



Fla-Ga and more fun things to do for Halloween weekend

LIFE, 1D

The Florida Times-Union

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Jamaica, Cuba survey Melissa’s aftermath



Hurricane Melissa left extensive flooding in St. Elizabeth, Jamaica, as the storm made landfall.
MARIA ALEJANDRA CARDONA/REUTERS

Death toll growing as rescue operations underway

Thao Nguyen, Jeanine Santucci and Dinah Voyles Pulver
USA TODAY

Parts of the Caribbean slowly began surveying the extensive damage caused by Hurricane Melissa after the storm brought destruction to the region and left dozens of people dead. AccuWeather estimated Melissa could cost \$22 billion in damages and economic loss and that rebuilding could take a decade or more. “DEVASTATION,” read the Oct. 31 front-page headline on

Jamaica Observer newspaper. Melissa tore through the Caribbean as one of the most powerful hurricanes in history. It made landfall in Jamaica Oct. 28 as a deadly Category 5 hurricane before crossing Cuba and the Bahamas. Per the U.S. National Hurricane Center, Melissa was expected to pass northwest of Bermuda as a Category 2 storm, but hurricane- and tropical storm-force winds would extend far from its mid-point.

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Floods caused by the outer bands of Hurricane Melissa killed several people, in Petit Goave, Haiti, according to officials.
EGEDER PQ FILDOR/REUTERS



Ryan O'Halloran
Jacksonville Florida Times-Union
USA TODAY NETWORK

‘IT’S LIKE MARDI GRAS’

RV City party leads up to Georgia vs. Florida

They drove down from Atlanta like the last 20 years. They drove up from Gainesville like they have for the last 10 years. And they drove over from Orange Park and other parts of the Jacksonville area like they have for as many as 30 years. There are college football traditions nationwide – it’s what makes it a great game that isn’t played to this level anywhere else on Earth. But then there is this tradition. Georgia vs. Florida in Jacksonville on a Saturday afternoon is the main event, but the undercard running from Tuesday-Sunday is the party in RV City, the makeshift motorhome lot across the street from EverBank Stadium, near the Hart Bridge and a short walk from the St. Johns River. I just had to get over there. During my first tour with the Times-Union (September 2012-April 2018), my duties covering the Jaguars kept me out of the Florida-Georgia game loop. Sometimes, the Jaguars were on the road, like 2012 in Green Bay. Most of the time, the Jaguars were on their bye week and I would dash out of town for a quick vacation. I saw the RVs assemble in the parking lots in the days leading into the game, but kept driving. I didn’t attend the game, either. Not this year, though. Back in Jacksonville as the sports columnist has opened additional doors – games to attend, people to visit with, traditions to experience, etc. That included my first trip to RV City

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FL House speaker says DeSantis is ‘petty’ over taxes

Gray Rohrer
USA TODAY NETWORK – FLORIDA

Gov. Ron DeSantis thinks the Florida House’s property tax plans are “milquetoast” and says House leaders must think voters are “stupid.” House Speaker Daniel Perez believes DeSantis is just being “small and petty” or is planning to massively slash funds for schools. The battle between the GOP leaders over taxes, which extended the 2025



Perez

legislative session earlier this year, remains intense as next year’s session looms. Speaking in Tampa on Oct. 29, DeSantis was asked about the eight bills aimed at cutting property taxes – including seven constitutional amendments – released by the House earlier in the month. DeSantis had previously panned the proposals, but he went further in his

criticism, slamming Perez personally. “I’ve not talked to (Perez) about it at all. The reality is, is he’s not been somebody that’s been supportive of these efforts,” DeSantis said. “They put out a bunch of proposals; they’re all milquetoast. There’s not one proposal that people would get excited about, not one. They’re total half measures, which is not what people are asking for. People want to be bold.” And by putting up to seven proposals

on the November ballot, the House plan would confuse voters and doom the push to cut property taxes, DeSantis added. “When I see politicians rolling out, ‘Oh, we’re going to put five proposals on,’ it offends me because they think you’re stupid enough to tell you, ‘Oh no, we’re supportive of you, we put stuff on the ballot, we tried,’” DeSantis said. “They can’t think you’re that stupid.”

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