



Seminole Voice

Composer > 6
These two teens heard their music at the Bob Carr



Great Day > 4
Check out our gallery of Oviedo's biggest festival



Blanket girl > 7
Nikki Kingsland has warmed up more than 2,000 people

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Nov. 18 - Dec. 1, 2011

Free!

Chuluota post office is back

BRITNI JOHNSON
The Voice

In rural Chuluota, businesses are few and far between. Located off South County Road 419, in an unadvertised, washed-white strip building set back from the road and behind some trees, is the Chuluota United States Post Office contract branch.

For the residents of Chuluota, this was their community post office, but one day it closed. It reopened months ago, but some residents said they're just finding out now.

"I just wanted people to know that the Chuluota post office is open," said Marcel Gajownik, a resident since 2000.

A history of instability

The Chuluota branch has had quite a history. Its first community contract office, which are smaller post offices run by private citizens, closed in 2005 after the USPS failed to make a good deal with the current contractor. That same year, residents lost the P.O. boxes in the former office.

In 2004, though, another contract post office, the one residents use now, opened. While the Oviedo USPS branch does inspect it, the office is run and supplied by manager Paris Patel and her family. They get

■ Please see **POST** Page 2

Breazeale sworn in

ISAAC BABCOCK
The Voice

One of the most powerful positions in Oviedo has a new face in Kathryn Breazeale, who officially took the oath of office to be city manager on Nov. 7.

But her first week on the job after the City Council appointed her on Oct. 20 was a contentious one, ending in the Council proposing new rules in how the city deals with the media.

Breazeale may seem like a familiar face for those who deal with city staff, as she's been helping to manage the city's finances as the active budget officer since December. Her quick rise to power in Oviedo comes after a long career in city management. The highest position she'd held previously was administrative services director for Wilmington, N.C., where she worked for seven years.

"I couldn't be more grateful for the opportunity given to me," Breazeale said following her swearing-in. "The unanimous



PHOTO BY ISAAC BABCOCK — THEVOICE

New Oviedo City Manager Kathryn Breazeale rose quickly through the management ranks since December.

vote, the support and encouragement has been great."

Media policy

But an "action packed" first week she had as city manager had some on the Council upset

over harsh treatment by an online journalist, and prompted at least one councilman to suggest new policies for granting interviews to city staff.

Describing the journalist in question as "rude" and "aggressive", Councilman Steve Henken suggested that the city change its policy toward the media to prevent harassment of city staff.

"I think what's happened in the last couple years, the media

■ Please see **MANAGER** Page 2

Support for local shops

SARAH WILSON
The Voice

Before heading out to shop this holiday season, local merchants want you to consider more than just the items on your wish list when it comes to where you decide to buy.

Sean Snaith, director of the Institute for Economic Competitiveness at the University of Central Florida, said the trend to spend during the holiday season has shifted greatly to big-box retailers and online websites and away from smaller, locally owned businesses because of the economy.

"Big-boxes are popping up everywhere for a reason," he said, "and it's not because people don't shop there."

Cory Skeates, executive director of the Oviedo/Winter Springs Chamber of Commerce, said this can put a strain on the local economy and the very people that fuel it: local business owners.

"I don't know if people often think about it, but these people that own these local busi-

nesses are our neighbors, the people we go to church with and socialize with," Skeates said. "Around the holidays I think it's really important to support our neighbors, friends and businesses."

To help support these local businesses across the country during the holiday season, American Express started an initiative dedicated to shopping at small businesses called Small Business Saturday. It's on Nov. 26, which is sandwiched right between Black Friday on Nov. 25 and Cyber Monday on Nov. 28.

Though the overall tally result of this day — held for the first time last year — may not be as substantial as those of its counterparts, Snaith said the day may help people give a second thought as to where they shop.

"It can help get more people to think about other opportunities to patronize local businesses as opposed to having their spending leave the area," he said.

A greater percentage of money spent at small businesses is reinvested back into the



PHOTO BY ISAAC BABCOCK — THEVOICE

Christy Ridgely hopes Small Business Saturday is a success for her Tropical Cat Creations in Oviedo.

local economy, Snaith said, which betters the local economic situation as a whole.

"The more money that is kept in the area, the better the local economy will be," he said.

Yet, he said, over the past few years con-

■ Please see **SHOP** Page 3

What's goin' on?

Winter Springs' Holiday Parade and Tree Lighting kicks off at 5 p.m. Dec. 3 at the Town Center. Call 407-327-1800 for details.

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Opening this week: 'The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn'

Edward and Bella celebrate their marriage while a werewolf pack and a council of vampires close in on them.



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USPS 008-093
Publisher statement on page 2.

THIS WEEK



THIS WEEK in history

Nov. 24, 1971 —

A hijacker calling himself Dan Cooper leaps from a Northwest Orient Airlines 727 over Washington state carrying \$200,000 he extorted from the airline. Wearing only sunglasses, a thin suit and a raincoat, Cooper parachuted into a thunderstorm with winds in excess of 100 mph. He was never found, making his the only unsolved hijacking in U.S. history.

MANAGER | Council blasts journalist

■ CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

has gotten very comfortable just being able to dial us up, but now I think we should be able to have some sort of process," Henken said. "We need to have a policy that can apply to everybody. I don't know what we'd want, but

"If you want to beat up on us, we're public officials ... but if you want to beat up on staff, that's over the line." — Mayor Dominic Persampiere

the way it is right now, it's not working for us."

City Attorney Lonnie Groot said an audio recording release form the journalist requested

Breazeale to sign was an "outrage," saying that it removed her chances of suing successfully if she was misrepresented in the final recording.

"That's what outraged me about this form," Groot said. "Whatever little protection you do have, the form takes it away."

In the end that interview was declined, though the Council said they would continue to be open to the media.

"If you want to beat up on us, we're public officials... but if you want to beat up on staff, that's over the line," Mayor Dominic Persampiere said.

Connecting

Despite the unusual start to her tenure as city manager, Breazeale said she's looking forward to helping improve the city's connection with the public, and to make it run more efficiently.

"I look forward to the visions and opportunities [Council and I] discussed," Breazeale said. "I look to put customer service and 'citizens first' back in Oviedo."

Persampiere said he's confident that she'll fit right in.

"Mrs. Breazeale is very energetic, she personifies Oviedo, she has two young children at home," Persampiere said. "She really is a reflection of the community. I see good things for her and our city."

POST | Reopened office still a secret to many residents

■ CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

no money from USPS.

At the end of January, the office closed to update its computer system and train the two employees, including Patel, on the new system. That process took about three months, and the office reopened in mid-April, unbeknownst to most Chuluota residents.

"A lot of people don't know we are open," Patel said.

Reluctantly using Oviedo's office

There are no signs pointing residents in the post office's direction, no announcements of reopening, and the only way someone would find out it's open is by choosing to visit the gas station in the same strip, also owned by the Patels.

Patel said they don't have any money for advertising, and though the USPS said they would try to help, they haven't.

In the meantime, residents have been driving to Oviedo to use that post office, about six miles away. But they aren't pleased with that. Lack of convenience to where they live, customer service, accessibility and ease of parking, and most of all, the long lines, have been some of the problems Chuluota residents have encountered.

"I literally bring a book to read in line," Gajownik said.

Some said they missed the atmosphere of their hometown branch.

"It's a sense of community out here," Mary Dall said.

Tough business

Contract post offices aren't an easy business, Patel said. They provide all of their supplies from their own pocket, along with the utilities for the building, which they own. Business has always



PHOTO BY ISAAC BABCOCK — THE VOICE

Chuluota's Patel family has kept the post office alive, despite weak revenue and the chance of thousands of other USPS offices closing nationwide.

been slow, but since closing and reopening, it's gotten even worse. They only break even.

"It's a very tough business," Patel said. "We're trying hard for it."

"Business is slow," husband Jay Patel said. "We never made a penny yet from that store."

That isn't uncommon in this economy and time, when post offices even in busy areas are in jeopardy, and most rural post offices don't make any money. Earlier this year, the USPS announced it would potentially close 3,700 offices across the nation, and ended this fiscal year with a \$5.1 billion net loss. Patel said their branch is

safe for now.

Even though it's hard for them to stay open, Patel said she loves her customers and giving them the service they need. She said she doesn't see them closing the post office any time soon, and will stay open as long as they can make it work.

"We are open to help the customers out," Patel said.

And while a younger generation might not understand the importance of the post office, Dall said hers still find beauty in the act of sending some love through the mail. She likes sending her grandchildren letters with stickers in the mail, something you can't get through email.

"It really kind of connects us," she said. "You want people to have the joy of opening a package."

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Learn more

The Chuluota full-service post office is located at 650 S. County Road 419, and can be reached by phone at 407-359-5987.

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SHOP | American Express offers \$25 credit to small biz shoppers

■ CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

sumers have been driven away from these pop and mom stores, in favor of the convenience and affordability of many big-box retailers.

America's Research Group founder and retail expert Brit Beemer said that in a survey he conducted last year, only 37 percent of people said they would definitely shop at an independent retailer that holiday season. He said this compares drastically to when he would conduct such surveys 25 years ago, and nearly 80 percent said they would.

"Generally I would say the independent dealer has struggled more so than the major chains," Beemer said. "...That doesn't mean they're beat, it just means that there's more of a challenge facing them."

In order to stand out, Snaith said, small businesses need to find their market niche and offer what big retailers can't, whether that is through unique products or personal customer service relationships.

"The ones who have lived through this are probably in a better position than they were before the whole recession started," Snaith said. "It's the Darwinian dimension of the recession — only the fittest survive."

Small business sound off

Many local businesses are taking Snaith's advice, and using their locality to provide consumers with one-of-a-kind products and one-on-one customer service to stand out.

Margo Meyer, owner of A Second Chance Quality Consignment in Winter Springs, said her store offers shoppers unique gifts and personal service that most big-box retailers can't offer. This, she points out, all while supporting the local economy.

"When you support local businesses it just helps everything in the local economy...Small businesses are what drive America," Meyer said.

On Small Business Saturday, Meyer said she plans to offer small promotions to customers to help draw them and give them an incentive to shop.

Lisa Mallardi, owner of Father and Son Imprints in Longwood, said she has seen the downfall of the economy put a strain on many small businesses. But, she said, it has given her motivation to diversify her business to fit into what people want now, and challenged her and

other small business owners to give consumers an even greater reason to choose their shops over the big-box stores.

"Your small business is never going to be able to compete with those big businesses," Mallardi said, "but small businesses can provide the better customer relationships to keep people coming back."

Christy Ridgely, owner of Tropical Cat Creations of Oviedo, said she's been trying to make her business stand out from the competition since it started with her unique, handcrafted products. Her presence in the community, interacting with locals at craft fairs and art festivals, she said, sets her apart — a perk of living and owning a business in the same community.

"I live, I work and I play in Oviedo, so that's where I want my money to go," Ridgely said. "I really think we all need to put our money back into our own communities."

Skeates said Small Business Saturday may be one new way to do that.

"I think any national push that can bring awareness to the importance of supporting local businesses can and will have an impact," he said.

Honoring vets



PHOTOS BY ISAAC BABCOCK — THE VOICE
Winter Springs honored vets on Nov. 11 while Palm Valley residents broke ground on a new veterans memorial that opens in February.



Learn more

If you register your American Express card online, and spend more than \$25 at a small business on Small Business Saturday, you can qualify for an automatic \$25 credit. For more information on Small Business Saturday, on Saturday, Nov. 26, visit www.smallbusinessaturday.com.

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Dr. Lauridsen joins general surgeon Jon Wiese, MD, and pulmonologist Antonio Rodriguez, MD, both of whom have been caring for patients in Seminole County for over 20 years. Drs. Wiese and Rodriguez are now seeing patients in the Oviedo office, as well as their established practices in Longwood.

To schedule an appointment with Orlando Health Physician Specialists, please call 321.842.3300.

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From my GARDEN to yours

Tom Carey

Tangy sorrel is a wake-up call ripped as leaves or blended into a dressing. Dandelion greens' bitter taste produces saliva to aid digestion and brings a complex depth of flavor to a salad of greens. Garden fresh parsley has an essence easily overlooked when merely used as a garnish. Kale and collard greens commit nutritional and texture aspects that the lighter greens lack.

Beyond the leaf, we can use many items from our garden for the big salad. Red radishes colorizing the verdant greenness is a short cut to holiday decorating. The tops of the radish plant are edible and are included with the mustard family of flavors. Diced kohlrabi bulbs add a sweet crunchiness that leaves lack. Think of the bragging rights when such an obscure vegetable is proffered to your guests. Cherry tomatoes of all sizes, colors and shapes grow well at this time of year depending on the first frost dates. The yellow pear will definitely elicit comments, as will the black and purple cherry tomato. The productivity of green scallion onions can be taken full advantage of, using the whole vertical inclination of the plant.

The pilgrims depended on local. We don't, but probably should. Be thankful and eat well, my friends!

Thanksgiving salad

Thanksgivings for a bountiful harvest usually are exhibited in a representative feast while the larder is fully packed. Imagine a local economy of remote settlers relieved that the crop was successful, the game in the forest is plentiful and life will be forgiving. Today, our worldwide distribution system precludes any survivalist worries. A traditional North American spread, including our efforts from the local garden, is an understandable way to manifest our contemporary Thanksgiving holiday.

The sit-down dinner is started with a big salad. Growing for simple leaf harvest is a grand way



to get abundance from any gardening effort. A basic salad recipe is started with a foundation of lettuces. Loose-leaf lettuce comes in many colors, textures, shapes and flavors. When I plant lettuce, a few extra seeds are dropped into the soil, emulating Mother Nature's growing methods. The necessary thinning then provides the first harvest, those high-dollar gourmet baby greens. When the lettuce plants mature, depending on convenience and growing space, individual leaves versus full heads are harvested.

Complimenting the simple leaves of lettuce are a large group of plants, too numerous to mention by variety names, I categorize as salad herbs. The Asian mustards range from the mild flavored, frilly mizuna family to sharp tasting, dense spoon-leafed tatsoi. Don't worry, the spicy sharpness of individual pieces will be deferred to the broader taste when added to the bowl.

WHO IS CAREY

Tom Carey is the owner of Sundew Gardens, a you-pick gardening business in Oviedo. Visit the Sundew Gardens Facebook page.

Obituaries

Stephen R. Jones, 33, of Winter Springs, Fla., passed away Tuesday, Nov. 8, 2011.

Mindy L. Godfrey, 54, of Winter Springs, Fla., passed away Wednesday, Nov. 9, 2011.

Nenad Dukic, 53, of Casselberry, Fla., passed away Monday, Nov. 14.

Services were handled by Banfield Funeral Home, 420 W. State Road 434 in Winter Springs.

Cool beans



PHOTO BY ISAAC BABCOCK — THE VOICE
The Woman's Club's bean soup flew off the shelves at the 38th annual Great Day in the Country on Nov. 12, the largest annual festival in Oviedo.

To learn more about brain development, scan this code.

Babies aren't fully developed until at least 39 weeks in the womb. Important development of their brains, lungs and eyes occurs in the last few weeks of pregnancy. If your pregnancy is healthy, wait for labor to begin on its own.

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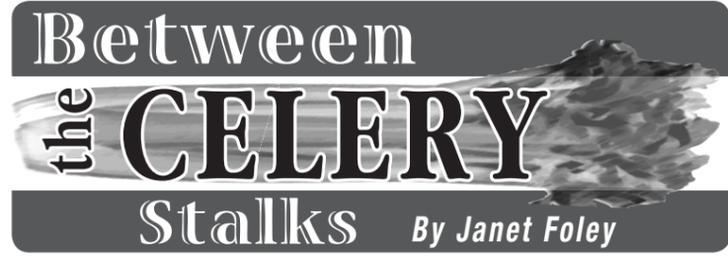
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It's turkey time, not Christmas



Chatting with my walking group the other day, some of my gals have said, "I have already started Christmas shopping." It is a wee bit too early for that. I am just getting over Halloween, our Farmer's Market, which I work each time, and then Great Day, which the Oviedo Woman's Club plans all year long. I enjoy Thanksgiving, and one now can hardly find a decoration for the occasion. Santa is taking over. Oh, maybe I am behind the times, but I think Thanksgiving should have a bit more publicity. Don't you all remember the pilgrims and their first Thanksgiving?

Big day

I understand that the 38th Great Day in the Country last weekend was one of the Woman's Club's biggest and certainly very well attended said the fire and police chiefs — about 66,000. I watched a lot of the crowd leave with Christmas gifts, toys and all sorts of other goodies, praises were given on the entertainment, food was great and the children's ac-

tivities were a big hit. The Oviedo Woman's Club works hard all year to put it on, and the proceeds from the event benefit local charities and organizations in our community.

Rockin' run

Jim Weber, my youngest, and several of my friends from Oviedo entered and ran the Rock 'n' Roll Marathon in Savannah, Ga., on Nov. 5. Jim finished in 4 hours, 22 minutes, and we should say congratulations to Shawn Green of Geneva for finishing in 4 hours, 14 minutes. This was her first marathon.

Another arts fair

Are you ready for another arts and crafts fair? Come and visit the show 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 19, and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 20, in the Longwood Historic District, Church and Warren avenues in Longwood. The Central Florida Society for Historic Preservation's 35th annual event is a juried arts and crafts show with food ven-

dors. Admission is free.

Beethoven concert

St. Luke's concert series at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 19, at St. Luke's Lutheran Church, 2021 W. State Road 426, Oviedo, will be presenting the University of Central Florida Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Laszio Marosi. They will present "Beethoven Forever." Admission is free. Need more information, call 407-365-3408.

Quilt documenting

Mark your calendars for Saturday, Jan. 28, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. for a Quilt Documentation Day, to be hosted by the Oviedo Woman's Club at 414 King St., Oviedo. Their goal is to find and make records of the wonderful quilts currently residing in Florida. They do not need to have been made in Florida. The information collected will be entered in the Quilt Index website. The data and photos will be available to anyone who wants view and study them online. Owners' personal information is not part of the viewable historical record. One must bring their quilt to the event where you will go to several stations where volunteers measure and examine the quilts, ask questions and fill in the form that collects all the information available. The quilt is photographed with a number on a card so the digital image can be

matched to the correct paperwork. Cost is free. There will be a professional quilt appraiser, Nan Moore, who will be available on a first-come, first-served basis to offer a verbal evaluation for you quilt for \$10 or a written appraisal for \$40 if you choose to have this done. If you need more information, please email sewing@oviedowomansclub.org or call Delaine at 407-359-1475.

New eatery in town

I keep hearing good things about a new restaurant that opened a short time ago in the Publix shopping center off State Road 434 down from Plant Fitness and IHOP called "Local A'fare." They had a booth at Great Day in the Country and after the event was over, several of the event Great Day committee of OWC went over to have dinner there. We all enjoyed our stay there, as the food was excellent, prices very affordable, the service was good and was a place to unwind so that you can really spend time with friends. Do come!

Gift Fair

Coming up, mark your calendar: Dec. 2 is the St. Luke's 14th annual Gift Fair, with more than 75 exhibits by local craftspeople and businesses plus food vendors. The event will take place at St. Luke's Lutheran Church, 2021 W. State Road 426 in Oviedo from 9

a.m.-2 p.m. Do come, admission is free.

Farmer's Market

The Oviedo Historical Society presents its annual Farmer's Market on Saturday, Dec. 3, from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. on the Lawton House Grounds and also that evening the society will host our second annual "Hometown Holiday Tree Lighting" community event. This year we will have Christmas music from Partin Elementary School Star Shine. In addition, we are working on securing other performers from the nearby churches. The evening will include refreshments with hot dogs, cookies donated by the Oviedo Woman's Club and drinks. I hear that Santa will arrive promptly at 6 p.m. by fire truck. This is one of the town's favorite events, and this one event is not to be missed. Everybody young and old wants to see Santa.

Happy Thanksgiving to one and all!

A thought

"Enjoy the little things, for one day you may look back and realize they were the big things."

— Robert Brault



Send word to Janet Foley about events and let her know what's going on around town by e-mailing celerystalks@att.net

Give thanks before it's lost



Thankfulness is a simple concept, but determining what we're thankful for often varies with our circumstances. The superficial version of thankfulness usually sounds like "I'm thankful for my friends and family." This year many of us are thankful beyond this knee-jerk answer. A job and home take on deeper value than what the accountants see when we face the fact that so many among us have neither. Some give thanks that home is a motel room instead of a car. Parents whisper thanks as they drive from the food pantry parking

lot with a bag of food for their family.

If we're wise, when we see loss happen to others around us, we should reevaluate our priorities and our choices. Sometimes it's the little things that become more valuable, sometimes it's the intangibles. True friendships, loyal relationships and active support truly are priceless. Giving up our time and treasure to help others in need brings a satisfaction to the soul. Think about inviting someone over to dinner during the Thanksgiving holiday or bringing a dish or two

to a neighboring family.

Thankful for our beds

I've mentioned before that the movie "The Blind Side" is one of my favorite movies of recent time. The Tuohy family is clustered around the television screens on Thanksgiving Day glued to the college pigskin competitions and juggling heaping plates on their laps. Then Mrs. Tuohy notices Michael Oher sitting alone at the polished dining room table. In that split-second everything that really mattered became clear and she clicked the off button on the remote. What a message and memory for her children to carry the rest of their lives. And then later, the famous scene after she furnishes a room for Michael and he said that he never had one before. "A room of your own?" she asks. "A bed," he replies.

Most of us cannot conceive of never having a bed but sadly it is a reality for thousands of children.

The term "teachable moment" is overused, but the upcoming holiday will hold many opportunities to create significant memories for your family that

have nothing to do with Black Friday or football.

Communicate your school views

If you missed the Geneva Citizens Association meeting held on Monday, Nov. 7, you missed a chance to watch some interesting dynamics. Commissioner John Horan came prepared to discuss the status of issues in the county such as the budget, SunRail, sunset of the penny sales tax and the disposal of unnecessary FEMA signs "Turn Around, Don't Drown."

Unfortunately he appeared to be completely unprepared to address the two topics folks came out to hear. The two front rows of the Geneva Community Center were nearly filled with citizens passionate about the Boars Nest land issue. Toward the back of the room, a row and a half of schoolteachers came to hear updates on possible school closings in the district.

Regardless of your stance on these issues, it was truly a study in communication and listening skills, or lack thereof. Mr. Horan could have simply said to the Boars Nest folks, "What you're

telling me is different than what I am hearing from my staff. Let me look into it." But for at least 15 minutes frustration grew because he argued and marginalized their feedback instead of actively listening to them.

The school issue was no better. Horan dismissed the issue saying he had nothing to do with school board budget cuts and had no control over it, and seemed completely unaware that it was a concern for his audience. In the end people just want to be heard, want their leaders to show an openness, behave like their advocate and to be educated on issues of concern to them. These are leaders we can be thankful for.



Please share your thoughts about Geneva at 407-221-7002, kphillips@observernewspapers.com with "Stetson's Corner" in the subject line, or fax 407-349-2800. Thanks!

This column is dedicated to Deputy Sheriff Gene "Stetson" Gregory, killed in the line of duty on July 8, 1998. Geneva will never be the same because of Deputy Gregory — it will be better.



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INTERESTS



THIS WEEK in human history

Nov. 28, 1582 —

William Shakespeare, 18, and Anne Hathaway, 26, pay a 40-pound bond for their marriage license in Stratford-upon-Avon. Six months later, Anne gave birth to their daughter, Susanna, and two years later, to twins. Shakespeare's plays were not published until after his death, when two members of his troupe collected copies of his plays and printed the First Folio (1623).

Child's play

SARAH WILSON
The Voice

In a small conference room backstage at the Bob Carr Performing Arts Centre, Caleb Bancroft of Oviedo sits and listens as five members of the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra play his piece for the first time.

He sits, suit and tie, his hands wringing the rolled score of the "Shining Brass March" he wrote, nodding his head as the melodies he crafted play out through the room.

Meanwhile on stage, Joseph Prior of Winter Park sits similarly under bright lights as a quartet of string players and a pianist rehearse his "Reverie and Song."

He shuffles the loose-leaf pages of his score, keeping tabs on what he has written and what he hears. "Can we take that faster?" he halts the ensemble mid-song. "What if I count off?" And with his count and three flicks of his wrist in time, the music resumes.

Upon only hearing the music for this Sunday, Nov. 13, performance it could appear to the ear as just a normal rehearsal for these music professionals, but a look at the program reveals each composer on the bill was born after 1993 — Prior is 17, and Bancroft is 15.

These local teens were two of seven 13- to 18-year-old composers chosen nationally as part of the 2011 Young Composers Challenge, created by Orlando-native Steve Goldman, to have their original works rehearsed, critiqued and performed by members of the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra. "For these kids, it's not just

an interesting local award they won," Goldman said. "This is a big national honor."

Crafting local talent

The Young Composers Challenge, held annually since 2004, Goldman said, has grown from a local movement to attracting submissions from across the United States.

"I guess no one had ever really thought that this would be something worthwhile, having professionals play kids' pieces, because I think people really underestimate how good some of these kids are," Goldman said.

This year, he said the judges of the challenge, including music and composition professors from Full Sail University, Rollins College and the University of Central Florida, selected the seven winners from 45 score entries from 13 different states.

"For these two local kids to have placed is really quite amazing," Goldman said. "They're both very talented local musicians. I'm proud that we're doing so well in Central Florida that these two kids are able to compete nationally."

Both Caleb Bancroft and Joseph Prior are homeschooled and compose in their free time not spent on schoolwork or playing in the Greater Orlando Homeschool Band.

Prior, who is a second-time winner of the challenge, having placed last year with his piece "Dance Royale," said he's been composing music since he was 12 and playing the French horn since he was 7 years old.

His mother, Rebecca Prior, said



PHOTO BY ISAAC BABCOCK — THE VOICE

Caleb Bancroft turned a passion for music into an opportunity of a lifetime. His piece was played at the Bob Carr.

Joseph has had music around him forever, from his father playing guitar to lull him to sleep as a baby, to Joe humming constantly as a child. He started on the French horn when he tagged along for his older sister's beginning band class. On a whim he tried it out, and the rest is history.

"I guess it kind of chose me," he said with a smile and a shrug.

Bancroft, who has been playing saxophone for five years, said he was equal parts surprised and excited when he learned that he won a spot in the Young Composers Challenge.

"It was the first piece I'd ever wrote," he said. "I mean I thought maybe I had a pretty good shot, but I was still surprised that I won."

After attending a workshop sponsored by the Young Composers Challenge earlier in the year, Bancroft said he began self-teaching himself the art of composing

through books and online.

"When he gets interested in something, he'll pretty much go all out," his mother, Cheryl Bancroft, said. "And that's what he's done with composing."

Making music

Christopher Wilkins, the music director and conductor of the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra who helped rehearse the Young Composers Challenge pieces, said he was very impressed with the skill and stylistic nuances in both Prior and Bancroft's works.

Both Bancroft, a woodwind player who composed a brass quintet, and Prior, a brass player who wrote a string quintet, went out of their own instrument families for their works.

"Both of their pieces had a very distinct American quality to them," Wilkins said. "Joe and Caleb both, particularly, showed the ability to be able to pick up on

styles of music and recreate and invent them."

Both Goldman and Wilkins said the local pair, as well as all other participants in the challenge, have a bright future in front of them. They said many former participants have used the recordings made during the Young Composers Challenge Composium to help them gain entrance to various prestigious music conservatories.

"You don't too often get to change lives as a regular aspect of what you do," Wilkins said. "But the Young Composers Challenge has been doing that for years."



Learn more

To learn more about the Young Composers Challenge, visit www.youngcomposerschallenge.com

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Family Calendar

Light Up UCF features an outdoor skating rink, holiday movies, music and a world-class holiday light show. The event runs through Jan. 1. Enjoy music, ice-skating and carnival-style rides. Entry is free, with skating and ride prices varying. Call 407-823-6006 for more details or visit lightupucf.com.

Santa will be available for photos through Dec. 24 at Oviedo Mall. Stay tuned to www.myOviedoMall.com for details on special photo nights including Pet Nights and School Spirit Nights.

The Cutest Santa Photo Contest will be hosted on Seminole Towne Center's Facebook page. Post your favorite photo of your kid with Santa on the Santa Photo App on Seminole Towne Center's Facebook page before noon on Wednesday, Dec. 14. The winner gets a visit from Santa before Christmas Eve, with a sleigh full of prizes valued at more than \$2,000. Visit Seminole Towne Center's Facebook page.

Story time at the zoo is every Wednesday in November (Nov. 23 and 30) from 10 a.m.-10:30 a.m. in the Rainforest Pavilion at Central Florida Zoo. Programs are presented by the Orange County Library System Storytellers. Call 407-323-4450 extension 123 for information.

Join Seminole County Natural Lands Program for **guided hikes and programs throughout the county**. Come learn about habitats and the wonderful and sometimes mysterious creatures that live there. For information about any of the hikes or programs, call 407-349-0959. It's \$3 per person. Please register in advance. (*for swamp walks, children must have completed fifth grade). November guided hikes:
Friday, Nov. 18: **Owl Prowl**, 7:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m., Geneva Wilderness Area

Before you hit the road to celebrate all you have to be thankful for this holiday season, **have your child's car seat inspected for proper installation**. Certified technicians from Seminole County Safe Kids Coalition will be waiting to help you at no cost at David Maus Chevrolet located off of Towne Center Boulevard and Rinehart Road in Sanford on Monday, Nov. 21, from 2 p.m.-4 p.m. Call 407-665-5641.

Spend a wild night at the **Central Florida Zoo** with a special overnight camping adventure at the Rainforest Pavilion on Dec. 3. Including an exciting flashlight tour of the zoo, and a continental breakfast, members will also have an opportunity to re-enter the zoo in the morning before anyone else arrives. It's \$17 per person. Campers must be 5 years or older. Call 407-323-4450 extension 123.

Email calendar submissions to editor@observernewspapers.com



PHOTO BY ISAAC BABCOCK — THE VOICE

Nikki Kingsland has donated more than 2,000 blankets to needy families, a charity that started three years ago after she saw a video about homelessness.

A gift of warmth for the needy

KRISTY VICKERY
The Voice

Nikki Kingsland's Christmas list doesn't contain an iPod, video games or a new laptop. There's just one thing the 11-year-old is asking for this year — blankets.

Her focus is not on what she can get, but what she can give to many Central Floridians in need.

This will be the third season that the Oviedo resident has made collecting blankets for Central Florida's homeless her mission, and her unselfish enthusiasm radiates just as strong as the day she decided on the idea.

"I feel really happy to help people, because when I give out a blanket their faces just look so happy and I know that I'm helping someone," Nikki said.

She first began her mission after watching a video in her third-grade class about homeless children and knew she had to do something to help.

"It showed 100 kids living in a homeless shelter, with beds and cots with nothing on them, so I went home and asked my parents if I could do something about it," Nikki said. "They didn't think I was serious at first, so I kept asking them and they sent out emails and started Facebooking it, and blankets started rolling in."

Nikki's mother, Tammie Kingsland, said the first year Nikki collected about 500 blankets within six weeks, and last year, with the help of the community, she collected around 1,500.

With the help of community partners Stor-All Storage in Oviedo, local churches, doctors offices, homeless shelters and HOPE (Housing Outreach Prevention Education), they have high expectations that they can surpass last year's number and have enough blankets for those in need.

HOPE Executive Director Joan Faulkner said she looks forward to working with Nikki at HOPE's Christmas in the City every year.

"To see a child doing something to help people in need is really an inspiration to all of us at HOPE," Faulkner said. "It's not only wonderful to the faces of those receiving that day, at Christmas in the City, but the joy of the faces that give... she is like a little angel providing for those in need."

Nikki's 11-year-old sister, Haley, also enjoys helping out with Nikki's mission, and said it always reminds her to appreciate how much their own family has.

"I always think about how lucky we are that we have stuff, and other people don't, and if it were the other way around, how would we feel if we got blankets from people," Haley said. "We'd be really grateful."

Rick Kingsland said he is really proud of his daughters and their mission to give so unselfishly. He said it's a very humbling experience.

"We are proud of them anyway, but now it's just one more reason to be proud," he said. "We're so blessed, and it's incredible that they (his daughters) get a chance to see just how blessed they are; it's a great lesson for all of us."

Nikki and her family are grateful for all that they have, and are looking forward to the gifts they will receive this Christmas season, not for themselves, but for those less fortunate.

"We are very thankful for what we do have, and thankful that we're able to give," Tammie said. "We get so much out of this; we feel like we are the ones getting the gift."



Learn more

Between now and Jan. 1, new or gently used blankets, adult sleeping bags and large backpacks can be dropped off at Stor-All in Oviedo (1931 W. State Rd. 426) during business hours. The organization can also pick up donations and will accept cash donations. For more information about Nikki's Blankets, visit www.nikkisblankets.webs.com or email nikkisblankets@gmail.com or for more information on HOPE or Christmas in the City visit www.hopehelps.org

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Calendar

NOV. 18

UCF Opera presents a free **Master Class with Dolora Zajick** from the Metropolitan Opera at Hagerty High School, 3225 Lockwood Blvd., at 7 p.m. Nov. 18. Call 407-823-4680.

“Laugh Your Way to a Better Marriage”, a seminar hosted by pastor Mark Gungor, is Nov. 18 from 7-10 p.m. and Nov. 19 from 9-12 p.m. at Metro Church in Winter Springs. The cost is \$40 per person or \$79 per couple. Call 407-366-7714 or visit metrocc.org

Winter Springs Police Explorer Annual Charity Golf Tournament, which benefits the Shop with a Cop Program, is 8:30 a.m. Friday, Nov. 18, at Twin Rivers Golf Club, 2100 Ekana Drive, Oviedo. Registration begins at 7:30 a.m. Tickets \$65/person or \$260/four-some. Call 407-327-1000 Extension 574 or email kchaulk@winterspringsfl.org

St. Stephen Catholic Church's annual craft fair is 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Nov. 18-19 and 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Nov. 20 at 575 Tuskawilla Road, Winter Springs. Call 407-767-5069.

NOV. 19

The first Seminole County South Rotary Club **art, craft and wine festival** at Crane's Roost in Altamonte Springs is Nov. 19 -20 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Visit www.ssrotary.com or contact Paul Crouch at 407 774-5905.

St. Luke's Concert Series presents the UCF Symphony Orchestra performing **“Beethoven's Symphony No. 8”** at 7 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 19. Admission is free. It's at St. Luke's Lutheran Church, 2021 W. SR #426, Oviedo.

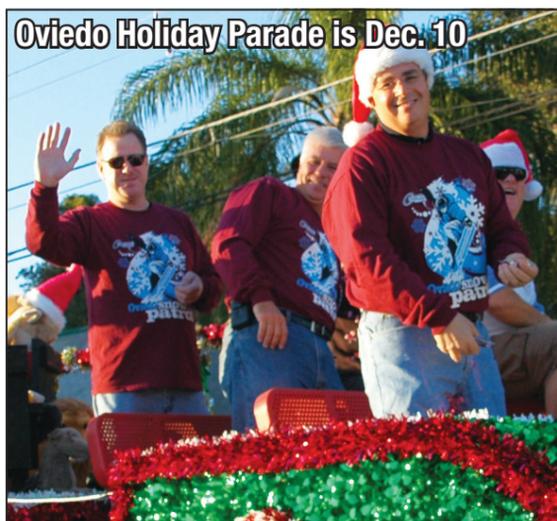
Join the **Florida Native Plant Society** at 9 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 19, on a walk through the Black Hammock Wilderness Area, 3276 Howard Ave., Oviedo. It's free. Call 407-302-7616 for more information.

NOV. 21

Tai Chi Class is Mondays at 9 a.m. at Adventure Martial Arts, 1425 Tuskawilla Road. Cost is \$12. They also offer weekly Women's Self-Defense Training classes. Call 407-695-7555.

DEC. 3

“Create a Backyard Habitat” is 9-11 a.m. Dec. 3 at Ed Yarborough Nature Center in Geneva. It's free but pre-registration is required. Call 407-349-0959.



Oviedo Holiday Parade is Dec. 10

Holiday calendar

NOV. 25

Celebrate the unofficial kickoff to holiday shopping at Oviedo Mall's **Friday Frenzy Shopping Spree** on Nov. 25. Doors open at 6 a.m. with a free gift for the first 100 people, DJ, prizes, snack stations and more!

The Sanford Welcome Center will be hosting the **“Wild Planet”** art show in conjunction with the Sanford Art Walk on Nov. 25. This event will include a book signing with Judy Martin, a local author and artist that has produced “Eyes on the Endangered”, a book that draws attention to endangered animals around the world. The event is open to the public and admission is free.

DEC. 2

Celebrate the holiday season at Seminole State College of Florida with one of the planetarium's most popular shows: **“The Star of Bethlehem.”** This planetarium favorite explores the mystery behind one of history's most famous stars and will be presented on two consecutive weekends: Dec. 2 and 3 and Dec. 9 and 10. Shows are at 7 p.m. and at 8:30 p.m.

DEC. 3

Join the city of Winter Springs as it kicks off its holiday festivities with the **Holiday Parade and Christmas Tree Lighting**. The event will feature fun, games, music and a visit by Santa Claus. The parade starts at 5 p.m. Dec. 3, followed by the Christmas Tree Lighting event at 6:30 p.m. It's all free, and it's all at the Winter Springs Town Center. For more information, call 407-327-1800.

International Holiday Festival presented by AFS Central Florida is Dec. 3 from 2-5 p.m. Experience holiday traditions, food, music and games from around the globe with our hosted students. Auction proceeds will establish a scholarship for high school international exchange. Bring your friends and neighbors and join us at 4725 E. Lake Drive, Winter Springs (Willow Creek Church). For more information, call 407-977-0286.

Frontier Civitan Club Tour of Homes is 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Dec. 3 and noon to 5 p.m. Dec. 4. Celebrate the beginning of the holiday season by touring festive holiday home designs in Winter Springs, Baldwin Park and Winter Park. Tickets are \$25 in advance and \$30 the day of the tour. Visit www.frontiercivitanclub.org or call 407-359-8941.

DEC. 4

Pet lovers can have their companion animal's photo taken with Santa at the Seminole Towne Center Santa set located in the mall's Center Court during the **Claus & Paws Pet Photos** event from 8 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 4. Call 407-323-2262 or visit www.simon.com

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Notes



ZumbaFest raises \$3K

Kids Together honored

Florida Educators of Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing Individuals presented its Honors of the Association Award to Kids Together Development Center in Oviedo. Three years ago a 4-month-old deaf child was enrolled at Kids Together. From the beginning Kids Together rose to the challenge and has worked closely with the little girl's family to meet her educational and developmental needs.

ZumbaFest raises \$3K

CFE Federal Credit Union organized a ZumbaFest this year at Oviedo Mall to raise funds for A Gift for Teaching. Casa de VIBE Dance Studio donated their time to lead the participants. The ZumbaFest raised almost \$3,000 and collected 30,650 school supplies.

Teacher of the year

Shawn Olmstead, ASL (American Sign Language) teacher at Winter Springs

High School, has been named Teacher of the Year by the Florida American Sign Language Teacher Association (FASLTA). Mrs. Olmstead received this award at the Florida Foreign Language Association Conference in Cape Canaveral on Oct. 15.

Featured runner

Rebecca Barnes Babb of Lake Mary, Fla., was selected as one of six Featured Runners in the ING New York



Kids Together wins award

City Marathon 2011 on Sunday, Nov. 6. Babb, an office administrator and mother of two boys in the Lake Mary area, ran in the world-renowned 26.2-mile event for the first time. Rebecca is raising awareness for Autism Speaks, the nation's largest autism science and advocacy organization. Her oldest son, Kadin, was diagnosed with autism two years ago. Visit <http://www.facebook.com/INGRunnersNation>

the high-energy small group (eight person max) workouts for 30 days! Donations are accepted through Dec. 15 (30 days start at time of donation). Call 407-542-5910 or visit 269 Aulin Ave., Ste. 1011, Oviedo.

Local considered for Reader's Digest

Mary Garrett of Altamonte Springs is one of the 150-word life stories being considered for publication in an upcoming issue of Reader's Digest magazine. Locals can show support by voting for Garrett's story or any others they like at facebook.com/ReadersDigest

Donations needed

Christmas in the City, a day the community unites to provide the spirit of Christmas to families in need, is 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 17 at First Baptist Church of Oviedo, 45 W. Broadway Ave. Donate new unwrapped toys, socks and underwear, gift cards to Target, Walmart or grocery stores, school supplies, and jeans. Several volunteers are needed to help with shepherding/family guides, wrapping gifts, sorting toys and clothes, set up and clean up. Your business or church can sponsor the event. Visit www.hopehelps.org to sign up. Families in need must pre-register at HOPE, 149 E. Broadway Ave., Oviedo, before Dec. 3.

Send 100-200 word submissions to editor@observernewspapers.com

Crooms is No. 1

U.S. News and World Report ranked Crooms Academy of Information Technology No. 1 in their Most Connected Classrooms ranking. The Most Connected Classrooms rankings measure the modernity and sophistication of high schools' online infrastructures, and the access students, faculty and parents have to them at school and home. Crooms Academy of Information Technology is Seminole County's only district-wide technology magnet high school. Principal Dr. Connie Collins said, "Crooms is indeed connected! We're educating millennials and our classrooms match up well with their talents and strengths..."

Food for Fitness

Breakthrough Fitness is doing their second annual food drive to help less fortunate families and kids have a fruitful Thanksgiving and a wonderful Christmas. Donate \$10 worth of non-perishable food items or a new toy and receive unlimited access to



Santa Claus Is Coming To Citizens Bank of Florida!

Friday, December 2nd

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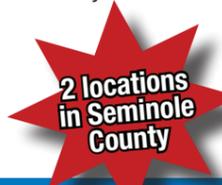
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ATHLETICS



THIS WEEK in sports history

Nov. 19, 1969 —

Brazilian soccer great Pele scores his 1,000th professional goal. Under Pele's leadership, Brazil won the World Cup in 1958, 1962 and 1970. During his career, Pele scored 1,282 goals in 1,363 games.

Knights need two wins

ISAAC BABCOCK
The Voice

The Knights haven't won two games in a row since the start of the season, but they'll need to do just that to if they want to finish the season with a shot at a bowl game.

The Knights (4-6, 2-4) watched a thrilling comeback fizzle on the final play as they fell 30-29 to then-No. 25 Southern Miss on Saturday, Nov. 12. The Golden Eagles rose to No. 22 after the win, and the Knights fell deeper into a losing record after coming closer to a fourth-quarter comeback win than they had all season.

The game started as a slow one on offense for both teams, as they struggled to find the end zone after repeatedly reaching within the 30-yard line. To that end, UCF's defense, despite frequently giving away much of the field, consistently stopped the Eagles outside the end zone, though kicker Danny Hrapmann drilled five field goals on the night after failed drives.

The final touchdown of the night for UCF came when backup quarterback Blake Bortles led an electric 89-yard drive in the final 2:47 that ended in a leaping touchdown catch by receiver J.J. Worton, surrounded by three defenders as time expired.

That's when a typically cautious Head

Coach George O'Leary decided to go for a two-point conversion to win the game rather than attempt a tying extra point and risk an overtime period against the dynamic Eagles offense.

That attempt would fail when a Bortles pass nearly sailed into the outstretched hand of Southern Miss defensive end Jacorius Cotton, who batted it away shy of its intended target, tight end Adam Nissley.

For their final two games of the season, the Knights will face two teams who have equal or better records, starting with East Carolina.

Thankfully for the Knights, East Carolina (4-6, 3-3) is also on a two-game losing streak after being blown out by Southern Miss 48-28 on Nov. 5 and edged by UTEP 22-17 on Nov. 12. The Pirates' weak offense should have trouble against UCF's defense.

That game kicks off in Greenville, N.C., at 7 p.m. on Nov. 19.

In their final and most crucial game of the season, the Knights return home to face UTEP (5-5, 2-4) at 7 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 25. The Miners have suffered some very narrow losses this season but edged the Pirates on Nov. 12. The last time the Knights faced the Miners in 2008, they were blown out 58-13.



PHOTO BY ISAAC BABCOCK — THE VOICE

Oviedo hosts East Ridge on Nov. 18 in the regional quarterfinal after a strong district showing.

Lions playoff bound

ISAAC BABCOCK
The Voice

The Oviedo Lions are headed to the playoffs, despite a 31-7 blowout loss they suffered at the hands of Lake Mary to end the regular season Nov. 11.

The Lions took the lead early in that game, jumping up 7-3 in the first quarter. But Oviedo would not score again in that game, watching Lake Mary walk away with it as they scored four unanswered touchdowns to finish them off.

Now the Lions (7-3, 3-1) get to face an East Ridge team that went 7-3 in the regular season and carries four straight wins into the postseason. Lucky for the Lions, they get to play the first round of the regional playoffs at home. That game kicks off at 7:30 p.m. Nov. 18.

Winter Springs

For the Bears (1-9, 0-4), an unfortunate sea-

son came to an ignominious end when they dropped their seventh straight game to end the season Nov. 11.

This time it was against a Seminole (3-7, 1-4) squad that hadn't won a game since September. The Seminoles blew the Bears out 55-14, with quarterback Dean Wilson throwing for 230 yards, including a 77-yard touchdown pass. A scoreless second half ended the worst season in team history.

Hagerty

The Huskies (6-4, 3-2) finished off their second-best season in history with a 18-13 win over Lake Howell on Nov. 11.

With the win, Hagerty finished the season with a three-game win streak. Unfortunately for the Huskies, their district was stacked this season with two teams (Lake Brantley and Lake Mary) that ran away with the district crown and runner-up spot, putting the Huskies in a solid third place but out of the running for the postseason.



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Map showing location at the intersection of County Road 419 and Riverside Blvd. Landmarks include Publix, Winn Dixie, Home Depot, Mitchell Hammock Road, Lockwood Blvd, and Lawton Chiles Middle School.

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Letters to Santa Contest

Kids, submit your letters to Santa Claus, starting with "The gift I most want to give is ..."

The winner of the contest will ride for one night on an Oviedo fire truck with Santa Claus as he greets residents on the week of Dec. 12-17. The winner will also win four tickets to Light Up UCF and their letter will be published in The Voice.

Letters to Santa Contest entries are to be no longer than one page and are due by 5 p.m. Monday, Dec. 5, either by email, editor@observernewspapers.com, or physical mail, 1500 Park Center Drive, Orlando, FL 32835. Include the author's name, age, phone number, address and email.

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VOICES

THIS WEEK in political history

Nov. 25, 1783 —

Nearly three months after the Treaty of Paris was signed ending the American Revolution, the final British soldiers withdraw from New York City, the last British military position in the United States. The city had been in British hands since 1776.

EMPLOYMENT

Ask Sandi



Where to look for job leads

I am always looking for ways to help job seekers in their job search. Sometimes it is helping people to tailor their approach, helping people to network or suggesting tools that will help job seekers to stay organized.

A couple of years ago at one of our employment seminars hosted by the Central Florida Employment Council, I met Georgia Lee Stuart. She has a phenomenal grassroots email that she sends out on a regular basis with job leads and job seeker events.

I have now officially seen many of the people I have referred to her get jobs as a result of her leads. She receives emails from employers (many are small businesses you won't see advertised anywhere) about their job openings, she scours websites for other ones, and she will let you know about every "now hiring" sign she sees.

I love when she celebrates a job seeker getting a job. Many ask to stay on the list so they can continue to forward her emails to friends they know who are still looking.

Do you know about tools that are great for job seekers? I would love to hear about them. Shoot me a quick email.

Georgia's email is georgialee@cfltministry.org. She volunteers with the Life Center at College Park Baptist Church.

TALK TO SANDI

Sandi Vidal is the executive director for Christian HELP and the Central Florida Employment Council, with more than 10 years of recruiting and human resources experience. Please send questions about employment by fax 407-260-2949, sandi@christianhelp.org, or mail Ask Sandi C/O Christian HELP, 450 Seminola Blvd., Casselberry, FL 32707.

Small steps to big change

MEGHAN HYATT
Guest Writer

After graduating from Oviedo High in 2006, I set off for Tallahassee to attend Florida State as a biology student on the pre-med track, because I absolutely, without a shadow of a doubt, knew that I wanted to be a doctor. I wanted to help people, and what better way to do that than cut them open, fix them and sew them back together? Four years and one quarter-life crisis later I graduated from FSU with a BS double major in international affairs and anthropology, still wanting to help people, just in a different way. Mere months after that I was on my way to Senegal as a Peace Corps volunteer, hoping to fulfill that desire halfway around the world.

I have now been in Senegal for 15 months, living with my host family in a village of about 800 people. In February, with the help of Peace Corps trainers, we organized a village meeting to allow the people of Jammagen to voice their opinions about their needs and wants in order to develop project plans for the next five years. The projects that were voted most important were all dealing with water sanitation, or the lack thereof. Because of lacking sanitation infrastructure, diarrheal diseases plague the villagers, mainly chil-

dren, especially during the rainy season. As a Sustainable Agriculture volunteer, my primary focus is to extend improved varieties of seed and growing techniques, but their desire to improve the sanitation standards of the community and thus prevent children from getting sick year after year inspired me to take on the challenge of a community-wide latrine project. Soon after that meeting, my village work partner and I went to all 100 compounds to speak with the head of each household and find out exactly how many families had acceptable latrines. The results of that survey were shocking; only four cement-lined latrines were in usable condition in the entire village, and one of those was mine. Some families dig direct latrines every year but they can't afford to line them with cement bricks and reinforce them properly and because of the extremely sandy soil in our region those usually collapse during each rainy season. I'll let you ponder what happens to our water supply when torrential rains bring rivers of water through the village as inadequate latrines collapse and flood.

After getting over the shock that we were going to have to build almost 100 latrines, I was struck with an even more daunting realization when we added up the total cost of the project to be around

\$15,000. My assistant Peace Corps director told me that a Peace Corps Partnership, a program that allows donors back home in the U.S. to make tax deductible contributions to specific Peace Corps projects, would be the only hope of raising enough money to complete the project. I am so thankful to be able to say that we have already had about \$6,000 donated to the project, but that still leaves almost \$9,000 to raise by the end of the year. People in the village are excited and ready to dig the hole for their latrines, but that cannot begin until the full cost has been donated.

As you sit down this week for Thanksgiving dinner with your families and are reminded of all the wonderful things we often take for granted in life, please take a minute to think about the people of Jammagen. Most of them don't have the ability to change their situation, but with small steps, such as these latrines, they can begin to move in the right direction to build a better future for the next generation. With your support and contribution we can change the lives of an entire village.

You can read more about the project at www.megsinsenegal.com and find the Peace Corps Donation page at www.tinyurl.com/senegalatrineproject

Hyatt is an Oviedo resident and Peace Corps volunteer.

Staff opinion

Support small businesses all year-round

It's easy to say "Shop local." It's harder to get people to actually do it.

It's not news that big-box stores have taken a huge chunk of the retail pie, squeezing out the smaller, mom-and-pop stores that used to be the backbone of America. But over the past several years, a movement has romanticized frequenting those locally owned shops and restaurants.

Those one-of-a-kind stores offer unique items that often times big chain stores can't compete with. People might go to these stores for special occasions, like a birthday gift for a friend or an anniversary dinner, but is that enough to keep these small businesses afloat? Unfortunately for mom and pop, many shoppers use big-box retailers for their everyday goods, such as groceries, and for big-ticket items like televisions or tools.

The reason is simple: Smaller shops have trouble matching big store prices.

For the second year, a movement called Small Business Saturday will encourage shoppers to spend Saturday, Nov. 26 — wedged between Black Friday on Nov. 25 and Cyber Monday on Nov. 28 — frequenting locally owned shops. Many businesses will offer slashed prices, just like the price-cutting usually seen in chain retailers.

But to really make an impact on the local economy, people need to find ways to incorporate local shopping into their routines. Another big reason big-box stores are people's go-to is time. It takes more time to peruse several small businesses' offerings than it does to go to big retailers, which often offer a one-stop-shop environment.

Shopping local is about more than just helping out your neighbor who owns it.

It's about keeping your money in the local economy. It's important for some of the money you earn to go to your neighbor who owns the bakery down the street because that money could in turn be spent buying ingredients at a locally owned grocer.

Instead of waiting until the last minute to check off items on your shopping lists, use a free afternoon and search these local shops to see where you can find good deals on the stuff you use daily. Yes, some prices are not competitive, and in a recession we need the best price. But instead of waiting for a special occasion to utilize these shops, find a way to incorporate them into your daily, weekly or monthly routine.

Shop local and your neighbor, your community — and, over time, your pocketbook — will thank you.

Young Voices

Here's what kids at Great Day in the Country in Oviedo said they are thankful for:



I am thankful for my family and friends. I am also thankful to live in a house because I feel protected there. Baked turkey and stuffing are my favorite Thanksgiving foods.

—Chloe C.
10 years old



For Thanksgiving my favorite food is turkey and rolls. I am thankful for my friends and family and for our dog Bella. She is a Yorkie. We live in Oviedo, and I'm in the first grade.

—Madison T.
7 years old



I am thankful for everything, for my family and for nature, animals and our two dogs. I am also thankful for God because he made everything. ... I love cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie.

—Hannah C.
8 years old



I am thankful for my family and friends. We always have good relationships in our family and I get to play with my friends every day and I don't have to be lonely.

—Kevin C.
8 years old



I am thankful for my friend in California. We are pen pals and he wrote that he was thankful for me as his friend. ... I like turkey, sweet potatoes, green beans and asparagus.

—Erik S.
6 years old

We would love to hear from your **Young Voices!**

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lost & found

Looking for my birth family
I am a female born April 28, 1964, Winter Park, Florida and adopted five days later. I am looking for my birth family. All I know is my birth mother and father were minors. teamruiz1@gmail.com if you have information that could help. Call Debra, 928-846-7208, teamruiz1@gmail.com

garage sales

Garage Sale
1078 Sugarberry Trail, Oviedo (Alafaya Woods Subdivision). Saturday 11/19/11, 8 am - 1 pm. Lots of misc. items and clothes.

real estate: commercial

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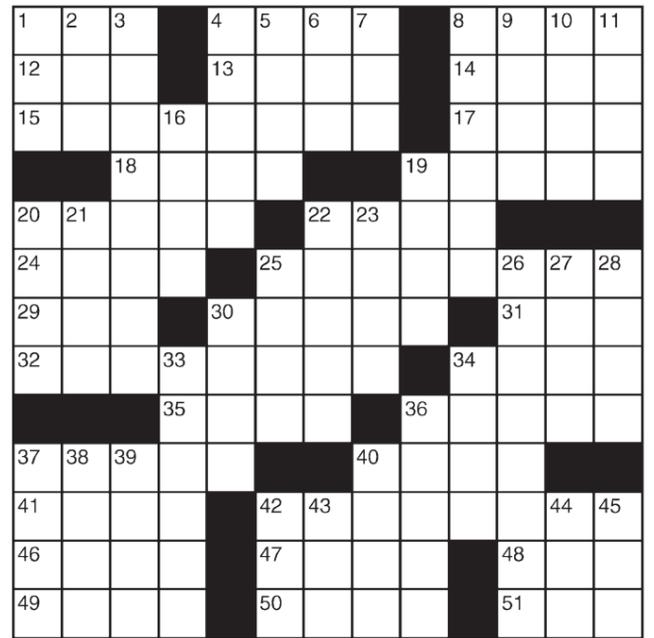
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King Crossword
Answers
Solution time: 27 mins.

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 — Mahal
- 4 Parisian pals
- 8 Choose from a group
- 12 Fuss
- 13 Color quality
- 14 On the briny
- 15 Old communication method
- 17 Bit of banter
- 18 Comestibles
- 19 Stallion or mare
- 20 Malaria symptoms
- 22 Transaction
- 24 Tranquil
- 25 Pollen-caused allergy
- 29 Under the weather
- 30 Cupid's yokemate
- 31 Is for you?
- 32 Short-term employment
- 34 Schleps
- 35 Shake-speare's river
- 36 Cockpit VIP
- 37 Steeple
- 40 Regimen



- 41 Lumber
- 42 Spring parade leader
- 46 Initial stake
- 47 Birthright barterer
- 48 Old studio letters
- 49 Paraphernalia
- 50 Sommelier's offering
- 51 Stitch
- 4 Friend of D'Artagnan
- 5 Disposition
- 6 Hostel
- 7 Get a glimpse of
- 8 Wheedle
- 9 Addict
- 10 Not so much
- 11 Tardy
- 16 Verse
- 19 Weapon's handle
- 20 Alkali neutralizer
- 21 Festive
- 22 Pythias' pal
- 23 Watchful one
- 25 Vagrant
- 26 Some track-
- and-field athletes
- 27 Therefore
- 28 Take a break
- 30 Bear lair
- 33 Pantry
- 34 Stead
- 36 Resentment
- 37 Booty
- 38 Corn concoction
- 39 Tittle
- 40 Actress Cannon
- 42 Kitten's call
- 43 "— was saying, ..."
- 44 Scratch out
- 45 Promptly

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