bottom of the page and click on "Watches and Warnings" under "HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS"). Please take all watches and warnings seriously.

A "last-minute" hurricane prep list is useful. Here is one example (create one that works for your situation):

- Sandbag at base of exterior doors
- Close garage doors using emergency cord and lock on both sides
- Shut all blinds
- Keep all interior doors shut
- Unplug all unnecessary electrical devices
- Fill bathtubs with water
- Empty ice maker and turn off
- Put one phone charger in emergency space/room with emergency kit
- Everyone puts a pair of shoes and their bag in the emergency space/room
- Put important family documents in a waterproof package and place in emergency space/room

There are many resources available to residents during a hurricane. Do your research before hurricane season begins, develop a plan to keep you and your family safe, prepare a fully stocked emergency kit, and create lists to help you through a potentially stressful situation.

Stay safe, Orlando!

Laureate Park Neighborhood Watch  
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# Rotary Update: Helping Disabled Veterans Get Their Home Cleaned – Green Cleaning For a Cause

BY BRITTANY BHULAI



PHOTO COURTESY OF  
MY CLEAN GREEN HOME

It all began when Page Leindecker, founder of My Clean Green Home, crossed paths with cancer patient Sandy Campbell. The two met in 2015 through a mutual friend who had stressed to Leindecker Campbell's need for a hand in cleaning her house.

On top of having a son who was a toddler she had to take care of, Campbell's chances of becoming ill were very high since she was going through chemo at the time. In response, Leindecker offered her residential house cleaning service to the woman for free for the next year. She came every month until Campbell was through with her treatments. "She said as long as you're in treatment, I'm going to come over and help you," Campbell mentions, reminiscing about the moment. She goes on to say how it was very significant for Leindecker to come and clean the house because it meant a lot to her. She really did need the help, and she was touched that the house cleaning was done from the goodness of Leindecker's heart. My Clean Green Home was usually a service purchased by customers, but not one time did Leindecker ask for a dime.

The bond between the two grew, and out sprung many conversations about services Campbell received from a cancer team that helped her. The team raised funds for her two-year-old son to go to daycare and aided with food and medication. It was all volunteer work. Hearing this sparked an idea in Leindecker's head to give back to the community as a whole in a voluntary fashion. She then began hand making soaps.

The concept behind the soaps was to get the word out about anyone who was disabled from illness and to highlight their significance to the community. The

soaps were sold alongside My Clean Green Home in order to generate money that went toward helping people like Campbell. It wasn't long before her handmade product was trademarked under the name Survivor Soap, which was all organic and vegan-friendly. A year later, Leindecker was molding the face of another company called Green Cleaning for a Cause.

The purpose of this rather hot-off-the-press business is to clean the homes of people who are disabled due to illness or injury. One of her main targets are veterans who are unable to clean their homes themselves. All of the income generated from her handmade soaps goes toward her new nonprofit organization. A percentage of funds from My Clean Green Home goes toward the nonprofit as well.

Leindecker's cleansing process is a deep clean of the house. This consists of ridding dust from high areas such as air vents and ceiling fans. The baseboards are also scrubbed. Furniture, the refrigerator, and bathrooms are also targets for Leindecker and the team she brings with her to clean. "It takes about eight hours of labor to do an average house in good condition," states Leindecker.

Green Cleaning for a Cause officially took on their first veteran-owned house this past month on April 5. With the support of Lake Nona Lunch Rotary Club, they were able to get the job done. They are aiming to make this a once-a-month community project. Leindecker says she would appreciate anyone from the area who is willing to assist them. All work is voluntary and is for a nonprofit organization. Kids in the 13- to 17-year-old age group who need community service hours are more than welcome to join. It is always a joy for Leindecker to work with the younger group as she comments with a smile, "They're so full of life." She is also looking for more veterans' houses to put her magic touch on. The invitation extends to those undergoing cancer treatments and other life-hindering diseases as well. Anyone can check out Green Cleaning for a Cause at



[www.green-cleaning.org](http://www.green-cleaning.org). Her website provides information on her Survivor Soap, how to donate, and links to her other main branch, My Clean Green Home.

Closing with her final thoughts on Leindecker and her work, Campbell says, "It was more than just a job...she was and still is just fantastic."



## BUSINESS & REAL ESTATE

# UCF Life Sciences Incubator at Lake Nona

BY BRITTANY BHULAI

A new Life Sciences Incubator has made its way into the GuideWell Innovation Center located in Lake Nona's Medical City. The grand opening for this biosafety wet lab facility will be held on May 10.

Executive director of the UCF Business Incubation Program (UCFBIP), Dr. Thomas O'Neal, says \$4 million went into the actual build-up of the facility while a little over \$1 million was geared toward equipment. He hopes the creation of the incubator will drum up new business in the area and produce new jobs for people.

Since UCF's College of Medicine is also located in Medical City, there is an intention that the Burnett School of Biomedical Sciences could produce leads for the incubator. Researchers will conduct their experiments and studies at the facility. "Well it's not going to be a place where they develop a new app or how to turn on your water heater, this is about deep life sciences where you have to have these special kinds of conditions," states O'Neal. Discoveries such as new proteins, vaccines, updated cancer treatments and drug development can be expected to take place in the setting. The goal is to create commercial products that can ultimately aid humanity.

The original funding for the project came from the state of Florida and was then sent to the city of Orlando. O'Neal says there is \$1 million alone in specialized air handling for the building. It is a sanitary place with clean air. Everything from the ground up is designed to support a wet lab incubator. The lab was in the making for about three years in terms of ideas and rough draft designs until it actually broke ground in 2016.

Based on the UCF Life Sciences Incubator floor plan, some features include seven private wet labs, five private small offices, a collaborative space, and two conference rooms. For the seasoned scientist, equipment ranges from a flammable storage cabinet to a "Follet Nugget Icemaker," as mentioned in the floor plan.

Besides being a new startup life sciences company, there is also a course one must go through to make sure they are an appropriate candidate for incubation.

Operating and marketing coordinator of UCFBIP, Robin Wright, mentions two compa-



UCF Life Sciences Incubator at  
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nies have already moved in. One company, Aviana Molecular Technologies, is currently chipping away at a cure for Lyme disease while the other company, SynapCyte, is working toward the treatment of Parkinson's and Alzheimer's.

It is true that UCF has its own research labs on campus, but those are mostly reserved for faculty and the federal government funded projects that are conducted there. O'Neal suggests that it is ideal to separate those types of studies from the studies that would go towards cooking up commercial products.


For the time being, this is the first and only wet lab of its kind in Central Florida. The UCFBIP would like to extend its growth in the future and open up more areas like the Life Sciences Incubator in other locations throughout the community.

For research companies who have inquiries on leasing building space, contact the UCF Life Sciences Incubator at [LNincubatorinfo@ucf.edu](mailto:LNincubatorinfo@ucf.edu) or (407) 313-2725.



PHOTO COURTESY  
OF UCF LIFE SCIENCES  
INCUBATOR



A close-up, vertical portrait of a woman's face, showing her eyes, nose, and mouth. She has a slight smile and is looking directly at the camera. The background is dark and out of focus.

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# Nona Growth: Pulte Homes Debuts Its Newest Community in Lake Nona

BY SOPHIA ROGERS



PHOTOS BY PULTE HOMES

Pulte Homes, awarded Developer of the Year by the *Orlando Business Journal*, is excited to announce their newest Lake Nona project, Somerset Crossings.

Conveniently located at the intersection of Lake Nona Boulevard and Wyndham Lakes Boulevard, Somerset Crossings is adjacent to Ariel Apartments and directly across from Somerset Park. Currently under construction, the community is expected to open for sales early summer.

According to Pulte executives, Somerset Crossings will offer “convenience and a high-quality of life.” Amenities include a resort-style pool and cabanas.

Clint Ball, president of Pulte’s north Florida division, says, “The townhomes are ideal for young families seeking an affordable residence in a highly desirable neighborhood.” Ball also states, “The combination of smart floor plans, location and price are difficult to match anywhere in the Orlando area.”

With prices starting in the mid-\$200’s, this makes for a great entry price point into Lake Nona. Somerset Crossings is not in a community development district, or CDD, which makes ownership more affordable. (New construction tip: A good time to buy is at the beginning of development. As more units sell, prices tend to increase.)

Somerset Crossings will offer three townhome designs within the 158-unit community. Square footages range from 1,570 to 1,778 square feet. Floor plans include two to three bedrooms, two baths, and one- or two-car garages.

What will the townhome floor plans look



PHOTO BY ORANGE COUNTY PROPERTY APPRAISER

like? One of the floor plans, the San Carlo design, is typical of the offerings at Somerset Crossings. It has three bedrooms, two baths and a one-car garage. The first-floor kitchen looks onto a dining-gathering room area that extends to a covered lanai for a spacious feel. The upstairs features an owner’s suite with walk-in closets and private bath. The other two bedrooms enjoy the privacy of distanced entrances. And to help busy families, Pulte Homes has conveniently located the laundry area on the same floor.

Until the models are complete, inquire with the sales team about design studio preview nights, which are typically held once a month. At these events, interested parties have the opportunity to see what options are available to customize interior finishes.

For those who need more space or are ready for an upgrade, Pulte Homes builds in two other Lake Nona communities, Laureate Park and Enclave at VillageWalk. Laureate Park offers luxury four-story townhomes and other residences ready for quick move-in. The luxury homes at Enclave at VillageWalk have up to six bedrooms, offering grand features and stylish options.

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*Sophia Rogers is a six-year Lake Nona area resident and realtor/founder of NonaHomeGuide.com. A wife and mom of four, family, relationships, real estate, and business are her passions.*

*She can be reached at [sophia@nonahoodnews.com](mailto:sophia@nonahoodnews.com)*



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# Johnson & Johnson Human Performance Institute: How Does a Science-Based Approach Add To the Bottom Line?

BY SOPHIA ROGERS

One thing most of us have in common is feeling stress at work. We all can probably agree that stress not only affects your productivity, it affects your life as a whole. Sleep patterns change, relationships may suffer, physical issues arise, and sometimes mental health takes a toll.

Think about it: On average, we spend eight hours a day, 40 hours a week, 160 hours a month, and 1,920 hours a year at work. Assuming approximately 8,760 hours in a year, over 20 percent of our life in a year is spent at work. The key is not to avoid stress, but to recognize different types of stress, understand how to respond to stress productively, and learn how to react so you can recover, adapt and grow from stress.

If you were to visit a doctor for stress, most likely you'll leave the appointment with a prescription for medication in hand – not the case at Johnson & Johnson Human Performance Institute. A holistic focus is placed on the power of human potential. Using a science-based approach, the Human Performance Institute helps leaders and employees become energized and focused. Individuals are able to enjoy the moments that truly matter – whether at work or at home.

Madalina Sucala, PhD, manager of behav-

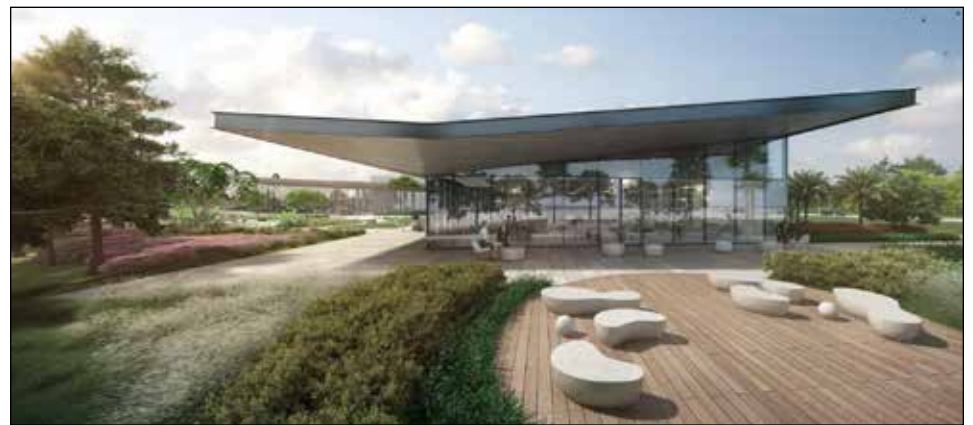
ior science at Johnson & Johnson, states, "Behavior change interventions promote healthy behaviors and support people on their journey towards more vibrant lives. By leveraging evidence-based behavior change principles and techniques, the Performance and Resilience suite of programs can have a profound impact on both well-being and productivity." These courses help individuals maximize their energy across four interconnected dimensions to create lasting behavior change. The dimensions are Purpose, Mental, Emotional and Physical.

As individuals, we each have our own goals, desires, hobbies, dreams, etc. Most importantly, we each have our own purpose. Some people call this your "Why." At the Human Performance Institute, this is called "Purpose." Purpose is invisible, yet so powerful. Johnson & Johnson believes purpose can help with "decision-making and priority-setting" to bring order and clarity to humans by aligning personal and professional motivation.

Being fully present and aware of your mental state is another component of maximizing your human potential. Our bodies believe what our brains tell us, right? The Human Performance Institute works to help individuals enhance mindfulness and judgment. It's one thing to have a purpose, but you must train your mind to focus on what matters most. Emotions build the healthy relationships needed to increase connections and restore confidence. How we feel might dictate how we act. At the Human Performance Institute, the emotional dimension addresses how to build strong, healthy relationships both at work and at home.

Often overlooked is the physical dimension. Getting enough sleep, nutrition and exercise helps to expand energy. And with more energy, we are alert and our individual capacity is at its peak potential. Working side-by-side with highly-skilled institute experts who have received specialized training in performance psychology, nutrition and exercise physiology, this multidisciplinary approach helps you to become physically energized, emotionally connected, mentally focused, and completely aligned with whatever mission is most important to you.

How do these dimensions add to the bottom line? In the workplace, stress contributes to employees feeling unfocused and



PHOTOS COURTESY OF HUMAN PERFORMANCE INSTITUTE

unmotivated and can lead to increased burnout and high turnover. Unchecked, stress can hurt employee productivity, quality of life and the bottom line. Johnson & Johnson's Human Performance Institute training has been proven to help increase engagement, performance, health and wellbeing, and talent retention.

Courses are offered on campus here in Lake Nona. You can choose between Performance Courses or Resilience Courses. Choose which setting works best for you or your employees. Online, 2½-day courses, and one-day courses are available.

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# Creator Mindset: Little Victories

BY NIR BASHAN



Nir Bashan

One of my earliest memories of childhood is finding a parking spot. Yep. A parking spot. You can't make this stuff up. I grew up in the heart of congested, clogged and gridlocked Los Angeles. I hadn't seen a farm animal until I was almost 10 years old – much less any wilderness. The closest we got to wilderness was an empty lot being prepared to make room for another building.

All of which makes finding a parking spot that much more amazing. I remember it like it was yesterday. We were circling the lot over and over trying to find parking. It felt like forever. There was not an empty spot in sight. Then, finally a car pulled out. My dad, who was driving, slammed

the transmission into reverse and backed up before someone else could cut in and grab the spot.

It was a little victory. Typical big city stuff, I suppose. And it just might be a rather sad first memory. But none of that mattered. We found a spot. And it was indeed a little victory.

I am often reminded of that memory today when I am working on an account or helping out friends with some business challenges. And I think it's a pretty good lesson that I learned early on.

You see, it seems that we are in too much of a rush these days for the next big win. The epic victory. The huge success.

What we end up doing is ignoring all the little victories along the way that got us there.

I find that in life and business, it is often these little victories that are far more important than the big ones. They are more important because they allow repeatable success. A roadmap of accomplishments that eventually add up to the big victory. Whereas one big victory often does not provide a pathway to repeatable success. Because they just sort of happen.

It's like the person who wins the lottery. Does that make them financially savvy? Someone who has put a ton of work into this windfall? Hardly.

But the person who saves? Who invests? Who pays attention to trends and is able to leverage them into repeatable small victories? Well, that is someone to be celebrated. These are the little victories that add up to the big victory.

As some of my readers know, I have a fondness for the military for a number of reasons. One that I particularly like is their

embrace of little victories. For example, the task of making your bed is a little victory in the military. You can mess up basic training. You can perform tasks in the wrong way. You can be late or unprepared. But if you make your bed – you know that you have at least gotten one thing right that day. That is a little victory.

The little victory is the foundation upon which success is built. Without it, success is just luck.

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# Business Culture: Three 'Invasive' Behaviors That Destroy Culture

BY TRAVIS JACOB

What does a ludicrous and non-germane amendment on an invasive species legislative bill have in common with organizational culture? The similarities might surprise you. One of the great qualities of Lake Nona is the intersection between the business community and the health and wellness community. Being a triathlete, I get excited when I see groups of athletes running or riding bikes around Lake Nona. This business and medical community is being built to attract and welcome the outdoor fitness community.

Apparently, this is not the goal of one Montana state senator. In 2017, the president of the Montana State Senate filed an amendment onto an existing bill that would impose a fee on all out-of-state bikers entering the state. To add insult to injury, the bill that this amendment was attached to was dealing with an "invasive species" of mussels to Montana, thus identifying cy-

clists as invasive species! In his comments, the senator called cyclists "some of the rudest people I've ever – I hate to say it, but I'm just going to be bold – they're some of the most self-centered people navigating on highways or on county roads I've ever seen," according to the *Missoula Current*. "They won't move over," he added. "You can honk at them; they think they own the highway." Although I don't agree with his method of dealing with this issue, he does have a point. On many occasions, I have witnessed cyclists with riding behaviors that I would classify as being very "invasive." These behaviors by a few can destroy the perception of the entire cycling community. They can also destroy the culture of the entire group of riders.

So, what's the connection to business? Leaders from any industry often must deal with people that can destroy the culture of the team, or worse, the entire organization. I call these people "invasive species" to a winning culture. These destroyers of culture exhibit one or more of the following three invasive behaviors:

**Negativity** – This person is always pessimistic. They do not see the good in any situation. They have the tendency to turn even the most positive conversation into a diatribe of reasons to be negative.

**Narcissism** – This person is always full of themselves. The focus of every conversation will somehow turn back to them and why they are better. Their main tendency is to "one up" every story by making themselves sound superior.

**Apathy** – This person just doesn't care. They don't care to get involved in any conversation. They don't care to be a team

player. They don't care about the work, period. Their focus is everywhere but the job at hand or the people they work with.

In nature, invasive species normally creep in slowly and often go unnoticed until they start to disrupt the ecosystem. Left alone, they will eventually take over and destroy everything in their path. This can also happen in an organization. Left undealt with over time, the people who exhibit one or more of these invasive behaviors can destroy the culture of the team or, worse yet, the entire organization. Leaders who are astute to culture will recognize very quickly when any of these behaviors are present and deal with the "invasive species" before they have a chance to disrupt or destroy the culture of the team or entire organization. By dealing with these behaviors early and

effectively, leaders will protect the cohesiveness of their team and send a strong message that they care most about those who bring value to the organization.

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# Business Spotlight: 407 Cafe

BY NICOLE LABOSCO AND VANESSA POULSON

PHOTOS BY NICOLE LABOSCO



and savory cravings.

When you first walk in, your senses will fill with a scent of sweetness, but it's not overwhelming...it's inviting. You'll notice the bright LED lights and luxurious black and white theme as you're greeted by the friendly staff and upscale, welcoming environment. Oh, and you will most definitely notice the beautiful case of different colors and flavors of rich, Italian gelato filled with 30 flavors ranging from fruity strawberry to creamy dulce de leche, all of them completely satisfying. Take a seat at one of the open tables, and someone will promptly greet you with a menu filled with options that are sure to satisfy every craving you could possibly have. Whether you're looking for local favorites like 407's notable sweet or savory crepes, a warm pressed panini, or even just a good cup of coffee, 407 has you covered. "Our sweet crepes are loved [by] kids and adults and with the gelato on the top," said Antonio Rodriguez, CEO and owner of 407 Cafe.

Established by Rodriguez and his family in August 2011, the restaurant began with the idea of opening a shop that would focus on serving high quality, European gelato, as there were no other businesses in the area with a European touch capitalizing on the growth of Lake Nona. It was Rodriguez's daughter who first suggested adding crepes to the menu as this was something else the local area was missing when it came to cuisine. Later on, the store added new items like flatbread, croissants and bagels. "I was thinking in some space where family and friends in our community come to enjoy good food, excellent service and an amazing environment," said Rodriguez.

Fan favorites are photographed all throughout the restaurant, and those include:

-Caprese salad, an Italian staple of buffalo mozzarella cheese layered between sliced tomatoes and fresh basil leaves, drizzled with Italian balsamic vinegar and herbs. The wondrous and mouth-watering surprise of housemade pesto with pine nuts really ties all of the flavors together.

-Prosciutto, salmon, or chicken marsala paninis. We tried the chicken marsala, and the grilled chicken breast is paired perfectly with mushrooms, spinach and

mozzarella cheese, all topped off with golden raisins, walnuts and a marsala wine reduction (available in: ciabatta, baguette, focaccia basil cheese, pumpernickel, and multigrain bread).

-Nutella and strawberry crepe, an absolute classic of a freshly made crepe, created right in front of your eyes, adorned with ripened strawberry slices and smeared with the chocolatey, hazelnut goodness and dusted with powdered sugar. The warm crepe is enough to satisfy your sweet tooth (available in original or whole wheat flour crepes).

Gluten-free options are available on the menu, as well. Recent additions to the menu include gelato milkshakes – where customers can choose any of the 30 fresh flavors of gelato to be blended into a sippable, splendid beverage to cool you off in the Florida heat – to a savvy, state-of-the-art coffee machine, where customers can send photos and artwork to the machine to have brought to life right in front of their eyes through coffee beans. No ink is used.

407 Cafe is an all-around art experience, and you can witness firsthand the amount of love that goes into perfecting your meal. The fresh and light ingredients and perfectly-sized portions will leave you feeling satisfied with no bloat. However, there might be just a bit of guilt depending on how many sweets you indulge in. It can be difficult to stop with all of the delicious choices on the menu.

Not only is 407 a wonderful stop for lunch, dinner, or even an afternoon gelato or cup of coffee, the business is also dedicated to finding ways to give back to the local Lake Nona community. 407 Cafe is proud to host a variety of Spirit Days, where part of the profits go to support local schools here in the Lake Nona area, including NorthLake Park Elementary School, Eagle Creek Elementary School, Moss Park Elementary School, Sunblaze Elementary School, Innovation Middle School, Laureate Park Elementary School, Lake Nona Middle School, and Lake Nona High School. These spirit days are sponsored by Nemours Children's Hospital and contribute in part to Rodriguez's hope that 407 Cafe can not only provide the Lake Nona area with a higher quality of food but also contribute in giving back to the community in the way he hoped the business could. "I chose Lake Nona because it is the community with major growing expansion in Central Florida and we live here, it is our community and we want to contribute to make the area



a better place," said Rodriguez.

There are other big plans on the horizon for 407 Cafe in this coming year, including the expansion of the business to a brand new store in Oviedo, as well as the development of a new concept store in Maitland called 407 Gelato, which will focus on the restaurant's popular gelato selection. 407 Cafe continues to impress people inside and out of the Lake Nona community with their exceptional, friendly service and fantastic food, and Rodriguez credits these aspects with keeping customers coming back time and time again. The store is certainly a Lake Nona favorite, and if you have not stopped in yet, it should definitely get put on your priority list.

Along with the expansion developments, 407 Cafe has plans to update a handful of its menu items based off of some customer recommendations and food trends, and they will not disappoint. It's safe to say Rodriguez gave *Nonahood News* some of the SCOOP (of gelato), and Lake Nona residents should keep an eye on 407 Cafe.





# Behind The Scene: Lake Nona Construction Projects Update

ARTICLE & PHOTOS BY SOPHIA ROGERS

So many major Lake Nona projects are underway that it's time for an update on construction. If you have not yet driven by these projects, it is a must do. History is in the making. Rick Singh, Orange County property appraiser, refers to Lake Nona as "the epicenter of growth that is happening in Central Florida." Stay tuned as this is only the beginning!

## Lake Nona Town Center



Tavistock Development Company is adding new office buildings and a parking garage to Lake Nona Town Center. Construction for BBA Aviation/Signature Flight Support is pictured here to the left. Conveniently located at the southwest corner of Veteran's Way and Lake Nona Boulevard, this marks the beginning of Phase II at Lake Nona Town Center. Target completion is fall 2018.

## Pixon Apartments



Pixon Apartments, another Tavistock Development, will house Orlando's first micro-apartment units. Located at the southeast intersection of Tavistock Lakes Boulevard and Lake Nona Boulevard, Pixon is a 201-unit, multi-family community featuring a Tesla car share program and concierge delivery. The ground floor is where you will find Foxtail Coffee and Island Fin Poke! Projected completion is late 2018.

## KPMG



KPMG, a leading U.S. audit, tax, and advisory firm, is constructing its \$400 million learning, development and innovation facility in the Lake Nona community. Located on Lake Nona Boulevard, the training and lodging facility includes 800 single-occupancy lodging rooms and 350,000 square feet of conference space. An estimated 1,000 KPMG employees from all over the world will be traveling to and from the learning, development and innovation facility in Lake Nona each week. KPMG expects to complete the project by year-end 2019.

## Amazon Fulfillment Center



The much-anticipated Amazon Fulfillment Center has exterior walls! This picture is only a snippet of the 850,000-square-foot building. You have to drive by to see its entirety. Located along Boggy Creek Road just south of Orlando International Airport, the new center plans to create 1,500 new, full-time jobs with benefits in the high-tech Lake Nona workplace. Projected completion is 2018.

## Johnson & Johnson Human Performance Institute



Johnson & Johnson Human Performance Institute is building an \$18 million global headquarters in Lake Nona's Medical City. Dedicated to helping individuals and organizations perform their best, the new facility is nearly twice the size of the institute's current Lake Nona home. Target completion is late 2018.

## Earth Fare



Earth Fare will open the first organic and natural food store in Lake Nona this summer. The new store is coming to Narcoossee and Tyson roads next to Lake Nona High School. All of Earth Fare's foods are free of antibiotics, hormones, high fructose corn syrup, artificial fats and trans-fats as well as artificial colors, preservatives and sweeteners. This is another highly anticipated store for Lake Nona residents! Target completion is summer 2018.

## Publix



Publix at Lake Nona Creekside is underway. Located near Boggy Creek Road and Lake Nona Boulevard, the Creekside plaza will be similar to the Lake Nona Plaza on Narcoossee Road. This makes the third location in Lake Nona to pick up a delicious Publix sub! Target completion is October 2018.

## Laureate City Park and East Airfield Park



Lake Nona has two city parks under construction! Both sites are in the process of being graded. East Airfield Park is located on Dowden Road, near Northlake Park. Conceptual designs include four softball fields, a playground, pavilions, concessions and separate walking/jogging and bike paths. Laureate City Park is located in Laureate Park, within walking distance of Laureate Park Elementary School. Laureate City Park's conceptual designs include four multi-purpose fields, a practice area, fitness station, playground and pavilion, concession building, and trails. Target completion is summer of 2018.



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# Get In-Powered!: What You See Is a Projection of Yourself

BY EDWARD A. RODRIGUEZ



Have you ever wanted to buy a particular car or a particular piece of clothing only to start finding it more often around you? Why do you think this happens?

One morning, before going to a meeting, I went to a diner to get a cup of coffee. It was busy, and the waitress took a few

minutes to come to my table. I was in the middle of a phone call when she came and I whispered, "Regular coffee, please...I am in a hurry." She brought it right away. I finished my phone call, saw the coffee and got upset. "How can she forget? I mentioned to her I was in a hurry. This is amazing! I should have gone to Starbucks instead," I said to myself.

From my seat, I was looking around trying to locate her. When we made eye contact, I waved and she came back. I said: "You forgot the sugar!" In silence, she looked at me for four long seconds like, if in disbelief, she was trying to gather her thoughts. Without saying a word with her lips, she pointed to the sugar container just eight inches away from the cup of coffee. The sugar was there all along, but I did not see

it! I did not know how to react. I did what any sensible, embarrassed person would do under these circumstances; I broke down in laughter. She left the table not necessarily sharing my feelings. Now, if the sugar was there all the time, why didn't I see it before? If I needed to leave for my meeting soon, why did I fail to notice something so obviously there?

This is the reason. In my mind, I had an image of a rectangular-shaped sugar container that normally has the white, pink, blue and yellow sugar packets. What was next to the coffee was a glass sugar pourer. It was amazing. Even though I would have been perfectly okay using that sugar, my mind deleted it completely because it did not match what I was looking for. Even though I was in need, I could not see what was just a few inches away from me because it did not match my expectations.

Then, why is it that when you decide to buy a car, you start seeing that brand and model very often? Why was it that your mind "deleted" them from your life experience before you started thinking about the possibility of buying it?

I will not get very technical here, but there is a part of our brain that helps us filter the tremendous amount of sensorial information we are continuously exposed to, but we tend to see more of what we focus on.

Sometimes in our lives...

We don't see abundance because we harbor lack.

We don't see hope because we feel fear.

We don't see what is be-

cause we expect what is not.

We miss opportunities that are just under our noses unless we are lucky enough that someone comes along and points them out to us. Meanwhile, we are drinking cold coffee, not connected with the moment and running like crazy in order to not miss the next appointment.

The sugar, the cars, and opportunities are all around us. We see only what we project. What we project is what we focus on. What we focus on determines what's available to us.

My question to you is: From now on, what will you start focusing on? Choose wisely and enjoy your coffee.

*Edward A. Rodriguez is a coach, co-author and transformational trainer. He is founder and CEO of Better Graphics (a promotional products company) and In-Powerment! Center (an international training company for productivity and personal development). He is an NLP, HNL, and neuro-strategy certified trainer. He has many certifications as a life and executive coach, serving clients in different countries. Edward has developed internationally known transformational programs and has co-authored books like "La Biblia de la Motivación" ("The Bible About Motivation") and "Empowered," which was co-written with other authors such as Wayne W. Dyer, John Assaraf (from the movie The Secret), Brian Tracy, etc. For more information, call 1-888-2-IN-POWER or write to info@EdwardRodriguez.com.*



# Get Traction: Chop Wood, Carry Water

BY CHRIS WHITE, EOS CERTIFIED IMPLEMENTER



From the bustling of staff moving through I recently read *Eleven Rings* by legendary NBA coach Phil Jackson, in which he shared his secrets on how he managed two of the most talented players,

Michael Jordan and Kobe Bryant, and built two successful championship programs.

His secret: Less is more!

This book is more than just a memoir of his accomplishments; it also provides great insight on how to build a solid, successful organization. Coach Jackson, who practiced Zen meditation, embraced simplicity. He believed in order to build a strong, cohesive team, he needed to reduce complexity by introducing the coaches and players to a simple model called the Triangle offense that only has a handful of rules to follow. His goal was to get each player, whether they were in the game or on the bench, to focus on the system, follow the few rules and let the rest fall into place. If they could all be on the same page, rowing in the same direction, winning games was inevitable. Regardless if you're a fan of the NBA or not, you probably have heard of Phil, who coached the Chicago Bulls to six championships and then won three more

with the Los Angeles Lakers using this methodology.

Similar to the Triangle offense, the Entrepreneurial Operating System (EOS) embraces simplicity as well. Business owners and their leadership teams follow a simple system that allows them to focus on the six key components of their business and use just a handful of practical tools and disciplines that strengthen each component and get everyone rowing in the same direction. Whether you're an executive, manager or in the mailroom, everyone has three to five roles and responsibilities they focus on to propel the company forward.

When asked how he was able to keep the players focused after winning their first title, Phil quoted a Buddhist, writing, "Before enlightenment, chop wood, carry water. After enlightenment, chop wood, carry water." This really resonated with me as a business owner and EOS certified implementer. With a "less is more" mindset, reducing complexity and following a simple, proven program allows everyone in an organization to stay laser focused. When everyone is focused, companies execute their visions.

So, it doesn't matter how big or small your company is or what market you're in, stay focused: Chop wood, carry water.



*Chris is a successful entrepreneur, author and head coach at Traction in Florida. He's passionate about helping entrepreneurs get what they want front their business*  
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## Inaugural MeGa Health Jam Changes The Game of Healthcare

BY NICOLE LABOSCO

About 100 technology and healthcare innovators joined forces over the weekend of April 13-15 to unite the gaming and healthcare communities for the future. What's a more suitable location than the GuideWell Innovation Core building? As introductions began on day one, the team who created the event joked about taking over the GuideWell workspace. This was the first-ever MeGa Health Jam and was sponsored by giants like EA Sports and Florida Hospital, while being organized by Florida Health Innovators, Indienomicon, and Rob Coble.

"We know this weekend, what we're manufacturing is serendipity," stated Kunal Patel, the co-founder of Indienomicon. Indienomicon is a community that banded together on a mission to bring awareness to the culture, excitement, and incredible tal-



PHOTOS BY ZACHARY BELL OF ZTB STUDIOS

ent of the indie developers of Central Florida. This community was founded in 2013.

The point of this jam was to have completed any functional projects by the end of the weekend. They really want to make an impact on future healthcare and how gaming can PLAY a part. What better way to bring together two groups that don't normally correlate by reaching out to the creative gaming community, including those who aren't happy with the current state of healthcare.

The projects fell under six primary tracks:

- Children's Health
  - Oncology, Anxiety, Risk Factors, Asthma

- Behavioral and Disability
  - PTSD, Autism, Shyness, Suicide Prevention, Mass Tragedy Events
- Aging Well
  - Diabetes, Falls, Loneliness, Nutrition, Caregivers
- Engagement and Adherence
  - Care Plan Compliance, Medication Adherence, Patient Education
- Community/Social Responsibility
  - Food Desserts, Minority Careers in Healthcare, Access to Care, Human Trafficking
- Security, Payments and Privacy
  - Blockchain, HIPAA, Payments, Confidentiality Challenges

How can two groups that almost never join forces unite and create change?

Through Virtual Reality (VR)

- Make physical therapy fun through VR games that strengthen player in real life (IRL).

Through Augmented Reality (AR)

- Display digital items IRL (visualization). The future is now, folks!

Through exercise

- Doctors can track all things medical: strengthening, weakening, heart rate, etc.

**Day One:**

Introductions were made, pitches were shared, and teams were formed. The focus of the kickoff day of the MeGa Health Jam was to get to know everyone and plan the game-changing healthcare project with one's team.

The 23 mentors/advisors made their introductions and were adorned with red stethoscopes.

An icebreaker began with a rock, paper, scissors competition with a room full of gamers. I was doomed. You turn to your neighbor and challenge them to rock, paper, scissors. Winner moves on to challenge another winner. Loser rallies with the winner and becomes their hype man or

woman. Losers grow as winners dwindle, and eventually you have a large supportive group backing you, and, in the end, you're all winners.

Around 40 eager and inspired innovators pitched their project ideas initially. Only 22 survived based off of support. A few teams merged, and 16 prevailed to begin working on their projects and bringing them to life. Ideas varied from VR simulators (which would help others understand what it's like to be in the shoes of someone who deals with ADHD) to those who overcome the everyday challenges of social anxiety. Additional pitches focused on the opioid crisis and suicide. Some were inspired by their own challenges or experiences, while others found their influence through family members or passions/interests. All ideas

were solid and were focused on one main notion: reform.

**Day Two:**

The second day of the MeGa Health Jam focused on working and creating the projects and bringing them to life. Several teams had to overcome challenges like glitches and making sure their actual games/applications were workable.

**Day Three:**

The 16 teams had about half-a-day to wrap up their projects, upload them and then present them to the judges and audience. And 16 presentations later, we had our top five.

**Fifth Place – WAKE**

This app focuses on brainwaves, and participants can utilize breathing and meditation exercises. In real time, users can see how the exercises are affecting their brainwaves. Users would wear a brainwave headband with five sensors, an accelerometer and a gyro.

**Fourth Place – Fantastic Hands and Where to Find Them**

This game was created to help those who have issues with finger and hand mobility. It focuses on how flexion is good, but consistent flexion (which is something that today's society has us all doing almost nonstop) is bad. It delves into the world of rehab therapy for stroke patients who lose feeling/movement in their fingers and arms and helps deviate the effects of carpal tunnel. It's meant to revolutionize physical therapy and make it fun. [This group was also the audience favorite.]

**Third Place – bARK**

This project was founded by a young woman who would visit hospitals with her therapy dog and couldn't visit all of the children in the pediatric units due to their health. She wanted those kids to still be able to interact with a dog and bring smiles to their faces. The AR dog named "Archie" can be placed anywhere in the user's room, and users can pet him, tell him to sit and roll over with appropriate gestures, and even play fetch with him. She hopes to further the app and create more animal choices for users to pick from. What's better than having a dog in the room?

**Second Place – ZenBloom**

This game focuses on relaxation and anxiety relief, incorporating a Dance Dance Revolution game mat and a VR headset. Players are brought into their own personal sanctuary where their feet and arm movements transform a dojo, gradually building it up. It's essentially a VR version of yoga, without the difficult poses.

**First Place – Boo Boo Snap**

This idea stemmed from a young woman



who usually just attends the jams with no ideas until she reads the room. She's a sound designer but taught herself how to program for Boo Boo Snap. She was inspired by the healthcare symbols all around the room and thought of Band-Aids. She said, "Doctors are finite, but there's Band-Aids everywhere. Everyone has Band-Aids." She then thought of her niece, who is obsessed with printed/themed Band-Aids. The young woman created an AR Band-Aid that would bring the image on the Band-Aid to life. She mentioned how it could connect to your phone and track your activity, and nurses/doctors would be able to do the same.

The judges agreed that her project was something that addressed furthering healthcare right now, and it was taking a simple medical object that everyone has used at some point in their life and completely transforming it into the future of healthcare.

Not really knowing what I was getting involved in when I originally showed up on day one to cover the event, I'll be thinking about this weekend for awhile. Change really can be brought about by something as simple as what we may brush off as "just a thought." Most individuals/groups initially presented their pitches based off of an idea that they had, nothing more. Taking the inspiration you have and turning it into something that really can transform and advance the healthcare system truly is mesmerizing and stimulating. Seeing firsthand what these two powerful communities can do in just 48 hours when they join forces is absolutely flabbergasting.

The end of the MeGa Health Jam brought all in attendance full circle with the icebreaker we participated in on day one: We are all truly winners.







# WATERCREST

## LAKE NONA

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4/09/18: Introducing the UCF Lake Nona Medical Center with Regional VP Jake Kirchner, DPM

4/13/18: Understanding The ABCDE's of Diabetes with Dr. Sowmya Surya, Endocrinologist

4/16/18: Avoiding Falls and Protecting your Health with Dr. Dangiolo, Geriatrician

4/20/18: Chronic Care Management with Dr. Gabriel Nuriel and Tammy Russell, ARNP

4/23/18: The Aging Eye with Dr. Chirag J. Patel, Ophthalmologist

4/27/18: The Benefits of Partial Knee Replacement with Dr. Obi Adigwme, Orthopedist

4/30/18: Treating Common Diseases as you Age with Dr. Vladimir Neychev, General Surgeon

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Assisted Living Facility #12742

## WaterCrest Resident Celebrates a Centennial

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY NICOLE LABOSCO



It was the year 1918. Woodrow Wilson was president. A gallon of gas cost 23 cents, and a new home could be purchased at an astounding price of \$2,200. This was the year several famous people were born, from Nelson Mandela to Bob Evans. It was also the year Margaret Kent was born.

On Saturday, April 7, WaterCrest resident Margaret "Peggy" Kent celebrated her 100th birthday alongside family and friends. The WaterCrest staff organized the party, and around 50 residents and staff members joined the celebration as the man singing performed such classic songs as Louis Armstrong's "What A Wonderful World" and Frank Sinatra's "New York, New York." Party-goers were enjoying cocktails and one another's company. Once the cake was cut, Peggy's granddaughter, Stephanie, was enjoying just how much cake her grandmother was eating. She said "Gram is going AT that cake! Her slice was HUGE!"

Peggy was enjoying herself for sure. After all, this day was dedicated to her. Marjorie, Peggy's daughter, said that Peggy was one of the first 10 residents at WaterCrest. Marjorie reflected on her days growing up with her mother, and she paused when asked what her favorite quality was about her mom. "I think that she's, how can I say this...she loves without any expectation at all. She's very kind." The most impactful lesson Peggy taught her daughter over the years was to be open and willing to meet everyone. "I think not to judge people, to give everyone a chance."

We can all learn something and take that advice from an individual with 100 years of wisdom. From all of us at *Nonahood News*, Happy Birthday, Peggy! Here's to many more celebrations!



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# Tough Things To Talk About: Earth Day

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS  
BY VANESSA POULSON



Each year, Earth Day, April 22, is celebrated and commemorated as the birth of the modern environmental movement in 1970.

The height of counterculture in the United States, 1970 brought the death of Jimi Hendrix, the last Beatles album, and Simon & Garfunkel's "Bridge Over Troubled Water." War raged in Vietnam, and students nationwide overwhelmingly opposed it.

At the time, Americans were slurping leaded gas through massive V8 sedans. Industries belched out smoke and sludge with little fear of legal consequences or bad press. Air pollution was commonly accepted as the smell of prosperity. "Environment" was a word that appeared more often in spelling bees than on the evening news, according to Earth Day Network.

Earth Day has been somewhat of a sore spot for many Americans. In a nation founded on prosperity and growth, the idea that actions would be taken to effectively limit that growth in an effort to preserve *nature* seemed like something best left to the beatniks and hippies, not something that corporate, capitalist America

could get behind.

In the modern world, Earth Day serves as more than recognition of the birth of the environmental movement. It is also a time where many are called to acknowledge the human impact of environmental degradation and to take action. However, much of the way that the conversation regarding the environment is conducted leaves many Americans and people worldwide feeling completely powerless and miserable.

Headlines regarding environmental degradation often read "Global Carbon Emissions Hit Record High in 2017" or "Sea Level Rise Will Rapidly Worsen Coastal Flooding in Coming Decades, NOAA Warns," which, though informative, leaves the reader feeling powerless and defeated. Often in these articles, there isn't any kind of description of what people can do to take any kind of action in protecting the environment. Whether you believe in climate change or not, there has to be at least some kind of understanding that the earth is where we live, and keeping the earth safe for us and future generations has to be something we acknowledge as a society.

There's a lot of pressure on people nowadays telling us we have to make big changes as a society to make a difference. Big changes are important, sure. Policy implementation and action on the political front is always what is going to cause the biggest ripple effect from the origin point of a cause, but it isn't the only thing that a person can do to start making a change. Take shorter showers. Recycle. Pick up trash that you see. Have a meatless meal once a week. Teach your children to be conscious of what they use and what they waste. Each of these things, if done collectively by a group of people, begins a ripple effect where change can be made on the local level.

I've been lucky enough to have traveled to some beautiful places in my life, from Alaska to England and even Tallahassee, there are beautiful places on this earth that are worth protecting. Thinking about climate change on a global level can be



incredibly scary, and we have to start retraining ourselves to see the issue as something that is not dependent on your political party, religious view, or even your social background.

The earth we call home belongs to each and every one of us, and on this Earth Day, remind yourself not to feel powerless but powerful in the changes that you can make.



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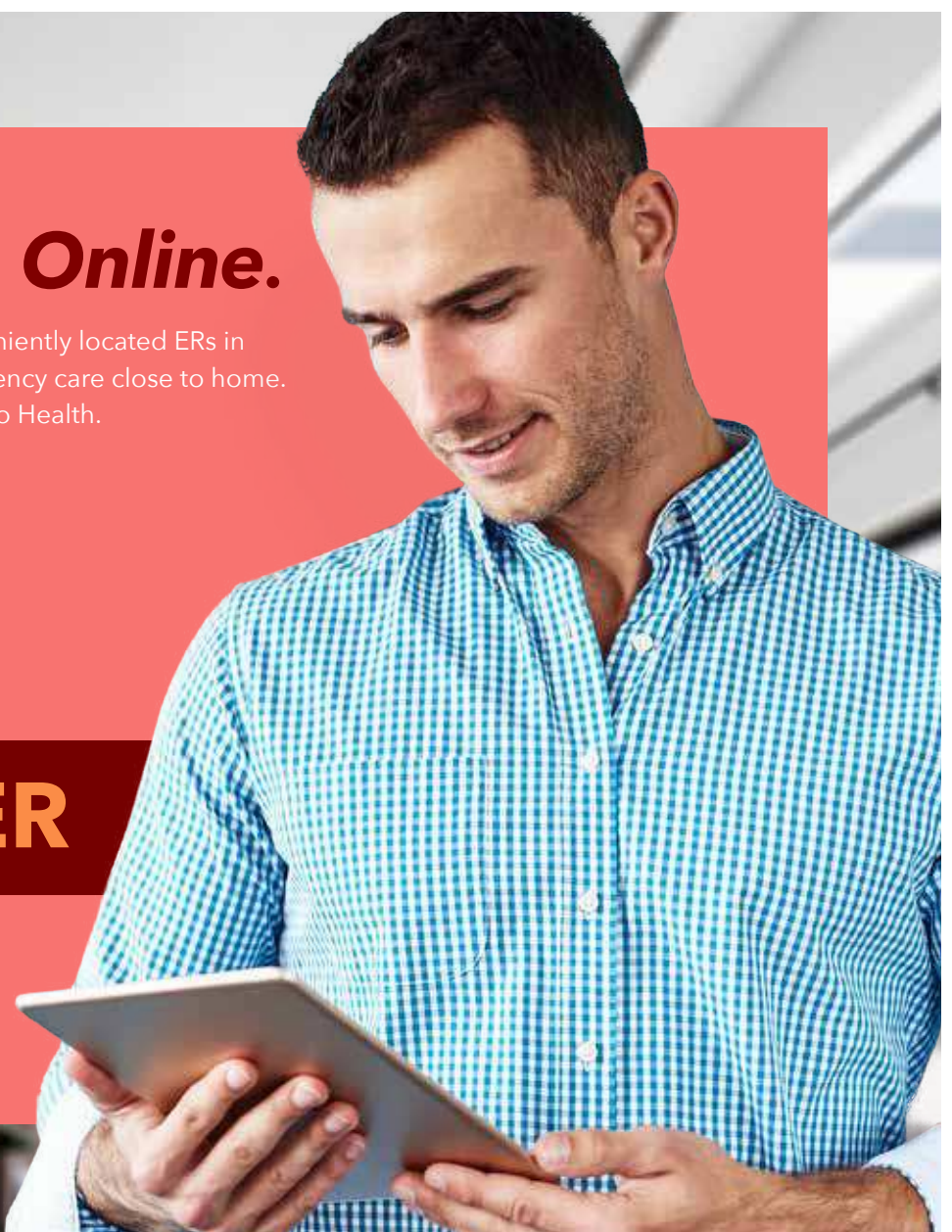
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# The Artist: Alejandra Tobon

BY VANESSA POULSON

“*Todo tiene arreglo*” or “everything can be fixed” is a phrase that local artist Alejandra Tobon finds herself living by whenever she is finding her way in creating a new project. It was something her mother used to remind her of in her childhood frustration when creating her art projects, and the message sticks with her to this day. Tobon was born in Cali, Colombia, but her family immigrated to the United States when she was only two years old. After some moving up and down the East Coast for a period of time, they finally settled in Lake Nona 10 years ago.

Her love for art was established at a young age, heavily influenced by her mother’s own artistic talent. As her work has developed, she describes her style as a matrimony between elements of surrealism and modernism incorporated into it.

“Art is important because it is an omnipresent aspect of our lives, although we aren’t always necessarily aware of it. Simply noticing the beauty in quotidian events can change our perspectives, even make us feel happier,” said Tobon. “I don’t think something has to be in a museum gallery to be considered art, we can find beauty in almost anything.”

Tobon is a multi-talented creator. A biomedical science major at UCF, she finds herself inspired by science itself, taking a variety of the content she learns in her classes and incorporating it into her pieces. “I am currently taking human anatomy, which has helped me portray the human body with more precision and accuracy. Furthermore, body parts are often subjects in my pieces, so the class has further made me appreciate the perfect synchronicity that makes human life possible,” said Tobon.

Scrolling through Tobon’s Instagram, it is obvious the amount of intricate work that goes into each of her pieces. Tobon’s work with lines, balance and symmetry, as well as the beautiful blend of surrealism and modern art, makes her work entirely unique and masterfully beautiful. Though she finds inspiration in a variety of elements in her life, music tends to reign supreme in her life when it comes to finding inspiration to create her pieces. “I am a firm believer

in the butterfly effect and perfect conditions, meaning every little event or change in events can completely change the direction of a piece,” said Tobon. “I don’t think any of my pieces would’ve come out the same way if I had simply changed what music I was listening to while working on them.”

Music, it seems, has also inspired a recent series of works by Tobon in which she is constructing a variety of portraits depicting her favorite music artists from Biggie Smalls and Erykah Badu to Sade, the members of Pink Floyd, Quincy Jones, Kali Uchis, Gucci Mane and Frank Ocean. She hopes the series will have about 22 paintings in total. Tobon describes this project as one of her most challenging efforts – it includes a variety of male artists and Tobon notes that she paints women more often than men – but also one of her most rewarding in trying to capture each artist’s “presence and essence.” Her goal is to release a new portrait every two weeks.

Another project currently in the works by Tobon is the launch of a website she is working on with a friend. It will encompass a wide variety of content including, but not limited to, art, writing, politics, philosophy and hopefully a platform to sell the artist’s work as well. She hopes to launch it by mid-summer.

Tobon is currently building an online platform where people can purchase her art, but for now you can contact her via email ([alejandrato8@icloud.com](mailto:alejandrato8@icloud.com)) if you are interested in purchasing a piece from her.



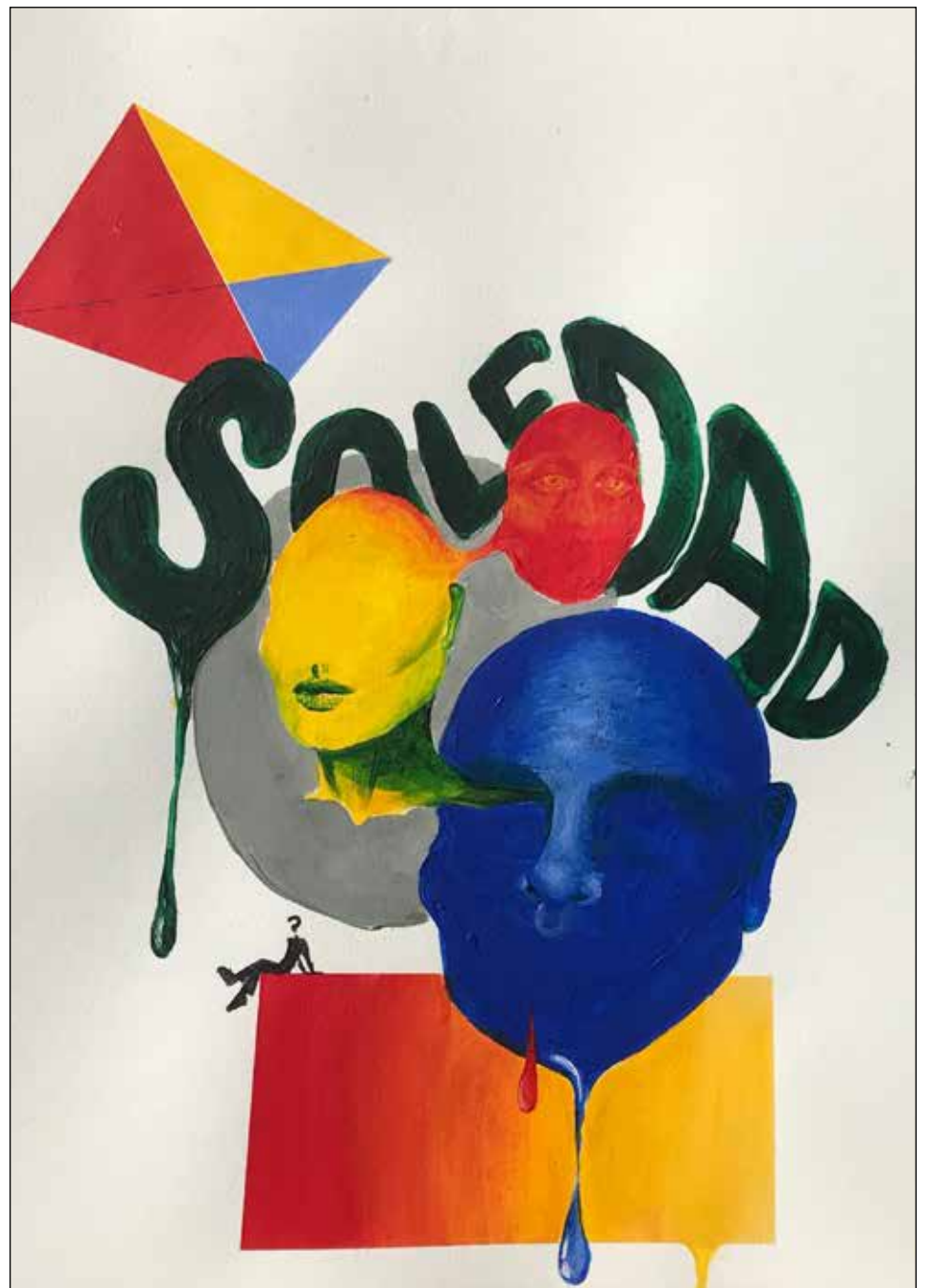
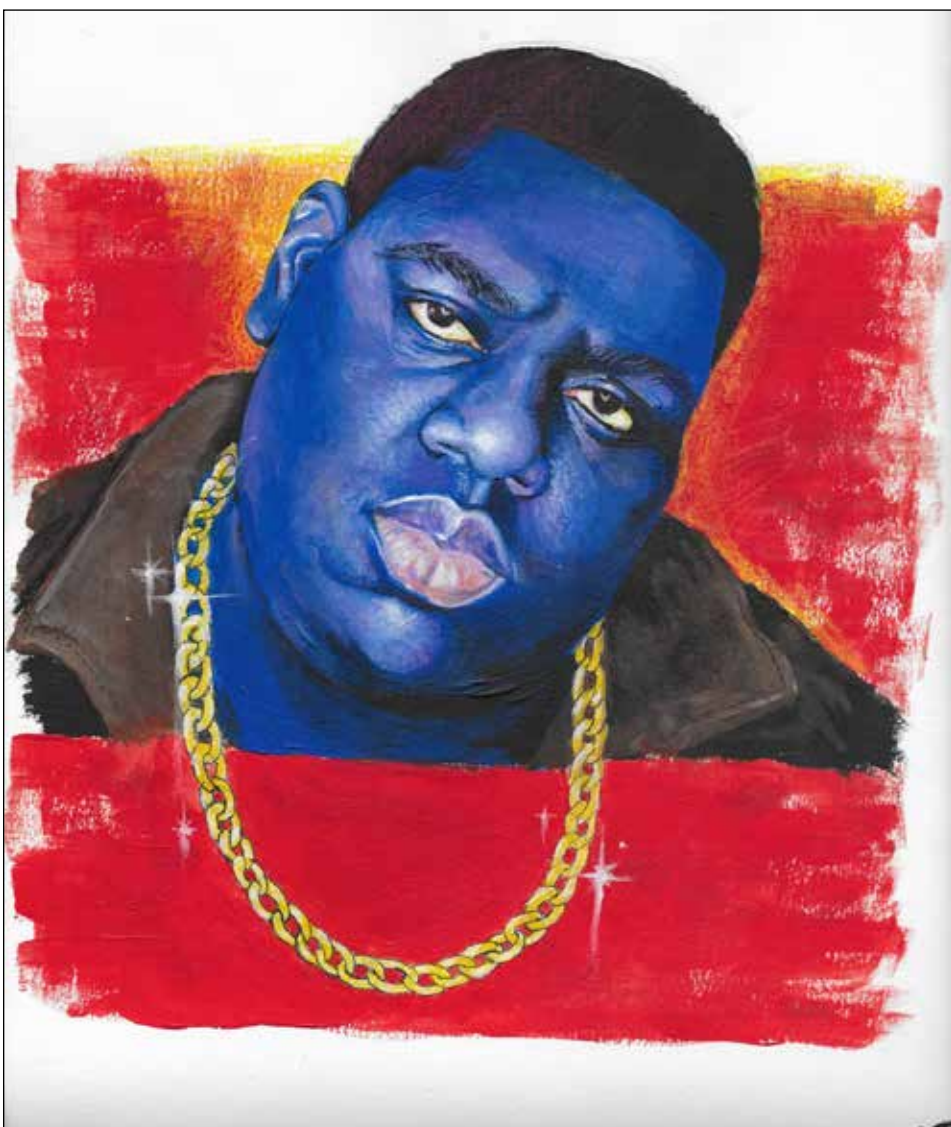
She also currently has prints available for \$10-\$20 depending on the size.

As far as what Tobon hopes the Lake Nona community takes from her work, she cites this: “I just want people to enjoy it aesthetically and interpret it how they see fit. There is no singular or correct interpretation.”

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



PHOTOS BY ALEJANDRA TOBON





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# Pigs Iron Out Pediatric Cancer

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS  
BY NICOLE LABOSCO

Each year, parents of over 15,000 children will hear the words, “Your child has cancer.” On average, about 43 children are diagnosed with cancer every day and the average age is six years old. Over 40,000 children undergo treatment for cancer each year, so a local motorcycle club is intervening.

On Saturday, April 21, the Iron Pigs Motorcycle Club set out to take down pediatric cancer. The Iron Pigs is a nonprofit motorcycle club for law-enforcement officers and firefighters. The club got its start with cancer fundraising back in 2013 when an Iron Pig brother received news that his sister had been diagnosed with brain cancer.

More than 100 motorcycle engines revved for the cause. The Iron Pigs rode from Nemours Children’s Hospital in the heart of Lake Nona to Ace Café in downtown Orlando as a fundraiser to help offset the medical costs and ensure kids receive the best medical treatment possible. This was their fifth annual drive against cancer. *Nonahood News* was one of several sponsors for the ride and was lucky to ride along.

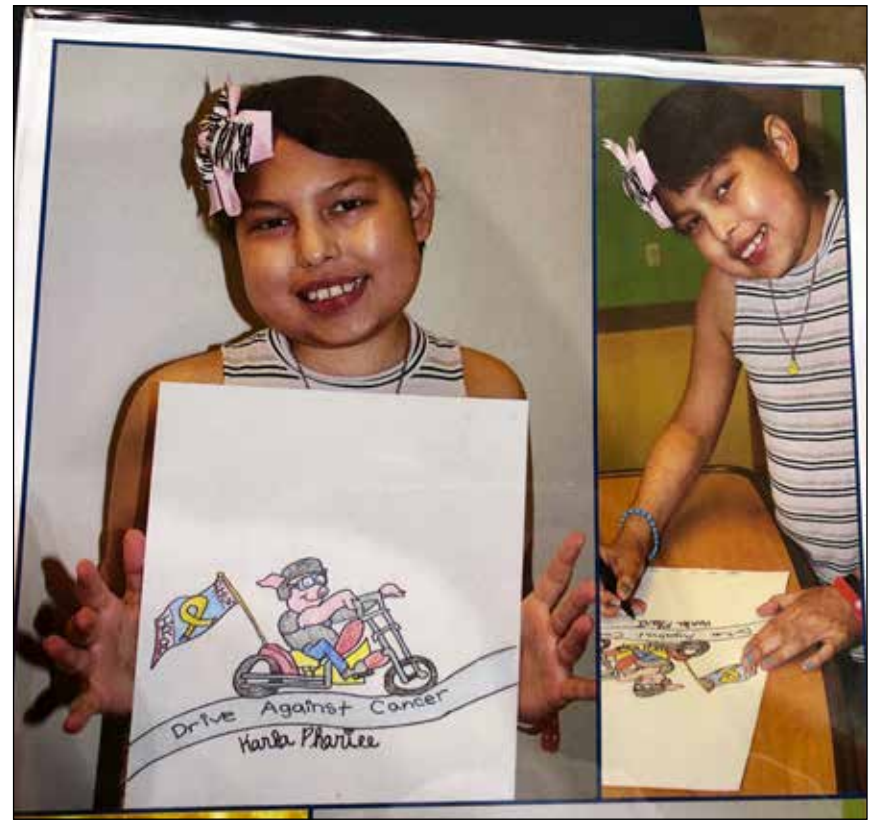
The ride began as the Pigs took over Lake Nona. We passed local “landmarks” such as the newly-opened DriveShack and made our way toward Narcoossee Road. Making our way through the scenic route, we ended up in St. Cloud and even Kissimmee before we came back down Boggy Creek Road and passed what will soon open as the Amazon Fulfillment Center. The Iron Pigs rallied as the flood gates opened and our sunny Florida turned into our spring rainstorms. Not a single rider hesitated. They were ready for this ride, and no amount of rain or inclement weather would stand in their way. The club’s website states, “These kids fight the battle day in and day out, rain or shine.”

Tons of bystanders watched as the Pigs rode by, cellphones in hand recording

video and all. Some waved, and others encouraged us to rev our engines. The Pigs happily obliged. It never ceases to amaze me at how motorcades bring people out of their homes and vehicles to a halt so that everyone can watch in awe.

After about two hours, the ride reached its destination at Ace Café Orlando. Riders mingled over food and drinks as the auction for several items commenced. The amount raised has yet to be determined, but there was a registration fee for each rider and passenger.

Anyone interested in donating can visit <http://nonahood.to/gofundme> and <http://nonahood.to/PayPal> to help the Iron Pigs meet their goal. You can also visit [www.ironpigsorlando.com](http://www.ironpigsorlando.com) for more information about the club.



# Amazon Donates to Future Through STEM

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS  
BY NICOLE LABOSCO



Everyone knows of Amazon, and by now, most of the Nonahood is well aware of the giant company staking ground right in our backyard. The massive 850,000-square-foot Amazon Fulfillment Center is scheduled to have its doors open just in time for the 2018 holiday season. The colossal building is located on Boggy Creek Road, just past the accompanying 417 exit. You

can’t miss it. The company will produce about 1,500 jobs in the community, according to Mike Bauer, Amazon’s assistant general manager.

Amazon obviously supports science, technology and engineering with its wide array of varying products, and the company wants to support and invest in our future as well. Amazon is investing in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) programs at local schools to ensure the children of today and tomorrow receive the very best hands-on education.

Osceola Science Charter School (OSCS) was selected by Amazon to receive \$10,000 worth of equipment to make a significant impact on education. A partnership with the super company can warrant just that. OSCS opened in August 2016 and had approximately 200 students. The school hopes to grow from its current 270 students to 500 students for the 2018 school year. OSCS is a tuition-free charter school with kindergarten

through grade four, eventually expanding to grade eight.

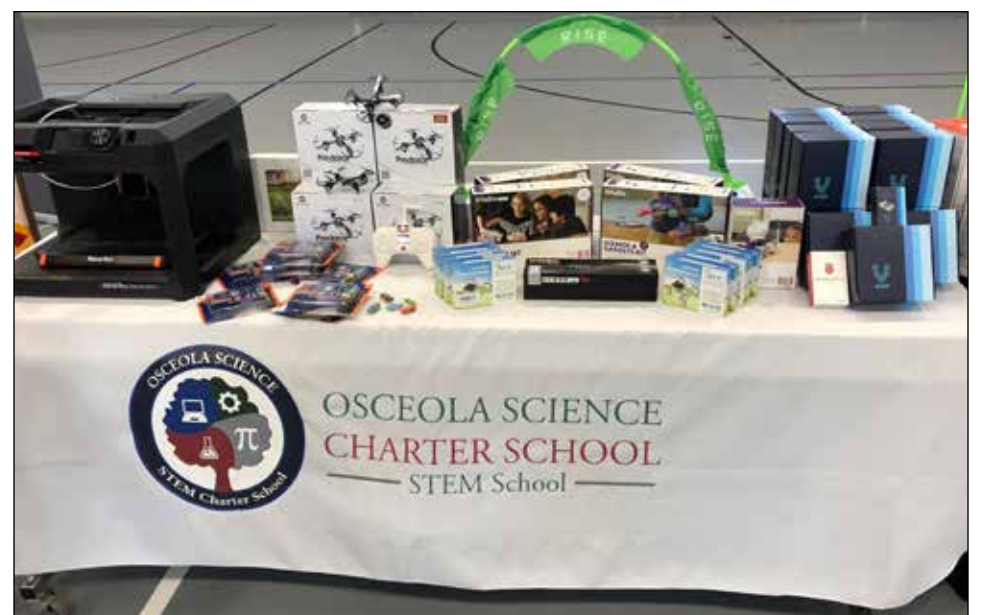
Bauer has been with Amazon for about 4½ years in the Florida sector and believes that these donations will help shape our future. “You are the innovators of tomorrow,” said Bauer to the elementary-aged students at OSCS. “We understand that the jobs of

tomorrow are going to require stronger STEM skills out there, to be successful out there, so we looked and saw where we could find a program that was encouraging that STEM hands-on learning, and we found the Osceola Science Charter School. [The school is] igniting those young minds on how to learn for that so they are the innovators of tomorrow.”

Murat Cetin, the principal of OSCS, is more than thrilled to introduce more exciting products to help his young students discover their interests and passions before the distractions like hormones and/or caring about what other people think begin to set in and influence their decisions. Most STEM programs focus on high school, then middle and then elementary. “It is my philosophy that elementary school is the most important time for students to be immersed in STEM subjects,”

said Principal Cetin. “In middle and high school, it can be difficult to pull students into the STEM field, as this period of life is full of distractions – but in elementary school, students have open minds and are able to latch onto new ideas quickly. We see this at Osceola Science Charter School all the time. Our students are eager and willing to try new concepts and engage with innovative technology.”

Around 75-80 percent of jobs are STEM related. NOW is the time to create change. NOW is the time to influence change. And who is a better influencer than THE company that completely changed the world of online shopping?





# Omnimodal Wins \$25K In Local Accelerator's Inaugural 'Shark Tank'-Style Pitch Event

BY VANESSA POULSON

Technology and the high-tech industry are launching new ideas from the present day into the future, and, rapidly, new ideas for means of innovation and growth are becoming a reality before our very eyes.

Rally: The Social Enterprise Accelerator recently awarded a \$25,000 investment to Omnimodal. Omnimodal, LLC (Omni) helps you empower your riders to make informed decisions about their commutes with high-quality, real-time data. The app helps users to schedule their transportation times, saving the users time and money by avoiding long commutes, missing trains or buses, or having to schedule sometimes expensive Ubers or Lyfts. This improvement helps create shorter wait times, makes connecting from one ride to the next easier, and makes long commutes less time consuming and stressful.

The company will use the funds toward its mission of making public transportation successful and streamlined, which can continue to be a reality for the company with this investment. "We are humbled to have been awarded this investment



PHOTO COURTESY OF EMILEY JONES PHOTOGRAPHY

money," said Nathan Selikoff, co-founder of Omnimodal. "There were seven other great social enterprises the judges could have chosen."

David Moran, co-founder of Omnimodal, added: "It's thrilling to have folks believe in our work to make transportation easy for everyone. This is our dream job, and real-time information is a critical tool for combating transit inequity." Omnimodal competed against seven other companies in the "Shark Tank"-style pitch event, where entrepreneurs of a variety of social companies were able to make their ideas heard with the possibility of being awarded the \$25,000 investment to forward their mission.

Other organizations present at the pitch event included:

The Mustard Seed of Central Florida – recycling mattresses and creating jobs

Outcome Funding – automating development coaching

Florida Abolitionist – equipping companies to stop human trafficking  
HEBNI (Health Empowerment through Behavioral and Nutritional Initiatives) – educating people to eat well

Snapgood – removing barriers in volunteering

Ecospears – decontaminating soil and waterways

Fleet Farming – disrupting food supply with local micro-farm plots

"This was a difficult decision because all of the entrepreneurs impressed us with their commitment to helping solve social issues while earning revenue," said Ben Hoyer, president and COO of Rally and founder of Downtown Credo, a donation-based coffee shop. "We're confident that this investment will advance Omnimodal's focus to enhance the quality, efficiency and reliability of public transportation."

Central Florida Foundation is the place for people who want to invest in their community. The foundation serves as the region's community foundation and is home to more than 400 charitable funds. The foundation manages and invests funds, offers personalized service and expert advice, connects caring people, businesses, governments and organizations to local initiatives that build and inspire community, and empowers them to make informed decisions that make a difference now and in the future.



# Thousands Gather at Lake Eola in Response to March For Our Lives Movement

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY BRITTANY BHULAI

An estimated 25,000 people showed up in support of the March For Our Lives event in downtown Orlando on March 24 that was hosted by Never Again UCF. The crowd gathered in a field next to Lake Eola, where a stage was set up. Guest speakers and singers kicked off the event as the swarm of supporters against gun violence waved posters and signs to heighten the spirit.

"We march to tell the world we refuse to be just another statistic...we stand with the students of MSD [Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School] because they are the voices of the future," said Pulse survivor Neema Bahrami. A speaker from Moms Demand Action, Adrienne Egolf, added to the point by saying that the movement will remind everyone that arming teachers would only make schools less safe and there needs to be an end to this once and for all. Congresswoman Val Demings from Florida's 10th district fueled the supporters even more by saying, "Today, march



until they hear you, march until they fear you, march until the massive bloodshed stops and until your safety is not for sale!"

Afterward, the crowd gathered in the streets near Lake Eola, where police helped section off the road and the march began. The crowd made their way past Senator Marco Rubio's office and ended at the Dr. Phillips Center lawn. The event lasted until around 4 p.m. as the crowd dissipated.

There was little appearance from NRA supporters as the majority who showed up protested for gun control. An activist, Lauren Licona, who drove from Sanford, was one among many students who came to aid Never Again UCF. Her poster posed the question "Am I Next?" in red ink. Around it, she wrote the names of people who have died in recent mass shootings such as Sandy Hook and Las Vegas. Licona says that even the people who do not believe in what eve-

ryone was marching for could find their life on the line next and to consider how random and frequent the shootings have been.

The lead organizer of Never Again UCF, Trevor Wild, says the march is just the start of things. "This is not ending when the march is ending. The march is just the beginning of this movement," states Wild.

To learn more about March For Our Lives, visit [marchforourlives.com](http://marchforourlives.com) or email [marchforourlivesucf@gmail.com](mailto:marchforourlivesucf@gmail.com).



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# Lake Nona's Connie Steinwart Celebrates Her 10-Year Anniversary With Concord Hospitality Enterprises

BY VANESSA POULSON

Connie Steinwart is dedicated to helping people in the hospitality and tourism industry. She spends each day as the director of sales at Concord Hospitality Enterprises working hard to ensure patrons from near and far feel welcome and comfortable throughout their stay in Lake Nona.

Steinwart is now celebrating her 10-year anniversary with Concord Hospitality Enterprises, and she couldn't be more excited. "I had a director of catering that I had worked with in the past that was employed



Connie Steinwart

by Concord. Concord was looking to fill a director of sales position for a Radisson hotel. She told me about the company and wanted me to interview," said Steinwart. "I got the job! I have been director of sales at Fairfield Inn and Suites and Hampton Inn for Concord prior to these two hotels."

Though one day she hopes to become an area director of sales and oversee more than two hotels, Steinwart is appreciative and affectionate when it comes to doing

the best she can at her job on a daily basis. She's excited to see Concord continue to pursue new partnerships and continue to go above and beyond to meet their expectations. Steinwart does not like saying no to patrons, and she credits the occasions where she cannot entirely accommodate a patron's wishes as the most frustrating aspect of her job. "I love working with people and building great friendships and business partnerships. I love that each day is different, and it is never boring," said Steinwart in an email interview. "I love being part of the planning process for groups and meetings and then seeing it all come to life."

Steinwart is a graduate of the University of South Carolina and has lived in the Lake Nona area for the past three years. She's been impressed by the rapid growth of Lake Nona in just the time that she has lived in the area. "New homes, new hotels, new dining locations, new schools, new parks, new shopping locations, new beauty services, new office buildings...it just continues to grow," said Steinwart.

To anyone looking to pursue a career in the tourism and hospitality industry, Steinwart offers this piece of advice: "I would suggest that they have a genuine passion to serve. This industry is demanding and very rewarding at the same time. The passion to serve and drive is something that can't be taught but is vital to being successful in hospitality," said Steinwart.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF CONNIE STEINWART



*Congratulations to Connie on her anniversary!*



# Drive Shack Update: The Grand Opening Has Arrived

BY BRITTANY BHULAI AND  
VANESSA POULSON

PHOTOS BY BRITTANY BHULAI

After a long anticipated wait, Drive Shack has finally opened in Lake Nona! As of Saturday, April 7, at 3 p.m., the business is officially open to the general public.

"The people are so warm and welcoming..." said Drive Shack CEO, Chuck Beyer, regarding the Lake Nona community in an email interview. "With the growth and the amazing people, we are loving what the future holds."

Drive Shack is the latest entertainment destination in Lake Nona, located in the Sports and Performance District at 7285 Corner Drive. Drive Shack is serving great food, cold drinks, and long drives at the three-story, indoor/outdoor all-weather golf-entertainment complex. The location also features a free play game lounge with classic games like shuffleboard, skee-ball and Pac-Man, a full-service restaurant and bar, an outdoor lounge, and three fully equipped meeting and event rooms for parties up to 1,000.

The driving range features a hitting bay where guests have access to golf clubs, unlimited golf balls, dual flat screens with TV on-demand, interactive games enabling guests to compete with other bays, and full-service, on-call food and drinks from the restaurant.

"We have 400 locals working with us now. We bring excitement and energy," said Beyer. "Focusing on hospitality will lead to the locals' go-to place for entertainment."

Drive Shack's signature technology includes new proprietary games like Shackjack, where guests can aim at playing cards that appear over each hole while trying to build a hand of 21 without busting. Or save the Drive Shack Princess by destroying all of the monsters on the range during a rousing game of Monster Hunt. Guests can also take on real courses – like Teton Pines and Linfield National – as if they're actually there, using Drive Shack's virtual technology.

For those less practiced in golfing, clinics for those looking to improve their swing

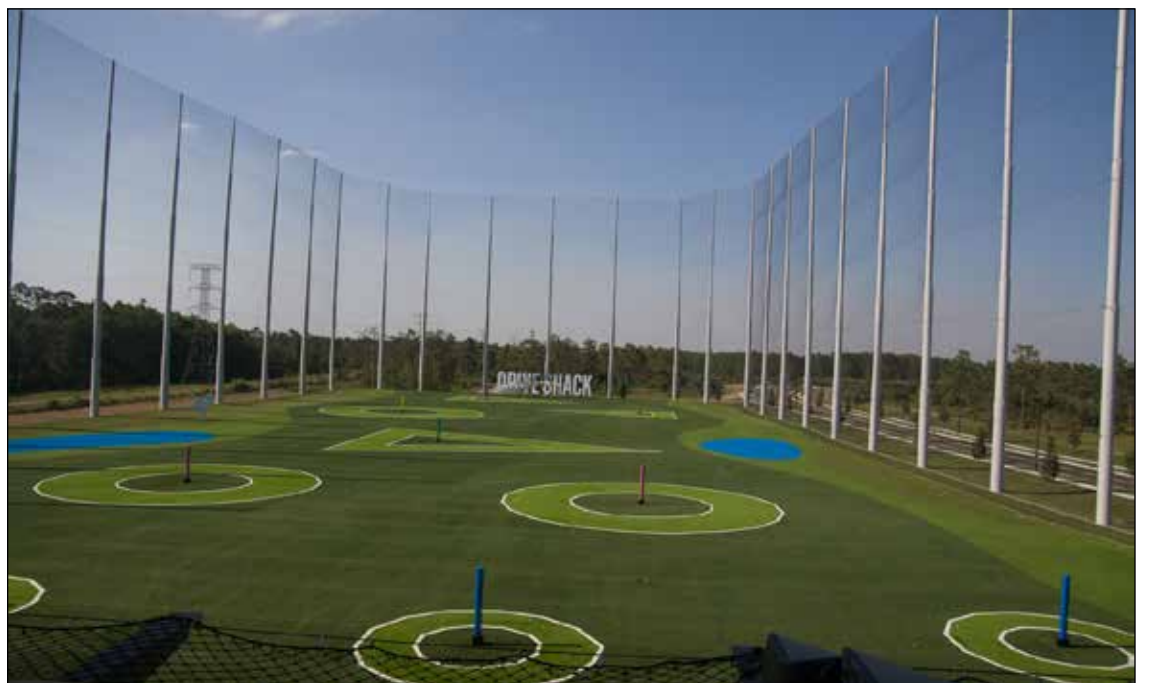
will begin in April and will be available to players at all skill levels, including individuals and groups, beginner clinics, juniors just starting out or wanting to enhance their skills, and parent-child classes.

The Drive Shack grand opening that happened on April 24 was amazing. I walked up to the massive building and as soon as I entered the doors, I was absolutely awed. The staff is very helpful as are their restaurant servers. The huge golf course that all of the bays lead out to brings the whole picture together. There are 90 bays and each bay offers the same five games that you can access through a monitor. I played Monster Hunt. My swing was not as sharp as I had liked it to be since my only experience is in putt putt golf. However, an instructor was happy to assist me. I was shown how to correctly hold the club. In Monster Hunt, you hit the ball in a certain area so I do not recommend that for beginners. The game you'll likely want to gravitate towards is Shackjack. With this activity, you can score points regardless of where the ball lands on the course.

As for the food, it was beyond my expectations. They laid out a very nice presentation for guests showcasing select items from their menu. I tried a spinach quiche along with their all classic beef slider. Both of these sparked my tastebuds for more.

Their terrace on the third floor looks great for parties and gatherings. It also has a bar placed next to it. This area leads to an arcade room where you can play Pac-Man games or shoot some baskets in hoops.

Overall, it seems like a great place to lean back in the lawn chair, kick your feet up, and crack open a beer. There is something for everybody whether you're a child or a grown adult. You won't be disappointed. So, if you're looking for a fun weeknight or weekend activity for you and your family, or looking to book a party or team building event, take a swing on Drive Shack.





## USTA Programs Inspire Love Through Experiences For All

BY DANIEL PYSER

The USTA National Campus has established itself as a place for people of all ages and abilities to play the sport of tennis. Courts are filled with a variety of participants, ranging from young beginners who are picking up a racquet for the first time to lifelong competitive players, not to mention the American pros who train on the same courts at Lake Nona.

There are also a number of programs designed for other players that offer some of the most rewarding moments of tennis at the USTA National Campus.

One of the earlier and most successful alternative tennis programs at the campus is the veterans' clinic. Started in partnership with Lake Nona's VA Hospital, the clinic grew from a few sparse participants in a pilot program to a weekly mainstay that has been extended indefinitely.

A number of veterans, some suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, have expressed that tennis has given them an outlet not previously available to them, as well as provided them with camaraderie as they bond with other former servicemen and women.

Some of the original and most dedicated of the program's participants were invited to last year's US Open to take part in the tournament's annual Military Appreciation Day, where they had an opportunity to play on the famed Arthur Ashe Stadium court.

The USTA National Campus is home to the USTA's wheelchair tennis department, made up of coaches and staff who oversee wheelchair tennis across the country. The top American wheelchair athletes often train at the campus, and a number of wheelchair events have been held in Orlando, notably an International Tennis Federation (ITF) World Team Cup qualifying tournament earlier this year.

Thus, the campus began hosting a free wheelchair tennis clinic for local players, led by the same coaching staff that works with the elite athletes. The weekly clinic has seen a growth in participants, and a number of events at the campus, including USTA Pro Circuit tournaments and College MatchDay events, have incorporated a wheelchair clinic into their schedules.

While the veterans and wheelchair clinics are run by USTA staff, there are two other inspirational alternative tennis programs run by outside organizations that the USTA National Campus has welcomed to the courts at Lake Nona.

Buddy Up Tennis came to the USTA National Campus last fall and has hosted a number of weekend clinics staffed by USTA National Campus employees and volunteers. Buddy Up is a high-energy, adaptive tennis and fitness program for children and young adults with Down syndrome. It is designed to give participants the opportunity to learn the sport of tennis and engage in fitness activities in an enjoyable and supportive environment.

More recently, the USTA National Campus has partnered with ACEing Autism, and weekly tennis clinics are set to be hosted throughout the spring. ACEing Autism's mission is to connect children with autism through unique tennis programs and to develop and advance proven methods to positively impact the children, families and communities we serve.

All of these programs truly embody the mission of the USTA National Campus of "inspiring a love for American tennis by creating memorable experiences for everyone."



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# Things To Consider When Living With Hip Pain

BY OBINNA ADIGWEME, MD



Dr. Obinna Adigweme, MD

If you are experiencing hip pain that is affecting your daily life, it is important to know that you don't have to live with the pain and that there are treatment options that can help you stay mobile and pain free.

There are many conditions that can lead to hip pain. Where you are experiencing pain is the biggest clue to what is going on. Problems with the joint itself tend to exhibit pain on the inside of your hip or in your groin area. Pain on the outside of the hip usually points to problems with soft tissue.

The majority of hip pain in adults age 65+ is the result of osteoarthritis – or the wearing down of cartilage in the joint. Pain in the groin and front of the thigh are the most common symptoms of hip arthritis, usually felt when walking or twisting.

## Receiving a Diagnosis

In order for your doctor to properly diagnose your hip pain, you must make note of a few things:

- A description of your hip pain, including whether you are experienc-

ing tenderness, swelling, aching or a burning sensation.

- A log of when the pain started and how long it has persisted.
- A note of when the pain feels better or worse along with what activities or movements aggravate the hip.

After assessing your symptoms, your doctor will be able to conduct a thorough exam, including an X-ray, to properly diagnose your hip pain and help you make a treatment decision.

## Treatment Options for Hip Pain

Hip pain due to arthritis can be treated with conservative measures like rest, activity modification, and weight loss. Anti-inflammatory medicines, such as ibuprofen and naproxen, can help to relieve hip pain. Steroid injections can also help to reduce inflammation for a short period of time.

These conservative methods of treatment will help relieve the pain but will not reverse the damage already done by arthritis. If you still experience pain, your doctor might recommend surgery.

Depending on your diagnosis, you might be a good candidate for hip replacement surgery. When pain is constant and arthritis is more advanced, hip replacement surgery can help to dramatically improve a patient's quality of life. Today, over 200,000 total hip replacements are performed each year, and this number is projected to increase as we continue to remain active and live longer. A hip replacement consists of removing damaged cartilage from the hip socket as well as the ball at the upper end of the thigh bone and replacing it with prosthetics. This surgery is called a total hip replacement. There are several variations to how this procedure is performed; however, the results are consistently excellent. Today's artificial hips can last for decades, so there is a good chance you might

never need surgery again.

## Recovering From Hip Surgery

If you do decide that hip replacement surgery is for you, you might wonder about the recovery process. In general, the healthier you are, the faster your rehabilitation and recovery are likely to be. Patients are able to place full weight on their new hip immediately after surgery. Physical therapy can assist with gait training and strengthening exercises. Most patients can walk normally, without a cane, four to six weeks after surgery. Once you are fully recovered, you will be able to enjoy your life pain-free and enjoy the activities you love.

If you are experiencing hip pain, talk to a hip specialist about your case and treatment options. Maintaining your mobility is so important to your long-term health. Addressing and treating your pain now can improve your quality of life and help you have a more active lifestyle.

*Dr. Obinna Adigweme is an orthopedic surgeon specialized in the surgical and non-surgical treatment of hip and knee pain. Learn more at [ucfhealth.com](http://ucfhealth.com).*



# What You Should Know Before Getting Pregnant

BY DR. ASHLEY HILL, MD



Dr. Ashley Hill, MD

– and you can hardly wait to get started on the road to pregnancy. But is your body as prepared as it should be? Here are a few things to consider if you're thinking about getting pregnant in the near future.

## Schedule a Pre-Conception Checkup

Pregnancy is a big job for your body. We always advise getting a pre-conception checkup to review important aspects of your health and make sure there are no barriers to a safe and healthy pregnancy ahead of time. Among other things, this is a chance for your doctor to go over your current medications and make sure you aren't taking anything that could be harmful to a baby – for example, anti-seizure medications or certain anti-hypertensives. Your doctor can also help you with the following important factors:

## Check Your BMI

Understanding the innumerable health benefits for mom and baby, we work

with our patients to manage any weight problems and get their body mass index (BMI) as close to normal as possible. Your BMI is an indication of the amount of body fat based on measurements of your weight and height. For adults, a normal BMI is between 18.5 and 24.9. This not only ensures that your body is in the best shape possible for what's ahead but also can help boost your fertility if you were previously underweight and lessen your risk of a premature delivery or stillbirth if you were previously overweight.

## Get Your Blood Sugar and Blood Pressure Under Control

If you are diabetic or hypertensive, or both, it is very important to work with your doctor to fine-tune your management of these conditions prior to becoming pregnant. Controlling your diabetes can help prevent birth defects, while managing your blood pressure helps ensure that your baby can receive the right amount of oxygen and nutrients and reduces the risk of preeclampsia, a potentially fatal condition for mother and baby.

## Reduce Stress

Most importantly, relax! The better you take care of yourself, the better you'll feel going forward. Prepare healthy meals, exercise regularly, and get proper sleep. There's plenty of time to make important decisions, and no need to rush things. If you're experiencing unusual anxiety, let your doctor know because usually we can help!

*Ashley Hill, MD, is medical director of Loch Haven OB/GYN, an academic practice managed by Florida Hospital Medical Group with offices in Orlando, Oviedo and Winter Garden. For more information or to book an appointment, visit [LochHavenOBGYN.com](http://LochHavenOBGYN.com) or call (407) 303-1444.*





# Camp Gladiator Trainer Talk: Resistance Training

**DON'T WAIT – PICK UP THE WEIGHTS AND STOP STRESSING ABOUT YOUR WEIGHT!**

BY VERNICE SALVERON-GASPER

*Resistance training has so many benefits, including improving function, changing body composition and increasing one's metabolism. Resistance training through all primary movement patterns should be completed regularly to reduce the effects of aging and ensure we maintain a healthy body.*

From birth until approximately the age of 30, muscles of the human body naturally grow larger and stronger, thus increasing functional performance over time. Unfortunately, after the golden ages (post-30 years of age), the body begins to naturally decline and lose muscle mass (atrophy), thus impacting our function and body composition. This has been linked to the reduction of hormones produced by the body as we age and is known as "age-related sarcopenia."

The impact of muscle reduction has huge implications to our health and quality of life, such as decreased strength, mobility, slower metabolism, less independence and reduced physical competence. Sadly, there is no easy way to reverse the aging process, however, one very significant way of reducing the physical symptoms of aging is...yes, you guessed it...exercise! More specifically, resistance training.

Resistance or weight training is a very important mode of exercise that should be incorporated in everybody's daily routine. Resistance training is a process where weight is used and gradually increased during exercise to facilitate muscle development. This does not mean lifting extremely heavy weight but simply putting the muscles under some challenging yet manageable stress. This allows physiological adaptations to occur whereby muscle fibers become stronger.

At face value, cardiovascular training (running, rowing and biking) might be more appealing, as minute for minute more calories can be burned during one single exercise session. However, resistance training has proven to have many more ongoing benefits post-exercise. Evidence has shown that weight training increases your metabolism for up to two to three days post-exercise. This means that you are burning more calories at rest, and over time, with consistent resistance training, your metabolism permanently increases. Often, when individuals commence resistance training, their weight on the standard scale might increase initially. However, they will notice that their clothes begin to fit better and the body's shape begins to positively change. This is called a shift in body composition (fat decreasing and muscle increasing) as the body starts to develop muscle tone. Hello biceps, shoulders and abs!

Having strong, lean muscle will help with strength, movement and mobility and ultimately improve the way we are able to interact with our world. For example, carrying shopping bags with ease, being able to independently reach for items on the top shelf and sit down on the floor to play with our children and/or grandchildren. In addition, research has shown that resistance training improves tendon and ligament tensile strength and increases bone mineral density. Resistance training has endless benefits, however, it should always be executed with strict form.

There are seven primary functional movements that should be incorporated in any whole-body resistance regimen. These are push, pull, squat, bend/extend, lunge, rotation and gait. Exercising through these movements will ensure that your body is functioning the way it is designed to do. Neglecting some of these movements can over time lead to movement imbalances that might give rise to chronic injuries and negative movement patterns.

The American Heart Association recommends a **minimum** of 150 minutes of moderate exercise per week. For those not familiar with exercising, it is recommended that a personal trainer or fitness savvy workout buddy is utilized to ensure that correct technique is being executed. Exercises continually completed the wrong way can introduce injuries. Do not be afraid or discouraged if you feel muscle soreness after your initial workouts as this is

a usual occurrence referred to as DOMS (delayed onset muscle soreness). This should ease after a few days and occur less with consistent resistance-based exercises.

The following workout is designed to hit most of the major muscle groups and the seven primary movements. Please note that as you fatigue, it is common that form is compromised, and therefore it is recommended that you revert to an easier exercise or rest rather than completing an exercise with poor technique.

If you are unsure of any exercise, do some research or better yet, stop by a Lake Nona Camp Gladiator workout; we would LOVE to have you!

## EXAMPLE OF A 30-MINUTE HOME BASED WORKOUT

### WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

- Mat
- Dumbbells
- Water bottle
- Music

### WARM UP - 3 ROUNDS

- 5 x Superman stretches
- 5 x Inch worms
- 20 x Butt kicks
- 20 x High knees

### WORKOUT

#### Round 1 As many rounds in 5 minutes

- 10 x Dumbbell squat press
- 10 x Push-ups or dumbbell chest press
- 10 x Bent over row
- 10 x Jumping Jacks

#### Round 2 As many rounds in 5 minutes

- 10 x Reverse lunge with dumbbell bicep curl
- 10 x Tricep dumbbell overhead extension
- 20 x Russian twists with dumbbell

Vernice Salveron CPT, Partner Trainer can be reached at (321) 947-9948 or [vernicesalveron@campgladiator.com](mailto:vernicesalveron@campgladiator.com). Like Camp Gladiator on Facebook and Follow @campGladiator on Instagram for exclusive offers, fitness tips, pictures, events, camp updates, and more! Visit the website at [campgladiator.com](http://campgladiator.com).

### Locations & Times:

Lake Nona Family Dentistry – Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 5:15 a.m.

Spring of Life United Methodist Church – Tuesday, Thursday 5:45 p.m.

Moss Park Elementary School – Monday, Wednesday 6:30 p.m.



Cassandra Lawless and Vernice Salveron-Gasper at Canvas Restaurant and Market, Lake Nona - Photographer Jim Uhing



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## Florida Technical College Opens Registration for Baking and Pasteleria Program in Spanish

*Making a splash in Central Florida's vibrant bakery scene no longer has to be just a dream for Spanish speakers.*

BY JEANNETTE RIVERA-LYLES

cost control.

Florida Technical College Kissimmee campus is also a Regional Chef Training Facility for the *Chaîne des Rôtisseurs*, the world's oldest gastronomic society founded in Paris in 1248. FTC is one of a handful of schools in the United States to currently hold the coveted designation, which will enable students and food preparation professionals to learn from nationally and internationally recognized chefs. At the same time, the campus is the headquarters of the American Culinary Federation Central Florida Chapter.

For additional information on the Baking and Pasteleria Spanish program and to register, visit [ftccolleges.com/programs/artes-culinarias.php](http://ftccolleges.com/programs/artes-culinarias.php) or call (407) 783-5700.

FTC recently merged with Puerto Rico-based National University College (NUC), which was previously a sister institution owned by the same parent company. In addition to FTC, NUC brought these four other learning institutions under its umbrella: The Digital Animation & Visual Effects (DAVE) School and Lasalle Computer Learning Center in Florida, as well as Instituto de Banca y Comercio and Ponce Paramedical College on the island.



Staying true to its commitment to serve Central Florida's growing Hispanic community, Florida Technical College recently announced that registration is open for a fully-taught-in-Spanish Baking and Pasteleria program at its Kissimmee campus.

Accredited by the largest and most important professional organization of chefs and cooks in the nation, the American Culinary Federation Education Foundation (ACFEF), the program is now in its third edition. The 13-month-long program combines classroom training, hands-on kitchen experience and an externship at a commercial bakery.

"This program makes it possible for students to move forward with their academic goals while they are in the process of mastering English," said Florida Technical College president, Dr. James Burkett. "By offering training in Spanish, we help an important segment of our community to develop a competitive edge to become gainfully employed in the local labor market."

Central Florida recently saw a larger-than-usual influx of Puerto Ricans moving to the mainland after Hurricane Maria swept through the island with Category 5 force.

"I encourage Spanish speakers in Central Florida to take advantage of this opportunity," said Wilmarie Rivera, Baking and Pasteleria lead instructor. "If you have a passion for baking, this program is the right fit for you. It covers the creative side of the industry as well as the business side of it, for a well-rounded approach to a promising career track."

Some of the subjects covered in the program are nutrition and sanitation, baking techniques, facility and menu planning, and

*National University College (NUC) is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, (267) 284-5000.*

*NUC's Florida Technical College (FTC), The Digital Animation & Visual Effects School (The DAVE School), and LaSalle Computer Learning Center (LCLC) are included in this accreditation. The Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) is a regional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.*



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# SCHOOL UPDATES

## SUN BLAZE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

BY TODD PERKINS



We had four students represent Sun Blaze at the Math Olympics competition for our learning community. To qualify for the district level, a team of two students had to be the top-scoring team in at least one of four categories: Fluency, Math Tasks, Math Models, or the Math Design Challenge. Sun Blaze participated in the Math Task category, and our two teams placed first and second. We are very excited that these students have the opportunity to represent Sun Blaze at the District Level Math Olympics on Friday, May 18, at Mid-Florida Technical College. Congratulations to Bella, Bethany, Colin, and Tristan!

Our PTA hosted an amazing school carnival on Friday, April 13. Everyone had a wonderful time; the students really enjoyed the chance to dunk Mr. Davis and Ms. Turner in the dunk tank. There was a dance performance by our staff, great rides and games, and the food was delicious. We would like to thank our PTA for the hard work and countless hours they gave.

With the 2017-2018 school year almost finished, we want to thank our staff, students and families for the outstanding year we are having. Our STEAM initiative has been a huge success this year, and we have seen tremendous growth academically. I would also like to thank the Lake Nona community and specifically our Partners in Education who have given us so much support this year: Kendrick Team at Keller Williams, John Madison Landscape Inc., Christopher Baker Team at Keller Williams, Domino's Pizza of Lake Nona, M&M Premiere Servicing, Pig Floyd's, Benjamin Mihalik of Nations Lending, Five Guys Burgers and Fries, Carlyle Orthodontics, Buffalo Wild Wings, and Mathnasium of Lake Nona.

Please continue to follow our social media links so you can 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 our new Twitter account, [SunBlazeElem](https://twitter.com/SunBlazeElem).

Go, Stingrays!



## EAGLE CREEK ELEMENTARY

### Girls On the Run

BY KATELYN F. NEWCOMB

Girls on the Run (GOTR) completed their practice 5K on April 5 and competed in an actual 5K race at the University of Central Florida on April 28. They are also planning a community impact project to give back to the Lake Nona community. We are so proud of the GOTR team and all of their accomplishments. -Coach Boger, Lewitt, Newcomb, and White.



### ECE Panther Chorus News

BY DARLENE B. GRANDE



Eagle Creek Elementary Panther Chorus and ECE Fine Arts would like to say "Happy Trails" to Ms. Liz Rosbury, our music assistant and assistant director of *Little Mermaid*. Thank you for two years of bringing your amazing creativity, imagination and positivity to ECE Fine Arts. We will miss you!

You can see our performance of *Disney's Little Mermaid Junior* on May 16 and May 17 at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$5.



Liz Rosbury, assistant director

## NORTHLAKE PARK COMMUNITY SCHOOL

BY SALLY SHUMAN

### April Is Autism Awareness Month – Light It Up Blue

April 2 was World Autism Day. This is a global initiative that kicks off Autism Awareness Month. NorthLake Park teachers and staff wore blue in support of autism and to bring awareness, understanding and acceptance. Staff members continued to wear blue every Friday as a sign of support to "Light It Up Blue" throughout the month of April. In honor of this day, many landmarks, sporting venues, bridges, retail stores, and hotels were among the thousands of buildings that were lit blue on April 2.



### Jump Rope for Heart

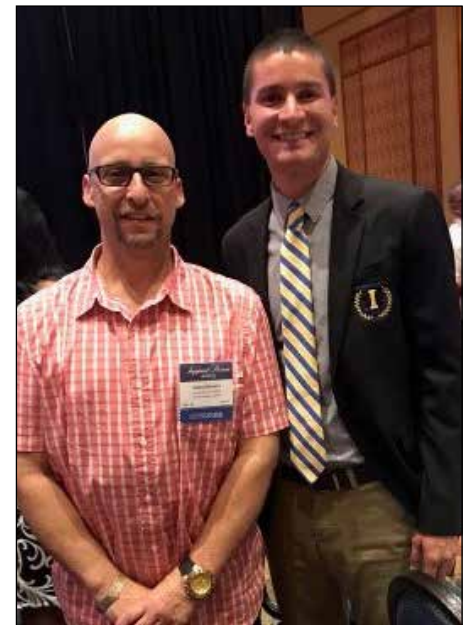
During the month of February, students participated in Jump Rope for Heart during their Physical Education class time, which raised money for the American Heart Association. Their mission is to build healthier lives, free of cardiovascular diseases and stroke. As a school, we raised \$10,568! The class that raised the most money earned a pizza party. The top three fundraisers will get to throw a pie at Principal Parker later this spring.

### Sunshine State Books Voting

Students in third through fifth grades, who read three or more of this year's Sunshine State Books, got to participate in voting for their favorite book. Orange County elections partnered with the school and created an electronic ballot that students were able to log into to cast their e-vote. Orange County elections also supplied voting cards and voting stickers. There were 116 students who participated and submitted a vote. Our votes will be submitted to Florida Association in Media Education (FAME), where they will be added to the other votes throughout Florida. The state winner was to be announced at the end of April. The new list of Sunshine State books will be out by the end of the school year, just in time for summer reading!

## INNOVATION MIDDLE SCHOOL

BY CHRIS CLARK



Jesus Marrero (left) and Dr. Maestre (right)

As we head into the final weeks of school, there are many things happening at Innovation Middle School.

The drama department will present its first spring musical on May 10, 11 and 12 at 7 p.m. Tickets for *Suessical the Musical* are now on sale at [teachtix.com/ims](http://teachtix.com/ims). Tickets are \$10 each, with VIP tickets (preferred seating) available for \$15.

Track meets continue on most Wednesdays with the last meet taking place on May 2 against Lake Nona Middle School. It's a home meet that begins with girls competition at 5 p.m., followed by the boys.

Our 8th graders are getting ready to blast off to high school. To that end, they will culminate their middle school years with some fun. They will attend 8th Grade Grad-Venture at Universal Studios on May 4 and enjoy a Field Day on May 30 after they "snake" out of the school for the last time.

We are very proud of our award-winning leadership team! Earlier this year, our principal, Dr. Maestre, was recognized by the Orange County School Counselor Association and was given the award for Middle School Administrator of the Year. He was nominated by Innovation Middle School counseling department, administrators, teachers, parents, students, and support staff. It is an unusual honor to have the principal in a new school recognized with this prestigious honor. Another member of our team was also recognized this year by OCPS. One of our custodians, Jesus Marrero, was honored by OCPS as the Support Person of the Year. Congratulations and thank you to both! We love our admin and support teams. It's great to see them recognized by others outside of school!

The PTSA will host the final meeting of this school year on May 8. They will hold elections for next year's board of directors, so all incoming 6th graders and their parents are encouraged to attend. The meeting will be at 7 p.m. in the IMS Media Center.

Thanks to the community for your amazing support as we conclude year one at Innovation Middle School!





# SCHOOL UPDATES

## LAUREATE PARK ELEMENTARY

BY SUZANNE WORKUM,  
PRINCIPAL

Our students have been involved in some fun and creative ways to learn! In March, the kindergarten classes kicked off an author study with Margret Rey by comparing and contrasting the adventures of Curious George. One of the activities was reading and mapping the story *Curious George Makes Pancakes*. At the end of the day, they made a connection using a real life experience of having a pancake snack.



Our second-grade students enjoyed reading the story *Flat Stanley: His Original Adventure*. They created a Flat Stanley and sent out a letter asking a friend or family member to take him on an adventure. The students received quite the response. The second-grade Flat Stanleys traveled around the U.S. and experienced playing in the snow from the Nor'easters to visiting the Miami Seaquarium. One Flat Stanley was even on QVC! Several Flat Stanleys have traveled outside the country, too. Visits to Milan, London, and St. Croix are just a few of the locations. We received a video from Flat Stanley's visit to QVC, postcards, a snow globe, scrapbooks, photos, and other souvenirs. As we receive each package, the students are plotting each location on world and USA maps.

Our first field day was an epic success! An enormous thank you to all of our AD-Ditions volunteers and to Coach Renuart and Coach Hernandez for putting together a well-organized event! The theme was the Olympics, with each class representing a different country around the world.

In February, Laureate Park Elementary National Elementary Honor Society started collecting money for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society through their Pennies for Patients program. Our students really stepped up and brought in their change to donate. On behalf of National Elementary Honor Society, we are humbled that Laureate Park Elementary was able to raise over \$2,000 to donate to the Central Florida Chapter of the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Thank you to all the students, teachers and parents who helped make this event possible to give back to our community in such a meaningful way!

At the end of the third nine weeks, LPE celebrated readers. Mrs. Furio, the media specialist, had a dance party for all the students who reached their AR goal for the third quarter: over 450 students from kindergarten through fifth grade! Those students danced and enjoyed treats in the cafeteria. We are super excited to have students who love to read and hope to have more eager readers at the last AR party this year.



## LAKE NONA HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE

BY DANY OLIVEIRA, JUNIOR

Troupe 7434 finally had their first week-end of performances for the spring musical *Aida*! This timeless love story, by Tim Rice and Elton John, has something for everyone to enjoy, from action and adventure to romance and comedy. We had two fantastic casts of students.



## Lake Nona High School Wind Ensemble Earns 'Superior' at State

BY MONICA C. LEIMER



For the first time in the school's history, the Lake Nona High School Wind Ensemble earned a "Superior" rating at the Florida Bandmasters Association (FBA) State Concert Music Performance Assessment (MPA). The band performed for a panel of three adjudicators on April 25 at Flagler Palm Coast High School. The adjudication panel consisted of college band directors from all across the United States.

In order to qualify for the State MPA, bands must first earn an overall Superior rating at the District level MPA. This year, both of Lake Nona High School's concert bands (Wind Ensemble and Symphonic Band) earned a Superior rating at their District MPA, which was also a first for the LNHS Band program, but only the Wind Ensemble performed at State this year.

High school bands throughout Florida perform at their District MPA at the beginning of March where they are rated by a panel of three certified adjudicators. The FBA rating scale consists of five ratings – Superior (highest), Excellent, Good, Fair, and Poor (lowest). Of the 645 high school bands that performed at District MPA's this year, only 244 (38%) qualified for State by receiving an overall Superior rating. Of the 16 high school bands from Orange County Public Schools (OCPS) that performed at State this year, six received Superior, four received Excellent, and six received Good.

To prepare for State and District MPA, the Lake Nona High School Wind Ensemble rehearsed after school on Wednesdays as well as in class daily. They had several guest clinicians attend rehearsals to provide feedback and suggestions, including the Director of Bands at Stetson University. The students worked very hard and continually rose to the high standards being set for them.

The band performed three selections of music: "The White Rose March" by John Philip Sousa, "Rhosymedre" by Ralph Vaughan Williams, and "Rhapsodic Celebration" by Robert Sheldon. Videos of the State MPA performance are posted on the Lake Nona High School Band Facebook Page for anyone who would like to listen.

The judges had many positive comments for the band, including:

*"Excellent literature choices! Many displays of technical brilliance and excitement. I enjoyed your performance! Superior teaching!"*

*"Nice work. Good general execution of the music with regards to the spirit and drive. Good overall feel."*

*"Very expressive and controlled performance. There is a poignancy about this work that you seemed to really capture. Good job!"*

*"Good spirit. The technical demands are tremendous. What was clear was the spirit in which you went after the music. The integrity and meaning was well-preserved and delivered. Very refreshing!"*

As reported in a recent *Nonahood News* article, the Lake Nona High School Wind Ensemble has been invited to perform at Carnegie Hall in New York City next year. If you are interested in contributing to the scholarship fund for this trip, please contact Ms. Leimer, Band Director, at [monica.leimer@ocps.net](mailto:monica.leimer@ocps.net).







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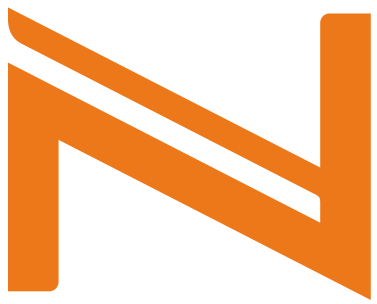
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MAY 2018 Volume 3 | Issue 4

entertainment

# LAKE NONA LOCAL ALYSSA RAGHU CHASES HER DREAMS ON AMERICAN IDOL

PAGE E-17

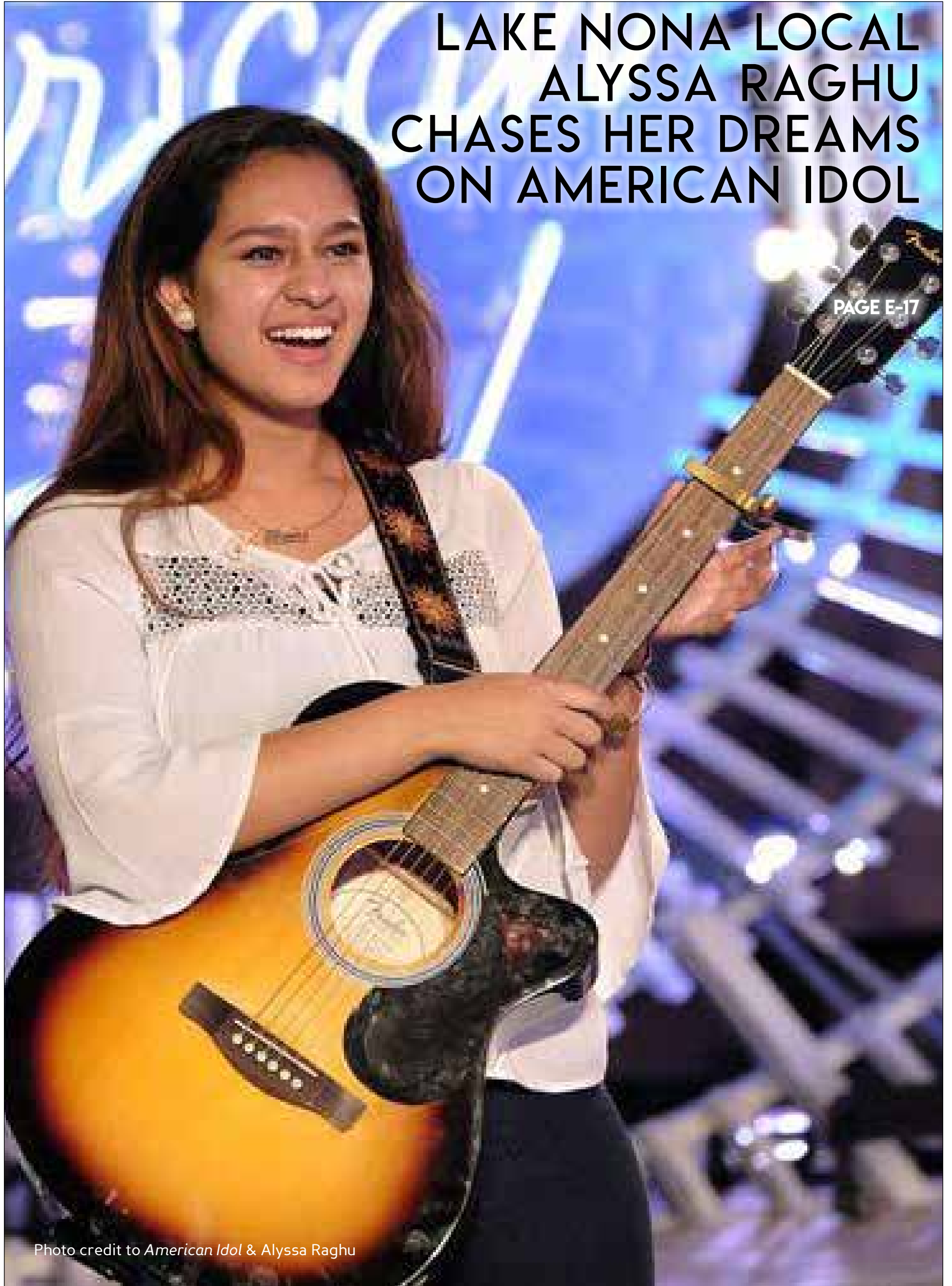


Photo credit to *American Idol* & Alyssa Raghu



## Family Fridays: A Day at The Orlando Museum of Art

ARTICLE AND PHOTO BY  
VANESSA POULSON

As summer rapidly approaches, the need to find relatively inexpensive but still fun and engaging day trips for couples and families is becoming more urgent. The Florida summer heat frequently makes being outside quite unbearable, and often the only way to combat the heat and escape the crowds of tourists is to find indoor and local activities that only those native to the Orlando area would know about.

Luckily, there are a couple of options on the table for those looking to find something fun to do that isn't too far from Lake Nona, including the Orlando Museum of Art, a personal favorite of mine. First, the museum is very inexpensive, especially for Florida residents. The entry fee for adults is just \$15, and for college students with ID and kids ages 4-17, the cost is just \$5. Children under four get in free.

The museum has art that will appeal to the young and old, including a variety of interactive exhibits that are sure to keep children entertained. The art featured in the museum comes from all across the state of Florida, the United States, and sometimes even the world. The museum offers a variety of "Art Encounters" for kids that allow them to explore their own artistic interests and create projects of their own. Other activities for the young

ones include Kids Yoga and Spring Art Camp. Adults and teenagers are sure to enjoy their time at the museum as well. Teens and adults are both welcomed to sketch in the galleries, creating art inspired by the pieces in the museum, and teens are offered the opportunity to build their personal portfolios through Teen Studio sessions.

Not only are the exhibits insightful and powerful, they also offer some wonderful opportunities to take pictures and interact with the art pieces, surely offering some wonderful photos for Facebook or Instagram. Recent exhibits have included collections related to Seminole Arts and Culture, sets of sculpture and paintings from across the globe, as well as works from the ancient Americas.

Each time I visit the museum, I am overwhelmed by the blessing it is to have such a powerful museum that showcases stunning works so close to us in the Orlando area. It is one thing to see a piece of art and recognize the talent and ability of the artist, but it's another thing entirely to see that art and learn something powerful and exceptional from the piece. The Orlando Museum of Art does just that.



## 5Kers Get Piggy With It

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS  
BY NICOLE LABOSCO



Racers, on your mark. Get set. Eat donuts? Anyone have room for more than 4,000 glazed and sprinkled delicacies in the

middle of a 3.1-mile run? Well, get ready to PIG out!

All 1,700 racers (1,400 5K runners and 300 Lil' Oinkers) were adorned with pig snouts in support of The B.A.C.O.N. Foundation (The Big Awesome Charity of Nona). All proceeds from the race were donated to the Nemours Children's Hospital "Child Life" Program and Camp Boggy Creek. The "Child Life" Program at Nemours assists patients and their families with coping with medical diagnosis, treatment and hospitalization through prep, play, self-expression and education. Camp Boggy Creek is a special place for children with chronic and/or life-threatening conditions to enjoy a camp experience, all while being in a safe and medically sound environment.

The Ate-th Annual Pig Run 5K took place on March 31 and was yet another sold-out community event. I arrived not really knowing what to expect as this was my first Pig Run, but I was not disappointed. It was immediately apparent that the ENTIRE community came out in support, whether they were running in the race or not. I ran into some teachers from when I was a Lake Nona High School student, and I reunited with some of my old friends and their parents. This was the epitome of an event that brings people together.

Only in Lake Nona will an event based on running bring everyone together. After all, Lake Nona is known for its healthy-living lifestyle. I was a "Surprised Swine," as I



told Rhys Lynn to surprise me with how many donuts I'd have to eat. I immediately regretted giving him that leverage. I had no idea there was actually a category for that, and I wouldn't find out how many donuts I'd be scarfing down until the Pig Pen.



It was time for the race to begin, and I swore I was just going to walk this one. I had just returned from a trip out of the country, and I was exhausted. Everyone took off, and all of a sudden, I just couldn't resist. I began running and next thing I know, I ran all the way to the Pig Pen. I was tired, but nowhere near as exhausted as I usually would be, you know...since I'm not a runner. I can thank the altitude from my vacation. My body hadn't readjusted to

normal yet, and I was feeling good. Then I saw the half-a-dozen donuts I had to eat. (Thanks, Rhys.) I instantly knew I wasn't going to eat all of them by myself. So much for being healthy, even if it was only for less than an hour. I ate one and hunted down Rhys to force him to eat one. Two down, four more to go. I decided to just run the second half of the race with the box of donuts in hand.

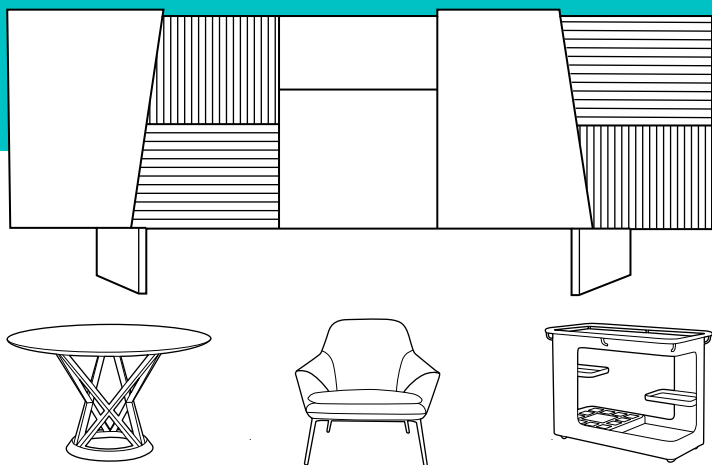
The latter half of the 5K went super quick. I never saw the mile two and mile three signs, but the next thing I knew, I was approaching the last turn to reach the final stretch leading to the finish line. I sprinted.

The Ate-th Annual Pig Run raised more than \$48,000. If you've yet to attend or even witness a Pig Run, be sure to make time for the 2019 race. It's a family-friendly 5K that is sure to allow everyone to embrace and unleash their inner pigs. DONUT lose your stride.



Photo by Renee Friedel

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# Wild Florida Paint Night Out

ARTICLE BY NICOLE LABOSCO  
PHOTOS BY NICOLE LABOSCO  
AND ELAINE VAIL

Here I am, making the journey with Elaine to Wild Florida, about a 40-minute drive from the heart of Lake Nona, to attend the first ever Wild Paint Night Out! We arrive to a sold-out event and meet our model, Aerie. Aerie is a 19- to 20-year-old sloth, and she was just hanging on to her handler like a child. Sloths can live to be around 30 years old. Aerie was enjoying an ear of corn, and she had kernels all over her face. I lost it.

Seeing a sloth that close up was sort-of strange. They're almost alien-like and seem like such a foreign creature with their perfectly round eyes and slow movements. We were encouraged to take a "slothie" with her (a selfie with a sloth), and I thought that would be easy. For a slow-moving sloth, she moved pretty quickly and was blurry in almost every shot I took. Her handler joked with me, "You gotta be quicker than the sloth!"

Elaine and I laughed a little too hard at that comment. Some barbecue food was served as well as fried brownies, and participants who were of age received a ticket for an alcoholic beverage. We moved inside and entered a room filled with paint brushes and blank canvases. It was time to get painting!

Aerie was placed on her mobile tree limb to model, and off we went becoming artists. The first step was to trace a cut-out of Aerie and then paint the background. Things were going smoothly so far. Then we had to paint leaves, and this is where I spiraled out of control. I watched Elaine take off with her perfect banana leaves, and I ended up painting over mine and moving on, leafless.

Aerie ended up falling asleep in the corner, so she was taken out of the room and back to her area. The painting continued until

Elaine and I realized we were the only people left painting. Call us perfectionists.

In the end, Elaine's painting prevailed with her cleaner background and smoother sloth fur. I joked that mine looked like a little kid painted it, but some kids there did better than I did! This event was an absolute joy and is definitely family-friendly, with the occasional breaks the group would take from painting to do raffles and play quick little games to keep everyone entertained.

Since the event was such a hit for the inaugural paint night, Wild Florida has already scheduled their second "Wild Paint Night Out" for May 11, this time with a gator twist. Tickets can be purchased for the one-night-only event with their albino alligators, Blizzard and Snowflake, for \$49.99 per person at [www.wildfloridairboats.com](http://www.wildfloridairboats.com).



## N

## FOOD & DRINKS

### Say Cheese!

BY NICOLE LABOSCO

*The Spanish say queso.*

*The French say fromage.*

*I say cheese and more of it, please!*

*This special feature follows a cheese-driven girl on her journey to try all of the sweet, creamy, sharp, stinky and spicy cheeses the world is lucky to devour. I'm the friend who is constantly tagged in those cheese memes on Facebook about drowning in grated cheese when the waiter/waitress asks you to "say when." In queso emergency, just say cheese!*

According to the USDA, Americans eat over 30 pounds of cheese a year. I've got to eat double that, at least! And 11½ pounds of that is mozzarella, which has beat out cheddar for the second year in a row for being the most popular cheese in the United States.

I love cheese, and I'm Italian, therefore I love a good mozzarella. When you think of mozzarella cheese, what's the first type of food that comes to mind that incorporates it? Probably the staple appetizer of mozzarella sticks that tons of people love to do a classic cheese pull with (when you break apart two halves and pull, with the cheese stretching, but not breaking).

There's also string cheese that usually can be found in children's lunchboxes or as a quick little snack. I refuse to listen to anyone who tells me I'm too old for string cheese.



Maybe you think of the prepared bag of shredded mozzarella that you might sprinkle onto pizza, salads or any other meal you wish. I think of fresh buffalo mozzarella paired with basil and sliced tomatoes, creating a perfectly paired caprese salad. This is an easy dish to make yourself. The only other ingredients I recommend adding to the trio is balsamic vinegar, which will add to the flavor and bring out some tanginess with the sharp notes of a sweeter vinegar and a sprinkle of sea salt directly on top of the mozzarella to enhance the flavor of the thicker cheese.

Caprese is on the lighter side, so you won't feel stuffed or have regrets about overeating (unless you're like me and have trouble putting the cheese down).

I'm pretty much always thinking of cheese and will find any excuse to eat it. I consider it an essential item, and it's definitely a comfort food.

How do you get a mouse to smile? SAY CHEESE!

*Is this article too cheesy? DEFINITELY. Send me your favorite cheese meme or joke to [nicole@nonahoodnews.com](mailto:nicole@nonahoodnews.com) and let me know your thoughts on your favorite cheese-filled meals! Is anybody else hungry all of a sudden?*



# Medalla Light, Puerto Rico's Award-Winning Beer, Arrives in Lake Nona

BY JEANETTE RIVERA-LYLES

Medalla Light, Puerto Rico's top-selling light beer brand, arrived in Florida this month ready to reconnect with its many fans in the Puerto Rican community while making new ones among beer lovers from all backgrounds. Award-winning Cervecera de Puerto Rico, which has crafted Medalla Light for 80 years, teamed up with Orlando-based Titan Products of Puerto Rico for wide distribution of the product in Florida. Titan's portfolio has more than 60 Puerto Rican brands, including Titan, La Aguadillana, Sofrito Montero, Marvel, Serranito, Indulac and Lotus juices.

"This is something many Puerto Ricans in the diaspora have been yearning for," said Grace Marie Valdés, president of Cervecera de Puerto Rico. "For them, Medalla

is more than just a beer, it is a flavorful connection to their beloved island that brings back memories of beach outings with family and friends. It is an honor to bring to them the brewing tradition my family began eight decades ago."

Medalla Light is available at 60 Walmart stores, including Lake Nona's, Sam's Club, Sedano's Supermarkets, and Winn-Dixie stores across Central Florida. It can also be found in selected establishments in South Florida and Jacksonville.

"Medalla Light is iconic," said Rafael Juliá, Titan Products of Puerto Rico's director of sales and marketing. "It is probably the one Puerto Rican product that *boricuas* in Florida have missed and yearned for the most. It is an honor and a great achievement to incorporate Medalla Light to our expansive portfolio."

Jorge Bracero, Cervecera de Puerto Rico's chief marketing officer, said the company has gone through great lengths to make sure flavor, freshness and quality remain intact in the importation process. "This is the same Medalla Light we enjoy in the island," Bracero said. "Same taste, same refreshing qualities. We are also making it affordable to all so that our customers can buy it in Florida for a price similar to what they pay for it in Puerto Rico rather than paying imported beer prices."

Medalla Light is available in 10-ounce six-



# Katie's Cucina: Mini Blueberry Yogurt Muffins

BY KATIE JASIEWICZ,  
KATIESCUCINA.COM

We are officially in the peak of Florida blueberry season! Each year, I've taken my son to go blueberry picking. It all started because he didn't like blueberries, and I was determined to get him to like them. So I found a local patch (A Patch of Blue off Colonial Road), and I took him blueberry picking when he was just two years old. Sure enough, my plan worked. He instantly was enamored by picking the plump blueberries off the bush, which then got him hooked on the fruit of the season.

There is something about seeing where your food is grown and then watching the process of getting it to the table that makes you respect it that much more. This is our third year going blueberry picking, and this year we've been a few times. Now that he's older, he fully understands what to do, and at times he yields just as many blueberries if not more than me! In my defense, I have a toddler strapped to me. Every time I pick a blueberry, she is asking for "more." One for her and one for the bucket as we make our way down each row of bushes. Of course, I have my son to thank because she is watching everything he does, and she wants to pick and eat blueberries just like him. Instead of two peas in a pod, I now have two berries in a bush!

I chose to share with my fellow neighbors my recipe for mini blueberry yogurt muffins for two reasons: blueberries are in season, but also I get to attend my very first "muffins with mom" this month. In honor of my first (of hopefully many) "muffins with mom," that's why we are talking muffins this month. Whether you are celebrating mom with a brunch or just simply want a delicious "on-the-go" breakfast, this recipe is for you. Making the "mini" version does take a little more time to fill, so if that's not your thing or you don't have a mini muffin pan, you can make larger muffins. You'll just need to adjust your bake time to 20-25 minutes or until the muffins are cooked through. I like the minis because my kids can eat them and not waste a whole muffin. If picking blueberries isn't your thing, head over to one of our many farmers' markets, pick up a few pints and make these delicious blueberry yogurt muffins.



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can packs and 12-packs and has 98 calories, three carbohydrates, and 4.2% alcohol per volume. It is best known for its golden color, premium ingredients and clean, refined taste. The beer pairs well with a wide variety of cuisines or as a standalone light adult beverage. Moreover, Medalla Light has won multiple global awards in major beer competitions, including Monde Selection in Brussels, the North American Beer Awards and the Australian Interna-

tional Beer Awards.

Cervecera de Puerto Rico is a family-owned business founded in 1937 in Mayaguez, on Puerto Rico's western coast. The company also owns Malta India, a non-alcoholic malt-based soft drink very popular in the Caribbean and readily available in Florida.

## MINI BLUEBERRY YOGURT MUFFINS

Yield: **36**

Prep time: **15 min.** | Cook time: **15 min.** | Total time: **30 min.**

### Ingredients:

- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup organic whole milk vanilla yogurt
- 3 tablespoons canola oil
- 2 tablespoons whole milk
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 cup fresh blueberries

### Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. In a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, combine the egg, yogurt, oil and milk. Mix on medium speed for 30 seconds until combined. Then add in the flour, sugar, salt, baking powder and baking soda. Mix for 1 minute until all the ingredients are combined (the batter will be thick). Using a spatula, fold in blueberries.
3. Place muffin wrappers in a mini muffin tray. Then, use a small scoop and fill each cup with batter. Bake for 15-17 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 5 minutes before removing from muffin pan to a wire rack.





# Back to Basics: Presenting Ultraviolet Purple

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS  
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, we're celebrating the Color of the Year: Ultraviolet Purple! This cool hue is not only becoming more prominent in high fashion but also in some great food and drink options in and around Lake Nona!

**Order:** Taro Boba and Blueberry Coconut Boba, Taro Cake

**Place:** Chibi's Boba

**Final Review Nicole:** So, naturally, I had to add coconut into my boba because I just can't resist. This would be the first time I've tried a blueberry boba tea, and I was not disappointed! The subtle sweetness of the blueberry combined with the tropical hints of coconut really transported me into the year of Ultraviolet...oh, wait, we're already there! I tried a bit of Van's taro boba and wasn't a fan, but it definitely tasted like Froot Loops milk, which is why I wasn't a fan. The taro cake was much better than the taro boba, and it was a nice snack, just like a pound cake but purple!

**Final Review Vanessa:** Taro boba has been my go-to boba flavor for the past two years. Though the flavor of the tea is definitely an acquired taste (think about the milk left in your cereal bowl after you eat Froot Loops), it has never steered me wrong as far as boba goes. I love the sweetness of the boba, and, of course, THE BRIGHT PURPLE COLOR! What's not to love about a drink that is worth putting on Instagram?

The Blueberry Coconut Boba will definitely appeal more to those of you who are less interested in Froot Loops and are looking for more of a sweet and refreshing drink for the hot Florida summers. Every sip of the drink was both delightfully sweet and tangy, and I really enjoyed it

**Taste:** 7/10

**Aesthetic:** 10/10

**Environment:** 9/10

**Price:** 7/10

**Proximity to Nonahood:** 8/10



Taro Cake



Taro Boba

**Order:** Revival Smoothie

**Place:** Canvas Market

**Final Review Nicole:** This smoothie consisted of plain Greek yogurt, blueberries, raspberries, strawberries, blackberries, banana and protein powder. There seemed to be some inconsistencies in how they were made because mine tasted MUCH better than Van's.

**Final Review Vanessa:** Overall, I didn't really like this smoothie. I'm not a huge fan of protein powder, and that flavor is never very pleasant to me, which is what ruined a lot of the appeal of this shake. The fruit in the drink was lovely, and I did like being able to know exactly what ingredients were in the smoothie. If I ordered it again, I would definitely swap out the protein powder for peanut butter, even if that might subdue the purple coloring a bit.

**Taste:** 6.5/10

**Aesthetic:** 10/10

**Environment:** 6/10

**Price:** 5/10

**Proximity to Nonahood:** 10/10



Revival Smoothie



Taro Cake and Blueberry Coconut Boba

**Order:** Starbucks

**Place:** The Purple Drink

**Final Review Nicole:** The purple drink



The Purple Drink

think the purple color is as ultraviolet as I would've liked it to be. I wish it had been a tad less sugary and a bit more fruity, as I think that would have improved my overall opinion of it.

**Taste:** 5/10

**Aesthetic:** 10/10

**Environment:** 6/10

**Price:** 8/10

**Proximity to Nonahood:** 10/10

Nicole here! Throughout this month, I learned I stand no chance against Ultraviolet Purple. In honor of the Pantone Color of the Year, I'd like to bid a farewell to my first vehicle, a 2007 Dodge Charger, which conveniently enough, is "Plum Crazy" Purple! (Notice the background of the photo of me leaning against my car.) So goodbye, Kevin...yes, his name is Kevin and I'm not ashamed. It's been one memorable heck of a ride...a decade long ride which I wish was never-ending. Aw geez, I'm having all of the feels right about now... (End sob story).

Next month, we'll embrace the summer heat (unfortunately, at least for Nicole) and cool down with all things boba! Yippee!

isn't bad, but it's not my favorite. It's subtly sweet, but in my opinion, nowhere near as good as the pink drink or the ombre pink drink.

**Final Review Vanessa:** Not a huge fan of this drink, either! (I'm striking out here!) It's far too sweet for me to drink on a daily basis (I'm much more of a black coffee fan), and I don't



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## Mindfulness Through a Lens

BY: ODETTA VACCARO

If you ever even peek at social media, I can almost guarantee you saw a flood of black and white photos take over your feed a few months ago. “Share seven days of black and white photos of your life,” the challenge said. No explanations, no words. Now, while I am not one to participate in challenges, I am so grateful I decided to take this one on. While spending too much time on social media can definitely be counterproductive and detract from our ability to stay mindful, this particular challenge sent by a dear friend came at just the right time. Little did I know how much consciously taking photos would help bring me to everyday mindfulness.

In its essence, isn't photography about capturing the moment? As photographer Marc Riboud once said, “Taking pictures is savoring life intensely, every hundredth of a second.” At its core, this is also the heart of a mindfulness practice. It is about anchoring ourselves in the present moment.

The black and white photography challenge forced me to SEE. It challenged me to actually LOOK at what is in front of me, to notice. When I was observing, trying to find my next picture, I was not judging or analyzing. I was simply finding joy in remaining fully present to what was in front

of me and then capturing the moment in one simple photo. The challenge was a beautiful exercise in mindfulness.

With a little research, I found that the multiple benefits that photography can bring to your mindfulness practice are increasingly being studied and used as a resource. In fact, new workshops and courses using photography to explore mindfulness are popping up more and more across the nation, both for adults and children.

The greatest photographers give up their expectations, desires and goals to focus simply on capturing what they view through their lens. Like them, we can devote ourselves to fully savor the experience of seeing. Through being open to just witnessing the moment and the subject of our photos, we expand our awareness. If we are willing to give up our need to “create” or stage a photo, and rather stand in amazement, we actively open up to the flow of life. We're not looking for anything specific or trying to control an outcome, a situation. Rather, we are open to experience what meets us on our path, and we allow endless possibilities.

By switching my attention to watching, truly observ-

ing, what was around me no matter where I was, I found myself becoming more welcoming, receptive and curious. Things that were “ordinary” or mundane became new, interesting and fascinating not because the objects changed but because my way of looking at them did.

This can be our mindful relationship with life, beyond this challenge, beyond pho-

tography. The black and white photography challenge became an eye-opener. It gave me a new way to look at life every day. So, thank you, Stephanie – not just for my lovely collection of photos, but for the reminder to SEE.



PHOTO BY DARIANA PEREZ

## Nona Heroes: Lieutenant Colonel Michele Cooke

ARTICLE BY NICOLE LABOSCO

*In this recurring special feature, Nona-hood 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 is currently serving and has been for over 25 years. Meet Michele Cooke.

“[At] 17, I joined a local unit while in high school. I received a scholarship to Georgia Military College, where I completed my Associate's and earned my commission as an army officer. My family was strong in military service: Navy, Marines, Air Force and Army. I decided to follow their legacy. I'm the only daughter that has joined the military.”

Cooke has lived in the Lake Nona area for less than a year and has been based all around: Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Louisiana, Texas and North Carolina. She's in Army logistics and started off as a transportation officer for a waterborne unit in Tampa. Cooke is now a Lieutenant Colonel and has been for over 20 years.

“Every officer rank and promotion [is] based upon a structure, meaning there are three zones – below the zone, in the zone or after the zone. Most promotions to make the next rank [are] five years, depending on reserve or active duty the pace is faster. For a typical reservist, below the zone means you can be promoted a year prior to the actual zone – if the next zone is 2019, and you have met all the requirements, then you can submit your packet for promotion to the next rank. Thank-

fully, I've been a below the zone, aka 'BZ,' for each zone.”

What is LTC Cooke up to nowadays?

“I'm the Mobilization Branch Chief for over 9,500 soldiers and over 85 units in eight states. My team and I prepare the units' readiness and all mobilization requirements prior to leaving their home base and reporting to the mobilization station. We also provide assistance to the units returning from deployment.”

Some of the best memories Cooke has had are while she's in command. “I love leading troops! Also, every deployment is memorable for the cohesion and experience. I've been deployed four times – 48 months in total on foreign soil.”

“The military is not just a job, it's an adventure. I knew this was what I wanted to do when I was a teenager. I'm living the dream, taking care of soldiers, preparing them professionally and personally for their next chapter and always being there for my soldiers.”

*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).*



PHOTOS BY MICHELE COOKE





# NonaVentures: Paragliding in Colombia

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY NICOLE LABOSCO

*We all have that one friend who is a die-hard adrenaline junkie who loves to discover their next greatest adventure. That friend is me...*

*This feature is all about uncovering Lake Nona and Orlando's greatest activities, especially if you enjoy living life on the edge!*

It was Sunday, March 25, and Andrew and I were on a new continent. We were in Colombia, South America, for our friends' wedding. We made the trek from the city to the mountains and headed to Sopó, where we soon would be making the leap (off a mountain) and gliding through the air. This month, NonaVentures took me paragliding in South America.

In the journey up to the mountains, fresh scents of eucalyptus and rose filled the air. The aroma was invigorating. Rolling hills and valleys were covered in nothing but grass and trees, with the occasional house built into the side of a hill. Winding roads snaked through small towns gradually passing cows, horses, stray dogs and alpacas. We were on a bus and I was sipping *Limonada de Coco* (Coconut Limeade), which, to my pleasure, is a signature drink all throughout Colombia. The fresh air at an altitude of 10,055 feet above sea level really was revitalizing.

The countryside was breathtaking, and I was finally beginning to realize I'm in South America. Luckily for us, we had to take the backroads that led to these scenic views. Sundays in Colombia are considered exercise days, and some streets are closed as the locals break out their bikes and hit the roads. Boy, do the locals take advantage of this. It looked like a marathon.

The bus ride up the mountain was more terrifying than the actual paragliding. The incline was too steep, and I thought for sure the bus engine was going to give out and we'd be rolling backwards to our imminent deaths. Maybe the ride was a good prep for what was to come, although I wasn't worried about the paragliding. That's my kind of fun.

We made it to *Parapente Paraiso en Sopó*, and the anticipation was growing. Upon arrival, the winds weren't strong enough for us to fly, but fortunately they picked up (although it took about an hour and a half). We watched as, one by one, people jumped off and took flight. It was my turn, and I couldn't have been readier. I met my pilot, Juan Sebastian, as he harnessed me up. He told me he's been a paragliding pilot for 12 years and was an airplane pilot before that. I envied his current job immediately.

I was suited up and ready to take flight. GoPro in hand, the wind filled our chute and after a quick few steps, I was flying. I almost lost a shoe on takeoff, but other than that, it was su-

per peaceful with breathtaking views from a new perspective: soaring among the clouds with the birds. My adrenaline was pumping, and I was on a natural high. I could stay up there and float all day. I seriously think I found my new calling...if only Florida had mountains. I glided through the blue skies with my pilot for about 20 minutes before landing right back where we took flight. I was surprised at how easy the landing was, landing straight up on my feet.

So, there you have it, I soared over the countryside of Colombia, South America, via paragliding and reignited my love for the sky. It's a sense of adventure that comes with peace and serenity, all while bringing you out of your comfort zone. Paragliding is something so calming to me, and it's a totally new way of taking in the views. Quite honestly, I prefer it from up there.

Have a suggestion? Send an email to [nicole@nonahood-news.com](mailto:nicole@nonahood-news.com) or fill out our NonaVentures column form at <http://nonahood.to/nonaventure>. What do you want to see me review next?



PHOTO BY ANDREW BEVERLY



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# Nona Motors Ride of the Month: Kody Carnahan's Toyota Celica GT

BY BRITTANY BHULAI

**Make:** Toyota  
**Model:** Celica  
**Year:** 1994  
**Horsepower:** 110  
**Current Mileage:** 229,000

## Background:

Her name is "Cecelia," and she's turquoise pearl, according to car owner Kody Carnahan.

After totaling his 1991 Camry back in February 2017, Carnahan was left without a car for about five months. A woman had hit another vehicle on Narcoossee, stopping her in front of a green light. Driving from far away, Carnahan did not realize the vehicle was not moving. As soon as he realized what had happened, he hit the brakes but ended up slamming right into the lady's car. Luckily, he was always a fan of cars and had been keeping a few under "saved" on Facebook Marketplace. He was scrolling through his list when he laid eyes on a gem that he had long forgotten. It was none other than the 1994 Celica, and this "Cecelia" was born. Well, to be accurate, not born exactly yet. He had to buy it from the owner first before he could call it his. The price was \$3,000, which was about \$1,000 over his budget. However, he was able to snatch it for \$2,300 after negotiating with the seller. Carnahan finally landed himself a new set of wheels.

One of the first things that ignited his thrill for cars was rally racing. He would take his former Camry mudding and currently takes his Cecelia mudding as well. Carnahan says he wants to make this car look as close to a rally car as possible.

## Mods:

"It was pretty boring looking when I got it," he said. The wheels were not up to his taste, and a few tweaks had to be made before he was satisfied. He purchased some gold Scion tC rims, but it did not look up to par with the red Sparco mud flaps that he added on. So, he painted them white. Some of the interior pieces as well were painted white. The color scheme he's going for is a white and teal look. Other alterations he's done have been installing a new radio, a new valve cover, under-the-dash LEDs and LED brake lights.

## Future Mods:

A drawback for Carnahan is that his car is an automatic. By the end of this year, he would like to do a manual swap. He would also fancy Work Emotion wheels and roof racks. Whatever it takes, the end look has to be autocross. Halo eyes in the headlights and the angry eyes cover over the headlights are on the list as well. The spoiler will be lifted with a spoiler riser modeled after the GT-Four along with a GT-Four front bumper and hood. Under-the-hood mods would be an open air intake, a turbo and a GReddy racing exhaust for the sound.

In the future, Carnahan sees himself driving an AE86 Corolla. He definitely loves the pop-up headlights. With a smirk, he adds, "It's just so much character in a car." He pauses and thinks back to his current car and ends with saying, "I can't explain it, but I love my car."

To submit your car for a possible feature, email pics and basic info such as make, year and model to [brittany@nonahoodnews.com](mailto:brittany@nonahoodnews.com).



PHOTOS BY KODY CARNAHAN



# In the Garden: April Showers Bring May Flowers

BY AMBER HARMON

Well, it's a good thing that April showers bring May flowers! The weather in March and April has been a ping-pong game, bouncing back and forth between winter and spring. Finally, in May, spring is in full bloom. Our plants, however, are about a month behind normal for the season as far as growth and bloom. When the weather has unseasonable changes, it causes the plants to go into a state of stress where growth, flowering and production all slow down. For vegetable plants it can also reduce the plant production for the season.

Bulbs are a good choice for May flowering plants in our region. These include lilies, amaryllis, begonias, caladiums, rain lilies and more. The reason bulbous plants grow well here is because they have a large root system that exists underground. Therefore, when it gets very hot, the main support and structure of the plant is not affected by the heat as it is safely tucked away underground in the cooler soil. Neat trick, bulbs!

Be careful when shopping for annuals. It is important to understand how much sunlight a certain variety of plant will require and accommodate those needs. By definition, annuals will live for one year. However, in Florida, it is important to know that many cool-season, hardy annuals will expire at the end of a season. This is due to the very hot weather conditions in Central Florida. The opposite can also happen to warm-season annuals, where it's a heat-tolerant plant that is very tender and affected by the cold. These annuals will be damaged by a frost or freeze and likely die.

Many herbs are delicate and do not do well

in full sun even in the springtime. Here are some herbs that will grow well now and some that will grow even into the summer months. For the spring, sweet basil, parsley, dill, garlic, and ginger grow well. Going into the summer, mint and rosemary will still produce well, thriving on the cool down from our afternoon showers.

When plants are under stress, the pests are not far behind, so you might be dealing with more pests than normal in your garden this month. The good news is, once the weather is consistently warm and it feels like spring, the plants will naturally adjust. The pests that appeared due to stress will also leave once the plant is back to full health. One go-to in the vegetable garden to treat pests is neem oil spray. It comes from a neem tree and can be an organic method for treating aphids, spider mites, scale, whiteflies, beetles, leafrollers, and other insect pests. Neem oil can also be used as a fungicide to treat diseases like black spot and powdery mildew. It is very easy to use, just dilute two tablespoons into one gallon of water and use a spray bottle for application. Be sure to only apply neem oil in the morning or evening – not when there is direct, hot sun in the garden. This can burn the leaves of the plants. There are additional benefits of applying the neem oil in the evening as other non-beneficial insects like moths only come out at night and can be treated with the neem oil.

Are there good bugs in the garden? Yes, absolutely! Honey bees that pollinate and ladybugs are the most popular beneficial insects. That is another reason I recommend neem oil. It does not harm honey bees or ladybugs. As a side note, worms and lizards are also beneficial to the garden. Worms continuously process dirt into compost; now that's amazing! Lizards eat the bad bugs and help maintain a healthy environment. Happy gardening, Lake Nona!



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!"



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# Travel: Hawaii

BY DEBORAH BULLEN

My family and I have been very irregular. We went to Hawaii once in late December-early January of 2013/2014 and again in June 2015. Our son and daughter-in-law were living there at the time, so it was an easy choice for a vacation destination.

If you ever fantasize about what heaven might look like, you don't need to look further than Hawaii. The weather is almost always perfect, the sky is blue, the water is many shades of blue, the vegetation is lush, the flowers are vibrant, the food – especially the Ono and Ahi tuna – is incredibly fresh. They often use orchids to decorate your plate.

Beginning with a short three-day trip to Kaua'i, we did an array of activities: hiking the Waime'i Canyon, snorkeling and swimming just outside our door at the Kiahuna Plantation, a Blue Hawaiian helicopter tour, and exploring Hanalei Bay and dry and wet caves. We had some expensive din-

PHOTOS BY DEBORAH BULLEN



ners, but the best meals I remember were lunch at the Shrimp Station, at the base of Waime'i Canyon – you can't miss it, it's a giant Pink (with capital P) Shrimp, and the fish market in Koalo where we got take-out Ono (wahoo) to dine in front of the sunset on our doorstep. I made a note to self that I must join Overeaters Anonymous when I returned home. I don't know why, really, because almost everything to do in Hawaii requires some form of exercise.

We flew over to Oahu to join our family for Christmas. I remember the Obama cavalcade passing us by. Never did meet them. Our first full day there, we went to the North Shore, where our son surfed, before going on to Turtle Bay, famous for the film *Forgetting Sarah Marshall*. We took trips to Haleiwa, saw giant 15- to 20-foot waves, went through the gardens up to Wailei Falls, hiked up a mountain at Lanikai, took an outrigger canoe over to the Moaks (where we jumped off a 12-foot volcanic rock), watched whales breach, paddle-boarded and canoed over to Gilligan's Island (otherwise known as Coconut Island and actually where they filmed the entire series), and even managed to fit in a whale-watching tour and a full day at Pearl Harbor. We didn't let any grass grow under our feet. I don't know if I have an unusually active family, but they just don't seem to know the meaning of "relaxing" and "vacation" in the same sentence.

Our second trip to Hawaii was spent similarly, although this time Bill and I started on the Big Island. We stayed at the Mauna Kea, a five-star hotel with a 10-star breakfast buffet. If you want to treat yourself, you can't go wrong here. I could have stayed there a month and never left the grounds. But, once again, after three days of luxury, we left and flew over to Oahu to vacation with both kids, their spouses and our new grandchild. It was non-stop hiking, swimming with sea turtles or manta rays, more waterfalls, more hiking. At night, we ate well and slept sound. Am I making it sound like tough duty? Well, it's not, I loved every minute, but relaxing? Not unless you count sleeping.



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## Pet of the Month

BY VANESSA POULSON

Lily is an exceptional dog from Laureate Park. Born in 2006, Lily was the last beagle of her litter to be adopted, but obviously, she is the best of the bunch. Lily loves peanut butter, tomatoes and walks but doesn't like the doorbell.

Since she's a beagle, her bark is much mightier than her bite, and she loves to welcome visitors to her home with a mighty beagle howl. She loves watching TV, cuddles, and smelling everything she comes across on her walk. Lily is courageous, gentle, and always fun-loving, and even at her age remains sassy and full of life. She is one loved hound dog.





# Nona Alumni: Jamie And Lexi Gehring

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!

<b>Name:</b> Jamie Gehring	<b>Name:</b> Lexi Gehring
<b>Age:</b> 25	<b>Age:</b> 25
<b>Year Graduated:</b> 2011	<b>Year Graduated:</b> 2011
<b>Occupation:</b> U.S. Air Force Pilot	<b>Occupation:</b> Emergency Department Registered Nurse
<b>Current Location:</b> Klamath Falls, Oregon	



This month's alumni met in high school, and their relationship bloomed as the years progressed.

"Jamie and I met at Lake Nona High School. We were friends but never super close. I was always impressed by his dedication to his dream of attending the Air Force Academy and eventually becoming an Air Force pilot. After graduating high school, we lost touch as we were both busy with college. Over Christmas break our sophomore year of college, Jamie texted me out of the blue and asked to hang out and catch up. After two dates, we continued talking after we both went back to school – him to Colorado and me to Alabama. We dated long distance for the next two and a half years and then got married after graduating college," said Mrs. Gehring.

Having both lived in Lake Nona for a long time – Jamie since he was born in 1993 until he moved after high school graduation in 2011, and Lexi since 2006 when her family moved from downtown Orlando, then leaving in 2012 to attend Samford University in Birmingham, Ala. – must have made leaving their hometown difficult. "We are thankful that both of our families [still] live in the Lake Nona area because it makes it easier when we go home to visit," stated Lexi.

Too few are actually able to say they've followed and met their high school goals or even lifelong dreams. The Gehring couple are among those elite few who can say they've made it. Jamie's post-high school goal was to become an Air Force Pilot, as it was his childhood dream.

"I was fortunate enough to go to school at the Air Force Academy and get sent to pilot training following that. I started pilot training in March 2016 in Columbus, Mississippi. Although pilot training was busy and challenging, it was so much fun. The flying in itself was awesome, but the people I went through the program with made it a blast. I finished up pilot training in April 2017 and was assigned to the F-15C Eagle. Following that, I went through IFF (Intro to Fighter Fundamentals), which is a quick course to teach the basics of being a fighter pilot. Lexi and I moved out to Oregon in October 2017 and should be here until the end of June. It looks like we will be going to Okinawa for my next assignment. The journey has been awesome so far and a dream come true. It is very satisfying flying a single-seat jet and still seems unreal that I get to do this. I am thankful that Lexi puts up with the long hours away from home and is always supportive," said Mr. Gehring excitedly.

Lexi had planned on going to college while in high school, but her vision of her future wasn't exactly as crystal clear as her husband's.

"After graduating high school, I decided to spend a year at Valencia College to give me some time to decide on a major. This also allowed me to take the time to travel with my family to China to adopt my little sister. I finally decided that I wanted to study nursing, so the next year I moved to Birmingham, Ala., to attend Samford University. Thank goodness I chose nursing because it is a great career for a military spouse. I can get a job anywhere," exclaimed Mrs. Gehring.

Since the couple both have pretty high-paced and stressful careers, they truly take advantage of the time they have to spend together. "We love to relax, cook food, and hang out with our friends. We have really enjoyed traveling and exploring new parts of the country, especially since moving to the West Coast. We are always planning our next weekend adventure," Lexi said.

Jamie agrees. "I am a big fan of hanging out with my buddies and drinking some beers. Lexi and I are always planning out our next trip out of town to explore a new part of the greatest country on the planet. Birmingham, Charleston, and Bend, Oregon, are some of our favorite places to visit. While in Mississippi, Lexi and I got a puppy and immediately regretted doing so," Jamie joked. "After a few weeks, we got the hang of it and figured out how [to] take care of him while balancing our jobs. One lost security deposit later, we love George and enjoy taking him out to breweries and on weekend trips when the weather is nice."

When asked where the couple sees themselves in five years,



PHOTO BY LINDSAY COPE PHOTOGRAPHY



it includes crossing the ocean and leaving the country for a new continent. "It is difficult to say where we will be physically in the next five years because the Air Force tells us where to go and when. As of right now, we will be moving to Okinawa, Japan, at the end of the summer for several years. In the next five years, we plan to start a family and continue our adventures on the other side of the world," said Lexi. Her husband hopes he will still be flying the Eagle either in Okinawa or in England. "Wherever we are, the picture will include George and maybe some kids eventually," added Jamie. Lexi added that being an Air Force spouse has been quite the learning experience for her. "I now know way more about airplanes than I ever cared to know, and that mustache March is the worst month to be a pilot wife. I have also met the best people in the close-knit pilot community.

I am very excited about the future and our upcoming move across the world. I am so thankful that I met Jamie way back in high school, and we are now on this exciting adventure together."

But, hey, it's all in the name of love!

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





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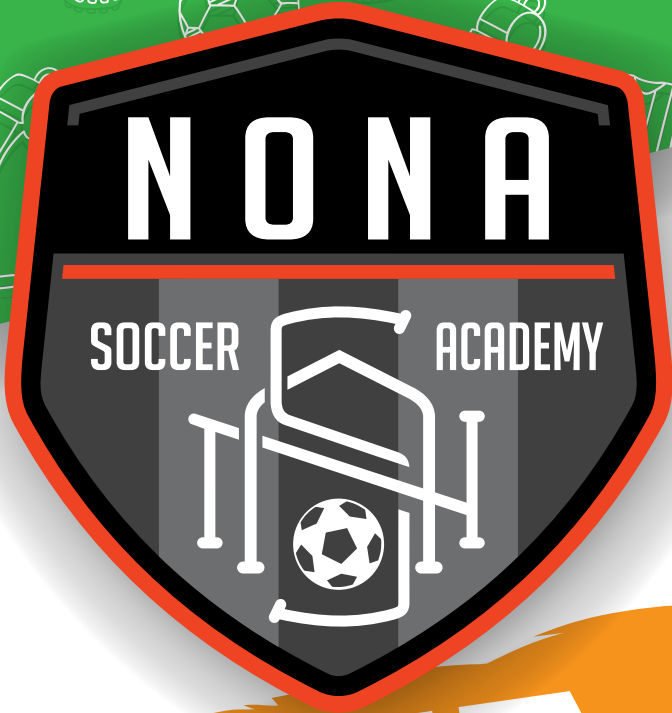
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# Nona Your Neighbor: Lynn Sheffield

BY VANESSA POULSON  
PHOTOS BY LYNN SHEFFIELD



Lynn Sheffield

For this month's Nona Your Neighbor, we spoke with Lynn Sheffield, Lake Nona local business owner and entrepreneur. She's passionate about her work, family,

and the Lake Nona area.

## NHN: What brought you to the Nonahood?

LS: My husband is Orlando born, and we had the opportunity to move back after 35 years and took it!

## NHN: How long have you lived here?

LS: It will be two years this June!

## NHN: Where are you from originally?

LS: I'm originally from Canada but have lived in the USA since 1997. I am now a dual citizen, having become an American citizen in 2012! My whole family still lives in Canada!

## NHN: What do you do for work?

LS: I am an entrepreneur and work a couple of businesses from home! I am [a] representative for two health and wellness companies that provide pharmaceutical grade nutritional supplements and CBD oil and hemp products. And I am also the vice president of HeadBed International.

We have a salon accessory called HeadBed, which is a head and neck support cushion that provides the ultimate comfort and safety for a hair stylist's client at the shampoo bowl.

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

LS: Lake Nona is an amazing place to live. I love the focus on health and fitness this community continues to embrace. We chose Lake Nona because of the USTA National Training facility as my 13-year-old son is a tennis player!

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

LS: It's been exciting to see the growth in the short time we have been here. Always great to see new restaurants come in as we love to eat out. Looking forward to more shopping, [a] movie theater and more fun outdoor activities!!!!

## NHN: What do you think the future is for Lake Nona?

LS: Lake Nona is definitely positioning itself as a frontrunner in innovation in both the



medical and sports performance sectors. As a result, it's attracting a lot of other businesses and creating jobs! Growth is good!

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

LS: Don't wait to consider Lake Nona as your future home!!!

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



# A Tale of Two Spring Breaks

BY KEVIN KENDRICK



Each year during spring break, 8th grade students from Lake Nona Middle School load up three buses and embark on a 12-hour journey to our nation's capital, Washington, D.C. At the same time that students are loading the chartered buses and parents are either ready to cry or celebrate that their 13- or 14-year-old student will be gone for a week, another set of students is organizing at the Orlando International Airport for an eight-hour journey across the Atlantic Ocean to western Europe for the annual Lake Nona HS Europe Senior Trip.

Over the past two years, I had the unique

opportunity to travel with both schools during spring break. This is the time of year that schools are holding parent meetings and sharing ideas on how to fundraise for the specific trip. Please note that these trips are not sponsored by Orange County Public Schools, however, they are organized and led by teachers at each school.

**Washington, D.C.:** Estimated cost \$1,300-\$1,500

**Who Goes:** 8th Grade Students at Lake Nona Middle School

**How You Get There:** By bus overnight. The bus ride is one of the best parts of the trip as many kids experience true freedom from their parents for the first time. What I experienced on my bus was young teenagers engaging with one another, singing songs, playing games, making new friends and interviewing their teachers. The bus stops in Jacksonville for dinner and makes another stop to switch drivers around 2 a.m. in South Carolina. The bus pulls into Williamsburg, Va., around 7 a.m. for breakfast as the students prepare to tackle one of our country's oldest cities.

**The Itinerary:** We arrived very early in Williamsburg and experienced the small town, as well as the College of William & Mary, which is also one of the oldest universities in the United States. Williamsburg is a living museum. Students participate in mock trials from the 1700s, learn about life and survival, and hear from residents about life in that era. The night is capped off with a "Ghost Tour" of Williamsburg before heading to Washington, D.C., for the evening.

The next four days, we are in Washington

with our tour guide "JJ" from Global Travel Alliance. In Washington, students get a chance to visit all of our national monuments as well as a guided tour of the Capitol building. When I went on our trip, we even met briefly with Congresswoman Stephanie Murphy, who spent about 30 minutes with our group talking about Congress and the legislative process. Students also visit Arlington National Cemetery and experience the changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Students also attend an improv comedy show at the Kennedy Center in the evening.

**Safety/Security:** There is one chaperone for every five to eight students. There is also specific site security at the hotels on the student's floors to ensure no one goes in or out of the student's hotel rooms.

**What Is Included:** Everything!! Breakfast, lunch and dinner, as well as transportation and hotels. Students will want to bring spending money for possible snacks and souvenirs.

**Western Europe:** Estimated cost \$3,000-\$3,200

\*\*Please note the itinerary changes each year. Our trip was to London, Paris and Barcelona.

**Who Goes:** Mainly seniors, but open to all students and parents.

**How You Get There:** By plane overnight. We were very blessed to fly directly into London without having a layover. While the flight seemed long, the airline (we flew British Airways) had free movies to help pass the time. Students were very engaged with one another at the beginning of the trip, talking about what they wanted to see and experience. Most slept on the plane until we landed in London, where we hit the ground running with a walking tour of the downtown London area.

**The Itinerary:** For our itinerary, we spent two days in London, three days in Paris and two days in Barcelona.

In London, we spent most of our time walking to see famous places like Big Ben, the Tower Bridge, and Buckingham Palace. We also had a special tour of areas of London that inspired J.K. Rowling to write the Harry Potter books. We left the city to tour the city of Windsor and Windsor Castle. The day we visited the castle, the queen was on site. Sadly, she did not come to greet us.



We took a bullet train from London to Paris and spent three days in the City of Lights. Paris was my favorite city and absolutely beautiful. We were able to go to the Louvre, Notre-Dame de Paris Cathedral and the Palace of Versailles, as well as climb the Eiffel Tower and see the Arc de Triomphe. We also took a cruise and toured the city from the Seine River.

We took another bullet train from Paris to Barcelona. The train ride through the countryside was serene and perfect. Barcelona was a beautiful city, and taking an architectural tour of Antoni Gaudi was the icing on the cake to a perfect trip!!

**Safety/Security:** The adult to student ratio was four-to-one on our trip. Everywhere on our trip, we saw police or military and had a great sense of safety.

**What Is Included:** Airfare, hotel, breakfast and dinner. Students will need to bring money for lunch and souvenirs.

Overall, both trips are excellent, and the cost is well below what you would spend if you did the trip on your own without a large group. The relationships and the experiences that students receive on the teacher-led trips cannot be matched. I highly recommend both trips for rising 8th graders and any student and family that would like to travel to Europe at Lake Nona HS.

For more information on Washington, D.C., please contact Mr. Gee at [tony.gee@ocps.net](mailto:tony.gee@ocps.net). For more information on the Europe trip, please contact David Grimm at [david.grimm@ocps.net](mailto:david.grimm@ocps.net).





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

## Do You Have a Vision For Your Family?

BY RODNEY GAGE, LEAD PASTOR



Pastor Rodney Gage

Several years ago, my family took a summer vacation to Steamboat Springs, Colo. It was beautiful! We did lots of hiking, horseback riding and whitewater rafting. As we were hiking one day, my in-laws, along with our younger nieces and nephews, became tired. They

decided to ride the gondola back down the mountain. My wife and I, along with our middle child, decided to walk down the mountain. We chose a walking path starting at the top near the gondola. Using the gondola as our point of reference, we followed the path we thought would lead us back down to the base. Two hours later, the path that we chose took us about five miles away from the base below. We ended up in a random neighborhood. Needless to say, by the time we walked all the way back into town to the base of the gondola, we were exhausted. We knew where we were wanting to go, but unfortunately we ended up taking the wrong path.

Author and speaker Andy Stanley says, "Direction, not intention, determines your destination." It doesn't matter how sincere our intentions are. We can't arrive at our desired destination if we're moving in the wrong direction. What direction are you headed? What direction is your marriage headed? How about your family?

Every family ends up somewhere, but few families end up somewhere on purpose. What if there was a way for you to reach the destination you desired in your most important relationships?

The good news is you can. How? Start with the end in mind. Ask yourself, what is my mission and vision for my life, my marriage and my family? No matter where you are in life, you can still start with the end in mind. Here are three things you can do to get started:

### 1. Define Your Vision and Mission for Your Family

When people lose their why, they lose their way! Every individual, marriage and family needs to define their "why." What is your purpose? What is your mission and vision for your most important relationships?

Mission speaks to WHY you exist...your purpose.

Vision speaks to WHERE you are going.

A clear mission and vision will provide us with...

- Passion
- Motivation
- Direction
- Purpose

No matter what age or stage of life you're in, it's never too late to start with the end in mind. You might already be an "empty nester" or already have grandchildren. Answer this question: What do you want your legacy to be? What are your mission and vision for the next 10-20 years? How do you want your loved ones to remember you? Like the old saying, "Nobody plans to fail, we fail to plan."

### 2. Write It Down

One of the reasons why it's so important to write down our mission and vision is because vision leaks. We forget! That is why we have to say it, spray it, wheel it and deal it until everyone can feel it! The noise from our culture and the pace of our lives are competing for our time and attention. There is something about putting our mission and vision in writing that helps us stay on track.

Why writing down your vision and mission is so important...

- It will force you to clarify what you want.
- It will motivate you to take action.
- It will provide a filter for other opportunities.
- It will help you overcome resistance.
- It will enable you to see and celebrate your progress.

Let me encourage you to go to our website at [rethinklife.com](http://rethinklife.com) and download a free worksheet. Use it to help you write down your mission and vision as a family. Vision always requires a shift, a change from where you are now to where you want to be in the future. Vision is a destination!

### 3. Start Living It Out

Imagine if we defined our mission and vision for our most important relationships. Imagine getting your family unified around a clear vision of your desired future. Imag-



ine how it would feel to have more purpose, fulfillment and intentionality.

Every family ends up somewhere, but few families end up somewhere on purpose. Let's make the SHIFT!

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: Stop Me Before I Volunteer Again

BY SHARON FUENTES



I would like to share a secret with you. Shhh... it is a secret that current PTA presidents don't want you to know because, if you did, they would never have anyone to chaperone the *Back to The Future* Fifth Grade Dance, bake muffins for the teachers' appreciation breakfast, or sew costumes with zero money and only two days' notice. It is a secret that others will tell you is just a myth, something that

they heard of but never spoke of for fear of what would happen next. Are you ready, my friend? Come closer. Closer.

IT'S OKAY TO SAY NO!!!!

Since my kids are in high school, opportunities for volunteering are not as readily available. Or so I thought. You see, as your kids get older and involved in extra activities...you become involved in them, too. My daughter's love for the theatre turned me into a Drama Mama – able to transform cardboard boxes into Easter Island head statues and pool noodles into red velvet ropes. Every time I said, "Yes," I whined and complained and swore to my husband that I wouldn't do it again. "Stop me before I volunteer again," I would say... and he would laugh, knowing full well that when it comes to my kids and their school, I would never say NO.

I am not saying you shouldn't volunteer. On the contrary, you should. Volunteering is an important ingredient in school success and a wonderful way for families to stay connected. Teachers are underpaid and overworked and could really use an extra pair of hands and eyes. Yup, volunteering is a necessary evil to get things done, and those dedicated parents who devote hours to bettering things for our kids' schools deserve medals. And WINE... lots and lots of wine.

All this said, when the PTA president calls you and says, "We know you'll say yes to anything, so we thought we'd exploit your time and energy just one more time

to serve on the Committee to Form More Committees"...it might be time to say NO!

When you haven't seen your kitchen table in weeks because it is covered in cut-out paper frames, glue bottles and glitter...it might be time to say NO!

When you have cut so many box tops that your scissors are no longer sharp...it might be time to say NO!

And when you set out to go the grocery store but you accidentally drive to the school instead...it might be time to say NO!

But when you walk backstage of the high school theatre and the entire tech crew comes running over to say hello, and you see the look of joy on your daughter's face as she hugs you and whispers, "Thank you for all you do, mom."...it might be time to say YES!



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).



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## Nona Soccer Academy Scores a Major Goal With New Sponsor

BY NICOLE LABOSCO



On Friday, April 20, Nona Soccer Academy announced a huge partnership with its new sponsor, Nemours. The soccer academy was founded in November 2016 and has been going strong ever since, as soccer plays a large part in the Lake Nona community.

“You know...since the beginning, we need

to have a...I've always had a dream that we had to have a big community partner, and I just thought since day one when we put up the idea to develop Nona Soccer, Nemours would be a good fit. And then with the network that we developed here, we were able to get the door open, and Nemours was very, uh, pleased with my idea and kind of bought into it, and we're very excited to be a part of it,” said Fabio Silva, the founder and owner of Nona Soccer Academy.

When Silva made the announcement in front of media, players and their parents, the kids screamed that they knew it about Nemours.

“It's extremely exciting to have this big community partner helping us,” exclaimed Silva as he revealed brand new jerseys to the players adorned with Nemours across the chest.

When *Nonahood News* asked Silva what he hoped the partnership with Nemours would bring to the children, he was optimistic about further change.

“For the kids? It's just that the whole hospital, the big hospital in the community...it's

a place that we don't want to go to, you know? And when I first talked to Nemours, every time we'd drive by, I'd ask the parents, ‘Have you ever been to Nemours?’ [They'd respond] like, ‘No, I don't want to go there.’ And then this relationship will open the community, open the doors of the building for the community to come in and tour the property and have, be more

welcoming as opposed to just as an emergency going to the hospital, having the doors open and kind of a more welcome atmosphere for the kids.”

Nona Soccer Academy has much to look forward to in the coming seasons.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF NONA SOCCER ACADEMY



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# Lake Nona High School Coach Joins Jr. Lions Wrestling Program

BY VALERIE SISCO

Many adults who competed in the sport of wrestling during high school or college tend to remember the sport more for the life skills they learned from time spent on the mat than for their competitive record.

For Kendrick Ellison, Lake Nona High School's wrestling coach, the sport was his roadmap to success in life. He came away from his competitive wrestling years with a greater sense of focus, self-discipline and confidence that built a strong foundation of expertise for his professional career.

Earlier this year, the Lake Nona Jr. Lions wrestling program welcomed Coach K to also instruct the Lake Nona Youth Sports athletes in calisthenics, basic wrestling instruction drills, and live wrestling matches. "Lake Nona

Youth Sports is pleased to be working so closely with the Lake Nona High School wrestling program to provide opportunities for our future high school athletes," says C.R. Dunnivant, president, Lake Nona Youth Sports. "When Coach K agreed to provide instruction to our young wrestlers, I knew they would greatly benefit from his expertise on skills and conditioning and be inspired by his motivational philosophy."

The elementary and middle school boys have been working with Coach K since February to hone their techniques and to develop physical and mental toughness. "Wrestling is a sport that lets kids develop a keen awareness of their individual capabilities," he says. "It's about developing a mental toughness that allows you to tackle life situations from high school to college and on through adulthood by gaining strength, perseverance and focus."

He teaches young wrestlers in the program to work on balance, agility, flexibility and footwork. Since wrestling is a one-on-one matchup, technique and toughness are important, but so are determination, endurance and creativity. "I think wrestling is one of the best sports to teach kids self-confidence and self-discipline," he says. "It gives them such a sense of accomplishment and self-worth when

they compete against another wrestler in a battle of wits and physical fitness."

Coach K also tries to instill humility in the young athletes, along with the ability to respect others and prove themselves coachable. "As a wrestler, you have to listen and respect your coach's instruction because all through your life, you'll be working, listening and respecting others," he says. "Proving you can learn from those you're wrestling with even when it's a struggle or a little challenging is a sign you're adaptable and eager to improve."

## Merrill Lynch is proud to support Lake Nona Youth Sports.

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But wrestling isn't all drills and hard work since he also wants the kids to have fun. "Even though it takes discipline to achieve your goals, the journey to get there can be one of the richest parts of our lives," Coach K says. "Spending time with friends, feeling good about improving physically and mentally while playing the greatest of sports, which I truly believe is wrestling, are the ingredients for a good athletic season and success in future endeavors in life."



Valerie Sisco lives in Lake Nona and is the author of the blog [gracewithsilk.com](http://gracewithsilk.com).



# Lake Nona Youth Sports

**"Home of the JR Lions"**

**LakeNonaYouthSports.Org**

**Non Profit 501c3**



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## Upcoming Events

*Mark your calendars for these important dates:*

- **Summer Lacrosse (boys and girls)** – Summer registration for 3rd-8th grades will begin soon! Check website for updates.
- **Summer Rowing** – Coming soon, check website for updates!
- **Cheerleading and Football** – Registration is now open!
- **04/24/2018** – Beginning of Football off-season conditioning session at LNHS (optional)
- **06/05/2018** – Beginning of Football off season conditioning-second session
- **06/23/2018** – Jr. Lion Football combine (player testing and evaluation day)
- **8/1/2018** – First day of Football and Cheerleading practice
- **8/25/2018** – First Football game

## Opportunities to Help

**Want to help coach? Training Provided!**

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**Bill.McNeil@LakeNonaYouthSports.Org**

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Please email: [lakenonajrlions@lakenonayouthsports.org](mailto:lakenonajrlions@lakenonayouthsports.org) for information on sports, coaching, board positions donations and sponsorships.



# Nona Cycle: 2018 Tour de Cure

BY TOMMY REECE



PHOTO BY ZSANETT  
KLAUDIA OLAH

Early in the morning on March 25 at the Lake Nona Town Center, an amazing event was about to begin. There was a buzz of excitement as teams of cyclists, runners and walkers came together to participate in the 2018 Tour de Cure at Lake Nona, a very successful fundraising event for the American Diabetes Association.

All of the training, preparation and fundraising to cycle 10-, 25-, 50-, 63- and 101-mile routes or the 5K Run & Walk was about to pay off. There were 40 cycling teams, 20 Friends and Family teams, including Nona Cycle, and 20 Corporate teams participating. There were first-time riders new to cycling feeling the excitement as they were about to embark on an adventure. Riders with some or more experience under their belt were stretching and riding farther than they had ever done, many riding 50, 63 and 101 miles for the first time. Veteran riders cycling the distances that they enjoyed the most were helping other riders with advice and answering questions. There was a constant stream of posts in the Nona Cycle Facebook group helping to organize weekly beginner rides or rides for more experienced cyclists to help train. A roll call asking for what distances everyone was riding helped to inspire Nona Cycle riders to ride even further. There was the ever-so-nice sense of camaraderie in Nona Cycle that helped to prepare riders for the Tour de Cure.

The sun began to rise as riders were streaming into the Lake Nona Town Center. The event organizer and sponsors had

parking organized around the town center, tents set up, as well as friendly volunteers helping riders, runners and walkers with packet pickups and questions. Announcements were being made over the speakers, and snacks and drinks were available. There were smiling faces as teams arrived early to get their team photos with their new cycling jerseys. Riders helped each other pin their bib numbers on their jerseys. Last-minute bike checks included tires being pumped, wheels spinning and testing brakes. Like the riders, there was a wide variety of bikes from the more affordable to the exotic. It was a very festive atmosphere, great weather and a real sense of friendliness as riders said hello to each other and greeted long-time friends and made new friends.

Police officers helped all along the way, managing traffic stops and turns throughout the courses, helping riders cross the roads. Friendly volunteers staffed the SAG (support and gear) stops, helping riders with Gatorade, water, pickle juice, peanut butter sandwiches, trail mix, and more. Riders started together with their teams and friends. It was not uncommon to finish with a different group of riders as they bonded together to help support each other. There were large groups riding very fast, and smaller groups that were pacing themselves. At the end, everyone finished with a sense of accomplishment. Food

and beverages were provided by the sponsors, and many riders hung out at the town center enjoying having finished the ride and sharing their stories in person and on Facebook.

The 40 cycling teams helped to raise over \$900,000 for the American Diabetes Association, going well past the fundraising goal that was set earlier in the year. Nona Cycle, with over 50 participants, raised \$43,665, a new fundraising record for the team. There were 12 Nona Cycle members who raised \$1,000 or more for the cause and were recognized as Champions. There was a flurry of activity as Nona Cycle sponsored a fun and successful fourth annual Cornhole Tournament fundraiser with 32, two-member teams participating with a very exciting finish.

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





## Book Review: *Artemis*

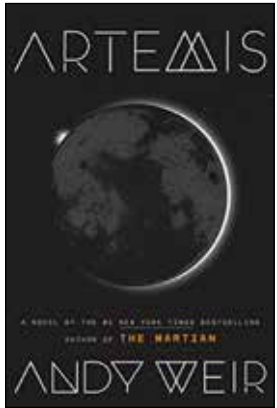
BY AARON VAIL

**Author:** Andy Weir

**Genre:** Science Fiction

**Hardback:** 305 pages

**Publisher:** Crown



The Story: Our protagonist is a young woman named Jasmine “Jazz” Bashara, who spent most of her life on a moon colony named Artemis. After leaving her father and his welding

shop, Jazz is determined to join the EVA (extravehicular activity) Guild, so she can give tourists private tours on the surface of the moon. Life isn’t easy, and to make ends meet she delivers contraband to local residents with the help of a penpal on Earth. Jazz is soon caught up in a scheme to take over the air supply industry on Artemis and has to rely on her experience and intellect to save the lives of everyone living there.

The good: This is the second book by author Andy Weir, and you can expect the same level of real science that made *The Martian* such a hit. Andy’s writing style

continues to make an in-depth and science-detailed story easy and quick to read without losing the reader along the way. I never once felt like I had to turn to Google for more understanding of some aspect of the story. Even the author’s use of historical emails between Jazz and her childhood penpal on Earth that were sprinkled in to explain her background doesn’t feel like a distraction.

The bad: The story itself feels thin. The plot lacks a degree of complication that urged me to want to read faster and turn the pages with eagerness. I felt like everything fell into place without any real contention or struggle. I never really thought they were in any danger at any time even though the words told me they were. The characters are very one-dimensional. The security guy is a meathead. The tech nerd is awkward but knows everything tech, including details of cutting-edge technology. The barkeep is your typical barkeep willing to smile at everyone and listen to all the stories you have to tell. Even Jazz is your typical “not gonna take any lip from anyone” and “I’ll show them how amazing I am” character.

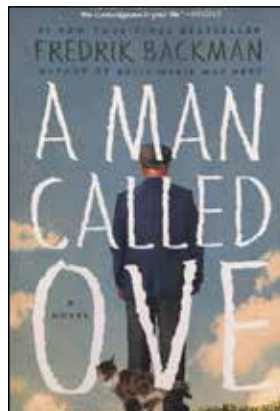
The conclusion: Overall, *Artemis* is a fun read. I learned a few new things about microgravity, why regolith (moon dust) isn’t really very fun, and how to weld in the vacuum of space. This is a book to read when you have a long flight or just want to read something light when you’re between shows or stuck at the laundromat. Even with all its flaws, I would still recommend this to anyone interested in the real-science-space genre with the only caveat being the strong language. I’m looking forward to many more action-packed and science accurate books by Andy Weir in the future.

## The Lake Nona Book Maven Review: *A Man Called Ove*

**Author:** Fredrik Backman

**Genre:** Fiction

**Hardback:** 337 pages



This book was originally published in Sweden in 2010, then translated and published in English in 2014, so the paperback copy was readily available. The story has been made into a movie in Swedish with

English subtitles, but I read hints on the web that there might be an entirely new American version possibly starring America’s everyman, Tom Hanks!

All that said, the story is about a grump, a grouch called Ove. In his backstory, we are told he was a hard-working, nose-to-the-grindstone young man who lost both parents and started working before he finished school. He was definitely a “measure twice cut once” type of guy, exacting and precise in his process, and simple and frugal in his lifestyle. Then, one day, he met the love of his life, a delightful, effervescent young teacher with a sparkling laugh and an engaging personality who actually loved him for who he was. Ove pursued her quietly, and they married and settled in a newly-built community

where Ove did his best to make sure everything ran like clockwork and the neighborhood rules were posted and observed.

The story continues describing situations like Ove’s on-again-off-again relationship with his neighbor and a tragic bus accident on a vacation in Spain, but I don’t want to spoil anything for you. Since Ove’s story is told in alternating past and present segments, we learn about the background as the contemporary story continues.

Eventually, a young family moved in next door, and through sheer force of personality and will, at times the young, pregnant wife both admonished and accepted Ove. Let’s just say they learned from each other – Ove just wouldn’t admit it. I found his part of the novel the most engaging. The wife and children next door were able to see through or just ignored the cracks in the hardened exterior of Ove’s personality and slowly were able to have a bit of a positive effect on his outlook.

Over time, Ove’s approach to life and his neighbors softens a bit. And over the course of the novel we begin to understand why he is the way he is and maybe even accept him. So, Ove represents the lovable curmudgeon or the hopeless annoying neighbor, depending on what you bring to the novel.

This book is a relatively easy and quick read. It is widely available and pretty popular. While it is set in Sweden and some local color and Swedish phrases are included, the setting is not critical; this story could happen anywhere, so anyone can imagine these events happening to people they know. The storyline is a bit predictable, and although the main characters are singular and interesting, they are not particularly complicated or multi-dimensional. So, if you’re looking for a nice story for a plane or train trip, or perhaps a lighter read after a heavy novel or a hard day at work, this might be the one for you. It’s a nice story, a little sad in places and funny in others, and it won’t ask you to work too hard.

## Meet the Press: Brittany Bhulai

BY VANESSA POULSON

Brittany Bhulai is a Staff Writer here at *Nonahood News*. Her exceptional reporting skills and writing ability have made her an incredible asset to our team, and we hope you enjoy getting to know her just as much as we do.

**Extrovert or Introvert?** Both.

**Indoors or Outdoors?** Outdoors.

**Sun or Snow?** Sun.

**Dogs or Cats?** Dogs.

**Vans or Converse?** Vans.

**Coffee or Tea?** Coffee.

**Adventurous or Laid Back?** Both.

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

**Books or TV?** MOVIES.

**NHN: What brought you to the Nonahood?**

BB: I remember the day like it was just yesterday. ...I had graduated from Lake Nona High School in 2015, and I was very involved in producing their yearbook as editor-in-chief. After I graduated, besides personal blogging, I was looking for a media outlet to write for. I was hungry for whatever I could get my hands on. I missed writing and producing content. A year went by, and I was not having any luck. Most outlets refused to adopt me since I was fresh out of high school with no “professional” experience in journalism. Now, in college, I was in my English Com-

position class. I guess I was feeling a little blue about having no luck in finding someone to write for, so before class, I asked my professor if she knew anywhere I could contribute. Suddenly, a girl who had eavesdropped mentioned *Nonahood News*. We all thought it was some type of joke, maybe a kid had played around and created an online forum about Lake Nona. My professor then searched for the organization online, and I do not remember if she had any luck in finding it, but I knew I was onto something.

I remember going home and searching their location, phone number, email, anything I could find on them. I found an address, but it was very general (little did I know at the time it was owned by a couple who operated from their home office!). I finally found the phone number and email. I contacted both, and the rest is history...

**NHN: What do you like writing about/taking pictures of/etc.?**

BB: I love fiction writing. I can be as creative as I want to be, and there are no boundaries in what I can produce.

**NHN: What’s your favorite thing about the Nonahood?**

BB: I love the fact that our area is well known, and it’s spoken about a lot. A lot of other communities know Lake Nona as the “growing area,” which is true. I’ve been in North Shore since 2003, so I’ve seen the area grow up. I went to K-12 here.

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

BB: I am from Tampa originally.

**NHN: What’s your favorite hobby?**

BB: I powerlift and weightlift almost every day. I also do martial arts. They’re both equally my favorite hobbies.

**NHN: What’s your most embarrassing moment?**

BB: Probably that one time I made a U-turn

down Narcoossee in my first manual car, and I didn’t realize I was in neutral after the turn. I had a mob of cars coming up behind me blowing their horns as I was freaking out wondering why the car was slowing down even though my foot was pressing the accelerator. Thankfully, before what could have been my death, I finally realized I was in neutral and popped it in first gear and took off.

**NHN: What’s your biggest dream?**

BB: My biggest dream is to work for a media outlet as an international journalist.

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

BB: In 10 years, I see myself living in California or New York working for the *LA Times* or *New York Times* traveling the world covering stories happening around the world. I also wouldn’t mind working overseas for a similar outlet doing the same thing.

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

BB: I look forward to seeing this place in 10 years. With the Lake Nona Town Center rising up, it will be a great gem in Orlando.

**NHN: Who’s your biggest inspiration?**

BB: My biggest inspiration would have to be my aunt, Margaret Ahmed, or as I call her, Auntie Maggie. She has worked for everything she has, and I admire her for that. I always get valuable life advice from her, and she pushes me to break my boundaries to be the best I can be.

**NHN: What’s your favorite book?**

BB: Believe it or not, I do not open books too much. I’d rather write than read. However, I enjoyed reading *Life of Pi*.

**NHN: What’s your favorite movie?**

BB: My fav movie would have to be *V for Vendetta*. It’s so original, and I have never



seen anything like it.

**NHN: What show(s) have you binge-watched?**

BB: I love to binge-watch *Mad Men* on Netflix. I’ve seen the series twice, and I continue to go through and watch episodes.

**NHN: If you could add one thing to the Nonahood, what would it be?**

BB: More food places, please. Some coffee shops or Asian cuisine restaurants would be nice.

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



# Lake Nona Local Alyssa Raghu Chases Her Dreams on American Idol

BY VANESSA POULSON



Photo via Alyssa Raghu and American Idol

My interview with Alyssa Raghu, a Lake Nona local chasing her music dreams on *American Idol* this season, occurred over a FaceTime call across the country. Raghu was in the car on her way home from a radio interview, and I was in another state.

After trying my best to chase down this rising star, I was finally able to find a time in Raghu's schedule that worked well enough with mine. We spoke about all her *American Idol* dreams, her single, *Leave*, that was released in 2017, her love of '80s and '90s pop music, and everything that she hopes will come from *Idol* and beyond.

With the community rallying around Raghu, from hosting a variety of watch parties for the young singer, Raghu has been ever supported by her friends, family and community as she begins her journey toward doing the thing she loves most:

making music.

Raghu has a versatile and powerhouse voice, a killer personality, and just enough ambition and nerve to pull together each of these aspects to chase after her dreams of breaking into the music industry. As of right now, she's made the Top 24 of *American Idol*, hung out with one of her musical inspirations and *Idol* judge Katy Perry, and had a rocking belated Sweet Sixteen party at Jacq & Jack.

And yes, you read that right. This young woman is just 16 years old, a high school sophomore, and she's already quickly on her way to stardom.

Raghu was born in Tucson, Ariz., but arrived in Lake Nona when she was only six months old. She is of both Indian and Mexican descent, which is something she hopes will help her to reach as many audiences and people as possible throughout the *American Idol* competition. With her ever-supportive dad by her side, Raghu admits that she's spent the majority of her life being shy, but she credits her family and some of her favorite music artists for her passion for music and singing.

"I love Blondie, she's so good, I would love to make music like her. I love Aaliyah from the '90s and early 2000s, she's great," said Raghu. "I also love the Jacksons, Michael and Janet."

Not only is Raghu an incredibly talented singer (her YouTube channel @AlyssaRaghu is filled with her covering music from The Police, Nick Jonas, and Ed Sheeran), but she also writes her own music. She's released a single on Spotify and iTunes called *Leave*, and Raghu credits that song with being part of her experiment with a style and testing the waters with the music industry and how she would be seen because of it.

"I really am trying to create a different sound every time that I release something," said Raghu. "My next single or my next album, I don't think it's going to sound like that at all. Maybe more '80s or '90s pop, but with some acoustic guitar in there and meaningful lyrics, because I think meaningful lyrics are worth it. I don't really like the stuff that's just nonsense."

Raghu describes her experience on *Idol* as a total whirlwind, though for 16, she's handled the experience with poise and maturity, even if at times there is a lot of hard work and quick-turnaround between learning songs, filming, and, of course, publicity.

"The business is tough," said Raghu on the difficulties that can come from being on *Idol*. "If they want to change stuff, you have to just be okay with it. You always need to be prepared, regardless of what they throw."

While the *American Idol* experience has provided Raghu with a variety of experiences and moments that are helping to forward her career in the music industry, she credits being able to meet Katy Perry and talk with her as one of her favorite aspects of it all. Perry has been one of Raghu's favorite artists since middle school, where she remembers earning straight A's every year, and that her dad offered to let her get one thing that she wanted for earning perfect grades. She chose Katy Perry's new album.

"To think that I was there, and that I'm here now, and [Katy Perry] is like - 'Oh, you should probably do a cool high note there in your next song,'" Raghu laughs. "It's such a spiral of what life can really throw at you, and I'm just so grateful. That's the most surreal thing."

Alyssa Raghu is undoubtedly one of Lake Nona's most talented and notable figures right now. As she continues to pursue her own dream on *Idol* and finding a way to break into the industry, she notes that whether she wins or loses the competition, the *Idol* experience has been life-changing for her and brought so many new opportunities for her at such a young age.

"This is my life, this is my dream, and I'm not just gonna sit and wait until someone does notice. I'm going to be knocking on



PHOTO COURTESY OF ALYSSA RAGHU AND AMERICAN IDOL

record label doors and doing my best to put my albums out there, my songs out there, and to be known," said Raghu.

You can keep up with Raghu on Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, and Twitter: @alyssaraghu.

**UPDATE:** As of April 16, 2018, Alyssa was not selected for the Top 14. However, she is currently one of the eight possible Wild Card contestants and may be brought back later on if selected by judges for one of the four Wild Card slots.



Photo by Sophia Rogers



# The Lake Nona Voices

BY BRITTANY BHULAI

A group of five girls has been going around the Lake Nona area singing their hearts out to the community. Hannah Yon, Jona Meier, Grace Hunter, Melissa Gonzalez, and Madison Rothschild are the young ladies who make up this group called the Lake Nona Voices. So far, they have made appearances at Ronald McDonald House, Watercrest Senior Living and local church gatherings.

In 8th grade, they participated in All-State Choir through Lake Nona Middle School. This was a state-wide opportunity for student vocalists to compete against one another. After they finished middle school and left All-State, they decided to create a team of their own to keep the singing alive. They are all currently finishing up their freshman year at Lake Nona High School and have been a group for a year now.

Hannah was the initial brains behind the operation and reached out to individuals she saw fit to make a decent singing group. "We made a small group where we could travel around to help the community in small, different ways," comments Madison. For Jona, her favorite part about this is getting to grow as an individual along with her peers. They can all agree that they find joy in making the public smile through their performances.

In the future, each girl sees herself still involved in the musical world. "In the future, I wanted to major in...maybe...music education, but then I could do it as a hobby," says Grace with an optimistic gaze in her eyes.

The Lake Nona Voices also mix in instruments with their performances. They try to balance out who plays what in each song. Hannah and Grace play the piano, Melissa and (again) Grace do the ukulele, while Jona specializes in the guitar. Disney songs are also a staple in their shows since its well known among their audiences and easy to sing along to.

As a group, they answered that their top fear was the fear of possibly "messing up" during a gig. Madison states, "You have to



PHOTOS BY KAY YON

know your part, but you know you're doing it for a good cause."

Lake Nona area with every performance they have done and the many more to come.

Kay Yon, mother of Hannah, is very proud of the girls and plays the role as the manager for the Lake Nona Voices. She and the girls are excited to continue the positive vibes they spread upon residents in the



# At the Movies: Avengers / Infinity War

A CONVERSATION WITH ELAINE & AARON VAIL

**Proceed with caution: SPOILERS!**

The last 10 years of Marvel movies have been building up to this moment. *Avengers: Infinity War* began almost precisely where the Marvel Universe left us in *Thor: Ragnarok*. We were merely spared the horror of the Asgardian refugees' annihilation and promptly entered the scene as Thor and Loki hopelessly fought with Thanos and his Black Order.

**Elaine:** I'm not a comic book fan, but I truly love the Marvel movies. So, it would have taken some really serious issues to disappoint me in this movie. I love every character and really enjoy the onscreen chemistry each of the actors has with the others, so I've been really excited to see everyone together in one movie (although I can't wrap my head around what that payroll budget must have been).

**Aaron:** Having read Marvel comics most of my life, I know the stories well. But I agree, this movie had me way too excited to see it. As challenging as it probably was to have more than 25 main characters in a movie of this scope and make sure all were represented, this story did a fantastic job of giving each star their share of screen time and dialogue.

**E:** I'm usually pretty easy going with the story lines, but there was one scene early on where the bad guys were permitted to leave and continue their evil bidding while our heroes just watched them walk away, and that was the one time I threw my hands up in the air in disbelief. With that exception, I was on the edge of my seat the entire time, taking in every special effect,

one-liner and fight scene I possibly could at once.

**A:** Yeah, I didn't care for that part, either. I get tired of the same tropes being overused. Like, when good guys give up for no reason.

**E:** One of my favorite parts was watching Black Widow, Scarlet Witch and Okoye fight one of Thanos' female assassins. Those three have amazing onscreen chemistry, and I was in awe of their ability to fight so well together despite (or maybe because of) their unique skills sets. By the way, where's my Black Widow standalone movie?!

**A:** It's in the works. I loved how the Hulk was too scared to come out and fight Thanos after the first fight.

**E:** I think Thanos could arguably be one of the most emotionally complex of the Marvel villains. While I still don't grasp what's in it for him to eliminate half the universe besides satisfying his God-complex, there really seemed to be more to this character than we have been privy to see in most of the other villains.

**A:** YES! Not your typical "kill everyone just because I'm a jerk" character arc. While I might not agree with his mission or methods, I certainly felt his emotions as he struggled with the decisions he felt he had to make. Watching him struggle with choice and consequence brought "the bad guy" to a level we can almost relate to. Having the antagonist's drive be more than the typical "I just want power over others" was a smart move, providing depth that allowed this movie to rise above the rest.

**E:** Almost as if to mirror Thanos' mission to bring balance to the universe,

the Russo Brothers (the directors) accomplished the perfect balance of humor with some serious fighting and intense conflict with the characters. I found myself laughing hysterically just as often as I was gasping and jumping in my seat.

Everyone needs to know beforehand that this movie is one of two parts, and it ends rather abruptly. And the final scenes were a lot to take in. I am one of those weird people who has to know before going in who dies so that I don't have a breakdown in the theater. I easily found a list online of which heroes die in the movie. I do believe a full-blown breakdown was averted, but Tom Holland still brought me to my knees in tears. The theater was nearly silent as the movie ended. All that could be heard was the soft sobbing of a few of the children in the theater who had just witnessed their favorite heroes being wiped out. And THAT (not the movie) is what made Aaron cry.

**A:** Yes, I cried, and thank you for not sharing the list with me. I love to watch the story unfold without any foreknowledge. I

was not disappointed with the ending. But those poor little kids crying really hit me.

**E:** Given the already scheduled movie sequels starring some of our recently deceased characters plus the fact that we're dealing with a soul stone and a stone that can turn back time, clearly at least a few of the heroes we now grieve will somehow return to save the universe in *Avengers 4*.

**A:** Yeah, Disney isn't going to let this profit machine die out. And the fans will want to see most of them again. I know I will.

We're always surprised how many people leave the theater at the end of the Marvel movies. Doesn't everyone know that there is ALWAYS at least one extra scene after the credits giving us clues for the next movie? This one hints to a new character joining the cast. But we will have to wait until May 3, 2019, to see the resolution of this heart-wrenching story.



PHOTO COURTESY MARVEL



# Short Stories: Mother Nature

BY BRITTANY BHULAI

The air is still crisp. Not all the time, though, just sometimes. My mind continues to wonder. I feel restless. Not the bad kind, but the good. I am anxious and excited for what is to come. I have seen it over and over during all my years of living here. However, there is always a lingering feeling of suspense leading up to it. I can not wait for summer.

Here in the countryside, it is always quiet. Autumn presents itself as a beautiful death as the trees begin to tarnish and their leaves fall. It is not long until the winter months unfold, and the snow caresses every twist and turn and the animals are tucked away. Before you know it, the white crust that has fallen upon the earth dissipates. Under it, fresh greenery has hatched and awaits the warmth the sun will bring it.

I sit here in my log cabin. In my eyes, time does not exist. I simply wait for what I long to feel...

This cabin has endured the rotation of the seasons for as long as I can remember. I have lived here for many, many centuries. I have seen the passage of travelers who come and go. Some stay but never for long. They must feel an odd presence in the air. So, they leave. It is always just me alone here for most of the time.

Once spring arrives, I indulge in long strolls through the valley. I am the breeze rustling between leaves or the thud one hears as a small branch descends from a tree and hits the ground. I cannot feel anything, yet I exist. You cannot see me, yet I am here.

Herds of elk pound away at the earth from the sight of a cougar or mountain lion. Foxes and coyotes slither around preying on helpless rodents. Birds master the sky as they hunt for insects and worms. I, however, do not consume anything. I am neither the hunter nor the hunted. I am an observer among it all. I am all elements.

A duration has gone by and the atmosphere has turned thick with heat. Flower buds are shyly

nustled in the thicket of grass. Thousands are about to open. I see the setting sun painted ever so graciously in the sky. My soul is smiling.

Spring departs as summer arrives. Tomorrow marks the first full day of summer. I enter inside my log cabin, and I do not come out until sunrise.

The next day, she wakes up from what felt like a deep sleep. She has been trapped as a soul for so long. There is a burst of light blazing above upon a rich blue. The clouds are scattered around in perfect formation. Plant life has blossomed and butterflies settle onto petals.

The woman exits her wooden enclosure. Her long, black hair flows in the cooling wind that passes. She once again has sensation as a human being. She can feel the tingling in her spine as sunlight hits her tan skin.

She strolls to the nearby river and places her hand in the calming stream. Her fingertips electrify with energy. Her heart-beat rises as she inhales the raw environment surrounding her.

Strength has been restored to nature. She has been reborn once more.

Her spirit lingers during the cooler months, but she is granted to come to life during the warmest of them all in order to reconnect with her creations. The ecosystems cannot survive without her physical presence for long. Her touch restores energy back into the environment. So, every summer, she comes back to life. Once this season ends, she will abandon her human formation and return as a ghost. This is her life cycle. She is a native of this land. She is the creator of all life, living and nonliving. She is a nurturer. They call her *Mother Nature*.



## events

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

- 5 NonaCrest Community Garage Sale (8 am-12 pm)
- 5 Special Olympics Florida Car & Truck Show (8 am-5 pm)
- 6 Man Up featuring Lou Holtz (6-8:30 pm)
- 9 LNRCC Breakfast Connections (8-9:30 am)
- 9 2018 State of Lake Nona Real Estate (6:30-8:30 pm)
- 10 Institute of Aesthetic Surgery Grand Opening (6-9 pm)
- 10 Womatec Evening Social (6-8 pm)
- 12 Reymont Street Gardening Workshop (9-10 am)
- 12 26th ANNUAL STAMP OUT HUNGER!
- 15 LNRCC Contagious Connecting (8-9:30 am)
- 18-19 Special Olympics Florida 46th Annual State Summer Games
- 19 BTN Animalversary (10 am-3 pm)
- 19 El Meson Sandwiches Grand Opening in Lee Vista Promenade (6 am-10 pm)
- 19 Crunch Fitness Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting (12 pm)
- 21 1st Annual Watermelon Festival at Market Monday Lake Nona (4:30-8:30 pm)
- 24 EOCC Coffee Club Nona (8:30-9:30 a.m.)

### 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/)

### LIVE + LOCAL

Thursdays 6:00-8:00 p.m.  
Crescent Park in Laureate Park  
[facebook.com/pg/learnlakenona/events/](https://facebook.com/pg/learnlakenona/events/)

### ART AFTER DARK

Fridays 6-9 p.m.  
Lake Nona Town Center  
Food Trucks on first Friday of each month  
[facebook.com/artafterdarklakenona/](https://facebook.com/artafterdarklakenona/)

### YOGA NONA Sponsored by Lake Nona Life Project

Saturdays 9-10 a.m.  
Crescent Park in Laureate Park  
8374 Upper Perse Circle  
[facebook.com/learnlakenona/](https://facebook.com/learnlakenona/)

### THE SATURDAY MARKET at VALENCIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE LAKE NONA

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

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This food drive falls during a particularly critical time for food-insecure families, as children approach summer vacation and will not have access to free or reduced-price meals at school.

For more information, visit:  
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