

local news

PUBLIC SAFETY

Lake Deputy Hurt When Car Goes Off Road

A Lake County deputy sheriff had minor injuries after his patrol car went off a road south of Leesburg early Thursday, the Florida Highway Patrol said. Deputy Darryl Pitcher Jr., 45, was traveling west on Dewey Robbins Road near U.S. Highway 27 about 5:10 a.m. when the vehicle went off the south side of the road for an unknown reason, hit a tree, overturned and then hit a second tree, the FHP reported. Pitcher, who had been wearing a seatbelt, was taken to Orlando Regional Medical Center, according to the report. The crash was under investigation.

— Greg Miller, Daily Sun

Painter's Van Catches Fire In Pine Hills

A painter's van caught fire Thursday afternoon while on a job site in the Village of Pine Hills. When the District Public Safety Department arrived at the intersection of Wiechens Way and Blaise Terrace around 12:30 p.m., fire and smoke were billowing from the vehicle, Fire Chief Edmund Cain said. Firefighters knocked down the blaze in about five minutes, Cain said. Damage was limited mostly to the van and grass at the house where the painters were working, he said. No one connected to the van was injured, Cain said.

— Greg Miller, Daily Sun

NEWS IN BRIEF

Re-Enactor Speaks to Early American History Club

The club will meet 1:30 p.m. Thursday at Bridgeport Recreation Center, 1670 Lake Miona Drive. Noted re-enactor John Grasse will describe the uniform, armaments and items the common British fusilier carried during the Revolutionary War. For information, email hershygth@centurylink.net or call 352-259-5463.

— Jill Sherman, Daily Sun

Upcoming Project to Honor Fallen Veterans

Do you have a loved one buried or interred at Florida National Cemetery outside of Bushnell? If so, the Daily Sun would like to hear from you for a project that seeks to honor and remember area fallen military veterans with ties to the country's second-busiest national cemetery. Contact associate managing editor Amy Johstono at 352-753-1119, ext. 5293, or amy.johstono@thevillagesmedia.com.



Join Varela family members at their upcoming concert, "Better Together." Shows are scheduled for 5 p.m. and 8 p.m. on June 1 and June 2 at the Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center.

Fernando Varela, Family Perform 'Better Together'

The tenor, his wife and their son invite your family to join theirs at their upcoming concert.

By KRISTEN FIORE
Daily Sun Staff Writer

Home is where the heart is, and tenor Fernando Varela's heart is with his family. Varela, his wife, Susan, and their son, Zeke, invite your family to join theirs at "Better Together," their upcoming show at the Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center. "Better Together" is an intimate concert put on by Fernando and Susan, and for the first time, Zeke. Zeke, who will turn 8 at the end of May, saw his father performing in Europe and started singing with him in the dressing room. "Zeke asked, 'When can I be in the show?' and I told him soon, but he has to practice," Fernando said. "So he's been practicing, we've been picking out songs and it's super cute. He's really excited." "Zeke is probably his dad's No. 1 fan," Susan said. "I've watched him prepare for this, and I know how much he wants to do this and be a part of it." Fernando said one of the reasons Zeke's first performance will take place in The Villages is that the audiences in The Villages are so supportive. "They make you feel like you're in a very safe space," Fernando said. He and Susan hope being together in an intimate and accepting atmosphere will put Zeke at ease if he is feeling nervous.

GET A GLIMPSE OF THE NEW SHOW
What: An intimate concert put on by Fernando Varela and his wife, Susan.
When: 5 and 8 pm June 1 and June 2
Cost: Tickets range from \$30 to \$60 and can be purchased online at thevillagesentertainment.com or at any Villages Box Office location.

Fernando said the set will be made to look like their living room. It will be a pretty and visual show, but also an honest and intimate take on what it is like to be a family. The family will sing many of the songs audiences like to hear, but also some new songs Fernando has been working on. While performing all over the world as a reputable tenor might look like a fabulous lifestyle, the Varelas said being apart so much can be difficult, and they hope to put on a show to which families of all dynamics can relate. "The last few years have been very exciting but also challenging," Susan said. "Still, we're doing it together. It's a choice and a commitment, and the only way to get it done is to rely on each other when we're not feeling as strong." Susan said "Better Together" has become their mantra. "When we put out focused energy, we can do some great things," she said. The Varelas have been doing some work at Wildwood Elementary School and are inviting the staff to the show. "We've done some projects

around that 'Better Together' theme, so we thought it would be a celebratory occasion to give the staff at Wildwood tickets to the show," Susan said. "You're stronger in numbers, and some of the things we've done at Wildwood have reflected that. We're really excited to have them there." Susan established an after-school program at the school that allows students to do activities and get homework help from Villager volunteers. Among a few other programs, they also host a teacher appreciation gala, which has helped decrease the school's turnover rate and increase morale. Some of the proceeds from the concert will fund those programs at the school next year, the Varelas said. "Better Together" will be backed by David Foster's concert band. Foster discovered Fernando on YouTube seven years ago, and they have been performing all over the world together ever since. "He's one of the greatest songwriters and producers of our time," Fernando said. "Being able to be around him and make music with him is just amazing." Fernando said he hopes to bring Foster to The Villages soon. "Better Together" will be performed at 5 and 8 p.m. June 1-2 at The Sharon. Tickets, which range from \$30 to \$60, are available online at thevillagesentertainment.com or at any Villages Box Office location.

Kristen Fiore is a staff writer with The Villages Daily Sun. She can be reached at 352-753-1119, ext. 5270, or kristen.fiore@thevillagesmedia.com.

Tri-County Passings

Marilyn Hetzer

Marilyn Ann Hetzer, 66, passed away Monday, April 2, 2018 after a long and strong battle with cancer. Marilyn and her husband Dan have lived in The Villages since 2004, moving from Rochester, NY. She taught elementary school for over 25 years in both Catholic and Public School Systems in Rochester. She was a true friend as evidenced by her many friends in Rochester and The Villages. She was a member of St. Paul Polish National Catholic Church, Lynnhaven Ladies, Neighbors and Monday Ladies Golf groups, the infamous Desperate Golfers, Ladies Book Club and Charity Chicks. She led Walking Aerobics classes at Churchill Rec Center for many years.

She is survived by her loving husband of 24 years, Dan Hetzer; in-laws, Hugh and Shirley Hetzer, Tim and Sue Hetzer and her precious cat, Desi.

A memorial service will be held at 11am Monday, April 23, 2018 at St. Paul Polish National Catholic Church, 5425 SE 112th St., Belleview, Florida 34420. Memorial contributions in Marilyn's name may be made to the Rectory Fund of St. Paul Polish National Catholic Church. Arrangements by Hiers-Baxley Funeral and Cremation, 3975 Wedgewood Lane, The Villages, FL 32162. Please visit hiers-baxley.com to share words of condolence with the family.



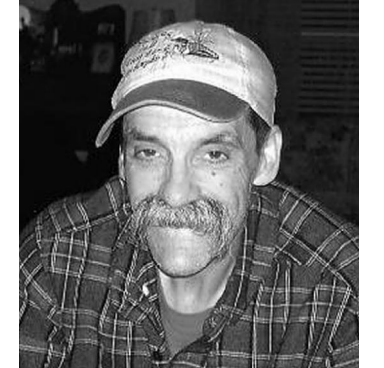
NOTABLE DEATH

Professional Wrestling Great Bruno Sammartino Dies at 82

He was professional wrestling's ultimate good guy. The son of Italian immigrants, Bruno Sammartino fled the Nazis as a child and built a career beating a string of bad guys that thrilled fans and made him reign as the conscientious champ for more than a decade. Before the flash of The Hulkster, the electricity of The Rock and the foul-mouth of Stone Cold, all Sammartino required to become wrestling's biggest box office draw was a pair of tights, boots and an honest promo that made fans believe in the most illegitimate of sports. Sammartino, professional wrestling's "Living Legend" and one of its longest-reigning champions, has died. He was 82. Sammartino's name on the marquee about guaranteed a squared circle sellout in the 1960s and 1970s and he held the World Wide Wrestling Federation championship for more than 11 years over two title runs.

— The Associated Press

Barry Ross McIntyre



Barry McIntyre, 55, of The Villages, Florida, formerly of Rumford, ME and Chester, VT passed peacefully after a period of failing health. He enjoyed living in Florida for the past 8 months, walked a lot on Hopespring Loop and made many new friends that welcomed him here. Barry leaves behind a son, Patrick in VT; older brother, Randy in The Villages, FL; sister, Sara of Rumford Pointe, ME; niece Amanda and nephews Michael of Maine, Cam and Garrett of Vermont and several great nieces and nephews, and cousins. He is predeceased by his dear parents Jack and Bertha and Brother Bob "Mac." Barry will be remembered for his gentle spirit, love of music and being a hard worker. A celebration of life will be held this summer up north with friends and family there. Memorial contributions in Barry's honor may be made to Compassionate Care Hospice, 900 Main Street #208, The Villages, FL 32159. Online condolences may be sent to www.baldwincremation.com



Lowell Baker

Lowell L. Baker age 82 of The Villages was born September 15, 1935 in Dayton, Ohio. Lowell passed away on Wednesday morning April 18th, 2018. He is survived by his wife Nancy Kincade Baker, daughters, Patricia and Katrina, sons, Patrick and Michael a sister Janice and many Grandchildren, as well as a multitude of friends. A celebration of life will be held on Saturday April 21st at the Savannah Center in The Villages. The Service will be from 11am - 1 pm. Luncheon will be served. Baldwin Brothers entrusted with the arrangements.



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