

The Front Porch

*Where The Tea is Sweet
And the Talks are Long*

Winter
2021



Local Small Business Spotlights

Six local small businesses
who are making it work

Madison County Memorial Hospital

See the new surgery center

Sisters Beat Kidney Disease

Jordan & Leslie tell their story



Here to guide you along the way,
on your retirement journey.



Professional financial advice designed to
help you achieve your financial and lifetime goals.



J. Byron Poore II, *Financial Planner*

The Retirement Services Center

Located at Madison County Community Bank

301 E. Base Street
Madison, FL 32340

850-253-6939

byronpoore@mccbflorida.com

www.mccbretirement.com

Securities offered through Securities America, Inc., Member FINRA/SIPC. Advisory Services offered through Securities America Advisors, Inc. The Retirement Services Center, Madison County Community Bank and Securities America are separate companies. • **Not FDIC Insured** • **No Bank Guarantees** • **May Lose Value** • **Not a Deposit and Not Insured by any Government Agency**



RAGANS FAMILY CAMPGROUND

Cabins - RV Sites - Waterpark

"Family camping at its best"

Come for the day or rent a cabin or campsite. Enjoy the WaterZone, jump pads, & much more!



1051 SW Old Saint Augustine Rd
Madison, FL 32340

www.ragansfamilycampground.com

info@ragansfamilycampground.com

(850) 973-8269

Host your next event with us!

**Amenity availability subject to change.*

Upcoming Events

- **New Year's Day Polar Bear Plunge**

Pay \$5 to take the Polar Bear Plunge into our pool. All proceeds will go to the Relay for Life Campaign.

- **Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Weekend (January 15-17)**

- **Valentine's Day Weekend (February 12-13)**

Fun and games to enjoy with your sweethearts. Dinner on Saturday, Feb. 13.

- **Fun in the Sun Spring Break Month**

Spend your spring break with us. Lots of things to do! Call for special packages for groups of 15 or more.

**Details and events subject to change*

While you're reserving your campsite, be sure to check out these exciting and upcoming themed weekends that you can plan your trip around! More themed weekends are offered and can be viewed at

www.ragansfamilycampground.com.

DISC GOLF

Full course available for tournaments!!!

BIRTHDAY PACKAGES

Celebrate your birthday with us! Starting at \$25! Must be planned at least 48 hours in advance!

GROUP CAMPING FACILITIES

Group facilities are available for reunions, weddings, receptions, summer camps, company picnics, birthday parties, Boy & Girl Scout Troops and church groups, etc. Contracts Required.

Contact campground manager for pricing, at (850) 973-8269.



In This Issue

8 From the Publisher
Keep Sowing and Planting

13 Sittin' On The Porch
Chris Musgrove

16 Madison County Memorial Hospital
See the new surgery center

24 Sisters Beat Kidney Disease
Jordan & Leslie tell their story

30 The Story of Ellaville
Story by Rick Patrick

34 Horsing Around
The Selph Family

38 Oh, The Seeds You Can Sow
Story by Susan K. Lamb

42 Auburn Golf Standout
Meet Megan Schofill

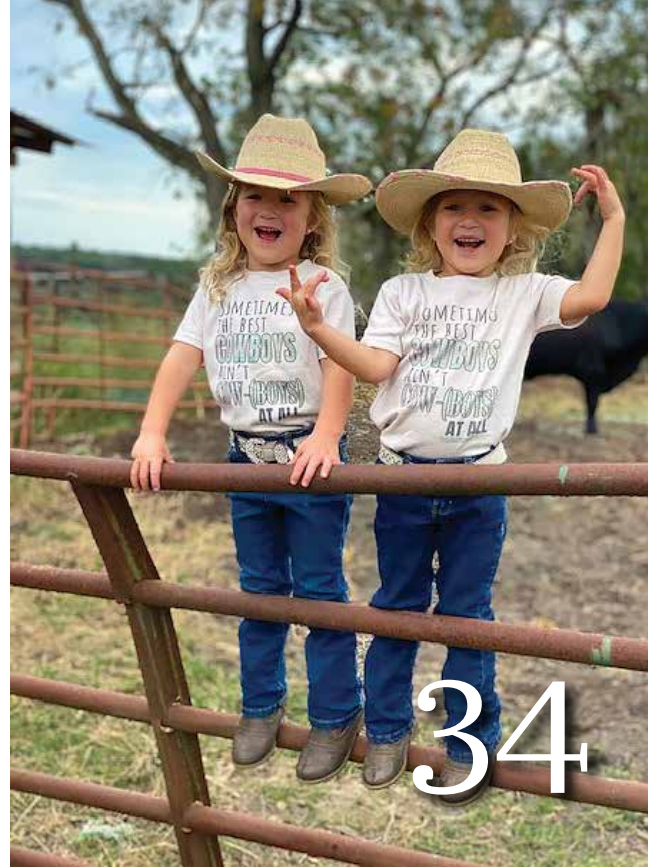
46 Dark Days Led Rob Hilley To The Light
Story by Mickey Starling

49 Local Small Business Spotlights
Six local small businesses who are making it work





16



34



38



30



46



42

The Front Porch

Established 2019
Vol. 3 Issue 1 Winter 2021

The Front Porch
is published quarterly at
1695 South SR 53
Madison, Fla. 32340

Published by



Publisher

Emerald Greene Parsons

General Manager
Chelsie Holbrook

Staff Writers

Rick Patrick
Mickey Starling
Ramsey Sullivan
Danny Federico
Susan Lamb

Contributing Writer

Merry Ann Frisbee

Advertising Specialists

Emerald Greene Parsons
Jeanette Dunn
Justice Barrington
Ina Thompson

Advertisement Design

Dona Gilbert
Mark Estefan
Shane Mathews

Finance

Amber Albritton

Layout

Maine St. Media, Inc.
www.mainestmedia.com

Printing & Distribution

Florida Sun Printing
www.flasunprinting.com

Advertising & Subscriptions

(850) 973-4141

On the Web

www.greenepublishing.com

Send letters and story ideas to:
editor@greenepublishing.com

Subscribe Today!



\$15 per year

- *January*
- *April*
- *July*
- *October*

Mail checks or money orders to:

Greene Publishing, Inc.

P.O. Drawer 772

Madison, Fla. 32341

For all credit card payments, call:

(850) 973-4141

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Please note: If you are a subscriber to the *Madison County Carrier* and *Madison Enterprise-Recorder* or *Jefferson County Journal* and *Monticello News*, you will automatically receive the magazine each quarter.

The Front Porch

Meet Our Staff



Emerald Greene Parsons
Publisher
emerald@greenepublishing.com



Cheltsie Holbrook
General Manager
cheltsie@greenepublishing.com



Amber Albritton
Bookkeeper
classifieds@greenepublishing.com



Shane Mathews
Graphic Designer
graphics@riverbendnews.org



Dona Gilbert
Graphic/Advertisement Desinger
ads@greenepublishing.com



Mark Estefan
Advertisement Designer
monticelloads@embarqmail.com



Ramsey Sullivan
Staff Writer
news@greenepublishing.com



Mickey Starling
Staff Writer
reporter3@greenepublishing.com



Danny Federico
Staff Writer
reporter3@riverbendnews.org



Rick Patrick
Staff Writer
rick@greenepublishing.com



Susan Lamb
Staff Writer
reporter1@riverbendnews.org



Merry Ann Frisbee
Contributor



Jeanette Dunn
Advertising Specialist
jeanette@greenepublishing.com



Justice Barrington
Advertising Specialist
adrep@ecbpublishing.com



Ina Thompson
Advertising Specialist
news@greenepublishing.com

Welcome back to our front porch

Come up, sit and meet more local folks. Silly or cool, crazy or kind, they are your people!

The cornerstone of The Front Porch is to tell the unique stories of our friends and neighbors in our surrounding counties. Our issues focus on the hometown folks that we all know and love or the ones whom we haven't met yet. Our magazine allows you, our readers, to learn more about not only your county, but the counties that surround you and are also considered your hometown. The stories you read here allows you to be encouraged by inspiring interviews, captivated by beautiful images and bold stories and motivated by time-sensitive philanthropy.

This issue brings you a variety of interesting stories.

You will explore and learn about the new surgical addition at the Madison County Memorial Hospital. Take a peek inside the operating room, meet the surgeon and the surgical staff.

You will meet two very special sisters who teamed up to fight kidney disease together. They say 'sisters will always be connected by heart', but these sisters will always be connected by a kidney.

Turn the history book pages back several years, and take a road trip to the (almost forgotten) town of Ellaville.

Meet a family who loves 'horsing around.' With four daughters that love rodeos, this family stays on the go.

A Mayo mother of three brings to life her dream of writing. "Oh, the Seeds You Can Sow" is her first published children's book. The inspiration of the storyline... is that of being the wife of a tree farmer.

Megan Schofill – a high school golf star who went on to play collegiate golf at Auburn University, but she didn't stop there. Not only did she play in the American Junior Golf Association, the young golfer has now been selected to play in the invite-only



Augusta National Women's Amateur, in April 2021.

Meet Rob Hilley of Taylor County. Just three weeks after the birth of his new daughter, Rob went into full organ failure and was given a 30 percent survival rate. Seven months later, he was back at work and praising God for his second chance at life, "If God gives you a second chance, use it to share Jesus in your conversations."

The heartbeat of America is our small businesses. Now more than ever, our hometown businesses need our support and patronage.

In this issue of the Front Porch magazine, we take pride in introducing you to six of our local businesses: our neighbors; our friends; and our family.

Arise Coffee Bar and Roaster – located in Live Oak – it is much more than 'just coffee.'

MesG Crafts – meet a wonderful Branford lady who took her love for painting and art to the highest level by making her own home-based business from it.

Debbie's Jewels Gift Boutique – a Perry based business where you can find a variety of gift ideas from jewelry and collectables, to bags and home décor.

J & J Gas Service – a family owned and operated propane gas business located in the heart of Mayo. Meet the family who has been servicing your gas needs for nearly 50 years.

Robinson Gun Works – located in Jefferson County – this husband-and-wife team meet the needs of area gun owners in four ways: an indoor shooting range, retail sales, classes and repair and the refinishing needs of your weapons. The half million dollar indoor shooting range is ideal for all gun lovers but also caters to the ladies by having "women's classes" and "ladies nights."

Sunsations – this flower shop, conveniently located in the center of Jasper, offers much more than just flowers. Within the business' walls you can find a wide variety of specialty items and crafts from local vendors, homemade cane syrup, gourmet soup mixes, gourmet cookies and chocolate-dipped strawberries and balloons. But, don't despair, they do have the perfect flowers and gifts for parties, weddings and special occasions, and they provide flower arrangements for funerals.

Welcome back to our front porch. May you find beauty, inspiration, encouragement and insight in your neighbors that surround you.

I invite you all to pull up a chair, sip on some sweet tea and sit a spell. We would love to share our new stories with you!

Emerald Greene Parsons, Publisher

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Emerald Greene Parsons".





SWEET TEE.



SWEET TEA.

Yes, it's all sweet here!

Our newly renovated grounds will welcome you to as little or as much activity as your family can take. From golfing, swimming, pickleball or just relaxing with a cold drink in your hand, make us the next sweet place to stay.



Visit MadisonRVResort.com
850.688.0363.

MADISON

RV & GOLF RESORT
MADISON, FLORIDA



Reserve your space now

- 95 spacious RV sites that are big rig friendly with back-in, pull through and waterfront option.
- Pet friendly, so bring your pups to our dog park for a run!
- All lots are spacious, 80' long x 37' wide, with beautiful landscaping for privacy.
- All monthly stays receive complimentary golf cart and unlimited golf at Madison RV & Golf Resort!

445 SW Country Club Rd. • Madison, Fla. 32340
(850) 973-6701 • MadisonRVResort.com

CMH Florida began their transformation in April, 2019, when the long standing ChrisMill Homes, Inc. made the decision to divide their 20-year operation into separate companies that are now individually devoted to the two regions once shared. Nearing two years into a fresh start, the CMH Florida team has been honored by the opportunity to be a part of the work they are doing and ecstatic about sharing their achievements, as well as plans for the future. In November, 2020, ChrisMill Homes of Florida completed remodeling on the former 4,800 sqft warehouse used by a coffee manufacturer to store product. Today, customers will find the CMH Florida team operating out of a newly constructed 2,600 sq. ft. office with 2,200 sq. ft. of warehouse space attached. The attention to detail and consideration of functionality is something CMH Florida very proudly displays along with their gratitude to the loyal North Florida customers that made this dream possible.

With a beautiful, new working environment tailored to the operations of their unique business procedures, the CMH Florida team has been able to foster innovative concepts pushing pricing, sales and product to new levels. A new website, www.cmhflorida.com, is up and running to better enhance the company's character. There are also efforts beginning by the team to be more prominent on social media and internet sites such as Facebook, Youtube and Instagram. Customers can find exclusive offers and information by following ChrisMill Homes of Florida on these outlets.

The increased efforts this Florida home builder has made since their relocation has allowed them to offer their customers a wider variety of quality finishes to choose from, grow their inventory of in-house floor plans and strengthen business relationships with local professionals to help customers with financing as well as land purchase. ChrisMill Homes of Florida team is passionate about the growth of their company. Over 20 years of experience has allowed them to successfully manage the many aspects of new home construction. Residents of North Florida looking to build a custom home can bring a floor plan of their own, choose one from inventory, get knowledgeable assistance in financing, land preparation, design and selecting finishes, all in the hospitable office of CMH Florida.



354 Enterprise Drive • Valdosta, Ga. 31602

www.cmhflorida.com



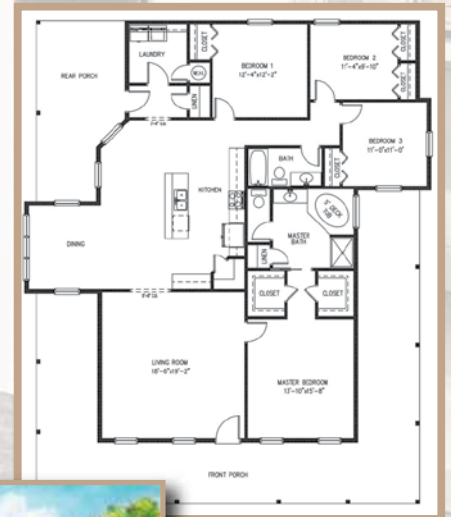
The Calloway



The Emerson



The Johnson



The Scarlett

Flatwoods Café

FAMILY OWNED • WOOD-FIRED PIZZA



**Now booking private parties
on Mondays and Tuesdays!**

Backrooms available for parties throughout the week.

Pizza available until 9 p.m. on Sunday, Wednesday and Thursday.

(850) 997-1979

10076 S. Salt Rd. • Lamont, Fla. 32336

SUN-WED-THURS 11 AM-8 PM • FRI-SAT 11 AM-10 PM • CLOSED MON-TUES



Custom Graphic
Roller Shades



Custom Drapery



Cordless
Cellular Shades



Cordless
Roman Shades

**BUDGET[®]
BLINDS**

Style and service for every budget.[®]

Call for your free
consultation right at home:

(850) 668-4835

BudgetBlinds.com/Tallahassee

Budget Blinds of Tallahassee

2743 Capital Circle NE
Suite 105 Tallahassee, Fla. 32308

Locally Owned and Operated

Blinds • Shutters • Shades • Drapes • Home Automation

©2019 Budget Blinds, LLC. All Rights Reserved. Budget Blinds is a trademark of Budget Blinds, LLC, and a Home Franchise Concepts brand. Each franchise independently owned and operated.

Sittin' on the porch with...

Chris Musgrove



Story and Photography by Mickey Starling

Staff Writer

Suwannee County native Chris Musgrove has quite a history in his home town of Live Oak, Fla.

Few would have expected Musgrove to succeed in life, given his lack of focus while growing up. Besides being a class clown, Musgrove had a few minor arrests under his belt as a young man, and he flunked out of college shortly after leaving high school.

However, as Musgrove reflects on his younger days, he is appreciative of the lessons he learned in his tumultuous youth. "Everything changed when I met Jesus," said Musgrove, who has ministered as a youth pastor and evangelist for over 30 years. He credits some of his success to the encouragement he received from Shirley Albritton, his high school English teacher. "Even though I did poorly in school, she always told me I had a gift for communication," said Musgrove. "I didn't give it much thought at the time, but she planted seeds of hope in me that bore fruit later."



That fruit came in groves for Musgrove, who has devoted his life to reaching young people for Christ. "I'll do whatever it takes to reach a child," said Musgrove, who has turned those words into actions many times over the years. He and his wife have had over 80 kids live in their home for extended time periods. Musgrove now considers North Florida and South Georgia his "Jerusalem," a term he uses based on Acts 1:8, which states, "... and you shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and Samaria, and as far as the remotest part of the earth."

Since the 1990s, Musgrove has definitely made this area a holy land experience through his FutureNow school assemblies and outreaches that have covered over 59 communities in the southeast.

His passion for helping kids find their purpose and destiny in Christ burns as brightly today as it did in the beginning. "One of the best sayings I like to give kids comes from Mark Twain," stated Musgrove. "He said the greatest two days of your life are the day you are born and the day you discover why you were born."

Through his many years of ministry, Musgrove reflects on the important value of relationships. "It's not just about getting what you want from others," said Musgrove. "Relationships give you the opportunity to treat people the way Jesus would have. Plus, with young people, they can see through a facade. You have to be real and love people. Real youth ministry isn't done in a church service. It happens when you spend time with kids on the bus or van while you are traveling on youth trips."



60-bed Skilled Nursing Facility
 Private and Semi-Private rooms
 Home-like atmosphere
 Wi-Fi for wireless access
 Cable TV
 Salon Services
 Designated outdoor smoking area
 Courtyard with gazebo & gardening area
 Fishing pond with dock
 Menu selection for meals
 Daily individual & group activities indoor, outdoor & off-campus
 Courtesy transportation to & from medically necessary appointments
 Elegant Dining
 Chaplin & worship services

**2481 West US Hwy. 90
 Madison, Fla. 32340
 (850) 973-4880
 www.madisonhealthandrehab.com**



**The Joint Commission
 Gold Seal Of Approval™**

Madison Health and Rehabilitation Center is a 60-bed skilled nursing facility with private and semi-private rooms. We are centrally located in the heart of Madison County and have provided quality care since 1985. Our dedicated teams of highly trained professionals focus solely on the needs of our residents. Each resident at our facility receives a well-defined individualized plan of care that caters to their needs. Short term or long term, our well trained therapists are here to assist the residents in achieving their goals. Our facility also offers outpatient therapy. The residents may enjoy visiting the beauty salon, spending the day fishing at our pond, relaxing at the gazebo in the beautiful, enclosed courtyard and much more. With quality care in a friendly and safe environment, our residents are able to enjoy themselves, while receiving the care they need.

Quality Focused Care, One Resident at a Time!

Close to family & Friends
 Physician visits as needed
 Nursing: RN, LPN, CNA's
 Staffed above requirements with warm, friendly staff
 Plan of care meeting within 72 hours with resident and family (includes discharge planning)
 Registered Therapist for evaluation & treatments
 Restorative Nursing Program
 Wound Prevention Precautions
 Podiatry & mental health services provided on-site
 Resident council
 Medicaid application assistance
 Personal provider of choice

Serving Madison, South Georgia, Perry, Live Oak, Monticello and Tallahassee.



WE BUY YOUR SCRAP!

(850) 575-5000 | (850) 877-6106
1351 Aeon Church Rd. | 3720 Woodville Hwy.
Tallahassee, Fla. 32310 | Tallahassee, Fla. 32305

M-F: 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. | Sat: 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Come and see why we are different!

Jason Shoaf

District 7

State Representative



Proud to be serving the citizens of District 7

- Support for our Veterans
- Protecting the Second Amendment
 - Defending the right to life
 - Supporting Law Enforcement
- Keeping taxes low • Improving education
 - Cutting business regulations
- Protecting our water • Fighting for our farmers
 - Recovering from Hurricane Michael



All Realty Services

Big Bend - Florida

WWW.MYALLREALTY.COM

*Lynette Sirmon, Realtor
Broker/Owner*

112 SW Range Ave. (850) 973-9990 Office
Madison, Fla. 32340 (850) 973-9992 Facsimile

Follow us on Facebook



Specializing in:

- Residential Real Estate
- Commercial Properties
- Lending and Financing
- Real Estate Investment
- Rental Property Management
- Farms, Ranches, Lots, Land
- Hunting Tracts

WE WANT TO BE YOUR REAL ESTATE AGENT

Welcome to All Realty Services, your source for Big Bend North Florida real estate. We specialize in Madison, Florida and Monticello, Florida properties. If you own real estate that you're thinking of selling, I would be happy to provide you with a FREE Home Evaluation.

In today's competitive real estate market, timing is everything. Many good homes are sold before they are ever advertised. Beat other homebuyers to the hottest new homes for sale in North Florida with my New Listings Notification.

M & R

Construction and Siding, Inc

Lic. # CBC 1256821

Licensed & Insured

20+ Years
Combined
Eperience



- New Construction
- Re-modeling
- Additions
- Replacement Windows
- Screen Rooms
- Decks
- Soffit & Fascia
- Repairs

• Vinyl, Wood, Fiber Cement Siding

Mitchell Morgan
(850) 251-6505



Rodney Roberts
(850) 251-4588

"THE GUN STORE"

 **MOULTRIE
SHOOTERS SUPPLY**

**ALL TYPES OF GUNS, AMMO
AND ACCESSORIES**

We Sell Reloading Supplies • Moultrie Feeders
Costa Del Mar Sunglasses & Much More!

130 Woodmen Rd. | Moultrie, Ga. 31768

(229) 890-7383

FAX: (229) 890-0780

DENVER BRASWELL

LINDSEY WILLIS

Madison County Memorial Hospital

Faith. Family. History.



Madison County Memorial Hospital has been serving the region since 1937. With an emphasis on patient-centered care that engages the patient's entire family in the process, they aim to set the standard in rural healthcare and consistently ensure ways to provide innovative services for our community. Ultimately, they strive to bring big city healthcare services right here at home.



Full-Service Healthcare Resource

Madison County Memorial Hospital is not just a hospital and Emergency Room (ER) – it's a full-service healthcare resource with state-of-the-art technology and a broad range of experts to help keep people in our community healthy.

With the opening of the new building in 2014, the hospital has made a concerted effort to establish resources that Madison County needs based on reliable data sources that gauge the health and wellbeing of our community. Through new lines of business and strategic partnerships, the hospital is addressing the healthcare access gap in the North Florida region through a variety of inpatient and outpatient services.



Operating Room Services Now Open

The newest and perhaps most exciting service offered at Madison County Memorial Hospital (MCMH) launched in November of 2020 - an Operating Room. With a fulltime Board-Certified Surgeon and surgical team, MCMH's Operating Room provides a variety of elective surgery procedures.

The Operating Room Suite consists of a large operating room, four private treatment/recovery rooms, and a procedure room. The mission of the Surgical Suite is to enhance quality of life by continuously improving the health of the people in our community by correcting and improving disease management through surgery.





■ ■ ■ ■ ■ *Our Operating Room* ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

The purpose of our operating room is to provide minor elective outpatient surgery and gradually begin adding rotating specialists. Following are the elective surgeries currently provided:

- Gallbladder Removal
- Hernia Repair
- Abscesses/Hematomas
- Incision & Drainage
- Central Lines
- Chest Tubes
- Colonoscopy
- Endoscopy/EGD
- Gastrostomy Feeding Tube Insertion
- Ingrown Toenail Removal
- Paracentesis
- Pilonidal Abscess Incision & Drainage
- Skin Cancers
- Skin Infections and Abscesses
- Thoracentesis
- Amputation-Minor
- Skin Lesion Biopsies/Excisions/Destruction

Our Surgical Team



MEET *Dr. Jerry Padrta* OUR SURGEON

Dr. Padrta is the Chief Surgical Officer and a Board-Certified Surgeon with over 29 years of experience including seven (7) of those years spent as a General Practitioner and Board Certified in Wound Care. He joins us from Albermarle Medical center, a 182-bed facility in Albermarle, North Carolina where he has been performing surgery for over twelve (12) years. Likewise, he served as the Wound Care Clinic Medical Director at the Albemarle Surgical Center. Prior to that, he practiced in Florida for ten (10) years.

Dr. Jerry Padrta



Additional Services

WOUND CARE CLINIC

Located inside of the hospital is a Wound Care clinic. Dr. Jerry Padrta is Certified in Wound Care Management. Specializing in a variety of wounds i.e., acute, chronic, and non-healing wounds. Go to <http://www.mcmh.us/services/woundcare/> or call 850-253-1964 to learn more.

EMERGENCY ROOM (ER) SERVICES

Emergency services offered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Emergency TeleStroke Care is available for Inpatient and Emergency Room services.

TELEMEDICINE SERVICES

Five years ago, the hospital introduced one of the latest technologies in emergency stroke care with a telemedicine robot named R.E.T.A, - Remote Emergency Telemedicine Assistant. Through an agreement, this service provides the emergency room professionals with remote, board-certified neurologists available 24/7 for stroke emergencies. In 2019, TeleCardiology was introduced and made available to hospitalized patients.

INPATIENT SERVICES

Inpatient services include all MCMH services as needed when serving hospitalized patients who have checked into the hospital for treatment. Additionally, MCMH offers Swing Bed services. What is Swing Bed? It is offered to patients who no longer require acute inpatient services but instead need extra time for healing. Call the business office at (850) 973-2271 to see if you or your loved one qualifies!

Patients receive a private room, along with personalized care tailored to their needs through a team of physicians, nurses, physical, speech, and occupational therapists, respiratory therapists, radiology and laboratory technicians, dietitians, activities coordinator, chaplains, and case managers. No matter what facility you may have been discharged from, Madison County Memorial Hospital is able to work with your providers and surgeons to develop an individualized care plan and to provide support for your family or caregiver.

OUTPATIENT SERVICES

Outpatient rehabilitation services, including physical, occupational, and speech therapy. These services allow patients who may have been injured in a car accident or experienced a stroke or heart attack to get back to living an independent life.

DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

MCMH diagnostic services include - Endoscopy, Radiology, Laboratory and Respiratory/ Cardiopulmonary. MCMH Radiology provides diagnostic services such as ECHO, CAT Scans, Ultrasound, Mammography, and Xrays.

WELLNESS SERVICES

This line of business aims at fighting chronic conditions and promoting health and quality of life through education, coaching, and behavior modification. Men, women, and young adults join us on Facebook @healthyyou and women 40+ @healthywisewoman to find out more, or call 850-253-1961 to speak with a coach.

Madison County Memorial Hospital (MCMH) is located near downtown Madison, Florida and serves a sixty-mile radius of North Florida and South Georgia providing big-city services in a small-town atmosphere. Meeting the healthcare needs of you and your family with an Emergency Room, Inpatient-Nursing, Swing-bed, Acute Care and Observation as well as Outpatient - diagnostic, physical, occupational and speech therapy, full-service laboratory, Endoscopy services, a Wound Care Clinic, and General Surgery, the goal is to build a collaborative network to ensure a strong and healthy community through innovative health services. To schedule an appointment or to learn more, visit www.mcmh.us or call (850) 973-2271. If you are a provider and would like to establish a partnership with the hospital, please contact 850-253-1961. We invite all our friends of the hospital to visit us live on the web or via social media to stay in the loop with current news and events in the surrounding communities! Join us on Facebook @MadisonCountyMemorialHospitalMCMH.

"Madison County Memorial Hospital prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees and applicants for employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, pregnancy or religion."

Royal Restorations

Antiques and fabulous finds

**Bath, Decks, Kitchen
and more**

Open

Tuesday - Friday: 10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Saturday: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

173 NE Range Ave. • Madison, Fla. 32340
(850) 973-2098



Worship – Grow – Serve – Share

Sunday Worship 10:45am

325 W. Washington St. (850) 997-2349
Pastor Sean Vickers www.fbcmonticello.org

DEAL'S *Famous*

**OYSTER
HOUSE**

*“The finest people
in the world walk through
our doors”*

2571 West U.S. 98 • Perry, Fla.
(850) 838-DEAL (3325)

**Join us for Lunch or Dinner
Dine-In or Take-Out**

Hours of Operation

Tuesday - Saturday, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. • Closed every Sunday and Monday

Oysters

call to reserve pints or bushels



FOR SALE
850-973-4458

P.O. Box 505
Madison, Fla. 32341

www.madisonrealtygroupllc.com



Crystal K Bochnia Broker (850) 973-7333
Ann Sapp Realtor (850) 464-0671
Beth Meggs Realtor (850) 545-5184
Sarah Pike Realtor (850) 673-1292



Gray Logging LLC
- Our Roots Run Deep -

Jerry Gray
Owner

665 SW Harvey Greene Drive
Madison, Fla. 32340
graylogging@yahoo.com
www.graylogging.com

Cell: (850) 673-1718
Office: (850) 973-3863
Fax: (850) 973-3924



OUTDOOR
Solutions & Services
(229) 869-9997

- **Deer Feed (OSS-20)**
- **Herd Management**
- **Deer Stands**
- **Feeders • Cameras**
- **Seed and Seed Plantings**

P.O. BOX 637 • LEESBURG, GA. 31763



Healing Minds & Empowering Lives!

Healing minds and empowering the lives of people with mental illness takes more than just skill... it takes compassion.

Apalachee Center has been offering its clients and their families caring service for over fifty years. Apalachee Center, Inc. is a Joint Commission accredited, private, not-for-profit behavioral health center serving the Big Bend area. We are hiring for various positions, ranging from Mental Health Assistants, Care Managers, Therapists, and more. We offer competitive pay and benefits!

Please visit apalacheecenter.org/careers-opportunities for a complete listing
2634 Capital Circle NE • Tallahassee, Florida 32308 • EEO Employer



Sisters team up to defeat kidney disease

Jordan Wainwright (left) and her sister, Leslie Slaughter, (right) do some healthy grocery shopping together just six days after their surgeries. Their humorous t-shirt messages surely entertained many shoppers. [Leslie Slaughter/Courtesy]

Mickey Starling

reporter3@greenepublishing.com

Jordan Wainwright grew up loving sports and she was a natural athlete. By the seventh grade, soccer had become her passion. During a game, Wainwright took a dive into the grass and thought nothing of it. The minor grass burns that showed up on her right leg merely indicated that she was playing the game as it was meant to be played.

A short time later, the burn began to be infected, which sent Wainwright to the doctor to receive antibiotics. After several weeks of treatment, the infection had not improved and both legs started having swelling issues. The swelling and infections never completely cleared over the next two years, which sent Wainwright and her family back to the doctor, looking for answers. Doctors diagnosed Wainwright



The threat of COVID-19 is no match for the love between these sisters as they prepared to go into surgery. Leslie (left) was a perfect match for donating a kidney to Jordan (right). [Leslie Slaughter/Courtesy]

with Nephrotic Syndrome at age 13. This kidney disease is often marked by swelling in the ankles or legs, much like what Wainwright was experiencing. Wainwright knew a kidney transplant was in her future.

Midway through her sophomore year of high school, Wainwright was back in the doctor's office because she was still suffering from swelling, fatigue and lack of endurance. As it turned out, Wainwright's condition was misdiagnosed. She was actually suffering from C3 Glomerulonephritis, a kidney disease that is often contracted due to infections or other diseases. For Wainwright, her body fought her infections improperly, treating the kidneys as if they were the infection.

Undaunted by her physical challenges, Wainwright continued to excel at playing soccer through her college years at Texas

A & M, Corpus Christie. She was given amino suppressants to reduce the number of attacks on her kidneys. "I continued to struggle with swelling in my legs," said Wainwright. "I didn't let the lack of endurance or recurrence of fatigue that I regularly dealt with stop me." Entering her senior year, Wainwright was the captain of her soccer team, even while she began losing all kidney functions. Swelling in her legs increased due to water retention and mobility and breathing was increasingly difficult, especially during strenuous physical activity. The hot summer sun of Texas didn't help matters, either. The heat increased Wainwright's risk of dehydrating, which could have resulted in chronic kidney disease.

Despite Wainwright's best efforts to maintain her kidneys, the inevitable diagnosis of renal failure came in July of

2019. Initially, a college teammate offered to donate a kidney to Wainwright, but the COVID-19 outbreak derailed that plan. Fortunately, Wainwright's sister, Leslie Slaughter, was a perfect match as a donor, and she was happy to help save her sister's life. Slaughter traveled to San Antonio, Texas, for the surgery, which took place on Wednesday, July 15, 2020, at San Antonio Methodist Transplant Specialty Hospital.

The surgery was successful, with Jordan and Leslie being discharged just three days later. Recovery was understandably slow at first, but Wainwright and her sister were eager to return to normal life. "I stopped taking pain medications after I was released," said Wainwright. "I also couldn't eat solids at first, but now I can't stop eating. I'm eating healthy food and a lot of it." Leslie had similar experiences during recovery. "It's tough. You don't realize how much you use your core," said Leslie.

Though Leslie soon returned to Live Oak to complete her recovery, Jordan remained in Texas for several more months, awaiting the removal of a stint. And, the challenges for the future remain. "I have to stay on anti-rejection drugs, which is not good for me, because I have to reduce my exposure to sunlight," said Wainwright,



The day after surgery, Leslie (left) and Jordan (right) were already taking strolls in the halls of the hospital. [Leslie Slaughter/Courtesy]

who describes herself as a "river girl." Also, there is a 50 percent chance of Wainwright's disease returning after one year.

Nevertheless, Wainwright has options for dealing with a recurrence if necessary. Doctors in Iowa have already made available clinical trials for medications that may help to prohibit attacks on the kidney. An added bonus is the large number of siblings at Wainwright's disposal. "I have eight siblings, so I have a lot of kidneys to choose from," said Wainwright, referring to the possibility of needing future transplants.

Wainwright hopes to return to classes in the spring. Soccer and an active lifestyle are already on her list of future plans. When she returns to college, Wainwright will pick up where she left off. Having earned Bachelor's and Master's degrees in kinesiology, she plans to continue research on acute kidney injury in relation to dehydration and strenuous exercise. If her health progresses normally, Wainwright will begin working on her P.h.D. In the fall of 2021. "I've had several offers, but I'm looking for the right place to do research with experienced mentors," said Wainwright. "Wherever I go, I want to make sure that I'm challenged."

Having already faced and conquered the challenges of playing soccer with a failing kidney, there may not be a college that can provide much of a challenge for this champion. One thing is for certain; wherever Wainwright's path leads her, she is sure to be putting her all into it. That's just how she plays the game.

100% CUSTOMER SATISFACTION
IS OUR GOAL!

DUNHAM BODY SHOP

FOREIGN & DOMESTIC

Body & Paint Work
Frame Straightening

~ FREE ESTIMATES ~

INSURANCE WORK WELCOME

11615 U.S. Hwy. 319 N.
Thomasville, Ga. 31757

(Past Walmart, across the street from
Stallings Dodge Chrysler Jeep)

(229) 226-2077

AFFORDABLE * QUICK * QUALITY

Real solutions for
your problems

MIKE'S
Pest Solutions

Mike Wheeler
850-228-5411
mike@mikespestsolutions.com
www.mikespestsolutions.com

TERMITES * ROACHES * ANTS * RODENTS * WILDLIFE



wens Propane, Inc.

"Service With A Smile"

Serving Jefferson, Suwannee
and Hamilton Counties

(866) 382-2484

CREATE YOUR SUCCESS STORY



Technical and Industrial Jobs are
among our fastest growing jobs in our area!

EASIER Admissions Process & **OUT-OF-STATE TUITION WAIVED** for Spring 2021*

Computer Programming with Python

Full Stack Developer Technical Certificate — **NEW PROGRAMS**

Occupational Studies Degree

**APPLY
TODAY!**

SPRING EXPRESS BEGINS FEB 18!

WIREGRASS.EDU
(229) 333-2100

#SUCCEEDSOONER #NEWCOLLAR

Equal Opportunity Institution / A Unit of the Technical College System of Georgia / WGTC is accredited by SACSCOC

*This does not qualify out-of-state
applicants for the HOPE Grant
or other Georgia grants



Your Friends
for Life.



SOUTHERN FARM BUREAU
LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

Big Bend Farm Bureau

(386) 310-2121

Jefferson County

(850) 997-2213

Abby Godwin

Agent

Madison County

(850) 973-4071

Mike Williams

Agent

Jimmy King

Agent

Lafayette County

(386) 294-1399

Devin Hingson

Agent

Taylor County

(850) 584-2371

Ryan Perry

Agent

Lance Braswell

Agency Manager

**Helping you is
what we do best!**

**24/7 Claims Service
Call 1-866-275-7322**



Auto • Home • Life

FLAUPR00111

*Florida Farm Bureau General Insurance Co.

*Florida Farm Bureau Casualty Insurance Co.

*Southern Farm Bureau Life Insurance Co., Jackson, MS



Jefferson County Parks & Recreation Department

"Where Everybody Plays"

Park Manager, Mike Holm

1380 Mamie Scott Dr. • Monticello, Florida

Park Office 850-342-0240 • Cell: 850-519-6640

mholm@jeffersoncountyfl.gov

Mike's Marine Supply

Whether you like to fish
or the comforts of riding,
we have what you need.

Marine Supplies & Accessories • Trained Mechanics

Hwy 98 • Panacea, FL 32346
www.mikesmarine-panacea.com

850-984-5637 • 850-984-5693



MADE YA LOOK!

Print Advertising **WORKS!**

Contact us today!

cheltsie@greenepublishing.com

KITCH-ENCOUNTERS

Kitchen & Bath Remodeling

- Kitchen Design and Remodeling
- Bathroom Design and Remodeling
- Walk-in Closets & More!



(850) 386-6555

2740 Capital Circle NE • Tallahassee, Fla.

TD-00002431 www.Kitch-Encounters.com

GRUMPY'S

on Main



Diner
& Pie Shop

Open 7 am - 3 pm Monday thru Saturday

Serving breakfast & lunch

Dinner Friday night! (open til 9 pm)

244 SW Range Ave., Madison, FL

850-973-2802

www.GrumpysDinerMadison.com

Cuz you're **GRUMPY** when your **HUNGRY!**

GFAST

GEORGIA-FLORIDA AVIATION SEARCH TEAM

Richard Connell
CEO & Director of Operations

Mobile: (850) 545-2358
Email: richard.connell@gfastair.com
Website: www.gfastair.com



WE CARRY
LIVE BAIT, ZEBCO,
PENN GULP,
COTTON CORDELL
AND MIRROLURE

COME CHECK OUT
OUR HUNTING
SECTION!

(850) 584-6157
1702 S. Byron Butler Pkwy | Perry, Fla.

Small and Large Animals

Medical and Surgery

Animal Medical Clinic



Matthew C. Davis, D.V.M.
Carrie Lee Baxley, D.V.M.
William J. Cone, D.V.M.



Monday-Friday: 7:30 A.M. - 5:30 P.M.
Saturday: 8:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.

1455 W. Washington St., Monticello, FL 32344

(850) 997-3750

After Hours/Emergencies: 850-997-3750 • Alt. Emergency: 850-222-0123

Visit our *Newly Enlarged*
Hardware Store! See our
Complete Inventory for ALL Your
HUNTING & FISHING needs!

WAUKEENAH Fertilizer & Farm SUPPLY INC.

Fertilizer in Bag and Bulk
Custom Blending Liquid Nitrogen
Feed • Seed • Chemicals
Fencing Materials
Veterinary Supplies



9643 Waukeenah Hwy • Monticello, Fla. 32344

850-997-4460 • 850-997-4480

2862 West US 90 Madison, Florida 32340
850.973.2285 • 800.999.2285 • Fax 850.973.1209
www.tceec.com



ELLAVILLE

Bustling turn-of-the-century town in Madison County

Story by Rick Patrick

In the years shortly following the Civil War, George Drew, a man originally from New Hampshire, moved from Georgia to Madison County. There, he opened a steam sawmill which would become the largest in the state, across the Suwannee River from the town of Columbus. The town accompanying the sawmill would soon become known as Ellaville. The story is that he named the town after an old African-American woman who had been employed by Drew.

An extremely successful businessman, Drew became involved in politics, and eventually was the Democratic nominee for Governor. Drew won the Governor's office in 1876, in a very hotly contested election. Reports of intimidation and violence were rampant on both sides of the political aisle. According to the book, "A History of Madison County, Florida", by Elizabeth Sims, "When election day came, the atmosphere was intense. Unregistered voters were allowed to vote, and some accommodating individuals voted several times at different polling booths. It was reported that the Democratic manager in Jacksonville wired the Democratic manager in Madison: 'By how many votes will Madison County go Democratic?' The manager in Madison immediately answered, 'How many votes do you need?'" After Drew appealed the vote count to the state supreme court, a recount was ordered. Drew won election by a slim margin. On the recount, Drew won the election by a mere 24,179 to 23,948 vote margin.

By all accounts, Drew's administration was a successful one. Not being a "politician," he managed the state in the manner of a businessman, cutting taxes and wasteful spending; while creating economic prosperity. One example of this was when he cut the salary of a prison warden from \$20,000 a year to \$4,000 a year (keep in mind, this was the late 1800s). Gov. Drew is also credited

with creating a convict labor system.

After his term as Governor, Drew returned to Ellaville, where he had built a two-story, 10-room home that was dubbed "The Drew Mansion." The home had oak parquet floors, marble mantles, chandeliers, an imported mahogany staircase and elaborately landscaped gardens. Soon after it was built, it became one of the first homes in Madison County to have indoor plumbing, electric lights and a telephone. In 1893, another family bought the mansion and lived there until 1911. That is when the Suwannee River flooded, resulting in six feet of water inundating the building. After that, a family of sharecroppers moved into the house until 1936, when the State of Florida acquired it as part of the Suwannee River State Park. Attempts were made to restore the old mansion, but those attempts accomplished little. By the 1950s, the home was practically taken over by the elements, due to years of neglect. The house was completely destroyed by a forest fire in December of 1970.

Drew continued in the lumber business until his death in 1900. The town he founded on the banks of the Suwannee River prospered for several years afterward, although it began to decline soon after the turn of the century; due to a decline in the lumber industry. At one point, the town boasted a population of over 1,000 people. Ellaville also had a telegraph office, an express office, a Masonic Lodge, a Post Office, two churches and two schools. After the pine trees were used up, the town began to fade away. The town ceased to exist in 1942, when the post office was closed.

Information for this article came from "The History of Madison County", by Elizabeth Sims and "Madison County From the Beginning", by Tommy Greene with assistance from Noland Greene. "Madison County From the Beginning" may be purchased from Greene Publishing, Inc. for \$15.



Several unsuccessful attempts were made to restore the Drew Mansion. It was severely damaged by flooding in 1911 and continued to decline until it was destroyed by a forest fire in 1970.

Your Hometown Experts

^a Main Street Realty Co., LLC



186 SW Range Ave.
Madison, Fla. 32340
(850) 973-2221

www.YourMainStreetRealty.com

Whether you are looking to buy or sell real estate in the North Florida area,
let one of our hometown experts show you the way.
We promise to provide you with the highest level of service, honesty and integrity.
Stop by and let us prepare a market analysis of your home at no charge!

Suwannee Valley Nursing Center

427 15th Ave. NW • Jasper, Fla. 32052 • (386) 792-1868

*We provide 24-hour a day skilled nursing care
with licensed nurses that include:*

- Disease Management*
- Diabetes Management*
- Enteral Feeding*
- Post-operative Care*
- Medication Management*
- Respiratory Care*
- Wound Care*
- And more*

*We also offer Rehabilitation Care
and Outpatient Therapy*

*At Suwannee Valley,
meeting the diverse
needs of our
residents and
creating a
comfortable
home-like
environment
is our top
priority.*



Live edge cypress furniture, including free-standing swings, porch swings, chairs, picnic tables, benches and more.



**Cypress grown,
sawn and
assembled in
Lafayette County,
Fla. at Central
Florida Lands and
Timber Nursery,
LLC by Marvin
Buchanan.**



**AUTHENTIC
CYPRESS
CREATIONS**

**3087 North CR 53
Mayo, Fla. 32066**

Phone: (386) 294-1211

Fax: (386) 294-3416

Email: cflat@windstream.net

In the business of cypress for six generations



Jasper family loves horsing around

There is plenty of room on the family farm for riding horses, which brings a smile to everyone's faces. Pictured in back is Luke and Brittany Selph. Pictured in front, from left to right, are: Rilyn, Lexie, Layla and Brooklyn. (photo by Mary Ellen Altman)

Story by Mickey Starling, Staff Writer
Photography by Brittany Selph, Tupelo Blossom Rodeo Photography, Mary Ellen Altman and Mickey Starling

Brittany Selph grew up in the countryside of Hamilton County, and she can't recall a time when she didn't love horses. Since she spent much of her childhood riding and competing in various events, it seemed only natural to Selph that, one day, her children would also love riding horses.

Now married to Luke Selph, Brittany's hopes for their four children have materialized beyond her wildest imagination. From eight year-old Rilyn, to 6 year-old Brooklyn and three-year old twins, Lexie and Layla, these young cowgirls are always ready to ride.

At five years old, Rilyn fell in love with horseback riding and she quickly honed her skills to the point that she was competing in barrel races a year later. In her first race, Rilyn took first place in her age division at the CGR Buckle Series in Jennings.

Though barrel racing is Rilyn's favorite competition, she and Brooklyn also compete in pole bending and goat tying races. Brooklyn got her early start in the

saddle at age four and began competing at age five. Brooklyn has already amassed numerous second-place finishes. Both girls compete several times a month, alternating between the CGR Buckle Series and the Georgia Florida Youth Rodeo, in Quitman, Ga.

Not to be outdone by their older sisters, Lexie and Layla began riding ponies in 2020, at three years of age. The twins are already competing in barrel races and goat ribbon pulls, while riding atop their favorite ponies, Elsa and Anna. The four sisters put in plenty of practice each week. "They have come so far, getting faster and better all the time," said Brittany. Though all of this riding is sure to create some falls now and then, it's all part of the fun to the girls. Brooklyn is quick to admit that she has fallen the most, and she remains undaunted. "It doesn't hurt and I don't care," proclaimed Brooklyn.

Brooklyn's favorite competition is pole bending races, which she enjoys because of all the weaving in and out that is required.

Miss Lexie is most fond of barrel racing because it gives her the opportunity to ride fast. Layla most enjoys the goat ribbon pull, but all of the girls have a competitive streak

that keeps things interesting around the house. When the girls aren't winning races, they have other forms of fun competition to enjoy. At Halloween, all the girls took part in a costume contest at the Georgia Florida Youth Rodeo, in Quitman, with the twins taking first place honors.

When it comes to riding horses, there is much to be learned from the experience. "I love that they rodeo and enjoy it," said Brittany. "It teaches sportsmanship, and win or lose, they have fun. This is my dream for them." Besides all of the fun, the entire family puts in a lot of work to make it happen. The girls feed the horses and help set up for competitions, while the parents do a little bit of everything. Brittany is quick to brag on her husband, saying, "We are thankful for having a good dad who gives them lots of help."

The horses seem to be a unifying force for this family, and the girls are all in. On any given day, you will find these young ladies clad in blue jeans and cowboy boots. Their pony tails flying freely behind them and bright smiles on their faces as they head to the barn to saddle up and make more beautiful memories that will last a lifetime.

The Selph sisters are taking a brief break from riding competitions to celebrate Christmas. Pictured, from left to right, are: Brooklyn, Lexie, Layla and Rilyn. [Mickey Starling]



(taken by Brittany Selph)



(Tupelo Blossom Rodeo Photography)



(Tupelo Blossom Rodeo Photography)



(Tupelo Blossom Rodeo Photography)



photo by Brittany Selph

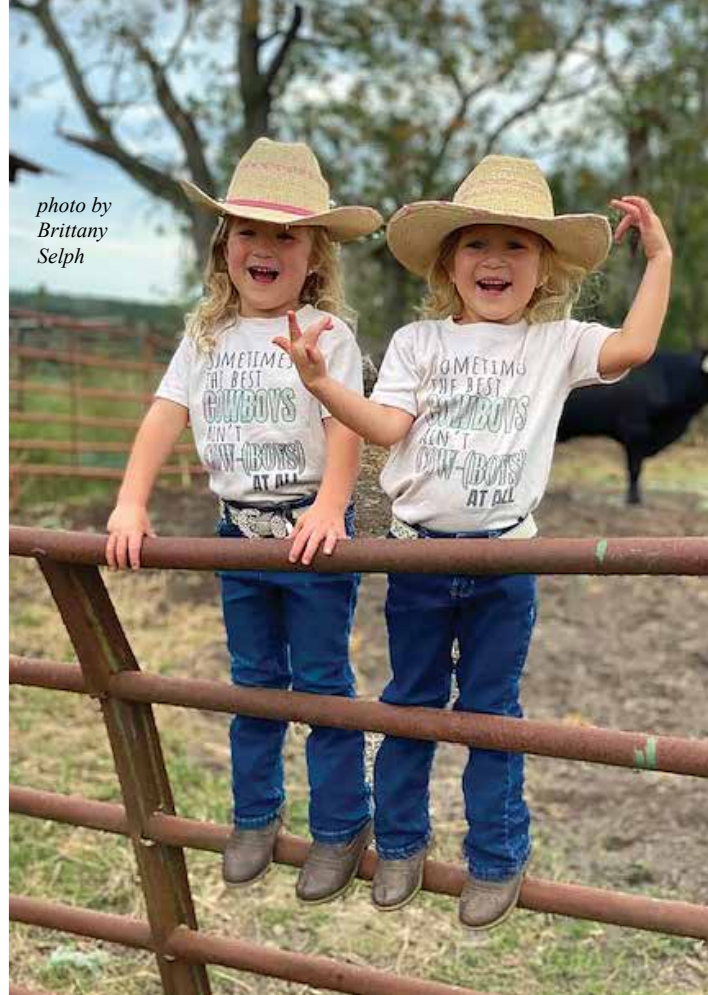


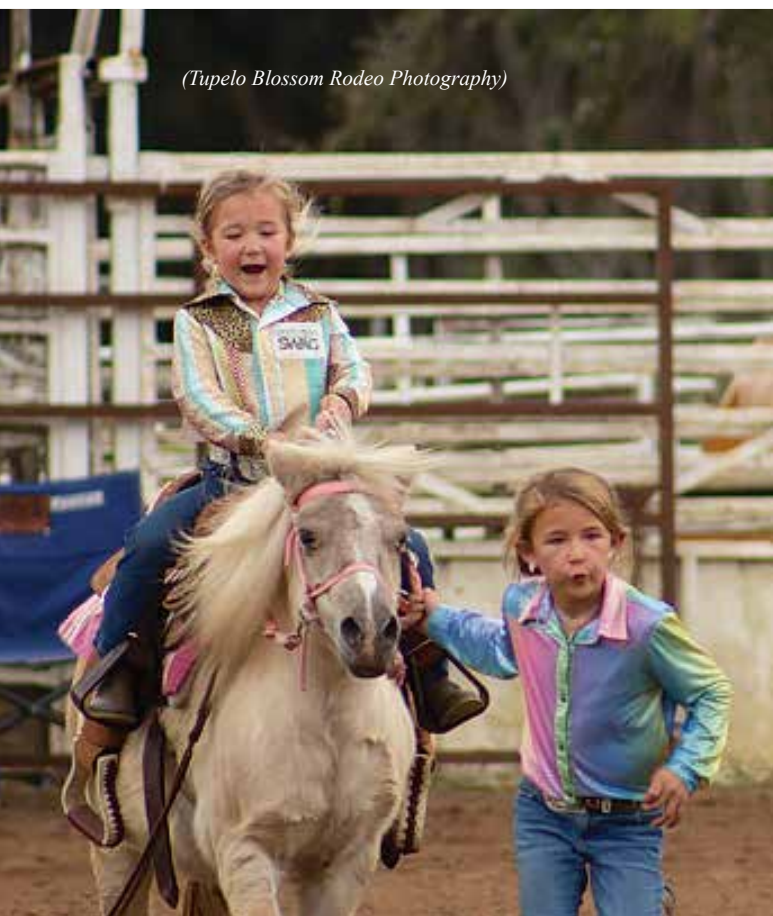
photo by
Brittany
Selph



photo by
Brittany
Selph



photo by Brittany Selph



(Tupelo Blossom Rodeo Photography)



photo by
Brittany
Selph

New, low rates right around the corner.

Here's the deal, North Florida. State Farm® has new, lower auto rates right in your neighborhood. Save more cash with the real deal. Call us today for a quote.

Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there.®



Rob Cathcart, Agent
115 Grand Street NE
Live Oak, FL 32064
Bus: 386-364-7900
www.robcatcart.com



Nate Cruce, Agent
378 E Base Street
Madison, FL 32340
Bus: 850-973-6641
www.natecruce.com



Derek Loadholtz, Agent
1562 South Ohio Avenue
Live Oak, FL 32064
Bus: 386-364-3535
www.derekloadholtz.com



Ina Padgett, Agent
211 E Green Street
Perry, FL 32347
Bus: 850-584-6767
www.inapadgett.com



Jim Tedder, Agent
209 E Hampton Springs Avenue
Perry, FL 32347
Bus: 850-584-7732
www.jimtedderinsurance.com



Tommy Surles Ins Agcy Inc
Tommy Surles, Agent
250 S Jefferson St
Monticello, FL 32344
Bus: 850-997-8282

State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company
Bloomington, IL

2001146



“Oh, The Seeds You Can Sow”



MAYO MOM WRITES AND PUBLISHES HER FIRST CHILDREN’S BOOK

By Susan K. Lamb

Mayo, Fla. – Jessica Lisk, 28, is a beautiful, small town-raised wife, married to her high school sweetheart, Sean, and mother to their three active children, ages 3, 6 and 7. Although she had no experience writing books, particularly children’s books, motherhood and trees inspired her to write her first children’s book, which is now selling rapidly on Amazon and other places online across the country.

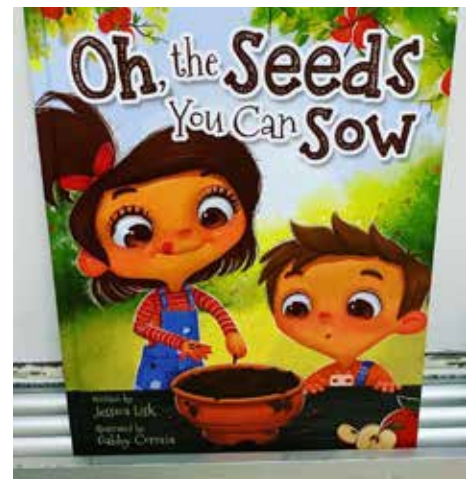
Jessica published her own book as an independent publisher and used a crowd funding campaign to raise the money to publish “Oh, the Seeds You Can Sow.” It’s her first published children’s book. “We ordered 2,000 and have been selling them steadily,” she notes. She attended her first festival in Live Oak, Christmas on the Square, the first weekend in December 2020, where many people told her they already had purchased her book! She was delighted to hear it’s a big hit with children everywhere!

Jessica and Sean, a welder and tree farmer, moved from Mayo to Waynesboro, Ga. for several years. With Lafayette County calling to their hearts, they recently returned to Mayo. “We own a tree farm...Sean grew up on one in Live Oak but in 2008 that changed, and it’s been a dream of his brother and his dad to get back to that,

so now we live on the farm and are so glad to be back home,” Jessica said.

Her idea for the book came from that farm. “I was out there on the farm looking at the cutest little tree and thinking about how much work goes into those little trees; they have to be staked and watered. I related that to children who have to be given resources and water. I really liked the idea of being intentional in molding those little minds, so I put it into a book.” Jessica explains.

What else inspired Jessica, who is also known locally for her beautiful singing voice, to write about this subject and why for children? “I like to be really intentional when I write, to inspire children. I think stories sometimes have deep influences on children of all ages,” she commented. Jessica mentioned there is an old saying which says, “You can count the seeds in an apple, but you can’t count the apples in a seed.” Thinking about that influenced her decision to name the book “Oh, the Seeds You Can Sow.” Jessica comments that seeds of kindness multiply, and you never know how far a seed will go, thus planting seeds of kindness in children pays a high benefit in the future. “I have this funky little girl as my character going about her days planting seeds, and “Pappa” in the story was inspired by my dad! I never dreamed when I got this idea we would be in a pandemic and need acts of kindness like we do today, which



goes along with the book," she comments. "Something cool we've already seen is people buying these books for other people," Jessica laughs.

People are buying copies of the book, and teachers are loving the book for classroom use. "Have you ever noticed that kids are a lot like trees? They start out tiny and fragile, and they require a whole lot of work...but tiny seeds eventually grow to full grown trees," Jessica stresses. Jessica's "From Seeds to Trees Press (her own official publishing company name) is passionate about publishing engaging, high-quality children's books which are meant to "tend tiny trees."

Jessica and Sean's children know the story in the book well as their mom has read it to them. "They love it," she exclaims. A former teacher of 3K and second grade students, Jessica enjoys staying home these days homeschooling her children. "When I was pregnant with my third child, I decided to stay home and homeschool."

Asked if she ever thought about writing as a career, the answer was an astounding "No!" She laughed and said she once had a teacher who asked her to write an article for class, and Jessica failed miserably at it. "As a student I always liked writing...our school in Mayo was really high on that...but I never thought about being an author... I was thinking the other day about that teacher who told me I didn't write well! Now, I'm an author!" she laughs.



Where can you get Jessica Lisk's first children's book, "Oh, the Seeds You Can Sow?" Amazon online (where it earned a #1 New Release Tag), in Mayo, at The Hornet's Nest; in Live Oak, at Victoria's Fashion House, in the newly opened Live Oak Commons Center; and Jessica's personal website at www.fromseedstotreespress.com, where she can autograph books also. The price of the first book is from \$11.99 (paper) or \$17.95 (bound), depending on where and how you purchase it. Jessica says it's also on Kindle and eBook. "It's been a long process! I never thought it would be this hard!" she states. "I'm a visionary but very impatient!"

While it is exciting and filling to know she is a first-time author of a wonderful children's book, Jessica says this is only the beginning. "I do have more titles coming, one is being illustrated right now! People are asking about the second book I just wrote, but I do not have a publication date yet," she remarked. "Stay tuned, it's coming!"

"In mid-December, Jill Duggar Dillard of 19 Kids and Counting's TV show, showed my first book on Instagram (Jill has almost two million people following her on Instagram and Facebook) and said how much she liked it!" Jessica said she was overjoyed, and added she's also received other comments online about this first book. Jessica said she reached out to Jill and sent her a book and the opportunity for her followers to get the book. "Jill said yes!" Jessica said gratefully.



Rock Bottom Seafood & Grill



Now open!

Thomasville, Ga.

Cairo, Ga.

1530 Hwy 93 S

Thursday & Saturday
10:30 a.m. - 9 p.m.

Friday 10:30 a.m. - 10 p.m.

(229) 377-5825

Monticello, Fla.

1403 S. Jefferson St.

Thursday, Friday & Saturday
10:30 a.m. - 9 p.m.

(850) 997-0070

2115 Smith Ave.

Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday
10:30 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Thursday & Saturday
10:30 a.m. - 9 p.m.

Friday 10:30 a.m. - 10 p.m.

(229) 236-5656



**Swann
Insurance**

PROGRESSIVE

Monticello

235 E. Washington St.
Monticello, Fla. 32344
(850) 997-8292

*Serving you with
two locations*

Perry

105½ N. Jefferson St.
Perry, Fla. 32347
(850) 584-5800

JAMES MADISON PREPARATORY HIGH SCHOOL



James Madison Preparatory High School provides a college and career preparatory high school that promotes student ownership of learning through a content-rich curriculum emphasizing science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).

Goal 1: Foster Student Success by studying complex, real-world problems in an integrative and collaborative environment with college instructors, business professionals, and community leaders, students will unleash their potential for success.

Goal 2: Promote Civic Engagement by setting high expectations and teaching our core values, JMPHS will promote good citizenship, develop ethical leaders, and produce graduates with a 21st-century global perspective.

For more information please visit our website at jmphs.org, call us at (850) 253-2173, or stop by our school at 176 NW Crane Ave.

James Madison Preparatory High School is an accredited AdvancEd/SACS 501[c]3 tuition-free public charter school and does not discriminate illegally on the basis of sex, race, religion, national origin, disability, or age as to employment or educational activities.



Megan Schofill:

From lone high school golfer to Auburn standout



By Ramsey Sullivan

Photos courtesy of Megan Schofill

From a lone female golfer at Aucilla Christian Academy to a standout on the Auburn University Women's golf team, Megan Schofill has already exceeded the expectations anyone had for her, and she's not stopping there.

Ever since she can remember, Schofill has played golf with her dad and her golf coach, David Jackson. "I would play once a week with my dad, and I would always go to Coach David Jackson's summer camp, but I wasn't serious about it until eighth grade," said Schofill.

In eighth grade, Schofill started realizing her potential as a golfer and began to play junior golf. She gradually began playing bigger and bigger junior golf tournaments and improving her skills. When she began high school, she was faced with a difficult choice. As a tri-sport athlete at her tiny middle and high school, she had to make the decision to continue spreading her time between playing golf, basketball and softball, or stop and focus solely on golf. In the end, she decided to make golf her only athletic focus.

"I decided that it was the best decision for my future in golf," said Schofill. "Making it the main focus meant giving up other sports that I enjoyed. It was really hard for me and I definitely missed them at times, but I know it was the best decision for me."

This decision to focus on golf proved to be the correct one the further along in high school Schofill went. She was named Big Bend Player of the Year in her sophomore, junior and senior years. Schofill also won the district competition, the regional competition and placed 5th at the state level while playing at Aucilla.

After years of focusing solely on golf, Schofill was offered a scholarship to play collegiate golf at the University of Kentucky, which she accepted. However, soon after accepting this offer, she began to doubt her decision, which led her to decommit. Going into her senior year, she was now looking for a college at which to

play, and there was no lack of colleges calling her. In September of her senior year, Schofill got a call from the college of her dreams, Auburn University.

"I love the coaches, I love the town and I love the team," Schofill said about her new home in Auburn.

After her commitment to Auburn, Schofill continued to make her mark in the golf world by playing for the American Junior Golf Association, and in exclusive tournaments, like the Georgia State Amateur Match Play. She also made it to round 16 in the U.S. Women's Amateur tournament at the Old Waverly Golf Club, in Mississippi.

In 2019, Schofill graduated from Aucilla Christian Academy and began attending Auburn University. In her first year at Auburn, Schofill placed second in a tournament, won a tournament and had several top 10 finishes. She was also named SEC Freshman of the Week, All-SEC First Team and an Academic All-American.

Also in her first year, Schofill was one of only 16 collegiate golfers to be selected to play in Ireland. However, due to COVID-19, the tournament location was changed to Orlando.

In the first few tournaments of her second collegiate year, Schofill placed 16th and first, and helped her team to grab the win over Tennessee with a birdie on hole 17. As of November 2020, Schofill is ranked #17 in all of collegiate women's golf and #22 in the world.

Schofill's future only looks to get brighter as she continues her golf career. Schofill plans to play in the invite-only Augusta National Women's Amateur in April 2021. She was selected to this exclusive tournament as one of only 60 total players, and only 30 American players.

Although Schofill is pursuing a degree in communications at Auburn, look out for her on the golf course in the future as she plans to take her career to the professional level.



“I love the coaches, I love the town and I love the team”

- Megan Schofill



Handle every chore on a tractor that's easy to handle.



B Series 209-24.3 HP Two transmission options



Call today to schedule a demo on the powerfully versatile and easy-to-operate B Series tractor.

- Easily switch out attachments
- Simple maintenance
- Gear or HST transmission
- Easy-to-use controls

Together we do more.

GORDON TRACTOR INC.

Madison

491 SW Range Ave.

850-973-2245

Live Oak

1722 S. Ohio Ave.

386-3621887

www.gordontractor.com

KubotaUSA.com

© Kubota Tractor Corporation, 2020. This material is for descriptive purposes only. Kubota disclaims all representations and warranties, express or implied, or any liability from the use of this material. For complete warranty, disclaimer, safety, incentive offer and product information, consult your local Dealer or go to KubotaUSA.com.

SURGICAL AND MEDICAL CARE OF THE EYES

850-942-3937 (EYES)

CATARACT SURGERY

- State Of The Art, No Shot, No Stitch, No Patch
- Premium Lens Implant
- Wave Front Lasik
- Laser Glaucoma Surgery And Testing
- Comprehensive Medical Eye Care

THOMAS L. LAWRENCE, MD PA
OPHTHALMOLOGIST

3401 Capital Medical Boulevard • Tallahassee, FL 32308
Capital Health Plan • BCBS • Medicare • Most Insurances Accepted



MOSSY OAK[®]

PROPERTIES

Southern Land & Homes

America's Land Specialist

Ben Jones - Broker

145 NW Cantey Ave. • Madison, Fla. 32340

Phone: (850) 973-2200 • Cell: (850) 673-7888 • Fax: (850) 973-2687

www.mossyoakproperties.com benj@mossyoakproperties.com

Each Mossy Oak Properties Office Is Independently Owned & Operated

Rob Hilley's darkest days led him to the light

Mickey Starling

reporter3@greenepublishing.com

Photos courtesy of Rob Hilley

Rob Hilley grew up in Orlando as a strong, independent young man who liked to maintain control of things. Some of that control began to loosen as Hilley became a Christian in the seventh grade, while attending a revival in Huntsville, Ala. However, Hilley is quick to confess, "I continued to pretty much be a control freak."

Hilley moved to Perry in 2012, after being hired at Buckeye Community Federal Credit Union. He soon married his wife, Ashley, in 2015. The young couple had their hearts set on having kids, but two years into their marriage, they were still unable to get pregnant. After hearing a sermon about the blessing of children, Rob and Ashley went to the altar and offered up their desire to have children to the Lord. "At that point, we were willing to adopt if that was what the Lord wanted for us," said Hilley.

Nine months later, Ashley gave birth to their first child, Addison, on Nov. 23, 2016. Hilley was still elated at the arrival of his new daughter when he went to work on the morning of Dec. 13. After arriving at work, everything began to change. Hilley began getting stomach pains, nausea and vomiting. He quickly left work and headed home to recuperate, but his condition only worsened.

Realizing that something may be seriously wrong, Hilley drove himself to Tallahassee Memorial Hospital. "I'm still not sure how I managed to do that," said Hilley. Doctors initially treated him as if he was having a heart attack. Blood work and a Computed Tomography (CT) scan revealed severe necrotizing pancreatitis, which meant Hilley's pancreas was digesting itself. His blood sugar level was dangerously high, hovering at the 400 mark (under 100 is normal). The triglycerides were at an equally alarming 5,000 mg/dl (under 200 is normal). Coupled with all of these health emergencies, Hilley was also going into keto acidosis, meaning his pancreas was not producing insulin.

With his wife at home with a newborn, and all his relatives



living out of town, Hilley was fortunate to have his pastor, Ben Reams, from Midway Baptist Church, to come and sit with him in those early hours and for the many days that lied ahead. A rare moment of humor arose as hospital officials asked Hilley a barrage of questions. Due to the high level of pain that Hilley was enduring, he referred some of the questions to Reams, who happened to be wearing a bright pink t-shirt. Because Reams was so helpful, hospital staff assumed that Hilley and Reams were a couple. "No," said Hilley, "he's my pastor!"

As the hours progressed, Hilley became incoherent and went into full organ failure. Severe pancreatitis has only a 30 percent survival rate. Typically, the body will either jumpstart a recovery or death occurs. Hilley is certain that part of the reason he recovered stems from a decision he made to stop drinking four years before becoming ill. His desire to set a good example for his newly adopted daughter may have saved his own life. Alcohol slows the ability of organs to heal and may have made it impossible in Hilley's case.

Hilley's body added 50 lb of fluid during his first two days in the hospital. During his 11 days in intensive care, Hilley lost the ability to walk or bend his joints. There was little the doctors could do other than insert draining tubes in his nose to help reduce fluid build-up. They also prepared

his wife for the probability that he would not survive.

However, a brief ray of hope entered in December, as Hilley's kidneys began to function again and he was allowed to go home for Christmas. By New Year's Day, he had gotten much worse and proceeded to spend 27 days in the hospital. His pancreas and liver were not healing and he was developing pancreatic cysts that caused his stomach to swell to the point of needing feeding tubes to get nutrition. Even with the feeding tubes, Hilley continued throwing up six to eight times a day. Fluid buildups continued and doctors eventually drained close to two liters of fluids from his lungs by way of drain tubes inserted through his back. Eating solid food was out of



the question for Hilley for five months.

During his lengthy stay in the hospital, Hilley got to know the nursing staff pretty well, and he shared his faith with many of them. The staff became like family to Hilley. "They were very personal in their care for me," Hilley remarked. "They held me, cried with me and prayed with me. I couldn't have asked for better people." The staff also made good use of Hilley's executive skills, treating him much like a consultant and frequently asking him how they could improve things. "I've never been shy about sharing my opinion," said Hilley, with a smile quickly etching across his face.

Along with the great care he received, Hilley had about 40 visitors during his hospital stay. Having only lived in Perry for five years, he was surprised at the outpouring of support that came his way. "Churches from all over town helped us," said Hilley, who credits the generosity of the community with everything from meals to monetary assistance while he was sick. Co-workers were also on hand to help transport kids to practices and other events. Buckeye Community Federal Credit Union CEO Charlton Knowles and Vice President Pam Rigoni-Parker, along with a tremendously supportive board of directors, were especially helpful to Hilley, who never had to worry about losing his job throughout his nearly six-month ordeal.

The pressure on Hilley's wife to keep up with a job, children and caring for him was immense, but her faith actually grew in the midst of it, which included making four round trips from Perry to Tallahassee each day for a month. "She was my rock," said Hilley. At one point, he had been sick to the point of giving up on keeping his family. "I told her this [constantly caring for him] was not fair to her," Hilley said. "Go live your life and let me die. I can't do this anymore. But, she didn't listen."

Hilley was again home, attempting to recover in March. By now, he had lost 100 lb and gotten much weaker and was still dependent on a feeding tube. One night, his pastor and elders from his church came to anoint him with oil and pray over him as the book of James instructs. "They spent 45 minutes praying for me and it was a very special time," Hilley recalls. "They were in tune with God. We were definitely on holy ground."

Some of the fruit of those prayers was evident several weeks later, as Hilley was sick and struggling to take a shower. "I cried out to God in anger and despair," Hilley said. "I just can't do this

anymore. What do You want from me?" The answers came quickly. "God said to me, 'Now you're listening. You're strength (or lack of it) is not the issue. I had to break you to remake you. I had to teach you to rely on Me.'"

Though these probably weren't the words Hilley wanted to hear, he found them to be true. "Being able to do nothing for myself helped me understand the sacrifice of Christ for me and why he asks for everything," remarked Hilley. "We manipulate the Gospel so that we aren't offended, but that just offends Him more." Hilley had professed to be a Christian for many years but he admits spending little time in worship or spreading the Gospel. "I was embarrassed that I had only helped three people come to know the Lord in all those years," Hilley expressed regretfully.

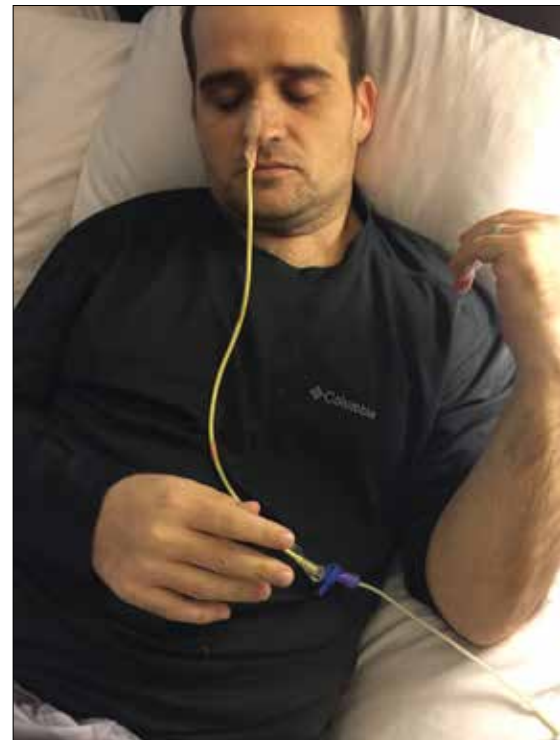
Four weeks after his desperate conversation with the Lord, Hilley woke up coughing, causing his feeding tube to come out. Inserting a feeding tube is a painful experience and Hilley dreaded calling his doctor. Surprisingly, the doctor suggested giving it a week before reinserting the tube so that he could see how Hilley did without it. "God must have thought it was time for it to come out," said Hilley, who steadily improved from that moment.

What Hilley experienced is truly a miracle. He soon went back to work after missing seven months of employment. He has had minimal long-term effects, including no dead tissue in his pancreas, no damage to his kidneys or liver, and no diabetes. Hilley did have his gall bladder removed and he is monitored regularly, but he continues to be doing fine.

Hilley has taken his second chance at life seriously. "Every day is a gift. It's up to you to unwrap it," said Hilley. "I've changed a lot. I help people as often as I can, but I like to do it secretly. Plus, I used to joke that I didn't have tear ducts. Now, I cry about everything. We have conversations with people everyday that give us an opportunity to expose people to the Gospel. If God gives you a second chance, use it to share Jesus in your conversations."

Hilley's present walk with the Lord is not the only thing that has been changed since his sickness. His view of eternity is far more personal. "I love the old hymns, but don't let me hear about living in a little cabin in the corner of glory," said Hilley. "That's not the kind of faith you have. I don't want to be insignificant in life. That's a terrible way to go about your faith. I want to worship Him first. Being a good daddy, husband and friend will all flow from that. He takes care of the rest. It's good to be able to say 'it is well with my soul.'"

Now blessed with good health and four lively children, Rob Hilley is proof that the best sermon one can preach will come from their life, not their tongue. His story continues to be one of inexhaustible hope and faithfulness and a clear sign that points to the only things that matter.





February is American Heart Month

fuel your heart
Eat a healthy diet.

move your heart
Be physically active every day.

love your heart
Quit tobacco.

**Share how you power your heart
and reduce your risk for heart disease
and stroke.**



#AmericanHeartMonth

flhealth.gov/heart

SMALL BUSINESSES ARE THE HEART OF AMERICA

By: Emerald Greene Parsons

Publisher

Small businesses are the heart of America and they are the core of a stable economy. They fuel local economies, they foster pride in a town and let's be honest, small businesses are just more fun and memorable than national chains.

It is in our best interest to support our small business network. Spending our money at local businesses supports the people we see every day. By investing in small businesses, we are investing in the livelihood of our neighbors and our towns. We are creating room for higher employment and putting money directly into our area's economy.

Small businesses act as the glue that holds our communities together. They fund the local tax base, finance local nonprofits and



charitable organizations and create good jobs that boost the overall marketplace. By backing our locally-owned small businesses, we support the hundreds of jobs they create and the families they sustain.

During the last year, our small hometown businesses have faced profound challenges. Now, more than ever, is the time to support your friends, family and neighbors in small business. Every dollar you spend, at a locally owned business, generates two to four times more economic benefit - measured in income, wealth, jobs, and tax revenue - than a dollar spent at a globally owned business.

With great pride, love, and adoration, The Front Porch Magazine would like to spotlight six local businesses in our corner of the world. Our goal is to share with our readers the array of fantastic hometown folks who own and operate these incredible businesses.



ARISE COFFEE BAR AND ROASTER

Creating a local coffee demand



By Susan K. Lamb

Riverbend News

Arise Coffee Bar and Roaster, on US 129, north of Live Oak and the West 11th Street Arise Coffee are the talk of the town these days in Live Oak and beyond. The very first coffee bar in the city last year has rocked the local coffee market and brought a huge following to what are now two successful Arise sites. This thriving new business has expanded to have lattes, smoothies, frappes and a menu full of delicious goodies to go with your coffee or other drinks at an affordable price.

Arise Coffee Bar and Roaster, north of town, just opened and is already famous for its great service, fantastic food, drinks and friendly staff who are always ready to help you with yummy decisions at their business. This is the second location for Arise and provides walk-in service with seating inside to make your coffee break longer while you visit with friends or you may order online for quicker service and outside pickup service. The new store is at 1411 Ohio Ave. North, in Live Oak Commons Center, where Live Oak's new post office is now open for business.

The first site on 11th Street is a drive-thru at 598 11th St SW, inside Howland's Express, with a drive-thru out back. This business was the first of its kind in Live Oak, and folks flocked to it throughout the day as the menu enlarged to satisfy customers' wishes. Soon, thru online media such as Facebook and satisfied

coffee lovers, the word was out and Arise was flourishing.

"We are a coffee bar with two locations in Live Oak," owner and now coffee guru as well as mission-minded Will Howland explains. "We provide fresh roasted coffee at a fair price, and we see coffee as a conduit for missions!" Missions? Yep, this bright young man, married and the father of three, is mission-minded, so do not ask if you do not want to hear all the reasons why. "We plan on trying to go to Panama and start working with farmers in Panama so we can work directly with them and have a relationship with the farmers to help Panama pay their farmers a fair wage, which will actually give the missionaries a leg up in sharing the gospel of Christ with those individuals in those communities," this mission minded owner of Arise points out.

Will said Arise Coffee began because of his whim for a cup of hot coffee at work. "After two years on the mission field and getting married, I returned home and started back to work at Howlands and saw the lack of coffee in town! My father graciously allowed me to open the coffee bar at Howland's Express. I did it out of needing to get a cup of fresh coffee while I worked at the store." Amazing that the results of that need for a cup of hot coffee has led Will down a totally different road in life, for which he is grateful to the Lord.

Serving coffee is not all these two locations do. Coffee lovers from all over town gather at the new site to sit and share stories and meet with friends while trying to get a grip on life during these



trying pandemic times. Yes, pick-up is available, but some folks just need time to relax, sit down in a nice atmosphere, and chat with another human!

Arise was named Best in the City Coffee House by Restaurant Guru.com online. Arise's overall score on Google is 4.8. Not bad for a new business in a rural North Florida town. As Krissy Johns put it on Facebook, "Hands down the best!!!! And they know my order before they even take my order!!!! Love these people and this place!!!! Nancy Daniels said on Facebook "Coffee and muffins awesome! Love the concept how Arise was founded!" And the praise goes on and on. More importantly, both businesses are booming, and coffee lovers are ecstatic.

After a major success in his first Arise Coffee site inside Howland's Express, Will decided that it was time to expand. His is one of the first businesses to open at the new Live Oak Commons Center..

Here are just some of the many items Arise has on its menu - espresso, latte, americano, iced coffee, cold coffee, iced latte, almond coffee, white mocha, chocolate, smoothies, cinnamon dolce latte, ice vanilla latte, vanilla latte, white chocolate mocha, pina colada, fruit smoothies, chai latte, frappes, mochaccino, tea, vanilla iced coffee and more! "We are doing more breakfast items at the Commons site, such as breakfast pockets with egg, cheese, sausage, bacon," Will states. "We also want to start producing more

healthy items as there are not a lot of healthy items available, so we recently brought in a super food like acai bowls. Come try this!"

You may purchase Arise fresh roasted coffee to take home so you can make your own coffee at home. Cheek & Scott Pharmacy, Live Oak and Lake City; Fifth Generation Farms, Lake City and Busy Bee, on US 129 at I-10 in Live Oak, all have Arises' roasted coffee available for sale in their businesses.

You may call them at 386-361-8062 (11th Street) or text an order to 386-243-5038 (US 129 north) or go to their Facebook site at <http://www.facebook.com/arise386> to order. The 11th Street site is open from 6 a.m. – 9 p.m. six days a week; Commons site is open from 6:30 – 9 p.m., both closing on Sundays in the tradition of Will's grandfather, Billy Howland, who never opened his own business on Sundays, a tradition passed down thru the family. Credit cards accepted, curbside delivery and takeaway provided.

Will and his wife Haleigh, their three children, daughter Emma, 4; son River, 3, and youngest daughter Harvest, who turned one in December 2020, are the owners behind this coffee success story. "Haleigh is my anchor, she helps me, homeschools our children and makes all of our food at our new location," said Will, who leads this five-member family, oversees both coffee sites, works to help others and helps spread the Lord's gospel.

An Artist's Pallet

Story by Danny Federico

Photos by Marie Goss

Marie Goss was born in May of 1956 in Branford, Fla., where she attended and graduated from Branford High School in 1974. She then attended Lake City Community College, studying in their Associate of Science Degree in Nursing (ASN) program. In 1977, she became a Registered Nurse. Goss also attended Valdosta State College (VSC) and the University of Alabama at Birmingham, where she studied to become a Nurse Practitioner (NP). She became a NP in Dec. 1979 and started her career at South Georgia Medical Center in Valdosta, Ga., where she worked in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (ICU). During most of her healthcare career, she worked more than 55 hours a week, many weeks ending up being between 65 and 70 hours.

In 1988, Goss moved back to Branford as a single mom and worked in Home Care Administration until 1995, when she was offered a position at North Florida Regional Medical Center in Gainesville, Fla. While there, Goss worked in administration, with her last position being Vice President of Operations and Quality.

She returned to Home Care for her last six years of working, where she was the Area Director from Live Oak to The Villages, including Jacksonville, Orange Park, Daytona and DeLand. Goss retired from healthcare in July of 2018.

Now, she is known around the Branford area for a talent even she didn't know she had. "In October of 2018, I painted a wood



Goss primarily works with acrylics when painting on canvas and wooden pallets.

pallet with pumpkins and sunflowers, wrote "Happy Fall Y'all," put it in my front yard and posted a picture of it on Facebook," Goss said. "Several friends loved it and a few asked if I would paint them one. That was the beginning of my fun business of painting and crafting!"

She painted six Fall pallets, then painted a Christmas pallet. "Again, folks wanted me to paint for them. I couldn't believe it!" Goss said. So, she decided to file for a limited liability company (LLC) and made a business Facebook page called "MesG Crafts."

"I love painting," Goss

said. "I love spending time painting on wood and knowing that something I've created is going home with friends and folks to help them decorate their yards and homes."

Her painted pallets are the most popular items she sells, but sometimes her husband, Jeff Goss, takes the pallets apart and rebuilds them, making a solid pallet for her to paint on. Recently, though, she's been focusing on painting "porch lean boards." These are planks of wood that are one inch thick, 10 inches wide and six feet long. Her most popular designs for these, especially



Marie Goss, a Branford artist, paints on many different mediums, but wooden pallets are her favorite to work with.

around the holidays, are her pumpkin topiaries, nutcrackers and a buffalo plaid background with "Merry Christmas" written over the top. "I've also got a big order right now of red trucks on canvases, which is fun!" Goss said.

Goss also works with acrylics, primarily on wood and canvas. Over the past year, she has experimented with pour painting,



Over the past year, Goss has painted many American flags on sheets of old tin.

painting and epoxying tumblers, as well as painting many American flags on wood and old tin. Her business tagline is "All on board for Him," crediting her talent as a gift from God. "I never dreamed I would be painting and selling my art when I retired from healthcare," Goss said. She adds that she didn't even know she could paint, having done a bit of painting in Art class in high school, but nothing since then. "The Lord knew I'd be crazy if I just retired, so He threw the doors open for me to do what I dearly love and have so much fun doing it," Goss said.

She adds that, thanks to her fourth grade teacher, Bertha Fletcher, she also has a passion for crocheting and knitting, particularly afghans. Goss says that the isolation brought about by the coronavirus pandemic has given her the opportunity to stay home, paint and do crafts while staying safe.

"I enjoy painting," Goss said. "It's fun, relaxing and I love people loving my work." Anyone who is interested in commissioning her work can do so by contacting her through her Facebook page "MesG Crafts."



Goss's painted pallets are the most popular things she sells.



Her most popular designs for her "porch lean boards," especially around the holidays, are her pumpkin topiaries, nutcrackers and a buffalo plaid background with "Merry Christmas" written over the top



It all started with Goss's "Happy Fall Y'all" pallets, and they continue to be one of her best sellers.



Debbie Glover-Hall (center) gets plenty of help from her son Will (left) and husband Tommy (right) when it comes to running her boutique gift shop in Perry, Fla.

DEBBIE GLOVER-HALL

Debbie's Jewels Gift Boutique

Story and photos by Rick Patrick

Perry, Fla. native, Debbie Glover-Hall, seems to have been born for retail. As cliché as that may sound, there is more than a little bit of truth in that statement. Her parents owned and operated a paint store when she was born and she spent many hours next to her mom at the cash register. "From the time I was a baby, I've heard the ring of a cash register," said Glover-Hall with a laugh.

After graduating as a member of the Class of 1978 at Taylor County High School, Glover-Hall went to college at Tallahassee Community College and later at North Florida Junior College, in Madison. However, Glover-Hall's parents knew that retail was in the young lady's blood and they bought a dress boutique, Dansby's Fashions, for their daughter. That dress shop later became Mi-Deb's Fashions. At the same time, Glover-Hall began working at several area banks, further developing her business experience. Glover-Hall also began selling weight-loss products and jewelry out of the trunk of her car and her home.

In time, Glover-Hall was able to find a location for her retail business. At the time, her business was merely a part-time venture. But as the business grew, it began to become apparent that a "leap of faith" would soon be in order. "I remember the day I came to that realization," recalls Glover-Hall. "Tommy [her husband] and I were going down the road and I was looking at the sales figures and tears just started streaming down my face. I said to Tommy, 'I have to quit my job and do this full-time. That's where I believe God wants me.'" Glover-Hall resigned from her position working in the school health field and opened Debbie's Jewels Gift Boutique on a full-time basis. For over 20 years, the store has been a fixture in downtown Perry. "Almost every day, I turn on the lights and say, 'Lord, thank you so much,'" says Glover-Hall.

Much of Glover-Hall's success can be chalked up to her high level of customer service. Debbie possesses an almost encyclopaedic mind for knowing her customers and the "perfect gift" item for them. "Debbie really makes the effort to get to know her customers," said Linda Wiles, a long-time customer. "Because of that, she knows just what each customer likes and what their tastes are. It's so easy to just call her up and she will pick out just the right thing and have it ready for you when you come into the store, or she'll deliver it to you. Plus, she's such a genuinely nice person." That level of customer service is nothing new for Glover-Hall. She said when her parents had the paint store, they kept a record of what each customer liked and had purchased. She has carried that same personalized level of service to her gift store.

In Debbie's Jewelry and Gifts, one can find a variety of gift ideas, from jewelry and collectables, to bags and home décor. Just a few of the brands found in Debbie's include: Vera Bradley, Pandora, Brighton, Thymes Candles, Big Green Egg grills, BOGG bags, Simply Southern and much more. "We wanted to have a big city look, but keep humble, hometown roots," added Glover-Hall.

That hometown attitude is very evident with Glover-Hall. To her, the customers who frequent her store aren't just customers. They have become close friends and almost like family. It was especially challenging for Glover-Hall when the store was forced to close during the virus. "It wasn't that I was just missing customers, these were my friends and I really wanted to know how they were doing," said Glover-Hall.

Glover-Hall is married to Tommy Hall, from Greenville, Fla. Her son, Will, also helps work in the store. Debbie's Jewels and Gifts is located at 134 S. Jefferson St., in Perry, Fla. The store can be reached at (850) 223-1360, or by email at debbiesjewels2000@yahoo.com.



Debbie Glover-Hall (center) has a talent for personal gifts.



J&J GAS SERVICE

A generational business serving nine counties with propane gas services



Family owned and operated

By Susan K. Lamb

Riverbend News

After 46 years in the propane gas business in Mayo, the Hewett family is still adding new customers and serving grateful Lafayette County customers as well as those in the surrounding eight counties.

Brandon Hewett, 36, is the owner/manager and has worked in the family business since 2002. Brandon says the 'family' aspect of the business is what led him to work at J&J Gas Service.

"J&J Gas Service is a local family owned and operated business in Mayo," Brandon said with great pride. "We have proudly served our neighbors here and in nearby towns and cities with propane gas services and products for nearly 50 years. J&J Gas takes pride in providing excellent customer service and offering consistent and competitive prices on propane for your home, business and farming needs.

"We've been in business since 1974. It was started by my

father, John Hewett, and Joe Walker," Brandon states. "Papa Joe was the manager of Doxel Gas Company, and my dad was one of the employees working for Joe." After much thought and guidance from other independent dealers, they decided to form a partnership and started J&J Gas Service. "Papa Joe continued to work at the office, answering the phone, filling cylinders and playing solitaire until 2010," Brandon stated.

Joe Walker unfortunately passed away recently, a sad time for his and the Hewett families. Brandon's dad, John, is currently enjoying his free time while exploring different business ventures. "Dad took a back seat about 20 years ago when we started building Oakridge Assisted Living Facility." Chuck Hewett, Brandon's cousin, ran the business for a while. "Chuck is now Lafayette County Tax Collector, going on his fifth year in office," Brandon said. "I've been manager for the last 12 years, and Jeremy has been our primary delivery driver since then." Jeremy West, 41, another one of Brandon's cousins, has worked for the company since he was



15 years old. "Jeremy and I have always been close and worked together. We started mowing yards, painting tanks and all the jobs that the others didn't want to do. When Jeremy turned 21, he decided to get in the delivery truck, and I chose the service truck. My wife Brittany works in the office and our 13-year-old son, Kagan, helps us during the summer break." The Hewetts also have a daughter, Kamdyn, 11, who surely will be part of this family-owned business soon.

"Our business has really expanded in the last couple of years, thanks to our hard-working employees and marketing team," Brandon said. "We have really seen an increase in business opportunities when we expanded our coverage area. We try to separate ourselves from the larger, corporate companies, by focusing on our customer service," he added. We have also seen a large increase in the use of propane operated generators, which requires propane gas to operate during utility outages," Brandon points out.

As a result of the many changes over the 20 years in his propane business, Brandon now has six full-time and four part-time employees. "All our employees have longevity here, and we appreciate each one of them," Brandon says proudly. "The business increases have led to several new part-time employees on the payroll recently and five trucks on the highways. Those five include two service/installation trucks and three propane delivery trucks," he said.

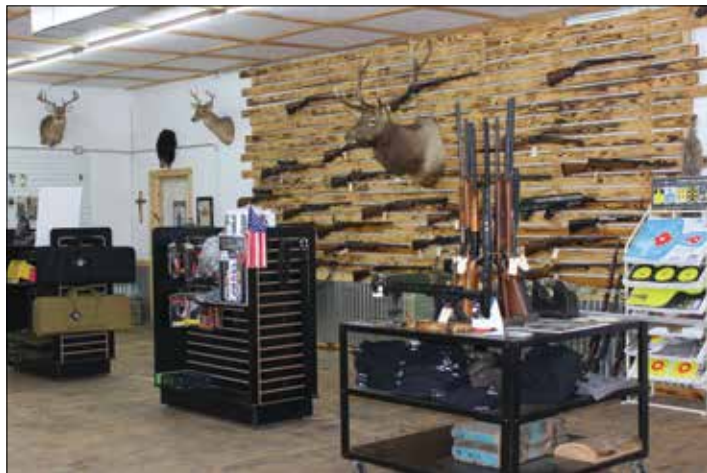
"We have recently moved to our new office at 185 East Main Street, Mayo, Fla., but you may call us at 386-294-1801," Brandon commented. You can check out this thriving business at www.jjgasservice.com, or find them at J&J Gas Service (jjgasservice) on Facebook.

Brandon always welcomes new customers and looks forward to many new customers in the coming years. He and his family are dedicated to serving the North Florida communities with what he believes is the best propane company anywhere.



ROBINSON GUNWORKS

*Mike and Jess Robinson have
business in their blood*



By Merry Ann Frisby

The owners of Robinson Gunworks in Monticello got the call early.

Mike says “I always wanted the good boots and clothes, so I worked for them.” When he was eleven years old, he had his own lawn service, making \$80 a day and bought the boots he wanted. “At seventeen I started a business buffing and restoring old boats. “

He and his wife Jess own Robinson Gunworks which meets the needs of area gun owners in four ways; the indoor shooting range, retail sales, classes and repair and refinishing.

The range is a half million dollar indoor shooting range. It has sound abatement and air purification. There is also an adjacent lounge so shooters can sit, grab a snack, and relax. The business has four staff master trainers, including training for ladies. Jess Robinson says that there is growing interest in ladies shooting and that part of the business has grown fifty percent. Jess, who teaches the women’s classes, says women are easier to teach than men. Many women have no experience with firearms and are excited to learn from scratch. Women are getting comfortable with guns.

Mike grew up in a small town Dentrail, Colo., but subsequently moved to a larger community in Florida. He says “As a youngster, I got arrested riding my dirt bike on my own front lawn.” He longed to return to the small town atmosphere. He began looking for a

place to build a business and raise his family.

Monticello is in a perfect circle. Major roads traverse Jefferson County and make transportation to the shop easy. Monticello also has inexpensive pricing, and the people are friendly.

“I have a specialty skill, people find us.” Robinsons draws customers from all over South Georgia and North Florida. Jess says “the business is growing by leaps and bounds. We are happy with this business. “

The gun shop has been affected by the Covid epidemic. The gun classes are smaller and socially distanced. Ammunition is scarce and Jess and Mike have to search for ammunition and pay more dearly for it as well.

However the health scare has not stopped customers from visiting the shop. Mike says “The gun shop is the male version of a hair salon. Everyone comes in and talks, sometimes showing family pictures. I feel like I am part of everyone’s family.”

Robinsons Gunworks
 705 S. Water St.
 Monticello, FL 32344
 Facebook: f/robingsongunworks
 850-556-9698
 Robingsongunworks@gmail.com

SUNSATIONS

is a special place



**Story and Photography by
Mickey Starling**
Staff Writer

Cathy Jo Foster had owned a tanning and nail boutique in Jasper for several years, drawing the attention of local customers with her colorful wreaths that adorned her front door. Soon, customers began telling Foster that she should sell flowers because of her obvious talent. When one of the

town's florist shops closed, Foster began praying about opening a flower and gift shop.

Foster already owned a building that was conveniently located on Hatley Street, which runs through the center of Jasper. However, the roof was in need of a costly replacement, which made Foster nervous about taking on the venture. At this point, Foster turned to prayer, asking God to make it clear to her the path she should take.

Soon, a friend told Foster that she should apply for a grant to cover the cost of the repair. "I had never applied for a grant and I didn't think I would get it," said Foster. When the funding was approved, Foster knew that God had delivered an answer to her prayers, and SunSations was becoming a reality. The popular shop has now been in business for over 15 years.

Fortunately, accompanying her talent was the wise tutelage of her grandmother,



Cathy Jo Foster has owned and operated SunSations, in Jasper, for over 15 years.



who was a florist. "Much of what I've learned was gained from her," said Foster, who sells much more than flowers. For the Christmas season, Foster had her shop so beautifully adorned that it resembled the set of a Hallmark movie. SunSations regularly features a wide variety of specialty items and crafts from local vendors, including pillows, hand towels, ornaments, t-shirts, soaps and lotions. Foster's husband is also famous for his homemade cane syrup,

which frequently sells out during the winter months. Another hot item at SunSations is gourmet soup mixes, which Foster says are hard to keep on the shelf. On special occasions, SunSations is the place to find gourmet cookies and chocolate-dipped strawberries and balloons. They have the perfect flowers and gifts for parties, weddings and special occasions, and they provide flower arrangements for funerals.

Although running a small business can

be very tiring, Foster loves giving back to the community. "Jasper is a great town, with a huge support system for each other," said Foster. "People love my decorations, and the candy canes especially excite and attract people around Christmas."

SunSations has a little bit of everything and some things you wouldn't expect. Visit them at 110 Hatley St., in Jasper, or give them a call at (386) 792-3538.



KIRK REAMS

Jefferson County Clerk of Court & CFO

Clerk of Circuit Court/ Clerk of County Court/ County Auditor/ County Recorder



1 Courthouse Circle • Monticello, FL 32344
(850) 342-0218 ext 232
Fax (850) 342-0222
kreams@jeffersonclerk.com



I have a passion for helping others, and becoming a nurse is one of the best ways to do that.

Mario Coronado, NFC Student
A.S. in Registered Nursing



NFC NORTH FLORIDA COLLEGE

NFC.EDU

Bachelor of Science

- Bachelor of Science in Nursing
- Online ADN-RN to BSN Bridge Program

Associate in Arts*

Florida's Statewide "2+2" Articulation Agreement (State Board Rule 6A-10.024) guarantees NFC A.A. graduates admission to one of the State University System of Florida's 12 universities. May not include limited access programs.

Associate in Science

- A.S. Accounting Technology*
- A.S. Business Administration*
- A.S. Criminal Justice Technology*
- A.S. Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
- A.S. Engineering Technology
- A.S. Registered Nursing (RN)

* OFFERED ONLINE

Certificate Programs

- Accounting Technology***
- Accounting Technology Management
 - Accounting Technology Operations
 - Accounting Technology Specialist

Advanced Manufacturing and Production Technology

- Business Administration***
- Business Operations
 - Human Resources Administrator

Commercial Vehicle Driving

- CDL-Class A Training

Criminal Justice Technology*

Early Childhood Education*

- Child Care Center Operations
- Early Childhood Professional (ECPC)
- Florida Child Care Professional (FCCPC)

Emergency Medical Services

- Emergency Medical Technician
- Paramedic

Engineering Technology

- Engineering Technology Support
- Lean Manufacturing
- Pneumatics, Hydraulics & Motors for Manufacturing

Medical Coder/Biller*

Public Safety Academy

- FL CMS Correctional Basic Recruit
- FL Law Enforcement Academy

Great stories start here.

Degrees | Career Training | Success

NFC is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award associate and baccalaureate degrees. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia, 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about NFC's accreditation. www.sacscoc.org • NFC is dedicated to the concept of equal opportunity and access to all programs.

J+J STRONG



J+J STRONG provides farm fuel delivery and construction site delivery in Madison & surrounding counties. We provide freight services in a 200-mile radius.

Newly opened self-service CardLock Gas Station is located at 3955 SW SR 14, Madison, Fla.

and is OPEN: 24/7

Office Located: 1130 US Hwy 90 E, Madison, Fla.

Phone: (850) 973-1431

Fax: (850) 290-7443

www.jj-strong-fuel.com

