



Trump says Iran ceasefire is 'over'

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THE ST. AUGUSTINE RECORD

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The Maria Jefferson Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution celebrated "Flags In" on Friday, July 2 at St. Augustine's National Cemetery. Members of St. Augustine's Maria Jefferson Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. LUCIA VITI/THE RECORD

DAR honors fallen soldiers at St. Augustine National Cemetery

Lucia Viti
St. Augustine Record
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Maria Jefferson Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution celebrated "Flags In" on Friday, July 2, at St. Augustine's National Cemetery.

Held to commemorate the service and sacrifice of America's military, the ceremony included prayers, an invocation, member and guest speakers before each attendee was given a flag to place in front of each headstone and gravesite memori-

al. Regent Beth Pelzer welcomed the guests. Charles Nuckolls, chaplain of the St. Augustine DAR Chapter, offered the invocation. Mark and Elizabeth Heinse led the Pledge of Allegiance. Shirley Thompson and Jennifer Draper led the National Anthem. And Diana Kaiser, first vice regent, introduced Commissioner Krista Keating-Joseph from the St. Johns County Commission.

Joseph, a Gold Star Mother, spoke of her son Charlie, a Navy Seal killed by ISIS in Iraq in 2016. Charlie was 31. She read a

letter written by Charlie while on deployment that was addressed to his little sister Allie, who was also present at the ceremony.

Joseph authored a series a children's book entitled "Charlie, Don't Be a Hero," about her son.

Harriet Levy placed the ceremonial wreath in front of the audience followed by a moment of silence, a benediction and TAPS performed by Draper. The ceremony concluded with Ron Birchall, president of the Military Officers Association of America, explaining flag placements.

Stop WOKE act struck down by fed court

Stephany Matat
USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

Florida's law limiting race-based trainings or instruction still can't be enforced, after a sharply divided three-judge appeals court panel ruled that the law violates the First Amendment rights of students and professors.

The 2-1 majority of the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals contended that the law suppresses political viewpoints contrary to Florida officials in academic settings, and that the law would "create a new rule that would quietly remove all free speech protections from the classroom," wrote Judge Britt Grant, who was appointed by President Donald Trump in 2018.

The ruling blasts the law as a "breath-taking assertion of power to ban unpopular ideas from public discourse."

"Because the government pays the professors' salaries, Florida says, their speech is the State's speech," Grant wrote. "Emphatically no."

This decision comes after multiple years of legal battles, since the law (HB 7) was signed in 2022 by Gov. Ron DeSantis to combat "woke" ideologies in schools, colleges and universities. At this time, DeSantis' national profile was rapidly rising prior to him announcing a White House presidential bid, and he positioned himself on battling cultural issues and a chief critic to critical race theory.

DeSantis has kept the fight going over the years. In recent months, Florida officials moved to disallow introductory sociology classes from

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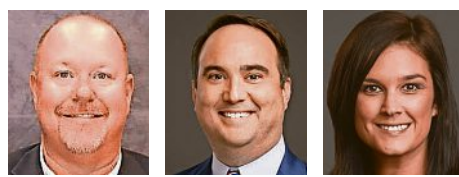
ST. JOHNS COUNTY

Elected officials charged over fraudulent voter guides

Lucia Viti
St. Augustine Record
USA TODAY NETWORK

Two St. Johns County commissioners, a former St. Augustine Beach mayor and two political operatives have been charged with distributing fraudulent voter guides during the 2024 Republican primary.

Prosecutors allege that political consultant Brianna Jordan and an employee, Jamie Johnson, conspired with St. Augustine Beach Mayor Dylan Rumrell



Rumrell Whitehurst Arnold

and St. Johns County Commissioners Sarah Arnold and Christian Whitehurst to distribute fake voter guides bearing the name of the St. Johns County Republican Executive Committee without

permission.

Johnson, Rumrell, Whitehurst and Arnold face charges of unauthorized voter guides and criminal conspiracy, which are misdemeanors. Jordan faces those charges plus tampering with evidence, which is a third-degree felony.

Investigators allege that between Aug. 1 and Aug. 15, 2024, Jordan "coordinated and conspired" with Johnson, Whitehurst, Rumrell and others to create "fraudulent voter guides using the name, logo, and likeness of the St. Johns County Republican Executive Commit-

tee without permission," according to court documents.

"The fraudulent guides portrayed candidates for the 2024 Republican primary as being endorsed by the SJREC," an affidavit says.

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement's case relies heavily on statements from Kyler Carpenter, a campaign volunteer; Johnson, an employee of Jordan's; and Garrett Davis, a former intern who later received immunity.

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