

Volume 5, Issue 4 ~ April 2025

# Whitfield Jenkins: A Living Legend!



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Iron Sharpens Iron Women's Fellowship

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**Knowing When to Buy Something Can Save You Money** 

**Easter Celebrations** 

# Happy Easter



**County Commission Meetings April 1 and April 15** 9 a.m.

McPherson Governmental Campus Auditorium 601 S.E. 25th Ave. Ocala, FL 34471

Ocala City Council Meetings **April 1 and April 15** 4 p.m.

110 S.E. Watula Ave., Ocala, FL 34471

Marion County School Board **April 8 and April 22** 

5:30 p.m. School Board Meeting Room 1614 E. Fort King Street Ocala, FL 34471

Our mission is to record the rich history of the people, places and events in the community and share information that impacts the lives of residents in Marion County.



Sharing the good news happening in our community.

#### **Founders**

Monica Bryant & Cynthia Wilson-Graham

#### Editor

Monica Bryant

#### Photography/Editor

Cynthia Wilson-Graham

#### **Contributors**

Scott Hackmyer Elgin Carelock

# Let's Talk

# We want to hear from you:

Email your submissions, events, comments or questions to Towntalkmagazine@yahoo.com. Please include contact information (name and phone number) on the submission. Deadline is the first Monday of each month for the following month's publication.

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# **Contact Us:**

Town Talk Magazine P.O. Box 6212 Ocala, FL 34478 (352) 897-1817

Towntalkmagazine@yahoo.com or Towntalkmagazine.org.

# EDITOR'S DESK



Since 1974, a whole week has been dedicated for nonprofits to celebrate those who give of their time, specifically during the month

This year, April 20 - 26, is designated National Volunteer Appreciation Week, the perfect time to show them how much you appreciate what they do.

Volunteers, the lifeblood for many nonprofits, are an invaluable resource that without them, many organizations, big and small, would not survive.

They deserve to be celebrated. Little acts of kindness can make a big difference. Ronnie Gomez, Content Marketing Manager for Neon One, said the most important thing you can do for your volunteers during this week is say thank you. For organizations that want to do a little more, below are seven ideas to help you get started to give them the recognition they deserve.

- 1. Organize a Volunteer Appreciation Week Celebration: You can host it in person at your organization or another location in the community. You can also do a virtual gathering or offer a virtual option if you have volunteers that work remotely.
- 2. Write Personal Thank-You Letters to Your Volunteers: A handwritten thankyou note that includes a heartfelt message of gratitude makes them feel personally appreciated for their contributions. Make sure your note spotlights specific events that each volunteer helped make possible.
- 3. Create a Wall of Fame for Your Volunteers: Set up a bulletin board or mural featuring volunteers' photos and bios. Dedicate a page on your website to showcase standout volunteers or post volunteer spotlights on social media, but before featuring a volunteer publicly, make sure they are comfortable being spotlighted.
- 4. Surprise Your Volunteers With a Gift or Token of Gratitude: These gifts don't have to be expensive, the goal is to show that you put some thought into recognizing their hard work and remind them just how much they mean to your organization.
- 5. Host a Volunteer Awards Ceremony: This can be as formal or informal as you prefer. The ceremony can also be an opportunity to share some impact stories to remind volunteers how much of a difference their contributions make to your organization.
- 6. Give Your Volunteers Special Perks: Volunteer perks don't have to cost your organization anything. Many local businesses are happy to support community volunteers by offering discounts or freebies.

It doesn't matter how you thank

Let's Talk! Monica Bryant Monica T. Bryant, Editor

It only matters that you do!

and recognize your volunteers.



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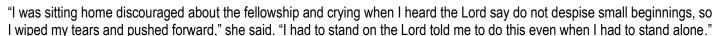
# COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT IRON SHARPENS IRON WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Melissa Drayton and Carmen Young ministered, prayed and poured into each other often and when they were done, Young always said iron sharpens iron.

Drayton said one day while she was seeking the Lord, he started ministering to her about starting an Iron Sharpens Iron women's fellowship in her home.

"I was like Oh boy, this is going to be a hard assignment because working with women is hard," she said. "But I obeyed and Iron Sharpens Iron was started in 2021 when I inherited my home with my husband Michael Smith."

The assignment was more challenging than she had imagined. She always fixed a big spread, put together gift bags, posted flyers on Facebook and put some in mailboxes, but for the first two years nobody showed up but the guest speaker and if someone was on Facebook live. Doubt began to set in, and at one point, she started thinking that maybe God didn't tell her to start the fellowship and she almost gave up.



She said when she saw the room she had for the fellowship, she moved immediately. Now, four years later, the women's group that was birthed from a lot of pain she encountered in her life, is finally a reality. Women have traveled from Tampa, Orlando, West Palm Beach, Sanford, Tallahassee, Atlanta, Ga., and surrounding counties to attend the fellowship. They talk about Parenting, Mental Health, Domestic Violence, Addictions, Depression, Suicide, Children with special needs, etc.

"My goal is to reach women of all cultures and have resources and support services. I want women to know they don't have to suffer in silence alone, they have to learn to trust someone, talk and get help from the proper resources that are available to help them become a better you," she said. "I want them to learn and understand how important it is to be in church, have a church family and have a pastor be accountable for you."

Drayton, who overcame a crack cocaine addiction, will be the guest speaker on Friday, April 25, at 7 p.m., at her home located at 3011 S.W. 13th St. The fellowship meets the last Friday of each month and includes a guest speaker, a meal and gifts for attendees.

"Iron Sharpens Iron Women Fellowship is more than just a group of women getting together. It's about saving lives and having a support system," she said. "It encourages young and older women of all cultures on how important it is for us to come together and support each other."

Although the fellowship was started for women, Drayton said some men, who wanted to learn how to be a better man, started coming too.

"Men need to have more respect and compassion for women," she said. "The Lord has given us a voice today and we are being heard. This Fellowship is going places I never expected."

In addition to hosting the monthly fellowship, for the past five years, Drayton has fixed and served hot meals from her car and provided clothing to the homeless. Although she never asks for anything, several people have donated items to support the ministry, but for the most part she pays for everything out of her pocket. When things get hard, she trusts that the Lord will provide because he's come through every time.

Drayton accepts food and clothing donations, but wants to do a flip flop outreach for the children and adults she meets that are running around the community with no shoes on their feet. She is accepting donations of flip flops for men, women and children in all sizes.

"This has been a long hard journey for me, but I am seeing the glory of God come through," Drayton said. "I don't know what God's plans are for Iron Sharpens Iron Women Fellowship, but I'm willing to trust his process and see where it's going."

For more information, to donate items or support Iron Sharpens Iron, email **melissadrayton67@gmail.com** or leave a message at **(352) 497-3310**.

# BUILDING CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

## By Elgin Carelock, Chairman of the Greater Ocala Community Development Corporation



Photo by Toni Ferreira on Pexels.com

There was a growing fear of an economic recession occurring in 2023. In fact, there are those who would argue that we are already there. While I do not believe we are in a recession, I think there will be some economic impact as the thousands of multi-family and single family projects come to completion. The primary result being a leveling of housing prices and more competition for rentals, which will shift the current housing markets from a sellers' advantage to a buyers' or renters' advantage.

While this is not anything new in the "ebbs & flows" of supply side economics, communities need to consider another element to lessen the effects of external factors that can cause local recessions, relationships.

The Oxford Dictionary defines relationships as, "the way in which two or more concepts, objects, or people are connected, or the state of being connected."

We need to cultivate relationships among the various facets of our communities from how our children are educated to the level of service customers receive in retail, hospitality and professional service businesses.

Moving away from transactional business and consumerism to enlightened individuals who realize we can take back our neighborhoods, have the educational systems we desire, and even control who we allow to run local municipalities, if we work together.

At the center of this thought process, is the understanding that everyone has intrinsic needs that involve their emotions and ultimately their habits. How you behave is directly affected by what you believe.

If you believe this life is only about you and what you can get out of it, then you tend to be more selfish in your behavior. You will not hold the door for someone else, let someone back out of a parking space before you drive by, or stop to help a person with a flat tire.

When you truly understand that we are all connected, then your focus changes to the other person's point of view. You begin to consider the effect your decisions have on others. So, you won't hold up traffic trying to make a left turn from the right lane or be rude to a waitress because your order isn't correct.

Instead, you will ask yourself how your response will help or hurt the other person feel valued, appreciated, needed, wanted, safe, smart or confident.

#### This mindset is the foundation for building connected communities.

Imagine the changes we would see in our local governments if we required our elected officials to have a "connected" mindset. If instead of being concerned with power and influence their actions were built around providing an educational system with all of the components necessary to not only educate our children but build better people.

Where employers were dedicated to creating exceptional experiences for their customers by creating the same kind of experiences for their employees. Where employers offer those who have made decisions in the past that caused them to lose their freedom, but have paid their debt to society, a second chance to be contributors to our communities.

Communities where customers understand that providing good jobs is expensive and their participation in the process involves paying higher prices but will receive outstanding products and services in return.

Communities where developers and investors take a granular look at communities before building. Find out what the market needs and how their facility will improve the lives of community members. Moving from "if you build it, they will come" to "tell me what you need, and I will make it happen."

Communities where local municipalities understand the importance of creating good jobs and help by making the process of job creation and quality of life through entrepreneurship simpler and more supportive.

By building connected communities, we will see a natural reduction in crime because we understand how it affects our neighborhoods and the individuals who live in them, but more importantly, we will have services to help individuals before they get to the point of committing the crime.

Relationships between neighborhoods and law enforcement are built on trust and support through mutual respect and constant communication and interaction.

We will see higher graduation rates, as people have more members of their families thriving with good jobs that resulted from our educational systems.

Most of all building connected communities allow for resilience through economic disruption and collaboration between municipalities, citizens, and businesses. This is not an unattainable goal, we simply have to change the way we think, which will change what we believe, and ultimately the way we behave.







Www.bowinthecloud.org tel: 352-496-0036



# LEAVING A LEGACY AND LIVING A LIFE

Who would have ever imagined that a little boy raised in a one-bedroom shack in the city of Zuber by his father, would impact and change the lives of so many people near and far.

Whitfield Jenkins did just that!

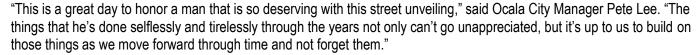
At an unveiling street naming ceremony on Friday, March 21, the City of Ocala honored the Civil Rights activist by renaming the road near his home after him.

"I'm so overwhelmed. This is so well deserved," said his daughter, Tijuana Jenkins Woods. "He earned every bit of recognition this is bringing him. He worked hard for it."

Rose Jenkins said her father gave of himself unselfishly to make a mark in his community as a leader who fought for equality of human rights. She said he's a unique outspoken humanitarian with a dictionary of knowledge that he loves to share with anyone he encounters.

"So today, as we unveil the renaming of Northwest 24th Rd., the Whitfield Jenkins Road, this is a historical moment for not just our family, but our community," she said.

The chilly morning did little to discourage nearly 100 people from attending the ceremony.



Ocala City Councilman, Ire Bethea Sr., who represents District 2, said he was honored to speak about an inspiring figure in our community who has dedicated his life to advocating for the needs and rights of those around him, demonstrating a deep commitment to making our community a better place.

Bethea said Jenkins' advocacy extended to environmental issues where he led and participated in initiatives to clean up local vacant properties and promoted sustainable practices. He said his passion for preserving our natural resources serves as a reminder of our responsibility to protect the environment for future generations.

"Mr. Jenkins has definitely put his best foot forward," said Bethea, who also presided over the ceremony. "He has pushed our community. He has challenged us and today we will recognize him by naming this street after him.

Jenkins' longtime friend Rodney Long traveled from Gainesville, FL., to attend the event. He said the two met more than four decades ago when Jenkins was the president of the Marion County branch of the NAACP and he was a young executive secretary of the Alachua County branch of the NAACP.



Rodney Long and Whitfield Jenkins

"Marion County, you should be proud that you have a fighter who fought all these decades, who gave his best to you to improve the city and the county of Marion County," Long said. "I'm just honored to be his friend and that he mentored me. On behalf of my family and my good friends from Gainesville, FL., we celebrate and we give flowers today for flowers are due."

Long told Jenkins' wife that she should be recognized and celebrated as well because every time Jenkins was there, she was there too, a comment that drew cheers and applause from the crowd.

It was Loretta Pompey Jenkins that submitted the application for the Honorary Designation Street Naming for her husband who has been a resident of Northwest 24th Rd., for more than

50 years.

"This person is a longtime, active and outstanding leader in Ocala, Marion County and the State of Florida," she wrote in the application. "His many ventures in the areas of Civil and Equal Rights activism, Voter Rights and Empowerment and many other areas pertaining to equal and human justice for all people is far above reproach."



Whitfield Jenkins

Honorary

Whitfield Jenkins Roa

# HAT'S NOT IN VAIN: WHITFIELD JENKINS

#### Continued from page 6

Rev. Eric Cummings, president of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., said Jenkins' life is a beacon of hope and justice, and his legacy is built on a lifetime of fighting for Civil Rights and fairness. He said as president of the NAACP, Jenkins challenged injustice head on and paved the way for greater equality.

Cummings said during his service to the Marion County School Board, as one of the first teachers in the segregated system, he empowered countless students turning education into that key that unlocks potential and opportunity. While working for the Department of Corrections for many years, Jenkins championed reform and dignity affirming that every human being is worthy of compassion and respect.

"Today, we celebrate a living legend, a man that has truly made a difference in his community, who has uplifted the community and who has done it with great style and vigor," Cummings said.

Reginald Landers said Jenkins brought him through the ranks of the NAACP and was the reason he went to the greatest of all colleges, FAMU. Landers said when he had the opportunity to follow in his footsteps into Omega Psi Phi, Jenkins was the first person he reached out to.

"He has truly been a mentor. He stood in the gap of my father," said Landers, who said he's been with Jenkins since he was 10 years old. "I will always be indebted to him, as well as Mrs. Jenkins and the family."

Ben Marciano, Mayor of the City of Ocala, said he met Jenkins about 15 months ago when he took office. He remembers Jenkins asking him if he was going to do the right thing and make sure he served the whole community. The Mayor replied absolutely!

"He's just been an amazing man for our community, and we're so grateful to be able to give him this honor today," Marciano said. "But I also want to say behind every great man, there's a great woman and he would not be able to accomplish all the great things he's

done without his amazing wife. It's an honor to recognize you today."

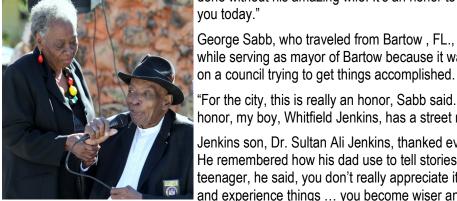
George Sabb, who traveled from Bartow, FL., said he always called Jenkins for advice while serving as mayor of Bartow because it wasn't easy when you're one vote or two votes

Whitfield Jenkins and Ben Marciano

"For the city, this is really an honor, Sabb said. "When I got up this morning I said what an honor, my boy, Whitfield Jenkins, has a street named after him."

Jenkins son, Dr. Sultan Ali Jenkins, thanked everyone for coming out and honoring his dad. He remembered how his dad use to tell stories as he was growing up, but as a kid and a teenager, he said, you don't really appreciate it until you grow older and go out into the world and experience things ... you become wiser and then you look back on things your parents

told you and now you understand it.



Loretta and Whitfield Jenkins

"My dad is many adjectives and gracious is probably close to the top," he said. "There's not enough words in the dictionary to express how fortunate me and my siblings are to have him as a father."

Jenkins said his dad, who lived to be 101 years old, had certain principles he taught him and his brothers. He said he was blessed to have a family that was in a position to support the work that he did.

"As I look into the faces of many, I'm looking into the faces of some of you that were well on the way when I was a little boy in this town," he said. "I could not envision that God would put me in a position to do what I did, but God did what God does ... what no other person can do."

"Whitfield Jenkins is not just a leader, he is a beacon of hope and a true advocate for our community." Let's all take inspiration from Mr. Jenkins' dedication and passion," Bethea said. "Together, we can continue to support his vision and work towards a brighter, more inclusive future for all."



George Sabb and Whitfield Jenkins



# **Ocala Spring Craft and Vendor Market**

Bloom with local treasures! Join us at the Spring Craft & Vendor Market at the Paddock Mall.

**Vendors:** Showcase your creations to shoppers looking for one-of-a-kind spring décor, gifts and seasonal goodies!

Registration is open at **hometownvendormarket.com** Don't miss this opportunity to grow your business and connect with the community.

**Shoppers:** Discover the perfect spring finds! Browse a delightful selection of handmade treasures, support small businesses and bring home something special to brighten your season.

Registration is LIVE! Reserve your space now and be part of a market filled with creativity, charm and local flair. Let's make this spring celebration a blooming success!

Vendor Application available at:

hometownvendormarket.com/ocalaspring





# FIRST BETHEL CELEBRATES ITS 137th ANNIVERSARY

When Chaplain LTC Raynard Churchwell returns to First Bethel Missionary Baptist Church on Sunday, April 27, at 11 a.m., to celebrate the church's 137th Anniversary, he will feel right at home again.

Churchwell, who grew up in First Bethel, started out as a young preacher under the leadership of Rev. James Brooks, who pastored the church for 29 years. In 1991, Churchwell became pastor after Brooks died and served until he left to attend the Chandler School of Theology at Emory University in Atlanta, Ga., in 1995. He graduated with a Master of Divinity degree.

Church members said under his leadership, worship services increased to four Sundays a month, and many started tithing something only a few of them were doing when he became pastor. Churchwell and his wife, First Lady Hazetta, spent a lot of time with the youth, who along with the adults absolutely adored him.

"He was patient, kind and very sincere. He knew his weaknesses and strengths and he didn't sugarcoat anything and still doesn't," members said. "We all grew a lot through his teachings, and we all thought he was a great preacher and pastor."

First Bethel has had 13 pastors since its establishment in 1888. The church, which has about 50 regular members, still remains in its original location at 11840 North Williams St., Dunnellon, FL. The celebration will include gifts for the pastors and their wives, dinner and each member 75 years and older will be honored with a Certificate of Appreciation and also receive a special gift.

"I pray the legacy of our great church continues to move forward from this day of celebration to be even better and greater in the years to come," said Maxine Thomas, who joined the church at the age of 10 and has been a member for 65 years. "After 137 years, especially after Covid, the hurricanes, storms and tornadoes, First Bethel is still standing."

Rev. Allen Brooks, Jr., pastor of the church and Chaplain for the Dunnellon Police Department, said First Bethel is active in the community. The church hosts community meetings for the NAACP and Christians United in Christ, and participate in fifth Sunday Citywide services with five local community churches They support The Rock program at Dunnellon Middle School by providing nonperishables, T-shirts, socks and personal hygiene items for students.

Thomas, said her parents, siblings, children and grandchildren have all attended the church. She said while getting the youth to come to church since the older people are now leaving is a challenge, she's grateful she's able to worship, fellowship and serve the Lord with people she sees on a regular basis.

"It means so much to be a part of a church family that you've known and

loved most of your life," she said. "It feels so good to walk in church on Sunday, or during any event, and see and feel the love of people you know and love and fellowship with."

Thomas said Churchwell comes home on special occasions to preach and everyone in the community tries to come and

HISTORY OF THE CHURCH'S PASTORS

1888 - 1889 Reverend A. Brice

1900 - 1925 Reverend O. B. Brown

1925 - 1937 Reverend C. P. Brown (Son of Rev. O. B. Brown)

1937 - 1939 Reverend R. M. Lane

1939 - 1955 Reverend H. F. Gary

1955 - 1957 Reverend L. Wilson

1957 - 1960 Reverend Calvin McGill

1961 - 1991 Reverend James Brooks

1991 - 1995 Reverend Raynard J, Churchwell

1995 - 2001 Reverend Michael D. Warren

2001 - 2004 Reverend Alec D. Richardson

2004 - 2013 Reverend Nathaniel E. Rawls Jr.

2014 - Present Reverend Allen Brooks, Jr.

## SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES



#### WEEKLY SERVICES

## Wednesday:

6:30 p.m. Bible Study (\*via conference call)

## Thursday:

1 p.m. Afternoon Prayer (\*via conference call)

\*Conference call number: (339) 207-8232

# SIGNIFICANT MOMENTS IN THE **CHURCH'S HISTORY**

- -- 100th Church Anniversary
- -- 125th Church Anniversary
- -- Mortgage Burning Ceremony

hear him. Now the members are inviting the community to come hear him too and celebrate this milestone with them.

# CITY OF OCALA HOSTS PUBLIC MEETINGS

The City of Ocala will host two public meetings to provide updates on Parking Garage #2 and the Downtown Ocala AC Hotel by Marriott on Wednesday, April 9, noon and 5:30 p.m., at the Marion Cultural Alliance (MCA), 23 S.W. Broadway St. These meetings are free and open to the public.

During these meetings, attendees will hear a brief presentation on the latest updates for the second parking garage and the concurrent construction schedule for the Downtown Ocala AC Hotel by Marriott. There will also be an opportunity for a question-and-answer session with City staff and representatives from the companies involved in the projects. Both meetings will present the same information.

For more information contact the City of Ocala Growth Management Department at (352) 629-8404 or visit www.ocalafl.gov/growthmanagement.

## SANKOFA PUBLIC LIBRARY

1821 NW 21st Avenue, Ocala, FL 34475 (352) 438-2550

Programs made possible by contributions from the Friends of the Ocala Public Library.

#### **ALL AGES**

## Games on a Table

Mondays, 4:30 p.m., April 7 - 28 Play classic and contemporary tabletop games!

## Dragons in the Library!

Wednesdays, 4 p.m., April 9
Explore new realms through tabletop gameplay.

#### **Crochet Corner**

Thursdays, 4:30 p.m., April 10 and 24 Relax and crochet. All skill levels welcome.





# SANKOFA PUBLIC LIBRARY CON'T

# **ADULTS**

## **Tech Help**

Thursdays, 2-4 p.m., April 3-24 Have a technology question?

#### **Book Club**

See Program Spotlight for more book clubs.

# **Second Story Readers**

Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.

April 15—The Boys in the Boat by Daniel James Brown

#### TEENS

## YALLA! Teen Club

Tuesdays, 4:30 p.m.

Young Adults Lead Library Awareness! Be a part of a talented teen team and make the library a better experience for all. Guide, participate and design innovative library programs while enjoying snacks & making friends as you earn volunteer hours for service.

MANGAlicious April 1 ConFAB April 15

## **FAMILIES**

# Ready...Set...Kindergarten!

Saturday, April 12, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

For ages 3 - 5 with caregivers.

Before your preschooler takes off on a new adventure, prepare!

# **Story Times**

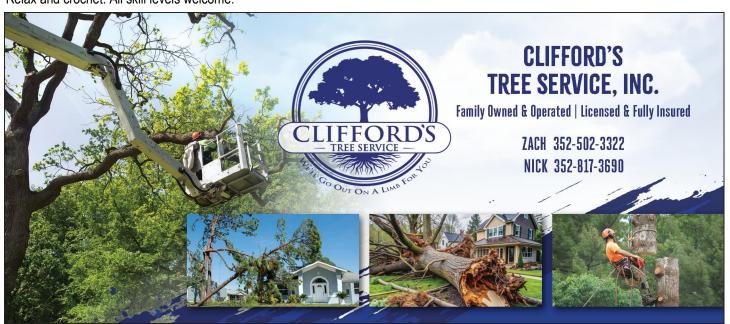
April 2 - 24

Stories, songs and activities for children and caregivers.

Family Story Time - Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.

Bouncing Babies - Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.

(For ages birth - 23 months).



# EASTER CELEBRATIONS

Easter is a Christian religious holiday that celebrates the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. It is considered the most important and oldest festival of the Christian Church. For many, easter is also a time to reflect on the meaning of life and the power of love and forgiveness. According to <a href="https://www.biblestudytools.com">https://www.biblestudytools.com</a>, through the symbolism of Easter, Christians are reminded that no matter how dark things may seem - right now a lot of families are struggling to make ends meet in our community - there is always hope in the power of resurrection and new beginnings.

While the primary focus of Easter is religious, over time, some traditions have changed and have become Easter traditions.

- -- Easter Eggs: are seen as symbols of new life and rebirth
- -- **Easter Bunny:** is a symbol of spring and fertility and widely associated with the holiday, especially for children.
- -- **Easter Meals**: Many families get together on Easter Sunday. The meal often includes eggs, ham or other celebratory dishes.
- -- **Church Services**: Many Christians attend church on Easter Sunday to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus.

In 2001, a young man, who went by the name Trooperville, hosted Super Sundays as a way to give back to his community. He organized several events including an Easter Egg Hunt and hid money in some of the eggs.

"We used that money for our light bill one time," said Dominic McDonald, who started helping with the event in 2015.

Now McDonald is continuing the annual tradition by hosting an Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday, April 20, at the MLK Recreation Complex, 1510 N.W. 4th St. The event, open to all ages, starts at 2 p.m. The egg hunt starts at 3 p.m. and games and free food will be provided until 5 p.m. or while supplies last. The Easter Bunny is expected to make a guest appearance.

"I love seeing our community come together for our children and embracing the teamwork it takes to make this event happen," McDonald said.

About 50 to 90 youth are expected to participate. There will be designated areas for children 4 and under, an area for children 5 and older and specific areas for adults to help children who need it. Eggs will be filled with candy, money and toys, and participants should bring baskets and bags for the egg hunt. Volunteers are welcome.

McDonald said in case of inclement weather, they will hold off to see if it clears up, but would have to cancel the event if the weather is bad.

The event is sponsored by the West SADD Club, Community Council Against Substance Abuse, Marion County Children's Alliance, AMP'D Up Stereo, Fresh Force Dj's, Greg Good Eats and Sellers Funeral Home.

# Other Activities Include:

- -- Easter, Still I Rise; Poetry Slam and Open Mic on Sunday, April 20, at 11 a.m. at Center For Spiritual Living Ocala, 1009 N.E. 28th Ave., Ocala, FL. The theme is the Easter message of "Rising." The cost is free and a potluck and Easter Egg hunt for little children will be held after the morning celebration.
- -- Monica Jacobs will be reading her first published book, My New Church, on Sunday, April 20, at 2 p.m. at Barnes and Noble, 4414 S.W. College Rd., Unit 500, Ocala. Event includes a coloring activity for the kids.
- -- River Life Church will host an Egg Hunt and Easter Carnival on Sunday, April 20, 8:30 a.m.to 11:30 a.m. at 2872 W Dunnellon Rd, Dunnellon, FL.. The fun-filled afternoon is designed for the whole family.

## The free event includes:

- -- Egg Hunt Age Groups (Pre-registration available): 0-3 years, 4-6 years, 7-9 years, 10-12 years.
- -- Bright Side Kid's Carnival Open to all!
- -- Face Painting; Carnival Games & Prizes; Popcorn & Cotton Candy; Family Photo Booth; Food Truck and more.

Can't make it Saturday? The Bright Side Kid's Carnival will also take place during all Easter services on Sunday, April 20. No pre-registration needed! Sunday Carnival at all three services during Kids Church: 8:30 a.m.; 10 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.



# **UPCOMING EVENTS**

# April 5

Inaugural Heart of Florida Health Center BBQ Bash Southeastern Livestock Pavilion 2232 N.E. Jacksonville Rd., Ocala, 34470 www.MyHFHC.org/BBQ

Family Fun Health Fair Celebrates
Minority Health Month
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Mary Sue Rich Community Center
at Reed Place
1821 N.W. 21st Ave., Ocala, FL 34475
Free! For info, call (352) 644-2679

# April 6

Advent Health Ocala
Downtown Easter Market
noon to 4 p.m.
Ocala Downtown Market
Corner of S.E. 3rd St. and 3rd Ave.

# April 11

In honor of the end of another school year, Angie Lewis State Farm is inviting all teachers, faculty and school staff to Teacher's Night Out! Friday, April 11, Cocktail Hour: 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Showtime: 6:30 p.m. The Marion Theatre, 50 S. Magnolia Ave., Ocala, FL 34471

# April 26:

God Belongs in My City 9 a.m. Ernie Mills Park 11899 Bostick Street Dunnellon, FL (352) 613-4033 GODINDUNNELLON@GMAIL.COM

# MONEY SMART TIPS

By Scott Hackmyer

#### KNOWING WHEN TO BUY SOMETHING CAN SAVE MONEY

I made an expensive purchase this month and really wanted to get the best price that I could. I checked online and the cost was \$2,350. Then I called some local businesses and found one that offered to sell me the item for \$1,700. That was much better but still a lot of money, so I asked if they could sell it for a little less than that. The salesman told me no twice but on my third request, just before I made the purchase, he told me he could take another \$100 off the price and sell it to me for \$1,600. Still expensive but I felt good thinking I got the best possible price I could. There is so much mark-up on many items that are sold and sometimes the business does have wiggle room, particularly with expensive items. We have mentioned this before so always ask. The worst thing that can happen is they say no, but there is a good chance you will save some money.

With purchases that you don't need immediately it is smart to know the time of the year these items usually sell for less. U. S. News and World Report and other publications share a best time to buy calendar. Some of the best timing strategies to save you money is to shop when seasons are changing, for example buy a new swimsuit at the end of summer, the same with outdoor furniture and grills. Buy your heavy coats and gloves at the end of winter, Christmas cards and



wrapping paper after Christmas or during the Christmas in July sales and summer clothing when fall is coming. Those clearance racks are a great place to find quality items that will last for years at greatly reduced prices.

Holiday weekends are often great opportunities for big sales and also special sale events like Amazon Prime Days, which now tend to coincide with sales at Walmart and other stores. The week or two before the Super Bowl is a great time to purchase that big screen television. Another great strategy is to buy at the end of the model year. If the 2026 cars are coming out search out a great deal on a 2025 model. When the new iPhone is being released, that is the best time to buy the current model at a greatly discounted price. If you have a specific big-ticket item you want to buy, I suggest doing a Google Search to find out when is the best time to buy a television, computer or mattress, etc. There are "best time" dates to buy many items and you can save some money by planning your purchases at these times.

If you are fortunate enough to have money in IRA or TSA accounts and you have reached the mandatory age to take distributions, there are ways that can help you save some tax dollars. Let's say you donate \$20 a week to your church which is roughly \$1,000 a year. You can have your IRA/TSA account make a direct payment of \$1,000 to your church and then you do not pay taxes on that amount. If you are in the 20% tax bracket you just saved \$200 which you can use yourself or use to increase the amount you are donating. This is permissible for any gift you are making to a 501(c)(3) organization. As always, check with your accountant or double check what you are doing by verifying online that your actions are in accordance with the tax rules.



Remember to file your Federal Income Taxes by the April 15 deadline. If for some reason you are not able to file, make certain you file an extension request by that same date. If you file after the due date without filing an extension request the Internal Revenue Service will charge you penalties and fees.

# **Business Spotlight**



Business Name: The Crafty Cobbler's

No. of Employees: 3

**Business Owner:** Michael McHellon

Business Address: 2204 E. Silver Springs Blvd.,

Ocala, FL 34470

Business Phone: (352) 369-3338

What Year Did You Start Your Business? January 2024

**Hours of Operation:** Monday - Friday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

#### Products and/or Services:

We repair shoes and leather goods and do Shoe resoling; Heel replacement; Purse repair; Zipper replacement; Leather dying; Custom leather work; Shoe stretching and more.

E-mail Address: Thecraftycobblers@gmail.com.

Website Address: Thecraftycobbler.com

Are You on Social Media? Yes. If yes, on what platforms?

**Facebook:** The Crafty Cobblers **Instagram:** @thecraftycobblers

What or Who Inspired You to Start Your Business? There was no one thing but a chain of events orchestrated by God that allowed me to be in the position that I'm in right now.

What Makes Your Business Unique or What's Your Specialty? To start, we are a full service shoe repair shop. We repair or have repaired just about every kid of shoe you can think of. Also, there are very few shoe repair businesses left in general. Our sneaker cleaning and custom shoe services sets us apart from other shoe repair businesses.

# What Advice Would You Give Someone Starting A Business?

Start by thoroughly researching your market and understanding your target audience. Focus on a clear business plan, keep your finances organized and be adaptable. Network with others, seek feedback and be prepared to learn from your mistakes. Lastly, stay persistent and patient; success takes time.

The **Small Business Profile** is **FREE** and open to small businesses located in Marion County with less than 25 employees or solo entrepreneurs.

To have your business featured in an upcoming edition, please request a form by emailing **Towntalkmagazine@yahoo.com**. Completed forms can be returned via email or mailed to P.O. Box 6212, Ocala, FL 34478.





# **Protecting, Promoting, and Improving Community Health**

The Florida Department of Health in Marion County

provides a wide range of services for county residents, including:

## Medical, Dental, Nursing

- Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program
- Dental Health
- Disease Reporting
- Family Planning
- Hepatitis Services
- HIV/AIDS Services and PrEP
- Immunizations
- Sexually Transmitted Infections Testing and Treatment
- · Tuberculosis Services

# **Community Health**

- Positive Youth Development Program (BRAZEN)
- Chronic Disease Management and Prevention
- Health Education
- · Healthy Start
- · Mobile Health Unit
- · Overdose Data to Action
- · Refugee Health
- School Health

# **Community Services**

- Birth and Death Certificates
- Disaster Preparedness
- Volunteer with the Medical Reserve Corps

#### **Environmental Public Health**

• Environmental Public Health

#### WIC

 WIC Program (Women, Infants, and Children)



Main Office: 1801 SE 32nd Ave., Ocala, FL 34471 • 352-629-0137

Dental Clinic: 1501 W Silver Springs Blvd., Ocala, FL 34475 • 352-622-2664

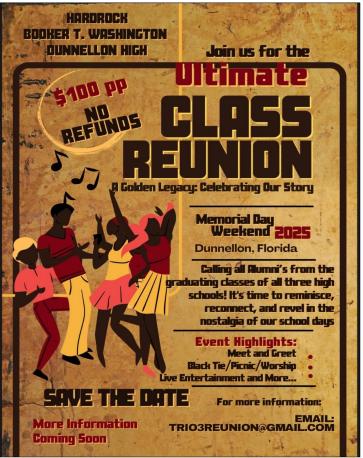
WIC: Ocala, Belleview, and Reddick • 352-622-1161

For more information, visit Marion.FloridaHealth.gov or email Info.Marion@FLHealth.gov.









# Town Talk Magazine, P.O. Box 6212, Ocala, FL 34478



