

STREETS TO BE RESTORED, RESURFACED, AND REHABILITATED



CAROL MAHLER

Independent Contractor
carolmahler22acl@gmail.com
Photos provided

At the Aug. 6 meeting, the City Council approved the contract for Invitation For Bid (IFB) 2024-04 with Ajax Paving of Florida, LLC, for \$885,290.96 to restore, resurface, and rehabilitate portions of 15 city streets: N. 11th Ave., Gloria Ave., N.E. Hickory St., N. LaSolona Ave., E. Maple St., N. Manatee Ave., N. Mizelle Ave., N. Monroe Ave., N Polk Ave., Rio Vista Rd., N. Rogers Ave., Smith Ave., N. 10th Ave., N. Twelfth Ave., Waldron St., Wilson Ave., and Washington St.. The project includes \$685,000.00 of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds with the balance of cost from Fund 107.

In addition, the Council also consented to a “walk-on” item so that 22 buildable lots on 12th Ave. will have water connections. The street’s design requires the proactive installation, so the new paving will not be impacted by future construction.

The change order to the contract with Andrew Sitework for 12th Ave. from E. Oak St. to E. Maple St., will also pay for “furnishing and installing a 12”

Construction of 12th Ave. will now include installing water and sewer connections for all the buildable lots, so that the new street will not need to be torn up for each connection as it is needed.

line stop with cut-in gate valve at the intersection of NE Oak St. and 12th Ave., and . . . the removal and disposal of the existing 10” force main.” The additional funds of \$145,234.00 from the Utilities Fund will increase the contract from \$2,664,211.00 to \$2,809,445.00.

The Council voted to hire Butler Aluminum to install a 60’ x 60’ steel open pavilion with enclosed gable ends at the center of the old 100’ x 110” tennis court at the Smith-Brown Recreation Complex/Louis C. Anderson, Sr., Park. Although the Council had allocated \$180,000.00 of ARPA funds for this project, the cost for the pavilion including engineering and permitting is \$78,300.00.

The proposal for Community Redevelopment Services with Business Flare for \$25,500.00 to complete the “finding of necessity” and develop the Community Redevelopment Plan was ratified by the Council.

The Council voted in favor of the second of two one-year extensions to the existing Golf Course

SEE STREETS PAGE 8 >>

IMPORTANT VOTER
INFORMATION

PAGE 16

Mark Negley
DeSoto County Supervisor of Elections

DESOTO COUNTY
SPORTS

PAGE 4

GET YOUR PUBLIX
WEEKLY ADS
INSIDE!

GOVERNMENT
MEETING SCHEDULE

CITY

CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS OCCUR THE
1ST AND 3RD TUESDAY OF THE MONTH
UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED

Margaret Way Building
23 N. Polk Ave., Arcadia, FL 34266

AUG 27	DESOTO COUNTY BOCC WORKSHOP: CURBSIDE GARBAGE COLLECTION
TUE 10A	Administration Building 201 E. Oak Street, Suite 103 Arcadia, FL 34266
AUG 27	DESOTO COUNTY BOCC WORKSHOP: IV
TUE 1P	Administration Building 201 E. Oak Street, Suite 103 Arcadia, FL 34266
AUG 27	DESOTO COUNTY REGULAR COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING
TUE 3P & 6:30P	Administration Building 201 E. Oak Street, Suite 103 Arcadia, FL 34266

Active dates and times are subject to change.
County: <http://desotobocc.com/calendar>
City: <https://arcadia-fl.gov/events/>

Realtor Showcase

See page 11

DESOTO COUNTY
SHERIFF'S OFFICE

ARREST REPORT

See page 15

SALES INQUIRIES:
SALES@PEACERIVERSHOPPER.COM
863.990.9813

223 E. OAK ST. STE. 1
ARCADIA, FL 34266

SALES / OFFICE MANAGER
Angie Duckett

CREATIVE DIR / AD DESIGN
Jackie Bierman

OPS / PRODUCT DESIGN
Jonathan Bruch

DESOTO COUNTY COMING TOGETHER: UNLEASHING THE COMMUNITY’S POTENTIAL



CAROL MAHLER
*Independent Contractor
carolmahler22acl@gmail.com
Photos provided*

Rich Harwood, founder of The Harwood Institute, addressed about 174 people encouraging them to step forward, turn outward, and come together at the Turner Agri-Civic Center on Aug. 1. He tried to inspire the community to build together a new trajectory of hope and civic culture.

At the same time, The Harwood Institute, in partnership with The Patterson Foundation, released the report, “DeSoto County Coming Together: Unleashing the Community’s Potential.” The Patterson Foundation and The Harwood Institute have committed to three years to build on the aspirations that the community has identified.

Founder of Links2Success and Consultant for The Patterson Foundation Ashley Coone wrote, “It’s wonderful to see so many DeSoto County residents connecting with each other over shared aspirations for our community. There is a role for everyone in making DeSoto County even better for residents including our youth, seniors, parents, families and more. Much gratitude to The Patterson Foundation for investing in DeSoto in such an impactful way. Their investment is successful because of willing citizens being ready and willing to step forward.”

So many residents describe DeSoto County as a unique, peaceful, and caring community. However, they struggle to work together on shared challenges and often worry about the future. To make a brighter, more hopeful future, residents must engage with each other, talk about their shared aspirations, and work to achieve them. Rather than relying on any one leader or organization, the entire community must take on this responsibility. Key issues identified in the report are roads and infrastructure, education, youth opportunities and communications.

On July 31 and Aug. 1, ten roundtable discussions were held over two days, and comments included the following: “there’s so much potential in DeSoto County for it to be great;” “people stay within their language, culture, and community;” “our schools are in a bit of a crisis;” “a lot of people’s social life and the way they stay up on what’s going on is through their interactions at their church;” and “your neighbors here are your family, too. That’s prevalent here and not everywhere else.”

You may choose to participate in “Building the Civic Culture” by signing up for The Harwood Institute Public Innovators Lab. The “Getting Started” happens October 24 and 25 with a second Lab “Unleashing Impact” scheduled for the Summer of 2025. The Harwood Institute will select 50 people



Rich Harwood gave the keynote presentation at the Aug. 1 release of the “DeSoto County Coming Together: Unleashing the Community’s Potential” report.



Residents of Casa San Juan Bosco participated in The Harwood Institute’s roundtable discussions and shared their views of the community.

ready to catalyze community-led change to be a part of the October lab.

Cheri Coryea, Lead for DeSoto County Ahead, an Initiative of The Patterson Foundation, wrote, “While I watched the faces of the community members who attended the community conversations in March, April, and May of this year during the Harwood Institute Roundtables, it was clear to me that they recognized how their voices were heard and helped to shape the authentic DeSoto County Report. There was an eagerness to take the next steps and many of the participants have already raised their hands to be considered for the October 24 and 25 Public Innovators Lab.”

For more information about participating in the Labs contact Coryea at ccoryea@thepattersonfoundation.org, by Aug. 22. The Labs are generously funded by The Patterson Foundation.



From left, Cynthia Scott and Heather Smith of the DeSoto County Health Unit pay attention to Rich Harwood during his keynote address on Aug. 1 at the Turner Agri-Civic Center.



Mary Dow, left, listened as Lorraine Anderson made a point during The Harwood Institute Roundtables.

A BLAST FROM THE PAST @ YOUR LIBRARY



CAROL MAHLER
*Independent Contractor
carolmahler22acl@gmail.com
Photos provided*

On Aug. 13, 2004, Hurricane Charley, a category 4 storm, blasted through DeSoto County devastating structures, ravaging trees, and knocking down unripe fruit from acres of citrus groves. Last Saturday, the DeSoto County Historical Society—in partnership with the DeSoto County Library and DeSoto County Emergency Management—marked the 20th anniversary of the cataclysm by opening an exhibit of artifacts, memoirs, newspaper articles, poems, photographs, song lyrics, stories, and more at the Library, 125 N. Hillsborough Ave. The display will be available until Aug. 31 during regular library hours—call 863-993-4851 or check online at myhlc.org.

The Society thanks those who loaned their newspaper clippings, photos, words, or other items: Kathy Bryce, Cindy McLeod Ely, Nancy “Eric” Erickson, Wendy Farris, Kathy Futch, Linda Keen, Jolaine Konstantinidis, Carol Mahler, Forest Reynolds, and Karen Smoke. Also appreciated are those who worked on accepting donations and assembling the exhibit: Norma Banas, Kathy Bryce, Nancy “Eric” Erickson, Carol Mahler, and Karen Smoke. The display is part of the Society’s mission to preserve and promote the history of DeSoto County for future generations.

“We consider the exhibit a work in progress,” Society Member Karen Smoke said. She designed the display to include an open space for “Community Recollections.” The Society invites more people to share their memories by writing a few sentences or a paragraph about their experiences during or after the storm.

In addition, the Society hopes that people will recognize the locations of unidentified photographs on loan from DeSoto County Emergency Management.

Smoke wrote, “Hurricanes are destructive, but they are also a catalyst for change. We are looking for uplifting stories about how recovery efforts improved our community, and we also welcome the comments from young adults who experienced the storm as a child.”

A photo album and a “Sorry Charley, We Survived” t-shirt are featured in the display case, and the Society welcomes the loan of other small artifacts or mementoes of the storm. Please contact the Society at 863-266-5774 or desotocountyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com.



Last Saturday, the DeSoto County Historical Society opened an exhibit in the DeSoto County Library to mark the 20th anniversary of Hurricane Charley, a category 4 storm that ransacked our community on Friday, August 13, 2004.



Printed by the Ridge Area ARC, a “Sorry, Charley, We Survived” t-shirt, is an artifact on loan to the display. The Society considers the exhibit “a work in progress,” and welcomes people to share other small items and mementoes of the storm as well as their memories.

Partnering with the Society, DeSoto County Emergency Management (DCEM) loaned photographs for the exhibit, some of which are not identified. The Society invites those viewing the display to provide the locations and/or other information about the photos.





THANK YOU TO OUR
BULLDOG YOUTH SPONSOR!

• DESOTO COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD (PRS)



DESOTO 17U

CLUB VOLLEYBALL TRYOUTS



Rhadassa Caldas passes the ball while Josephine Albritton and Bailyn Gopher watch during the 17U club volleyball tryouts.



STEVE KNAPP

Sports Writer
sports@peacerrivershopper.com

Last Saturday was a big day for club volleyball tryouts in DeSoto County. Beginning early in the morning four different age groups of volleyball hopefuls filed into the high school gym for their 2 hour session. It was after 4pm when the final ball was put away and the nets came down.

The players were met by 6 coaches, including head volleyball coach Danielle Taylor and former head coach Dave Bremer, who were eager to start coaching the future of DeSoto volleyball. With 6 experienced coaches on hand there was plenty of information and guidance for the athletes to soak in.



Julianne Irby floats up for the kill shot for the 17U club team.



Izaria Anderson, who is also on the high school team, works on her kill shot.



Southpaw Josephine Albritton blasts the ball in spike drills.



Varsity head coach Danielle Taylor, Jarrett Zolkos and Phoebe Poe discuss drills for the 17U players.



DESOTO YOUTH FOOTBALL AND CHEER GOES 3-1 IN SEASON OPENERS



STEVE KNAPP
Sports Writer
sports@peacerriver shopper.com

The future of DeSoto youth football looks like has a bright future based on their opening games last Saturday. They beat the visiting Frostproof Bulldogs in three of their 4 games outscoring Frostproof 73-20.

The flag team started the day with an impressive 22-6 win. The 8U team jumped out to a quick 19-0 lead at halftime and coasted to a 25-0 win. In a well played game the 10U team came up short 14-7, but the 12U team finished off the day with another shutout 19-0 with the game called in the second half due to weather conditions.

Today we have photos of the 8U game with flag and 10U coming up in the next couple of weeks. None of the teams had their new uniforms yet so there is no roster for the players.



The DeSoto youth 8U Football team photo after their 25-0 win.



NEVER TOO EARLY TO START BASKETBALL CONDITIONING



STEVE KNAPP
Sports Writer
sports@peacerivershopper.com

The DeSoto County boys basketball team fell on hard times last season because of inexperience due partly to a talented graduating class of 2023. That inexperience melted away as the season wore on. With a good group of hard fighting basketball players returning to erase last season’s dismal memory, things are looking up for Darrel Nicklow and his staff.

Practice can’t be held for another couple of months, but Nicklow is holding conditioning sessions for his players who aren’t playing a fall sport. He wants to make sure that when the players can officially begin practices that they are in the best condition possible. Nicklow ran the players through six different stations to improve strength and speed.



Players use blocks to improve footwork before moving to another station.



Junior Isaac Clarke lifts dumbbells before advancing to the next station.



Sopjhomore Olivier Jeanite concentrates as he uses the heavy ball over his head to build up both arm and leg strength.



Coach Darrel Nicklow keeps a watchful eye on the players as they go through their conditioning drills.

2024-2025 FALL SPORTS SCHEDULE

Football			
Date	Time	Opponent	H/A
16-Aug	7:00	Lakewood Ranch	Away
23-Aug	7:00	Okeechobee	Away
30-Aug	7:00	Avon Park	Home
13-Sep	7:00	George Jenkins	Away
20-Sep	7:00	Bayshore	Away
27-Sep	7:00	North Port	Away
4-Oct	7:30	SE Bradenton	Home
11-Oct	7:00	Mulberry	Away
18-Oct	7:00	Lake Placid	Home
25-Oct	7:00	Hardee	Home
1-Nov	7:00	Booker	Home

Boys Golf			
Date	Time	Opponent	H/A
22-Aug	4:00	Avon Park	Away
24-Aug	4:00	Lemon Bay	Away
3-Sep	4:00	Lake Placid	Home
6-Sep	4:00	Sebring	Away
9-Sep	4:00	Charlotte/AP	Home
10-Sep	4:00	Hardee	Away
16-Sep	8:00am	Crutchfield Inv.	Away
17-Sep	4:00	Hardee	Home
23-Sep	4:00	Sebring	Home
24-Sep	4:00	Frostproof	Away
26-Sep	4:00	Parrish	Away
30-Sep	4:00	Charlotte	Away
7-Oct	4:00	Port Charlotte	Away
10-Oct	4:00	Lemon Bay	Home
15-Oct	4:00	Lake Placid	Away

Girls Golf			
Date	Time	Location	H/A
27-Aug	4:00	Hardee	Away
29-Aug	4:00	Charlotte	Home
5-Sep	4:00	Palmetto	Home
10-Sep	4:00	Lemon Bay	Away
12-Sep	4:00	Avon Park	Home
16-Sep	8:00am	Crutchfield Inv.	Away
19-Sep	4:00	Charlotte	Away
24-Sep	4:00	Frostproof	Away
8-Oct	4:00	Hardee	Home
10-Oct	4:00	Palmetto	Away
15-Oct	4:00	Labelle	Away
17-Oct	4:00	Avon Park	Away

Volleyball			
Date	Time	Opponent	H/A
20-Aug	JV-6:00/V. 7:00	Charlotte	Away
22-Aug	JV-6:00/V. 7:00	Pt. Charlotte	Home
24-Aug	TBD	JV Tourney @ Pt. Charlotte	Away
27-Aug	JV-6:00/V. 7:00	North Port	Home
29-Aug	JV-6:00/V. 7:00	Labelle	Away
3-Sep	JV-6:00/V. 7:00	Lake Placid	Away
5-Sep	JV-6:00/V. 7:00	Sebring	Home
10-Sep	JV-6:00/V. 7:00	Hardee	Away
12-Sep	JV-6:00/V. 7:00	Pt. Charlotte	Away
16-Sep	JV-6:00/V. 7:00	Palmetto	Away
17-Sep	JV-6:00/V. 7:00	Charlotte	Home
19-Sep	JV-6:00/V. 7:00	Labelle	Home
21-Sep	TBD	JV Tourney @ Braden River	Away
21-Sep	TBD	V tourney @ Palmetto	Away
24-Sep	JV-6:00/V. 7:00	Lake Placid	Home
26-Sep	JV-6:00/V. 7:00	Lemon Bay	Away
30-Sep	JV-6:00/V. 7:00	Palmetto	Home
1-Oct	JV-6:00/V. 7:00	Hardee	Home
3-Oct	JV-6:00/V. 7:00	Sebring	Away
10/4-10/5	JV-6:00/V. 7:00	V tourney @ Charlotte	Away
8-Oct	JV-6:00/V. 7:00	North Port	Away



Boys and Girls Cross Country			
Date	Time	Location	H/A
17-Aug	7:45am	Dunbar Tiger Jamboree	A
20-Aug	4:30pm	Desoto	H
24-Aug	8:00am	Lemon Bay High	A
7-Sep	7:30am	Estero DDD	A
14-Sep	7:15am	Fort Meyers High	A
20-Sep	9:20am	North Port XC	A
5-Oct	9:00am	Fl Runners inv.	A
8-Oct	4:50pm	Hardee	A
12-Oct	TBD	FSU invite	A
19-Oct	8:00am	Heartland Championship	A



BULLDOGS

NEW FIRST 1,000 DAYS FAMILY NAVIGATOR TO SUPPORT DESOTO MOMS AND BABIES



Tonya Wallace has joined DeSoto County-based nonprofit Links to Success in the new role of First 1,000 Days Family Navigator.

Wallace will guide and connect DeSoto families to a range of healthcare, childcare, and social-service resources to support their newborns and young children during the critical years of early childhood development. The role is key to further expanding the services of the successful First 1,000 Days Suncoast initiative, which is housed within Sarasota Memorial Health Care System, to meet the particular needs of the DeSoto County community.

“Connecting Links to Success and First 1,000 Days in this way will have a tremendous impact on families in DeSoto County,” said Ashley Coone, CEO of Links to Success. “With Tonya on board, we will identify and partner with new parents and young children to lay a strong foundation for their future success.”

Tonya Wallace, Links to Success Links to Success has been at the forefront of providing essential college and career preparation for middle- and high-school students in DeSoto County,

addressing educational inequality and limited resources in one of Florida’s lowest-income areas. Currently, the county has a 30 percent kindergarten-readiness rate, and 38 percent of third graders are reading at grade level. “To best serve our families and our community, we must start earlier and ensure our children have access to quality early learning experiences,” said Coone. To that end, Barancik Foundation awarded Links to Success a \$400,000 grant to expand its programs and build its capacity, including start-up funding to begin serving families during the critical early childhood years.

The new family navigator role involves guiding families through a maze of available services to ensure they receive the comprehensive support necessary during the pivotal time of early childhood development. Wallace will provide direction and resources to families to help meet their specific needs, and she’ll build and maintain relationships with service providers to facilitate referrals and ensure access. She’ll also lead workshops and educational sessions for parents and caregivers on topics related to early childhood development, parenting, and health.

The hiring of a DeSoto First 1,000 Days navigator aims to replicate the

success already being achieved in neighboring counties. The position will lean on and leverage the proven referral model and vast resource network built by the First 1,000 Days Suncoast initiative. While First 1,000 Days had expanded outreach to DeSoto County prior to this new role, it became clear that the community’s particular needs and geography require more attention and staff dedicated to DeSoto families.

“The relationships that our initiative coordinator Janice Houchins has built with DeSoto County organizations over the last few years laid a strong foundation for this partnership,” said Chelsea Arnold, initiative manager of First 1,000 Days Suncoast. “Paired with Links to Success’s incredible reputation and trust among families in the county and Tonya’s extensive experience with young children, this new collaboration will strengthen the work of our initiative.”

Wallace brings an impressive



professional background and long history of service and collaboration in DeSoto County to her new role. Most recently, she worked with DeSoto County children and their families as the children’s library manager for the DeSoto County Public Library. Prior to that, she spent 22 years as an elementary school educator for the School District of DeSoto County.

DeSoto County mothers who are pregnant or families raising a young child may complete the assistance-request form available on the First 1,000 Days Suncoast website to get connected with Wallace for help.



**PROUDLY MANUFACTURED IN
DESOTO COUNTY, FLORIDA**

Day Shift **MONDAY - FRIDAY** 6:00AM - 6:30PM
Night Shift **MONDAY - FRIDAY** 6:00PM - 6:30AM

Apply in person at: **6018 SW Highway 72 • Arcadia, FL 34266**
Questions? Call Dawn McIntyre: **Human Resources, 863-993-4004 x108**

STREETS

FROM PAGE 1 »

Turf Management Agreement with SIP Ventures, LLC, doing business as Florida Turf Caretakers (FTC), with a five percent overall increase, for a total of \$153,578.25. Services include consultation, weekly treatment of greens with fertilizer, fungicides, herbicides, and insecticides; fertilization and herbicide of 55 acres, and overseeing of greens. Golf Course Director Jeff Gibson assured the Council that FTC does “lots more than what’s in the contract.” In addition, Gibson said that the rain from Hurricane Debby was “soft, and it rained all day”—the perfect conditions to benefit the grass. The “greens are resting,” he said, “and that’s a good thing.” Although business has been slow because of the summer weather, the income is still up \$13,000.00 year-to-date from last year.

COMMENTS FROM DEPARTMENTS

Marshal Quinn Jones reported that during Operation Southern Slow Down, July 15-20, Arcadia Police Dept. officers issued a total of 51 citations and 29 warnings. A July 25 traffic stop resulted in the arrest of a passenger who had two felony warrants and the driver who had 95.9 grams of marijuana with a street value of \$1,200.00. On Aug. 5, Sgt. Danielle Rios filled out a stolen vehicle report, and the following morning, she saw the vehicle. With the help of other officers, the vehicle was stopped, the driver (who ran away) was caught, and the vehicle returned to its owner. Airport Director Shelley Peacock reported 32 operations for Taco Tuesday and 80 gallons of fuel sold. She noted that the event continues to be successful because of “community support”—people driving in to buy lunch from the food trucks. For the shade hangars, she requested the contractor fill material from the eaves to the peak to make the hangars look more finished. In addition, the walls for the new T-hangars are built and then the roof will go on. She also noted that the turf runway was closed for two days because of standing water, the first time that has happened since the completion of the drainage project in 2019.

The City hired Ajax Paving to restore, resurface, and rehabilitate portions of 17 streets, including Rio Vista Rd. from W. Gibson St. to Park View Rd.



American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds will help pay for the restoration, resurfacing, and rehabilitation of a half mile of N.E. Hickory St. from Rogers Ave. to 17th/Turner Ave., plus parts of 6 other streets.

Finance Director Teresa Conerly reported 34.2% revenues received and 36.4% of expenses paid. Much of the American Rescue Plan Act funds are allocated to projects not yet finished, and the City awaits more than \$2 million in hurricane expenses reimbursement from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). City Administrator Terry Stewart reported that Assistant City Administrator Beth Carsten negotiated with the legislature to allow the City to use the balance of the \$1.5 million not spent on the Livingston St. property on the other two parcels the City is purchasing to build the new wastewater treatment plant. He also noted that she



Andrew Sitework is constructing N. 12th Ave., and the City voted to add water and sewer connections for every buildable lot to their contract.

was in Plant City to finish her Certified Public Manager training—a two-year program—and he will present her diploma on Friday. He also noted meeting with the YMCA about the rehabilitation of the Speer Center. During the summer, they donated 90,000 meals through their give-away program.

CONSENT AGENDA

Under the Consent Agenda, the Council ratified the following items: minutes from the July 8 CRA Workshop, July 11 Budget Workshop and the July 16

regular meeting; as well as two special event permits: the Independence of Mexico Parade sponsored by Azteca Promotions from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Sept. 15, on Oak St., from Orange to Volusia avenues; and the youth fishing clinic, sponsored by DeSoto Bass Club, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Oct. 19, at Lake Katherine.

BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVES

DAVID VANAMAN

Retired pastor and teacher
DeSoto Ministerial Association

I thought I would tell you a little bit about me so you know whose thoughts and opinions you are reading. I was born in 1956 and grew up in SE Michigan. I am one of six kids. My father was a pastor and taught at a local Bible college; my mother taught elementary. I graduated high school in 1974 and college in 1978. I taught various grades and courses in schools for 30 years in Michigan, California, and Florida. I served as a pastor for 15 years, but was always bi- or tri-vocational, driving a school bus or

working security. I am retired now... from all of the jobs! I have been married for 45 years, have nine children, 16 grandkids, and would like a few chickens someday.

Now, you may be reading your Bible but not really giving it a whole lot of thought. Today, let’s look at biblical creation to understand what it actually says. Remember, as you read, slow down and really see what God says and what he does not say.

What does Genesis 1:1-5 tell us about the first day of creation?

Genesis 1:1-5

Day 1, the first day of the week, Sunday. Verse 1 says, “in the beginning” (rē’sî = first, beginning,

best, chief) “God created the heaven” (šāmayim = sky, the abode of God) “and the earth” (’ere = whole earth, land, soil). Verse 2 describes the earth as being confused and formless and dark. Sounds chaotic! In verse 3, God speaks. He says “Let there be light” (’ôr = illumination, happiness). Verse 4 states that God saw what he had made and considered it “good” (ô = better, pleasant, agreeable). In verse 5, God speaks again. He gives the light he created a title or name, “Day” (yôm); and he gives the darkness a title or name, “Night” (layil). The evening and the morning were the first day. In the Hebrew timeframe, days begin in darkness - in the evening - and the day ends as daylight goes. The “evening” on this first day of creation was chaotic. The “morning” was ordered.

What we read in those five verses is that God made heaven and earth and time. There was darkness on the earth He created. So, He brought forth light and separated the light and dark. He then named Day and Night, making the evening and the morning the first day of creation. Time began “in the beginning”. What can you and I take away from these verses or how do these verses benefit our lives? These verses explain that God has a purpose and design for everything he created, especially you and me. These verses describe a thoughtful and wise Creator that brought order out of chaos and brought forth light separating darkness and gave proper names to his creation. These first verses can give us encouragement and hope that God is making good out of our lives, even when it seems chaotic and a mess.

SFSC GRADUATES 36 CADETS FROM THREE PUBLIC SAFETY PROGRAMS



AVON PARK, Fla. – Aug. 2, 2024 – South Florida State College (SFSC) honored 36 graduating students from three Public Safety programs in a ceremony on Wednesday, July 31 on the SFSC Highlands Campus in Avon Park.

The nine cadets from SFSC’s Fire Science Academy are: Michael Beasley, Aiden Brantley, Noah Browning, Cameron Cantu, Jesus Inciarte Fuenmayor, Sebastian Orozco, Jaycen Register, Aleecia Rhoden, and Uriel Tovar. Special recognition went to: Michael Beasley, as Class Leader; Cameron Cantu for earning Highest GPA; and Jaycen Register for Most Heart.

The eight cadets from the Paramedic program are: Jack Arseneau, Jackson Campbell, Clayton Johnson, David Julius, Hunter Knuckles, Antoinette Stewart, Jorge Sanchez-Torres, and Elizabeth Velazquez. Special recognition went to: Elizabeth Velazquez for Highest GPA in Lecture, Jorge Sanchez-Torres for Highest GPA in Lab, and Clayton Johnson for Most Heart.

The 19 cadets from the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) program are: Zachary Durastanti, Davian Gamez-Cendejas, David Hagelstein III, Emily Jestes, Tiana Jones, Chloe Mason, Ismael Mejia, Michael Smith, Jerry Whitten,



Victoria Wright, Jonathan Young, Jeremiah Bessard, Jordan Frazier, Stephen Goff, Danielle Medley, Meggan Mills, Jennifer Moore, Aaron Murray, and Makayla Vansickle. Special recognition went to: Davian Gamez-Cendejas for Highest GPA in Lecture, Makayla Vansickle for Highest GPA in Lab, and Jeremiah Bessard for Most Heart.

Chief Matt Zahara of the Fort Meade Fire Department was guest speaker during the ceremony.

Graduates of the Firefighter Career Certificate program have completed 492 contact hours of training. A cohort of cadets enroll in the Firefighter I course,

often with the expectation of continuing through to Firefighter II training. Firefighter II training is required for those who wish to be employed as professional firefighters in Florida.

The paramedic graduates completed an 11-month College Credit Certificate course offered through SFSC’s Emergency Medical Services (EMS) program. Paramedics work as part of an emergency response team called out to traffic accidents, fires, and other life-threatening situations.

The EMT graduates completed the 16 weeks of training, or 300 contact hours, in the program. Upon completion of the

program, graduates are eligible to apply to take the Florida EMT State Board Exam. EMTs function as part of an emergency rescue and transportation team by responding to emergency calls through a dispatch system, operating emergency vehicles safely, assessing scenes of accidents or illnesses, setting priorities for treating patients based on their degree of illness or injury, providing pre-hospital emergency care to treat trauma, shock, wounds, and other medical issues.

For more information about any of SFSC’s Public Safety programs, call 863-784-7278 or visit southflorida.edu.



Elect

VOTE
August 20th

DEBBIE WERTZ



for
SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS

Committed to Our Community

Goals when Elected

• Voter Education • Election Integrity • Transparency

PAID FOR AND APPROVED BY DEBBIE WERTZ REPUBLICAN FOR SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS 2024

ALL FAITHS FOOD BANK ONCE AGAIN NAMED AMONG 'TOP 100 BEST COMPANIES'



Nonprofit organization makes annual list – in midsized category – managed by Florida Trend and Workforce Research Group

SARASOTA, FL – For the second year in a row, All Faiths Food Bank (AFFB) has been named one of Florida’s Best Companies To Work For. The annual Best Companies list – featured in the August issue of Florida Trend magazine – ranks 100 companies in small, medium and large employer categories.

AFFB was ranked 33rd in the midsized companies list, and was one of only four nonprofits to make the cut in this category, comprising 41 employers.

“At All Faiths Food Bank, we know that great workplace culture doesn’t just happen – it is something that leaders must strive to achieve each and every day. Whether it is supporting our team members’ professional and personal development, a commitment from managers to mentor and advocate for their teams or helping employees to achieve the work-life balance that works for them, All Faiths has been rigorous in listening, responding to – and being respectful of – team member feedback,” says All Faiths Food Bank’s Chief People Officer, DD Goerke. “We are thrilled to be recognized as a Top 100 Best Company; we are dedicated to upholding the values associated with such an honor in the coming years of service to our community.”

To participate, companies or government entities were required to have at least 15 workers in Florida and to be in operation for at least one year. Companies that chose to



All Faiths Food Bank’s senior leadership team is (from l-r) MJ Horen, Nelle S. Miller, Bill Haley, Denise Cotler, and DD Goerke. Provided photo/All Faiths Food Bank.

participate underwent an evaluation of their workplace policies, practices, philosophy, systems and demographics. The process also included a survey to measure employee satisfaction. The combined scores determined the top companies and the final ranking.

“In today’s hyper-competitive labor market, it takes more than good salaries and benefits to attract and keep talent,” says Florida Trend Executive Editor Amy Keller. “Looking under the hood, we see that the ‘Best Companies To Work For’ in Florida maintain an edge by prioritizing culture and creating environments where employees are engaged, feel valued and can grow. They also strive to balance employee needs with business priorities, baking flexibility and fun into the workplace.”

“Pioneers and trendsetters ... This year’s group of ‘Best Companies’ stand out from their competition,” adds Florida

Trend Publisher David Denor. “Innovative in their thinking, inspirational in their actions and visionaries in their industries – these companies recruit, retain and deliver unique workplace environments and employee benefits to keep their staff engaged, involved and continuing to collaborate.”

The Best Companies To Work For In Florida program is managed by Florida Trend and Workforce Research Group and is endorsed by the HR Florida State Council. Workforce Research Group managed the registration, survey and analysis, and determined the final rankings. For this year’s listing, visit FloridaTrend.com/BestCompanies.

For more about All Faiths Food Bank, visit allfaithsfoodbank.org.

About All Faiths Food Bank

All Faiths Food Bank is the only food bank and largest hunger relief organization in Sarasota and DeSoto counties, providing millions of meals each year in collaboration with more than 300 agencies and programs throughout the community. All Faiths works not only to end hunger today, but also strives to end hunger – forever – by helping families and individuals gain long-term food security, enjoy better health outcomes, and achieve self-sufficiency. All Faiths is rated four stars by Charity Navigator and is a partner of the Feeding America and Feeding Florida networks. For more information, visit allfaithsfoodbank.org.

GUARDIAN AD LITEM DONATES SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Guardian ad Litem thanks Marshal Jones and the Arcadia Police Department for the generous donation of school supplies for Desoto County children in the foster care court system. The backpacks, paper, pens, pencils, and crayons are greatly needed by families who struggle daily. Thank you again!



Realtor Showcase

Your Hometown Realtor



ONE CALL DOES IT ALL!

COLLINS MANAGEMENT & REALTY

Dan Collins, Broker

863.494.6181
223 E. Oak Street
Arcadia, FL 34266

Make Your Appointment Today!

Jean Vitali

Contact this agent:

863.990.5106
jean1711@gmail.com
www.jeanvitali.com



RMZ Realty Inc

Oralía Ramirez, BROKER
863.494.2702
oraliaramirez@gmail.com
3263 NE Hwy 17 Unit #3
Arcadia, FL 34266

"If You're Looking To Buy, Sell Or Invest In Real Estate, Give Us A Call"
Hablamos Español

www.rmzhomez.com



DOW Realty Inc.

Been a Realtor for 46 years in Arcadia

Mary E. Dow BROKER/OWNER
863.494.6062
marymarydow@gmail.com

11855 SE South Hog Bay Ave • Arcadia, FL



United Country Real Estate

GULFLAND REAL ESTATE

Mac Martin, ALC, GRI, BA BROKER/OWNER
863.990.2322
2019 Florida Land Realtor • landpanther@gmail.com

www.gulflandrealestate.com

CUSTOM HOMES STARTING AT \$269,000!



NOW TAKING ON CUSTOM HOMES!

IF YOU HAVE THE LAND OR ARE THINKING OF PURCHASING LAND...

LET US HELP YOU GET YOUR DREAM HOME BUILT!



JEWELCONTRACTINGINC.COM

CALL ROGER AT: **863-990-5921**

OR AJ AT: **863-633-8345**

THREE CHOICES FOR VOTING

VOTE BY MAIL

Voting by mail is easy! Call the Elections Office at **863.993.4871** or click the Vote-By-Mail button on our website (www.votedesoto.com) to request a Vote-By-Mail ballot. Vote-By-Mail ballots are **NOT** forwarded by the U.S. Postal Service. It is the voter's responsibility to provide an accurate mailing address. Ballots can be mailed worldwide.

VOTE EARLY

August 5th – 17th
Monday – Friday 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM
Weekends 7:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Any registered and eligible voter in the county may vote early. Early voting is held in DeSoto County Supervisor of Elections Office at 201 E. Oak Street, Ste 104, Arcadia FL.

VOTE ELECTION DAY

You must vote in your assigned precinct on Election Day. Please update your address by calling the Elections Office before visiting your polling location **863.993.4871**.

AUGUST 20th
Polls Open 7 AM – 7 PM

Has Your Signature Changed?

Signature Updates can be made any time! A voter's signature on file is used to verify Vote-By-Mail (Absentee) ballots and petitions for candidates or initiative issues. If you believe your signature has changed, please send us an updated voter registration application. Print, complete and mail us a completed voter registration application form to: **PO Box 89, Arcadia, FL 34265**. Find the form at www.votedesoto.com.

THE AUGUST 20TH ELECTION IS A CLOSED PRIMARY ELECTION

- Democrats vote on a Democratic ballot.
- Republicans vote on a Republican ballot.
- Any other registered voter may vote a non-partisan ballot.

Please remember that state law requires you to present a form of photo/signature identification, such as a Florida Driver License, when voting on Election Day.

AUGUST 20, 2024 20 DE AGOSTO DE 2024

- **Instructions:** To vote, fill in the oval (●) completely next to your choice. Use only the marker provided or a black or blue pen. If you make a mistake, ask for a new ballot. Do not cross out or your vote may not count.
- **Instrucciones:** Para votar, rellene por completo el óvalo (●) ubicado al lado de su selección. Utilice el dispositivo de marcado que se le haya entregado o un bolígrafo de tinta negra o azul. En caso de haber cometido un error, pida una papeleta nueva. No tachar: de lo contrario su papeleta podría no ser válida.

OFFICIAL PRIMARY ELECTION SAMPLE BALLOT REPUBLICAN PARTY – DESOTO COUNTY, FLORIDA			
PAPELETA OFICIAL DE ELECCIÓN PRIMARIA PARTIDO REPUBLICANO, CONDADO DE DESOTO, FLORIDA			
United States Senator (Vote for 1) Senador de estados unidos (Vote por uno)	State Representative District 76 (Vote for 1) Representante Estatal Distrito 76 (Vote por uno)	Supervisor of Elections Universal Primary Contest (Vote for 1) Supervisora de Elecciones Concurso Primario Universal (Vote por uno)	County Commissioner District 1 (Vote for 1) Comisionado del Condado Distrito 1 (Vote por uno)
<input type="radio"/> John S. Columbus REP	<input type="radio"/> Steven Ceracche REP	<input type="radio"/> Sheri Ross REP	<input type="radio"/> Michael Allbritton REP
<input type="radio"/> Keith Gross REP	<input type="radio"/> Vanessa Oliver REP	<input type="radio"/> Debbie Wertz REP	<input type="radio"/> Jerod Gross REP
<input type="radio"/> Rick Scott REP			

OFFICIAL PRIMARY ELECTION SAMPLE BALLOT DEMOCRATIC PARTY – DESOTO COUNTY, FLORIDA			
PAPELETA OFICIAL DE ELECCIÓN PRIMARIA PARTIDO DEMÓCRATA, CONDADO DE DESOTO, FLORIDA			
United States Senator (Vote for 1) Senador de estados unidos (Vote por uno)	State Representative District 76 (Vote for 1) Representante Estatal Distrito 76 (Vote por uno)	Supervisor of Elections Universal Primary Contest (Vote for 1) Supervisora de Elecciones Concurso Primario Universal (Vote por uno)	County Commissioner District 1 (Vote for 1) Comisionado del Condado Distrito 1 (Vote por uno)
<input type="radio"/> Stanley Campbell DEM	<input type="radio"/> Peter A. Braunston DEM	<input type="radio"/> Sheri Ross REP	<input type="radio"/> Michael Allbritton REP
<input type="radio"/> Rod Joseph DEM	<input type="radio"/> Andrea Doria Kale DEM	<input type="radio"/> Debbie Wertz REP	<input type="radio"/> Jerod Gross REP
<input type="radio"/> Debbie Mucarsel-Powell DEM			
<input type="radio"/> Brian Rush DEM			

OFFICIAL PRIMARY ELECTION SAMPLE BALLOT NONPARTISAN – DESOTO COUNTY, FLORIDA	
PAPELETA OFICIAL DE ELECCIÓN PRIMARIA NO PARTIDISTA, CONDADO DE DESOTO, FLORIDA	
Supervisor of Elections Universal Primary Contest (Vote for 1) Supervisora de Elecciones Concurso Primario Universal (Vote por uno)	County Commissioner District 1 (Vote for 1) Comisionado del Condado Distrito 1 (Vote por uno)
<input type="radio"/> Sheri Ross REP	<input type="radio"/> Michael Allbritton REP
<input type="radio"/> Debbie Wertz REP	<input type="radio"/> Jerod Gross REP

Mark Negley
DeSoto County Supervisor of Elections
201 E. Oak Street, Suite 104, Arcadia, FL 34266

DESOTO COUNTY

VOTING PRECINCTS

- PRECINCT 01 - South County Annex**
8789 SW CR 761 ▪ Arcadia, FL 34266
(Fire Station ▪ Corner of Hwy 761 & Kings Hwy.)

PRECINCT 02 - Owens Community Center/School
5586 Owens School St SW ▪ Arcadia, FL 34266
(Corner of Owens School Street & Thigpen Ave.)

PRECINCT 03 - Pine Level Church
9596 NW Pine Level St ▪ Arcadia, FL 34266
(Pine Level Church)

PRECINCT 05 - The House of God Church
200 S Alabama Ave ▪ Arcadia, FL 34266
(Fellowship Hall ▪ Corner of S. Alabama & Gordon St.)

PRECINCT 06 - The House of God Church
200 S Alabama Ave ▪ Arcadia, FL 34266
(Fellowship Hall ▪ Corner of S. Alabama & Gordon St.)

PRECINCT 07 - Family Service Center
310 W Whidden St ▪ Arcadia, FL 34266
(Annex ▪ Corner of N. Orange & Effie St.)

PRECINCT 08 - Oak Hill Baptist Church
5104 NW Oak Hill Ave ▪ Arcadia, FL 34266
(Fellowship Hall ▪ Turn off CR 661A onto Oak Hill Ave.)

PRECINCT 09 - Bethel Assembly of God Church
7538 NE Cubitis Ave ▪ Arcadia, FL 34266
(Old Hwy 17)
- PRECINCT 10 - Iglesia Cristana Patco De Fe Church**
1218 SE Hillsborough Ave ▪ Arcadia, FL 34266
(Corner of Hargrave St. at SE Hillsborough Ave.)

PRECINCT 11 - Trinity United Methodist Church
304 W Oak St ▪ Arcadia, FL 34266
(West on Oak St.)

PRECINCT 13 - First Baptist Church of Nocatee
4610 SW Hwy 17 ▪ Nocatee, FL 34268
(Hwy 17 North Side)

PRECINCT 14 - Ft. Ogden Community Church
6923 SW River St ▪ Ft. Ogden, FL 34266
(Right off of Hwy 17 South)

PRECINCT 15 - First Baptist Chur Christ. Life Ctr
1006 N HWY 17 ▪ Arcadia, FL 34266
(Hwy 17 North)

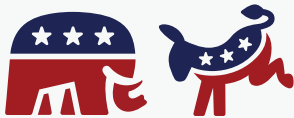
PRECINCT 16 - McSwain Building
16 S Volusia Ave ▪ Arcadia, FL 34266
(McSwain Park, across Oak St. from Courthouse)

PRECINCT 17 - First Baptist Chur Christ. Life Ctr
1006 N Brevard Ave ▪ Arcadia, FL 34266
(Hwy 17 North)

ELECTION DAY:
AUGUST 20TH

7:00AM - 7:00PM at your polling place!

Please remember that *state law requires you to present a form of photo/signature identification*, such as a Florida Driver License, *when voting on Election Day*.



DeSoto County Supervisor of Elections
MARK NEGLEY

201 E. Oak Street, Suite 104, Arcadia, FL, 34266
863-993-4871



OBITUARIES

ANDREW "RAY" SMITH



Andrew "Ray" Smith, age 83, went to his heavenly home on July 28, 2024 at Sarasota Memorial, surrounded by his family. He was

born on July 21st, 1941 in Estero, Fl to Hugh and Della Smith of Estero. He survived by his wife of 52 years, Roberta "Bobbie" Smith, daughter Marilyn Patton of Arcadia and sons Robert Smith of Arcadia and Jackie (Tanya) Smith of O'Brien, Fl; 11 grandchildren, 9 great grandchildren and 1 great grand fur baby, which he thought the world of and numerous nieces and nephews. Ray is preceded in death by his son-in-law John Patton of Arcadia, his sister Kay and husband John McCullers of Estero, his brother George Smith (Luan) of California and his parents Hugh and Della Smith of Estero. Ray was well known in the

community as the Postmaster of Nocatee, where he worked 35 years in the postal service. Most say when going into the post office you knew you were going to be a while because Mr. Ray loved to hold conversations and catch up on how the family was doing. He dedicated many years to the youth in DeSoto county by volunteering and supporting the youth agriculture programs and exhibitors. Ray appreciated the little things in life. You could find him every morning feeding the birds, squirrels and cranes from his lawn chair every morning. He loved tinkering in his shed, fishing, putting together jigsaw puzzles, playing trivia against

game shows and most importantly spending time with his family. Ray also loved taking his wife and great grand fur baby to Joshua Citrus to enjoy ice cream. Visitation was at 10:00am on Saturday, August 10, 2024 at Ponger-Kays-Grady Funeral Home (Arcadia) with funeral service following at 11:00. The interment followed at Joshua Creek Cemetery. Online condolences can be made at www.pongerkaysgrady.com Ponger-Kays-Grady Funeral Homes & Cremation Services have been entrusted with the arrangements.

Our Father,
who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy Name.
Thy Kingdom come.
Thy will be done in earth,
As it is in heaven.

Give us this day,
our daily bread.
And forgive us
our trespasses,
As we forgive them that
trespass against us.

And lead us not
into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
The power, and the glory,
For ever and ever. Amen.

While I Breathe I Hope

With every generation,
we get better at protecting
our environment.

Reclamation ecologists like Ashlee work to return mined lands to productive use as wildlife habitats, public parks and more—so future generations can enjoy these lands for years to come.



DESOTO COUNTY
SHERIFF'S OFFICE



ARREST REPORT | 8/2/24 - 8/6/24

Anaico, Omar Lopes:

Retail Theft (Value \$100 To \$300) 1St Ofns - Pursuant To 812.015

Bailey, William Boyd:

Aggrav Battery - Cause Bodily Harm Or Disability, Nonmoving Traffic Viol - Drive While Lic Susp 1St Off

Blanton, Ty Bradley:

Traffic Offense - Dui Alcohol Or Drugs

Brady, Ny'Trevious Levon:

Damage Prop-Crim Misch - 1000 Dols Or More, Disord Conduct - Affray

Brown, Jason Adam:

Nonmoving Traffic Viol - Operate Motor Vehicle Wo Valid License, Prob Violation

Davis, Joseph Jamar:

Fraud-Swindle - Obtain Property Under 20K Dols

Game, Austin Levi:

Prob Violation (X2)

Gonzalez-Castaneda, Yon Jairo:

Homicide - Murder Dangerous Depraved Wo Premeditation

Guerrero, Salvatore:

Nonmoving Traffic Viol - Drive While Lic Susp 1St Off

Hepburn, Jeremy Rashad:

Fraud-Imperson - Use Id Another Wo Consent 5K Dols More, Fraud-Swindle - Obtain Property Under 20K Dols, Fraud-Illeg Use Credit Cards - Use More 2 Time 6 Ms Obt Gds Mney 100 Dol More

Layport, Daniel Shane:

Eh Theft - Grand Theft Of Motor Vehicle

Martinez, Joseph Thomas:

Drugs-Possess - Cntrl Sub Wo Prescription, Drug Equip-Possess - And Or Use

Mata, Juan Carlos:

Fail To Reg As Crim Reg - Convicted Felon Fail To Register, Marijuana-Possess - Not More Than 20 Grams, Drug Equip-Possess - And Or Use

Parsons III, Vernon Ballard:

Resist Officer - Obstruct Wo Violence

Pinero, Dennes:

Veh Theft - Grand Theft Of Motor Vehicle (X2), Stolen Prop-Deal In, Fraud-Imperson - False Id Given To Leo

Ramirez, Leonard Andrew:

Veh Theft - Grand Theft Of Motor Vehicle, Resist Officer - Obstruct Wo Violence

Resendiz, Pierson:

Prob Violation

Roblero, Fredy Morales:

Battery - Touch Or Strike

Rodriguez, Gualberto:

Public Order Crimes - Racketeering Violation (X2), Larc - Grand Theft 5K Less Than 10K Dols (X2), Burgl - Occupied Conveyance Unarmed (X5), Larc - 20K Dols Less Than 100K Dols (X2)

Ruiz Jr., Alfredo:

Veh Theft - Grand Theft Of Motor Vehicle, Damage Prop-Crim Misch - 1000 Dols Or More

Rupert, Jesse James:

Failure To Appear - Written Promise To Appear

Ussery, Jessie Randolph:

Nonmoving Traffic Viol - Drive While Lic Susp 1St Off

Vasquez, Guadalupe Perez:

Trespassing - Fail To Leave Property Upon Order By Owner

Zamora, Silvestre Cano:

Nonmoving Traffic Viol - Drive While Lic Susp 3Rd Or Subsq Off

Information on this report is provided for informational purposes only from the public Inmate Records of the DeSoto County Sheriff's Office. While every effort is made to ensure that the posted information is accurate, it may contain factual or other errors. Arrest information may not reflect the current information. An arrest does not mean that the individual has been convicted of a crime. The information on this report should not be relied upon for any type of legal action. Unauthorized or illegal use of the information is strictly prohibited.

NEWS FROM THE DESK OF SHERIFF POTTER

SCHOOL'S IN SESSION:
KEEPING OUR ROADS SAFE



SHERIFF POTTER
DeSoto County Sheriff

BACK-TO-SCHOOL SAFETY REMINDER

As the first week of school begins, excitement is in the air as students return to classrooms, reconnect with friends, and embark on new academic adventures. But with this comes a shared responsibility for all of us on the road. The start of the school year brings more traffic, young pedestrians, and a need for heightened awareness from every driver.

LEAVE EARLY AND PLAN AHEAD

Mornings during the first few weeks of school can be particularly busy, with everyone settling into new routines. To avoid the stress of rushing, plan your commute ahead of time and leave a little earlier than usual. By giving yourself extra time, you reduce the need to speed or make decisions that could jeopardize your safety or the safety of others, especially our students.

SCHOOL ZONES:
BE VIGILANT AND SLOW DOWN

School zones are now active, and it's crucial to slow down and stay alert as you approach them. Children may be crossing the street or walking along sidewalks, often with little notice. Speeding in these areas is not only illegal but endangers the lives of students. Our deputies will be out in force this week, ensuring everyone is following the speed limits to keep our children safe.

RESPECT AND SUPPORT OUR SCHOOL
CROSSING GUARDS

Our school crossing guards are on duty, ensuring students cross streets safely during these busy mornings and afternoons. They play a critical role in traffic safety, and your cooperation is essential. We ask you please follow their signals and instructions without hesitation. Our crossing guards are there to protect our children.

EXERCISE CAUTION AROUND SCHOOL
BUSES

With school back in session, school buses will be a regular sight on our roads. Remember, when a school bus stops and extends its stop sign, all traffic—regardless of direction—must come to a complete stop. This allows children to board and exit the bus safely. During this first week, when routines are still new, your patience and caution are especially important.

PATIENCE IS KEY

The first week of school often brings unexpected delays and changes in traffic patterns. It's important to remain patient and stay focused on the road. A few extra minutes of caution can make a significant difference in ensuring the safety of our students.

As your Sheriff, I urge everyone in our community to join me in prioritizing safety during this first week of school.



By following these guidelines, we can ensure a safe, smooth start to the school year for our students and their families.

Thank you for your commitment to safety, and let's make this school year a great one!

BE KIND, BE SAFE, GOD BLESS.
Sheriff James Potter

SHIPPING CONTAINERS

Expand Your Storage Options!



COME CHECK OUT
OUR NEW INVENTORY!

Scan for a free
quote!





1173 SW Hwy 17 Arcadia, FL 34266
(863) 303-4439 • ShedPro.Pro • ShedProLLC@gmail.com

For All Your Water Needs



Water Treatment Sales & Service

- Pumps • Tanks • Aerators • Salt Delivery


863-494-6548

*Serving Desoto and
Surrounding Counties*

Newberry A Trusted Name in the Water Industry for Over 50 Years.
Owned & Operated by a SWFWMD. Licensed Water Well Contractor. License #2881

VOTE

August 20th



Re-Elect Jerod

GROSS

for County Commissioner

District 1

DeSoto County Commissioner Candidate (Rep), District 1
“Strong leadership means a secure future.”

Conservative ★ Trustworthy ★ Dependable

Reasonable Dedicated Sincere

Paid for and approved by Jerod Gross for DeSoto County Commissioner, District 1 (Rep)

STORAGE UNITS

★ AVAILABLE ★

RATES STARTING AT
\$95.00 PER MONTH

FIRST MONTH FREE!

RV/BOAT/OUTSIDE STORAGE
AND PRODUCT ADVERTISING

PLEASE CONTACT US FOR DETAILS

The lovely
COWPENS, LLC
Amy Smith, Mgr. - 863-303-1406

2242 SE HWY 70, ARCADIA, FL 34266 - BEHIND K & J'S
HOMEGROWN PRODUCE

Quality Storage Sheds for you!



As low as \$299 down!

FEATURED options:

- NEW! electrical packages
- Shelving
- Work benches
- Ramps



DESIGN your shed,
your way at
Shed4me.com

SouthCountrySheds.com
Email: Sales@SouthCountrySheds.com
1460 SW Price Child St. Arcadia, FL 34266
Call 863-491-8700 Today!

RECLAIM YOUR GARAGE! BUY A SHED!

The stuff goes in the shed
& the car in the garage!

Shed After!



Garage Before



Garage After Shed, Wow!



SFSC CONSTRUCTION TRADES STUDENTS DONATE GARDEN BENCH TO RIDGE AREA ARC



AVON PARK, Fla. – Aug. 2, 2024 -- Julia Mercer (seated, left), director of programs and services, and Donna Smolarick (seated, center), director of development, accepted a garden bench on behalf of their organization, Ridge Area Arc, from the students who attended South Florida State College’s (SFSC) Construction Trades Summer Camp. Bagwell Lumber of Avon Park donated the materials toward the project. Building the garden bench gave the students an opportunity to learn power tool, tape measure reading, plans reading, and teamwork skills. At the same time, they benefited a local non-profit organization. The free Construction Trades Summer Camp attracted 30 students, ages 14-17. They participated in classroom and shop training and earned a Construction Site Safety Certificate from the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER). In addition, the students were



taught leadership, resume writing, and job interview skills. The College intends to offer the Construction Trades Summer Camp again in 2025. For information

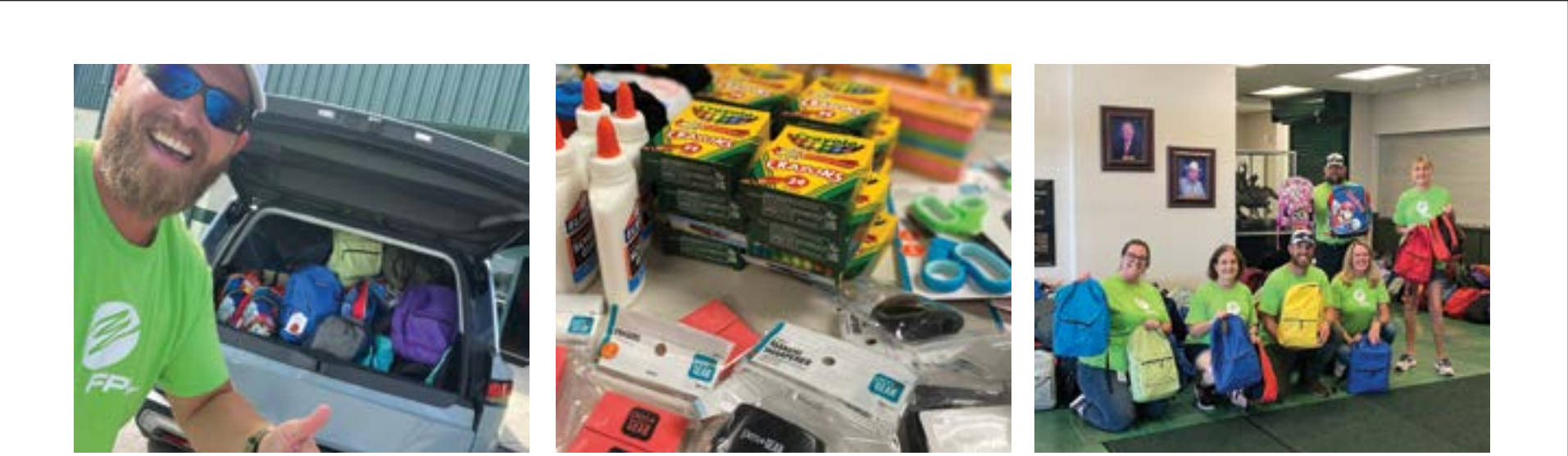
about any of the Construction Trades programs at SFSC and funding opportunities for job training, see the Construction and Utility Trades Class

Catalog on the SFSC website at: <https://bit.ly/3DzYoqv>, call 863-201-7195, or email fred.hayes@southflorida.edu.

HELP SUPPORT THE ARCADIA COMMUNITY LOCAL!

For advertising, contact Angie Duckett: sales@peacerivershopper.com or call 863-990-9813

To participate as a Community Contributor, email: editorial@peacerivershopper.com



Best of luck this school year!

The secret to getting ahead is getting started. At Florida Power & Light Company, we’re happy to support the Back-to-School Fair created by the School District of DeSoto County and the Florida Department of Health. It’s an honor to help **empower** DeSoto County students with the tools they need for a successful school year!



AUGUST 2024 USDA FOOD DISTRIBUTION SCHEDULE



SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Additional food assistance sites can be found at <https://www.allfaithsfoodbank.org/foodfinder/>

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services contracts with All Faiths Food Bank to distribute free U.S. Department of Agriculture commodities.

Eligible residents will receive nine to 12 free commodities.

Distribution will be at these sites; *schedules are subject to change:*

NORTH SARASOTA COUNTY:

BETHLEHEM BAPTIST CHURCH:

Thursdays (excluding holidays), 3-4:30 p.m.
1680 18th St., Sarasota, FL 34234
941-955-8834

BOOKER MIDDLE SCHOOL:

August 5 & 19, 5-6:30 p.m.
2250 Myrtle St., Sarasota, FL 34234
941-379-6333

BRENTWOOD ELEMENTARY:

August 12, 5-6:30 p.m.
2500 Vinson Ave., Sarasota, FL 34232
941-379-6333

CHURCH OF THE PALMS:

Monday-Friday (excluding holidays),
10 a.m. - 1 p.m. August 9 & 23, 5-7 p.m.
3224 Bee Ridge Rd., Sarasota, FL 34239
941-924-1323

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH:

August 26, 5-6:30 p.m.
601 Honore Ave., Sarasota, FL 34237
941-379-6333

FRUITVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:

August 21, 5-6:30 p.m.
601 Honore Ave., Sarasota, FL 34232
941-379-6333

GLASSER SCHOENBAUM CENTER:

August 2 & 16, 9-11 a.m.
1750 17th St., Sarasota, FL 34234
941-379-6333

GRACELIFE FOOD PANTRY:

Mondays (excluding holidays), 12-1:30 p.m.
1801 N Lockwood Ridge Rd., Sarasota, FL 34234
941-539-9249

GULF GATE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:

August 20, 5-6:30 p.m.
6500 S Lockwood Ridge Rd., Sarasota, FL 34231
941-379-6333

NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH:

August 22, 4:30-6:30 p.m.
3131 61st St., Sarasota, FL 34243
941-355-4729

RIVERVIEW HIGH SCHOOL:

August 6, 5-6:30 p.m.
1 Ram Way, Sarasota, FL 34231
941-379-6333

SALVATION ARMY TUTTLE:

Food pantry: Mondays/Thursdays (excluding
holidays) 12-2 p.m. Served meal: Tuesdays
(excluding holidays) 12-2 p.m.
1701 S Tuttle Ave., Sarasota, FL 34239
941-364-8846

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH:

Saturdays (excluding holidays), 9-10:30 a.m.
2256 Bahia Vista St., Sarasota, FL 34239
941-955-6479

ST. WILFRED EPISCOPAL CHURCH:

Fridays (excluding holidays), 1-3 p.m.
3773 Wilkinson Rd., Sarasota, FL 34233
941-924-7436

THE HARVEST FOOD PANTRY:

Thursdays (excluding holidays), 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.
3650 17th St., Sarasota, FL 34235
941-953-3559

VAN WEZEL:

August 24, 9-10:30 a.m.
777 N. Tamiami Trl., Sarasota, FL 34236
941-379-6333

SOUTH SARASOTA COUNTY:

7TH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH:

August 13 & 27, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
4330 S Biscayne Dr., North Port, FL 34287
941-586-1436

ATWATER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:

August 22, 5-6:30 p.m.
4701 Huntsville Ave., North Port, FL 34288
941-379-6333

AWAKEN CHURCH:

Tuesdays/Thursdays/Saturdays, 9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.;
Wednesdays, 3-8:30 p.m.; Fridays, 8:30-11:30 a.m.
4940 Pan American Blvd., North Port, FL 34287
941-200-2739

COLONIAL BAPTIST CHURCH:

August 1, 5-6:30 p.m.
2400 Taylor Ranch Trl., Venice, FL 34293
941-379-6333

ENGLEWOOD ELKS LODGE:

August 5, 10-11a.m.
401 N Indiana Ave., Englewood, FL 34223
941-379-6333

ENGLEWOOD HELPING HAND:

Wednesdays & Thursdays (excluding holidays)
8 a.m. - 1 p.m; August 7 & 21, 4:30-6:30 p.m.
700 E Dearborn St., Englewood, FL 34223
941-474-5864

FLY AWAY UNTO THE LORD INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES:

August 10 & 24, 2-3 p.m.
12450 Tamiami Trl. Unit F, North Port, FL 34287
941-237-9286

GLENALLEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:

August 15, 5-6:30 p.m.
7050 Glenallen Blvd., North Port, FL 34287
941-379-6333

GOOD SHEPHERD EPISCOPAL CHURCH:

August 7 & 21, 9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
1115 Center Rd., Venice, FL 34292
941-497-7286

LAMARQUE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:

August 14, 5:30-7 p.m.
3415 Lamarque Ave., North Port, FL 34286
941-379-6333

LAUREL CIVIC ASSOCIATION:

August 1 & 15, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. & 4-6 p.m.
509 Collins Rd., Nokomis, FL 34275
941-483-3338

NOKOMIS PARK COMMUNITY CENTER:

August 14 & 28, 9-10:30 a.m.
234 Nippino Trl., Nokomis, FL 34275
941-379-6333

NORTH PORT CITY HALL:

August 3, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
4790 City Hall Blvd., North Port, FL 34286
941-379-6333

SALVATION ARMY VENICE:

Mondays/Tuesdays/Thursdays/Fridays
(excluding holidays)
10 a.m. - 12 p.m. & 1-3 p.m.
1051 Albee Farm Rd., Venice, FL 34285
941-484-6227

ST. NATHANIEL EPISCOPAL CHURCH:

August 1 & 15, 10-11:30 a.m.
4200 S Biscayne Dr., North Port, FL 34287
941-426-2520

THE CENTER OF HOPE:

Tues and Thurs (excluding holidays), 8-11 a.m.
2395 Shamrock Dr., Venice, FL 34293
941-412-9044

TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH:

Tues & Thurs (excluding holidays), 9-10:30 a.m.
4365 State Rd. 776, Venice, FL 34293
941-492-6384

TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH:

Mondays (excluding holidays) 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.
4285 Wesley Ln., North Port, FL 34287
941-426-1734

TRINITY UMC CHURCH:

August 7, 4:30-6 p.m.
4285 Wesley Ln., North Port, FL, 34287
941-379-6333

VENICE MIDDLE SCHOOL:

August 8, 5-6:30 p.m.
1900 Center Rd. Venice, FL 34292
941-379-6333

DESOTO COUNTY:

7TH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH:

August 15, 10-11:30 a.m.
2865 SE Ami Dr., Arcadia, FL 34266
941-379-6333

CATHOLIC CHARITIES FOOD PANTRY:

Mondays - please call first; walk in only.
August 2 & 16, 9-11 a.m. - last name (A-M),
August 9 & 23, 9-11a.m. - last name (N-Z)
1210 E Oak St., Arcadia, FL 34266
863-884-2134

DESOTO FOOD AND RESOURCE CENTER:

Mondays & Wednesdays (excluding holidays),
10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Thursdays, 2-6 p.m.
1021 E Oak St., Arcadia, FL 34266
941-379-6333

SOUTH FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE:

August 13 & 27, 4:30-6 p.m.
2251 NE Turner Ave., Arcadia, FL 34266
941-379-6333

Join the Mission to Keep Florida Communities Safe



We provide evidence based
Forensic Treatment.

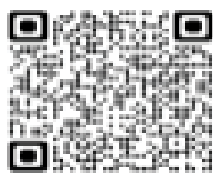
**Walk-in interviews
every Wednesday 9am-noon**

Wellpath Recovery Solutions/Florida Civil Commitment Center
13619 Hwy 70 Arcadia, Florida 34266 (10.5 miles east of Walmart)
(863) 491-4800 To apply please visit [Wellpathcare.com/careers/](https://www.wellpathcare.com/careers/)

We have jobs and careers in security (\$21), nursing (\$23-38), direct care (\$15-16), mental health therapist, maintenance, food service and more...

We find the best fit for applicants based on their work history, attitude, education and interests. New employees receive intensive training and OTJ support.

YOU have choices! We offer DailyPay, regular paychecks, various health care plans (health, dental, vision), 401K, sponsorship for the Correctional Academy, full time and PRN, some sign bonuses are up to \$2000, air conditioned work environment, tuition reimbursement and more...



Florida Civil Commitment Center
13619 SE Hwy 70, Arcadia FL 34266 (863)491-4800

PUNTA GORDA GUN SHOW

CHARLOTTE HARBOR EVENT CENTER

75 TAYLOR ST. • PUNTA GORDA, FL 33950

AUGUST SHOW CANCELED!

~~AUGUST 17TH & 18TH~~

SATURDAY 9AM-5PM & SUNDAY 9AM-3PM

RESCHEDULED FOR NOV. 23RD & 24TH

UPCOMING

BROOKSVILLE

AUG. 31ST & SEP. 1ST

HERNANDO COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

6436 BROAD STREE. (US HWY 41) • BROOKSVILLE, FL

SAT 9AM-5PM & SUN 9AM-3PM

PORT CHARLOTTE

SEP. 7TH & 8TH

CHARLOTTE COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

2333 EL JOBEAN RD. • PORT CHARLOTTE, FL

SAT 9AM-5PM & SUN 9AM-3PM

WE ARE THE BEST COMBINATION OF FFL DEALERS AND PRIVATE COLLECTORS AROUND!

All Federal, State , and local laws must be obeyed.
Guns, knives, accessories, ammo, parts, and so much more. Come ready to buy, sell, or trade. We have new, used, and antique items.
And as always, **FREE PARKING!**

CHILDREN (16 and Under)
2-Day Admission

Free

ACTIVE Miliarty or LEO
2-Day Admission

Free

Veteran OR Retired LEO
2-Day Admission

\$1⁰⁰ off

ADULT (17 and Over)
2-Day Admission

\$10⁰⁰

WE HAVE TONS OF GUNS AND AMMO AVAILABLE!

Tickets sold at the door, Cash or Check Only, limit 1 discount per person

Saturday AND Sunday

Come and go as you please on both days!



**2 GUYS
GUN SHOW**



727-776-3442 • 2GuysShows.com