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Soccer site road gets \$8M assist

DeSantis awards tax funds for access to Inter Miami stadium

By Susannah Bryan and Angie DiMichele
South Florida Sun Sentinel

The long-awaited soccer stadium being built by the owners of Inter Miami at Miami Freedom Park is expected to open in late 2025.

And when it does, South Florida soccer fans should find it a little easier to make their way to games and other events thanks to a new road that will be partly funded by

\$8 million in state tax dollars.

Gov. Ron DeSantis shared the news Thursday from a stage set up at Chase Stadium in Fort Lauderdale, current home base for Inter Miami and its superstar player, Leo Messi.

"We've never given state money to build a soccer stadium," DeSantis said. "Our role as the state government is not to give money to a team, but to create an environment where everyone can be successful. And infrastructure is a big part of that."

Florida will dedicate \$8 million in funding from its Job Growth Grant Fund to Miami-Dade County to help build a roadway that's going to help get people where they need to go and relieve traffic at Miami Freedom Park, DeSantis said.

"We don't want a situation where people aren't going to be able to get there," the governor added. "We're creating a nice artery where people can get to where they need to go. This will lead to even more tourists wanting to come visit the state of Florida."

In the audience were team owners Jorge and José Mas, Fort Lauderdale Mayor Dean Trantalis and State Rep. Chip LaMarca, R-Lighthouse Point. Team owner David Beckham did not attend.

Messi was also absent but got a shout-out from DeSantis nonetheless.

"When they brought Messi on, that was the best thing ever," the governor said.

Jorge Mas, the team's managing owner, beamed while DeSantis spoke.

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BATTLE OF THE BANDS



From left, Unravel bassist-vocalist Antonia "Anto" Albornoz, 13; lead singer Sophia "Cipher" Phillips, 16; lead guitarist Dylan Simonson, 16; and drummer Casey Burt, 18, gather at Markee Music in Deerfield Beach. CARLINE JEAN/SOUTH FLORIDA SUN SENTINEL

The kids are all right

Why do these local teen musicians love their parents' classic rock?

By Ben Crandell | South Florida Sun Sentinel

To watch Pompano Beach-based cover band Unravel resuscitate a classic tune like AC/DC's "Highway to Hell," all snarling vocals, flailing hair and swagger, is to witness rock 'n' roll at its essence — when the music was about rebellion and passion and the audacious joy of playing

it for a crowd. The bass player is 13.

At a time when there are no rock bands near the top of the Billboard Hot 100 chart, young people across South Florida are doing deep dives into the classic rock of their parents, sometimes grandparents, and performing in bars and on festival stages across the region.

Yes, they can talk to you about their favorite song by J. Cole, Kendrick Lamar and Billie Eilish, but as performers, their heart is with Led

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IF YOU GO

WHAT: Fourth annual Battle of the Bands

WHEN: 7 p.m. Friday, Aug. 9; doors open at 6 p.m.

WHERE: Mizner Park Amphitheater, 590 Plaza Real, Boca Raton

COST: Free

INFORMATION: Visit MiznerAmp.com

Insiders urge using careful consideration of judgeships

By Anthony Man
South Florida Sun Sentinel

Arguelles or Phillips. Moon or Weekes. McHugh or Shapiro.

They're among the 15 mostly unfamiliar names Broward voters will find on their August election ballots.

It's not as daunting in Palm Beach County, where voters will see only three such names: Casanova, Leifert and Middleton.

All are running for consequential positions, circuit and county court judgeships. Broward voters have seven judicial elections this month; Palm Beach County has one race.

Voting is open to all registered voters — by mail, early voting or on Election Day, Aug. 20. The contests will be decided on that day unless no candidate receives more than 50% of the vote. If that happens, there's a runoff in November.

"Picking a judge is not, 'eeny, meeny, miny, moe,'" said Alfreda Coward, a past president of the T.J. Reddick Bar Association, named after the first Black lawyer to practice in Broward and the first Black circuit court judge in Florida.

In voting for judicial candidates, pick "someone who is smart and learned and respectful and understanding," advised Jason B. Blank, a Fort Lauderdale lawyer who is president of the Florida Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers.

Tough choice

It sounds simple enough. But judicial races are among the most difficult offices for people to figure out who deserves their votes.

"Most people are not going to take the time. It's difficult," said Barbara Roth, president of the Coalition of Boynton West Resi-

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Parents of 3 Parkland students, survivor reach settlements

By Terry Spencer
Associated Press

Families of three students murdered during the 2018 massacre at Parkland's Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School and a wounded former student have reached

multimillion-dollar settlements in a lawsuit against the shooter, though their attorney concedes it is highly unlikely they will ever receive much money.

The parents of slain students Luke Hoyer, 15, Alaina Petty, 14, and Meadow Pollack, 18, each reached \$50 million settlements with

Nikolas Cruz while wounded student Maddy Wilford agreed to a \$40 million settlement, according to recently filed court records.

"The chief rationale for the judgment amounts is simply in the event that the killer ever comes into possession of money, we could execute on the judgments and

obtain it, thus preventing him from buying any creature comforts," their attorney, David Brill, said Thursday.

Cruz, 25, is serving 34 consecutive life sentences at an undisclosed prison after

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DISCOVER WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE FAIRGROUNDS THIS WEEKEND!

LEARN MORE

EXPO CENTER
at the South Florida Fairgrounds



Bands

from Page 1

Zeppelin, Rush, Van Halen and Pat Benatar.

It feels good performing these 50-year-old jams, “remembering what my dad would play in the car,” says Unravel’s lead vocalist, Sophia “CIPHER” Phillips, 16.

“When I was getting into middle school, my dad started introducing me to AC/DC and Metallica. You know, all the super popular stuff. I kind of, on my own, ventured out and started listening to more and I realized that I really had a liking for rock music,” CIPHER says.

Unravel will be among eight bands taking part in a free Battle of the Bands concert at 7 p.m. Friday at Mizner Park Amphitheater in Boca Raton. Competitors will face off in two categories — one for performers younger than 20, and one for those 20 and older — with a \$2,500 cash prize for the winner in each group.

The four members of Unravel met through School of Rock in Pompano Beach, performing with the prestigious house band touring ensemble. They’ve turned rock music into a door that opens into learning other genres of music.

Dylan Simonson, 16, picked up the guitar because of Eddie Van Halen, but likes to explore the role of bandleader in the work of jazz titan John Coltrane. Best friend Casey Burt, 18, Unravel’s drummer and elder statesman, is on a similar quest.

“Like everybody else in this room, I’ve grown more tasteful. When I just liked rock, it really stunted my growth. I started listening to complex things like jazz, and I started reading all this difficult music,” Casey says, citing Miles Davis and drummers Lenny White, Larnell Lewis and jazz-influenced rock god Neil Peart of Rush.

The band’s energetic 13-year-old bassist and singer, Antonia “Anto” Albornoz of Weston, got a head start in music in more ways than one. Her father, Andrés Albornoz, whose production company recently staged the world tour by global superstar Bad Bunny, introduced her to music very early.



From left, Guitarist Dylan Simonson, 16; lead vocalist Sophia “CIPHER” Phillips, 16; bassist Antonia “Anto” Albornoz, 13; and (obscured) drummer Casey Burt, 18, rehearse for Battle of the Bands, set for Mizner Park Amphitheater in Boca Raton tonight. **BRIELLE AGUAYO/SOUTH FLORIDA SUN SENTINEL**

“My dad told me he would put headphones on my mom’s belly and he would [play], like, Rammstein and hard metal. And I was like, ‘Oh, OK, so that’s where I got it from,’” she says, laughing.

Speaking during a recent Unravel rehearsal at Markee Music in Deerfield Beach, the native of Bogota, Colombia, recalls watching music videos from the 1970s and ’80s with her parents and grandparents.

“Just thinking, like, that happened once. And we’re doing it now, onstage, [capturing] that ‘esencia,’ you know? The beginning of it,” she says.

Unravel has more than 200 songs in its arsenal, everything from “Carry On Wayward Son” (Kansas) and “Tom Sawyer” (Rush) to “Love Shack” (The B-52s) and “Bodies” (Drowning Pool).

They also do a memorable version of Rage Against the Machine’s “Killing in the Name,” removing the opening F-bomb in the refrain, as Anto on vocals yells,

“Shut up, I won’t do what you tell me!” She’s 13, after all.

For information on Unravel, visit [Instagram.com/unravel.band](https://www.instagram.com/unravel.band).

The event

Unravel will be competing in the younger category along with The Borin Brothers from Boca Raton, Midnight3 of Parkland and Miami’s Nothing Wrong with Wet Socks.

Each is unique: A Borin Brothers show is typically almost all original songs. Midnight3 is a sister trio raised on Christian music who also love Mötley Crüe. Wet Socks closed their first show in December to a crowd of teenagers waving their arms to “Freebird.”

The older performers at Battle of the Bands include 212 Degrees from Coral Springs-Pompano Beach, Leave it to Us from Fort Lauderdale, Miami’s Ryan Cooper Band; and vocalist Jass, a frequent visitor with relatives across South Florida.

The event will also include the Young Entrepreneurs Market, from 6 to 9 p.m., for vendors age 13 to 20. Food and beverages will be available for purchase inside the venue (no outside food, beverages, or pets permitted). And while bringing blankets and chairs is encouraged, there will be chairs available to rent (\$5). Doors open at 6 p.m., and admission is free. For more information, visit [Mizner-Amp.com](https://www.mizneramp.com).

The younger acts at Battle of the Bands, of course, play with varying degrees of polish. But they all boast a critical thing that older performers can lose over time, says Elijah Leano, 16-year-old drummer for Nothing Wrong With Wet Socks.

“We’re not afraid to show everyone that we’re having fun. I think people like bands with personality, and being true to ourselves,” he says. “Obviously, by the way we play, you can tell that we’re dedicated to our instruments, but we just want to show everyone how much of a good time we’re having.”

The other young bands

Here’s a look at the other young performers who will be onstage at Battle of the Bands. The interviews below have been edited for clarity and brevity.

MIDNIGHT3, PARKLAND

The band: Selena Bronkhorst, 21, is the drummer and a student at Palm Beach Atlantic University with sister Bella, 18, the lead guitarist. Younger sister Layla, 15, is the lead vocalist, bassist and pianist.

Behind the music: Selena was a freshman at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in 2018 when the Valentine’s Day shooting claimed 17 lives, including a couple of her friends. She and her sisters were homeschooled after the tragedy, and they turned to music as a way to heal. They still consider making music together a form of therapy. “We use it to cope whenever we feel stressed or anxious,” Selena said in an interview. Their parents — U.S.-born father, Puerto Rican mother — raised them on a diet of strong female vocalists (Sade, Adele), dad’s country music (Kenny Chesney) and Christian contemporary music, which remains an influence. When Selena began taking drum lessons at Parkland International Music & Arts School, rock music became part of the family soundtrack. Midnight3 performed at Battle of the Bands in 2023 and has played local bars including Rudy’s Pub in Lake Worth Beach, Cheers in Fort Lauderdale and Jimmy Johnson’s Big Chill in Key Largo. Asked what makes Midnight3 unique, Selena said, “We have a great sisterly bond. We get told that a lot.”

Q: Who are your musical role models?

Selena Bronkhorst: One band that influenced us to say, yeah, I think we can do this as a three-sister band, is BarlowGirl. They’re a Christian rock band. We saw them play on YouTube and were like, what if that was us? The Warning is another three-sister band that we saw play and saw it was possible.

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FLORIDA'S LOTTERY

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Fireball: 6
Pick 2 (midday): 4-4
Pick 3 (midday): 0-5-5
Pick 4 (midday): 3-7-5-8
Pick 5 (midday): 7-0-5-9-8
Selected Wednesday
Fireball: 6
Pick 2 (evening): 5-7
Pick 3 (evening): 2-1-2
Pick 4 (evening): 0-3-2-1
Pick 5 (evening): 7-1-4-1-7
For more results, call
1-850-921-7529
Selected Thursday
Cash Pop
Morning: 8
Matinee: 15
Fantasy 5 (midday): 6-12-15-28-30

Selected Wednesday
Cash Pop
Afternoon: 13
Evening: 1
Late Night: 4
Fantasy 5: 6-8-10-20-30
Lotto: 10-11-14-17-39-49
Lotto Double Play: 1-3-20-27-44-46
Powerball: 6-19-35-47-57
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