

The Latest News!

Belle Glade Chamber of Commerce <lamar+bellegladechamber.com@ccsend.com>

Thu 9/15/2022 9:02 AM

To: Updates <updates@gladesinitiative.org>

Chamber Chatter

A Publication of the Belle Glade Chamber of Commerce

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Chamber Breakfast is Back!

After 2 Years our Networking Breakfast is back!

After two long years, the Chamber will be hosting the monthly networking breakfasts starting next month. The first breakfast will take place on September 21st at 7:30am, we have a new meeting place at the First Baptist Church's fellowship hall.

Chamber members are invited for a free breakfast along with great networking opportunities. For additional information call the Chamber, 561-996-2745.

Teacher Appreciation Breakfast

This year's teacher appreciation breakfast took place on Thursday, August 4th at the First Baptist Church Gymnasium in Belle Glade. Teachers from Belle Glade, Canal Point, Pahokee, and South Bay were invited with approximately 200 teachers attending.

A hot breakfast, fruit cups, and pastries along with coffee and juice were provided by local businesses. Each teacher received a bag full of "goodies" and many teachers won door prizes including gift cards and a variety of other wonderful prizes, all provided by our sponsors.

Mr. Burke, superintendent of Palm Beach County Schools along with Tamey Jones, Principal of the Shepherd School in Pahokee, spoke and gave encouragement for the upcoming school year.

ACES, McDonalds, Young Singers of the Palm Beaches, Glades Initiative, and Education Foundation set up tables and handed out information on resources available to the teachers.

The event lasted a little over an hour with teachers being recognized for the challenging work that they do. ***We truly appreciate our teachers*** and we look forward to next year - we are already planning on how to make it better!

We thank our Sponsors

Clerks for a Cause Scholarship Program

Awards \$4,500 to Local Students

From left to right: Chief Legal Officer and Chief Operating Officer of Courts Amy Borman, Michael T. Hunt Sr., Lead Court Specialist Loraine Hunt, Michael Hunt, Clerk Joseph Abruzzo, Lucille Jefferys, Finance Services Manager Jessica Comis, Chief of Staff and Chief Deputy Clerk Shannon Ramsey-Chessman.

WEST PALM BEACH, FLA. (August 2, 2022) – Three local students will each receive a \$1,500 college scholarship to help them reach their academic goals, thanks to generous donations from Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller employees.

The Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller recently announced the recipients of its annual Clerks for a Cause Scholarship Program. They include Lucille Jefferys, a graduate of Inlet Grove Community High School in Riviera Beach; Daniella Reyes (not pictured), a graduate of John I. Leonard High School in Greenacres and Michael Hunt, a graduate of Alexander W. Dreyfoos School of the Arts in West Palm Beach.

The Clerks for a Cause Scholarship Program is open to dependent children of Clerk employees. The office's employee-led Charitable Giving Committee selects the winners based on the student's community service, grade point average and a 500-word essay. "Our team is proud to help these students succeed in their academic journeys and career aspirations," said Clerk Joseph Abruzzo. "We're helping to give them a financial head start in their education."

This year's scholarship winners are planning careers in engineering, healthcare and the arts. Lucille Jefferys plans to attend Embry-Riddle University, where she is majoring in aerospace engineering. She is the daughter of Jessica Comis, a Manager of Finance Services in Accounts Payables.

Daniella Reyes plans to attend Palm Beach State College, where she is studying nursing and wants to become a nurse practitioner. She is the daughter of Payment Specialist Vicky Vargas. Michael Hunt plans to attend Florida Atlantic University, where he is majoring in music playing the trombone. He is the son of Lead Court Specialist Loraine Hunt.

The Clerk's scholarship program is funded solely through donations from employees who voluntarily participate in the office's Dress Down Program, which allows team members who donate \$5 per pay period to wear jeans once a week. Since 2021, Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller team members have raised over \$88,000 for local charities and have volunteered over 2,300 hours to community groups.

For more information about the Clerk's office, please visit mypalmbeachclerk.com.

LEADERSHIP GLADES 2022-2023

We are excited to announce that the 2022-2023 Leadership Glades program will be starting next month. With a full class, orientation will take place on September 21st at the First Baptist Church fellowship hall. Orientation will begin with a networking breakfast starting at 7:30 am, and will be followed by a half day in which the class will be prepared on the structure of the

program.

"We are excited to be offering this wonderful program after two years of being placed on hold," stated Melanie Grimes, Co-Director of the Chamber, "this year's class is completely full with additional participants interested in attending. We will be placing those people on a waiting list for next year."

Leadership Glades is an exciting program designed to prepare potential leaders to meet the challenges facing the Glades area. Participants explore critical issues through a series of seminars and related activities. Interaction with key decision-makers, experts, community leaders, and representatives of local government assist participants in better understanding the forces that impact their business, community, and daily lives.

Boost Mobile Back to School Bash!

[Boostmobile 8th annual back to school](#)

Boost Mobile 8th Annual Back to School Bash was a HUGE success! Over 4000 BACKPACKS mixed SCHOOL SUPPLIES were given away.

If you are interested in being a sponsor for next year contact:
Amin at 561-449-1039 or email amin@wirelessimage.com

First 1 Bank Celebrates 100 Years!

Clewiston, Florida (06/22/2022) – **Pioneer Bankcorp, Inc. (OTC Markets: PBKC)** the holding company for First Bank, held their 100th annual stockholders meeting on May 19, 2022. This year's gathering of interested stockholders received the annual financial report, historical images, and a timeline of First Bank's 100-year history, and elected their board of directors: Miller Couse, Earle "Chipper" Edwards, Karl Larsen, Tommy Perry, Jr., Bryan Beer, Carey Soud, Mary Beth Carroll, and Andy Higginbotham. Miller Couse will continue to serve as Board Chair. Morris Ridgdill stepped down from the Board of Directors and was honored for his years of service and was also presented with a First Bank memorabilia shadowbox. Recognition was also given to Nilda Sparks for her 50 years of loyal service to First Bank.

Miller Couse, Chairman of the Board, reflected on how the bank has been fortunate dealing with adversity in the past. He also spoke about how we've been able to withstand hurricanes, advancements in technology, and trying times from the Banking Crisis of 1933 to the Housing Crisis of 2008 to continue to serve our customers.

Carey Soud, President & CEO, spoke about our growth the last couple of years. He mentioned how it took 70 years for the Bank to grow \$100 million in assets in the past, but in the past 3 years, we've grown \$100 million per year in assets, and we are continuing to grow.

Andrew Couse, COO & Executive VP, shared his plans for the Bank moving forward. The implementation of ITMs, a call center, crafting more convenient digital experiences for customers, and having succession plans in place for employees all topped his list of importance.

Carey Soud & Andrew Couse were interviewed by Nicole Reid from Big Lake Now about our centennial milestone and our strategy moving forward.

The interview can be found at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLc4dxsE6NQ&t=1s>

First Bank covered the May issue of FBA Magazine, which highlighted special moments of the Bank's history, but also included photos celebrating our agricultural heritage. A digital copy of the magazine can be found at: <http://omagdigital.com/publication/?m=9986&i=745976&p=1&ver=html5>

In 2022 First Bank has four customer appreciation days planned at four of their branches: Fort Myers, Immokalee, Moore Haven, & Belle Glade. There are two events remaining, one at their Main Office in Clewiston on September 22nd, and the other in LaBelle on October 19th.

Both events will be from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm and will feature free food and giveaways. A Centennial Celebration is scheduled on November 16th at the Moore Haven Rodeo Grounds from 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm. There will be food trucks, First Bank merchandise, and special guest speaker, former Arkansas Governor, Mike Huckabee. This will be a free event open to the public. To learn more go to: first1bank100.com

New & Renewing Members

We would like to welcome our new chamber members!

**Hampton Inn - Clewiston
Healthier Glades
Nelson & Associates**

Stay tuned - next month we will be spotlighting the Hampton Inn and Healthier Glades! In October we will spotlight Nelson & Associates.

Banyan Tree
Duda Farm Fresh Foods
Legal Aid Society of PBC
Sugar Cane Gowers Co-Op
PBS College
SIR Speedy

MEET OUR NEW MEMBER!

An Interview with Ramona Hyson - CPM, President/CEO of Nelson & Associates

Tell us about your business?

Nelson & Associates, Inc. is a woman and minority owned professional real estate firm having its corporate office in Mason, Ohio with a branch office in Boca Raton, Florida. Having been in business over 35 years, Nelson & Associates, Inc. currently manages over 1,900 affordable housing units including, Tax Credit, HUD Section 8, USDA Rural Development, market rate units and commercial space in three states: Ohio, Indiana and Florida.

Nelson & Associates, Inc. has a long standing working relationship with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, USDA Rural Development and have extensive backgrounds in working with Public Housing Authorities. Our portfolio is diverse and key staff members are fluent in English, Spanish and Creole.

Nelson & Associates, Inc Florida Office

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Boca Raton, FL 33434
Phone: 561-504-2110
Fax: 561-258-0188

Hours: Mon-Fri 9-5

email: ramona.hyson@nelsonasc.com

website: <https://nelsonasc.com/>

Does your business have a mission/vision?

Yes, our mission statement is to provide quality and affordable housing to very low-, low- and moderate-income families. To provide professional, quality development, property management and consulting services to our clients and their constituents in a courteous, accurate and efficient manner. And, to assure owners that properties are being managed and maintained in a way that is consistent with goals of ownership while providing residents with quality homes and responsive services to enhance their quality of life.

Tell us about your management team.

Team Members include Ramona Hyson, CPM, President / CEO, Gregory Hyson, Vice President, Tawana Shaw, CPM, Chief Operating Officer, John Nelson III, Regional Property Manager, each with years of experience in working with PHA's and others, providing property management, development and consulting services. Jessica Zelaya serves as the onsite Property Manager and

heads the Nelson Belle Glade Team.

Why did you decide to join the chamber?

We manage Okeechobee Center and Osceola Center owned by the Belle Glade Housing Authority. We want to support the community and have a presence.

Is there something special about your business that you would like to share?

We are committed to "Making A Difference"

Name a "fun fact" about your business.

Nelson & Associates, Inc. is Family Owned and Operated. Ramona Hyson, founder and CEO works closely with her husband, Gregory Hyson, Daughter, Tawana Shaw, Son, John Nelson and Granddaughter, Chelsea Hillman.

First Baptist Church Block Party

Belle Glade City Events

Upcoming Events

September 30 - National Night Out

October 2 - Hispanic Festival

October 31 - OctoberFest

For additional information or if you are interested in additional City events check out the City calendar.

[Click here for city calendar.](#)

Habitat for Humanity of Palm Beach County Dedicated Two Women build Homes for Two Women Led Families in Belle Glade

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BELLE GLADE, FL (August 17, 2022) On August 10, two women-led families officially became Habitat homeowners! Habitat for Humanity of Palm Beach County (HFHPBC) presented keys to the Lane Family and Volmard Family in a special double home dedication ceremony in Belle Glade as part of Women Build 2022.

Women Build is an annual, worldwide event engaging women to support affordable, quality housing. Women from all walks of life in our local community joined HFHPBC's Women Build event. Women Build teams significantly impacted these two mothers in our community, Shaquasha Lane and Elione Volmard, and are now on their way to creating a better life for their families!

Shaquasha Lane was born and raised in Belle Glade. A mother of three boys, she is looking forward to seeing her boys grow up in a new home. "Being accepted into the Habitat program has already changed my life," Shaquasha noted. "I have new hopes and dreams for my sons, and I am happy to be providing them with a stable place to call home."

Elione Volmard is originally from Haiti and has lived in Belle Glade for over 21 years. Elione and her daughter are both looking forward to hosting gatherings with their extended family in their new home. Elione is proud to have achieved her goal of becoming a homeowner and demonstrating the benefit of hard work and dedication to her daughter. "My dream for the future is to see my daughter succeed and to continue my own education. A Habitat home will help me realize both of these dreams," said Elione.

Kelly Smallridge, President and CEO of the Business Development Board of Palm Beach County, was Honorary Chair of HFHPBC Women Build 2022. Kelly and her team, "BDB Building for Beauties," along with 19 other Women Build teams, rolled up their sleeves and helped build two Habitat homes in four months!

Habitat for Humanity of Palm Beach County's Women Build 2022 was in partnership with the City of Belle Glade, The Breakers, Carrier, The Batchelor Foundation, FPL/NextEra Energy, The GEO Group, and Unity Construction.

About Habitat for Humanity of Palm Beach County

Habitat for Humanity of Palm Beach County, founded in 1986, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to building strength, stability, and self-reliance through shelter. Each Habitat partner family is required to invest a minimum of 400 sweat equity hours of their own labor into the construction of homes before being eligible to purchase their home utilizing a 30-year, no-profit, no-interest loan. The affiliate's service area extends from Hypoluxo Road in the south to the Martin County line in the north and from Palm Beach to Lake Okeechobee. For more information, visit www.habitatpb.org or call 561.253.2080.

Habitat for Humanity News

BOYS & GIRLS CLUB NEWS

West TEC News

PBSC News

“THE FROG PRINCE” *Auditions at the Dolly Hand*

Auditions will be held for the Missoula Children's Theatre's production of “The Frog Prince” on Monday, September 26 at 4pm. Those auditioning should arrive at 3:30 to register and plan to stay for two hours. Some of the cast members will be asked to stay for a rehearsal immediately following the audition.

Among the roles to be cast are three sisters – who also happen to be Princesses, two students to play the lonely Frog, Ollie the Aspen Tree, bumbling Knights, kindly Swamp Things, the well-read Alligator, fancy Flamingos, helpful Ducks, a busy Fly, and the mischievous Venus Fly Traps. All students, grades K-12, are encouraged to audition. No advance preparation is necessary. Assistant Directors will also be cast to assist with the technical aspects of the production.

The Missoula Children's Theatre touring productions are complete with costumes, scenery, props and makeup. The MCT Tour Actor/Directors will conduct rehearsals throughout the week from (start time) to (end time) each day.

THE FROG PRINCE will be presented on Saturday, October 1 at 11am. The Dolly Hand Cultural Arts Center is located on the Palm Beach State College/Glades Campus at 1977 SW College Drive in Belle Glade. For more information, call the Box Office at 561-993-1160.

Check out the calendar for Dolly Hand Cultural Arts Center [here](#)

Interested In More Events?

We have more events going on this month!
Check out our updated events calendar by clicking [here](#).

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Forward our Newsletter with your friends so they can keep up with the news!

Sign up for the newsletter [here](#).

Newsletter Sponsor Opportunities

Share Your News in the Newsletter!

Interested in becoming a Newsletter Sponsor?

We have both monthly and yearly opportunities, call Lamar Weathers at the Chamber to discuss which option is best for your business.

561-996-2745 or
Lamar@bellegladechamber.com.

Have any News to Share?

How about an announcement that you would like make, then let us know!

Just contact us by the 20th of the month and we will place it in the newsletter for the following month.

Contact Lamar Weathers at the Chamber.

561-996-2745 or
Lamar@bellegladechamber.com

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