

► "It is easy to perform a good action, but not easy to acquire a settled habit of performing such actions."

Aristotle, Nichomachean Ethics, 4th Century B.C.

CITRUS COUNTY CHRONICLE

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Founded by Albert M. Williamson

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

MILES TO GO

# Donate now for new DAV vehicle

After honorably and courageously serving their country, many veterans return home with visible wounds — loss of limbs, disfigurement — and others that are not so apparent, such as post traumatic stress syndrome, anxiety and the inability to return to life outside a war zone.

**THE ISSUE:**

New van for DAV.

**OUR OPINION:**

Worthwhile cause.

Medical care — physical, mental and emotional — is vital to the care, healing and reintegration of these heroes who fought and sacrificed so much for this country and its people.

But not all returning vets have the ability to seek medical care or the means to find their way to treatment facilities, such as those in The Villages or Gainesville.

One local group, however, does its best to accommodate those in need. But, now, as the miles have added up over time, members of the Disabled American Veterans Transportation Network need the community's help to help those most in need.

According to Joe Stephens, a driver for the organization, \$20,000 in donations is needed to help fund a new transport van through the DAV from the Ford Motor Company in Ohio. The actual cost of the van is \$35,000, but the state and national DAV organizations contribute the remaining funds.

According to Stephens, the group's current van has approximately 276,000 miles on its odometer. The van services patients in Citrus County, including Crystal River, Inverness, Hernando, Holder and Dunnellon.

The county, said Stephens, has nearly 22,000 residents who are veterans. Approximately 3,000 ambulatory veterans a year are transported to a Veterans Administration medical facility in either Gainesville or The Villages for appointments or treatments.

The patients range from young able-bodied men and women receiving minor treatment to disabled veterans and others who need frequent hospital care.

It is the season for giving, and while many residents may be facing donation fatigue by this time each year, a worthy cause such as this one really is the reason for the season. Our veterans gave there all, and some came home with less than they

left with. It is our patriotic duty to take care of those who so valiantly took care of us when we needed it the most.

Take the time to reach just a little bit deeper this season and find it in your hearts — and your wallets — to help out a worthy cause with its worthy efforts.

It really will be appreciated.

**Project information:**

■ Chapter 70, in Inverness, is the not-for-profit entity through which Stephens is collecting donations. Contributions are tax-deductible and can be mailed to: DAV Van Project, c/o Joe Stephens, 2797 W. Xenox Drive, Citrus Springs, FL 34433. He asked that all checks be made out to the DAV Van Project and cash cannot be accepted.

■ For more information or to have Stephens speak to your group about the DAV Van Project, call 352-489-5242 or visit [davfl70.yktc.us](http://davfl70.yktc.us) and click on "van service."



c/o Gerry Mulligan, The Chronicle, 1624 N. Meadowcrest Blvd., Crystal River, FL 34429.

**Editor's note:** On Dec. 15, the Chronicle published the Sound Off, "Missing hearing aid." Citrus County Veteran Services may be able to assist the caller. They can be reached at 352-527-5910.

**Survey says...**

I think all surveys now in this country are rigged. And if you've ever had statistics — which I have and got an "A" — you know that any survey can be skewed. These questions are rigged so that you have to pick one or the other and then they can make their case. It would be better if the survey was unanimous or not offered to only those that want to participate. Take a statistics course, study



about statistics and surveys and you'll start to have a more skeptical view of all these polls that are on the news.

**Seeking lower bills**

I'd like somebody to tell me, with all the advertising that we see about these new light bulbs saving millions and millions and millions of dollars, when is my electric bill going to start going down?

**Not in the daylight**

You know, I'm sitting here in Crystal River on (U.S.) 19 and the Christmas lights are on. It's 11:30 in the morning. Who's paying for them? Come on, man. Shut them off.

# 2013: The year of Big Brother

In his classic novel "1984," George Orwell warned about the evils of a totalitarian state dominated by a single ruling party with total power over its inhabitants. Oceania, his fictional superstate, is under complete surveillance by the authorities. The character known as "Big Brother" reminds everyone he is constantly monitoring the citizens of Oceania, mainly by "telescreen."



Cal Thomas  
**OTHER VOICES**

At the end of 2013, the federal government may not yet have telescreens, which in Orwell's imagination had the ability to eavesdrop on people's conversations and broadcast propaganda, but it does have the nonfiction equivalent — data collection, drones and other technological invasions of privacy.

Our government does have the National Security Agency.

And because we have the NSA, and drones and all the rest, U.S. District Judge Richard Leon recently ruled, in an ongoing civil lawsuit, that it's "significantly likely" that the agency's wholesale collection of our phone records is unconstitutional — a clear violation of the Fourth Amendment's protection against unreasonable searches and seizures. Judge Leon suspended his ruling to allow for appeals, but his objection to this information-vacuuming was clearly stated in his 68-page decision: "I cannot imagine a more indiscriminate and arbitrary invasion than this systematic and high-tech collection and retention of personal data on virtually every

single citizen for purposes of querying and analyzing it without prior judicial approval. Surely, such a program infringes on that degree of privacy that the founders enshrined in the Fourth Amendment."

President Obama has said, "Nobody is listening to your telephone calls." He named a panel to review the NSA's methods and the balance between privacy and security. The draft report, expected to be released next month, seems to favor privacy over security. A recent *Wall Street Journal* editorial, "Disarming Surveillance," supports the NSA's actions and thinks the board Obama appointed is making recommendations that would make data collection impossible, and us more vulnerable.

The *New York Times* sees it differently. Its editorial Tuesday was headlined "A Powerful Rebuke of Mass Surveillance."

So which is it? In Washington's tainted political atmosphere, you can be for maximum freedom and privacy ... until there is a terrorist attack. Then, the same people who argue for the Constitution to be taken literally when it comes to the Fourth Amendment (and who argue for a "living Constitution" on other issues) would demand to know why the government didn't do more to protect us.

How much privacy would Americans be willing to give up in exchange for a promise that the bargain will lead to more security? Our leaders regularly tell us they can't guarantee we won't be attacked again, so

might this be a Faustian deal with the government "devil"?

NSA Director Keith Alexander claims 50 potential attacks were prevented because of the government's surveillance programs, but we only have his word for it. "If you like your privacy you can keep it" wouldn't sound any more credible coming from Alexander than it did coming from the president when he gave us his line about keeping our doctors.

Freedom is a precious commodity. Like virtue, once it is given up it is difficult, if not impossible, to regain. A government that regularly attempts to encroach on our right to privacy must be restrained by the people. Additional hearings should be held on this critical issue and they should be nonpartisan, as difficult as that may be heading into another election season.

Jihadists don't discriminate between political parties. They have vowed to kill as many Americans as possible. Striking the right balance between security and freedom is critical to both. Recent history provides numerous examples of nations that have traded freedom for security and gotten neither.

What must be avoided is the kind of thinking Orwell warned against: "Doublethink means the power of holding two contradictory beliefs in one's mind simultaneously, and accepting both of them."

Freedom and security should not be contradictory, but complimentary. In an age of terrorism, this "devil" is really in the details.

Readers may e-mail  
 Cal Thomas at  
[tcaceditors@tribune.com](mailto:tcaceditors@tribune.com).



"WHAT MAKES YOU THINK WE CAN AFFORD TO RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE?"

LETTERS to the Editor

**How will we grow?**

Dear commissioners, Please read the following article, as it could very easily have been written about our county: [www.thebradentontimes.com/index.php?srnews&refno9392&categoryCommentary](http://www.thebradentontimes.com/index.php?srnews&refno9392&categoryCommentary).

The future is at hand now and many decisions are being made. If our leaders are truly looking into the far future, actions today do make an immense difference.

With clean industry, many people can be put to work and vacant properties put back on the tax rolls.

May I suggest you go after the solar industry and manufacturing perhaps of solar products. Also could you please review the permit fees for solar panels? At \$100 plus \$10 per panel, this adds up to an outrageous permit fee compared to the electrical fee at \$50 flat. It certainly appears that the fee schedule has been discouraging the solar industry severely in this county for many years. If you want to encourage clean growth, you need to make it possible instead of shooting it in the foot.

Healthy capitalism needs the ability to flourish and not be strangled at the starting line.

**OPINIONS INVITED**

- The opinions expressed in Chronicle editorials are the opinions of the newspaper's editorial board.
- 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 **Charlie Brennan** 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 600 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, fax to 352-563-3280, or email to [letters@chronicleonline.com](mailto:letters@chronicleonline.com).

Our county is a wonderful and beautiful place to live. When we work together and not under constrictive borders, we will flourish. We must think as a working unit, not at individual opportunities for advancement. We all live together

and must benefit each other, not benefit when the other fails.

Theresa Waldron  
 Lecanto

**A triathlon race across the county**

So I am quite impressed with the completion and work done on County Road 486. A nice-looking road.

Looking at the route before me I could not help but think what a great course this would make for a race. The contestants would start off with a swim at Tsala Apopka Lake, the beach there. Swim out a half-mile to a floating dock and around it, then back to the beach. From there the contestants would ride their bikes down C.R. 486 to the Walmart parking lot. From there the contestants would run down C.R. 486 to State Road 44 and head to Hunter Springs Park in Crystal River for a jump into the spring to finish the race.

How neat would that race be? Maybe 15 to 18 miles in all. A charity race? A race to save the manatees?

Send this one up the line for approval.

Dave Howe  
 Pine Ridge