



**BEFORE THEY WERE VILLAGERS | D5**  
John Bawol was a 911 dispatcher for 10 years and worked for an electronics company.

6 a.m. 9 a.m. 12 p.m. 3 p.m. 6 p.m. 9 p.m.  
77° 82° 90° 94° 91° 83°

**OUT & ABOUT IN THE VILLAGES | A4**  
Senior writer Maddie Cutler shares observations from a day in The Villages.



IN SPORTS | B1

**Barely four weeks removed from surgery after a heart attack, Michele Pancheshan is competing — and medaling — at the National Senior Games in Iowa.**



IN LIFESTYLE | E1

**The Spice and Tea Exchange offers more than just its expertise on tea and spices by also providing chef-curated cooking demos for resident foodies.**

Staff writer Sylaisha Taylor gives readers an inside look into the vibrant social scene of The Villages. Read more about how this shop turns into one of the hottest cooking classrooms in town.

IN NATIONAL NEWS | A2

**ARKANSAS POLICE ARREST SUSPECT IN MURDER OF COUPLE AT DEVIL'S DEN**

A 28-year-old schoolteacher admitted to the killing of a married couple who were hiking with their children at Devil's Den State Park following a five-day search and public pleas for tips from other hikers.

IN LOCAL NEWS

**HERITAGE FESTIVAL TO MOVE INDOORS AT LA HACIENDA RECREATION**

To accommodate for construction at Spanish Springs Town Center, the festival will be reimaged for an indoor setting. **D3**

IN CONSUMER NEWS

**AIR TAXIES SEEK TO PROVIDE SERVICES WITH UBER PRICES**

Air taxi company Joby Aviation seeks to provide its eVTOL services at a similar price point to Uber Black. **D10**

ONLY IN THE VILLAGES

By Michael Fortuna

**During the first week in August, clowns around the world let the public know about the good deeds and zany antics they bestow. Locally, members of Clown Alley 179 are donning their colorful costumes, ready to kick off some silly events for International Clown Week, including picking one's nose.**

Please See **CLOWNS, A8**

# Food Festivals Bring Big Appetites, Revenue



Harrison Cooney | Tribune News Service

**From Ocala to Miami and beyond, the events attract plenty to the Sunshine State.**

By **JAMES DINAN**  
Daily Sun Senior Writer

Ask Louie and Sylvia Vassmer what one of their favorite things to do at the Orlando-area theme parks is, and chances are they will mention the annual Epcot Food and Wine Festival.

"We're foodies from the Chicago area that enjoy food from around the world," said Louie, of the Village of Santo Domingo. "It's incredible."

The Epcot International Food and Wine Festival, which takes place this year from Aug. 28 to Nov. 22, is one of Florida's several food-centric festivals that happen throughout the year to appeal to tourists' taste buds. SeaWorld Orlando is currently hosting Bands, Brew and BBQ until Aug. 24, and held its annual Seven Seas Food Festival this past winter and spring. Busch Gardens Tampa is holding Bier Fest Brews and BBQ

Please See **FOOD, A7**

Above: This year's Epcot International Food and Wine Festival opens Aug. 28 and runs through Nov. 22, featuring cuisine from six continents.

Right: SeaWorld Orlando's Bands, Brew and BBQ festival is underway at the theme park until Aug. 24.

SeaWorld Orlando photo



TAX HOLIDAY FACTS

31

The public has 31 days in August to make the most of the 2025 back-to-school sales tax holiday. The holiday, which is usually held in the first two weeks of August, has been extended under a new Florida law. Multiple local businesses will run promotions during the holiday.

\$100

Nearly every apparel item in a store under \$100 will be tax-exempt for the 2025 back-to-school sales tax holiday. There are limits on certain clothing items, including athletic gloves, watches, briefcases, jewelry and sports helmets. The full list of exempt and nonexempt items is available at floridarevenue.com/backtoschool.

## Back-To-School Tax Holiday Runs Throughout August

GARRETT SHIFLET | Daily Sun Staff Writer

Parents' wallets are getting some relief beginning today. This year, the back-to-school sales tax holiday kicks off for the entire month of August. Gov. Ron DeSantis extended the holiday from two weeks last year to a whole month this year when he signed HB 7031 in June.

"With the new school year just around the corner, Florida families can save on back-to-school shopping during the tax holiday for the entire month of August," DeSantis said in a news release. "By cutting taxes, empowering parents, and

Please See **TAX HOLIDAY, A6**

NEWS, NOTES & HAPPENINGS

HEALTH NEWS

**PRESIDENT TRUMP PLANS TO REVIVE THE PRESIDENTIAL FITNESS TEST FOR AMERICAN SCHOOLCHILDREN**

President Donald Trump signed an executive order Thursday reestablishing the Presidential Fitness Test for American school children. The program was created in 1966 to help interest young people in following healthy, active lifestyles.

Children had to run and perform situps, pullups or pushups and a sit-and-reach test, but the program changed in 2012 during the Obama administration to focus more on individual health than athletic feats.

The president "wants to ensure America's future generations are strong, healthy, and successful," White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said, and that all young Americans "have the opportunity to emphasize healthy, active lifestyles — creating a culture of strength and excellence for years to come."

The fitness test will be administered by health secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. The reestablished President's Council on Sports, Fitness, and Nutrition also will develop criteria for a Presidential Fitness Award.

— The Associated Press



Jacquelyn Martin | The Associated Press  
President Donald Trump was joined at the White House Thursday by, from right, WWE CCO Triple H, NFL player Harrison Butker and Golfer Bryson DeChambeau.

**What Changes Were Made to the Program in 2012?**

In 2012, the assessment evolved into the Youth Fitness Program, which the government said "moved away from recognizing athletic performance to providing a barometer on student's health." Then-first lady Michelle Obama also promoted her "Let's Move" initiative focused on reducing childhood obesity through diet and exercise.



**Make it a Great Day!**

Weather	D2
Recreation Listings	D8-9
Recipes	E1
Comics	E4
Puzzles	E5-6
Horoscopes	E7
Advice	E8

BY THE NUMBERS

**FLORIDA TOPS IN BUSINESS INDICATORS**

1. Florida
2. Georgia
3. Utah
4. Texas
5. Idaho

**Florida is the best state in the nation to start a business,** according to a report by personal finance company WalletHub. The Sunshine State boasts the second-most startups per capita and the highest percent of adults who engage in entrepreneurship, according to the report.