

ARCADIA

THE COMMUNITY

FEBRUARY 6, 2025



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Local

RIDE FOR TINY TOWN

TOPS \$50,000 IN SEVEN YEARS



Completing the Ride for Tiny Town's 60-mile route last Sat., five cyclists ride on Roan St. toward the finish line at the Mosaic Arena.



CAROL MAHLER
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Photos provided

Despite the overcast and drizzly sky last Sat., the cycling event Ride for Tiny Town in its 7th year has topped more than \$50,000.00 for DeSoto Cares Homeless Services, Inc., (DCHS). Generous donations from sponsors and 200-plus registered cyclists will help DCHS furnish a village of “tiny homes” in Arcadia as a program-managed living space for homeless individuals.

“As defined in the 2021 International Residential Code (IRC) Appendix AQ, tiny houses are dwelling units that are 400 square feet or less in floor area, excluding lofts” iccsafe.org/tinyhomes. DeSoto Cares has built one on Lee Ave., south of Magnolia St., and has partnered with DeSoto County to construct a State Housing Initiative Program (SHIP) Homeless Rental Housing Development for more structures.

The event began with a complimentary breakfast and



RfTT Volunteer Joan Cranor helps Pat Bearup, a member of Coastal Cruisers Bike Club of Venice, find a t-shirt in the right size. Bearup said that one club member builds tiny homes and encouraged members to participate in the ride. “It was a little rainy,” she said, “but it’s always fun to ride some place different.”

SEE RIDE PAGE 19 >>



DESOTO COUNTY SPORTS
PAGE 4
STEVE KNAPP
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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

FEB 11

TUE 9P

DESOTO COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING
Administration Building
201 E. Oak Street, Suite 103
Arcadia, FL 34266

FEB 17

DESOTO COUNTY
COUNTY OFFICES W CLOSED
In Observance of Presidents Day

FEB 25

TUE 3P & 6:30P

DESOTO COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING
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

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT—A PEAK EXPERIENCE



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Photos provided*

On Jan 29, the DeSoto Economic Development Dept. held an Economic Development Summit in the Turner Agri-Civic Center: “an opportunity to network and communicate with other business owners, developers, state-based groups, and those looking for employment.” Economic Development Director Sandra Guffey emceed the event, and Economic Development and Tourism Specialist Dan Sutphin managed the sound system provided by Mark Anderson Productions.

Sponsors for the event are the Arcadia All-Florida Championship Rodeo, Ark Eco Roofing, Charlotte-DeSoto Building Industry Associates, Coldwell Banker: Sunstar Realty, Crews Bank & Trust, Cummings Commercial Group, Cut Above The Rest Hair Studio, DeSoto Memorial Hospital, iLamp Florida Lighting, Premier Nationwide Lending, Sarasota-Manatee Area Manufacturers Assoc. (SAMA), Palmdale Oil Co., Solar Power Now, Suncoast One Title and Closings, Take 5 Oil Change, and United Country/Gulfland Real Estate.

For information, contact Guffey or Sutphin at 863-993-4907 or s.guffey@desotobocc.com or d.sutphin@desotobocc.com or check online at GoDeSotoFL.com.



DeSoto Economic Development Director Sandra Guffey opened the Economic Development Summit with words from John Maxwell: “People who wait for the one great opportunity often keep waiting. The way to find the best opportunities is to pursue the one at hand.”

Chief Operations Officer of Biotech Applied Research, Zack Farr spoke about replanting dying citrus groves with hemp to make bio-char, a charcoal-like substance, used as a soil amendment.



Discussing broadband and digital access were Keyvan Sangelaji of IBT Connect, a Fiber Internet Service Provider, part of the Intelligent Building Technology (IBT) Group, and Patterson Foundation Consultant Cheri Coryea, of Digital Access For All and Aspirations to Actions.



President and Chief Executive Officer of NetWeave Social Networking, Kevin McNulty demonstrated how Artificial Intelligence applications can assist with marketing for businesses and organizations.



The panel presenting “A Vision For DeSoto’s Future” was, from left, Patterson Foundation Consultant Cheri Coryea, Rob Harris of the Sarasota-Manatee Area Manufacturers Assoc. (SAMA), Stacey Dadd of the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) of the University of South Florida (USF), and Beneshea Frazier of the Central Florida Regional Planning Council (CFRPC).



The “Planning and Building Basics” Panel was, from left, Animal Services, Code Enforcement and GIS Director Jorge Hernandez; Utilities Director Greg Harris; and Planning and Zoning Director Misty Servia.

FUNDRAISING TO A TEE



CAROL MAHLER
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Photos provided*

Calling all golfers: Compete in two upcoming golf tournaments at the Arcadia Municipal Golf Course and help local non-profit organizations to raise funds. The Arcadia American Legion K-Post 11 “Love Our Veterans” Valentine Golf Tournament tees off on Feb. 15 and the 2nd Annual Arcadia Main Street (AMS) Golf Tournament on Mar. 1.

With a putting contest at 7:30 a.m. and a four-person scramble at 8:30 a.m., the Legion Golf Tournament

benefits the Legion’s Emergency Funds for both the national and local organization. A donation of \$65.00 per person includes golf, cart, lunch, two drinks at K-Post 11 (full bar), raffles, auctions, contests, live entertainment, and more. Prizes will be awarded for low-score top three teams, longest drive (men/women), closest to the pins (par 3), and putting. Entry forms are available at the course, Radio Shack, 707 N. Brevard Ave., or at K-Post 11, 2124 American Legion Dr. For more information, call Ron Jones at 941-806-7108.



From left, Arcadia Municipal Golf Professional Jeff Gibson, City Administrator Terry Stewart (now retired), Arcadia American Legion K-Post 11 Commander Ron Jones, and Sheriff Jim Potter pose together before the start of last year’s “Love Our Veterans Valentine Golf Tournament.” Photograph provided.



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BURIED EARLY

BULLDOGS CAN'T COME BACK



STEVE KNAPP
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You could say the Bulldogs got off to a slow start in their 67-49 loss at Imagine High School of North Port. The Sharks put up the game's first 11 points and grew that lead to 21-4 later in the opening quarter. DeSoto cut the 14 point deficit of the first period down to 9 at the half to somewhat get back into the game at 41-32.

The big reason for the comeback was the shooting of Eddie Vasconcelas who tallied 11 of his game high 18 points to give the Bulldogs a spark of life. DeSoto opened the second half with an 8-0 run to cut the lead to one at 41-40, but they never were able to gain the lead.

Imagine went on a 15-3 run in the third quarter to take a 56-43 lead going into the final 8 minutes. The Sharks outscored the Bulldogs 11 to 6 to coast to their 13th win of the season. It was a sloppy game with Desoto turning the ball over 25 times while the Sharks turned it over 31 times yet still won by 18 points. The only other Bulldog to hit double figures behind Vasconcelas' 18 points was Isaac Clarke with 10. The Bulldogs' top four scorers average 35 points a game but totaled just 3 against the Sharks with two of them not even dressed for the game. Rylan Unruh and Jayden Santiago each hauled in a dozen rebounds.



Isaac Clarke goes up high to notch 2 of his 10 points in the loss at Imagine.



Jayden Santiago gets off a shot against the Sharks in the Bulldog loss. Santiago had 12 rebounds in the game.



With a game high 18 points, Eddie Vasconcelas puts up a shot under the net for the Bulldogs.



Enrique Castro gets a layup on a fast break in the loss at Imagine.

DESOTO COUNTY

ATHLETES OF THE WEEK

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JUNIOR VARSITY BOYS BASKETBALL TEAM

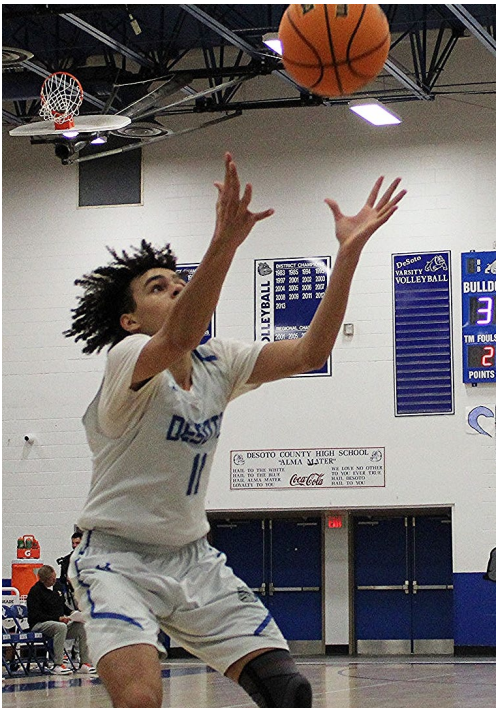


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There were only two DeSoto athletic teams that finished with a winning record for the winter season. The varsity girls basketball team has had great success as they finished their season 17-6 with a chance to get more wins than any DeSoto girls basketball team in history.

You would expect the boys soccer team to be the other team over .500 this year but they finished with a disappointing 8-9 record. The other team with more wins than losses? The boys JV basketball team!

This unheralded group of athletes have put together a very good season with a big group of talented players who will be vying for starting positions next season.



“JUST ONE OF THOSE GAMES”



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The Lady Bulldogs basketball team has won 15 games and lost 6 games this season. If they take Charlotte, Port Charlotte and Booker off the schedule then they'd be undefeated. After the 72-35 loss to the Tarpons, coach Ardine Primus described it as “Just one of those games”.

Certainly the team had hoped to have a better game than what they did, but in sports there are sometimes when nothing seems to go right and that is what the Bulldogs faced against the number 56 team in the state.

The Bulldogs scored the first bucket, but everything went down hill after that as Charlotte scored the next 16 points to essentially put the game away. That 14 point difference was there at the end of the first quarter and at the half with the Tarpons on top 34-20.

Charlotte played a tough defense and saw their lead grow to 53-30 outscoring the Bulldogs 19-10. With the game out of reach, both teams cleaned their bench as players racked up valuable minutes.

Yahri Tyler picked up another double-double with 11 points and 10 boards while Cherish Wiggins topped the Bulldogs with 16 points.

Games with opponents like this is valuable for teams as they go against



Yahri Tyler gets tangled up with the Tarpons' Dakota Galley as Tyler tires to score.

tougher competition in preparation for the district tournament that started Tuesday. The Bulldogs have a big lead in state rankings over the second place Lemon Bay in the district 4A-12 and is number 2 in the Region 4A-3. The Bulldogs will host a game tonight against the winner of the Island Coast-Cypress Lake game.

Jaliyah Luther and Cherish Wiggins work for the rebound against Samantha Vega and Dakota Galley in the loss to Charlotte.



Sara Rooney attempts to block a shot by Raeghan Fink.



Sophomore Cherish Wiggins stops and pops for two of her team high 16 points.



Both teams gather under the bucket for a rebound as Cherish Wiggins makes a shot late in the game against Charlotte.



Junior Yahri Tyler hauls in one of her 10 rebounds in the 72-35 loss to Charlotte.



Janeris Bing cuts through the Tarpon defense to put up 2 points.

DESOTO COUNTY

GAME OF THE WEEK

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JUST ENOUGH



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The thing about watching sports is that most of the games are different from another. You’ve seen teams win “ugly” and other teams have destroyed their opponent as they should have with superior players. There have been upsets and games decided on a bad call by an official or perhaps an unlucky bounce of the ball. Games have been decided by a “miraculous play” or sometimes it was just one of those games where everybody was “off” for the game. Athletes are not machines and sometimes that happens.

The Bulldogs 60-50 win over Sebring could be called a “just enough” game. The Bulldogs did just enough to win the game and just enough to keep it exciting and in doubt throughout the game.

DeSoto has “owned” the Blue Streaks over the past 7 years. In their last 13 meetings, the Bulldogs have won 12 times. Their only loss was just over a year ago on January 18 2024. The loss before that was nearly 8 years ago on January 19 2018, when the current players were all in elementary school! Just 9 days earlier the girls from DeSoto won big on the road crushing Sebring 70-37. So playing their final home game it would seem like an easy runaway victory for the Bulldogs.

DeSoto did win but it wasn’t as easy as many thought it would be. Desoto coach Ardine Primus knew it was important to get her “bench” as many minutes as they can not only for this season but for next season too. She started 4 of her reserve players and they fell behind 10-4 midway throughout the opening quarter.

When the starters came in, it took awhile to take control of the game. That is what happens when an inferior team gets momentum and takes an early lead, they get confidence and sometimes it is hard to stop that feeling and gain control of the game. Janeris Bing dusted the net in the closing seconds of the quarter to give the Bulldogs their first lead of the game 17-16 at the end of the first 8 minutes.

The Blue Streaks stayed within striking distance as the Bulldogs failed to take control of the game and held a slim 28-25 lead over their opponents from the north at the break.

While the Bulldogs opened up a big lead in the third quarter outscoring Sebring 17-9, there never was the feeling that DeSoto had the game in control. With an 8 point lead with just 3:30 to play, Yahri Tyler and Bing hit back to back buckets that felt like the Bulldogs had finally put “the final nail in the coffin” to assure the victory.

“The plan was to put the starters



Cherish Wiggins gets two of her 11 points in the win over Sebring 60-50.



Jalilah Luther screens out the Sebring player as Whitley Barron puts up a shot to score two of her season high 14 points in the 60-50 win.

Junior Yahri Tyler chases down an errant pass in the win over Sebring. Tyler scored 27 while crashing the boards 13 times.

(bench players) back in the game at some point, but the situation never really presented itself. We had to secure the win first. We just didn’t execute as we wanted. The shots bounced off the backboard and wouldn’t fall in. We got the shots we wanted but they just weren’t falling for us. That kept the game close,” said Primus.

Tyler led the team with another double double reaching 27 points and 13 boards. Whitley Barron had a season

high of 14 points while Cherish Wiggins also hit double figures with 11 points.

The Bulldogs finished their outstanding 17-6 season with a 57-53 win over Manatee the following night. Tyler had another double double (she’s had more double-double games this season than games where she hasn’t reached that milestone) with 18 points and a like number of rebounds. Wiggins also hit for 18 points and 10 rebounds and a high of 6 steals which is the most

she has had since December. Jalilah Luther also gathered in 10 rebounds.

It was the 7th straight game that the Bulldogs had at least 8 offensive rebounds as they gathered in a season high of 21.

The District championship goes through DeSoto County. The Bulldogs will host the winner of the Cypress Lake-Island Coast game (played Tuesday) tonight. A win will put them in the district finals on Saturday night.



Must-See Listings





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Arcadia, Florida - Fort Ogden Area



7088 SW Groveway Trl
\$360,000
3 BR | 2 BA | 1792 SF

This home features a formal living room, family room, and dining room and sits on 5.76 acres. MLS A4629034

Arcadia, Florida - Fort Ogden Area



7089 SW Groveway Trl
\$375,000
4 BR | 2 BA | 2016 SF

This home features a formal living room, family room, dining room, and laundry room/mud room and sits on 5 acres. MLS A4628352

Arcadia, Florida - Fort Ogden Area



7141 SW Groveway Trl
\$385,000
4 BR | 3 BA | 2240 SF

This home features a living room, dining room, family room, game room, and laundry room and sits on 5.47 acres. MLS A4629040

Arcadia, Florida - Fort Ogden Area



7142 SW Groveway Trl
\$395,000
4 BR | 3 BA | 2560 SF

This is a very large open floor plan, living and dining room open to the kitchen, with a very large family room at the end of the hallway. Enjoy a dream mud room/laundry room with its own exterior door. MLS A4637041

The builder/seller is offering up to \$20,000.00 to help lower your interest rate, which can reduce your monthly payments and save you money in the long run. Contact Melanie Brown as she is the Builder's trusted lender.



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NEW LIVERPOOL PARK BOAT RAMP OPENED MONDAY



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Photos provided*

Tara Anderson, Director of County Parks, announced that the new Liverpool Park Boat Ramp, 9211 SW Liverpool Road, officially opened to the public on Feb. 3. The ramp was totally rehabilitated with the addition of a new aluminum floating dock. She wrote, “Please visit and enjoy this newly renovated boat ramp and float dock at Liverpool Park.”

Weiler Engineering Corp. designed the project, and Thomas Marine Construction, Inc., worked on the improvements from Sept. 2024 to Jan. 2025. The total cost was \$1,027,795.00, with 73% paid by the the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) through the Florida Boating Improvement Program (FBIP) and 27% by the Board of County Commissioners.

The first boat ramp constructed in Liverpool Park in 1956 was not paved as shown in this historic photograph, courtesy of the DeSoto County Historical Society.



The new boat ramp at Liverpool Park was constructed, in part, with funds from the Florida Boating Improvement Program (FBIP) of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC). Photograph courtesy of Carol Mahler was taken before the official opening.



Courtesy of the DeSoto County Historical Society

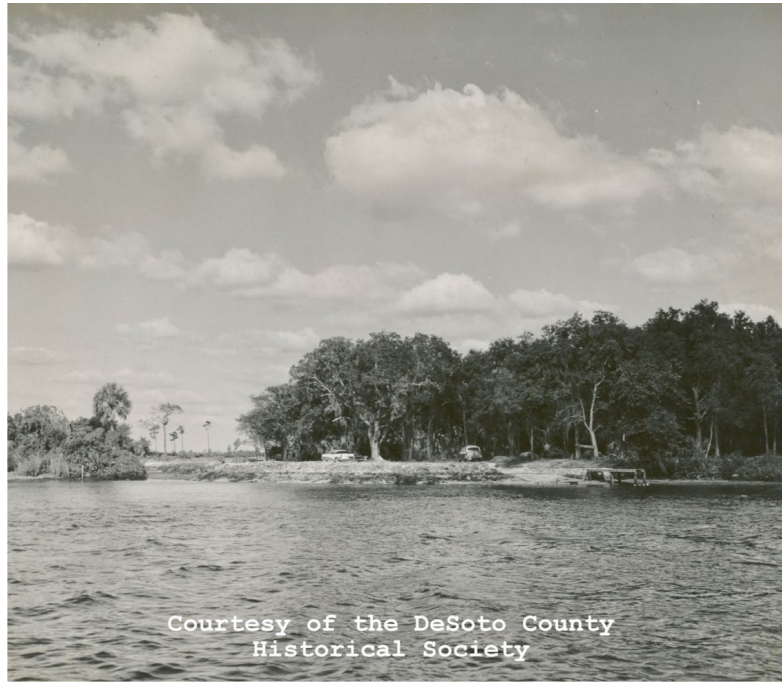


By 2021, when this photograph was taken, the pavilion, picnic tables, and a wooden dock had been built, and the boat ramp paved. Photograph courtesy of Carol Mahler.



The new boat ramp at Liverpool Park was constructed, in part, with funds from the Florida Boating Improvement Program (FBIP) of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC). Photograph courtesy of Carol Mahler was taken before the official opening.

Even before the official opening of the new boat ramp, many local residents drove by Liverpool Park to check on the progress of the improvements as seen by the tire tracks in front of the pavilion. Photograph courtesy of Carol Mahler.



Courtesy of the DeSoto County Historical Society

Originally established in 1956, Liverpool Park had very few improvements as seen in this view of the park from the water. Photograph courtesy of the DeSoto County Historical Society.

“ON THE PATH TO PROGRESS” PLATTING AND SUBDIVISION WORKSHOP



CAROL MAHLER

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Photos provided

The Board of County Commissioners held a Platting and Subdivision Workshop on Jan. 28 and agreed to a second workshop to consider the changes proposed and discussed, or as County Administrator Mandy Hines said to the Board, “The direction we think we heard you say.” Chairperson J.C. Deriso said, “We’re on the path to progress.”

Commissioner Judy Schaefer asked for an evening public forum as part of the next workshop, so that more of the public could comment on the topic. “It’s important to get some of their thoughts.” Commissioner Jerod Gross agreed, saying, “We need to listen to our constituents.”

At the present time, because the Board reviews every property division, so “people are waiting a year to get in front of the Board.” Deriso suggested that a “simple” property split could be an administrative review with “simple” being defined as one or two lots without the complications of utilities, roads, or rights-of-way. He also advocated for the “development plan” proposed by staff, so that property owners could present their concept of the subdivision before they pay for the expense of a formal plat.

Staff also asked the Board to consider allowing higher residential densities as an affordable housing development for teachers has been proposed that needs 12 units per acre, but the highest density that the County’s Land Development Regulations (LDRs) allow is eight per acre.

Regulated by Florida Statutes Chap. 177 and the County’s LDRs, a subdivision is defined “as the division of land into three or more lots, parcels, tracts, or any other division of land, including the establishment of new streets and alleys, additions, and re-subdivisions,” and a plat as the map of the subdivision.

The County categorizes subdivisions as “minor” when a property is split into no more than six lots including the original parcel and no new public roads are established; and as “major” with seven or more lots or establishing new public roads. The workshop explained “concerns with the existing plat process for a growing county” including the following topics: “access, roads, stormwater, wetlands, thresholds for subdivision standards, plot process, re-plats, and community character.”

Three different kinds of roads run



John Osborne of Green Street Associates presented the “Platting and Subdivision Review Process in DeSoto County” workshop for the Board of County Commissioners on Jan. 28.



Will Waters of Heartland Surveying also spoke about his experience in Hardee County where “single splits” or one property divided into two parcels was done “for families all the time.”

through the County: arterial (major highways), collector (county roads), and local. Recommendations were to use shared driveways on thoroughfare roads for all plats; paved roads for major plats, and if extending an existing road, upgrade it to meet current County standards for all plats; any plat with a new road/access by easement is major; require paved roads for County utilities and maintenance agreements for private roads for all plats; option for inter-neighborhood ties and no dead-end public streets for all plats; and future right-of-way setback requirements.

Guidance for coping with stormwater is to submit drainage= on a development plan, and for all plats, show any shared maintenance requirements and responsibilities, and clarify ownership and maintenance responsibilities by Homeowner Association’s deed restrictions. When property owners have wetlands, they will need to show a determination of wetlands and that

State requirements are reflected in the development plan.

Currently, to reduce the footprint on a site, the Comprehensive Plan requires all development to “provide a minimum of 25% open space.” Recommended for “major” plats only, open space requirements may be met by “platted landscape buffers around subdivision perimeter of internal facing lots,” stormwater ponds, platted common open space—such as a playground or amenity area, and paved roads. For all plats, any shared maintenance for all property owners shall be recorded in the plat and documents.

The plat process was recommended to be changed, so that the Planning Commission (PC) and the Board will first review—and may condition—a development plan showing lots, access points, roads, open space, buffers, wetlands, and stormwater drainage. Then an improvement plan with administrative



County Attorney Valerie Vicente explained how a family could divide their property among immediate family members by a limited exemption in the Comprehensive Plan or Land Development Regulations.



Steve Fussell spoke briefly during the workshop and asked for an opportunity to “communicate back and forth” with the Board about subdivisions. A realtor, he is also a farmer and rancher. “We care about the community,” he said. “We want the land protected as best as we can,” he said.

review; and the final plat subject to Board approval during a public hearing.

In addition, a “major” subdivision will have a construction phase for infrastructure and common areas as well as a preliminary plan—including any maintenance agreements or “notice to buyers” of future plans for road widening or park construction—with administrative review. Also, new roads must be built to County standards with dead-end roads designated as private; inter-neighborhood ties will be required to build the transportation grid and interconnect utilities; platted common areas, open space, and landscape buffers.

Re-plats will require applicant to show land plat and subdivision history. Furthermore, plats should be consistent with the existing built environment, the Future Land Use Map (FLUM), and zoning to maintain “community character.”

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CELEBRATING PIONEER DAY

This Pioneer Day, we honor the rich history of DeSoto County while we take a glimpse into the lives and traditions of the early pioneers who laid the foundations of this community. Their dedication, resilience and pioneering spirit inspires us.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the organizers, participants and volunteers for their unwavering commitment to making this year's Pioneer Day an extraordinary celebration. Together, we are preserving the county's rich heritage and building a future rooted in the strong values of our past.

With gratitude,







OBITUARIES

JOHN WILSON WHIDDEN

01/30/1941 TO 01/09/2025



John Wilson Whidden, 83, lifelong resident of Arcadia, FL passed away January 9, 2025 at 10:20 am. John passed away at hospice in Arcadia, FL. He was a caring and loving man. He loved to fish, watch wrestling, and

spending time with his family, but mostly he loved being on his computer. He enjoyed talking to friends on Facebook. John loved his wife with all his heart. They would have been married for 45 years this year. John was of the Baptist faith. John is survived by his wife Vivian Whidden, his daughter, Samantha (Brett) Yates of Arcadia, FL. He left behind 4 grandkids; John “JP” (Anis) Fewox, Zoey Yates, Vaisely Yates, and Charlie Yates all of Arcadia, FL. He also leaves behind nephew John Whidden. John also left behind plenty of friends. He was preceded in death by his parents John and Mary McGuire Whidden, and his brother Edward Lee Whidden.

Celebration of Life will be at a later date. John is missed and loved by all.

MICHAEL “MIKE” LEE ABBOTT



Michael “Mike” Lee Abbott, 63, of Arcadia, FL went home to Jesus on January 29, 2025, surrounded by loved ones.

Mike was born in Sarasota, FL, to Ted and Marilyn Abbott, on February 20, 1961. Throughout his life, he was an avid outdoorsman who loved hunting, fishing, diving, air-boating, and driving racecars. He could fix anything with a motor. Mike graduated from Riverview High School in 1979. He was a second-generation owner of Abbott’s Construction Services with his brother, Craig.

Mike met his beloved wife, Cynthia, in 1989 on a blind date. They were married the following year, and had 5 children: Jeremy(Kella), Jesse(Gemma), Daniel(Cassidy), Lindsay(Derek), and Kimberly(Daniel). Mike was affectionately known as, “Papa” or, “Papa Buzzard Bait” by his 13 grandchildren: Brianna, Jennifer, Kierstin, Ethan, Zachary, Gracie, Dylan, Juliet, Eli, Laynie, Boone, Beau, and Bellamy, and 3 great-grandchildren: Evelyn, Eliana, and Eros. He found his faith in Jesus, and was baptized into Christ as an adult.

In addition to being a loving husband, father, and grandfather, Mike’s passion was spearfishing and diving. His most prized material possession was his Yellowfin. You were always invited on the boat, as long as you weren’t late and didn’t want to come in early. Mike was known by all for his kindness and generosity. He was only a phone call

away when someone was in need or needed advice.

Mike joins his Baby Sister, Uncle Bobby, Uncle Herald, and Aunt Margaret Earle in Heaven. He is survived by his wife, Cindy, his children, brother, Craig(Beth), parents, grandchildren, great grandchildren, nieces Jessica(Rhett) and Dana(Walt) and many close friends.

Please join us for a celebration of Mike’s life at The Barn at Bert’s Prairie located at 5990 N.W. Fussells Rd. Arcadia, FL on February 8th, 2025 at 11:00am

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in Mike’s honor to St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital <https://www.stjude.org> or Operation Second Chance <https://operationsecondchance.org>

STELLA PARNELL PARKER



Stella Joyce Parnell Parker died on Jan. 29, 2025. Born on Sept. 11, 1952, in Munford, Alabama, she was the youngest child of Lawrence Dumas Parnell and Ethel Fuller Parnell. After graduating from Munford High School in 1969, she accepted a respiratory therapy technician job at DeSoto Memorial Hospital (DMH). “She was a brave young woman,” her son Thomas said, “as she moved to Arcadia not knowing anyone.”

Working as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), she met her late husband who was also an EMT at DMH. Married in 1979, they had two sons. She also worked in medical records for DMH,

RONALD EDWARD STEPHENS (RON)



Ronald Edward Stephens (Ron), born on January 7th, 1946, went to be with Jesus on December 5th, 2024 in Palm Coast, Florida. The youngest of 5 children, Ron was born in Arcadia, Florida to Opal Keen and Joseph Stephens. Preceded in death by his parents, brothers Gordon and Joel, sister Betty, and son Scott, he leaves behind his wife Linda, daughter Melinda, son-in-law Jon, grandsons Colin, Cole, and Cameron, sister Barbara, in-laws, and many

and for more than 25 years, as the lead office staff for Dr. Louis Kirschner at Arcadia Chiropractic Clinic. She retired after years ten years serving as a control room operator at the DeSoto County jail.

A member of the DeSoto County Historical Society, she served as a director and secretary. Newsletter Editor Karen Smoke wrote, “Stella would take on tasks that she was uncertain of and do them to perfection. She had a quiet determination to see a project through.” A member of Trinity Methodist Church, Stella volunteered for events, on the scholarship committee, and taught Sunday School.

She loved to travel and collect souvenirs. Her miniature silver spoon collection chronicles her journey to Paris and Europe. She also enjoyed camping and the outdoors.

Strong and resilient but very humble, Stella was devoted to family first. She participated in whatever her sons chose to do—Boy Scouts, 4-H, sports, and more. She cared for her family and extended family, including her mother-in-law and grandmother-in-law.

She is survived by her sons, Travis Parnell Parker and Thomas Marion Parker, III; granddaughters Addisyn Marie Parker and Sydalee Taylor Parker; siblings Melba Parnell Ware and Kenneth Parnell; sister-in-law Karen Parker Raineri; nephew Kyle (Sandy) Parnell, and other nieces and nephews. She is preceded in death by her husband Lewis Henry Parker, IV; her parents; sister-in-law Louana Parker Thompson, and brother-in-law Barry Raineri.

A Celebration of Life will be at 11:00 a.m. on Mar. 1 at Trinity Methodist Church. In lieu of sending flowers, please make a donation to the DeSoto County Historical Society or Trinity Methodist Church.

nieces and nephews.

Ron served in the Air Force in Vietnam before becoming a Florida Highway Patrolman. He earned a Bachelor’s degree in Human Resources and a Master’s degree in Business Administration, both while working full time. Ron directed Human Resources in the government contract defense industry and private manufacturing; his expertise being startup operations. Even after retiring, Ron found a new joy in starting and running a family business along with his daughter and son-in-law.

Ron was a good man. He loved his Lord, his country, and his family. He truly enjoyed helping others, making people laugh, and was recognized as being a man of his word. He loved golfing, cruising, going to theme parks and resorts; but most of all, he enjoyed any time spent with his wife and family. Ron definitely lived life to its fullest.

Heritage Funeral and Cremation Service of Bunnell, FL assisted the family. www.HeritageFlagler.com

VIVIAN ANN WHIDDEN

08/01/1955 TO 01/12/2025



Vivian Ann Whidden, 69, passed away on January 12, 2025, at 6:15 pm in Sarasota, FL. She was of Baptist faith. She loved being with friends and family. She enjoyed the Jesus Loves Me Club. Vivian enjoyed helping others. Vivian enjoyed her outings with her best friend, Heather. Vivian is survived by her daughter Samantha (Brett) Yates of Arcadia, FL. She left behind 4 grandkids that she loved dearly, John “JP” (Anis) Fewox, Zoey Yates, Vaisely Yates, and Charlie Yates all of Arcadia, FL. She is also survived by her siblings, George (Deborah) Mothershed, Orlando, FL; Jay Mothershed, Nocatee, FL; Debbie Webb of Nocatee, FL; Katherine (Kavis) Murray, Oklahoma and Darrell (Deborah) Mothershed, GA. She leaves lots of nieces and nephews. Vivian also leaves a lot of adopted grandkids. Vivian is preceded in death by her parents Charles Martin Mothershed Sr. and Vivian Mothershed Trumpower, her loving husband John Wilson Whidden, and her baby brother Charles Martin Mothershed Jr. She loved her husband with all her heart. They would have been married for 45 years this year. She is loved and missed by all.

A celebration of life will be at a later date.

DESOTO COUNTY
SHERIFF'S OFFICE



ARREST REPORT | 1/24/25 - 1/30/25

Cobb III, Julian Henry:

Prob Violation - Prob Violation

Conley, Crystal Jean:

Burgl - Unoccupied Dwelling Unarmed,
Larc - Petit Theft 1St Degree 100 Less
300 Dols, Failure To Appear - Written
Promise To Appear (X2)

Gause, Jonathan Marshall:

Out-Of-County Warrant - Out-Of-
County Warrant

Golden, Frank Phillip:

Prob Violation - Prob Violation (X4),
Drugs-Possess - Possess Controlled
Substance W/O Prescription

Heeman, Tyler Donald:

Drugs-Possess - Possess Controlled
Substance W/O Prescription, Drug
Equip-Possess - Drug Equip-
Possess: And Or Use

Hernandez-Aquino, David:

Aggrav Assault - Aggrav Assault On
Specified Personnel, Moving Traffic
Viol - Operate Motor Vehicle W/O Valid
Lic 1St Conv, Hit And Run - Leave
Scene Of Crash Involve Damage To
Prop, Resist Officer - Obstruct Wo
Violence, Dui-Unlaw Bld Alch - Dui
Influence Of Alcohol Or Drugs

Lukach, Edward William:

Obscene Material-Possess - Poss
Photograph Of Sexual Performance
By Child

Peet III, Edward C:

Dui-Unlaw Bld Alch - Dui Alcohol Or
Drugs 4Th Or Subsq Off, Resist Officer
- Refuse To Accept Sign Citation Or
Post Bond, Hit And Run - Leave Scene
Of Crash Involve Damage To Prop

Picard, Jessica Elizabeth:

Prob Violation - Prob Violation (X2),
Resist Officer - Obstruct Wo Violence

Roof, Dale Ray:

Public Order Crimes - Keep Pub
Nuisance Structure For Drug Activity,
Drugs-Possess - Possess Controlled
Substance W/O Prescription, Drugs-
Health Or Safety - Poss Harmful New
Legend Drug Wo Prescription, Rug
Equip-Possess - Drug Equip-Possess:
And Or Use (X2), Obstructing Justice
- Tamper W Evidence In Criminal
Proceeding, Resist Officer - Obstruct
Wo Violence, Amphetamine-Traffic - Or
Methamphetamine 14 Grams Or Over,
Drug Equip-Possess - And Or Use

Wetherington, Timothy James:

Drug Equip-Possess - Drug Equip-
Possess: And Or Use, Nonmoving
Traffic Viol - Fail To Register Motor Veh

Williams Jr, Darrin Gene:

Battery - Touch Or Strike

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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

RACHELL MAXINE
SUMMERALL



Rachell Maxine Summerall was born August 26, 1960 in DeSoto County, at the Arcadia General Hospital. She passed away peacefully, Saturday, January 25, 2025. She was preceded in death by her mother, Ruth (Mathis)

Summerall, her father, Raleigh Summerall, Sr. and her great grandson, Tolkien Allen Avner Ames. All of them were no doubt there to greet her on the other side of the veil. She is survived by her devoted son, Daniel (Louise) Summerall, grandchildren: Carolina (Landon) Ames {great grandson: Ronin Ames}, Daniel Summerall, Jr., Adam Summerall, and Hailey Canfield. She is survived by all four of her siblings: Marvin (Lois) Summerall, Michael (Claudia) Summerall, Joanna (Gary) Lowery, Raleigh (Melissa) Summerall and cherished nieces, nephews, and dear sweet cousins, namely: Delton (Julie) Lynch who has been there for her at every turn. Last but not least, her “ride or die” best friend, Mary Magdalene “Mag”

(Baxter) Roe, died the same week of Rach’s tragic accident. They are survived by Mag’s daughter and Rachell’s Goddaughter, her namesake, Rachell (Chris) Smith. ‘Mag’ and ‘Rach’ are having a good time reminiscing on the other side of the veil today.
In her younger years, Rachell was a nurse-caregiver, manager, and a skilled cook. She was a hard working, talented woman. She crocheted, carved artwork, and weaved baskets. When she was 37, she was in a horrific car accident leaving her paralyzed from the chest down. With all her challenges, she always remained a nurturer and found ways to show everyone that they were loved and important. She was an awesome listener, an avid

reader, and a teenager at heart. She said her ‘grands and greats were the light of her life’. She loved to hear everyone’s news, play and joke around, and jam out to good tunes. She always had an adventurous spirit, although, as a quadriplegic, it wasn’t easy. Her son and the Good Lord always found a way to get her where she wanted to go. Her smile radiated from the inside out and lit up our lives. While we rejoice in her complete healing, literally walking with Christ, and that great family reunion that she is experiencing right now, she will be greatly missed. Glory to God and Jesus Christ for our opportunity to see our loved ones again. 1 Corinthians 15:54-57

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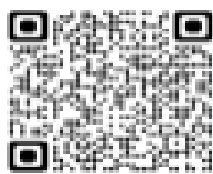
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CROSSWORD

CLUES ACROSS

1. __ Spumante (Italian wine)

5. Highly impressed

11. Pronoun to identify something specific

12. Uttered in an impassioned way

16. Outfits

17. ÒWestworldÓ actor Harris

18. Stewed game casserole

19. Indignities inflicted on others

24. Blood type

25. Says beneath oneÕs breath

26. Taxis

27. Transmits genetic information from DNA to the cytoplasm

28. NFL great Randy

29. Where college students live

30. Brief Yankees sensation Kevin

31. Condiment

33. -frutti

34. Polish city

38. Astronomy unit of distance

39. Romanian village

40. Bears first overall pick Williams

43. Irritated

44. Clothing for sale has them

45. One-time world power

49. When you anticipate arriving

50. Farm building

51. Organize thoughtfully

53. Detective

54. One who reduces

56. Nursemaids

58. Partner to ÒPaÓ

59. WorldÕs longest river

60. Commemorates

63. Compound

64. The Lannisters and Starks fought for one

65. Email function

CLUES DOWN

1. Open-roofed entrance

2. Japanese religion

3. DancerÕs garments

4. Distributes

5. Yemeni port

6. Spanish doctors

7. It cools your house

8. Engine variant

9. Makes more manageable

10. Days (Spanish)

13. Milliliter

14. Spread out from

15. With two replaceable hydrogen atoms

20. Respectful title for a man

21. Equally

22. ScarlettÕs home

23. Big Blue

27. Subway dwellers

29. One-tenth of a liter

30. Central European river

31. Distress signal

32. Expression of sympathy

33. Bar bill

34. Football equipment

35. Dance music

36. Russian river

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37. Mary __, cosmetics

38. Gym class

40. Autos

41. Fourth and honorable name in ancient Rome

42. Defeats (abbr.)

44. A way to color

45. Planet

46. Form of humor

47. Taken without permission
48. Go over again

50. Auto parts manufacturer

51. DetectiveÕs source

52. Home of the Flyers

54. Short official note

55. Emit coherent radiation

57. In the year of Our Lord

61. Atomic #18

62. Not from, butÉ

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BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVES: HONEST, HUMBLE, AND HABITUAL LEADERS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

AMANDA REUTER
Chaplain, US Army Reserve
DeSoto Ministerial Association

Leaders in the NT experienced God differently. Jesus Christ, God-incarnate, had lived, died, resurrected, and ascended to heaven in their lifetimes. Those who chose to follow Jesus Christ, to lead others into a relationship with Him, were the first of their kind. God’s Spirit indwelt thousands of people in the first century. In the early days of Christianity, God’s eyes, Spirit, and power were concentrated on a group of people that “turned the world upside down” (Acts 17:6). Saint Paul was eager to serve people the Truth about God. He was more than excited to serve as he brought along others like Silas, Barnabas, etc., so that they could learn and serve together. Life as a first century Christian was an adventure – at times exciting and rewarding, and at other times despairing and risky. One of the great leaders in the NT, Paul, was honest to God about his struggles (2 Corinthians 7:16-33; Acts 20-28), life’s purpose (Romans

7-8), death, life, other saints, etc. Paul is an example of one leader who, despite worry and joy, he was honest to God (Philippians 4). He was also honest and transparent to all those to whom he testified. In order to be honest, one must also be humble.

Leaders who are humble before God act out their death in service to His kingdom. Note the humiliation Jesus Christ demonstrated as he washed the disciples’ feet, symbolizing the humility of laying down his life on the cross. Christ told his followers that they would suffer for his name’s sake (John 15:21; 2 Corinthians 1:7; James 5:10), that they would be persecuted (John 16:33), have to take up their cross (Matthew 16:24-26; Mark 8:34-35; Luke 9:23, 14:27), and some would even die like him (Romans 12:1). Practicing humility with others is like a warm-up to being humble before God. Paul’s humility before God was demonstrated before his co-laborers as well. Leaders are humble before God in every area of their life. Christian leaders are to think like, live for, and die in Jesus Christ.

Christian Leaders should be honest, humble, and habitual with God.

The leaders in the NT were habitual with God. They talked with Him in prayer; they gathered together with the purpose of discussing Christian virtues, ethics, theology, Jesus Christ, the OT scripture, the Law, etc. Habits that defined who they were in Jesus Christ made them strong leaders. There are many times leaders were seen in a routine that amplified God in their lives. Church leaders today have the benefit of a plethora of books written on spiritual disciplines. There are even books written on “spiritual disciplines for the spiritually exhausted” (Ragged by Gretchen Ronnevik). The truth is the same – those who will lead in God’s kingdom will have an intimate pattern of behavior with God. Being habitual with God involves vulnerability and intimacy. Christian Leaders have the opportunity of connecting with God through many habits, whether in private or a corporate setting, that magnify who God is in their lives while leading others to do the same.



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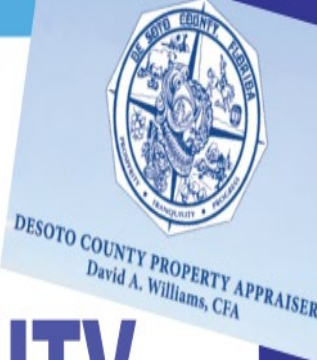
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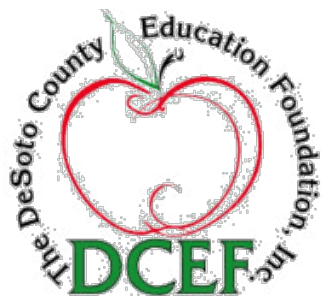




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EMPOWERING EDUCATORS ACROSS DESOTO COUNTY



The DeSoto County Education Foundation is thrilled to announce the launch of RISE! DeSoto, an exciting new initiative designed to support teachers in our district. RISE stands for retain, inspire, support, and encourage. While the program is still in the planning phase, RISE! DeSoto has big plans to provide teachers with the resources, networking opportunities, and professional development they need to thrive in their early years and beyond.

The first networking event for RISE! DeSoto is set for February 10th, marking the start of our efforts to create a supportive community for our teachers. As the program continues to grow, it will offer a range of tools and connections to help teachers succeed and stay in the profession long-term. Our ultimate goal is to reduce turnover and build a strong foundation of passionate educators in DeSoto County.

One exciting result already emerging from this initiative is the RISE Above Award, a special monthly recognition that honors exceptional educators who go above and beyond to inspire, empower, and transform our community. “It’s all about celebrating the dedication and impact these educators bring to our students every day,” says Jodie DeLoach, Executive Director of the DeSoto County Education Foundation. What makes this award unique is that anyone in the community can nominate an educator, allowing parents, students,



and colleagues to join in recognizing those who make a lasting impact.

January marked the first month of this initiative, and the nominations poured in. A total of 32 incredible teachers were nominated by their peers, students, and community members. While we already know how amazing our teachers are, it was truly inspiring to read the heartfelt descriptions of their impact. This recognition not only celebrates individual accomplishments but also fosters a positive, supportive school culture.

Our very first RISE Above Award was presented to Leslie Lolley, a 1st-grade teacher at Memorial Elementary school, whose dedication was described by a

community member as “a true blessing to the education system.” During a surprise ceremony in her classroom, Ms. Lolley expressed her gratitude, saying, “I really appreciate the DeSoto County Education Foundation for taking the time to do this. I work with some amazing educators, and it means a lot to be acknowledged for what we do.”

RISE! DeSoto and the RISE Above Award together form a powerful initiative aimed at boosting teacher morale and retention in DeSoto County. As RISE! DeSoto continues to take shape, we look forward to the future opportunities it will provide for our teachers and the lasting impact it will have on our entire community of educators.

We invite our community to nominate outstanding teachers whose dedication exemplifies what it means to RISE! To submit a nomination for the monthly RISE Above Award, please visit the DeSoto County Education Foundation’s website: Desotoeducationfoundation.com.

Students, parents, colleagues, and community members can nominate one teacher per month. A new teacher will be selected each month to receive this prestigious award. Nominations close on the 20th of each month.

Let’s shine light on the incredible educators who are shaping the future of DeSoto County.

GOLF

FROM PAGE 3 >>

With a shotgun start at 8:30 a.m., the AMS Golf Tournament is a four-person scramble to benefit continued revitalization of downtown Arcadia. Registration begins at 7:00 a.m., and Mulligans (two per player at \$5.00 per Mulligan) and prize raffle tickets (\$5.00 each) may be purchased. Awards will be presented at the luncheon provided to all golfers. A donation of \$75.00 per person includes one lunch. A donation of \$400.00 for a business team includes a course sign for the business. A course sign for organizations, individuals, or businesses is available for the \$100.00 hole sponsorship. Entry forms are available at the AMS office, 17 N. Polk Ave., the course, or online at arcadiamainstreet.com/golf-tournament. For information, call 863-494-2020 or info@arcadiamainstreet.com.

Historic Arcadia Golf Course
The Arcadia Municipal Golf Course, 1769 NE Livingston St., is one of 53 listed in “Florida’s Historic Golf Trail” (floridahistoricgolftrail.com). The first



few holes of the private course were completed for play on Christmas Day 1922 and all nine holes in 1923. Citizens petitioned the City to take the golf course in 1936, and it was so operated; however, the deed was not officially

transferred until 1952. Although the original course had planned 18 holes, the expansion was not completed until 2001 after the City purchased an additional 24 acres in 1999.

Golfers lined up for the shotgun start at the 1st Annual Arcadia Main Street Golf Tournament last year at the Arcadia Municipal Golf Course. Photograph courtesy of Carol Mahler.

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RIDE
FROM PAGE 1 »

an 8:00 a.m. start for those riding the 35-, 45-, or 60-mile routes. The ten- or 20-mile route began at 9:00 a.m., and by 11:00 a.m., the first riders crossed the finished line as the DeSoto High School JROTC cadets cheered. They also helped to set-up and clean-up the event.

Participating in the 20-Mile Slow Roll route, Susan Hotzler of Venice has ridden in three Rides for Tiny Town (RfTT). This time, she liked the route better “especially going out in the country.” A first time participant, Suping Han said she enjoyed riding “where there is less traffic” than where she usually cycles in Sebring.

County Resident Cheryl Irvin, who has ridden four or five years in RfTT, said that “it is a fun event and gets us out to meet new people.” Scott Mears, a homeowner in Arcadia, has ridden every year. He said with a grin, “This year, there’s a lot less pot holes.” Another local citizen, Dawn Raye Cain said that participating in the ride “helps me be braver with traffic when I ride with other people.” She also volunteered at the event registration.

Alice White is the director of the Annual Tour de North Port, “a scenic on-road organized bicycle ride fundraiser sponsored by People for Trees, a non-profit native tree advocacy group since 1997.” She rode the new “Goldilocks” 20-mile route and said, “I like riding . . . where I get to see things I don’t usually see. I saw some sandhill cranes in the cemetery, and I looked at the John Morgan Ingraham House Museum.”

Event Director Karen Smoke explained, “People asked for something that was little bit longer than ten miles, but less than 35, so I picked one of my favorite daily cycling routes and started calling it the ‘Goldilocks’ route.”

A complimentary lunch of hotdogs, hamburgers, baked beans, and potato salad was prepared and donated by the Arcadia Rodeo Association in the Mosaic Arena, where the event started and finished. Additional donors for the luncheon included Beef O’Brady’s (coleslaw); Broken Spur Dinner (potato salad), Oak Park Inn (vegan spaghetti), and Oak Street Deli (macaroni salad). Other food and beverages were donated by All-Faiths Food Bank, Joshua Citrus, K & J Produce, McDonald’s, Pine Level Church, Taco Bell, and WaWa. With names drawn at random, 25 cyclists completing their routes won gift certificates for free beer donated by the Three Trees Brewing Co., and Groovy Smoothie provided frozen smoothies at a reduced cost.

Real Bikes of Venice provided the Supplies And Gear (SAG) along the routes, fixing flats and picking up riders unable to continue. Bicycles International furnished a sound stage at the Mosaic Arena. DeSoto Cares is grateful for sponsorships from Arcadia Printing; Cowpens, LLC; Decker Plumbing; Green Street Associates; Hackney, Ames, & Reichel; Mosaic; Peace River Shopper; Thrivent Financial Services; United Country / Gulfland Real Estate; Vision Ace Hardware, and WC Sounds.



Enjoying the 20-Mile Slow Roll in the Ride for Tiny Town (RfTT), Greg Hotzler and Steve Irvin rode through Morgan Park and then crossed Peace River into DeSoto Veterans Memorial Park.



The Ride for Tiny Town Event Director Karen Smoke chats with Arcadia Rodeo Association’s Office Manager Pat Lindsay, who helped to serve the lunch donated by the Association.



As cyclists completed their routes, the DeSoto High School JROTC students celebrated the accomplishment: from left, Geovani Orozco, Ronald Baynes, Katherine Orozco, Zhimora Wicks, Joel Camacho, Juan Mendoza, Nayeli Garcia. Not pictured, but also volunteering for the event were Isabella Ayala, Erick Cardenas, Nicholas Casteel, Kimberly Galindo, Regina Hudson, Immanuel McKnight, Lauren Ortega, River Rhodes, James Thursby, and Liz Velazquez.



From left, Cheryl Irvin and Scott Mears—local residents—pause during the RfTT for a snack, beverage, and visit with DeSoto Cares Homeless Services Volunteers Marie Hoffmeier and Jay Ambler. Hoffmeier said, “People like to ride their bikes,” and Ambler said, “The event attracts a lot of people from out of town.”



RfTT Bicyclists take a break at DeSoto Veterans Memorial Park: from left Greg Hotzler, Susan Hotzler, Cheryl Irvin, Steve Irvin, Scott Mears, Suping Han, and Dawn Raye Cain visit with DeSoto Cares Volunteers Marie Hoffmeier and Jay Ambler.



From left, Wesley Culpepper, Greyson Culpepper, Darlene Culpepper, and Harper Culpepper staffed the Bicycles International Sound Stage for the Ride for Tiny Town at the Mosaic Arena.



RfTT cyclists cross the Peace River bridge built in 1924 by the Luten Bridge Co., and restored in 2020 by the Florida Dept. of Transportation as part of a multi-use trail between DeSoto Veterans Memorial and Morgan Parks.

The DeSoto High School JROTC cadets cheered cyclists as they crossed the RfTT finish line: from left, Dianna Martinez, Daniella Dominguez, Ronald Baynes, Jessenia Benitez, Giovanni Lopez, Selina Montes, Lee Jones, Juan Mendoza, Natalye Martinez, and Yandel Avila.



Did you purchase or construct a new home last year?



DEADLINE to file your application for Homestead Exemption is **MARCH 1ST**

To qualify for homestead exemptions, you **MUST** own and occupy your home as your primary residence and be a Florida resident as of **JANUARY 1ST**

FILE ONLINE

OR

FILE IN PERSON

Online Exemptions Applications are provided as a courtesy.

IMPORTANT

Please do **NOT** use the Online Exemption Application on **PUBLIC** computers, such as those at the public library or coffee shop. You will be required to provide **PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL** information, such as Social Security Number and Driver's License.

TO FILE ONLINE, VISIT:
desotopa.com/online_exemptions/

The application process can be overwhelming, due to the nature of the form supplied by the Florida Department of Revenue and the number of documents required to be provided.

**CALL TO SCHEDULE
IN-PERSON APPOINTMENT:**
863-993-4866

» Each individual applying should bring **ALL** of the required documents listed below. «

ADDITIONAL EXEMPTIONS

- Senior's Exemptions (age 65 or older, limited income)
- Disabled Veteran's Exemption
- Widow's / Widower's Exemption
- Disability Exemption
- Exemption for Blind Persons
- Veteran's Combat-Related Percentage Discount (age 65 or older)
- Deployed Military Exemption
- Exemptions for Surviving Spouse of Veteran or First Responder

If you have questions concerning the qualifications for these exemptions, please contact our office:

863.993.4866 • 201 E. Oak Street Suite 102, Arcadia
Office Hours: Monday - Friday 8:30 am - 5:00 pm

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

- Social Security Number
- Florida Driver's License or ID Card (with current address)
- Florida Vehicle Tag Number
- Voter Registration (if applicable)
- Immigration Information (Residency, Passport, etc.)
- School Information where dependent children are registered
- Checking/Savings Account Statement (leave in envelope)
- Paid Utility Bill (with Service Address)
- Death Certificate for Spouse (when applying for widow/widower's exemption)
- Copy of Trust (for properties titled to Trusts)
- For disability exemptions, contact the office for the documentation required (includes service-connected)



DESOTO COUNTY PROPERTY APPRAISER

David A. Williams, CFA, CCF

www.desotopa.com

FESTIVAL

FROM PAGE 2 >>

PROGRAMS IN THE CCC MUSEUM INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

12:00 PM - 12:45 PM

Joe Guthrie, Wildlife Biologist, Archbold Biological Station will present 'The Florida Wildlife Corridor' and screen 'The Wild Divide,' a documentary film of the 2019 Ranch to Ridge Expedition.

1:00 PM - 1:30 PM

David Schmidt, CCC Museum Curator will present 'The Appalachian Trail and the Blue Ridge Parkway,' which examines the roles of the CCC and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in these New Deal Era projects.

2:15 PM - 3:00 PM

John Goss, Archaeologist will present 'Prehistoric Native American Corridors and Waterways in Florida,' which explores historical and archaeological accounts of Native American transportation corridors in southern Florida.

Refreshments may be purchased at the Hammock Inn and food vendors will be providing BBQ, hot dogs, lemonade and snow cones. All CCC Festival activities are free and open to the public with the exceptions of tram rides, pony rides and wagon rides. Tram tickets are sold through the Hammock Inn concession, which is open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Ticket cost is \$15 per adult and \$10 for children six to 12 years old. Children aged five and younger are free. Tickets may be purchased on the day of the tour or one day in advance. Call the Hammock Inn at 863-402-0061. Pony rides are \$5 per ride and wagon rides are \$10 per person. Park entry fees of \$ 6 per vehicle (up to 8 people) and \$ 4 per single occupant vehicle apply. Highlands Hammock State Park is located at 5931 Hammock Road in Sebring.



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\$65 per person
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- LOW SCORE TOP 3 TEAMS
- CLOSEST TO THE PINS (PAR 3)
- LONGEST DRIVE (MEN/WOMEN)
- PUTTING

PLEASE PRINT NAMES:

Captain: _____ Phone #: _____

Email: _____

Golfer #2 _____

Golfer #3 _____

Golfer #4 _____

FOURSOME: \$260 INDIVIDUALS: \$65 PLEASE SELECT:

Paid Foursome ☐ Paid #1 ☐ Paid #2 ☐ Paid #3 ☐ Paid #4 ☐

Total Paid: _____

Cash ☐ Check ☐ (payable to American Legion)

Post Representative: _____ Date: _____



For more info, call Ron Jones: 941-806-7108

ENTRY FORMS AVAILABE AT:

Arcadia Golf Course: 1769 NE LIVINGSTON ST. • Radio Shack: 707 N. BREVARD AVE.
Arcadia American Legion: 2124 AMERICAN LEGION DR.



STUDENT APPLICATION

Only Eighth, Ninth, and 10th Graders Can Apply

Must meet the following requirements

- Income eligibility
- Attendance
- Minimum 2.5 GPA
- Behavior



Apply Online

MENTOR APPLICATION

TSIC is seeking for mentors who meet these criteria:

- Want to make a difference in a child’s life
- Willing to commit a minimum of a year to serve as a mentor
- Able to meet 30 minutes twice a month to mentor a student
- Undergo a background check for security purposes



Apply Online



IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS,
CONTACT TAKE STOCK IN CHILDREN:
PHONE: **863-784-7343**
EMAIL: **tsic@southflorida.edu**

SUDOKU

		8	1					
				7				
7		4		3	8			
							6	
	4	5		1			3	
	2	7	5				9	4
						1		
	8							2
3	5				4	9		

Level: Advanced

HERE'S HOW IT WORKS:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

ANSWERS:

6	8	6	4	2	7	1	5	3
2	5	7	1	6	3	9	8	4
3	4	1	5	8	9	2	7	6
4	9	8	3	6	5	7	2	1
7	3	2	6	1	8	5	4	9
1	9	5	7	4	2	3	6	8
5	2	9	8	3	6	4	1	7
8	1	3	2	7	4	6	9	5
9	7	4	6	5	1	8	3	2

HELP SUPPORT THE ARCADIA COMMUNITY LOCAL!

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or call **863-990-9813**

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

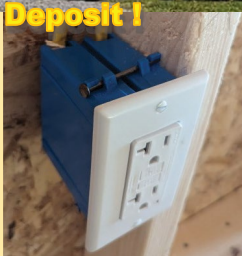
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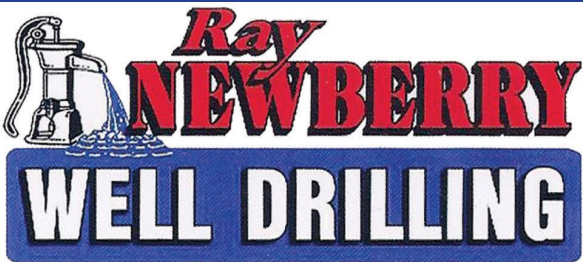
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MARCH 6TH-9TH, 2025

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