

Weekend guide

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to attend. Barrel of Books is located at 530 N. Donnelly St., Mount Dora. Details: <https://barrelofbooksand-games.com/pages/2025-book-expo>

Bigfoot & Skunk Ape expo in Ocklawaha

Bigfoot World, Cryptids and the Paranormal Researchers of Central Florida gathers Floridians curious about weird lore at 777 S. 314A, Ocklawaha, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 20.

Participants will share exclusive clips of their reported evidence collected deep within the Ocala National Forest. Attendees can check out Bigfoot structures, signs and theories from their fieldwork.

Dive into the paranormal side of Central Florida’s strangest happenings. Meet local researchers, investigators and “fellow believers.” Light refreshments will be provided. Contact Kathy Westerman on Facebook for details.

Viva La Frida Festival in Mount Dora

Kick off Hispanic Heritage Month with a festive bang and enjoy a colorful, culturally enriching homage to the late great Frida Kahlo on Saturday, Sept. 30, from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Mount Dora Center for the Arts celebrates the diversity and artistic creativity of the famous Mexican artist with an outdoor fiesta that features a variety of food vendors, dancing, music and a free kids art zone.

Come dressed up like Frida to compete to win a basket of goodies. Community outreach groups will also be on hand to offer services to Spanish-speaking families. Details: facebook.com/MountDora

Phantasmagoria XVI: ‘Hauntingly Whimsical Tales’

The roving multitalented performers of Phantasmagoria take us on a journey through the tales of author Edward Gorey in celebration of his 100th birthday. Expect nods to “The Beastly Baby,” “The

Wuggly Ump” or “The Gashlycrumb Tinies” along with other Gorey stories, reimagined through performative storytelling, ghostly dances, puppetry, projections, original music and more.

“Renowned for his intricate pen-and-ink drawings, clever storytelling and a distinctive blend of elegance and playful whimsy, he left an indelible mark on the worlds of art, literature, and design,” says the Edward Gorey website, EdwardGorey.org.

The Melon Patch Players will pay tribute to the legendary and darkly enchanting author/illustrator on the weekend of Oct. 3-4 at the Tropic Theater, 122 W. Main St., Leesburg. Check out the event’s Facebook page for ticket link and updates.

Back the Blue 5K at Leesburg Int’l Airport

Talk about a project runway! The Leesburg Blue Foundation 5K invites runners to hoof it again on the runway of the Leesburg International Airport. Presented by Sunair Aviation, the event returns on Saturday, Oct. 4. As per tradition, all proceeds raised will go to the Leesburg Police Department through the Leesburg Blue Foundation.

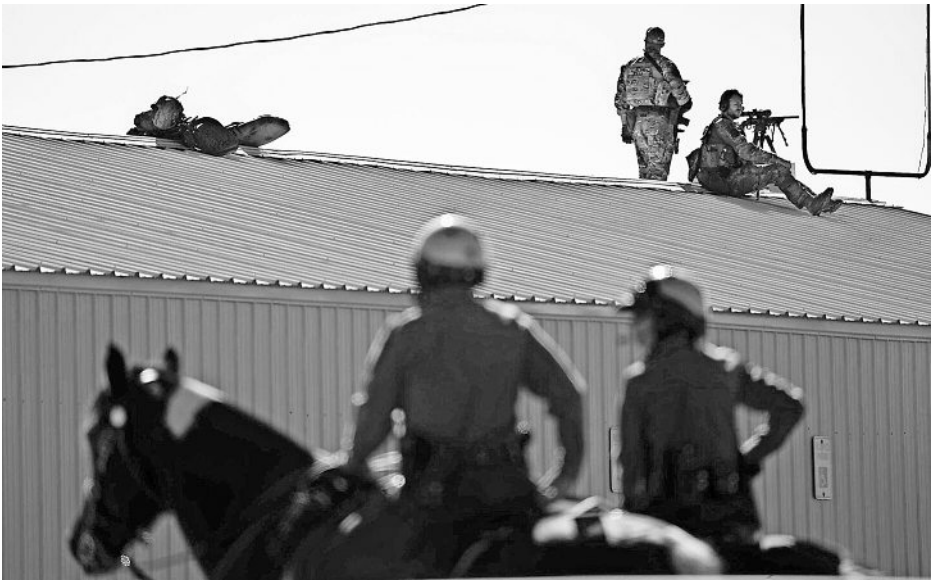
Participants can walk or run. Check in at 6 p.m. Race is at 7. Details: runsignup.com/.../Leesburg/LeesburgBlue-Foundation5K

Golf tournament to support disaster relief efforts

The Orange Blossom Gardens Lions Club has announced a \$1,000 sponsorship of the First Annual District 35-O Golf Tournament. The event raises funds for disaster relief initiatives across Central Florida. The tournament, organized by Lions Club District 35-O, takes to the greens on Saturday, Oct. 4, at Harbor Hills Country Club in Lady Lake.

The tournament will feature an 8 a.m. shotgun start, with check-in beginning at 7 a.m. The entry fee is \$100 per person or \$400 for a team of four, which includes lunch. Attendees can also participate in raffles and compete for prizes throughout the day. Details: outreach@obglions.com

Planning an event? Email us details and photos at news@dailycommercial.com



Secret Service countersnipers survey from an elevated position before former President Donald Trump speaks at a campaign rally in Butler, Pennsylvania, on Oct. 5, 2024. JASPER COLT/USA TODAY FILE

Snipers

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leaders, the Sept. 2 report warned.

“Failure to appropriately staff (snipers) could limit the Secret Service’s ability to properly protect our Nation’s most senior leaders, risking injury or assassination, and subsequent national-level harm to the country’s sense of safety and security,” Cuffari said in the report.

Cuffari recommended that the Secret Service develop a strategy to hire more countersnipers and to ensure that they receive the necessary training.

The Secret Service agreed with both recommendations. The agency has recommended hiring more sharpshooters since at least 2022.

Secret Service Director Sean Curran said in a written reply to the report that it recognized the importance of having a specialized unit with highly trained, precision marksmen.

“The Secret Service remains committed to both adequately staffing this function” and to ensuring adequate training, Curran said.

The need for Secret Service snipers was reinforced with the July 13, 2024, assassination attempt against Trump, who was then a former president campaigning to return to the White House. A gunman fired eight shots from a rooftop near where Trump was speaking and

wounded him in the ear before a Secret Service countersniper killed the assailant.

Countersnipers racked up 247,887 hours of overtime from 2020 to 2024, which is the equivalent of 24 full-time employees, the report said.

Snipers who didn’t meet mandatory re-qualification requirements were at 47 of 426 or 11% of events that people under the agency’s protection attended in 2024. Those events included President Joe Biden appearances at a wake in Dallas on Jan. 8, 2024; campaign receptions in New York on Feb. 7, 2024; and remarks in Manchester, New Hampshire, on March 11, 2024.

Before March 2024, it took almost three years for a uniformed Secret Service agent to become a countersniper. The minimum time period has dropped six months.

Each officer gets 13 weeks of police training and 16 weeks of uniformed training. Agents must now spend 18 months in uniform, down from the previous 24 months, before being eligible to apply to become a countersniper. The candidate attends a one-week selection process and a 10-week training program.

The Secret Service “will need to quickly hire and train substantially more countersnipers to meet growing operational demands and be prepared for the 2028 Presidential election cycle and beyond,” Cuffari said.

NOTICE OF FILING CERTIFICATION APPLICATION FOR ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION LINE CORRIDOR TO BE LOCATED IN LAKE AND VOLUSIA COUNTIES DELAND WEST – DONA VISTA 230 kV TRANSMISSION LINE

Duke Energy Florida DeLand West – Dona Vista 230 kV Transmission Line Application No.TA25-20 (OGC No. 25-1510) for certification to authorize location of a transmission line corridor, construction, operation and maintenance of a 230 kilovolt (kV) electrical transmission line commonly referred to as DeLand West – Dona Vista and maintenance of the transmission line right-of-way from, Lake County, Florida to Volusia County, Florida was received by the Department of Environmental Protection on August 22nd, 2025. The case is pending before the Division of Administrative Hearings, Case No. 25-004655TL, prior to action by the Governor and Cabinet (sitting as the Siting Board), or the Secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection, pursuant to the Florida Transmission Line Siting Act, Chapter 403, Part II, F.S. The proposed corridor passes through the following local government jurisdictions: Lake County, Volusia County, City of Umatilla, and City of Eustis (see accompanying map).

State agencies, water management districts, and local governments will be reviewing the application and preparing reports regarding the compliance of the proposal with applicable laws, and any needed conditions of certification to assure such compliance. It is recommended that interested individuals review the application and bring matters of concern to the appropriate agency's attention as soon as possible. Information regarding the appropriate contact persons in the agencies may be obtained from the Department of Environmental Protection's Siting Coordination Office, (2600 Blair Stone Road, MS 3500, Tallahassee, Florida 32399, (850) 717-9111, Nate Senn). The application for certification which more specifically depicts the proposed transmission line corridor is available for public inspection at the following locations: Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Siting Coordination Office, 2600 Blair Stone Road, Tallahassee, Florida 32399; Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Central District Office, 3319 Maguire Boulevard, Orlando, Florida 32803; Duke Energy Florida, 299 1st Ave N, St. Petersburg, Florida 33701; Duke Energy Florida, 3300 Exchange Place, Lake Mary, Florida 32746; DeLand Regional Library, 130 E Howry Ave, DeLand, Florida 32724; Umatilla Public Library, 412 Hatfield Dr, Umatilla, Florida 32784. The application is also available on the Internet at Department of Environmental Protection's Siting Coordination Office website by clicking on "Applications in Process" or <https://floridadep.gov/water/siting-coordination-office/content/applications-process>.

Unless the administrative law judge cancels the certification hearing pursuant to Section 403.527(6), F.S., based on a stipulation of the parties to the proceeding that there are no disputed issues of material fact or law, a certification hearing will be conducted by the administrative law judge at a central location in proximity to the proposed corridor. Notice of the date and location of the certification hearing will be published in this publication at least 65 days before the date set for the hearing.

The Transmission Line Siting Act provides, among other things, that:

- (f) Subject to the conditions set forth therein, certification shall constitute the sole license of the state and any agency as to the approval of the location of transmission line corridors and the construction, operation, and maintenance of transmission lines. The certification is valid for the life of the transmission line, if construction on, or condemnation or acquisition of, the right-of-way is commenced within 5 years after the date of certification or such later date as may be authorized by the board.

(2) (a) The certification authorizes the licensee to locate the transmission line corridor and to construct and maintain the transmission line subject only to the conditions of certification set forth in the certification.

(b) The certification may include conditions that constitute variances and exemptions from nonprocedural standards or rules of the Department of Environmental Protection or any other agency which were expressly considered during the certification review unless waived by the agency as provided in s. 403.526 and which otherwise would be applicable to the location of the proposed transmission line corridor or the construction, operation, and maintenance of the transmission line.

Any person wishing to participate in the proceedings, as a party, must file an appropriate pleading with the Division of Administrative Hearings following the procedures in Chapter 28-106, F.A.C., and Section 403.527(2)(c), F.S., which provides that:

(f) Parties to the proceeding shall be: Duke Energy Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Florida Public Service Commission, the Florida Department of Commerce, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Florida Department of Transportation, the St. Johns River Water Management District, Lake County, Volusia County, City of Umatilla, and City of Eustis. Any of these parties, other than the Department of Environmental Protection and Duke Energy Florida, may waive its right to participate in this proceeding if the listed party fails to file a notice of intent to be a party on or before the 30th day before the certification hearing.

(2) Notwithstanding the provisions of Chapter 120, F.S., to the contrary, upon the filing with the administrative law judge of a notice of intent to be a party by an agency, corporation, or association described in subparagraphs (a) and (b) below or a petition for intervention by a person described in subparagraph (c) below no later than 30 days before the date set for the certification hearing, the following shall also be parties to the proceeding:

(a) Any agency not listed in subparagraph (f) above as to matters within its jurisdiction.

(b) Any domestic nonprofit corporation or association formed, in whole or in part, to promote conservation of natural beauty; to protect the environment, personal health, or other biological values; to preserve historical sites; to promote consumer interests; to represent labor, commercial, or industrial groups; or to promote comprehensive planning or orderly development of the area in which the proposed transmission line or corridor is to be located.

(c) Any person whose substantial interests are affected and being determined by the proceeding.

For further information about the certification process please see: <https://floridadep.gov/water/siting-coordination-office/content/rules-and-statutes>.

Persons not wishing to participate in the proceedings as a party may nevertheless offer sworn testimony during the public hearing portion of the certification hearing, if a certification hearing is needed.

Any notice of intent to be a party or motion to intervene must be sent to; Re: DOAH Case No. 25-004655TL, Division of Administrative Hearings, 2001 Drayton Drive, Tallahassee, Florida, 32311, and must contain the following: reference to the application number; the name, address, and telephone number of the agency or person; and, allegations sufficient to demonstrate the agency or person is entitled to participate in the proceeding. The notice or motion must be sent by mail to the applicant and to all parties. (A list of parties may be obtained from the Department of Environmental Protection's Siting Coordination Office at the physical address above.)

Consideration may be given in this proceeding to corridors alternate to the corridor preferred by Duke Energy Florida. Persons other than the applicant may propose alternate corridors for portions of or all of the corridor proposed by the applicant. To propose an alternate corridor, persons must request to become a party to the proceedings, and then must file a notice of proposed alternate corridor with the administrative law judge pursuant to Section 403.527(1), F.S., all parties, and any local governments in the jurisdiction of which the alternate is proposed, by no later than 45 days prior to the originally scheduled certification hearing. The filing must include the most recent United States Geological Survey 1:24000 quadrangle maps with the alternate corridor boundaries specifically delineated on it, a description of the proposed alternate corridor, and a statement of the reasons the proposed alternate should be certified. Each party proposing an alternate corridor shall have the burden to provide the data necessary for the agencies listed in Section 403.526, F.S., to prepare a supplementary report, to provide public notice in accordance with Section 403.5363(2), F.S., and the burden of proof on the certifiability of the alternate corridor at the certification hearing. See Section 403.5271, F.S., and Florida Administrative Code Rule 62-17.543 for further information and requirements. <https://floridadep.gov/water/siting-coordination-office/content/rules-and-statutes>

Issues relating to the use of, connection to, or the crossing of properties and works of the following agencies The Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, the St. Johns River Water Management District, the Florida Department of Transportation, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Forest Service, Lake County Water Authority, Lake County, Volusia County, City of Umatilla, and City of Eustis may be addressed in this certification proceeding.

