

Photo Credit: Governor's Press Office



Congratulation Felecia Judge of Columbia Bank! Felecia has taken over as president of the Select Business Associates of Ocala. They are a Wednesday lunch group that meets at Mojos at Ocala, location Hwy 200.



Congratulation Carissa Sawyer of Fox Fire Realty for agreeing to be Vice President of the Select Business Associates of Ocala. They are a Wednesday lunch group that meets at Mojos at Ocala location Hwy 200.



## Acquisition of 20,000 Acres

This purchase would be the largest wetland acquisition in a decade and will permanently save the land from oil drilling.

**Fort Lauderdale, Fla.** – Today, Governor Ron DeSantis announced the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has reached an agreement with Kanter Real Estate LLC., that will allow for the purchase of 20,000 acres of critical wetlands in Water Conservation Area 3 (WCA 3) within the Everglades Protection Area located in Broward County. This acquisition would represent the largest wetland acquisition in a decade.

“One of my administration's top environmental priorities has been expediting Everglades restoration,” said **Governor DeSantis**. “Today we take another step in the right direction by reaching this agreement between DEP and

Kanter Real Estate that will allow for the purchase of 20,000 acres of critical wetlands. This significant purchase will permanently save these lands from oil drilling. I'm proud of our progress but also recognize this is just the beginning. I will continue to fight every day for the Everglades and Florida's environment.”

The Kanter property is in the heart of the Everglades in WCA 3, which is part of the Everglades Protection Area - one of the most important wetland systems in the Everglades ecosystem. With this acquisition, there would be nearly 600,000 acres of wetlands in WCA 3 that would be permanently protected in public ownership for restoration and recreation.

“This acquisition will help ensure that the largest contiguous wetland in the state remains in a more natural state for future

generations,” said **DEP Secretary Noah Valenstein**. “Having these wetlands in public ownership supports expedited restoration work on the EAA Reservoir and other critical Everglades projects, provides recreational opportunities for residents and visitors and protects the wildlife habitat of more 60 endangered and threatened species.”

“Under the leadership of Governor DeSantis, 2020 is already starting out as a banner year for Everglades restoration,” said **South Florida Water Management District Governing Board Chairman Chauncey Goss**. “These wetlands are critical to the health of the Everglades and now we can guarantee that there will be no oil and gas drilling on 20,000 acres in the heart of the Everglades.”

## We Are On Information Overload!



By TomL

We are on information overload! While some media sources report or don't report or report facts wrong or twist facts, some news media are trying their best to report the facts. Other countries are feeding us facts that their

investigating people pick up over the past few years implicating some high up personalities or politicians in wrong doing.

It comes out now that one of the FBI members that was caught lying is now lecturing at our colleges for big money. How does that happen? Who would hire him? For what purpose? To indoctrinate the young. The far left is a scary group, they run deep in our political educational world, they are well embedded, they have a lot of money and they will do whatever it takes to do the task at hand. Today it is to take down a sitting President of the United States. The far left is trying to destroy our Constitution. We must stop that if we want to live in a country that

has a dream. The American Dream. Who was that said “I have a Dream!” MLK. Of course I know who said it.

In the past some of our smarter than us leaders decided that every young American should get a higher education. We left carnage behind, we left the Children behind that were not college material. Meanwhile we are shoving these young people in a direction they don't want to go and the indoctrination starts in some schools and colleges. I would say there could a small portion of professors are part of the indoctrination but they get to enough students to make a difference. They come out into the world all full of energy to fix the

world and try to take in a direction not described by our Constitution. When you lose an election by Constitutional Laws you can't just change the laws!!!

As I watch this Kangaroo court proceed I can envision how much time and money it cost the Tax Payers. Some of these people making our decisions have never run a business. They have been full time politics all there life, sitting in the same for 30 years. What is the matter with this???

Get out and vote these people they are not going to lie to us any more. Let your voice be heard...Send me a letter to the editor. I will run it with your initials only. Send to: floury@att.net

Kevin Sheilley  
**OCALA/MARION COUNTY CHAMBER & ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP**

The mission of the CEP is to *be the catalyst for a prosperous community* and one of the primary ways we seek to deliver on this mission is by actively working to recruit new primary employers. The Ocala Metro recently reported an unemployment rate of 3.4% which is lower than the national average. More importantly, our job growth rate has been averaging 3% which is nearly double the national average. Our wage growth has also been greater than the national average. In other words, our unemployment rate is decreasing, our workforce is increasing, we are creating more jobs and they are paying higher wages.

This growth can be directly tied to the CEP's current five-year goals. These goals include impacting the announced creation of 4,500 new jobs which pay an average wage

which is 15% above the current County average and will result in a direct capital investment in our community of \$400 million. Through the first two years (17 & 18) of this current strategic plan, we have announced 2837 new jobs paying an average wage 17% above the County average with a capital investment of \$318.6 million. While this is a great start, we believe year 3 is going to end as one of the best for these measures.

**Green Thumb Industries**

In mid-November we were very excited to announce that Green Thumb Industries (GTI) was redeveloping the former Mark III property along the interstate. The company will start construction early in 2020 on the first phase of their new manufacturing and processing facility. This first phase will result in a minimum capital investment of

\$20 million and the creation of more than 100 new jobs.

GTI is a publicly traded company based in Chicago. The company has a market cap of \$2 billion and is a leading player in the medical cannabis industry. The company has a license to grow, process, and distribute medical cannabis products through a network of retail locations which they also own. This retail network, called Rise, is licensed for 36 stores throughout the state. The new Ocala facility will place GTI as a major player in the Florida market especially with our community's central location.

**BioSysco**

In late November the County and City approved incentives for the location of BioSysco. This is a life-sciences technology company currently based in Chicago. Utilizing a patented muscle activation technology, Sigma Q (SQ®), Biosysco "helps individuals become stronger, move better and recover faster than ever thought possible." BioSysco has more recently

developed an equine application for their technology and has worked with a respected Ocala-area equine rehabilitation center on a clinical study.

Pending the approval of incentives by the state, BioSysco is excited about the prospect of hiring new 10 positions at an average annual wage of \$65,500 in the Ocala area. Their initial presence would be at the Power Plant Business Incubator, where a new program has just been designed to support equine innovation.

**Dollar Tree**

We certainly saved the biggest for last. At the end of the year we were able to announce that Dollar Tree would be the first tenant in the new Florida Crossroad Commerce Park. The company, a perennial member of the Fortune 200, will be investing approximately \$211 million and building a 1.7 million sq. ft. distribution center. This facility will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest building in the area and one of the largest in Central Florida. The facility will eventually employ nearly 700 people.

The location of this project will enable a tremendous amount of infrastructure development in this area. Hwy 484 will be further four-laned, the next leg of SW 49<sup>th</sup> Ave will be built through the park, a new interior road will be built, and water and sewer capabilities will be significantly expanded. These improvements will positively impact everyone who lives in the area not just the businesses locating in this park.

2019 has certainly been a memorable one and we look forward to seeing all that 2020 has to deliver as we all work to keep this community *Moving Forward*.

**Caregiver Champions**



**Hollywood Legends Recruit Military Caregiver Champions**

(NAPSI)—Academy Award winner Tom Hanks is rallying the nation behind America's military caregivers with help from the legacy of a legend, Bob Hope. Hanks launched the Military Caregiver Champion program with the Elizabeth Dole Foundation to fund resources for the 5.5 million Americans voluntarily caring for a loved one who was wounded, made ill or injured through military service. Hope's daughter, Linda Hope, was the first to join the campaign, donating \$1 million on behalf of the Bob and Dolores Hope Foundation.

"My dad, Bob Hope, dedicated so much of his life to connecting members of our military to the nation they served and their loved ones waiting at home. He would be so proud to join another passionate entertainer like Tom Hanks in making that same connection between America's military caregivers and the country that owes them such a debt of gratitude and support," said Hope.

Military caregivers provide \$14 billion of unpaid care to veterans every year. They  
*Continued page 3*

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We are looking for six new members not in the categories above.  
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 We meet in the private room.  
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Florida State Senate

## DENNIS K. BAXLEY



Friends,  
Legislative discussion in Tallahassee continues, and I have been encouraged by a lot of what our leadership has accomplished so far. Vigilance from you, the voter, is still very important at this stage as we are beginning to see which bills are running out of time, and those (which we may or may not like) that are still pressing forward through the committee process.

Quick update on the SB 404, the Parental Consent for Abortion Act that I have written about previously. The bill has just made it through its second committee of referral and only faces one more hurdle before being sent to the Senate floor for a vote. Thank you to all of you who traveled to Tallahassee to advocate and support this good legislation, and for those you back home who supported us through word-of-mouth and more importantly, prayer. I am very optimistic that we will get this passed, and parents' rights will be restored.

Also, I am very happy to report that your Senator's bill, SB 864 Surrendered Newborn

Infants passed through its first committee of reference. This good bill expands Florida's current safe haven law, allowing hospitals, fire, and EMS stations to utilize a "newborn safety device" as a means of accepting surrendered infants. Current law requires that an infant to be handed directly to emergency personnel or hospital staff, thus requiring the mother to be seen, possibly by someone who might recognize her. This might discourage women from legally surrendering their infant and encourage more illegal abandonments. This bill fixes that issue of anonymity. The device, called a "baby box", is located on the outside wall of a building, with one outside facing door for someone to place the infant in, and an inside door for staff or personnel to accept the surrendered child. The bill requires a dual alarm system that activates once an infant is placed inside, and staff is required to periodically check the device and ensure that the alarm system is operable at all times. This bill is not mandating that these devices be used, but just allows for one more tool to be used to help someone in distress who feels that they have no other option. The message that we can send with a bill like this is that we do care about every life, and every little baby deserves a chance to live.

Another piece of legislation that your

Senator filed is SB 682, Florida Guide to a Healthy Marriage. This bill authorizes the creation of the Marriage Education Committee, within the Department of Children and Families, for the purpose of creating the Florida Guide to a Healthy Marriage. Current State law requires, as a prerequisite to receiving a marriage license, acknowledgement by couples that they have read either the Florida Family Law Handbook or other marriage-related information. The 19 page handbook offers little positive introduction and instead, 16 of its pages focus on child-related issues after divorce, how the court divides assets and liabilities upon divorce, and the actual steps to take to end a marriage. The Committee will consist of six marriage education and family advocates appointed by the Governor (2), Speaker of the House (2), and Senate President (2). The Florida Guide to a Healthy Marriage will focus on elements not expanded upon in the Family Law Handbook, such as conflict management, communication skills, family expectations, financial responsibilities, and parenting responsibilities – items of benefit to any married couple.

I hope you were encouraged by this update, and excited about the good things happening in the Florida Senate. Thank you for letting me serve you.

Onward & Upward,  
Senator Dennis Baxley

## Caregivers

*Continued from page 2*

devote their lives to their loved ones, often sacrificing their own health, jobs and financial security.

"As Senator Elizabeth Dole says, our military caregivers are hidden heroes and I am honored to have the spirit of Bob Hope helping us support them," said Hanks. "There has never been, nor will there ever be, a greater ambassador between the military community and us Americans than Bob Hope."

All Americans are invited to become Caregiver Champions. Supporters will receive a Caring Tag, which reimagines the honored symbol of the military dog tag and includes the name and story of a military caregiver.

All administrative costs have been sponsored. One hundred percent of donations will support the Elizabeth Dole Foundation's resources for caregivers.

"We cannot take away the injuries or the illnesses but we can ensure our caregivers do not walk this difficult journey alone," said Hanks.

To become a Caregiver Champion, visit [www.hiddenheroes.org/champion](http://www.hiddenheroes.org/champion).

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Tom Loury *Long time member of CEP/Ocala Chamber of Commerce, Past President of the Ocala Business Leaders, Co-Founder and President of Select Business Associates, Past President of the Lady Lake Chamber.*

## PUBLISHER'S NOTES



By TomL  
First I want to acknowledge the spelling of Harold Schwarz name. For years I have seen people spell it different ways and now I have done the same thing...SORRY!

I wonder? Remember North Korea Kim said he had a Christmas present for Trump and everyone jumped at it saying he was going to do something evil??? Maybe not. Someone had to tell Trump about the terrorist, another plot to kill our people and do Cyber attacks. Someone had to tell Trump that the number one terrorist was where he was when they got him??? I wonder???

\*\*\*\*\*

### Information from the net...

Joe Biden lives in the biggest Mansion in his state and he just bought another mansion in DC. Bernie Sanders has four houses.

Obama just bought his third Mansion. It is said that all this money was made from them lecturing you on income equality!

\*\*\*\*

The left voted that you had to buy insurance or pay a fine. Now they have offered free Healthcare Insurance to the Illegals...

\*\*\*\*\*

The Judiciary Committee just offered an amendment that requires ICE be notified when an illegal immigrant tries to buy a firearm. Dems voted NO. That means the Dems have no problem with people owning guns even if they're not American Citizens.

\*\*\*\*\*

"You need to vote for the Democrats. Otherwise the illegal aliens will lose their rights"! ~Nancy Pelosi.....2019

\*\*\*\*\*

Speaking of which... "We are all born ignorant, but one must work very hard to remain STUPID!" ~Benjamin Franklin~ (1706-1790)

\*\*\*\*\*

### WHO SAID THIS???

"The Democratic debates are millionaires arguing with other millionaires about how evil millionaires are."

Mike Rowe from Dirty Jobs!  
TRUE OR FALSE???

\*\*\*\*\*

Politics is all consuming right now and it sound like it will be even more all-consuming after the next election, when I hear Nancy Pelosi say we will stop Donald Trump from serving another term one way or another??? That sounds to me like a threat!!! This no longer the party my Dad belong to. How far will this party go with hatred motivating them? This is not the average Democrat in the USA. It is a mix of people that are consumed, not a good way, to live, thrives and survive.

The alternative if a Socialist gets in it will be different than a Democrat; things will be devastating for life in America as we know it, because rich people will move their money out of the country. The middle class will down grade to poverty level because they are going to pay a heavy tax. Poverty level people will get a free ride to middle class whether they are working or not. What about our healthcare? What about the

farmers? What about our country? Every one of the people that are trying to take down Donald Trump is a millionaire or billionaire.

I still say the Democratic Party has allowed the Socialist to take over the Party and there is only a slight window of opportunity to get it back. You better take it!!!

Last but not least...I am confused. Right after the death of the Terrorist Soleimani, the TV news showed people in the streets say death to America and now they are protesting against their own government. Was it because they lied about the accidental shooting down of the Commercial Airline? What is your opinion? [tloury@att.net](mailto:tloury@att.net)

## Genealogical Society

The Marion County Genealogical Society will meet Thursday, February 20, 2020 from 2pm - 4pm at the Marion County Public Library, 2720 E. Silver Springs Blvd, Ocala, FL. Annette Burke Lytle will give a live presentation on the topic "Find Your Family History in Free Online Newspapers". For further information, visit [www.mcgsocala.org](http://www.mcgsocala.org) or contact Joel Swanson at (352) 897-0840.

## Newspaper Deadlines

*Editorial & Ad Copy for March*

**Seniors Voice & Ocala DownTown**

**12am, February 12th**

**Lady Lake Magazine & Village Spectator**

**12am, February 19th**

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ONE PERSON'S OPINION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

Cargo on the Mayflower: Religion and Politics. Reasons America was founded. Reason why the Pilgrims undertook the perilous journey. They were not on a cruise. Today our government is a shambles, since religion has been tossed in the trash can, and politics is in shambles, corrupted to the nth degree.

Inequality of income is the mantra of the day. How can equality of income ever be fair, just? We all start out with an inequality of talent. It would have to be equality of talent, ambition, skill, knowledge. If you are unable to make change for a dollar, why do you deserve equal pay? What warrants equal pay? On what grounds is this equableness predicated? Does breathing qualify you for equal pay? Should you receive a Bezos { not even Bezos deserves it} size paycheck, just for breathing? Can we have a little common sense?

The people calling for this equal pay naturally will want to be the ones in charge of doling out this equableness, but somehow their equal slice will be larger than anyone else's equal share, and their buddies as well. We [you and I] will still be getting the short

end of the stick. We need a better fairer solution.

Smaller entities are better, easier to manage, and monitor. Look at the behemoth in D.C. Looks like the Anti-Federalists were right.

Solution: Divide the country, California and New York, Illinois, Washington and Oregon in one country, and the rest of us in another. See who prospers.

We will start off much better: no excrement on the streets, nor needles, nor beds, nor stench, vs. pedestrians only, as intended. Common sense vs. uncommon sense? This way everyone is happy, we all have a choice, we can move if we do not like our situation. If piggish conditions are your thing have at it. Move.

The Pilgrims need to see this mess, and whip us into shape, get us back on track. It was their country, their idea. They knew the troubles governments cause. They did something about it. They tried the share the work and wealth shtick, and it did not work. Only when they began to work for themselves did things begin to click. Experience teaches.

D. I. Larson

Civil War

Dr. Jack Devere Minzey, born 6 October 1928, died 8 April 2018, was the Department Head of Education at Eastern Michigan University as well as a prolific author of numerous books, most of which were on the topic of Education and the Government role therein. (Editor's note) This was the last of his works:

Civil War: How do civil wars happen?

By Dr. Jack Devere Minzey

Two or more sides disagree on who runs the country. And they can't settle the question through elections because they don't even agree that elections are how you decide who's in charge. That's the basic issue here. Who decides who runs the country? When you hate each other but accept the election results, you have a country. When you stop accepting election results, you have a countdown to a civil war.

The Mueller investigation is about removing President Trump from office and overturning the results of an election. We all know that. But it's not the first time they've done this. The first time a Republican president was elected this century, they said he didn't really win. The Supreme Court gave him the election. There's a pattern here.

What do sure odds of the Democrats rejecting the next Republican president

really mean? It means they don't accept the results of any election that they don't win. It means they don't believe that transfers of power in this country are determined by elections. That's a civil war.

The description is exactly what the Radical left is doing. They need to uphold our Constitution and quit ad-libbing.

What do you think? tloury@att.net



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FROM THE DESK OF  
GOVERNOR DESANTIS



Photo Credit: Governor's Press Office

**Governor Ron DeSantis Gives State of the State Address**  
Tallahassee, Fla. – Today, Governor Ron DeSantis delivered the State of the State address to a joint session of the Florida Legislature and Floridians everywhere, highlighting Florida's strengths while reporting on the promising prospects for the future with the support of the House of Representatives and Senate.

Governor DeSantis said, "In 2019, we took bold steps to expand educational opportunities, protect our environment and natural resources, reform health care, invest in infrastructure and bolster public safety – all while reducing taxes and adding to our budget reserves. While we should look with favor on these bold beginnings, we have much more to do."

"For everything there is a season, and this is Florida's season of opportunity – we have the chance to build on a strong foundation, the chance to face the challenges before us and the chance to leave a legacy of success that will benefit our people now and in the future. There is no reason why we can't seize this moment and deliver for the people of Florida."

**Governor Ron DeSantis Announces**

**Made In Space Corporate Headquarters Relocation from California to Florida**

Jacksonville, Fla. – Today, Governor Ron DeSantis announced that Made In Space has decided to relocate their corporate headquarters and satellite manufacturing operations from California to Florida. The headquarters relocation and expansion effort



will involve more than \$3 million in new capital investment for Jacksonville.

"As a global leader for in-space manufacturing and assembly, Made In Space has a proven track record of delivering innovative space technology demonstrations at an industry-leading pace," said Governor DeSantis. "Made In Space's move to Florida is more evidence of Florida's success and growth in the aerospace industry. My administration remains committed to supporting that growth and ensuring we maintain an economic climate that allows companies like Made In Space to prosper."

"Made In Space, through its innovative in-space manufacturing segment and technology which improves life on earth and in space, is

forging the way toward a bright new future," said Space Florida President and CEO Frank DiBello. "We are pleased to have established a long-standing relationship with Made In Space and are proud to welcome the company to Jacksonville on Florida's First Coast. Space Florida looks forward to Made In Space's continued growth and success, expanding Florida's thriving aerospace economic footprint."

"This is an exciting moment and relocating our headquarters to Jacksonville is a strategic step to position the company for long-term growth," said MIS President and CEO Andrew Rush. "By expanding our presence in Florida, we can leverage a skilled aerospace workforce, large scale infrastructure to support our growth, and key strategic partners like Space Florida that will accelerate our momentum as we continue to develop world-class space technology."

Founded in Silicon Valley in 2010, Made In Space has flown 8 different missions to the International Space Station. NASA awarded them a \$73.7 million contract to develop Archinaut One, the world's first self-assembling satellite and will help NASA with long-term goals for missions from the Moon to Mars.

**Military and Defense Industry Provides \$95 Billion Economic Impact**

Joint study concludes industries grew by \$10 billion and added more than 100,000 jobs since 2017

Tallahassee, Fla. – Today, Governor Ron DeSantis announced the results of the 2020 Florida Military and Defense Economic Impact Study, which shows that Florida's military and defense industry has a \$95 billion economic impact. The study is commissioned by Enterprise Florida, Inc. (EFI) and the Florida Defense Support Task Force (FDSTF).

The results mark a \$10 billion increase from the 2017 study, making military and defense one of the state's top economic drivers. The defense sector also provides 914,787 jobs in Florida, an increase of 113,040 jobs during the past two years.

"The results of this study demonstrate that maintaining and protecting military bases and industry in Florida is a win-win for both Florida and the United States," said Governor DeSantis. "Florida offers unmatched conditions for training air and sea forces with access to some of the highest quality test and training ranges in the country. Florida's military and defense industry has never been more vital to the economic success of our state."

"Today's announcement is great news for Florida," said Jamal Sowell, Florida Secretary of Commerce and Enterprise Florida President & CEO. "Enterprise Florida and the Florida Defense Support Task Force will continue to maintain Florida's reputation as the most military-friendly state in the nation by strengthening our state's support for military members and their families and ensuring our bases remain resilient."

Other major results of the study demonstrate that, by region, the defense sector has the greatest impact on Northwest Florida, where one-third of the regional economy comes from military spending. Additionally, defense manufacturing has nearly doubled since 2015 with the aerospace and engineering sectors centered in Brevard and Orange Counties leading the way. Finally, Florida boasts the second largest military retiree population and the third largest veteran population of all 50 states. Florida also receives the fourth largest sum of defense contracts among all states and ranks fifth in the country in the number of military personnel.

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Answers page 11



**CORNER**

- 46. Bit of residue
- 47. A beach ball may do it
- 50. Bean and Bates
- 52. Animal pouch
- 53. Lillehammer

**Across**

- 1. Part of a doorway
- 5. Defect
- 9. Prolonged attack
- 14. London Magazine essayist
- 15. Misplace
- 16. "Circle of Life" singer John
- 17. Emulate a raindrop
- 20. Work a form
- 21. Splits up evenly
- 22. Occupational suffix
- 23. Moll Flanders' creator
- 24. Avoid incoming fire
- 28. Type of log
- 32. Rumford-to-Bangor dir.
- 33. Verses of tribute
- 34. Nova follower
- 36. To any extent
- 38. Right away
- 40. Chichen Itza attraction
- 41. Grayish green
- 43. Breaker
- 45. Mediocre mark

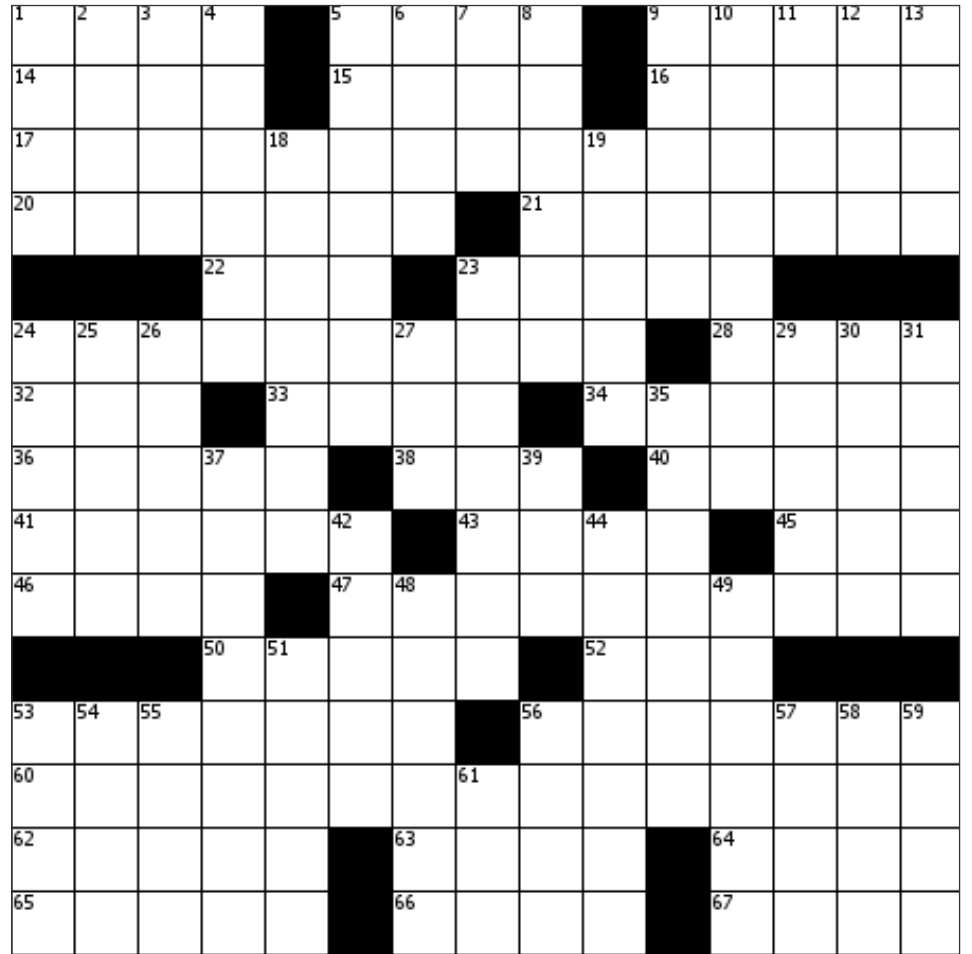
**events**

- 56. Female player
- 60. Airplanes do it every day
- 62. Liqueur flavoring
- 63. Nephew of Cain
- 64. Arraignment offering
- 65. Alternatives to walks
- 66. Lalique or Russo
- 67. Brother of Cain and Abel

**Down**

- 1. "Mutt and \_\_\_"
- 2. Jai \_\_\_
- 3. Grain grinder
- 4. Setting for some Tchaikovsky score
- 5. Prepared fish, in a way
- 6. Trent of the Senate
- 7. It's a grate thing
- 8. Garden neatener
- 9. Prefix for motor or control
- 10. Start of Barney's theme song
- 11. A case of pins and

- needles
- 12. Used up
- 13. Word with split or book
- 18. Rock climber's need
- 19. They're kept under wraps
- 23. Writes out of the will
- 24. Caught wind of
- 25. Prefix with change
- 26. Add body to hair
- 27. Daniel survived it
- 29. Carthage neighbor
- 30. Type of closet
- 31. Reduced, as tension
- 35. Having a scalloped edge
- 37. Attorneys' jargon
- 39. Money roll
- 42. San Antonio landmark
- 44. Type of rayon
- 48. Reply
- 49. Meal leftovers
- 51. Rich sources
- 53. Old wound mark
- 54. Burt's ex-wife
- 55. In the thick of
- 56. Like \_\_\_ of bricks
- 57. First name in mysteries
- 58. Editor's "Let it stand"
- 59. Former Iranian monarch
- 61. Cincinnati-to-Toledo dir.



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FROM THE DESK OF  
**ATTORNEY GENERAL MOODY**



**CONSUMER ALERT:** Attorney General Reminds Consumers of Deadline to File Claims for the Equifax Data Breach

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody today issued a Consumer Alert to remind consumers affected by the massive Equifax data breach to file claims before the Jan. 22 deadline. The 2017 data breach affected nearly half of the U.S. population and Attorney General Moody's Office reached an agreement with Equifax creating a Consumer Restitution Fund of up to \$425 million. Attorney General Moody encourages all eligible consumers to file a claim before the deadline by visiting

[EquifaxBreachSettlement.com](http://EquifaxBreachSettlement.com) or calling 1(833) 759-2982.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "The massive Equifax data breach affected millions of consumers and there is relief available for victims, but the deadline to file a claim is quickly approaching. That is why I am encouraging all eligible consumers to please file a claim before the deadline on Wednesday, January 22."

In July 2019, Attorney General Moody

announced an agreement reached with Equifax over the company's failed security measures in a data breach that allowed attackers to penetrate the company's system that went unnoticed for 76 days. The agreement is the result of a multistate investigation into the breach that found Equifax failed to maintain a reasonable security system enabling hackers to penetrate its systems. Affected personal information included Social Security numbers, names, dates of birth, addresses, credit card numbers, and in some cases, driver's license numbers.

Along with the announcement of the claims process, came reports of phishing attacks related to the Equifax claims process. Attorney General Moody issued a previous [Consumer Alert](#), warning consumers not to fall for scams attempting to steal consumer information using fake Equifax claims webpages. With the claims deadline quickly approaching, consumers should still be wary of these phishing attacks and use the following tips:

- Do not open emails or attachments from an unfamiliar sender;
- Hover cursors over links in emails to see where the links lead to determine if the links are known and trusted web addresses;
- Study the email or attachment carefully for any spelling or grammar issues;
- Verify the legitimacy of the email with its source by contacting the institution at the

- web address or phone number listed on a bill or statement; and
- Notify the institution of any phishing attempts made in its name; it may wish to send an alert or warning to its customers.

Forward phishing and spam emails to the FTC at [FTC.gov/Complaint](http://FTC.gov/Complaint). Report fraud to the Florida Attorney General's Office by calling 1(866) 9NO-SCAM or by visiting [MyFloridaLegal.com](http://MyFloridaLegal.com).

**Attorney General Moody Presents Human Trafficking Awareness Month Resolution**



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody today presented a Cabinet resolution recognizing January as Human Trafficking Awareness Month in Florida to the Florida Alliance to End Human Trafficking. The Florida Alliance to End Human Trafficking is the new name of the Direct Support Organization of the Statewide Council on Human Trafficking. Attorney General Moody serves as Chair on the Council and will work with the DSO as it secures additional resources to further the mission of the Council. With major events, such as the Super Bowl, taking place in Florida in the coming weeks and months, it

is imperative to ramp up efforts to combat human trafficking in the state.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "I am proud to present this resolution to the Florida Alliance to End Human Trafficking, and to stand with our Direct Support Organization as they work to provide additional resources for our mission of ending this atrocious crime in Florida. Raising awareness of human trafficking is vitally important as our state prepares to host several large, high-profile events, such as the upcoming Super Bowl in Miami and Super Bowl LV in Tampa next year."

It is especially important to recognize the signs of human trafficking now, before major events that can draw people from across the world to Florida and could create a temporary, illegal market for human trafficking.

Attorney General Moody encourages everyone to learn how to spot human trafficking. Some of the significant signs of human trafficking to look out for include:

Physical injuries, such as burns, branding, disorientation, scars, tattoos, etc.;

Individuals displaying fear, anxiousness, paranoia or a reluctance to discuss injuries;

Speaking as if coached or having someone else speak for them; and

Suffering from drug addiction, infections or sleep deprivation.

Anyone who suspects or witnesses an occurrence of human trafficking should contact local law enforcement or call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1(888) 373-7888.

Earlier this month, Attorney General Moody issued a video recognizing January as Human Trafficking Awareness Month..

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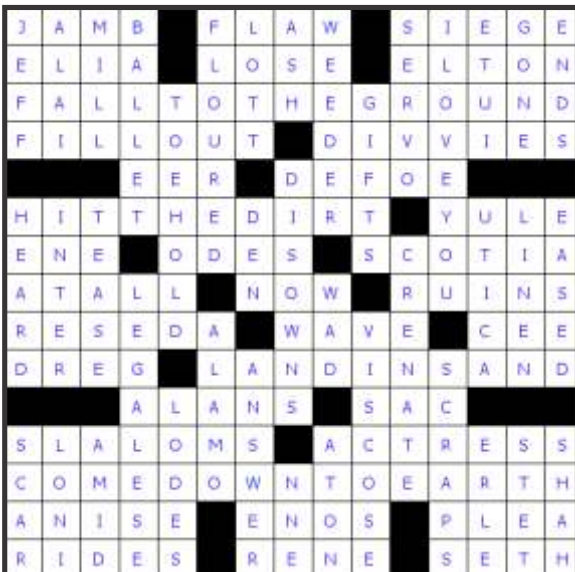
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