



BEFORE THEY WERE VILLAGERS | C5
Joe Gilhousen was a high school baseball coach who won back-to-back state championships.

6 a.m. 9 a.m. 12 p.m. 3 p.m. 6 p.m. 9 p.m.
60° 64° 75° 84° 78° 69°

OUT & ABOUT IN THE VILLAGES | A4
Senior writer Veronica Wernicke shares observations from a day in The Villages.



IN SPORTS | B1

Mikaela Shiffrin ends an eight-year medal drought with an emotional victory in the women's slalom, making her the first American with 3 Alpine gold medals.



IN LIFESTYLE | D1

Shake, rattle and roll the night away at Spanish Springs Town Square from 5 to 9 p.m. with live entertainment from Rocky and the Rollers.

Led by drummer Gerry "Rocky" Seader, Rocky and the Rollers has been a favorite of The Villages for more than 25 years, playing a mixture of sounds that span from the 1950s through the '70s.

IN WORLD NEWS | A10

ENVOYS SIGNAL NO BREAKTHROUGH IN PEACE TALKS BETWEEN RUSSIA, UKRAINE

The latest U.S.-brokered talks in Switzerland ended Wednesday with both sides saying they were "difficult." Zelenskyy said some progress was made on military issues, although political differences remain deep.

IN STATE NEWS

FLORIDA ZOO'S PLAN SAVES WILD RHINO'S SIGHT IN AFRICA

Animal behaviorists at Palm Beach Zoo were able to help save an endangered white rhino with an eye infection. **A9**

IN NATIONAL NEWS

ZUCKERBERG TESTIFIES AT SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION TRIAL

The Meta CEO answered questions during the trial on whether his platforms deliberately addict and harm children. **A15**

ONLY IN THE VILLAGES

By Chasity Boatman

The Eastport Lions Club turned Ezell Recreation into a carnival of color Tuesday with its Mardi Gras-themed bingo fundraiser. Feathered hats bobbed through the crowd, gold and green beads sparkled in the lights and tables overflowed with food as Villagers came together to support the club's charitable efforts.

Please See **BINGO, A8**

Local Farmers Work To Recoup After Cold



George Horsford | Daily Sun

Water from sprinklers creates a coating of ice on a young citrus grove along County Road 452 at Wild Goose Farms in Grand Island on Feb. 2, when the temperature dropped to 27 degrees.

By ELLA SHAMS | Daily Sun Staff Writer

Maria Tracy and her husband didn't sleep much around the end of January. They stayed awake through the night, irrigating crops in a bid to insulate their blueberries from the bitter cold at Heather Oaks Farm in Lady Lake.

They also prayed.
"We are doing the best we can," Tracy said. "We won't actually know until later. Our (blueberry) bushes look bad, at least what's left of them. It's kind of late in the year, and the buds

didn't freeze. Even if they continue to bloom, it's too late for the fruit to mature."

Hurricanes are normally the enemy of farmers in the state, causing millions in damage every year, but none made landfall in 2025. The cold got to the crops instead. The recent record-breaking temperatures could cause millions in damage

Please See **FARMERS, A7**

PROPERTY TAXES

\$113.2M

Property taxes received by Sumter County in 2025 that could be eliminated if Florida voters approve a measure being considered by the Florida Legislature to remove ad valorem taxes for counties and school districts. That amount represented 57.4% of Sumter County's general fund this fiscal year.

116%

The estimated increase in the rollback rate for property taxes in Sumter County if Florida voters approve eliminating all non-school property taxes for homesteaded properties. County officials estimate the rollback rate would need to jump from \$4.67 per \$1,000 of assessed value to \$10.10 to offset revenue losses.

Sumter County Monitors Reform Bills For Property Taxes

By KEITH PEARLMAN | Daily Sun Managing Editor

Sumter County officials, like others in the state, are keeping a much closer eye on activity in Tallahassee as the Florida Legislature considers measures that could result in major changes to the way property taxes are assessed or eliminate them altogether.

Sumter County commissioners received an update

to multiple bills making their way through the legislative process that would potentially impact the county's budget at a workshop Tuesday night. The presentation included estimates of how some of the proposals could affect tax rates for

Please See **TAXES, A6**

INSIDE TODAY'S DAILY SUN

TEST YOUR NEWS IQ

MILAN'S DUOMO STATUES, RISING COFFEE PRICES AND INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENTS

1. The Bearded Saint with Book statue from Milan's Duomo was recently restored under an "Adopt a Statue" program. The statue was put on display at which location Friday? **Page A21**

- a) Galleria Vittorio Emanuele c) Castello Sforzesco
b) Piazzale Cadorna d) Parco Sempione

2. Many are changing their coffee habits as prices increase. How much have costs risen from a year ago, according to the Consumer Price Index? **Page A17**

- a) 15.5%
b) 17.1%
c) 18.3%
d) 20.7%



3. A study found nearly all life forms depend on Earth's fungi species, which also contribute an estimated \$54 trillion to the global economy. **Page A23**



4. A pilot program being pushed for schools in Kalihi, Hawaii, would help students produce what? **Page A16**

- a) Books
b) Songs
c) Paintings
d) Poems

5. How much money has Japan pledged to an investment package for U.S. industry? **Page A19**

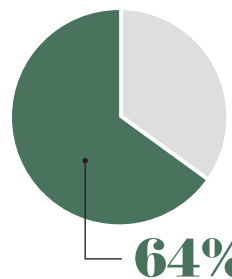
- a) \$100 million
b) \$6.5 billion
c) \$550 billion
d) \$1 trillion



Make it a Great Day!

Weather	C2
Recreation Listings	C6-8
Recipes	D1
Advice	D2
Comics	D4
Puzzles	D5-6
Horoscopes	D7

BY THE NUMBERS



Florida is the most domestically visited state, according to a YouGov survey. Sixty-four percent of Americans say they have visited the Sunshine State, the most of any state. Other frequently visited states include New York (56% of Americans), Texas (51%), and California (50%). Fifty-four percent say they have visited Washington, D.C.