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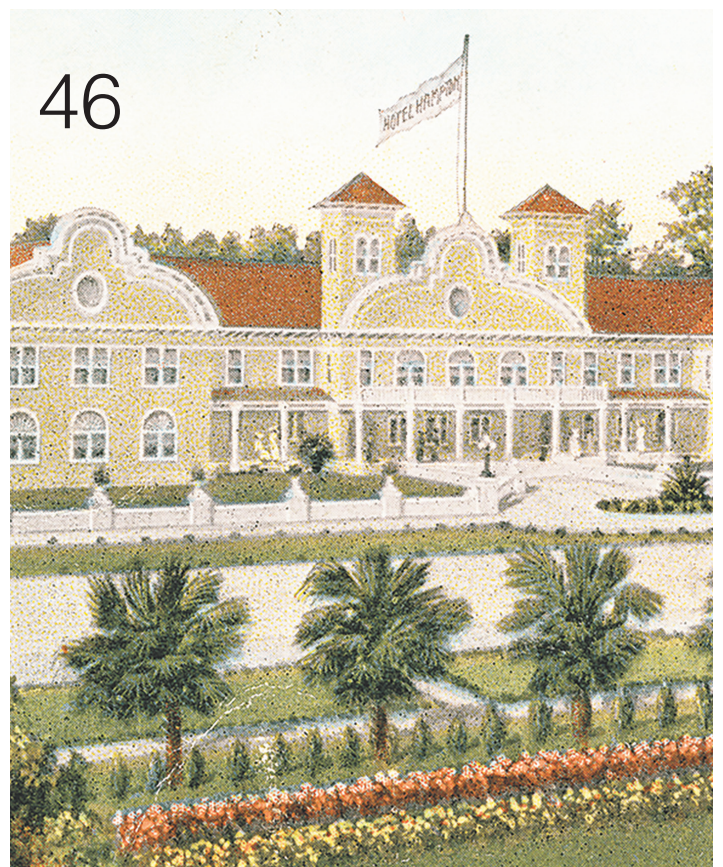
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Emerald Greene Parsons was born and raised in Madison County and grew up in the newspaper business. As a child, she was taught every capacity of the newspaper business, from making prints in the darkroom to typesetting, selling advertising and running the press. She is now the owner of Greene Publishing, Inc. and ECB Publishing, Inc. and, together, the two companies publish the Madison County Carrier, Madison Enterprise-Recorder, Monticello News and Jefferson County Journal. All four newspapers are Florida Press Association award winning newspapers and Emerald, herself, has won numerous awards for her personal editorial column and photography.



Savannah Reams is the Editor at Greene Publishing, Inc. and hails from the small town of Greenville, Fla. She attended Valdosta State University in South Georgia, where she obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in English Literature and wrote for the university's literary journal, The Odradek. Reams is a 2018-19 Florida Press Association award winner in Agricultural and Environmental Reporting, Investigative Reporting and Breaking News Story. She loves kayaking, collecting vintage vinyl records and escaping to Walt Disney World when time permits.



Rick Patrick has deep family roots in the North Florida area. He was raised in Perry, Fla. and graduated from Taylor County High School. He studied communications as an undergraduate at Florida State University and holds a BFA in Theatre Arts from Valdosta State University. Rick traveled for one year with the internationally acclaimed music group "Up With People." His anticipated weekly columns have won awards from the Florida Press Association and are a favorite among our readers. He still enjoys participating in theatre productions and is currently working on producing a one-man show based on the writings of Mark Twain.



Cheltsie Holbrook grew up in Madison County where she obtained her Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Administration while minoring in Human Resources. Her passion for the news media outlet developed when she was a little girl while working at her family's newspaper business. After 26 years of learning the ins and outs of the business, she now sits as the General Manager.



Shane Mathews is Colorado-born and South Florida-raised. Growing up, he was always into the arts. His interest developed into a successful career as an award-winning oil painter, photographer, graphic designer and engineer. Shane is currently the lead designer at Greene Publishing, Inc. He also owns and operates a photography studio and an engineering business. When he's not working, he enjoys spending time with his four children and wife of 13 years.





John Willoughby, born and raised in Perry, Fla., has been a reporter with Greene Publishing Inc. since 2017. Before his present tenure began, he worked as a freelance writer in Nashville, Tenn., primarily within the music industry. John is a Florida Press Association award-winning journalist in Best Headline and Breaking News Story. He enjoys a good challenge and delights in photography. When he isn't writing, he's either watching a good race or participating in activities as a Marzuq Shriner of Perry, where he is a member of the Board of Directors.



Kate Frizzell is a freelance artist living in North Florida and working as a graphic designer at ECB Publishing, Inc., in Monticello. Time off the clock is spent writing and drawing comics, taking care of animals and renovating a 40-year-old Airstream trailer.



Justice Barrington is the advertising specialist for ECB Publishing, Inc., a position she has filled since August of 2018. Justice is a born-and-raised North Floridian, having lived throughout the Big Bend area for the majority of her adolescent and adult life. For three years, Justice coached the Jefferson Tigers' softball team, serving as the hometown team's assistant coach. Currently, Justice resides in Tallahassee, where she balances her work life while also being a full-time mother and auntie. In her spare time, Justice supports the culture of local arts through open mic poetry nights at Tallahassee venues.



Dona Gilbert, born and raised in Dublin, Ga., is a wife and mother of four amazing kids. Dona studied Accounting at Georgia Southwestern State University in Americus, Ga. Today, Gilbert is a graphic designer at Greene Publishing, Inc. When she's not working, she bakes and designs cakes.



Olivia Vann, advertising specialist at Greene Publishing, Inc., is a Madison county native. She enjoys spending time with her fiancé, Dylan, and little boy, Emory. Olivia loves the outdoors. You can find her riding the family buggy, boating on the river or laying out in the pool soaking up the Florida sun.



Mickey Starling is a Madison native and has been a reporter for Greene Publishing, Inc. since 2017. Mickey is a Florida Press Association award winner for Feature Profile Story and has enjoyed writing since his days as editor of his high school and college newspapers. Mickey loves using humor to bring his stories to life and to pass on valuable life lessons. Before returning to journalism, Mickey spent over 20 years as a youth pastor.



Jeanette Dunn is a native of San Francisco, Calif. The daughter of Angelo Roccasalva, a Sicilian immigrant who arrived on Ellis Island in 1939, Dunn was raised to be resilient. This same resiliency has been her driving force. In fact, she unabashedly began a new career at the age of 62, when she joined the Greene Publishing, Inc. team 12 years ago as an advertising specialist. Jeanette has one daughter, Kim Spear, of Alexandria, Va. She loves spending time with family, friends and colleagues; and enjoys a good book regularly. Jeanette likes the small town environment of Madison, where the people remind her of a Sicilian village: community-minded, patriotic and everybody knows your name.



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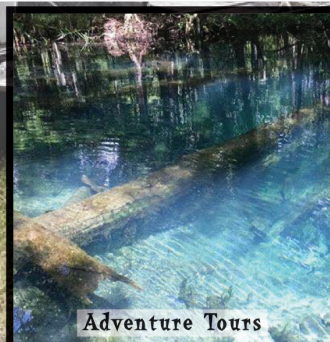


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from the publisher

Our maiden voyage



Welcome to Volume 1, Issue 1 of The Front Porch ... where the tea is sweet and the talks are long.

One of the best things about growing up in the newspaper business has been giving back to the community and keeping all the local citizens informed of what's happening in their corner of the world. It is with this love, desire and passion, that

Greene Publishing, Inc. has embarked on a new adventure.

The Front Porch magazine makes its debut with this 2019 Summer Edition, featuring stories and spotlights about your neighbors in North Florida and South Georgia. We mail the magazines to our newspaper subscribers within the same area, and also distribute them to family-friendly businesses and other high-traffic areas for the reading pleasure of patrons.

We, the staff at Greene Publishing, Inc., have worked

for over a year on the concept of The Front Porch and are happy to say we will be mailing and delivering a new issue each quarter. It is our intent to provide all our neighbors with insight on not only what is happening in their small community, but in their neighboring communities as well.

In this first issue, you will learn about the North Florida Paranormal Investigators, summer fun in Madison County, the history of Taylor County's Hampton Springs, beekeeping in Jefferson County, a new event venue that is coming to Suwannee County and much, much more. Each quarter, The Front Porch will bring you stories about agriculture, business, health, history, travel, arts and entertainment.

Great magazines have personalities, just like old friends. So, we invite you, our friends, to come up on our front porch, sip on some sweet tea and sit a spell. We would love to share our stories with you!

Emerald Greene Parsons
Publisher



from the editor

Home



When I graduated high school, I decided it was time to escape. I had grown up on the outskirts of the tiny town of Greenville—a small city in North Florida which sits between two caution lights. In college, I began seeking out internships far away from home. Upon graduation, my plan was to pack up and head out. I stayed away from home as much as

possible, going so far as to study abroad the summer of my senior year. I traveled throughout Spain and Portugal, staying in Madrid, Barcelona, Lisbon and communities large and small along the way. It was during an adventure to Spain's southern territory of Andalusia that I had a realization.

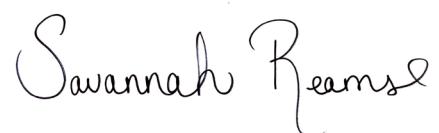
As we journeyed through the Sierra Nevada mountains, we came upon a small town—not much larger than the one I called home. We stopped at a local cafe and I watched a group of old men sitting around a table playing a card game. Our tour guide informed me that the men came to that cafe every day at the same time. They would eat, drink, play games and swap stories of times gone by. As we traveled further, a local woman welcomed us into her home. She cooked us a large meal and, to this day, it is remembered as one of the best meals I enjoyed while overseas. She was kind, warm and welcoming and she very much reminded me of my mama, aunts and family back home. In fact, I realized that

out of all the places I had visited while in Spain—the huge cities, breathtaking palaces and historic museums—this day spent in a tiny community hidden in the mountains among hometown people was the best part of my trip.

I am now older, a bit wiser and a lot less eager to run away. I know that I am blessed to call North Florida my home and even more blessed to have been raised in Greenville. Much like the villages nestled within the Sierra Nevadas, this region is surrounded by small communities—all of which are unique, full of life and brimming over with interesting people, backgrounds and stories.

At Greene Publishing, Inc. we have always valued small town life and the amazing people that frequent this area. Through our award-winning newspapers we've been privileged to capture the very essence of Madison County. However, there is so much more beyond our county limits. From the banks of the Suwannee River, to the shores of Keaton Beach and the rolling farm lands that spread across the Florida-Georgia line, our homeland is as beautiful and full of adventure as the far away places featured on travel channels. Artists, farmers, medical professionals, writers and entrepreneurs flourish among these small town communities. Their stories are precious and their lives worth sharing. And there's no better place to share a story than The Front Porch, where the tea is sweet and the talks are long. We hope that you'll embark on this incredible journey with us, as we tell the tale of the region we call home.

Savannah Reams
Editor-in-Chief





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Standing on the steps leading to the Greystone Manor's front porch are the Paranormal Investigators of North Florida. Pictured from the top clockwise, are: Chris Estes, Suzy Bass, Denise Burroughs and LaDonna Denmark. Not pictured are: Cliff Burroughs, Jason Bass and Kim and Mitch Kingston.

When Darkness Falls

North Florida investigators brave the shadows

Story and photos by John Willoughby, Staff Writer

Paranormal activity is a taboo subject to which many turn a blind eye. However, there are those who claim there is a fine line that separates our world from a paranormal reality that cannot be seen . . . or can it?

Enter Paranormal Investigators of North Florida, a group of fearless investigators who are eager to walk toward a room full of darkness and mysteries that people would otherwise run from. Led by Denise Burroughs, of Perry, Fla., Paranormal Investigators of North Florida officially formed in 2011 and has since explored every case of unexplained tapping, knocking and footsteps that comes their way. However, Denise's paranormal investigation began long before the team was ever formed.

Denise invited me to join the team on two cases: one in Tallahassee, Fla.; the other in Perry, Fla., and I was able to step into the shoes of an investigator. But beforehand, I had the chance to sit down with Denise and talk about what sparked her interest in what we all know as ghost hunting.

Born in Rome, N.Y. and raised in Hollywood, Fla., De-

nise's experience with paranormal entities began at a young age. "I used to see things; shadows," said Denise. "I really wouldn't call it the boogeyman – I didn't know what it was. And back then, things were very different then they are today so I rolled with it, but always had a fascination with this because it was real to me."

The older she became, more events began to happen. At age 11, she recalls being home alone and unexplainable events occurring, such as hardwire phones ringing. Often-times, she would hear tapping. Denise explained that one night, as she slept, she felt someone at the edge of the bed and heard a voice. "It was kind of like a whisper but it's not like I would say to you it was angelic," said Denise. "It was a very

uneasy whisper. It was a male voice, but I don't really know what it said or what it was trying to say." Over the years, her interest in investigating grew larger and the desire to "figure it out" came into fruition.

"When mom found out, she thought I was nuts and probably needed to see a shrink," stated Denise. "Then she did realize something was going on. She experienced something too. Most recently, she felt somebody sit down next to her on her bed and touch her. She wasn't fearful. She believed it was an angel. She knows I wasn't 'loco' in the brain."

After talking, Denise and I made plans to explore. As we

"It was a very uneasy whisper. It was a male voice, but I don't really know what it said or what it was trying to say."

traveled to Tallahassee on a September Saturday evening, my nerves were getting the best of me because of my past-reluctance to acknowledge paranormal activities. As we walked into the home, Denise and her team set up cameras; video screens; laptops; temperature readers; K2 meters, used to detect changes in electro-magnetic energy; Radiating Electromagnetic (REM) pods, used to identify energy fluctuations; and other gadgets, all of which helped to reveal spirits and their possible connection with those in the earthly realm.

During the investigation, not much communication was encountered with what the investigators thought could be the client's grandparents, who had been deceased for some time. Denise decided to try a thermal infrared camera, which would've shown any spirits in the living room or hallway. With nothing showing, a five-minute break was initiated and everyone but the client and investigators left the home. Upon dimming the

lights, Denise began asking the spirits for communication and, in the process, the Tallahassee client began hurting immensely in her abdomen for reasons unknown. The client walked outside and, finally, the house went completely dark, allowing the team to continue with the investigation. Cliff, Denise's husband, who kept a watchful eye on the cameras, began seeing white, transparent orbs flying rapidly in front of the lens that had been set atop the kitchen's refrigerator.

Upon communication from the deceased grandfather's son, the K2 meter, which is a main source of determining communication, began flickering, signifying a type of communication. Reaching a conclusion on why the deceased were not resting, which will remain confidential, final peace was made among the client, her father and everyone who resided in the Tallahassee home with the spirit known as the grandfather.

"You cannot walk this earth without having bad and having good," said Denise. "They're both fighting hard right now. I feel like I can reach out, touch people and help. I've had so many 'thank you's' and not 'I hate you.' There are many that never knew God or had faith before we came along and I believe everyone has a calling and it comes in different forms." Before wrapping up the investigation, the investigators received gratitude for their work, which is not taken lightly.

The next, and last, investigation I took part in with Paranormal Investigators of North Florida came one month later in October of 2018, in Denise's hometown of Perry. The investigation resulted in plenty of action in the mere two hours the investigators were in the home. As the undisclosed client informed us, she had heard unexplained tapping and the

movement of toys in a room, that is normally unoccupied, in the middle of the night. The strange feeling she felt made her uneasy about even staying in the home alone for a long period of time ... especially at night.

Upon beginning the investigation, multiple instances of communication occurred and the unveiling of spirits took place through massive temperature changes throughout several spots in the home. By the end of the investigation though, the home was calm with little interruptions. More than one month after the investigation, the family, however, moved from the home and out of the town. Since then, the life of the client has been relaxed and calm, stating that her new home is quiet.

"If you've ever had something around you, you'd understand the feeling when you just know, 100 percent, it's there," said the client, who also recalled times when the living room television would turn on and change channels at random moments through-

out the night. "To be honest, ever since the [investigation], I've felt okay. Before, I remember actually running outside [out of fear], even though it was dark. I've just known that something was around."

Another investigation that Paranormal Investigators of North Florida performed in 2018 included a study of the Greystone Manor, in Perry, which is known for rampant

Continued on page 12.



Burning sage is a ritual used to clear an environment of negative energy and generate clarity.



The Greystone Manor has been a lasting figure in Downtown Perry for centuries, with many stories and legends surrounding what lies within its walls.



Denise Burroughs (front) and LaDonna Denmark (back) investigate a Tallahassee home thought to be inhabited by the spirit of the homeowner's grandfather.

activity by those in the community and those who have once owned the home. Walking inside the dark mansion, which was once an orphanage, provided a lot of evidence of paranormal happenings, past and present.

The two-story Greystone Manor, with a three-story tower, sits at the corner of Jefferson Street and Bay Street, in Perry, directly across from the First United Methodist Church and beside the dental offices of Dr. Morgan. The house was once owned by a man in Perry, who opened the house to guests yearly as a Halloween attraction. The grimly manor, however, has sat empty and vacant for years until it's most recent buyer began occupying the home.

The Greystone Manor investigation occurred on the night anyone would suspect creepy incidents: Halloween. For the first time ever, Denise and the team allowed five guests on the tour, one of whom is now a member of the team, following their second experience inside the haunted, three-story home.

"Many rumors circulate this house," said Denise. "I've heard it was a brothel, I heard a woman committed suicide in the bath tub upstairs, but we've not been able to conclude whether it's accurate information."

The investigation began promptly at 8 p.m. and the team proceeded to complete their normal routine. Each guest was given equipment, allowing them the opportunity to be an actual investigator. The search for evidence of activity began on the first floor where the command center was located. Two

"They appeared to be finger prints of small children. The connection to that, I'm not sure, but I saw it with my own eyes."

investigators stayed with the equipment to monitor possible activity. "Not a lot of activity was on that floor," said Denise. "It was rather quiet."

The second floor was where team members and guests claimed to feel heaviness in their chest, according to Denise. Some guests experienced difficulty breathing and felt light-headed. Upon entering a room on the second-floor, perceived as a child's room, activity in that room and others became known to the team. K2 meter readings and temperature changes became noticeable as well.

The investigators proceeded to the third-floor following an hour of investigating on the second floor. It is believed that some type of energy from the second floor, which later identified itself as Sarah, continued to follow the team. Denise stated that upon entering another room, the team noticed burned trusses. "When one of our guests looked at them, they noticed that finger prints kept appearing on the wood," said Denise. "They appeared to be finger prints of small children. The connection to that, I'm not sure, but I saw it with my own eyes." A total of three hours was spent in the home and plenty of evidence was gathered.

Following every investigation, Denise uses sage to cleanse the team members, the homes, equipment and everything that is involved with the case or anything that could have the potential to follow those who have no intentions of staying with a spirit. Burning sage is an old Native American ritual, used to alleviate the burden of negative energy.

"I have a lot of faith in God and I would prefer that the people on my team have that same faith. [Faith] is the thing that protects us. It is the light that guides us," said Denise. "It is what I want to put out there so that those who are lost within themselves can be found and can be brought to a safer haven in their life ... They manifest their own demons and through that, they create their own dark cloud and they just need someone to go in there and help put things back into perspective; help them find their worth and calm their fear."

The team consists of three husband-and-wife duos: Denise and Cliff Burroughs, Suzy and Jason Bass, as well as Kim and Mitch Kingston. Additionally, Ladonna Denmark and Chris Estes make up the rest of the investigation team.

If you feel you may have experienced paranormal activity or if you have heard or seen unexplainable incidents, such as knocking, temperature changes or anything out of the ordinary, Paranormal Investigators of North Florida are available to reveal the source at no cost to you. To contact the team, call (850) 254-1222 or log onto facebook.com and type "Paranormal Investigators of North Florida" in the search bar. You are encouraged to leave a message and a team member will speak with you as soon as possible to schedule a meeting.

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White visits the set of "The Long Goodbye," a play set in Monticello about a woman who loses a daughter to illness just before Christmas.

The Words of White:

Local playwright provides voice for North Florida

Story and photos by Rick Patrick, Staff Writer

Taylor County native Anthony Lamarr White discovered at an early age that he had a way with words. Growing up as a child in Perry, White was never far away from the pads of paper on which he would write stories of various kinds. "I've always been writing," says White. "I don't even remember when I started." At the age of nine, White's grandmother gave him the gift of a manual typewriter for Christmas. White immediately proceeded to teach himself to type and, soon, his love affair with words was ready to blossom. Now, with a pair of plays; two novels and another novel on the way; along with several possible television projects in the works, all set in various North Florida communities; White hopes to help place the area he knows the best on the map.

White, a 1982 graduate of Taylor County High School (TCHS), recalls several teachers in Perry who have been an inspiration to him; namely Estic Rollings, the late Gwen Faulkner, Glenda Hamby and others. "I truly loved each of those teachers," said White. "I can truly say that I have been blessed with some great teachers." After graduating from TCHS, White went to the University of Florida, where he studied journalism. Once he obtained his degree in journalism, White had various jobs around the country, including an internship at CBS news in New York. But he has always

managed to return to his Taylor County roots. Most recently, White was in Atlanta for two years, working in a fellowship program with the Alliance Theatre. It was while working at the Alliance that he developed the script for his play, "The Long Goodbye," which held its world premier at the Monticello Opera House in November of 2018.

"The Long Goodbye" is a play set in Monticello about a woman who loses a daughter to illness just before Christmas. "The Long Goodbye" is a story that White has had in the works for many years. It was hatched from a skit he wrote for a church service in Perry when White was a youngster. The story has an autobiographical element as it was written following the death of a member of White's family. "It was important to me that we have the world premier of "The Long Goodbye" in Monticello since the story takes place in Monticello," said White. White has written a screenplay from his stage play and Rae Dawn Chong, actress best known for her roles in "Quest for Fire," "The Color Purple" and "Commando," has expressed an interest in teaming up with White to produce "The Long Goodbye" as a theatrical feature film. If it does make its way onto the silver-screen, White wants the movie shot in Monticello.

One event, which had a profound impact on him, happened while he was at a 4-H conference in Washington D.C. Katherine Hepburn had just won an Academy Award for her performance in the movie "On Golden Pond." White had just read the play on which the movie had been based while in Hamby's Senior English class at TCHS. As White recalls, "We were at the Kennedy Centre for the Performing Arts and about to see Katherine Hepburn in "The West Side Waltz." She (Hepburn) had just won the Academy Award for "On Golden Pond" and when she made her first entrance, the audience burst out in applause. She [Hepburn] went to the edge of the stage and asked, 'Why are you clapping? I haven't done anything yet.' That experience really had an impact on me, more than any other theatrical experience." That "what have you done for me lately" mindset continues to drive White forward. He continues to work at the Perry News-Herald and Taco Times newspapers and is currently working on his third novel as part of a three-book deal with Zane Publishing, part of the Simon and Schuster publishing company. White is also working on an unscripted crime series project entitled "Closure," in conjunction with the cold-case unit of the Cobb County, Ga. District Attorney's office.

White was recently nominated for a Taurean Award as Outstanding New Playwright. The Taurean Award celebrates excellence in Atlanta's black theatre community. White was nominated for his play, "Calming the Man," set in Greenville, Fla. "Calming the Man" was also developed at the Alliance Theatre in Atlanta.

Regardless of where future paths lead White, one can be sure that he will always find his way home. "I'm a small town person," says White.



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- Specialized Valor Ceremonies honoring Veterans enrolled in the Transitions Program

Transitions is a program that is provided at no cost to the client and is funded by Big Bend Hospice, grants, Big Bend Hospice Foundation and donations.

If you would like to know more please contact us
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or visit www.wingstocarryyou.org

Live like *Lucile*



Lucile Day is a force to be reckoned with. At 85 years old, she's still living every moment with as much vigor and passion as a twenty something—perhaps better.

Story by Mickey Starling, Staff Writer
Photos by Savannah Reams, Editor-in-Chief

Entering Lucile Day's home is like stepping into another world. Inside, you will find walls lined with family portraits from days gone by; neatly-arranged vintage furniture laden with crocheted afghans; an old upright piano; the smell of bacon and coffee seeping from the kitchen; and beautiful music playing in the background, as it flows from a high tech device disguised as an antique record player. "My granddaughter is teaching me the Bluetooth," says Day, with a twinkle in her eye.

Nothing about this remarkable lady, now 85 years young, seems to fade. She glides through her home as if she were wearing roller skates and you may need a pair to keep up with her. Permeating through everything she touches is a sense of purpose and what she touches seems to be blessed.

Day's purpose is evident. Loving and serving others and

teaching them to live happy and healthy lives is what she does best. Her many years of teaching at Greenville Elementary School gave her a perfect platform to do just that. Reading has been a favorite pastime for her since she was a young child. "People all over town used to bring me things to read," said Day, who has resided in Greenville since 1939.

Growing up in Greenville may have been difficult back in those days but Day, then Lucile Martin, was too busy working to notice. Working was just part of life and she took every opportunity to make money that came her way. She would deliver food to families on her bicycle, sew, do housework, babysit and even took a paper delivery route to help her family make ends meet. Like many of her generation, Day put in numerous hours of hard work in the tobacco fields that are legendary for their sweltering heat. Yet, wherever Day went, there was fun to be had and those tobacco fields yielded numerous opportunities for her creative mind.

Continued on page 19.



Lucile's home possesses a vintage flare that would appeal to any modern interior designer. The charm doesn't come from a Southern Living catalog, but from a life well lived, organized and loved.



Lucile is brimming with stories and the best place to hear them is at the breakfast table over a home-cooked meal and a good cup of coffee.

"I loved finding those juicy little tobacco worms and chasing people with them," said Day, who admits, with a sheepish grin and a hint of regret, that she occasionally chased old women with them.

As Day grew older, she began chasing other things that seemed, at the time, beyond her reach. Rather than giving in to an inferiority complex that had plagued her since childhood, Day used those feelings as fuel for studying harder and staying up longer in order to do her best. Her grades showed no signs of inferiority and she received a scholarship to Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) for her efforts.

One of the things that stands out about Day is her character. Though she could have used the extra money, Day rarely accepted money from her parents while in college because she knew it would be difficult for them to provide it and she often made \$10 last for a month.

To make that amount of money last a month requires being incredibly resourceful, which Day made look easy. Nothing demonstrated that more than the day she was invited to a college dance called "A Night at the Sahara." Day found herself with no pretty dress for the occasion but she did have a beautiful swimsuit that was given to her by a family friend. "I took that lovely swimsuit and paired it with the curtains in my apartment," said Day. "I didn't cut them. I just pinned

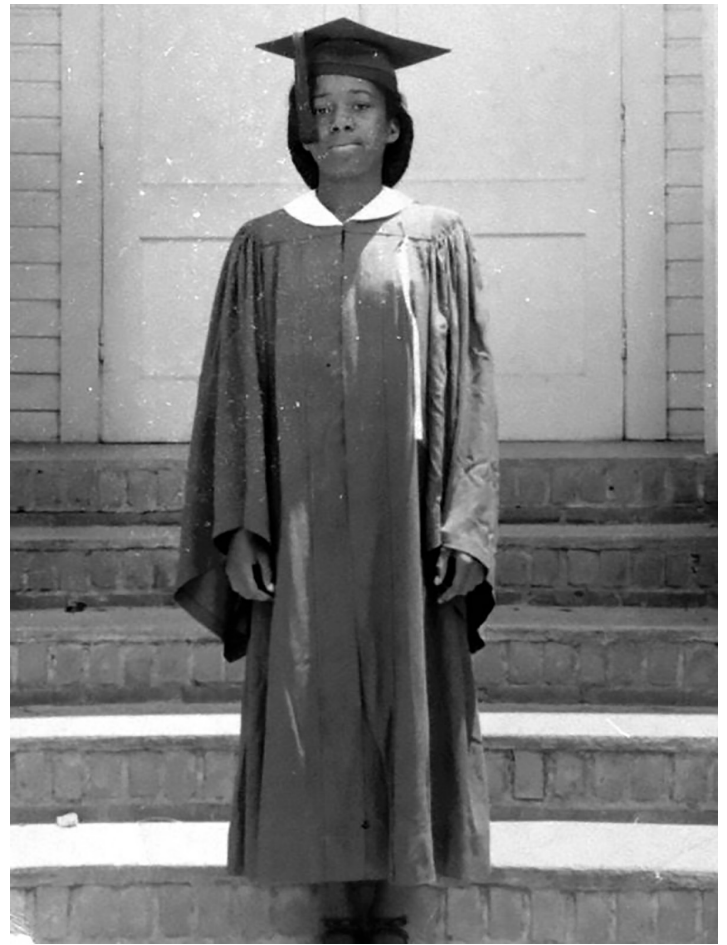


them into a skirt to go over my swimsuit and I got a lot of compliments for that dress." After the dance, the curtains returned to the windows and no one knew the difference.

After college, Day soon married and her family began to grow. It quickly became evident that the Day children inherited their mother's love of learning and tenacity for success. When her daughter was around four years old, Day suggested she place her money in the bank for safe keeping. Her daughter was reluctant and full of questions, so Day took her to the bank for a visit. Day lifted her tiny little investor so she could peer at the teller and make her wishes known, which she did with pointed enthusiasm. "I'd like to speak to the president," she said. The bank president at the time, Mr. T. P. McLeod, was happy to oblige her request and welcomed her into his office for a proper meeting.

He quickly discovered that he wasn't dealing with the average client. Little Miss Day wanted a full run down on what the bank intended to do with her money and, only after all her questions were satisfied, did she decide to "give the bank a try."

All of Day's children have been led by the hard work and dedication to excellence that Day's life has modeled for them. As a teacher, it was common for Day to end her



Lucile Martin Day graduated from Greenville Training School in 1947. (Photo courtesy of Florida State Archives)

workday by going home, starting supper, returning to school to prep for the next day and then going home to finish the cooking.

Day wasn't just a teacher, she was a dream-giver who used her classroom to open the imaginations of her young students to a world of possibilities. Day used everything within her reach to get kids excited about reading. Her enthusiasm was contagious and generations of kids were the better for it. During her tenure as an educator, she even worked with a committee to develop and write a district-wide school safety plan.

Today, while retired, Day still works hard to promote the education of Madison County youth. She currently serves on the North Florida College Foundation Board of Directors. She also donates her time to the Kiwanis club, assisting with fundraisers and events such as Light Up Madison; has spent many years on the Greenville Country Christmas committee and much more.

However, above all, Day serves her family. In fact, she is well-known for providing a warm and inviting space for the holidays and her grandchildren make sure to enjoy every moment. They often bring their friends from college to share in the pleasure of Day's company and her delightful food. On one Thanksgiving break, Day's granddaughter, Alex, called numerous times, asking permission to add "just one more" to the dinner table. Before the calls concluded, five very happy students had reservations at the Day table.

Retirement hasn't changed Day much. She still reads regularly, travels all over the state visiting family and friends and works in her garden. The garden is the perfect place for Day to simply be herself. To say she has a green thumb is an understatement and the large garden just beyond her back door has been happy to yield its fruits to her. Peas, butterbeans, squash, okra, watermelons and strawberries are just a few of the many items found in Day's garden.

The locals see a lot of Day's garden, because she happily gives away much of its bounty to whoever needs it. The garden is the perfect metaphor for Day's life, which has been full of hard work, careful tending, fertilized by love and faith and the ability to see and expect the best in people. Some have reaped lifelong blessings from her desire to see them



Lucile's garden is brimming with all sorts of delicious fruits and veggies. (Photo courtesy of Alexandra Thompson)

succeed, while others have been blessed by unintended encounters. Such was the case with a young man many years ago, who sought to rob Day's vehicle.

After hearing a commotion in her driveway one evening, Day charged out of her front door, armed only with her finger, poking like a gun under her shirt. Day held her hapless burglar in place with her fake gun while she preached to him about making good

and bad choices and about living with consequences. When she was satisfied that he had heard enough, she told him to run on home.

Though Day recognized this young man, she never revealed his identity to anyone and he has a new identity today because of the love and grace she offered him that night. He went on to become a productive citizen who still calls her from time to time.

Eighty-five years have been kind to Lucile. Though her hands have worked tirelessly for others, their smooth appearance refuses to show the slightest sign of aging, though she jokes that some old woman has moved in with her and "shows up in the mirror every day."

If the saying that "age is only a number" has ever been true, it is certainly a fact for Lucile Day, whose youthful zeal for life and loving others remains contagious. Entire schools would be blessed if they could take field trips that led them to her garden, though she would doubtless have them stop for a meal at her table first. "You've got to get up, make some breakfast and conquer the day," she would say.

As the sun rises over each new morning, Day will continue going quietly about making a difference in the lives of the people she touches and, should you meet her on the road, get out of her way, because it is certain she has somewhere to be.



Lucile's grandchildren visit often. She is pictured with her granddaughter, Alexandra Thompson (left).



Lucile busily picks peas in her garden—a place she loves to frequent.

Jefferson County Solid Waste Department

1697 S. Jefferson
Monticello, FL 32344
(850) 342-0184
(850) 342-0185 fax

7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday – Friday

HAZARDOUS WASTE

Hazardous waste is collected at the Main Office and at some of the collection sites. JCSWD prefers to accept all of the following items at the Main Office.

- Household: cleaners, cooking fats, oils & grease, aerosol cans, , kerosene, photo chemicals, chemistry sets, spot removers, adhesives, glue, resins, fluorescent tubes & bulbs
- Outside: gasoline, Insecticides, weed killers, pesticides, fertilizer, propane cylinders, swimming pool chemicals,
- Paints: oil-based, latex, stains, thinners & strippers, solvents & varnishes, wood preservatives, hobby supplies, artists' supplies
- Cars: engine degreaser, brake fluid, transmission fluid, motor oil, oil filters, batteries, antifreeze
- Batteries: all single use and rechargeable batteries
- Electronics: television & computer monitors, vacuums, blenders, etc. (anything with a cord)
- Medications: medications must be given directly to an employee at the JCSWD main office. Please remove the labels from bottles. Needles and similar supplies should be placed inside of a large bleach jug or similar and sealed securely. Note: Red Sharps Containers must be taken to the Health Department.

RECYCLING

Reduce! Reuse! Recycle! Recycling containers are located at all collection sites. Help keep reusable items out of the landfill. JCSWD collects the following:

- Cans: tin & aluminum (examples: food, dog & cat food, soda, beer)
- Paper goods: newspapers, magazines & office paper
- Plastics: soda & water bottles, milk jugs, laundry detergent bottles
- Cardboards: cereal & food boxes, laundry detergent boxes, shipping boxes, brown grocery bags. Note: Wax coated cardboard (example: meat and produce boxes) are not accepted.
- White goods: refrigerators, freezers, washing machines, dryers, air conditioner units, (anything metal)
- Glass: all clear, brown and green glass and jars

This program is partially funded by our recycling sales. Unfortunately, there is a high level of scavenging and theft of metal and aluminum cans from our collection sites, resulting in a loss of income to the County.

In an attempt to combat this loss, we have added OFFICE PAPER to our recycling program! The previous office space in the warehouse has been prepared for storage of office paper, which includes items such as copy paper, stationary, notebook paper, envelopes, magazines, file folders, and paper-based packaging. The campaign will be announced in April, 2015.



TREE DEBRIS

JCSWD provides a dedicated site for residents to dispose of tree debris. The site is conveniently located in a central area to county residents, just off Tyson Road at 8639 Landfill Road. No other items may be disposed of at this location. Call our office for access information.



ANIMAL CONTROL

At this time, the Animal Control program is limited to assisting the Sheriff's Department with dangerous and aggressive dogs. Stray animals are not accepted.

CODE ENFORCEMENT

A code investigation may be initiated upon a signed complaint by a county citizen. Our goal is to help citizens find solutions that will bring violations into compliance without the need for formal proceedings.



ADOPT-A-ROAD

This popular program encourages businesses, civic groups, or residents to adopt a two mile section of road to control litter, beautify and clean roadsides, and improve the appearance of the County road system.



TIRES

Citizens are allowed to dispose of only 4 tires per household per month. Commercial tires are not accepted at collection sites. JCSWD is a registered tire-hauler and can assist businesses with proper tire disposal.



CONTAINER RENTAL

JCSWD offers temporary container rentals for construction or cleaning projects and permanent container rentals for scheduled refuse pick-up. Sizes range from 4 yard, 6 yard and 8 yard (square) household to 20 and 30 yard (long) construction containers. Rental rates are as low as \$1 per day.

GRAPPLE SERVICE

JCSWD offers bulk grapple service for citizens who wish to have a large load of debris (tree or refuse) picked-up from their home. Each load is \$100 for county residents paying the landfill assessment.





Kingdom Fit of Madison

Kingdom Fit of Madison is a haven for community members who seek to get fit and live a healthy lifestyle. Not only is Kingdom Fit the ideal place to challenge oneself to meet new fitness goals, but it is a place where community bonding occurs and new relationships are formed. The camaraderie which exists at Kingdom Fit is unlike any other. Here, new friends become family.

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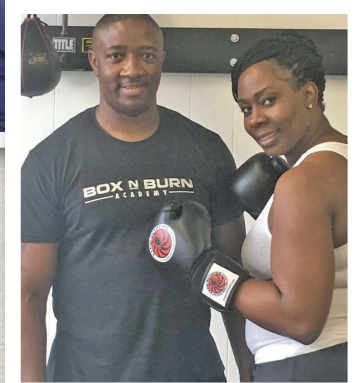
2. **21st century before and after photos:** These photos can really show how far someone has come in pursuit of their goals. With this scan, you will have your own before-and-after photo, 3D style, when you complete another scan. You will be able to overlay one on top of the other to really see the changes that are being made.

3. **Accuracy and ease:** This scanner reduces the human error of the old way of measuring circumferences with measuring tape. The scan takes approximately 40 seconds and measures the exact place on your body every time you do a scan. The same way every time!



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POW!

Frazier's Fit Tips:

The Big 5 for Beginners

Alfonso Frazier, Guest Columnist

1. Don't bite off more than you can chew. When beginning your fitness journey, you never want to set unrealistic goals-- with impractical expectations, you'll fall off the wagon before it starts rolling. Start with 10-15 minute workouts, three days a week, and just get moving. Walking is a great place to start. While enjoying the outdoors, ponder on the things you value and how exercising affects those values. If possible, schedule your workouts for the morning. This will jump start your metabolism.

2. Gain stamina. Begin with simple workouts you can do at home to gain stamina and strengthen your core, such as push-ups, air squats or planks. Once your stamina begins to strengthen, start adding light weights and resistance bands to your routine. If you feel like you can handle it, add five to 10 minutes to your workout.

3. Add cardio. Easy exercises to get your heart pumping are jumping jacks, jogging and, my personal favorite, boxing.

4. Nutrition makes a difference. If you want this to work, you've got to change your way of eating and, above all, change your way of thinking. Avoid processed foods and refined sugars. Eat balanced meals and control your portion sizes. To avoid those quick and convenient meals that are so easy yet so bad for you, set aside a day during the week for meal preparation. Stock your refrigerator with healthy, balanced meals for each day of the week.

5. Remember the 'why.' Are you changing your lifestyle for yourself? Are you changing to feel better and gain that energy you lost? Or are you doing this for a family member-- to become healthy and be able to stick around for the important milestones in their life? Whatever your reason may be, remind yourself of its importance every day. Your 'why' is worth it.

Alfonso Frazier is the owner of Kingdom Fit of Madison, Fla. A Level 1 and Level 2 Boxing Fitness instructor, he received his certification through Box N' Burn Academy in Santa Monica, Calif., and loves using his talents to help others succeed physically. Frazier is happily married to his wife, De-Shala, a registered nurse who has worked in Madison County for over ten years. They have five children: Sequoia, Zakyah, Alysia, Alonah, AJ; and one granddaughter, Khalani. They have owned Kingdom Fit of Madison since the Fall of 2017. "A lot of people are dying prematurely because of health-related issues and some of those issues can be avoided by simple nutrition and exercise," Frazier says. "I know that in this season of my life, this is my ministry: to meet the needs of people through fitness."



The Beat Goes On...

Join us on our county wide campaign to prevent heart disease.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. There are many risk factors for heart disease, many of which can be controlled.

Control your blood pressure. A major risk factor for heart disease is high blood pressure. Regular blood pressure checks are important, and the Florida Department of Health in Jefferson offers them for **FREE**. We also offer **FREE** Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring classes. For more information about the classes, call 850-342-0170 ext. 1230.

Keep a healthy weight. Obesity can increase your risk of heart disease. It is linked to heart disease risk factors such as high cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes, and high triglyceride levels. Controlling your weight can lower the risks.

Healthy diet. Limit consumption of foods high in sodium, saturated fats, and added sugars. Consume plenty of fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.

Exercise on a regular basis. Exercise has many benefits, including improving circulation, and strengthening your heart. Exercising can also help you maintain a healthy weight, and lower your blood pressure and cholesterol.

NO Smoking. Smoking can cause high blood pressure and put you at a higher risk for heart disease and stroke. If you are a smoker, and need help quitting, Tobacco Free Florida offers free tools and services to help you get started. Just pick the one that's right for you and get the support you need. Call Tobacco Free Florida at 1-877-U-CAN-NOW (1-877-822-6669) or visit tobaccofreeflorida.com/quityourway





Honey Lake Clinic is also neighbor to the picturesque Honey Lake Church, which sits on the banks of historic Honey Lake. The church is an intricately designed wooden building with detailed stained glass windows and a glorious view of the water.

Honey Lake Clinic a safe haven

Story and photos by Savannah Reams, Editor-in-Chief

Greenville, Fla. is a caution light community nestled in the western side of Madison County. At its center rests Haffye Hayes Park, where a statue of the piano wonder Ray Charles resides. The singer, born in Georgia, grew up in Florida, right across the railroad tracks in the small town of Greenville. The park sits across from the historic Greenville Baptist Church; known to many as “the church on the hill.” Its mighty white columns are the church’s best-known feature-- a building that has stood for over 150 years. Historic structures, many no longer in use, line the streets along the tracks, serving as relics of times gone by. Despite its size, Greenville is known for its rich history and fiery spirit. Above all, it serves as a place many call their home.

While Greenville isn’t well-known nationally, that may be changing in the near future. Just outside the city limits,

beneath the forest green canopies of a winding road, resting on the banks of Greenville’s historic Honey Lake, you’ll find Honey Lake Clinic—a plantation turned into a safe haven for people from all walks of life. It’s fitting, really. Greenville has served as a home place for Madison County folks for generations. Now, the peacefulness of this unique town is being shared with individuals from all over the nation.

Honey Lake Clinic began with the vision of doctors Karl Benzio and David Hoskins. Benzio, who, in the past, struggled with his own addictions, landing himself behind bars at one point in his life, developed a passion for Bible-based mental health.

In 2015, Celebration Church of Jacksonville purchased 2,800 acres of beautiful land which was previously known as Honey Lake Plantation, an upscale resort known for its picturesque weddings and lavish retreats. The church began to use its facilities for ministry, but it was harder than they imagined.

After visiting the plantation on a church retreat, Bob Hoskins, leader of OneHope ministry, thought the property would make an amazing location for a mental health facility, which is what his son, David Hoskins, specializes in. Together, Benzio and Hoskins, who had also worked together for Lighthouse Network, Benzio’s non-profit 24/7 hotline ministry, purchased the land and formed Honey Lake Clinic. The mental health facility opened their doors in May of 2017.

Honey Lake Clinic offers bible-based psychological care for people who are struggling with depression, PTSD, Bipolar Disorder, ADHD, OCD, Anxiety Disorder, among other illnesses. Their programs focus on healing the mind, body and spirit, with 24/7 behavioral health treatment services as well as refresher programs to help people recover from addictions. Honey Lake Clinic also serves as a place for pastors, business owners, politicians and those in leadership positions to take a sabbatical for healing, prayer and refreshment. When it comes to refreshment, Honey Lake’s grounds are unlike anywhere else – the landscape is the best representation of North Florida’s beauty. The green landscape of the premises,

Continued on page 26.



Honey Lake Clinic offers equine therapy, a form of experimental therapy involving interactions between clients and horses with an equine therapist and horse specialist.



The gathering hall is a beautiful southern mansion where guests gather to dine and socialize, among other activities.



Honey Lake stables provide a home for the gentle equine therapy horses.



There are many beautiful southern-style buildings on the grounds of Honey Lake Clinic, which provide a tranquil environment to participate in therapy sessions.

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According to honeylake.clinic, their mental health program is intensive and thorough, designed to treat people who are distressed, caught up in a psychological struggle, or battling to function in a way that they want to. Individualized treatment, experienced staff and a soothing environment assists people in regaining control of their mind and peace. Equine therapy – a form of experimental therapy involving interactions between clients and horses with an equine therapist and horse specialist – is offered in addition to other forms of treatment. Horses are gentle creatures and, according to Honey Lake professionals, working with these majestic animals can teach lessons about respect, empathy and communication.

This editor grew up in Greenville, where my father would ride me along its narrow roads and dirt paths in the seat of a pick-up truck. The sound of whippoorwills, hoot owls and singing crickets served as a lullaby and, before long, I would fall asleep. That same sweet comfort that comes from being at home, safe in the arms of your protector is perhaps the best form of healing known to man. I'm happy that people from all over the country are finding that same peace in my very own hometown, where they are not only experiencing the serenity that comes from being in nature, but the kind of everlasting calmness that can only come from the arms of a Heavenly Father.



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Department of Health
WIC office
1225 W Washington St
Monticello, FL 32344

Thursdays
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Madison County
Department of Health
WIC office
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Serenity Acres Farm:

gaining national recognition from
the heart of North Florida

Story by Savannah Reams, Editor-in-Chief

Photos by Savannah Reams and Shane Mathews Photography

Amidst the grassy fields painted richly green and the winding scenic routes of the Madison County countryside, sits Serenity Acres Farm, a homestead with a huge mission: goats. These goats are special. Their milk is used to make some of the purest, gentlest and freshest soaps and skin creams around. After hearing rumors that nationally-recognized skin care products were being produced at a goat farm in my very own county, I set out to see what all the fuss was about. Serenity Acres is located in the rural community of Pinetta, a historic small settlement just north of Madison. Despite their discreet location, Serenity Acres is making a name for themselves across the United States and I was determined to figure out why.

A minute on Google will quickly reveal that Serenity Acres Farm is well-known for their goats; how well they treat their beloved animals; and the high-quality, chemical free products they produce—cruelty-free. In fact, their farm is Certified Animal Welfare Approved by AGW, an independent, non-profit farm certification program which “has the most rigorous standards for farm animal welfare and environmental sustainability across the globe.”

Armed with this information, I eagerly journeyed to Pinetta to explore the farm that’s been making a formidable name for itself. When I arrived, owner, Julia Shewchuk, and the family dog, Boo, greeted me at the gate and I followed them as we headed towards the farm. As I exited my vehicle, at least five fully-grown Great Pyrenees surrounded me, pushing past each other to give me tons of love and affection. “Guard dogs,” according to Julia. While they may be ferocious at night, in broad daylight they were my buddies.

Upon arriving, it was evident Julia and Wayne Shewchuk take pride in their farm—a dream turned reality many years ago. Their goats are milked once a day and, with this milk, Serenity Acres produces the finest skin care commodities in North Florida. The Shewchuk family believes that happy soap comes from happy goats, and their goats are truly happy among the rolling grassy hills of the farm, where they live out their entire lives in peace, without facing slaughter.

Julia Shewchuk, owner of Serenity Acres Farm, stands with Cassie (left) and Cookie (right), mother and daughter Nubian goats who love being the center of attention.



We began to explore the property together and Julia explained how her passion began. The Shewchuks moved to Pinetta to get away from the city life; to settle down and start a small homestead. The couple refurbished an old cabin, modernizing the inside and preserving the original structure and features on the outside. As part of their wish for a healthy, all-natural lifestyle, and due to Wayne's lactose intolerance, the family sought out alternatives to dairy products made from cow's milk. After researching, they discovered the amazing health benefits of goat's milk.

Only about two percent of goat's milk is curd (fat globules that, in excess, can become difficult to digest), however, 10 percent of cow's milk is curd, therefore proving irritable during digestion. Goat's milk also contains less lactose than cow's milk and, for those with a slight lactose intolerance, it can be a reasonable option.

Julia informed me that cow's milk contains A1 casein, a protein found in cow's milk, to which many are sensitive. It can cause allergic reactions, ranging from abdominal cramping, to hives and a runny nose. It is extremely inflammatory and can cause gastrointestinal issues, acne and eczema. However, goat's milk only contains A2 casein, making it extremely similar to human breast milk. Goat's milk is less allergenic and is actually anti-inflammatory, due to the high levels of vitamin A, which improve skin health.

With all this in mind, Julia and Wayne added a few milking goats to their family. Then, what started as a few, began to grow. Today, the Shewchuks own over 54 happy and spunky goats. The goats roam freely on the farm and are well taken care of. They are only milked once a day, however, they produce a lot of milk. In fact, years ago, as the farm began to expand, the Shewchuks began to have more milk than they knew what to do with. Julia considered all the health benefits of goat's milk, including its anti-inflammatory properties and

Continued on page 32.



Serenity Acres lip balm is made from all natural ingredients, including beeswax and mango butter. (Photo courtesy of Shane Mathews Photography)



At this station, goats are milked once a day, in the morning time, during peak production.



After production, soaps are organized by scent and kept in a cool, dry environment before they are packaged.



Adier Kwai, intern from San Diego, pictured on the left, enjoys helping Julia Shewchuk around the farm.



The goats at Serenity Acres Farm live peaceful, happy lives and are well cared for. (Photo courtesy of Shane Mathews Photography)

how it improved skin. It was at this time that Serenity Skin-care was born and Julia began making soaps and creams that provide the ultimate nourishment for the body.

Today, Serenity Acres Farm produces 15 different bars of soap; five different body creams; six different body scrubs; a shaving soap; deet-free insect spray made from essential oils; lip balm; and their newest endeavor, Goat's Milk Bath, shredded goat's milk soap that melts into bath water and gives one's skin a velvety finish.

Serenity Skin Care products are gaining recognition across the United States and, in 2016, they were recipients of the 2016 Bronze Stevie Award for Startup of the Year, by the International Business Awards. Their products are sold in stores in Washington, Idaho, North Dakota, Ohio, Kansas, New York, Pennsylvania, Georgia and Florida.

After our visit, Julia sent me on my way with my very own lavender-scented soap and body cream and, after a few uses, I discovered what all the fuss was about. My skin felt soft and supple after every use and, unlike other lotions and skincare products, it didn't feel dry hours later. The nutrients from the goat's milk enriched my skin. In addition, all of the bad ingredients found in typical skincare products, such as preservatives, alcohols, drying agents, chemical dyes and sodium laurel sulfates, are left out. The Shewchuks only use plant and herb-based ingredients like oats, clays, honey, essential oils and phylate-free and paraben-free fragrance oils in their products.

All cosmetic benefits aside, I truly enjoyed spending time with Julia and exploring the farm. The goats are loving and tender, not afraid to approach someone, with the hope they will receive a pat on the head or a scratch on the back-- it is evident their caregivers provide them with plenty of love. In *Continued on page 34.*



This little fella, an hour old, is already feeling the love at Serenity Acres.



Serenity Skincare body creams rejuvenate the skin with the important vitamins found in goat's milk.



Interns from all over the world visit Serenity Acres Farm to become educated on agriculture and farming and gain hands-on experience. Pictured, from left to right, are: Alfonso Herrera, from Colombia; Estefania Kierzemblat, from Costa Rica; and Sebastian Camargo, from Nicaragua.



This map pinpoints the many locations from which interns have traveled to visit and learn at Serenity Acres Farm. (Photo courtesy of Shane Mathews Photography)



(Photo courtesy of Shane Mathews Photography)



Serenity Skincare soaps are beautifully packaged and each scent comes complete with a personalized goat biography from a member of the Serenity Acres family. (Photo courtesy of Shane Mathews Photography)

fact, some of the people who work closely with the animals are interns.

While Julia showed me around, I was able to meet the young people who were staying on the farm as part of the Serenity Acres internship program. Youth from all over the world travel to the farm to take part in this internship, which involves working with the animals and learning how to run a farm and dairy. In exchange, they are offered food and lodging. Serenity Acres provides interns with a fully-furnished community house with bathrooms, a laundry facility and wireless internet. Community-style dinners gather everyone together and all take a turn cooking throughout the week. The positive relationships these interns build are like no other. Young adults who are interested in farming, veterinarian practices or those who simply want to take a sabbatical before college find a temporary home at Serenity Acres, gaining experiences that will last them a lifetime.

What I found truly extraordinary about my experience was that it took place right here in North Florida. Our area, consisting of small rural counties, quaint little towns and forests filled with tall slender pine trees, is oftentimes underestimated and under appreciated. The heart of North Florida beats strong and, from its ground, grows innovative entrepreneurs, headstrong business men and women, poets, musicians, farmers and artists who have achieved what they have, not in spite of, but because of these stomping grounds. Serenity Acres Farm is only one of many amazing aspects of



the place we call home. May we continue to seek out this special magnificence and teach our children that their home is a place to be proud of, not a place from which to escape.

To learn more about Serenity Acres Farm or book a tour to find out for yourself, visit www.serenitygoats.com.

(Photo courtesy of Shane Mathews Photography)



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Becky Hogg makes all sorts of gifts, including homemade soaps and candles, for the Full Moon Farm shop located in Tupelo's Bakery in Monticello, Fla.

Full Moon Farm: Jefferson County sweet spot

Story and photos by Savannah Reams, Editor-in-Chief

There's nothing sweet and southern like a jar of tupelo honey, fresh off the farm. Honey is only as good as the nectar plants from which the bees graze, and the southeastern tupelo plant is the finest there is for making that sweet sticky stuff Van Morrison sings about. Hailing from the town of Monticello, in Jefferson County, Fla., are Tony and Becky Hogg, owners of Full Moon Farm. Rest assured, the Hogg family knows honey. In fact, they've been in the beekeeping business for approximately 17 years, with no plans to stop anytime soon.

Full Moon Farm began when Tony and Becky were seeking a way to help their daughter overcome her fear of insects. With that notion, the Hoggs began beekeeping. What started as a hobby became a lifestyle for the family. Today, Full Moon Farm produces honey, beeswax candles, natural skincare products and provides pollination services for area farmers.

Their products are sold at places such as New Leaf

Market, Native Nursery and Liberty Bar, in Tallahassee; The Country Store, in Madison; Tupelo's Bakery and the Jefferson Farmer's Market, in Monticello. Recently, Full Moon partnered with Florida State University and now supplies all of their restaurants with farm-fresh honey. In fact, the honey Full Moon produces is some of the best-tasting around. They offer an assortment of honeys, such as tupelo and orange blossom, both known for their mild flavor. The taste of the honey depends on the nectar plants the bees pollinate, and its quality depends on several environmental factors, such as the amount of moisture in the air and the geographical region in which it's produced. Luckily, the southeast, especially Florida, is a prime location for tasty honey.

Despite the recent success of Full Moon Farm, Tony Hogg stresses the importance of finding solutions to keeping bees alive and healthy. In fact, beekeepers are struggling to maintain bee populations and hives are quickly vanishing. "Nationally, last year beekeepers lost 44.5 percent of their hives and this year, in Florida, we're looking at a fifty percent loss," said Hogg. The biggest problem is that there is still much beekeepers don't know about this phenomenon.

Five years ago, Hogg joined with many other Florida beekeepers, in an effort to generate more research towards the health of bee populations. Their goal was to obtain fund-

Continued on page 38.

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ing to improve the honey bee research lab at the University of Florida. The first year the beekeepers association went to the legislature, 2.5 million was appropriated toward their efforts, but the legislation was vetoed. The second year, 2.5 million was, again, set aside for their cause, and the governor vetoed it once more. The third year, 2 million was appropriated and, finally, it passed. In addition to the government funding of their project, the association raised 2.7 million through fundraising efforts. This money went towards building a brand new honey bee research facility at the University of Florida, which, in August of 2018, held its grand opening in Gainesville. Thanks to the efforts of Hogg and other beekeepers throughout the state, careful research of this mysterious creature can begin to take place and, perhaps, in the near future, we will begin to see a resurgence of honeybees in our state and, subsequently, throughout the country.

To learn more about beekeeping, its agricultural importance, or to simply try a sample of the finest honey in North Florida, visit fullmoonhoney.com or stop by one of the many locations that offer Full Moon products, such as Tupelo's Bakery in Monticello, home of the Full Moon Farm shop.



Tony and Becky Hogg have owned and operated Full Moon Farm for close to 17 years. Since its start up, Full Moon Farm has expanded immensely, recently contracting with Florida State University to supply the college's food establishments with honey.



30-50,000 bees reside in each beehive box at Full Moon Farm. They collect nectar from flowering plants, storing it in their honey stomach. When their stomach is full, they regurgitate the nectar, passing it from bee to bee, until it gradually turns to honey. The bees then store it in honeycomb cells, sealing each cell with wax covering. (photo courtesy of Full Moon Farm)

The Full Moon Farm gift shop also provides items from other local farmers and vendors, such as homemade goats milk soaps and creams from Serenity Acres Farm in Pinetta, Fla.



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The historic mansion at Heritage Park and Gardens was donated to the City of Live Oak by the Crapps family—children of the former owner of First National Bank.

LIVE OAK'S HERITAGE brings folks together

Story and photos by Savannah Reams, Editor-in-Chief

Composer Stephen Foster's lyrics have chimed throughout our nation for many years, enticing Americans to visit the famed Suwannee River, "far, far away." Suwannee County, home of the romanticized river, is, in fact, rich with history and pride and, today, ripe with opportunity.

Suwannee County has become a beacon for travelers entering the State of Florida and tourism has certainly boomed in the region. The Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park, which sits directly on the water's edge, attracts millions of tourists every year. In fact, the park frequently hosts some of the biggest names in music, throwing annual music festivals such as the Suwannee River Jam and the Waneé Festival. Other venues, such as Ellie Ray's RV Park, in Branford, also bring visitors to the banks of the Suwannee, where boating and swimming are favored. At Ellie Ray's tourists and locals, alike, enjoy indoor and outdoor seating, a full-service bar

40 The Front Porch

and many enjoyable concerts throughout the year—all on the winding, historic Suwannee.

However, not as often advertised, is a unique development nestled in

the heart of Suwannee County's largest city, Live Oak, which serves as a beautiful space for community bonding, physical fitness and special events. Heritage Park and Gardens was donated to the City of Live Oak by the Crapps family. The land, and mansion which sits on its premises, was home to Porter Claude Crapps, Jr., his wife and eight children. The mansion was originally built by T. T. Scott, a local timber man who owned one of the last large sawmills in Suwannee County. He also owned the First National Bank in Live Oak. In 1951, he sold the property to the Crapps family, who had moved to the area after retiring from the timber business. Part of the deal included the purchase of First National Bank, and consequently, Mr. Crapps became a banker and investor.

The land spans several miles within Live Oak. Its western end includes a disc golf course, a children's playground, a beautiful walking trail and plenty of room for recreational activities. The eastern portion, which includes the mansion, gardens, gazebo and a lovely, outdoor pergola, is reserved for events and weddings and provides a lovely space for any celebration.

Most exciting, is Heritage Park and Gardens will soon be connected, by the newly-installed Heritage Trail, to Heritage Square, a downtown entertainment district that will provide an interesting hot spot for locals and tourists to fre-



Mayor Frank Davis proudly displays the concept art for the Heritage Square master plan. The same plan won the President's Award at the 2018 Florida Redevelopment Awards.

quent. In fact, the City of Live Oak won the President's Award at the 2018 Florida Redevelopment Awards for the Heritage Square master plan—and ground has not yet been broken.

According to the city, the hub will provide a brand new downtown experience for residents and visitors alike, as well as become a focal point in the ongoing connectivity effort with the Live Oak Heritage Trail. The city states in their master plan that their vision is to offer restaurant and entertainment venues, while simultaneously honoring the city's heritage with the focal points of the original City Hall, the Dowling House and the passenger and train depots. Essentially, visitors and locals will be able to leisurely stroll Heritage Square, enjoy delicious cuisines, experience musical entertainment and explore.

"The vision for Heritage Square is to develop an area that revitalizes downtown Live Oak while preserving the historical significance of the area," says Frank Davis, Mayor of Live Oak. "One's visit to our city will be enhanced as Heritage Square will offer a special and entertaining experience."

While the city owns the donated land which houses the Heritage locations, a community volunteer group called Friends of the Park works hard to promote, maintain and

Continued on page 42.



Heritage Trail is the newest addition to Live Oak's downtown Heritage locations. This pathway will connect Heritage Park and Gardens with Heritage Square.



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Heritage Square will provide a brand new downtown experience for residents and visitors. Created by Kimley-Horn: Planning and Design Engineering Consultants

develop the area. “Heritage Park has added new playground equipment and sports facilities which have caused an increased use of the park,” said Ronnie Poole, Friends of the Park representative. “We are excited about the new pavilion being constructed and other improvements coming. When completed, Heritage Square will be connected to Heritage Park by the recently added Heritage Trail. We’re grateful for the support of the entire community.”

It’s safe to say Live Oak has big plans for the future. The charming, southern, Suwannee County town is simply one more example of the unique, resilient and beautiful spirit of North Florida. While considered “home where the old folks stay” in Foster’s ballad, it is evident the area will continue to see new changes, new faces and new reasons to be proud of a remarkable heritage.



The gazebo at Heritage Gardens is a lovely addition to the pleasing appearance of the premises.



The pergola at Heritage Gardens is discreetly nestled among beautiful greenery and landscaping—the perfect location for an outdoor wedding.

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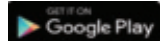
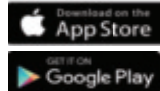
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The fountain that once graced the entrance of Hotel Hampton Springs over a century ago now stands, operating within Rosehead Park in Perry's historic downtown district. The fountain was donated to the Taylor County Historical Society by a Tallahassee family who acquired the relic years ago.

Something in the Water

A history of the South's finest hotel

Story and photos by John Willoughby, Staff Writer

For decades, Taylor County has been on the map for its extraordinary fishing and hunting excursions. The annual Florida Forest Festival in October has drawn visitors year after year and high school football stars have gone on to make a name for themselves and their home, such as three-time Su-

per Bowl champion, LeGarrette Blount; and Moral Stephens, a 2014 high school graduate who recently stepped from Florida Gator turf to the stomping grounds of the Buffalo Bills.

Nicknamed the Pine Tree Capital of the South, Taylor County flourishes under the county seat of Perry, the only incorporated city in the county. With over 22,000 proud residents spanning from Eridu's small country store on Highway 19, to the southern Steinhatchee River, stories of Taylor County's past have long been carried from generation to generation, preserving the memory of the county's humble and steady growth, deep within their minds.

The Taylor County Historical Society has preserved well the memories that surround the rich history of Taylor, and specifically, what's left of the memory of the Hotel Hampton Springs. In fact, the Society and its building of use also carries rich history. Founded in 1971, the Taylor County Historical Society operates within the old First National Bank building at the corner of Main Street and Green Street, in Perry, Fla., a bank which was opened around the beginning of the hotel, which is rumored to have been visited by United States President Theodore Roosevelt and the original Scarface, Al Capone.

The two-story building, accented by four tall columns, served as the first offices for former Governor Claude Pepper and the first County Health Department within the state of Florida, before becoming the subject of possible demolition. Luckily, the building was saved and Alton H. Wentworth birthed the Taylor County Historical Society in 1971, providing stories for the curious.

One story of such can be traced back to the 19th and 20th centuries when travel by train was the norm. Taylor County became its own county in 1856, independent from Madison County. Shortly after, Rocky Creek Mineral Springs was bought in 1857 by Joseph and Benjamin Hampton. The economy and the ongoing rampage of the Civil War, however, prevented development until 1898, when a 60-room hotel was built; the official beginning of what was known as the world-famous Hotel Hampton Springs.

The Live Oak, Perry and Gulf Railroad had tracks running east and west near the hotel, however, with a railway extension from South Georgia brought by Georgia's James W. Oglesby sometime between 1908 and 1915, the business and property offerings expanded.

Nestled along Spring Creek, just miles west of Perry, sat a two-story building among the tall pines in the early 1910s, accented by palm trees along its entrance after the first building was remodeled, becoming the front entrance of new construction after Oglesby bought controlling interest. With a beautiful veranda, the hotel front was welcoming, decorated with lush landscaping and wide green lawns. Ornamental pools reflected the tall walls as exotic fish scuttled their way through the waters. Thanks to Oglesby, the ever-impressive Hotel Hampton Springs thrived well on nearly 80 acres and became the topic of discussion in the southeast.

Throughout the first years of its operation, the hotel grew into a booming resort with an additional 20-room annex and a beautiful golf course, as well as a casino, grand ballroom and other attractions that brought in tourism from all over. Adding to its value for guests, part ownership in the



Where Hotel Hampton Springs once stood is now flatland in the shadows of pine trees and live oaks that have since sprouted since its demise in 1954. Now open to the public, the Hampton Springs Park is where people can see very little ruins of the luxurious establishment, including the pool and foot bath that was known for the water's claimed-healing power.

properties was offered through an exclusive invitation. The restricted Hampton Springs Club offered club members a 20 percent discount on their local stay, and free use of specific recreational activities which could be found on site, such as the swimming pool or a concrete tennis court.

Simultaneously, through 10 train stops per day at Hotel Hampton Springs, the number of visitors increased exponentially, "not on a whim, but with a prescription," as described by state historian Josh Goodman.

Continued on page 48.

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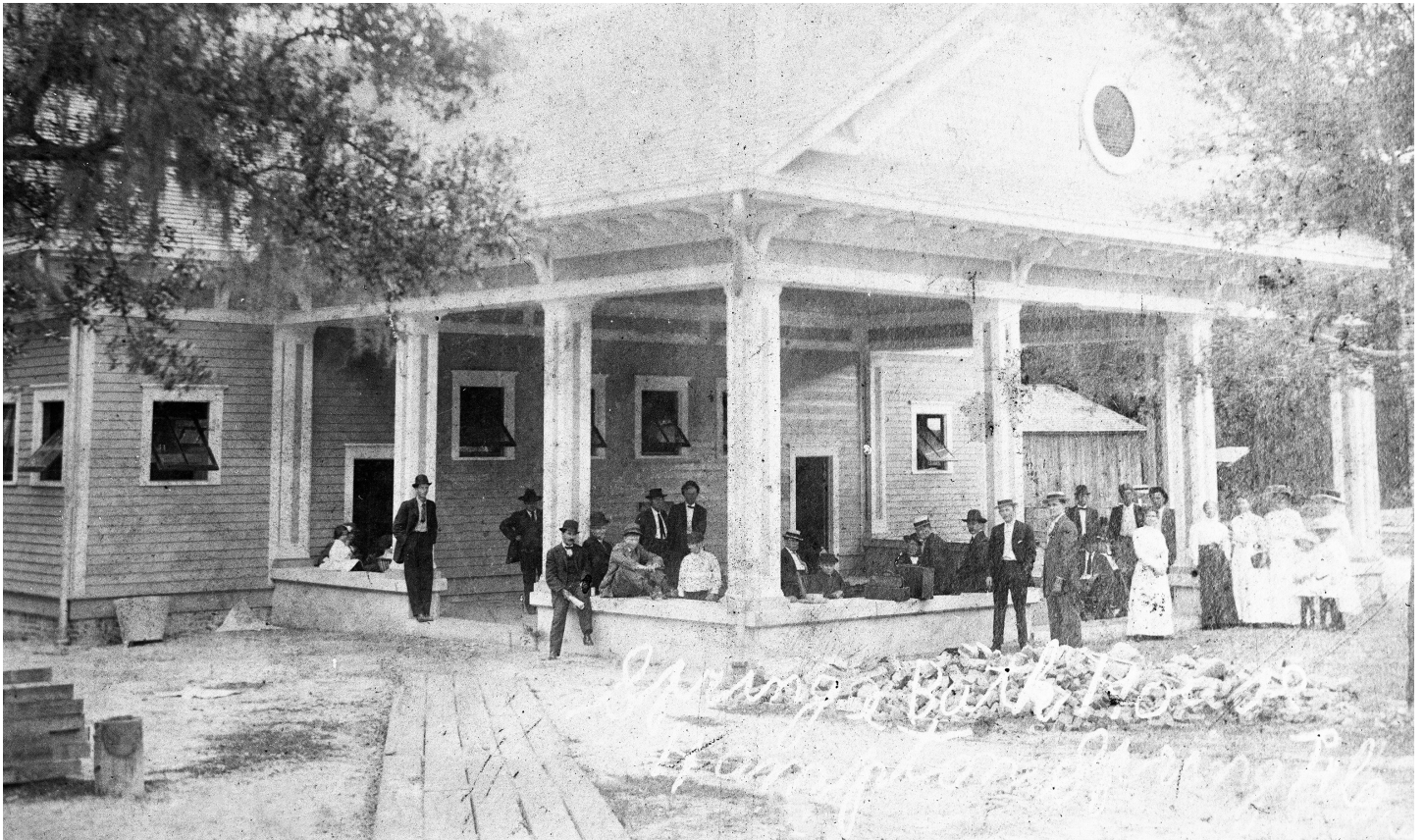


Photo courtesy of Florida State Archives – Dubbed the bathhouse, this building was the hot spot for visitors and residents alike, offering recreational and relaxing swimming in the pool.

In a dated brochure provided by the luxurious institution in its glory days, it was detailed that the recreational water available to guests in the hotel's bathhouse was believed to contain a blend of magnesia, carbonate, potassium chloride, oxide of iron, sodium chloride and the sulfates of calcium and magnesia. And while it wasn't claimed to be a cure-all substance, guests believed it to be a powerful, medicinal treatment, hence the arrangement to have water shipped to their homes on a regular basis.

The water was marketed with the proper authority of physicians, some of which were members of the establishment's club who would send their patients to the resort for treatment for kidney and bladder disorders, nervousness, rheumatism and other gastrointestinal ailments.

As the freshly-minted City of Perry was growing, it was no longer necessary to go to the Hampton Springs Hotel for a lavish evening. The remaining mineral springs resorts had begun falling apart toward the beginning of the 1920s and doctors abandoned the ideology that the sulfur waters cured ailments. Reports swirled that the spring water had lost the power the hotel was so widely known for. Tales remain to this day that the hotel changed owners several times, falling into the hands of a New York woman who drove away what little business the hotel had left. Further decay set in on the nine-hole golf course and fountain basins.

In 1946, a local Tallahassee print company detailed that, under the guidance of George Davis, attorney of the corporation, and W.R. Tucker, approximately \$90,000 in renovations were spent putting paint on the exterior walls and repairing

interior blemishes, including the bathhouse over the spring and pool. After suffering through World War II, where it served as barracks for local soldiers, the building was used again as a hotel and a boarding house, however, details surrounding the hotel's final years are limited.

On Thursday, Sept. 23, 1954, what was once valued at \$1 million had burned to ashes and rubble. Hotel Hampton Springs went up in flames for an unknown reason still to this day, though reports state that the fire began near the roof of the structure. The Taylor County Development Authority and the Taylor County Board of County Commissioners purchased the land in 1959 for approximately \$14,000, according to reports.

Today, the hotel grounds are open to visitors. Beneath the shadows of the many pine and oak trees which have since sprouted, lies the brick and mortar foundations, outlining portions of the fallen hotel. Greeting visitors toward the back of the property is the pool and foot bath, powered by the 70-degree sulfurous waters, that drew thousands, if not millions, to the property over the course of its life.

In recent years, the quiet grounds have been the subject of multiple instances of vandalism, causing county officials to lock restrooms to limit damage, according to Taylor County Administrator LaWanda Pemberton. "In an effort to secure the site and engage local citizens, the Board of County Commissioners appointed the Hampton Springs Advisory Board last year to work with staff and the Board [of County Commissioners]," Pemberton stated.

One such idea brought from this partnership was the

concept of a park site host, which would allow Hampton Springs park to have constant supervision and virtual house-keeping. “We have poured a concrete pad and are presently working with staff to locate the needed utilities for an RV,” said Pemberton. “Our hope is that the site host will not only provide a much-needed presence for the site but will also provide light restroom and park up-keep.”

Fencing was also placed around the springs’ pool and foot bath after the county faced public opposition due to an effort to reduce liability. In 2018, rocks were placed within the pool, allowing water to divert the flow across the top of the pool, instead of inside the pool. The opposition was made clear and the decision was quickly reversed.

The opening of Rosehead Park, in Perry’s downtown historic district, in 2016, was capped with the placement of Hotel Hampton Springs’ original fountain, a centerpiece that was among the first sights for all visitors. The wrought iron fountain was gifted to the Taylor County Historical Society and the City of Perry by Sid Cooper, the son of Mrs. Nelle Cooper, who was in possession of the fountain for a number of years. The refurbished fountain stands proud today, greeting all visitors just as it did at the hotel more than a century ago.

If you’re interested in visiting the Hotel Hampton Springs historical park, the site can be found less than one mile down County Road 356, off of U.S. Hwy. 98, four miles west of Perry. The park is open from sunrise to sunset.



Photo courtesy of Florida State Archives – Found in a booklet detailing the claimed-healing powers the hotel’s water had, this painting of hotel grounds shows the lavishing landscapes and eye-catching scenes that greeted visitors upon arrival.



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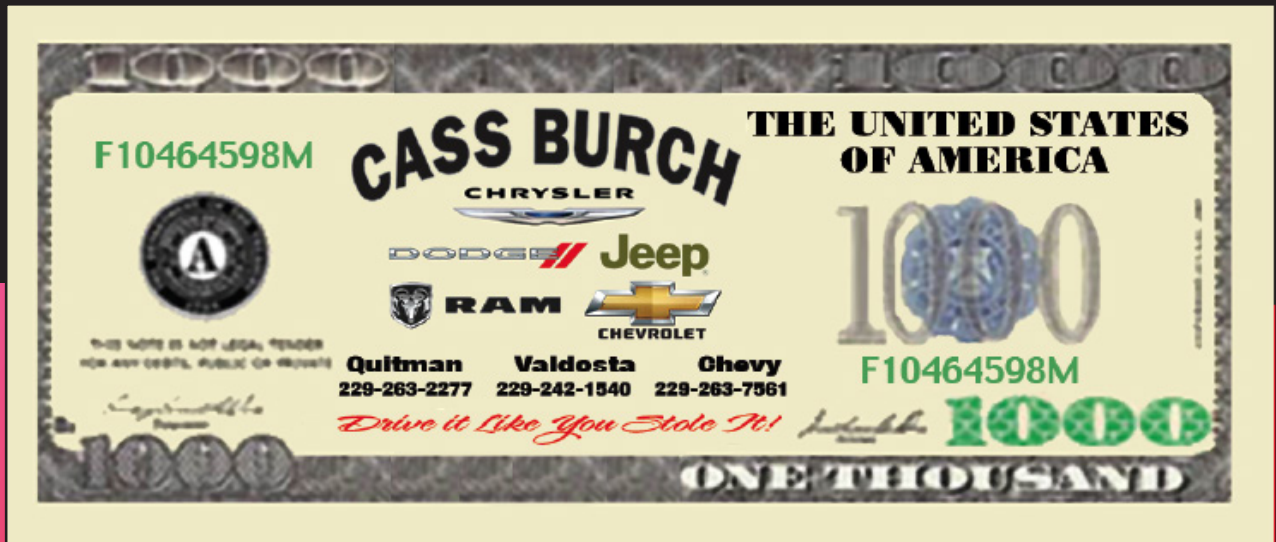
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Exp: 12/31/19



Summer is here at Ragans Family Campground

Story by John Willoughby, Staff Writer

Just an hour east of Tallahassee and more than 30 minutes west of Interstate 75 sits North Florida's favorite campground and waterpark. Ragans Family Campground, located at 1051 SW Old St. Augustine Rd., in Madison, is open for the summer and you're invited to join in on the fun.

Owned by Madison's Jimmie and Latrelle Ragans, the campsite was opened in 2000 and the pair have worked hard at creating a family-friendly environment ever since.

From cooling off in the park's water zone, to mining for gems in the park's mining sluice, there is something for everyone of all ages to enjoy. Daily activities include fish-

ing, putt-putt golf, 88 acres of ATV trails, gem mining and so much more. The attraction also offers a 60-foot water slide and an exciting inflatable obstacle course on the lake.

For the traveler, this award-winning park offers 29 cabins, 160 campsites, 34 water and electric sites, 16 primitive sites and 126 full hook up sites.

Day passes (10 a.m. to 5 p.m.) are not available during holidays or weekends in June or July. For more information about ticket prices, you may call Ragans Family Campground at (850) 973-8269. The park is located at 1051 SW Old St. Augustine Rd., in Madison.

Cook-off Week – August 2-4

Get those ribs ready for the Ragans Family rib and chili cook-off. Do you have the best ribs to win top prize? What about your chili? Amazing prizes will be awarded to the winners, including a free night at Ragans Family Campground. The first ever Little Miss Barbecue Pageant will take place as well.

Back to School Bash – August 9-11

It's time to hit those books in August, but what better way to celebrate the occasion than with the Ragans Family? The park's lazy river spelling bee and underwater numbers crunch are great ways to keep cool while gearing up for school.

Super Suds Weekend – August 16-18

On Saturday, Aug. 17, enjoy some good clean fun during the Ragans Family foam party. Who knows ... it might even snow!

Ole Fashioned Camping Fun – August 23-25

Relax for the week while enjoying outdoor cooking and fun. On Saturday, Aug. 24, at 7 p.m., join staff and other campers at the community fire pit located at the gathering place, where marshmallows and hot dogs will be roasted while campers tell campfire stories, sing songs and make s'mores.

Labor Day Celebration – August 31-September 2

Join the Ragans Family for the end-of-the-summer blow out. Live music and fireworks will take place on Saturday, Aug. 31. Additionally, enjoy wet-n-wild train rides and fishing contests. Decorate your golf carts, ATVs and bicycles for the red, white and blue parade.



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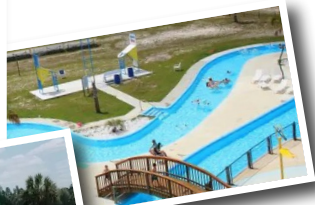
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What's Happenin'?

August

August 1-10

Big River: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn: Theatre Guild Valdosta opens their 31st season with the Tony Award winning musical "Big River: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," with music and lyrics by Roger Miller and book by William Hauptman. Adapted from the novel, "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" by Mark Twain. Performances are: Thursday through Saturday, Aug. 1-3 and 8-10, at 7:30 p.m. and on Sunday, Aug. 4, at 3 p.m. Adult tickets are \$25. Performances are in the historic 'Dosta Playhouse, located at 122 N. Ashley St., in downtown Valdosta, Ga. For reservations and ticket information, including discount tickets, please call (229) 24-STAGE (247-8243) or visit www.theatreguildvaldosta.com.

August 3

Jasper Market Day and Farmer's Market at Central Avenue Walkway, in Jasper, Fla., beginning at 8 a.m.

August 3-31

"Day-cation" at Ellie Ray's RV Resort and come boogey to some bands on the Santa Fe River! Here are several of many shows you can expect to see at Ellie Ray's this summer: Aug. 3 Xhale; Aug. 16-17 Faster than Flash; Aug. 30 Red Hot Chili Peppers Tribute Band; Aug. 31 Tobacco Road Band. Visit www.ellierraysrvresort.com for more information!

August 17

Fleetwood Mac Tribute Show at the Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park. Visit www.musicliveshere.com for details.

September

September 7

Jasper Market Day and Farmer's Market at Central Avenue Walkway, in Jasper, Fla., beginning at 8 a.m.

September 20-21

The Smokin' in the Pines BBQ Festival is held each year in Taylor County, Fla. and, with it, comes a BBQ Open Competition, Backyard BBQ, the KIDZ-Q Competition (Ages 6-15), John Boy & Billy Grilling Sauce Contest and People's Choice. There's always Southern Rock and Country music and a variety of vendors and loads of barbecue! You'll be sure to have a finger lickin' good time! Call the Taylor County Chamber of Commerce at (850) 584-5366 for event times and details.

September 28

KC & the Sunshine Band/Huey Lewis & The News Tribute Show at The Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park. Visit www.musicliveshere.com for details.

October

October 5

Jasper Market Day and Farmer's Market at Central Avenue Walkway, in Jasper, Fla., beginning at 8 a.m.

October 10-13

Suwannee Roots Revival; a festival held at the Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park that will feature a lineup including Sam Bush, Del McCoury Band, Peter Rowan and Donna the Buffalo. There will be music workshops, kids activities, daily yoga and food/craft vendors. Visit suwanneerootsrevival.com for more information.

October 11-13

52nd Annual Thomasville Fly In is for aircraft enthusiasts everywhere! Come experience what is referred to as the best grassroots fly-in around! Visit thomasvilleflyin.weebly.com for more information.

October 17-27

The Covey Film Festival in Thomasville, Ga. is referred to as "a vehicle to entertain, educate and engage audiences through the screening of over twenty acclaimed films." If you're a movie buff with an affinity for the South Georgia-North Florida region, make sure you visit this popular festival!



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We Need More Porches

by Rick Patrick, Columnist

This past weekend, I had the chance to go down to Perry and visit with my sister. I always enjoy going down for a visit, just to touch “home base.” Often when I’m down there, my sister and I will sit and chat and get caught up. Sometimes I find myself becoming a sounding board for my sister when she feels the need to vent about whatever may be on her mind. I don’t object to this at all, I realize how important a sounding board can be from time to time.

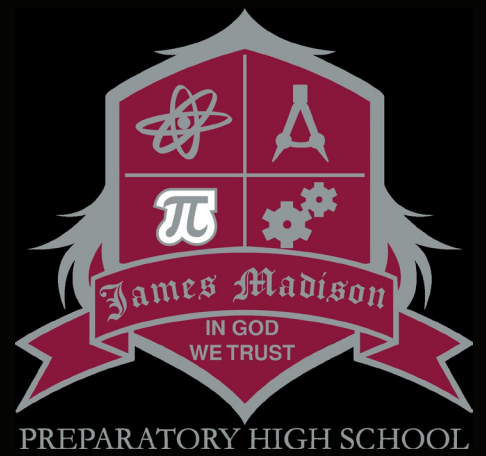
During my latest visit, we both began reminiscing about our collective youths. Both of us talked about those precious times spent on the porch at our grandmother, Mama Patrick’s house in Greenville. It was a pretty large porch, looking out toward US Hwy 90, with several rocking chairs. On Sunday afternoons, that would be the destination for everyone’s post dinner migration, especially when the weather was nice and not too hot. We would sit and rock in those old rocking chairs and Papa

would tell stories about what went on and where, back in the old days. Occasionally, a passenger train would pass by and I would wonder about where it was going, and why the people on the train wanted to go there. Other times, if I was lucky that weekend, one of my cousins may also be visiting and I could talk them into a round of catch with the baseball. Sometimes, we would just sit and rock and “watch the cars go by,” as Mama Patrick would say.



As my sister and I talked, I found myself thinking that we need more porches; we need places where families can gather and talk, visit, play catch, and simply spend time together; places without cell phone signals so people might just interact face to face. That might just help more families reconnect and get to know each other again. I don’t know that it would solve all the problems facing the world today, but a return to those simple Sunday afternoons might help more than we think. It’s hard to hold onto bitterness while you’re sipping on a glass of sweet tea, rocking in a rocking chair and just “watching the cars go by.”

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