



HELP US CELEBRATE
DR. MYRA D. SHERMAN
FIRST FEMALE AND FIRST BLACK
MAYOR OF REDDICK, FLORIDA
DURING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH!



In this issue:

Celebrating Women's History Month

Dr. Kathryn Crowell-Grate:
A Trailblazer!

Put Some Pep in your Step: How to
get Literate and Test Ready at Home

Creativity Equals Success!

Dr. Myra Sherman: History-Maker

Driving Without Insurance
is a Bad Idea!

Don't Miss the World's Greatest
Baby Shower



GET INVOLVED

County Commission Meetings

March 3 and March 17

9 a.m.

McPherson Governmental

Campus Auditorium

601 S.E. 25th Ave.

Ocala, FL 34471

Ocala City Council Meetings

March 3 and March 17

4 p.m.

110 S.E. Watula Ave.,

Ocala, FL 34471

Marion County School Board

March 10 and March 24

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.



TOWN Talk MAGAZINE

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

Monica M. Jacobs

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.

Policy Statement

All submissions become the sole
property of Town Talk Magazine.

The opinions expressed in this
publication do not necessarily reflect
the views of Town Talk. All articles,
announcements and advertisements
submitted are subject to refusal and
editing at the editor's discretion.

Contact Us:

Town Talk Magazine

P.O. Box 6212

Ocala, FL 34478

(352) 897-1817

Towntalkmagazine@yahoo.com

or Towntalkmagazine.org.

EDITOR'S DESK



March is designated as Women's History Month, a time to celebrate the achievements and contributions of women in history and society. The commemoration started in 1978 as Women's History Day in Sonoma County, California and was championed by Gerda Lerner. It became a national celebration in 1982 although the initial celebration was Women's History Week. In 1987, the National

Women's History Project was successful in petitioning Congress to expand the event to the entire month of March.

On Friday, March 6, 2026, Ollin Women International (OWI) will host its 9th annual International Women's Day (IWD) Celebration by honoring Women in Philanthropy with a luncheon from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the CF Klein Center, 3001 S.W. College Rd. This annual luncheon is filled with friendship and honors local Ocala / Marion County women who make a difference in our community. The event usually sells out but you can go to <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/international-womens-day-celebration-tickets-1982371285880> to see if any tickets are available.

Locally, we have many women in our community that have been trailblazers or history-makers and we applaud their efforts and their sacrifices for paving the way and opening doors for others.

In this issue, we recognize **Dr. Myra Sherman**, who will become the first female and first black woman to hold the position of mayor when she is sworn into office.

Others include:

Erin Jackson: an Olympic gold medalist and the first Black woman to win a Winter Olympic gold medal.

Mary Sue Rich: the first African-American woman to be elected to the Ocala City Council, a position she held for more than two decades.

Alice Faison: the first African American woman hired at the Ocala Department.

Capt. Virginia Ferguson: the first female and first Black woman to hold a U.S. Coast Guard captain's license in Florida, and the first female glass-bottom boat captain at Silver Springs.

Judge Sandra Edwards-Stephens: the first African-American and first female elected county judge in the 5th judicial circuit.

All of their contributions have helped to shape our community in remarkable ways.

We can't all be history-makers or trailblazers, but we can
all do something to make a difference in our community!

Let's Talk!

Monica Bryant

Monica T. Bryant, Editor

What will you do?

Subscribe with Us:

To receive a **free** copy via e-mail, subscribe at Towntalkmagazine.org

Annual subscription (printed copy) via mail: \$50

Advertise with Us: Business card: \$35 ~ Quarter-page: \$65 Half-page: \$100.

Ads are black and white and must be submitted in Jpeg or Pdf format
and sent to Towntalkmagazine@yahoo.com.

Payments can be made via Cash App ([\\$Towntalkmarion](https://www.towntalkmarion.com))

or make check payable to Town Talk Magazine and mail to P.O. Box 6212, Ocala, FL 34478

Please visit our website at Towntalkmagazine.org to keep up with the latest happenings in the community.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

~Dr. Kathryn Crowell-Grate~



Dr. Kathryn Crowell-Grate

Kathryn Crowell-Grate always knew her life had purpose. Born in Ocala, she grew up in a large family with 12 siblings and serving the community and helping others were values that were instilled in them at an early age.

Crowell-Grate attended Madison Street Elementary School, Dr. N.H. Jones Elementary School, and she was part of the first group of students that integrated Osceola Middle School. While in high school, she worked in the front office at Forest High School and was selected to work as a mentor at the Alyce McPherson School for Girls. She left Ocala for a few years after graduating to continue her education. She earned an Associate's Degree in Secretarial Sciences, two Bachelor's Degrees and two Master's Degrees while working as a Civil Service employee.

When she retired, she returned to Ocala and partnered with the Marion County School Board to start a GED program at her church, the Greater Apostolic Outreach Holy Church of God, Inc., to educate adults in the community who did not have a high school diploma.

The politics were too much for her so she stopped teaching the GED program and started Contemporary Christian Academy in her home in 2001 because she saw the need to educate parents so they could support their children. The Academy served all grade levels, but was limited to 20 students, 10 attended in the daytime and 10 in the evening.

"Parents could not keep a schedule for GED classes that were offered at certain times. Daycare for many struggling parents was often closed the hours they needed daycare to make life better for them," she said. "I saw a need and sought to fulfill my ministry of meeting parents where they are and helping them move from a system not meant to accommodate shift work."

The 24-hour daycare and preschool was started first. It was so successful she had to move from her home to another location because they always had a waiting list. She also needed a place where she could work with parents in a quiet location because they wanted privacy since some of their children did not know they never completed high school.

"They were having trouble helping their children with homework assignments," she said. "My ministry became a 24-hour service and it was as important for me as it was to my clients. My ministry is serving God's children."

"Earning my diploma through Kingdom Christian Academy has opened doors to new opportunities, including further education, career advancement and the confidence to pursue goals that once seemed unattainable," said Winter Crosby, a former student, who earned her high school diploma. "At the time, I was a single mother with five children living on the system."

In 2006, she added a school and changed the name to Kingdom Christian Academy and Precious Children Preschool and Daycare because she wanted the school's name to stand out from the preschool and the daycare. She added more services at the new facility that was located at 517 S.W. 10th St., including afterschool tutoring and extended care for parents.

Now 25 years later, Crowell-Grate, whose passion is education and community service, is still fulfilling her dream of educating the entire family in one location. On March 2, 2026, family and friends will gather to celebrate her birthday and highlight all of her accomplishments.

"I'm a proponent of educating the entire family to improve living conditions of all people but especially people of color and those who need a second chance or a hand up," said Crowell-Grate, Dean of the National School of Theology and Kingdom Christian Academy. "I desire to remove people from public assistance to become self-sustaining parents who could make future generations literate and productive members of the community."

In 2016, to honor her mother, she changed the name to Dr. D.D. Brown Academy of Hope, a private, Christian K-12 school and daycare center that offers a holistic, God-centered curriculum. Fees are based on income and circumstances. Crowell-Grate serves as the principal and is also the Director of the Deliverance Refuge Center, which provides food, clothing, furniture, etc. for needy and elderly persons.



Continued on page 8

The **Community Spotlight** highlights a person, place or event in our community. Tell us what's happening around town so we can share your **Good News** with others. Email submissions to Towntalkmagazine@yahoo.com.

Building Back Generational Wealth

TOWN Talk

SMALL BUSINESS & COMMUNITY RESOURCE DIRECTORY
SERVING OCALA | MARION COUNTY AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

Let's Do Business

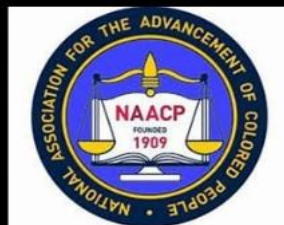
Together We Can Serve Our Communities Better.

"Every small business is a story of risk, resilience, and the belief that something great can grow from something small"

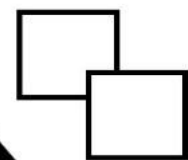


"There is no better way to support your local community than by shopping small and supporting local businesses."

Our goal is to highlight resources available in the community and link businesses to consumers to help improve their visibility by providing this directory to market their products or services in Marion County.



Town Talk Small Business & Community Resource Directory
 Post Office Box 6752 | Ocala, Florida 34478 | 352-286-1772



J
A
N
U
A
R
Y

Did you download your **FREE** copy of the Town Talk Small Business & Community Resource Directory? If not, go to Towntalkmagazine.org to get a copy. Please support the small businesses and organizations featured in the directory who provide valuable services to residents in our community.

Email Cynthia Graham at hhp5032c@icloud.com for more information.

PUT SOME PEP IN YOUR STEP:

HOW TO GET LITERATE AND TEST READY AT HOME

By Monica M. Jacobs, Teacher and Author of "My New Church" children's book



The school year is nearing its end and standardized tests are quickly approaching. Within the next few months progress monitoring will be assessed, so I would like to give you and your children some tips that can be used to help their smarts shine.

1. Show your child that reading is not only fun but also necessary. You can do this by reading in front of them and explaining to them the purpose of your reading. For instance, you may be reading a newspaper or a magazine to get more information on something that interests you or to find out more about your surroundings which can keep you safer. You may be reading a book in print or listening to an audio book for entertainment. Encourage your child to ask questions about what you read and why you read it.

Monica Jacobs 2. Fill your child's bookshelves or other storage spaces with books that you buy and/or borrow from the library. Allow him/her to choose what interests them. This will make them more excited about reading it. It's okay for children to read for pleasure. Try to help them choose books from different genres such as fiction and non-fiction.



3. When your child reads, ask him/her the 5 Ws, who, what, when, where, how and why. Also, have him/her predict what they think will happen next and why they think so. Years ago, I did this with a second grader who was making very low grades. After asking her these questions and having her create her own 5 Ws about the text, her grades improved. The 5 Ws can be used with any text, fiction or non-fiction.

4. Have your child listen to audio books. These can be checked out at the public library, purchased online or from a bookstore. It is important for children to listen to good readers so that they can mimic how they read.

Then your child will begin to develop his/her own voice because they have a good one to reference.

5. Encourage your child to write. Did you know that literacy not only includes reading but also includes writing? Help your child write for different purposes. Let them know why writing is important and allow them to watch you as you write. They can help you create shopping lists, write thank you notes, write directions on how to do things such as tying shoelaces, writing recipes, journaling about their day and writing for play or practice (e.g. a doctor's note).

Since standardized test are arriving very soon, it is important to be proactive in helping your child become more literate. Literacy is one of the greatest gifts we can give a child because it helps us succeed in life, and it enriches our lives. Let's help our children become literacy rich!

For comments, questions or more information, contact Jacobs via e-mail at Jacobsmonica628@gmail.com.



Central Christian Church
3010 NE 14th Street, Ocala, FL 34470

Saturday, April 25, 2026
10 am – 2 pm
FREE & Open to the Public

- CONNECT WITH FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS
- APPLY ACTION STEPS TO OWN A HOME
- PROTECT YOUR ASSETS WITH LIFE INSURANCE
- LEAVE A FINANCIAL LEGACY
- DEVELOP A WILL & TRUST

VENDORS • GIVEAWAYS • FOOD

#1 GRAND PRIZE
\$250 VALUE



CONTACT:
DR. BARBARA J. BROOKS
352-875-4237
WWW.RAMALSERVICES.ORG

CREATIVITY = SUCCESS

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

As business owners, we are often faced with challenges that require “a work around.” These situations usually occur at the most inopportune times, such as just before a multi-million dollar presentation, but I’m here to tell you those scenarios are the seeds of creativity.

I was travelling from Miami to Ocala, FL (about a 4.5 hour drive) and had a conference call scheduled with a client during the ride to take advantage of uninterrupted time. Ten minutes before the call, my phone chirped, which was an indication of the battery going dead. When I reached into the console to get my charger I discovered it was not there, but I did have a wall charger in my briefcase. While I could have pulled over and stopped at a fast food restaurant to take the call, I had other appointments in Ocala that would not allow me to sit for an hour before completing the trip. As I considered what to do, I remembered the wall charger I had and I also had a USB connector; so I pulled out my laptop, turned it on and plugged in the power cord to my USB port, problem solved.



This type of adaptive thinking or problem solving is the same ability that will help you get your company to the next level. If you are experiencing slow sales, you need to immerse your thoughts into the situation just as I did with the phone. Ask yourself what were the conditions when you were achieving your goals and how you can reproduce the same environment. Many times this will require creativity in approach, messaging and application. For example, there was a service I used to use fairly often (can’t remember which one), but for whatever reason I had not used them for more than a year. I received a card in the mail that read, “Is it because we didn’t say we love you enough?” The card went on to talk about the last time

I made a purchase and asked what I was using now and how they could regain my favor. I can’t remember if I returned to their product or not, but we are still discussing their creativity more than five years later.

The same creativity works for expanding markets as well. I had a client who was a landscaper and was looking to move into a more upscale neighborhood. There was already a resident firm servicing the subdivision, but we devised a strategy to gain customers by approaching the homeowners at the entry of the subdivision and offered to cut their grass for free for sixty days. When they agreed, we cut their lawns in a herring bone pattern. As you can imagine, it wasn’t long before their neighbors wanted the same cut and after sixty days the first ten houses on either side of the street had a beautiful pattern that extended the length of the block. Soon he had more than 80 homes in the subdivision and held them until he sold the company.

Marketing and advertising are essential, but creativity is what makes them effective.

I won’t use a cliché like “thinking outside of the box,” but I will conclude by saying if you don’t like the way you feel about your business, change the way you think.

KDA
KUT DIFFERENT
ACADEMY

KDA Vision Roundtable

Shaping the next generation of leaders — together.

📅 Saturday, March 7
🕒 10:00 AM
📍 Community Building
15 NW MLK Jr. Ave
Ocala, FL 34475

Join us for a community conversation about the future of education and the vision for Kut Different Academy.

- What makes KDA different
- The long-term vision for our community
- How the community can be part of shaping it
- Opportunities specifically for families

Limited seating. RSVP required.

Emily.parada@kutdifferent.org

Open to families, community members, organizational leaders, and partners who care about the future of our youth.



★ PATRIOT ★ PARADE

SAT. JULY 4, 2026

APPLY TO PARTICIPATE!

We're seeking **vibrant floats**, **marching units**, and **local partners** to lead the way. Join Ocala's most anticipated parade today.

Have questions? Please contact:

SueMasleyRealtor@gmail.com

(352) 427-9898



APPLY TODAY!

MARIONCELEBRATES250.ORG

OCALA



MEET & GREET WITH
RODNEY MULLEN
Godfather of Modern Street Skating

OCALA SKATE PARK

517 NE Ninth St.

In partnership with:



GRAND REOPENING

SATURDAY MARCH 28

11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

ENJOY LIVE MUSIC,
VENDORS, FOOD TRUCKS,
TRICK COMPETITIONS,
GIVEAWAYS, LIVE SKATE
DECK PAINTINGS AND
MORE!

Free screening of
Bones Brigade
with Q&A featuring
RODNEY MULLEN

Doors Open: 6 p.m.
Q&A: 6:30 - 7 p.m.
Film: 7 p.m.



at Marion Theatre
50 S. Magnolia Ave.



More information visit:
ocalafj.gov/skatepark

KUT DIFFERENT PRESENTS

GO ALL IN FOR THE FUTURE OF OCALA

CASINO NIGHT

GENERAL ADMISSION: \$75
VIP ADMISSION: \$125

POKER - BLACKJACK - ROULETTE - CRAPS

APRIL 4, 2026 | 7PM - 10PM

Diamondz & Pearlz Event Center



Free Dental Care for Marion County Veterans!

(extractions, fillings, endo, etc.)

Sunday, March 1, 2026

Providing **FREE** Dental Care
for Marion County Veterans in Need

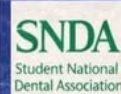
Call to Get Scheduled!

352-421-5510

Walk-Ins Welcome: 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM

Cala Hills Endodontics

2130 SW 22nd Pl, Suite #101
Ocala, FL 34471



DR. KATHRYN CROWELL-GRATE: A TRAILBLAZER

Continued from page 3

“We believe success comes when a holistic approach is done to the entire family, community and the world,” she said.

Crowell-Grate said the Academy focuses on improving economic circumstances for the entire family from the top down and/or the bottom up, which means every family member, from the oldest to the youngest or vice versa, can all be educated and get a high school diploma.

Teresa Chappell Grant also earned her high school diploma from the school. For many years, she said she explored different paths to complete her education including attempting to earn a GED when she found out she could actually obtain a high school diploma through an accredited institution.

“Beyond academics, Kingdom Christian Academy emphasized values such as discipline, perseverance and faith,” Grant said. “The Christ-centered environment fostered personal growth, responsibility and a renewed sense of purpose. Through this experience, I not only gained a diploma, but also a deeper belief in my abilities and future potential.”

The school, which is accredited by the National Association of Christian Education (NACE) and the Florida Association of Christian Colleges and Schools (FACCS), offers child-centric programs that address essential developmental needs including Physical, Psychosocial, Emotional, Cognitive and Early Language Development, Learning Creative Expressions and Executive Function Development.

Currently the Academy has six paid staff members and most of their volunteers are retired educators. Crowell-Grate said the criteria to be a volunteer includes; being able to pass a background check, love the Lord and care about making a difference in the lives of children.

“I want the Academy to continue making families who are educated and can fully participate in society,” she said.

Although Crowell-Grate has spent her life improving the lives of others, life hasn't always been easy for her. She's faced setbacks and didn't always get things right the first time, but she persevered.

“I want my community to know that I fell down by getting married and pregnant in high school which prevented me from my dream job of going into the Air Force. I want my community to know that no matter how many times you fail, you can get back up and be better,” she said. “God is a forgiver and He will forgive your sins and welcome you as His child.”

Crowell-Grate believes what we do for the least of God's children, we do unto God. She said with every challenge she faces in her life, God restores her ten-fold.

“I want to ensure that I have done all that I could to make a better community and have them become productive members of society,” she said. “The legacy that I leave here is that I gave God and society the best of me.”

For more information or enrollment inquiries, call (352) 433-2217 or visit <https://www.drddbrowncrystianacademy.com> or <http://www.henrycrowelljrkaofexcellence.org>.

Calling all Girls
Middle and High
ages 10-19

EmpowerHER
Bunch
FREE March 28th

VIP TICKET
BOOKING CODE
DG32025
FIRST 16 GIRLS

ADULT REGISTRATION \$20

Parent Workshop with
Cassella Shaw
Average
Coaching & Consulting
Bringing out the best in your girls

I Am HER

11AM - 2:30PM | 49 Banyan Course,
Ocala, FL 34472

Contact:
Amiracle Watson | 352-509-6691 or
diamondcircle23@gmail.com

SPONSORED BY: DM, BIKINI BEACH, INTERSONG, FLY FIT, etc.

DIAMOND GIRLS INC. (501C3)
VENDORS SPONSOR VOLUNTEERS
CONTACT: 352-509-6691

United Holiness Church of Christ Deliverance Center
Apostle Grant Wilkerson Jr., Founder & Overseer
Sponsored by Missionary Ministry

Free GIVEAWAY

HOT FOOD | HOUSEHOLD ITEMS | & MORE

SAT. MARCH 7th
10 AM - 2 PM

1642 NW 3rd ST Ocala, FL 34475
For More Info Contact (352) 361-1207

DR. MYRA D. SHERMAN - HISTORY-MAKER



Dr. Myra Sherman

Myra Sherman, a Nurse Practitioner, Ordained Minister and Pastor of Reddick Church of God, never wanted to be or planned to hold any of those titles or positions growing up.

“My entire life and career was hand orchestrated by God,” she said.

Now Sherman, who is set to make history when she is sworn in as Mayor of the town of Reddick, FL., in April, is adding another title she didn’t plan for. She will be the first female and the first black woman to hold that position.

“I’m honored. I represent my heritage. Women that could not voice their opinions in government like my grandmother the late Leola Hint Baker,” she said.

Sherman, who grew up in what she said they called “across the four lane,” a Citra route, never had a desire for politics, and will be the first in her family to run for office. She purchased her first home in Reddick in 1994. But things changed when Michael Salter, the first African-American to sit on the town council of Reddick died, and James Stroup, the Mayor at the time, approached her in 2020 about completing his term. She agreed.

In December of 2023, Reddick Mayor John Vetter, Sherman and the rest of the town council, except town clerk Marjorie Stroup, resigned due to new financial disclosure requirements for elected officials in Florida. A federal judge blocked the disclosure, known as Form 6, in June of 2024. In September of 2024, the town council and the mayor were sworn in again. Sherman never had any opposition so she remained on the town council. Town meetings are held the first Thursday of every month at 7 p.m. at the Reddick Community Center.

Although she’s the first, Sherman hopes she’s not the last female or black woman to hold the position.

“Constantly move. Move toward your destiny. Don’t be complacent,” is Sherman’s advice to other young women considering running for office. “Time will past whether you are moving or sitting still, so move!”

Sherman said prayer, God’s guidance and the assistance of the council and citizens is how she plans to balance the new demands of the office with her current professional and personal commitments. She said her perspective as a woman will not impact her decision-making.

“Leadership skills are built on integrity, faithfulness and the love of the position at hand,” she said. “The focus should not be on the sex, but on completing the task at hand with success.”

As mayor, Sherman will be responsible for leading the town council, overseeing daily operations, representing the town in official capacities and managing local services like roads. Additionally, she will also ensure the needs of the town of Reddick are met to the best of her ability and according to the local ordinances.

Sherman’s long-term vision for the town of Reddick includes bringing the community together as one and having local gatherings such as picnics. She said at a recent town council meeting, they discussed looking into town parades, keeping the community clean and improving healthcare concerns.

During her first term in office, Sherman’s priorities include implementing protocols to help decrease the risk of premature deaths related to drug overdoses and reestablishing a local 12-step program. She said the homeless and the lack of sidewalks are currently the greatest issues facing the town.

“Both will be discussed with the council and approached with the diligence regarding health concerns and safety,” she said.

Sherman said she’s always encouraged staff, members and her family to achieve in everything she’s ever accomplished. She tries to get them to excel above her and she never feels intimidated because she knows her positions are only temporary.

“Trust God! I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me,” is the legacy Sherman said she wants to leave.



Key facts about the town of Reddick:

Reddick has seven elected officials: 5 councilmen, a Mayor and a Town Clerk.

The town was platted on **June 8, 1882**, and named after John Reddick, the first postmaster.

-- **Location:** Situated in Marion County, about 15 miles north of Ocala.

-- **Government & Status:** It is one of three debt-free municipalities in Florida, governed by a mayor and five council members.

-- **History:** Founded in 1882 following the arrival of the Reddick family from South Carolina in the 1850s.

-- **Demographics:** As of the 2026 projections, the population is approx. 548, with a median age of 46.4 years.

-- **Geography/Climate:** Located in a humid subtropical climate zone (Cfa). It covers 1.3 square miles, all of which is land.

Economy: The area is known for horse country, with local businesses including antique shops, BBQ, and bed & breakfasts.

Source: <https://townofreddick.com/about-reddick/>



WAR CRY 4 PEACE PRESENTS

WHEN PEACE CRIES OUT A NIGHT OF POETRY AND THE ARTS

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

TICKETS \$30 | INCLUDES BEVERAGES AND SNACK BAR

SATURDAY APRIL 11, 2026
DOORS OPEN AT 6PM | SHOWTIME AT 6:30PM
2739 SE MARICAMP ROAD | OCALA, FLORIDA 34471

MT CALVARY MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

FREE GOSPEL FEST

Join us as powerful voices come together to celebrate faith, joy, & community fellowship under the Big Oaks

Featuring

- TOP GROUPS
- BRING YOUR OWN SINGERS
- SHARE YOUR TESTIMONY
- SOUTHERN BBQ
- BRING YOUR LAWN CHAIR
- BANDS/SINGERS
CALL 352-875-0197

**SATURDAY
MARCH 28
10 - 6**

*The friendly church by the side of the road
where everybody is somebody
and God is the head*

5000 SW COLLEGE RD, OCALA
Pastor Standley T. Gillings & Lady Faye Gillings

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.

Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

Psi Chi Chapter

Health Seminar

SATURDAY, MARCH 28
10:00AM - 12:00PM

Free!



New St. John Baptist Church
Brother Rev. T.L. Brooks, Pastor
2251 NW 2nd Street
Ocala, FL 34475

JOIN US FOR FREE

SPEAKERS:

• **Dr. Edward D. King**
Urologist
Advanced Urology Institute

• **Devin Breedon MBA, RD, LDN**
Dietitian & Owner of Vital Nutrition



There will also be

- Red Cross Bloodmobile
- Blood pressure screening
- Light refreshments
- Door Prizes

Please call, text, or email to register your attendance to:
Brother Dr. William Palmer, Jr.
(336)403-1442
wpalmerjr@aol.com

MANHOOD

SCHOLARSHIP



PERSERVERANCE

UPLIFT

Estella Byrd Whitman Community Health Center

NOW ACCEPTING NEW PATIENTS!

You and Your Family's First Choice in Healthcare,
Estella Byrd Whitman Community Health Center
is your Neighborhood Medical Home!

SERVICES:

- Comprehensive Primary Care
- Men's & Women's Annual Health Check-ups
- Well Child Visits
- Women's Health Services & Family Planning
- Vaccinations
- Chronic Care Management
- Preventative Care Screenings
- Specialty Referrals
- Drug Assistance Program
- Transportation Assistance



TWO LOCATIONS:

819 NW 7th St, Ocala 34475
5664 SW 60th Ave., Bldg. #2
Ocala 34474

www.ebwchc.com
352.875.2226

"Walk-Ins" Are Welcome!

Insurance Accepted

Sliding Fee Available for those that qualify.

Marion County Charmettes present

Pastors in Praise & Little Miss Charmette Pageant

Date: March 28, 2026
Time: 4:30 pm
Place: New Covenant Missionary Baptist Church
606 SW Broadway St
Ocala, FL 34475

Women and Men of Purpose & Destiny Incorporated

MAR. 21, 2026
2PM - 5PM

HOST PASTOR
CHRISSE VICKERS

Waiting to Exhale

Men Empowering Women
PANEL DISCUSSION

GUEST PANEL SPEAKER: TAUREAN WILLIAMS
GUEST PANEL SPEAKER: MINISTER JORDYN RILEY
GUEST PANEL SPEAKER: PASTOR JASON POWELL
GUEST PANEL SPEAKER: CLINTON HART (RETIRED NFL PLAYER)

MARION COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY (MEETING ROOM C)
2720 E. SILVER SPRINGS BLVD. OCALA, FL. 34470

know the safe-sleep



Scan the QR code to learn more.



your baby should sleep

ALONE

Adult beds are dangerous for babies.



your baby should sleep on their

BACK

Reduce sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) risks.



your baby should sleep in a

CRIB

Your baby is safest sleeping with no pillows, soft toys, stuffed animals, or bumpers.



Ocala Steel Orchestra Inc. presents

INTERNATIONAL Jazz

Art & Poetry Festival Ocala

OCALA STEEL ORCHESTRA
led by Sean Thomas ft
Michele, Neal, Cynthia,
Will, John, Leona, Audrick,
Janisha, Chrissy, Rhonda,
Marlene, Oswald, Alex,
Lala, Nerymar

STNUCTET:
Ft: RAFAEL ABDALLA-BASS
ALEX SHERMAN-PIANO
NATALIE RELLA-VOCALS
BRAYDEN CHEEK-TROMBONE
SEAN THOMAS-DRUMS

POET:
RUBY BODDIE

FT ARTIST:
TYREK STUDEVANT

produced, marketed
& promoted by



Scan for more info or visit
www.ocalasteelorchestra.com/events



Harry's
SEAFOOD • BAR • GRILLE
"A New Orleans Style Restaurant"

POSTER SPONSORED BY:



Tribute to Roy Haynes



SAT APRIL
26

6:00PM

APPLETON MUSEUM of ART
4333 E Silver Springs Blvd, Ocala,
FL 34470

to benefit
Ocala Steel Orchestra
Non-Profit

POETRY ART JAZZ MERCH
VIBES FOOD



Florida State University

CHELSEA JAMES

I am pleased to share that I will be studying in London and interning in South Africa this upcoming May-July 2026.

THANK YOU

SUPPORT ME

YOUR CONTRIBUTION WILL HELP ME COVER EXPENSES, FROM TRAVEL TO PROGRAM FEES.

With love, Chelsea James



GoFundMe



Zelle



CashApp

MONEY SMART TIPS

By Scott Hackmyer

DRIVING WITHOUT INSURANCE IS A BAD IDEA!

Sometimes you might just need a little help with your bills. So much stress is caused by money problems. Many of you are aware of places that might offer assistance with electric bills and sometimes even rent payments but other extremely important bills, such as car insurance, don't seem to have any place for you to go to ask for help.



Car insurance is critical as you absolutely do not want to drive without insurance. The financial cost if you get in an accident while uninsured can be great and you risk having your license suspended if stopped while driving without insurance. I have seen too many situations where this happens and the person ends up in jail for driving on a suspended license which happened because they were driving without insurance. My suggestion is this. If you find an agency or church that will help you with your rent, electric or other utility bills, apply for this assistance and then use the money you had put aside to pay this bill to pay the bill that you can't get help with. It might be car insurance, a car repair, a plumbing problem or any other expensive need you have that no organization helps with.

DENTAL INSURANCE



An elderly neighbor of mine asked me to help him find a dentist for a toothache he had. He's on a tight budget and doesn't have dental insurance. In looking for an affordable dentist for him, I discovered a dental plan through AVS Dental that isn't insurance but offers discounted rates at participating dental offices. AVS

uses the Aetna Dental Access Network where participating dentists offer reduced fees, sometimes up to 50% off. The cost for a single individual is \$149 a year, \$199 for couples and \$249 for families. There is a one time \$19 enrollment fee. My neighbor was referred to an oral surgeon by the dentist to have two teeth pulled at a cost of \$1,150. He joined this plan and with the discounted rate his cost was \$608, a savings of \$542 and he can continue to save throughout the year as he gets dental work done. I know Aspen Dental takes this plan and so do a number of other dentists in Marion County. Look for an eligible dentist at <https://www.avsdental.com/> or call your dentist's office and ask if they participate.

I was looking for a narrow table with shelves to wedge into a small space in my kitchen. I checked all the usual sites like Amazon, Walmart and Wayfair and came across Tribesigns. I was very impressed by their selection, prices, free shipping and guarantee. I found exactly the table I wanted there at a great price and it came fully assembled! If you are looking for small wood furniture items check them out at <https://tribesigns.com/>. If looking to buy other items March is a great month for anything home and garden such as outdoor power tools, grills and patio furniture. Watch the ads at Lowe's and Home Depot in particular. Paint also goes on sale in March. Stores are aware of spring-cleaning needs and often put vacuum cleaners and other cleaning supplies on sale. Traditionally, Ulta Beauty runs a 21-day sale in March on their hair, skincare and makeup lines.

If you have Christmas bills that you are paying off and the interest is killing you, consider applying for a credit card that offers 0% interest on balance transfers. If you have good or excellent credit, my favorite choices are the Discover It Chrome Card which offers 0% balance transfer for 18 months, Capital One Venture with 0% transfer for 15 months which is the same as the Bank of America Customized Cash Reward Card and the Chase Freedom Unlimited Card. All these cards have no annual fee and offer a reward program on various purchases. If you have fair credit, consider the Citi Simplicity Card with 21 months of 0% interest on balance transfers. This card charges you 3% on the balances you transfer but this might be worth it compared to the high interest rate you are being charged now on your unpaid balance. Before applying for any of these cards make sure you verify that the card you want has no annual fee and check to see whether it charges a fee for balance transfers.

Don't forget, if you have money related questions, you can email them to me at moneyocala@gmail.com. I will not use your name but will answer all the questions that I can.

Business Spotlight



Business Name: Herbs & Roots

No. of Employees: 2

Business Owners:
Denise McFarland and Regina Gordon-Gibbs

Business Address: 3100 S.W. College Rd., Suite 37-38
Paddock Market, Ocala, FL 34474

Business Phone: (352) 578-3333

What Year Did You Start Your Business? 2023

Hours of Operation:
Monday - Saturday: 11 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.
and Sunday noon to 6 p.m.

Products and/or Services:
Herbal Teas, Tinctures, African Cultural Attire, Sea moss,
Headwraps, Incense, Labor Doula Services.

E-mail Address: herbalsoulroots@gmail.com

Website Address: N/A

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

Facebook: Herbs & Roots
<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61587525924102>

Instagram: Herbs & Roots

What or Who Inspired You to Start Your Business?
Personal experience and the healthcare system for people of color. We wanted to share with our community and get back to our roots.

What Makes Your Business Unique or What's Your Specialty?
We are one of a kind in our area. We carry both memory and medicine ancestral healing products.

What Advice Would You Give Someone Starting a Business?
Have a why. Start small and know your market. Don't do it by yourself. Be intentional.

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.



Marion County

World's Greatest Baby Shower

Friday, March 20, 2026

Mary Sue Rich Community Center
1821 NW 21st St., Ocala 34475

Session 1 2-4 p.m.
Session 2 5-7 p.m.

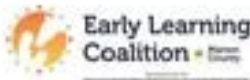
Choose **ONE** session.
Preregistration not required.



Expecting a baby? Come to our community Baby Shower!
Parents of infants up to 1 year old are also invited.

Exhibitors • Games • Prizes • Fathers Encouraged

Proud Sponsors:



MARION COUNTY CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE
FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION WORKGROUP

PARTY

IN

purple



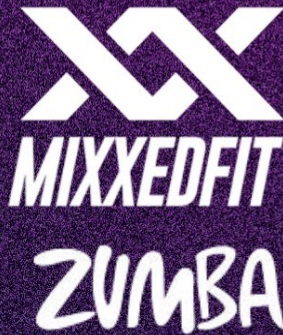
DANCE FITNESS PARTY

SATURDAY MARCH 28, 2026

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

\$15 ADULT / CHILD 12 & UNDER \$5

100% OF PROCEEDS BENEFITS LOCAL VICTIMS & SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



FOR MORE INFO
CONTACT: VAL
352-438-5990



MARY SUE RICH COMMUNITY CENTER
1821 NW 21ST AVE OCALA, FL 34475

[HTTPS://PARTYINPURPLE3FORDV.EVENTBRITE.COM](https://partyinpurple3fordv.eventbrite.com)



NAACP

5114 MARION COUNTY BRANCH

44th Annual Freedom Fund and Awards Banquet

"The Fierce Urgency of NOW!"

April 24, 2026

6PM

TICKETS \$75.00

*Mary Sue Rich Community
Center at Reed Place*

*1821 NW 21st Ave
Ocala, Florida 34475*

FOR MORE INFORMATION

*(352) 351 - 4567 or
(352) 286-5946*

marioncountyflnaacp@gmail.com

Send Donations to:

**NAACP 5114 Marion County Branch
P.O. Box 2274
Ocala, Florida 34478**

*Featured Speaker
Florida Senator
LaVon Bracy Davis*



*Zelle: marioncountyflnaacp@gmail.com
CashApp: \$naacpmarioncountyfl*