



BEFORE THEY WERE VILLAGERS | C5
Gay Birchard lived in Japan for two years and worked in a University of Michigan medical lab.

5 a.m. 8 a.m. 11 a.m. 2 p.m. 5 p.m. 8 p.m.
74° 75° 82° 85° 85° 79°

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



WORLD NEWS | A9

U.S. SAYS IT STOPPED IRANIAN DRONES, LAUNCHED DEFENSIVE STRIKES

U.S. officials say the military shot down four Iranian one-way attack drones that posed a threat around the Strait of Hormuz as peace negotiations continued. U.S. forces also struck an Iranian ground control station that was about to launch a fifth drone.

STATE NEWS | A8

GOV. DESANTIS CALLS FOR SPECIAL SESSION ON PROPERTY TAX

Under his plan, the current exemption for homestead properties would rise from \$50,000 to \$250,000 immediately.

ONLY IN THE VILLAGES

By Veronica Wernicke

On Saturday, the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 1036 in The Villages served up charity with a side of syrup. The local VVA chapter hosted its annual pancake breakfast, one of two major fundraisers the chapter puts on annually.

The success of this breakfast and a golf tournament fundraiser allow the group to donate to local charities each year.

"It was successful," said John Kerrigan, VVA Chapter 1036 board member. "A lot of people when they came played

Please See **PANCAKE, A8**

Top of the News

Shop Local During Small Business Month



Rachel Govola | Daily Sun

Debbie Zlotkowski, left, of the Village of Dunedin, and Vicki Musil, of the Village of Osceola Hills, look at items for sale Tuesday at Found for Home in Eastport. The store offers curated home decor and gifts.

Locally owned stores, restaurants and other small businesses thrive in the welcoming climate of The Villages.

By **SUMMER JARRO**
Daily Sun Senior Writer

May is National Small Business Month and The Villages has a lot to celebrate.

The community is home to hundreds of small businesses, from retail stores to restaurants to home decor stores, with new establishments opening every year.

Nationwide, more than 36 million

small business owners make up about 99.9% of all businesses, according to the United States Small Business Administration Office of Advocacy's 2025 Small Business Profile.

The Sunshine State is home to about 3.5 million small businesses, accounting for about 99.8% of Florida's business landscape.

"The impact small businesses have on the local economy is significant. They create jobs, generate tax revenue, keep money circulating locally and support other businesses

throughout the community," said Jamie Mead, area manager of the Florida Small Business Development Center of Florida. "For example, a new restaurant may hire local contractors, use local accountants, buy from local suppliers and sponsor local events. In many ways, they are neighbors investing in neighbors."

National Small Business Month was created by the SBA to celebrate the impact of small businesses on the

Please See **BUSINESSES, A7**

LOCAL NEWS

Prosecutors Seek Death Penalty for Accused Sexual Abuser

By **FRANK DIFIORE**
Daily Sun Staff Writer

A Leesburg man accused of repeatedly abusing a minor could face the death penalty if convicted — even if Fifth Circuit State Attorney Bill Gladson needs to argue the case before the U.S. Supreme Court.

Gladson, flanked by Florida legislators and Lake County Sheriff's deputies, announced Wednesday at the Lake County Courthouse in Tavares that a grand jury indicted 41-year-old Schubert Navarroza Macarat on 47 felony counts including sexual battery of a minor, possession of child sexual abuse material, promoting a sexual performance by a child and lewd or lascivious molestation.

Macarat has pleaded not guilty to all the charges.

Immediately after the indictment, Assistant State Attorney Shannon

Please See **PENALTY, A6**

SPORTS NEWS | B1

CAROLINA HURRICANES MOVE WITHIN A WIN TO THE STANLEY CUP FINAL

Sebastian Aho, Jordan Staal and Logan Stankoven scored in a 2:47 span in the first period as Carolina overwhelmed Montreal 4-0.

LOCAL NEWS | C1

LOCAL BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS PROGRAM IN NEED OF VOLUNTEERS

Due to mentor shortages, children in Wildwood and nearby communities are waiting longer to be paired with adult role models.

HEADLINES & DATELINES

TEST YOUR NEWS I.Q.

Read the stories inside to find the answers!

1. The first Scripps National Spelling Bee was held in ____, when a ____ newspaper invited other papers to host spelling bees and send their champions to Washington, D.C. **Page A13**

- a) 1925, Kentucky
- b) 1935, Ohio

- c) 1945, Pennsylvania
- d) 1955, New York



2. Medical professionals say moving to music is one of the best ways to stay healthy, whether it's line dancing, ballroom steps or tap. **Page A23**



3. Authorities in ____ on Wednesday ordered its border with Congo closed as suspected cases of a rare type of Ebola surge in the country. **Page A16**

- a) Angola
- b) South Sudan
- c) Uganda
- d) Tanzania

4. Which daytime talk show host born in 1977 celebrates their birthday today? **Page D2**

- a) Kelly Ripa
- b) Elisabeth Hasselbeck
- c) Tamron Hall
- d) Hoda Kotb

5. Novak Djokovic suggested the French Open should move more matches to when? **Page B2**

- a) Winter
- b) Fall
- c) Night
- d) Early morning

ALSO FEATURED INSIDE TODAY

World News	A2
Lottery	A2
Public Safety News	A5
Coast to Coast	A6
Sports	B1
Local News	C1
Weather	C2-3
Recreation	C8-10
Lifestyle	D1
On The Squares	D3
Comics & Puzzles	D4-6



TODAY'S TOP PICK: THE ALAN ROSS KARAOKE ROADSHOW

Take the stage at Sawgrass Grove and belt out your favorite tune while host Alan Ross keeps the energy up.