

ALCS: Rays take third shot at World Series berth /B1

SATURDAY
 TODAY & next morning
HIGH 85
LOW 62
 T-ease_Weather; get ONLY from BN9 text.
 PAGE A4

CITRUS COUNTY CHRONICLE

www.chronicleonline.com



OCTOBER 17, 2020 Florida's Best Community Newspaper Serving Florida's Best Community 50¢ VOL. 126 ISSUE 9

NEWS BRIEFS

Citrus COVID-19 update

Twelve new positive cases were reported in Citrus County since the latest FDOH update. One new hospitalization was reported; one new death was reported.

To date in the county, 3,000 people have tested positive (including 12 non-residents), 310 have been hospitalized and 125 have died.

Citrus' jobless rate drops to 6.8%

Citrus County's unemployment rate for September was 6.8%, down from 7.2% a month earlier, according to data released Friday by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity.

One year ago, in September 2019, the rate was 4.4%.

Citrus County's labor force decreased by 614 in September, to 45,435. The number of employed dropped by 363 to 42,355 and the number of unemployed dropped by 251, to 3,080.

Compared to September 2019, the labor force decreased by 2,208, the number of employed is down by 3,187 and there were 979 more unemployed.

—Michael D. Bates/Staff writer

Celebrate Wildlife Refuge Day

The Crystal River Wildlife Refuge will celebrate National Wildlife Refuge Day from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 17, 2020.

According to officials, this year's Refuge Day will be a little different from ones in the past, but the plan is to have fun. Changes have been made to follow all health and safety guidelines for COVID.

There will be a virtual birding tour at 9 a.m.; virtual animal yoga at 11 a.m. and a virtual manatee talk at 1 p.m. There will be a \$5 discount offered to adults, seniors and those with military ID.

For additional information and to participate in virtual events, visit <https://tinyurl.com/y2q4a56j> or <https://tinyurl.com/yvyv-q2kn> or email monica_scroggin@fws.gov.

—From staff reports

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Sexual offender faces new charges

Weeklong investigation leads to arrest

FRED HIERS
 Staff writer

A registered sexual offender finds himself in the Citrus County Detention Facility on new sexual battery charges after detectives arrested the 52-year-old on

Thursday, Oct. 15, 2020, after a weeklong investigation, according to a Citrus County Sheriff's Office news release.

Tommy Glenn Dees, a registered sexual offender with child pornography convictions stemming from a 2016 investigation,

was charged with sexual battery, lewd and lascivious molestation and lewd and lascivious exhibition. No bond was set.

According to the release, the sheriff's office was contacted Friday, Oct. 9, 2020, in reference to an alleged sexual assault of a juvenile victim.



Tommy Dees

The complainant told responding deputies the 4-year-old had disclosed that the defendant had performed sexual acts on the child.

Detectives from the Special Victim's Unit (SVU) were assigned to conduct an investigation. See CHARGES/Page A6

Women: The future of welding

WTC certifies six new welders, including women

JEANE DEFELICE
 Special to the Chronicle

Women are the future of welding.

This is according to Aubrey Greene, president and founder of Rig Fab Energy Services. He's also the founder and CEO of the Bridge the Gap Foundation, a nonprofit organization that focuses on helping veterans and individuals from disadvantaged communities acquire the skills and training they need to be successful.

It's not the first time women have been needed to close the skills gap in welding.

During World War II, women entered the American workforce in droves out of necessity and patriotism. Two years after the attack on Pearl Harbor 19,170,000 women were part of the civilian workforce, making up approximately 36% of the total national workforce. A portion of those women worked as welders. As the war effort rolled on at home, more women found themselves working on larger and more complex projects such as tanks, B-29 bombers, and ships. After the war ended in 1945, most of these women returned to their homes as full time mothers and wives, and the returning soldiers took their places in the workforce.

With over 20 years in the industry, Greene is an AWS Certified Welding Inspector (CWI), AWS Certified Welding Educator (CWE), and a Nuclear Quality Assurance (NQA-1) Lead Nuclear Auditor. His company, Rig Fab, provides, educates, trains, certifies and helps with employee placement in the welding field.

Greene says skilled welders are needed and women are critical in closing the skills gap.



WTC Welding student Ryan Leach practices her techniques in anticipation of her AWS certification test. Special to the Chronicle

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports the employment of welders and similar professions is on pace to grow by

about 6% by 2026. However, there is a component of the workforce aging out, and as more projects are created

—like the Suncoast Parkway — the need for skilled workers is high.

See WELDING/Page A6

Diva Night turns into month-long awareness event

GWEN BITTNER
 Staff writer

Help a Citrus cancer patient in need, honor a loved one and have fun — all while raising awareness in the month of October, Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

The Chronicle is hosting an array of digital activities to shed light on breast cancer while raising funds for the Citrus Aid Cancer Foundation, a local nonprofit that assists cancer patients, as

COVID-19 forced cancellation of the Chronicle's annual Diva Night fundraiser.

Select from one or more of the following activities, and make a difference in the life of a breast cancer patient in Citrus:

■ Make a tribute: Recognize the strength and tenacity of a current cancer patient, thank someone who supported you during your fight with cancer or write a remembrance for a loved one that has passed. The Chronicle is

seeking special stories of impact in the Citrus community. Share photos and make your unique story known. Breast cancer tributes can be submitted at <https://tinyurl.com/y6q5009a>.

■ Bid on a Diva raffle basket: While the traditional in-person Diva Night fundraiser has been canceled, the Chronicle will continue to raise money for the Citrus Aid Cancer Foundation through a virtual Chinese auction. Businesses around the community will



donate baskets for Chronicle readers to bid on. Raffle baskets See DIVA/Page A8



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<p>2017 TOYOTA COROLLA LE</p> <p>Certified Used Vehicles 20090200 \$13,553</p>	<p>2018 TOYOTA COROLLA LE</p> <p>Certified Used Vehicles 20090378 \$13,991</p>	<p>2018 TOYOTA COROLLA IM BASE</p> <p>Certified Used Vehicles 20090253 \$14,522</p>	<p>2014 FORD EDGE SE</p> <p>20090329 \$14,721</p>	<p>2017 TOYOTA CAMRY SE</p> <p>Certified Used Vehicles 20090182 \$14,793</p>
<p>2017 HONDA ACCORD SPORT SPECIAL EDITION</p> <p>20090068 \$14,893</p>	<p>2018 CHEVROLET MALIBU LT 1LT</p> <p>20090325 \$14,992</p>	<p>2017 NISSAN ROGUE SV</p> <p>20090319 \$15,692</p>	<p>2016 NISSAN ROGUE SL</p> <p>20090226 \$15,993</p>	<p>2017 HYUNDAI SANTA FE SPORT 2.4 BASE</p> <p>20090059 \$16,374</p>

2017 Chevrolet Malibu LT 1LT 20090285.....\$16,692	2017 GMC Terrain SLE-2 20080243.....\$18,994	2018 Toyota Camry XSE 20090161.....\$24,622
2016 Honda Civic EX-T 20090341.....\$16,921	2015 Toyota Sienna XLE 20090365.....\$19,991	2018 Toyota RAV4 Limited 20090388.....\$25,491
2018 Toyota C-HR XLE 20090052.....\$17,323	2015 INFINITI QX60 Base 20090339.....\$19,992	2018 Toyota RAV4 Limited 20090276.....\$25,792
2020 Toyota Corolla SE 20080044.....\$17,664	2019 Toyota Camry SE 20090361.....\$20,421	2018 Toyota RAV4 Limited 20090274.....\$26,782
2010 Cadillac Escalade Premium 20090210.....\$17,881	2018 Toyota Camry SE 20090244.....\$21,552	2018 Toyota Sienna XLE 20090170.....\$27,993
2014 Buick Enclave Leather Group 20090354.....\$17,941	2018 Toyota Camry SE 20090251.....\$21,692	2017 Cadillac XT5 Base 20099007.....\$29,653
2018 Toyota C-HR XLE Premium 200902.....\$18,492	2015 Chevrolet Camaro SS 2SS 20090085.....\$21,693	2019 Toyota Tacoma SR5 20080386.....\$30,994
2019 Toyota Corolla Hatchback SE 2009.....\$18,771	2018 Toyota Camry SE 20090243.....\$21,882	2018 Toyota Tacoma TRD Sport 20090235.....\$32,792
2018 Toyota Camry LE 20090070.....\$18,794	2018 Toyota RAV4 Adventure 20090043.....\$22,274	2018 Toyota Highlander Limited 20090275...\$32,822
2018 Toyota Prius One 20090286.....\$18,991	2020 Toyota Camry SE 20099008.....\$22,772	2018 Toyota Tacoma SR5 20099001.....\$34,774
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Map showing location at 2431 S Suncoast Blvd, Homosassa, FL. Neighboring streets include W. Glenvale Ct., W. Veterans Dr., W. Atlas Dr., W. Kingston Dr., W. Goodman Ln., and W. Longfellow St. Minutes from Spring Hill, Ocala, and Hernando Off US-50.

Around the
COUNTY

Fire damages home; minor injuries reported

A fire damaged a Beverly Hills home, displacing two people.

Citrus County Fire Rescue (CCFR) crews were dispatched to the blaze at 8:07 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 15, 2020, off of West Valerian Place, where firefighters from Pine Ridge Station 20 arrived first at 8:15 p.m. to find a fire in a bedroom of a single-story home, according to CCFR.

After making sure the residents were evacuated, responders extinguished the fire, confining it to the bedroom. Nature Coast EMS also transported a person to a hospital with minor injuries.

CCFR units from stations in Kensington, Hernando, Citrus Springs and Rock Crusher also responded to assist.

Emergency responders contacted the American Red Cross to assist the two adult residents, and the State Fire Marshal's Office to investigate the fire's cause.

Blood drive for K of C Council 6168

The next blood drive for Our Lady of Grace — K of C Council 6168 will be from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 17, at the Knights of Columbus Council Hall, 2389 W. Norvell Bryant Highway, Lecanto, at the corner of Wesley Pinecone Avenue and County Road 486.

The value of blood is priceless to those in need. For example, about one-third of heart surgery patients need a transfusion, so please plan on participating in this important community event. All types of blood are needed. Life South takes great care to insure the safest conditions possible by requiring temperature checks before admission and cleaning all areas used with medical grade sanitizer.

Appointments are recommended but not required and can be made through the Life South website at www.lifesouth.org, the donor portal, or calling Life South at 352-527-3061.

Custom T-shirts will be available as tokens of appreciation for all donors. The feeling of accomplishment is immeasurable.

The August drive collected 16 life saving units of blood from 21 donors. We are grateful for all who donated the precious gift of life during these trying times.

Garden club set to meet

The Homosassa Garden Club will meet from 9:30 a.m. to noon on Monday, Oct. 19, at Bicentennial Park Pavilion, 8145 W. Bicentennial Drive, Crystal River. For information, visit homosassarivergardenclub.wordpress.com.

The Path hosts donated item drive

The Path of Citrus County is in need of items for their Fall Scrub Up drive. To donate, drop-offs will be accepted from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday, at 21 S. Melbourne St., Beverly Hills.

Items needed include: Baby wipes, Huggies and/or Pampers diapers (all sizes, urgent for size 4), feminine pads (urgent), Q-tips, deodorant, men's underwear and socks (urgent), toilet paper, laundry detergent (urgent), bleach and Pine Sol.

Donations of Walmart and grocery gift cards and gas cards are appreciated.

For information, visit PathOfCitrus.org.

— From staff reports

CCSO wants info on shooting

Man arrested as person of interest in killing, but authorities need more help

BUSTER THOMPSON
Staff writer

After apprehending a person of interest in the deadly shooting of Tyler Hopkins in a Crystal River neighborhood, local authorities are looking for more evidence to strengthen their case.

"To the members of the Copeland Park community and Mr. Hopkins' family, the Citrus County Sheriff's Office wants to bring you justice for your loss, but we need your help," Sheriff Mike Prendergast said in a release. "It is your knowledge, tips and

information that will help detectives build a rock solid case, which can then be brought before a judge. If you know anything, please speak up."

Members of the sheriff's office and the U.S. Marshals Service on Thursday, Oct. 15, 2020, apprehended David Jerome Lemon Jr. near County Road 486 and North McGee Drive in Hernando.

Lemon, 26, of Crystal River, was arrested on a warrant charging him with possessing ammunition as



David Lemon Jr.

a convicted felon. He was booked at the county jail without bond.

Lemon is also a suspect in the fatal Feb. 20, 2020, shooting of 26-year-old Hopkins near Copeland Park. No other injuries were reported.

Sheriff's office deputies responded to a report of gunfire off of Northeast First Street near Copeland Park, where witnesses said they saw a man running from the source of the gunshots.

Deputies later discovered Hopkins was shot in

his yard before his girlfriend drove him to Bayfront Health Seven Rivers Hospital, where he was pronounced deceased.

Lemon was then identified as a person of interest in the shooting, and an arrest warrant was issued for him for unlawfully carrying ammo.

According to Citrus County court records, Lemon has been convicted in two separate felony cases for possessing more than 20 grams of marijuana (a third-degree felony) in 2013 and 2016.

Asked when Lemon could be charged in connection with Hopkins'

death, sheriff's office spokeswoman Brittney Carman said Friday the agency's investigation is still ongoing.

Those with information about the shooting can contact the sheriff's office at 352-249-2790 and ask for the agency's Major Crimes Unit.

Tipsters can also remain anonymous and be eligible for a cash reward by calling Citrus County Crime Stoppers at 888-269-8477.

Contact Chronicle reporter Buster Thompson at 352-564-2916, bthompson@chronicleonline.com or visit tinyurl.com/yxzn2ahso to see more of his stories.

Gyro Festival



MATTHEW BECK/Chronicle

George and Deanna Mavros work quickly to fill orders Friday, Oct. 16, 2020 at the Archangel Michael Greek Orthodox Church drive-thru Gyro Festival. This festival, replacing traditional Greek Festival, will continue today, opening at 11 a.m. and closing at 6 p.m. and will provide traditional Greek foods to go. Menu items such as made-to-order Gyro sandwiches, chicken and pork souviaki sandwiches, skewered meats and Greek sweets are some of the items available for purchase. All monies will benefit the church at 4706 W. Gulf-to-Lake Hwy. in Lecanto. Menus are given to motorists as they enter the property, orders are placed from inside each vehicle then orders are brought to each customer while safety measurers are practiced. For additional information about the festival, visit stmichaelgoc.org/festival.

Trump on defense in Florida, Georgia

STEVE PEOPLES, DARLENE SUPERVILLE AND BILL BARROW
Associated Press

FORT MYERS — Backed into a corner and facing financial strains, President Donald Trump went after his opponent's family and defended his own struggle to contain the pandemic on Friday as he fought to energize his sagging reelection bid in the nation's Sunbelt. With Election Day looming, Democrat Joe Biden pushed to keep voters focused on health care in the Midwest.

Trump was campaigning in Florida and Georgia, neighboring states he carried four years ago and must win again to extend his presidency. His decision to devote Friday evening's prime-time slot to Georgia in particular highlighted the serious nature of his challenge in the 2020 contest's closing days: Far from his original plan to expand into Democratic-leaning states, he is laboring to stave off a defeat of major proportions.

No Republican presidential candidate has lost Georgia since George H.W. Bush in 1992. And earlier this week, Trump had to court voters in

Iowa, a state he carried by almost 10 points four years ago.

In Florida on Friday, the president derided the Bidens as "an organized crime family," renewing his daily claims about the candidate's son, Hunter, and his business dealings in Ukraine and China.

More to the point for Trump's Florida audience, he spoke directly to seniors who have increasingly soured on his handling of the pandemic.

"I am moving heaven and earth to safeguard our seniors from the China virus," Trump said, using his usual blame-shifting term to describe the coronavirus. He also offered an optimistic assessment of the pandemic, even as a surge of new infections spread across America.

"We are prevailing," the president said, promising to deliver the first doses of a vaccine to seniors when it's ready.

Despite the tough talk, Trump's actions on the ground in Florida underscored the conflicting messages his administration has sent throughout the pandemic. All of the president's security personnel and support staff were wearing face masks

when Air Force One touched down, but Trump and Florida's Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis were bare faced.

Crowds gathered at the president's subsequent events, many without masks as well.

It was just the opposite as Biden opened his Michigan swing at a suburban Detroit community center. In keeping with his usual protocols, Biden and all of the participants wore masks throughout the event, except when they were speaking, and a small crowd of dozens of reporters and supporters watched from folding chairs separated by circles to ensure social distancing.

"He's living in a dream world," Biden said of Trump's rosy predictions of the pandemic. The former vice president then turned to the Trump administration's court fight to overturn the "Obamacare" health coverage law — including its protection for people with pre-existing conditions — without having a replacement plan.

"Mishandling the pandemic isn't enough for Trump," Biden charged. "On top of that he's still trying to take away your health care."

Inverness man faces theft charges

Allegedly raided parents' camper, pawned items

FRED HIERS
Staff writer

An Inverness man faces charges of stealing electronic gaming equipment from his parents' recreational vehicle and pawning it as his own.

Citrus County Sheriff's Office deputies arrested Shawn Michael Votino, 25, after his parents told investigators he took an Xbox One, PlayStation 4 Pro, and a large television from their camper, according to the arrest report. The parents, Noel Votino and Paul Lucas, told deputies the equipment belonged to another person.

The parents told arresting deputies that their son took the stolen jewelry and Pawn in Inverness and sold them claiming they were his, according to the report. The arresting deputy reported they spoke with the owner of the items who told the deputy he did not give Votino permission to take them. The deputy reported the victim was upset because he still owed nearly \$1,000 on the

stolen items.

The deputy reported that they went to Colonial Jewelry and Pawn and confirmed that Shawn Votino came to the business and pawned the items, receiving \$200, according to the report.

The deputy reported they telephoned Shawn Votino, who confirmed he took and sold the items, according to the report.

The deputy arrested Votino at the Value Inn, 2350 N. Florida Ave., Hernando.

"The defendant was extremely cooperative and turned himself in," the deputy wrote in the arrest report.

Votino was charged with one count of falsely telling the pawn shop owner the items belonged to him, one count of grand theft of an item valued at more than \$750 but less than \$5,000, and one count of trafficking in stolen property.

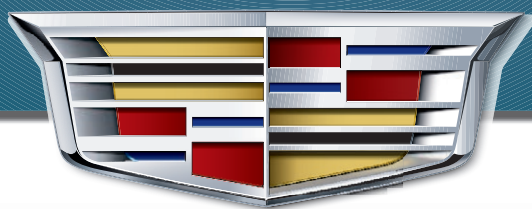
His bond was \$9,000.

Contact Chronicle reporter Fred Hiers at fhiers@chronicleonline.com or 352-397-5914.



Shawn Votino

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2020 Cadillac XT5 Luxury

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LOOK FORWARD TO TAX SEASON

Small Business Owners: You could qualify for a 2020 Tax deduction up to 100% of the purchase price.

Federal tax benefits are available for vehicles acquired for use in the active conduct of trade or business and may change or be eliminated at any time without notice and each taxpayer's tax situation is unique; therefore, please consult your tax professional to confirm available vehicle depreciation deductions and tax benefits.



VILLAGE CADILLAC

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Crystal River names 2020 Homecoming royalty

JEFF BRYAN
Staff writer

Crystal River High School continued a time-honored tradition Friday, Oct. 16, 2020, with the crowning of its Homecoming King and Queen. Due to the pandemic, ceremonies were done before the Pirates' conference tilt against Brooksville Central. In addition, the school did not host a dance this year. After the ceremony, students and parents put on face masks.



Tiyahna Hopkins reacts with a surprising smile Friday, Oct. 16, 2020, as her mom looks on after Crystal River High School senior was named Homecoming Queen prior to kickoff.



Charles Wilson, Crystal River senior, smiles as Principal Janet Tuggle pins a corsage on his lapel after he was crowned king prior to the school's homecoming football game.

Photos by Jeff Byran

Around the STATE

Florida sees slight uptick in COVID-19 cases

MIAMI — Florida has reported a slight uptick in daily confirmed COVID-19 cases, adding 3,449 to its total caseload on Friday.

The new state report raises the seven-day average of new infections close to 2,800, a figure that had dropped under 2,300 in late September and early October, when the state lifted restrictions on restaurants and the largest school districts began welcoming students.

The number of people being treated in Florida hospitals peaked in late July at more than 9,500, then declined for about two months. But the figure has leveled off for the past three weeks at around 2,000 to 2,200 without further decline. The state tallied 98 new virus-related deaths on Friday, raising the death toll to 16,030.

Three men die at motorcycle club shooting

ORLANDO — Three men died and one man was injured in an early Friday shooting sparked by a confrontation at a Florida warehouse used by a motorcycle club, officials said.

The Orange County Sheriff's office says deputies are looking for suspects who may have fled the area in Orlando, but investigators are still not clear whether those who died or were injured fired a weapon themselves.

"There were multiple shots fired, there was possibly more than one shooter," Orange County Sheriff John W. Mina said Friday.

Mina said the man who is recovering at the hospital has not been cooperating with authorities.

— From wire reports

Weekly roundup: All eyes on Florida now

DARA KAM
The News Service of Florida

TALLAHASSEE — Location, location, location.

Florida was the epicenter of the political universe this week, as President Donald Trump, Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden and their surrogates crisscrossed the state.

The Republican president made the Sunshine State the stage for his campaign re-debut after being sidelined by COVID-19, appearing Monday in Sanford.

Trump, who four years ago defeated Hillary Clinton in Florida by nearly 113,000 votes, held a fundraiser in Doral on Thursday before appearing at a televised event that was a substitute for what was supposed to have been a second debate with Biden.

NBC hosted Trump's hastily arranged town hall in Miami at the same time Biden held a town hall in Philadelphia. The dueling Q-and-A sessions came after Trump refused to take part in a virtual debate with Biden, which debate planners ordered after the president contracted the coronavirus.

Trump was capping the work week with campaign stops Friday in Ocala and Fort Myers, following Florida visits by Vice President Mike Pence, Pence's wife, Karen, and Trump's sons Eric and Don Jr.

Biden and his team aren't giving the state short shrift, either. The former vice president met with supporters in Broward County on Tuesday. His wife, Jill, was swinging through Central Florida on Friday. And Democratic National Committee Chairman Tom Perez stumped in South Florida, urging Black and Hispanic

voters to cast their ballots for Biden.

Florida, with 29 electoral votes, is always in the crosshairs in a general election. But the focus on Florida in this year's race between the two starkly contrasting candidates is intense, with recent polls showing Biden and Trump running neck-and-neck in a state Democrats and Republicans consider crucial for a White House victory.

Meanwhile, nearly 2.3 million Floridians already had cast mail-in ballots as of Friday morning. Early voting sites will open in 52 of the state's 67 counties on Monday. And the spotlight on the Sunshine State won't dim until all the ballots have been cast and counted.

RED? BLUE? PURPLE?

After last week's deadline to register to vote in the Nov. 3 election, Republicans narrowed Democrats' advantage among the state's 14.4 million registered voters.

In all, 14,441,869 Floridians were registered before a "book closing" deadline, including 5,303,254 Democrats and 5,169,012 Republicans. Another 3,753,286 Floridians are registered without ties to any political party.

Emma Vaughn, Florida spokeswoman for Trump's campaign, called the updated numbers "proof of Florida's enthusiasm for President Trump and Republicans."

"Democrats just can't compete with that type of passion and Trump Victory's superior ground game and infrastructure," Vaughn added in a text.

Carlie Waibel, Florida spokeswoman for Biden's campaign, countered by pointing to Democrats' "overwhelming" vote-by-mail lead, as well as record turnout in the August primaries.

"Democrats are leading in the metrics that will determine this election and returning their ballots at a higher rate than Republicans — and we aren't letting up," Waibel said in an email.

The overall number of registered voters is up 550,499 from the August primaries and is nearly 1.58 million more than were registered to vote in the 2016 presidential contest, when votes were cast by 9.58 million Floridians — 74.5% of the then-registered voters.

Four years ago, Democrats accounted for 37.9% of the registered voters, while 35.4% were Republicans and 24.02% were independents.

In the new count, Democrats make up 36.7% of the voters, Republicans are at 35.8% and independents account for nearly 26%. The remainder are voters registered with third parties.

PATIENCE IS A VIRTUE

With an unprecedented number of voters opting to cast ballots by mail in Florida and throughout the nation, elections officials are urging patience in what some experts say should be viewed as "election season" rather than Election Day.

Supervisors and public-interest groups are trying to spread the word that it could take days for



President Donald Trump speaks with Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis as he arrives at Southwest Florida International Airport, Friday, Oct. 16, 2020, in Fort Myers.

elections officials to get a final tally in the battle between Trump and Biden.

The push to educate the public about the time involved in the tabulation of mail-in ballots comes as the Republican president has repeatedly demanded that a winner of the Nov. 3 election be determined by the end of Election Day.

In Florida, elections officials are allowed to begin processing mail-in ballots weeks before Election Day. But in some states, the ballots can't be counted until the day of the election.

This year's exponential number of mail-in ballots — including in some states that have initiated vote-by-mail procedures for the first time in response to the COVID-19 pandemic — could result in an extended ballot-counting period, experts say.

Uncertainty about the outcome of the Trump-Biden race by the end of Election Day is OK, they emphasized.

The Florida elections supervisors pointed out that their unofficial tallies do not have to be

submitted to state officials until noon Saturday, Nov. 7. After Election Day, officials have to scrutinize provisional ballots, ballots of voters who had an opportunity to "cure" mismatched signatures, and verify precinct-level results.

STORY OF THE WEEK

President Donald Trump, Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden and their surrogates flooded the Sunshine State, as Floridians cast mail-in ballots and as early voting begins on Monday.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"We need to give all of us a little bit of time. We want to ensure that everything we produce, everything that we publish is 100% accurate. We do not have the opportunity to be wrong." — Marion County Supervisor of Elections Wesley Wilcox, saying the results of the Nov. 3 election may not be finalized for days.

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BRIAN POISSON/Special to the Chronicle

Breast cancer survivors, from left, Dorena Bedwell, Brandie Burriss and Tobey Phillips pose in dresses made from the Chronicle's Pink Paper in a cooperative photo shoot to promote breast cancer awareness.

DIVA

Continued from Page A1

will be available to view at www.chronicleonline.com/diva. Tickets will be available through Nov. 16, with drawings on Nov. 17. All proceeds benefit the Citrus Aid Cancer Foundation.

Take a quiz, show what you know: Test your breast cancer knowledge with the Chronicle's Breast Cancer Quiz.

Available now at <https://tinyurl.com/y5ufpu3s>. One lucky quiz participant will be chosen to win a gift certificate to Aspire Salon & Spa in Citrus Springs, along with salon products.

Play some Bingo: Cut out a Diva Bingo card from the paper on Oct. 18, or download one from the Diva page of the Chronicle website, and play for a chance to win big prizes. Players will visit and shop local, small businesses from Oct. 18 to Nov. 16,

securing initials from business owners to make a traditional Bingo. Winners will be entered into a drawing to win one of three prizes valued at \$500. Kick off your holiday shopping and support small businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, while also raising breast cancer awareness across Citrus County.

Vote for your favorite Sassy Cup bra: The Chronicle's annual Sassy Cups design contest is underway and votes are needed

to choose the 2020 Sassy Cups winners. Readers are invited to buy votes at www.chronicleonline.com/diva and pick their favorite bra design. Votes are five for \$5; 10 for \$10; 20 for \$15; 30 for \$20; and 40 for \$25. Online voting is available now through Nov. 16. One hundred percent of Sassy Cups voting proceeds go to the Citrus Aid Cancer Foundation, so vote to make a difference in the life of a breast cancer patient in Citrus.

Around the COUNTY

Celebration at Alexander Park set

Citrus County Parks and Recreation will be hosting a community celebration to recognize Dr. Devonte White and all the citizen and business sponsors for their hard work and dedication involved in renovating the basketball court located at Alexander Park, 2552 N Railroad Way, Hernando.

The public event will be from 1 to 2 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 17, at the park. CDC guidelines for social distancing will be followed during the event. The renovation of the basketball court includes new backboards and the installation of a Versacourt surface, which is a suspended tile surface designed to be assembled on top of the existing basketball court.

The total amount of the project is \$18,831. The majority of the project was paid for with a \$10,000 grant applied for and received by Dr. White, along with \$2,000 in donations collected from local citizens and businesses. The remaining \$6,831 is funded through the Parks and Recreation Division annual budget. For more information, phone 352-527-7540.

— From staff reports

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 Victor Pinchuk, businessman, 1960-

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“You may differ with my choice, but not my right to choose.”
 — David S. Arthurs publisher emeritus

The opinions expressed in Chronicle editorials are the opinions of the newspaper's editorial board.

MAINTAIN ENTHUSIASM

Don't let curtain drop on Citrus art scene

Theater curtains were closed. Artwork stood invisible to the public in darkened galleries. Concert halls fell silent.

For about seven months, American arts and cultural institutions stood still, unable to operate in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Citrus arts scene suffered immeasurably as cancellations and closures rang through the community.

Now nearing the year mark into the coronavirus pandemic, some local galleries have closed doors for good, select theaters remain inoperable, concerts are postponed and annual arts festivals deeply scaled back. Things are certainly different, but as they say — the show must go on.

We must commit ourselves to not lose sight or enthusiasm for the arts, as they enrich the human spirit in times like these when they are needed the most.

Currently, the bulk of Citrus' arts nonprofits and businesses continue to take large financial hits. The pandemic pinch has put many artistic entities on the cusp of bankruptcy, restructuring to survive the economic climate put forth by COVID-19.

Local artist organizations and art venues are unable to hold the successful, large pre-pandemic events that kept income flowing in. These revenue shortfalls

have detrimental effects on cultural groups.

With numerous annual festival cancellations in the community, artist opportunities are reduced (and many artists support themselves solely through their art).

It is a monumental challenge to stay above water, even in normal times.

Arts organizations are generally run by volunteers that serve without compensation, and are never usually flush with cash. They tend to operate one event to another, so the loss of an event can mean no income.

Typically, even well-run institutions do not have deep reserves to survive in times of crisis; they remain operational thanks in part to donations from loyal patrons, small business loans and negotiated payments in order to weather a storm.

At some point, these resources will run out if the organization is unable to host functions to generate income.

For artists, COVID-19 has put a number of dreams and goals further away.

Supporters of the arts are encouraged to open their hearts and their wallets, and make a donation to keep their favorite arts organizations afloat.

As the holiday season approaches, buy local and support Citrus artists in their time of need. Your support is essential now more than ever.

THE ISSUE:

COVID-19 impacts Citrus arts scene.

OUR OPINION:

Don't give up on our local arts and culture.

West does everything with excellence

Is it really OK to just fill in the bubble? With the exhaustion of national politics, all too often many fill in the partisan candidates and then either skip or worse, Christmas-tree the lesser known local offices. I admit, I have been guilty of this myself. This all changed for me in 2010. I came to the understanding that the local candidates have an equally, if not greater direct impact on my daily life.

This new-found understanding influenced me to learn more about local politics. There are several local candidates that could warrant great discussion, but I would like to introduce you to only one: Theresa Foster-West. Theresa is running for one of those lesser known political offices, Mosquito Control Board Seat 2. Those of us who know her well, know she is the right woman for the job. “Why,” you ask. Well, that is an easy answer. Take for instance how she has campaigned for an office that most are unaware of. One might think she was running for president. If you know Theresa, you understand she will campaign for a rather obscure office with everything within her, because if it's important enough to require your hard-earned tax dollars, it's important enough to fight for. I quickly learned this about Theresa when she began attending church where I serve as one of the pastors. When I asked her to head up one of our largest ministry teams, she asked why. I replied with, “I know that you will not lay your head down to sleep until you know for sure that you have done everything you possibly could.” There could not be a better description of her than that, she does everything with excellence and my fellow Citrus County citizens, she deserves our vote for Mosquito Control Board Seat 2 on Nov. 3. Resist the urge to just fill in the bubble.

Justin Strickland
 Homosassa

President has destroyed economy

Trump was just humiliated by his own alma mater, the University of Pennsylvania, Wharton School of Business, after they said that Joe Biden's economic plan is better for America. Trump keeps telling his followers that his first three years were the best in history. Well, we know he has no idea what truth looks like. He thinks if he keeps repeating lies he will be believed; let's look at facts.

In Trump's first three years versus Obama's last three years, total job creation by Obama was 8.1 million jobs to

OPINIONS INVITED

- **Viewpoints** depicted in political cartoons, columns or letters do not necessarily represent the opinion of the editorial board.
- **Groups or individuals** are invited to express their opinions in a letter to the editor.
- **Persons** wishing to address the editorial board, which meets weekly, should call **Mike Arnold** at 352-563-5660.
- **All letters** must be signed and include a phone number and hometown, including letters sent via email. Names and hometowns will be printed; phone numbers will not be published or given out.
- **We reserve** the right to edit letters for length, libel, fairness and good taste.
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- **SEND LETTERS TO:** The Editor, 1624 N. Meadowcrest Blvd., Crystal River, FL 34429; fax to 352-563-3280; or email to letters@chronicleonline.com.

Trump's 6.6 Million jobs. Average monthly job creation: Obama 224,000 jobs created to Trump's 182,000 jobs created. Cumulative stock market returns ending Jan. 31, 2020: Obama 64% and Trump 42%. When Obama left office, the U.S. deficit was \$587 billion; under Trump that deficit is now almost \$1 trillion. So much for the great businessman. His leadership is lacking, even after three years of manipulating the government's involvement in the stock market.

Capitalists can no longer talk about our free enterprise system. The government now decides winners and losers. Capitalism under Trump has died. The U.S. government is now a player in the stock market. Yes, that's right, the global corporations blackmailed Trump into having the government buy most of their junk bonds, so that they and the stock market would look better when the market was starting to fall. Now the global giants are looking good. Well, in fact they are looking better than that, because they're not carrying worthless bonds in their portfolios. They awarded themselves golden parachutes and tremendous bonuses. We will never know how big of a loss they would have sustained because the government does not have to sell them, ever.

The free market system was in trouble even before Trump. George W. Bush left the White House leaving Obama with a \$3 trillion bailout of Wall Street under threat that the world financial system would collapse. Then Trump in his stimulus package gave Wall Street another \$2 trillion. When that did not work, he bullied the Federal Reserve to inject another \$8 trillion into the system. That's \$13 trillion to create the illusion that the stock market is doing great. This does not help the workers of America. He has

singlehandedly destroyed our economy, even before the virus. Capitalism and the free market system is over.

Roger Cullen
 Old Homosassa

A plan for no decision

The Constitution determines there will be an election on Nov. 3, 2020. This could be changed only by the Congress with joint agreement of the Senate and the House of Representatives. It is not likely that the Democrat-controlled House would agree to a change.

Mail votes received no later than each state deadline will be counted. But the count may not be completed by the end of Election Day. So it is possible Trump may have a temporary majority at the end of the day and would declare himself the winner. However, the vote on Election Day does not determine the winner. That will be determined by the Electoral College on Dec. 14, 2020.

Trump will surely contest the election, the votes and the results. He will drag this through the courts for months. That could mean it would not be possible for the Electoral College to meet and there would be no winner declared. This is the real secret of Trump's plan. He intends to make sure that there is no decision. He will claim there is no decision so he is still the president and he will refuse to leave the White House.

Regardless of anything Trump may do, the Constitution determines that Inauguration Day will be on Jan. 20, 2021, and also determines that at noon on this day the four-year term of both Trump and Pence will end. Trump will be out of office and there is absolutely nothing he can do about it.

If no one has been declared president, the Constitution further specifies that the House of Representatives then has the sole responsibility to decide by vote in the House who is to be the president. There would be one vote cast by each state. The person who receives a simple majority would be the next president. We can assume the Democrat majority in the House would vote for Biden.

But what if Trump refuses to leave the White House? He believes he can use the military or other federal officers to prevent his removal. He is wrong! At noon on Jan. 20 he is no longer president. He is a private citizen with no authority over the military or any federal agency. The new president is immediately commander-in-chief and the military must obey an order to remove Trump by any means necessary.

Kenneth J. Clark
 Homosassa

Shelter needs a lot of repairs

I read the Sound Off in today's paper (Monday, Sept. 21, 2020), “Animal shelter deserves support,” and I couldn't agree with it more. The shelter in Inverness is so old and needs a lot of repair work. I think Citrus County's animals deserve better. You need a bigger, more well-equipped shelter with lots of room, indoors and outdoors, for the animals to play and be comfortable. All the workers there also deserve a more up-to-date and cleaner atmosphere to do their jobs.

This is something the county's animal lovers should get together and support. I'm from up North and the shelters we have up there are beautiful compared to this one here. You really have to treat these poor animals better.

People just want to complain

I was getting ready to send in a letter and then I saw in the paper this morning that it could not exceed 400 words. What happened there was my letter had to do with how many people in the area complain about the different things in the area, especially about the traffic on (U.S.) 19. For some reason, they seem to think they could have done it better, quicker and so on and so forth. And we know at the end of it, there's going to be

more and more and more calls about how it was done all wrong because back in Iowa or Kansas or Minnesota, they'd have done it a different way, better and etc.

We needed a good laugh

Sunday's (Sept. 27, 2020, front-page) Commentary, “Making puppies is real work,” by Gerry Mulligan, just cracked my husband and I up. We laughed until tears rolled down our face. Just what we needed was a good laugh at this time. Hope Hunter is doing OK, and the prospective female. We learn a lot about things, don't we? We also learned about Havana Silks.

Keep us updated

Please keep us updated on Sandra Ingram's progress toward a new home for herself and two grandchildren. Let us know when she needs help with furniture, household items and any other things she needs. We will be glad to help her get back and set up to a new home, and we need to know where she lives so we can stop by and help her.

A NOTE ABOUT SOUND OFF

- Sound Off is meant for readers to voice their opinions on local issues. If you would like to comment on state or national issues, please submit a letter to the editor.

Editor's note: The Chronicle Editorial Board issues endorsements of local candidates. Endorsement decisions are based on multiple interviews conducted with each candidate by the board and staff. Candidates not endorsed by the editorial board of the Chronicle are encouraged to submit a rebuttal to letters@chronicleonline.com no later than Thursday, Oct. 29, 2020. All rebuttals submitted prior to the deadline are guaranteed to publish no later than Monday, Nov. 2, 2020, the day before Election Day.

CHRONICLE EDITORIAL BOARD ENDORSEMENTS

- **School Board runoff:** Ginger Bryant (Endorsed during Primary)
- **Amendments:** Vote NO on Amendments 1, 2, 3, 4 and YES on 5,6
- **Property Appraiser:** Cregg Dalton
- **Crystal River Council Seat 1:** Ken Brown
- **Crystal River Council Seat 5:** Robert Holmes
- **State House 34:** Ralph Massullo

Emails show Giuliani risk

Intelligence agencies express concern

ERIC TUCKER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A New York tabloid's puzzling account about how it acquired emails purportedly from Joe Biden's son has raised some red flags. One of the biggest involves the source of the emails: Rudy Giuliani.

Giuliani has traveled abroad looking for dirt on the Bidens, developing relationships with shadowy figures, including a Ukrainian lawmaker who U.S. officials have described as a Russian agent and part of a broader Russian effort to denigrate the Democratic presidential nominee.

Yet Giuliani says foreign sources didn't provide the Hunter Biden emails. He says a laptop containing the emails and intimate photos was simply abandoned in a Delaware repair shop and the shop owner reached out to Giuliani's lawyer.

That hasn't stopped the FBI from investigating whether the emails are part of a foreign influence operation. The emails have surfaced as U.S. officials have been warning that Russia, which backed Trump's 2016 campaign through hacking of Democratic emails and a covert social media campaign, is interfering again this year. The latest episode with Giuliani underscores the risk he poses to a White House that spent years confronted by a federal investigation into whether Trump associates had coordinated with Russia.

The Washington Post reported Thursday that intelligence agencies had warned the White House last year that Giuliani was the target of a Russian influence operation. The newspaper, citing four former officials, said that assessment was based on information including intercepted communications showing Giuliani had been in contact with people tied to Russian intelligence.

The newspaper said national security adviser Robert O'Brien had warned Trump that information Giuliani brought back from Ukraine should be considered contaminated by Russia, but that Trump brushed off the warning.

Far from distancing himself from Giuliani, Trump has made the purported Hunter Biden emails one of his main talking points in the final weeks of the campaign as he tries to disparage his Democratic rival.

The Trump-friendly New York Post began publishing stories about the emails Wednesday, saying it had obtained



Former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani speaks Monday, Oct. 12, 2020 during a Columbus Day gathering at a Trump campaign field office in Philadelphia.

Twitter CEO says it was wrong to block links to Biden story

Twitter was wrong to block weblinks to an unverified political story, CEO Jack Dorsey said on Friday, as the company responded to criticism over its handling of the story that had prompted cries of censorship from the right.

"Straight blocking of URLs was wrong, and we updated our policy and enforcement to fix," he tweeted. "Our goal is to attempt to add context, and now we have capabilities to do that."

Dorsey was weighing in after an executive at the social media company announced changes late Thursday to its policy on hacked content following an onslaught of criticism.

Twitter will no longer remove hacked material unless it's directly shared by hackers or those working with them, the company's head of legal, policy, trust and safety, Vijaya Gadde, said in a Twitter thread.

them from the former New York mayor. The newspaper said the emails of Hunter Biden, a California resident, were found in a laptop that had been dropped off for service at a Delaware repair shop by an unidentified man who never picked it up. They said the shop owner turned it over to the FBI, but also made a copy of the hard drive and provided that to Giuliani's lawyer.

One 2015 email published by the Post purported to show a top adviser for Burisma, the Ukraine gas company where Hunter Biden held a board seat, thanking Biden for giving him an opportunity to meet his father when the older Biden was serving as U.S. vice

And instead of blocking links from being shared, tweets will be labeled to provide context, Gadde said.

"We want to address the concerns that there could be many unintended consequences to journalists, whistleblowers and others in ways that are contrary to Twitter's purpose of serving the public conversation," she said.

Twitter and Facebook had moved quickly this week to limit the spread of the story published by the conservative-leaning New York Post, which cited unverified emails from Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden's son that were reportedly discovered by President Donald Trump's allies. The story has not been confirmed by other publications.

Twitter initially responded by banning users from sharing links to the article in tweets and direct messages because it violated the company's policy prohibiting hacked content. But it didn't alert users about why they couldn't share the link until hours later.

— From wire reports

president. The Biden campaign and a lawyer for Hunter Biden said they had no record of such a meeting taking place. They have not addressed the authenticity of the emails.

Giuliani did not respond Friday for a request for comment from The Associated Press. But in an interview Thursday with a SiriusXM show, he asserted that the laptop had been dropped off by Hunter Biden, and that the material was not hacked and the laptop was legally obtained. He said on Fox News on Friday that the information from the laptop was "authentic as hell."

The FBI is investigating whether the emails are tied to a foreign influence operation,

according to a person who was not authorized to discuss an ongoing investigation and spoke on condition of anonymity to AP. The exact scope of what was being investigated was not clear.

But the report that intelligence agencies have been concerned about Giuliani is hardly surprising.

Andrii Derkach, the Ukrainian parliamentarian who is one of Giuliani's principal contacts, was mentioned in an August intelligence assessment that described a concerted Russian effort to disparage Biden. A Treasury Department sanction announcement from last month characterized Derkach as an "active Russian agent for over a decade."

Derkach in recent months has leaked recordings of calls Biden had as vice president with Ukraine's then-leader, audio the Biden campaign contends is heavily edited. Despite his own administration's warnings on Derkach, Trump has promoted those recordings on Twitter.

Giuliani has not been shy about discussing his foreign contacts, including with Derkach. In December, Derkach posted on his Facebook page photos of him and Giuliani meeting in Kyiv and said the two had had a meeting.

Frustration about Giuliani in the West Wing has long run rampant, with those around the president warily watching Giuliani's efforts to bring down the Bidens and fearful they could boomerang back on the president.

Giuliani was central to advancing a discredited theory that Ukraine, not Russia, had interfered in the 2016 election. His shadowy efforts to get Ukraine to launch investigations into the Bidens helped create the impeachment case against Trump.

Nation & World BRIEFS

Thailand



Associated Press

A pro-democracy demonstrators raises a three-finger salute, a symbol of resistance, as hundreds gather in a business district in Bangkok, Thailand, Friday, Oct. 16, 2020. Thailand's prime minister has rejected calls for his resignation as his government steps up efforts to stop student-led protesters from rallying in the capital.

Trump changes course, approves Calif. fire relief

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — President Donald Trump's administration abruptly reversed course and approved California's application for disaster relief funds to clean up damage from six recent deadly and destructive blazes that have scorched the state, Gov. Gavin Newsom said Friday.

"Just got off the phone with President Trump who has approved our Major Disaster Declaration request. Grateful for his quick response," Newsom said in a brief statement.

Adviser: Tweet about Afghan forces was a wish

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's national security adviser on Friday doubled down on his assertion that the number of U.S. troops in Afghanistan will shrink to 2,500 early next year, while suggesting that Trump's tweet that all forces should be home by Christmas was more a wish than a reality.

Seeking to clarify a series of confusing statements about the American footprint in Afghanistan, Robert O'Brien appeared to take a shot at Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Milley in recent days said that the U.S. is executing a plan to reduce the number of troops to 4,500 in November, but talk of any further reduction would be "speculation."

"I think what the president was doing is, he was expressing the same desire I think every president since the Revolutionary War has said," O'Brien said during an online event hosted by the Aspen Institute. "Whenever we're at war, whether it was the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, World War I or World War II, all presidents ... want the troops home by Christmas."

Reports: Turkey tests Russian-made S-400 defense system

ANKARA, Turkey — NATO member Turkey has tested its Russian-made advanced air defense missile system, Turkish media reports said Friday, raising the specter of a new standoff with the United States.

The U.S. Department of Defense said that if the reports are accurate it "strongly condemns" the test.

"We have been clear: an operational S-400 system is not consistent with Turkey's commitments as a U.S. and NATO ally," chief Pentagon spokesman Jonathan Rath Hoffman said.

— From wire reports

French leader decries decapitation attack

ELAINE GANLEY
Associated Press

PARIS — For the second time in three weeks, terror struck France, this time with the gruesome beheading of a history teacher in a street in a Paris suburb. The suspected attacker was shot and killed by police.

French President Emmanuel Macron denounced what he called an "Islamist terrorist attack" and urged the nation to stand united against extremism. The teacher had discussed caricatures of Islam's Prophet Muhammad with his class, authorities said.

The French anti-terrorism prosecutor opened an investigation for murder with a suspected terrorist motive, the prosecutor's office said.

Macron visited the school where the teacher worked in the town of Conflans-Saint-Honorine and met with staff after the slaying. An Associated Press reporter saw three ambulances arrive at the



Associated Press

French President Emmanuel Macron speaks in front of a high school Friday Oct. 16, 2020 in Conflans Sainte-Honorine, northwest of Paris, where a history teacher who opened a discussion with high school students on caricatures of Islam's Prophet Muhammad was beheaded.

scene, and heavily armed police surrounding the area and police vans lining leafy nearby streets.

"One of our compatriots was murdered today because he taught ... the freedom of expression, the freedom to believe or not believe," Macron said.

He said the attack shouldn't divide France because that's what the extremists want. "We must

stand all together as citizens," he said.

The incident came as Macron's government works on a bill to address Islamist radicals who authorities claim are creating a parallel society outside the values of the French Republic. France has the largest Muslim population in Western Europe with up to 5 million members, and Islam is the country's No. 2 religion.

The killing of the teacher occurred in Conflans-Sainte-Honorine while the fleeing suspect was killed by police in adjoining Eragny.

A police official said the suspect, armed with a knife and an airsoft gun — which fires plastic pellets — was shot dead about 600 yards from where the male teacher was killed after he failed to respond to orders

to put down his arms, and acted in a threatening manner.

The teacher had received threats after opening a discussion "for a debate" about the caricatures about 10 days ago, the police official told The Associated Press. The parent of a student had filed a complaint against the teacher, another police official said, adding that the suspected killer did not have a child at the school.

An ID card was found at the scene of the suspect, but police were verifying the identity, the police official said. French media reported that the suspect was an 18-year-old Chechen, born in Moscow. That information could not be immediately confirmed.

France has seen occasional violence involving its Chechen community in recent months, in the Dijon region, the Mediterranean city of Nice, and the western town of Saint-Dizier, believed linked to local criminal activity.

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Nancy Kennedy
**GRACE
NOTES**

Heartfelt laughter of the broken

At church this past week, the pastor showed a short video of a kid working on a math problem.

He reads out loud: "Jaden has one dollar bill, one quarter and two pennies. How much money does he have?"

He answers, "Jaden broke," and then he bursts out laughing.

That laugh was priceless.

"Jaden broke, and so are we," the pastor said.

The whole world is broken, but I don't need to tell you that. The evidence is everywhere.

Disease. Division. Destruction. Death. Joblessness. Hopelessness. Anger and angst.

Broken promises. Broken dreams. Broken hearts.

Even life's best moments often leave us empty.

We broke — and we need a good laugh.

I don't mean we should make light of tragedies. I'm talking about the laughter that comes when we know the end of the story: God wins, which means his people win, too.

I remember one week a bunch of years ago when everything went wrong. To name just a few things: Two magazines I regularly wrote for folded, putting me out of a job; my car broke down; one of my daughters moved 6,000 miles away to Hawaii and I got a letter saying one of my books was out of print, meaning the publisher didn't think it was good enough to reprint.

Also that week I learned I had made a \$10,000 error on my income tax form and the \$26 refund I had expected to receive morphed into a \$1,000 additional debt to the IRS.

That was the final blow, the last straw, and I vividly remember losing it, falling to the floor — laughing until my sides ached.

For a moment I thought I had lost my sanity, but I think that was actually the point at which I had found it.

Nineteenth-century theologian Oswald Chambers said Christians are "hilarious when crushed with difficulties because the thing is so ludicrously impossible for anyone but God."

Sometimes there's nothing left to do but laugh. Not that laughter changes things — I still had to pay the IRS \$1,000.

Even now, we're still in the middle of a pandemic and a nation that's embroiled in chaos and division.

But when I laugh at things that are utterly out of my control, my laughter becomes a surrendering — a "Let Go and Let God" moment.

In that way, laughter is a form of worship, because it's saying to God, "Only you can fix this mess, and if you can raise Christ from the dead, then surely you can care for me."

We laugh, not because terrible things aren't true and we don't suffer from them, but because the Resurrection of Christ is true.

I imagine after Jesus died and then his followers found his tomb empty and then later saw their friend alive again that they laughed with utter amazement.

"We buried you! We saw you dead! You're alive?! This is nuts!"

We, too, can laugh because the Resurrection is our great hope that one day God will fix everything that's broken.

One day God will wipe away all our tears. He will right all wrongs, restore what has been destroyed or robbed from us.

Therefore, in anticipation of that day, even in our deepest sorrow and grief, even through our tears, we can also laugh.

Nancy Kennedy is the author of "Move Over, Victoria — I Know the Real Secret," "Girl on a Swing" and "Lipstick Grace." Email her at nkennedy@chronicleonline.com.

2020 challenges change fundraising



Chronicle file

Community leaders, friends, supporters, staff and board members of The Path of Citrus County came out in 2019 to help DuWayne Sipper, The Path executive director, and his wife, Kathryn, cut the ribbon, officially opening the shelter's newest addition, the former 30-room Beverly Hills motel.

Path of Citrus County takes its annual event online during COVID

Just like you, this year has been very different for us. We have changed our formal banquet to online like most nonprofits because we can't meet in person safely.

Also, just like most things, I analyze the positives and negatives. Our annual banquet was the one place we could meet many of our donors and friends and often, it was the only time of the year we would see them.

We would sit down at a nice dinner and share how their donations had affected some lives in our shelter and meet them if they wanted to.

This was quite an undertaking for my wife, Kathryn, and we were both proud we had been running this banquet for about 17 years in a row.

Now, this year, we have hired Adam

Hill to film our staff and clients and present them online in place of our banquet.



DuWayne Sipper
**THE PATH
HOME**

Some of us are really going to miss our sit-down dinner! At first, I thought this was going to be a lot less work for us because I remember all of the details which go into planning a dinner.

Well, I was wrong. Kathryn has spent just as much time planning the details of the film and coordinating the phone calls, in my opinion, as when she planned a dinner.

Here is the good news. I found myself communicating the whole program as well as listening to the staff and we are all telling the story of The Path in a fresh new way.

The capital campaign is mostly finished, as well as the new roof on the old Beverly Hills motel and we have

checked in many new people since we started.

I promise you this, no matter how long or how much you think you know about The Path, you will learn something new.

For the first time, we will have time to show you how much is going on our property when before, we didn't have time to show you everything.

You will still see some of the changed lives we always like to show you because it is the core of what we do, but you are going to see much, much more.

Please go to our website — www.pathofcitrus.org — and you will see on the purple ribbon or the button how to register.

This will not be what you are used to. Enjoy the show!

DuWayne Sipper is the executive director of The Path of Citrus County, a faith-based homeless shelter. Contact him at 527-6500 or sipperd@pathofcitrus.org.

RELIGION NOTES

Victory Baptist Church invites the public to God and Country from noon to 5 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 17, at the church, 5040E. Shady Acres Drive, Inverness. Special music by the Ferguson Family and special speakers Bobby Stewart, founder of Faith of America, and Pastor Richard Harrison of Union Baptist Church.

On Saturday, Oct. 17, from 2-6 p.m., **Joy & Praise Fellowship** church will host a free

outdoor concert featuring three great local church bands

There will be free food and refreshments and games for kids. Limited seating will be provided, so you're encouraged to bring a chair or blanket. Come early so you don't miss any of the bands. The church is at 6670 N. Lecanto Highway, Beverly Hills.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 3473 W. Southern St., Lecanto, has reopened the

Family History Center.

Hours are 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for the family-friendly, free ancestry resource/research center.

For more information, contact Frances Austin at 352-746-5943.

Shalom House of Prayer @ The Path Family of God Rescue Mission, 4395 N. Lecanto, Highway, Beverly Hills, has Upper Room prayers; continuous prayer, praise and worship are open to everyone.

Join members of the body of Christ as we unite and partner with the work of the Lord.

Follow Shalom House of Prayer on Facebook; email shalom.hop.path@gmail.com.

Cross Bound Ministry broadcasts with a focus on Bible teaching and strengthening the family on radio station 720AM every Sunday at 8 a.m. and on YouTube and Facebook. Visit online at CrossBoundMinistry.com.

Respect Life Month



Special to the Chronicle

Saint John Paul II Catholic School fifth-grade students help St. Scholastica Knights of Columbus Council 14485 post 47 crosses in remembrance of the number of years since the Supreme Court ruling legalizing abortion in 1973. October is "Respect Life Month." Students pictured, from left, are: Ana Terry, Kyle Hegarty, Christopher Kingree and Ella Celada. Knights, from left, are: Ken Geiger, Steve Amann, Ben Divona, Pete Burrell, Jack King and George Fanning.

THE NUMBER:**9**

Strikeouts by Houston starter Framber Valdéz in six innings Friday against the Rays in a 7-4 victory in Game 6 of the ALCS.



Framber Valdéz

SPORTS

CITRUS COUNTY CHRONICLE

Section B - SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2020



Crystal River volleyball wins district title over North Marion./B2

- College football/B2
- Volleyball/B2
- Scoreboard/B3
- Sports briefs/B3
- Lottery, TV/B3
- TV/B4
- Comics/B5
- Classifieds/B6

Astros beat Rays 7-4 to force Game 7 in ALCS

Springer, Valdéz help Houston win third in a row

BERNIE WILSON
AP sports writer

SAN DIEGO — George Springer and José Altuve delivered big hits, Framber Valdéz pitched six brilliant innings and the Houston Astros beat the Tampa Bay Rays for the third straight time, 7-4 Friday to force a deciding Game 7 of the AL Championship Series.

Houston chased starter Blake Snell in the fifth before Springer hit a go-ahead, two-run single

and scored on Altuve's double. Carlos Correa, who hit a walk-off home run in Thursday night's 4-3 win, added an RBI single.

The Astros are one win away from their third World Series in four seasons and joining the 2004 Boston Red Sox as the only teams to rally from a 3-0 deficit to win a seven-game series. The Red Sox stunned the New York Yankees to win the ALCS before winning their first World Series in 86 seasons.

See ALCS/Page B2

Tampa Bay's Mike Zunino breaks his bat after striking out against Houston in Game 6 of the American League Championship Series, Friday, Oct. 16, 2020, in San Diego. The Rays lost 7-4, as the Astros have tied the series.

Associated Press



A happy Homecoming



Crystal River blanks Central 46-0 for first win

MATT PFIFFNER
Sports editor

CRYSTAL RIVER — If the Crystal River football team had a hangover after last week's tough 24-16 home loss to county rival Lecanto, it certainly didn't show Friday night in a 46-0 dismantling of Central for a Homecoming victory.

The Pirates scored on their first five possessions of the opening half to take a 32-0 lead into the break and quickly scored again early in the third quarter to put the running clock into effect for the rest of the night.

"After we lost to Lecanto, we knew we had to step up," Pirate senior Manny Hampton said. "We came back Monday and worked hard, worked hard Tuesday and finished through the week and played hard on Friday."

The Pirates improved to 1-2 on the season, while the Bears dropped to 0-4 and still haven't scored a point this fall.

"We definitely did some good things. But we still made some mistakes," Pirates coach Cliff Lohrey said. "It's common knowledge they're in a rebuilding phase and I thought our guys played with a lot of class and sportsmanship."

The Pirates opened the game with the ball and marched 50 yards in 9 plays for a quick 6-0 lead on a Joel Velazquez 4-yard touchdown run on fourth-and-goal.

A penalty on second-and-goal from the 3 put the ball back on the 23, but big runs from Jeff Jones Jr. and Jared Newell put the ball inside the 5.

After a Bears punt, Velazquez ripped off runs of 14 and 18 yards to set up the Pirates at the Central 18, where quarterback Jones Jr. ran it in around the right corner, diving for the pylon for the score, for a 12-0 lead.

The Pirate defense forced another three-and-out and on the ensuing possession, Jones Jr. connected with Daunte Gunter for a 21-yard touchdown pass. Zach Van Fleet's kick made it a 19-0 game.

A big punt return by Newell set up the Pirate offense inside the Bears 10 and on the very next play Hampton bulled his way into the end zone for a 9-yard score.

Newell had another nice punt return later in the second quarter and this time Velazquez went untouched around the right end for a 17-yard scoring scamper to make it 32-0 at the half.

MATT PFIFFNER/Chronicle

Crystal River quarterback Jeff Jones Jr. races for a nice gain against Central during the first quarter Friday night at Bramlett Stadium in Crystal River. Jones Jr. had a touchdown run and pass in the Pirates' 46-0 Homecoming victory over the Bears.

See HAPPY/Page B3

Panthers stay perfect with win at Weeki Wachee

Sets up big showdown next week with Nature Coast

CHRIS BERNHARDT JR.
Staff writer

WEEKI WACHEE — It's no secret that Lecanto has struggled to add to the win column in recent seasons, and throughout much of the program's existence.

In fact, the current group of seniors who have been with the Panthers their entire prep careers have only experienced five varsity victories the past three years.

That has very much changed. Only Friday, Oct. 16, 2020, Lecanto paid a visit to Gulf Coast 8 conference foe Weeki Wachee and left the Hornets Nest with a 26-21 triumph.

It moved the Panthers' record to 3-0, already matching the most wins in any season since last reaching the playoffs in 2015.

"It feels good," said Lecanto's first-year head coach Wyndell "Chop" Alexander. "We can say we're probably one of the first teams (in program history) to have ever done that. It's a good feeling. It feels good to be able to prepare and get the kids to realize we're supposed to win."

"This game and next week's (at Nature Coast) we'll hopefully turn the corner and this will be the new way of thinking, that we're supposed to be winning."

See PANTHERS/Page B3

Lecanto's Hayden Parker (6) reaches for the first down marker against Weeki Wachee on Friday night in Brooksville. The Panthers stayed undefeated with a 26-21 road win.

JOE DICRISTOFALO/For the Chronicle



Pirates claim district volleyball crown

Defeat North Marion in 4 sets

Chronicle

The Crystal River volleyball team won the district championship on Thursday night, with a 25-19, 25-20, 14-25, 25-17 victory over North Marion in the District 4A-5 title game at the Villages Charter School.

The Pirates defeated the Colts behind the strong play of senior team leader Jordan Williams, who led all players with 21 kills.

Crystal River jumped out early with sophomore Bailey Einspahr serving the first four points. The Pirates never looked back, leading most of the first two sets.

Strong serving and field play by Mackenzie Richardson and Phoebe Shaw allowed the Pirates to maintain comfortable leads. Erin Probst, Savannah Pochis, Brook Bargiel and Maddie Cobb gave solid defensive support.

In the third set, the Colts took the momentum and fought back for a 25-14 decisive win.

Set 4 belonged to Crystal River, as Mackenzie Richardson



The Crystal River volleyball team shows off the hardware after winning the District 4A-5 championship Thursday against North Marion at The Villages Charter School.

served seven straight points as the Pirates jumped out to a 9-3 lead and never looked back. Dominate net play by Williams, Einspahr, Kelsey Thomas and Alexia Williams kept the pressure on.

“These 15 girls have had no rules all season. They show up early for practice, they don’t miss, they work hard the entire time, and never complain. I think very highly of them as people first and also as athletes,”

coach Greg Hamilton said. “I am delighted they were able to win their district and put a 2020 on the banner in our gym sky.”

Coach Hamilton singled out his team leader:

“Jordan Williams has led this

school in kills for three straight years. She has had an excellent senior year and I think she should win several honors for her outstanding play this year. She is the leader of the only team in the county that won its district,” he said. “About two weeks ago we were struggling and after a loss and our quiet senior said something that I think has helped to change our season. When it was quiet she simply said a few things of how this team needs to listen to its coach and do what he says. From that point on there has been a change in this team.

“As a coach when you have a player who leads by example who is totally on board, you know that group can achieve together. That is our story. We began to prepare for districts at that time. You have to love it when a plan comes together. This group has come so far the past two years. We as coaches are so happy for them. Especially for the four seniors, Sydney Mieman, Savannah Pochis, Jordan Williams and Alexia Wilson.”

Crystal River will host Wesley Chapel on Thursday, Oct. 22 at 7 p.m. in the Class 4A Regional quarterfinals.



North Carolina wide receiver Dyami Brown (2) scores a touchdown Saturday, Oct. 10, 2020, as Virginia Tech defensive back Armani Chatman (27) chases during a college football game in Chapel Hill, N.C. The Tar Heels look to stay undefeated today when they visit Florida State.

Tar Heels look for 4-0 start

No. 5 UNC visits Florida State today

AARON BEARD
AP sports writer

North Carolina is unbeaten and has its highest ranking in more than two decades, even as the fifth-ranked Tar Heels have yet to have a strong performance from their offense and defense in the same game.

It’s the perfect scenario for coach Mack Brown entering Saturday night’s game at Florida State: a good start to build momentum, yet plenty to improve if the Tar Heels want to contend with No. 1 Clemson and No. 4 Notre Dame in the Atlantic Coast Conference race.

“Right now we’re a work in progress,” Brown said. “We’re getting better. The ranking is ahead of where we are I think, because we’re not consistently good enough right now on defense. The offense hasn’t shown the ability to do it every week. So we’ve got to do that.”

The Tar Heels (3-0, 3-0 ACC) are coming off a dominating offensive output against then-No. 19 Virginia Tech with 56 points and 656 yards. But that offense hadn’t been nearly as sharp in the first two wins against Syracuse and Boston College.

The defense led the way with seven sacks against the Orange and the clinching interception on the Eagles’ late 2-point conversion for the tie. But as the offense took off against Virginia Tech, the defense gave up 45 points and 495 yards with three starters down to injury.

That unit has also managed just one takeaway in three games, a point Brown repeatedly emphasizes. There’s an opportunity to improve against the Seminoles (1-3), who are 0-3 in the league for the first time since 2009 in their first season under Mike Norvell.

Florida State had three turnovers in each of their first two league games before having just one in last week’s loss to the Fighting Irish, the first of two straight games against top-5 opponents.

“We’ve got to come out and continue to improve, continue to get better,” Norvell said. “I’ve got a lot of confidence in what these guys can accomplish, but we need to be consistent in getting that done and go play our best game here this week.”

Some other things to know about Saturday night’s UNC-FSU game:

NEXT STEP

FSU redshirt sophomore Jordan Travis is set to get his second start at quarterback. He threw for 204 yards and a touchdown while running for 96 yards and another score in his first start against Notre Dame.

Florida State’s 405 yards marked its best in league play so far.

“There are a lot of things I have to correct,” Travis said. “I just have to trust my eyes and keep my footwork. That’s one thing that’s really important we’ve been emphasizing this week, is working on my footwork.”

RUSHING ATTACK

North Carolina’s offense runs its best when running backs Michael Carter and Javonte Williams are moving the chains. The duo had career-best performances against

the Hokies, with Carter (214 yards) and Williams (169) helping the Tar Heels finish with 399 yards on the ground for their best total against an ACC opponent since 1988.

STARTING FAST

The Tar Heels have scored a touchdown on their first drive in all three games, including their first two drives against BC and their first three against Virginia Tech.

“I like to get the ball and go ahead and set the tone,” UNC quarterback Sam Howell said.

All three opening drives have been at least 10 plays and 65 yards.

“They’re operating at a high level,” FSU defensive coordinator Adam Fuller said, adding: “They’re an absolute challenge from sideline to sideline.”

FLAGS

UNC and FSU must clean up their penalties.

The Seminoles are averaging 9.25 penalties for 81.75 yards per game, ranking near the bottom of the Bowl Subdivision ranks. But the Tar Heels have been worse, averaging 9.67 flags for 91.33 yards per game.

WINLESS

Brown has won a national championship and is a College Football Hall of Fame member, but he’s never beaten his alma mater.

Brown lost three matchups with the Seminoles at Tulane during the 1980s and all six matchups during his first stint with the Tar Heels, the last in 1997. Coincidentally, that game was also the last time the program has played with a top-5 ranking.

ALCS

Continued from Page B1

Otherwise, big league clubs leading 3-0 in a best-of-seven postseason series are 37-1.

Houston also is trying to become the first team to win a pennant with a losing regular-season record (29-31). The Astros have been criticized for their role in a cheating scandal en route to the 2017 title that was uncovered last offseason.

“We’re not through writing history,” Astros manager Dusty Baker said. “We’re hoping we can have a happy ending to this historic season and historic year.”

“This team’s battled back big time,” he added. “You’ve got to love this team, or some people hate this team, but I mean you’ve at least got to respect this team, the way that they’ve worked.”

Manuel Margot homered twice and drove in three runs for the Rays. Despite blowing a 3-0 series lead, they remain one win away from the second World Series in franchise history — and one loss from joining the 2004 Yankees in ignominy.

Game 7 on Saturday night will feature the pitchers who started and finished Houston’s Game 7 win against the Los Angeles Dodgers in the 2017 World Series. Lance McCullers Jr. will go for the Astros while 36-year-old Charlie Morton is expected to start for the Rays.

In the decisive Game 7 in 2017, McCullers started and went 2 1/3 scoreless innings while Morton pitched the final four innings for the victory. Morton signed with Tampa Bay prior to the 2019 season.

It’s also a rematch of Game 2 of this series, won 4-2 by Morton and the Rays.

“We’ve just got to bounce back,” Rays manager Kevin Cash said. “This isn’t the scenario that we wanted leading 3-0, but this is a resilient group. Encouraged that the offense kind of got going there. Look for some carryover.”

“There’s no doubt the momentum has shifted, but I would bet on this team being very capable of bouncing back,” he said.

Valdéz, who lost the opener of this series 2-1 to Snell, held the Astros to one run and three hits while striking out nine and walking three in his third career postseason start. He allowed Willy Adames’ RBI double in the second.

Astros closer Ryan Pressly pitched for the third straight day and got three outs for his second save to go with a win in Game 5. He allowed Yoshitomo Tsutsugo’s one-out single, then induced Mike Brosseau’s game-ending double-play grounder, a call upheld in a video review. Pressly threw nine pitches, all for strikes, raising his three-day total to 39.

The 71-year-old Baker, who led NL teams for the first 22 seasons of his 23-year managerial career, used some old-school baseball to outfox his younger counterpart, 42-year-old Cash, to overturn a 1-0 deficit in the fifth. The rally had only one hard-hit ball. The Astros had been frustrated in the first three games when they scalded balls right to fielders.

Snell walked Yuli Gurriel opening the fifth and allowed a single to Aledmys Díaz on his 82nd pitch. Cash, whose team was built around analytics, pulled Snell before he could face the No. 9 batter, catcher Martín Maldonado, and leadoff hitter Springer, who had struck out twice.

Maldonado laid down a sacrifice bunt against Diego Castillo and Springer punched a two-run single to center through a hole in Tampa Bay’s drawn-in infield that was also in a shift. Altuve followed with a double into the left-field corner that brought in Springer, who might have been out if Brandon Lowe had thrown to the cutoff man instead of second base.

After Michael Brantley walked, Correa singled to left to bring in Altuve.

Snell allowed two runs and three hits in four-plus innings, struck out four and walked four.

Baker, hired after AJ Hinch was fired following the revelation of the sign-stealing scandal, is the first manager to take five different teams to the playoffs. He has yet to win a World Series as a manager. His San Francisco Giants reached the 2002 Fall Classic before losing in seven games to the Angels. As a player, he helped the Los Angeles Dodgers win the World Series in 1981 against the New York Yankees.

Houston’s Kyle Tucker homered off rookie Shane Bieber leading off the sixth. In the seventh, Brantley hit an RBI single and Tucker a sacrifice fly.

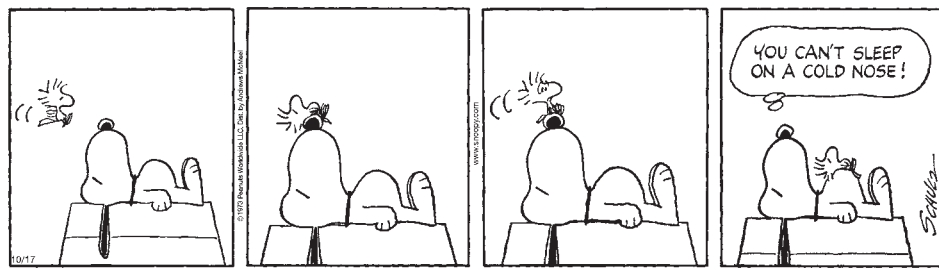
Margot homered off Andre Scrubb leading off the Rays’ seventh and hit a two-run shot off Cristian Javier with two outs in the eighth.

UP NEXT

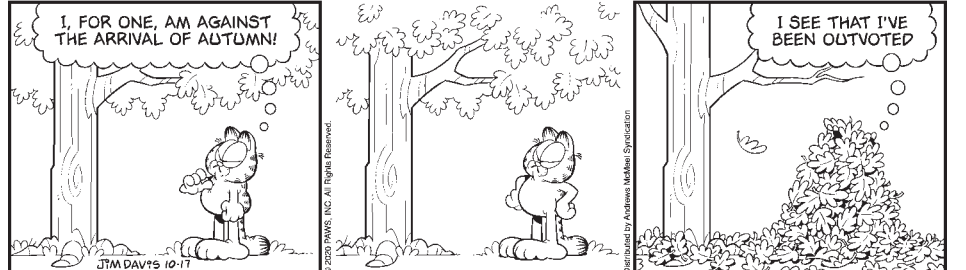
Astros: McCullers struck out 11 in seven innings in taking the loss in Game 2. He allowed four runs, only one earned, and four hits.

Rays: Morton pitched five scoreless innings in winning Game 2.

Peanuts



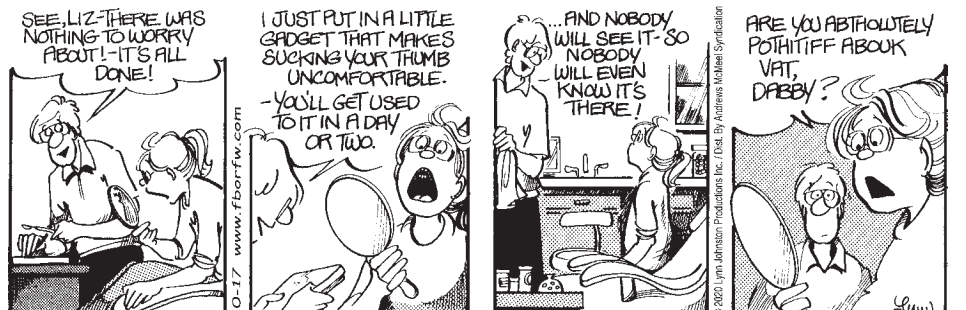
Garfield



Pickles



For Better or For Worse



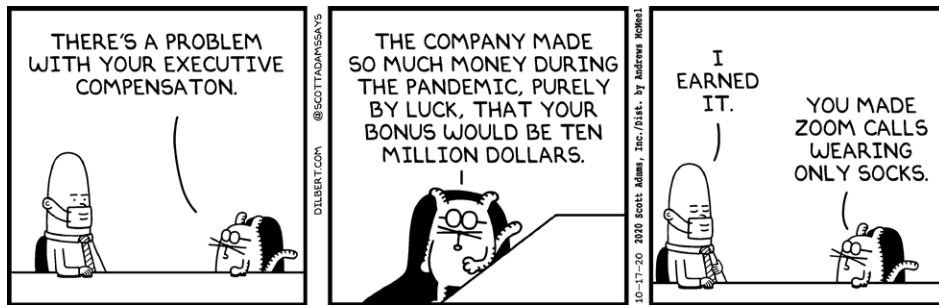
Sally Forth



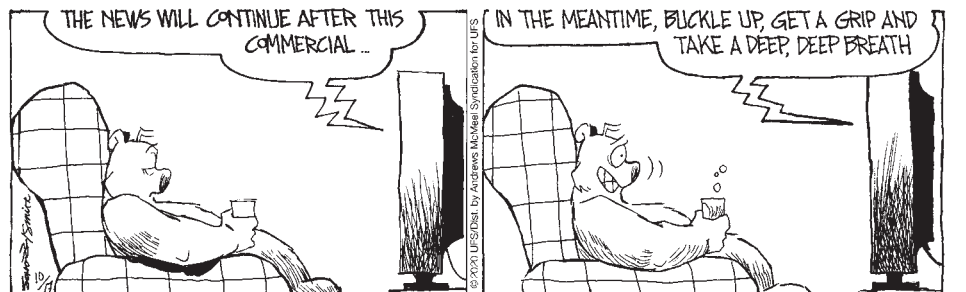
Beetle Bailey



Dilbert



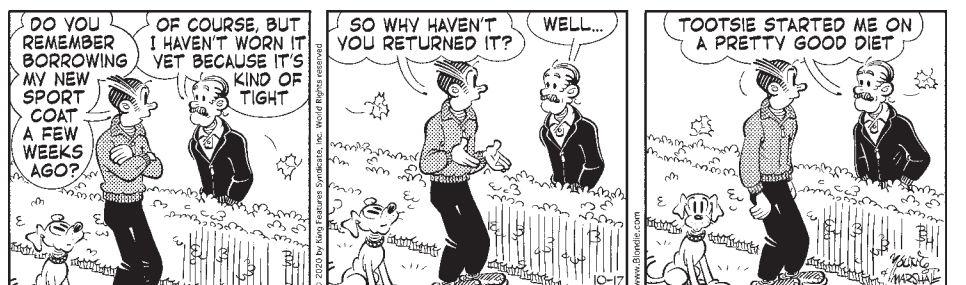
The Grizzwells



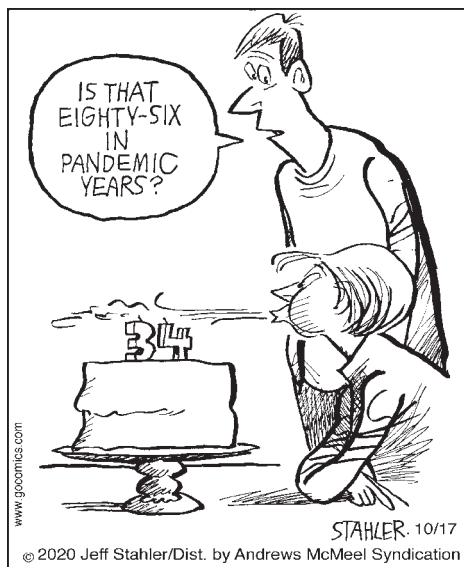
The Born Loser



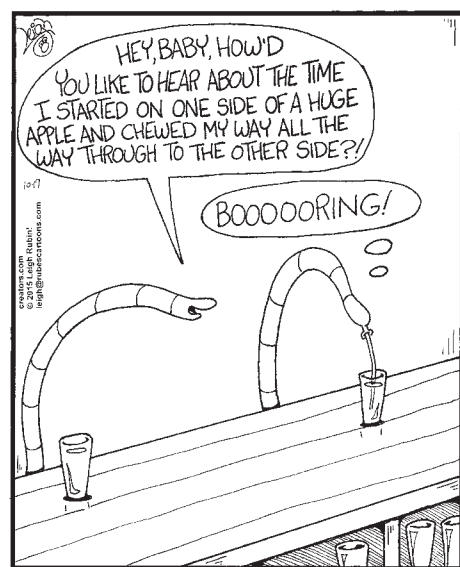
Blondie



Moderately Confused



Rubes



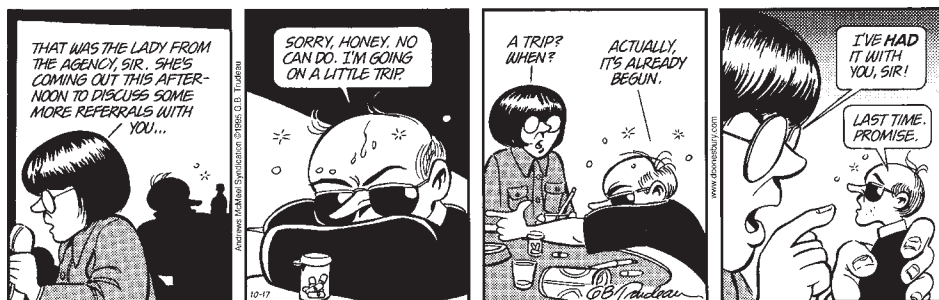
Dennis the Menace



The Family Circus



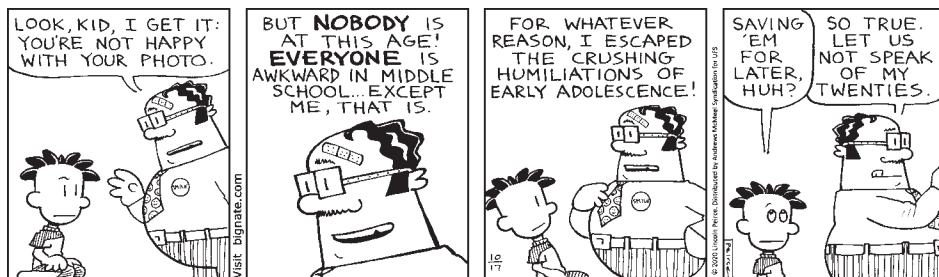
Doonesbury Flashbacks



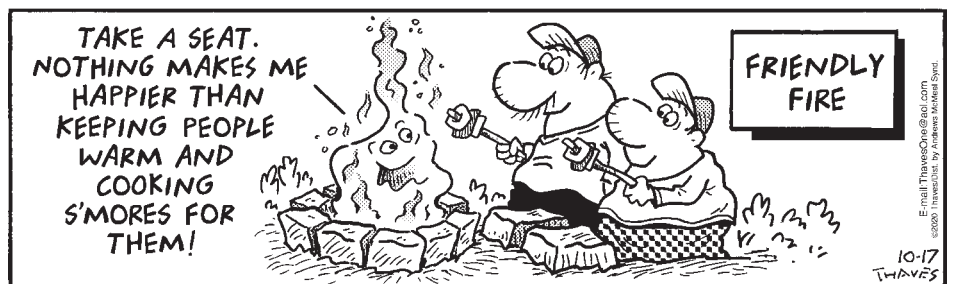
Betty



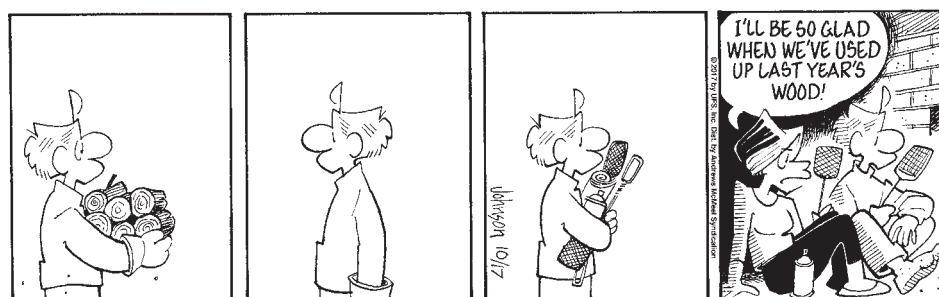
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CELEBRITY CIPHER by Luis Campos

Celebrity Cipher cryptograms are created from quotations by famous people, past and present.

Today's clue: Z equals M

'MAA ISLIAS TMJS DSSV FLUVE WUVHS
RTS FMKV LN RUZS UW RBUVE RL
NUEXPS LXR TLK RL AUJS RTUW AUNS
MVF DS TMIB.' - KAAA MPVSR

Previous Solution: 'Making someone feel ashamed of who they are is a cruel manipulation, designed to oppress and repress.' - Ellen Page

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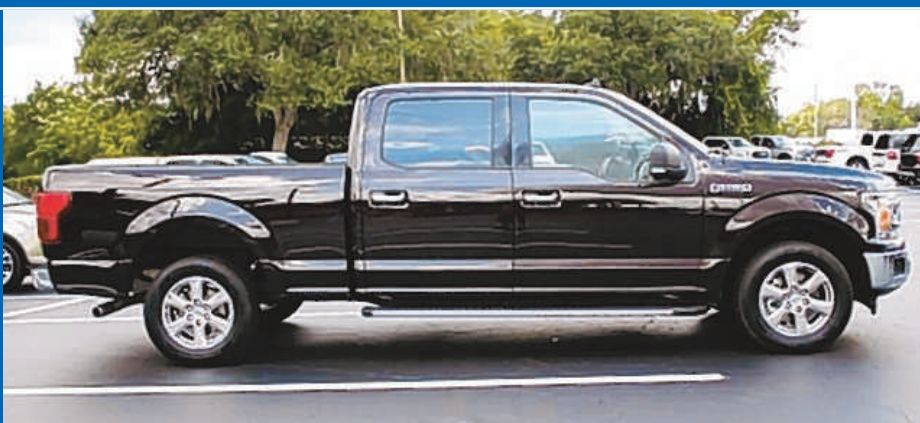
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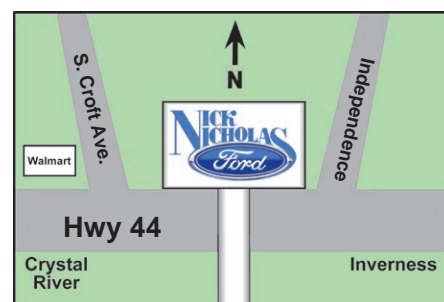
See Our Entire Inventory at:
NickNicholasFord.com

2901 Hwy. 44 W.,
Inverness, FL
352-726-1231

Mon-Fri: 8-7 • Sat: 8:30-5 • Closed Sunday



Brad Hill
Salesperson Of The Month



**1.49% apr for 36 months, \$28.32 per month for 36 months per \$1,000 financed. Must be financed with Ford Credit and requires Ford Credit approval. Not all applicants may qualify. Ford Certified vehicles only. Limited time offer. See dealer for details. Prices are plus \$399 admin fee, taxes, tag, & governmental fees. Dealer reserves the right to correct any errors or omissions. See dealer for complete details.