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MARCH 2019
Volume 4 | Issue 3

THE ARTIST: THE THERAPEUTICS OF MIXING PAINT

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Lead With Care

BY ELAINE VAIL



There are many things that make the Lake Nona area unique. As I read your stories every month and prepare this newspaper for the community, I am never disappointed and I am always impressed and inspired.

I've mentioned before that I often see a theme emerge as I edit each month. I had a harder time identifying it this round, but I think it's leadership. We have several recurring columns that are geared toward leadership, particularly in the business world, but if you pay attention and look closely, a theme of leadership is present in all the sections this month. You'll see guidance, direction, management, organization, orchestration, initiative, mastery, strength, foresight, and influence – all forms of leadership.

In this edition, we have many great examples of good leaders, how to be better leaders, organizations leading the way in their industries, and, perhaps most comforting for me, so many youth in our community who are learning how to be leaders. Just a few examples you'll find this month ... physical therapy students teaching medical students in an interdisciplinary, intensive anatomy training at UCF; the reasons good business owners combine quality soft skills with specific industry training to give

employees the best chances for success; multiple companies/organizations in our area providing innovative technology in products and services, particularly in the medical field; several mentors throughout this edition who provide leadership training and loving care to youth in our community to give them every chance to live their best lives; leaders who are also our neighbors, who lead without pay, volunteering their time to organize and give back and welcome newcomers (I'm talking about you, Paul and Spencer); and every one of our school updates will blow you away with what these kids are learning and doing to make a difference in the world. It's astounding.

I recently read a quote online that rang true to me: "One of the most absolute truths of leadership I know is this: You can care about someone without leading them, but you cannot truly lead someone without caring for them." (*Leading With Care* by Steve Keating) I feel that this concept captures one of the things that makes those who live and work in Lake Nona unique: They care. They care about their industry, about making a difference, about the people around them. It's important to them – us – to continue learning and to seek better ways of doing things. We (sometimes I forget I'm not just an observer, but I am also among those who live or work here) care deeply about our community, our stories, our history, our future.

And as we care, we lead. We inspire. We teach. We help one another. We lead each other to a better tomorrow.

Careful and heartfelt leadership isn't always obvious, blatantly noticeable, loud, or even constant. Sometimes, it is those things, but I think more often it is quiet, goes unnoticed, is subtle and calm. Sometimes, it happens unexpectedly during an unplanned teaching moment. But, it's there. Any time you show kindness toward another, pick up the slack for someone who is struggling, or put someone else's needs or feelings ahead of your own, you are leading and caring.

Did you notice some great examples of leading with care in this edition that I didn't mention? Did you learn anything new about leadership as you read through these stories? I'd love to hear from you. Drop me a message any time: elaine@nona.media.

Thank you for another month of uplifting, thought-provoking, and heartwarming stories, Lake Nona. You remind me what life is about and why it's important to never give up, no matter how tired you get. Thank you for leading the way. Lead on, Lake Nona. Lead on.



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Med Students Get a ‘Leg Up’ In Anatomy From PT Students

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



Dr. Deborah German

Kayla Combs stood at the head of the anatomy lab table surrounded by medical students examining their patient’s musculoskeletal system. “If you pull on this tendon here, it will cause the fingers to move,” Combs demonstrated.

But, the teacher wasn’t a med school faculty member. She was a doctoral candidate in UCF’s physical therapy program participating in an interdisciplinary session designed to better educate future doctors on human anatomy. Combs was one of three PT graduate students serving as teaching assistants during this year’s anatomy lab module.

“It’s a win-win situation,” said Dr. Daniel Topping, who directs the College of Medicine’s anatomy lab and began the physical-therapists-as-educators program. “Physical therapy students get more intensive anatomy training than our medical students because their profession is very anatomy-dependent. They are so knowledgeable and great with the med students that it’s just like having another faculty member.”

The College of Medicine’s anatomy lab module is unique nationally. Cadavers are considered a student’s first patient. First-year medical students don’t just memorize organs and body systems – they become forensic detectives trying to determine their patient’s cause of death. PT students provide additional expertise, Topping said, because they have spent seven months studying in a cadaver lab compared to 17 weeks for med students.

The PT students – Combs, Akash Bali, and Kelly LaMaster – were chosen based on their expertise and teaching experience. They came in every Friday for the four-hour lab and taught under the supervision of Topping and other core and volunteer faculty.

“What’s really good, as physical therapy students, is that we get to open their eyes to what we do and offer them a different perspective on anatomy,” Combs said, “like having them pull on tendons to see what the muscle actually does, actually seeing that it flexes the finger or flexes the toe.”

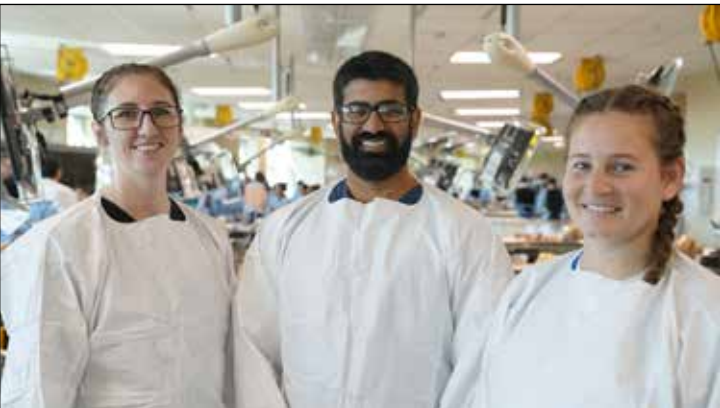
“And in teaching them, we’re also teaching ourselves,” Combs said. “Our PT labs are purely about identification. For the med students,

their lab is much more about investigating and asking questions, as they have to determine the cause of death of their ‘patient.’ So, it’s been fun to see them question things, whether or not an organ looks normal or not, and I learned a lot, too, from that process.”

The PT students said the collaboration was an opportunity to “get inside the mind of med students,” which will give them a better understanding of the physician’s perspective as far as pathologies, clinical diagnoses, and treatment.

“In the future, when we need to talk to a physician about a patient, we will know where the physician’s mind is at or why they made the referral or recommendation,” LaMaster said. “When everyone is on the same page, the better the outcomes are going to be for the patient.”

With the development of UCF’s new Academic Health Science Center (AHSC),



PT doctoral candidates teaching in this year’s Anatomy Module are (L-R) Kelly LaMaster, Akash Bali and Kayla Combs.

which will ultimately bring many UCF health programs to Lake Nona, these types of collaboration are only the beginning of an exciting future for healthcare education. We hope that as healthcare students with diverse specialties learn together, they will also develop better teamwork and communications skills that will improve how they care for their future patients.

As Dr. Patrick Pabian, program director for the Doctor of Physical Therapy program, explained, “Interprofessional collaborations such as these will provide a more well-rounded healthcare provider both for physical therapists and medical doctors. Getting our students working together and becoming familiar with each other as much as possible is paramount because it’s really going to benefit patients in the future.”

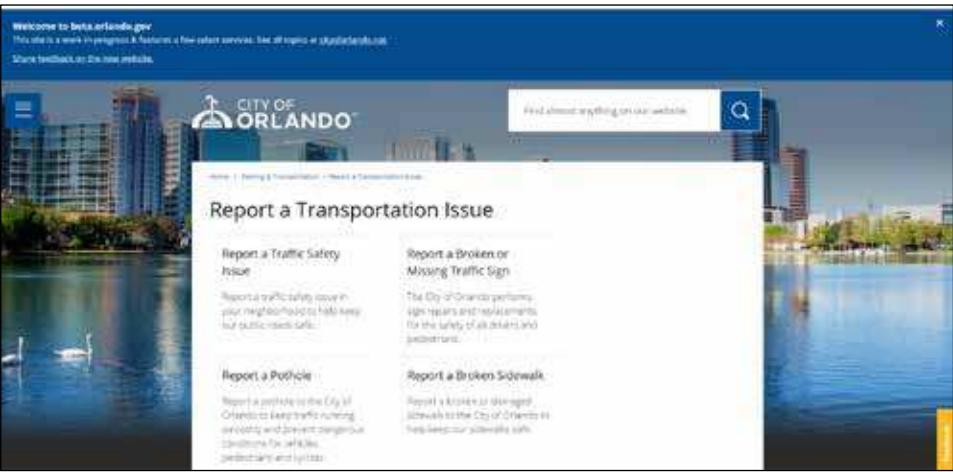
Deborah German, M.D. is the Vice President for Health Affairs and Founding Dean of the UCF College of Medicine. To learn more, visit med.ucf.edu.



Onward Orlando: How The City Is Transforming Residents’ Online Experiences

BY SHARON FUENTES

Do you have a problem with cars speeding through your neighborhood streets? Are you afraid to walk on the sidewalks because they are broken? Did the last thunderstorm blow down a street or traffic sign? Or maybe there is a pothole the size of Texas in the road, but you don’t know who to contact to fix it. Well, now, thanks



to a new Beta version of the orlando.gov website, you can go online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and, with just a few clicks, report the problems in a simple, beautiful and easy-to-use experience.

The new Beta website at beta.orlando.gov was launched by the City of Orlando’s Digital Services Team with the intention of reducing residents’ needs to visit City Hall or to make calls to city staff. Beta is a new and

improved version of the city’s Alpha system, which was launched in 2017. Where Alpha only offered 13 initial services to choose from, Beta offers 60 city services online.

Mayor Buddy Dyer says that Beta is the first step in his goal of becoming the first municipality to fundamentally transform the way cities do business and interact with residents daily. “We sought to reinvent Orlando’s web and mobile sites, turning them into service-based platforms, allowing our residents to conduct business



with us on their time, and we are well on our way to making that a reality,” says the mayor.

While the city’s digital team has worked hard to remove program bugs and make the website more efficient, they are aware that there is plenty of room for improvement and are requesting resident feedback. So, the next time you need to report a problem, pay a parking ticket, or even just figure out what bus can take you downtown, DO IT ONLINE at beta.orlando.gov.

Stay informed, connected and involved by following the City of Orlando Neighborhood Relations Facebook Page: facebook.com/orlandoneighborhoodrelations.



Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer Files for Re-Election

BY KYLE HAMM



Our current mayor, Buddy Dyer, will officially be on the ballot for re-election this upcoming voting season. On Nov. 5, the ballots will open, and Dyer will be contending with several other candidates for Orlando mayor.

Dyer has stated that, even though he knows that there is still more work to be done, he has never been more optimistic about the future of Orlando, and he is very proud of what has been accomplished. “Together with our commissioners, city employees, and business and community leaders, I am confident Orlando will remain one of the top job-growth markets and tourism destinations in the country,” said Dyer.

Mayor Dyer says he will continue to stay committed to improving our economy through programs such as the Main Street Program, which has created over 1,000 businesses, including the development in downtown Orlando called the Creative Village and the Medical City in Lake Nona.

A bit of background for our current mayor, Dyer is a Central Florida native. He graduated from Brown University and also from the University of Florida College of Law. Dyer served in the Florida Senate for 10 years before he was elected as mayor of Orlando. We had the opportunity to ask him a few questions to get to know his work even better.

NHN: What is your main objective to accomplish if you win this re-election?

Buddy Dyer: My objective is to continue the momentum we have built over the last 16 years so Orlando remains a great place to live, work and raise a family. I take great pride in our city and look forward to continuing to work side by side with our residents and business owners.

NHN: When you say there is more work to be done, can you give a few tasks at hand that you would like to personally see completed if re-elected?

BD: The expansion of transportation options for our residents, including connecting the SunRail to MCO. The continued enhancement of our public parks and green spaces throughout our neighborhoods. In Downtown Orlando, the completion of the Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts expansion, upgrades to Camping World Stadium, and the completion of the Creative Village.

NHN: What are your main focus points to continue making Orlando more innovative and sustainable?

BD: I am proud that Orlando has evolved into one of the greenest cities in America, and, in my next term, I plan to continue to foster a culture of innovation and creativity and to prioritize making Orlando a cleaner,

healthier and more sustainable city by:

- Reducing our use of fossil fuels and providing more renewable energy options for the community.
- Working to modernize our regional recycling infrastructure and making it easier for residents and businesses to divert their waste from the landfill.
- Expanding our bike and pedestrian corridors and urban trails throughout our city to protect our travelers from accidents. Our goal is zero pedestrian fatalities by 2040.
- Enhancing our public parks and green spaces throughout our neighborhoods to improve outdoor recreation. Our goal is to have every resident live within a 10-minute walk to a green space.

NHN: If re-elected, how will you continue to keep the efficiency you have set in place?

BD: We are continually exploring new technologies to keep our government running efficiently and to allow residents to seamlessly access city services.

NHN: What is in store for Orlando in the next several years?

BD: Orlando continues to see great growth and developments. In the next several



years, we will remain focused on expanding transportation options throughout the city and ensuring that parks and open spaces are readily accessible for our residents to enjoy, including our two newest community parks in Lake Nona.



“Dyer has defined Orlando as the country’s new home for inclusiveness, opportunity, and quality of life, with a strong focus on innovation, safety, transportation, sustainability, and government efficiency.” - City of Orlando



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Neighborhood Watch: The Season to Plant and Grow Relationships In Your Community

BY ISHU MARTINEZ

Spring is around the corner, which means it is planting season!! This is a wonderful opportunity to host a Plant Sharing and Seed Swap in your neighborhood. Plant Sharing and Seed Swap is an excellent opportunity for gardeners to share their leftover or surplus seeds from the previous season. This event also creates an opportunity to grow something new and save money on buying seeds. One can also meet fellow plant enthusiasts, share ideas with fellow gardeners, and share knowledge

and tips about plants and anything green. The Plant Sharing and Seed Swap is not only a wonderful way to meet other gardeners but also to meet your neighbors and people who live in your community. How many years have you lived in your neighborhood and how many neighbors do you really know? If you are unable to think of the last time that you and your neighbors got together and did something fun in your community, then this is a perfect opportunity to do so.

Host a community event!! Make it a free event, and more people will be inclined to attend.

Here are some tips to host a successful and fun Plant Sharing and Seed Swap:

- 1. Find a Venue and Set a Date:** This event can take place in your community park or even on a cul-de-sac on your street. Try to find a large, open space where people will have room to display their plants and seeds.
- 2. Make the Event Free:** Who doesn't like a free event? By not charging an entrance fee, you will get more people to attend. The more people who attend, the more seeds and plants to share and swap.
- 3. Guest Speaker:** Find a local garden society or local horticulturist who will



be willing to attend the event and give information on gardening and plants.

- 4. Refreshments:** Have the kids in your community set up a lemonade and cookie stand. You can also get some of your neighbors to bring in refreshments if they do not have any seeds or plant to share and swap.
- 5. Mailing List:** Have your neighbors provide you with their email address, but make sure to let them know that it will be used strictly for this mailing list. You can use this list to notify your neighbors about upcoming community events or future Plant Sharing and Seed Swap events.
- 6. Sponsors:** Contact your local garden center or shop. Ask them if they would be willing to donate an item or two for a raffle. Make sure to advertise their name at your event.
- 7. Raffle:** You can raffle a pair of gardening gloves, a plant, or gardening books.
- 8. Donations:** Have a donation jar where guests can donate money toward future community events or the next Plant Sharing and Seed Swap.
- 9. Invite People:** Create a Facebook event and share it on your local community Facebook page. Create a flyer

about the event and share it in your community newsletter or clubhouse.

- 10. Entertainment:** Create an area for kids where they can color pots or plant seeds in their pots. Maybe one of your neighbors is a musician – have him or her play some music. You can also use a simple Bluetooth speaker and audio device to play some music.

In fact, I will be hosting my first ever Plant Sharing and Seed Swap in my neighborhood! I am both nervous and excited because I love to meet other gardeners who live in my community, and I always love meeting new people. Creating community events is a wonderful way to meet new people and get to know your neighbors. I believe that this strengthens your community and also creates a “second family” outside of your home.

So, readers, I encourage you to host your Plant Sharing and Seed Swap in your neighborhood and let me know how it went. I would love to hear all about it. You can reach me at martineishu@yahoo.com. Wish me luck on my first Plant Sharing and Seed Swap!!

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Creator Mindset: Nobody Wants To Teach Anything Anymore

BY NIR BASHAN



As some of you may know by following my articles, once or twice a year, I call around to see how my friends are doing. A bunch of them are still in the ad business, but a few have drifted into different fields since such as pharma, manufacturing, healthcare, entertainment, and technology, among many other fields. It's always interesting to call folks that I went to school with or met along the way in my career to see how far everyone has come and how far folks have drifted in new and exciting ways.

One of my closest friends growing up recently had a major promotion at work. She was excited to tell me all about it, and I sure was proud of her. But, one of her major complaints was frustration at colleges in the area. They were not graduating folks she could hire right out of school. She said that the amount of on-the-job-training she

had to do was quite high. And she spent a bunch of time on basic skills that amounted to something she ultimately felt that the schools should teach, not her or her company. She felt that these folks coming out of schools were merely learning on the job.

It was hard not to empathize with her. I have experienced similar things in my own field. And it got me thinking a bit about what the function of colleges is today and whether colleges are the place where education occurs or on-the-job-training should take place. Traditionally, colleges were institutions of higher learning for higher learning's sake. And vocational schools or trade schools were where people would go to learn a skill or trade. Yet, trade schools are disappearing all over the country. That is an article for some other time, but the gap in the type of education that a college provides versus the type of education that a trade school provides is great. It's a whole different ballgame. Plus, it puts some burden on colleges to teach actual job skills, which is challenging to their founding charter.

Still, the sentiment among my humble sampling of friends was the same. No matter what business. No matter what role. I kept hearing the same things over and over again:

Colleges are not graduating the right candidates. And we won't or can't do any on-the-job-training. We are a business, not a school. And it really boils down to turn-key hiring. We want to hire people who are ready to go on day one.

This got me thinking about how I hire and what I look for in a candidate. I have gotten hiring all wrong in the past as some of my readers know. But what has always helped was a focus on "soft skills." This means looking for people based on what makes them extraordinary, not what is listed on their resume. For instance, I tend to hire a lot of military folks, men and women who have served our country honorably. Most have exactly zero experience in my field, but I have found that there is a thread of



humanity that runs through most individuals who agree to hold the value of their nation above the value of their own lives. It turns out that this commitment is easily translatable to roles at a civilian company. This tends to result in someone who is teachable and chock-full of soft skills.

But, it's not just the military that provides extraordinary candidates. It's also other fields that are unrelated to the field you are hiring for. I have found that retail sales associates tend to make great account managers. Nannies tend to make great project managers. And engineers tend to make terrific accountants. And so on. And I found that, in 100% of cases, I prefer to hire soft skills over specific industry knowledge.

Why?

Because industry knowledge can be taught, no matter what industry you work in. And I think it's our due diligence to teach it. Am I talking soup-to-nuts teaching here? No. But, I am talking about some training and some on-the-job teaching to improve the chance of staff doing well. While it might be true that colleges are not graduating turn-key employees for your company, it is still our responsibility to make sure that whoever we hire has a fair chance at doing

well. And it is imperative that we focus on activities that will help this person succeed in any given venture.

Because what it really comes down to, at least for me, is that these so-called "soft skills" are not really soft at all. They are skills like empathy, a desire to learn, a hunger for information, a yearning to do well, critical thinking ... there is nothing soft about that. And they are skills that, once joined with specific industry teaching, I find to be the most important.

Nir Bashan is an executive creative director/managing director with over 19 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. McGraw/Hill is publishing a book on The Creator Mindset that will be released in 2020. www.nirbashan.com



Work Well: Mindful Email

Using Mindfulness Practices in Everyday Action

BY NATALIA FOOTE

How many ways can someone get in contact with you? I can get an email, a text message, correspondence in the mail, a Facebook message, an Instagram PM, a Tweet, a LinkedIn notification, a Slack team message, a snapchat, a WhatsApp, a phone call, a written note, a fax, or someone can come and knock at my door and talk to me face-to-face. We are inundated with information and are constantly sifting through it all to find the nuggets of importance.

Mindfulness training allows us to choose what we want to give our attention to. It teaches us to focus on what we choose and thus become more productive. However, when our attention is hijacked by the constant stream of information, it depletes our ability to focus. At a recent training, some clients mentioned that email was one of their biggest concerns.

Respond Vs. React

Mindfulness training teaches us how to take a breath and respond instead of automatically react. When sending an email, we must recognize that a person will be reading on the other end of the screen. The words we write, although they seem to be in a void, are read by other humans ... humans who might be missing your tone, facial cues and/or body language. Writing a "mindful" email takes longer than simply reacting with your initial thoughts. Think

of who you are responding to and ask yourself, is this true, necessary, and kind?

It is also important to decide whether email is the best form of contact to use. K. Allisson Yu, the National Executive Lead of Principal Gifts at the American Heart Association, recognizes that email is essential in managing a business and it can be unintentionally used as a quick mode of communication that is not appropriate for certain circumstances. "Potentially sensitive situations or topics should always be addressed in person or voice-to-voice at a minimum; emails can be easily misinterpreted." Before writing the email, decide if an email is the best form of contact.

Boundaries

When do you check your email, how often do you check it? According to a 2018 Adobe Consumer Email Survey, 49% of people check work emails every couple of hours outside of normal work hours. While 18% never check their work emails outside of work, 13% check it multiple times each hour, and 11% check it constantly.

Do you place any boundaries for yourself regarding work email? Mindfulness teaches us to focus on what we choose. Whether you need boundaries from work email or not is completely and entirely up to you. I have spoken to people who say they need to turn it off when they are home, and I also know people who are not bothered by responding to email from home outside of work hours. The choice is yours. Become aware of your needs and make a mindful choice as to when you respond to email so it works with your lifestyle.

One thing to follow regarding email is to avoid responding or sending email first thing in the morning. According to Rasmus Hougaard, author of *One Second Ahead: Enhance Your Performance at Work with Mindfulness*, our brain is more alert, focused and creative in the first half of the morning. Responding to email as your first task wastes the time when your brain has the highest potential. Instead,

use the morning to bring focus and attention to tasks that will produce the greatest outcomes. When we are overwhelmed with information and distractions, we tend to jump to whatever feels most pressing at the moment. We are busy, but not necessarily effective. Our urge is to act, to do something, and responding to email makes us feel productive. By rejecting the noise of information and prioritizing our tasks, however, we make better use of our morning mental clarity.

Email Challenge

Check your work email twice a day:

- Set two times a day that you will check and respond to email. Usually, an a.m. and p.m. time work great, like 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Set an auto-response letting your senders know you have a designated time to respond to email and, if it is an urgent matter, to contact you in another manner.
- When sending email, avoid scanning for anything new and commit to checking your email at your scheduled time.
- When your designated email check time occurs, bring your attention to the emails and respond in one of three ways:
 - Delete or archive the message.
 - Respond to anything that will take less than two minutes to respond to.
 - Any email that requires more than two minutes to respond, place in a task or to-do folder and schedule when you will take the time to fully

respond. Let the recipient know when they should expect your full response.

Let me know how this email challenge works (or completely doesn't work) for you. Notice whether you are more productive and less distracted by email and adjust your life and schedule accordingly. Ultimately, focus on what you choose and choose your distractions mindfully.

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.



Behind The Scene: Florencio Rodriguez, Owner of Don Julio Mexican Kitchen and Tequila Bar

ARTICLE BY SOPHIA ROGERS
PHOTOS COURTESY OF DON JULIO MEXICAN KITCHEN & TEQUILA BAR



When we hear of a new restaurant coming to the Lake Nona area, the first thing that comes to mind is, “What major chain is coming?”

Not the case for Don Julio. Scheduled to open in late 2019, owner Florencio Rodriguez is excited for their expansion to Lake Nona. Yes, it’s a chain; no it’s not a corporate one. Don Julio is an authentic Mexican restaurant with recipes passed down

family as the Athens restaurant they loved years ago.

Currently, Rodriguez owns and operates two existing Don Julio restaurants, one in east Orlando and the other in Lake Mary. In addition to the new 6,000-square-foot Lake Nona area location, a fourth location at Orlando International Airport Section A is also in the works.

The airport location will offer 6,500 square feet of dining space.

Everything is made from scratch. From the guacamole to the tortilla shells, all made in-house. Rodriguez said, “The mole sauce is a main ingredient and a secret recipe that makes our meats flavorful. The sauce is prepared with 40 different ingredients.” My favorite dish is the tamales, which is a recipe passed down from Rodriguez’s mother’s generation.

For consistency, each location will use the same recipes and ingredients. Rodriguez himself conducts trainings with his staff to ensure the best in quality. The deliciousness doesn’t stop there, though. Rodriguez has partnered with Chef Roberto Trevino to incorporate more Latin flavor. If you watch *Iron Chef*, you might have seen Chef Trevino competing. In March, Don Julio and Chef Trevino will introduce a new concept at the Chickasaw location. Expanding

the space to 5,000 square feet, Don Julio Mexican Kitchen and Ceviche Bar will make its debut.

Why does Rodriguez continue to grow? For family. A few months before the east Orlando location opened in 2014, Rodriguez’s father passed away. He was part of the startup and never got to see its success. Six months later, his mother passed away. “I made a promise to my father that I would keep family traditions and recipes alive.” And that he has.

Rodriguez also helps new restaurateurs establish their businesses at no charge to continue the family legacy. He said, “It’s my way of giving back.”

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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through three generations. “We are not Tex-Mex,” said Rodriguez.

Originally from Guanajuato, Mexico, Rodriguez’s family moved to Athens, Georgia, when he was 10 years old. In Mexico, Rodriguez’s grandparents had restaurants and jaliscos. It was only natural for them to open one in Athens. In 1980, El Azteca was one of the first authentic Mexican restaurants in the city. At a young age, Rodriguez was immersed in the family tradition of making quality Mexican food.

My husband, Jeff Rogers, also from Athens, recalls visiting El Azteca Restaurant as a child with his uncle, Kenny Rogers. They frequented the restaurant so often that the owners had a dedicated table for the Rogers family. (We discovered this during my interview with Rodriguez.) On occasion, Rodriguez’s father also helped with the horses at Kenny Rogers’ ranch near Athens. Jeff and his parents had no idea the Don Julio restaurant they frequent on Chickasaw Trail was run by the same

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Get Traction: The Entrepreneur's Path Is Littered With Squirrels

BY CHRIS WHITE, ENTREPRENEUR, AUTHOR AND CERTIFIED EOS IMPLEMENTER



Chris White

"The difference between failure and success is dependent upon your ability to focus." – Chris White

It's easy to get distracted in business. Maybe you're desperate, bored, stuck, frustrated, or can't help yourself and keep saying yes to every opportunity. Now you're chasing

squirrels – one minute you're telling your team to go left, then right, then left again. This is called organizational whiplash, and it causes major injuries to your people and business.

Successful entrepreneurs stay focused. Orville Redenbacher sells popcorn, not microwaves. Ford builds cars and trucks, not planes. Microsoft sells computers and software, not desks and chairs.

You need to define your company's core fo-

cus so that you can use it as a filter to make decisions. Your core focus is comprised of two elements: your purpose, cause, passion and your niche.



To do this, assemble your leadership team for a half day and simply ask two questions:

1. What is our purpose, cause or passion? Have everyone write down their answers, then facilitate a discussion, and define your company's core focus in simple language, 2-3 sentences max.

Once you have articulated your core focus, now you have to ask the team....

2. What is your niche? Your niche is that one thing your company does world-class. Have everyone share their answers, then discuss and debate until you've landed on your niche.

Once you have answered these questions, you can pull them together and they fit like yin and yang. With this combination, you now have a filter that will prevent you from being distracted by squirrels. If an opportunity doesn't fit your core focus, you now have the tool and confidence to say no.

The Entrepreneurial Path is littered with squirrels. Define your core focus and avoid all the distractions.



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! Avoid This Silent Productivity Killer

BY EDWARD A. RODRIGUEZ



Are you waiting for all lights to be green before you start that important project, accomplish that goal, or make that life-changing decision you have been postponing for the longest time?

I am not referring to wanting to be cautious and acting in a

responsible manner before embarking on a new venture. Rather, I am referring to being a perfectionist, which leads you to overanalyze things. This is extremely important because, when you do that, the following things happen:

- You get stuck. You don't take action until everything is "perfect."
- Your goals and dreams don't get accomplished.
- You don't truly enjoy your accomplishments. It's never enough.
- It is easy for you to find fault in you and others.
- You don't enjoy the presence of a loved one until he/she gets his/her act together.
- You deprive yourself of the learnings by "making mistakes" because your focus is on the pain rather than how you can grow from them.



As you can see, this might be killing your productivity and who you can become in the process ... silently!

Being a perfectionist has its merits, though. This shows you are someone who wants to do things well and that you put a lot of effort into doing it right. Believe me, if I need brain surgery, I want the surgeon to be a perfectionist.

If you are a highly visual person, you might want to see all the towels perfectly aligned and color-coded in your linen closet, and you might want to be impeccably dressed ... you want to look perfect. That's cool.

My focus on this article is about the areas where being a perfectionist might be leading you to "Paralysis by Analysis," affecting your productivity and your accomplishments.

If this describes you, then consider the following:

1. Choose an area where being a perfectionist and over-analyzing things are causing a project or a goal to not get started or to be stuck.
2. What price are you paying for not having this project or goal completed or started? What don't you have in your life or business that having completed this goal or project would have given you?
3. What underlying beliefs or rules are you holding that might cause you to over-analyze before you start?

Beliefs like:

- I am not good enough to finish this project.
 - What I do will never be enough.
 - I don't have what it takes.
 - "They" will never like it.
 - Things have to be perfect before I start.
4. Neutralize your beliefs with some of these new ones:
 - Progress is more important than perfection.
 - It doesn't have to be perfect to get started, but to be perfect, it must get started.
 - There are no mistakes, only feedback.
 - Many things I need for my journey will be revealed ONLY once I get started.
 - I don't have to do it alone. I can get help. I don't have to do it all at once.
 - In the beginning, it might be hard. The sooner I start, the faster I will get it done.
 - "Done" is better than perfect.
 - My future is a reflection of what I do today. I take action.
 - I don't allow "perfect" to be the enemy of the "good."

As you have probably heard, "Good judg-

ment comes from experience, and experience comes from bad judgment." When you over-analyze, you are depriving yourself of the experiences of taking action and developing good judgment for future actions.

Taking actions brings results. If you like the results, celebrate. If you don't like the results, take the learnings and the wisdom they gave you and move on. If not, you will have to repeat the lesson.

Define your goal, objectively analyze what is necessary, and get it started. You will notice the growth on two tracks: the accomplishment (your goal) and the transformation (who you become in the process).

If it is not now, then when? If it is not here, then where? And if not YOU, for God's sake, then WHO?

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 me an email: Edward@EdwardRodriguez.com.

Get in-Powered!

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.



The Artist: The Therapeutics of Mixing Paint

ARTICLE BY NICOLE LABOSCO
PHOTOS COURTESY OF
HANNAH B. RUPP

Lake Nona area resident Hannah B. Rupp shares her creative journey on following her calling to create and becoming a professional artist in the mix(ing) of the paint.



Hannah painting.

NHN: What drove you to become an artist? When did you realize creating art was your passion?

Hannah B. Rupp: I've always felt called to create, but it wasn't until my first studio art class in undergrad in college that I found a passion for art. Appreciating beauty and creating beautiful things is a huge driver for my life. It's taken me awhile to become in touch with myself as an artist, but I realized within the last few years that God has definitely wired me to be an artist. I am fortunate that I am also married to an artist. Being able to see another artist follow his creative path has been inspiring to my journey. It made me feel encouraged that I could pursue my own career as an artist.

NHN: How long have you been an artist?

HBR: I started creating acrylic paintings consistently at the end of 2016. Before then, I had dabbled in printmaking, watercolor and photography. I received my Bachelor of Arts in Studio Art in 2008, so I mark that as when I officially felt I could call myself a professional artist. Although, my philosophy is that we are all artists in one way or another, and each life is a work of art.

NHN: How often do you find yourself creating art?

HBR: I try to create every single day. I'm a big fan of creating consistently – even for just 30 minutes a day. If I were to wait until inspiration or motivation struck, I might choose to do something else in the moment. Mixing paint is very therapeutic for me, so sometimes just focusing on the color that I want to achieve is a big part of my creative process. I love showing up to my studio space, creating, and looking at the outcome. Oftentimes, I'm happily surprised with the shape the piece has taken at the end!

NHN: How long did it take you to discover yourself as an artist?

HBR: It took me awhile to gain the confidence to focus on abstract artwork. While I was studying art at Rollins College in 2004, I had the opportunity to try so many different mediums, which I am forever thankful for. I found a love for printmak-

ing and darkroom photography. However, after graduating, it wasn't practical for me to continue these art forms. While at Rollins, I was also in a program where I completed my undergraduate education in three years instead of four because, during my fourth year, I started my MBA curriculum at the Crummer Graduate School of Business. Art was put on the back burner while I pursued a career in marketing.

I started to research how I could combine my art degree and my MBA, and I decided to attend Savannah College of Art & Design's (SCAD) Design Management program and went on to graduate with an M.F.A. It was at SCAD that I knew that I wanted to work in a creative field and with creative people. In 2013, I incorporated my own business, *Hanbphoto & Strategy, LLC*, where I started to create my own notecards, prints, [and] photographs for sale while also being able to pick up marketing projects for nonprofits, small and large companies. I enjoy being able to make my own artwork and create pieces for people that they treasure for a lifetime. I also love color and found painting to be the perfect medium for me because it doesn't erase the hand of the artist and brings me so much joy.

NHN: Which of your artwork would you consider to be your favorites?

HBR: It's hard to pick just one because there are so many I've enjoyed creating for both myself and others. I love *1950s Hollywood* because it is the largest acrylic painting that I've completed to date and I love the colors that are reminiscent of vintage Hollywood. *Teal Waters* is also a favorite of mine and was chosen to be exhibited



1950s Hollywood - Hannah B Rupp.

ings complete on their own, yet also work together as a whole. After I shipped the paintings to the client, it was such a thrill to hear her response when they arrived to her home in Texas. It's a constant reminder to me that bringing joy to others and creating beauty is always worth the hard work and investment.

NHN: What are some of your dream projects?

HBR: I would love to be able to create

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

HBR: Nature is a huge inspiration for me in my day-to-day. The texture of leaves, the colors of a sunrise or sunset, and the way that light reflects are aspects I desire to incorporate into my paintings. When I can travel, I am inspired by new cultures and environments. I visit art museums and galleries as well to stay in touch with art history and continue to learn from a diverse range of art forms and artists.

NHN: Future goals/plans?

HBR: To become more involved in the local artist community in Central Florida and to continue to produce more work this year. I am also really excited about forming more partnerships with people and doing more home design work. I hope to showcase more projects on social media and perhaps even start a blog to stay connected to current and future clients. I will definitely be creating, so be sure to stay in touch!

You can connect with and find more work from Hannah at www.hannahrupp.com, on Instagram @hanbphoto and on Facebook @Hanbphoto & Strategy.

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 <http://nonahood.to/artist>.



Blue Series - Hannah B Rupp.

as part of The Museum of Modern Art's "In the Studio: Postwar Abstract Painting" online learning community exhibition in New York. That was a really cool experience!

NHN: Which of your projects were the most time-consuming or challenging and why?

HBR: I feel so fortunate that over the last couple of years I've been able to work with clients who have commissioned me to do paintings for their home or office. I love it so much! It can definitely be a challenge because when I start a painting, I know the palette, size of canvas, what style of framing, etc., that will be included, but there have been times where, midway through the process, I know I need to change the result. As I keep working, it's amazing to see the outcome at the end. The most time-consuming project I've worked on is one of my favorites called *Blue Series*. It's a triptych of three large 24x48-inch paintings. I spent hours and hours building texture with my palette knife and brushes. It was such a challenge to make the three paint-

large paintings for office spaces or homes because it is a joyful challenge for me as an artist and will allow an opportunity to showcase my experience in size and scope.



Jazz 1-2 - Hannah B Rupp.

High-Tech Medical Company Moves Global Headquarters to Lake Nona Medical City

BY KYLE HAMM

For the last 27 years, Invel® has worked with a single technology called bioceramic MIG3 and researched all of the possibilities of MIG3 in Brazil and Japan. Invel® products have been clinically trialed in the Brazilian population with excellent results as shown below.

Invel® North America has officially moved its global headquarters to Lake Nona. Their award-winning patented technology was unveiled on Feb. 18 at the GuideWell Innovation Center, hosting more than 100 professionals from more than five countries. This was their first-ever international symposium in Lake Nona Medical City. Several of the world's leading doctors and researchers revealed Invel's revolutionary bio-ceramic technology.

This technology is already a success in Japan and Brazil, and they are now introducing their technology to the North American market.

Invel® launched its branded technology in 1999. Five years later, they launched their Invel® Anticellulite Shorts. The following year, in 2005, Invel® Japan Incorporated began. In 2012, Invel® opened its first concept store in Sao Paulo, Brazil. By 2015, their patents were in 29 countries. This year, Invel® launches Invel® China, Invel® Taiwan, and their New Worldwide HQ in Lake Nona - Invel® North America.

From Active Shirts to Anti-Insomnia Pillow Tops, their infrared technology spans to far more than you would think. All of their patented technology contains Bioceramic MIG3, which radiates infrared. Their technology also uses +Nitric Oxide, which they call "molecules of life." They have been awarded by Japanese scientists with Best Product and Technology of the Year by JIRA Awards.

Invel® Compression Belts and Arm Sleeves will ensure protection and support during physical activities. Anti-Cellulite leggings



Photo Courtesy of Invel



Photo by Elaine Vail



Photo by Elaine Vail



Photo by Elaine Vail



Photo Courtesy of Invel

and shorts reduce, on average, 19% of cellulite and improve the appearance of the skin by 65% on average. Invel® Active Tanktops are the ideal treatment for cellulite, as well as improving local blood circulation, and are made with double fabric near the waist to mold your body shape. With the Invel® Active Comb, you will notice an immediate effect of brighter and softer hair with just 10 combs.

For men, there is the Invel® Active Boxer that improves local blood circulation and is made to be comfortable with their soft fabric. Invel® Active Socks are effective in reducing pain and provide relief from muscle fatigue in the legs. There are even Active Insoles for your shoes, which offer a reduction of pain, fatigue and swelling. Invel® Active Gloves are

used for treating pain in the hands, wrists and arms, and studies have shown that within 28 days of use, there is an average reduction of pain by 55%.

Invel® Active Shirts for men and women are effective in relieving pain in your spinal area, reducing 45% on average in 14 days of use. Pillow Top Invel® Recharge is made with their patented infrared Bioceramic MIG3 technology that improves blood circulation, better muscle relaxation, and decreases the time it takes to fall asleep by 52%.

“As an evolution of all we’ve done by now, mainly in Japan and Brazil, knowing the textile produces the NO that helps to balance the blood circulation, we brought the HQ to Orlando and have launched and Invel® lifestyle clothing under the Wellness Guidelines released by the FDA in July 2016. Therefore, we hope the Americans have the benefits from the MIG3 tech and get a better quality of life.” - Carla Taba, CEO of Invel®

All information has been provided by Invel® and results of treatments depend on the metabolism of each individual. Invel® is a global leader in long waved far-infrared technology and is always seeking to improve the quality of life with Invel® technology. To learn more about Invel®, visit www.invel.com, invel.com.br, or www.invel.it.



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Make a Difference in a Young Person’s Life: Become A Foster Care MENTOR

BY SHARON FUENTES

Christie Hyde DeNave didn’t set out to change a young person’s life, but that is exactly what she did. She didn’t do it by funding a scholarship, donating an organ or even adopting a child. Christie made a difference by simply volunteering four or five hours a month as a mentor to a young person in Central Florida’s Foster Care System.

The statistics are daunting. Fifty percent of young adults will leave foster care with

no high school diploma or job. Thirty-six percent will become homeless at some point with nowhere to go. Most of these young people will live in poverty. But, you can help change these numbers! Research shows that kids linked with a caring adult at an early age are more successful maneuvering through life’s obstacles. The generous gift of your time and love can make a difference for not only these children, but for generations to come.

Embrace Families (formerly Community Based Care of Central Florida) is the leading child welfare organization in our region, serving more than 3,000 kids each day. Their services include foster care, adoption, youth transitional services and, of course, mentoring. They are currently seeking 200 new mentors for their Legacy Mentor Program, which matches teens and young adults from ages 13 to 23 in foster care or transitioning services to an adult positive role model. While adults age 25 or older of all races are welcome to apply, they specifically need African-American men and women. They’re also looking for mentors for LGBTQ youth and children with special needs.

Mentors do not serve as a case manager or foster/adoptive parent. Rather, the



Christie & Phrankie at Don Quijote Awards.

goal of the Legacy Mentor Program is for the adult to become a friend to their mentee and a positive influence who can help them on their journey toward adulthood. Danielle Abbey, Community Impact Manager of Embrace Families, says that each mentoring pair has the flexibility to choose what works best for them. “Some mentors take their kids out every week, others take them on an outing once a month, checking in via phone the weeks they aren’t meeting in person.”

Hyde DeNave likes to introduce her mentee, Phrankie, to new experiences that she might not otherwise have had as a child in foster care. “Many of them are simple things, like attending the Winter Park Arts Festival or trying a new type of food for dinner. Mentoring does not have to be full of glamorous and expensive outings. What matters most is showing your mentee you care and are someone they can trust and confide in,” DeNave shares.

So many young people don’t have a positive influence in their life. The mentor program at Embrace Families is designed to show these often-forgotten children and

young adults that, no matter the cards they were dealt, they can rise above it.

But mentoring doesn’t just offer benefits to those being mentored. As Christie quickly realized, “The purpose of doing philanthropic work isn’t to make you feel good, but honestly, it does. In a world where we tend to put ourselves first, mentoring allows you to take a step back and invest in someone else. I have a young person who looks to me for guidance, and I know I am making an impact. Phrankie is more than just my mentee – she has become an extended member of our family.”

If you are interested in becoming a mentor, are at least 25 years of age, and have your own transportation and are willing to transport the youth, please email Camber Page at camber.page@cbccfl.org. To learn more about Embrace Families, visit their website: www.protectandinspire.org/.



Christie, Phrankie and Christie's husband, Joe DeNave, kayaking.

Rise Above: Staying Grateful in the Worst of Times And the Best of Times

BY SAMIA SOLH

I open the door of my Lake Nona home and I’m welcomed by perky lizards, chirping birds, beautiful weather and weird Florida bugs, and I can’t help but thank the universe for the hand I was dealt. I can only imagine what other people all around the country or world are greeted with when they open their doors. Some open their doors to wars, oppression, pollution, abuse, and some to begin a day of misery being underpaid and unappreciated with no hope for growth.

Although we live in one of the best places in the world, with all the opportunities and security, the world still manages to creep issues and challenges into our lives. Sometimes, it’s just hard to hold on to the feeling of gratefulness when so many things are worrying us and weighing us down. Then you add the feeling of guilt for feeling ungrateful because there are starving kids in Africa and you are sitting depressed over brunch at Canvas.

Nevertheless, problems are problems and life will always spring something on you, and it’s not reasonable to wait until life is

perfect before you can enjoy some peace. On the contrary, it’s in the worst of times when you need to be the most grateful because it helps pull you out and shift your focus. It’s easy to feel grateful when everything is going well, but it’s much needed when your chips are down.

You will notice that when you start focusing on positivity, it becomes your environment and your overall attitude. You can help yourself by setting a time limit to when you will think of the subject that is bothering you. You can take an hour to sit down with a cup of tea and give it the hour of misery it deserves, but after that, don’t think about it until it’s necessary to again, but again, with time limitations and rules. That way, you are not bothered all day, and it’s not affecting the rest of your life, your mood, and your productivity.

There are many techniques to help you stay grateful like meditating and keeping a gratitude journal, but the one that I thought was the most practical is stopping yourself when you start complaining and you notice that your mind is focusing on negativity that is taking you to a dark place. The trick is to catch yourself doing it and stop. You can create a mantra that works for you like, “I choose to think of what is good” or “No matter what, things always work out.”

Sometimes, the future seems eerie with climate issues, political issues, and personal issues. Although it’s easier said than done, when life is weighing you down, take a deep breath and think of the happiest things in your life, appreciate your surroundings, and tell yourself that you are blessed, despite life’s issues. You are still blessed!



I am happy because I’m grateful. I choose to be grateful. That gratitude allows me to be happy.

Will Arnett

World Changers

BY LILIANA PICKENS

The last thing your kid wants to hear after coming home from his first semester away at college is, “Hey! I signed you up for a leadership workshop tomorrow ... Saturday ... from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.” You can only imagine the look I received from Ric, right? “But, Mami ... I just finished finals!!! I need a break!” Well, I exercised my parental power and made him go to this thing my office called Quantum Leap. It was free and I knew he would get something out of it, so he went.

Saturday morning came and I woke him up, fed him breakfast, and sent him on his not-so-merry way, still rolling eyes at me and giving me the silent treatment. It was evident that he was not happy. Little did we both know that his life was going to literally change, and so was mine.

As parents, we, willingly or unwillingly, program our kids. What’s right, what’s wrong, what they should aspire to in life, how much money they should be making at a certain age, when to get married and have kids, just to name a few. I did that to Ric, all of it. I am a planner, so I have been giving him a certain set of expectations to follow according to what I thought

EVERYTHING IS A CHOICE

LEARN TO BECOME

GOOD AT CHOOSING

was right. Not really asking him what he REALLY wanted because I would get answers like, “I want to play in the NBA” or “I want to write music and perform” to which I would reply with all MY limiting beliefs ... “You are not tall enough to play in the NBA,” or “You shy away every time I put you in music class, so that definitely is not going to happen.”

I was making dinner that Saturday when Ric storms into the house, yelling at the top of his lungs, “I HAVE BEEN WOKE!” To which I replied ... in English or Spanish, not teenager lingo. He proceeded to sit down at the counter while I cooked and told me everything that had happened. He was saying things like “Mami, my mission in life is to help people through music. I am going to do it. I have a plan. I know what I need to do now. I am WOKE! I know MY value, MY mission, and MY vision for it.”



I proceeded to open a bottle of wine. This was a LOT of information coming at me from my 19-year-old ... and a lot of “MY” thrown into pretty serious statements.

It was that Saturday after hearing Ric speak so openly about his past, present and future that I realized who the heck am I to tell him he can’t do this? It made me look at myself really hard, too. Was I imposing limitations on my child based on MY view of the world?

What is Quantum Leap (QL)? I am a realtor with Keller Williams, and Keller Williams has a charity side called Keller Williams Kids Can (KWKC). I PROMISE YOU this is NOT about real estate! When I joined the company, I was immediately drawn to this because of my passion for giving back. Naturally, when my partner offered the course, I enrolled Ric. He said to me that QL strives to be the bridge between school and life, and that was good enough for me.

QL was founded to engage the next generation of entrepreneurs and world leaders in conversations that matter. KWKC believes that the cultivation of a growth mindset needs to begin as early in life as possible and recognizes all the possibilities that lay ahead when a young person takes control of their life and starts living with intention. It brings the company’s strengths in education and training to the next generation of world leaders. It teaches young adults, ages 18-24 (sometimes even as young as 16, depending on their maturity level), how to gain their edge in an increasingly competitive world. Students walk away with concrete tools that help them pursue the life they desire. It is about bringing clarity to one’s purpose in order to maximize productivity and reach your full potential.

The key concepts discussed in the work-

shop include:

- Shifting Your Mindset
- Developing Powerful Habits
- Fostering Supportive Relationships
- Increasing Productivity With Proven Tools
- Building Wealth

I have become an instructor for QL. When I saw the shift in mindset Ric had, I had to throw myself into the program and attempt to help other young adults in giving them that same moment of “I AM WOKE!” As a mother, I have to say that moment ranks very high in the list of epic moments with my kids. What parent doesn’t want to see their kid happy? Furthermore, what parent doesn’t want to see their kid living a life of purpose with serious intent?

Our next FREE session will be held on March 30 at our Keller Williams Lake Nona office (9101 Narcoossee Rd., Orlando, second floor). Lunch and snacks are included. We are inviting all of your young adults in the Nonahood to sign up at [www.qlcbteam.org](http://www qlcbteam.org). We have taken things one step further, and all young adults who come to the event will become eligible for a \$1,000 educational scholarship!

It took me a whole semester to understand what Ric meant when he came in and said he had “been woke.” I saw him implementing systems in school, his grades got even better than they already were, he made the Dean’s list, he was focused, and he started making music. Ric goes to FSU and is studying entrepreneurship (yes, that’s a thing) and is also laser-focused on making music. He has been able to apply the tools that were given to him that one Saturday into both his studies and his music. He just released his first EP, not too long ago, and people can download it on iTunes and other similar platforms.

I guess I was imposing my limiting beliefs on him. The moment I stopped doing that, I saw him flourish and grow into the purposeful young adult he is today.



Tough Things To Talk About: Suicide Awareness

BY VANESSA POULSON

Recently, the Orlando International Airport experienced an unpredictable tragedy: 36-year-old Robert Henry, a TSA agent at MCO, jumped from a Hyatt Regency balcony overlooking the fountain and interior space of the airport’s signature atrium, where the entrance to the TSA checkpoint funnels, and fell to his death. Rep. Darren Soto noted in a tweet that Henry’s death comes after TSA agents worked through a partial government shutdown without pay. Henry had worked for TSA since September 2006.

To say the least, suicide is a difficult subject to discuss. To understand the thought process of someone who has reached the point where they feel that they have no options, nowhere and no one else to turn to, and no one to ask for help, is something that even the best psychologists still struggle to manage. Even today, where mental health is becoming something that is more prioritized in schools and in the workplace, there are still many gaps that need to be filled when it comes to communal response to tragedy and prevention.

“Suicide has a number of complex and interrelated and underlying contributing factors ... that can contribute to the feelings of pain and hopelessness,” the World

Health Organization (WHO) noted on the subject.

It is currently estimated that one million people per year die by suicide or about one person in 10,000 (1.4% of all deaths). The number of people who die by suicide is expected to reach 1.5 million per year by 2020. Suicide is also the “most common cause of death for people aged 15-24.”

Mass media on the subject, such as the popular Netflix show and best selling novel, *13 Reasons Why*, has been widely criticized by mental health professors as “glamorizing” the act of suicide, especially toward an impressionable generation of teenagers and young adults who might not be able to grasp the act of suicide in its entirety.

So, as the general public, what can we do to combat this? First and foremost, it’s important to remember this number: **1-800-273-8255**. This is the number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, a source for “24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals.” This hotline can help get you or loved ones in touch with valuable counselors in your local area, as well as offer the kindness and support needed in such a dire situation that might be just enough to make the difference between making the choice to end your life and finding the help you need.

The Lifeline also features a variety of volunteer opportunities, including volunteering at a crisis center and helping on the Lifeline’s social media platforms. Volunteers are trained on how to respond to those who appear to be at risk for suicide in a timely matter and learn when to call 911.



Suicide is a tragedy, and there’s no getting around that. Perhaps the most important thing that all of us can do as individuals is to remember to be kind to one another. In a world ruled by social media and the consumption of an artificial livelihood of the people we see online, we are becoming increasingly isolated from one another. It’s easy to ignore problems that seem like they don’t directly impact you as an individual. It’s also easy to cut people out of your life when they become difficult or no longer serve a purpose to you, especially if they are in a situation that you as a friend or family member feel like you do not know how to deal with.

However, it is more important now than ever to remember to reach out and take the hands of those who are struggling. That one “Are you okay?” text or phone call to reach out to someone can sometimes be the bridge between life and death. These small actions can make a lifetime of a difference, especially when it reminds someone that they are never really alone.

In memory of Robert Henry.



A NOTE FROM THE CEO

INTRODUCING OUR NEW LOGO

BY DON LONG

I invite you to take a look at the upper left of this page to see the new logo for the Lake Nona Regional Chamber of Commerce. This logo is the product of more than a year of work and negotiations involving the entire board of directors, Chamber staff and Lake Nona/Tavistock authorities. Special thanks to Rhys Lynn and Nona.Media, our Diamond Partner, staff for initiating the design effort. Also, the Chamber is appreciative of Tavistock Development Director of Marketing Brad Fennessey's efforts to help guide the Tavistock approval to a successful and spectacular conclusion.

The Chamber will immediately begin to rebrand our efforts to the new and progressive marque while also bringing the Opportunity, Progress, Support (OPS) message to the fore with new initiatives and values for the membership. Soon to come: new stationery, member plaques or window clings, Chamber banners, and more.



EVENT GALLERY



Jan. 25, Business Luncheon, Belfry Restaurant, Eagle Creek Golf Club - Sam Choi, manager for Emerging Technologies and Renewables for Orlando Utilities Commission (OUC), speaks during the January Business Luncheon at Eagle Creek Golf Club's Belfry Restaurant. Choi updated luncheon guests on "New Energy Technologies in Lake Nona & Their Impact." OUC is a Copper level Chamber Partner and receives numerous benefits for their level of investment. The Belfry Restaurant provided a delicious Taco Bar lunch for the attendees. (Photo by Don Long)



Feb. 5, First Tuesdays, Chroma Modern Bar + Restaurant - Chamber members and guests enjoy a pleasant evening during the February First Tuesdays hosted by Lake Nona's Chroma Modern Bar + Restaurant. The after-hours networking event was attended by more than 95 participants, making this the highest number of attendees for a First Tuesdays to date. (Photo by Don Long)



Feb. 14, Breakfast Connections, GuideWell Innovation Center - Wendy Brandon, CEO UCF Lake Nona Medical Center, presents "Building the Hospital of the Future" during Breakfast Connections at Lake Nona's GuideWell Innovation Center, a chamber Silver Partner. As attendees dined on a delicious breakfast prepared by Caps Kitchen Creations, Brandon briefed them on the new Lake Nona teaching hospital created through a partnership between Hospital Corporation of America (HCA) and the University of Central Florida. The new hospital is scheduled to open in late 2020 and will bring the latest in medical care processes and techniques to the Lake Nona area. In honor of National Heart Month, HCA Emergency Medical Services Coordinator Patrick Wolf also provided "Hands-Only CPR" techniques to breakfast guests. (Photo by Don Long)



Feb. 14, GuideWell Innovation Center - Don Long, CEO Lake Nona Regional Chamber of Commerce, presents a new logo and focus for the Chamber. Using the new and attractive logo and a focus for Opportunity, Progress, and Support (OPS), the Chamber will begin fielding its new look and focus over the next few months. (Photo by Madelyn Long)



FEB. 14, FISHER HOUSE ORLANDO VA MEDICAL CENTER - (left to right) Orlando City Commissioner Jim Gray, Orlando VA Medical Center Chief of Staff Dr. Linda Zacher, Fisher House Manager Terri Turner, Chamber CEO Don Long, and Secretary Friends of Fisher House Maureen Karkovich break the ground to initiate work for Fisher House Orlando's new climate-controlled storage facility on the grounds of the Orlando VA Medical Center. The construction of the building is funded by Lockheed Martin with a grant applied for through the efforts of Friends of Fisher House, a nonprofit foundation dedicated to the support of the local Fisher House. (Photo by Madelyn Long)



FEB. 14, GUIDEWELL INNOVATION CENTER - Lake Nona Regional Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors meet to discuss their mission to welcome, communicate with, and integrate members into the active community of the Chamber. Ambassadors at the meeting include (clockwise from center front): Brian Miller, AlphaStaff; Brandy Bennett, Creative PGM; Connie Ortiz, Nona Oils; Edward Rodriguez, Better Graphics; Angie Amate, Luxury Realty, Inc.; Michelle Estevez, Nona Mortgage, LLC; Dennis Watkins, TMW Insurance Agency, LLC; Nicole Perez Gutierrez, New York Life & NYLIFE Securities LLC; Silvia Araujo, Nona's Delivery; Marissa Jane Smith, Premier Sotheby's International Realty; and Naomi F. Norris, BB&T Lake Nona. Chamber members interested in joining the Ambassadors and increasing their connections can call (407) 796-2230 or email administration@lakenonacc.org. (Photo by Madelyn Long)

UPCOMING EVENTS

MAR. 5 - FIRST TUESDAYS AFTER HOURS EVENT & RIBBON CUTTING AT DRIVE SHACK

COMPLIMENTARY APPETIZERS, SEVERAL BAYS OPEN FOR FREE PLAY, AND DRAWINGS FOR CERTIFICATES TOWARD BAY PLAY AND FOOD!

TIME: 5:30-7:30 P.M.

LOCATION: DRIVE SHACK (3RD FLOOR TERRACE), 7285 CORNER DRIVE.

FEES/ADMISSION: FREE FOR MEMBERS OF THE CHAMBER. RESERVE YOUR SPOT! PLEASE CONTACT ADMINISTRATION@LAKENONACC.ORG IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BRING OR BE A FIRST-TIME GUEST TO THIS NETWORKING EVENT.

MAR. 14 - BREAKFAST CONNECTIONS: COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS BETWEEN LAKE NONA AND OSCEOLA COUNTY WITH DON FISHER, OSCEOLA COUNTY MANAGER

DON FISHER, OSCEOLA COUNTY MANAGER, WILL PROVIDE THE LATEST NEWS AND PLANS FROM OSCEOLA COUNTY THAT ARE OR WILL AFFECT THE LAKE NONA REGION.

TIME: 8-9:30 A.M.

LOCATION: ORLANDO VA MEDICAL CENTER, LAKE NONA AUDITORIUM, 1800 VETERANS WAY

FEES/ADMISSION: CHAMBER MEMBERS \$15, NON-MEMBERS \$20

MAR. 22 - BUSINESS LUNCHEON: "ENHANCE RELATIONSHIPS & MOTIVATE OTHERS" WITH TWEET COLEMAN & ROB PENNACCHINI, DALE CARNEGIE TRAINING OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

TECHNIQUES ON HOW TO PERSUASIVELY COMMUNICATE IN A CLEAR AND CONCISE WAY SO PEOPLE (CUSTOMERS) ARE MOVED TO ACTION.

TIME: 11:30 A.M.-1 P.M.

LOCATION: 310 NONA, 10783 NARCOOSSEE RD.

FEES/ADMISSION: CHAMBER MEMBERS \$20, NON-MEMBERS \$30

APR. 2 - FIRST TUESDAYS AFTER HOURS EVENT AT EAGLE CREEK GOLF CLUB & THE BELFRY RESTAURANT

APPETIZERS AND HAPPY HOUR DRINK SPECIALS.

TIME: 5:30-7:30 P.M.

LOCATION: EAGLE CREEK GOLF CLUB & THE BELFRY RESTAURANT, 10350 EMERSON LAKE BLVD.

FEES/ADMISSION: FREE FOR MEMBERS OF THE CHAMBER. RESERVE YOUR SPOT! PLEASE CONTACT ADMINISTRATION@LAKENONACC.ORG IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BRING OR BE A FIRST-TIME GUEST TO THIS NETWORKING EVENT.

NEW MEMBERS

AMERIFIRST HOME MORTGAGE

BEAUX-ARTS GROUP

BRANCH CONNER REALTY AND MANAGEMENT

HEALTHCARE SOLUTIONS TEAM

JAIME CARR - BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY RESULTS REALTY

LAKE NONA PILATES

NEMOURS CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL (COPPER PARTNER)

OSCEOLA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS (COPPER PARTNER)

RODAN & FIELDS DARE TO DREAM WITH DEB

STAND OUT CONSULTING, LLC

THE BASKET CASE

TRACTION IN FLORIDA

VISCOGEN

WATERCREST AT LAKE NONA

WOMEN'S CENTER FOR TOTAL HEALTH

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BOS/JANUS ET CIE

BROKEN WINGS - COUNSELING

CENTENNIAL BANK

DREAM VACATIONS

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KERINVER CHIROPRACTIC HEALTH

LAKE NONA SELF STORAGE

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Orlando Fisher House Celebrates Milestone After Milestone

ARTICLE BY NICOLE LABOSCO

It’s 2018. Valentine’s Day. Love is in the air, but there appears to be a little more love than usual. The doors to the Orlando Fisher House, located on the Orlando Veterans Affairs Medical Center property right in the heart of Lake Nona, open. The rush of love and support comes flooding out.

Flash forward to exactly one year later, and that feeling never left. It’s like a constant cloud of love and support hovers over the house, and with good reason.

“Fisher Houses are built on the premise that ‘a family’s love is good medicine,’ and when a loved one is ill or injured, a Fisher House unites families and caregivers, relieving the financial and emotional strain of being away from home,” said Orlando Fisher House manager Terri Turner.

It’s now Feb. 14, 2019, and VA employees, veterans, families and friends all came out to celebrate the Orlando Fisher House’s one-year anniversary. The turnout from the community was more than Turner had expected. In those short 365 days that flew by, the Fisher House has helped 1,231 guests since the first guests walked through its doors on April 2, 2018. A total of 204 tours have been given, and 32 community groups have prepared meals for the guests at an average of three per month.

For those of you who don’t know about the Fisher House, it’s a “14,500-square foot comfort home that provides free lodging to loved ones of our hospitalized Central Florida Veterans.” To really put into perspective just how important the Orlando Fisher House is, our local heroes and their families have saved thousands upon thousands of dollars by staying in the house. Turner described how the longest stay for a single guest was 28 days long, which would have been approximately \$4,900 at \$175 a night, but thanks to the Fisher House, the guest only had to worry about their loved ones in the hospital and not a hefty hotel bill.

In the year the house has had its doors open, 779 rooms have been occupied, which Turner explained saved the veter-



Photo by Nicole LaBosco - Opoliner Plaque Dedication.



Photo courtesy of Fisher House.

ans families about \$130,000.

Two more celebrations took place on the 14th, including a plaque presentation to the Opoliner family, who donated \$100,000 in honor of their husband and father, as well as the groundbreaking of the new climate-controlled storage unit (which will be designed with similar architecture to look like an identical, yet mini, version of the Orlando Fisher House). Lockheed Martin contributed \$33,000 toward the storage unit.

Looking to get involved? There are many ways to assist the Orlando Fisher House, such as:

- Have a meal catered
- Prepare a meal in the house’s gourmet kitchen
- Become a “Baking Buddy”
- Donate travel-size toiletry items
- Host a donation drive for non-perishables, paper products, comfort items, and more!
- Individual yogurt
- Large apple juice, orange juice, and cranberry juice
- Catered meals
- Individual refrigerated snacks (apples, carrots with ranch, celery/cheese/ranch, etc.)
- Gift cards (Walmart, Publix, Lowe’s, local restaurants)

So here’s to you, Terri Turner, and the rest of the staff at the Orlando Fisher House! Cheers to another successful year full of love and support for our country’s more-than-deserving heroes!




Photo courtesy of Fisher House.




Photo courtesy of Fisher House - One year ago when the Fisher House Orlando dedication took place.



Photo by Nicole LaBosco - Commissioner Jim Gray, Fisher House Orlando Manager Terri Turner and Friends of Fisher House Orlando officially break ground on the storage unit.




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USTA: Spring Break Camps

BY DANIEL PYSER
PHOTO CREDIT USTA

March marks the launch of a new program at the USTA National Campus in Lake Nona, where for the first time ever, spring-break camps will be offered to local youth tennis players who are off from school.

The camps will be held March 19-21, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., during the Orange County Public Schools’ spring break. They are designed to mimic the popular USTA National Campus Summer Camp.

There are five camp options available, based upon age and skill level.

The Red Ball Spring Break Camp is for children ages 8-and-under who are currently participating in the campus’ Big Kids, Red Ball Club, Red Ball Plus and Red Performance programming. The drills and games in this camp are designed to develop a player’s foundation in all strokes, as well as training skills for tennis.

The Big Shots Spring Break Camp is for children ages 8-10 who are currently enrolled in Big Shots and Big Shots Plus classes at the campus. In this camp, players will learn and develop serve, rally and score skills.

The Orange Ball Spring Break Camp is available to players who participate in the Orange Ball Club and Orange Ball Plus programs. Players will focus on developing groundstrokes, serve and net play on the 60" court. The use of spin, consistency and transition skills is also emphasized.



The Youth Development Spring Break Camp is open to middle and high school-aged players at the beginner through intermediate skill level. Players, who will be placed in groups of similar level and age, will be introduced to the fundamentals of the game through a rally and game-based curriculum. Their practices will include a dynamic warm-up, drills with instruction, and match play.

The High Performance Spring Break Camp, the most advanced camp, is offered to High Performance players with a minimum UTR of 3. Players will be placed in groups at a similar level, and their practices will include a dynamic warm-up, drills with instruction, and match play.

For more information on the Spring Break Camps and to register, please visit reserve.ustanationalcampus.com.

Also in March, fans will have the opportunity to purchase tickets to the NCAA Division I Men’s and Women’s Tennis Championships, which will be held at the USTA National Campus, from May 16-25, for the first time.

A ticket presale will be held March 8-10 when fans can buy discounted 10-day passes for \$50, allowing access to every day of the 10-day tournament, including four days of the team event and six days of the individual tournament.

Tickets will go on sale to the general public starting March 11, with single-session tickets available for purchase, as well as the 10-day pass, which will then cost \$100.



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March 19th, 20th, and 21st

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Consumer Research and Cosmetic Surgery

BY DR. RICHARD O. GREGORY, MD



Patients frequently come to our office for cosmetic surgery consultation with a preconceived notion as to what is needed. While, as a plastic surgeon, I am happy to address the patient's stated purpose, it is important to realize that information obtained from the Internet and other sources might be incomplete and perhaps even misleading. Therefore, it is important to seek consultation from a plastic surgeon who can utilize many tools and technologies to customize a plan that will meet your needs. It's important to find a source that you can trust.

Many times, the patient's preconceived notions are based on factors other than the final result, including costs, downtime, pain and other considerations. When patients choose a lesser procedure in an effort to mitigate cost and other factors, they often compromise the final result, leading to an unhappy patient. It's important to understand that factors including cost are not nearly as important as doing your homework to select a surgeon whose primary focus is your safety and who is realistic about the outcome you can expect.

While the Internet, patient testimonials, and other sources do have value, it is important to understand their role and value. Physician review forums and reputable websites can be used to confirm a doctor's qualifications and certifications. However, using the Internet to self-diagnose a problem and determine your own treatment plan can leave you with unrealistic expectations and an incomplete understanding of the best procedure(s) to address your needs. Patients need to understand the motives and limitations of the sources providing the information.

As the information available from the Internet and other sources might be incomplete, it is primarily the surgeon's job to educate the patient prior to deciding what is appropriate to meet the patient's needs. When selecting a board-certified plastic surgeon, it is incumbent on the patient therefore to:

1. Seek a qualified surgeon who can do many different procedures so that you are not stuck with only one treatment option. Every patient is different. Therefore, different tools and approaches are needed.
2. Consult with more than one surgeon if you are uncertain or unsatisfied with the initial consultation.
3. Ask questions and gather all the information you can while keeping in mind that some sources of information might be biased.
4. Keep in mind that everything we do carries some risk. On a daily basis, we all accept the risk associated with common activities like driving a car. However, before undergoing elective surgery, you should be well aware of the most important considerations. Again, ask questions.
5. Have faith that the surgeon and the staff will do their best to help you achieve your goals and will be there for you throughout the procedure and full recovery.

While it's important to do your research when identifying a qualified surgeon with whom to consult, it's important to remember that online research is limited in nature. Reading articles and reviews might help provide you with a great list of questions to ask and a better understanding of the procedures available. However, no amount of consumer research will trump the expertise of an experienced, board-certified plastic surgeon. Be open about your cosmetic goals and heed their advice about which procedure(s) will help you best achieve those goals.

If you are considering a cosmetic procedure, I invite you to join IAS (Institute of Aesthetic Surgery) for a complimen-

tary consultation to discuss your aesthetic goals and the options available to you. To learn more, call us at 407-409-8000 or visit iasurgery.net.

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.



Colon Cancer: Knowledge Is Power

If You're 45, It's Time to Get Screened

BY DR. CHARLENE LEPANE, DO

March is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. Overall, the lifetime risk of developing colorectal cancer is about 1 in 22 (4.49%) for men and 1 in 24 (4.15%) for women. In the United States, colorectal cancer is the third-leading

cause of cancer-related deaths in men and in women, and the second most common cause of cancer deaths when men and women are combined. The American Cancer Society's estimates for the number of colorectal cancer cases in the United States for 2019 are 101,420 new cases of colon cancer and 44,180 new cases of rectal cancer. It's expected to cause about 51,020 deaths during 2019.

The colon cancer death rate in this country could be cut by more if these screening guidelines were followed. Early detection and treatment are critical. If caught early, colorectal cancer is 90 percent curable. If precancerous polyps are found during screening, the disease is often altogether preventable. Because colorectal cancer can develop with no signs or symptoms, a colonoscopy could serve as a life-saving test.

New Guidelines: Get Screened at 45.

Men and women are affected equally by colorectal cancer. For patients of average risk with no family history, it is now proposed that screenings for colon cancer begin at age 45, with follow-up screenings every five to 10 years, even for people who feel perfectly healthy. There are important reasons that warrant earlier or more frequent colonoscopies: family history of colon polyps or colon cancer, weight loss, blood in stool, change in bowel habit, and a history of polyps on previous colonoscopies.

A Colonoscopy Is Not as Difficult as You Think.

There's no need to feel embarrassed or ashamed about getting a colonoscopy. It is your doctor's job to perform these lifesaving screenings, and every effort is made to help patients feel comfortable during the painless procedure. Here is what you can expect:

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

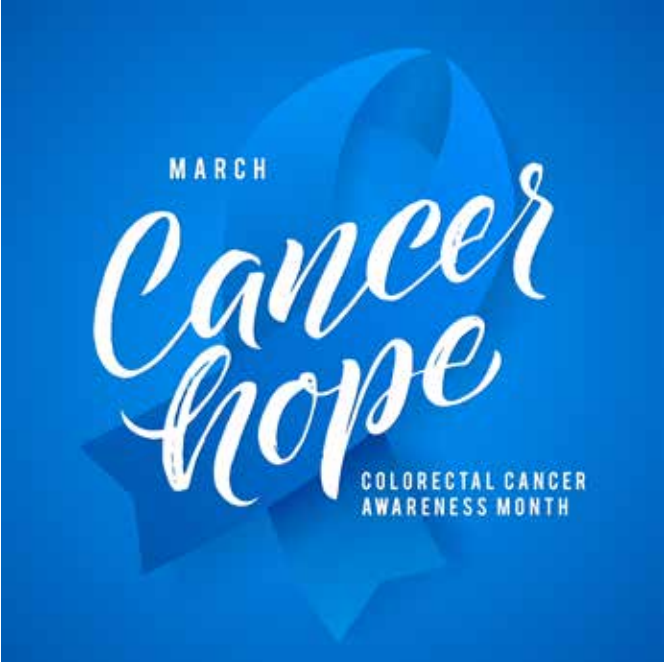
A colonoscopy is the most effective way to prevent, detect and diagnose colon cancer. Along with functioning as a screening test to check for cancer or precancerous polyps in the colon or rectum, a colonoscopy can also help find ulcers, tumors and areas of inflammation or bleeding. It is important to be screened for colon cancer even if you do not have any symptoms described above.

Colorectal Cancer Risk Factors

Even if you have no family history of colorectal cancer or polyps, you are at increased risk if:

- You are 45+ years of age
- You are overweight
- You are physically inactive
- You smoke and/or excessively consume alcohol
- You eat a lot of red meat
- You have diagnosed or undiagnosed Type 2 diabetes
- You have Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis

Dr. Charlene LePane, DO, is a dual-board certified advanced endoscopy gastroenterologist who practices at AdventHealth Celebration. For more information and to book an appointment with Dr. LePane, visit GetScreenedToday.com or call (407) 303-4829.



Nemours Children’s Hospital Grant To Expand Innovative Care Model Thanks To Generous Grant

ARTICLE BY SHARON FUENTES
PHOTOS BY NEMOURS CHILDREN’S HEALTH SYSTEM



The idea of any child having to undergo surgery can be stressful. If that child has special needs, the hospital experience can be even more intense and traumatic. But now, thanks to a generous grant from the Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for Autism, Nemours Children’s Health System is expanding their REACH Program so that they can meet the unique needs of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), sensory issues, mental health disorders, and similar conditions.

Three years ago, Nemours, with the help of the Flutie Foundation, built two REACH (which stands for Respecting Each Awesome Child Here) emergency rooms after figuring out that the long waits, noise of other patients, and the endless stream of doctors and nurses could be overwhelming for those prone to stress and sensory overload. In addition to providing a calm and less-stimulating environment, the REACH care team receives ongoing special training for working with those with ASD as well as procedure planning and recognizing and managing anxiety and agitation.

Doug Flutie Jr., founder of the Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for Autism, expressed his gratitude by saying, “We are honored to continue our partnership with Nemours and so grateful for their careful attention to the diverse needs of all patients, including children and families affected by autism.”

The new Doug Flutie Grant will expand REACH from the ER to the surgical area of the hospital with a special pre-operative and post-operative room. These rooms will incorporate the use of sensory-friendly equipment and other appropriate calming and engaging resources designed to hopefully eliminate the need to use sedatives and restraints to prepare a child for surgery. Since sedatives can often have side effects, being able to reduce the usage of them is an added benefit to the patient and their family.

The REACH program is working, too. An independent study found that, on average, one out of every four autistic patients who visited a regular ER needed to be medicated or restrained. But, in the past two years, out of the 860 pediatric ER visits in which the REACH model was used, fewer than 6% of those patients required anxiety medication and less than 1% needed to be physically restrained.

Emily Bradley, Surgical Nurse at Nemours Children’s Hospital, stated, “Our program was designed to help prevent escalation of anxiety and agitation in children with ASD, therefore leading to the reduced use of sedatives and restraints.” Bradley continued, “Since many of our ASD patients experience frequent hospital visits, causing stress and anxiety, the ability to minimize the use of sedative medications, which do have side effects, is an added benefit for our patients and their families.”

We certainly are lucky to have an internationally recognized children’s health system that is committed to creating environments that will allow them to deliver health care in a way that meets the needs of all children right here in Orlando.



Nemours is an internationally recognized children’s health system that owns and operates the two free-standing hospitals: the Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children in Wilmington, Del., and Nemours Children’s Hospital in Orlando, Fla., along with outpatient facilities in five states, delivering pediatric primary, specialty and urgent care. Nemours also powers the world’s most-visited website for information on the health of children and teens, **KidsHealth.org**, and offers on-demand, online video patient visits through Nemours CareConnect. Nemours’ **ReadingBright-start.org** is a program dedicated to preventing reading failure in young children, grounded in Nemours’ understanding that child health and learning are inextricably linked, and that reading level is a strong predictor of adult health. Established as The Nemours Foundation through the legacy and philanthropy of Alfred I. duPont, Nemours provides pediatric clinical care, research, education, advocacy and prevention programs to families in the communities it serves.



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Food As Medicine: Using Plant-Based Diets To Reverse And Prevent Disease

BY SHARON WASSERSTROM, MD, UCF HEALTH



If you think eating vegan is only for animal lovers, think again. There is significant evidence that plant-based diets can help prevent, treat and even reverse some chronic illnesses, such as diabetes and heart disease.

This does not mean you have to go 100 percent vegan to get the benefits, but the more fruits, veggies, and beans you eat, the more health benefits you will see.

What Is a Plant-Based Diet?

Plant-based diets are centered on foods rich in vitamins and minerals, including non-starchy vegetables, legumes, fresh fruit, and nuts. Broccoli, mushrooms, beans, lentils, peas, berries and almonds are common foods found in a plant-based diet.

When switching to a plant-based diet, it's important to focus on eating mainly whole foods such as fruits, vegetables, beans, lentils, chickpeas, and quinoa. By eating these fiber-rich, nutrient-rich foods, you avoid foods high in salt, sugar, saturated fat, trans fat, and simple carbohydrates. Eating a plate full of these whole food ingredients is a recipe for avoiding many chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes and obesity.

Diabetes

Research has shown that those with type 2 diabetes can see positive impacts on their health by eating a plant-based diet through improved insulin sensitivity, decreased insulin resistance, and better glycemic control. After adopting plant-based diets, I've had patients no longer require insulin to control their blood sugar. Patients really love it when they no longer require a medication – it saves them from adverse side effects, saves them money, and they feel more vibrant.

Even if you don't have diabetes, eating more plant-based meals and less of the foods that contribute to obesity can reduce your risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

Heart Disease

Eating a plant-based diet also lowers your risk for developing heart disease. Studies have shown that a higher intake of plant-based foods substantially lowers your "bad" cholesterol and contributes to healthy blood pressure. If you think that a family history of heart disease has you doomed, think again! By being proactive in changing your diet and other lifestyle modifications, you may never develop heart disease like your mother, father, sister or brother did.

Getting Started

Always consult a doctor before making big changes to your diet. If you are motivated to take charge of your health by making healthy lifestyle modifications, such as diet, a lifestyle medicine specialist can help. Together, as a team, we can devise a plan that works best for you to achieve your goals.

Dr. Sharon Wasserstrom is a Lifestyle Medicine specialist at UCF Health in Lake Nona. She helps patients to feel their best through diet, exercise, stress management and more. Learn more at ucfhealth.com.



Namaste with Natalia: Warrior Three Virabhadrasana III

Your Monthly Yoga Pose

BY NATALIA FOOTE
PHOTOS BY MICHAEL FOOTE

It is the third month of the year: March. A month named after Mars, the Roman god of war. We look forward to spring and festivals. The weather begins to change, and, in my opinion, it is the best time to be in Central Florida. For the third month, the month named after a Roman warrior, we will practice one of my favorite poses, Warrior Three.

According to B.K.S. Iyengar, Virabhadrasana III, or Warrior Three, conveys harmony, balance, poise and power. He recommends it for runners as it gives vigor and agility. I find the pose to give me the sense of flying without leaving the ground.

Virabhadrasana III

1. Begin in mountain pose, or standing.
2. Come into crescent lunge or a high lunge pose, where both hips are facing forward, the right leg is bent in front, and the left leg is about four feet behind with the left toes on the ground under the left heel.
3. Lift your arms overhead and relax your shoulders down your spine. Feel as your naval comes closer to your spine with your exhale.

4. Take a full inhale, and as you exhale, hinge from the hips and bring your torso parallel to the ground. Continue to keep the left toes on the ground.
5. On your inhale, press the right leg to straighten and lift the left leg to parallel. Feel as if you are kicking your left heel toward whatever is behind you. Your body should resemble a one-legged table.
6. Release the left hip toward the earth so that both hips are parallel to the floor.
7. Feel a long line of energy from the fingertips and crown of the head to the left heel. Imagine you are being stretched by either end.
8. Continue to bring the naval toward the spine with each exhale and feel the shoulders come down the spine.
9. Stay for 8-10 breaths and repeat on the other side.



Arm Variations for Warrior Three:

1. Repeat all the steps above, but bring the hands clasped behind you and allow them to lift you and open your shoulders.
2. Repeat all the steps above, but bring the hands to the heart in prayer position.
3. Repeat all the steps above, but place your hands on your hips.

Variation Using a Chair or Wall for Warrior Three:

1. When beginning the pose, place a chair or stool 2-3 feet in front of you. Otherwise, stand 2-3 feet facing a wall.
2. Repeat steps 1-8, but place your hands on the chair, stool or wall for balance.
3. As you gain your balance, place only your fingertips.

For more tips on Warrior Three and other yoga poses, 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.



SCHOOL UPDATES

MOSS PARK ELEMENTARY

BY STEPHANIE OSMOND, ED.D.



We have had a wonderful month at Moss Park! We celebrated National School Counseling Week. We have been blessed this year with a wonderful new guidance counselor, Ms. Miller. She is new to us and an amazing asset as we help our students navigate so-

cial and emotional growth. Thank you for all you do, Ms. Miller!

Recently, several of our 5th graders had the opportunity to participate in the OCPS All-County Elementary Concert. This concert highlighted students performing in orchestra, recorder, Orff, and chorus. Congratulations to Eliana, Francheska, Maya, Cristian, Tatyana and James – their hard work paid off and they were able to represent Moss Park well!

In art class, our students were busy making Valentine's cards for the residents of Watercrest of Lake Nona nursing home. The residents really enjoyed receiving the cards and the visit from our Art Club students.

Our Moss Park Eagles participated in the Healthy Heart Challenge, raising more than \$5,600 for the American Heart Association and having an amazing time jumping and learning about exercise and healthy choices!

Word is out! Our Annual Players production is well underway, and we cannot wait to see all the talent in *Madagascar Jr.* presented by the Moss Park Players on March 7 and 8 at 6:30 p.m. and March 9 at 2 p.m. Follow the Moss Park Players on Facebook: [facebook.com/mpplayers08/](https://www.facebook.com/mpplayers08/)

Our students' involvement in the arts constantly reminds me of the quote by Phylicia Rashad: "Before a child talks, they sing. Before they write, they draw. As soon as they stand, they dance. Art is fundamental to human expression." Thank you, parents, for supporting our Fine Arts programs and encouraging your children to be involved!



INNOVATION MIDDLE SCHOOL

BY CHRIS CLARK, PTSA

As we fly into spring, the Phoenix are busy with many fun activities.

The speech and debate team recently participated in the Modern Woodmen Oration Contest. Congratulations to the winners: 3rd place, Bianca Bernard; 2nd place, Bryce Highton; and 1st place, Giovanna Conde. Good luck as the winners now move on to competition at the Southeast Learning Community Competition.




IMS Thespian troupe 89478 participated in the Jr. Thespian State Festival that included more than 5,000 students. We are so proud of our 14 acts. They all scored superior or excellent.



The PTSA recently awarded grants of more than \$2,600 to several teachers and programs, including the Chess Club, Phoenix Exchange, ESOL students, and an anti-bullying program.


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SCHOOL UPDATES

EAGLE CREEK ELEMENTARY

2019 is off to an amazing start at Eagle Creek Elementary. So far, we have celebrated the many special events below and are looking forward to even more in the upcoming weeks and months.

Oration



Recently, we held our annual oration contest. Students were tasked with writing a speech regarding an obstacle children in their generation are faced with that previous generations did not have to face. Congratulations to our top three finishers: Brinnli Peck, 1st place; Isabella Carrasquilla, 2nd place; Shaurya Tandon, 3rd place. We are very proud of everyone who participated!

Spelling Bee



Congratulations to our 2019 Eagle Creek Elementary Spelling Bee participants and winners!

Winner: Vihaan Manchikanti

Runner Up: Tyler Dy

Counselor Appreciation Week



Our School Counselor, Ms. Sonia Velarde, and Staffing Specialist, Ms. Perry, were recognized for all of their hard work and dedication to the students and ECE community at the OCPS Counselor Appreciation Ceremony. We are fortunate to have them here at ECE.

National Education Honor Society



Congratulations to our inaugural members of Eagle Creek Elementary's National Elementary Honor Society. We are so proud of you! Thank you to Ms. Condeluci for all of her hard work in bringing NEHS to ECE.

Advocate '19 in Tallahassee



Mr. McCloe had the opportunity to attend Advocate '19 in Tallahassee. Our principal and school administrators from around the state met with multiple senators and state representatives to share how policies truly impact the lives of our students, teachers and families.



Panther Chorus

Some of our Panther Honor Chorus students, Madison Perez, Connery Jacobs, Micheal Madueme, and Madison Leimer, represented ECE as they performed at the All-County Music Series. They did an AMAZING job! Earlier this month, they also performed at Calvary. Their musical talent is a joy to share with others.



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SCHOOL UPDATES

SUN BLAZE ELEMENTARY



Miles Adams - winner.

Literacy Week at Sun Blaze was an event to remember! We had guest readers visit all of our classrooms throughout the week. The week started with “superheroes” reading their favorite story to multiple classrooms. Special guest readers for “Team Up with a Book” included the following: members of the US Tennis Association, University of Central Florida athletes, and Olympic Gold Medalist Mackenzie Soldan. During the week, our older Stingrays were able to “buddy read” with our younger Stingrays. We celebrated on Friday with a character and vocabulary word parade.

This year's Modern Woodmen School Speech Contest asked contestants to give a speech addressing the topic, “Challenges Youth Face.” Speeches had to be between three and five minutes long and in the student’s words. Ten talented finalists represented more than 190 fifth-grade students that participated. We want to congratulate all of our finalists and our winner, Miles Adams. Sun Blaze would like to thank Mr. Kevin Cadogan, one of Central Florida’s top communicators, who made a special appearance to share with our students about the art of public speaking.

Hydroponics is one of the eight free STEAM clubs offered at Sun Blaze. Hydroponics is the science of growing plants in a pH and nutrient-rich water base instead of soil. There are no pesticides, germs or insects. The hydroponics club has built a contained growth structure of PVC pipes, lights and timers to allow for automation of the environment. This provides a clean growth environment for the plants that allows for the ability to control the humidity levels, temperature, CO2, nutrient levels in the water (ppm – parts per million), and pH of the water. The goal is to have a clean, fully functioning, and aesthetically pleasing grow “room.”



Spelling Bee Champion.



USTA, UCF athletes, Mackenzie Soldan - Olympic Gold medalist.

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thetically pleasing grow “room.” The plants that our club grows are seed germinated, sprout, teen, and mature plants.

Every year, students from Sun Blaze take part in the Scripps National Spelling Bee. This year, the top three spellers from each grade level competed to represent Sun Blaze at the next level. We are proud of all our students and thankful for the family members who came out to support them. We want to congratulate Alexa Garofalo, our Spelling Bee champion.

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

LAUREATE PARK ELEMENTARY

BY SUZANNE WORKUM,
PRINCIPAL



The month was another busy one at Laureate Park Elementary. We competed, celebrated, inducted, introduced, and dedicated. Our Longhorn students were busy competing in a variety of challenges this month: STEM challenge, spelling bee, and Level 1 Oration Contest. Three of our students represented Laureate Park Elementary at the Southeast Learning Community STEM challenge. Angelina Chenault took home the gold and is the first place champion! Congratulations to our 2019 Spelling Bee participants! Fifth grade student Olivia Venezia is our 1st place winner and will represent Laureate Park at the OCPS Spelling Bee. Our fifth graders competed in the 5th Grade Level 1 Oration Contest. The classroom finalists delivered powerful speeches about "Challenges Youth Face." We are proud of our 12 finalists. Congratulations to our 1st place winner, Olivia Venezia.



This month, we also celebrated literacy, our diverse culture, and Black History Month. Our Longhorns celebrated their love of books during Literacy Week with author visits, storytime with the Orange County Library, flashlight reading, buddy reading, and an AR challenge. Our student body celebrated their diverse cultural heritage during Diversity Week by wearing traditional attire from their home countries, learning about different countries, and ending the celebration with a



party complete with food from different cultures. For Black History Month, our students researched, read stories and presented information on African American leaders.

In February, Laureate Park Elementary inducted 75 of its 4th and 5th graders into the National Elementary Honor Society. This event celebrated student commitment to the NEHS pillars, which are scholarship, leadership, responsibility and service. Special thanks to Mr. Peter Luu and Ms. Carin Nagy for speaking to our students and families at the induction ceremony. Congratulations to our NEHS members and their families!

This month also saw the introduction of a new program to Laureate Park Elementary: Watch DOGS (Dads of Great Students). Our Longhorn Dads are enjoying volunteering in our school and classrooms and making a positive impact on our students.

Finally, the Laureate Park PTA held its formal dedication ceremony for our playground sunshade. There were lots of people to honor and thank for making this important feature of our outside play area a reality. Our students love the new sunshade!



LAKE NONA HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY BELLA FUENTES, SOPHOMORE

The Lake Nona High School Theatre Department started off their spring season with a special Valentine's Day performance celebrating the ups and downs of love. Congratulations to the cast and crew of *Stories From The Heart: Scenes By John Cariani* on a beautiful show. The department's next production will be Rodgers and Hammerstein's *The Sound Of Music* in April, so mark your calendars now.



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SCHOOL UPDATES

NORTHLAKE PARK COMMUNITY SCHOOL

BY SALLY SHUMAN

School Spelling Bee



NorthLake Park is proud to announce that Shannon McInerney is the winner of the 2019 School Spelling Bee! Shannon is in the 4th grade and has been a participant in the Spelling Bee since she was in 1st grade. As a second-grader, Shannon came in 5th place, and as a third-grader, she came in 3rd at the school level. She enjoys studying the words with her father, and Shannon said her father was very helpful with giving her tips to remember how to spell certain words. All of the children in the McInerney family have competed in Spelling Bees, so it was natural for Shannon to follow her brothers' examples. During the competition, her mother and father were texting her brothers because they wanted to know how their sister was doing! Shannon loves to compete academically.

ally. She said, "I was nervous during the first few rounds, but then, after those first few words, I wasn't nervous anymore and it was a lot of fun!" She is going to compete next year as a fifth-grader and said she will feel the pressure to win again. Congratulations, Shannon!

Battle of the Books

Battle of the Books is a reading motivational program designed to encourage students to read quality literature. Beginning in January, students in 3rd, 4th and 5th grades were invited to attend the weekly NLP Sunshine State Book Club and began preparation for the Battle of the Books. The students are selected because of their interest in reading the Sunshine State books. Students selected have read 8-10 of the 15 Sunshine State Young Readers books. The NLP Book Club begins with students playing Kahoot, reviewing the books, and having mock battles. This is all in preparation for the Battle of the Books competition in April. Five students and one alternate will be selected to compete as a team for NorthLake Park. This year, the competition for the Southeast Learning Community will be held at Lake Nona High School.



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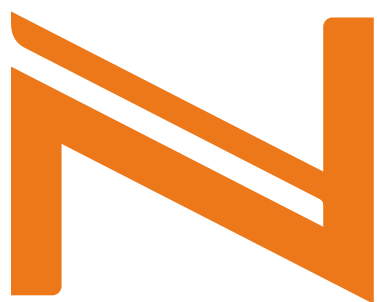
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A POEM TO ESTEBAN AND ALL THE KIDS WITH DOWN SYNDROME

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FOOD & DRINKS

Kyle's Culinary Column: Rising Apricot!

BY KYLE HAMM



The apricot is a widely known fruit that is used in many ways all across the world. Some say the origin of this fruit began in ancient China and dates back more than 4,000 years, and that it is cultivated on every continent except Antarctica. California harvests about 95% of apricots in the United States. This stone fruit, belonging to the Rose family, is grown from a small tree. The lifespan of an apricot tree can range from 15-20 years. Apricots tend to ripen all at once and have a short window of time to harvest. They will turn a golden yellow-orange with a soft flesh, and they will have a strong sweet smell when they are fully ripe.

Storing the fruit is just as important as the harvesting. Underripe apricots can be stored at room temperature in a paper bag up to 23 days. Ripe apricots can be refrigerated for up to one week, but make sure they're ripe because they will not continue to ripen once they are in the cooler. If your apricots are a little over-ripened, don't worry; they can be used for sauces, jams or pies.

The benefits are plentiful with apricots, too. They are a natural source of antioxidants, vitamin A, and fiber. They are good for your heart by reducing bad cholesterol, good for your blood because they contain non-heme iron, and good for your skin because of the combination of vitamins A and C.

Apricots are widely eaten as a dessert fresh and whole, but there are other methods of use for this stone fruit as well ... just as dried apricots, processed into a jam or preserve, or sliced and prepared for pies or other baked goods.

To begin the drying method, wash your apricots thoroughly. Cut in half and remove the large seed (also known as pitting the apricot). Separate the halves and turn them inside out, with the flesh side facing up. If you are using an oven, set to 200 degrees Fahrenheit for 10-12 hours. In a dehydrator, you can set to 57 degrees Celsius (135 degrees Fahrenheit) for 12 hours. Flip them halfway through to ensure the best quality.

For jams or preserves, begin by peeling, pitting and crushing the apricots. Then, mix the apricots with lemon juice and add sugar. Slowly bring it to a boil while mixing until the sugar is dissolved. Remove from the heat when the apricot mixture is thickened, usually about 25 minutes. Be sure to have your jars ready for jam and boil the jars to seal properly.

Preparing the apricots for pies and other baked goods is very similar. Start with washing the apricots thoroughly, cut in half and scoop the seed out. If desired, you can peel the skin off, but it is not necessary. Mix with water and sugar and bring to a boil over medium heat. You don't want to crystallize the sugar. This will take about 30 minutes, or until the fruit begins to come apart. Then, squeeze fresh lemon juice into the mixture. Remove from heat and let cool before using.

My favorite way to enjoy apricots is to make a semi-sweet/sour preserva-



tive. Then I top a thin, creamy piece of Brie cheese with the preserves and dust with pistachios (or pecans). It's super delicious!

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 the friend who is constantly tagged in those cheese memes on Facebook about drowning in grated cheese when the waiter/waitress asks you to "say when." In queso emergency, just say cheese!

I think it's time to admit, as I force myself to sit down and write this, that I've hit a point in my life where I barely even have time to do some of the things I love ... and that includes relaxing and enjoying some good ol' cheese. I know, I never thought I'd see the day ... (My boss, Rhys, even asked me if I was feeling okay when I turned down some meats and cheese in the office one day.)

Lately, in my busy, filled days and weeks, I've had to make time to run to the store and remember to drop by the cheese section to get a cheese to indulge in and enjoy – usually, that's just instinct! Turns out, the one store I

ran into only had a basic selection of about four cheeses, and I already knew I was featuring brie this time around, so I ended up tossing a wheel of Président Brie in my cart, which I feel is one of the most basic types of brie cheese available.

The original plan was to incorporate the recipe featured in *Kyle's Culinary Column*: a thin slice of brie topped with apricot preservatives and pistachios, but I was missing every ingredient except for the cheese, and by the time I realized it, it was already too late ... I had to improvise.

I sliced open the round wheel of Président Brie and decided to pair the creamy, soft cheese with a cracker to add some crunch to my bite and balance the flavors out and add some habanero jelly for a little kick of heat to compliment the otherwise plain cheese and cracker combination. I was delighted to feel (and taste) the accomplishment of creating something so simple.

So, although this simple creation wasn't much (ingredient wise or money wise), the moral of the story is to find a second to keep to yourself and stay true to who you are, no matter how busy and crazy life gets. Always make some time for cheese!



Q: What happened after an explosion at a French cheese factory?

A: All that was left was de brie.

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?



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

March, to me, is a month where I embrace all the Irish food. I'm always trying to use up any leftover corned beef I have on hand. Which, I'll preface, typically isn't much! What better way, then, to make an easy Corned Beef Hash & Egg Breakfast Skillet.

almost always make corned beef hash



with my leftovers. It's one of my favorite breakfast dishes. I've learned over the years how to make this classic Irish breakfast dish quick and easy. I'm happy to share my tips and tricks with the Nona-hood. With just a few ingredients, this breakfast skillet is put together in no time!

My first tip: I like to use either fresh, refrigerated, diced potatoes, or frozen. Of course, if you have leftover boiled potatoes from your corned beef and cabbage dinner, you could use that, too.

Another flavor booster I love to use is bacon fat. I know this might sound a little odd, but trust me, the bacon fat adds so much flavor. I started adding the bacon fat to my corned beef hash a few years back. Pro tip: I always keep a jar of bacon fat in my refrigerator. I'll use it like butter (1 tablespoon) to enhance flavors for any meal I make. Add it to veggies, pasta dishes, and more!

Another key ingredient I love to add to my corned beef hash is carrots! When I'm chopping up the corned beef, I also chop a few leftover cooked carrots. Let's face it – this hash is all about using up the leftovers. Since I make a ton of carrots with my corned beef, I always have a few left over. After all, minus the corned beef, my next favorite part of the meal is the veggies!

I only cooked two eggs for this skillet (as pictured) since it was just two of us eating the breakfast skillet; however, you can crack up to six eggs for the hash! This is the perfect dish to enjoy on a Sunday morning with family and even friends!

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.



CORNERED BEEF HASH & EGG BREAKFAST SKILLET

Yield: **2** | Prep time: **5 minutes**
Cook Time: **16 minutes** | Total time: **21 minutes**



Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons bacon fat, divided
- 1/2 cup leeks, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup cooked corned beef, diced
- 1/4 cup cooked carrots, diced
- 1 20-oz. package of refrigerated
diced potatoes with onions (such as
Simply Potatoes)
- 1/2 teaspoon dried dill
- 1/8 teaspoon smoked paprika
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 teaspoons grapeseed oil
- 2 eggs

Directions:

1. Melt bacon fat in a cast iron skillet. Then, add in the leaks. Cook on medium-high heat for 3-5 minutes.
2. Preheat broiler on high.
3. Add corned beef, carrots and potatoes. Mix well and cook for 5 minutes. Mix again, then add in the dill and smoked paprika. Mix and cook for an additional 5 minutes (mixing every other minute to prevent burning/sticking).
4. Once the broiler is preheated, make two holes in the skillet mixture. Add a teaspoon of oil to each hole, then add an egg to each hole. Place the cast iron skillet under the broiler for at least one minute or until the eggs are done to your liking.
5. Carefully remove the skillet from the oven. Divided evenly among plates. Enjoy.

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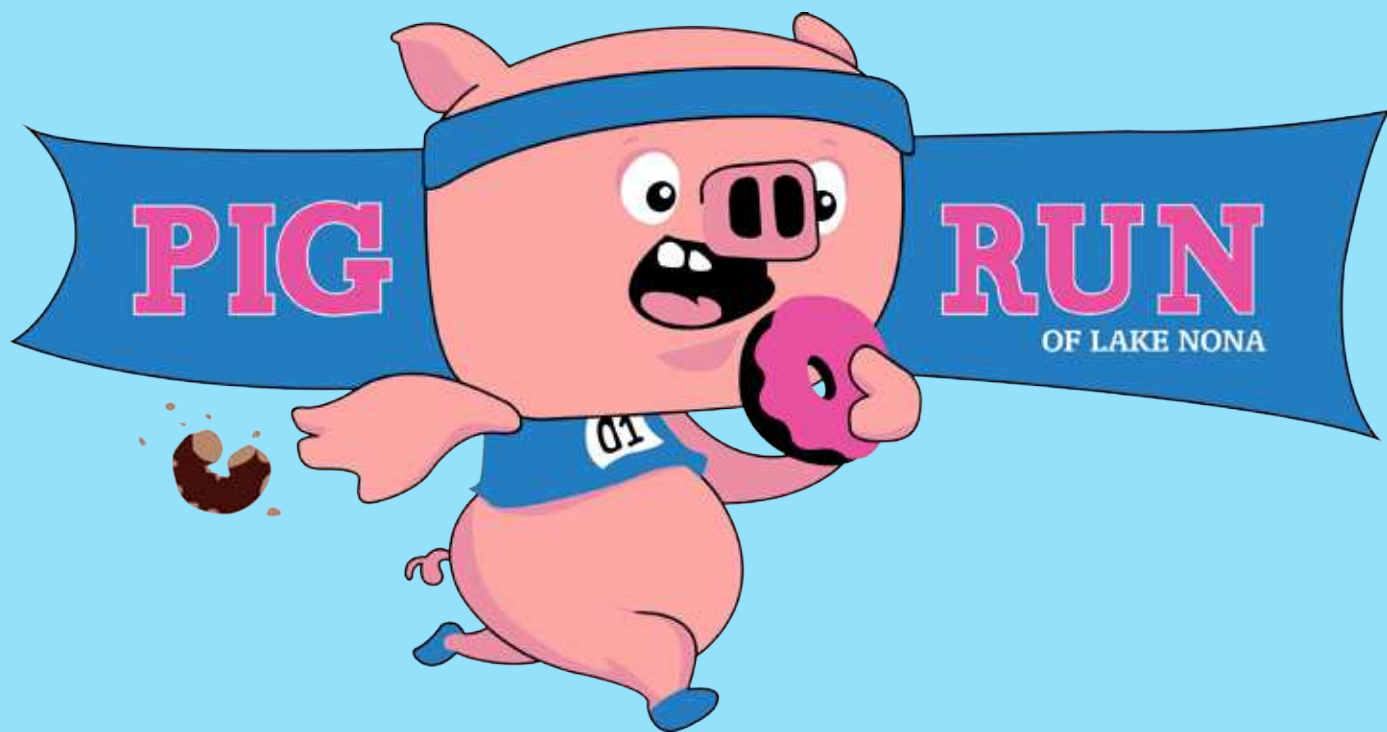
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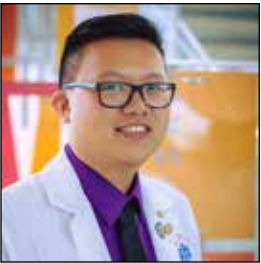
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Nona Alumni: Liem Dang

ARTICLE BY NICOLE LABOSCO
PHOTOS COURTESY OF
LIEM DANG

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: 25
Year Graduated: 2011
Occupation: Student at UF College of Pharmacy Orlando Campus; Pharmacist Intern at ORMC
Current Location: Orlando, FL



Liem Dang was surprised at how he and his family ended up in the Lake Nona area.

"I am not sure how my family stumbled

upon Lake Nona. When we moved to Orlando back in 2009, I thought we would live closer to the rest of our family here. We lived in the Lake Nona area for about three to four years before relocating to downtown Orlando."

Dang had a few aspirational goals to

achieve while a student at Lake Nona High.

"My main goal as a student was to attend the Georgia Institute of Technology to become a biomedical engineer and then work in tissue engineering. Secondary to that was to look into investment opportunities and how I can assist my family more."

As his graduation date neared, Dang had to make a last-minute decision and hope that it was the right one to make.

"I almost started my goal of becoming a biomedical engineer. I was accepted into GA Tech but decided to not attend at the last minute so that I could assist my family more. Looking back, supporting my family was definitely the best decision given that situation. I have not looked into investment opportunities, so you can say that I accomplished one out of the three goals so far."

Although he didn't attend the college he had originally planned for, his decision to stay back and help his family paid off. Staying in Florida brought him on a journey he hadn't planned, but it was nothing he couldn't handle and it's led him to where he is today.

"When I decided to stay back to help my family, I pursued a Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Sciences at the University of Central Florida. The idea was to focus primarily in biomedical sciences, take on a few engineering courses along the way, and then apply for a PhD program in biomedical engineering. Things did not pan out the way I expected," Dang explained. "I was not accepted into any of the programs I interviewed for, and so I went back to looking at what other career paths were available for me with my degree. I thought back to how interesting molecular biotechnology was when I had a course in it, and I remembered how influential my organic chemistry professor, also a practicing pharmacist at the time,

was on my education. That's where the next part of the journey began. I looked into pharmacy a little bit more and found that it aligned with the vision I had when I pursued biomedical engineering: making an impact on people's lives through science and technology. I took the PCAT, applied to pharmacy programs in the state of Florida, and now I am a third-year pharmacy student at UF COP Orlando Campus."

Working toward his pharmacy school graduation date, Dang, staying true to his character, has some extraordinary goals and a clear vision of what he'll be doing in the next five years.

"Ideally, I will be working as a pharmacist for a pharmaceutical company or in the Office of Regulatory Affairs with the Food and Drug Administration. I see myself continuing to give back to the community that helped raise me both personally and professionally by being a mentor or preceptor for pharmacy students," Dang continued. "My main goal presently is to finish my PharmD degree. Some other goals I have in addition to that are taking care of myself more, relearning my native tongue, and establishing a strong legacy that will allow future pharmacy students to succeed."

His acceptance into pharmacy school sparked a change within himself, and it's led to an even better version of Liem Dang.

"The biggest recent milestone in my life is being accepted to and attending pharmacy



school. Since my acceptance, I made it my goal to become more involved as a student since, during my undergraduate years, I had absolutely zero involvement. It has been three short years, and I would say I have overwhelmingly succeeded in becoming involved within my pharmacy program. I currently serve as a Student Ambassador for the College of Pharmacy, President of the Industry Pharmacists Organization Orlando Chapter, and Regent/President of the Epsilon Mu Chapter of Kappa Psi Pharmaceutical Fraternity, Inc."

Dang credits his new level of participation with wanting a challenge and to watch himself grow out of his normal day-to-day routine to truly be able to help others.

"I desired to become involved to challenge myself and to spark my personal and professional growth. One of the key aspects of leadership that I love so much is being able to empower others to accomplish their goals and seeing them succeed. It is through witnessing their growth that I may wholeheartedly say that I succeeded as a leader," Dang stated confidently. "Some advice I would like to give to the readers is that 'failure' is normal, and it is, in fact, okay to 'fail.' The important part is to turn it into a learning opportunity and use it to better yourself and the people around you."

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



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Presents
THE DOG OF THE MONTH

Cookie

Owner: Brittani Woods

Breed: Pomeranian

Age: 1 year, 10 months – Born April 27, 2017

Dog's Quirk/Story:
Cookie is a rescue, but her parents were actually show dogs! The Pomeranians weren't meant to have babies and the lineage wasn't meant to be bred – but, as luck would have it, we were meant to have a pom! We scooped her up, and she is the best thing to have happened to us! Our fur baby is the sweetest and most precious out there, and we are so thankful for the light she has brought to our lives!

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:
Army Specialist
Kimberly Jones

ARTICLE BY NICOLE LABOSCO
PHOTOS COURTESY OF
KIMBERLY JONES

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.



Me and my service dog, Zambu, who recently passed away at 13 months. I am thankful for all the people that helped me during our difficult time.

This month’s hero is Kimberly Jones. She was raised in Saudi Arabia and was the daughter of an Aramco Oil employee.

“As a child, I spent my time riding Arabian horses and racing sailing boats with my father in the Arabian Sea when I was not in school.”

At the age of 14, Jones attended a boarding school in Bluche, Switzerland, where



My first job was with the Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO) in 1973 as a returning summer student from boarding school.

skiing was astounding all year long. By the time she graduated in 1975, she had wanted to attend Lausanne American University, but her parents had other plans. Jones then found herself at Seattle University studying Political Science and Paralegal Studies from Edmonds Community College.

“From there, my life became somewhat nomadic, and I moved around. By 1982, I was married and had two small children under the age of three. Work was not going well for my husband, and he was ex-military. Advertising on television was routinely saying how much ‘Uncle Sam wants you.’ So, we decided to join the Army, but [what] really happened was I joined the Army. A different story!”

So off she went to Fort McClellan in Alabama for training. At just 24 years old, she was the oldest recruit in the group and had several challenges ahead of her.

“Physical training was the hardest thing I faced in the military, despite having tried to prepare before arriving. Having signed up for Military Police, they were tough, and we trained with Marines, which made it worse. Those guys were like steel. The only way for me to get through was to latch onto a Marine that I met and got him to drag me through the training in fair exchange for one plane ticket home to see his girlfriend at Christmas. Done,” Jones playfully exclaimed. “Without this guy’s tenacity to push me around, I would have never made it out of training. Unethical bartering, maybe! Successful finish, definitely!”

Jones soon found herself at Fort Bragg, being welcomed to the 52nd MP CO, where she was assigned to a Military Police Investigations Unit.

“My most exciting case was breaking up a fight between two really big guys who apparently were arguing over a girl. When I pulled up, they looked at me, 5’10 and 114 lbs. They could have ignored me or tore into me, but one guy said, ‘I know, my momma taught us better, we are just being buttheads.’ They were Army buddies, joined together and served together.”

As most individuals who’ve served know, events in the military cause change. Jones was moved to an airborne unit and began the appropriate training with a can-do attitude ... until the day came to jump from a perfectly good airplane.

“We boarded the C-130 at Pope Air Force Base and took off. Everything seemed like it was going to be a momentous day until I watched the jumpmaster hang out of the plane door. I believe he exaggerated that hang just a little further than normal to freak me out – and it worked. Boy, was I nauseated ... quite sure I turned green, and I decided right then that I was a ‘LEG.’ I told the jumpmaster my legs worked just fine, and I was going down with the plane. He told me I would fail the course. My ‘look’ apparently told him failure was



perfectly fine because he told them to take me down.”

Although being airborne wasn’t meant for her, Jones found another way to utilize her degree and be of service.

“The next day [after failing to jump out of a plane], I was back at the 52nd talking with the Company Commander. He said my options were ‘slimming, but you will check into the 65th. You can type, correct? Say you type.’ Okay, I type,” joked Jones as she reminisced on her next journey in the military. “My career at the 65th MP Company was spent typing reports and reorganizing volumes of misfiled documents. During my service with the 65th, I was able to get a lot of interesting training as the entire brigade found out that I was a ‘darn good typist’ and I was a ‘paralegal,’ so I was able to often fill in within the JAG and sometimes even with the Brigadiers General’s office. All of that experience did gain communication skills I would need for my future career.”

In 1993, her career was cut short when she was rear-ended and injured. From that point, Jones had to overcome several obstacles: surgery and rehabilitation in Ft. Bragg that didn’t go well. Before leaving the service, Jones ended up remarrying, and, when she got out, she and her new husband moved to Michigan.

“After another three years of rehabilitation and follow-up surgeries outside the military on temporary retirement, my career formally ended.”

Jones moved around the country working for Blue Cross Blue Shield before ending up in the Lake Nona area about 18 months ago with her granddaughter, Kauri, to be closer to the rest of her family who lives in Lake Nona.

“The big plus was finding the state-of-the-art Veterans Hospital right here in Lake Nona. Many VA hospitals around the country have treated me, and I cannot say enough about the level of care that I have received at the Lake Nona VAMC. The specialist is fantastic, and my primary



My granddaughter, Kauri, who is my best friend.



Me and Antar in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.

care physician in the Woman’s Clinic is on the ball.”

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.



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Nona Your Neighbor: Amy Johnson-Henson

BY VANESSA POULSON

Amy Johnson-Henson is a Nonahood resident and teacher at Narcoossee Middle School. She loves history and travel as well as helping teach some of the brightest young minds of the future. Check out our conversation with her below!

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

AJH: I have lived in Central Florida for over 20 years and have worked in the Lake Nona area for 15 years. A year ago, I moved into Lake Nona to be closer to work.

NHN: What does your daily life look like?

AJH: I teach a course called A.V.I.D. (Advancement Via Individual Determination). My day typically consists of teaching students (AVID focuses on skills to help students be academically successful in higher level courses and interpersonal skills), mentoring students (personal issues can often impede academic success), and event planning (putting together fundrais-

ers, student activities, school-wide AVID skills implementation plans, teacher trainings, and AVID showcases).

NHN: What’s the most powerful moment you’ve had while teaching?

AJH: The most rewarding thing as a teacher is when students return, sometimes years after they graduated, to tell me I inspired them to learn more about history or about science. My pinnacle goal as an educator is to instill a love of learning. If I can spark curiosity and the motivation to learn, everything else falls into place.

NHN: What is your favorite part about Lake Nona?

AJH: Taking in a Lake Nona sunrise with a good cup of coffee.

NHN: What are your hobbies?

AJH: Playing the piano, history and astronomy buff, traveling to historic places.

NHN: What is your favorite place that you’ve traveled to?

AJH: Okay ... favorite place I’ve traveled ... I can’t pick just one: roaming the halls of German Parliament late at night in Berlin, experiencing an opera in Vienna, and hiking along the trail of Lewis and Clark in Montana.

NHN: What’s your favorite song to play on the piano?

AJH: *Moonlight Sonata* – Beethoven. It’s an emotional outlet.

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

AJH: The most interesting things have all been work related. I have worked raising fish for a tropical fish farm, as a tour guide in a cavern, as a concierge for a large hotel in Austin, and did a teaching internship for a semester in The Netherlands. The craziest thing was when growing up in a typical suburban neighborhood in Texas, we lived next to a house where, over the span of about 15 years, the two different families that lived there both had a husband/father who murdered the mother/wife in that same house.

NHN: What advice would you give aspiring teachers?

AJH: Be passionate about what you teach. Students will remember less of what you taught and more of how you taught it.



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



How We Got Here: The Kendricks

BY VANESSA POULSON
PHOTOS COURTESY OF KEVIN KENDRICK

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.

This month’s family, The Kendricks, includes Kevin Kendrick and his wife, Yvette, both realtors for Keller Williams Lake Nona, Carson Kendrick who is 15 and in 10th grade at Lake Nona High School, and Brandon Sandoval, who is 13 and in 8th grade at Lake Nona Middle School.

Check out our conversation with the family below!

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

Kevin Kendrick: We are a blended family. Carson is my son. We moved to Lake Nona in 2008 when I decided to build a home in Water’s Edge at NorthLake Park. I wish there was a great reason for us to move to Lake Nona, but it just seemed like the right place to be after seeing all of the “Lake Nona” signs on the 528 for many years. I married Yvette in August 2012, and she and Brandon joined us.



NHN: What’s unique about having a “blended” family?

KK: We do think that every “blended” family is different. Our family is unique because Carson’s mom lives and works in the Lake Nona area and is in-and-out of our home quite regularly, while Brandon’s dad lives in Chicago, and he gets to visit a few times each year. Yvette gets to serve as the “bonus mom” to Carson. I’ve helped fill the “gap” with Brandon and have helped raised him since he was in 2nd grade. As parents, we try to give each boy experiences that they may not have at their biological parents’ homes.

NHN: What does your daily life look like?

KK: Yvette and I generally start our mornings at Orange Theory Fitness Lake Nona. We are usually there 4-5 days a week. Once the boys are up and off to school, there is no normal. One day, we could have multiple appointments with potential buyers and sellers, and another day may be calling and networking with members of the Nonahood. While we try to do many appointments together, we are able to network within difference circles throughout the community. We love building relationships with those living in the Nonahood.

NHN: Where are you from originally?

KK: I’m a seventh-generation Floridian and was born and raised in Orlando. I graduated from Dr. Phillips High School

in 1991 (the first four-year class). Carson is an eighth-generation Floridian and born in Orlando as well. Yvette and Brandon are both from Chicago and moved to Orlando in 2007.

NHN: What is your favorite part about Lake Nona?

KK: We love how everyone is interconnected in some capacity. When we are out and about, we love talking to complete strangers, and we always find out we have friends in common or maybe even places that we frequent in common. We also love how everyone comes together to support each other during tumultuous times, like hurricanes or the loss of a family member, as well as rallying around amazing events like the Lake Nona Pig Run or the Lake Nona High School theater performances.

NHN: What has it been like as a native Floridian to see Lake Nona grow in the way that it has?

KK: When I was a kid, we used to come to Moss Park all the time, as it was one of the few state parks that we could visit that was nearby. I remember Narcoossee being desolate, and there was very little traffic in the area, filled with trees and wildlife. As a high school student, we would come to the area that is now NorthLake Park and the Lake Nona Country Club to fish and hunt with friends. When Lake Nona first started to develop, I would always question why people would live out there, as it was the farthest place away from anything within the city. I was extremely hesitant to make the move here because I felt like it was so far away from everything. Now, I wouldn’t leave Lake Nona if you paid me. This is our

home, and we have embraced the changes, good and bad. We look forward to continuing to live and serve the Lake Nona community for many years to come.

NHN: What are your hobbies?

KK: As a family, we love to travel. We try to take a few trips each year. We love spending time with our family and friends. We are very blessed that our parents live 15-20 minutes away.

NHN: What is your favorite place that you’ve traveled to?

KK: Chicago would have to be our favorite within the United States, as we go there 1-3 times each year. Each time we go, we seem to experience a new part of the city. Internationally, we went to London, Paris and Barcelona last year for spring break, and we all loved Paris. It was truly a beautiful city and exceeded our expectations.

NHN: What is your dream travel goal?

KK: Yvette would love to travel to Italy. Our goal is to visit in the next 2-3 years.

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

KK: I love to wear my Lake Nona t-shirts when we travel. I’ve run into people who live in the Nonahood and knew [of our] advertising on Facebook and from the community in Chicago and Key West. As realtors, we get to work with people from all walks of life. We have had several opportunities to see families that came to the United States for a better life and ultimately purchase their first home but also their first home in their entire family. To see them weep with pride and joy is always an amazing experience and reminds us that anyone can achieve the American Dream.

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

KK: Lake Nona is more than a place to live – it is a community that allows you to integrate work, social, spiritual, athletics, etc., into your daily life. It is a place that you can meet lifelong friends through attending community events or partaking in a local road race. Lake Nona is more than a part of Orlando. Lake Nona is a place to Be, Belong and Become.



Meet the Media: Saul Markowitz

BY VANESSA POULSON



Saul ... hard at work!

Saul Markowitz is a creative and comedic genius, known for his monthly column that is sure to make you laugh out loud. Check out our conversation with him below!

- Extrovert or Introvert?**
A little bit of both.
- Indoors or Outdoors?**
Depends if I'm in Florida or Pittsburgh.
- Sun or Snow?** Snow
- Dogs or Cats?** Dogs
- Coffee or Tea?** Tea
- Adventurous or Laid Back?** Adventurous
- Canon, Nikon or Sony?** iPhone – c'mon?
- Books or TV?** TV

NHN: What brought you to the Nonahood?

SM: My Garmin GPS. Also, came down from Pittsburgh – aka The Burgh – for our son's health issues. And it's working extremely well for him.

NHN: What do you like writing/reading about or taking pictures of?

SM: Anything regarding current events, theatre, film, and the entertainment world. Hey, *MAD Magazine* is still a great read, too!

NHN: What's your favorite thing about Nonahood News?

SM: My monthly column. (Just kidding.) The well-written stories and well-produced videos. Congrats to Rhys and his entire team for a job well done.

You're welcome.



Saul with his son, Brandon.

NHN: Where are you from originally?

SM: I'm a proud Buffalonian. The official home of chicken wings, unfortunate Super Bowl losses and snow – and more snow!

NHN: What's your favorite hobby?

SM: I'm a crazy "beer league" ice hockey player!

NHN: What's your most embarrassing moment?

SM: I'm too embarrassed to tell you.

Next question.

How dare you?

NHN: What's your biggest dream?

SM: To be taller than 5 ft. 4. Oh – a man can dream!

NHN: Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

SM: I see myself grayer and continuing to expand our PR/marketing efforts in this region as well as back in Pittsburgh n'at. (Pittsburghers will understand that last word.) Do you think my Buffalo Bills will finally win a Super Bowl by then?

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

SM: All the exciting new projects being planned for this area. As a PR professional, there are so many opportunities to tell the positive story about Lake Nona.

NHN: Who's your biggest inspiration?

SM: There are two: My wife, Bonnie, who is the ultimate mom to our teenage son, Brandon. What she has to done to assist our amazing son with his long-term health issues is incredible and a true inspiration. Also, my dad (he passed away suddenly in 1992), who juggled an array of jobs to keep a roof over our heads. As he once said to me, "On my tombstone, I want it to read, 'At least he tried!'" I'm proud to have inherited his work ethic and a strange sense of humor.

NHN: What's your favorite book?

SM: Anything with Cliff-sNotes and beautiful pictures.

NHN: What's your favorite movie?

SM: *Amadeus* and anything by Mel Brooks.

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

SM: So many shows, so little time. Here are a few: *Dexter*, *Breaking Bad*, and *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*.



Bonnie, Brandon and Saul Markowitz.



Bonnie, Brandon and Saul Markowitz. Photo by Stephen Gross



Saul with his brothers. Left to right: Stuart, Harvey, Bruce, Saul, Joel (who passed away last year), and Dave.



Saul in his authentic Mr. Rogers' sweater with David Newell, otherwise known as Mr. McFeely.

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

SM: An amazing kosher deli. Oh – and a library. In that order.

Check back next month to get to know another member of the nona.media team!

Mama’s Turn: All Signs Point To YES

BY SHARON FUENTES



Do you believe in signs? I’m not talking about road signs or astrological ones. I mean signs, as in those subtle (and sometimes not-so-subtle), gentle nudges from the universe that can help point us in the right direction, confirm our decisions, or just offer us a sense of hope.

I am sure right about now some of you may be rolling your eyes. Hey, I get it. I am a natural-born skeptic myself. I trust ... but only if verified. Except when it comes to signs. When it comes to signs, I believe in what Swiss psychotherapist Carl Jung termed “synchronicity” or “meaningful coincidences” – things that occur with no causal relationship, yet seem to be meaningfully related.

I believe that it was synchronicity that brought our new furry four-legged family member, Skip, to us.

I wasn’t looking to adopt another dog. I was perfectly happy with our Miniature Pinscher/Shibu Innu/Terrier mutt we got from a rescue eight years ago. Stanley is the best dog. Sure, he has an un-



derbite and snaggletooth that has scared a few children. Yes, he gets carsick and most likely qualifies for a General Anxiety Disorder diagnosis. But, he is quirky and sweet and fits in perfectly with our crazy family. There was no way we would ever be able to find another Stanley, so why bother trying was my thinking. But those darn SIGNS began popping up. At first, I admit, I didn’t see them.

It started in November when Stanley started limping. We took him to the vet and found out that Stanley has arthritis. The doctor prescribed meds to reduce the inflammation and vitamins for his joints. “Oh, and you might want to get another dog,” the doctor joked with us. “You know, to keep him young and active.” To which I quickly replied, “Stanley is all we need.”

December brought with it the holidays, all the chaos that goes with it, and Sign #2. The day after Christmas, I was online trying to see if there were any good sales when I saw a headline for a story that had gone viral about a noseless dog named Sniffles who was looking for a home. I had to read on.

Sniffles was originally from Puerto Rico, where he was a stray who lost his nose after being attacked by a group of dogs. A rescue there raised money and sent him to Florida to have surgery, and he was said to have been adopted. But, in early December, Sniffles was found once again on the

streets by Orange County Animal Services, who turned him over to Poodle and Pooch Rescue because of all his health issues. My “we don’t need another dog” heart began to melt. But then, winter break ended, and the kids went back to school, and I forgot about Sniffles and the idea of adopting. Until...

One Saturday morning, a few days later, a strange car was parked right in front of my house. The driver got out along with a beautiful chocolate Lab. They started to walk up our walkway, then realized they made a mistake and walked down the street to our neighbors. (In case you are keeping track, Sign #3 is about to happen.) That was when we saw the name on the side of the parked car, Houndhaven Inc. My husband looked at me, and I knew immediately what he was thinking, “We are not adopting another dog,” I said in an unconvincing voice and walked into my office, where I logged onto Petfinder.com to investigate adopting another dog.

Petfinder is an online, searchable database of animals who need homes and the more than 11,000 animal shelters and adoption organizations across the U.S., Canada and Mexico that have taken them in. I put in what I was looking for: small, young, adult dog already house trained in the Central Florida area. Page after page of adorable fur babies appeared on my screen. It was a bit overwhelming. How was I supposed to find OUR dog? That was when my computer glitched and went black (here comes Sign #4) and when it came back on, I saw SKIP: a MinPin/Chihuahua mix! He looked like a tiny tan version of Stanley and, somehow, I just knew that he was meant to be ours. So, we adopted him!

But wait, there was one more sign that happened while I was writing this article that proves that Skip is indeed meant to be ours and I was indeed meant to write this article. I wanted to include a quote at the end of this piece that reminded me of synchronicity. I found this one, “The greatest secrets are always hidden in the places where you are most likely to think you won’t find them.” I knew it was by Roald Dahl, but did not know from which of his books, so I looked it up. To my surprise, I found out that the quote I picked was from

the very last book he ever wrote called, are you ready for this... **The Minpins**. (Both Stanley and Skip are MinPin mixes! Sign #5!)

If the SIGNS are pointing you toward getting a dog, too, please consider adopting. There are thousands and thousands of dogs and cats that need a forever family. You can start your search by using a site like Petfinder.com or go directly to the many local rescue or adoption organization websites. To help you out, I have included the information for the organizations I mentioned in this article.

Orange County Animal Services (www.orangecountyanimalservicesfl.net) is the only open admission shelter in Orange County, which means that it does not turn away any animal, regardless of their temperament or health. The shelter is located at 2769 Conroy Rd., Orlando, 32839.

Poodles and Pooch Rescue (www.poodleandpoochrescue.org) is where Skip and Sniffles came from, and they rescue the “leftovers” from animal control, the dogs that nobody wants because they’re older or suffer from neglect, abuse or have a medical need.

Houndhaven Inc. (www.houndhaven.org) rescues dogs and puppies from euthanasia at kill shelters.

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.



Family Fridays: Put Your Phone Down

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!

We’ve all been there: It’s the middle of family dinner and conversation is flowing. Everything seems to be going great, until the moment everyone dreads. A phone rings. A text buzzes. Someone gets a Tweet or a Snapchat, your phone blows up notifications, and suddenly the great family moment that was being shared has evaporated and everyone is now glued to their phone screens.

The phenomenon of phones at the dinner table has become all too common in American households, and it seems like nobody is onboard with these digital devices invading family time. A new survey by Pew Research Center found that 88% of respondents believe it’s “generally” not okay to use a cell phone during dinner. 82% of respondents say that using a phone in social settings hurts conversations, at least

occasionally. 89% of respondents said they had used their phone during their most recent social gathering, most often to read a text or email, take a photo or send a text. All in all, the results showed that 61% percent of people surveyed agreed that the overuse of technology has had a negative impact on family life.

Family meals are often the only time during the day that the whole family is together for long enough to have a conversation and reconnect with each other after a long day of work or school. This is also the time of day when parents can present themselves as an important and stable part of their child’s everyday lives.

The best way to help combat this might seem simple: just ask everyone to put their phones away until after dinner is over. But, as with most things, the solution is far more complicated than meets the eye. With the digital-media-obsessed world that we live in, often putting your phone down and away is more like trying to break an addiction rather than just putting the device down.

Here are a couple of tips to help you get started with breaking even the most smartphone-addicted family member:

- You want to set the precedent that your family is open and talks to each other. If this is the kind of behavior that is expected on a consistent basis, that’s the kind of response and behavior you’re going to get back from your kids.
- Parents are the role model. Let that work email go for a couple of minutes – your boss can wait when you’re with your kids.
- Teenagers need time offline in order to help establish opinions and ideas about the world around them that they’re

growing into. Family dinners are the perfect time to help get their creative wheel turning, offline.

- Establish the idea that, as a family, you can talk openly about current events and feelings in an environment without judgment. This helps build a foundation where kids and teens can talk to you while you’re sitting with them at the dinner table, rather than just with their friends on Snapchat.
- Share what happened throughout your day with them as well as listening to theirs.
- You want to encourage kids to share the “best” and “worst” parts of their day, as this encourages more than one-word

responses like “fine” or “good.”
As smartphones continue to wiggle their way into more and more social situations, families will continue to have to get creative when it comes to getting their kids’ and teenagers’ attention. The battle against the smartphone isn’t going to be won easily, but it’ll be worth it.

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



In the Garden: Who Knew A Properly Planned Spring Vegetable Garden Will Produce for Six Months?

BY AMBER HARMON

The spring vegetable gardening season begins, for most, after the threat of frost is gone. Planting in the beginning of March is typically a safe bet as the last frost of the year in Central Florida is usually sometime in February. This winter season was quite mild, where we never even got a frost. In comparison, last year we got our first frost in November and a hard freeze in February. The point is that you never really know what the season will bring, so planning to plant in the beginning of March is typically a safe bet.

In order to be successful in the spring and summer vegetable garden, we must choose plants that are heat tolerant and pest resistant. Always read the description on the seed packet and look for these qualities. If you'd like to know certain varieties to seek out and purchase on the internet, just access the University of Florida data sheet for that vegetable plant. It will usually



Spring Garden (Photo by Amber Harmon)

recommend several varieties of tomato or eggplant that are proven to be successful in our region.

When temperatures are above 90 degrees daily, it makes it difficult for many plants to produce the flowers necessary to develop fruits and vegetables. It is important to choose the types of vegetables that will tolerate the summer heat. Here are some good options in general that you can plant in the beginning of March that will continue producing through the summer and into the fall:



- Cherry tomatoes are a good option that will grow most of the summer. Beefsteak and other large varieties do not do well when it gets very hot. A great cherry option is the Florida Native Everglade Cherry Tomatoes.
- Eggplants are heat-loving plants that can continue to produce through most of the summer.
- Peppers also do well in the summer. Hot peppers tend to produce even longer through the summer than the sweet bell peppers.
- Okra will just grow all spring and summer long, and it will continue to produce into the fall season.
- Spinach substitutes like Malabar Spinach and Longevity Spinach are nutrient rich and can continue to produce all summer long. Use the leaves in salads, sautés and smoothies, just like traditional spinach.
- African blue basil is a great heat-tolerant option to have Caprese salad and pesto all summer long. It also has beautiful purple flowers that are edible.

We are so fortunate to be the only state in the country that can successfully grow and harvest vegetables all year round. In order to get the most out of your spring and summer gardens, just follow the above guidelines, along with:

A minimum of six hours of direct sunlight on the garden.

Regular daily watering in the morning so the moisture is with the garden during the heat of the day. By late afternoon, the garden should have a dry layer on top to know you are not over-watering the garden.

Start the season with some fresh compost to revitalize the nutrients in the garden. Use organic fertilizer regularly as directed on the package.

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!"



Family Shift: The Danger of DRIFT

Helping families live with greater intention so that they can succeed in what matters most in life.

BY RODNEY GAGE, LEAD PASTOR



I believe that every family ends up somewhere, but few families end up somewhere on purpose.

Like most couples, it would probably be safe to say that when you first fell in love with your spouse or when you started your family, the dream was to live "happily ever after," right? You wanted to experience all the good things that life has to offer. That's the goal, right? We all want to be happy, successful and thrive in our most important relationships.

Unfortunately, even with the best of intentions, the demands of life and the unexpected twists and turns can cause us to drift or even feel pulled away from the most important people in our lives. The busyness, stress and pressures we all face can negatively impact our marriage and

family relationships.

Like a car that has alignment issues, when you take your hands off the steering wheel, the car will naturally drift. Sometimes there is even a pull that you feel that forces you to hold the steering wheel even tighter so that you don't lose control.

Perhaps you can relate. Maybe you are experiencing that drift in your marriage or with one of your children right now. Instead of being pulled closer together, you feel like you're being pulled further apart. You're in survival mode. You're co-existing, but there is no intimacy, connection, fulfillment or joy in your home. You might not even know how it happened, you just know things aren't where they could be or should be. I call it the danger of **D.R.I.F.T.**

Perhaps there is a pull that you feel from the outside:

- Work demands
- Peer pressure
- Negative influences
- Too many extracurricular activities
- Distractions
- Etc.

All of these challenges are causing conflict and problems on the inside:

- Disappointment
- Regret
- Isolation
- Frustration
- Tension
- Etc.

These negative emotions can have you feeling overwhelmed, defeated and emotionally exhausted from trying to keep your marriage and family from falling apart. The question is, what do you do? How can you keep from drifting further apart as a family?

It starts by asking yourself the questions, "What do I really want in life? What do I want for my marriage? What do I want for my family?" The biggest challenge we face as individuals and as families is distin-

guishing the difference between what we naturally want versus what we ultimately want.

What we naturally want is instant gratification. We live in a culture that is driven by upgrades and experiences. We want *bigger, better, faster* and we want to go to more places and experience all the good things life has to offer. There is nothing wrong with any of those things as long as they don't rob you of what you ultimately want. What we ultimately want can't be marketed, packaged, bought or sold. Again, the question is what do we really want and how do we get it?

What if we changed the question to WHO do I want to become? Who do I want to be as a husband? Who do I want to be as a wife? Who do I want to be as a mother? Who do I want to be as a father? While you're asking these questions on a personal level, let me encourage you to take it a step further and ask the following questions to each other as a couple or over a family meal.

6 Questions That Will Shift the Direction of Your Family Relationships

1. On a scale of 1-10, how would I/we rate the health of our family's relation-

ships?

2. What is the vision for our family?
3. What values are most important to us as a family?
4. What distractions/activities are competing with our family's vision and values?
5. What unmet needs are being neglected in our home?
6. What are three things we can do in the next 31 days that would shift the atmosphere of our home and improve the health of our relationships?

Remember, your family is not an important thing. It's everything.

Rodney Gage is an author, speaker and family coach. He is also the founding pastor of ReThink Life Church. His passion is to help families live with greater intention. To learn more, check out rodneygage.com.



Ask Lady Nona:
It's Not Me,
It's You!



Being in a relationship sometimes allows you to learn something new about yourself and see yourself through the eyes of others. As time passes and you face different scenarios, you get introduced to new and different parts of yourself. Some good, some bad, and some truly ugly. As much as we all would like to think we are perfect, we have to come to terms with the fact that we are not – nobody is. Although you might leave almost every relationship thinking that you have been wronged and the other person is to blame, sometimes it's necessary to consider (for your own sake) that maybe it wasn't them, it was you.

Think of all the ways you have been described by your past and present partners, friends or family. Is there a reoccurring term? Once you have heard something more than once or from more than one person, maybe it's time to really consider what is being said. Granted, no one likes to hear that they are too possessive, too jealous, have spending issues, are not supportive, a sociopath or selfish. But, let's face it, the world is full of people with these issues, and you might be one of them. Though, when being criticized, people automatically dismiss what is being said because, well, nobody wants to hear about their negative attributes.

Being seen with all our flaws and our non-Instagram selves is part of being in a real relationship. Which means that a relation-

ship will sometimes magnify our less-than-perfect sides. Although it is easier and an act of self-preservation and almost natural to point the finger at someone else, if we choose to really listen and really consider our behavior, we might be able to learn something new about ourself and change it. No matter how ugly, it's an opportunity to become a better version of yourself.

Getting criticized hurts the ego and naturally puts someone on the defensive. Of course, there is a difference between constant verbal abuse, condescending comments, or put-downs versus having a heart-to-heart with your partner about how your repetitive actions are making them feel. Make sure that you are taking a step back to evaluate which is taking place. No one should take any constant, unconstructive criticism, but we also must not pretend that we don't bring any issues to the table.

I can think of three of mine just off the top of my head right now, thanks to my very perceptive and articulate husband. And after years of resistance, I finally heard him and saw things from his perspective. I have acknowledged that I'm not perfect and not always right, took into consideration these things that he was right about, and now am working on fixing them. It's actually freeing, and it feels great. I can catch myself doing them now and just alter my actions, making me a much more pleasant person to be in a relationship with and making my husband truly appreciate and love me.

It's not necessarily me just acting the way he thinks I *should* act, rather how my actions are making him feel. I mean, who died and made him Mr. Right about everything? But if something is not making him feel good and making him feel like he wants to leave or poke his eyes out with a fork, then it should be addressed.

Think of the way you react when "criticized" by your partner ... do you automatically argue against it (I mean who wouldn't) and start pointing out their flaws as well? Put yourself in their shoes for a second and imagine that you are expressing yourself and not getting heard – wouldn't that leave you feeling invalidated? What ends up happening when no one is taking the time to listen is the conversation turns into a battle of the wits – who can prove themselves right – and it can lead down a dark and unproductive path.



If you have been in a long-term relationship, then you have most likely experienced something like this and know that it can be challenging to stand there and accept your faults. Vulnerability requires a lot of maturity and strength. What's even harder is admitting you are wrong, in whole or in part. We spend so much time focusing on our positive attributes in an effort to love ourselves for who we are that we have become accustomed to overlooking our flaws. I have yet to read a self-help book about focusing on all your negative characteristics. It does seem like a negative practice, doesn't it? It is if you are just doing it to put yourself down, but if you are looking in the mirror to see the parts that are negatively affecting your relationships so that you can grow, then it turns into a positive exercise.

This exercise might take some practice, but in the end, what you are doing is shifting any negativity to result in positivity and regaining the power in your life and over yourself. You are making a choice to see yourself, really see your actions and behaviors, and being strong enough to acknowledge your flaws and eventually releasing them.

Editor's Note: Those who know me know that I am very into self-evaluation, self-improvement, mental health awareness, and overall wellbeing. That being said, IF after reading this op-ed you feel that your personal situation just does not quite fit what Lady Nona has described here, please use the Crisis Text Line, a free, 24/7 crisis support organization with trained counselors to help you through any painful emotion. Simply text HOME to 741741. "Every texter is connected with a Crisis Counselor, a real-life human being trained to bring texters from a hot moment to a cool calm through active listening and collaborative problem-solving. All of Crisis Text Line's Crisis Counselors are volunteers, donating their time to helping people in crisis." Please go to www.crisistextline.org to learn more or become a volunteer.



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NonaVentures: Airboating

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS 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 decided to finally embrace the typical Floridian life-style and go airboating. It's pretty sad, actually. I've lived in the Lake Nona area for 16 years (it'll be 17 years in August), and airboating is kind of just the staple activity in this state. How on earth has it taken me this long to experience this?!



With several options available to choose from, I chose Wild Florida. Going to Wild Florida gave me a decent excuse to go on a short road trip and feel like I was getting away. As Andrew and I arrived, we passed a giant sign notifying us that we were in the right place (it's easy to feel like you're in the middle of nowhere going down backroads).

Our group was called to the dock to get ready for our trip. We made our way down the lengthy, winding dock to reach the area where all of the airboats were waiting. As our group of about 20 stepped upon the boat, we grabbed pairs of headphones to protect our ears from the loudness of the boat. We were given some minor rules for our safety and in case of an emergency, and the next thing I knew, we were off.

The fan turned on, and the noise filled the air. It was loud, but not unbearable, even without the headphones. I decided to keep them on the whole time to look the part. We reached speeds of about 35 to 40 miles per hour, and as we flew across the lake, I was taking in all the views. Birds were flying alongside the boat, and we even spotted some eagles. It was a perfect day for airboating, and the temperature was spot on.

Next thing I know, we're chasing down some baby gators that were spotted. Now, all I could think about was "Swamp people live!" I kept laughing a bit to myself because everyone was so excited to see the gators and I kept thinking (as a typical Floridian), "Just go outside. It's Florida." The state is known for gators. This part of the tour I didn't care for because I

grew up with a lake in the backyard and always saw a gator or two swimming around or basking in the sun. I had hoped the entire experience wasn't going to be chasing gators. I just wanted to reach top speed!

We sped back up, and the driver began turning, which felt like drifting and being on the edge. I'd be lying if I said I didn't grab ahold of the bar near me. A part of me felt like I was going overboard. We rode over the marsh as if we could glide over everything, and as we

continued to glide over the water in the openness, a little swamp water landed in my mouth, no biggie.

I chose the hour-long tour at 4:30 p.m., hoping to catch the sunset and, boy, did I choose correctly. The sun began to set about halfway through the tour, and the skies turned the perfect golden color, painting flames across the lake. The tour costs \$49.50 per adult and \$41 per child. The experience was fun, but I'm not sure I'd choose airboating over regular boating. I have more of a need for speed than for hunting down gators and other wildlife.



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.



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Camp Gladiator Trainer Talk: Seven Reasons Why You Might Not Be Seeing Results

BY VERNICE SALVERON-GASPER

Are you putting in the work and not seeing the results you are after? Unfortunately, this is a common occurrence that does not always have a simple answer. There is so much health, nutrition and training information out there that it is hard to know what is fact and what is a fad.

As a personal trainer/occupational therapist, I am passionate about balance, healthy eating habits, and sustainable health approaches. Here are my seven reasons why you might not be seeing your sought-after results.

1. Hidden calories: Frequently, I hear my clients say, “I don’t know why I am not losing weight; I eat very clean.” By clean, I assume that they are eating unprocessed whole foods, which is a great step in the right direction. However, calories are calories. The body essentially sees food by its caloric weight; therefore, 800 calories of raw unsalted

nuts is the same as an 800-calorie donut. If you are trying to reduce body fat, my recommendation is to use a mobile app where you are able to track your calories in order to ensure your “healthy snacks” are not derailing your progress.

2. Portion sizes: Similarly, many people have the right idea about eating healthy food with good quality macro/micronutrients. However, overeating (even the “good” food) will not facilitate body fat loss. It is important to recognize the body’s signs of satiety and avoid overeating.

3. Cutting food groups: Some diets promote protocols where entire food groups are off limits or significantly reduced. While these weight-loss strategies work initially, this is often not the case in the long term for a multitude of reasons. Firstly, if the diet is not sustainable, then neither will the results be. Also, all the macronutrients (carbohydrates, fats and proteins) have a specific purpose for the human body, so limiting these food sources may limit the body’s ability to perform optimally.

4. Not exercising hard enough or correctly: I first want to point out that any exercise is better than no exercise at all. However, I have to stress that you MUST work out with EFFORT and INTENSION to get results. The way you train should be specific to the goal you are trying to achieve. For example, if you want to tone up, you must resistance train, and if you want to improve functional movement, you must engage in functional training. I must also add that correct form and technique are paramount to an effective training regimen. If you are not confident that you

are exercising correctly, then you should invest in a fitness professional to avoid injury.

5. Not following a sustainable approach: If you want results to be life-changing, you must make life changes. This means that you must follow a health regimen that is sustainable FOR YOU. If you are not going to drink liquid meals for the rest of your life, don’t waste time with a liquid diet. If you enjoy variety in your food, then don’t try to restrict yourself to only a few sources. Some of the best approaches to long-term health use a combination of approaches that work FOR YOU!

6. Consistency: Being consistent is probably the number one reason for people missing out on seeing their results. When we adopt a healthier lifestyle, a lot of the positive physical and mental changes occur internally before they are outwardly noticed. For many of us, we become impatient and return to our old habits before we reach this point. This is why it is so important to have other evaluation tools, such as digital body composition scans, blood tests and, most importantly, monitoring the way you feel. With consistency, the results will come – trust the process!

7. Not having support: Making a lifestyle change is difficult alone as we often revert back to old habits when our motivation is lacking. Having people around you who are supportive and are working toward the same mission can ultimately keep us consistent and on track. As a T.E.A.M., together everyone achieves more!



If you are looking for a supportive, challenging, yet fun fitness community, be sure to contact me to join us for FOUR WEEKS OF SPRING TRAINING.

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

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

“To positively impact the physical fitness and ultimately the lives of as many people as possible.” – Camp Gladiator

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.



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World-Class Soccer Training Coming to Lake Nona

BY PHILIP LONG

I was tucking my 10-year-old son, David, into bed when he asked me, “Dad, do you think I’ll become a professional soccer player?”

So many thoughts began to race through my head – tryouts, coaches, travel, agents, development, networking, and, ultimately, that God’s in control. I put my face close to my sons and said, “I don’t know, but if you give it your best, and you’re lucky, you never know.” Of course, being a soccer fan, I then rambled on and on until he fell asleep.

One of the failures of US soccer, and US team sport, in general, has been that we’ve focused so much on organizing our kids into teams and clubs and traveling from such an early age that we’re not only burning our kids out, but we’re burning ourselves out. We’re forking over a lot of cash to what end? And to make matters worse, recreational leagues and pick-up play suffer as all the talented players are busy practicing, traveling or too tired.

Sandlot sports seem to be a thing of the past. But there’s middle space between recreational and club soccer that can ease the burden we parents feel to expose our kids to quality soccer. That’s why I’m excited that Dakota Dreisbach with Coerver Coaching, the world’s leading soccer skills



program, is offering a free clinic to introduce you to a very reasonably priced soccer academy.

Developed by soccer experts analyzing the strengths of players like Pele, Maradona and Cruyff, it’s a program that has graduated the likes of Real Madrid’s Gareth Bale, Bayern Munich’s Arjen Robben, Liverpool’s Daniel Sturridge, and Borussia Dortmund’s Shinji Kagawa.

Dakota has one location, once a week, here in Lake Nona, where our budding pre-professional, superstar kids can learn soccer the way it’s taught abroad. Through a wide variety of games, the program instills valuable lessons, not only about how soccer is played but about persistence, determination, and that secret ingredient we’re all looking to mix into our kids these

days – grit.

“A lot of the training is teaching them resilience, teaching them to not give up,” says Dakota, “that when they set their minds on something, there’s not always just one way to fix it. It’s an optimistic outlook.”

In fact, Coerver Coaching studies its graduates to see how they do in life. And since what they implement in their program is flexible growth and problem-solving styled learning (a must in soccer), a vast majority of their graduates are faring very well in the job market.

All that to say, here’s an option that can add some quality experience to what your child is already doing with his soccer club. Or, if you’re like me and don’t want to go the club route, expose him or her to the beauty and competitiveness of the game in

a high-class environment.

Details: The free clinic is for boys and girls aged 7-12. So, bring water, cleats (running shoes will also work), and a ball if you have one. It will be at the North Shore at Lake Hart Recreational Field, March 9, 3-4:15 p.m.

Questions? You can reach Dakota at 866-819-5252, ext. 1, or visit www.coervermoves.com.



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KITCHEN RECYCLING WORKSHOP: BEST PRACTICES FOR COMPOSTING AND GREASE RECYCLING AT HOME

Tuesday, February 28, 2017
6 - 7:30 p.m.
Orange County IFAS Extension Office
6201 South Conway Road
Magnolia Room

Tuesday, March 28, 2017
6 - 7:30pm
5100 L.B. McLeod Road

The City of Orlando is partnering with the Orange County IFAS Extension office to provide free kitchen recycling workshops. These information sessions will focus on ways to clean up our waste stream through backyard composting and grease recycling.

To register or to order your FREE composter and grease recycling jug, visit cityoforlando.net/composter.

Questions or concerns? Contact Joe England at joseph.england@cityoforlando.net.



WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

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Great informative information and look forward to other workshops.

Presented valuable information in an organized manner.

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2019 WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

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- January 12: HOA & Condo Board of Directors Certification Training
- February 9: Behind the Badge
- March 9: What is That? Curious Facts of Orlando and Orange County
- April 13: Neighborhood Wellness Challenge
- May 11: Be Prepared. Stay Safe.
- June 8: 2019 Legislative Updates
- July 13: HOA & Condo Board Of Directors Certification Training
- August 10: Crime Prevention and Neighborhood Safety
- September 18: Building Stronger Neighborhoods
- October 12: Sustainable Living Made Easy
- November 9: Navigating Neighborhood Resources

Looking forward to the next workshop!

Great presentation! Excellent speaker and informative.

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Nona Cycle: Safety, Camaraderie, Inclusion, and Charity

ARTICLE BY DAN WILSON
PHOTOS COURTESY OF NONA
CYCLE FACEBOOK GROUP



Lake Nona? Where the heck is that?? These are the words I spoke when I was chatting with my girlfriend, Jenn, about two months ago when she told me she submitted for a position within Johnson & Johnson at a subsidiary in the Orlando market, the Human Performance Institute.

I have lived in Jacksonville since 2004, with established roots, knowing all the great restaurants, bars, hidden gems,



things to do, and places to be active. And by “be active,” I mean feed my growing obsession with endurance sports, and specifically triathlon.

For the unfamiliar, a triathlon consists of swimming, biking and running for various distances, ranging from shorter “sprints” to full-distance Ironman races (finishers taking between 8–17 hours). I have come to accept that it takes a special version of crazy to not only endure these events but to maintain the discipline to train for months before so that the race itself is only moderately painful, instead of simply intolerable.

Fast forward to late December 2018, and we (Jenn, myself, and our sweet black lab, Ella) are loaded up and ready to drive a couple of hours to our new home in Laureate Park. In addition to the usual stress of moving, unboxing, wondering where the heck the movers put my (insert item

here?!?), I also had the nervously excited task of looking to meet new people in the Lake Nona area in hopes of making new friends and also professional contacts as I look for the next chapter in my professional career. Leaving Jax to support my partner’s career ambitions is exciting but also a new challenge. As an experienced triathlete, I have come to appreciate that those things that are tough are probably good for me.

Lake Nona is beautiful! The thought put into planning and developing this community is evident immediately. Wide bike lanes, planned infrastructure for an active lifestyle, and a delicate balance between new housing, nature and commercial development highlight my initial impressions of our new home. From some initial research around biking and running groups, I stumbled upon the Nona Cycle Facebook Group, and admittedly stalked their routes, posts and general vibe.

Once we were settled and I was able to actually find all my boxed bike gear, I committed to joining Nona Cycle for a Saturday group ride. While I have been riding bikes since I was six years old, from BMX to mountain to road and triathlon, I was a fair bit nervous about this initial ride. My cycling in Jax was largely by myself, or perhaps with a few other friends looking to get some mileage in.

As the group assembled in the Canvas parking lot that Saturday morning just before 8 a.m., more and more lycra-clad cyclists showed up for the ride, many of whom were sporting a stylish Nona Cycle jersey.

While I was confident of my abilities to cycle, I was wondering ... what have I gotten myself into?! Just then, I was greeted by Spencer Phelps, and we briefly chatted about me being new to the group and area. He was extremely welcoming, introducing me to nearby waiting cyclists and generally giving me the lay of the land for the ride and also the group. He also made a very clear point to go through the safety measures and announcements for the ride, which I have come to appreciate at the start of all rides.

The ride started, and we were off! The group was well laid out, with a self-seeding aspect to the ride tempo from newbies to

fast kids, with safety as the clearly evident main priority. I pushed myself on that ride harder than I have in years on solo rides, and even some races.

Not having ridden in a lot of group rides previously, I didn’t know what to expect. What I found with Nona Cycle was a welcoming environment for cyclists of all abilities, with periodic stops to refuel and recollect. The endpoint was Starbucks, which was my reward for working hard, and also a great way to get to know those cyclists that I just trusted, pulled and pushed myself with. I met quite a few people that first day – some were very fast, some were less fast, but all were very welcoming and genuine.

A few weeks later, I was finally able to convince my girlfriend to join on the Nona Cycle Sunday ride. As a 2X Ironman triathlete, Jenn is more than confident on two wheels, but like me, had not been on many

group rides.

With some apprehension, we started off on the typical Sunday ride of approximately 30 miles, heading south from Lake Nona to St. Cloud and back, with careful thought on the route by Nona Cycle as to avoid traffic and stay on safer roads. As we all know, any time one rides outside on the public roadways or even on secluded trails, there are risks – squirrels, dogs, cars, slick pavement, glass, road imperfections, etc.

It was just shortly after our “restart” to the ride, which is when the group recollects everyone to ready for the trek home, allowing those to leave according to how fast they want to go and how hard they want to work. I went with the “B+” group, not as quick as the obscenely fast kids, but still pretty peppy. We started off along Lakeshore Boulevard along Lake Tohopekaliga (thank you, Google, please don’t ask me to say that), and I was ready to push it on the route home.

Not more than a few minutes into the journey back, I saw a call from Jenn come through on my Garmin bike computer. I knew she was heading out with the group behind me, so she should be riding, not calling.

My stomach sank, and I thought, “This can’t be good.”

Immediately after that, I saw a call from Spencer (group leader), and then I really felt ill. This could only mean a couple of things – something is wrong, or something is really wrong.

I gestured out of the pace line and busted a U-turn to head back to the rest stop we left from. When you fear for the safety of a loved one, you can cycle pretty darned fast if you need to.

Once I arrived at the scene, which was visible from nearly a mile away by the EMS trucks and flashing lights, I arrived to see Jenn on a gurney being loaded into the back of an ambulance. OMG!! What the heck happened and is Jenn ok?!? (Edited for PG-13 readers).

She was visibly shaken but appeared to be relatively okay at first glance. After my first trip to the ER in an ambulance and several hours at the St. Cloud Medical Center, we were able to determine that Jenn was stable and we could head home.

While any accident on a bike is not ideal, this one was better than it could have been. No cars, just bikes, a few people, and pavement. While this sounds gruesome and candid, it’s a reality of being active in the real world. In addition to my obvious concern for Jenn’s (and others who were hurt) well-being, I was truly impressed by



Dan & Jenn.

the outpouring of care and concern by not only the group leaders but also the members – many of whom we haven’t met yet.

This group cares about safety, camaraderie, inclusion, cycling awareness and, more importantly, charity. That’s right, Nona Cycle has (again) created a Tour de Cure team, which proceeds benefit the American Diabetes Association (ADA). Last year, they were able to donate close to \$45,000 to the ADA, and have their sights set to top \$50,000 this year (donation details can be found on the Nona Cycle Group Facebook page or bit.ly/tourdecureln).

If you are looking to get out on two wheels and want to see what a truly great cycling group is all about, come out and join us on one of the weekly rides. The Nona Cycle Facebook Page is the best way to stay current. Otherwise, feel free to show up on Saturday or Sunday morning at Canvas restaurant parking lot at 8 a.m. (weather permitting). Hope to see you soon!



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



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Lake Nona Family Shares How Playing Youth Sports Helped Son Focus

ARTICLE BY VALERIE SISCO
PHOTO CREDIT: BENITA FOSTER



It’s the meeting many parents worry about when they notice their child seems to be a lot more energetic and active than other kids they know. Lake Nona resident Sophia Rogers remembers the day her son’s fifth-grade teacher requested a conference with her and her husband, Jeffrey.

“She told us we may want to have Gabe tested for ADHD,” she recalls. “We were surprised and felt disappointed in ourselves that we’d let our son down because we had missed something that we should have noticed earlier.”

Sophia and her husband realized Gabe had extra energy, yet he did so well in school that they had hoped he’d improve as he matured. They had Gabe tested and, at their physician’s recommendation, agreed to try medication. They were also eager to find other options to help him concentrate and direct his energies in ways that would progress his schoolwork, help him develop friendships, and participate in extracurricular activities.

“As I observed Gabe and thought about the best ways to help him, I caught an interview with swimmer Michael Phelps’ mom,” Sophia says. “She talked about how sports was a key to help him focus, and since I had been a varsity swimmer in high school, I loved the idea of Gabe swimming.”

When Sophia introduced the idea of swimming lessons,

Gabe dismissed it but said he’d like to try football instead. So, Sophia enrolled him in the Lake Nona Youth Sports football program when he was in sixth grade.

Lake Nona Youth Sports is a community nonprofit organization designed to cultivate and enhance a young player’s skill and passion for sports. The all-volunteer coaches for football, cheer, wrestling and lacrosse offer kids, ages 6 to 14, an opportunity to participate and compete in a fun, safe and exciting sports environment. Lake Nona Youth Sports also has partnerships with rowing and baseball programs in South Orlando to offer additional sports for kids to try.

Sophia wanted Gabe to learn the importance of being part of a team and how to handle frustration and mistakes, as well as how to celebrate accomplishments while showing gratitude and respect. For a few years, Gabe succeeded in school with the help of medication, but when he was in eighth grade, he wanted to discontinue it. Sophia and Jeffrey supported his decision.

“Putting the focus on sports instead of medication was a good decision for us,” Sophia says. “At Lake Nona High School, Gabe continued to play football and joined the weightlifting team, where he really excelled. As a senior, he took his team to the state championships and placed 12th overall, taking second for his 365-pound bench press.”

Gabe graduated as an honor roll student and is now attending college. His mother couldn’t be more surprised – and pleased – at his choice of a major. Gabe is a junior at UCF, studying sports and exercise science.

“Playing youth sports gave Gabe the opportunity to focus his abundant energy, but he also learned much more than just how to tackle, catch and throw a football,” Sophia says. “He learned about failure and teamwork, how to get back up when you lose, and how to have greater confidence that comes from within. Today, I’m incredibly proud of the young man he’s become.”

Sophia is so grateful for the benefits sports offered Gabe that she currently volunteers as the social media coordinator for Lake Nona Youth Sports, managing their Facebook page. Visit them at facebook.com/LakeNonaJuniorLions/ to learn more.

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Valerie Sisco lives in Lake Nona and is the author of the blog, gracewithsilk.com.



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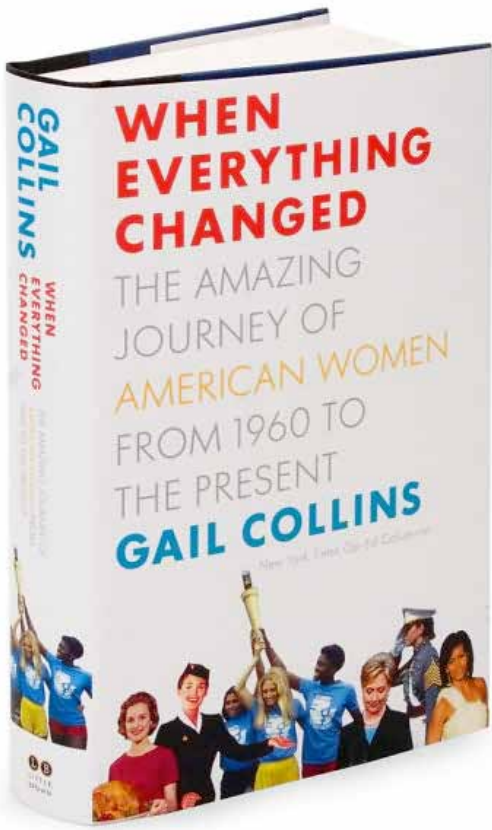
The Lake Nona Book
Maven Review

Title: *When Everything Changed: The Amazing Journey of American Women From 1960 to the Present*
Author: Gail Collins

I was looking for a book for March to reflect Women’s History Month. Skipping all the usual suspects, books by the Brontës, Jane Austen, and slightly more contemporary fiction choices like *A Room of One’s Own* by Virginia Woolf, I decided to go outside the box and read a nonfiction look at the last 50 years of women’s history in the U.S.

Okay, it is nonfiction, so no real characters, plot, and certainly no suspense. But, the author is a journalist, so the writing is good. Although I didn’t always pay attention to the cultural and political news growing up, I did live through the last half-century, so I was interested to see how we got to where we are today. Personal admission: I did skim-read parts of it, and you might want to do the same. But I would recommend this book for anyone younger than 50 and anyone who did not spend most of the last 50 years in this country. Younger readers – I’m talking about college and even high school students – probably have no idea about older dating, social and fashion rules (some I’m sure they won’t believe). And for the rest of us who did live through it all, oh, the memories!

The book is broken down into three parts entitled “1960,” “When Everything Changed,” and “Following Through.”



Some entries go back further in time to reflect the social changes resulting from inventions like the radio and eventually TV. The book also covers demographic changes like the post-war baby boom, the gradual shift to a two-income family with fewer children ... there is a chapter on gender issues in the civil rights struggle, and toward the end of the

book, there is a chapter about women in politics.

Throughout the book, individual stories flesh out the topics and make the events more real. Some of those highlighted are more well known, like Gloria Steinem, Lucille Ball, and Roseanne Barr. Others are the average, everyday wives, moms and daughters who experienced what so typified this particular era of social change.

In the last part of the book, “Following Through,” we are reminded that the Equal Rights Amendment (to the Constitution of the U.S.) that would give equal rights to women, was never ratified. And when the economic downturn in the 1970s caused more women to join the workforce, and child care became more of an issue, a national child care bill that was proposed ultimately failed. Women’s fashions for a while required shoulder pads – really. Women were seen more and more in co-starring and even lead roles in TV dramas, which brought a different way of thinking about women’s roles in society to a whole new crop of youngsters.

The stories in this book are the same ones we might hear from our mothers, grandmothers and great grandmothers; they’re just presented in a linear fashion and with a cultural overview. If you are lucky enough to have someone close to you to talk to about this time in our history, some of the topics in this book will make for interesting conversations. And if you lived through any or all of this recent 50-year period, I’m sure you will have stories to share yourself. Either way, *When Everything Changed* should provide an eye-opening read during Women’s History Month.



He Has a Dream,
And I Am
On His Team

A poem to Esteban, and all the kids with Down Syndrome (dreaming of equality) everywhere. I am on your team.

BY GABRIELA RUIZ

He has a dream, and I am on his team.
 I wish you could see him as I do.
 He is happy. He is fun.
 How he dances and sings all day.
 Before he sleeps, he kneels to pray.
 I wanted him to ride a bike, and he did,
 with hard effort ... like any other kid.
 I wish you could see how he reads...
 with a smile on his face. For him, everything has grace.
 He has no limits. He kicks like Ronaldo.
 And bounces like Durant.
 I am on his team; would you join the dream?
 It’s 2 o’clock and I am picking him up.
 He notices me from the distance among all,
 though the doctor says his vision is small.
 We have a dream.
 Let’s accept each other with love and genuine respect.
 Are you on the team?
 He has taught me to see.
 He doesn’t have a soft heart like books say.
 He gives me a million kisses...
 and I have buried some bridges.
 Ohh ... I haven’t told you. He has Down Syndrome.
 But he is still a handsome man with wisdom.
 He loves to fly, airplanes, and the sky.
 About love, acceptance, and Madrid we dream.
 I have been inviting you – are you on the team?



Sunny Side Up: Sweat

BY PHILIP LONG

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.

My brother and I floated in the Dead Sea, bobbing around like a couple of human-shaped rubber ducks, and laughing at our physics-defying and chemistry-affirming buoyancy. The Dead Sea must be where the earth sweats. And that transitions me into my painful subject for the month: sweat.

If you don't sweat in Florida, may the gods curse your dry head to be dipped in the Dead Sea repeatedly (sorry, my daughter is making me read the Percy Jackson books). But if you do sweat, like the rest of us, I'm here to comfort you as I rant about our particular brand of sweat: the eye-pinging, eternal, stinkify-ing, I-have-a-107-degree-fever-and-I-think-I'm-dying kind of sweat.

Writing this column makes me wonder if I have issues. Yes, I do, and they're all caused by Central Florida.

For example, I play soccer over lunch at work where I'm a writer/illustrator. We play all year round. Yes, we play in August at 12:30. Want to join us? No? Okay. Immediately after playing, I have to pitch ideas for upcoming articles to a group of editors. What provokes sweat more than

soccer in the insanely soupy Floridian humidity? Sitting in front of a group of editors whose job it is to judge you.

"Phil, so you want to write a profile on a camel whisperer?"

Drip, Drip. "Yes."

"Where is he located?"

Drip, Drip, Drip. "I think he's in sub-Saharan Africa."

"Oh, man, and you say our only window to profile him is in the summer? It's going to be hot."

Drip, drip, drip, drip, drip, drip, drip, drip, drip, drip, drip, drip, drip. "I know. Argh, this sweat."

"Am I making you sweat?"

"Gurgle, slurp, glub," says I, the human puddle.

To make matters worse, I play soccer in "moisture-wicking" fabric. More like "moisture sticking." Supposedly it's "scientifically proven to do really cool science-y things" for our faux athletic bodies. However, all mine does is locate every possible fleshy puddle on my body, soak it up and display it for all to see. To top it off, it doesn't wick, it turns my sweat straight into gag-scented mildew. They should call it moisture wicked fabric. Not wicked as in the Boston sense of the word. Wicked as in depraved, iniquitous, appalling and heinous.

"Hey, I like your new 'depraved fabric.'"

"I know. After I sweat, it goes from white to black to rainbow in like 15 minutes."

"Wicked."

Sweating is such a natural part of Florida life that who among us has not shamefully skipped our shower and just changed our shirts (I'm so vulnerable in this column). Harmless enough, right? Wrong.



Say I've just survived my incendiary drive-way to retrieve our Saturday newspaper. I decide not to shower since I'm going to have to shower four more times today anyways: two times after mowing the lawn, once after walking up the stairs (I don't bother after the way down), and once after washing the dishes (or if I get caught for not washing the dishes).

Un-showered, I stroll to my chest of drawers and blithely pull out my Mary Kondo-approved, pre-thanked, joy-sparking, fondle-folded, blessed-T-shirt of everlasting ecstasy out of my drawer. I anticipate its smooth embrace as I slip it over my head, not knowing that I'm about to feel a million miniature cats clawing their way down my back. I'm a salt lick.

My 12-year-old daughter informs me that sweat is the body's way of regulating temperature. Whatever, smarty-stretchy-pants, sweat is Florida's way of trying to kill me.

I tell her that 70 percent of the body is water, and if this keeps happening, everyone will soon be two feet tall and creating a moist wake behind them like a slug. (Which leads me to one of nature's great paradoxes: When a slug sweats to cool itself, why doesn't it die from its own salt?)

Well, at least we'll make our New Year's weight-loss goals. Hearing this, my daughter smugly lifts a glass to her lips as she answers, "Not if I do this." Know it all.

Maybe she has a point. That's exactly what's happened to the Dead Sea. It's not drinking. No rivers, tributaries or water thingies drain into the thing, and all the water is evaporating into the atmosphere and the poor sea is getting more and more salty (like my daughter) by the minute.

Thinking back to when my brother and I

were blobbing around in the Dead Sea and giggling like a couple of, well, our daughters, we saw a kid sprint to the shore and dive straight in. Our jaws would have dropped open if we didn't know better. I had accidentally touched my lip, which was slowly smoking into my left nostril.

To this day, I have never seen someone exit a body of water as fast as that poor child. If we'd been a little farther north, I'd have been impressed by his Jesus walking on water impression. Of course, then the kid would be blissfully doggy-paddling through the Sea of Galilee, rather than scampering wildly around the beach yelling for his mother in some foreign language.

"Typical tourist," I said to my brother.

"Yeah, he doesn't even speak American."

"Reminds me of Florida."

"Don't get me started."

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.



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Orlando Ballet Announces New And Exciting 2019-20 Lineup

BY KYLE HAMM

The Orlando Ballet has recently announced their new season lineup for 2019-20. This new investment into Orlando Ballet includes the return of artistic director Robert Hill, family season packages, guest choreography, and newly revamped works. Hill will make his debut return to the stage in Jessica Lang's *The Calling* on the Dr. Phillips Center stage. "It's going to be a remarkable experience, and I'm looking forward to it," said Hill.

This season will mark the largest production budget in the history of Orlando Ballet and features renowned choreographers from around the country such as Jessica Lang and Victoria Morgan.

Orlando Ballet is bringing back their Family Season Packages for the 2019-20 season. The shows are shortened to one-hour versions, which are ideal for younger children.

Orlando Ballet will be starting the season on Halloween night with *Vampire's Ball*, a thrilling tale of two vampires. This performance runs from Oct. 31 to Nov. 3.

The story of *Cinderella* will come to the stage at Dr. Phillips Center from Feb. 14-16, 2020, choreographed by Victoria Morgan, previously the artistic director of the Cincinnati Ballet.

Made in the USA: A Collection of American Works will debut March 27-29, 2020. This is a true celebration of American choreographers such as Jessica Lang, Val Caniporoli and Robert Hill.

May 8-10, 2020, Orlando Ballet will premier *Mowgli - The Jungle Book*. This production will feature sets and costumes that truly make the famous Jungle Book characters come to life.

Subscriptions for the 2019-20 season will be available for purchase beginning April 26.



19

SEASON

A ballerina in a black leotard and a voluminous purple tutu is captured in a dynamic pose, performing a grand jeté. She is set against a dark background with a subtle pattern.

20

VAMPIRE'S BALL
October 31-November 3, 2019

THE NUTCRACKER*
Sponsored by Sony's BBO,
December 13-15 & 20-23, 2019
(Also sponsored by Disney Theatricals)

CINDERELLA*
February 14-16, 2020

MADE IN THE USA
A COLLECTION OF AMERICAN WORKS
March 27-29, 2020

MOWGLI
THE JUNGLE BOOK
May 8-10, 2020

*Season subscription option. Additional purchase required.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY
844.513.2014 OrlandoBallet.org
Orlando Ballet is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. All proceeds support the company and its artists.

Orlando Ballet Presents 'Bailamos!' And Donates 1,000 Tickets

ARTICLE BY BRITTANY BHULAI
PHOTOS COURTESY OF ORLANDO BALLET



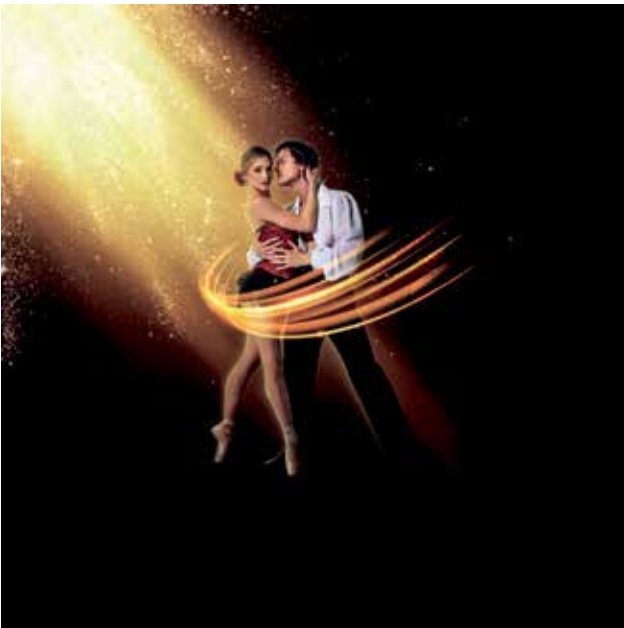
Orlando Ballet is donating a thousand free tickets to the Puerto Rican community who have been affected by Hurricane Maria for their upcoming show *Bailamos!* The Latin-inspired performance will be showing at the Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts from Feb. 15-17.

This is the first time that the Orlando Ballet will be offering free tickets to Puerto Ricans in Central Florida who were

affected by Maria. They partnered with Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration and the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce to make it happen.

Even though this is the first time the ballet is offering tickets, it is the third time they are performing *Bailamos!* The show made its first appearance in 2010 and again in 2011. In addition to wanting to give back to the Puerto Rican community, *Bailamos!* was bound to make a comeback.

“Since this was my 10th anniversary season, it made sense to bring back something that I thought was kind of representative of me,” said Orlando Ballet Artistic Director Robert Hill. He says he has always had a love for Latin culture. Sev-



eral of the pieces in *Bailamos!* were created by him during his artistic directing years at Ballet de Monterrey in Mexico. “It is a real dance-driven show,” says Hill. It showcases Latin choreography along with salsa and tango. They will be featuring hits such as *Gracias a la Vida*, *I Love Salsa* and pieces from *Don Quixote*. It will be close to two hours long with a 20-minute intermission. Hill will also be co-hosting the performance with News 13’s anchor Ybeth Bruzual.

Hill adds that the Orlando Ballet is doing better than ever. Their two previous shows this year, *Carmina Burana* and *The Nutcracker*, sold well. He anticipates the same for *Bailamos!*

If you or someone you know might qualify for a complimentary ticket, contact the Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration at 407-776-9000. The show is also open to the general public and is welcoming for all ages. If you do not qualify for one of the free tickets, go to www.drphillipscenter.org/events/tickets/2019/bailamos/ to purchase tickets or call the Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts box office at 844-513-2014.

Short Stories: A Rich Man, Part I

BY BRITTANY BHULAI

There was a man named Papi. He lived a simple life. He had no wife or kids. He spent most of his time running a small restaurant called Little Purple Cafe. It sold breakfast, lunch and dinner. The menu featured dishes from all over the world. Purple Cafe was famously known for its naan bread and hummus, crepes, Korean BBQ, curry, and its flan.

Papi was raised by two people who loved traveling the world. His mother and father loved to indulge in all the cultures the world had to offer, and that’s what he grew up in. As he got older, he began to appreciate culture as much as his parents did. His specialty was food. He felt that food was a great way to learn about people. The spices and ingredients used in food told you what region that person came from and how they utilized the area to make their native dish.

After his parents passed, he dedicated his life to globe-trotting. There was not a region he did not visit. He learned many customs and gained several languages that he spoke very well. He did this to carry on their legacy along with the fact that he enjoyed going to new places and fully immersing in new environments.

After his prime years of life, age caught up with him and he was not able to travel as much.

He settled in a small town in Italy. He chose this area because it was the last place he had traveled to before his parents had passed. Two years after he settled, he opened his cafe. It gained popularity quickly because it was the only food spot that cooked just about every dish, and every dish was quality. He imported many of the ingredients he used.

Papi was not the only one who ran his restaurant. His nephews, Joey and Pablo, helped him run the store. Joey and Pablo would cook while Papi handled the register out front. You could smell their shop from miles up the block. They began cooking every morning at 6 a.m. The savory aroma of sweetbreads and meats was in the air. They also served up a mean Cuban coffee in the early hours.

A crowd of people would swarm the shop. They all rushed up to the glass case to see what baked goods lay there. Scones, bagels, sweetbreads, french toast, muffins, English cookies, and churros were the usual goodies in the morning. Eggs, pancakes, and different hams were also side options to choose from. On the table to the right of the glass case were different spreads, syrups, and kinds of butter to choose from.

After the breakfast rush, the crowd dissipated but returned for lunch and

dinner. Papi and the boys barely took breaks during the days. The customer was their top priority.

There was not much seating inside the restaurant, only a table or two could fit. However, there was plenty of seating outside. Papi even had a nice terrace out back where he let guests lounge. You could even reserve the area on special occasions. It overlooked a beautiful view. The ocean was right under it with green mountains in the distance.

When the day was done, Papi and the boys would spend an hour or two cleaning up the kitchen and dining area. When everything was tip top and clean, they would go to the floor above the shop where they lived. They would crack beers and reminisce on the day. Cooking and time together were all they needed. They were content.

The sun would go down, and another day of cooking was ahead of them.

Check back next month for Part II of A Rich Man.



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UPSHOT

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

- 1-10 Florida Strawberry Festival in Plant City (8 a.m.-5 p.m.)
- 1-17 Central Florida Fair (centralfloridafair.com)
- 1-31 Bay Area Renaissance Festival in Tampa (10 a.m.-6 p.m.)
- 2 Central Florida Children's Home Spring Fever Run & Walk 5K & 10K (8 a.m.)
- 2 Appetite for the Arches (Ronald McDonald House)
- 2 Reymont St. Community Gardening Class (9 a.m.)
- 2 5th Annual Cornhole Tournament at Boxi Park (10 a.m.)
- 2 Fiestas at Boxi Park Presents El Carnaval (4-10 p.m.)
- 3 Mardi Gras at Lake Nona Town Center (11 a.m.-2 p.m.)
- 3 USTA College Matchday: Miami vs. UCF (5-8 p.m.)
- 5 EOCC La Crema de Nona Networking in Lake Nona (8:30-9:30 a.m.)
- 5 LNRCC First Tuesdays at Ribbon Cutting at Drive Shack (5:30-7:30 p.m.)
- 8 Eagle Creek Elementary PTA Paradise Island Carnival (8 p.m.)
- 11 Dale Carnegie Skills class at GuideWell Innovation Center (6 p.m.)
- 11 Meet Your Chief (Orlando Rolón) - District 1 at Lake Nona YMCA Family Center (6:30-8:30 p.m.)
- 12 EOCC La Crema de Nona Networking in Lake Nona (8:30-9:30 a.m.)
- 12 Lettering Workshop at Lakehouse (6-8 p.m.)
- 14 LNRCC Breakfast Connections at VA Medical Center (8-9:30 a.m.)
- 16 Laureate Blvd. Community Gardening Class (9 a.m.)
- 16 LNHS Lions to London Car Show (10 a.m.-2 p.m.)
- 19 EOCC La Crema de Nona Networking in Lake Nona (8:30-9:30 a.m.)
- 22 LNRCC Business Luncheon at 310 Nona (11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.)
- 22 Yappy Hour at Crescent Park (6-8 p.m.)
- 26 EOCC La Crema de Nona Networking in Lake Nona (8:30-9:30 a.m.)
- 28 EOCC Coffee Club Nona at Sam's Club (8:30-9:30 a.m.)
- 31 Tour De Cure at Lake Nona Town Center

Save the dates

- Apr. 6 NonaCrest Community Annual Garage Sale (8 a.m.-12 p.m.)
- Apr. 13 Nona Chamber Festival at Nona Adventure Park (10 a.m.-4 p.m.)
- Apr. 20 The SWINeth Annual "PIG RUN of Lake Nona" (9 a.m.-5 p.m.)
- Apr. 29 RMHCCF Golf Classic at Lake Nona Golf and Country Club

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/

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

MORNING MEDITATION
Wednesday 6 a.m.
Lakehouse in Laureate Park
www.facebook.com/learnlakenona/

CYCLE & CORE
Tuesdays & Thursdays 6 a.m.
LP Fit in Laureate Park
www.facebook.com/learnlakenona/

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

LIVE + LOCAL
Thursdays 6-8 p.m.
Crescent Park 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/

YOGA NONA Sponsored by Lake Nona Life Project
Saturdays 10-11 a.m.
Crescent Park 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/

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



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