



Croom, Haynie are All-Big Bend Wrestlers of the Year

SPORTS, 1B



TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

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ELECTIONS 2026

DeSantis signs law requiring citizenship proof

Voter groups file lawsuit

John Kennedy

Capital Bureau | USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

A measure requiring new Florida voters to provide documented proof of U.S. citizenship was signed into law by Gov. Ron DeSantis, despite opponents saying it will keep many women, minorities

and older voters from casting ballots.

DeSantis signed the legislation (HB 991) April 1, just hours after President Trump enacted an executive order intended to create a nationwide list of verified eligible voters and restrict mail-in voting.

Voting law experts say Trump's order violates the U.S. Constitution by attempting to seize states' power to run elections and is rooted in his false alle-

gations of fraud.

DeSantis sidestepped the president's action when signing the measure in The Villages, the Central Florida retirement community that's frequently used as a welcome backdrop for Republican politicians.

"This bill protects and expands integrity in our voter registration process," DeSantis said, adding, "Our constitution in the state of Florida says only

American citizens are allowed to vote in our elections. So we need to make sure that is the law."

The new law takes effect Jan. 1, so it will not affect voter registration leading into the November midterm elections, when Floridians also will elect a new governor to succeed the term-limited DeSantis.

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Billy Holder, Chairman of Army Strong of Tallahassee. ALICIA DEVINE/TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

City country club's investor deal raises questions

Elena Barrera

Tallahassee Democrat
USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

The Capital City Country Club's plan to transfer the property to outside investors to revive its more-than-a-century-old golf course is raising questions about whether the city has an obligation to approve the new sale.

But City Hall says the new deal may not require their oversight.

In December, a divided city commission approved a controversial sale of the 178 acres of publicly owned land to the country club, which said it needed ownership to secure financing or investors that would help restore the golf

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'Honoring the brave'

Tallahassee man seeks donations for Army memorial at cemetery

Arianna Otero

Tallahassee Democrat
USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

For Billy Holder, one newspaper story became the catalyst for a two-year long project: An Army memorial set to come to the Tallahassee National Cemetery.

At the time, Tallahassee National Cemetery had welcomed a shiny aluminum memorial honoring the Air Force. The memorial, erected in 2023, sits along Memorial Walk, home for several other monuments dedicated to the military.

After reading that Tallahassee Democrat article, Holder had just one question:

Where was the Army?

Holder feels a close connection; he's chairman of Army Strong, which he called a "group of veterans and supporters dedicated to honoring the brave men and women who served in the U.S. Army."

He didn't serve but both his brother and father did. And he said his generation included those drafted for Vietnam. Many of his classmates from Leon High's Class of 1968 still carry scars, psychological and otherwise, decades later.

Alongside the Army tribute, there will be a monument of the Vietnam Battle Cross, a symbol with a soldier's boots upright, rifle upright between the boots, and topped with helmet and dog tags. Both are nearly finished and ready to move into their new homes.

But one thing is missing. Holder is turning to the community for donations to gather the last \$10,000 needed for the project's \$40,000 bill. Holder is hoping the monuments will be installed between April and May.

The fine details

After reading the article in 2023 Holder got to work. He was able to get in contact with David Wilson, a former Air Force member and one of the many men behind the branch's memorial at the Tallahassee National Cemetery. He also got to speak with Gordon Lightfoot, Marine Corps veteran and one of

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Tallahassee Democrat's All-Big Bend winter sports teams revealed

Jim Henry

Tallahassee Democrat
USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

The Tallahassee Democrat's longstanding tradition of honoring high school athletes continues with fanfare as the All-Big Bend teams for the 2025-26 winter sports season are revealed online and in print.

Local athletes from wrestling, soccer and basketball are honored through the Democrat's All-Big Bend selections.

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<p>4 for \$ 10</p> <p>Mexican Heather, Gold Lantana, Impatiens, Begonias, Dianthus, Angelonia, Vinca, Geraniums, Marigolds, Petunias, & Salvia</p>	<p>8 for \$ 10</p> <p>Tomato Cages (Limit 50) • Select Tomatoes, Peppers & Eggplant</p>	<p>\$ 13⁸⁸ Sales</p> <p>Boston Ferns • Dwarf 3gal Azaleas • 3 gal Hibiscus • 3 Gal Loropetalum • Azalea Food • 20lb Bag ACE Wild Bird Seed</p>
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