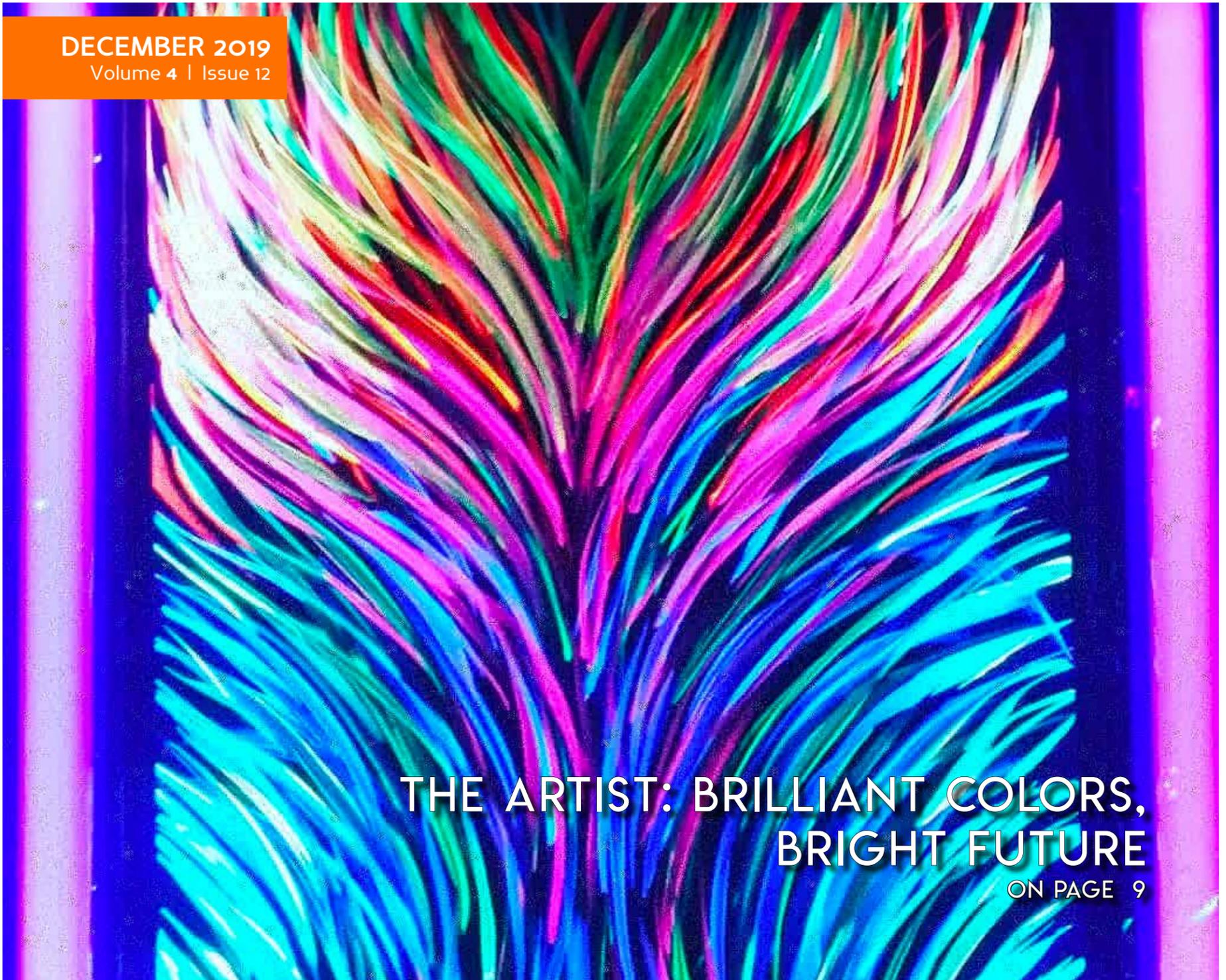


# nonahood news®

CREATIVELY AND INDEPENDENTLY PRODUCED BY THE RESIDENTS OF LAKE NONA

DECEMBER 2019  
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THE ARTIST: BRILLIANT COLORS,  
BRIGHT FUTURE  
ON PAGE 9

### IN THIS ISSUE

- LOCAL LEADERS, 4
- BUSINESS & REAL ESTATE, 6
- FEATURES, 9
- HEALTH & WELLNESS, 14
- EDUCATION, 14
- FOOD & DRINKS, E2
- LAKE NONA LIVING, E2
- LIFESTYLE, E6
- SPORTS & FITNESS, E11
- ARTS & CULTURE, E13
- EVENTS & ACTIVITIES E14

ONE MAN'S HEART ATTACK LED HIM TO HIKE THE APPALACHIAN TRAILS  
4



ORLANDO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT BRINGS OUT THE BIG DOGS  
11



LAKE NONA'S 40+ TENNIS TEAM AS SEMIFINALISTS IN THE USTA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP E11



DOCUMENTARY HONORING LOCAL 9/11 HEROES TAKES HOME GOLD E15



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**NONA MEDIA**

# EDITOR'S NOTE

## Reflection

BY DEMI TAVERAS, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



Well, Lake Nona, we've reached the final stretch of 2019. I think it's safe to say it's been quite an eventful year in our community and in the current state of our world. For some of us, we'll say it's been an amazing and rewarding year. For others, we'll sugar-coat a rough year by just mentioning a lot of "ups and downs." And hey, maybe for you, you'll say it was just another regular year. No matter how your 2019

went, though, where each of us began in January surely isn't where we are right now in December. Even if it seems like it's only the little things that changed, each year we evolve into something greater, whether we recognize it or not.

Personally, in 2019, I felt like I had the most self-growth I've ever had. This month, I will graduate from the University of Central Florida with my B.A. and will be able to commit to *Nonahood News* full time. In my last year of college, I learned the most about what I'm truly passionate about in life – creative writing. I created opportunities for myself to gain real-world knowledge and had amazing mentors to help guide me to where I am now. Throughout the course of this year, I've grown more independent, more open-minded, and have gone out of my comfort zone many times in order to grow as a person. I don't doubt that you, too, can make a reflective list, like this one, of things you've achieved personally or professionally this year because we as a community have so much to be proud of! Just flip through the pages

of any of our Volume 4 issues to see all of the accomplishments the citizens of Lake Nona have made over the past year. The list can go on and on.

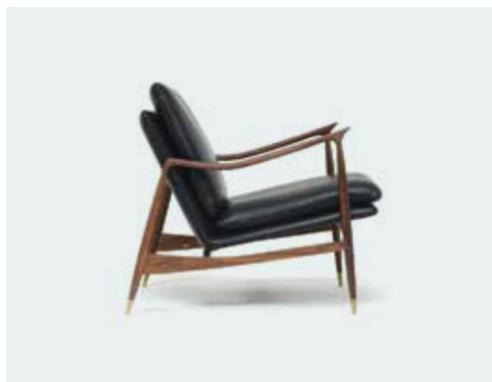
And while our resolutions may be heavy on our mind right now as we bring in a big year, 2020, whether we make it the whole year holding strong to our resolution or only make it to mid-January, something to keep in mind is just that: reflection. Especially in times where you think you haven't made much progress. Progress isn't linear. Think about where you were two years ago, one year ago, six months ago compared with where you are now. Even if you hit a few bumps in the road to get where you are, you're at the very least more knowledgeable than where you started. So, while I hope we all want to dream big for 2020, it's also okay to pause or hit the restart button. We say the little things add up when it comes to money, but it applies here, too. Reflect on all the small wins you've had over the year, and maybe you'll realize 2019 wasn't just another regular year after all.

See you in the new year, Lake Nona!



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## One Man's Heart Attack Led Him To Hike the Appalachian Trails

ARTICLE BY NATALIA JARAMILLO  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF RHONDA FERNANDEZ

It was 2:30 a.m. on Monday, Feb. 18, 2019, and Halo Fernandez couldn't sleep. It had been 38 degrees the day before, and in a few hours, he would begin his dream of climbing the 2,192 mile Appalachian Trail.

"The morning was chilly but clear and not raining," Fernandez wrote in his 2019 Appalachian Trail Journal. "My lovely wife and father-in-law took pictures and vide-



otaped me as I made my way up the trail. It was a controlled emotional time as deep inside I was wondering what in the world am I doing? Of course, I kept the brave face and hiding smile as I waved and walked off into the clouds."

This excerpt from Fernandez's trail journal has over 300,000 reads, and his entire trail journal has an average of 300,000 reads per journal entry on the trailjournals.com website. The website is used by the hiking fanatic community and their families to share hiking tips, journal their days hiking, and share their hike mileage status.

"It was interesting to have people that didn't even know me respond and offer prayers and offer good thoughts and just follow along with me, so I would try to journal every night," Fernandez said.

In the same month, he retired after spending 30 years at Sherwin Williams as a national account executive and began his journey of hiking the Appalachian Trail.

Two years prior to hiking the Appalachian trails, Fernandez had a massive heart attack with over 99% blockage of his artery, known as the widower heart attack because it can cause rapid heart failure. He

had gone to his yearly check-up and cardiologist appointment only three months earlier.

On the morning of an average day on a business trip in 2017 in Asheville, North Carolina, Fernandez had woken up to do some exercise but felt overly fatigued.

"There was no pain," Fernandez said. "It was to the point that every time I saw a bench, I felt I had to sit down, and once I sat down, I felt fine."

As the day went on, Fernandez ignored the extreme fatigue and blamed it on a higher altitude until things took a turn for the worse.

"We pulled off to a gas station, and my wife was able to get some water and aspirin in me then called 911, and I was very, very fortunate to be in Asheville because that's one of the top 10 heart facilities in the United States."

While still in the hospital, he asked his cardiologist if his lifelong dream of hiking the Appalachian Trail was still possible after his heart attack. With regular exercise and a healthy diet, Fernandez said his doctor



didn't see why he couldn't do it.

"It gave me additional motivation to get well with the goal of hiking the trail," Fernandez said.

Fernandez has a theory that a fishing trip two weeks prior may have caused his heart attack. He caught a 180-pound tarpon fish; by the time he brought it in, he knew he had overdone it and possibly loosened a plaque in his arteries that could have caused the massive blockage. He went into his hike two years later still cautious of overexerting himself.

"If you are feeling tired for apparently no good reason, get yourself checked out," Fernandez said. "Don't wait until you are in pain, and be aware of the symptoms of heart attacks."

Fernandez, whose father passed away from a heart attack, suggests that if there's a family history of heart attacks, it's a good idea to visit a cardiologist.

"Yes, it would have been safer staying at home [than hiking the trail], but I'm not going to hinder myself," Fernandez said.



## Nona Heroes: Darlene Grande

ARTICLE BY CHRISTIAN CASALE  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF DARLENE GRANDE



In the music room of Eagle Creek Elementary School, 16 kindergarteners in a semi-circle try their best to sing and dance along to the Jackson 5 classic "ABC." The school's teacher of the year, Darlene Grande, is at the piano as she guides them through the lyrics. As any student of American music would know, the lyrics to "ABC" aren't complicated – and the kids seem to have a handle on the song.

It's with The Supremes that problems start to arise. All the lyrics after "Stop! In the Name of Love" seem to confound the kids. Mrs. Grande's co-teacher, Murphy Sullivan, stands in the middle of the kindergarteners, trying to keep them engaged by guiding them through the dance.

As one can expect, complete synchronization isn't quite there yet for the five- and six-year-olds; one or two look so lost that they just stand in place, frozen, their mouths agape as they stare into space.

Grande grins from across the room. "They have a few more months to get the hang of it."

The kids' performance in January, a celebration of Motown Music to coincide with Black History Month, was the brain-child

of Grande, who plans out the yearly performances for her classes and her before-school Chorus Club during the summer.

Grande has been teaching music for 17 years, each of the schools in Orange County. It was her high school choral director who encouraged her to be an educator.

"He had a belief in me and my talent, and he's still a mentor of mine and one of the reasons why I continue to be a musician," Grande said.

She started her education at Syracuse University and then Long Island University. She moved to Florida and began her career in 2003 at Frangus Elementary.

"Frangus was interesting," Grande says. "It was a Title I school, so when I first started out, there were a limited number of instruments, and I had to start the program from the bottom up."

A Title I school is one that receives federal funds for a high number of low-income students. At Frangus, Grande had a Chorus Club that she took to perform at places like Disney and Orlando Magic games.

In 2012, she moved to Three Points Elementary – where she re-opened their music department. She stayed there for three years until Eagle Creek brought her on.

Grande feels that she has a lot more support now to build a music program than when she first started out.

"It's easier now, especially with the help from the community," Grande says. "The community has been great at Eagle Creek. PTA has been wonderful with assisting me as well as the administrator, Mr. McCloe."

Robert McCloe, Eagle Creek's principal, is this year's recipient of the county's Fine Arts Principal of the Year.

"Without his support, I wouldn't be able to do the things that I'm doing," Grande says.

According to Grande, the already lauded music programs at Lake Nona Middle School and Lake Nona High School play a huge role in the support she receives. De-



spite that, she says she'd never move to teach higher grades.

"Always kids, K through 5," Grande says. "My heart is with the elementary, especially in 4th and 5th. Through my experience, the talent is there. They're ready to perform; they're ready to be molded into that performer."

In the past, her students have performed *The Lion King*, a springtime musical called *Bugs*, an underwater-themed performance based on *The Little Mermaid*, and a show for Hispanic Heritage Month.

"We have a high Venezuelan population and a high [English-language learner] population, so the parents loved it," Grande says.

Grande's dream is to teach her students to perform *Hamilton*, but she admits that it's a little far fetched for those in primary school. She loves Lin-Manuel Miranda's work, and she tries to make it up to New York to catch Broadway shows when she



can. Grande also tries to stay caught up in the Orlando musical scene, attending performances at venues like Orlando Shakes.

Grande was also this year's recipient of the annual OCPS and Kessler Grand Bohemian Hotel Scholarship for excellence in elementary music. She received a two-night stay at the Grand Bohemian Hotel, a \$1,500 scholarship, and a trip to Europe.

*If you would like to nominate someone for our next Nona Heroes feature, please complete the form here: [nonahood.to/nonaheroes](http://nonahood.to/nonaheroes).*



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# Nobel Notable Of Laureate Park: Toshihide Maskawa, Diviner Of Quarks

BY DENNIS DELEHANTY

This is the ninth in a series of articles that celebrate the lives of the Nobel Prize laureates whose names grace the 125 streets of Laureate Park. Dr. Costas Efthimiou, professor of physics at the University of Central Florida, contributed to this article.



“Three quarks for Muster Mark!”

In the mid-1960s, as American physicist Murray Gell-Mann set out to devise the equivalent of a periodic table for elementary particles, he cast about for an appropriate name for those particles with the most mass. For this purpose, Gell-Mann had discarded ancient Greek, the usual go-to source for scientific neologisms, as some terms invented from that language concealed unfortunate flaws. Atoms, from the Greek word for “indivisible,” were later found to be composed of smaller components and in fact were quite divisible, explosively so in some cases. These smaller components, a set of particles that physicists had just begun to discover, required a name. A nonsense word, Gell-Mann thought, would be best, a term not later to be revealed as inapt. So he turned to that singularly bountiful collection of nonsense vocabulary – James Joyce’s *Finnegans Wake* – discovered Muster Mark’s quarks, and assigned that

moniker to three particles in his draft table, assumed to be constituents of heavier known particles, a table later to evolve into the “Standard Model of Particle Physics.” A fourth quark was discovered soon after.

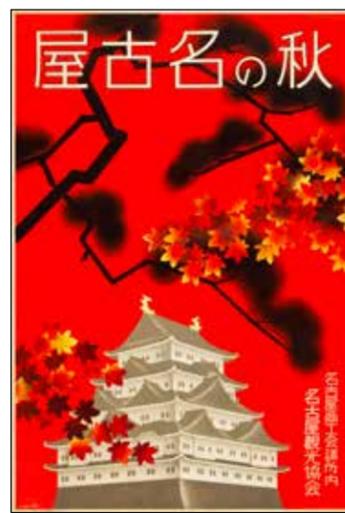
We don’t often think about quarks. But we should since we are made up of them completely from head to toe. And, as far as we know, so is just about everything everywhere throughout the universe. Molecules and atoms, yes, we can more or less understand. Each atom, as we know, contains an infinitesimally tiny nucleus, ten thousand times smaller than the cloud of electrons overhead, making 99.999999% of every atom empty space. That fact is already counterintuitive, but when we drill down further, say, into the nucleus of the atom, we enter the realm of elementary particles, where things get really bizarre. According to the Standard Model, elementary particles are of two types: bosons and fermions. Fermions make up the matter around us. The important fermion is the electron with which we are already familiar. Quarks are fermions, too. Among other duties, bosons carry the forces that hold together quarks inside protons and neutrons, from which quarks the building blocks of nuclei can never escape and never detach from one another. (Three quarks in every proton and neutron, as James Joyce accidentally predicted.) But how else to describe quarks?

Quarks have an electrical charge, expressed by a fraction, as well as a specific “spin” (also a fraction), which is not the rotational motion that we experience in our world, but rather a fundamental property that cannot really be explained. Quarks also have something called color charge, which – unfortunately for those of us trying to grasp the concept – has nothing to do with color. Every quark has a twin, an antiquark, just like in the Bizarro world in Superman comics. And through the weak force, one “flavor” of quark (yes, physicists adopted the designation “flavor” rather than “type” to further confuse us) can turn into another flavor of quark.

It was into this weird world of quarks that young Toshihide Maskawa was drawn as a student at Nagoya University, west of Tokyo. Maskawa’s first name, Toshihide, which roughly means “clever hero,” presaged his brilliance as a theoretical physi-

cist. In grad school, Maskawa, needing a topic for an academic paper, came across an article about a phenomenon that puzzled physicists: the breakdown of symmetry in both the charge of particles and the parity of their spatial coordinates in the formation of antimatter. This breakdown of symmetry is known as “CP Violation” – the C standing for “charge” and the P for “parity.” (Antimatter particles, including antiquarks, are not science fiction but quite real, and a slight surplus of matter over antimatter following the Big Bang, a result of CP Violation, left us with a universe containing matter – including ourselves.) The problem confronting Maskawa was that the four-quark model and CP violation were mathematically incompatible. Working with his colleague, Makoto Kobayashi, Maskawa attacked the problem, which seemed insoluble until one evening, stepping out of his bath, he hit upon the answer: The universe contained six quarks, not four! Unlike the ancient Greek philosopher Archimedes, Maskawa did not leap out of the tub to run through the streets of town shouting “Eureka” to announce his breakthrough to the world, but his discovery was no less momentous for science. To the already known and named up, down, strange, and charm quarks, Maskawa and Kobayashi in 1978 postulated the existence of two more quarks to be discovered years later at Fermilab near Chicago and dubbed the top and bottom quarks. For this achievement, the duo won the 2008 Nobel Prize in physics, shared with their compatriot Yoichiro Nambu. In December of that year, Maskawa traveled to Stockholm to accept his award, thus making, at age 68, his first trip outside of Japan.

Twelve years earlier, while spending two weeks in Dublin on a business trip, I convinced an Irish cousin of mine to make a visit one Saturday to the James Joyce Museum in a small row house in that city. As we ascended to the second floor of the residence, an elderly gentleman poked a book into our faces and announced, “This is the Japanese translation of *Finnegans Wake*.” Our man, it turned out, was Joyce’s nephew. In the ensuing conversation, one common thought baffled the three of us: how could a 625-page novel of purposely invented nonsense words ever be translated into any other language, a paragraph



of which even English speakers struggle mightily to decipher? We now know, though, that nonsense words sometimes acquire concrete meanings, and what noun could be more meaningful than that which refers to the basic building blocks of all matter in the universe? A new generation of Japanese physicists, building upon the legacy of Toshihide Maskawa and his contemporaries, may one day need to coin new terms for their future discoveries, for example, for the vibrations of the strings in string theory that form fermions and bosons – if those vibrations are ever observed. For that purpose, they will surely need look no further than to that universally acclaimed masterpiece, *Fineganzzu eiku*, by that famed Hibernian author, Jēmuzu Joisu.

Next month: Gabriela Mistral, A Peripatetic Poetess, or *Una Poetisa Itinerante*

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. You can contact Dennis at [donnagha@gmail.com](mailto:donnagha@gmail.com).



## BUSINESS & REAL ESTATE

### Creator Mindset: Bad Words

BY NIR BASHAN



I was headed back to Orlando recently on a flight. I happened to sit next to a college professor who taught English. We struck up a conversation about teaching, students, learning, and how universities are preparing for the future. Or not preparing for the future. But one thing the professor men-

tioned that stuck with me was the conversation we had about language.

It turns out that, in the English language, there are far more ways to describe unpleasant things than pleasant ones. In other words, we have far more ways to describe negative things than positive ones. More words to describe displeasure than pleasure. More words to describe hurt than joy. More words to describe bad than good.

So, I dug a little deeper. Maybe it’s a construct of our English language only. Surely, there were other languages on Earth that had more happy words than sad. Right? I looked at happiness assessments across a bunch of different countries. Countries like Iceland and Bhutan and Holland always score high on the happiness index (whatever that is). Surely, they are onto something that we Americans don’t know!

But it turns out that language for pessimism instead of optimism is not an English-only construct. It’s found in every language on earth.

And that got me thinking. One of the key tenets of The Creator Mindset is the language of positivity. It’s what I talk about in the book, which comes out in April 2020 in detail. The language of positivity is like a rich soil ready for whatever creative seeds you decide to harvest. It’s the fertile soil of future potential.

And there can be no creativity where there is negativity.

Negativity is the stuff of nightmare. It’s the soil that tarnishes all potential and stunts all growth. Yet, why are people – not just in the United States but internationally – are we so inclined to use negativity far more than positivity? It’s almost like we are inclined to gloom. To sorrow. Dejection. Misery. Desolation. Despair. Woe. Agony. Distress. Sadness. I think I’ve made my point: It seems no one is immune from the shambolic power of negativity.

But fortunately, The Creator Mindset has three easy tools that can help avoid the dark and everlasting pull of cynicism:

- 1. Nothing lasts forever.** Even in the darkest times and the most challenging of circumstances, things can and will always change. They might not be predictable – or even consistent – but they will change. This change gives us the creative ability to weather the storm.
- 2. Choose Differently.** If everyone is predisposed to negativity, choose positivity instead. And how we choose to use positivity creatively over negativity is entirely up to us. Being aware that negativity is far more prevalent than positivity will help us achieve more balance in our day-to-day lives. Just knowing that we tend to think on the dark side of life will help us choose not to go there.
- 3. Remember Success.** Everyone at some point in life has had something go well. So, thinking creatively, remembering how things turn out right



is important. We spend far too much time looking at failures rather than celebrating success. Let’s stop for a minute when negativity creeps up and instead recall a success.

The language of negativity is stuck in antiquity – unable to cope adequately with the demands of the 21st century’s creative economy that promotes positive, hopeful, and optimistic solutions to modern problems. Using the three steps above will help you uncover more creative solutions to problems that plague us.

I have good news for my loyal readers! The Creator Mindset book is now on pre-release through my website: [www.thecreatormindset.com](http://www.thecreatormindset.com). You get some neat freebies by preordering the book on Amazon, Barnes & Noble, or your favorite bookstore today!

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](http://www.nirbashan.com)

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# Business Spotlight: Pawsitively Purrfect Care for Your Furry Loved Ones at Woof Gang Bakery Lake Nona

ARTICLE BY NICOLE LABOSCO  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF ALEXA CUNAT FROM  
WOOF GANG BAKERY LAKE NONA

Look at your family. You may see your spouse, your parents, your children ... and even your pet. According to [prnewswire.com](http://prnewswire.com) and the Harris Poll back in 2015, nearly all pet owners (95%) consider their pets to be members of the family. It's something we can get on board with, and the trend of fewer children and more pets in a household is on the rise.

Treat your pet as you would your family and loved ones with nothing but the best. Lake Nona's Woof Gang Bakery makes your pet a top paw-ority. *Nonahood News* spoke with Ryan Wesner, owner of the Lake Nona Woof Gang Bakery location that opened its doors in January 2013, to see why this local small business puts their best paws forward!

"Our mission is basically to provide excellent service to pet owners that are working to have happy and healthy fur babies through proper grooming and nutrition. This is the company blurb ... 'Woof Gang Bakery is the leading specialty retailer of pet food, pet supplies, and professional pet grooming in North America with more than 130 locations open or under development across the U.S.," said Wesner. "Woof Gang Bakery offers the very best in pet care by providing quality products and grooming with a service-oriented approach. Each location is a neighborhood store committed to the well-being, health, and happiness of pets."

Woof Gang Bakery was founded in 2007, and the story of how the company ended up in Lake Nona is one that will open your heart and make you hug your furry loved ones even tighter.

"I opened the Woof Gang in this area before the population really began to grow. At that time, I had spent over 15 years in commercial real estate and wanted to add something to my life that offered a little more food for the soul. I am a 'crazy dog person' and always have thought of my boys as my children. Before I made this decision, one of my boys had been injured at another groomer, and my other dog became gravely ill due to his food," explained Wesner. "I began to research more about the industry and the needs of pets. There was a need not being met for myself and many others. From there, it just seemed like the obvious solution for myself and hopefully for those that feel the same way for their pets."

Woof Gang has something for everyone and every pup's (and cat's) needs, and the numbers show.

"We typically groom between 550 and 800 dogs per month depending on the time of year. We probably feed about the same number but not all the same people (some groom but not feed with us, some feed but not groom). [For] products,

[we have] high-quality nutrition foods, including traditional kibble-based, raw and freeze-dried diets," Wesner described. "We also carry natural chews and treats for every shape and size of pup. Not to mention our cookie table of fun and tasty iced cookies! We offer services as simple as cutting or grinding nail[s] to full grooms – including special conditioners, seasonal packages such as pumpkin spice baths, deshedding treatments, facials, tooth brushing, as well as full cleanings by a dental professional."

One thing you may not be aware of is that Woof Gang Bakery Lake Nona is a family-owned business. The business offers free delivery for any purchase over \$49 in the area. Wesner explained that Woof Gang Bakery Lake Nona is the only pet supply small business in the Lake Nona market with a brick-and-mortar store. So, what sets them apart from other pet businesses?

"We are a locally owned and operated company that strives for great customer service. The owner and manager both live here in the area within a few miles of the store and are always available to help. We also try to stay as active as possible in our community, which is admittedly a growing task [as] the area grows. We welcome it, though, and look forward to welcoming and serving new dog owners to the area," stated Wesner. "It has always been our policy to stay competitive even when we were the only game in town. That said, we can't compete with Amazon and Chewy on sticker price. ... But what people don't realize is that if you add in the free bag program we offer [that] they do not, they really aren't saving money in the long run, along with getting no service and no expertise in the products."

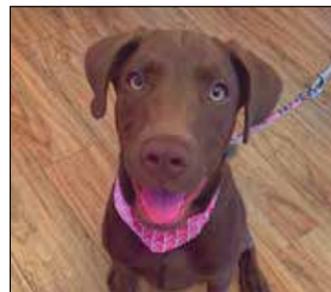
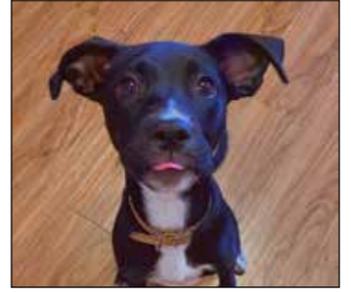
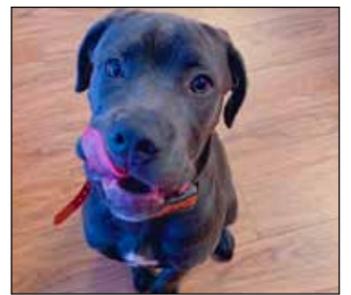
For a local small business that is family-owned right in your neck of the woods and cares about your four-legged family member just as much as you do, consider Woof Gang Bakery Lake Nona. They even have a "buy 12 bags of dog food and get one free" promo for most of the brands they carry, as well as monthly specials!

The specials for December are:

- Buy three Primal Treats, get one FREE
- \$5 off Holistic Hound Full Spectrum Healing Balm (one ounce)
- Purchase any 16 oz. or larger Grizzly Product, get a 16 oz. Joint Hemp Enhanced Liquid Bottle FREE
- Buy two Vital Essentials Freeze Dried Treats, get one FREE
- And more!

*Don't forget to submit your dog to our Dog of the Month contest with Woof Gang Bakery Lake Nona by visiting [nona.link/dog](http://nona.link/dog). For more information, please visit:*

[www.facebook.com/WoofGangLakeNona/](http://www.facebook.com/WoofGangLakeNona/)



## Pigtails & Crewcuts Is Coming to Lake Nona

Books, toys, movies, a train table, video games, and chairs shaped like airplanes and police cars are just a few of the tricks Pigtails & Crewcuts salons across America use to make haircuts fun for kids of all ages. We know haircuts

can be overwhelming for some kids, and we're here to help ease the fears, wipe away tears, and make haircuts a memorable experience for kids and parents. And we can't wait to meet families in Lake Nona!

Pigtails & Crewcuts was created to be a place that kids can call their own and just be kids. That's why we don't worry if your child cries during their haircut or doesn't want to sit in a styling chair. We hire stylists who love kids and take pride in making haircuts a positive experience. They will work their magic and take any case of the wiggles or tears

and turn them into smiles and giggles before the haircut is over.

Pigtails & Crewcuts offers a range of haircutting and hair-care services for the entire family. Our first haircut package includes a certificate, picture, and lock of your child's hair to mark this special milestone. Other services include braids, up-dos, swimmer's treatments, comb-out and detangling, plus haircuts for moms and dads as well. We also know that parents like helping their kids look their best, so we offer private braiding lessons to help you achieve that picture-perfect look.

The fun doesn't stop there! Pigtails & Crewcuts also offers several other services, including ear piercings, nail and toe polishes, and specials like a Spa Day Package. Find everything you need to recreate the look at home with our wide range of kid-centric hair products and accessories. Plus, you can find tons of great gift items like toys, lip gloss, nail polish, and more.

Owner Jennifer Tribble is excited to bring the Pigtails & Crewcuts experience to Lake Nona families. She has been a part of the community since 2009 and owns two other Pigtails & Crewcuts salons in Doctor Phillips and Winter Springs. Jennifer has built a staff of stylists who are ready to welcome kids just as they are and help put everyone at ease as they settle in for a haircut.

*Pigtails & Crewcuts Lake Nona will be located at 13006 Narcoossee Rd. and will be open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The salon will be closed on Sundays. Follow the salon on Facebook or Instagram @pigtailslakenona to learn more and stay up-to-date for the latest salon happenings, or visit*

[www.pigtailsandcrewcuts.com/lakenona/](http://www.pigtailsandcrewcuts.com/lakenona/).







# We Lake Nona!

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Smiles that put everyone at ease  
An atmosphere that encourages play

 Pigtails & Crewcuts: Haircuts for Kids - Lake Nona  
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13006 Narcoossee Place • Orlando, FL 32832 • 407.955.0505  
[pigtailsandcrewcuts.com/lakenona](http://pigtailsandcrewcuts.com/lakenona)

Book an Appointment Online!

# LAKE NONA REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE UPDATES



## EVENT GALLERY



**Oct. 16, Groundbreaking Ceremony at Lach Orthodontic Specialists** – Members and visitors celebrated the future space of Lach Orthodontic Specialists. Congratulations on this new chapter! (Photo by Madelyn Long)



**Oct. 24, Ribbon Cutting & Grand Opening Ceremony at A Ruff Day Bark Club** – Welcome, all humans and dogs to the classiest dog club around! It's the closest thing to Disney World for your pups. Thanks to A Ruff Day Bark Club for throwing such a fun grand opening ceremony. (Photo by Felicity Gomer)



**Nov. 5, First Tuesdays After-Hours at Nona Adventure Park** – Nona Adventure Park hosted our Chamber members and invited guests for a beautiful, breezy evening on the water. Thanks to everyone for coming out to eat, drink and make connections. (Photo by Felicity Gomer)



**Nov. 11, Ribbon Cutting & Grand Opening Celebration at Island Fin Poke** – Welcome, Island Fin Poke, to Lake Nona and LNRCC! Guests had a great time sampling signature poke and enjoying live entertainment. (Photo by Felicity Gomer)



**Nov. 14, Breakfast Connections with AdventHealth** – Thank you to Dr. Desai and Dr. Nathoo of AdventHealth for sharing their medical expertise regarding men's health topics like GERD, prostate health, testosterone, and more. A big thanks to USTA for making our first event at your gorgeous venue a success. (Photo by Felicity Gomer)



**Nov. 15, Ribbon Cutting for Ronald McDonald House's Third-Floor Expansion** – Bronze Partner Ronald McDonald House recently cut the ribbon to their brand new third-floor expansion project. They added nine bedrooms to their house to service additional families in Central Florida. Congratulations! (Photo by Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central Florida)



**Nov. 15, Ribbon Cutting at Pediatric Dental Group** – Welcome, Pediatric Dental Group's newest location to the Nonahood! Thank you for a fun and lively ribbon cutting. (Photo by Ashley Brown)

## FROM THE CEO: WHAT YOUR CHAMBER DOES, PART II

Last month, I promised to tell you more about our OPS Plan for your Opportunity, Progress and Support. Here are the components of the Chamber OPS Plan:

### Opportunity

- Innovation and economic development
- UCF counseling programs
- Collaboration with local chambers and civic groups
- Educational and government seminars
- Community updates
- Cultivation of large corporate connections
- Cultivation of a vendor supply base and information system
- Chamber marketing and networking

### Progress

- Infrastructure and growth leadership
- Talent supply and education
- Continuation of seminars
- Informational updates via media
- Chamber marketing and networking

### Support

- Building of a business climate and competitiveness
- Maintenance of civic and government systems relations
- Pursuing of quality of life and quality places initiatives
- Collaboration with local charities
- Chamber marketing and networking

Your Board of Directors and Chamber Staff constantly work to bring members and the entire community these benefits. Find out how you can benefit and participate in this process by calling us at (407) 796-2230.

*Next month, how your Chamber is a Catalyst of business growth, Convener of leaders and influencers, and Champion for a thriving community.*

*Don Long, President/CEO*



## UPCOMING CHAMBER EVENTS

**December 5**

**Ribbon Cutting at Centennial Bank**  
13901 Narcoossee Rd  
3:00 p.m.

**December 12**

**Breakfast Connections - "Tackling Your Marketing" - Melanie Miller Consulting**  
**Eagle Creek Golf Club & The Belfry Restaurant**  
8:00 - 9:30 a.m.

**January 9**

**Breakfast Connections with Rick Singh, Orange County Property Appraiser and Cliff Long, Orlando Regional Realtor Association**  
8:00 - 9:30 a.m.

**REGISTER AT LAKENONACC.ORG**  
**MERRY CHRISTMAS!**

## NEW MEMBERS

Central Florida Building Corporation, Inc.

Coldwell Banker Ackley Realty - Rhonda Smith

Creative Printing Services

Cruise Planners/Micdan Travel

Dumpster Medic

Gatherings Lake Nona by Beazer Homes

ILingo Academy

Proliant Settlement Systems

V3 Capital Group

Wooten CPA PLLC

Worth Real Estate Company



## WHY YOU SHOULD JOIN & RENEW

THE LAKE NONA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, PART FIVE

Chamber events and programs - Chamber events and programs provide members with great opportunities to get to know new people and expand their prospect base. Chamber events are innovative and fun ways to help members meet potential customers, clients and vendors— and generate new business leads.

## RENEWED MEMBERS

3rdArm, Inc.

Baker Barrios Architects, Inc.

Commercial Air Conditioning & Electric, Inc

Digital Memory

Gemilang Solutions

Inspired Performance Institute

Markowitz Communications

Pollo Tropical

Rosenthal Meyer, PLLC

TMW Insurance Agency, LLC



## LAKE NONA REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PARTNERS

DIAMOND PARTNER:

**NONA.MEDIA**

PLATINUM PARTNERS:



GOLD PARTNERS:



SILVER PARTNER:



BRONZE PARTNERS:

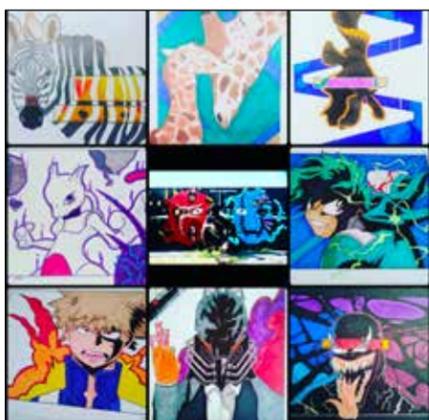


## The Artist: Brilliant Colors, Bright Future

ARTICLE BY DEMI TAVERAS  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF  
JE-WAN HERBERT



Je-Wan Herbert's journey as an artist was inspiring to read about as we came to the close of 2019. It definitely got us thinking here at *Nonahood News*. Get to know Herbert as both a person and an artist in the following interview he had with us. His creative energy and luminous art will not disappoint.



### Nonahood News: What drove you to become an artist?

Je-Wan Herbert: I have done art since I was a child. I've always found an interest in creating and working with vivid colors. My biggest inspirations are my aunt, who put up one of my first finished drawing[s] on her fridge. The second is my uncle, who is an amazing artist. He encouraged me to continue feeding my creativity.



### NHN: When did you realize creating art was your passion?

JH: I realized creating art was my passion toward the end of high school during my senior year. Everything I did was focused on creating art in any way, shape or form.

### NHN: How often do you find yourself creating art?

JH: I create art when I either have the free time or feel inspired to create. I don't like to force my creative flow when it comes to art.

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

JH: I have observed that even in my lowest points in life, I have continued to create even when I did not feel up to the task. However, I believe that discovery of one's self as an artist is a never-ending journey! As you grow and learn, your art and creativity will continue to shape and mold itself based upon your perspective of the world and your environment.

### NHN: Which of your projects would you consider to be your favorites? (Pick a top three).

JH: My top three projects are the following:

1. (Angels of the sea). This is a piece I did on a four feet by two feet canvas. The vibrant colors of the fish and the UV glow of the piece make it come to life.
2. (Neon Butterfly). I enjoyed the entire process of this piece from start to finish. The piece makes me think of the inner beauty of women.
3. (Big Wave). This piece I love because it was one of my first paintings! I remember the feeling I got from creating it.



### NHN: Which of your projects was the most time-consuming/challenging and why?

JH: "Angels of the sea" was my most challenging piece for a variety of reasons. The canvas was huge, and the material of the canvas had a hard time holding acrylic paint. I had to apply paint very softly to the canvas with as little water as possible so that the paint would not run. The next challenging aspect was in applying the neon paint upon the dried acrylic in order to get the glow effect I had in my mind. The final challenge was finishing the painting [well] enough for a live event that I did in my area. I finished 80% of the piece at home then finished the rest of the piece at the event. It turned out amazing.

### NHN: What are some of your dream projects?

JH: My dream projects are the following:

1. Working with the artist Ten-Hundred. He has been a big inspiration to me on my artistic journey.
2. Taking part in a gallery opening where I can discuss art with a multitude of different creative people or lovers of art. I've always dreamed of my art being in a gallery. A trendy gallery at that.
3. Traveling to do murals in other states or countries!

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

JH: Experiencing life and not focusing every aspect of my life around art. It may sound counterproductive to some. For myself, however, living and soaking in some of life's day-to-day energy allows me to come back to the drawing board with new

fresh and creative ideas.

### NHN: Future goals/plans?

JH: Excel in my art career through festivals and murals within my local area. Build a website to showcase my work and communicate with people who are interested in my work or working with me on bigger projects. Never stop creating or practicing, even when I am feeling discouraged or afraid of taking on a bigger project or learning something new.

#### 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>.



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# Transportation Innovation Coming to Lake Nona

BY NICOLE LABOSCO

## Reimagining Mobility Within Lake Nona

On Nov. 12 in the early afternoon, the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced the recipients of the BUILD grant at the UCF College of Medicine in Lake Nona. The BUILD grant stands for Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development. Elaine L. Chao, USDOT Secretary, was joined by Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis for the formal announcement.

“The Administration is targeting BUILD Transportation grants to repair, rebuild and revitalize significant infrastructure projects across the country,” said Chao.

A check was displayed on podiums to be paid to the order of America’s Infrastructure for \$883.5 million as part of the BUILD Grant Program. Another check was made out to the Orange County Government of Florida for \$20 million for the Reimagining Mobility Project. This \$20 million grant will go straight to the development of infrastructure within the community we call home – Lake Nona.

“I think it’s great today to have Florida chosen as the backdrop for today’s announcement given the tremendous impact that bill grants have had in creating a modern, robust transportation system. ... In fact, the state of Florida is first in the number of bill grants received as well as first in the dollar amount,” exclaimed Gov. DeSantis.

Over 666 applications for the BUILD grant were submitted, and a total of 55 projects in 35 states were chosen. Those projects that were selected needed to provide potential to improve safety, rebuild and refurbish the nation’s critical infrastructure, improve quality of life, and be ready for the future without hampering innovation.

“This is an incredible win for the region and yet another example of how the right public-private partnerships can distinguish themselves and win big when we collaborate together,” said Rasesh Thakkar, senior managing director of Tavistock. “The Local Alternative Mobility Network (LAMN) is a forward-thinking project within the Lake Nona living lab environment that will better position Orange County and Orlando for a new wave of multi-modal transportation solutions, all with a view toward scaling the learnings from this innovation to the rest of the region, the state, and the country.”

The \$20 million BUILD grant for Orange County will support the investment in multi-modal transportation by adding several key elements:

- **A full-service mobility networking hub connecting multiple forms of transportation:**
  - Full-service hub facility for recreational and commuter users located in Lake Nona Town Center that will connect all modes of transportation and include restrooms with shower facilities, digital kiosks, seating, bike racks, storage, and access to dedicated parking.
- **Infrastructure that supports a fleet of autonomous vehicles (AV):**
  - Infrastructure required for the safe and efficient operation of an AV fleet consisting of approximately 20 multi-passenger shuttles on the route network. Infrastructure includes dedicated AV stops, shared ROW lanes, dedicated AV lanes, and AV storage, maintenance, and vehicle charging stations. In addition,



Officials pose with checks totaling \$903.5 million for advancing the nation’s infrastructure; Courtesy of Nicole LaBosco.

tion, the AV system and its users will have access to the same services for the shared bicycle and electric assist programs to be offered in Lake Nona.

- NOTE: BUILD grant funds will not be used to purchase vehicles, only to support the infrastructure.
- **Bicycle Transportation Network (BTN), which consists of three facility types to accommodate various users:**
  - Multi-use trail network (MUT) provides commuter and recreational corridors for bicycle and pedestrian users alike.
  - Dedicated commuter way provides destination-oriented commuter paths for higher-speed travel.
  - Enhanced and expanded on-street dedicated lanes support the travel of bicycle users throughout the community.
  - The BTN is complemented by strategically located support facilities, called “Recovery Zones,” that allow users to rehydrate, repair and recover while biking.
- **Linear Park:**
  - A linear park connecting a dense, mixed-use environment within Lake Nona Town Center, displacing a conventional automobile street with a dedicated bicycle commuter way, dedicated AV right of way, and pedestrian paths organized around an exposed storm water conveyance waterway.
- **Linear Park Bridge:**
  - A dedicated bridge over the highly traveled, six-lane Lake Nona Boulevard, providing bicycle and pedestrian access to the Lake Nona Town Center and Mobility Network Hub.

There will also be green link multi-modal routes to reduce stormwater runoff. These infrastructure advancements will reduce congestion and improve air quality.



Linear Park Rendering; Courtesy of Tavistock Development Company.

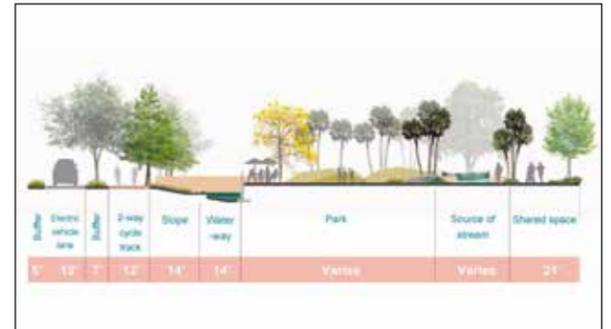
Jacksonville will receive an additional \$20 million, and Miami will receive \$22 million to enhance a 10-mile mass transit corridor. Florida will receive \$62 million overall in this round of BUILD grants.

“Today’s announcement will highlight innovative projects that will support Florida’s growing infrastructure needs and help lay the groundwork for the future of transportation systems,” DeSantis continued. “Today’s announcement also speaks to our efforts to modernize this infrastructure system to keep up with Florida’s rapid growth. We need a stable and efficient transportation network here in Florida, but particularly in Central Florida, which is a very fast-growing area, and those needs are going to continue to be [important] in the future. When you have a lack of mobility, when you have congestion plaguing metropolitan areas, that costs money because it costs productivity, it costs time, and it costs effort.”

Nearly 70% of the nation’s LAMN miles are in rural areas. One-fifth of Americans live in rural areas, and nearly half of deaths occur on rural roads, according to Chao. This is a safety issue, and these grants aim to build on the safety of residents as it’s a top priority.

“With this ambitious project, we strive to create better mobility options,” said Orange County Mayor Jerry L. Demings. “This is about looking ahead to new technologies and innovative transportation solutions to ensure the future mobility of our residents and visitors. Tavistock has continued to be a great partner in our community espousing smart growth and innovation in community-building. We are pleased that they have stepped up to be the sponsor for this exciting project.”

Jessi Blakley, vice president of communications for Tavistock Development Company, mentioned that Mayor Demings and Orange County have a huge focus on transportation and how one of their biggest priorities is safety and reducing traffic congestion.



Specs for Linear Park; Courtesy of Tavistock Development Company.

“The focus of our grant really surrounded on automobile dependency. How do you reduce automobile dependency in a large-scale community? And so, we focused on that first mile and last mile. And so, by expanding people’s opportunities in the multi-modes in which they can get around the community – you’ve got the bike lanes, you’ve got also things like the scooters and mopeds, trail-ways for pedestrian paths as well as dedicated lanes for autonomous. So, it’s really just going to give people more options to get around the community.”

Tavistock has its boots to the ground ready to jump on this project as soon as possible. Permits have already been sent off, and expected project completion is anywhere from three to five years.



# Narcoossee Road Widening Update

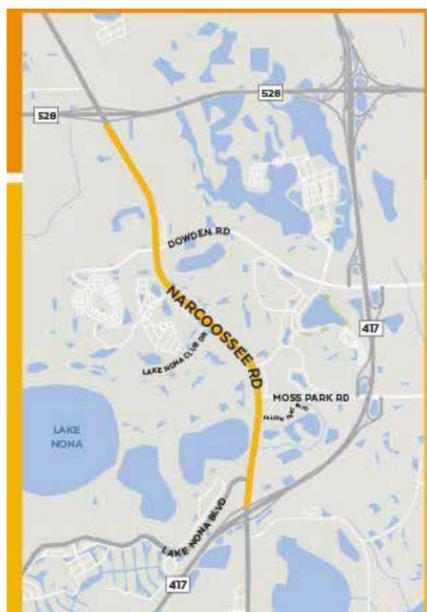
ARTICLE BY DEMI TAVERAS  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF  
ORLANDO.GOV

As our community gets bigger, so will our beloved Lake Nona. The Narcoossee Road Widening and Improvements Project is a City of Orlando roadway improvement project that has an anticipated start date of fall 2019. Narcoossee Road will be widening to six lanes between state roads 528 and 417 with an anticipated completion date of fall 2022. Over the next three years, the city of Orlando will construct a 1.6-mile trail alongside the road with added turn lanes and bike lanes; the project also includes upgrades for things like lighting and signalization, as well as upgrades to the City of Orlando water systems between Lake Nona Boulevard and Moss Park Road.

Construction will begin with the trail, which will be eight to 13 feet wide. Some features of the trail will be a bike repair

station and benches. The projected completion of the trail itself is 10 months, according to the City of Orlando press release. Shoulder closures will be necessary for the completion of the trail.

After the trail has been completed, work



will begin on the new, added lanes and improvements on utilities. A left-turn and right-turn lane will be added at Moss Park Road and Dowden Road, and a new directional median opening will be added at Falcon Parc Boulevard. Following the completion of these, Narcoossee will be milled and replaced with fresh layers of asphalt. A low-profile barrier will be placed in the median, and the installation of the wastewater pipe will commence. Lastly, the final layer of asphalt will be placed on all six lanes. The project also includes decorative landscaping with native shrubs and trees like live oaks, pines and cedars.

Since the work will begin on the roadway shoulders, we can expect little disruption to everyday traffic. The construction crew will work behind the barrier wall during the weekdays while any construction at the major intersections will occur during the night, 10 p.m.-5 a.m., Sunday through Thursday.

We’re looking forward to eventually seeing our new and improved Narcoossee Road!



# Orlando International Airport Brings Out the Big Dogs

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS  
BY NICOLE LABOSCO

When's the next time you're traveling? Imagine strolling through the airport with your bags in tow and you hear, "Who's a good boy/girl?!" No, you're not hallucinating. You turn around and discover a furry friend who's receiving a bunch of love from passing travelers. You can't resist the cuteness, and you make your way toward the four-legged pup as if you're in a trance. (We can't blame you.)

You meet Annabel, a golden retriever, and learn that she's part of Orlando International Airport's newest program, the MCO Paw Pilots. MCO Paw Pilots puts their best paws forward to offer comfort to those who are traveling. Annabel is a certified therapy dog and is just one of 10 teams that are part of the initiative.

The traveling public can decompress with cuddles and kisses from their favorite pups, and if you have a fear of flying, be sure to pet before you jet for a few moments to destress. According to psychcentral.com, "As many as 20 to 30% of people are apprehensive about flying, and between two and 10% of people at any point in time have a phobia about flying."

Allow the MCO Paw Pilots to help you overcome the hustle and bustle of one of the busiest airports. MCO has more than 49 million annual passengers and is the busiest airport in Florida. MCO is also the 10<sup>th</sup> busiest airport in the United States.

"We understand that travel can be stressful, and the Greater Orlando Aviation Authority (GOAA) wants to try something new to enhance the customer experience," said Brian Engle, GOAA's director of customer experience. "Our Paw Pilots will offer the right balance of comfort and cuddles with our team of vetted therapy dogs and their handlers."

The 10 teams can be found in the main terminal building (not at the gates) and will appear at various times throughout the week for two hours each. Each of the therapy dog teams have been screened and certified as a therapy dog for at least two years by the Alliance of Therapy Dogs to ensure the safety of the MCO guests. All dogs also had to pass an in-person screening and an in-terminal test before receiving



Tori

ing an invite to join the MCO Paw Pilots.

The MCO Paw Pilot program is currently in trial mode and will be evaluated next year to determine if it will officially be added as a long-term customer service program, according to the press release.

Here's a list of the good boys and girls that are making a difference:

- Annabel – Golden Retriever
- Annie – Golden Retriever
- Fifi – Miniature Schnauzer
- Daisy-Mai – Pomeranian
- Jora – Golden and Labrador Retriever Mix
- Essie – Rescue (potentially Corgi and Border Collie mix)
- Tori – German Shepherd
- Farley – Bearded and Border Collie mix
- Woody – Basset Hound

We're pretty paws-itive that the good boys and girls will be making an impact for travelers and can't wait to meet even more teams because it's a dog-gone good time!

*Please note that therapy dogs are different from service dogs and emotional support dogs. Whereas both therapy and service dogs require training, emotional support dogs do not. Therapy dogs are meant to be pet and receive attention and affection from the public, which is opposite when discussing service dogs as they should be ignored since they are a working animal to help with whatever reason(s) their owner has them. Therapy dogs can typically be found at sites after a tragic event, helping victims and first responders cope, or at airports or hospitals. Service dogs can go anywhere as long as they are working and behaving. Emotional support dogs are allowed on planes (and even those laws are changing).*



Jora shows off how to be a good therapy dog with a bunch of kisses!



Woody



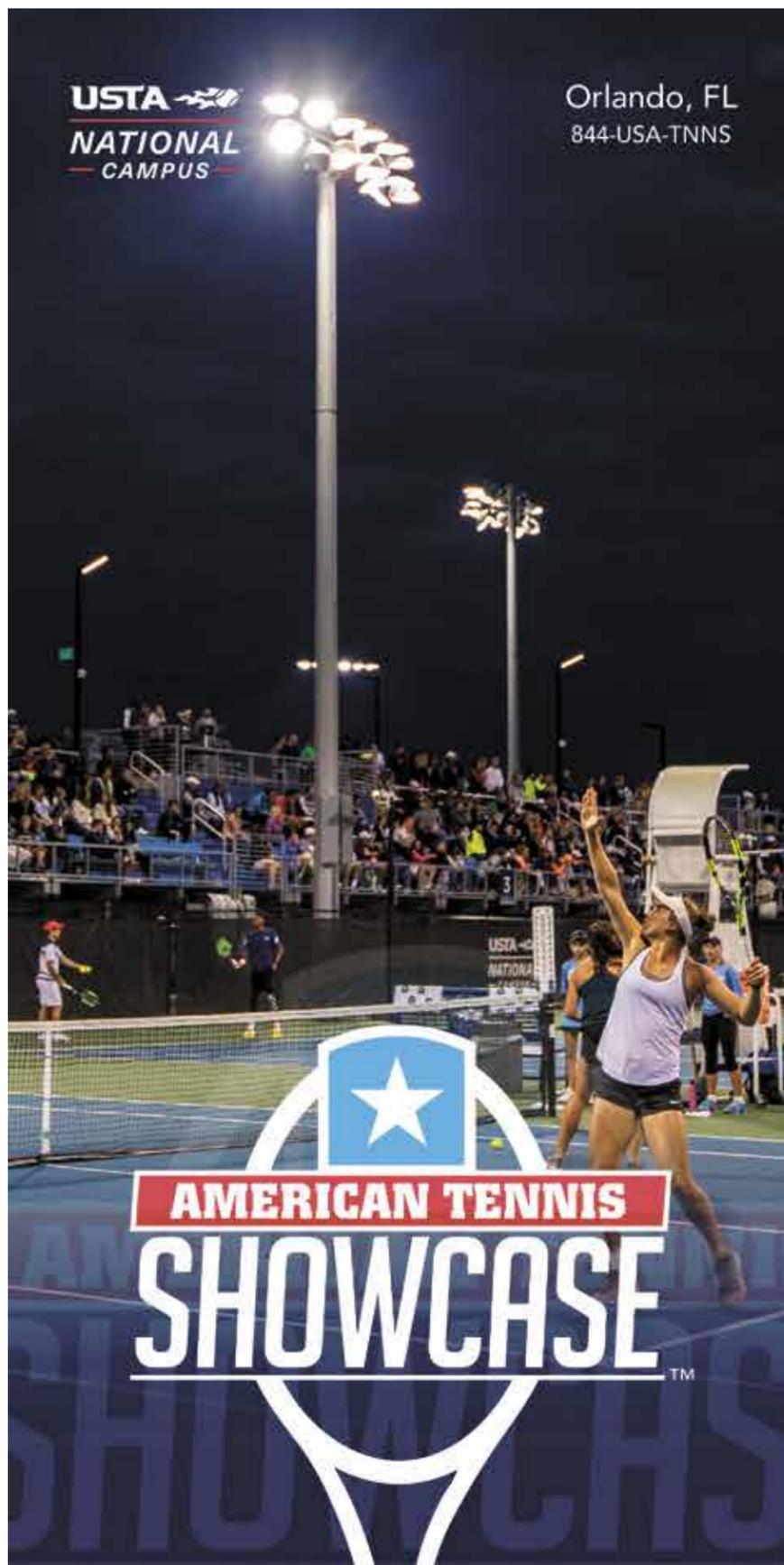
Farley



Jora



Annabel



## Two-Day Event

**December 13**  
**Skills Challenge**  
**7:00 PM EST**  
Gates Open/Fan Fest  
5:30 PM

**December 14**  
**Match Play**  
**5:00 PM EST**  
Gates Open/Fan Fest  
3:30 PM

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CHANNEL

Past participants include Frances Tiafoe, CiCi Bellis, Bjorn Fratangelo, Jennifer Brady, and more.  
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rebellious because they believe it's an important question that should be asked or maybe simply out of anger. If one or both of these are the case, redirect the question to why they are asking you this question. For example, let's say your cousin, who always gets shut down from asking about political beliefs because she is known to instigate arguments, decides to ask who you will vote for in the next election. Your response can be something like a light-hearted laugh and a reply like, "Why do you want to know?" This will catch her off guard and prompt her to think about why she wants to know and possibly rethink her question. If she says "just 'cause," light-heartedly say something along the lines of how you

think she may want to get into an argument and just walk away.

think she may want to get into an argument and just walk away.

think she may want to get into an argument and just walk away.

think she may want to get into an argument and just walk away.

## Tough Things to Talk About: How to Handle The Holiday Stress

BY NATALIA JARAMILLO

The holidays are upon us and so are the endless family gatherings, present giving and receiving, and general stress that it encompasses. When it comes to the holiday season, many people have a love-hate relationship with it. This tough relationship comes from attempting to navigate the stress without a game plan. So, here is your key guide to making your own successful game plan to handle the holidays.

Family gatherings that are bound to happen mean one thing that most people dread – nosy relatives you haven't seen in a while. Whether they are asking about why you are single, why you aren't the president of the USA yet, or why you look the way you do, here is how you should approach awkward family questions. First off, you need to quickly identify why the person may be asking you an awkward question. There are typically six reasons someone may ask you an awkward question, according to Diane Barth's article "Why People Ask You Awkward and Annoying Questions" in *Psychology Today*.

First, they may not understand what they are asking; your family member may not get that what they are asking isn't okay to ask or shouldn't be asked. If this is the case, you need to approach it as if they mean the best. Tell them you appreciate their concern and redirect their question to something a little more acceptable.

The second, third, and fourth reasons your family members may want to ask awkward questions are just to be

think she may want to get into an argument and just walk away.

think she may want to get into an argument and just walk away.



## HEALTH & WELLNESS

### Have a Heart-Healthy Holiday

BY USMAN HASHMI, MD, FACC

Though we love this time of year, it can be pretty stressful. Crazy schedules. Financial strain. Traffic. Less time for exercise. Complicated family dynamics. Studies have shown that cardiac events such as heart attacks and strokes peak during the holiday season.

A number of factors are thought to be responsible, but a major one is that normal routines are disrupted during the holidays, leading to a significant increase in stress. Since we know that's not on your wishlist, here are a few things to think about:

#### GET SOME REST AND UNPLUG.

Quality sleep helps to protect your heart and keep your stress levels down. Practice good sleep hygiene; that means no smart phones in bed. In fact, charge your devices away from your bed. If your phone has a blue light filter, turn it on because this type of light generated from the screen can negatively affect your melatonin levels, an important sleep hormone. Anyone might be tired from all the hustle and bustle of holiday prep, but if you're waking up feeling like you never went to bed in the first place, there may be a bigger problem. Ask yourself how long it's been going on, and talk to your doctor about the possibility of sleep apnea. This very common, treatable disorder is linked to hyper-

tension, irregular heart rhythm, heart attack and coronary artery disease.

#### DON'T IGNORE SYMPTOMS.

If you feel unwell, don't delay seeking medical attention. Men and women should look out for changes in their normal health. Symptoms include chest pain or discomfort, shortness of breath, dizziness or passing out, nausea or vomiting, extreme fatigue, lightheadedness, pain in the jaw, neck, or back, or pain in the shoulder or arm.

#### SAY NO.

It sounds simple, but it's so easy to forget when you're looking at that plate full of cheesy mashed potatoes with a side of chocolate cake. Or you've received another invitation for which you really don't have the capacity; you can say no. You don't have to go to every party, eat every treat, or buy every gift. Overindulging, no matter how you do it, is a fast track to stress, and it's bad for your heart. Protect your schedule, your budget, and your heart by pacing yourself and staying in control.



**About Dr. Hashmi**  
Usman Hashmi, MD, FACC, is board certified in cardiology, both interventional and nuclear, and internal medicine. He grew up in Buffalo, New York. Dr. Hashmi's primary focus is on comprehensive and compassionate patient-centered care emphasizing a unified team approach with the patient, their family, and all healthcare providers.



For more information and to make an appointment, visit [YourCentralFloridaDoctor.com/Cardiac](http://YourCentralFloridaDoctor.com/Cardiac) or call 407-303-6588.

# USTA: The American Tennis Showcase

BY DANIEL PYSER

December is the one month of the year that professional tennis goes on hiatus as the 2019 season comes to a close in November, and players across the world gear up for the 2020 campaign, which starts in early January in Australia.

While stadiums and arenas across the world sit empty, the adidas Performance Center at the USTA National Campus will be bustling with activity as a number of the top American professionals will be hard at work with the USTA Player Development staff. December is crunch time for the players' off-season training regimen as they work on their fitness and fine-tune their games heading into the next season.

While the number of players training in Lake Nona rises during this time of year, the core group of Orlando residents who train at the USTA National Campus year-round will be working to build on their 2019 success.

That group is led by Madison Keys, a perennial Top-20 player on the WTA Tour, who added two more titles to her resume in 2019, including the biggest of her career at the Western & Southern Open in Cincinnati this summer. She ended the year ranked No. 13 in the world after reaching the Round of 16 or better in three of the year's four Grand Slam tournaments.

She is joined by Alison Riske, who ended the season ranked a career-best world No. 18 after a breakout 2019 campaign, as well as Caroline Dolehide and Ann Li, who



each reached career-high rankings in November.

Two former Top-50 players – CiCi Bellis and Mackenzie McDonald – are also training in Lake Nona to prepare for their return to the pro tour after prolonged injury absences. 20-year-old Bellis, once ranked a career-high No. 35 in the WTA Rankings, has not competed consistently since a wrist injury and multiple surgeries sidelined her starting in March 2018. McDonald, 24, broke into the ATP's Top 50 in the spring before a hamstring injury ended his season.

The December training block will culminate with the American Tennis Showcase on Dec. 13-14, which will not only serve as a training opportunity for the players to experience a match-like atmosphere, but it will also give the Lake Nona community the chance to watch the nation's best young players in person for free.

This year's event has been expanded to two days with a special Skills Challenge headlining Friday's action, in which players will compete head-to-head in a number of on-court games and contests. Saturday will feature match play, with players being divided into two teams competing in both singles and doubles.

In addition to the world-class tennis talent, the event will feature free kids' activities, live music, specialty food and drinks, as well as an autograph session with the participating athletes.

Friday night begins at 7 p.m., while Saturday action gets underway at 5 p.m. Each day, the Fan Fest begins an hour-and-a-half before the start of the event. Saturday's matches will be broadcast live on Tennis Channel.

For more information, including how to reserve your free tickets, please visit [www.ustanationalcampus.com](http://www.ustanationalcampus.com).



## Namaste With Natalia: Extended Side Angle

### Utthita Parsvakonasana

#### Your Monthly Yoga Pose

ARTICLE BY NATALIA FOOTE  
PHOTOS BY TARA SPROC

The final month of the year is here! December is full of emotions and giving everything the final push to finish the year strong. Perhaps you look forward to the end of Q4, donating to an organization to get the last tax break, or maybe you look forward to taking some much-needed time off. Either way, December is the last reach, the last stretch before a fresh new year begins.

Extended side angle, or *Utthita Parsvakonasana*, is exactly that. This pose is the ultimate reach. The pose is grounding and strengthening in the legs, lightness in the arms, and a complete body stretch. In addition to the side body receiving a stretch, the hamstrings and groin muscles receive a deep stretch as well. The pose looks deceptively simple, but a number of stabilizing muscles work together to keep you aligned. And it is easy to sag in the pelvic floor, which decreases the effectiveness of the pose.

1. Begin in mountain pose and step your left leg back about 3-4 feet.
2. Allow your hips to open to the side but keep the right toes pointed toward the top of the mat.
3. The left foot should slightly angle in.
4. Bend the right leg and try to get the right thigh parallel to the ground. (It requires some flexibility to do this, so try and bend as much as you safely can.)
5. Keep the left leg straight and lean the upper body toward the right side.
6. Place the full palm of the right hand on the ground next to the outer edge of the right foot. (This also requires a great deal of flexibility.) A few variations are possible for the right arm and hand placement. You may bend the right arm and gently place the elbow on the right thigh. The right arm may reach toward the front or side of the mat. A block may be used to bring the ground closer to the right hand. The right hand may come on the inside of the right foot. The right arm may come under the thigh and bind with the left. Lots of options are available for the right arm, but please find a placement that maintains the integrity of the pose and allows you to breathe



deeply while in it.

7. While maintaining strength in the legs, reach the left arm overhead. If you have the range of motion in your neck, gaze at the left fingertips.

8. Breathe for five full breaths and switch sides.

According to the Yoga Anatomy Book, *Utthita Parsvakonasana* asks the spine to maintain neutrality as you stretch the side body. In addition, breath action in this posture provides very useful asymmetrical stimulation to the diaphragm and all the organs attached to it.

Extended side angle pose feels like the ultimate reach. In my personal practice, I have pulled away from practicing the full expression as I find strength and ease in using a block, enabling me to breathe more effectively. I hope you are able to find strength and ease during the month of December. And I hope you are able to breathe deep.

Namaste.



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



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# Good Sleep, Good Health, Good Life

BY KRISTINA GRABNICKAS,  
ARNP - NURSE PRACTITIONER

Sleep is often one of the first things to go when people feel pressed for time. Many view sleep as a luxury and think that the benefits of limiting the hours they spend asleep outweigh the costs. People often overlook the potential long-term health consequences of insufficient sleep and the impact that health problems can ultimately have on one's time and productivity.

Many of the costs of poor sleep go unnoticed.

Sleep plays a vital role in good health and wellbeing throughout your life. Getting enough quality sleep at the right time can help protect your mental health, physical health, quality of life, and safety. For example, sleep is involved in healing and the repair of your heart and blood vessels. Ongoing sleep deficiency is linked to an increased risk of heart disease, kidney

disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, and stroke.

Sleep helps your brain work properly. While you're sleeping, your brain is preparing for the next day. It's forming new pathways to help you learn and remember information. Studies also show that sleep deficiency alters activity in some parts of the brain. If you're sleep deficient, you may have trouble making decisions, solving problems, controlling your emotions and behavior, and coping with change. Sleep deficiency also has been linked to depression, suicide, and risk-taking behavior.

Fatigue and sleepiness can reduce productivity and increase the chance for mishaps, such as errors and motor vehicle or industrial accidents.

**"Washington, D.C. (November 4, 2016) – The National Sleep Foundation (NSF) recent fielding of the Sleep Health Index® (SHI) reports staggering drowsy driving statistics: Three percent of Americans, representing more than seven million drivers, reported falling asleep behind the wheel within the past two weeks. Equally alarming, results of the SHI also indicate that people only felt well-rested about four days per week."**

Sleep helps maintain a healthy balance of the hormones that make you feel hungry (ghrelin) or full (leptin). When you don't get enough sleep, your level of ghrelin goes up and your level of leptin goes down. This makes you feel hungrier than when you're well-rested.

Sleep also affects how your body reacts to insulin, the hormone that controls your blood glucose (sugar) level. Sleep deficiency results in a higher-than-normal blood sugar level, which may increase your risk for diabetes. While sleeping well is no guarantee of good health, it does help to maintain many vital functions. Sleep provides cells and tissues with the opportunity to recover from the wear and tear of daily life. Major restorative functions, such as tissue repair, muscle growth, and protein and hormonal synthesis, occur during sleep:

- Fight off infection
- Support the metabolism of sugar to prevent diabetes
- Solidify and consolidate memory
- Work effectively and safely

Persons experiencing sleep insufficiency are also more likely to suffer from chronic diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, depression, and obesity as well as from cancer, increased mortality, and reduced quality of life and productivity.



Sleep insufficiency may be caused by broadscale societal factors such as round-the-clock access to technology and work schedules, but sleep disorders such as insomnia or obstructive sleep apnea also play an important role. An estimated 50-70 million U.S. adults have sleep or wakefulness disorder. Not surprisingly, these potential adverse health effects can add up to increased healthcare costs and decreased productivity. More importantly, insufficient sleep can ultimately affect life expectancy and day-to-day well-being. An analysis of data from three separate studies suggests that sleeping five or fewer hours per night may increase mortality risk by as much as 15%.

Sleep experts say there is ample evidence which shows that when people get the sleep they need, they will not only feel better but will also increase their odds of living healthier, more productive lives.

## EDUCATION

### Ringing in the New Year With The Sound of The Lions

ARTICLE BY JENNY LYNN  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF PAUL THIERRY

To bring in the New Year of 2020, our very own Lake Nona High School band, Sound of the Lions, is preparing to travel abroad to London's New Year's Day Parade and provide one of their greatest performances yet. This year's Parade theme is a celebration of life called "London Loves Life."

London's New Year's Day Parade is a spectacular event, and the band members at Lake Nona High School are prepared to perform alongside 21 other marching bands from across the United States. See a complete list of bands below:

- Colton Joint Unified School District All-Star Band
- The Brunswick High School Marching Band
- Campo Verde High School Marching Band
- Edward C Reed High School Raider Band
- Glenbrook North High School Band
- Hempfield Area Spartan Band
- Hendersonville High School Band
- Lake Nona High School Sound of the Lions
- Lake Zurich High School Marching Band
- Marshall University Marching Thunder
- The Murrieta Valley All Star Marching Band
- Newport High School Band
- The Nogales High School Noble Regiment
- Parkview Marching Band
- Putnam School Marching Band
- The Saints Brigade Drum & Bugle Corps
- Southmoore High School Band
- The St. Clair County High School Marching Band
- The Tri-City Band Corps
- West Boca Raton High School Band
- West Orange Warrior Band
- Dulaney High School



The marching bands will be joined by hundreds of other performers while walking down a 2.2-mile parade route. Millions of spectators will be lined up along the road to watch, and millions more will be watching on their televisions.

The parade starts at noon on Jan. 1 (7 a.m. EST). You can tune into channels like RFD-TV to watch from home. The Lake Nona High School band will be the 46th performance in the parade. You can see a complete list of performers here. The publishers of *Nonahood News*, Rhys and Jenny Lynn, will be our Lake Nona media team onsite with updates and video to share back home. Make sure to follow *Nonahood News* :



@nonahoodnews.

### Cosmic Wonders Of Lake Nona

ARTICLE BY ISHU MARTINEZ  
PHOTOS BY ISHU MARTINEZ AND KOSHA SHAH



Left to right: Aarish Reddy, Juhi Shah, Olive Martinez, Maya Prasad, Sidney Guy, Aarush Palmurkar, and Abdus-Samad Shaik.

When you hear the words "Cosmic Wonders," one cannot help but think of something related to space or about our galaxy. But Cosmic Wonders is actually a group of kids who are a part of FIRST Lego League, or FLL. I recently had the chance to meet this group of kids and got to know more about FLL and their team.

There are seven members on this team, and they are from the ages of 10-13. Sidney Guy, Olive Martinez, Aarush Palmurkar, Maya Prasad, Aarish Reddy, Abdus-Samad Shaik, and Juhi Shah are the Cosmic Wonders, and they have known each other since elementary school. Aside from Abdus-Samad, who is in 5th grade, the rest of the children are in middle school. Most of them have been competing for three years and are currently working on this year's FLL theme, "City Shapers."

So what is FLL? According to the FLL, FIRST stands for "For Inspiration & Recognition of Science & Technology." It is an alliance between FIRST and the LEGO group. There are 40,000 teams, 320,000+ participants, and can be found in 98 countries. 40,000 teams!

Aarush informs me that FLL consists of three parts – Project, Core Values, and Robo game. Project is where you choose and research about the problem based on the yearly topic that is given to the teams. Each team works together in not just coding and building a robot made out of Legos but also coming up with a new solution to an existing problem. This might seem challenging, but not to this group of kids, aka Cosmic Wonders.

Olive, who has been part of FLL for three years, enjoys working on the project part. She likes to research about the given topic because she likes to learn and find different and new ideas/methods to solve problems.

The next part of the FLL is the Core Values, which teach the kids about teamwork, inclusion, discovery, innovation, impact, where the kids explore new skills, and, most importantly, fun. I asked Juhi if it is hard to follow core values while working on this type of project with friends. She replied, "No, because we have learned to listen and respect each other, even though we all have different ideas and opinions. We learn to resolve our differences by listening to each other and realizing that, in the end,

our disputes are just silly."

Robo game seems to be a favorite for all of the kids since they all love to code and program the robot. Aarish informs me that the robo game is about the robot that they have built, coded and programmed to solve different missions on the game mat.

Sidney, Olive, Aarush, Maya, Aarish, and Juhi have known each other for years and decided to work together and try out something new by creating their own FLL team. Last year was the first time they competed together against several other teams. Although they were nervous, they were also excited to meet other teams and to learn from each other. When asked, "What was their favorite part of the competition?" they all answered, "When we found out that we won and that we would be competing in the regionals."

Each of them not only meet once a week to work on coding, researching, and building the robot, but all of them have extracurricular activities. Sidney is learning tennis, capoeira, and is also part of math club. I was amazed that he has time for not just the weekly Lego meeting, but also for the many after-school activities, and he continues to excel in middle school. He lets me know that by scheduling and managing his time wisely, there is no reason as to why he cannot do all the extracurricular activities that he enjoys. I definitely need his help in scheduling my calendar.

Abdus-Samad is the youngest and the newest member of the team. Although he was nervous at first to be part of Cosmic Wonders, he now enjoys and loves to research and learn to code together with his new friends. Maya is the oldest and wanted to be a part of the team not just to learn something new, but also to help her decide if she wanted a career in engineering or computers.

Their competition is coming up in a few months, and these kids have been working hard in researching, improving their coding skills, and learning from their mistakes when building their robot. It amazes me that these kids are able to balance their school life, extracurricular activities, and also have the time for their Lego robotic meetings. These kids hope to inspire other children to not just learn to code and program a robot made out of Legos but also remind other kids not to give up and keep trying to get better. These kids have encountered many problems and mistakes during their mock mission robo game, but they continue to keep working hard, perfect their coding, learn, and improve from their mistakes. The girls in this team especially hope to inspire other girls to learn something new in the STEM field and hope to see more girls participate in the FLL competition.

To any kid out there reading this article, I leave you these parting words from Aarish, "FLL is not just building a robot out of Legos or coding. It is more than that. It is about inspiring each other, finding new ways and ideas to solve problems, building confidence, and learning not to give up even after many failed attempts to solve a mission/problem."

# SCHOOL UPDATES

## MOSS PARK ELEMENTARY

BY DR. STEPHANIE OSMOND, PRINCIPAL

There are a lot of exciting things going on at Moss Park Elementary! Most recently, we announced and cast our annual Moss Park Players production. This year, our students will perform *Frozen JR*. We can't wait to see the talent Ms. Jacobacci will bring out in our young performers. In addition to this, we have a variety of other after-school activities that have kicked off. We are so excited to be able to offer our students activities that will instill a love of learning beyond the classroom, and we cannot do it without the dedication of our wonderful teachers! These activities are focused on increasing STEAM in our school and include visual arts as well as science and math.

We recently completed our Boosterthon Fun Run. This is always a highlight for our students as they enjoy the character lessons and the atmosphere that the event provides. However, it is only successful because of our continued community support. Thank you to the families for supporting our school.

As we focus on character and team building this year, we have implemented a house structure for our students. The houses focus on different character traits. Each of our students and staff members have been sorted in our first-ever sorting ceremony. They selected an Eagle Egg from our mascot Goldies' nest. The egg contained their house bracelet. This was an exciting event, and we are looking forward to embedding the teamwork, mentorship and positive character into our culture.

Our vocabulary parade was a wonderful success; we had so many wonderful new words to learn. The conversations students were having about their own words were amazing! Thank you all for your support!



## EAGLE CREEK ELEMENTARY

BY JESSICA SCULLY

Hello, Panther Community!

**Hispanic Heritage Night.** We had an amazing time at our Hispanic Heritage Celebration! Our first-grade students accompanied by our grade-level STEAM groups did a fantastic job with their performances! Thank you, Ms. Grande and Ms. Zimmerman, for leading our student performances! We also want to thank School Board Member Ms. Johanna Lopez for her support.

**Boosterthon.** Last month, we ended our Boosterthon fundraiser with an awesome Fun Run. Parents, thank you all so much for supporting this year's Eagle Creek Fun Run. I would like to congratulate all of our students for completing the Boosterthon Fun Run. I would like to thank our PTA, our parent volunteers, and Eagle Creek families who came out to support our runners, as well as those who donated to help support our school.

**Relay for Life.** We are so proud and thankful for a very successful Relay for Life Event, raising \$7,000 at Eagle Creek for the American Cancer Society. Kudos to everyone at ECE who participated throughout our fundraising efforts, especially to the following for all of their hard work and assistance with Relay for Life: our organizers Ms. Andraski and Ms. Rydell, Chess Club, K Kids, NEHS, SGA kids, Chorus, Art Club, Ms. Roller, PTA, Ms. Hodgkins, Ms. Fisher, and Ms. Giblin.

**Maitland Art Show.** We are pleased to announce that last month during the 43rd Maitland Rotary Art Festival, our students represented our school, and we were thrilled to showcase their work. The Maitland Art Festival has been around since 1976 and has always been a great venue for exploring what our community has to offer through the arts. The Maitland Art Festival is surrounding Lake Lily in Maitland, Florida.



## SUN BLAZE ELEMENTARY

We want to congratulate Ms. Carra, our OCPS HERO teacher! Ms. Carra is one of our fourth-grade ELA teachers, who challenges her students to strive for their best. She models this each day as she challenges herself to learn the new content while keeping it engaging for her students. Congratulations, Ms. Carra!

We are so proud of our Sun Blaze Dance Team for a very successful experience at Dance Performance Assessment (DPA) at the Linda Chapin Theater in the Orange County Convention Center. They were adjudicated in front of a panel of judges on their jazz piece, "Good to Be Bad" from Disney's *Descendants 3*, and had an outstanding evening performance. We want to thank Ms. LaPuz and Ms. Towle for their time, talents and instruction they give to our amazing group of students!

In November, Sun Blaze took part in the Lake Nona Relay for Life. It was a wonderful community gathering to help bring awareness and raise financial support for the American Cancer Society in the fight against cancer. We had many staff and families attend the event and pledge their support!

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

Have a safe, relaxing, and fun winter break.

Go, Stingrays!



## LAKE NONA HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

BY ANDREW GORDON

Since the last issue of *Nonahood News*, our Lions football team took on their rivals, East River, in the Battle of the Beachline. After traveling to Osceola High the previous week, the Lions traveled home on Nov. 1 to take on the East River Falcons on the Lions' senior night. The Lions beat the Falcons in a hard-fought game, 13-10, and retained the surfboard another year. After the last game of the regular season, the Lions football team found out that they had made it into the FHSAA 8A playoffs. The Lions took on the No. 1 seeded Riverview (Sarasota) on Nov. 8. Unfortunately, after traveling to Sarasota to take on Riverview, the Lions lost, and their season ended. It was a great first season in the 8A bracket this year, and overall, our varsity football team had a great season. We finished 7-4 overall, and we are looking to improve for next year. We would like to thank the Lake Nona community for their continued support throughout the season and hope to see everyone out there again next year.

Also, since the last publication, the JV football team played in their last game of the season. In the JV team's last game against Freedom High School, they beat the Patriots and finished 5-1 on the season. We are proud of how well both the freshman and JV teams played during the season and how they became better as teams throughout the season. We also want to thank the Lake Nona community again for coming out and supporting our freshman and JV teams. We hope to see everyone out there again next season.



## LAUREATE PARK ELEMENTARY

BY SUZANNE WORKUM

Laureate Park Elementary wrapped up the second quarter in typical Longhorn style: celebrating our successes! All of our students who met their Accelerated Reading (AR) goal for the second quarter were celebrated with a snow cone party.

Our Longhorns participated in Multicultural Night, a celebration of all of our many cultures represented at Laureate Park Elementary. Families brought food and dressed in the traditional clothing of their home countries. It was a delicious and informative celebration of our families. In November, we shared our love of books by presenting Literacy Night. Everyone was excited when a special guest, Clifford, greeted our families.

Our parents joined our classrooms during Teach In and shared with our students their careers and passions. From firefighters to doctors to dentists to sports professionals, our students really loved all the creative presentations.

Our Longhorns celebrated World Kindness Day, dedicated to Fred Rogers, by wearing a cardigan. Kindness fills our hallways every day, so our students were excited to celebrate it. Our Storybook Character Parade brought out some amazing costumes inspired by favorite books and authors.

Congratulations to Sofia Hernandez, 1st Place, and Charlie Muniz, 2nd Place, in the K-2 division for Week of the Family essay contest. They wrote essays for the prompt: "I should be present with my family because ..." Their winning essays will be on display at the school.

Laureate Park PTA continues to bring fantastic resources to our students. Celebrated author Kate Messner was invited to speak to our students about her writing process. Our Longhorns agreed this was one of the most entertaining presentations. One student said, "I can't wait to read her books!" In addition, Laureate Park PTA supplied our clinic, attained field trip t-shirts for kindergarten and fifth grade, and supplied our teachers with books and other instructional tools.



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entertainment

# Happy Holidays



## Katie's Cucina: Grinch Buttermilk Pancakes

BY KATIE JASIEWICZ, [KATIESCUCINA.COM](http://KATIESCUCINA.COM)



Last holiday season, my son was enamored by the nonstop commercials from IHOP advertising the limited edition Grinch pancakes! Of course, naturally, we surprised him with a breakfast trip to IHOP so he could get his Grinch fix. As soon as I tasted the pancakes, I knew I could recreate these at home year round if I needed to! The following weekend, I got to testing. Needless to say, my son was delighted to enjoy Grinch pancakes all December long thanks to a little bit of recipe testing on my part. I used the base of my [butter-milk pancake recipe](#) and transformed them into Grinch pancakes!

When I first tasted the pancakes while dining at IHOP, they seemed to have a canned "cream cheese" glaze taste to them as well as green-colored Cool Whip that was just placed in a piping bag. So, you can go the easy route and use the canned frosting and just add some green dye to the Cool Whip. Or you can go the extra step and make

fresh, homemade cream cheese frosting and homemade green whipped cream. Once the whipped cream is done, you'll then place it into a piping bag to give that professional polished look. Heart-shaped sprinkles can be ordered on the Internet. I'm also starting to see a wide variety of sprinkles at your local arts-and-crafts store, so you can check there, too. Or use what you have on hand. I had some leftover Valentine's Day sprinkles, so I just picked the hearts out of those and used the remaining sprinkles I had.

You might be wondering if I like to recreate restaurant recipes often? It all depends on the dish, and with something so "limited edition," this was high on my list.

If you are looking for a fun holiday tradition, host a Grinch-themed breakfast for your kids (or family and friends) this holiday season. I hope everyone enjoys the holiday season and may add a new tradition to your month of festivities!

*Katie Jasiewicz is a full-time food blogger and recipe developer at [KatiesCucina.com](http://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.*

## GRINCH BUTTERMILK PANCAKES

Servings: 3 | Prep time: 20 min. | Cook time: 10 min. | Total time: 30 min.

### Directions:

1. In a large bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Then add in the buttermilk, milk, eggs, and melted butter. Mix for 30 seconds until all ingredients are blended.
2. Spray cooking spray on a griddle or frying pan. Heat at medium heat. Using a small ladle or ice cream scoop (using about 1/4 cup batter for each pancake or less if you want silver dollar pancakes), pour the batter onto the griddle.
3. Let cook until you begin to start bubbles form on the top of the batter (about 1-2 minutes). Then flip and cook an additional 30 seconds to one minute. Remove from griddle and repeat until all the batter is used.
4. For the cream cheese frosting: Mix together using a hand mixer or stand mixer the softened cream cheese, powdered sugar, vanilla extract, and water (start with 2 tablespoons and add additional water as needed to thin frosting). Mix until smooth and set to the side.
5. For the green whipped cream: Using a hand mixer or stand mixer fitted with whisk attachment, mix the heavy cream, powdered sugar, and green food coloring until stiff peaks form (about 3-5 minutes on medium high speed). Place in a piping bag fitted with a star (no. 1) tip.
6. To assemble the pancakes, stack pancakes, then drizzle on the cream cheese frosting. Top pancake with green whipped cream. Add heart-shaped sprinkles on top. Repeat until all the pancakes are done and enjoy.

### Ingredients:

#### For the pancakes:

- 1 cup of all-purpose flour
- 1 tbsp white sugar
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 3 tbsp milk
- 1 egg
- 2 tbsp butter, melted and slightly cooled

#### For the cream cheese frosting:

- 8 oz. cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 cup powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon clear vanilla extract
- 2-3 tablespoons water

#### For the green whipped cream:

- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 3/4 cups powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon Adams extract
- green food coloring



## LAKE NONA LIVING

### Nona Your Neighbor: Alicia Colón

ARTICLE BY CAMILLE RUIZ MANGUAL  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF ALICIA COLÓN



Alicia is the owner and manager of Menchie's in Lake Nona, a wife, and a mom of three. She is also a Nonahood resident. Check out our interview with her below!

#### NHN: What is your job?

AC: I'm the owner of Menchie's. I'm considered not only the owner but the manager.

#### NHN: What does your day-to-day schedule look like?

AC: It depends on what needs to be done. 90% of the time, I'm here at the store. A lot of people don't see me most of the time because I'm behind the scenes, but I'm easy to reach.

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

AC: I think the most challenging part would be making sure that all my team members are available and that I'll be able to schedule them according to their school schedule. We take a lot of consideration when it comes to what they're doing in



college or high school to make sure that they're available, and work doesn't interfere with their schoolwork; for us, it's very important. Besides that, the machines. Making sure that they're working right and they're producing the product, making sure the output is correct, like, is it at the right temperature and everything. You check that on a daily basis.

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

AC: I have seen a lot of kids grow up in the area. I have seen people that were pregnant that now, their kids are seven or eight years old. I've seen kids that were in elementary and now they're high schoolers, and middle schoolers who are now in college. I think the most rewarding aspect of my job goes back to seeing everyone here, the people that come, and to see them grow. With my team members, what is rewarding for me is when I see them leave the store, and they're reaching their future; they're reaching what they studied for. And that, I think, is the most rewarding. Knowing that we were their first jobs, and from here, they moved on to college or university, away or nearby, or they still work during the summer. I think it's rewarding seeing my team members grow and seeing the community enjoy coming to the store.

#### NHN: What got you interested in doing your current job in this area?

AC: Menchie's came to our lives when I was sick. It was discovered that I was allergic to soy, and soy was affecting my bones. After visiting various places with my family to eat, the only place that I found that had a binder with information for me to be able to read and know if I can eat it or not was actually at Menchie's. That was the only franchise or restaurant at the time, seven years ago, that actually had that binder in place. Any other restaurant, any pizza place, any burger joint that I went to with my family, I was not able to eat. I just had to sit and drink water with them. That's how we got interested in Menchie's as a franchise. It was very interesting, and it still is. It's part of my life.

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

AC: I love sewing or anything that is manual, like crocheting. I love to crochet. Collections? I collect all the Menchie's spoons that we have had. For the past seven years, Menchie's has come out with different spoons, and I've been able to grab them. Sometimes I forget about it, but I think I have almost all of them.

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

AC: Well, we've been here for seven years with Menchie's, and we're looking to be able to find another location, but it's hard. When we started Menchie's here in Lake Nona, it was first because it was near my kids' schools, and I was able to attend the store at the same time that I was not neglecting my kids and was able to be at their performances or any other activity after school. But, in the next five years, time will tell. It's hard. I'm not getting any younger [laughs] so, maybe one of my kids takes over? I don't know. I really don't know where we'll be standing.

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

AC: We moved to Lake Nona as a family 15 years ago, going on 16.

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

AC: I am from Puerto Rico. I left Puerto Rico when I was 16 years old, but I've been in the Orlando area for the last 31 years.

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

AC: How the area has grown and that we don't need to travel away from the area to be able to have quality time with our own families and friends.

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

AC: The first thing, visit the schools if you're moving here for the schools. The schools have a lot to offer, but every individual is different. You should visit schools because not all the schools have the same facilities for specific children. Lake Nona is a great community, it has a lot of places to go, and the schools are a great fundamental. And visit. Be here during the day, during the night, be part of the community, look at it. Lake Nona is great. I wouldn't change it. I moved here, and I'm staying here for a long time.



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## *Dog of the Month*



### *Jax & Oliver*

**Owner:** Chelsea Byard

**Breed:** Miniature Golden Doodles

**Age:** 4 years, 2 months; 8 months  
(at time of submission)

**Dog's Quirk/Story:** Our pups are two peas in a pod! Jax thrives in the presence of other dogs, so for Christmas, we got him a puppy. Welcome, Oliver! They are brilliantly smart and know how to manipulate their owners into playing their games. Jax loves to cuddle. Oliver is aloof and very clumsy!



*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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# One Date at a Time: Dating During the Busy Holiday Season

BY SHARON FUENTES

Let's be honest, the most wonderful time of the year can sometimes not feel so wonderful. There are presents to buy, holiday office parties to attend, baking, decorating, school choir concerts, travel plans and in-laws ... the list can go on and on. If I am not careful, it is easy for me to slip into what some experts have cleverly named ... the Clark Griswold Syndrome:



The feeling that you must be the merriest person on the block so that your family can have a spectacular Christmas (and in our case, Hanukkah, too). There is certainly nothing wrong with trying to create magical moments, but when they come at the expense of the very same people you are trying to create them for ... that is a problem.



Spending countless hours planning and hoping that a holiday event or a date with my husband will be as special as one of those cheesy Christmas Hallmark movies can quickly turn into me feeling that I can never be happy unless it is perfect, which can then lead to sadness and disappointment when reality doesn't live up. But not carving out special time can often result in even more hurt feelings, which along with the general high stress of the holiday season can easily result in spousal arguments. Which is why we as a couple over the years have learned to ditch our expectations and appreciate the little moments that we can squeeze in together during this busy time of year.



Date nights from November until after the New Year often look very different for us. With so many commitments and family obligations, an entire night out can feel more like a chore than a privilege. Even if time was available, we are often just too tired or just plain done being around other people to enjoy that. This is where realistic expectations and a bit of creativity come into play. For us,

that means fun, quick and inexpensive times that allow us to escape the craziness, reconnect, relax, and enjoy being in the moment with one another. Here are a few of our favorite holiday season quick date night-ins.

## 1 - NETFLIX AND CHILL



– (No, not what you are thinking; although if things go that way, good for you!) On the occasional cool Florida evening, there is nothing better than sitting in our backyard by a nice fire, mugs filled with coffee, sharing a blanket, and watching an episode of a show we enjoy together on our laptop. We could easily watch from the comfort of our warm, cozy living room couch. But being outside takes a bit more effort and usually ends up with us both sitting closer together, not falling asleep, and just truly enjoying each other's company.

## 2 - TAKE A LONG WALK

– and then stop to enjoy the view together! Sure, we walk the dogs often together, but it is often because we feel like we "HAVE TO" do it. But what if you changed that to ... I "GET TO" TAKE A WALK WITH MY PARTNER. That simple change in attitude can make a huge difference and often leads to a wonderful simple date.

**3 - SPEED DATE EACH OTHER** – Yes, you read correctly ... speed date your partner! Remember the fun and excitement you had when you first met and were taking time to get to know one another? Remember how you really listened to each other? What would happen if you tried to recreate that time? Set a timer and just sit down face to face and ask each other a few questions. I had no idea that my hubby's dream vacation is Tahiti. How can we have been together so long and I didn't know that? If you are at a loss of what to ask each other or how it works, here is an adorable website that offers FREE printable versions and even name tags to make it fun: [www.thedatingdivas.com/spouse-speed-dating/](http://www.thedatingdivas.com/spouse-speed-dating/).



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**4 - PLAY A BOARD GAME TOGETHER** – A study performed by Baylor University found that playing board games together for just half an hour releases oxytocin – also known as the "love hormone." Need I say more?

**5 - CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTS AND MEMORIES** – Okay, this one may be a bit cheesy Christmas Hallmark movie-ish, but turn off all the lights except the ones on the tree or the menorah and sit together with your partner, and for a few minutes, just admire it. If there are ornaments with special memories, share the stories together. Basically, for a few minutes just appreciate each other, YOUR STORY TOGETHER, and share dreams for your future.



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# LAKE NONA HOUSING MARKET UPDATE

October 2019



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www.theLizTeam.com

## Laureate Park

**43 HOMES**  
Active Inventory

**19 HOMES**  
New Listings

**SOLD LAST MONTH: 6**

Average sold price:

**\$479,609**

**97%**

List to sold price ratio



**65 DAYS**

Avg. Days on the market

## Eagle Creek

**19 HOMES**  
Active Inventory

**6 HOMES**  
New Listings

**SOLD LAST MONTH: 8**

Average sold price:

**\$571,636**

**98%**

List to sold price ratio



**80 DAYS**

Avg. Days on the market

## Village Walk

**31 HOMES**  
Active Inventory

**3 HOMES**  
New Listings

**SOLD LAST MONTH: 3**

Average sold price:

**\$321,333**

**98%**

List to sold price ratio



**100 DAYS**

Avg. Days on the market

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All data from Orlando Regional MLS. The Liz Team is not responsible for any mistakes and/or miscalculations of any of the data.

## LIFESTYLE

### To Generation Z: Healthy New Year Goals

BY NATALIA JARAMILLO

From entering high school to graduating college, it's one of the most important times in your life. Everyone goes through it, but only the people who have lived through it can give the best advice. That's where I come in, a 20-year-old college student who's been through high school and living the college experience to give you all the tips for survival.



Every New Year, all the commercials and social media posts are about everyone's New Year goals. One year, even Kylie Jenner posted on Instagram that she was going to try to be more present and post less on social media. I'm not here to tell you what to set and what not to set as a goal, but if you're going to set them, they might as well be healthy, worthwhile, and reasonably easy to stick to.

If you are like Kylie Jenner and are a little too addicted to social media, then take your time away from it. Social media is great and not so great at the same time. If you find yourself too hung up on your friend's new boyfriend rather than doing your homework, then you should definitely consider taking a step back from social media for a little bit. I suggest going cold turkey for at least two weeks. One week

is too short, and two weeks will give you a taste of how living life for yourself really feels. I went cold turkey off of social media for two weeks after I missed an assignment due to endless scrolling and ended up continuing it for a month. During that month, I found out that I was posting for other people's likes and not for the sake of my own memories. I found out that I had more time to do things that didn't make me feel kind of empty. Write in a journal how your mood and life feel before doing a social media detox for two weeks, and at the end, take note of how your mood changed. Also, try including a list of what you actually like and don't like about social media in your pre- and post-detox journal. If the cons outweigh the pros, rethink your social media usage entirely.

Losing weight is always a popular goal, but most people go about setting the goal in the wrong way. They end up failing and blaming themselves. They promise that next year will be their year. Well, if you are really trying to lose weight and really want to do it, then losing weight in a healthy way is the only way. If you set a goal to lose 10 pounds in two months when according to Mayo Clinic's advice, it's reasonable losing only one to two pounds per week, it's not motivating enough in the long term to keep going. If you set a goal to only eat fast food once a week or trade candy bars to a square of dark chocolate anytime you get a sweet craving, you are more likely to keep the goal long term. If you keep a goal long term, that's the key to success. Allowing yourself some form of reward often, but not too often, is also key to not relying on motivation but consistent ease in living healthier. Allow yourself one episode of your favorite show after you work out, or treat yourself to window shopping after a healthy eating week. The best goals for losing weight are not number-based but based on consistency.

Another New Year goal is to find a new hobby or skill. Many people decide photography, running, cooking, or reading are the best and most productive skills to pick up. I say, whatever makes you happy and can make you money will let you kill two birds with one stone. Find something you love to do and get good at it, then figure out a way to make money off of it. If your thing is photography, start a photography

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charge for photoshoots. If you love cooking, sell your recipes or ideas on how to meal prep. If you love running, start a running guide or running club. Get creative and find a creative way to make money so you can keep this hobby going in the long run. If it helps you make money, you will be more inclined to keep the hobby and have extra cash to do other things you really love, too. In the end, setting goals and keeping them is all about making it a habit and making it into something you love.

*Of course, I'm still going through the whole college situation and you should always listen to your parents' advice first, but I hope this helps. And don't forget that you have so much to offer the world! Have some advice or want advice on a specific topic? Email [Togenerationz@gmail.com](mailto:Togenerationz@gmail.com) with your inquiries.*

# Work Well: Truth And Change

BY NATALIA FOOTE

"If you do what you did, you get what you got." - Anonymous



As the year draws to a close, we can reflect on 2019 and our life up to this point. We can acknowledge the areas in our lives that are working well and take stock of the areas that are falling through the cracks. We anticipate creating positive as the new year dawns. Many of us wait for Jan. 1 to make changes and allow the flurry of the holidays to be our main focus during the last month of the year.

However, it is during this last month that our strengths and weaknesses come to light. We somehow show the best and worst of ourselves, and it is an excellent moment to pause and catch the areas that need gentle tweaking. While our mind is

focused on the holidays, we may notice our joy in giving and also notice our tendency toward anxiety and worry. Perhaps you become aware of what overwhelms you, or you recognize that you indeed have a healthy relationship with food.

December becomes a month of opportunity to find your truths. Before January 1, before you create a New Year's resolution, before you set any goal: Find your truths.

When making a change using a 12-step program, the first step is to admit. Admit your truth. In yoga, *satya*, or truthfulness, comes as the second "rule" for right living. (It is second after *ahimsa*, or non-violence.) According to the yoga sutras, "With establishment in honesty, the waste of fearlessness comes. One need not be afraid of anybody and can always lead an open book." Once you admit your truth, you can be free to create positive change.

Oftentimes, we see our truth but tell ourselves a story to make our truth seem bearable. Becoming aware of the stories we tell ourselves uncovers how we've been hiding from our truth. The stories may be truths as well, and they may even be positive aspects of your life as we compensate our flaws with our strengths. It's in becoming aware and creating behavioral change that true change occurs.

I will share one of my personal truths, and the story I tell myself.

Truth: I procrastinate at work. Story I tell myself: I live in the moment.

My truth comes along with a host of other truths. I procrastinate at work because I enjoy focusing on other aspects of my life as opposed to those I see as tedious but will gain the most professionally. And although I do tend to "live in the moment," which is a positive, I need to work on planning and where I spend my attention. Do I want to increase my productivity to begin with? (I do.) If so, I need to see my truth, stop hiding from it with my story, and actively make some changes.

Creating positive behavioral change can

be uncomfortable. Our old ways creep in and tell the story we've been telling ourselves for years. Because we are used to believing it, we will easily fall in the trap of living the same life and consequences. Maintaining a reminder of our truth and the story we enjoy telling ourselves helps us stay connected to the behavioral change we've chosen to make.

Below you'll find four areas where you can answer your truth and your relationship to each. Do this prior to creating any goal or New Year's resolution and come back to it as you see your old ways creeping in.

**Sleep:** How well do you sleep? How long do you sleep for? Do you feel rested when you wake up?

**Mindset:** Do you consider yourself open-minded? How do you naturally respond to stimulus, negatively or positively? In what areas of your life can you create a calm response?

**Nutrition:** Do you have a healthy relationship with food? Are you aware of the food you eat? Can you identify foods that produce a negative outcome in your body?

**Fitness:** How often do you move your body for 20 minutes or more? Can you do routine, everyday movement tasks? Do you have a person who keeps you accountable for your fitness goals?

There are many areas and several questions you can ask yourself. Feel free to use these as a starting point. I hope you can identify some of your personal truths and create a path for your positive change. Every story is different, and each one of us has a different path. Practice doing the work of figuring your truths and follow up the intention to change with action.

Happy end of 2019!

What is your truth?

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*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.*



# Fun Family Fridays: Camping In the Ocala National Forest

ARTICLE BY NATALIA FOOTE  
PHOTOS BY NATALIA FOOTE AND MATT DUERR

Ahhh! The weather is finally getting cooler, and it is time to enjoy the outdoor activities Central Florida has to offer.

Our family moved to the Lake Nona area 10 years ago, and within those 10 years, we've created some beautiful friendships. As the kids have gotten older, they also have created friends that have become like our extended family. Families create traditions. One of the traditions we are establishing is a yearly camping trip to the Ocala National Forest.

Just over an hour's drive north and, all of a sudden, the trees are taller, the streets are clearer, and cell reception is spotty at best. According to the United States Department of Agriculture's website, the Ocala National Forest encompasses approximately 387,000 acres and is the southernmost forest in the continental United States. It is rich with water resources with more than 600 lakes, rivers and springs with four major springs of crystal clear water: Juniper Springs, Salt Springs, Alex-

ander Springs and Silver Springs.

Our friend and camping enthusiast, Chris Adams, set up the rental of the campsite. I am not familiar with the process of booking in the Ocala National Forest, so my first recommendation is to find a friend who does. Delegate that task! (Although a quick Google search will give you results on booking a campsite.) In all honesty, booking a campsite, whether on the national, state or local level, is not difficult; it simply requires flexibility in your dates and location. Certain campsites book 11 months in advance; others are only available two months in advance. Doing some research on where you want to stay and their booking processes may take

some time, but it is worth it in the end.



We arrived at the campsite early, and the kids left the car and headed straight for the lake and the woods. Our specific campsite has a lake and a trail around it. My kids are excited to make forts with their friends, catch fish, go kayaking, make swords out of branches, and make s'mores. We don't bring devices, and my cell phone gets no reception (other carriers do), so we are fully disconnected from our "virtual world" and fully connected with the humans in front of us.

My kids are old enough now that they can explore the woods on their own. My husband and I planned for this and decided to take 45 minutes out of our camping time to have a "wine and cheese" date. We set up our chairs to face the lake and created a mini charcuterie board. I made a playlist, and we enjoyed some quiet time together.

Cooking while camping can be simple or elaborate. We had a group of 23. One family, the Swansons, made the most amazing pork butt! They brought a smoker and let it sit for hours. We thought we were going to make eggs and bacon for lunch, but we forgot our skillet and instead had yogurt and granola. Peanut butter sandwiches or mac and cheese are also easy options to bring.

I saw my boys briefly at meal-times and around the campfire at the end of the evening, when we all shared our adventures



# Mama's Turn: The Not-So- Newlywed Game

BY SHARON FUENTES



My daughter, always one up for a good scientific experiment and for a way to avoid doing her homework, decided to help us out. And so, the beginning of our Not-So-Newlywed Game began.

For those too young to remember, *The Newlywed Game* was a television game show on which newly married couples would attempt to win exciting prizes and trips while letting an international TV audience know the precise location they last made "whoopee." The game show was kind of a joke, though, because the contestants had only recently been married, and most didn't have children, so they were fully rested and blissfully naive. They were at the stage where they spent all of their time together, which greatly increased the chances of them matching answers to gripping questions such as: "Who replaces the toilet paper roll the most?" But, in the Not-So-Newlywed Game my daughter created for us, we would find out just how well Hubby and I still knew one another after all these years. Her version would help us figure out if we had truly become a vacuum-cleaner-giving couple or if we still were connected. I am not quite sure how answering questions like, "How does your spouse like her steak cooked?" would show that, but my daughter was so excited that we played along.

Our much-cuter-than-Bob-Eubanks host started off by asking us questions separately, and then she brought Hubby and I back into the same room. With the homemade name tags on (I told you she was avoiding her homework), Hubby and I sat there, smiling, but perhaps both a bit nervous that instead of laughter, this game could end up with someone sleeping with the dog hair on the couch.

So, what did we find out ... we don't know each other very well at all! We didn't get the answer right to any of her questions! Not one! She left discouraged, but Hubby and I were okay. You see, we did learn something very important about each

The other day, my husband surprised me with a gift ... an upright vacuum that promised to pick up all the hair our four-legged fur babies leave behind. My daughter could not help but laugh at the excitement both my husband and I had over the lightweight design and swivel steering for easy maneuverability that the thing had. "You two have been married way too long if a vacuum cleaner gives you that much joy," she joked. I ignored her and encouraged my hubby to rip the box open so we could take this baby for a spin. But as my hubby began to "ooh" and "ahh" over how much hair was being sucked up into the bagless filter, I began to wonder if perhaps my daughter was right. Have we really lost our spark and excitement?

When one spouse gives another a vacuum cleaner, it's easy to jump to the conclusion that the romance is gone from the relationship. Yet, if one spouse was to give the other a fancy diamond bracelet or some other type of expensive jewelry, we might assume that all is well, that they must really be in love. But is it fair to jump to conclusions that the giver of the vacuum cleaner values their spouse any less than the giver of the jewelry or that there may be trouble in paradise?



Sorry, as a writer, I tend to overthink things; it's a professional hazard. That said, the whole vacuum-as-a-gift thing made me begin to wonder just how well Hubby and I really know each other after 20 years of marriage. The vacuum was a very nice "just because" gift, but if he would have given it to me for Christmas, I would be the first to admit my reaction would be much more Grinch than jolly St. Nick-like. Certainly, my man knows me better, right?

other playing her game. Perhaps, the fact that we still don't know everything about one another is what has kept our marriage fresh all these years. He doesn't know what craziness to expect from me, and I certainly cannot predict what appliance he may randomly bring home. But it's okay because that just means we still have a lot more years ahead to surprise one another.



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](mailto:sharon@sharonfuentes.com).



# Felicity Mae Know

BY FELICITY MAE GOMER



In this monthly column, Felicity gives advice of all kinds to readers. Send your questions to [FelicityMae-Know@gmail.com](mailto:FelicityMae-Know@gmail.com) for a chance to have your questions answered!

## Q: How do I tell my spouse I need some me-time? - Joel G.

A: Communicate! Couples should be able to survive if they don't spend a day or two together. Many times, getting away for a while can help you get the "refresh" you desperately need! You should always feel like you can talk to your partner and engage in honest, understanding conversation. If you need a bit of alone time to recharge, you shouldn't feel bad about that and neither should your partner. If they are the type to worry, reassure them that you love them but just need an hour or an evening to rejuvenate. As I've mentioned in previous articles, try not to ever leave things on a bad note. Perhaps you can encourage them to go catch up with a friend, go for a run, or take a long bath so that they see the merits in "me-time" as well. Plus, this would be the perfect opportunity for them to watch that movie you really didn't want to sit through. Moral of the story: *communicate!*



## Q: What tips do you have for making and maintaining a budget? - Anonymous

A: Handling money is by no means an easy task, so I've enlisted the help of a few incredible and talented colleagues to give you a variety of financial tips and tricks.

I have changed their names here for privacy purposes. Shannon, with an extensive background in banking and Wall Street, says to be realistic with your budget. Know that things come up and that you won't always comply with your allowance. To maintain your budget, Shannon insists that there are no "ifs, ands, or buts," stick to it. Bridgette, hotelier and event extraordinaire, suggests making a spreadsheet of all income and expenses and only using a credit card when you have the money to pay it off. She also mentioned that reducing your beer budget may or may not help. Placing your bills in a visible location can motivate you to keep working until you've earned enough to pay x number of bills. Charlie, an architect with Baker-Barrios, recommends decreasing square footage (*Thanks, Charlie*). Juan, operations director and jack of all trades, says not to think of things as "only costing ten dollars" because, at the end of the day, it's ten dollars. How many "only ten dollars" items or subscriptions will you succumb to? Eventually, those things really add up, and one day (if you're like me), you may be wishing you had those ten dollars back. Lastly, Ulysses, CEO and outstanding Marine, shared an unconventional yet effective strategy to manage and maintain your budget: use only cash for a month. Grab one envelope for each category of your budget (i.e., one envelope for gas, one envelope for rent, etc.), and put the cash you think you'll need into each category's envelope. If you run out, you run out! Do your best to make each allotment last until it's time to draft your next budget, where you can adjust the amounts as necessary.

## Q: How do you decide whose side of the family to spend the holidays with? - Anonymous

A: While relationships do sometimes involve sacrifice, it's important to be fair when deciding to spend the holidays with either side of the family. Try alternating every year, or if you're truly torn, see about celebrating the day before or after or even on the same day but at a different time. Two Thanksgiving meals can be one's greatest holiday dream, but splitting your time can be a huge source of stress. When the food coma hits, the last thing some people want to do is get up and do it all over again somewhere else. Stay fair in choosing where to celebrate. If you dread spending that coveted time with the in-laws, remind yourself that getting to know your partner's family and strengthening those bonds can be rewarding and



with all the trimmings. The entire community has the aroma of turkey, making us remember those great holidays of years past. No Christmas would be complete without a visit from Santa, our residents enjoying a cup of eggnog and a picture with St. Nick. It is all amazingly heartwarming and reminds us of how blessed we are."

It can be difficult to think about, but as we age, simple tasks we do regularly may become nearly impossible to do on our own. The holidays are meant to show how much you love and care about others, and although that might not be the ideal time for moving and transitioning into a new lifestyle, it might be best.

"No one is thinking that this would be a great time to move to senior living, but outside our community, it is a different story for our future residents and their families. For many of them, they haven't seen their parent or parents in a few months or all year. They arrive to pick up Mom or Dad and discover a very different picture than they expected," Harwood detailed. "The house doesn't look the same. It may be a bit dirtier or cluttered than they remember. They discover a few half-eaten frozen dinners on the kitchen counter, and mail is piling up. The house is pretty cool. When they ask Mom why she doesn't have the heat on, she replies she is afraid of getting a huge electric bill. The car has a few new dents and dings that were not there on the last visit. Things just don't seem right, but when their parent is questioned, they say everything is

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beautiful. Maybe, at some point, you can combine both families for the festivities. Keep in mind that there is a multitude of people out there without family nearby or even without family at all; consider asking both sides of your family to join you at a soup kitchen or volunteering at a toy drive. The most wonderful time of the year should bring people together and celebrate

all walks of life. If you are in a position to give, please find it in your heart to do so – and make it a bonding activity for both your family and your partner's family.



## Business Spotlight: The Holiday Season At Somerby Lake Nona



ARTICLE BY NICOLE LABOSCO  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF SOMERBY LAKE NONA

The holidays are quickly approaching, and that means families and friends are gathering to celebrate the festivities and create more memories. But what about your loved ones who aren't able to travel and are in assisted living? Don't worry ... if they're staying at Somerby Lake Nona, they're in some of the greatest care. Off of Narcoossee Road, area residents will discover Somerby Lake Nona, a licensed assisted living facility for those family members who require a little extra help as they age.

"Most folks think that holiday season in senior living is pretty quiet," Robert "Bob" Harwood, director of sales and marketing at Somerby Lake Nona, stated. "Of course, we have the usual staff and resident parties, family nights, and those amazing holiday dinners. There is nothing like a traditional Thanksgiving or Christmas dinner

fine and not to worry. Does Mom look a bit thinner? Has she been eating properly? Is she hydrating? A quick check of the pill organizer tells you that your parent has not been taking medications properly. There is mail with unpaid bills from a few months ago. The list goes on."

The challenge in accepting that your loved one needs additional help can be a tough pill to swallow, but it's not one you need to do alone. That's where Somerby Lake Nona steps in.

So, if you discover this holiday season that your loved one may need assisted living care, check out Somerby Lake Nona. Somerby offers living and care options for assisted living, memory care and respite care, and offers a wide range of amenities to its residents, including:

- 24-hour licensed staff and personal assistance
- Medication management
- Personalized memory care
- Wellness programs
- On site full-service salon and spa
- Fresh meals prepared by a chef
- And more!



The facility offers many options for assisted living floor plans, varying between studio suites and apartments. Apartments start at \$3,995, which is all-inclusive "with care and medication assistance, local ca-

ble, housekeeping, and laundry included," according to their website.

Whether you're considering an assisted living option for your mother, father, grandma or grandpa, highly consider Somerby Senior Living in Lake Nona to be your loved one's new home. Family can visit as often as they'd like and are highly encouraged to visit. There are even reasonably priced guest-suite accommodations available in all Somerby communities!

"People often think the holiday season is a slow time for folks transitioning to senior living, but it is one of our busiest times of the year. It's the time of year that many of our future residents' children discover Mom or Dad is no longer safe at home," explained Harwood. "Most people think the transition to senior living is a crisis-based move. Mom or Dad fell, and they just are not safe at home anymore. Many times, that is exactly what happens, but just as many times, it is not. It is the proactive children that are keeping an eye out for changes in their parents, so they can help them move to a safer environment before the unthinkable happens."

Spend the holidays doing what's right and best for your loved ones. Formerly known as Watercrest, Somerby is located at 9682 Lake Nona Village Place, Orlando, FL 32827. For more information, visit [somerbypark.com](http://somerbypark.com) or call 1-800-892-3753 to schedule a tour or trial stay to experience Somerby Lake Nona for yourself.



# Family Shift: Relation-slips

BY RODNEY GAGE, LEAD PASTOR



RG RODNEY GAGE  
FOUR FAMILY COACH

Years ago, my wife, Michelle, and I went to Stetson University to visit our kids while they were attending a summer camp. During the afternoons, the kids got to enjoy recreation. One of the more popular activities during recreation was a long slip 'n' slide they had set up that was covered with soap and water. As you can imagine, the kids had a blast running and sliding onto the slide that allowed them to stay cool on a hot summer day. For some crazy reason, my wife decided she wanted to give it a try. She not only ended up embarrassing the kids, but she also became the center of attention when she took off running toward the slide. Consequently, she didn't know you were supposed to dive onto the slide. Instead, she kept running onto the slide. As soon as her feet hit the slippery slide glazed with soap and water, they slipped out from under her, and she fell straight back and landed on her booty and the back of her head. All the kids (including ours) made a big gasp as they witnessed this horrific fall. Fortunately, she was alright. It was not only a scary moment but an embarrassing one as well for our kids. For the rest of the week, all the kids kept talking about the epic fall of Mrs. Gage. It was a moment we would never forget.

Have you ever had a relation-slip? Whether it is with your spouse, your kids, your parents, your co-workers, or with "those neighbors" next door? The truth is, we've all experienced relation-slips.

We say things we shouldn't have said, do things we shouldn't have done, or maybe it is the opposite. It's what we didn't say or didn't do that tripped us up.

After 28 years of marriage, raising three kids of our own, and working with couples and parents every day, if there is one thing that trips relationships up more than anything else, it is what I call good old-fashioned self-centeredness. If we were to be

honest with ourselves, most relation-slips are a result of self-centeredness.

The definition of self-centeredness is: "engrossed in oneself and one's own affairs; selfish." Webster's defines self-centeredness as one who is concerned solely with his or her own desires, needs, or interests.

When it comes to healthy relationships, there is one thing we know for sure; you can't be selfish and loving at the same time.

## How to Avoid the Relation-Slip of Self-Centeredness

### 1. Change Your Attitude.

Whether we realize it or not, our attitude is a choice. We choose to be others-centered or self-centered. For some of us, our attitude STINKS! You may not smell it, but everyone else around you does. There is very little difference in people. The little difference is attitude. The big difference is whether it is positive or negative. The truth is we get to choose.

### 2. Practice Self-Denial.

There have been countless times where I have been guilty of cutting my wife, Michelle, off while she is talking, so I can get in my "two cents" or have the last word. I wasn't listening to what she was trying to say because I was so preoccupied trying to build my case and prove my point.

Why do we need to practice self-denial? Because life is not about YOU! Back in the day, there was a national campaign called "Just Say No!" It was an anti-drug campaign challenging young people to "Just Say No" to drugs. Imagine what our homes and marriages would be like if we learned to "Just Say No" to self.

It's hard to beat the golden rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Or "treat others as you would have them treat you."

### 3. Give Yourself Away.

The greatest way to avoid the relation-slip of self-centeredness is to give yourself away.

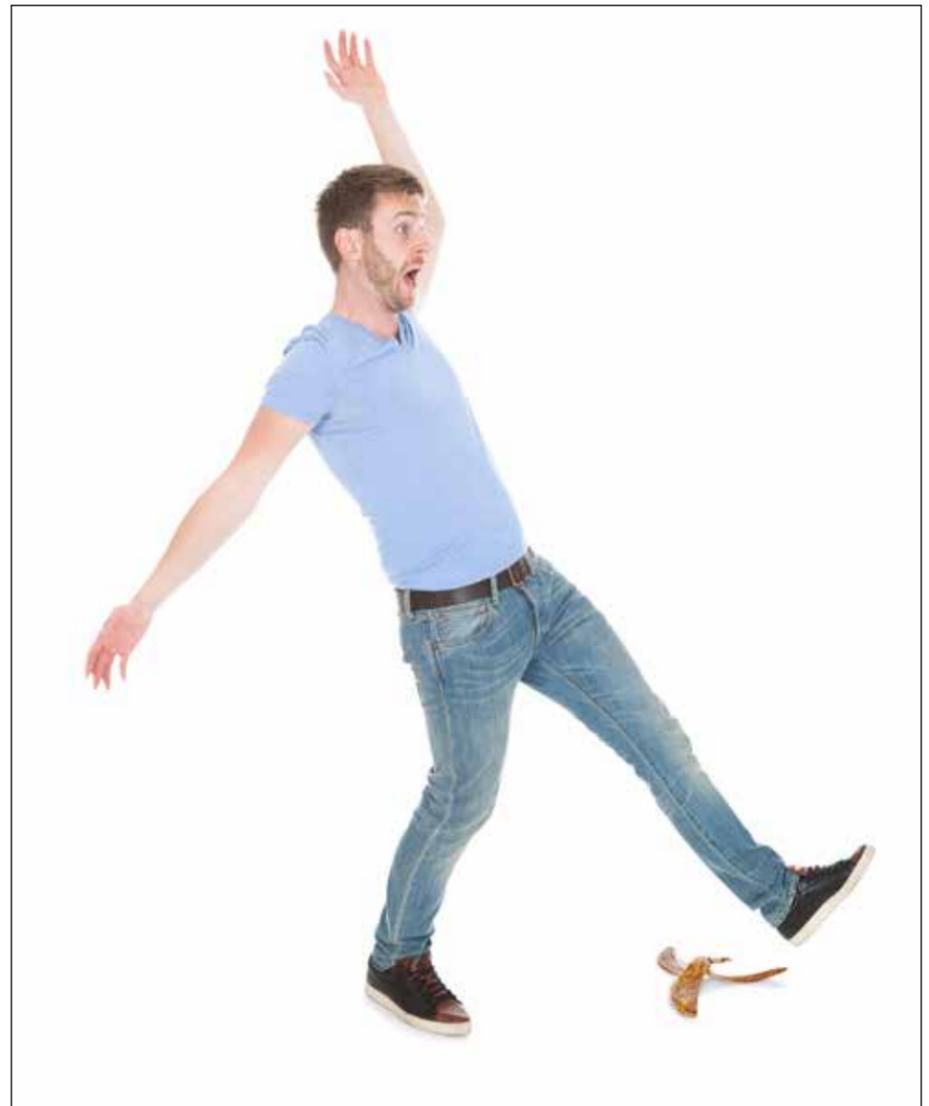
Imagine what it would look like if we became givers instead of takers?

Let me give you a challenge this week. It's what I call the "One Person Assignment." Reflect on the relationship that is slipping the most in your life. The question is, what

will you do to serve that person this week? Let's shift your relationships away from slipping to equipping those around us.



Rodney Gage is a family coach, author, speaker and the founding pastor of ReThink Life Church that meets at Lake Nona High School. His passion is to help families stop drifting and start living with greater intention. To learn more, check out [familyshift.com](http://familyshift.com) and [rethinklife.com](http://rethinklife.com).



# In the Garden: To Cover or Not To Cover, That Is The Question!

BY AMBER HARMON

It's a little tricky in Central Florida to know what to do in order to protect edible trees and plants when it comes to a frost or freeze. We can get away with planting some heat-loving plants like tomatoes and peppers in the fall, when we have a warmer season. When the rest of the country is packing up their gardens in September and October, we are just getting going for the fall and winter grow season. 2018 was a warm winter, and we got away with growing tomatoes and peppers with a decent production rate nearly all season long. In 2017, we got our first frost at the end of November. Then, that was followed

by several other frosts and a hard freeze. It was the coldest winter in the last decade. The production for vegetable plants like eggplant, tomatoes and peppers slowed near the beginning of the season and never picked back up due to all of the cold weather that year. It's just the risk that we take at the beginning of each season.

For edible fruit trees like citrus, they can withstand some cold snaps or frosts with minimal damage. It can just cause them to go through a period of dormancy. If the tree started out healthy, it will typically be able to bounce back and continue to thrive in the spring. It is important to harvest as much of the mature fruit as possible before the freeze to prevent fruit damage. It also helps the tree to bounce back more quickly. Any fruit not harvested can drop early or late due to damage as well. After the frost or freeze, be sure to resist the urge to prune the fruit tree right away. It can take a couple of weeks for the tree to show the full extent of the freeze damage. Thus, early pruning can actually cause more damage and stress to the tree.

For vegetable plants, be sure to harvest

all tomatoes and peppers that are of size before the freeze or frost, even if they are not fully ripe. The green tomatoes will ripen on the countertop within two weeks. When tomatoes are exposed to the cold temperatures, like when we put them in the refrigerator, they can get mushy and grainy. The peppers can be harvested early as green peppers to avoid the freezer burn that can occur.



Cold-loving fall vegetable plants like carrots actually get sweeter with a frost. The cold weather enhances the growth and flavor of broccoli and cauliflower as well. Greens and herbs really thrive in the cooler weather.



My first choice to protect plants and trees from the cold is agriculture fabric. It's sold in rolls and is designed to cover plants for extended periods of time. The fabric allows sunlight and air to flow to the plants. This way, they are protected and can continue to grow and thrive during the difficult conditions. My second choice is to use a fitted sheet with clamps and posts to cover and protect plants and trees. The fitted sheet seems to form better; then I secure it with plastic clamps. Before covering, be sure to water the garden. It's a bit counter-intuitive, but it actually can create a protective layer that acts as a buffer from the cold.



As we watch the weather ping-pong around this month, be sure to be prepared to protect your trees and plants from whatever cold weather conditions may arise. Happy Gardening!

Amber Harmon is the Owner of My Nona's Garden, where they sell and service low-maintenance, elevated, organic vegetable gardens. Our mission is to bring health, promote growth, and provide vegetable gardening education to local communities, one garden at a time. Visit [www.MyNonasGarden.com](http://www.MyNonasGarden.com) for more information.

"We make organic vegetable gardening easy!"



I like to be safe rather than sorry, so I cover my plants that are not frost-tolerant when temperatures are predicted to be in the mid-low 30s. The forecast can vary significantly, so it's safer to just cover when there's any chance of hitting 32 degrees.

# Zen and the Art Of Being Online: Why We Say 'OK, Boomer'

BY CHRISTIAN CASALE

*Zen and the Art of Being Online is a monthly column where I try to explain internet culture and news that has a real impact on the way people absorb information and media through a series of 1's and 0's.*

Sometimes, teens may have had enough.

It may come when bickering with their elders because of generational divides – people wearing torn jeans, or that not tipping that tax isn't a nice thing to do, or that climate change is, in fact, real and will be a problem for my generation. And both parties, regardless of the century in which they're born, are usually so sure of their rightness that they refuse to listen to any counterargument.

And two little words may come to my mind.

The "OK, Boomer" meme has been popular on social media apps like Twitter and TikTok amongst teens and young adults for the better part of a year, but only after a *New York Times* article in October did it reach the blogs and cable news talking heads. It did the usual half-week outrage cycle and then fizzled out.

But that doesn't mean the meme is gone, nor the ongoing resentment between Generation Z and the Baby Boomers. To understand where it comes from, and why young people have chosen this form of re-



volt, we need to look at some facts.

"Baby Boomers" are those classified as being born between 1946 and 1964, with the oldest now in their late 70s – there are more than 70 million people in the United States of that age. They also make up a reliable voting bloc – with nearly 69% of eligible voters hitting the booths in 2016, compared with 63% among GenX-ers (1961-1981) and 51% among Millennials (1981-1996).

Meanwhile, Generation Z was born after 1997 – the oldest is around my age, 21. Many have never been old enough to cast a vote in their life – I was 18 and a few days old when I voted in 2016 – and they only make up 27% of the population. They're ethnically diverse, on track to be the best-educated generation, and much of their understanding of the world and moral values come from the internet.

But, like any new generation, they're small and underrepresented. Like any young generation, they are more progressive than their parents – 62% believe that increasing diversity is good for the U.S. And like any group of young people, they like to rebel and curse their elders.

But today's teens aren't merely protesting their curfew or their homework, they have real questions.

"What are you doing about climate change?" "How am I going to escape crushing student loan debt?" "How can I pay rent when I move out if wages are so low?"

And when some are met with sneering condescension and an attitude of superiority, the teens eventually resort to what journalist Taylor Lorenz calls "the digital eye roll."

"OK, Boomer."

It's worth noting that, to teens, "Boomer" is a mindset. If anyone from their age to 100 fits their stereotypes of an old person – someone who doesn't tip well or is rude to customer service, is culturally conservative, and is constantly affirmed by their media diet that their opinions and fears are not only justified but correct – they can be, "OK, Boomer"-d. This obviously doesn't apply to all people of a certain age, which is why some researchers believe that classifying people by generations is a construct.

Nevertheless, the stereotype persists.

The phrase itself can be a last-resort tactic, for when young people feel like they aren't being listened to by someone who will never change



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their mind. What's the point of arguing then? "OK, Boomer."

What's the solution? Well, the first is to not take it so seriously – after all, it's an internet joke. But behind every joke, there's a kernel of truth. If you don't want to be "OK, boomer"-d, then I would suggest

actually being sympathetic and listening to those younger than you with an open mind. The world is a scary place, and the one that Generation Z will inherit won't be sunshine and rainbows.



## SPORTS & FITNESS

### Lake Nona's 40-and-Over Tennis Team Places As Semifinalists In the USTA National Championship

BY NATALIA JARAMILLO

With four wins and zero losses as a team, the men's 40-and-over Florida team won second place overall at the USTA National Championship in Surprise, Arizona, on Oct. 13, according to TennisLink League championship reports.

"It was exhausting in a sense because all the matches were so close, and they are the battle of your mental capacity," said Gaurang Gandhi, tennis team member and pharmacist by trade at Magellan Health. "For us, winning was unbelievable; now, we didn't win finals, which was disappointing, but getting up to number two was so special."

In the final, the team of 13 players, who mainly practice on the Village Walk courts



in Lake Nona, battled against tennis teams from all over the country. Prior to making it to the semifinals in the National Championship, the Village Walk team won their men's age group for all of Florida in July.

"We had to play two matches per day for three days; then we got into semifinals and lost to Texas," Gandhi said about the National Championship.

While the tennis team was dominating the courts in Arizona, tennis team captain Fernando Colon had to get surgery to remove cancerous skin cells from around his eyes.

"I decided not to tell anyone on the team, so I flew there on Wednesday to organize as a captain, and I practiced Thursday then flew back that night and went in for surgery on Friday morning," said Colon, a strategic customer development manager at United States Pharmacopeia.

He maintained his responsibilities as captain through it all by texting who was playing whom at the next game. He had the team texting him live updates on all the matches. In the end, Colon said the sur-



gery was successful, and he will be fine.

"It was tough for me because I like to be there, but by the phone, everyone was texting me," Colon said.

The recreational tennis league is made up of over 300,000 players every year across all age ranges and different rankings within the ages. The adult 40-and-over league for men and women was created in 2013 due to the high volume of players in this category. This category is the largest demographic for the USTA, according to the official USTA website.

The team takes their practices very seriously. Mondays and Thursdays for two hours at 7 p.m. at the Village Walk courts, then they have games on Saturdays from February to July, playing against local teams to make it to the top.

"If you play a tennis match, you need to enjoy yourself; if not, don't play," Colon said. "If you are going to get mad, don't play."

Colon's philosophy on the team's dynamic and on coaching is to always stick together and have fun.



"No matter if we win or lose, we stick together because this is a lifelong thing," Colon said.

Out of the 20 team members, only 13 could make it to the championship to play. Each team member had to pay for their own flights and hotel stay, and on top of this, all the members have jobs.

"If we had more guys, we definitely would have won," Colon said.

In December, the team will find out if their status of playing at the 4.0 category will be moved up to the 4.5 category. The team's individual players' rankings throughout their time playing the whole year will be taken into account to decide where the team goes from here for next year's matches.

"Some will be around, and some will move on, so it will be closing time for some of us," Gandhi said.

The entire team is awaiting the confirmation text from their captain to see when the big celebration of their win will happen.

"We always organize parties in my home whether we win or lose, but for this one, we will rent the clubhouse in Village Walk to party in December," Colon said.

# Nona Cycle: The Season of Giving – Cycling to Help Others

ARTICLE BY DEBRA LOWE, NONA CYCLE MEMBER  
PHOTOS BY MEMBERS OF NONA CYCLE



The holiday season is in full swing, and while it is a time for family, friends, shopping, merriment, and a bit of excess in all areas of our lives, the holiday season is also the time when many people count their blessings by remembering those less fortunate. This is the time of year when charities receive the highest volume of gifts, be it cash or tangible items, so it's no wonder many organizations plan their galas and online or direct mail appeals for this time of year; it's truly the season of giving. We want to show the universe we are grateful for all we have.

While Nona Cycle is known for our weekend rides in the Lake Nona area, most notably our Sunday Signature Ride, we have an enduring history of supporting our community and beyond throughout the year through participation in local charity rides. In the three years since a few guys who shared a love of cycling came together to form Nona Brew Crew (our original name), we've grown to more than 1,000 members from all throughout the Central Florida area and have raised more than \$155,000 in support of local and national charities.

Each October, Nona Cycle members support Ronald McDonald House Charities by raising funds and participating in Ride for

Ronald. In three years, Nona Cycle members have raised nearly \$36,000 in support of the organization's cornerstone program Ronald McDonald House, providing a home away from home for families with children receiving treatment at hospitals and medical facilities in Orlando.

Members also support the October Think Pink! Ride organized by Winter Garden Wheel Works and, last year, had the largest team participation in the St. Cloud-based JHOP race/ride.

On Dec. 8, Nona Cycle supported the second annual Ride With a Santa holiday toy drive and ride benefitting local families who otherwise would not have presents for their children. Nona Cycle member Angel Ledesma was profiled in a previous issue of *Nonahood News*, sharing how he and

his wife, Carla, turned their passion for helping those in need into an annual holiday event benefiting hundreds of children and families.

Nona Cycle's main focus for fundraising as a team is Tour de Cure, held each March beginning and ending at Lake Nona Town Center. Tour de Cure rides are held throughout the country, and last year, the Lake Nona ride raised more than \$1 million in support of diabetes awareness, research and prevention.

Here are some startling facts: More than 30 million Americans are living with diabetes, 84 million people are living with prediabetes and 90% don't even know it, and every 21 seconds someone in the U.S. is diagnosed with diabetes.

This isn't a problem, it's an epidemic, and

the American Diabetes Association is committed to helping those living with this disease thrive. Tour de Cure is the premiere fundraising event for the organization, and Nona Cycle is proud to support their efforts.

Nona Cycle is the top non-corporate fundraising team, both in number of participants and dollars raised; in three years of participation, members have raised and contributed \$119,600 with our highest amount, \$46,500, raised this past March. Our goal for the March 29, 2020, Tour de Cure is \$50,000. It should be noted that the funds we raise are contributed by friends, family members, co-workers, and ourselves – Nona Cycle is not an organized dues-paying group, so each member pays a registration fee to ride and is responsible for their own fundraising. We care about our neighbors and want to make our community a better place to live; through cycling, we are able to make a difference.

Everyone knows someone who has been affected by diabetes. I'm sure you can say the same – perhaps you or a loved one live with this disease.

During this season of giving, when our hearts are grateful for all we have – good health, adequate food, safe shelter, and more – the members of Nona Cycle ask you to support our efforts to raise

\$50,000 between now and March 29. Your gift will support diabetes advancements in research, programs and education, and advocacy efforts in your community and beyond.

If you are a cyclist and want to join our Tour de Cure team or wish to make your donation to an individual member, you can find Team Nona Cycle at: [main.diabetes.org/goto/NonaCycle](http://main.diabetes.org/goto/NonaCycle).

All of us in Nona Cycle wish you a wonderful holiday season and all the best in the coming year!



# Lake Nona Youth Sports Sends a Massive Thank You to Their Volunteers

BY HANNAH MARSHALL, CO-DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

Lake Nona Youth Sports is a community full of dedicated volunteers, whose goal is to provide a fun and safe environment for the children of Lake Nona to participate, learn and excel in various sports. This fall season, young athletes are having a blast participating in football, cheer, wrestling and lacrosse. Behind every sport is a long list of volunteers who put in the hard work to make the season successful.

Every single volunteer is important and plays a part in helping Lake Nona Youth Sports thrive as a nonprofit organization. The board of directors for Lake Nona Youth Sports has an underlying passion to help improve the livelihood of kids in their community by putting in many hours of work to help the organization grow. The committed coaching staff does all it can to ensure the kids progress as athletes and have a fun time, while learning new techniques. Devoted parents make sure the

concession stand runs smoothly at home games. The announcers, team moms, high school volunteers, and photographers all play a significant role in helping the organization as well.

The Lake Nona Youth Sports Organization would like to thank the following volunteers personally for all their hard work and dedication:

- Jennifer Young
- Jessica Felicipano
- Bailey Smiley
- Laila Harris
- Carly O'Toole
- Amy Kleiner
- Lauren Hewins
- Xandra DeJesus
- Alyssa Jiminez
- Carolina Misle-Olivier
- Brindesi Sanders
- Julia Louiero
- Andrea Misle-Olivier
- Judy Sellers
- Haleigh Vaughn
- Jeremy McKean
- Rick Blodgett
- Fabiola Guevara
- Tracy Barton
- Mindy Overby
- Kendrick Ellison
- Luis DeJesus
- Colleen Keeley
- Brett Coufal
- Kevin Keeley
- Aiden Earnst
- John Gay

- Mike Dunham
- Sarah Hammerschmidt
- Betsy Meckstroth
- Hailey Jackson
- Howard Harrison
- Jason Kleiner
- Steven Kleiner
- Andrew Tucker
- Andrew Samson
- MC Lombardi
- Jamie Sardo
- Rob Findlay
- Vince Meckstroth
- Dan Riordan
- Josh Fletcher
- Bruce Grimes
- BJ Jackson
- Josh Parkin
- Christie Mullins
- Scott Gillum
- Rovard Micher
- Jason Kleiner
- Gil Goncalves
- Frank Martin
- Eric Reyes
- Natalie Abedelal
- Justin Starnes
- Lindsey Freshour
- Mike Besney
- Kris Scoggins
- Chris Rullan
- Tyler Letson
- Matt McKay
- Abby Jackson

- Christine Emanuel
- Byron Miller
- Wadzaire Blanc
- Charles Emanuel
- Anns Marceus
- Emmanuel Claimon
- Derek Tyson
- Jessica Thompson
- Jeffery Rogers
- Maria Lopez
- C.R. Dunnivant
- Dan Riodan
- BJ Jackson
- John Chin
- Brandon Marshall
- Tim Mullins
- Lauren Foertsch
- Brandy Sellers
- John Saia
- Sophia Rogers
- Josh Fletcher
- Hannah Marshall

The Lake Nona Youth Sports organization deeply appreciates the community of volunteers involved in all of the sport programs. To learn more or get involved, visit [LakeNonaYouthSports.org](http://LakeNonaYouthSports.org).



## The Lake Nona Book Maven Review

BY LINDA CARVIN

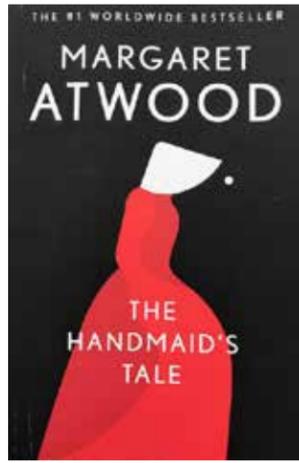
*The Handmaid's Tale*

Author: Margaret Atwood

Margaret Atwood wrote *The Handmaid's Tale* over 30 years ago, and it has been a number one worldwide bestseller. It is a bestseller at Barnes and Noble with four stars and is rated four stars on Goodreads. So, just the fact that it has remained popular all this time (popular enough to have been made into a recent miniseries on Hulu) says something. I had read the book some years ago, but since I didn't see the Hulu miniseries and I knew Atwood had just released a sequel, *The Testaments*, I wanted to re-read the book.

I remembered it as a thought-provoking, dystopian novel. Dystopia, the opposite of utopia, generally means "bad place" – a fictional setting that is, at least, undesirable, often totalitarian, unjust, and even frightening. And that is certainly the case in this novel. Often, the point of a dystopian story is that it is far enough from what we would anticipate happening in our future but close enough to our own lives to be recognizable, so it can be a cautionary tale.

Gilead, the location for the story, is in what is now New England. The U.S. no longer exists, there is war being waged (why or with whom is not clear), and environmental degradation, along with other factors, is so severe that birthrates have declined and many men and women are even infertile. Resources are scarce, and those that are available are allocated first to leaders (commanders) and their families who can often get things, like al-



cohol, prohibited to the rest of society.

In Gilead, many rules are based on certain passages from the Bible, yet some common phrases that sound biblical are taken from places like *The Communist Manifesto*. Women are no longer allowed to read (that might encourage them to question their society and even to rebel) and must stay at home caring for their husbands and households or hold other limited, acceptable jobs that support the social order. Former liberals, educators, and any convicted of acts against Gilead are routinely put to death, and their bodies are put on public display on a wall.

Sounds pretty grim, doesn't it? But Atwood's main character, Offred, is the "us" in the story – a young, middle class mom who lived through the "old" order and is now captive in Gilead. She has been deemed fertile and is trained as a handmaid. As such, she must wear a long,

shapeless red dress and a white, deep bonnet that limits her view and the view of her face by others. Offred chafes at the limitations of her current position yet occasionally sees some freedom in the anonymity and strict definition of her role because she has few personal obligations. Yet, she has one enormous societal obligation – to bear a child for the husband (commander) of the family where she is assigned.

Offred struggles with thoughts of escape, but she knows eyes are always watching, and she never knows who she can trust. She must suspect even the other handmaids she is partnered with for her walks to get groceries. Her situation at times seems desperate.

Because Offred's ultimate fate is not completely clear, I was excited to hear that Atwood had written a sequel, which was recently released. For those of you who have not read *The Handmaid's Tale*, I recommend it. For those who have not read it but have seen the Hulu drama, I recommend the book as well – they are not exactly alike. Happy reading!



## Binge-Watching In the Nonahood: BoJack Horseman

ARTICLE BY DEMI TAVERAS  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF  
[NETFLIX.COM](http://NETFLIX.COM)

RATED TV-MA

\*Spoiler alert\*



Do not be fooled by the cartoons in the pictures or the cutesy title of this Netflix TV series. *BoJack Horseman* is rated TV-MA and probably one of the heaviest shows you'll find on the streaming app. You might see all of the animals and be endeared, but this series is not the easy, breezy, piece-of-cake television you might think it is. It's got some pretty dark themes. But it also has amazing writing, incredibly realistic characters (even if some of them are animals), and quite a story to relate about the crazy entertainment industry in Hollywood. This show is near and dear to my heart; I started watching this show out of sheer boredom during my freshman year of college. Little did I know how attached I would get to this show and how sad I'll be now, four years later, as it comes to a grand finale with its sixth season. Since I'm a fan of shows like *The Simpsons* and *Family Guy*, I was excited to watch another adult cartoon, but I had no idea just how profound it would be. Let's dive into my favorite Netflix show of all time, *BoJack Horseman*!

From the title, you can guess who the main character is – it's BoJack Horseman, a washed-out celebrity who used to star in a successful sitcom during the '90s. He's gone downhill since the success of the sitcom and is now an alcoholic with awful personal habits like pushing away the people who care about him, self-destructing his relationships, exhibiting plain meanness, and victimizing himself without first working on how he can make himself a better person. You can just see the potential his character arc has from the beginning, though, because he has a lot of other redeeming qualities, like any other person. He's hilarious, unique and doesn't follow the ridiculous trends of Hollywood, and he's actually a very talented actor.



As the seasons go on, we see how he picks himself up with the help of his go-getter agent Princess Carolyn, his new writer friend Diane and her husband Mr. Peanutbutter, and his "roommate" Todd Chavez, who really just happened to crash on his couch one day and stayed for good. He eventually lands roles again, attempts to have some great romantic relationships, and gets up to all kinds of shenanigans as he continues to party his way around Hollywood. While his career starts to soar, his mental health still takes a backseat, and even though he hasn't yet gotten to the point of no return, he continues to make terrible mistakes. By the fifth season, he has a ton of demons he still hasn't worked through, concerning the death of one of his sitcom costars, the daughter of one of his old friends, and trauma inherited from his parents. At the end of the fifth season, he finally reaches the point of no return, not being able to distinguish reality from fiction, and he is sent to a rehab center.

The sixth season of *BoJack Horseman* was released in October, and we get to see how BoJack has transformed into a sober man (well, horse-man). Life isn't sunshine and daisies, but he really demonstrates how a person can change if they keep at it, even after hitting rock bottom so many times. That message sticks out over everything and makes it impossible not to love this damaged character and the world around him. I'm sad to see this show come to an end, but I'm sure I'll be binge-watching the seasons over and over again until I find another show to warm my heart like this one does.

*Demi is currently a senior at UCF, studying creative writing. She is a lover of the arts and always eager to discuss films, TV and music. Send in shows to be binge-watched at [demi@nona.media](mailto:demi@nona.media)!*



## The Nona Film Review: Fred Claus

ARTICLE BY DEMI TAVERAS  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF  
[WWW.WARNERBROS.COM/](http://WWW.WARNERBROS.COM/MOVIES/FRED-CLAUS/)  
[MOVIES/FRED-CLAUS/](http://MOVIES/FRED-CLAUS/)

RATED PG

\*Spoiler alert\*

To a majority of us (side-eyeing the Scrooges here), it's the most wonderful time of the year! And to those who celebrate Christmas, I'm sure you, just like me, have that one favorite Christmas movie that you have to watch every year. Maybe you even have more than one or have a long list of movies that get you in the Christmas spirit (it's not just me, right?). My all-time favorite Christmas movie has to be *Fred Claus*. Released in 2007, *Fred Claus* stars, to name a few, the always funny Vince Vaughn, Elizabeth Banks, Kathy Bates, and Rachel Weisz. No matter how many classic Christmas movies I see like *Home Alone* or *The Grinch*, *Fred Claus* always takes the cake because of the humor, how relatable Fred is as a character, and, of course, who can resist the beautiful setting of the North Pole?



*Fred Claus* centers around Fred, the older brother of Saint Nicholas Claus (who goes by Nick in the movie). In the beginning

of the movie, we're told that when Nick became a saint, his whole family was frozen in time, never to age. So we jump to the present day, in Chicago, where Nick is the Santa Claus we all know and love, and Fred...well, Fred is a very spiteful man who actually hates all things Christmas because of how he constantly gets overshadowed by his brother's good deeds. And you can't help but empathize with him and how differently he gets treated, even with his own parents, because his brother is the Santa Claus. After getting into a rut because of money issues, Nick convinces Fred to come visit him in the North Pole and help work in Santa's workshop to pay off his debt. Fred works in the "naughty-nice department," where he looks over each record of every kid in the world and decides if they're naughty or nice. What Fred doesn't know is that a man named Clyde Northcut is in the North Pole to evaluate Nick and his workshop and eventu-



ally decide if the whole operation has to shut down.

Things obviously go awry as the tension builds between Fred and Nick, including an actual snowball fight between the two, and Clyde happily shuts down Santa's workshop. After going home and getting a pick-me-up during a Siblings Anonymous meeting, Fred decides to go back to the North Pole to save the day. Nick is in bed after getting injured during their snowball fight, and Fred takes up the challenge of delivering the presents. Next comes my favorite sequence of scenes in the movie, where we see Fred messily delivering presents to all the kids around the world. He eventually succeeds, and everyone gets to wake up to presents from "Santa" on Christmas! By the next Christmas, things are much, much better between the brothers, and the whole family celebrates the holiday together in Fred's house. And the spirit of Santa Claus and Christmas gets to live on and on and on...

I can never get enough of this movie, and I love how Fred starts off as such a Christmas-hater to become the hero of Christmas. It's such a feel-good story! Vince Vaughn's characteristic quick wit and jokes also make the movie incredibly entertaining, and it's just the most perfect Christmas movie for me. If you haven't seen it, I recommend watching it this December and falling in love with it for yourself!

**Merry Christmas and a very happy holidays to all!**

*Demi is currently a senior at UCF, studying creative writing. She is a lover of the arts and always eager to discuss films, TV and music. Have any movies to recommend? Shoot her an email at [demi@nona.media](mailto:demi@nona.media).*



# Sunny Side Up: Grass

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.

Mowing grass. I really don't get the point. Well, I get a lot of little green ones, ha. But I really hate cutting them.

My hunch is that lawn servitude evolved over time. A cave-woman thought, *Oh, clearings are so lovely. What if I gathered a swath of these delectable little plants and rooted them in front of my cave?*

She tell husband, "Grunt, grunt, yowl."

Husband respond, "Argh. Grunt, grunt, sigh."

Then, once one woman had done it, the whole village saw how charming her clearing looked as it lay there adorning the mouth of her cave. Can we have a village of caves? In this article, we can. We can have whatever I write. How about a city of caves?! You're welcome.

So, true to cultural growth, which one could call communal stupidity, the whole village transplanted clearings to their caves. Then, of course, no one wanted to be that guy who didn't take care of his patch. He'd probably have rocks thrown at him. So, societal pressure bid humankind to bite, cut, and then mow their lawns.

And today, if we don't do our part in this neighborhood sociopathic idiocy by mowing our lawns, we'll remember. Our ancestral consciousness will reach back through the mists of time to Fred, The-Village-Moron-Who-Didn't-Trim-His-Clearing-and-Got-Hit-By-Rocks.

So today as I look at my St. Augustine grass, I scratch my head and wish it'd all just die because is it even a grass? It acts more like a vine, dying in patches, and if it's kept up,



it turns into a very short and wide hedge. Not to mention that if you walk on it, St. Augustine feels like stepping on millions of soft daggers.

Why mow at all? Other than the threat of flying rocks, why keep up the pretense? Because being

shunned can be worse than getting hit by rocks, depending on the size of the rocks.

I'm dangerously close to becoming Fred because my lawn looks like nuclear fallout compared with Bob's neat hedge across the street. Bob (He's totally made up. Please don't look up where I live.) spends every waking moment delicately weeding, edging with a laser-site, and clipping with Mr. Miyagi-like exactitude.

Maybe I just don't like St. Augustine.

I grew up surrounded by soft immaculate greens in Cambridge, England. Mind you, the greenskeeper at Trinity College had no sense of fun: "Oy, who's been removing the 'No Walking on the Grass' signs agin', eh? You. Yeah, you, the cheeky one with the football. You done it, didn't ya? You little blighter. Come 'ere, and I'll cop ya one."

Once, I found a green with football (soccer) goals, so I felt welcome to play. Looking fit in my new footy kit, I laced up my boots and ran out onto the pitch for a kick-about. I was having a jolly good time at it, too, until I saw, silhouetted against the expanse of luxurious fields, the unmistakable form of the groundskeeper. My stomach sank as he approached, waving his arms. It sank further as I deciphered soundbites of the words he was yelling. They weren't very English words. Now that I think about it, his words were very English, used by Shakespeare, and comprised of one word, on repeat.

As he yelled, he drew close enough to give me a very good look at the state of English dental hygiene. Not good. Not only did I surmise he must struggle with "Voice Immodulation Syndrome" (True syndrome. Look it up on SNL.), but his face was turning the color of the Queen's knickers. Oh,

I'm a naughty lad, aren't I? Finally, he summed up all of his Shakespearean one-line-words with "99 times out of ten, I'd let you play here. But since you didn't Shakespeare-ing ask me, I'm not going to Shakespeare-ing let you."

I thought, *Crikey. You obviously didn't spend much Shakespeare-ing time on maths. Cor' blimey, you're saying I get to play here, AND I don't get to play here? What we have here is a conundrum, one in which I better hoof it, or I'll be Shakespeare-ing sorry. Shakespeare-ing jobsworth, I thought as hopped off.*

So today I find myself a whole lot older, still keen on playing footy, and still wondering why I should bother spending so much time and money keeping what's left of my St. Augustine grass alive. If I ever venture to attempt soccer again in my yard, I'll inevitably stand on one of those spiky weed things, which appeared in lawns during the Spanish Inquisition. I obviously can't keep up with Bob over there. And heck, I prefer the rugged and healthy thigh-high stuff I see around abandoned homes.

"Honey, are you going to mow the lawn today or just stand there?"

I tell her that I'll mow the front today and get the back tomorrow. But secretly, I plan on keeping what I call a mullet lawn for another week. Who looks at the back anyway?

"Are you planning on cutting the party as well?"

Argh.

*Philip is a father and husband who coaches soccer with Coerver Coaching and freelances as a writer, illustrator, and carver. He's constantly sniggering to himself whilst whittling spoons and toys in the kitchen (hey, it's way too hot outside). To his wife's chagrin, the kids track wood chips around the house. He would love to hear from you at [plong3510.com](http://plong3510.com), either to giggle with him about something silly he wrote or for any carving, illustration or writing needs. Oh, and please remind him to sweep up.*



## EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

### Nemours Pediatric Pain Program to Host Celebration and Fundraising Event

ARTICLE BY CHRISTIAN CASALE  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF ROBYN LEBEAU

Nicole was 16 years old when her amplified musculoskeletal pain syndrome (AMPS) required her to seek treatment at the only program created specifically for pediatric patients suffering from chronic pain in the southeastern United States, located at Nemours Children's Hospital in Lake Nona.

In April 2017, Nicole started to feel joint and muscle pain "everywhere."

"We tried everything; I did rounds of physical therapy, massage, and even acupuncture. But nothing really worked," Nicole said. "It was really hard to be a normal kid and see people doing activities that I couldn't do because it hurt me."

Her family found the program at Nemours, and for four weeks, Nicole and her mother stayed at the Ronald McDonald House. She spent her waking hours either going through treatment at the hospital, under the supervision of a physical therapist, a behavioral specialist, and an occupational therapist, or doing her prescribed lifestyle routines and workouts out of the hospital.

In the end, Nicole saw the results she was looking for.

"The pain is almost gone," she grinned. "And I'm not afraid to try new things."

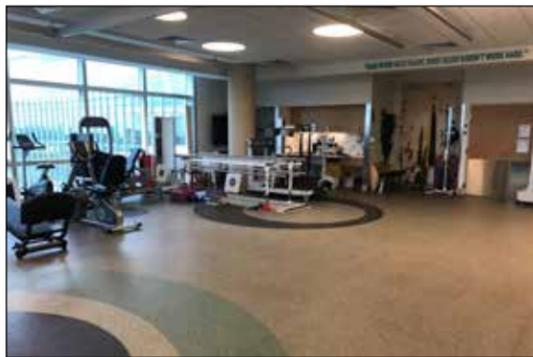
The Nemours Pediatric Pain Rehabilitation Program commonly sees patients with Nicole's affliction as well as kids suffering from cancer pain, chronic headaches, nerve injuries, and complex regional pain syndrome.

Lisgelia Santana, M.D., is an anesthesiologist at the hospital who helped create the pediatric pain program.

"I told the hospital that in order for me and for us to be successful, we needed to create a program that will involve multiple disciplines that will make for better function for the patient," Santana said. "Not only physically but also mentally."

Kaylin Luu is a clinical therapist at Nemours; she helps oversee the program as well as the program's sixth anniversary celebration on Dec. 14.

"We want to not only celebrate the graduates of the program over the last six years," Luu said, "but it's also to bring community awareness to the program and to facili-



ties, [to create] opportunities for financial contribution, and to ensure our continued growth and expansion."

Graduates of the program will also be attending the celebration, which Luu is particularly excited about.

"The program itself is a four-week, intensive outpatient program," Luu said.

"So, it's a big accomplishment for [the patients] to get through that."

Because of the program's detailed and intensive approach to their treatment of kids with chronic pain as well as a limited staff of people, they can only see two patients at a time. Part of the celebration will be an attempt for the program to expand its resources.

"If we had more staff, we could treat more patients. We could also add additional treat-

ments like art therapy and yoga," Luu said.

Potential patients are screened beforehand for their chronic pain, and the staff looks for those with "functional impairments of the pain in their life."

"Have they been withdrawn from school? Withdrawn from sports? How has their life been impaired by the pain? And are they motivated to get better and, committed through this type of treatment, to realize their goals?"

Luu said that the program has so far not received any funding from contributions in the local community. All of the funding comes from coverage by the patient's medical insurance

Alyssa Raghu, a Lake Nona native and *American Idol* star, will perform at the event. There will also be a silent auction for items like Lunch for a Year at Panera Bread, eight weeks of classes at My Gym in Waterford Lakes, a getaway for two at Saddlebrook Resort, passes to Universal Studios, and many more.

The celebration will feature booths from vendors such as Color Street, Nona Oils, and Vaco Orlando, and activities like face painting and photos with Santa Claus. There will also be food trucks from Avofuel, Tacos Mazatlan, and Bahama Buck – among others.

The venue, Nona Adventure Park, will hold a fundraiser where, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., 50% of the proceeds of all activity passes and regular priced rental fees will go to Nemours. Each park guest who visits during the promotion hours will also receive a voucher for another visit.

The program's celebration will take place at the park from 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.



Event flyer

# Documentary Honoring Local 9/11 Heroes Takes Home Gold

BY NICOLE LABOSCO

These six individuals shared their memories of some of the worst days of their careers and lives. Rayner immediately knew this documentary needed to be shared to film festivals, and with the support of LaBosco and those who starred in the film, they never looked back. *Ground Zero* was accepted, screened, and took home first place (gold) in the documentary-short category at the Hollywood Independent Filmmaker Awards and Festival. The festival took place in the backlot of Paramount Studios in Hollywood, California, on Nov. 2.



Eighteen years ago, the United States of America experienced one of the worst terrorist attacks the country had ever seen. September 11, 2001 – it's a date America will never forget. Thousands of lives were lost, and every American life was forever changed. Two years ago on Sept. 11, Lake Nona residents Nicole LaBosco and James Rayner of nona.media released a documentary short sharing six stories of firsthand experiences at *Ground Zero* and the White House.



Both LaBosco and Rayner flew out to experience the festival and to accept the award. Around 100 people attended, filling nearly every seat, and when the film concluded, a round of applause erupted and sniffles were heard throughout.

"It was a surreal feeling ... kind of like things were beginning to come full circle. It was my first documentary, and it won first place in the first film festival I've ever been a part of! I knew it was a great film, but it was never about receiving recognition for it. James and I really just wanted to focus on those who sacrificed so much on that day and were willing to sit with us and go back to that moment. They were the stars, the heroes that deserve the recognition," LaBosco described. "I'm just so grateful to have met Adam, Angie, Ed, and Renee, and I'm glad to have reconnected with Michael (I've been friends with his daughters since middle or high school), and Anthony is my father. I never would've thought that I'd be having IMDb credits for director, producer, and writer of an award-winning documentary, and the film was even lauded!"

We met:

- Adam Fallon, an FDNY firefighter
- Angie Fallon, a nurse
- Ed Juarbe, an NYPD officer
- Anthony LaBosco, a United States Secret Service Agent
- Renee Palma, a survivor
- Michael Troisi, an NYPD Sergeant



The documentary took just three days to come to life from concept to reality ... and coffee, lots and lots of coffee. LaBosco still keeps in touch with those she interviewed for the film, and those connections will never be forgotten.

"The attacks on 9/11 are events most of us experienced from different parts of the country, but what really made this film special to us is that these six individuals were all there for different reasons and didn't know the others, but 17 years later, they discovered they had brethren, and they were all neighbors ... they were all OUR neighbors. It made me love our community even more," declared LaBosco.

*Ground Zero* has also been accepted into and is screening at the Culver City Film Festival in Culver City, California, from Dec. 6-12 and has been submitted to several other film festivals spanning California, New York, New Jersey and Florida. The determination dates of festival acceptance range from February 2020 to August 2020.

## DECEMBER EVENTS

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

- 5 TEDxBoggyCreek Women Watch Party
- 5 Latin Night with Orlando's Best Latin Band, Lati-2
- 6 Sip and Shop with Kendra Scott Jewelry
- 6 Sock It to Cancer - Tree Decorating and Sock Drive
- 7 Cars & Coffee Central Florida
- 7 Meet the Builder: Craft Homes
- 7 Wild Winter Wonderland - Back to Nature Wildlife Refuge
- 7 Saturday Night Holiday Dance Party with the Legendary JC's
- 8 Riding with Santa 2nd Edition
- 8 Holiday Sunday Fundays with Kids Snow Globe Making Activities
- 8 Hank Lebioda Golf Challenge
- 10 Empowering Women Through Mental Wellness Workshops
- 13 Nona Leadership Network
- 13 Naughty or Nice Boxi Park Holiday Party
- 14 Santa Brunch
- 14 Nemours Pediatric Pain Rehabilitation Anniversary Celebration
- 14 Doggy Ugly Sweater Day at Boxi Park
- 15 Holiday Sunday Funday w/ Gingerbread Decorating & Face Painting
- 19 Nona Connect - Building Communities Through Connections
- 21 Ugly Sweater Holiday Party at Boxi Park
- 22 Holiday Sunday Funday w/ Snowflake Making & A Visit from Santa
- 25 Christmas Day

### Save the dates

Dec. 5-Dec.31: OH WHAT FUN! Lake Nona Holiday Festival  
Dec. 23-Jan. 3: OCPS Winter Break

### Weekly Events

**LAKE NONA FARMERS MARKET**  
Saturdays 11 a.m.-3 p.m. | Lake Nona Town Center  
[www.facebook.com/LakeNonaFM](http://www.facebook.com/LakeNonaFM)

**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/](http://www.facebook.com/LakeNonaFarmersFreshMarket/)

**LP YOGA**  
Mondays & Wednesdays 6 p.m. & 7 p.m. | LP Fit in Laureate Park  
[www.facebook.com/learnlakenona/](http://www.facebook.com/learnlakenona/)

**MORNING MEDITATION**  
Wednesday 6 a.m. | Lakehouse in Laureate Park  
[www.facebook.com/learnlakenona/](http://www.facebook.com/learnlakenona/)

**CYCLE & CORE**  
Tuesdays & Thursdays 6 a.m. | LP Fit in Laureate Park  
[www.facebook.com/learnlakenona/](http://www.facebook.com/learnlakenona/)

**LIVE + LOCAL**  
Thursdays 6-8 p.m. | Crescent Park in Laureate Park  
[www.facebook.com/learnlakenona/](http://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/](http://www.facebook.com/artafterdarklakenona/)

**YOGA NONA Sponsored by Lake Nona Life Project**  
Saturdays 10-11 a.m. | Crescent Park in Laureate Park  
[www.facebook.com/learnlakenona/](http://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](http://www.nonahoodnews.com/events)



Combining the best of a boutique store and community café, Canvas Market has everything you need for the holiday season. And through December, Canvas Market is partnering with Indie Flea to create monthly artisan outdoor markets, featuring handmade gifts, plants, home goods, vintage items & more.

Come visit us in Lake Nona!



# MARKET

## CANVAS



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**NOW OPEN!**

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