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DECEMBER 2024



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THERE WILL BE NO MEETING IN DECEMBER. NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY, JANUARY 9TH, 2025, BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING AT 6:30 P.M. AND MEMBERSHIP MEETING AT 7:00 P.M. OUR GUEST SPEAKER IS THE NEW CITY MANAGER FOR WINTER SPRINGS The meeting will take place at the Wedgewood Tennis Villas Clubhouse. Members may find further information at: Tuscawilla.org.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Benjamin Franklin once said, "Change is the only constant in life." Things change every day all around us. In our lives, with the things we use, and in the world. Starting in November, we have experienced a great deal of change. It started the day after Halloween when people started decorating for Christmas. It continued with turning our clocks back an hour, and we said good-bye to daylight savings time. Then a huge change occurred in our country when on November fifth voters said that they wanted a new direction for our country. For the second time in American history, a former president has been reelected on nonconsecutive terms. There will be a lot of change beginning in January. In the same election, our city residents elected three new City Commissioners. This will bring a lot of change to our city. In addition, beginning this month, after an absence of sixteen months, the City of Winter Springs will have a new city manager. His name is Kevin Sweet. You will have a chance to meet him at our Tuscawilla Homeowners Membership Meeting on Thursday, January 9th at the Wedgewood Tennis Villas Community building. On top of this, we have a new owner at Dominick's restaurant. The first reports are that the food and service are good.

How do we handle all this change? That is simple. We adjust. We don't always have to look upon change as being negative; most times it is positive. Do you remember when you got married? Unless both made some changes, it was going to be a challenging time. In making those changes and adjusting to your new life together, you develop something very positive. I knew an older gentleman who did not want anything to do with computers. In his reluctance to change, he missed out on a lot of new and exciting things. Take cars, for example. I personally like my eleven-year-old gas SUV. It has 165,000 miles, and I know that someday I am going to have a get a new car. The new ones have all kinds of new features that they say are good for you. After eleven years, I have just learned all the features of my present SUV. What I am saying is that don't look upon change as necessarily bad, but we should look upon it as mostly good.

To make you feel better, there are some things that do not change. For example, the Tuscawilla Homeowner's dues for 2025 are still only forty dollars. In the January Issue of the Tuscawilla Today please be sure to read all the benefits you receive in being a member. With all the change going on around us, we are still trying to keep our community a very nice place to live. We have a few challenges with increased traffic flow through our neighborhoods, with the condition of our storm water retention ponds, our streams, and maintaining green spaces.

Some things that do not change at this time of year are Hanukkah and Christmas. This year they both occur on the same day. The meaning of both events is inspiring. The word Hanukkah means dedication. It is a wintertime festival of lights in which a candle is lit for eight nights on a Menorah. It remembers the time back in the second century BC when the Temple was back in the hands of the Jewish people. Christmas is the time when Christians remember the birth of Christ in Bethlehem over two thousand years ago. The meaning behind this event is best said in the Christmas Carol by Phillips Brooks, O Little Town of Bethlehem. In the stanza, "Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light, the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight." I wish you all a meaningful and wonderful holiday season.



Dr. Kurt Miericke

THOA President

Publisher, *Tuscawilla Today*

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HOLIDAY TRAVELING TIPS FROM THE FLORIDA SHERIFFS ASSOCIATION

On behalf of the Florida Sheriffs Association, you are encouraged to use these safety tips for you and your loved ones as you travel:

1. **Safeguard Your Home** – Securing entry points of your home is critical. Lock all the doors and windows in your home. It is also important to lower your blinds and close your curtains so that people cannot look into your home.
2. **Secure Personal Documents and Valuables** – Any jewelry, cash, small electronic devices, or other items that can be easily moved and have a high monetary value should be put into a secured location that isn't out in the open parts of your house. Documents with your personal information should also be placed in these secure locations to reduce the likelihood of identity theft.
3. **Mail Delivery** – Utilize the United States Postal Service (USPS) Hold Mail Service while you are gone. This service will hold your mail while you are out of town and compile it for your return. An overfull mailbox is an easy identifier for thieves that you have been away from your home for an extended amount of time.

4. **Before You Walk Out the Door** – If you have an alarm, remember to set it. There are also devices that allow you to set a timer for your lamps so that you can set the light on a timer and give the appearance that you are home. Finally, if you have a trusted neighbor or family member that lives nearby, let them know you are leaving and when you are returning. Kindly ask for them to pick up any packages that arrive outside your USPS Hold Service.
5. **When You Return Home** – Look around your house to see if anything looks out of place. If so, immediately go to a safe place and call law enforcement.

Wishing you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas, a Happy Hanukkah, and a joyous holiday season filled with warmth and happiness. As we bid farewell to the year behind us, let's welcome the new year with hope, optimism, and a shared commitment to building a brighter future.

Stay safe, be well, and cherish the moments that matter most.

THE POINSETTIA'S FORGOTTEN HISTORY

A curious U.S. ambassador and the American family who patented poinsettia varieties are behind the holiday ubiquity of a plant that originated in Mexico.

The poinsettia, which blooms for only a couple of weeks in November and December, is one of the best-selling flowers worldwide. It's especially popular in the U.S., where the market was worth an estimated \$153 million in 2020. But because most poinsettia varieties are patented in the U.S. and have international protections, Mexican farmers have been forced to pay breeder's rights fees to grow and sell them.

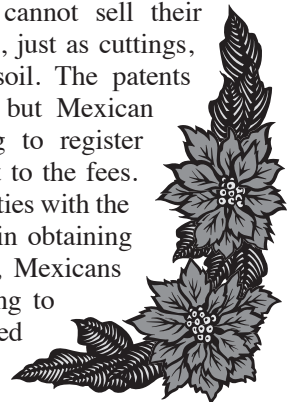
Aztecs in the 14th century called the plant *cuetlaxóchitl*, which roughly means "leathered flower" in Náhuatl. They used it for warrior rituals and dyes, and the latex sap to treat wounds and help break a fever. Other Mesoamerican civilizations had different names. The Maya, for example, called it *k'alul wits*, which roughly translates to "fire flower". It wasn't until the first Spanish settlers arrived in Mexico in the 16th century that the plant was specifically linked to the Christmas season. Colonizers used what they eventually called "flor de nochebuena," or Christmas Eve flower, to decorate nativity scenes to mark Christmas and attract people to the faith.

In 1825, four years after Mexico became an independent nation, diplomat Joel Robert Poinsett — who counted botany among his hobbies — was



appointed as the first U.S. ambassador to the country. Admiring the plant during Christmas, Poinsett sent samples to friends, before the U.S. had phytosanitary regulations. Eventually, a sample from Poinsett made its way to a Philadelphia Botanic Garden, which debuted the plant in the U.S. at an 1829 flower show. It then spread throughout the country and across Europe under the name poinsettia.

Among the poinsettia's early propagators were the Ecke family, who patented it after the 1930 Plant Patent Act was passed. The family made the plant smaller, before mass-marketing it as a "California Christmas flower." The Ecke family's patent is one of many for poinsettia varieties that remain in place today. Those varieties also have global protections through the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants. Mexican growers also cannot sell their poinsettias to the U.S. as full plants, just as cuttings, because of regulations related to soil. The patents affect most varieties of the plant, but Mexican botanists and farmers are working to register other varieties that won't be subject to the fees. So far, they've registered seven varieties with the Mexican regulator — the first step in obtaining international protections. For years, Mexicans used the word *poinsettismo*, referring to Poinsett, to describe actions perceived as American meddling ahead of the Mexican-American War.



EDITOR'S NOTES

MEET TONY BRYANT

This month's feature article was written by Mr. Bryant as a reflection of his remarkable accomplishments while hiking the entire length of the Appalachian Trail. Another interesting consideration is that Tony is the second resident to share experiences in conquering the "Trail." Back in February of 2021, Evandor Martins Fontes was also featured for hiking the Appalachian Trail. Our Tuscahill Community is made up of a variety of amazing residents who willingly share their experiences. Please see pages 6-7 for Mr. Bryant's article.

TUSCAWILLA HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR 2025

January is the month to renew your membership or join the THOA. Your renewal notice will arrive in the mail during the month of January so please respond promptly to ensure your membership remains active and that the delivery of the monthly Tuscahill Today magazine will continue throughout the year. While the cost of everything is going up, take comfort in knowing that the annual THOA membership dues of \$40.00 will remain the same for 2025.

KEVIN SWEET IS THE NEW CITY OF WINTER SPRINGS "CITY MANAGER"

After 17 long months with an Interim City Manager with repeated 3-2 votes (4 needed to hire a city manager) by the city commissioners, a new manager has been hired. Mr. Sweet is highly qualified and experienced for this position and will officially begin work on December 16th. Be sure to mark your calendar for the January 9th THOA Membership Meeting at 7:00 p.m. to meet Kevin Sweet. The location is scheduled for the Wedgewood Tennis Villas Clubhouse.

ENTRANCE FOUNTAINS UPDATE

The good news is that the south fountain has been fully repaired and is functioning. The landscaping has been purposely delayed to monitor the new pump equipment and plumbing. New landscaping is scheduled to be installed within the next couple of weeks. The plantings will be installed to conceal the pump housing vault and exposed plumbing. The bad news is that the north fountain has sustained extensive electrical problems, and it should be repaired early in December.

GETTING INTO THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT

The month of December is always active with many events. First and foremost is the call for charitable "Secret Santa" program headed up by Mayor McCann and detailed on page 9. The City of Winter Springs "Winter Wonderland" is scheduled for Saturday, December 7th. See page 10. This is followed by the "Light Up Winter Springs" in Central Winds Park beginning on December 15th and culminating on

December 21st. Let's not forget Santa Clause visiting the neighborhoods throughout the city. The schedule can be found on page 11.



FUN AT HOMETOWN HARVEST AND CENTRAL WINDS MUSIC FESTIVAL

Be sure to see the pictures from Kathy McCann on page 11. Both events had great turnouts and, as the pictures indicate, everyone had a wonderful time.

CITY OF WINTER SPRINGS VETERANS DAY TRIBUTE

Each year, the City of Winter Springs hosts a respectful tribute to honor our veterans who have fought to preserve our freedom. Please see page 13 for photos and information.

SUNSHINE GARDEN CLUB "YARD OF THE MONTH"

The Sunshine Garden Club has submitted the month of December "Yard of the Month" recipients. Please see page 12.

PRIVATE HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATIONS OFFICERS UPDATE REQUEST

There are 28 private HOAs within our Tuscahill Community. Each year, we reach out to ask that the list of officers be updated for future issues of Tuscahill Today. Please review page 18 and email editorelainejohnson@gmail.com if your HOA officers need to be revised.

MONTH OF DECEMBER

According to the Farmer's Almanac, December is the 12th month in our modern-day Gregorian calendar. However, it was initially the 10th month of the Roman calendar (until 153 BC). Hence, "December" comes from the Latin decem, meaning "ten."

"Have a safe and happy holiday season"

Elaine Johnson

Editor, *Tuscahill Today*

EditorElaineJohnson@gmail.com

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up."

— Thomas Edison

Happy Holidays

MEET TONY BRYANT

Local Man Completes Appalachian Trail at Age 66

Winter Springs, FL – At the age of 66, Tony Bryant, from Winter Springs, Florida, has achieved a remarkable feat by completing the Appalachian Trail, a grueling 2,197-mile journey that spans 14 states from Georgia to Maine.

Tony began his adventure in 2020, starting at Springer Mountain, Georgia. Over the course of that year, he covered an impressive 1,000 miles, reaching Harper's Ferry, West Virginia. The trail, known for its demanding terrain and breathtaking scenery, tested Tony's endurance and determination. Despite the challenges, he found joy in the camaraderie of fellow hikers and the beauty of the Appalachian Mountains.

In 2021, Tony planned to continue his journey with his hiking partner, Dr. Greg Carr from Chicago. However, just days before their hike was to begin, both Tony and Greg contracted COVID-19. Their dreams were temporarily dashed as they had to exit the trail after only 20 miles. It was a setback, but not the end of their adventure.

Determined to complete what they had started, Tony and Greg resumed their hike once they recovered. Over the next few years, they tackled the trail in sections. They completed three additional section hikes, each one bringing them closer to their goal. The final stretch was the most challenging yet rewarding. The last 479 miles took them through the northern states of Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine.

The Appalachian Trail is known for its demanding terrain, with an elevation gain equivalent to climbing Mount Everest 16 times. It takes approximately 3 million steps to complete the trail, and Tony felt every one of them.

Finally, in the summer of 2024, Tony and Greg reached the northern terminus of the trail at Mount Katahdin, Maine. The sense of accomplishment was overwhelming. They had conquered the Appalachian Trail, a journey that tested their limits and proved their resilience.

Tony and Greg, with their trail names of Sir Sweep and Dr. Freeze, faced several specific challenges during the section hikes. Here are some of the notable ones:

Physical Strain: Each section hike required the two to readjust to the physical demands of the trail. The rugged terrain, steep climbs, and long distances tested his endurance and strength. They had to be mindful of their pace and take care of their bodies to avoid injuries.

Weather Conditions: The weather varied significantly across different sections of the trail. The two encountered everything from scorching heat and humidity in the southern states to cold temperatures and snow in the northern states. Adapting to these changing conditions required careful planning and the right gear.

Logistics and Planning: Coordinating section hikes involved meticulous planning. Tony and Greg had to arrange transportation to and from trailheads, resupply points, and accommodations. Ensuring they had enough food, water, and gear for each section was a constant challenge.

Health Concerns: After contracting COVID-19 in 2021, Tony and Greg had to be extra cautious about their health. They took measures to stay healthy and avoid any further setbacks. The experience also made them more aware of the importance of hygiene and safety on the trail.

Mental and Emotional Challenges: Hiking the Appalachian Trail is as much a mental challenge as it is a physical one. They had to stay motivated and positive, especially during difficult stretches. The isolation and solitude of the trail could be tough, but they found strength in the support of each other and the trail community.

Navigation and Trail Conditions: Some sections of the trail were poorly marked or had challenging terrain, making navigation difficult. Tony and Greg had to rely on maps, GPS, and his hiking experience to stay on course. Trail conditions, such as fallen trees or washed-out paths, also added to the difficulty.

Wildlife Encounters: While wildlife encounters were often exciting, they also posed challenges. Tony had to be cautious and prepared for encounters with animals like bears, Moose and snakes. Proper food storage and awareness of his surroundings were essential for safety.

What advice would Tony and Greg give to other hikers planning section hikes on the Appalachian Trail?

Tony and Greg would have plenty of valuable advice for other hikers planning section hikes on the Appalachian Trail. Here are some key tips he might share:

1. **Plan Thoroughly:** Research each section of the trail you plan to hike. Know the terrain, weather conditions, and resupply points. Having a detailed plan will help you stay organized and prepared.
2. **Stay Flexible:** While planning is essential, be prepared to adapt to changing conditions. Weather, trail closures, and other unexpected events can alter your plans. Stay flexible and have backup options.
3. **Pack Smart:** Carry only the essentials to keep your pack weight manageable. Invest in lightweight, high-quality gear, and always have the right clothing for varying weather conditions. Remember to pack enough food and water for each section. Tony and Greg used lightweight high-tech hammocks with rainflies that kept them warm and comfortable.
4. **Stay Hydrated and Nourished:** Proper hydration and nutrition are crucial for maintaining energy levels. Carry a reliable water filter and plan your water sources. Pack high-energy snacks and meals that are easy to prepare.
5. **Take Care of Your Feet:** Your feet are your most important asset on the trail. Wear well-fitted, broken-in hiking boots and moisture-wicking socks. Take care of blisters and hot spots immediately to prevent further issues.
6. **Pace Yourself:** Don't push yourself too hard, especially at the beginning. Find a comfortable pace and take regular breaks to rest and refuel. Listen to your body and know your limits.
7. **Stay Safe:** Be aware of your surroundings and practice good trail safety. Carry a first aid kit, know basic first aid, and have a plan for emergencies. Let someone know your itinerary and check in regularly.



8. **Embrace the Trail Community:** The camaraderie among hikers is one of the most rewarding aspects of the trail. Be open to meeting new people, sharing stories, and helping each other out. The support and friendships you build will enhance your experience.
9. **Respect the Environment:** Follow Leave No Trace principles to minimize your impact on the environment. Pack out all trash, stay on designated trails, and respect wildlife and natural resources.
10. **Enjoy the Journey:** Remember that hiking the Appalachian Trail is not just about reaching the destination but also about enjoying the journey. Take time to appreciate the beauty around you, savor the moments, and create lasting memories.
11. **Have Support from Family and Friends:** Tony's wife played a key role in emotional and logistical support that was invaluable to completion of this four-year odyssey. Friends both on the trail and off kept his hopes high during those long and often painful days and nights.

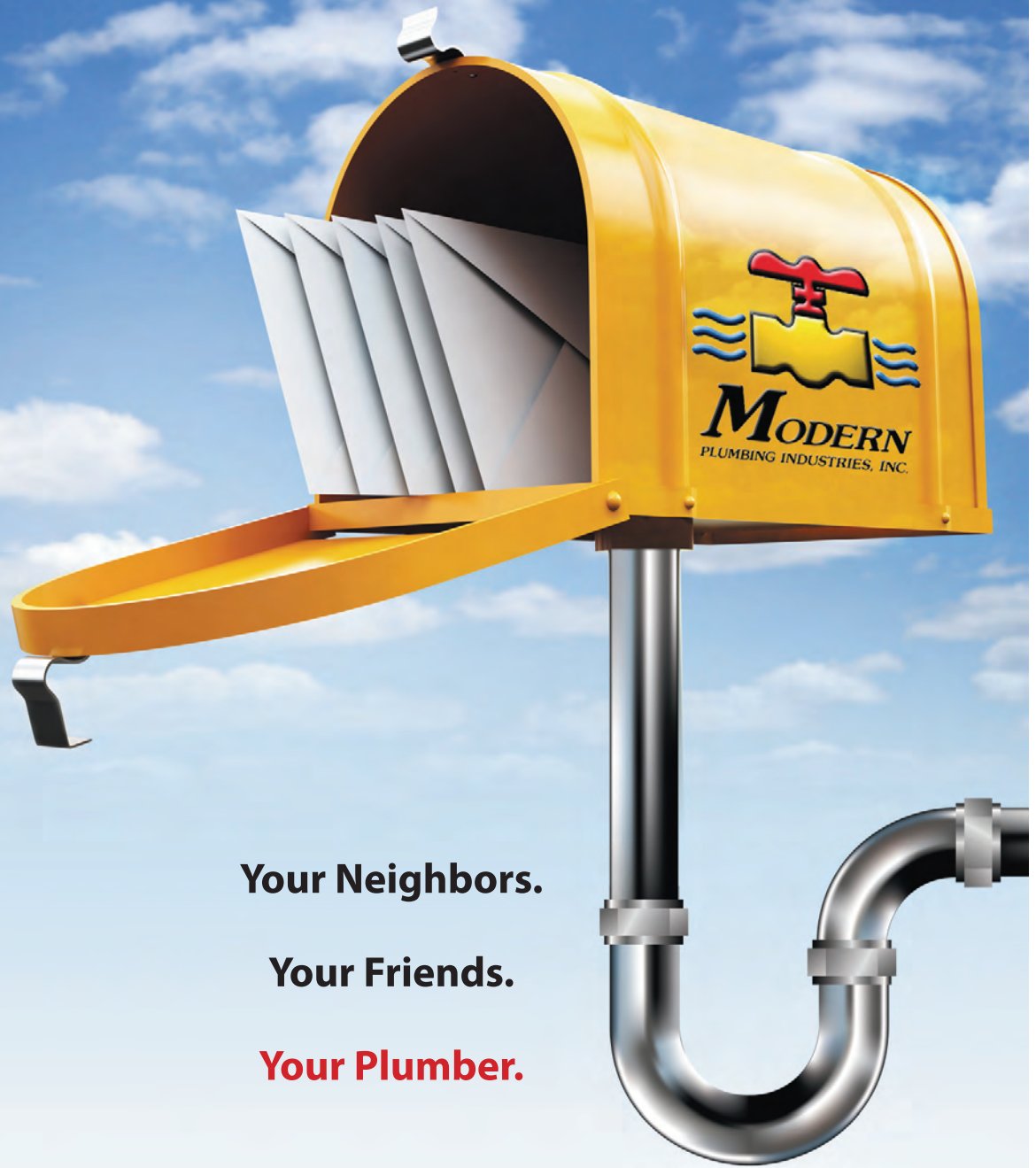
One of Tony's favorite parts of the entire Appalachian Trail journey was undoubtedly reaching the summit of Mount Katahdin in Maine. This moment marked the culmination of years of hard work, perseverance, and determination. Standing at the northern terminus of the trail, Tony felt an overwhelming sense of accomplishment and fulfillment. The breathtaking views from the summit, the camaraderie with his hiking partner Dr. Greg Carr, and the realization that he had completed one of the most challenging long-distance hikes in the world made this moment truly unforgettable.

Tony's experience on the Appalachian Trail taught him the importance of preparation, resilience, and a positive attitude. His advice would help other hikers have a safe, enjoyable, and fulfilling adventure.

In addition to reaching Mount Katahdin, Tony also cherished the sense of community and camaraderie he experienced along the trail. The friendships he formed with fellow hikers, the acts of kindness from trail angels, and the shared stories and laughter around campfires were all highlights of his journey. These connections and the support from the trail community added a special dimension to his adventure.

Overall, Tony's favorite part of the Appalachian Trail journey was the combination of personal achievement, natural beauty, and the bonds he formed with others. It was a life-changing experience that he would always treasure.





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"SECRET SANTA PROGRAM" IN HONOR OF ARNIE NUSSBAUM CONTINUES FOR 2024



Mayor Kevin McCann will, once again, be conducting the "Secret Santa Program" charity drive this year in memory of Tuscahill resident, Arnie Nussbaum. Mr. Nussbaum was a Guardian Ad Litem volunteer for many years

and supported this organization by collecting holiday gifts for the children in the system. This child advocacy group works with the court system to assign volunteers to speak on behalf of children who have experienced abandonment and neglect. In honor of Arnold Nussbaum's devotion to the GAL program, Mayor McCann, with the support of the THOA, will be seeking donations of NEW unwrapped toys again this year.



Examples of new unwrapped toys needed are high-quality stuffed animals, educational gifts, cars, dolls, musical toys, the season's hottest toys, Gift Cards for tweens and teens and, of course, larger gifts are also welcome. Toys are needed for children ranging from infants to teens. Remember, these toys are for children who have been abused/neglected and are impoverished.

The deadline for donating toys is Monday, December 9th. Toys can be dropped off at 1109 Pheasant Circle (just place the donations on the front porch bench or in the donation box located at the front door from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. For more information, call or text Mayor Kevin McCann at 407-534-0675. Thanks, from a kid in need and have a happy holiday while continuing this Tuscahill and Winter Springs tradition of caring.

Do you or someone you know in Tuscahill have a special hobby, unique profession or insightful travel experience that would be interesting for our readers? Has your community completed notable improvements or planned an important event? Let me know and we will be glad to include these news items in a future issue of Tuscahill Today. Thank you, Elaine Johnson. I can be contacted at: EditorElaineJohnson@gmail.com.

SUNSHINE GARDEN CLUB OF TUSCAHILL



TUSCAHILL YARD OF THE MONTH NOMINATIONS

Email Nominations to:

TuscahillGardenClub@gmail.com

Homeowner Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact info: _____

Your Name: _____ contact info: _____

TUSCAWILLA HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION AND WINTER SPRINGS ROTARY CLUB MAKE ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION TO WSPD "SHOP-WITH-A-COP" PROGRAM



THOA President Kurt Miericke and Rotary Club President Denise McKinley presented a check to Chief Matt Tracht and Community Relations Officer Thomas Ballew. This combined contribution of \$1,600 by both organizations helps to support the positive culture that has been established between the WSPD and the Winter Springs Community. Each year, the department works with our local schools and social agencies to identify children who would benefit by participating in the Shop-With-A-Cop Program. On the day of the event, children are assigned to officers who help them shop for holiday gifts for themselves and their family members. Afterwards, the children are brought back to the Winter Springs Civic Center where they are assisted with wrapping the presents. This culminates with each child receiving a personally selected surprise gift just for them as they are being picked up by their parents.



WINTER WONDERLAND 2024

Experience the enchantment of the holiday season at Winter Wonderland, proudly presented by AdventHealth. Join us on Saturday, December 7, 2024, from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Winter Springs Town Center. This year's festivities feature the 42nd annual Holiday Parade, the ceremonial tree lighting, performances by local talent, and a special visit from Santa Claus. Enjoy a delightful evening of community celebration, local entertainment, and culinary offerings from various food trucks. We invite all residents and visitors to partake in this cherished tradition.

LIGHT UP CENTRAL WINDS!

Sun, December 15th – Saturday, December 21st

Join us in celebrating the holidays at Light Up Central Winds, presented by AdventHealth! This festive event, organized by Winter Springs Parks and Recreation, will transform Central Winds Park into a dazzling holiday light experience. Admission is FREE! Winter Springs has expanded the holiday lights into the park this year, making it our biggest and brightest experience yet! Enjoy driving through holiday light tunnels and viewing spectacular displays, along with a special visit from Santa. Don't miss the final night, where you can take part in a walk-through experience featuring a movie and food trucks.

DRIVE-THRU: Experience the magic of the season at 'Light Up Central Winds'! Join us for a winter wonderland tradition as you drive through Central Winds Park and immerse yourself in the enchanting holiday light tunnels and displays from December 15 - 20, from 7:30 - 9:30 PM. Motorists are encouraged to use the Tuskawilla Road entrance in the Winter Springs Town Center.

Restrictions on Vehicles: Vehicles exceeding 12 feet in height, as well as RVs, campers, and buses, are prohibited from entering the light tunnels.

WALK-THRU: Mark your calendars for Saturday, December 21, 2024, when Central Winds Park transforms into a captivating walk-through wonderland from 5 to 8:30 p.m. This exclusive one-night event includes an opportunity to meet Santa, indulge in delicious food from food trucks, and enjoy a movie under the stars in the park. Attendees should bring a picnic blanket or lawn chair to enjoy the movie. Don't miss this unforgettable holiday experience! **Movie: Elf (Rated PG) begins at 7 PM**



SANTA'S CITY RUN

Santa Claus will visit Winter Springs during the week of December 9-13, 2024, to spread holiday cheer to children and families. The Winter Springs Police Department will escort Santa around town each evening from 5 PM to 8 PM. Listen for the sirens and holiday music in your neighborhood, and be sure to head outside to greet him!

Santa's Run

5 PM - 8 PM

MONDAY, DECEMBER 9

Park at Laurel Oaks, Highlands, Seven Oaks, Wildwood, The Terraces, Sugar Creek, Mt. Greenwood, The Arbors, The Vineyards, Hacienda Village, Deer Song, and Meadowlark

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10

Ranchlands, Seville Chase, Stone Gable, Winding Hollow, Heritage Park, Tuskawilla Trails, Jesups Reserve, and Parkstone

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11

Avery Park, Oak Forest, Arbor Glen, Tuskawilla Crossings, The Blake, Winter Springs Village, Tuskawilla Trace, St. John's Landing and Jesups Landing

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12

Areas of Tuskawilla (North of Winter Springs Blvd), Barclay Reserve, Barrington Estates, Southern Oaks, Northern Oaks and Integra 360

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13

Areas of Tuskawilla (South of Winter Springs Blvd) and Amberly



ATTENTION PRIVATE HOMEOWNER'S ASSOCIATIONS: NOW IS THE TIME TO UPDATE YOUR HOA BOARD MEMBER INFORMATION!

PLEASE let us know if there have been any changes for your officers. Review page 18 in this issue of Tuscawilla Today to confirm that our information is accurate. If changes are needed, please email Elaine Johnson at editorelainejohnson@gmail.com.

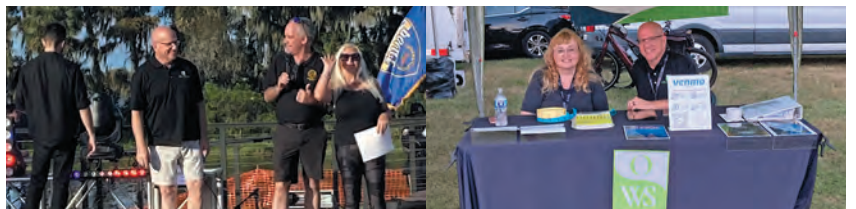
CITY OF WINTER SPRINGS HOMETOWN HARVEST FUN



The Hometown Harvest was back for its 18th year on October 26, 2024, from 4:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Central Winds Park. Presented by Orlando Health, this event produced a night of excitement for all ages. Activities included free hayrides, bounce houses, fall-themed activities, and delicious eats from food trucks. Kids arrived dressed in a variety of spooky and wacky costumes! Plus, the WSPD local officers were on hand to demonstrate their cool gear at the National Night Out event.



2024 CENTRAL WINDS MUSIC FESTIVAL DRAWS LARGE CROWD



What a difference a year makes! The Central Winds Music Festival was a night to remember! A large attendance & perfect weather made for a wildly successful, second-year community event! Presented by AdventHealth, the City of Winter Springs and Oviedo-Winter Springs Regional Chamber of Commerce collaboration produced a near-perfect setting for those in attendance. Special thanks to Full Sail University for their technical support! Their talent & expertise made for a first-class presentation. We would like to thank the community for coming out and supporting this event and look forward to promoting next years' Central Winds Music Festival.



WSPD PROMOTIONS

Congratulations to Detective Tracy Fugate and Officer Cesar Chavez on their promotion to the rank of Sergeant. Their exceptional leadership skills and commitment to excellence



make them valuable assets to our leadership team. We look forward to seeing them thrive in their new roles. Congratulations, Sergeants Fugate and Chavez!



Sergeant Tracy Fugate has been especially supportive in supporting the THOA "Family Fun Day" event as well as overseeing the

Shop with a Cop program for many years. We appreciate all the dedication and hard work provided by Sergeant Fugate and Sergeant Chavez along with the other members of the Winter Springs Police Department.

SUNSHINE GARDEN CLUB "YARD OF THE MONTH"



Congratulations to Kay and Cindy Powser at 682 Tuscora Drive for being awarded the Sunshine Garden Club "YARD OF THE MONTH" for December! Pictured with Kay and Cindy are Laura Leigh Wood from Re/Max Realty and THOA President Kurt Miericke.

We are grateful to the members of the Sunshine Garden Club for sponsoring this community service. If you would like to nominate yourself or a deserving neighbor, be sure to contact the club at: TuscawillaGardenClub@gmail.com.

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You're invited!

We are proud to be a part of the Oviedo/Winter Springs community. To express our appreciation for our clients and friends, we're throwing THE Holiday Party of the season. It's a celebration you won't want to miss!

We'll have hors d'oeuvres, sweets and drinks for all to enjoy.



When

Friday, December 6th, 2024
6:00p.m.-8:30 p.m.

Where

Tuscawilla Country Club
1500 Winter Springs Blvd, Winter Springs, FL 32708

Your family and friends are welcome to join us. Please call 407-365-3246 to RSVP.

We'll be collecting donations for Toys For Tots. Feel free to bring a new, unwrapped gift if you would like to participate.

Disclosure: Donating is a personal decision and completely voluntary. Please note that we cannot accept monetary donations of any kind, including gift cards.



Geoffrey Del Bene, CFP®, Financial Advisor

1757 West Broadway, Suite 4, Oviedo, FL 32765
407-365-3246

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WINTER SPRINGS VETERANS DAY CELEBRATION



The City of Winter Springs recognized Paul H. Dillman, commander of VFW Post 5405, this year for his exemplary service and dedication to our community. A distinguished veteran of the U.S. Army, Paul continues to make a positive impact through his civilian work with the Department of the Army.

The city also remembers Michael Segura, who was posthumously named the Winter Springs Hometown Hero for 2024. Known for his unwavering commitment to supporting veterans and extensive volunteer work with organizations like the Kairos Prison Ministry and Big Brothers Big Sisters, Michael truly embodied the spirit of service. Sadly, Michael passed away on August 26, 2024, before he could accept this honor. Our hearts go out to his wife, Janis Canon-Segura, and their family. A special thanks to the many Winter Springs High School students, staff, and volunteers.



SEMINOLE COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT STATION 26 NEWS

Seminole County Fire Department's Fire Station 26 B Shift in Tuskawilla/Winter Springs is visited by local Girl Scout Troop 223. If you'd like to have the Fire Department visit, fill out www.seminolecountyfl.gov/communityrelationsform.

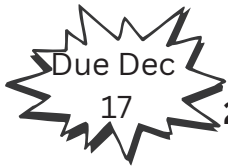


47TH CENTRAL FLORIDA SCOTTISH HIGHLAND GAMES

Sat, Jan 18, 2025, 8am - Sun, Jan 19 2025, 5pm

The Central Florida Scottish Highland Games, the largest community event in Seminole County, organized each year by the Scottish-American Society of Central Florida, was created to promote and preserve Scottish heritage. Each January, the two-day gathering welcomes thousands of visitors to Central Winds Park in Winter Springs. The festival begins on Saturday with competitions in Scottish heavy athletics, Highland dance, bagpiping, and baking. The weekend hosts cultural activities, including Border Collie demonstrations, Scottish clans, musical performances, a medieval camp, ax throwing, and more. There is also the popular Boulder Boogie event, where contestants vie for bragging rights of carrying the heaviest stone the farthest distance without dropping it. Our festival is a family-friendly event featuring a non-competitive "Kids Games" version of Scottish athletics and other activities. We feature the best Celtic artisans presenting jewelry, clothing, artistry, weaponry, and more. There is plenty of food and drink: beer, wine, whisky, fish-n-chips, scotch-egg, and even haggis tacos. The whiskey tasting welcomes attendees to sample expertly curated rare and unique whiskies. The Ceilidh, (Scottish gathering) features multiple Celtic-rock bands, all included with admission. There is something for everyone at the Central Florida Scottish Highland Games. **Tickets are on sale now: Flascot.com/tickets for details.**

Kim's Annual Holiday Coloring Contest



5 age groups with \$100 prizes each

2-5 years 6-10 years 11-14 years 15-20 years 21-101 years

Color and send to **The Kim Coburn Team** 407-341-1324

RE/MAX Town and Country Realty

1315 Tuskawilla Rd Winter Springs FL 32708 or email to kimcoburn@gmail.com



Additional
Sheets



Name:

Age:

Address:

Phone:

5 WAYS TO RECOGNIZE CHARITY SCAMS AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

Fairwinds Credit Union

It always feels good to live generously and give back to those who need help the most. Thousands of charities and organizations depend on the generosity of others, especially during the holiday season. Lurking in the shadows, though, are individuals looking to scam you out of your hard-earned donations. Here's how you can stay ahead of fraudsters and watch out for charity scams.

1. **Research, research, research.** The Better Business Bureau and the IRS maintain a list of safe charities that you can thoroughly research before you donate. You can also visit organization websites to research their credentials, including their headquarters, boards of directors, and how funds are used. Don't be afraid to ask questions and pay close attention to charities whose names are oddly similar to those of more well-known organizations.
2. **Watch out for look-alike charities.** A look-alike charity is a person or group that will act as a legitimate or well-known charity by using their logo and name to steal your donations and personal information. When giving online, double-check the website's URL (also known as a web address). Sometimes, fraudsters will use URLs with a slight variation of a reputable charity's name. Not only will your donation go directly to the scammer, but they will also get access to your card number and personal information. Look for secure website connections (https://) and verify the web address with official sources.
3. **Be suspicious of requests for specific payment methods.** If you're asked to give cash immediately, pay in cryptocurrency, or wire money to a charity, recognize

this as a major red flag and steer clear. Scammers try to get you to send money immediately or through these other payment methods so you can't get your money back once it is sent. Reputable charities aren't going to pressure you to donate on the spot, and they can typically accept checks and credit cards in addition to cash.

4. **Set up account alerts.** It's important to stay on top of your accounts and be on the lookout for suspicious transactions or activity. A great way to help you stay in the know is using automated account alerts. If you are a Fairwinds Credit Union member, for example, you can sign up online and receive account notifications (and peace of mind!) through your text or email.
5. **Use caution when donating to crowdfunding sites.** Crowdfunding is used when people ask for donations of any amount online to support them and their cause. This can include anything from donating to help someone start a new charity or helping someone pay for their medical expenses. Anyone can create a crowdfunding campaign on popular donation platforms to have people from around the world donate to their individual cause. If you are able to verify a crowdfunding campaign because you have direct or personal connection to the recipient, then making your donation is less risky. However, sometimes these donation requests are set up by individuals who are using the situation for their own monetary gain. Find a trustworthy to donate to, instead of giving directly to a person you don't know. By following these tips, you can continue to live and give generously with confidence, while keeping your personal and financial information secure.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13TH IS THE LEAST OF OUR WORRIES

Did you know that every Friday the 13th, the world's economy apparently loses about \$900 million because people are afraid to work and travel on this date? The 13th of each month rarely falls on a Friday during any given year. For example, there were only two instances during 2024, in September and now in the current month of December. For example, June 13th in 2025 is the only time this date falls on a Friday during the next calendar year.

That said, an interesting, related event has been in the news media regarding Friday, April 13, 2029. According to

multisource predictions, Asteroid 99942 Apophis is forecast to pass Earth a scant 18,000 miles away. Before seeking a cave in Colorado Springs, consider that a NASA analysis has found that Apophis' current trajectory doesn't pose a threat to Earth. This prediction holds true for the subsequent pass forecasted to occur in 2036. Additionally, the NASA analysis concluded that it is unlikely to pose a real threat to our home planet for at least another 100 years. Let's keep our fingers crossed.

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News At A Glance

NEWCOMERS OF CENTRAL FLORIDA, INC.

December 12th Luncheon Will Feature: “Who Killed Santa” Murder Mystery Party Game

Newcomers of Central Florida will celebrate the holidays with an interactive “Who Killed Santa”-themed luncheon December 12th at Heathrow Country Club in Lake Mary. Attendees will meet eight intriguing suspects (played by club board members) who will introduce themselves and provide clues to explain their character’s motivations. Then audience members will be challenged to test their crime sleuthing abilities and try to solve the whodunnit. The names of attendees who correctly identify Santa’s killer will be entered into a drawing for one special grand prize. Members and guests are encouraged to wear their best seasonal finery--from candy cane jewelry to “ugly sweaters” and everything in between. Everyone at the luncheon will also take home a special holiday treat and have an opportunity to win door prizes. Members, guests and prospective members

are welcome. Luncheon tickets are priced at \$30. Doors open at 11:30 a.m. Advance reservations are required. The deadline for non-members to sign up and submit payment is December 5th at 5 p.m. No walk-ins are allowed. For more information, contact: VP-Membership Diana Engling, 407-256-3592, e-mail: englingd@yahoo.com, or visit newcomerscfl.org.

L’ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENTS, INC. SENIOR TRIPS

Call Karen at 407-786-8755 to make reservations

TAMPA BAY DOWNS: January 18, 2025

Enjoy a sumptuous lunch buffet in the Clubhouse then check your program, pick your horses, and make your wagers. It’s Post Time and the horses will be off and running. Catch the excitement of thoroughbred horse racing at the one and only Tampa Bay Downs. COST: \$109.00 per person. **Reservations and payments are due by December 20th. Late payments will be assessed a \$10.00 late fee.** Includes: R/T motor coach transportation, admission, lunch, program, Reserved seating, taxes, gratuity on meal, driver’s gratuity. Bus will depart the Winter Springs Senior Center at 8:30 a.m.

TUSCAWILLA WOMEN’S CLUB

“Where you are among friends”

The November meeting was a real thanksgiving. Special thanks to all attendees plus the donations to our Secret Santa Program with The Guardian Ad Litem supporting abused/neglected children. This will certainly make a difference.

Our December meeting is set for Thursday, the 12th at 1pm at the Wedgewood Tennis Villas Clubhouse. It will be our Christmas Party with food and line dancing to Christmas songs. Please contact Anne Combs 407-761-5779 for questions and interest. See you there. Merry Christmas to all and to all be safe this holiday season.

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wed, Dec 11 2024, 6:30pm

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) started in 1998 with about 5 citizens and has continued strong with over 50 members. The committee is comprised of homeowners association board members and Winter Springs residents. The CAC meets with the Police Chief and the command staff to discuss monthly departmental statistics and each Commander tells what is happening within their respective bureaus. There is a roundtable discussion and each attendee of the meeting is given the opportunity to discuss what is happening in their community and/or ask any questions.

The CAC meets the second Wednesday during the months of September through May at 6:30 p.m. at the Winter Springs Police Department.

If you have any questions or would like to join us, please feel free to contact us at 407-327-1000.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Dec. 4th	National Cookie Day
Dec. 5th	Planning and Zoning Meeting, 5:30
Dec. 7th	City of Winter Springs Winter Wonderland at the Town Center, 4:00 – 8:00 National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
Dec. 9th	Regular City Commission Meeting, 6:30
Dec. 12th	Poinsettia Day
Dec. 15th	Full “Cold” Moon Bill of Rights Day
Dec. 17th	Wright Brothers Day National Maple Syrup Day
Dec. 20th	Ugly Sweater Day Games Day
Dec. 21st	First Day of Winter
Dec. 22nd	City Holiday – Offices are closed Mathematics Day
Dec. 23rd	Festivus Christmas Movie Marathon Day
Dec. 25th	Christmas Day Hanukkah
Dec. 26th	National Candy Cane Day Kwanzaa
Dec. 27th	National Fruitcake Day Visit The Zoo Day
Dec. 31st	New Years Eve
Jan. 1st	New Year’s Day

THOA BOARD MEMBERS

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COMMITTEES

Membership Chairman/Committee

Cindy Guiles 407-462-6061

LIAISONS

Kurt Miericke with SR 417 issues.

Boards and committees are comprised of both Board Members and volunteers from the Community. If you wish to volunteer, please contact Kurt Miericke at 407-359-4077.

CLUB PRESIDENTS

Sunshine Garden Club:

Tace Crouse..... 407-222-4336

Tusawilla Women's Club:

Ronnie Balmat..... jebalmat@gmail.com

ADDITIONS OR UPDATES TO PRIVATE HOAs AND CLUBS

You are responsible for providing updates/additions to your listing by the 15th of the month for the following months issue. E-mail them to Lisa@cponline.com. Please mark in the subject "THOA NL".

We cannot take changes over the phone.

"Tusawilla Today" is the official publication of the Tusawilla Homeowners' Association, P.O. Box 195666, Winter Springs, FL 32719-5666. Publisher is the Association President.

PRIVATE HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATIONS

Do to space, we only list Pres, VP, Sec & Treas.

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ARTICLES & ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Should be e-mailed to Elaine Johnson, at editorelainejohnson@gmail.com and to the THOA President, Kurt Miericke, at THOAws20@gmail.com. All articles/ announcements need to be approved by the THOA President before publishing. **Deadline** is the **12th** of the month for the following months issue.

ADVERTISING:

For rates and availability contact Lisa Kimbrough-Rodriguez at Creative Printing & Publishing, **407-302-9147** or Lisa@cponline.com. **Deadline for ads and payment** is the **15th of the month** for the following months issue. Ad rates are subject to change without notice.

The Homeowners' Association reserves the right to deny any advertising or editorial copy that is deemed inappropriate to the interests of the community; however, neither the publisher nor the advertisers necessarily always support or agree with all viewpoints printed herein.

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