



SPORTS CALENDAR

- **Thursday**
Sertoma Junior Golf Tour at Placid Lakes Country Club, 8 a.m.
- **Friday**
Sebring in Dixie Softball Angels Traditional World Series in Alexandria, La, TBD
- **Saturday, July 27**
Dr. Tom McDonald Caladium 5K Race in Lake Placid, 7 a.m.
Sebring in Dixie Softball Angels Traditional World Series in Alexandria, La, TBD
Avon Park in Machine Pitch World Series in Ruston, La., TBD
- **Sunday, July 28**
Sebring in Dixie Softball Angels Traditional World Series in Alexandria, La, TBD
Avon Park in Machine Pitch World Series in Ruston, La., TBD
- **Monday, July 29**
Sebring in Dixie Softball Angels Traditional World Series in Alexandria, La, TBD
Avon Park in Machine Pitch World Series in Ruston, La., TBD
- **Thursday, Aug. 1**
Sertoma Junior Golf Tour at Highlands Ridge South, 8 a.m.
- **Friday, Aug. 2**
Lake Placid in Dixie Softball X-Play World Series in Texas, TBD
- **Saturday, Aug. 3**
Heartland Golf Open qualifier at Sebring Golf Club, 8 a.m.
Lake Placid in Dixie Softball Ponytails X-Play World Series in Texas, TBD
Sebring vs Arkansas in Dixie Youth AAA World Series in Ruston La., 3:30 p.m.

CALENDAR | 2B

Sonic baseball benefit is today



FILE PHOTO

Sebring's Jett DeWitt bats during the Dixie Youth AAA State Tournament. There will be a Sonic fundraiser at the Heacock Insurance building today.

Fundraiser for AAA team heading to World Series

Highlands News-Sun Sports Staff

The Sonic baseball benefit is today for the Sebring AAA team that won the state championship and is going to the AAA World Series in Ruston, La. The event is from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the Heacock Insurance Building in Sebring. Hamburgers, hot dogs, french fries and tater tots will be available. Please come out and support the team as it raises funds for the trip.

Weekly youth tennis camps

SEBRING — The Highlands County Tennis Association is holding weekly camp sessions. The camps are for ages 6 to 18 at the Thakkar Tennis Center at the Country Club of Sebring. First-time players are welcome.

The week-long camps run through Aug. 2. The cost is \$100 per week and includes snacks and drinks. The camps will be held Monday thru Friday from 9 a.m. until 12 p.m. under the guidance of USPTA Tennis Pro Horace Watkis. For more information please contact Watkis at horacewatkis@hotmail.com or 863-414-2164 or 863-386-4282.

Swim lessons

Swim lessons are held at Sebring High School in the morning and evening

BRIEFS | 2B

Johnson seeks win at Lime Rock Park

JDC-Miller Motorsports looks to repeat past success

Special to Highlands News-Sun

Returning to Lime Rock Park this weekend, Michael Johnson is hoping to recreate some magic in the IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge.

A paraplegic since age 12 following a motorcycle incident, Johnson scored a memorable first victory in the Pilot Challenge TCR class in last year's race at Lime Rock.

This year, Johnson has experienced a tale of two seasons with his co-driver and coach Stephen Simpson and the rest of the JDC-Miller Motorsports team. While 2018 brought six podium finishes in eight races for the No. 54 Audi RS3 LMS, the team was finally able to break through two weeks ago for its first top-five finish of 2019 at Canadian Tire Motorsport Park.

Midway through the 10-race schedule, the only other highlight for Johnson so far this year was earning the Motul Pole Award to start the season at Daytona.

"I got the pole at Daytona and it was starting to go well there, but it didn't work out," said Johnson.



IMSA PHOTO

Returning to Lime Rock Park this weekend, Michael Johnson is hoping to recreate some magic in the IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge.

"Sebring, Watkins Glen, all these, it's just been bad luck. We've had a lot of issues that we didn't have last year. Hopefully we can rally, get some momentum, get a good result and just keep that going for the rest of the year and work for next year."

The memory of the 2018 victory — which made national headlines and doubled as Johnson's first professional sports car victory — lives on and serves as proof of the team's capabilities. In fact, a win

was seemingly destined to come for the team after it scored finishes of fourth, third and second place successively in the three races leading up to the 2018 Lime Rock triumph.

Johnson hopes destiny will step in again to turn around the team's luck, hopefully sooner rather than later.

"Last year was honestly amazing with that win and all of our hard work we put together," said Johnson. "If we could just repeat that, that would be amazing."

All the hard work we've put together this year, it's been there. We just haven't been able to put the results together. If we can just finalize it and actually make it come through, it'll be like the icing on the cake for how 2019 has been.

"I think everyone has been working really hard, especially Cole (Scrogam), our engineer and Stephen Simpson and everybody. I know it's coming. Our bad luck is going to turn

IMSA | 2B

Improvise, adapt, overcome

Cross country bike trip challenging and memorable

By RUTH ANNE LAWSON
STAFF WRITER

SEBRING — Nearing the end of their biking journey across America, the Shelley family and Steve Murphy passed through Highlands County on Friday morning.

The Shelley's are going coast-to-coast having started their journey in California with their tires in the Pacific Ocean at Newport Beach on June 1. Their cross-country trek across America will come to an end today when they stick their tires in the Atlantic Ocean at Boynton Beach.

"I just wanted to spend time with my boys and have an adventure," said Al Shelley. "How often does a dad get to spend time with his kids? We started talking about it when they were 15 but I wanted them to learn how to drive first so they could see and understand what we were going to do on a bike. It just dawned on me one day, that if we didn't do it now they would be off to the military or college and we would never get another chance. We started putting things together and we took off. The hardest part was overcoming the



COURTESY PHOTO

The bikers pose for a photo after making a stop in Missouri on their trek across America. From left to right: Lucas Shelley, Garrett Shelley, Al Shelley and Steve Murphy.

'just do it' part. We tried to ride as much as we could to get ready. We really put the miles in. I had the boys sleep on the floor for two weeks to get them ready for camping. We knew there would be challenges like hills so we would put extra weight on our bikes and tried to prepare as much as possible. You can never really get used to sitting on a bike seat that long."

For Al Shelley, this is not his first time crossing the country on his bike. Al took the journey once before when went from Chicago to California shortly after leaving the military. Al always wanted to take the journey with his twin sons, Lucas and Garrett. He mentioned it several times as they grew up and now that they are 17 years old, have taken drivers education

and are able to understand traffic, this summer was the perfect opportunity to hit the road on their bikes. Carrying just what they could fit on their bikes the Shelley family and Murphy began their adventure and are now at the end.

"My dad has been talking about this trip since we were 8 years old," said Lucas Shelley. "I always said I would be down to go cross country on our bikes. It is a cool experience to see how people live, what other places look like and a new experience. I have gotten a lot closer to my dad, brother and Steve. My favorite experience has been seeing how other people live. You make assumptions and stereotype but I think going through the states on a bike you get a completely different view. I think Kansas had the nicest people we've ever met. They wanted to help and wanted to talk to us. The sights have been beautiful and living in the moment has been great. It



RUTH ANNE LAWSON/STAFF

Al Shelley leads the way Friday as his twin sons follow as they pass through Highlands County on their adventure across the country. From left to right: Al Shelley, Garrett Shelley and Lucas Shelley.

BIKE | 2B

