

OUR TOWNS

AROUND TOWN

Pet Vet Cruiser makes rounds

Volusia County's Pet Vet Cruiser will offer spaying and neutering services to dogs and cats in several locations through the month of January. The mobile clinic will be at Rockin' Ranch, 801 S. Nova Road, Ormond Beach, on Jan. 13, 19 and 27; Fancy Fruit and Produce, 911 S. Volusia Ave., Orange City, Jan. 7, 14, 21 and 28; Oakbrook Professional Center, 931 N. Spring Garden Ave., DeLand on Jan. 5, 8, 15, 26 and 29; and Fire Station 23, 1850 Pioneer Trail, New Smyrna Beach, on Jan. 6, 12 and 20. Fees are based on income. Appointments are required and may be made by calling 386-323-3575 in Daytona Beach, 386-626-6643 in DeLand, or 386-424-6875 in New Smyrna Beach. For information, visit volusia.org/petvet.

Explore Volusia with specialists

Volusia County's environmental specialists will share information about local habitats and land management practices during free Explore Volusia activities in January. Participants should bring water and wear comfortable clothes and hiking or walking shoes. Reservations are required; call 386-736-5927.

Upcoming events include:
Guided hike of Indian River Lagoon Park: 9 to 11 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 7. Explore the waterfront park while learning about the importance of estuaries, natural uplands and wetlands. Participants can test water quality and learn about environmental issues facing the lagoon. Meet at 700 Sandpiper St., New Smyrna Beach.

Nature photography in Longleaf Pine Preserve: 9 to 11 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 9. Professional photographer Lee Dunkel will offer tips on photographing nature during this exploration of Longleaf Pine Preserve. Bring a camera and meet at the preserve's east entrance, 4551 Pioneer Trail, New Smyrna Beach. Learn more about Dunkel at leedunkel.com.

Bike-about along Martins Dairy Trail: 2 to 4 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 12. Learn about the ecosystem of the Doris Leeper Spruce Creek Preserve while riding a segment of Martins Dairy Trail. Moderate skill is preferred due to the rough terrain, hills and soft sand. Bring a bicycle and helmet. From Turnbull Bay Road, turn north onto Martin Dairy Road and meet in the dirt

Families treated to dinner and giveaways

PIERSON – Embassy of Hope, Food Brings Hope, Kids Are First and Sodexo Campus Services hosted more than 125 children, families, and volunteers Dec. 15 for a holiday dinner, giveaways and activities at Pierson Elementary.

Kidds Are First joined Food Brings Hope, Embassy of Hope and Sodexo to continue the "Hope for the Holidays." Families participating in the Barbara Bush Foundation Family Literacy Program, facilitated by Food Brings Hope, received a special invitation to attend the holiday event. Seventeen families voluntarily participate in this weekly afterschool program to

reach individual and family unit educational goals.

The evening kicked off with a family feast catered by Sodexo before parents and children separated for activities and giveaways. While the children enjoyed Christmas-themed arts and craft activities, their parents were able to select from a vast collection of children's and adult's clothing donated by Embassy of Hope and Kidds Are First. Natalie McCall, Kidds Are First secretary, and her daughter, Taylor, delivered the donation and stayed to help families select desired items.

"It was our pleasure to partner with Food Brings Hope and help needy

children in our community," said McCall. "We are also so thankful for the support of our donors in our community as without them we could not reach as many children as we do today."

Daytona State College professor, Frank Gunshanan, and his team of student volunteers attend the family literacy program weekly and were on hand to assist with sorting more than 150 pairs of shoes donated by ICI Homes employees.

Volunteers also helped arrange the many children's toys, games and stuffed animals, courtesy of Food Brings Hope and Kidds Are First.

After parents selected



From left, Betzy and Ashley Escobar enjoy dinner with mom, Melgar, at "Hope for the Holidays" at Pierson Elementary.

PHOTO PROVIDED

their items, families were brought back together for holiday cookie decorating. Before heading home for the evening, families were

given a turkey, on behalf of Sodexo, and a gift bag filled with family games and activities donated by FBH.

Deltona Art Club's featured artist



Lorene Brookshire is the featured artist of the Deltona Art Club and her painting "Amaryllis" is now hanging in the lobby of the Deltona City Hall. Brookshire has been painting for more than 20 years. She was inspired when she met Bob Ross in Arizona many years ago. She is certified in the Bob Ross method for floral, landscapes and seascapes. Brookshire has lived in Deltona since 1993. She gets many of her inspirations from her travels. In addition to painting on canvas, Brookshire paints animals on queen palm boots. The Deltona Art Club meets 9:30 a.m. the second Wednesday of each month, September through May, at the Deltona Regional Library. The club also meets year round for workshop time 12:30-3 p.m. each Thursday at the Deltona Senior Center on Lakeshore Drive. All are welcome.

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