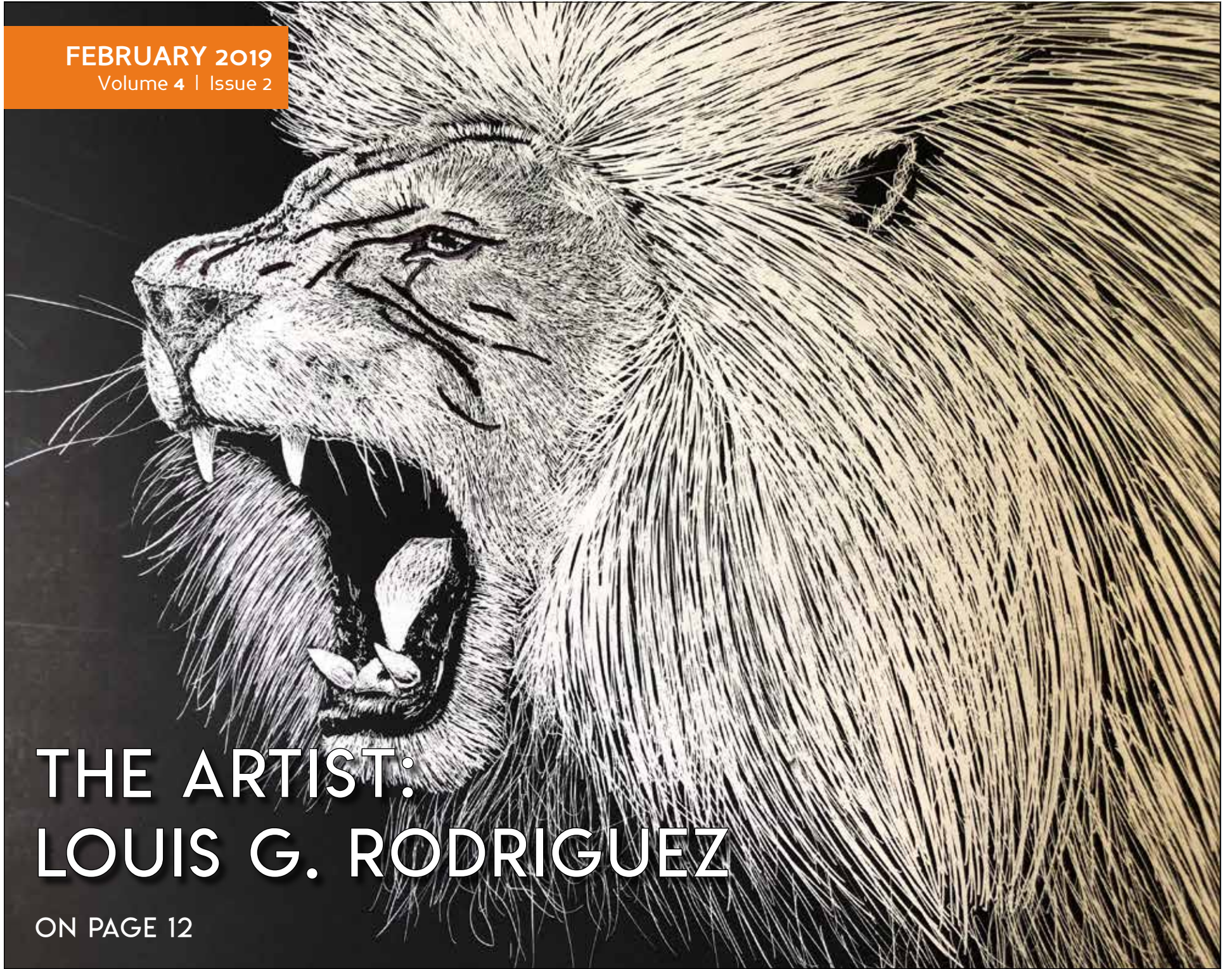




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THE ARTIST: LOUIS G. RODRIGUEZ

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EDITOR'S NOTE

One Day of Love Is Not Enough for Me

BY ELAINE VAIL



I've never been a big fan of Valentine's Day. It's not that I'm bitter or don't believe in love – that's not me at all. I love giving and receiving gifts and expressing emotions and all of that, but I don't like the pressure of a holiday that forces the attention on a relationship. It feels artificial, not organic. It's a lot of pressure. I'd much rather treat the people around me like it's Valentine's Day every single day, or whenever the urge or emotion strikes me, not because of a date on a calendar.

In my childhood home, we didn't express love very much. We *never* said "I love you" out loud. If there was a really, really bad argument, I might see the words in an apology letter left in my room when I wasn't looking. Rarely were hugs and kisses given. It's just the way my family was growing up. It's not that we didn't love each other, we just didn't know how to say it or

really show it.

As a young adult, I went from one extreme to the other. College life was so different from my old home life, and the people around me were very free with their expressions of affection toward their friends. Maybe I was just lucky, but I was surrounded by people who freely complimented one another, hugged when they saw each other, and didn't hesitate to say, "I love you." It was a bit of a culture shock to me – slightly uncomfortable at first. But, then I embraced it and never turned back. And that's how the Elaine you all know now really came to be.

I'm a very emotional person and feel very deeply – and I don't hide it anymore. I'm very quick to express my love, even to people I barely know. And I mean it when I say it! I know people think I'm crazy, but I don't care. It's easy for me to see the good in people and love them quickly. This also means I am easily hurt, but it's worth the risk. I'm so much happier with the me who gives big hugs and cheek kisses, who is easily excitable and shouts, "I just love you!" all the time, rather than the old me who didn't know how to do those things.

People don't always say it back, and that's okay. I remember the first time while away at college that I was on the phone with my mom and said, "I love you," as we were hanging up ... it was returned with awkward silence. She wasn't taught to express love, either – it's not her fault. But, I didn't give up. Eventually, she said it back, and now we say it all the time.

Some might say I express love too easily and too often and that it takes away the meaning or depth of the expression. Nah. If I'm super excited about

something or someone, I just use the word in all caps (or yell it) and repeat it. *I LOVE LOVE LOVE this so much!* I'm a goof. But, I'd rather be a goof than be bitter and hateful.

Speaking of things I love ... did you know that February is *Nonahood News'* anniversary month? Now THAT's something you can't celebrate every day! Jason Diven founded the paper in February 2016. When he and his family moved out of Lake Nona, he sold the paper to Rhys and Jenny Lynn in April 2017. And what a journey it has been! So, you all can celebrate Valentine's Day if you want to – I'm not against other people enjoying that. But, for me, the three-year anniversary of *Nonahood News* is a much bigger deal and should be a Lake Nona holiday every February! Is there a committee that I could present that idea to?

I love my job. I love living in Florida. I love the people I've met since moving here. I love the life that I have. I love our community. I love so many things and so many people. I can't contain that in just one day, so please don't freak out when I throw my arms around you and yell at you that I think you're pretty awesome any given day of the week or month. Happy Valentine's Day, anyway. And HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO *NONAHOOD NEWS!!!*



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LOCAL LEADERS

Military Residency Match Combines Medical Training, Service to Veterans

BY DR. DEBORAH C. GERMAN, M.D.



Dr. Deborah German

One Memorial Day, Arron Smith and his wife Melissa – both UCF medical students – stood before a monument at the Orlando VA Medical Center that bears the name of fallen soldiers. “Our job will be keeping names off of this wall,” Arron said.

Now, he is closer to his goal of healing those who serve. He and four other UCF College of Medicine students recently matched into military residencies. The seniors are recipients of the military’s Health Professions Scholarship, which covers tuition and living expenses for medical students who agree to serve their country for one year for each year of scholarship. Students match into residencies at military hospitals or do their service after civilian residencies. Military match is held before National Match Day – this year, on March 15 – when thousands of graduating medical students learn where they will spend the next three to seven years of medical training.

For the match, medical students select their preferred residency program while residency programs at universities and hospitals conduct student interviews and then list their top picks. Then a centralized computer spends weeks sorting and coming up with the best “match.”

This year, UCF’s military officers matched into specialties including general and orthopedic surgery and emergency medicine, and will train at VA hospitals across the country, including the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.

Smith will do a transitional year at the Madigan Army Medical Center, where his wife is doing her urology residency.

Haley Dodson is heading to the Naval



Medical Center San Diego, where he will train in emergency medicine.

“The Navy has allowed me to serve in some unique environments and has provided opportunities that I wouldn’t have experienced as a civilian,” Dodson said, “so, I’m grateful to be able to continue my service as a physician. I love emergency medicine because of the variety, the acuity, and the opportunity to be one of the first to provide treatment and hopefully make a difference.”

Heather Lesch secured one of only four general surgery positions at Wright Patterson Medical Center at the Air Force base in Ohio.

“It was a very competitive process, so I’m very ecstatic,” she said. “My parents will tell you I’ve wanted to be a doctor ever since I was very young, and I’m even more thrilled for this opportunity to train in general surgery as it is a practice that makes me happy, being able to heal and save lives.”

Jeremy Tran’s father served in the Navy, and having spent most of his life immersed in all things military, is grateful for the opportunity to give back. He is headed to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., where he will train in orthopaedic surgery.

“Knowing that I am able to provide health-care for the brave service men and women is a gratifying feeling,” Tran said. “I feel one of the best parts of doing a military residency is that not only are you practicing medicine as a doctor, you are an officer in the military. It is a great honor and privilege to serve our country and care for the service men and women that protect us.”

Deborah German, M.D. is the Vice President for Health Affairs and Founding Dean of the UCF College of Medicine. To learn more, visit med.ucf.edu.



Onward Orlando: Getting Dirty This Valentine’s Day

ARTICLE BY SHARON FUENTES
PHOTOS COURTESY OF CITY OF ORLANDO



Did you know that Mayor Buddy Dyer and the City of Orlando want you to get your loved one something dirty this Valentine’s Day? Not only do they want you to get dirty in your own home, but they also want you to encourage your neighbors to join in! In fact, they want you to get dirty so much that they are willing to pay for it!

“It,” of course, referring to a Green Works Composter.

Why such a big push to get more homes in Orlando to compost? According to the Backyard Composting Guide found on the Green Works City of Orlando website, the average home here in Orlando produces 474 pounds of waste per year. That comes out to approximately 1.3 pounds of waste per person, per day. All that garbage must go somewhere, and that somewhere is landfills.

It is estimated that 24% of the landfill waste could have been composted or recycled. Instead of being composted, organic waste such as food scraps and leaves are compacted down and covered. This removes the oxygen and causes the waste to break down in an inorganic manner. Eventually, this process releases methane, a gas that is 25 times more potent than carbon dioxide. But a wonderful way to decrease the amount of waste in our landfills and the lethal gas it can produce is composting.

Once made aware of the problem, Mayor Dyer committed to reducing our environmental impact. He established a goal to make Orlando a zero-waste community by the year 2040. To keep that commitment and make our city more sustainable, he developed the Green Works Initiative. Through this initiative, any City of Orlando resident can receive a free backyard home composter.

Not ready to request your composter and get dirty yet? Perhaps you are still not sure what composting even is. Composting is a natural process of decomposition. Ever walked through a forest? If so, I am sure you have noticed that the leaves from the trees naturally fall off to the ground. Eventually, they start to decompose on their own and make a mulch-like substance that provides the trees and the soil with nutrients. Composting works in a similar way

by turning our kitchen and yard waste into the same type of nutrient-rich soil.

Besides helping the environment, composting can make your yard healthier and look better. The organic matter in the compost soil helps retain nutrients, moisture, and air and even acts as a fertilizer. As if that alone is not enough, research now shows that composting is a natural pesticide. Yes, you read correctly. Soil treated with compost tends to harvest plants with fewer pest problems!

Adding to the list of benefits, composting saves water and MONEY! Compost can act as an organic evaporation barrier, soaking up water then slowly releasing it to your plants and grass when needed. Those homes where composting is done tend to have lower water usage because of this and therefore lower water bills.

So, what are you waiting for? It’s time to get dirty! The process for requesting your composter couldn’t be simpler. Go to the City of Orlando website: cityoforlando.net/composter. Follow the instructions on the site, fill out the remaining info, and the City of Orlando will follow-up with you in two to three business days to let you know when you will receive your composter. Make sure to download the Composting Guide PDF available on the site as it gives some wonderful tips on how to get started as well as troubleshooting solutions for common problems.

So, this Valentine’s Day, show the environment how much you love it by requesting a free composter and see for yourself how much fun getting dirty can be!



Feel free to reach out to Rebecca Fernandez, Neighborhood Relations Coordinator, for more information about neighborhood programs: rebecca.fernandez@cityoforlando.net. You can join the conversation on social media as well: www.facebook.com/orlandoneighborhoodrelations/.



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Congressman Darren Soto Opens Congressional District Office Inside VA Medical Center In Lake Nona

BY SAMIA SOLH



Congressman Darren Soto's previous Congressional District office was located at the UCF Medical School Administration Building in Lake Nona, and although it was just across the street from the VA Medical Center, it was yet another hurdle for veterans in need to cross in order to get help. Most were unwilling due to a myriad of understandable reasons. Now that the office is located within the VA Medical Center, an interview with Congressman Soto (D-FL-09) gives us an inside look at how it has helped countless veterans get the help they deserve.

Q: Was the process easy for you to get approval to set up inside the VA Medical Center? What were some of the obstacles you faced?

A: The House Administration office only

meets about this subject twice a year. So, we rushed to get this approved during the last meeting a few months ago. Unfortunately, the VA was worried that it would get political, but these are official government offices – they are not political offices. So, the agreement was that we would have to shut down 60 days before the elections under the Hatch Act and reopen the day after the elections. Which was fine by us – we are willing to abide by any rules required because it is absolutely critical to have a seamless process to serve our veterans. Otherwise, many of them will lose because they have developed a distrust of government through their experience in the military, and we have to overcome that in order to help them.

Q: What are some veteran issues that your office deals with?

A: [There are] multiple: not getting timely care, or if they are not being qualified for benefits they are entitled to, or if they had a bad experience. They could be homeless or have a drug problem or even looking for work. PTSD is [also] a huge issue; these veterans have experienced things that the civilian population couldn't fathom, so that creates all sorts of stresses. Having a one-stop shop where we can help out has been absolutely critical.

Q: What are the gaps you fill in to make the process better?

A: It is so critical not to have any gaps in the services we provide to our veterans. Even being across the street, some people who have severe PTSD found it tough to take any extra steps in their condition. People call us from the VA upset and some have psychological issues, and we couldn't get them to cross the parking lot. The geographical change has helped fill any gaps for our veterans who represent more than half of our cases. We are all about process and like to see every case to the very end – whether it works out or not, we know we did our best.

Q: How has your staff been received at the VA hospital when they get involved in a case?

A: We were welcomed both by the director, Timothy W. Liezert, and with the professional staff there. We view ourselves as

partners of theirs; we work out problems together. We don't view ourselves as being in an adversarial position with them. Sometimes, it's just about getting them the resources they need to get things done in a timely fashion.

Q: Do you take all the cases that come to you? What are the criteria?

A: We have between 400 to 500 cases at a given time, and we clear about 10% of those a week. They are all sorts of federal issues, so that defines the jurisdiction of what we get involved in. Anything related to veterans is a federal issue. We also deal with Social Security, Medicare, certain immigration cases (like political asylum), persons with disabilities, [and] civil rights matters. Other things that are on a state level, like Medicaid or K-12 education, and most criminal laws, the state deals with.

Q: Is there anything that can be done on a federal level to make it easier for veterans to deal with medical or non-medical issues?

A: We have some reforms that recently passed that cracked down on the abuse at other VA hospitals. Some management staff were presenting false numbers of the people they were serving and their satisfaction surveys, etc. We also now have the Choice Act, which after 60 days, if a veteran still doesn't get an appointment, they can get transferred to a private health practitioner. Although we urge everyone to try a VA medical center first because those doctors are familiar with the conditions that affect our military, conditions that are often misdiagnosed by private physicians. A lot of it is just funding – a lot of the wait time is due to insufficient funding, and that is an issue that I will continue to be fighting for.

Q: Is there a unique case that you have had success in that you would like to share?

A: There were a couple. One that sticks out in my mind is about a gentleman who heard one of our ads at a time that he was contemplating suicide. He decided not to do that on the hope that we could help him and decided to talk to Pablo (Veteran Affairs & Military Field Representative). We were able to let him know that we cared



and understood that he served our country and could help him. He is now getting the treatment he needs, and I recently recognized him with the 50th anniversary Vietnam veteran pin in an emotional ceremony where he mentioned to me that our office had saved his life.

Q: What are the resources that are available and how do you help veterans with them?

A: There are resources for veterans that are not available for the general public. Like funding for higher education, free healthcare at the VA hospitals and clinics, a rental stipend for those who are homeless, work skills and training other than higher education, SBA loans, contract preferences for veteran-owned businesses. We work with veterans throughout the entire process.

Q: What are some restaurants you have enjoyed in Lake Nona?

A: There are many great restaurants in Lake Nona. You can catch Mrs. Soto and I at the Lake Nona Town Center enjoying dinner at Bosphorus or Chroma.

To contact the Congressional District Office inside the VA Medical Center, call 407-452-1171 or you can reach Pablo Alvarado, Jr., Veteran Affairs & Military Field Representative, directly at 202-322-4476.

*The new office address is:
13800 Veterans Way, Suite 1F806
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BUSINESS & REAL ESTATE

Creator Mindset: How We Define Success



BY NIR BASHAN

Once upon a time, I worked at an ad agency that was special. We will get to why they were special shortly, but first we must look at what it is that defines success for most companies.

Most companies define success in two unique ways. One, they define success on how much business is coming in. What the sales are like, how much of their product or service is being consumed, and what the projection of this consumption is. Second, and perhaps most importantly, success is defined by the satisfaction of those who consume the product or service. Oftentimes, this measure of success is tied not only to how many customers are buying things and having a good experience, but the support over the long term for those who have already purchased goods or services.

The auto business understands the long-term relationship particularly well, even if they don't always follow best practices. Their long-term support centers around a warranty on a car or some perk from maintaining the car at a certain dealer. The bottom line is always this: How you treat customers after the sale can mean more than making the sale in the first place. This can determine how likely they are to recommend the product or service to a friend

and how likely they are to use the product or service over a period of time. Ultimately, this boils down to one thing: happiness.

So, back to this special agency I worked at ... they were special in that their leadership defined success in a way that I had never encountered before. It wasn't joy. It wasn't inspiration. It wasn't elation. Or long-term customer satisfaction. It was the most peculiar definition of success I had ever encountered.

Their definition of their success was a glum unhappiness.

Defining success and rewarding it with misery might seem counter-intuitive. And it might seem rare. But, you would be surprised. I imagine a fair amount of folks reading this are stuck in environments like the one I am describing: toxic. What are toxic environments? Toxic environments are ones that do not define success in joy. And, as you might imagine, toxic environments breed bad moods from staff; culture of dark conspiracy and weak staff mixed in with strong staff resulting in a half rotten brew.

So it all comes down to how we define success.

The Creator Mindset – as most of you readers already know – is a shift in thinking that activates a part of the brain we have neglected for a while. It is the part that deals with problem-solving creatively. We have spent so much time building up the analytical side of our brain through common discourse that we have distanced ourselves from another way of thinking. We ignore the opportunity to unite both hemispheres of the brain, the analytical and the creative – precisely the shift needed to find happiness.

This agency with the odd definition of



success made me think of all the different ways that people define success. Most times, it is tied to money – the making of it, the accrual of it, or even the spending of it. But, according to the Creator Mindset, the definition of success is directly correlated to what you deem as being successful. And it is defined in personal terms – not in terms that someone else might have for us. It is about understanding that success means different things to different people. It is about knowing that different people produce different efforts and the success of each effort must be analyzed based on what the person is capable of, not by what you have predetermined.

But, ultimately, at the end of the day, success is defined by happiness. That's it. Just happiness. An infectious joy that spreads from the baker to her customers, from the housewife to her children, from the landscape artist and his love for growing things, from the accountant and her love of numbers, from the ad agency executive to clients who trust him with the sanctity of their brand.

I wish I could tell you that this ad company with the toxic environment went

out of business. But no, they're still kicking and alive. They burn and turn through staff barely making it to the next day. It's a shame, really, because just one simple will to define success by a yardstick that matters would yield a much more fruitful business, better employees, that holy grail of better culture, and a better business built on attributes that at the end elevate everyone – no matter what it is you do at your chosen work. It's attending to your business each day with joy. It's about defining success with happiness.

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



Florida Technical College Offering HVAC Program Taught Completely in Spanish

BY SHARON FUENTES

Florida Technical College (FTC) is doing something HOT and COOL at the same time! FTC is now enrolling students into Spanish-only taught HVAC with PLC diploma program classes at their Kissimmee campus. FTC President Dr. James Burkett said the school's decision to create a Spanish class came as an effort to meet the demand of skilled HVAC technicians and to accommodate the influx of students in our area from Puerto Rico and other parts of Latin American who are in the process of learning English but still want to be productive and a part of our community's labor force.



The Spanish HVAC program is the same 17-month-long diploma program as the English-taught program and includes both classroom and hands-on training, but in Spanish. Upon successful completion of the entire 17 months, graduates from both the English and Spanish program are eligi-



ble to sit for the EPA certification exams.

HVAC Spanish came about after the success of the school's Culinary Arts, Baking and Pastelería, and Electrical Spanish-taught programs. FTC will also be starting a Cosmetology diploma program taught fully in Spanish later this year.

For more information, contact Florida Technical College at (321) 684-4034 or visit their website: www.ftccollege.edu/disclosures.html.



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Work Well: Finding Purpose at Work

BY NATALIA FOOTE

Close your eyes, sit quietly and ask yourself, “What is my purpose? Why do I do what I do? How do I help others?”

Answering the questions above requires a great sense of self-awareness. Who are you and what are your strengths? How can your strengths help others?

In *Noble Purpose* by William Damon, purpose is defined as, “A stable and generalized intention to accomplish something both meaningful to the self and of consequence to the world beyond the self.” Damon explains that a noble purpose can be heroic but is more commonly found in the day-to-day fabric of ordinary existence.

Your purpose is your WHY. It is what keeps pulling you forward in life. When we live purposefully, we know what we want to accomplish and why we are taking the steps we are taking.

In *The Path to Purpose*, William Damon defines the three alternatives in how we may be living: in a disengaged drift without a passion beyond enjoyment, dreaming without a realistic plan, or dabbling without a sustained commitment.

Where are you in your journey for purpose?

Do you go to work simply to get paid? Are you looking at your profession with an idea of growth and promotion? Or, do you feel pulled and committed to work in order

to make in difference in the world?

Do you find yourself with a job, a career or a calling?

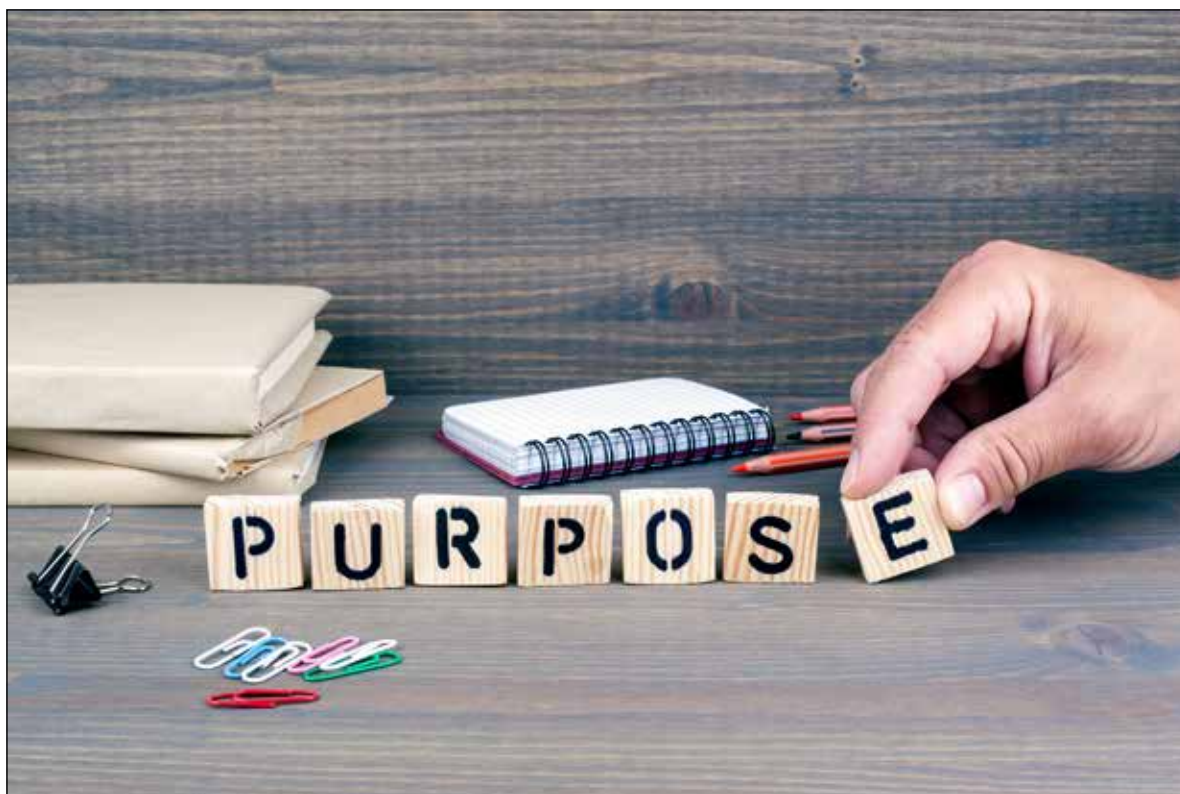
A study published in *The Journal of Research and Personality* by Amy Wrzesniewski called “Jobs, Careers, and Callings: People’s Relations to Their Work” found that the three dimensions were represented in various occupations. The study looked at different professions, but when it narrowed the scope to administrative assistants, it found that of 24 participants, nine found it to be a job, seven saw it as a career, and eight felt it was a calling.

It is our disposition that generates how we feel toward our work, and our disposition is under our control. In *Authentic Happiness*, Martin Seligman says, “Any job can become a calling, and any calling can become a job. A physician who views his work as a Job is simply interested in making a good income and does not have a Calling, while a garbage collector who sees the work as making the world a cleaner, healthier place could have a Calling.”

Start by evaluating your life. Look at your strengths and define how you want and can give back. Make sure to write all of this down. (Writing slows the stream of thoughts and allows you to truly listen to yourself.)

What are my five greatest strengths?

How do I use my strengths in everyday life?



Formulate your purpose and, from there, write down a mission statement for work and allow your mission statement to be flexible over time. Brian Johnson says, “Our purpose is the same, but our missions are many.”

Seligman says, “If you can find a way to use your signature strengths at work often, and also see your work as contributing to the greater good, you have a calling.”

Finding purpose in your everyday life brings about greater joy. Working full-time is a significant chunk of your life. We aren’t going to argue with the reality that for the vast majority of us, we must work to fulfill our needs. We get ONE life. Don’t just wait for the weekend to LIVE. Use and show off your strengths in your life, enjoy the journey, and live with purpose!

Natalia Foote is the owner of threeR, a company bringing mindfulness, meditation and yoga practices to the workplace. Her mission in life is spreading love and light in the world. When not spending time with her family, you can find Natalia taking and teaching yoga all around Lake Nona.



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Nona Growth: Lake Nona Construction Project Update, Part Two

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY SOPHIA ROGERS

2019 brings us closer to the completion of quite a few major projects. This article is a follow-up to the *Behind the Scene* update published in May 2018. You can view that article online by going here: nonahoodnews.com/behind-scene-lake-nona-construction-projects-update.

We closed 2018 with the opening of a new Holiday Inn hotel, Lowes, Park Pizza & Brewing Company, the much-anticipated Earth Fare, and multiple new restaurants. We survived the closing of Nona Tap Room and re-opening as Nona Social. Laureate Park residents celebrated the opening of the Nemours Parkway extension toward Lake Nona High School and Valencia College, creating a shortcut to nearby shopping.

So what's in the works?

KPMG



KPMG's 765,000-square-foot future learning, development and innovation center will feature 800 guest rooms, fitness and outdoor recreational facilities, dining, and classrooms over 55 acres on Lake Nona Boulevard. Nestled between the Enclave at VillageWalk community and the USTA National Campus, this location will serve as the main training and innovation campus for more than 180,000 employees around the globe. The project began in December 2014 and is scheduled for completion late December 2019.

BBA Aviation



BBA Aviation plc, parent to Signature Flight Support in Orlando, will soon occupy the 65,000-square-foot, six-story, Class A office building in the Lake Nona Town Center. What a spectacular-looking building this turned out to be! BBA Aviation operates primarily in the business and general aviation market, providing services to the owners and operators of private and business aircraft.

Boxi Park



Did you visit BoxiPark over the holidays? Make sure to come back because they're not done yet. The 30,000-square-foot entertainment complex built around shipping container dining will feature an outdoor stage, fenced dog park, and beach volleyball court. They're set to open this spring and have many fun events in the works.

Lake Nona Pixon Micro-Apartments



Located at 7004 Tavistock Lakes Blvd., Pixon Apartments are currently pre-leasing at LandonHouse. Orlando's first micro-apartments, Pixon will be offering studio, one- and two-bedroom homes, and two- and three-bedroom penthouses. Located within walking distance from the Lake Nona Town Center and showcasing 32,500 square feet of retail space on the main level, Pixon also boasts their offering of "201 modern apartments incorporating forward-thinking design and sophisticated amenities such as a Tesla rideshare program, concierge delivery system, 3-D printer on-site, and more. Traditional amenities will take on new elegance through incorporated technologies, such as Pixon's fitness center, which will partner with Technogym to bring ultra-modern equipment and on-demand fitness instruction."

Johnson & Johnson Human Performance Institute



Johnson & Johnson continues construction on its new global headquarters. Soon, it will house the Human Performance Institute's multidisciplinary training center and serve as the global hub for continuing research and development into science-based approaches to improve human energy capacity for performance, resilience, and leadership. Located in the heart of Medical City, where life-enhancing research takes place daily. Across the street, you'll find the UF College of Pharmacology and the new UCF Lake Nona Cancer Center.

Nona Adventure Park



Nona Adventure Park is opening in February! Outdoor exercise awaits in this challenging and fun environment. This nearly-completed family water park will include a floating Aqua Park, a Cable Park for wakeboarding and water skiing (with instruction opportunities), a 60-foot climbing tower and ropes course, a pro shop and a bistro. Not up for wakeboarding? Climb instead. Not up for climbing? Grab a bite to eat at the bistro. You just might catch one of Lake Nona's beautiful sunsets to end your day.

Sophia Rogers leads The Rogers Team at Premier Sotheby's International Realty. Family, relationships and real estate are her passions. She can be reached at sophia@nonahoodnews.com.



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Get Traction: What's Your Plan?

BY CHRIS WHITE, CERTIFIED EOS IMPLEMENTER



Chris White

Last Monday, I facilitated a three-hour workshop for 60 small- to medium-sized entrepreneurial companies who wanted to increase discipline and accountability in their organizations so that they could execute their company vision. The problem with the companies and the reason they were attending my workshop was that none of them had a written plan for 2019. Everyone had a vision with goals and objectives for the new year, but they didn't have a simple way to capture it.

Unfortunately, it's been my observation that this is more common than you would think. I personally have been there with my first two companies that I built. My partner and I had a great vision, but we never wrote it down. When I made my first hire, I simply described who we were

and where we were going to the new employee. What a mistake! Because I hadn't taken the time to build a plan with goals and objectives and share it with my employees, I created a culture where everyone was disconnected and rowing in opposite directions. As Winston Churchill once said, "He who fails to plan is planning to fail."

To help these companies in my workshop capture their vision, I introduced them to the V/TO™. The Vision/Traction Organizer is a simplified business plan that asks eight questions:

Vision:

- What are your core values?
- What is your core focus?
- What is your 10-year target?
- What is your marketing strategy?
- What is your three-year picture?

Plan:

- What is your one-year plan?
- What are your Quarterly Rocks (priorities)?
- What are your Issues?

The best way to answer these questions is to assemble your leadership team off-site for three to four hours to collaborate and build the plan based on their answers. Once completed, you now have a document that can be shared with everyone in the company, getting them on the same page and rowing in the same direction!

Download your free Vision/Traction Organizer by going to www.eosworldwide.com/vto.



Chris is a successful entrepreneur, author and head coach at Traction in Florida.

He's passionate about helping entrepreneurs get what they want from their businesses. Learn more at tractioninflorida.com.



Get In-Powered!: Are You Unconsciously Capping Your Success This Year?

BY EDWARD A. RODRIGUEZ



One of the most important inventions of the Industrial Revolution was the steam engine, which paved the way for the steam locomotive. An interesting belief back in that era was that women's bodies were not designed to go above 50 miles per hour, or their

uterus would fly out of their bodies. It was thought that human bodies would explode or melt at that speed. For this reason, it was suggested that trains not reach that speed. In other words, in both cases, its potential needed to be capped.

Think for a moment – what would happen if that belief were still held today? Airplanes could not exist, space exploration would be just fiction, and commerce would be very different. If those beliefs had not been challenged, civilization, the way we know it, would not exist.

As I travel around the world, I meet people that are in jobs where they are unfulfilled because they have accepted that they don't have what it takes to get a better one or to open their own business. They cling to a reason, to a story, or to a belief that tells

them why they can't do it – in essence, capping their success and what is possible for them.

I have seen that plenty of times in my own life. When people see me on TV or in front of hundreds or thousands of people in my seminars, they cannot believe it when I tell them that I used to be an extremely shy person growing up and with low self "steam" – I mean, self-esteem, LOL.

I had to understand that, if I wanted a breakthrough, I needed to break with what was holding me back. I had to understand that if I wanted to move to the next level in my life, I had to be willing to challenge the beliefs that were holding my potential hostage.

Believe me, it has been a long and challenging journey, but a worthy one. The price of change and transformation is far less than the cost of remaining stuck and unfulfilled ... the way I used to be.

This reminds me of a phrase that is attributed to Benjamin Franklin: "Many people die at twenty-five and aren't buried until they are seventy-five." It's not that they died physically at twenty-five, but that their dreams die inside of them while they remain alive. Later they die with their book unwritten, their song unsung, and their tree unplanted.

Your beliefs determine what is true and real in your life. What you believe to be true in what is possible for you – and this becomes your reality.

Human history is full of examples where beliefs are challenged, boundaries are broken, and new frontiers are discovered:

- Today, there is a train in France, the "LGV Est," that could take you 437 miles per hour to your destination – and no, you won't melt.
- Men don't have wings, but look how far we have gone into space.
- We don't have gills but have conquered the depths of the ocean.

Please take a moment to consider the full extent of the following five questions:



1. What belief are you holding about your life, career or business that may be holding you back?
2. Is it true?
3. What would be different in your life if this belief were not true?
4. What new "in-powering" belief could you adopt to make it easier for you to succeed?
5. What can you do and learn or who do you need to become to make this new belief true for you?

The purpose of these questions is not to turn dirt into gold or help you dunk a basketball if you are only 4'5" tall. Rather, they are meant to bring to the scrutiny of your reasoning what you have accepted to be true for you and what is not. Your responses will determine what is possible for you in 2019, and, as you have heard, you will never know how far you can go until you decide to go far.

Choose wisely and Get In-Powered!

Do you have a question or a topic suggestion you would like for me to cover in this column about personal development or productivity? I would love to hear from

you. Send an email to me at Edward@EdwardRodriguez.com.

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, HNLP, 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.



Behind the Scene: ‘Old’ Lake Nona – What Was Life Like?

BY SOPHIA ROGERS

Before we share stories of “old” Nona, we should pay homage to the first settlers who called Narcoossee home. Much of what we know today as Lake Nona began in Narcoossee/St. Cloud. In the early 19th century, settlers were drawn here looking for opportunities in the warm climate of Florida. Road names such as Tyson, Tindall, Jones, Jack Brack, Runnymede, Thompkins ... all are named after early English settlers.

Jack Brack Road, located 10 minutes south of Lake Nona, was named after William Jackson Brack, the first mayor of Orlando (1875-1877). After leaving office, the



AUGUST 1914, STREET GRADING IN NARCOOSSEE, COURTESY FLORIDA STATE PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION

and Moss Park Ridge, and of course the Police Range.

“Moss Park was nice and quiet. We loved our neighborhood – it was secluded in the back, and we always had cute visitors [like] red foxes, bobcats, deer galore. It was perfect – back then we only had two schools fully built: Moss Park Elementary and NorthLake Park Elementary. The high and middle schools were being built. Most Lake Nona kids went to Odyssey Middle School.

“Coming from Miami, a lot of people told us that this will be too much tranquility and peace for us, but in reality, it was a perfect balance of lots of green areas and space for the children to be free, zero traffic and beautiful construction.”

Laurie Holmes | VillageWalk at Lake Nona resident since

2006

“We were originally looking in the Lake Nona area to move my grandparents over from Clearwater. When we drove through the front gates of VillageWalk, we knew it wasn’t a good fit for them – but realized it may work for us! It was time for us to downsize as we had a big home along with the backyard and pool and a lot of work to go along with it. Additionally, our neighborhood was changing and not for the better.

“We were too busy to maintain a larger home and were looking for a community that was committed to the aesthetics of the property and was all-inclusive. We were busy with our business in 2006, and we needed a residence that we could lock up and leave for a few weeks and not worry about any maintenance. Every single home in VillageWalk is maintained by our landscaping company.

“YES, YES, YES to the all-inclusive lifestyle in VillageWalk! My husband, Chuck, and I are socially active and even though we moved from Chicagoland and spent 10 years in our other community, it never quite felt like home. It’s hard to leave your hometown and your family and all of your friends – but it was a great opportunity for Chuck

to transfer to Orlando, and here we are!

“In 2006, VillageWalk had the ‘A – G’ streets, as I call the original DiVosta homes, under construction with several ready to move into. Another reason for our purchase decision was living on the waterways that are connected throughout the community by walkways and bridges. Anyhow, socially we found out that we were not alone as everyone that we met was looking for the same lifestyle and a sense of community. There is something for everyone here whether it’s sports, exercise, games, social clubs and our favorite – an amazing resort pool!

“Of course, it would be great if Lake Nona remained a sleepy little area. But honestly, in 2006, we had Publix and our go-to restaurant at the time was Sweet Mama’s at their original location down Narcoossee and Carriera’s, which is now Giovanni’s. Now it’s nice to have so many restaurant choices in the area. We don’t like the traffic, but it’s still a lot easier to navigate than the Winter Park/Altamonte area! So, yes, I am in favor of the growth in Lake Nona, and I also believe it’s advantageous for our real estate market. Today’s busy families need the convenience of close-by shopping, restaurants, entertainment, etc. Also, the housing options are abundant in Lake Nona – lots of choices!

“We knew that we were a master-planned community with Medical City moving in. However, I will say that we did not know about the Sports Corridor and had NO

idea that KPMG was slated for a future site. I’m certain that happened as the economy changed and supply and demand, so to speak.

“In 2006, Tavistock was in their makeshift home at the corner where the Chase bank is under construction. In the ‘old days,’ there were a few ladies that worked with Tavistock, and at that time they’d direct guests to look at homes here in VillageWalk, NorthLake Park and the Lake Nona Country Club. There were maps, diagrams, etc., available for anyone questioning the growth of Lake Nona. I used to write an article for VillageWalk Pathways, our community’s newsletter, with all the happenings in Lake Nona – from what restaurant was opening up to dry cleaners and doctors moving into the area. We were excited about the growth!

“Personally speaking, the recession did not visibly affect VillageWalk. The only exception is that Pulte changed their original plan for our community. Our homes were all poured concrete (no blocks/rebar), one-level homes, with the exception of the townhomes. Construction changed up from one-story, single-family homes to much larger, two-story homes. In this case, Pulte knew what they were doing! Many residents were concerned that our town center, fitness center, pools, etc., would not be finished. I knew that wouldn’t happen as Tavistock had far too many dollars invested in their master-planned community. The last thing they needed at the time was negative rumors around town!

“Tavistock did decide to hold off construction on their Lake Nona Town Center/Mall, which was to be expected. We were originally slated for a million+ retail similar to Winter Park Village. The mall was going to have two major anchor stores at each end. For obvious reasons, that construction was put on hold.

“There is definitely a difference in the sense of our community – Lake Nona is now a very lively, diverse, multicultural area. With our growth came professionals from around the world.”

Rene Rogers | NorthLake Park resident since 2002

“In 2002, the only section of Narcoossee that was four lane was from Beachline to 417, which was weird since there was nothing here except the YMCA/school, Lake Nona Estates and half of the original NorthLake Park (NLP) neighborhood, the NLP apartments and the townhouses



Bracks settled on the north shore of East Lake Toho, where they operated a general store and sawmill. Brack also commanded a 35-foot side wheel steamboat along canals that connected to the Kissimmee River. That’s right – steamboats on Lake Toho.

Tyson Road, at the intersection of Lake Nona High School, was named after Joel T. Tyson. Tyson, his wife and 11 children settled in Narcoossee in 1849. The Tysons were cattle ranchers, citrus growers and farmers. Generations of Tysons married into many local families. One of the Tysons married Jack Brack, another married Arthur Roland Thompkins.

Curious to know what life was like in the more recent early days of Lake Nona, I reached out to the community to ask residents, “What was ‘old’ Nona like?”

Carolina Misle-Olivier | Lake Nona area resident since 2008

“We moved to Lake Nona from Miami in August 2008, straight to Moss Park Ridge. It was the perfect wildlife tranquility conservation area. The neighborhood had a few houses abandoned because when they were originally built, the prices were higher during the whole crisis, but it was still nice.

“There was no traffic whatsoever on Narcoossee Road – it was still a working one-way street past 528. By Dowden, there was no Camden, Wawa, and in front of it only CVS. On Wycliff, we only had the Enclave



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across from them, too. Off Moss Park Road, Cru and Wycliffe were here and they were just starting to build the model homes for part of North Shore.

“There was no shopping or restaurants at all in this part of Narcoossee. Sweet Mama’s was in a rundown, old building about a half mile south of 417. And there was an old dive bar just north of Beachline on the right side. For groceries, we had to go to the Publix on Semoran, near Lake Frederica. There was also a Sack-n-Save-type place on Goldenrod about a mile north of Hoffner.

“When our Publix opened, it was a TRULY momentous occasion! There was a guy there who lived out near Lake Mary Jane. He wore a sign saying he had been waiting for this store for 18 years! The Lee Vista Publix opened first, and we were soooo jealous.

“Hubby is a pilot with Southwest, so we liked the idea of being in a relatively quiet area near the airport.

“We were ‘told’ that some specialty grocery store (like Whole Foods or Trader Joe’s) would probably be going in near the entrance to NLP (near where Panera is now). Closest real shopping/theaters was Waterford Lakes. Closest restaurants were Semoran near the airport.

“We didn’t expect things to develop the way they have. We were told that our area was going to have a special small town feel like Celebration — instead it’s just a bunch of sprawl with no plan.

“We were homeschoolers when we moved in, and so we didn’t think to ask about local schools. My oldest kids were middle school age. The bad side to this was that they had very few friends in middle/high school. No one wanted to move into this area with older kids because we were zoned for Oak Ridge, which was a D/F school at the time.”

Erleen Villanueva Cooper | Eagle Creek resident since 2004

“In 2004, my husband and I were renting an apartment off of Goldenrod and Hoffner, near the other Walmart. We had moved from Destin, Fla., just before then. I went to UCF for my BS a few years prior and knew the east side of Orlando. We were actually looking at a few other places like Avalon Park and Stoneybrook in Winter Garden since the market was saturated with buyers but really liked the location and potential in Nona. I fell in love with the Morrison homes and the fact that there was a YMCA in the school so that when we decided to have children, we could walk to school and I could work out.

“Shopping was mostly done at the Publix and the other Walmart. I also drove to Waterford Lakes. Dining was also in Waterford, or we just traveled to wherever had what we were craving that day.

“We didn’t have our first child (daughter) until December of 2006, and at that time I had heard there were sports like soccer and T-ball at the Y. She ended up being a dancer, so we ended up going to a dance studio off of OBT from a neighbor who also had a daughter.

“I remember loving living in the Enclave of NorthLake Park. We had so many friends in there because it had so many young families. There were about 8-10 families that would get together for holidays – Halloween, the 4th of July, New Year’s, birthday parties, baby showers ... we did that for years. We would all take turns hosting. We moved to Eagle Creek when our second daughter was on the way and needed more room since our extended families would visit often.

“Our NorthLake friends were of the same mindset and also ended up moving to oth-

er communities like Waters Edge, Laureate Park, North Shore. ... The dynamics at Eagle Creek were different. Being a larger community, it wasn’t as intimate or social. The market had crashed, so there were also a lot of vacant homes. I liked my house there, but there were issues with the home builders and the HOA. My parents ended up moving in with us for a while after they sold their house near Destin, and since my dad is a social butterfly and loved being outside, he made lots of neighborhood friends. They all knew my dad – more than me, LOL!

“Over the next several years, most of my family moved into the area, Laureate Park, St. Cloud and Beacon Park, so I was ready to downsize again and have less maintenance, so we moved into Laureate Park. I love Laureate because it’s just a hop, skip and a jump to the restaurants, pool, park, etc. I feel more active in the neighborhood because I can bike or walk most places. Ironically, my neighbor that lived right behind me in NorthLake just built in Laureate as well; we got back in touch via the Saturday morning yoga and realized our girls who are the same age would be going to the middle school together (we shared being pregnant together in NorthLake and hung out everyday when our girls were babies). The girls now bike to school in the mornings together.

“I think the most exciting thing is just knowing that living in Nona, my daughters will know that from birth until they leave for college, they would have known the same friends, families, teachers, and familiar faces at the grocery stores, restaurants, schools and such.”

Dana Standaland Hopper | Odyssey Middle School teacher since 2001

“I have to chuckle because yes, we are the school where ‘teaching is a blast,’ LOL. We were all over the news, even countrywide news back in the day, from editorials to political cartoons. We had robots scan the property looking for “munitions.” (We are not allowed to call them bombs.) We have had our track dug up a few times looking for “junk munitions” (they found an entire unarmed tank, though). So, yes, we are ‘the’ school.

“Let’s not forget Casey Anthony – we were on lock down the entire day when they found her.”

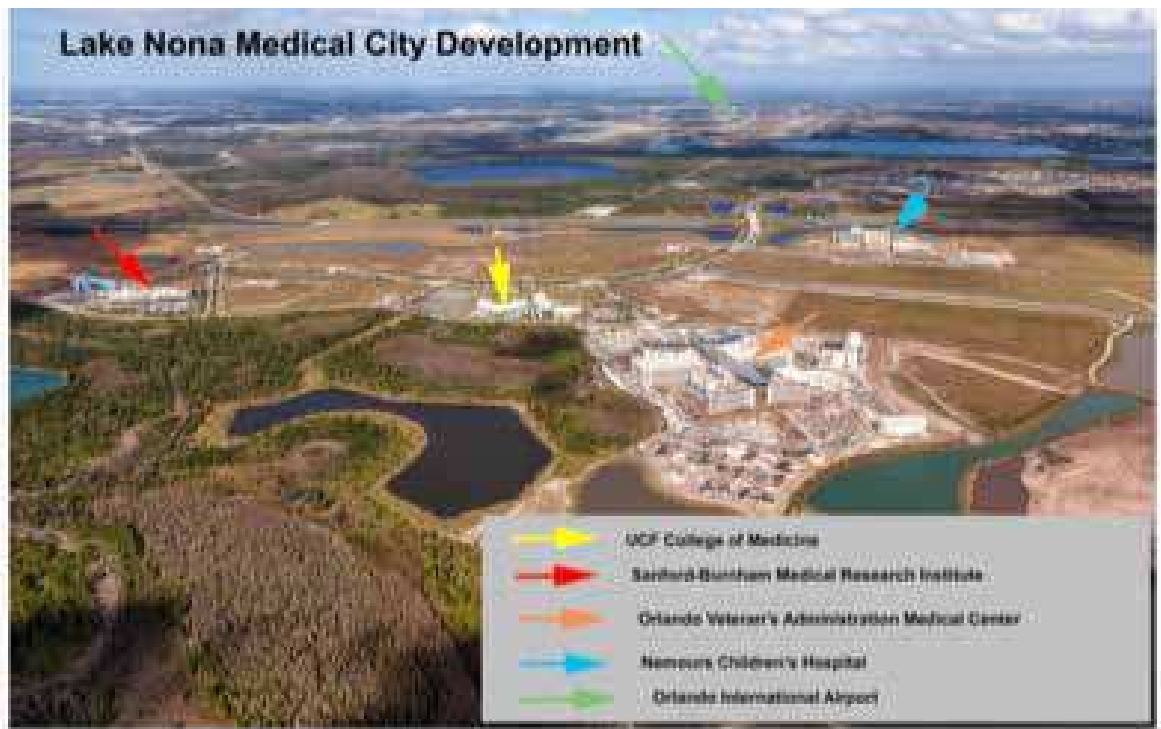
Richard Cueto | North Shore resident since 2003

“We were looking at Lee Vista because Lennar was also building there, but since North Shore had a golf course, we figured that it would have better resale value long term.

“School – there was only Moss Park, and traffic wasn’t an issue. Shopping-wise, we had to drive to Lake Fredrica Publix for a few weeks until our Publix was open. Anything in the way of food was a joke – we only had the McDonald’s at first, so that was the first ‘fine dining’ in the area until the Carrera’s next to Publix opened up.

“We never considered leaving Lake Nona. Ironically, many of neighbors during 2008 refinanced from their homes and took equity loans ... for either cars or small businesses. Most of our neighbors ended up losing their home. A lot of the homes became rental properties.

“Conveniences – more shopping and more options like restaurants, and Walmart is



nice. Usually had to drive quite a bit to get to a Walmart or Target. Less driving [now] for the essentials.

“However, with the growth came the boom in traffic, spending more time sitting on Narcoossee. Also, not thrilled with sheer amount of apartments that have sprung up. That adds to the traffic, and, I believe, brings down home values.

“Also, I remember during 2008 when we had the recession – a lot of homes in the area became section 8, which was horrible – Eagle Creek was really affected badly.”

Tiffany Lembke | Former resident and one of the first to build in Eagle Creek

“What led us here initially was the excellent schools. Our boys were very young then. We lived in the Lee Vista area and were zoned for Three Point Elementary. We knew we needed to move to get the kids zoned in better schools. So we looked in Eagle Creek because it was the ‘up-and-coming’ community which we were told had so much to offer its residents.

“We built a beautiful home in there on Bramhall Run and stayed until 2012. We then moved (downsized) to a smaller home in The Enclave at Moss Park. My oldest son, who is now 23, graduated from LNHS in 2014. He started out at NorthLake Park. Back then, there were only two elementary schools. My youngest is 18 now and a senior at LNHS.

“We have seen a ton of changes in the community since then. Narcoossee Road was a one-lane road each way with orange trees on both sides. We had one gas station and Publix. Traffic was very light.

“The sense of community has definitely grown. Back then, there really wasn’t much of a community. I have watched the area grow and change each year. I don’t mind the change, actually. I am glad we live here. I just wish, like most everyone else, that the developers would have planned our roads better for the growth.”

Keisha Lopez | Myrtle Creek resident since 2003

“In 2003, I lived in Myrtle Creek in North Shore. Then I got married and moved to the The Reserve at the Beachline (apartments by the 528). Now I live in Stratford Point on Kirby Smith. I have moved around a little.

“I was a junior in high school when my family and I moved down here from New York. Back then, the zoned high school was Oak Ridge. We had to be at the bus stop by 6 a.m. It was the very first stop on the driver’s route.

“I loved how quiet it was. My husband loves the growth. He has lots of food choices now.

“My parents still live in the area, so we will be here for a long time. My kids will grow up in the surrounding schools.

“We love the area. On the weekends, there is always something to do.”

Sophia Rogers leads The Rogers Team at Premier Sotheby's International Realty. Family, relationships and real estate are her passions. She can be reached at sophia@nonahoodnews.com.



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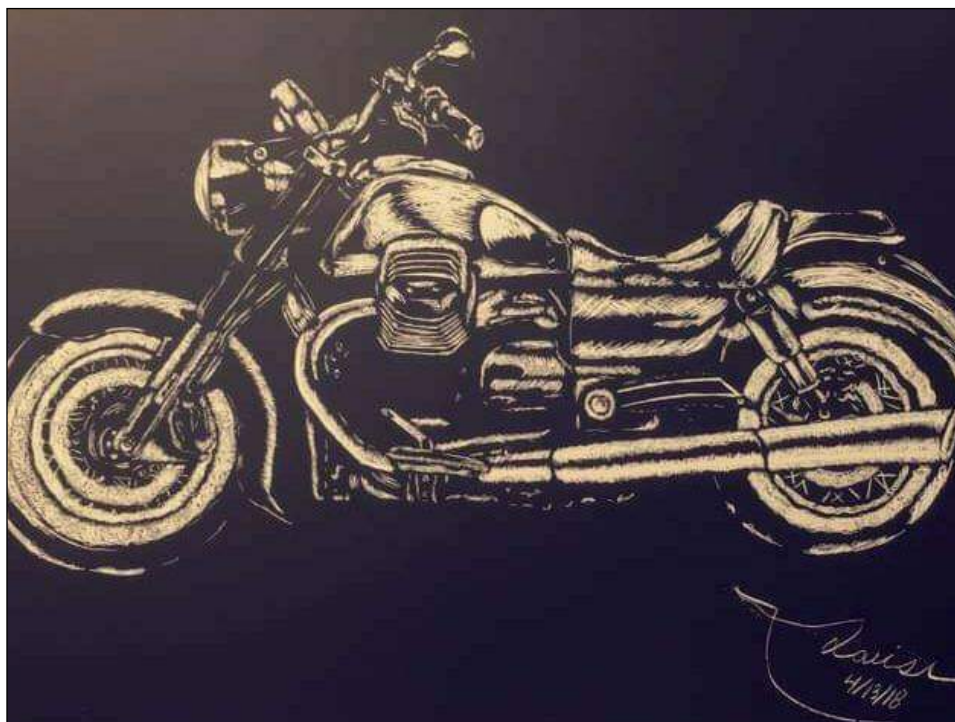


FEATURES

The Artist: Louis G. Rodriguez

BY VANESSA POULSON

At just 17, Louis G. Rodriguez has already built quite the artistic portfolio for himself. From painting animals, superheroes or motorcycles to intricate scratchboard art, Rodriguez pursues projects that are not only incredibly detailed but also provide the viewer with an innate sense of harmony and happiness, his most important artistic component.



Rodriguez, originally from New York, has been creating art since his formative years, taking after his mother who is also an artist. The path to creating art of his own wasn't an easy one, however, and it was Rodriguez's mother who served as his main inspiration in refining his craft. Whenever he felt discouraged about the work that he'd done and was on the brink of giving up, she was always there to pick up the pieces and encourage him to start again.

"I wanted to make drawings to give to other students, but I wasn't the best at drawing at the time – in fact, most of my art looked like scribbles," said Rodriguez. "However, my mom was actually

good at art, so I would ask her to make a drawing for me. After that, I would present it as my own. My mom was my main motivator – she always encouraged me to draw even after I ripped paper in half. I wouldn't be what I am today without her."

Rodriguez specializes in creating intricate and incredibly detailed artwork on scratchboards, a technique that requires the artist to start with a black surface that, when scratched, creates a white line. Your only tool throughout this process is a small knife that is used to carve the drawings into the black surface. This makes for an incredibly tedious and unique process.

"Normally with a pencil, you draw whatever it is you will draw and create shadows to make it pop more or give it form and shape," said Rodriguez. "However, scratch art primarily focuses on creating only the highlights of a subject. No outlines, no shades."

Through the scratchboard medium, Rodriguez has already created a lion, an owl and a motorcycle with this technique. This, along with improving his portrait skills (specifically, one day being able to draw a portrait of his family and especially his mother) as well as the re-creation of an old scene with a style similar to Rococo or Renaissance, are all projects he looks forward to pursuing in the near future.

When asked about his artistic process, Rodriguez credits the power of having inspiration strike at the right time and remembering to work on projects that, first

and foremost, make him happy.

"Once inspired, I almost immediately begin the project and do as much work as I can before I become tired. From there, I work on the piece every now and then, adding details from my mind that serve as inspiration," said Rodriguez. "Harmony is an important component in art because it helps bring all the factors of a piece together. This makes one subconsciously attracted to a piece because we are all drawn to something we feel like we could break apart into small parts."

In the future, Rodriguez hopes to continue his artistic endeavors. He's currently leaning toward the graphic design field, but no matter what, he knows that art is going to be a huge factor in his future.

You can see more of Rodriguez's art on his Instagram account @lgrodat.

NOMINATE AN ARTIST

We are looking for interesting artists who live in the Nonahood to be featured.

If you or someone you know should be nominated to be a Nonahood News Featured Artist, send your nomination to nonahood.to/artist.



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Catch a Lift Fund: Any Gym. Anywhere. Fitness for Wounded Veterans

BY ROBERT FESSOCK



CATCH A LIFT FUND
Any gym. Anywhere. Fitness for wounded veterans.

Corporal Christopher Coffland was a Baltimore native and student-athlete who excelled both at The Gilman School and Washington and Lee University. He received his bachelor's degree in anthropology in 1998. After completing college, he pursued a doctorate degree for which he traveled extensively throughout the world, studying and immersing himself in many different cultures. As a stellar athlete, Coffland also spent time playing professional football in Finland.

The multi-talented Coffland was not only a football player, role model, artist, anthropologist, son, brother, uncle, and friend to so many people – he was the epitome of a citizen soldier. Coffland had always been a selfless individual who joined the military at age 41 to protect our liberties as Americans. He was truly dedicated and determined to be the best soldier possible in all facets of the military.

Like many soldiers who have risked their lives to save others, Coffland was a person who thought about others first rather than himself and never described himself as extraordinary. Young soldiers not only looked at Coffland as a leader and fitness expert, but they also looked to him as a “fatherly figure” who could not only provide guidance, direction, and lift their warrior

spirits in training and combat but in personal challenges as well.

As an intelligence analyst, he felt that he was doing a job that needed to be done in service to his nation. Coffland also personally believed that by joining the Army in the latter part of his life, his enlistment could keep a mother or father out of harm's way. That is the type of person he was, never putting himself above others.

Corporal Coffland was killed by an improvised explosive device (IED) two and a half weeks after arriving in Afghanistan. Coffland was assigned to the 323rd Military Intelligence Battalion out of Fort Meade, Md., as an intelligence analyst. His death is where his never-ending legacy begins through the compassion, dedication, and hard work of Coffland's sister, Lynn Coffland, who created the Catch a Lift Fund (CAL) in 2010, a nonprofit whose primary mission is to promote Post-Traumatic Growth (PTG) by providing post-9/11 wounded veterans nationwide granted gym memberships and home gym equipment. His intense passion for health and physical fitness is what inspired Lynn to keep Chris' memory alive and incorporate the importance of physical fitness in the lives of combat veterans.

As a combat veteran and CAL grant recipient myself, I know firsthand the multitude of challenges soldiers face when we return home from combat. Medication and substance abuse were the only options I seemed to have after separating from the military. Certain smells, loud and unexpected noises, and other triggers brought me right back into combat. It is very hard to adjust from your combat mentality where you are always scanning and identifying potential threats to becoming a husband and father in a matter of weeks upon



post-deployment.

Most people don't realize that once you separate from the military, treatment and comradery are completely gone. As a soldier and leader, you lose that sense of identity and purpose. But, most importantly, that avenue of communication with your fellow soldiers disappears, leaving you in a state of “limbo.” I became extremely depressed and I felt like my life was over until a soldier I served with in Afghanistan told me about an organization called Catch a Lift that will get you back into the gym and back into a state of physical and mental toughness.

I applied in 2014. Four years later, I lost 30 pounds, and I currently volunteer as the race coordinator for CAL. In addition, we are one of the charity partners for runDisney, participating in all four Disney races throughout the year. What CAL provided me and thousands of other soldiers is purpose, motivation and direction – three main ingredients that were lacking in our lives once we separated, and without those key elements, we are lost as individuals!

For the past two years, CAL has reached more than \$1 million in donations through the hard work of their volunteers as well as the soldiers who share their emotional stories of combat and struggles during post-deployment. Additional key accomplishments

to date include ringing the NYSE bell on Dec. 22, 2016, and being a top-rated organization for the past three years by GreatNonprofits.org. Our past two audits show that more than 90% of every dollar donated goes directly to veteran programs. In 2015, our organization was featured on the CBS evening news with Scott Pelley. We have more than 3,000 veterans in our program representing all 50 states, including a large veteran population in Florida.

Lynn Coffland and her team continuously strive every day to ensure our servicemen and women have the opportunity to improve the quality of their lives through physical fitness, nutrition and accountability. In addition, Coffland and everyone on her team are always there for you 24 hours a day when you need someone to talk to.

For more information, to volunteer, or make a donation, please visit www.catchaliftfund.org.



AWARDS AND ACCOLADES:

- Rated as a top non profit on GreatNonProfits.org in 2015, 2016 and 2017
- Rang the Opening Bell on the New York Stock Exchange in Dec. 2016
- Certificate of Appreciation from the DMIC Veterans Resource Center
- Certificate of Recognition from the Senate of Maryland
- Certificate of Recognition from the Commonwealth of Virginia General Assembly
- Baltimore Orioles HomeTown Hero Award
- Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve presented by the Secretary of Defense
- House Resolution Certificate from the Maryland House of Delegates
- Seven Seals Award presented by the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve
- Rated as a Platinum Charity by GuideStar
- Certificate of Recognition from the Comptroller of Maryland
- Certificate of Recognition from the Honorable C.A. Dutch Ruppbergerberg
- Grant Recipient of the Bob Woodruff Foundation
- Grant Recipient of the Wounded Warrior Project
- Grant Recipient of the Department of American Veterans (DAV)
- Recipient of the Sheetrock For Soldiers National Lacrosse Fundraiser
- Member of the Combined Federal Campaign since 2013
- Participant in the 2017 Center Fitzgerald Celebrity Charity Day

Tough Things To Talk About: Love Yourself First

BY VANESSA POULSON

I've always had really vivid past memories of Valentine's Day. For example, I could tell you about the time that my crush in the first grade gave chocolate to the girl that used to draw awful pictures of me and pull my hair every day instead of me. Or, I could talk about the bus ride home on that fateful February 14 in seventh grade where a boy I didn't even know gave me a stuffed teddy bear and walked off the bus, and I never saw him again. I could tell you about what it feels like to be in a relationship and outside of one, happy and sad, frustrated and fain, and every emotion in between. But on this holiday dedicated to loving others, I think it's much more important to talk about loving yourself first.

For starters, loving yourself is **hard**. It can be so easy to pour out passion for another person because when you love someone, sometimes we are blinded by that love and tend to ignore the misgivings or flaws in that person. On the other hand, we know ourselves better than anyone else does. We've seen ourselves through the entirety of our own lives, through all the moments where we made mistakes, hurt people, felt bad about ourselves, and were otherwise in our own eyes “flawed” and maybe even “unloveable.” When we think about what

it would take to love ourselves, it can be more difficult than anything else to sort through all of the negative things and see the person that we are as one who is deserving of the compassion and respect we are so willing to provide to others.

This is where the idea that you can't really love somebody until you know and love yourself really comes into play. New love feels a lot like butterflies and fireworks; beautiful, picturesque but temporary. No matter how powerful or honest a relationship is, the honeymoon phase does not last forever, and eventually we are met with the reality that the other person in the relationship also has flaws and has made mistakes of their own. Each person in a relationship has made mistakes and battles with personal demons. If we have not learned to love ourselves and acknowledge our own mistakes first, how can we say that we are ready and willing enough to love someone else and all of theirs?

It can take a long time to know how to approach a healthy relationship with yourself. Even if you have the best personal, professional and social life, it can still be difficult to look in a mirror and provide yourself with the compassion that you deserve. Perhaps the most important part in this journey is accepting that you as an individual are worth starting the journey toward a better relationship with yourself. You have to be willing to accept your flaws, accept the things about yourself that you wish you could change or that you think make yourself someone who is difficult, undeserving, or not worth loving. No one is going to be able to do this for you just like no one is going to be able to tell you what you need to do to care about you. You have to know when going into this journey



that the person who is going to be able to care about you and love you the most someday is going to be the person staring back at you in your reflection, even if initially it might not feel like it. One step at a time, it gets easier, and one step at a time, you realize that this form of acceptance is so rare and so powerful, even if it takes a bit of interpersonal digging and healing.

I mentioned I've always had vivid memories of Valentine's Day, and though some are bad and some are good, I can say this: It wasn't until I moved on from elementary school where the holiday was spent celebrating friends, middle school when it was something I hated in favor of ignoring my

feelings, and high school when I let people I loved get the best of me, that I realized that this holiday doesn't have to be about someone else. In fact, it doesn't have to be about anyone else. It's about finding a love that you've had all along that can't be bought or sold or given to you on a school bus. A love for yourself.

It's going to be difficult. But, I promise it's going to be worth it.





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A NOTE FROM THE CEO

VALENTINE'S DAY IS ALMOST HERE

BY DON LONG

February 14 is always a great time to tell your loved ones how much you care and value their support. We here at the Lake Nona Regional Chamber also want to thank our many members and supporters for the great success you brought to this chamber over the past year. Thank you. We energetically request your continued support and want you to tell us how we can impact your future in positive ways.

One of the ways we can receive your input is for you to participate in our surveys available on our website, www.lakenonacc.org, or by responding to an email that

you will receive soon. Another way is to come and talk with me at one of my monthly "Talk With the CEO" meeting opportunities. These 30-minute talks are intended to be one-on-one or to small groups only.

Members may also request to meet with one of our Directors from the board. We planned the meeting for the third Thursday of every month at 10:30 a.m., usually at the GuideWell Innovation Center in Lake Nona. You can request your meeting by calling (407) 796-2230 or emailing administration@lakenonacc.org. Hope to see you soon.

2019 EVENT SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

CHAMBER MEMBERS ONLY

First Tuesdays - \$1500 entire year: First Tuesdays, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Breakfast Connections - \$1500 entire year: Second Thursdays, 8:00-9:30 a.m.

Business Luncheons - \$1500 entire year: Fourth Fridays, 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Contagious Connections - \$750 entire year: Quarterly - February, May, August, & November, 8:00-9:30 a.m.

Benefits Include:

- Exposure on all of our social media platforms and website as our sponsor for the event through marketing and promotional campaigns run by the Chamber.
- Opportunity to speak for five minutes at the beginning of the event.
- Your logo and contact info displayed on the big screen before the presentation at the event.
- Placement of your marketing materials on the tables.
- Complimentary registration for two of your representatives (additional reps pay normal registration fees).

All sponsorships are non-exclusive. Logos will present in order of purchase.

EVENT GALLERY



Jan. 4, First Tuesdays on Thursday, Castle Church Brewing, Waterford Lakes - New chamber member Castle Church Brewing Community welcomed chamber members and guests to the chamber's first event for 2019. The First Tuesdays event moved from Tuesday, Jan. 2, to allow for attendees to adjust to the New Year and still visit our new regional brewery. Guests were greeted by the brewery owners with free appetizers and happy hour prices for their local brews. Photo Credit, Don Long



Jan. 4, Ribbon Cutting Castle Church Brewing, Waterford Lakes - Owner Jared Witt cuts the ribbon to celebrate the opening of Castle Church Brewing Community. He is joined by several Lake Nona Regional Chamber of Commerce members. The brewery is located at 6820 Hoffner Ave., Orlando. Photo Credit, Don Long



Jan. 10, Lake Nona Information Center, Lake Nona - Lake Nona Regional Chamber of Commerce members and visitors participate in a briefing delivered by Kelly McGinty and other members of the info center located in Canvas Restaurant and Market. The informational brief was delivered as part of the chamber's monthly Breakfast Connections program. The information center is the place to go for people interested in knowing the latest news and updates about Lake Nona. Photo Credit, Madelyn Long



Jan. 10, Canvas Restaurant and Market, Lake Nona - Anna Pindara, Senior Sales Manager, Tavistock Restaurant Collection (back to camera), shares information about offerings from four Tavistock Restaurants: Canvas Restaurant and Market, Chroma, Park Pizza & Brewing Company, and (soon to open) Boxi Park. All four restaurants are members of the Lake Nona Regional Chamber of Commerce. Photo Credit, Madelyn Long



Jan. 11, River Ranch Resort, Lake Wales - Dr. Linda Travelute, Travelute Leadership & People Development, leads the board of directors and staff of the Lake Nona Regional Chamber of Commerce in a John Maxwell Leadership Program. The program was an integral part at the beginning of the board of directors' annual retreat held at River Ranch on Jan. 11-12. Sixteen of the 20 directors attended the retreat. Photo Credit, Nelson de Frietas



Jan. 11, River Ranch Resort, Lake Wales - Lake Nona Regional Chamber of Commerce board of directors, members and their guests set out for an after-office-hours part of the annual retreat at Westgate River Resort near Lake Wales. Photo Credit, Westgate Staff

Upcoming Events

Feb 05: First Tuesdays Business After-Hours at Chroma Modern Bar + Kitchen
First Tuesdays Business After-Hours Exclusive Member's Event at Chroma Modern Bar + Kitchen
Time: 5:30-7:30 p.m.
Location: Chroma Modern Bar + Kitchen, 6967 Lake Nona Blvd., Orlando (Lake Nona), FL 32827
Exclusive Members Event. Registration is free for Chamber members. Reserve your spot! Please contact administration@lakenonacc.org if you would like to bring a first-time guest to this networking event.

Feb 14: Breakfast Connections with Wendy Brandon, FACHE, CEO of UCF Lake Nona Medical Center
HCA Healthcare and the UCF College of Medicine named Wendy H. Brandon, FACHE, as CEO of UCF Lake Nona Medical Center. Slated to open by the end of 2020, the hospital strives to represent the future of medicine in Central Florida while delivering outstanding training for physicians. Brandon began her new role on January 1, 2019. She will update attendees on progress and goals of the hospital.
Time: 8:00 - 9:30 a.m.
Location: GuideWell Innovation Center Café, 6555 Sanger Rd., Orlando (Lake Nona), FL 32827
Fees/Admission: Chamber Members \$15, Non-members \$20

Feb 22: Business Luncheon "ARE YOU THINKING LIKE AN OWNER?" with Chris White, Owner, Traction in Florida
Chris White - entrepreneur and business coach - will take you through a dynamic presentation that lays the foundation for crafting incentive plans, fostering a healthy company culture and breaking down the financial literacy essential to make it effective.
SPACE IS LIMITED--register today!
Time: 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
Location: Ronald McDonald House, 13551 Nemours Pkwy., Orlando (Lake Nona), FL 32827
Fees/Admission: Chamber Members \$20, Non-Members \$30

Feb 26: Contagious Connecting "Top 10 Traits of a Master Networker That Eliminates Cold Calling" with Dr. Linda Travelute, Travelute Leadership & People Development
Secure your footing as an elite Networker so you are only separated by six degrees from anyone with whom you want to do business. You'll learn the top 10 traits then practice one-on-one, what you've learned along with round table discussions to make it applicable. You will leave with new connections and a game plan to implement your discoveries immediately so you can make more money from networking. Value: \$99.
Time: 8:00 - 9:30 a.m.
Location: GuideWell Innovation Center, 6555 Sanger Rd., Orlando (Lake Nona), FL 32827
Fees/Admission: Chamber Members \$15, Non-Members \$20

Mar 05: First Tuesdays Business After-Drive Shack Orlando, 3rd Floor Terrace
First Tuesdays Business After-Hours Exclusive Member's Event at Drive Shack. Specialty snacks, great drinks and driving ranger fun!
Time: 5:30-7:30 p.m.
Location: Drive Shack Orlando (3rd Floor Terrace, 7285 Corner Dr., Orlando (Lake Nona), FL 32827
Exclusive Members Event. Registration is free for Chamber members. Reserve your spot! Please contact administration@lakenonacc.org if you would like to bring a first-time guest to this networking event.

RENEWALS - Thank you for your loyalty!

December 15, 2018 - January 14, 2019

- BB&T - Branch Banking & Trust Lake Nona
- David Weekly Homes
- Dwell Nona Place Luxury Apartments
- Green Cleaning For a Cause, Inc.
- Lake Nona Youth Sports
- Luxury Realty, Inc.
- New York Life & NYLIFE Securities LLC - Nicole Perez Gutierrez
- Orlando Heart and Vascular Center
- RE/MAX BLUE WATER
- Sean Gerlin - Envision Wealth Planners
- Susan Murray, CPA, PA
- Tempus Hair Restoration
- The Pictionary Club

NEW PLATINUM PARTNER

December 15, 2018 - January 14, 2019

AdventHealth, Orlando

NEW MEMBERS

December 15, 2018 - January 14, 2019

- Avalon Insurance Services, LLC
- Commercial Air Conditioning & Electric, Inc
- Carlisle Realty, LLC
- Carr Riggs and Ingram
- Drive Shack
- First Colony Bank of Florida
- HIS Capital Funding
- Lake Nona Silkscreening, LLC
- Office of Lou Holtz
- Premier Elevator Co, Inc
- St. Cloud Printing



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Nona Chamber

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- \$450 NON-MEMBERS

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Jackson Wyatt Of Lake Nona Selected as 2019 Youth Ambassador For the ADA's Tour de Cure at Lake Nona



them to a hospital for emergency testing. The results of those tests put Jackson in a fight for his life. With his glucose levels at a life-threateningly high level, doctors had to hospitalize Jackson for two days while they worked to bring his levels down.

It's been approximately a year since that frightful day, and Jackson and his family have wasted no time adjusting to a new way of life. Within a month of his initial diagnosis, Jackson started administering his own insulin injections and following his continuous glucose monitor (CGM) that he fondly calls "Dex." The Dexcom transmits Jackson's glucose numbers to his parents' smartphones in real time and sounds an alarm when numbers are out of range – no matter what time of day. Several times a night, the alarm sounds, and Jackson's parents wake up to assess how to help his glucose levels stabilize. "We learned from the very start that diabetes won't limit or define you," said Jackson's father, Ryan. While diabetes may be Jackson's disease, it's his entire family's fight. Jackson's older brother, Walker, 9, and sister, Olivia, 4, help their brother in any way



that they can. "They get me snacks, and my brother helps me with Dex," said Jackson, who laughs when describing how his Dexcom records look as trivial as his little sister's scribbles. This year, Jackson was selected as the American Diabetes Association's (ADA) 2019 Youth Ambassador. The ADA's mission is to prevent and cure diabetes and improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes, and it's a mission that Jackson and his family share. Together with his family, Jackson has committed to walking 10 miles at the ADA's premier fundraising event, the Tour de Cure at Lake Nona, and is helping raise awareness and funds for the event through his participation in the ADA's newly-launched advertising campaign called "I Ride For." The powerful series of video and print ads shares the stories of Central Floridians from all walks of life and ages who are affected by diabetes and why they are participating in the Tour de Cure at Lake Nona.

Hosted on March 31, the event offers participants the chance to ride, run or walk to find a cure for diabetes and includes bicycle route options from 10 to 101 miles. Its family-friendly 5k walk/run also includes activity stations along the way from Crayola Experience to keep even the youngest minds engaged and educated about the ADA's cause. Last year, the local event raised more than \$928,000, and the goal for this year is even higher: \$1 million. All participants can either join or create their own team to help raise money for the event. The Wyatt family has appropriately named their team "Team Jackson" and would love any support that could help them reach their personal \$10,000 fundraising goal. You can learn more about the ADA's Tour de Cure or donate by visiting www.diabetes.org/lakenona.

You can learn more about the ADA's Tour de Cure or donate by visiting www.diabetes.org/lakenona.

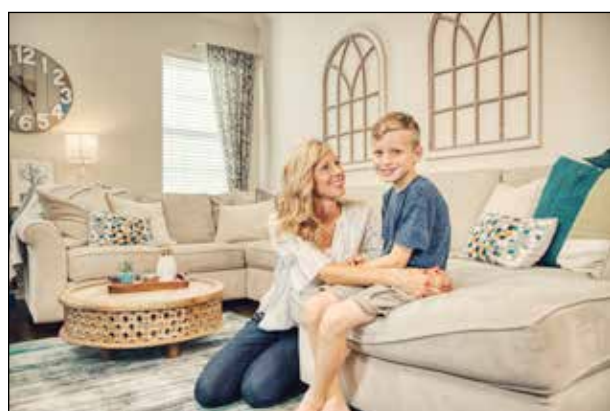
**Sunday, March 31, 2019
Lake Nona Town Center**

Long-Distance Riding – 50MI / 63MI / 101MI
Check-in: 6:30 a.m. | Start Time: 7:30 a.m.
Short-Distance Riding – 10MI / 25MI
Check-in: 8:30 a.m. | Start Time: 9:30 a.m.
5K Run/Walk
Check-in: 9:00 a.m. | Start Time: 10:00 a.m.



ARTICLE BY MEG ROSENOFF
PHOTOS PROVIDED BY
J. MICHAEL MEDIA

Lake Nona's own Jackson Wyatt is a little different than other seven-year-olds – and it's not because of the way he undoubtedly plans on being a quarterback for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. Jackson is living with Type 1 diabetes, and the diagnosis almost killed him. A candy-fueled Valentine's Day Party that should've been a dream for Jackson quickly turned into a nightmare. When Jackson came home from school that day, he wasn't himself. The energetic young boy his parents knew and loved was debilitatingly weak and tired. "I couldn't even walk up the stairs in my house," said Jackson. The Wyatts rushed their son to a doctor who, suspecting diabetes, sent



A Community To Be Proud Of

BY SOPHIA ROGERS

This is a story about a community that takes pride in coming together. One where residents connect via networking groups, youth sports, running clubs, local bars, neighborhood groups and even social media.

On Dec. 7, 2018, Carolina Misle-Olivier posted on the Narcoossee News Network, a local Facebook group of more than 9,000 members. She reached out to the community in hopes that she could gather items to help a displaced family right before Christmas.

To all my local Lake Nona friends – I am helping a displaced family new to Orlando, a couple with a 6-year-old son. I've managed to get some things for their new apartment, but they are still in need of many things since they got here from overseas empty-handed.

If you are cleaning up and feel in the spirit of helping this season, the following items will be greatly appreciated:

- Sofa / futon / living room furniture
- Night tables
- Platform base for a full mattress
- Twin bed / bedding for a boy
- Kitchen supplies – anything helps
- Bedding for a full bed
- Winter clothes for a 6-year-old boy

*For whatever anyone can help with, I am deeply appreciative for your donations.
Happy Holidays!*

Shortly thereafter, and much to Misle-Olivier's surprise, multiple offers of bedding, furniture, clothing, toys and anything else the family needed began coming in. One gentleman even offered the use of his truck to deliver a mattress from another neighbor. Some simply asked, "Where do we drop off?" Without having to know the who, what and why – strangers came together and made the holiday season a little better for this family.

Misle-Olivier would like to thank the community and let you all know she "was so touched by the immediate and warm response from the Lake Nona Community. The fact that this family, who left everything behind to take a shot at a whole new life, was able to get here straight into their almost fully-equipped home ... their son received toys, books, clothing, a bed, etc. ... it was a blessing and it was because you all pitched in! Thank you!"

Stories like this are what make our little section of southeast Orlando unique. I'm so proud of our community!

Sophia Rogers leads The Rogers Team at Premier Sotheby's International Realty. Family, relationships and real estate are her passions. She can be reached at sophia@nonahoodnews.com.



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Rising Above the V-Day Blues!

BY SAMIA SOLH

Over the years, countless romantic comedies have been produced about Valentine's Day. Usually starting with a bitter woman who has given up on love and rejects the day entirely, and ending with her madly in love and kissing the perfect guy as the credits roll.

The happily-ever-after routine may not be everyone's destiny. So why not find the most positive way to deal with it instead of choosing to be sad, bitter and lonely on a day that is supposed to celebrate love? Love comes in so many different forms, and Valentine's Day represents all these different relationships. So, if you have the V-day blues creeping in on you this year, just choose to focus on LOVE!

Let us mentally list the love that is surrounding us all the time, one that doesn't come from a life partner. Granted, they don't replace that kind of love, but nevertheless, they still add positivity, happiness and companionship, and isn't that what love is all about at the end? Also, just because you don't have love now doesn't mean you won't have it eventually, so why be sad till then?

Your life is probably filled with most of the following things, if not all. Love from your parents and siblings, love from a BFF (or a group of them), your furry BFF at home, your career that brings you joy. Of course, the highest blessings in life, the kids. If you don't have kids, then you are also blessed to have your freedom, plenty of time to sleep, and time to love yourself. Which brings me to the next love that should be the love of your life, without sounding selfish or narcissistic: If you love yourself,



everything else just falls into place. Cherish these things and use Valentine's Day to celebrate them and rise above nitpicking all that you don't have and just be content with what you do have.

Embrace your blessings. Remind yourself that you are living in a beautiful and safe town, you have your health, and you have a few things that make you happy. That's a lot more than many people can say. New-age studies show that once you reach that point of contentedness and appreciation, you actually allow for more blessings to enter your life.

Don't forget that sometimes giving love can be just as satisfying as receiving it, so this Valentine's Day, remember that there are people who don't have any of the things listed above and don't have the mental or emotional power to rise above. If you are feeling down, think outwardly instead. Think of what you can give instead of what you can take. Be the person who does something kind for others in need to remind them that they are not alone in this world and that even they deserve and have some love on Valentine's Day. Volunteer at a shelter and offer hot cocoa or take some

chocolate down to pass around. Pass by an orphanage with little goodie bags for the kids who have to grow up without a mommy and daddy.

Love is in the air and all around – you just have to see it. If you can't see it, then be it. Don't waste a precious moment in your life obsessing about the lack of it. Rise above, and the world will rise to you.



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HEALTH & WELLNESS

USTA's College MatchDay to Kick Off Its Annual Slate Of Marquee Matchups

ARTICLE BY DANIEL PYSER
PHOTOS COURTESY OF USTA



The month of February at the USTA National Campus will once again be dominated by college tennis, as College MatchDay returns to Lake Nona and both the men's and women's UCF programs begin their 2019 seasons.

For the second straight year, College MatchDay will kick off its annual slate of marquee matchups with the in-state rivalry match featuring the Florida Gators' and Florida State Seminoles' men's teams on Feb. 2.

This is the third consecutive year the two nationally ranked men's programs have met in Lake Nona, and the Seminoles are looking to make it a perfect 3-0 record against their Gator rivals. Last year's match, which also featured both universities' women's teams, attracted nearly 2,000 fans.

Admission is free for each College MatchDay event, which will feature kids' activities, live music, specialty food and drinks, games and giveaways on-site at the National Campus.

In addition to the typical game-day atmosphere that has become a staple of College MatchDay, fans will be treated to a pre-match fireworks display. Gates open at 5 p.m., and the match begins at 6 p.m.

This year, the National Campus' 1,200-seat collegiate stadium – the only off-campus stadium in America built specifically for college tennis – will host five consecutive weekends of team matches. Each match will also air live on Tennis Channel.



The second matchup of the year features the men's teams from Duke and Tennessee on Feb. 9, followed by both the men and women from Army and Air Force on Feb. 16. That match marks the first time that a service academy has been featured in College MatchDay, and the day will include a number of military-themed activities and tributes, including a veterans' clinic and a flyover. It is also the only match of the year featuring both men's and women's teams playing side-by-side, utilizing all 12 courts.

The final two weekends of College MatchDay feature the hometown UCF Knights. First, on Sunday, Feb. 24, the UCF women will take on the perennial national title contender Florida Gators, who will make their third straight appearance at College MatchDay. And finally, on Sunday, March

3, the UCF men close out the College MatchDay season against the University of Miami.

College MatchDay is one of the USTA's primary platforms to promote college tennis. The first two years of College MatchDays hosted at the USTA National Campus have drawn more than 10,000 fans. Last year's matches all aired live on Tennis Channel as part of the network's first-ever live college tennis series.

This year, College MatchDay serves as a five-week lead-up to the 2019 NCAA Division I Men's and Women's Tennis Championships, set to be held in May at the National Campus in Orlando for the first time.

Fans who are interested in more college tennis are encouraged to come to support UCF, which plays all of its home matches at the USTA National Campus' Collegiate Center. In addition to UCF's schedule, the USTA Collegiate Series features a number of top-tier Division I programs playing in Lake Nona throughout the spring.

For a complete list of USTA National Campus events and additional event information, including how to reserve complimentary tickets, please visit www.ustanationalcampus.com.



COLLEGE MATCH DAY

USTA

DON'T MISS A MOMENT OF THE 2019 SEASON!

Join us an hour before First Serve for prematch festivities!

DATE	SCHOOLS	TIME (EST)
Saturday, Feb. 2	Florida vs. Florida State (M)	6:00 PM
Saturday, Feb. 9	Duke vs. Tennessee (M)	6:00 PM
Saturday, Feb. 16	Air Force vs. Army (M&W)	4:30 PM
Sunday, Feb. 24	Florida vs. UCF (W)	5:30 PM
Sunday, March 3	Miami vs. UCF (M)	5:00 PM

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The Heart of The Matter

Do You Need a Cardiologist?

BY DR. RAJESH TOTA-MAHARAJ

As you consider health improvements you want to make in 2019, look into your heart and ask yourself: "How's it going in there?" According to the American Heart Association's 2018 statistics, about 92.1 million American adults are living with some form of cardiovascular disease. It accounts for one in seven deaths in the U.S. and claims more lives each year than all forms of cancer combined. These are scary statistics but take heart: Many of the risks of cardiovascular disease are reversible with medication and lifestyle changes. You can lower your cholesterol, stabilize your blood pressure, and achieve a healthy weight, but it can't happen until you know your numbers.

Start With Your PCP

Your primary care physician can often monitor and manage high cholesterol and/or high blood pressure. At a glance, your vital stats should look something like this:

- If you are under age 80, your **blood pressure** shouldn't regularly be higher than 120/80.
- The optimal level for your **LDL cholesterol** (LDL is bad cholesterol) is 100. The lower the number, the better.
- If your **HDL cholesterol** level is around 60, you are lowering your risk

for heart disease. HDL is good cholesterol, so higher numbers are best.

- Your **total cholesterol** (LDL + HDL) should be below 200.
- Your **blood glucose** should be below 150.

Your PCP can check these numbers at your annual exam. Some PCPs may also recommend an EKG, a diagnostic test to establish a baseline of your heart rhythm. The annual exam is essential for tracking your health and making plans for improvements. And improvements *are* possible – many of these numbers can be put in check by eliminating smoking, adding exercise, and cleaning up your diet.

When Would I Need a Cardiologist?

If your numbers are out of range, or if you have a family history of heart disease – such as one or more immediate family members being affected by high blood pressure or cholesterol – then it might be time for an evaluation from a cardiologist. Additionally, high numbers and comorbidities diabetes and obesity can prompt your PCP to refer you to a cardiologist.

Your referral to a cardiologist could be a one-time visit or a series of ongoing, routine check-ups. If you are experiencing heightened risk factors of a cardiac event, you should not hesitate to see a cardiologist.

Heightened risk factors include:

- Chest pain or discomfort
- Shortness of breath, which can indicate congestive heart failure or valve problems
- Rhythm disturbances called arrhythmias

- Family history of heart disease
- A diagnosis of chronic kidney disease, which increases your risk of heart disease
- A diagnosis of peripheral arterial disease

Your heart's working hard for you – show it some love! Small changes can make a tremendous difference to your heart health.

Dr. Rajesh Tota-Maharaj is an interventional cardiologist who is board certified in internal medicine and cardiovascular medicine. To make an appointment, call (407) 303-6588 or visit AdventHealthMedicalGroup.com.



Plastic Surgery: A Cure for Personal Relationship Problems?

BY RICHARD O. GREGORY, MD

It has long been known that a person's appearance will affect not only the way a person feels about him or herself, but also the way that person interacts with others. Maxwell Maltz wrote an entire book, *Psycho-cybernetics*, in 1960 about this important aspect of life. Other books such as *Dress for Success* deal with this same premise. The thought that "plastic surgery reaches into the psyche" also reflects the role of aesthetic intervention in patients' lives. Finally, Francis Cooke McGregor's book, *After Plastic Surgery*, describes the role of facial disfigurement in the lives of numerous patients relative to depression, suicide, divorce, occupational problems and other life-changing aspects. Thus, it is well recognized that appearance can have a significant impact above and beyond the "vanity quotient."

It is important also to ask the question, "Can improving the appearance change a person's success in life?" A study was done in the Texas prison system in which inmates who had identifiable physical characteristics to which they attributed their life of crime underwent plastic surgery. These "improved-appearance" convicts,



when released from prison, were found to have a much lower recidivism rate (return to jail) than those who had not undergone plastic surgery.

Returning to the original question: "Can plastic surgery cure interpersonal relationship problems?" Every classic surgeon can relate instances in which aesthetic plastic surgery has caused introverted young people to emerge from their social cocoon and become social butterflies. Rhinoplasty in young girls is a classic example of this. For example, plastic surgery has helped widows overcome their depression following the death of a spouse. One might see this as an effort to start a new phase in their lives.

It is evident from the above discussion

that, indeed, relationships can be and are healed by judicious application of the plastic surgeon's scalpels, lasers or other tools. Conversely, it should be noted that cosmetic surgery or treatments will not reverse the broken relationships caused by deep psychological issues that ultimately result in divorce or other self-defeating acts such as suicide.

While the age-old saying "happiness comes from within" may be true, the added confidence that comes from being happy with one's appearance certainly impacts the way we view ourselves and the way others may view us as well. Surgeons at The Institute of Aesthetic Surgery (IAS) often find that the biggest transformation for patients isn't external, it's internal.

Fixing something on the outside impacts a patient's confidence and benefits those around them.

Join IAS for a complimentary consultation to discuss your aesthetic goals and the options available. To learn more, call us at 407-409-8000 or visit iasurgery.net.

About Richard O. Gregory, MD



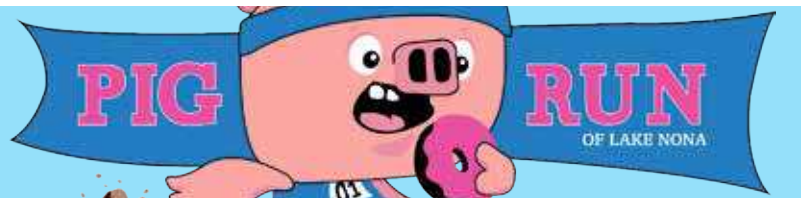
An internationally known board-certified plastic surgeon, Dr. Richard Gregory has developed an outstanding reputation locally for his unparalleled surgical technique, excellent service and integrity. While skilled in all

areas of plastic surgery, his passion is in facial rejuvenation, utilizing surgical procedures, non-surgical options and laser technology to achieve the desired result. Dr. Richard Gregory is a world-renowned expert welcoming patients and surgeons from around the world who seek his expertise.

Year after year, Dr. Richard Gregory is voted "Best Plastic Surgeon in Orlando" by Orlando Magazine, recognized in America's Best Doctors list, and chosen as "Best of the Best" by SELF Magazine. Dr. Richard Gregory is dedicated to helping his patients look and feel their best.



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Staying Up-to-Date On Recommended Vaccines Protects Your Health

BY AISHAH ALI, MD, UCF HEALTH



Vaccines are for all ages, not just children. They are an excellent way to prevent disease; in fact, as we age, it is crucial that we receive the appropriate vaccinations to protect ourselves from diseases that can have serious health implications. Staying up-to-date on vaccinations should be a top priority throughout your life.

Different vaccines are recommended during certain stages of our lives, including ones to take during childhood, pregnancy and after age 65. Some patients with chronic diseases may also be at a higher risk for some illnesses and have recommended vaccines. Here is a breakdown of what shots to get and when to get them.

Vaccines for All Ages

The Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria, Acellular Pertussis) vaccine and the yearly influenza vaccine are recommended for all ages, regardless of health status.

The Tdap vaccine protects us from tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis – rare but severe diseases. Doctors recommend receiving this booster vaccine every 10 years. Pregnant patients have different recommendations.

Everyone should get the influenza vaccine yearly and as early as it is available.

Vaccines for Pregnant Women

In addition to a yearly flu shot, pregnant women should also receive a Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria, Acellular Pertussis) vaccine during their third trimester with every pregnancy. This helps protect newborn babies from pertussis,

also known as whooping cough. Those who will be around young children should also be up-to-date on their Tdap and may need a booster to protect the health of their young loved ones.

Vaccines for Those Who Are 65+

If you are over the age of 65, you should receive the pneumonia vaccines and shingles vaccine in addition to your yearly flu shot. For pneumonia, both Prevnar and Pneumovax are recommended, but you should talk to your doctor about spacing out the vaccines. For shingles, there is a new vaccine called Shingrix, which is recommended to all patients, even those who have received the older shingles vaccine, Zostavax, in the past.

Vaccines for Those With High-risk Conditions

High-risk conditions can include any cardiac diseases, rheumatologic diseases, pulmonary diseases, kidney diseases, liver diseases, diabetes, and immunocompromising conditions, among others. If you have any of these conditions, you should likely get the pneumonia vaccine. Other vaccines may be recommended depending on your condition. Having a visit with your primary care doctor or subspecialist regarding vaccines is a good way to understand your condition and which vaccines are recommended.

Cancer-preventing Vaccines

The HPV (human papillomavirus) and HBV (hepatitis B) vaccines may help prevent cancers. The HPV vaccine may help prevent cervical, anal, and oropharyngeal cancers, and the HBV vaccine may prevent liver cancers. These vaccines are recommended for young children and adolescents as well as other high-risk patients. You should receive the vaccine to prevent the disease before exposure to the HPV and HBV viruses.

Travel Vaccines

When traveling out of the country, you should talk to your doctor before the trip. Certain vaccinations may be required for entering your destination, and others are generally a good idea to protect your health. Your doctor or a travel medicine specialist can help advise you.

Dr. Aishah Ali is a board-certified allergist and immunologist at UCF Health in Lake Nona and helps educate patients about recommended vaccinations. Learn more at ucfhealth.com.



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The Mind, Body and Soul of Body Energetics Wellness

ARTICLE BY ELAINE VAIL
PHOTOS PROVIDED BY BODY ENERGETICS WELLNESS



Now that we're into February, many of us are still trying to cling to our New Year's resolutions, including putting our health and wellness at the top of our priorities. Many people are longing to take care of their bodies as a whole rather than treat acute symptoms or illnesses without getting to the root of the cause. It has become more and more evident that we must care for our mind, body and spirit all at once in order to achieve the highest level of well-being. But, where to begin? That's where Meltem Turan, owner and founder of Body

that were new to us – that BEW specializes in to promote wellness of the mind, body and soul. Turan explained, "Here in our new center, we have many different acupuncture therapies including laser acupuncture, auricular (ear) acupuncture, electro-acupuncture, as well as other traditional Chinese medicine modalities such as herbal formulas and cupping. We also offer bio-energetic medicine (also known as bio-feedback therapy) by using the latest German technology. Other treatments include homeopathy, tissue-mineral salts, vitamin injections, homeopathic injections, and ozone therapy with many benefits like pain management, detoxification, and cosmetic ozone injections."

Turan went on to share in her warm and gentle demeanor, "We are also able to do nutritional tests using QRA, a form of applied kinesiology, and a variety of exams. Heavy-metal testing is done by using the best technology system available, providing results to customize heavy-metal detoxes that match the patient's specific needs, addressing the deficiencies with cellular resonant formulations and supplements. We also provide full infrared sauna treatments with many benefits like detoxification, anti-aging, cardiovascular health, pain management, and weight loss." She continued to share information with us as she gave us a tour of her facility. We had so many questions and were eager to learn more. "We will be adding more services in the upcoming months that are essential to the overall health and wellbeing of our patients."

It's so obvious as you spend time with her that Turan deeply cares about her patients and the unique methods of healing and wellness she offers. "Our mission is to respect the wisdom of the body," said Turan. "We look at the person as a whole and focus on emotional, physical and nutritional healing as well as prevention rather than only treating the symptoms. We work to identify everything that is interfering with the optimal functional integrity of the body, mind and spirit, providing the body with the building blocks and corrective bio-information it needs in order to heal."

Before opening BEW in the Medical City area, Turan practiced as an acupuncture physician in Winter Park for seven years. "I always wanted to be close to my home and our community, as well as incorporate many different natural health modalities into my practice. I am very happy that I am now able to provide all of these treatments

education is the key to changing lives. "My goal has always been to educate people about how to be healthy and stay healthy," she said. Then she elaborated, "Most of us are in the cookbook phase of 'What do I take to kill the microbe?' or 'What do I take to get the toxins out?' This is why we have so many chronically ill people who are just spinning in circles. There is more to health than doing the latest diet or taking the most advertised supplements. We are looking for quick-fix answers: new herbs, new injections, new drugs, new surgeries ... but we're not looking for a better perspective on how to navigate our health. So, the answer is education. If I get a mom healthy, then I only help her; but if I educate her about how to get well and stay well, she will be helping her whole family, and that is my main goal."

How does this all fit in to the culture of wellness in Lake Nona? Is there a way to integrate multiple schools of thought on the matter of health and wellness? Yes! Turan stated, "As a part of the modern medical community in Lake Nona, I believe my practice brings a balance that complements traditional medicine with holistic healing. I believe in integration, but I am not a fan of the latest fad diet or the latest therapy or test. Everybody is unique and there is no 'one way' to healing. This is why I use my knowledge and understanding of health, as well as a variety of healing modalities, in order to help the patients with what is best for their journey to healing. The Lake Nona community has sought holistic medicine for some time in order to balance traditional medical practices, which is why I'm so excited to be here. I am here to serve a health-conscious community who are eager to live their best quality of life."

What can you expect when you visit BEW?

"We use the most appropriate healing tools to restore the integrity and function of every tissue, gland, organ and system in the body." Turan went on to explain, "We determine what the body is striving to accomplish and work to facilitate the body's ability to accomplish what it needs in order to heal, instead of forcing the body into the drug-induced illusions of health." Oh, how I love that phrase, "drug-induced illusions of health"! Making her core values precisely clear, Turan also said, "At Body Energetics, it is important for us to understand where you are coming from and where you want to go. To get you there, we offer unlimited support, value every question, and we are here to help you along your journey."

We are sure you will feel inspired when you visit with Turan. And she shared with us what inspires her as well: "My in-

spiration is the actual people around me. Seeing people move through their struggles into a better way of health, or finding their strengths to achieve their goals, going for their dreams, taking chances, overcoming their fears, and their joy is extremely inspiring to me."

There is no doubt in my mind that Turan will help you achieve your health-related resolutions for 2019. "I know from personal experience that it's never too soon – or too late – to start taking better care of yourself, start treating yourself with kindness, and start loving yourself."

Body Energetics Wellness accepts most major insurances and is located at 6917 Narcoossee Rd., Suite 734, in the plaza directly behind CVS. Call (407) 801-5510 or email info@benergetics.com to schedule a consultation. We're confident it will be a life-changing experience. Visit their website for more information: www.benergetics.com.



Energetics Wellness (BEW), comes in. If you are seeking a more natural and holistic approach to your wellbeing, including practices like acupuncture and homeopathy, Body Energetics Wellness here in the Lake Nona area might just be the place for you to visit this year.

Our team went to visit with Meltem Turan in her new office. We were greeted warmly like old friends and immediately felt at peace with the calming aromatherapy and welcoming decor (including original artwork by her mother). We were anxious to learn about the many interesting methods – some we had heard of before, some

here at my new facility," she said.

Turan has had the privilege of working with hundreds of patients since she began her practice in 2011. "I've witnessed people go from being sick, stressed, exhausted, depleted, sedentary, to a full shift into a completely new way of life. A life filled with health, movement, more energy, more confidence, new habits and new passions. I love witnessing this kind of transformation, and it's the same journey that I've been on myself," she revealed.

Turan and I talked about our mutual love and excitement for the concept that edu-

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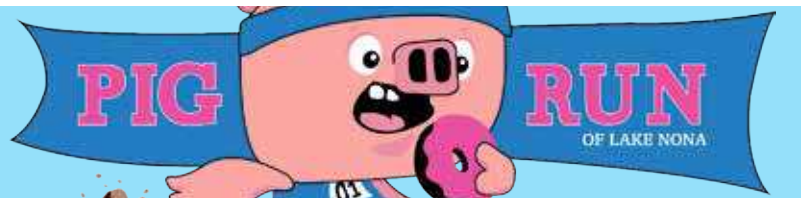
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Namaste With Natalia: Reclined Bound Angle Pose

Supta Baddah Konasana

Your Monthly Yoga
 Pose

BY NATALIA FOOTE
 PHOTOS BY MICHAEL FOOTE

"Your task is not to seek for love, but merely to seek and find all the barriers within yourself you have built against it." Rumi

Rumi's quote above is simply telling you to open your heart. Madonna sang it, "Open your heart to me, I hold the lock." You, and only you, are responsible for how tight or closed your lock around your heart may be. As love fills the air, notice the parts of you stopping the love from coming in.

This month's pose allows us to surrender in an open heart. Supta baddah konasana, or reclined bound angle pose, is a pose that brings openness and light to the heart or upper chest. This simple pose opens the hips and heart. Many of us feel vulnerable when being so open. We build walls to protect ourselves from the fear of pain. When we are open, we are exposed both to scrutiny and love. By staying closed, however, we make it more difficult to allow the beauty of love and light to enter. The choice is yours.

Supta baddah konasana:

1. Sit on the ground and bring the soles of the feet together.
2. Lie back and open your arms to the sides or one hand on the heart and the other on the belly.
3. Close your eyes and breathe in and out for 5-10 breaths.



Supta baddah konasana is a pose that works well with modifications:

- *Supta baddah konasana with blocks, blankets or towels under legs (excellent for tight hips).*
 1. Place a rolled blanket or towel or a block under each thigh.
 2. Repeat steps 1-3 above.
- *Supta baddah konasana with laying on a block (excellent for opening the heart and chest).*
 1. Place a block on the ground where the middle of the back would lie.
 2. The block can be in the lowest or middle position.
 3. Repeat steps 1-3 above.
- *Supta baddah konasana with blocks, blankets and hands overhead.*
 1. Place blankets under legs.
 2. Place block under the heart.
 3. Bring the soles of the feet together and lie back onto the block
 4. Place hands overhead holding on to each elbow.

5. Close your eyes and breathe in and out for 5-10 breaths.

I hope you enjoy this pose, and I hope that you find and keep a light and open heart. For videos detailing this pose and more, follow me on Instagram @namastewithnatalia.

Namaste.

Natalia Foote is the owner of threeR, a company bringing mindfulness, meditation and yoga practices to the workplace. Her mission in life is spreading love and light in the world. When not spending time with her family, you can find Natalia taking and teaching yoga all around Lake Nona.



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EDUCATION

SCHOOL UPDATES

LAUREATE PARK ELEMENTARY

BY SUZANNE WORKUM, PRINCIPAL

Laureate Park Elementary wrapped up 2018 by giving to some important causes. The students and families of our LPE Student Government and Safety Patrol donated items for the local personal care items drive. These items were then donated to the Ronald McDonald House, Fisher House at the local VA, and the Central Florida Children's Home. A great act of kindness that goes along with the thoughtfulness of giving for Covenant House that was school-wide!

Also in December, the National Elementary Honor Society and the PTA organized a toy drive for fellow students at Orlo Vista Elementary, an OCPS school. Mrs. Workum, Mrs. Brauner and Mrs. Thompson had the wonderful opportunity to bring over 300 toys and 14 bicycles to Mrs. Barton, Principal, and Mrs. Wallace, School Counselor, for the students at Orlo Vista Elementary School!

Our smallest Longhorns hit the stage to present a Holidays Around the World musical for family and friends. They did a fantastic job telling us about the Holiday ABC's, along with several popular holiday songs.

In 2019, Laureate Park Longhorns are focused and working hard on meeting and exceeding our academic goals for the remainder of this school year.



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SCHOOL UPDATES

SUN BLAZE ELEMENTARY

We want this month's *Nonahood News* article space to express our appreciation to Lake Nona community businesses that are Partners In Education (PIE) with our school. These partners invest in public education, specifically Sun Blaze, which allows family events, programs, educational clubs, and more to take place.

With almost 1,200 students enrolled at Sun Blaze, community support and involvement is essential. We consider ourselves blessed and fortunate to have the following businesses as Partners In Education. We would like to encourage the Lake Nona community to support organizations and businesses that support our community.



- RICHARD VARNER OF GO REALTY
- JOHN MADISON LANDSCAPE INC.
- THE KENDRICK TEAM AT KELLER WILLIAMS
- PIG FLOYD'S URBAN BARBAKOA
- VICTORY MARTIAL ARTS
- NONA SOCCER ACADEMY
- DUNKIN' DONUTS AT TAGORE PLACE
- FLORIDA SPORTS MARTIAL ARTS ACADEMY
- DOMINO'S PIZZA
- M&M PREMIERE SERVICING

- MATHNASIUM OF LAKE NONA
- BUFFALO WILD WINGS
- ORLANDO FINE ARTS ACADEMY
- ORLANDO SCIENCE CENTER
- SYNAPSE SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY LEARNING CENTER
- PEDIATRIC DENTAL GROUP

We would like to invite the Lake Nona community to follow our social media links to stay connected with all that is happening at Sun Blaze Elementary. The website address is sunblazees.ocps.net and you can follow us on Facebook at Sun Blaze Elementary.

Go, Stingrays!



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SCHOOL UPDATES

NORTHLAKE PARK COMMUNITY SCHOOL

BY SALLY SHUMAN

NorthLake Park recently hosted a Fine Arts Night and Pasta Dinner. The entire school population created a themed work of art for sale to benefit the PTA. Parents who attended were able to purchase their child's masterpiece. In addition, at the event, there were performances from the NLP chorus and music department, Orlando Ballet, and the Lake Nona High School Jazz Band Ensemble 1. Thank you, Mrs. Feinauer (art teacher) and the PTA for all the hard work.

Upcoming projects for art instruction include African art for the 5th grade, ceramic clay coil pots for 4th grade, Midwest scenic farm paintings for 3rd, Norse trolls for 2nd, the tooth fairy for 1st grade, and polar bears for kindergarten.

B-I-N-G-O was the celebration for students who met their AR (Accelerated Reader) for the 2nd nine weeks. Students who met their AR goal played BINGO with

their grade-level peers in the cafeteria. They each had a bingo board and a bag of cheese crackers to use as markers. Students who won were able to select a prize. This is an exciting event for NorthLake Park students. Congratulations NLP students on meeting your AR goal!



LAKE NONA THEATRE DEPARTMENT UPDATES

BY BELLA FUENTES

Lake Nona's Theatre Department created a wonderfully jolly production of *Elf the Musical Jr.* in December. Among families getting into the holiday spirit, adjudicators from the Applause Awards were in the audience to judge the show. All of the cast and crew's hard work paid off as the show was nominated for awards in 11 categories! Those nominations include Outstanding Musical, Outstanding Ensemble, Outstanding Lead Performer, Outstanding Supporting Performer, Outstanding Acting Performance, Outstanding Vocal Performance, Outstanding Director, Outstanding Musical Director, Outstanding Stage Manager, Outstanding Set Designer, and an Honorable Mention in Acting! Congratulations to the whole company!



SCHOOL UPDATES

EAGLE CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

BY JESSICA SCULLY

Hello, Panther Community!

I hope that everyone had a great winter break and took some time to enjoy their family and friends over the holidays. It



was so great to see all our students back on campus, ready to continue learning in their classrooms. I know our teachers and staff enjoyed their breaks and came back refreshed and energized for the second half of the school year.

We have many exciting events planned for the second half of our school year. We hope to continue to see many families involved in our activities, including our PTA dance, Literacy Night, Kindergarten's Black History Month Performance, Field Day and much more!

Principal Sundae

In December, for surpassing our Boost-erthon fundraiser goal, a class from each grade level had the opportunity to turn our principal into a human sundae!

STEM Challenge

It was a Cargo Conundrum, and our Panthers couldn't wait to soar through to a solution! We had so much fun testing their weighted airplanes. We are excited to announce our top three participants in our school-wide Cargo Conundrum #STEM-challenge: 1st Place, Shaurya T. (5th); 2nd Place, Andy G. (5th); and 3rd Place, Marc B. (3rd).



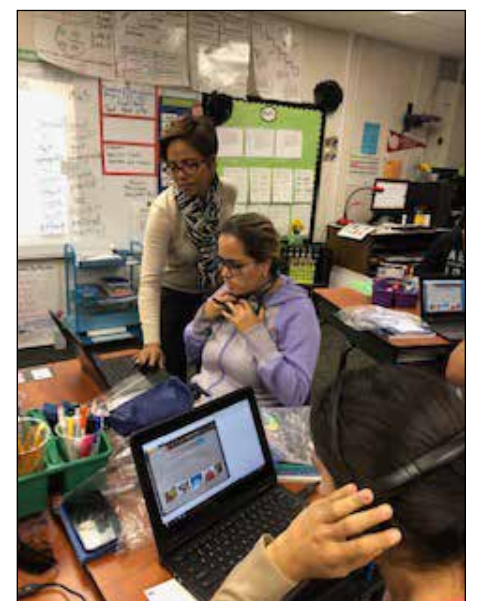
Adult English Classes

During the first semester, Ms. Seda (ESOL Compliance Specialist), Ms. Sanchez (4th Grade Teacher), and Ms. Leon (5th Grade Teacher) have been teaching Parent English Classes here at Eagle Creek. In December, they were assigned a project to present their family or country's holiday traditions. Needless to say, they went all out, bringing pictures, flags, instruments and delicious original foods to share. Ms. Seda stated this initiative has truly made an impact on her life. The parents have been so appreciative of this opportunity.

We received a visit from Mrs. Roberts and Mrs. Vega from the Multilingual Department to our ELL Adult English Class. They were impressed with the teachers, Mrs. Leon and Mrs. Sanchez, the wonderful parents and their enthusiasm for learning English! The best is yet to come!! Thank you, Ms. Seda, Ms. Sanchez, and Ms. Leon for taking this on and helping our community in such a huge way!

School Carnival

Save the Date! Our PTA Spring Carnival will be held on March 8 from 4-8 p.m. Join us for rides, games, bounce houses, bingo, raffles, an auction, and so much more!





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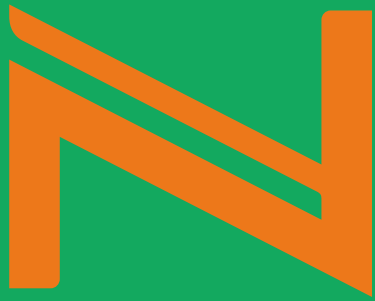
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EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Family Fridays: Conflict + Resolution

BY VANESSA POULSON

Welcome to Family Fridays, where we discuss the importance of reconnecting with your family. In the hustle and bustle of the digital age, finding a moment of peace and quiet is so hard to come by. It can be easy to simply hand our kids technology rather than engaging in real-world activities that challenge their minds and engage their spirits. Each month, we'll look at new and exciting activities that you can do with your family to re-engage and reconnect!

Having conflict with your family is an unfortunate part of life. No matter how close your bond is as a family, there is always room for disagreements to occur between even the people who are closest to you.

In this edition of Family Fridays, we're tackling the issues surrounding conflict resolution within the family. Though disagreements are a natural part of life, there are things that you can do as an individual and as a family to nip conflict in the bud before it really gets out of hand.

1. Find the source of the conflict. Conflict can start over just about anything! Whether it is something trivial like the TV channel or sitting in the passenger seat of the car, to more serious things like a new baby in the house or a teenager becoming a young

adult, conflict needs to be identified before it can be resolved.

- 2. Define the problem and stick to the topic.** When navigating the conversation to work out the source of the problem, it can be easy to get off track and allow for other underlying family issues to bubble up to the surface accidentally. This not only leads to a lot of heartbreak (and maybe some unkind words that people do not really mean) but also distracts from the original conflict that needs to be solved. Stay focused.
- 3. As an adult, don't pick a side.** Staying neutral is so important. If someone feels like they are on the wrong side of the argument often enough, they're more likely to become resentful in future conflicts and be less likely to want to agree to a compromise.
- 4. Talk reasonably and clearly.** This one is pretty self-explanatory. Letting your feelings or past pettiness get the best of you is only going to lead to more people getting hurt than there needs to be.
- 5. Ask questions and try to understand both sides.** Even if you already have an idea in mind as to who is right in the situation, listen to what both parties have to say about the situation. It helps everyone involved to feel vali-



dated in the fact that they are, indeed, being heard and that their concerns are not falling on deaf ears.

- 6. Come up with numerous possible solutions.** There is often more than one answer to a question, and there is even more likely to be more than one solution to a conflict. Explore all the possibilities of what can be done to improve the situation and listen to the concerns of each party before making a final call.
- 7. Make a 'contract.'** Contracts are important legal bindings for a reason. They help lay everything on the table so that there is no room for loopholes or later disagreements down the line. Lay

out everything that was talked about and have everyone sign off, saying they understand what was discussed and make a plan for moving forward.

Conflict stinks, no matter where in your life it occurs. However, with the right attitude, plan and mindset, even the most difficult of situations can be ironed out to make a better plan moving beyond it.

If you take any of our suggestions, be sure to tag us on Instagram and Facebook @nonahoodnews!



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N

FOOD & DRINKS

Kyle's Culinary Column: Kick Some Asparagus!

BY KYLE HAMM



On my way home from work I got a flat tire, I should have brought "asparagus."

Asparagus is typically grown in oceanic locations and thrives in soil that is too salty for other weeds to grow.

Salt has been traditionally used in the soil to suppress other weeds in the fields intended for the vegetable. Asparagus belongs in the species of *officinalis*, which is a perennial flowering plant that grows tall with firm stems and can grow singularly or clustered together. The female asparagus plants can flower with small red berries that are actually poisonous to humans. From seed to harvest can take up to three years, but once they get going, the plants can be picked each spring for 15 years or more.

This spear-shaped vegetable, informally known as sparrow grass, has been dubbed the "food of kings" by kings and queens dating back to first

century B.C. ... Roman emperors had "asparagus fleets" to gather the best quality asparagus to return with. Asparagus has been cultivated all over the world for more than 2,500 years and is still widely grown today. China is the largest producer of asparagus in the world, followed by Peru. Oceana County of Michigan hosts the National Asparagus Festival in June of each year to celebrate the harvest, where they actually have self-proclaimed to be the Asparagus Capital of the World.

Asparagus can come in a variety of three different types: green, white and purple. Green asparagus is the most common and can range from very thin to thick spears. White asparagus is grown below the soil to prevent any production of the chlorophyll and is the most preferred around Europe. Any type of asparagus can produce white spears, as long as it is not open to light. Purple asparagus produces thick spears that are generally tenderer and taste sweeter. However, purple asparagus does not produce as many spears as the green asparagus.

To prepare your asparagus, thoroughly wash the spears under cool running water because they are grown in soil – or if you have a large enough container, ice water

will release any sediment to the bottom. The base of the stalk on asparagus is a very tough, woody texture, and does not taste very good when cooked; just cut the base off of the spears (usually about one to two inches, or just above the white-colored base tip). Thicker spears may need to be peeled to get through the tougher exterior.

Methods of cooking asparagus are plentiful:

- Blanch in salted water and "shock" the spears in an ice bath. This will allow your asparagus to maintain its bright color and stay crisp. This is best to serve cold for salads or other decorative side dishes.
- Steaming is another great method to preserve the asparagus' crisp texture. Easily place in a vegetable steaming basket over a small amount of boiling water and steam until they're bright green, yet still crisp.
- Sautéing for stir-fry is one of my favorite methods. I prefer to cut the spears into half-inch segments for easier bites, but they can be left whole as well.
- Roasting the asparagus is a very common method because of the ease of preparation. Simply lay into a single layer on a roasting pan, drizzle with oil, season and put into the oven at 400°F.
- Grilling the spears is my preferred method of all, especially when they are thicker than average. It creates a great, tender, yet crisp bite with the great taste of smoke from the grill.

Don't be scared to season! Asparagus is surprisingly good with a number of dif-



ferent types of seasoning. My personal favorite is a Greek blend of herbs and spices such as salt, black pepper, basil, oregano, parsley, dill, and garlic and onion powder.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss new ingredients, you can always feel free to chat with me! I love to work with any ingredients that I can get my hands on and have explored many traditional and innovative alternative methods of cooking. So, even if there's something new that you would like to explore, we can go on that culinary adventure together! You can reach me at kyle@nona.media.

Kyle is a graduate of the culinary arts from Le Cordon Bleu. With almost 10 years of experience in the culinary industry, Kyle has trained in almost every technique of cooking from Classic to Modern. Fresh ingredients will always be found exciting, no matter how mundane they are. Kyle's goal is to spread awareness and knowledge of all the possibilities that pertain to the culinary world.



Say Cheese!

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS 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



Sartori Parmesan

kinds of cheese: Buttermilk Bleu, Sartori Parmesan, and Stracciatella (a cheese I'd yet to discover). Let the digging in commence!

I grabbed some bread, smeared some raw honeycomb across it and paired it with the bleu cheese, added some candied bacon and VOILA! Pure bliss! I've always been a fan of pairing honey and bleu. The parmesan was just the way I like it ... crystalized salt balanced out by the sweetness of the honey is a nice contrast to the creamy, yet potent bleu. The parmesan was just the way I like it ... The star of the show was the Stracciatella, the cheese I'd never heard of but quickly realized I've been missing out on. It has the appearance of a cottage cheese, but a little runnier, and the saltiness of parmesan, and it is now one of my favorite cheeses. I easily smeared it on bread, dressed it with honeycomb and bacon and sent my taste buds on an adventure of a lifetime.



Buttermilk Bleu



This month's cheese feature can be found at Cooper's Hawk. The menu listed "Candied Bacon and Artisan Cheeses," and I was immediately sold ... and maybe even drooling, I won't lie. I could barely contain my excitement. Seriously ... it's a bit ridiculous how much I look forward to cheese.

The cheese plate found its way on to my table, and I was instantly delighted. Roughly eight pieces of candied bacon. I'm talking sticky, sweet deliciousness!

Was it possible I was looking forward to the bacon more than the cheese at this point? POSSIBLY. The plate also adorned raw honeycomb (YUM!), black fig jam, grilled polenta crostini, and three different



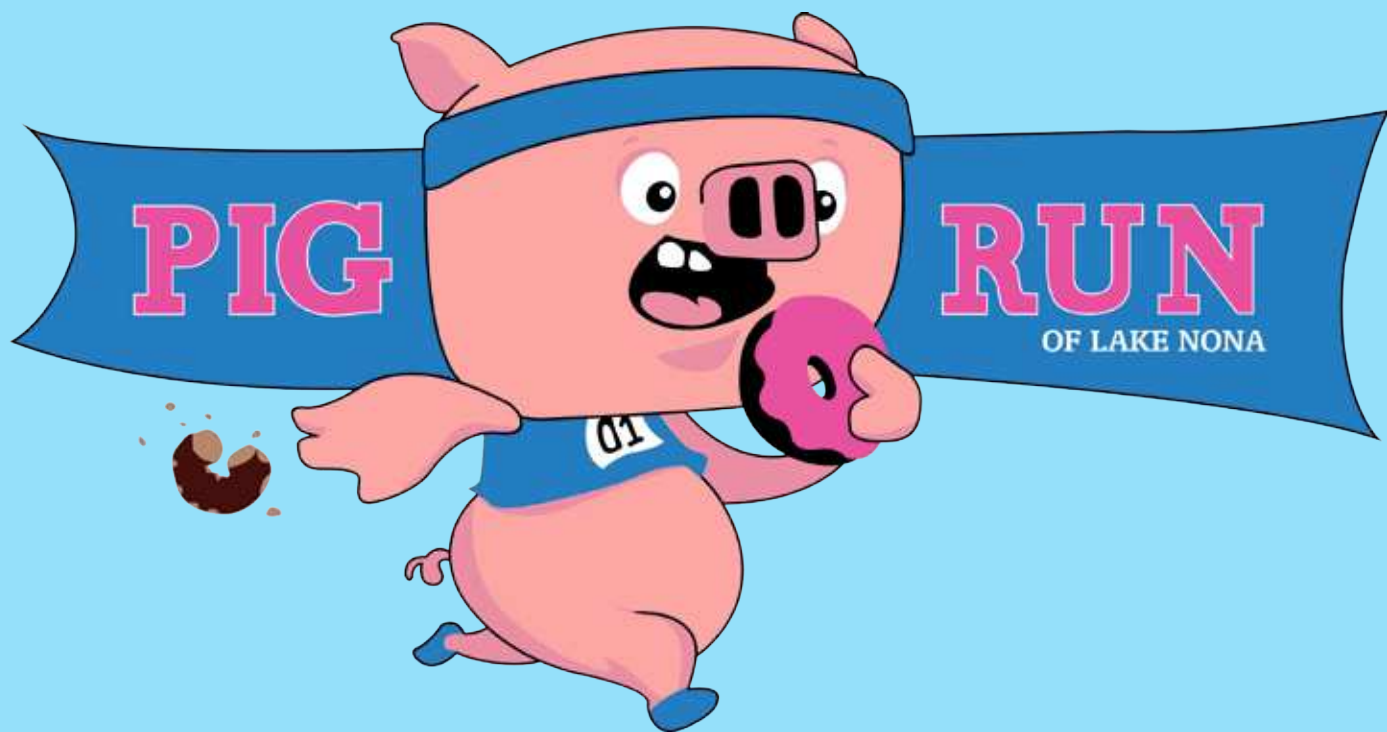
Stracciatella

Out of bread? No problem. I grabbed my spoon and went to town on the Stracciatella. That dish could have returned to the cupboards. No cheese went to waste that day...

For \$17.99, it might seem a bit on the more expensive side, but for the wonderful taste experience you get out of it, I'd say it was worth it! Forgive the photos, I may have dug in a bit before taking them. Blame my excitement and the cheese obsession.

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





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Katie's Cucina: Chocolate Strawberry Overnight Oats

ARTICLE, PHOTOS AND
RECIPE BY KATIE JASIEWICZ,
KATIESCUCINA.COM

Raise your hand if you struggle with breakfast. Me!!! I do a fantastic job of feeding my children and husband every morning. But by the time I get around to making myself something for breakfast, I'm already in need of running out the door. I've started making myself a few jars of overnight oats each week so that I can grab and go. I immediately grab a jar from the refrigerator the minute I start working on breakfast for my family. That way, I can slowly eat a bite here or there while I cook for everyone. By the time we are ready to leave for school, I'm done with my breakfast. Or, on the really crazy mornings, I just take the jar in the car with me.

My go-to favorite overnight oat recipe is Chocolate Strawberry Overnight Oats. I can actually feel good about eating chocolate for breakfast! I personally love the chocolate/strawberry combo. It's strawberry season in Florida, so I found it only fitting to incorporate fresh strawberries into my overnight oats recipe. You can pick them locally (we like to drive out to Pappy's U-Pick in Oviedo) or buy them at the farmer's market or in the grocery store. I love this time of year since strawberries

are so cheap. We go through a few containers a week in my house.

For this recipe, I like to use organic lowfat strawberry yogurt to really intensify the strawberry flavor. I like to buy a quart of yogurt. (It's more cost-effective, and then I can make yogurt parfaits for myself and the kids, too.)

A few years ago, I learned about strawberry honey during one of our strawberry picking trips. I was instantly obsessed. It has a hint of strawberry in the honey, which makes it perfect for this overnight oats recipe. You can also find strawberry honey at the Saturday farmer's market at Valencia. If you don't have access to strawberry honey, don't sweat it. You can use any neutral-flavored honey for this recipe. Just remember that the flavors of the overnight oats could be altered depending on the type of honey used.

If you're looking to switch up your breakfast routine or just trying to feed yourself on a busy morning, I hope you'll take advantage of Florida strawberry season and try my recipe for Chocolate Strawberry Overnight Oats.

Katie Jasiewicz is a full-time food blogger and recipe developer at KatiesCucina.com, a recipe blog that provides family-friendly, easy-to-make recipes that anyone can make. Join her on her culinary adventure, where life always tastes good.



RECIPE

Yield: 2 | Prep time: 10 minutes
Total time: 10 minutes

Ingredients:

- 1 cup rolled oats
- 3 tablespoons flax, chia coconut blend
- 1/2 cup organic low-fat strawberry yogurt
- 1/2 cup organic 2% milk
- 1 tablespoon raw strawberry honey
- 2 teaspoons cocoa powder
- 16 fresh strawberries, washed, diced, and divided
- 2 tablespoons mini chocolate chips, divided

Directions:

1. In a large bowl, mix together the rolled oats, flax, chia coconut blend, strawberry yogurt, milk, honey, and cocoa powder.
2. Rinse and dice the strawberries. Set to the side.
3. Place a thin layer of fresh strawberries at the bottom of two mason jars. Then layer a few spoonfuls of oatmeal into each glass. Add another layer of fresh strawberries, followed by the remaining oatmeal.
4. Top each jar with additional strawberries and 1 tablespoon of mini chocolate chips per mason jar. Place in refrigerator overnight and enjoy the next morning.



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PRESENTS...
DOG OF THE MONTH



Bailey Akos

Owner: Emily Akos
Breed: Beagle/Lab Mix

Bailey was rescued from Alabama by a beagle rescue organization out of Tampa. She has the sweetest disposition and is always ready to snuggle or play with anyone she meets! She is the best furbaby my husband and I could ask for!

Do you have the cutest, weirdest, smartest, or coolest dog in Lake Nona? Let's hear about it! Your furry friend could be featured in an upcoming issue! Submit your Dog of the Month nomination at <http://nonahood.to/pet>.


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Nona Heroes: Second-Class Petty Officer Dan Deverney

ARTICLE BY NICOLE LABOSCO
PHOTOS COURTESY OF
DAN DEVERNEY

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.

was a great opportunity to grow up and be on my own.”

We all know or understand that the military builds character on and off the battlefield, and this month's hero is a prime example of that. Deverney made the rank of E-5, or Second-Class Petty Officer, and it took him five years to achieve that rank. Over his time spent serving our nation, he was stationed at Naval Station Norfolk in Norfolk, Va., and Naval Station Little Creek in Virginia Beach.

Deverney has three children: a 13-year old son, a 12-year old daughter, and his youngest boy at just two years old. He says that



raising his young son “has been the best time of my life.” Deverney has lived in Saint Cloud for four years now and reminisces on his home away from home.

“I love it here because of the people and the country area where I live. It greatly reminds me of Michigan where I grew up.”

His reminiscing brought him back to his time in the Navy, reflecting on some of his best memories.

“Two of my best memories of my Navy career have to be the group of guys I spent the first four years with. I went to the Middle East with them and had each other's backs till the end. [It was my] 2005-2006 deployment,” described Deverney. “And the second good memory has to be when I went to the island country of Seychelles. Looks like Hawaii in pictures. [It was] so beautiful ... there was much wildlife there: whales, sharks, huge tortoises, and huge flying bats the size of an eagle.”

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



Dan Deverney served in the U.S. Navy for almost eight years and felt destined for this branch of the military because of his love and passions growing up.

“I chose this branch because I have always loved the water and being near water. I grew up on a river in Michigan.”

Although Deverney's love for water was strong, his love for our country was the embodiment of what our military is made of. “What made me join was the chance to help our country out at the time we were at war,” Deverney explained. “Also, I knew I wasn't going to college right away, so this



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Nona Your Neighbor: Ingrid Ramos

ARTICLE BY VANESSA POULSON
PHOTOS COURTESY OF
ALEXANDRA GUTIERREZ

Ingrid Ramos is a testing clerk at Lake Nona High School, known for her kind heart and compassion toward all students. Check out our conversation with her below!

NHN: When did you come to Lake Nona and what brought you here?

IR: Seven years ago, I applied to a job vacancy at Lake Nona High School, and I was selected for the position, and since then I've been working in the school system. One of the reasons I applied to a job in the area was because I knew Lake Nona would turn into something big, and, as a parent, I was looking for good educational opportunities for my kids and a better place to raise my kids.

NHN: What does your daily life look like?

IR: I wake up very early in the morning, have breakfast, pray or meditate and read. I feel incomplete if I don't start my day by giving thanks for the privilege of opening my eyes to a new day and ask God for his blessing and protection for my family through the day. Then I arrive at school at 7 a.m. to start my duties. At the high school, I collaborated in various departments, such as student services, media center and now the testing department. Days in our

testing department are running from one place to another, solving technical issues, preparing student lists and materials for testing, accommodations (if they are necessary), answering emails and phone calls, assisting students, parents, and teachers, plus general office work. After my work routine, I try to walk every afternoon in the neighborhood that fortunately is surrounded with beautiful nature. Walking keeps me grounded and helps clean my mind from whatever happened in my day. Then I am ready to cook for my family, do chores or personal activities until it's time for bed, and I usually read again before I go to sleep.

NHN: What's your favorite part about your job?

IR: The best part about my job is the students. It's not easy being a young person these days. Kids are exposed to so much pressure in many areas, and for them to be unique and authentic is not easy. I feel useful when I can bring a little bit of light to their life. Something as simple like, "Hey, you look good today," "How are you?," "How is your day so far?" Just the little things!!! Or when the communication is coming from them and they ask: "Ms. Ingrid, what do you think about this?" "Ms. Ingrid, where you had been? I miss you!!" "Ms. Ingrid, I love your outfit!" They just make my day better!

NHN: What is your favorite part about Lake Nona?

IR: One of my favorite things about Lake Nona is this concept of healthy/modern living community. I love the way we promote the new gastronomy coming to the city, what restaurant is opening or what new business is coming, or what is new in the Medical City. Because we are growing so fast, everything happening is extremely interesting.

NHN: What are your hobbies?

IR: I love to spend all the time I can with my family, travel, explore new places to eat or to visit, have a coffee with a friend, read a good book, or just be in contact with someone I love.

NHN: Where has been your favorite place that you have traveled?

IR: My favorite city until this moment is Quebec, Canada. Their culture, the architecture, the romanticism, the restaurants, the little shops, everything!! And of course, Celine Dion, LOL. It's like being in France without traveling to Europe.

NHN: What is the craziest thing that has ever happened to you? The most interesting?

IR: Ironically for me, the greatest joke in my life is work at the school system, and not only that, on top of that, a dear friend asked me also to take care of her Key Club members (over 200 students) because she can't do it anymore for personal reasons, and of course, I was petrified. I always used to say that I will never work with kids, I don't want to deal with these hormonal attitudes, but priority changes in life. When I finished my bachelor degree in business with a major in marketing, I always thought that it was my direction, but I had kids and I started to look for more balance and flexibility as a mother and as professional while they were little. But, you know what, I don't regret it. High schoolers keep me young and energized. I love to hear their dramas, I love to hear the love stories, the breakups. I am proud of their achievements, and I am also there to comfort them in their frustrations and to push them to keep going. This crazy joke turned into one of my biggest blessings.



NHN: If you could tell one thing to a person or family considering moving to Lake Nona, what would that be?

IR: I can say too many things but you ask only for one. I think one thing I can tell a family or a person considering moving to Lake Nona is opportunities. The opportunities coming (in all areas, professional, academic, medical, retail, corporate) to us are too good to avoid. Lake Nona is one of the fastest-growing communities in the United States, and you need to live here to enjoy and benefit from all this transformation.

*Want to nominate YOUR neighbor (or yourself) to be featured?
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How We Got Here: The Hahn Family

BY VANESSA POULSON
PHOTOS COURTESY OF
JAIMEE HAHN

So many of us here in Lake Nona come from different places and have different stories of how we wound up in the Nonahood. No two stories are the same, with each comprised of individuals making the choice to pick up and move from another part of Florida, another state, or even another country. This is How We Got Here, telling stories one at a time of how different families from all different walks of life ended up in Lake Nona.

The Hahn Family, made up of Mark, Jaimee, Allison (19), Kelsey (12), Keaton (9), and Mandy, the family's seven-year-old Dalmatian, have resided in the Nonahood since 2005 after moving here from a small town just outside of Salt Lake City. Jaimee works in the emergency department at ORMC and Dr. P. Phillips Hospital, and she and Mark have been married 22 years. Mark is a ramp supervisor for Southwest Airlines, where he has been for 19 years.

Check out our conversation with the family below!

NHN: When did you come to Lake Nona and what brought you here?

JH: Our family moved to Lake Nona in 2005 from a small town outside of Salt Lake City, Utah, when Southwest Airlines said they needed Mark's help here at MCO. We moved here when most of this area was still weeds and raccoon hideouts. We chose Lake Nona because of its proximity to the airport and the highly rated elementary school (NorthLake Park). At the time, we only had a 5-year-old.

NHN: What does your daily life look like?

JH: Currently, our daily life consists of get-

ting out the door for school on time, then after school is piano practicing for both kids, softball practice for Kelsey, probably squeeze in some fishing for the boy with a one-track mind. Throughout the week, we will go to Boy Scouts, Ninja zone, flag football, and piano lessons for Keaton. Kelsey has softball practice twice a week, youth night at our church (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Lake Nona Ward), piano lessons, and usually a ball game or two on Saturday depending on the week. We have church services on Sunday, then we prepare for another week of the same.

NHN: What are your favorite hobbies?

JH: My hobbies are spending time with my family traveling and having lots of fun. Working for a fantastic airline, my husband has access to great benefits for travel, so we take full advantage of them. We have enjoyed seeing many parts of the globe. I love going on cruises with my family. Other hobbies I have are playing the piano, playing or watching my kids play sports, making crafts, camping, watching movies (then quoting the movie lines). We are die-hard Harry Potter and Star Wars nerds.

NHN: What is the most memorable trip that you have taken?

JH: Our favorite places have been Thailand (three times, my husband was a missionary for our church there, so he is fluent in Thai, Laotian, and Isaan) and New Zealand, Russia, and London/Paris, Austria/Germany, Costa Rica. Generally, we take global trips as a family despite the crooked glances we get by taking toddlers and small kids on extensively long flights. They are good fliers. My kids loved New Zealand – it really is a place like no other. I have been to 39 countries, so it is difficult to choose. The Caribbean nations are fun as well. We try to make fun memories everywhere we go, so we are full of funny stories. Snakes falling from the roof, feeding elephants, swimming with dolphins, random animals climbing in our car, strange food, etc. We still need to make it to Africa. My husband wants to do a great white shark cage-diving experience in South Africa and also see Hong Kong and the Great Wall, and I would like to see the pyramids of Giza. The kids have their own

ideas as well. My son, the amateur biologist, wants to go to Central America to see harpy eagles in the wild, and Kelsey wants to see the cherry blossoms in Japan. All of these are on the list of places to visit.

NHN: What is the craziest thing that has ever happened to you? The most interesting?

JH: I think the craziest thing that has ever happened to me, personally, was being one of the first nurses to care for the Pulse shooting victims. I am honored to have been part of that team, and I am proud of the work we did that night. I think the most interesting thing was being a guest at Kennedy Space Center in their space medicine course – in the event of a space disaster, NASA could have civilian medical personnel trained. I and a few of my coworkers were able to go inside the Vehicle Assembly Building and go behind the scenes. It was fascinating for a science nerd like myself.

NHN: Tell me a little bit more about your experience at Kennedy Space Center. That sounds awesome!

JH: The KSC experience was amazing. It was called the Spaceflight Medical Support training course. It was comprised of physicians, registered nurses, respiratory therapists, and paramedics from bigger Central Florida hospitals. NASA wanted to have a group of medical personnel trained on how to properly get a sick or injured astronaut out of the space suit and to anticipate their needs after being in space (there are many effects of being weightless). We got to hang out with a Black Hawk helicopter and a bunch of astronauts and NASA doctors and engineers. I was selected to participate by my management team at Orlando Health – I guess they knew I would behave myself and give ORMC a good reputation, as well as really enjoying it. They were right. I loved every second.

NHN: What is your favorite part about the Nonahood?



JH: I think one of my favorite things about Lake Nona is the people. I mentioned to Mark a little while back that it is so nice to be established and know the people that we do business with, and how they can become our friends. For example, my favorite place to eat is Larry's Giant Subs (YEAH!!!). I have come to be good friends with the owners and enjoy seeing them when it is time for a sandwich. (I recommend the Ultimate or the Mighty Mitch.) Having people at the schools and other local businesses that know me and I can wave and say hello is nice. It's like a small town within a big one. Also, I love how close we are to the airport.

NHN: If you could tell one thing to a person or family considering moving to Lake Nona, what would that be?

JH: Lake Nona is a wonderful place to live; we have been enjoying it since 2005. Although, I don't recommend trying to drive southbound on Narcoossee between 5-6:30 p.m.

Would you like to share your story of how you got here? Please fill out this online form:

forms.nona.media/how-we-got-here

or send an email to Vanessa@nonahoodnews.com with a brief summary of why your family moved to Lake Nona. We'll be in touch.



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Meet the Media: Brandon Wilson

BY NICOLE LABOSCO

Brandon Wilson is nona.media's video producer/video editor/Swiss army knife. He's the man behind the *In the Nona* edits, and he knows how to keep the staff on our toes with his spunky personality and sassy attitude. Wilson knows how to get things done, all while cracking a joke to raise the crew's spirits. His job title should really read as our go-to guru.

Extrovert or Introvert?

More extroverted

Indoors or Outdoors?

Depends on the day

Sun or Snow? Sun

Dogs or Cats? Cats

Vans or Converse? Neither

Coffee or Tea? COFFEE!!!!

Adventurous or Laid Back? Laid Back

Canon, Nikon or Sony? Panasonic!

Books or TV? Both

What brought you to the Nonahood?

"Well, as of right now I don't currently live in the Nonahood, although I am very close by. I met the team at Nona.Media about a year and a half ago where we worked on an online show. Right away, I loved working with them – they're not only professional, but fun to work with and hang around with, so they are what brings me around. And to be honest, I'd love to live in Lake Nona – the fact that it's such a health, tech, and education hub makes it such an appealing area."

What's your favorite hobby?

"I really don't have a hobby at the mo-

ment, although I did pick up some paint and canvases shortly around Halloween, but I haven't delved too deep just yet. When I was younger, I loved playing around with clay and have really considered picking that up again just as a creative outlet. Mostly, I enjoy seeing movies!"

What's your biggest dream?

"My biggest dream is to become a successful film director. I don't really care about the fame aspect, I just want to be happy, want people to see and appreciate my work, and to have a comfortable living."

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

"In 10 years, I'll be the big 4-0, and that's a little scary to think about! But by that time, I really hope to have gotten a lot more experience in my career. I know that I will have at least one feature-length film under my belt by that time (shout out to UCF and their awesome Master's degree in Film Production), but I'm hoping to have two or three. I've been happy to join Nona.Media while it's on the ground floor and would love to continue on with the company as we all grow professionally. I'd also like to be married and have a kid or two by that time as well."



Photo courtesy of Brandon Wilson



Photo courtesy of James Rayner



Photo courtesy of Brandon Wilson

Who's your biggest inspiration?

"I would have to say that my biggest inspiration is Tim Burton since his films are the reason why I want to be a director – I've known since I was five years old, all thanks to *The Nightmare Before Christmas*. Although I still appreciate his films, it's not his style that I wish to emulate. The films of Drew Goddard (*Bad Times at the El Royale*, *Cabin in the Woods*) and Damien Chazelle (*Whiplash*, *La La Land*, *10 Cloverfield Lane*) have begun to really pique my interest. They maintain a similar tonal style to that of Burton, but without being so overt."

What's your favorite book?

"I have to say that my favorite books are still the Harry Potter series (*The Prisoner of Azkaban*). The way that Rowling incorporates so many themes into her books is amazing, and I truly enjoy learning more about the small details that she put in each story. I also really enjoyed the book *The Lovely Bones* by Alice Sebold.

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

"I worked at a hospital for nearly eight years, even though I had a degree in film production. I ended up leaving that job

and basically starting over again, but this time I was not going to take a job simply because the pay or benefits were good ... I was going to find work in my career field, even if that meant starting at the bottom. It turned out to be a challenge at first, but then all of a sudden, things began to fall into place. 2016 and 2017 were good years for me career-wise."

Describe one of your most memorable experiences.

"When I was about five years old, my family went to Disney for the first time (we lived in Indianapolis at the time). I had spiked hair – it was the '90s – which made me just tall enough to ride Space Mountain. My dad didn't know that you don't sit side-by-side on that ride, so I was all alone on my first 'roller coaster.' The second that ride stopped and we were able to get out, I jumped out as fast as I could and whipped around to my dad saying in the most loathsome voice I had at the time, 'I hate you,' to which anyone who overheard busted out laughing. At the time, I hated that ride, but now it's one of my favorites at Disney!"

Check back next month to get to know another nona.media staff member/partner!



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Nona Smiles is very excited to Celebrate 10 years of Serving the Lake Nona Community! But this 10 years Anniversary is not the only reason to Celebrate! 2019 marks the Last Anniversary Nona Smiles will celebrate at their current location. They will soon be opening the doors to the Lake Nona Community in the Brand New State-of-the-Art Facility at the Lake Nona Landing shopping center by mid Summer 2019!

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Nona Alumni: Alexis Clarke



Courtesy of Bumble Australia

ARTICLE BY NICOLE LABOSCO
PHOTOS COURTESY OF
ALEXIS CLARKE

In this recurring monthly special, Nona-hood 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!

Age: 24

Year Graduated: 2013

Occupation: Market Manager/Fitness Industry

Current Location: Orlando, FL

Alexis Clarke and her family moved to the Lake Nona area when she was just 10 years old.

"My parents were looking for a better area for me and my brother to grow up in and have more opportunity. My parents are still in the area, and I have just recently moved back." Clarke just returned home from a year living and working abroad in Sydney, Australia.

While a student at Lake Nona High, Clarke knew exactly where she wanted to go for higher education.

"My dream growing up was always to go to the University of Florida, born and raised a Gator! So, during high school, I put a lot of focus into my studies and extracurriculars to achieve that dream. So, post-high school goals for me were studying at UF and graduating with a degree in business and going on to start out in a career in business right away."

Reflecting on the time after she graduated, Clarke discussed the goals she had set and achieved.

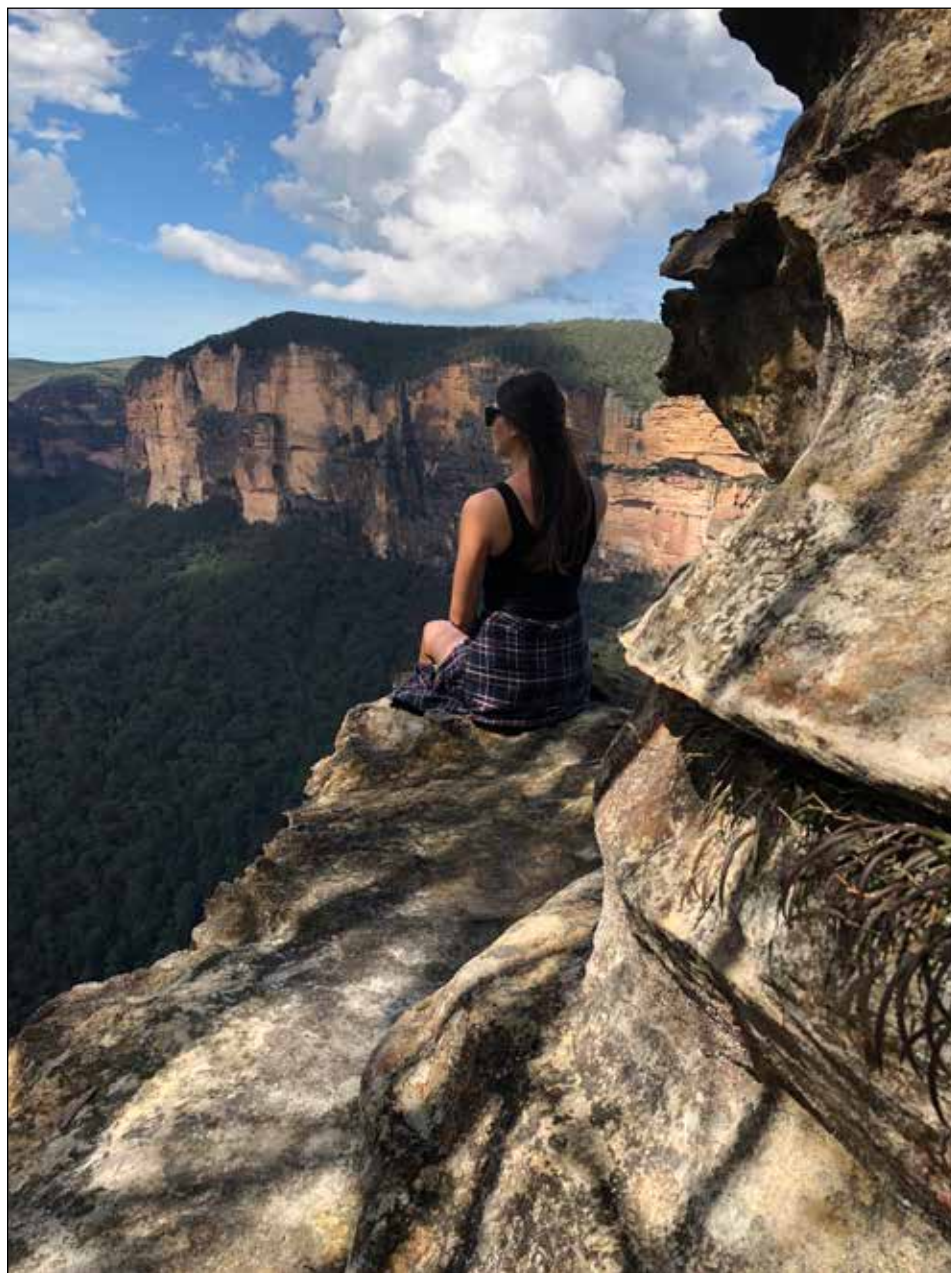
"I learned and achieved so much more than I could have imagined. I graduated HS with my two-year degree from Valencia, which was such an accomplishment and went on to complete four years at the University of Florida. However, while I was there, I learned so much about life and myself, getting through obstacles, of course, but coming out of it all better," Clarke detailed. "I graduated after those

four years with a degree in sociology, learning that I loved studying society and people and why we are the way we are and trends in society and how that relates to business, as I have a minor in business. So, it wasn't the direction I had originally seen for myself ... however, I am so happy with where I ended up going with my college career."

Although she didn't jump straight into a career after college as she had envisioned, the journey she did go on was worth it and left her with plenty of memories to share and stories to tell.

"When we are young, the way I was raised, I was told you go to school then get into a good college, work hard, graduate with a good degree, and then start a career. However, along my journey, I discovered that I needed to take a different path than what I had planned for myself since as far back as I can remember," Clarke continued. "I think growing up, we all have different ideas of who we want to be or what we want to be when we grow up, and we think that by the time we graduate college we will have it all figured out. But, I think it is important for teenagers and young adults to realize that everyone is still figuring themselves [out] and what they want out of life every day! When I graduated from the University of Florida, I was very proud of where I had gotten and how hard I had worked to get there. However, I was very confused on what I wanted next out of life. College had been my focus for so long that I never really took the time to ask myself what I really wanted out of life. So, I decided that right after I graduated, I would take a trip to Greece to clear my head [and] enjoy my accomplishments. It was in Greece that I really saw a different side of myself, and I wanted to embrace that side. Travel was what I felt I needed to better myself for my future. So, I made a crazy decision to move across continents and spend the next year living and working in Sydney, Australia. During that year, I grew so much and learned so much about myself and what I wanted out of life. I found passions of mine and built up dreams for my future."

Speaking of her future ... in the next five years, she hopes to have traveled even more and to have made progress toward her career goals.



"I also realize that we can make plans all we want, however a quote I love is, 'Life is what happens when you're busy making plans.' So, I try not to worry too much about where I will be in my future and instead focus on the here and now."

Some of Clarke's current goals consist of learning as much as possible about all of her passions for her future, including the events and fitness industries, as well as people.

"One day, I would like to use my experience and knowledge of both industries and my love for connecting and motivating people to create a business that helps people connect through their common interests and inspires them to better themselves. Running a business that turns fitness events into networking communities for people to share, motivate and inspire. But that's just a dream ... it'll take a lot of hard work and patience to get there!"

Clarke's milestones in life so far have been rich in travel and discovery, and that must be one of the purest accomplishments of all.

"I have been able to travel to many great places, and I look forward to doing more. I have had many successes in my academic career and have been proud to work many jobs. However, probably the milestone I am most proud of is that I have been able to really discover myself and become confident in that and through sharing my journey and all my experiences and wisdom that has come along with those experiences. I have been able to really help people grow, which is bigger than any other accomplishment in my book. I strive for success; however, success is relevant to who you are, what one person may deem



successful may be totally different than another. So, rather than comparing my life goals and successes to others, I aim to be successful on my terms and help others feel that same way!"

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





LIFESTYLE

Mama's Turn: With This Ring

BY SHARON FUENTES

A few months back, my niece surprised me by asking if I would consider becoming ordained so I could marry her and her fiancé. Those who know me can confirm that I ALWAYS have something to say, but this question literally left me speechless. After a few awkward, silent moments, my niece went on to explain that they wanted their ceremony to be done by someone who really knew them and would help make their wedding as unique and as fun as their relationship. No pressure there, right?

While I was honored by her wanting me to be such an important part of her special day, I was also terrified. So, I tried to point out the obvious fact that I was not a religious leader, a civil servant or even a notary. Not to mention I was a crier and she knew it. "I don't want to ruin your wedding video with ugly crying," I told her. She sweetly kissed my cheek and said, "Aunt Sharon, you did the puppet show for my 5th birthday party ... I still remember that. I want to remember my wedding day just as fondly!"

I may have been the puppeteer 23 years ago, but it was now she who was pulling on my heartstrings. Of course, I said YES and then, as if on cue, I began to full out ugly cry. I am talking my eyes got puffy, red and bloodshot, my nose began to run, my skin got blotchy and my face uncontrollably be-

gan to bunch up in ways I never knew it could. Surely, this unattractive, scary sight would make her change her mind. But my niece just laughed, wrapped her arms around me and softly whispered in my ear, "Thank you, Aunt Sharon. I am so grateful for you. I know you will make our day perfect." Then she happily left, and I began to freak out about what the heck I was going to wear ... oh, and about the whole marrying her thing, too.

First thing I did was call the county my niece would be wedding in to find out what I needed to do to legally marry them. Turns out, getting ordained is the easy part. I went online, filled out an application, hit submit, and within three minutes, received an email bestowing all rights and privileges to perform all duties of the ministry! I did splurge and purchase the credentials package because if I was going to be a Jewish Minister, I at least wanted the clergy parking pass!

With that part out of the way, I began to concentrate on the actual script. This was the part I was most nervous about. I am a published writer – everyone was expecting me to be witty while still being heartfelt. Funny, yet serious. Traditional, yet totally unique. I shared this fear with my niece, who calmly reminded me of what Maya Angelou once said, "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." With these wise words in mind, I set out to create a ceremony that would help these two special individuals begin the next chapter of their lives encircled by the love and support of those dearest to them.

On Jan. 12, 2019, I stood in front of 115 people, but really in front of just two. I reminded my niece, and soon-to-be nephew,



that the wedding vows they were about to speak were just a way of saying to one another, "You know all those things we've hoped and dreamed about? Well, I meant it – every word."

I led them through their vows filled with promises to love and respect one another and build their dreams together. They exchanged rings and gave each other their hands, their hearts, their love. Don't mean to toot my own horn (toot, toot), but it was a beautiful ceremony. Although my son insists that I accidentally said: "I now RENOUNCE you," instead of "PRO-NOUNCE," but I am about 99.9% sure he was just pulling my leg. I guess puppeteering runs in the family!

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



Ask Lady Nona: Let's Get Chemical



Valentine's Day can bring up many emotions that you have spent all year trying to suppress. If you are alone, it's a reminder of that, and if you are in a bad relationship it amplifies that. If you are seriously dating someone, you may be hoping that your partner will pop the big question on this day, only to realize that you are not on the same page at all. So, unless you are part of the very lucky small percentage of people who are happy in a relationship with someone who envisions the same future on the same timeline, this Valentine's Day will most likely stir up some unwanted emotions.

All this talk of disappointment in personal lives and reading about the high suicide rate surrounding this holiday made me wonder if we can trick our minds into feeling "in love" so that we can live happily ever after regardless of the status quo of our love life.

What is love, anyway? The official formula of brain chemicals released that scientists define as love is a combination of dopamine, serotonin, oxytocin and endorphins.

Memes circulating online claim that overdosing on any of these chemicals can cause "schizophrenia, extreme paranoia and insanity." If you have ever been in an intense relationship, you can probably back this theory up.

So, if men are not rushing to buy you a drink at the bar or women are just not responding to your awesome pick-up lines, just make yourself a love cocktail. Here are some ways to increase the love chemicals in your brain.

Dopamine, the "pleasure chemical," produces the feeling of bliss.

- Eat tyrosine-rich food: Tyrosine can be found in almonds, avocados, eggs, beans, fish, bananas and chicken.
- Exercise: This increases levels of dopamine.
- Meditate: Studies have shown that meditation increases dopamine, which leads to improved focus.
- Get a massage: Research has shown that getting a massage increases dopamine levels by nearly 30%.
- Sleep: Easier said than done, but if you can, it ensures that your brain increases dopamine naturally.

The "love molecule," **oxytocin**, is triggered by touch or the feeling of support. Increase your oxytocin levels by:

- Enjoying your friendship bonds.
- Making love.
- Having a baby.
- Petting a dog.
- Hugging more often.
- Using the word "love" frequently.

Serotonin, the happiness chemical, is a crucial multi-purpose ingredient in this cocktail of love. To increase your serotonin levels, do the following:

- Get some sunlight (with SPF).



- Exercise – it boosts serotonin in your brain even more than having serotonin-enhancing medications.
- Enjoy some complex carbohydrates (aka healthy comfort foods) like sweet potatoes, apples, blueberries, carrots and garbanzo beans.

Need a shot of **endorphins**? That's an easy, fun one:

- Eat chocolate.
- Make love.
- Exercise (alone or in a group) for at least 30 minutes at a time.
- Listen to music or create it.

The lifestyle choices listed above can help you feel healthy, alive and complete. A balanced diet, exercise, friendships and some fun activities can go a long way in making you feel at your best and, if anything, in

love with yourself and your life. It's worth a shot to launch this chemical-inducing lifestyle on Valentine's Day!

Share your own experiences, questions and thoughts to Lady Nona by filling out the online form here: nonahood.to/askladytona. Your submissions will be anonymous.

**"To love oneself is the beginning of a lifelong romance."
– Oscar Wilde, Playwright**



In the Garden: Size Doesn't Matter in a Square Foot Vegetable Garden!

BY AMBER HARMON



Photo by Amber Harmon

Here's how to get the most out of vegetable gardening in small spaces.

Now, I didn't invent square foot gardening – it's been around for decades. Mel Bartholomew documented square foot gardening principles in 1976 as an alternative to traditional row vegetable gardens. As many of us live in social communities with smaller lot lines, we know that a traditional row vegetable garden is just not an option. Not only do we not have the space for it, but we just don't have the time. The weeding alone in a 10'x20' traditional garden would take a couple of hours a week – who's got time for that?

The main concept of square foot gardening is to use less space, time, water and money by dividing the garden up into square feet and then using specific plant spacing to determine exactly the space a plant needs and no more. Then, other vegetable plants can be placed as close as possible to get the highest yield in the smallest space. Some like to use strings or strips of wood to divide up the garden into a nice tic-tac-toe board. I like to keep it simple and just draw lines on the soil with my hands. Then I use

labels to remember what is planted where.

Many things are the same in a square foot garden as compared to a traditional garden. It is important to prepare nutrient-rich soil, have the proper irrigation in place, and a minimum of six hours of direct sunlight on the garden. Sometimes it is nice and relaxing to water the garden, but who needs the headache of having to get out there every day while trying to take care of all of the other thirsty mouths in the house. Self-watering gardens are low-maintenance and help to keep gardening enjoyable and stress-free. It is also important in our region to select only varieties of plants meant to grow in hardiness Zone 9b, which are heat tolerant and pest resistant.

Some differences with square foot vegetable gardens are companion

planting and plant spacing. To plant so many different vegetable plants in such close proximity, it is important to understand how these plants interact with each other in the air and under the soil. The three sisters – corn, beans and squash – were known to be planted together by Native Americans prior to the European settlers. The corn acts as a great trellis for the beans to climb and also provides some welcome shade in the hot afternoons for the squash. The beans remove nitrogen from the air and trans-

fer the nitrogen into the soil through the roots. The squash then utilizes the nitrogen for vegetable production. Since corn is too big to grow in many square foot gardens, just use a trellis and the two sisters left should be very happy together. Some plants can enhance the flavor of other plants, like having basil next to tomatoes. Other plants need to be separated when

they compete for large amounts of water or nutrients. There's no need to remember all of the companion rules because companion planting guides exist freely on the internet.

Some examples of plant spacing in a square foot garden are the standard tomato plant will take up about three square feet when supported by a tomato cage, where lettuce can be planted four heads per square foot. My spacing doesn't always line up with Mel's. While I admire his technique and wish I had shared a glass of wine with him while he was alive, his spacing can be quite ambitious. Depending on the variety of plant, the spacing can also vary. It is important to respect the plant spacing for maximum vegetable production.

So, if gardening has been daunting in the past, consider the approach of square foot gardening to have a high-yield, low-maintenance, successful garden this spring season.

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

"We make organic vegetable gardening easy!"



ReThink Life: A Conversation About Life, Leadership and Relationships

How Not to Bring the Worst
Of Our Past Into the Best of
Our Future

BY RODNEY GAGE, LEAD PASTOR



According to a Harris Poll, nearly one-third of American adults have a tattoo. Another interesting fact is that tattoo removal is the fastest-growing cosmetic procedure in the world. Why is that? Because tattoos last longer than the desire to get or have one. And, according to the Harris Poll I mentioned, "poor execution" is one of the



biggest reasons why people regret tattoos. We've all seen the popular tattoo on the person's chest that says, "No Regrets."

When it comes to achieving our highest hopes and aspirations for 2019, it is important to remember that the windshield we look through to see the future is bigger than the rearview mirror we look through to see behind us. We must remember that our beliefs shape our reality. If we want to change our future, we must learn from our past. We must exchange our limiting beliefs for liberating truths that allow us to be totally free from our past.

Here are three ways we can achieve that principle.

1. Review the Past.

In 1981, the U.S. Army developed a system called the "After Action Review." They developed a four-stage process to help them improve performance and get better at what they do.

Here are the four phases:

a. State What You Wanted to Happen.

As you look back on this past year, what were your goals, dreams and intentions? What were you hoping to accomplish?

b. Acknowledge What Actually Happened.

What setbacks or unexpected events did you encounter? Were there any regrets? The point of regret is not to try to change the past but to shed light

on the present. However, we don't want to just focus on our failures or disappointments. What were the things you were most proud of? What were some of the wins? What were some specific themes that kept recurring that you should take note of and build upon for this year?

c. Learn From the Experience.

What were some of the major life lessons or takeaways you learned from this past year? Remember, we will never grow and reach our full potential until we learn from our past.

d. Adjust Your Behavior.

If something in your beliefs and behavior contributed to the gap between what you wanted to happen and what actually happened, something has to change. It's been said, the definition of insanity is "doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results."

2. Rethink Regret

When we are forced to look back in the rearview mirror and review our past, it can be a painful and emotional experience. However, it all depends on how you view regret. There is a difference between "I'm a screw up" and "I screwed up." You can either see your past mistakes, failures or setbacks as a roadblock that hinders your progress and potential or you can see regret as a road sign for new opportunities. What if your greatest frustrations and disappointments from the previous year were actually pointing you to some of your biggest wins for this year? There are always opportunities hidden in regret.

3. Remember That Gratitude Changes Everything

Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote while sitting in a prison cell, "It is only with gratitude that life becomes rich." Gratitude is not just a mood, it's a practice. As you review your past and present, what lessons are you thankful for that have allowed you to grow and benefit from? What good things have come in your life as a result of some of the bad things you've had to endure? Looking at your future through the big windshield in front of you, why not remind yourself that the rest of your life is going to be the best of your life. Be encouraged – the best is still yet to come!

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

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NonaVentures: The Journey in Salt Lake City, Utah

BY NICOLE LABOSCO

Life is all about moments ... from the small instances that we don't think twice about or the larger occurrences where we are thrown outside of our norm; experiences that test us and push us over the edge. That edge is our comfort zone, and sometimes all we need is a little push. Swallow your fear, gather your courage (it's already there), and take that leap of faith. Ready or not, it's happening, and the everyday adventure which we call life is upon us. This is NonaVentures, and this is living for every moment.

For this month's adventure, I was in dire need of a vacation. I needed to be trekking through a new state full of discovery and not having a worry in the world ... this is not how my trip kicked off. Allow me to tell you a story.

A last-minute Christmas gift of a much-needed trip came to be after I practically begged Andrew over and over. I wanted nothing but a new experience and, boy, did I get one. ... After hours of scouring Delta's flights, we decided upon Salt Lake City, Utah. Partly because it was somewhere neither one of us had been and also because this was booked two days before we left, therefore it was the cheapest out of our options.

Fast forward to touching down in Minneapolis (we had a connection). The last time I was here, I was awaiting my connecting flight to Anchorage, Alaska. Boy, do I wish I were going back! I joked with Andrew that I was waiting for him to tell me we were actually returning to The Last Frontier and not actually going to Utah, but he joked back that we were really just flying back to Orlando. I didn't find that very funny. Get me and keep me out of Florida, gosh!

While waiting to board our flight to Salt Lake City, I checked the weather and laughed as it was going to be -22 in Minneapolis the following day.

"Hey, Andrew, you wanna just stay here," I joked. I'm sure you can imagine his reaction...

Fast forward yet again to Salt Lake City. I had fought Andrew for the window seat so I could get some aerial views of my mountains, and that backfired immediately. It was snowing, so overcast clouds blocked my view entirely. I'd have to wait to see the majestic giants that take my breath away so nonchalantly. We landed in the early

evening, and although it was snowing a bit, the mountains never showed themselves.

The next day, we wake up to icicles hanging off the roof outside our window and brisk 20-degree weather. It was beautiful! Much better than the 85-degree "winter" we all know and tolerate here. I know, I know – a lot of Floridians love that – needless to say, I despise it. (And believe me, I know ... I'm living in the wrong state.)

This is when the real adventure began. Walking around downtown the previous night, we had noticed electric scooters called "Bird" that were used as public transit. We had seen some friends test these out in different states and wanted to give it a go ourselves. I must admit, Andrew was more excited to try it than I was. Don't get me wrong ... the scooters looked fun, but I knew that luck was not on my side. I knew the snow would turn against me, and I wasn't prepared to accept my fate. I at least convinced Andrew to wait until daylight. Side note: It didn't help.



Photo by Andrew Beverly

We figured we'd spend the first full day in a new city and state exploring. What better way to do that than by scooter? Think of a Razor scooter from when we were kids and now add an electric motor to it. You download the app, scan your driver's license, scan the scooter you want and go. With a little running start, you're off! I had Andrew lead so he could be the first to discover the ice patches (how kind of me, I know), and within five minutes of scooting around town, here comes the ice.

Andrew glides over the ice and his scooter gives way just a little bit, but he manages to stay on and keep going. I, however, squeezed the brakes and hit the ice patch, causing the back wheel of my scooter to give out, resulting in me swerving and ultimately hitting the pavement. BAM! I came down on my hands hard, but I was good. I let out a laugh as passersby enjoyed my accident and immediately wished Andrew had got that on video. He was just recording a few moments before. I always joke about a LaBosco curse that only seems to



Photo by Andrew Beverly

affect me. Let's call this the curse's first strike of the day. Missed opportunity, but I got up, brushed the snow off, made sure my clothes were still intact, and off we went.

Round two: Probably 35 to 40 minutes into canvassing the town on scooters, we made our way back down the hills. I was questioning my fate and felt I was pushing my luck a bit too far. I watch Andrew fly down a fairly steep hill and run right through a stop sign. "Well, that's safe," I thought sarcastically. Great. It was my turn. I had no other way to avoid this decline. I begin descending very slowly, but as the descent increases, so does my speed, and the brakes were barely working. Keep in mind these scooters really only go about 15 to 20 miles per hour, but down a hill, it's much faster and just too sketchy. Not my kind of adventure! I'm thinking to myself, "This is it, this is how you're gonna go out." I began to yell

at Andrew to make sure there are no cars coming because I wasn't going to be able to stop at the stop sign and would go flying into the intersection. Luckily, there were no cars, and I was safe.

Next came another hill, not as steep as the previous one. I watched Andrew as he continued to lead the way. He rode over a sewage drain with no issue. It looked like a pretty large dip in the pavement from where the metal drain cover was, but he cleared it, no problem. I go over the drain and realize I messed up. Next thing I know I'm flipping over the handlebars (in what felt like slow motion) and smacked against the road, rolling a little down the hill and my phone flying into the snow-covered curb. I was done. This one hurt. Meanwhile, bonehead's still riding ahead, not realizing I had crashed yet a second time. I call his name, throw my scooter (sorry, Bird) and begin walking with a slight limp. No way was I getting back on that death trap. Andrew yelled at me to learn how to drive, and now it's all we laugh at. LaBosco curse struck once again!

Skip to about an hour later when we're going to grab some food and behold, LaBosco curse strike three ... my missing driver's license. I immediately assumed it was at one of my crash sites, and we spent the rest of the day (about five hours) retracing our steps to find it. Andrew grabbed a scooter and went ahead. I walked, refusing to get back on the scooter. We never found it, and for the rest of the trip, I couldn't drink and was barely allowed in anywhere. Utah is extremely strict about ID'ing people, and most of their cool restaurants are 21



Photo by Andrew Beverly

and up. No ID, no entry.

I also went snowboarding in Park City and didn't hurt myself this time (shoutout to Alyeska in Alaska a year ago). Progress, baby!

So, there you have it, my need for a relaxing vacation turned into everything but, however I still managed to enjoy myself. The LaBosco curse manages to follow me everywhere I go, and the next time I ride a Bird scooter will be when there's no snow or ice on the ground. Here's to second chances!

To those wondering how I managed to get on the flight back home without my ID, I had my credit card and the police report for my lost ID to show TSA. They gave

me a pat down and checked my bag and back to Lake Nona I came. Seemed a bit too easy, but blame the government shutdown, I guess. Part of me was hoping I'd be stranded and get an extended vacation out of it. I guess we'll call that LaBosco curse strike number four! Until next time, Utah.

Update: My ID was mailed to me right after finishing this article. Thank you, kind Samaritan. I had a hunch while writing this article that it would turn up.

Have an experience that had adrenaline coursing through your soul? Challenge me to live YOUR moment at nicole@nonahoodnews.com or fill out our NonaVentures column form at forms.nona.media/nhn-nonaventures.



Photo by Nicole LaBosco



Photo by Nicole LaBosco



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SPORTS & FITNESS

Camp Gladiator Trainer Talk: Meet the Campers



BY VERNICE SALVERON-GASPER

Camp Gladiator (CG) is an all ages, all fitness levels, outdoor boot camp that prides itself on building

communities whilst getting physically healthy. Workouts are always different, fun, yet challenging, and trainers are energetic, knowledgeable and genuine. With 90 locations and thousands of campers across the city of Orlando, there are three locations in the beautiful area of Lake Nona.

As the Primary Camp Gladiator Trainer in Lake Nona, I have watched this amazing community not only grow but thrive. Our mission is to positively impact the

physical fitness and ultimately the lives of as many people as possible, and I am so blessed to be able to do this with the support of Nonahood News. Many of my campers would not have connected with CG if it were not for this newspaper and its mission to support local business and develop this amazing community.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or drop by for a workout at one of my following locations.

Vernice Salveron-Gasper CPT, Partner Trainer can be reached at (321) 947-9948 or 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.

LOCATION & TIMES

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

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

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

MEET LAKE NONA RESIDENT CATHY, A CURRENT CAMPER WHO STUMBLED ACROSS CG WHILE READING NONAHOOD NEWS.



Name: Catherine S. Manger

Occupation: Self-employed Physical Therapist - Lake Nona Physiotherapy Inc. (Home Health Services providing Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy and Speech Therapy)

Age: 49

Favorite workout: Agility week (It improves my coordination, balance and endurance).

How did you hear about CG: I was reading Vernice's article in *Nonahood News* and saw the details about Camp Gladiator. I was looking for a new fitness program, so I contacted the trainer who responded within minutes. I was at my first workout the following week and have never looked back.

How long have you been with CG: Since April 2018.

What was your first CG experience like?

The first week I attended, I felt very deconditioned with poor strength and endurance. I was initially very frustrated, but with the encouragement of the campers and trainer, I persevered. I attended the whole week without missing a session, though I had a hard time getting out of my bed each morning and using the stairs, but I improved quickly. I now move better, run faster, feel fitter, and my Inbody test shows that I have also built muscle!!

How many check-ins/workouts? Over 121 (sometimes I forget to check in).

Why do you love CG?

- There are so many workouts all over the city that I can access with the app, and they are always outdoors.
- I don't feel judged, and it really is designed for all fitness levels and ages.
- The workouts are always different and we often work as a team or in partners, which really motivates me. It is also so positive to be around people with common goals.
- Camp Gladiator allows you to develop friendships, learn, and socialize with people in your neighborhood.
- All workouts are one hour and burn a lot of calories.
- The trainer is very fit, motivating, knowledgeable about proper body mechanics, and is able to modify exercises so we are all successful.
- I often refer patients to camp as they offer locations all over the city.



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Nona Cycle: No Better Time To Ride! Cycling Your Way Into the Year

ARTICLE BY DEBRA LOWE
PHOTOS COURTESY OF
NONA CYCLE TEAM MEMBERS

Resolution

res-o-lu-tion

noun

a firm decision to do or not to do something.

synonyms: intention, resolve, decision, intent, aim, aspiration, design, purpose, object, plan

As you read this article, we are already into the second month of 2019. So, how are those resolutions working out? Year after year, as the New Year approaches, we make the traditional resolutions with the main focus relating to health, fitness and breaking bad habits. And consistently, in a short time, our best intentions have fallen by the wayside.

Studies have shown it takes three months of consistently doing something new for it to become a habit. This is why fitness centers everywhere are filled with new faces in January and back to the usual clients by late February.

Goal

/gōl/

noun

the object of a person's ambition or effort; an aim or desired result.

synonyms: aim, objective, object, goal, holy grail, end, target, design, desire, desired result, intention, intent, plan, purpose, idea, point, object of the exercise

A better, more successful approach to self-improvement or acquiring a new skill is to set goals. By creating a plan – a road map of sorts – for achieving a desired outcome, you will certainly ensure a greater chance of success. Setting goals and developing a plan to achieve them should be no different when it comes to fitness as it is to anything else, be it a career, financial planning, or your everyday life.

Often, when someone asks me how many miles we ride on Nona Cycle's Sunday Signature Ride (on average, 30 miles), the response is, "I could never do that!" – a completely self-defeating statement. When I



first began cycling outdoors on a hybrid bike I purchased, the thought of riding more than a few miles seemed impossible

friends, and have come to love this sport. There are days when a ride is nothing more than a lot of hard work balanced by days

give up! Indeed, I completed that ride, lived to tell about it, and four years later, what seemed like an impossible accomplishment has become a lifestyle and source of great enjoyment.

In December 2017, I joined Nona Cycle, and, with the support of this outstanding group of riders, I've exceeded my own cycling expectations, made many new

manner as opposed to enjoying coffee and a leisurely breakfast, my response would have been the same as what I hear from people I come across post-ride: "I could never do that." Never say never, as they say. Never is a word rooted in fear. Fear of not accomplishing one's goals, of giving up, of not even trying. It's a new year and new opportunities await – how wonderful will it be to look back a year from now and realize you set a goal, accomplished something you did not think possible, and then set another even greater goal for 2020?

While goals are all important, motivation always factors into how successful we are at achieving what we set out to do. In all honesty, I'm not particularly motivated to ride a metric or entire century (63 and 100 miles, respectively) just for the sake of riding. My motivation is to ride these distances as a way to raise funds and support charitable causes. My first three century rides were in support of the Rotary Foundation's goal to eradicate polio, an easy choice as I am employed by this organization. Nona Cycle has three main organizations we support as a team: American Diabetes Association, Ronald McDonald House Charities, and JHOP.

For all of you who are now motivated to set your cycling goals in motion, Nona Cycle is looking for riders to join us for the March 31 Tour de Cure, supporting the American Diabetes Association. Last year, our team broke records with 52 riders registered to our team and more than \$42,000 raised in support of a cure for diabetes. There are distances for everyone from new riders to advanced cyclists. Find us on Facebook and come join us!

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



to me. I recall riding 12 or so miles on an urban trail at a 10 mph pace and feeling as if it were the hardest thing I'd ever done – and I've been a consistent spin class and weight lifting devotee for years. I was content to ride the urban trails at this pace until several months later, when in a moment of what seemed to be at the time insanity, I committed to a 100-mile road ride in Tucson, Ariz. Suddenly, I had four months to acquire, learn to ride, and train on a road bike in order to achieve this goal. My desire to succeed combined with, admittedly, my ego ensured that I would not



when the ride is gloriously wonderful, but the sense of accomplishment is always the same. I continue to set goals to ride faster, go farther, tackle climbs and other challenges that ensure I remain committed to what I was determined to accomplish back when I first set off on my then new road bike: incorporate this into my fitness routine, become a good rider, meet like-minded people, and improve with each ride. It's no exaggeration to say cycling has saved me. As someone who is on the downside of middle age yet considers herself fit and active, cycling is not only a skill that gives me a great sense of personal satisfaction but also alleviates stress and improves my mental attitude.

The width of the two tires connecting a cyclist in motion to the Earth is approximately two inches. It never ceases to amaze me when I'm in the pace line, zipping along at 20 or so miles an hour, inches from the rear tire of the rider ahead of me, that I'm actually doing this. Had someone told me just a couple of years ago that I'd be spending my Sunday mornings in this

Believe
you can
— & —
you're halfway
there.

T. ROOSEVELT

TOUR de CURE American Diabetes Association
at LAKE NONA

- RIDE. RUN. WALK. -

March 31, 2019
Lake Nona Town Center

DIABETES.ORG/
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LAKE NONA
David's World Cycle
Advent Health

David Sanborn
David's World Cycle
Riding for his mom,
who suffered from
Type 2 Diabetes

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USTA Partners With Tennis Channel to Provide Live National Coverage Throughout the Year

ARTICLE BY KYLE HAMM
PHOTOS COURTESY OF USTA NATIONAL CAMPUS



The USTA has announced as of Dec. 19 that they have agreed to the operation of a brand new broadcasting facility, which will have the availability to broadcast live coverage of all events throughout the year. This is a fascinating partnership between the Tennis Channel and the USTA. The USTA National Campus will now be able to air matches ranging from Pro Circuit tournaments to Junior National Championships.

On Thursday, Dec. 20, the official beginning of this partnership ran with live coverage of the sport's celebrities. This several-hour showcase was brought nationwide with one of their long-term network announcers, an inclusive Hall-of-Famer, Jim Courier, along with a legendary sportscaster, Mary Carillo ... all in hopes to deliver high-quality content and to give fans a unique way to relate with the sport.

I couldn't agree more with Ken Solomon when he said that this is a breakthrough moment for tennis because this is truly the first time as a nation that they are able to cover this live footage, whilst showing the prosperity of tennis. And all of this will be coming from the USTA National Campus here in Lake Nona.

Within this agreement, USTA and Tennis Channel are also teaming up with the local Full Sail University in Winter Park. Students will be able to work in a rotating group that will give them the opportunity of undergoing a year-round broadcasting and production program.

The Tennis Channel aired the first-ever live college tennis series at the National Campus earlier this year, which also lead to the showings of the USTA Pro Circuit and juniors matches. The Tennis Channel will also have access to the USTA footage which includes events from the US Open Series.

The USTA is a not-for-profit organization with more than 650,000 members and they invest 100% of their proceeds to growing the game. Their new partner, Tennis Channel, is the only channel that is fully dedicated to the sport and lifestyle 24/7. The Tennis Channel is owned by Sinclair, having multiple national networks with live local sports under their belt. They are one of the major and most expanded television broadcasting companies in the country, owning 191 television stations in almost 90 different markets.

If you would like to find out more information, you may contact Eric Abner with the Tennis Channel at 310-314-9445, eabner@tennischannel.com, @TennisChannelIPR; or Brendan McIntyre with USTA Corporate Communications at 914-696-7077, mcintyre@austa.com.



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CURRENT EVENTS

- **Wrestling - New and Returning Athletes**
- Registration opens now, practice starts Feb. 11
JRLionsWrestling@LakeNonaYouthSports.Org
- **Boys Lacrosse**
- Season in progress – Go, Lions!
JRLionsLacrosse@LakeNonaYouthSports.Org
- **Cheer**
- Off-season, tumbling class meets weekly
- Contact Brandy Sellers at:
JRLionsCheer@LakeNonaYouthSports.Org
- **Baseball**
- Partnership with SOBR, see website for updates and more information

OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP

We are always looking for those wanting to make a difference in our community - let's work together. Just send us an email.

Community service hours available for high school students!

Feeling led to help families in need? “Sponsor a Child Program” helps local families in financial need.
Email: C.R.Dunnivant@LakeNonaYouthSports.Org

We are currently looking for volunteers to help with Football, Cheer, Lacrosse and Wrestling. Positions vary from Assistant Coaching to light administrative duties. We look forward to hearing from you soon!

**For more information, email LakeNonaJRLions@LakeNonaYouthSports.Org
or visit <http://leagues.bluesombrero.com/lakenonajrlions>**

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FireStars Youth Tennis Team Takes Another Championship Title

BY VANESSA POULSON
PHOTOS COURTESY OF
FIRESTARS TEAM

son. FireStars team members Josh Gilbert and Jorge Cely both recently competed in the "Bobby Curtis" State Championships.

Twins Jordyn and Jaedyn Gomez played in the prestigious "Little Mo" Junior Tennis International Tournament. At nine years old, both girls have also competed in girls 12-year-old USTA tournaments. Jordyn and Jaedyn are both official USTA "Netgeneration" Tennis Ambassadors. This is an initiative founded by the USTA in its second year that is geared to make tennis accessible to youth players.

Flavio Martinez has served as an official ball boy at USTA pro matches. He's been developing his game and gearing up for springtime.



Local Lake Nona tennis team FireStars recently took home another championship title to add to their collection, this one being the 12U Greenball Championship. Last fall, the FireStars team was featured here in Nonahood News after their win of a 10U championship, and after a new season that included the loss of one of their players, a rough loss midseason, and a tough match against the undefeated Hunters Creek team, the FireStars came out victorious once again.

The team, comprised of Flavio Martinez, Jorge Cely, twin sisters Jordyn and Jaedyn Gomez, Joshua Gilbert, Aaron Hernandez, and Johnny Velasquez, took home the impressive win even as some of the youngest competitors in their age group. Members of the FireStars team range from that of 9- and 10-year-olds, while they competed and came out victorious against a division made up mostly of 11- and 12-year-olds.

"Before the season started, we prepped our parents on the expectations for the season," said FireStars team captain Jeff Gomez. "Playing against 11- and 12-year-olds would be a lot different than playing against 9- and 10-year-olds. Many of the kids we played against were in the 7th grade vs. our 4th and 5th graders. Our expectations were not high, we just wanted to keep the matches close. Older kids are bigger, stronger, mature, and can process information on the court quicker than younger players. We knew that playing in an older division was going to be tough. I wanted to challenge our players."

The FireStars team is part of the "Estrada Tennis Academy" located in VillageWalk in Lake Nona. The team practices together on a daily basis, which Gomez credits as one of the biggest sources of their confidence and coherence as a team.

"This win gave the kids confidence in playing tennis. It helped them believe in their skills, believe in each other, their team, their growth, and their training," said Gomez.

Now that the season has ended, the FireStars team is focused on their own individual endeavors while they prepare for upcoming tournaments and the next sea-

Johnny Velasquez and Aaron Hernandez have been training diligently, prepping for their next tournament.



"It's awesome to watch these kids grow in their sport ... very interested in seeing their growth and where this game will take them. The FireStars may make another run at another championship. Stay tuned."

To read the previous article about the VillageWalk FireStars Tennis Team, go to www.nonahoodnews.com/villagewalk-firestars-tennis-team/

Gomez and the rest of the Lake Nona community will be watching as these kids continue to follow their tennis dreams and bring home more championships.



N

ARTS & CULTURE

Author Highlight: Gary Gygax

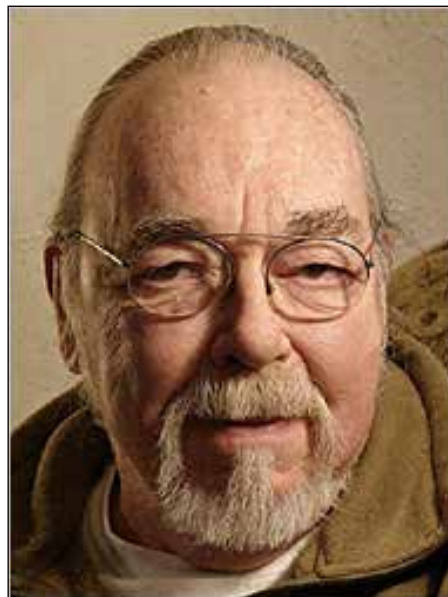
ARTICLE BY AARON VAIL
PHOTO COURTESY OF WIKIPEDIA

July 27, 1938-March 4, 2008

There really isn't enough space in this paper to fully explain the importance of this man in the tabletop gaming industry. His work is epic, but I'll try to keep it short and to the point.

You might not have even heard of Gary Gygax, but if you're a fan of Dungeons & Dragons (D&D), then let me introduce you to the father of today's geek culture.

In the 1960s, Gygax created several war-gaming clubs designed to get friends together and play tactical tabletop games. He also founded GenCon, which is a gaming convention that takes place every August in Indianapolis with an annual attendance of more than 60,000. People travel from all over the world for a three-day gathering of board and card games. There's also



a huge section for merchandise. I used to live in Indy, and we went as a family once. It's mindblowing if you're into games like we are.

In 1971, Gygax co-founded Tactical Studies Rules (TSR), which was used to publish his new creation, D&D. This was also the year he founded *The Dragon magazine*, which was the main, if not the only, magazine for fantasy art, stories, and gaming in the U.S.

1997 sees his more detailed game version

in Advanced Dungeons & Dragons. This truly revolutionized gaming because the AD&D system allowed for expanded stories known as modules. Now you could create a character and play through several other adventures with friends. This system is still in use today with countless modules to choose from.

And you might recall waking early on Saturday morning in 1983 to a cartoon named *Dungeons & Dragons*. Gygax was instrumental in getting that developed. He even wanted a movie, but it wasn't meant to be until 2000 and was met with mixed reviews. Personally, I didn't care for the first movie as much as the second, which went straight to DVD release.

The mid-'80s saw Gygax a very busy man ... a cartoon to approve, gaming modules to create, companies to be founded, and conventions to attend. This all caused Gygax to turn his focus away from his Greyhawk world.

During this time, TSR created a new campaign world called Dragonlance, and it quickly became a hit, partly due to employing the writing team of Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman to publish novels set in this new realm. Dragonlance was so successful that Gygax thought he could revitalize Greyhawk in a similar fashion,

and so he wrote some novels of his own to give more depth to his original world. He also hoped these novels would boost sales of game boxed sets that give more details for gamers to enjoy.

I don't recall any Greyhawks novels while I was reading in the 1980s, so I'm not sure if they made any impact on sales. I only discovered these books a few months ago while shopping at Goodwill. Gygax only published 11 novels but wrote hundreds of short stories for *The Dragon* magazine.

There are more than 400 modules to date for AD&D alone. Not all were written by Gygax, but his influence is seen throughout the fantasy genre. In 1997, his TSR publishing company would go on to be bought by Wizards of the Coast, famous for the card game *Magic: The Gathering*. Wizards of the Coast has since tweaked the AD&D formula, making it even more popular today than it ever has been.

Gygax passed away in 2008, but his vision and imagination are very much alive today. More and more people are discovering his games and works and are having fun rediscovering the world of imagination.



Sexism in Publishing

OPINION BY AARON VAIL

I recently read an article at upworthy.com (from March 2017) about how one used bookstore decided to bring light to the imbalance of male and female authors of fiction for Women's History Month. They decided to turn all the male authors' books backward so that only the pages faced outward. This left all the female-authored books normal to view so they would stand out more.

Okay, I admit, I found the article on Facebook and didn't bother to read it at first due to its clickbaity title and quickly posted my opinion of what I thought the article was. However, I made myself read it before publishing here. It's only a little different than I thought it would be. I'm glad I read it.

The article talks about the lack of female authors in the book publishing industry, how difficult it is for women to get published, and how it's a boy's club. One study in 2011 by a women's literary group called VIDA found that men wrote more book reviews for major publications such as *The New York Times* than women. I'm certainly following on the coattails of *The Lake Nona Book Maven* here at *Nonahood News*. Of the 30-ish writers from the January edition of *Nonahood News*, there are at least 21 female writers. We're very outnumbered. And I'm 100% okay with that. Gender should have zero influence on a good, well-written article or story.

Honestly, I've never gone into a bookstore looking only for male-authored books. I do, however, have some patterns that I follow when I'm searching.

First, I look for a large section of books by the same author. This tells me that, because they have more than two books published, they might have written stories that are good enough to sell a lot of books and to gain a following. If no one buys the books, then they won't get picked up by publishers to sell more, right? This isn't always true, though. Once in a while, a new author will emerge and publish a great book at the first attempt.

Second, if I haven't found anything that piques my interest, then I look at covers. Yes, I'm one of those people who still initially judges a book by its cover. I've bought more than one book just because it was the genre I prefer and the cover was outstanding. Nothing wrong with having a nice-looking shelf.

Lastly, I look through my list of books that I've found on websites or recommendations from friends and family.

You'll notice that I don't mention that I ever look for male or female authors. That's because the gender of the author has very little to do with the story for me. I buy books for the stories. If the author happens to be female, then that's great, but it doesn't make the story any better or worse for me. I don't finish a book and think how much better it would be if a male or female had written it. Those thoughts never enter my mind.

The article did cause me to reflect on my current inventory and wonder how many books I have written by women. I tend to read fantasy, fiction and science fiction, but there are still many women authors in my personal 480-plus library. Here are some along with the number of books they've published. Susanna Clarke (1+), Margaret Weis (66+), Diane Duane (50+), Kathy Reichs (26+), J.K. Rowling (12+), Anne Rice (38+), Margaret Wander Bonanno (21+), Judith Reeves-Stevens (38+), Barbara Hambly (73+), Carmen Carter (4), Diane



Carey (55+), Esther Friesner (50+), Susan Wright (15+), Rose Estes (33+), Kate Elliott (24+), Suzanne Collins(11+), Elaine Cunningham (31+), Veronica Roth (9) ... there are plenty of women in my life. (+ indicates there are other non-fiction works or short stories written besides just books.)

Look, people are people, and not all of them like to play fair. Sure, there are publishers that screen out female authors, and that really sucks. It's doing so much harm to filter out great writing based on gender. How many stories have never been published because of this? It actually makes me upset thinking that there are women out there with amazing things to show the world but are being held back by those who don't see their value. And you know it's true. J.K. Rowling decided to use initials because she was afraid that Joanne Rowling, a female, wouldn't get picked up. Can you imagine NOT having Harry Potter in your world? That thought actually makes my heart hurt.

I think there's good news despite all this. Recent articles and studies show that book sales are on the rise and that more authors are getting published. That means an increase of female authors as well. And with the boom in self-publishing, there are even fewer roadblocks to smash through.

Source by Robbie Couch:
www.upworthy.com/this-bookstore-found-the-perfect-way-to-show-how-sexism-affects-publishing



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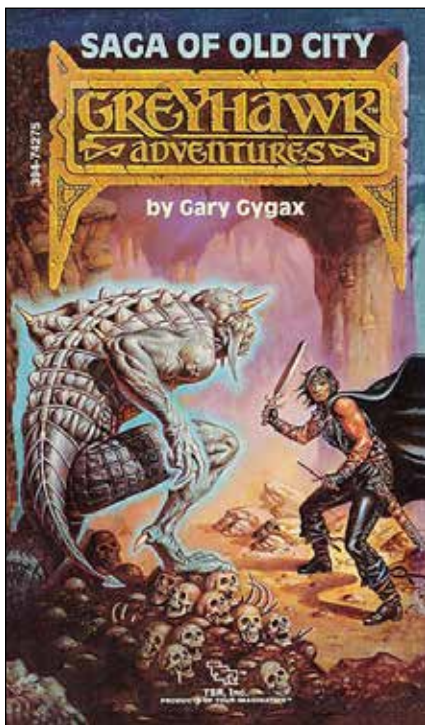


Book Review: *Saga of Old City*

BY AARON VAIL

Author: Gary Gygax

Publisher: TSR, 1985, 348 pages



I've been playing Dungeons & Dragons since the late 1980s. I knew who Gary Gygax was, of course, but somehow I never knew he wrote books. Until one day at my local Goodwill, I happened to come across the first four books in the Greyhawk world with the first two written by Gygax. I was surprised and excited. Here's a man who created one of the most beloved and successful gaming systems in the world. And now I get to read his vision of what a fantasy story should be.

Have you ever heard the saying, "Never meet your heroes"? Although Gygax is no hero in my eyes, the essence to the adage is true. He might be able to create game mechanics, but writing novels isn't really his calling.

We follow the young antagonist named Gord from his very early years as an orphan living on the streets stealing food to survive. He gets caught one day and is sold to the local Thieves Guild. He spends his days in the training room learning to hide, sneak and steal like a professional. Of course, he's the best and learns fast. Soon he's leading other youth on missions and bringing home coins and loot in amounts that surprise everyone.

This book is written more like a collection of short stories than a traditional novel. At least, that's how it

felt to me. There's no real sense of getting to know Gord. Gygax jumps from event to event without connecting the dots. Gord is a skilled youth about the age of 11. Next chapter, he's early 20s and scamming people in card games. Then, he's on a barge heading down the river learning to be a seaman. Next, he's helping a princess escape her kidnappers and getting her home safely. Then, he's caught in a battle between warring cities. It just goes on like that.

I wouldn't mind so much if there were any kind of struggle to overcome or lessons to learn. But everything just kind of happens. I never felt suspense. I just read what happened. Perhaps because there isn't any protagonist at all, just events that occur.

The writing is actually pretty good. Gygax has a large vocabulary, and I even had to look up more than a couple of words. I was only slightly annoyed with the verbiage from time to time.

I wish there were more I could write about this book, but I don't want to just rant on about all the downsides. But, I feel like that aren't any real upsides to the story. Not all books are winners. I suppose you need to read a few bad ones to know what a good one looks like.



Short Stories: *The City of the Unknown*

BY BRITTANY BHULAI

I just moved to the bustling and frigid city. The streets are always crowded and people are always trying to get from point A to point B. There are always mixed smells in the air. You might get a whiff of a street cart selling food, and the next thing you know, you're smelling someone's cigar a few seconds later. Fumes from passing vehicles are always in the mix as well. Sometimes, while walking, you feel a sudden rush of heat pass your face. They're from vents placed on the ground that lead to the underground metal beasts that run all day and all night, the subways.

The subways hold a viscous mystery about them. Waiting in the tunnel, you hear a loud clap of wind approaching you. The clap seems to get louder, and you look down the tunnel hoping the train is arriving. However, your gaze falls upon darkness. Out of nowhere, two headlights appear as the ground shakes. The force the train races down the track with breaks the settled air ahead of it. An immense gush of wind slaps across your face as the subway passes by.

When its doors open, a crowd of people departs as you walk in. Within a few seconds, it

picks up speed again and moves on to the next destination.

Anyone and everyone rides the subway. Sometimes, you see homeless people at the end of the cart wrapped up in a blanket lying on the seats. Not far from them is a mother and two children or a businessman minding his own business. The lights in the train flicker at times. You move at the mercy of its speed. Once you arrive at your destination, you go up the steps and enter into the world above.

The tall buildings hold a sort of mystery about them as well. You never know what is around the corner. There might be construction workers facilitating traffic, a large sofa getting shipped into an apartment, or someone dressed up as a Marvel character waving at you. Most commonly, you see someone smoking a cigar with one leg braced up against the building. They have a grim look on their face as

they stare at you. They speak so many words with their eyes but never with their mouths.

Buried in the skyscrapers are the mom and pop stores. The stories on how each one got there are unique and one-of-a-kind. The tiny sushi shop on 5th Avenue exists because, in 1969, a man moved from Japan to the States. He took his family along with him. None of them spoke a word of English. He decided to take his shot at selling sushi for the first time outside of his country. You would never know it by walking in. They all speak very good English, and the business is thriving.

No matter where you go, there is always something in the city of the unknown.



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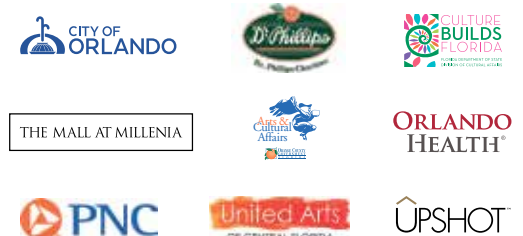
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Sunny Side Up: The Birds

BY PHILIP LONG
PHOTO BY ELAINE VAIL

On the lighter side of the Nonahood, this is a column about the humorous realities of life in Central Florida. We must choose to laugh and sweat rather than cry and sweat.

Have you noticed the birds? They're everywhere. It's getting serious. I live in constant fear of being pooped on. Add this aerial threat to the Spanish-Moss-spider-web festivals strewn across my journey from car to desk, and I'm perfecting my army-crawl-ninja-crouch-jump-run-for-your-life walk.

Am I the only one freaking out? I've seen two owls in broad daylight. My hunch is we have so many birds that owls can't find anywhere to sleep during the day.

Maybe I have reason to fear. No, it's not because of the giant, yellow-feathered and gloved walking nightmare that is Big Bird. Aside: Big Bird is proof that birds evolved from dinosaurs, Big Bird from Barney.

When I was about two, I possessed an angelic coil of feathery golden hair; an irresistible invitation for winged beasts to harvest as nest fodder.

One day, as I was playing in my backyard, my billowing tufts bouncing atop my sweet little head, a claw-footed Ring-necked pheasant swooped in to clasp my boyish curls and proceeded to drag me across the property. Apparently, our neighbor's pet raven (Yes, true story. We lived in Germany.) had been eyeing me and decided he couldn't resist the temptation anymore. Thankfully, my parents heard my screams. I haven't been back to Germany since.

Another of my earliest memories is staring at a robin perched menacingly atop some monkey bars. I remember thinking something along the lines of, *Oh, no. No, no, no.*

Not again.

This reminds me of a girl in my college speech class. She spoke about how she had been attacked by dogs over and over throughout her entire life. As she spoke about how traumatic, ridiculous and unfair it was that fate had chosen to deal her this hand of a mongrel nightmare, I began to notice how extremely toothy she was. While she continued to talk, I watched her teeth and gums go up and down, up and down, up and down ... soon, the hair on the back of my neck rose, and I could barely keep from scampering from my desk to sink my canines into her leg.

Maybe birds feel that way toward me. Am I subconsciously doing something that makes me a target?

For example, one morning on my way out the front door, I came face to face with two sandhill bird-brains, staring directly at me. They began to approach, and if I hadn't slammed the door, they were probably going to waltz right into my house. What were they thinking?

"Hey, have you heard about what this guy experienced as a kid?" Other bird, "Yeah, let's scare the living [bird expletive] out of him."

I feel like we'd be justified in thinning out the flock of birds a bit. Alligators could start pulling their weight. We could quit feeding them. Actually, you should never feed an alligator. A fed alligator is a dead alligator. I think they must die because they can't stomach what the FDA approves as food. No surprise there.

A cattle egret provides scarce meat for a gator, but come on, there are thousands of them grazing atop gators' double-lidded eye sockets.

My brother found out about all the birds down here, and he tried to get me into "birding." He told me he had a ton of American bushtits perched on his bird feeder. After the requisite seven minutes of uncontrolled giggling, I wondered what other delights birding could offer. He sent me some expensive binos that looked suspiciously like binoculars and The Sibley's Guide to Birds. The book is supposedly all that, but Sibley didn't even take any pictures. Lazy.

After thumbing through Sibley's, I thought



I was ready. My brother visited, and we drove out onto Narcoossee Road to Chisholm Park.

Within minutes, my brother was acting crazed. He madly grabbed his binos and shouted, "No way, come look at this. It's a snail kite!" I took his proffered binos, which still looked a lot like binoculars, knowing I was about to behold the wonder of a kite-shaped bird with a shell. After fumbling with the binos for a few minutes, I found sky. Then I found land. Then I found bird smudges. He panted excitedly about how exceptionally rare snail kites are, and how lucky he was to have seen it and could I see it yet? Could I see it? "Can you see it?" Finally, I miraculously focused the binos, which are way harder to work than binoculars btw, on a random bird. No shell. No diamond shape. Not even a kite string or a crisscrossed pair of flimsy stanchion poles. Who names birds, anyway?

My problem with birding is that they move all the time. Then they have all these different colors and whatnot. It's a lot to keep track of, and it takes an organized mind to find, check, reference, date and sometimes draw what you've seen. Not being a structured type, if I ever made it to the drawing stage, I'd be so tired that I'd draw the ever rare stick bird. I'm not sure how Sibley did it. Oh yeah, he didn't take photos, so he had all the time in the world. So lazy.

With his copious amounts of time, Sibley

should have written something useful, like a book on training birds to eat mosquitos. My family owns a parakeet, apparently the most teachable of birds. But the most I've been able to train him to do is to bite my hand really hard. And since he spends half of his time hanging upside down on his perch, and the other half swooning at his reflection in the mirror, my guess is the book could never have been written. Not by Sibley, anyway.

That's okay, maybe I should just swallow the feathers and leave well enough alone. And considering my background, I shouldn't even be thinking about birds.

Philip writes for Cru, a nonprofit organization located on Moss Park Road, close enough to the 7-Eleven off of Narcoossee to justify ditching work for a Slurpee.

While he thinks he's funny, he wisely never verbalizes his musings to his two ever-increasingly hostile pre-teens. His brain doesn't seem to do the heavy lifting in the writing process – his sweaty fingers do. So, if you laugh, snort, chortle or guffaw, they deserve the credit ... both of them.

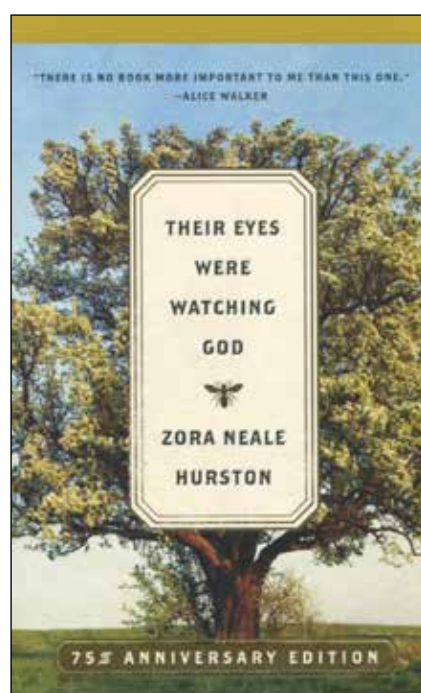


The Maven Book Review: Their Eyes Were Watching God

Book: *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

Author: Zora Neale Hurston

In honor of Black History Month, I chose a book about a black woman by a black author – but not just any black author – an educated and celebrated woman, part of the Harlem Renaissance, and a Central Florida native. Zora Neale Hurston's history and the history of the town where she lived, Eatonville (now part of Orlando), are just as interesting as the novel she wrote. This, her most popular book, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, is now celebrating its 75th anniversary year. And on Feb. 2, at the UCF Pegasus Ballroom, Pulitzer Prize-winning author Alice Walker returns to Eatonville and Orlando for the historic 30th Zora Neale Hurston Festival of Arts and Humanities.



This novel was a surprise for me. Janie Crawford, an African-American woman, relates the events of her life from her early years in west Florida raised by a former-slave grandmother, through three husbands (two died), and her return to her home in Eatonville in her early 40s. Upon her return, she tells her best friend, Pheoby, this tale, which comprises the narra-

tive in the book. The bulk of the story takes place in the 1930s and is compelling and full of local color and Florida references. The pace is a bit slow for a contemporary reader used to faster-paced suspense stories and 50-second sound bites, but it is nonetheless well worth the time to read.

Janie's tale starts shortly before her grandmother, fearing her own death, arranged a marriage for Janie to a much older man. After her grandmother's passing, Janie accepted the offer of a traveling young man with potential and an offer of marriage to go to Eatonville, where her new husband became mayor. Together, they built a home and ran a store for 20 years until his death. But never having found a real love match and still in search of her own identity after her husband's death, Janie sold the store and ran off with a man a decade younger than herself when they both found real affection for each other. They traveled to Jacksonville to marry, then worked seasonal crops in the Lake Okeechobee and Everglades area, where they struggled through a severe hurricane.

Hurston's writing is very good. I was particularly impressed with her imagery, metaphors and novel ways of describing surroundings, emotions and thoughts. Her

sentences and phrases are at times almost poetic. Her dialogue, however, is in early 20th Century, black, southern vernacular – it takes a few pages to get accustomed to that, but it makes the story and characters so much more rich and real.

This book ticked two boxes for me. At under 200 pages, it was a great book for me to read to celebrate Black History Month. And being relatively new to Florida and to Orlando, I appreciated the local history to help me understand my new home a bit better and give me a few places to put on my "plan to visit" list. There are lots of websites to visit to research both Zora Neale Hurston herself as well as her life and all her literary work if you want to dig in further. Happy reading!



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At the Movies: *Bird Box*

A CONVERSATION WITH AARON
AND ELAINE VAIL

R (PG-13 with VidAngel) | 2h 4min

Director: Susanne Bier

Stars: Sandra Bullock, Trevante Rhodes,
John Malkovich, Sarah Paulson

Photo Credits: Netflix

This is actually a two-part review. We haven't watched an R rated movie in more than 22 years. It's a personal preference and we know we're in the minority. VidAngel (vidangel.com) is a streaming service that allows users to filter out most of the garbage in movies and TV shows. For example, there 29 filters for the first episode of *The Office* (US) and you can choose the level of filtering you want. With that in mind, we decided to give *Bird Box* a PG-13 rating and cut out all the gore, nudity, and bad language (you can even choose "blasphemy" in the filter checklist and it removes every time someone takes the Lord's name in vain). It worked very well and at \$10 a month, it's not breaking my bank. You'll need to plug in your Amazon Prime and/or Netflix accounts to get all the shows you like without all the excessive junk. Fair warning, though – many titles are blocked due to "creative rights" lawsuits.

That being said, *Bird Box* takes place in today's world. For some unknown reason, people are committing suicide by the thousands. It starts in Russia and spreads across the world in a matter of days. Anyone who looks at the mysterious monsters instantly goes insane and kills themselves. How do you survive? Don't open your eyes.

Aaron: I like a good thriller. This was kind of right up my alley. I don't like movies that over-explain all the details. The mystery of the unknown plays a big part in this movie and I enjoyed that. We never see the monsters. We never know where they actually came from or if they want anything. It's just a movie about how do we stay alive.

Elaine: So, we just weren't interested in anything playing at the theater. And it



A: The story was pretty good. The only character I didn't like at all was the store employee who starts monologuing all these details about the end of days because he happens to be writing a book. I felt that was overly cliché and could have been removed because it didn't really add to the story.

E: Many are upset that there was no suspense. The way the movie is sequenced, we see Bullock's character in the present, alone, with two kids, getting ready for a dangerous trip. Within a few minutes, we are taken back five years. After chaos breaks loose, Bullock takes refuge with a core group of about eight other characters. Clearly, none of them survive since we have already seen Bullock on her own with the two kids, knowing she was only expecting one baby and a woman in the core group was expecting the same time as her. This, actually, did not bother



come insane when they see the monsters, those who were already insane or mentally ill before the incident and then see the monsters become "sane," but are turned into recruiters for the mysterious entity. What? Why? And the survivors make supply trips and drive down the street and manage to stay on the street – while blindfolded. Sure, GPS, but still. Sandra runs

tively survive without modern technology or civilized organization ... but they still have to obey the laws of physics or I am pulled out of the story and can't get past the far-fetched concepts they hope we'll just ignore.

A: With all the bad and strange things, I still really enjoyed this movie somehow. Not sure I would watch it again, and I'm



didn't seem right to review an old movie from our library. So, our Director of Content Development, Nicole LaBosco, suggested we pick a Netflix original that just came out. She suggested something much cuter (*Pick of the Litter*, a movie about puppies being trained to be service dogs), but Aaron wasn't interested. I have been a huge Sandra Bullock fan my whole life. And I was puzzled by the Internet reactions to *Bird Box* that seemed evenly split down the middle with nothing in between – either they hated it or were obsessed with it. I wanted to see what all the fuss was about.

me one bit. I'm one of those weirdos who will read the last page of the book series just to make sure my favorite character is still alive at the end. I was just fine with the intrigue of how each character dies off and why. I liked the movie for the most part. But, I did expect a few questions to get resolved before it ended, like, what was the monster's objective? It felt like a cross between the series *Lost* and *The Walking Dead* – a post-apocalyptic world with a "smoke monster" who we never truly figure out what it is or how it works or what it wants.

A: This isn't a perfect movie by any means. Unlike the "normal" population who be-



through the forest with two kids in her arms and trips only once, stays on the path and gets right to the door they need to ... all while blindfolded in unknown territory? I don't think so. And they have to travel 48 hours down a river blindfolded ... but the initial radio signal reaching out to them was via walkie talkie at that distance? ... Just not happening in the real world.

E: Yea, I have no problem accepting the "rules" of fictional worlds, but they need to be believable. The whole point of post-apocalyptic shows, what makes them so interesting, is watching how people crea-

definitely not doing any *Bird Box* challenges. I'm actually more impressed with VidAngel's filtering system. Now I can watch *Wolf of Wallstreet* and cut out all 506 F-bombs (every 2.61 seconds on average) and turn it into a silent movie.

E: Actually laughing out loud – a silent movie! Ha!



APPETITE FOR THE ARCHES

Saturday, March 2, 2019

6:00 P.M. - Early Entry

7:00 P.M. - 10:00 P.M. - Event

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VISIT WWW.NONAHOODNEWS.COM/EVENTS FOR UPDATED EVENTS AND DETAILED INFORMATION.

- 1 Cranium Academy Open House (6-7:30 p.m.)
- 2 Reymont St. Community Gardening Class (9 a.m.)
- 2 USTA College Matchday: UF vs. FSU (6-9 p.m.)
- 5 LNRCC First Tuesdays at Chroma Modern Bar + Kitchen (5:30-7:30 p.m.)
- 9-10 Orlando Taco Festival at Drive Shack (1-6 p.m.)
- 9 USTA College Matchday: Duke vs. Tennessee (6-9 p.m.)
- 12 Valentine's Day Floral Workshop at Lakehouse (6-8 p.m.)
- 14 LNRCC Breakfast Connections (7:45-9:30 a.m.)
- 16 Laureate Blvd. Community Gardening Class (9 a.m.)
- 22 LNRCC Business Luncheon (11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.)
- 22 Yappy Hour at Crescent Park (6-8 p.m.)
- 23 Ronald McDonald House Scavenger Hunt at Thornton Park (12:30-5 p.m.)
- 23 Bay Area Renaissance Festival in Tampa through Mar. 31 (10 a.m.-6 p.m.)
- 24 USTA College Matchday: UF vs. UCF (5:30-8:30 p.m.)
- 26 Burlap Wreath Workshop at Lakehouse (6-8 p.m.)
- 28 Florida Strawberry Festival in Plant City through Mar. 10 (8 a.m.-5 p.m.)
- 28 EOCC Coffee Club Nona at Sam's Club (8:30-9:30 a.m.)

Save the dates

- Mar. 2 Central Florida Children's Home Spring Fever Run & Walk 5K & 10K (8 a.m.)
- Mar. 2 Appetite for the Arches (Ronald McDonald House)
- Mar. 2 5th Annual Cornhole Tournament at Boxi Park (10 a.m.)
- Mar. 2 Fiestas at Boxi Park Presents El Carnaval (4-10 p.m.)
- Mar. 3 Mardi Gras at Lake Nona Town Center (11 a.m.-2 p.m.)
- Mar. 31 Tour De Cure at Lake Nona Town Center
- Apr. 13 Nona Chamber Festival at Nona Adventure Park (10 a.m.-4 p.m.)

Weekly Events

THE MONDAY MARKET at Lake Nona YMCA
Mondays 4:30-8 p.m.
YMCA of Central Florida (Lake Nona),
9055 Northlake Parkway
www.facebook.com/Lakenonaymcafarmersmarket/

LIVE + LOCAL
Thursdays 6-8 p.m.
Crescent Park in Laureate Park
www.facebook.com/learnlakenona/

LP YOGA
Mondays & Wednesdays 6 p.m. & 7 p.m.
LP Fit in Laureate Park
www.facebook.com/learnlakenona/

ART AFTER DARK
Fridays 6-9 p.m.
Lake Nona Town Center
Food trucks on first Friday of each month
www.facebook.com/artafterdarklakenona/

MORNING MEDITATION
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Lakehouse in Laureate Park
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Saturdays 10-11 a.m.
Crescent Park in Laureate Park
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CYCLE & CORE
Tuesdays & Thursdays 6 a.m.
LP Fit in Laureate Park
www.facebook.com/learnlakenona/

THE SATURDAY MARKET at Valencia Community College Lake Nona
Saturdays 9 a.m.
Valencia College, Lake Nona Campus
12350 Narcoossee Rd.
www.facebook.com/LakeNonaFarmersFreshMarket/

CHESS CLUB
Wednesdays 3:30 p.m.
Lakehouse in Laureate Park
www.facebook.com/learnlakenona/

Please check our online calendar for event details like locations, any costs or registration requirements, etc. You can also submit your organization's events online. www.nonahoodnews.com/events

FISHER HOUSE
ORLANDO VA MEDICAL CENTER

FISHER HOUSE
1 Year Anniversary
Open House

February 14th from 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m.
Open to the public
Refreshments
Provided by our Community Supporter

BOLAY SO FRESH SO BOLD.

HAVE YOU BEEN INJURED?
For Guidance For Trust For Results

Questions about your accident? Call us 24/7

COLLING GILBERT WRIGHT & CARTER
ONE CALL DOES IT ALL

Home, Office or Hospital Visits Available

Serious Injury & Death Cases

Automobile/Truck Accidents	Personal Injury
Dangerous Products	Stock Broker Fraud
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Stock Broker Negligence	Wrongful Death
Nursing Home Neglect	Veterans' Benefits
Social Security Disability	Insurance Disputes

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Fiestas at BOXI — PARK —

PRESENTS:

El Carnaval in Lake Nona

SATURDAY, MARCH 2ND
4 PM - 10 PM
BOXI PARK

LIVE MUSIC & ENTERTAINMENT
FOOD AND DRINKS · KIDS ACTIVITIES

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