

# The Northeast Polk Gazette

Community News That Matters!

A Monthly Community Soft-News Source for the Northeast Polk County Area

May 2020



By: Nasif Ahmed, Contributing Cartoonist @NasifAhmed3

## May 12 is International Nurses Day: Not All Heroes Wear Capes. Some Wear Scrubs

By: Staff Writer.

**Polk County** - Each year, the International Councils of Nurses (ICN) leads the celebrations on International Nurses Day, which is traditionally held on May 12, the anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birth.

This year's celebrations will be extra special because the World Health Organization (WHO) has designated 2020 as The Year of the Nurse and Midwife, and because it will be the 200th anniversary of Nightingale's birth. To mark the occasion, ICN is planning and coordinating a wide range of activities throughout the year.

The theme for 2020, Nurses: A Voice to Lead – Nursing the World to Health, demonstrates how nurses are central to addressing a wide range of health challenges. It will encourage nurses and the public to celebrate the big day, but also provide information and resources that will help to raise the profile of the profession throughout the year and attract a new generation into the nursing family.

ICN President Annette Kennedy said she is expecting 2020 to be a momentous year for the profession:

“Having the Year of the Nurse and Midwife coincide with Florence Nightingale's bicentennial raises the exciting prospect of nurses finally being recognized for all the good they do.

All around the world, nurses are working tirelessly to provide the care and attention people need, whenever and wherever they need it.

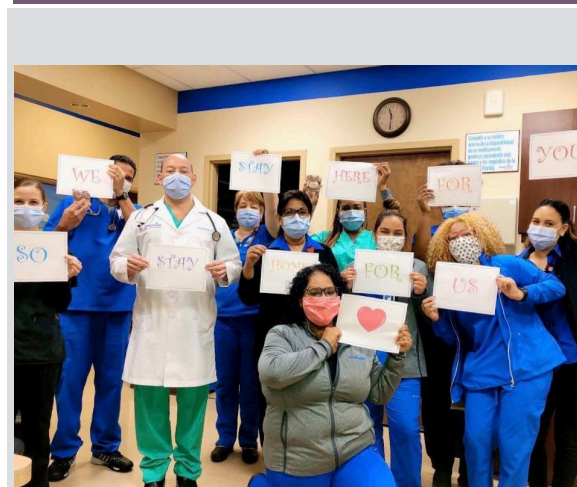
We want this year's International Nurses Day to highlight that nurses are central to the delivery of health care, that nurses are making invaluable contribution to the health of people globally. Nurses, because of their unique role of working with people from birth to death, need to be involved in health policy."

In addition, the world's National Nursing Associations will be organising local events throughout the year to celebrate the profession and demonstrate its unique position in the health-care landscape.

**The International Council of Nurses (ICN) is a federation of more than 130 national nurses' associations representing the millions of nurses worldwide. Operated by nurses and leading nursing internationally, ICN works to ensure quality care for all and sound health policies globally.**



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Community News that Matters

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The Northeast Polk Gazette

Community News that Matters

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## Founder / Editor's Message

**By: M.C. Reyes**

Hi Guys!

Welcome to The Northeast Polk Gazette. In case you are reading this newspaper for the first time, let me share with you our story.

On May 11 of 2019, my oldest daughter graduated from college. On that day, during the commencement acts, I was not only watching her become an adult, but I was also listening to one of the most motivational speeches I have heard in my life.

You see, the guest speaker was a prior student who, after graduating, went ahead and created her own community magazine. She had no idea what she was doing. All she knew was that she wanted to run her own magazine and that nothing was going to stop her... not even her inexperience.

Fast forward two months (this was back in July 2019), there I was, running my own community newspaper. A dream that started many years ago when I got my first rejection letter for an opinion article that I had written for the Orlando Sentinel. That rejection letter did a number on me and made me stop writing for a while... until one day, I tried again and, this time, the piece was published by them and, with that, came my new desire to become a journalist and to finally create my community newspaper.

My dream of starting the newspaper came with a lot of challenges, and one of them was being stationed overseas for three years due to my husband's active-duty military status. At that time, we were sent to Zimbabwe, Africa and my dreams of starting my beloved newspaper were put, once again, on the back burner.

In May 2016, we came back to the United States after my husband retired from the military and, after dealing with many health issues, I finally decided that it was time for me to make my dream of becoming a freelance writer for major publications come true... that was until one day, I received another rejection letter... this time from The New York Times. On that day, I again stopped writing and became involved in a program called Vet Voices to try to fill the void I had in my life.

Believe me when I say that Vet Voices was a gift sent from heaven. They not only gave my life a different meaning but also made me realize that there was a light at the end of the tunnel.

During my daughter's commencement ceremony, I had another gift sent from heaven... and this time it came in the form of a fellow journalist who, like me, had a dream. But, the difference between her and I was that she made hers become a reality, even when she had all the odds against her, and I was still wondering how to make mine come true. But, her speech made me realize that it was time to do it... that it was time for me to stop procrastinating... that it was time for me to stop allowing my fears to control my dreams.

On that day, I snapped out of my self-pity and decided that it was time... that the time for making my dream come true had arrived and that I needed to put my big girl pants on and do it. And I did. Oh boy, I did. The next day after that commencement ceremony, I took the first step and created the first page of my nonprofit community newspaper, which I tentatively called The Haines City Herald, but later on that night, I changed it to The Northeast Polk Gazette after my husband asked me to think bigger, which I did.

Now, here I am, writing this piece to present to you my biggest dream, my new baby, and the result of my hard work.

The truth is that this newspaper is not a typical newspaper. With this nonprofit community newspaper, I not only want to bring news that matters into our communities, but I also want to use it as a way to give back to our community since a portion of our ad sales will be used to support other nonprofit organizations.

I hope you guys give this newspaper a chance.. give me a chance to show you what hard work and dedication looks like. I promise you, I will not disappoint you.

Thank you in advance for your support.

With Love, Marielys Camacho-Reyes (M.C. Reyes)

**Interested in making a donation to our nonprofit? Visit our website at [www.thenepolkgazette.com](http://www.thenepolkgazette.com) to find out about the ways you can support our organization.**

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**Feature News**

**Here are Some of The Heroes in Our Community:  
Today, We Say... THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU**



Photo Provided: Winter Haven Hospital's Unit Nurses of the Year were honored in 2019, along with four Nurses of Excellence, selected by their peers. They are Bryanna Pierre-Paul, Rose Berlus, Tanisha Wesley and Douglas Grocholske. All award winners received their awards from BayCare Chief Nursing Officer Lisa Johnson, Polk Chief Nursing Officer Carol Koepfel-Olsen and WHH President Steve Nierman. Polk Clinical Professional Practice Manager Mia Brooks-Schemmel is also pictured.



Photo Provided: Bartow Regional Medical Center's Nurses of the Year for 2019 were, from left, Ed Barnhart, Lorna Hicher, Cal James, Sandy Collier, Dawn Leiva, Erin Garza and Debbie Kendrick. In front from left are Steven Gerst and Shania Reas.



Photo Provided by Lakeland Volunteers in Medicine (LVIM).



Photo Provided: In the photo is Miriam Rammal who is a hardworking nurse currently in New York City. She is treating Covid-19 patients day and night and recently started treating her coworkers who became infected.

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# Here are Some of The Heroes in Our Community: Today, We Say... THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU



Photo Provided by Lakeland Volunteers in Medicine (LVIM).



Photo Provided: In the photo is Chantelle Flores. She works at Advent Health - Centra Care at Winter Garden.



Photos Provided: In the photos is Megan (Meg) Klekos. Meg is a nursing student at the University of Tampa.



Photo Provided: Meg posing in her UT nursing uniform. Meg is set to graduate this upcoming May and will be joining the fight against Covid-19 right after graduation.

**Continuation from Page 3**

**Here are Some of The Heroes in Our Community:  
Today, We Say... THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU**



Photo Provided: Polk State College's Health Sciences programs prepare students for the front-lines and, in just one week, Respiratory Care seniors will be graduating and taking the next step to becoming the health-care professionals local hospitals need. A huge congratulations to the Spring 2020 Graduating Class and thank you to our front-line workers.

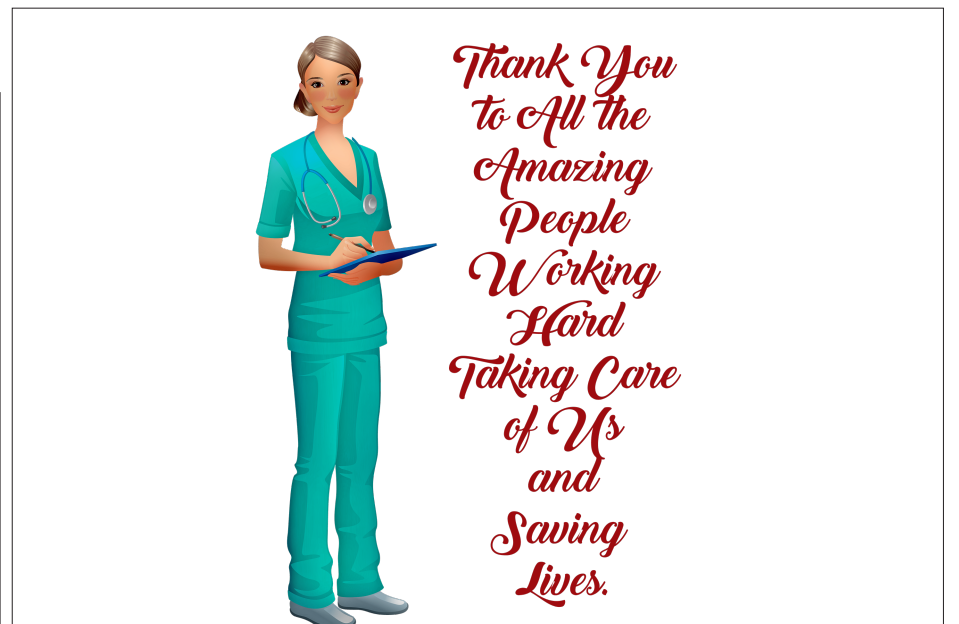
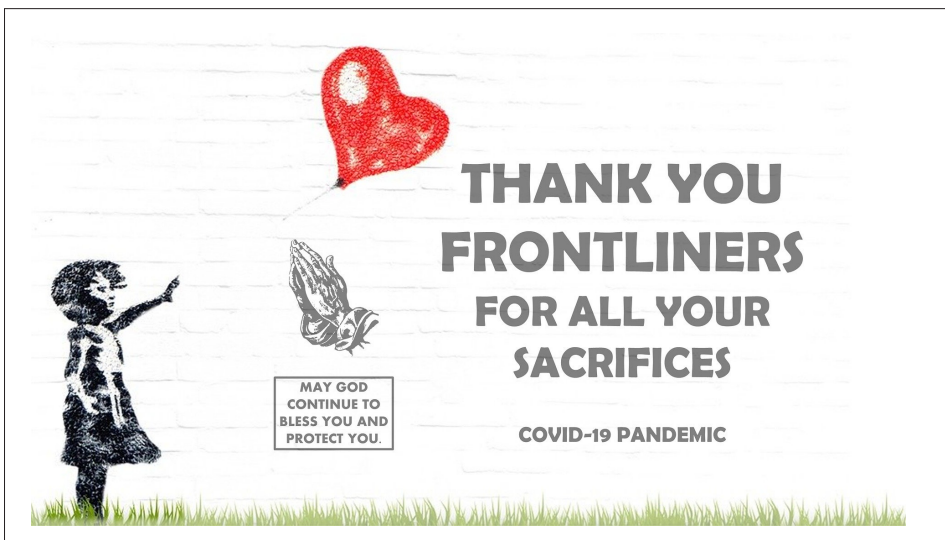
*Congrats, and Stay Healthy and Safe!*

## Continuation from Page 3

**Here are Some of The Heroes in Our Community:  
Today, We Say... THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU**



Photo Provided: In the photo are some of the staff at the Advent Health - Centra Care at Winter Garden.





# NURSING THE WORLD TO HEALTH

**NURSES**

**A VOICE TO LEAD**  
NURSING THE WORLD  
TO HEALTH



**12 MAY 2020**

**INTERNATIONAL NURSES DAY**

[www.icnvoicetolead.com](http://www.icnvoicetolead.com)

@ICNurses #voicetolead #IND2020



**International Council of Nurses**

## In The Spotlight

# Meet the Peace River Center: A Victim Service Non-Profit Organization



### Do you need to contact the organization?

If you are in immediate danger, please call 911. If you would like to contact their crisis response team, you can use their 24-hour crisis line: (863) 519-374, or their toll-free line: (800) 627-5906.

The Crisis Response Team is a mobile outreach service that is designed to provide immediate crisis assessment, intervention and counseling, linkage and referral, and crisis follow-up contact. All in an effort to reach a resolution for adults and children who may be experiencing any type of emotional crisis, which can include: suicidal intentions, self-destructive behaviors, or acute, severe, and intense emotional distress. The Team is also equipped to provide suicide prevention awareness, critical incident stress debriefing, and stress management.

You can also reach their crisis stabilization unit at their 24-hour crisis line: (863) 519-3744 or at their business line: (863) 519-3747.

The Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) is a secured 30-bed public receiving facility for Florida's Baker Act. The CSU provides short-term, intensive, psychiatric stabilization and discharges planning services to individuals in need of emergency treatment either voluntarily or involuntarily meeting the criteria for Florida's Baker Act. Individuals who experience a crisis are psychiatrically evaluated, observed, and stabilized on the Unit for a period of up to 72 hours for the purpose of returning them to a less restrictive level of care. Services offered at the CSU include medication management, psycho-education on illness, group support, discharge planning and referrals, as well as, family education.

For more information about this amazing organization, visit their website at <https://www.peacrivercenter.org/>

Content Provided by the Organization's Website.

**Lakeland** - As part of our "In the Spotlight" section, for this edition, we would like to feature an organization that is dedicated to offering outpatient therapy services, client-centered individual therapy, group treatment, and family therapy to those who need them the most. These services are offered in the Polk, Hardee, and Highlands counties.

Meet the Peace and River Center Victim Services.

Peace River Center is a nonprofit organization, whose mission is to engage, restore, and empower individuals in our community to reach their fullest potential. The vision of the Peace River Center is to be a Center of Excellence for building emotional wellness. The Peace River Center therapists work with prospective clients to create an individualized treatment plan to help support the client in his or her health, wellness, and recovery goals. Therapists may also provide referrals, as appropriate, for specific Peace River Center services such as Targeted Case Management, Psychiatric Evaluations, Adult Recovery Services, and Child Specific services.

Peace River Center was founded in the late 1940s in response to the community's concern for the emotional and psychological well-being of children. Over time, Peace River Center gradually expanded its services to include adults. A significant growth period for the Center came after the 1973 passing of the Baker Act, which is Florida's Mental Health Act, enabling them to establish a community mental health center as an alternative to treatment at the State Hospital.

In the late 1970s, Peace River Center opened the first of two domestic violence shelters, and in 2013 we added a primary care Wellness Clinic. Our Lakeland Crisis Campus opened in January 2018.

With 27 locations, 30 programs, and accreditation from The Joint Commission and licensed by ACHA and DCF, Peace River Center is one of the largest behavioral health agencies in Florida. PRC will never deny services to anyone based on their inability to pay. PRC will provide discounts to patients based on family size and income.

**Peace River Center**<sup>®</sup>  
 COMPASSIONATE PEOPLE • POSITIVE IMPACT

**STRESS** I'm not good at working remotely!  
 Will my family be ok? **FEAR**  
**ANXIETY** what if my parents get sick?  
 What about my job?  
**DEPRESSION**



Free, 24-Hour Emotional Support  
 Through PRC's Crisis Line  
 (863) 519-3744 or (800) 627-5906





## Peace River Center Hosts Mental Health Awareness Month Virtual Sessions



Content Provided By Organization.

**Lakeland** - Peace River Center, a non-profit behavioral health and victim services organization that serves more than 22,000 individuals every year, is hosting virtual sessions during Mental Health Awareness Month.

“Now more than ever it’s important to talk about mental health, be aware of the resources, and share with our friends and loved ones who might be struggling,” said Ileana Kniss, Director of Development and Community Relations at Peace River Center (PRC). “We have transitioned our awareness events to virtual platforms and invite the community to join us for these meaningful conversations.”

The awareness activities and virtual sessions include:

- \* May 1 at 8:30 a.m. Virtual Chat with Mental Health Professionals: Four PRC professionals will discuss mental health, treatments, and services. Attendees can ask questions and will walk away with tools to thrive in this ever-changing world.
- \* May 6 Wear Green Day: Community members are encouraged to wear green and upload their photos to social media with the hashtag #Green4PRC to show their support of mental health and the organization.
- \* May 13 at 10:00 a.m. Depression and Anxiety in Children and Teens: Learn more about depression and anxiety in children and teens such as general symptoms, risk factors and what you can do to help a child or teen experiencing depression and anxiety.
- \* May 20 at 2:00 p.m. What is Mental Health Recovery? What does it mean to be in mental health recovery? Learn more about that and how to access resources in our community such as Club SUCCESS and Psychosocial Rehabilitation Services.

These virtual sessions are free to attend and those interested can visit <https://www.peacrivercenter.org/mham-registration/> for details and to register. Attendees are encouraged to submit questions ahead of time, but they will also have a chance to ask the mental health experts their questions at the end of each session.

### About Peace River Center:

Peace River Center is a licensed and accredited, non-profit provider of mental health, substance use and integrated medical services serving Polk, Highlands and Hardee counties. Peace River Center provides options for people struggling with mental health and addiction, for children and adults coping with the trauma of abuse and violence, crisis intervention for people in acute need, and housing and community support and integration for people affected by domestic violence or whose recovery requires more support and time. Peace River Center offers inpatient, outpatient, home-, school- and community-based services, telehealth and mobile programs to individuals, groups and families. Peace River Center’s dedicated and compassionate staff of more than 400 operate 36 programs out of 27 locations and provide 24/7 emergency psychiatric response services to the community through our mobile psychiatric Crisis Response Team. In FY2019, Peace River Center had contact with and provided services to more than 22,000 children, adolescents, adults and seniors. For more information visit [www.PeaceRiverCenter.org](http://www.PeaceRiverCenter.org).



## Election of Delegates to the Democratic National Convention



Content Provided By Organization.

**Lakeland** - In the interest of public health and safety, the Democratic National Party has changed the date of its Democratic National Convention to the week of August 17, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The Florida Democratic Party has 248 total delegates, the bulk of which will come from the District-level candidates who will be elected at Congressional District elections throughout the state.

Those elections will be held on-line from 2:00 p.m., Thursday, May 14 to 2:00 p.m., Saturday, May 16.

All registered Democrats are eligible to vote for the delegates in their District who will represent them and vote for their pledged Presidential candidate at the National Convention in Milwaukee.

Polk County has three Congressional Districts within its borders: CD 9, CD 15, and CD 17. Voters can only vote for the candidates in their specific Congressional District, as indicated on their Voter Registration card.

If you want to vote for the local delegates in your District, you can do that by following the directions at this link. <https://www.floridadems.org/delegates>. From this site, you will be able to see who is running for election as a delegate in your District. You will be sent an electronic link with a unique code to access your online ballot and you will be given instructions on how to cast your vote electronically.

Other questions regarding this online voting system will be answered at the same link - <https://www.floridadems.org/delegates>. Included are instructions on how to vote if you do not have internet access by calling (954) 893-2355.

Remember, all registered Democrats can vote for the delegates of their choice to attend the Democratic National Convention.

For further information regarding the delegate process, contact Karen Cooper Welzel, Polk County DEC State Committeewoman, <mailto:Kwelzel628@gmail.com>.

The Polk County Democrats remain at work. Although their offices are closed, they can be reached by calling 863-688-7199, emailing [polkcountymdemocrats@gmail.com](mailto:polkcountymdemocrats@gmail.com) or visiting their website at <https://polkdemocrats.org/>

For further information about this release, contact Karen Cooper Welzel, Polk County DEC State Committeewoman, <mailto:Kwelzel628@gmail.com>.

## Keeping Up with the Community

# Haines City Police Department Brings Joy to Children in Our Community

Content Provided by the HCPD Facebook Page.

**Haines City** - Last month, during Easter morning, the Bravo shift at the Haines City Police Department took it upon themselves to provide about 30 Easter baskets to local youth at their COPS station on Avenue D.

At the *Northeast Polk Gazette*, we want to thank the HCPD for everything they do for our residents, especially for the young members of our community.



**Would you like your event featured here?**

**Contact us at [contactus@thenepolkgazette.com](mailto:contactus@thenepolkgazette.com) today!**

## Community Leader of the Month

### Meet Dr. Michelle Henne from Releves Sports Medicine: She is Our Community Leader of the Month



Photo Provided: Dr. Henne in the clinic's "football" themed room with the ultrasound, which is used for image guided injections.



Photo Provided: Dr. Henne working as the ringside physician for a boxing event and performing pre-bout physicals.

By: Staff Writer.

**Winter Haven** - For this month's community leader of the month, we want to feature a community doctor who is working hard to provide sports medicine services to her clients, while at the same time, volunteering in the community.

Meet Dr. Michelle Henne.

Dr. Henne is the head physician for Polk State College, Warner University, and All Saints Academy. She's also actively involved in the Junior League of Greater Winter Haven. She has worked with Warner University by developing their medical policies and procedures for their athletes. She has also been a consultant during Warner's development of their COVID-19 policies and procedures.

Dr. Henne is a Medical Doctor graduating as a Gold Humanism Honor Society member from the University of South Florida College of Medicine in Tampa. She also did her undergraduate training at the University of South Florida as part of an accelerated program.

After medical school, she completed her residency at Bayfront Health St. Petersburg and her sports medicine fellowship in Orlando. She has worked with high school, college, amateur and professional athletes including those with the MLS, NWSL, Washington Nationals, Kissimmee FireFrogs, a minor league affiliate of the Atlanta Braves, LPGA and Symetra Tour, FINA (International Swimming Federation), FIFA (international soccer federation), US Soccer, and USA Water Ski and Wake Sports.

She moved to Winter Haven to provide specialized care in the community where her husband grew up. She enjoys the opportunity to bring her specialized skills to our community, including local high schools and universities.

Dr. Henne is published in many journals including the American Journal of Orthopedics, Clinical Journal of Sports Medicine, and the 5-Minute Clinical Consult. She has presented at numerous venues, such as the American Medical Society of Sports Medicine, the orthopedic conference at Orlando Health, and the 33rd Annual Colin J. Condon Care of the Sick Child. In her spare time, she enjoys volunteering as a member of the Junior League of Greater Winter Haven.

Visit <https://relevesportsmedicine.com/> for more information on what Dr. Henne and her team can do for you.

HAVE AN INJURY?  
**GET TREATED,  
NOT SEATED.**  
CALL TO SCHEDULE TODAY

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(863) 401-4401

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SPORTS MEDICINE

*Way to go, Dr. Henne!*



## Investigative News

# VA Secretary Looked for Dirt on a House Staffer Who Reported Sexual Assault in a VA Hospital, Complaint Says

By: ProPublica.

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert Wilkie personally sought damaging information about a congressional aide who said she was sexually assaulted in a VA hospital, according to an anonymous complaint to the House committee the woman works for.

The written complaint was obtained by ProPublica. In addition, a former senior official with direct knowledge of the matter said Wilkie discussed damaging information he collected about the aide and suggested using it to discredit her. Another person said he spoke with other officials who were in those discussions, and they corroborated the former senior official's and the written complaint's account. The people interviewed spoke on the condition of anonymity, saying they feared retaliation.

Wilkie denied inquiring into the aide's past. "I never would do that to a fellow officer," he said in a statement. "It is a breach of honor."

The aide, Andrea Goldstein, is a Navy reserve intelligence officer and a senior policy adviser for the House Veterans' Affairs Committee's Women Veterans Task Force. In September, she said she was sexually assaulted at the VA medical center in Washington. According to Goldstein's account reported in *The New York Times*, she was buying a snack in the cafeteria when a man slammed his body into hers, pressed against her and told her, "You look like you could use a good time." Goldstein said she did not know who the man was, but he was not an employee.

As required by VA regulations, Goldstein's allegation was turned over to the department's inspector general to conduct an independent criminal investigation, working with federal prosecutors.

But the complaint alleges that while the inspector general and prosecutors investigated Goldstein's allegation, Wilkie initiated what the complaint described as "his own investigation into Ms. Goldstein's credibility and military record."

The House committee said it is considering how to respond to the complaint, spokeswoman Jenni Geurink said. While the committee has oversight jurisdiction over the VA and often fields complaints from employees and patients, it is in an unusual position since this complaint relates to one of its staff members.

"We have been contacted about possible actions taken within VA which may have utilized government time and resources to attempt to tarnish a member of our staff's character, discredit her and spread false information about her past in retaliation for her reporting of a sexual assault at VA," Geurink said. "This ordeal has been draining and unfair to Ms. Goldstein."

According to the complaint and the former senior official, Wilkie repeatedly shared the information he had gathered about Goldstein with his senior staff, including officials responsible for public relations, between October 2019 and January 2020. One of the officials present, Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs James E. Hutton, did not respond to requests for comment.

"Wilkie's energies are directed toward attacking her character," the complaint said.

Wilkie did not specify the source of his information but said he wished his findings could be used to undermine Goldstein's account of the assault in the Washington VA, the complaint and the former senior official said. While Wilkie did not direct anyone to do anything with the information, he wondered aloud about how it might become public, according to the complaint and the former senior official.

Wilkie, through a spokeswoman, denied saying that. Wilkie also met in his office with Rep. Dan Crenshaw, R-Texas, who is a former Navy commando. After the meeting, Wilkie told his staff that Crenshaw agreed with the allegations that Wilkie made about Goldstein's credibility, according to the complaint, the former senior official and the other person with knowledge of the meeting.

Wilkie denied discussing Goldstein with Crenshaw. Crenshaw, in a brief interview in the Capitol, confirmed that he met with Wilkie. "I had breakfast with him once," Crenshaw said. "I know where this rumor's coming from. So you have a bunch of Democrat staffers who are leading you guys down a really stupid path. I've never been asked about the case, never been told about the case."

Wilkie and his staff have not publicized the information he collected about Goldstein's past. But after the inspector general concluded its investigation and federal prosecutors declined to bring charges, Wilkie sent a Jan. 15 letter to Congress calling Goldstein's complaint "unsubstantiated" and saying it "could deter our veterans from seeking the care they need and deserve."

Wilkie's letter prompted an objection from the VA's inspector general, Michael Missal, who said calling Goldstein's allegations "unsubstantiated" was "not an accurate description of the results of our investigation." The *Times* reported that the criminal probe was hindered because video cameras that might have captured the incident at the hospital weren't working.

"Neither I nor my staff told you or anyone else that the allegations were unsubstantiated," Missal wrote to Wilkie. "Reaching a decision to close the investigation with no criminal charges does not mean the underlying allegation is unsubstantiated."

Goldstein, in an op-ed published Monday on the website *Jezebel*, criticized Wilkie, saying that his letter to Congress was retaliation for her reporting the assault and that she had also faced retaliation from a military commander when she reported sexual harassment while on active duty. She said she receives treatment at the VA for conditions related to sexual trauma during her military service.

"He used coded language, but the words still stung," Goldstein wrote. "The Secretary of the second largest federal agency knew how his words would resonate. He was implying that a fellow Navy veteran was a liar. He was implying that I was a liar."

Asked about the subject at a post-State of the Union press conference on Wednesday, Wilkie said he was "not satisfied with the resolution of the Goldstein case" and wants to reexamine it.

"I met with the [inspector general] yesterday," he said. "We're going to make a renewed push to get answers."

But the inspector general's office later said the investigation remains closed. "We are not working with anyone to seek additional information at this time," a spokesman said.

A spokeswoman for Wilkie later clarified that he wasn't asking to reopen the investigation but wants to receive more details of the inspector general's findings. "At a minimum, the IG should let VA and committee leaders know if its investigation found any wrongdoing so the department can take action to protect and safeguard our patients," VA press secretary Christina Mandreucci said. "We need this help to make sure our facilities are safe."

This article first appeared in [www.propublica.com](http://www.propublica.com)

My road from self-discovery to emotional healing.

**CLEANING OUT MY CLOSET**

a collection of essays by  
Marielys Camacho-Reyes

*A Memoir-In-Essays and Poems*  
by  
**Marielys Camacho-Reyes**

**Available on Amazon!**

## Keeping Up With The Community

# Balmoral Estates is Now Offering Co-Living Arrangements



By: Staff Writer.

**Haines City** - The Feltrim Group continues to look for ways to make Polk county living opportunities better for all. This time, they are sharing with you their new baby... a co-living opportunity within their Balmoral Estates.

Without further ado, let's introduce you to the Feltrim Co-Living opportunity.

### What is Co-Living?

Co-Living is a modern form of housing where residents share living space and a set of interests, values, and/or intentions. It's a new take on an old idea, imagined by a millennial generation that values things like openness and collaboration, social networking, and the sharing economy.

### Who Co-Lives?

Lots of folks! Professionals, teachers, medical professionals, students, and others.

### How Does Feltrim Co-Living Work?

Each renter is responsible for only their portion of rent regardless of the status of other residents in the home. We'll do our best to match you with others of like interests.

### What's the House Like?

Each fully-furnished 3-bedroom home features luxury living/dining area, outside lanai with screened-in pool, and a modern, fully-equipped kitchen. The best part is each bedroom features a private bathroom with a half bath in the common areas.

### What Does My Rent Include?

Your rent includes all utilities, services, and amenities! That includes: electric, water, pool, lawn, and pest control services. Amenities include: water park, games room, poolside games, outdoor sports, and 10% off on-site dining.

### Where are Feltrim Co-Living Homes Located?

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## Viewpoints

# Editorial Commentary: A Tribute to the Men and Women in Gowns



By: Nasif Ahmed, Contributing Cartoonist. @NasifAhmed3

By: M.C. Reyes, Editor-in-Chief and Member of the Editorial Board.

As we continue the fight against the spread of the Coronavirus, we would like to take this opportunity to do a tribute to those who, day and night, put their lives in danger to save other people's lives... and those are our men and women in gowns.

These men and women wake up every day ready to give their 100 percent to help others fight this horrendous virus. They leave their families behind to do the job that they love, even when knowing that the risks of them getting infected are extremely high. If that's not considered a heroic act, I am not sure what is.

As we mentioned on our front page, May 12 is international nurses day, and we, at the Northeast Polk Gazette, would like to give our sincere thanks to the front-line health-care nurses who are putting their lives on hold, and at-risk, while providing care for those in need. Without you guys, the chances of survival of those infected with the virus wouldn't be as promising as they are. You guys are making a difference in people's lives... in families' lives and that will never go unnoticed.

The truth is that thanks to each one of you, and the amazing job that you are doing, we have been able to stay positive while "sequestered" at home... because we know that you guys are there for those who need help.

We know that the fight is not over and that it may be months before things go back to normal... or, at least, to the "new normal," but we have faith that you guys will continue staying strong so that you can do your job to the best of your abilities. But, we also pray God that he gives each one of you the physical, mental, and emotional health that you guys need to be able to deal with what comes your way.

So, without further ado, today we say THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU.

THANK YOU for the sacrifices you make every day, especially during these challenging times.

THANK YOU for your dedication, commitment, and courage.

And, THANK YOU for the service you are providing to the patients suffering from the virus. You are saving countless lives and making a difference in our communities. And, again, your dedication and sacrifices are not going unnoticed.

For that and more, we want to say to each one of you... THANK YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF OUR HEARTS!

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### We Want to Hear from you

As part of our commitment with our community, The Northeast Polk Gazette would like to share your opinions and views with our readers. Submit your letters to the editor or opinion pieces to [contactus@thenepolkgazette.com](mailto:contactus@thenepolkgazette.com) for a chance to have your submissions published in our newspaper.



Photo Provided by Lakeland Volunteers in Medicine (LVIM)

## Healthy Eating for a Healthy Weight



A healthy lifestyle involves many choices. Among them, choosing a balanced diet or healthy eating plan. So how do you choose a healthy eating plan? Let's begin by defining what a healthy eating plan is.

### According to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015–2020, a healthy eating plan:

- \* Emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products
- \* Includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts
- \* Is low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars
- \* Stays within your daily calorie needs
- \* Fresh, Frozen, or Canned Vegetables — try something new. You may find that you love grilled vegetables or steamed vegetables with an herb you haven't tried like rosemary. You can sauté (panfry) vegetables in a non-stick pan with a small amount of cooking spray. Or try frozen or canned vegetables for a quick side dish—just microwave and serve. When trying canned vegetables, look for vegetables without added salt, butter, or cream sauces. Commit to going to the produce department and trying a new vegetable each week.
- \* Calcium-rich foods — you may automatically think of a glass of low-fat or fat-free milk when someone says “eat more dairy products.” But what about low-fat and fat-free yogurts without added sugars? These come in a wide variety of flavors and can be a great dessert substitute for those with a sweet tooth.
- \* A new twist on an old favorite — if your favorite recipe calls for frying fish or breaded chicken, try healthier variations using baking or grilling. Maybe even try a recipe that uses dry beans in place of higher-fat meats. Ask around or search the internet and magazines for recipes with fewer calories — you might be surprised to find you have a new favorite dish!

### Do I Have to Give Up My Favorite Comfort Food?

No! Healthy eating is all about balance. You can enjoy your favorite foods even if they are high in calories, fat or added sugars. The key is eating them only once in a while, and balancing them out with healthier foods and more physical activity.

### Some general tips for comfort foods:

- \* Eat them less often. If you normally eat these foods every day, cut back to once a week or once a month. You'll be cutting your calories because you're not having the food as often.
- \* Eat smaller amounts. If your favorite higher-calorie food is a chocolate bar, have a smaller size or only half a bar.
- \* Try a lower-calorie version. Use lower-calorie ingredients or prepare food differently. For example, if your macaroni and cheese recipe uses whole milk, butter, and full-fat cheese, try remaking it with non-fat milk, less butter, light cream cheese, fresh spinach and tomatoes. Just remember to not increase your portion size. For more ideas on how to cut back on calories, see Eat More Weigh Less.

With these tips, you can include almost any food in your healthy eating plan and still lose weight or maintain a healthy weight.

This article first appeared in [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

## Healthier and Happier Living

### Here's How to Pull Through in Tough Situations



In life, there is going to be tough times. Whether you are currently going through something right now or are trying to prepare if something was to happen, shit will happen. However, there is something we can control – how we react. Ultimately, the key is often not to let the tough times get the better of you. Of course, the key question is – how do we do that?

**Accept that people make mistakes** – When you think of tricky times you have been through before, it is likely to bring back anxiety and sadness. With this in mind, it means that you're still attached and affected by some ideal. At first, it can be hard to notice this, but you have to if you want to move forward. If a family member hurt you, this still hurts because they aren't supposed to do this (in theory). To progress, you have to notice this and then let it go. How? By realizing that every human makes mistakes and that, even though it hurts, it has to be accepted.

**Be overly Grateful** – Secondly, you must always find something to be grateful for in every single moment. When life kicks us to the ground, it can be hard to be grateful, but this is a powerful technique if you can master it correctly. How? Above all else, you have to live in the present because this is the only way you can recognize what's in front of you. As soon as you do this, you can accept reality and make the best of a bad situation.

**Judge much less** – If you continue to judge something or someone, there is no way you will ever move on. If you still hold onto blame (even towards yourself), you have to let go of this judgment otherwise, the pain will stay with you for years to come. Even if you aren't pleased with what happened, you can still relieve yourself of the burden by letting go of judgments. If you manage to do this, it doesn't mean that you support what happened but rather you want to release the negativity and accept it to then move on

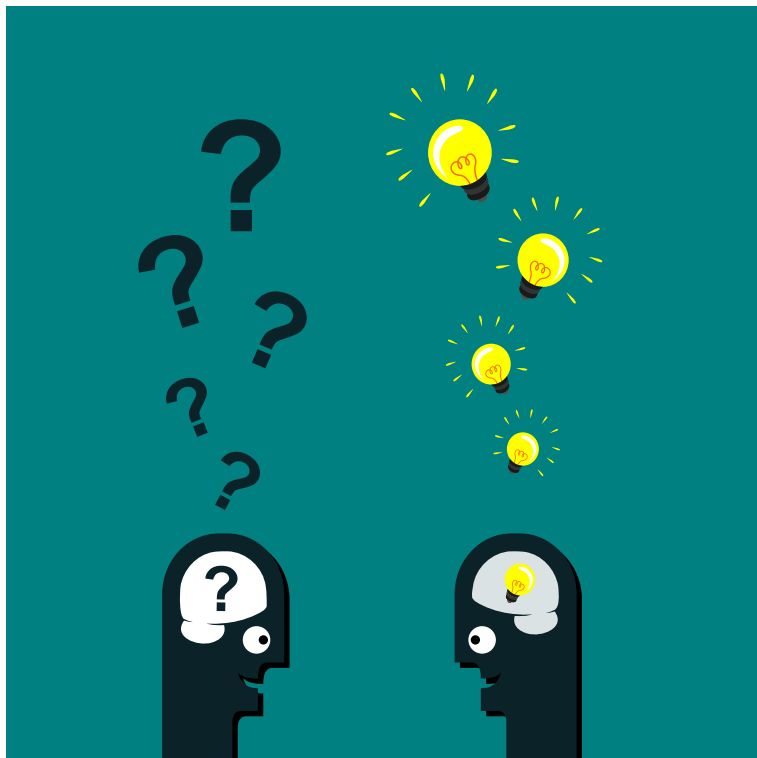
**Attend to others** – Finally, place your focus on someone else rather than thinking you are the center of the universe. By doing this, you are getting out of the 'how does it affect me' mindset. Once we have someone to focus on, we stop feeling sorry for ourselves and realize that we were over-worrying about something that isn't important. Again, this will lead to a removal of negativity and will allow you to accept and move on.

As mentioned at the beginning, it is all about how we react and how we pick ourselves up from the ground. By following these simple tips, you will be putting yourself in the best possible position for happiness.

This article first appeared in <https://iwontlose.com/>

## Mind, Body, Soul: Wholeness

### Sanity in the Midst of Crisis



By: Aida Betancourt, Contributing Writer.

There's no doubt we have been living the most unimaginable difficult times. I think none of us would have ever thought we would be living through something like this... well maybe through a two-hour movie... because this really seems like the worst nightmare and we are tossing and tossing unable to wake up from it.

I think it is time we wake up from that dream and face it head-on. While we can toss and toss worrying about our present, and the what-ifs, my question is, until when are we going to focus on that? Here is the best nugget you can take from this article: "focus on where you are going rather than where you are." I have listened to many presentations and speakers in the last month, and one thing that is repeated over and over is that!!

There is no justifiable reason to complain about your situation at this moment, mainly because everyone is going through the same thing, not only within your area, or within your state, but within the whole nation, oh yeah, and within the entire world! This is a crisis that is affecting every human being on a global level. However, we need to understand the concept that even though it is chaos out there, we personally do not have to be in chaos mode. Our current situation does not have to define our personal mode. The choice is ours: we can either react to this or we can respond to this! What's your choice? I know mine!

Focus on where you are going: how do you want to be when all of this is over? Stronger: physically, mentally, emotionally? With newly acquired skills? How will you be tomorrow? A month from now? A year from now? How will your relationship with your immediate family be? Whatever you choose to do or however you decide to spend this time, know and understand that the result tomorrow will depend directly on those answers.

If your answer was nothing, that is ok. You do not need to read any further. I will not waste your time. However, if your answer is yes, but what do I do or where do I start, keep reading:

Here are some valuable things that might help you keep calm and your sanity in the midst of this crisis:

#### Body:

- \* It is highly important to stay calm throughout these times... stress and anxiety directly affect our immune system. The healthier and stronger we are the more resistant we can be in the event that we get contaminated.

- \* Increase foods that aid your immune system.
- \* This is the perfect time to get your exercise routine started: whether it is outdoors or indoors, start with something small and go from there. The important thing is that you start.
- \* Self-Care is a must, remember to keep your bucket full in order to serve those around you from your best level. These are stressful times; therefore, self-care activities have to increase.

#### Personal Growth:

- \* Every morning, write down the tasks you wish to accomplish through-out the day, during these times, it is very easy to waste all that extra time we have.
- \* Establish routines: Especially morning and bedtime routines.
- \* Read more books
- \* Start journaling
- \* There are hundreds of online courses being offered, go ahead, give yourself permission to invest this time on something new to learn.
- \* Take on something new that you may use as a side income...

We do not have the power to change what is going on, but we do have the power to make decisions on what we can do during this time. Keep in mind, this too shall pass... and I want you to be stronger physically, mentally, and spiritually than you ever were after all of this is over.

May God bless you!

**About the Author:** Aida Betancourt is an Army Veteran, and an empowering transformational life and health coach. Connect with her at [www.aidabetancourt.com](http://www.aidabetancourt.com)



## 4 Ways to Turn Uncertainty Into Strength for Your Business



By: Tonya Dalton, Founder, inkWELL Press Productivity Co.

It's a tough time for all of us. Beyond making my kitchen table my new "office," I found out last week that my kids will continue homeschooling until at least May 15. We're navigating uncharted waters both personally and professionally. But as someone who started her first business in 2008 — sitting at the aforementioned kitchen table with the same kids at home — I'd be remiss not to share the silver lining. Yes, it's challenging, particularly as the global economy plunges, but surviving and growing as a business can be done. I'm here to prove that again.

Some of you may not know that business ownership among female entrepreneurs grew dramatically during the Great Recession and afterwards. During this period (2007 to 2012), minority women-owned businesses saw the most dramatic growth. Hispanic women owned 26.5 percent more businesses in 2012 than they did in 2007, and African American women increased the number of businesses they owned by 20.2 percent during that same period. Looking at today's economy, we're situated in a much better place than we were in 2008. So can aspiring female business owners top these figures coming out of this crisis? I certainly think so.

Those who own businesses are tightening their belts and restructuring, but I still think there are a few silver linings to be had out of all of this. Just as I clung to these silver linings when I launched my business in 2008, I'll do the same now.

### See this as a time to be aggressively imperfect.

For the first time in a long time, I've noticed people turning to social media to spread positivity and kindness. We're connecting with each other on a human-to-human level, and many of the procedural and business etiquette rules we normally follow have gone out the window. Use this to your advantage.

You know the saying "Done is better than perfect"? There's no better time than now to take that to heart. Ask yourself: What need do I fulfill? Then, find ways to meet that need. Right now, that might be something that's different than what you normally do. Engage with your social media communities to ask what kind of support they're looking for.

A woman business owner I mentor recently tweeted in response to an entrepreneur who was asking how he could get publicity for his business during this crisis period. They exchanged a few messages and are now in contract negotiations for her to handle his PR. Don't be afraid to go after the people who need you most right now. It doesn't have to be a perfectly designed business proposal. Generous, proactive support trumps perfection right now.

### Use the constraints to bring you clarity.

I like to say that until your boat is sinking, it's hard to know what to throw overboard. Right now, you have more clarity than ever about how you want to spend your time and money. Pay attention to what you realize you can toss aside in your business and use those constraints to your advantage.

Dr. Seuss famously wrote his best-selling children's book *Green Eggs and Ham* using only 50 words after his publisher bet him he couldn't do so. Constraints can direct us to make the best use out of what we already have. They hone our focus and make us concentrate on our business' bottom lines. Despite the chaos going on in the world, I feel incredibly clear on my business and what needs to be achieved this month. My team knows exactly what we need to do to have a strong April.

This is an ideal time to follow the Pareto principle, also known as the 80/20 rule. Under this principle, 80 percent of your outcomes can be attributed to 20 percent of your input. For example, say that 20 percent of your clients bring in 80 percent of your sales. Using this theory, it's better to spend time on those few vital tasks (the 20 percent) rather than the many trivial ones in order to maximize our output. Ask yourself: What are the vital components of my business? Which client can I not stand to lose? Which product or service brings in the most revenue? From there, your path should be clear.

### Meet your customers where they are.

This is a time when you need to shift and adjust your offers. It's not the time to dig in your heels on your current offer and refuse to budge. While the world is in the throes of this pandemic, now is the time to think of your legacy as a company and brand, not your short-term goals. Show up for people when they are struggling.

Many companies are generating positive word-of-mouth PR just by adjusting their offerings to support individuals and small businesses right now. A great example is Zencastr, a tool for remote podcasters. The company announced that now through July 1, it will be waiving the limits for those on its Hobbyist tier, which includes dropping limits on the number of recording hours and the number of participants each podcaster gets. Side note: If you've always wanted to start a podcast, it looks like the time is now.

Do you offer an essential or much-needed service? Can you temporarily cut the costs or offer it for free? Can you take your offering and adjust it to help even more people? For example, my company offers productivity tools and trainings. In difficult times like now, when there's so much to think about, I know how challenging it can be to maintain productivity. That's why in addition to our comprehensive program launch in April, we came out with our Daily Momentum offering. For a low price, customers receive audio text messages from me each morning consisting of positive and motivational productivity tips for the day ahead. During a time of turmoil, you want your customers to remember you being there as a continual source of support. The worst thing you can do is turn the lights off completely and then come knocking when things have returned to normal.

### Embrace the novelty as exercise for your brain.

For most of us, our days have an entirely new look and feel to them. Instead of being resistant to this novelty, try to lean into it. Research shows that changing up your routine encourages your brain to make new connections and neural pathways, a concept known as neuroplasticity. It sounds silly, but something as little as switching up the route you drive to work (or these days, the grocery store) can increase brain efficiency in problem-solving or discovering creative solutions.

Instead of stressing out over the change, embrace it and recognize it as something that's good for you. Your brain needs to stay active, too. Like everything in life, it's all about shifting your mindset to focus on the positive. Even though there's a lot of negativity in the world right now, I hope you can implement these shifts to focus on the silver linings and strengthen your business. We will get past this.

This article first appeared in <https://www.entrepreneur.com/>

## Sports

## COVID-19 Creates Uncertainty for College Football Players from Polk



Photo Provided: Credits: FSU Sports Information/Jeremy Esbrandt.

By: Mike Ferguson, Contributing Writer.

**Winter Haven** - The COVID-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on the United States and the world.

That is also true for the sports world. Since the second week in March, major college sports, as well as the NBA, NHL and Major League Baseball, have all come to a grinding halt. The virus has created a realm of uncertainty for professional and college athletes alike, including those from Polk County.

### Sports Stops

Jack Twyford is set to enter his sophomore season as an offensive lineman at Yale University. The Winter Haven High School graduate said it wasn't long after the Ivy League canceled its basketball tournament that he realized how serious the virus was.

"I remember people getting pretty mad about the basketball decision," Twyford recalled. "The (Centers for Disease Control) said we were 14 days behind Italy's model for a pandemic outbreak. That's when I knew this was serious."

Brendan Gant, a former safety at Kathleen High School in Lakeland, will be a sophomore for Florida State in the fall. Gant said the impact was unexpected.

"We didn't expect it to happen," Gant said. "But our coaches prepared us for whatever."

### Persevering Through Adversity

Both Twyford and Gant were hoping to take on bigger roles for their football programs. For both, spring practice was canceled.

Twyford was on spring break when he received the news that there would be no spring football. Yale was scheduled to begin its spring immediately after spring break. Twyford appeared in two games for the Bulldogs in 2019 and looking to push for more reps as a sophomore and perhaps a starting spot.

"I'm definitely confident in myself and my abilities," Twyford said. "Spring was a chance to really prove myself to my coaches. You can never have enough reps in practice."

As for Gant and the Seminoles, spring practice had already gotten underway when it was canceled. Gant played all 13 games at FSU in 2019 as a freshman but was used often at linebacker. For 2020, he had planned to return to his natural position of safety and perhaps work his way into the starting lineup.

"Coming into the spring and getting back into the groove of playing safety was important for me," Gant said. "I was expecting to take on a bigger role. It was tough."

### Academics

Fans often forget about the "student" portion of what it means to be a student-athlete. With the coronavirus outbreak, changes have not only had to be made to football regiments but academic ones.

Gant noted that most of his scheduled classes were already online. Since he arrived in Tallahassee from Lakeland, Gant said he's taken school every bit as important as football. Forced to do more on his own, Gant has tried to stick to his normal class and study schedule.

"I try to keep the times the same," he said. "I just made (academics) my main priority. You just have to focus in a little more."

During this time of uncertainty, Gant remains in Tallahassee. Twyford, however, has gone from New Haven back to his home in Winter Haven.

Classes at Yale, he said, have gone away from letter grades for the spring semester and are now strictly pass/fail. Twyford said he's unsure of how summer courses will be affected.

"Three or four of my classes were lectures," Twyford said. "I have a pretty obtuse schedule."

### Team Activities and Staying in Football Shape

Although FSU players and staff have been practicing social distancing, Gant said they can work in very small groups to stay in shape. With a first-year head coach in Mike Norvell, Gant added that players and coaches are doing what they can to meet regularly.

"Our coaches have been preparing us for moments of adversity since they got here," Gant said. "We want to be a player-led team, so we're pushing each other to stay on top of stretches and exercises. With a new staff and a new scheme, we have to stay on top of things. We're trying to keep everything the same as much as we can."

Gant added that under the current situation, it will be on the players as individuals to work hard and improve.

"I just feel like this is the year of the athlete itself," he said. "There are no excuses really."

Being away from campus and with gyms closed back home, Twyford said he's just using what's available to him to stay in football shape.

"I have a weight set in my garage – a power rack," he said. "I sometimes have to get creative to find a way to work the muscles. There's a certain degree of creativity that goes into it."

"I'm taking it as an extended vacation, only I have to do my schoolwork and work out," Twyford added. "I'm cherishing the time with my family."

### Will There Be Football in 2020?

With the COVID-19 pandemic having caused the NCAA to end spring and unfinished winter sports, there are questions whether or not fall sports, like football, will take place. Among the items on the table are the prospects of playing in empty stadiums or pushing the season back to later in the fall or the spring.

"I didn't know it would be to this scale," Twyford said. "I thought I'd be back in Connecticut by April. If we're allowed to go up in the summer, I plan to take classes and work out with the team."

Both Gant and Twyford seemed optimistic about football in the fall.

"I know this situation is serious," Gant said. "I just feel like, at the same time, we can't keep the world on lock forever."

As far as empty stadiums go, Twyford joked that wouldn't be much different for many Yale games.

"It's my best guess that we'll have football in the fall," he said. "If you've ever been to a game outside of Harvard-Yale, we play pretty much without crowds."

**About the Author:** Mike Ferguson currently serves as the public information officer at the Haines City Police Department. Mike earned his bachelor's degree from Florida State University in 2009. Mike and his wife Jennifer live in Davenport, Florida with their two children.



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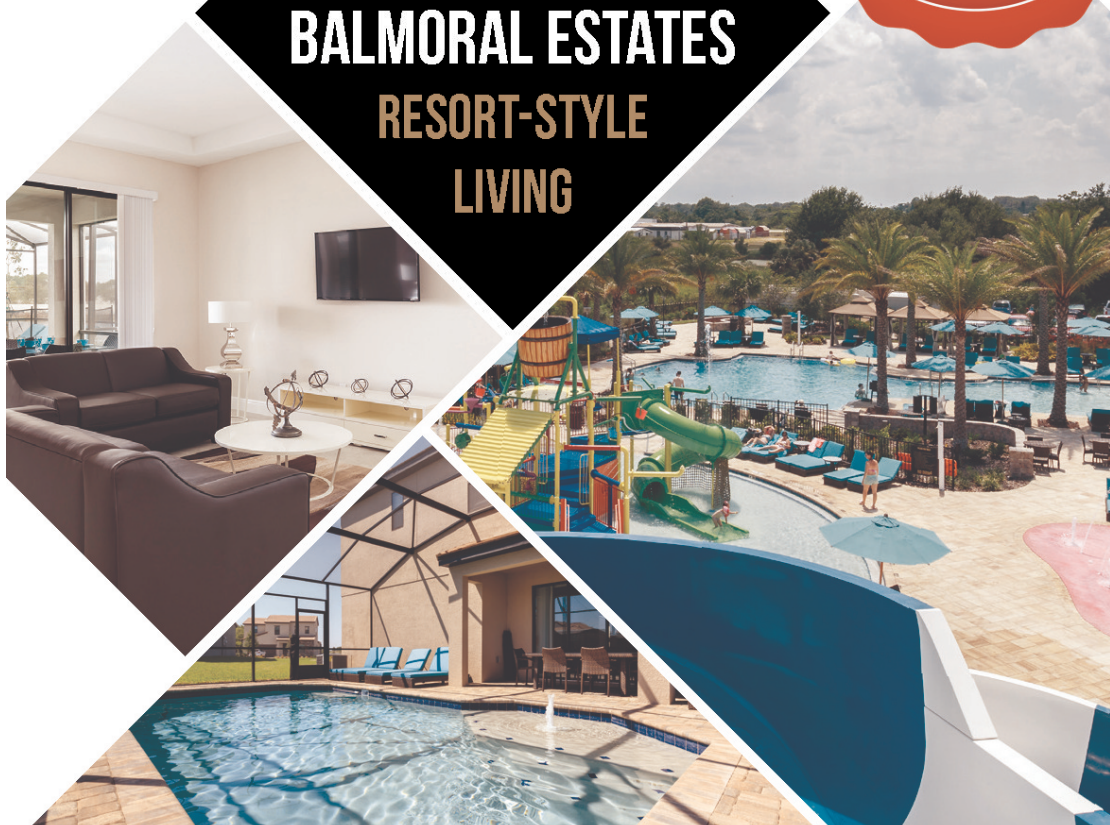
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