Buttigieg doles out $241 million to U.S. ports / A12

FRIDAY
TODAY & next morning
HIGH 74
LOW 45
Sunny and pleasant.
PAGE A4

CITRUS COUNTY CHRONICLE

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NEWS BRIEFS

Chronicle holiday closures

In observance of the Christmas holiday, the Chronicle office will be closed on Dec 24, and in observance of the New Year holiday, the office will be closed Dec. 31.

Property Appraiser office holiday hours

The Property Appraiser's office will be closed Dec. 24 and 27 in observance of the Christmas holiday.

Normal hours of operation and services will resume Dec. 28.

The office will also close early at 3 p.m. Dec. 31. They will be closed Jan. 3 in observance of the New Year and will reopen Jan. 4 for normal hours of operation.

For more information, visit citruspa.org or call 352-341-6600.

Lane closures planned for Forest Ridge Boulevard

Beginning on Jan. 3 and continuing for the first few months of 2022, citizens should expect single-lane closures on weekdays between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. along North Forest Ridge Boulevard, from County Road 486 (Norvell Bryant Highway) to West Lake Beverly Drive.

An around-the-clock closure is also in place northbound on Forest Ridge Boulevard, from north of West Sugarmaple Lane to north of West Roosevelt Boulevard, through approximately March 2022.

These closures are for construction of a "Safe Routes to Schools" sidewalk project that is expected to be completed in spring 2022.

To allow full roadway access during peak school drop-off and pick-up times, lane closures will not be permitted on school days from 8:45 to 9:15 a.m. or 3:30 to 4 p.m.

For more information, visit tinyurl.com/2p8s6hfn.

Elections office holiday hours

The Supervisor of Elections office will be closed Dec. 24 and 27 in observance of the Christmas holiday.

Normal hours of operation and services will resume Dec. 28.

The office will also be closed Jan. 3 in observance of the New Year and will reopen Jan. 4 for normal hours of operation.

For more information, visit votecitrus.gov or call 352-564-7120.

INVERNESS YEAR IN REVIEW

Infrastructure focus of 2021

By FRED HIERS
Chronicle Reporter

As 2021 winds to a close, Inverness can glance back over the past year and take note of accomplishments that made headlines.

■ The city of 7,700 made infrastructure a focus in 2021 and its council and city manager Eric Williams said they would continue to do so in 2022 in order to prepare Inverness for smart and planned growth.



WILLIAMS

This fall the city received a $11.1 million state grant to help replace septic systems in Highlands South and connect as many as 750 properties to the city's wastewater treatment plant. The project will require a financial commitment from the city of about $10 million.

In 2021, Inverness also received a state grant of $2.4 million to expand utilities along State Road 44 westward and nearly $3.3 million as part of a federal springs project grant to convert septic to sewer services on a portion of U.S. 41 north.

The city also plans to take about $200,000 that the city saved in its 2021 events' budget and apply it to infrastructure, namely adding it to Inverness Heights' $500,000 road reclamation project.

■ The city council and its staff managed in 2021 to rejuvenate a year's long dormant Wyld Palms subdivision. The community now has a proposed final plat of 62 townhomes and 168 single family homes.

The council approved in 2021 the development's preliminary subdivision plan. The council will early next year approve the subdivision's final plat. Wyld Palms is on the banks of Lake Tsala Apopka on East Turner Camp Road.



Fred Hiers / Chronicle Reporter

Wyld Palms Clubhouse is overgrown with vegetation.

See INVERNESS, page A6



Matthew Beck / Chronicle photo editor

A motorist approaches Crystal River's intersection of Southeast Paradise Point Road and Southeast Kings Bay Drive Thursday afternoon, Dec. 23. City staff is looking for funding to realign Kings Bay Drive's junction with Paradise Point to help calm traffic at the congested junction.

CR to vet once-supported road project

City exploring shifting Kings Bay Drive

By BUSTER THOMPSON
Chronicle Reporter

It made sense 20 years ago for Crystal River to shift its neighborhood road of Southeast Kings Bay Drive away from a growing waterfront hotel and federal wildlife headquarters nearby.

"It isolates the business area from the residential area," former City Councilwoman Bonnie Taylor said in October 2001, when City Council was workshopping the infrastructure project. "This is going to be an upscale area."

Question is: does the endeavor make sense now?

"Overall," City Manager Ken Frink told the Chronicle Thursday, Dec. 23, "it looks like a very good project, but we haven't vetted it publicly."

Realigning Kings Bay Drive's intersection with Southeast Paradise Point Road was a proposal pitched to city council in 2001 by an engineering firm tasked with redeveloping the former Port Paradise Hotel – now called the Port Hotel and Marina.

Council members then were in favor of the conceptual plan, which showed a connector road joining Kings Bay Drive with Paradise Point Road farther east from the current and curvaceous junction and Port Hotel entrance.

Kings Bay Drive would also dead end into a cul-de-sac north of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's (USFWS's) Crystal River National Wildlife Refuge Office.

This would allow motorists traveling to residents off of Kings Bay Drive to go there without driving past the Port Hotel and wildlife refuge office, calming traffic in the area.

"You've got access to a significantly large hotel right there on a corner," Frink said. "It's not a good situation to have a driveway right off a sharp curve like that."

However, securing funding for the initiative was unsuccessful, putting it off Crystal River's radar until 2021.

Council and its latest members voted 5-0 Dec. 13 to have Frink apply for a Federal Lands Access Program Grant, which, if approved, would pay for 100 percent of the realignment project.

According to its application, the city is seeking around $800,300 in grant money, which is subject to change depending on public say.

City staff had limited time to apply for the U.S. Department of Transportation grant, and can withdraw the bid if city citizens aren't supportive.

Frink said he plans to put the item on a future council agenda for discussion.

See ROAD, page A8

Inverness Heights set for road, drainage repairs

Council approves nearly $50K for work

By FRED HIERS
Chronicle Reporter

The Inverness City Council continued this week with its focus on infrastructure improvements to the city when it approved a near $50,000 contract for engineering services in Inverness Heights subdivision.

City Manager Eric Williams proposed 2022's annual road improvement project focus on 2.76 miles of residential streets in the subdivision and that the city hire Gainesville-based George F. Young Inc. to do oversee much of the project.



McBRIDE

"The project will address the roadway and drainage improvements needed within the neighborhood to include those areas around Bryant Park, said City Manager Eric Williams.

Williams said the city has done a "yeoman's job" on its parks and downtown, but it was now time to focus on infrastructure and projects that would expand the city's tax base.

Councilman Cabot McBride asked Williams how he had selected this area of the city to focus on roads next year.

Williams replied that

See REPAIRS, page A8

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2018 TOYOTA CAMRY HYBRID LE 21110310	$23,992
2019 CHEVROLET EQUINOX LT 2LT 21110199	$24,994
2021 TOYOTA COROLLA HYBRID LE 21120117	$26,971
2016 CADILLAC SRX LUXURY 21120105	$28,291
2020 JEEP RENEGADE TRAILHAWK 21110368	$28,722
2017 TOYOTA HIGHLANDER XLE 21120050	$28,771
2020 TOYOTA CAMRY SE 21110197	$28,993
2017 CADILLAC XT5 BASE 21110244	$28,994
2019 TOYOTA RAV4 XLE 21110242	$29,272
2019 TOYOTA RAV4 XLE 21110060	$30,554
2018 GMC CANYON SLE1 21110220	$30,772
2018 TOYOTA RAV4 HYBRID LIMITED 21110117	$31,471
2019 TOYOTA HIGHLANDER LE 21100326	$31,552
2017 CHEVROLET SILVERADO 1500 LT LT1 21110230	$32,773
2017 TOYOTA HIGHLANDER LIMITED 21110273	$32,993
2016 CHEVROLET CAMARO SS 2SS 21120083	$33,451
2019 TOYOTA TACOMA SR5 V6 21120082	$34,551
2018 CADILLAC XT5 LUXURY 21110064	$35,464
2019 TOYOTA RAV4 LIMITED 21120024	$35,991
2019 TOYOTA RAV4 LIMITED 21110251	$35,993
2020 JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE ALTITUDE 21110095	$37,343
2019 CADILLAC XT5 LUXURY 21110348	$37,992
2020 JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE LIMITED 21110293	$38,552
2019 TOYOTA TACOMA TRD SPORT V6 21110306	$38,772
2019 TOYOTA HIGHLANDER LIMITED 21110335	$42,232
2021 TOYOTA TACOMA TRD OFFROAD V6 21110071	$42,993
2020 CADILLAC XT4 SPORT 21109017	$42,994
2021 JEEP GLADIATOR SPORT 21110046	$43,994
2020 RAM 1500 BIG HORN/LONE STAR 21120101	$47,441
2021 TOYOTA SIENNA XLE 21120021	$48,992
2017 CHEVROLET CORVETTE STINGRAY 1LT 21110369A	$52,992

2013 MAZDA MIATA PRHT GRAND TOURING

21110377 $17,771

2019 CHEVROLET CRUZE LS

21110162 $17,994

2014 KIA OPTIMA SXL TURBO

21120061 $18,951

2018 TOYOTA COROLLA SE

21110237 $19,443

2017 TOYOTA PRIUS TWO

21110201 $19,553

2014 TOYOTA AVALON XLE TOURING

21110349 $19,772

2020 TOYOTA COROLLA LE

21129004 $21,552

2021 TOYOTA COROLLA LE

21119006 $21,554

2017 BUICK ENCORE PREMIUM

21120022 $21,771

2019 CHEVROLET IMPALA LT 1LT

21120006 $22,772

2016 TOYOTA AVALON XLE

21100259 $22,774

2019 TOYOTA C-HR XLE

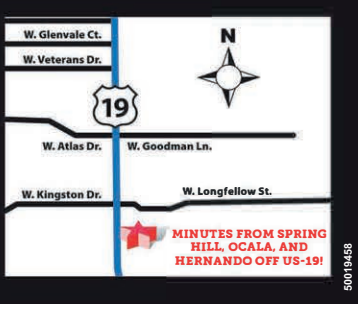
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State & Local

Citrus County Chronicle

Inverness leases former train station

More city spending will be required for building

By FRED HIERS
Chronicle Reporter

After sitting vacant for two years, and with a price tag of over a million dollars, the former Inverness train station is closer to being put to use.

The city council voted unanimously this week to lease the renovated train station just outside Liberty Park to C & V Express Enterprises LLC. The company is made up of businesswomen Vickie Humphrey, of Inverness, and Caroline Jenkins, of Lecanto.

The two plan to build Train Station Café and Game Room in the 3,600-square-foot facility.

But that doesn't end the city's work with the building.

The city is on the hook for an additional $255,300 in regards to the vacant building.

That's because the city left the building without restrooms, ceilings, indoor walls, and flooring in hopes of finishing the facility when it leased the building. The problem for almost two years was that no one wanted to start a business inside, until Humphrey and Jenkins stepped forward.

City Manager Eric Williams said that although he didn't relish spending more on the building, the new owners will likely spend significantly more than that on the building. Williams also said the city had to finish off the train station and not leave it an empty shell if it wanted it leased.

The council also approved using Wheeler Construction Inc. to do the city's upgrades. The construction company is the same one Humphry and Jenkins are utilizing.

The plan for the building is to offer pizza, ice cream, drinks, beer and wine, and a gaming room which would include Duckpin Bowling (similar to traditional bowling but with shorter lanes, pins and balls), Jenga, tabletop shuffleboards, and large-screen televisions.

The two women also want to offer indoor and outdoor seating for clientele.

Williams said earlier this year that in most cases there would be several applicants and the council would pick the one that best reflected the city's hopes for the train station. But in this case, despite hundreds of letters sent to prospective businesses, Williams said there was little interest.

Under the lease, the tenants would begin paying rent July 1, 2022 in the amount of $1,500 per month during the first year, $2,250 per month the second year, $3,000 the third year, $3,750 per month the fourth year and $4,500 per month the fifth year.

The lease also requires the business to be operational by July 3, 2022.

The lease allows for an outdoor seating area and sale of alcohol beverages upon approval of the city. The tenant may use the premises for private events with written approval of the city, according to the lease.

Councilman Gene Davis said during the lease discussions that it was not uncommon for landlords to have to make improvements to properties to make them leasable. He also said that whatever changes the two women make to the building they should not inhibit if the city wants to lease to others in the future.

Council president David Ryan said he viewed the lease as a good deal for the city and good deal for the two businesswomen.

Fred Hiers is a reporter at the Citrus Chronicle. E-mail him at fred.hiers@chronicleonline.com

NEWS BRIEFS

Apply for Girls State

Girls State is open to young women in their junior year of high school. It is an all-expense paid week-long trip to Tallahassee from June 7 to 15 for an intense study of government. College scholarship opportunities will also be available.

Qualifications for juniors interested in Girls State are:

- Has an interest in government
- Demonstrates leadership
- Is a resident of the state of Florida
- Is willing to salute the flag and take the oath of office on a Bible
- Has maintained an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher

Contact your guidance counselor for an application and additional information. Applicants can also contact Elfie Baker, Girls State chairperson of the American Legion Post 155, at 352-564-2548 or rbaker244@tampabay.rr.com.

For more information, visit floridalegion.org. Applications should be submitted as soon as possible.

VFW Post 4337 to have Christmas dinner

Eugene Quinn VFW Post 4337 in Inverness is having a Christmas dinner Dec. 24 at the post, 906 State Road 44 in Inverness. Dinner will be served from 5 to 7 p.m. Music will be provided by Roger Carrier.

The post will be open to the public all day Dec. 25. Post 4337 is a non-smoking post. For more information, call 352-344-3495.

Oakwood Village HOA to meet

Oakwood Village Homeowners' Association, Inc. will have a meeting at 10 a.m. Dec. 30 at Villages Services Cooperative, Inc., 2541 N. Reston Terrace in Hernando for consideration of the 2022 budget.

Citrus County government offices closed for Christmas

Citrus County government offices will be closed Dec. 24 and 27 in observance of the Christmas holiday. Normal hours of operation and services will resume Dec. 28 with the following exceptions:

- Citrus County Animal Services will be closed to the public Dec. 24 and 25. Normal hours of operation will resume Dec. 28. For more information, call 352-746-8400.
- The Citrus County Library System will be closed Dec. 24, 25 and 27. Normal hours of operation will resume Dec. 28. For more information, call 352-746-9077.
- The Citrus County Central Landfill will close at 2:30 p.m. Dec. 24 and will be closed on Dec. 25. The administrative office will be closed both days and there will be no hazardous waste drop-off. Normal hours will resume Dec. 27. For more information, call 352-527-7670.
- Bicentennial Park Pool will be closed Dec. 24 to 27.

SANTA ATTENDS PRECIOUS PAWS ADOPTION EVENT



Special to the Chronicle

Precious Paws Rescue held their monthly adoption event Dec. 18 at the PetSense in Beverly Hills with Santa, who was available for holiday pictures and good wishes. The many community donations of pet food and supplies will be used to help care for Citrus County pets. PetSense employees Diane Nick, left, and Felisha Tucker are pictured with Santa (Al LaFrance), along with a few kittens and dog looking for a loving home for the holidays. The dog and one kitten have been adopted; the other kittens and cats are still waiting.

Homosassa men accused of battery

Reportedly attacked restaurant employee

By HANNAH SACHEWICZ
Chronicle Reporter



HUGGINS



K. PIERCE



N. PIERCE

While walking a coworker to her car, an employee at a local restaurant was attacked by three Homosassa men, according to a Citrus County Sheriff's Office arrest affidavit.

Brandon Huggins, 32, Kyle Pierce, 27, and Nathan Pierce, 29, were arrested and charged Dec. 19 with battery. Bond was set at $1,000 each.

At approximately 11:30 p.m. Dec. 18, deputies responded to a physical disturbance at Crumps Landing in Homosassa.

According to the report, three suspects fled from deputies across the Homosassa River to the MacRae's boat ramp. When deputies arrived at MacRae's, they observed Huggins, Kyle and Nathan departing on a white boat.

Deputies noted the three defendants appeared intoxicated and refused to speak about the incident. However, one of the men continuously yelled the other two were (explicit) for not fighting with him.

Multiple witnesses alleged they saw the men and victim fighting, but could not provide further detail.

According to the report, the men were arguing earlier with a female bartender at Crumps Landing. The male victim, a coworker, walked the bartender to her car to ensure she was safe.

The men reportedly approached the male employee and began striking him in the face. He sustained multiple contusions.

Deputies reviewed surveillance footage, which depicted the three defendants approaching the male victim and striking him. He attempted to defend himself, but reportedly did not appear to continue the altercation.

Huggins, Kyle and Nathan were arrested and transported to the Citrus County Detention Facility.

Hannah Sachewicz can be reached at hannah.sachewicz@chronicleonline.com or 352-564-2929.

Woman arrested on drug charges

Reportedly gives officer false name

By HANNAH SACHEWICZ
Chronicle Reporter

Deputies found cocaine on a 33-year-old Brooksville passenger after the driver of a vehicle was pulled over for speeding, according to a Citrus County Sheriff's Office arrest affidavit.

Megan Shoffner was arrested and charged with falsely identify or give false name to LEO, possession with intent to sell/manufacture/deliver a controlled substance, resist officer without violence and drug paraphernalia. Bond was set at $8,000.

On Dec. 17, deputies pulled over a truck into a Floral City Circle K gas station, alleging the vehicle had been traveling 70 mph in a 55 mph zone.



SHOFFNER

A woman, later identified as Shoffner, exited the vehicle and attempted to walk into the store. Deputies asked her to return to the truck.

Deputies informed the driver the traffic stop was conducted due to his speed. He reportedly agreed and said he was not familiar with the area. During this interaction, deputies reportedly smelled marijuana coming from the truck.

Deputies then asked Shoffner to provide her driver's license to which she said, "I don't have one on me." According to the report, Shoffner gave deputies a false name and said she was born in 1969. They noticed she did not look old enough to have that birth date.

Deputies asked the man if there was anything illegal in the vehicle and he said no. He reportedly consented to an interior search of the truck and Shoffner was asked to step out.

Shoffner reportedly grabbed her purse and began to walk away from the truck. When deputies asked her to leave it inside, she said, "He let you search the truck, not my purse."

During a search of the truck, deputies reportedly found what looked to be marijuana along the floorboard. Shoffner and the man said neither of them have a medical marijuana card.

According to the report, the man said the marijuana was given to him as a tip at the bar he works at. In addition, deputies located an open beer bottle in the passenger seat of the vehicle. The man said, "I'm going to be honest that is my beer." He was issued a citation.

Deputies also noticed Shoffner clutching her purse nervously and asked if there were any other illegal items inside. She reportedly said no and would not consent to a search. Shoffner was asked to place her purse down away from her person.

At this time, a K-9 deputy arrived on the scene. During an exterior sniff of the vehicle, Shoffner reportedly walked behind the K-9 deputy and tried to grab her purse back.

Shoffner was pulled away and placed in handcuffs to prevent her from being bitten. The K-9 alerted to the presence of a controlled substance in the purse.

Inside were four cylinder clear glass containers containing 34 white oval pills, according to the report. Shoffner said they were 600 mg ibuprofen.

Through field test kits, deputies confirmed they were pressed cocaine tablets in the amount of 26.2 grams. During a search of Shoffner's wallet, they also found $215 in cash. All items were seized and submitted to evidence.

She was arrested and transported to the Citrus County Detention Facility. Post Miranda, Shoffner refused to speak further and reportedly cursed at the deputy.

Hannah Sachewicz can be reached at hannah.sachewicz@chronicleonline.com or 352-564-2929.







ENTERTAINMENT

Bateman named Hasty Pudding's Man of the Year

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. (AP) — Jason Bateman was named the 2022 Man of the Year by Harvard University's Hasty Pudding Theatricals on Thursday, the first recipient of the award since 2020 because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Bateman, an actor, producer and director on the Netflix series "Ozark," who also played a starring role in "Arrested Development," will be given his pudding pot at a roast on Feb. 3, the theater troupe said in a statement.

"We are stoked to present Jason Bateman with the 55th annual Hasty Pudding Man of the Year award. It's been a hot minute since we've handed one of these out, so we figured we'd give it to the guy who all our moms have crushes on after watching 'Ozark,'" organization President Nick Amador said.

The last Man of the Year was Ben Platt in 2020. Past recipients include Clint Eastwood, Tom Hanks, Robert De Niro and Samuel L. Jackson.



Willy Sanjuan / AP file

Jason Bateman appears at the "The Outsider" panel during the HBO TCA 2020 Winter Press Tour at the Langham Huntington in Pasadena, Calif. Bateman has been named the 2022 Man of the Year by Harvard University's Hasty Pudding Theatricals, the first recipient of the award since 2020 because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Bateman, 52, earned a Primetime Emmy for outstanding directing in a drama in 2020 for "Ozark," two SAG awards for acting in "Ozark," and a best actor Golden Globe in 2005 for his portrayal of Michael Bluth in "Arrested Development."

Bateman, whose acting career dates to the early 1980s, has appeared in multiple television shows and starred in several films including the "Horrible Bosses" movies, "Game Night," and "Identity Thief."

Bateman at age 18 became the Directors Guild of America's youngest director for directing three episodes of "Valerie," according to Hasty Pudding Theatricals, which dates to 1844 and calls itself the third oldest theater group in the world.

The Man of the Year Award has been handed out since 1967. Hasty Pudding's Woman of the Year Award was established in 1951. The 2022 Woman of the Year has not been announced yet. The 2021 recipient was Oscar-winner Viola Davis.

The awards are given out to people who have made lasting and impressive contributions to the world of entertainment.

Tesla to halt games on screens in moving cars

DETROIT (AP) — Under pressure from U.S. auto safety regulators, Tesla has agreed to stop allowing video games to be played on center touch screens while its vehicles are moving.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration says the company will send out a software update over the Internet so the function called "Passenger Play" will be locked and won't work while vehicles are in motion.

The move comes one day after the agency announced it would open a formal investigation into distracted driving concerns about Tesla's video games, some of which could be played while cars are being driven.

Actor who played 'Home Alone' brother arrested in Oklahoma

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — "Home Alone" actor Devin Ratray surrendered to authorities in Oklahoma on Wednesday after he was accused of assaulting his girlfriend, police said.

Ratray, who played older brother Buzz McAllister in the 1990 Christmas movie, was released from jail shortly after his booking on two domestic assault and battery complaints, police said.



RATRAY

Ratray, 44, was in Oklahoma City earlier this month for an event called "Buzzed with Buzz," which was promoted as a screening of the film along with a question-and-answer session with Ratray.

An affidavit says Ratray choked his girlfriend and said "This is how you die," but Ratray denies those allegations, Oklahoma City TV station KFOR reported.

"Mr. Ratray denies he ever laid a hand on her or did anything in regards to anything like that," his attorney Scott Adams said.

TODAY IN HISTORY

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Today is Friday, Dec. 24, the 358th day of 2021. There are seven days left in the year. This is Christmas Eve.

Highlight in history:

On Dec. 24, 1943, President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower supreme commander of Allied forces in Europe as part of Operation Overlord.

On this date:

In 1809, legendary American frontiersman Christopher "Kit" Carson was born in Madison County, Kentucky.

In 1968, the Apollo 8 astronauts, orbiting the moon, read passages from the Old Testament Book of Genesis during a Christmas Eve telecast.

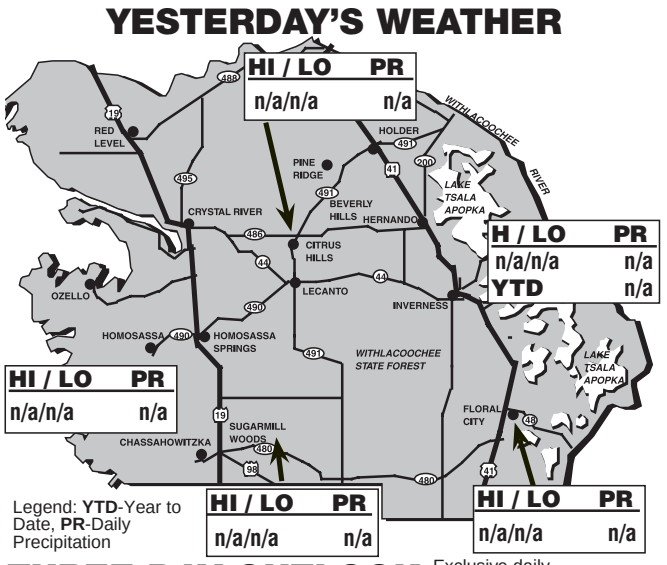
Ten years ago: In a setback, Republican presidential hopefuls Newt Gingrich and Texas Gov. Rick Perry failed to qualify for Virginia's Super Tuesday primary ballot by falling short of the 10,000 signatures required.

Five years ago: President-elect Donald Trump said he would dissolve his charitable foundation before taking office to avoid conflicts of interest; the Democratic Party said that wasn't enough and called for the businessman to put his assets in a blind trust.

One year ago: California became the first state to record 2 million confirmed coronavirus cases. Bethlehem ushered in Christmas Eve with a stream of joyous marching bands and the triumphant arrival of the top Catholic clergyman in the Holy Land, but few people were there to greet them as the pandemic and a strict lockdown dampened celebrations. Just a week before the deadline, Britain and the European Union struck a free-trade deal that would avert economic chaos on New Year's and bring a measure of certainty for businesses after years of Brexit turmoil.

Today's Birthdays: Dr. Anthony Fauci is 81. Former U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions is 75. Singer Ricky Martin is 50. Author Stephenie Meyer is 48. TV personality Ryan Seacrest is 47.

YESTERDAY'S WEATHER



Legend: **YTD**-Year to Date, **PR**-Daily Precipitation

THREE DAY OUTLOOK

Exclusive daily forecast by: Bay News 9

TODAY & TOMORROW MORNING
High: 74° **Low:** 45°
Sunny and pleasant.

SATURDAY & SUNDAY MORNING
High: 73° **Low:** 48°
Mostly sunny.

SUNDAY & MONDAY MORNING
High: 74° **Low:** 59°
Mostly sunny.

ALMANAC

Data from Crystal River Airport

TEMPERATURE

Yesterday	69/37
Record*	86/27
Normal	71/43
Mean temp.	57
Departure from mean	-4

PRECIPITATION

Yesterday	0.00"
Total for the month	0.83"
Total for the year	62.49"
Normal for the year	51.14"

As reported from https://citrusmosquito.org

UV INDEX: 4
0-2 minimal, 3-4 low, 5-6 moderate, 7-9 high, 10+ very high

BAROMETRIC PRESSURE 30.16

DEW POINT
Yesterday at 3 p.m. 46°

HUMIDITY
Yesterday at 3 p.m. 75%

POLLEN COUNT**
Predominant: Trees
Fri
low med high
****Light** - only extreme allergic will show symptoms, **moderate** - most allergic will experience symptoms, **heavy** - all allergic will experience symptoms.

AIR QUALITY

Yesterday observed	Good
Pollutant	PM2.5

SOLUNAR TABLES

Provided by ezfshn.com

DATE	DAY	MINOR (MORNING)	MAJOR (MORNING)	MINOR (AFTERNOON)	MAJOR (AFTERNOON)
12/24	FRIDAY	7:19	4:35	5:38	4:58
12/25	SATURDAY	7:20	5:20	5:38	5:43

CELESTIAL OUTLOOK

Dec 26 Jan 2 Jan 9 Jan 17

SUNSET TONIGHT 5:38 pm
SUNRISE TOMORROW 7:20 am
MOONRISE TODAY 10:40 pm
MOONSET TODAY 11:20 am

BURN CONDITIONS

Today's Fire Danger Index is: MODERATE. There is no burn ban.

For more information call Florida Division of Forestry at (352) 797-4140. For more information on wildfire conditions, please visit the Division of Forestry's Web site: www.freshfromflorida.com/Divisions-Offices/Florida-Forest-Service/Wildland-Fire

WATERING RULES

For established lawns and landscapes, irrigation may occur during only one (1) of the specified time periods, 12:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m., or 4:00 p.m. - 11:59 p.m., on the allowable watering days below:

Addresses with house numbers ending in:

0 - 1	Monday	6 - 7	Thursday
2 - 3	Tuesday	8 - 9 -or- Common Areas	Friday
4 - 5	Wednesday		

Questions, concerns or reporting violations, please call: City of Inverness at 352-726-2321; City of Crystal River at 352-795-4216, Ext. 313; unincorporated Citrus County at 352-527-7669. For more information, visit: https://www.citrusbocc.com/departments/water_resources/watering_restrictions.php

TIDES

*From mouths of rivers **At King's Bay ***At Mason's Creek

FRIDAY

City	High		High		Low		Low	
Chassahowitzka*	9:19 a.m.	0.6 ft	9:59 p.m.	0.2 ft	1:20 a.m.	0.1 ft	5:47 p.m.	0.1 ft
Crystal River**	7:16 a.m.	2.2 ft	8:30 p.m.	1.6 ft	1:15 a.m.	0.8 ft	2:34 p.m.	0.2 ft
Withlacoochee*	4:02 a.m.	3.0 ft	5:41 p.m.	2.5 ft	11:56 a.m.	-0.4 ft	None	n/a
Homosassa***	7:49 a.m.	1.3 ft	9:43 p.m.	0.7 ft	2:16 a.m.	0.3 ft	4:27 p.m.	0.1 ft

FLORIDA TEMPERATURES

City	H	L	F'cast	City	H	L	F'cast
Daytona Bch.	72	53	s	Miami	77	68	pc
Fort Lauderdale	77	64	pc	Ocala	75	48	s
Fort Myers	78	57	s	Orlando	75	55	s
Gainesville	73	48	s	Pensacola	71	58	s
Homestead	77	61	pc	Sarasota	76	56	s
Jacksonville	71	50	s	Tallahassee	70	52	s
Key West	76	68	s	Tampa	75	56	s
Lakeland	75	54	s	Vero Beach	75	55	pc
Melbourne	75	58	pc	W. Palm Bch.	75	68	pc

MARINE OUTLOOK

Today: West winds around 5 knots becoming east in the late evening and overnight. Seas 2 feet or less. Bay and inland waters smooth. Tonight: South winds 5 to 10 knots becoming southwest around 10knots in the afternoon.

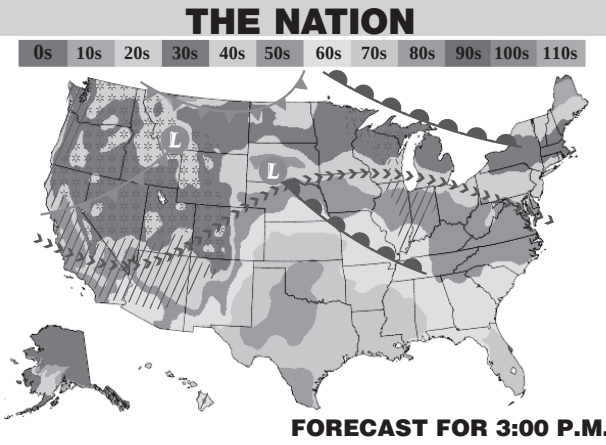
Gulf water temperature
64°
Taken at Crystal River

LAKE LEVELS

Location	THU	WED	Full
Withlacoochee at Holder	29.49	29.50	34.64
Tsala Apopka-Hernando	37.82	37.83	38.66
Tsala Apopka-Inverness	39.15	39.16	39.73
Tsala Apopka-Floral City	40.33	40.34	41.37

Levels reported in feet above sea level. Flood stage for lakes are based on 2.33-year flood, the mean-annual flood which has a 43-precent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any one year. This data is obtained from the Southwest Florida Water Management District and is subject to revision. In no event will the District or the United States Geological Survey be liable for any damages arising out of the use of this data. If you have any questions you should contact the Hydrological Data Section at (352) 796-7211.

THE NATION



FORECAST FOR 3:00 P.M. Friday

City	THU H	L	Pcp.	FRI H	L	Fcst
Albany	30	19	Trace	37	29	mc
Albuquerque	60	34	0.00	53	31	sh
Asheville	56	24	0.00	63	44	pc
Atlanta	61	28	0.00	64	51	s
Atlantic City	37	28	0.00	50	43	mc
Austin	71	55	0.00	81	61	mc
Baltimore	42	25	0.00	53	42	mc
Billings	52	37	0.00	34	14	sn
Birmingham	59	31	0.00	67	56	pc
Boise	46	39	0.09	41	31	sn
Boston	34	27	0.00	36	27	sn
Buffalo	34	23	0.07	45	42	mc
Burlington, VT	22	10	0.00	30	22	pc
Charleston, SC	57	39	0.00	67	50	s
Charleston, WV	49	19	0.00	62	51	mc
Charlotte	56	29	0.00	60	49	s
Chicago	47	28	0.00	52	42	cl
Cincinnati	54	19	0.00	59	53	ra
Cleveland	41	26	Trace	51	45	sh
Columbia, SC	57	30	0.00	63	47	s
Columbus, OH	45	19	0.00	55	50	ra
Concord, NH	30	17	0.00	33	18	mc
Dallas	76	52	0.00	81	62	pc
Denver	63	40	0.00	53	30	ra
Des Moines	50	28	0.00	55	31	mc
Detroit	39	24	Trace	46	42	ra
El Paso	73	39	0.00	77	57	pc
Evansville, IN	55	26	0.00	66	60	mc
Harrisburg	37	26	0.00	47	39	mc
Hartford	34	25	0.00	38	27	mc
Houston	77	52	0.00	80	67	pc
Indianapolis	50	23	0.00	57	53	cl
Kansas City	60	42	0.00	69	41	pc
Las Vegas	58	46	0.04	63	44	sh
Little Rock	65	32	0.00	72	64	mc
Los Angeles	58	53	0.47	60	49	ra
Louisville	58	27	0.00	61	57	cl
Memphis	64	36	0.00	70	63	mc
Milwaukee	41	27	0.00	46	35	cl
Minneapolis	39	21	Trace	42	20	mc
Mobile	63	36	0.00	72	56	pc
Montgomery	62	32	0.00	69	55	s
Nashville	63	26	0.00	65	59	mc

City	THU H	L	Pcp.	FRI H	L	Fcst
New Orleans	68	46	0.00	74	64	pc
New York City	36	31	0.00	46	40	sn
Norfolk	44	35	0.00	59	46	pc
Oklahoma City	64	36	0.00	82	56	s
Omaha	48	28	0.00	57	31	mc
Palm Springs	68	57	0.03	61	50	ra
Philadelphia	40	28	0.00	50	40	mc
Phoenix	75	57	0.00	63	52	sh
Pittsburgh	37	21	0.00	51	45	ra
Portland, ME	29	18	0.00	32	21	pc
Portland, OR	50	43	0.17	43	35	ra
Providence, RI	34	27	0.00	36	27	sn
Raleigh	52	27	0.00	59	45	pc
Rapid City	57	29	0.00	40	21	pc
Reno	45	33	1.36	42	28	sn
Rochester, NY	28	23	0.09	42	38	mc
Sacramento	56	51	0.92	53	44	ra
Salt Lake City	50	28	0.00	43	31	ra
San Antonio	79	50	0.00	81	60	mc
San Diego	64	57	0.09	62	52	ra
San Francisco	59	54	1.82	56	49	ra
Savannah	60	39	0.00	68	47	s
Seattle	46	41	0.15	42	35	ra
Spokane	43	36	0.06	35	27	sn
St. Louis	63	29	0.00	69	58	mc
St. Ste Marie	30	12	0.08	37	34	cl
Syracuse	32	21	Trace	41	35	mc
Topeka	59	35	0.00	69	40	pc
Washington	43	28	0.00	54	44	mc

YESTERDAY'S NATIONAL HIGH & LOW
HIGH 86, Breckenridge, Texas
LOW -11, Gorham, N.H.

KEY TO CONDITIONS: c=cloudy; fg=fog; hz=haze; mc=mostly cloudy; pc=partly cloudy; ra=rain; rs=rain/snow; s=sunny; sh=showers; sm=smoke; sn=snow; ss=snow showers; t=thunderstorms

WORLD CITIES

CITY	THU H/L/SKY
Acapulco	87/69/s
Amsterdam	50/46/ra
Athens	52/42/pc
Beijing	28/17/mc
Berlin	40/34/ra
Bermuda	67/64/ra
Cairo	63/53/mc
Calgary	2/-8/cl
Havana	76/64/s
Hong Kong	71/66/ra
Jerusalem	49/45/ra
Lisbon	60/55/ra
London	47/43/mc
Madrid	52/49/ra
Mexico City	74/56/s
Montreal	19/11/pc
Moscow	14/6/cl
Paris	49/45/ra
Rio	75/69/ra
Rome	55/50/ra
Sydney	75/68/ra
Tokyo	53/41/pc
Toronto	35/30/sn
Warsaw	32/27/sn

ALERT CITRUS SIGNUP

- To register for the Citrus County Sheriff's Office's Alert Citrus weather program, visit www.sheriffcitrus.org and click on the links to register.
- Create a profile, list how you want to be contacted in case of a weather emergency (text, mobile phone, home phone, email), then include the address(es) you want alerts for. You can choose what types of emergencies you want to hear about, and set a quiet period for no conduct.
- Those without computer access may call 352-249-2705.

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BTV REPORT: DEC. 23, 2021

Here are the reported burglaries, thefts and vandalisms (criminal mischiefs) released Thursday, Dec. 23, by the Citrus County Sheriff's Office:

Theft, 8:21 a.m. Dec. 22, off of Sunnybrook Court, Crystal River;

Vehicle burglary, 12:54 p.m. Dec. 22, off of Marsha Terrace, Homosassa;

Theft, 3:24 p.m. Dec. 22, off of Suncoast Boulevard, Homosassa;

Criminal mischief, 4:54 p.m. Dec. 22, off of Turner Camp Road, Inverness;

Theft, 6:05 p.m. Dec. 22, off of Lecanto Highway, Lecanto;

Theft, 7:03 p.m. Dec. 22, off of Gulf-to-Lake Highway, Inverness.

Those with information about these offenses could be eligible for a cash reward by contacting Citrus County Crime Stoppers at 888-269-8477. Tipsters remain anonymous.

Tips can also be reported to the sheriff's office by calling the agency's non-emergency line, 352-249-2790.

FOR THE RECORD

Citrus County Sheriff's Office Arrests from Dec. 22

Gamble Robert Glass, 28, Homosassa, arrested Dec. 22 for possession of a firearm by convicted felon, flee/elude LEO, aggravated assault with a deadly weapon without intent to kill, driving while license suspended or revoked (knowingly – third offense and conviction), possession of controlled substance, drug paraphernalia, resist officer without violence and violation of probation. No bond.

Matthew Scott Varvarinecz, 47, Beverly Hills, arrested Dec. 22 for violation of probation. No bond.

William Anthony Hout, 38, Crystal River, arrested Dec. 22 for failure to appear. Bond $2,000.

Corey Edward Brooks, 36, Dunnellon, arrested Dec. 22 for felony battery – domestic – by strangulation. No bond.

Kelly Jean Costello, 44, Homosassa, arrested Dec. 22 for domestic battery. No bond.

Xavier Dixon, 21, Tallahassee, arrested Dec. 22 for violation of probation. No bond.

Travis James Damron, 29, Homosassa, arrested Dec. 22 for retail petit theft ($100 or less). Bond $500.

Mary Jacqueline Wright, 59, Homosassa, arrested Dec. 22 for retail petit theft ($100 or more but less than $750) and violation of probation. Bond $1,455.

Luis Raul Diaz, 72, Dunnellon, arrested Dec. 22 for battery. No bond.

Kenneth Lee Gholson, 32, New Port Richey, arrested Dec. 22 for felony petit theft, resist LEO or merchant during or after theft, possession cannabis (less than 20 grams) and possession of controlled substance. Bond $10,000.

Renee Jean Ruiz, 52, Homosassa, arrested Dec. 22 for drug paraphernalia and driving while license suspended or revoked (knowingly – second offense). Bond $2,000.



John Raoux / AP

Visitors arrive at Universal Studios on June 3, 2020, in Orlando. The theme park is reinstating its mask requirements beginning Christmas Eve as COVID-19 cases are surging.

Universal Orlando reinstates mask rule

ORLANDO (AP) — Universal Orlando is reinstating its mask requirements beginning Christmas Eve as COVID-19 cases are surging as a result of the omicron variant.

Daily cases of coronavirus have quadrupled in the past week in the state of Florida, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Hospitalizations have increased by 12 percent, the CDC says.

But one of the largest hospital networks in Miami, Jackson Health, has reported twice as many COVID-19 patients on Thursday than it had a week ago.

Universal Orlando says masks will be required at all public indoor locations and at all attractions from the moment guests enter the lines to when they leave. A lot of lines for rides and shows in the resort theme parks start in outdoor areas.

The resort has seen a busy holiday season with popular rides this week reporting waits of up to three hours.

The requirements will be for guests and employees regardless of vaccination status and will cover restaurants, shops, and indoor hotel public areas.

Walt Disney World earlier this year relaxed its face covering rules to require them only indoors, and has not announced any decision to revise their policy.

Hope Your Holiday Is
Simply Delightful



Carolers, bells and boughs of holly,
sounds and sights that make us jolly…
Yes, Christmastime is finally here,
filling our hearts and homes with cheer!
As we take time to celebrate, rejoice and reflect,
there's just one more thing we don't want to neglect:
It's the chance to say thanks and send best wishes, too
to our customers, friends and good folks like you!

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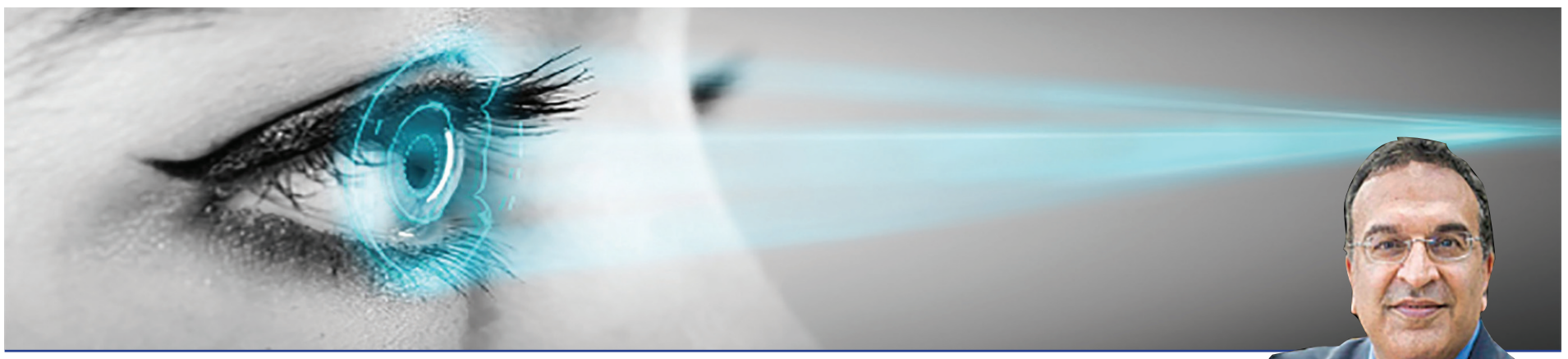
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Joan Didion, peerless prose stylist, dies at 87

By COLLEEN LONG
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Joan Didion, the revered author and essayist whose precise social and personal commentary in such classics as "The White Album" and "The Year of Magical Thinking" made her a uniquely clear-eyed critic of turbulent times, has died. She was 87.

Didion's publisher Penguin Random House announced the author's death on Thursday. She died from complications from Parkinson's disease, the company said.

"Didion was one of the country's most trenchant writers and astute observers. Her best-selling works of fiction, commentary, and memoir have received numerous honors and are considered modern classics," Penguin Random House said in a statement.

Along with Tom Wolfe, Nora Ephron and Gay Talese, Didion reigned in the pantheon of "New Journalists" who emerged in the 1960s and wedded literary style to nonfiction reporting. Tiny and frail even as a young woman, with large, sad eyes often hidden behind sun glasses and a soft, deliberate style of speaking, she was a novelist, playwright and essayist who once observed that "I am so physically small, so temperamentally unobtrusive, and so neurotically inarticulate that people tend to forget that my presence runs counter to their best interests."

Or, as she more famously put it: "Writers are always selling somebody out."

Didion received a National Humanities Medal in 2012, when she was praised for devoting "her life to noticing things other people strive not to see." For decades, she had engaged in the cool and ruthless dissection of politics and culture, from hippies to presidential campaigns to the kidnapping of Patty Hearst, and for her distrust of official stories.

"Slouching Towards Bethlehem," "The White Album" and other books became essential collections of literary journalism, with notable writings including her takedown of Hollywood politics in "Good Citizens" and a prophetic dissent against the consensus that in 1989 five young Black and Latino men had raped a white jogger in Central Park (the men's convictions were later overturned and they were freed from prison).

Author Susan Orlean called Didion "my idol and inspiration" on Twitter.

Didion was equally unsparing about her own struggles. She was diagnosed in her 30s with multiple sclerosis and around the same time suffered a breakdown and checked into a psychiatric clinic in Santa Monica, California that diagnosed her worldview as "fundamentally pessimistic, fatalistic and depressive." In her 70s, she reported on personal tragedy in the heartbreaking 2005 work, "The Year of Magical Thinking," a narrative formed out of the chaos of grief that followed the death of her husband and writing partner, John Gregory Dunne. It won a National Book Award, and she adapted it as a one-woman Broadway play that starred Vanessa Redgrave.

Dunne had collapsed in 2003 at their table and died of a heart attack even as their daughter, Quintana Roo Dunne Michael, was gravely ill in a hospital. The memoir was a best-seller and a near-instant standard, the kind of work people would instinctively reach for after losing a loved one. Didion said she thought of the work as a testament of a specific time; tragically, "Magical Thinking" became dated shortly after it was published. Quintana died during the summer of 2005 at age 39 of acute pancreatitis. Didion wrote of her daughter's death in the 2011 publication "Blue Nights."



Kathy Willens / AP

Author Joan Didion sits in front of a photo of herself holding her daughter, Quintana Roo, and another picture of her daughter's wedding, in her New York apartment in 2005. Didion, the revered author and essayist, has died. She was 87.

INVERNESS

From page A1

■ After 35 years of standing empty and neglected, Inverness demolished the remnants of what was commonly called Manning's Bar on State Road 44. The IRS had placed several liens on the property dating back to 2007 for unpaid federal taxes. After the April 14 demolition, the city found a contaminated septic tank on the property which had to be cleaned out.

■ After canceling or scaling back many of its traditional holiday events because of the coronavirus pandemic, Inverness again in 2021 hosted the popular attractions.

They included 2021's Independence Day during which the city again celebrated with July 3rd fireworks. The event had been canceled in 2020.

The city again hosted its traditional Chamber of Commerce Christmas Parade this month. The event was greatly scaled back in 2020. The city also revamped and aggressively marketed its annual Festival of the Arts with a renewed focus on traditional arts and excluded crafts. All the events were well attended and received by residents and visitors to the city.

■ The city also began Teen Night Out, allowing parents to drop off middle school aged children at the city's Depot District, with the city offering events and games for the children.

■ Local physician and entrepreneur Dr. Paresh Desai broke ground in 2021 to build a downtown Inverness hotel.

"I've done more than 10 groundbreakings for hotels, but this has been the most difficult," he told the Chronicle as about 60 dignitaries came to the event this summer. Desai had worked for more than two years acquiring the property for his $7 million hotel project.

The property was owned by the Citrus County Hospital Board on behalf of the public but leased to Hospital Corporation of America, the same company that operates Citrus Memorial Hospital and other associated campus properties. Desai had to work with both entities, taking it out of the public domain and the lease.



Fred Hiers / Chronicle Reporter

The former Manning's Bar

The future hotel on 123 S. Seminole Ave. will have 72 rooms with each including kitchenettes for extended stays.

■ The Inverness City Council approved this year a plan to allow for greater density in some of the city's commercial and residential communities, making possible new condominiums, apartments, and senior living communities.

The new maximum density would allow 17.5 units per acre. The previous maximum density was 12.5 units per acre. The county's maximum density outside the city already allows for 20 units per acre.

Under the new plan, applications would have to go through a lengthy process to be allowed the greater density zoning, city staffers say.

■ Also in 2021 Inverness installed security cameras at Liberty Park.

The city's council voted 4-0 to approve the $68,028 expense with approval for the city manager to add more security cameras if the need arises.

City Manager Eric Williams said that the plan, during the park's renovations, was always to add security cameras.

Williams told the council there had also been some juvenile delinquency at the park, vandalism, and other unwanted activity to warrant the cameras.

In related Liberty Park news, the city is also hoping to build a beach at Liberty Park and Big Lake Henderson.

City officials are now working with state water regulators trying to get permission for the beach. City officials say people are already entering the water and the beach would help control erosion.

The estimated cost of the beach would be between $350,000 – $500,000. City Manager Eric Williams said the beach would also help attract many more visitors to the park and downtown area.

■ After more than 18 years on the Inverness City Council dais, Councilman Ken Hinkle resigned in December, citing personal issues behind his decision.

The city's mayor, Hinkle's fellow council members, and the city manager lavished Hinkle with praise for his service on the council. The remaining four council members unanimously voted to fill the vacancy with Inverness businessman and Realtor Gene Davis. The seat's term expires November 2022.



HINKLE

■ Inverness in 2021 redesigned Oak Ridge Cemetery to accommodate 4,200 more plots for the departed.

Without the changes, the 22-acre cemetery created in the 1800s would be down to about 200 spaces and in about three years turning away those needing eternal resting places.

■ Also in 2021 a judge threw out the city's 2019 voluntary annexation of New Horizon Funding Inc. by the Inverness council. The 234 acres is owned by Inverness attorney John Eden is still slated to become an upscale RV resort called Preservation Point. The judge said the annexed property, sitting alongside Lake Spivey and the city limits did not meet state standards to be voluntarily annexed. It will no remain in the county and the RV park construction will be overseen by county staff.

Fred Hiers is a reporter at the Citrus Chronicle. E-mail him at fred.hiers@chronicleonline.com

Sally Ann Howes, actor in 'Chitty Chitty Bang Bang,' dies at 91

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Sally Ann Howes, who played as a child actor before she later starred in the 1968 film "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" with Dick Van Dyke, has died. She was 91.

Her son Andrew Hart Adler confirmed his mother's death in an interview with the Press Association on Wednesday. Her nephew, Toby Howes, said on Twitter that the family hoped Howes could "hold on" until the Christmas screening of "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang," but he said she ultimately died peacefully in her sleep.

The cause of Howes' death has not been released.

The New York Times reported she died in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, on Sunday.

Howes, an English actor, began her career on the big screen at the age of 12 in the 1943 film "Thursday's Child," where she played a schoolgirl turned successful actor. She comes from an acting lineage that includes her parents, Bobby Howes and Patricia Malone.

In five decades, Howes made appearances in more than 140 films, musicals, plays and television projects including the screen adaption of Charles Dickens' "Nicholas Nickleby" and "The History of Mr. Polly." She made her biggest splash as the character Truly Scrumptious in "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang."

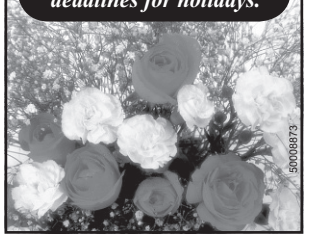


Marty Lederhandler / AP file photo

Sally Ann Howes on stage of the ball room of the Americana Hotel in 1968 in New York. Howes, who starred in the 1968 film "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" with Dick Van Dyke, has died at age 91.

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Tuesday, December 21, 2021
10:00am-12:00pm

Wednesday, December 22, 2021
2:00pm-4:00pm

Tuesday, December 28, 2021
10:00am-12:00pm

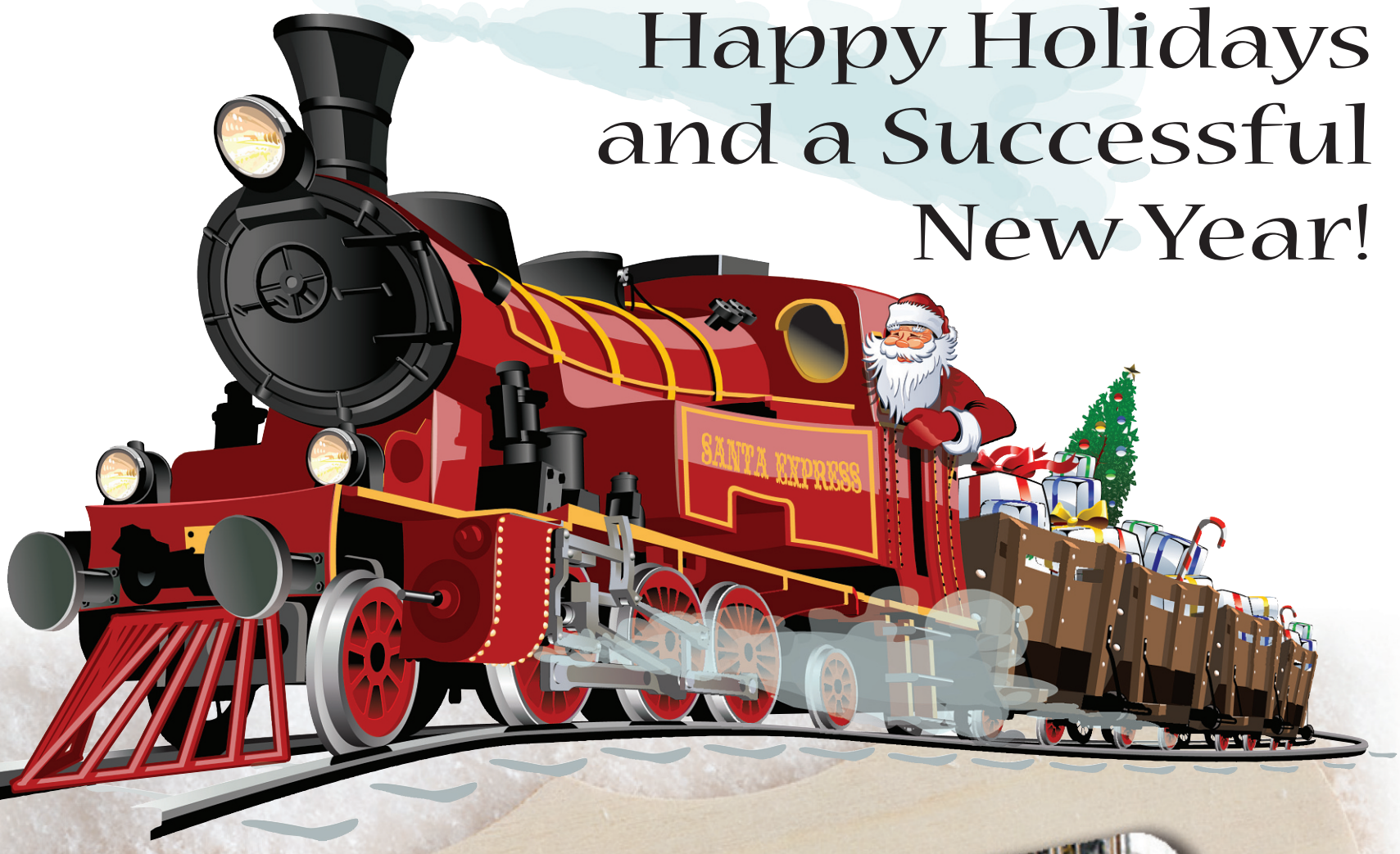
Thursday, December 30, 2021
6:00pm-8:00pm

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City of Crystal River

A map illustrating Southeast Kings Bay Drive in Crystal River, and its relationships with Southeast Paradise Point Road, the Port Hotel and Marina and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's Crystal River National Wildlife Refuge Office.

ROAD

From page A1

"We don't want to do something the public doesn't want," Frink said, "but I didn't want to miss the opportunity."

Along with moving King's Bay Drive, the city would also like to use grant monies to improve drainage in the area to alleviate storm flooding.

City staff is also considering a roundabout as the future intersection of Kings Bay Drive and Paradise Point Road.

Dr. Paresh Desai, owner of the Port Hotel and Marina, said Thursday the support for the project has been there since its inception but he respects the city's desire to gauge public opinion.

"It is their wish but it was already approved," he said. "It is going to benefit the residents more than the Port Paradise or Fish and Wildlife."

Frink said USFWS would have to grant the city right of way for the Kings Bay Drive-Paradise Point Road connector to be paved on its land. USFWS would also have to sign off on an easement allowing the city continued access to its utilities along Kings Bay Drive.

A USFWS representative involved in the Kings Bay Drive realignment project was unavailable for comment.

Contact Chronicle reporter Buster Thompson at 352-564-2916, bthompson@chronicleonline.com or visit tinyurl.com/yxn2ahso to see more of his stories.

REPAIRS

From page A1

the area had been selected using the city's new road assessment program this year. In addition, that part of the city already has water and sewer services, is compact, and needs road repairs, so it's a logical choice for road work, Williams said.

The engineering oversight work includes:

■ Review and assessment of current roadway and drainage conditions.

■ Preparation of plans and specifications for rehabilitation of roadways.

■ Assistance with bid solicitation.

■ Review of conditions during construction.

■ Provide recommended action for final acceptance of construction.

The engineering contract is structured so not to exceed $48,277 for the service outlined above.

The road and drainage work is expected to cost about $500,000.

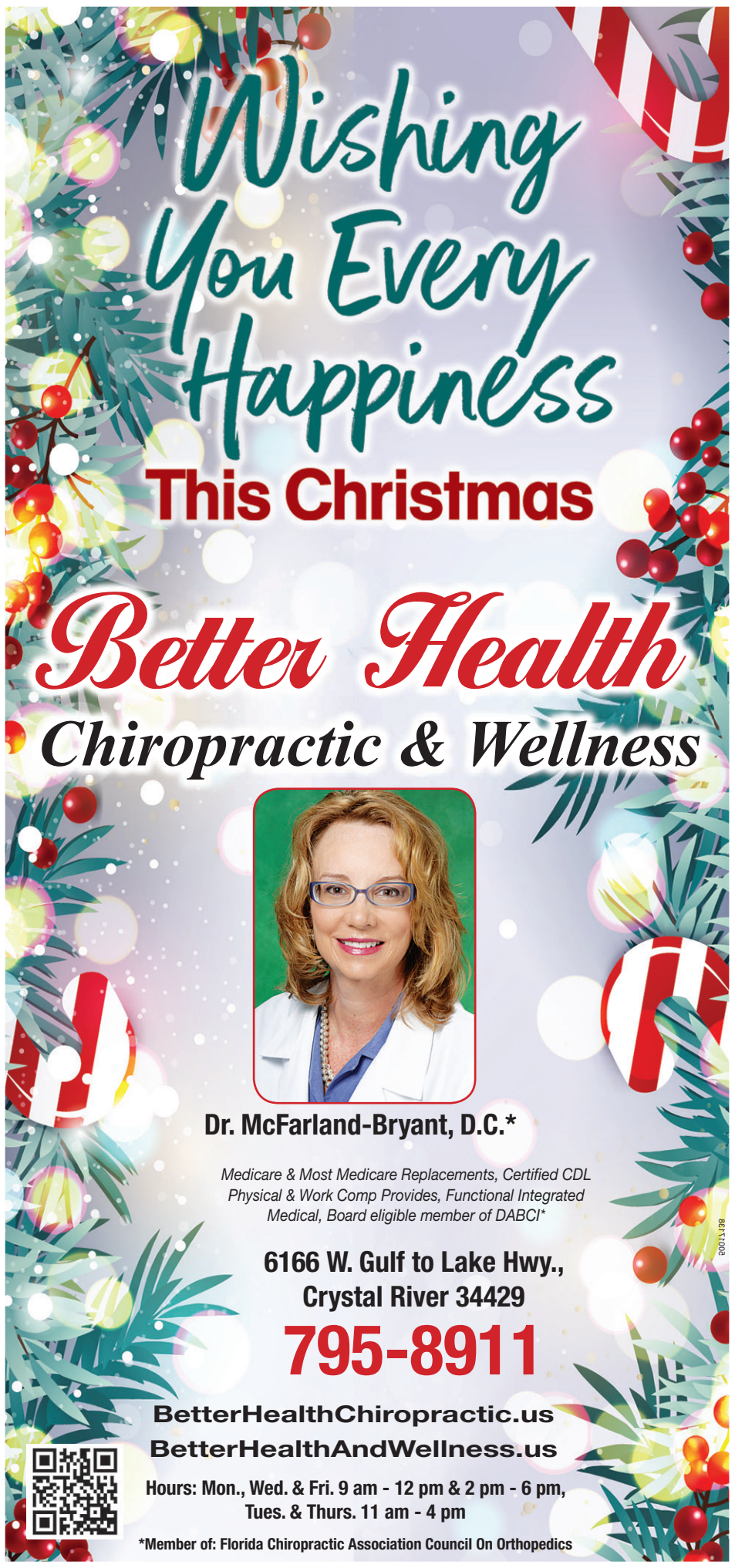
Williams said the $48,277 engineering work is a good price for the city.

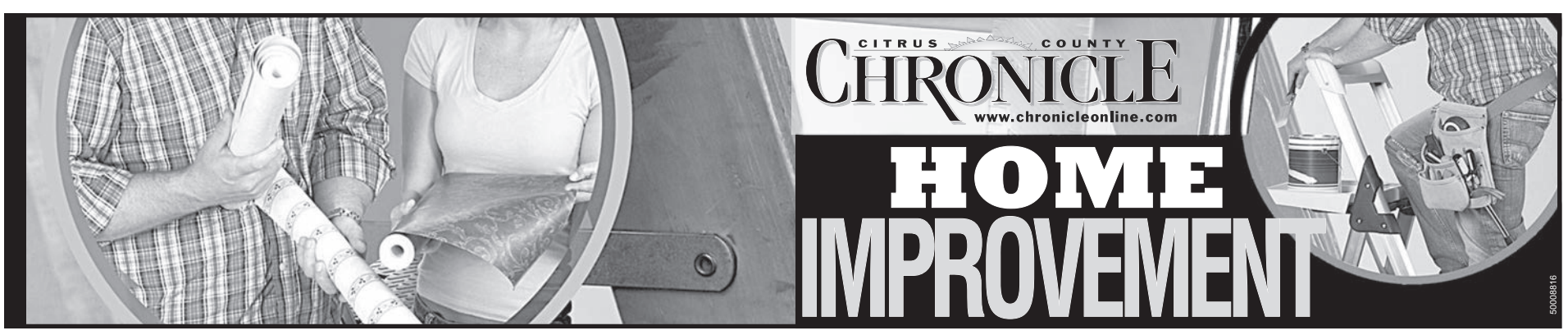
Fred Hiers is a reporter at the Citrus Chronicle. E-mail him at fred.hiers@chronicleonline.com

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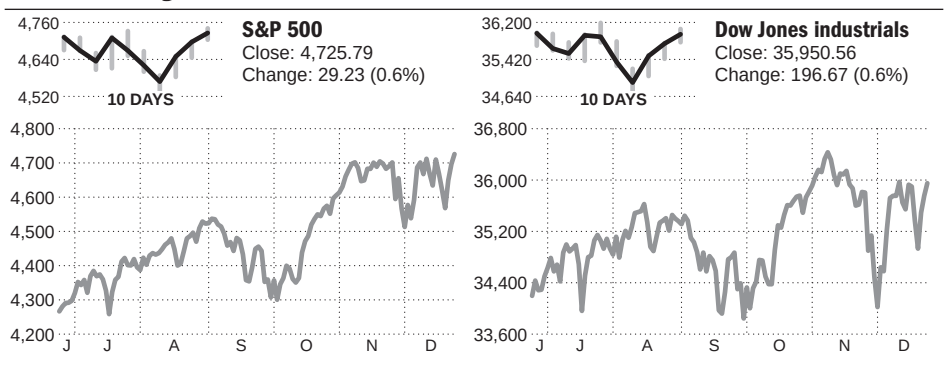
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StocksRecap

	NYSE	NASD
Vol. (in mil.)	2,678	3,539
Pvs. Volume	3,059	3,760
Advanced	1792	2507
Declined	691	992
New Highs	83	65
New Lows	9	69

	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	CHG	%CHG	YTD
DOW	36,060.99	35,782.42	35,950.56	+196.67	+0.55%	+17.46%
DOW Trans.	16,238.92	16,005.15	16,186.96	+225.22	+1.41%	+29.42%
DOW Util.	960.48	954.99	955.77	-0.61	-0.06%	+10.54%
NYSE Comp.	17,011.48	16,874.88	16,963.44	+88.56	+0.52%	+16.79%
NASDAQ	15,697.98	15,528.91	15,653.37	+131.48	+0.85%	+21.45%
S&P 500	4,740.74	4,703.96	4,725.79	+29.23	+0.62%	+25.82%
S&P 400	2,803.05	2,776.56	2,795.82	+19.26	+0.69%	+21.21%
Wilshire 5000	48,313.73	47,844.53	48,171.11	+326.58	+0.68%	+22.09%
Russell 2000	2,247.63	2,222.25	2,241.58	+19.68	+0.89%	+13.51%

Stocks of Local Interest

NAME	TICKER	52-WK RANGE LO	52-WK RANGE HI	CLOSE	CHG	%CHG	WK	MO	QTR	YTD %CHG	1YR %RTN	P/E	DIV
AT&T Inc	T	22.02	33.88	**24.87**	**+.09**	+0.4	▲	▲	▼	-13.5	-8.5	cc	2.08
Ametek Inc	AME	106.96	145.06	**142.57**	**+1.52**	+1.1	▲	▼	▲	+17.9	+19.7	36	0.80
Anheuser-Busch InBev	BUD	54.08	79.67	**60.77**	**+.38**	+0.6	▲	▲	▲	-13.1	-13.4	21	1.10e
Bank of America	BAC	28.73	48.69	**44.42**	**+.14**	+0.3	▲	▼	▲	+46.6	+51.2	13	0.84
Capital City Bank	CCBG	21.42	29.00	**26.58**	**+.23**	+0.9	▲	▼	▲	+8.1	+9.7	13	0.64f
Citigroup	C	57.40	80.29	**60.21**	**+.61**	+1.0	▲	▼	▼	-2.4	+0.3	6	2.04
Disney	DIS	142.04	203.02	**153.63**	**+1.75**	+1.2	▲	▲	▼	-15.2	-11.5		...
Duke Energy	DUK	85.56	108.38	**102.97**	**-.19**	-0.2	▼	▲	▲	+12.5	+20.0	58	3.94f
EPR Properties	EPR	29.79	56.07	**46.48**	**+.33**	+0.7	▲	▼	▼	+43.0	+52.9		3.00
Equity Commonwealth	EQC	25.03	29.29	**26.01**	**+.05**	+0.2	▲	▼	▲	-4.7	-2.4		2.50e
Exxon Mobil Corp	XOM	40.53	66.38	**61.02**	**+.03**	...	▲	▼	▲	+48.0	+52.5		3.52f
Ford Motor	F	8.43	21.49	**20.25**	**+.11**	+0.5	▲	▬	▲	+130.4	+120.7	24	0.40
Gen Electric	GE	82.88	116.17	**94.00**	**+.93**	+1.0	▲	▼	▼	+9.0	+8.4		0.32
HCA Holdings Inc	HCA	156.43	263.92	**252.05**	**-.02**	...	▼	▲	▲	+53.3	+52.7	23	1.92
Home Depot	HD	246.59	420.61	**397.07**	**+1.43**	+0.4	▲	▼	▲	+49.5	+46.5	28	6.60
Intel Corp	INTC	45.24	68.49	**51.31**	**+.34**	+0.7	▲	▲	▼	+3.0	+12.5	10	1.39
IBM	IBM	114.56	152.84	**130.63**	**+.88**	+0.7	▲	▲	▼	+3.8	+15.0	22	6.56
LKQ Corporation	LKQ	34.11	60.05	**57.73**	**+.45**	+0.8	▲	▼	▲	+63.8	+59.0	19	...a
Lowes Cos	LOW	150.84	263.31	**250.09**	**+.39**	+0.2	▲	▼	▲	+55.8	+52.0	26	3.20
Lumen Technologies	LUMN	9.66	16.60	**12.84**	**+.08**	+0.6	▲	▼	▲	+31.7	+37.9		1.00
McDonalds Corp	MCD	202.73	266.89	**265.95**	**+1.01**	+0.4	▲	▲	▲	+23.9	+27.4	29	5.16
Microsoft Corp	MSFT	211.94	349.67	**334.69**	**+1.49**	+0.4	▲	▼	▲	+50.5	+48.1	37	2.48f
Motorola Solutions	MSI	163.16	266.86	**262.90**	**-1.69**	-0.6	▲	▲	▲	+54.6	+60.1	46	2.84
NextEra Energy	NEE	68.33	92.70	**90.70**	**-.10**	-0.1	▼	▲	▲	+17.6	+23.6	57	1.54
Piedmont Office RT	PDM	15.10	20.35	**18.06**	**+.06**	+0.3	▲	▼	▲	+11.3	+18.8	44	0.84
Regions Fncl	RF	15.16	24.89	**21.52**	**+.18**	+0.8	▲	▼	▲	+33.5	+41.4	8	0.68
Smucker, JM	SJM	110.53	140.65	**132.99**	**-.15**	-0.1	▼	▲	▲	+15.0	+18.6	17	3.96f
Texas Instru	TXN	159.56	202.26	**187.40**	**+.47**	+0.3	▲	▼	▼	+14.2	+17.3	24	4.60f
UniFirst Corp	UNF	189.84	258.86	**203.23**	**+.39**	+0.2	▼	▲	▼	-4.0	-1.5	25	1.00
Verizon Comm	VZ	49.69	60.13	**52.68**	**-.09**	-0.2	▼	▲	▼	-10.3	-7.0	10	2.56f
Vodafone Group	VOD	14.53	20.36	**15.22**	**+.05**	+0.3	▲	▼	▼	-7.6	-1.2	cc	1.06e
WalMart Strs	WMT	126.28	152.57	**139.49**	**-.31**	-0.2	▲	▼	▲	-3.2	-2.8	39	2.20
Walgreen Boots Alli	WBA	39.03	57.05	**50.48**	**+.07**	+0.1	▲	▲	▲	+26.6	+27.5	19	1.91

Dividend Footnotes: a - Extra dividends were paid, but are not included. b - Annual rate plus stock. c - Liquidating dividend. e - Amount declared or paid in last 12 months. f - Current annual rate, which was increased by most recent dividend announcement. i - Sum of dividends paid after stock split, no regular rate. j - Sum of dividends paid this year. Most recent dividend was omitted or deferred. k - Declared or paid this year, a cumulative issue with dividends in arrears. m - Current annual rate, which was decreased by most recent dividend announcement. p - Initial dividend, annual rate not known, yield not shown. r - Declared or paid in preceding 12 months plus stock dividend. t - Paid in stock, approximate cash value on ex-distribution date.
PE Footnotes: q - Stock is a closed-end fund - no P/E ratio shown. cc - P/E exceeds 99. dd - Loss in last 12 months.

Interestrates

The yield on the 10-year Treasury note rose to 1.49% Thursday. Yields affect rates on mortgages and other consumer loans.

TREASURIES	LAST	PVS	NET CHG	1YR AGO
3-month T-bill	.08	.08	...	.09
6-month T-bill	.18	.16	+0.02	.09
52-wk T-bill	.28	.26	+0.02	.09
2-year T-note	.71	.68	+0.03	.13
5-year T-note	1.25	1.23	+0.02	.38
7-year T-note	1.42	1.39	+0.03	.67
10-year T-note	1.49	1.46	+0.03	.94
30-year T-bond	1.90	1.85	+0.05	1.70

CONSUMER RATES	NAT'L AVG	WK AGO	6MO AGO	1YR AGO
48 month new car loan	3.42 ▼	3.57	3.58	4.11
Money market account	0.07 ▬	0.07	0.07	0.08
1 year CD	0.28 ▬	0.28	0.27	0.30
$30K Home equity loan	6.46 ▬	6.46	6.46	4.68
30 year fixed mortgage	3.19 ▼	3.24	3.18	3.13
15 year fixed mortgage	2.50 ▼	2.52	2.52	2.44

	PRIME RATE	FED FUNDS
LAST	3.25	.13
6 MO AGO	3.25	.13
1 YR AGO	3.25	.13

Commodities

Energy prices mostly rose, with U.S. crude up 1.4%, heating oil up a little over 1% and wholesale gasoline up almost 1.8%. Natural gas slumped 6.2%. Gold and silver prices rose slightly.

FUELS	CLOSE	PVS	%CHG	%YTD
Crude Oil (bbl)	73.79	72.76	+1.42	+52.1
Ethanol (gal)	2.14	2.14	...	+49.1
Heating Oil (gal)	2.33	2.31	+1.02	+57.2
Natural Gas (mm btu)	3.73	3.98	-6.16	+47.0
Unleaded Gas (gal)	2.21	2.17	+1.76	+54.9
METALS	**CLOSE**	**PVS**	**%CHG**	**%YTD**
Gold (oz)	1811.20	1801.60	+0.53	-4.3
Silver (oz)	22.93	22.79	+0.61	-12.9
Platinum (oz)	975.10	968.40	+0.69	-9.3
Copper (lb)	4.39	4.39	-0.06	+24.8
Palladium (oz)	1954.70	1887.10	+3.58	-20.2
AGRICULTURE	**CLOSE**	**PVS**	**%CHG**	**%YTD**
Cattle (lb)	1.37	1.36	+0.96	+21.3
Coffee (lb)	2.31	2.34	-1.01	+80.3
Corn (bu)	6.06	6.03	+0.54	+25.2
Cotton (lb)	1.09	1.09	+0.27	+39.7
Lumber (1,000 bd ft)	1052.40	1022.70	+2.93	+20.3
Orange Juice (lb)	1.45	1.47	-1.46	+17.7
Soybeans (bu)	13.32	13.29	+0.24	+1.3
Wheat (bu)	8.15	8.14	+0.09	+27.2

(Previous and change figures reflect current contract.)

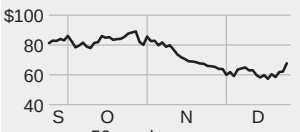
MutualFunds

FAMILY	FUND	NAV	CHG	TOTAL RETURN YTD	1YR	3YR*	5YR*
American Funds	AmrcnBalA m	33.22	+.10	+14.9	+16.3	+15.8	+11.2
	CptWldGrIncA m	63.07	+.35	+13.7	+15.8	+19.2	+13.0
	CptlIncBldrA m	69.30	+.28	+13.6	+15.1	+11.9	+7.9
	FdmtlInvsA m	75.40	+.57	+21.6	+23.1	+22.7	+15.2
	GrfAmrcA m	74.39	+.77	+19.5	+21.1	+30.1	+20.6
	IncAmrcA m	25.53	+.08	+15.9	+17.1	+13.8	+9.2
	InvCAmrcA m	51.35	+.33	+23.9	+26.0	+22.3	+14.4
	NwPrspctvA m	66.08	+.62	+17.1	+19.4	+28.2	+19.7
	WAMtlInvsA m	59.75	+.37	+26.9	+29.3	+21.0	+14.7
Dodge & Cox	Inc	14.05	-.01	-1.0	-0.6	+6.1	+4.4
	Stk	244.45	+1.85	+31.3	+33.0	+22.0	+13.7
Fidelity	500IdxInsPrm	163.89	+1.02	+27.6	+29.9	+27.3	+18.0
	BCGrowth	184.09	+1.54	+23.0	+22.8	+41.1	+29.3
	Contrafund	18.71	+.10	+24.0	+25.6	+31.0	+22.2
	GroCo	40.61	+.32	+23.5	+22.6	+44.7	+29.8
	TtlMktIdxInsPrm	132.84	+.87	+24.8	+26.2	+27.0	+17.5
	USBdIdxInsPrm	11.97	-.03	-1.9	-1.6	+4.9	+3.6
Schwab	SP500Idx	71.87	...	+26.8	+29.2	+27.0	+17.9
T. Rowe Price	BCGr	178.47	+1.15	+18.1	+19.3	+29.8	+23.3
Vanguard	500IdxAdmrl	436.03	+2.70	+27.6	+29.9	+27.2	+18.0
	DivGrInv	40.32	+.18	+22.9	+25.1	+22.8	+16.4
	GrIdxAdmrl x	164.82	+.90	+27.0	+28.7	+36.8	+24.5
	InTrTEAdmrl	14.72	...	+1.2	+1.2	+4.4	+3.9
	IntlGrAdmrl	138.25	+1.10	-1.5	+0.1	+28.6	+21.2
	MdCpIdxAdmrl x	311.81	+.75	+23.1	+23.3	+25.4	+15.4
	PrmCpAdmrl	168.44	+1.74	+21.2	+22.9	+23.8	+17.9
	STInvmGrdAdmrl	10.80	...	-0.5	-0.3	+3.6	+2.8
	SmCpIdxAdmrl x	107.40	+.31	+16.7	+15.8	+22.6	+13.1
	TtBMIdxAdmrl	11.19	-.02	-1.7	-1.4	+5.0	+3.7
	TtlnSIdxAdmrl	33.94	+.21	+7.8	+9.7	+14.3	+9.9
	TtlnSIdxInv	20.29	+.13	+7.8	+9.7	+14.2	+9.8
	TtlSMIdxAdmrl x	116.71	+.35	+24.8	+26.2	+27.1	+17.6
	TtlSMIdxInv x	116.69	+.38	+24.7	+26.1	+26.9	+17.4
	WlngtnAdmrl	89.35	+.19	+18.4	+19.7	+18.0	+12.2
	WlslyIncAdmrl	69.62	+.04	+7.8	+8.8	+11.3	+7.9

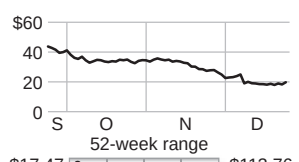
*– Annualized; d - Deferred sales charge, or redemption fee. m - Multiple fees are charged, usually a marketing fee and either a sales or redemption fee. x - fund paid a distribution during the week.

StoryStocks

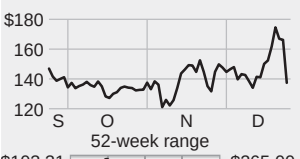
Wall Street added to its recent string of gains Thursday, closing out a holiday-shortened week of trading with a broad stock rally that nudged the S&P 500 to an all-time high. The Dow Jones Industrial Average and the Nasdaq also rose.

Scientific Games SGMS
Close: **$67.75 ▲5.57 or 9.0%**
The company withdrew its offer to buy the remaining 19% of SciPlay that it does not currently own.


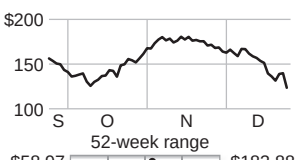
$36.89 $90.20
Vol.: **3.3m (3.7x avg.)** PE: **34.7**
Mkt. Cap: **$6.5 b** Yield: **...**

Stitch Fix SFIX
Close: **$19.74 ▲1.47 or 8.1%**
Working Capital Advisors disclosed a purchase of more stock in the online clothing styling service.


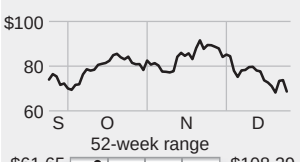
$17.47 $113.76
Vol.: **3.1m (1.0x avg.)** PE: **...**
Mkt. Cap: **$1.6 b** Yield: **...**

Quidel QDEL
Close: **$137.39 ▼-28.85 or -17.4%**
The medical diagnostics company is buying Ortho Clinical Diagnostics.


$103.31 $265.00
Vol.: **5.4m (10.1x avg.)** PE: **6.7**
Mkt. Cap: **$5.7 b** Yield: **...**

Crocs CROX
Close: **$123.53 ▼-16.25 or -11.6%**
The footwear company is buying Heydude for $2.5 billion in a cash-and-stock deal.


$58.97 $183.88
Vol.: **9.5m (6.6x avg.)** PE: **10.7**
Mkt. Cap: **$7.3 b** Yield: **...**

JD.com JD
Close: **$68.65 ▼-5.10 or -6.9%**
Tencent Holdings is cutting its stake in the Chinese e-commerce company.


$61.65 $108.29
Vol.: **26.4m (2.8x avg.)** PE: **27.2**
Mkt. Cap: **$106.6 b** Yield: **...**

Steady gains leave indexes higher in holiday-shortened week

By DAMIAN J. TROISE and ALEX VEIGA
AP Business Writers

Stocks closed higher on Wall Street Thursday, leaving major indexes with solid gains in this holiday-shortened week. The S&P 500 closed at another record high. The benchmark index rose 0.6 percent, the Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 0.6 percent and the Nasdaq rose 0.8 percent. Technology companies and retailers did especially well, while safe-play sectors like real estate and utilities lagged behind. Energy prices rose. European and Asian markets also closed higher. Bond prices fell. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note rose to 1.49 percent. U.S. markets will be closed Friday in observance of Christmas.

Stocks rose in afternoon trading on Wall Street Thursday, putting the major indexes on track for weekly gains and driving the S&P 500 toward another record high.

The S&P 500 rose 0.8 percent as of 2 p.m. Eastern and was hovering above the record it set on Dec. 10. The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 235 points, or 0.7 percent, to 35,990 and the Nasdaq rose 1 percent.

More than 80 percent of stocks within the benchmark S&P 500 gained ground, with technology, communication and industrial companies accounting for a big share of the gains. Only real estate stocks lagged. The index is on track for a 2.4 percent gain this week. U.S. markets will be closed Friday in observance of Christmas.

Cisco systems, which makes routers and other computer hardware, rose 1.2 percent. Chipmaker Micron Technology rose 5 percent.

Retailers and other companies that rely on consumer spending gained ground. Tesla jumped 5.6 percent for the biggest gain in the S&P 500. Target rose 1.5 percent and Domino's Pizza rose 2.6 percent.

Bond yields rose. The yield on the 10-year Treasury rose to 1.49 percent from 1.46 percent late Wednesday.

European markets were higher, and Asian markets closed higher overnight.

Amazon settles with NLRB to give workers power to organize

By ANNE D'INNOCENZIO
The Associated Press



Jay Reeves / AP file

In this March 30 photo, a banner encouraging workers to vote in labor balloting is shown at an Amazon warehouse in Bessemer, Ala. Amazon, under pressure to improve worker rights, has reached a settlement with the National Labor Relations Board to allow its workers to organize freely and without retaliation. According to the agreement, the online behemoth said it would reach out to both current and former warehouse workers via email who were on the job from March 22 to now to notify them of their organizing rights.

NEW YORK — Under pressure to improve worker rights, Amazon has reached a settlement with the National Labor Relations Board to allow its employees to freely organize – and without retaliation.

According to the settlement, the online behemoth Amazon said it would reach out to its warehouse workers – former and current – via email who were on the job anytime from March 22 to now to notify them of their organizing rights. The settlement outlines that Amazon workers, which number 750,000 in the U.S., have more room to organize within the buildings. For example, Amazon pledged it will not threaten workers with discipline or call the police when they are engaging in union activity in exterior non-work areas during non-work time.

According to the terms of the settlement, the labor board will be able to more easily sue Amazon— without going through a laborious process of administrative hearings – if it found that the online company reneged on its agreement.

"Whether a company has 10 employees or a million employees, it must abide by the National Labor Relations Act," said NLRB General Counsel Jennifer Abruzzo, in a statement. "This settlement agreement provides a crucial commitment from Amazon to millions of its workers across the United States that it will not interfere with their right to act collectively to improve their workplace by forming a union or taking other collective action."

She added that "working people should know that the National Labor Relations Board will vigorously seek to ensure Amazon's compliance with the settlement and continue to defend the labor rights of all workers."

Amazon.com Inc., based in Seattle, couldn't be reached immediately for comment.

Kent Wong, the director of the UCLA Labor Center, called the settlement "unprecedented" and said it represents a sea change in attitude at Amazon, which is known to deploy fierce measures against union activity at its warehouses.

"Amazon has been very consistent in holding a strong anti-union position, " Wong said. "This opens up a new opportunities for unionization there as well as at other companies."

Wong noted that the settlement comes as Amazon, the nation's second-largest private employer after Walmart, is on a hiring binge while facing organizing efforts at warehouses in Alabama and New York.

In November, the labor board ordered a new union election for Amazon workers in Bessemer, Alabama, based on objections to the first vote that took place in April. The move was a blow to Amazon, which spent about a year aggressively campaigning for the Bessemer warehouse workers to reject the union, which they ultimately did by a wide margin. The board had not yet determined the date for the second election, and it hasn't determined whether it will be conducted in person or by mail.

The campaign is being spearheaded by the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union.

Meanwhile, on Wednesday, the Amazon Labor Union, an independent group representing workers in New York's Staten Island borough, refiled its petition for a union election. The group of workers withdrew its first petition in mid-November to hold a vote to unionize after falling behind the adequate number of workers pledging support. Former Amazon employee Christian Smalls is organizing the effort in Staten Island without the help of a national sponsor.

The organizing drive is also happening during a moment of reckoning across Corporate America as the pandemic and ensuing labor shortage has given employees more leverage to fight for better working conditions and pay. Workers have staged strikes at Kellogg's U.S. cereal plants and at Deere & Co., while workers at a Starbucks in Buffalo, New York, recently voted to unionize, a first at the coffee chain's 50-year history.

WEEKLY AQUATIC TREATMENT SCHEDULE FOR CITRUS COUNTY

Citrus County's Aquatic Services Division plans the following aquatic weed control activities for the week beginning: **December 27, 2021**

HERBICIDE TREATMENTS

Waterbody	Plant	Herbicide Used
Inverness Pool	Hydrilla, Cuban Bulrush, Nuphar, Southern Naiaid, Limnophilia, Cattails, Hygrophilia, Tussocks	Aquathol, Diquat, 2, 4D, Glyphosate, Flumiguard
Floral City Pool	Hydrilla, Cuban Bulrush, Nuphar, Floating, Southern Naiaid, Cattails, Duckweed, Torpedograss	Aquathol, 2, 4D, Diquat, Glyphosate, Flumiguard
Hernando Pool	Hydrilla, Cuban Bulrush	Aquathol, Diquat, 2,4D

MECHANICAL HARVESTING

Inverness Pool	Tussocks, Nitella, Eleocharis	Mechanical Harvesting
Hernando Pool	Tussocks, Southern Milfoil	Mechanical Harvesting

All treatments are contingent upon weather conditions and water quality. Treated areas identified with "Warning Signs" indicating the date of treatment and the necessary water use restrictions. For further information, please call 352-527-7620 or view our website at http://www.citrusbocc.com/pubworks/aquatics spray-schedule.pdf.

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Citrus County Division of Aquatic Services

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OPINION

"*"Even as an adult, I still find it hard to sleep on Christmas Eve."*

Carrie Latet

CITRUS COUNTY CHRONICLE

CITRUS COUNTY CHRONICLE

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

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

EDITORIAL

Yes Virginia, there is a Santa Claus

Editor's Note: *Eight-year-old Virginia O'Hanlon wrote a letter to the editor of New York's Sun, and the quick response was printed as an unsigned editorial Sept. 21, 1897. The work of veteran newsman Francis Pharcellus Church has since become history's most reprinted newspaper editorial, appearing in part or whole in dozens of languages.*

Dear Editor: I am 8 years old. Some of my little friends say there is no Santa Claus. Papa says, 'If you see it in the sun it's so. Please tell me the truth; is there a Santa Claus? – Virginia O'Hanlon

Virginia: your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except (what) they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children's, are little. In this great universe of ours, man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect, as compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole of truth and knowledge.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! How dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus? It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginias. There would be no child-like faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence.

We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

Not believe in Santa Claus! You might as well not believe in fairies! You might get your papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas Eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if they did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see. Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not, but that's no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in the world.

You may tear apart the baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, nor even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived, could tear apart.

Only faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernal beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding.

No Santa Claus! Thank God! He lives, and he lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay, ten times ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood.

Our newspaper carriers are great

I have to say thank you to Brianne and Lisa, two of the greatest Chronicle newspaper carriers you've ever had. They are fondly known here in Oak Village South of Sugarmill Woods as "The Girls." "The Girls" have always brought the newspaper timely, ultra-early and it's a pleasure to have it here. And we know when they're on vacation because even that one week when they were gone recently, we didn't get a paper one of those days, but we let it pass. And maybe we should have notified you, since it would have shown what good people they are about getting the papers out. They have a wonderful work ethic and we hope that everybody considers them for this Christmas in giving them a good tip.



Start picking up trash

All these people keep complaining in the paper about litter. Why don't they get off their butts, pick up a garbage bag and go outside and start picking some up? Then maybe we wouldn't have so much litter on the roads. Stop complaining and do something.

United Way

The United Way needs your support this holiday season. Please consider writing a check for $36 – or whatever you can afford – to help the local organization. Become a stakeholder in solving the problems in our community. Please mail your contribution to: Gerry Mulligan, c/o The Citrus County Chronicle, United Way Fund Drive, 1624 Meadowcrest Blvd., Crystal River, FL 34429. Make checks payable to the Citrus County United Way.

OTHER VOICES

Do not forgo family gatherings amid pandemic

Dr. William Dixon



The Omicron variant of COVID is a Christmas gift to the world, not a threat. It marks the end of the COVID pandemic and a return to normalcy. Let me explain.

All of us, no exception, vaccinated, immune or not will be infected with a COVID variant. It will be either the severe Delta variant or the mild Omicron variant. Naturally acquired immunity nor vaccination with boosters can prevent reinfection. This is not speculation. This is factual.

Because Delta produces so many viral particles, it is highly contagious. Until recently it was the dominant variant. For those of us with natural immunity or vaccinations, infection with Delta will range from a severe cold to no symptoms at all. But people with defective immune systems may become severely ill, and some of them may succumb to the disease. Those who contract the Delta variant will be left with very strong immunity against current and any future variants.

Omicron produces many more viral particles and is even more contagious than Delta. Omicron has now superseded Delta as the dominant variant. Symptoms of infection with the Omicron variant range from none to a moderately severe cold. None but the severely immune-compromised will be hospitalized or die from the Omicron variant. Survivors of the Omicron variant will likely have strong, long lasting immunity against all of the more severe COVID variants. In essence, as Omicron becomes endemic, this mild form of COVID will replace the more severe strains of COVID.

Considering the arrival of Omicron and after considerable research my recommendations are as follows:

■ People in the high risk category should be vaccinated and have a booster shot when necessary.

2. People at low risk or no risk should be vaccinated to reduce the severity of the infection. Those who have been vaccinated may not need a booster shot.

■ School-age children without debilitating medical conditions do not need to be vaccinated. Those already vaccinated certainly do not need a booster.

■ Vaccine requirements are neither necessary nor helpful.

■ Discrimination against those who are not vaccinated is irrational and not supported by science. They are of no risk to anyone but themselves.

As to masks: The only mask that has shown to be of any value whatsoever against the highly aerosolized Delta and Omicron variants is the N-95 surgical mask. Cloth masks and non-surgical masks are nothing more than facial decorations. If we choose to wear a mask, it should be an effective mask. If others choose not to wear a mask we should not be critical. There is to date no hard science supporting mask effectiveness in reducing the spread of Delta or Omicron variants.

Most important of all, do not forgo the gatherings of family and friends during the holidays. These gatherings nourish our souls and enhance our lives. The holidays fill us with the love and caring spirit that we need going into the new year. With the appearance of the Omicron variant, the risk from these gatherings is minimal compared with their importance for our lives.

I wish all of my friends and neighbors in Citrus County a very Merry Christmas and I look forward to a much happier pandemic-free new year.

William Dixon is a graduate of Columbia University, New York Medical College and the USF College of Business Administration. He was an assistant professor of surgery at the University of Georgia before entering private practice. He served 11 years in the Army as a surgeon and as a Special Forces officer, achieving the rank of lieutenant colonel. Dr. Dixon can be reached at dixonbill513@gmail.com.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Don't San Francisco my Florida

The Withlacoochee Trail is one of the premier bike and hiking trails in the country. The residents of Florida and Citrus County support this beautiful, scenic trail and are proud is part of the county. More importantly, either the state of Florida, Citrus County, or both are expanding the north end of the trail and at considerable expense. Why? Because it is a real draw for tourists.

I have personally met people from all over the world that wanted to enjoy the natural beauty of the trail.

So ... what does this have to do with San Francisco and the self-inflicted decay that the citizens of that once spectacular city are suffering through?

Approximately 200 yards south of the U.S. 41/County Road 486 exchange in Hernando there was a dilapidated motel that was a nest of homeless, drug use and worse. County officials deemed it a health and safety hazard to the users of the bike trail and Citrus County citizens, in general. The county condemned this festering sore of a building, and it was razed. However, not completely. And the reason for not completely is the reason for this letter.

Behind this festering sore was another building that served as a utility shed for the motel. This building is metal, approximately 15 feet x 25 feet and generally as dilapidated as was the motel. This out building could have been easily razed along with the main building, but it was not. It is on the same condemned property; it would have never passed any test for structural soundness, yet the c county official left it in place. Why?

This building is next to the bike trail where there is bike and pedestrian traffic; however, now it is a garbage dump, a suspected meth kitchen, smelly, a health hazard and perhaps a center for drug transactions.

I was personally warned to stay clear of this cesspool because it was private property, and that I should not trespass. Moreover, a county official told me that I might be in personal danger because of the people who were openly trespassing. What about the innocents who walk by this every day? The sheriff's office is aware of this; county Code Enforcement is aware of this, but nothing is happening.

Citrus County is responsible for this because either directly or tacitly they approved of leaving that metal shed in place when it should have been razed with the other building. The county needs to clean it up and soon.

So ... don't San Francisco our bike trail, either.

William New
Hernando

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 Jeff Bryan 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.
- **Letters** must be no longer than 400 words, and writers will be limited to four letters per month.
- **SEND LETTERS TO:** The Editor, 1624 N. Meadowcrest Blvd., Crystal River, FL 34429; or email to letters@chronicleonline.com.

Kudos to letter writer

I just read Edna Mattos' letter on the Bill of Rights. It was beautifully written, informative and well worth the read. I hope everyone saw it and took the time to really absorb its importance, especially those in Washington, DC.

Gary Kenworthy
Beverly Hills

THE CHRONICLE invites you to call "Sound Off" with your opinions about local subjects. You do not need to leave your name, and have less than a minute to record. COMMENTS will be edited for length, libel, personal or political attacks and good taste. Editors will cut libelous material. OPINIONS expressed are purely those of the callers.

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Citrus County Chronicle

Buttigieg doles out $241M to U.S. ports

By HOPE YEN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg is awarding more than $241 million in grants to bolster U.S ports, part of the Biden administration's near-term plan to address America's clogged supply chain with infrastructure improvements to speed the flow of goods.

The transportation money is being made available immediately to 25 projects in 19 states. Next year, the amount of money for port improvements will nearly double to $450 million in grants annually for five years under President Joe Biden's new infrastructure law.

"U.S. maritime ports play a critical role in our supply chains," Buttigieg said with Thursday's announcement. "These investments in our nation's ports will help support American jobs, efficient and resilient operations and faster delivery of goods to the American people."

Biden on Wednesday touted the coming grants as one of a series of efforts that will alleviate supply bottlenecks over the short and long term.

"Earlier this fall we heard a lot of dire warnings about supply chain problems leading to a crisis around the holidays, so we acted," Biden said. "We brought together business and labor leaders to solve problems and the much predicted crisis didn't occur. Packages are moving. Gifts are being delivered. Shelves are not empty."

The grant money includes $52.3 million to help boost rail capacity at the port in Long Beach, Calif., with a new locomotive facility, 10,000-foot support track and extensions of five existing tracks to speed up freight movement while cutting down the number of truck trips required to do that.



Stephen B. Morton / AP

U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg speaks to the media during a visit to the Georgia Ports Authority's Megarail facility Dec. 17 in Savannah, Ga.

Other recipients include:

■ Portsmouth, Virginia, $20 million, to help build out a supply chain for the offshore wind industry.

■ Brunswick, Georgia, $14.6 million, to build a fourth berth for cargo ships at Colonel's Island Terminal.

■ Houston, $18.3 million, to facilitate more export and import cargo by significantly boosting storage capacity at the Bayport Container Terminal.

■ Tell City, Indiana, $1.6 million, to construct a 40-foot diameter pier on the Ohio River that can be used direct barge-to-truck unloading of cargo.

■ Delcambre, Louisiana, $2 million, for dock restoration and climate resiliency.

In recent months, higher prices have eaten into wages and turned public sentiment on the economy against Biden in polls. One of the obstacles for reducing inflation amid a coronavirus pandemic has been backlogged ports with ships waiting to dock at major transit hubs, causing shortages and leaving some store shelves depleted.

Buttigieg's announcement seeks to build upon recent moves by the Transportation Department to reduce supply chain congestion, such as by allowing port authorities to redirect leftover money from grant projects. For example, the Georgia Ports Authority is using $8 million to convert its inland facilities for the port of Savannah into container yards, freeing up dock space and speeding the flow of goods to their final destinations. Buttigieg last Friday toured the port, which his department says has seen the number of ships waiting at anchor fall from over 30 to six last week, while long dwelling containers have been cut in half.



Aaron Lavinsky / Star Tribune via AP

Damik Bryant, brother of Daunte Wright, looks on outside the Hennepin County Government Center in Minneapolis after the guilty verdict was delivered Thursday. Jurors on Thursday convicted Potter of two manslaughter charges in the killing of Daunte Wright, a Black motorist she shot during a traffic stop after she said she confused her gun for her Taser.

Potter guilty of manslaughter in Daunte Wright's death

By AMY FORLITI and SCOTT BAUER
Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — A suburban Minneapolis police officer who said she confused her handgun for her Taser was convicted of manslaughter Thursday in the death of Daunte Wright, prompting tears from the young Black man's parents and a jubilant celebration by supporters outside the courthouse who chanted "Guilty, guilty, guilty!"

The mostly white jury deliberated for about 27 hours over four days before finding former Brooklyn Center Officer Kim Potter guilty of first-degree and second-degree manslaughter. Potter, 49, faces about seven years in prison under the state's sentencing guidelines, but prosecutors said they would seek a longer term.

Judge Regina Chu ordered Potter taken into custody and held without bail pending sentencing on Feb. 18. Potter had been free on $100,000 bond posted the day last April that she was charged, which was three days after she killed Wright and a day after she quit the police force.

As she was led away in handcuffs, a Potter family member in the courtroom shouted "Love you, Kim!" Potter's attorneys left the courthouse without commenting and didn't immediately respond to phone messages or emails.

It was the second high-profile conviction of a police officer won this year by a team led by Attorney General Keith Ellison, including some of the same attorneys who helped convict Derek Chauvin in George Floyd's death in the very same courtroom just eight months earlier.



Court TV via AP, Pool

Former Brooklyn Center Police Officer Kim Potter stands with defense attorney Earl Gray as the verdict is read Thursday at the Hennepin County Courthouse in Minneapolis, Minn.

Wright was killed while that trial was happening not far away, and it set off a wave of angry protests outside the police station in Brooklyn Center, where demonstrators demanding "Justice for Daunte" clashed with officers in riot gear for several nights.

Outside the courthouse Thursday, dozens of people who had gathered erupted in cheers, hugs and tears of joy as the verdicts were read. A New Orleans-style jazz band played "When the Saints Go Marching In." Two men jumped up and down holding one another's shoulders, and then other people began jumping up and down and chanting "Guilty, guilty, guilty!"

They chanted "Say his name! Daunte Wright!" Some held yellow signs that said "guilty" in large block letters.

Potter, who testified that she "didn't want to hurt anybody," looked down without any visible reaction when the verdicts were read.

U.S. approves Merck pill as second easy-to-use drug against COVID-19

By MATTHEW PERRONE
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — U.S. health regulators on Thursday authorized the second pill against COVID-19, providing another easy-to-use medication to battle the rising tide of omicron infections.

The Food and Drug Administration announcement on Merck's molnupiravir comes one day after the agency cleared a competing drug from Pfizer.

Pfizer's pill, Paxlovid, is likely to become the first-choice treatment against the virus, because of its superior benefits and milder side effects.

As a result, Merck's pill is expected to have a lesser role against the pandemic than predicted just a few weeks ago. Its ability to head off severe COVID-19 is much smaller than initially announced and the drug label will warn of serious safety issues, including the potential for birth defects.

Both treatments will be free to patients in the U.S. after being purchased by the federal government.



Merck & Co. via AP, File

Merck & Co.'s new antiviral medication molnupiravir, which U.S. regulators have authorized for emergency use for adults with early COVID-19 who face the highest risks of hospitalization.

The FDA authorized Merck's drug for adults with a positive COVID-19 test, early symptoms and who face the highest risks of hospitalization, including older people and those with conditions like obesity and heart disease.

The agency said molnupiravir should be considered for patients "for whom alternative COVID-19 treatment options authorized by the FDA are not accessible or clinically appropriate." It did not include that restriction for Paxlovid, which was authorized for patients 12 and older.

Molnupiravir, made by Merck and Ridgeback Biotherapeutics, also will carry a warning against use during pregnancy. Women of childbearing age should use birth control during treatment and for a few days after while men should use birth control for at least three months after their final dose, the FDA said. The federal agency also said molnupiravir should not be used in patients under age 18 because it may affect bone growth.

NEWS BRIEFS

'Unabomber' Kaczynski moved to prison medical facility

DENVER (AP) — The man known as the "Unabomber" has been transferred to a federal prison medical facility in North Carolina after spending the past two decades in a federal Supermax prison in Colorado for a series of bombings targeting scientists.

Theodore "Ted" Kaczynski, 79, was moved to the U.S. Bureau of Prison's FMC Butner medical center in eastern North Carolina on Dec. 14, according to bureau spokesperson Donald Murphy. Murphy declined to disclose any details of Kaczynski's medical condition or the reason for his transfer.

Kaczynski is serving life without the possibility of parole following his 1996 arrest.

5 teenagers charged in armed carjacking of U.S. Rep. Scanlon

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Five teenagers were charged Thursday after the vehicle stolen at gunpoint in Philadelphia from U.S. Rep. Mary Gay Scanlon was found in neighboring Delaware, police said.

Scanlon's blue Acura MDX was located Wednesday night in Newark, Delaware, Delaware State Police said. The five were apprehended as they tried to flee, police said.

Scanlon, a Democrat, was walking to her parked vehicle after a meeting in the city's FDR Park shortly before 3 p.m. Wednesday when two armed men demanded her keys, police said. She handed them over, and one drove off in the car while the other followed in a dark sport utility vehicle, police said.

Trump asks Supreme Court to block release of Jan. 6 records

By MARK SHERMAN and NOMAAN MERCHANT
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Former President Donald Trump turned to the Supreme Court on Thursday in a last-ditch effort to keep documents away from the House committee investigating the Jan. 6 insurrection at the Capitol led by his supporters.

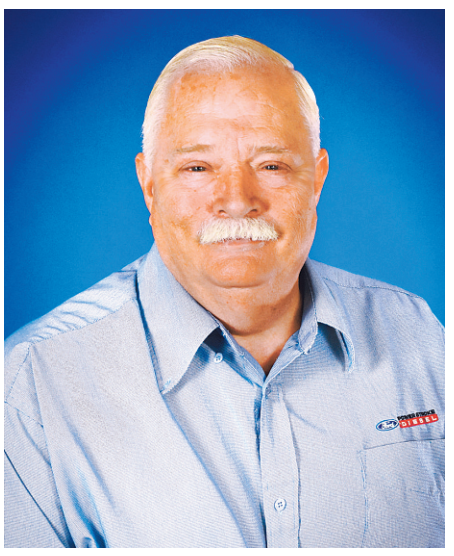
Trump's attorneys asked the Supreme Court to reverse lower court rulings against the former president, who has fought to block the records even after President Joe Biden waived executive privilege over them. The federal appeals court in Washington previously ruled the committee had a "uniquely vital interest" in the documents and Trump had "provided no basis" for it to override Biden and Congress.

The records include presidential diaries, visitor logs, speech drafts, handwritten notes "concerning the events of January 6" from the files of former chief of staff Mark Meadows, and "a draft Executive Order on the topic of election integrity," according to a previous court filing from the National Archives.

Trump's filing came on the day that an administrative injunction issued by the appeals court was set to otherwise expire. That injunction, preventing the release of records, will remain in place for now. Lawyers for the House committee asked the Supreme Court later Thursday to expedite its processes and consider the case as soon as mid-January.

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SPORTS

CITRUS COUNTY CHRONICLE

UCF wins Gasparilla Bowl



Photos by Chris O'Meara / AP

Florida wide receiver Rick Wells (12, above) can't make the catch on a pass after getting past Central Florida defensive back Justin Hodges during the first half of the Gasparilla Bowl on Thursday night. Central Florida won 29-17. See Saturday's Sports section for a complete story. **Below**, Central Florida wide receiver Ryan O'Keefe (4) runs away from Florida defensive lineman Jalen Lee



Hawaii Bowl canceled on eve of game after Hawaii pulls out

HONOLULU (AP) — The Hawaii Bowl was canceled Thursday on the eve of the game after Hawaii withdrew because of COVID-19, season-ending injuries and transfers.

"We are disappointed our season has to end this way," Hawaii coach Todd Graham said in a statement. "As competitive as we are and as much as we want to play the game, we cannot put the health and safety of our student-athletes at risk."

The game was scheduled for Friday at the Clarence T.C. Ching Athletics Complex.

Hawaii athletic department spokesperson Derek Inouchi said about 30 players and staff recently tested positive for COVID-19. Cases have been surging in Honolulu for the past two weeks. Oahu's seven-day average of new cases was 11 times higher on Thursday compared to Dec. 8

"The health and safety of our student-athletes is the most important part of this decision," Hawaii athletic director David Matlin said in a statement. "The recent surge in COVID-19 cases has forced us to not participate in the game. We are disappointed for our players, coaches, and fans. ESPN and the EasyPost Hawaii Bowl staff did everything they could for us and we appreciate their valiant effort throughout the week. We want to thank the Memphis Tigers for making the long trip to Hawaii. We are disappointed we can't compete on the football field."

Hawaii finished the season 6-8, getting into the bowl because there were no available 6-6 teams. Memphis finished 6-6.

"We are very disappointed to hear that Hawaii will be unable to participate," Memphis coach Ryan Silverfield said in a statement. "We hope that Hawaii players and staff get healthy soon. I'm upset for our seniors and the rest of the team that battled this season to earn this opportunity. We've had terrific time here in Hawaii as a program and we are sad our trip ended this way."



Gabbert leads Miami (Ohio) to Frisco Football Classic win



Matt Strasen / AP

North Texas wide receiver Roderic Burns (14) catches a pass defended by Miami (Ohio) defensive back Ambe' Caldwell in the first half of the Frisco Football Classic on Thursday.

FRISCO, Texas (AP) — Brett Gabbert completed 22 of 31 passes for 228 yards and two touchdowns, Kenny Tracy scored on an 8-yard run and Graham Nicholson kicked two field goals as Miami (Ohio) beat North Texas 27-14 in the first – and possibly last – Frisco Football Classic on Thursday.

Gabbert, the brother of former NFL quarterback Blaine Gabbert, threw a 5-yard scoring pass to Kenny Davis late in the second quarter and an 11-yarder to Nate Muersch early in the third quarter for Miami (7-6), which won a bowl game for the first time since the 2010 season.

Tracy's touchdown run came late in the first quarter.

Nicholson made a 48-yard field goal on the RedHawks' opening drive, which was one yard shy of his season-high, and a 36-yarder in the second quarter.

Austin Aune and Isaiah Johnson scored on runs of 2 yards and 1 yard for the Mean Green (6-7). Aune was 15-of-32 passing for 228 yards and two interceptions.

North Texas played without two senior starters, running back DeAndre Torrey and safety Makyle Sanders, for unstated reasons. Torrey had averaged 101.3 rushing yards per game, 41 percent of the 245.5-yard team average that ranked fourth in the FBS.

The Mean Green had 32 rushes for a season-low 89 yards, led by Aune's 28 yards. North Texas had averaged 50 rushes per game this season.

The bowl game, played at Toyota Stadium, which had hosted the Frisco Bowl on Tuesday night, was hastily created a few weeks ago when 83 NCAA Division I teams were eligible to fill the slots of the 41 NCAA-approved postseason games.

The takeaway

Miami: The RedHawks were a two-point conversion away from winning the MAC East. They extended their streak of seasons at .500 or better to four straight.

North Texas: The loss ended a five-game Mean Green winning streak following a 1-6 start, and leaves them with their third straight losing season.

Rutgers to replace Texas A&M in Gator Bowl vs. Wake Forest

By RALPH D. RUSSO
AP College Football Writer

Rutgers will replace Texas A&M in the Gator Bowl against Wake Forest after an NCAA committee decided Thursday to adhere to an existing policy for making teams with 5-7 records bowl eligible.

The NCAA football oversight committee also announced that any bowl can be moved to as late as Jan. 10 if the schools involved need additional time to prepare for the game.

The Gator Bowl will keep its scheduled date and 11 a.m. EST kickoff on New Year's Eve, meaning Rutgers will have less than a week to get ready to play one of the highest-scoring teams in the country.

"Better late than never," read a tweet from the Rutgers football account. "The Scarlet Knights are going BOWLING."

Rutgers will be making its first bowl appearance since 2014, its first season as a member of the Big Ten Conference.

"This program has made great strides under the leadership of head coach Greg Schiano and what better way to showcase that than at the TaxSlayer Gator Bowl on New Year's Eve," Rutgers athletic director Pat Hobbs said in a statement. "It is an equally exciting time for our Rutgers fans to be part of this marquee game."

Texas A&M pulled out of the Jacksonville, Florida, game on Wednesday because of a lack of available players. The Aggies were having issues with COVID-19, plus they already had been depleted by injuries, opt-outs and players transferring.

NCAA rules allow teams with 5-7 records, such as Rutgers, to be bowl eligible if there are not enough six-win teams to fill all the spots.

The 5-7 teams with the highest Academic Progress Rate scores have first crack at open slots. Rutgers is atop that list, though the NCAA did not release the full APR rankings to allow schools to privately decline a bowl bid.

"This is what the NCAA is about, in instances like this, let's reward those schools that do put academics first," Hobbs said.

Having Rutgers replace Texas A&M on short notice was not a foregone conclusion for the oversight committee – even after Rutgers officials informed decision-makers on Wednesday that they believed the team could be reassembled quickly.

The Scarlet Knights have not played since losing to Maryland 40-16, two days after Thanksgiving. Schiano said the players trained for a week after the game in hopes of getting a bowl bid with a 5-7 record. The players also worked out the following week and had a voluntary week of training during final exams, so they are conditioned.

"Physically, if I didn't think we would be able to I wouldn't do it," Schiano said, adding his team is fully vaccinated. He hopes there won't be COVID-19 issues when the players return to school.

Players are due back on Saturday night and they will get on the field Sunday to ramp up, Schiano said. He noted players who declared for the NFL Draft and signed with agents can seek a waiver from the NCAA if they want to play in the bowl game.

There was some concern among oversight committee members about the safety of having a team compete with so little time to prepare. At least some consideration was given to having a team that already has played a bowl face Wake Forest, or simply not filling the spot and having the game be canceled.

Ultimately, the committee chose to stick with an existing policy under unusual circumstances.

"The TaxSlayer Gator Bowl team has done an amazing job of pivoting in these circumstances," bowl CEO Brian Rhodes said in a statement. "We wish the Aggies a speedy recovery, and we are looking forward to a great bowl game between Wake Forest and Rutgers."

Gator Bowl president Greg McGarity said the SEC will not receive any benefits of the game because it did not play. He said the bowl is reworking its payout model. Usually, the participating teams receive about $5.3 million to share with its conference.

"Certainly we want to be fair to everyone," McGarity said.

A new view for Bearcats



Aaron Doster / AP

Cincinnati running back Jerome Ford (24) carries the ball as he breaks a tackle against UCF linebacker Jeremiah Jean-Baptiste, right, during the first half of an Oct. 16 game.

Cincinnati climbs CFP mountain, but can it stay there?

By MITCH STACY
Associated Press

CINCINNATI — The University of Cincinnati has played football for more than a century in the long shadow of Ohio State.

After all these years, little brother is making some big noise.

For Cincinnati (13-0), playing in the under-the-radar American Athletic Conference, everything fell into place in 2021. The Bearcats landed as the No. 4 seed in the College Football Playoff, crashing what has been the domain of college football's blue bloods, the first school outside a Power Five conference to do so.

Meanwhile, back in Columbus, Ohio State fans are still working through the grief of last month's disastrous loss to Michigan, which to many was worse than being shut out of the playoff for the first time in three seasons.

The Bearcats scaled the CFP mountain and can see the top from there.

Now fifth-year coach Luke Fickell has to figure out how to keep the Bearcats up there as the program prepares to transition to a Power Five conference – the Big 12 – in the next few years.

"When I came here, a mindset of mine was, 'I hope someday, that we could become a rival to my alma mater,'" said Fickell, who played at Ohio State and was on its coaching staff for 16 years.

"I mean that, all of the sudden, maybe they look at you and recognize that they have to battle against us," he said. "Whether we play them on the football field or not, a lot of the other opportunities are in recruiting. That's where we continue to want to be – and that's not just the Ohio State stuff. That's being a top-10 program."

Cincinnati has a well-earned national reputation as a basketball school. But it could never compete with the tradition, fan base, facilities and recruiting advantage of the juggernaut Buckeyes.

It has, however, had enough football success in the past two decades to become a mid-major stop on the coaching ladder for the likes of Mark Dantonio, Brian Kelly, Butch Jones and presumably Fickell, though he has spurned opportunities to leave.

Urban Meyer, the former Ohio State coach, suggested the trajectory of the Cincinnati program could depend on how the Bearcats show against No. 1 Alabama on New Year's Eve with 25 million people watching on TV.

"It can be that double-edged sword," Meyer said. A competitive game boosts the profile of the program; a blowout looks bad and raises doubts about whether the Bearcats belonged.

"There is a lot of responsibility at Cincinnati to go perform well," said Meyer, who was fired as the Jacksonville Jaguars coach last week. "It is great for them."

Curiously enough, Cincinnati and Ohio State, 100 miles apart, have never been football rivals. They've played each other just 17 times, with the Bearcats winning twice – in 1896 and 1897. The last time they met was in 2019, when the Buckeyes sent Fickell and the Bearcats back to the bus with 42-0 loss.

The schools once went nearly 70 years without a gridiron clash.

Cincinnati football fandom is regional, closer to Ohio's six Mid-American Conference schools than Ohio State, which a few years ago tried unsuccessfully to trademark the word "The" as in "The Ohio State University."

Century-old Nippert Stadium on the UC campus has undergone some major renovations in recent years but still seats only around 40,000. (That's smaller than any in the current Big 12.)

Fickell built his 2021 team around seniors and transfers who will be gone next season, including quarterback Desmond Ridder, running back Jerome Ford (an Alabama transfer) and most defensive starters. Sustaining the success will be challenging, but Fickle has prioritized recruiting and building for the future.

"They've got a top-five team – they're a ways away from having a top-five program, and that's what Ohio State is," said Jim Kelly, a former Bearcats player and radio analyst for more than three decades.

"Yeah, they will have some growing pains with some new kids, but they're making strides and truly are ahead of where they were five years ago (when Fickell arrived), in every aspect," Kelly said.

Buckeyes fans will keep an eye on the Cincinnati game before settling in to watch No. 7 Ohio State's consolation game, a Rose Bowl matchup with No. 10 Utah on New Year's Day.

Things will get more interesting if the Bearcats beat two-touchdown favorite Alabama, and No. 2 Michigan takes down No. 3 Georgia.

"In a perfect world, Michigan and Cincinnati would play each other in the national championship game – let the coaching sparks fly! – with Fickell getting the best of Jim Harbaugh," columnist Rob Oller wrote in The Columbus Dispatch. "That might even make Buckeye Nation happy, despite being on the outside looking in."

SEC, Big East alter basketball policies as COVID cases spike

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Southeastern and Big East conferences have updated their policies for basketball game postponements, cancellations and rescheduling to provide more leniency for teams that are unable to play because of spiking COVID-19 cases.

The policies for both conferences establish that men's and women's teams will be required to play if seven scholarship athletes and one countable coaching staff member are available. The SEC gives teams the option to play with fewer players or coaches if they choose.

If a team can't play, both leagues say the game will be rescheduled or declared a no contest.

The policies announced Thursday are a revision of previous procedures, which called for a game to be forfeited and a loss given to any team unable to play.

The Mid-American Conference and Conference USA announced similar policies on Thursday.

"As we have done since the onset of the pandemic, we continue to evaluate our policies and procedures related to COVID-19 based on the most current information," said SEC Commissioner Greg Sankey. "Circumstances have clearly changed since our interrupted game policy was implemented in August and this updated approach is intended to support healthy, fair and equitable competition."

"Circumstances have clearly changed since our interrupted game policy was implemented in August and this updated approach is intended to support healthy, fair and equitable competition."

GREG SANKEY
SEC Commissioner

Four Big East men's games were already designated as forfeits under the league's previous policy, but the forfeiture classification will be removed from those games and the league will try to reschedule them.

On Thursday, the Butler-St. John's game was canceled because of COVID issues in St. John's program with the hope that it can be rescheduled.

The SEC's updated policy also says that at least two game officials must be available. If that's not possible, the game will be postponed.

In other college news, No. 24 Wisconsin called off its scheduled Thursday game with George Mason due to positive COVID-19 tests within the Badgers' program.

The game won't be rescheduled.

The matchup with George Mason had just been arranged Tuesday night.

Wisconsin originally was supposed to play a Thursday home game with Morgan State, which had its own COVID-19 complications.

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Brooklyn	21	9	.700	—
Boston	16	16	.500	6
Phila.	16	16	.500	6
Toronto	14	15	.483	6½
New York	14	18	.438	8

Southeast Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Miami	20	13	.606	—
Washington	17	15	.531	2½
Charlotte	16	17	.485	4
Atlanta	15	16	.484	4
Orlando	7	26	.212	13

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Chicago	19	10	.655	—
Milwaukee	20	13	.606	1
Cleveland	19	13	.594	1½
Indiana	14	19	.424	7
Detroit	5	26	.161	15

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Memphis	19	13	.594	—
Dallas	15	15	.500	3
San Antonio	12	18	.400	6
New Orleans	12	21	.364	7½
Houston	10	23	.303	9½

Northwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Utah	21	9	.700	—
Denver	15	15	.500	6
Minnesota	15	16	.484	6½
Portland	13	19	.406	9
Oklahoma City	11	19	.367	10

Pacific Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Phoenix	25	5	.833	—
Golden State	25	6	.806	½
L.A. Clippers	17	15	.531	9
L.A. Lakers	16	16	.500	10
Sacramento	13	20	.394	13½

Wednesday's Games

Boston 111, Cleveland 101
Orlando 104, Atlanta 98
Oklahoma City 108, Denver 94
Milwaukee 126, Houston 106
L.A. Clippers 105, Sacramento 89
Toronto at Chicago, ppd

Thursday's Games

Indiana 118, Houston 106
Atlanta 98, Phila. 96
New Orleans 110, Orlando 104
Washington 124, New York 117
Miami 115, Detroit 112
Milwaukee at Dallas
Charlotte at Denver
Minnesota at Utah
Oklahoma City at Phoenix
Memphis at Golden State
San Antonio at L.A. Lakers
Brooklyn at Portland, ppd

Friday's Games

No games scheduled.

Saturday's Games

Atlanta at New York, 12 p.m.
Boston at Milwaukee, 2:30 p.m.
Golden State at Phoenix, 5 p.m.
Brooklyn at L.A. Lakers, 8 p.m.
Dallas at Utah, 10:30 p.m.

Sunday's Games

Orlando at Miami, 3:30 p.m.
Memphis at Sacramento, 6 p.m.
Phila. at Washington, 6 p.m.
Toronto at Cleveland, 6 p.m.
Detroit at San Antonio, 7 p.m.
New Orleans at Oklahoma City, 7 p.m.
Indiana at Chicago, 8 p.m.
Denver at L.A. Clippers, 9 p.m.

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Tampa Bay	30	20	6	4	44	98	80
Toronto	30	20	8	2	42	98	76
Florida	29	18	7	4	40	104	87
Detroit	31	15	13	3	33	88	104
Boston	26	14	10	2	30	71	69
Buffalo	30	10	15	5	25	82	104
Ottawa	28	9	17	2	20	79	101
Montreal	31	7	21	3	17	67	109

Metropolitan Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Carolina	29	21	7	1	43	95	62
Washington	31	18	6	7	43	108	81
N.Y. Rangers	30	19	7	4	42	86	77
Pittsburgh	30	17	8	5	39	91	76
Columbus	28	14	13	1	29	91	95
Philadelphia	29	12	12	5	29	77	95
New Jersey	30	10	15	5	25	82	105
N.Y. Islanders	26	8	12	6	22	57	77

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Central Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Minnesota	30	19	9	2	40	112	92
Nashville	30	19	10	1	39	89	79
St. Louis	31	17	9	5	39	106	85
Colorado	27	17	8	2	36	115	91
Winnipeg	30	14	11	5	33	90	87
Dallas	29	15	12	2	32	82	85
Chicago	30	11	15	4	26	72	97
Arizona	29	6	21	2	14	56	109

Pacific Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Vegas	32	20	12	0	40	114	98
Anaheim	32	17	9	6	40	103	89
Calgary	28	15	7	6	36	87	62
Edmonton	29	18	11	0	36	101	90
Los Angeles	30	14	11	5	33	80	79
San Jose	30	15	14	1	31	78	85
Vancouver	31	14	15	2	30	81	90
Seattle	30	10	17	3	23	84	108

NOTE: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild cards per conference advance to playoffs.

All games postponed until Monday, Dec. 27.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

2021-22 Bowl Glance

Thursday, Dec. 23

Frisco Football Classic
Frisco, Texas
Miami (Ohio) 27, North Texas 14

Gasparilla Bowl
Tampa, Fla.
UCF 29, Florida 17

Friday, Dec. 24

Hawaii Bowl
Honolulu
Memphis (6-6) vs. Hawaii (6-7), canc.

Saturday, Dec. 25

Camellia Bowl
Montgomery, Ala.
Ball St. (6-6) vs. Georgia St. (7-5), 2:30 p.m. (ESPN)

Monday, Dec. 27

Quick Lane Bowl
Detroit
Nevada (8-4) vs. W. Michigan (7-5), 11 a.m. (ESPN)

Military Bowl
Annapolis, Md.
Boston College (6-6) vs. East Carolina (7-5), 2:30 p.m. (ESPN)

Tuesday, Dec. 28

Birmingham Bowl
Birmingham, Ala.
No. 21 Houston (11-2) vs. Auburn (6-6), Noon (ESPN)

SERVPRO First Responder Bowl
Dallas
Air Force (9-3) vs. Louisville (6-6), 3:15 p.m. (ESPN)

Liberty Bowl
Memphis, Tenn.
Mississippi St. (7-5) vs. Texas Tech (6-6), 6:45 p.m. (ESPN)

Holiday Bowl
San Diego
UCLA (8-4) vs. No. 18 NC State (9-3), 8 p.m. (FOX)

Guaranteed Rate Bowl
Phoenix
Minnesota (8-4) vs. West Virginia (6-6), 10:15 p.m. (ESPN)

NFL

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

East

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
New England	9	5	0	.643	367	227
Buffalo	8	6	0	.571	394	243
Miami	7	7	0	.500	285	312
e-N.Y. Jets	3	11	0	.214	250	428

South

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Tennessee	9	5	0	.643	337	309
Indianapolis	8	6	0	.571	398	300
e-Houston	3	11	0	.214	207	372
e-Jacksonville	2	12	0	.143	196	370

North

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Baltimore	8	6	0	.571	334	315
Cincinnati	8	6	0	.571	369	303
Pittsburgh	7	6	1	.536	291	335
Cleveland	7	7	0	.500	292	305

West

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Kansas City	10	4	0	.714	385	296
L.A. Chargers	8	6	0	.571	379	370
Denver	7	7	0	.500	285	243
Las Vegas	7	7	0	.500	299	374

FLORIDA LOTTERY

Thursday's winning numbers

Cash4Life
14-19-30-31-43, Cash Ball: 3

Mega Millions jackpot
$187 million

Pick 2 Evening
1-2, Fireball: 0

Pick 2 Midday
0-0, Fireball: 0

Pick 3 Evening
5-9-2, Fireball: 0

Pick 3 Midday
1-2-1, Fireball: 0

Pick 4 Evening
0-2-7-5, Fireball: 0

Pick 4 Midday
5-7-2-7, Fireball: 0

Pick 5 Evening
8-6-1-0-2, Fireball: 0

Pick 5 Midday
5-3-4-3-8, Fireball: 0

Powerball jackpot
$400 million

ON THE AIRWAVES

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

6 a.m. (ACCN): Missouri at Boston College (Taped)
6 a.m. (ESPNU): Famous Idaho Potato Bowl – Kent State vs Wyoming (Taped)
9 p.m. (ACCN): Syracuse at Florida State (Taped)
9 p.m. (ESPNU): Lockheed Martin Armed Forces Bowl – Missouri vs Army (Taped)
2 a.m. (ESPN2): Frisco Football Classic – North Texas vs Miami (Ohio) (Taped)

POP WARNER FOOTBALL

7 p.m. (FS1): 2021 Pop Warner Super Bowl: Teams TBA (Same-day Tape)

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

East

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Dallas	10	4	0	.714	401	293
Phila.	7	7	0	.500	364	308
Washington	6	8	0	.429	283	351
N.Y. Giants	4	10	0	.286	238	331

South

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Tampa Bay	10	4	0	.714	410	306
New Orleans	7	7	0	.500	313	285
Atlanta	6	8	0	.429	258	384
Carolina	5	9	0	.357	271	313

North

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
y-Green Bay	11	3	0	.786	359	302
Minnesota	7	7	0	.500	361	342
e-Chicago	4	10	0	.286	240	349
e-Detroit	2	11	1	.179	243	366

West

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Arizona	10	4	0	.714	378	284
L.A. Rams	10	4	0	.714	386	303
San Francisco	8	6	0	.571	360	314
Seattle	5	9	0	.357	282	282

e-Eliminated from playoffs
y-clinched division

Thursday's Game

San Francisco at Tennessee

Saturday's Games

Cleveland at Green Bay, 4:30 p.m.
Indianapolis at Arizona, 8:15 p.m.

Sunday's Games

Baltimore at Cincinnati, 1 p.m.
Buffalo at New England, 1 p.m.
Detroit at Atlanta, 1 p.m.
Jacksonville at N.Y. Jets, 1 p.m.
L.A. Chargers at Houston, 1 p.m.
L.A. Rams at Minnesota, 1 p.m.
N.Y. Giants at Phila., 1 p.m.
Tampa Bay at Carolina, 1 p.m.
Chicago at Seattle, 4:05 p.m.
Denver at Las Vegas, 4:25 p.m.
Pittsburgh at Kansas City, 4:25 p.m.
Washington at Dallas, 8:20 p.m.

Monday's Game

Miami at New Orleans, 8:15 p.m.

NFL playoff scenarios entering Week 16

AFC

CLINCHED: None

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS (10-4) vs. Pittsburgh (7-6-1)

Kansas City clinches AFC West with:
1. KC win + LAC loss or tie OR
2. KC tie + LAC loss

Kansas City clinches playoff berth with:
1. KC win OR
2. KC tie + BUF loss OR
3. KC tie + IND loss OR
4. KC tie + CIN-BAL does not end in a tie

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS (9-5) vs. Buffalo (8-6)

New England clinches AFC East with:
1. NE win + MIA loss or tie

New England clinches playoff berth with:
1. NE win + LV loss or tie + LAC loss OR
2. NE win + IND loss or tie + CIN loss OR
3. NE win + IND loss or tie + BAL loss + PIT loss or tie OR
4. NE win + IND loss or tie + LAC loss OR
5. NE win + BAL loss + CLE loss or tie + PIT loss or tie

TENNESSEE TITANS (9-5) vs. San Francisco (8-6), Thursday night

Tennessee clinches AFC South with:
1. TEN win + IND loss

Tennessee clinches playoff berth with:
1. TEN win + MIA loss or tie + BUF loss + DEN loss or tie + CLE loss or tie + PIT loss OR
2. TEN win + MIA loss or tie + BUF loss + DEN loss or tie + CLE loss or tie + BAL loss or tie

NOTE: There are other scenarios in which Tennessee can clinch a playoff berth that involve a Titans win, a Dolphins loss or tie, a Bills loss and a combination of other teams losing and various strength-of-victory clinchings.

NFC

CLINCHED: Green Bay Packers – NFC North title

ARIZONA CARDINALS (10-4) vs. Indianapolis (8-6), Saturday night

Arizona clinches playoff berth with:
1. ARI win or tie OR
2. PHI loss or tie + SF loss OR
3. PHI loss or tie + MIN loss or tie OR
4. PHI loss or tie + NO loss or tie OR
5. MIN loss or tie + SF loss OR
6. MIN loss or tie + NO loss or tie OR
7. NO loss or tie + SF loss

DALLAS COWBOYS (10-4) vs. Washington (6-8)

Dallas clinches NFC East with:
1. DAL win or tie OR
2. PHI loss or tie OR
3. DAL clinches at least a tie in strength-of-victory tiebreaker over PHI

Dallas clinches playoff berth with:
1. NO loss or tie OR
2. SF loss OR
3. TB win or tie

LOS ANGELES RAMS (10-4) at Minnesota (7-7)

Los Angeles Rams clinch playoff berth with:
1. LAR win or tie OR
2. PHI loss or tie + NO loss or tie

TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS (10-4) at Carolina (5-9)

Tampa Bay clinches NFC South with:
1. TB win or tie OR
2. NO loss or tie

Tampa Bay clinches playoff berth with:
1. MIN loss or tie + PHI loss or tie OR
2. MIN loss or tie + DAL win or tie OR
3. MIN loss or tie + DAL clinches at least a tie in strength-of-victory tiebreaker over PHI

TRANSACTIONS

BASKETBALL

National Basketball Association

ATLANTA HAWKS — Signed G Wes Iwundu to a 10-day contract.
CHICAGO BULLS — Signed F Ersan Ilyasova and G Mac McClung to 10-day contracts.
DALLAS MAVERICKS — Signed Gs Charlie Brown Jr. and Brandon Knight to 10-day contracts.
DETROIT PISTONS — Signed F Cheick Diallo to a 10-day contract.
GOLDEN STATE WARRIORS — Signed G Quinndary Weatherspoon to a 10-day contract.
MILWAUKEE BUCKS — Signed C Javin DeLaurier to a 10-day contract.
NEW YORK KNICKS — Signed F Danuel House Jr. to a 10-day contract.

FOOTBALL

National Football League

ARIZONA CARDINALS — Signed P Ryan Winslow and TE David Wells to the practice squad.
ATLANTA FALCONS — Placed DL Marlon Davidson on the reserve/COVID-19 list.
BALTIMORE RAVENS — Placed TE Josh Oliver and QB Chris Streveler on the reserve/COVID-19 list. Signed OT Adrian Ealy to the practice squad.
BUFFALO BILLS — Activated LB Tyrel Dodson from the reserve/COVID-19 list.
CAROLINA PANTHERS — Placed C Pat Elflein, OL Dennis Daley on the reserve/COVID-19 list. Placed DE Austin Larkin on the practice squad reserve/COVID-19 list.
CHICAGO BEARS — Activated QB Andy Dalton and DE Mario Edwards Jr. from the reserve/COVID-19 list. Promoted LB Sam Kamara from the practice squad to the active roster. Signed OLB Ledarius Mack to the practice squad. Placed DT Akiem Hicks on the reserve/COVID-19 list.
CLEVELAND BROWNS — Activated S Grant Delpit and T James Hudson III from the reserve/COVID-19 list. Placed C J.C. Tretter on the reserve/COVID-19 list.
DALLAS COWBOYS — Placed S Malik Hooker and RB JaQuan Hardy on the reserve/COVID-19 list. Activated DT Osa Odighizuwa from the reserve/COVID-19 list.
DENVER BRONCOS — Placed C Lloyd Cushenberry on the reserve/COVID-19 list. Signed RB Damarea Crockett to the practice squad. Placed OT Drew Himmelman on the practice squad reserve/COVID-19 list. Released LB Avery Williamson from the practice squad.
DETROIT LIONS — Activated CBs Corey Ballentine and Nickell Robey-Coleman from the practice squad reserve/COVID-19 list. Placed WR Trinity Benson on the reserve/COVID-19 list.
GREEN BAY PACKERS — Activated DT Kenny Clark from the reserve/COVID-19 list.
HOUSTON TEXANS — Signed K Dominik Eberle to the practice squad. Signed DL Chris Smith and DB Grayland Arnold to the active roster. Designated DL DeMarcus Walker and WR Danny Amendola to return from injured reserve to practice. Placed DLs Roy Lopez, Jordan Jenkins, DBs Lonnie Johnson Jr., Eric Murray, OLs Justin Britt and Tytus Howard on the reserve/COVID-19 list. Activated RB Jaylen Samuels from the practice squad reserve/COVID-19 list.
INDIANAPOLIS COLTS — Placed G Mark Glowinski on the reserve/COVID-19 list.
KANSAS CITY CHIEFS — Activated DT Chris Jones from the reserve/COVID-19 list. Placed CB Chavarius Ward on the reserve/COVID-19 lsit. Signed P Johnny Townsend to the practice squad.
LAS VEGAS RAIDERS — Placed OL Jermaine Eluemunor and S Roderic Teamer on the reserve/COVID-19 list. Signed DB Tony Brown to the practice squad. Released TE Matt Bushman from the practice squad.
LOS ANGELES RAMS — Activated DBs Antoine Brooks, JuJu Hughes, TE Johnny Mundt and DB Jake Gervase from the reserve/COVID-19 list. Designated RB Cam Akers to return from injured reserve to practice.
MIAMI DOLPHINS — Placed TE Cethan Carter, OL Greg Mancz and LB Duke Riley on the reserve/COVID-19 list.
MINNESOTA VIKINGS — Placed RB Dalvin Cook on the reserve/COVID-19 list. Placed CB Tye Smith on the practice squad reserve/COVID-19 list. Activated WR Dan Chisena from the reserve/COVID-19 list. Activated G Kyle Hinton from the practice squad reserve/COVID-19 list. Signed RB A.J. Rose Jr. to the practice squad.
NEW ORLEANS SAINTS — Placed QBs Taysom Hill, Trevor Siemian, Ss Malcolm Jenkins, Jeff Heath, OLs Jordan Mills, James Carpenter, DT Christian Ringo, DE Jalyn Holmes and LB Kaden Elliss on the reserve/COVID-19 list.
NEW YORK GIANTS — Activated WR Kadarius Toney, OLB Oshane Ximines and S J.R. Reed from the reserve/COVID-19 list. Signed CB Darqueze to the practice squad. Promoted WR Pharoh Cooper from the practice squad to the active roster. Activated OL Jonotthan Harrison from the practice squad reserve/COVID-19 list.
NEW YORK JETS — Signed S Kai Nacua. Placed QB Joe Flacco and G Laurent Duvernay-Tardiff on the reserve/COVID-19 list.
PHILADEPHIA EAGLES — Placed DE Ryan Kerrigan on the reserve/COVID-19 list. Signed OT Casey Tucker to the practice squad. Promoted DE Cameron Malveaux from the practice squad to the active roster.
PITTSBURGH STEELERS — Placed DL Isaiah Buggs and RB Anthony McFarland on the reserve/COVID-19 list.
SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS — Signed RB Brian Hill and S Jarrod Wilson to the active roster. Promoted LB Curtis Robinson from the practice squad to the active roster.
SEATTLE SEAHAWKS — Activated WR Tyler Lockett from the reserve/COVID-19 list. Designated OT Jamarco Jones to return from injured reserve to practice. Signed LB Lakiem Williams to the practice squad.
TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS — Placed RB Leonard Fournette and LB Lavonte David on injured reserve. Placed WR Jaelon Darden and DL Rakeem Nunez-Roches on the reserve.COVID-19 list.
TENNESSEE TITANS — Activated WR. A.J. Brown and DB Chris Jackson from injured reserve. Placed OL Kendall Lamm on the reserve/COVID-19 list. Promoted OLs Christian DiLauro, Daniel Munyer and DL Kevin Strong from the practice squad to the active roster.
WASHINGTON FOOTBALL TEAM — Released QB Jordan Ta'amu from the practice squad. Activated S Darrick Forrest, QB Taylor Heinicke, LB David Mayo and TE Temarrick Hemingway from the reserve/COVID-19 list. Placed G Zack Bailey on the reserve/COVID-19 list. Designated K Joey Slye to return from injured reserve to practice.

HOCKEY

National Hockey League

NEW YORK RANGERS — Signed G Dylan Garand to a three-year, entry-level contract. Recalled D Jarred Tinordi from Hartford (AHL).
PHILADELPHIA FLYERS — Reassigned G Kirill Ustimenko from Lehigh Valley (AHL) to Reading (ECHL).

American Hockey League

GRAND RAPIDS GRIFFINS — Released C Josh Dickinson and D Gordi Myer from player try-out contracts (PTO). Returned F Max Humitz to Kalamazoo (ECHL).
HERSHEY BEARS — Assigned G Ryan Bednard to South Carolina (ECHL).
MILWAUKEE ADMIRALS — Returned D Jake McLaughlin and F Robert Carpenter to Florida (ECHL).

East Coast Hockey League

ATLANTA GLADIATORS — Placed D Tim Davison on commissioner's exempt list.
GREENVILLE SWAMP RABBITS — Claimed F Mike Gornall from Reading. Signed D Jake Cass.
MAINE MARINERS — Claimed F Maxime St-Cyr from Trois-Rivieres. Signed F Metis Roelens. Placed G Dallum Booth, Ds Andrew Peski and Connor Doherty on commissioner's exempt list. Suspended D Philippe Bureau-Blais.



Phelan M. Ebenhack / AP

New Orleans guard Tomas Satoransky (31) steals a ball from Orlando forward Admiral Schofield during the second half of Thursday's game.

Ingram, Hart lead Pelicans past Magic for 4th straight win

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ORLANDO, Fla. — Brandon Ingram scored 31 points, Josh Hart hit two clutch 3-pointers in the second half to thwart an Orlando rally, and the New Orleans Pelicans beat the Magic 110-104 on Thursday night.

The Pelicans have won four straight and five of six. New Orleans started the season 1-12 but is 11-9 since.

"What it really says is how much they trust in each other and trust in the coaching staff," Pelicans coach Willie Green said. "They just trust what we're doing and we take that seriously. We come in with a consistent message – win, lose or draw – that this is how we're going to play. The guys are buying into that."

Hart scored 22 points and hit two straight 3s after Orlando had climbed within 93-90 with 5 minutes remaining. Devonte Graham added 20 points and five 3-pointers for the Pelicans, who improved to 6-12 on the road. Ingram hit 12 of 23 shots and topped 30 points for the fifth time this season.

"Thank God we got the lead to 20 early because they just kept chipping away and getting stops," said Graham, whose final 3-pointer came after Orlando got within 99-97. "But (Ingram) does what (Ingram) does and Josh was making big plays and hitting shots and everybody off the bench was contributing."

Cole Anthony returned after missing three games with a sprained ankle to score 22 points for the Magic, who also got 22 points from Gary Harris. Franz Wagner scored 20 points and Wendell Carter Jr., who had missed the previous two games with a right leg strain, had 17 points and 12 rebounds.

Orlando's only lead of the night came at 2-0. New Orleans led by 12 at halftime, and Ingram scored the Pelicans' first 12 points of the second half to extend the advantage to 65-45.

Later, Ingram made the Magic pay for trapping him by finding Hart and Graham for open 3s.

"They started to blitz Brandon and he did a good job of getting off the ball and making the simple play," Green said. "Our shooters knocked down some big shots for us."

Orlando got within 83-78 by the start of the fourth quarter thanks to a 31-14 burst.

"Ingram came out hot early and we made our adjustments to get it out of his hands, and that got us turned up a little bit," Orlando coach Jamahl Mosley said. "What we were trying to avoid (was) giving up the 3s. But that's what happens sometimes with the traps."

Hawks 98, 76ers 96

PHILADELPHIA – Bogdan Bogdanovic scored 10 of his 15 points in the final 3:44, helping short-handed Atlanta beat Philadelphia.

The Sixers had the ball with 5.4 seconds left, and Joel Embiid missed a potential tying shot at the horn.

The Hawks were without seven players because of health and safety protocols, lost two more during the game to injury, but stuck with the Sixers, who were 9-1 favorites to FanDuel Sportsbook.

Cam Reddish scored 18 points and John Collins had 17 for the Hawks.

Embiid had 23 points and 10 rebounds.

Pacers 118, Rockets 106

INDIANAPOLIS – Myles Turner had 32 points and 10 rebounds, Caris LeVert added 24 points and 11 assists and Indiana beat Houston,

Turner made 14 of 18 shots as the Pacers hit 52.8 percent from the field. Indiana played without starters Malcolm Brogdon (sore right Achilles tendon) and Domantas Sabonis (sore right calf).

Christian Wood scored 22 points for Houston.

Nets plan to play Christmas; NBA, union evaluating protocols

By BRIAN MAHONEY
AP Basketball Writer

NEW YORK — The Brooklyn Nets have enough players to fly to Los Angeles and play their Christmas showdown against the Lakers, though Kevin Durant might not be among them.

But news worsened for many other teams in the league Thursday, including Minnesota, which placed Karl-Anthony Towns – who previously revealed that COVID-19 caused the death of seven of his relatives, including his mother – on the health and safety protocols list. Towns also missed time last season because of a positive test.

"Can't catch a ... break," Towns wrote on Twitter.

Meanwhile, a person with direct knowledge of the matter said the NBA and the National Basketball Players Association are continuing discussions on whether to change the current protocols about returning to play after a positive test – something that typically has taken 10 days or more in most cases. The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because nothing had been finalized.

Brooklyn coach Steve Nash said Thursday that James Harden has cleared the protocols, but he said the Nets don't expect any of their players still in the protocols to come out in time for the game. That would include Durant, the NBA's leading scorer.

Brooklyn planning to play on Saturday was a positive sign, as was Chicago coach Billy Donovan announcing after practice Thursday that the Bulls no longer have any players on the protocols list. The Bulls had as many as 10 on that list last week, when the league postponed two of their games as a result.

But the numbers continued rising around the league, with 101 players in the protocols as of Thursday night. The Timberwolves now have seven in the protocols.

"He's in the best spirits possible," Minnesota coach Chris Finch said of Towns. "It's unfortunate, obviously. It happened right before the holidays, too, so it'll affect the next couple days for everybody being around him. But he was in the best spirits possible."

Washington's Bradley Beal was another big name added to the protocols list on Thursday. Beal, who missed out on the chance to play in the Olympics last year after testing positive, said before this season he was unvaccinated.

Others remaining on the list included Giannis Antetokounmpo, Luka Doncic and Trae Young. All three were scheduled to be part of the NBA's five-game Christmas schedule.

And Detroit said on Thursday it had added four players to the protocols, where they joined rookie Cade Cunningham, the team's leading scorer.

The Nets have had their last three scheduled games postponed – among the NBA's nine postponements thus far – after a coronavirus outbreak left them with a league-high 10 players in protocols. Nash said Harden, Paul Millsap and Jevon Carter had also cleared protocols, though rookies Cam Thomas, Kessler Edwards and David Duke Jr. had since entered.

Teams need a minimum of eight players to start a game. Nash said the Nets have more than enough.

But it's unclear if they will have another practice before the game Saturday. Nash said it's only in the last day that healthy players have been able to return for individual workouts.

"It's tricky," Nash said. "We haven't been able to do a lot, but we do what we can and we'll continue to just adapt as the rules and mandates come in."

It is important to note that players can enter and exit the health and safety protocols list quickly in some cases, some teams do not release updated numbers except when mandated by league rule, and not everyone on the list has tested positive for COVID-19.

Also important: NBA Commissioner Adam Silver said earlier this week in an interview with ESPN that positive-testing players who have received booster shots tend to show, at worst, very mild symptoms. The league says 97 percent of players are fully vaccinated; the NBPA says 65 percent are boosted, and it is a top priority of the union to get that number much higher.

Durant was placed in protocols last Saturday along with Kyrie Irving, a day after the Nets said they were bringing the unvaccinated point guard back to play in road games. There's still time for Irving to return two negative tests 24 hours apart to be cleared, though Nash said the Nets weren't expecting that.

With the Lakers' Anthony Davis already sidelined with a sprained left knee, Durant's absence would remove another superstar from what was expected to be one of the marquee games of the regular season when it was scheduled.

Can Pro Picks get a mulligan for Week 16?

By BARRY WILNER
AP Pro Football Writer

A mulligan is a golf term, of course. Pro Picks would like to apply it to the NFL.

We'd like the opportunity for a do-over on any of the choices this week – made before any games have been played – that get messed up because of more pandemic-related issues. Some of our selections in Week 15 fell into that category, with rosters severely depleted by COVID-19 after the picks were in.

We have a deal?

KNOCKOUT POOL: The Dolphins came through against the Jets, who we actually considered picking this week. Then we woke up and chose PHILADELPHIA.

No. 11 Los Angeles Chargers (minus 9 1/2) at No. 31 Houston

The Chargers are in the midst of a playoff push that likely will succeed.

BEST BET: CHARGERS, 30-13

No. 8 Indianapolis (plus 1 1/2) at No. 7 Arizona, Saturday

Indy is playing well and has balance. The Cardinals haven't displayed much lately.

UPSET SPECIAL: COLTS, 20-17

No. 19 Cleveland (plus 7) at No. 1 Green Bay, Saturday

We also considered this for Best Bet but weather in December at Lambeau Field is tricky.

PACKERS, 27-16

No. 10 Buffalo (plus 2 1/2) at No. 6 New England

The Bills could creep back into the AFC East race and bring Miami with them. But ... PATRIOTS, 22-15

No. 17 Miami (plus 3 1/2) at No. 18 New Orleans, Monday

Whoever wins this one will be in nice shape for a wild-card challenge.

DOLPHINS, 17-16

No. 22 Denver (plus 1 1/2) at No. 21 Las Vegas

Whoever wins this one will be in nice shape for a wild-card challenge.

RAIDERS, 23-20

No. 14 Baltimore (plus 2 1/2) at No. 13 Cincinnati

Pro Picks can't believe it has come to this in the AFC North.

BENGALS, 21-20

No. 15 Pittsburgh (plus 7 1/2) at No. 2 Kansas City

Of course, the Steelers could have a say in the AFC North. Or maybe not.

CHIEFS, 27-16

No. 4 Los Angeles Rams (minus 3) at No. 16 Minnesota

The Vikings probably need to win this to remain viable for a wild-card berth. Nope.

RAMS, 31-26

No. 3 Tampa Bay (minus 11) at No. 26 Carolina

Considering how undermanned the Bucs are heading into this, betting line might be too high.

BUCCANEERS, 23-14

No. 20 New York Giants (plus 10) at No. 28 Philadelphia

Considering how undermanned the Giants are heading into this, betting line might be too low.

EAGLES, 30-13

No. 23 Washington (plus 10 1/2) at No. 5 Dallas

This line seems about right, particularly if Washington can get back some pieces.

COWBOYS, 20-10

No. 27 Chicago (plus 6) at No. 25 Seattle

Rookie Justin Fields would like to someday be compared to vintage Russell Wilson.

SEAHAWKS, 19-15

No. 29 Detroit (plus 6) at No. 24 Atlanta

The Lions already have blown the first overall draft spot.

FALCONS, 22-17

No. 32 Jacksonville (plus 1) at No. 30 New York Jets

Even with their lack of talent and COVID-19 concerns, the Jets are better.

J-E-T-S, 21-15

2021 RECORD

Last Week: Straight up: 11-5. Against spread: 8-8.

Season: Straight up: 145-78-1. Against spread: 125-96-2.

Best Bet: Straight up: 9-5-1. Against spread: 10-5.

Upset Special: Straight up: 12-2. Against spread: 12-2.



Seth Wenig / AP

Cleveland center JC Tretter (64) talks to teammates during the first half of a Dec. 20 game. Tretter, the NFL Players Association president who has been pushing for daily COVID-19 testing all season, said he tested positive for the virus on Thursday.

Browns' C Tretter, Saints QBs test positive for COVID-19

By TOM WITHERS
Associated Press

Both Saints veteran quarterbacks, Taysom Hill and Trevor Siemian, Minnesota star running back Dalvin Cook and Cleveland center JC Tretter, the NFL Players Association president, tested positive for COVID-19 on Thursday.

But Washington is getting back quarterback Taylor Heinicke.

Hill and Siemian were among nine players for New Orleans placed on the reserve/COVID-19 list. The others include such key players as safety Malcolm Jenkins and tackle Jordan Mills, who is expected to start Monday night against Miami.

The situation left Ian Book, a rookie out of Notre Dame who has been inactive for all 14 games, as the only active quarterback under contract. It appears Book is in line for his maiden NFL regular-season appearance. Running back Alvin Kamara has been the Saints' emergency quarterback for several seasons and conceivably could take direct snaps as a wildcat threat.

The latest COVID-19 hit to the Saints came as New Orleans awaits the return of coach Sean Payton, who did not travel to Tampa Bay for the Saints' victory has worked from home since testing positive for COVID-19 last Thursday. Saints defensive coordinator Dennis Allen has been serving as acting head coach.

Also placed on the COVID-19 list: guard James Carpenter, linebacker Kaden Elliss, safety Jeff Heath, defensive end Jalyn Holmes, and defensive tackle Christian Ringo.

Tretter posted on Twitter that he was experiencing symptoms and chose to be tested at the team's facility in Berea, Ohio.

"Unfortunately, I am positive for COVID-19," Tretter wrote. "I encourage all NFL players to take every precaution available to them to protect themselves, their families and their teammates from this virus."

The Browns have been hit hard by a spate of positive tests in the past week and were missing 22 players, including Baker Mayfield as well as coach Kevin Stefanski, for Monday night's rescheduled game against Las Vegas, which Cleveland lost.

■ Washington's Heinicke was activated off the COVID-19 list and was back at practice running the offense. Heinicke is expected to start Sunday night at the Dallas Cowboys after missing the game at Philadelphia while in virus protocol along with backup Kyle Allen.

Practice squad tight end Temarrick Hemingway also came off the list. Linebacker Cole Holcomb went into protocol Wednesday, and Washington is preparing to play without him.

■ Tampa Bay, already struck by injuries as well as the coronavirus, put wide receiver Jaelon Darden and defensive lineman Rakeem Nuñez-Roches on the COVID-19 list. The Buccaneers also placed linebacker Lavonte David and running back Leonard Fournette on the injured reserve.

Record 27 teams remain in playoff hunt with 3 weeks to go

By JOSH DUBOW
AP Pro Football Writer

While no team has clinched a postseason spot in the jam-packed AFC, there never have been more teams alive in the playoff hunt this late in a season.

Only Chicago, Detroit, Jacksonville, Houston and the New York Jets have been eliminated so far, with 27 teams still with at least a sliver of a postseason chance, tied for the most ever with three weeks left in the season.

The only other times that has happened came in 2004, 1995 and in 1982, when 16 teams made the playoffs in a strike-shortened, nine-game season.

The only team that has clinched a spot is the Green Bay Packers, who have won the NFC North after beating Baltimore on Sunday.

No team has clinched in the AFC, marking just the sixth time since the eight-division format started in 2002 that no team in a conference had clinched a playoff berth with three weeks left in the season.

It last happened in the AFC in 2016. It also happened in the AFC in 2002, the NFC in 2010 and both conferences in 2014.

Fourth down gambles

The two successful fourth-down conversions this week by the Chargers gave the NFL 301 on the season, topping the 300 from 2018 for the second-most in a season, behind the record 362 last year.

There were 20 more in Week 15, leaving the league on pace to break last year's mark.

But the failed chances for the Chargers this week in the overtime loss to Kansas City got much more publicity.

The Chargers got stopped on fourth-and-goal twice in the first half, becoming the first team to do that since the Chargers did it 37 years to the day on Dec. 16, 1984, against Kansas City, according to the Elias Sports Bureau.

The Chiefs were stopped on a fourth down from inside the 5, marking the first time since at least 2000 that teams combined to fail on at least three fourth downs from the 5 or closer, according to Sportradar.

But while the failed fourth downs proved costly this past week, the Chargers have been successful on them plenty this season, tying for the league high with 15 conversions. They have gone for it on fourth down on 17 drives in field-goal range and scored 51 points on those possessions.

The Chargers weren't the only team struggling on fourth downs near the goal line.

The Falcons were stopped three times inside the 10, the first time in the last 40 years that has happened, according to Elias.

Rare blankings

Tom Brady had a rare shutout loss this week with a 9-0 defeat to the New Orleans Saints, marking the first time his team had been held scoreless since Dec. 10, 2006, at Miami.

Brady had gone 255 straight starts in the regular season and playoffs without being shut out, the second-longest streak ever for a QB behind Drew Brees, who was never shut out in 304 career starts.

It also was the first time in Brady's career that he was shut out at home.

Pittsburgh's Ben Roethlisberger has the longest active streak without being shut out for any current QB, with the Steelers scoring in his last 225 games in the regular season and playoffs.

Brady's old team, the Patriots, were held scoreless in the first half in their loss to Indianapolis for the first time since Oct. 2, 2016, against Buffalo, when Jacoby Brissett started in the final game of Brady's suspension for "Deflategate."

New England had gone 99 straight games in the regular season and playoffs without being shut out in the first half, the longest streak in the NFL since at least 1991.

The Patriots also held the previous record of 82 straight games from 2006-11.

Touchdown Taylor

Jonathan Taylor of the Colts capped off another big performance with a game-sealing 67-yard TD run against New England that gave him a TD run in the 11th straight game.

Taylor is now tied with Priest Holmes (2002) and Emmitt Smith (1995) for the third-longest streak in a season in NFL history. Only John Riggins (12 in 1983) and LaDainian Tomlinson (12 in 2004) have had longer streaks in a season. Tomlinson's streak, which started in 2004 and carried over until the next season, went 18 games, the longest ever.

Taylor has scored 31 career TDs before his 23rd birthday on Jan. 19, with Edgerrin James (35) the only player with more before turning 23.

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CITRUS COUNTY CHRONICLE

On the Town

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Good Times

Traveling exhibit: 'Apron Strings: Ties to the Past'

The Old Courthouse Heritage Museum's latest free traveling exhibit, "Apron Strings: Ties to the Past," is open to the public from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday through Jan. 7, 1 Courthouse Square in Inverness.

The exhibit explores the people behind the aprons and is more about life than fabric. It will reevaluate these unique objects as an important piece of social history.

Featuring 50 vintage and contemporary examples, dating from the 1900s, this exhibit reviews the apron's role as an emotionally charged vehicle for expression with a rich craft history that is still relevant today.

The exhibition chronicles changing attitudes toward women and domestic work. It also surveys the wide range of design techniques apron-makers have used to express themselves.

Today, artists continue using aprons to explore cultural myths, realities and their individual experiences with American domesticity. Though not as widespread today, aprons remain as functional and protective garments for men and women alike.

If you have an apron to share, you are invited to participate in the museum's first Lunch and Learn speaker program from noon to 1:30 p.m. with presenters Marnie Ward and Sue Collins from the UF/IFAS Extension.

Both are gifted seamstresses and will share aprons from their personal collections.

For more information, call 352-341-6428.

Kick of the New Year with a hike

Get your New Year off to a great start by taking a first day hike at 8 a.m. Jan. 1 at Crystal River Preserve State Park, 3266 N. Sailboat Ave.

Group hikes are led by state park volunteers and begin at the 7-mile loop trailhead. Hikers will choose between a 2-mile out and back hike or the full 7-mile loop.

Hikers will cross over tidal creeks, hike alongside salt marshes and walk through pine flatwoods. Those on the long hike will travel through an oak hammock.

Hikes are free and open to the public with no pre-registration necessary.

Donations will be used to sustain future interpretive park programs.

Participants should wear sturdy, close-toed shoes, dress for the weather, bring a snack, water and bug spray.

Those doing the 7-mile trek should bring two containers of water, as there is no water available on the trail.

Children must be accompanied by an adult.

See **GOOD**, page C2

'Who Said I'm Dead?' George Carlin Tribute Show on stage

By HARVEY HAMERLING
Special to the Chronicle

The late, great George Carlin is coming back!

Joe Beddia, a talented comedian and entertainer, presents "Who Said I'm Dead?" George Carlin Tribute Show as part of a "Night of Comedy."

The show takes place on Saturday, Feb. 12, 2022, at Kellner Auditorium, 92 Civic Circle, Beverly Hills. The show starts at 7:30 p.m. Cost is $20 per person.

Carlin was one of the greatest comedians of his time. Beddia gives a lookalike, soundalike, word-for-word shotgun delivery of Carlin Classics from the 1990s. You will believe George Carlin is really back.

This show won awards for best comedy tribute show in Las Vegas and Orlando. Beddia has performed this and other comedy shows in Citrus Hills, The Villages and other areas in Central Florida.

Guest emcee and opening act will be Harvey Hamerling, who has appeared at comedy shows in New Jersey, Connecticut and Florida.

Please note that this show is R-rated for adult humor and language.

At a time when there is a need for laughter, please join us for this night of comedy. Light refreshments included.

Masks are suggested at this time per current CDC guidelines. There will be separation between seats and sanitizer will be available. COVID guidelines are subject to change.

Tickets are on sale now. For information in advance, email Barbara at barb4949@gmail.com.

To make reservations, call Barbara at 352-513-5169 or send an email.



Joe Beddia, a talented comedian and entertainer, presents "Who Said I'm Dead?" George Carlin Tribute Show as part of a "Night of Comedy," Saturday, Feb. 12, 2022, at Kellner Auditorium, 92 Civic Circle, Beverly Hills.
Special to the Chronicle

Familiar holiday sound



Claire Phillips Laxton / For the Chronicle

Bell ringers Jackie Smith, left, and Cynthia Childs, both longtime members of the Crystal River Kings Bay Lions Club and good friends, have rung the bells in front of Publix in Crystal River for the Salvation Army for the past 20 years while interacting with the public. Joseph Hoehman of Crystal River just finished putting money In the pot.

Pair of Lions volunteers ring bell for Salvation Army for 20 years

By CLAIRE PHILLIPS LAXTON
For the Chronicle

"It's wonderful to see how excited little children are as their mothers allow them to drop money in the kettle pot."

CYNTHIA CHILDS
Crystal River Kings Bay Lion and bell ringer for Citrus County Salvation Army Corps

Jackie Smith and Cynthia Childs are good buddies and have been ringing bells and interacting with the public for the Citrus County Salvation Army Corps at Publix in Crystal River for the past 20 years.

They both are longtime members of the Crystal River Kings Bay Lions Club. Lion Ruth Levins coordinates different Lions members to take turns ringing the bells during the Christmas season.

Smith and Childs engage the public more than just saying "Merry Christmas" and over the years they have heard some endearing stories from customers who put money into the "Red Kettle Pot."

"Cynthia is a riot, she keeps me laughing and I never know what she is going to say," said Smith.

"It's wonderful to see how excited little children are as their mothers allow them to drop money in the kettle pot," she said.

Out of the mouths of babes: "One time, a child about 8 or 9 asked us, 'Do you get to keep all the money?'" Cynthia Childs remembered with a laugh.

On a heartwarming note, Childs said, "a 16-year-old came up last year, reached in his pocket, and dropped 60 cents into the pot. Then, he said 'that's all I have, I don't know where I will eat or sleep tonight,'" she recalled. He was homeless.

They remembered an elderly man who came up to them and put a $20 bill in the kettle. Then he went inside Publix to do his shopping. He came out, went to his car and put his groceries away, then came back and put another $10 in the pot, to their delight.

At times, they have to keep pushing the money down inside the red kettle as it was filling up.

As one gentleman came up to them, Childs asked him if he had been good this year. His reply was, "No, I haven't been good." And they all had a good laugh.

"Cynthia makes me laugh all the time and has such a great imagination," said Smith.

The Salvation Army Citrus County Corps based in Lecanto helps those in need. They are part of the international Salvation Army.

The Salvation Army is a nonprofit organization that has a food pantry, offers social services assistance, holiday assistance, disaster service, emergency financial assistance, has worship services, do Angel Trees, and more.

They are on Facebook, Instagram and the internet.

All volunteers who do the bell ringing wear red aprons while they volunteer and stand by the big red kettle pot.

Childs and Smith continue to volunteer ringing the bells and collecting donations for the Salvation Army.

They both enjoy socializing with the public and giving back, especially at this time of the year.



Billy Lindsey of Tampa will perform for the Citrus Hills Women's Club fundraiser on Feb. 5, 2022.
Special to the Chronicle

Enjoy 'Blue Hawaii' at Elvis tribute coming in February

Women's club event raises funds for scholarships, charities

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

On Saturday, Feb. 5, 2022, the Citrus Hills Women's Club will host a fundraiser for scholarships for local students and donations to local charities at Citrus Hills Golf and Country Club.

The event, "Blue Hawaii" – A Night with Elvis, features Tampa's popular Billy Lindsey as Elvis. The fun starts at 6 p.m. with dinner and dinner music by Lindsey, followed by dancing, a hula contest and "Elvis" performing throughout the evening.

The price is $55 per person with a choice of dinner entrees of either filet mignon, broiled salmon or Chicken Christopher, complemented by a tossed salad, potatoes au gratin, glazed baby carrots, pineapple upside down cake, coffee or tea. Tables of eight are being offered, or sign up as an individual, couple, etc. and you will be seated with others.

For a donation to the club's Scholarship/Charities Fund, participants may win a basket, cash or even an auction item.

It's a Hawaiian, Elvis or '60s kind of evening, so join the fun and dress the part (optional).

Call 352-860-2818 for a reservation form to be emailed to you.

Dec. 26: Get to know Boxing Day



MetroCreative

By METROCREATIVE

Many people may get their fill of boxes on Christmas Day. However, people living in certain countries, including Canada, know that there may be some more boxes in store on the day after Christmas as well.

Boxing Day is an annual holiday celebrated in Canada on Dec. 26. Canadians are not alone in celebrating Boxing Day, which is observed in Australia, the United Kingdom and New Zealand, among other countries.

The origin story behind Boxing Day is not entirely known. One theory regarding those origins connect the holiday to 19th century England and the giving of boxes that included money, presents and/or food to British servants on the day after Christmas.

The servants had to work on Christmas while their employers celebrated, so they waited until the following day to celebrate with their families. The boxes were a token of appreciation and a way to make servants' celebrations more bountiful and enjoyable.

Another theory links Boxing Day to collection boxes for the poor. Long known as a time of giving, the holiday season was a time to give to the poor. So when the boxes were opened on the day after Christmas, they were full and the money within them was then distributed to the less fortunate.

Modern Boxing Day celebrations don't resemble either theory of the day's origins.

In fact, modern Boxing Day more closely resembles Black Friday, a retail holiday in the United States that marks the unofficial beginning of the holiday shopping season.

Retailers discount items on Boxing Day, and the deals compel people across Canada to spend the day after Christmas shopping.

Canadian soccer fans who are not excited by the idea of shopping on Boxing Day can celebrate like many of their British counterparts.

In England, Boxing Day has become synonymous with European football, and the Premier League has ensured its fans can spend a good portion of Boxing Day watching the action on the pitch. This year's Boxing Day slate includes 10 matches.

Boxing Day may not have maintained too significant a connection to its past. But the day remains one to look forward to in 2021.

GOOD

From page C1

Dunnellon Woman's club to have BBQ fundraiser Jan. 8

Come and enjoy BBQ pulled pork sandwiches from the Woman's Club of Dunnellon from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Jan. 8 at the clubhouse, 11756 Cedar St.

This is a takeout only event. The cost is $10 per sandwich and includes coleslaw, baked beans and a brownie.

Proceeds from all club fundraisers benefit local charities and college scholarships. For more information, call Susi at 727-460-0435.

Paint with the Women of Sugarmill Woods

The Women of Sugarmill Woods are hosting a painting party at the Crazy Mermaid Gallery from 6 to 9 p.m. Jan. 13, 5450 S. Suncoast Blvd. in Homosassa.

For $35, try your hand at painting, enjoy a glass of wine, coffee or water and snack on some finger food.

To register, visit ThatCrazyMermaidLady.com. For more information, contact Roxanne Soden at rmsoden@gmail.com or 630-212-7173.

Chance to view, buy postcard memories

The Sunshine Post Card Club's show and sale will be 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday, Jan. 14, and Saturday, Jan. 15, at the Country Inn and Suites, Lakeside Events Center, 4750 N. Dale Mabry Highway in Tampa.

Admission is $3 and parking is free. Complimentary coffee and pastries are available.

For more information, call Leah Schnall at 941-753-8794 or email leahcard@aol.com

Audition for an Art Center thriller

The Art Center of Citrus County will host auditions for "Something to Hide" at 2 p.m. Jan. 15 and 16, 2644 N. Annapolis Ave. in Hernando. The cast has three male and four female roles.

This ingenious thriller follows an author who finds out his wife and publisher ran over and killed his mistress in a car.

They agree to dispose of the body and the rest of the play reveals the true relationship between husband and wife.

Show dates include:
7:30 to 10:30 p.m. March 25
7:30 to 10:30 p.m. March 26
2 to 4:30 p.m. March 27
7:30 to 10:30 p.m. April 1
2 to 4:30 p.m. April 2
7:30 to 10:30 p.m. April 2
2 to 4:30 p.m. April 3
7:30 to 10:30 p.m. April 8
7:30 to 10:30 p.m. April 9
2 to 4:30 p.m. April 10

For more information, call 352-746-7606.

Attend the annual Military Card Party

The public is invited to a fun afternoon of card games, attempting to "capture the flag," at the annual Military Card Party, sponsored by the Catholic Women's Club of Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church.

The event will take place from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Jan. 19, 550 U.S. 41 in Inverness.

Featured are a delicious buffet luncheon, dessert and an afternoon of cards and door prizes. The cost is $15 per player and reservations are required. Funds raised support the many charities the Catholic Women's Club supports each year.

Space is limited. To make a reservation, call Jeanne at 763-560-7324.

Garden Club to have mah-jongg party

The Citrus Garden Club is hosting a mah-jongg party at 9 a.m. Jan. 19 at the Citrus Hills Golf and Country Club's Windsor/Hampton room, 509 E. Hartford St. in Hernando.

The party includes morning coffee and a luncheon choice of taco salad or chicken salad wrap with potato salad, as well as strawberry cloud cake for dessert. There will be prizes galore, raffle baskets and a share-the-wealth drawing.

Be sure to bring one mah-jongg set per table and each player must bring their 2021 NMJL card.

Tournament play and luncheon is $30 per person. Checks should be made out to the Citrus Garden Club with specified lunch choices. Proceeds from this event help fund civic projects and youth scholarships.

For reservations or more information, call Dee at 352- 697-1846 or Patty at 352-527-4164.

Art Center Theatre presents winter musical comedy

The Art Center Theatre presents their winter musical, "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum," Jan. 7, 8, 9, 14, 15 and 16 at the Art Center of Citrus County, 2644 N. Annapolis Ave. in Hernando. Friday and Saturday night showings are at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m.

Travel back to ancient Rome in this classical comedy where Pseudolus, a crafty Roman slave, struggles to win the hand of a beautiful, but slow-witted courtesan named Philia for his young master, Hero, in exchange for freedom. The plot twists and turns with cases of mistaken identity, slamming doors, and a few trips around the seven hills of Rome.

The original 1962 Broadway production won six Tony Awards, including Best Musical and Best Author.

Tickets are $21. Box office hours are from 1 to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. For more information, call 352-746-7606 or visit artcentertheatre.org.

Ladies of the Elks to have charity fashion show

The West Citrus Ladies of the Elks will have their charity fashion show, "Celebrating the Fabulous You," at 10:30 a.m. Jan. 22 at the lodge, 7890 W. Grover Cleveland Blvd. in Homosassa.

Fashions are by Janet of Sarasota. Guests will have a chance to shop for clothes with everything from casual to dressy, enjoy lunch and win a raffle basket.

Tickets are $30. For more information, call Kathy at 352-586-8886.

GOING ON

Valerie Players seeking members

A community theater group is planning a series of plays at the Valerie Theater in Inverness.

Artistic Director Patrick Erhardt said the Valerie Players needs performers, directors and people to work behind the scenes.

The season will include: "The Trial of Ebenezer Scrooge," Dec. 10-12; "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown," Feb. 18-20, 2022; "Psychic," April 22-24, 2022; and "On Golden Pond," June 17-19, 2022.

The theater also will sponsor a 10-Minute Playwriting Festival, and the winning works will be produced Sept. 16-18, 2022.

For information, contact Erhardt at: patherhardt@gmail.com.

Hernando Ukulele Jam to meet

The weekly Hernando Ukulele Jam meets at 11 a.m. for intermediates and noon for beginners every Tuesday at the Historic Hernando School at the intersection of U.S. 41 and County Road 486. The event is free and open to everyone.

Attendees should bring their favorite ukulele and a music stand if they have one.

For more information, call 352-566-2328.

Acoustic music jam at the library

The Nature Coast Dulcimer Players host an acoustic music jam from 3 to 5 p.m. most Mondays at the Central Ridge Library community room, 425 W. Roosevelt Blvd. in Beverly Hills.

A beginner group meets from 2 to 3 p.m. in the same location.

Adults of all levels are welcome to join. For more information, call 352-746-6622.

Test your brain at trivia nights

Continuing in 2021, Citrus County Parks and Recreation will have free virtual trivia nights at 6:30 p.m. the first and third Mondays of each month, excluding holidays.

Test your brain against the brightest minds of Citrus County.

Pre-register at least 24 hours prior to the event at apm.activecommunities.com/citruscountyparks to receive the video chat trivia links.

For more information, call 352-527-7540.

Socialize every week at Café Break!

Among the wellness programs offered by Friends of Citrus and the Nature Coast at its Wings Grief Center, 8471 W. Periwinkle Lane (gold building on right) in Homosassa Springs is Café Break!

At Café Break! Anyone grieving or lonely can find a safe place to socialize with others, work puzzles, play games or chat over a cup of coffee and snacks for 2-½ hours starting at 11:30 a.m. Wednesdays and at 9 a.m. Thursdays.

For more information or to join this program that follows CDC guidelines, call 352-249-1470.

Community center open mic nights

Citrus County Parks and Recreation presents open mic nights from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. the last Wednesday monthly at the Citrus Springs Community Center at 1570 W. Citrus Springs Blvd. at Citrus Springs.

Vocalists, musicians, poets and comedians are welcome at this all-ages event. No profanity is allowed.

Social distancing guidelines will be followed. Masks will be required to enter the building, but not by performers during stage time.

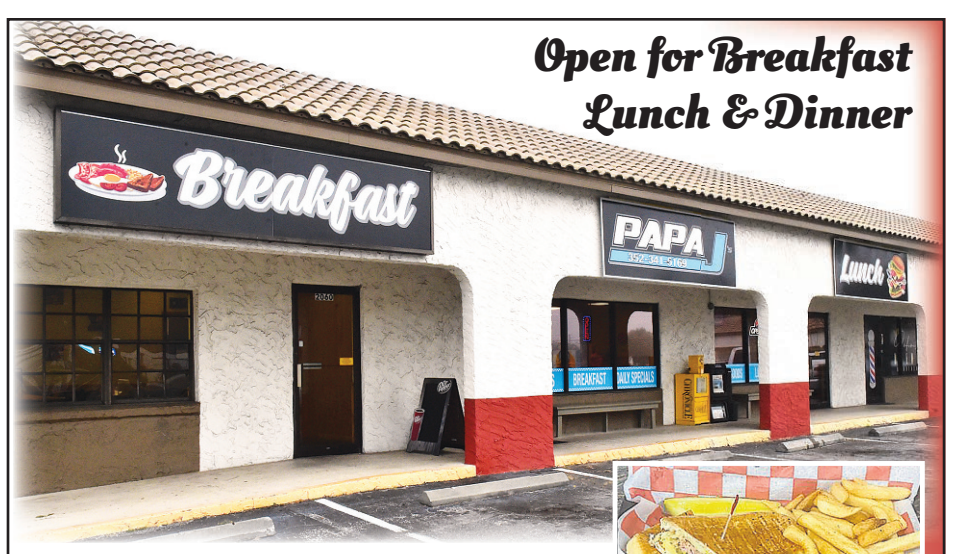
For more information, call 352-527-7540.

See GOOD, page C5


Merry Christmas to all!
A very happy holiday to all of our customers.
It's been a pleasure serving you!
Thank You for your patience during what has been a trying year for all restaurants and small businesses.
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FRIDAY EVENING DECEMBER 24, 2021

C: Comcast, Citrus S: Spectrum D/I: Comcast, Dunnellon & Inglis

	C	S	D/I	6:00	6:30	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
2 WESH NBC	19		19	News	NBC News	Ent. Tonight	Hollywood	★★★★ ***"It's a Wonderful Life"*** (1946) James Stewart. 'PG' CC (DVS)						News	Christmas
3 WEDU PBS	3	3		World News America	BBC World News Today	PBS NewsHour (N) (In Stereo) CC		Washington Week (N)	Florida This Week (N)	Great Performances "Coppelia" (In Stereo) 'PG' CC			University of Tampa Holiday Concert		European Christmas
5 WUFT PBS	5		5	DW News	BBC World	PBS NewsHour (N) CC		Wash	Greater	20 Years of Christmas With the Tabernacle Choir 'G'				Sounds of the Season	
8 WFLA NBC	8	8	8	News	NBC Nightly News - Holt	NewsChannel 8	Ent. Tonight	★★★★ ***"It's a Wonderful Life"*** (1946, Comedy-Drama) James Stewart. An angel saves a distraught businessman from suicide. (In Stereo) 'PG' CC (DVS)						NewsChannel 8	Christmas Eve Mass
9 WFTV ABC	20	7	20	News at 6pm	ABC World News	Jeopardy! 'G' CC	Wheel of Fortune 'G'	***"Olaf Adventure"***	Shrek the Halls 'PG'	Disney Prep & Landing	Prep & Landing	Shark Tank (In Stereo) 'PG' CC (DVS)		Eyewitness News 11PM	Jimmy Kimmel Live!
10 WTSP CBS	10	10	10	10 Tampa Bay	CBS Evening News	Wheel of Fortune 'G'	Jeopardy! 'G' CC	A Holly Dolly Christmas (In Stereo) CC		Kenny Rogers: All in for the Gambler CC		Blue Bloods Danny works to convict a drug lord. '14'		10 Tampa Bay	Late Show-Colbert
13 WTVT FOX	13	13		FOX13 6:00 News (N)	FOX13 Special	Winter Preview	TMZ (N) 'PG' CC	WWE Friday Night SmackDown (N) (In Stereo) 'PG'				FOX13 10:00 News (N) (In Stereo) CC		FOX13 11:00 News	FOX13 Special
20 WCJB ABC			11	TV20 News	World News	Ent. Tonight	Inside Ed.	***Olaf's***	Shrek/Halls	Landing	Prep &	Shark Tank 'PG'		News at 11	J. Kimmel
22 WCLF IND	2	2	2	Christian	Bridges	Joyce	Great Awakening with		The Good Life		Andrew	Good News	News Up	Life	The Great A
24 WYKE FAM	16	16	16	Vegas Unveiled		Daily Flash	Citrus	Sully's Biz Brew		Pictures	Side Ente	Street	Street	Citrus Court	Citrus
28 WFTS ABC	11	11		News	World News	Inside Ed.	The List (N)	***Olaf's***	Shrek/Halls	Landing	Prep &	Shark Tank 'PG'		News	J. Kimmel
32 WMOR IND	12	12		Sheldon	Sheldon	Big Bang	Big Bang	Mom '14'	Mom 'PG'	Last Man	Last Man	Creek	Creek	Big Bang	Sheldon
38 WTTA MNT	6	6	6	Extra 'PG'	Ent. Tonight	Family Feud	Family Feud	NewsChannel 8		Noticias	Seinfeld	Chicago P.D. '14'		Chicago P.D. '14'	
40 WACX TBN	21		21	The Strang	The 700 Club CC		Sid Roth's	Let's Go!	Ministries	Hour Power: Schuller		Watch	Jentezen	Faith Build.	Prince
44 WTOG CW	4	4	4	Mike & Molly '14'	Mike & Molly '14'	Two and a Half Men	Two and a Half Men	Christmas Around the World How Christmas is celebrated. (In Stereo) 'PG' CC				CW44 News (N) CC	CW44 News (N) CC	Dateline A celebration ends in murder. 'PG'	
50 WVEA UNI	15	15	15	Noticias	Noticiero	La Rosa de Guadalupe		La Rosa de Guadalupe		Somos Navidad (N)				Noticias	Noticiero
51 WOGX FOX			13	Fox 51 at 6	Fox 51	Big Bang	Big Bang	WWE Friday Night SmackDown (N) (In Stereo) 'PG'				FOX 51 News		Dateline 'PG' CC	
66 WXPX ION		17		***"The Christmas Thief"*** (2021) Michelle Borth. 'NR'				***"The Christmas Sitters"*** (2020) Tristin Mays. 'NR'				***"Christmas in Palm Springs"*** (2014) Patrick Muldoon.			
A&E	54	48	54	Court Cam	Court Cam	Court Cam	Court Cam	Court Cam	Court Cam	Court Cam	Court Cam	Court Cam '14' CC		Court Cam	Court Cam
ACCN		99		College Football Clemson at NC State. (Taped)						College Football Syracuse at Florida State. (Taped)					
AMC	55	64	55	★★ ***"Four Christmases"*** (2008) Vince Vaughn. CC				★★★ ***"National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation"***				★★★ ***"National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation"***			
ANI	52	35	52	Treehouse Masters 'PG'		Treehouse Masters 'PG'		Treehouse Masters: Ultimate Builds Pete builds a winter wonderland. (N) 'PG'						Treehouse Masters 'PG'	
BET	96	71	96	★★ ***"Sister Act"*** (1992, Musical Comedy) Whoopi Goldberg. 'PG' CC						Tyler Perry's The Oval		Games People Play '14'		Tyler Perry's Sistas '14'	
BIGTEN	742	809		B1G Basketball & Beyond		Michigan Football Classic		Ohio State		B1G Basketball & Beyond		Campus	Campus	The B1G Story CC	
BRAVO	254	51	254	★★★ ***"Pretty Woman"*** (1990) Richard Gere. 'R' CC				★★ ***"Sweet Home Alabama"*** (2002) Reese Witherspoon. 'PG-13'				★★ ***"Sweet Home Alabama"*** (2002)			
BSFL	35	39	35	American Ninja Warrior		Panthers	NHL Hockey Nashville Predators at Florida Panthers. (Taped)					Panthers	Panthers	Inside	Football
CC	27	61	27	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office
CMT	98	45	98	Last Man	Last Man	Last Man	Last Man	Last Man	Last Man	Last Man	Last Man	Last Man	Last Man	Last Man	Last Man
CNN	40	29	40	CNN Special Report		Jerusalem: City of Faith		Jerusalem: City of Faith		Jerusalem: City of Faith		Jerusalem: City of Faith		Jerusalem: City of Faith	
ESPN	33	27	33	SportsCenter (N) CC		SportsCenter (N) CC		College Football Easypost Hawaii Bowl -- Memphis vs Hawaii. (N) (Live)							SportCtr
ESPN2	37	28	34	30 for 30			30 for 30			30 for 30				30 for 30	
FBN	106	149	106	The Evening Edit (N)		Kudlow CC		Wall Street	WSJ	Barron	Wall Street	WSJ	Barron	How America Works	
FLIX		118	170	***War Roses***	★★½ ***"You Better Watch Out"*** 'R'			★★★ ***"Death Becomes Her"*** (1992)			★★★½ ***"Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind"***				***Sideways***
FNC	44	37	44	Special Report		FOX News Primetime (N)		Tucker Carlson Tonight		Hannity (N) (Live) CC		The Ingraham Angle (N)		Gutfeld! (N) CC	
FOOD	26	56	26	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners
FREEFORM	29	52	29	★★ ***"Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas"*** (2000) 'PG'				Frosty		Rudolph, the Reindeer		Santa Is Comin' to Town		The 700 Club CC	
FS1	732	112	732	Undisputed		Football		Greatest Games: College Football From Nov. 27, 2021. CC						Greatest: College Ftb.	
FX	30	60	30	***"How the Grinch Stole Christmas"*** 'PG'		★★½ ***"Dr. Seuss' The Grinch"*** (2018) 'PG' CC					★★½ ***"Dr. Seuss' The Grinch"*** (2018) 'PG' CC				***How Grinch***
GOLF	727	67	727	2020 Tokyo Olympics Men's Golf, Third Round. CC				2020 Tokyo Olympics Men's Golf, Final Round. CC							
HALL	59	68	39	***"'Tis the Season to Be Merry"*** (2021) 'NR' CC				***"The Nine Kittens of Christmas"*** (2021)			***"The Christmas Contest"*** (2021) 'NR'			***"Unexpected"***	
HBO	302	201	302	***Dunkirk*** CC	Landscapers 'MA' CC		Insecure	★★½ ***"Dinner for Schmucks"*** (2010) Steve Carell.				John Wilson	Chillin	John Wilson	Chillin
HBO2	303	202	303	***"Wonder Woman 1984"***		Red Blue Green		Landscapers 'MA' CC		***"The Slow Hustle"*** (2021) 'NR' CC			Succession 'MA' CC		***Judas***
HGTV	23	57	23	Dream	Dream	Dream	Dream	Dream	Dream	Dream	Dream	Dream	Dream	My Lottery Dream Home	
HIST	51	54	51	The Bible The Jews are enslaved in Babylon. '14'				The Bible Jesus brings a dead man back to life. '14'				The Bible (In Stereo) '14' CC			
LIFE	24	38	24	***"Reba McEntire's Christmas in Tune"*** (2021) 'NR'				***"Hot Chocolate Holiday"*** (2020) Aubrey Reynolds.				***"Holiday in Santa Fe"*** (2021) Mario Lopez. 'NR' CC			
LMN	119	50	119	***"Memories of a Murder"*** (2020) Isabella Pisacane.				***"The Virgin Sinners"*** (2020) Kaitlyn Bernard. 'NR'				***"Desperate Widows"*** (2021) Justine Eyre. 'NR' CC			
MSNBC	42	41	42	The Beat With Ari Melber		The ReidOut (N) CC		All In With Chris Hayes		Rachel Maddow Show		The Last Word		The 11th Hour (N) CC	
NBCSN	448	26	730	Monster Jam CC		Monster Jam CC		Monster Jam CC		Monster Jam CC		Monster Jam CC		Monster Jam CC	
NGEO	109	65	109	Ramsay: Uncharted		Ramsay: Uncharted		Ramsay: Uncharted		Ramsay: Uncharted		Ramsay: Uncharted		Ramsay: Uncharted	
NICK	28	36	28	Loud House	Loud House	***"A Loud House Christmas"*** (2021) 'NR'		SpongeBob		SpongeBob	SpongeBob	Friends '14'	Friends 'PG'	Friends '14'	Friends 'PG'
NWSNTN	18	18	18	The Donlon Report (N)		On Balance		Dan Abrams Live (N)		NewsNation Prime (N)		Banfield (N) CC		On Balance	
OWN	125	24	103	★★★ ***"The Preacher's Wife"*** (1996) (In Stereo) 'PG'				***"Baking Christmas"*** (2019) Tim Reid. (In Stereo) 'NR'				***"A Sisterly Christmas"*** (2021) Deborah Joy Winans.			
OXY	123	44	123	Homicide for the Holidays		Homicide for the Holidays		Homicide for the Holidays		Homicide for the Holidays		Homicide for the Holidays		Homicide for the Holidays	
PARMT	37	43	37	***Indiana***	★★★★ ***"Raiders of the Lost Ark"*** (1981) Harrison Ford. 'PG'					★★★ ***"Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom"*** (1984) Harrison Ford. 'PG'					
SEC	745	72		SEC Storied	Cuban Comet		SEC Storied 'G'			SEC Storied 'G'			SEC Storied 'G'		SEC Storied
SHOW	340	241	340	★★★½ ***"Minari"*** (2020) Steven Yeun. 'PG-13' CC				★★★½ ***"The Descendants"*** (2011) 'R' CC				★★★ ***"Lee Daniels' The Butler"*** (2013) 'PG-13' CC			
SUN	36	31	36	Destination	Lightning	NHL Hockey Tampa Bay Lightning at Arizona Coyotes.					Postgame	Lightning	Football	American Ninja Warrior	
SYFY	31	59	31	***Live Free***	★★★½ ***"Die Hard"*** (1988, Action) Bruce Willis, Alan Rickman. 'R' CC						★★★ ***"Die Hard 2"*** (1990, Action) Bruce Willis. 'R' CC				
TBS	49	23	49	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	★★★★ ***"A Christmas Story"*** (1983) 'PG' CC (DVS)				★★★★ ***"A Christmas Story"*** (1983) 'PG' CC (DVS)			
TCM	169	53	169	★★★½ ***"Meet Me in St. Louis"*** (1944) 'NR'				★★★ ***"The Bishop's Wife"*** (1947) Cary Grant. 'NR'				★★★ ***"A Christmas Carol"*** (1938)			***Remember***
TDC	53	34	53	Gold Rush: Freddy Dodge		Gold Rush: Freddy Dodge		Gold Rush: The Dirt 'PG'		Gold Rush: Freddy Dodge		Gold Rush: Freddy Dodge		Gold Rush: Freddy Dodge	
TLC	50	46	50	90 Day Fiancé		90 Day Fiancé: Before the 90 Days (N) '14'				90 Day Fiancé: Before the 90 Days '14'			The Family Chantel '14'		90 Day
TMC	350	261	350	★★½ ***"Forces of Nature"*** (1999) Sandra Bullock.				★★★ ***"Gloria Bell"*** (2018) 'R' CC			★★★ ***"Young Adult"*** (2011) Charlize Theron. 'R'				***Damsels***
TNT	48	33	48	Bones Quarantined. '14'		Bones '14' CC		Bones '14' CC		★★★★ ***"A Christmas Story"*** (1983) 'PG' CC (DVS)				***"A Christmas Story"*** 'PG'	
TOON	38	58	38	Regular	Teen Titans	★★ ***"Sherlock Gnomes"*** (2018, Children's) 'PG' CC				King of Hill	King of Hill	Burgers	Burgers	Rick, Morty	Rick, Morty
TRAV	9	106	9	Osbournes Want- Believe		Osbournes Want- Believe		Osbournes Want- Believe		Osbournes Want- Believe		Osbournes Want- Believe		Osbournes Want- Believe	
truTV	25	55	25	Jokes	Jokes	Jokes	Jokes	Jokes	Jokes	Jokes	Jokes	Imp. Jokers	Imp. Jokers	Imp. Jokers	Imp. Jokers
TVL	32	49	32	Andy Griffith	Andy Griffith	Andy Griffith	Andy Griffith	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	King	King
USA	47	32	47	★★★ ***"Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets"***				★★★½ ***"Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban"*** (2004) Daniel Radcliffe.						***"Harry Potter"***	
WE	117	69	117	★★★ ***"A League of Their Own"*** (1992) Tom Hanks.				★★★ ***"Grease"*** (1978, Musical) John Travolta. 'PG' CC					★★★ ***"Grease"*** (1978) John Travolta.		

BRIDGE

By PHILLIP ALDER

Winners produce the goods when it matters. A top golfer holes a long putt on the 18th green, or a tennis player uncorks an ace at match point or break point. It is the same in bridge. The expert finds the key bid or play at the time, not in the post-mortem.

What should happen in three no-trump here? South's opening showed a long, solid minor with a stopper or two on the side. North did not retreat to four clubs; he gambled.

At the other table, South opened one club, disliking three no-trump because his partner was not a passed hand. When two passes ensued, South was apprehensive. No worries, though, as East balanced with a takeout double, and now South bid three no-trump.

As the author wrote, the weather kept fine because West led the diamond six, giving declarer the first nine tricks.

At this table, West knew what to lead: the heart ace. The plan was to look at the dummy and partner's signal, and learn how to continue.

West was not sure which pointed suit to lead next. East did know, though. He should have dropped his heart jack under partner's ace, a clear-cut suit-preference signal for spades. Then the defenders would have taken the first five tricks.

However, East parsimoniously played the heart seven. To West, this looked like an encouraging signal. So West, hoping his partner had the heart king-jack and would shift to a diamond at trick four, continued with his second heart, ducked to declarer's king. South claimed 10 tricks; two hearts, one diamond and seven clubs.

North 12-24-21
♠ 10 9 6 3
♥ Q 10 9 5
♦ 10 5
♣ 10 8 2

West
♠ Q 8 4 2
♥ A 6
♦ K J 9 6 4
♣ 9 3

East
♠ A K J 7
♥ J 7 4 3 2
♦ 8 7 3
♣ 5

South
♠ 5
♥ K 8
♦ A Q 2
♣ A K Q J 7 6 4

Dealer: East
Vulnerable: Both

South	West	North	East
			Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

Opening lead: ??

SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ☆☆☆☆☆

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

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HOW TO PLAY: Each row, column and set of 3-by-3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 through 9 without repetition.

PREVIOUS SOLUTION

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

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

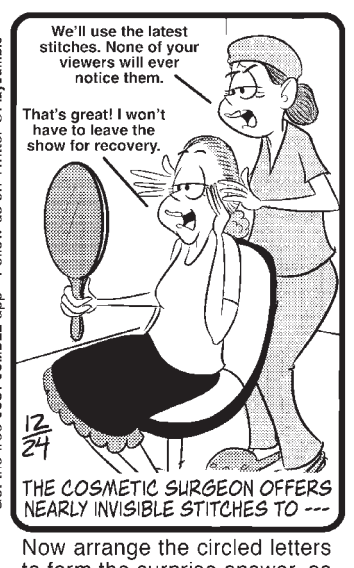
SREHF

RNSLA

PUYGMS

NCLEUT

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

"_____" _____

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: BRAWL VALVE FINALE QUORUM
Answer: She asked if she could borrow her sister's favorite sweater, but the response wasn't — FAVORABLE

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CELEBRITY CIPHER

by Luis Campos

Celebrity Cipher cryptograms are created from quotations by famous people, past and present. Each letter in the cipher stands for another.

"R P U C U D U Y A U S A O U T H G, 'P U G, E H C, H Y U G S M U D U Y B S V C B K S B Y S R M A?' K P H K'T R P U C G S M N C S R G S M'Y U W S V C B K P V C B T Y V B P K." — Y V X N G E H Y K V C

Previous Solution: "Nothing changes. The world goes on and you're gone. The best revenge is to live on and prove yourself." — Eddie Vedder

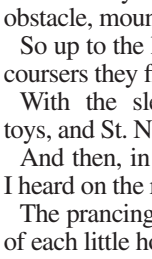
TODAY'S CLUE: D = equals W

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■ Find the daily crossword puzzle inside the Chronicle's classified pages, along with Sudoku, Wordy Gurdy and a word puzzle.

Merry Christmas, readers!

Annie Lane
Dear Annie



DEAR READERS: Below is one of my favorite poems for Christmas. Please enjoy, and wishing all of you and your families a joyous, peaceful and bright holiday season.

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house

Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;

The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,

In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there;

The children were nestled all snug in their beds;

While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads;

And Mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap,

Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap,

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,

I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter.

Away to the window I flew like a flash,

Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.

The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow,

Gave a lustre of midday to objects below,

When what to my wondering eyes did appear,

But a miniature sleigh and eight tiny reindeer,

With a little old driver so lively and quick,

I knew in a moment he must be St. Nick.

More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,

And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name:

"Now, Dasher! Now, Dancer! Now Prancer and Vixen!

On, Comet! On, Cupid! On, Donner and Blitzen!

To the top of the porch! To the top of the wall!

Now dash away! Dash away! Dash away all!"

As leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,

When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky;

So up to the housetop the coursers they flew

With the sleigh full of toys, and St. Nicholas too –

And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof

The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.

As I drew in my head, and was turning around,

Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.

He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,

And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot;

A bundle of toys he had flung on his back,

And he looked like a pedler just opening his pack.

His eyes – how they twinkled! His dimples, how merry!

His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!

His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,

And the beard on his chin was as white as the snow;

The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,

And the smoke, it encircled his head like a wreath;

He had a broad face and a little round belly

That shook when he laughed, like a bowl full of jelly.

He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,

And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself;

A wink of his eye and a twist of his head

Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread;

He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,

And filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk,

And laying his finger aside of his nose,

And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose;

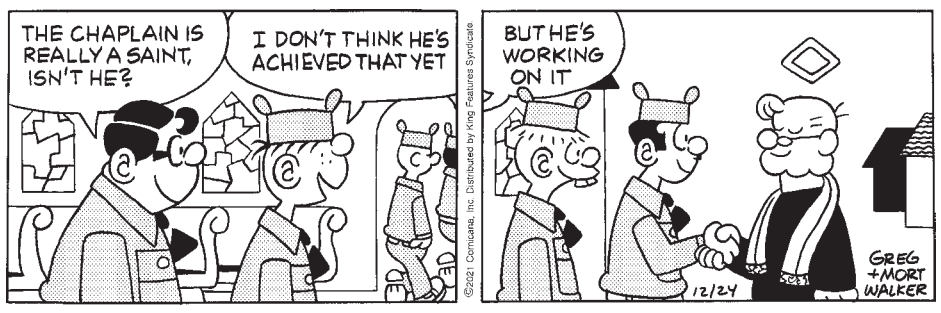
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,

And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.

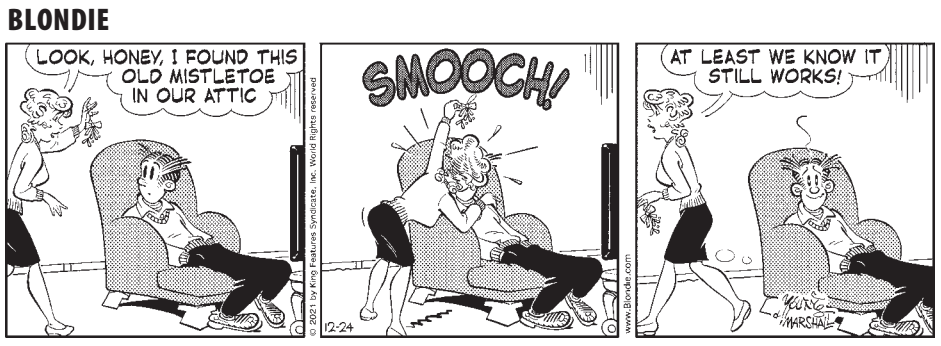
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight –

"Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good night!"

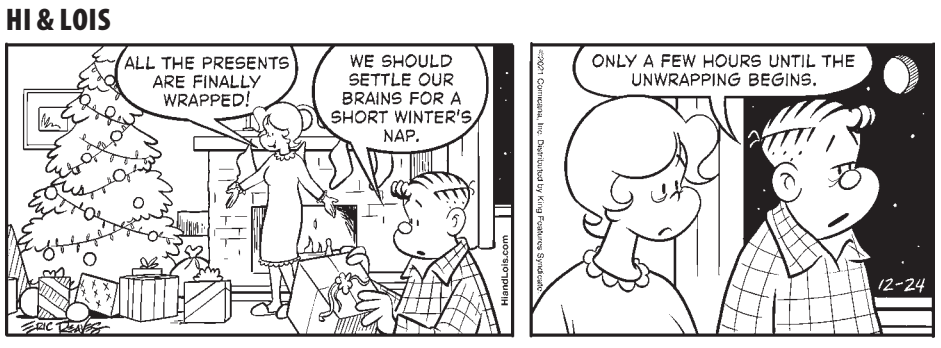
BEETLE BAILEY



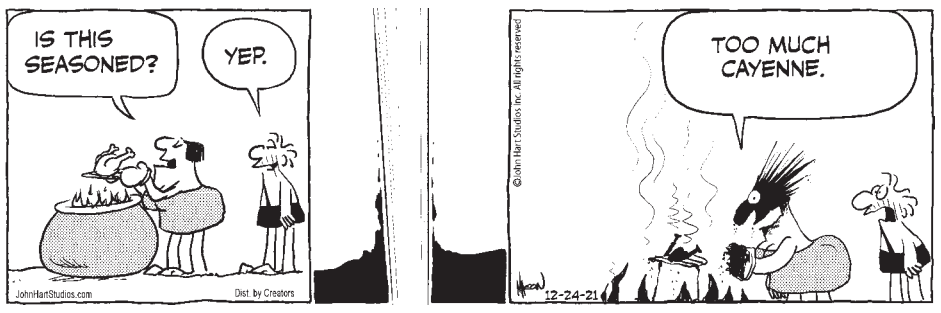
BLONDIE



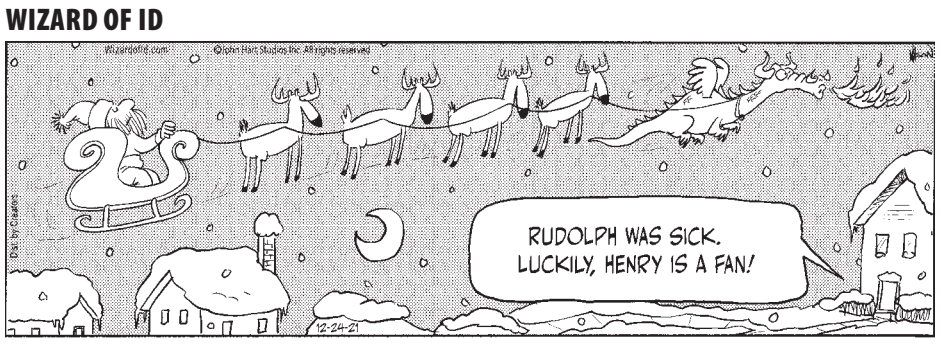
HI & LOIS



BC



WIZARD OF ID



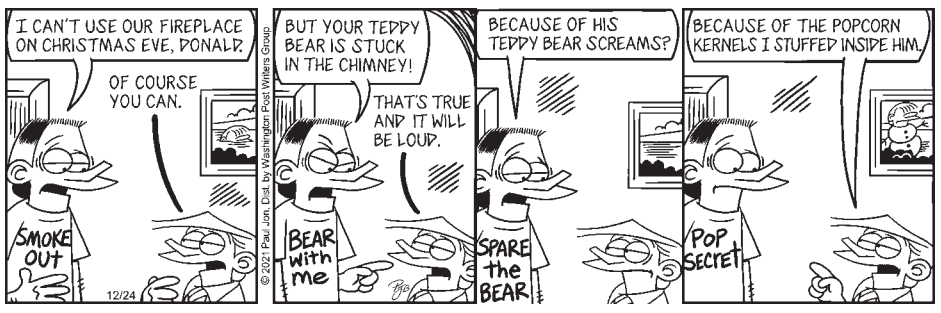
DILBERT



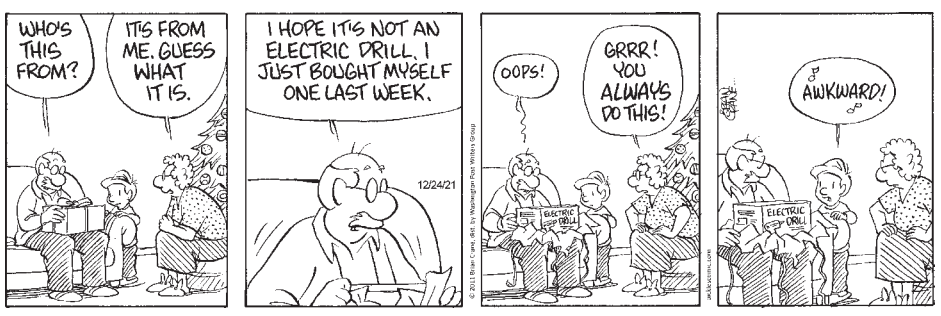
GARFIELD



FORT KNOX



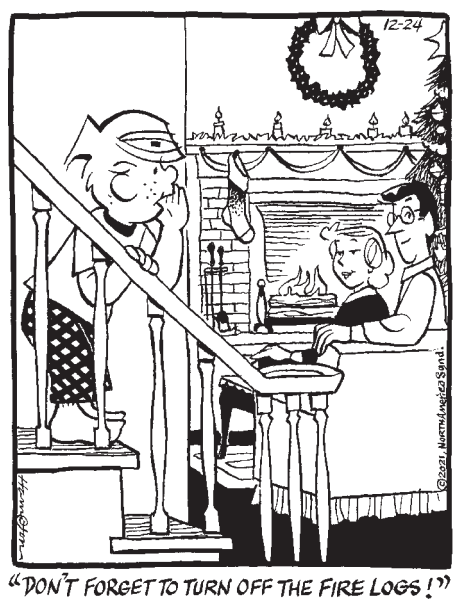
PICKLES



FAMILY CIRCUS



DENNIS THE MENACE



BABY BLUES



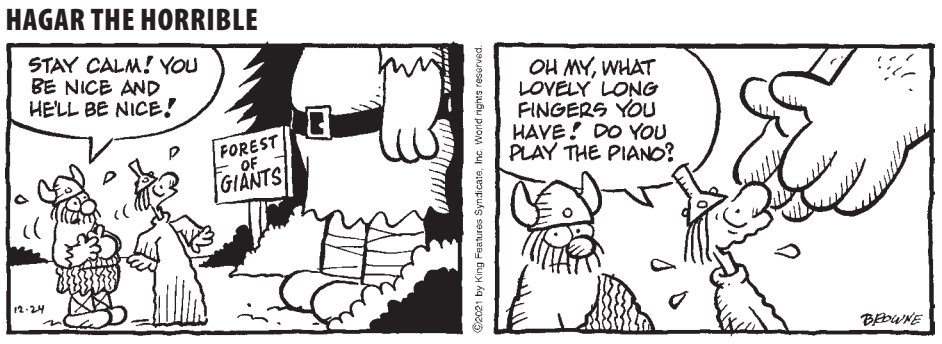
CURTIS



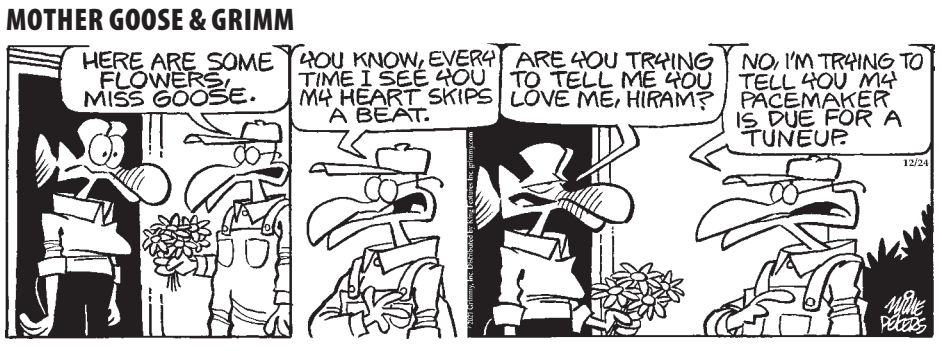
ZITS



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM



MUTTS



SALLY FORTH



ASTROGRAPH

By EUGENIA LAST

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24

You are right on target. You are smooth, confident and ready to make the most of what you've got. Your instincts and insight are keen, and your power of persuasion is primed and ready. Preparation will pay off, and positive lifestyle changes will take place. A partnership looks promising, and contracts will be beneficial.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) It's all about giving, sharing and making the world a better place. Refuse to let the little things get to you. Put on a happy face and be kind to others. A positive change will surprise a loved one.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) Keep busy; too much idle time will result in an unnecessary feud. Keep your life simple and your emotions under control. Offer kindness, understanding and a helping hand to those in need.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) A kind gesture toward someone who can influence your goals will pay off. Use your charm to persuade others to help you gain ground and deal with a matter that concerns you. Be part of the solution.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) Slow down, get the facts and pace yourself. Refuse to let an emotional issue stop you from having a good time. Enjoy what life has to offer, and ignore anyone who upsets you.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) An emotional moment will overwhelm you. Invest in something that interests you. Someone will do something that takes you by surprise. Be gracious when accepting a proposal. Romance is favored.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) A change may not be what you want or anticipate, but it will turn out well. Sit back and let things unfold naturally. Be open to suggestions and willing to do your fair share. Avoid anger.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) Do something with a loved one. Talk about the future and set common goals. Combining your skills and effort will help turn your dreams into a reality. Joint ventures will enhance your life.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) Consider the improvements you want to make and start talking about the resolutions you plan to put into play. Let your enthusiasm build, and listen to the suggestions friends and relatives make.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) Live in the moment and think positively. Recognize what you have and extend a warm welcome to friends and family. The joy you offer others will encourage better relationships and a bright future.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) Be gracious about what you receive. Give what you can and be mindful of what you say. Help a cause and spread joy to those who look sad or lost. Be the bright light that warms the room.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) Tone things down. Find peace in observation and joy in what others offer. Relax, and let the magic of the moment lead to answers that have eluded you in the past. Change is upon you, and good things are yet to come.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) Distance yourself from anyone who makes you angry. Keep the peace at gatherings. It's in your best interest to take the high road and show patience and goodwill.

TODAY'S MOVIES

Citrus Cinemas 6 Inverness; 844-462-7342 Code 187

Friday, Dec. 24

"Sing 2" PG – 1, 4, 7, 10 p.m.
"American Underdog" PG – 4, 7:45 p.m.
"Sing 2" PG – noon, 1, 3:45, 7 p.m.
"The King's Man" R – 11:45 a.m., 3, 7:30 p.m.
"The Matrix Resurrections" R – 11:15 a.m., 2:45, 6:45 p.m.
"Spider-man: No Way Home" PG13 – 11, 11:30 a.m., 2:30, 3:15, 6:30, 7:15 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 25

"American Underdog" PG – 11:30 a.m., 3:30, 7:45, 10:45 p.m.
"Sing 2" PG – noon, 1, 3:45, 7, 9:40 p.m.
"The King's Man" R – 11:45 a.m., 3, 7:30, 10:30 p.m.
"The Matrix Resurrections" R – 11:15 a.m., 2:45, 6:45, 10:15 p.m.
"Spider-man: No Way Home" PG13 – 11 a.m., 2:30, 3, 6:30, 7:15, 10, 10:30 p.m.

Valerie Theatre, Inverness; 352-341-7850

Monday, Dec. 27

"Downton Abbey" (2019) PG – 3 p.m.

Wednesday, Dec. 29

"How the Grinch Stole Christmas" (2000) PG – 3 p.m.

Friday, Dec. 31

"The Polar Express" (2004) G – 3 p.m.

Times provided by Regal Cinemas and are subject to change; call ahead.

Director Joel Coen distills 'Macbeth' down to the bone in new film

By JAKE COYLE
AP Film Writer

NEW YORK — In Joel and Ethan Coen's "Inside Llewyn Davis," Oscar Isaac's folk musician is trying to make it on his own, without his longtime partner. He travels to Chicago to audition for Bud Grossman, who gives the damning judgment: People need time to get to know you, he says, "buy you as a solo act."

"The Tragedy of Macbeth," Joel Coen's first time directing without his brother, is going much better for him than it did for Llewyn.

An intoxicatingly expressionist Shakespeare adaptation dense in fog and shadow, Coen's "Macbeth" is a solo debut from a filmmaker whose visual virtuosity has never been so starkly drawn in sound and fury. The movie has been hailed as one of the finest film Macbeths – a legacy including Orson Welles' powerhouse interpretation and Akira Kurosawa's feverishly atmospheric "Throne of Blood" – and an unexpected detour from a filmmaking life previously always defined by brotherhood.

"I spent 40 years looking over at Ethan after each shot or looking at him if there was a problem. And, so, I missed him because that wasn't there," Coen said in a recent interview. "On the other hand, Fran was there as a producer bringing a different skill set that was in some ways absent from things we'd done earlier – especially in the context of this particular movie because of her experience in the theater."

"The Tragedy of Macbeth" (in theaters Saturday, streaming Jan. 14 on Apple TV+) stars Denzel Washington as Macbeth and Francis McDormand as Lady Macbeth. The project was driven partly by McDormand, who had longed to do the play with her husband directing, possibly on the stage. Coen eventually relented, but he could only imagine it as a film – stripped down and stylized, abstracted in black and white and composed in a nearly square academy-ratio frame.

"The ambition was to do it very much as a movie in terms of embracing what the medium gives you stylistically and psychologically and formally, but trying not to lose the essence of the play-ness of the piece of literature," Coen says. "From the very beginning, we weren't interested in doing a realistic version of the play. We weren't interested in a rent-a-castle version."



Alison Rosa / A24 via AP

This image released by A24 shows director Joel Coen, left, and actor Frances McDormand on the set of "The Tragedy of Macbeth."

As much as the film is a departure for Coen, "The Tragedy of Macbeth" isn't really a solo act. Along with working with actors like McDormand, Washington and Kathryn Hunter (a stunning witch), the film was built through collaborations with cinematographer Bruno Delbonnel and production designer Stefan Dechant.

Coen and Delbonnel, who shot "Inside Llewyn Davis" and the Coens' previous film, "The Ballad of Buster Scruggs," first met almost three years ago, spending a week in a Swiss hotel going over ideas and references. In that conversation and others, they grasped at things like Edward Gordon Craig's stylized early 20th century stage design, Carl Dryer's "The Passion of Joan of Arc," Hiroshi Sugimoto's chiaroscuro photographs and Charles Laughton's "The Night of the Hunter."

Some of the intense conversation that Coen might normally have exchanged with his brother, he had with Delbonnel, poring over sketches and taking contemplative cigarette breaks. Their connection, Delbonnel says, is in questioning everything.

"Joel and Ethan were always questioning whether it was the right way to do something. There is no right way, but the right way for the movie," says Delbonnel. "We both think Kurosawa was a genius."

As much as the hurly burly of the Coen brothers' movies might seem distant from Shakespearean tragedy, their films are crowded with schemers seized by misguided ambitions – just usually more farcical ones. It's not a terribly far leap from "Fargo," where foul was also fair, to "Macbeth," or even from McDormand's opportunistic personal trainer, Linda Litzke, in "Burn After Reading," to Lady Macbeth.

"There are echoes of things we've done in the past in this play," Coen says. "One of the reasons I've always loved the play is how Shakespeare anticipated or prefigured these tropes of 20th century crime fiction, this idea of a couple plotting a murder. While they're not comically hapless or characters we've explored in that context in other movies, they nevertheless lose control of the situation."

For Coen, less is increasingly more, particularly in the minimalistic "The Tragedy of Macbeth." He and Delbonnel storyboarded heavily to find the right level of abstraction. Coen didn't want a castle but "the idea of a castle," says Dechant.

GOOD

From page C2

Join the Women's Mahjongg Club

A Women's Mahjongg Club is forming for residents of Sugarmill Woods. The version that will be played is the Wright-Patterson (not the American version).

They will meet every Wednesday at a resident's home. For information, contact Maria at flowergarden444@gmail.com.

Join the Floral City Crafters weekly

The Floral City Crafters meet from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tuesdays at the Floral City Baptist Church, 8545 Magnolia St.

The crafters are a group of knitters, crocheters, quilters, jewelry makers and more who share their love of crafts and spend time together. Attendees can bring their crafts or learn a new one.

There is a $2 fee for each weekly meeting. For questions, call 352-637-5423 or 352-726-5658.

Attend monthly meetings with the Sunshine Poets

Join the Sunshine Poets' monthly meeting and poetry reading at 10 a.m. on the last Thursday of each month at the Central Ridge Library in Beverly Hills.

Attendees are welcome to bring poems to share, or just listen.

If you would like the members to critique your poems, bring several copies on which they can write suggestions. Attendees are also welcome to join the group afterward for lunch at a local restaurant.

Additional details are available on the Sunshine Poets Facebook page. For questions, contact Cheri Herald, Sunshine Poets president, at sunshinepoets@gmail.com.

Senior program hosts free ukulele classes

The Hernando Area Senior Program is hosting free ukulele classes with Joy Wilson at noon on Tuesdays at 2415 N. Florida Ave. in Hernando. All skill levels are welcome.

Attendees must comply with COVID-19 guidelines and masks are mandatory. Due to limited space, participants should call ahead to make a reservation. For additional information about these activities, call 352-527-5484.

Inverness Bridge Club offers free membership

A limited number of players can join Inverness Bridge Club free to play either duplicate or party/rubber bridge at noon, Mondays and Fridays.

The club plays a friendly game that is not sanctioned by the ACBL that normally lasts between 2.5 and 3 hours.

For information, email pepperpothead@gmail.com. Provide your name, preferred times and ways to reach you.

Sarah Gatling is features editor of the Citrus County Chronicle. Email her at sgatling@chronicleonline.com.



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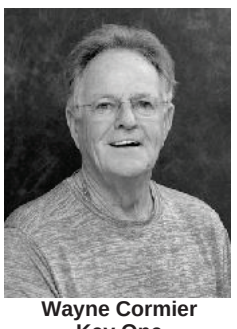
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Office 352-563-3275 or Fax # 352-563-5665

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Send Resume to John Murphy:
jmurphy@chronicleonline.com

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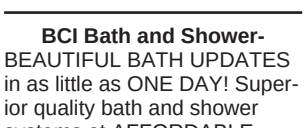
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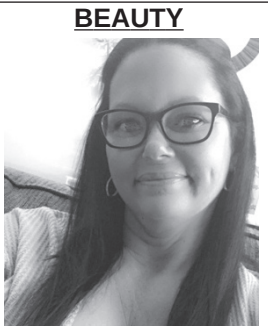
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21sp, Granite Peak, Like New, $99 **(352) 464-4089**

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Mens RH - ACCUMARK 3-P.W., S.W., Stl., 1,3,5 graf. wds., putter & bag. $35 **727-514-4112**

GOLF CLUBS
Mens RH - DUNLOP 3-P.W., S.W., Stl., 1,3,5 graf. wds., putter & bag. $35 **727-514-4112**

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IST, all brand new, long sleeves, Adult Lg and LX $100 each, Childs' short sleeve ML, & XL. $80 each Masks $30 ea. Call for Appt. **352-564-0557**

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REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

ACTION
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HOMOSASSA
$1300
3827 S. Flamingo Ter.
2/2/1 Fenced Yard, handicap ramps, walk-in shower.

CRYSTAL RIVER
$1000
8380 N Desertrose Ter, Apt A
2/2 Apt. Includes Lawn, Water and Trash Removal

$1,200
801 SE Mayo Dr
1/1 Ground Floor Condo with screen porch, Community Pool and Laundry Facility on Premises.

HOMOSASSA
$1200
2369 S Tennyson Pt
2/2/1 Fenced back yard. Newly remodeled home

$2500
9 Dahoon Ct.
3/2/2 Pool home, lawn & maintenance included

$1200
9779 W Cleveland Lane
(NO PETS) 2/1/1 with fenced in yard

COMMERCIAL - INVERNESS
1,000 sq. ft. units located at Croft Plaza

50014597

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

VACANT LAND
High and Dry Lot with nice trees- Crystal Paradise Estates - Unit 3 $20K obo **352-464-0477**

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE



CITRUS HILLS
Clearview Estates - Grand pool home- Move In Ready! 3 BedRms/ Den/ 2-1/2 Baths/ 2 CarGar on 1 Acre 2,226 LivSF $419K
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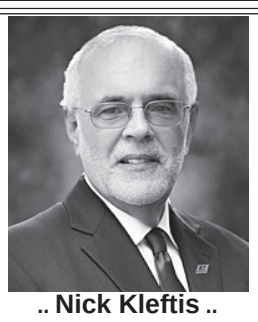
CITRUS SPRINGS
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FSBO New Construction 3/2/2 CHCC Regina Showcase model, 1771 sq ft on .5 acre golf course lot with rear southern exposure. Well/septic/ sprinkler system included **$385k**
Available March 2022
772-979-0463



Inverness Home
Beautiful Updated Pool Home! By Ft. Cooper Forrest & short Walk to Bike Trail!
Great 2/2/1 + FL Room & Fenced. Move in Ready!
$229,000
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Inverness Home
Move-In Ready! 3/2/2 on large 100'x100' lot w/Workshop Covered screened Lanai.
$174K
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LECANTO HOME
Great home w/Front Porch on private 1.30 Acres!
3/2/2 Block & Stucco Home across from State Forest.
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TRANSPORTATION

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2014 TRX 400X
Low Miles-
$4,500 obo cash only
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WANTED
JUNK & ESTATE CARS
Up to $1,000 & MORE
(352) 342-7037

BOATS

2007 Key West 17.2CC 90HP, $13500 / NEW Garmin Striker Vivid 7cv GPS, dual batteries, garage kept, seat cushions, bimini top, continental swing tongue trailer. Call
352-560-3207

2011 TWIN VEE
17ft Twin Vee Classic, center console, 50HP Honda 4 stroke, bait well, 55lb trolling mtr, fish finder, bimini top & galv. trailer. Garaged- Excellent Cond! $12K **(352) 302-9842**

SOLD

- 14 Foot G3 Yamaha Wide Jon Boat w/ Trailer and 9.9 Yamaha Motor 4 stroke Looks NEW , Very Low hrs (5) $5000

CHECK THIS OUT!

HONDA
90 HURRICANE
22'6" Needs TLC - Includes Trailer
$5,300
(352) 794-6600

WANTED - ALL RV's & BOATS - Any condition - We come to you- **SAME DAY CASH (941) 284-3498**

CARS/SUV

LINCOLN
2011 TOWN CAR Continental Series, 1 owner , garage kept, 4 New tires, New shocks, 63K orig. miles $11K **352-637-3552 or 352-201-4822**

JAGUAR
2003, 1ST YR W/ V8
$10k
(352) 422-7170

89 Mustang Convertible 5.0
5sp, Rust Free, Many Extras! Too much to List- Discs, SS Exhaust, etc $15,000
(352)436-9718

TOYOTA AVALON
2011 / 1-owner, garage kept, reg maint, GPS, Exc Cond fully loaded, cold a/c, 127K mi moon roof, $10,400 obo
808-203-9621 call or text

Toyota 2014 Prius,
Hybrid**,** 60,200 mi, exc gas mil (50 mpg), Dark blue with light gray interior, great condition
$**10,900 813-760-8690**

CLASSICS

MG
1976 MGB, Red, NEW top & upholstery, wire wheel, $6900 Make Offer
(352)346-1053

CLASSICS

PLYMOUTH
1969 Sport Satellite
Numbers Matching Car
383 V8 (Prof. Rebuilt Power Brakes)
SHOW WINNER
$34,500 **352-746-3749**

MOTORCYCLES

HARLEY 2016
Switchback, 2,935 mi., $10,500 or BEST OFFER
352-765-4679

HARLEY DAVIDSON
2007 Fat Boy, *Vance & Hines Pipes*, 13k Original Miles, **Well Maintained!** $7950 OBO
516-819-9196



HARLEY-DAVIDSON
2001 FAT BOY
1-owner, lots of extras, low miles, Excellent Shape!
$7500
352-220-4752



HARLEY-DAVIDSON
SPORTSTER 1200
3 wheeler- (rear end kit-IMC Trike)-has Reverse, Emergency Brake & Hitch for towing. **Call RICK**

TRIKE V8
MUST SEE! Factory Made, Excellent Cond./ Low Miles, Auto Trans w/ reverse
1 of a Kind- Pics online
Reasonable $19,900
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1994 INTERNATIONAL 4900 CREW CAB TURBO DIESEL
17,985 orig mi., 1K gal. water tank w/ 1250 GPM pump. Runs & Drives PERFECT! $29,500 obo Call/Text **305-720-8033**

RECREATIONAL VEHICLES

2007 Trail Cruiser Lite
19ft., Loaded, Cold A/C & Heat, Very Clean, sleeps 6-7
$7900 OBO **(352) 765-3089**

2018 STRYKER
TOY HAULER, FIFTH WHEEL, 2 Slides, 41ft, $59,995
352-795-7820

RECREATIONAL VEHICLES

2020 JAYCO
NORTH POINT, FIFTH WHEEL, 5 Slides, 44ft, $70,995
352-795-7820

FIFTH WHEEL
2012 36FT, KEYSTONE COUGAR, 3 slides, lg kitch island, 2 recliners, lg couch, fireplace, lg dining area, jack-n-jill Bath, Very Clean $26,500
(815) 557-3330

RECREATIONAL VEHICLES

FIFTH WHEEL- 2021 44.5ft LUXE Toy Hauler- Arctic Pkg +W/D, 2 heat pumps & 1 A/C-heater, bath tub, side covers, loaded, plus more $165K Call Bruce at **352-398-7012**

WANTED - ALL RV's & BOATS - Any condition - We come to you - **SAME DAY CASH (941) 284-3498**

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000TV5X

MISCELLANEOUS

6695-1231 FCRN
PUBLIC NOTICE

As of January 14, 2022 Jeffrey Marcus, M.D., FACS will be closing our practice. If you would like a copy of your medical records or would like a copy transferred to another physician, please contact our office at 352-726-3131 or write us at 821 Medical Court East, Inverness, FL 34452.

Published December 10, 17, 24 & 31, 2021

LEGALS

6718-1224 FCRN
FICTITIOUS NAME NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that Cabot SMW OpCo LLC, as owner, desires to engage in business under the fictitious name of Sugarmill Woods Country Club. The business is located at 1 Douglas Street, Homosassa, Citrus County, Florida 34446, and intends to register the said name with the Division of Corporations, Florida Department of State, pursuant to section 865.09 of the Florida Statutes.

Published December 24, 2021

LEGALS

6716-1224 FCRN

Notice under Fictitious Name Law, pursuant to Section 865.09, Florida Statutes.
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the undersigned, desiring to engage in business under the fictitious name of:
ALPHA EXTERIOR CLEANING
located at **500 N Indigo Ter** in the County of **Citrus**, in the City of **Hernando, FL 34442-4832** intends to register the said name with the Division of Corporations of the Florida Department of State, Tallahassee, FL.
Dated at **Hernando**, Florida, this **December** day of **17, 2021.**
CARR CHRISTOPHER ALAN
Published December 24, 2021



LEGALS

6717-1224 FCRN

Notice under Fictitious Name Law, pursuant to Section 865.09, Florida Statutes.
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the undersigned, desiring to engage in business under the fictitious name of:
BERTIES
located at **5625 W Pine Circle** in the County of **Citrus**, in the City of **Crystal River, FL 34429-7768** intends to register the said name with the Division of Corporations of the Florida Department of State, Tallahassee, FL.
Dated at **Crystal River**, Florida, this **December** day of **17, 2021.**
NEWCOMER BRITTANY ANN
Published December 24, 2021

LEGALS

6690-1231 FCRN 2021-DR-1779 Notice of Action For Termination of Parental Rights and Stepparent Adoption
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR CITRUS COUNTY, FLORIDA
CASE NO.: 2021-DR-1779
IN THE MATTER OF THE TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS AND PROPOSED ADOPTION OF MINOR CHILDREN:

CORBIN TOBIAS GENDRON d/o/b 10/31/2008,
DANNY ETHAN GENDRON d/o/b 03/11/2011,
Minor Children/Adoptees.

NOTICE OF ACTION FOR TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS AND STEPPARENT ADOPTION

TO: LEVON EDDIE GARCIA
LAST KNOWN ADDRESS: 9765 SOUTH BROOK DR APT 2116 JACKSONVILLE FLORIDA 32256

YOU ARE NOTIFIED that a Joint Petition for Adoption by Stepparent has been filed against you and that you are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, to it on CHARI GENDRON CUMBUS AND DANIEL EARL CUMBUS, whose address is c/o LAW OFFICE CHARLES P. VAUGHN, 120 N. SEMINOLE AVE. INVERNESS, FL 34450, on or before January 9, 2022, and file the original with the clerk of this Court at 110 N. APOPKA AVENUE, INVERNESS, FLORIDA 34450 before service on Petitioner or immediately thereafter.

If you fail to do so, a default may be entered against you for the relief demanded in the petition.

The minor children are identified as follows:

Date of Birth	Place of Birth
October 31. 2008	ORLANDO. FLORIDA
March 11. 2011	WINTER PARK. FLORIDA

Physical Description of Respondent:
Age: 43
Race:
Hair Color: Unknown
Eye Color: Unknown
Approximate Height: Unknown
Approximate Weight: UNKNOWN

Copies of all court documents in this case, including orders, are available at the Clerk of the Circuit Court's office. You may review these documents upon request.

You must keep the Clerk of the Circuit Court's office notified of your current address. (You may file Designation of Current Mailing and E-Mail Address, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915.) Future papers in this lawsuit will be mailed or e-mailed to the addresses on record at the clerk's office.
Dated: 12/3/2021

ANGELA VICK
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
{{County Court Seal}}
By: /s/ Samantha Leap
{Deputy Clerk}

Published December 10, 17, 24 & 31, 2021

LEGALS

6719-1224 FCRN
FICTITIOUS NAME NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that Cabot SW OpCo LLC, as owner, desires to engage in business under the fictitious name of Southern Woods Golf Club. The business is located at 1501 Corkwood Blvd., Homosassa, Citrus County, Florida 34446, and intends to register the said name with the Division of Corporations, Florida Department of State, pursuant to section 865.09 of the Florida Statutes.

Published December 24, 2021.

LIENS

6720-1224 FCRN

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE: ADVANCED TOWING gives Notice of Foreclosure of Lien and intent to sell these vehicles at **08:00 am at 4875 S Florida Ave Inverness, FL 34450-0537**, pursuant to subsection 713.78 of the Florida Statutes. **ADVANCED TOWING** reserves the right to accept or reject any and/or all bids.

Date of Sale: 01/08/2022
WBABS53431JU87461 2001 BMW

Published December 24, 2021

CREDITORS

6715-1224 FCRN James L. Finnen
09-2021-CP-000927 Notice to Creditors
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR CITRUS COUNTY, FLORIDA.
PROBATE DIVISION.
CASE NUMBER: 09-2021-CP-000927
IN RE: THE ESTATE OF:
JAMES L. FINNEN,
Deceased.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

The administration of the Estate of James L. Finnen, Deceased, whose date of death was September 25, 2021; File Number 09-2021-CP-000927, is pending in the Circuit Court for Citrus County, Florida, Probate Division, the address of which is Citrus County Courthouse, 110 North Apopka Avenue, Inverness, Florida 34450. The names and addresses of the Personal Representative and the Personal Representative's attorney are set forth below.

All creditors of the Decedent and other persons having claims or demands against Decedent's estate, on whom a copy of this notice is required to be served, must file their claims with this court WITHIN THE LATER OF 3 MONTHS AFTER THE TIME OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE OR 30 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF SERVICE OF A COPY OF THIS NOTICE ON THEM.

All other creditors of the Decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate must file their claims with this court WITHIN 3 MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE.

ALL CLAIMS NOT FILED WITHIN THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH IN SECTION 733.702 OF THE FLORIDA PROBATE CODE WILL BE FOREVER BARRED.

NOTWITHSTANDING THE TIME PERIOD SET FORTH ABOVE, ANY CLAIM FILED TWO (2) YEARS OR MORE AFTER THE DECEDENT'S DATE OF DEATH IS BARRED.

The date of the first publication of this notice is date of first publication of this notice is December 17, 2021.

Personal Representative:
Scott A. Finnen
14450 NE 75th Street
Bronson, Florida 32621

Attorney for Personal Representative:
Douglas K. McKoy Florida Bar Number: 0101744
Attorney for Petitioner
302-B North Main Street, Trenton, Florida 32693
Telephone: (352) 490-4488 Facsimile: (352) 463-0773
E-Mail: doug@chieflandlegal.com
E-Mail: legalassistant@chieflandlegal.com
Published December 17 24, 2021

SUDOKU

THE SAMURAI OF PUZZLES By The Mepham Group

Level 1 2 3 4

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

Solution to Thursday's puzzle 12/24/21

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

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit, 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit **sudoku.org.uk**

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Friday, December 24, 2021

KATHLEEN SAXE

WORD GAME

TODAY'S WORD -- TERRAIN

(TERRAIN: teh-RANE: A geographic area; a piece of land.)

Average mark 28 words
Time limit 40 minutes

Can you find 38 or more words in TERRAIN?
The list will be published tomorrow.

YESTERDAY'S WORD -- VERBOSE

veer	robe	obese	serve
verb	rose	observe	sever
verse	rove	obverse	sober
verso	beer	over	soever
erose	bore	seer	sorb
ever	breve	sere	sore

RULES OF THE GAME: 1. Words must be of four or more letters. 2. Words that acquire four letters by the addition of "s," such as "bats" or "dies," are not allowed. 3. Additional words made by adding a "d" or an "s" may not be used. 4. Proper nouns, slang words, or vulgar or sexually explicit words are not allowed. Contact Word Game creator Kathleen Saxe at kzsaxe@gmail.com.

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ACROSS

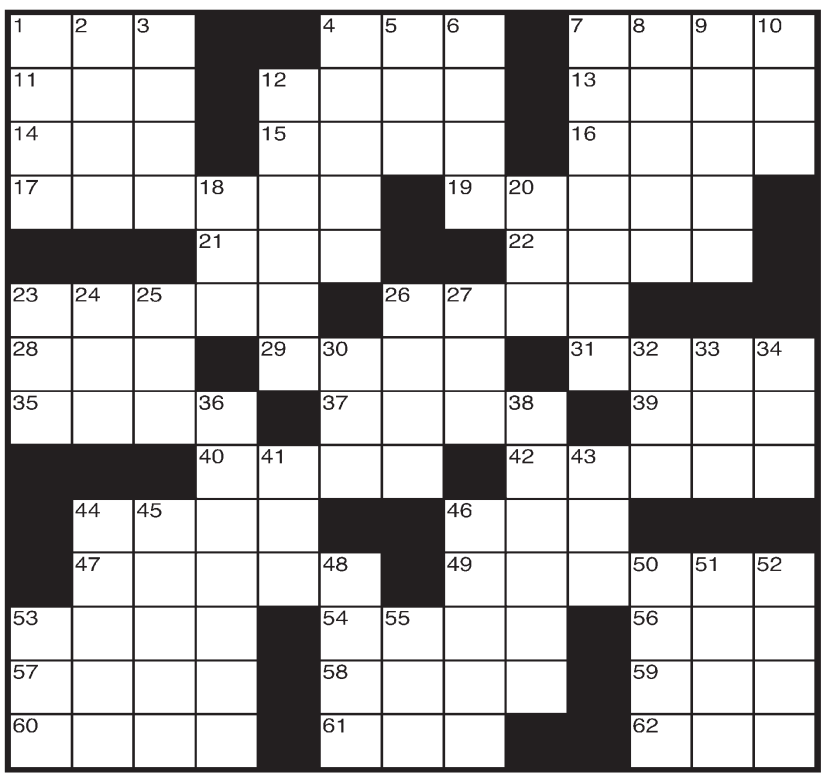
1 Fall guy
4 Sports off.
7 Pinnacle
11 Shade of a color
12 Popeye's hi
13 A Barrymore
14 Potato st.
15 Burn slightly
16 Bud holder
17 Environment
19 Helen, in Spanish
21 Ultimate degree
22 Irritates
23 Fountain in Rome
26 Downward slopes
28 Tire filler
29 Nippy
31 Collar style
35 Runs for fitness
37 Join forces
39 Key point
40 Weight
42 UHF part
44 Firewood quantity
46 Exercise place
47 Pastis flavor
49 Farthest point
53 Cup edge
54 Molokai neighbor
56 Puppy plaint
57 Perched on
58 Type of swan
59 X-ray kin
60 Cub Scout groups
61 Mellow
62 Dry, as champagne

DOWN

1 Wedge
2 Car import
3 Sound of thunder
4 "I see" (hyph.)
5 Ostrichlike bird
6 Ceremonial fire
7 Unfavorable
8 Kind of phone call
9 Butte cousins
10 Bleater
12 Mild acid
18 Mdse. bill
20 Edge
23 — Mahal
24 Guanabara Bay port
25 Foot-pound relative
26 Simpleton
27 Sick
30 Ill-mannered one
32 HBO alternative
33 Not just my
34 Cagers' org.
36 Prawns
38 Affluent person
41 Newspaper execs
43 — -tzu ("Tao" author)
44 — blanche
45 Pungent veggie
46 Recipe verb
48 — Thompson of films
50 Fitness centers
51 Patrick's domain
52 Typical DeMille flick
53 Terrible
55 Dog days mo.

Answer to Previous Puzzle

■	S	A	F	E	■	■	R	A	B	B	I
P	A	V	L	O	V	■	C	A	R	E	E	N
C	R	E	A	S	E	■	O	P	E	R	A	S
T	A	R	S	■	N	U	N	■	■	G	U	T
■	■	■	K	I	D	S	K	I	N	■	■	■
A	R	N	■	C	E	O	■	R	O	S	E	■
B	O	I	L	E	D	■	■	I	D	E	A	S
S	O	N	I	C	■	■	A	S	S	E	S	S
■	M	A	M	A	■	E	V	E	■	P	E	N
■	■	■	A	P	P	E	A	S	E	■	■	■
V	O	W	■	■	R	O	I	■	L	U	B	E
I	N	H	A	L	E	■	L	A	U	R	E	L
S	T	I	L	E	S	■	S	Y	D	N	E	Y
A	O	R	T	A	■	■	■	N	E	S	T	■



12-24

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WORDY GURDY®

BY TRICKY RICKY KANE

Every answer is a rhyming pair of words (like FAT CAT and DOUBLE TROUBLE), and they will fit in the letter squares. The number after the definition tells you how many syllables in each word.

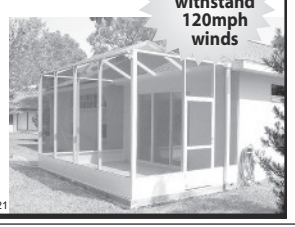
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1. The Santa topper over there (1)
2. Raise up a Secret Santa present (1)
3. Didn't get on Santa's "nice" roster (1)
4. Powerful ditty like "Santa Baby" (1)
5. Much improved "Dear Santa" epistle (2)
6. "The Santa Clause" star Tim's gas units (2)
7. Santa Claus aka Kris's one-dollar bills (2)

ANSWERS
1. THAT HAT 2. LIFT GIFT 3. MISSED LIST 4. STRONG SONG
5. BETTER LETTER 6. ALLENS GALLONS 7. KRINGLES SINGLES

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CREDITORS

6713-1224 FCRN Laroy Jay Farnsworth
2021-CP-000617 Notice to Creditors
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR CITRUS COUNTY, FLORIDA
PROBATE CASE NO. 2021-CP-000617
IN RE: THE ESTATE OF
LAROY JAY FARNSWORTH,
Deceased.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

The administration of the estate of LAROY JAY FARNSWORTH, deceased, whose date of death was April 7, 2020, is pending in the Circuit Court for Citrus County, Florida, Probate Division, the address of which is 110 North Apopka Avenue, Inverness, FL 34450. The names and addresses of the personal representative and the personal representative's attorney are set forth below.

All creditors of the Decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate on whom a copy of this notice is required to be served must file their claims with this court WITHIN THE LATER OF 3 MONTHS AFTER THE TIME OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE OR 30 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF SERVICE OF A COPY OF THIS NOTICE ON THEM.

All other creditors of the Decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate must file their claims with this court WITHIN 3 MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE.

ALL CLAIMS NOT FILED WITHIN THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH IN FLORIDA STATUTES SECTION 733.702 WILL BE FOREVER BARRED.

NOTWITHSTANDING THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH ABOVE, ANY CLAIM FILED TWO (2) YEARS OR MORE AFTER THE DECEDENT'S DATE OF DEATH IS BARRED.

The date of first publication of this Notice is December 17, 2021.

Personal Representative:
ANGELA FULGENZI
9193 N. Arcadia Way
Citrus Springs, FL 34434

Attorney for Personal Representative:
DIANE COHNE, P.A. Florida Bar No.: 11801
DIANE COHEN, ESQ.
120 North Shore Road
Hampton, NH 03842
Telephone: (352) 637-1899
Email: dcohen@dianecohen.com
Published December 17 & 24, 2021.

CREDITORS

6708-1224 FCRN Ronald Eric Stinedurf
2021-CP-000939 Notice to Creditors
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR CITRUS COUNTY, FLORIDA
PROBATE CASE NO. 2021-CP-000939
IN RE: THE ESTATE OF
RONALD ERIC STINEDURF aka
RONALD E. STINEDURF,
Deceased.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

The administration of the estate of Ronald Eric Stinedurf aka Ronald E. Stinedurf, deceased, whose date of death was August 27, 2021, is pending in the Circuit Court for Citrus County, Florida, Probate Division, the address of which is 110 North Apopka Avenue, Inverness, FL 34450. The names and addresses of the personal representative and the personal representative's attorney are set forth below.

All creditors of the decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate on whom a copy of this notice is required to be served must file their claims with this court ON OR BEFORE THE LATER OF 3 MONTHS AFTER THE TIME OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE OR 30 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF SERVICE OF A COPY OF THIS NOTICE ON THEM.

All other creditors of the decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate must file their claims with this court WITHIN 3 MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE.

ALL CLAIMS NOT FILED WITHIN THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH IN FLORIDA STATUTES SECTION 733.702 WILL BE FOREVER BARRED.

NOTWITHSTANDING THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH ABOVE, ANY CLAIM FILED TWO (2) YEARS OR MORE AFTER THE DECEDENT'S DATE OF DEATH IS BARRED.

The date of first publication of this Notice is December 17, 2021.

Personal Representative:
Cheryl A. Sharp
10853 43rd Street North
Apt. 1206
Clearwater, FL 33762

Attorney for Personal Representative:
Denise VanNess, Esq. Florida Bar No. 0845050
VanNess & VanNess, P.A. 352-795-1444
1205 North Meeting Tree Blvd., Crystal River, FL 34429
dvn@vannesspa.com bag@vannesspa.com
Published December 17 & 24, 2021.

CREDITORS

6685-1210 FCRN 2021-CP-975
Walter Glen Shelton, Jr. Notice to Creditors
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR CITRUS COUNTY, FLORIDA
PROBATE DIVISION
File No. 2021-CP-975
IN RE; ESTATE OF
WALTER GLEN SHELTON, JR.,
Deceased.

AMENDED NOTICE TO CREDITORS

The administration of the estate of WALTER GLEN SHELTON, JR., deceased, whose date of death was December 10, 2018, is pending in the Circuit Court for CITRUS County, Florida, Probate Division, the address of which is 110 N. Apopka Ave., Inverness, FL 34450. The names and addresses of the personal representative and the personal representative's attorney are set forth below.

All creditors of the decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate on whom a copy of this notice is required to be served must file their claims with this court ON OR BEFORE THE LATER OF 3 MONTHS AFTER THE TIME OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE OR 30 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF SERVICE OF A COPY OF THIS NOTICE ON THEM.

All other creditors of the decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate must file their claims with this court WITHIN 3 MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE.

ALL CLAIMS NOT FILED WITHIN THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH IN FLORIDA STATUTES SECTION 733.702 WILL BE FOREVER BARRED.

NOTWITHSTANDING THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH ABOVE, ANY CLAIM FILED TWO (2) YEARS OR MORE AFTER THE DECEDENT'S DATE OF DEATH IS BARRED.

The date of first publication of this Notice is December 24, 2021.

Personal Representative:
SHERYL L. SHELTON
4210 S. Big Al Point
Inverness, FL 34452

Attorney for Personal Representative:
ROBERT S. CHRISTENSEN, ESQ.
Attorney for the estate
Florida Bar Number: 0075272
PO Box 415, Homosassa Springs, Florida 34447
Telephone: 352-382-7934 Fax: 352-382-7936
E-mail: christensenlaw@earthlink.net
Published December 24 & 31, 2021

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2008 FORD TAURUS L29562B — $8,998	2015 NISSAN ROGUE 1112YG012 — $17,998	2017 KIA SEDONA 9P0815A — $24,998
2006 DODGE CHARGER L29664A — $9,998	2018 HYUNDAI SONATA YT13746B — $17,998	2015 JEEP WRANGLER M7245B — $24,998
2015 MITSUBISHI MIRAGE L29507A1 — $9,998	2015 HYUNDAI TUCSON 5P6066A — $17,998	2020 TOYOTA CHR AT1443B — $25,383
2014 CHEVROLET SPARK K8235B — $9,998	2016 HYUNDAI TUCSON L29717A — $18,674	2019 JEEP COMPASS L28020A — $25,475
2011 KIA SORENTO 11L29482B — $10,847	2017 JEEP COMPASS Y13652A — $18,998	2017 FORD EXPLORER L29538B — $25,498
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2012 HONDA CR-V H14842B — $11,998	2015 HYUNDAI SANTA FE Y13673A — $18,998	2020 MITSUBISHI OUTLANDER Y13803B — $25,998
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2014 KIA OPTIMA Y13842A — $12,998	2019 NISSAN VERSA X6111A — $18,998	2018 MAZDA CX-5 4K8449B — $26,883
2014 CHEVROLET SONIC M7345A — $13,883	2018 JEEP CHEROKEE XT5957C — $19,813	2016 LINCOLN MKC 6P1423A — $26,900
2015 KIA SOUL K8491B — $13,900	2017 CHEVROLET EQUINOX L29688B — $19,898	2019 FORD ESCAPE YT13743A — $26,998
2013 VOLKSWAGEN TIGUAN X6127A — $13,975	2017 TOYOTA COROLLA K8570B — $19,900	2018 FORD F-150 Y12450A — $26,998
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2018 FORD FOCUS H15031B — $16,998	2015 CADILLAC ATS 6A14166A — $22,900	2019 MAZDA MX-5 4P4130 — $31,383
2018 KIA SOUL Y13682B — $16,998	2018 VOLKSWAGEN BEETLE 6P1421 — $22,900	2019 DODGE CHALLENGER 10P1181 — $31,990
2013 KIA SPORTAGE K8499A — $16,998	2015 TOYOTA HIGHLANDER 11H14843B — $23,850	2018 FORD F-150 Y13630A — $33,998
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