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## EDITOR'S NOTE: PURA VIDA

BY DEMI TAVERAS, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

We all know summers in Florida last for more than the normal three months. But by October, we usually begin feeling the cooler weather, and the excitement of all things pumpkin spice and Halloween solidifies the official arrival of the fall season. Before we jump into a bustling holiday season, I wanted to reflect on how I ended the first real summer after a life-changing pandemic.

As soon as the option of getting vaccinated against COVID-19 became available for the general public, I immediately scheduled my appointment because of how badly I wanted to be able to travel again safely (among many other reasons). One destination that had been on my family's bucket list for a while was Costa Rica, especially since some of our closest family friends hail from this beautiful Central-American country. So, with all of my family scattered in different states, we all met in Houston and flew out for five days of pura vida.

For those unfamiliar with the Ticos, "pura vida" is a mantra meaning "pure life," and nothing embodies Costa-Rican lifestyle like this phrase. It can be used as a hello or a goodbye or pretty much anything in between: "Pura vida. Welcome to Costa Rica." or "Enjoy your dinner. Pura vida." or "Cheers! Salud! Pura vida!" I've never encountered such a widely-used phrase quite like it. It's simple yet so profound, putting in words how life will always be full of pure ups and downs, so why worry or why stress?

But you see, I'm a walking bundle of worries if I don't consciously shut my brain off. However, the minute we landed in San José, the switch in my brain flipped without me having to lift a finger, and that's because the Ticos know how to kick back, relax and live the good life. We hopped in a jeep for a two-hour road trip and swerved through the mountainous and hilly terrain, arriving in the region of La Fortuna. Here, we were able to see the Arenal Volcano in all its might as the clouds cleared the way to let the peak stand proud. We were told that doesn't happen often, so we took advantage. The next day, we hiked (downhill, thankfully) to the large waterfall in La Fortuna, full of fresh and freezing-cold water. With so much nature, this region was by far my favorite, and there were so many restaurants, bars, stores and stands to indulge in.

Pura vida continued during the next part of our trip as we headed to the beaches in Guanacaste, and my family was constantly cracking jokes about feeling like we were straight out of *The White Lotus*. (I don't think I'll ever look at a stay in a tropical resort the same way. Thanks, HBO.) At this point, the indulgence from all the mouth-watering food everywhere where we looked had my stomach begging for a break. That break actually never came, though, because on our last day, we stopped in Esparza to eat the most delicious seafood right by the water before ending back in San José. Usually at the end of a vacation, I'm either dying to leave or begging to stay, but I felt so content that I was almost unbothered whether my flight took off or not.

It was an unforgettable experience just because everything felt so at peace. "Pura vida" means so much more to me now. It'll always be something to remember when the nerves and anxiety and stresses of our world start to grate. "Pura vida" is a damn good way of life.



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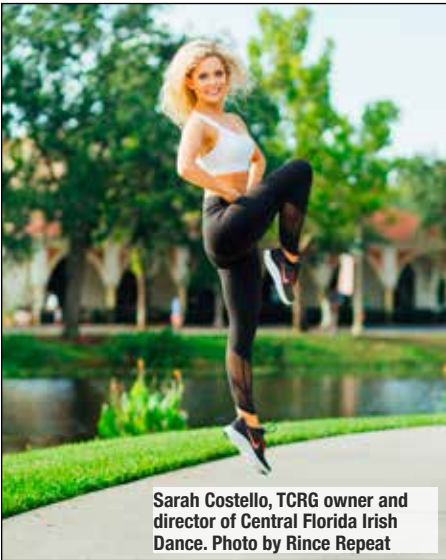
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# BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT: CENTRAL FLORIDA IRISH DANCE

PHOTOS COURTESY OF SARAH COSTELLO



Sarah Costello, TCRG owner and director of Central Florida Irish Dance. Photo by Rince Repeat

When people think of the Irish in Lake Nona, they may automatically think of golf, but Lake Nona's a hub for Irish dance, too. Now entering their sixth year of teaching Irish dance classes in Lake Nona, Central Florida Irish Dance is an award-winning Irish dance academy founded and owned by Irish native Sarah Costello.

Costello hails from Belfast, Northern Ireland, and brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to her Irish dance classes. After travelling the world with professional Irish dance shows and performing in 31 countries, she was recruited by Walt Disney World to be a performer and musician in 2011 and has lived in Central Florida ever since. Costello graduated in 2007 with an honors degree in theatre and Irish language from Queens University in Belfast and became a qualified TCRG (Irish dance teacher) in 2008. She is a professional Irish dancer and musician and also performs with her own Irish band, Irish Echoes.

She had always dreamed of opening her own dance school but never thought she would settle in Florida and open a school on this side of the Atlantic. After finishing working with Disney in 2013, Costello decided Central Florida would be the place to settle and pursue her dream of becoming a small business owner and founded her Irish dance school. Starting out eight years ago with only one student, Central Florida Irish Dance now has 10 locations and over 130 students throughout Central Florida and in Augusta, Georgia. After meeting her fiancé from Pittsburgh in an Irish pub on St. Patrick's Day in 2019 while she was performing, Costello is now planning a wedding in Ireland for spring-time of next year.

In 2016, Costello started classes in Lake Nona at NorthLake Park Community School as an after-school program and then continued classes in Movez Dance Inc. on Narcoossee Road. These classes were the first of their kind in the Lake Nona community and brought many from the Irish and English communities together. With the strong golf community in Lake Nona, lots of Irish connections were made with families who have come over and settled here.

Irish Echoes, Costello's professional Irish musical troupe, has been lucky enough to perform throughout Lake Nona over the

years with her dance students alongside. Irish Echoes performed at the first-ever St. Patrick's Day event in Boxi Park back in 2019. Costello has been fortunate enough to perform for celebrities and at major events throughout Orlando over the years – including dancing for the Irish golfers at the PGA's Arnold Palmer Invitational at Bay Hill on St. Patrick's Day, dancing with former Orlando Magic star Bo Outlaw, and touring with some of the most popular Irish dance professional shows across the U.S.

Central Florida Irish dance has won many awards since opening in 2013: the Irish American Chamber of Commerce Florida Harp Award for outstanding contribution to Irish culture and community, Best of Orlando Magazine Top 3 Performing Arts Group Award, Orlando Weekly Best Dance Company, and multiple Top 3 Awards at Fusion-Fest Orlando Dance Contest. Over the last eight years, the dance school has attended competitions worldwide and has national champion titles as young as five years old. The academy also has world championship medal holders and prides itself on successfully molding young students from complete beginner to open champions.

Classes cater to children from ages three and up, and the academy has a specialized preschool program called Jump n' Jig, designed specifically as a fun intro activity for younger students.

You don't have to be Irish to join. Anyone can



Lake Nona Jump N' Jig dancers

try a free trial class at any time throughout the year. Classes run for both competitive and non-competitive students from September through May each year on Wednesdays and Fridays at Movez Dance Inc. and are one hour long. Classes focus on musicality, timing, rhythm and technique and cater to all levels whether you're a complete beginner or have experience in Irish dance. Opportunities to perform are offered throughout the year as well as optional competitions and recitals.

**Central Florida Irish Dance is located in Lake Nona at Movez Dance Inc. (7480 Narcoossee Rd., Suite 100-C). More information can be found on the website [www.centralfloridairishdance.com](http://www.centralfloridairishdance.com) or by emailing Sarah Costello on [info@centralfloridairishdance.com](mailto:info@centralfloridairishdance.com). You can also keep up to date with the dance school on their Instagram and Facebook pages.**



Miss Sarah Costello with some of her students at the Disney Feis



Sarah Costello dances with Padraig Harrington at the Arnold Palmer Invitational

**SCHEDULE:**

WEDNESDAYS AT 6 P.M. – ALL LEVELS IRISH DANCE

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NOBEL NOTABLE OF LAUREATE PARK: BERTHA VON SUTTNER, THE DOGGED PACIFIST

BY DENNIS DELEHANTY

This is the 25th in a series of articles that celebrate the lives of the Nobel Prize laureates whose names grace the 130+ streets of Laureate Park. These laureates are extraordinary individuals who through their lifetime achievements have made our daily lives immeasurably richer, often in ways not readily apparent.

One way to win a Nobel Peace Prize is to make Alfred Nobel fall in love with you. Then convince him to fund provisions for such a prize in his will.

Just kidding ... but not entirely. There is no real evidence that Alfred Nobel harbored truly romantic feelings for the lovely Austrian countess Bertha Kinsky, whom he first met when she spent a week in Paris in 1876 employed as his secretary and housekeeper. If their relationship was not, let's say, steamy, the two did become intimate friends over the last quarter century of Nobel's life. And what drew them so closely together – on an intellectual plane, of course – was their common passion for the cause of peace. You might say that Alfred and Bertha were soulmates, though Bertha was happily married for those many years.

This chance encounter of the highly-educated yet enticing Austrian countess and one of Europe's most accomplished bachelors makes for a magical story in itself. But even without crossing paths with Alfred Nobel, Bertha already lived a life resembling that of a fairytale. Though born Countess Kinsky in Prague in 1843, Bertha's blood was insufficiently pure by the demanding standards of Austrian nobility of the era. (Let's just pause right here to say that the notion of nobility is an absurd concept in our century, but to understand Bertha von Suttner, we must reckon with the environment in which she was raised.) Her widowed mother's diluted genes Bertha could overcome, and in fact by her 20s, she had been proposed to twice. The first of these was to be an arranged marriage to an elderly gentleman, whom Bertha rejected upon meeting him; her second prospective fiancé died suddenly on a sea passage to New York escaping his creditors.

What Bertha could not surmount, though, was the grave depletion of family income resulting from her mother's gambling losses at spas such as Wiesbaden. Bertha had benefited from a tutored education and was highly proficient in English, French and Ital-



Bertha von Suttner

ian, in addition to her native German. So, at age 30, with no marriage prospects in sight and having failed in pursuing a career as an opera singer, she secured a position as governess for four children of a wealthy family in Vienna, where she promptly fell in love with the eldest son, Arthur von Suttner, seven years her junior.

Arthur's mother, though, had no intention to allow her son to marry the insufficiently noble Bertha and conceived a plan to separate the two lovers as far apart as possible. By mail, she helped to procure the secretarial position for Bertha at Alfred Nobel's office in Paris. Undeterred by his parents' disapproval of his wedding hopes, Arthur telegraphed Bertha to plead that he could not "live without her." Jotting a quick resignation note to Alfred, who was on travel for business, Bertha returned to Vienna to elope with her beloved Arthur, marrying in an obscure church outside the city. Unmoved, Arthur's parents cut off his baronial income, leaving him no choice but to seek a living outside of Austria.

Years earlier, at Bad Homburg, Bertha had met a Georgian princess, Ekateriné Dadiani, to whom she now wrote in desperation, seeking refuge and possible employment in her principality of Mingrelia. Ekateriné cabled back, "Welcome." Clutching their dwindling funds, Arthur and Bertha sailed across the Black Sea to Georgia's western shore. From there, they traveled for days by carriage and on horseback, accompanied by Prince Niko himself, the titular head of the land, toward Ekateriné's cliffside castle. Along the way, lavish dinners and entertainment celebrated the honored guests.

Reunited finally with Ekateriné, they were however stunned to learn that the Russian Empire, which in 1801 had added Mingrelia to its domains, had now taken away all political authority from both her and her son, Prince Niko. No palace employment would be forthcoming for Arthur and Bertha. To survive in this exotic, remote land, the



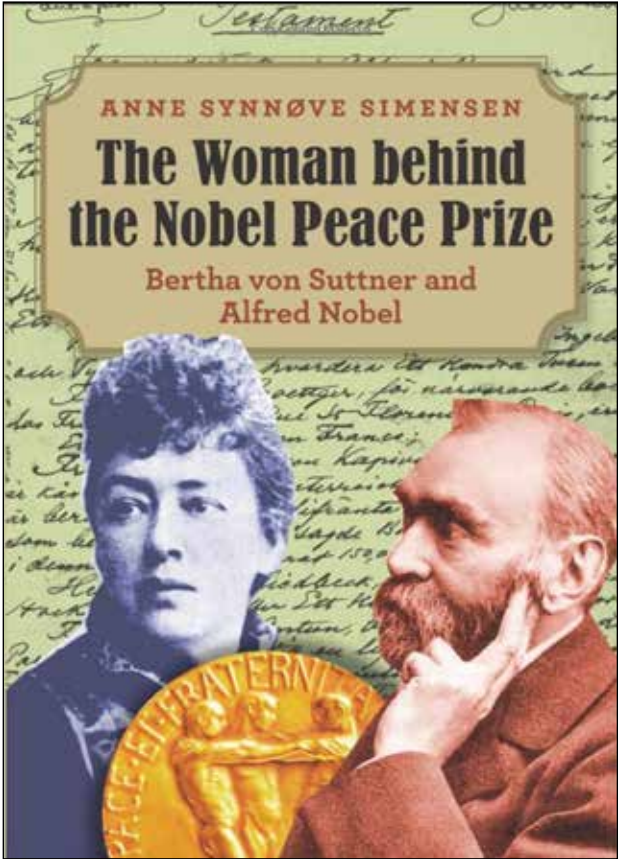
Vienna in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

newlyweds would have to cobble together meager incomes through tutoring and odd jobs. Eventually, they settled down near a secluded village and took up writing articles for German and Austrian periodicals. The couple endured a life of poverty in Georgia for nine years, until 1885, when Arthur's family relented and invited him home to Vienna.

Relieved from their exile, the von Suttners wasted no time to travel to Paris, where Alfred Nobel introduced them to leading literary salons, through which they befriended France's intellectual giants of the day, including Emile Zola and Alphonse Daudet. The learned discussions at these gatherings further instilled in Bertha her passion for literature. While in Georgia, Bertha had published her first two books, in addition to penning countless articles, the start of a literary output that eventually grew to include dozens of novels. Most of these are now forgotten, except one, *Lay Down Your Arms (Die Waffen Nieder!)*.

In Georgia, during the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War, Bertha's cottage had abutted the front lines, and she experienced firsthand the horror of war in its rawest form. The trauma sparked in her a serious interest in pacifism. In 1889, back home in Austria, Bertha poured out her hatred of war in *Lay Down Your Arms*, which swiftly became a bestseller throughout Europe. Praise even came in the mail from Leo Tolstoy, who equated the novel with Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. What Stowe had accomplished in ending slavery, wrote Tolstoy, Bertha would achieve in promoting peace. To the modern reader, *Lay Down Your Arms* plods along plotlessly, but the descriptions of the dead and dying on the battlefield of Königgrätz during the 1866 Prussian-Austrian War are expertly crafted. European readers had never before confronted such haunting accounts of the effects of war.

The success of *Lay Down Your Arms* made Bertha an instant celebrity, and she soon dove into a dizzying range of roles that included promoter of peace organizations, editor of her *Die Waffen Nieder!* pacifist magazine, and much sought-after speaker. In 1892, Bertha convinced Alfred Nobel to travel to Bern, Switzerland, to observe the proceedings of the International Peace Congress, after which he invited her to dinner in Zurich. At that dinner, Albert raised, for the first time, the idea of including provisions for a peace prize in his will. He soon passed away, and the first Nobel Prizes were awarded in 1901. Four years later, Bertha won the Peace Prize, the second woman, after Madame Curie, to be awarded a Nobel Prize.



Until 75 years ago, Europeans regularly settled their differences through horribly destructive wars that grounded up the lives of millions upon millions of victims. These days, in Western Europe at least, toughly-fought contests on soccer pitches have supplanted these once-ceaseless armed conflicts. Though Bertha von Suttner's decades-long campaigns to lay down arms did not prevent two World Wars, her tireless campaigns to promote pacifism arguably laid the foundations of organizations designed to secure European – and global – peace following World War II. In our neighborhood, we honor Bertha von Suttner with an afterthought of a street where, until recently, only local longhorn cattle grazed. A year or so ago, a special building rose on Suttner Avenue, a lone structure bordered by those cattle paddocks. And what is that structure? An indoor soccer field and training facility.

True, *Lay Down Your Arms* is not a fun or easy read. If you wish to learn more about the life and remarkable achievements of Bertha von Suttner and her relationship with Alfred Nobel, you might dip into a fascinating biography entitled *The Woman behind the Nobel Peace Prize* by Norwegian author Anne Synnøve Simensen. Or read one of her lectures, such as her address to the October 1904 International Peace Conference in Boston.

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# PINKTOBER: SEEING BEYOND THE 50 SHADES OF PINK

BY TERI D'AMELIO, DIRECTOR OF MARKETING  
NONA SPORTS CLUB

It's one of my favorite times of year. I start to feel the hint of the cool fall air, and a breeze is noticeable on my outdoor runs. The holiday season decorations are being flaunted in stores, Soccer Saturdays are happening, college football is in high gear, and there are Friday night lights. Even the pumpkin spice returns! There is another significant part of this time of year: Breast Cancer Awareness Month. We've grown accustomed to the 50 shades of pink mixed into the fall and typical sports fan colors.

Since April 2018 – when my family firsthand lived through the unimaginable, coveting my sister, Kristin Todd, and her last days on earth (diagnosed during her pregnancy with her only son, Logan) – many of us have been faced with great loss, consequently creating tighter human bonds. We've been navigating the COVID-19 pandemic, witnessing loved ones in accidents and friends and family coming to the end of hard-fought diseases. There can be more research and awareness for so many diseases and unknowns that ultimately affect our wellbeing and health.

**Still to this day, 1 in 8 women will be diagnosed with invasive breast cancer, according to the American Cancer Society. Therefore, a full month is dedicated to this horrible disease that took my sister at 36 years young.**

I am in awe of how we come together with a full color palette of pink to honor and remember survivors, thrivers, and those whose battle came to an end. Everywhere you go, each time you turn on the TV during October, it's a guarantee you will see the pink color signifying breast cancer. For some, it's a reminder to make the phone call to get a mammogram. For others, it's running a race in remembrance of Mom, or it's the trigger to donate for more research. For many, it's



Kristin and her son Logan in Lake Nona (Fall 2017)  
Photo Courtesy of Teri D'Amelio

the celebration of getting through the last grueling chemo treatment knowing you are in remission – praise God!

For the thrivers (patients living with stage 4 breast cancer, also known as metastatic breast cancer), it can be a reminder of hope and comfort that our American culture is fully behind the support of awareness, and simultaneously, it can be a reminder that with a diagnosis of metastatic breast cancer, you will never be on the “I survived” celebration side of pink.

### Stage 4 Needs More.

According to [metavivor.org](https://metavivor.org), 30% of all breast cancer patients develop metastatic cancer with only 2-5% of research funding it. This is when the cancer has spread to other organs in the body, eventually resulting in death. Can we come together to raise money to stop the spread? **Thankfully, today, a diagnosis of breast cancer is not a death sentence. Yet, if the cancer travels from the origin or comes back elsewhere, the life expectancy is 18-24 months.**

[Metavivor.org](https://metavivor.org) was created to focus solely on this terminal stage. 100% of money raised goes toward stage 4 research. In memory of my sister, Kristin, I promised her that I would

continue shedding light on the most progressed stage of the disease, and I would always advocate for more to be done. This is the fourth year Nona Soccer Academy and our Nona Sports Club Family will lead the way with a breast cancer fundraiser through the selling of pink shirts, powered by **Bassin Center for Plastic Surgery Orlando, Nona Adventure Park**, and more local sponsors.

Donations can be made to Nona Soccer CARES Foundation at [nonasocceracademy.com](https://nonasocceracademy.com) or by using the link in our Instagram bio [@NonaSoccerAcademy](https://www.instagram.com/NonaSoccerAcademy). Orders for shirts can be placed at [teri@nonasportsclub.com](mailto:teri@nonasportsclub.com). Profits will be donated to [metavivor.org](https://metavivor.org) on behalf of Nona Soccer CARES and the Lake Nona community.

I am hopeful that one day there is a cure and Pinktober turns into a celebration for all. I have hope that the ringing of the “cancer-free” bell is in the future of everyone who fights this disease. I started this pink movement with Fabio and Cris Silva in October 2018, just six months after losing Kristin. I wish she could have seen the support we have given to the disease. She would be in awe of every aspect of the Pink Movement here that gives much more hope to women on the same journey.

When you walk into the grocery store and see the pink balloons or you turn on the TV and notice the pink ribbon on all the sports uniforms, just remember it has a dual meaning for those in our community living with stage 4. Buy the Pink for the cause. Let's



Nona Student-Athletes at a tournament (Oct 2020)  
Photo Courtesy of Nona Soccer Academy



Pinktober Recognition: Moment of Silence at Heroes Park (Oct 2019)  
Photo Courtesy of Nona Soccer Academy

continue celebrating our survivors with the 50 shades of pink. All I ask is we keep in mind it's not “rosy” pink for all.

Kristin explained she couldn't have lived almost five years with stage 4 without the love and encouragement she had from family, friends, her medical teams, and complete strangers. **“The Journey is Ours,”** she reminded us. And now, the journey is ours to continue this fight.

# NONA HEROES: MILEINA CRUZ-PABON

ARTICLE BY FELICITY MAE GOMER  
PHOTOS BY BOZANICH PHOTOGRAPHY



Small but mighty 11-year-old Mileina Cruz-Pabon is one tough cookie. This little girl has handled Turner syndrome (TS) like a champ, and having been through medical stress so young hasn't hindered her sunny disposition one bit.

Mileina was diagnosed with Turner syndrome one year ago. Her mom, Michele, grew concerned over Mileina's seemingly stunted growth at age eight. She was smaller than other kids her age, and her development appeared to pause. Doctors reassured Michele that her daughter was fine with nothing to worry about. Two years later, she took Mileina to an endocrinologist as she saw little change. Then followed a series of specialist visits, tests and examinations before determining that Mileina suffers from a chromosomal disorder in which a female is only born with one X chromosome. Mileina is one in 2,000 females to be afflicted with this condition.

Turner syndrome expresses itself in females through short stature, delayed puberty, hearing loss, infertility, heart defects, and certain learning disabilities. Treatment includes giving yourself an injection every single day, which is daunting enough even as an adult. The shots are part of a growth hormone treatment – and Mileina and her family have very recently celebrated completing one full year of this program.

“At the beginning, it wasn't easy for me because I don't like needles,” said Mileina, “but now, I am the one that gets all the medication ready so that my mom or dad can give me the injection. This process has helped me be stronger and gain more confidence.”

Her bravery grew and grew until injections became second nature to her. She had collected each and every needle she used during the past year and featured them in a recent photoshoot by Bozanich Photography to symbolize her accomplishment as an unstoppable little lady.

One day, we may see Mileina conquer some more incredible feats. Michele described Mileina's passion for animals and particularly her passion for snakes; Mileina's dream career involves animals in some capacity. Additionally, she'd love to sign on *America's Got Talent*. With her fierce energy and strength, we know she would take those judges by storm!

“If I had to describe her, she is unique! There is no one else like her,” said Michele. “If she had a not-so-good day at school, she always has a smile, and she always has something positive to say. Mileina makes sure that everyone around her feels loved, and she does it with the biggest smile and the biggest of hugs.”

At only 11 years of age, Mileina Cruz-Pabon is tougher than you'd think. She lets nothing stop her from living freely and joyfully. Her big smile is a testament to her heart, despite what she faces every day. To feel happiness in the presence of adversity is a heroic trait and is surely what keeps this little girl going at full speed.

“Mileina has shown me that no matter what the situation, there is always a brighter side of things. She has overcome this with such poise and grace, and no matter who or what tries to bring her down or makes her feel uncomfortable because of her height, she will demonstrate the total opposite,” shared Michele. “Mileina is the most beautiful young lady you'll ever meet.”



# SCHOOL UPDATE: SUN BLAZE ELEMENTARY

BY TOMICKA CADOGAN

We are excited to begin year eight at Sun Blaze Elementary. As we celebrate the past seven years, we do not measure our success based on past merits but look to the future, exploring new and exciting ways to create environments where students are excited and challenged to learn.

We believe that our school has some of the finest teachers and staff in OCPS. During pre-planning, our teachers embraced this year's theme, “We Are Rockin' It.” They demonstrated their commitment to this theme through training sessions, meetings and planning times. We are truly excited to “rock” this year with our students.

We would like to thank everyone who showed up for our Meet the Teacher Event on Monday, Aug. 9. It was delightful to see our hallways full of big, bright smiles, children's laughter, and just overall excitement for a new school year! PTA sold school uniforms and memberships, and Lake Nona businesses were able to promote and share programs available to families. We are so fortunate to have families engaged and involved in their child's education.

We anticipate great things at Sun Blaze Elementary during the 2021-22 school year and look forward to celebrating these achievements with our students, families and community. We would like to invite the Lake Nona community to follow our social media links to stay connected with all that is happening at Sun Blaze Elementary. The website address is <https://sunblazees.ocps.net/>, and you can follow us on Facebook [@SunBlazeElementary](https://www.facebook.com/SunBlazeElementary).

GO, STINGRAYS!





# THE ARTIST: ESCAPE FROM REALITY

ARTICLE BY DEMI TAVERAS  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF KELLIE DELANEY



**K**ellie Delaney is a Central Florida-based artist who specializes in acrylic paint and digital art. On one hand, Delaney’s known for painting charming portraits of furry friends. But on the other hand, moments from iconic fictional characters are a common theme that permeates her art. And we can’t forget her special dash of spookiness, of course, perfect for welcoming the Halloween season.

**Nonahood News: Tell us a little about your artistic background. What drove you to become an artist?**

Kellie Delaney: I watched a lot of Bob Ross as a kid and was always drawing or crafting. My art teacher in high school, Ms. Souve, really drove me to want to become an artist. She is such a talented, lovely and brutally honest person. Souve always went above and beyond, making sure we had top-of-the-line supplies and plenty of opportunities to get into shows. She was definitely the best teacher I ever had.

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

KD: I didn’t do a lot of art for a long time. I went to school for pastry, hoping to translate art into cakes. The last 10 years, I worked in restaurants and bakeries. Most of those years were spent doing plated desserts but, eventually, wedding cakes. I was painting in the evenings when commissions began to roll in for pet portraits and other art. I loved it so much. Over the years, it picked up, and when my daughter was born, I decided to pursue art full-time while also getting to be home with her. I have been so happy.

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

KD: I create almost every day, whether it’s to keep up with commissions or work on a personal piece. Recently, I have been dabbling in digital art and have several projects going with that.

**NHN: How long did it take you to discover your artistic style? Which mediums do you use in your work?**

KD: I didn’t really have a “style” until a few years ago. Honestly, I was all over the place trying to figure it out. I kept thinking I should do more realism but always found myself adding bright colors and heavy outlines, the finished products looking more cartoony. I almost exclusively use acrylic paint; it’s been a long time since I have used anything else.

**NHN: Which of your projects were the most challenging and why?**

KD: Hands. Hands and bodies in weird positions. Hands will be the death of me, though.

**NHN: Which of your projects were your favorite to create?**

KD: I love faces, any face really. I do a lot of pet portraits, and those are fun. Horror and fantasy portraits are by far my favorite, though.

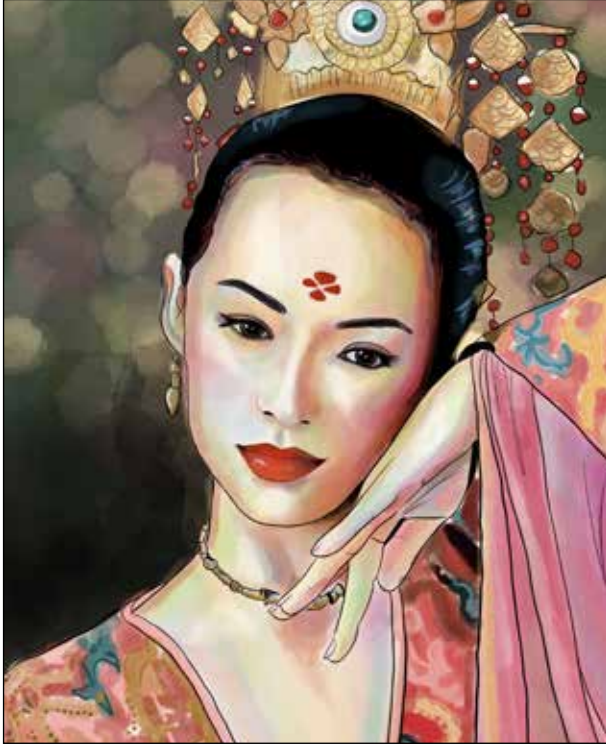
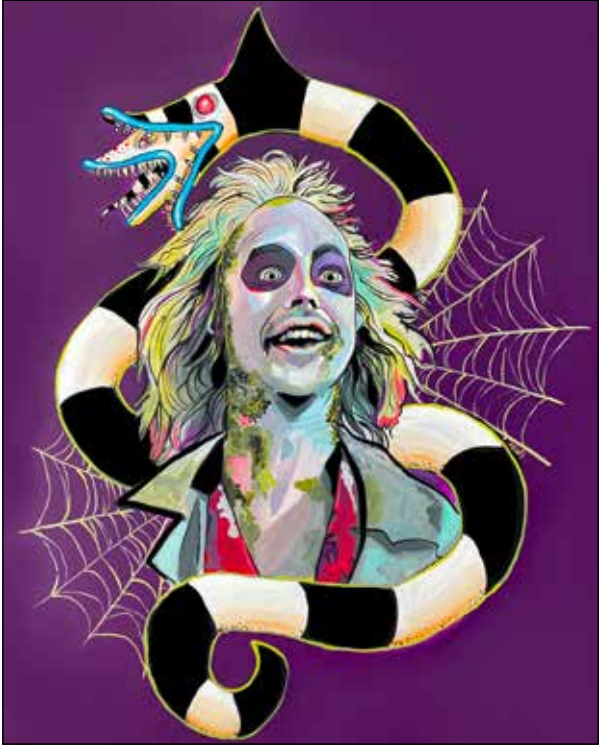
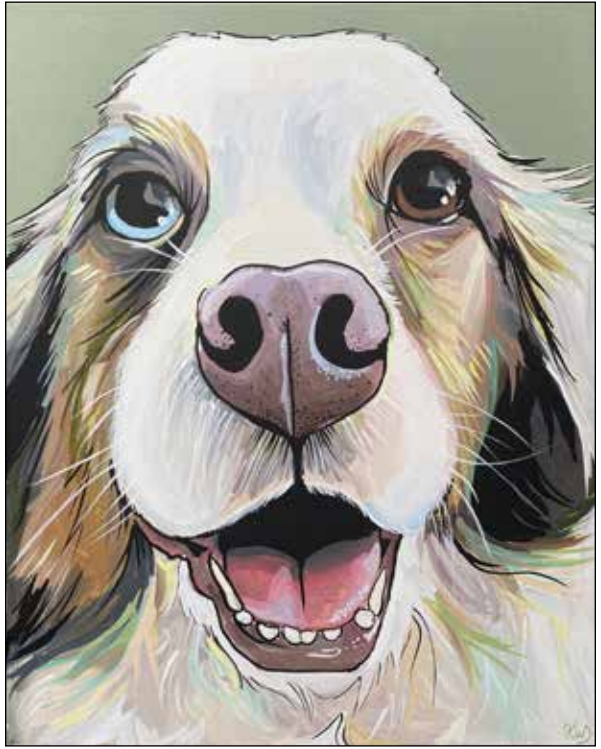
**NHN: Which artists have inspired you on your artistic journey? What inspires you on a day-to-day basis?**

KD: There’s really too many to name. Movies and books are my biggest inspiration. I find myself overly-invested in fictional characters. Escape from reality, if you will.

**NHN: Future goals/plans?**

KD: I would love to be a part of more art shows and, potentially, murals. I also hope to venture into book covers.

To keep up with Kellie Delaney, find her on Instagram and Facebook @KellieDelaneyArt or [www.kelliedelaneyart.com](http://www.kelliedelaneyart.com). To check out some of her pet portraits, visit @KellieDelaneyPortraits on Instagram.





# leAD LAKE NONA SPORTS & HEALTH TECH ACCELERATOR ANNOUNCES SECOND COHORT

ARTICLE BY FELICITY MAE GOMER  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF LEADSPORTS.COM

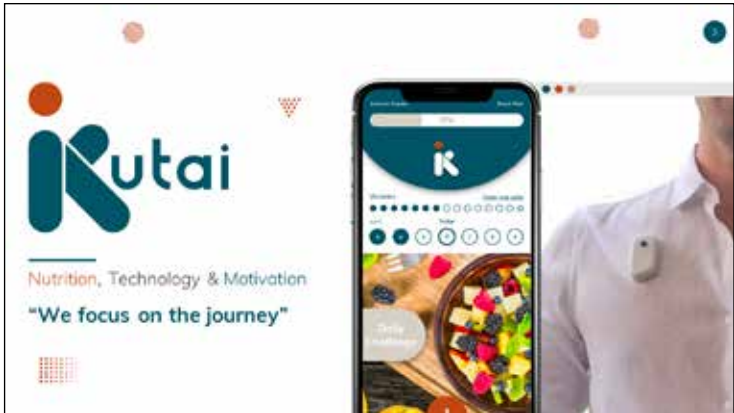


Lake Nona's resident accelerator for wellness and athletic research startups has announced its next wave of promising companies. Of all 495 applicants, only the top 1% were selected to participate in the program, and leAD is thrilled to see these groups develop to their full potential under their wing.

"What we have found for this cohort is nothing short of amazing! From solutions that aggregate your data and make you a better athlete to wearables that can truly save lives, each company has the potential to truly disrupt their market," said Christoph Sonnen, leAD co-founder & CEO, partner at ADvantage Sports Tech Fund. "I am so grateful that we can support them as they develop, and I'm very excited for the world of opportunities that awaits them in Lake Nona."

The leAD Lake Nona program began in August, when all participants underwent the virtual phase. Now, these top-tier startups have come to Lake Nona for the next phase of their prestigious program. In this stage, the six seedling companies selected for this round will collaborate, create and test new ideas as well as utilize the hub of innovation that is our region. Additionally, they will have access to all the Nona economy has to offer.

Many of leAD's new participating companies came to us from around the world, though 44% of applicants resided in North America and 34% in Europe. One of the companies was born and raised, as it were, right here in Lake Nona – a true



OxiWear addresses hypoxic injury in an earpiece that monitors your vitals and acts as an emergency alert for those prone to silent hypoxia. This high-tech accessory hails from Arlington, Virginia.

Point, a personalized wellness experience from Los Angeles, California, uses your biometric data to design customized health and fitness goals, perfectly suited for your own body.

From Motherwell, Scotland, Suji focuses on preventative care and a very low-intensity exercise approach to assist in recovery, performance and pain relief. They identify weakness in your muscles to target and treat before injury occurs.

indiFIT covers all bases when it comes to running your own business in a fitness or a wellness field. This Chicago-based company fully outfits entrepreneurs with everything they need in order to administrate an organized and robust health business.

From the region we know and love comes Flumina, a Lake Nona startup company dedicated to light wave research. Using selective parts of the wavelengths of light, Flumina has produced a means to faster recovery and healing.

These smart-as-a-whip startups will be researching, prototyping, brainstorming and collaborating their way to growth and development in the leAD Lake Nona Sports & Health Tech Accelerator lab on the first floor of the Pixon building. Their time in the leAD program will guide and support their future successes.



testament to the brilliance of our residents!

Meet Kutai, a holistic Artificial Intelligence solution to achieving and maintaining your nutritional, performance and health goals through software, hardware and motivation. Kutai is from Medellín, Colombia.



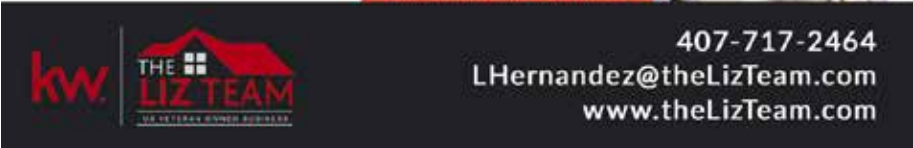
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**FIRST TUESDAYS ON THURSDAY**  
AT USTA NATIONAL CAMPUS  
& RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY FOR PICKLEBALL AND PADEL COURTS

Thursday, October 7  
5:00 - 7:00 P.M.



**NONA PROFESSIONAL LADIES**  
Breast Cancer Month "Social"  
Monday, October 18  
4:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.  
First Nature Ranch Foundation



**BUSINESS LUNCHEON - ORANGE COUNTY**  
PROPERTY AND BUSINESS TAXES

Friday, October 29  
11:30 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.  
Bespoke Conference Room




Presented by Synovus Bank Lake Nona

**CHAMBER SWING**

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 5  
EAGLE CREEK GOLF CLUB

Hurry - filling up fast for teams and sponsors



FROM THE CEO

Sept. 15 to Oct. 15 every year marks Hispanic Heritage Month. Here at our chamber, we are thankful for the support of our thriving Hispanic community and the welcoming spirit of our membership to all. We believe Lake Nona sets the example of inclusion and shared community interests.

As the chamber begins a new fiscal year this month, your board of directors will participate in a two-day retreat to continue development of our strategic plan. We encourage your comments and suggestions on the content of the plan. Email me at [ceo@lakenonacc.org](mailto:ceo@lakenonacc.org) or call (407) 796-2230 with your suggestions.

Please visit our website at [www.lakenonacc.org](http://www.lakenonacc.org) to review our very busy schedule for October.

Finally, we are happy to welcome our new communications and administration coordinator, Danielle Conley, to our staff. Danielle brings more than a decade of publishing experience to our desk.

Please stay safe and well.

*Don Long, President/CEO*

EVENT GALLERY



Cynthia Washington of WCI Florida presents "Sell to the Largest Customer in the World: The Federal Government!" at Eagle Creek Golf Club Lake Nona Regional Chamber Professional Ladies Group Luncheon on August 16. (Photo by Madelyn Long)



Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer assists in cutting the ribbon for e l spaces Orlando in downtown Orlando on Aug. 26. (Photo by Madelyn Long)



Ashley Swanson, owner of Veg'n Out, cuts the ribbon celebrating their one-year anniversary on Sept. 8. (Photo by Madelyn Long)



Owner Holly Rivera cuts the ribbon as Chick-fil-A Nona celebrates their one-year anniversary opening on Aug. 20. Orange County District 4 Commissioner Maribel Gomez Cordero attended the event. (Photo by Madelyn Long)



Jay Groves, executive director of the Center for Integrated Wellbeing, speaks at the Lake Nona Performance Club during the Lake Nona Regional Chamber Business Luncheon on Aug. 27. Dr. Sumeet Bhavsar of Florida Integrative Modern Medicine sponsored the event. (Photo by Madelyn Long)



Suzanne Weinstein, president and CEO of Orlando Credit Union, cuts the ribbon during their grand opening celebration in Lake Nona Town Center on Sept. 14. (Photo by Madelyn Long)



Congratulations to our Ambassador of the Month: Marissa Smith of Premier Sotheby's International Realty!



Join us in welcoming Danielle Conley, our new communications and administration coordinator. Danielle is a Central Florida resident, having grown up in Kissimmee, who now lives in Lake Nona. She holds a BA in English and brings more than a decade of publishing experience to our staff. (Photo by Deneff Gallery)

**CHAMBER PARTNERS**

**DIAMOND** NONA MEDIA COMMUNITY-DRIVEN ENGAGEMENT

**PLATINUM** Advent Health

**GOLD** amazon, GUIDEWELL Innovation, CENTRAL FLORIDA MONTHLY, STARLING

**SILVER** FIRST COLONY BANK

**BRONZE** OUC The Reliable One, Ronald McDonald House Charities Central Florida, ORLANDO HEALTH, UCF, Lake Nona Medical Center, SYNOVUS The Heart of Trust, onemed, TRC, TAVISTOCK RESTAURANT COLLECTION, TAVISTOCK

**COPPER** Northwestern Children's Hospital, VERANDAH PROPERTIES, LLC, Northwestern Mutual Wealth Management Company, FIMM FLORIDA INTEGRATIVE MODERN MEDICINE, LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

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# OUC'S WATER CONSERVATION TIPS AND TRICKS

ARTICLE BY FELICITY MAE GOMER  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF OUC

We may be surrounded by water here in Florida, but it is still a resource that we need to appreciate and use conservatively. People like you and I can do our part to limit water usage in our own lives while OUC's commercial partners make large changes to cut back on wasted water. OUC has collected a series of tips that will help you do your part in saving our planet's most valuable phenomenon.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact that few of us are likely to forget anytime soon. In addition to every issue the pandemic brought, we are now treating our liquid oxygen supplies tenderly. The need for liquid oxygen for medical use means that it is less available for usage in water treatment. Contributions by larger OUC clients like Universal Orlando Resort, Taylor Farms, Lynx, and more have made alterations in their routines that are helping us to save our water.

As an example, the LYNX transit agency cut down its bus-washing by half. Rather than washing the exterior of the buses every day, they cut back to washing them every other day instead (while maintaining their cleaning of the interior as usual). Universal Orlando and each of its destination resorts have suspended pressure washing and other water-guzzling tasks as a result of the shortage. Their everyday water conservation routine involves recycling and repurifying water from pools and rides and now extends to preserve even more. Taylor Farms cut back a considerable amount of wasted water by pausing land irrigation and closing excessive wash stations.

While OUC's larger clients may be capable of preserving more water than your household, we each can still make a monumental difference. Follow these tips from OUC to see how you and your family can contribute to Or-

lando's effort in conserving liquid oxygen levels. Do what you can and potentially help save the life of someone who needs it.

Contrary to what you may think, a modern dishwasher uses about 10 gallons less of water than hand-washing your dishes. A great way to save on your water usage is by putting those dishes in the dishwasher instead of washing them by hand. It's more convenient – and it doesn't hurt that it significantly cuts down on your gallons. If you don't have a dishwasher, an alternative would be to fill your sink with water and wash your dishes by hand with the faucet off.

Additionally, rather than letting your sprinklers run during the day, let Florida's infamous afternoon showers water your lawn. Irrigation systems are the largest culprit in water usage, accounting for 38-40% of drinking water usage. Outdoor water use and irrigation are to blame for 50% of residential water usage. Try cleaning the exterior of your house with a broom rather than a pressure washer. If you have any leftover water, such as from a pet's bowl, use it to water plants. Recycle your water wherever you can and find great alternatives for water-centric services.

Check your toilet for a leak that can easily go undetected: Add a few drops of food coloring inside the toilet's tank and wait for 15-20 minutes without flushing. If your toilet has a leak, color will enter the toilet bowl within that time frame. An affordable fix is replacing the flapper in your toilet's tank. Water usage in the bathroom is where the majority of indoor water use comes from. Take shorter showers and cut down on wasted water to make a difference.

In addition to these great tips for water conservation, follow general guidelines for saving water. Only run your washer or dishwasher with a full load, cut back on how frequently you wash your car, turn off faucets when not in active use, and save or recycle water in as many areas of your life as possible. Water is an invaluable resource, and we cannot afford to lose it.

WATER EMERGENCY

OUC

The Reliable One

OUC asks water customers to start conserving water IMMEDIATELY

Every Drop Counts

LIMIT YOUR IRRIGATION

Irrigation accounts for 38–40% of drinking water usage.

OUC.com/waterinfo

Every Drop Counts

WAYS TO SAVE WATER

Modern Dishwasher uses about 3 gallons of water per cycle.

Handwashing dishes uses up to 13 gallons of water.

OUC.com/waterinfo

HOW YOU CAN HELP

1 Limit watering your lawn or landscaping

2 Limit using a pressure washer

3 Limit washing your vehicle

4 Wash only full loads in dishwasher & clothes washer

5 Take short showers

6 Turn off water while brushing teeth or shaving

7 When washing dishes try hand, fill sink with water & turn off faucet

8 Recycle water rather than pour it down the drain

9 Repair leaking faucets and toilets

10 Install water-saving flush valves in toilets

11 Install low-flow shower heads

12 Use garbage disposal sparingly

MORE AT OUC.COM/WATERINFO

OUC The Reliable One

Every Drop Counts

WATER CONSERVATION

DO

• Let afternoon showers water your lawn and landscaping

• Clean outdoor surfaces with a broom

• Take short showers

• Run only full loads in the dishwasher and clothes washer

• Recycle leftover water (use water from dog's water bowl to water plants)

DON'T

• Run your irrigation system on your lawn and landscaping

• Use a pressure washer to clean outdoor surfaces

• Take long showers or baths

• Wash dishes by hand

• Pour leftover water down the drain (instead use it to water your plants)

OUC.com/waterinfo

Did you know?

The bathroom accounts for nearly half of indoor water use. Simple steps can help conserve.

MORE AT OUC.COM/WATERINFO

OUC The Reliable One

RESIDENTIAL WATER USE

Outdoor Use & Irrigation 50%

Other 2%

Toilet 12%

Sinks 10%

Shower 15%

Washing Machine 8%

Leaks 2%

Dishwasher 6%

OUC.com/waterinfo

OUC The Reliable One

# ONE DATE AT A TIME: STRETCHING YOUR DOLLAR AND MAKING ERRANDS FUN

BY SHARON FUENTES

If there is one question worse than the ever-famous “What do you want to eat for dinner?” it is the “What should we do for date night?” Hubby and I banter back and forth trying to make the other person decide on what to do for date night until one of us gives in and picks something. Recently, Hubby and I had the following convo:

Hubby: “It's date night. What do you want to do?”

Me: “I don't know. What do you want to do?”

Hubby: “Hmm...”

Me: “Well, why don't you think about it? I am going to run to Dollar Tree as I want to pick up some stuff for Bella's care package.” (Bella is our daughter away at college, and I was in the process of putting together a box of silly odds and ends and treats to send to her to remind her of HOME and how much she is missed.)

Hubby: “I'll go with you! That can be our date!”

Me: “Going to the dollar store? You hate going to places like that, and I need to shop around because I really don't know what I want to get or what treasures we can find.”

Hubby: “I want to go. Besides, I don't really care where we go or what we do. I just like spending time with you!” (Yes, he scored some major brownie points with that answer!)



The whole convo got me thinking. Can running an errand together be considered a date? The whole reason why Hubby and I started our date nights was to make sure we carved out time to be together, relax, and LAUGH ... basically enjoy each other's company. But how would we do that when I was on a mission to buy stuff for my daughter and Hubby really doesn't like shopping with me when I am in that mode? And that was when I got the idea to do something I used to do with my kids when they were little and I needed to shop and get stuff done without them whining and complaining. I would make it into a game. Games make everything better! I wasn't sure if this would work, but heck, it was worth a try.


I went online and found a cool, free site where you can generate your own bingo cards: [www.bingobaker.com](http://www.bingobaker.com). Just enter your bingo card title, choose a size, and type your words into the squares. I had so much fun thinking of stuff and people we might see at the store and filling out the boxes with them. Then, I did a simple scramble, and voila, I had bingo cards ready to print. When I showed Hubby the cards, he got just as excited as my kids used to get! (It was really cute!)

Bingo cards and umbrellas in hand, we dodged raindrops and headed to the Vista Palms Dollar Tree on Narcoossee Road. It was a Saturday afternoon, so it was busy, which made it even more fun to play our bingo game. While I had printed out two cards to make it a competition, we decided to do it together. Besides, that way I could also shop. (I may have been on a date, but I was still a mom on a mission!)

I am happy to report that it actually was a pretty fun time. We kept nudging each other like co-conspirators and pointing out things so we could “X” it off. We talked about candy from our childhood, stared at people's feet to see who might be wearing flip flops, and got a strange look from the pregnant lady when she saw how excited we were to see her. At one point, we even considered tripping a kid so we could mark off the “crying child” square. Don't worry, we didn't! But the fact that we both had the idea made us laugh so hard I snorted! It took us half an hour to get a BINGO, and by then, we had also filled our cart with all sorts of fun things for our daughter's care package that we BOTH picked out.

Hubby and I discovered that an errand turned into a game makes for a great date. We are already starting to brainstorm what else we could do. Publix Pictionary, Home Depot Hide and Seek, Target Tag ...





# FELICITY MAE KNOW


BY FELICITY MAE GOMER

Q: “What's a good piece of advice that someone has given you?” – Riley

A: I constantly find myself asking for advice from all kinds of people to really feed my mind into being more well-rounded and not being afraid to ask for help. You will get some of the most interesting pieces of advice from some of the most unexpected people. Sometimes, one small tip mentioned years and years ago will stick with you loudly for the rest of your life. I'm this way with some advice my dad gave me throughout my teenage years. You never know what someone is capable of; being nice to every person you meet might give you everything, eventually. First impressions are, unfortunately, a very key factor in someone's opinion of you. Remaining positive and kind will make you more likeable, memorable, and generally more approachable. This concept alone will open so many doors for you as it has for me. Other advice that has really stuck with me includes not exfoliating my skin every day or even once a week. It's amazing how much that little fact has done for my skin! Money tips, travel tips, life hacks, etc., are everywhere you look. Asking people for their thoughts on certain matters is perfectly okay and even makes that person feel good. Another suggestion I heard that resonated was to run the dishwasher twice. There are no rules. Who says you have to take the dishes out and wash them again? Just run it again. Nobody will punish you for not having the energy to deal with the dishes, and there's absolutely nothing wrong with running the dishwasher again. The moral of this is that there is nothing wrong with needing time, shortcuts, etc. Do what you have to do, but the process is up to you!

Q: “I'm just struggling. I'm so stressed that I can hardly eat, move or relax. How do I manage this?” – Estefania

A: I'm so sorry that you're experiencing this. I hope you remember that above all else, you will be okay. Humanity has worked for thousands of years to make sure that we get better at remaining okay. Regardless of what happens, you are alive and things have the potential to get better. We could whip out the old “things will get better” trope, but the meaning is the same. You have to stick in there to see the ways in which it does, actually, get better. Start by breathing, of course. It seems silly, but all of us forget to breathe – and even worse, we forget even more often to breathe *deeply*. Give yourself something to focus on that does not include your own thoughts. I saw something online the other day that said when you feel anxious or are in mid-anxiety attack, apply something cold to your vagus nerve. This is your most central, big-boss nerve that largely determines your reactions to anxiety. Press an ice pack onto your chest and keep it there for 15 minutes. You could also try an ice cold shower, but I'm sure you don't want misery on top of your anxiety. Write down easy, manageable goals. It's okay if you can't do them yet. Make sure your basic necessities are being taken care of. If you can't get yourself to brush your teeth, at least swish some mouthwash. If you can't eat, try drinking something with substance, like a smoothie or even a glass of milk. Take the time you need, but try to do the bare minimum to take care of yourself until it gets more manageable. Once you start accomplishing small tasks you've laid out for yourself, you will feel more productive and more capable. If it took all of your energy to do those small tasks, that's okay! You can try again tomorrow (in most cases). Be okay with feeling the totality of your feelings.



OCTOBER 2021 9



# Pickleball and Padel

## Ribbon Cutting Ceremony



The USTA National Campus invites you to join us for a ribbon cutting celebration to mark the recent opening of four new pickleball courts and four new padel courts at our Nemours Family Zone. Following the ceremony, please join us for light bites and refreshments. Guests are welcome to bring athletic clothing if they want to try pickleball or padel.



### Date and Time

Thursday Oct 7, 2021  
5:00 PM - 7:00 PM EDT

Ribbon Cutting at 5:15 pm

1000 USTA Blvd Orlando, FL 32827



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10 OCTOBER 2021

## USTA NATIONAL CAMPUS BREAKS IN NEW PICKLEBALL AND PADEL COURTS

ARTICLE BY DANIEL PYSER  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF USTA

The USTA National Campus officially opened four pickleball courts and four padel courts – complete with permanent nets and lights – in the Nemours Family Zone this summer. Both sets of courts have been packed with local players as participation among the entire racquet sport industry continues to grow in the United States with people of all ages and abilities picking up the sports as a way to stay active, healthy and social.

In addition to regular programming, a number of events have been held, including the inaugural Orlando Cup, a Pro Pickleball Association event that was held in mid-September. The event attracted more than 1,000 elite pickleball players and was even featured on Tennis Channel.

An official ribbon-cutting for the new courts is scheduled for October.

For those unfamiliar with the newest additions to the campus, think of pickleball as a crafty mix of badminton, tennis and ping-pong. Like tennis, pickleball can be played in singles or doubles, but the pickleball ball is plastic and perforated like a wiffle ball. Pickleball is a sport for everyone and a great way to stay active.

Various programs and social opportunities will be offered in the sport at the campus, with players being able to find the perfect level using the USAPA rating program. Pickleball programming options include camps or private/small group lessons to meet every player's needs. Players will also have the option to reserve pickleball courts for play.



Padel is a racquet sport that is different from the sport known in the U.S. and Canada as paddle tennis. Padel is typically played as doubles in an enclosed court with artificial turf that is roughly 25% smaller than the size of a tennis court. Scoring is the same as tennis, and the points are started with an underhand serve. Padel is played with a paddle or racquet with no strings and a lower compression ball than that used in tennis, making it easier to control.

Padel programming at the campus will also include junior and adult clinics for beginners, intermediate and competition as well as social events and camps.

Pickleball and padel courts are open Monday-Thursday from 7:30 a.m.-9 p.m., Friday 7:30 a.m.-8 p.m., and Saturday-Sunday from 7:30 p.m.-5 p.m. For more information on pickleball and padel programming, events, and for court reservations, please call (407) 675-2502 or visit the PLAY Section of [ustanationalcampus.com](https://ustanationalcampus.com).



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## BEST FRIENDS IN THE NONAHOOD: A HOME BUILT FOR MILA

ARTICLE BY PATTY REBER  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF  
MELISSA SPEZIALE

A scared little puppy that appeared to be about three months old was hiding under a truck in Fort Worth, Texas. The little dog was rescued by Allie, a caring young woman who wanted to find its owner. Allie thoroughly searched for the puppy's

owner to no avail. Then, she had a brilliant solution. She contacted her sister, Melissa Speziale in Lake Nona, to adopt this sweet pooch. Allie thought this could be the best medicine for Melissa and her fiancé, Peter, whose wedding plans had to be rescheduled due to COVID. This was a very difficult time for them. With no assurance of a future date in sight, Melissa and Peter decided to fly to Texas to see her sister and meet this newly-rescued pooch. The connection was instant. Many smiles, cuddles and doggie licks later, they decided to name her Mila, and she "belonged."

Peter and Melissa drove back to Florida with Mila stretched out in her crate hugging a green dinosaur toy. Sweet and scared, Mila just clung to her little stuffed friend for the entire journey, and the dinosaur continues to be her BFF to this day.

Mila was the joy in Melissa and Peter's home during the COVID lockdown.

Mila has become a well-known "pooch pal" at the dog parks in Laureate Park. She runs with the pack every morning and evening. Well, some mornings she gets distracted. There are feral cats living near the Bovet dog park, and Mila keeps a sharp eye on them. She is so focused on this task that one morning she jumped the park fence to take a closer look! Fortunately, both Mila and the feral cats remained intact!

There is one other thing that sets Mila apart from her dog friends. Mila can open doors at home. She is an expert at pushing down latches, opening doors, and going on her way to sun herself. The new home that Melissa and Peter built has latches on all the doors instead of doorknobs. It is definitely the "house built for Mila."

The final joy in all of this? Melissa and Peter will finally become Mr. and Mrs. in November. There is no stopping them now. I can visualize Mila pushing the latch down and opening the door for Melissa to step out into the sunshine on the day of their wedding! Mila is sure to enjoy every moment! Congratulations to Melissa, Peter and Mila on a beautiful outcome!

## TOUGH THINGS TO TALK ABOUT: THE IMPORTANCE OF AN ANNUAL CHECKUP

BY NATALIA JARAMILLO

October is National Breast Cancer Awareness month, which is why this month we are discussing the importance of getting an annual checkup done. Throughout the pandemic, many women have felt the doctor's office is the last place they want to go. Many women have put off their annual checkups for fear of getting sick from going to the one place where all sick people gather. It has been over a year of this pandemic, which means that if you haven't gone to the doctor in the past year, it is time for your yearly checkup. Men should also not put off their annual checkup as they, too, can be diagnosed with breast cancer. About 1 in every 100 breast cancer diagnoses in the U.S. will be a man, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

A study conducted by the University of Massachusetts Medical School comparing medical records of women and men aged 30-85 who had not been diagnosed with cancer found that breast cancer screenings dramatically decreased from 2019 to 2020. With a decrease in screenings, there will likely also be an increased number of breast cancer cases going undiagnosed. As research has come to find out, treating cancer as quickly as possible is often the best method when fighting it. This lack of screenings is also concerning because it points to the clear impact COVID-19 has had on the healthcare system.

"Our survey shows that the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted breast cancer screening, including surveillance among women who have been diagnosed with breast cancer," said Erica Warner, assistant professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School. Warner presented the results of a study conducted by the Massachusetts General Hospital, where they concluded a significant delay in breast cancer screenings.

This concerning trend could have negative ramifications for the future of our country. In an editorial article published in June 2020 in the journal Science, Norman Sharpless, director of the National Cancer Institute, wrote about his grave prediction. In the next decade, about 10,000 more breast cancer or colorectal cancer patients than normal will die due to the ongoing pandemic's impact on the cancer healthcare system, Sharpless predicted.

In the beginning of the pandemic, many medical offices, including those caring for cancer, delayed non-essential work. Today, as the pandemic is still here, it is vital to ensure you receive an annual checkup, and doctor's offices are more open than before. We have learned a lot throughout the last year and a half regarding COVID; therefore, taking the proper precautions will ensure that a trip to the doctor's office will not be the likely source of an infection.



## KATIE'S CUCINA: HALLOWEEN CANDY COOKIE SKILLET

BY KATIE JASIEWICZ, [KATIESCUCINA.COM](https://katiescucina.com)

If you celebrate and enjoy taking part in Halloween, you will love this recipe. Year after year, I find myself with so much leftover Halloween candy. Can you relate? I typically do not allow my children to consume a lot of candy throughout the year. But I make a big exception on Halloween night. I let them eat (almost) as much as they would like. Then after that, it's back to one piece a day for a few weeks until magically the Halloween candy has "disappeared." I realize my years of getting away with this are coming to an end as they grow older and wiser. But for now, this is what I continue to do in my home.

In an effort to create additional fun Halloween traditions, I let my kids help me make various desserts the day after Halloween. We transform leftover Halloween candy into a Halloween Candy Cookie Skillet (don't forget the vanilla ice cream!), a Halloween snack mix, white chocolate Halloween candy bark, and even candy cookies. As you can tell, lots of additional sweet treats. Making desserts after Halloween has been a great way to use up leftover candy without feeling like you have over indulged!

Even after all the baking, if you find yourself with additional leftover candy, you can contact the Ronald McDonald House (RMH) located on 6551 Nemours Parkway, Orlando 32827. Their phone number is (321) 319-4748, and they will gladly take wrapped leftover candy to pass out to children and families staying at the home. RMH is always looking for donations, and this is one simple way we can help give back to our community.

If you love Halloween as much as I do and hope to start a new tradition all while using up that leftover, coveted and hard-earned trick-or-treating candy, I hope you'll make this candy cookie skillet with your family this month.



### HALLOWEEN CANDY COOKIE SKILLET

#### Ingredients

- 2 sticks salted butter room temperature
- ¾-cup white granulated sugar
- ¾-cup brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- ½-teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 2-¼ cups all-purpose flour
- ½-cup chocolate chips
- 2 cups chocolate Halloween candy, unwrapped and chopped
- ½-cup M&Ms
- 3 tablespoons Halloween sprinkles, divided

#### Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Using a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, beat the room-temperature butter, granulated white sugar, and light brown sugar together for 1 minute on medium speed until creamy. Then, add in the eggs, vanilla extract and baking soda. Mix

again for 30 seconds.

3. Add the all-purpose flour to the mixture and mix on low speed for 20 seconds, then medium speed for 40 seconds until well-incorporated.
4. Stop the mixer, add in the chocolate chips, chopped chocolate Halloween candy, M&Ms, and 2 tablespoons of the sprinkles. Mix on low for 10-15 seconds until just incorporated.
5. Grease a 9-inch cast-iron skillet with vegetable oil. Wipe it clean so the skillet is just greased but not puddling with oil. Then, scoop the cookie batter into the skillet. Flatten with a silicone spatula and sprinkle the remaining 1 tablespoon of sprinkles on top of the cookie.
6. Bake for 30 minutes until golden brown. Carefully remove the skillet from the oven and let it rest for 30 minutes. Cut into wedges and serve.

**Note:** If you have a lot of leftover candy, feel free to omit the chocolate chips and chop additional candy bars to mix into the batter.



# HAPPY EATERS LAKE NONA: IS THERE A CONNECTION BETWEEN PICKY EATING AND AUTISM?

BY KELLY KOMISARUK, M.ED., CCC-SLP

I remember the day I called my father from New York, where I was living at the time, to tell him I wanted to get a tattoo. I was 21 years old and certainly didn't need his permission, but I felt the need to run the idea by him. Having been raised in a conservative Jewish home, I knew getting a tattoo was frowned upon. My father, who was on the orthodox side, was not excited about his baby girl marking up her body, but he understood it was MY body and the symbolism behind the tattoo. So, without skipping a beat, he told me if this was something I really wanted to do, he would prefer I wait to have it done in Florida so he could go with me.

Two months later, my father picked me up from the airport and drove me to a place that he said was the best in town. He never tried to talk me out of it; he just sat there holding my hand and trying to make me laugh while I had what would be my first tattoo (and only for the next three decades) engraved onto my ankle. It wasn't until I had my own children many years later that I realized just how incredible a gesture that was from him.

My daughter has been talking about getting a tattoo since the time she started speaking. I remember coming home from work one day when she was only four to see that she had set up our living room to look like a tattoo parlor, with pictures she had drawn taped on the walls and her sitting in a chair by the couch with magic markers, ready to ink up her next customer. As I sat down to have her scribble a smiley face on my hand, she would tell me how she was going to get tattoos when she was older because "who wouldn't want pretty pictures on your body?"



# TEAM NONA BECOMES NATIONAL AND WORLD WAKEBOARD CHAMPIONS

ARTICLE BY JORDAN BURNETTE  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF GORDON COTTRELL

When most people think of Nona Adventure Park, they think of a fun place to go on a day off. The truth is, there is so much more to it. Nona Adventure Park is known for being the best spot to learn how to wakeboard. Since opening in March of 2019, Lake Nona locals have learned and advanced in a whole new sport. The weeks of August 1st-4th and September 11th-12th, Nona Wake members competed in National and World Wakeboard Competitions at neighbor parks, Orlando WaterSports Complex (OWC) and Elite Cable Park (ECP). Many of the Nona Members did amazing and made the podium at these intense competitions. At the 2021 Nautique WWA (World Wake Association) Wake Park Nationals, Trent Stuckey (17), Isaac Claudio (13), Michael Kim (14), and Jeven Garcia (12) all won first place for their divisions. Coming in second place in their divisions: Jaden Garcia (16) and Michael D'amelio (11). In third place: Gavin Stuckey (15), Jake Kappler (23) and Nollan Vasconcelos (12). At the 2021 Nautique WWA Wake Park Worlds, Isaac Claudio, Jaden Garcia, Trent and Gavin Stuckey came in first place in their categories as well. In second place: Jake Kappler and Jeven Garcia. Placing third in their category: Preston Persichetti (11).

While wakeboarding is not a "team"-based sport, these athletes are still a team. After asking Jaden Garcia his favorite thing about the sport, he said, "My favorite part about wakeboarding is being with my friends, learning new tricks, and progressing together. Everyone helps each other improve." Jaden started wakeboarding only two years ago at Nona Adventure Park. Jaden and his brother, Jeven, spend most of their days on the water practicing their skills.

After asking the same question to another member, Michael Kim, his answer was, "My favorite part about wakeboarding is

So, I was not surprised when months before she was about to turn 18, she started to talk more seriously about what she wanted her first tattoo to be. She had drawn a simple butterfly, something we both feel a connection to ever since my mother passed away, as the tattoo she wanted on her left forearm. It would be very small, but the meaning behind it would be huge! I cried at the gesture and told her I would make her an appointment as I would go with her to hold her hand the way my father did mine. But she shook her head no. To say I was a bit shocked, perhaps even saddened, is an understatement. She laughed, though, when she saw my pouty face.

"Mom, I don't want you to just go with me to hold my hand. I want you to get a matching tattoo! I want this to be a special thing for us BOTH!" I began to cry... again. I had been joking for weeks saying that I was going to give her wings to fly, and yet it was she who would be doing that for me!

As our children become older and start to forge ahead alone, it's easy to feel forgotten, sad, and no longer needed. But if we do our job right – if we express our opinions but still choose to show up and hold their hands even when they don't take our advice – then one day, they may invite us to not just watch but to be a part of the new life they are creating for themselves. And, if you are lucky, you will have a beautiful picture on your arm to remind you of that moment!



Some of the boys with their trophies. Hard work pays off! Left to Right: Jaden Garcia (16), Michael Kim (14), Isaac Claudio (13), Jeven Garcia (12), Nollan Vasconcelos (12).

the thrill of learning something new. There is always a new trick to try or a new skill to learn." We also asked Kim to describe Nona Adventure Park in one word, and his answer was, "Home."

Nona's members have created friendships on the dock that will last a lifetime. They have built a community that truly feels like home for them. It is rare to see these kids spend days off from school and or go through the afternoons without practicing. The dedication and determination within these individuals is inspiring.

Nona Adventure Park general manager Jeff Trudeau stated, "I am proud to be able to be a part of the team at NAP. We are here to provide an outlet for people to come and progress their creativity and competitive spirit. NAP is not just an adventure park, we are also the venue for water sports athletes to perfect their craft."

The next competition on the calendar is Nona Mini Jams on Oct. 10 at Nona Adventure Park. The athletes are currently starting to prepare their runs for this day. Trudeau encourages Lake Nona residents to come out to this event to see what the hype is all about. Nona Adventure Park is so proud of their members. Congratulations to Team Nona Wake for their big wins! We now have WWA National and World Wakeboard Champions in our Lake Nona community!



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TO NONA & BEYOND:  
THE CRS-23 MISSION

BY EMERSON & ETHAN WALSH

On the peaceful early morning of Aug. 29, we gazed east to watch SpaceX’s Falcon 9 rocket illuminate the sky. Approximately eight minutes after liftoff, the Falcon 9 first stage B1061-4 successfully landed on an autonomous barge out in the Atlantic Ocean. The next day, CRS-23’s Cargo Dragon capsule reached the International Space Station – delivering 4,800 pounds of science investigations, vehicle hardware, crew supplies and spacewalk equipment.

A notable local tie was a submission by Orlando’s own Girl Scouts of Citrus. In their partnership with SpaceKids Global, 21 local scouts were selected to have their science experiments, essays and art included in the Faraday Box as a part of the “Making Space for Girls” challenge.

This was the second flight for the Cargo Dragon capsule designated C208. Unlike Crew Dragon, the cargo variant of Dragon has no SuperDraco abort engines, cockpit controls, or passenger seats. SpaceX intends to reuse this Cargo Dragon up to five times.

CRS-23 Launch by Emerson Walsh

After spending a few days out at sea, the booster that launched CRS-23 arrived back at Port Canaveral. The vessel that carried the booster back to shore was none other than “A Short-fall of Gravitass.” This was the new drone ship’s first operational mission, and it appears to have performed flawlessly.

In our next article for *Nona-hood News*, we will be documenting the launch of the highly anticipated Inspiration-4 mission.

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## SUNNY SIDE UP: SPANISH

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.*

Floridians know their Spanish. A trip to Walmart is to hear perfect Spanish, Spanish in all its iterations. So when I moved here, I thought I’d give this Spanish thing a go. To say I’m pretty good at languages is an understatement. My family moved to Germany when I was two, and you should have heard me jabber away in German by age five. I was a baby prodigy!

In fact, my confidence in language learning was so high at that tender age that I refused to speak German after we left. My parents tried to keep me speaking German, but I refused, knowing that I’d already learned it. So what was the point?

When I began learning Spanish through Duolingo, my skills were on full display. My computer screen kept pinging with awards. Duolingo even sent me emails about how I needed to keep up my winning ways. They must have never seen such proficiency. But I stayed humble so as to keep up my humility streak, for which I’ve been winning awards for years.

After a week, I was 14% proficient in Spanish. So when work took me to Mexico City, I was surprised at the lack of language-learning in this part of the world. I kept asking where the bathroom was, an extremely simple phrase (“Como es el baño?”), and folks kept looking at me cross-eyed. Mexico needs Duolingo.

Language proficiency runs in my family; my dad has worked on translating large portions of the Bible from ancient texts. If the Bible is a conspiracy, my dad’s in on it. Note to self: Keep eye on dad. With language-learning in my blood, I knew that I was to become a language rival to C-3PO from *Star Wars*, Data from *Star Trek*, and pretty much every fictional robot there ever was.

Stuff like this had happened to me before in grad school when the philological stars had aligned. For example, me versus ancient biblical Greek and Hebrew. I was so good at Greek that my advanced Greek teacher brought me blackberry cobbler every week (true story). I suppose she wanted to see if the sugar could enable me to bring a dead language alive again. I crooned ancient Greek. She was so overwhelmed she went to get me some ice cream for my cobbler. I think she just needed to cool down.

In ancient Hebrew class, my teacher was a little more severe. He looked just as I would imagine Moses looked. His face was perfectly encircled by great white tendrils of hair and beard. Think Einstein’s hair blown back by a holy gust.

He was a fantastic teacher if you already knew the language. “Students” would raise their hands and ask about some abstract exception to the rule in the language, and he would spend the rest of class discussing it with that individual. Meanwhile, the rest of us were poised with pens in hand, waiting for the third letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Now, we were thinking about more violent uses of pens. Even my prodigious language abilities were tasked by this class where I learned precisely nothing. I should have been using Duolingo and

pinging.

Unfortunately, Moses was to be my examiner to graduate from grad school, enabling me to become a grad-grad. He was unable to be there for the written exam, so he had me take it alone. This was before the age of “Hey, Google,” so to cheat on this test would have taken a trip to the library, a keen understanding of the Dewey decimal system, and looking through ancient archived tomes. Being allergic to dust, I decided not to cheat.

After skimming the instructions, I cracked open the test to see four ridiculously long passages. Three of them I’d seen before and one I hadn’t ever seen. So I dug in. Moses was going to bless me with his rod (perhaps that thought was foreshadowing). But I ploughed on, translating perfectly all three of the uber-long (see my German work) passages with pizzazz (Italian I haven’t even studied).

I’d done such a good job on the three seen passages that by the time my three-hour exam was over, I didn’t even bother with the unseen one. I’d been popping one M&M with each word I translated and was feeling a bit jittery. But I felt sick when I went back and read the instructions again, “Be sure to only take 45 minutes on each passage and then move on to the next.”

Knowing this could mean trouble, I called Moses, and he pronounced judgement upon me, “Thou art unlikely to become a grad-grad, for you did not obey my instructions thus breaking the covenant. Tomorrow, come and see me and my brother, Aaron, at the office of meeting.”

Next morning, I met Moses and Aaron in their office. I was doomed. Hell hath no fury like having to read obscure pas-

sages of Hebrew before a Moses glowing with anger. But obscurity quickly became my friend. The passages were so obscure that Aaron, ever the peace-maker, kept giving me the definitions for the words that occurred less than 100 times in the Hebrew bible. In the end, I only had to translate like four words: and, the, walk and give.

Much to Moses’ chagrin, I passed, and my belief in skimming instructions and my inherent language gifting was restored. Aaron even pried Moses’ smiting rod from his fingers and blessed me with it.

So what does all this have to do with learning Spanish in Florida? Well, I skimmed the instructions about my assignment for this column. It said something about writing funny stuff about life in Central Florida, but I forget. It probably said something along the lines of write about whatever you want to write about because you are such a prodigious and praiseworthy genius par excellence (French) that we will print whatever your blessed hands write. Well, it is written.

*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@gmail.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.*

14 OCTOBER 2021



## TO GEN Z: HALLOWEEN IS BACK!

### HERE'S WHERE TO CELEBRATE

BY NATALIA JARAMILLO

This year it seems that Halloween will consist of more events than last year. If you were anything like me last year, you stayed at home and watched scary movies all night long due to COVID-19. This year, most of the usual events are back on. Here's where to spend Halloween like the good old days in 2019.

Halloween Horror Nights! After taking a year off in 2020 due to the pandemic, Universal Studios' notorious haunted house theme park event is back. You know the situation is serious when Halloween Horror Nights gets

cancelled. This year, the event runs from Sept. 3 through Oct. 31. If you are a loyal fan to Halloween Horror Nights and bought tickets to go in 2020, there is still a way that you can use them this year. Head to their website to find out exactly how to use tickets from last year's cancelled event.

For a similar event to Halloween Horror Nights, head to SeaWorld for Howl-O-Scream. This event is similar to the Universal event and takes place on select nights from Sept. 10 through Oct. 31. This event, just like Universal's, will require a separate ticket. You can go to SeaWorld during the day with one ticket and then buy your Howl-O-Scream ticket to attend that event at night.

One event that stayed the same in 2020 and 2021 is The Haunted Road, a drive-thru haunted house. The event started in 2020 at 15239 Lake Pickett Rd., as a halloween option that was safe during the pandemic. This year, if you still feel safer away from large crowds, go to this haunted drive-thru running from Sept. 30 through Nov. 7.

If you are of-age, then check out a Halloween block party at ICEBAR Orlando. The Dia De Los Muertos Halloween Block Party will take place on Halloween. All you need is a valid ID. ICEBAR will serve alcoholic beverages and host a costume party.



# Spooky story contest

Kids between the ages of 6 and 16 are invited to send us their scariest stories.

Original, Halloween-themed tales of ghosts, witches, vampires, werewolves and other creatures of the night should be emailed to our newspaper by noon on October 13, 2021 at support@nona.media

A winner will be chosen at random from among the contest participants.

**You could win a \$100 prize!**

ALL STORIES WILL BE SHARED ON SOCIAL MEDIA ON OCTOBER 27.

**nonahood news**

## WELCOMING AWARD-WINNING CHILDREN'S AUTHOR SOPHIA GHOLZ TO LAKE NONA

ARTICLE BY DENNIS DELEHANTY  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF SOPHIA GHOLZ

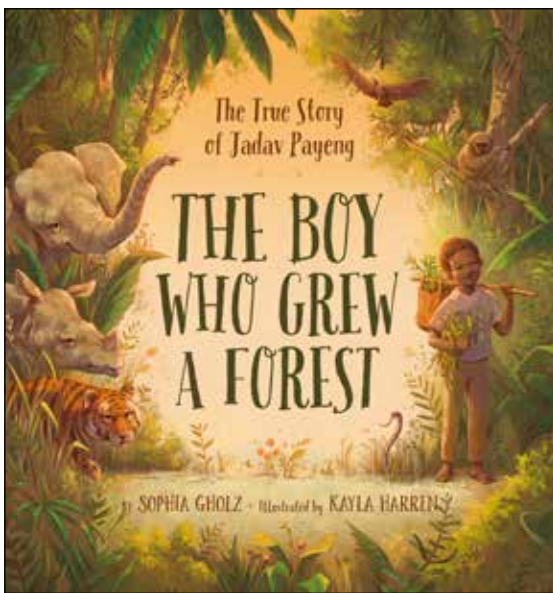


We have many reasons to be proud to live in Lake Nona. Topping the list, of course, is our community's intense pursuit of health and wellness. Our architecture is cutting-edge and world-class, and where else can you find such variety and color in the design of neighborhood homes? Then, there's our Beep shuttles, the USTA, and plans to build the nation's first vertiport. Perhaps the one asset our town still lacks – other than, of course, higher-end retail options – is a strong literary life. That, though, is about to change. Meet Sophia Gholz, Lake Nona's resident children's author, who is publishing yet another major children's book this fall and will have more to come next year.

As a child growing up in Gainesville, Sophia always wanted to write, especially to tell stories. But a negative experience with a literary professor in college caused Sophia to shift her sights to telling stories through other avenues instead. Soon after, she drove cross-country to Los Angeles, chasing her reworked dream.

In California, she discovered that stage fright and acting did not mix. Shifting direction once again, Sophia enrolled in Santa Barbara's Brooks Institute to study photography. The field of fashion photography most interested her. Not surprisingly, her career path led her next to New York City, where she worked for many years in fashion publishing. Now married and finding the prospect of raising a family in New York City unappealing, she returned in 2010 with her husband to Florida, this time to Jacksonville, where she returned, too, to her lifetime ambition: to write books. During her adult life, Sophia says she had "kept the words and stories inside of her." Now, she felt it was time to bring out those stories to a world of young readers. But learning the craft of writing children's books as well as the ins and outs of the children's book industry took several years. Success came finally in 2019 with the publication of her first book, *The Boy Who Grew a Forest*, a genuine literary and visual masterpiece.

*The Boy Who Grew a Forest* tells the incredible story of Jadav Payeng, who lived on Majuli Island – the world's largest river island – on Brahmaputra River in northeastern India. As a teenager, Jadav saw wildlife struggling to survive along the river's barren sandbars, whose relentless expansion threatened to wash away the island entirely. In fact, over the past century, Majuli Island had lost half of its area to erosion. The barefoot Jadav, armed with only a stick, decided to take action and

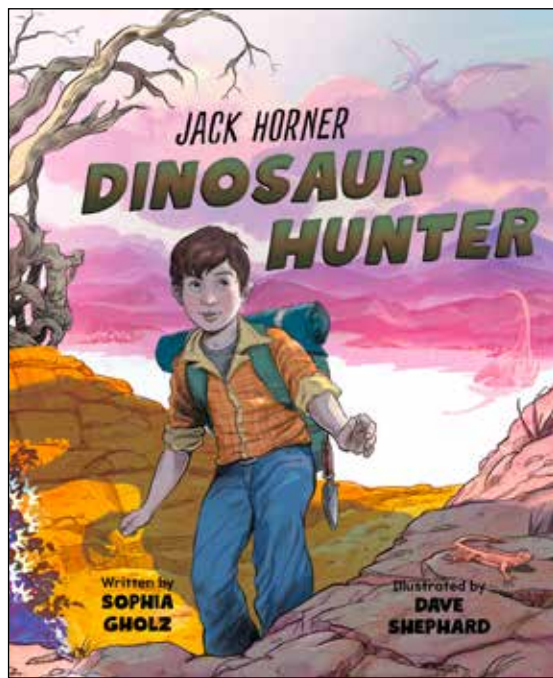


single-handedly began planting seedlings in the mud along the river. He kept planting month after month, year after year, and eventually produced a forest larger than Central Park in New York. Importantly, wildlife returned to the island forest, which now boasts of several Bengal tigers and one-horned rhinos, herds of buffalo and elephants, plus monkeys, snakes and vultures within a thriving ecosystem. With its gorgeous illustrations and a heart-warming, inspirational text, *The Boy Who Grew a Forest* has won several awards, most notably the Florida State Book Award Gold Medal.

This fall, we await the arrival of Sophia's newest book, *Jack Horner Dinosaur Hunter*! Luckily, we have procured an advance copy so we can share some of its content with you. In an engaging comic book format, Sophia recounts the life of Jack Horner, one of the world's most knowledgeable experts about dinosaurs. So knowledgeable, in fact, that he advised Stephen Spielberg about the behaviors of those enormous reptiles for the *Jurassic Park* movies. As a child growing up in rural Montana, Jack was drawn to fossils, and his discovery of a dinosaur bone at age eight cemented what would become a lifelong interest in paleontology.

Jack, however, struggled in school. Unbeknownst to him, he suffered from severe dyslexia. He could easily read fossils but could make little sense of words and numbers. On the basis of a successful high school science project, Jack was admitted to college but flunked out his freshman year, and was soon drafted into the army to serve in Vietnam. Returning home a couple of years later, Jack searched for a job in paleontology everywhere he could and was finally offered a job as a technician at Princeton University's Natural History Museum.

On vacation in Montana, Jack kept hunting for dinosaurs and found what turned out to be the world's first specimen of a dinosaur embryo. This discovery launched him upon an exceptionally productive academic career that brought him professorships, honorary doctorates, and acclaim for the scientific papers and books he produced over his lifetime. This is an inspirational tale of a boy who, through dogged determination, overcame a severe learning handicap and reached the top of his profession. And along the way, Jack Horner has given us a more enlightened understanding of our distant reptilian ancestors.



Recently, a college classmate of mine, now a professor emeritus of business at the University of Michigan, was asking me about life in Lake Nona. Though I could boast about our community's passionate focus on health and wellness, I conceded that we seem to stumble in building a local intellectual life.

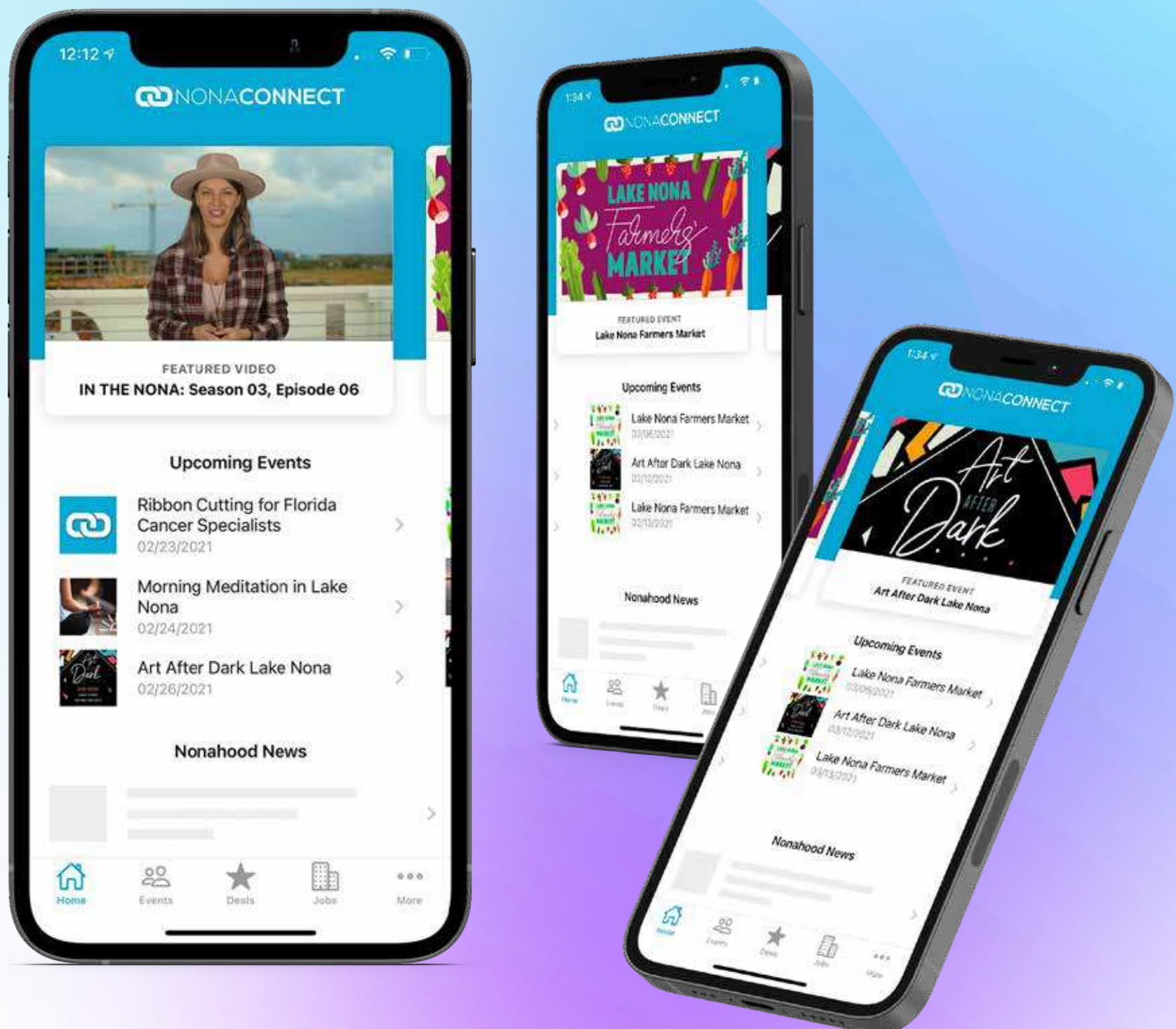
"But isn't an intellectual life an important part of health and wellness?" she asked. Due to the extraordinary efforts accomplished by Ashley Cisneros Mejia and her team, we can expect a library to open in Lake Nona in the near future. This will be an important first step in bringing a literary life to our town, for young and old. Perhaps the library will also help to bring together our town's readers – and writers. And by the way, shouldn't that library's first acquisitions include two special books penned by our community's own writer of children's literature? Of course! In the meantime, while we are waiting for our new library to open, let's just be thankful that we have an author of the stature of Sophia Gholz living right here in Laureate Park.





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