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DISCOVERING THE HIDDEN ARTIST WITHIN

ON PAGE 10

EXPLOÇÃO DE MARILYN MONROE

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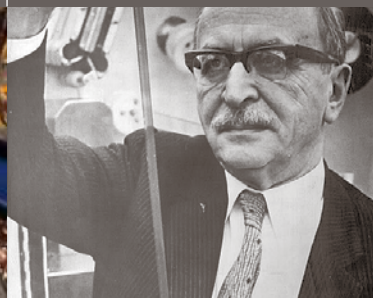
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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Your Story, Your Vision, Your Newspaper Pick Your Flower, Not Your Poison

BY NICOLE LABOSCO

Every month, we provide the Lake Nona community a newspaper full of content to appeal to the masses to the best of our abilities. We focus on the positive in a world that seems to be drowning in the negative. We highlight our wonderful community that's been making a name for itself, and we all have one thing in common ... we get to call it home. We want every member of our neighborhood to be able to pick up a copy of *Nonahood News* and be interested – whether in a section of the paper or a specific article running that month. On a daily basis, I determine which stories will run in our paper, online, on social media, in a video, or on *In the Nona*.

Every quarter, we come together to revise content. We ask for your feedback to help us determine which content we move forward with and which we give a facelift or get rid of completely. Working on increasing our engagement levels is a constant battle. Our paper distributes to more than 20,000 homes every month – and that number continues to grow monthly as Lake Nona continues to grow. It's a pretty massive challenge to meet the interests of every individual who picks up our paper, but we want nothing more than to take that challenge head-on and make it one of our biggest feats. With that said, we can't do that if we don't hear from you ... all of you. Each opinion is as valuable to us as the next.

When we reach out to the public for feedback, we want to hear the truth –



good or bad. That's all we can ask for. We can only continue to provide content for **you** as our readers if we know what **you** want to read about. Think of picking which articles will stay in the paper as picking flowers ... what I (or the rest of the *Nonahood News* team) may like might not be something you want to see in your vase or read about in your paper. Whereas the paper might not be filled with content that each person enjoys 100%, that's a goal we can strive for.

There's A LOT that goes on behind the scenes at *Nonahood News* that the average community member isn't aware of. You might see us attending/hosting events or conducting interviews and you retrieve the newspaper from **your** mailbox every month, but you might not have realized that this paper is 100% written by our community members, **your** community members – comprised of **your** neighbors, **your** friends, your coworkers, and maybe even **your** family. At least once a day, I think about how we could all use a clone or two of ourselves to keep up with all the happenings in Lake Nona, and we've come to realize that our field requires us to be "on call" at all times. But that's okay ... we do it for you and we love what we do.

We bring content to life through storytelling and that story is **y(our)** story. Let it be known that this community newspaper known as *No-*

nahood News is filled with **y(our)** stories, **y(our)** visions, and it's ultimately **Y(OUR)** paper. So, when we announce our content revision and want to hear from you, don't hesitate to reach out. Honestly, you can always send us a message and expect a response. We are here for you. So, pick your article(s) and share it with us, just like you would your favorite flower. It's pretty safe to say that we're growing just as much as a blossoming flower that's looked after and watered daily. We are blooming and so is Lake Nona. So, tag us in your photos around town, message us (even if it's just to say "hi"), stop us when you see us around town and talk to us. *Nonahood News* is about you, just as much as it's about our community.



"When you take a flower in your hand and really look at it, it's your world for the moment. I want to give that world to someone else. Most people in the city rush around so, they have no time to look at a flower. I want them to see it whether they want to or not."
- Georgia O'Keeffe

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'Today Is Joy' – Three UCF Students Match At Nemours

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



Dr. Deborah German

Gabriel Williams opened his match envelope, fist-pumped and cheered, "I got Nemours!" – capping off March 15's Match Day at the UCF College of Medicine that saw three students enter a new pediatric residency at Nemours Children's Hospital down the street in Medical City.

Williams was born and raised in Orlando, did his undergraduate work at FAMU (Florida Agriculture and Mechanical University in Tallahassee), and returned to his hometown for medical school. He'd worked as a substitute teacher and, like most College of Medicine students, did his pediatric clerkship at Nemours.

"Today is joy," Williams said. "Nemours was my number one choice because I



want to give back to the community I grew up in."

Twenty-one seniors matched into pediatrics – the most in College of Medicine's seven years of graduating students. In total, 118 of 119 students who went through match secured graduate medical education positions. UCF's 99 percent match rate is higher than this year's national average of 93.9 percent. Nationwide, 38,376 medical students applied for 35,185 residency positions.

UCF med school graduates will do their training nationwide at hospitals including Georgetown, Johns Hopkins, Mayo Clinic, Michigan, Stanford, Vanderbilt and Yale. In Florida, in addition to Nemours, they will train at locations that include



AdventHealth, Orlando Health, University of Florida, University of Miami and University of South Florida. Nine will train at UCF residencies in North and Central Florida through a consortium with Hospital Corporation of America – the most UCF students of any residency program in the state.

Laura Chilcutt and Elliot Griffith are joining Williams at Nemours. Chilcutt was an immigrant/human rights attorney before medical school, and when funding for such legal efforts dried up, she decided to become a doctor to do her part to care for the underserved. Griffith and Williams were standing at the same table when they learned they are both going to Nemours. They high-fived and hugged and then Griffith dug into a "goodie" bag of Nemours memorabilia that delighted hospital officials handed to him.



Nemours is a great partner of ours. The hospital is where most of our students get their training in pediatrics. The impact of their partnership is strong – Nemours inspired more than a fifth of this year's class to

go into pediatrics this year, including the three who will be doing their residency training at that facility.

We hold our Match Day celebration on the Tavistock Green. Nationwide, match results are kept secret until noon EST on the third Friday in March. Minutes after our students had learned their futures, Dr. Colleen Moran-Bano, who directs the College of Medicine's pediatric curriculum, stood on the green as delighted students ran toward her, announcing where they will do their pediatric residencies. Baylor ... Cincinnati Children's Hospital ... Penn State ... UCLA ... University of Chicago ... University of Colorado ... University of Florida ... University of South Florida.

"These students want to practice preventative medicine, advocate for children, and help children become happy, healthy adults," she said of her charges. "This is a group that's highly motivated to improve the human condition."

Deborah German, M.D. is the Vice President for Health Affairs and Founding Dean of the UCF College of Medicine.



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Business Spotlight: Laureate Insurance Partners

BY TARA WIKOFF AND COTE LEWIS

Take a minute to think about the last interesting conversation you had. Our bet is that it probably wasn't about insurance. Despite how interesting the advisors at Laureate Insurance Partners find the ins and outs of coverage options and deductibles, they realize it's not something the average person thinks about often. The team at Laureate Insurance Partners completely understands and is here to help. They are "insurance geeks" and wear that badge proudly (they don't actually have badges,



Laureate office located at 13630 Sachs Ave., Suite 100 in Lake Nona.



The Laureate Insurance team at their ribbon cutting in October with the Lake Nona Chamber of Commerce.

but that would be cool).

Having an "insurance geek" in your corner will definitely come in handy as you move through the different stages of your life. The knowledge that a licensed expert has your back can be very reassuring. That is the reason Laureate Insurance was created, to keep their clients protected from risk and give them peace of mind. Living and working in the Lake Nona community, the Laureate team understands the importance of being a trustworthy neighbor and being there for their clients when things are good, or if an unfortunate event happens. This makes their clients feel safe and protected and allows them to focus on their dreams, purpose and passions.

Launched in 2018, Laureate Insurance Partners was designed to fulfill the unique needs of Lake Nona and its residents. They are thrilled to be a part of our close-knit community. Unlike other insurance companies that provide impersonal transactions, Laureate Insurance takes a comprehensive approach to crafting unique coverage plans, specific to those living in the Lake Nona community. They offer protection for your home, vehicles, business, boat, golf cart, and much more.

When you work with Laureate Insurance, you're matched with a Risk Advisor who will get to know your personal risk exposures and help you to select an affordable, tailored solution that complements your

current lifestyle and protects your future. Florida native and an Orlando local, Julie Newman, has been a Risk Advisor at Laureate Insurance since opening in 2018 and is enthusiastically active in the Lake Nona community. Newman has nearly a decade of experience in property and casualty insurance and more than 15 years in client-oriented environments. Newman tells us, "I love meeting new people and helping others. Every person has a different life story, situation and insurance need, so it keeps my job very interesting. Most people don't understand how much or what kind of coverage is sufficient for them and their lifestyle. That's why I find it fulfilling to educate and advise my clients, as well as giving guidance on what policies best fit their needs and what options are available to them."

Community commitment is a vital part of the business for Laureate Insurance; they strive to be involved through volunteer and fundraising efforts. Newman, in particular, has worked with organizations such as the Ronald McDonald House, the American Diabetes Association through the Tour De Cure, Homes for Dogs Project, and the Clean the World Foundation helping with disaster relief after Hurricane Michael. Laureate Insurance's community-focused approach and specialized expertise enable them to go the extra mile to help individuals, families and local business owners.

Laureate Insurance wants to make the community better by helping their clients and neighbors stay educated about the risks in our area. They're passionate about educating the community of Lake Nona on the basics and intricacies of insurance. Using customized products that best fit Lake Nona residents, Laureate Insurance is the



Laureate Insurance Advisor Julie Newman volunteering at the Clean the World Foundation.

go-to resource for those who have any questions about insurance or their coverage options. Be sure to check out their website, where you can find an informative blog and educational videos such as Hurricane Preparedness and Homeowners Insurance 101.

If you or someone you know is interested in discussing coverage options, please visit Laureate Insurance at 13630 Sachs Ave., Suite 100 (in Laureate Park). Stop by their office anytime from Monday to Friday between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. and mention this article for your free Laureate Insurance Swag Bag! If you are interested in more information or would like a quote, you can visit their website at LaureateInsurance.com or call 407.675.3880 to speak with an advisor today.



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Behind The Scene: Community Meeting With Commissioner Jim Gray

BY SOPHIA ROGERS



On Monday, March 19, Orlando City Commissioner Jim Gray held a community meeting at the Lakehouse in Laureate Park. Orlando Fire Department, Green Works, Orlando Health, and OUC were present to answer questions. More than 60 residents were in attendance, with standing room only. The meeting gave attendees an opportunity to hear what's going on in the city.

Before opening the room to questions, Commissioner Gray began with PowerPoint slides, going back to Lake Nona in the year 2000.

In the city of Orlando, we make up about 275,000 residents, divided into six geographic districts. Lake Nona is District 1, the largest geographic district, which is because our district includes Orlando International Airport.

Where we've been in the last 20 years – looking at Google Earth in 2000, you can see very little development south of the 417. In 2017, we are almost grown up. Gray reminds us, “We're still teenagers, we're growing rapidly, we're a little awkward, and we haven't all quite filled in yet.”

How many cars do you think drive on Nar-



coossee every day? The answer is 40,000.

With that in mind, Narcoossee Road is being widened. The widening has been delayed to bring a reclaimed water pipe from the Beachline Expressway all the way to underneath Narcoossee Road, to connect with Lake Nona Boulevard. Widening will start in May and will take approximately 12-18 months.

Narcoossee northbound will look like it does south of the 417. In the end, we'll have six lanes and a bike path on the west side of Narcoossee Road. This will finally connect the bike trail. The bike trail is pretty well developed in Laureate Park. It will go across Lake Nona Boulevard and end right behind Nona Blue. So, in theory, when this is done, you can ride your bike all the way from Laureate Park to East Park to Randal Park to Storey Park.

Orlando International Airport – We have a world-class airport, and it is driving the growth here in the Lake Nona area, not just residential but commercial. “KPMG will tell you that was one of their key decisions in coming here. Being able to get people in and out of the airport is important,” says Gray.

Parks – We have two city parks opening soon. McCoy Community Park off Dowden Road should open in a couple of months. The second park is Heroes Community Park in Laureate Park. The ribbon cutting is planned for April 13.

UCF – We should be very proud of the medical school we have here. Most people don't know that the acceptance rate at UCF medical school is 2.5%. Open for 10 years, it is very tough to get in.

Audience Q & A with Commissioner Gray:

Is there a plan to extend the bike trail all the way to Moss Park?

There is not. It's going to go to where North Shore is and stop. The county may have a plan that I'm not aware of.

For the bike trail, is it going to be a crosswalk or an overpass?

It will be a crosswalk. At Narcoossee and Moss Park, you'll have to walk across the street. Then at Moss Park and the 417, you have to cross north to go into East Park.

What about a library? With Valencia College expanding, will there be a public library added?

So far, Orange County has not elected to expand to this area. I am not on the board, but that could be a possibility. We are in the process of trying to put a City Hall annex in the second office building at Lake Nona Town Center. Long term, we need a library-looking building where we as neighbors can go and meet as a community.

What about a Post Office?

Same answer. At this moment, the US Post Office has also not elected to open another branch in the area.

What's the status of Turnpike on-ramp to the 417?

I'm not sure of the status. I do know they want to make it a full interchange.

What is the timeline for UCF teaching hospital with HCA?

Currently under construction, should open in November 2020. It will start as a community hospital with the capability of growing into a 400-bed hospital.

How can we help with your duties if you do have to go to the government or county for funds or support?

The state is usually supportive. We are one of the safest places to live in Orange County. Our issues are transportation, and roads are expensive. The Narcoossee widening will cost \$25 million. Our big challenge is getting money for transportation – and those are big-ticket items. We are putting the most money in the tax bucket. This district puts \$43 million in every year toward ad valorem taxes. It is my job with your help to get our share back out.

I read awhile back that AdventHealth purchased the property adjacent to Lake Nona Boulevard. Is a hospital coming?

It's not approved yet but is going through the approval process. AdventHealth, formerly Florida Hospital, had plans to do an emergency room with small offices near Lake Nona Boulevard and the railroad tracks. There will be no access on Narcoossee Road, access will be from Lake Nona Boulevard.

(Orlando Health was also present to discuss the new freestanding ER, 50-bed hospital and medical offices at Dowden and 417.)

East Airfield – has there been any movement for development in retail?

East airfield is the 1,300 acres bounded by the area north of Beachline, near North-Lake Park. No development activity is underway. When they do decide to develop, whether they want to develop five acres or 500 acres, they have to bring the site plan to the city, and that will be a public process.

I heard a rumor that a 7-Eleven is coming on Lake Nona Boulevard. Is



that true?

Yes, they are between the entrance to the USTA and Drive Shack. There is a retail approval, and it will be a 7-Eleven.

Is there an elementary school going across from VillageWalk?

Yes, there is one planned, however there is talk of Tavistock building a private school back where OSC would have been. There is a good chance that the elementary school may move from VillageWalk to south of Laureate Park.

City of Orlando Deputy Police Chief Velez addressed the room regarding public safety. “First of all, I have been with Orlando Police Department for over 24 years, in many positions. I have been to many community meetings throughout the city. This is the first time ever I've seen standing room only. So, I applaud the community for showing up. This is awesome.”

Effective March 31, the police department will have double the number of officers working during peak hours to manage calls. This, along with a crime analysis unit, will track trends and crime throughout the city.

Gray urges the community to lock their homes and cars and don't leave valuables in plain sight. Criminals who are committing these crimes are “both lazy and smart,” he says. They go where it's easy for them. “Statistics show this is still the safest place in the city, but we've got to work together to keep it that way. If you see anything of concern, call 911.”

In closing, Richard Wales, City of Orlando Deputy Fire Chief, discussed public fire safety.

(Orlando Fire Department stations 14, 15 and 16 are the responders for our area.)

This is a fast-growing area. What is your response time?

Across the city, we're around seven minutes. We're always looking for ways to shave that time.

We live in VillageWalk, where it is a gated community – is that a deterrent to you getting in?

Our systems carry those passcodes that will give us the community code. I would be remiss if I said it does not cause a delay, we still have to stop, but again, that takes seconds. You get security with gates, but you lose a little bit of response with a gate.

One of the issues we have in LP is parking on both sides of the street. Does that create any problems for fire trucks?

We run into this in any community where people park on both sides. It is more of a challenge and we are able to traverse these areas, but I don't think it's any different than another community. The city of Orlando encourages street parking to slow drivers down, so street parking is here to stay. There is a process to restrict parking on one side, but you must have at least 60% of the neighbors to agree.

Have questions for Commissioner Jim Gray? You can contact him directly at 407.246.2001 or email Jim.gray@cityoforlando.net.

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@nonahood-news.com.

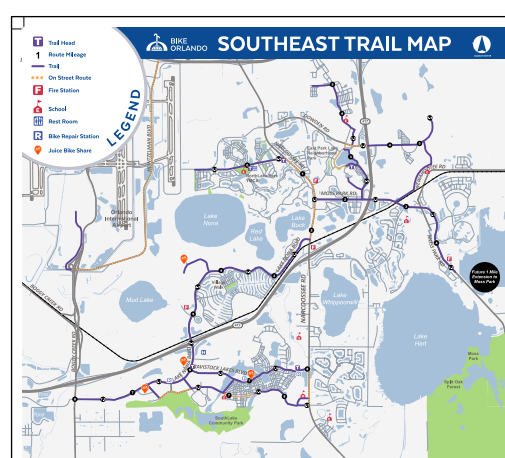


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Creator Mindset: Everyone Is a Critic

BY NIR BASHAN



There are critics everywhere I look these days. It seems that everyone is an expert. Especially online. And there are a lot of things that these so-called experts spew about. If you don't believe me, Google your favorite restaurant – the awesome spot where they know you because you go so often. The place that has that special dish you always seem to order even though you convince yourself that this time you will order something new! The place you think is the best – nothing can top it. It is your restaurant, after all! Google it and see what the reviews say.

Prepare to be shocked.

There are countless websites out there that review different restaurants. But, they are all more or less the same. People sign up for a login name and fill out some other basic info and, just like that, they are an expert restaurant reviewer. They are free to write about whatever and whomever they would like.

And I bet that as you look at reviews of your favorite restaurant, you will be astonished. That favorite dish of yours? Someone will write a review that somehow proves it's terrible because such-and-such

café down the street makes a way better one. The awesome staff there that made the effort to get to know you? Well, actually, they are horrible people who give bad service and are inattentive. The best restaurant in the area, you say? Hardly, says someone online. They will review the place and call it one of the worst they have ever eaten at. How can you possibly think that the food is good?

It turns out that everyone is a critic these days. But, a major part of The Creator Mindset is asking a lot of questions; to exercise a part of your brain that hasn't been worked out in a while. When we read a review, we tend to accept it. We acknowledge it. We think that since someone wrote it down, it must be true.

It turns out that we are so good with the analytical side of our thinking that we hardly use our creative side. There is no creativity unless things are challenged, questioned, asked about. Just reading a review shouldn't count as truth. We should ask who, exactly, is doing the reviewing. And moreover – is the critique relevant to you personally? Tastes are so private and personal and change so often that it is just about impossible to take some stranger's word. Especially online. But, even in the real world, there are things that I think are great and my wife does not ... for instance, documentary movies and Chinese food. I'm sure you have differences of tastes with the ones you love, too.

The truth is that restaurants are like most things in life – they appeal to different people at different times in their lives. If you were to tell me what my top restaurant choices are today, only five or 10 years ago, I would laugh and tell you how horrible these places are and how the food is downright terrible. But, my palate has changed. Matured, if you will. And also, what I look for in a restaurant today is certainly not what I looked for five or 10 years ago. Why?

Because things change. People change. Tastes change. Values change. Perceptions change. Today, I have a young son, and the idea of sitting through a seven-course meal at some place I loved five years ago

seems downright laughable.

I wonder how many people who review restaurants on these websites have ever worked in one. Because I have – for many years. And if you have, too, you will know that the next sentence is very true: It is hard, hard work. Brutal even. It's hot. It's stressful. Customers give a new name to hangry when their food is wrong or cold or the other countless things that can go wrong in the food service business. But, as you have figured out already, this article is not really about restaurants. It is about how the opinions of the mob have turned into an acceptable way to think. This mob mentality is the opposite of The Creator Mindset. It's almost as if we allow someone else to do our thinking for us. Modernity has brought on countless blessings, but giving away our opinions simply because it's easier to adopt someone else's is silly.

The worship of this so-called "expert" has gone too far. It only serves to take away our freedom to choose. We think that we are hedging our bet by reading online reviews before we try this or that new restaurant. Or try this or that new product or service. But, what we are actually doing is putting our hands in the fate of a so-called expert who doesn't really exist.

That's why reading review after review online actually makes us depressed. We think it will make us more informed, but the opposite is true. It's because someone who doesn't know you or me and has never met us is given the power of becoming a source of unquestioned wisdom. It's frus-



Nir Bashan's son at his favorite Denny's restaurant.

trating. And it kills our ability to decide for ourselves. Instead, reclaim this misplaced authority.

We need to accept some degree of uncertainty and actually go out and try something new. Trust me, it won't be as bad as you think. Because no matter what the review says – good or bad – it's how you experience your story that matters most.

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: Three Reasons To Bring Mindfulness to The Workplace

BY NATALIA FOOTE

Mindfulness is a current buzzword. You can find the word "mindfulness" on newsstands and in magazines. The word "mindful" is thrown around regarding the way we speak, act, write and think.

But, what is "mindfulness"?

I can tell you that it is not a religion, although some of the teachings are rooted in Buddhist meditations. It is not mystic, and it does not have to be practiced in a specific place at a specific time. Mindfulness can be done anywhere at any time.

Jon Kabat-Zinn, the father of mindfulness in the United States, defines mindfulness as paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally. Easy enough, right?

Try it right now. Simply notice your breath. Allow your gaze to go soft, and pay full attention to ONE inhale and ONE exhale. Stop reading, and try it now.

Now, ask yourself how it felt to stop for ONE breath. Perhaps you noticed nothing. That's okay. Perhaps your mind had difficulty focusing on one breath in and one breath out, that's okay, too. (Remember that nonjudgmentally part?)

But HOW does mindfulness bring any value to the workplace? Here are three reasons you need to start a mindfulness program at work.

1. Increase Productivity

We live in a world of distractions. Thirty

years ago, our computers didn't buzz every five minutes with an alert. Our mobile devices were used for making an emergency call. Distractions are everywhere, and regardless of devices, distractions exist in life. Our brains are a distraction. It wants to think of everything all at once. It's possible you've had to reread part of this article because your brain reminded you of something REALLY important. That's okay. You're a normal human living in 2019.

Mindfulness training works by removing the clutter from the brain and focusing on one thing. The exercise above where you focused on one inhale and exhale was a breath awareness exercise. By giving the brain a task of focusing on ONE thing, you are training the brain to become more focused and attentive. A *New York Times* article by David Gelles interviewed Aetna CEO Mark Bertolini, who introduced a mindfulness program for Aetna employees where they offered free yoga and meditation classes. According to Gelles, more than one-quarter of the company's workforce of 50,000 has participated in at least one class. Participants have become more effective on the job, gaining an average of 62 minutes per week of productivity each. Aetna estimates this is worth \$3,000 per employee per year.

2. Decrease Work-Related Stress

Mindfulness training teaches how to manage stress and sit with it. Although the breath is an anchor in mindfulness training, focusing on the body, an image or a point on the wall are all also forms of mindfulness training. The mere act of focusing on ONE thing, not thought, brings us into the present moment. As you deepen your focus through mindfulness training, you also gain awareness. By quieting the noise, you can hear clearly what is going on inside and outside. You become more aware of your thoughts and can take a step back and not take them so literally.

In a study titled *Effects of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction on Medical and Premedical Students* by Shauna Shapiro,



they found that participants reduced anxiety and reduced overall psychological distress including depression. In addition, the levels of empathy increased for the participants. Mindful.org states, "Mindfulness not only reduces stress but also gently builds an inner strength so that future stressors have less impact on our happiness and physical well-being."

3. Increase Resiliency and Work Retention and Satisfaction

What do you do? Where do you work? Are you happy? Have you considered switching your role, or switching companies, or perhaps even quitting altogether? I bet your employer doesn't want to hear that. According to an HRdive Study, turnover in employment costs employers 33% of a worker's annual salary to hire a replacement. For an employee making \$45,000 a year, that is a \$15,000 hit for the employer. In addition, there are the added productivity costs to the organization from time lost that is spent on finding a replacement, training said replacement, and the time it takes to have him/her fully functional.

Mindfulness training at work helps build resiliency. Mindfulness has many benefits in addition to the ones already mentioned. It boosts creativity and critical thinking, increases emotional intelligence and cooperation, in addition to raising levels of empathy and compassion, and leads to higher levels of well-being. In jobs with a high burnout rate, all of these traits work together to build resiliency. When you are mindful, you don't cry over spilled milk; you get a towel, clean it up and move on.

According to a study titled *The Protective Effects of Mindfulness Against Burnout Among Educators*, "Educators reporting

higher levels of mindfulness reported less burnout than educators reporting lower levels of mindfulness." The study also found that mindfulness moderates the effect of perceived stress on emotional exhaustion such that it is most protective at high levels of stress.

Starting a mindfulness program at work can be simple and does not require much time. The 20 minutes spent on mindfulness for the employees is made up in the increase in productivity, reduction in stress, and might keep your employees working for you a bit longer. But don't take my word for it; companies like Aetna, Google, Nike, Apple, Goldman Sachs, and General Mills have all implemented mindfulness offerings for their employees. Companies like threeR, Release, Reconnect, Reset, can help create a mindful workspace where employers create a healthy and productive environment.

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.



UCF Business Incubation Program Companies Receive Record-Breaking Investments

BY SHARON FUENTES

Orlando has always been an appealing destination for dreamers and risk-takers. It is no coincidence that Walt Disney chose this city to make The Mouse his home. But, dreaming about starting or expanding a business is one thing; turning that dream into a reality is quite another!

In fact, the statistics are a bit daunting. The U.S. Small Business Administration estimates that 56% of small businesses will go under before the four-year mark. Just like the old saying, “It takes a village to raise a child,” many businesses are finding out that it takes an “incubator program” to help them succeed. Thankfully, the UCF



Unveiling of the commemorative plaque at the grand opening of the UCF Life Sciences Incubator in 2018 (Photo courtesy of UCF Office of Research & Commercialization).

Business Incubation Program is here to offer that nurturing, helpful environment they might be looking for.

The University of Central Florida Business Incubation Program (UCF BIP) is a university and community partnership between the Florida High Tech Corridor Council and Orange, Osceola, Seminole and Volusia counties, as well as the cities of Apopka, Kissimmee, Orlando and Winter Springs. UCF BIP is designed to help create and sustain jobs in the community while spurring economic growth throughout the region. The program’s main goal is to help new and struggling early-stage businesses grow to the point where they need to hire employees in order to continue operating and growing.

Since 1999, this award-winning program has helped more than 390 local startup companies reach their potential faster by offering support and an array of targeted business resources and services. This past fiscal year, the program helped to sustain more than 6,275 local jobs and has had a cumulative impact of more than \$888 million on regional GDP (gross domestic product) and more than \$1.59 billion on regional sales.

2018 was by far the program’s best year to date with record-breaking investments. Companies in the incubator program set records for both investments and grants, with outside investments in 50 of the program’s participant companies totaling more than \$19 million in funding and 46 clients receiving grant awards of \$4.6 million. This amounts to a 69 percent increase in investment and a 49 percent jump in grant activity.

“We are extremely proud of our incubator clients for these record-breaking achievements,” said Dr. Tom O’Neal, founder and executive director of the UCF BIP. “The increase in funding clearly demonstrates the success of the UCF BIP program and validates that our incubators are an irreplaceable gem in the community that helps produce scalable, investible companies in Central Florida.

“These companies are truly making a difference in our community in terms of diversifying our economy and creating jobs that pay higher-than-average wages, and the grant dollars are also an important measure of the quality of the clients in the program,” continued O’Neal. “The grants and investment capital are a great way to get these companies off the ground with funding mainly from outside the region. They are highly competitive, and 46 awards in one year speak highly of the companies and the region overall.”

If you are looking to start up, grow your existing business, or wish to expand your company to Central Florida, UCF BIP



Photo courtesy of UCF Life Sciences Incubator.

might be able to help you. There are three separate programs, each designed to help businesses at different stages:

Pre-Incubation – helps create and launch scalable startups.

Incubation – helps scale businesses already in operation.

Soft Landing – helps companies headquartered elsewhere expand to Central Florida.

Companies seeking to enroll in one of these programs must fill out an online application and demonstrate their business growth potential. Only scalable businesses (ones designed that, as they grow, will need to hire employees in order to continue operating and growing) will be considered. A willingness to fully engage in the program and accept constructive feedback will also be taken into account. For more information, visit <https://incubator.ucf.edu/>.



The GuideWell Innovation Center, home of the UCF Life Sciences Incubator (Photo courtesy of Lake Nona).

Nona Growth: Isles of Lake Nona

ARTICLE BY SOPHIA ROGERS
SITE MAP PROVIDED BY PULTE HOMES

A new gated waterfront community is coming to Lake Nona! Located along the western side of Narcoossee Road, between Laureate Park and Fells Landing, Isles of Lake Nona is scheduled to open in 2020.

Pulte Homes recently purchased 142 acres for the community that will feature more than 500 residences. Home styles include a selection of single-family homes, townhomes and bungalows with open concept floor plans, designer finishes, and energy efficient features. Pulte will offer design customization to satisfy individual preferences and family lifestyles.

Preliminary drawings show an interconnected network of ponds with single-family homes backing up to water views, reminiscent of Lake Nona’s VillageWalk community.

“This will be one of the few gated new home communities in Lake Nona,” said Clint Ball, president of PulteGroup’s North Florida division. “It will offer a high-quality lifestyle at prices starting under \$300,000.”

Amenities for the community include a clubhouse, resort-style pool, tot lot, sports courts, and, of course, water views at every turn. Sitting less than three miles from State Road 417, the Isles of Lake Nona is convenient to the health care facilities of Medical City and dining and retail options within the growing Lake Nona Town Center.

Isles of Lake Nona adds to the active list of communities Pulte Homes offers in Lake Nona. Current projects include the Enclave at VillageWalk, Somerset Landings, Somerset Crossings, and the almost sold out four-story townhomes in Laureate Park.



For more information, visit www.pulte.com/homes/florida/the-orlando-area/orlando/isles-at-lake-nona-210302 or call 888-386-2489.

Pulte Homes is a national brand of PulteGroup, Inc. (NYSE: PHM). Pulte Homes builds consumer-inspired homes and communities that provide the move-up buyer the best quality of life. Only Pulte Homes offers the combination of innovative Life Tested Home Designs® with an unwavering commitment to quality and attention to detail. For more information about Pulte Homes, visit www.pulte.com.

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



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Get Traction: So, I'm a Visionary. Now What?

BY CHRIS WHITE,
ENTREPRENEUR, AUTHOR AND
CERTIFIED EOS IMPLEMENTER



Chris White

Recently in a session with a new client, the executive leadership team wanted to place the owner of the company in the Visionary seat of the Accountability Chart (think of the Accountability Chart on steroids). This excited the owner, but he found himself wondering

if he was being put out to pasture. He wasn't quite sure what his role would be if he weren't running the day-to-day activities he was accustomed to for the past 20 years. He felt threatened.

The Visionary seat, as described in *Rocket Fuel: The One Essential Combination That Will Get You More of What You Want from Your Business*, written by EOS founder Gino Wickman and Certified EOS Implementer Mark Winters, states, "Visionaries are the creators of almost everything. Very little exists on our planet without the Visionaries of the world. You are the 3% of the population that creates two-thirds of the new jobs."

As the team began to define the roles and responsibilities of the Visionary seat, you could see the owner's face begin to glow! Not only did he realize the importance of his new role in the company, but he also realized this was tailored to his unique ability, where his passions truly resided.

Common roles for Visionaries include:

- Entrepreneurial "spark plug"
- Inspirer
- Developer of new/big ideas
- Big problem solver
- Key vendor relationship builder
- Learner, researcher and discoverer

It's common for entrepreneurial business owners to be reluctant to "let go." Delegating authority and decision making to the Integrator (second in command) is no easy task when you have been the owner for so many years and everyone looks to you for the final say. By doing the Accountability Chart exercise with his leadership team, my client was able to see that he was actually holding on so tightly, he was preventing the company from growing. Yes, he could run the company as he had for the past 20 years, but upon realizing his Visionary DNA, he saw how he was actually holding the company back. He didn't like managing and holding his direct reports accountable. He despised getting mired in the details of running his company.

His passion, his unique ability, was brought to the forefront, and he now understood that he had to let go and elevate himself for the greater good of his organization. With this clarity into the Visionary role, he no longer felt threatened. On the contrary, he actually felt relieved. He now was more excited than he had been in years!

My fellow EOS Implementer and good friend, Walt Brown, calls this "Freedom."



Freedom to concentrate on your innate, God-given talents that define who you really are, day in and day out, in your business, allowing you to thrive in your unique ability!

If you're struggling with similar feelings like my client who I've described above, do yourself a favor and read *Rocket Fuel*. This book will bring absolute clarity to the roles of the Visionary and Integrator in your company. It will give you the confidence to embrace your gifts as a Visionary and allow you to "Let Go."

Take the Visionary Indicator Assessment here: www.markwinters.com/assessment-survey.

You can order *Rocket Fuel* here: www.eosworldwide.com/rocket-fuel.

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.



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Discovering the Hidden Artist Within

ARTICLE BY NICOLE LABOSCO
PHOTOS COURTESY OF VANIA VALDO



Vania Valdo is a newer Lake Nona area resident, having moved here from São Paulo, Brazil, in 2016 to achieve an old dream of living in America. She worked as an orthodontist, but once she discovered the artist hidden inside, her life changed.



Vania pictured with her artwork shown in the Louvre, "The Colors of Louvre."

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

VV: The person I admired the most in my life was my father, and in order to share more moments with him, I decided to enroll in the painting course he was already attending, and that's how it all started ... and I was able to discover the artist hidden inside me. Art has entered in my life as music enters our soul. It penetrated so deeply into me that it became difficult to keep away from the brushes and paints, and depicting each work, I realized that I could see things with different eyes, with the eyes of the soul, which fascinated me.

NHN: What was one of your most memorable moments within your artistic career?

VV: At some point, I realized that people admired my work. It was when an artist friend of mine told me to show my artwork to a curator, and she introduced me to Carmem Pousada. At that moment, I had no idea that I was meeting one of the most important curators in my country. Most surprisingly was the first day that I brought some pieces for her to see my work and she observed very carefully and after a while, she said, "I have a great opportunity for you, but to confirm, it depends on the evaluation of [a] curatorial

group at the Louvre." On hearing that my head began to spin, I didn't know if I had misunderstood or [if] she was really talking about the Louvre of Paris...

The distinguished Carmem Pousada, representative curator of the Louvre in Brazil, began to explain to me details of what I needed to do to participate in the exhibition at the renowned museum in Paris. She chose three of my paintings, photographed [them], and we filled out the registration form together.

A fortnight later, I received a letter from the Louvre, my heart pounded. Even shaking, I opened it and was taken by a lot of emotion. The letter was signed by the president of France and the director of the Carrousel du Louvre, and it was congratulating me for being approved. Unbelievable! I jumped for joy and thanked God for the opportunity. One of the most important moments in my life. From then on, my desire to paint only increased.

I returned to Brazil and soon began receiving invitations to exhibitions around the world. I had the opportunity to be in Italy, Austria, Slovak, [the] USA (Art Expo NY and Art Basel Miami). And wherever I went, I had the pleasure to show my art for those who had the sensitivity to understand emotion, good energies, and love for life.

NHN: Which of your artwork would

you consider to be your favorites? (Pick a top three.)

VV: The painting shown at [the] Louvre [titled "The Colors of Louvre"] for the obvious reasons was the work that [I'm] most proud [of]. However, other jobs are a source of great pride as well. "The Explosion of Marilyn Monroe" is one of them. I have [a] passion for painting faces and self-portraits. "The Universe Infinite" depicting the universe and the others that [were] done as a series like "Infinite on Fire," "Infinite in Nature," and "Infinite in Minerals." Actually, one of my favorites is "My Protective Angel," which is very special for me. I've [painted it] for my husband. I painted a couple in love, toward the heights, with open arms, like wings protecting me in a shape of a heart.

NHN: What are some of your dream projects?

VV: As I like to think outside the box, I'm working with 3D paintings. Literally, first I paint the canvas, then I do embroidery over it. New to

the world of art, but almost back to the origins, it reminds me [of] my grandma embroidering and I'm teaching my students this new way of doing art and they are delighted. I give private and group classes from four years old to 70 years old. The motto of these classes [are] "discover the artist hidden inside you." My students are enjoying [the classes] so much that I have plans to open a new school where I can share my work with a larger number [of] people and so I can spread the art and enjoyment of this emotion.

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

VV: I'm an eclectic artist because I like to paint what involves me in that moment of life. I love to express what I live, what I feel. In every trip I've done around the world, I get inspired and always want to represent what I see in the form of art. My pictures speak about my emotion. They express the intensity of my personality and also tell about my emotions. They express the intensity of my personality and tell about how light and fun I am. My art is playful, colorful, but harmonious. I'm positive, cheerful, and that is what I like to convey to my observers.

Living inside a golf course, and feeling a little of the dedication, concentration and satisfaction of the players, in the midst of beautiful, charming and calm landscapes, is very inspirational for me.

NHN: Future goals/plans?

VV: Recently, I was recommended to take the VISA for Special Abilities. I did the process with the support of my husband, and once again I was approved, without the request of evidences (which is not common), and I thank this country for having welcomed me with open arms, with great affection. I was honored and recognized for the love I have for my work. And in this way, I feel free to inspire more and more people to cross my path. So, I follow my path, dreaming and coloring life through my art.



"My Protective Angel."



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>.



"Infinite in Nature."



"Infinite on Fire."



"The Universe Infinite."

Lake Nona Forum Leaves Lasting IMPACT

ARTICLE BY NICOLE LABOSCO
PHOTOS COURTESY OF LAKE
NONA IMPACT FORUM 2019



LNIF banner.

Every year for the last seven years, the prestigious Lake Nona Impact Forum brings experts, doctors, professionals and those who are making a difference in all aspects of health and wellbeing together for three days. This forum was jam-packed with a whirlwind of information – from the past, present and future – leaving all in attendance in awe of mankind. *Nonahood News* was present during the forum for the ultimate coverage, and here's a recap of only a handful of topics and discussions that took place.

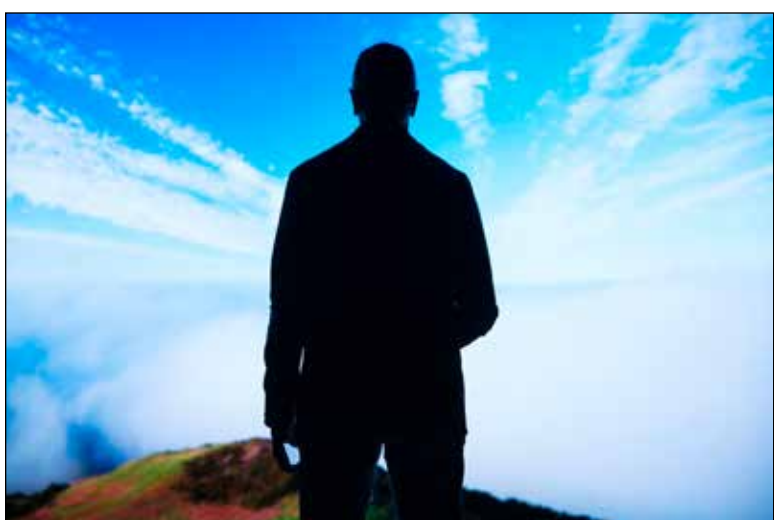
One Nation Under Stress

A topic we all understand because most of us experience it every day, stress has become a major epidemic in the United States, affecting generation after generation. But, younger children are feeling more stressed than their counterparts. Why?

Sanjay Gupta, MD, Chief Medical Correspondent of CNN and a staff neurosurgeon for the Emory University School of Medicine, helped break down positive stress, negative stress, and how too much of it can be detrimental.

“Neverending toxic stress ... that’s the stress that’ll kill you. Stress is not the enemy. It’s really that constant nature of stress.”

Gupta continued to eliminate causes of stress (healthcare issues, drug issues, etc.) and noted the pressures of this demographic. Some are quick to judge how “Millennials” and “Gen-Xers” are constantly complaining, but does anyone stop to think about the constant pressures of



Louie Schwartzberg's (filmmaker, director, producer) art installation showcased mesmerizing hyperlapses showcasing this planet's natural beauty on day one.



Murali Doraiswamy, MD discussing mental health and the fate of the nation on day two.

society? Gupta noted that this demographic is the “sons and daughters of what is known as the ‘greatest generation.’” Parents of those in question came back from war and built this country, and those children “were supposed to inherit the Earth and instead see their jobs leaving, death increasing, and dying sooner.”

Why is a “hand-off” viewed as something to complain about, one might ask? Gupta explained that the idea of expecting something and not receiving it can become a very toxic stressor. There is a certain inequality in life nowadays – the balance thrown off – as there is an increase in mortality and a decrease in life expectations. Glaring inequality can be very detrimental, according to Gupta.

Did we do this to ourselves? That’s a big question. Gupta noted the death by suicide rates that have increased drastically, there’s an opioid epidemic taking over the country, more liver cirrhosis, and these have one thing in common: They are all self-inflicted. The existential question is what is driving it. The stress of expectations? The stress of being able to do better?



Kevin Hines discussing mental health at the Lake Nona Impact Forum, day two.

Our parents (Gen-Xers and Baby Boomers included) did all of these amazing things for the foundation of our country, and we (current generations of the youth) are supposed to surpass those expectations ... it’s the evolutionary dream. It’s evident that some don’t feel they’ve received what they deserve, and that, Gupta said, is “the framework of the psychology that is happening.”

We are living in a constant state of stress, and it’s reaping havoc on society. Stress is generational, but for the same reasons of dashed expectations. If we define the core causes of what is actually happening here, we learn that expectations are ultimately the root cause of the constant stress and toxic lifestyles found in today’s society.

Gupta quoted a line from Robert M. Sapolsky’s *Why Zebras Don’t Get Ulcers*, “Zebra’s don’t get ulcers not because they don’t get stressed, but because they’re not constantly stressed.” He continued to explain that we’re living in a state of hypervigilance and hyper stress as a result. The current generation has some

of the highest stress levels that we have now recorded.

What would Gupta prescribe to overcome the overwhelming stress? “The answer is not to go back, it’s to move forward. In order to care for ourselves, we have to care for each other. The opposite of stress is social support and cohesion, and 70% of stress is preventable.” It’s our fate.

Mental Wellbeing: The Fate of the Nation

Mental health is slowly becoming less of a faux pas as we embrace the truth. A crucial aspect of one’s overall health and wellbeing, mental health impacts everyone (whether we want to admit it or not) and is only becoming more and more of a critical issue in schools, workplaces, families and society as a whole. Kevin Hines, a best-selling author, global public speaker, and an award-winning documentary filmmaker, spoke about his experience and everyday battle with mental health – diagnosed with bipolar depression (BD) – as he gave us insight into his attempt at suicide.

Hines leaped from the Golden Gate Bridge and had immediate regret.

“When my hands left that rail – and my legs curled over – as soon as I left the bridge, I thought, ‘I don’t want to die.’”

Now, as an award-winning documentary filmmaker and mental-health advocate, Hines works to make others realize that suicide is not the answer. He wants to help make media that saves lives.

“If you know two people with BD, one will try to commit suicide. If you know five people with BD, one will succeed.”

For years, the only approved treatment for depression was electroshock therapy because it raised neurotransmitters. Murali Do-

raiswamy, MD, Professor of Psychiatry and Medicine at Duke University Health System, explained how we’re suddenly on the dawn of the age where we can identify proper treatment for mental health. What works for some might not work for others. The stress threshold in our brains is already set around the age of five or six, Doraiswamy explained. Some might blame their genes, but the total blame falls elsewhere.

“Genetics load the gun. Your lifestyle pulls the trigger,” stated Doraiswamy. A statement that really makes you take a second to think – and maybe even reevaluate your mental health status.

Hines left us with a vital reminder: “Our words and actions have the power to damage and destroy or to help and heal.”

In a state of being so easily connected to nearly everyone around the world through technology and social media, allow us to come together and heal. Together, we can be forces of nature.



Live art installation on day one.

Society’s Revolutionaries: Forces of Nature

In this discussion, leaders – and fathers – shared their journeys on the ultimate race against time ... battling all-consuming diseases that their children were diag-



Sanjay Gupta, MD discussing the impact of stress at the Lake Nona Impact Forum, day one.

nosed with. They decided to stare at these diseases in the face and annihilate them. These fathers wouldn’t take no for an answer (who would?) and made the decision to turn their children’s suffering into a disease revolution.

“At that moment, we had the chance to get in the fetal position, dying, or fight. We chose to fight,” declared Gordon Gray, the Founder of Celenix and a film producer (*McFarland, USA*, *The Game Plan*, *Million Dollar Arm*, and more), on discussing his two daughters’ diagnoses of Batten disease (specifically CLN6), a rare and fatal neurological disease. Batten disease is an inherited disorder of the nervous system where a defect in a specific gene triggers cascading problems.

The motivating journey of how a Hollywood producer and father took his rage and turned it into something that will help others diagnosed with Batten disease in the future is awe-inspiring. A desperate



Gordon Gray, the Founder of Celenix and a film producer, discusses his two daughters’ battling Batten disease, as part of the Society’s Revolutionaries - Forces of Nature segment.

race for a cure, battling time, led to a potential medical breakthrough. Gray was able to raise \$3.5 million in donations, and his daughters became the pioneer recipients of the very first gene therapy of its kind in a clinical trial. Signs of a rebound in his girls are happening, slowly but surely, but strength is returning and deterioration has been halted.

Many other topics were covered during this year’s Impact Forum; these were only a few that stuck out to us. We could’ve filled a whole newspaper with the medical happenings discussed! Until next year, Lake Nona Impact Forum!



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A NOTE FROM THE CEO

2019 IS GOING GREAT!!!

BY DON LONG

This is truly a note, meaning short and to the point. Please look at all the events offered on this page and decide early, if not now, on the ones you want to participate in. I ask you to do this because most of our events sell out and some even have a waitlist. The earlier you register, the better for our caterers and venues that provide for you. Visit our events page at www.lakenonacc.org or catch one of our links from the social media or monthly newsletter to sign up online. Most of our events have grown by 200% or more, so we ask for your help so that we can continue to offer efficient service.

Don't miss the Nona Chamber Festival!!! All the info is on the facing page of this centerfold. Don't forget to register early for the beer and wine tasting to save money on the at-the-gate price.

Until next month, see you in the Nonahood.



Don with Don Fisher and Jim Grey.

CHAMBER CHARITY OF CHOICE: NEMOURS CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Nemours Children's Hospital is our Chamber Charity of Choice for 2019. This year, we want to feature some brief Q&As about their efforts and needs.

Q: What is Nemours Children's Hospital?

A: Nemours Children's Hospital, a part of the Nemours Children's Health System, is recognized as one of the nation's safest pediatric hospitals with teams that include some of the best doctors, nurses, and support specialists around. Children can get the full spectrum of care through our extensive pediatric specialty care network comprising Central Florida and our surrounding communities – from fetal care starting in the womb to primary care for regular well-child visits, urgent care for life's little mishaps, and emergency and inpatient care. Taking care of kids isn't part of what we do. It's *all* we do.



EVENT GALLERY



Feb. 22, Business Luncheon, Ronald McDonald House – Chris White, entrepreneur and business coach from Traction in Florida, speaks during the February Business Luncheon at Ronald McDonald House. White inspired luncheon guests to think like a business owner and foster a successful company culture. Bolay of Lake Nona provided a delicious lunch for attendees. (Photo by Felicity Gomer)



Feb. 20, Ribbon Cutting Ceremony, Smashburger – (left to right) Chamber CEO Don Long, Reinaldo Ruiz (co-owner), Wanda Ruiz, Wellesley Broomfield (co-owner), and Arbra Calvert (Pro I.T. Services and Support, LLC, Chamber Director of Membership) welcome Smashburger to our Chamber as new members with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Smashburger provided coupons for a free meal to attendees. (Photo by Felicity Gomer)



Feb. 26, Contagious Connecting, Ronald McDonald House – Dr. Linda Travelute of Travelute Leadership and People Development and Sam Eckerson of Keller Williams Advantage III Realty teach members 10 traits to practice as a networker and then how to implement the skills amongst each other. (Photo by Don Long)



UPCOMING EVENTS

April 2 - First Tuesdays After-Hours at Eagle Creek Golf Club & The Belfry Restaurant
Appetizers and happy hour drink specials, "Swing Into Spring"
Time: 5:30-7:30 p.m. | Location: 10350 Emerson Lake Blvd., Orlando, 32832
Fees/Admission: Chamber Members with registration. Guests allowed one visit: contact administration@lakenonacc.org.

April 11 - Breakfast Connections: Michael A. Schaffauer, Enterprise Florida
Enjoy breakfast, networking, and more.
Time: 8-9:30 a.m. | Location: GuideWell Innovation Cafe
Fees/Admission: Chamber Members - \$20, Non-Members - \$25

April 13 - Nona Chamber Festival: "Easter Basket" at Nona Adventure Park
Business and community expo with food, adventure, competitions, and beer/wine tasting.
Time: 10 a.m.-4 p.m. | Location: Nona Adventure Park, 14086 Centerline Dr., Orlando, 32827 (Use Waze app for GPS help)
Fees/Admission: FREE

April 26 - Business Luncheon: Mayor Jerry L. Demings at GuideWell Innovation Theater
Enjoy lunch and hear the latest from Mayor Jerry L. Demings of Orange County.
Time: 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. | Location: GuideWell Innovation Theater, 6555 Sanger Rd., Orlando, 32827
Fees/Admission: Chamber Members - \$30, Non-Members - \$40

May 7 - First Tuesdays After-Hours at 310 Nona
Networking, appetizers and happy hour specials.
Time: 5:30-7:30 p.m. | Location: 310 Nona, 10783 Narcoossee Rd., Orlando, 32832
Fees/Admission: Chamber Members with registration. Guests allowed one visit: contact administration@lakenonacc.org.

Check our website for the latest information: www.lakenonacc.org.

March 5, First Tuesdays, Drive Shack
– Drive Shack General Manager Dan Kirby cuts the ribbon as a brand new member of the Chamber while guests gather for the monthly First Tuesdays event. More than 130 members who registered were exclusively given free appetizers and several open boys to play in as they networked and enjoyed a relaxed after-hours environment. (Photo by Felicity Gomer)

March 14, Breakfast Connections, Orlando VA Medical Center – Don Fisher, Osceola County Manager, speaks to nearly 100 Chamber members and guests. Fisher spoke about the impact neighboring Osceola County does and will have on the Lake Nona region. (Photo by Don Long)

New and Renewed Members from March 16 through April 15

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Tough Things To Talk About: Self-Awareness and Why It Matters

BY KYLE HAMM



To be aware is to have knowledge, to have consciousness. But there is so much more than that, isn't there? There are multiple contexts to view "awareness," such as mindfulness; being aware simply meaning that you are paying attention to what is happening right here and now. In meditation and mindful conversations, awareness is a word constantly buzzing around.

Why does self-awareness matter, though? Why is it so important? In today's hectic and busy lifestyle, levels of stress and anxiety have dramatically increased and the emotions come along with it. Others talk about depression or dissatisfaction rather than acknowledging their feelings and emotions and attempt talking about them. Instead of working them out, we all turn to temporary distractions so that we can turn away from dealing with those feelings. Self-Awareness would be the cure-all for these issues.

Through meditating, self-awareness can naturally develop over time, and self-awareness is practically the core of meditation. With meditating and gaining self-awareness, you'll be able to collect feelings, emotions and physical sensations more positive and lively. It's also possible to gain more knowledge of your character, such as how you react to different situations. Through self-awareness, you can see yourself in a different light, and it may be possible to even unearth those deep emo-

tions that you were not able to perceive before.

Self-awareness is more than just being involved with your emotions – it's also to help you live your life more fully after discovering your emotions and feelings. I've learned of three tips to help gain self-awareness: acknowledge your emotions, record your feelings, and expand your self-awareness beyond your own feelings. We cannot simply rely on rational thinking to make decisions because it is our very own emotion and feelings that will keep us in balance.

Recording your feelings is a very simple exercise that can be used in a number of ways. It develops self-awareness through communicating with your subconscious to discover what it truly is you're passionate about. If you record your feelings often enough, you might even start beginning

to see a trend happening because your subconscious knows it all before you even write it down.

Meditation is the secret key to self-awareness because it is the best way to reconnect with ourselves while quieting down the non-stop, busy mind chatter. Once you are able to find your quiet zen space for meditating, dive deep into your subconscious minds to find the limitless potential of self-awareness. You will gain natural compassion, accurate intuition, and the ability to read others' emotions. You'll find you'll get better at decision-making, increase self-discipline, become a great listener, have an optimistic attitude, and gain the ability to have a flexibly-adaptive mindset for new and different situations.

There are different levels of self-awareness and different ways to get there for each person. As a matter of fact, the majority

of our emotions and feelings are going on autopilot, and sometimes when we're on autopilot for so long, we forget that we're not even in control! The practice of avoiding pain through distraction is where it all begins. Our mind goes to some other time or place where it can feel safe and secure from the pain of everyday life. There's nothing wrong with distractions, we just need to be aware of our distractions. The goal would be to establish awareness and manage our distractions.

The next stage to bring to the topic is what are you actually feeling? It's an uncomfortable place to go. It requires a lot of focus and effort to go through old emotions and deal with them instead of letting them hold you back. But don't get too caught up on that because your emotions can also be a distraction. A lot of emotions are pointless and can hold you back from the emotions and feelings that outweigh all of the others.

If we are aware of our own weaknesses, then we can no longer allow them to be weaknesses. Otherwise, you'll become a slave to your own mind. Be realistic, recognize the problems that you create for yourself, learn your patterns, take yourself less seriously, and don't have such strong opinions. There's a good chance that your assumptions could be straight-up wrong. Most behaviors are just reactions to your emotions. Stop avoiding problems in life and understand your faults so that you can change them for the better.

Self-awareness will not make everyone happier because it is often combined with self-judgment. Don't become aware of all the ways you deserve to be judged; become aware of all the ways to elevate your own mind – to be more empathetic, more accepting, more knowledgeable about emotions for yourself and others. Because in the end, self-awareness is only wasted if the outcome is not self-acceptance.



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USTA: Summer Camp 2019

BY DANIEL PYSER
PHOTO COURTESY OF USTA

The start of April means that summer is just around the corner, and as families begin to make their summer plans, the USTA National Campus is gearing up for another successful year of summer camps.

Registration is now open for Summer Camp 2019 at the USTA National Campus. This year's camp offers a wide variety of options for kids of every skill level, ages 5-17, including both morning and full-day sessions.

Summer Camp 2019 will feature professional coaching and tennis training, combined with the perfect blend of competition, camaraderie and fun.

In addition to morning on-court tennis training and afternoon match-play opportunities, the camp's expert coaching staff will help guide players in developing comprehensive and individualized training plans. They will also offer personal guidance on tournament play and competitive scheduling.

Summer Camp 2019 consists of nine one-week sessions that can be registered for individually. The sessions begin on Monday, June 3, and run through Friday, Aug. 9. There will be no camp the week of July 1-5 in observance of Independence Day.

Full-day camp runs from 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. and includes lunch for each camper. Morning camp runs from 8:30-11:30 a.m. Prices vary, based on age and skill level.

Summer Camp 2019 is divided into three main categories: Red & Orange Ball, Youth Development, and High Performance.

Red & Orange Ball is designed for players ages 5-10 (must be at least entering kindergarten in the fall of 2019). The programming will be held on smaller courts designed for beginning players. The summer camp staff will ensure that all campers learn how to play tennis and learn the

required tennis and athletic skills to enjoy the sport now – and stick with it for a lifetime.

Youth Development is designed for players ages 11-17 who are either new to the game, are experienced Junior Team Tennis/high school team players, or are currently enrolled in our Campus Youth/Campus Youth Plus programs. Players will train with others who are similar in age and ability. Mornings will focus on drill-based coaching, while afternoons will be centered around match play, giving campers opportunities to practice their game under the guidance of coaches.

And, finally, the High Performance program is designed for players who compete in state, sectional and/or national USTA tournaments. Players will train with others who are similar in age and ability. Morning training will focus on technique, shot selection, and patterns of play. Skills designed to help players deal with pressure tolerance will be emphasized. Afternoons will consist of match-play opportunities with expert coaches who will also guide players in developing comprehensive and individualized training plans. Coaches will also offer personal guidance on tournament play, competitive scheduling, and nutrition and hydration. The program includes fitness sessions to improve speed, flexibility, agility and core strength.

New this year, the USTA National Campus is offering a special promotion for families who want to register early for Summer Camp 2019. All players who register for a week of full-day camp by April 15 will receive a \$50 gift card to the Pro Shop. Players who register for three or more weeks of full-day camp by April 15 will receive an additional \$100 in Pro Shop spending.

Anyone interested in Summer Camp 2019 or any of the other USTA National Campus programs is encouraged to visit www.ustanationalcampus.com.



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Preparing to Achieve Your Body Goals

BY DR. ROXANNE SYLORA, MD, INSTITUTE OF AESTHETIC SURGERY



Summer is coming, and that means graduations, weddings, beaches and beach attire. Everyone wants to look fabulous, and after the holiday season, it is time to get to work! Spring is the perfect time for a little tune-

up to help our bodies look their best.

Suggestions from a plastic surgeon:

- 1. Start doing some exercise**, whatever program you can stick with. There is no substitute for muscle to help improve your shape. Strong core muscles help tighten your waist and improve your posture.
 - 2. Eat healthily.** Decrease sugar and carb intake to lose some excess fat on your own.
 - 3. Avoid nicotine**, or other substances that cause your blood vessels to constrict, for at least one month before surgery and six weeks after surgery.
- If you are thinking about plastic surgery, whether it's something small and non-invasive or larger like a full "mommy makeover," you need to do some homework to help get your body beach-ready.
- 1. Find a plastic surgeon certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery.** Board certification requires a specific amount of residency training followed by nationally administered exams. This process is designed to make sure surgeons are safe and can deal with complications from procedures.
 - 2. Determine what results will make you happy.** Understand the specifics of what makes you unhappy. Is it the "jiggle" of your belly, or is it the fullness when you pinch, or is it the overhanging skin? Make sure you can communicate this effectively to your surgeon, as the more you understand each other, the more likely you will get what you are expecting.
 - 3. Keep your expectations realistic.** Most minimally or non-invasive procedures cannot produce the same results as a surgical procedure, even with multiple treatments. The benefit of them is less downtime but anticipate fewer results as well. Their best use is typically when there is a very small need to address.
 - 4. Spend time in preparation for your procedure as well as recovery.** Most procedures need several months before the "final result." If you are planning on doing any procedure that requires skin removal, you will get the most predictable results if you are at your target weight already.
 - 5. Keep in mind that your body will change even after recovery is complete.** Recovery may only be a few weeks after surgery, but your body will still change over time. The full process usually takes six months, possibly a year.
 - 6. Aftercare is an important part of the process.** Staying in a clean environment with clean clothes and bed-sheets are simple things to help prevent infections and allow your body to heal faster. Having the appropriate post-surgical garments can decrease your discomfort and swelling. Eating foods that are beneficial for healing will help provide the appropriate nutrients.
 - 7. Plan cosmetic surgery at an optimal time for both recovery and results.** Healthy people recover faster than those who are not. Although you might be excited and impatient to have a procedure done, it still should be planned to optimize your ability to get a good result from your investment.



A good result and a great surgical experience involve communication and planning. As a patient, you impact your results greatly. Since results can never be guaranteed, it is in everyone's best interest to optimize the things we can control. Many people find great happiness in the transformation they see from cosmetic surgery, and the experience can be very rewarding. However, to maximize your results and decrease recovery time, preparation is key.

If you are considering a cosmetic procedure, I invite you to join IAS for a complimentary consultation to discuss your aesthetic goals and the options available. To learn more, call us at 407-409-8000 or visit.iasurgery.net.

Dr. Roxanne Sylora is known for her expertise in breast enhancement, reduction, and body contouring. Before moving to Orlando, she spent several years in the Chicago area performing breast augmentation and body sculpting, including breast lifts, tummy tucks, breast reconstruction, and post-massive weight loss body contouring. Certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery, Dr. Sylora has been recognized as a "Top Plastics Surgeon" by Consumers Checkbook and as one of "America's Top Plastic Surgeons" by Consumers Research Council of America.

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Relieving Spring Allergy Symptoms

BY AISHAH ALI, M.D., UCF HEALTH

Spring allergies can be brutal, and, with pollen and other allergens constantly surrounding us in Central Florida, they can be

hard to avoid. Allergies have been proven to negatively impact quality of life and account for preventable school and work sick days. The good news is that there are proven ways to relieve spring allergy symptoms and limit your exposure to common allergens.

Spring Cleaning

Spring cleaning is a common household tradition for a reason. Eliminating common allergens from your home, such as excess pet dander, dust mites and mold, can help if you are allergic to these things. Make sure to vacuum, dust and wash your

bedding often (about once a week), not just in the spring, as these allergens are present year-round.

Resist the urge to "air out" your house if you have pollen allergies. You'll be letting in the pollen, which is counterproductive to your goal of limiting your exposure to allergens.

Over-the-Counter Medications

There are a number of over-the-counter medications that can help relieve allergy symptoms. The three most common are first-generation antihistamines, second-generation antihistamines, and nasal sprays.

First-generation antihistamines, like Benadryl, provide short-term relief (up to six hours) for allergy symptoms such as itchy eyes, hives and runny nose. These are not intended for chronic allergy symptoms, and better, longer-acting alternatives are available. These medications are sedating and can cause severe drowsiness.

Second-generation antihistamines include brand names Allegra, Claritin, Zyrtec and Xyzal. These are all 24-hour, non-sedating medications. These are safe to take daily to relieve allergy symptoms.

Nasal steroid sprays are a first-line treatment for nasal allergy symptoms. These include brand names like Flonase, Fluticasone and Nasacort. After starting this medication, you should start seeing relief within a few days or up to a week. One spray per nostril per day is recommended while your symptoms persist. Read the box carefully to ensure you are buying a nasal steroid and not a decongestant. Daily use of a nasal decongestant can be harmful. If

you're not sure, ask a pharmacist to help you find the correct product.

Many of the medications above are available in generic forms that are as safe and effective as the brand names and more economical. Please see your allergist regarding whether or not you can use the above medications in combination.

Visiting an Allergist

Half of the battle of fighting allergy symptoms is knowing exactly what it is that you are allergic to. Visit an allergist to be tested for common allergens. Armed with this knowledge, your allergist can create an individualized treatment plan to help relieve your symptoms. Common treatments include medications and allergy avoidance tips, and you may be a candidate for allergen immunotherapy (allergy shots).

If your allergies are getting in the way of you enjoying the season, visit an allergist to get tested.

Aishah Ali, MD is a board-certified allergist and immunologist at UCF Health in Lake Nona and helps patients find allergy relief through testing, treatment and education. Learn more at ucfhealth.com.



Less Scarring, Faster Recovery With Minimally Invasive Surgery

BY DR. SEBASTIAN DE LA FUENTE

Advancing medicine using the most innovative surgical procedures is at the heart of AdventHealth's surgical programs. In



fact, some of the cutting-edge techniques we use – and develop – involve no cutting whatsoever.

While not every case is eligible for minimally invasive surgery, many surgeries once performed "the old-fashioned way," with open incisions requiring lengthy recovery time and considerable pain, can now be done using minimally invasive robotic and laparoscopic procedures. Both have benefits of smaller incisions and result in fewer side effects, reduced healing time, less scarring, and faster returns to normal activity.

For Routine and Complex Cases

During a laparoscopic or robotic surgery, a surgeon inserts a thin scope with a tiny

camera through a few small incisions in the abdomen. The surgery can be completed with the use of instruments that allow the surgeon to manipulate the organs that otherwise would require large incisions. Because the incisions are smaller than with an open surgery, this procedure often requires a shorter recovery time, shorter hospital stays, faster return to work, less pain, and lower chances of wound infections.

Robotic surgery has revolutionized complex surgery for many cancers, including prostate, gynecologic (ovarian, uterine and vulvar), stomach, pancreas, liver and colon. Using the robot allows surgeons better visualization and precision. The robotic instruments are driven by the surgeon who is present in the operating room during the procedure.

Over the last several decades, many studies have shown that minimally invasive techniques are safe in patients with cancer who require surgery. "The old paradigm that 'big tumors require big incisions' is being constantly challenged by the utilization of minimally invasive approaches that facilitate access to cavities through smaller incisions expediting recovery while maintaining sound oncologic principles," Dr. de la Fuente says. "These approaches allow patients to return to the baseline level of functionality and activity faster than procedures done through larger incisions."

Minimally invasive and laparoscopic techniques make it possible to address the wellbeing of the whole patient. It's not enough to perform a procedure – a patient's comfortable recovery and return to

health are essential parts of the surgical plan. AdventHealth's esteemed surgical experts blend world-class surgical technology with leading-edge care and award-winning hospitals.

Dr. Sebastian de la Fuente, MD, is board certified in general surgery with special certification in advanced surgical oncology. He specializes in surgical interventions for gastrointestinal, liver and bile duct diseases, as well as for benign pancreatic disorders, pancreatic cancer, sarcomas and melanomas. He is active in research and is at the forefront in the development of minimally invasive techniques for patients with cancer. To learn more about minimally invasive surgery for a variety of procedures, visit AHCentralFloridaSurgery.com or call 407-303-7399.



Namaste With Natalia: Crow/ Crane Pose

Bakasana

Your Monthly Yoga Pose

BY NATALIA FOOTE
PHOTO BY MICHAEL FOOTE

Spring has sprung! Spring brings sunshine, rainbows, flowers, bees and birds. April's yoga pose of the month is crow pose (sometimes called crane), or *bakasana* in

Sanskrit. Crow pose is a pose of strength and stability. It is a pose that can challenge beginner and expert yogis. Crow pose is an excellent base for poses like headstand and handstand, and the pose allows yogis to feel and activate their inner core to control balancing poses.

Crow pose has many benefits for the yogi. According to YogaJournal.com, crow pose strengthens the arms, wrists and abdominal muscles, stretches the upper back, and opens the groin.

Bakasana

1. Stand with your feet slightly turned out and about shoulder distance apart.
2. Squat into a yogi squat, or malasana, where your seat is pointed down and

lower than your knees.

3. Bend your elbows inside your knees and open your hands so all fingers are pointed up. Flex your wrists so the fingers are pointed up.
4. Place your palms on the ground and activate your hands, feeling strength throughout the fingertips.
5. Gaze forward as you begin to transfer your weight into your hands.
6. Using your core, begin to lift one knee onto its respective armpit or triceps. (This will vary on your body.)
7. Continue to gaze forward and lift the other knee onto the armpit or triceps.
8. Continue to tighten your core and begin to straighten the arms.
9. Stay for 20-30 seconds with normal breathing. Bend the elbows and finish in a yogi squat.

Modifications for beginners are to use blocks under the feet in a yogi squat in order to already have a small lift in the feet. Additionally, you may lift one foot at a time. For those with wrist complications, try "baby crow," where you are on your forearms but still use the same lift from the core. If trying at home, be mindful of what is in front of you or any jewelry that you might fall on. A pillow or bolster over the hands is a nice soft landing when working on crow at home.

Modifications for experts is to begin in tripod headstand and flow into crow pose. Extensions can be made to press into handstand or fly into chaturanga.

Crow pose is a fun pose to acquire. You can feel your strength and balance come together. It can feel very liberating to fly.

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



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SCHOOL UPDATES

NORTHLAKE PARK COMMUNITY SCHOOL

BY SALLY SHUMAN

NLP School Speech



Hannah Aglio.



Olivia Gutierrez.

Fifth-grade students had to prepare and practice a speech on the topic, "Challenges we face versus previous generations." All students presented their speeches in their homerooms to determine a class winner. Each classroom winner then advanced to the school level competition. The eight class finalists gave their speeches on the cafeteria stage in front of 200 of their peers and parents. Subjects included divorce in the social media age, self-esteem, stress, dangers of too much screen time, not enough outdoor playtime, poverty, gun violence in schools, and fast food. To become a better speaker, the students used strategies by planning appropriately, practicing (and practicing some more) and engaging with their audience. All the finalists did a fantastic job! Congratulations to the

first and second place winners, Olivia Gutierrez and Hannah Aglio!

GYTO and Be The Revolution

In the month of February, teachers at NorthLake Park had the opportunity to attend two great educational events. The PTA sponsored a professional development opportunity by sending some of our teachers to the Get Your Teach On (GYTO) Conference at the Florida Mall Hotel. This experience left educators motivated, inspired and empowered. They learned best practices for true engagement in the classroom with academic rigor while at the same time having fun! Teachers explored numerous strategies to increase their students' desire to learn. They experienced so much during the two days and returned to work refreshed and ready to implement so many new and engaging ideas!

The second educational event was Be the Revolution! NLP teachers had a great time hearing from motivational educator Ron Clark at Lake Nona High School. Ron Clark is a *New York Times* bestselling author and motivational speaker for inspiring educators. Ron Clark has appeared on national TV shows, including appearances on the *Oprah Winfrey Show*. In 2000, Clark received the Disney Teacher of the Year Award. A big shout out to Vista Lakes Elementary, which organized and hosted this awesome event.



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SCHOOL UPDATES

LAUREATE PARK ELEMENTARY

BY SUZANNE WORKUM

As we enter into the final nine weeks of the 2018-19 school year, it's hard to believe that another school year is almost complete. This past month, Laureate Park Elementary students were busy with 120-day celebrations, Fairy Tale activities, Math & Science Night, Field Day, Living Wax Museum, and a chess tournament.

Our first-grade students celebrated their 120th day of school by imagining what life would be like in the future and dressing for it.

Kindergarten students celebrated National Read a Fairy Tale Day on Feb. 26 by decorating their hallway with fairy tale themes. The students had been comparing traditional fairy tales with fractured fairy tales in reading. In order to extend the theme, each display also has a math component since kindergarten is studying measurement. During this unit, kindergarten students enjoyed measuring the length of Rapunzel's braid, the dragon cave, the yellow brick road, the path to grandmother's house, the height of Jack's beanstalk, the witch's house in Hansel and Gretel, and the gingerbread man's house.



Our Math & Science Night event was a success! Students and families were grossed out by the thrilling hands-on labs and enjoyed viewing the science and math-themed decorated classroom doors. Thank you to the parents, teachers, and staff who volunteered their time to make this event a success.



Laureate Park Longhorns celebrated all their hard work at the end of the third nine weeks with a superhero-themed field day. Our students had a wonderful time with their classmates participating in field day games such as tug of war, an obstacle course, relay races, dunk the hoops contest, and more. A gigantic thank you to our ADDitions volunteers who donated their time, and thank you to Coach Clawson, Coach Hernandez, and Coach Renuart for planning the activities for all of our Longhorn superheroes!



The Third Grade Enrichment groups honored Black History Month, Women's History Month, and Presidents' Day by presenting a Living Wax Museum. Various historical icons were researched and brought to life for their friends and families! Thank you to Mrs. Carrillo, Mrs. O'Sullivan, and Mrs. West for organizing this fun event.



In March, Laureate Park Elementary had the privilege of hosting the Southeast Learning Community Chess Tournament. Thank you to all students, families, staff members and visitors who attended. Laureate Park student Sanika Kaushikkar, second grade, earned first place in the K-2 group. Way to go, Longhorns!



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Education Spotlight: Creative Inspiration Journey School Of St. Cloud

Reggio-Inspired Gifted Learning for All

BY ELAINE VAIL

The residents of Lake Nona are proud of their reputation of being forward-thinking, innovative, and viewing the world “outside of the box.” Therefore, it’s no surprise that many parents of pre-K through fifth-grade students will be making the 30-minute drive to our neighboring town of St. Cloud this fall so that their children



Patricia Marquis and Sherri Schneider, photo courtesy of CIJS.

can experience the Reggio-inspired curriculum of Creative Inspiration Journey School (CIJS).

Currently under construction and scheduled to open this fall, CIJS of St. Cloud is conveniently located on the corner of 192 and Old Hickory Tree Road, just moments after turning off Narcoossee Road. This tuition-free public charter school features an early education program that is inspired by Reggio Emilia, a city in Northern Italy, and is one of the top 10 curriculums in the



world. This unique educational approach makes this institution in St. Cloud one of the most innovative schools in Central Florida and includes project-based learning, thrives on creativity and imagination, and encourages self-discovery and critical thinking while establishing an environment where children love to learn!

Founded by Patricia Marquis, Ed.S, and Sherri Schneider, BBA, sisters who were eager to instill a love of life-long learning through this unique curriculum, CIJS began in Winter Springs as a private school.



The education philosophy “focuses on more than 100 endless ways children think, understand, dream, explore, discover, play, invent, speak, sing, and listen.” When I asked Marquis how they are able to offer such an amazing opportunity to our community free of tuition, she explained,



Patty Marquis (Founder and CEO (IPS)) and Tony Amettis (site supervisor), photo by Elaine Vail.

“It’s a charter school, and it is funded completely through the state. We decided to close the private school [in Winter Springs] and come to the charter school world because we think it’s important that everybody has this opportunity – we are offering a typical private, tuition-based education completely free through the charter realm.”

Marquis and Schneider sold the building in Winter Springs and began the move into the charter school world (Marquis even designed the school building plans with M+H Architects!) so as to share their passion for offering a gifted program of instruction to all students in the area. But, what is it about this Reggio style that was so influential to these sisters that it inspired them to open up a school? Marquis enlightened me:

“Reggio in itself is the hundred languages of children, with the idea of integrating projects and it encourages students to get involved in their own learning. The mutual respect between adults and children, the children getting to drive their own instruction, that’s really the heart of what Reggio is ... community involvement – that’s a huge piece. What really sets Reggio apart from other schools is their environment as well. So, when you walk into a Reggio school, one that is really using the Reggio-inspired philosophy well, you’re not going to see single desks, you’re not going to see a lot of plastic materials – there’s a lot of nature-based materials that are pulled in [like] wicker baskets instead of plastic baskets, you’re going to see regular furniture that you would see in a house, you’re going to see lamps and rugs – the idea is that

we want the kids to be relaxed ... and to be able to do their best thinking because, when you are relaxed, obviously you’re able to absorb more information.”

Marquis continued, “The other thing that is huge is that we do a lot of group projects, so students utilize deeper-level thinking and critical-thinking skills

while engaging in collaborative work and conversations. The teacher is learning alongside the students, so, it’s okay not to know everything. It’s okay to say, ‘You know what, I don’t know that answer, let’s find out.’ And that’s doing two things: It’s engaging and learning together, and it’s teaching the kids how to find an answer, to find a solution to their problem when they don’t know.”

What, exactly, does project-based learning mean? “Project-based means you’re taking projects and integrating the standards throughout the project. So, instead of just having a workbook or a worksheet and filling it out, we train our teachers to take those standards and integrate them through projects,” Marquis elaborated. “We do it through interdisciplinary learning ... we’re training teachers how to take each individual standard and intertwine them throughout all of the different subject areas. Therefore, it has meaning, it makes sense, the kids can apply what they learn to the real world, and they’re understanding and remembering it versus re-



gurgitating and forgetting.”

What makes CIJS the most innovative in Central Florida? Marquis answered, “I would say the Reggio philosophy is so unique because they believe there are 100 different ways to learn. And, so, it’s a very hands-on atmosphere ... and there is mutual respect between adults and children. That doesn’t mean that children get to ‘rule the roost,’ but it does mean that they get to take part in their learning. So, as we see that they are interested in a particular topic, we use that as a unit within the classroom.” That educational philosophy coupled with Marquis’ experience in the public schools creates the perfect combination because she understands the importance of balancing data-driven learning and having milestones and goals while integrating with the project-based learning and the Reggio approach.

I was so intrigued by this inspiring curriculum that I continued to ask Marquis more questions, such as, “What is a typical day in the life of one of your students?” and she answered with the most wonderful examples of student-led discovery and exploration. In order to read the rest of the interview and learn about how CIJS teachers work with the more reserved students, how their fifth-graders are pre-

pared for education outside of CIJS, the process for Orange County residents to apply, and so much more, check out our online version of this interview by going to www.nonahoodnews.com/CIJS.



CIJS opens this August, is now enrolling, and is tuition-free. Affordable before- and after-school programs are also available. CIJS will have a free information seminar on Saturday, April 27, at noon at the Veteran’s Memorial Library in St. Cloud in the Fisk Room (810 13th St., 34769).

To apply for enrollment, go to www.nonahoodnews.com/education-spotlight-creative-inspiration-journey-school-st-cloud/. You can also email charterschool@CIJSstcloud.org or call 407-949-0056 for more information. Whether you plan to enroll or not, if you want to show your support, CIJS is looking for the following donations: www.CIJSstcloud.org/#donate_items.



CIJS rendering.



Gloomy day, but bright future! CIJS construction site, photo by Elaine Vail.

Education Spotlight: Florida Technical College Expands And Introduces New Programs, Solidifies Itself as A Premier Post- Secondary Education Option in Florida

ARTICLE BY NICOLE LABOSCO
PHOTOS COURTESY OF FLORIDA TECHNICAL
COLLEGE



Dr. Burkett.

Florida Technical College (FTC) recently reached a new milestone, and a major one at that: the launch of a Continuing Education division to help advance professional careers. This strengthens the school's position as the premier post-secondary education provider in the state and enhances its academic offerings.

The Continuing Education division is comprised of three campuses (Tampa, Kissimmee and Orlando) which brings to seven the total number of FTC locations strategically positioned throughout Central, Southwest and South Florida. The new division offers more than 20 business and tech certification programs, including Human Resources Professional, Microsoft System Administration, Cisco Wireless Specialist, Internet Marketing Strategies, and many more.

"The addition of these programs to our offerings solidifies Florida Technical College as a well-rounded institution that meets the needs of many different kinds of adult learners," said FTC president, Dr. James Burkett.

FTC was founded in 1982 to provide private, specialized field education for those seeking higher learning. The school offers associate, bachelor's degrees and diploma programs in a wide variety of professions, including cosmetology, computer networking, criminal justice, healthcare and more.

The sustained growth of Florida Technical College academic offerings includes the expansion of its electrical program to the Orlando campus, making it now available at four locations. The program is also offered in Kissimmee, Deland and Pembroke Pines. The school's Spanish language programs are also experiencing growth. A

new HVAC/R with PLC diploma program taught fully in Spanish was launched earlier this year. The 17-month-long program includes classroom instruction, as well as hands-on training in specialized labs. This type of schooling allows practical skills to be gained as the students practice performing installations, service, and repairs on heating units, air conditioning systems, and refrigeration. PLC stands for Programmable Logic Controller, a computer system that controls machines and processes, which is incorporated into the training.

Other programs taught in Spanish include Culinary Arts, Baking and Pastelería, and Electrical. A Cosmetology program in Spanish is set to launch in April 2019. All of them are taught at the Kissimmee campus.

"These programs are designed to help Spanish speakers earn a diploma while they are learning English, instead of putting their education on hold," Burkett said. "The sooner they can start actively participating in the job market and the local economy, the bigger the contribution they can make to their families and to the rest of the community that it is now home."

After the 17-month period has surpassed, graduates of the HVAC/R with PLC program become eligible for the EPA 608 exam (as mandated by the Environmental Protection Agency's Federal Clean Air Act, requiring that all persons who maintain, service, repair or dispose of appliances that contain regulated substances be certified in proper handling techniques) and the OSHA 10 exam (which tests for avoidance, recognition, abatement and prevention of health and safety hazards in workplaces).

As an academic unit of National University College (FTC's Puerto Rico-based parent school), FTC was accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education just last year. This ultimately means students can be confident that the school will comply with rigorous quality standards. Financial aid is available to qualified students. You can find a Florida Technical College campus in Orlando, Kissimmee, Lakeland, Tampa, DeLand, Pembroke Pines, and Cutler Bay. FTC offers flexible schedules at all seven campuses.

For more information on the programs that Florida Technical College has to offer or to register to further your education, visit ce.ftccollege.edu/courses-certifications/ or call (321) 684-4034.



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SCHOOL UPDATES

EAGLE CREEK ELEMENTARY

BY JESSICA SCULLY

Fine Arts Principal of the Year

On behalf of the teachers and staff here at Eagle Creek, we would like to take a moment to honor Mr. McCloe. We would like to congratulate Mr. McCloe on winning the prestigious United Arts OCPS Fine Arts Principal of the Year Award for Elementary. Mr. McCloe was presented this award at the Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts.



School Board Member Mrs. Lopez Visits ECE

Thank you for your support of ECE, Mrs. Lopez! We enjoyed showing you all around ECE and the wonderful things happening in our classrooms.



Read Across America

Read Across America Day is a nationwide reading celebration that takes place annually on March 2, Dr. Seuss' birthday. At Eagle Creek Elementary, we celebrate all week long! From Feb. 25-March 1, we celebrated with themed dress-up days.



Kindergarten Roundup

We hosted our annual Kindergarten Roundup and are excited to welcome new families to Eagle Creek Elementary. No worries if you missed this event; you can still visit our school and register your incoming kindergartner. Also, you are invited to our kindergarten orientation taking place on May 7. I am looking forward to seeing all of our new Panthers!

ECE PTA Carnival

I'd like to say a big THANK YOU to our Eagle Creek PTA for another amazing Carnival! Panther families had a blast enjoying the paradise island-themed games and rides. Your hard work and dedication to our students are greatly appreciated by all.

SGA Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser

Our SGA sponsored a spaghetti dinner with all of the proceeds going to the Ronald McDonald House! They were able to raise \$500. Thank you to everyone who came out!



Hero Teacher

Congratulations Ms. Simmons for being recognized as an OCPS HERO Teacher!

School-Wide STEM Challenge – Paper Chair Predicament

ECE was excited to participate in another school-wide STEM Challenge. This challenge invited our students to engineer and build furniture for our conference room using only newspaper and masking tape! We are proud of each participant and are enjoying our new affordable and recycled furniture.

Ron Clark Visits Lake Nona

ECE had an inspiring night listening to Ron Clark speak at Lake Nona High School. We are excited to be a part of the teacher revolution!

ECE Panther Chorus

On Feb. 25, our chorus did an awesome job performing the National Anthem at the USTA College Match Day (UCF vs. UF).



Disney Dreamer and Doer

Congratulations to 5th Grader Alana Rodante for being named ECE's Disney Dreamer and Doer!



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SCHOOL UPDATES

SUN BLAZE ELEMENTARY



Family Dance.

Field Day was a huge success for our students and volunteers! Our students were challenged to “go the distance” by completing the 13 stations, providing a day of fun in the sun. Thank you to Coach Alvarez and Coach Nieves for the organization and excellence of this event. We also want to thank the dozens of parent volunteers and staff.

The fourth- and fifth-grade students sang and danced through the decades during their performance, *We Got the Beat*, at the Lake

Nona High School Performing Arts Center. The house was packed, and the performance provided a night to remember. Thank you to our special area teachers for making this such an amazing tradition!

Our Historical Math Night, sponsored by Richard Varner of GO REALTY, was a fun-filled night of math activities. Families were immersed in learning as they participated in math activities involving timelines, calculating currency, problem-solving, math games, math art, and logic puzzles. Families were welcomed by Abe Lincoln (Mr. Rach, Lake



Field Day.



Math Night.



We Got The Beat.

Nona High School history teacher). Our partnership with Mathnasium of Lake Nona, Orange County Regional History Center, and Marco's Pizza helped create an unforgettable event. We also appreciate the Lake Nona High School Key Club, PTA, and Sun Blaze teachers for volunteering as station facilitators.

Thank you, PTA, for hosting the Family Dance, Light Up the Night, at Innovation Middle School. The evening was packed with glow sticks, '80s dance music, friends and family. We want to thank Dr. Maestre for sharing the Innovation Middle School campus with us.

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 <https://sunblazees.ocps.net>, and you can follow us on Facebook at Sun Blaze Elementary.

Go, Stingrays!



LAKE NONA HIGH SCHOOL BAND: SOUND OF THE LIONS

PHOTOS FROM THE LNHS BAND FACEBOOK PAGE



Our drum majors attended the Mayor's Veterans Advisory Council meeting at City Hall on March 7 to accept the award for “Best Marching Band” in the 2018 Orlando Veterans Day Parade.

The marching band is hosting a Spring Rummage

Sale on Saturday, April 6, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. to raise funds for their trip to London. The sale will be held in the Lake Nona High School parking lot.

Save the date for the First Annual Lake Nona High School Band Golf Tournament. It will be on Saturday, May 18, and proceeds will support the band's trip to London to play in the New Year's Day Parade in 2020. The tournament will be held at the Eagle Creek Golf Club.

For more information about these events, please reach out to Monica Leimer, Director of Bands, at monica.leimer@ocps.net or visit the band's website at www.lakenonalionsband.com.



MOSS PARK ELEMENTARY

BY DR. STEPHANIE OSMOND, PRINCIPAL MOSS PARK ELEMENTARY

Moss Park has a lot to be proud of this marking period! Our P.E. department, under the guidance of Tim White, participated in the Jump Rope for Heart campaign this year. With the support of our wonderful community, we were able to soar past \$5,000 for the American Heart Association! Our Eagles were able to learn about the benefits of being heart healthy.

Several of our students competed at the district level Math Olympics. Congratulations to Sean, Kaleb, Luke, Ivan, Aubrey and Abdullah for making it to the competition in the Math Application Challenge. These students were given certain supplies to create a catapult. They all did such a wonderful job! Luke and Ivan brought home First Place in the district overall! Nice job, Math Team!

Moss Park Players wrapped up their 12th season of spectacular performances. Under the direction of Diana Jacobacci, our young actors worked incredibly hard to put on a production of *Madagascar Jr.* These productions are one of the highlights of the year for the school and community, and this show did not disappoint!

We have a lot to look forward to moving into the next marking period. I know our students have enjoyed making great memories this year and are excited to finish the last few months strong!



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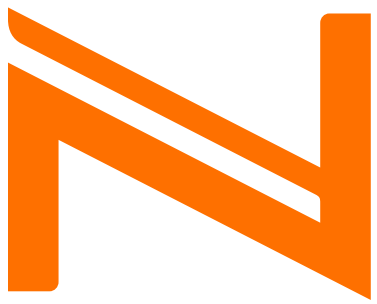


Aishah Ali, MD is a board-certified allergist and immunologist at UCF Health in Lake Nona. From common allergies to rare allergies, she helps patients to minimize the impact of their allergies through testing and treatment.

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Kyle's Culinary Column: Wheat a Minute!

BY KYLE HAMM



Even though wheat is one of the most controversial ingredients being used today, this worldwide staple food is the third-largest crop produced in the United States, follow-

ing corn and beans. Wheat is mainly controversial because it contains a certain protein called gluten, which is known to cause a harmful immune response to some individuals. For those who can tolerate it, though, whole-grain wheat can be an amazing source of antioxidants, vitamins, minerals and fibers.

There are many varieties of wheat, but in the end, there are six main categories: Hard Red Winter, Soft Red Winter, Hard Red Spring, Durum, Hard and Soft White Wheat. The most common types of wheat are All-Purpose Flour, Bread, Pastry, Cake, 00 Flour, Spelt, Rye and Buckwheat. Naming these types of wheat comes from numerous factors such as which season it grew, the protein content, the gluten quality, and the grain color.

United States farmers grew close to 2.4 billion bushels of wheat within 63 million acres of land in 2008-2009. Just one acre of wheat can produce nearly



40 bushels of wheat on average, with just one bushel weighing 60 pounds and yielding 42 pounds of white flour per bushel.

Here are some grains of truth: Wheat is grown in 42 states, one bushel of wheat can make 42 pounds of pasta, the traditional bagel is the only bread product that is boiled before baked, and Kansas is the largest wheat producer in the United States.

With all the tons of different uses of wheat, it's so hard to avoid. Personally, I'm a fan. A big fan of the baked goods like cookies, cakes, brownies and pastries. An even bigger fan of pastas and pizzas. Plus, endless varieties of bread: ciabatta, rye, baguette, focaccia, sourdough, banana bread, and even tortillas. My all-time favorite would have to be fresh biscuits and sausage gravy.

Gravy is one of my all-time favorites to make. Any type of gravy, honestly! But for my biscuits and gravy, I love a nice white, creamy, sausage gravy, with a little bit of Cajun heat. I start by making my roux – lightly melt your butter/shortening and add in your flour. Mix well until the flour is fully incorporated. Then you will continue with sauteing onions and peppers, adding the sausage. Add your cream and bring to a low heat – you do not want to scald or boil your gravy. Once the cream is

up to heat, mix in the roux slowly and continue to stir until the gravy has thickened. Don't forget to taste and season!

I'll let you in on a little secret for when you're making fresh biscuits ... always use cold butter or shortening. The fat creates pockets in the biscuit dough, and as the fat melts in the oven while the biscuit is baking, CO2 from the butter or shortening will take its place so that the biscuits can rise. If the fat melts before the biscuits are done baking, then the CO2 will have nowhere to go except for outside of the biscuit, and the biscuit will be hard and flat. Butter adds more flavor, but the shortening will make a more tender biscuit because it does not contain water or milk fats. To get those layers in your biscuit, simply fold repeatedly and then cut them out. However, you want to handle the biscuit dough as little as you can. The more that it is pressed and folded, the more gluten will build up (causing a sticky dough), and the fat will not stay cold. A light touch is essential, so think of it like you're handling a cloud!

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!

This month, I enjoyed a Hickory Smoked Bourbon Gouda that I discovered in Walmart. It's a gluten-free cheese that has an oaky and nutty taste (shout out to the hickory). I decided to get a little fancy and pair the cheese with some mango jalapeno twice-baked crackers I discovered at Publix and add some olives into the mix, resulting in my very own personal charcuterie board. The only thing I was missing in my fridge was meat! (That's a first!) I guess it's time to go grocery shopping.

I adorned the bourbon gouda and the spicy, yet sweet, mango jalapeno crackers with some more sweet heat, pairing half of the crackers with hot honey and the other half with habanero pepper jelly. I found the hot honey to be a little too sweet among the mix, but the habanero pepper jelly added a nice little kick! My taste buds were dancing happily in my mouth with the spiciness, the sweetness, the oaky and nuttiness. What a pairing!

My makeshift charcuterie board consisted of an assortment of olives, curried pickled cauliflower (WOW!), spicy pickled okra, red pepper shooters and cornichons, all courtesy of Earth Fare. Man, I LOVE that olive bar! Spent over \$20 the last time I was there ... OOPS!

Gouda is up at the top of my cheese favorites, and I would absolutely indulge in the Hickory Smoked Bour-



bon Gouda once more! For eight ounces, this cheese is about \$4.50, which is a great deal in my opinion. Just try not to eat it all in one sitting!

This must be as GOUDA as it gets!

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?



Katie's Cucina: Slow Cooker Brown Sugar Honey Glazed Ham

BY KATIE JASIEWICZ,
KATIESCUCINA.COM

Hello, April! In my home, we celebrate Easter. I wanted to share this month one of my go-to holiday ham recipes that even the least-experienced cook can whip up and be proud of. My recipe for Brown Sugar Honey Glazed Ham in the slow cooker is sure to be a new family favorite. Even if you don't celebrate Easter, but love ham, you'll want to give this a try. It's a perfect recipe for a Sunday dinner, a potluck, or even a dinner party.

When you buy a ham at the store, it comes pre-cooked. You really just need to reheat the ham. I found the key to reheating in the slow cooker is to buy a whole ham. Do not, I repeat, do not buy a pre-sliced ham. It will come out dry and leathery, and you (and your guests) will be very disappointed. Trust me, I've made this mistake before (and it was a year I happened to host Easter dinner).

Cooking ham in the slow cooker is ideal for a holiday dinner or even a special Sunday supper. I love the idea that my slow cooker is doing all the work for me (and making it smell like I've been cooking all day long). You'll notice that this recipe takes a whole five minutes to put together. You'll make a "rub" of sorts using a mixture of brown sugar, ground cinnamon, ground clove, and nutmeg. Then rub it on the ham that is inside the slow cooker, followed by drizzling on some local honey. I love to go to the Saturday Farmers Market at Valencia College to get my local honey. You will want a mild honey – nothing that will overpower the flavors of the rub. Typically, look for a clove honey or a spring honey

(something that isn't too fragrant).

Pro Tip: Before you cook the ham in the slower cooker, you will want to do a test run while it's in its wrapper to ensure it's going to fit. I almost always have to cut off a portion of the top so that my lid will close tightly. You can take that portion of meat and just throw it in the side of the slow cooker. No wasting meat here!

Whether you're entertaining for Easter and simply want to make a delicious Sunday dinner, I hope you'll give my Slow Cooker Brown Sugar Honey Glazed Ham recipe a try. You'll be happy you tried it, and it frees you up of precious time (and oven space)! Remember to save the ham bone and turn it into delicious split pea soup for another meal.

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.



SLOW COOKER BROWN SUGAR HONEY GLAZED HAM

Yield: 6-8 | Prep time: 5 minutes
Cook Time: 8 hours | Total time: 8 hours, 5 minutes



Ingredients:

- 1 6.5-lb. bone-in whole ham (not pre-sliced)
- 1 cup brown sugar
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground clove
- ⅛ teaspoon nutmeg
- ¼ cup local honey

Directions:

1. Place a slow cooker bag in a 6-quart slow cooker. Then place the ham flat side down in the slow cooker. If the ham is too tall for the slow cooker, run your knife on the top of the slow cooker, trimming away excess meat (place the excess meat in the slow cooker).
2. In a medium-sized bowl, mix brown sugar, cinnamon, ground clove and nutmeg together. Rub the brown sugar mixture on the ham until it's all used. Then drizzle ¼ cup honey on top of the ham. Place the lid on the slow cooker and cook for 8-10 hours on low or 4-6 hours on high.
3. Remove the cooked ham from the slow cooker, carefully slice, and pour additional brown sugar honey glaze on top of ham.

*Note: Make sure you get a bone-in ham. This recipe will turn out extremely dry if you have a spiral sliced ham!

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Nona Alumni: Courtney Hilkert

ARTICLE BY NICOLE LABOSCO
PHOTOS COURTESY OF
COURTNEY HILKERT

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

Age: 24

Year Graduated: 2013

Occupation: Event Representative at the Hyatt Regency Orlando on I-Drive

Current Location: Lake Nona, Orlando, FL

Courtney Hilkert lived in Orlando for quite some time before her family moved to the Lake Nona area.

"We lived in a different part of town that was starting to become a bad place. My parents wanted to move out of that area. Lake Nona was just developing, and I remember coming to visit our dirt lot here. It was about 2003 when we officially moved here. We have been here ever since. This place is not what it used to be."

Hilkert was a part of the Lake Nona High School class of 2013, the first class to have



spent all four years at the school. She had a goal to attend college, but throughout that journey, she still needed to discover herself and plan her future out.

"To be honest, the only goal I had was to go to college and to be successful in whatever I decided to do. You see, I knew I wanted to go to college, but I didn't know what I wanted to major in yet. I had a couple ideas in mind but wasn't ready to make that decision yet. At the time, my real goal was to get accepted into a good college. I was originally wanting to go to Florida State University since my sister did. I applied to a ton of colleges and didn't necessarily get into any of the ones I thought I would've attended. So, my goal from there was to make the best out of [it]."

Although Hilkert didn't get accepted into her first college choice, she did manage to discover herself while away from home and grew while overcoming everyday challenges.

"I went to Florida Gulf Coast University



my first year of college. I didn't get into any of the colleges I wanted, but after visiting this campus I knew it would be the best choice for me. Well, it ended up being a good choice but not the best choice. I made some great friends at that campus, but I really struggled with myself there," Hilkert opened up. "I ended up leaving after the first year and going back home to attend Valencia until I was qualified to get into UCF. I explored both Psychology and Education and ended up not choosing either as my major. I finished my year at Valencia and got accepted into UCF! UCF was known for their hospitality school, Rosen, which got me thinking. My dad has been a part of the events/hospitality business for as long as I could remember. I thought about following in his footsteps since hospitality was something I was always good at. I went to Rosen, joined a sorority and had the best two years of my life there," exclaimed Hilkert. "The first two years were hard, but once I got to where I needed to be, I loved every minute of it. I graduated from Rosen in 2017 with a degree in Event Management. I immediately worked for Hyatt Regency Orlando after college and have been with them since. I worked my way up and am continuing to learn. I now am starting to take on my own events and, soon enough, I'll be in a manager position. That's my goal, at least!"

Taking life one step at a time, Hilkert is keeping her mind open for where she might end up in the next five years.

"I am not sure where I will end up. Not sure [if] it is in Florida, but I see myself hopefully still with Hyatt. If not Hyatt, then I plan to still be in the hotel business. I see myself married to my high school sweetheart (if you know me, you know who this is). I see myself happy and healthy and still horseback riding every weekend, hopefully with my own horse."

Speaking of owning her own horse ... Hilk-



ert has always been completely and utterly obsessed with the majestic beasts. Riding and being surrounded by horses have always been passions of hers, and as life got busier she rode less. However, her story comes full circle as her love for the animals never faded, and she rediscovered her talent and hobby.

"I used to horseback ride when I was younger. I stopped for a long time but still continued to ride every now and then for fun. I always wanted to compete, so I recently picked it back up and competed in my first-ever event! I ended up winning two grand champion titles and had the best time. I have gotten better every day and am loving being back in the saddle. It is something that I have always loved, and I am still competing every month."

If rediscovering yourself in college and planning your future out in just four challenging years means returning to your favorite pastime as a child better than ever, sign us all up!

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






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Dog of the Month



Yoichi

Owner: Millie Evardone

Breed: Shih Tzu

Age: 4 years old

Dog's Quirk/Story:
Yoichi is a fun and lovable pure-bred shih tzu. His name is Japanese for "first son." He loves kisses, belly rub songs, hiding under the couch, and meeting people at the pool. He also enjoys Saturday cuddles with mommy, sleeping on daddy's pillow, and playing with his favorite toys (Tiger, Sonic, and Mouse).

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: Hector Perez

ARTICLE BY NICOLE LABOSCO
PHOTOS COURTESY OF
HECTOR PEREZ

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.

Hector Perez found himself serving in the United States Marine Corps for four years, and his decision to join was based on a high school experience.

“Not really sure why I chose them. I remember my recruiter from high school and they seemed like the best, so I wanted to be a part of that,” Perez reminisced. “I had wanted to join since I was a junior in high school. My parents talked me out of enlisting right after high school, so I ended up going to college instead. After one



Perez celebrated his 21st birthday in Afghanistan.



Perez and his fellow soldiers in Afghanistan.

semester, I had determined that I didn’t want to do college, so I went back to my recruiter and was gone in a couple months.”

Perez entered the Marine Corps as a Private, and, six months later, he became a Private First Class.

“I think I ended up being a Lance



Perez working the Dayton Country 500.

Corporal after around a year. I retained that rank until I left because cutting scores to be a non-commissioned officer were stupidly high.”

He went on to explain how he was based at the Marine Corps Base of Hawaii Kaneohe Bay, and the location alone led to some of his best memories while serving.

“I was stationed in Hawaii. Just being able to experience that was one of the best things in my life. Wish I had never come back.”

And who can blame him! Perez



Afghanistan.

has lived in the central Florida area for his entire life, outside of his first two years and the four he was enlisted. He served overseas in Iraq and Afghanistan. Currently, Perez works in the audio-visual industry, building conventions and concerts for the public to enjoy.

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.



Nobel Notable Of Laureate Park: Dennis Gabor The Hungarian Architect of Holography

BY DENNIS DELEHANTY

This is the first in a periodic series of articles that celebrate the lives of the Nobel Prize laureates whose names grace the 100 streets of Laureate Park. These laureates are extraordinary men and women – many of whom are alive today – who, through their lifetime achievements, have made our daily lives immeasurably richer, often in ways not readily evident. Through these articles, we hope to introduce you to these exceptional individuals and encourage you, perhaps, to learn more about them.

“Help me, Obi-Wan Kenobi, you’re my only hope ...”

So pleased a diminutive Princess Leia at the start of the 1977 classic movie *Star Wars*, the first installment of a series that would eventually grow to nine films. *Star Wars* would cast a spark to reignite America’s love for the cinema, and the various optical tricks of that first movie enthralled the public, not least among which was the vision of a diaphanous Leia begging for help from the master Jedi, Obi-Wan. This was the first time most Americans had ever seen a hologram, even though George Lucas, the genius behind the *Star Wars* franchise, had employed holograms in his

first feature film, *THX 1138*, several years earlier.

The concept of holography and its invention actually found its origin in Hungary, amidst the daydreams of an aspiring engineer of Jewish extraction named Dennis Gabor. As a youth, Gabor served in the Austrian-Hungarian army as an artillery specialist in the waning months of the First World War. In the 1920s, Gabor undertook university studies in electrical engineering in his home country but finished his education in Germany, where he landed a job in Berlin at Siemens. But with the rise of the Nazi party in 1933, no Jews were awarded contracts at that company, so Gabor wisely moved on to Great Britain, eventually obtaining British citizenship. In Britain, Gabor was employed at a company whose work focused on the electron microscope. While waiting for a tennis game on Easter Sunday in 1947, pondering the problems of the properties of light, Gabor had a sudden brainstorm for capturing the “entire information” of a solid item using light refraction. The result of his musings, and later experiments, was a process that would reproduce three-dimensional images onto flat surfaces.

The mechanics of holography are not easily described in a few words. But let’s try.



Essentially, the concept devised by Gabor uses a ray of light bisected by mirrors into two beams, a reference beam and an object beam. The reference beam travels more or less directly to a photographic plate. The object beam, in contrast, bounces off mirrors to record the form of an object, such as a small eagle toy, then further emits its light into the same photographic plate as the reference beam. The interference pattern generated by the two beams of light creates the three-dimensional image of the hologram.

Gabor dubbed his process “holography” which, roughly translated from the Greek, can be understood as the “whole picture.” One amazing property of holograms is that each individual sliver of the photographic plate contains the entire image of the object recorded, a surprising attribute of holograms that Gabor discovered as he smashed the plate in tiny pieces and examined the image within each piece.

To work properly, however, Gabor’s invention required beams of light that were coherent. Ordinary light, such as that emitted by common household lamps, is incoherent. You might imagine coherent light as packets of photons marching in lockstep, while incoherent photons meander in a chaotic manner. For his initial experiments, Gabor employed a mercury arc lamp with a narrow-band green filter, the best source of coherent light in the 1940s, and his first attempts to produce holograms were admittedly crude. Holography would not benefit from an ideal source of coherent light until the invention of the laser in 1960.

In recent decades, holography has found uses in construction, where engineers can test the load-bearing capacity of materials in 3D virtual models, in medicine in the production of CAT scans, and in the prevention of fraud in driver’s licenses and credit cards. Holograms are truly little wonders.

And so was Gabor a wonder himself. His interests were wide-ranging, and this prodigious inventor we would now classify as



a modern Renaissance Man. I do not know if Gabor ever saw *Star Wars* (he died two years after its release), perhaps chuckling to himself as he watched Leia plead the cause of the galactic Rebellion. But if he did, he might have mused upon his most enduring quote, that “the future cannot be predicted, but futures can be invented.” Dennis Gabor, without a doubt, helped to shape our own present daily lives and inspired us to dream big.

Dennis Delehanty moved to Laureate Park with his wife, Elizabeth, from the Washington, D.C., area in mid-2018. Dennis completed a long career in international affairs at the U.S. Postal Service, the United Nations and the U.S. Department of State, jobs that required extensive global travel and the acquisition of foreign languages. Please contact Dennis about the Laureate Park Nobel Prize honorees or suggestions for future articles at donnagha@gmail.com.



Nona Your Neighbor: Jack Priest

ARTICLE BY CAMILLE RUIZ MANGUAL
PHOTOS COURTESY OF JACK PRIEST



Jack Priest is the laboratory director at Osceola Regional Medical Center and Hunter's Creek ER, as well as a father of four. He is also a Nonahood resident. Read our conversation with him below!

Nonahood News: What does your day-to-day schedule look like?

Jack Priest: I come in in the morning, and I round with the employees. Then, there's a morning huddle that we attend for the safety of the hospital. There are meetings scheduled throughout the day and just putting out little fires here and there.

NHN: What would you say are the most challenging aspects of your job?

JP: Trying to manage the day-to-day schedule. I mean schedule as in meetings. Sometimes, you're double-booked or triple-booked. Also, trying to interview and hire enough people so that we keep staffing up.

NHN: What would you say is the most rewarding aspect of your job?

JP: The most rewarding aspect is when your techs in the laboratory find a new diagnosis of, say, cancer, and it's something that they catch early enough that it helps the patient recover.

NHN: What got you interested in being a lab director?

JP: I started my career in the military, so I went through the military and got my degree. I kind of fell into the lab. I didn't know what a laboratory med tech was at the time. After that, I started working in the civilian world as a lab tech. While I was working, I went back to school for my bachelor's. And at that point, I decided that I wanted to be a lab director. It's been about 15 years. So, for about 10 years, I went and did everything I could do to get there.

NHN: Do you have any interesting hobbies, collections or interests?

JP: I was collecting LEGOs before and I assembled with my daughter; she's 10 now. And, I collect weird socks because I figure if I'm going to be wearing dress clothes every day, I can wear a cool sock to go underneath it. Today's are mustache socks. Other than that, I like bike riding and lifting weights.

NHN: Where do you see yourself in the next five years?

JP: Professionally, regional lab director. Either Orlando market or division. Currently, I am one of the North Florida division hospital directors, so I'd like to be a North Florida division regional director.

NHN: What brought you to Lake Nona and when did you move here?

JP: I moved here in February 2018. I came down here because my daughter has a sensitivity to clothing. We lived in Wyoming at the time. Eight months of winter wasn't good for her because she couldn't wear long sleeves or pants, so we were looking for somewhere warm. My son decided that he was going to go to Full Sail University, and when we started looking, we knew where my job was and where his school was. Living in the Lake Nona area is right between Osceola and Winter Park.

NHN: Where are you from originally?

JP: I'm from Houston, Texas. The move up the ladder to be a lab director got me to Wyoming. I've been a lab manager in Wyoming. I went back to Texas, opened up a hospital lab from the concrete slab up, kind of like what they're doing in Lake Nona with the new hospital coming up there, and then went to Wyoming again for a bigger hospital. Then I figured out my daughter had issues with the cold and came to Florida.

NHN: What would you say is your favorite part about Lake Nona?

JP: I like the different restaurants they have to offer there. I also like the fact that they have bike trails. Just the atmosphere.

NHN: What would you say to anyone who is considering a move to Lake Nona?



JP: Pick where you want to live, make sure it's close to places, and know you're going to hit traffic. There's lots of traffic now, and as it grows, I think there's more coming.

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



Date Night in The Nonahood

ARTICLE BY KYLE HAMM
PHOTO CREDITS: LIZZIE HAMM



"Date Night in the Nonahood" is a new article for *Nonahood News* to bring you and your significant other new ideas to enjoy a night out together. With new restaurants and activities around every corner, it's easy to lose track of what's new and fun to do in Lake Nona and nearby areas. That's why we are here to help! We want to bring you the inside scoop of everything local that's going to be a hit for your date night.

We started off strong on our first date night article by taking a trip to Hemisphere at the Orlando International Airport. It's just a short drive down to the airport, and the



restaurant is located on the 9th floor of the Hyatt Regency. If you're visiting the Hemisphere Restaurant, there's a handful of perks that are included, such as complimentary valet parking. A friendly group of valet members greeted us and escorted us to the elevator to go up to the restaurant.

Once you step out of the elevator, you are right at the entrance of Hemisphere (and it sure is a beautiful sight). I would say another perk of Hemisphere is the amazing view of Orlando International Airport and the horizon of trees and fields. I thought it was very exciting to see the airplanes taking off and landing on the runway. We even had the opportunity to see a live SpaceX rocket go into space!

Aside from being a great date night venue, Hemisphere has quarterly wine dinners and specialty brunches for Easter, Mother's Day and Thanksgiving (which I definitely plan to try for this year's holidays). The wife and I decided to plan for their Spring Kick-Off Food and Wine Dinner, and it was amazing! The food was paired excellently with Orlando's very own Inquisitor Wines. Intricate and delicious courses were made from Executive Chef Jeffrey and Sous Chef Shelby (who is going to be on *Guy's Grocery Games!*)



with influences and inspiration from the South African region.

The culinary team at Hemisphere definitely came with big, bold and delicious flavors that Sous Chef Shelby says she put a lot of work and research into. Our first course was a bit out there, but I think it's my favorite of the four. Bruleed egg yolk with grilled zucchini, a mint vinaigrette, spring peas, miso aioli, cured egg dust, and a miso butter crostini. If it could taste anymore fresh, I believe it would have been harvested right off the vine. The creaminess of the egg yolk matched with

the smoked flavors of the grilled zucchini is not one to forget. This course was paired with Inquisitor's *Method Cap Classique*, 2013.

Our second course was very bold and delicious as well: A wilted braai salad with charred beet greens, Boerewors beef cheeks, stone fruit chutney, sous vide golden beets and cashews. The tartness of the chutney went excellent with the tender yet bold flavors of the beef cheeks, and the charred greens really set it off. Paired with *2017 Sauvignon Blanc*. The third course really brought it home for me with the display of how beautiful this delicious meal was. A Biryani spiced grouper with blue corn pap (a type of grit), key lime coriander labneh, finger lime, and pickled lotus root. If these flavors weren't bold enough, a *2016 Cabernet Franc* certainly brought it over the edge, and I loved it.

Then it was time for dessert; an incredible grapefruit tartlet with chamomile whip, tarragon butter crumb, blood orange, and calendula; paired with *2017 Chenin Blanc*. This was such a spectacular dessert that I just had to have a second one. The tartness of this dessert was matched perfectly with the sweet bite of the *Chenin Blanc*.

If you're looking for a next-level dining experience for your date night, then I would definitely recommend Hemisphere Restaurant. They made it a point to make each and every guest feel important while dining with them. Their views are unmatched, their cuisine is world-class, and their wine list is very impressive.

Stay tuned for our next issue of "Date Night in the Nonahood," and we'll continue to find all of the local places for you to enjoy a night out with your significant other.



Meet the Media: Kyle Hamm

ARTICLE BY NICOLE LABOSCO
PHOTOS COURTESY OF
KYLE HAMM



Kyle Hamm is the *nona.media* Production Manager with a culinary background, originally from New Orleans, Louisiana. He'll handle all of your gear needs, and you can even find him on the set of video shoots as the Grip "Extraordinaire" or delivering the newest copies of *Nonahood News* to our newsstands every month. Hamm tends to be the sarcastic jokester on the team, but he knows how to get things done.

What brought you to the Nonahood?

"Family, community and all types of new fun. There are all types of new fun going on around here: We've got Boxi Park, Nona Adventure Park, Disney World!"

What are you most excited about in Lake Nona?

"Nona Adventure Park because I wanna get out there and SHRED IT! Gonna shred it, bro!"

What's your favorite hobby?

"Skateboarding."

What's your biggest dream?

"Wow. Probably to own my own unique restaurant. It's exclusive."

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

"In the Nonahood" [laughs to himself]! "Most likely off some Thai coast on an island. My wife and I were gonna go on a cruise and when we find an island, hop ship and live there forever. I'll build a mud hut, make a spear for fishing. We'll be good!"

Who's your biggest inspiration?

"My parents because they always are driven to be successful and be a part of the community."

What's your favorite movie?

"I like all kinds of movies. *Fast Times at Ridgemont High* would be my favorite. It's a classic!"

Extrovert or Introvert?
Introvert.

Indoors or Outdoors?
I don't know. That's a tough one. I like being outdoors.

Sun or Snow? Sun.

Dogs or Cats? Dogs. My wife's not gonna be happy with that one.

Vans or Converse? Vans, bro! Vans for life!

Coffee or Tea? Coffee.

Adventurous or Laid Back? I'm very laid back, but also very adventurous.

Canon, Nikon or Sony? Probably go with Sony. Sony's way more versatile.

Books or TV? TV. I hate reading.

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

"Hmmm ... I don't know. I've done a lot of scary stuff while skateboarding. I skitched behind a truck going like 40 and got some major road rash. I mean, it was fun until I let go and almost died. It's alright ... once I healed, like a month later, I did it again and didn't get hurt. I don't know ... doing this interview with you brought me out of my comfort zone."

Describe one of your most memorable experiences.

"When my daughters were born. It was scary AND awesome ... and gross" [laughs nervously].

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



Mama's Turn: Saying Goodbye to My Childhood Home

BY SHARON FUENTES

Dear Old House,

Well, the time has finally come. In a few short weeks, we will finally be closing on you. This is the last piece of business that we must do to wrap up my parents' estate. In a way, I guess it is also the last little piece of them.

To the outside world, I know you look like just an old, rundown ranch-style home. But to me, you were so much more.

You were the place my parents lived for more than 50 years. Underneath your ugly popcorned ceilings and between your '70s-style wood paneled walls, I grew up. I learned to crawl on your shag-carpeted rugs, I sneaker roller skated in your driveway, I had my first kiss in the shed in the backyard, and cried a thousand tears in my old purple bedroom after my first marriage fell apart.

You were a place for holiday celebrations, where extended family gathered. A place where anyone could drop in – no need to



call. Mom would whip up a batch of her famous "Greenie Meanies," an overly sweet mixture of lime sherbet and rum, and dad would charm guests with his jokes and stories. At Hanukkah, you would be filled with the smell of potato pancakes frying and even more laughter as tables of people played the dreidel game to win fake money that they would use in our auction to bid on gifts my father had purchased for the occasion.

And when I got older, you became even more than my childhood home – you became Grandma and Grandpa's house to my kids. A place where they could jump on the couch, stay up way past their bed-

times, and eat as many sweets as they desired. You might not have been as fancy a place with a pool or hot tub as some of their friends' grandparents had, but you charmed them just like you did me with the simple presence of the two special people who lived beneath your roof. Knowing that you and my parents were always there was a source of comfort to us all, and the thing I know we will miss the most.

My husband says I am being overly sentimental about saying goodbye to you. He says you are just a house. That HOME is made up of memories and memories travel with you. I know in my head he is right, but my heart can't help but feel sad let-

ting you go. It's kind of ironic if you think about it, considering all the years as a teen and young adult that I couldn't wait to get away from you. But I hope you know, Old House, that you were the ultimate safety net to me, the link to my childhood, the place where I always felt treasured and secure and loved.

So, I guess what I am trying to say is, thanks for always giving my family a place to connect, a place to meet in the middle, for all these years. Thank you for your warmth, your shelter, and for keeping my secrets. Thank you for loving all the special people in my life as much as I loved them.

Goodbye, dependable old friend.

I will love you forever,

Sharon

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.



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In the Garden: Attracting Pollinators to The Central Florida Garden

BY AMBER HARMON

Many of us live in areas that have had a lot of recent construction or current construction that is damaging to the environment and natural habitat. We recognize the animals that are displaced, but what about the beneficial insects like bees, butterflies and other pollinators?

Pollinators are vital to a vegetable garden. Some vegetables are self-pollinating, but others depend on a pollinator in order to produce the vegetables. Most tomatoes, peppers and eggplants are self-pollinating. This means that they have both male and female parts inside the same flower, so all it takes is a gust of wind and the pollen drops from the male part onto the female part.

Then, other vegetable plants like cucumbers, squash and zucchini have separate male and female flowers. The male flower is recognized by the long, thin stem. The female flower has a small bulge at the base of the flower. This bulge is what will grow into the actual vegetable once the flower has been pollinated. If it is not pollinated, the flower will shrivel up and die. The job of the butterfly or bee as they are just floating and buzzing around is to oh-

so-naturally remove the pollen from the male flower and distribute it to the female. Then, two to four weeks later, you will enjoy the delicious and nutritious vegetable, right from your own backyard. Mother nature is truly amazing!



Female Cucumber.

In areas where there are few or no pollinators for the garden, it is also possible to manually pollinate most vegetable plants, if the bees and butterflies are not around. There are several methods, but the most common is to use a paintbrush or Q-tip and collect the pollen yourself from the male flower and place it into the female flower. This method can be extremely effective and preserves the flower so it can stay around and continue to provide pollen. If there are an abundance of flowers, like on a cucumber plant, the actual male flower can be removed and used to polli-

nate the female flower.

A pollinator is not only a bee or butterfly but any insect that carries the pollen from a male flower to a female flower. In order to create your own backyard sanctuary for the pollinators, there are just a few simple things that you need to know.

First, pick the right location. Ensure that the location gets at least four to six hours of direct sunlight for flowers to thrive. Make sure there is a reliable water source as well.

Then, pick the right flowers and plants. Plant several of the flowers together to offer a clear source of pollen or nectar. Some examples are milkweed, wild geraniums, sunflowers, and black-eyed susans. Beneficial insects also need a nesting site so have clumping grass planted like lemongrass or muhly grass to provide a good home for them to nest.



Bee pollinating.

There are particular types of flowers that can attract different pollinators. For example, bees are also attracted to specific colors of flowers like white, yellow, blue and purple. Also, milkweed is a favorite of the monarch butterfly. It is important to remember not only to plant flowers that attract pollinators but to plant a nectar source, too.

Finally, maintain a healthy yard environment. Minimize the use of pesticides and chemical treatments in the yard. These all disrupt the natural ecosystem and can directly or indirectly kill the pollinators.

As we enjoy the beautiful surroundings here in Lake Nona, let's be sure to give back to nature and be a host for these amazing insects that play a vital role in our ecosystem and our gardens.

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 Fridays: Boxi Park Fun!

ARTICLE BY KYLE HAMM
PHOTO CREDITS: LIZZIE HAMM

There's a new park in town, and it has fun for all ages! There's great food, plenty of games, a big dog park for my pup, Thor, an amazing playground for the kids, awesome entertainment, and let's not forget about the drinks!

The concept of Boxi Park is totally unique. It's constructed of shipping containers that house the bars, restaurants and their stage. The grass mew area in front of the



stage is really fun to hang out in and get a bite. Our kids love the live entertainment and dance their way through the mew onto the playground, where we can see them from our picnic table by the stage. Being able to sit in front of a live entertainment stage, eating dinner, and being able to watch the kids run around in the playground is probably my favorite aspect of Boxi Park! Though it is hard to choose favorites...

Each time we go to Boxi Park, we never cease to be amazed. The live performances and entertainment are always so much fun. They have performers, from stilt-walkers to magicians, and live entertainment on the stage, from one awesomely artistic DJ to very talented musicians.

The playground is huge and has activities for all of my

kids. We sit back and relax on the plentiful lounge chairs in the playground area while the kids go wild. They absolutely love it there. And what's not to love, especially from our point of view? We get to watch the kids have a blast while the wife and I relax with a drink. Then, when they are exhausted of all energy, it's time to eat.

The food containers are awesome; we're all big fans. There are delicious options for all of us to be happy with. Claw and Order has the seafood, and next door is Fowl Play, the family's favorite spot. Their chicken is delicious! I go for the juicy burgers at The Grill Next Door. Naughty and Nice is a really fun place to eat, too, with their fresh salads on-the-go (you should try their ginger juice shots!) and really yummy doughnuts! Then, we finish off the day with Before It Melts' signature soft-



serve ice cream, and they have all the toppings!

There's no doubt about it, Boxi Park was a hit for the whole family. The entertainment, the food and drinks, and the all-around fun that each one of us had is quite memorable. We haven't made it over to the volleyball field yet, but that's been on the books to try out, for sure. The only downfall is that they aren't open through the whole week, which leaves the kids asking all week long if we're going to Boxi Park yet! So, from Thursday to Sunday, Boxi Park is most likely where you can find the Hamm Fam.

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- Allows interaction and development of friendships with like-minded peers.
- Instills self-confidence, teaches independence, and reinforces empowerment.
- Creates memories that last into adulthood.
- Fosters gratitude for mom and dad – time away from home can teach them to appreciate what they have!



Family Shift: How to Balance Work and Family

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



BY RODNEY GAGE, LEAD PASTOR

“There can be no happiness if the things we believe in are different from the things we do.”
- Freya Stark

When I was a kid, one of my favorite toys was called “Stretch Armstrong.” It was a large, gel-filled action hero. The amazing thing about Stretch Armstrong is that even though it was only 15 inches in its original size, it could be stretched up to 5 feet. After it was stretched to the max, it would slowly

return to its original size. Of course, as a kid, the goal was to see how far it could be stretched without causing a tear. What I quickly learned is even Stretch Armstrong had limitations. Needless to say, we figured out how to make Stretch Armstrong break. Even though we tried to repair the toy with the adhesive bandage that was included inside the box, we learned that Stretch Armstrong was never the same after it had been stretched beyond its limitations.

The example above describes many modern-day families. They are stretched beyond their limitations with work, school, domestic responsibilities, and extracurriculars to the point that marriages and families are being torn apart.

Small Business Trends surveyed 38 countries on work and life balance. America ranks 30th in balancing work and home. Full-time U.S. workers spend an average of 8.15 hours per day working. In addition, 33% work on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, which leads to the reason why 66% of all full-time employees strongly believe they do not have a healthy work-life balance.

Sadly, we live in a culture that says, “More is better.” Everywhere you turn, we are bombarded by advertisements that remind us of all the things that we don’t have and attempt to sell us on all the things we need in order to be happy. Therefore, we are driven to have more “upgrades and experiences” so that we don’t miss out on all the “good things” life has to offer. Yet, all of this causes us to say “yes” to even more things, which takes up more time and money.

Have you noticed the default language we use when people ask us, “How things are going?” We typically say things like ...“Things are crazy right now.” “We’ve been so busy lately!” “We have been going non-stop.” Unfortunately, we seem to justify all of these statements by believing three lies:

“There is just not enough time to do everything.”

“It’s just a busy season I’m in right now.”

“But, this is really important right now.”

I must confess, I have used all of these default statements and believed all three



of these lies. No matter how we try to rationalize and justify our overstretched and busy lives, it is pulling our families apart.

How to Balance Work and Home

1. Admit the Lies

Stop believing that more is better; stop saying it’s a season ... a season is not busy. People are busy. We all get 24 hours a day. We have 168 hours in a week. The question is where and how are we spending our time. Put it on paper. Look at how and where you’re spending your time in a typical 24-hour day and seven-day week. You might discover you have more time than you think.

2. Name Your Distractions

Identify your commitments that are competing with the things that you say are important to you. How do you know if something is a distraction? You feel guilty because the commitment you said yes to is robbing you from the things you say are important to you. Something or someone is being cheated from your time and attention, and it is causing guilt and regret. Some of the things that take up time might not be bad things; some might even be

necessary. However, if you have too many of those things going on at the same time, then they can turn into distractions that rob us from what is better.

3. Choose What Is Better

This is the *Shift* we have to make if we’re going to get our lives back. We have to start eliminating the unnecessary distractions that are competing with our values and priorities. We have to embrace the truth that we can have more by doing less. How? Claim your calendar before something or someone else does. Learn the difference between what is urgent and what is important. Everything might be important in your eyes, but not everything is urgent.

Remember, busy is not better ... better is better.

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.



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NonaVentures: Nona Adventure Park

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.



Before you can tell a story, you have to live it. Well, let me tell you – I LIVED AT NONA ADVENTURE PARK! The full day I spent at Nona Adventure Park was quite LITERALLY the most fun I've had in awhile. I'd be lying if I said I wasn't a bit nervous – I was – but I was also filled to the brim with excitement. (I sound like a little kid, I know.) I've never successfully wakeboarded before and I've never attempted the wakeboarding cable system, only tried behind a boat. I've always had fears (or foreshadowing visions) that I'd just get yanked and dragged through the water on a cable – which would be kind of funny – but I'll gladly pass on the opportunity. I'm a klutz, and I'd break something ... (probably my leg) ...

Naturally, the day I planned to conquer Nona Adventure Park was one of the chilliest days, a frigid 65 degrees or so. I woke up thinking it was going to be a beautiful warm day, perfect to hit the water, and instead, it was overcast and chilly and a sense of regret began to fill my head. I knew I was

going in the lake, and I was going to be soaked ... I mean, I'm no pro, NOT EVEN CLOSE ... and I knew the water was going to be even colder than the air! I convinced myself it was worth it ... and it totally was.

I swung by the *Nonahood News* headquarters to grab the GoPros and drove a swift two minutes to Nona Adventure Park, located right by the Orlando VA behind Laureate Park Elementary School. Convenient? I think yes! Due to the chilly weather (and it still being in the soft opening phase), the park was empty, and I was thrilled! It was like I rented the park out to have a solid party of one! Best. Party. Ever!

Climbing Tower and Ropes Course

I began my day of fun with the climbing tower and ropes course. A staggering 60-foot-tall obstacle course with several



levels of difficulty to appeal to the masses (children included). I was immediately having flashbacks to my glory days at Odyssey Middle School in the Climbing Club. When I was younger, rock climbing was a HUGE passion of mine. I've lost touch with it since middle school, but whenever I see a rock wall, I never pass it up. I suited up in the harness and made my way up the stairs to complete the first obstacle that awaited me. The two guides who went up with me were friendly and fun and recommended I do the more challenging obstacles first rather than last. I completed the first obstacle like nothing and looked to my left. Suspended telephone poles with rock wall grips. This was a challenge I couldn't pass up. I needed to know if I still had it. I grabbed hold of the first log and immediately realized I'm not middle school Nicole anymore and my feet barely fit on the rocks. Unwilling to give up, I took a sec-



ond to analyze the situation, all while still hugging the pole. I gradually transferred myself from one pole to the next and made it to the other side! Your girl's still got it ... barely! I was exhausted! Then I felt a sudden burning sensation on my right forearm and saw a gnarly scratch from when I made the first transfer, literally bear hugging the pole so tight I scraped my arm. Guess I was too focused to notice! First battle scar of the day and I'm only two obstacles in! That's me!

I spent a little more time attempting each obstacle as I gradually made my way up to the higher platforms. I flew on the eagle zip line, which (although short) was a lot of fun. I wish you could gain more speed! I failed at a few more obstacles and needed to be rescued ... twice ... but hey, nothing like a little failure to bring you back down to earth. My arms were already jelly, but I had a full day ahead of me. There was no looking back (but plenty of looking down)!



I love looking down when I'm high up. Gives me that sense of adrenaline that I seek out so diligently. At the very top, I soaked in the views of the park and watched some planes fly overhead. Now it was time to jump! Anything to give my arms a break! I was hooked up to the repelling system and walked right off the platform, steadily returning to the ground. Now, it's wakeboarding time!



Wakeboarding

It was time to trade in the climbing harness for some wakeboarding gear, and my nerves began to settle in. My arm strength was drained, but I tried to remain positive. I would learn how to wakeboard. I watched the safety video, suited up in my helmet and life vest, and grabbed my board. I stuck with the beginner board so that I could easily slip my feet in and out. That was a nice option to have. I took to the beginner cable to get the form down and as I approached the dock, I felt the water. HOLY CRAP, WAS IT COLD! I followed instructions and sat on the edge with my board in the water, soaking in the freezing cold temps around my feet. This was not going to end well ... I grabbed onto the cable handle and brace. I felt the tug and immediately gave out, hitting the water. I was submerged in an ice bath. As I pulled myself back up onto the dock, I noticed Rhys recording my every fail and laughing way too much. Best boss ever!

After about four or five more attempts, I had the technique nailed, and I was coasting on the lake feeling pretty cool. Now it was time to take on the big cable, reaching speeds of 36 miles per hour. I approached hesitantly as my mind filled with every negative thought possible: *You're going to hit one of the ramps on accident, you're going to hurt yourself*, etc. After a few failed attempts, I was off and making my way around Adventure Lake. I began to approach the turn and didn't know what to expect, but the slack the cable gave caught me off guard and then it jerked me forward again. Into the lake I went! After a long walk back to the starting point on the floating dock, I was ready to get around this lake at least once. I had to!

I let the cable pull me off the dock and I was off, determined to make it around all of the turns. I made it past the second turn and I began to hit choppy water, but there was no way I was falling on the complete opposite side from where I began! I approached the third turn and was heading toward my starting point. My back leg was burning in pain and my arms were ready to give out, but I wanted it. I flew past the dock and let out a yell of excitement as they clapped for me. I'd be lying if I said I didn't think I was going to fall right there in front of everyone, but I kept going. On to lap two! I began to hear cheers out of nowhere and saw a group of random people enjoying a picnic along the lake. They had been watching my failed attempts and were rooting for me, and that truly made my day, so thank you to those people! My legs were burning so badly that I honestly thought I was done for, but I made it almost back to the dock before both my arms and legs just gave out. A good round to end on!

Aqua Park

I entered the aqua park thinking I was going to dominate it, but I was so wrong! At this point in my journey experiencing Nona Adventure Park, it was safe to say exhausted didn't even begin to cover it, but I still wanted more! I entered the

aqua park by running down the dock and jumping into the lake. As soon as I climbed upon the inflatables, I immediately felt like I was in trouble. I could barely stand! I'm sure I looked like I was in a drunken stupor, but I couldn't stop laughing. Rhys jumped up on the inflatables with his aqua shoes and went running past me, and I



fell to the inflatable laughing. I couldn't balance for the life of me! Rhys laughed evilly as he continued his way through the course and I was still at the starting point. As I finally stood up and maintained my balance, I began to question how they made it to the other side of the course as I struggled to get over the first obstacle. Gradually, I made my way over the varying obstacles and slipped and slid all over the place. I fell down some obstacles, I fell off some obstacles and into the lake, but it was all in good fun! When I finally made it up Mt. Rainier (the tallest feature the aqua park offers), Rhys so kindly sacrificed me to jump first. The Mt. Rainier obstacle is at least 12 feet above the water. Don't worry, the lake is deep enough in that area to jump from that height and not even touch the bottom.

So, it's safe to say that Nona Adventure Park will be seeing a lot of me, which makes a lot of sense saying that this is, hands down, one of the coolest locations to spend the hot summer days in Florida (or really the entire year because it is, indeed, Florida). I finally learned how to wakeboard and had one of the most physically draining yet one of the most fun days, all jam-packed into one location, practically in our backyard! Now on to my new goal of becoming a pro! Did I mention my body is covered in bruises and I was sore for almost a week?! Baby steps...

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 form at forms.nona.media/nhn-nonaventures.

Nona Cycle Saddles Up for Tour de Cure (Part One)

DEBRA LOWE, NONA CYCLE MEMBER

"Bicycles are the indicator species of a community, like shellfish in a bay."
- P. Martin Scott



Post Ride at Starbucks - photo by Debra Lowe.

As I write this, it is two weeks before Tour de Cure, the cycling event that raises significant funds for American Diabetes Association. As of this writing, 100 riders are signed up to participate as members of Nona Cycle and we are at 65% of our \$50,000 fundraising goal, closing in on 1st place in the Friends and Family division. This is the largest of the three local charities Nona Cycle supports and the one we support at the highest level (in addition to Ride for Ronald and JHOP).

Early on the morning of March 31, Nona Cycle, along with numerous other teams, families and individuals, will descend upon Nona Town Center to walk, run and cycle for a single purpose, raising funds in support of those who suffer from diabetes. Most of the Nona Cycle team plan to ride the 68-mile route, although several are committed to the full 100-mile Century route. (Be sure to check the next edition of *Nonahood News* to read the recap of the event.)

A year ago, I had been a member of Nona Cycle for just over three months when I rode 63 miles in Tour de Cure. Although I had completed other distance rides for charity, I was still very much a novice rider and it showed in the fact that I rode at a painfully slow pace, had a completely preventable crash (gravel and road bikes do not mix), and had plenty of time pedaling alone with my not-always-positive thoughts. That ride, combined with the



encouragement/expertise from my teammates and a year's worth of weekly Sunday Signature Rides, led me to where I am today – a better rider with a wonderful network of cycling friends, the proud owner of a new bike, and very much looking forward to lining up at this year's Tour de Cure start for a day of cycling fun and fellowship.

While charity rides are an opportunity for riders to support worthy causes while enjoying wonderful comradery, it's not without a great deal of dedication and effort in the months leading up to ride day. Personally, the only thing that motivates me to ride long distances is riding for charity ... perhaps because it prevents people from questioning my sanity – although I am often asked, "Can't you just write a check instead?" Everyone who rides is required to raise a minimum amount of funds (in addition to the registration fee), which in itself can be a challenge. Although I am a fundraiser by profession, I don't have access to the same network of donors as I do in my work. Many of the participating riders aren't comfortable asking for money, and yet everyone finds a way to ensure Nona Cycle leads the way in fundraising. Five years ago, Nona Brew Crew launched an annual Cornhole Tournament as a way to fundraise for Tour de Cure. This year, the event was moved to Town Center, sold out, and not only raised funds for the Nona Cycle team but helped promote Nona Cycle and our dedication to supporting our community.

The months leading up to a distance charity ride require an increase in the number of days and miles spent in the saddle; one does not simply hop on a bike and ride for the better part of half a day. At this point in time, I refer to cycling as my second job. While the increased miles help ensure a more enjoyable and successful ride day, I've concluded a certain percentage of training is psychological – the thought of being part of an organized ride makes us more accountable to ourselves and our teammates to do well. Many of us have added rides in the hills of Lake County, extended rides, and an obsessive devotion to our normal weekly workout routines. We've crawled out of our warm beds before dawn and ridden more than 50 riders strong in 50 degree weather, 20-mph winds, rain and other extreme winter weather (by Florida standards) for the past few months. In recent memory, only one Sunday Signature Ride was cancelled (due to torrential rain), moving most of us to post about our indoor training outcomes for the day.

Does this sound like self-inflicted torture? Hardly! The fellowship, laughs, conversation, physical challenges and encouragement are everything that make Nona Cycle the highly regarded cycling group we are. We epitomize what cycling is all about; cycling for charity is additional motivation to do what we collectively love. What could be better than pursuing your passion and helping your neighbors who face health challenges on a daily basis? I am thankful every day that I am able to ride my bike and do all the other things I love in life; being able to utilize cycling as a way to help those who struggle with maintaining their health or the health of their child or other loved one is truly a blessing and privilege.

Thank you to all of you who supported our efforts, cheered us on as we rode by, and helped ensure we stayed safe along the way!

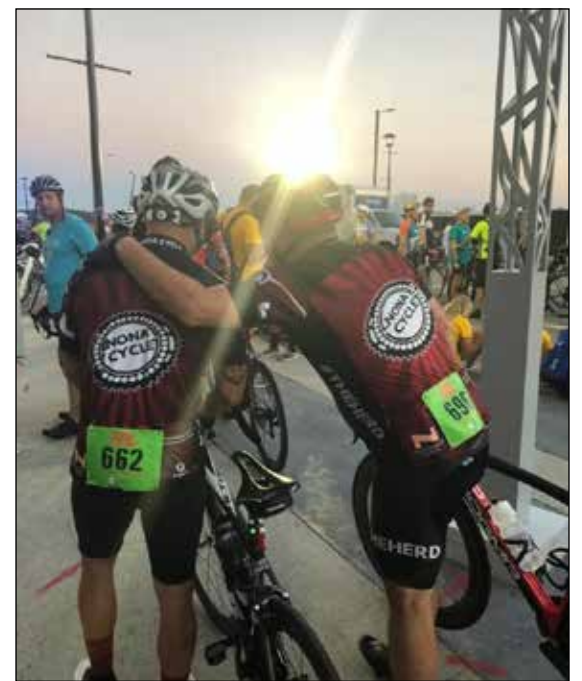
Do you like to cycle or want to learn how? Join the Nona Cycle group for weekly rides:
nonahood.to/nonacycle.



Cornhole Tournament - photo courtesy of Nona Cycle team.



Sunday Signature Ride - photo by Debra Lowe.



Team Spirit - photo courtesy of Nona Cycle team.

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WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



2019 WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

WORKSHOPS HELD AT BEARDALL SENIOR CENTER
800 SOUTH DELANEY AVENUE, ORLANDO, FL 32801

- 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.

To register, go to orangecountyfl.net/NeighborsHousing/CommunityConnectionsWorkshops

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Lake Nona Youth Sports Founder Pleased at Program's Success

ARTICLE BY VALERIE SISCO
PHOTO CREDIT: RENEE FRIEDEL

When Mike Bensey and his family moved to Lake Nona 13 years ago, he'd hoped to enroll his eighth-grade son in youth football where he could play sports and meet new friends in the community. Instead, he spent a year shuttling his son back to their old neighborhood on the east side of Orlando to play football since he wasn't having any luck finding an organized sports program in Lake Nona.

Mike wondered if other parents were in a similar situation, so he called a meeting at the Lake Nona McDonald's to see if his neighbors were interested in starting a youth football league. To his surprise, several families showed up, and the parents formed a board, recruited volunteers, and created a plan.

"We really wanted to include all kinds of sports so kids could try what interested them," Bensey said. "But we knew it couldn't happen all at once since we had to find facilities where we could practice and play games, buy equipment, and organize the programs. Although our vision was ambitious, we scaled it back and started with football and cheer."

During their first year, the 14U and 10U age groups both won football national championships that helped set the stage for future success. The program Bensey and his neighbors created is now Lake Nona Youth Sports, and kids in the community can participate in football and cheer, along with wrestling, lacrosse, rowing and baseball, thanks to partnerships with Lake Nona High School and other established sports programs in South Orlando.

"From the beginning, coaches were willing to jump in and help, and parents donated funds to provide scholarships for kids who wanted to participate but didn't have the financial resources," Bensey said. "We wanted to help kids play sports and improve their skills, but we also wanted to help build their characters and instill qualities that would



help them mature into outstanding young adults."

Lake Nona Youth Sports is now led by 11 board members, a group of dedicated coaches, and a loyal band of parents who all volunteer their time, resources and expertise. They carry on the vision of the original board members – Daryl Smith, Barry Rice, Johnny McDonald, Harold Lawson, Allyn Macumber, Amanda Allen, Bethanie McKinley, Tonda Logue, Michelle Thomas and Erica Williams-Hughes – who joined Bensey more than a decade ago to bring youth sports to Lake Nona.

"Over the past 10 years, we've had more than 2,000 young athletes between the ages of 5 and 14 participate in sports," said C.R. Dunnavant, who is the current president of Lake Nona Youth Sports. "We welcome all kids in the community, and for those who need financial assistance, our volunteers and sponsors generously donate to help defray expenses. We're still dedicated to helping provide kids with a sports teamwork environment, but more than that, we hope they learn how to persevere, have courage and determination, and acquire other character qualities that help them become future exceptional adults in the Lake Nona community."

Today, Bensey's youngest son plays lacrosse for Lake Nona Youth Sports, and Bensey finds himself back on the field, volunteering his time at games. "My son loves lacrosse, and I'm happy to help and watch him play," he said. "Today, when I look at what Lake Nona Youth Sports has become, it's so similar to what our original group envisioned at that first meeting at McDonald's. I'm amazed by the growth and excellent quality of the programs, and I'm so proud I could be a part of it."

If you can help Lake Nona Youth Sports with a donation or sponsorship for a young athlete or are interested in filling a volunteer role, contact C.R.Dunnavant@LakeNonaYouthSports.org. Lake Nona Youth Sports is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and your donation might be tax-deductible.

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



LAKE NONA YOUTH SPORTS

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!!! 2019 FOOTBALL AND CHEER REGISTRATION OPEN NOW !!!**

CURRENT EVENTS

- **FOOTBALL:** Fall Season Starts August 1st
Spring Camps - see website for details on how to sign up.
 - Lions Quarterback Camp, hosted by Tucker Israel
 - Spring Conditioning Camps, Speed and Agility
- **CHEERLEADING:** Fall Season Starts August 1st We are looking for assistant cheer coaches and student cheer coaches.
- **LACROSSE** - Congratulations on a great spring season!
Watch for news about upcoming Girls', SPEED, and Boys' Fall programs!
- **WRESTLING:** Congratulations, athletes, for all your hard work this spring!

OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP

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

- Lake Nona Youth Sports Board Positions Open
- Corporate and Personal Sponsorship Opportunities
- We are currently fundraising for Cheer Uniforms and Football Equipment needs.
- Feeling led to help families in need? "Sponsor a Child Program" helps local families in financial need. Email: C.R.Dunnavant@LakeNonaYouthSports.org

If you are interested in any of the above opportunities, send us an email. We would love to hear from you.

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

Website: LakeNonaYouthSports.org

We are a nonprofit 501(c)(3)

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The Lake Nona Book Maven Review

Title: *Educated*

Author: Tara Westover

It isn't often that I review, or even read, a new release. They can be expensive, virtually impossible to get from the library, and I often like to hear what others have to say first. This book was released in 2018, was on everyone's "to read" list, and since it was recommended to me, I bought the hardback.

I was not disappointed. The book has won many awards, and I can see why.

Educated is a memoir, the true story of a woman who grew up among seven siblings in a family of separatist, survivalist Mormons living in rural Idaho and, however unlikely, now has a Ph.D. in history and political thought. Tara and her siblings were nominally homeschooled, very nominally. Their homeschooling consisted of books

they could find around the house and life education working with their mother, a herbalist, midwife and healer, and their father, who ran a junkyard. That their father was brilliant but mentally unstable is not in doubt. Their mother was gifted and passionate about her work but unable to defend her children against the demands and eccentricities of their father. The children were not much more than free labor and had only each other for close friends.

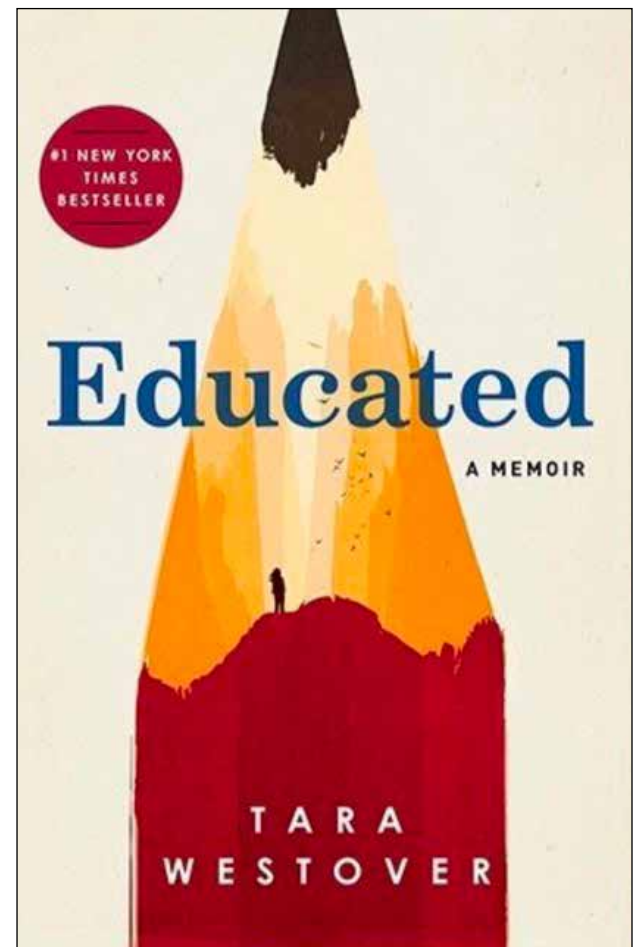
As Tara grew older, she decided she wanted to go to school. Discovering there were no legal records of her existence, she struggled to get a legal birth certificate and finally made it into college. Needless to say, even though it was Brigham Young University, a Mormon school, Tara had a difficult adjustment. But as she began to adjust, she began to see the vast differences between the more contemporary Mormon culture and her own family. Tara's continuing efforts to find her place between living in the world of her reclusive family and the wider world are the primary plot line for the rest of the memoir. As Tara continues to excel in her classes, she is introduced to an even wider world and goes overseas for some classes, where her intellectual gifts come to the attention of an influential professor.

All through Tara's pursuit of her Master's degree and her Ph.D., even as she continues to become more comfortable and suc-

cessful, she is inextricably linked to her family and is just as conflicted when she is away from home as she is when she goes back for visits.

The fact that this is a true story is startling and unsettling. Thankfully, Tara Westover is an excellent writer, and, while surprising and even disturbing in places, her story has an engaging plot that moves it along at a good pace, so I wanted to turn every page. Tara's ultimate personal success is a happy conclusion to a difficult personal story.

All that said, I highly recommend this book. At about 350 pages, it's a good read by itself, but for a book group, it will most likely stir up a great conversation.



Sunny Side Up: Theme Parks

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.

Theme parks. What can I add to this teaming fountain of comedic anecdotes that hasn't been written already? Probably nothing. But I'm a writer, and sometimes we must forge ahead in order to bring home the big bucks. Apparently Charles Dickens was paid by the letter, so I'm in good company. And I've researched theme parks by doing my best not to read Dave Barry, who I'm sure has covered them (and is a terrible writer, anyway). Ignorance is a writer's fodder.

Let's address lines. Not beautiful lines that weave themselves into letters, or the intricate etchings of Rembrandt, nor even the Edenic lines of my chiseled abdomen. We're talking lines of despairing humans, or "queues," according to the prim, dentally-challenged Brits, who redden rapidly under our merciless Florida sun.

Why do we get in lines? One reason is we just dropped ridiculous coin to get into this stupid park, so there is no chance we're spending the day going, "Nope, that line's too long." Doing that only worsens our self-inflicted larceny and, very likely, grand theft. Plus, we'll have to walk more, sweat more, get hungry more, have to eat more, and go broke more.

So we read the 45-minute wait time indicator and think, *Yeah, it's worth an hour or so of our lives waiting in order to dangle above a fake London on a fake boat.* Then we shuffle and make awkward eye-contact with that toddler that wipes his booger on his mom's pants. We do our best not to mindlessly stare at the butt in front of us, knowing that as soon as we do, someone coming the other way will draw the wrong conclusion.

It's so easy to get caught butt-staring. My kids and I christened "bot-toms" with the more descriptive title "leg-topping flesh-bulbs." What other body part serves so many purposes? Custom seat cushion, waste management system, personal space coordinator, authentic plumber identifier.

When I get caught butt-staring, I pretend to be blind. Desperate times call for insensitive measures. Don't know what I want to order after being in line for an hour? Blind. See my son steal candy from his sister for the dozenth time? Blind. Every time I look at the calendar and see all the stuff I have to do? I go blind. "Every time I look at you..."

Maybe theme parks aren't for us locals. We know better. They're really for the Germans who are so efficient that they need something to do with all the time they've saved. Building a land of caricature of all their old folk-tales is better than just giving them a swamp to go to. Besides, they'd probably proficiently drain the swamp, level it, and build neat little solar-powered houses and drive electric Volkswagens at ridiculous speeds. Barbarians.

"Ah, yah, zis is better, yah?"

"Yah."

"Vat did you do vith all de pigs we found?"

"Sausages."

"Fine svine, my goodness, ve are living it, yah?"

"Yah!"

I pray that you, my reader, are doing your best to avoid our parks and reserve them for the Germans. And Super Bowl winners. Or maybe the parks are actually sociological experiments set up to see how much pain the human species is willing to take. Think



about it. Money, gone. Health, gone. Hope, gone. Getting out, just try to find your car. And then our little snot-nosed brat says he wants to ride the Goofy-Loopy-Roller-Ball-of-Perpetual-Vertigo again. Yup, this is definitely some sort of experiment.

I'll admit that I understand those among us who are oblivious to their inclusion in psychological studies and actually like the parks. Occasionally, I'll get sentimental about the time my mom said, "Come on, Philip, Space Mountain isn't supposed to be that scary." I remember us hurtling through the dark at a gajillion miles per hour, our tears of abject terror ping off the faces of those behind us. Or the time my son, before leaving the park, decided that he didn't just want ice cream, but he wanted waffles, too. This devolved into a rigorous wrestling match where I learned why benches are bolted down and why there seems to be no moratorium for yelling profanities at your child in the parks. I didn't actually yell profanities, I just thought them. I very much thought them, while I tossed my son over my shoulder, while he screamed like a rabid chimpanzee and while he furiously beat my leg-topping flesh-bulbs.

I think I would have been humiliated if half the parents weren't red-faced and trying to gag, bind and suppress their own progeny.

Even typing about all this right now makes me wish I could funnel some German willpower to resist the parks next time. But they're so sparkly, so much candy, and I'm so rich from writing so many words and, hey, what doesn't kill us makes us barf.

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 Shurpee.

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.

Neon Swan Awards: Recognizing Orlando's Women in the Field of STEAM



ARTICLE BY NATALIA FOOTE
PHOTO CREDITS: CHRISTY MARKS PHOTOGRAPHY

The inaugural Neon Swan Awards were held on Thursday, Feb. 28, at our very own Lake Nona GuideWell Innovation CoRE. The event honored women in the tech community – specifically, women in Orlando representing STEAM: science, technology, engineering, art, and math.

The Neon Swan Awards began when Erica Jacobs, Chief Creative Officer of Pixadactyl, mentioned the names of 10 women on a social media forum who were creating greatness in Orlando. After less than a month, the list of 10 grew to a list with more than 150 names. Erica realized that something needed to be done to honor our local female talent who were shining brightly in Orlando, and, thus, the Neon Swan Awards were born.

“Awards are usually gold or silver, but neon is tech; neon is VIBRANT,” says Erica Jacobs of the name choice. “And the swan is elegant and beautiful but also confident. Plus, it is basically the Orlando mascot!”

When talking to Jacobs, she is effervescent and a self-described extrovert. She’s energetic and not afraid to wear neon blue lipstick to the event. She sees Orlando for all its beauty and knows how unique it is to live where we live. “Orlando isn’t cute. It is full of talented women that should be honored.”

Board members from Black Orlando Tech and ACMSiggraph choose eight outstanding women to award. Although more than 150 women were recognized and celebrated as Neon Swans, the awards ceremony on Feb. 28 highlighted nine women in eight specific categories. The categories for the awards were Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math, as well as Community Development, Confidence, and Empathy.

Neon Swan Award Winners 2019:

Science

Kelli Murray of MedSpeaks

Kelli Murray created MedSpeaks in order to bridge scientific innovation with healthcare. She left the corporate world to make a change in our healthcare system by connecting “problem owners with problem solvers.”

Technology

Asia Hall of Neon Cowboys

Natalie Concors of Little Light Lab

Asia Hall and Natalie Concors met in Orlando, although both were California natives. Both women create wearable light-up tech. Together, they created WETESCO – Wearable Technology Solutions – a consulting firm that advises and works with companies on all aspects of wearable tech. They have partnered with the University of

Central Florida and military organizations like MD5 and Sofwerx.

Engineering

Leslie Hielema



Leslie Hielema is an all-around badass. She is an engineer, a pilot, a speaker, and a consultant and has created more than 30 new products, services and/or initiatives around the globe. She was formerly with GuideWell Innovation CoRE but decided it was time to fly around the world and help others.

Art

Reina Castellanos

Reina Castellanos is an illustrator and designer. She holds a masters in fine arts from UCF in studio art and the computer and has also been a graphic design professor for Rollins College. She has received numerous awards and honors for her illustrations and videos. She is currently the social media manager for AIGA Orlando.

Math

LaShea Reaves from 8 Cents in a Jar, Inc



LaShea Reaves is the Executive Director of 8 Cents in a Jar, a local nonprofit teaching financial education to combat generational poverty. Their mission is to provide students in underserved communities with engaging resources to become financially capable through economic education. 8 Cents opened in 2016 and has already served more than 1,000 students and generated more than \$98,000 worth of student wealth.

Community Development

Dionne Aiken

Dionne Aiken is a graphic designer and user experience designer. She is the winner for Community Development for her ability to create person-to-person experience and interaction in a world full of screens. She voluntarily created an AIG



mentorship program to give back, allowing mentorees to understand that someone is there to help them; they aren’t alone. Her website states, “By creating design that encourages offline interaction, we can take steps to restore our social fabric and human nature through empathy, acts of kindness, positivity and generosity.”

Confidence

Lydia Chicles with Bold! Technologies

Lydia Chicles founded Bold! Technologies, a development company that works with startups as well as established companies. Women in male-dominated industries sometimes ask, “Should I be here?” Lydia Chicles doesn’t ask that question. She is a woman who embodies confidence, and the award is a reminder to women to assert themselves in what they know.

Empathy

Danya Shea of Fervor Works



Danya Shea is the co-creator of Fervor Works, a company that specializes in teaching empathy to companies to promote growth and strategic marketing. Fervor Works strategically teaches empathy both to the employees toward each other but also to the company as a whole toward the consumer or client. She has received many accolades for her work.

Seeing the women above was inspiring. Each had her own story, and each one is showing off the powerful female force Orlando has to offer. They are not only contributing to our local community but spanning the globe and bringing positive recognition to our ever-growing City Beautiful. Perhaps Erica Jacobs said it best, “There is something special about women professionals; we don’t just do ONE thing. Women are out there kicking ass. It needs to be highlighted; people need to know.”

To learn more about all 150+ Neon Swan recipients, visit www.neonswanawards.com.



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www.kegsneggstampa.com

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

- 2 EOCC La Crema de Nona Networking in Lake Nona (8:30-9:30 a.m.)
- 2 LNRCC First Tuesdays at Eagle Creek (5:30-7:30 p.m.)
- 6 LNHS March Band Spring Rummage Sale (8 a.m.-2 p.m.)
- 6 Bay Area Renaissance Festival "Kegs 'N' Eggs" in Tampa (11 a.m.-1 p.m.)
- 4 LNRCC Young Professional's Group at GuideWell (8-9 a.m.)
- 5 Complete Care Charity Golf Tournament at Eagle Creek (12-6 p.m.)
- 5 NorthLake Park Spring Fling (5:30-7 p.m.)
- 6 NonaCrest Community Annual Garage Sale (8 a.m.-12 p.m.)
- 6 Reymont St. Community Gardening Class (9-10 a.m.)
- 6 Orlando Museum of Art Family Day - Free Admission (11 a.m.-2 p.m.)
- 7 RMHCCF 9th Annual Ice Cream Social at Blue Jacket Park (1-5 p.m.)
- 9 EOCC La Crema de Nona Networking in Lake Nona (8:30-9:30 a.m.)
- 11 LNRCC Breakfast Connections at GuideWell (8-9:30 a.m.)
- 12 Midnight Mayhem at Boxi Park (8-11 p.m.)
- 13 Run To Rally Community 5K (8-11 a.m.)
- 13 Nona Chamber Festival at Nona Adventure Park (10 a.m.-4 p.m.)
- 13 9th Annual Wine Women & Shoes Orlando (2-6 p.m.)
- 16 EOCC La Crema de Nona Networking in Lake Nona (8:30-9:30 a.m.)
- 20 The SWINeth Annual "PIG RUN of Lake Nona" (9 a.m.-5 p.m.)
- 20 Laureate Blvd. Community Gardening Class (9-10 a.m.)
- 20 Dr. Phillips Spring Festival (12-6 p.m.)
- 23 EOCC La Crema de Nona Networking in Lake Nona (8:30-9:30 a.m.)
- 25 EOCC Coffee Club Nona at Sam's Club (8:30-9:30 a.m.)
- 26 LNRCC Business Luncheon at GuideWell (11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.)
- 27 Hope & Help's Annual AIDS Walk Orlando (7:30-10:30 a.m.)
- 29 RMHCCF Golf Classic at Lake Nona Golf and Country Club (11:30 a.m.)
- 30 EOCC La Crema de Nona Networking in Lake Nona (8:30-9:30 a.m.)

Save the dates

- May 5 Nonahood Latino Fiestas - Cinco de Mayo at Nona Adventure Park (10 a.m.-9 p.m.)
- May 18 LNHS Band Golf Tournament at Eagle Creek (7 a.m.)
- May 18 Caminata Con Flow 3K Cancer Walk at Nona Adventure Park (8 a.m.)
- May 21 10th Annual RMHCCF Bowl-A-Thon (6-9 p.m.)

Weekly Events

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

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

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

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

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

YOGA NONA Sponsored by
Lake Nona Life Project
Saturdays 10-11 a.m.
Crescent Park in Laureate Park
www.facebook.com/learnlakenona/

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

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

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

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

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