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Thriving on a  
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## VEGAN FITNESS

A Healthy  
Choice for Body  
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March 2020

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Natural Awakenings of North Central Florida is a faithful steward of global resources. We are delighted to be a part of an environmentally conscious community and therefore manufacture this magazine utilizing the environmentally-friendly cold-set web printer process which emits virtually immeasurable VOC's into the environment. The product is 100% recyclable.

## letter from publisher



Welcome to our plant-based nutrition issue. For many people, making a shift from a meat-based to a plant-based diet has become a lifestyle choice. For others like myself who prefer the traditional meat and potato dishes, shifting to incorporate plant-based foods has been a conscious effort to make healthier choices at restaurants, grocery stores and the foods I prepare at home. I have noticed a drastic difference in how much better I feel since incorporating more plant-based options. April Thompson shares the secrets of making this a seamless transition

in "The Roots of Good Health: Thriving on a Plant-Based Diet."

The process for my family the last few years started by substituting red meat with turkey and chicken and then to find plant-based meals. Thompson takes this concept a step further with "Meatless Makeover. A Plant-Based Spin on Classic Dishes," complete with recipes for Vegan Popcorn "Chicken", Walnut Meat Tacos and a mouth-watering Mushroom and Sage Wellington.



Most restaurants these days offer plant-based options that you can try to get a sense of the vast variety of flavorful dishes to satisfy any palate. I encourage you to try it on your next visit one of our many participating local restaurants and diners.

Plants also play a role in other important aspects of our lives. Marlaina Donato's "Vegan Fitness: A Healthy Choice for Body and Planet" explains how eating lower on the food chain benefits body, soul and the environment. Julie Marshall reveals the healing powers of a popular hemp-based oil in "CBD's New Frontier: Help for Mental Health."

Be sure to check out all that *Natural Awakenings* has to offer this month, from pointers on pet diets to inspiring words from Meg Ludstrom about "synchronicity" and how we can encourage the sometimes life-changing "coincidences" that may have a profound influence on our lives, as well as the Wise Words of author Ronnie Cummins, founder of the Organic Consumers Association, on the future of regenerative agriculture in sequestering greenhouse gases and the power of growing a movement.

We're also so pleased that our reach now extends into coastal Citrus County and look forward to hearing from all our new readers there. I want you to know that we're not just another free community publication. We have a mission to promote natural health and sustainable living with award-winning national content and hyperlocal coverage of the events and activities that really matter in your life. Give us a holler at [Sheila@GoNaturalAwakenings.com](mailto:Sheila@GoNaturalAwakenings.com).

Sheila

## February News Brief Correction:

Sandra Wilson is certified in Energy Balancing with Emotion Code, Body Code, Emotional Freedom Technique and hypnosis. She offers treatments in those modalities, but not certification in Energy balancing. We regret the error. For more information, call 352-454-8959 or visit [SandraWilsonPositiveChange.com](http://SandraWilsonPositiveChange.com).



Natural Awakenings is a family of more than 70 healthy living magazines celebrating 25 years of providing the communities we serve with the tools and resources we all need to lead healthier lives on a healthy planet.

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### HOW TO ADVERTISE

To advertise with *Natural Awakenings* or request a media kit, please contact us at 352-366-0088 or email [Sheila@GoNaturalAwakenings.com](mailto:Sheila@GoNaturalAwakenings.com).

Deadline for ads: the 10th of the month.

### EDITORIAL SUBMISSIONS

Email articles, news items and ideas to:

[Sheila@GoNaturalAwakenings.com](mailto:Sheila@GoNaturalAwakenings.com).

Deadline for editorial: the 10th of the month.

### CALENDAR SUBMISSIONS

Email Calendar Events to:

[Sheila@GoNaturalAwakenings.com](mailto:Sheila@GoNaturalAwakenings.com).

Deadline for calendar: the 10th of the month.

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## Treasures from the Earth



In addition to selling rocks and crystals, High Springs Emporium offers a variety of services, including workshops and crystal healing, consultations, special orders, lapidary services,

and mineral identification and valuation.

In a vintage house built in 1929 in the heart of springs country, patrons will find a treasure trove of ethically sourced crystals, fine minerals and gems from all over the world. Owner Sharron Britton says, "Crystals have been used to enhance energy, create focus for meditation, and provide joy and beauty for millennia. Many people feel that crystals can be used for spiritual healing and balance. There is nowhere else in North Central Florida where you can find the quality and breadth of selection in the mineral world."

Britton explains, "Our mission has always been to create sacred space where all who enter can discover the beauty of the mineral kingdom. Everyone who loves rocks will find something to delight the eye and lighten the heart. Rare minerals, quartz crystals from all over the world, unusual gemstone spheres and geodes are on display for our customers to enjoy in an atmosphere of peace and tranquility."

*Location: 19765 NW U.S. Hwy. 441, High Springs. For more information, call 386-454-8657, email [Sharron@HighSpringsEmporium.net](mailto:Sharron@HighSpringsEmporium.net) or visit [HighSpringsEmporium.net](http://HighSpringsEmporium.net).*

## Calling All Animal Lovers



Marion County Animal Services will hold the Ocala Pet Expo from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., March 28, in the Tusawilla Park Historic District for one of the area's

most popular and anticipated events of the year. Visitors can speak with trainers, enjoy demonstrations, shop with vendors of pet-centric merchandise and even find a forever companion. Hosted by 93.7 KCountry and WIND-FM, it's a great day out to support the incredible work of animal welfare providers of fosters and adoptions.

*Location: 829 NE Sanchez Ave., Ocala. For more information, visit [Tinyurl.com/OcalaPetExpo](http://Tinyurl.com/OcalaPetExpo).*

## Art and History Go Together

To celebrate Women's History Month, artists and designers can explore exhibits and create art together at SciArt

Meetup: Women Scientific Illustrators from 6:30 to 9 p.m., March 24, at the Florida Museum of Natural History.

In partnership with Santa Fe College Art Gallery and Wayfarer Painter, the museum also offers creatives the opportunity to give a short art or science presentation about influential female scientific illustrators in history. Working studio space is included for artist use, plus after-hours access to all permanent exhibits at the museum.

*Cost is \$7 per person; artists must bring their own supplies. Location: 3215 Hull Rd., Gainesville. For more information, call 352-273-2062 or visit [FloridaMuseum.ufl.edu/event/sciart-illustrators](http://FloridaMuseum.ufl.edu/event/sciart-illustrators).*



## Stock up on Plants for Spring



The Florida Museum of Natural History will conduct their spring plant sale from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., April 3 and 4, and 1 to 5 p.m., April 5, on the front lawn, just in time for spring garden planning. More than 150

species of rare, hard-to-find, pollinator-friendly plants are on sale. Accent, native, host, and nectar plants are available, with proceeds benefiting the museum's Butterfly Rainforest exhibit.

*Location: 3215 Hull Rd., Gainesville. For more information, call 352-273-2057 or visit [FloridaMuseum.ufl.edu/event/spring-plant-sale](http://FloridaMuseum.ufl.edu/event/spring-plant-sale).*

## Just Say No to Tobacco

Tobacco-Free Alachua, a diverse, energetic community of individuals in a partnership committed to developing and promoting policies

that reduce the use and effects of tobacco, will hold their monthly meeting at 3:30 p.m., March 11. Established in 2008, the organization is funded by grants from the Department of Florida Health and support from the Alachua County Health Department. It's a good starting point for those interested in quitting tobacco or want to learn more about prevention and tobacco-related illness.



*Location: 2401 SW Archer Rd., Gainesville. For more information, visit [Facebook.com/tobaccofreealachua](https://Facebook.com/tobaccofreealachua).*





## Veg Fest Promotes a Healthy Lifestyle

Ocala Veg Fest will take place from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., March 8, at the Ocala Downtown Market with the purpose of demonstrating the benefits of a healthy,

plant-based diet. VegFest also promotes compassion for animals and advocates for the protection of the planet by reducing our carbon footprint.

Participants will learn about plant-based, healthy food in the Ocala area and discover local sources for eco-friendly and cruelty-free products that use no animal testing. There are expert speakers, cooking demonstrations and a plethora of vendors, entertainment, activities, animal adoptions and fantastic food to sample.

*Location: 310 SE 3rd St., Ocala. For more information, visit [OcalaVegFest.org](http://OcalaVegFest.org).*

## It's Shrimpalooza Time in Homosassa



The Homosassa Civic Association hosts the family-friendly, pet-friendly crustacean celebration of Shrimpalooza from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., March 14, with loads of shrimp cooked in innumerable different ways. There will also be non-seafood fare, cold drinks, beer and live music to round out this festive and eclectic community party.

A parade starts at 10 a.m. from the Old Mill Tavern to Homosassa Elementary School; participants will be giving away beads and candy throughout the route, so bring the kids and enjoy a fun, entertaining and scrumptious time.

*Admission is \$5. Location: 5330 S. Mason Creek Rd., Homosassa. For more information, visit [Shrimpalooza.com](http://Shrimpalooza.com).*

## News to share?

Submit information to [Sheila@GoNaturalAwakenings.com](mailto:Sheila@GoNaturalAwakenings.com).

Submittal deadline is the 10th of the month.

## Natural Awakenings Looking for Cover Artists

Creative individuals that would like to see their work featured on the cover of a nationally distributed magazine now have an exceptional opportunity. *Natural Awakenings* is extending a call for cover art and accepting submissions online via a dedicated web page. Now in its 26th year, the franchised, monthly, healthy living publication that's available in more than 70 U.S. markets is known for eye-catching covers that feature original works by artists from around the world.

"This is an exciting opportunity for artists to be featured on one of our covers and reach a huge new audience because our monthly readership exceeds 2.5 million," says founder and CEO Sharon Bruckman. Selected artists that grant permission to have their work appear on a cover are featured in a one-third page, professionally written "Cover Artist" bio-style piece that describes the artist and includes their contact information.

*Natural Awakenings* covers reflect monthly editorial themes and a variety of selections are distributed to all franchise publishers so they can choose which they want to use. "Our covers are creative and help convey our mission of mapping out alternate routes to a healthier, happier and longer life," says Bruckman. "Art that is inspiring, uplifting and occasionally whimsical can unlock our imagination and nurture our spirit."

*For more information, including a list of monthly themes, submission terms and format requirements, visit [NaturalAwakenings.com/CoverArt](http://NaturalAwakenings.com/CoverArt).*

## kudos



*Natural Awakenings* magazine now includes **Citrus County**. With warm gulf waters and robust river estuaries, Citrus County is a lush, active paradise and a destination for nature and marine lovers. The towns of **Inverness, Homosassa, Floral City and Crystal River** are rich with history, art and culture. Visitors flock to enjoy the pristine freshwater springs, abundant fishing and boating activities, swim with the manatees and explore diverse riding and hiking trails throughout the region.

In addition to the stunning environmental wonders of the **Nature Coast**, there is fantastic shopping and dining and a thriving artistic community. We look forward to bringing readers an inside look at this wonderful region and telling them about everything it has to offer, including community and entertainment events, activities and profiles of the people that make it home.

*For more information, visit [DiscoverCrystalRiverfl.com](http://DiscoverCrystalRiverfl.com).*

## Take Folic Acid to Reduce Stroke Risk



Researchers from Beijing Geriatric Hospital, in a meta-analysis of 12 studies involving 47,523 patients with cardiovascular disease, found that those that supplemented with folic acid (vitamin B<sub>9</sub>) reduced their risk of stroke by 15 percent. Folic acid, which

the study authors called a “safe and inexpensive therapy,” lowers levels of homocysteine, an amino acid linked to heart disease; research indicates that 0.5 to 5 milligrams daily can reduce homocysteine levels by approximately 25 percent.

## Practice Yoga to Help the Brain

It's long been known that vigorous, sweaty aerobics strengthen the brain and help grow new neurons, but the latest research from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign shows that practicing gentle hatha yoga enhances many of those same brain structures and functions. The analysis, published in *Brain Plasticity*, examined 11 studies that used brain-imaging techniques to evaluate outcomes of hatha yoga, which involves body movements, meditation and breathing exercises. The researchers concluded that the hippocampus, which is involved in memory processing and typically shrinks with age, increased in volume with yoga. The amygdala, which helps regulate emotions, tends to be larger in yoga practitioners. Other brain regions that are larger or more efficient in enthusiasts are the prefrontal cortex, essential to planning and decision-making; the default mode network, involved in planning and memory; and the cingulate cortex, which plays a key role in emotional regulation, learning and memory.



## Balance Water Consumption for Cognitive Health

Drinking either not enough or too much water can decrease cognitive performance in older women, Penn State University researchers reported in the *European Journal of Nutrition*. In a nationwide study, 1,271 women and 1,235 men over age 60 gave blood samples, answered questionnaires about the previous day's food and drinks, and performed cognitive tests to measure working memory, brain processing speed and sustained attention. Women, but not men, performed more poorly if they were not in the “sweet spot” of just enough hydration, typically around two liters a day. “As we age, our water reserves decline due to reductions in muscle mass, our kidneys become less effective at retaining water and hormonal signals that trigger thirst and motivate water intake become blunted,” explains lead author Hilary Bethancourt, in urging greater attention to hydration levels.



## Catch Some Rays to Boost Gut Health

Fresh evidence is emerging of a skin-gut axis that links type B ultraviolet (UVB) exposure to the microbiome, a finding that has implications for those suffering from autoimmune and inflammatory diseases. University of British Columbia researchers divided 21 healthy young women into two groups: Nine took vitamin D supplements during Vancouver's long, dark winter, and 12 didn't. After three months, only the non-supplement-takers tested as being deficient in vitamin D. Both groups were exposed to three, one-minute, full-body UVB light sessions; within a week, vitamin D levels increased 10 percent on average and the gut microbiota diversity of the low-D group rose to match that of the sufficient-D group. Along with other probiotic bacteria, *Lachnospiraceae* species, typically low in the guts of people with inflammatory diseases, increased with the UVB exposure.





## Cut Back on Sugar and Carbs to Improve Sleep

Women that toss and turn at night might sleep better if they pass up sugary treats for fruit, suggests a new study from Columbia University. Examining records of nearly 50,000 postmenopausal women in the Women's Health Initiative, researchers found those that consumed a diet high in refined carbohydrates—particularly added sugars and processed grains—were more likely to develop insomnia. Women with a diet that included higher amounts of vegetables, fiber and whole fruit (not juice) were less likely to have trouble sleeping. "When blood sugar is raised quickly, your body reacts by releasing insulin, and the resulting drop in blood sugar can lead to the release of hormones such as adrenaline and cortisol, which can interfere with sleep," explains senior author James Gangwisch, Ph.D.

## Try Vitamins and Garlic to Lower Gastric Cancer Risk

In a rural region of China where gastric cancer is common, researchers found in a two-decade study that two approaches—antibiotics and vitamin/mineral supplements—protected against it. Both methods, as well as a garlic supplement, significantly reduced death rates from the cancer. Peking University Cancer Hospital and Institute researchers enrolled 3,365 residents ages 35 to 64 from 13 villages with symptoms of *H. pylori*, a gut bacteria linked to increased risk of ulcers and cancer. Two weeks of conventional antibiotics treatment reduced the risk of gastric cancer over a 22-year period, and twice-daily supplements of 250 milligrams (mg) of vitamin C, 100 international units of vitamin E and 37.5 micrograms of selenium taken for seven years also reduced gastric cancer incidence. Garlic in the form of 400 mg aged garlic extract and one mg of steam-distilled garlic oil was given to a third group for seven years. All three treatments significantly slashed the gastric cancer fatality rate.



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*California Sage*

### Green Flying

#### First Commercial E-Plane Makes History



Electric propulsion has long been a goal of aviation manufacturers to lessen the carbon footprint of air travel. On December 11, Vancouver, Canada-based Harbour Air launched the first suc-

cessful test flight of an all-electric aircraft. Founder and CEO Greg McDougall piloted a 1956 de Havilland Beaver seaplane, rechristened the ePlane. Retrofitted with a 750-horsepower magni500 motor by MagniX, it took off from a dock on the Fraser River in Richmond, British Columbia, and flew for four minutes. The certification process will take one to two years. After that, the retrofits of the company's existing fleet of small planes can begin. The challenge for airlines seeking to go green with large aircraft is that current technology leaves electric engines relatively weak for their weight and they have a short battery life, but these factors do not deter Harbour Air, which went carbon-neutral in 2007 and flies mostly short hops in the Northwest.



#### Viva Agave Tequila Waste Turned into Bio-Straws

Jose Cuervo, the bestselling tequila maker globally, has initiated an eco-friendly process of

salvaging the leftover agave fibers from its distilling process and upcycling them into a more sustainable alternative to regular plastic straws. The biodegradable drinking straw will decompose up to 200 times faster than regular plastic. Made with an agave bio-based and U.S. Food and Drug Administration-approved composite, the new straws replace about a third of the polymers used in traditional straw production, and at the end of its lifecycle a straw can be consumed by microorganisms to fully biodegrade within one to five years in landfill conditions. The company plans to distribute millions of the straws this year at bars, restaurants and Jose Cuervo events across the U.S. and Mexico.



#### Waste-to-Energy 'Matterhorn' Sustainable Power With a Recreational Bonus

Copenhagen has dramatically refashioned the look and function of a power station with a new state-of-the-art, waste-to-power plant that powers 200,000 homes and doubles—actually, sextuples—as a ski slope,

a climbing wall, a viewing tower, a hiking and running trail network, and a bar and restaurant. Named Copenhill, "It is the cleanest waste-to-energy power plant in the world," says architect Bjarke Ingels. "It is a crystal clear example of 'Hedonistic Sustainability' because a sustainable city is not only better for the environment, it is also more enjoyable for the lives of its citizens." The building, 278 feet tall at its apex, has

a glass elevator for viewing the inner workings of how the city's trash is transformed into both electricity and heating, as well as the best view in town of the harbor. It has three ski lifts that serve a one-third-mile course coated with a special "plastic grass" that provides the perfect friction for both skiing and snowboarding. It even features the tallest climbing wall in the world, designed with overhangs and ledges of white, like an icy mountain. Ingels says 97 percent of Copenhagen residents get their heating as a byproduct of energy production from an integrated system in which the electricity, heating and waste disposal are combined into a single process. Copenhagen has a goal of becoming the world's first carbon-neutral city by 2025.

#### Sunscreen Sanction

##### Palau Bans Chemicals to Save Reefs

Palau is the first country in the world to ban ecologically harmful sunscreens containing oxybenzone and octinoxate. Studies have found the ingredients cause coral DNA to mutate in the larval stage, which prevents coral from growing properly and makes it more susceptible to bleaching. Palau, with a population of about 20,000 people spread across 340 islands between Australia and Japan, is a diving hotspot for tourists, and one of its lagoons has been named an official UNESCO World Heritage Site. President Tommy Remengesau says, "We have to live and respect the environment, because the environment is the nest of life."



## Instant Home

### 3D-Printed Buildings on the Rise



ICON, an Austin-based startup, built the first permitted 3D-printed house in the U.S. in its hometown in 2018. Since then, the company has built a small neighbor-

hood in Mexico and launched its Vulcan II printer, which can produce houses measuring up to 2,000 square feet. San Francisco-based Apis Cor is another company in the 3D-printing space: It has just completed a two-story, 6,900-square-foot building in Dubai and it plans to build a demonstration house in Santa Barbara, California, this year. Another tech startup, *Haus.me*, has opened an assembly plant in Reno, where it plans to ship its first off-the-grid models to buyers in Nevada, California and Arizona. In the Netherlands, a consortium of companies has set up a factory with 3D-printing machines that use concrete; it plans to supply materials for five homes to be built in the city of Eindhoven. The upside of using 3D-printing techniques for building houses include lower cost, less waste and reduced construction time—six weeks versus six months. Current barriers include a lack of regulation and building codes, and a limit on the types of materials that can be used. The process is limited largely to plastics and concrete, and homes requiring wood or steel still need to use traditional methods.

## Soothing Scents

### Smells of Nature Lower Physiological Stress

In a virtual reality experiment, people recovered faster from a small electric shock when they smelled a mix of natural scents in a forest scene or grass in a park scene than when they smelled diesel or tar in an urban setting. Researchers at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences hypothesized that natural environments would reduce stress faster than a non-natural one. After administering the small shock to induce stress, they tracked how quickly participants' skin conductance levels rose and fell in each of the three environments. The pleasant natural scents were the strongest predictor of reduced stress, both during the initial shock response and in recovery, suggesting that odor might have a much more profound effect on reducing stress than sights and sounds. As study coauthor Johan Lundström, a neuropsychologist at Sweden's Karolinska Institute, theorized smell is wired to bypass the thalamus, the brain's switchboard, to go directly to the hypothalamus and olfactory cortex, creating a more immediate response than visual or auditory stimuli.

## eco tip

## Eating Greener

### Tips for Plant-Based Living



Eating more fruits and vegetables as part of a plant-based diet is catching on. In 2019, more than one third of Americans said they plan to incorporate more plant-based foods into their diets to achieve their wellness resolutions, according to data company

YouGov. For those new to “green eating”—and even for veggie-minded veterans—lots of helpful information is available now on what to consider in buying, preparing, re-using and discarding food.

The Environmental Working Group's website at [ewg.org/foodnews](http://ewg.org/foodnews) makes it easy to research pesticide levels in produce. Check out the Clean Fifteen and Dirty Dozen—the most toxin-free and toxin-heavy fruits and vegetables—along with related news and developments.

Home deliveries of local and organic produce can save time and gas consumption from shopping. Some of the leading regional services include Fresh Direct ([FreshDirect.com](http://FreshDirect.com)), Sun Basket ([SunBasket.com](http://SunBasket.com)), Green Bean Delivery ([GreenBeanDelivery.com](http://GreenBeanDelivery.com)), Irv & Shelly's Fresh Picks ([FreshPicks.com](http://FreshPicks.com)) and Territory Foods ([TerritoryFoods.com](http://TerritoryFoods.com)).

Composting combines food scraps with lawn and garden trimmings and more into a nutrient-rich, natural garden fertilizer. A useful guide to composting basics by the Environmental Protection Agency can be found at [epa.gov/recycle/composting-home](http://epa.gov/recycle/composting-home).

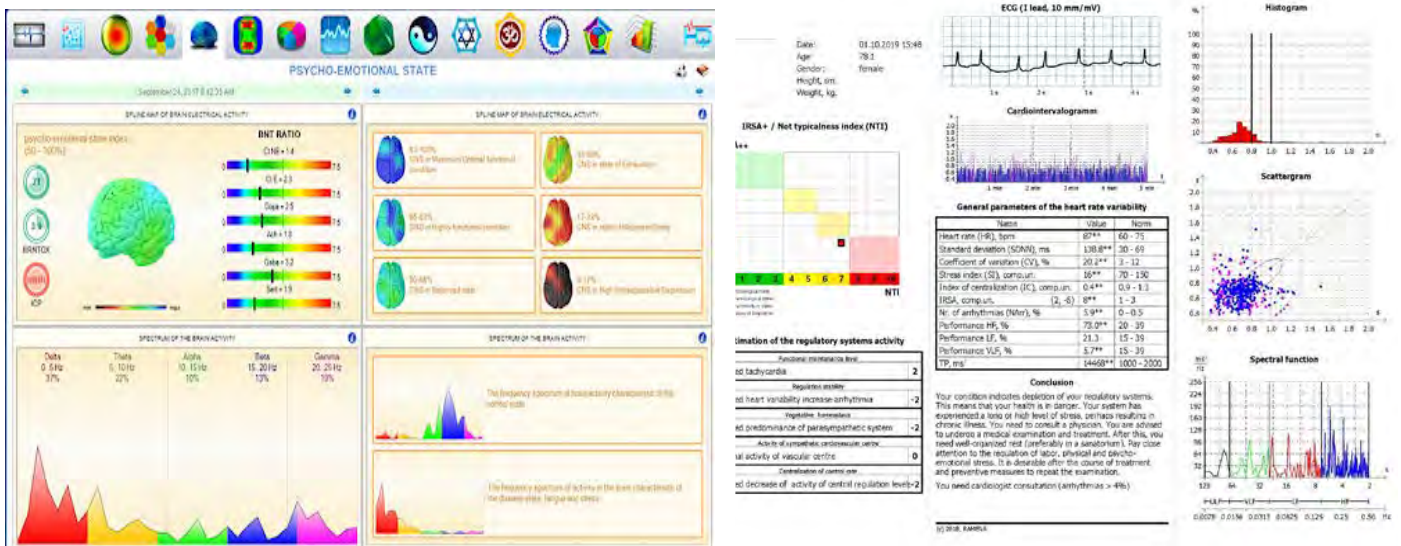
The phenomenon of food scrapping—using the parts of produce in recipes that are often thrown out—saves money in shopping, is easier on the environment and pleasingly leads to creative and innovative meals. A number of cookbooks are dedicated to the subject, including *Cooking With Scraps: Turn Your Peels, Cores, Rinds, and Stems into Delicious Meals*, by Lindsay-Jean Hard and *Scraps, Peels, and Stems: Recipes and Tips for Rethinking Food Waste at Home*, by Jill Lightner.

Plant-based foods can be swapped for traditional ingredients in countless recipes. *MotherEarthLiving.com* explains how aquafaba—the water from a can of beans—can replace egg whites, even in meringues. Bananas, applesauce and ground flaxseeds or chia seeds can substitute for eggs to bind baked goods. Coconut oil can replace butter and nutritional yeast can do the job of parmesan when sprinkled on pasta.

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# Florida Poised for Olive Production Boom

by Nancy DeVault

Olives have long been recognized as a sign of peace and prosperity in many cultures and even in the Bible. Now, Florida farmers are hoping this stone fruit will be their saving grace.

Florida has led the nation in commercial citrus farming for decades, but in recent years, groves have been devastated by citrus greening disease, a debilitating bacterium. The subsequent decline in production has wreaked havoc on industry's economy, forcing agriculturists to explore alternative crops like blueberries, grapes, hops, peaches and pomegranates. Some believe olives could become the Sunshine State's shining star.

Roots of this agricultural transference are slowly taking hold thanks to Michael O'Hara Garcia. In 2011, he founded the Gainesville-based Florida Olive Council to examine if olives could serve as an environmentally considerate crop to sustain farming into the next century. It's a tall tale, he admits, with many sidebars.

"There is a story of utilization of land, there is a story about bailing out the citrus industry and there is a story about opening new farm operations and giving people jobs," Garcia explains about the overarching complexity. He's spearheaded and even personally funded efforts with the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, the Mosaic Company and a handful of other partners to generate fundamental research.

Olive trees typically need 200 to 300 chill hours (between 32 and 45 degrees Fahrenheit) a year to flourish, similar to conditions in olive-producing counties like Spain, Italy and Greece around the northern rim of the Mediterranean Sea. But such temperatures aren't guaranteed in southern states with subtropical climates. That's why the Florida Olive Council has dedicated years to studying tree growth, soil and other components at more than 30 plantations statewide.

"Most traditional varieties don't perform as well in the south. We're working to find an olive cultivar that would do well below [Interstate] I-4 with less than 120 chill hours. That's why we're working with the [Middle Eastern and] North African varieties,"



Garcia says. These are in contrast to the *arbequina*, *arbosana* and *koroneiki* varieties now most commonly used for olive oil production.

Demand for olives, and more specifically their pressed byproduct of olive oil, has spiked, thanks to scientifically proven payoffs. A staple of the Mediterranean

Diet, which is revered as one of the healthiest regimes, olive oil is praised as "liquid gold" that fights heart disease, cancer, diabetes and Alzheimer's, among other benefits. American consumers use 90 million gallons of olive oil annually—the largest market outside of Europe—and yet the U.S. (primarily California) only produces roughly five percent of the olive oil consumed in this country.

There are about 80 olive growers in Florida, and some have the potential to help grow an American-based olive oil industry. But because this budding industry is still in its infancy, most of these cultivators operate smaller farms versus commercial businesses. "There are only a few bigger growers with anywhere from 30 to 200 acres, though the majority of growers are in the under-10-acre category," Garcia estimates. Some produce oil in modest quantities, but Florida Olive Farms & Mill, a 20,000-tree orchard in Live Oak, currently operates the only commercial olive oil mill in the state.

Farmers are also advocating to protect the fruits of their labor. The U.S. International Trade Commission found that some imported extra virgin olive oils are fraudulently labeled. This revelation motivated the Florida Olive Council, Georgia Olive Growers Association and Texas Association of Olive Oil to align as the American Association of Olive Oil Producers (AOOPA) with a mission to create fair access to global markets and ensure the integrity and quality of olive oil. According to Garcia, because U.S. Department of Agriculture standards for olive oil are not being enforced, the AOOPA is petitioning the U.S. Federal Drug Administration to regulate the criteria. Consumers can help by voicing their support to state legislators.

For more information, visit [FloridaOlive.org](http://FloridaOlive.org) and [SmallFarm.IFAS.ufl.edu](http://SmallFarm.IFAS.ufl.edu).

A staple of the Mediterranean diet, which is revered as one of the healthiest regimes, olive oil is praised as "liquid gold" that fights heart disease, cancer, diabetes and Alzheimer's, among other benefits.

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## wise words

# Ronnie Cummins on Growing a Movement

by Elizabeth Greene

For five decades, human rights activist, journalist and author Ronnie Cummins has campaigned for natural health and the environment. Since he co-founded the Organic Consumers Association in 1998, the nonprofit has grown to a network that's 2 million people strong, dedicated to promoting organic food, regenerative farming and commerce through global initiatives that integrate public education, marketplace pressure, media outreach, litigation and grassroots lobbying.

His latest book, *Grassroots Rising: A Call to Action on Climate, Farming, Food and a Green New Deal* ([ChelseaGreen.com/product/grassroots-rising](http://ChelseaGreen.com/product/grassroots-rising)), focuses on Regeneration International, a global network that he and other advocates spawned in 2015 with a goal to reverse global warming and end world hunger by accelerating the transition to regenerative agriculture and land management.

### What is Regeneration International?

It's a movement that spread when people started to understand that the climate crisis was very, very serious and connected to other crises we face—our health and farmers not being able to make a living, for example. It's about identifying regenerative practices around the world, publicizing them and changing public policy. We use



Every time you pull out your wallet, you are either casting your vote for regeneration or the continuation of degeneration. Everything you buy is a vote.

the slogan, "Healthy soil, healthy ecosystem, healthy plants, healthy food, healthy people, healthy animals, healthy climate." All these living systems are interconnected. Regeneration of one system impacts another, which will lead to stabilizing the climate.

### What's the difference between organic and regenerative farming?

Regenerative farming is simply the next stage of organic, focusing on soil health, carbon sequestration and ecosystem

restoration. We call it "regenerative organic" because people understand organic. But when we devised organic standards, we didn't completely understand soil biology and the carbon cycle. Now we know that there's important biological life below the soil. We understand carbon sequestration. Regenerative organic farming rebuilds the soil, which improves food, health and eventually, the climate. It's a transformation of the food system.

### What will it require to achieve the goals of the Green New Deal, which calls for net zero emissions of greenhouse gases by 2030?

First, consumers need to understand the interconnectedness of things so that they



make decisions to create market pressure. Second, farmers, ranchers and land managers need to use regenerative best practices. Third is political power and policy change to drive regeneration. We need elected officials to understand regenerative ideas and feel pressure from constituents. Officials need to hear that we don't want our tax money used for degenerative practices. Fourth is money. It will take trillions of dollars over the next decade, with much money coming from government funding. But private investments also need to shift. Our savings, pensions and retirement accounts need to be in financial institutions that place assets in regenerative, socially responsible investing.

### *How can we help address climate change on a personal level?*

Every time you pull out your wallet, you are either casting your vote for regeneration or the continuation of degeneration. Everything you buy is a vote. What you

*This is a spiritual movement  
as much as it is an  
agricultural and alternative  
energy movement.*

talk about and do every day is also extremely important. Americans spend half of their food dollars eating out. Learn to cook, invite people over for dinner, teach your kids how to cook. Eating is an agricultural act.

Everyone should also be active in civic organizations. Run for office. It doesn't have to be in politics, it could be a conservation committee or school board. Do what you can do best inside this regenerative framework and you will have a big impact.

Things aren't hopeless. It's plausible that we are going to solve this. Unfortunately, it took until now for people to wake up. I believe people have an innate love for nature and other people, but if they're hopeless and unaware, they're going to

behave as if they don't care. There is an increasing common awareness and responsibility to get the job done. This is a spiritual movement as much as it is an agricultural and alternative energy movement.

### *What inspired you to write about this issue?*

About 10 years ago, I learned that regenerative food, farming and land use, in combination with renewable energy and radical energy conservation, could solve the climate crisis. I did more research, helped form Regeneration International and then saw that there wasn't a roadmap for regeneration. I needed to write the book so that the climate movement would understand regeneration and the food-farming-regeneration movement would understand climate. And I need for everyone to understand that there is hope.

*Elizabeth Greene writes about the environment. Connect at ElizabethGreene28@gmail.com.*

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# THE HIGH STAKES of Growing Hemp

by Nancy DeVault

**T**he cannabidiol (CBD) industry is one of the fastest-growing markets. Seemingly in a year's time in 2018, it became a billion-dollar business; and now projections estimate that CBD sales in the U.S. will surpass \$20 billion by 2024. Florida state leaders don't plan on getting left behind in a cloud of smoke.

The Federal Farm Bill of 2018 legalized industrial use of hemp and removed it from the list of controlled substances. Soon after, Governor Ron DeSantis signed the State Hemp Plan (SB 1020) in 2019. Florida Agriculture Commissioner Nikki Fried then appointed Director of Cannabis Holly Bell to oversee efforts of developing and implementing cannabis rules and coordination with scientific experts. The job stakes may be high, especially as the Sunshine State seeks to find a new cash crop because of a citrus farming decline. Bell is confident hemp will thrive statewide and boost the economy by generating new businesses and properly regulated products.

"Florida has a great opportunity for this industry because we are an ag [agricul-

ture] state with farmers that are specialty crop growers. That's important because this is not your typical row crop or ag crop. It is



really a specialty crop like tomatoes, blueberries or watermelon," Bell says.

"Because our farmers have the infrastructure to grow those, it's a natural transition to growing hemp." She believes Florida's nurseries are also poised to proficiently propagate seedlings.

Hemp and marijuana are essentially different names for the cannabis plant. While they both contain CBD, they are distinguished by their tetrahydrocan-

nabinol (THC) content. Hemp is specifically cannabis sativa with a THC content of less than 0.3 percent; meaning hemp and its byproducts do not cause the high effect associated with recreational marijuana. With much confusion surrounding the use and legality of medical and recreational cannabis, Bell is focused on widespread education, regulation and research.

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services permitted five universities—University of Florida, Florida A & M University, Florida State University,

University of South Florida and South Florida State College—to join a two-year industrial hemp pilot program to identify which varieties will flourish in Florida's heat and humidity, evaluate landscape risks from growing hemp and develop economically viable management practices and cropping systems.

"They are all researching different things because the plant is so diverse. It can do so many things that one university is not really overlapping the other at this point," Bell says. Credited with easing arthritis, anxiety, sleeplessness and other ailments, hemp-based CBD is popular in many forms such as oils, tinctures, edibles, oral sprays, balms/topicals and smokeables. But experts assert hemp has even greater potential with textiles, recycling, automotive, furniture, food and beverages, paper, construction materials and personal care. Breaking ground in spring 2019, the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) has planted 46 varieties so far, originating from all over the world.

"We have grown from four to 14 permitted sites across the state in Gainesville, Homestead, Apopka, Quincy, Jay, Milton, Belle Glade, Ona, Balm, Hague [and] Citra. Some may have multiple permitted sites," says UF/IFAS Communications Specialist Ruth Hohl Borger. "Florida presents unique challenges to growing industrial hemp including weather, a variety of soils and limited daylight. It has a risk of being an invasive species," Borger says. "Researchers take measurements over time and under different conditions to identify trends and results."

Bell reports that hemp plants do not like to stay wet—an important discovery considering Florida's rainy climate. Work is also being done to evaluate farming costs, market value, planting methods (seed versus cuttings), nutrients and potential pests and diseases.

When the pilot wraps in May 2021, Bell says she'll use the conclusions to educate farmers. Thus far, industrial hemp permits have only been authorized for the select research sites, but Bell says permitting for commercial hemp farming may begin by the end of March.

*For more information, visit [FDACS.gov/Cannabis-Hemp](https://FDACS.gov/Cannabis-Hemp) and [Programs.IFAS.ufl.edu/hemp](https://Programs.IFAS.ufl.edu/hemp).*

photos from UF/IFAS





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## CBD's New Frontier Help for Mental Health

by Julie Marshall

When Kaye Herbert's husband brought home a free sample of cannabidiol (CBD) oil, she didn't hesitate to give it a try. Having heard about its calming effects, she gave CBD to her three sons, whose attention deficit hyperactivity disorder made home-schooling difficult due to frequent tantrums and lack of focus. "I didn't expect CBD to be miraculous, but I was surprised that my kids' frustrations were greatly reduced," says the Austin, Texas, mom. "We weren't seeing the severity of meltdowns."

The use of CBD in tinctures, capsules and lotions has grown exponentially, along with the science to prove its efficacy in remediating physical pain. Newer, but equally as robust, is the viability of CBD as a remedy for mental health-related issues, experts say, pointing to anxiety, depression and stress as the top three applications.

However, as an unregulated supplement, CBD presents a challenge for con-

It's really important for people to know their options and to keep looking for what works for them.

~Peter Bongiorno

sumers in its ubiquity from CBD-infused pillows to gummies, soaps and even pet food. Discerning purity, dosage and safety are real concerns for those that may grab any bottle off the shelf.

Consumers must become well informed, especially

when replacing medications for serious disorders, experts say. But for anxiety and emotional well-being, CBD is largely heralded as a safe and natural choice by providers well-versed in CBD, such as Peter Bongiorno, past president of the New York Association of Naturopathic Physicians. "It's really important for people to know their options and to keep looking for what works for them," he says.

### The Feel-Good Molecule

CBD, a compound extracted from the hemp plant, is appealing because it can raise the level of cannabinoids—feel-good molecules naturally created within the human body. "When we can't sleep or are stressed out, cannabinoid levels go way



down,” Bongiorno says. While prescription drugs overwhelm the body with adverse side effects, CBD can healthfully bring back balance.

But CBD won't trigger an altered state because there is little to no tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the psychoactive chemical in marijuana that produces a high, he says, adding that he starts patients at a low daily dose of 25 milligrams.

It's important to talk with a physician about drug interactions, Bongiorno says. For instance, CBD can increase levels of blood-thinning medications, according to a 2017 study published in *Epilepsy & Behavior Case Reports*.

CBD can possibly treat a wide range of conditions, from fear of public speaking to bipolar and post-traumatic stress disorders, but more research is needed, experts say. A 2018 clinical trial published in *JAMA Psychiatry* suggests CBD offers potential in treating psychosis. More recently, researchers in a 2019 case study of 27 patients published by the *Permanente Journal* concluded, “Cannabidiol may hold benefit for anxiety-related disorders.”

## Seeds of Hope

The most important step consumers can take to find a safe, quality product is to know where their CBD comes from, experts say. Lara Miller is an organic farmer in Lafayette, Colorado, who in 2017 dedicated a parcel of her two-acre farm to growing hemp for her

We imagine the people suffering who need support and think about how we are growing the plants to help them.

~Lara Miller

business, North Field Farmacy. “I added in hemp because it is a dynamic plant that produces fiber, seed and medicine for us humans, all at the same time,” she says.

Miller's small, women-owned business grows the leafy plants outdoors in organic soil and harvests by hand. “We test in the field, post-harvest, during extraction and in the final product,” she says. “We know our product is clean and pure and potent.”

This isn't always the case. A 2017 study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* showed that in 84 CBD products sold online by 31 companies, 26 percent contained less CBD than the amount listed on the label.

Miller receives weekly calls from those wanting to purchase her plants and start a CBD business. “What bothers me the most is that not one person has asked how my hemp is grown,” she says. “It all feels like a big grab; the integrity isn't there.”

Miller continues to decline these requests and spends her days on the farm, where—come harvest time—she, alongside her crew, engages in some visualizations. “We imagine the people suffering who need support and think about how we are growing the plants to help them.”

Julie Marshall is a Colorado-based writer and author of *Making Burros Fly*: Cleveland Amory, Animal Rescue Pioneer. Connect with her at [FlyingBurros@gmail.com](mailto:FlyingBurros@gmail.com).



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~Ocean Robbins

# THE ROOTS OF GOOD HEALTH

## Thriving on a Plant-Based Diet

by April Thompson

**W**hether identifying as vegan, vegetarian, pescatarian, flexitarian or other veggie-friendly variant, a growing number of Americans are moving away from meat products and toward plant-rich foods. Most come to a plant-based diet for personal, planetary or animal welfare reasons; however, they stay for the flavorful foods they discover along their dietary journey and the health benefits they reap.

Marly McMillen-Beelman was prescribed medications to alleviate symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome. “I knew I didn’t want to be on prescriptions, so I decided to change my diet, beginning by giving up meat, dairy and eggs. I immediately felt much better and my symptoms went away naturally,” says the Kansas

City, Missouri, author of *The Everything Vegan Meal Prep Cookbook* and founder of Chopped Academy, an online resource for food bloggers. “Now I eat an even greater variety of food than I did before I went vegan.”

While only 3 percent of Americans identified as vegan and 5 percent as vegetarian in a recent Gallup Poll, a 2018 report by restaurant consultants Baum + Whiteman indicates that about 83 percent are eating more plant-based foods.

Embarking on a plant-based diet is a lifelong adventure, but it can take time to adjust. Experts recommend a healthy dose of self-love with the newfound fondness for fruits and veggies. “Give yourself some slack and realize that dietary changes do not happen overnight,” says

April Murray, a registered dietitian in Costa Mesa, California. “Start with familiar plant-based foods you already enjoy, and ease into trying new foods, whether tempeh or lentils.”

A plant-oriented diet also can be flexible; health advocates encourage individuals to find a diet that works for them and their families. Leah Webb, the Asheville, North Carolina, author of *Simple and Delicious Recipes for Cooking with Whole Foods on a Restrictive Diet*, has adapted her diet over time to accommodate her family’s health needs. Although Webb has always maintained a plant-rich diet, she began incorporating some animal products when her son was born. “He had severe food allergies and asthma, and needed a more diverse



diet,” explains Webb, whose daughter also has cystic fibrosis. Cutting out grains was a game-changer in “calming down his gut, where most of immune response lies,” says Webb. “He is now off asthma medication and the number of allergens he suffers from has dropped from seven to two.”

Webb’s family eats bountifully from their backyard garden, complemented by meat and produce from local farmers’ markets, where she can be certain the foods were produced sustainably and humanely. “I use meat to flavor soups or accent vegetables, rather than as the star of the show. I like to focus on real flavors, using lots of garlic, herbs and spices,” says Webb.

Murray, author of *The Everything Pegan Diet Cookbook: 300 Recipes for Starting—and Maintaining—the Pegan Diet*, follows that diet, a mash-up of paleo and vegan regimens that focuses on whole, fresh and sustainable food high in healthy fats and vitamins. The Pegan diet eschews refined sugar and highly processed foods, while allowing meat, poultry, fish and eggs, as well as gluten-free grains, legumes and dairy products in small amounts.

“This diet can be helpful to different people in so many ways,” says Murray. “For people with diabetes and blood sugar dysregulation, this high-fiber diet can

Start with familiar  
plant-based foods you  
already enjoy, and ease into  
trying new foods, whether  
tempeh or lentils.

~April Murray

help lower blood sugar and insulin levels. Heart health will improve, as you’ll be eating less animal products, which can be high in cholesterol and saturated fat. Many individuals also find themselves losing unwanted weight as they get filled up so quickly with these whole foods.”

### Plant-Based Nutrition Made Easy

While some worry about getting sufficient nutrients on a largely plant-based diet, nutrition experts say these fears are unfounded. “People think they need to calculate every nutrient, but if you eat a plant-centered, whole-foods diet, you will get every vitamin and mineral you need to thrive,” says Ocean Robbins, co-founder of the Food Revolution Network and author of *The 31-Day Food Revolution: Heal Your Body, Feel Great, and Transform Your World*. Legumes, nuts and seeds are all healthy, abundant sources of protein and iron.

Reed Mangels, author of *Your Complete Vegan Pregnancy: Your All-in-One Guide to a Healthy, Holistic, Plant-Based Pregnancy*, busts the myth that cow’s milk is a must for growing bones. “Calcium, vitamin D and protein are the nutrients we usually associate with bone health. One easy way to get all three is a soy-based or pea protein-based plant milk that is fortified with calcium and vitamin D,” says Mangels, adding that green vegetables like kale, bok choy, collards and broccoli are great sources of calcium.

“Eating the rainbow’ is great way to make sure you’re consuming a variety of nutrients,” offers London-based Ben Pook, who co-authored the cookbook *So Vegan in 5* with his partner Roxy Pope. “Many vitamins, minerals and antioxidants bring their own distinctive colors to fruits and vegetables, so preparing colorful meals is a simple way of getting as many nutrients into your diet as possible.”

### Getting Social

Dietary changes can be challenging to navigate initially, particularly when faced with social situations ranging from family gatherings to cohabitation. Having a good plan going into such situations can help ease the transition, say experts. “Never show up to an event hungry. You will be more likely to make a good decision if you

## Plant-Based Primer

Navigating the lexicon of plant-based diets can be tricky, and choosing a diet even trickier. Here’s a brief guide to some of the commonly used terms.

**Flexitarians** eat a mainly vegetarian diet, but will consume meat on occasion.

**Pegans** (a term coined by Dr. Mark Hyman, who follows the diet) focus on eating vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds, meat, fish and eggs, while avoiding dairy, grains, legumes, sugar and processed foods.

**Pescatarians** like radio host Howard Stern eat fish, seafood and other forms of animal products such as dairy, but don’t eat other forms of meat such as chicken, beef or pork.

**Plant-based diets**, followed by celebrities like Ben Stiller, consist mostly or entirely of foods derived from plants, including vegetables, grains, nuts, seeds, legumes and fruits, with few or no animal products.

**Vegans** don’t consume any animal products, including eggs, dairy, honey or gelatin. Famous vegans include Ellen DeGeneres, Betty White, Beyonce, Bill Clinton, Madonna and Venus Williams.

**Vegetarians** refrain from meat and seafood, but will consume dairy or other animal byproducts such as honey. Well-known vegetarians include Albert Einstein, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Doris Day, Jane Goodall, Kristen Wiig and Prince.



are nourished. On the way there, remind yourself why you are making the transition to plant-based eating,” suggests Murray.

“I call myself a secular vegan because I don’t have a dogmatic approach to the way I eat. If I go to a family dinner and someone has made something special for me, but they used a non-vegan cheese, I will respect my family member’s effort and eat some of it. These situations will pop up from time to time, and the more you can be compassionate with yourself, the better,” says McMillen-Beelman.

“If you are living with people who are not joining you in making a dietary shift, agree to respect each other’s choices. Make it a shared learning journey rather than a power struggle,” says Robbins. For example, he suggests making a vegetarian base and allowing those that want animal products to add them as toppings. A burrito bar can accommodate all diets by allowing people to add their own fixings to a base of beans and tortillas, whether those be dairy options like cheese and sour cream or vegan-friendly guacamole and salsa.

For families with kids, being flexible and inclusive can help make changes feel more positive and sustainable. “We never eat processed foods at home, but parties are that time I tell my kids they can eat

I call myself a secular  
vegan because I don't  
have a dogmatic approach  
to the way I eat.

~Marly McMillen-Beelman

whatever they want,” says Webb.

“Get your children involved, so that they are more engaged in the eating experience. Let your children pick out recipes or snacks for the week. Make the food look pretty and it will taste more satisfying,” adds Murray.

### Plant Prep Made Easy

Plant-based chefs have plenty of kitchen hacks for making food prep and planning fun and easy. Robbins suggests finding go-to recipes to put on repeat. “Your prep time goes down a lot as you make the same dish, and the familiarity will help you develop lasting habits around new food patterns,” he says.

Webb incorporates a healthy protein, fat and vegetable into every meal, even breakfast, but cooks in batches and freezes portions or repurposes leftovers to simplify mealtimes. “You’ll get burned out if you try to cook something from scratch every meal,” says Webb. “We eat a lot of eggs

because we raise chickens, so I’ll do baked frittatas I can reheat during the week.”

Advance meal prep can take the pressure off busy times like the weekday breakfast rush, adds Robbins. One of his favorite breakfasts involves soaking oats and chia seeds overnight, which he tops in the morning with some unsweetened soy or coconut milk, chopped banana, frozen blueberries, and a dash of maple syrup, vanilla and nutmeg. “It’s full of omega-3 fatty acids, protein, antioxidants and phytonutrients,” he says.

Webb encourages people to get out of their food comfort zones by experimenting with approximate ingredients, like swapping kabocha or honeynut squash for butternut squash.

Robbins also suggests making social connections with others on the same path by cooking them a meal, organizing a meal swap or sharing extras. “It’s not a diet or a fad; it’s a way of life. Start where you are and remember it’s not about perfection, it’s about progress. Have love, dignity and compassion toward yourself and others along the journey,” he says.

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## Tips to Stay on the Plant Track

**M**any new regimens begin with gusto, only to be abandoned because old diets die hard. Here are some expert tips for eating well over the long haul.

“Find plant-based options at your favorite restaurants, and be open to new flavors. I promise you, your taste buds will change,” says April Murray, dietician and author of *The Everything Pegan Diet Cookbook*. To keep the momentum and inspiration going, follow plant-based chefs on social media, she adds.

When switching to a plant-based diet, some miss the rich, fatty flavors found in meat, says Ben Pook, co-author of *So Vegan in 5*. “The trick we found is using ingredients rich in umami, which is a flavor commonly found in meat. One

of our favorites is miso paste (fermented soybeans), which has an intense savory taste. We often add it to stews, pies and even pastas to deliver more depth of flavor. Soy sauce and porcini mushrooms are also a great substitute.”

“Sustainable change doesn’t happen overnight. If not sure what to cook, start with one big salad a week. When you get the hang of that, add in something else, like prepping snacks from scratch. Small things add up over time,” says Leah Webb, author of *The Grain-Free, Sugar-Free, Dairy-Free Family Cookbook*.

“Seek out loved ones who share your food values and nurture those relationships. You might be surprised how many people around you are also quietly trying

to achieve similar goals,” says Ocean Robbins, founder of the Food Revolution Network.

“We put a lot of pressure on ourselves when we first switched to a plant-based diet. Shopping for vegan food and eating out at restaurants felt very overwhelming, and we found ourselves spending hours checking food labels. We’ve come to realize that veganism isn’t black or white and encourage others not to worry about making mistakes along the way,” shares Pook.

If we can’t resist temptation on occasion, that’s okay too, Murray says. “That one unhealthy meal won’t undo all the hard work you’ve put in. Get right back on track the next morning. Positivity is key.”



fit body



# VEGAN FITNESS

## A Healthy Choice for Body and Planet

by Marlaina Donato

**T**ennis champion Venus Williams and New England Patriots star quarterback Tom Brady are among the athletes that opt for healthy, plant-dominant diets to reach their personal best, a trend that belies some misconceptions about what it means to be vegan. “Going vegan implies a larger, lifestyle choice based on personal ethics, but athletes report that they just feel better,” says Brenda Carey, editor-in-chief of *Vegan Health and Fitness Magazine*. “They’re also surprised at how well they put on muscle after making this dietary change.”

A balanced vegan diet can provide everything an active body needs for muscle mass, stamina and recovery while lowering the risk of heart disease. A 2018 meta-analysis of 40 studies published in the peer-reviewed journal *PLOS One* concludes that a plant-powered diet fosters a healthier cardio-metabolic profile. According to Dutch researchers, amping up nutrition from plants may also lower the risk of insulin resistance and Type 2 diabetes. Devotees report unexpected perks.

“I recover faster. I also have more natural energy without the need for caffeine and reduced inflammation, as confirmed in blood tests,” says Matt Tullman, managing partner of the community-building

website *NoMeatAthlete.com* and CEO of vegan supplement maker Complement, in Boulder, Colorado.

### Nutritional Superpowers

Bolstering the diet with foods like quinoa, chia seeds, nut butters and vegan energy powders, as well as combining foods for a more complete protein profile, is important. For example, pairing whole-grain rice with beans makes a complete protein, says Stefanie Moir, international vegan fitness coach and founder of *VeganAesthetics.co.uk*, in Glasgow, Scotland.

“Eating a wide variety of foods across the plant kingdom ensures that you reach your fitness goals,” says Moir, who trains six days a week and opts for a breakfast of oats with nut butter and chia seeds. “If you want a ‘superfood’ component, you can add cacao powder for antioxidants and a great chocolate taste.”

Tullman acknowledges that there are some exceptions to protein requirements—especially for the elderly, individuals with certain chronic diseases and pregnant women—but he notes that daily protein needs are less than we’ve been conditioned to believe. “If you track your macronutri-

ents through a day, you’ll find that you’re getting adequate protein.”

Professional bodybuilder Torre Washington, in Tamarac, Florida, keeps it simple. “We’re all unique individuals, so it’s up to each person to test things without fear of lack.” The National Academy of Sports Medicine-certified coach loves antioxidant-rich blueberries, filling apples and potassium-packed bananas, and tends to choose calorically lower, nutritionally dense foods during periods that he’s competing.

Carey suggests vegan meal delivery services as an option and vegan-friendly restaurants in a pinch, but attests to an easy system of meal prep for consistency. “Some people like to meal prep one day a week—cooking brown rice, quinoa and chopping veggies. This way, you can just throw it together when it’s time to eat,” she says. “You can also eat more simply and throw a bunch of yummy fruits or veggies into the blender for smoothies or soups.”

For added fortification, some experts recommend supplementing with vegan sources of vitamin B<sub>12</sub>, especially for active women in their child-bearing years and older individuals, because B<sub>12</sub> absorption is compromised as we age. Adding a vegan source of vitamin D is also a wise choice if exposure to natural sunlight is not adequate.

### The Big Picture

For the vegan athlete, workout gear that doesn’t contain wool or leather is the way to go. “Making conscious choices expands beyond your plate, and a lot of brands have vegan-friendly shoes,” says Moir.

“The difference between ‘plant-based’ and ‘vegan’ has to do with ethical motivations and treatment of animals,” says Tullman. “Natural fibers such as cotton and synthetic fabrics like polyester are fine.”

The path of vegan fitness can not only offer health benefits, but also a personal connection to the Earth. “It’s given me an opportunity to share my journey with others and to allow them to reach their own specific goals,” says Washington. “Mentally, it’s given me more depth of thought and spiritually connected me with the ‘YOUiverse’ as a whole.”

*Marlaina Donato is the author of several books and a composer. Connect at [AutumnEmbersMusic.com](http://AutumnEmbersMusic.com).*



# Meatless Makeover

## A Plant-Based Spin on Classic Dishes

by April Thompson

When contemplating a shift toward a plant-based diet, some may prematurely mourn the loss of their favorite meaty classics. Luckily, enterprising vegan chefs have experimented with flavors and textures that will lure almost any palate into loving a plant-based version of their favorite dishes without resorting to processed foods.

“Plant-based versions of classic dishes offer all the nutritional benefits of plants without the cholesterol and saturated fats from animal products,” says chef and author Marly McMillen-Beelman. “You don’t have to abandon all your favorite foods to become vegan—just veganize them.”

The Kansas City chef makes carrot “dogs”, for example, by roasting carrots in a savory mix of tamari, agave, miso, paprika and garlic for a cookout-worthy treat. McMillen-Beelman’s cookbook *The Everything Vegan Meal Prep Cookbook* also offers many bean- and legume-based versions of classic sandwiches, like a vegan “Big Mac” with quinoa and pinto beans; a burger made from oats, black beans and pecans; meatballs from tofu and lentils; and a chicken salad based on tempeh, a

fermented, soy-based, high-protein product with a nutty flavor.

“A lot of people like using tempeh, tofu or jackfruit for a meaty texture. It needs to be well seasoned, but so does meat,” suggests Ocean Robbins, author of *The 31-Day Food Revolution: Heal Your Body, Feel Great, & Transform Your World*. “To mimic cheese, some combination of nuts and nutritional yeast, cultured nut cheeses or plant-based milks works nicely.”

McMillen-Beelman likes using jackfruit for a “pulled pork” sandwich or taco, the tropical fruit being packed with vitamin C, protein, calcium, potassium and iron. Her slow-cooked version leans on whole-food ingredients, including pear and cranberries, to add natural sweetness and phytonutrients. “I use canned jackfruit because it’s much easier to find and cook with than the expensive jumbo whole fruit,” she says.

Ben Pook, the London co-author with Roxy Pope of *So Vegan in 5*, says mushrooms lend substance and umami flavor to vegan dishes such as a mushroom, sage and onion Wellington as a

Vegan food doesn’t need to be expensive, boring or complicated.

~Ben Pook

substitute for the classic beef Wellington. “We use portobello mushrooms for their meaty texture, which we surround with a sage and onion stuffing—all wrapped in vegan puff pastry to create a centerpiece worthy of any dinner party,” says Pook, whose cookbook features dozens of plant-based recipes that contain only five ingredients each, such as a broccoli alfredo with cashews, broccolini, tagliatelle pasta, nutritional yeast and garlic.

Nuts can also work wonders in a vegetarian dish, such as Pook and Pope’s walnut meat tacos, which blend toasted walnuts together with spices like cumin, paprika, garlic and chili powder to create a mince-like texture built into a taco with toppings galore.

Many classic dishes can also be adapted by simply leaving out the meat and letting the spices, herbs and vegetables shine through; for example, in a vegan shepherd’s pie, go with penne pasta with red sauce or a garlicky pesto with extra nuts, greens and olive oil in lieu of cheese.

Sweet tooth cravings can be satisfied with healthy, plant-based versions of classic desserts, substituting aquafaba (the starchy liquid left over from canned beans) instead of frothy egg whites, or olive oil or avocado for butter.

Nut butters can also add a touch of richness to a dish, whether sweet or savory. “I love making a peanut coconut milk curry soup with onions, mushrooms and bok choy, with peanut butter, lime juice and soy sauce blended into the coconut milk for a luxurious flavor and texture. It’s great over potatoes, quinoa or rice,” says Robbins.

“Vegan food doesn’t need to be expensive, boring or complicated,” Pook says. “There really are endless possibilities when it comes to cooking with plants, so don’t be afraid to experiment and create your own twist.”

Connect with Washington, D.C.-based freelance writer April Thompson at [AprilWrites.com](http://AprilWrites.com).



# Magical Meatless Meals



## Vegan Popcorn 'Chicken'

Yields: 4 to 6 servings

10.5 oz extra-firm tofu  
Sea salt and pepper  
½ cup flour  
Vegetable oil

### Dry ingredients:

3.5 oz paprika-flavored chips  
4 Tbsp flour  
2 tsp dried oregano  
1 tsp smoked paprika  
½ tsp onion powder  
½ tsp garlic powder

### Wet ingredients:

½ cup plant-based milk  
½ Tbsp apple cider vinegar  
2 Tbsp hot sauce

### To serve:

Tomato ketchup  
Vegan mayonnaise

Crush the paprika crisps between a clean tea towel using a rolling pin until no big pieces remain. Transfer to a bowl along

with the remaining dry ingredients and a pinch of salt and pepper. Use a spoon to mix everything together, then set aside.

Combine the plant-based milk and apple cider vinegar in a separate bowl. Let sit for a minute or two until the milk curdles and turns into a “buttermilk”. Then add the hot sauce and mix everything together until the ingredients are well combined. Set aside.

Meanwhile, add the flour to a small plate and set aside. Press the tofu if required. (Extra-firm tofu contains very little moisture, so this step isn't always necessary.) Then slice the block in half and break the tofu into bite-sized pieces with hands.

Season the tofu on both sides with salt and pepper; dip tofu into the flour, followed by the milk mixture, then the crisp mixture. Repeat until all the tofu pieces have been coated.

Add the vegetable oil to a pan until it's ¼-inch deep. Tip: Use a wok to reduce the amount of oil needed. Heat the oil on medium-high. Drop a tiny amount of the dry mixture; if it starts sizzling as soon as it hits the oil, it's ready.

Carefully add half a dozen or so tofu pieces to the hot oil and fry for about 2 minutes on each side or until the tofu begins to brown and is extra crispy. It's important to not overcrowd the pan, as it can lower the temperature of the oil.

When the tofu is ready, carefully remove it from the pan and transfer it to a plate lined with parchment paper; immediately season it with some extra salt, which will help make it even crispier. Repeat until all the tofu pieces are cooked. Serve with a favorite dip, such as one made by combining equal amounts of tomato ketchup and vegan mayo.

*Adapted from So Vegan in 5 by Roxy Pope and Ben Pook.*



## Walnut Meat Tacos

Yields: 4 servings

### Walnut meat:

14 oz walnuts  
1 Tbsp smoked paprika  
2 tsp chili powder  
1½ Tbsp ground cumin  
3 garlic cloves  
2 tsp balsamic vinegar  
2 tsp maple syrup  
2.5 oz sun-dried tomatoes in oil  
Sea salt

### Black bean mixture:

9 oz canned sweet corn  
14 oz canned black beans  
Sea salt and pepper  
½ lime  
Handful of fresh cilantro

### Salsa:

9 oz cherry tomatoes  
1 green chili  
1 red onion  
1 lime  
Handful of fresh cilantro  
Sea salt and pepper

### To serve:

2 avocados  
½ lime  
8-10 small corn tortillas  
Vegan yogurt

Natural Awakenings recommends using organic, non-GMO (genetically modified) and non-bromated ingredients whenever possible.

Toast the walnuts in a pan over a medium heat for 6-8 minutes or until they begin to smoke. Keep an eye on them and stir occasionally to prevent them burning. Then peel and dice the garlic and add it to the walnuts along with the smoked paprika, chili powder and ground cumin. Stir to coat the walnuts in the spices, then cook for 2 minutes.

Meanwhile, drain and rinse the black beans and sweet corn. Transfer them to a separate pan and stir in a generous pinch of salt and pepper, as well as the juice from the lime. Heat through for 5 minutes on a medium heat. Remove the pan from the heat, roughly chop the cilantro and stir it into the beans and sweet corn.

Add the cooked walnuts, garlic and spices to a food processor along with the balsamic vinegar, maple syrup, sun-dried tomatoes (drain as much oil as possible) and a pinch of salt. Process for a minute or two until the walnut mixture turns into a mince-like texture.

Next, prepare the salsa by slicing the cherry tomatoes into quarters and transfer them to a mixing bowl. Peel and dice the red onion, slice the chili (leave the seeds in if spicy is preferred) and roughly chop the cilantro leaves, adding all to the mixing bowl. Squeeze the juice from the lime into the bowl, along with a generous pinch of salt and pepper, then stir to combine. Meanwhile, heat through the tortillas in a pan over a low-medium heat.

Slice the avocado in half and remove the pit. Scoop out the flesh and mash it in a bowl along with juice from half a lime.

When you're ready to assemble your tacos, spoon a few tablespoons of the walnut mixture on top of a tortilla, followed by the bean mixture, salsa and a dollop of mashed avocado. Top with a drizzle of vegan yogurt. Repeat for the remaining tacos.

*Adapted from So Vegan in 5 by Roxy Pope and Ben Pook.*

## Mushroom, Sage and Onion Wellington

An absolute showstopper and the perfect dish to make for friends on a Sunday afternoon alongside some tasty, roasted vegetables.

**Yields:** 4 servings

8 Portobello mushrooms  
3 onions  
10 sage leaves  
4.2 oz walnuts  
2 (11 oz) sheets of dairy-free puff pastry

Preheat oven to 425° F and line a large baking tray with baking paper. Wipe any excess dirt off the mushrooms and place five of them in an ovenproof dish. Drizzle with olive oil and season with sea salt and pepper, then bake for 15 minutes. Remove the mushrooms from the oven and set aside, leaving the oven switched on for later.

Meanwhile, quarter the remaining mushrooms; peel and roughly chop the onions and add to a food processor along with sage leaves, walnuts, ½ teaspoon of salt



photo by Andrew Hayes-Walkins

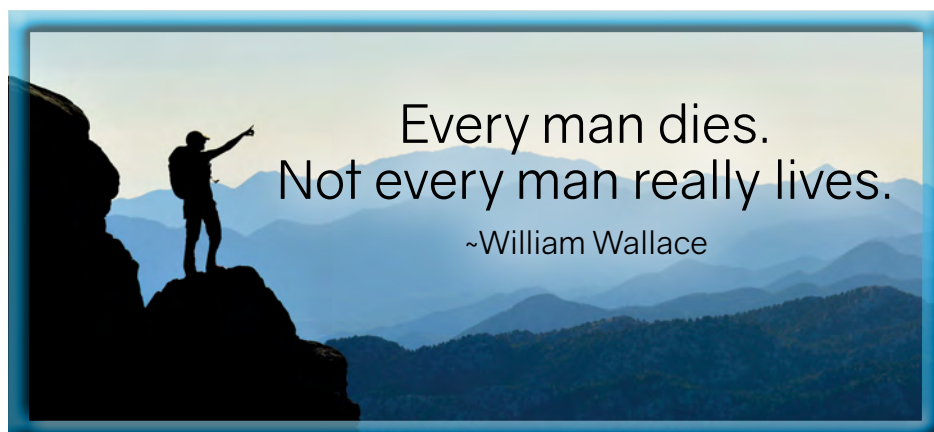
and 1 teaspoon of pepper. Process to form a smooth paste, then fry in a pan over a medium-high heat for 15 minutes, stirring frequently. Set aside to cool for 10 minutes.

Roll out one sheet of pastry onto the lined baking tray. Spread a third of the paste down the middle of the pastry lengthways, spreading it 2 inches wide and leaving the same length clear at each end.

Turn the baked mushrooms upside-down to drain excess juices, then place three of the mushrooms, gills facing up, on top of the paste along the middle of the pastry. Add the remaining two mushrooms, gills facing down, between the three mushrooms. Spoon the remaining paste around the mushrooms to cover them on all sides.

Place the second sheet of pastry on top and use your fingers to seal the edges together. Trim around the Wellington roughly one inch away from the filling, discarding the excess pastry as you go. Lightly score the Wellington with diagonal lines at 1-inch intervals and brush with olive oil. Bake in the oven for 50 minutes, until the pastry turns a lovely golden brown. Remove from the oven and serve in slices.

*Adapted from So Vegan in 5 by Roxy Pope and Ben Pook.*







# HEMP GETS HOT

## Meet the Hardest Working Plant on the Planet

by Julie Peterson

A crop that was illegal in U.S. soil for more than half a century is now reaching for the sun. Industrial hemp, the low- or no-THC cousin to marijuana, has created high hopes among farmers, agricultural researchers, manufacturers and consumers. By 2019, America had become the world's third-largest producer, behind Canada and China, where it's been cultivated for 8,500 years.

"It's the fastest-growing ag industry that we've ever seen," says Tara Valentine, hemp specialist at the Rodale Institute, in Kutztown, Pennsylvania. Since hemp's inclusion in the 2018 Farm Bill, Rodale's hemp web page hits have grown 10-fold.

### Better Products

All parts of the hemp plant are useful in multiple ways, and hemp has applications in textiles, construction, bioremediation, technology, nutrition and health, including cannabidiol (CBD). The seeds are rich in protein, essential fatty acids and vitamins. They can be eaten, ground into flour or pressed for oil that is used for cooking or in body care products.

Right now, it's the Wild West of agriculture.

~Dustin Enge

The stems undergo decortication to separate the long outer fibers (bast) from the short inner fibers (hurd). Hemp hurd makes extremely durable hempcrete for construction, absorbent and dust-free animal bedding or pellets for heating stoves. An exponential rise in the use of hemp is expected because it can replace products made from paper, wood, plastic, cotton and fossil fuels.

"Hemp fiber is going to dominate the market once we get to the full manufacturing potential," says Erica Stark, executive director of the National Hemp Association, in Washington, D.C.

The first introductions consumers can expect include hemp paper products, such as plates and toilet paper, and biodegradable hemp bioplastics like cutlery and cups. Construction materials and other products are expected to quickly follow.

### Environmentally Friendly

The Institute of Papermaking and Printing, at the Technical University of Lodz, Poland, did a 2015 study comparing making paper from wood to making it from

hemp. Among the findings: hemp takes four months to grow, while trees need 20 to 80 years. An acre of hemp can produce four or more times as much paper as an acre of trees. Hemp paper doesn't need toxic bleaching and can be recycled twice as many times. Other studies concur.

Paper without deforestation would be a major benefit, but it's a minor job on hemp's profound résumé. "Hemp needs to be a part of every climate change conversation, not only because it sequesters huge amounts of carbon during cultivation, but also because construction products made out of hemp will continue to sequester carbon for up to 100 years," says Stark.

Hemp could also help save the depleted soil on U.S. farmland that has been destroyed by tilling and synthetic fertilizers. "We have to rebuild the soil by putting carbon back in and increasing organic matter," says Valentine. Hemp does this with a massive root biomass that breaks up compacted soils, improves water infiltration and reduces runoff and erosion.

Fast-growing hemp naturally suppresses weeds, needs no pesticides and



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Hemp needs to be a part of every climate change conversation, not only because it sequesters huge amounts of carbon during cultivation, but also because construction products made out of hemp will continue to sequester carbon for up to 100 years.

~Erica Stark

isn't picky about soil, water or latitude. By comparison, cotton is water-intensive and uses 25 percent of the world's pesticides.

### Income for Farmers

Used in crop rotation, hemp's soil-enhancing qualities can increase profits on subsequent crops. While cover crops don't usually have return value, hemp provides additional revenue streams. But the revenue isn't quite there yet, because the supply chain isn't complete. Seed supply, farm equipment, education, processing facilities and manufacturers are all links that are developing simultaneously. "Fiber processing facilities will be available soon. Manufacturers are anxious to start incorporating hemp," says Stark.

The lack of buyers isn't deterring farmers. Neither are warnings that current harvesting equipment can spark disaster when hemp fiber wraps around rotating parts, heats up and combusts.

Dustin Enge, a third-generation farmer in Prairie du Sac, Wisconsin, started Honey Creek Hemp in 2017. He planted six acres of hemp. "I think it's a long-term viable commodity for farmers. Right now, it's the Wild West of agriculture. Everyone is trying different things," says Enge, who modified a harvester for hemp. "I spent about two hours harvesting and 20 hours torching the fiber off my equipment." Even so, he will plant more acres when he knows it will sell.

Behold the sprouting of the hemp industry as an ancient plant takes root in the modern world.

*Julie Peterson writes from rural Wisconsin and can be reached at [JuliePeterson2222@gmail.com](mailto:JuliePeterson2222@gmail.com).*

## equine spotlight



## Take the Plunge with Horseback River Riding

by Nancy DeVault

Water and animal enthusiasts can feel the rush of Florida's up-close encounters by swimming with dolphins, manatees, sharks and astonishingly, horses. Labeled the "Horse Capital of the World", Marion County boasts more horses than any other county in the nation, so it should come as no surprise that these maned mammals are making a splash with river rides on the outskirts of the Ocala National Forest.

Although they are known to roam farm fields and race tracks, swimming may seem like an atypical action for a horse. "Horses are actually just like other animals or people," reveals Tina Rhoads, owner of Makin' Tracks Trail Rides. "They have emotions; they think, they feel and they have varying likes and dislikes, including water."

Established 15 years ago as a result of a passion project, Makin' Tracks Trail Rides is a family-owned, self-funded equine rescue, and she is the tour guide operator. "I took in stray horses just like how people take in stray cats, and I found myself with too many. So I started the company to support the rescues," Rhoads explains. The current herd embraces 11 rescues, although that number fluctuates as Rhoads adopts displaced horses in and out.

Makin' Tracks leads standard one- and two-hour trail rides all year long, but the company's most popular outings are dubbed River Rides, which are best

enjoyed during the spring and summer. These unique, three-hour excursions encompass a trail ride out, swimming with horses and a return ride, with each part averaging one hour.

Participants arrive to the Makin' Tracks' farm grounds to receive basic riding instructions and get acquainted with the horses and guides. Then riders trek along a sandy path on the Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway, a lush 110-mile corridor spanning the state from the Gulf of Mexico to the St. Johns River. The Greenway offers a hospitable landscape for horseback riders to marvel at wildflowers and for those with eagle eyes, wild critters such as black bears, deer, otters, snakes and colorful birds soaring above in the blue sky.

The excitement intensifies upon arrival at the Ocklawaha River, flowing along the muddy western border of the Ocala National Forest. During this stopover, participants can enjoy riverside relaxation and recreation underneath ancient cypress trees. "Our guides untack the horses down to bareback for those that want to swim," Rhoads says. Surf-savvy riders may take several whirls in the water on the horses and even dare to cannonball off for gleeful gushes.

Customers of all skill levels come from near and far to saddle up and suit up. "We have a combination of locals and visitors from





all over, including abroad," notes Rhoads.

Patron Lynn Hope says the River Ride was "one to tick off the bucket list," especially because nothing like it is available back in her hometown of East Yorkshire, England. As an experienced rider, she was thrilled to immerse herself in the one-of-a-kind venture alongside her daughter-in-law while vacationing last spring. "It was a brilliant adventure, even though I couldn't stay on [the horse in the water] for long," Hope shares. She says the two guides were fun, laughing and encouraging the entire time, and the extraordinary experience rekindled her daughter-in-law's passion for riding.

Ashley Kelleher, of Reading, Pennsylvania, also credits the friendly guides with sparking her newfound interest. "I had never been on a horse before but, trust me, I have since and will continue to," she affirms. On a trip to visit her Gainesville-based family last fall, Kelleher opted for a standard trail ride, but happily dove deeper with the help of Mother Nature. "It had rained, so the trail was very watery. There was a part where the river overflowed, and so the water was almost up to the horses' knees as they walked through it," recalls Kelleher, who is planning on another "relaxing" ride with Makin' Tracks.

Seasonal River Rides cost \$100 per person, with bookings opening up as soon as the water is warm enough and when hunting season wraps, says Rhoads. Riders should provide their own helmets (children younger than 16 years of age are required by Florida law to wear protective headgear); there are no changing rooms along the river bank; and packed picnics are permitted.

*Makin' Tracks Trail Rides is located at 15901 NE 137th Ct., in Fort McCoy. For more information, call 352-342-8891 or visit [OcalaTrailRides.com](http://OcalaTrailRides.com).*

## equine events

### SATURDAY, MARCH 7

**1st Annual Harness Party** – 1-4pm. Free. Watch as dozens of horses get harnessed up for the Parade of Breeds Downtown. Enjoy an extended Saturday Market, drinks, music and food. Ocala Downtown Market, SE 3rd St, Ocala. 352-629-8051. [OcalaDowntownMarket.com](http://OcalaDowntownMarket.com).

**The Horse Capital Parade by Live Oak International** – 4-6:30pm. Free. Community parade to welcome the Live Oak International riders and drivers, bringing all breeds and disciplines together. Downtown Ocala, SE 3rd St, Ocala. 352-629-8051. [OcalaCEP.com](http://OcalaCEP.com).

### SUNDAY, MARCH 8

**Southeast Baroque Rated Working Equitation Show** – 8am-5pm. B-Rated Working Equitation Show with WE Judge Michael Vermaas. Intro through Advance levels and all phases. Working Equitation is for all breeds. Florida Horse Park, 11008 S Hwy 475, Ocala. 352-317-6113. [SoutheastBaroque.com](http://SoutheastBaroque.com).

### FRIDAY, MARCH 13

**Ocala II Horse Trials** – Mar 13-15. 8am-5pm. Registration required. Running an A/I and Full 3-Phases Intermediate-BN, including modified. Florida Horse Park, 11008 S Hwy 475, Ocala. 352-307-6699. [FIHorsePark.com](http://FIHorsePark.com).

### SATURDAY, MARCH 14

**Competition Prep Video Review MiniClinic** – 8am-1pm. \$75-\$150. Hone your skills as you prep for any horse show competition. Led by Cyril Pittion-Rossillon's trained eye. Palm Equestrian Academy at Fox Grove Farm, 9445 NW 60th Ave, Ocala. 352-629-3310. [LynnPalm.com](http://LynnPalm.com).

### MONDAY, MARCH 16

**75th Anniversary FTBOA Horse of the Year Emerald & Gold Gala** – 5:30-9:30pm. \$125-\$150. Honoring

champion thoroughbred horses. Florida Thoroughbred Breeders' and Owners' Association, 801 SW 60th Ave, Ocala. 352-629-2160. [FTBoa.com](http://FTBoa.com).

### THURSDAY, MARCH 19

**No Muscle, No Movement-Educational Talk & Demo** – 5-8pm. Free. Susan Kasmin of Connecticut Equine Therapy, LLC is offering an educational talk and demonstration on equine muscles. Learn basic muscle anatomy, large muscle groups, and how hoof confirmation can affect the horses posture and range of motion. Ocala's Farrier Supply, 1211 NE 17th Rd, Ocala. 352-456-7888. [OcalasFarrierSupply.com](http://OcalasFarrierSupply.com).

### FRIDAY, MARCH 20

**Special Olympics 2020: Florida State Equestrian Championships** – Mar 20-21. Free. Come cheer on these athletes as they compete in the State Equestrian Championship games. Grand Oaks Resort, 3000 Marion County Rd, Weirsdale. 352-750-5500. Tickets: [GrandOaksTickets.com](http://GrandOaksTickets.com). [GrandOaksResort.com](http://GrandOaksResort.com).

### SATURDAY, MARCH 21

**Cows! Cows! Cows!** – 9am-5pm. Free. Learn to work with cattle to improve your horsemanship. Whether you need to expose your horse to build confidence or have a meaning for what you are asking your horse to do, cattle work is a great way to do it. Pear Tree Ranch, 5089 E Hwy 316, Citra. 630-220-7107. [JakesPearTreeRanch.com](http://JakesPearTreeRanch.com).

**Famous Horsey Yard Sale** – Mar 21-22. 6:30am-1:30pm. \$15 per car. The horse lovers candy store. Multiple vendors, food and drinks. No reservations, first come, first served. Tack Shack of Ocala Inc, 481 SW 60th Ave, Ocala. 352-873-3599. [TackShackOcala.com](http://TackShackOcala.com).

### FRIDAY, MARCH 27

**Southeastern Pro Rodeo** – 7:30-9:30pm. \$7-\$35. Saddle and bareback bronc riding competitions, tie down roping, steer wrestling, team roping, barrel racing and eight seconds bull riding. Southeastern Pro Rodeo, 2200 NE Jacksonville Rd, Ocala. [OcalaRodeo.com](http://OcalaRodeo.com).



## Arthritis? Allergies? Paralysis? Cancer?



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# SPECIAL NEEDS GARDENERS

## Reap Therapeutic Horticulture Benefits

by Nancy DeVault

**H**orticulturists at Wilmot Botanical Gardens, in conjunction with The University of Florida (UF) College of Medicine, are proving that greenhouses can fight the blues and build self-worth. Research shows gardening decreases stress and depression symptoms, and also boosts balance, coordination, muscle strength, motor skills, mental clarity and a sense of accomplishment.

The terms horticultural therapy and therapeutic horticulture are often used interchangeably, but UF Director of Therapeutic Horticulture Leah Diehl clarifies that the approaches are slightly different. While both employ stimulating, plant-based activities, horticultural therapy, as defined by American Horticulture Therapy Association (AHTA), is typically a prescribed treatment facilitated by a registered horticultural therapist that tracks individualized goals and achievements; whereas therapeutic horticulture, like at Wilmot Botanical Gardens, is implemented with less stringent, group-based objectives.

The therapeutic horticulture program began serving veterans in 2012 and grew to include other populations with special needs such as addiction, autism spectrum disorder (ASD), bipolar disorder, cancer, developmental delays, depression, movement disorders, renal disease, spinal cord injury and stroke, in addition to affiliated caregivers. Thanks to the diverse benefits of gardening, participants of varying abilities may cultivate physical, emotional and spiritual gains.

Groups comprised of two to 15 people meet for one-hour sessions on a weekly basis. Programs feature three components: traditional horticulture deeds (planting), crafts using plant materials and sensory stimulation (citrus tastings). Private funding and grants typically determine specific special needs emphases. The therapeutic horticulture program is currently facilitating a cancer support group, an addiction group, two veterans groups (one exclusive to women), an alumni assembly open to all former participants regardless of special needs and a horticulture tutoring program for individuals with ASD. While precise instruction and application differs for each group, all have a common theme of connecting with plants and nature to enhance quality of life.

"I have overarching goals for any group that I work with that I think are important and at the core of horticulture therapy. One is that we're helping individuals rebuild their self-esteem," says Diehl. "I have found that some of the people that we work with, because of their disease or disability, [feel they] have lost the opportunity to contribute in some way." She explains that the program affords purpose and creates valuable outcomes both within the participant and inside the greenhouse.

Diehl also strives to foster a sense of community. "Many of them have been isolated because of their diseases or disabilities and they may not have social interaction [elsewhere]," she says. "We're helping them feel they belong." Plus, she empowers

participants with a sense of ownership, something that especially resonates with partakers battling addiction.

"Leah gives them a few different options on what they can do which is nice because, usually, our program [treating people with addiction] is regimented," says Katie Walker, a recreational therapist at the UF Health Florida Recovery Center, of her recovery-oriented patients. Since 2016, the center has taught patients that horticulture can serve as a positive coping mechanism and sober leisure activity. "Because we are a production-oriented greenhouse, the participants feel needed; and since something new is always growing, we decide together what to work on," says Diehl, who has an affinity for experimenting with unusual plants like the desert rose to deepen engagement.

Walker says the effects of being in the serene setting are fast-acting. "It's exciting to see from pre-session to post-session how much brighter and more positive the patients are," she shares. Hoping to stretch that optimism beyond the garden space, patients get to make and take home succulent arrangements. "It teaches them to care for the plant just like they should care for themselves," Walker explains about the behavior lesson.

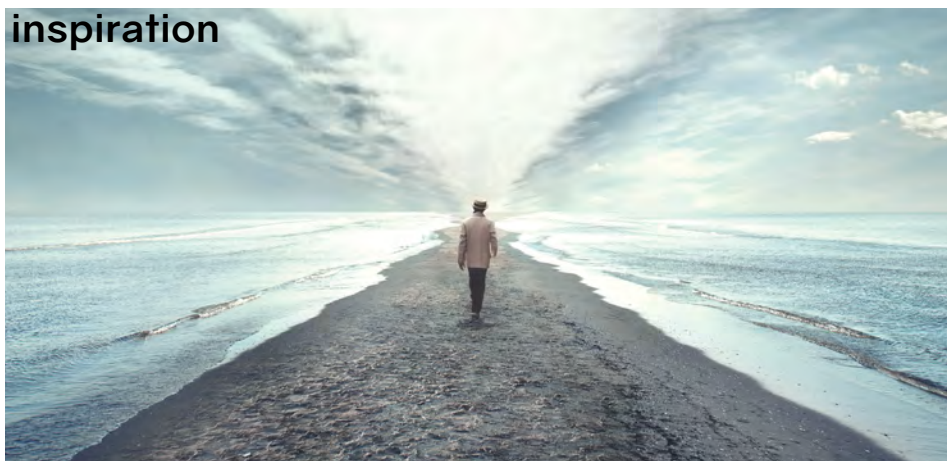
While the addiction group hones in on healthy hobbies, young adults with ASD dig into life skills and workplace potential. "Aside from the plant work, we focus on both hard and soft job skills like problem-solving, communicating with co-workers and workplace attire and hygiene," Diehl says. For the past three years, Dr. Charlie Guy, professor emeritus in the UF Department of Environmental Horticulture, has led the Autism Spectrum Disorder Job Skills training program with a goal to teach students about horticulture and prepare them for the Florida Nursery, Growers and Landscape Association (FNGLA) Certified Horticulture Professional designation exam.

"It provides a professional credential that demonstrates a level of horticulture knowledge in general and aspects specific to the state of Florida," says Guy. "It's a pathway to gainful employment and a more independent lifestyle." Although the program is not college credited, Guys says the challenging syllabus is equivalent to that of two school semesters. Students





inspiration



# LIVING IN SYNCHRONICITY

## The Power of Meaningful Coincidence

by Meg Lundstrom

are charged with learning to identify 198 plants among other requirements.

"Of the five students that have gone on to take the exam, all have successfully passed to earn a certificate," Guy reports. "Three have gone on to obtain jobs in the horticulture industry!" He's currently assisting two more students interested in earning the FNGLA certificate.

Many other benefits are available through the therapeutic horticulture sessions, such as intellectual stimulation, improved confidence and respite and relaxation. "When working with someone with Parkinson's disease, for example, you're working to maintain their physical function and design activities for that [goal]," Diehl explains. She notes that participants combating cancer gravitate toward plant crafts as a form of creative expression, and patients battling addiction mostly crave the calming tasks within the greenhouse.

Wilmot Botanical Gardens welcomes volunteers interested in maintaining the garden and supporting the participants. For those interested in studying therapeutic horticulture, the UF Department of Environmental Horticulture offers an undergraduate certificate in horticultural therapy. Open to UF students as well as non-degree-seeking pupils, this three-course curriculum is online only and accredited by AHTA.

*Wilmot Botanical Gardens is located at 2023 Mowry Rd., in Gainesville. Visit [Wilmot.med.ufl.edu](http://Wilmot.med.ufl.edu).*

When we have an inner need that converges with an outside event, it is a meaningful coincidence known as synchronicity, and it happens to us all. It can be simple, like a playful sprite: recurring numbers or dates, all the lights turning green as we race to meet an appointment or a call from a faraway friend just when we want to talk to them. Or it can be profound: a chance meeting with an employer looking for exactly our skills, unexpected money appearing when we're in a pinch, a timely rescue or our grandmother's favorite, obscure song coming on the radio or app just as we're feeling teary-eyed on the anniversary of her death.

Whether they are lighthearted or life-changing, synchronicities link us to an underlying order in the universe that is profoundly reassuring. They open us to mystery and delight. They give us a sense of being taken care of. They nudge us to grow in scary, but life-affirming directions. They awaken a sense of awe, which studies have shown to be the emotion most likely to make us reach out generously to others—and that evokes even more synchronicity. And they can make daily life a lark.

By its very nature, we can't create synchronicity, but we can live life in a way that encourages it to show up. The more

engaged we are spiritually—whether that means prayer, meditation, walking in nature or loving others deeply—the more likely synchronicity is. Being open, self-honest, courageous, engaged, grateful and fully present summons it, which is where therapy, yoga and bodywork can be useful. But we don't have to be saintly or enlightened; synchronicity is there for us all. It is simply the way the Universe works.

The first step is to notice synchronicity when it occurs, and honor it. As with humans, when we give it our attention and say thank you, it makes it more likely to show up in our life again.

At some point as our trust builds, synchronicity becomes simply the way our life works. Things show up as we need them and we are in the right place at the right time. Even when occurrences seemingly go awry, we glimpse an underlying order that gives us strength and purpose. Life becomes a steady stream of meaningfulness and inner and outer exploration. We find ourselves living in flow, attuned to life's deepest currents and awash in deep gratitude.

*Meg Lundstrom is the co-author with Charlene Belitz of [The Power of Flow: Practical Ways to Transform Your Life with Meaningful Coincidence](http://The Power of Flow: Practical Ways to Transform Your Life with Meaningful Coincidence). Connect at [FlowPower.com](http://FlowPower.com).*

# Seven years without a cold?

## New device stops cold and flu

Scientists recently discovered a way to kill viruses and bacteria.

Now thousands of people are using it to stop colds and flu.

Colds start when cold viruses get in your nose. Viruses multiply fast. If you don't stop them early, they spread and cause misery.

In hundreds of studies, EPA and university researchers have confirmed that viruses and bacteria die almost instantly when touched by copper.

That's why ancient Greeks and Egyptians used copper to purify water and heal wounds. They didn't know about microbes, but now we do.

Scientists say the high conductance of copper disrupts the electrical balance in a microbe cell and destroys the cell in seconds.

Tests by the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) show germs die fast on copper. So some hospitals tried copper for touch surfaces like faucets and doorknobs. This cut the spread of MRSA and other illnesses by over half, and saved lives.

The strong scientific evidence gave inventor Doug Cornell an idea. When he felt a cold about to start he fashioned a smooth copper probe and rubbed it gently in his nose for 60 seconds.

"It worked!" he exclaimed. "The cold never got going." It worked again every

time. He hasn't had a single cold for 7 years since.

He asked relatives and friends to try it. They said it worked for them, too, so he patented CopperZap™ and put it on the market.

Soon hundreds of people had tried it and given feedback. Nearly 100% said the copper stops colds if used within 3 hours after the first sign.

Even up to 2 days, if they still

get the cold it is milder than usual and they feel better.

Users wrote things like, "It stopped my cold right away," and "Is it supposed to work that fast?"

"What a wonderful thing," wrote Physician's Assistant Julie. "No more colds for me!"

Pat McAllister, 70, received one for Christmas and called it "one of the best presents ever. This little jewel really works."

Now thousands of users have simply stopped getting colds.

People often use CopperZap preventively. Frequent flier Karen Gauci used to get colds after crowded flights. Though skeptical, she tried it several times a day on travel days for 2 months. "Sixteen flights and not a sniffle!" she exclaimed.

Businesswoman Rosaleen says when people are sick around her she uses CopperZap morning and night. "It saved me last holidays," she said. "The kids

had colds going round and round, but not me."

Some users say it also helps with sinuses. Attorney Donna Blight had a 2-day sinus headache. When her CopperZap arrived, she tried it. "I am shocked!" she said. "My head cleared, no more headache, no more congestion."

Some users say copper stops nighttime stuffiness if used just before bed. One man said, "Best sleep I've had in years."

Copper can also stop flu if used early and for several days. Lab technicians placed 25 million live flu viruses on a CopperZap. No viruses were found alive soon after.

Dr. Bill Keevil led one of the teams confirming the discovery. He placed millions of disease germs on copper. "They started to die literally as soon as they touched the surface," he said.

People have even used copper on cold sores and say it can completely prevent outbreaks.

The handle is curved and finely textured to improve contact. It kills germs picked up on fingers and hands to protect you and your family.

**Dr. Bill Keevil:**  
**Copper quickly kills cold viruses.**

Copper even kills deadly germs that have become resistant to antibiotics. If you are near sick people, a moment of handling it may keep serious infection away. It may even save a life.

The EPA says copper still works even when tarnished. It kills hundreds of different disease germs so it can prevent serious or even fatal illness.

CopperZap is made in America of pure copper. It has a 90-day full money back guarantee. It is \$69.95.

Get \$10 off each CopperZap with code **NATA18**.

Go to [www.CopperZap.com](http://www.CopperZap.com) or call toll-free 1-888-411-6114.

Buy once, use forever.



**New research: Copper stops colds if used early.**





## calendar of events

NOTE: All calendar events must be submitted via our website by the 10th of the month and must adhere to our guidelines. Visit [GoNaturalAwakenings.com](http://GoNaturalAwakenings.com) for guidelines and to submit entries.

### SUNDAY, MARCH 1

**2020 Manatee Car & Truck Show** – 8am-3pm. Free. Car show of vehicles at least 25 years or older. Judged show with 64 awards. 50's music, vendors and 50/50. Crystal Chevrolet, 1035 Suncoast Blvd, Homosassa. [CitrusCountyCruisers.com](http://CitrusCountyCruisers.com).

### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4

**Sound Bath with Your Phoenix Is Rising** – 7-8pm. Be bathed in the sound of Singing Bowls, Spirit Drum, Kirimba and Tibetan Bowls. Stay after to play the bowls yourself. Dress comfortably and bring a blanket and pillow. Center for Spiritual Living Ocala, 1009 NE 28th Ave, Ocala. 352-629-3897. [CSLOcala.org](http://CSLOcala.org).

### THURSDAY, MARCH 5

**"How Seeing the Past Can Loosen Fear's Grip."** – 6pm. Free. All welcome. Spiritual Exploration Discussion on ECK Wisdom on Conquering Fear, Presented by Eckankar. Gift book for attendees. Downtown Library, 401 E University Ave, Gainesville. 352-378-3504. [TheSoundOfSoul.org](http://TheSoundOfSoul.org).

### FRIDAY, MARCH 6

**An Afternoon of Spirit Communication with Ma-Ryah** – 2-4pm. \$30. With Sharon Dvorak. Call the store to register. Fairy Dust Crystals and Such, 11781 SE US Hwy 441, Belleview. 352-693-4592. [FairyDustCrystals.com](http://FairyDustCrystals.com).

**Bat Chat at Fort Cooper** – 5:15-6:30pm. Free. Special program and observation of Florida's bats featuring Fort Cooper's bat house with thousands of inhabitants. Presentation led by Shari Blissett-Clark, president of Florida Bat Conservancy. Must RSVP by email to [NaturCoastBirder5@yahoo.com](mailto:NaturCoastBirder5@yahoo.com). Seating is limited. Fort Cooper State Park, US Hwy 41, Inverness. 352-726-0315. [DiscoverTheForest.org](http://DiscoverTheForest.org).

**Reiki Sessions** – By appointment. Buy two sessions, get the third half off of equal or lesser value. Reiki energy healing; chakra clearing and balance; intuitive healings and readings; meditation; past life regressions. Dr. Lora Coleman, 810 E University Ave, Gainesville. Text 305-298-6561 or email: [DrLoraColeman@gmail.com](mailto:DrLoraColeman@gmail.com). [DrLoraColeman.com](http://DrLoraColeman.com).



### SATURDAY, MARCH 7

**33rd Annual Floral City Strawberry Festival** – 9am-5pm. \$5. Family friendly. Over 200 booths filled with crafts, artists, local non-profits, and commercial vendors offering their wares. The Beer Garden will offer multiple selections of beer and wine plus local and touring musical entertainment. Floral City Park, 9530 S Parkside Ave, Floral City. [GoStrawberryFest.com](http://GoStrawberryFest.com).

**7th Annual Habitat Ocala Strawberry Festival** – 9am-5pm. Free. Family friendly strawberry event inspired to raise funds to build a home for a low income family in the community and provide hope and dignified housing solutions. Live music and entertainment. McPherson Complex, 601 SE 25th Ave, Ocala. 352-351-4663. [HabitatOcala.org](http://HabitatOcala.org).

**OPI Annual Cornhole Tournament** – 9am-5pm. Free. Family friendly LGBTQ day at the park. Food and drink will be available for purchase. Cash and prizes for youth and social double's winners. Ocala Tuscawilla Park, 829 NE Sanchez Ave, Ocala. 352-671-8700. 352-436-2462. [OcalaPride.org](http://OcalaPride.org).

**Orange Blossom Special Poultry How** – 9am-5pm. Free. Establish community and networking opportunities for poultry fanciers. Members and non-members welcome. Gilchrist County Agricultural Complex Arena, 4050 S US Hwy, 129, Bell. 321-236-1080. [CFIPoultry.org](http://CFIPoultry.org).

**Florida SpringsFest 2020** – March 7-8. 10am-4pm. \$2. Learn about Florida Springs history, science, and sustainability. Food and music along with special guests from mermaids. Half price for Glass Bottom Boat rides

all weekend. Florida SpringsFest, 5656 E Silver Springs Blvd, Ocala. 352-236-7148. [SaveTheManatee.org](http://SaveTheManatee.org).

**Yin Yoga Teacher Training 1 Day Intensive** – 12:30-6:30pm. \$99. Learn which tissues are being targeted, the physiological benefits of practicing yin, and the subtle effects that contribute to the all-over good feeling the practice creates. We will explore more than 20 Yin Yoga poses and learn individual-specific alignment. Ocala Yoga Center, 3620 NE 8th Pl, Ste 7, Ocala. 352-789-9481. [OcalaYogaCenter.com](http://OcalaYogaCenter.com).

**Psychic/Medium Spiritual Developmental Class** – 2-4:30pm. \$35. Includes meditation, lesson and practice. Unity of Gainesville, 8801 NW 39th Ave, Gainesville. International Foundation for Spiritual Knowledge. 407-247-7823. [IFSK.org](http://IFSK.org).

### SUNDAY, MARCH 8

**Ocala Veg Fest 2020** – 10am-4pm. Free. Family friendly event for people, animals and our planet. This is a 100% vegan event. Vendors and scheduled speakers featuring Dr. Klaper. Ocala Veg Fest, 310 SE 3rd St, Ocala. [APlantBasedDiet.org@Gmail.com](mailto:APlantBasedDiet.org@Gmail.com). [OcalaVegFest.org](http://OcalaVegFest.org).

**"The Wind of Change" ECK Light and Sound Service** – 11am. Free. All welcome. Presented by Eckankar. Conversation and light refreshments. La Quinta Inn & Suites, 3530 SW 36th Ave, Ocala. 352-867-4456. [TheSoundOfSoul.org](http://TheSoundOfSoul.org).

**Music as Spiritual Practice** – 1-3pm. Free. Experience greater love and connection with others. Led by Elaine Faerie Silver. Center for Spiritual Living Ocala, 1009 NE 28th Ave, Ocala. 352-629-3897. [CSLOcala.org](http://CSLOcala.org).

### TUESDAY, MARCH 10

**Family Fued Night** – 5:30-8:30pm. Free. Everyone is welcome. Hosted by Times of Your Life Entertainment. Prizes will be awarded to the winning team. Reservations are requested via email; [nbring@hampton.golf](mailto:nbring@hampton.golf) to reserve your table. Stone Creek Golf Club, 9676 SW 62nd Loop, Ocala. 352-854-1272. [StoneCreekGolfClubOcala.com](http://StoneCreekGolfClubOcala.com).

**British Style Psychic Medium Spiritual Development Class** – 6-8:30pm. \$35. Includes meditation, lesson and practice. Holiday Inn Express, 1205 Avenida Central, Lady Lake. International Foundation for Spiritual Knowledge. 407-247-7823. [IFSK.org](http://IFSK.org).

### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11

**British Style Psychic Medium Spiritual Development** – 2-4:30pm. \$35. Includes meditation, lesson



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**natural awakenings**

**Membership Form**

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**Mail to: Natural Awakenings**  
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and practice. Holiday Inn Express, 1205 Avenida Central, Lady Lake. International Foundation for Spiritual Knowledge. 407-247-7823. IFSK.org.

**Experience, HU, The Sound of Soul HU** – 6pm. Free. The Sound behind all sounds, brings insight, calm and greater awareness. Presented by Eckankar. Conversation and light refreshments. SFC DT Blount Ctr, Board Rm, 401 NW 6th St, Gainesville. 352-378-3504. TheSoundofSoul.org.

**Learning How to Open Your Third Eye** – 2:30-4:30pm, 5:30-7:30pm. \$30. With JoEllen Blue. You will be provided with the tools and knowledge you need to open your Third Eye, thus enhancing your intuition. Please call the store to register. Fairy Dust Crystals and Such, 11781 SE US Hwy 441, Belleview. 352-693-4592. FairyDustCrystals.com.

## FRIDAY, MARCH 13

**Citrus County Speedway Driving Experience** – 2-8pm. \$79-\$359. Get out of the stands and get behind the wheel of a real race car with Rusty Wallace Racing Experience. Limited spots available, must book in advance. Use the promotional code, SAVE60 to get 60% off your tickets. Citrus County Speedway and Track LLC, 3600 S Florida Ave, Inverness. 352-341-5764. CitrusCountySpeedwayAndTrack.com.

**2nd Annual Made for the Trades Dinner & Auction** – 6-10pm. \$25. Dinner and auction benefiting Withlacoochee Technical College. Citrus County Auditorium, 3610 S Florida Ave, Inverness. 352-726-1931. Ext 2240. CitrusEducation.org.

**Love Land** – 7:30pm. Take a trip to Loveland! Three ballets to be featured, How do I love thee, Moonlight Sway, and Someone to Love. Legacy Park, 15100 NW 142nd Terr, Alachua. 352-371-2986. DanceAlive.org.

**Reiki Sessions** – By appointment. Buy two sessions, get the third half off of equal or lesser value. Reiki energy healing; chakra clearing and balance; intuitive healings and readings; meditation; past life regressions. Dr. Lora Coleman, 810 E University Ave, Gainesville. Text 305-298-6561 or email: DrLoraColeman@gmail.com. DrLoraColeman.com.

## SATURDAY, MARCH 14

**Spring Festival** – 8am-4pm. \$2. Garden related vendors, educational booth and speakers plus a KidZone and food trucks. Livestock Pavillion, 2232 NE Jacksonville Rd, Ocala. 352-671-8400. MarionCountyFL.org.

**Hike with a Ranger** – 9-10am. \$3. Family friendly hike on one of the three trails that is approximately 1.5



miles long featuring different plants, animals and insects. Closed toed shoes, water, insect repellent, a hat or visor and camera are suggested to bring for optimal hiking experience. Fort Cooper State Park, US Hwy 41, Inverness. 352-726-0315. DiscoverTheForest.org.

**Spiritual Aspects of Essential Oils** – 11-12:30pm. \$20. With Ina Anderson. Learn how essential oils can help us connect to our spiritual self. Class will focus on oils that help us make that connection. Fairy Dust Crystals and Such, 11781 SE US Hwy 441, Belleview. 352-693-4592. FairyDustCrystals.com.

**Intuitive “Home Style” Development Class** – 1-4 pm. \$30. With Bobbie Roberts. Great time to explore your intuitive self. Call to register. Fairy Dust Crystals and Such, 11781 SE US Hwy 441, Belleview. 352-693-4592. FairyDustCrystals.com.

## SUNDAY, MARCH 15

**“The Benefits of Blessings of True, Necessary, Kind.”** – 1pm. Free. All welcome. ECK Light and Sound Service. Presented by Eckankar. Refreshments provided. 352-378-3504. MiraclesInYourLife.org.

**Intro to AumaKhua-Ki Energy Balancing** – 3-5pm. \$20. \$40 for 2 CEs from #50-14398. With Rev. Ojela Frank, LMT (MA60322). The Martial Arts Center, 3233 SE Maricamp Rd, Ocala. 352-239-9272. AKHeal.com.

## THURSDAY, MARCH 19

**Music at the Museum: Joe Donato Jazz** – 6-9pm. \$20-\$500. Enjoy an evening of true saxophone and woodwind legend, Joe Donato and his band's unique performance style and improvisational techniques. The Old Courthouse Heritage Museum, 1 Courthouse Sq, Inverness. 352-341-6428. CCCourthouse.org.

## FRIDAY, MARCH 20

**AK Heart Chakra Activation** – By appointment. With Rev. Ojela Frank, LMT (MA60322). Call for pricing and appointment availability. Healthy Hands of Ocala, 1302 SE 25th Loop #104, Ocala. 352-239-9272. AKHeal.com

**LEAF Series: Mind Full to Mindful** – 10:30am-Noon. Learn to see the extraordinary while practicing simple ways to go from “Mind full to Mindful”. Led by personal development coach and published author, Tracy Ryzan. Sholom Park, 7110 SW 80th Ave, Ocala. 352-873-0848. SholomPark.org.

**Reiki Sessions** – By appointment. Buy two sessions, get the third half off of equal or lesser value. Reiki energy healing; chakra clearing and balance; intuitive healings and readings; meditation; past life regressions. Dr. Lora Coleman, 810 E University Ave, Gainesville. Text 305-298-6561 or email: DrLoraColeman@gmail.com. DrLoraColeman.com.

## SATURDAY, MARCH 21

**Inverness Big Bass Classic** – 6am-4pm. \$85-\$170. Locals and professional anglers throughout the southeast compete for the hourly thousand dollar payout for the biggest overall bass and biggest bag of the day. Youth are encouraged to attend the event and enter the Apopka Marine Junior Angler Boat. No cost to enter, must be present to win. Wallace Brooks Park, 328 E Dampier St, Inverness. 352-726-2611. Inverness-FL.gov.

## SATURDAY, MARCH 22

**Fort Cooper Days** – 9am-4pm. 13 and older, \$8. 12 and younger, free. Special educational events with Militia and Seminole Living Historians. Special booths will be set up on the lakeside. Fort Cooper State Park, US Hwy 41, Inverness. 352-726-0315. DiscoverTheForest.org.

## TUESDAY, MARCH 24

**British Style Psychic Medium Spiritual Development Class** – 10:30am-1pm. \$35. Includes meditation, lesson and practice. Fairy Dust Crystals and Such, 11781 SE US Hwy, 441 Belleview. International Foundation for Spiritual Knowledge. 407-247-7823. IFSK.org.

**“A Guide to the Most Secret Part of Yourself,” Spiritual Exploration Class** – 1pm. Free. All welcome. Spiritual Wisdom on Prayer, Meditation and Contemplation. Gift book for attendees. Presented by Eckankar. Marion County Public Library, Meeting Room B, 2720 E Silver Springs Blvd, Ocala. 352-867-4456. TheSoundOfSoul.org.

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**Experience, HU, The Sound of Soul** – 2:30pm. The Sound behind all Sounds, brings insight, calm and greater awareness. Presented by Eckankar. Marion County Public Library, Meeting Room B, 2720 E Silver Springs Blvd, Ocala. 352-867-4456. TheSoundOfSoul.org.

### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25

**“Your Dreams-A Source of Truth”** – 6pm. Free. All welcome. Eckankar Video and Discussion. Conversation and light refreshments. Presented by Eckankar. SFC DT Blount Ctr, Board Rm, 401 NW 6th St, Gainesville. 352-378-3504. TheSoundOfSoul.org.

### THURSDAY, MARCH 26

**A Historic Evening with Anne Frank’s Stepsister Eva Schloss** – 6-7:30pm. \$20. A story of triumph, hope and tolerance. Led by Eva Schloss, trustee of the Anne Frank Educational Trust. Listen to a firsthand account of the discovery and printing of Anne Frank’s famed diary. Marion Technical-Institute, 1614 SE Fort King St, Ocala. 352-330-4466. AnneFrankOcala.com.

### FRIDAY, MARCH 27

**Reiki Sessions** – By appointment. Buy two sessions, get the third half off of equal or lesser value. Reiki energy healing; chakra clearing and balance; intuitive healings and readings; meditation; past life regressions. Dr. Lora Coleman, 810 E University Ave, Gainesville. Text 305-298-6561 or email: DrLoraColeman@gmail.com. DrLoraColeman.com.

### SATURDAY, MARCH 28

**CBD and Acupuncture For Pain Relief** – 10-11am. Free. A community education event. Learn how CBD and acupuncture can be utilized to successfully treat acute and chronic pain. Led by Pain Management Specialist Hamilton Rotte and Acupuncture Physician and CBD Specialist Traci Pettigrew. Seating is limited, RSVP required. Gainesville Holistic Healthcare, 910 NW 57th St, Suite B, Gainesville. 352-727-7070. GNVHealth.com.

**Marion County Day** – 10am-2pm. Free. Organizations from the area will participate by providing activities, information, delicious food and locally-made products. Come hungry and ready to have fun! McPherson Governmental Campus, 601 SE 25th Ave, Ocala. 352-438-2300. MarionCountyFL.org.

**Ocala Pet Expo** – 10am-2pm. Free. Meet adoptable dogs, speak with dog trainers, see demonstrations,

explore various pet-related vendors and more. Ocala Tusawilla Park, 829 NE Sanchez Ave, Ocala. 352-671-8700. MarionCountyFL.org.

### SUNDAY, MARCH 29

**AK Energy Sound Healing** – 5-6:30pm. \$10-20. Enjoy the relaxing sounds of singing bowls, bells and a gong, guided meditations and energy balancing by Ojela Frank, LMT (MA60322). At-door registration, bring yoga mat, snack and bottled water. The Martial Arts Center, 3233 SE Maricamp Rd, Ocala. 352-239-9272. AKHeal.com.

**Citrus County Fair** – 7:30am-8pm. \$1-\$22. Family friendly. Annual exhibits, music and entertainment. Midway rides, games, carnival, 4-H/FFA exhibits, open class exhibits, livestock shows and contests, fair food, crafters and more. Citrus County Fair, 3600 S Florida Ave, Hwy 41 S, Inverness. 352-726-2993. CitrusCountyFair.com.

### SUNDAY, APRIL 5

#### savethedate

#### SUNDAY, APRIL 5

**AumaKhua-Ki Energy Balancing 1** – 9am-4pm. \$225. With Ojela Frank, LMT (MA60322). Includes AK Energy Level 1 Attunement, class book and certificate. (6 CEs from #50-14398). Pre-registration required at AumaKhua-Ki.org. Healthy Hands of Ocala, 1302 SE 25th Loop, Ocala. 352-239-9272. AKHeal.com.

### SATURDAY, APRIL 11

#### savethedate

#### SATURDAY, APRIL 11

**NadiOm Raise Your Vibration Health Fair** – 10am-2pm. Free. Holistic health discussions, nutrition tips, vendors, artwork, crafts, health-care professionals and more. Gifts to the first 25 attendees. Nadi Om Wellness, 6118 SW Hwy 200, Ocala. 352-525-0247. NadiOmWellness.com.

## plan ahead

### SATURDAY, MAY 9

**Windsor Zucchini Festival** – 9am-4pm. Free. Festival to include arts and crafts shows with over 100 vendors, zucchini carving, cooking, contests, plant sale, raffle, live music, children’s activities, pony rides, food and zucchini ice cream. Location: 1401 County Rd 234, Gainesville. 352-372-4875. Info@windsor-z-news.org.



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"Marie and Rosetta" is presented by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc., a Concord Theatricals Company. World Premiere presented by Atlantic Theatre Company, New York City, 2016. MARIE ANDROSETTA was developed at TheatreWorks Silicon Valley as part of their New Works Festival. Additional development at The Playwright's Center and The New Harmony Project.

## ongoing events

NOTE: All calendar events must be submitted via our website by the 10th of the month and must adhere to our guidelines. Visit [GoNaturalAwakenings.com](http://GoNaturalAwakenings.com) for guidelines and to submit entries.

### sunday

**A Course in Miracles** – 9:30am. Unity of Gainesville, 8801 NW 39th Ave. [UnityGainesville.org](http://UnityGainesville.org).

**Spiritual Service** – 9:30am. Let the spirit guide you with hands-on healing, meditations, messages and more. Conscious Awakening, 301 SR26, Melrose. 352-262-0078. [BackToBasicsLiving@gmail.com](mailto:BackToBasicsLiving@gmail.com).

**Sunday Spiritual Service** – 10am. Unity of Ocala, 101 Cedar Rd. 352-687-2113. [Mail@UnityOcala.org](mailto:Mail@UnityOcala.org). [UnityOcala.org](http://UnityOcala.org).

**Guided Meditation and Sunday Service** – 10am (meditation); 10:30am (service). Rev. Cindy Grimes, Senior Minister. Awaken and live. Center for Spiritual Living Ocala, 1009 NE 28th Ave. 352-629-3897. [CSLocala.org](http://CSLocala.org).

**Meditation and Book Discussion** – 10:30am-noon. Shambhala Gainesville, 1899 NE 23rd Ave. 352-214-1334. [Gainesville.Shambhala.org](http://Gainesville.Shambhala.org).

**Brewery Yoga at First Magnitude** – 1-2pm. Bring your own mat for yoga in the warehouse. All experience levels. Suggested \$5 donation. First Magnitude Brewing Co, 1220 SE Veitch, Gainesville. 352-727-4677.

### monday

**Amethyst Bio-Mat** – By appointment. Seating is limited. Reduces stress, relieves pain, and improves the immune system. Lemire Clinic, 9401 SW Hwy 200, Ste 301, Ocala. 352-291-9459. [LemireClinic.com](http://LemireClinic.com).

**Astrology Readings** – By appointment. With Dr. Patricia Bell, astrologer, author, gift clairvoyant. Call for pricing and appointment availability. @Nadi Om Wellness, 352-525-0247.

**Ionic Foot Detox** – By appointment. Seating is limited. Lemire Clinic, 9401 SW Hwy 200, Ste 301, Ocala. 352-291-9459. [LemireClinic.com](http://LemireClinic.com).

**Latest in IV Therapies** – By appointment. Seating is limited. Lemire Clinic, 9401 SW Hwy 200, Ste 301, Ocala. 352-291-9459. [LemireClinic.com](http://LemireClinic.com).

**Traditional Hatha Flow Yoga** – 8:30am. An intermediate yoga class with Johanna Marsan. \$12. Nadi Om Wellness. 6118 SW Hwy 200, Ocala. 352-525-0247. [NadiOmWellness.com](http://NadiOmWellness.com).

**Fitness Zone** – Noon-8pm. Ages 14+. Free. Cardio and strength training equipment. E.D. Croskey Recreation Center, 1510 NW Fourth St, Ocala. 352-401-3920.

**Hearing Screenings** – Afternoons by appointment. Seating is limited. Free. Lemire Clinic, 9401 SW Hwy 200, Ste 301, Ocala. 352-291-9459. [LemireClinic.com](http://LemireClinic.com).

**Fit In The Park: Zumba** – 5:30-6:30pm. Ages 10+. Free. E.D. Croskey Recreation Center, 1510 NW Fourth St, Ocala. 352-368-5517.

**ACA Meeting** – 6pm. Adult Children of Alcoholics. Unity of Ocala, 101 Cedar Rd. 352-687-2113. [Mail@UnityOcala.org](mailto:Mail@UnityOcala.org). [UnityOcala.org](http://UnityOcala.org).

**A Course in Miracles** – 6:30pm. Unity of Gainesville, 8801 NW 39th Ave. [UnityGainesville.org](http://UnityGainesville.org).

### tuesday

**Fitness Zone** – Noon-8pm. Ages 14+. Free. Cardio and strength training equipment. E.D. Croskey Recreation Center, 1510 NW Fourth St, Ocala. 352-401-3920.

**Newberry Farmers Market** – 4-7pm. A local producer only market focused on food with additional vendors. Located on the corner of Newberry Road and 254<sup>th</sup> St. 352-472-2112. [nmsoinfo@gmail.com](mailto:nmsoinfo@gmail.com). [Newberrymainstreet.com](http://Newberrymainstreet.com)

**Fit In The Park: Zumba** – 5:30-6:30pm. Ages 10+. Free. E.D. Croskey Recreation Center, 1510 NW Fourth St, Ocala. 368-5517.

**Meditation Instruction and Orientation** – 7-9pm. Meditation, book discussion, refreshments to follow. Shambhala Gainesville, 1899 NE 23rd Ave. 352-214-1334. [Gainesville.Shambhala.org](http://Gainesville.Shambhala.org)

### wednesday

**Qigong** – 10am. With Dr. Neil Crenshaw and Dr. Don Mederios. Donations go to Connected Warriors. Van Ness Park Civic Center, G Ave and 7th St, McIntosh. 352-425-2975.

**Fitness Zone** – Noon-8pm. Ages 14+. Free. Cardio and strength training equipment. E.D. Croskey Recreation Center, 1510 NW Fourth St, Ocala. 352-401-3920.

**Technology Help Center** – 2-4pm. Free. Belleview Public Library, 13145 SE Hwy 484. 352-438-2500.

**Fit In The Park: Zumba** – 5:30-6:30pm. Ages 10+. Free. E.D. Croskey Recreation Center, 1510 NW Fourth St, Ocala. 352-368-5517.

**Game Night** – 7:30pm. Muddy Lotus Tea, 520 NE 1st Ave, Ocala. 352-559-3003. [MuddyLotusTea.com](http://MuddyLotusTea.com).

### thursday

**A Course in Miracles** – 10am. Unity of Gainesville, 8801 NW 39th Ave. [UnityGainesville.org](http://UnityGainesville.org).

**Gentle Flow Yoga** – 10am. All levels yoga class that is prenatal friendly with Johanna Marsan. \$12. Nadi Om Wellness. 6118 SW Hwy 200, Ocala. 352-525-0247. [NadiOmWellness.com](http://NadiOmWellness.com).

**Fitness Zone** – Noon-8pm. Ages 14+. Free. Cardio and strength training equipment. E.D. Croskey Recreation Center, 1510 NW Fourth St, Ocala. 352-401-3920.

**Alachua Farmers Market** – 4-7pm. A local producer only market where most foods have been picked or made that day. Behind the Chamber of Commerce office. 14801 Main Street, Alachua. 386-462-3333. [Alachuafarmersmarket.com](http://Alachuafarmersmarket.com).

**Fit In The Park: Zumba** – 5:30-6:30pm. Ages

10+. Free. E.D. Croskey Recreation Center, 1510 NW Fourth St, Ocala. 352-368-5517.

**Embodiment 101** – 6:30-8pm. Body awareness movement followed by meditation. Shambhala Gainesville, 1899 NE 23rd Ave. 352-214-1334. [Gainesville.Shambhala.org](http://Gainesville.Shambhala.org).

**Karaoke** – 8-11pm. Muddy Lotus Tea, 520 NE 1st Ave, Ocala. 352-559-3003. [MuddyLotusTea.com](http://MuddyLotusTea.com).

### friday

**Health Happens Farmers' Market** – 9am-2:30pm. Shop for fresh produce, seafood, honey, baked goods, gluten-free snacks and prepared meals for lunch. McPherson Governmental Complex field, 601 SE 25th Ave, Ocala. 352-438-2360.

**Fitness Zone** – Noon-8pm. Ages 14+. Free. Cardio and strength training equipment. E.D. Croskey Recreation Center, 1510 NW Fourth St, Ocala. 352-401-3920.

### saturday

**Alachua County Farmers' Market** – 8:30am-noon. Open rain or shine. A grower's only market. 5920 NW 13<sup>th</sup> St, Gainesville. 352-371-8236. [441market.com](http://441market.com)

**Haile Farmers Market** – 8:30am-noon. Open rain or shine, heat or cold. Haile Village Center in Haile Plantation, SW 91st Terr, Gainesville. [HaileFarmersMarket.com](http://HaileFarmersMarket.com).

**Ocala Farm Market** – 9am-2pm. Locally-grown farm fresh seasonal produce, homemade jellies and jams, crafts and plants. Corner of SE 3rd St and SE 3rd Ave, Ocala. 352-629-8051. [OcalaDowntownMarket.com](http://OcalaDowntownMarket.com).

**Farmstead Saturday** – 9am-3pm. Free. Crones Cradle Conserve, 6411 NE 217 Pl, Citra. 352-595-3377. [CronesCradleConserve.com](http://CronesCradleConserve.com).

**Starlab Planetarium Shows** – 11-11:30am, 1-1:30pm. Tour our solar system and learn about the stars and constellations. \$3/person/session plus exhibit admission of \$6/person or \$22/family of four. Discovery Center, 701 NE Sanchez Ave, Ocala. [Ocala.org](http://Ocala.org).

**Fitness Zone** – Noon-8pm. Ages 14+. Free. Cardio and strength training equipment. E.D. Croskey Recreation Center, 1510 NW Fourth St, Ocala. 352-401-3920.

**Psychic/Medium Spiritual Development Class** – 2-4:30pm. With International Foundation for Spiritual Knowledge. One Saturday each month. Includes meditation, lesson and practice. \$30. Call or check website to confirm date. Unity of Gainesville, 8801 NW 39th Ave. 407-247-7823. [ifsk.org](http://ifsk.org).

**The Third Testament Foundation** – 8pm. *What is The Third Testament?* Introduction to the Third Testament by Martinus. Live Stream with chat. Free. 941-462-3177. [Infinite808@gmail.com](mailto:Infinite808@gmail.com).

**Fire Flow** – 9pm. Fire spinners and poi with music outside. Muddy Lotus Tea, 520 NE 1st Ave, Ocala. 352-559-3003. [MuddyLotusTea.com](http://MuddyLotusTea.com).





## community resource guide

Connecting you to the leaders in natural health care and green living in our community. To find out how you can be included in the Community Resource Guide, email [Sheila@GoNaturalAwakenings.com](mailto:Sheila@GoNaturalAwakenings.com) to request our media kit.

### COLONICS

**GENTLE WATERS HEALING CENTER**  
352-374-0600  
Gainesville  
[Info@GentleWatersHealing.com](mailto:Info@GentleWatersHealing.com)



The therapists at Gentle Waters Healing Center assist each individual with detoxing using colon hydrotherapy and/or far infrared sauna. Call Dawn Brower for more information or visit [GentleWatersHealing.com](http://GentleWatersHealing.com). MA41024, MM15426.

### ENERGY BALANCING

**SANDY WILSON**  
EFT, Emotion Code, Body Code, Hypnosis  
352-454-8959  
[EFTSandy@yahoo.com](mailto:EFTSandy@yahoo.com)  
[SandraWilsonPositiveChange.com](http://SandraWilsonPositiveChange.com)



With balanced energy, you feel better, make better decisions, and have better relationships. Sandy will help balance your energy so you can achieve your health, wealth, and relationship goals. See website or call to start achieving your goals.

### FUNCTIONAL MEDICINE

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9401 SW Hwy 200, Suite 301  
352-291-9459 • [LemireClinic.com](http://LemireClinic.com)



Dr. Lemire is both Board Certified in Family Practice for 40 years and is an Institute for Functional Medicine (IFM) Certified Practitioner. Some of the common protocols Dr. Lemire works with are: Thyroid conditions, Chronic Fatigue, MS, Fibromyalgia, Arthritis, Leaky Gut, Cancer, Hormone Unbalances, Heavy Metal Toxicity, Inflammatory and Auto Immune Conditions, Lyme Disease, Cardiovascular Disease, Diabetes, and Weight Management. Dr. Lemire sees children and adults. See ad, page 12.



People don't notice whether it's winter or summer  
when they're happy.

~Anton Chekhov

### LOCALLY-GROWN PRODUCE

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352-595-3377  
[CronesCradleConserve.org](http://CronesCradleConserve.org)



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### NATURAL MENTAL HEALTH

**DR. LORA COLEMAN, LCSW**  
810 E. University, Suite B, Gainesville  
305-298-6561  
[DrLoraColeman@gmail.com](mailto:DrLoraColeman@gmail.com)  
[DrLoraColeman.com](http://DrLoraColeman.com)



As a Doctor of Natural Health and licensed Clinical Social Worker, Dr. Coleman offers traditional mental health and spiritual counseling. Dr. Coleman's full Apothecary carries herbs, teas, essential oils, nutritional supplements and education to support natural healing. Dr. Coleman offers Reiki, meditation, Past Life Regression, Chakra Clearing, Theta Healing, crystals, stones and jewelry for healing. Insurance is accepted.

### PLANT-BASED EXPERT

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## REIKI

### DEBI GOLDBEN, RM/T, LMT

MA78069/MM37419  
13722 SW 40<sup>th</sup> Circle, Ocala  
352-209-0303  
DebiGoldben@gmail.com  
DebiGoldben.com



As a House Healer and Intuitive Spiritual Teacher/Coach, Debi uses a unique blend of techniques and spiritual guidance to clear the clutter. Whether it's Geopathic Stress or non-beneficial energies/spirts, Debi can help reduce or eliminate physical and emotional discomfort.



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BodhiSangha.com  
ArielaGrodner@yahoo.com



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## VETERINARY CARE

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Ocala  
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disease. Certified veterinary acu-puncture, certified-AVCA animal chiropractic, herbal therapy, tui na medical massage, functional neurology, postural rehabilitation, ozone therapy, homotoxicology and nutrition. Available for workshops. *See ad, page 29.*

## classifieds

Fee for classifieds is a minimum charge of \$20 for the first 20 words and \$1 for each additional word. To place an ad, email [Sheila@GoNaturalAwakenings.com](mailto:Sheila@GoNaturalAwakenings.com).

## ADVERTISING

**ADVERTISE HERE** – Are you: hiring, renting property/office space, selling products, offering services, or in need of volunteers? Advertise your personal/business needs in *Natural Awakenings* classified ads section. To place an ad, email [Sheila@GoNaturalAwakenings.com](mailto:Sheila@GoNaturalAwakenings.com).

## FOOD CODES

**DEVELOP A FOOD PLAN UNIQUE TO YOU USING FOOD CODES**–Your subconscious knows which foods are best for you for energy, for weight loss, and to avoid. For more information visit [SandraWilsonPositiveChange.com](http://SandraWilsonPositiveChange.com) or email [EFTSandy@yahoo.com](mailto:EFTSandy@yahoo.com)

## OPPORTUNITIES

**START A CAREER YOU CAN BE PASSIONATE ABOUT** – Publish your own *Natural Awakenings* magazine. Home-based business complete with comprehensive training and support system. New franchises are available or purchase a magazine that is currently publishing. Call 239-530-1377 or visit [NaturalAwakeningsMag.com/Franchise](http://NaturalAwakeningsMag.com/Franchise).

## STEM CELL

**AFFORDABLE STEM CELL TECHNOLOGY** – Anti-aging phototherapy patch that activates your own stem cells! – Contact Dianne Purdie, LifeWave Independent Distributor at 352-598-7319, email [DiannePurdieLW@gmail.com](mailto:DiannePurdieLW@gmail.com) or visit [LifeWave.com/abundanthealth](http://LifeWave.com/abundanthealth) and [LiveYounger.cc](http://LiveYounger.cc) for more information.



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