

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

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Sports, 1B



Trees thrive 48 years after seeds orbit moon APOLLO ROOTS



One of Tallahassee's "moon trees" is located behind the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Doyle Comer Building. The large, mossy tree is a loblolly pine.

CD Davidson-Hiers Tallahassee Democrat / USA TODAY NETWORK — FLORIDA

They're not certified space explorers, but two trees in Tallahassee have been to the moon. One is a sycamore that casts a shadow in Cascades Park. The other is a loblolly pine that grows in the fields behind the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services buildings off Capital Circle S.E.

Two years after the Apollo 11 moon landing, Apollo 14 astronaut Stuart Roosa took hundreds of seeds from five "important" American species — Douglas fir, loblolly pine, redwood, sycamore and sweetgum — in his personal kit on the country's third lunar expedition. The idea was to take one species to the moon from each of the country's regions.

Roosa used to work for the U.S. Forest Service as a smelter jumper and came up with the idea to create "Moon Trees" for the Bicentennial celebration of the U.S.'s founding, according to NASA official David Williams.

Roosa didn't step foot on the moon during the 1971 expedition, but stayed in orbit while astronauts Alan Shepard and Edgar Mitchell tinkered on the surface.



In 1971, astronaut Stuart Roosa took hundreds of seeds from five American tree species, including loblolly pine, in his personal kit on the country's third lunar expedition.

PHOTOS BY TON SCHNEIDER/TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

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Williams' daughter awarded all assets

Prosecutors agree to drop insurance fraud charges

Jennifer Portman
Tallahassee Democrat
USA TODAY NETWORK — FLORIDA

Denise Williams, who is serving a life-prison sentence for the murder of her husband Mike Williams, will not face additional insurance fraud charges or pay restitution to the state. Prosecutors dropped the charges and agreed to not seek financial penalties as part of a settlement agreement reached by Mike Williams' mother and brother, which shifted all of Denise Williams' assets to the couple's daughter, Analee Williams.

"Mike would have wanted her to have this," said Cheryl Williams, Mike's mom and Analee's grandmother. "Michael would have wanted her to be taken care of for the rest of her life."

Under the terms of the agreement, Analee Williams, 20, is prohibited from using any of the money or assets she received to help pay her mother's legal fees or other costs associated with the murder case or any ongoing appeal. If she violates terms of the agreement, the state could force her to turn over \$500,000 in damages.

The assets given to Analee Williams include four pieces of Tallahassee real estate valued at about \$677,000, including her home on Centennial Oaks Circle, purchased by her parents when she was a baby. Assistant State Attorney Jon Puchs had no comment on the total dollar figure, though Cheryl Williams said it was about \$1.4 million.

Denise Williams collected \$175 million from her husband's three life insurance policies after she had him declared dead six months after he supposedly vanished in December 2000 during a solo duck hunting trip on Lake Seminole in Jackson County.

One of the policies, for \$1 million, was written less than a year before he went missing by his best friend, Brian Winchester, who 17 years later confessed to killing Mike during the hunting trip after competing with Denise as they could be together.

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Gov. Ron DeSantis holds the signed law banning sanctuary cities in Tallahassee at a news conference in Tallahassee on June 14. (JIM UTTER/FLORIDA NEWS) (JIM UTTER/FLORIDA NEWS)

Immigrant coalition sues to stop 'sanctuary cities' law

Jeffrey Schweers
Tallahassee Democrat
USA TODAY NETWORK — FLORIDA

Florida's new so-called "sanctuary cities" law, which prohibits local governments from enacting sanctuary policies and requires local law enforcement to help ICE detain immigrants without warrants, is being challenged as unconstitutional.

A coalition of immigrant rights groups, including Florida Immigrant Coalition, Farmworker Association of Florida, WeCount, Americans for Immigrant Justice, Hope Community

Center, QLatinx, and the City of Miami filed the suit in federal court in Miami this morning. The injunction request is the first lawsuit to target the controversial law.

Rather than make Florida communities more secure, the lawsuit said, the law will lead to "the erosion of trust in law enforcement, racial profiling, and the violation of the constitutional rights of hundreds of thousands of Floridians."

The lawsuit also contends that hate groups defied the original version of SB 866 and recruited state lawmakers to turn their anti-immigrant agenda

into state law.

Christopher Cuevas, executive director of the Central Florida-based QLatinx, an organization that focuses on the rights of LGBTQ+ immigrants, said in a news release that "we are taking a stand to unapologetically defend the rights and dignity of our immigrant community and reject the practice of terrorizing families."

He added that ICE "seeks to stoke fear, criminalize immigrant communities, and disrupt the moral fabric of peace in our home."

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USA TODAY

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