

# Spectator

September 2023



**GRAND OPENING!**

**SOFLA**  
NINJA ACADEMY  
OCT • 2023

See pages 6-7



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*Publishers, Shellie & Scott Farrugia*

# It's All About

## Hello September!

Alright, the kids are back in school, and life almost feels "back to normal." Not completely, but things are much more optimistic!

Please see the article on the facing pages we learn about and explore solutions regarding bullying and its repercussions. Our community is much more valuable when we work together to make things fun and inclusive for everyone.

Meet a beautiful local family, learn about neighborhood and International leagues, find a local, new Ninja Academy(see pgs 6-7) for fun activities for friends of every age, and mark your calendars for Faith Fest (see pg. 10). This issue is full of fun happenings, and events to look forward to.

We are so blessed to be part of this community! Thank you for supporting our magazine and each of our advertisers!

Our prayer is for every family touched by the Spectator and every home in between. God bless our troops,

*Shellie & Scott*

### Spectator™ Magazine

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On the cover: Soflo Ninja Academy Opening Oct 2023  
See page 6-7

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# Community!

## Let's Combat Bullying

By Heather Sohl

Bullying has become a serious issue. As a mother, I always ask my kids how their day was. Did anything interesting happen within their day, good, bad or indifferent. By doing that, I found out that one of my kids was cuffed upside the back of his head, called an idiot, and told that he sucks by a boy who just didn't want him to be friends with kids with whom he wanted to be friends. This situation may seem slight, but it still effected my son.

There are three types of bullying: verbal, social and physical. Sadly, it doesn't even just happen to kids. Adults experience it too!

### But why?

There are people, kids and adults, that are trying to fit into a crowd, social acceptance. We all have insecurities, but some feel the need to assert themselves in a more aggressive manner. In the social media realm, there is cyber bullying. People make posts not thinking about the possible future consequences. Next thing you know, there is an embarrassing photo being re-posted by someone unhappy with you, and it has an effect upon your future ...cyber-bullying.

### But why?

There may be a lack of attention at home. There may be aggression in the home. They may have their own physical or mental insecurities, so they exert power to lift themselves up.

### What are the signs?

There is no romanticizing this subject, but I immediately think about the movie "The Breakfast Club". The character John Bender, the perceived "bad boy", is the staple example of a bully; however, in today's society, there is such a personal disconnect. It can be anyone.

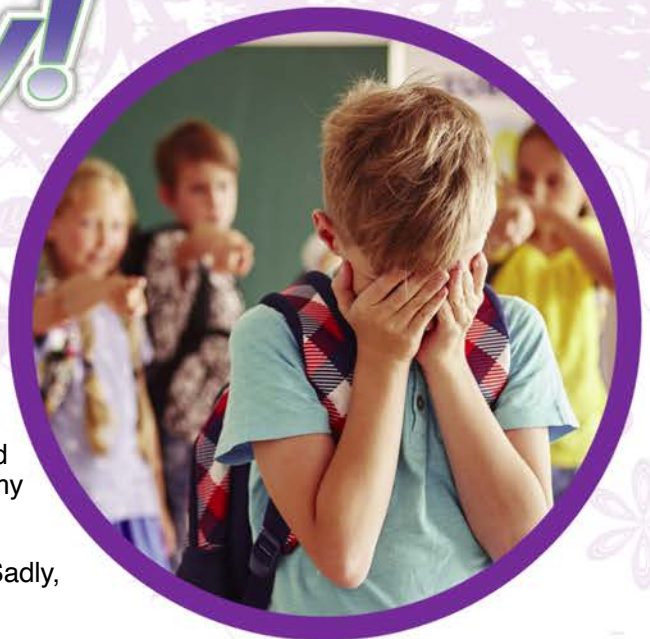
A person being bullied may be hesitant to tell someone what is happening. They feel a sense of shame or are afraid that telling will make the situation worse. They tend to make excuses not to go to school or not to go to work. The quality of homework/work may decline.

### What can we do?

I think a really prevalent saying right now is "see something, say something". There is so much going on in this world today. It is so important to make sure there are open lines of communication within the household. Know there is support everywhere. There are online resources that can be utilized. If you are a member of a church group, there are people within to give guidance.

I like to read this to my boys before their games:

**"No one can destroy iron, but it's own rust can, like no one can destroy a person, but his own mindset can."** – Author unknown



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# SOFLO NINJA ACADEMY

By Ashley Ferraro

## Broward's Ultimate Fitness and Entertainment Destination

This fall, Broward County will welcome a real-life version of the popular NBC competition reality show, **American Ninja Warrior**. **SOFLO Ninja Academy**, a state-of-the-art fitness facility and entertainment center for adults and kids alike, was inspired by the show and offers a unique athletic development path diverging from traditional recreational and fitness options. The American Ninja training program focuses on upper body exercises and provides a variety of obstacles to accommodate individuals with different needs, encouraging them to overcome their limitations.

Expert coaches, some of whom are participating in the current season of **American Ninja Warrior**, are highly skilled and experienced in the art of ninja training. Among them is fan favorite R.J. Roman.

The gym is equipped with intricate obstacle courses that challenge balance, agility, strength, and endurance. Even those with limited athletic or fitness backgrounds are encouraged to participate, as there's something for everyone.

SOFLO Ninja Academy is also an excellent entertainment space, perfect for hosting events such as children's birthday parties, corporate events, or team-building activities on the obstacle course. From adult night to family visits, there's nothing more rewarding than putting your body and mind to the ultimate test and proving to yourself just how much you can accomplish.

The concept was developed by a team passionate about indoor recreation and inclusivity. Leo Gordon and his wife, Mayda, are Parkland residents and the visionaries behind SOFLO Ninja Academy. They say the new facility is more than just a business. Blending fitness with fun and making the two accessible to everyone is important to their family. Their youngest daughter, Emma, is disabled, and the family looks forward to

building a business and environment where she can get involved.

Joining the Gordon family on this exciting new business venture is Coral Springs resident and **American Ninja Warrior** competitor, Vinnie Castranova (The Plumbing Ninja).

"We've always loved the idea of a family business," says Leo. "Now we can include everyone and offer an opportunity for people to learn something new while having a great time."



Leo and Vinnie have traveled around the country to visit other **American Ninja** facilities, connect with their owners, and conduct the necessary research before building the SOFLO Ninja Academy in Broward County. Once completed, it will be the only **American Ninja** training facility in the area, and the demand for the opening day has never been higher.

The passionate team of fitness professionals and enthusiasts are eager to invite Parkland and Coral Springs, regardless of age or athletic back-

ground, to try something new, challenge themselves, and learn the way of the ninja.

In a world where routine gym workouts can become monotonous, this fresh concept provides a change of pace. Whether you're a fitness fanatic or seeking a new adventure, **SOFLO Ninja Academy invites you to become an American Ninja.**

The brand new facility is located in Pompano Beach, at 1751 W Copans Road.

**Follow SOFLO Ninja Academy on Instagram @sofloninjaacademy to watch the facility come to life and look out for the grand opening. More info can be found at [sofloninja.com](http://sofloninja.com). See ad on opposite page.**



# GRAND OPENING

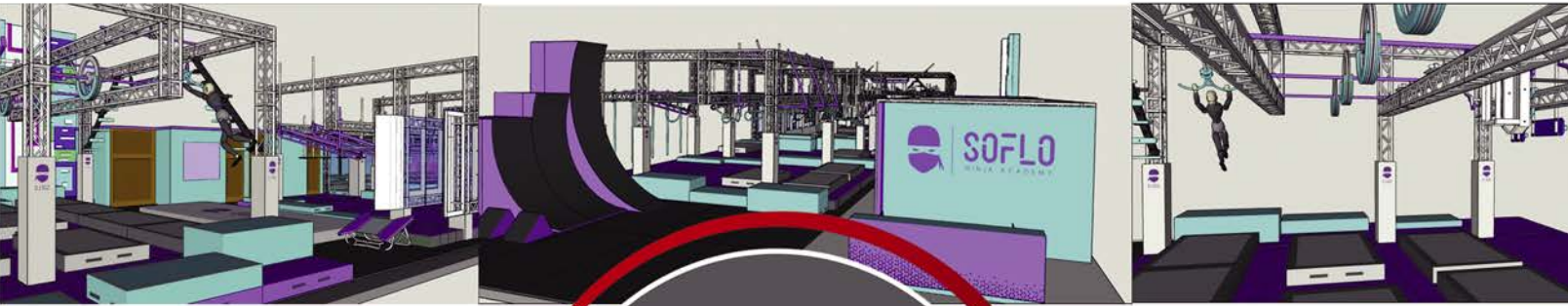
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Manager and coach **Vinnie Castranova** "The Plumbing Ninja" is a 5x American Ninja Warrior veteran born and raised in Broward County!



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Head coach extraordinaire **RJ ROMAN** known for "Shredding the Course" is a 7x American Ninja Warrior veteran & made it to iconic stage 4 rope climb for \$1Million!



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## Meet The

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# Ferrari Family



**Parkland residents Randle and Krystal are blessed with their four daughters**, Josephine, 6, Giuliana, almost 5, Dorothy, 3, and the cherubic Brielle, one. According to Dad, “They affectionately respond to the monikers “JJ,” “GG,” “DD,” and “BB,” respectively.” The couple agree that someday, when Krystal has a son, that will signify the end of her childbearing journey. The Ferrari family also includes Mylo, a spirited three-legged Papillon, and Dr. Bubba, a Bambino Sphinx. Randy also notes that they have a menagerie of seven chickens, an abundance of wild rabbits, and a profusion of Cuban anoles living throughout their rural property.

In their previous careers, Randy was in charge of an international automobile shipping enterprise, and Krystal worked in the dental supply industry. “Currently, our vocational path has been realigned to embrace a more organic ethos,” Randy shares. “My spouse now serves as a doula, lending her expertise to maternal care, while my own pursuits involve mentoring individuals through yoga, meditation, and life philosophy. As proponents of ecological harmony, our interests have converged towards bioagroforestry and permaculture, manifesting in transformative endeavors within Parkland.”

After living in Parkland, for five years, the couple are thrilled that their four daughters are all involved in tending to their verdant homestead. The three oldest girls are involved in martial arts, where JJ has been for three years, followed by GG with two years, and DD has just begun.

Randy, who often goes by the moniker #GirlDad, enjoys staying connected to community events, while meeting other like-minded, neighbors and friends. He and the girls are very much enjoying participation in events such as the Indian Princess gatherings, a testament to their commitment to communal resonance.

When they are not in school or tending to their property, Randy tells us, “Embracing an active lifestyle, we find solace in aquatic pursuits through frequent swims, engage in leisurely bicycling escapades, and indulge in whimsical games of hide and seek. Further satiating our penchant for the outdoors, camping excursions punctuate our family chronicle.” Dedicated to sharing a variety of flora and fauna natural to Florida, Randy shares his knowledge and plants with those who are interested. He says, “The commitment to nurturing finds tangible expression in the diligent care and cultivation of banana pups. This horticultural endeavor extends to the generous dissemination of nearly twenty homegrown specimens, exchanged for philanthropic donations, ranging from avocados to Whopper begonia cuttings.”

Their three eldest daughters attend North Broward Prep, where they attend first grade, kindergarten, and pre-K3. Their favorites include JJ’s penchant for photography and the culinary reprieve of lunchtime, GG’s animated engagement during recess, and DD’s artistic finger painting.

Randy was raised in West Palm Beach, and Krystal hails from California. They are thrilled to be living in a central area of Parkland, free from HOAs. They are happy to be close to friends and family, while able to pursue individual and environmental goals.



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• 8.25% APR is variable, includes a .50% margin and subject to change based on the Wall Street Journal U.S. Prime Rate (WSJ Prime) which is 7.75% as of February 2, 2023. The minimum APR is 3.25% and maximum APR is 16.00%. Maximum term 120 Months (35 Month maturity option available in the state of Georgia). Payment options include interest only, or 1.00% of the outstanding balance or \$100, whichever is greater; with outstanding interest, principal and any applicable fees due as a final balloon payment at maturity.

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**Scheduled for September 30th at Pine Trails Amphitheater and Park,** FaithFest is set to be a one-of-a-kind experience where the melodies of faith resonate with a profound mission. At the core of this festival lies a simple yet powerful message: #everykid deserves a home.

The statistics are alarming. Over 391,000 children are in foster care in the United States. A stunning 1 out of 30 American children face homelessness. The impact on these young lives is immeasurable, leading to a higher likelihood of depression, unemployment, homelessness, and incarceration as they grow. By addressing the foster care issue, we stand a chance to heal many of the symptoms of dysfunction that afflict our society.

3rd Beat Studios, almost single handedly sponsoring this event, is more than just a benefactor; they're a beacon of hope. Their commitment is not just about dollars; it's about change. A change that reverberates through the voices of leading worship teams and artists, including the headlining act, Social Club Misfits. They are a gift to the festival, a symbol of unity in faith.

Yet, one of the most anticipated moments will undoubtedly be the performance by Sam Llanes. Known for his incredible rap talent and his unwavering stand for Jesus Christ, Sam Llanes embodies the spirit of FaithFest. His performance is not merely a showcase but a testimony that faith and love can triumph over adversity.

FaithFest is not just another festival. It's a call to arms, a

plea for compassion, an opportunity for us all to step up and insist that every child in our nation has a home. It's an event that goes beyond the boundaries of music and faith to touch the very soul of humanity.

The world needs to know about FaithFest. Keep it in your prayers, share it with your community, and embrace the possibility that through music and fellowship, we can make a difference.

At 3rd Beat Studios we firmly believe that every kid deserves at home which is why we partnered with 4kids of South Florida as our charity beneficiary. We're not only hoping to raise awareness, we're also planning to bring resources. Now it's our time to get in the story. #everykid

Join FaithFest. Be part of the change. Let's ensure that the echoes of faith and love reach every child, every heart, every home.

### About Sam Llanes:

*Sam Llanes is an artist whose music reflects his personal journey of faith, resilience, and transformation. Hailing from Parkland, Florida, Sam's heartfelt compositions combine the artistry of rap with the inspiration of Christian music. His songs are a testimony to his experiences, navigating through life's challenges and discovering hope amidst adversity. Through his lyrics, Sam shares a narrative that resonates with listeners, inviting them to find strength in faith and to embrace positive change. Sam's commitment to spreading positivity and light is evident in his music, making him a beacon of encouragement in a world that often seeks solace. His passion for music is deeply intertwined with his faith, resulting in a captivating fusion of genres that brings comfort, inspiration, and a reminder that there's always a way forward.*







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#everykid

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*By Dr. Howard Gelb*

Little league elbow is a common problem in the growing athlete and describes medial elbow pain that is attributed to a microscopic injury to the growth plate or apophysis, where the tendon attaches to the inner elbow. Pain and loss of motion are common symptoms of little league elbow. Pitchers sustain the majority of injuries but any player may develop it from overuse. X-rays are very important as part of the work up for little league elbow. Comparison x-rays can be helpful in certain cases to evaluate the extent of the injury. The UCL (ulnar collateral ligament) can be involved in severe cases. If the apophysis or UCL origin is significantly displaced, surgery may be indicated. If the ligament is completely torn, a formal UCL reconstruction (Tommy John procedure) may be needed to return to competitive throwing. Prevention of overuse injury in the throwing athlete is critical to avoid long term injury. Injury to the young athlete's elbow may be prevented by limiting the number of pitches in a game or practice, allowing the athlete adequate rest after throwing, and limiting the number of teams that he or she plays on. Recent studies demonstrate that the fast ball may be worse than breaking pitches for the immature elbow, causing the growth plate to separate or ligament to fail. Fortunately, most athletes can return to their sport after adequate rest and rehabilitation.

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### BUZZARDS MEN'S LACROSSE CLUB

For more info contact Mike at 954-540-8970 or visit [www.buzzardslacrosse.org](http://www.buzzardslacrosse.org)

## Running

### NORTHWEST BROWARD ROAD RUNNERS

A volunteer-based organization with a goal to pro-

vide health and wellness through running, provide support for runners of all ages, levels and abilities. For more info, go to [www.nwbrrc.com](http://www.nwbrrc.com) or email [jaygee725@gmail.com](mailto:jaygee725@gmail.com)

## Soccer

### CORAL SPRINGS RECREATIONAL

The official Recreational Soccer Program in the City of Coral Springs. Play from November through the first weekend in March. Boys and Girls U06-19U are welcome. Play at Mullins Park, Coral Springs. For more info: [www.csys.org](http://www.csys.org), email: [csysadmin@csys.org](mailto:csysadmin@csys.org) or call Mimi Milton at 954-341-6391 see ad below.

### CITY OF CORAL SPRINGS SPRING TRAVEL SOCCER CLUB

The official Travel Soccer program in the City of Coral Springs. Boys & Girls U8-U11. City of Coral Springs Cypress Park; 1301 Coral Springs Drive. For more info see [www.springsoccerclub.com](http://www.springsoccerclub.com). See ad on page 21.

## Softball

### YOUTH SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION OF CORAL SPRINGS (YSACS)

Two seasons run each year, February-May and September-November. See the website at [www.coralsspringssoftball.com](http://www.coralsspringssoftball.com) or call (954)344-0171. See ad below

### CORAL SPRINGS WOMEN'S SOFTBALL

Players 18 & older can join the slow-pitch teams that play on Sundays and Monday evenings at Forest Hills Park. Call Barb Pantazis (954) 344-4449.

## Register now for the fall/winter season!

Official Recreational Soccer League of Coral Springs since 1976



Register online at [www.csys.org](http://www.csys.org) or in-person at Mullins Hall

Mullins Hall, 10150 NW 29th St, Coral Springs, FL 33065

August 26 (10 AM-2 PM), September 9 (9 AM-2 PM) or September 14 (7 PM-9 PM)

**Ages: 4.5-19.5 / All skill levels / Season starts mid November**

Entire season with jersey, shorts, socks: U6-U8 \$135 / U10-U15 \$160. / U16-U19 \$175.



# sConnections

## Swimming

### AQUATIC COMPLEX & FITNESS CENTER

12441 Royal Palm Boulevard • Coral Springs, 33065  
• 954-345-2121

### MULLINS PARK POOL

10180 Ben Geiger Drive (NW 29 St.) • Coral Springs, 33065 • 954-345-2170

### CYPRESS WATER PARK

1300 Coral Springs Drive • Coral Springs, 33071  
• 954-345-2109

For more information see [AquaticComplex.com](http://AquaticComplex.com)

## Private Schools & Camps

### CORAL SPRINGS CENTER FOR THE ARTS NEXT STOP BROADWAY SUMMER CAMP

Let's go to the MOVIES! This Summer...Star in your favorite films LIVE on stage at the premier performing arts summer camp! Where memories last a lifetime...  
For more info see [www.nextstopbroadwaycs.com](http://www.nextstopbroadwaycs.com).

### NORTH BROWARD PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Is an accredited, college-preparatory, independent, non-sectarian school serving families of the pre-kindergarten through high school age groups. For more info, call (954) 247-0011 or [www.NBPS.org](http://www.NBPS.org) See ad on pg 19.

## SoFlo Ninja Academy

### GRAND OPENING OCTOBER 2023!

Discover The Excitement Of American Ninja Training At Our Fitness Center For All Ages and fitness levels!

For more info. See [SoFloNinja.com](http://SoFloNinja.com) or call

954-876-1378. See article and ad on pages 6-7.

## Special Needs

### PARKLAND BUDDY SPORTS

Find out about league offerings and activities.  
[www.ParklandBuddySports.com](http://www.ParklandBuddySports.com)

### CHALLENGER BASEBALL LEAGUE

Open to all special needs kids and their families at no cost. For more info, call (954) 345-9329 or [www.challengerbaseballoffbroward.com](http://www.challengerbaseballoffbroward.com)

### THE FRIENDSHIP JOURNEY

Provides programs & facilities for children and young adults with special needs, while creating awareness and sensitivity. For more info, contact [hello@thefriendshipjourney.org](mailto:hello@thefriendshipjourney.org) or [www.thefriendshipjourney.org](http://www.thefriendshipjourney.org)

## Volleyball

### SAND TURTLES VOLLEYBALL CLUB

Beginner sand volleyball training for kids and adults. Call Mark Lewkowicz for more info. (954)345-0500. [www.sandturtlesvolleyball.com](http://www.sandturtlesvolleyball.com)

## Parkland P-Rec

### PICKLEBALL

Pickleball is a racquet sport that combines elements of badminton, tennis and table tennis. Players use solid paddles to hit a whiffle ball over a net. Yearly fee: Residents \$45/Non-residents \$54. P-REC – 10559 Trails End (located inside Pine Trails Park)

## Scouting

Scouting offers Year Round Activities for Boys and Girls in K to 12th Grade

Find a local unit at [www.beascout.org](http://www.beascout.org)

## i9 Sports - Youth Sports Leagues

### Coral Springs Leagues - Saturday & Sunday Options

Soccer - Ages 3 - 12  
Flag Football - Ages 4 - 13  
Baseball - Ages 3 - 7  
Indoor Basketball - Ages 5 - 12

[www.i9sports.com](http://www.i9sports.com)

954-227-9955 (M-F, 9am-8pm)

## Important Numbers

Aquatic Complex.....	(954)345-2121
City Hall in the Mall .....	(954)344-1828
Coral Springs Gymnasium .....	(954)345-2107
Cypress Park Pool .....	(954)345-2109
Cypress Park Tennis .....	(954)345-2100
Mullins Park Pool .....	(954)345-2170
Sportsplex Tennis Center .....	(954)344-1840
Parks and Recreation .....	(954)345-2200
Parks Field Conditions .....	(954)344-1187

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954-270-1000

[Joe@JKRockandRollRealtor.com](mailto:Joe@JKRockandRollRealtor.com)



# Parkland Connections

## Parkland Little League

For more info., call (954) 604-2442 or visit [www.parklandll.com](http://www.parklandll.com). See article on opposite pg.

## Basketball

PARKLAND REC BASKETBALL  
[www.parklandbasketball.com](http://www.parklandbasketball.com) or call the hotline (954) 227-0989.

## Tackle Football & Cheerleading

PARKLAND RANGERS TACKLE FOOTBALL & CHEERLEADING

Football Contact: 786-236-0948 or [info@parklandrangers.com](mailto:info@parklandrangers.com)  
Cheer contact: 786-236-0948 or [cheer@parklandrangers.com](mailto:cheer@parklandrangers.com).

## Flag Football

PARKLAND FLAG FOOTBALL  
For more info, see [www.parklandflag.com](http://www.parklandflag.com)

## Lacrosse

PARKLAND REDHAWKS  
For more info go to [www.parklandlacrosse.com](http://www.parklandlacrosse.com)

BUZZARDS MEN'S LACROSSE CLUB  
For more info contact Mike at 954-540-8970 or visit

## Soccer

PARKLAND REC SOCCER  
For more info, visit [www.parklandsoccer.net](http://www.parklandsoccer.net)

PARKLAND TRAVEL SOCCER CLUB  
For more info, see [www.parklandtravelsoccer.com](http://www.parklandtravelsoccer.com) or email [Info@parklandtravelsoccer.com](mailto:Info@parklandtravelsoccer.com)

## Private Schools & Camps

**NORTH BROWARD PREPARATORY SCHOOL**  
Is an accredited, college-preparatory, independent, non-sectarian school serving families of the pre-kindergarten through high school age groups. For more info, call (954) 247-0011 or [www.NBPS.org](http://www.NBPS.org) See ad on pg 19.

## SoFlo Ninja Academy

**GRAND OPENING OCTOBER 2023!**  
Discover The Excitement Of American Ninja Training At Our Fitness Center For All Ages and fitness levels!  
For more info. See [SoFloNinja.com](http://SoFloNinja.com) or call 954-876-1378. See article and ad on pages 6-7

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## Special Needs

**PARKLAND BUDDY SPORTS**  
Find out about league offerings and activities. [www.ParklandBuddySports.com](http://www.ParklandBuddySports.com)

**CHALLENGER BASEBALL LEAGUE**  
Open to all special needs kids and their families at no cost. For more info, call (954) 345-9329.

**THE FRIENDSHIP JOURNEY**  
Provides programs & facilities for children and young adults with special needs, while creating awareness and sensitivity. For more info, contact [hello@thefriendshipjourney.org](mailto:hello@thefriendshipjourney.org) or [www.thefriendshipjourney.org](http://www.thefriendshipjourney.org)

## Scouting

Scouting offers Year Round Activities for Boys and Girls in K to 12th Grade  
Find a local unit at [www.beascout.org](http://www.beascout.org)

## Adult Softball

For more info, contact Parkland Parks & Rec. Manager Bruno Battel at 954-757-4103

**i9 Sports - Youth Sports Leagues**

Parkland Leagues - Saturday Only  
Soccer - Ages 3 - 12  
Baseball - Ages 3 - 7  
[www.i9sports.com](http://www.i9sports.com)  
954-227-9955 (M-F, 9am-8pm)

**Important Numbers**

Leisure Services .....	(954)757-4105
Field Conditions .....	(954)757-4110
Park Ranger .....	(954)575-1007
Youth, Teen, & Senior Programs	(954)757-4129
City Hall .....	(954)753-5040
Tennis .....	(954)757-1910
P-REC .....	(954)757-4105

**The SOFLO NINJA ACADEMY**  
October 8, 2023  
**Parkland Dash**  
BENEFITTING: SUPPORT SERVICES, YOUTH SERVICES, FUTURE

**10.08.23**  
[www.cityofparkland.org/dash](http://www.cityofparkland.org/dash)  
5K, 5 MILE AND 1 MILE FUN RUN

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8**  
Pine Trails Park 7:00 AM





## Beyond the Finish Line: Join the Race Junkies Movement

By Ashley Ferraro

**In the heart of Parkland and Coral Springs, a vibrant community of people, known as the Race Junkies, has come together.** The group gathers not only to pursue their athletic aspirations, but also to form friendships based on shared interests. With this mission in mind, the Race Junkies also give back to the community by advocating for road safety, aiming to make our streets safer for runners, bikers, and drivers alike.

Founded by former soccer player turned triathlete Diego Velasquez, Race Junkies was born out of a deep passion for endurance sports and the desire to create a supportive community. After an injury put an end to his soccer career, Velasquez channeled his energy into triathlons, discovering a new avenue for personal growth and a sense of camaraderie. In 2011, he took the plunge into the world of triathlons and later established Race Junkies, a dynamic training and social group for local athletic enthusiasts.

With open arms, the group welcomes individuals of all ages and backgrounds to join them on foot, bike, and in water. With 138 members hailing from local neighborhoods, Race Junkies has become a haven for those seeking both physical improvement and genuine connections. A few members have even relocated from across state lines to join the group right here in Parkland and Coral Springs.

The Race Junkies aren't just athletes; they're a family. Their recent venture to the Maine 70.3 triathlon showcased their commitment to both competition and companionship. Nearly 40 members and their families embarked on this journey up the East Coast.

Of all places, the trek to Maine was inspired by Diego's wife's desire to indulge in the state's famed lobster

cuisine. The epic trip resulted in a second-place finish that solidified their prowess as a team and offered the gift of lasting memories. Not to mention, lots of fresh seafood!

Balancing their dedication to training with a "work hard, play hard" mindset, Race Junkies understands the importance of a holistic approach to life. As much as they relish the rigors of workouts and the thrill of competition, they also value their downtime; and of course, parties on the weekends.

Next up for the Race Junkies is the Panama City Ironman 140.6. With a lineup of 20 athletes, including 15 first-time participants, the group is eager to take on this fulfilling challenge.

As much as the group loves to travel, there's plenty of action happening locally. For example, the Race Junkies meet at Deerfield Beach every Friday morning at dawn to swim together. Throughout the week, you'll find them biking or running across our cities.

Race Junkies' impact extends beyond the finish line. Collaborating with Mayor Walker of Parkland, the group is working diligently to raise awareness and implement practical solutions that make local roads safer for everyone. For the Race Junkies, it's about fostering an environment of understanding and respect on the road.

In the end, Race Junkies' mission is clear: to change lives through sport and shared experiences. If you're searching for a community that celebrates achievement, promotes health, and values road safety, look no further.

**To learn more about the Race Junkies or join the movement, look for the "Race Junkies" public group on Facebook.**





# Uncommon Care for a Common Condition

BROWARD  
HEALTH  
CORAL  
SPRINGS

MAIN ENTRANCE

**Every day, approximately 15 million Americans experience the burning discomfort of heartburn.** Although it's a common ailment, it doesn't mean it's harmless.

Heartburn, or acid reflux, can result from overindulging in certain foods or beverages. Frequent heartburn is commonly the result of gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD).

Lifestyle changes like eating smaller meals, losing weight and not lying flat may help manage the discomfort. Medication may relieve symptoms, but long-term use may not be ideal. In fact, recent research found that taking a common type of acid reflux drug known as proton pump inhibitors for more than 4.4 years is associated with a 33% greater likelihood of developing dementia for people aged 45 and older.

## When to Seek Help

Mark Shachner, M.D., medical director of the Heartburn Center at Broward Health Coral Springs, recommends that heartburn sufferers see a doctor if they're experiencing it multiple times a week, especially if they also have pain or difficulty swallowing, an early sign of esophageal cancer.

"We don't want to mask the symptoms, we want to fix the problem," Dr. Shachner said. "GERD may start with heartburn, but it can potentially lead to more severe issues including damage to the esophagus."

## What is GERD?

GERD is caused by a weakening of the lower esophageal sphincter (LES), which acts like a valve between the stomach and esophagus. When this weakens the diaphragm where the esophagus passes through, it can cause a hiatal hernial.

Barrett's esophagus, a condition in which the esophageal lining is damaged by acid reflux, can be a complication of GERD and increases the risk of esophageal cancer.

## Identifying the Problem

Fortunately, there are numerous tests to identify what's causing heartburn and the extent of the damage.

Endoscopy is a minimally invasive procedure in which a

long, thin tube with a camera is inserted down the esophagus, enabling doctors to visually examine the upper gastrointestinal tract.

In addition, the Heartburn Center offers EndoFLIP, a potential alternative to manometry, which more comfortably measures the function and tightness of the LES valve. Bravo pH monitoring tests measure pH levels in the esophagus.

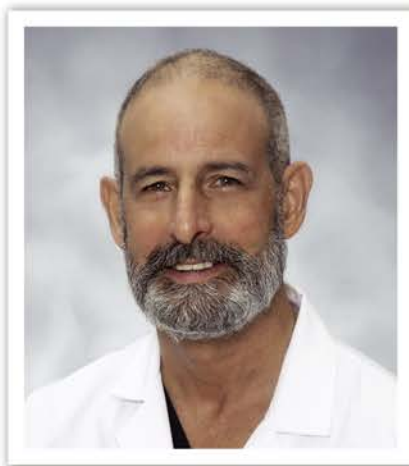
"With these three tests, I can provide a complete diagnosis in a much shorter period of time and tailor treatment for the individual patient," Dr. Shachner said.

## Advanced Surgical Treatment Options

Advanced surgical treatment options to strengthen the LES valve include magnetic sphincter augmentation, a procedure in which a small but flexible magnetic ring is implanted around the esophagus.

Transoral incisionless fundoplication, or TIF, is an endoscopic procedure performed through the mouth in which the LES can be reconstructed, and hiatal hernias reduced, while the patient is asleep. Hiatal hernias can also be repaired with robotic surgery.

For Barrett's esophagus, ablation procedures can destroy damaged cells, after which patients are closely monitored to identify and treat any new developments as early as possible.



**Mark Shachner, M.D.**

## Here for the Long Haul

Dr. Shachner and the caregivers at the Heartburn Center focus on their patients' long-term outcomes and participate in a multi-institutional study that monitors patients to identify what treatments provide the best results and quality of life for patients. The center is currently enrolling patients to participate in both national and local surgical outcome studies.

The Heartburn Center at Broward Health Coral Springs is the only hospital-based Heartburn Center in Broward County. It offers advanced diagnostics and surgical treatments for a wide variety of conditions that cause heartburn to eliminate discomfort and treat the cause as well as the symptom. **To learn more, call 954-227-GERD (4373) or visit [www.BrowardHealth.org/Heartburn](http://www.BrowardHealth.org/Heartburn).**





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## Springs Soccer Club Director Makes History with the Jamaican Women's World Cup Soccer Team

By Shellie Miller

One of the most successful soccer programs in our area is the only officially recognized travel soccer program in the City of Coral Springs, the Springs Soccer Club. We have written about SSC multiple times in the past and they have done so much to promote the sport, encourage sportsmanship, and lead athletes in the most positive direction for their future goals.

A major coach and influencer of the club is Coral Springs resident and Executive Director, Laurie Thomas, wife of co-founder, Roger Thomas, and a soccer phenom in her own right. For more than 20 years, she has been coaching local athletes, including her own sons, who are both successful in professional soccer.

One of her most recent accomplishments is in her position as Assistant Head Coach for the Jamaica Football Federation Women's National team, also known as the "Reggae Girlz", was coaching in the Women's World Cup which was held in Australia July 20 – August 20, 2023. Taking into account a much smaller population than most countries, Coach Laurie and the Reggae Girlz broke world records this August in their first winning Women's World Cup performance, bumping Brazil off course in their historic performance which landed the girlz into the Round of 16.

In our discussion about the local club versus the international team, Coach Laurie sees many similarities, such as at all ages, she believes that women's sports is an effective tool to build young ladies' self-esteem and confidence, this is the same for boys as well. "There are a lot of parallels," she begins, "in terms of preparation, both on and off the field, as well as goals that we set." She intimates that, although the girls on the Jamaican National Team are professionals, the way the program at the Springs Soccer Club (SSC) is led are very similar, which is one of the reasons why SSC is so successful! Coach Laurie is the executive Director of SSC, whose roster includes six female coaches.

As we delve further into the future for women's soccer, Laurie tells me that her intention in Coral Springs is to help every girl see that they could have a prolific future in soccer... Whether she is an outstanding athlete, has a talent for coaching, or wants to be a referee... She is excited to share her experience and knowledge of the game to all players in the SSC. Laurie sees that there are positive opportunities for women in soccer all over the world.



Laurie's focus, whether she is talking about a team from Springs SC or her team from Jamaica has always been player development and the teaching process is on-going. For her, that is a primary necessity. She says that from entry level to pros, working on a player's mentality (mind-set), tactical understanding, technical skills, social and emotional skills, as well as their physical game are always a priority. SSC prides itself in parent education. For the best development of the player, Coach Laurie says it's important to educate the parents in order to keep goals realistic while supporting the player.

In the meanwhile, Laurie is currently working with the Reggae Girlz in preparation for the upcoming Olympic Qualifiers, held in Kingston, Jamaica and Toronto, Canada in late September. They are very excited about that! Whether you are rooting for your favorite team in the Springs Soccer Club, or you feel passionate about Jamaica, we are blessed to have an amazing professional in our community who loves both.





SPRINGS SOCCER CLUB

# FALL SOCCER 2023

THE FASTEST GROWING SOCCER CLUB IN SOUTH FLORIDA!

Development League U7-U11

SEPT 11 - OCT 20

- Birth Years 2017 - 2013
- \$175 per player
- Training: Mon & Wed
- Friday Games
- 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm

FALL SESSION

SEPT 11 - OCT 20

First Touch U5-U6

- Birth Years 2019-2018
- \$115 per player
- Training: Wed
- Friday Games
- 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Cypress Park

Uniforms required



NIKE SOCCER

CITY FURNITURE

Registration & Details:

[SpringsSoccerClub.com](http://SpringsSoccerClub.com)

Facebook Springs-Soccer-Club

Instagram springsoccerclub

Twitter @springs\_sc

Email info@springsoccerclub.com

# SPRINGS SOCCER CLUB

## SPONSORSHIP 2023-24

CORAL SPRINGS

**WE WOULD LOVE TO PARTNER WITH YOU IN SUPPORT OF THE KIDS, THE CLUB AND THE COMMUNITY!**

Springs Soccer Club (SSC) is currently seeking sponsors for our 2023-24 Season. Springs SC operates youth soccer programs for kid's ages 5- 18 years old in the City of Coral Springs, FL.

We currently are working to expand our membership through innovative player development programs. Sponsors help us keep our registration costs down which allows more kids the opportunity to play soccer.

We have identified the following 3 areas in which sponsor donations will be used in our club, Player Development, Coaches Education and Equipment.

If you or your group is interested in becoming a SPRINGS SOCCER CLUB Sponsor we will work with you to create a package that suits both the needs of our club and your budget.



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW TO BECOME A SPONSOR, PLEASE CALL 954-282-5215 OR EMAIL [SPRINGSSOCCERCLUB@GMAIL.COM](mailto:SPRINGSSOCCERCLUB@GMAIL.COM)





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# 2023-2024 SCHOOL CALENDAR - BROWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

AUGUST				
M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

SEPTEMBER				
M	T	W	T	F
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OCTOBER				
M	T	W	T	F
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30	31			

NOVEMBER				
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DECEMBER				
M	T	W	T	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29



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MRI Services 954-575-8201	Rehabilitation Services Physical Therapy Occupational Therapy Speech Therapy Feeding Therapy 954-575-8962 JDCH.com/Rehab	Otorhinology (ENT) 954-265-1616 General Surgery 954-265-0072 Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation 954-276-1600	Orthopedics, Spine and Sports Medicine Hand and Upper Extremity Program Hip Preservation Program Sports Physical Therapy Concussion Clinic Performing Arts and Dance Medicine Program 954-265-6300 JDCH.com/Orthopedics

5830 Coral Ridge Drive, Coral Springs, Florida 33076 | JDCH.com

JANUARY				
M	T	W	T	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
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29	30	31		

FEBRUARY				
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MARCH				
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APRIL				
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22	23	24	25	26
29	30			

MAY				
M	T	W	T	F
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27	28	29	30	31

JUNE				
M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28

- Employee Planning (no school for students)
- Schools & Administrative Offices Closed
- Schools Closed
- Report Cards Issued
- Interim Reports Issued
- Early Release Day
- First & Last Day of School

Hurricane Make-up Days: 10/23/23, 1/19/24, 3/21/24, 5/24/24, 6/10/24