EGAD looks to mark 10th anniversary as Florida Main Street program

By Ken Datzman

Dollar-for-dollar, “Main Street America” programs have proven to be one of the most effective economic development tools ever created for downtown business districts, long the heart of communities until big-box retailers reshaped the landscape.

Developed more than 35 years ago, the Main Street “Four-Point Approach,” a preservation-based economic development model, has uplifted more than 2,000 communities around the nation, creating 648,000 jobs and bolstering independent businesses in downtown areas once forgotten.

It has also led to the rehabilitation of many historic buildings and the revitalization of disinvested commercial corridors.

Main Street was built around the understanding that “small steps, small businesses, small deals, and small developments can add up to a big impact.”

Since the program’s inception in 1980, Main Street communities have seen almost $79 billion in new investment. What’s more, in 2017, every $1 of public money invested in Main Street communities leveraged more than $28 of private investment.

Locally, the Eau Gallie Arts District of Melbourne, which will mark its 10th year as an accredited Florida Main Street Inc. program in October 2020, has greatly benefited from its involvement in this initiative. Florida Main Street is a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

“When we started as a Main Street program there was about a 35 percent vacancy rate on Highland Avenue,” said Lisa Packard, executive director of Eau Gallie Arts District Main Street Inc. “And there was hardly any business activity on Eau Gallie Boulevard. There were empty buildings and storefronts. Today, we have a waiting list of businesses wanting to come to EGAD. So the demand for space remains high.”

EGAD Main Street is comprised of a wide range of small businesses and organizations. They include Meld Studio Architecture, Intercoastal Insurance Inc., Cleven’s Face and Body Specialists, Joan’s Perfect Pie, the Junior League of South Brevard, Foxwood Wine Co., Roman Bros., and The Cottage Irish Pub.

Other popular sites include Florida Tech’s Foosaner Art Museum, the Eau Gallie Public Library, the historic Rossetter House, Eau Gallie Rotary Band Shell, and two public parks — Pineapple Park and Eau Gallie Square.

Some businesses have been in the Eau Gallie market for more than four decades, including Ace Hardware, ABC Awning & Canvas Co. Inc., Sorensen Moving & Storage Co., James H. Nance Attorney at Law, and Eau Gallie Florist.

Recently, businessman Steve Young, president of area firm Y-COM, purchased Eau Gallie’s “sharking lot” and the three-story building that housed the long-defunct Dr. Joe’s Intra-Coastal on West Eau Gallie Boulevard. He’s planning an entertainment destination at that site.

Since the mid-1980s, the 56 designated Florida Main Street communities around the state have cumulatively created 242,388 jobs, 7,190 new businesses and produced $2.3 billion in reinvestment. The Orlando area alone has 11 Main Street programs.

The public and private reinvestment in EGAD Main Street since 2010 is $3.2 million, adding 275 new jobs, 45 new businesses, and more than 16,000 volunteer hours.

In 2006, the City of Melbourne rezoned part of a residential area of Eau Gallie as an “Art Overlay Zone,” creating the Eau Gallie Arts District. Four years later, EGAD became a designated member of the Main Street program, which encourages economic development within the context of historic preservation through revitalization of Florida downtowns.

Main Street empowers communities to set their own destinies. While revitalization is challenging work, the Main Street program offers a roadmap for locally driven prosperity.

Across the nation, communities have used the Main Street approach to transform their economies, leverage local leadership, and improve overall quality of life.

Lisa Packard is executive director of the Eau Gallie Arts District Main Street Inc., which was designated as such in October 2010. Florida Main Street is a program administered by the Division of Historical Resources under the Florida Department of State. Currently, there are 56 Florida Main Street communities. Packard’s organization was singled out at the recent Florida Main Street Awards event in Orlando. The 2019 Merit Award for Outstanding Local Program Supporter was given to Verdi EcoSchool in EGAD. The 2019 Merit Award winner for Outstanding Rehabilitation Project was presented to Frank and Melanie Schrader for their renovation of the historic Ginter Building in EGAD.
International Dinner Series to feature African cuisine; public invited to event at Florida Tech’s Panther Hall

Florida Tech’s innovative and popular International Dinner Series began Sept. 12 with a first–ever menu of dishes from Hungary, the Czech Republic and other Eastern and Central European locales.

The series features authentic foods from Africa, the Caribbean, China, India and elsewhere each month and culminates with a Mother’s Day Brunch Around the World on May 10, 2020.

Launched in 2014 by the university’s Campus Dining Services Director Tom Stewart and Chef de Cuisine Jon Skoviera, the series features buffet–style dinners offering authentic foods from different regions and countries. To ensure authenticity, each food is tasted, tested and approved by Florida Tech students and staff from the country or region featured that month.

The Central and Eastern Europe meal featured gulyas, a traditional Hungarian goulash featuring slow simmered beef, potatoes, carrots, tomatoes with paprika and caraway; the Russian fish soup known as ukha with potatoes, carrots, fresh dill and sour cream; haluski, a dish from the Czech Republic with smoked sausage, cabbage and noodles; and other dishes, including several vegetarian options. Desserts included apple strudel, black forest cake and Russian tea cookies.

All dinners are on Thursdays from 5:30–8:30 p.m. at Panther Dining Hall and cost $16.50 per person. The Mother’s Day Brunch is from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

In addition to the foods, there will be related educational materials posted in the dining hall and, at some meals, entertainment from the country or region that developed the cuisine.

Panther Dining Hall, 3113 Panther Place, is just south of the Clemente Center on the Florida Tech campus in Melbourne. Visitor parking is free on the first floor of the parking garage behind the dining hall.

For more information, call (321) 674–8040 or visit the International Dining Series page at www.fit.edu/dining/international–dinner–series/.

About Florida Institute of Technology

Florida Tech was founded in 1958 at the dawn of the Space Race that would soon define the Atlantic coast of Florida and captivate the nation. Now the premier private technological university in the Southeast, Florida Tech is a Tier 1 Best National University in U.S. News & World Report and one of just nine schools in Florida lauded by the Fiske Guide to Colleges. Florida Tech offers bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees in aeronautics and aviation, engineering, computing and cybersecurity, business, science and mathematics, psychology, education and communication. Learn more about our relentless pursuit of greatness at www.fit.edu.

JT’s Bluegrass announces 2019–20 artists; to perform at Stage 12 Theater

TITUSVILLE — It’s Bluegrass season in Titusville. Home to J.T. Shealy and JT’s Bluegrass, Titusville is Central Florida’s source for the best in live bluegrass. The just–announced 2019–20 season includes seven groups from all over the U.S. who will be performing inside the newly renovated and comfortable Stage 12 Theater in the Titusville Mall, 3550 S. Washington Ave.

The bluegrass action kicks off Oct. 26 with the Baker Family, followed by Wayne Taylor & Appaloosa on Nov. 8. Joe Mullins & the Radio Ramblers will take to the stage on Dec. 1, with Little Roy and Lizzy following on Dec. 19.

After the holidays, fans can catch Monroe Crossing on Jan. 17, along with Sideline on Feb. 7. Rounding out the bluegrass season is the Trinity River Band on March 6. Shealy has been bringing the top family–friendly acts from the bluegrass world to Titusville in Brevard County since 2007. Performance time for all J.T.’s Bluegrass shows is 7 p.m. Seats are $21 and can be reserved by calling (321) 222–7797 or visiting www.JTsBluegrass.com.

“We’re excited to be bringing another great season of bluegrass music to Titusville,” said Shealy. “The music is going to sound fantastic at the Stage 12 Theater and we think the comfortable seating will make performances that much more enjoyable. And our audience will be glad to know that our world–famous chocolate chip cookies will still be available at every concert.”

A full schedule of bluegrass events is available at www.JTsBluegrass.com, where visitors may sign up for concert notification. Facebook users can post, interact and find links to bluegrass band pages at www.facebook.com/jts.bluegrass.

About J.T.’s Bluegrass

Shealy has been bringing bluegrass to Brevard since 2007, but his roots in the American music form go back decades in the Carolinas. A bluegrass musician from a musical family, Shealy has performed with numerous bluegrass bands and knows what true aficionados want to hear. Seating prices may vary, starting at $21 per person. The Stage 12 venue is spacious and comfortable environment with excellent acoustics.

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Dreaming about the transformative power of international service–learning

By Alvin Wang
UCF Forum columnist
University of Central Florida

The day was spent participating in an international service–learning program with Tzotzil children. Our location was a small village outside of San Cristobal de las Casas in the southernmost Mexican state of Chiapas. This was the third year of our team of UCF students would teach basic English phrases to Tzotzil children.

The Tzotzil are an indigenous Maya community who have fiercely maintained their cultural traditions dating back over 1,000 years. Their ancestors built the great city states of Palenque and Toniná during the rise of the classic period in Maya history. For many who speak Tzotzil, Spanish is their second language and for most, crushing poverty is their only existence.

Later that afternoon our group of students visited the home of 8–year old Israel. Three years earlier, Israel was treated for retinoblastoma. He wasn't able to see out of one eye. He had lost his left eye.

In all other respects, Israel was a normal child who wanted to do kid things. But due to Tzotzil superstitions, he and his mother were ostracized from their family and community. As a result, he couldn't attend school or playgroups. Israel didn't have any friends so he played by himself.

Israel lived with his mother in a roughly hewn wooden shack with an uneven dirt floor that looked no different than the ground surrounding their home. No other homes were visible from their remote location in a forest. There was no furniture. Only two makeshift beds, a shelf, and a square fire pit. The clothes that were stacked on the beds also served as their blankets. They didn't have running water and lacked a toilet or outhouse. There were no toys. When we visited, the fire pit smoldered a small fire as gray smoke leaked through the walls of their house.

The plan was for our service–learning team to work with Tzotzil children like Israel for two weeks.

Yet I found myself back home one week early. My initial reaction to returning home was a sense of peace and comfort. It always feels good coming home after a long trip. But as I walked through the house, I had a growing sense of disquiet — a feeling of disconnection. It was my home and yet it wasn't.

I first noticed that a home improvement project that I hadn't completed before leaving was now finished. I peered around the corner of the living room and saw furniture that I had never seen before. Household objects were in places where they shouldn't be. And there was that large square hole in the back of the fireplace that didn't make any sense.

When I questioned my wife about these strange occurrences she stared at me with a puzzled expression. “You seem different” she remarked. “Somehow you seem out of place.”

It was then that I started to question my existence in these surroundings. I wandered through the house. Was this really my home? Was I standing in my living room or was I dreaming?

My teenage daughter was watching me quietly from the doorway. I approached her and asked her to stand in front of me. She looked puzzled and gently asked “What for? Dad, is something wrong?”

Satellite High’s Alexandria Lalonde wins Florida Atlantic University scholarship

Satellite High School’s Alexandria Lalonde was one of the Florida Atlantic University Kelly/Strul Emerging Scholars winners, recently announced by the Boca Raton institution. The winners were listed in the Sept. 16 issue of “Brevard Business News.” The story on page 3 incorrectly spelled her first name as Alexandra.

Organizations team up to present ‘The Hope Movement,’ in an effort to help Orlando Health’s Cancer Support Center raise funds for programs dealing with diverse obstacles. We believe the arts are a gateway to a deeper level of community and support that transcends any border or boundary.

“We are so grateful to be the beneficiary of this special performance about Hope,” said Dr. Dane Robinson, a psychologist who is the program director for the Cancer Support Community. “The arts are so meaningful to patients while going through cancer treatment and can help them cope with life’s curve balls. It is so nice to know that others understand the need for arts in the lives of our patients and are willing to help support our program.”

● About Emotions Dance

Emotions Dance is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 2007 by artistic director and choreographer Larissa Humiston. The organization emphasizes strong technical training and education combined with passionate artistry. Through inspiring performances, arts–education programs, and active community outreach the company touches thousands of people of all ages, races, and economic backgrounds. To learn more about Emotions Dance, call (407) 788–1659, or log on to www.emotionsdance.org.

Alvin Wang resumed his role as a professor in the University of Central Florida’s Department of Psychology this year after serving 11 years as dean of the Burnett Honors College. He can be reached at Alvin.Wang@ucf.edu.
sentencing hearing immediately after the jury returned its recommendation, at about 9 p.m. During the sentencing, Judge Lemonidis and those assembled in the Courtroom heard horrific details about the crime, and heartfelt impact statements from members of the victim’s families about the positive traits of the victims, and the devastating impact on the victims’ family and friends. She then imposed the legally required life sentences. During the sentencing colloquy, Judge Lemonidis made the following comments:

And uh sir, I cannot disagree with a single thing that [the victim’s family member] said and I’m glad she said it.

***

[Other impact speakers] are far more gracious soul[s] than a person like you deserves. And that, is something you’re going to get to ponder for the rest of your miserable life. There is a Chinese proverb, do good, reap good, do evil, reap evil- which section will you sit in sir? There’s no doubt in my mind. And I tend to agree that the outcome might have been different had this been three years ago. So, uh, you’ve been adjudicated guilty and I will now remand you back to the custody of the sheriff to serve your three consecutive life sentences.

***

I hope you see the [victim’s] faces on every single face you see. You have— The collateral damage that you have caused, sir, is immeasurable and your life is—is not worthy of what you have done to these people. I do hope you do fight for your life every minute of every day. And that would be the only reason that I would hope your life is any longer than six weeks. Remand him to the custody of the sheriff. Thank you.
Among those who understand what it means to live in a free society, democracy remains the system of choice.

By Lee H. Hamilton

A wave of protests is roiling Moscow. Millions of people, young and old, have been crowding the streets in Hong Kong. In Britain, members of the Conservative Party took to open revolt over Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s move to sideline Parliament on Brexit. If democracy is dysfunctional and on the ropes worldwide, as many voices currently insist, you’d have a hard time making the case from these headlines.

In fact, at a time of concern and, in many quarters, cynicism about democracy and its prospects, they remind us of a basic truth: people want a say in how they’re governed. As Winston Churchill put it back in 1944, “At the bottom of all the tributes paid to democracy is the little man, walking into the little booth, with a little pencil, making a little cross on a little bit of paper—no amount of rhetoric or voluminous discussion can possibly diminish the overwhelming importance of that point.”

To be sure, “democracy” is hard to define. The UN says that democracies are where “the will of the people is the source of legitimacy of sovereign states,” but that’s a broad definition. Our representative democracy, the various parliamentary democracies, the town–meeting democracy of New England—these are all forms of democracy. What they have in common are mechanisms for the people to express their will; characteristics such as free speech, the ability to associate freely, fair and free elections, and universal suffrage; and such values as equality before the law, political responsiveness, transparency, and accountability.

I’d argue there’s one other characteristic you also find in the world’s democracies: people prefer living in them. And when they don’t feel the popular will can find expression, at some point conditions ripen to the point where, as in Russia and Hong Kong, they take to the streets.

Why is this? What do people value about living in a democratic system? Most of us who support democracy would argue that its key characteristics—openness, accountability, transparency, media freedom, responsiveness—actually improve the nation’s overall well-being. On the whole, democratic nations have stronger economies. They tend to be less corrupt, because free and fair elections and their systems’ checks and balances impose accountability on their leaders. They make it possible for citizens to know where they stand, because the rules of the road are set up to apply to everyone. At their core, they recognize the value and dignity of each individual.

There are clearly signs of stress in the world’s democracies. A Pew poll last year found sometimes marked increases in dissatisfaction with how democracy is working in such countries as Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Canada, and the US. It was a warning sign that all is not well.

Even in the best of times, democracies are imperfect. They too often wallow in political stagnation or gridlock. Issues that need resolution get batted back and forth for years, and even when they’re addressed the remedies fall short. It’s far easier for opponents of a given approach to block it than for its proponents to enact it. Elections may give the people a voice, but they also serve as a de facto horizon, inclining political leaders to short–term fixes rather than investing in people, infrastructure, or other long–term goals. And far too often, the voices of those with resources are louder in the halls of power than those of people who lack money or access.

Yet even people who complain about their governments or their representatives rarely argue that they need a different system. That Pew survey I cited above measured unhappiness with how democracies are functioning, not with democracy itself. Most citizens of democracies believe that their countries are wealthier, less corrupt, more resilient, and more responsive than they would be in any alternative. That’s because their governments or their representatives serve as a de facto horizon, inclining political leaders to short–term fixes rather than investing in people, infrastructure, or other long–term goals. And far too often, the voices of those with resources are louder in the halls of power than those of people who lack money or access.

This is why, in the end, the discussion in the world’s traditional democracies is about how to make them stronger. It’s about fear of slipping into autocracy, not about the desire for democracy. Among those who understand what it is like to live in a free society, democracy remains the system of choice.

Lee Hamilton is a senior advisor for the Indiana University Center on Representative Government; a Distinguished Scholar at the IU Hamilton Lugar School of Global and International Studies; and a Professor of Practice at the IU O’Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.

‘Pastor Patty’ to address Federated Republican Women

The Federated Republican Women in Action will meet at 11:15 a.m. on Friday, Oct. 4, at Memaw’s BBQ, 4916 Babcock St. in Palm Bay. The guest speaker will be “Pastor Patty,” a lifelong Floridian, who currently serves as state chaplain for Florida Federation of Republican Women. She is a member of Brevard Federated Republican Women and performs the duties of club chaplain. She also serves as the constituent services liaison for Congressman Bill Posey in the 8th District of Florida.
By Judy Kent (jkent@nationalcenter.org) and David W. Almasi (DAlmasi@nationalcenter.org) National Center for Public Policy Research

WASHINGTON — Black unemployment and the black–white employment gap have fallen to the lowest levels ever recorded, and members of the Project 21 black leadership network are cheering the economic policies of the Trump Administration for ushering in historic levels of opportunity and equality for black Americans.

“Love him or hate him, this is an incredible economic accomplishment for the President and a tremendous benefit for American blacks,” said Project 21 member Derryck Green.

Along with a reported third straight month of 3.7 percent overall unemployment, the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) August jobs report noted that the overall black unemployment rate fell half–a–percent to 5.5 percent. This is the lowest black unemployment rate ever recorded. BLS began reporting employment statistics by race in 1972. And with overall white unemployment at 3.4 percent, it is also the smallest reported gap between the races ever in terms of joblessness. Until recently, the racial employment disparity between blacks and whites has generally held to a 2–1 margin.

“Once again, unemployment among blacks has reached a record low,” remarked Project 21 Co–Chairman Horace Cooper. “Before his first term is over, President Trump’s high–growth/low–tax/limited regulatory policies will have set more high employment records than Obama’s slow–growth/high–tax/high regulatory policies could in eight years.”

In addition to black Americans, drops in unemployment have also been seen among Hispanics, Asian–Americans and other groups.

“A strong U.S. labor market and flourishing industries have contributed to unemployment nationwide being near a 50–year low. Many who have previously been left out of the workforce — including women, minorities and workers with disabilities — have all seen gains during the Trump Administration,” said Project 21 member Derrick Hollie.

“And the unemployment rate for black Americans dropped to a record low of 5.5 percent in August. It narrowed to being 1.62 times the white unemployment rate. This is the smallest gap ever. Most economists use gross domestic product (GDP) and unemployment to gauge how well our country is doing. So all this shows America is doing okay right now.”

“Black unemployment hitting a recorded all-time low is bad news for those who take black political support for granted,” noted Project 21 member Leo Fuller. “For too long, many ethnic communities have largely been afraid to leave the liberal orthodoxy because they were told it was necessary for the government to provide for them. Liberals, to keep and expand their power, must now tell blacks, Hispanics and others that they have to work against their own pocketbooks.”

● About Project 21
Project 21, a leading voice of black conservatives for over 25 years, is sponsored by the National Center for Public Policy Research. Its members have been quoted, interviewed or published more than 40,000 times since the program was created in 1992. Contributions to the National Center are tax–deductible and greatly appreciated, and may be earmarked exclusively for the use of Project 21.

Follow Project 21 on Twitter at @Project21News for general announcements.

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**Merritt Island native Brandon Troutman serving aboard future warship as fire controlman responsible for weapon system inspects and challenges we faced and overcame as a crew have prepared us to bring this ship to life and join the world’s finest Navy.”

Troutman has military ties with family members who have previously served and is honored to carry on the family tradition of service.

“My father served as a machinist’s mate and retired after 20 years,” said Troutman. “My mother served four years in the Navy as a radioman.”

Troutman’s proudest Navy accomplishment was manning the rails when the ship returned home after a nearly 10-month deployment.

“It was an amazing feeling pulling into Mayport, Florida with hundreds of proud family members waiting and screaming on the pier for our return,” said Troutman. “It put a lot of things into perspective. To my left and right were men and women who put their lives on the line to protect each other and their loved ones and on the pier were the families that they sacrificed for. A very small percentage of people understand this feeling.”

As a member of one of the U.S. Navy’s high-tech and lethal surface combatant ships, Troutman and other Paul Ignatius sailors are proud to be part of a warfighting team.

“Serving in the Navy means I’m a part of a select few individuals that get the opportunity to put the uniform on and do our nation’s duty in keeping our country safe,” said Troutman.

Paul Ignatius is the 67th Arleigh Burke-class destroyer, and the 31st DDG 51 class destroyer built by Huntington Ingalls Industries. It is the first warship named for Paul Ignatius who served as the United States Secretary of the Navy under President Lyndon Johnson from 1967 to 1969. Ignatius had previously served with honor as a commissioned lieutenant in the Navy during World War II.

The warship was officially placed into peacetime presence to national security. Troutman and other Paul Ignatius sailors are proud to be part of a warfighting team.

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**Billy Vaughn to speak on Sharia Law a BFRW meeting Oct. 14**

Billy Vaughn, vice president of Operation 300 “Forging the Heart of a Warrior,” will speak on Sharia Law at the Oct. 14 luncheon meeting of the Brevard Federated Republican Women.

The 11 a.m. meeting will be held at Duran Golf Club, 7032 Stadium Parkway, in Viera. Reservations are required and can be made at www.brevardfederatedrepublicanwomen.org or by calling (321) 727–1212. The reservation deadline is Wednesday, Oct. 9.

The meeting fee of $25 includes a plate lunch of baked salmon, green beans almondine and cheese cake for dessert. Vegetarian and gluten free options are available with advanced reservations.

The Brevard Federated Republican Women are “here to help encourage and empower women in all areas of the political system.”

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Jennifer Griffin, Tax Director and Rich Sutter, Audit Manager

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By Logistics S1C Courtney Mitchell
navyoutreach@navy.mil
Navy Office of Community Outreach

A 2008 Merritt Island High School graduate and Merritt Island native is serving aboard the future USS Paul Ignatius, an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer homeported in Mayport, Fla.

Petty Officer 1st Class Brandon Troutman is a fire controlman responsible for the maintenance and operation of the Aegis Weapon System.

“I enjoy normal day-to-day challenges, such as troubleshooting the ship’s weapons system,” said Troutman. “It’s challenging at times, but the end result is fixing the fault.”

Paul Ignatius is an Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer that provides a wide range of warfighting capabilities in multi-threat air, surface, and subsurface environments.

Arleigh Burke-class destroyers are the U.S. Navy’s most powerful destroyer fleet. These highly capable, multi-mission ships conduct a variety of operations, from peacetime presence to national security. Ships like Paul Ignatius operate forward in every ocean of the world to keep our nation secure by meeting threats abroad before they can harm us here at home.

Troutman has carried lessons learned from his hometown into his military service.

“Early on, I learned to adopt a strong work ethic,” Troutman said. “That approach has gotten me far in the military.”

The Surface Force is focused on providing lethal, ready, well-trained, and logistically supported surface forces to fight today and in the future. The highly professional men and women serving aboard Paul Ignatius are some of our nation’s best and brightest, and are typical of the talented sailors on duty in our Navy around the world today. They are properly trained, prepared to go into harm’s way, and ready to carry out orders in defense of our nation’s freedom.

“The crew’s performance has been absolutely remarkable, rising to the occasion and answering the call every time,” said Cmdr. Robby Trotter, Ignatius’ first commanding officer. “The many occasions and answering the call every
Solutions to veteran suicides requires an all-hands-on-deck approach

A disturbing number of veterans take their own lives in the U.S. On average, approximately 7,300 veterans die from suicide each year. Despite significant efforts and billions of dollars invested by the state and federal governments across the nation, suicide rates among veterans rose 26 percent from 2005 to 2016. In Florida alone, nearly 600 veterans die from suicide each year at a rate slightly higher than the national average.

Finding a solution to this public health crisis requires an aspirational, innovative, all-hands-on-deck approach—not government as usual. The VA alone cannot achieve effective or lasting reductions in the veteran suicide rate. To make a real impact, Federal, state, and local providers of resources must partner together, pool resources, and coordinate care and delivery of services efficiently.

In Florida, we recognize these challenges and are taking proactive steps to break down bureaucratic barriers; working together to form a wide-ranging coalition of government and nonprofit organizations who offer resources to veterans in need of our help the most—before they reach a crisis point.

We are proud to say that we are making progress on multiple fronts. This is best demonstrated through the development and growth of the Florida Veterans Support Line, 1–844–MyFLVet (693–5838). Supported by the VA Sunshine Healthcare Network (VISN 8), Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs, Florida Department of Children and Families, and operated by the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay, the line provides confidential emotional support and connection to community resources 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The line is available to all veterans in Florida.

Our work does not stop there. As we continue to move forward together, we are meeting and learning from communities and local organizations about how best to partner with them and leverage the resources they can provide. Likewise, we are proactively working on expanded public health initiatives to align with Presidential Executive Order 13861 “National Roadmap to Empower Veterans and End Suicide” and opportunities that may become available from the national task force.

We continue to support and promote the abundance of VA resources available to Veterans to include the Veterans Crisis Line (1–800–273–8255, press 1). Like the Florida Veterans Support Line, Veterans can call to receive confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, even if they are not registered with VA or enrolled in VA health care.

So, what can you do to help? First, add the Veterans Crisis Line and Florida Veterans Support Line to your mobile phone contacts. Second, share the numbers with others and ask them to do the same. Third, visit www.visn8.va.gov/savealife.asp to download and share outreach materials. Be there for Veterans and active duty service members who may be in crisis. Listen to what they say, ask the hard questions, and assist them with connecting with VA and other important community resources. Be the difference and be there for a Veteran in crisis.

Submitted by: Mary Kay Rutan (marykay.rutan@va.gov) and Jason W. Dangel (jason.dangel@va.gov); Office of Communication & Stakeholder Relations, VA Sunshine Healthcare Network

On behalf of: Miguel H. LaPuz, Network Director, VA Sunshine Healthcare Network (VISN 8); Danny Burgess, Executive Director, Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs; and Clara Reynolds, President and CEO, Crisis Center of Tampa Bay
Growing pressures in the labor market are giving rise to the need for a new form of working relationship and a fresh deal for social welfare.

Many workers in the construction, press and information technology sectors have long operated on a freelance basis, but they have usually made contributions to social security through funds especially established for them.

However, a new wave of flexible employment is rapidly emerging in the form of “Gig jobs.” Such workers find themselves in pseudo-employment relationships, where they operate as if they were employees, wear company uniforms, drive company-badged vehicles, take work instructions from managers in the business they work for — but are actually contractors without any form of welfare, or employment protection — and usually without any guaranteed working time.

The answer of many governments to the Gig economy is to legislate to close it down and force companies to treat such workers in exactly the same way as conventional employees. But is that the best way forward? Are we going to develop an energetic, free enterprise economy if everyone has to be treated as if they lacked initiative, needed an employer to act in a maternal way and as if they could not be trusted to fend for themselves without many layers of legislative protection? Why does the future model for good working style and practice have to be the culture of entitlement, non-accountability and low productivity found in the public sector?

At the heart of the problem with all forms of work — whether through direct employment or its more liberal cousins — is the question about what level and type of basic welfare protection is necessary in any civilized society. Nobody doubts the need for every worker to have financial support when they are sick, injured, unemployed or old. However, as things stand, such schemes would often seem to provide extremely poor value for money.

The Federation of International Employers (FedEE) is developing a new approach to work which will address a number of key and closely linked issues that are too often neglected by employers, unions, politicians and labor economists alike. At the heart of our proposals will be a new category of worker who enjoys the security of welfare insurance, but only to the extent that it is affordable, generates a fair return and produces a good investment for the risks that it covers.

Therefore, change cannot come until we achieve a clear understanding, for instance, about what an adequate level of sick pay or permanent disability insurance should cost and how to ensure that social security contributions only go to funds dedicated for their use and not into the endless pot of general taxation. Welfare insurance, as currently administered in most countries, has to cover the massive overhead of an over costly, inefficient and wasteful public-sector delivery system. Whereas, if undertaken by the private sector, and just overseen by public officials, competition would help to ensure that costs are minimized and profits are reasonable.

Therefore, FedEE is calling for:

- A new category of independent worker entitled to welfare insurance and a measure of notice — but not other types of employment protection.
- The conduct of a study into value for money in social security insurance systems.
- The imposition of a cap on the total contributions to social security (by employers and employees) and a requirement that social security is not treated as a general tax. As this cannot be imposed by the EU under its existing treaty powers, it will have to rely on pressures from public opinion and professional bodies.
- An exploration of the greater role that could be played by private insurers in handling all state social security schemes.

According to the secretary-general of the FedEE, Robin Chater, “There is an important link between employment status and level of tax imposed on both employees and employers in the form of social security. In fact, the wider picture also needs to take into account income tax itself. Currently too many workers have to work for Monday and Tuesday of each week for free because the tax and social security take is so huge that it takes up all their income for two out of five days they work. This is a form of slavery that no worker should tolerate. What we are proposing is that at least the more justifiable element of the tax take — social security — is better managed. If it is allowed to be administered by the public sector then, even if it is not considered part of general taxation, almost half of all contributions will go into the pockets of civil servants and not be a nest egg for tougher times for the hard-working private-sector worker.”

Greater Palm Bay Senior Center to host Oktoberfest event

The Greater Palm Bay Senior Center, located at 1275 Culver Drive NE, in Palm Bay, will host an Oktoberfest event from 2-6 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 6. There will be live music, food, beer, wine, and more. The cost is $15 per person and includes $15 worth of tickets that can be redeemed for food and drinks. Oktoberfest is open to the public. For more information on this community event, call (321) 724-1338, extension 6.
Jens Kuerschner appointed as the first chief customer officer at Tacton, a leader enabling smart commerce for manufacturers

By Ester Bergmark
ester.bergmark@tacton.com
Tacton System AB

CHICAGO — Tacton, a global leader enabling smart commerce for manufacturers, recently announced the hiring of Jens Kuerschner.

He will be Tacton’s first chief customer officer, a role created to ensure the company’s customer centricity continues during this period of rapid expansion. His appointment will strengthen the leadership team’s commitment to ensure customers’ success remains the primary mission.

Kuerschner has more than 20 years’ experience working for software giants such as Oracle, Salesforce, and most recently, Pegasystems, where he served as the regional director of consulting for the DACH (Germany, Austria and Switzerland) region.

His previous roles as vice president of Salesforce Services DACH, and director of sales consulting for Oracle, demonstrate a solid track record in delivering excellence through customer success and consulting services for cloud-based solutions. His leadership and expertise complement Tacton’s software-as-a-service strategy as more manufacturing companies continue digitizing their business processes.

“We are extremely happy to welcome Jens to our executive team. His addition will help us maintain our focus ensuring our customers remain our primary focus,” commented Frederic Laziou, CEO of Tacton. “Many organizations claim to be customer focused and some fail to deliver on that promise. Fortunately, with Jens’ expertise, dedication, and leadership, we are better positioned to continue delivering real value to all our customers.”

“I am delighted to join Tacton at such a crucial time of growth and expansion,” said Kuerschner. “It is during these times that focusing on the customer is of the utmost importance. I already had the pleasure of meeting many of my new colleagues and I have been impressed by the level of expertise, commitment, and dedication towards helping our customers. I look forward to working the entire organization to continue helping our customers benefit from smart commerce.”

Manufacturers today are adopting digital solutions to offer superior solutions to their customers. Kuerschner’s addition to the leadership team ensures Tacton is poised to help its global customers embrace a seamless customer experience.

For more information on Tacton and its smart manufacturing capabilities, visit www.tacton.com.

About Tacton

Tacton enables smart commerce for manufacturers by empowering organizations to extend beyond traditional commerce. Tacton smart commerce ensures manufacturers always offer optimal solutions to their customers throughout the entire business-to-business buyer journey. Our industry expertise and leading technology enable a seamless customer experience.

Tacton provides solutions to global customers such as Bosch, Caterpillar, Daimler, Mitsubishi, and Siemens. Tacton is headquartered in Chicago, and Stockholm, Sweden, with regional offices in Karlsruhe, Germany; Warsaw, Poland; and Tokyo, Japan.
Habitat for Humanity of Brevard names Carey Gleason vice president of development and Anna Terry vice president of operations for the ReStore

By Ken Dotzman

PALM BAY — Habitat for Humanity of Brevard County, which will celebrate its 35th year of building affordable homes for qualified people in 2020, has hired two longtime professionals to help lead the community-driven organization into the future.

Carey Gleason has been named vice president of development for Habitat for Humanity of Brevard, and Anna Terry has come aboard as vice president of operations for its ReStore.

The ReStore is a 10,000-square-foot home-improvement center that sells a wide range of goods to the public at a fraction of the retail price. The ReStore's address is 4515 Babcock St.

Terry is a new Brevard resident, having moved here with her husband from Naples. She had a 38-year career in retail, working for some of the largest such companies in America, including Nordstrom, Guess and Chico's.

“We have longtime friends in Brevard County,” said Terry, who grew up in a military family and lived in Southern California before moving to Naples. “We have been coming to Brevard County since 1985 to visit with friends. The growth we have seen over that time, especially in the last four or five years, has been impressive.”

She continued, “I remember when there were no Starbucks stores in Brevard. All this growth presents a great opportunity for Habitat of Humanity of Brevard and for the ReStore. It’s an exciting time for this organization and it is great working with Carey Gleason, who is very well known in Brevard for her work in development.”

Terry and Gleason report to Mary Kelly, Habitat for Humanity of Brevard's executive director. Kelly has been involved with Habitat for Humanity of Brevard for many years and once chaired its board before becoming its executive director.

Gleason has worked locally in business development for more than 30 years. Her career has spanned various sectors, including health care, higher education, and organizations that serve people with disabilities.

“Habitat for Humanity of Brevard is an amazing organization with many moving parts,” said Gleason, a Duke University graduate who earned her MBA degree from Florida Tech. “It has support from faith-based groups, from individuals, from foundations, and from corporations and businesses. Many of these entities not only help Habitat financially to build homes for families, but their employees also volunteer and take part in the builds. Some volunteer in the ReStore.”

Gleason added, “Habitat for Humanity of Brevard is all about the community and helping families in need. I am excited about this opportunity at this time in my career. It seemed like a natural progression, with my networking connections and my skill sets. I’ve long had a passion for my community and for giving back.”

Gleason was on the leadership team years ago that brought the Level II Trauma Center to Health First Holmes Regional Medical Center in Melbourne. She also raised money for the Health First Heart Institute in Melbourne.

While working in development at Florida Tech, Gleason led the effort to revitalize the 15-acre Botanical Garden on campus. It’s considered one of the most unique campus gardens of its kind in America, and is open to the public. The garden includes natural water features.

Driven by the vision that everyone needs a decent place to live, Habitat for Humanity, which started as a grassroots housing effort in southern Georgia in 1976, is one of the most interesting nonprofit-sector concepts and one of the most successful.

The organization offers a “hand up, not a hand out,” said Terry. The homeowners are laborers in the project and go through an in-depth program that includes financial education. But the concept could not work without committed community volunteers and the support of businesses and organizations.

“The engagement and commitment of the volunteers, the businesses, the construction crews, the Habitat team, and the community make it all happen,” said Gleason.

“And right now, affordable housing is a hot topic not only in Florida but also around the nation.”

“Together, we are helping families have a successful future by providing affordable housing to hard-working local families and individuals,” she added.

Nearly 19 million households across America — moderate to low-income families — are spending at least half of their income on a place to live, often foregoing basic necessities like adequate food and health care to make ends meet.

“Rents for apartments are higher than the mortgage of a Habitat house,” said Gleason. The mortgage on a local Habitat home is around $400 to $500 a month.

Please see Habitat for Humanity of Brevard County, page 19
By Ken Datzman

MERRITT ISLAND — Field Manor is an educational tool unlike any other in Brevard County, in that it wraps itself around rich history, architecture, horticulture, and the efforts of Indian River Lagoon preservation. Essentially, it’s a museum preserving the past.

The Field Manor property features 300 feet of uninterrupted riverfront shoreline. The 45-acre spread includes a citrus grove, a farm, and a 3,500-square-foot home built in 1880.

In 1997, Field Manor gained wider recognition when it was listed on the federal government’s National Register of Historic Places, as the John Robert Field Homestead. John and Eliza Field and their children lived there. Properties on the National Register of Historic Places present opportunities for research and are learning classrooms for young and old alike.

“Field Manor, a Florida Heritage Site, is an educational gem, a great learning laboratory,” said Korrinn Braden, Field Manor’s director. “It was the first house built on Merritt Island. The land for Field Manor was homesteaded.”

The house became a museum in 2013, when the last living Field descendant to reside in the home — Alma “Clyde” Field — established the Field Manor Foundation as part of her estate. Field Manor is now open for historic tours, educational programs, and is a venue for weddings and other events.

Braden was recently named the new director at Field Manor. She is a University of Florida honors graduate with a bachelor’s degree in anthropology, focusing on archaeology. Braden has in–depth experience cutting across the fields of anthropology, culture and history, and archeology.

Her résumé includes having worked as a “metal conservationist” at the Mel Fisher Maritime Museum in Key West. During her four years there she learned about the Spanish in the New World, and much more. Braden also was a volunteer, an intern, and later worked for the Historical Archaeology/Collections Department at Dickinson Hall at the University of Florida. Dickinson Hall houses the Florida Museum of Natural History. Through these efforts, Braden has in–depth experience cutting across the fields of archaeology, history, and archeology.

“My goal as the new director of Field Manor is to build on the wonderfully established programs, including education, agriculture, and history, and to create a greater presence and recognition in Brevard of this incredible piece of land and history,” said Braden. “I would like for people to share in the Field family story and their community on Indianola/Merritt Island at the end of the 19th century and into the 21st century.”

Brevard residents will have the opportunity to check out and support Field Manor during the fourth annual Oyster and Fish Fry, a fundraiser for the Field Manor Foundation. The event is from 4–8 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 12. Field Manor is located at 750 Field Manor Drive in Indianola on Merritt Island.

The old–fashioned celebration will feature fried oysters, raw oysters, fried fish, corn, coleslaw and potatoes, as well as appetizers, fruit trays and desserts. Field Manor honors the anniversary of the founding of Indianola with its Oyster and Fish Fry each October. The tradition was started more than 100 years ago by the Field family.

Families in the area would gather for the occasion. “A riverboat would go up and down the river and stop at the small communities,” said businessman Frank Sullivan, a Field Manor board member and operator of Sullivan Victory Groves, which ships fruit nationwide. “Indianola was considered a good–sized community back then. It even had a post office. The next community down was Georgiana. These communities had pioneers who had settled. Most of them came here after the Civil War. They would all get together at times for their social outings. You lived off what you could harvest. They would harvest the river and have oysters and fried mullet. Tables were set up. Everybody in the area came. This was their social life.”

Individual tickets for the Oyster and Fish Fry are $35 before Oct. 10. They are $40 the day of the event. Tickets for children 12 and younger are $10. There is no charge for children under age 3. Field Manor offers “specialty” tickets, too. There is a $30 VIP ticket and a $115 Family Pack, with amenities at each offering. Tickets are sold at FieldManor.org. Pull down the “event” tab, or call Field Manor at (321) 848–0365.

“It’s an easy process to purchase tickets for this event and we offer various ticket options,” said Alexis Pernal, Field Manor’s event coordinator.

“We are also seeking sponsors for the Oyster and Fish Fry. The sponsorships range from $250 to $1,000 and feature different amenities at each level of support, including social–media marketing, recognition at the event, and your business or organization will be listed in printed materials. We are also accepting in–kind donations, such as plastic cups and paperware.”

For information about being a sponsor for the Oyster and Fish Fry, call the number above or email events@fieldmanor.org. The Field family moved here from Macon, Ga., in the 1860s. John Moss Field, the family patriarch, first came to Florida in the 1830s to participate in the Second Seminole War. He fell in love with Florida life and “dreamed of returning with his family to live in Florida one day.”

Soon after, the country was caught in the heat of the
Eleanor Health outpatient clinic launched to treat opioid use and substance-abuse disorders using a whole-person approach

By Chris Fleming
chris@redhorsestrategies.com
Red Horse Strategies

Eleanor Health, the first addiction and mental health services provider designed to deliver long-term patient recovery outcomes and modeled on value-based care delivery and payments, officially launched with its first outpatient clinic in Mooresville, N.C.

The opening marks the first of 10 to 15 Eleanor Health sites set to open in the next year, first in North Carolina, and then across the country.

Eleanor Health is rethinking how to treat addiction, which is now the leading cause of death in America for those under 50, by fully treating addiction as a chronic disease.

Eleanor Health will focus on the complete set of clinical and non-clinical factors to manage the disease and provide both human and high-tech support. This includes comprehensive treatment, including medication assisted treatment (MAT), for Opioid and other Substance Use Disorders. The Eleanor Health approach is designed to meet patients where they are in their recovery journey, through outpatient clinics, community settings, and at home through technology and field-based teams.

Uniquely, Eleanor Health is designed to be financially accountable for long-term, whole-person outcomes.

Eleanor Health is led by seasoned health-care innovator, CEO and co-founder Corbin Petro, formerly founding CEO and president of Benevola Health. We launched Eleanor Health to help people with addiction challenges not only survive, but live amazing lives by providing evidence-based, whole-person treatment for substance use disorders and mental health. We are committed to treating these conditions as a chronic medical illness requiring long-term management, and to being reimbursed based on positive health outcomes.”

He added, “We are leveraging data and new technology to enhance in-person clinical service delivery and building a world-class team committed to our mission and vision.”

To address the human toll taken by addiction, Eleanor Health has been working with national clinical and community experts to design treatment and has recruited a top tier team and board of directors.

As the company begins operations in North Carolina, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina is collaborating with Eleanor Health to expand access to Eleanor Health’s comprehensive treatment services. “The prevalence of substance use disorders, especially fueled by the opioid epidemic, is a national public health emergency,” said Dr. Patrick Conway, president and CEO of Blue Cross North Carolina. “There simply aren’t enough high-quality facilities and clinical teams to effectively treat everyone at all stages of their recovery, so we partnered with Town Hall to build and launch Eleanor Health. Starting here in North Carolina, Eleanor Health is providing fully coordinated, high-quality care to individuals and families impacted by substance use and will save lives.”

● **COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO NATIONAL CHALLENGE**

  Nationwide, more than 21 million people have a substance use disorder. More than 12.5 million people misuse prescription opioids with over 2 million people suffering from an opioid use disorder. From 1999 to 2017, more than 700,000 people have died from a drug overdose. Despite this rise in deaths, individuals with substance use disorders experience significant barriers accessing quality comprehensive treatment in their community.
By Steve Barry
sbarry@rendina.com
Rendina Healthcare Real Estate

JUPITER — Rendina Healthcare Real Estate recently welcomed Michael Noto as its chief strategy officer. Noto brings more than 30 years of commercial and health-care real-estate experience to Rendina and was previously employed by Welltower as senior vice president of real-estate services.

In his new role, Noto will use his extensive health-care real-estate experience and deep industry relationships to help grow Rendina’s market leading, full-service platform.

“We couldn’t be more excited about Mike rejoining our team,” says Steve Barry, President of Rendina. “He knows Rendina and our culture very well,” says Richard Rendina, chairman and chief executive officer of Rendina. “His experience and insight will be invaluable for us as we continue our growth and focus on implementing the vision of each of our health-care clients.”

Before working in health-care real estate, Noto was a banking executive and practiced law in New York and Florida, where he led successful law practices and advised clients on the acquisition, disposition, management and financing of commercial real estate. In 2001, Noto joined Bruce A. Rendina and Paramount Realty Services — Rendina’s former property management company that was later purchased by Welltower (then a health-care real estate investment trust). As head of Paramount, Noto oversaw all property management operations for Rendina’s vast portfolio of medical office buildings.

Following Welltower’s acquisition of Paramount in 2007, Noto spent 11 years with Welltower as senior vice president of real-estate services, overseeing and growing its medical office portfolio to more than 250 properties and serving as a frequent panelist and speaker at industry conferences.

“Mike’s ability to anticipate the changing needs of our healthcare clients made him the perfect fit to rejoin our team in this new role,” says Steve Barry, President of Rendina. “He will be an asset for us and our clients as we lead the development of their ambulatory strategies.”

As part of his role as chief strategy officer, Noto will create strategic initiatives and enhance operations across Rendina’s platform, which includes both full-service development and property management services.

“I am excited and thankful to be back with the Rendina organization,” says Noto.

“One of the attractive aspects of returning is that the company has attained considerable success while retaining most of the executive and senior management team with whom I am familiar. While the values of the company are the same, I expect to help deliver increased value by providing leadership, support, experience and knowledge for everyone’s benefit.”

Noto earned a bachelor’s degree and an MBA degree in finance from Rutgers University, and a law degree Pace University. He is licensed to practice in Florida and New York, and is a member of BOMA International. In 2018, he was presented with “Healthcare Real Estate Insights” magazine’s Lifetime Achievement Award for his “extraordinary contributions” to the industry throughout his career.

About Rendina Healthcare Real Estate

Rendina is a national leader in health-care real estate, providing comprehensive solutions to our clients and giving back to the communities we serve. The company has developed more than 7.7 million square feet of health-care real estate throughout the nation.

For information on this company, contact Steve Barry, president, at (866) 630-5655; or visit rendina.com.

ABWA Oceanside Chapter to host event at Eau Gallie Yacht Club

The American Business Women’s Association Oceanside Charter Chapter will present “Women of Many Hats!” at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 24, at the Eau Gallie Yacht Club in Indian Harbour Beach. Talk—show host Seeta Begui will moderate a panel of women on the topic “Treating Others with Dignity.” Attendees are invited to decorate and wear a hat that represents one or more interests of their life, or to wear a favorite hat to compete in the fun and entertaining hat contest. The dinner fee is $30 for members and $35 for guests. To reserve a seat at the event, visit www.abwaoceanside.com or email reservations@abwaoceanside.com. The Oceanside Charter Chapter of ABWA is part of a national network of businesswomen. ABWA is a 14,000—member strong association with chapters and Express Networks nationwide, providing business skills training and networking opportunities for women of diverse occupations.

Eleanor Health

Continued from page 14

“We refer to the people we serve as community members,” says Dr. Nzinga Harrison, cofounder and chief medical officer of Eleanor Health. “We are creating longitudinal relationships that allow us to know individuals as more than just patients, and provide whole-person treatment and support. Our goal is not just remission, but as more than just patients, and provide whole-person treatment and support. Our goal is not just remission, but providing leadership, support, experience and knowledge for everyone’s benefit.”

Eleanor Health, whose name was chosen for the Greek meaning of Eleanor, “shining light” and as an ode to Eleanor Roosevelt, one of the earliest champions for universal human rights including medical care, is an emerging national addiction treatment provider. The company delivers comprehensive, evidence-based, outpatient treatment for individuals with opioid and other substance use disorders. The company launched in 2019 in North Carolina and is expanding nationally in 2020.

About Eleanor Health

Eleanor Health is a firm that connects health-care companies with fundamental drivers of business growth, including people, information and capital. Eleanor invests in businesses through Town Hall Ventures and shapes and creates companies from scratch from within the Oxeon Venture Studio.

About Town Hall Ventures

Town Hall Ventures is an investment firm that invests in health-care companies primarily serving vulnerable populations covered by Medicare and Medicaid. With deep experience building businesses, serving in major public and private-sector roles, building premier executive teams, and investing across technology and health care, Town Hall partners with entrepreneurs to build transformational businesses from the idea stage to the growth stage.
Florida Attorney General Ashley Moody issues alert to inform consumers of imposter scam spoofing FDLE

TALLAHASSEE — Attorney General Ashley Moody is issuing a “Consumer Alert” to warn Floridians about an imposter scam spoofing Florida Department of Law Enforcement phone numbers. Imposter scams often involve spoofing, the practice of using technology to disguise the name and number displayed on caller ID.

Imposters use spoofing to create the appearance that a law enforcement agency, or other government entity with authority, is making a request. In this case, the imposters want targets to believe FDLE requires immediate payment or the target will face legal ramifications.

“As Florida’s Attorney General, I am infuriated that anyone would impersonate law enforcement, especially one of our state law enforcement agencies—FDLE,” said Moody.

“Not only are scams like this illegal, they make citizens question real law enforcement efforts. Please be on the lookout for these types of imposter scams and report fraud to FDLE, local law enforcement or my office at (866) 9NO–SCAM.”

Other common imposter scams include impersonating federal agencies such as the Internal Revenue Service, the Social Security Administration or a representative of a utility or phone company.

- To avoid falling victim to an imposter scam:
  - Do not automatically trust the number listed on caller ID;
  - Be wary of any individual who calls or emails asking or demanding a money wire, prepaid debit card or gift card as payment;
  - Be wary of anyone who reaches out on social media pretending to be someone in military service or law enforcement and asking for financial assistance;
  - Never provide personal or financial information over the phone or via email in response to a solicitation;
  - Contact the appropriate government agency or requesting entity before paying for a government service and verify whether the charge is necessary and actually payable to the government entity;
  - Know that the IRS and law enforcement agencies will never call threatening arrest unless payment is immediately made.

The Attorney General’s Consumer Protection Division issues Consumer Alerts to inform Floridians of emerging scams, new methods used to commit fraud, increased reports of common scams, or any other deceptive practice.

Other common imposter scams include impersonating a law enforcement agency.

New CAARM practice in Viera offers microcurrent acupuncture

The new Center for Antiaging Aesthetic and Rejuvenation Medicine in Viera is now open. The practice is run by Dr. Yale Smith. The team includes aesthetician Anna Valdez, who is certified in microcurrent acupuncture, a non-needle method. “Microcurrent is a modality legally allowed to be used by an aesthetician to touch the meridian line points on the face,” said Valdez, who does not perform traditional acupuncture with needles. Valdez performs a range of procedures, including microdermabrasion. Dr. Smith himself does bioidentical hormone therapy, as well as other procedures. The practice is located at 700 Spyglass Court, Suite 300.
Florida Bar opens nominations for annual pro bono service awards; deadline for entries set Oct. 24

The Florida Bar is asking for nominations for the annual pro bono service awards, which honor lawyers, judges, law firms and associations that have contributed extraordinary pro bono service. The deadline for most nominations is Oct. 24.

Pro bono publico means “for the public good,” and pro bono legal service is just one way that attorneys do their part to help make their communities better.

In 2017–18, the last year reported, Florida Bar members collectively contributed more than $5.2 million to legal aid organizations and donated 1.5 million hours of free legal service.

Every year, in a ceremonial session of the Florida Supreme Court, more than two dozen lawyers and judges are honored by the court and The Florida Bar for the free legal assistance they have provided.

For each of these members of The Florida Bar, as well as a law firm and a voluntary bar association, this honor underscores a professional commitment to service and acknowledges the many hours of pro bono work performed to help children, victims of human trafficking, the elderly, refugees, the poor and countless others who wouldn’t be able to afford the legal assistance they so badly need.

The 2020 pro bono service awards ceremony will be held at the Florida Supreme Court at 3:30 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 30. The road to this annual ceremony begins now, with the call for nominations.

The Florida Bar and the Supreme Court invite nominations from legal aid organizations, civic organizations, fellow lawyers and regular citizens who know of a special lawyer, judge, law firm or voluntary bar that has freely given of time and expertise in making legal services available to the poor.

Nominations must be received by Oct. 24. Nomination forms are available at https://www.floridabar.org/ProBonoAwards for the following award categories:

- The Tobias Simon Pro Bono Service Award
  Presented annually by the chief justice to a lawyer to recognize extraordinary contributions in ensuring the availability of legal services to the poor. Named for the late Miami civil rights lawyer Tobias Simon, the award represents the Supreme Court’s highest recognition of a private lawyer for pro bono service. All current recipients of The Florida Bar President’s Pro Bono Awards are considered for this prestigious award, as are direct nominees who have demonstrated exemplary pro bono service over the course of their careers.

- The Law Firm Commendation
  This statewide award, presented by the chief justice, recognizes a law firm that has demonstrated a significant contribution in the provision of pro bono legal services to individuals or groups that cannot otherwise afford the services. This award recognizes extraordinary commitment on the part of a law firm to provide access to the courts for all Floridians.

- The Voluntary Bar Association Pro Bono Service Award
  Presented by the chief justice, this award recognizes a voluntary bar association that has demonstrated a significant contribution in the delivery of legal services on a pro bono basis to individuals or groups that cannot otherwise afford the services. This award recognizes an extraordinary commitment to provide access to the courts for all Floridians.

- The Florida Bar President’s Pro Bono Service Award
  This award is given to an outstanding attorney for each of the state’s 20 judicial circuits and to an outstanding attorney among the out–of–state Florida Bar members.

- Distinguished Judicial Service Award
  Presented by the chief justice, this award is given for outstanding and sustained service to the public, especially as it relates to support of pro bono legal services.

- Distinguished Federal Judicial Service Award
  This award, presented by the chief justice, recognizes an active or retired federal judge for outstanding and sustained service to the public, whether through legal or civic service or a combination of them, especially as it relates to the support of pro bono legal services.

Nominees’ pro bono service contributions may be cumulative. Consideration is not limited to the events of the immediate past year. An award is also given to a young lawyer (all lawyers in good standing under age 36 and all new Florida Bar members of any age for their first five years in practice) by the Bar’s Young Lawyers Division, but nominations are now closed.

For additional information, contact Francisco Digon-Greer at The Florida Bar at (850) 561–5793, or fdigion-greer@floridabar.org.

Play Cribbage at Palm Bay Library on Tuesdays
On Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m. during October, Palm Bay Public Library will host the game Play Cribbage. The program is open to all skill levels. Participants are asked to bring their own boards and decks of cards. This event is free of charge. The library’s address is 1520 Port Malabar Blvd., NE. The phone number is (321) 952–4519.

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Forest Service accepting applications for grant programs; urban forestry accounts for more than 80,000 jobs

TALLAHASSEE — The Florida Forest Service recently announced that applications are now being accepted for the 2019 Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program and the 2019 Managing Community Forests Grant Program.

Both programs are supported through the U.S. Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Program which provides funding to local governments, educational institutions, Native American tribal governments and nonprofit groups for urban forestry projects within their communities.

“Urban forestry accounts for over 80,000 jobs and contributes more than $8 billion to Florida’s economy,” said Commissioner Nikki Fried, of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. “Now is the time for our cities and towns to take advantage of these opportunities to more actively manage the urban forests in their communities.”

“Urban forests provide a multitude of environmental and health benefits,” said Jim Karels, state forester and director of the Florida Forest Service. “Restoring and sustaining these forests is vital to protecting and improving the livability of Florida’s communities and the quality of life of our residents.”

The Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program is part of Florida’s ongoing initiative to increase and protect existing tree canopies in developed areas. The program is offered for projects implemented on public lands in all Florida counties. This year, projects will focus on promoting storm preparedness and storm recovery assistance. Qualified participants may apply for up to $20,000. Applications for this program will be accepted until Oct. 25, 2019.

The Managing Community Forests Grant Program is a new opportunity aiming to help communities develop an urban forestry management program. The program includes funding up to $55,000 for three projects over a three-year period and is designed for communities with a population between 10,000 and 100,000. Applications for this program will be accepted until Oct. 24, 2019.

To submit a proposal or to learn more, contact your local Florida Forest Service County Forester or visit the Florida Urban and Community Forestry grant program webpage. All qualifying applications will be evaluated and ranked for approval.

The Florida Forest Service, a division of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, manages more than 1 million acres of state forests and provides forest management assistance on more than 17 million acres of private and community forests.

The Florida Forest Service is also responsible for protecting homes, forestland and natural resources from the devastating effects of wildfire on more than 26 million acres.

Library in Cocoa to present ‘Computer Basics’ class

The Catherine Schweinsberg Rood Central Library & Reference in Cocoa will host a two-part program on “Computer Basics” at 10 a.m. on Oct. 2 and Oct. 9. This class is free of charge. To register for this program, call the library at (321) 633–1792. The library’s address is 308 Forrest Ave.
Habitat for Humanity of Brevard County
Continued from page 12

These are zero-interest Habitat mortgages. The stability that housing brings continues to remain out of reach for many people. At the same time, with the rising cost and scarcity of available land, skilled labor shortages, and restrictive building laws and regulations, affordable homes have become more difficult for builders to produce.

Habitat for Humanity of Brevard is providing an affordable housing solution for qualified families. “On the development side, we plan to do more profiles of the Habitat families so that the community better understands who these people are,” said Gleason. “These are hard-working families with children. They have jobs and they put in their own ‘sweat equity’ on their Habitat homes, working alongside volunteers in the community. Once they are officially in the program, we are going to highlight them. We plan to start doing that this year.”

Program requirements for qualified applicants include 300 sweat-equity hours and completion of homeowner preparatory classes. The program teaches them about budgeting their time and money, how to take care of their home, financial planning, and a host of other related subjects.

Habitat also offers multiple home-repair programs for homeowners. Each program strives to overcome standard maintenance issues that can affect the stability of homes for low-income families. Habitat for Humanity of Brevard has just cut a new path within the national organization and is building a “Female Veterans Village” in the Diamond Square neighborhood in Cocoa. “We are the only Habitat in America doing a Female Veterans Village,” said Gleason. “And we’re doing this in partnership with some donors and the City of Cocoa.”

The partners include Leonardo DRS, area residents Guy and Delores Spearman, City of Cocoa, the Diamond Square Redevelopment Agency, and NextEra Energy Inc. The veteran population in Brevard County, age 18 and older, is estimated at 67,084 or 15 percent of the total population. Of that total of Brevard veterans, 13,674, or 20 percent, are veterans with service-related disabilities, and 1,476 are veterans living below the poverty level, according to Habitat for Humanity of Brevard.

According to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs, the Sunshine State is home to more than 144,000 women veterans, the third largest population of women veterans in America. Nearly half of U.S. female veterans who are single or are single mothers spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing, says a report by the National Housing Conference.

The public can help fund the building of new Habitat homes for low-income residents in Brevard by donating new and gently used furniture, home accessories, building materials, and appliances, as well as other items, to the ReStore. “Our greatest needs for the ReStore are furniture, especially couches, and refrigerators,” said Terry. “We sell a lot of refrigerators and stoves.”

Terry has a lot of experience in merchandizing and creating appealing displays. She will be using her experience at the ReStore. “We’re looking to take the ReStore to the next level. That’s not to say the ReStore is not doing well. Sales have been good. We continue to grow. But I believe there is always room for improvement. Every year, our business has to be better. So every year, we have to do things better. We’re excited about the ReStore’s potential. It’s amazing to see the merchandise donations we receive from the community.”

Habitat will come to your location and pick up the items that you are donating to the ReStore. The number to call is (321) 728-4009. “We have two trucks that cover the 72-mile-long county,” said Terry.

The ReStore also offers deconstruction services. Its crew will perform the removal of usable materials before a remodeling project, or a complete strip-out before a demolition. These materials are then recycled and reused in the community rather than tossed into landfills.

Terry said because Brevard is such a long county, her organization is considering adding a second centrally located ReStore. “That’s on the horizon in the future.”

Habitat for Humanity of Brevard is overseen by a board of directors and senior leadership staff. Habitat’s board is responsible for establishing policy and guiding the organization’s work to construct, rehabilitate, repair, and improve affordable housing in Brevard County.

The officers of the board are: Karen Osniak, chairwoman; Joe Harris, vice chairman; Marcus Ingeldsen, treasurer; and Tracy Stoller, secretary. “We have a very hands-on, engaged board. They are leading us into the future. Habitat for Humanity of Brevard is changing the lives of individuals and families. With the growth in the county, we are hoping to gain support from more businesses and organizations. We need to raise funds to buy the lots to keep the building momentum going. We’re looking forward to some new opportunities for home builds in Brevard in 2020,” said Gleason.
Fiber is a thread or filament from which a vegetable tissue, mineral substance, or textile is formed. That’s a broad category and the Studios of Cocoa Beach, 165 Minuteman Causeway in downtown Cocoa Beach, has invited artists to showcase works representing the world of fibers.

From 6–9 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 27, there will be a reception celebrating the “Fiber Fusion” exhibit and announcing awards.

Fiber Fusion will include felted flax, hand sewn and machine quilting, embroidery, pin–weaving, baskets, sculpture, handcrafted dolls and more.

The participating artists are: Ellen Lindner, Gabriele DiTota, Marilyn Seibring, Nancy Bindig, Marilyn Poell, Mary Dyer, KC Grapes, Kestrel Michaud, Doris Hulse, Micheal Moffet, Ann Welly Revels and Linda Geiger.

The show will be judged by Keidra Daniels Navaroli. She is the assistant director and curator of the Ruth Funk Center for Textile Arts at Florida Institute of Technology in Melbourne, where she oversees daily operations. Founded in 2009, the Ruth Funk Center is one of few textile museums in the nation and specializes in traditional garments, handmade textiles from Asia, Africa, and Central America, as well as historical American and European costumes, and contemporary fiber art.

The evening will include wine and food bites. This festive evening event is an opportunity to talk to the exhibit artists and also meet many of the Studio of Cocoa Beach resident artists, who present paintings, photography, ceramics, jewelry, sculpture and more.

The exhibit will be on display daily through Nov. 17 at the Studios of Cocoa Beach. This nonprofit, co–op gallery presents the work of 30 local artists and offers workshops and classes for adults and children in a variety of techniques.

For more information on the exhibits, the artists, and the workshop schedule, call (321) 613–3480 or visit www.studiosofcocoabeach.org.

Society of Women Engineers to conduct event at Holy Trinity Episcopal Academy

The Space Coast Section of the Society of Women Engineers will present “Wow! That’s Engineering,” a workshop designed for girls in grades seven through 10, from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 19, at Holy Trinity Episcopal Academy in Melbourne.

The workshop will provide participants the opportunity to do fun, hands–on activities related to several different engineering career fields. They will also be able to find out about the different types of engineering disciplines, and will meet women engineers who will talk about how they became engineers.

This event is in need of volunteers to help with modules and other activities the day of the event. Women engineers can sign up to lead a workshop or as hands–on helpers.

The workshop fee of $30 includes lunch, drinks, snacks, a T–shirt and supplies. Registration is now open for both students and volunteers. Registration closes Wednesday, Sept. 25. Fee waivers are available based on financial need.

For more information about this event and to register, visit www.swe–sc.org/WOW.

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Civil War, and John Moss Field saw his four oldest sons fighting for the Confederacy.

In 1882, President Abraham Lincoln signed the Homestead Act, granting farmers up to 160 acres of land for the price of $1.25 per acre. Stipulations required applicants to construct a shelter and grow crops to sustain life on the land. John Moss Field took part in that program.

In 1868, the family made their way South, landing on their future Merritt Island estate on March 21, according to Field Manor Foundation history.

Within their first year, “John Moss Field’s youngest son passed away at age 8, and John’s wife decided it was time to head back to Macon.”

The whole family went, except sons John Robert Field and Samuel Joseph Field. “They decided to fight the tough conditions and work on their new Florida venture. The brothers applied for Homestead Act certificates multiple times, eventually accumulating 471 acres.”

“At one time, they owned land from here all the way to Sykes Creek, because there were several members of the Field family who homesteaded as many as 160 acres at a time,” said Sullivan. “That’s why Pioneer Road, which is at the south end of their property, is appropriately named.”

He added, “Clyde Field wanted this property to be able to visualize and see how the early pioneers settled this area. There were not many of them on Merritt Island at that time.”

Jane Templeton who lived nearby became a good friend of Clyde Field, he said. “Clyde shared with Jane her dream of what she wanted the property to become. Jane had the desire to fulfill Clyde’s vision for the property.”

Templeton served as president of the Field Manor Foundation for years and was its board chairwoman. She passed away this year at age 76.

While the Field history has a longtime connection to the citrus industry in the county, today some of the Field grove property is being used in a new way. “We are leasing about 3 acres to an individual who is growing olives and figs,” said Braden. “Because of citrus greening, citrus farmers in Florida are looking for new revenue streams. We have jackfruit growing here, too. Jackfruit is a great protein substitute that a lot of vegetarians use. Jackfruit generally doesn’t grow this far north. It’s more suited for places like Palm Beach, but we are seeing good results.”

Jackfruit is a tropical fruit recognized for its unique shape and size. It is rich in dietary fiber and minerals.

As citrus greening research continues, some Florida farmers are now growing olives on fields that have only known citrus trees.

The citrus greening disease, or Huanglongbing, has seriously affected the $10.7 billion Florida citrus industry, “causing roughly $7.8 billion in lost revenue, 162,200 citrus acres, and 7,513 since 2007, according to researchers from the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Florida.

“With citrus greening, which started in China, a little bug puts bacteria into the trunk of the tree and interferes with the nutrients coming from the root zones to the canopy of the tree,” said Sullivan, who has been in the citrus business for decades in Brevard.

“The fruit never matures. That’s why it’s called greening. Years ago, canker was a big problem for citrus growers, but the fruit could be used for juice and shipped. It didn’t hurt production. But with citrus greening, every citrus—producing area in the world is affected. We haven’t found a silver bullet for citrus greening yet, but there are some resistant varieties that we are going to be picking this season.”

Sullivan said citrus greening has Florida growers trying all sorts of things to figure out how to combat the disease.

For example, in Bartow, in Polk County, the Dundee Citrus Growers Association has undertaken a sizable experiment, lining an 80-foot row with screened—in citrus trees. The Citrus Under Protective Screen project is supposed to protect the trees from insects that spread the disease.

Trees have been planted for all of phase one, which is 110 acres. Another 113 acres are under construction. “Polk County used to produce more citrus than the entire state of California,” said Sullivan.

At Field Manor, many different species of fruit grow. John Robert Field cleaned, graded, sorted, and boxed citrus in a packing house he built on the homestead in 1900. The structure was used primarily from 1900–1930, and worked solely with fruit produced on the Field property.

Today, Field Manor’s packing house is home to many of the Field’s original grove supplies, from fruit shears, reapers, and watering cans to one of the family’s citrus-sorting machines. Although it is not currently open to guests as part of the guided tours, visitors can still walk around the outside of the century—old structure while exploring the groves themselves.

“We have so much history to show off at Field Manor. We’re inviting the community to join us for our annual Oyster and Fish Fry and to see the Field Manor structure and property and learn more about the role of pioneers in this area of Brevard County,” said Braden.
"With CERTIFIED, there is an extraordinary level of teamwork between our two organizations, as we share common values and culture of excellence. 100% of our projects have been on-time and on-budget.

— Steve Cole, Newman Student Housing Fund"
EGAD has one full-time staff member — Packard — and a part–time employee, “Most Main Street programs have one to two people. I’m lucky to have a part–timer,” she said. One of EGAD’s board members is Tina Murray. She has been involved with the organization as a volunteer since 2010. “Lisa (Packard) runs a one–woman show. There is especially a lot of administrative work to do at EGAD Main Street. She can always use help with creating social media content and help with a variety of office tasks,” said Murray. She continued, “Additionally, volunteers are crucial to the success of our events, and we have several coming up this fall and in the spring of next year. EGAD volunteers range from the highly dedicated individuals who have lots of free time to people who just have a few hours on a weekend to spare. We are seeking people who would like to become active volunteers in a lively arts district.”

EGAD’s upcoming events include the Dec. 6 “Holiday Tree Lighting” “Whiskey in the District” on Feb. 8 and “Women We Love,” set for March 4 at the Rossette House Garden. The luncheon will honor artist Therese Ferguson. If you are interested in being an EGAD volunteer, contact Murray at tinamurray411@gmail.com or call (321) 759–6050.

EGAD is the only Brevard County district to have received a Florida Humanities Council grant to create an “audio–history walk” that is sponsored on the FHC app “Florida Stories,” said Packard. Florida Stories supports the creation of cultural, historical, and architectural walking tours for communities across the state. The Florida Stories app allows users to learn about the history of some of the Sunshine State’s unique towns at their own pace and on their own schedule.

“We applied for and received a grant from the Florida Humanities Council to be included in their state–supported app called Florida Stories. You can download the free app on a smartphone and take the tour at home, or you can come to EGAD and walk around. All the tours of Florida Stories are one mile with 12 stops. We are the only city in Brevard to be included in Florida Stories. We join a lot of really nice communities on the tour, including St. Augustine, Fort Pierce, Key West, Tarpon Springs, and Tampa’s ‘Old City,’” said Packard.

One of EGAD’s most impressive projects is the creation of the Outdoor Museum, made up of more than 30 murals and sculptures that line the streets of the community. The museum attracts thousands of visitors, not only from Florida and other states, but also from abroad.

“The murals have put us on the map,” said Packard. “They have generated a lot of interest. The value of the murals to EGAD has been immense, even though at times they stirred some controversy. Mural art is very popular throughout Florida communities and fits nicely with Main Street’s Four–Point Approach, or business model, for revitalization.”

The Four–Point Approach of Main Street includes Organization, Promotion, Design, and Economic Vitality. “Main Street work is divided into the four areas, which we call at EGAD ‘fund me,’ ‘entertain me,’ ‘build me,’ and ‘feed me.’ We just use different words, but our work falls under the guidelines of Organization, Promotion, Design, and Economic Vitality,” she said.

Packard added, “Annually, Florida Main Street has an awards program that showcases the innovative practices and projects that contribute to the success of local Main Street programs. We’re allowed to submit an entry for each of the four focus points of Main Street.”

There are two award categories — Honor, which highlights the “best of—the–best” Main Street communities, and Merit, which recognizes outstanding examples of redevelopment and leadership.

Among the 56 Florida Main Street programs, 26 Honor and Merit awards were presented at the recent annual conference in Orlando’s Church Street District. Florida Secretary of State Laurel Lee announced the winners. EGAD was the only local winner this year, and went home with two awards.

The 2019 Merit Award winner for Outstanding Local Program Supporter was given to Verdi EcoSchool in EGAD. Verdi EcoSchool was nominated by Packard’s organization because of the “tremendous impact the school has had on EGAD.”

The Verdi EcoSchool is a not–for–profit urban–farm school that uses EGAD as a “community classroom.” Founder Ayana Verdi started her school in July 2016 with urban farm labs and environmental science and enrichment programs. The school has already created enough demand to offer a high school curriculum. “Their presence has helped raise the profile of EGAD and has brought in parents who contribute to the local economy while in EGAD,” said Packard.

The Verdi EcoSchool has also stimulated the EGAD Community Garden initiative and The Pleeged Market, which is open on the first Saturday of each month.

The 2019 Merit Award winner for Outstanding Rehabilitation Project was given to Frank and Melanie Schrader for renovation of the historic Ginter Building, located across from the Eau Gallie Civic Center, at 1540 Highland Ave. “That building is on our historic tour. The Schraders gutted that building. It’s a beautiful facility now,” said Packard.

The property was eligible to receive a façade improvement matching grant by the City of Melbourne. The purpose of the grant is to improve the aesthetics of commercial building facades, and covers only exterior repairs and improvements.

“All the repairs are compatible with the original or historical architectural design of the building and improve the aesthetics of the property,” she said.

The Ginter Building was constructed in 1926 by Clifford Ginter. Through the years, it was used as an apartment complex, a rescue mission house, a store, professional offices, and a nursery school.

This brings the total number of awards won by EGAD since its inception to nine. The awards include Intracoastal Brewing Co. (Outstanding Rehabilitation Project), and volunteers Derek Gores and Tina Murray (Merit Awards for Local Program Supporter).

“Just last year it was Tina and two years ago it was Derek winning awards for their support of EGAD. We’re proud of that,” said Packard.

Packard, EGAD’s executive director since 2014, won the Honor Award for Outstanding State Program support in 2016 for her efforts in changing the state law that limited the number of alcohol permits that all Florida nonprofits could receive in one year, from three to 12. That change meant thousands in dollars in revenue for local programs statewide.

Eau Gallie was founded in 1860 by William Henry Gleason. He discovered the area while traveling up the Indian River and named the city Eau Gallie, which is French for “rocky water.”

The Indian River Lagoon was essential to the development of Eau Gallie, as it was an important hub for transporting goods and passengers. In 1969, citizens of the city decided to merge Eau Gallie with Melbourne. While it is no longer its own city, residents continue to recognize the area as Eau Gallie.

“Being a waterfront community has made the Eau Gallie Arts District incredibly attractive to businesses and to people who want to shop, enjoy entertainment, or visit the area, which is walkable,” said Packard. “EGAD has come a long way since being designated a Main Street program. The future looks bright for EGAD.”

She added, “There are several things that are about to fall in place for EGAD. Over the next two to three years, I believe the people are going to see big changes in EGAD. It has kind of reached the tipping point where properties in EGAD are changing hands, and we only have three empty lots now. Looking ahead, there are going to be new business opportunities. We’re excited about that.”
Court Sets the Record Straight AGAIN!

Patient-centered care comes first at Parrish Healthcare.

The United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida has granted Summary Judgment in favor of Parrish Medical Center and against seven oncology physicians who demanded to remain on our medical staff despite failing to comply with requests for patient data relating to hospital quality initiatives.

We share this with you because at Parrish Medical Center (PMC) we are deeply committed to hospital quality initiatives for the benefit of our patients and our North Brevard Community. On August 22, 2019, U.S. District Court Judge Roy B. Dalton, Jr. issued the Federal Court’s order granting summary judgment in favor of Parrish Medical Center and against the seven physicians on all counts of their Amended Complaint.

We all appreciate and understand that hospital quality initiatives, safety standards, regulations, and practices, are part of providing you with the best possible experience. It was with careful consideration that Parrish Medical Center last year decided not to renew the hospital privileges of the seven physicians. These physicians failed to provide, or cause to be provided, patient centered data required by our cancer program. Our cancer program is Brevard County’s longest continually accredited hospital cancer program (since 1989) by the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer (CoC).

PMC asserted that the patient-centered data was necessary for the reaccreditation process with the CoC. Among Judge Dalton’s findings: “...PMC fought tooth and nail to gain reaccreditation and succeeded despite this missing data. PMC worked with the CoC’s surveyor to brainstorm and create workarounds to get at this missing data from another angle, via records it could obtain,” the opinion stated.

Notably, the opinion states: “...at bottom, this dispute revolves around the thinly veiled effort of Health First to flex its muscle in the long running, heavily litigated, ‘scorched earth’ turf war for Brevard County’s health care business.”

The seven physicians “…have been employed as foot soldiers in the intractable hostilities,” the Judge wrote.

"Whether Health First has any concern for the reputation of their employee physicians, or the unfettered delivery of health care services to Brevard County citizens, or simply disregards this as unfortunate but necessary collateral damage is unclear. No sacrifice is too great when it's not yours,” Judge Dalton wrote.

Patients and families who are battling cancer deserve the highest quality and most compassionate care, and the confidence an accredited cancer program affords them. We live in an age where patient-centered data and hospital quality initiatives are inextricably tied to patient well-being. That Parrish Medical Center’s Board, CEO and managed care officers, stood firm for that principle—despite the fierce opposition faced from other interests—is both inspiring and comforting to our community.

The Federal Court has validated the review and decisions of Parrish Medical Center’s medical executive committee, board of directors, and administration.

PMC serves as the areas only independent, not-for-profit, public, community medical center that invites continuous and rigorous testing of our processes and procedures against national best practices. It is why we earn and sustain among the highest quality and safety rankings from many nationally recognized regulatory and quality assessment agencies and organizations, among them Consumer Reports, J.D. Power & Associates, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and the international Patient Safety Movement Foundation. Safety, loyalty, integrity, compassion, excellence, and stewardship are the values we live by. We will uphold these values as we continue to serve you.