Lawmakers gear up for cultural warfare

Statewide crises take a back seat to DeSantis’ re-election year agenda, which features issues that play more to a national audience.

BY FLORIDA TIMES-UNION AND PAM JONES
Transcribed Alphonso Brown

TALLAHASSEE — On Nov. 7, Melinda Jack-
son’s landlord told her she was ending the
lease on the three-bedroom downtown
suburban neighborhood of Tallahassee that Jack-
son had rented for seven years, forcing her to
move by the Tallahassee landlord by Dec. 20.
Jackson, 36, a single medical assistant who
makes $18 an hour, financially started
filling out rental applications and paying
apartment deposits in hopes of only
being told repeatedly she had been put on a
waiting list.

Still eyeing former St. Pete, San,
Jeff Brandes
will again push for
primary in
his legislature
season. Local, 13

Pam meet Steve Kruise at a Marine ball when she was 16, he was 23. The couple loved to dance, roller skate and ride bikes together. They raised three children and were married for 42 years.

As Pam Kruise’s disease worsened, Stephen Kruise, a retired Marine, drew a gun.

BY LANCE DeGREGORY | Times Staff Writer

Chapter 1

When he visited his wife that day, she was agitated and angry, more than ever.

She didn’t want to be in that place. She didn’t know what was wrong with her or why she couldn’t go home.

For three months, she had been at the Parkside Inn, an assisted living facility for Alzheimer’s patients in Benton Beach.

Her husband visited every day. Every day, she seemed to be getting worse.

They had been married 46 years, had raised three children and a foster son. She had worked at the checkout, sung in the church choir run marathons.

Now, a few weeks after turning 65, Pam Kruise couldn’t remember how to use the bathroom and stood at the phone, trying to figure it out. In rare lucid moments, she sobbed that she didn’t want to live like this.

Her husband had been a career Marine, then a truck driver. He was 62, used to taking charge, fixing things.

But that morning — March 27, 2007 — Stephen Kruise had prayed for guidance: How could he help his wife?

That evening, he signed her out at the front desk and drove down the road to the Drugstore.

He got her hot coffee. Her ice was iod. As they talked, he said later, “she would come and go, come and go.”

After almost an hour, she looked at him and asked, “Do we have to go back there?”

Well, he said, yes, we do.

During the drive back, she gotrier, the more unhappy Pam became. Steve later told a detective. This account is drawn from his interview at the Brun-
ton Beach Police Department.

Steve signed his wife into the facility at 6:30 p.m.

“And when we finally went back inside is when she started almost immediately with, I want you to — to — I don’t want be here anymore.”

She said she wanted to die. That she was going to kill herself. She told her husband, “I want you to kill me.”

He walked her down a long hallway, through the building, then out to a side door facing the parking lot. She kept begging, “Please.”

“I led her to her van, where he got his pistol from the glove box and got it in his jeans pocket.”

She told him no one loved her anymore. She felt trapped. This was not how she wanted to live the rest of her life.

They went back toward the building and stopped on the patio. Pam stood close to him and looked into his eyes.

He thought, maybe, if he pulled the gun, she would get scared and back off. But she didn’t.

See KRUISE, 8A

Study: Omicron likely to peak soon in Florida

UF researchers say the variant will cause a record number of infections.

BY DANIEL CHANG
Miami Herald

Florida’s reckoning with the number of COVID-19 cases likely will peak by mid-January as the more contagious omicron variant poten-
tially infects most of the state population during this wave alone, according to disease modelers with the University of Florida’s Emerging Pathogens Institute.

UF mathematicians and scientists said they revised their forecast for the state’s omicron wave to account for the astronomical and swells with which the virus was spreading through Florida in December, leading to recent increases of COVID-19 cases during the state’s fourth wave of the pandemic.

“We’re seeing that the dominance of this new omicron causes more fever deaths than prior waves during a pandemic, and like past waves this one is expected to diminish with the same speed that it spiked — making for possibly one of the shortest but still devastating waves of the pandemic.”

See PEAK, 12A

Pam Kruise in a Happy Family portrait.

MERCY OR MURDER?

TO MAKE ENDS MEET, SENIORS HIT THE ROAD

As a cut of two-rooms, older adults are giving away cars or trucks for free to the Home Free Transportation Network, which makes up a "higher number of drivers than national-
ly." Local, 18

RECIPIENT FOLLOWS UNUSUAL ROUTE

Former quarterback and Buca devotee Gino Armytage said he had a "great idea to do a date night or other option for

Editor’s note

Today’s Tampa Bay Times magazine features a cover story detailing the author, comedian and

Hilton’s Connie Beam, who died Dec. 8.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Steve visited his wife almost every day at Parkside Inn, an assisted living facility for Alzheimer’s patients in Benton Beach. He often took her for walks or coffee. On March 27, 2007, he signed her out for the last time.

We’re bringing back our local and entertain-
er Payroll guide, 4th Weekend

Starting Wednesday, the section will once
again feature the arts, TV, movies, entertain-
ment and cultural events that happen around Tampa Bay. Yes, the pandemic is stil out there. But we will feature ways to safely experience the world around us. The section will include news that the former rolls to do on a date night or other option for the entire family.

It was protested before Whirl’s Dec. 8.

Coming Wednesday: "tbt" Weekend returns

Wednesday's exclusive art heaven. Including restaurants and recipes to make at home, will be part of "tbt." Weekend every Wednesday. Our first section features an interview with Connie Beam, who died Dec. 8. Hilton’s Connie Beam, who died Dec. 8.
Kruspe continued from 1A

What do you do in someone you love is hurting, and there’s no way to fix it?

It’s illegal, in most places, to help someone end their life. Even if they beg.

Since December, when Jack Krivick- vonan was jailed for helping terminally ill 8-year-old Jackson Starzl adopt a Death With Dignity act that he didn’t support, he has felt trapped.

But in Florida — and 30 other states — doctors can only try to stop pain physically. At the end, the only advice right-to- life groups can offer is to talk with families. Patients have to be deemed competent enough to make their own decisions.

Kruspe now sees that as a port for end-of-life options for patients like Jackson. But laws haven’t caught up.

“He’s been nonverbal for a year and a half. He’s been sitting in a rocking chair, pushing his unfeeling body back and forth, until just put on my medi- cations. Our lives once again. But would totally fail.

“The bed, the play, the Jofe, the, and Steve, and wanted to dance. And at that night in 1974 seemed to notice the music.

“His mother was a young woman was swaying in her seat. ‘A liar, a traitor, a drug addict, a madman, a green eyes,’ he remembered in a 2008 memoir. Ross is young. His other two children declined.

‘Do you know how to sing dawah?’ his sister. She is a pretty woman. She did so he let him walk around, showing off his best jay.

Pam had come to the Martin County Courthouse in Stuart, T. C., with a friend, who had worked at Parkland Hospital in the past. When he broke into tears, and he knew if he knew how to fasten them. They had an evening was over.

Kens became the Martin County Bar first female? ‘I wrote, “I know I would’ve been good at it.” We had been 20 and had been a Fighting First for four years working security at the Gerald Ford White House and carrying cakes at Arlington Cemetery Cafeteria. Pam had taken a seminar at the University of Maryland and run out to get back. She was a critical worker at the New York Times. They ran into each other a few months later at a New York’s bar.

At midnight, they kissed. He proposed. “The word,” she said, “is to do something to each other, and for each other.”

When you marry a Marine, you learn your family can’t come first. A Marine can’t come to the Country. Corps. Then some opuses and kids.

Pam was 20 when they had their first child followed their eyes into base housing at his new post at Camp Lejeune, N.C. He had seen shipwreck over six months. He was still, albeit a corpse. During two decades of service, Pam had to explain to them, back to home. Pam would wake him in the middle of the night to take care of “goodbye to Daddy.”

Kens left the two with their blue and spoke to him. In 2009, they were still alive. “I have a raw RSLS and Green Beans, teaching them to jump out of helicopters, over the water, through dangerous waters, become experienced. When he was in Special Warfare Ops, his family knew he was or if he was in danger. Pam had to lay this down slowly while helping her daughter and stepson. Afterward, they went with them to church and driving them to the hospital. Pam said, “I miss you, and color guard.

“She always got everyone else first and made him feel OK,” said their youngest son, Jack. “She taught me compassion. And I’m happy. I want to do all the way, whether it’s the sadness or the living or some- thing.”

The only thing ever sang

Matt Krupke holds some of his mother’s ashes in his home in Lake Worth. He keeps the urn wrapped in a British soccer scarf she brought him wrapped in a British soccer scarf she brought him.

Kurt Bollin was Steve’s house at Camp Lejeune, N.C. The Bollin family lived through the history, spirituality and God.

John Wiseman, a retired journalist, said his friend and fellow Marine Steve, Krupke, might be that he never even got a parking ticket.

Kurt Bollin was Steve’s house at Camp Lejeune, N.C. The Bollin family lived through the history, spirituality and God.

Kurt Bollin was Steve’s house at Camp Lejeune, N.C. The Bollin family lived through the history, spirituality and God.

John Wiseman, a retired journalist, said his friend and fellow Marine Steve, Krupke, might be that he never even got a parking ticket.