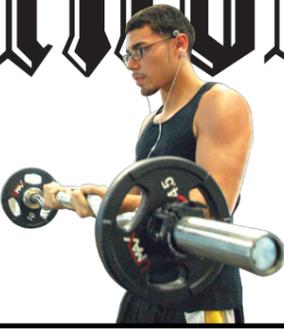




# Seminole Voice



**Shoe savvy > 10**  
A Lake Mary woman has the largest collection of Converse



**Heavy lifting > 7**  
The Zoo Health Club opened recently in Winter Springs



**Hot wheels > 3**  
Hundreds of cars descended on Oviedo on Saturday

www.SeminoleVoice.com

Jan. 27 - Feb. 9, 2012

Free!

## HOPE hosts first 5K on Feb. 4

ALLISON OLCSVAY  
The Voice

A soft-spoken woman with a broad smile, Astrid Bartolomei comes every Tuesday to the food pantry she calls "her blessing." Six months ago, this middle-class mom and former real-estate agent needed help feeding her family, so her friend and neighbor referred her to the place where she herself was getting assistance.

Like many other families in Central Florida, the Bartolomeis find themselves in a gray area following a job loss. With just her husband's commission-only income to rely on, they still make too much money to qualify for food stamps, yet their budget is stretched too thin to satisfy her 16-year-old son's appetite.

"We can't even get insurance," Bartolomei said.

So the family of three goes without it, hoping their health holds out until their situation improves.

Stories like this are typical at places like HOPE (Housing Outreach Prevention Education) Helps in Oviedo. HOPE was founded by

■ Please see **HOPE** on page 2

# Schools fight to avoid closure

ISAAC BABCOCK  
The Voice

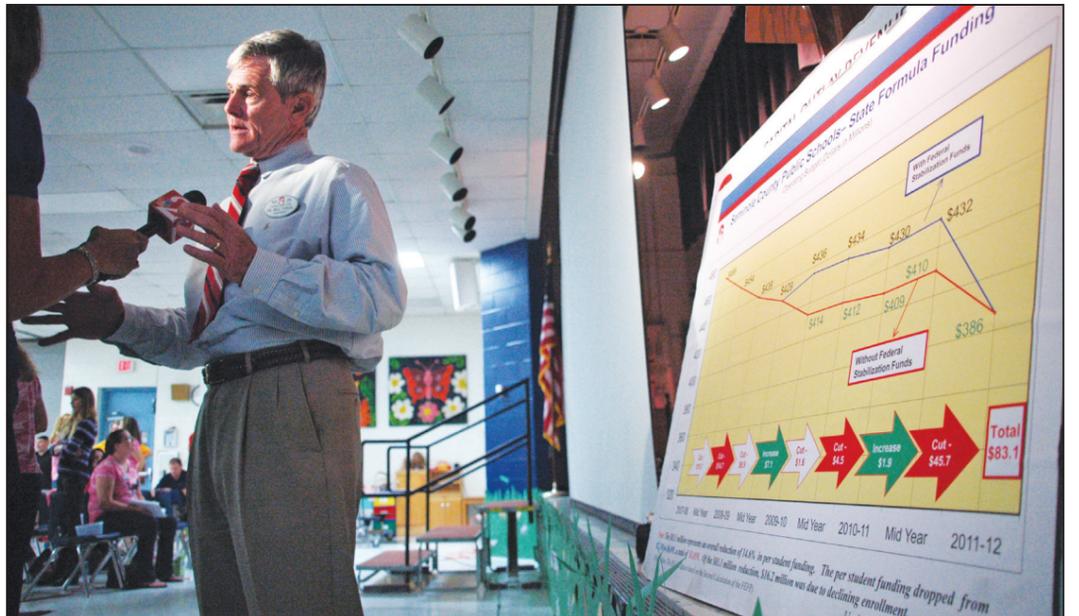
It's 6:30 p.m. on a school night as Cindy Ducker picks up a microphone and fills the Geneva Elementary cafeteria with a list of proud statistics. The Mustangs, teachers, administration, staff, students and all have received an A+ rating for 11 straight years. They have some of the highest FCAT scores in the county. They also might be shut down within a year.

On Jan. 23, the school's standing-room-only cafeteria found out why one of the statistically best elementary schools in one of the statistically highest-performing school districts in the state is statistically the most likely to be shuttered within a year.

The mass of parents and teachers demanding answers from Seminole County Public Schools Superintendent Bill Vogel weren't alone in their fears. Eight schools in the county dot a list of potential closures to make up for a nearly \$20 million budget shortfall that will no longer be shored up by federal money in the next school year. The east side of Seminole County would be the hardest hit, with Oviedo's Carillon and Stenstrom Elementary schools and Winter Springs' Keeth Elementary also on the chopping block.

Parent Julie Clarke, who has lived in Geneva since she was 10 years old, said that if the axe drops next year, teachers and parents will have little they can do to stop it.

"The School Board has stated that they do not want to close schools," Clarke said. "But if



PHOTOS BY ISAAC BABCOCK — THE VOICE

**Seminole Superintendent Bill Vogel** talks to news reporters about the district's budget gap and plans to shutter schools in order to make up for it. The School Board may approve a ballot measure that asks voters to pay increased taxes.

they choose to close schools, then no school on the list is safe."

### The deficit

That's why an army of mostly women in pink Geneva Mustangs shirts organized to stop it. They wanted to help the School Board before it was too late, parent Alison Warren said.

"We know that the School Board has a deficit that they know has to be addressed," Warren said. "They're talking about vending machine electricity cost. It's crazy what they're looking at. We need to help them help us."

The help she talked about was the same issue that the School Board has grappled with for years, ever since the beginning of the recession in 2008: money. As the economy and property values fell, money for schools

fell with it. The state slashed more than \$83 million since the 2007-08 school year. Then a more than \$20 million federal subsidy expired. Then the County Commission refused to extend a penny sales tax that paid \$13.4 million for schools, citing that voters would have rejected it anyway. Then in November 2010, voters rejected a half penny sales tax for schools.

The expiration of the property tax dealt a deathblow to a budget that was already 60th lowest of 67 districts in funding in the state, Vogel said.

"They only had it for two years because they thought the economy would rebound," Vogel said. "It hasn't."

### Rallies for schools

That's why a group of activists is asking for it back. Stand Up for SCPS has organized a series of informational sessions on its campaign to push for a property tax increase that would add \$25 million back into the school system — enough to cover the current budget shortfall.

On Jan. 26, parents packed into Oviedo High School to listen to the group's pitch. The numbers are simple, Vogel said.

"If Seminole County had that,

we would have another \$25 million a year and we would not be here tonight, and we wouldn't be looking at any of the drastic measures that we have taken," he said.

Gone would be the fears the School Board faced when voters killed a half penny sales tax measure in 2010. At least for four years.

If the group can get enough support, a ballot referendum could be fast-tracked to a special election to raise the money. But by then the School Board may already have made its decision. On Feb. 28, the School Board may decide which schools to close.

That's something Geneva Elementary School principal Tina Erwin hopes to head off. But Jan. 24, that school may have been granted a reprieve. That night the school's supporters persuaded the County Commission to push for Federal Emergency Management Agency money to pay for a new roof for the school. If that money comes through, Geneva Elementary may be safe — for now. In the meantime, Warren said, they'll keep fighting.

"They say it takes a village to raise a child," Warren said. "I'm going to tell you, it takes a village to save a school."



### What's goin' on?

Take a trip back through the early days of Geneva during the village's historic bus tour, which leaves the community center at 9:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, Feb. 4.

Calendar > 8

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### Opening this week: 'Man on a Ledge'



When a man threatens to jump from a high Manhattan ledge, a police psychologist tries to talk him down.



0 94922 58042 9

USPS 008-093  
Publisher statement on page 2.

# THIS WEEK



## THIS WEEK in history

Jan. 30, 1948 —

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, the political and spiritual leader of the Indian independence movement, is assassinated in New Delhi by a Hindu fanatic. Known as Mahatma, Gandhi's persuasive methods of civil disobedience influenced leaders of civil rights movements.

## HOPE | Oviedo nonprofit organization has more than 100 people signed up for its first 5K fundraiser event

■ CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

another middle class mom, Krissy Todd, who 5 years ago, saw a need to help families avoid the threat of homelessness.

### Organization's heart

To that end, HOPE operates the Sunshine Thrift Store located at 149 E. Broadway St. serving as the primary fundraiser for the organization.

Amidst the shelves stuffed with antique plates, vintage dresses, hockey equipment and an assortment of kids videos, volunteers mingle with shoppers offering to help find something or fielding questions about HOPE's programs.

While at the foundation's center, clients

can also get help applying for Food Stamps, creating a resume, or learning about other community resources that may be available to them.

From the back of the thrift store, more volunteers accept food donations, stock the shelves of the pantry and check in clients as they come to pick up food for the week.

Husband and wife team Mike and Alice Beall have spent every Tuesday for the past year and a half volunteering together at the pantry.

For them, getting to know their clients and check on them on a week-to-week basis makes all the hard work rewarding.

Everywhere you look there is a busy volunteer. They all seem to have their niche, some drive trucks to pick up donated food,

some assist clients in getting set up with services, others like Nancy Williams sort and price clothes.

Williams has been with HOPE from the very beginning when Todd first called for help to set up the thrift store.

From the earliest days Williams has felt like this is what she was supposed to do.

"I had never volunteered anywhere, but when my daughter brought me along with her, it was just the right timing," Williams said. "I had recently retired and was looking for a place to help out. It's a nice feeling to help people who need it, to accomplish something. I never could just sit around."

And neither can HOPE.

### Inaugural race

For the first time ever, the foundation is hosting a 5K event with all proceeds going directly back to the foundation.

Race for HOPE will set off from Winter Springs High School at 8 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 4. Registration is \$30 prior to the event and \$35 on race day.

If getting up early to run (or walk) 3 miles is not the most enticing idea, it's still possible to help out the cause.

Instead of participating in the 5K, there is the option of "hitting snooze for HOPE." For a \$25 donation, non-racers get an event T-shirt and the chance to sleep in on Saturday.

Joan Faulkner, the new CEO of HOPE, is optimistic about the event.

"It's a fun, healthy way to get outside and raise money for a great cause," Faulkner said.

"We have over 100 people signed up so far and expect at least 100 more, so it's very exciting for our first year," HOPE's events coordinator Sara Ozim said.

"The more money we raise, the more money gets funneled directly back to the families," Ozim said.

This is the heart of HOPE's mission, to directly impact families in need.

### Touching lives

Bridging the gap between services and needs, HOPE fed over 700 kids who receive free and reduced lunch with their Kids of HOPE program, which provides meals for the kids during school breaks.

Realizing that kids need more than good

■ Please see HOPE on page 3

# ES24

## What's Your Emergency?





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## HOPE | Helping families in a spiral

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

meals to be successful, HOPE hosted a back-to-school event for 500 kids where they handed out backpacks, school supplies and provided haircuts and physicals.

To Bartolomei, this help was invaluable.

"I was able to get everything I needed for my son. I didn't have to buy a thing," she said. "You know...when your son is happy, you are happy."

With the help of the community, HOPE aims to make more

kids happy this year, by meeting needs and offering encouragement to families through their outreach.

"Although the majority of people we help are not homeless, we do serve them and work to locate housing, job assistance, food and other basic necessities to get them back on their feet," Faulkner said. "HOPE's mission is to prevent homelessness through our programs. We help families before they end up in a crisis, which can spiral into homelessness."

# Cool cops and hot cars



PHOTO BY ISAAC BABCOCK — THE VOICE

The seventh annual Central Florida Law Enforcement Car Show returned to the Oviedo Mall on Jan. 21.

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## Bears are SAC champs

PHOTO COURTESY OF TRACY DIGHTAS

Winter Springs' wrestling team broke records while winning the Seminole Athletic Conference Championship Jan. 21, setting school records in the process. They had more champions with 8, more finalists with 10, and more place winners with 13 than any other time in school history. They also broke Oviedo High School's streak of 11 straight championships.



# 5K & COMMUNITY FAIR

Presented by South Seminole Hospital, the J. Douglas Williams YMCA and the City of Longwood.

Celebrate Red February with a fun-filled day promoting heart health in our community. Join family, friends and neighbors for a family-friendly 5k event, followed by a community fair.

**Saturday, February 11, 2012**  
Reiter Park • 311 W. Warren Avenue • Longwood, FL 32750

**5k Certified Course**

- 6:30 am: Race packet pickup
- 7:30 am: Race begins
- Kids' Dash to follow
- \$20 (through 2/4)
- \$25 (through 2/10)
- \$30 (day of race)
- FREE for kids age 10 & under (registration required)
- Complimentary t-shirt (while supplies last)

**Free Community Fair**

8:30 am – 11:00 am

- Blood pressure screenings
- "Ask the Doc" with a family medicine physician and orthopedic surgeon
- Healthy cooking and fitness demos
- Kids' soccer activities by **Orlando City Soccer**
- Face painting
- Longwood Police & Fire Department vehicle displays
- And much more!

**Two Ways To Register:**

**Online:** [southseminolehospital.com/caringhearts](http://southseminolehospital.com/caringhearts)      **In-Person:** Pick up application at the J. Douglas Williams YMCA

*Avoid the last-minute race day rush. Race packets can be picked up beginning February 9, 2012 at the J. Douglas Williams YMCA, 665 Longwood-Lake Mary Blvd., Lake Mary, FL 32746.*

**More information at**  
[southseminolehospital.com/caringhearts](http://southseminolehospital.com/caringhearts)







# Between the CELERY Stalks *By Janet Foley*

## Car show got better

Did you visit the Central Florida Law Enforcement Car Show last Saturday? It was bigger and better than last year, if things like that are possible. What a joy and delight to see some of those old vintage car and trucks. It does bring back memories of growing up.

### Flea market

St. Stephen's Catholic Church is hosting a huge flea market on Friday and Saturday from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., and on Sunday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Visit [www.st-stephen.com](http://www.st-stephen.com)

### Glass Show

The Sanlando Depression Glass Show will be held from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 28, and from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 29, at the Sanford Civic Center, 401 E. Seminole Blvd. in Sanford. The cost of show is \$4.50, and admission is good for both days. Call 407-298-3355.

### Marker dedication

The first Saturday in February is very busy, and I do mean it — you all will have to choose your activities wisely. My favorite, I am partial, would be to visit the Oviedo Historical Society's Farmer's Market for the dedication of the Lawton House Historical Marker on Saturday, Feb. 4. The mayor of Oviedo, Historical Society, Oviedo Rotary Club and Oviedo Woman's

Club will participate in the unveiling ceremony scheduled for 11 a.m. It will also bring attention to the farmers market. The ceremony will be simple — a few quick words and an unveiling of the marker. The Rotary and the Woman's Club are the financial supports and donated \$1,000 each. Do come shop, visit, eat and have a good time. The market hours are from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

### Orchid Show

The Greater Orlando Orchid Society and Orlando Garden Club will host their annual Orchid Show and Sale Friday, Feb. 10, through Sunday, Feb. 12. The event will run from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday at the Orlando Garden Club, 710 E. Rollins St., Orlando. The show will include blooming orchids, foliage plants, bromeliads, books and supplies. Admission is free. Call 407-299-8003.

Visit [SeminoleVoice.com](http://SeminoleVoice.com) for more events.

### TALK TO JANET

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

# STETSON'S CORNER

By Karen McEnany-Phillips

## Help save the Mustangs

### Geneva Elementary leads the short list of school closings

Our Mustangs are in trouble. The Seminole County School Board has made it clear that two of eight schools must be closed to counter the budget deficit. The cost analysis for Geneva Elementary portrays the school's bus use, projected renovation cost and student enrollment ratio as negative factors that collide to place it at the top of the list.

### A community village

No one, including the School Board, wants to close a school. Interrupting the rhythm of a family's routine takes a toll that exceeds any mathematical formula. The impact and unintended consequences cannot be boxed in dollars and cents. It is a painful process.

Most schools on the list are in neighborhoods that belong to larger communities like Winter Springs, Longwood and Oviedo.

But Geneva is not a mere neighborhood. It is a vital community with a unique character and educational history that reaches back to Russian immigrant schoolteachers who home schooled many of Geneva's earliest children.

Like those children, our young Mustangs walk to school under the watchful eyes of sand hill cranes and deer in the early hours after dawn. They hear the

skitter of the squirrels, the pushy call of the red tail hawks, and the staccato of the eagles. We have a sign that asks us to keep our horses off the school sidewalk.

### 88 years of public education

Our Rural Heritage Center began as the Geneva School in 1924. It served Geneva's children until the present school was dedicated in 1988 and the excellent tradition for education continued. Geneva Elementary has been led by visionary and caring administrators and teachers for decades. An A-rated, five-star school for 10 straight years, the school serves and connects us in so many ways. Our children walk to the museum for their Florida history experience. This school has been the beating heart of our community from the inception of the village. We honor our fallen deputy in its shadow.

### It does take a village

Geneva Elementary teachers, staff and administrators know more than the test scores and attendance records of their children. They know when they're hungry on Monday morning and when their dad got laid off. They celebrate when a big sister earns a scholarship, and wipe tears when a family dog dies. Geneva Mustangs have mourned the loss of at least one principal, teacher and student.

■ Please see **STETSONS** on page 5



## 2011 HOLIDAY TOY DRIVE Thank you for your generous support of our kids

**New Hope for Kids** provides specialized support to children and families grieving the loss of a loved one and grants wishes to children with life-challenging illnesses in Central Florida.

In 2011, New Hope for Kids granted 47 wishes to girls and boys and assisted over 350 children through grief facilitation.

Because we do not receive any funding from government agencies, the personal donations so generously given by individuals and local organizations are so important to the success of our mission ... to bring hope, healing and renewal to our community.

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For more information please call 407.331.3059 ext. 10 or visit [www.newhopeforkids.org](http://www.newhopeforkids.org)

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- Sports Cuts Haircuts
- Universal Studios Florida
- Whole Foods
- Wyndham Worldwide



# STETSONS | Check out the bus tour

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

Families crowd the school for FCAT updates, PTA family nights, book fairs and musical productions. Whether they arrive by pick up, Prius or by foot, parents care about what happens to their kids within the school walls, and the school cares about the children's home lives. Our village puts its children first and this is why it feels like our heart is being ripped apart. This school is more than brick and mortar, it is a living entity. It cannot be cut into pieces, scattered about the county and expected to regenerate itself 6.2 miles away. We know as Solomon did, that you cannot divide a living thing and expect it to live.

Make your solutions and concerns known. Give the Geneva PTA your ideas and support. Contact information for the Seminole County School Board can be found at [www.scps.k12.fl.us](http://www.scps.k12.fl.us)

### Save the dates

At 6 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 28, the Rural Heritage Center Annual Membership Meeting will be

held, with pot luck dinner, free movie and door prizes. This organization serves our community and deserves our support. For more information, visit [Rural-HeritageCenter.net](http://Rural-HeritageCenter.net)

Geneva's Annual Historical Bus Tour and Pancake Breakfast is coming up on Saturday, Feb. 4, and reservations for those coveted bus seats are going fast. Call 407-947-4412 or email [margieilj@aol.com](mailto:margieilj@aol.com) and leave your name, phone number or email, number of people, and which tour you prefer, 9:30 a.m. or 11:30 a.m. You will receive a call or email back for confirmation. Tours start and end at the Geneva Community Center and cost \$10 per person.

## TALK TO KAREN

Please share your thoughts about Geneva at **407-221-7002**, [kphillips@observernewspapers.com](mailto: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.



# From my GARDEN to yours

Tom Carey

## Asian greens

Some of the most productive plants I grow in my garden could be categorized as Asian greens. The simple abundance of harvesting the early leaf and stem portions of these vegetables provide a quick and nutritious harvest with minimal maintenance. As we grow into our lucrative spring season, take advantage of some of the easiest crops to produce on Earth.

Most Asian greens must be started from seeds instead of off-the-shelf transplants. Locating the seeds is a low hurdle to choosing many of these exotic

plants. (I haven't had much luck at nursery center seed racks.) An Internet search of seed catalogs will provide numerous options. Since purchasing seeds offers an incredible economy of scale over buying transplants, don't skimp on trying a spectrum of varieties.

Starting the seeds requires a balanced mix of quality potting soil, clean containers, moisture, warmth and sunlight. Most Asian greens germinate in just a few days, so be prepared to deliver the new sprouts to full sun. Left in limited light, lanky, weak seedlings are prone to stem disease and damage. Provide fresh air and ventilation as a warm sunny day could lead to overheating. In three to four weeks most of these seedlings will be ready to grow in the great expanse of the garden.

Available soil fertility, moisture, pest controls, sunlight and space provided in almost any garden configuration is usually adequate. A 3-gallon landscape pot filled with well-drained potting mix supplies ample space for six transplants. A 4-foot square bed using grid pattern spacing produces dozens of heads. As the crop starts to mature, pick crowded 'thinning greens' for those gourmet baby vegetables that are so expensive in the grocery store.

Most Asian greens are in the Brassica family of plants, similar to radish or cabbage. I repeatedly plant Pac choi, a smaller variety of Bok choi. Another favorite is Mizuna, which produces a large quantity of fine, mild-flavored green or purple fern-like foliage.

Gather individual leaves and stems or harvest the whole head by cutting at ground level. Promptly rinse to avoid wilting. I graze fresh from my garden, taste testing to compare and contrast many of these unique flavors. The vitamin, fiber and mineral components of Asian greens are easily off the charts. I'll leave it to you to research the possibilities.

## WHO IS CAREY

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

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# INTERESTS



## THIS WEEK in human history

Feb. 4, 1922 —

The Ford Motor Company acquires the failing luxury automaker Lincoln Motor Company for \$8 million. Ford's son Edsel eventually helped to convince his father to drop his famous rule: "You can have any color, as long as it's black."

# Tennis aces win against the odds

The Acers tennis team beat out 8,000 other teams to place second in the USTA Jr. Team Tennis National Championships

**BRITNI JOHNSON**  
The Voice

It wasn't too likely they'd win Florida, let alone become the second best tennis team in the nation. But the self-described "motley crew" did it. Without a professional coach or even much practice, and a team half the size of competitors' and with some of the youngest in the tournament, they did it.

"Our guys played completely against the odds," Coach Brian Sephton said.

The Acers, made up of five local tennis players and one from Miami, beat the odds last October to snag second place at the United States Tennis Association (USTA) Jr. Team Tennis National Championships, 14 and under intermediate category. They beat out 8,000 other teams across the nation, and were one of 16 to make it to the tournament held in Arizona after winning sectionals in Daytona.

### Work alone, win together

But it wasn't easy for the team. The Acers, while all friends and based in the same area, rarely practiced together. Most of their experience playing as a team and with Sephton's guidance was during the three months of matches they played to win Florida. Any time the team was together, it was to win a game.

On their own, though, the players worked to sharpen their tennis skills.

"All of them achieved this under their own steam," Sephton said. "They're out there on their own."

One player's mom said she saw that first-hand. While Nat Saffran's friends were having fun, he was on the court.

"All that discipline paid off," Pat Saffran said.

### Rough starts

Many times during the finals, the chance at reaching the top felt like it would slip through their fingers, Sephton said. But they'd always pull forward, even during a three-hour singles game for their player from Miami, Lucas Nickolich. It was a seesaw of emotions for The Acers.

"We watched it slipping away from us," Sephton said. "And see them dig in and turn the game around and win."

"You have to have mental toughness and physical toughness," Cecilia Tong, 12, a Lee Middle School student said.

### Friendship is essential

For the Acers, though, reaching even the semi-finals was a dream, and being top four was good enough for them — the highlight of the competition. Nat Saffran said he barely thought about the



PHOTO BY BRITNI JOHNSON — THE VOICE

The Acers, from left, Cecilia Tong, Kaylan Rotman, Ben Sephton, Nat Saffran and Theresa Tong, pose with their USTA Jr. Team Tennis National Championships trophy and banner. Not pictured is Luca Nickolich, who lives in Miami.

competition as he played with doubles partner Ben Sephton, both from Trinity Preparatory School. He only thought about what was happening on the court. Being best friends helps keep things in perspective, and brings some special chemistry to their playing, they said.

"We're a pretty solid team," Ben said. "We just have a lot of fun on the court."

That's what makes this team so special, they all said — their friendships on and off the court. Instead of getting separate hotel rooms, the team and their parents all stayed in one big house. Almost like a tennis vacation.

"We're all close, which is essential for a team," said Theresa Tong, 14, from Edgewater High School.

"Friendship ... is part of what

turns them into a cohesive team," Sephton said.

There's forgiveness when a doubles partner makes a mistake and encouragement when they play well — a key, they said. They're certainly not a serious bunch, and most of their favorite tennis memories involved the silliness behind the scenes, not the sweating on the court. Most on the team members have known each other for years, and Sephton has seen them grow as players and as friends to his son Ben.

"It's really a little bit like watching your own kids and friends playing," Sephton said.

They'd love to stay together for this year's USTA Nationals, but Theresa will be too old, so the team's future is unsure. They hope to keep as many players as they can, and move up from the intermediate to advanced competition category. Now that they've done it once, the team knows what it takes to get there and is itching for another try. And why not, it's their favorite thing to do in the whole world.

"I just love the sport," said Kaylan Rotman, 14, from Lake Highland Preparatory School.

"I'd die if I didn't play tennis," Theresa said.

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For more information about the United States Tennis Association, visit [www.usta.com](http://www.usta.com)

## Family Calendar

Seminole County high schools are hosting Superintendent Bill Vogel as he presents the **state of the public school system address**. Find out about possible school closings and a tax measure that seeks to infuse the school coffers.

Thursday, Feb. 2 – Lake Brantley High School, 6 p.m., Auditorium

Thursday, Feb. 16 – Seminole High School, 6 p.m., Media Center

**A 24-hour softball game fundraiser** will start at noon Saturday, Jan. 28, and end at noon on Sunday, Jan. 29, at Central Winds Park in Winter Springs. Visit [hometorome.net](http://hometorome.net) for information, to register your team or contribute to fundraising. There's a cost to participate, but it's free to watch.

**Seminole's Got Talent finale** is at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 28 at the Wayne Densch Performing Arts Center in Sanford. Call 407-321-8111 or go to [wdpac.com](http://wdpac.com) to purchase tickets.

**The Race For HOPE 5K** starts at 8 a.m. on Saturday, Feb. 4, at Winter Springs High School. HOPE's mission is to prevent and reduce homelessness in Central Florida by equipping individuals and families to become self-sufficient through Housing, Outreach, Prevention and Education. Visit [tinyurl.com/5KforHOPE](http://tinyurl.com/5KforHOPE) for information.

Seminole Towne Center welcomes the annual **Seminole County Schools Regional Math, Science and Engineering Fair** on Saturday, Feb. 4. The countywide science fair includes the best projects from students in grades 6-12. Award winners will be announced in the mall's Center Court at 6:30 p.m.

Oviedo Mall announces a live butterfly experience to support **Children's Miracle Network Hospitals**. Admission is \$2. Visitors can tour the butterfly house, interacting with more than 150 butterflies in their habitat Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., and noon to 5 p.m. on Sundays. Guests can take a photo with a butterfly, create butterfly crafts, view a life-cycle kiosk, and adopt-a-butterfly to take home. Call 248-885-0447 or visit [butterfliesinthesky.com](http://butterfliesinthesky.com) for details.

**St. Luke's Lutheran School** is hosting an open house on at 8 a.m. on Friday, Feb. 17. If you cannot attend contact Sherry Abell, School Admissions Director, for a personalized tour of campus, at 407-365-3228 or [sabell@stlukes-oviedo.org](mailto:sabell@stlukes-oviedo.org)

Join Seminole County Natural Lands Program for **guided hikes and programs throughout the county**. For information, call 407-349-0959. It's \$3 per person.

Email calendar submissions to [editor@observernewspapers.com](mailto:editor@observernewspapers.com)

# Fitness buff opens Zoo in Winter Springs

ALLISON OLCSVAY  
The Voice

Chris LaRocca believes in family. Perhaps that's why his customers feel that way when they enter his new fitness center, The Zoo Health Club, which opened last month in the Winter Springs Town Center.

Bright and airy inside, the new gym lets the afternoon light in through windows reaching from the floor to the 20-foot ceiling. LaRocca and his staff are just as open and inviting as guests walk through the door.

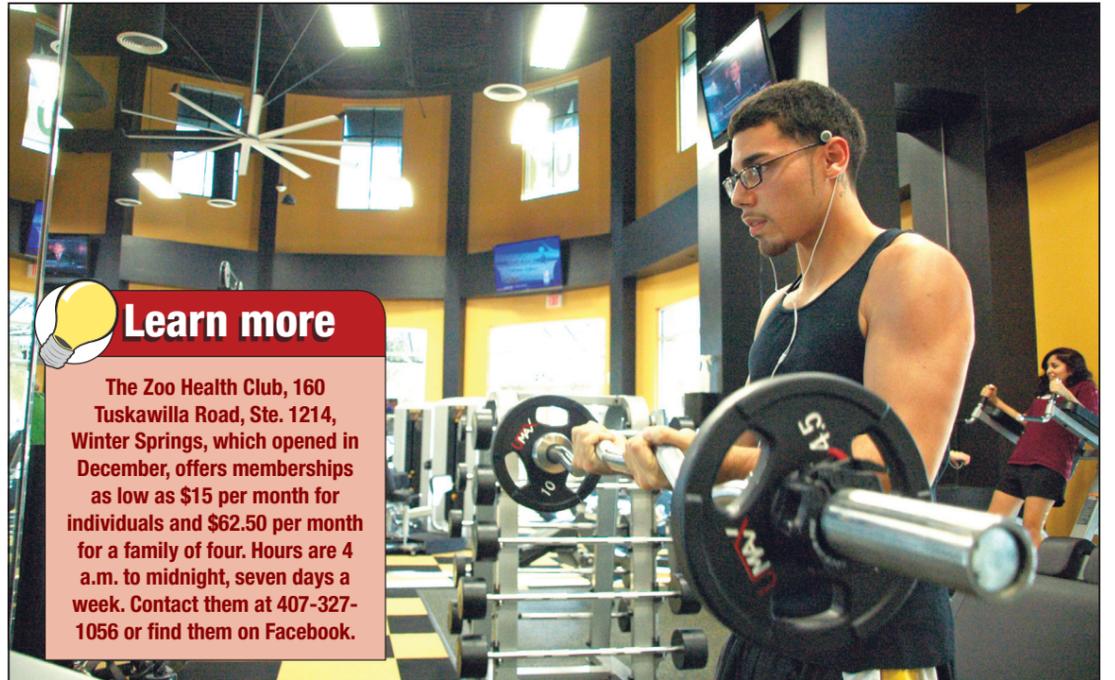
Built like the college football player he once was, LaRocca is a friendly, outgoing man who is eager to share his passion for fitness. As a 10-year cancer survivor, he knows what it means to struggle to reach a goal and how important good health is to a person's overall well-being.

This "second chance at life," as he calls it, has given him the opportunity to pursue his dreams. "I just love seeing and helping people achieve their own health and fitness goals," he said.

"What I love is seeing people have a good time," LaRocca said. "Making it enjoyable is what it's all about."

The 6,500-square-foot gym features everything one would expect from a first-class center. Racks of gleaming chrome free weights stand along a mirrored wall as treadmills, ellipticals, stair-steppers and cycles with hi-tech iPod-ready audio-video systems help keep hearts pumping in the middle of the gym floor.

But this isn't just a bare-bones pump and run sweatshop. Zoo Fitness offers an assortment of classes from belly dancing and



### Learn more

The Zoo Health Club, 160 Tuskawilla Road, Ste. 1214, Winter Springs, which opened in December, offers memberships as low as \$15 per month for individuals and \$62.50 per month for a family of four. Hours are 4 a.m. to midnight, seven days a week. Contact them at 407-327-1056 or find them on Facebook.

PHOTO BY ISAAC BABCOCK — THE VOICE

Orlando Cintron works out at Zoo Health Club, which recently opened at the Winter Springs Town Center.

yoga to R.I.P.P.E.D., a total body workout designed to burn fat and build muscle.

The Zoo also features Zumba classes, the Latin-inspired dance-fitness craze that's spread nationwide faster than the blistering tempo of this pulse-pumping workout. LaRocca said the class is such a hit with his members that he's thinking about adding a kids' version called Zumbatomic in the near future.

Located in the Town Center right in the middle of a growing family-oriented community, The Zoo Health Club is a perfect fit, said Oviedo-Winter Springs Regional Chamber of Commerce President Cory Skeates.

"It's an impressive place," he said. "It's great because while peo-

ple are there, they are also visiting other shops, perhaps eating at one of the restaurants or visiting Publix before they head home."

As a local resident from Oviedo, LaRocca really wanted this business to be part of a close-knit community.

He recalled driving back and forth on the way to his kids' football and basketball practice, thinking that it would be a perfect place to follow his dream of opening a fitness center that would have family at its heart.

"I kept looking at this corner location," he said, "and finally, it came to fruition."

Winter Springs High School senior Lauren Greed signed up with her mom during pre-enrollment before the gym even opened.

"I come here every day," said Greed. "It's convenient and it's nice to see the same people in here. I feel comfortable because it's a smaller gym, so it's more personal."

Under the whirl of two colossal fans hanging from the high ceiling, members and staff chat easily with each other, offering advice or an encouraging word.

"I've only been a member for one week," Carmen Santiago said,

"and already it feels like family here. The staff are so nice and they know my name," she said.

Santiago used to drive to a gym in Longwood, but when it closed, she went looking for a new place.

"This one was just so close to home and it's nice and clean," she said. "Plus, you can't beat the prices, it's much cheaper than other gyms."

Basic memberships begin at \$15 and signing up for the Zoo Card plan offers benefits, such as free tanning and half price classes. Location also seems to be a selling point for many. According to staffers, some of the members even jog to the gym from home, or take advantage of the Seminole County trail system right outside the Town Center.

This formula of location, service and family atmosphere is key to the new gym's success, LaRocca said.

"We've been open six weeks and we are very pleased by the response," he said. "Most of our new members have come by word of mouth. We had a vision for a mom-and-pop feel and that's kind of where we would like to keep it, where the members know us and we know them by name."

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# Calendar

## JAN. 27

**Early voting** runs 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily through Jan. 28. Locations include the East Branch Library, 310 N. Division St., Oviedo. Visit [www.VoteSeminole.org](http://www.VoteSeminole.org)

The Jeanine Taylor Folk Art gallery hosts Matt Sesow's **"From the Gut"** 6-9 p.m. Friday, Jan. 27, at 211 E. 1st St., Sanford. This event is free. Visit

[www.jfolkart.com](http://www.jfolkart.com)

## JAN. 31

Interested in **networking**? Join mPowerNetworking at 4380 Carraway Place, Sanford from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 31. Bring plenty of cards! Call 407-455-4699.

## FEBRUARY

Girl Scouts of all ages are engaging in **Forever Green** offering a leadership experience that makes an impact on the environment.

- In February reduce waste by using reusable water bottles and bags.

## FEB. 2

The **Artistic Hand** gallery classes: painting and drawing, tile mosaic, clay, jewelry making and stained and fused glass start Feb. 2. Also offered: one-day glass blowing workshops. Call 407-366-7882.

The Oviedo-Winter Springs Regional Chamber of Commerce features **Milton Champion**, former director of Pari-Mutuel Wagering in Florida, as the speaker for its luncheon 11:30 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 2, at the Oviedo Mall. Rates are \$17 for members, and \$22/guests. Visit [www.oviedowintersprings.org](http://www.oviedowintersprings.org) or call 407-278-4871.

## FEB. 3

The **Aviation Institute of Maintenance** hosts the grand opening of their new location in Casselberry on Friday, Feb. 3, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 2725 S. U.S. Highway 17/92. Call

## Sanford Art Walk

This month's Sanford Art Walk features the photography of Reg Garner (Pictured is his "The Bridge to Nowhere"). This free event is from 6-9 p.m. Friday, Jan. 27, in Sanford. Visit [www.sanfordartwalk.com](http://www.sanfordartwalk.com)



407-896-2800.

## FEB. 4

St. Luke's Lutheran Church presents the UCF Wind Ensemble show, titled **"Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed, Something Blue"** at 7 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 4, at 2021 W. State Road 426, Oviedo. Call 407-365-3408 or visit [www.stlukes-oviedo.org](http://www.stlukes-oviedo.org)

The **Geneva historic bus tour** is Saturday, Feb. 4, at 9:30 or 11:30 a.m. Seats are a \$10 donation. Call 407-947-4412 or email [margieilj@aol.com](mailto:margieilj@aol.com) for tickets.

Enjoy the **Pancake Breakfast** at the Community Center from 8:30-11:30 a.m. Feb. 4. Tickets are a \$5 donation to support the Geneva Historical

Society. Have breakfast, then tour the museum free from 9-11 a.m.

## FEB. 7

The Seminole Audubon Society is offering a **bird-watching course** 6-9 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 7, at 3485 N. County Road 426, Geneva. Cost is \$30. Pre-registration is required. For information call 407-977-4389.

## FEB. 9

Join the party Thursday, Feb. 9, for Sanford's **Pardi Gras Alive After 5** featuring food and beverage samples, live music, art and community businesses. This event is every second Thursday from 5-8 p.m. and is \$7 per person. Call 407-302-2586.

## FEB. 10

The **Love Your Shorts Film Festival** will return Feb. 10-12 at Wayne Densch Performing Arts Center in Sanford. The three-day event will feature short films up to 30 minutes each. Visit [www.LoveYourShorts.com](http://www.LoveYourShorts.com)

## FEB. 12

The **Luv 2 Run 5K** benefiting Girl Scouts of Citrus will begin 7:30 a.m. on Sunday, Feb. 12, at the Oviedo Mall. Registration is \$25 through Feb. 11 and \$30 the day of (cash or check only). Visit <http://racetimesports.com/luv-2-run-5k>

Visit [SeminoleVoice.com](http://SeminoleVoice.com) for more details. Email [calendar.submissions@editor@observernewspapers.com](mailto:calendar.submissions@editor@observernewspapers.com)

## Cool beans

The **All Around Geneva Relay for Life Team chili cook-off** is from noon to 6 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 28, at the Jolly Gator Fish Camp, 4650 E. State Road 46, Geneva. Registration is \$5 in advance and \$10 the day of. Call 407-402-3993 or email [mcon-solato@bellsouth.net](mailto:mcon-solato@bellsouth.net)





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# Notes

### New sweet stop

A new Menchie's opened across from the Oviedo Mall at 8085 Red Bug Lake Road.

### Biggest Ever food drive

HOPE volunteers will be in the Oviedo Mall near Sears through Sunday, Jan. 29, collecting non-perishable food items. All items will be counted/weighed, and the winner of the largest donation will be announced at 7 p.m. Jan. 31.

### USTA honor for Harkins

The USTA selected Cindy Harkins of Longwood as a 2011 USTA Eve F. Kraft Community Service Award recipient. The award is given to individuals who perpetuate Kraft's mission to bring the game of tennis to everyone who wants to play. Harkins has been instrumental in the growth of the Seminole County

tennis community by establishing Red Bug Park in 1976 and serving on the committee to develop Sandlago Park in 1978.

### Theater seeks desert fatigues

For its production of Irwin Shaw's "Bury the Dead", Theatre UCF needs Army apparel, particularly boots. They are seeking brown tone fatigues with a digital pattern. Used items are preferred, though new will be accepted. They cannot be returned. Contact the costume shop at 407-823-0593 or theatre.ucf.edu

### Gliders host Track Classic

The Central Florida Gliders, will host its Spring Track Classic on April 28 at Lake Brantley High School. The meet is open to teams or unattached athletes from youth

through masters (30 and older). Marks and times in the open division can be used to qualify for Olympic trials. Visit [www.cfgliders.com](http://www.cfgliders.com) Registration is online only at [www.coacho.com](http://www.coacho.com). Entry fee is \$6 per event.

### SCHOOL NEWS

#### Master of Science awarded

Michelle Solano of Winter Springs was awarded a Master of Science degree during Creighton University's winter commencement ceremony on Dec. 17.

#### Dean's List

The following students have earned the distinction of Dean's List at The Georgia Institute of Technology for fall semester 2011.

- Daniel Mongiove of Winter Springs

**BIZ NEWS**

#### New associates

RE/MAX Town & Country Realty located at 1315 Tuskawilla Road, Ste. 101, Winter Springs, is pleased to announce that David Coburn, Joseph Dionne and Millie Rivera have joined our office as real estate associates.

#### Exclusive contract awarded

Stirling Sotheby's International Realty has been named exclusive sales and marketing agents for a one-acre golf course estate home at Alaqua County Club, the private, gated community off Markham Woods Road in Longwood.



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# SENIOR VOICE



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## Walking into the record books

### Local shoe collector shattered a world record, but can't stop buying Converse

ISAAC BABCOCK  
The Voice

Penny Gold threw away the first pair of Converse Chuck Taylor All Star sneakers she owned, but she's spent the rest of her life making up for it. Seven hundred and thirty three pairs later, she may own more Converse shoes than anyone else in the world. Just to be sure, she applied for a Guinness World Record on Jan. 5. She needed to rent a U-Haul truck to drive her shoes from her Lake Mary home to the counting ceremony.

"Hi everybody, welcome to my shoes!" she yelled toward a train of first-graders winding their way into the multi-purpose room of Maitland's Jewish Academy of Orlando at about 10 a.m. Overflowing from the tops of more than 20 tables, a kaleidoscopic parade of Chuck Taylors perched a few feet off the floor. They're used to this lazy existence by now. Each one of them waits an average of two years to take a walk.

Gold, ever smiling, has worn almost all of them at least once. The morning of the official count, bursting with energy and sporting an outfit that made more noise than even her voice, Gold wore a pair of shimmering size nine Chuck Taylor high tops the color of her name. They might as well have her name on them; for the better part of the last two decades teaching at the Jewish Academy, she could be recognized by anybody staring at the floor.

But not on Jan. 5. As she paced the room, stopped every few feet by friends and gawkers who wanted to ask her which is her favorite pair, she passed by more than a few well-worn Converse on the feet of family, students, fellow teachers and random strangers. In Gold's world, Converse fever is contagious.

In unlaced gray low tops, her son Lander was the one who called the Guinness Book of World Records. Their instructions: shoot photos of every pair, catalog them and do a public counting with seven witnesses, or pay up to \$10,000 to have a Guinness official do the same. The choice was easy. Plenty of family and friends were ready to help. So on that cold morning after the holiday break, they trucked in more than 20 crates of shoes that had taken a month to inventory, and they started quantifying Gold's obsession.

Across the room, Jewish Academy Principal Lynne Shefsky, shod in a pair of borrowed black All Stars covered in colored rings, talked to a reporter about the reach of Gold's passion for a very particular type of shoes.

"In the third grade, the kids had to wear Converse sneakers," Shefsky said. "They knew it before they started."

Gold taught the third grade here while she traded curiosity for addiction. In the first 25 years of collecting, she may have picked up a few dozen pairs. In the last 15 years, it's been in the hundreds.



PHOTO BY ISAAC BABCOCK — THEVOICE

Lake Mary's Penny Gold has spent a lifetime collecting Converse, which she officially counted on Jan. 5.

Pretty soon after her collection edged beyond a pair for every day of the year, the kids started making a game of trying to catch her wearing the same pair twice. They kept journals and videos, hoping for the one day that their teacher would finally slip up. It never happened.

That's not hard to believe considering how often she picks up a new pair. She strolls into the Orlando area's three Converse outlets once a week. She rarely leaves without new shoes.

"Sometimes it's only one pair," Gold said. "But it's usually more."

Her husband, Barry, had to remodel their closet to fit the shoes, but he's gotten used to the growing behemoth behind the closet door.

"My clothes have to go in another room," he said. "But we've been married 40 years. This is nothing."

Finding the impetus to this madness takes a journey farther than Gold's feet could carry her, all the way back to her childhood roaming the sidewalks of New

York City. Every time she steps into a pair of Converse, she takes a step back in time to a hometown far away that gave birth to her accent and her passion. She laces up a pair, and all the sudden she's home again.

"They always reminded me of being a kid in Brooklyn," she said. Back then her favorite shoes only came in red, yellow, black or, her first pair, white low tops. She outgrew those, but never outgrew her love for her favorite footwear.

Everyone at the school knows about it by now. She's the Converse Lady. If anybody wants to buy her a gift, the choice is obvious. About 14 years ago Jill Braunstein, whose son Michael was in Gold's class, bought a pair of hi-tops and spent hours sewing buttons and baubles on with fishing line and lacing the pair up with tie-dyed ribbons, hoping to make Gold's Hanukkah a special one.

"I was overwhelmed," Gold said. "I was jumping up and down, gave him a big hug."

But most of the shoes she's bought on her own, which begs an

obvious question that 7-year-old Benjamin Shapiro couldn't help but ask: "How do you have all this money for all these shoes?"

It turns out she doesn't. Shopping for deals at the local outlets, she buys them for less than \$25 each most of the time. They're always different. She wants a new pair every time. For a while it was pairs that were an homage to AC/DC, Metallica or other famous rockers. She owns a pair made from see-through plastic. Another pair has eggs, sunny side up, adorning the ankles.

But ask her what her favorite is, and that's an easy guess. She strolls toward a pile of shoes at the front of the room to grab a pair of black hi-tops that read like a subway map. Just about where the old BMT subway line meets her left big toe is Lorimer Street station, where the train used to carry her home. Decades later, her shoes still do, every day, though the location has changed a bit.

With the official count finished, she was all smiles as she greeted more visitors. A sign on a post in the middle of the room read "Conversations, Penny", seemingly to pronounce some sort of finality to Gold's quest. But will she ever stop? Never, she said.

"Especially with my friends feeding the habit," Gold said. "I hope to get to 1,000, but I know I'll go over."

Lucky for her, the Converse stores are always within shopping distance in Orlando. On Saturday she made her usual rounds, hoping to find something she's never seen before. They're usually waiting there for her, handpicked by Converse store employees.

But before she could make it there, the employees had already brought her a gift: a pair of white hi-tops colored with a rainbow of signatures, congratulations and thank yous. Make that 734 pairs.

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subject to change

# Gulf War Syndrome, diet sodas linked?

## VETERANS ★ POST ★

by Freddy Groves

Gulf War Syndrome is often a mystery to the medical profession because there are so many varieties of symptoms. What happens in one veteran doesn't happen in another. Even the source isn't completely clear.

Was it from the vaccines given? Bug sprays? Depleted uranium dust? How about the oil-well fires?

Or was it from something completely innocuous — the diet sodas? Aspartame is a sweetener that's used in diet sodas. Cooks realized long ago that using it in recipes was a bad idea because the sweetener breaks down at high temperatures.

What happened to all those cases of drinks over in Iraq and Afghanistan? Were they kept

chilled the whole way? Not likely. A better scenario is that they sat on the hot tarmac before being transported to a hot storage area. The temperature at which Aspartame breaks down in a mere 85 degrees Fahrenheit, turning into chemicals such as formaldehyde and formic acid.

I'm not a doctor or a researcher, but from reading the studies it looks like there are biologic effects from putting Aspartame in the human body. In the U.K. and Canada, special product labeling

is required when the sweetener is used in food.

Is there a link between the ingestion of Aspartame and the symptoms of Gulf War Syndrome? Arguments exist on both sides of the issue. If you want to do your own research, put these all words in an Internet search engine: aspartame methanol formaldehyde formic acid. Look for the scholarly articles, not those a non-medical person has written.

If you are suffering with any

of the myriad symptoms of Gulf War Syndrome, try cutting Aspartame completely out of your diet for one month and see how you feel. You'll need to read the ingredients in everything you consume.

Write to Freddy Groves in care of King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853- 6475, or send email to columnreply@gmail.com

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## Senior Community Bulletin

### One Senior Place opens Feb. 1

One Senior Place Director Karen Precord has finalized staff hiring in advance of the Wednesday, Feb. 1, opening of the revolutionary senior mall and resource center. The elder care services complex is located near Florida Hospital off Interstate 4 between state roads 434 and 436. More than two dozen senior and health care-related businesses will have a presence at the newly remodeled facility at 715 Douglas Ave. in Altamonte Springs when the doors open. For more information about One Senior Place, call Karen Precord at 407-949-6733 or visit OneSeniorPlace.com

### Painting class

The Lake Mary Senior Center hosts an Abstract Painting class from 1:30-2:45 p.m. Friday, Jan. 27, at 911 Wallace Ct. Cost is \$12. E-mail Rusty at rstywahl@bellsouth.net or call 407-688-

0537.

### TV studio audience needed

Studio audiences are needed for two Vital Living Forums being filmed at Orange TV on Feb. 2. The first is an 8:45 a.m. episode on alternative health, and the second is a 10:45 a.m. episode on volunteerism. It's free! Taping will last 90 minutes each. For more information, contact Mimi at 407-836-6563 or mimi.reggentin@ocfl.net

### Telephone bill assistance

The Link-Up Florida and Lifeline Assistance programs help make telephone service affordable to low-income customers in Florida. For info, visit <http://tiny.cc/qjiw6>

### New census brief

The 65-and-older population represents a

higher percent of the U.S. population than ever before. For more information, visit <http://tiny.cc/mkzyh>

### Aging in place report

Most older adults want to age in place in their own homes or communities. This report examines needed state policies, including integrating land use, housing and transportation; efficiently delivering services in the home; providing more transportation choices, particularly for older adults who no longer drive; and improving affordable, accessible housing to prevent social isolation. Visit <http://tiny.cc/m7j79> for more information.

### Caregiving seminar

Counsel for Caregivers Seminar Series at the Orlando Public Library, Third Floor, Albertson Room, 101 E. Central Blvd., Orlando, to be held At 12:10 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 16. The topic being presented is "Caregiving: Getting organized and asking for help." Please RSVP to [officeonaging@ocfl.net](mailto:officeonaging@ocfl.net) or 407-836-7446.

officeonaging@ocfl.net or 407-836-7446.

### VA care changes

The Department of Veterans Affairs last week announced a change in regulations that extends VA's authority to pay for emergency care provided to eligible Veterans at non-VA facilities until the Veterans can be safely transferred to a VA medical facility. Visit [www.nonvacare.va.gov](http://www.nonvacare.va.gov)

### Nominate a senior volunteer

The Home Instead Senior Care office, serving seniors in Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties, has announced the Salute to Senior Service program, which will include a search for the most outstanding senior volunteer in each state and culminate with the selection of a national Salute to Senior Service winner during Older Americans Month in May. Nominees must be 65 years of age or older and volunteer at least 15 hours a month. Nominations will be accepted at [SalutetoSeniorService.com](http://SalutetoSeniorService.com) through March 15.

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- CarePlus Health Plans
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- Savannah Court & Cottage of Oviedo
- Brookdale Senior Living
- Winter Park Towers
- On Target Web Solutions
- Villa Grande on Saxon
- Eastbrooke Gardens



## One Senior Place The First Stop for Senior Care and Services

For Central Florida seniors, their families and caregivers, finding products, services and resources that cater to their specific needs is now easier – thanks to One Senior Place expansion to Orlando.

Building on 6 years of award-winning success in Brevard County, One Senior Place opens its second location to serve the Greater Orlando area! One Senior Place is a business community that incorporates a wide range of senior-focused providers, a Senior Resource Library, Living Options Showroom, auditorium and conference center, and access to elder care management services. The center is located at 715 Douglas Avenue in Altamonte Springs and is built on the concept that combines business and service providers in a unique mall-like environment

with the most thorough information, comprehensive resources and unbiased advice – all in a friendly, helpful environment. The concept integrates access to businesses, social and service organizations, non-profit resources, activities, events and care solutions – all dedicated to seniors, and all in one place.



**407.949.6733**

**OneSeniorPlace.com**

715 Douglas Avenue  
Altamonte Springs, FL 32714

**Monday – Friday**  
**8:30 am – 5 pm**



In short, One Senior Place is the first stop in navigating the maze of elder care. Never before have seniors or their families been able to call or visit one place and talk with experienced professionals in the senior services network who have access to all the senior resources available in the community. Seniors and their family members are able to use the “one-stop” resource for answers on everything from health care, legal, financial concerns, in-home care, to educational seminars and events designed for the active senior to remain engaged and informed. One Senior Place Orlando also offers a Living Options Showroom and on-site Senior Resource Library that lets visitors gather information and learn about products or services particular to seniors.

But it's not all about care or support. Active seniors can attend classes, seminars and join the Active Senior Club. Come visit us to see firsthand how One Senior Place is revolutionizing how America shops for elder care and services. Grand opening events are being planned, so watch for details. We're not a senior center, a healthcare facility, a nursing home, or a place to live. We're the “personal assistant” you need who has done the research to put you in touch with whatever you need. Now, you will be able to find what you need, all in one place. No more unanswered questions, no more wondering where to begin.

To find out more, call us at 407-949-6733 or visit us on the web at [OneSeniorPlace.com](http://OneSeniorPlace.com)

# Calendar of Events

## February 2012

**One Senior Place Orlando opens its doors!**

### **Ribbon Cutting Ceremony**

**Thursday, February 23rd 10 am**

Join One Senior Place, community leaders and Chamber members as we celebrate the Grand Opening of One Senior Place!

## March 2012

### **Community Open House**

**Thursday, March 22nd 10 am – 4 pm**

Come meet all of our Resident Businesses that are here to serve YOU! Stop by to see what we are all about!

## April 2012

### **Senior Living Options Day**

**Thursday, April 19th 9 am – 1 pm**

One Senior Place is putting the Options in Senior Living! Join us to meet the elder care experts who will help you understand all the different opportunities for senior living here in Orlando. Learn what living options are available and what is right for you, legal considerations, tips strategies and straight answers.

## And beyond

### **Women's Day Extravaganza**

**Thursday, June 7th 9am - 1pm**

Ladies don't miss our best day of the year! This inspiring event is specially designed to help women celebrate who they are, enjoy the fellowship of other women and continue life's learning experience. Hear informative and inspiring presenters. Don't miss this event!



See our full Calendar of Events at  
[OneSeniorPlace.com](http://OneSeniorPlace.com)

**407.949.6733**

# ATHLETICS



## THIS WEEK in sports history

Feb. 9, 1971 —

Pitcher Leroy "Satchel" Paige becomes the first Negro League veteran to be nominated for the Baseball Hall of Fame. He was inducted in August of that year. Joe DiMaggio once called Paige "the best and fastest pitcher I've ever faced."

## Knights grab historic conference wins

ISAAC BABCOCK  
The Voice

Thousands of fans mobbed the court, lifted A.J. Rompza into the air, and roared the name UCF over and over again Jan. 18. The Knights were victorious over Memphis for the first time in school history, and three days later, they had another first, beating UAB for the first time in eight meetings.

The Memphis win was de-

scribed as one of the most important wins in team history, leading fans to storm the floor after the win, dancing with players at half court.

"It was unreal," forward Keith Clanton said. "Everybody was out there having fun."

Seconds earlier the Knights' scrappy team captain had stolen a ball bound for a final shot attempt by Memphis as the score stood 68-67 with the Knights narrowly ahead. And as he turned

with the clock ticking to zero and fired a final shot, the stands were already exploding with cheers.

But there was plenty of heroics to go around in the final seconds of the Knights' shocking upset of the Tigers. Down 63-64, junior Marcus Jordan raced into the paint to fire a Jordanian acrobatic layup that fell to put the Knights back on top. Down again after a 3-pointer by the Tigers, Keith Clanton leapt up for a layup while being fouled mercilessly by the Tigers to tie the game. Clanton had only hit half his free throws all night, but on the ensuing foul shot, he sank what would be the winning basket with just four seconds left.

And as the clock ran out and Knights fans leapt onto the court to dance with their team, the Knights celebrated a victory that had been long in coming. In nearly a dozen meetings on the court, the Knights had never beaten the Tigers.

"We knew what it meant to the school," Jordan said.

Clanton and Jordan would lead the Knights in scoring. Clanton had 23 points, 8 rebounds, 3 turnovers and 2 steals on the

night. Jordan added 20 points and 2 assists.

The Knights needed everything they had to stave off a late comeback by Memphis (12-6, 3-1), which was down by as much as 13 points as the Knights pulled away early in the second half. But after a string of shots by the Tigers, they came within 2 points with 11 minutes left. After that, it was a struggle for the Knights to stay ahead.

But in the end, the Knights gritted out one of the most memorable wins in team history.

"We've beaten some good teams," Jordan said. "We're just

going to try and continue to win every game we play."

Three days later, they did just that, holding off UAB in a hard-fought battle that ended 48-41. That low-scoring affair was nearly a high-water mark for UCF defense, which held the Blazers to the third lowest score by an opponent in team history.

The streaking Knights (15-4, 5-1) were in the national spotlight Wednesday at press time, playing Tulsa on national television. They'll continue their C-USA play with a return home to host Southern Miss at 7 p.m. Saturday.



Fans lift captain A.J. Rompza after the Knights beat Memphis on Jan. 18.

PHOTO BY ISAAC BABCOCK — THE VOICE

## Districts approach

ISAAC BABCOCK  
The Voice

On an up-and-down roller coaster, the Lions have been looking to break away from their break-even season. At 11-10 overall, the Lions have flirted with streaks in both W and L columns but haven't managed more than two in a row since opening the season undefeated in four games.

With the district championship looming, the Lions will have to reverse their momentum in a hurry. Downed in two straight games against Lake Howell and Seminole, they took on Winter Springs for their final district match-up of the regular season Jan. 25 at press time.

With that out of the way, they'll close out regular season play at home in three games, first against Lake Minneola at 7:30 p.m. on Jan. 27, then hosting Lake Brantley at 7:30 p.m. on Jan. 31, and finally

East River at 7:30 p.m. on Feb. 2.

District play will tip off at 6 p.m. on Feb. 8 at Lake Howell. The hosts have been nearly even with the Lions for most of the season, with the two teams trading a win and a loss in two games so far. Overall the Silver Hawks have struggled a bit more with an 8-10 overall record.

Looking to make a comeback, the Winter Springs Bears have posted a 5-16 overall record, with only one win in district play.

One team that's had little to complain about this season is Hagerty (15-5, 7-4), closing in on the end of the season with only two losses since Dec. 14. Incidentally two of those losses have been to district rival Lake Brantley, the most recent on Jan. 24 by a 53-49 score.

They may get a shot at a rematch in the district championships, which start at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 7.



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# VOICES



## THIS WEEK in political history

Jan. 31, 1950 —

U.S. President Harry Truman publicly announces his decision to support the development of the hydrogen bomb. In 1952, the United States successfully detonated "Mike" in the Pacific Marshall Islands. The 10.4-megaton thermonuclear device instantly vaporized an entire island.

### EMPLOYMENT

## Ask Sandi



## Want a job? Read carefully

One of the biggest eye-openers for me when speaking about how to get a job is when I am hiring. We recently started a search for a volunteer coordinator and it has been challenging to say the least.

The instructions on the job advertisement were simple: Please send a resume and cover letter with salary requirements. Of the more than 50 applications I received, only three had a cover letter and two put their salary requirements.

This meant I had to e-mail those who had potential and ask them to send their salary requirements.

I set up all of my interviews by e-mail this time. A couple of people did not get back to me. Checking your e-mail is so important. Make sure you do not just delete your junk e-mail too.

I did also receive a couple of "applicants" by text or one-line e-mails. This is NEVER acceptable.

I do have to say I was pleased with the first round of interviews. When we narrowed our candidates down, we found several qualified candidates.

There is only one position open so it means the other four interviewees will be not be hired by us at this time. We might love you in the interview, but someone else appeared to be a better fit. Don't take it personally, just keep moving forward. If possible, stay in touch with the recruiter.

I was also pleased that everyone sent a thank you note to us. I was glad to see they took the time to follow up.

So the lesson for today is in order to be seen, tailor your resume to the job, follow directions, and follow up.

### 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.

## Letters to the editor

### Vote Santorum

Obama and the Democrats are taking our country over a cliff at 90 mph. Electing a new president who'll just slow us down to 45 mph doesn't seem like much of an improvement to me. We need someone who'll stand on the brakes, crank the wheel over and turn things around. A president who will unburden our economy by rolling back the politicians' spending spree by \$5 trillion in five years, by repealing every \$100 million-plus Obama-era regulation, and by reducing taxes to two rates, 10 percent and 28 percent. A president who will require the end of deficit spending by passing a balanced budget amendment. A president who will free our health care from political control by repealing so-called "ObamaCare" and replacing it with reforms featuring competition and choice for us. That's why I'm supporting Rick Santorum for president.

—Jeffrey Payne  
Winter Springs

### Be ready for Election Day

The League of Women Voters of Florida encourages all citizens to vote with confidence during this year's three elections.

The first election date is the Florida GOP Presidential Preference Primary on Tuesday, Jan. 31. Early voting is until Jan. 28.

To make sure voters are as informed as possible about the process, the League offers these voting tips:

What happens on Election Day if my residential address is out-of-date?

Voters who have moved from one county to another, and who have not updated their address with their Supervisor of Elections, could be handed a provisional ballot at the polls under Florida's new election law. You can change your address by simply calling your Supervisor of Elections before you get to the polls.

I have heard that vote-by-mail ballots are not counted unless the election is close. Is that true?

**False!** Vote-by-mail ballots are actually the first ballots to be counted. By Florida law, supervisors can begin tabulating vote-by-mail ballots 15 days before Election Day. Vote-by-mail results are not actually counted until after 7 p.m. on Election Day.

Where do I vote if I have been forced out of my home due to foreclosure?

The law states that you must vote in the precinct where you live on Election Day. Voters in a foreclosure situation have several options: any voter can vote early at one of several designated early voting sites in their county. There are no assigned precincts for early voting. In addition, you may request a vote-by-mail ballot by calling your local supervisor. The most practical option is to contact your supervisor and update your residential address before Election Day so that is current and accurate. You can do this by phone. Then go to your assigned precinct for your new address on Election Day.

Update your voter status!

The League encourages Florida voters to be ready for all three elections in 2012. The League has made it easy. The League encourages voters to take action: update your voter record for address changes, name changes and updates to vote-by-mail ballot requests. Visit [BeReadyToVote.org](http://BeReadyToVote.org) or [VamosAVotar.org](http://VamosAVotar.org)

It's democracy made easy!

—Charley Williams  
Voter Service Chair,  
League of Women Voters of Florida

# Fighting the right to vote

Early voting is awesome. It reduces lines on Election Day, it allows for more flexibility for those of us who can't sneak away from work or other responsibilities on a Tuesday and it generally promotes the democratic process.

Early voting has also grown wildly popular with about a dozen states expanding the time frame for these early bird voters in the last decade. And more people are taking advantage. According to findings by the Associated Press, early voters increased from 22 percent in 2004 to 34 percent in 2008.

Now about a half dozen states, including Florida, have passed laws that seek inexplicably to reverse that trend.

One of the major changes Florida voters will see this year is their early voting time

period, which started Jan. 21, shrunk from 14 to eight days. Voting is also canceled the Sunday before Election Day.

Within the broadest of terms these changes will affect all voters identically, and that's an easy talking point to stick to. In theory, everybody will have the same significantly reduced opportunity to go to the polls.

In practice, the story changes dramatically. The numbers have already told us what will happen before the laws' reach becomes more tangible to the voters come Election Day. More than 3.3 million Democrats in the state flocked to the polls prior to Election Day during the 2008 presidential election compared to 810,666 Florida Republicans, a USA Today report stated.

Many of those early voters

were minorities, the elderly and student voters, who are also known to be fans of early voting, from the polls. More than half of blacks in Florida cast their votes early in 2008. Given the data at hand, the effect of these laws, whether intended or otherwise, is obvious. To a Republican-dominated legislature, the issue becomes terrifyingly black and white.

Of course the law isn't banishing early voting, it's cutting it down from two weeks to one, still giving people plenty of time to get to the polls, say proponents of the new laws. Is a week versus two really so bad? There are 15 states in this country that don't allow early voting at all. But that's a group of late adopters that we should all see as behind the curve, not ahead of it.

Yes, a week of early voting still provides ample time to cast a vote, no matter your race, creed or place in the world. But the fact that there's any extra time to vote left after those laws are finished hacking away at it is a poor consolation for voters on the losing side of what has become a sadly partisan issue. Increasing Florida's abysmal voter turnout rates shouldn't be a partisan fight. But that's exactly what's happening.

Given the obvious nature of the laws' effect, those who drafted them already have put a finer point on these fractured politics for us: Those who disagree with the current Legislature should have less of a chance to say so. And now that forcibly silenced voice is no longer a political ideology; it's the law.

## Young Voices

We asked kids what they liked about the Central Florida Scottish Highland Games, and the medieval times.



This is the second time I've been to the games and I like when they throw the huge poles and metal things in the air. If I lived in medieval times, I would be big and strong and fight dragons.

—Jacob M.  
9 years old



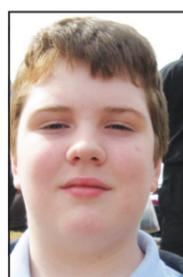
I like the food especially baked apples. I don't think I'd like to wear a kilt, but I do like the sheep and the herding dogs. I might like to live in medieval times and I like the music and the bagpipes.

—Aleena O.  
7 years old



I like the games when they toss the big rocks, and food like warm haggis and sausage rolls. I have visited Scotland and we saw castles, mountains, snow and sheep. It's fun to see the plaid kilts.

—Victoria F.  
9 years old



I'm into medieval weapons, armor, catapults and siege weapons. Here at the games I'm watching the blacksmith and the contests. It's great to see the chain mail and the swords and bows.

—Jonathon S.  
11 years old



It's fun to see different cultures to see how they dressed and lived, even getting dressed for battle. I like to look for costume ideas because I sew. I may try haggis today. When we went to England, we saw ancient ruins and Buckingham Palace.

—Kaylyn S., 10 years old

We would love to hear from your Young Voices!

Call 407-563-7026 or e-mail [editor@observernewspapers.com](mailto:editor@observernewspapers.com) to have The Voice visit your class or group.

