

ARCADIA

THE COMMUNITY

JANUARY 30, 2025



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Local

ARCADIA CELEBRATES MLK DAY WITH PARADE & BAZZAR



From left, Breiden Mack, Tami Ridley, Kyla Mack, and Brittanna Mack set up a booth at the Martin Luther King, Jr., Day Bazaar in the park.



CAROL MAHLER
Independent Contractor
carolmahler22acl@gmail.com
Photos provided

“The parade is bigger this year than it was last year,” Shawn Washington, president of Building A Village, said of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Day Parade. “The community really showed up this year.” Because of construction on W. Magnolia St. (State Road 70 East), the parade started at Elizabeth Baptist Church, 108 S. Orange Ave., and ended at the park at the northwest corner of Martin Luther King, Jr., St..

Following the parade, 16 vendors offered arts and crafts, food, and information for a bazaar in the park at the northwest corner of Martin Luther King, Jr., St. and S. Orange Ave. For the ceremony at the start of the Bazaar, the DeSoto High School JROTC cadets served as color guard the while the Blazing Blue Band played the National Anthem.



The DeSoto High School JROTC cadets marched in the Martin Luther King, Jr., Day Parade: from left, Jasmine Daniel, Jason Hirschy, Joel Camacho, Natalie Martinez, Katherine Orozco, Isabella Bates, Emily Irick, Alyrika Bailey, Kimberly Galindo, Nicholas Casteel, Savannah Rachel, and Erick Cardenas.

SEE MLK PAGE 19 >>

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**DESOTO COUNTY
SPORTS**
PAGE 4

STEVE KNAPP
sports@peaceivershopper.com



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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 5	DESOTO COUNTY VALUE ADJUSTMENT BOARD MEETING
WED 9A	Administration Building 201 E. Oak Street, Suite 103 Arcadia, FL 34266
FEB 11	DESOTO COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING
TUE 9P	Administration Building 201 E. Oak Street, Suite 103 Arcadia, FL 34266
FEB 25	DESOTO COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING
TUE 3P & 6:30P	Administration Building 201 E. Oak Street, Suite 103 Arcadia, FL 34266

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

Realtor Showcase
See page 11

**DESOTO COUNTY
SHERIFF'S OFFICE**
ARREST REPORT
See page 13

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“STATE OF MAIN” PRESENTED AT COUNCIL MEETING



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

At the Jan. 21 Council meeting, Pam Ames, Director of Arcadia Main Street (AMS), gave the “State of Main” for 2024 presentation. Of the 87 businesses located in the Arcadia Historic District, 34 are Main Street Partners.

Although three businesses closed in 2024—Mary Margaret’s Tea and Biscuit, Mixed Emotions Boutique, and Rattlers—13 new enterprises opened: Arcadia (formerly Magnolia) Seafood and Grill, Broken Spur Diner, Dozier’s Pool Hall, FETTERS Keep Creating, Gilded Cypress, Laura’s Good Vibe Tribe Thrift Store, Lucky Monkey Mercantile, Neon Moon Saloon, The Sweet Shop, Sweet Magnolia Creamery and Confection, Three Trees Brewery, and YiYi’s Wine & Cigar Bar. In addition, Anderson Ink Parlor, Jypsie Soul Event Planning, and The Valley Florist relocated. As a result, 15 full-time and 30 part-time jobs were created.

However, eleven buildings are vacant, and AMS requested that the Council rent one of them—the other half of “the old Arcadia Police Dept.”—to AMS with the understanding that AMS will apply for a grant from the Selby Foundation for needed renovations in exchange for a long-term lease. “It will be a community space for meetings and allow the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to help entrepreneurs,” Ames said. The Council agreed to entertain the proposal as a future agenda item.

Ames reported on activities ranging from two Bike Fests, Discover Arcadia Market (Oct. to May), Downtown Cleanups, Happy Thrifter Bus, Golf Tournament, Passport Event, and Summer Block Party to Holiday Wine Walk, Poker Walk/Beer Walk, Rodeo Beer Walk, and Valentine Wine Walk. For the events, 40 volunteers worked a total of 423 hours for a value of \$14,199.76.

To provide guidance and information, AMS developed a Brochure and Map, Sticker with QR Code, Banner Program/Decorations, Store Front Mastery Consultant Presentation, and What is Main Street? In addition, AMS participated in planning a Community Redevelopment Area (CRA), Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Coordination, plus the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Recovery and Resiliency Partnership Project (R2P2) for the City.

AMS received three grants: \$50,000.00 from T-Mobile and \$20,000.00 from Hope DeSoto for downtown facade repair and restoration, and \$50,000.00 from the Florida Dept. of State, Division of Historic Resources, to resurvey the Arcadia Historic District. The building improvement (with



During Bike Fest on Apr. 6, 2024, motorcycles and people crowd W. Oak St. for one of Arcadia Main Street’s fund-raising activities.



Pam Ames, director of Arcadia Main Street, presented the “State of Main” for 2024 to the Council at their Jan 21 meeting.

Discover Arcadia Market

Join us **EVERY** 2nd Saturday
9am-2pm
Tree of Knowledge Park

www.arcadiamainstreet.com
863-494-2020

Vendors always welcome
apply [here](#).



permitting) investment is \$330,500.00.

“To create a vibrant, welcoming, downtown Arcadia that preserves our historic charm while fostering a dynamic environment for businesses, residents, and visitors,” AMS has four committees. The design, economic development, and promotions committees work, respectively, “to enhance the aesthetic appeal and historic charm of downtown; strengthen downtown’s economic base and support local business growth; increase awareness of downtown as a destination for shopping, dining, and events.” In addition, an organization committee “builds a sustainable and effective organization that drives downtown Arcadia’s revitalization efforts.”

“BRONCO BUSTER” STATUE OFFERED TO THE CITY



John Arnold has offered to donate to the City a “life-size” copy of “Bronco Buster” and suggested placement in the Tree of Knowledge Park. Photograph provided.



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

At the Jan. 21 meeting, Mayor Judy Wertz-Strickland said that John Arnold has offered to donate to the City a life-size bronze statute of “Bronco Buster,” a renowned sculpture by artist and writer Frederic Remington (1861-1909). She noted that it was appropriate for the City to accept the statue because Remington visited Arcadia.

Based on his trip to Arcadia in 1895, he wrote and illustrated the article “Cracker Cowboys of Florida” that was published in “Harper’s New Monthly Magazine.” His painting of a lone cowhunter may be of Morgan Bonaparte “Bone” Mizell (1863-1921) and is on the cover of “Florida Cowhunter: The Life and Times of Bone Mizell” by Jim Bob Tinsley.

Arnold suggested placing the statue in the grass area of the Tree of Knowledge Park at the corner of DeSoto Ave. and Oak St.. However, Wertz-Strickland said that it will require a four-to-five foot base, so it may need to be situated farther north in the grass. She has been invited to view the statue stored locally in a barn.

Councilmember Keith Keene noted that the statue was probably “after” or “in the style” of Remington because Remington did produce large sculptures. Indeed, according to “Everybody has a Frederic Remington for Sale” by Mark Chervenka posted on realorrepro.com,

“Bronzes by Frederic Remington are among the most widely reproduced of all metal sculptures . . . [and] since the copyright protection expired in the 1960s, the number of reproductions in the market has exploded . . . Only two sizes of Remington’s original ‘Bronco Buster’ were produced: one about 23”, the other, about 32”.” The Council plans to continue discussion of the proposed gift.

IN OTHER BUSINESS

The Council approved Specific Authorization #51 for \$438,330.00—funded by the State Revolving Fund loan/grant—with George F. Young (GFY) for Construction, Engineering, and Inspection (CEI) services during the construction Phase 2B Sanitary Server and Phase 1B Water Project. Hazen and Sawyer is the engineer of record. Services include attending pre-bid and pre-construction meetings, conducting field inspections, witnessing testing and providing documentation, including meeting agendas and minutes, plus reviewing all paperwork associated with the project as outlined in Exhibit C.

The agreement with Andrew Sitework, LLC, (AS) for IFB 2024-08 Sanitary Sewer Collection Improvements, Phase 2B, Water Distribution System Improvements, Phase 1B, was approved and executed. The Council had previously approved the award of IFB 2024-08 to AS for \$11,813,615.00, funded by the Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection (FDEP) State Revolving Fund Program (SRF).

In addition, the Council ratified the contract for IFB 2024-10 Arcadia Municipal Airport Obstruction Removal to A+ Environmental Restoration, LLC, for a base bid of \$317,688.70 plus additive alternatives A1-A12 for \$341,295.92 for a total of \$658,984.62 funded by a Florida Dept of Transportation (FDOT) grant. Alternatives include trimming instead of removing trees and planting replacements.

Also, the Council approved a request from Sarasota Trading Co. and L & E Builders, Inc., to use three parking spaces in front 101 W. Oak St. and five parking space on S. Polk Ave. and all adjoining sidewalks for a planned restoration of the Rosin Arcade from Jan. 21 to Feb. 10. A boom will be used for the refurbishment of 15 windows on the second floor to “preserve the integrity and aesthetic of the property.” No work will be done during weekends of Jan. 25-26 (4th Sat. Antique Fair) and Feb. 8-9 (Discover Arcadia Market).

COMMENTS FROM DEPARTMENTS

Marshal Quinn Jones reported that speed enforcement was conducted on Harris St. from Nov. 11 through Dec. 2 with 2 citations and 1 warning issued. He noted that the City’s crime rate had decreased 9% during 2024. Also, two officers received minor injuries when they confronted a shoplifting suspect who attacked them.

Code Enforcement Director Carl

McQuay opened 57 and closed 53 cases, with 197 ongoing cases in Jan. 2025. Thirteen cases scheduled for the Jan. 24 special master hearing had been reduced to eight because of violations corrected or time extensions granted. He will get an estimate for a survey of the home at 301 S. Dade Ave. as it seems to be located on City property. He reported that the water is turned off at 807 W. Oak St., and City Attorney T. J. Wohl will inform the bank of the \$3,000.00 in utility liens in addition to more than \$200,000.00 in code enforcement liens.

Interim City Administrator Beth Carsten reported “an exciting piece of news.” After struggling to find a new assistant Golf Professional, one “with a passion for the game” has been hired to begin in Feb. In addition, she noted that the design to rebuild the Waste Water Treatment Plant is 100% complete and goes to FDEP for review and permitting. Then the bid process may start. Construction will take two years, and the deadline is May 2027. Also, bids for the City Hall restoration are higher than the design estimate but much lower than the previous bids. As they are itemized, the City may be able to accomplish the project in phases.

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., DAY PARADE TO THE PARK

Deputy Mayor Luis Velasco thought more businesses could participate in the Martin Luther Kind, Jr., Day parade, and



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BULLDOGS STUMBLE AT HOME IN 60-32 LOSS



STEVE KNAPP
Sports Writer
sports@peacershopper.com

Two weeks earlier the Desoto Bulldogs girls basketball team played a very good Booker team and lost by 16 on the road. Their rematch at home was expected to be a closer game since they were familiar with the Tornadoes and they had the advantage of “home cookin”.

It didn’t turn out that way at all as the Bulldogs just couldn’t get going and were blown out by their first running clock of the season with a 60-32 loss. Even losses to Charlotte and Port Charlotte, two of the best programs in the area, weren’t as bad as the game with Booker.

The Bulldogs trailed 33-12 at the half scoring just 6 points in each of the first two quarters. An 8 point third quarter was no match for the speedy Tornadoes as they knocked down 23 points to start the running clock. With the Booker bench empty they got just 4 points in the final 8 minutes with their subs on the floor while the Bulldogs scored 12 to make the final score somewhat more respectable.

Yahri Tyler was held to just 7 points down from her season average of 19 a game. She did manage to pull in 8 rebounds. Cherish Wiggins had another respectable game leading the Bulldogs with 13 points and 8 rebounds. It was her third straight game with at least 8 rebounds.

“We didn’t match Booker’s intensity. They were coming off a big loss and wanted to win big and unfortunately we were the team they played. We had some turnovers that we have to work on before playoffs, we had a good plan for tonight but it just never happened. It was good to get some other players in the game to get them used to the speed of the game,” said coach Ardine Primus.

Five days later the Bulldogs bounced back with a convincing 70-37 win over Sebring hit run their record to 15-5. Four players hit double figures with Tyler leading the way with 21 and 10 rebounds for another double double. Wiggins totaled 16 with Janeris Bing close behind with 15. Whitley Barron had her first double figure game knocking down 10 points.



Sa'Niyah White (4) and Sara Rooney work under the board for a rebound in the loss to Booker.

Sa'Niyah White and Sara Rooney walk off the court after the 60-32 loss to Booker.



Janeris Bing passes the ball to Jaliyah Luther under the basket for a quick two points.

The Bulldogs are currently 15-5 with all 5 losses coming at the hands of Booker, Charlotte and Port Charlotte. The Bulldogs will host Sebring tonight in their final regular season home game before they finish the season at Manatee tomorrow night.

Cherish Wiggins, Rihanna Downing and Iyanna McGill listen to coach Primus during a late timeout.



DESOTO COUNTY

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

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Mosaic

LADIES STEP UP TO EARN THE TITLE



STEVE KNAPP
Sports Writer
sports@peacerrivershopper.com

The girl's soccer team has had tough times over the past 3 seasons. Going into the first round of the district tournament they had won just one game in the past 3 seasons. That win came against Lake Placid, 2-1, on November 16 2023.

The 2022-2023 season saw them drop all 12 matches and then one win last season and an 0-10 record entering the playoffs. One win over the previous 35 games and being outscored in those three seasons 210-23 didn't provide much hope for the girls as they faced Island Coast in the district tournament.

The team found a way to break a scoreless tie in the second half and win 3-0 to set up a rematch with the number one seed team in the next round. The three goals was as many as the team had scored in their previous 10 games combined so you can see it was quite an accomplishment to eliminate a team from the district competition.

Freshman Iris Rios scored the second goal for the Bulldogs and said, "It was an amazing experience that we had as a team." Junior Isela Gonzalez scored the other two goals.

Coach Ana Reyes was happy for the girls, not only for the win but to see them be successful. "I am very proud of the team this year. The girls who have played since their freshman year have really stepped up and made themselves coachable. They have worked on their technique both on and off the field. I am thankful that Dany (Gonzalez assistant coach) stepped in to help me with the girls this season. He brought some techniques and drills that kept the girls on their toes. Getting the win was a good feeling, but my favorite part was seeing the girls actually enjoy the results of their hard work."

The girls weightlifting team also had some success this week. Brasaya Wiley placed first in the traditional portion of the district meet (clean and jerk and bench press). That performance put her automatically into the regional tournament held yesterday. Wiley placed in the Olympic lifting.

Tomiah Henry placed 3rd in the 154 weight class which put her in the pool of top 16 qualifiers for the regional tournament. Lea Garcia, a senior in her first year as a lifter placed 6th but did not qualify to advance to the regionals.



The DeSoto soccer team is a fun team to be around. They earned a 3-0 win to break a losing streak.



Brasaya Wiley won the district championship despite lifting 15 pounds under her max in the bench press.



Izzy Gonzalez flashes 3's to represent her uniform number. Three is also the number of goals the Bulldogs scored to beat Island Coast.



Iris Rios scored the second goal in the win over Island Coast.



Tomiah Henry advances to the regional tournament after placing 3rd at the district meet.

LAST GO AROUND FOR BULLDOG SENIORS



STEVE KNAPP
Sports Writer
sports@peacerrivershopper.com

Senior night is always filled with a little sadness and reflection along with excitement for the future. Here are the Desoto County senior soccer players and their families on their special night.

DeSoto coach Fernando Zepeda



Tony Caja



Andri Vargas



Alan Mejia



Keeper Samar Hernandez



Jean Betecherely



David Rojas



Juan Gonzalez



Evan Kreft



Josaphet Ramirez

DESOTO COUNTY

GAME OF THE WEEK

Sponsored by: 

BULLDOGS LOSE “YO-YO” GAME TO BOBCATS



STEVE KNAPP
Sports Writer
sports@peacerivershopper.com

Invented nearly 100 years ago, the yo-yo (translates to “come back”) was a very popular toy for kids of all ages. The oldest and most well known manufacturer is a company named Duncan. That would seem to go well with the sport of basketball since the “dunk” is an exciting play.

The Desoto boys basketball 66-53 loss to North Port was a perfect example of a Yo-Yo game. The Bulldogs jumped out to a 15-2 start in the first quarter. Every shot they made, no matter how difficult it was, seemed to go through the net effortlessly. They were making shots normally seen shooting by themselves in an empty gym. The team was cheering and the fans were loud and everything was great in Arcadia as the Bulldogs stood tall with a 21-8 lead at the end of the first period.

The yo-yo got involved in the second quarter as the Bulldogs’ lead shrunk from 13 points to just 5 at 27-22 at the break. The second half started with the yo-yo coming back up as the Bulldogs scored the first 4 points to get the lead back to 9 at 31-22. DeSoto had a 41-31 lead with 2 minutes to go in the third and maintained the lead outscoring the Bobcats 19-18 to take a 46-40 lead going into the final 8 minutes.

Then the yo-yo’s string broke, it rolled away and got crushed by a truck and fell into the storm drain as the Bobcats came out of the gate scoring 12 of the first 14 points in the quarter to take a 52-48 lead.

DeSoto crawled back to tie the game at 52, but North Port went on a 14-1 run to easily pull ahead and win the game going away 66-53. The fourth quarter meltdown was just the opposite of the first quarter highlights. Jordan Demond got the only point over the last half of the final quarter. Azir Blanding fouled out with 2:41 left to play and took his second high (9) point total to the bench for the rest of the game.

Shots were way off mark as one of the team’s best three point shooter missed two in a row including one that was an air ball. Shots were bouncing off the rim like those rims at a carnival with an extra roll of metal at the top to keep the ball from going through. Players and fans alike were stunned at the complete difference in the game from the first and fourth quarter. DeSoto was outscored 26-7 in the fourth quarter and that was the difference in the game.

“We let one get away from us. We got a little selfish at the end and just didn’t finish the game. Our shots stopped falling and they began attacking and that was the difference of the game,” said Darrel Nicklow.



Zion Morales fires up a shot from beyond the arc in the loss to North Port.



Azir Blanding goes way up for two of his 9 points in the 66-53 loss.



Julian Quezada puts up a shot in the first quarter against North Port.



Isaac Clarke gives a good effort to keep the ball in play in the loss to North Port.



Marlon Taylor uses his acrobatic skills to get two of his team high 16 points.



Isaac Clarke gets off a shot underneath against North Port.



Isaac Clarke and Zion Morales (15) display some of the pesky swarming defense for the Bulldogs.

SFSC MOFAC PRESENTS EXHIBITIONS: “ECHOES UNVEILED” AND “WHISKERS AND TALES”



AVON PARK, Fla. — Jan. 10, 2025
— Two exhibitions open in January at the South Florida State College (SFSC) Museum of Florida Art and Culture (MOFAC) in Avon Park. On view at MOFAC are Katya Neptune’s “Echoes Unveiled” and Mary Seigfreid’s “Whiskers and Tales.” Both exhibitions run now through Monday, March 31. MOFAC exhibits can be viewed Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, 12:30 – 4:30 p.m. and by appointment. Admission is free.

A free art exhibition opening reception will be held on Thursday, Jan. 16, 12:30-1:30 p.m. at MOFAC, in which artists Neptune and Seigfreid will give brief talks. Refreshments will be served.

KATYA NEPTUNE, “ECHOES UNVEILED”

Neptune’s “Echoes Unveiled” exhibition runs Jan. 5 through March 31 and can be seen in MOFAC’s main gallery. This exhibition highlights Neptune’s two-decade journey as an interdisciplinary artist and independent curator dedicated to empowering emerging artists. Neptune is the founder of ArtHeart, a South Florida-based organization that, through group exhibitions and collaborative projects, has raised funds and awareness to support orphaned children in Rwanda and Cap-Haïtien, Haiti. The works featured in “Echoes Unveiled” honor the lives of these children and their resilience.

A central theme in Neptune’s advocacy for emerging artists and her personal art practice is her exploration of mental health. Her work is deeply process-oriented, reflective, and introspective. She navigates the complexities of mental health through diverse mediums, including mixed-media sculpture, abstract mapping, photography, painting, digital art, and installation. Each medium is chosen with care — often guided by intuition — to mirror her psychological and emotional states. Through intimate visual narratives, Neptune shares her journey of struggle and healing, fostering conversations about mental health and challenging the stigma surrounding mental illness. The marks and abstract mappings framing the

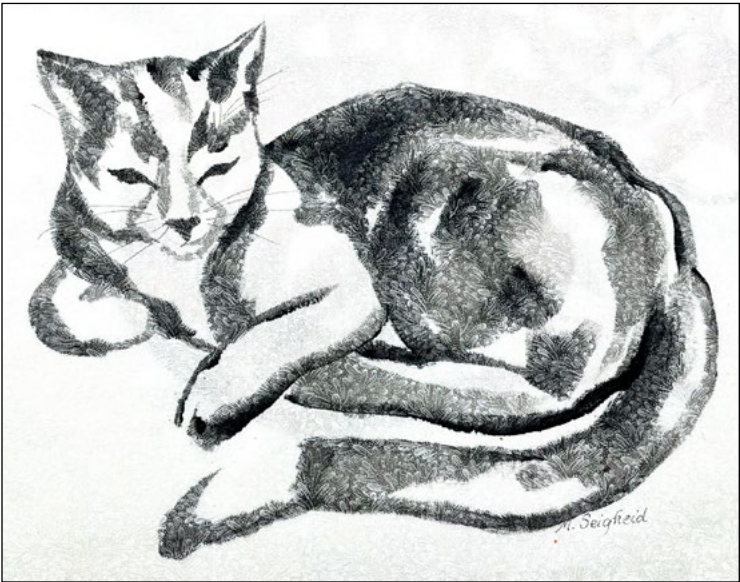


Rwanda, 2013, by Katya Neptune

works in “Echoes Unveiled” bring her internal reflections to life.
Neptune is a Filipina artist of the diaspora (b. 1976, Angeles City, Philippines) now based in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

MARY SEIGFREID, “WHISKERS AND TALES”

Seigfreid’s exhibition, “Whiskers and Tales” runs from Jan. 9 through March 31 and can be seen in the gallery at the Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts. Through her art, she invites viewers to see the extraordinary within the ordinary. Her playful use of materials often sparks nostalgia, while her attention to detail and humor encourages a closer look at the stories her works tell. The artwork in “Whiskers and Tales” resonate with themes of resourcefulness, relaxation, and the celebration of life’s small moments.



(Unnamed cat image) by Mary Seigfreid

Seigfreid relocated from Cincinnati to Sebring in 1978, forging a deep connection with the local art community that has spanned decades. During that time, she also developed a distinctive artistic voice celebrated for its whimsical and witty use of repurposed and vintage materials. Seigfreid’s

artistic practice is rooted in finding joy and wonder in the natural world, the rhythms and materials of everyday life, and the imaginative possibilities that arise during the process of creation.
MOFAC is located at 600 West College Drive on the SFSC Highlands Campus in Avon Park.

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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
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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

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SFSC GRADUATES 37 CADETS FROM THREE PUBLIC SAFETY PROGRAMS



AVON PARK, Fla. — Jan. 8, 2025 — South Florida State College (SFSC) honored 37 graduating students from three Public Safety programs in a ceremony on Tuesday, Jan. 7 on the SFSC Highlands Campus in Avon Park.

The 12 cadets from SFSC’s Fire Science Academy are: Pierre Beaucicot, Zachary Durastani, Davian Gamez-Cendejas, David Hagelstein III, Makayla Jones, Jhezer Maranan, Ismael Majia, ESean Miller, Christian Newport, Sheldon Rossin, Caden Storts, and Johnathan Young. Special recognition went to Christina Newport for attaining the highest GPA in the class.

The 12 cadets from the Paramedic program are: Terrance Adams, Jillian Barber, David Heflin, Juan Marcial-Arciniega, Dominic Matute, Ian McGuirk, Scott Moller, Sabrina Page, Kristin Robie, Aaron Wertz, Ceceil Williams, and Michael Yount. Special recognition went to Kristin Robie for attaining the highest GPA in lecture and to Ian McGuirk for the highest GPA in lab.

The 13 cadets from the Emergency

Medical Technician (EMT) program are: Sylvia Arevalo-Perez, Cheney Brady, Trevor Cooke, Jacob Delong, Michael Dunn, Cayley Franks, Kristian Gonzalez, Elizabeth Hayn, Khair Lightfoot-Muhammad, Francisco Olivero Jr., Rebecca Oser, Armando Otero-Rivera, and Nicholas Wetherington. Special recognition went to Armando Otero-Rivera for attaining the highest GPA in lecture and to Cayley Franks for highest GPA in lab.

Steve Ashworth, director of the EMS and Fire Science programs, presented the graduate address during the ceremony.

Graduates of the Firefighter Career Certificate program have completed 492 contact hours of training. A cohort of cadets enroll in the Firefighter I course, often with the expectation of continuing through to Firefighter II training. Firefighter II training is required for those who wish to be employed as professional firefighters in Florida.

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

threatening situations.

The EMT graduates completed the 16 weeks of training, or 300 contact hours, in the program. Upon completion of the program, graduates are eligible to apply to take the Florida EMT State Board Exam. EMTs function as part of an emergency rescue and transportation team by responding to emergency calls through a dispatch system, operating

emergency vehicles safely, assessing scenes of accidents or illnesses, setting priorities for treating patients based on their degree of illness or injury, providing pre-hospital emergency care to treat trauma, shock, wounds, and other medical issues.

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

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OBITUARIES



JOSEPH EVERETT WALKER



Joseph Everett Walker, 64, of Arcadia, Florida, passed away peacefully in the early morning hours of January 20, 2025, surrounded by his family in Port Charlotte, FL. He leaves behind an incredible legacy of kindness, integrity and leadership. Joseph, or “just Joe” to most, was born in Sarasota, FL, on August 2, 1960. From a young age, he was active in Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts and the Order of the Arrow, where he developed his love for the outdoors. It was not uncommon to find him—

usually accompanied by his best friend of 60 years, Giles “Dean” Perry—in the woods or on the water after school (if not during). He was an active member of the Future Farmers of America, in which he had the best time competing in Career Development Events and raising a grand champion steer for the Sarasota County Fair. From 1979 to 1983, Joe was a soldier in the United States Air Force, having earned the rank of Sergeant by the end of his service. He worked primarily as a Security Specialist, training a ‘triple threat’ K-9 named ‘Zorro.’ His secondary AF Specialty Code was ground radio communications. He also trained with the Special Forces and earned the coveted title of the ‘Green Beret.’ Joe held several jobs over the years—electrician, welder, private helicopter pilot and flight medic, just to name a few—but he found his true calling in public service. At the beginning of his impressive 30+ year career, he obtained certifications as an EMT, paramedic and firefighter while working in a walk-in clinic and in the Sarasota Memorial Hospital emergency room. Later, He earned a B.S. (Summa Cum Laude) in Fire Science, a B.S.

in Paramedic Science and an M.S. in Fire Protection Engineering, adding fire inspector, instructor, investigator and professor of Fire Science to his résumé. These achievements made him one of the most decorated professionals in the field. Departments he worked for included Sarasota County, where he got his start; DeSoto County, where he retired in 2011; and Hardee County, where he came out of retirement to lead the department as Fire Chief and Public Safety Director until 2021. As dedicated as he was to his career, his top priority and joy in life was always his family. On a fateful day in 1988, Joe met the love of his life, Jeanne, and they married on September 11, 1989. They welcomed a son, Travis, in 1990 and a daughter, April, in 1992. He worked hard and sacrificed more than he’d ever let on to ensure his family was cared for. Later in life, he loved being ‘Grandpa’ to “Emmy” and “Alex”, spending every day with them and helping guide them, just as he did with his own children. Two of Joe’s lifelong passions were amateur radio and aviation. He earned his HAM radio license when he was 15 and soon had a full station set up, making contacts all

over the world from his bedroom. Over time, he became one of the most accomplished Morse Code operators of his generation, actively competing in national contests until recent years. In his early twenties, he obtained his private pilot’s license and later his commercial license. He enjoyed flying smaller planes, gyrocopters and jets, but his true love was piloting helicopters. His head remained in the clouds until his last days. Joseph is survived and missed by his devoted wife of 35 years, Jeanne M. Walker; his children, Travis W. (Elsie) Walker of Arcadia, FL, and April M. Walker of Big Timber, MT; his granddaughters, Emmily L. Walker and Alexandria G. Walker of Arcadia, FL; his mother, Joanne C. Walker of Arcadia, FL; his sisters, Catherine ‘Kitty’ Scott of Sarasota, FL, and Loretta ‘Lorrie’ (Robert “Bob”) Johnston of Dover, FL; and many beloved nieces and nephews. He is preceded in death by his father, Donald E. Walker. **Family and friends are welcome to attend a celebration of life, which will be held at the Turner Agri-Civic Center (2250 NE Roan St, Arcadia, FL 34266) on Saturday, February 1, at 1:00 p.m.**

ANTHONY MICHAEL BRYAN (MIKE)



Anthony Michael Bryan (MIKE) was born in Wauchula on June 9, 1959, and passed away on January 14, 2025, at Brandley’s Hospice House in Summereld, FL. Mike was co-owner of Bryan Farm Supply for several years. He served nine years in the 82d Airborne Division of the US Army and was stationed at Ft. Bragg. Mike is survived by his brothers Derrell Bryan and Scott Bryan (Molly) and his sisters Karen Shields (Richard Neville) and Cheryl Carr and is preceded in death by his parents, W. Derrell Bryan and Darlene Rudolph (nee McLeod.) **Services were private.**

GARY THOMAS

Gary Thomas age 60, of Arcadia, Florida, was called home to serve his Lord on January 18, 2025. He loved to fish, garden, and go on the boat, shoot guns, his dogs and most of all spending time with family and friends. His biggest accomplishment was his kids. He is survived by his mother, June Wooten, his brothers Guy, Jimmy, Timmy and Daniel Thomas and his two children Michelle and James Thomas. He is preceded in death by Mandy Thomas and Rawlis Thomas. He will be greatly missed.

Online condolences may be made at: www.pongerkaysgrady.com **Ponger-Kays-Grady Funeral Home & Cremation Services have been entrusted with the arrangements.**

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SHERIFF'S OFFICE



ARREST REPORT | 1/17/25 - 1/23/25

Cruz Tablada, Estefany Isabel:

Moving Traffic Viol - Operate Motor Vehicle W/O Valid Lic 1St Conv, Out-Of-County Warrant - Out-Of-County Warrant

Daniels IV, Nelson:

Drugs-Sell - Sell Controlled Substance Schedule I, Drugs-Possess - Possess Controlled Substance W/O Prescription, Drug Equip-Possess - Drug Equip-Possess: And Or Use, Resist Officer - Obstruct Wo Violence, Weapon Offense - Use Display Etc Firearm During Felony, Marijuana-Sell - Wi 1000 Ft Of Specified Area Sched I, Cocaine-Sell - Wi 1000 Ft Of Specified Area Sched Ii, Public Order Crimes - Keep Pub Nuisance Structure For Drug Activity

Davis, Michael Callan:

Possession Of Weapon - Or Ammo By Convicted Fla Felon, Smuggle Contraband - Ctrl Sub S.893.02(4) County Detention Facility, Drugs-Possess - Possess Controlled Substance W/O Prescription, Drug Equip-Possess - Drug Equip-Possess: And Or Use, Resist Officer - Obstruct Wo Violence, Veh Theft - Grand Theft Of Motor Vehicle

De La Cruz-Perez, Robertoni:

Moving Traffic Viol - Operate Motor Vehicle W/O Valid Lic 1St Conv, Out-Of-County Warrant - Out-Of-County Warrant

Eady, Robert Vaughn:

Prob Violation - Prob Violation

Faulkner, Rusty Lee:

Stolen Prop-Deal In - Dealing Traffic Stolen Property

Gutierrez, Janie:

Larc - Other Theft

Isaacs, Robert William:

Prob Violation - Prob Violation

Jimenez Mendoza, Rene Edenilson:

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

Killian, Olivia Lynn:

Nonmoving Traffic Viol - Operate Motor Vehicle Wo Valid License, Nonmoving Traffic Viol - Fail To Register Motor Veh (X2), Drug Equip-Possess - And Or Use (X2), Drugs-Possess - Cntrl Sub Wo Prescription, Cocaine-Possess - Possess Cocaine, Nonmoving Traffic Viol - Drive While Lic Susp 1St Off

Lucas, Bryan Jeffery:

Drugs-Possess - Possess Controlled Substance W/O Prescription, Drug Equip-Possess - Drug Equip-Possess: And Or Use, Moving Traffic Viol - Dwlsr Revocation Equiv Status 2Nd Subs Off, Veh Theft - Grand Theft Of Motor Vehicle, Drug Equip-Possess - And Or Use, Drugs-Possess - Cntrl Sub Wo Prescription, Marijuana-Possess - Not More Than 20 Grams

Martinez, Tracie Nicole:

Prob Violation - Prob Violation

Micallef, Calieb Emanuell:

Larc - Other Theft

Perez-Lopez, Alberto:

Moving Traffic Viol - Operate Motor Vehicle W/O Valid Lic 1St Conv

Rodriguez, Cesar Raul:

Obstructing Justice - Tamper W Evidence In Criminal Proceeding

Rodriguez, Johnny:

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

Rosenwinkel, Steven Michael:

Flee/Elude Police - Fail To Obey Leo Order To Stop, Failure To Appear - Written Promise To Appear, Fail To Reg As Career Off - Fail Report In Person Change To Residence/Name

Williams Jr., Darrin Gene:

Battery - Touch Or Strike

Williams, Derrick Benard:

Larc - Other Theft

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NEWS FROM THE DESK OF SHERIFF POTTER

PROTECTING OUR VICTIMS
WHILE KEEPING YOU INFORMED



SHERIFF POTTER
DeSoto County Sheriff

Over the last several years, you have probably noticed the increasing emphasis law enforcement agencies have placed on community outreach and information sharing. With social media, websites, and custom apps, it has become easier to disseminate information efficiently on a large scale. While it is unquestionably a benefit both to law enforcement and the communities we serve, providing information about arrests, emergencies, community events and more presents challenges when determining what information should and shouldn't be shared. When a law enforcement agency is considering sharing information with the community, there are many factors considered. Some factors may weigh in favor of sharing specific information and others may weigh against it, creating a balancing test between the benefits and drawbacks of sharing a particular piece of information. At the DeSoto County Sheriff's

Office, we make great efforts to keep our residents informed and up to date with what is happening in our community as it relates to law enforcement. Recently, there has been a noticeable increase in individuals expressing concerns and frustrations about information not being shared, specifically information related to individuals arrested for sex crimes. While at face value it may seem that these arrests are appropriate for dissemination on social media due to the serious and heinous nature of the case, that it is only part of the consideration when determining if an arrest should be shared. It is true that sex crimes, especially those involving child victims, are taken extremely seriously by our agency and our community. A tremendous amount of effort and resources go into these cases from start to finish to ensure the individuals committing these crimes are held fully accountable for their actions. However, protecting a community goes far beyond arresting criminals. In the case of sex crimes, protecting victims is also of paramount importance. In Florida, many safeguards have been put in place to protect

victims of sex crimes which include provisions protecting their identity from disclosure to the public. One of the few unfortunate circumstances of being a small, tight-knit community is that these safeguards rarely afford victims complete anonymity. By bringing additional attention to these cases, we are placing not only the accused in the spotlight, but their victims as well. These victims have endured trauma most people cannot comprehend, and they have had to live that trauma every day and will carry that trauma with them forever. Even posting basic details of the arrest triggers numerous requests from the media and members of the community for arrest reports containing the details of the crime. Although the identity of the victim may be redacted, details of the crime spreads like wildfire across a community of their peers. With Florida's strong open government laws, our agency is left with little discretion when responding to Public Records Requests, but we can choose not to place our agency in a position where our social media platforms become a place for public discussion about these sensitive cases. To those who intend on

posting about these cases, please consider the victims as well. Remember, they had no choice when they became a victim, but WE, as a community, have the choice whether we want to protect them from reliving their nightmare each time they open their news feed. The decision not to publicize ongoing investigations or prosecutions regarding sex crimes in no way diminishes the importance of keeping our community safe from those who have been charged or convicted of such crimes. You can find all updates related to recent arrests as well as a database with an interactive map, showing the addresses and information for every sex offender and sex predator in our county, on our website and our DeSoto County Sheriff's Office app. Your safety and the safety of your family is what matters the most, and no matter the day or the hour, you can count on the DeSoto County Sheriff's Office to be there when you need us.

Be Kind, Be Safe, God Bless.
Sheriff James Potter

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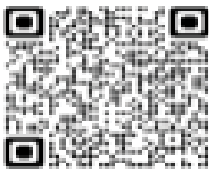
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SFSC ATHLETICS RECEIVES SUPPORT FROM MILLION DOLLAR HOLE-IN-ONE GOLF SHOOTOUT



AVON PARK, Fla. – Jan. 24, 2025 – The South Florida State College (SFSC) Foundation hosted its eighth annual Million Dollar Hole-in-One Golf Shootout sponsored by Bill Jarrett Ford on Saturday, Jan. 18. This year, all finalists were unable to place, but the event raised \$16,029 in support of SFSC Athletics.

Golfers participated in the three-day Golf Shootout and new Putt Challenge, which began on Thursday, Jan. 16 at Sun ‘N Lake Golf Club in Sebring. A record number of golfers turned out to vie for the \$1 million prize with 116, and 24 golfers tried to putt their way to \$10,000.

The golfers who rounded out the group of 12 shootout qualifiers were: Kyle Braxton, Dave Johnson, Jeff Polen, Steve Sortore, Tosh Banning, Scott Hitt, Jeff Taylor, Julian Gonzalez, Randy Bonney, Carlos Maldonado, Andy Polk, and Peter Elliott. The Putt Challenge finalist was Terri Thayer.

“Anytime we can see an event exceed a previous year is a great



accomplishment,” said Jamie Bateman, vice president for institutional advancement and external affairs at SFSC. “This, of course, couldn’t be possible without our sponsors and golfers who come out each year to support our athletes, and who bring their friends. SFSC is blessed with the amazing support we receive from our community.”

Proceeds from the golf shootout

benefit SFSC Panther Athletic with teams in women’s volleyball, women’s cross country, men’s baseball, and women’s softball. SFSC’s student-athletes assisted throughout the Golf Shootout.

For more information on the event or how to become a sponsor for next year’s Golf Shootout, contact the SFSC Foundation at 863-453-3313.



CROSSWORD

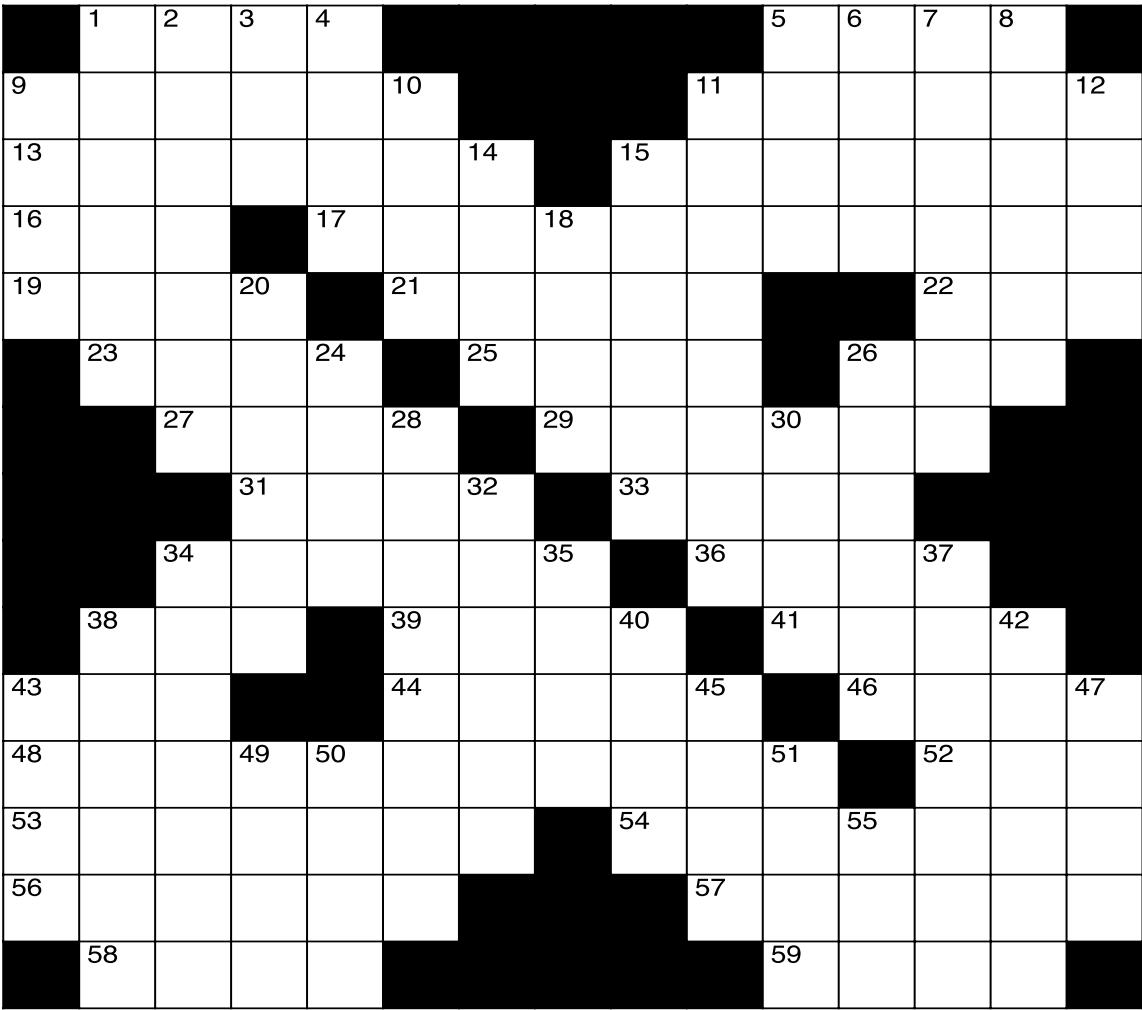
CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Tall, upright post on a boat
- 5. Basics
- 9. Used to refer to cited works
- 11. Folds
- 13. Former UK PM May
- 15. Cold region of Russia
- 16. Standard operating procedure
- 17. Separating
- 19. Particles
- 21. A way to map out
- 22. Referee declares
- 23. Beginner
- 25. Water (Spanish)
- 26. Gov’t lawyers
- 27. Non-reproductive parts of an organism
- 29. Spanish friends
- 31. A type of tree
- 33. Walk heavily
- 34. About a wood
- 36. Free-swimming marine invertebrate
- 38. Political action committee
- 39. SB19 hit song
- 41. Scorch the surface of
- 43. Moved quickly on foot
- 44. Sacred state for a Muslim
- 46. Growl

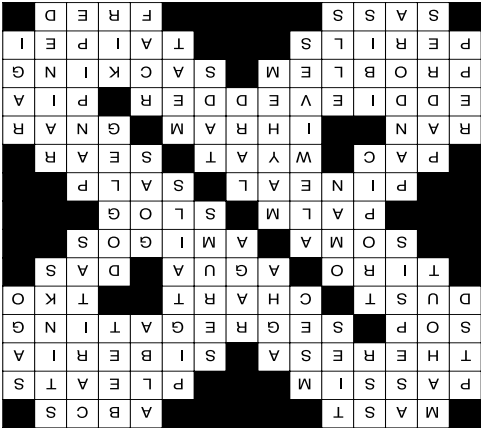
- 48. Pearl Jam frontman
- 52. Irritating person
- 53. Something requiring a solution
- 54. Firing
- 56. Hazards
- 57. Taiwan capital
- 58. Impudence
- 59. Rock frontman Durst

CLUES DOWN

- 1. One who rides an elephant
- 2. Absence of bacteria
- 3. Soviet Socialist Republic
- 4. Men’s fashion accessories
- 5. Honey’s actress Jessica
- 6. Round red root vegetable
- 7. Latin term for charity
- 8. Doesn’t smell good
- 9. Mental health issue
- 10. Millisecond
- 11. Hairstyle
- 12. Edible starch
- 14. Middle Eastern military title
- 15. Protein-rich liquids
- 18. Indian musical pattern
- 20. Cancer and Capricorn
- 24. Country along the Arabian peninsula



- 26. A bend
- 28. Fishes of the herring family
- 30. Antelopes
- 32. Chaos
- 34. Popular music app
- 35. Cooking material
- 37. Musical instrument
- 38. San Diego ballplayers
- 40. Small amounts
- 42. Poured
- 43. Fabric
- 45. Food option
- 47. Finger millet
- 49. The U. of Miami mascot is one
- 50. Alberta, Canada river
- 51. Canadian flyers
- 55. Dry white wine drink



BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVES: A LOOK AT LEADERSHIP IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

AMANDA REUTER

Chaplain, US Army Reserve
DeSoto Ministerial Association

A leader in the New Testament often looks like someone who watches over or cares for others. The Good Shepherd in the Old Testament sets the example of someone who genuinely cares for and looks over the gathered flock (Psalm 23 and John 10:11-18). In an effort to lead others one must show him/herself as one who has others' interests (and spiritual needs) in mind. In "A Concept Study: Leadership in New Greek", Robert Stacy describes the morphology of leadership language in the New Testament (NT) Greek as one who "scopes out" a situation and "looks upon" others. Leaders in

the NT were focused on the mission given by Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-47; John 20:21; Acts 1:7-8). Jesus Christ ascended knowing that his followers would lead countless other nations, languages, tongues, and people to know him.

These leaders took the mission to enlarge the flock to heart. Leaders like Paul, Barnabas, Timothy, and several more women and men, demonstrated their leadership in the Church by serving others first. They met their spiritual need for Jesus Christ. Not only did they serve, but they also led through their honesty,

humility, and habits. Leaders in the NT had an indwelling Holy Spirit that kept them honest, humble, and habitual (John 14:15-31). Leaders chose to be honest, humble, and habitual in the sight of God. Their actions served as their proof of their sincerity to look over, scope out, and watch for the cares of others. These leaders were eager to serve, excited to serve, and had eternity in mind. Like the Good Shepherd, leaders in the NT served their flock and were honest to God, humble before God, and habitual with God.

God calls on people to help
lead his earthly family. The Good

Shepherd is the ultimate example of an honest, humble, and habitual leader. NT Leaders were extreme in the eagerness, excitement, and eternal mindset. They desired to be like Jesus Christ. With the everlasting life of Jesus Christ in their hearts and minds, they led with honesty to God, humility before God, and had habits in a relationship with God. Today's church leaders can live out their callings with an eagerness, excitement, and mindset that keeps them honest to God, humble before God, and habitual with God.



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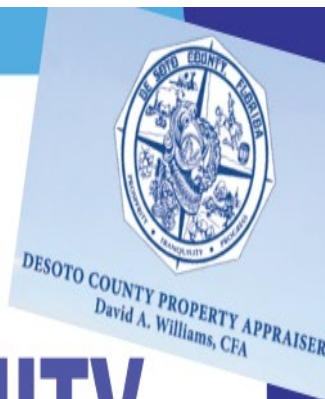
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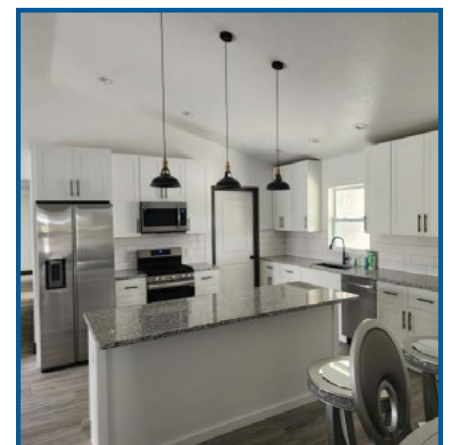
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BRONCO
FROM PAGE 3 >>

Councilmember Dee Washington said that he enjoyed it. The parade ended at the park on Martin Luther King, Jr., St., and Mayor Judy Wertz-Strickland said that she was thrilled with improvements to the park in which the Council had invested. “It was a good thing that we did that day,” she said.

The DeSoto County Historical Society requested that the Council not remove the sign or designation of the Louis C. Anderson, Sr., Park for the playground area of that park; restore the historic name—“Smith-Brown Recreation Complex”—to the entire park, and name the new pavilion built on the former tennis court for coach Fred Carter.

The Society noted the property—formerly a dairy—was sold to the Board of Public Instruction—today’s school board. At the Aug. 11, 1959, meeting, the Board “approved cooperation with the City of Arcadia in efforts to provide recreational facilities in south-west Arcadia and approved the placing of recreational facilities on the board-owned site at Smith-Brown High School.” In 1963, the Board sold the Smith-Brown Gym to the City, and in 1978, the rest of the park.

The Society wrote, “As you may know, recreation complexes often have other named areas within their boundaries, and the Louis C. Anderson, Sr., Park is such an area within the Smith-Brown Recreation Complex. In addition, the

Before renovations began at the park, a sign identified it as the “Smith-Brown Recreation Complex.” Unfortunately, the wooden sign was in poor condition and was thrown away. Photograph courtesy of Carol Mahler.



Society respectfully requests that the new pavilion constructed on the former tennis court be named for Coach Fred Carter who . . . probably spent more time than anyone else playing and teaching tennis on that court.” The Council will consider this request as an agenda item at a future meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

Under the Consent Agenda, the following special event permits were approved.

- DeSoto County Fair Association to hold DeSoto County Fair, with the theme “Stars and Stripes And Country Nights” with carnival rides, food vendors, livestock shows, and pageants from 5:00 p.m. to midnight, Jan. 31 and Feb. 7; 3:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m., Feb. 1 and 8; and 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., Feb. 2-6. The baseball field on Palm Dr. will be used for parking.
- Open to the youth of DeSoto County

as a community event, Miss Small Town Sweetheart Pageant will be 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Feb. 22, at the Tree of Knowledge Park.

- Fisher and Roes Auctioneers will have an equipment auction in the exhibit hall from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Feb. 22 and May 31 at the DeSoto County Fairgrounds.

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MLK
FROM PAGE 1 >>

The musicians performed a second selection while the cheerleaders danced.

Darien Bailey of Building A Village served as emcee. “Thank you for coming out today,” he said. “I remember the disarray of the park, and I am so happy to see it now after its 360-degree transformation.” He characterized the City Council as “the embodiment of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s idea of inclusion.” He thanked the sheriff’s office, police dept., and everyone for celebrating King’s legacy. He gave special thanks to the JROTC cadets, girls basketball players, cheerleaders, and band for their participation, and he recognized the high school students as “our future leaders.”

Washington thanked everyone for their support of Martin Luther King, Jr., Day, and to those who saw his vision for the park six years ago.

Bailey called on Mayor Judy Wertz-Strickland and Interim City Administrator Beth Carsten to give impromptu remarks. Both noted the importance of the City’s investment in improving the Park.

From left, Kalise Ortiz, Casandra Bailey, and Jordan Washington represented Building A Village in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Parade on Jan. 20.



Sisterhood Chap. 1 of Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church handed out free water and treats at the Martin Luther King, Jr., Day Bazaar: from left, Shalette Bassett, Evelyn Dallas, Barbara Hall, Bobbie Faison, Cynthia Townsend, Deborah Richardson, Deborah Clifton, Gloria Kendrick, and Vera Rogers.



At right, Interim City Administrator Beth Carsten drives Mayor Judy Wertz-Strickland in a golf cart decorated for Martin Luther King, Jr., Day.

Before the parade began, the DeSoto High School girls basketball team posed with Sheriff Jim Potter: from left, Yahri Tyler, Coach Ardine Primus, Coach LaDeja Dennis, Janeris Bing, Alexa Ramos, Jaliyah Luther, Whitley Barron, Rihanna Downing, Sa’Niyah White, Iyonna McGill, Cherish Wiggins, Potter, Coach Toi Reaves, and Xinoi Reaves.



From left, as Band Director Fernando Frank watches, Kaylee Wilson twirls a flag as the DeSoto High School Blazing Blue Band performs in the Martin Luther King, Jr., Day parade.



Property Appraiser Dave Williams waves from his vehicle during the Martin Luther King, Jr., Day Parade on Jan. 20.



Shawn Washington and Darien Bailey of Building A Village thanked everyone for their participation in the Martin Luther King, Jr., Day Parade and Bazaar.



The House of God Church, Keith Dominion, drove two vehicles decorated to celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr., in the parade.

Crystal Walker of Big Brothers, Big Sisters, and Allen Reesor of Team Arcadia carry the McSwain Cultural Arts and Learning Center Banner in front of the Rebuilding Together Van driven by Chris Reesor



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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/

OR

FILE IN PERSON

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