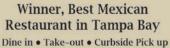


Commandments Exodus 20:3-17

- I Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
- II Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.
- III Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
- IV Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.
- V Honor thy father and thy mother.
- VI Thou shalt not murder.
- VII Thou shalt not commit adul-
- VIII Thou shalt not steal.
- IX Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
- X Thou shalt not covet.





2 Locations to Serve You Quesabirria ww.donjuliosmexican.com 813-898-2860

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What is Christmas All About?



The story begins in a place called Nazareth, in a quiet, sleepy town where most people were farmers and shepherds. In this town was a young Jewish woman Mary. She was very obedient, a Godfearing woman who helped her parents and did her chores. She was kind and helpful to everyone, all the people liked her very much, and soon she was going to be married to Joseph, who was a good, honest, hardworking man.

One day God sent an angel to visit Mary and he said, "Mary, do not be afraid, for God has sent me to you. My name is Gabriel. Because of your kind heart and pure soul, you are of great value to the Lord. You are fortunate. Above everyone else, He has chosen you for a very special task. I have come to tell you that soon you will have a son. He will be a great king and will be loved by everyone."

Continued on Page 10



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Christmas - An Amazing Time of the Year

the ways we do that is by giving and receiving gifts, and as we do, it reminds us that Jesus is the greatest gift of all. Pure giving is one of the most beautiful things that we do, and I always encourage people to make every day Christmas as far as giving is concerned. Let's live in the spirit of Christmas all year round!

If you just open up your eyes and look around, I are like cracked pots. you can see that it's true. There is nothing that

It is a time to celebrate the birth of Christ. One of He lives in us, we can shine the light of His love to shine his light. It can be as simple as wearing throughout the entire world.

> That is the purpose God has for us. In other words, he has chosen us to shine his light in the world. It's very encouraging to know God doesn't expect us to be perfect before his love and light can shine through our lives. You could say that you and

We will always have weaknesses and imperfeclights a person up like Jesus. He puts so much joy tions, but we never have to hide them from God. give of ourselves because His life and light is in in your soul! Without Jesus, we would have no love The light of God actually intensifies in us as we us. He is Emmanuel, God with us! or compassion to share with others. But because allow him to work in us. There are so many ways

a smile. As you go about your daily life, especially during this special season of celebration, I encourage you to let aside a portion of your time, energy, talents, and resources to share that light and serve others.

After all, this is what Christmas is really all about. Just as Jesus came to love and serve all of us by giving the greatest gift, his very life, we can

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Tax Collector Mike Fasano Announces **Holiday Season Giving Opportunities!**



Pasco County Tax Collector Mike Fasano announces that his office is sponsoring the following events to help the community during the 2022 holi-

- Be a Santa to a Senior collection boxes are in each of the five tax collector offices. Please stop by and donate a personal care item for a local senior citizen (i.e., toiletries, bath sets, greeting cards, stationary, stamps, etc.). Gifts will be collected until December 14.
- Toys 4 Tots the five tax collector's office locations in Pasco County are all drop-off sites for the Marine Corps League's annual toy drive. Toys for children of military personnel will be
- Salvation Army's Red Kettle Drive The Gulf Harbors and Wesley Chapel offices will be Red Kettle donation sites on December 10 and December 17. Please stop by between 8:30 AM and NOON either day to contribute to the important programs the Salvation Army provides
- 28th Annual Holiday Food Giveaway On December 16 food for those in need will be distributed by Tax Collector Mike Fasano and other officials. Details of this event will be sent separately. To support this event collection jars will be on display in December in each of the five tax collector offices in Pasco County. Donations made will help purchase fresh food and other items for needy families this holiday season and into 2023.

The locations of the five tax collector offices are: the West Pasco Government Center, 8731 Citizens Drive - Room 120, New Port Richey; Gulf Harbors - 4720 U.S. Highway 19, New Port Richey; Land O' Lakes, 4135 Land O' Lakes Blvd. (US 41), Land O' Lakes; Wesley Chapel -4610 Pet Lane - Room C 101, Lutz/ Wesley Chapel, and the East Pasco Government Center, 14236 - 6th Street - Room 100, Dade City.

"Please join the staff of the Pasco County Tax Collector's Office as we celebrate the holidays by reaching out to those most in need," states Tax Collector Mike Fasano. "Your support

of these wonderful local programs will help countless people enjoy the holidays this year. Your gift of any amount will go a long way towards helping our community have a joyous holiday season."

For details about each program, information regarding hours and locations, or general questions about the services provided by the Pasco County Tax Collector's Office, please contact Greg Giordano, Assistant Tax Collector at (727) 847-8179.





Feeding Tampa Bay is Feeding the Food **Insecure in Our Community**

By Karen McBride

Trinity Cafe has been serving free, chef prepared meals for anyone in need for 21 years. In January of 2019, Trinity Café merged with Feeding Tampa Bay having no idea what the future had in store and how great the need would become due to the pandemic and now inflation. On November 15th of this year the cafes celebrated serving their 2 millionth meal with dignity and respect. Trinity Cafe is more than just a place to be served a hot, delicious



meal. Each location provides the opportunity for guests to connect through meaningful conversation and often directed to additional services they may need.

Tables are set up warmly in a restaurant-style atmosphere with colorful seasonal centerpieces. As guests arrive, they are greeted with the warm and friendly smile of the maitre'd. They are then directed to an available table to enjoy their served meal at their leisure.

Belinda P. has volunteered at the café in the past. "It was great how the guests formed friendships with each other and some of the volunteers. They probably don't get many times where they get to sit and eat a meal with other people and have that interaction," said Belinda.

Volunteers are a key element to keeping the well-organized program running smoothly. Since opening in 2001, over 200,000 volunteers have made service possible and lifted spirits. Tasks include serving guests, hosting tables, greeting guests, pouring drinks, preparing silverware, or cleaning tables. One server and host companion are assigned to each table. For this reason, many volunteers are needed at each meal.

Trinity Cafe is now serving in three locations: 2801 N. Nebraska Avenue, Tampa, FL 33602, 2202 E. Busch Blvd., Tampa, FL 33612 and 6330 54th Avenue North, St. Petersburg, FL 33709. With one dollar equaling five meals, monetary donations are greatly appreciated.

One of the greatest gifts we can give is our time to make another person's day a little better. For more information about volunteering at Trinity Café or donating to support Feeding Tampa Bay's programs, email volunteer@feedingtampabay.org, call 813-254-1190 extension 270 or visit https://feedingtampabay.org/ways-we-serve/trinity-cafe.





Canines for Christ Bringing God's Love and Hope to the Community

By Karen McBride



Canines for Christ brings joy to patients and volunteers by sharing God's love. The animal therapy ministry visits people in cancer centers, children's homes, nursing homes, hospitals, prison ministries, and other places where people are in need of God's comforting words and the unconditional love and affection dogs bring.

Animal Therapy

Animal therapy is known to lessen the effects of depression, lower anxiety, lower blood pressure, improve cardiovascular health, and even release endorphins that have a calming effect. The rhythmic movement of petting an animal can aid in therapy, producing an automatic re-

Kind, Compassionate Volunteers

When the volunteers are visiting, the patients receive the added blessing of communication, reducing their loneliness and boredom that can happen with extended stays in hospitals. The visits help to lessen the feelings of isolation and alienation.

"When you combine these benefits with the presence of Christ Jesus offered with kindness, compassion, love, and hope from our C4C volunteers, the results are powerful," said Chaplain

The Ministry Has Grown Throughout the Country and Internationally

His love for serving the Lord inspired the Chaplain to start Canines for Christ in July 2007. At the time, he did not own a dog but took a step out in faith and borrowed his daughter's dog to start the ministry. It has spread across the United States and internationally. God has blessed this ministry with over 1,000 active volunteers and 91 chaplains.

Canines for Christ has established a Spanish arm of the ministry called "Caninos Para Cristo" that is reaching the Hispanic population in the United States and South America. God is on the move! Chaplain Randolph has been an active speaker to churches, rotary groups, civic organizations, and radio and TV outlets. His extensive list of credentials includes Commissioned Chaplain with Corporate and Community Chaplains of America, Rapid Response Chaplain for Billy Graham Ministries, Member of American Association of Christian Counselors, Volunteer Chaplain for Tampa Fire and Rescue, and many more.

Bringing Peace to People in the Midst of Difficult Times

The ministry has been very active in crisis response teams with many teams going to the Uvalde, Texas shooting disaster as well as hurricane Ian. Ministry volunteers with their dogs have reached out to hundreds of people in Uvalde as they ministered to people in the schools and funeral homes as well as doing the visits to special parades and other functions in that devastated

For those affected by hurricane Ian, the ministry partnered along with the Salvation Army to minister to survivors of the hurricane that have lost everything. Their therapy dogs were instrumental in bringing moments of comfort and peace and joy to people in all these settings.

"We managed to bring them God's love and hope and brought them peace in the midst of their difficult time," said Chaplain Randolph.

Spreading the Word Through Media

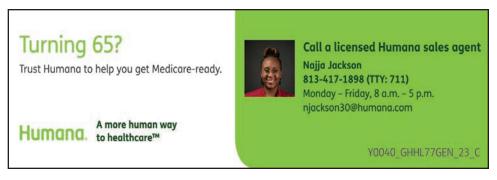
Tyndale, a Christian book publisher, has commissioned Chaplain Randolph to write a book about the journey of Canines for Christ. It is a story of faith and obedience and how this ministry grew from not even having a dog to where it is today. It is a true and inspiring story of how therapy dogs have changed people's hearts with God's love and hope over the hundreds of hundreds of visits by thousands of volunteers and their puppies. The book is scheduled for publication in 2023.

"Our prayer is that this book will turn people to Christ and lead them into that wonderful and fulfilling relationship with Him," said Chaplain Randolph.

Be sure to look for the documentary about Canines for Christ which airs on the Christian television streaming Network FISM called "Good Guys Doing Good". It will be featured across the country on faith-based networks and other media sources by the end of the year.

If you are looking for a way to serve the Lord and are interested in becoming a volunteer, you must complete an application, have a certificate of health completed by your veterinarian, provide the Therapy Dog Certification or the AKC Canine Good Citizen (which can be issued by Canines for Christ if you do not have one), and sign a liability waiver. Dogs must be six months old to enter the ministry, well-mannered, and non-aggressive.

For more information, go to www.k9forchrist.org, call 210-452-5623, or find them on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/c4ctherapydog.







A List of Christmas Events and Movies

Samantha Taylor, Samantha Taylor Fitness

It's hard to believe the Christmas season is here, so one thing I really enjoy doing to get myself in the Christmas spirit is enjoying some traditional experiences. I will share what some of those are and I'll start with some Christmas attractions that I know around the area and then share some

I always enjoy going to Christmas Town at Busch Gardens, they have lots of great Christmas lights and an awesome ice-skating show. My favorite show is the Three Wise Men. It's spectacular and shows a part of the story of why many people celebrate Christmas, about Christ's birth.

My other favorite place to go is Seaworld, for they also have amazing Christmas lights and they have an awesome nativity play including camels and other many live animals. It's actually pretty funny too. Make sure to check out the "snow flurries" (bubbles, well you know Florida's version of snow). Just don't open your mouth when they're flying in the air! And seeing the lighted trees show on the lake is a must see too.

I also really enjoy going to the zoo, they've got great Christmas lights and it's fun to walk around although you can't see any animals but it's neat to see the place in the dark with sparkling lights everywhere.

And lastly for events, if you would like to see a Christmas play with a huge choir and beautiful songs, Idlewild Baptist has one Dec 9-11th.

As far as my favorite Christmas time movies the very first one is an animated movie called "The Star". It's an adorable movie telling the nativity story from a donkey's perspective but it's a really cute movie and very well made.

My second favorite movie is "The Nativity Story" that was made in 2006 (so you know which one to look for). Telling the powerful story of Joseph and Mary going on that 90-mile trek to Bethlehem with a nine month pregnant woman riding on a donkey, is quite a miraculous story that impacted this world.

None of these movies are 100% accurate but they follow mostly along the true story of the Bible and I always find it really gets you in the Christmas spirit watching these movies. I always like to also read the story straight from the Bible and I read the book of Matthew and Luke. I like to always go back and read the true story right from the source!

And my third favorite Christmas movie, even though it has nothing to do with the original celebration of Christmas, but "Elf" is a classic. I often find myself wanting to hit all the buttons on an elevator just to see it light up like a Christmas tree just like he does in that movie!

I hope you can get out and enjoy some of these beautiful experiences outside enjoying sparkling lights or enjoying a nice warm blanket and curling up to a movie. I truly do love December because I love all the Christmas lights but mostly, I love the feeling of the spirit in the air. People are nicer, they're more willing to talk about God and it is one of the number one holidays they are the most willing to go to church.

So, I encourage you to invite someone to go to church with you and maybe if you haven't gone in a while, you go back as well. Sometimes that's all you need to get started again. Life has certainly been challenging for all of us but I can tell you that without my relationship with God, I can't even

imagine how much more difficult it would have been not having His wisdom and comfort.

I hope you have a wonderful time celebrating Christ being born on this earth and how one person had so much impact on this world, it's quite astounding! And if you don't have a relationship with Him, maybe it's time to start exploring what that experience is like.

I also would not do my health and fitness service to this community without giving you some delicious healthy cookie recipes (and some fudge too) that have no sugar but taste amazing. It's nice to have a backup with all those tempting foods around. Go to www.SamanthaTaylorFitness. com/cookierecipes

Have a wonderful Christmas!

(813) 377-3739

GFWC Takes CPR Class



GFWC Lutz-Land O'Lakes Woman's Club members very much appreciated the opportunity to participate in an important CPR class presented by Advent Health. Two Community Outreach staffers with Advent Health presented an informative video while citing the statistics of saving lives via this "Hands-Only" CPR method, followed by a hands-on demonstration. Advent Health generously provided practice mannequins to each member, as well as an instructional video, to teach and share with friends and families.

Phone: 813-949-4411

This was a very important class to prepare for should an emergency situation arise within one's own home or in public and could be lifesaving.

For more info or membership opportunities, please visit the website gfwclutz-landolakeswomansclub.org or its Facebook page.

Club President Elayne Bassinger & members Madeline McCulloh, Joan DeCapua, Nancy Allen & Jean Palmieri following CPR instructions.



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It is Time to Make Appointments for **Sports Physicals and Back to School Physicals!**

By Karen McBride

Summer break is quickly coming to a close. It is important to schedule your child's appointment to ensure his/her immunizations are up to date. COVID immunizations are now available for ages 5 and older. The shots for 6 months to 5 years will be coming soon. Contact Dr. Michele Johnson-Towson, at Pediatric Place of Tampa, a board-certified pediatrician with over 30 years of experience in caring for children ages newborn to 21 years old.

If your son or daughter is involved in sports, it is time to schedule his/her sports physical. Same-week appointments are available for school physicals at Pediatric Place of Tampa, and the practice accepts all insurances as well as self-pay patients. New patients are always welcome!

When visiting Pediatric Place of Tampa for the first time, new patients should bring:

- Your child's insurance card
- · A release of medical records
- · Copies of preexisting medical problems
- Immunization records

Dr. Johnson-Towson and her staff are dedicated to keeping patients both healthy and educated on changes in children's health care and take the time to answer any question parents may have. They treat your child's overall health, including allergies, asthma, and ADHD (Attention-Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder).

Pediatric Place of Tampa offers Urgent Care hours to accommodate sick children after work, school, and/or daycare. Urgent Care hours are available Monday - Friday until 7pm and Sat-

Pediatric Place of Tampa is located at 1338 W. Fletcher Avenue, Tampa, FL 33612. For more information, or to schedule an appointment, call 813-264-2288.









Social Isolation



How to make good friends is a common concern among children and teens, and one that I hear often as a clinician. On the heels of the COVID-19 pandemic, feelings of loneliness and disconnection have become pervasive in our society and the youngest among us are not exempt. The challenges in establishing connections in youth are well known; we are familiar with the first day of school jitters, lunchroom anxiety, and the range of emotions associated with asking someone to a dance or the prom.

However, kids today face a unique set of challenges and insecurities that have undoubtedly been exacerbated by the pandemic. According to data provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in a 2021 survey of high school students, 44% reported that they persistently felt sad or hopeless during the past year.

Everyone needs social connections to survive and thrive. Social support can be defined as the help provided by family, friends, groups, and communities, and it is noted to fulfill a variety of emotional and social needs. Additionally, social support is associated with benefits such as improved physical health, higher resilience to stress, improved self-esteem, overall greater life satisfaction, and emotional well being. Youth who feel connected to adults and peers at school are significantly less likely to experience depressive symptoms, have suicidal ideations, or attempt suicide.

So what can we do to help the children and teens in our lives?

First, it is important to examine the factors contributing to their social isolation:

Is the child being bullied?

Adjusting to a recent move?

Attending a new school?

Having trouble fitting in? Why?

It may also help to:

- 1. Increase community involvement: A great way to explore your child's current interests by having them participate in extracurricular activities, volunteering, or religious groups. This could open the door to meet like-minded people, and connect with others they might not normally interact with. It is important that activities are not forced, and the experience is enjoyable for your child.
- 2. Encourage nurturing existing relationships: Encourage your child to reach out to friends and family. Teach them that it is important to prioritize maintaining their most important relationships, even when other areas of their lives are busy.
- 3. Encourage using professional support: Teachers, doctors, therapists, social workers, and other professionals can help your child solve problems that are more complicated, or too difficult to tackle alone.

If interested in learning more, please contact Sheryl Henry, LMHC at Life Connections: 813.265.3859 or www.lifeconnectionsonline.org

Women Are Making Disciples Through The Well Training Ministry

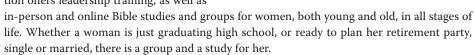
By Karen McBride

Women Making Disciples

Susie Walther, president and founder of The Well Training and Discipleship Ministry began the organization to establish women in their faith and relationship with Jesus and to equip them for ministry in their everyday lives.

"We are not a community of perfect women, but we are a community of women learning how to love one another better," said Susie.

The inter-denominational organization offers leadership training, as well as



Targeted leadership training sessions are held throughout the year. Participants learn strategies on how to cultivate discipleship through a Bible study or group platform. Proven techniques can encourage women in their walk with $\operatorname{\mathsf{God}}$ and to really dig into $\operatorname{\mathsf{His}}$ word.

A New Centralized Facility

The Well has purchased land for a centralized facility and renovations are almost complete. The main building is a 6,000 square foot training space. The smaller building is a 1,500 square foot structure that will be the child watch center, where children are supervised by trained staff and can safely play while their moms, grandmothers, and foster parents can learn more about living and spreading God's word.

Upcoming Bible Studies

New and on-going virtual and in-person Bible studies are beginning in January. Groups include bible studies, book studies, accountability groups, Bible reading groups, and prayer groups. To see the Well calendar, a complete list of current studies, or to donate online go to http://thewelltraining.org







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Happy Aging Is Set to Music



If you're looking for a way to add an element of health and joy to the life of a senior, music might be just the ticket.

Our lives are governed by rhythmic patterns from before birth, as we listen to a mother's heartbeat and the cadence of her speech. That might be part of what makes music a positive, appealing experience for most people in the last years of their lives. Now research has found that music can also help people heal.

Studies prove it: Music therapy works!

We always provide free assessments. Call us today! 813.908.8303

Lori Barhonovich lori@liveathome1.com

Kidz Corner: Fire Safety

Hi! I'm Harley, the monthly writer of the Kidz Korner articles. In November, my American Heritage Girls troop camped out for two nights in Hillsborough State Park. We learned about fire safety and building the first night we were there. We learned about different types of fire starters (like flint and steel, magnesium, the bow and drill, and fire plough), types of firewood, types of fire frameworks, and first aid for burns.

The next day, the girls found dead cabbage palm leaves, pencil-lead-size sticks, and witch's hair (a type of mossy thing) to burn and built the four different frameworks at the three different firepits and lit them. We had to keep our fires burning for at least five minutes, and then roast a marshmallow over them.

Keeping the fire going was harder than I anticipated, and because I don't like my marshmallows burnt in the first place, I just held my marshmallow over the fire long enough for it to get gooey, then I ate it whole.

The experience was enjoyable, but there's a

lesson in it, too. Just like we have to stay safe around a fire and not walk too close, so we won't get burnt, we have to stay safe from sin. Just like we need to build a fire in a safe place where a forest fire won't start and then stay away, we need boundaries in our lives, so we don't fall into the spiritual flames.

Harley Isabel Smith is a 4th grader who has been featured on TV as a philanthropist, has a heart for evangelism, and writes monthly for the Gazette's Kid's Corner. Visit https://harley-isabelsmith.com where she is constantly adding written and video content to entertain and educate children. Matthew 19:14 Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Tampa Bay Dance Club

December 2022 Schedule 12/02 Singer Jorge Perez 12/09 DJ Mike Unwin 12/16 John Ricky

Singer and Plays All the Music You Like First Timers Free Admission Singer and Keyboard Player

Dances every Friday night! Everyone is welcome. Doors open at 6:30-pm, goes from 7:30pm-10:30pm. Non-member admission \$12. Dress code is casual. 8401 W. Hillsborough Ave. at the Lutheran Church of our Savior. Weekly broadcast on Facebook: Tampa Bay Dance Club or Tampa Bay Dancing. Email: bdanceclub@aol.com

Do You Have a Plan for Staying Healthier Through the Holidays?

The holiday season has looked a little different for many of us these past couple of years. And as we continue to emerge from the recent chaos and confusion, we will still experience the usual stress and temptations to eat lots of unhealthy food. I think it's important to remember to find the joy during this season and pay extra attention to our mental health, especially while trying to attend the traditions or gatherings we've loved in years past. Here are a few tips to help you stay healthy through the holiday season:

Light. Leading up to the winter solstice (December 21, 2022) is the darkest time of the year, remember that natural sunlight (or the lack of) can have a big impact on our mental health. Try to find a way to get outside during the daylight time, or at least get /allow more of it coming through the windows. If you can't get enough natural light, supplementing with the right kinds of artificial light can help.

Connect. Whether virtual or in-person, we need to connect with people. It might take a bit more creativity, but connecting with others, and laughing, and touch, all improve our mental well-being. Hugs are healthy!

Identify. The first step is to understand what's causing your stress, mental health, and physical health issues. Then you can work on a plan to minimize it, counteract it, find alternatives, etc.

Exercise. Regular exercise can boost serotonin, endorphins, and other feel-good brain chemicals. It also helps us stay healthy, sleep better, and can even help you achieve a few of the other tips in this email such as exercising outside to get more daylight or with friends to build connection, etc.

Mindset. Sometimes we just need to reframe our mindset. Instead of focusing on the expectations, demands, or disappointments, remind yourself every situation is what we make of it. We can adjust the expectations or demands we have for ourselves. We can find joy in different places. We can get creative and try new or different things that work better given the current circumstances.

Self-care. This time of year, it's more important than ever, but can seem even harder to implement. What can you do to make sure you're carving out enough time to fill your own cup?

Healthy eating. It's okay to include in treats, but just try to balance it out with the healthier stuff in between to keep your immune system up. It feels good to eat treats in the moment, but often they leave us feeling not as good long-term, so pack in some extra nutrients in between.

Prioritize sleep. We all function better with a good night's rest, but it doesn't mean it's easy to get. Making it a priority helps us to avoid staying up too late, drinking too much, or eating too late at night. Let's try incorporating practices to help us de-stress and unwind, such as prayer, journaling, meditation, drinking calming teas, practicing gratitude. And getting reflexology can help to get that time to be used for actually sleeping.

Reflexology can be a great tool to help you cope with everything. It's always okay to book an extra session (or 5) and to carve out time to put your needs for health and relaxation first.

Here's to your health! Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas!

Affectionately, Louise Richardson, Reflexologist.

Merry Christmas from Dunndeal Publications!



Alkaline Your Water - Drink Healthy!

Recipe:

One chopped lemon ½ cucumber (slices)
Mint leaves 1 tsp baking soda
Ginger & turmeric root (chopped) 1 quart of aloe
Eggplant (is not required but good for cholesterol control)

Place in a 2 gallon jug for easy access in your refrigerator.

GFWC Helps Meals On Wheels



GFWC Lutz-Land O'lakes Woman's Club member volunteers showed up in force at the Tampa offices of Meals on Wheels to wrap the large Christmas gift donation boxes which will be spread throughout the community. Hopefully these boxes will be filled to the brim with Christmas gifts for the shut-in clients of Meals on Wheels.

The elderly and infirm will enjoy their Christmas surprises since often this is the only social contact they may have during the holidays. For more information, please visit gfwclutz-landola-keswomansclub.org or its Facebook page.

Members who wrapped the donation boxes stacked behind them

Volunteer Opportunity

Florida's Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program needs volunteers to join its corps of dedicated advocates who protect the rights of elders who live in nursing homes, assisted living facilities and adult family care homes. The program's local councils are seeking additional volunteers to identify, investigate and resolve residents' concerns. Special training and certification is provided.

All interested individuals who care about protecting the health, safety, welfare and rights of long-term care facility residents—who often have no one else to advocate for them—are encouraged to call toll-free 1-888-831-0404 or visit the program's website at http://ombudsman.myflorida.com.

December 2022

6

Christmas Letter 2022

Phone: 813-949-4411

River of Life Church

You better not pout, you better not cry, you better be good, I'm telling you why...Does it sound familiar? Much of our childhood leaning reinforces our need to "be good" or we will not get what we want. The bribery of a wanted gift and the threat of the dreaded lump of coal conditions us to believe that we won't be loved, we won't measure up, and we will be punished unless we are "good enough". Are you "good enough"?

What is good enough? Is it perfect obedience to our parents? Our schoolteachers? Our boss or whoever is "in charge"? Is there a standard to follow, a road map to perfection to receive the reward? When we measure ourselves against some perfect requirement, we all fall short. Our failures keep us in that "not good enough" category. Some people spend their lives adding up the reminders of their "not good enough" condition until the hope of receiving any reward is too impossible. The shame of failure and guilt of wrongs appear to be irreversible.

RUT

"Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord" (Lk. 2:10.11)

A Savior is someone who can deliver us from those things that are too strong for us to break, too heavy for us to carry, too broken for us to fix. Someone who will do for us what we could not do for ourselves.

As we celebrate this Christmas season, let us remember that we have all been given gifts of immeasurable value because we have a Savior of infinite love and strength. He gives us His righteousness, His peace, His joy. He makes us perfect and qualified to receive every good and perfect gift. We can't make ourselves what we need to be, but we can freely receive all we need from the only one who has already purchased the gift with our name on it.

Merry Christmas from Pastors Dan and Dianne and all the River of Life Church staff. 410 E. Chapman Rd. Lutz, FL 33549 (813) 949-9931 • www.roltampa.org

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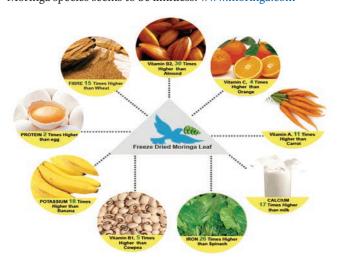
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Extreme weather can damage and kill this remarkable species. Every part of this tree can be used for the health and nourishment of humans and domestic animals: the leaves, the flowers, the roots, and bark all have nutritional properties. Additionally, the entire plant can be plowed back into the earth to nourish the soil, or the leaves may be used as mulch to fertilize and feed other crops. The leaves may be ground, mixed with water and sprayed onto plants as a natural pesticide. When the seeds are crushed, they may be used to filter and purify water. The benefits of the Moringa species seems to be limitless. www.moringa.com



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Walk-Ins Welcome

The Great Florida Outdoors: Bees

Dr. Robert Norman, Clinical Professor, Dermatology, Nova Southeastern University

Although there are many other organisms (e.g., butterflies, moths, beetles, and birds) that contribute to pollination services, bees are likely the most important pollinators of native plants in Florida. In addition to ensuring the reproductive success of native plants, many of our crop plants

depend on bees and wild pollinators for fruit set, the process of a flower forming a berry. And Invasive plant species may also exploit native pollinators for ensuring fruit set.

Did you know there are over 320 species of bees in Florida? And over 4,000 species of bees in the United States?

Wild bees vary widely in behavior, color, size, and shape. Often the color variation is widespread throughout Florida. Many of our endemic Florida subspecies have darker red coloration that usually is yellow further north.

The vast majority of bees found in Florida are species that have more extensive distributions to the north o+f the state. Some are widespread across the United States while others are restricted to sandy areas of the Southeastern Coastal plain. Florida has a relatively large number of endemic species and subspecies.

We all seem to know about honey bees, the ubiquitous, medium-sized bees that live in large colonies and are used intensively for honey production and agricultural pollination. The only honey bee species in Florida is the non-native European honey bee (Apis mellifera).

As noted in Bee Basics (see reference), "Most people do not realize that there were no honey bees in America before European settlers brought hives from Europe. These resourceful animals promptly managed to escape from domestication. As they had done for millennia in Europe and Asia, honey bees formed swarms and set up nests in hollow trees. Native pollinators, especially bees other than honey bees, have been pollinating the continent's flowering plants since long before the arrival of honey bees. Even in today's vastly altered landscapes, they continue to do the yeomen's share of pollination, especially when it comes to native plants."

From where do bees come?

Back to Bee Basics. "Bees are descended from wasps. Most wasps are carnivores; they either prey upon or parasitize other insects or spiders, and use this rich protein source to feed their young. About 125 million years ago, when the first flowering plants evolved, some wasps made a switch from hunting prey to gathering pollen for their brood. Perhaps they were hunting for insects that visited flowers and ate some of the pollen or drank the nectar along with their prey. It didn't take much to find the advantages of consuming pollen over hunting. Pollen is rich in proteins and doesn't fight back, so it is easy to imagine why the bees became vegetarians. Gathering pollen and nectar requires certain adaptations different from those of hunters, so they started to change, to evolve to meet these requirements and consequently became bees. Even today, there are bees that appear very similar to wasps. Like wasps, some bees are also nearly hairless; and like female wasps, only female bees have stingers."

Sweat bees are very small to medium and often brilliantly metallic-colored bees of the family Halictidae. The bees are a diverse and common group of bees with 66 Florida species. They are attracted to sweat and will land on your skin to take a drink.

Leafcutter bees (26 Florida species) are a diverse group of solitary bees in the genus Megachile. This species is known for cutting round segments of leaves used to line their nest cells and are most easily identified by the pollen-carrying hairs under their abdomens.

 $Mason\ bees\ (14\ Florida\ species)\ are\ solitary\ bees\ in\ the\ family\ Megachilidae\ and\ tribe\ Osmiini.$

Most are metallic dark blue and some are black and white striped. Mason bees are known for lining their nest cavities and entrances with mud.

Bumblebees (6 Florida species) are in the family Apidae, genus Bombus, and are most easily identified by their robust size, hairy abdomens, and packed pollen balls on female hind legs, similar to honeybees. The hair color on the abdomen may include black, yellow, white, and orange.

Carpenter bees (5 Florida species) are wood-boring bees in the family Apidae. Two genera of carpenter bees exist—large (Xylocopa) and small (Ceratina). The large carpenter bees may be mistaken for bumblebees but the carpenter bees have a shiny, smooth, and less hairy abdomen. The small carpenter bees are dark and shiny.

Long-horned bees (24 Florida species) are in the family Apidae and tribe Eucerini. The species includes specialists on sunflowers and squash. Females can be recognized by having very hairy and robust hind legs. The males have very long antennae, giving rise to their common name.

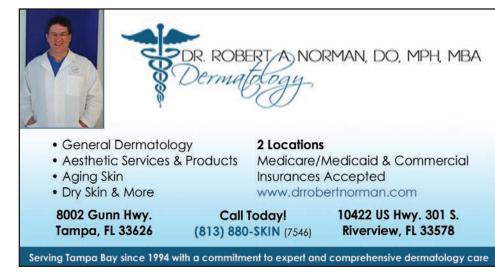
Mining bees (63 Florida species) are a diverse group of ground-nesting bees in the family Andrenidae. Two main genera exist in Florida, Andrena (small to large-sized bees) and Perdita (very small bees). Mining bees are known for digging deep holes in the ground in which they nest.

Plasterer or cellophane bees (26 Florida species) achieve their name from the cellophane-like substance that they create to line their nests. Plasterer bees include two genera: Colletes (black with light hairs, often striped abdomens) and Hylaeus (yellow-faced bees).

Cuckoo bees (73 Florida species) are called kleptoparasitic, or nest parasites of other bees. The female cuckoo bees will enter nests of other species and lay their eggs on pollen collected by the other mothers. Cuckoo bees have lost much of their pollencarrying hairs and thus may appear more wasp-like. Where can you find these amazing creatures called bees and plants like the Gallberry and Climbing Aster?



Get out into The Great Florida Outdoors!







The Days of Advent

December Day #1 The Holy Land: Luke 1:26

Nearly 2000 years ago on the sun-washed land between the Jordan river and the Mediterranean Sea, a miraculous story was about to unfold. A story so glorious that to this day we call this land the Holy Land. During this time most of the people lived in small towns or villages, such as Nazareth, Bethlehem, and Jaffa. They were herders, farmers and craftspeople who worked hard but rested on the Sabbath day and gave thanks to God.



December Day #2 The Prophecy Luke 1:30

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Although many of the people of the Holy Land were Jewish, they were governed by the Romans. And the Romans made life hard for the Jews. They treated them harshly and treated them and denied them any religious freedom. In those hard times, the Jewish people remembered what the prophets had foretold them someday God would send them a savior who would deliver them from their oppressors.

December Day #3 Mary: Luke 1:31

In the village of Nazareth lived a young woman named Mary as a child she went with her mother to the Jerusalem temple which she learned to pray and live an honest life. When she grew up, Mary was promised in marriage to a carpenter named Joseph. who loved her for her kind and generous ways and for the wisdom in her heart.

December Day #4 Gabriel: Luke 1:32

One day the angel Gabriel came to Mary, bringing wonderful news. His face was kind and full of compassion, yet Mary trembled before him. "Do not be afraid Mary," he said. "God is pleased with you, and he has chosen you to be the mother of his son. This child will be called Jesus, and his goodness will light up the world. He will rule the Kingdom of David and his rule will never end."

December Day #5 Joseph: Luke 1:38

Not long after the angel Gabriel's visit to Mary, another Angel appeared to Joseph in a dream and said: "Joseph. I have come to tell you of a great miracle," "Mary is soon to be the mother of God's son. God has seen what you are wise and strong, and because of your great wisdom and kindness. He has chosen you to be the guardian of his child."

December Day #6 Roman Rule: Luke 2:1

Soon after they were married. Joseph and Mary were in the busy marketplace in Nazareth. Suddenly a chariot driven by a Roman soldier, came clattering through the streets. "I bring a message from your emperor," The driver told the villagers." Caesar demands to know how many people live in the royal Kingdom, so all of you must return to the city of your birth should be counted and to register as taxpayers." "From this day forward, you will all pay taxes to Caesar Augustus. This is the emperor's royal decree." For marrying Joseph this was startling news, for Joseph was descended from the family of David, the great king of Israel and since Joseph had been born in the city of Bethlehem, where David had been born. The emperor's decree means that they would have to travel to Bethlehem at once. Mary and Joseph went home to prepare for their long journey.

December Day #7 Setting Off to Bethlehem: Luke 2:3

Joseph brought their donkey up to the door. There he had harnessed the animal and fill its saddlebags with food and clothing for their journey. He packed a sack of fodder for the donkey, too. "Mary, I'm sorry we cannot wait until after the baby is born to make the trip," said Joseph." I am not afraid," said Mary. "Our baby has been blessed by the Lord."

December Day #8 The Journey Luke 2:4-5

Joseph helped Mary climb onto the donkey back, then he led the donkey slowly away from their home, down the street of Nazareth and into the countryside. The road took Them through the fields filled with screeching birds in a wilderness area inhabited by howling jackals. Now and then. Joseph and Mary felt afraid. But they comfort each other and spoke of their faith in God. Clip, clop, clip, clop with the donkeys' hooves as they trotted up the street, of a dusty trail. Clip, club, clip, with the donkey Stanley down winding hills and rocky paths. The stones hurt Joseph's feet in the sun made Mary drowsy. But the road to Bethlehem was a long one, and they still had many miles to go. finally the trail led them down to the sandy desert with its long hot days in cold nights. Joseph and Mary prayed they would be safe.

December Day #9 The Star Luke 2:6

Miles away, in lands far from one another three kings—Melchior of Arabia, Caspar of Tharsis, and Balthazar of Saba—were each glazing at a star they have never seen before, the three kings were called wise men because they spent their days studying the universe, when they consulted their books they saw that this new star was this sign the great king was about to be born.

December Day #10 The Wise Men Luke 2:7

Bringing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, the three wise men set out following this wondrous new star knowing that it would lead them to the newborn king. After traveling for many days and many nights, the three wise men met in the desert, When they learned they were all following the same star and so they decided to continue their journey together.

December Day #11 An Oasis Luke 2:8

Bringing meanwhile as the road to Bethlehem stretched on and on. Mary felt the baby stirring within her. she prayed for his safety and the donkey carrying her over the stretches of sand and rocks and how thirsty she was! But Mary knew they had to make their water last and only allowed herself take small sips at a time. "Don't worry, Mary," said Joseph. "God is watching. he will provide for us." At last, their faith was rewarded. "Look!" cried Joseph. "An oasis!" A small pool of water glistened ahead. Joseph led Mary to the cool water where they bathed and quenched their thirst. Mary and Joseph said a prayer of thanks for this refreshing gift. Even the donkey paraded happily as he splashed in the water. Mary and Joseph rested under the shade of the palm trees and fell fast asleep.

December Day #12 Jerusalem Luke 2:9

All three wise men followed the star across this desert. They could see it easily because it glowed much more brightly then the others. But as they came closer to Jerusalem, a thick band of clouds covered the night sky like a blanket so that they could no longer see any stars at all. "Now we don't know which way to go," said Balthazar. "Let us ask in Jerusalem. Surely someone there will have heard of this new king." The next morning, in the bustling streets of Jerusalem, the wise men asked, "Has the new king been born here?" "A new king?" asked one. "That would be good news indeed!" "No new king," said another. "Just the same cruel King Herod who profits from our misery."

December Day #13 Faithful Servant Luke 2:10

Suddenly a voice boomed out, "What traitor dares to insult King Herod?" shouted a well-dressed man who was Herod's high priest. A silence fell over the frightened crowd. "There can be but one king in Jerusalem!" thundered Herod's faithful servant. Then the wise men told him about the new star that had appeared—a sign that a great King would soon be born.

Merry Christmas!

December Day #14 King Herod Luke 2:11

The king's high priest hurried off to tell Herod about the three wise men who were spreading rumors about the new king. "Who were riding fine camels and wearing rich robes," report by the priest, "and they speak of a child-king it will become the king of the Jews." "How can that be?" cried Herod in anger. "I'm the king. There only can be no other! "The three kings spoke of an ancient prophecy," the high priest continued. "What prophecy?" asked Herod. "I do not believe in prophecies!" "They said that God promised to deliver a savior to the people of Israel," replied the priest. "A savior will be born in Bethlehem, and all will worship him." "Bring these strangers to me at once!"

December Day #15 The Search Luke 2:12

Soon after, Melchior, Caspar, and Balthazar stood before the king Herod's throne. "Go to Bethlehem," ordered the king. "Search for this child-king so that I, too may worship him." When the clouds lifted, the three wise men set out again to follow the star to Bethlehem. Of course, they did not know that Herod intended to destroy the new baby as soon as he was found!

December Day #16 Bethlehem Luke 2:13-14

Refreshed from a good night's sleep at the Oasis. Mary and Joseph continue on the road to Bethlehem. They began to see other families on the road like themselves who may have made the journey from a distance town to obey the emperor's decree. "It can't be far now," said Joseph. "Soon we will have proper shelter." Mary prayed that Joseph was right and that they would reach Bethlehem before the baby's birth. Joseph stops to rest at the top of a hill. Joseph fed what was left of the fodder to their donkey karma and then they each took a sip of water they had brought from the oasis. Joseph surveyed the land that stretched out before them. "Look!" He exclaimed. Mary stood up to look where Joseph was pointing. There was a town just beyond the next hill. "Bethlehem!" cried Mary. Once again God had answered their prayers.

December Day #17 The Inn Luke 2:16

Eagerly, Joseph led Mary to the first inn they saw. But it was already filled with travelers. They went on to the next end, into another one after that, but none of the inns had rooms to spare. So many people had come home to Bethlehem to be counted and the city overflowed with visitors. Joseph and Mary had no choice but to keep looking for a place to stay.

December Day #18 The Dream Luke 2:17

That morning, their campsite not far from Bethlehem, the three wise men woke to discover an amazing thing. An angel had appeared to them in their dreams. "Do not return to Jerusalem," said the angel. "King Herod was not truthful with you. He does not plan to worship the newborn king. Instead, he plans to do him harm."

December Day #19 The Stable Luke 2:20

In Bethlehem, Joseph tried one more inn. It was their last hope. "I'm sorry. We are full," said the innkeeper. "Please," said Joseph. "My wife is with child, and she is tired. Is there no other place we can stay?" asked Joseph. The innkeeper took pity on the young couple and led them to the stable. "At least here you will have a roof over your heads." he said.

December Day #20 The Manger Matthew 2:1

The stable had had everything they needed. Joseph found a lamp to provide them with light. The donkey found sweet-smelling hay to eat. And Mary found an empty manger. The animals watched with gentle eyes as Mary cleaned the manger and filled it with straw and soft cloths. "Look, Joseph," she called. "A crib for our baby!"

December Day #21 Good News Matthew 2:10

"At last!" cried Melchior as they came to the road into Bethlehem. "Now that we have come to our journey's end, we must spread the good news to one and all!" rejoiced Caspar. So under the dark covers of the clouds, the three kings spoke to the crowds that had gathered in the city of Bethlehem and told them of the prophecy.

December Day #22 Heavenly Light Isaiah 9:6

As the three kings addressed the crowd in Bethlehem, all at once the dark clouds parted, and the sky was bathed in a radiant light. The people were filled with wonder as they gazed into the heavens. In the hills nearby, some shepherds saw the same light where they have been tending their sheep, but when the heavenly light broke through clouds, they fell to the ground in fear.

December Day #23 Holy Night John 3:16

People in town and villages for miles around and all the shepherds in the fields covered their eyes to shield them from the blinding rays. When they looked up, the glory of the Lord was all around them, and the sky was filled with singing angels. One voice could be heard above all others: "Fear not," said the angels of the Lord, "for we bring tidings to great joy. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a savior who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign: you will find the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and laying in a manger." And then the sweet voice of the angels rang out like bells: "Glory to God in the highest: Peace on earth goodwill toward men." And the hearts of the people we're filled with gladness.

December Day #24 Baby Jesus John 3:16

And when the angels had returned to heaven, the people in the towns and villages for miles around and the shepherds in all the fields hurried to Bethlehem to find the new baby who was the son of God. The stars light guiding them to the stable. There they saw Mary and Joseph watching over the baby Jesus, who laid in a manger just as the Angel of the Lord had said." It is the holy child of God!" they whispered to one another. The soft breathing of the sheep and gentle lowing of the cows mingled with the faint coos of the tiny baby, and the people saw that this simple stable was far more splendid as any place the could imagine. The wise men, dressed in their jeweled crowns and silk robes stepped into the humble stable. When they saw baby Jesus with Mary, they fell to their knees and worshipped him. The donkey and the lamb and all the other animals in the stable bowed down their heads to the mighty king to honor him, too. The three kings brought out their treasures of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, and laid them before the tiny baby. Mary accepted these gifts with grace, as she had accepted all the gifts that had been given to the Christ child, no matter how small. The people knew that at long last the ancient prophecy had been fulfilled. A savior had indeed been delivered onto them. "This is the day that God had made blessed," said Caspar, "This is he who will give strength to his people," said Melchior. "Today will be remembered always," said Balthazar. And after they left, the people who had seen the Christ child that night became the messengers of the Lord. They told everyone about all that they had seen and heard. In time, the message spread to all countries and to children everywhere. And so it is that at Christmas we celebrate the birth of the blessed baby who was born one starry night in a peaceful stable in Bethlehem.

Suncoast Credit Union Helps Babies Who Are Visually Impaired Meet Developmental Milestones



The Lighthouse for the Visually Impaired and Blind (LVIB) has received a generous grant from Suncoast Credit Union, Florida's largest credit union, to help babies who are visually impaired learn the adapted skills needed to meet their unique developmental milestones.

"Every child deserves a fulfilling educational experience and we want to do what we can to make that a reality. Developing life skills is so important as they are a fundamental part of life," said Cindy Helton, Executive Director, Suncoast Credit Union Foundation. "Supporting LVIB is a natural fit for Suncoast, as we both share the similar goal of promoting the education, health, and wellbeing of children in our communities."

Since its inception in 1990, the Foundation has raised and donated over \$36 million to help provide a better future for the children of our

community. Each time a Suncoast member uses their debit or credit card, two cents are donated to the Foundation to support local initiates, like LVIB.

Suncoast Credit Union puts members first and enriches our local communities. The credit union offers lower rates on loans, higher earnings on deposits and more fee-free services so you can live your best life. Learn more and apply for membership at suncoastcreditunion.com.

Stefanie Pontlitz, Lighthouse CEO, is so grateful to the Suncoast Credit Union for providing this grant and for all the good work they do in community. She said, "The babies program is vital to ensuring these children reach their milestones. The work done in this program provides the confidence and reassurance for the parents and the families and creates the foundation for the child's future."

The "Little Lighthouse" Early Intervention Program at LVIB teaches babies, young children, and their parents, adapted skills and ways to use residual vision and other senses so that babies are able to meet their unique developmental milestones and be as prepared as possible to enter the school system. The program also assists parents and professionals with developing advocacy skills so they are able to obtain the equipment and other educational supports needed by the child in preschool and kindergarten. Learn more at www.lvib.org/programs/little-lighthouse.

About The Lighthouse

LVIB is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit which operates in Pasco, Hernando, and Citrus. The mission of the LVIB is to educate, empower, and employ people who are visually impaired and blind. LVIB receives partial funding therefore must fundraise to meet the demand for programs and services.

About Suncoast Credit Union

Suncoast Credit Union is the largest credit union in the state of Florida, the 10th largest in the United States based on membership, and the 10th largest in the United States based on its \$15.8 billion in assets. Chartered in 1934 as Hillsborough County Teachers Credit Union, Suncoast Credit Union currently operates 75 full-service branches and serves more than one million members in 40 counties across Florida. As a community credit union, anyone who lives, works, attends school, or worships in Suncoast Credit Union's service area is eligible for membership. In 2021, Suncoast Credit Union's field of membership was expanded to include public K-12 teach-

ers, college educators, and educational support staff from all of Florida's 67 counties. Suncoast is passionate about community support. Since its founding in 1990, the Suncoast Credit Union Foundation has raised and donated more than \$36 million to organizations and initiatives that support the health, education, and emotional well-being of children in the communities that the credit union serves. For more information, visit suncoastcreditunion.com or follow us on social media: Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Instagram.

Phone: 813-949-4411



GFWC Donates to Sunrise Shelter

GFWC Lutz-Land O'Lakes Woman's Club members held a very successful fundraiser to benefit Sunrise Shelter of Pasco County. This domestic violence facility has long provided free emergency shelter and services to women and children in need of protection. The club women have supported this facility for many years and particularly during October, which is designated as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

The club was proud to present a donation of \$1,000 to the Sunrise Shelter to support its mission, as well as a truckload of donated handbags





filled to the brim with personal hygiene and other needed items for the women and children in residence.

Note that club President Elayne Bassinger has serious baking skills as shown in her "cupcake" butterfly cake creation frosted in purple icing in keeping with the purple theme of Domestic Violence and Abuse.

Happy Holidays From Social Security

By Javier Morales, Social Security Public Affairs in South Florida

The holiday season brings us feelings of warmth and joy. At Social Security, we want you to know we share the same joy when it comes to serving you, whether it be in person, by telephone, or online. Our online services are available to help you do business with us in an easy, convenient, and secure way. It all starts with a personal my Social Security account. More than 70 million people have signed up for their personal account to conduct their business online! You can create a personal my Social Security account to:

- \bullet Apply for retirement, spouses, or disability benefits.
- Apply for Medicare.
- \bullet Check your application status.

If you receive benefits, you can use your personal my Social Security account to:

- Change your address. (Social Security benefits only)
- \bullet Set up or change your direct deposit information. (Social Security benefits only)
- Instantly get proof of benefits.
- Print your SSA-1099.

If you do not receive Social Security benefits, you can use a personal my Social Security account to:

- $\bullet \ Get \ personalized \ retirement \ benefit \ estimates.$
- Get your Social Security Statement.
- \bullet Get estimates for spouse's benefits.
- Get instant proof that you do not receive benefits.

You can use our services on-the-go or from the comfort of your home. Please visit www.ssa.gov/myaccount to view the services available to you. We want you to have a safe, happy holiday season and know that we are here for you.





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Celebrate The Holidays Responsibly

Pasco Sheriff's Office is urging individuals to celebrate responsibly this holiday season. This includes not firing guns into the air, practicing proper firework safety and not driving distracted or impaired.

Celebratory gunfire endangers the health and safety of our community. Bullets fired into the air must eventually fall back down. However, where that bullet lands presents a danger to citizens. Falling bullets can still cause severe injury or even death. Factors such as wind also have the ability to carry a bullet into more populated areas away from the location at which the gun was originally fired, presenting an even greater danger to others. As such, PSO urges citizens to celebrate responsibly, and leave celebratory gunfire out

While fireworks can be fun, it's imperative to ensure they're used safely. If not handled properly, fireworks can cause injuries and damage. Always check that fireworks are legal in your area before buying or using them. Have a hose or bucket of water nearby in case of a fire. Light fireworks one at a time outdoors away from flammable objects, vehicles, buildings and people. Once lit, back up quickly to a safe distance. Never allow children to play with or ignite fireworks. Do not try to re-light or pick up fireworks that have not ignited fully. Soak all used fireworks in a bucket of water before disposing them in a trash can.

When you commit to driving, remember the responsibility you have. Not only are you in control of operating your vehicle, but your decisions may impact others on the road. Help everyone arrive at their destinations safely and focus on the road while driving. Always designate a sober driver before heading out and wear your seatbelt.

Consider other ways to celebrate the holidays. Try safe noise-making alternatives such as party horns, clapping noise makers and bells. To share some light or sparkle at celebrations, use glow sticks, confetti poppers, streamers and ballon drops. Attend a public display of fireworks, leaving the igniting and clean-up to the professionals.\

Holidays can be filled with great memories when celebrated responsibly. Taking a few extra safety steps can help that. Stay safe, Pasco!

Liberty Manor

The dedicated staff from Bloomin Brands, Carrabba's, and Outback Steakhouse hosted a Community Service Day and a luncheon for the Veterans at Liberty Manor

At Bloomin' Brands, we are constantly working to improve how we support Our People, preserve Our Environment, and increase the quality and sustainability of Our Ingredients in order to provide an exceptional guest experience.

Our first commitment as a company has always been to Our People. We are proud to foster a welcoming and inclusive culture where teammembers can thrive, be themselves, and deliver memorable experiences to our guests

It is also our privilege to invest in the well-being of our communities, supporting our neighbors, first responders, and others in need. To protect Our Environment, we prioritize working with key stakeholders to build on our current progress and identify new measures that include conserving water, operating with more energy efficiency, and redirecting excess food away from landfills into the hands of

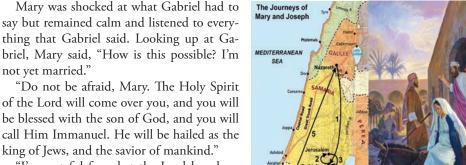
people who might otherwise go hungry. Focusing on Our Ingredients means keeping our longstanding dedication to food safety and seeking opportunities to improve the sustainability of the items we buy. And, it includes teaming with leading experts to identify best practices and holding suppliers accountable

for helping to preserve our environment and the ethical and humane treatment of animals. We will be bringing people together on this journey, in our restaurants, in our communities, and within our industry. We embrace our inherent responsibilities and are proud to share the progress we have made.

The mission of Liberty Manor for Veterans; Inc. is to promote the developmental and social needs of disabled and honorably discharged veterans who have fallen victim to homelessness providing transitional; supported housing and establishing objectives designed to attribute to self-sufficiency. Anyone interested in assisting this meritorious initiative please contact Connie Lindsay (813) 900-9422, the Liberty Manor for Veterans (a 501c3 nonprofit organization), website at http://www.libertymanor.org, 10015 N 9th Street Tampa, FL 33612, or the mailing address P.O. Box 274081 Tampa, FL 33688-4081. Veterans are certainly worthy of our help. EIN #02-0775720.

What is Christmas All About?

Continued from Page 1



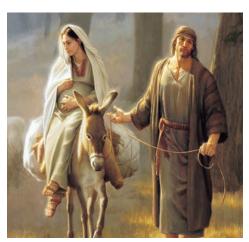
of the Lord will come over you, and you will be blessed with the son of God, and you will call Him Immanuel. He will be hailed as the

"I'm grateful for what the Lord has done for me, and I'm happy to have His wish come through me."

Afterwards, Mary explained to Joseph what the angel had to say, about God's wish and the son she was going to have, and because Joseph was a good man, he accepted everything Mary had to say, and made plans to marry.

Meanwhile, in the days to come, King Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census would be taken because he wanted every citizen throughout the entire Roman kingdom to be counted and documented.

And since Joseph was from Bethlehem, he had to go there to be counted, and Bethlehem was a long way from Nazareth. Joseph and Mary had a long, difficult journey ahead that had to be made on foot.



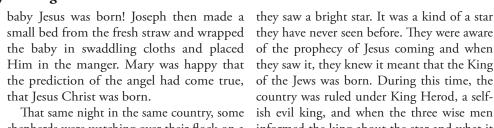
Mary, who was going to be giving birth, sat on a donkey as Joseph walked along. After many days through the desert, Joseph and Mary finally reached Bethlehem. It was getting dark when they reached the town, and they desperately needed a place to rest for the night, but all the inns were full, and no one had a place to spend the night.

Joseph walked all over town knocking on doors looking for a place, but no one had space for them. With Mary about to give birth, it was important she had a safe, comfortable place for the baby and herself.

It was beginning to look hopeless for a while, until Joseph finally found an empty barn built for cows. There was fresh straw there, and Joseph used it to make a bed for Mary and the manger.

Later that night, Mary gave birth and





That same night in the same country, some shepherds were watching over their flock on a hill. Suddenly they saw a bright light in the sky and in front of them was a beautiful angel.



Amazed, not knowing how to react, they listened as the angel spoke to them saying, "Don't be afraid. I come to give you good news. In the town of Bethlehem, a savior has been born, and His name is Jesus. Everyone will know of this news, so go in peace and spread the good news that a savior has come." Overjoyed, they ran towards Bethlehem to find baby Jesus, King of the Jews.

On the night Jesus was born, three wise men were traveling on their camels across the desert and suddenly a bright light came down on them and they looked up at the sky and



they have never seen before. They were aware of the prophecy of Jesus coming and when they saw it, they knew it meant that the King the prediction of the angel had come true, of the Jews was born. During this time, the country was ruled under King Herod, a selfish evil king, and when the three wise men informed the king about the star and what it meant, the king began to worry that he may lose his kingdom to this baby boy.

> Herod said, "Go and find this King of the Jews, Jesus, and let me know where he is so I can also worship him." But he was plotting to



kill the child. As the three wise men followed the star for several days, they found baby Jesus in a barn in the manger and were surprised to find the future King of the Jews lying in a manger where the star had led them.

They bowed down to baby Jesus with valuable gifts-gold, frankincense, and myrrh. It was highly unusual for anyone to give these precious things to a newborn baby.

For these types of gifts were only given to kings. But the wise men knew that this was no ordinary baby, and the wise men fully understood the purpose of Jesus Christ's birth. Now you know what Christmas is about. Amen!

Luke 2:1-13 • Luke 1:26-30 Galatians 4:3-5 • Isaiah 7:14 • Isaiah 9:6 Matthew 1:18-23 • John 1:14 Philippians 2:6-8 • Micah 5:2-3 Formulated by Dunndeal Publications



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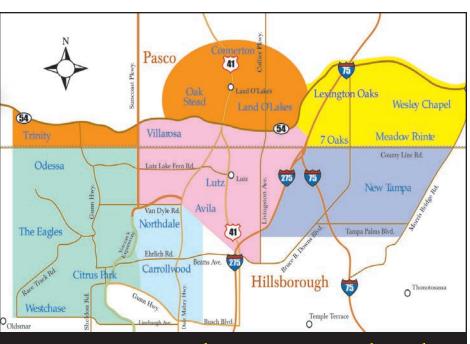
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