

AFTER 24 YEARS:

WE REMEMBER 9/11



The Arcadia Police Dept. paused for a moment after the remembrance, from left, Capt. Kevin Joens, Assistant Marshal Gary Evans, Officer Angie Allred, Marshal Quinn Jones, Sgt. Danielle Rios, Sgt. Zachary Birge, Lt. Tory Carrillo, and Patrolman Yves Chery.

CAROL MAHLER
Independent Contractor
carolmahler22acl@gmail.com
Photos provided

On the east lawn of the courthouse, firefighters, law enforcement officers and paramedics gathered with their families, friends, and others in the community to recall the Sept. 11, 2001, tragedy—what some call “the deadliest terrorist act in human history.” They also honored the 340 firefighters and 72 law enforcement officers who died that day.

Public Safety Director Chad Jorgensen organized and emceed the event, and he opened the ceremony calling for a moment of silence.

Serving as the American Legion K-Post 11 Color Guard, Mike Dempsey, Amber Jones, and Ron Jones, Sr., posted the U.S. flag. Pastor Dave Stewart of Grace Presbyterian Church in Lake Suzy gave the invocation and led the recitation of the “Pledge of Allegiance.”

School Board Member and Pastor Dr. Sharon Goodman sang the National Anthem.

After calling for Sheriff Jim Potter and Marshal Quinn Jones to stand beside him, Jorgensen recounted the tragic timeline: at 8:45 a.m., American Airlines (AA) Flight 11 crashed into the North Tower of the World Trade Center complex and at 9:03, AA Flight 175 slammed the South Tower. Firefighters fought the flames and rescued people. Some who had worked in the North Tower before it fell, then entered the South Tower knowing that it would probably also topple.

At 9:37, AA Flight 77 hit the Pentagon, causing a partial collapse of the structure. At 10:03, passengers on United Airlines Flight 93, who had learned of the other attacks, forced the pilots to crash the plane into a pasture. Jorgensen said, “They were true heroes.” In all, 2,977 people died in the attacks.

Lt. Chris Cane read the “Firefighter’s Prayer” (aka the “Fireman’s Prayer”) written by Alvin William

SEE REMEMBER PAGE 8 >>

HELP SUPPORT ARCADIA’S NEWEST PUBLICATION!

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US IN MAKING OUR COMMUNITY BETTER, TOGETHER!

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

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

DESOTO COUNTY
SPORTS
PAGE 4
STEVE KNAPP
sports@peaceivershopper.com

Publix.

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	
SEP 23	DESOTO COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING
TUE 3P	Administration Building 201 E. Oak Street, Suite 103 Arcadia, FL 34266
SEP 25	DESOTO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
THUR 8:30A	Administration Building 201 E. Oak Street, Suite 103 Arcadia, FL 34266
OCT 7	DESOTO COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
TUE 5:30P	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 13

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

SUNCOAST CREDIT UNION FOUNDATION PROVIDES \$25,000 TO THE DESOTO COUNTY EDUCATION FOUNDATION



(Arcadia, FL) – The DeSoto County Education Foundation is proud to announce a charitable gift of \$25,000 from the Suncoast Credit Union Foundation. These funds will directly support programs that impact both students and educators across DeSoto County, including educator mini grants, teacher retention initiatives, and expanded opportunities for student success. In the 2025–2026 academic year, the Foundation anticipates serving all five public schools and reaching over 2,000 students and 250 educators with programs supported by this funding.

"This investment from Suncoast Credit Union Foundation helps us empower teachers and inspire students at every level," said Jodie DeLoach, Executive Director of the DeSoto County Education Foundation. "With Suncoast's continued

support, we can fund innovative classroom projects, support teacher morale and retention, and ultimately expand educational opportunities that shape brighter futures for DeSoto County."

Suncoast Credit Union, Florida's largest credit union, founded the Suncoast Credit Union Foundation to promote the education, health, and emotional well-being of children in the community. Each time a Suncoast member uses their debit or credit card, the credit union donates two cents to the Foundation to fund local initiatives. Since its inception in 1990, the Foundation has raised and donated over \$45 million.

"Supporting teachers and students is core to our mission and it benefits the entire community when education is valued and supported," said Jeff Kunberger, Executive Director of Suncoast Credit Unions. "When teachers have the resources they need, students have the opportunity to thrive, creating vibrancy and economic prosperity," he added.

ABOUT THE DESOTO COUNTY EDUCATION FOUNDATION

The DeSoto County Education Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting and enhancing public education in DeSoto County, Florida. Through scholarships, educator mini grants, teacher recognition initiatives, and community partnerships, the Foundation works to empower educators, inspire students, and build a stronger future for the community. Each year, the Foundation helps provide thou-sands of dollars in scholarships, classroom funding, and recognition programs that di-rectly benefit DeSoto County students and teachers. For more information, visit desotoeducationfoundation.com or follow us on social media: Facebook and Insta-gram.

ABOUT SUNCOAST CREDIT UNION

Suncoast Credit Union is the largest credit union in the state of Florida, the 8th largest in the United States based on membership, and the 10th largest in the

United States based on its \$19 billion in assets. Chartered in 1934 as Hillsborough County Teachers Credit Union, Suncoast Credit Union currently operates 78 full-service branches and serves more than 1.3 million members across Florida. As a community credit union, anyone who lives, works, attends school, or worships in Suncoast Credit Union's service area is eligible for membership. In 2021, Suncoast Credit Union's field of membership was expanded to include public K-12 teachers, college educators, and educational support staff from all of Florida's 67 counties. Suncoast is passionate about community support. Since its founding in 1990, the Suncoast Credit Union Foundation has raised and donated more than \$55 million to organizations and initia-tives that support the health, education, and emotional well-being of children in the communities that the credit union serves. For more information, visit suncoast.com or follow us on social media: Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Instagram.

2025-2026 Annual Funding Request DCEF

PROGRAM NAME	IMPACT	2024-2025	Proposed 2025-2026
Innovation in the Classroom Grants – These strategic mini-grants support teachers and schools in delivering core curriculum through creative, student-centered approaches. Designed to enhance student involvement and align with district priorities, grants are awarded across categories such as literacy, agriculture, STEM, and more—empowering educators to bring innovation directly into the classroom.	Last year, projects funded reached nearly 1900 students and empowered educators to tailor learning to student interests and needs.	\$9000	\$20,000
Teacher Growth – “Teacher to Be” Program – This initiative supports aspiring educators already serving in our schools as paraprofessionals by providing guidance and resources to help them earn their degree. We are aligning this pathway with the district’s DeSoto University program, which includes a commitment to teach in the district for at least two years. This collaborative approach strengthens our local teacher pipeline by developing dedicated, homegrown educators and addressing ongoing staffing challenges.	Our goal is to have 3 educators enroll in our Teacher to Be Program – with 1 at minimum finishing their AA.	\$1,000	\$5,000
Teacher Appreciation and Recognition – In addition to our annual Teacher of the Year program, which honors outstanding educators through peer nominations and a district-level portfolio review, we’ve launched RISE DeSoto (Retain, Inspire, Support, Encourage) to recognize and support teachers <i>all</i> throughout the year. This initiative includes quarterly professional development, a monthly “Teacher of the Month” award, and ongoing recognition efforts that extend well beyond Teacher Appreciation Week—creating a culture where educators feel valued, motivated, and empowered year-round.	600+ district staff members	\$7,032	\$15,000
Education Foundation Support – To better serve students and educators, we are seeking funding to add a Program Manager. This role will help coordinate initiatives, manage programs, and build stronger community partnerships to support our mission in DeSoto County.	This added capacity will allow us to grow programs, increase efficiency, and deepen our impact across the district.	\$1,892.40	\$5,000
Student Enrichment Projects – DCEF has previously provided student enrichment experiences such as PBIS rewards, STEM family nights, and field trips to locations like the theater, Books-A-Million, the wind tunnel, etc. These opportunities were originally supported through post-hurricane resiliency funding, which is no longer available—though the need remains high. In our rural community, opportunities are limited and play a vital role in student engagement, behavior, and academic growth.	Last year we were able to fund 5 trips that impacted nearly 1,000 students.	\$5,000	\$12,000
Total		\$23,924	\$57,000

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

COUNTY WINS MARKETING AWARD, PURSUES LITIGATION



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

At the Aug. 9 meeting, the Board of County Commissioners congratulated Economic Development and Tourism Director Sondra Guffey and Economic Development and

Tourism Specialist Dan Sutphin for winning first place for the “Florida Wild” campaign in the Rural County Marketing category of the Flagler Awards at the Florida Governor’s Conference on Tourism. Guffey and Sutphin developed the campaign with the Destination by Design marketing firm.

County Administrator Mandy Hines said that Guffey and Sutphin “have such passion for what they do, and they do it with such great energy, and we really appreciate having them as a part of the team and congratulations for representing the County so well.” Later in her comments, Commissioner Judy Schaefer commended both Guffey and Sutphin for their award in the annual statewide awards program named for Henry Flagler, regarded as the “Father of Florida Tourism” by Visit Florida, the state’s official tourism marketing organization.

In addition, the Board directed County Attorney Valerie Vicente to pursue litigation for an injunction against Giuseppe’s Brooklyn Oven Restaurant, 2135 SW Highway 17, for continuing to operate without a certificate of occupancy (C.O.) and certificate of use (C.U.). Not only had the County sent a “cease and desist” letter to the owner, but Code Enforcement Director George Hernandez also has posted “cease and desist” notices at the restaurant because the owner “did not go through with the agreement that they made with the Board,” he said.

Vicente confirmed that the restaurant had received a temporary certificate of occupancy (TCO) “solely for stocking,” but not for operations. The restaurant owner has submitted a revised improvement plan for the Planning Dept. to review and approve before any work can be done. She said, “Based on an argument that was raised about getting inadequate notice, the Special Magistrate continued the [code enforcement] case to Sept. 23.”

Vice-Chairperson Steve Hickox said, “As a small business owner myself, I’m all for them trying to open their doors . . . but we’ve already had one individual hurt very bad.”

Commission Jerod Gross said, “We have a right to protect and uphold the citizens here as far as health and well-being and make sure that things are in compliance that they can enjoy and use. . . . the law states what it is . . . cease and desist means stop.”

Commissioner Elton Langford said, “He needs to shut the doors and quit



Economic Development and Tourism Director Sondra Guffey and Economic Development and Tourism Specialist Dan Sutphin showed the Board the first prize award that they received for their “Florida Wild” marketing campaign in the Flagler Awards at the Florida Governor’s Conference on Tourism.



Developed with “Destination by Design” marketing firm, the new “Visit DeSoto” logo is part of the County’s “Florida Wild” campaign that focuses on DeSoto County and Arcadia.



Joseph Minore reported on his continued progress to have the Land Development Regulations changed to allow primitive camping with a fee.

opening and stop selling stuff to the public until he gets everything he supposed to get done done. Then he can open and run his business legitimately like he should be.”

ACTION ITEMS

The Board approved the contract for \$940,000.00 for the replacement of the force main located on State Road (SR) 31 within the County limits, with Accurate Drilling Systems, Inc., of LaBelle, as “the lowest, responsive, responsible bidder for the base bid as well as all alternate bid options” in response to Invitation to Bid (ITB) No. 25-17-00. The new line is vital because of the master lift station recently installed on Senate St.. The old pipe will be removed as required by the Florida Dept. of Transportation (FDOT).

As ratified by the Board, Change Order #2 for the fiscal year (FY) 2025-2025 Annual Road Paving added a half million dollars to the original million-dollar contract with Excavation Point, Inc. (EPI), to pave 5,400 feet of West Farms Rd. from County Rd. (CR) 763 to Far Point Dr., and to pave the first and last 5,200-feet of NW Wuthrich Ave., because the middle 4,350-foot section is in good condition. The rollover of \$114,505.00 from FY 2023-2024 increased the paving budget to \$1,614,505.00, so after change order #1 (paving the CR 769 and State Road (SR)

72 intersection) and change order #2, more than \$20,000.00 will remain in the paving budget for contingencies.

At the request of Tax Collector Susan Pooley and as authorized by Sect. 197.212, Florida Statutes (F.S.), the Board adopted a resolution excluding tax notices which are \$5.00 or less and “instructing the property appraiser not to extend the tax roll for any parcel for which the tax amount” is \$5.00 or less. Also at Pooley’s request and as authorized by Sect. 197.323(1) F.S., the Board also passed the resolution extending the tax roll until completion of the Value Adjustment Board hearings.

Hickox abstained from the vote to approve the accounts and warrants drawn according to the schedule of bills payable August 12-25, 2025.

CONSENT AGENDA

The Board approved the 2025/2026 Annual Certified Budget for Mosquito Control, with \$68,587.50 from the Florida Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) and the required 25% match of \$17,396.88 from the County. As required by FDACS, they also ratified, the 2025/2026 Detailed Work Plan Budget for mosquito control.

Amendment #2 to the Agreement with Truist Bank for banking services was approved by the Board. This is the second and final one-year renewal of the original Oct. 1, 2021, agreement for “a

three-year term with the option to renew for two additional one-year periods upon mutual consent with no changes in terms or pricing.”

The Board declared the following items surplus and approved their disposal: no longer needed by dept: Microsoft Surface Pro #1, four Dell Optiplex 790, two Dell Optiplex 7010 desktop, Dell Optiplex 9020, and four Dell Optiplex 3050 computers, plus Aeromed Air Purifiers 20F2 and 10F2; damaged or worn out: 2018 Net Optics Tap Splitter, 2018 Dell Power Edge R630 Server E265, dual ramp wheelchair scale, and three Welch-Allyn Diagnostic Wall Units 767; to send to Internet auction: 2021 Chessman 8-passenger trolley and Sanyo 42” LCD HD TV; and lost or stolen: 2022 HP All In One.

The Board approved the letter of engagement for \$165,500.00 with Purvis Gray & Co., LLP, for financial audit services for fiscal year 2024-2025 including “audit services and financial statements for the Board of County Commissioners, Clerk of Court, Tax Collector, County Sheriff, Property Appraiser, and Supervisor of Elections as well as preparation of the Schedule of Transactions - Landfill Escrow Account Report, the Statement of County-Funded Court-Related Functions Report, and the Annual Financial Report for the State of Florida Department of Banking and Finance.”



THANK YOU TO OUR
BULLDOG YOUTH SPONSOR!

- DESOTO COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD (PRS)
- MOSAIC • FPL



STRONG SECOND HALF NOT ENOUGH IN 19-0 LOSS



STEVE KNAPP
Sports Writer
sports@peacerivershopper.com

The DeSoto JV football team was able to move the ball offensively and their defense kept the Hardee Wildcats out of the end zone in the second half, but a first half filled with DeSoto turnovers and big plays by the Wildcats was too much for the young Bulldogs to overcome.

Hardee scored in the first quarter on a 45 yard pick six to give them a 6-0 lead after the PAT was wide left. The entire first quarter was played between the 30's as neither team could move the ball very much.

In the second quarter DeSoto turned the ball over on downs at their own 35 and Hardee followed with a 33 yard touchdown pass with 6:36 remaining in the quarter. Another failed kick wide left boosted the score to 12-0.

The final score of the half and game came when the Bulldogs failed to make a first down at the Wildcats 45. The first play resulted in a 55 yard touchdown pass at 3:13 before half. The kick was good to give the Wildcats a 19-0 lead.

With the Wildcats moving the ball downfield to the Bulldog 29 late in the half, a pass was intercepted by Jacob Tanner at the 12 to put an end to the scoring threat.

The second half looked much better for the Bulldogs as Yshmel Nurse returned the kickoff to the Hardee 35. DeSoto worked it inside the red zone but the second Hardee pick ended the drive for the Bulldogs.

Luc Morgan stopped a Wildcat drive with an interception at the 33 yard line but the Bulldogs turned the ball over with another fumble. DeSoto had 4 fumbles in the game. Going into the final quarter the Bulldog defense stood strong as they stopped the Wildcats on the DeSoto 8 yard line.

Tanner, who is also the quarterback, had a couple of runs up the middle that picked up 6 or 7 yards. He broke a 21 yarder for a first down and followed that with a 16 yard gallop to the Hardee 29. Jayse DeLuca caught a pass to get the Bulldogs down to the 10 yard line. The Bulldogs tried to score as time was running out in the game, but another fumble at the 5 ended the game with the Bulldogs on the short end of the 19-0 score.



The Bulldog defense is off on the snap. They played good defense allowing two touchdowns on long pass plays. The run defense was strong.



Carvaris Hatcher makes a tackle for the Bulldogs in their loss to Hardee.



Jacob Tanner kept Hardee from scoring in the red zone on this interception late in the first half in the 19-0 loss to Hardee.



Jayse DeLuca makes a nice catch on a low pass and takes it to the 10 yard line to get the Bulldogs deep into Hardee territory in the final minute of the loss to the Wildcats.



"Yogi" Nurse gets some good blocks to help with his 19 yard kick return.



Big Phillip Taylor sets his sites on the ball carrier and makes the tackle in the loss to Hardee.



Dataivian Marshall is brought down after a 37 yard kick return for the Bulldogs.

DESOTO COUNTY

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



EMMA SORRELLS



STEVE KNAPP

Sports Writer
sports@peacerrivershopper.com

“Yeah that was fun”, said freshman Emma Sorrells when I asked her about the match at Hardee when she had 23 kills in just 3 sets. The team is averaging 30 kills a match and Sorrells nearly had enough to win a set all by herself!

It is rare for a freshman to make the leap from the middle school to a starting position on any varsity team. Usually, if a freshman makes the varsity team they may get a few “garbage minutes” in basketball or football after the game has been decided. In baseball and softball a freshman may go in the game as a late inning defensive replacement but it is not often you’ll see them start.

That’s what makes Sorrells so unique. She not only made the varsity team and earned a starting position, she is leading the Bulldogs in several categories and turning heads on the opposing teams. I haven’t seen that much talent for a freshman on the

volleyball court since Yahri Tyler burst on the scene 3 years ago.

The thing that surprises me is how hard she blasts the ball over the net with such a small frame. “It comes from a lot of practice,” said Sorrells.

If you like numbers, consider these. She leads the team in kills with 149 in 387 chances with just 63 errors. That number is good enough to get her into the top 25 of the entire state and number 17 in the state for all the schools in class 4A.

She also leads the Bulldogs with 25 serving aces and aces per set. Sorrells is second on the team in hitting percentage at 222 and defensively she is second in serve receptions.

Of all the schools in the district, she is number 1 in kills and aces. She is second in hitting percentage.

Sorrells is a pleasure to talk to and humble about her game as she quickly

gives credit to her teammates for any success she has had.

Coach Danielle Taylor says, “She is a very humble player. Always smiling and beaming energy into every play. I love to watch her play and move on the court. If you were to google the ideal athlete- she would be it. Disciplined, motivated, great sportsmanship, attitude and coachable.”



DESOTO COUNTY

GAME OF THE WEEK

Sponsored by:

DESOTO ROAD SHOW CONTINUES WITH WIN



STEVE KNAPP
Sports Writer
sports@peacerrivershopper.com

The DeSoto Bulldogs volleyball team was racking up the travel points as they continued on a 7 game road trip when they went to Babcock Ranch to play the Trailblazers. The Blazers had a 5-5 record which included a 3-0 win over South Ft. Myers and a close 3-2 loss to Lemon Bay. Both of those teams had shut out the Bulldogs earlier in the season.

DeSoto had won 6 of their previous 8 matches and didn't lose a set in those wins. The only blemish on their record was a pair of losses at the Gorman tournament to the second and third place teams. (DeSoto finished 4th). With a 16-4 run in set wins the Bulldogs continued their hot streak with a 3-0 win over the Blazers.

DeSoto rolled in the first set 25-9 and continued to impress in their second set win 25-13. They managed to hang on for the win in a close match deciding win 25-22. That set was filled with hitting errors and a good example of a team playing down to their opponent's level.

Emma Sorrells and Yahri Tyler racked up 28 kills of the team's total of 44. Sorrells led with 15. She also had three serving aces in 9 serves to share the lead with Chloe Clemons and Brighten Long who also had 3 aces. Long had 14 serves while Clemons had 22 opportunities. Clemons led the Bulldogs with 12 digs with Brileigh Long also reaching double figures with 10.

The DeSoto set streak ended at 9 when they dropped their first set at Palmetto on Thursday in a 3-2 loss. After the first set loss, DeSoto won the next two sets including an overtime thriller 26-24 in the third set. Their 4 match winning streak ended with a 25-19 loss in the fourth set (the same score as their loss in the opening set) and the match set at 15-9.

It was Sorrells with 20 kills and Tyler at 17 that led the way for the Bulldogs. Avery Hancock had 4 aces with Brileigh Long and Kylee Taylor both picking up 3. Long led with 13 digs with Sorrells and Clemons each getting 9. Brileigh Long continued her nice performance leading the team with just 1 serve error in 24 chances.



Jordin Campbell and Brileigh Long attempt to reach the ball in the win over Babcock Ranch.



Bailey Muse and Yahri Tyler block a shot against Babcock Ranch in the 3-0 win.



Freshman Madalynn Atherton gets all of her 5'9" body into this kill shot at Babcock Ranch last week.



Brighten Long gets one of her 3 aces in the 3-0 win at Babcock Ranch.

Junior Izaria Anderson makes the play for the Bulldogs in their win over the Blazers.

BULLDOGS SHOW SOME GOOD THINGS IN 36-0 LOSS TO COWBOYS



STEVE KNAPP
Sports Writer
sports@peacriver shopper.com

The DeSoto Bulldogs had chances to put points on the board, but a series of fumbles and penalties ended several opportunities to stop LaBelle's string of three consecutive shutouts to start the season. Three empty trips to the red zone and 4 fumbles dropped the Bulldogs record to 0-4. The defense had flashes of strength in the early games this season, but gave up 451 total yards including 308 on the ground in the 36-0 loss.

After the Bulldogs failed to move the ball on the opening drive of the game, the Cowboys finished their first possession with a 16 yard run to pay dirt to take a 7-0 lead just 4 1/2 minutes into the game.

The second Bulldog possession saw some spark as Chris Lincoln picked up 15 yards for a first down at the Bulldogs' 46. Back to back fumbles in that series forced the Bulldogs to punt as the Cowboys took possession on their own 35. That ended the first period with the Bulldogs down by 7.

LaBelle scored just 11 seconds into the second quarter but failed to convert a two point attempt and boosted their lead to 13-0. Elijah Johnson gave the Bulldogs' offense a spark with a 66 yard touchdown run, but the play was called back to the Desoto 37 as the Bulldogs committed 2 penalties on the play.

That drive ended with the Bulldogs punting to the Cowboys' 47. A 23 yard run followed by a 24 yard pickup put the Cowboys on the DeSoto 6 yard line. A one yard plunge with 6:20 left in the half coupled with a successful kick gave the Cowboys a 20-0 lead.

It was Johnson who gave the Bulldogs a glimmer of hope as he returned the kickoff to the LaBelle 28 yard line. Johnson got the ball into the red zone to the Cowboys' 17. The Bulldogs then fumbled and the ball was picked up by the Cowboys Arrie Davis. Davis reached the end zone, but a penalty moved the ball back to the LaBelle 38. Two passes and 31 yard touchdown run brought the score to 27-0 with under 2 minutes left in the half.

On the ensuing kickoff, the ball was fumbled by the return man with another Bulldog picking up the ball. He was tackled in the end zone for a safety and a 29-0 score at the break.

The second half gave the team and fans some hope as Gatlan Unruh recovered a fumble at the LaBelle 42. Nothing resulted from that drive as the Bulldogs went back five yards and punted.

LaBelle drove from their own 10 to the Desoto 34, aided by a pass interference penalty, before the second turnover of the half. Aiden Clarke scooped up a fumble and brought it to



Madden Purvis (50), Devion Brown (27) and Jaedon Romero (33) lead the Bulldogs onto the field for their game against LaBelle.



Elijah Johnson follows Haydon Ames and Charlie Wilkinson (10) through the LaBelle kickoff team defense.

Elijah Johnson had a good night racking up 100 yards on 15 carries in the loss to LaBelle.



Aiden Clarke makes the tackle in the 36-0 loss to LaBelle. Clarke scooped up a second half fumble and brought it to the Cowboys' 18 yard line.



The ball came loose inside the red zone and was scooped up by Arrie Davis (11) for the Cowboys for a long return in DeSoto's 36-0 loss.



the LaBelle 18. The drive and potential score ended with an incomplete pass on 4th and 12.

LaBelle went on an 8 play drive until the DeSoto defense stiffened and turned the ball over on downs at the Bulldog 28 yard line. It was Johnson again with a carry for 56 yards to the Cowboys' 17 and then he followed that up with a run to the 8 yard line. DeSoto lost 10 yards on the next play but Johnson picked up 13 yards to get to the 5 yard line.

An offside penalty on LaBelle moved the ball to the 2 1/2 yard line. With the

Bulldogs facing a 4th and 1 from the one yard line, their 4th fumble of the game turned the ball over to LaBelle on the DeSoto 3. It took the Cowboys 3 plays to cover those 97 yards to put the final points on the board with 7:35 left in the game and start the running clock. The extra point kick ran the final score to 36-0.

As DeSoto coach Cliff Lohrey has said several times before, they are showing flashes of being a good team, but there just wasn't enough of them to win the game. The two turnovers by

Unruh and Clarke were promising and the defensive stand to stop the drive on their own 28 were a couple of positive takeaways from the game. Johnson had an outstanding night toting the rock, but the 4 fumbles and costly penalties didn't do the Bulldogs any favors. Fortunately those are correctable mistakes.

A much better second half allowing just 7 points and the defensive turnovers need to happen through an entire game. DeSoto will have their next chance tomorrow as they host the Bulldogs from Ida Baker starting at 7pm.

REMEMBER

FROM PAGE 1 »

“Smokey” Linn (1924-2004) after not being able to rescue some children from a burning apartment building.

A tradition dating from the 19th century, when fire stations communicated with bell commands, Trent Cholley tolled the bells: four series of five strikes for the death of a fireman. Then two recordings were played—“Amazing Grace” performed on bagpipes and “Where Were You When The World Stopped Turning” sung by Alan Jackson.

Serving as the K-Post 11 Honor Guard, Mike Dempsey, Ray Dennison, Amber Jones, Ron Jones, Sr., and Kenny Prescott joined by Capt. José Vitali of the Sheriff’s Office, fired a gun salute.

Stewart prayed the benediction, calling for everyone “to be bound together . . . one nation under God,” and giving thanks for those who “laid down their lives for others . . . and those who every day lay down their lives for others.”



School Board Member and Pastor Dr. Sharon Goodman sang the National Anthem while Sheriff Jim Potter and Marshal Quinn Jones saluted the flag.



A member of the Arcadia American Legion K-Post 11, Art Southwell played “Taps” on the bugle.



The K-Post 11 Honor Guard fired a gun salute, from left, Ray Dennison, Capt. José Vitali of the Sheriff’s Office, Kenny Prescott, Amber Jones, Mike Dempsey, and Ron Jones, Sr..



From left, Pastor Dave Stewart prayed both the invocation and benediction at the 9/11 ceremony while Public Safety Director Chad Jorgensen listened.



Sheriff’s Office personnel at the event included from left, Capt. José Vitali, Lt. Jenny Cross, Lt. Buddy Lewis, Lt. Mike Bellflower, Capt. Tom Hilgeman, Sheriff Jim Potter, Major Andrew Proudfit, Lt. Nick Tribble, Lt. Eduardo Trujillo, and Deputies Robert Śleaziński, Ernie Manriquez, and Tim Kratzer.



Using the bell mounted on the bumper of Tower Truck 1 that displayed the U.S. Flag, Trent Cholley “tolled the bells,” a nineteenth century tradition when a firefighter dies.

From left, Trent Cholley listened while Lt. Chris Cane read the “Firefighter’s Prayer” written by Alvin William “Smokey” Linn (1924-2004), who served in the Wichita, Kansas, Fire Dept. from 1947 to 1975.



On the east lawn of the courthouse, firefighters, law enforcement officers, and paramedics joined with their families, friends, and others in the community to remember the tragedy of Sept. 11, 2001, and to honor those who gave their lives helping others.

Some firefighters attended the ceremony, from left, Lt. Chris Cane, Patrick Staye, Steven Rose, Nick Talamantez, Pedro Villegas, Trent Cholley, Cherie Bailey, Ben Solomon, Battalion Chief Lewis Welles, and Volunteer John Twohig.

BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVES:

“TURN MY EYES FROM LOOKING AT WORTHLESS THINGS;
AND GIVE ME LIFE IN YOUR WAYS” (PSA. 119:37).

PASTOR DAVID STEWART
*Grace Presbyterian Church of Lake Suzy
DeSoto County Ministerial Association*

Countless times during the week I am deep in thought either reading or studying when I am jolted out of that reflection by the loud thumping coming from a car passing by. And other times it is the roar of the airboats as they make their way up and down the Peace River ALL DAY LONG. These things are distracting. I keep trying to concentrate on writing and studying, but these obnoxious sounds keep bursting through my walls and windows. My mind fights to focus.

Life is often like that. Distractions are everywhere, tugging on our arms, filling our eyes and gnawing at our ears... trying to lure our hearts down

little alleyways not conducive to our journey. Image, material possessions, wealth, influence, positions of power, current issues, reputation, desires, lusts, greed, noise, busyness... all distractions. Many of these aren't bad in and of themselves, but when we chase after them, forgetting who and whose we are, trying to attain them, they become deadly.

'Busy' is a HUGE modern-day distraction. I believe in hard work, setting goals, dreaming big and initiating plans. But we ought not be busy for busyness' sake! Busyness doesn't make you important. It can make you tired and sick if you're

chasing the wrong things.

Socrates said "Beware the barrenness of a busy life..." And Dolly Parton said, "Never get so busy making a living that you forget to make a life." By the way, I don't think I've ever put those two side by side before.

Fame, money, fortune, influence. These are things that we are tempted to think are equally significant. While some people will experience these, that doesn't make them more important than anyone else. What is truly fulfilling is following the path God has for us. Don't get distracted by what she's doing, or by what he said, or by what they have (or the thumping of loud music or the roar of an airboat). We need to daily put our life to the way of Christ.

"Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things; and give me life in your ways" ought to be a prayer that often flies from our lips. It is the pursuit of a life rooted in the gospel that helps

us to evaluate distractions, fix our eyes on Jesus, and follow the path of life found in God's word. This is the journey of faith. "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Psa. 119:105). If we are not traveling by this light, we are walking in the dark!

Many things will cross your path. Some will enhance and invigorate your journey, others bring destruction and pain. Through it all, we must keep our eyes focused on God in Christ. Don't get distracted, steady your mind and heart and enjoy this beautiful life you've been given. No matter what blessing or heartache has overwhelmed you, God will lead you through, healing and refining you step by step as he leads you home.

"Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the LORD!...Oh that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes!" (Psa. 119:1,5).



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

COWPENS, LLC

The Lovely
Amy Smith, Mgr. - 863-303-1406

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

**BUY
OR RENT**

SHIPPING CONTAINERS

EXPAND YOUR STORAGE OPTIONS

SCAN ME

CALL FOR PRICES!

(863) 303-4439

ShedPro
MOVING & ANCHORING

SHEDPRO.PRO
SHEDPROLLC@GMAIL.COM

• SHED MOVING & ANCHORING • RV MOVING & ANCHORING •
• CONTAINER MOVING & ANCHORING •

For All Your Water Needs

WELL DRILLING

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

SARASOTA GUN SHOW

ROBARTS ARENA

3000 RINGLING BLVD. • SARASOTA, FL 33948

SEPTEMBER 20TH & 21ST

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

UPCOMING

PORT CHARLOTTE

SEP 27TH & 28TH

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

Realtor Showcase





Oralia Ramirez, *BROKER*
863.494.2702
oraliamirez@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



YOUR Heartland Home Source!



Dan Collins, Broker

941.SUN.0005
223 E. Oak Street
Arcadia, FL 34266

Make Your Appointment Today!

Randa Lee Hammond

Contact this agent:
941.786.0005
heartlandhomesource@gmail.com





Dan Collins, Broker

Jean Vitali *REALTOR®*
Cell: 863-990-5106
Office: 863-494-6181
jean1711@gmail.com



223 E Oak St. Arcadia, FL 34266





GULFLAND REAL ESTATE



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

www.gulflandrealestate.com



Florida Power & Light Company prepares for hurricane season year-round, and that includes helping you prepare, too.

From strengthening our poles, to clearing lines to improve resiliency and training our team to act at a moment's notice – we're always working for you. And we're helping neighbors get ready, delivering hurricane meal kits to seniors in our community.

Now during the peak of storm season, please remember to stay connected, stay informed and rest assured if a storm hits, you can count on us.





OBITUARIES



AMY MARIE CREWS



Amy Marie Crews, age 46, passed away on Friday, September 5, 2025, in Arcadia, Florida. She was born on August 2, 1979, to John Crews and Edith Sweeting. Amy enjoyed reading, watching television, photography and cooking. Amy loved all animals, especially her beloved fur baby Bella. She spent lots of

time at her father's farm tending the animals and doing the work that she loved. She loved owls and had a large collection of owls and cows themed items. She was very passionate about her family and friends and was a member of the North Hillsborough Baptist Church. Amy is survived by her mother Edith Sweeting, father John Crews (Betty), brother Sam Charles Deriso Jr., sisters Teri Lynn Deriso Bryan, Kelley Irby and Lisa McManus along with a host of nieces, nephews, and extended family members. Her thoughtfulness and kindness will be missed. She will be remembered as a loving daughter and sister. **Online condolences can be made at www.pongerkaysgrady.com Ponger-Kays-Grady Funeral Home & Cremation Services have been entrusted with the arrangements.**

Wood Park Pointe I & II



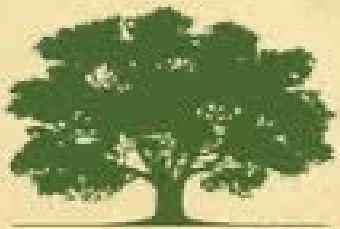
Now Taking Applications

Come Enjoy The Tranquil Atmosphere And Beautiful Landscaping...

Income Restricted Residents must be 62+ years, handicapped, or disabled.

600 West Gibson St., Arcadia
863-494-3230 - TDD 711





DeSoto County Historical Society
PAST • PRESENT • FUTURE
ARCADIA, FLORIDA



Come to our Fifth Annual Florida Cracker Meal

5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, Oct. 4, 2025
Pine Level Church Fellowship Hall
9695 NW Pine Level St.



Enter the Arcadia Albritton Coker Cake Contest.
If you are interested please call or email the Historical Society

MENU
Traditional Florida Cracker foods:
Pork Steaks
Rice and Tomato Gravy
Black Eyed Peas
Sweet Potatoes
Collard Greens
Cornmeal Muffins
Fresh Churned Butter
Cake
Tea

Tickets \$15.00 each.

LIMITED SEATING - Get your tickets early!
Tickets available from the Society, Radio Shack, Rosé Cafe, Sweet Magnolia Creamery and Confectionery, and Crews Bank and Trust E. Arcadia location ONLY, Member FDIC.

historicdesoto.org ~ 863-266-5774
desotocountyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com



DESOTO COUNTY
SHERIFF'S OFFICE



ARREST REPORT | 9/5/25 - 9/11/25

Brown, Elisha Ann:
Out-Of-County Warrant - Out-Of-County Warrant

Daurov, Grigoriy Evan:
Resist Officer - Obstruct Wo Violence

Ecker, Ryan Michael:
Prob Violation - Prob Violation

Haney, Rachel:
Fraud-Imperson - False Id Given To Leo

Hooks, Kristen Ann:
Drugs-Sell - Methamphetamine Wi 1000 Ft Specified Area, Public Order Crimes - Use 2 Way Comm Device To Facil Felony, Drug Equip-Possess - And Or Use

Kellum Jr., Eldred Dracey:
House For Other Agency

Lopez, Jessie Alexander:
Battery - Touch Or Strike

McHenry, Autumn Kacin:
Drugs-Possess - Possess Controlled Substance W/O Prescription, Drug Equip-Possess - Drug Equip-Possess: And Or Use, Burgl - Unoccupied Dwelling Unarmed, Larc - Grand Theft 300 Less Than 5K Dols, Drug Equip-Possess - And Or Use

McRoberts, Sarah:
Battery - Touch Or Strike

Mercer Jr., James Francis:
Out-Of-County Warrant - Out-Of-County Warrant

Moore, Blake Allen:
Drug Equip-Possess - Drug Equip-Possess: And Or Use

Ricewick, Chris William:
Burgl - Burglary Of Unoccupied Dwelling Unarmed , Larc - Grand Theft 10K Less Than 20K Dols

Rodriguez, Remington Aaron:
Moving Traffic Viol - Driv While Lic Suspend Revocation Equiv Status

Rogers, Jennifer Sue:
Prob Violation - Prob Violation

Surette, Sarah Elizabeth:
Trespassing - Trespass Fail To Leave Prop On Order Of Owner, Disturbing Peace - Breach Of The Peace

Wiseman, Joseph Allen:
Resist Officer - Obstruct Wo Violence

Wiseman, Robert James:
Dui-Unlaw Bld Alch - Dui Influence Of Alcohol Or Drugs

Zavala Monroy, Avangelina:
Failure To Appear - Written Promise To Appear

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.



CUSTOM HOMES
STARTING AT \$269,000!

BUILDING HOMES IN
DESOTO COUNTY SINCE 2005

IF YOU HAVE THE LAND OR ARE THINKING OF PURCHASING LAND...
LET US HELP YOU GET YOUR DREAM HOME BUILT!



CALL ROGER AT: 863-990-5921
OR AJ AT: 863-633-8345

JEWELCONTRACTINGINC.COM



DESOTO BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS IS SEEKING A
VOLUNTEER TO SERVE ON THE
VALUE ADJUSTMENT BOARD
AS AN ALTERNATE

This citizen member must own homestead property in DeSoto County. The VAB is made up of five members all of whom require specific qualifications.

The VAB shall hear petitions relating to assessments, complaints relating to homestead exemptions, hearing of appeals from exemptions denied, appeals concerning ad valorem tax deferrals and classifications. The VAB only schedules hearings a few months out of the year.

If you are interested in serving as a Value Adjustment Board member please email a letter of interest to Marilyn Padilla at: m.padilla@desotobocc.com by September 30, 2025.

The Board of County Commissioners will appoint a citizen from the letters of interest in October 2025 at their next regular scheduled Board meeting.

COUNTY SETS TENTATIVE MILLAGE AND BUDGET



CAROL MAHLER

Independent Contractor
carolmahler22acl@gmail.com
Photos provided

At the Sept. 8 public hearing, the Board of County Commissioners approved a resolution setting the 2025-2026 tentative General Operating millage rate at 6.8675 and the law enforcement municipal services tax unit (MSTU) operating millage of 2.9406 mills, for an aggregate total of 9.4508 mills, a .35% decrease over the rolled-back rate of 9.439. They also voted to approve the tentative 2025-2026 county budget of \$178,349,641.00. The final millage rates and budget will be adopted at the public hearing at 6:30 p.m., on Sept. 23.

The Board also adopted an amended and restated rate resolution for the Fire Protection Services and Emergency Medical Services Tax Assessment at 15%.

Vice-Chairperson Steve Hickox and Commissioners Jerod Gross, Elton Langford, and Judy Schaefer passed a resolution setting the solid waste collection and disposal residential rate at \$239.30 per unit, representing a 6% increase on the hauling portion of the rate. Chairperson J.C. Deriso was opposed because he wanted to review the results of the financial audit of Womack Sanitation before he voted. He thanked Aubrey Womack for her “good presentation.”

Under the Consent Agenda, the Board also voted to approve the Municipal Service Benefit Unit (MSBU) for the Solid Waste Disposal (Landfill) at \$45.50 per residential and \$91.00 per commercial unit.



After Senior Budget Coordinator Brian Wagoner reviewed the budget, County Administrator Mandy Hines presented the assessments and millage to the Board.



Residents on Addison Ave., Renee Graeve and Mark Graeve questioned why their pole barn was assessed at the commercial rate for two fire protection and emergency medical services units.



On behalf of the property owners in The Preserve, 12116 County Road 769 (aka Kings Hwy), who are mostly seasonal residents, Raychel Thomas—an attorney with Pavese Law Firm—asked that property taxes not be raised.



James Ramey asked the Board not to raise taxes for people like him, who are retired and have a fixed income. Soon “we’ll be priced out of Florida,” he said.



Aubrey Womack presented Womack Sanitation's justification for a 6% increase in the assessment for the hauling portion of the solid waste disposal.

In addition, they adopted resolutions reimposing the special assessment rates for the following Lighting Districts: Golden Melody, Harlem Heights, Kings Crossing, Lake Suzy, Ogden Acres, Peace River, Spring Lake, and Sunny Breeze.

All property owners within a lighting district pay the special assessment because they receive a special benefit from “the existence and provision of street lighting resulting in, among other things, added use and enjoyment of property,

protection of public safety, a decreased risk from crime, a decreased risk of property loss from crime, and potential savings in insurance as a result of said street lighting.”

CITY BREAKS GROUND FOR AIRPORT WATERMAIN EXTENSION



CAROL MAHLER

Independent Contractor
carolmahler22acl@gmail.com
Photos provided

On Sept. 12, under an overcast sky, the City broke ground for the Watermain Extension Project at the Municipal Airport. This major underground improvement will enhance fire protection and future airport development thanks to a Rural Infrastructure Fund Grant from Florida Commerce.

To improve water capacity and reliability, the current two-inch line that serves the airport buildings will be replaced with a new eight-inch water pipe that connects to the existing main on West. St.. The new line will run 10,000 feet along A.C. Polk, Jr., Dr. as well as south on Airport Rd. to Airport Estates St., for an additional tie-in at the airport’s southeast entrance.

General Underground, LLC, contractor for the project, will use directional drilling to minimize surface disruption during construction. In addition, 18 new fire hydrants will be installed on Maple Dr., Airport Rd., and



Breaking ground for the Airport Watermain Extension are the following, from left: Utilities Director Lee Snyder, Assistant City Administrator Carl McQuay, Airport Director Shelley Peacock, Deputy Mayor Luis Velasco, Mayor Judy Wertz-Strickland, Council Member Keith Keene, City Administrator Beth Carsten, Camilla Santana and Manny Perez—Engineers with George F. Young, and Chris Brown of General Underground, LLC. Photograph provided.

Airport Estates St. providing improved fire protection for nearby neighborhoods as well as airport facilities.



MAIN STREET HOSTS WALK AUDIT DOWNTOWN



CAROL MAHLER

Independent Contractor
carolmahler22acl@gmail.com
Photos provided

On Sept. 13, Arcadia Main Street (AMS) initiated a walk audit of downtown as part of a \$25,000.00 Community Challenge grant from the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP). About 50 people had registered to participate, and they picked up their t-shirts plus forms and a map at the AMS office, 17 N. Polk Ave., during a brief orientation at 10:00 a.m. or 2:00 p.m. on Fri., or at 9:00 a.m. on Sat. followed by the walk evaluation.

AMS Director Pam Ames said, “We’re very proud to share the AARP Walkability Challenge with our community, especially those who support downtown.” The City of Hialeah was the only other recipient in Florida of an AARP Community Challenge Demonstration Grant in the category of “Enhancing pedestrian safety by creating safer streets and sidewalks, with a focus on people age 50-plus, with funding support from Toyota Motors North America” aarp.org/livable-communities.

The walk audit covers 18 blocks, from Hickory to Magnolia streets and from Orange to Volusia avenues. Those participating may focus on a particular spot, or they may assess the entire site for safety on streets and sidewalks, walkability, and appeal. They may spend however long they choose to complete the audit, and they may write their observations, send photos, and draw on the map.

After the walk audit is completed by 100 people, AMS “will install pedestrian-friendly way-finding signage in downtown Arcadia. The signs will highlight key destinations, historical sites, and cultural landmarks.” Architect Kevin Lynch first used the term “way-finding” in his book published in 1960, “The Image of the City,” to describe how people determine their location and destination and form a plan of how to travel from one place to the other.

“Way-finding signage will be such a good addition and will greatly improve downtown,” Ames said, “We can also use this walk audit to ask for some improvements downtown because the needs will be documented by the community and in the spotlight.”

The next walk audit will start at 9:30 a.m. on Oct. 11 during the “Discover Arcadia Vintage Market” hosting vendors in the Tree of Knowledge Park and Truist Bank parking lot. In addition, Pletcher’s Art Gallery has organized displays of artwork and demonstrations by local artists for that day. To participate in the walk audit, please register on the AMS website: arcadiamainstreet.org or call 863-494-2020.



Joyce Blackman asked AMS Secretary Chelsea Palmer some questions about the AARP Community Challenge walk survey forms. Although she is a county-resident, she said, “I’m often downtown, sometimes five times a week.”



Mason Peterson, Sandra Peterson, and Tom Peterson engaged in the walk audit downtown because AMS Volunteer Jim Covey convinced Sandra to do so while she was purchasing a t-shirt featuring the “Greetings From Arcadia” mural at the Discover Arcadia Market in July.



City Residents and AMS Volunteers Jim Covey and Lisa Covey participated in the walk audit on Oak St., just west of the Rosin Arcade (aka “The Pink Building”).



From left, Van Fussell, Blaine Wallace, and Gina Fussell paused near the W. Oak St. and Polk Ave. intersection during the walk survey. “We come downtown all the time,” she said. “We love downtown.”



New residents of Arcadia Village, Cheri and Aaron Quakenbush assessed N. Monroe Ave. near old City Hall. They registered for the walk assessment after learning about the AARP Community Challenge grant on Facebook.



Gioia DeCarlo reviewed the walk survey forms with AMS Director Pam Ames during a brief orientation in the AMS office before starting the AARP Community Challenge walk evaluation downtown.



During their walk survey, Kathy Apodaca and her daughter Michelle Potter—both County residents—enjoyed a break on a bench at the W. Oak St. and Monroe Ave. intersection.



Jackie Scogin, Ann Ryals, and AMS Board Member Mindy Ryals discussed the walkability, safety, and appeal of W. Oak St. near the Monroe Ave. intersection during the AARP Community Challenge Walk Audit.

Join the Mission to Keep Florida Communities Safe



We provide evidence based
Forensic Treatment.

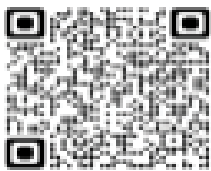
**Walk-in interviews
every Wednesday 9am-noon**

*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