



# Behind the Gate

Orange Park Country Club/Loch Rane

OCTOBER 2024

VOLUME 5 • ISSUE 10

## Transform your home into a haunted house



Many transformations occur during the month of October. Leaves begin to turn various shades of orange and red, while the weather gets decidedly cooler. In the meantime, neighborhoods across the country begin to look quite different, with many homes decked out in the garish garb of Halloween.

The National Retail Federation together with Prosper Insights & Analytics reports that decorating ones home for Halloween is the second most popular way to celebrate the holiday. Only purchasing and sharing candy beats out home decor. Individuals spend billions collectively on Halloween each year, and one of the ways they can have some frightening fun is by transforming a regular, unassuming home into a haunted house. There are certain necessities to turn a an otherwise typical home into a suddenly spooky abode.

% Scene setter: Start with a scene setter if you would like to decorate both inside and out. Scene setters are plastic or paper backdrops that can be tacked up on

walls to make a house look completely different, particularly under low light. A scene setter is an investment of time and money, but it can be reused each year and really make a room take on a new look quickly.

- **Lawn graveyard:** Visitors to the home who have to step through a graveyard will know there are more scares ahead. Its relatively easy to make your own grave markers from wood or foam. If you're not handy, you can purchase them from a Halloween supply store. Disturb the earth by the markers to make visitors believe each grave is fresh. A bony hand sticking out of the dirt or some wilted flowers placed by the graves also can set the scene.

- **Floating candles:** Simulate the look of levitating candles with an easy craft. Take toilet paper or paper towel cardboard tubes and use hot glue on the top to make it look like beads of dripping wax. Paint the tubes with white chalk paint, as this type of paint is thick and covers easily. Glue a battery-powered tea light to

the top for the wick. Poke a hole through both sides of the tube and thread some fishing line through. Use your mounting device of choice to attach the fishing line to the ceiling indoors or outside to hang each candle. When the lights are dim, its very difficult to see the fishing line and the candles will appear to be floating.

- **Haunted archway:** Make an arch using PVC pipes, and thread jack-o'-lanterns or papier mache heads or masks through to create an ominous arch that greets visitors.

- **Handprints:** Use window-safe paint to create bloody handprints on the inside of windows. This is a design touch that will enhance both the interior and exterior of the windows.

- **Fog machine:** Use a fog machine to spread a creepy mist where you need it, whether on a front porch or indoors.

Haunted houses come together with various design touches that are easy to execute.

### When should children trick-or-treat without adult supervision?

Kids go through many rites of passage throughout childhood. There is the first time they go to school and leave parents behind for several hours per day. Another rite is sleeping over at a friend or family members house or even summer camp. Still another may be being allowed to attend a movie alone with a friend. Small rites of passage signify a child is getting older and is ready for more responsibility and trust. Such may be the case when parents conclude that their children are ready to engage in Halloween fun without an adult chaperone.

SEE CHILDREN, 7







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# OPCC Board of Directors Meeting

September 17, 2024 / By Bob McKinney

## Very lite turnout for this meeting, but business was conducted

Prior to the BOD meeting, the ARC gave Initial Project Approvals to 2 roof replacements and Final Inspection Approvals to 2 roof replacements. I know I'm sounding like a broken record on this topic, but I have to remind our residents that any exterior work requires prior approval before the work actually begins. And the work must be done in accordance with the approved plan. You cannot change the approved plan without ARC approval. Right now, we have one residence that changed the approved plan and maybe on the hook for some expensive corrections. Better to be safe than sorry.

The Roads Committee is working to stay within their budget, but what appears to be relatively simple drainage corrections that results in \$54,000+ costs quickly change the landscape. We must be planning and prepared to address infrastructure issues. Just addressing problems as they occur is not the answer for the Board. Unless the Board is proactive, future costs will be very painful.

The Lakes Committee has authorized additional fish to help control the algae problems rather than depend on more chemicals alone. The drop in temperature and the recent rains have helped.

The Steering Committee has put a hold on a couple of projects until next year's budget, but considerable work will be required to make up for years of neglect. Some of the work will make the processing of visitors to future Grove events flow smoothly while minimizing inconvenience to our residents.

More information will be provided, but we are planning on a volunteer group of residents to replace the steps/deck at the Community Building.

Please pay attention to messages concerning the process and deadlines for applying for positions on the 2025 BOD. There are two slots open for applicants.

The Amended and Restated Covenants and Restrictions are available on our website and will soon be up for your vote. There have been two specific open meetings for residents' comments. If you did not attend, you may contact any Board member with your questions. The current/old documents are very outdated and, in many cases, do not comply with current laws. There will be a push by street captains to provide information and voting documents. Next monthly meeting: October 15 at 6:00 p.m. at the Community Center.

## NEXT OPCC BOARD MEETING:



## Submit Your Stories

### Help contribute to your community newsletter!

This newsletter is produced for Loch Rane and Orange Park Country Club. If you'd like to offer content for publication, here's how to get started:

**Stories/Photography:** Send your articles and/or high-resolution JPEGs to Randy Rutan at randy@randyrutan.com. Articles should be sent as Microsoft Word attachments that are saved as ".doc" files. Photos should also be sent as attachments not embedded in an email.

**Deadline:** The November 2024 Deadline for content: Sunday, October 20, 2024.

### About this Newsletter

Publishing/Advertising  
Farris@ClayTodayOnline.com  
904-264-3200 Office Phone  
386-316-4936 Cell Phone

## 2024 OPCC Board of Directors

Tom Mackin, President  
904-276-4634 • TMackin106@aol.com

Mark Blakewood, Vice-President  
904-838-0961 • markblakewood@comcast.net

Fred Scott, Treasurer  
301-535-6264 • sgtfredscott@verizon.net

Randy Rutan, Secretary  
845-797-7842 • randy@randyrutan.com

Jerry Deans, Member at Large  
904-449-3970 • deansjd794@comcast.net

Bill Engelbrecht, Member at Large  
904-537-8359 • cwejax65@gmail.com

Bob McKinney, Member at Large  
904-375-9554 • bobpat4FL@comcast.net

## Publication Policy

The function of the community newsletter, "Behind the Gate" is to serve the entire gated community of Loch Rane and Orange Park Country Club and is a product of Clay Today.

Priority will be given to reporting news and activities of the community and other news and events that directly affect the residents. Second priority will be given to articles of general interest as space permits. Articles and photos must be sent to Randy Rutan at randy@randyrutan.com by the deadline date below. Due to space limitation, all articles are subject to editing.

Letters of opinion must be signed, as well as brief and in good taste. Views expressed are those of the writer and do not express the viewpoint of the publisher, OPCCOA or LRIA.

Acceptance of advertising does not constitute an endorsement or approval of any product or services by the publisher, OPCCOA or LRIA. The publisher reserves the right to refuse advertising that does not meet the standards of the publication.

The publisher of "Behind the Gate" agrees to indemnify and hold harmless OPCCOA and LRIA for any claims asserted against or financial liabilities incurred by them arising from commercial content of this publication or anything contained in any advertising copy, including without limitation any claims of whatever nature asserted by advertisers or potential advertisers.





# Call for Candidates for OPCCOA Board of Directors

At the end of 2024, the terms of office for two members of the OPCCOA Board of Directors will end. Volunteers are being sought to fill these positions. Do you have a desire to serve our community in a positive way? Are you a community minded team player? Please consider running for the Board.

Qualifications for BOD members include possessing a desire to positively serve the community; having the ability to serve a three year term and attend monthly meetings; being a homeowner "in good standing" (not delinquent in paying Association dues or assessments); having familiarity with electronic communications and willingness to

be a community-minded team player. In addition, Florida Statutes require that Board members read and become familiar with the governing documents for the community. Aspiring members can find these documents on our website at [www.opcc.info](http://www.opcc.info). Select the OPCCOA tab and go to Governing Documents.

If you are interested in running for a vacant position, submit an application following the guidelines below.

The Annual Meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 3 at 6 p.m. at the Advent Lutheran Church located just outside the gate.

A second Formal Notice of the Annual Meeting will

be mailed to eligible voting homeowners in mid-November. It will include the meeting Agenda, candidate information sheets, a ballot and instructions. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact any BOD member or Karen Gowen of Lifestyles Property Services at 904-432-1207.

Could your time, talents and professionalism positively affect the place we all call home? If so, our community needs you to volunteer as a member of the OPCCOA Board of Directors.

## OPCCOA 2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS CANDIDATE APPLICATION

*Application deadline is 5:00 p.m. on Friday October 24, 2024.*

Applications received after the deadline will not be included on official ballots. Candidates' completed applications will be posted on the OPCCOA website and will appear in the November edition of Behind the Gate. Please mail the completed application and photo to: OPCCOA c/o Lifestyles Property Services, 1011 3rd Street North Jacksonville Beach, FL 32250; or email to the Community Manager, Karen Gowen, at [karen@mylrw.com](mailto:karen@mylrw.com); or place in the mail slot at the Community Building.

The application should be on 8 1/2 by 11 inch paper and must include the following information as well as a photo of the candidate:



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

STATEMENT: Please complete a short statement – no more than 500 words – stating your qualifications and why you wish to serve on the Board. Since the application will be scanned and posted online and placed in the November issue of Behind the Gate, it is recommended that candidates type the information.



# Ladies Lunch Bunch

By Frances Smith

The LR/OPCC Ladies Luncheons started the 2024 – 2025 season on September 18, 2024 at Club Continental. It was a time to just come together and share how we spent our summer. Funny stories about vacations, family fun and of course grandchildren were shared. The food was delicious, as usual, and the ladies came ready to be together and enjoy each other's company. The next luncheon will be hosted by Barbara Mancini on October 16 at 11:30 at Club Continental. The Topic will be Health Care and there will be a speaker from Florida Blue. If you would like to add your name to the luncheon list, please email or call Frances Smith: fksmith63@comcast.net or 904-579-3008. We are always looking forward to having new faces join our group.



## 2024 Loch Rane Board of Directors

**Brian Rogers, President**  
[rogersbw@gmail.com](mailto:rogersbw@gmail.com)

**Chuck Bryner, Vice-President**  
[bryner@comcast.net](mailto:bryner@comcast.net)

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[james.hudgins@hotmail.com](mailto:james.hudgins@hotmail.com)

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**Kathryn Marko, Member at Large**  
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**Sonya Kirk, Member at Large**  
[addedrevenue12@gmail.com](mailto:addedrevenue12@gmail.com)

**Charles Honaker, Member at Large**  
[wade247@yahoo.com](mailto:wade247@yahoo.com)

## 2024 Steering Committee

**Daniel Butler, Chairman**  
**Randy Rutan, Secretary**  
**Jerry Deans, Member**  
**Kathy Marko, Member**  
**Gary McMahon, Member**

The Steering Committee meets on the third Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m. at the community building. The purpose of the committee is to oversee issues of joint interest in the common areas of Loch Rane and OPCC. Homeowners of both communities are invited to attend.





## OPCCOA/LRIA Steering Committee Report

**September 19, 2024**

*By Randy Rutan*

September's meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman, Daniel Butler. There was a quorum of members present.

The meeting began with a discussion of the proposed Standard Operating Procedure for Access to Events at The Grove presented by Marc Hardesty of The Grove

OP LLC. Marc had received input from the OPCCOA and LRIA Board Presidents as well as Giddens Security. The document was well written and covered things well. With a couple of minor changes and one addition the document was approved and will be part of the working procedure at the gate.

### In other business

Other business included approval of brick repair work at the 4-way stop at the wing walls. Updated bids need to be sought for interior and exterior repairs at the gatehouse. The already approved installation of new license reader cameras will be delayed until the interior and exterior repairs are completed. Changes and updates to the Comcast accounts at the gate resulted in a reduced monthly

service fee on the main account which covered the set up of the mobility account covering the iPad and free cell phone. The committee will be looking into installing Christmas lights on the gatehouse and an apparatus to make truck drivers aware when their trucks are too tall to go through the visitor's lane without doing damage.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 17, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

## Loch Rane Board of Directors Meeting

*By Brian Rogers*

The September meeting of the Loch Rane BOD was held on the 24th and was well attended by members! We appreciate all those who came to the meeting to participate!

### 2024 Assessment:

The 2nd half of the 2024 assessment was due this month and the CAM Team reported more than \$120,000 of it (1/3rd!)

has still not been paid. Please reach out to the CAM Team to arrange for a payment plan to avoid being turned over to the association attorney as part of the collections process.

### Tennis Courts:

Big thanks to all the Board members who sacrificed not one but TWO week-end days to pressure wash and clean the parking lot at the tennis court mailboxes in preparation for the new parking lot lines

to be laid down. The striping was installed earlier this week and looks great!

### Fine Policy:

The BOD voted to approve the new fine policy that was mailed out to all residents earlier this month to bring us into compliance with all new Florida state laws relating to association fines. With the new policy in place and the fine committee established, fines will return in October. If you have any questions about the new policy or wish to serve on the fine committee, please reach out to the CAM Team

at lochrane@thecamteam.com

### Devonshire Repair:

This project is still scheduled for the first part of December and as we get closer to the actual date, we will be more proactive in notifying the residents on Devonshire to keep them in the loop. The expectation is that these repairs to take up to two weeks we are making every effort to minimize the impact to residents.

**SEE MEETING, 7**

# WHAT'S CHANGED IN REAL ESTATE IS LAW

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# Paddle your way through Old Florida

Paddle Florida, Inc., is a not-for-profit corporation organized to support canoeing and kayaking in Florida. With them, you can enjoy multi-day paddling/canoeing adventures all over Florida while appreciating the natural beauty and rich cultural heritage of the area. Paddle Florida promotes water conservation, wildlife preservation, springs restoration, and waterways protection. Paddle Florida scouts trips in advance to ensure waterway conditions and shoreline campsites are safe, comfortable, and showcase nature's best view. Meals are prepared for the group and personal gear is shuttled from campsite to campsite to eliminate the need to weigh down boats with food and camping equipment. Florida-based entertainment and educational programming is provided each evening by regional artists, musicians, authors, and naturalists. Partnerships with local outfitters provide paddlers with canoes, kayaks, and other paddling gear to rent if needed. Paddlers are provided shuttle service from their cars parked at their final destination to the point of departure. With this level of support, paddlers of all ages and skills can explore and enjoy the REAL Florida.

to the right is a calendar of events for Paddle Florida for the 2024-2025 season.



## PADDLE FLORIDA SCHEDULE

- **17th Annual Suwannee River Wilderness Trail:**  
October 15-20, 2024 - 65-mile paddle
- **Santa Fe Springs Celebration:**  
October 21-25, 2024 - 54-mile paddle
- **Florida Keys Challenge:**  
Jan 13-19, 2025 - 35-70+ mile paddle, from a basecamp with ALL CABINS
- **Mangroves, Manatees & More:**  
Feb 9-15, 2025 - 46 to 60-mile paddle
- **Kissimmee River Restoration Paddle - NEW:**  
March 2-8, 2025 - 73-84-mile paddle
- **Suwannee River Paddling Festival:**  
(Two weekends scheduled pick one of the two)  
April 4 -6, 2025 or April 11-13, 2025 - each are 20-mile paddles over two days.

<https://www.paddleflorida.org/>

They vary their locations all the time but generally do the Suwannee River Wilderness Trail in October each year and the Suwannee River Paddling Festival in April each year. If you sign up, you'll receive announcements of their planned trips and an opportunity to register early. Many trips will sell out early. These kayaking/canoeing adventures are a great way to connect with Florida's environment and the people who care about the environment. The Paddle Florida season starts in October each year.

appears to be a very similar repeat of the issue we are dealing with on Devonshire. The BOD has agreed to engage the same company we used in the past to use ground penetrating radar to inspect the ground under the road in an attempt to identify what is causing that long section to settle.

### Arran Ct Empty Lot:

After meeting with representatives from Clay County, they have agreed to take over landscape maintenance of the vacant lot on Arran Court. They did come out earlier this month to knock down a significant portion of the overgrown areas and will begin regular maintenance of the lot in Oct/November moving forward.

## Meeting

from page 6

### 2025 Budget:

We hope to have a copy of the proposed 2025 annual budget available at the October meeting and we will also publish a copy on the website for all residents to review. Be on the lookout for an eblast when it becomes available, however, we expect costs across the board to increase beyond the 5% annual increase we have been implementing the past few years.

### Dunster Depression:

The road depression issue on Dunster

## OCTOBER

# FOOD TRUCK FRIDAYS

**OCTOBER FOOD TRUCK FRIDAYS** are scheduled for **October 11 and October 25** from 5 – 7:30 at the cabana. You can Grab N Go or eat in the cabana. Some good trucks are scheduled and we'll send out menus in an eBlast as we get closer to the dates.



## Children

from page 7

There is no set age when a child can walk around the neighborhood trick-or-treating unattended. Just as with other tests of responsibility, such as staying home alone or being able to ride bikes with friends, it is up to parents to gauge their youngsters readiness. Halloween for older children often is less about candy and more about hanging out with friends. Therefore, parents probably needn't worry that their kids will be traveling solo since a large group of children will likely be visiting homes together. Many parents find that anywhere between ages 11 and 13 are good times to let their children go trick-or-treating with friends. However, this decision may be based on several factors.

- **Time of day:** It's best to limit a first time trick-or-treating without parents to daylight hours. What looks familiar during the day may be less familiar after sunset. It's generally safer for kids to be out and about before night falls.
- **Other participants:** Parents should weigh the personalities of their kids friends as well. For those who are assured

that others in the group are mature and responsible, there's no need to continue to clip the proverbial wings of trick-or-treaters. But if parents are leery of any shenanigans that may take place, it may be better to wait things out a little longer.

- **The neighborhood:** Is the area relatively safe with limited vehicle traffic? If so, then parents may feel more comfortable letting kids on the younger range of that age spectrum trick-or-treat without them. Urban neighborhoods or ones where houses are separated by a lot of land may warrant some adult supervision.

- **Constant contact:** Parents who utilize GPS apps to keep tabs on their childrens whereabouts may feel more comfortable letting them trick-or-treat with friends. These apps will show exactly where the child is at the time and can trace the route kids take. Many children get smartphones while young, which can alleviate concerns about getting in touch or keeping track of kids left to their own devices.

When to let kids go out trick-or-treating without adults is a decision each family needs to make based on their unique circumstances and preferences.



# Outfit your golf cart with must-have accessories

Golf carts are not necessarily reserved for those hitting the links. While it's true that a cart makes it easier for golfers to make their way around a course, golf carts are quite popular in and around many residential neighborhoods as well.

Global Market Insights says the golf cart market was valued at \$2.5 billion in 2023, with an estimated growth of more than 7.5 percent expected between 2024 and 2032. These carts are regularly utilized in residential communities, retirement villages, university campuses, and even across campgrounds and small towns. Many homes in suburban communities, like those being built in Texas, Florida and Georgia, now boast additional, smaller garages designed specifically for golf carts. Designated golf cart parking also has turned up in town centers and other retail locations around the country.

As the popularity of golf carts surges and more people rely on them as a second vehicle, outfitting these carts with the right gear can help them stand out.

• **Cover:** For those without the benefit of a special garage for the golf cart, a golf cart cover protects the vehicle against sun and weather damage. Look for a cover that is water-repellent.

• **Cup holders:** Whether it's for a morning cup of coffee or an insulated water tumbler, cup holders are must-haves on the golf cart. Many cup holders attach easily to the rear accessory bar and elsewhere.

• **Upgraded tires:** Tires that come standard on most golf carts are not the most durable, says Matt O's Custom Golf Carts. Therefore, replacing the tires with ones designed to traverse the terrain you travel the most can be a wise investment.

• **New lighting:** Improve on visibility and style by customizing lighting accessories on the golf cart. Many golf carts are being used to get around town, so it pays to have brighter headlights to see roadways and increase your visibility to oncoming traffic and pedestrians.

• **Anti-slip mats:** These mats can help ensure passengers stay safe and secure



when stepping in and out of the golf cart, particularly on rainy days. Custom floor mats are available so you can put even more style into your ride.

• **Side mirrors:** Improve on safety with the addition of side mirrors. Icon Electric Vehicles says most factory golf carts feature just one small, center-mounted mirror to view the rear. While adequate for the golf course, it is not safe for the open road. Adding side mirrors helps elevate the safety factor.

• **Tinted windshield:** Some golf carts do not come with windshields. The addition of one, particularly a tinted version, can help reduce glare and protect against debris and bugs while driving.

• **Rear flip seat kit:** This kit increases the seating capacity of the golf cart. When not in use, the seat can be flipped down to carry cargo.

• **Speakers:** No ride is complete without music. Adding speakers to the golf cart can make the ride even more enjoyable. Bluetooth speakers may not require any special wiring and can work immediately with your smartphone.

Golf carts are turning up well outside of golf courses, making them a go-to second vehicle for people in various communities. Accessorizing a golf cart can improve the driving experience.

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## 3 strategies that can lower breast cancer risk

Increased survival rates for breast cancer are welcome news. Women can consider these three strategies that can lead to improved overall health and might help women lower their risk for breast cancer as well.

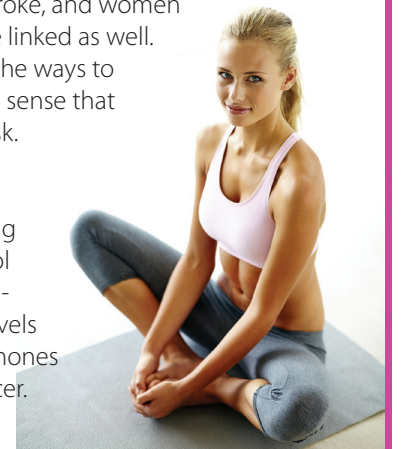
1. Reach and maintain a healthy weight. The benefits of maintaining a healthy weight include a lower risk for heart disease and stroke, and women should know that weight and breast cancer risk are linked as well.

2. Avoid a sedentary lifestyle. Exercise is one of the ways to achieve and maintain a healthy weight, so it makes sense that being physically active can reduce breast cancer risk.

3. Limit or eliminate alcohol consumption. The ACS urges women who drink to consume no more than one alcoholic drink per day, noting that consumption of even small amounts of alcohol have been linked to an increased risk for breast cancer.



Alcohol can increase levels of estrogen and other hormones associated with breast cancer.







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# Five festivals usher in Fall season during next two weekends

CLAY COUNTY – While there's no chill in the air yet, the smell of pumpkin spice and Friday night high school homecomings mean one thing: weekends will be busy with festivals. Just in the next two weekends, there are at least four events to usher in the new season, including:

- The Melrose United Methodist Church Fall Festival on Saturday at 5807 Hampton St. from 3-7 p.m. The free event will feature a bounce house, dunk booth, free games, prizes and food.

- The Almost Fall Craft and Vendor Fall Festival is on Saturday at the Keystone Heights Woman's Club, 6747 Woman's Club Dr. The third annual event accepts vendors. For pricing or information, visit KHJuniorWomansClub@gmail.com.

- The Black Creek Fall Festival at Black Creek Methodist Church, 3925 Main St., Middleburg, Saturday from 9 a.m.- 3 p.m. The Festival will include arts and crafts, quilt show, homemade baked goods, wood working, local entertainment, silent auction, car show, door prizes, train

rides, petting zoo, large slide and bounce houses.

- The Fall Festival at the Amazing Grace Family Farms, 4251 State Road 21, Green Cove Springs (one mile south of SR 16) on Fridays (4-9 p.m.), Saturdays (10 a.m.-9 p.m.) through Nov. 2 and Monday, Oct. 14 (10 a.m.-4 p.m.) at Amazing Grace Family Farms, 4251 State Road 21, Green Cove Springs (one mile south of SR 16). Admission includes access to a crop maze and pumpkin patch, attractions, farm animals, photo opportunities, a corn crib, a jump pad, a cow train and hula hoop cows. Tickets are available at agcropmaze.com.

- The Soul Food and Food Festival on Saturday, Oct. 5, from noon to 7 p.m. at Vera Francis Hall Park, 1503 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Green Cove Springs. The 23rd annual event will start with a parade along Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard into the park. It will include a kickball game, horseshoe and spades tournaments, sweet potato pie, barbecue rib and dance contests, music, food trucks, games, door

prizes, gospel hour with gospel recording artist Helen Miller, appearances by Special Formula Band featuring Ms. Thickums, Men of Soul, David James, Mr. Showtime, Liz Owens and JTruth. Florida Blue and the Aaron Group will also sponsor a Children's Fun Zone. For more information on the festival, contact Felecia Hampshire at (904) 622-7903. For more information on the entertainment, contact Diddy Coffey at (904) 525-6386. For more information on the parade, contact Debra Austin at (904) 599-5236.

- The Scottish Athletics Masters World Championships will be at the Clay County Fairgrounds on Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 5-6, from 9 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. More than 200 international athletes 40 and older will compete in traditional Scottish games. The event will include games like the Hammer throw, Haggis hurling, Caber toss, Shot put, Weight for height and Gourock Highland Games, along with food, merchandise, Clans and entertainment. You can attend as an athlete or spectator, participate as a vendor or a volunteer or represent your Clan. To purchase advance tickets, which are \$20, visit [f4sa.ticketspice.com/2024-masters-world-championship](http://f4sa.ticketspice.com/2024-masters-world-championship). Tickets at the gate are \$25.

*(Editor's note: The Touch-A-Truck: What Moves Clay County that was scheduled for Saturday at the Clay County Fairgrounds was postponed to a further dated by the threat of Hurricane Helene).*



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# Happy Halloween!



**Thursday, October 31 there will be Trick or Treating in the neighborhood from 6 – 8 p.m. Participating homes will have their front porch lights on. Be safe and have fun!**



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