



TRUMP SEEKS TO CUT FOREIGN AID TO 3 CENTRAL AMERICAN NATIONS

President Donald Trump moved Saturday to cut direct aid to El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, as people flee north and overwhelm U.S. resources at the southern border. *See The News Wire*

Sunday, March 31, 2019

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SUN PHOTO BY LIZ HARDAWAY

Police tape was set up along Washington Loop Road Saturday in Punta Gorda, where deputies parked and entered Prairie Creek.

Male body found in Prairie Creek

Charlotte authorities treating area as a crime scene

By LIZ HARDAWAY
STAFF WRITER

PUNTA GORDA — A deceased male of undetermined age was found in Prairie Creek near the boat ramp, the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office said Saturday morning.

A civilian boater observed the body of a white male in the water two miles down the creek and called it in to authorities at 9:07 a.m., according to CCSO spokesperson Katie Heck.

The agency's marine unit and dive team arrived to recover the body. CCSO's Crime Scene Unit and detectives with their Major Crimes Unit also arrived near Washington Loop Road, where crime scene tape was put up.

There were an estimated 20 deputies on-site investigating, and ultimately it was several hours before the body was recovered from the water.

The sheriff's office is treating all of Prairie Creek as a crime scene, Heck said.

CCSO had not yet determined whether a crime occurred Saturday afternoon while they investigated the scene, Heck confirmed.

The individual also had not been identified, and an identity will likely not be confirmed for several days due to the condition of the body, CCSO tweeted.

The body will be taken to the medical examiner to determine cause of death, and how long the person has been deceased, Heck said.

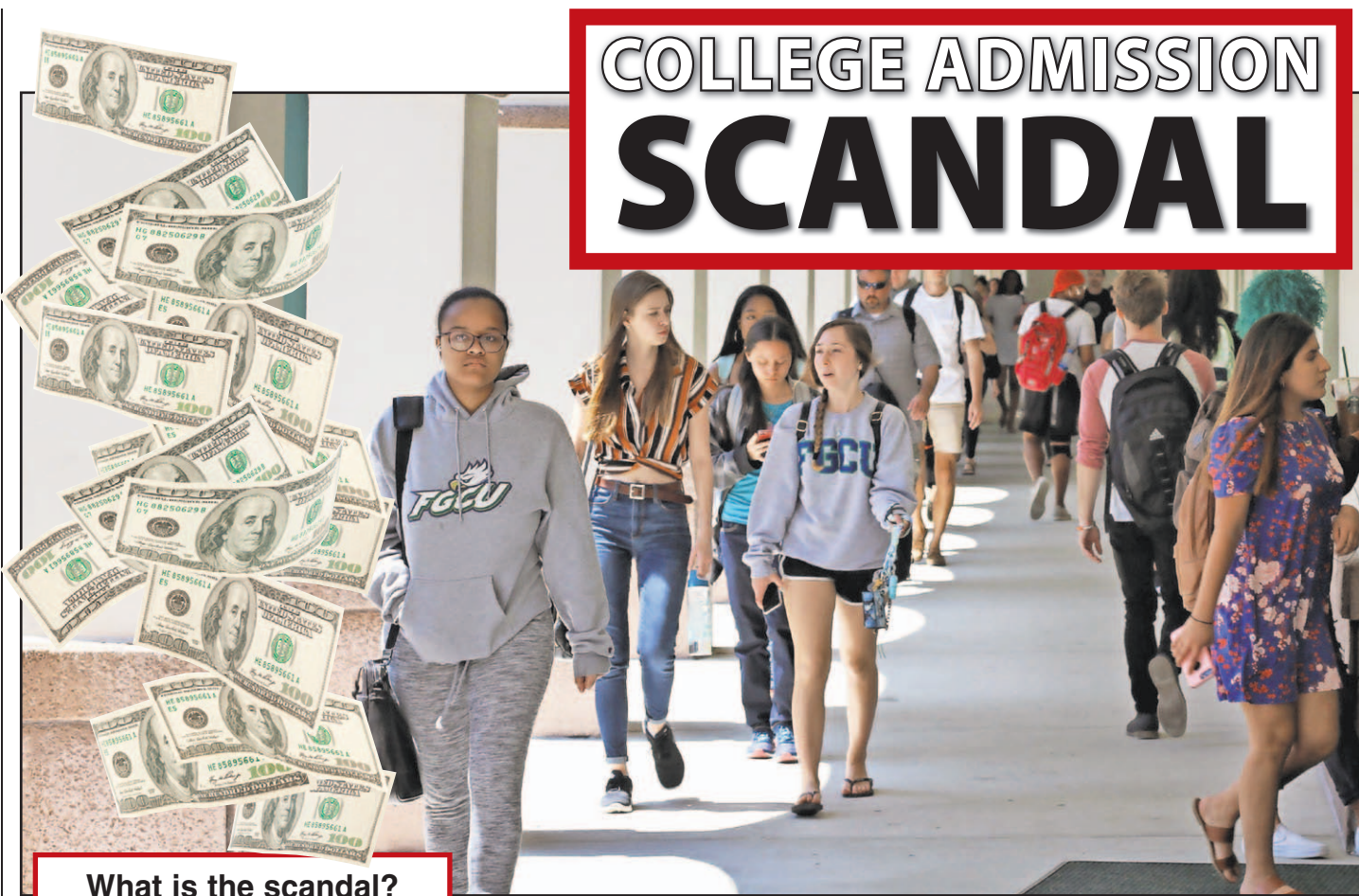
People on social media questioned Saturday if this could be 19-year-old Gage Jackson, who was reported missing March 20 out of Charlotte County.

"It could be anybody," Heck said. "We are cautious to jump to conclusions."

Saturday's scene began on Washington Loop Road in Punta Gorda.

Jackson was last seen the evening of March 19 after being dropped off by

BODY | 8



SUN PHOTO BY SEAN C. PORTER

COLLEGE ADMISSION SCANDAL

Students walk around campus at FGCU this month. Although a college admissions scandal happened far from FGCU's campus, it still has an impact on the students who go here.

'It's unfair to students'

FGCU reacts to national college entrance controversy

FORT MYERS — The recent college admission cheating scandal has thrown a harsh spotlight onto higher education.

Accusations involve bribes from wealthy parents — including celebrity actresses Felicity Huffman and Lori Loughlin — seeking to get their students into elite universities such as UCLA, USC, Stanford, Yale and Georgetown.

From an outsider perspective, it may look like one student here or there doesn't really impact other students.

But as a student at Florida Gulf Coast University in Fort Myers and an intern at the Sun, it impacts me.

Originally, I was not admitted to the university and was put on a wait-list.

Ultimately, I was accepted to FGCU just two days before I graduated from Lemon Bay High School, in 2016.

I got one of the last available spots the university had to offer, and looking back, it was a close one.

For admissions into Fall 2018, 13,098 high school seniors applied to the school, and 8,181 were admitted, roughly 62 percent. Of those admitted, 2,756 enrolled to begin classes that August, which was 34 percent of admitted students.

Is it crazy to wonder, could there have been one student, who may have had lower test scores but a little more money, who got in above me?

At some elite schools, that question has some shady answers.

But how does the admissions process work at FGCU?

INSIDE: SEE PAGE 4

- College-bound student reacts
- IMG director faces possible prison
- Yale rescinds student's admission

ELITE VS. ELITIST

FGCU President Michael Martin says that the difference between universities across the country is between elite schools and elitist schools.

"I think elite universities, in my judgement, are those who serve their students based on the student's need at the highest possible level," Martin said. "To me, that's being elite. Therefore, I think by that definition, we're an elite university. No one has to bribe to get in here. But the people who do get in here get an education well above and beyond what they might get at some other places even that are expensive and selective."

While FGCU does strive to become an elite and competitive university in the state, it does have some "little brother" issues. It's not really fair to compare FGCU to older schools like University of Florida and Florida State University.

STUDENT PERSPECTIVES

For a majority of students, this scandal can go over a lot of heads. It's easy to dismiss this, simply because it's apparently not happening at FGCU.

"I'm indifferent about the scandal," said Rickedson Alexandre, a junior at FGCU. "I haven't looked into it because it's not affecting my life."

SCANDAL | 4

What is the scandal?

- Dozens of people, including two famous actresses, have been swept up in the scandal.
- The scheme centered on a for-profit Newport Beach, California college admissions company owner.
- Wealthy parents are accused of paying money to help their children cheat on college entrance exams.
- There are also claims that athletic records of students were falsified to enable them to get admitted to elite schools such as UCLA, USC, Stanford, Yale and Georgetown.

— Source: Los Angeles Times

The latest on the scandal

Parents charged in admissions scandal begin making appearances in federal court

By MATTHEW ORMSETH
LOS ANGELES TIMES

BOSTON — They filed into court, one after the other — the casino magnate, the Napa Valley vintner, the Hot Pocket heiress — having braved the Boston cold and a line of cameras and reporters outside the courthouse doors, to stand before a judge and have their rights to travel, to speak with co-defendants and to change their residences curtailed or revoked.

It was a situation none of the 15 people who appeared for the first time before U.S. District Judge M. Page Kelley had been in before.

Each has been charged with one count of conspiracy to commit mail fraud and honest services mail fraud. Prosecutors allege the parents paid small fortunes to William "Rick" Singer, a Newport Beach, Calif., college consultant who has pleaded guilty to four felony counts, to sneak their children into top universities with bribes, fake athletic credentials and rigged entrance exams.

COURT | 4

Do we trust the government to hold themselves accountable?

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Jim GOUVELLIS
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

children and don't cheat your neighbors or your customers. Keeping our worst instincts in check is a legitimate goal of government.

But just as humans have instincts and traits that need to be kept in check, so do governments. Too much authority, secrecy or arrogance can lead to a corrupt government.

Over the course of history several institutions evolved to keep government in check. Obviously, Democracy is a major check on government. Don't like your

elected official? Vote them out.

The press has also evolved as a fairly reliable check on government. Want to know what your city officials are doing at their meetings and behind closed doors? Don't wait for the government to tell you. It's not that government folks are dishonest. They just aren't motivated to encourage tons of people to show up at meetings or scrutinize their activities.

The natural reflex of many government officials is to keep things on the down low,

maintain a low profile and hope the public doesn't complain too much.

That's why years ago, we passed laws, not just here, but all over the country, that compelled governments to publicize their meetings, their bids, their tax increase proposals and just about every official action.

Public notices are important because they help keep government honest. Because newspapers are not beholden to government, they are a good third party source to publish those notices.

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notices both in print and online. All newspapers in the state post their legal notices on their own websites and a website operated by the state press association so everyone in the state can see every government public notice from every government in the state.

You can even ask the press association to email you notices from particular governments that you are interested in — at no charge.

This year, another state legislator is proposing a law that will allow city and county

JIM | 8

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CHARLIE SAYS
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'Nothing is urgent enough to bypass us'

Charlotte commissioner outraged by shelter bill dealings

By **BETSY CALVERT**
STAFF WRITER

A call for public funds never had county approval to financially support a private field house at Babcock Ranch, Charlotte County's lawyer confirmed.

"Perhaps it had the backing of several county commissioners," County Attorney Janette Knowlton said at Tuesday's commission meeting.

She explained: "You can only act by resolution, ordinance or by board action, so

I don't think it is correct to say that (legislation) had the backing of the Board of County Commissioners,"

Knowlton was responding to questioning by Commissioner Joe Tiseo. Tiseo has expressed outrage that a bill offering \$2 million of local funds is currently circulating in the state Legislature without the official backing of county government.

The bill also asks the state to give \$8 million; the

federal government to give \$2 million; and other funding sources of \$7.7 million (which includes \$3 million from FPL); with the promise that the field house at



GRANT

Babcock Ranch in Charlotte County would double as a regional storm shelter in times of need with its higher elevation and more inland location. Charlotte County does not currently have any hurricane shelters certified by the American Red Cross. The state uses Red Cross standards to evaluate shelters for safety.

Tiseo has said that Babcock President Syd Kitson asked Tiseo independently if he would support the county paying \$2 million for a field house. Tiseo said he could not promise that amount of money. At the time of this meeting, Tiseo said he did not know about any proposed legislation.

Tiseo said he learned after the meeting that Kitson and Rep. Michael Grant, (R-Port

Charlotte), had already filed a bill (HB 3139). The bill has an associated Appropriations Request stating "Charlotte County commission recognizes the immense need for a shelter to serve local residents and has made this one of their top legislative priorities."

"Nobody uses the authority of this board without our consent," Tiseo told his fellow board members.

"Nothing is urgent enough to bypass us. You have an idea, you bring it to the commissioners. You make your case. You get your votes

and move on. That's how it works."

"I was not afforded the opportunity and neither were the taxpayers afforded the opportunity to vet this thing... We need to do something about this gentlemen, today."

Kitson told the Sun earlier this month that the matter did not go before the Charlotte County Commission as a whole. But he stressed nothing was

done behind closed doors.

"There has been no secret with anybody, anywhere," he said. "We had a deadline to submit the request of funding. We had no choice."

The legislative session is only 60 days, he noted, and

it was either submit, or miss a year of opportunity. "I want to make this absolutely clear. This has a long way to go," Kitson has said.

Meanwhile, Grant told the Sun earlier this month that he operates under separate authority from the county.

At this latest confrontation by Tiseo, two of the other four commissioners opted to explain their lack of outrage.

"I appreciate what you're saying," said Commissioner Stephen R. Deutsch, "but that's not our responsibility. That happened at the state level."

"This is like someone going out and saying, 'Hey, this is how Joe Tiseo feels,' and they didn't ask you," Deutsch suggested.

Truex disagreed that the



NAPLES DAILY NEWS FILE PHOTO

Syd Kitson, CEO of Kitson & Partners, speaks at an infrastructure and growth summit held recently at Babcock Ranch.

legislation lacks county support.

"A regional shelter is a priority of this board, and it was approved unanimously in a vote 5-0 as part of our legislative agenda," Truex said. "To say that we support a regional shelter is a fact."

Truex referred to the county's legislative agenda, which includes support for regional shelters, but has no mention of a specific shelter in Babcock, nor of financial support.

Truex said he is open to a vote by the board at a

future date.

All of Southwest Florida, Charlotte County in particular, lacks shelter space that is not in a flood zone. Babcock is a large development that opened in 2018 with a targeted population of 50,000. It is located many miles from coastal land in the previously undeveloped eastern part of the county.

So far, the bill has received a favorable response in Tallahassee passing through the Transportation & Tourism Appropriations Subcommittee March 5.

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Sarasota County schools have suicide resources

Three suicides involving Newtown, Parkland survivors prompt schools to remind students of mental health help

STAFF REPORT

SARASOTA – The Sarasota County School District is reminding students and families about its mental health resources in the wake of three recent suicides connected to the Parkland and Newtown school shootings

"With this week's passing of two former Parkland students and a Sandy Hook parent affected by loss, we are reminded of the need for extended services not only in schools, but throughout the community," said

Superintendent Todd Bowden, in a statement.

"Suicide is a complex dynamic that requires many prevention efforts, including attention from school staff, families and communities," he added. "We are thankful to Barancik Foundation for providing our students access to the Crisis Text Line should they need to speak with a counselor whenever they need one."

Crisis Text Line, a confidential 24/7 service, provides immediate support to those in distress. Students can text 'HERE4U' to 741741

to be connected with a trained counselor.

The service is available to all students in Sarasota County through a grant from Barancik Foundation, according to a district news release. Signs are displayed in school bathrooms, media centers and hallways to remind students of the service.

The National Association of School Psychologists recommends the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline as an alternate resource available to students and families.

By calling 1-800-273-TALK (8255), students have 24-7 access to counselors.

The Association also offers free online resources for families in both English and Spanish.

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SCANDAL

FROM PAGE 1

But there are students that do feel passionately about the issue, even if it hasn't been reported at their own school.

"It's kind of annoying, because those kids are born into rich families so they have guaranteed access to an education — financially — so all they need to do is try a little and do well in school and they're set," said Gabriela Rivas, a student at FGCU. "So, it's like damn, just put some effort into it and you'll get into school anyway."

Other students say the scandal uncovers unfairness in admissions at some schools.

"I feel like it's unfair to students who work hard to get into schools like USC," said Connor Mason, a senior at FGCU. "But they don't get in because their parents don't bribe the school."



PHOTO PROVIDED

"No one has to bribe to get in here."

— FGCU President Mike Martin

FGCU ADMISSIONS

FGCU has a student body of about 15,000, give or take a couple hundred transfers, which doesn't even come close to larger, nearby schools like University of South Florida or University of Central Florida.

In its 21 years as a public university, FGCU has grown at a fairly constant level. Being a new university comes with both benefits and drawbacks, but it has been a particularly appealing spot for high schoolers since 2013 March Madness, when FGCU earned the moniker "Dunk City," according to Marc Laviolette, senior director of undergraduate admissions at FGCU.

Laviolette has been at FGCU since 1998, just one year after the school opened. He's had eight different jobs at FGCU, but has been in his current role for over 14 years.

When asked about the situation at the University of Southern California in which college admissions requirements were allegedly circumvented through fraudulent athletics categorization, Laviolette doesn't see something like that happening at FGCU.

"I can see that working at some of the larger, elite institutions, but that would not work here at FGCU," Laviolette said. "The issues there are coaches in these larger Division I elite schools, they have a lot of control over who gets in."

"They're basically told, 'you can admit so many students, and you decide who you want to admit,' and the admissions office may or may not have final say on who gets in," he said.

STORY STAYS IN SPOTLIGHT

The scandal has made national headlines and grabbed social media attention, which continues as criminal cases progress in court.

"It's been interesting to see (the admissions scandal) explode, and you can click on it minute-by-minute and there's a whole other blast out there," Martin said. "It comes with the times."

But just because cases of admission fraud haven't been publicized doesn't mean it hasn't happened in the past. When it comes to higher education, donors are a pivotal part of just about every institution.

In most cases, donors get their name on a building. In other cases, donors may want something more.

"I think (the admissions scandal) has happened before, in one way or another," Martin said. "I don't doubt that there's been cases of this for a long, long time. I happen to have a friend who told me that he was offered \$350,000 at what was not a terribly elite college, to get two students in."

The question remains, how many people got away with bypassing college admissions before it made national news?

Would I be getting my college education if this happened at my school?

Sean C. Porter is an intern with the Sun in Charlotte Harbor and attends FGCU as an undergraduate student in Fort Myers. He can be reached at Sean.Porter@yoursun.com.

'You should prove that you deserve to be there'

By LIZ HARDAWAY

STAFF WRITER

PORT CHARLOTTE — Skylar Rupert, 18, did over 300 hours of community service, wrote a 500-word essay, studied four months each for both the SAT and ACTs, earned the Bright Futures Florida academic scholarship and got straight-A's all throughout high school.

So, yeah, it's pretty obvious that Rupert earned her spot in Florida Polytechnic University.

But as shown in the recent college admission cheating scandal, including two celebrity actresses, some parents bribed their kid's way into college in lieu of impressive grades or honest test scores.

"The admissions process should be based on the transcript," Rupert said. "You should prove that you deserve to be there."

And, Rupert has an idea what should happen to potential bribe money.

"That should go to the people who can't afford to go there," she said.

Even though Rupert received a scholarship for tuition, her books, room and board and other necessities for college are her monetary responsibility.

Rupert currently goes to Florida Southwestern Collegiate High School at the Charlotte campus, and got accepted to all the colleges to which she applied.

She plans to major in mechanical engineering this fall.

Email: Liz.Hardaway@yoursun.com

COURT

FROM PAGE 1

A day earlier, Rudy Meredith, the former Yale women's soccer coach, admitted to taking bribes from parents and pleaded guilty to charges of fraud and conspiracy. A dozen coaches, university officials, school administrators and teachers were arraigned in Boston federal court Monday and pleaded not guilty.

None of the 15 parents who appeared before Kelley on Friday indicated whether they would plead guilty or not guilty, nor were they expected to.

There were, to name a few, I-Hsin "Joey" Chen, wearing an electric yellow vest and accompanied by a woman toting an enormous Louis Vuitton bag, who listened to Kelley's instructions with the help of a Mandarin interpreter; Michelle Janavs, the Newport Coast philanthropist whose family developed the Hot Pocket; Elisabeth Kimmel, a television executive and adviser to a popular San Diego brewery; Marci Palatella, the chief executive of a liquor distribution company and wife of former San Francisco 49ers guard Lou Palatella; and two couples: Gregory and Marcia Abbott, and Diane and Todd Blake.

They were all barred from speaking with their co-defendants without their lawyers present, but Kelley made an exception for the Abbotts and the Blakes.

For the sake of efficiency, the defendants went before the judge three at a time. Few of the defendants or their attorneys said anything beyond the requisite "Yes, your honor."

But squabbles between the prosecution and defense over travel restrictions occasionally flared into debates about the strength of the case itself.

In arguing for why his client, Gamal Abdelaziz, should be allowed to travel to Mexico for business, Brian Kelly said the former Wynn executive will not abscond because he believes he can fight the government's account of his alleged crimes — and win.

Kelly, a former prosecutor in the Massachusetts U.S. attorney's office, said the government's case rested on one "deeply compromised" witness: Singer, who, Kelly noted, has admitted to obstructing justice.

"This is a winnable case for my client, and he intends to fight it and win," Kelly said.

Kelley allowed Abdelaziz to travel abroad occasionally for business, as long as he surrenders his passport between court-approved trips.

Attorneys for Bill McGlashan, a private equity executive, asked the judge to allow him to go to Mexico for a family vacation, saying the

seventh-generation Californian was no flight risk.

The vacation had been planned months in advance, and the prosecutors' refusal to let McGlashan enjoy an international holiday with his family was merely "punitive," said Jack W. Pirozzolo, one of McGlashan's attorneys.

Eric Rosen, a federal prosecutor, fired back, saying McGlashan had committed a serious crime and "knew exactly what he was doing."

Rosen laid out the evidence against McGlashan: flight and phone records placing him and his son in Los Angeles the weekend he took his SAT during a two-day extended period; financial records showing he paid Singer's charity \$50,000; and wiretapped phone calls "in which he essentially acknowledged the cheating," Rosen said.

"In terms of the 'side door' scam," Rosen said, referring to Singer's admitted scheme to bribe university coaches and officials to recruit the children of his clients as athletes, "the calls are devastating."

Rosen said they show McGlashan agreed to pay \$250,000 to have his son accepted to the University of Southern California as a football recruit, that he knew about Singer's plans to use photo-editing software to put his son's face onto a stock image of a football player, and that he sent Singer two photos for that purpose — one of his son running, the other of him playing in the family's backyard.

Rosen said the government has records of a text McGlashan allegedly sent Singer in late September 2018, asking when he would know if his son had been admitted to USC. Rosen disclosed that McGlashan didn't go through with the recruiting scam because he was told in October 2018 that Singer was being investigated by the FBI and the IRS.

Rosen's rundown of the government's case against McGlashan prompted a retort from Pirozzolo, his attorney.

"I want to make it crystal clear we contest" the prosecution's account, Pirozzolo said, adding that Rosen's opposition to letting McGlashan go on vacation with his family was "entirely punitive and totally inappropriate."

Rosen, for his part, noted that McGlashan owns a \$12 million home in Montana that would be a serviceable getaway.

Kelley ruled against allowing McGlashan to take his vacation abroad.

All 15 parents in court Friday waived their rights to a preliminary hearing. An additional dozen parents will make their first appearances in Boston on Wednesday, including actresses Felicity Huffman and Lori Loughlin.

IMG Academy director facing 40 years in prison

By CARLOS R. MUNOZ

BRADENTON HERALD-TRIBUNE

SARASOTA — IMG Academy college entrance exam director Mark Riddell, a Sarasota High graduate, could face up to 40 years in a federal prison if convicted of two counts of fraud in the college admissions scam that's captured national attention.

And one Sarasota attorney says Riddell has little power to negotiate a plea.

"If you're in state court you can negotiate a plea deal with the prosecutor," said Jeff Young, a former assistant state attorney. "You can't do a plea bargain with the feds. They can only change the charges."

Riddell is one of 50 people from across the country swept up in the college admissions cheating scam. Among the defendants are actresses Felicity Huffman and Lori Loughlin, and chief executives, real estate moguls and doctors.

Riddell, a 36-year-old test-taking whiz who is alleged to have aided or corrected the ACT and SAT tests for the children of wealthy parents, has been charged with conspiracy to commit mail fraud and honest services fraud, and conspiracy to commit money laundering that each carry sentences up to 20 years with three years of supervised release. That could also carry a fine of \$750,000 or twice the value of property involved or profit gained.

According to prosecutors, from 2011 to February 2019, Riddell allegedly conspired with William "Rick" Singer to rig standardized tests. Singer allegedly bribed test administrators to allow Riddell to secretly take exams in place of actual students, or to replace students' responses with his own. He used the facade of a charitable organization to conceal the nature and source of the bribes to test administrators and the payments made to him, court documents show.

Yale rescinds student's admission in wake of national bribery scandal

By NICOLAS RONDINONE

THE HARTFORD COURANT

HARTFORD, Conn. — Yale University has rescinded the admission of one student in connection with a sweeping scandal revealed this month that also implicated the university's former soccer coach.

Thomas Conroy, a spokesman for the university, said Monday morning that the unnamed student's admission was revoked in connection with the scandal, but did not elaborate how the student was associated with the university. It's not immediately clear if the university believes any other students were involved in the scandal that led to the indictment of dozens of people paying fortunes to get their children into elite colleges.

The former Yale women's soccer coach, Rudy Meredith, was among those indicted in the admission scandal that prosecutors say was orchestrated by California businessman William "Rick" Singer.

According to court documents, Singer took a \$1.2 million bribe from a parent to get a student into Yale.

At the time the indictments were announced in mid-March, Conroy said: "As the indictment makes clear, the Department of Justice believes that Yale has been the victim of a crime perpetrated by its former women's soccer coach. The university has cooperated fully in the investigation and will continue to cooperate as the case moves forward."

Meredith, who resigned in November after serving 24 years as the Yale women's soccer coach, was accused of taking a \$400,000 check from the family of a Yale applicant he ensured would be put on the team, federal court documents show. Meredith, who has agreed to plead guilty to charges including wire fraud, worked with Singer, prosecutors said.

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MEMBER FDIC

OBITUARIES

CHARLOTTE

Colonel James C. Bowden, Jr.

Colonel James C. Bowden, Jr., US Army, Retired, age 91, of Punta Gorda, Florida, passed away in his sleep on Saturday, March 9, 2019.

Jim was born in Humbolt, South Dakota, the third of four children of James Clare and Lillie Bowden. They were farmers, and as Jim would say, dirt poor. He grew up in a house without plumbing or electricity, luxuries that were not added to their home until Jim was in high school.

Jim was drafted into the Army in 1945 when he was 18. He was training for the invasion of Japan when, to his relief, the war ended. Jim finished his stint in the Army, came home and enrolled at the University of South Dakota in Vermillion. Jim was a good student and athlete. He played basketball, football, and ran track, at one time breaking a state record.

Jim earned his officer's commission through the Army ROTC program and after graduation was sent to Korea where he was wounded in action. Though he suffered permanent disability, he was able to continue his military career. He received a Master's Degree from American University and became an Army Intelligence Officer, specializing in the Soviet Union and Russian language. Among Jim's favorite assignments were working on the Airborne Command Post, and teaching Russian at West Point.

In 1951, Jim married his sweetheart, Renee Helen Berridge. They had 3 children, Terri Lynn, who died as an infant of cystic fibrosis, Scott and Lori. After Renee passed away, Jim married Virginia Agather, a widow with 3 children of her own, Martin, Kristen and Stephen. Sustained by the love and guidance of Jim and Ginny, the two families quickly became one.

In 1972, Jim retired from the Army and began his second career as an insurance executive in suburban Chicago. After retiring for a second time, he and Ginny spent their time between their home in Florida and their summer cabin in Cass Lake, Minnesota.

Jim Bowden loved life. He had a no-fuss common sense, but was quick to smile, tell a joke, shake a stranger's hand and introduce himself. He had many good friends, was generous, kind and loved his family deeply. He loved to fish, but loved to golf even more. He was a dedicated member of Faith Lutheran Church, enjoyed singing in the church choir and the Charlotte Chorale, and was a long-time member of Twin Isles Country Club. He often marveled that a farm kid from such humble beginnings could grow up to see the world

and live such an extraordinary life.

Jim Bowden is survived by Virginia, his wife of 48 years; his children Scott Bowden (Sharmon) of Wheaton, IL, Lori Bowden (Steve Miksis) of Santa Rosa, CA, Martin Agather (Maxine) of St. Louis Park, MN, Kristen Rosenwinkel (Mark) of Villa Park, IL, and Stephen Agather (Elizabeth) of Raleigh, NC; along with 11 grandchildren. He is preceded in death by his parents, his first wife, Renee, daughter Terri, and sister, Connie.

A memorial service is scheduled for April 6th, 2019 at 10:30 am at Faith Lutheran Church, 4005 Palm Drive, Punta Gorda, FL, 33950 with a reception following the service at Twin Isles Country Club, 301 Madrid Blvd, Punta Gorda, FL. If so desired, memorials may be made to Faith Lutheran Church, or your favorite charity. Arrangements were made by Larry Taylor Funeral and Cremation Services.

Alice Joanne Buzzell

Alice Joanne (Hart) Buzzell, 86, went to be with her Savior on Friday, March 22, 2019.

She was born in Kalamazoo, Michigan on May 12, 1932 and graduated from Otsego High School in 1950.

Alice married Robert Buzzell on June 28, 1952 in Otsego and celebrated 66 years of marriage. Alice earned a bachelor's degree from Western Michigan University, with honors, in Education. She received her MA in 1973 from Michigan State University. She taught elementary school for Manistee Public Schools and retired from teaching in 1991. Alice enjoyed singing in the Manistee Methodist Church choir. She loved the outdoors and was an avid fisherwoman. Alice and Bob, retired to Punta Gorda, Florida in 1992. They traveled from coast to coast and spent their retirement years camping with fellow teachers.

She is survived by her best friend and husband, Robert N. Buzzell; and their children, Steven Buzzell (Mary Lynn), Mark Buzzell (Kate), and Karen Lindeman (Paul); 8 grandchildren; and 16 great-grandchildren.

A celebration of life will be held at Friendship Methodist Church in Punta Gorda FL on April 3, 2019 at noon.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to the Friendship Methodist Church.

Barbara Morrell

Barbara Morrell, 74, of Punta Gorda passed away March 23, 2019. She was the daughter of George and Virginia Jacobs, born March 27, 1945 in Brooklyn, NY. She came to this area from Crete, IL where she was an office manager for Balmoral Woods Golf



and live such an extraordinary life.

Course for many years before retiring. Barbara and her husband, Bob, began coming to Punta Gorda in 1991. She was an avid reader, enjoyed planting and tending to her flowers, and loved to traveling with her husband. She was of the Catholic faith.

Barbara will be greatly missed by her husband of 41 years, Bob Morrell; daughter, Vicky Pommier; sister, Kathy Utz; niece Katy Brownley; and nephew, Andy Utz.

No services are planned. Memorial donations may be made to the Alzheimer's Assoc. (alz.org). To express condolences to the family, please visit www.LTaylorFuneral.com and sign the online guest book. Arrangements are by Larry Taylor Funeral and Cremation Services.

Olga R. Sabo

Olga R. Sabo, 99, of Port Charlotte, Florida died on Tuesday, March 26, 2019 at Port Charlotte Rehabilitation Center.



Olga was born Feb. 9, 1920 in Depew, New York to Lester and Rose Pandey.

She moved to Port Charlotte with her husband Gaylord Sabo in 1973 from College Park, Maryland.

Olga was retired a retired budget and fiscal clerk for the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Beltsville, MD. Member of the National Association of Retired Federal Employees and the Port Charlotte United Methodist Church. In earlier years she volunteered at the church and the Cultural Center of Charlotte County.

There are no immediate survivors. She was preceded in death by her husband Gaylord; and a son, Gerald Sabo.

Memorial services will be held at 2 p.m. on Friday, April 5, at the Port Charlotte United Methodist Church, 21075 Quesada Ave., Port Charlotte, FL 33952. Interment will follow at Restlawn Memorial Gardens in Port Charlotte.

Friends may visit online at www.robersonfh.com to extend condolences. Arrangements by Roberson Funeral Home & Crematory Port Charlotte Chapel.

James Randall Skinner

James Randall Skinner passed away at home surrounded by loved ones on Friday, March 22, 2019. He was born in Hope, Arkansas to Jim and Lillian Skinner on



June 8, 1940.

He worked for the City of Lewisville, Texas for over 30 years and retired as Director of Health & Code. He and Kimber moved to beautiful Punta Gorda where he continued his hobby and love of working out at the gym where

he was an inspiration to others. He will be remembered as a kind, generous and likable soul who loved people, music and giving to others.

James is survived by his wife of 23 years, Kimber; beloved children, Cristy (Bill), Randy (Marilyn), Leslie (Brent); step-children, Heather (Arne), and Ryan; grandchildren, Shasten (Richie), Callie (Nick), Trevor, Sean, Alex and Sebastian; great-grandchild, Ivar; and loving brother-in-law, Ron; and many cherished friends. He was preceded in death by his parents; and baby daughter, Cheryl Ann. He will be greatly missed.

ENGLEWOOD

Pierina Torza LaFrancis

Mrs. Pierina "Patty" Torza LaFrancis, 87, of Winston-Salem, passed away at her home on Wednesday, March 20, 2019.

She was born in Hartford, Connecticut on Dec. 6, 1931, to the late Peter Torza and Angelina Palumbo Torza. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Robert C. LaFrancis and two brothers, Camile and Felice Torza.

Patty is survived by her daughter, Angelina LaFrancis of Clemmons, North Carolina; a son, Robert LaFrancis of Rocky Hill, Connecticut; three grandchildren, Michele, Anthony, and Ryan; one sister, Catherine Sardinha; and two brothers, Acky and Hugo Torza.

Patty was a devoted wife and beloved mom who loved her family very much, including her cats, Scooter, Buddy, and Sweet Pea. A funeral mass will be held at 11 a.m. on Thursday, March 28, at Holy Family Catholic Church, 4820 Kinnamon Rd., Winston-Salem, NC 27103.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial contributions be made to Mountain Valley Hospice and Palliative Care, 320 West Maple St., P.O. Box 1267, Yadkinville, NC 27055. Hayworth-Miller Silas Creek Chapel is assisting the family of Mrs. LaFrancis. Online condolences may be made at www.hayworth-miller.com.

NORTH PORT

Donna R. Ford

Donna R. Ford, 75, of North Port, Florida passed away on Wednesday, March 27, 2019.

She was born on Sept. 17, 1943 in Medford, Massachusetts.

Donna loved people and enjoyed many years working in retail. She was a member of Amvets Post 312 and VFW 8203 of North Port, Florida.



Donna was an avid bingo player, fisherwoman and volunteered for Toys for Tots with her husband, Clem. They moved to North Port in 1995 from Middleton, Massachusetts.

Donna is greatly missed by her husband of 39 years, Clem; daughters, Wendy (David) Antaya of Gardner, Massachusetts, Susan (Rick) Kolozsi of Murrells Inlet, South Carolina and, Lori (Greg) Pace of Bradford, Massachusetts; sister, Shirley (Sonny) Blair of New Hampshire and twin brother, Doug Crane of Burlington, Massachusetts; 9 grandchildren; and 1 great-grandchild. She was preceded in death by her grandson, Marty Johnson Jr and sister, Lois.

Donald N. Hughes

Donald N. Hughes, 84, of North Port, Florida passed away on Tuesday, March 26, 2019 at Fawcett Memorial Hospital in Port Charlotte, Florida.



Donald was born Jan. 12, 1935 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

He was a Korean War veteran who served in the U.S. Army. Donald was an avid golfer who loved to spend time with his friends. His most important times was spending them with his loving companion, Mary Jane. He was a wonderful man who will be missed dearly by all who loved and knew him.

Survivors include his loving son, Scott Hughes of Sewell, New Jersey; his sister, Alma Alexander; his brother, Carl Hughes; his three grandchildren,

Shaine, Jessica and Dylan; and his loving companion, Mary Jane Trimbach.

A Memorial Service will be held at a later date by the family.

Friends may visit online at www.robersonfh.com to extend condolences to the family. Arrangements are by Roberson Funeral Home & Crematory Port Charlotte Chapel.

Jody L. Hutchinson

Jody L. Hutchinson, 59, passed away peacefully on Saturday, March 23, 2019 at her home in North Port, Florida.

She was born in 1959 in Sandusky, Ohio.

In 1989, Jody married Tim Hutchinson. They created a lasting love story and many memories. Jody was a manager for Sarasota County's Food and Nutrition Services for many years. She was dedicated to her family, her work and her husband.

In 2014, Jody was diagnosed with Multiple System Atrophy, a rare, terminal neurological disease. Throughout the course, she maintained a positive attitude and strength.

Jody is survived by her husband of 30 years, Tim Hutchinson; a son, Cory Hutchinson; her mother, Peggy Walter; and brothers, Michael and Jeffrey Walter.

A Celebration of Jody's life will take place on Friday, April 5, 2019 from 4 p.m.-7 p.m. at Farley Funeral Home in North Port.

The family asks that in lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the MSA Coalition at www.multiplesystematrophy.org.

Farley Funeral Home in North Port is handling the arrangements. Please share prayers, condolences and memories with the family at www.farleyfuneralhome.com.

Words of Comfort

It is good for us that we sometimes experience adversity and sorrow, for they often make our hearts understand that we are only strangers and sojourners here for a time.



- Anonymous

The experience you have here on earth is only a small fraction of time, compared to the infinite time you will spend in heaven. Be comforted knowing what adversity you have, is but a wisp of time to the joy that awaits you in heaven.

- Michael Dunn-Rankin

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VIEWPOINT

OUR VIEW

Affordable-housing crunch needs a bigger solution

The local housing market has rebounded. Prices are up and construction is booming. If you're recently retired and looking for your home in paradise, you have a lot of options.

If you're still working and looking for an affordable place to live ... well, good luck.

According to Realtor Robert Goldman of Michael Saunders & Co., the median selling price of a residential property in Sarasota County in February was \$260,000. (The median is the point at which half the selling prices were higher and half were lower.)

A 10-percent down payment on a \$260,000 house is \$26,000. Someone making \$8.46 an hour, Florida's minimum wage, earns \$17,597 a year working 40-hour weeks. There's probably no 10-percent down payment for any house in that person's future.

It's worse for renters.

According to ApartmentList.com, the median rent for a two-bedroom unit in Venice in February was \$1,300, which was actually down 0.4 percent compared to 2018.

Using the rule of thumb that you shouldn't spend more than 30 percent of your income on rent, an individual or family would need to make \$4,333 a month — \$52,000 a year — to be able to afford that median-rent unit.

Again, a minimum-wage worker makes \$17,596.80 a year. Thirty percent of that is \$440 a month. In other words, it would take the equivalent of three minimum-wage incomes to be able to afford that two-bedroom apartment.

'Cost burdened'

That's why more than 78,000 households in Sarasota county — four out of 10 — are "cost burdened": paying more than 30 percent of their income for housing.

Now, there are units available for less, though not in the \$440 price range. And many potential renters, especially couples, make more than minimum wage, though maybe not \$52,000 a year.

Higher-paying jobs would help, but even if the minimum wage rose to \$15 an hour, that's just \$31,200 a year — \$780

a month for rent, using the 30 percent rule. Most one-bedroom apartments cost more.

Here's the takeaway: It's hard, and getting harder, for the people whose labor is needed here to be able to afford to live and work here.

That's a very worrisome fact. More needs to be done about it. Much more.

This statement from the county's 2016 Housing Affordability Major Initiative spells out its philosophy on the subject: "Government has a role in the private sector production of affordable housing." The city sees it essentially the same way: Private enterprise, it's pretty much on you.

So their role has largely taken the form of incentives — density bonuses, fee reductions — to encourage, and sometimes require, developers to include affordable housing units in new communities.

According to a recent county housing affordability update, that has resulted in more than 3,000 affordable housing units being included in eight recently approved developments (none in the Venice area).

That's good news, certainly, but only to an extent.

About 70 percent of those 78,320 cost-burdened households are classified as low income — making 80 percent or less of area median income (AMI) — to extremely low income — less than 50 percent of AMI.

But only about one-third of those 3,000-plus affordable units are targeted toward that group, and they have a "maximum rental affordability" of \$1,406 — higher than the median rent that many already can't afford. The other two-thirds of "affordable" units are for people who earn more.

Carrots

Money, of course, is the main issue.

Developers make more by building nice, big homes than by constructing apartment buildings.

The city and the county have little, if any, to spend on housing, and they vastly prefer reducing or waiving fees, which affects future income, to paying out money now.

The state puts money from

documentary stamp sales into housing funds and then the Legislature raids them every year to pay for other things. Federal funding can't be counted on year to year either.

What's the answer? We wish we had one.

It's not that local governments aren't trying. It's that the carrots the city and county offer haven't proved as enticing to developers as they would like.

The newest one is a county ordinance allowing the construction of "half-unit" dwellings of only 750 square feet in multi-family districts. We'd prefer that working people be able to afford "whole" units, but this could help — assuming any half-units actually get built.

Any addition to the affordable housing inventory is an improvement, but a real solution means adding thousands more units every year.

Unless they can persuade developers to do that, local governments will need to find a way to play a bigger role in providing truly affordable housing.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Feeding public with hate-filled lies

Editor:

Forget egg on the face of congressional Democrats, media and letter-writers who bored us for two years with crystal-ball Russia collusion hysteria and substitute a \$25 million taxpayer-funded omelet.

Some of the above (who have a close relationship with an equine's posterior), a few months ago tried to pass a law to protect Mueller and now call foul because he gave an honest report and continue to feed the public their hate-filled lies.

Sally Meier
North Port

It was all just illusion

Editor:

They made an allusion to Donald's collusion. It was made in profusion which caused much confusion. Then came the conclusion: It was all an illusion.

Tom Curran
Englewood

Socialism means degrading of military

Editor:

Marxist socialists, like Bernie Sanders, and Democratic socialists like Nancy Pelosi, love to tell us over and over how much life is so much better in Democratic socialist countries.

This argument is reinforced by media in articles such as Joe Conason's Viewpoint in Saturday's paper.

There's one major reason countries in Conason's article can survive as Democratic socialist governments. Very small military budgets.

To a one, they all depend on our military umbrella for survival. Even with high, stifling tax rates, and President Trump's brow beating, most NATO members rarely meet their minimum payments.

Just last week, NATO member



Germany, one of Europe's most successful Democratic socialist countries, admitted they couldn't make minimum payment this year.

So how can we adopt Democratic socialism? In two ways:

Print trillions more to pay for socialist programs. Then in 10 or 15 years, we'll become another Venezuela.

Or, continue to follow Obama/Clinton's policies to downgrade our military to a point that it becomes defensive to us only.

In either case, our enemies, China and Russia, will move on all those Democratic socialist countries, leaving us as the only democracy left in the world.

I ask your readers, is this the future for America and our friends that you want?

Steve Wall
North Port

We will reap what we sow

Editor:

Ocasio-Cortez is depicted throwing up her hands saying, "In 12 years, the world is

coming to an end." Adherents chant in unison.

With 7.5 billion people, 11.5 billion by 2100, in the world, maybe, there are benefits from melting ice ... rain making arid places bloom.

Millions of years, before man, the earth cooled and warmed; there were jungles in Utah and ice in Florida.

The culprit is fossil fuels. About 120 years ago, people were living as they had lived for 2,000 years, the main mode of transportation was the horse, forests were denuded for firewood.

In 1880 there were 1.2 billion people in the world. The explosion of technology, lifestyle and population was caused by cheap energy. Cheap energy changed everything, the greatest change is how minds view the world. We are divorced from elemental things, adrift in paranoia and economic-political manipulation.

Energy comes from the sun, variations cause climate fluctuations. A dome filled with pollutants should block solar energy.

Most of the 7.5 billion people in the world live in cities. Cities are 10 degrees hotter than the

countryside. We have asphalted the world, one giant solar collector. The waving hand people propose black solar collectors that would cover 25 percent of the West as a solution.

I never believed in the apocalypse. I believed in the assent of man. I think, casually observing, man will eventually destroy himself. It is simply a matter of reaping what you sow.

Xavier Narutowicz
Punta Gorda

Cookie drive another success

Editor:

Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida would like to sincerely thank all those who purchased Girl Scout Cookies this year, as well as our retail partners who generously hosted cookie booths outside their storefronts. It's amazing what a huge impact a simple package of Girl Scout Cookies can have. And Charlotte County is all the better for it.

By participating in the largest girl-led business program in the world, Girl Scouts of all ages develop valuable skills, including goal setting, decision

making, money management, people skills, and business ethics, that help set them up of for a lifetime of personal and professional success. They not only discover their inner leadership potential but also use their earnings to fund troop projects and experiences, as well as important programming at the local level, such as travel, outdoor adventure, and science, technology, engineering, and math.

Many girls also put their earnings toward impactful community projects right in their own backyards, from supporting animal shelters and food banks to working with local and state legislators to change laws. And the proceeds stay local, meaning that when consumers purchase the delicious cookies that come from a registered Girl Scout, they're giving back to their wider community.

Though the 2019 cookie program has officially ended, the unique benefits to both girls and the larger community will continue for years to come. Thank you for helping us build girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

Mary Anne Servia
Girl Scout Council
Sarasota

Skipped storied IU in the NIT tourney

Editor:

Indiana University — the number one seed in the college NIT basketball tournament who kicked off play on a recent Tuesday evening — and your sports department doesn't see fit to include a write-up?

All other NIT games were covered that followed the Indiana game. Take a look at the Indiana license plates around Charlotte County seasonally. And then take into account the license plates of the other 14 teams in Big Ten who follow the performance of their conference teams.

Shame on you.

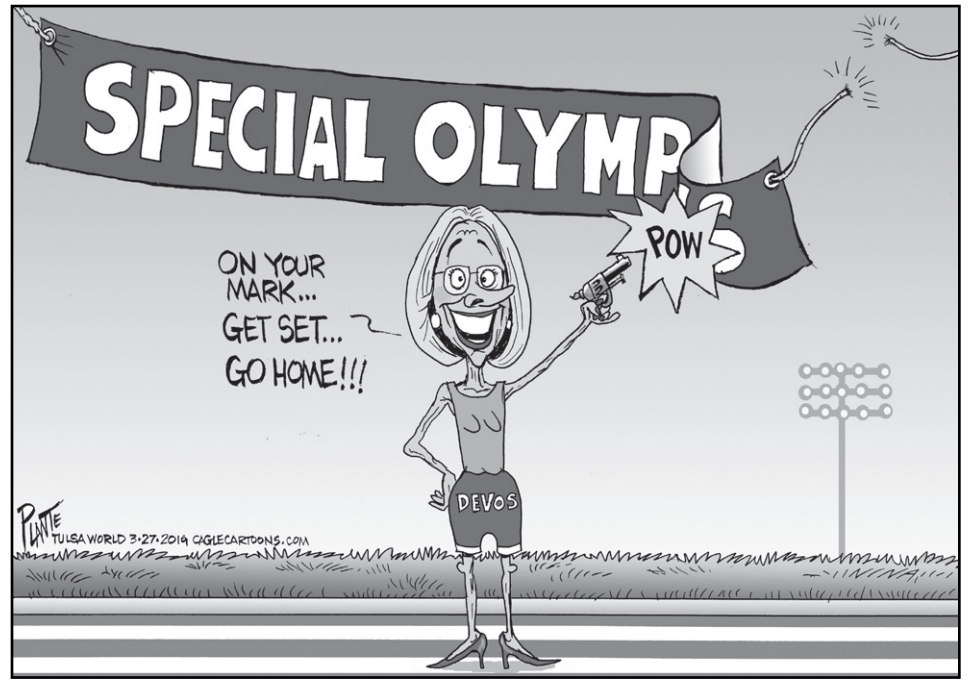
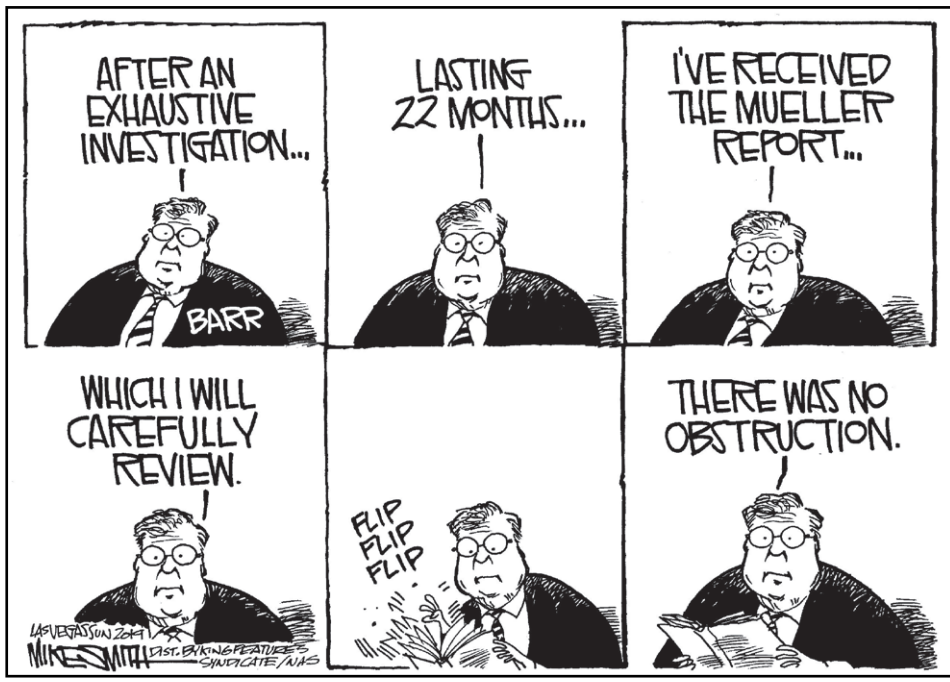
Betsy Yarbrough Donley
Port Charlotte

HOW TO SUBMIT A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Letters are welcome on virtually any subject, but we do have some rules. Please keep them to less than 250 words. Letters will be edited to length as well as for grammar and spelling. All letters must be signed with full name — not initials. An address and telephone number must be included. The phone number and address are not for publication, but must be provided. Due to the number of letters received, we are able to run only one letter per person per month.

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WEEK IN REVIEW



Mueller report still an indictment of administration

A thought experiment. Suppose that on March 24 — the day Attorney General William Barr publicly summarized the Mueller report — all of the results of the special counsel's probe that have dribbled out over the last two years had been revealed at once.

Americans would have discovered that a hostile foreign power had engaged in major intelligence operations designed to elect Donald Trump — something consistently denied by the president himself.

In this hypothetical, Robert Mueller would have simultaneously announced the indictment of 34 Russians and Americans — a network of espionage and corruption including hackers, Russian military officers and high-level operatives of the 2016 Trump campaign.

Suppose the report



Washington Post
Michael GERSON

had revealed that 14 Trump campaign officials had been in contact with Russian nationals, including the president's son, who had met with Russian operatives in an attempt to gain information harmful to Hillary Clinton's campaign.

Suppose it had been revealed that several Trump advisers and operatives had lied to the FBI and Congress in an attempt to conceal the extent of these contacts, and also that some of Trump's closest advisers — including his campaign chairman — were guilty of conspiracy and fraud.

Suppose it had been revealed that Trump himself, while a Republican

candidate, had continued to pursue a multimillion-dollar business deal to place a Trump Tower in Moscow. And that there was serious though not conclusive evidence that Trump obstructed justice during the Mueller investigation.

Yes, it would still be news that Mueller did not believe that Trump and his campaign had directly coordinated with Russia, and that Trump himself would not be indicted for a crime. But that would only be part of the story — a story of corruption, criminality and cover-up. The story of a presidential election that should have an asterisk explaining that the outcome may have been substantially influenced by a foreign power.

But all these disturbing facts did not come out at once. And Trump and his team provided a master class in controlling expectations. Trump

consistently set out the standard of judgment he wished — "No collusion! — in the knowledge that he was not personally guilty of collusion. And when this was (seemingly) confirmed by Mueller, Trump and his team declared unconditional victory.

This has led to an unusual circumstance. Trump supporters are doing a victory dance over the fact that he isn't a Russian agent, just a Russian stooge. And Trump's supporters are spiking the ball following an investigation that did not clear the president of obstruction charges. So it is still a legal judgment call whether or not the president is a crook.

Trump may not know much, but he knows lawsuits and legal proceedings. In this instance, he did not claim, "My staff has the highest ethical standards!" That would have been laughable.

He did not say, "My first choice for national security adviser wasn't a national security threat!" Because he was. Trump claimed, in essence, that he did not directly conspire with Russia to win an election. Then he cleared an ankle-high bar.

Though Trump and his team are savaging the media for its coverage of the scandal, the president is benefiting from its shallowness. Much news coverage is based on an electoral paradigm: Who won and who lost? These events are more complex.

Barr's summary of the Mueller report is the most favorable interpretation Trump is likely to get. The report itself may be a catalog of horrible judgment, unethical behavior and noncriminal corruption. It may put Trump Inc. in a very bad light. If and when it comes out in full. In the meantime, the Trump administration is defendant, judge and jury.

The full report, however, may require revised judgments from some of Trump's critics as well. Perhaps the president is not a foreign agent or a criminal mastermind. Perhaps he is a weak leader who surrounds himself with clowns and criminals. Perhaps his lack of character attracts and enables other corrupt men. Perhaps he is more pathetic than dictatorial, more fool than knave. Perhaps behind the compulsive, simplistic, narcissistic exterior there is a compulsive, simplistic, narcissistic interior. Perhaps he has moved beyond good and evil, enforcing only one code: loyalty to his person. Integrity and competence be damned.

All this may not be criminal. But it mocks our country in a different way.

Michael Gerson's email address is michaelgerson@washpost.com.

Nominees to the Trump-Russia collusion hall of shame

The news that special counsel Robert Mueller "did not find that the Trump campaign, or anyone associated with it, conspired or coordinated with the Russian government" has left a lot of people in Washington with a lot of explaining to do.

Put aside the rogues' gallery of reporters and pundits who assured us that Donald Trump had conspired with Vladimir Putin to steal the presidency. What is most insidious are those who did have access to classified intelligence and led Americans to believe that they had seen what we could not: actual evidence of Trump-Russia collusion.

Recall that in 2016, Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., released a letter to FBI Director James Comey claiming the FBI had proof of Trump-Russia collusion. "In my communications with you and



Washington Post
Marc A. THIESSEN

other top officials in the national security community, it has become clear that you possess explosive information about close ties and coordination between Donald Trump, his top advisors, and the Russian government," Reid declared. When asked what information Reid was referring to, a spokesman said, "There have been classified briefings on this topic. That is all I can say."

Trump has called for House Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff, D-Calif., to resign. He is absolutely correct. Schiff repeatedly said that his committee had dug up "plenty of evidence of collusion or

conspiracy." In March 2017, he said on "Meet the Press," "I can't go into the particulars, but there is more than circumstantial evidence now" and last May he told ABC that Trump's Russia conspiracy is of "a size and scope probably beyond Watergate."

Schiff is a disgrace. But he is not alone. Rep. Eric Swalwell, D-Calif., a member of the Intelligence Committee, said, "In our investigation, we saw strong evidence of collusion" and declared Trump an agent "working on behalf of the Russians." House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., claimed, "It's clear that the campaign colluded, and there's a lot of evidence of that." Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., a member of the Judiciary Committee, assured us last year that "the evidence is pretty clear that there was collusion between the

Trump campaign and the Russians." Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., a member of the Intelligence Committee, said, "There is no longer a question of whether this campaign sought to collude with a hostile foreign power to subvert America's democracy." And recently, the committee's vice chairman, Sen. Mark Warner, D-Va., declared that "enormous amounts of evidence" exist of collusion between Trump and Russia and that "there's no one that could factually say there's not plenty of evidence of collaboration or communications between Trump Organization and Russians." Except for Mueller, of course.

These comments by people with access to intelligence were shameful. But the most sinister of all is John Brennan, who used his authority as former CIA director to suggest that Trump was a traitor

and a compromised Russian asset. After Trump's Helsinki summit, Brennan declared "he is wholly in the pocket of Putin." When challenged by Chuck Todd on "Meet the Press," Brennan stood by his assessment. "I called (Trump's) behavior treasonous, which is to betray one's trust and aid and abet the enemy, and I stand very much by that claim."

This month, MSNBC's Lawrence O'Donnell told Brennan this investigation was "developing while you were still on the job" and asked, "Did you see enough at that stage to believe ... that that would result in indictments?" Brennan replied, "I thought at the time there was going to be individuals who were going to have issues with the Department of Justice. Yes." In a New York Times op-ed, he wrote that "Trump's claims of no collusion are, in a word, hogwash." Now, Brennan

feigns contrition. "I don't know if I received bad information, but I think I suspected there was more than there actually was," he said, adding, "I am relieved that it's been determined there was not a criminal conspiracy with the Russian government over our election."

Hogwash. He wanted it to be true, and he relied on his CIA credentials to convince Americans that it was. That is a violation of the public trust. Trump was right to revoke Brennan's security clearance. He is among the worst of the worst, the Trump-Russia collusion hall of shame. We have long since passed the point where Americans expect objectivity from the press. But we should hold our elected and appointed officials handling sensitive national security issues to a higher standard.

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An unexpected surprise for service

Army veteran gets new home, mortgage-free in Babcock Ranch

By **BRIANNA KWASNIK**
STAFF WRITER

PUNTA GORDA — As Sergeant Howard Appleby and his family turned onto Silverspur Drive in Babcock Ranch, he suggested the car pull over for the Patriot Guard Riders.

He had no idea the motorcycles were there to escort him to what would soon be his new home.

Sgt. Appleby, his wife Yoland, and their four children were greeted with applause as they stepped out of the car, led by Rusty Carroll, executive director of Operation FINALLY HOME.

The family thought they were meeting for their final interview with Operation FINALLY HOME and PulteGroup. They didn't expect to be shown the lot where their four-bedroom home will stand this summer. They didn't expect that home would be presented to them by Operation FINALLY HOME, Kitson & Partners and Babcock Ranch mortgage-free.

"We're going to build a house, it's going to turn into a home, and it's going to be gifted to the Appleby family mortgage-free,"

said Richard McCormick, president of PulteGroup Southwest Florida Division.

Sgt. Appleby covered his eyes in disbelief.

Appleby joined the Army in 2004 as a combat engineer. He was deployed to Afghanistan just one month after completing basic training.

During his first tour, he was struck with an IED and sustained a back injury, and was sent back to California.

In 2007, he was deployed once more to Afghanistan.

He encountered several IED blasts, resulting in a traumatic brain injury, PTSD, myofascial pain syndrome and migraines.

Appleby, his wife, and their four kids are currently living in Cape Coral. The family's new home is expected to be complete in July.

Sergeant Geoffrey Heath and his family received a home from Operation FINALLY HOME in Estero in 2016.

"It's exciting. I was at a loss for words when I found out about me," he said, "I can't wait to see the look on the guy's face."

Sgt. Heath served in the military for a decade and has served tours in Iraq



SUN PHOTO BY BRIANNA KWASNIK

Sgt. Appleby and his family arriving at the ceremony, where they soon after found out they would be getting a home mortgage-free.

and Afghanistan.

He has suffered multiple injuries as a result of multiple encounters with IED blasts. In 2006, he was shot and wounded, and in 2010 encountered a bomb which resulted in a brain injury and loss of vision in his right eye.

In 2016, his family was living in North Carolina, bouncing from home

to home when they got the call from Operation FINALLY HOME.

"It's always good to see something like this happen, it'll give him a peace of mind. I know we're here at."

Sgt. Heath spoke at the ceremony for Sgt. Appleby, and admitted he didn't know what to say while he was in the audience.

"It warms my heart to know he's being taken care of like this," he told the crowd of about 75 Friday. "The only thing I can say is congratulations. When they called me up, I couldn't wait to be here."

Sgt. Heath and Sgt. Appleby shared an embrace after the speech.

Then, after the ceremony, Sgt. Appleby and his

family walked through the foundation of the house, and into what will soon be their front yard. Sgt. Appleby, his wife, and three of their four children picked up a gold shovel and broke ground on their new home and future.

"Life is not a race, but a journey," Appleby said. "We've been searching, and we're finally home."

BODY

FROM PAGE 1

a friend on Washington Loop Road at his apartment, according to information from the sheriff's office.

Heck said Saturday the missing person investigation remained open.

It is not clear whether the area where the body was found had been previously searched for Jackson. Heck said Saturday she did not immediately have information to say.

At the crime scene Saturday, a group of spectators watched from down the road, but declined comment to the Sun.

The sheriff's office says anyone with information regarding the male body should call CCSO at 941-639-0013.

Last week, the sheriff's office said anyone with information on Jackson's whereabouts should call 941-639-2101.

Tips can also be submitted anonymously through the Sheriff's Office mobile app.

Email: Liz.Hardaway@yoursun.com

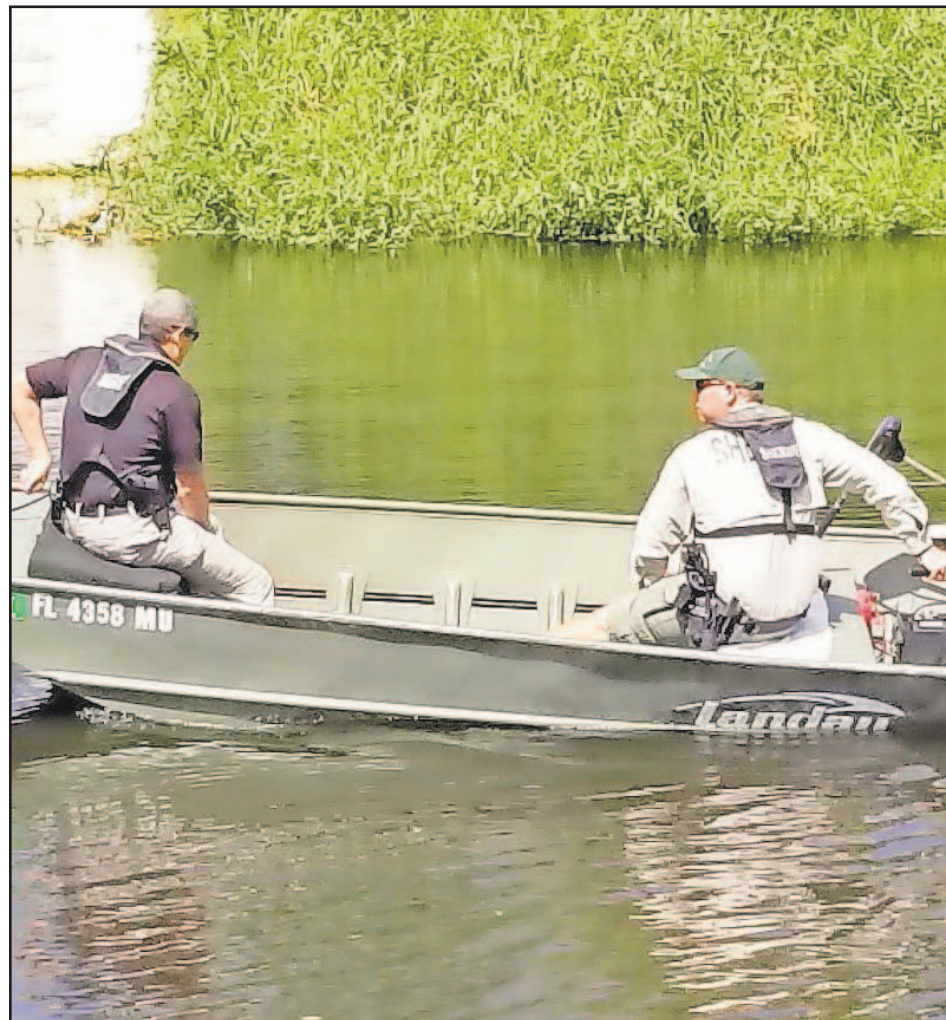


PHOTO PROVIDED

Marine Deputy Nate Edwards (right) runs the boat with Major Case Commander John Heck (left) to go recover the body.

POLICE BEAT

The information for Police Beat is gathered from police, sheriff's office, Florida Highway Patrol, jail and fire records. Not every arrest leads to a conviction and guilt or innocence is determined by the court system.

The Charlotte County Sheriff's Office reported the following arrests:

- Bernard Charles Neff III, 66, 12500 block of Pannikin Ave., Punta Gorda. Charges: DUI and knowingly driving while license suspended. Bond: \$7,500.

- Dominic Patrick Mucci, 56, 1100 block of Strasburg Dr., Port Charlotte. Charges: possession of cocaine, possession or use of drug paraphernalia and knowingly driving while license is suspended or revoked. Bond: \$5,500.

- Vitaliy N. Kolesnik, 31, of Orlando, Fla. Charges: operating a motor vehicle without a valid license, possession of not more than 20 grams of marijuana, and possession or use of drug paraphernalia. Bond: \$6,000.

- Alans Dionicio Serbellon Pena, 33, of Lehigh Acres, Fla. Charge: operating a motor vehicle without a valid license. Bond: \$1,000.

- Jose Pascual Diego, 27, of Fort Myers, Fla. Charge: operating a motor vehicle without a valid license. Bond: \$1,000.

- Amanda Michelle Byers, 42, of Venice, Fla. Charge: out of county warrant. Bond: \$5,000.

- Loretta Mae Miller, 33, 22200 block of Vick St., Punta Gorda. Charge: disorderly intoxication. Bond: \$1,000.

- Harold Earl Allen III, 38, homeless of Port Charlotte. Charge: trespass

on property other than structure or conveyance. Bond: none.

- Marie Christian Irons, 56, 22100 block of Belinda Ave., Port Charlotte. Charges: possession or use of drug paraphernalia, introduction of contraband into county detention facility, and DUI. Bond: \$6,000.

- Jacob Joseph Steinman, 26, homeless of North Port. Charges: retail theft of \$300 or more alone or coordinates with others, first degree larceny/petty theft of property \$100 to under \$300, resisting a law enforcement officer or merchant during retail theft and resisting an officer without violence. Bond: none.

- Jorge Alvarado-Carranza, 42, of Bradenton, Fla. Charge: driving with license expired more than six months. Bond: \$1,000.

The Punta Gorda Police Department reported the following arrests:

- Jason Lee Cole, 42, 25500 block of Tevestine Court, Punta Gorda. Charge: resisting officer without violence. Bond: \$3,500.

- Jordan Dwight Johnston, 25, 2400 block of Pelham Blvd., Port Charlotte. Charge: DUI. Bond: \$1,500.

- Arce Darryl Knight, 65, of Indiantown, Fla. Charge: second degree larceny/petty theft, first offense. Bond: \$2,500.

-Compiled by Liz Hardaway

JIM

FROM PAGE 1

governments to just post their notices on their own websites.

Florida Rep. Randy Fine, who represents Brevard County, introduced

legislation (HB 1235) to reduce the requirement of counties, cities and school districts to purchase public notices in printed newspapers and newspaper websites. Fine says it will save taxpayer dollars.

Maybe, but at what cost? The money our newspaper

makes from public notices is a very small part of our revenue. In fact, newspapers charge governments a lot less for public notices than a private business pays for advertising.

The money taxpayers pay for the publication of these notices is like

an insurance policy that governments will do their business in the sunshine.

I'm not sure what is driving Rep. Fine to push this bill but I would venture a guess that it really isn't about saving money for the taxpayer. In the 30 plus years I have been

newspapering, I have seen many politicians propose laws just like this. Often it is a result of the legislator getting mad at his local paper. I'm not sure if that's the case here, but I wouldn't be surprised if it was.

Allowing the government to control the

means of public notice is tantamount to giving up one of the safeguards we put in place to make sure government is dealing openly and fairly with its citizens.

If you agree, contact our local legislators and let them know.

Contact your local representative and tell them how you feel.

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Hearing Wednesday in Mosaic, DeSoto dispute

Should farmland in DeSoto County be rezoned for industrial mining?

By CRAIG GARRETT
ARCADIAN EDITOR

DeSoto County and Mosaic Fertilizer go before a dispute resolution expert on Wednesday, attempting to resolve differences over rezoning Mosaic farmland in DeSoto County to industrial mining. The special magistrate is to decide the impact of the DeSoto Board of County Commissioners on Mosaic when it voted against rezoning last July. (Procedural guidelines are listed at desotobocc.com)

The Arcadian asked Dennis Mader with People for Protecting Peace River Inc. (3PR) and Heather Nedley with Mosaic to define their opposing positions for our readers. Space allows for one answer. The full replies can be found at www.yoursun.com/Arcadian.

Question: Phosphate mining has a history in Florida. DeSoto County, in fact, is its home. What's wrong with continuing that?

Nedley: "Phosphate was discovered by Captain J. Francis LeBaron in the Peace River in 1881 and in 1889 Arcadia Phosphate Co. mined the first commercial phosphate in Florida. Mining is moving southward to reserves in Hardee, DeSoto and Manatee counties.

"Thirty years ago, 20+ companies were mining and a dozen manufacturing facilities were operating. Now, there's three manufacturing facilities and four mines operating. So, phosphate mining has been going on in Central Florida for more than 100 years and if you compare the past to the present, it is done

with much less intensity and greater environmental protections now. Being a responsible neighbor is important to our company. That starts with safe and reliable operations and extends to our economic impacts and employee contributions.

"As for what phosphate offers DeSoto County in the future? A lot. The University of Florida/IFAS completed a comprehensive economic impact study detailing what DeSoto could expect in terms of economic activity and jobs from Mosaic's operations. Some of the highlights include nearly \$20 million in state and local tax revenue, 200 jobs with a local multiplier of 777 jobs and an average wage of around \$95,000. Phosphate mining is significant economic driver representing 21 percent of total gross regional product and \$219.56 million in value added to the regional economy.

"Those opposed to mining will often reference a prior project which was an extension to an existing mine and claim that mining adds no new jobs. The DeSoto mine will be an entirely new facility. And, while we expect that some experienced employees will be necessary to bring the mine online, over the life of the facility we expect the majority of the employee base to come from DeSoto and the surrounding areas. As our mining has moved south over time, the regions contributing to our employee base have as well. Hardee County residents now make up a large portion of the employees at our mines, whereas that was not the case when mining was

predominantly taking place in Polk and Hillsborough counties.

"Our employees actively contribute to the communities where they live and work. Whether it's coaching a youth baseball team or volunteering at a local food pantry, their efforts and impact can be seen throughout Central Florida. Mosaic employees are proud of the work we do, the families we support and the benefits we provide to our operating areas.

"And our contributions go far beyond jobs. In association with our recent permit for the Ona mine in Hardee County, Mosaic agreed to fund an endowment for a forgivable loan program for Hardee County students seeking degrees in such fields as STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) or a technical trade certification. If the students remain in the county after receiving their degree or certification, the loan can be forgiven. This program will not only help the citizens of Hardee obtain a college degree, but it will also help the county build a skilled workforce to attract new employers. And, the company also agreed to help fund an infrastructure grant program that allows the county and its municipalities to apply for grants for infrastructure projects that help encourage economic opportunities in the county. These types of opportunities will be available to DeSoto County and its residents as well once we are operating here."

Mader: "Yes, phosphate mining has a history in Florida, but it's a dubious history at best. There is a great deal wrong with its

continuation because of the irremediable impacts to the natural environment and the vast scope of phosphate mining operations both above and below the ground.

"I grew up in south Lakeland on the Mulberry Highway (State Road 37) which had been mined continuously from the Lakeland city limits all the way to Mulberry and beyond. My father's first job when my family came to Florida in 1946 was with International Mineral and Chemicals. He was working as an engineer in the design of an industrial drier to remove clay particles from phosphate concentrate. He intensely disliked the industry and the town of Mulberry, which was a God-forsaken dusty crossroads and railroad stop dominated by fertilizer production plants, so he moved on after one year and ultimately went into business for himself. However, a great many of my peers growing up in Lakeland were the scions of phosphate and its allied industries executives and engineers - a privilege that bestowed on us practically free range all over mine property. It was just part of the wall paper growing up there, and we took it all for granted. There was no mandatory reclamation in those days and practically everywhere we went the natural landscape had been ravaged by draglines and was just left idle and overgrown. Even today tens of thousands of acres (about one fifth of all Polk County) is idle and worthless. Think about the economic consequences of the loss of such a vast tract of Florida landscape which otherwise

could have been developed or used for agriculture. To me it's a tragedy that this scale of destruction has continued for generations.

"Certain experiences that occurred to me in my youth stand out above all the rest ... the first was the loss of Kissengen Springs, a 20-million gallon per day, first-magnitude flowing springs just south of Bartow where my family and many folks throughout history used to go for swimming. In 1950, Kissengen Springs went completely dry due to ground water withdrawals by the phosphate industry. The spring never recovered, and today all that remains is just an overgrown patch of dry mud. To me, that's unforgivable.

"Another was the sight of frogs that had grown an extra appendage. A family I knew well acquired a building lot across the road from the Medulla School House south of town on an unreclaimed phosphate pit. There were seven kids in that family. One day the boys were messing around the banks of that old pit and began finding these weird mutated frogs that had three hind legs. That was in the early sixties. They brought those frogs to Lakeland High School where our biology teacher, Miss Williams, preserved them in formaldehyde bottles and stashed them in the closet of the biology lab. I never forgot that sight. That marked my conversion. It was then I began to realize the true and malign consequences of phosphate mining.

"A lot of my peers found summer work in the fertilizer operations—particularly those whose

parents were employed in the industry. I applied for a job one summer myself. At least I had enough presence of mind to write on my application that I wouldn't work around acid. When I was called in for my interview the man looked at the application, and said, "It says here you won't work around acid?" I answered, "Yessir, I'm going to college and I don't want to risk my eyesight." He looked at me in disbelief and said, "Son, all we got around here is acid." I realized then the interview was over. That's before it was revealed to the public that all mined land also had elevated radio-activity levels.

"So, when I think about the history of phosphate mining in Florida, I see it from an environmentalist's point of view. I see the complete disintegration of the native vegetation and the destruction of complex soil layers that sustained the flora and fauna that once thrived across hundreds of thousands of acres. I think about the dozens of gyp-stacks containing acidic water destined to subside and vanish into the porous substrata that forms the basis of this whole state. (Every school child knows that Florida's subterranean landscape is like a sponge of limestone, and limestone and acid don't mix.) I think about ruptured clay slime containments and recurring pollution of the Peace River and its tributaries, the systematic loss of streams and flowing springs, of pastures, woods, and bayhead swamps, fish kills, and loss of animal habitat. It's what I would consider a form of environmental genocide."

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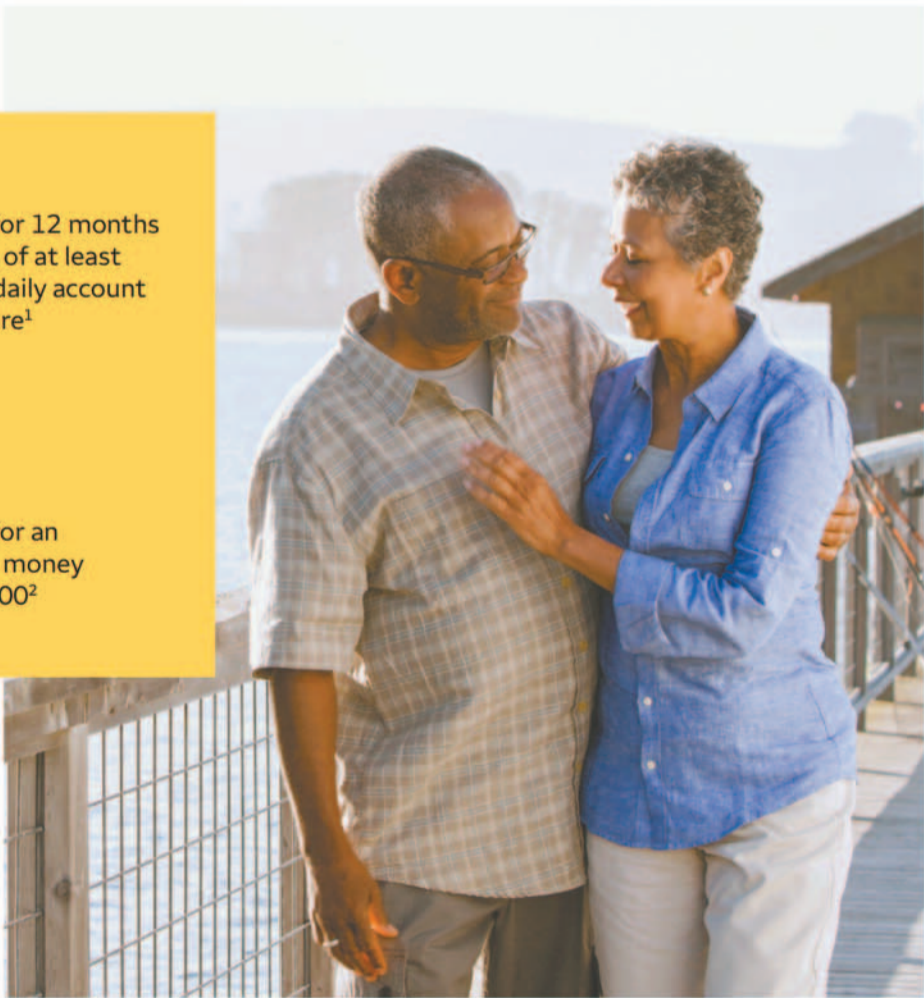
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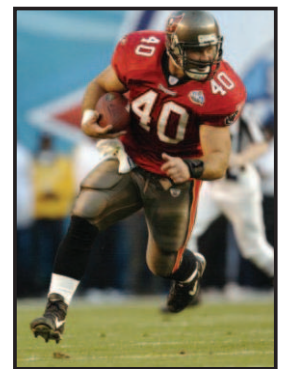
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EVENING UNDER THE STARS RETURNS



This year's theme is the Atlanta Braves
• See page 8B

CHEERS AND TEARS AT LOCAL BAR/GRILLS



New eatery starts engines; another bids bartender adieu
• See page 9B

'CHOICES AND CHANCES' PREMIERS



New movie about distracted driving will premiere in in Charlotte County
• See page 10B

OUR TOWN: SUNCOAST HOMES

Sunday, March 31, 2019

Should condo complexes allow rentals?

Question: Our condo association is rapidly becoming an apartment complex. The Board refuses to amend the condo documents to adjust the ratio. Please tell me your business view on condos with a ratio of 50/50 owners-to-renters.



Columnist

Brett SLATTERY

In the past, banks rejected loan applications for condos unless the condo association was occupied by more owners than renters. Has that requirement changed?

Will the owner experience a delay when they try to sell their property?

Answer: Yes. As in the past, it is still common to see lenders reject loan applications when the ratio of owner-occupied units to renter-occupied units within the condo association fails to meet a minimum threshold.

The required ratio can vary from lender to lender, but it is usually the underwriter who dictates the ratio for federally-unwritten loans. Those are loans backed by the FHA, Fannie Mae, and Freddie Mac. These ratios change over time. The current FHA guidelines require that 51 percent of the units be owner-occupied.

Note that "owner-occupied" doesn't mean that the condo needs to be the principle residence of the owner. The condo can be a part-time, vacation home used by the owner and her family, for example. The key to qualification as owner-occupied is that it is not also used as a rental.

Because this ratio changes over time, and varies between lenders and their underwriters, you would need to contact various lenders to determine if your condo association qualifies at its current ratio. There are, of course, other variables lenders will consider such as the financial health of your association.

You also asked if your association's high renters-to-owners ratio will create delays when you are ready to sell your condo. This is something we can quantify. The probability that this ratio will create problems for you is only 37 percent.

Why 37 percent? It's because only 37 percent of all condo sales in Charlotte and Sarasota counties during the past 12 months involved lenders. The other 63 percent were cash deals. So, in most transactions, there were no lenders to muddy the gears.

Now let's address your frustration with your association's board (of directors). Having been elected to serve as a director and officer of the largest mandatory homeowner's association in Florida over a three-year period, I have some insights to share with you.

Does your desire to control the owner-renter ratio within your association reflect the will of the majority. If yes, consider running for office. But before you do, understand that you may be taking on a very time-consuming job with no compensation.

Also, have you engaged your directors in a cordial dialogue to ascertain why they oppose policies to control the occupancy ratio?

My experience as a director taught me that directors often acquire a much broader understanding of the issues because they are exposed to more information than the general membership.

Decisions they make must conform to state statutes, county restrictions, accounting requirements, the guidance of the association's attorney, etc. In other words, as a director, you discover that many issues are much more complex than meets the eye.

And finally, I emphasize with your position. It's not just condo associations that are wrestling with your issues. The character of many single-family neighborhoods is also being altered throughout the country by the growing popularity of Airbnb and "VRBO.com".

The flip side of this is that without the ability to rent their vacation homes when not in use, many of these owners could not afford them. Of course, you could then argue that would free up these homes for would-be homeowners who use them full-time, thus offsetting the nationwide shortage of homes.

Then again, the recurring news stories detailing the legal battles between homeowners and organizations like Airbnb fighting municipalities and other entities trying to impose rental restrictions and taxation on them demonstrate how complicated this issue gets.

Here's another twist. The nationwide, real estate meltdown that began locally in 2005, and was further fueled by the "great recession", created massive waves of foreclosures. Some second-home owners were able to avoid foreclosure by renting their second homes year-round.

This helped all members of the homeowners' association (HOA). That's because owners of a foreclosed property typically also default on paying

BRETT | 4B

3286 Henderson Lane, North Port



3286 Henderson Lane, North Port, FL 34286
County: Sarasota
Year Built: 2005
Current Price: \$399,900
LP/SqFt: 3427 sq ft
Garage: 2-car
Beds: 4
Baths: 3
SqFt Heated: 2,638 sq ft

Total Acreage: 0.8672 acres
Pool: yes
Location: North Port
Listing agent/brokerage: Jens Reuter Runyon, 941-232-5410, jens.runyon@floridamoves.com; Coldwell Banker Residential Real Estate, 941-493-1000



3237 Rock Creek Drive, Port Charlotte



3237 Rock Creek Drive, Port Charlotte, FL 33948
County: Charlotte
Year Built: 1990
Current Price: \$324,500
LP/SqFt: 2848 sq ft
Garage: 2-car
Beds: 3
Baths: 2
SqFt Heated: 1,970 sq ft

Total Acreage: 0.2296 acres
Pool: Yes
Location: Canal
Listing agent/brokerage: Pamela Starr, 941-822-1093, pamelasellsfl@gmail.com; Coldwell Banker Residential Real Estate, 941-493-1000



633 Alhambra Road #302, Venice Sands, Venice



633 Alhambra Road #302, Venice Sands, Venice, FL 34285
County: Sarasota
Year Built: 1970
Current Price: \$475,000
LP/SqFt: 984 sq ft
Garage: Covered parking
Beds: 2
Baths: 2
SqFt Heated: 912 sq ft

Total Acreage: N/A
— Condominium
Pool: Community
Location: Island of Venice
Listing agent/brokerage: Tina Springer, 941-303-0722, tina.springer@floridamoves.com; Coldwell Banker Residential Real Estate, 941-493-1000



Rural America faces a housing cost crunch

By **TIM HENDERSON**
STATELINE.ORG

The problem of housing affordability, long a concern in popular big cities, has moved to rural America.

Nearly one-fourth of the nation's most rural counties have seen a sizeable increase this decade in the number of households spending at least half their income on housing, a category the federal government calls "severely cost-burdened."

Those counties, none with towns of more than 10,000 residents, have

experienced housing cost increases significant enough to force families to scrimp on other necessities.

Meanwhile, only two big-city counties — Bronx, New York, and Norfolk, Virginia — fell into the same category. Both had two-point increases, according to a Stateline analysis of American Community Survey estimates from the U.S. Census. Stateline compared the early years of the Great Recession, 2006-2010, with the most recent economic recovery era, 2013-2017.

The share of severely cost-burdened households has fallen since the Great Recession in expensive destinations such as Cape Cod, Massachusetts; Key West, Florida; San Francisco and Seattle. The share also has dipped slightly in Manhattan, New York, as the overall economy has recovered.

Losses of high-paying jobs have hit some rural regions, such as a cluster of coal-dependent counties in Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia, especially hard. Other places are struggling with affordable housing because new workers in economically revived areas are vying for rental housing, putting pressure on prices in a rental market with a limited supply.

"Sometimes all it takes is just one new (business) facility in one of these communities," said Corianne Scally, a research associate who studies affordable housing at the Urban Institute.

"All of a sudden you need more labor on hand to start up that

plant, you're stretching the ability of the rental housing base to accommodate new people and you see prices increase," Scally said.

That's the case in Irion County, Texas, population 1,516, where fracking and wind farms have been bringing new workers, said county clerk Shirley Miles. The county's energy jobs tripled to 187 between 2010 and 2016, the latest federal data available, at average annual wages of more than \$63,000.

Unemployment in the county dropped from 5.3 percent to 3.2 percent in that time, and typical monthly rents rose 44 percent to \$858.

Another new wind farm is under construction now, and it's already under contract to provide power to Mexico-based baker Grupo Bimbo and other customers. That's bringing 300 temporary construction workers this year and a dozen more permanent jobs after the wind farm is operational.

"You think of these places like Irion County

as 'The Last Picture Show,' all dusty and forgotten, and then you see that some of them are success stories. This isn't all a dark story," said Keith Wiley, senior research associate at the Housing Assistance Council in Washington, D.C., a nonprofit working to build more housing in rural communities.

Yet Irion County had one of the largest cost-burden increases, according to the Stateline analysis, with 13 percent of households severely cost-burdened in recent years, up from just 4 percent during the Great Recession.

There are similar situations in rural areas of Iowa and Georgia, where new meatpacking plants are stressing the local rental market and driving up prices, Wiley said.

One reason for the slow-moving crisis in rural rental housing is that federal incentives to include affordable units have all but disappeared, and those remaining are quietly expiring, allowing landlords to freely charge more when demand rises, according to a 2018 study by the Housing Assistance Council. More than 2,000 rental properties left the federal program, mostly in the Midwest, between 2006 and 2016, according to the study, as landlords paid off the loans.

Norton, Virginia, a town at the heart of Appalachian coal country with a population of 3,936, saw its cost-burdened population soar to 22 percent

from 12 percent in Stateline's analysis, one of the largest increases.

In Norton, people have lost good jobs and are struggling to make a living in a town that's a commercial and health care center for surrounding rural counties. The area is having its own local recession after prospering during the nation's Great Recession, officials there said, before the fracking boom made natural gas cheaper than coal. Median rent is unchanged at about \$550 between 2010 and 2017, but household income dropped to about \$27,000 from about \$34,000.

"We never had a downturn here like other places. Our economic peak was probably around 2010," said Norton City Manager Fred Ramey. "Then we lost a lot of coal jobs — probably a thousand in this area, and those were jobs paying \$50,000 to \$80,000, and the rest of the local economy was not able to absorb all those jobs."

A similar thing is happening in Madison County, Idaho, 475 sprawling square miles of farmland and foothills with a population of about 40,000 people. The county seems an unlikely candidate to eclipse crowded hotspots such as Los Angeles and Key West in the number of residents struggling to pay rent. But 25 percent of Madison County households are severely cost-burdened, an

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Coming Monday, some state lawmakers say it's gotten out of hand. Find out how they're working to tighten the leash.

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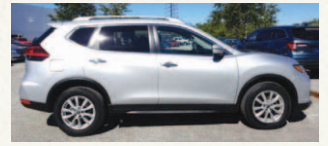
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Don't be a victim; protect yourself when buying or selling property

By **GARY M. SINGER**
SUN SENTINEL

Q: I am getting ready to sell my house. I spent many years paying off my mortgage and am worried about something terrible happening to my proceeds. I need that money to buy a condo and retire. How can I protect myself?
— Randall

A: You are right to be cautious. Financial crime and fraud are a problem in the real estate industry. From counterfeit cashier's checks to fake deeds, criminals can be very creative in separating you from your money. Fortunately, even with the problems in the industry, almost all closings occur without a problem. However, you do have to be diligent to make sure that you are not a victim.

Rather than repeat the advice found quickly with a web search, I am going to give you some tips I have picked up over the thousands of closings I have been part of. To be clear, this is in no way meant to be an inclusive list, but rather my supplement to the conventional wisdom.

Once the title and escrow company is chosen, you should verify their license and underwriter. Go to the state insurance website, and you will find a link to do this. Once you check their license, confirm their phone and address independently on the web and not from their website. If you are local, get in your car and drive to the title company to introduce yourself.

Most fraud involves the fraudster hijacking or spoofing someone's email address and sending fake wiring instructions. Face to face is the safest way. Since this is not always

possible, a phone call can be made using the verified number to verify what was sent to you. Email is a great tool, but it has made people shy away from phone calls and face to face interaction. Getting to know the people involved in your transaction make it easier to tell if something seems suspicious later.

The best way to avoid being a victim is to listen to your gut. Be on the lookout for things that seem strange. For example, it is highly unlikely that your title company will switch banks accounts during the several weeks it takes to close your deal. If you are told to send your money to a different account, you should be highly suspicious. Similarly, a buyer will not be asked to send in their closing money long before closing.

Criminals prey on the fact that you only buy or sell a house occasionally and are not familiar with the process. Fight this with education and diligence.

Gary M. Singer is a Florida attorney and board-certified as an expert in real estate law by the Florida Bar. He practices real estate, business litigation and contract law from his office in Sunrise, Fla. He is the chairman of the Real Estate Section of the Broward County Bar Association and is a co-host of the weekly radio show Legal News and Review. He frequently consults on general real estate matters and trends in Florida with various companies across the nation. Send him questions online at www.sunsentinel.com/askpro or follow him on Twitter at @GarySingerLaw.

BRETT FROM PAGE 1B

their HOA fees. It was not unusual to see homes in foreclosure for up to five years before the banks repossessed them.

During that period, it was the remaining HOA members who were saddled with making up the difference in lost HOA revenues. And making matters worse, many lenders refused to finance any condo in the association once the percentage of units in foreclosure hit

a certain threshold.

In these cases, the freedom to rent condos created big, unforeseen benefits to all members of those associations. So, as you can see, the deeper we delve into this subject, the more complex it becomes.

Brett Slattery is a Realtor and broker/owner of Brett Slattery Realty LLC. Brett and his wife, Deb, specialize in residential home sales and listings. Reach him via 941-468-1430, Brett@BrettSlattery.com, or www.BrettSlattery.com.

RURAL FROM PAGE 2B

increase of 6 percentage points, according to Stateline's analysis.

That's because Brigham Young University's Idaho campus has expanded from a two-year to a four-year school, drawing thousands of new students from other states. Many of them are married with children, following a way of life common for members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which is affiliated with

the school.

Eastern Idaho Public Health has expanded low-income family programs like immunizations and nutrition programs to serve the new residents.

"Technically we have an increase in poverty, but that's just because when you're a 19-year-old college student with a family you're not bringing down the big bucks yet," Taylor said. "It's an exciting development for the community, and it's also bringing good jobs for professors and other university employees."



Learn to speak Spanish at Renaissance Academy

“If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart,” said Nelson Mandela, the anti-apartheid revolutionary, political leader, and philanthropist, who served as President of South Africa, the country’s first black head of state, from 1994-1999.



FGCU
Richard RAMOS

Paralleling Mandela, “There is so much to gain when we try to communicate with one another, and language does not have to be a barrier. If people are traveling in Spanish speaking countries, I want them to feel like they can attempt to communicate,” said retired educator Christine Zimmer, Ph.D.

“Most importantly I want them to try to communicate without worrying about being perfect. If you just try, people tend to appreciate that. By you trying, they will try too, and you usually manage to make it work.”

In her six-session short course “Spanish for Travelers: Language, Culture, and Tips,” Zimmer teaches the basic language skills needed to communicate while traveling in Spanish speaking

countries. The sessions are 10 a.m. – noon April 8, 15, 29, May 6, 13, 20 at Florida Gulf Coast University’s Renaissance Academy 117 Herald Court, Suite 211 in Punta Gorda.

“The main reason I’m teaching this class is to encourage people to step out of their comfort zone and go to places they might have dreamt about, but never thought they could visit. While they’re there and with the basic skills I teach in my class they can communicate with the people who live in those exotic places and ports o’ call,” Zimmer said. “We’ll focus on the most typically used travel and tourism vocabulary as well as the grammar and

pronunciation to use that specific vocabulary.”

Zimmer learned Spanish in college, before going on to teach the language for 15 years at what is today Florida SouthWestern State College as well as in middle and high school. In addition to her doctoral degree in educational leadership, she has 38 years of experience teaching and as a dean, assistant principal, principal, and title grant program administrator.

In her short course Zimmer examines Castilian, or classical Spanish, and the vernacular forms of the language spoken throughout the Western Hemisphere. Participants will learn

the Spanish alphabet, pronunciation, and the common words and phrases for directions like north, south, east and west; how to get from here to there, access transportation, shop, order food, navigate tourist areas and attractions and more. Zimmer also explores the use of translation apps and camera translators.

“I’ll also ask the participants what they want to know, what words and phrases they feel they’ll need, and what sorts of things they think they’ll be asking about,” Zimmer said.

In each class, there is also some discussion of the culture, geography, and history of the Spanish-speaking world.

Agencies work to drive down child abuse

Charlotte County had fourth highest rate across Florida in 2017

By ANNE EASKER
STAFF WRITER

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, and the most recent data from the Florida Department of Health shows Charlotte County with the fourth highest rate of child abuse in the state for children ages 5 through 11.

In 2017, the county had 1,770.9 cases per 100,000 population, or 148 total children experiencing abuse. The number is somewhat lower than the peak in 2015 at 2,264.6 per 100,000 population, or 194 total children. Sarasota County had 182 children experiencing abuse in 2017, or 797.6 per 100,000 population.

Jennifer Sexton, spokesperson for the Department of Health in Charlotte County, said she couldn’t guess what’s driven up Charlotte County’s numbers in recent years, but she noted for actual cases, Charlotte County ranks 24th. Regardless, the Department of Health and the Healthy Charlotte Council are committed to driving the rate back down, she said.

Last fall, Healthy Charlotte looked at local child abuse data, among other health issues in the county and decided to create an action plan, which will be unveiled at the April 23 Healthy Charlotte Steering Committee Meeting.

The focus of the plan is on educating the community on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), which include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, emotional neglect, physical neglect, substance use disorders, incarceration of a family member, parental separation or divorce, domestic violence, and mental illness.

“We are currently focused on educating everybody and every organization in Charlotte County about ACEs science, including the lasting health impacts of childhood abuse and other traumas,” Sexton said. “For example, ACEs can significantly influence a person’s health, economic standing, and educational attainment, which are all protective factors for an individual.”

Two out of three adults have one or more ACE, she said, but their impact can be minimized by the amount of support a child has.

Cecelia Lyew-Kong, of Behavior Analysis, Inc., is the director of one program that aims to support children coming out of difficult situation by better equipping their foster parents. Serving, the 20th Judicial Circuit, the program teaches positive methods for managing difficult behavior. Children who have been abused or neglected might hoard toys or food, or act out negatively to get attention, because they’re

used to getting a response that way.

“One of the big things we say all the time is ‘Your normal is not their normal,’ Lyew-Kong said. “You need to be understanding and meet them where they’re at as opposed to doing a comparison of where we are or where our children are.”

The most important tool is helping foster parents develop a strong bond with their children.

“This may be the first healthy bond the child is

experiencing,” she said. “We want to make sure the foster parents that we work with are building a strong relationship, one that’s very loving, one that’s very supportive, one that’s setting them up for success.”

Healthy Charlotte is using a social network called ACEs Connection to track its impact, Sexton said. The network is working to “accelerate the global movement toward recognizing the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences

in shaping adult behavior and health, and reforming all communities and institutions — from schools to hospitals and churches — to help heal and develop a resilient community network of resources.”

In its 2-year plan, Healthy Charlotte plans to educate 1,740 individuals in Charlotte County about ACEs science, engage ten residents to join the local ACEs initiative, and find 20 organizations to

commit to integrating trauma-informed and resilience-based practices.

Other initiatives within the county to reduce child abuse include the Green Dot program, which offers bystander training for individuals to intervene. Director Chris Hall said intervention doesn’t mean a bystander has to get directly involved in someone else’s business. The direct approach is one way, but there’s also delegating and distracting.

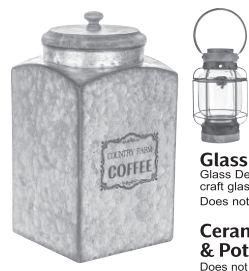
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AREA PROPERTY TRANSFERS

CHARLOTTE COUNTY/NORTH PORT - COURTESY OF PUNTA GORDA, PORT CHARLOTTE, NORTH PORT ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS

Table with columns: ML#, STATUS, CITY, ZIP CODE, ADDRESS, LIST PRICE, AREA, SOLD PRICE, SOLD DATE, POOL, BE, FB, HB, BUILT, PROPERTY STYLE, SOLD TERMS, LP/SQFT, SP/LP, LP/SQFT. Contains numerous rows of property sale data.

ENGLEWOOD - COURTESY OF ENGLEWOOD AREA BOARD OF REALTORS

Table with columns: ML#, STATUS, ADDRESS, CITY, ZIP, LEGAL SUBDIVISION NAME, SQFT, PRICE, BE, FB, HB, BUILT, POOL, PROPERTY STYLE, SOLD TERMS, CLOSE, LP/SQFT, SP/SQFT, SP/LP. Contains numerous rows of property sale data.

Nonprofit aids new Punta Gorda library

Group asks teen room be named for shooting victim Mary Knowlton

By RUSTY PRAY
SUN CORRESPONDENT

The Friends of the Punta Gorda Library has provided more than \$150,000 to help furnish the interior of the new Punta Gorda Charlotte Library, scheduled to open in August.

The Friends is a support group that helps provide funding for programs and building maintenance and improvements. The nonprofit is made up of 500 households and governed by an 18-member board.

It earmarked the money

to furnish children's and teen rooms, a book store and office, and provide an audio-visual package. The total, according to county officials, is \$151,750.53. The Friends board approved the expenditure last week.

In a letter to the county, the Friends asked that the teen area be designated the Mary Knowlton Teen Room. Knowlton, 73, a retired librarian, was shot and killed by a Punta Gorda police officer during a civilian shoot/don't shoot demonstration in August 2016.

Knowlton had served as president of the Friends

of the Punta Gorda Library and was deeply involved in the effort to get the new library built. She was a member of the board when she was killed.

"Mary was determined the new library should have a space to entice our area teens to the library," the board said in the letter to the county.

Part of the money has come through donations made in memory of Knowlton following her death.

"We wanted to make sure the teen area was designated as Mary Knowlton Teen Room,"

said Katie Mazzi, president of the board and a close friend of Knowlton's. "In the months prior to her death, she visited all the schools, talked to all the media specialists.

"She asked the question, 'What do teenagers want that would draw them to the library?' Mary was committed to getting teenagers to the library."

The Friends earlier donated \$50,000 to assist with an enhanced exterior of the new building, located next to History Park on Shreve Street.

"Charlotte County is extremely grateful to

the Friends of the Punta Gorda Library for their contribution to the Punta Gorda Charlotte Library," said Tommy Scott, the county's community services director. "The Friends' support of the library in both time and money is invaluable and deeply appreciated."

Budgetary considerations have dogged the new library for years. Construction of the 20,000-square-foot building had been stalled by a debate over whether it should fit neatly into the county's original \$6.9 million budget — funded by the 1 percent

sales tax. Construction began in May 2018.

The new building is twice the size of the 9,145-square-foot current library on Henry Street. It is part of a county library system that includes the Mid-County Library, Port Charlotte Library and Englewood Charlotte Library.

"The Friends has been accumulating funding for years," Mazzi said.

"We knew that someday a new library was going to be built, so we saved our money. We wanted to do as much for our library as we could, and we did that."

AREA PROPERTY TRANSFERS

ENGLEWOOD - COURTESY OF ENGLEWOOD AREA BOARD OF REALTORS -continued

ML#	STATUS	ADDRESS	CITY	ZIP	LEGAL SUBDIVISION NAME	SQFT	PRICE	BE	FB	HB	BUILT	POOL	PROPERTY STYLE	SOLD TERMS	CLOSE	LP/SQFT	SP/SQFT	SP/LP
N6102440	SLD	2080 ALAMANDER AVE	ENGLEWOOD	34223	MANASOTA LAND & TIMBER CO	1,227	\$220,000	3	2	0	1973	Private	Single Family Residence	Cash	3/22/2019	\$178.48	\$179.30	1
D6105444	SLD	7475 CLEARWATER ST	ENGLEWOOD	34224	PORT CHARLOTTE SEC 074	1,572	\$223,000	3	2	0	2016	None	Single Family Residence	Cash	3/22/2019	\$143.13	\$141.86	0.99
C7406768	SLD	164 BONITA DR	ROTONDA WEST	33947	ROTONDA HEIGHTS	1,403	\$195,000	3	2	0	1999	Private	Single Family Residence	Conventional	3/19/2019	\$160.37	\$138.99	0.87
D6104988	SLD	89 LONG MEADOW LN	ROTONDA WEST	33947	ROTONDA W LONG MEADOW	1,533	\$225,500	3	2	0	1997	Private	Single Family Residence	Conventional	3/22/2019	\$149.38	\$147.10	0.98
A4423740	SLD	10437 GREENWAY AVE	ENGLEWOOD	34224	PORT CHARLOTTE SEC 064	1,325	\$239,900	3	2	0	2019	None	Single Family Residence	Cash	3/22/2019	\$181.06	\$181.06	1
D6102424	SLD	2405 N BEACH RD Unit#16	ENGLEWOOD	34223	ISLND BRZE CNDO OF MNST KEY	949	\$239,900	2	2	0	2015	Community	Condominium	Cash	3/22/2019	\$252.79	\$252.79	1
N6104313	SLD	9001 CALOOSA DR	VENICE	34293	TARPON POINT	1,100	\$235,000	3	2	0	1959	Private	Single Family Residence	Cash	3/20/2019	\$222.73	\$213.64	0.96
D6104486	SLD	329 ROTONDA CIR	ROTONDA WEST	33947	ROTONDA WEST PEBBLE BEACH	1,635	\$249,000	3	2	0	2003	Private	Single Family Residence	Conventional	3/20/2019	\$156.51	\$152.29	0.97
C7412689	SLD	3 SPORTSMAN CIR	ROTONDA WEST	33947	ROTONDA WEST BROADMOOR	1,615	\$262,000	3	2	0	1992	Private	Single Family Residence	Cash	3/18/2019	\$160.93	\$162.23	1.01
D6104554	SLD	49 SPORTSMAN LN	ROTONDA WEST	33947	ROTONDA WEST BROADMOOR	1,663	\$260,000	3	2	0	1995	Private	Single Family Residence	Cash	3/20/2019	\$161.76	\$156.34	0.97
D6105404	SLD	2126 ARKANSAS AVE	ENGLEWOOD	34224	GROVE CITY TERRACE	2,084	\$280,000	3	2	0	1975	None	Single Family Residence	Conventional	3/22/2019	\$134.36	\$134.36	1
D6102021	SLD	14274 EDSEL DR	PORT CHARLOTTE	33981	PORT CHARLOTTE SEC 058	1,656	\$270,000	3	2	0	2005	Private	Single Family Residence	FHA	3/18/2019	\$172.04	\$163.04	0.95
U8019462	SLD	114 ENGLEWOOD CT	ROTONDA WEST	33947	ROTONDA LAKES	1,767	\$285,000	3	2	0	2017	Private	Single Family Residence	Conventional	3/22/2019	\$163.55	\$161.29	0.99
D6102671	SLD	7160 BROOKHAVEN TER	ENGLEWOOD	34224	PORT CHARLOTTE SEC 074	2,059	\$282,000	3	2	0	1995	Private	Single Family Residence	Cash	3/20/2019	\$145.22	\$136.96	0.94
D6102936	SLD	2684 TITANIA RD	ENGLEWOOD	34224	GULF WIND	1,160	\$275,000	2	2	0	1979	Private	Single Family Residence	Conventional	3/19/2019	\$258.53	\$237.07	0.92
D6101927	SLD	8081 DIMSTEAD ST	PORT CHARLOTTE	33981	PORT CHARLOTTE SEC 058	1,657	\$335,000	3	2	0	2018	Private	Single Family Residence	FHA	3/20/2019	\$202.11	\$202.17	1
D6103505	SLD	2955 N BEACH RD Unit#B822	ENGLEWOOD	34223	TAMARIND GULF & BAY BLDG	1,551	\$360,000	2	3	0	1981	Community	Condominium	Cash	3/20/2019	\$242.75	\$232.11	0.96
D6105294	SLD	734 ROTONDA CIR	ROTONDA WEST	33947	ROTONDA WEST LONG MEADOW	1,904	\$400,000	3	2	0	2019	Private	Single Family Residence	Cash	3/21/2019	\$209.56	\$210.08	1
C7403357	SLD	9986 AUDREY ST	PORT CHARLOTTE	33981	PORT CHARLOTTE SEC 87	2,141	\$395,000	3	2	0	2018	Private	Single Family Residence	Conventional	3/22/2019	\$191.03	\$184.49	0.97
D6102879	SLD	1052 BOUNDARY BLVD	ROTONDA WEST	33947	ROTONDA WEST PINE VALLEY	2,116	\$405,000	3	2	0	2016	Private	Single Family Residence	Cash	3/20/2019	\$202.74	\$191.40	0.94
N6103765	SLD	2665 ALAMANDER AVE	ENGLEWOOD	34223	MANASOTA GARDENS	1,656	\$440,000	3	2	0	2015	Private	Single Family Residence	Cash	3/21/2019	\$271.68	\$265.70	0.98
D6104496	SLD	918 BOUNDARY BLVD	ROTONDA WEST	33947	ROTONDA WEST WHITE MARSH	2,329	\$458,000	3	2	1	2015	Private	Single Family Residence	Conventional	3/20/2019	\$201.76	\$196.65	0.97
D6100067	SLD	320 GULF BLVD Unit#5D	BOCA GRANDE	33921	BOCA GRND BCH CLUB CONDO	1,098	\$575,000	2	2	0	1968	Community	Condominium	Cash	3/22/2019	\$569.22	\$523.68	0.92
D5924139	SLD	5000 GASPARILLA RD	BOCA GRANDE	33921	VILLAGE BOCA GRANDE CLUB	1,240	\$600,000	3	2	0	1992	Community	Single Family Residence	Conventional	3/20/2019	\$524.19	\$483.87	0.92
D6104218	SLD	111 KETTLE HARBOR DR	PLACIDA	33946	PALM ISLAND ESTATES UNIT 4	2,396	\$957,500	3	3	1	2005	None	Single Family Residence	Cash	3/20/2019	\$415.28	\$399.62	0.96
D6104075	SLD	161 KETTLE HARBOR DR	PLACIDA	33946	PALM ISLAND ESTATES UN 4	3,324	\$1,050,000	4	3	1	2006	Private	Single Family Residence	Cash	3/20/2019	\$353.49	\$315.88	0.89

SOUTH SARASOTA COUNTY - COURTESY OF VENICE AREA BOARD OF REALTORS

ML#	STATUS	ADDRESS	BE	FB	HB	YEAR BUILT	SW SUBDIV COMMUNITY NAME	PROPERTY STYLE	SOLD TERMS	SP / SQFT	SP / LP	CLOSE DATE	CLOSE PRICE	POOL Y/N
N6103322	Sold	642 BIRD BAY DR E #207	2	2	0	1983	Bird Bay Village	Condominium	Conventional	96.58	0.85	3/18/2019	\$110,000	FALSE
C7411439	Sold	176 MARLIN RD	2	1	0	1973	South Venice	Single Family Residence	Cash	130.54	0.93	3/18/2019	\$112,000	FALSE
D6105754	Sold	1032 PANDA RD	2	2	0	1988	South Venice	Single Family Residence	Cash	103	0.89	3/22/2019	\$137,500	FALSE
N6102878	Sold	1725 BONITAS CIR #1718-D	2	2	0	1980	Villa Nova	Condominium	Conventional	116.27	0.95	3/22/2019	\$137,900	FALSE
T3150050	Sold	104 CAPRI ISLES BLVD #305	2	2	0	1983	Villa Deste	Condominium	Conventional	156.49	1	3/22/2019	\$139,900	FALSE
C7410270	Sold	744 WHITE PINE TREE RD #204	2	2	0	1983	Bird Bay	Condominium	Cash	160.47	0.95	3/21/2019	\$142,500	FALSE
N6104431	Sold	640 BIRD BAY DR W #79	2	2	0	1978	Bird Bay Village	Condominium	Cash	132.22	0.96	3/19/2019	\$151,000	FALSE
N6104113	Sold	1059 LILLIAN ST	3	1	0	1960	East Gate Terrace	Single Family Residence	Other	139.37	1	3/22/2019	\$160,000	FALSE
N6103913	Sold	4321 ALLIGATOR DR	2	2	0	1972	South Venice	Single Family Residence	Conventional	129.92	1.03	3/19/2019	\$165,000	FALSE
N6103546	Sold	734 BIRD BAY DR W #157	2	2	0	1979	Bird Bay	Condominium	Conventional	151.1	0.98	3/18/2019	\$165,000	FALSE
N6103703	Sold	437 CERROMAR LN #321	2	2	0	1982	Farmington Vistas	Condominium	Cash	190.27	0.97	3/21/2019	\$180,000	FALSE
N6101411	Sold	248 COWRY RD	2	2	0	1978	South Venice	Single Family Residence	Conventional	109.09	0.95	3/20/2019	\$180,000	FALSE
N6103974	Sold	7202 L PAVIA BLVD #7202	2	2	0	2003	L Pavia	Condominium	Cash	158.54	0.98	3/20/2019	\$182,000	FALSE
N6102819	Sold	1212 MANGO AVE	2	2	0	1980	East Gate	Single Family Residence	Cash	132.62	0.93	3/22/2019	\$185,000	FALSE
N6104456	Sold	931 WEXFORD BLVD #931	2	2	0	1989	Ninth Fairway	Condominium	Cash	192.13	0.96	3/22/2019	\$210,000	FALSE
N6101712	Sold	278 PADOVA WAY	2	2	0	2005	Venetian Golf And River Club	Single Family Residence	Cash	165.09	0.91	3/19/2019	\$210,000	FALSE
N6103860	Sold	467 SUNNYSIDE DR	2	2	0	1976	Venice East	Single Family Residence	USDA	131.74	1.01	3/20/2019	\$215,000	FALSE
N6103364	Sold	337 GLEN OAK RD	3	2	0	1960	Venice Gardens	Single Family Residence	VA	166.67	1.01	3/20/2019	\$225,000	FALSE
N6104119	Sold	408 LAUREL LAKE DR #101	2	2	0	2000	Waterside Village	Condominium	Cash	150.88	0.98	3/18/2019	\$227,825	FALSE
N6103246	Sold	503 CASA DEL LAGO WAY #503	3	2	0	2002	Casa Del Lago	Condominium	Conventional	165.58	0.98	3/22/2019	\$229,000	FALSE
N6104313	Sold	9001 CALOOSA DR	3	2	0	1959	Tarpon Point	Single Family Residence	Cash	213.64	0.96	3/20/2019	\$235,000	TRUE
A4425552	Sold	1216 SUNSET AVE	3	2	0	1979	Not Applicable	Single Family Residence	FHA	168.92	0.96	3/22/2019	\$237,500	FALSE
A4429303	Sold	1006 DEER RUN	3	2	0	1978	Venetian Gardens	Single Family Residence	Cash	129.87	0.96	3/22/2019	\$240,000	TRUE
N6102833	Sold	1301 EAST GATE DR	2	2	0	1972	East Gate	Single Family Residence	Conventional	189.19	0.91	3/22/2019	\$245,000	FALSE
N6104284	Sold	1455 STRADA D ORO	2	2	0	1979	Carlentini	Single Family Residence	FHA	181.75	1	3/22/2019	\$251,000	TRUE
N6103947	Sold	1236 PINEBROOK WAY	3	2	0	1981	Pinebrook South	Single Family Residence	Cash	134.35	0.91	3/18/2019	\$255,000	FALSE
U8024085	Sold	8940 EXCELSIOR LOOP	3	2	0	2017	Rapalo	Single Family Residence	FHA	147.74	0.98	3/21/2019	\$264,900	FALSE
A4418599	Sold	250 CORONADO RD	3	2	0	2018	South Venice	Single Family Residence	VA	181.88	1	3/18/2019	\$269,000	FALSE
N6101879	Sold	11731 TEMPEST HARBOR LOOP	3	2	1	2006	Stoneybrook At Venice	Single Family Residence	Conventional	146.9	0.98	3/22/2019	\$275,000	TRUE
N6104238	Sold	977 LAKESIDE CT	3	2	0	1978	Venice Gardens	Single Family Residence	Conventional	135.33	0.98	3/22/2019	\$275,000	FALSE
N6102609	Sold	20684 SWALLOWTAIL CT	2	2	0	2018	Preserve at West Villages	Single Family Residence	Cash	152.53	0.98	3/19/2019	\$277,000	FALSE
N610														

Evening Under the Stars returns for 31st year

Theme this year Atlanta Braves

By **ALEXANDRA HERRERA**
STAFF WRITER

WEST VILLAGES — Evening Under the Stars returns for its 31st year at State College of Florida Venice on Saturday.

This year's theme is "Take Me Out to the Ballgame," which will feature music surrounding America's past time.

The annual event is a celebration of music in an open air setting.

This year's theme celebrates the West Villages' newest neighbor — the Atlanta Braves.

Barb Bourgoïn, development director for the SCF Foundation said that the theme is chosen a year in advance.

"We wanted to welcome (the Braves)," Bourgoïn said.

Bourgoïn added that the team and SCF have already started a strong

partnership. The Braves held their job fair on the school's campus back in January.

Due to this theme music for the event will be classics associated with baseball, which also includes film scores.

"We have 'Take Me Out to the Ballgame,' (from) Madonna, Bruce Springsteen, quite a variety," Bourgoïn said.

All of the songs are played by SCF musicians, including the jazz band and the Venice Symphony. The night is capped off with fireworks. It's also an opportunity to show off the campus.

Evening Under the Stars is also the largest fundraiser for the college, with the money going back to provide scholarships for students.

The event takes place at the SCF-Venice campus, which is located steps



PHOTO COURTESY OF SCF VENICE

The State College of Florida Jazz Band performs at last year's Evening Under the Stars event.

from CoolToday Park.

Those attending watch the performances from the reading grove west of the lake.

Bourgoïn said the campus has ample parking and a beautiful natural setting that those visiting will enjoy.

"For those that have been, it's a beautiful campus," Bourgoïn said.

The event also includes dinner, which this year is catered by Fin's. Bourgoïn says that SCF students also come out to help at event.

She added that it was a good opportunity to meet the students who benefit from the scholarships.

"Our mission (is) supporting our students," Bourgoïn said.

SCF's annual Evening Under the Stars begins at 6 p.m. on Friday at the SCF Venice Campus, 8000 S. Tamiami Trail.

Tickets for the event at \$20 in advance or \$25 the day of, reserved seating is available for \$30 and kids 10 and under are free. Reserved seating grants those access to the campus at 2 p.m. to

reserve seating and drop off cooler.

Tickets for the event can still be purchased by visiting the SCF Foundation website www.scf-foundation.org and click the link for Evening Under the Stars.

Those with questions can call Beth Bourgoïn at 941-752-5398 or email her at bourgob@scf.edu.

Max Weisglass: A Holocaust Survivor's Story at FSW Charlotte Campus

Every year, Florida SouthWestern State College (FSW) welcomes local Holocaust survivors to share their stories at each of our locations. The FSW Charlotte Campus, 26300 Airport Rd. in Punta Gorda, will host local Holocaust survivor Max Weisglass at 11:30 a.m., Wednesday, April 3, in the Building O Auditorium. Please join us to hear his personal and humbling account of the Holocaust. There will be time for a question and answer session following his



Florida SouthWestern
Jessica RUSSELL

story, and light refreshments will be served in the lobby afterward.

Weisglass was born in 1936 in Borszow, Poland (now Ukraine). What follows is a brief account, in his own words, of his experience during the Holocaust.

"In 1939, the Russians invaded eastern Poland, and I had my first experience with war. My family, being capitalists, had to escape to my father's birth town, Kopitzincy. A year later, we returned to Borszow. In 1941, the Germans invaded our part of Poland, and shortly after, the Borszow ghetto was formed. My family and I survived 18 months in the ghetto, and in 1943, we went into hiding in an underground bunker for 10 months, provided by a Polish family. In 1944,

we were liberated by the Russian army and stayed in Borszow until 1945. At the end of 1945, my family was able to leave for communist Poland where we stayed for a year. In 1946, a Russian captain was bribed to smuggle our family to West Germany where we resided until 1948."

"In 1948, our family sailed for Canada where I grew up and attended Sir George Williams University. I met my wife Anita in Israel while fulfilling a one-year contract installing

production systems for the first hosiery mill built in Israel. We returned to Canada, got married in Brookline, Mass., and lived in Montreal for 16 years. We have two daughters and two granddaughters. In 1978, I moved my family to Houston. We lived there until 1997 when I retired from a distribution company I had formed and moved to Punta Gorda, Fla."

We hope you will be able to join us to hear his entire, detailed narrative and engage with one of the

few remaining Holocaust survivors.

Additionally, in partnership with The Holocaust Museum & Education Center of Southwest Florida, the Holocaust Boxcar will be on display for tours April 1-15 on the FSW Charlotte Campus in parking lot 4.

These events are free and open to the public.

Jessica Russell is the assistant director of Campus Student Engagement at the FSW Charlotte Campus. She can be reached at jessica.russell@fsw.edu.

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BUSINESS Journal

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Cheers and tears at local bar/grills

New eatery starts engines; another bids bartender adieu

Muscle Car City revs up new restaurant

Golf carts are already flocking there from the neighborhood.

A year after **Rick Treworgy's Muscle Car**



Sue WADE
COLUMNIST

City opened its big, new location at 10175 Tamiami Trail, it was the perfect finishing touch — a big, new, 188-seat

bar and grill named after, what else, a classic Chevy Corvette.

Ever since **Sting Rays Bar & Grill's** fanfare-free opening in mid-March, word of mouth has kept the place's staff of 20 hopping.

"It'll probably be at least a week before we get it open at night," Treworgy said. "I don't want to rush it and not be able to accommodate everybody. We intend to serve some really good food here. I'm trying everything myself, to make sure I like it!"

Word of mouth: Today would be a good time to stop in, during Muscle Car City's monthly 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. Auto Flea Market.

Sting Rays (\$-\$\$), 941-575-1279, 10175 Tamiami Trail, Punta Gorda, serves breakfast from 8 to 11 a.m., lunch from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Full bar.

Last call, no kidding

Even though tomorrow is April Fool's Day and everybody wishes that her big news were just a joke, **Clare Donaldson** really will retire then from Port Charlotte's **Chubby's Sports Grill & Tavern**, after 32 years tending bar.

Asked if she feared boredom, she quipped, "I have a lot of bartenders to visit because now I can spend the time with them!"

There will be tears, but as Donaldson recently quoted Dr. Seuss: "Don't cry because it's over, smile because it happened."

Many customers' fondest memory is Clare and hubby Gene's trivia night heyday, captured in a 2014 column:

"It's nearly 7 o'clock Wednesday night at

Chubby's. All eyes are riveted on the back of the dining room, where bartender Clare Donaldson wields the microphone to launch Big Dog's Live Trivia Challenge, with husband Gene (said 'Big Dog') by her side.

"The crowd roars as each team name is announced. Some 16 teams, with names like Betty's Kids, The Cat's Meow and It's Only a Game, joke, 'Did ya study?'"

Clare and Gene ran a live trivia night phenomenon at Chubby's for six years, and before that at **Hogbody's**, whence 60 regulars followed them when they changed jobs.

Some of the most creative ideas in the English language have been spun in pubs. (Or so it seemed at the time.)

In the early nineties, when Clare worked at a little ad agency in downtown Ardmore, Pennsylvania, she remembered, "A bunch of us would go to a neighborhood bar after work to come up with ideas over a few drinks, then all the crazy schemes would come pouring out."

Clare also tended bar nights along Philly's Main Line.

As an Irish pub manager, her mantra was, and always remained: "99 percent of bartending is making people comfortable. Give them a reason to come. Help them make friends. Make it even better than they expected."

All this experience lent Clare a unique mix of promotional and bartending savvy — not to mention a now-25-year marriage.

"I saw this guy all the time who worked at the post office and lived above that neighborhood bar, so I asked him out."

Once Gene and Clare hit Port Charlotte, bartending became Clare's local career, starting at **Harpoon Harry's**. Wherever she went, she came up with great ideas.

When bar patrons play electronic trivia, for instance, they don't even look at one another. This made Clare think: What's a bar about if not making friends? And money?

So she pitched an idea to Chubby's owner **Danny Lutinsky**: "What's your worst night?"

"Wednesday."
"What if Gene and I do a live trivia game every



SUN PHOTO BY SUE WADE

The **Sting Rays** bar area features Muscle Car City memorabilia, a penny-tiled bar created by museum manager April Treworgy Patchell, and well-known local bartender Nicole Ivankovic as bar manager.

Wednesday, and we promise to get 100 customers in for it?"

Every weekend afterward, Gene and Clare spent hours crunching questions they'd dug up all week — out of thrift-shop trivia games, radio shows and obscure newspaper columns like this one. They dress-rehearsed the 70-question game, starting easy and building difficulty to weed out all but the winners by the end.

They asked over 20,000 different questions at Chubby's before retiring from trivia four years ago.

"The players tell us ours was the best game in town," said Clare. "But my favorite thing is the friendships formed because of it."

After Gene retired from the post office in 2014, he and Clare took a rare vacation.

As of tomorrow, they'll have a lot more vacationing to do.

Chubby's (\$-\$\$), 941-613-0002, 4109 Tamiami Trail, is open Monday to Saturday 11 to 2 a.m.,

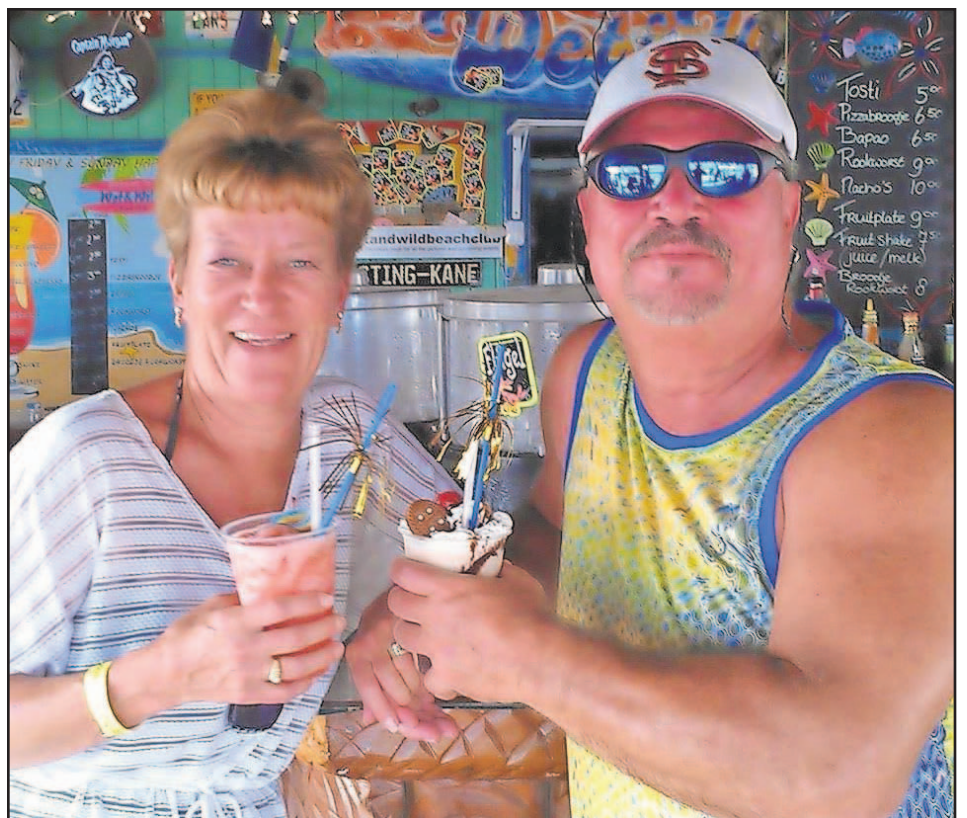


PHOTO PROVIDED

Here's to life on the other side of the bar! Clare Donaldson, here with hubby Gene, is retiring from Chubby's after 32 years tending bar.

Sunday to midnight. Wednesday is still trivia night, with many of the same teams.

Send restaurant and

bar news and recommendations to columnist Sue Wade at suewade47@aol.com.

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'Choices and Chances' premieres in Charlotte County

By **ELAINE ALLEN-EMRICH**
COMMUNITY NEWS EDITOR

MURDOCK — After relentless bullying, Benny Kehoe misses his bus. He gets a ride from two sympathetic girls from his high school. Less than 15 minutes later, he's dead.

Kehoe was in the back seat not wearing seat belt. The two girls were talking about a text message. The driver Ember playfully pulls the phone from her best friend Tiffany the passenger. As they laugh, Ember takes her eyes off the road for a second. She turns back and immediately smashes into an oncoming vehicle. Benny goes flying through the windshield. Ember's legs are crushed and Tiffany gets out of the car and cries for help.

For the next 60 minutes, the audience learns the aftermath of how the two girls and others cope with the choices the pair made after the crash.

Although the scenario is fictitious, it's the story line of the movie "Choices and Chances" which opened to a VIP crowd Saturday at the Charlotte Town Center Mall and was followed by a discussion about the movie and real life situations.

The movie was made in collaboration with Charlotte County Fire and EMS, Fawcett Memorial Hospital, Charlotte Behavioral Healthcare, Charlotte County Public Schools, Drug Free Charlotte County, Charlotte County Sheriff's Office and The Other West Coast Motion Media Productions. It was produced by Elizabeth Tracy of Charlotte County CC-TV.

Anyone who lives locally will recognize the movie was shot in more than 16 locations including Lemon Bay High School, Charlotte High School and other

parts of the county including a cemetery. The principal who suspended the bully in the film was played by Charlotte County Commissioner Bill Truex.

"I really think it covered many real-life situations that teenagers go through," said Charles Reynolds, who played the at-times screaming father of Benny Kehoe. Reynold's character ends up in a fight and gets pushed into the water at Laishley Park after blaming Tiffany for causing distracted driving and not being hurt in the crash that left his son dead. Reynold's character had to be rescued by the Charlotte County Sheriff's Marine Unit. "I have been in theater for years. I am the fitness director at the YMCA. When I heard about this film being shot here I went for the audition. I think they did an outstanding job, it's very realistic."

The film also deals with teens partying with drugs and alcohol, which led to an arrest and an overdose of a girl at the party. There's a scene where the bully Crystal gets "catfished" by a girl she made fun of and threw hot French fries on during school lunch. Crystal deals with having a verbally abusive father which is why she bullies others.

The film also shows how Tiffany struggles with depression and survivor's guilt including suicidal thoughts. She intentionally cuts her wrists several times but tells her mom she broke a mirror to cover it up. Her mom doesn't think too much about it. Tiffany is offered help from her mom but refused to get counseling because she thought everyone already hated her and then would think she was crazy.

The other lead character Ember, who was driving the car, sustained life-long injuries to her

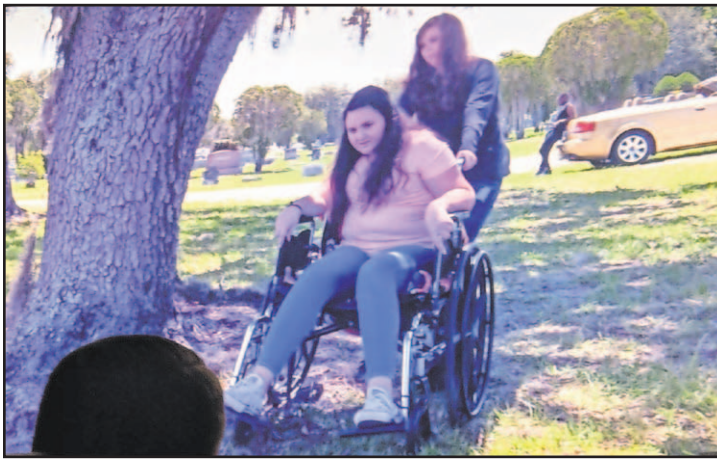


PHOTO PROVIDED

In the film, the two lead characters deal with life after a distracted driving crash leaves them both in a lot of emotional and physical pain.

legs and is wheelchair bound. In the film, she had to be airlifted to Tampa General after the crash.

"I played the mom of Tiffany (who went missing taking her friend Ember's pain pills)," said Maureen Moran. "It was a wonderful experience to participate in such a real life film. Tracy and the whole crew were just great to work with."

There were more than 175 cast members in the film which took two years to make. The film and resources including information about Charlotte Behavioral Health Care, which is also used at the end of the film, will be made available to the public.

In the film, Tiffany gets help from Charlotte Behavioral. CC-TV station manager Elizabeth Tracy, was dressed in a gown and greeted everyone on the red carpet as they entered the theater. Many of the extras were not actors.

As the station manager, Tracy, works with all the boards and committee departments to produce original videos about programs and services Charlotte County government provides.

"I bring to the project my life's experience of my older sister being killed in a car accident when she was 17, and a family member that committed suicide," said Tracy, 37, in an earlier interview with the Sun. "I have two children ages 11 and 18 that are growing up in this day and age."

The film will debut at 3:15 p.m. today at Regal Cinemas Town 16, 1441 Tamiami Trail in Port Charlotte. Seating is free but limited.

"I hope this will bring awareness to teens and families," said Charlotte County Sheriff Bill Prummell, whose deputies were in the film.

"Choices and Chances" will soon be available for clubs and organizations to show, along with a packet of questions and resources to distribute to attendees.

The next public showing of "Choices and Chances" will be at 6 p.m. on April 17 at the Mid-County Regional Library, 2050 Forrest Nelson Blvd. in Port Charlotte.

Email: eallen@sun-herald.com

North Port to explore revitalization of neighborhoods Workshop set for Monday morning

By **TOM HARMENING**
STAFF WRITER

NORTH PORT — The City Commission plans to explore the city's revitalization plan at its regular workshop on Monday.

The meeting, which begins at 9 a.m. in City Hall, will look at the implementation strategy of the plan.

Public comments will be welcomed.

The five-person commission is also slated to consider revisions to the North Port Road and Drainage methodology, as well as the city's policy on easements.

The meeting takes place at 9 a.m. Monday at the City Commission Chambers on the second floor of City Hall at 4970 City Hall Boulevard.

Meetings of the North Port City Commission can be viewed online at cityofnorthport.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx or on YouTube under "City of North Port."



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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

■ TODAY

Easter Cantata, The Risen Christ, Grand 70-Voice Choir & More! 9:15 & 11 am, EUM Church, 700 E Dearborn, 474-5588, www. englewoodumc.net

The Boyz in Concert, The Boyz will be in a free concert at 10:30 a.m. @ Fellowship Church & refreshments 475-7447

Broasted Chicken, Bar food available all day. Broasted chicken w/ potato wedges & coleslaw 2-5 p.m.. Rotonda Elks members & guests

Billy Lindsey Show, Public Invited Elvis Dinner/Dance Sat 4/6 \$20pp for dinner & show, \$15 for bar seat, show only Rotonda Elks 697-2710

FC FUEL TEEN GROUP, FUEL High School Youth Group meets Sun. 4 p.m. @ 140 Rot. Blvd. W. Join us for fun, food & Bible Study. 475-7447

SUNDAY BLUE PLATE, Ham Steak \$7 VFW Auxiliary 550 N. McCall Road. 4:00 — 6:00 p.m. dine in or carry out. Public Welcome 941-474-7515

FC BLAST KIDS, BLAST Middle School Youth Group meets Sun. 5-7 p.m. @ 140 Rot. Blvd. W. Join us for fun, food, games & Bible Study. 475-7447

Farmers Market, History Park Farmers Market open every Sunday 9 a.m.-1 p.m., 501 Shreve St., between Virginia Ave. & Henry St. 941-639-1887

Easter Cantata, The Risen Christ, Grand 70-Voice Choir & More! 9:15 & 11 am, EUM Church,

700 E Dearborn, 474-5588, www. englewoodumc.net

Eagles, Eagles 23111 Harborview Road PC 941-629-1645

Punta Gorda Elks, 12 p.m. Bar & Tiki open, 2-5 Steak Roast (Ticket Only Event) 2-6 Music/Jeff Hughes @ 25538 ShorePG637-2606, mbrs&gsts

AL 110-show me money, Show me the Money — join us for an afternoon of fun. Starting at 1:00 pm

Dog Show, Register dog \$10- Prizes — Chance Auction- Food-Music- Fun to benefit Moose Charities

Am Leg Aux 103 Golf, Win \$ Sundays 1-3 p.m. Proceeds to Final Salute (Finding Homeless Female Veterans Safe Housing) 2101 Taylor Road PG 639-6337

Amvets 2000 Special, Best Breakfast in town 8-11 a.m. large menu to choose from only \$7 incl/bev 401 Ortiz Blvd NP 941-429-1999

North Port VFW, Members & Guests, Sunday Funday, \$0.25 off of drafts, domestic bottles and well drinks, 4860 Trott Cir, NP 426-6865

North Port Moose, Kitchen is open from 11-12! NASCAR is on with legionnaire discount day! 14156 Tamiami Trl NP 9414262126

SOA Fry & Grill Day, Relax & let the Sons to the cooling NEW menu to choose from 401 Ortiz Blvd NP 941-429-1999

Non profit 97.5 FM, 3:00 12735 US 41, North Port, 34287 Vol Tech No experience necessary Will train Details Linda 941-223-1262

■ MONDAY

Eagles, Eagles 23111 Harborview Road PC 941-629-1645

Trustee meet, 6 pm Aerie/Aux 7 p.m. lunch 11-2 pm dinner 5-8

Genealogy, Free Class: "Ancestry.com" at Mid County Library, 10:30 am, MON, Apr 1. Public Welcome — info 941-380-1488

Punta Gorda Elks, 11-2 Lunch, 2 p.m. Tiki, 4-7 Music/Mike Gorka, 4:30-7:30 ChickenNite, 7-10 Karaoke

Basic Exercise, \$3/class 9-10 AM NP Senior Center 4940 Pan American Blvd 426-2204 Join Brenda for a good workout and feel better

Free Tax Help, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., every Mon., AARP Tax-Aide, Holiday Park Recreation Center, Phase 1 Rec. Hall, Tuscola Blvd., NP

Mahjongg, 9 AM-12:30 PM NP Senior Center 4940 Pan American Blvd 426-2204 Learn something new. Will teach Looking for more people

North Port Moose, Kitchen open from 11-2 with wings on sale! Queen is at 6! 14156 Tamiami Trl NP 9414262126

North Port VFW, Members & Guests, Lunch 11-2, Wings 5-7, Q-7PM, Music by Dave Daviski 6:30-9:30, 4860 Trott Cir, NP 426-6865

Duplicate Bridge, \$3/person 12:30-4 PM NP Senior Center 4940

Pan American Blvd Ella 429-8958 If you like bridge/join others who do too

Rummikub, 1-4 PM NP Senior Center 4940 Pan American Blvd 426-2204 Like cards but not holding them? This is played with tiles.

monday music, Eddie & The Edsels 6:30 4/1/19 Am Legion 113 3436 Indiana Road Rotonda 6973616. Last chance till next year!

Gyrokinesis, Movement to benefit entire body, increase range, motion strength & agility. Text Wendy 37

Crafts, Handmade items avail or help us create one of a kind crafts, Lemon Bay Woman's Club, 9:30 — 12:30, 681-2048

Table Tennis, Englewood Sports Complex, 9:30-1p, 941-861-1980. \$2 to play.

40 Carrots, Share meaningful play with your child ages 0-5 limit 12 families 10:15 or 11:45 Elsie Quirk Lib 100 W Dearborn 861-5000

Euchre, Euchre Every Mon & Wed @ 1:00 PM VFW Post 10178, 550 N McCall Road. (941)474-7516 Come join us and have fun!

H2U BINGO Suncoast, Free popcorn and refreshments, bring your friends, 1:00-4 pm. Suncoast Aud. 779 Medical Drive, \$1/ card. RSVP: 941-473-3919.

The Community Calendar items are entered by the event organizers and are run "as submitted." To submit an item, go to www.yoursun.com, select an edition and click on the "Community Calendar" link on the left. Click "Submit Event," and fill out the appropriate information.

PAID ADVERTISEMENTS

Featured Events

Health & Wellness Event, N Port SDA Church, 4330 S Biscayne Dr. N Port, FL 34287, Ph (941) 426-5708. April 5, 6:30 PM- Mental Health Seminar. April 6, 9:30 AM - 8 Laws of Health, 11 AM- Special Health Presentation, 5 PM -Treating and reversing diseases. April 7, 9 AM - 1 PM Health Expo. BP & glucose checks, etc.

AAUW -Punta Gorda/Port Charlotte Branch, Ap 6. AAUW presents FREE prog for Char Co Middle School students. Newton's Laws of Motion presented by TAG Science teacher Melissa Fiuzza. At Mid County Library, 2050 Forrest Nelson Blvd, PC. 10-11:30 am. Pre-registration required: 508-878-9160 more »

Put The Lime In The Coconut - Tiki Hut, The Punta Gorda Woman's Club presents "Put The Lime In The Coconut", a fun in the sun style show featuring Anthony's Fashions.

Wednesday, April 10th at the Four Points by Sheraton Punta Gorda beginning at 12:00. Includes lunch and beverages. Cash bar available. \$35. Call Maureen at 617-827-0727.

Bion Cantorum Sings Fresh Aires April 7, Bion Cantorum sings Fresh Aires at 3 p.m. April 7 at First Presbyterian Church, 25250 Airport Rd, Punta Gorda. New compositions and old spirituals are featured. Adult tickets \$15, \$10 for juniors under age 15 when with an adult. Call 941.206.2071 for info. Tickets at the door, cash or check only.

Secular Community of SWFL Meeting, The March meeting of the Secular Community of SWFL is from 3 to 5, Sunday, March 31 at the Punta Gorda Boat Club at 802 W Retta Esplanade, Punta Gorda. All welcome. Guest speaker Amy Weintraub on reproductive rights. Questions, call Barb Hazlett at 414-801-8163. CHORALE CONCERT: Puttin' on the Gritz, "Puttin' On the Gritz" April 13, @ 4 pm THE CHARLOTTE CHORALE brings to life the by-gone era of Hollywood and Broadway musical extravaganzas with select melodies from award winning stage and screen productions. Final Choral concert of the Season at CPAC in PG. \$25 adults, \$10 students 941-204-0033

Englewood Fun Chorus Spring Show, Englewood Fun Chorus presents their annual Spring Show "A Little Bit Country" on Sunday, March 31 at 3 PM at the Fellowship Hall, Christ Lutheran Church, 701 N. Indiana Ave. Englewood. Admission is free; a collection is taken to sponsor a scholarship given to a senior at Lemon Bay High School.

WEEKLY RECORD

Charlotte County marriage licenses

- Amy Rebecca Schiebel of Pickerington, Ohio, and Brian Matthew Thomas of Reynoldsburg, Ohio
- Matthew Tyler Roberts of Anderson, Ind., and Tyleah Ann Williams of Anderson, Ind.
- Robert Paul Boyd of Avon, Ind., and Melinda Kay Cupp of Avon, Ind.
- Thomas Edward Houston of Chicago, Ill., and Maria Victoria Swanco Abana of Fort Myers
- Kamila Paclt Hajdikova of Port Charlotte, and Dennis Graham Domres of Englewood
- Elizabeth Seijas of Port Charlotte, and Jeffrey Isaias Perez of Port Charlotte
- Shelomie Francois of Punta Gorda, and Jean Genel St. Louis of Punta Gorda
- Robert Gregory Smith of Rotonda West, and Kathy Marlene Johnson of Rotonda West

- Robert Mark Hardin of North Port, and Sharon Michelle Lee Woodward of Port Charlotte
- Van Ethan Woods of Port Charlotte, and Ashley Danielle Roberts of Punta Gorda
- Christopher Eric Stone of Port Charlotte, and Catherine Marie Nicole Brenneman of Port Charlotte
- Patricia Fay Redfering of Punta Gorda, and Julian Ciarimboli of Dallas, Penn.
- Carlos Enrique Garcia of North Port, and Brittany Ann Curcuru of North Port
- Aimee Elizabeth Gregoire of Port Charlotte, and James Lee Munz of Port Charlotte
- Mindy Marie Dawes of Cape Coral, and Eric Martin Swat of Cape Coral
- Michael Cofield of Rotonda, and Sandra Franovich of Sarasota
- Jacqueline Sanchez of Punta Gorda, and Ricardo Tineo Manon of Punta Gorda

- Matthew Jacob Blassus of Port Charlotte, and Cassandra Haley Rodriguez of Port Charlotte
- Connie Lorraine Ingersoll of Punta Gorda, and Norman Junior Schuchman of Punta Gorda
- Sylvia Jane Bennett of Port Charlotte, and William James Lutz of Port Charlotte
- William Andrew Hekkema of Punta Gorda, and Cheryl Lynn Rysko of Punta Gorda
- Cady Jermain Rueff of Punta Gorda, and Daniel Frank Weber of Punta Gorda
- Randy Alan McCluer of Arcadia, and Sarah Elizabeth Drewry of Punta Gorda
- Marisol Rosario of Port Charlotte, and Alex Mero of Borgloon, Belgium
- Naphkie Vincent of Punta Gorda, and Barthelemy Arthur of North Port
- Jessica Marie Laurie of Port Charlotte, and Jeffrey David Faett of Port Charlotte

WEEKLY RECORD

- American Legion Post 103**
 - Sunday Darts winners March 24: Round 1: 1-Nancy Becker and Christy Buzzell; 2-Fern Tropea and Dave Heder; 3-Barb Carroll and Tommie Holl. Round 2: 1-Kim Smith and Sandy Becker; 2-Nancy Becker and Baeb Carroll; 3-Margaret Baldwin and Fran Smith.
- American Legion Post 110**
 - Bridge winners March 25: Chris Ostmark, 4790; Jerry Fowler, 4340; Judy Tayler, 4200; Linda Kopp, 4140.
- Charlotte Harbor Yacht Club**
 - Ladies Bridge winners
- Charlotte Square Condominium Complex**
 - Charlotte County Bridge Group winners March 23: Jay Oberlander, 5800; Fred Weibel, 4800; Virginia Clayton, 3800.
- Cultural Center of Charlotte County**
 - Duplicate Bridge winners March 21 (a.m.): 1-Peter Harrington, Bob Bonjean; 2-Marsha Vanegren, Margie Moser; 3-Linda Jones, Alice Williams. March 21 (p.m.): (N/S) 1-Peter Harrington, Dottie Harrop; 2-Denise Cucaro. Randy Peterson; 3- Lenore Bumstead, Marilyn Grant. (E/W) 1- Fred and Zena Thomas 2-Nicole Paker, Bill Sharp; 3-Tom Ohlgart, Bonnie Elliott. March 26: (N/S) 1-Pam Dean, Bonnie Elliott; 2-Dan Becker, Al Tyminski; 3- George Cantin, Tom

- Christie. (E/W) 1-Bill Sharp, Nicole Parker; 2-Dennis Leduc, Fred Andreas; 3-Elena Steingraf, Marilyn Hurin.
- Mah Jongg winners March 21: Table 1: Kathy Cimaglia, Cindy Robertson; Table 2: Cindy Carroll, Barb Polisar; Table 3: Brenda Merran, Dolores DePasquale; Table 4: Bev Levy, Marie Devlin. March 26: Table 1: Linda Kopp, Kathy Cimaglia; Table 2: Barbara Bennett, Cindy Carroll; Table 3: Joan Kamaitis, Gina Adamo; Table 4: Brenda Merran, Dolores DePasquale; Table 5: Emily Hughes, Judy Spargue; Table 6: Marie Devlin.
- Englewood Elks**
 - Trivia Game winners March 20: 1-Phillies, \$124; 2-Sexy Seniors, \$42. March 26: 1-Villains, \$79; 2-Eight Shades of Grey, \$27.
- Fisherman's Village Yacht Basin**
 - Mahjongg winners
 - Isles Yacht Club**
 - Scrabble winners March 22: Mary Lou Coutts, 243; Judith Howell, 263; Diana Lehr, 187.
 - Kings Gate**
 - Friday Night Double Deck Pinochle winners March 22: Dennis Kiselyk, 1133; Jan Howard, 1094.
 - Wednesday Night Double Deck Pinochle winners March 27: Gary Sblendorio, 1288; Jan Howard, 1279.

- Bridge winners March 25: 1-Pinky Harmon, 3980; 2-Pat Mulligan, 3890; 3-Bev Sudds, 3490; 4-David Beard, 3390.
- Kingsway**
 - Ladies Bridge winners March 6: 1-Marilyn Gilbert; 2-Dee Nutt. March 20: 1-Linda Bellmore, 2-Dee Nutt. March 22: 1-Linda Bellmore, 2-Gerrie McGee.
 - Partner Bridge winners Feb. 27: 1-Dave Baker, Norma Block; 2-Bev Bossert, Richard Bryson; 3-Ron and Dee Nutt. March 6: 1-Jim and Gerrie McGee; 2-Rodger Dowdell, Helen Christensen; 3-Dave Baker, Marilyn Gilbert. March 20: 1-Rodger Dowdell, Denny Gilstad; 2-Ron and Dee Nutt; 3-Jim and Gerrie McGee.
- Moose Lodge 2121**
 - Contract Bridge winners March 27: Jay Oberlander, 6590; David Beard, 5640; Connie Oberlander, 5400; Lorita Portis, 4720.
 - Euchre Card Game winners
- Port Charlotte Bridge Club**
 - Bridge Club winners March 22: 1-Joyce Weibel, 4680; 2-Pat Mulligan, 4300; 3-Cleta Clark, 3960; 4-Fred Weibel, 3610.
- Riverwood Trivia**
 - Trivia winners March 23: 1-Sawgrass Sharks; 2-Corner Wackers.
- Twin Isles Country Club**
 - Duplicate Bridge winners March 27: 1-Barbara Clay, Teri Leavy; 2-Katie Costello, Emma May Goddard.

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Harbor Walk for Hunger

Funds raised benefit the Holy Trinity Lutheran Church's food pantry

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church of Port Charlotte, held its inaugural Harbor Walk for Hunger at Fisherman's Village in Punta Gorda, on March 23.

Participants walked from Fishermen's Village parking lot to Gilchrist Park and back, to complete a 2.3 mile circuit.

Volunteers provided pastries, fruit and water to the walkers.

Eight hundred dollars was raised to benefit the church's food pantry which serves meals to those in need. For more information or to make a donation, call 941-625-5262 or visit www.htlchurch.org.



Participants begin the Harbor Walk for Hunger.



James Rose crosses the finish line.



Holy Trinity Lutheran Church Council Member Sandra Santello is first to cross the finish line.



Pat Wachter recovers with fruit and water.



Ray Blashill (left) stands near the registration desk, where volunteers Dave and Fran Kern (rear) await participants.



FEELING FIT PHOTOS BY JERRY BEARD

Participants pose for a photo, at the Harbor Walk for Hunger, sponsored by Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, at Fishermans Village in Punta Gorda.

Colon cancer: Earlier screening advised

American Cancer Society recommends new colon cancer screening guidelines

Provided by BEVIN HOLZSCHUH

BAYFRONT HEALTH
PORT CHARLOTTE AND
PUNTA GORDA

Colorectal cancer (CRC) is the third most commonly diagnosed cancer, excluding skin cancers, among adults in the United States. Over 145,000 Americans are expected to be diagnosed with CRC in 2019.

The preferred screening strategy for colorectal cancer is to have a

colonoscopy every 10 years, beginning at age 50. Earlier in 2018 however, the American Cancer Society (ACS) made a qualified recommendation that routine colon cancer screening begin at age 45 years. The ACS estimates that the lifetime risk of developing colorectal cancer is about 1 in 22 (4.49 percent) for men and 1 in 24 (4.15 percent) for women. Some people are at higher risk and should be screened earlier, including

personal or family history of inflammatory bowel disease, colorectal cancer or polyps, or ovarian, endometrial or breast cancer.

"Most people don't realize that colon cancer is a totally preventable cancer," says Sovi Joseph M.D., board-certified gastroenterologist and Medical Director of Gastroenterology at Bayfront Health Port Charlotte. "It develops from a benign polyp that over the course

of a number of years becomes the carcinoma, which is the cancer," he added. "So, there is time to detect the polyps and remove them before they become cancer. In essence, you can prevent colon cancer if people get the colonoscopy on time and follow through with continued screening."

ACS recommends those tests that actually examine the interior of the colon because they cannot

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by Dr. Tetyana Metyk



How college pressures are causing serious anxiety problems in students

By **KATHERINE ROSENBERG-DOUGLAS**
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

For high school students with dreams of reaching top colleges, the pressure to prove they can handle a punishing academic schedule can have devastating effects: Some are hospitalized for academic anxiety and others don't graduate at all after failing an AP class they weren't required to take, a suburban high school guidance counselor says.

Students today are acutely aware of how hard it is to get into the best universities, so they're preparing themselves earlier, many as early as junior high and some even in elementary school. But until they are in over their heads, it can be hard for them to understand how much is too much — causing academic anxiety or extreme stress over their studies — and what their breaking point will be, said Elizabeth Arbir, a guidance counselor at Crystal Lake Central High School in the far northwest Illinois suburb.

"Without a doubt, academic anxiety is definitely increasing," Arbir said in a recent interview. "These kids are setting themselves up for dealing with a lot of pressure. And though some of them will be able to handle it ... others are going to be, probably, those same kids who are going to come into my office and have a meltdown."

Counselors' experiences are reflected in recent studies of high school students. Rachel Gordon, a sociology professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago, recently published research about high school peer groups. One of the biggest changes that separates today's high school students from past generations is the increased stress and anxiety about their studies and getting into top colleges, Gordon found.

Arbir, who has been a counselor for more than two decades, said there is a fine line between pushing students to master the most academically challenging schedule possible and overscheduling them. Finding the balance can

take trial and error, but she most often sees students start high school with wildly ambitious schedules that can lead to suffering emotionally and possibly physically.

"I like all students to reach their full potential, but when my kids start having bad day after bad day, I would say, 'Look, it's not worth your well-being here, so let's lighten your load,'" she said.

When Antonette Minniti walked into a sixth period sophomore honors English class at Palatine's Fremd High School and saw most of the students eating at their desks, the overscheduling she'd cautioned against came into sharp focus.

"It hit me — sophomore year is the first year they're allowed to remove lunch from their schedule," said Minniti, a guidance counselor at Fremd. "Colleges love to see the most rigorous schedule you can take, but they want you to be getting As. Some students can handle it and they get really excellent grades, but for other students, sometimes it comes at a cost."



TNS PHOTO

Crystal Lake Central counselor Liz Arbir, right, talks with senior Katie O'Berry in Crystal Lake, Illinois. O'Berry deals with academic anxiety and gets help from a therapist and the school to help her relax and focus on life outside school.

Arbir said each year it becomes more apparent that eighth-graders think they've got to set themselves apart beginning in the first semester of high school. She recently spent an evening with incoming freshmen at an event designed to help the students select their high school classes, something she has done for a number of years. More students than ever — and parents on students' behalf — ignored her advice that students should build some downtime into the day, such as with homeroom or a study hall, she said.

"It just seemed like in conversation after conversation I'd hear, 'She's OK if she doesn't even have lunch, she can eat during passing period,'" Arbir said. "... It's like, push, push, push."

Arbir's experience mirrors Gordon's findings. In studying high school cliques, Gordon found increased anxiety about parents' expectations worse than in earlier studies of teens, especially in the group of students known as "brains." Gordon expected the highest-achieving students to be anxious about performance, but she said it was greatly amplified in comparison with the same group in earlier studies.

"Participants identified academic anxiety in more specific terms, even suggesting that students in the 'brain' peer crowd were less mentally healthy, due to a fear of upsetting their

parents," said Gordon, who is also a fellow of the Institute for Health Research and Policy at UIC.

Arbir said the students who are most afflicted and debilitated by anxiety often have therapists who they're seeing outside of school in an attempt to mitigate it.

Katie O'Berry, a senior at Central, where Arbir works, decided to visit a therapist toward the end of her junior year, she said.

"AP tests were coming up, so to cope with all that anxiety and all that stress, I started to go to therapy and it literally has changed my life," O'Berry said. "Now I know how to deal with all that overwhelming pressure that school kind of gives me."

O'Berry usually gets up at 6 a.m. and is on campus around 7 a.m. to either attend a club meeting or to seek out a teacher to ask questions. She takes multiple AP classes and is in two clubs: Tiger Buddies, in which she helps students with special needs at fun activities such as going to an arcade or bowling, and Interact Club, a volunteering group that often requires her to log hours after school and on weekends. She also is a mentor to several younger students through an organized, school-sanctioned program.

To keep up with her rigorous class load, including AP Physics and AP Calculus, O'Berry often is still doing homework into the early morning. Some

days she gets as few as four or five hours of sleep.

"It's good in the way that it will get us ready for college — but we're still in high school," she said.

O'Berry recently was accepted into the University of Colorado at Boulder, where she plans to study infectious diseases. She hopes ultimately to work in a medical research lab. She knows both her schedule and her studies will be more demanding in college and she'll need the tools she's picked up in therapy.

Her therapist recommended she try breathing exercises when she notices a spike in anxiety. She also uses two apps to do guided meditation.

"Doing those guided meditations, I can shift the focus from school to somewhere else I'd rather be," O'Berry said.

She also uses Central's new Care Room, a space designed for students who need a break.

Minniti said she does her best to tailor her approach to each student she sees struggling with his or her course load and resulting anxiety, noting there isn't a single approach that will resonate with students. Part of her job is to ask questions about the student's goals and to offer feedback with possible paths to meet them.

"I don't want to be a dream-crusher, but I also don't want them to be like, 'No one told me getting into Harvard was crazy difficult,'" Minniti said.

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COLON

FROM PAGE 1C

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Does most of your paycheck go to rent? That may be hurting your health

Families that spend more on housing may have less to spend on their health

By JESSICA OWENS-YOUNG
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

THE CONVERSATION

New data on health across the U.S. shows that high housing costs are harming Americans' health — and that some communities are affected more than others.

The 2019 County Health Rankings, an annual collaborative report from the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, shows that 11 percent of U.S. households are severely burdened by housing costs. This means that more than 800,000 households spend at least half of their income on housing.

In communities with high housing costs, residents rate their health as lower, are less likely to be able to purchase enough quality and nutritious foods, and have higher rates of child poverty.

As a health researcher, this is a theme that I have seen in studies over and over again.

The most burdened households

While many communities face high housing costs, these burdens are not universally shared. Renters are more likely than homeowners to spend more than half of their paycheck on housing. The costs of homeownership have improved over the past few years, but housing costs for renters have not.

There are also racial differences. More than 1 in 10 white households spend more than half of their income on housing, with a median income of US\$56,000. But among households headed by blacks, the median income is \$33,000 — and about 1 in 4 black households experience these housing costs burdens.

Another key finding from the County Health Rankings report is that segregated communities with more households headed by black residents are twice as likely to face severe housing cost burdens than white households.

Why are black Americans more likely to spend so much of their incomes on housing? One reason is that black neighborhoods were targeted in a process called redlining, especially between the 1930s and 1965. Banks and other lenders excluded black communities from favorable loans and charged higher interest rates on mortgages, leading to higher housing costs — even when homes were valued less than similar homes in white communities.

Redlining is not explicitly practiced in the same way today, but its damage and discrimination remains — such as how banks targeted black homeowners with subprime loans. The consequences of this

became clear in the 2008 recession, when black homeowners suffered worse outcomes compared to white homeowners. These practices led to higher foreclosure rates and steeper declines in home values during and after the recession, limiting opportunities for black communities to build wealth through homeownership.

Effects on health

There is a powerful relationship between housing and health.

When people pay too much for housing, they must make tough choices between paying their rent or mortgage or paying for food, medicine and other resources that support their health. In 2015, households that are burdened by housing costs spent 53 percent less on health care, food and transportation combined, compared to households that do not spend more than half of their income on housing.

To afford housing, some families spend less on food, do not buy enough food, or buy less nutritious and cheaper food. These families may also live in homes with structural deficits and other inadequacies, where they are at higher risk for health conditions like lead paint poisoning and asthma.

Research shows that segregated communities



PHOTO PROVIDED

In communities with high housing costs, residents rate their health as lower, are less likely to be able to purchase enough quality and nutritious foods, and have higher rates of child poverty.

are more likely to be exposed to more threats to their health. For example, a study published in March showed that black and Hispanic populations are exposed to 56 percent and 63 percent more air pollution compared to white residents, even though white residents are more likely to contribute to pollution.

Segregated communities are also less likely to have resources in their communities that promote health and help prevent chronic diseases, like obesity and diabetes. Even if black families were not overly burdened by housing costs, they still are more likely to need to leave their own neighborhoods to access fresh and nutritious foods, quality health care services and places to exercise. And black residents living in segregated neighborhoods are also more likely to die prematurely.

I recently co-authored a paper, led by University

of Maryland professor Caryn Bell, that shows that counties with 9 percent or more black residents are more likely to have resources that compromise health, such as fast food restaurants, and less likely to have resources that promote health, such as grocery stores. Research has shown that this is important, due to the relationship between access to health-promoting resources, like grocery stores, and lower obesity rates.

A growing problem

As housing costs have risen, incomes have not kept pace. Additionally, affordable housing is not available to everyone who needs it.

The National Low Income Housing Coalition reported in March that only 37 affordable homes exist for every 100 extremely low-income renter households, meaning households with incomes at or below the poverty line or 30 percent of the

area median income. That means that there is a shortage of homes with monthly costs that are 30 percent or less of the monthly household's income. No state has enough homes for every extremely low-income renter household, which are the majority of households that are severely housing cost burdened.

Incomes are stagnating while housing costs, especially renting, continue to rise. As these two forces combine to limit opportunity, more U.S. residents are at risk of becoming burdened by their housing costs and damaging their health, especially low-income and black Americans.

Jessica Owens-Young does not work for, consult, own shares in or receive funding from any company or organization that would benefit from this article, and has disclosed no relevant affiliations beyond their academic appointment.

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Special evaluations can help seniors cope with cancer care

By **LINDSEY TANNER**
AP MEDICAL WRITER

Before she could start breast cancer treatment, Nancy Simpson had to walk in a straight line, count backward from 20 and repeat a silly phrase.

It was all part of a special kind of medical fitness test for older patients that's starting to catch on among cancer doctors. Instead of assuming that elderly patients are too frail for treatment or recommending harsh drugs tested only in younger patients, they are taking a broader look.

Specialists call these tests geriatric assessments, and they require doctors to take the time to evaluate physical and mental fitness, along with emotional and social well-being. They also take into account the patient's desires for life-prolonging treatment regardless of how much time might be left.

An avid walker with a strong network of nearby family and friends, Simpson, now 80, says she "wanted to do the maximum I could handle" to fight her disease. She scored high enough in her 2017 evaluation to proceed with recommended surgery and chemotherapy.

"It gave me encouragement. Then I felt like I am OK and I can get through this and will get through this," said Simpson, who lives in Fairport, New York, near Rochester.

These tests are sometimes done with other illnesses but only recently have been recommended for cancer. In new guidelines, the American Society of Clinical Oncology recommends the evaluations for patients aged 65 and up, particularly before making decisions about

chemotherapy. The idea is to find ways to help patients tolerate treatment, not rule it out.

For example, if walking tests show balance problems that chemotherapy might worsen, patients might be offered physical therapy first. Relatives or friends might be called on to help cook for seniors who live alone and would become too weak to prepare meals during chemo. And for those who want to avoid the hospital no matter what, treatment that could put them there would be avoided.

Almost 1 million U.S. adults aged 65 and older will be diagnosed with cancer this year, the American Cancer Society estimates. Nearly two-thirds of all cancer patients are in that age group. And yet, most cancer treatments stem from studies on younger, often healthier patients. That leaves doctors with limited information on how treatments will affect elderly patients. Geriatric assessments can help bridge that gap, said Dr. Supriya Mohile, a specialist in geriatric cancer at the University of Rochester Medical Center.

These tests may require 15 to 30 minutes or more and recent research has shown they can accurately predict how patients will fare during and after cancer treatment, Mohile said. Older patients who get chemo and have other health problems are more vulnerable to falls and delirium and at risk for losing independence.

"We hear all the time about 'decision regret,'" she said, meaning patients who got harsh treatment but weren't aware of risks and other options and who say, "I wish someone had told me this could happen."



AP PHOTO

In this March 4 photo, Nancy Simpson, left, speaks with Dr. Allison Magnuson, Geriatric Oncology and Breast Oncology at Wilmot Cancer Institute, at the Pluta Cancer Center in Rochester, N.Y. Simpson, 80, says she "wanted to do the maximum I could handle" to fight her disease.

Mohile co-authored a recent study that found just 1 in 4 U.S. cancer specialists did the assessments. She said doctors say it takes too long and that patients don't want it. But she hears from patients and caregivers: "I'm so happy you're asking me about these things. Nobody ever asked me."

One of Mohile's colleagues did Simpson's evaluation, which showed she was strong enough to endure a standard, aggressive three-drug chemotherapy combo for breast cancer. She chose a variation that was gentler but extended the treatment by several weeks.

The evaluation showed "I wasn't in as that bad of shape as my age would indicate," Simpson said.

Her walking buddy and

four attentive children gave her strong social support, and she lived independently, doing her own cooking and cleaning.

Treatment left Simpson with hair loss, fatigue and excruciating mouth sores. She knew about the risks but has no regrets.

Cancer "gave me a different perspective on what is important in life and what isn't and I'm still adjusting to that," Simpson said.

Dr. Hyman Muss, a geriatrics specialist at the University of North Carolina's Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center says there's no question the evaluations are important but insurance coverage is sometimes a problem. Medicare will pay for yearly physical exams but not geriatric assessments, he

said. Doctors can sometimes squeeze the tests into other office visits, but there is no billing code for the exams, he said.

Advocates note that the evaluations can include questionnaires that patients can fill out at home to shorten time in the doctor's office.

Beverly Canin, 84, of Rhinebeck, New York, became an advocate after declining chemotherapy following surgery for early breast cancer 20 years ago. She didn't have an assessment, and says her doctor dismissed her concerns about harsh side effects and refused to consider other options.

A 2015 medical report Canin co-authored told of a patient who had the opposite experience. The 92-year-old man with rectal cancer entered hospice care after he

declined surgery, the only treatment his primary care doctor recommended. The doctor determined the man would not tolerate rigorous chemotherapy and radiation because of his advanced age. A specialist approved the treatments after the man had a geriatric evaluation and declared he wanted care that would control his symptoms and prolong his life.

The patient managed well and was cancer-free two years later. Canin said his stress and treatment delay could have been avoided if a geriatric evaluation had been done first.

"The risks with older adults traditionally are overtreatment and undertreatment. What we need is more precision treatment," she said.

Never neglect physical therapy after an injury

By **WINA STURGEON**
ADVENTURE SPORTS WEEKLY

Nearly every athlete or active person will at some point need physical therapy (PT), which is the rehabilitation of an injury. Don't shake your head. It doesn't have to be a major injury, such as a broken bone. Even something as common as a slightly sprained ankle requires therapy.

Few folks realize that the ankle is one of the most complex joints in the human body. It has numerous bones, ligaments and tendons. It's definitely worth some research. Type "anatomy of the human ankle" into a search engine and you may be surprised at what you learn.

For our purposes, let's follow the timeline of a sprained ankle without

PT. You first realize something is wrong with your ankle after an activity. You felt a sharp pain when it happened, but the pain didn't go away. Instead, your ankle became swollen and painful when touched. You iced it and spent a day or so in active rest. Then you returned to your active life.

The ankle grew more painful as you kept walking and playing your sport, and it hurt every time you put weight on it. You naturally began to favor the injured ankle to prevent pain, transferring more work to the healthy ankle. This caused an imbalance in the way you shifted your weight. The imbalance quickly became chronic, affecting your entire active and athletic performance.

A physical therapist would have identified



PHOTO PROVIDED

Never second-guess the therapist. If he or she tells you to ice it twice a day, do it. If there is a rehab program assigned for 'homework,' follow it as scheduled.

the imbalance in the way you walked and given you

exercises and a program to follow that would help prevent favoring of the sore ankle. The therapist would schedule more visits to keep track of how you were recovering, analyzing not only the ankle, but the distribution of your weight. Some therapists have a pressure plate that measures the weight of each foot placement, showing whether you are doing less work on one side of the body.

Without this professional analysis and correction, you may continue letting

one side of your body do more work than the other side. The results of such a change will eventually affect not only your walk, but all activities. Your athletic performance will subtly decline over time, and you will always wonder why.

This timeline is common with any injury, whether it's a broken bone; a pulled muscle, tendon or ligament. Having PT, where you are observed and analyzed in your movement, is usually the solution to

lingering effects of even a mild injury; not to mention a serious one.

If you have been smart enough to get PT after a problem, never second-guess the therapist. If he or she tells you to ice it twice a day, do it. If there is a rehab program assigned for 'homework,' follow it as scheduled.

Now comes the big problem: if you don't have insurance that covers this kind of treatment, how are you going to pay for it? Be upfront with the issue.

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Gene-edited food quietly arrives in restaurant cooking oil

A Midwestern restaurant is using cooking oil made from soybeans gene edited to be healthier and longer lasting

By **CANDICE CHOI**

AP FOOD & HEALTH WRITER

Somewhere in the Midwest, a restaurant is frying foods with oil made from gene-edited soybeans. That's according to the company making the oil, which says it's the first commercial use of a gene-edited food in the U.S.

Calyxt said it can't reveal its first customer for competitive reasons, but CEO Jim Blome said the oil is "in use and being eaten."

The Minnesota-based company is hoping the announcement will encourage the food industry's interest in the oil, which it says has no trans fats and a longer shelf life than other soybean oils. Whether demand builds remains to be seen, but the oil's transition into the food supply signals gene editing's potential to alter foods without the controversy of conventional GMOs, or genetically modified organisms.

Among the other gene-edited crops being explored: Mushrooms that don't brown, wheat with more fiber,

better-producing tomatoes, herbicide-tolerant canola and rice that doesn't absorb soil pollution as it grows.

Unlike conventional GMOs, which are made by injecting DNA from other organisms, gene editing lets scientists alter traits by snipping out or adding specific genes in a lab. Startups including Calyxt say their crops do not qualify as GMOs because what they're doing could theoretically be achieved with traditional crossbreeding.

So far, U.S. regulators have agreed and said several gene-edited crops in development do not require special oversight. It's partly why companies see big potential for gene-edited crops.

"They've been spurred on by the regulatory decisions by this administration," said Greg Jaffe of the Center for Science in the Public Interest, a health watchdog group.

But given the many ways gene editing can be used, Jaydee Hanson of the Center for Food Safety said regulators should consider the potential implications of each new

crop. He cited the example of produce gene-edited to not brown.

"You've designed it to sit around longer. Are there problems with that?" he said.

Already, most corn and soy grown in the U.S. are herbicide-tolerant GMOs. Recently regulators cleared a hurdle for salmon genetically modified to grow faster. The fish is the first genetically modified animal approved for human consumption in the U.S.

Though regulators say GMOs are safe, health and environmental worries have persisted, and companies will soon have to disclose when products have "bioengineered" ingredients.

Calyxt says its oil does not qualify as a GMO. The oil is made from soybeans with two inactivated genes to produce more heart-healthy fats and no trans fats. The company says the oil also has a longer shelf life, which could reduce costs for food makers or result in longer-lasting products.

Soybean oils took a hit when regulators moved to ban oils with trans



AP PHOTO

A farmer holds soybeans from the previous season's crop at his farm in southern Minnesota. Most soy grown in the U.S. are conventional, herbicide-tolerant GMOs. Though regulators say GMOs are safe, health and environmental worries have persisted and companies will soon have to disclose when products have "bioengineered" ingredients.

fats. Other trans fat-free soybean oils have become available in the years since, but the industry has found it difficult to win back food makers that already switched to different oils, said John Motter, former chair of the United Soybean Board.

Calyxt said the first customer is a company in the Midwest with multiple restaurant and foodservice locations, such as building cafeterias. It said the customer

is using it in dressings and sauces and for frying, but didn't specify if the oil's benefits are being communicated to diners.

Calyxt is working on other gene-edited crops that it says are faster to develop than conventional GMOs, which require regulatory studies. But Tom Adams, CEO of biotech company Pairwise, said oversight of gene-edited foods could become stricter if public attitude changes.

"You should never think of regulation as settled," Adams said. Pairwise is partnering with Monsanto-parent Bayer on developing gene-edited crops.

Views on gene-editing vary too. The National Organic Standards Board said foods made with gene editing cannot qualify as organic. And last year, Europe's highest court said gene-edited foods should be subject to the same rules as conventional GMOs.

What is a low-carbon diet, and is it good for losing weight, or is it only about saving the planet?

By **E/THE ENVIRONMENTAL MAGAZINE**

What is a low-carbon diet, and is it good for losing weight, or is it only about saving the planet?

Not to be confused with a "low-carb" diet, which involves avoiding carbohydrates (bread, rice, pasta) as a way to lose weight or keep it off, a low-carbon diet — whereby you limit foods that generate a lot of carbon (CO2) emissions in their production and distribution — is indeed more about reducing your carbon footprint than your waistline.

That said, proponents of a low-carbon diet say that eating with reduced greenhouse gas emissions in mind is healthier for us than the typical American diet whereby carbon-intensive meat, dairy and processed foods occupy

too large a share of our overall food intake.

A recent study from the University of Michigan Center for Sustainable Systems backs up these assertions. Researchers correlated data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey — a snapshot of what 16,000 Americans consumed over one 24-hour period — with information on the nutritional value and greenhouse gas impacts of different food items, concluding that the better a diet is for the planet, the better it is for our health. Furthermore, the 20 percent of Americans who eat what researchers consider a "high-carbon" diet (rich in red meat, dairy and exotic and processed foods) are responsible for almost half of the nation's food-related CO2 emissions. The upshot is

that changing the behavior and food choices of this small segment of the population could pay big dividends for public health and for reducing our overall national carbon footprint.

The concept of a low-carbon diet was first popularized in the U.S. by Bon Appétit Management Company, which runs more than 1,000 cafes in 33 states for corporations, universities and venues. Back in 2007, the company partnered with the non-profit Ecotrust to compile and conduct Life Cycle Assessments (LCAs) — measuring the amount of CO2 emitted during a given food product's entire life cycle — for thousands of different foods. These LCAs became the basis for the "Food Scores" section of its EatLowCarbon.org website, which provides



PHOTO PROVIDED

The fact that food and the systems to produce and distribute it are responsible for about a third of all greenhouse gas emissions means that everyone has a lot of potential for fighting global warming through sourcing locally produced and in-season foods to minimize emissions-intensive 'food miles,' buying only as much as we can eat to reduce waste and minimizing consumption of red meat, dairy and processed foods. In the case of climate change, if we don't watch what we eat, it could really come back to haunt us.

information to help people reduce their carbon footprints through food choices.

Besides launching EatLowCarbon.org, Bon Appétit's managers also embarked on a five-year internal campaign to ratchet down the emissions generated by the company's own operations and offerings by 25 percent. The company stopped buying air-freighted seafood, reduced its use of tropical

fruit by half, shrank beef purchases by 33 percent and cheese by 10 percent while cutting food waste by one-third. Overall these moves shaved some five million pounds of carbon emissions per month off Bon Appétit's contribution to global warming.

The fact that food and the systems to produce and distribute it are responsible for about a third of all greenhouse gas emissions means

that everyone has a lot of potential for fighting global warming through sourcing locally produced and in-season foods to minimize emissions-intensive 'food miles,' buying only as much as we can eat to reduce waste and minimizing consumption of red meat, dairy and processed foods. In the case of climate change, if we don't watch what we eat, it could really come back to haunt us.

Tips for a heart-healthy sandwich

By **FROM MAYO CLINIC NEWS NETWORK**

Packing a healthy lunch seems like an easy task, but sometimes all the sandwich choices may seem daunting. Many deli, or processed meats, are packed with preservatives, nitrates and sodium that could raise your risk of heart disease and other health issues.

So is there a better choice to build a lunch you'll love and feel good about? Katherine Zeratsky, a Mayo Clinic registered dietitian nutritionist, says what you pack with your lunch may help balance what you pack in your sandwich.

The sandwich. Convenient and delicious, but not all fillings are the same, especially when it comes to deli meats.

"If it's gone through a grinder, and had sugar and salt and other things added, it's now been more highly processed."

But what about your favorite rotisserie chicken?



TNS PHOTO

Katherine Zeratsky, a Mayo Clinic registered dietitian nutritionist, says what you pack with your lunch may help balance what you pack in your sandwich.

Zeratsky says it's a step in the right direction, but it will have added sodium.

"Most chicken products do because they are leaner, and, so, they're adding a little salt in there to hold the moisture."

Zeratsky says knowing that, you can still create a healthy lunch.

"Complement that with other nutritious foods, like fruits and vegetables. That way, you're getting some added potassium."

A sandwich and a


banana. Seems like a good match, but why?

"Potassium, on the flip side from sodium, you have two nutrients that can work for and against your blood pressure. And, so, you're just creating a better balance overall."

Be sure to use a whole-grain bread to get your fiber, and consider an avocado, tomato or sprouts for added health benefits.

For more sandwich options, visit the Mayo Clinic website for recipes.

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NEWS & NOTES

Lee Health seeks O positive blood donors

Lee Health is asking the community for O positive blood donations to help refill inventory levels. As home to the region's only trauma center, it is vital that Lee Health's blood supply remains at healthy levels in order to quickly care for patients needing an urgent transfusion. Blood and blood products are not only used in the trauma center, but also to treat cancer patients, premature babies, anemia and a variety of other conditions.

Though there is a current need for O positive blood, donors of all blood types are welcomed and encouraged to help serve the needs of our community. Anyone who is at least 17 years old, or 16 years old with parental permission, weighs at least 115 pounds and is in good overall health is eligible to donate blood. A person can donate blood approximately every eight weeks.

For more information on blood donation, or to find a blood center or blood drive near you, call 239-343-2333 or visit www.leehealth.org/bloodcenter/

their families); 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on April 19 at St. David's Episcopal Church, 401 S. Broadway, Englewood.

- North Port JFCS Care Partner Connection with Carolyn Stephens, LCSW (Open Forum and Sharing) and Parkinson's Power Hour; from 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. on April 24 at Neuro Challenge Foundation North Port, 5600 Peace River Road, North Port.
- Voice Aerobics; A fun and enriching therapeutic group to promote voice amplification and cognitive fitness with Mary Spemulli, Speech Language Pathologist; from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on April 25 at Neuro Challenge Foundation North Port, 5600 Peace River Road, North Port.
- Movers and Shakers Parkinson's Discussion Group "Alternative Energy Based Training: Exercises: Movement, and Meditation" with Robin Bennett, Movers and Shakers Group Member Venice Care Partner Support Group with Ellen Schaller, NCF Care Advisor (Open Forum and Sharing); from 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on April 25 at Jacaranda Public Library, 4143 Woodmere Park Blvd, Venice.
- Punta Gorda Parkinson's Support Group People with Parkinson's and Care Partners Breakout Groups; from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on April 26 at Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association, 2001 Shreve St., Punta Gorda.

For a full listing of Neuro Challenge programs and services, visit www.neurochallenge.org.

Neuro Challenge Foundation for Parkinson's

- Punta Gorda Care Partner Support Group, (Open Discussion and Support for Care Partners); from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on April 2 at The BEAN on 41 Coffee Shop, 2705 Tamiami Trail #413 Punta Gorda.
- North Port JFCS Care Partner Connection with Carolyn Stephens, LCSW (Open Forum and Sharing) and Parkinson's Power Hour Special Presentation: "Our Journey — Tips for Living Well with Parkinson's Disease" with Ed Smith and Jane Masterson; 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. on April 3 at Neuro Challenge Foundation North Port, 5600 Peace River Road, North Port.
- Venice Parkinson's Wellness Club "Parkinson's Disease: What Your Family Needs to Know" with Carisa Campanella, NCF Program Director; 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. on April 4 at Jacaranda Trace Assisted Living, 2nd Floor Classroom 3600 William Penn Way, Venice
- Port Charlotte Parkinson's Support Group (Sharing and Support for people with Parkinson's and their families); 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. on April 9 at Murdock Baptist Church Student Center, 18375 Cochran Blvd., Port Charlotte.
- Venice Parkinson's Wellness Club "Parkinson's Disease: What Your Family Needs to Know" with Carisa Campanella, NCF Program Director; 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. on April 10 at Sarasota Memorial North Port Medical Plaza, 2nd Floor Conference Room, 2345 Bobcat Village Center Road, North Port.
- The 2019 Neuro Challenge Parkinson's EXPO will be held from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on April 13 at Bradenton Area Convention Center, 1 Haben Blvd., Palmetto. Register here: www.parkinsonsneurochallenge.org/expo.html.
- North Port JFCS Care Partner Connection with Carolyn Stephens, LCSW (Open Forum and Sharing) and Parkinson's Power Hour; from 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. on April 17 at Neuro Challenge Foundation North Port, 5600 Peace River Road, North Port.
- Englewood Parkinson's Support Group (Sharing and Support for people with Parkinson's and

GriefShare Program

If you have lost a loved one or know of someone who has and have concerns/questions, we invite you to join our GriefShare Program on Sundays through March 31, from 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 2565 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte. Contact Holy Trinity Lutheran office at 941-625-5262 with questions or sign up at griefshare.org.

Chronic Pain Self-Management workshops

Would you like to learn how to better manage chronic pain conditions such as arthritis, fibromyalgia, back pain, headaches and more? Lee Health is pleased to announce a free six-week workshop, entitled "Chronic Pain Self-Management" — a research-based program developed by Stanford University. Information presented in the workshop can help you become empowered to improve your quality of life. Learn how to more easily manage your medications; understand the benefits of exercise; manage symptoms of stress, pain and fatigue; and make smarter decisions related to health eating. Participants will also receive a copy of the book "Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Pain." The sessions will be held on Mondays beginning April 1 from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at The Sanctuary Outpatient Center, 8060 Colonial Center Drive, Fort Myers; Thursdays beginning April 4 from 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Brookdale College Parkway, 8351 College Pkwy, Fort Myers. Seating is limited and registration is required. For more information, call 239-343-9264.

Pinwheels for Prevention

Charlotte Behavioral

Health Care is taking part in Prevent Child Abuse Florida's Pinwheels for Prevention campaign by planting a pinwheel garden at 9 a.m. on April 2. The event will be held on CBHC's front lawn, 1700 Education Ave., Punta Gorda. A group photo will be taken at 9:15 a.m. Guests are encouraged to wear blue in support of Child Abuse Prevention Month. You may "plant" a pinwheel in the pinwheel garden, which will remain on display during the entire month of April. CBHC and Charlotte County Healthy Start Coalition will also have tables set up in our lobbies during the entire month to distribute information on healthy child and family development.

A walk in Pinebrook Park

The Friends of Pinebrook Park, a central Venice neighborhood association whose mission is to take care of and promote the park, in partnership with the City of Venice, will hold a walk at 9 a.m. on April 4 at Pinebrook Park, 1251 Pinebrook Road, Venice, to celebrate the rezoning of the park and unveil new signage. For more information, Kathy Eiferle at katharineeiferle@aol.com or 810-513-0390.

Bank offers free stroke education

Fawcett Memorial Hospital is offering free stroke-risk education assessments at Charlotte State Bank & Trust. These one-on-one consultations will take place at bank offices from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. according to the following schedule:

- April 4 – Murdock, 1100 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte
- April 17 – Peachland, 24163 Peachland Blvd., Port Charlotte
- May 1 – Parkside, 3002 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte
- May 15 – Charlotte Harbor, 23112 Harborview Road, Charlotte Harbor
- May 29 – Punta Gorda, 2331 Tamiami Trail, Punta Gorda
- June 12 – North Port, 4300 Aidan Lane, North Port

While the assessments are free, reservations are recommended and may be made by calling Consult-A-Nurse 941-624-4441. Walk-ins are welcome and will be seen as time permits. Residents are invited to sign up and attend the free course at their closest bank office. One of Fawcett's stroke-specialized nurses will meet attendees in private sessions to discuss risk factors and how to reduce them. "Research shows that 85 percent of strokes occur with no apparent warning signs and that nearly 80 percent of all strokes are preventable through managing risk factors," said Alexandria Davis, marketing director at Fawcett. "Since there are no tests that can detect a stroke before it happens, understanding and controlling risk is vitally important."

'A Night at South Beach' to support Virginia B. Andes community clinic

Virginia B. Andes Volunteer Community Clinic is hosting "A Night at South Beach" at 5:30 p.m. on April 5, at Trinity Banquet Hall, 24411 Rampart Blvd, Port Charlotte. Enjoy an evening of great food, auctions and dancing to music by Jonathan A. Cortez, while supporting the VBA Clinic. Tickets are \$95 per person. Dress

is South Beach, "warm Florida-night" casual. For more information call 941-276-1668 or visit www.volunteercare.org/SOBE.

Cornhole Combats Cancer/Richard Todd Memorial Chili Cook-Off

The Kiwanis Club of Englewood Florida is partnering with Elevating Englewood Florida to present the 6th Annual Richard Todd Memorial Chili-Cook Off and the 1st Annual "Cornhole Combats Cancer" Tournament from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on April 5, at the Plaza Property, 300 W. Dearborn St., Englewood. Prizes will be awarded for the best chili, along with prizes for the Cornhole Combats Cancer Tournament. For more information or to register visit www.elevatingenglewoodfl.org/cornhole-registration.

8th annual adaptive Easter egg hunt

An egg hunt accommodating children with special needs and their families will be held from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on April 6 at Bayshore Live Oak Park, 23157 Bayshore Road, Port Charlotte. Face Painting, music, games, arts & crafts, vendor booths, raffles and meet the Easter bunny. Children will collect empty eggs and turn them in for a goodie bag afterwards. Don't forget to bring your Easter basket. This event is free for all. Please call 941-627-1074 to register for this event.

Hope Healthcare Parkinson Program to host Walk 4 Hope

To kick off National Parkinson's Awareness Month, Hope Healthcare's Parkinson Program is hosting Walk 4 Hope at 10 a.m. on April 6 at Lakes Regional Park, 7330 Gladiolus Drive, Fort Myers. Supporters can participate in a short stroll or a one- to three-mile walk, sponsored by Millennium Physician's Group, to help raise awareness for the local Parkinson community. A registration fee of \$25 per person includes event T-shirt and light refreshments. Register at www.hopeparkinson.org/walk. For more information, call at 239-985-7727.

American Cancer Society seeks participation in Relay For Life of Charlotte County

American Cancer Society is calling on all community members to participate in the annual Relay For Life of Charlotte County on April 6, at Lashley Park. Be part of the fight, and together we can beat our biggest rival. American Cancer Society is seeking volunteers to form teams and stand shoulder to shoulder with us and cancer patients and those supporting them. This year, an estimated 1.3 million people in the U.S. will participate in more than 2,000 events to help the American Cancer Society attack cancer in dozens of ways, each of them critical to achieving a world without cancer — from developing breakthrough therapies to building supportive communities, from providing empowering resources to deploying activists to raise awareness. Funds raised support the American Cancer Society 24/7 cancer help line and free rides to chemo. To learn more about Relay For Life, and register a team, visit RelayForLife.org/charlottecountyfl.

Performing the bicep curl

By **GREGORY WHYTE**

THE CULTURAL CENTER
OF CHARLOTTE COUNTY'S
FITNESS CENTER

The bicep curl refers to a number of weight training exercises that cause the arm to bend from an extended position until the forearm contacts or is close to the bicep muscle (biceps brachii). The exercise (when performed regularly and correctly) is

an extremely popular one that is used to produce arms that are strong, well developed and toned.

Although the bicep curl may be performed while standing or sitting and while using a variety of machines and equipment such as barbells and dumbbells, it is the curling action of the forearm and the closing of the distance between the forearm and bicep

muscle that characterize the exercise.

The bicep curl exercise presented in this article is referred to as the "Concentration Curl" and is performed in the following manner:

1. From a seated position, grasp a dumbbell with one hand while resting the back of your upper arm against your thigh. Ensure that the arm is fully extended

and the legs are wide enough to ensure stability. Place your free hand (left hand in photo) on your thigh for support.

2. Next, curl the dumbbell up towards your shoulder. This should be done slowly and smoothly.

3. Once the dumbbell reaches shoulder level, return it slowly to the starting position. Repeat the exercise 8 to 12 times then switch to the other

arm. This exercise may be done up to three times (3 sets of 8 to 12) on both sides.

For fitness information and services, visit the Cultural Center's Fitness Center or call 941-625-4175, ext. 263.

PHOTO PROVIDED

Fitness Center member Regina Veach performs the concentration curl.



Does the battle of the sexes begin in utero?

For twins, gender inequities may start in the womb, a new study finds

By **RITA GIORDANO**

THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

Does the battle of the sexes begin in utero?

A new study has found that women who have shared a womb with a twin brother are less likely to graduate from high school or college, may earn less money and will have lower marriage and fertility rates than twins who were both female.

A possible culprit? Blame it on the male hormone testosterone manspreading its way into female twins' amniotic sacks.

The researchers, who hail from Northwestern University and the Norwegian School of Economics, looked at data on about 13,800 twins born in Norway from 1967 to 1978, and tracked their lives over three decades.

"Nobody has been able to study how male twins impact their twin sisters at such a large scale," said economist Krzysztof Karbownik, a study author and research associate at Northwestern's Institute for Policy Research. "This is the first study to track people for more than 30 years, from birth through schooling and adulthood, to show that being exposed in utero to a male twin influences important outcomes in their twin sister."

The findings published last week in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS)* show that girls with a male twin are about 15 percent less likely to graduate from high school than a girl with a twin sister and almost 4 percent less likely to complete college.

The women with male twins also had on average nearly nine percent lower earnings by their early 30s than female twins with sisters, about six percent lower fertility rates and



TNS PHOTO

A new study has found that women who have shared a womb with a twin brother are less likely to graduate from high school or college, may earn less money and will have lower marriage and fertility rates than twins who were both female.

12 percent lower marriage rates.

No long-term negative impact on the male twins was found as a result of sharing space with a female twin.

The rate of twin births in the U.S. has nearly doubled since 1980, a development attributed to women having babies later in life and increased reliance on in vitro fertilization.

Karbownik said it is known from other studies that once a male fetus's testes start developing, there is a spike in testosterone in his amniotic

sack, and some of it goes into his sister's.

In addition, Karbownik said women pregnant with a male child have a higher level of testosterone in their blood than women carrying a girl, or female twins.

What the initial study does not get into is how much of the later-life outcomes are due to the biological effect of the testosterone, versus how much is due to how the girl is socialized, Karbownik said.

To get a better sense of the

prenatal testosterone's impact, the team repeated their study focusing on female twins whose twin siblings — either a sister or a brother — died shortly after birth. The results were the same as for the twins raised with their sibling. To the researchers, that was clear evidence that the long-term effects documented by the study were due to prenatal testosterone exposure, rather than postnatal socialization.

Karbownik said he believes the issue of prenatal exposure

as opposed to postnatal socialization merits further study.

A next step, the author said, could be to look at whether the results are consistent across different cultures and time frames.

"The fact that we can distinguish between prenatal and post-natal exposure doesn't mean post-natal channels are not responsible for (some of) what we observed," Karbownik said. "It just means that growing up with a brother is not responsible for this."

New rules will ease patients' access to electronic medical records, Senate panel says

By **FRED SCHULTE,**
KAISER HEALTH NEWS
and **ERIKA FRY, FORTUNE**
KAISER HEALTH NEWS

The chairman of the Senate health committee on Tuesday backed new federal regulations to remove roadblocks patients can face in obtaining copies of their electronic medical records.

"These proposed rules remove barriers and should make it easier for patients to more quickly access, use and understand their personal medical information," Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.), chairman of the Health, Education, Labor & Pensions Committee, said in a statement prepared for a hearing on the rules that kicked off Tuesday.

The rules, proposed last month by the Department of Health and Human Services, take aim at so-called information blocking, in which tech companies or health systems limit the sharing or transfer of information from medical files.

Alexander said HHS believes the new rules should give more than 125 million patients

easier access to their own records in an electronic format.

"This will be a huge relief to any of us who have spent hours tracking down paper copies of our records and carting them back and forth to different doctors' offices. The rules will reduce the administrative burden on doctors so they can spend more time with patients," Alexander said.

The proposal requires manufacturers to fashion software that can readily export a patient's entire medical record — and mandates that health care systems provide these records electronically at no cost to the patient.

Congress jump-started the nation's switch from paper to electronic health records in 2009 using billions of dollars in financial stimulus funding to help doctors and hospital purchase the equipment. Officials expected the shift to cut down on medical errors, reduce unnecessary medical testing and other waste and give Americans a bigger role in managing their health care.

Yet in the decade since

the rollout, critics have argued that the government spent billions financing software that can cause some new types of errors and typically cannot share information across health networks as intended.

"Botched Operation," a recent investigation published by KHN and Fortune, found that the federal government has spent more than \$36 billion on the initiative. During that time, thousands of reports of deaths, injuries and near misses linked to digital systems have piled up in databases — while many patients have reported difficulties getting copies of their complete electronic files.

Sen. Patty Murray (D-Wash.), ranking member on the committee, cited two patients profiled in the article to illustrate the potential dangers from EHRs that can't exchange information.

"It's patients who get hurt. Like the man in California, who suffered brain damage after his diagnosis was delayed because a hospital's software couldn't properly

interface with a lab's software," she said at the hearing. "Or the woman in Vermont, who died of a brain aneurysm that might have been caught if a software problem hadn't stopped the order for a test she needed."

Jonathan Lomurro, a medical malpractice attorney in New Jersey, said his clients usually have to go to court to get their complete medical record. The information that health care providers fight most bitterly to keep from them, he said, are the audit logs — or the data that show every time a record has been accessed or edited, and by whom and when.

That "metadata," he and other plaintiff attorneys argue, is critical for patients to understand the history of their care, particularly in cases where something has gone wrong.

In an interview prior to Tuesday's hearing, Lomurro criticized the HHS proposal, saying it limits a patient's ability to obtain these logs. While the proposed rule requires the systems to share most data from a medical

record with a patient, it excludes audit trails from that classification.

"While the proposal talks about the need of patient access ... they then strip the greatest protections from the patient," said Lomurro. "I am at a loss on how this could ever be a beneficial change to the rules and help patients."

Seema Verma, who heads the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, agreed that patients should be entitled to audit log information. "At the end of the day, it's all of the patient's data. If it affects and touches their medical record, then that belongs to them," Verma said in an interview last month.

The HHS proposal also encourages doctors and other users of EHR technology to share information about software problems they encounter by prohibiting "gag clauses" in sales contracts. Critics have long argued that the clauses have prevented users from freely discussing flaws, including software glitches and other breakdowns that could

result in medical errors and patient injuries. In 2012, an Institute of Medicine report blamed the confidentiality clauses for impeding efforts to improve the safety of health information technology.

But a major remaining problem in wiring up medicine is the lack of interoperability across rival data systems, said Christopher Rehm, chief medical informatics officer of LifePoint Health, a hospital system in Brentwood, Tenn. In testimony prepared for the Tuesday hearing, Rehm called it "the equivalent of telling people they must buy cars and move those cars from place to place, but there are no roads and no agreed-upon design for the roads, let alone the funding to actually pay for the construction."

According to Rehm, the average-sized community hospital (161 beds) spends nearly \$760,000 a year on information technology investments needed to meet federal regulations. He said the costs "are crushing our industry where margins are already thin."

Tiny 'water bears' can teach us about survival

U.S. military hopes that humans can learn toughness from tiny 'water bears' that survive 300-degree heat, Antarctic cold and even the vacuum of space

By **SETH BORENSTEIN**
AP SCIENCE WRITER

Earth's ultimate survivors can weather extreme heat, cold, radiation and even the vacuum of space. Now the U.S. military hopes these tiny critters called tardigrades can teach us about true toughness.

These animals are pipsqueaks, only about the size of a period. Under a microscope they look like some combination of chubby bear and single-eyed alien. And they are the closest life gets to indestructible.

No water? No worries. Tardigrades survive. Antarctic cold, 300-degree heat (150 degrees Celsius), a lack of oxygen, even punishing radiation doesn't stop these animals. They are so resilient in the face of so many dangers that scientists think their unique biology may hold clues to how we can make crops more resistant to drought, better preserve blood and medicines, and even make more effective sunscreen.

When the going gets tough for tardigrades, they curl up, dry out and wait. Then, when the environment gets better and they get water, they spring back to life.

Scientists say they can stay dormant for decades before reanimating.

In 2007, scientists put two species of tardigrades in containers, launched them into orbit and

opened them up to cold, airless space full of punishing radiation from the sun and stars.

"If you were put into that same thing, you would explode," said tardigrade expert Randy Miller, a biologist at Baker University in Kansas. They lived and later multiplied, and the offspring from those tardigrade astronauts are still alive, Miller said.

There are as many as 1,200 species of tardigrades, and they live all over Earth, from mountain tops to ocean depths to driveways. Not all have the ability to go dormant and come back to life.

Speaking from McMurdo Station in Antarctica, Brigham Young University biologist Byron Adams said he can walk a few hundred yards outside and find tardigrades. He called them the tigers of inland Antarctica, near the top of the limited food chain, eating algae and aquatic plants.

Miller said tardigrades seem to be the first animals on Earth to have evolved legs, and, sure enough, they look like a first draft: The rear two legs face backward while the front six face forward.

If they are hurt when they are in an active phase and can't go into survival mode, they die like other creatures. But they don't have a circulatory system or a skeleton, so that allows them to curl up in a hyper-survival mode called "cryptobiosis."



AP PHOTO

This undated microscope photo provided by Thomas Boothby shows a tardigrade, also known as a "water bear." The small animals, about the size of a period, are able to survive extreme heat, cold, radiation and even the vacuum of space.

Not all the critters come back from suspended animation, Miller said. But overall, they survive, even living through Earth's five mass extinctions.

University of North Carolina biologist Thomas Boothby wanted to know how they manage to survive in "environments we think of as being impossible to live in." So he isolated the genes that activate when tardigrades need to go into cryptobiosis.

Boothby engineered those genes into yeast and says their tolerance to drought increased 100-fold. He hopes the genes could also help crops better survive drought. In December, the

Defense Department's long-term research arm gave Boothby a nearly \$5 million grant to figure out what in tardigrade genes might help human health.

The idea is to see if the tricks that tardigrades use to protect themselves when they dry can be used to protect vaccines and human blood, Boothby said.

Boothby hopes to make bags of blood last longer than the current six weeks and allow them to be stored in a dried state so soldiers can take their own blood supply to battle or ambulances can carry more. Tardigrade tricks could possibly also help with preserving

vaccines to help reduce the enormous cost and complexity of trying to keep vaccines cold. They could also potentially help preserve organs or damaged tissue.

Japanese scientists are studying whether tardigrade proteins could help them come up with a better sunscreen to protect against ultraviolet rays that cause skin cancer. A 2016 study showed that human cells augmented with a DNA protein unique to tardigrades reduced radiation damage in preliminary lab tests.

Tardigrades are so otherworldly that some theorize that they could easily exist on planets outside the solar system.

Harvard astronomer Avi Loeb said "they could survive an impact by a rock and they could potentially be brought from another planet" to Earth.

Loeb and colleagues decided to see if life on Earth could survive some of the worst cosmic calamities. So they looked at the hearty tardigrades, concluding that the water bears could survive most end-of-the-world scenarios, like a giant asteroid crash, cosmic ray burst or nearby supernova — everything short of our sun blinking out.

"It's good to know that at least one creature on Earth has a chance of surviving no matter what," Loeb said.

Studies suggest using catheter to replace heart valve better than open-heart surgery

By **TOM AVRIL**

THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

Promising new studies on a type of artificial heart valve could pave the way for it to be used in many more patients, allowing them to avoid the rigors of open-heart surgery.

Compared with those who underwent surgery, patients who got the device were less likely to die or suffer a stroke after the procedure, researchers announced Sunday at a meeting of the American College of Cardiology in New Orleans.

One of the studies, whose authors included surgeons from Penn Medicine and the Lankenau Heart Institute at Main Line Health, has followed its patients for one year. The other, in which patients received a replacement valve made by a different manufacturer, has lasted for two years.

In both cases, the goal was to treat a condition called aortic stenosis, in which the heart valve that transmits oxygenated blood to the body becomes narrow and stiff with calcium deposits — causing shortness of breath and fainting in severe cases.

Surgery to fix the problem involves cracking open the patient's chest or making smaller cuts through the ribs, then implanting a replacement valve. Full recovery takes weeks, sometimes months. The newer alternative involves using a slender catheter to insert a replacement valve through an artery in the groin, typically enabling the patient to go home the next day.

At a glance, the second

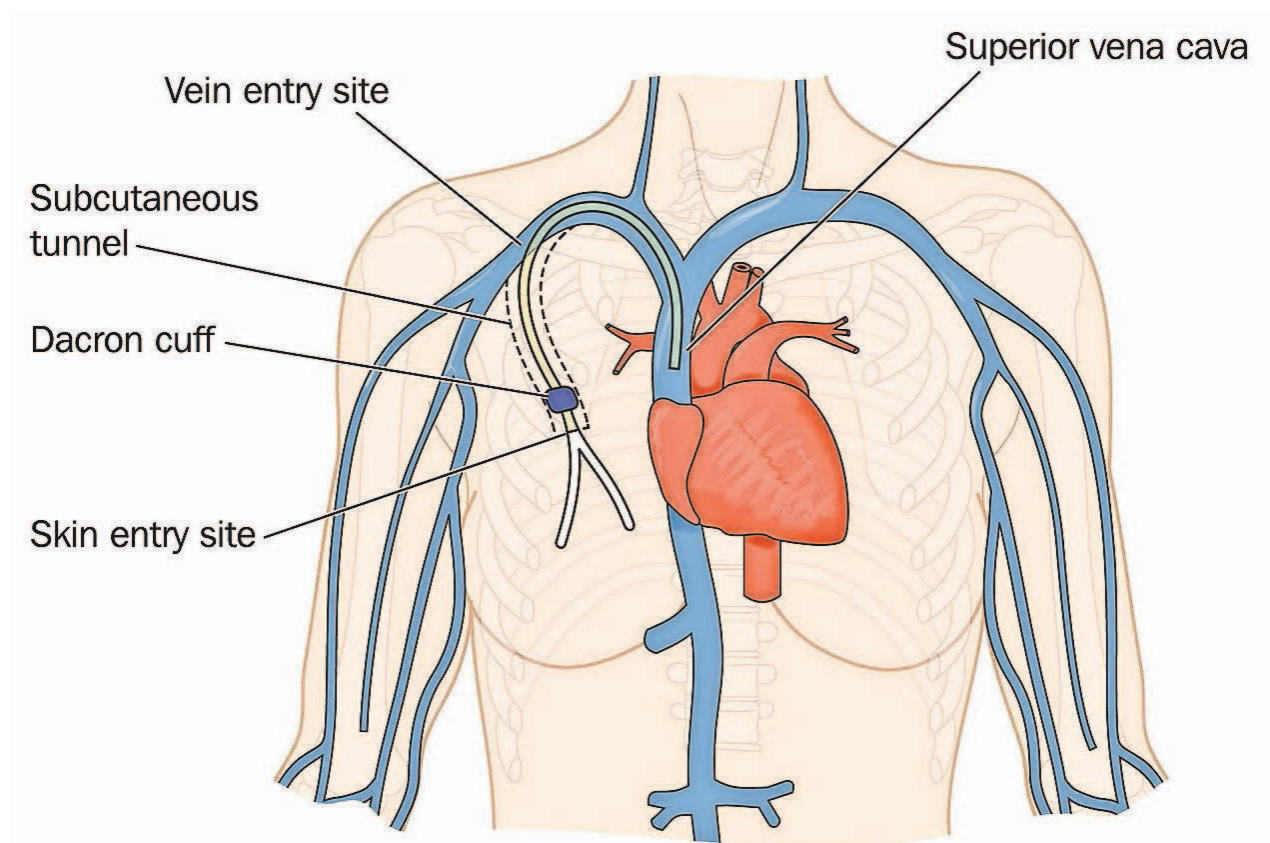
option — a transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) — would seem to be a no-brainer. But before approving it, government regulators required evidence that it worked at least as well. Among the questions: was the TAVR valve, which is expanded to full size after being inserted with a catheter, as durable as the kind used in traditional surgery?

The catheter option initially was approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in 2011 for patients who were too frail or sick for surgery. The pool of patients eligible for TAVR later was expanded to include those who were at high or intermediate risk for surgery.

The latest studies suggest that TAVR is a good bet for patients who are at low risk for surgery.

In the study to which Penn and Lankenau contributed, 8.5 percent of people whose valves were replaced via catheter died, had a stroke, or went back to the hospital within one year, compared with 15.1 percent of patients who had the valve replaced with open-heart surgery. In a separate analysis, the researchers tallied the number of deaths or "disabling" strokes, finding that they occurred in just 1 percent of catheter patients but in 2.9 percent of those who had surgery.

Patients who received the valve via catheter were more likely to suffer mild leakage around the device, but that issue did not appear to cause complications. The TAVR valve in that study is called the Sapien 3, made by Edwards Lifesciences



TNS GRAPHIC

Photo illustration of a catheter insertion into the heart. In a study announced at a meeting of the American College of Cardiology in New Orleans, patients who had a replacement heart valve, which was inserted into the aorta with a catheter, were less likely to die or have a stroke than those who underwent surgery.

of Irvine, California.

In the other study, 5.3 percent of TAVR patients died or suffered a disabling stroke within two years, compared with 6.7 percent of those who had surgery. The TAVR valve in that study is called the Evolut, made by Medtronic Inc., which has its main offices in Minneapolis, Minnesota and Dublin, Ireland.

Both study teams will continue to follow their patients.

Scott M. Goldman, a co-author of the first study and director of the structural heart program at Lankenau, said he was not surprised that TAVR patients fared so well. In addition to the lower rate of death or stroke, such patients also are

less likely to suffer infection and other complications because they spend such a short time in the hospital, he said.

"Typically, they go home the next day," Goldman said. "They walk out of the hospital better than they walk in."

A key to the good outcomes with TAVR is the teamwork between heart surgeons and cardiologists, said co-author Wilson Szeto, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania's Perelman School of Medicine. But he cautioned that more research is needed.

"It is only one year, and longer follow-up will be needed before we're completely sure," Szeto said.

The study results will give ammunition to the manufacturers when they seek approval for their devices to be implanted in the broader pool of low-risk patients. TAVRs already are implanted 45,000 times a year in higher-risk patients at more than 600 hospitals, according to James Laskaris, a senior clinical analyst at MD Buyline.

Medicare pays \$38,500 to \$49,500 for the combination of the device and the fees to the hospital and physicians, said Laskaris, whose firm is a subsidiary of Dallas-based TractManager, a purchasing and contract manager for hospitals. The amount varies based on the health of the

patient. Reimbursements to private insurers tend to be higher.

For hospitals that perform fewer than 50 TAVR procedures a year, the procedure is at best a break-even proposition, Laskaris said. But many institutions feel the need to have it on their menu of services to be considered a full-fledged heart program.

Hospitals that perform more than 100 TAVRs a year can come out ahead through higher efficiency and purchasing the necessary supplies in volume, Laskaris said.

Penn Medicine performs about 500 of the procedures each year, Szeto said. Lankenau performs about 230, Goldman said.

Social Security, Medicare: Rules for those with higher income

By **NICOLE TIGGEMANN**
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

If you have higher income, the law requires an upward adjustment to your monthly Medicare Part B (medical insurance) and Medicare prescription drug coverage premiums. But, if your income has gone down, you may use form SSA-44 to request a reduction in your Medicare income-related monthly adjustment amount.

Medicare Part B helps pay for your doctors' services and outpatient care. It also covers other medical services, such as physical and occupational therapy, and some home health care. For most beneficiaries, the government pays a substantial portion — about 75 percent — of the Part B premium, and the beneficiary pays the remaining 25 percent.

If you're a higher-income beneficiary, you'll pay a larger percentage of the total cost of Medicare Part B, based on the

income you report to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). You'll pay monthly Part B premiums equal to 35, 50, 65, 80, or 85 percent of the total cost, depending on the income you report to the IRS.

Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage helps pay for your prescription drugs. For most beneficiaries, the government pays a major portion of the total costs for this coverage, and the beneficiary pays the rest. Prescription drug plan costs vary depending on the plan, and whether you get Extra Help with your portion of the Medicare prescription drug coverage costs.

If you're a higher-income beneficiary with Medicare prescription drug coverage, you'll pay monthly premiums plus an additional amount, which is also based on the income you report to the IRS. Because individual plan premiums vary, the law specifies that the amount is determined

using a base premium. Social Security ties the additional amount you pay to the base beneficiary premium, not your own premium amount. If you're a higher-income beneficiary, we deduct this amount from your monthly Social Security payments regardless of how you usually pay your monthly prescription plan premiums. If the amount is greater than your monthly payment from Social Security, or you don't get monthly payments, you'll get a separate bill from another federal agency, such as the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services or the Railroad Retirement Board.

Find Form SSA-44 online at www.socialsecurity.gov/forms/ssa-44.pdf.

You can also read more in the publication "Medicare Premiums: Rules For Higher-Income Beneficiaries" at: www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/EN-05-10536.pdf.

Yoga

- Englewood Beach: Daily at 8:30 a.m.; and Wednesday at 6 p.m. 941-473-0135.

- Manasota Beach, 8570 Manasota Key Road: Monday-Friday at 8 a.m. and 9 a.m.; Saturday 9 a.m.

- Venice Beach Yoga, Daily 8 a.m. and 9 a.m.; Monday-Thursday at 5 p.m.

- North Jetty, Nokomis Beach Yoga, 1000 S. Casey Key Road: 9 a.m. Monday-Friday. All ages and abilities bring a towel or blanket and join. Free will donation.

- Yoga Tots – The Punta Gorda Library, 424 W. Henry St., hosts the free program Yoga Tots Storytime from 10:15 a.m. to 10:45 a.m. on Fridays

for children ages 12-36 months. Bring your toddler, towels or yoga mat to stretch your mind and muscles with a story and fun yoga poses. For more information, call 941-833-5460 or email: PuntaGordaLibrary@charlottecountyfl.gov.

If you would like your free yoga event added to our events, email feelingfit@sun-herald.com.

BAYFRONT NEWS & NOTES

April 2, 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. Cardiac Diet Nutrition Class. Bayfront Health Wellness & Rehab Center, 733 E. Olympia Ave., Punta Gorda. Learn heart-healthy, low fat and low sodium food options. Free. Call 941-637-2450 to register.

April 2, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Baby Care and Safety Class. Bayfront Health Port Charlotte, Conference Center, 2500 Harbor Blvd., Port Charlotte. This newborn class will teach you the basics of baby care and answer questions about how to keep your newborn safe. Attendance should be planned for the last trimester of pregnancy. Partners are encouraged to attend. (\$) or ask how you can take this course for free. Register at www.BayfrontHealthEvents.com.

April 3, noon to 2 p.m. Healing Through Music. Bayfront Health Port Charlotte, The Daily Grind, 2500 Harbor Blvd., Port Charlotte. According to a growing body of research, music is more than a nice perk. It may improve medical outcomes and quality of life in a variety of ways. Bayfront Health Port Charlotte invites you to The Daily Grind coffee shop to enjoy the benefits of live music. The Daily Grind is located in the main lobby of Bayfront Health Port Charlotte and offers a variety of your favorite Starbucks® creations. Admission is free and no RSVP is required.

April 4, 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. Attend a Seminar: What Do You Have To Lose? Bayfront Health Port Charlotte, Conference Center, 2500 Harbor Blvd., Port Charlotte. If you're considering weight loss surgery, the best place to start is with

the right information. That's why we offer free weight loss seminars as an opportunity to talk with the experts. Seminars are interactive and include members of our weight loss team. You are invited to bring a family member, friend, or other support person with you. Free.

Register at www.BayfrontCharlotteWeightLoss.com or call 941-766-4564 to schedule a free consultation.

April 4, 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. Bariatric Weight Loss Support Group. Bayfront Health Port Charlotte, Conference Center, 2500 Harbor Blvd., Port Charlotte. We encourage you and your family to gain support not only from our bariatric experts, but also from others going through similar experiences. Free.

Register at www.BayfrontHealthEvents.com.

April 9, 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Ribbon-Cutting: CERT Trailer Reveal. Charlotte County Public Safety Building, 26571 Airport Road, Punta Gorda. Learn more about Bayfront Health and Charlotte County Community Emergency Response Team's (CERT) Stop the Bleed community education and for the unveiling of CERT's redesigned emergency response trailer. Tours of the Charlotte County Public Safety Building to follow. Free. RSVP encouraged. Register at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/D9BNCZ3>.

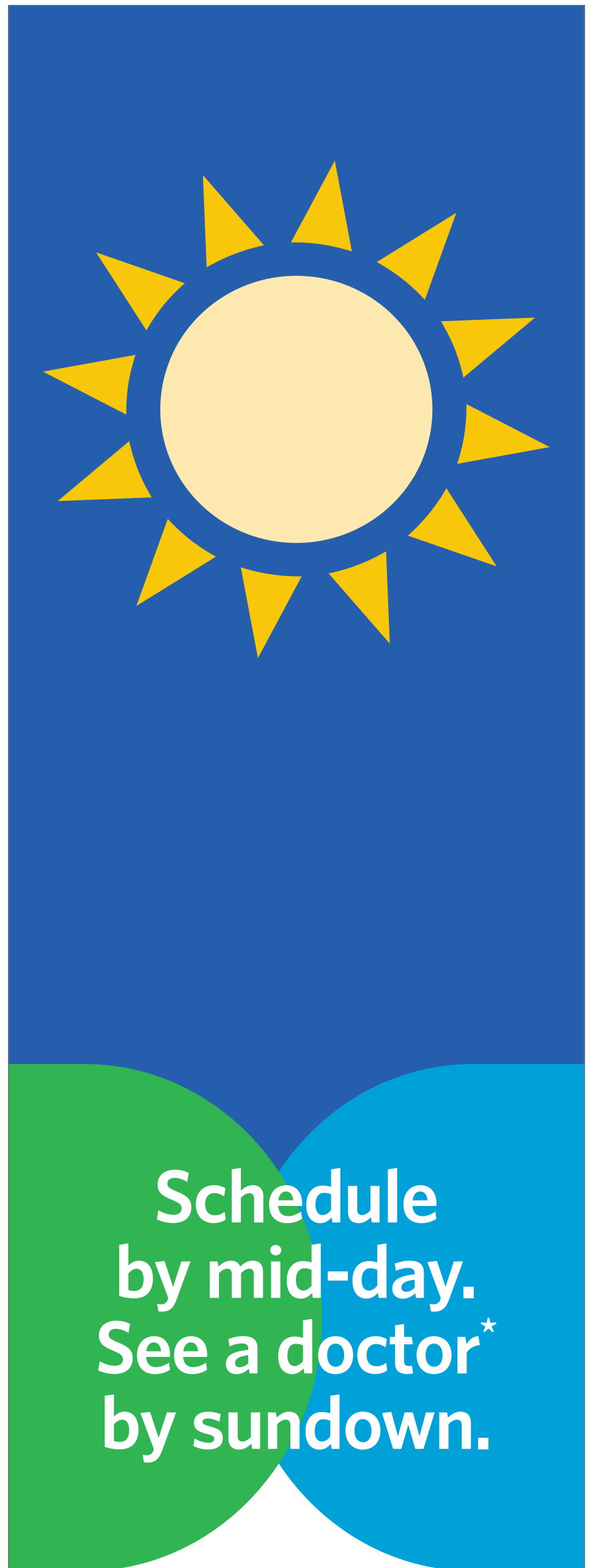
April 9, 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Pulmonary Diet Nutrition Class. Bayfront Health Wellness & Rehab Center, 733 E. Olympia Ave., Punta Gorda. Learn how eating habits can affect your breathing. Free. Call 941-637-2450 to register.

April 9, 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. Lung Cancer Support Group. Bayfront Health Punta Gorda Medical Office Plaza, 4th Floor Conf. Room, 713 E. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda. Find out what support and assistance is available to you and your family, and how others are coping. No registration required. For details, call 941-637-9575.

April 10, noon to 1 p.m. Hip and Knee Pain? Ask Dr. Davis. Speaker: Mark Davis, M.D., Orthopedic Surgeon. Bayfront Health Punta Gorda Medical Office Plaza, 4th Floor Conf. Room, 713 E. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda. Have your questions answered one-on-one for all your hip and knee ailments. Free. Lunch provided. Register at www.BayfrontHealthEvents.com.

April 10, 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. Bayfront Baby Place Tour. Bayfront Health Port Charlotte, Lobby, 2500 Harbor Blvd., Port Charlotte. Expecting? View the birthing suites, meet the staff and get questions answered in preparation for an exceptional experience. Free. Register at www.BayfrontHealthEvents.com.

April 13, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Childbirth and Newborn 1-Day Course. Bayfront Health Port Charlotte, Conference Center, 2500 Harbor Blvd., Port Charlotte. In this course, you will leave with a better understanding of labor and delivery, the birthing process, anatomy and physiology, birth basics, comfort techniques, hospital procedures and medical interventions. (\$) or ask how you can take this course for free. Register at www.BayfrontHealthEvents.com.



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A solution to 5-year-old's eating issues

By JOHN ROSEMOND
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Q: My 5-year-old has had eating issues since he was an infant. When I introduced solid food at six months, he began rejecting most vegetables. His feeding problems have worsened since then to the point, today, where he will eat only breaded chicken strips, Tater Tots, and vanilla ice cream (but only a certain brand). We worked with a feeding therapist for about six months but made no appreciable progress. She said he has a form of sensory integration disorder, which she explained as his brain is wired such that foods don't taste to him the way they taste to most people. So, even certain sweet foods taste bitter to him, for example, and he will gag and even throw up at the mere sight of them. In addition, he reacts negatively to certain textures. My mom says I was a picky eater, so he apparently inherited a tendency in this direction from me. I'm grasping at straws here, but do you have any suggestions?

A: First, you need to know that there is zero confirmable evidence with which to back up the claims made by the occupational therapist. She cannot prove her contention that the "wiring"



TNS PHOTO

One suggestion for parents experiencing eating issues with their child is to redefine the problem in terms a young child can understand.

between your son's taste buds and his brain is abnormal, nor can she can't prove he inherited some "tendency" from you (contrary to popular belief, no one has proven that "tendencies" are inherited). What the OT told you is typical of the pseudo-scientific babble dispensed by professionals who can't see outside the boundaries of the

medical model they were taught in graduate school. My very simple belief is that most if not all childhood behavior "disorders" are nothing more than long-standing bad habits. In some cases, it's relatively easy to figure out how these habits developed while in other cases, it's anyone's best guess. At some point in the development of

a certain bad habit, the child in question intuitively (i.e. he cannot explain his thought process) that the behavior in question — in this case, refusing to eat certain foods — is a means by which he can control other people, cause them to treat him as a special case. Over the course of my career, I've been consulted by dozens of parents

about "feeding issues." When parents cooperate and follow through as prescribed, my approach has never failed. It's based on the commonsense notion that children will do what is to their advantage and, conversely, stop doing what is no longer to their advantage. For example, I once had parents tell their preschool-age son that

his picky eating (after six months in a feeding therapy program he was eating about five foods) was due to a lack of adequate sleep — that when a child doesn't get enough sleep, taste buds stop working properly and food tastes weird. In other words, I had them begin their son's "therapy" by redefining the problem in terms a young child could understand. The solution became obvious: When he was unable to eat the food put on his plate at the evening meal (one teaspoon portions of what everyone else was eating), it simply meant he needed to catch up on his sleep. In that event, he was excused from the table and went to bed, lights out, curtains drawn. He did not like that, not one bit (pun!). In less than a week, his repertoire of acceptable foods went from five to fifteen. The last time I checked, he was eating anything his parents put on his plate and usually asking for seconds. Mind you, a few nights of early bedtime "therapy" accomplished more than six months in a feeding therapy program where he received attention and concern for acting like his tongue and brain weren't properly connected. Commonsense trumps pseudo-science once again.

Canned food myths debunked

PROVIDED BY MCC

The affordability of canned foods entices many people to stock up on the essentials. However, there are some people who still harbor concerns about the safety of canned foods. Getting to the truth about canned foods can make some of those concerns and help those on the fence stock up on these budget-friendly staples.

Myth #1: Canned foods are not as healthy as fresh foods

Fresh foods, once harvested, have a finite shelf life. Plus, once fruit or vegetables are picked, their vitamin and mineral content decreases each day that they are not consumed. Many canned foods are picked and processed on the same day, helping to retain nutrients at their peak and lock them in for many months. Also, according to the

Hy-Vee supermarket chain, sometimes canned foods are packed with additional nutrients, such as increased lycopene in canned tomatoes.

Myth #2: Canned foods are full of preservatives

The perception that canned foods are processed foods often leads people to believe they're full of unsavory ingredients. The term processing is used to describe any food that has been changed from its natural form. So removing corn from a cob counts as processing, as is baking or boiling potatoes. Canned foods are preserved by heating the items and sealing them under pressure. No other preservatives are needed to keep them fresh.

Myth #3: Can linings are dangerous

There has been controversy concerning BPA-containing plastics for many years. Even

though the Food and Drug Administration, as well as other international food safety agencies, has evaluated the extensive body of science and continue to affirm BPA's safety in food packaging, some manufacturers are voluntarily moving away from it. Consumers can find many foods packed in cans with non-BPA linings. However, even foods packaged in BPA are considered safe for consumption.

Myth #4: Canned foods are full of sodium

Some canned foods will contain salt as an added ingredient to improve taste and act as a freshness preservative. But canned foods do not rank among the biggest offenders in regard to excessive amounts of sodium. In 2012, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released a study that identified the top 10 food



PHOTO PROVIDED

If a can is bulging or if the top or bottom of the can moves or makes a popping sound, the seal has probably been broken or compromised by bacteria and should be thrown out.

categories that contribute to high sodium diets. Pizza, cured meats, cold cuts, and rolls made the list, while canned foods did not.

Myth #5: Canned foods do not taste good

Because foods are canned when they are at peak freshness and

ripeness after harvest, they retain full flavor if properly stored.

Myth #6: All dented cans are unsafe

Cans can become dented in transit. Drop a can and it will dent. But that doesn't necessarily mean foods inside dented cans are unsafe to eat. If

a can is bulging or if the top or bottom of the can moves or makes a popping sound, the seal has probably been broken or compromised by bacteria and should be thrown out.

Canned foods are safe and can make for valuable additions to any pantry.

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- Pat M. - Current Resident

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Monkey birth a step to saving fertility of boys with cancer

Birth of a monkey highlights experimental technology to preserve fertility when boys undergo cancer treatment

By **LAURAN NEERGAARD**
AP MEDICAL WRITER

Scientists are closing in on a way to help young boys undergoing cancer treatment preserve their future fertility — and the proof is the first monkey born from the experimental technology.

More and more people are surviving childhood cancer, but nearly 1 in 3 will be left infertile from the chemotherapy or radiation that helped save their life.

When young adults are diagnosed with cancer, they can freeze sperm, eggs or embryos ahead of treatment. But children diagnosed before puberty can't do that because they're not yet producing mature eggs or sperm.

"Fertility issues for kids with cancer were ignored" for years, said University of Pittsburgh reproductive scientist Kyle Orwig. "Many of us dream of growing up and having our own families. We hope our research will help these young patients to do that."

Orwig's team reported a key advance Thursday: First, they froze a bit of testicular tissue from a monkey that hadn't yet reached puberty. Later, they used it to produce sperm that, through

a monkey version of IVF, led to the birth of a healthy female monkey named Grady.

The technique worked well enough that human testing should begin in the next few years, Orwig said.

"It's a huge step forward" that should give hope to families, said Susan Taymans of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, which helped fund the research published in the journal *Science*. "It's not like science fiction. It's something that seems pretty attainable."

University of Pittsburgh Medical Center and a handful of other hospitals already freeze immature testicular tissue from young cancer patients, in hopes of knowing how to use it once they're grown and ready to have their own children.

Boys are born with stem cells inside little tubes in the testes, cells that start producing sperm after puberty's testosterone jolt. Orwig's goal: Keep sperm-producing stem cells safe from cancer treatment by freezing small pieces of testicular tissue, and using them to restore fertility later in life.

How? Enter the monkey

research.

Orwig's team froze tissue from young male monkeys, and then sterilized them. Once the monkeys approached puberty, the researchers thawed those tissue samples and gave them back to the original animal — implanting them just under the skin.

"We're not hooking it up to the normal plumbing," Orwig cautioned.

Boosted by hormones, the little pieces of tissue grew. Months later, the researchers removed them. Sure enough, inside was sperm they could collect and freeze.

Colleagues at the Oregon National Primate Research Center injected some of that sperm into eggs from female monkeys and implanted the resulting embryos. Last April, Grady was born, and "she plays and behaves just like every other monkey that was grown the normal way," Orwig said.

If the technique sounds a little bizarre, it's similar to a female option.

Girls' eggs are in an immature state before puberty. Researchers have removed and frozen strips of ovarian tissue harboring egg follicles from young women before cancer treatment,



AP PHOTO

This undated photo provided by the Oregon Health and Science University in March 2019 shows a baby monkey named Grady, at two weeks old, born from an experimental technology that aims to help young boys undergoing cancer treatment preserve their future fertility. Scientists froze testicular tissue from a monkey that had not yet reached puberty, and later thawed it to produce sperm used for Grady's conception.

in hopes that when transplanted back later the immature eggs would resume development. It's considered experimental even for young adults but some births have been reported. Now some hospitals bank ovarian tissue from girls, too.

Surgery involving the boys' testicular tissue is less invasive, noted Orwig, who also is researching ways to reinsert sperm-producing stem cells where they belong rather than the more roundabout technique.

The new research

shows "immature testicular tissue may become an option" to preserve boys' fertility, Nina Neuhaus and Stefan Schlatt of the Center of Reproductive Medicine and Andrology in Muenster, Germany, wrote in an accompanying editorial.

Meanwhile, "it's important for parents to know about this," said Christine Hanlon of Holiday, Florida, who took her son Dylan to Pittsburgh to have his tissue stored when he was newly diagnosed with Ewing's sarcoma at age 9.

Today Dylan is a healthy teen, and no one knows if he'll ever need the stored tissue, one of more than 200 samples Orwig's study has preserved. But Hanlon was thrilled to learn the research is moving along, just in case.

"You lose part of your childhood in cancer treatment," Hanlon said. "If there was a chance I could help him have normalcy in his future, with the potential of having a family if that's what he decided to do, I wanted to be able to."

Broken bones from falls on the rise among older dog walkers

By **LINDSEY TANNER**
AP MEDICAL WRITER

Broken bones from falls while dog walking are on the rise among older U.S. adults and hip fractures are among the most common injuries.

That's according to a study published Wednesday in *JAMA Surgery*.

University of Pennsylvania researchers examined government data on emergency room visits for dog walking injuries in adults aged 65 and older. The numbers nationwide jumped from almost 1,700 in 2004 to about 4,400 in 2017.

Almost 80 percent of the patients were women, who tend to have less dense bones than men.

While dog-walking causes fewer than 1 percent of fractures among older adults, the

numbers are higher than expected and the risk is often underappreciated, said study co-author Dr. Jaimo Ahn, an orthopedic surgeon.

Injuries typically happen when a dog pulls on a leash and walkers lose their balance.

Breaking bones, especially hips, can sharply diminish elderly adults' health. Previous research suggests that at least 1 in 4 older adults dies within one year of breaking a hip.

But research shows that dogs can be good companions for older adults and can help them stay active. So before embarking on those outings, older people should consider strength training for themselves and obedience training for their dogs, Ahn said.

Susan Bush, 69, has had several injuries from falls while walking

her dogs. The worst happened three years ago, while putting her leashed shepherd mix, Piper, on the porch of her Pocono Pines, Pennsylvania cottage just as a bear came out of the woods.

"I held onto her leash to keep her from chasing the bear," Bush recalled. Bush fell on her right hip and broke her leg.

Extensive surgery and rehab repaired the break, but "I'm still fighting to walk. I can't go upstairs without a cane."

She later had hip replacement surgery, but won't give up on dogs.

"Old people need our dogs. We need our soul mates," Bush said.

Dr. John Fernandez, an orthopedic surgeon at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago, said he treats injuries connected to dog walking at least



AP PHOTO

A dog pulls on his leash during a walk in Waltham, Massachusetts. A U.S. study suggests broken bones from falls while dog-walking are on the rise among older adults and hip fractures are among the most common injuries. Doctors recommend assessing your strength and balance, and Fido's obedience, before embarking on those healthful outings.

weekly and he's noticed an increase among older patients. He said that hospital coding changes

that include more specific details about how injuries occurred might partly explain the

increase. But Fernandez said the numbers also likely reflect an aging U.S. population.

Support Groups

Lung Cancer Support Group of Punta Gorda

Lung Cancer Support Group of Punta Gorda meets the second Tuesday of each month at 2 p.m. on the 4th floor of the medical office building at Bayfront Health hospital campus on E. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda.

Speakers:
April 9: Dr. Glick, Oncologist Florida Cancer Specialists
May 14: Thomas Cappello, speaking on estate planning
For more information, call 941-637-9575 or email icgarg@embarqmail.com.

The Charlotte Prostate Support Group meeting

The Charlotte Prostate Support Group will meet from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. April 12 at the Fawcett Hospital H2U facility located 3280 Tamiami Trail, Suite #493, Port Charlotte. The speaker will be Dr. Luis Fernandez, M.D., Family

Practitioner and Primary Care Physician. Dr. Fernandez will address early detection of prostate and other cancers ... to screen or not to screen?

A cancer diagnosis is not required for attendance. Many of our members have other prostate issues. We try to present an open, casual, environment to discuss any prostate concern. Women are cordially invited to attend and participate. Refreshments and room provided by Fawcett Memorial Hospital.

This will be our last meeting until Oct. 18.

Alcoholics Anonymous

Call 941-426-7723 for information on meetings in the Arcadia, Venice, Port Charlotte, Punta Gorda, North Port and Englewood areas, including dates times and places.

Alzheimer's support groups

The Alzheimer's Association holds monthly caregiver support groups

for spouses, adult children and family members who want to connect and share insight with others in similar situations. RSVP is not required to attend. For questions on groups and services through the Alzheimer's Association, please call 941-235-7470.

Port Charlotte area
• 3 p.m. third Tuesday at South Port Square (Harbor Terrace), 23033 Westchester Blvd., Port Charlotte.
• 3 p.m. third Thursday

at Port Charlotte United Methodist Church, 21075 Quesada Ave., Port Charlotte.

Punta Gorda area
• 3 p.m. third Monday at Life Care center, 450 Shreve St., Punta Gorda.

• 3 p.m. second Tuesday at Punta Gorda Civic Association, 2001 Shreve St., Punta Gorda.

Englewood area
• 10:30 a.m. third Friday, Englewood United Methodist Church, 700 E. Dearborn St., Englewood.

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One day, his disease may consume him

But for tonight, he wants you to laugh

Comedian turns news of Parkinson's into something he — and a room full of strangers — can laugh at



TNS PHOTO

Glenn Lurie, 57, takes part in the March Mania Comedy Tournament at The Comedy Zone. It was head-to-head challenge where two comedians faced off and the audience decides who moves forward with their applause.

By ANNA DOUGLAS
THE CHARLOTTE OBSERVER

Behind the stage curtain, Glenn Lurie could see the bar stool waiting for him.

It was just a few feet away but for the 57-year-old comedian, every step of the 10 he needed to get there would be slow and uncertain.

He made it to his seat, his hands and feet a bit more steady than usual, and spoke softly into the mic: "Here's the transparency part of the program — I'm living with Parkinson's."

With that, the audience — 100 people or so who paid to see a Tuesday night amateur comedy show — fell silent.

So Lurie moved quickly to one of his favorite jokes, about support groups for people with Parkinson's disease: "When we have our meetings once a month, we start off with a secret handshake."

He paused long enough for the joke to sink in. Then, hearing laughter bubble up from the crowd, Lurie kept going.

"Our favorite furniture is Shaker," he said.

More laughter.

"And we like our martinis stirred, not shaken."

By then, everyone was laughing.

Lurie was diagnosed nearly six years ago. But it's only been in the last four months that he's found a way to take the bad news of Parkinson's and turn it into something he — and a room full of strangers — can laugh at.

'A wake-up call'

Before moving to Charlotte, North Carolina, Lurie lived near San Francisco. Back then, in his early 50s, he was enjoying decent health other than, as he puts it, "battling the bulge."

But everything changed

in September 2013.

Two friends in California, in the span of one week, both asked Lurie whether he'd had a stroke. They'd noticed his walk or gait looked different, like he was dragging his feet. And his friends thought it was odd Lurie's right arm seemed habitually bent and immobile, sort of tucked in to his side.

At his first visit to the neurologist, Lurie walked a short distance down a hallway for observation. The diagnosis, he remembers, was quick and obvious to the doctor. Suddenly, symptoms Lurie had been trying to ignore now made sense.

"I would wake up in the morning and when I would yawn, my body would shake. I would have tremors and I would get cramps in my calves ... More than likely, I had Parkinson's for a year before it was diagnosed."

Parkinson's is a neurodegenerative disorder caused by too little dopamine in the brain. The chemical is widely associated with happiness and psychological health but it also plays an essential role in some of the body's most-basic physical functions.

Without enough dopamine, Lurie explains, "The brain is sending messages to my limbs but it's arriving on a delay." Medicine helps slow the severity of progressing symptoms but there's no known cure for the disease.

"As the illness goes on and on, the effectiveness of the medication wanes and you gotta keep taking more and more and eventually the drugs don't help," Lurie said, holding out a handful of 15 pills he takes daily. About half are for Parkinson's.

The most common Parkinson's symptoms include shaking or tremors in the body, and difficulty

with speech, dexterity and balance. Lurie describes the change as becoming almost "statuesque." Over time, doctors say Parkinson's usually worsens and can lead to the inability to walk, to drive or to control other movements of the hands and feet.

"It affects everybody differently ... I don't know what the future holds," Lurie said. "I might have to have a walker. I might go into a wheelchair."

He moved to Charlotte two years ago to be closer to family so he'd have help. Every six months, he checks in with his doctor and he's regularly making lifestyle changes as the illness progresses.

"You start to take stock of yourself," Lurie said. "You don't know how long you have to be capable of walking or cutting food with a fork and knife ... Eventually, I won't be able to drive. It gets harder and harder."

And for all those things he wants to do before his body won't let him, Lurie has a "bucket list."

No time for nervousness

Stand-up comedy may look easy enough as long as you don't have a fear of public speaking. But for a person living with Parkinson's, it will challenge all their senses.

Lurie's handwriting is nearly unreadable, he says, because his finger movement isn't as precise as it once was. He types his jokes out before a show and prints his bio for the emcee to announce the evening's entertainers. But even then, the going is slow and difficult. Lurie used to type more than 50 words a minute. Now, that's closer to 20.

Remembering jokes is hard, too.

"I can go into a mental pause like a brain fade,"

he said. "All comedians have it, even if they don't have Parkinson's. But it's a little more out in the open that I'm working through something."

On some nights, Lurie labors over every word. His brain knows what to say but the message being carried to his lips is often sluggish and choppy. And when words arrive, his voice is soft — a common side-effect of Parkinson's, caused by weakening of the vocal chord muscles.

Smiling at his own jokes, even, is no guarantee. Doctors call this "facial masking," part of the minimal muscle control associated with Parkinson's. Or, as Lurie describes it: His "poker face."

Overcoming the inherent obstacles to perform with Parkinson's, Lurie says, leave little energy for stage fright: "I have so much to worry about — making sure I get to the seat and sit down on it, and don't trip when I'm walking on the stage."

"Being nervous doesn't really factor into the equation."

Lurie's comedy not only increases Parkinson's awareness for the audience but also likely boosts his own health, says Ann Marie Obrikat, executive director of the Parkinson Association of the Carolinas.

"As you lose more and more of the dopamine, (Parkinson's) does influence mood and health," Obrikat said. "Emotionally, there's a lot going on as they travel through the journey. And it's ever-changing, depending on how the Parkinson's is going."

She remembers a time, after Lurie moved to

Charlotte, when he began volunteering with the Parkinson's Association but then he was absent for a stretch. Obrikat was worried — until several months later, she said, Lurie called her and said he'd started doing stand-up.

"I could just tell a difference in his voice — he'd found something that worked for him."

Missed jokes — still laughter

Until recently, Lurie had limited stage experience (other than in junior college 38 years ago when he performed a self-written monologue titled, "How to dress for your first Grateful Dead show").

First, he started with open-mic nights in Charlotte. Then, in February, Lurie entered a comedy "showdown" hosted by Heist Brewery and Vinyl Pi. After several rounds of competition, Lurie was chosen by fellow comics to open on March 2 for Paul Hooper, a Charlotte native who has performed stand-up around the world.

At Charlotte comedy events, both the performers and the audience tend to be much younger than Lurie. But he doesn't mind — so far, the reception has been good. Plus, he says, it's better therapy than traditional Parkinson's support groups where many people there are 15 to 20 years older than him.

Still, the younger audience means a few jokes get missed.

"Some people don't have the same sense of humor as I do," Lurie said.

But what's the worst that could happen, he asks — "that they're not gonna

laugh?"

For self-critique, Lurie records and re-watches every performance. Those punch lines that do best are kept in regular rotation — like the joke Lurie makes about his pharmacist who "is a real bastard," he says. "Whenever I go there, he puts my medicine in child-proof safety caps."

But even the not-as-great jokes don't completely bomb on stage. Like at his first-ever performance when Lurie told the story of his career in advertising and all the failed marketing pitches he made. When he got to the part about the PGA pairing up with Slice soda, he heard only a few muted laughs. Then Lurie waited a moment, looked out at the audience and dead-panned: "Alrighty ... — which got the biggest laugh of all."

"He is very likeable. The crowd seems to love him even if the joke doesn't go well," said Paul Baeza, a fellow comedian in Charlotte who produces local shows.

Baeza and Lurie recently went head-to-head in a "March Mania" competition at the Comedy Zone. Baeza advanced to the next round and Lurie lost out.

But with every performance, Baeza said, Lurie seems to get a little better.

And for Lurie, every time he takes the stage he feels just a little better. When he can't do it anymore, he says, he'll write jokes for others to perform.

"The prognosis for Parkinson's is, it just gets worse," he said. "When you're at the bottom, it's the best time to try something new ... There's things that you want to accomplish before the body won't let you."

Support Groups

At Ease, Veterans

Combat veterans from Gulf Cove United Methodist Church are providing some of the

support and discussion that our veterans deserve. On the first Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m., they are at the American Legion Post 113, at 3436 Indiana

Road in Rotonda West. Veterans are invited and encouraged to join them. Gulf Cove UMC is located at 1100 McCall Road in Port Charlotte, just ¾ mile

south of the Myakka River on Route 776. The church can be reached at 941-697-1747 or GulfCoveUMC@gmail.com and their website is found at <http://GulfCoveChurch.com>.

GulfCoveChurch.com.

Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group

The Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group meets from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. the second Tuesday every month at The Springs at South Biscayne, 6235 Hoffman St., North Port. Call 941-426-8349 to register.

Amputee Support Group

The Amputee Support Group meets at 3 p.m. on the second Monday of every month at the Life Care Center, Punta Gorda. Contact George Baum at 941-787-4151 for more information.

Breast cancer networking

The Venice Breast Cancer Networking Group meets on the third Tuesday of the month at the Elite Health Wellness Center at 4125 S. Tamiami Trail, Suite 2, Venice. Time is from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. It is a safe place for newly diagnosed and survivors to talk with informative speakers in alternate months. Contact Dawn Moore at 941-408-9572 or <http://www.jfcs-cares.org/services/cancer-support/>.

Breastfeeding support group

The Florida Department of Health, local partners and organizations, such as the American Academy of Pediatrics, strongly recommend babies exclusively breastfeed for the first six months of life and continue to breastfeed for one to two years.

There are a variety of programs and resources to empower breastfeeding moms. Health professionals and peer counselors provide a range of services from right after birth at the hospital to breastfeeding support groups in the community as noted below:

- Tuesdays, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., WIC in partnership with Lactation Love Breastfeeding Support Group, Jacaranda Library, 4143 Woodmere Park Blvd., Venice. Contact: Arielle Ball, DOH-Sarasota, WIC and Nutrition Services, Arielle.Ball@FLHealth.gov or 941-685-3324.

- Second Wednesday each month, 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m., North Port Library conference room, 13800 Tamiami Trail, North Port. Contact: Jamee Thumm, Healthy Start Coalition of Sarasota County, jamee.thumm@gmail.com or 941-373-7070, ext. 307.

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How to become an everyday millionaire

By **CHRIS HOGAN**
COLUMNIST

I have something important to tell you: Stop saying "I can't."

Yes, you can!

Why am I on this rant? I came across a study that says 64 percent of millennials don't think they'll ever reach \$1 million in retirement savings.

Really? Why not? I say you can! Here's how.

Start early

Of all the age groups, millennials have the best chance of reaching the magic million mark because they have time on their side. And some millennials are off to a great start. Almost 60 percent of them have already started saving for retirement. Great! You've got a head start. If you start investing just \$300 a month at age 25, you'll hit the \$1 million mark by age 60!

I know what some of you are thinking: I didn't start when I was 25. I can't hit \$1 million. Yes, you can! How? You get on a budget, pay off any debt, and put as much as you can toward your retirement. If you're already doing that, sit down with your spouse or a friend, look at your budget, and decide how you can trim your expenses to

put more money in your investment accounts. Then, stick to your plan!

Increase every year. Not everyone can put away loads of money when they're first starting out. I get that. But that doesn't mean you're doomed to a miserly retirement. Start with a percentage you can manage (and get the max of any employer match), and increase the percentage every year so your investing grows as your career (and paycheck) grows. If you get a bonus, throw that in your investment account, too.

If you want concrete financial numbers to show where you stand right now, you can use my new Net Worth Calculator. It takes less than five minutes to complete, and you'll get tailored advice for your unique situation.

Think long-term. Saving for retirement is a marathon, not a sprint. That mentality isn't popular in our instant download culture. Building wealth doesn't work that way. It takes time and patience. Remember the fable about the tortoise and the hare? Slow and steady wins the race every time.

But winning the marathon only happens when you stay in the race. That

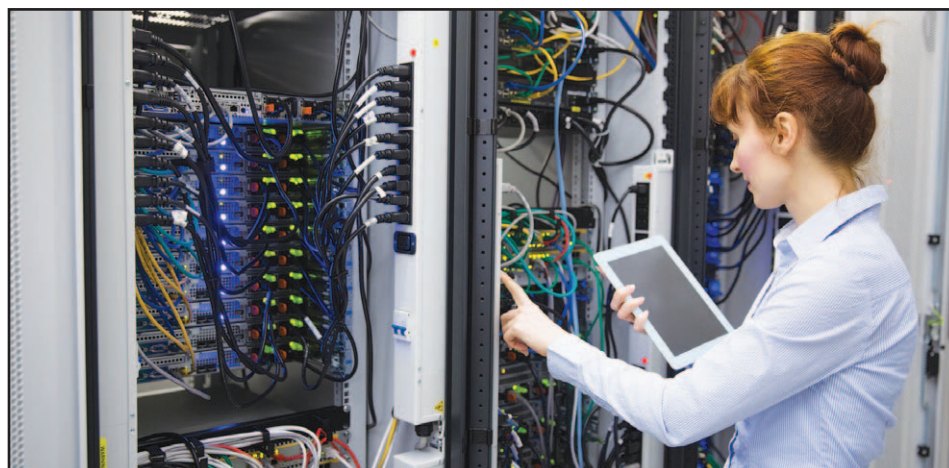
means you keep plugging away, putting money in your retirement accounts no matter what the markets do. If your portfolio balance drops (and it will), don't panic and pull your money. Keep your eye on the prize. The market will correct itself, and your investments will earn a return over time.

What it takes

There's nothing fancy about building wealth. The question is whether you're willing to do the work to get there. It's about avoiding debt, living on a budget, staying on guard against stupid decisions, and investing your money wisely.

So, start saying "Yes, I can!"

Chris Hogan is a best-selling author, speaker and financial expert. For more than a decade, Hogan has served at Ramsey Solutions, equipping and challenging people to take control of their money and reach their financial goals. His second book, Everyday Millionaires: How Ordinary People Built Extraordinary Wealth—And How You Can, Too, was released in January 2019. You can follow Chris Hogan on Twitter and Instagram at @ChrisHogan360 and online at chrishogan360.com or facebook.com/chrishogan360.



Tech talent shortages aren't as big as you think, research shows

By **SHELLY HAGAN**
BLOOMBERG NEWS

NEW YORK — Economists at the hiring website Indeed say user data indicate that the technology job market may not be living up to some expectations about how hard it is to find workers.

Assertions that technology jobs change so fast that job seekers can't keep up, and employer grumbings about a skills shortage, don't match the evidence based on the company's job seeker resumes and employment postings from 2014 through 2018, an Indeed study shows.

"While the tech labor market does face some unique challenges, the rhetoric is more dire than the reality," economists Martha Gimbel and Tara

Sinclair wrote in a report published by the Austin, Texas-based company Thursday. "Compared with recruitment in the overall economy, it has become easier for employers to find tech talent in recent years."

Tech job seekers are actually better matched to current job opportunities in their industry than employment seekers in the broader economy. Jobs in the overall economy are changing faster than job postings for tech positions, according to the report by Gimbel, research director at Indeed's Hiring Lab and a former Labor Department economist, and Sinclair, a senior fellow at the lab and economics professor at George Washington University.

Listings on Indeed were 25 percent different

for the study period versus 18 percent in tech, and within the sector, demand for software engineers and some kinds of developers jumped the most over the four years.

Another surprise was that employers found it easier to find tech talent compared with four years earlier. The training industry that caters to aspiring programmers and developers grew, and as a result employers were better able to find workers with the right skill sets.

Though the skills gap in tech was smaller than the overall economy, the shortfall has increased in recent years as companies struggle to find data scientists and software engineers. Meanwhile, positions for tech support roles and IT technicians were easier to fill.



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1 in 4 marijuana users get high at work in states with legal weed

By GENE BALK

THE SEATTLE TIMES

It's probably not a good idea — and it can't be great for productivity — but that's not stopping a lot of Washingtonians from doing it.

I'm talking about getting high at work.

One in four marijuana users who are employed admit to doing this within the past year, according to a new survey of cannabis consumers in Washington, Oregon and Colorado, three states where recreational weed is legal.

One in four also said they've gotten high before work — I'm guessing it's the same one in four, but the survey doesn't specify.

The marketing communications firm Quinn Thomas, which has offices in Seattle and Portland, funded the survey, which was conducted by polling-and-opinion outfit DHM Research. A representative sample of 900 cannabis consumers were interviewed — 300 in each of the three states — from Jan. 8 to 14. The survey has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.3 percent.

"There is a lot of information out there about the cannabis industry and its regulatory structure, but not much is known about consumers," said Zach Knowling, vice president at Quinn Thomas, in an email. "We felt our experience researching and reaching unique audiences could build greater understanding of who they are."

Washington and Colorado both legalized recreational use of marijuana through

voter initiatives in 2012, becoming the first states to do so. Oregon followed in 2014.

The survey shows that after legalization, many cannabis consumers increased their usage. In Washington 44 percent of respondents said they are now regular consumers of pot (daily or a few times per week), compared with 36 percent who said they consumed that much prelegalization.

With legalization, it seems that marijuana has entered into the mainstream. Indeed, the survey data show that recreational-cannabis consumers look pretty much like the average American. They are a close match to the U.S. average for household income and educational attainment. In the three states that were surveyed, pot users match the general population breakdowns in terms of race and ethnicity, age, political-party affiliation and other demographic factors.

There is one significant exception: Gender. Cannabis consumers skew male by about 60 percent, according to the survey.

Even though marijuana is legal and widely popular in the three states surveyed, the great majority of users (79 percent) still feel there is some lingering social stigma attached to it. Only about half say they are completely transparent with family and friends about their use of the drug.

Even if folks feel some social stigma still exists, a lot of marijuana users aren't exactly secretive about it — at least that's



AP PHOTO

true in Seattle, where the passing smell of pot smoke has become one of the defining characteristics of city sidewalks. While the great majority of those surveyed said that home is the primary place they consume cannabis, more than one in six said they typically get stoned away from home.

Survey respondents expressed a need for accurate information regarding safety and health of cannabis use, and just about half (49 percent) said they trusted their local retailer for that. In comparison, only 38 percent said they trust their health-care provider.

"Staff at dispensaries are the most trusted source of information about cannabis, well above doctors and public health

officials. That surprised us," Knowling said. "There's an opportunity for state officials and health care experts to increase their role, particularly because consumers told us they want more information."

Smoking is the most popular method of cannabis consumption — a little more than half said that's how they usually use it. Only 18 percent typically consume edibles, which ranks second, followed by vaping and topicals (oils or creams), in that order.

A large percentage of consumers surveyed reported a modest household income, so it's not surprising that 62 percent pointed to price as one of the two most important factors when

purchasing marijuana (THC potency came in second, at 45 percent). Still, consumers overwhelmingly said they want the retail experience of buying pot to be more like going to a nice wine shop than to a convenience store for a six-pack.

Speaking of alcohol, nearly a quarter of survey respondents said the reason they use cannabis is as an alternative to liquor. But the two most common reasons selected for pot use are reducing stress and anxiety, and reducing pain.

One remarkable finding of the survey is that lower-income folks spend the most on marijuana. One quarter of consumers with a household income of less than \$25,000 spent more than \$500 in a year. As you go higher

up the income ladder, the likelihood of spending that much money on pot gets progressively lower. In light of that finding, Washington's 37 percent sales-tax rate on marijuana seems particularly burdensome to people with lower incomes.

While the survey shows that getting stoned at work is a fairly commonplace activity, so is drug testing. Twenty-one percent of respondents said they've been subjected to a drug test that checked for cannabis within the past year. And just about the same number said they stopped getting high for a while in order to pass the test.

It worked for most. Nine percent indicated that they still failed the test.

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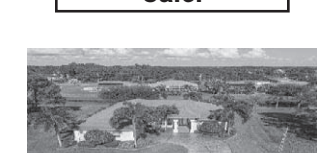
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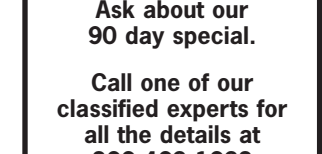


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NORTH PORT 5574 Gagnon Terrace. SOLAR POWERED HOME!! Immaculate, 3 bdrm, 2 bath, Pool home, 1987sq ft, built in 2004. Fenced yard, private setting. RV parking. Beautiful! Don't miss this energy efficient home. Perfect! \$289,900
Pat Walker 941-276-4674 REMAX Anchor Realty



PORT CHARLOTTE
15184 Mille Fiore Blvd. Almost NEW, built in 2015, almost 1900 sq ft, Huge 30x10 ft lanai. Priced THOUSANDS below builders models. Ready NOW! Great community of Villa Milano! \$200,000
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PORT CHARLOTTE
 15341 Mille Fiore Blvd., CHARACTER, CHARM, AND ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL ABOUND in this STUNNING MEDITERRANEAN DESIGN. 2000 SF 3/2/2 WITH 12x27' HEATED PEBBLE TECH POOL with serene wooded view (privacy!) in rear. Located in NW Port Charlotte's very private gated community of Villa Milano. Available turn-key furnished! CITY WATER & SEWER! LOW HOA FEES! **\$300,000**
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1020 HOUSES FOR SALE



PENDING
PORT CHARLOTTE Suncoast Lakes Gated community, 3 bdrm 2 bath, large lanai, 1936 sq ft, 2 car gar, community pool Freshly painted, new carpet in bedrms. **REDUCED \$235,000.**
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PORT CHARLOTTE
 Suncoast Lakes is a gated community and home to this 3/2 open and spacious great room floor plan, (1913 sq ft). Lovely lanai looking out to greenbelt area. Large kitchen with lots of counter space and large pantry. Built in 2006. See this one today! \$245,000
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1030 WATERFRONT HOMES
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REDUCED
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LAKE SUZY
12144 SW Egret Cir #1604 NORTH SHORE CONDOS
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\$160,000
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PENDING
LAKE SUZY - \$144,500
 North Shore Condo Beautiful and in perfect condition with expansive lake view. Meticulously maintained this 2 bd 2 bath is fully furnished with lovely furniture, 20 in. ceramic tile flooring, vaulted ceilings, freshly painted in neutral colors. Nothing to do but move in and enjoy! Community pool nearby. Condo fee \$666 per quarter!
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NORTH PORT-TALON BAY
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3000


NOTICES

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Attention Entrepreneurs: Walmart is now accepting applications for 2019 Open Call for American Products

BENTONVILLE, Ark (BUSINESS WIRE) — If you've ever dreamed of potentially reaching thousands of customers with your American products, now is the time to act: Walmart is accepting applications for its 6th annual Open Call, scheduled for June 18 and 19 at the company's Home Office campus in Bentonville, Arkansas. Apply today by visiting Walmart-jump.com for the opportunity to secure a face-to-face pitch meeting with a Walmart buyer. The application deadline is April 30.

"Our participation in the Open Call opportunity has had an amazing impact on our business," said Justin Mark, JustinTimeSnacks. JustinTimeSnacks recently launched its Homeplate Pizza on store shelves in Missouri, just in time for baseball season. "The Walmart deal we secured has led to expansion for increased production that allows us to now own a 5,000 square-foot manufacturing facility. Additionally, all of our ingredients and even the packaging is sourced through local businesses creating jobs across the St. Louis area."

This year's Open Call attendees could secure deals ranging from a handful of stores in local markets, to supplying hundreds, even thousands of stores,

Sam's Clubs and Walmart.com. The two-day event informs, empowers and encourages attendees while providing effective networking opportunities for local entrepreneurs.

"Our customers tell us that products made, sourced or grown in the U.S. are important to them and we work year-round to identify local suppliers and source products that our customers are proud to buy," said Cindi Marsiglio, Walmart's vice president of Merchandise Services and U.S. Manufacturing. "Walmart's Annual Open Call gives us a unique opportunity to meet entrepreneurs from across the country and discover new, niche and innovative products that fill a need for our customers and support jobs right here in America."

During the 2018 Walmart Open Call, nearly 600 meetings were held with product pitches including toys, apparel, natural health and beauty aids, and food. Prospective suppliers traveled from 46 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. More than half of the attending businesses self-identified as diverse, including nearly 25 percent identifying as women-owned.

Following last year's event, a new line-up of products has begun arriving on Walmart

shelves and Walmart.com, representing the dreams of dozens of entrepreneurs across the country, including:

- Ahssa Foods LLC, Mesa, Arizona – Low-fat gourmet sauces
- Bodylove Naturals, Rogers, Arkansas – Natural skincare products
- The Cumberland Companies, Knoxville, Tennessee – Fog-free shaving mirror
- Mame's Burrito Company, Denver, Colorado – Organic breakfast burritos
- The Perfect Granola, Rochester, New York – Naturally sweetened granola bars
- RPM, Savage, Minnesota – Placemats for pet food bowls
- Shoe Crazy, Chesterfield, Virginia – Unique wine blends
- Wings Cosmetics LLC, Andrews, Texas – Winged eyeliner stamp

In January 2013, Walmart announced its commitment to help boost job creation and U.S. manufacturing through buying an additional \$250 billion in products supporting American jobs by 2023. Walmart's Open Call is one way in which the company continues to invest in this commitment.

Apply for Open Call today and join the conversation on your social channels by using #WalmartOpenCall

What to do when you are rising in your company and not liking what you see

By LIZ REYER
STAR TRIBUNE (MINNEAPOLIS)

Q: I'm struggling with a lack of confidence in my company's executive staff bordering on cynicism. The higher I've gotten in my position, the more visibility I have into how and why decisions are made. I'm not sure what to do, or if any other company would be any different.

—Al, 41, vice president, sales

A: It can definitely be eye-opening to understand all of the considerations that go into organizations' decisions, even in the best of cases.

In your situation, perhaps you are seeing that your ideals clash with the reality of your company. This is worth reflecting upon.

For example, if decisions are being made that put profits over customer needs or even safety, this would be extremely disturbing.

Or if a company directive requires you or your sales force to lie or otherwise impinge on your ethics, you would be right to be alarmed.

However, things are seldom this unambiguous. First, consider that the executive leadership team likely can't tell you

everything that would help you understand the true reasons behind all their decisions.

Confidentiality is a fact of life at those levels, and as you continue to gain more promotions, additional information will be shared.

You may find that you then can understand some rationales that simply didn't make sense before.

There's also a place for some humility. You simply may not have quite enough background to grasp the complexity of the many factors that this team is managing.

Also keep in mind that your senior leaders are flawed humans, just like all of us. While each undoubtedly has skills that got them to that level, they also have weaknesses. And sometimes they may have a bad day or make mistakes, no matter how good their intentions may be. Your reservations may not simply be the reaction of an idealistic or naive young executive. There may, in fact, be veniality afoot.

The first question to confront is, how will you know if things are amiss? Sometimes those committing fraud or other criminal acts hide their tracks very well.

The next question is, what are you willing to do? Integrity would call for the whistleblower path.

If you intend to do this, plan ahead so that you are prepared for the risks and potential costs.

In the end, a likely cause is simple mediocrity. Your company may have a decent vision or product, but just not very skilled leadership. Your executives may be over their heads, and not be able to create plans that truly lead to the vision. This is called fantasy and doesn't end well in business.

Or you may have found that your firm's reason for existence simply doesn't inspire you, and maybe you are pinning the blame on management.

You then need to decide if you can be a difference maker in this situation.

If you stay with the company, identify ways that you can influence the firm within your current role and in future positions, if you should be promoted.

If you decide to look elsewhere, use this situation to plan questions you will ask and observations you will want to make to find an organization that better meets your expectations for leadership.

Fishing For A New Career?



Check Out The Classifieds In The SUN NEWSPAPERS

How brokers' bonuses can lead to ruin

By **JEFFREY MEITRODT**

STAR TRIBUNE (MINNEAPOLIS)

After 26 years helping his clients try to get rich, Indiana securities broker James Madden thought it was his turn to make a lot of money when a recruiter from Raymond James offered him \$150,000 — nearly twice his annual income — to shift his business to the Florida-based firm.

Madden said there was just one catch: Each time he failed to reach his sales quota in a three-month period, he would have to repay \$7,500.

Six months after cashing in his windfall, Madden was in trouble. Business was down, and he had to give back \$15,000. Madden started making secret trades in client accounts to reach his sales targets. Regulators later found unauthorized trades for at least 15 people and suspended his license. Raymond James fired Madden and paid \$36,000 to reimburse one of his clients, records show.

"I got seven kids and they are all in private schools and college — I was not prepared to give back \$7,500 every quarter," Madden said. "If I was Raymond James, I wouldn't want anybody to know about that (bonus) program. It is ridiculous. If my clients knew about that, they would have fired me, I am sure."

For most brokers, getting a six-figure check to bring their clients to a new firm is a moment to celebrate. But records obtained by the Star Tribune show that the strings attached to these rich packages have destroyed the careers of hundreds of brokers since 2012 and caused financial woes for some of their customers.

In the past five years, Minneapolis-based Ameriprise Financial, Wells Fargo and three more of the nation's biggest investment firms spent at least \$40 million to settle complaints filed by investors against brokers who accepted a bonus to change firms, records show. Most of those complaints were settled in arbitration with no public disclosure.

"These bonuses are like the crack cocaine of the securities industry," said Chicago attorney Andrew Stoltmann, past president of the Public Investors Arbitration Bar Association, a trade group that promotes stronger consumer protections. "They lead to a whole lot of chicanery in the industry, because there is extraordinary pressure to pay those things off."

Paying bonuses to recruit top performing brokers and their clients is not a new practice among investment firms, but a booming stock market and aging workforce have made the competition more intense and expensive than ever. Recruiting packages in the six figures are now typical. Ameriprise, the nation's fifth largest investment firm, spent \$152 million on recruiting in 2017, nearly triple what it spent in 2010, according to records filed with Minnesota regulators.

Wells Fargo, Ameriprise and other investment firms declined several requests to discuss their recruiting practices. In written statements, the firms said they do everything they can to help newly recruited brokers succeed. Wells Fargo and Ameriprise said they also take prompt action if one is accused of harming a client.

"We want every financial adviser at WFA to be successful while working in their clients' best interests," Wells Fargo, which has more than 19,000 advisers, said in a written response to the Star Tribune's inquiries.

Ameriprise, which has nearly 10,000 financial advisers, said it is "misleading" to focus on "the very small percentage of advisers who have left our company due to performance issues or violation of the policies we have in place to protect clients."

At the same time, Ameriprise and other investment firms have successfully blocked measures that would require them to tell customers if their brokers have received a bonus, even if it includes sales goals they must meet to avoid triggering penalties or risk losing their job.

Chicago investor Cathy Hill said she didn't think twice about following her new broker when he was recruited by another firm in 2013.

But Hill didn't know that Wedbush Securities had paid him \$2.1 million to move his business.

Nor did she know that he would be paid a \$135,000 bonus if he could generate \$2 million in commissions in his first year from Hill and other clients.

Over the next five years, Hill's lawyer alleges, broker William Mark Heiden depleted her account by \$200,000. Most of those losses, according to her complaint, came when Heiden invested her money in an oil company that went bankrupt. Hill said Heiden also executed trades without her permission, making risky investments that paid him fatter fees than the conservative products she preferred.

By the time Hill discovered that much of her nest egg was gone, 11 other customers had accused Heiden of abusing his position. Wedbush fired him in 2018 and has paid out nearly \$2 million to settle claims of fraud and other misdeeds by Heiden, records show.

Heiden, who is fighting to keep his license, blames his customers' losses on a downturn in the oil market. "I am not guilty of anything," he said.

Hill worries that the financial hit she took could make it impossible to keep her home.

"I have these rolling panic attacks," she said. "I worry about my future."

How brokers can make it or lose it big

Here's how a stockbroker could earn more than \$1 million in commissions and bonuses or end up losing it all in just three years. In this scenario, two brokers who make \$200,000 a year accept large bonuses to switch firms, agreeing to pay back some of the money each year if they fail to meet certain sales goals.

Not bonuses but loans

Though called bonuses, the deals used to recruit established brokers are usually treated as loans. Repayment terms vary from one deal to another, but the loans are typically forgiven if brokers meet certain financial goals and stay with their new firms anywhere from five to nine years.

Brokers must pay interest on any unpaid balance of the loan and taxes on any portion that is forgiven. If they miss a sales quota or fail to hit some other financial target, their commissions may be slashed or they may be forced to unexpectedly pay back thousands of dollars each month.

They also must repay any unforgiven amounts of money if they leave before the end of their employment agreements.

A former Wells Fargo broker in Georgia said he felt trapped after he failed to meet his production quotas and the company started docking his paycheck to recover \$520,000 in bonus money.

"It incentivizes you to make bad decisions and really do things that you normally wouldn't do," said the broker, who said he started selling his clients on investments that carried higher fees. He quit less than two years after joining Wells Fargo and was ordered to repay more than \$450,000 in bonus money in an arbitration proceeding, forcing him into bankruptcy last year.

Since 2012, financial services companies have filed more than 3,200 arbitration cases against brokers seeking repayment of recruiting-related loans, according to the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA), an industry-supported group authorized by Congress to protect investors.

Most cases are settled and all details, including the name of the broker and the firm, are never disclosed. That can make it difficult to learn what ultimately happened to the brokers who received those recruiting packages, or whether problems associated with them are widespread or limited to a few firms.

Among the cases that ended with an arbitrator's ruling, a pattern emerges: The company almost always wins, and the broker is ordered to repay hundreds of thousands of dollars in recruiting loans.

A review of 500 cases by the Star Tribune found that brokers in those cases owed an average of \$236,472. A quarter of them ended up filing bankruptcy. In more than 100 of the cases, the brokers also



DAVID JOLIS/TNS

Josh Maddux's career as a financial adviser ended after he couldn't repay taxes on his \$287,000 bonus.

were fired or penalized by regulators for harming their clients, or their employers settled complaints for infractions linked to improper sales practices such as excessive trading. Records show most of them had never had a customer complaint prior to being recruited.

"I understand how these guys are romanced — when you see a seven-figure check coming into your bank account, you are blinded a bit," said Brian Hamburger, a New Jersey attorney who advises brokers on compensation issues. "But these deals are overwhelmingly favorable to the companies. If a financial adviser is selling out for a big bonus, thinking they are going to outsmart the firm, they are sorely mistaken."

How to avoid problems with your broker

- **Check out your broker:** Spot potential issues by reviewing your broker's history at BrokerCheck. The searchable site will show whether your broker has been fired or disciplined, as well as the result of any prior complaints.

- **Ask about incentives:** Brokers are not required to share this information, but regulators recommend trying to find out whether your broker's compensation arrangements require them to meet financial goals to avoid penalties, such as reduced commissions.

- **Monitor your account:** Review your trading records and make sure you have approved every investment. Watch for unusual amounts of activity. Ask your broker to explain any large losses.

- **Watch for 'happiness' letters:** If your broker's firm spots questionable trading, you will receive a letter asking you to sign off on recent transactions. You may not think anything is wrong, because such letters sometimes suggest the firm is simply making sure you are still "happy" with your broker.

- **Keep records:** If you ever get into a dispute, you will need to document your trading history. Take written notes on conversations with your broker, in case you need to dispute their representations about a specific investment.

Aaron Parthemer, who used to handle investments for a stable of NFL and NBA players, filed for bankruptcy after Morgan Stanley won a \$675,000 arbitration award over his bonuses. Regulators took his license for selling unregistered securities to his clients without taking proper steps to protect them.

"I went from the top to the gutter," said Parthemer, who managed \$250 million worth of investments. "Until this happened, I didn't have a single complaint in my entire 20-year career. I was the poster child of how you do great business. And today, I get referred to as the Bernie Madoff of athletes. ... It makes me sick to my stomach."

Phyllis Borzi, who as assistant secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor from 2009 to 2017 tried to limit bonuses for brokers who handle retirement plans, said she thinks most broker misconduct is caused by compensation practices.

"I think the overwhelming number of brokers who do bad things are not bad people," said Borzi. "But the system is set up to reward that kind of behavior. ... People believe their advisers are

legally required to act in their best interests, and they're not."

Reform rejected

Investment companies began using signing bonuses to recruit top brokers in the 1980s, and regulators began scrutinizing the practice by the mid-1990s, when brokers were being offered as much as a year's pay to switch firms.

In 1994, the head of the Securities and Exchange Commission asked a panel of veteran financial industry executives to analyze compensation practices and recommend reforms. A year later, the committee recommended eliminating upfront bonuses, noting that these undisclosed payments created conflicts that sometimes harmed investors. The recommendation went nowhere, recalled panel member Raymond Mason, former chairman and CEO of Legg Mason.

In an interview, Mason said he was astonished to find out that brokers are now getting packages worth more than three years' pay. "That is gigantic," Mason said.

The SEC sounded the alarm about bonuses again in 2009. In a letter to Wall Street executives, then-SEC Chairwoman Mary Schapiro warned that large incentive packages could motivate brokers to "churn customer accounts, recommend unsuitable investment products or otherwise engage in activity that generates commission revenue but is not in an investors' interest."

FINRA tried to address the concerns by proposing that brokers be required to disclose any signing bonus of \$50,000 or more. The proposal was killed by the industry. Ameriprise said such disclosures could create "misperceptions" for customers and violate advisers' privacy, records show.

Instead of requiring brokers to disclose the size of their bonus, FINRA began requiring firms to send out an educational letter, which includes questions that clients should ask if their broker changes firms and asks them to transfer assets.

"We think a customer should carefully consider whether to entrust his or her assets to a representative that is unwilling to be completely transparent with respect to conflicts of interest and other issues of importance to the customer," FINRA spokeswoman Michelle Ong said.

However, if a client asks a broker about his or her signing bonus, the broker is not required to share any personal information, according to FINRA.

In 2016, the president of UBS Wealth Management decried what he called the industry's "unhealthy obsession" with bonuses, noting in a trade publication that "relentless recruiting is bad for the industry." UBS subsequently reduced its recruiting efforts by 40 percent.

Edward Jones, one of the nation's largest investment firms, has never offered signing bonuses. Katherine Mauzy, the executive in charge of recruiting, said Edward Jones doesn't want to "handcuff" employees with long-term agreements that could lead to dissatisfaction and resentment.

"If (brokers) don't want to be here," Mauzy said, "let's not force them to stay."

'They own you'

Not every broker who moves gets a bonus. Veteran headhunters involved in negotiating the deals say about 1,000 brokers receive large signing bonuses annually. Ameriprise, which said it recruits about 300 brokers per year, said less than half of its recruits get money to switch firms. But the company said there are situations where the bonuses are important.

"Given the disruption to their practice when moving, many advisers experience an initial loss in revenue and a spike in overhead costs until they get settled into their new firms — and these funds are helpful in bridging that transition period," Ameriprise said in a written response to questions.

Lisa Schesso said she agreed to join Wells Fargo in 2013 after the company offered her a bonus of \$63,357. She was just starting to build her practice, and she said the company promised to let her manage \$35 million in assets that had been handled by a colleague, who was leaving the firm's branch in Hudson, Wis.

But the colleague refused to relinquish the accounts when he transferred, Schesso said, and she began to struggle.

In 2015, despite earning \$29,331, Schesso took home just \$7,567 after Wells Fargo took out its payments for her bonus-related loan. Some months she earned nothing. In her previous job at a financial services firm, she earned more than \$100,000 a year.

"I came home from work many times crying my eyes out," Schesso said. "I couldn't do it. I wasn't going to sell something just because I needed a paycheck. But that does happen, obviously. Because when you are putting a commission in front of somebody who has to pay their bills, they are going to bend the rules. It happens every day."

Schesso quit in 2016 and was ordered to repay \$23,025 in bonus money after losing her arbitration case. She hopes to make her final payment this year. She now works for another financial services firm, which gave her a \$50 million book of business and guaranteed her \$70,000 annual salary for 18 months.

Wells Fargo declined to comment, saying it considers employee information confidential.

In interviews, brokers said the companies tend to win no matter how things turn out. If a broker succeeds, as many do, the firms get new clients and revenue. If the broker fails, the companies usually can hang onto the clients while filing arbitration claims against their former employees to recoup bonus money.

"When they give you that check, it's more money than you've ever seen in your life," said Scott Capone, a New York broker who had his securities license indefinitely suspended in 2016 for not repaying Morgan Stanley the unpaid balance of his \$550,000 signing bonus. "You feel this euphoria. But it's calculated on their end. ... They know they own you."

Many brokers said their inability to meet bonus-related obligations meant the end of their careers. Some found lucrative new work. Joshua Maddux, who quit Morgan Stanley's Minneapolis office in 2011 when he couldn't repay \$15,000 in taxes on his \$287,000 bonus, is now earning more than \$100,000 a year working on oil rigs in North Dakota and Utah.

"It's not easy to begin a career again at 45 when all of your expertise is in financial services," Maddux said. "You find yourself wondering: 'How did I get here?'"

But many brokers have struggled to make ends meet. Too old to start fresh in many lines of work and unable to continue working in finance, some brokers end up in much lower-paying jobs. One told bankruptcy court officials that he now mows lawns in Connecticut. Another fills online orders at a warehouse in Arizona for \$12 an hour. Several are selling cars.

"I had a 20-year career and I wound up delivering pizzas and driving for Uber," said a former broker in Minnesota, who went bankrupt after he was unable to repay more than \$200,000 in bonus money. "It certainly wasn't the career I expected."

THE CONVERSATION

Why pay transparency alone won't eliminate the persistent wage gap between men and women

(The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts.)

By **NANCY MODESITT**
UNIVERSITY OF BALTIMORE

(THE CONVERSATION) No matter how you slice the data, women in the U.S. earn a lot less than men.

A typical woman working full-time makes 81 cents for every dollar a man earns, little more than the 77 cents she got a decade ago. Within careers, it can vary widely, with female physicians and marketing managers earning 71 cents, while female registered nurses are at 92 cents. A university degree doesn't help, as women with a bachelor's earn just 74 cents of every college-educated man's dollar.

One of the popular solutions proposed for narrowing this persistent gap is pay transparency. There are two rationales for this. First, employers will be less likely to pay women less than men for the same job if salaries are known. Second, if a woman knows how much her male colleagues are earning for doing the same work, she'll be in a better position to negotiate a higher salary.

The House passed a bill on March 27 designed to promote equal pay and transparency by, among other things, banning employers from asking applicants about their salary history and preventing them from retaliating against employees who compare wages.

Many states have already passed similar laws, while the federal government has issued a few regulations along these lines.

The question is, are they working? As an expert in employment discrimination law, including equal pay, I have my doubts about many of these laws.

No salary disclosure required

Part of the problem is that with one exception – government employees – the laws currently in place to promote pay transparency do not actually require disclosure of individual salary information.

For example, the government regulation that has been touted as a pay transparency law prohibits federal contractors only from retaliating against employees who disclose their own salary. And states with the toughest laws, such as California and New York, use

similar language.

The idea behind these anti-retaliation laws is to allow employees to disclose their pay without repercussion, eliminating pay secrecy policies and customs.

For these laws to create actual pay transparency, however, employees must be willing to share salary information. And while there appears to be a trend toward employee willingness to do so, it is at odds with the longstanding social norm against discussing pay.

Finding a link to pay equity

In the absence of a legal requirement to disclose actual wages, an increasing number of companies are making salary information transparent on their own.

Different companies have taken varying approaches to this. For example, Whole Foods allows workers to check their colleagues' salaries, while social media scheduler Buffer publicly discloses the formula it uses to determine employees' salaries. At the extreme end of transparency, many governmental employees' salaries are publicly available, depending on the state.

Proponents argue that transparency decreases the gender pay gap because if employers disclose salaries, they will also be disclosing any gap that exists, which will lead to efforts to eliminate it. This is precisely what happened at Buffer, which, after disclosing employee salaries, found a wage gap and changed its compensation system and hiring priorities to eliminate it.

The federal workforce, where the pay gap is significantly lower than in the private sector, can also be seen as support for the argument that pay transparency helps reduce it. The federal wage gap ranges from about 4 percent to 9 percent, when controlling for relevant factors that affect pay, compared with 8 percent to 18 percent among all employees.

Limited research

But there is little actual research that supports these arguments.

I don't know of any empirical study of how pay transparency affects the gender wage gap, such as what happens to the gap when companies shift from withholding to disclosing employee pay. While research does exist comparing the federal workforce's wage gap with the



private sector's, it does not show whether pay transparency is a factor.

It is quite probable that the most important reason for the smaller federal wage gap is the government's highly structured pay and promotion system. Because pay is based on a job's classification, with step raises that are identical, there is less chance for men and women to be paid different amounts for doing the same job.

When one looks more closely at the anecdotal evidence, pay transparency appears more likely to be simply one part of narrowing the pay gap. For example, while Buffer eliminated its pay gap after disclosing employee salaries, Salesforce did so after merely conducting an internal review.

The common link in these approaches is not pay transparency but recognition of a gap and a commitment to closing it. Thus, transparency can assist in pushing companies toward recognition of a problem but isn't an essential component to eliminating it.

Pitfalls of transparency

One downside to pay transparency is the effect on employee morale.

A fascinating study on the effect of revealing salaries of University of California employees showed that employees below the median salary for their position had

decreased job satisfaction and an increase in desire to change jobs.

This was not offset by improvements in employee morale among those who were paid higher than the median salary. Thus, there was a net overall decrease in employee morale.

On the other hand, a 2015 PayScale survey suggests that transparency has the opposite effect, encouraging retention, because employees tend to think they're more underpaid than they actually are.

To avoid negative consequences, the Society for Human Resource Management recommends that employers be prepared to explain any reasons for pay disparities that are revealed. This also suggests that how an employer handles a pay gap matters more than the disclosure of it.

Other factors influencing the gap

Another factor affecting the pay gap is simply an employee's initial salary, which is usually higher for men than women for the same job.

California recently passed a law to combat this by prohibiting employers from asking applicants for salary history, and the bill the House just passed would do the same thing. If employers don't know the prior salaries of applicants, presumably they will offer the

same pay to everyone.

This is a good start, but it may not be enough to completely close the wage gap. Even if offered the same salary, men are usually rewarded for negotiating a better salary – while women are penalized for doing the same.

Other factors blamed for why women earn less than men include seniority and time off to care for a baby or sick family member, and companies need to take these components into account as well if they wish to eliminate gender disparities in pay.

Putting this all together, pay transparency in and of itself doesn't necessarily help close the gender pay gap. It creates opportunities for employers to reconsider their current compensation systems but doesn't mean they'll necessarily do anything about it.

So while pay transparency is a good idea, on its own it probably won't be able to eliminate the persistent pay disparities between men and women. More aggressive legislation, such as the recent California prohibition on asking for prior salary or the pending House bill that makes it far more difficult for employers to pay women less than men, is likely needed to combat the persistent gender pay gap.

This is an updated version of an article originally published on May 1, 2016.



Be Smart. Be Informed.

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Here are groups in the area taking members



Blue Star Mothers

Southwest Florida Chapter 4 of the Blue Star Mothers of America meets at 9:30 a.m. the second Saturday of each month at the Sarasota American Red Cross building, 2001 Cantu Court, Sarasota. Light refreshments are served. Blue Star Mothers of America is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, nonsectarian and nonpolitical organization for mothers, grandmothers and stepmothers who have children serving in the armed forces. Associate members assist the chapter in supporting the mission of the Blue Star Mothers of America; any family member or friend may join. For more information or to join, visit www.floridabluestarmoms.com or email swflbluestarmothers@gmail.com.

Charlotte County Parliamentarians Unit

The Charlotte County Parliamentarians Unit (CCPU) is a teaching unit that offers classes for anyone interested in Roberts Rules of Order and parliamentary procedure. Meetings are held the second Thursday of January, March, May, September, and November starting at 9:30 a.m. and are held at the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) Hall, 23300 Harper Ave., Charlotte Harbor. Visitors are always welcome. Each meeting begins with a short business session followed by an informal class on some point of parliamentary procedure. For more information, call 941-637-5921 or go www.robertrules.org.

Charlotte County Woodcarvers/Sculptors

Meetings for the Charlotte County Woodcarvers/Sculptors, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the art of woodcarving and wood sculpture, are held from 8 a.m. to noon every Tuesday at 802 W. Retta Esplanade, Punta Gorda. The public is invited to visit and see what the club is all about. For more information, call 941-875-9244.

Coast Guard Auxiliary

The auxiliary is the volunteer arm of the U.S. Coast Guard, and is a member of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The operational unit of the auxiliary is the "Flotilla," where Coast Guard policies and programs are transformed into action. For more information, go to www.coastguardinglewood.com or attend monthly meetings held on the second Tuesday of each month at 1949 Englewood Road, (Rt. 776).

Computer Group

The Charlotte County Computer Group meets at 7 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month at the Cultural Center of Charlotte County, 2280 Aaron St., Port Charlotte. The club will host programs or guest speakers each month with time allowed for computer questions. Members and guests are welcome. For more information, call 941-585-0356.

Disabled American Veterans

Meetings for the Disabled American Veterans Chapter 82 are at 4 p.m. on the first Thursday of every month at its new monthly meeting place, The American Legion Post 110, 3152 Harbor Blvd., Port Charlotte. All veterans are urged to attend. For more information, call 941-629-2833.

Englewood Area Macintosh User Group (MAC)

Meetings are held at 1:30 p.m. on the first Thursday of the month at Elsie Quirk Library, 100 W. Dearborn St., Englewood. All levels of users are welcome.

Floridians

The Floridians is a civic-minded social organization meeting monthly, September through May, at 9:30 a.m. for coffee with meeting following at 10 a.m., on the third Tuesday of the month at St. James Episcopal Church, 1365 Viscaya Drive, Port Charlotte. Group activities include visits to area cultural events, concerts and local attractions as well as active flight bridge, lunch bunch and book discussion groups. The club also raises money to donate to local charities. For more information, call 941-255-6995.

Greater Charlotte Harbor Sierra Club

Meetings are held at 7 p.m. on the third Tuesday of the month at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 1532 Forrest Nelson Blvd., Port Charlotte. Meetings include coffee, outdoor prizes, environmental speakers and more. For more information, call 941-626-4919.

Italian Heritage Social Club

The Italian Heritage Social Club is a fast growing club with 85 members of all ages. You do not have to be Italian to join. Pasta dinners and karaoke are held twice a month and a dinner/dance once a month. A yearly talent show is also held. Yearly dues are \$35 per member or \$65 per couple. September membership drive dues are reduced to \$25 per person. For more information, call 941-235-3303.

Kiwanis Club of Punta Gorda

Meetings are held from 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the first and third Thursdays of each month at Lashley Crab House, 150 E. Retta Esplanade, Punta Gorda. Local projects include Socks for Kids, sponsorship of East Elementary, road cleanup, K-Kids, Builder's Club, Key Club and Circle K. For more information, call 941-769-1270.

League of Women Voters Charlotte County

The League of Women Voters Charlotte County is a non-partisan political group encouraging informed, active participation in government. Membership is open to residents of all ages, regardless of gender. The Charlotte County (Florida) chapter is one of 800 affiliates of the national Leagues. Like them on Facebook at League of Women Voters of Charlotte County and visit their website at <http://www.lwvccfl.org>. For more information, email president Julie McGillivray at juliekmac@ymail.com.

Military Women Across the Nation (MWAN)

MWAN is a national organization dedicated to keeping all military women, past and present, informed of current events associated with their military service while staying connected with other women veterans to preserve our common history. Membership is open to all women veterans who have served honorably or are currently serving in all branches of the military. Meetings are held at 11 a.m. every third Wednesday of the month at Heron Creek Golf & Country Club, 3401 S. Sumter Blvd., North Port, at 11 a.m. Lunch may be ordered off the menu. For more information, call 941-429-8952.

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness)

A family support group is held from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of every month at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 1532

Forrest Nelson Blvd., Port Charlotte. Two problems one person support group is held from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. every Friday at Charlotte Behavioral Health, Building A, Room 1, 1700 Education Ave., Punta Gorda. For more information, call Joseph P. Zyjewski, program coordinator, at 239-337-9024.

NYC Transit Retirees

Meetings for the New York City Transit retirees of Florida Chapter 11 are held at 1 p.m. the first Saturday of each month at Olympia Restaurant, 3245 S. Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte. All retirees from the Mabsto, Queens and Surface lines are invited. For more information, contact Armando R. Loney at 941-623-8672 or Jose Grant at 941-624-6812.

The Patriot Riders of America Inc.

The Patriot Riders of America Inc., Chapter One meet at 2 p.m. on the third Sunday at the American Legion Hall, Post 110 at 3152 Harbor Blvd., Port Charlotte. All parties interested in helping veterans that have fallen on hard times are invited to attend. For more information contact 757-206-7871.

Peace River Doll Club

The Peace River Doll club was created 21 years ago to provide education, service, conservation, collecting and appreciation of dolls. Every society, from the most primitive to the most civilized has dolls and doll makers. They are created to teach and foster human nurturing. The club is a member of the National Club "UFDC" (United Federation of Doll Clubs) and meet at 12:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month at 227 Sullivan St., Punta Gorda. All who have an interest in dolls are invited to attend. For more information, call 941-575-7789 or 941-244-2204.

Peace River Riders Bicycle Club

Scheduled club rides are: 7:30 a.m. Tuesdays from Gilchrist Park, 400 W. Retta Esplanade, Punta Gorda, A group 18-21 mph for 30-35 miles, Tweeners 16-19 mph same distance, B group 14-16 mph same distance. Helmets required; 8 a.m. Thursdays, Tweeners Ride leaves from Gilchrist Park 16-19 mph, 30 miles; 7:30 a.m. Fridays from boat ramp at Lashley Marina, 120 Lashley Court, Punta Gorda, 19-21 mph, 35-40 miles; 8:30 a.m. Saturdays from the Acme Bicycle Shop, 615 Cross St., No. 1116, Punta Gorda, three speed groups from 12 mph to 21+ for 30 miles; 7 a.m. Sundays from Gilchrist Park, 18-19 mph for 30 miles. Helmets required. The public is invited to join. For more information, visit www.peacriverridersbicycleclub.com.

Peace RiverWood Turners

Peace River Wood Turners meet at 6 p.m. on the first Thursday of every month at the Cultural Center of Charlotte County, 2280 Aaron St., Room 34, Port Charlotte. For more information, call 941-505-1016 or 219-928-3509.

Port Charlotte Garden Club

Meetings are held monthly between September and May (except December) at 9:30 a.m. on the second Thursday, at the Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 2565 Tamiami Trail. The public is warmly welcomed and all attendees are encouraged to sign in. For more information, contact Carolyn Savary, 941-426-1299.

Punta Gorda Lions Club

Meetings are held the second and fourth Mondays at 5:30 p.m. at the FOE Eagles, 23111 Harborview corner of Kings Highway, Port Charlotte. Dinner reservations are required by calling 941-637-9979 or email Bill Ringelstein at billjeanr@embarqmail.com. The Punta Gorda Lions are major providers of eye exams, eye glasses, eye surgeries, hearing aids and hearing aids in the Charlotte County area. Also, we provide county wide preschool screenings of vision and hearing through the Early Learning Coalition.

Punta Gorda Masonic Lodge F&AM 115

Chartered, Jan. 21, 1890, serving the community for more than 125 years. Free and Accepted Masons stated communications are held the first and third Thursday at 7:30 p.m., dinner served at 6:30 p.m., at 2539 Airport Road, Punta Gorda. All Master Masons are welcome. For more information, email puntagorda115@gmail.com.

Rotary Club of Charlotte Harbor

Meetings are held at 6:45 a.m. every Tuesday morning at the Cultural Center, 2280 Aaron St., Port Charlotte. For more information, call Mark Payne at 941-743-5365.

Rotary Club of Murdock

Meetings are held from 7:45 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. every Thursday at Perkins on 41 (1700 Tamiami Trail). Breakfast is available. Visiting Rotarians and snowbird Rotarians are welcome as well as anyone who might be interested in joining Rotary. Some local projects include the building of the adaptive playground at Charlotte Harbor School, yearly Halloween parties for disabled children at Peace River Elementary, distribution of dictionaries to all third graders in five schools in Port Charlotte (other schools are handled by other Rotary Clubs), and scholarships for high school students. For more information, call Walt Powers at 941-624-2353.

Rotary Club of Punta Gorda

Meetings are held at noon on Thursdays at the Isles Yacht Club, 1780 W. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda. The Rotary Club of Punta Gorda promotes good fellowship and puts service to the community and to the world above self. It sponsors the Taste of Punta Gorda, works with several local charitable organizations, and funds international humanitarian projects in Africa and Latin America. Visitors are welcome. For more information, call 219-742-3287, or visit <http://www.puntagordarotary.com>.

Royal Order of Ponce de Leon Conquistadors

The Conquistadors honor Ponce de Leon's discovery of Florida, celebrate his landing in Charlotte Harbor, and promotes the Spanish heritage of Punta Gorda and Port Charlotte. It is a nonprofit organization of local businessmen, professionals, community leaders and retirees. Membership is open to men wishing to promote the organization's history and community endeavors. Meetings are held year-round at 5 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month, at the Charlotte Park Community Center in Punta Gorda. The ROPC sponsors college scholarships at Charlotte, Port Charlotte and Lemon Bay high schools, sponsors community events like the Conquistadors Cup Regatta, and participates in full costume, with its ship, the Palencia, in local parades. For more information, call Larry Sexton at 941-505-4686, or Lindsay Harrington at 941-380-4277.

Sons of Italy

The Sons of Italy, 3725 Easy St., Port Charlotte, is a nonprofit Fraternal Organization, which donates quarterly to Autism, Alzheimer's, Cooley's Anemia, Cancer, Salvation Army & Homeless Coalition, here in Charlotte County and also creates scholarships for

students from the community. A full dinner is served at 6 p.m. every Thursday followed by karaoke and dancing for \$9. "You don't have to be Italian, to be a member." For more information, call 941-764-9003 or 941-875-7314.

SWFL Retired Law Enforcement Association

Meetings are held every first Wednesday of each month, meets at 6:30 p.m. at Fraternal Order of Police R.E. Lister Memorial Lodge 66, 23300 Harper Ave., Port Charlotte. Dinner is served to all members. The association welcomes all new members. For more information, call 941-235-8493.

Sunrise Kiwanis Club of Port Charlotte

Meetings are held from 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. every Thursday at the Cultural Center of Charlotte County, 2280 Aaron St. Breakfast is served. Some of the local projects include: Shoes for Kids, Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets to local schools and agencies, reading program at Neil Armstrong Elementary, Florida Foundation Scholarship Fund Sponsor and many more. For more information, call 941-637-5611.

US Paratroopers

The U.S. Paratroopers group meets the third Wednesday of each month at American Legion Post 110, 3152 Harbor Blvd., Port Charlotte. All military jump-qualified individuals are invited to join.

Venetian Harmony Chorus

Venetian Harmony Chorus, a chapter of Sweet Adelines, a women's barbershop singing organization, is looking for new members from the area. Rehearsals are held every Monday night from 6:30 p.m. — 9 p.m. (except on the second Monday of the month) at Christ Lutheran Church, 701 N. Indiana Ave., Englewood. For more information, call 941-4801480 or visit website www.venetianharmony.com.

Vietnam Veterans of America

Gulf Coast Chapter 1037, Vietnam Veterans of America meets at 7 p.m. on the first and third Monday of each month at American Legion Post 110, 3152 Harbor Blvd., Port Charlotte. All Vietnam veterans and supporters are welcome to attend. For more information, call 941-276-1842 or email drbruland@comcast.net.

Writers Help Writers

Meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. the Punta Gorda Library, 424 W. Henry St. In Punta Gorda. Everyone, in turn, reads a few pages of their current work and receives helpful and encouraging feedback from those present. This is a small group normally around 10 authors so we have time to help each other improve our work. The group is sponsored by the Charlotte Arts and thanks to the generosity of the public library there is no charge to attend and one does not have to belong to any particular group. So if you're writing a book poetry or anything else you are welcome to join in. For more information, contact Paul Holmes at pgholmes@comcast.net.

Zonta Club

The Zonta Club of Punta Gorda/Port Charlotte works diligently to advocate for empowerment of women and girls. The club is an affiliate of Zonta International which is a global network of professionals committed to equal rights and a life free of violence for all women and girls. Local projects include support to CARE, Girls on the Run, Healthy Start Coalition, and the Human Trafficking Awareness Partnerships. Monthly dinner meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month at the Lashley Crab House in Punta Gorda. For more information, call 941-380-0877 or email judiw5@comcast.net. — *To submit items for consideration, email sdennis@sun-herald.com.*

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US judge throws out Trump's Arctic oil leasing order

See page 8



Trump seeks to cut foreign aid to 3 nations

First steps taken to cut aid to El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras in response to border issues

By JONATHAN LEMIRE, NOMAAN MERCHANT and COLLEEN LONG
ASSOCIATED PRESS

PALM BEACH, Fla. — Taking drastic action over illegal immigration, President Donald Trump moved Saturday to cut direct aid to El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, whose citizens are fleeing north and overwhelming U.S. resources at the southern border.

The State Department notified Congress that it would look to suspend 2017 and 2018

payments to the trio of nations, which have been home to some of the migrant caravans that have marched through Mexico to the U.S. border.

Amplified by conservative media, Trump has turned the caravans into the symbol of what he says are the dangers of illegal immigration — a central theme of his midterm campaigning last fall. With the special counsel's Russia probe seemingly behind him, Trump has revived his warnings of the caravans' presence.

Trump also has returned to a previous threat he never carried out — closing the border with Mexico. He brought up that possibility on Friday and revisited it in tweets Saturday, blaming Democrats and Mexico for problems at the border and beyond despite warnings that a closed border could create economic havoc on both sides.

"It would be so easy to fix our weak and very stupid Democrat inspired immigration laws," Trump tweeted Saturday. "In less than one hour, and then

a vote, the problem would be solved. But the Dems don't care about the crime, they don't want any victory for Trump and the Republicans, even if good for USA!"

As far as Mexico's role, he tweeted: "Mexico must use its very strong immigration laws to stop the many thousands of people trying to get into the USA. Our detention areas are maxed out & we will take no more illegals. Next step is to close the Border! This will also help us with stopping the Drug flow from Mexico!"

When reporters asked Trump on Friday what closing the border could entail, he said "it could mean all trade" with Mexico and



TRUMP

added, "We will close it for a long time."

Trump has been promising for more than two years to build a long, impenetrable wall along the border to stop illegal immigration, though Congress has been reluctant to provide the

AID | 4

Ban on plastic bags comes close to reality in New York



AP FILE PHOTO

Plastic bags are tangled in the branches of a tree in New York City's East Village neighborhood.

New York is poised to join California and Hawaii in banning plastic grocery bags

By CHRIS CAROLA and DAVID KLEPPER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

ALBANY, N.Y. — Gov. Andrew Cuomo and fellow Democrats who control the Legislature have reached a deal to make New York the third state with a ban on single-use plastic grocery bags as they worked to finalize budget agreements, officials said Friday.

The ban would prohibit grocery stores from providing plastic bags for most purchases, something California has been doing since a statewide ban was

approved in 2016. Hawaii has an effective statewide ban, with all its counties imposing their own restrictions.

Supporters of such bans say they keep plastic bags from entering the environment and causing damage to ecosystems and waterways.

"With this smart, multi-pronged action New York will be leading the way to protect our natural resources now and for future generations of New Yorkers," Cuomo, who proposed a ban in his \$175 billion budget proposal, said



In this March 27, file photo, oranges and tomatoes are displayed for sale alongside a roll of plastic bags at a supermarket. New York lawmakers are working through the final weekend of March 2019 to pass a budget that would include as one of its proposals a state wide ban on single use plastic bags.

in a statement Friday.

New York's ban wouldn't take effect until next March. The plan also calls for allowing local governments the option to impose a 5-cent fee

on paper bags, with 3 cents going to the state's Environmental Protection Fund and 2 cents kept by local governments.

PLASTIC | 4

Alex Jones blames 'psychosis' for Sandy Hook hoax claims

By JONATHAN TILOVE
AUSTIN AMERICAN-STATESMAN

AUSTIN, Texas — Alex Jones, the Austin-based provocateur embroiled in several lawsuits filed by parents of victims of the 2012 Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, said in a deposition released Friday that his conspiracy thinking was a kind of mental disorder.

Jones, who repeatedly claimed on his internet and radio show InfoWars that the mass shooting in Newtown, Conn., was a hoax, told lawyers he "almost had like a form of psychosis back in the past where I basically thought everything was staged, even though I'm now learning a lot of times things aren't staged."

Jones blamed his mental state on "the trauma of the media and the corporations lying so much, then everything begins — you don't trust anything anymore, kind of like a child whose parents lie to them over and over again, well, pretty soon they don't know what reality is."

The admission came toward the end of the three-hour deposition recorded in a downtown Austin law office March 14 in one of several lawsuits brought in Austin, Connecticut and Virginia against Jones by parents of children killed in the shooting. The suits contend that Jones' repeated claims that the shootings were staged



JONES

JONES | 4

Europe watches Brexit events with frustrated disbelief

By RAF CASERT
ASSOCIATED PRESS

BRUSSELS — The date for the U.K.'s departure from the European Union was seemingly chiseled in stone — March 29, 2019. When it finally arrived with no Brexit, Europeans could only shake their heads in frustrated disbelief.

They saw three years of bluster on how Britain would leave the EU on its own terms dissolve Friday with the last of three votes in Parliament that failed to approve Prime Minister Theresa May's divorce deal, leaving an uncertain course.

"There was no game plan. Well, no strategy," Philippe Lamberts, a key member of the European Parliament's Brexit steering group, said of the British approach in an interview with The

BREXIT | 4



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Rockets from Gaza Strip hit Israel; 4 die at border protest



AP PHOTO

5 rockets have been fired into Israel following a day of mass protests

By **FARES AKRAM**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip — Five rockets were fired from the Gaza Strip into Israel early Sunday, the Israeli military announced, following a day of mass protests that saw Israeli troops kill four Palestinians near the territory's border.

The rocket attack threatens to undermine Egyptian-mediated efforts to cement a deal that the Gaza Strip's Hamas rulers hope will ease a crippling Israeli-Egyptian blockade of the crowded territory.

No casualties were reported and no Palestinian group claimed responsibility for the rockets, though they appeared to be in retaliation for the deaths of the protesters.

Tens of thousands of Palestinians rallied in the Gaza Strip on Saturday to mark the anniversary of their mass protests along the Israeli border.

Most demonstrators kept their distance from the border, though small crowds of activists approached the perimeter fence and threw stones and explosives toward Israeli troops on the other side. The forces responded with tear gas and opened fire, killing four Palestinians and wounding 64.

Hamas had pledged to keep the crowds a safe distance from the fence to avoid inflaming the political atmosphere during negotiations of a possible easing of the blockade.

Hamas officials say that Israel is offering a package of economic incentives in exchange for calm along the volatile border.

Khalil al-Hayya, a senior Hamas official, said the group had received "positive signs" from the Egyptians. He added that the Egyptian team was to return to Israel on Sunday to continue the talks.

Saturday's protest came at a sensitive time, with Israel and Hamas, bitter enemies that have fought three wars and dozens of smaller skirmishes, both having a strong interest in keeping things quiet.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is seeking his fourth consecutive term in April 9 elections, but is facing a serious challenge from a group of ex-army chiefs who

have criticized what they say is his failed Gaza policy. With a lack of alternatives, Netanyahu has been forced at times to rely on Hamas to maintain stability along Israel's volatile southern front.

In the final stretch of the campaign, Netanyahu needs to keep the Israel-Gaza frontier quiet, without seeming to make concessions to Hamas. Netanyahu took heavy criticism this week for what was seen as a soft response to renewed rocket fire out of Gaza.

Hamas, meanwhile, faces growing unrest in Gaza as a result of worsening conditions after more than a decade of an Israeli-Egyptian blockade. The two countries imposed the blockade in 2007 after Hamas, an Islamic militant group that seeks Israel's destruction, seized control of Gaza from the internationally recognized Palestinian Authority.

The blockade has helped drive unemployment over 50 percent, led to chronic power outages and made it extremely difficult for Gazans to travel out of the territory.

The fence protests, which began exactly a year ago, have been aimed in large part at breaking the Israeli-Egyptian blockade on Gaza, but haven't delivered major improvements.

Saturday's demonstrations were held at five rallying points along the border with Israel. Dozens of volunteers in fluorescent vests were deployed to restrain demonstrators, and cool rainy weather also appeared to affect enthusiasm.

But as the crowds swelled throughout the afternoon in response to Hamas' calls for a large turnout, dozens of protesters approached the fence, unfurling Palestinian flags and throwing rocks and explosives toward Israeli soldiers. The Israeli forces responded with tear gas and live fire.

The Israeli military estimated 40,000 Palestinians were gathered at the marches.

Gaza's Health Ministry said that a 17-year-old protester died immediately after being shot in the face in east Gaza City. In the evening, the ministry said another 17-year-old died hours after being shot in the chest in a different protest

Protesters run to cover from teargas fired by Israeli troops near fence of Gaza Strip border with Israel.

location.

A third teenager, also aged 17, succumbed to his wounds and died in the late evening. A 21-year-old Palestinian also died around dawn after sustaining injuries in overnight protests before the main demonstration.

While bloodshed was not avoided, it was far less than previous high-profile protests. Over 60 people were killed during intense protests on May 14, the day the U.S. moved its embassy to Jerusalem.

As Saturday's protest was winding down, organizers vowed to continue the marches and said they would gather again as usual next Friday.

The military released video footage showing large crowds of protesters gathered near the fence and hurling objects.

In one scene, a group of activists went up to the fence and hurled stones at the other side. In another scene, a youth could be seen trying to pull apart barbed wire along the fence.

The army also said it caught two young Palestinian children who had tried to cross the border with a knife. The children were returned to Gaza through a border crossing.

Earlier on Saturday, Gaza health officials said Israeli troops shot and killed a 21-year-old Palestinian man near the perimeter fence, hours before the mass rally.

The marches near were initially organized by grassroots activists who were calling for a mass return to ancestral homes in what is now Israel.

The border marches routinely ended in confrontations, with some of the Palestinian demonstrators burning tires, hurling fire bombs or setting off explosives and Israeli troops firing live rounds and tear gas.

According to a Gaza rights group and a count by The Associated Press, 196 Palestinians were killed in the demonstrations over the past year, including 41 minors, and thousands were wounded by live fire.

But Israel has come under heavy international criticism for the large number of unarmed people who have been harmed.

Mozambique cholera cases jump to 139 a day after outbreak

By **CARA ANNA**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

JOHANNESBURG — Cholera cases in Mozambique among survivors of a devastating cyclone have shot up to 139, officials said, as nearly 1 million vaccine doses were rushed to the region and health workers desperately tried to improvise treatment space for victims.

Cholera causes acute diarrhea, is spread by contaminated food and water and can kill within hours if not treated. The disease is a major concern for the hundreds of thousands of cyclone survivors in the southern African nation now living in squalid conditions in camps, schools or damaged homes.

The Portuguese news agency Lusa quoted Mozambique national health official Ussein Isse for the new toll. Isse declared the outbreak on Wednesday with just five confirmed cases.

Far more cholera cases already were feared. The medical charity Doctors Without Borders told The Associated Press it is seeing around 200 likely cholera cases a day in the Indian Ocean port city of Beira alone. The city of some 500,000 people is the hub of cyclone relief efforts.

The World Health Organization has warned of a "second disaster" if waterborne diseases like cholera spread in the impoverished nation. It said 900,000 oral cholera vaccines were expected to arrive Monday and a vaccination campaign will begin late next week.

WHO also has opened seven treatment centers with a total of 400 beds, including 100 in Beira.

Health workers are treating every case of diarrhea as though it were cholera, Sebastian Rhodes Stampa, the deputy U.N. humanitarian coordinator for Mozambique, told reporters. While cholera is endemic to the region, "when it does break out, it breaks out fast and it travels extremely fast," he said.

Cyclone Idai, which struck March 14, destroyed more than 50 health care clinics in central Mozambique, complicating the work to contain the disease, Radio Mozambique cited disaster management official Rui Costa as saying.

It is not yet clear whether any cholera deaths have been confirmed. "We're not going to test every single case (for cholera) because it's not difficult to recognize when you look at the diarrhea of

a patient. Once you see it once, you always recognize it," said Gert Verdonck, Doctors Without Borders' emergency coordinator for Beira.

Other suspected cholera cases are outside Beira in the badly hit areas of Buzi, Tica and Nhamathanda, he said, but the chance of spreading in rural areas is smaller because people are more dispersed.

In urban areas, however, cholera "can have a huge impact if not contained quickly," Verdonck said. He said the 900,000 vaccine doses should be enough to cover targeted areas but that a second dose should be given after two weeks to strengthen protection.

The speed of the outbreak came as a surprise, he said. Earlier this week workers found 40 to 50 people with acute diarrhea at a health center in Munnava, one of Beira's poorest neighborhoods.

"We had to improvise," he said. Without space for the usual treatment setup of beds with holes and buckets underneath, they carved holes in plastic chairs instead for patients with enough strength to sit upright.

Outside, nails were pounded into walls to hand IV drips to rehydrate patients.

Cholera is not difficult to treat but the treatment needs to occur as early as possible, he said.

The cyclone badly damaged Beira's water supply, adding to the city's cholera risks. Some people have resorted to drinking stagnant water by the side of the road, increasing the chances of diarrhea. Others are drinking water from contaminated wells.

Some of the hardest-hit communities remain cut off from aid 15 days after the cyclone, and people are relying on heavily polluted water, the International Committee of the Red Cross said.

"You can imagine how much we are sitting on a water and sanitation ticking time bomb," the secretary-general of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Elhadj As Sy, told the AP after visiting a school where 3,000 survivors had only six toilets to use.

The cyclone death toll in Mozambique inched up to 493 on Friday, with at least 259 dead in Zimbabwe and 56 in Malawi. Officials have warned that those numbers are preliminary and final figures may never be known.



AP PHOTO

A displaced young boy sleeps on the floor at a school in Buzi district, Mozambique, on Saturday.

HEADLINES AROUND THE STATE

Contractor fined \$4.6 million over SunPass problems

TALLAHASSEE (AP) — Florida Transportation officials say they've fined a contractor \$4.6 million for problems with the state's toll road system last year.

The Florida Department of Transportation announced the fine for Conduent State & Local Solutions in a news release Friday. The agency also replaced its director of toll systems.

FDOT Secretary Kevin Thibault says he wants Florida's Turnpike Enterprise to assess maximum performance penalties allowed under its contract with Conduent.

Conduent won the estimated \$600 million contract to take over Florida's SunPass program despite concerns over the New Jersey company's troubled history. Millions of

toll transactions got delayed as a result of a billing system upgrade last June. When the transactions finally began to show up, some customers incurred bank overdraft fees as a result.

Gov. Ron DeSantis has authorized FDOT to continue waiving fees and penalties.

Woman charged with killing 21-yr-old in orange grove

LAKELAND (AP) — A Florida woman has been charged with first-degree murder after authorities say she shot a 21-year-old in the back of the head as he drove through an orange grove.

Polk County Sheriff's Office Homicide detectives have arrested 28-year-old Heather Tyler with the crime, saying she and Joseph Witherington were hanging out last week and went for a drive. Authorities offered

no motive, but said Tyler shot Witherington twice as he drove. Authorities said she then took his wallet and burned her clothes that had his blood on them. She is also charged with witness tampering.

Tyler admitted the flip flops found in the back of Witherington's car were hers and that she was with Witherington during that time frame.

She was booked into the Polk County Jail late Friday. It's unclear if she had an attorney to comment on the charges.

Man charged in 2012 cold case killing

FORT MYERS (AP) — A Florida man has been charged in the cold case killing involving a 28-year-old woman.

A U.S. Marshall's Task Force says Jonathan Adolfo Espinosa has been charged with second-degree murder and sexual

battery in the 2012 death of Shirley Zerna.

The victim was found dead in an apartment complex. Investigators believed she overdosed after a night of partying, but a medical examiner ruled her death a homicide.

The Fort Myers News-Press reports he was arrested this week and being held in the Fort Lauderdale area until he is transported to Lee County to stand trial.

Records did not list an attorney who could comment on the charges.

Deputy injured at firing range

COCOA (AP) — Authorities say a Florida deputy was hospitalized following an accident at the firing range.

Florida Today reports that the Brevard County deputy's lower leg was injured Thursday at a training range in Cocoa.

Officials weren't saying what caused the injury. A sheriff's office spokesman says the injury wasn't life-threatening.

2 teens killed in crash

DELTONA (AP) — Authorities say two Florida teens are dead after a car crash.

The Daytona Beach News-Journal reports that 17-year-old Chester Turck died at the scene of the Thursday night crash in Deltona, and 17-year-old Zachary Hollenback died Friday at a Sanford hospital.

The Volusia County Sheriff's Office says Hollenback was speeding when he crossed the center line and hit an oncoming car. The other car's driver was hospitalized but later released, and a teen passenger in that car didn't report any injuries.

Hollenback and Turck were students at Pine Ridge High School.

Trump steps in to help Navy SEAL charged with murder

PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — President Donald Trump said Saturday a Navy SEAL charged with murder in the stabbing of an Iraqi war prisoner will be moved to less restrictive confinement while he awaits trial.

Trump said in a tweet that the move was in honor of Special Operations Chief Edward Gallagher's past service to the country.

The tweet came after 18 Republican members of the U.S. House sent a letter to Navy Secretary Richard Spencer raising concerns about the conditions of Gallagher's confinement at a Navy brig in California.

Gallagher is accused of killing a teenage Islamic State fighter under his care and then holding his reenlistment ceremony with the corpse. Navy prosecutors also accuse Gallagher of shooting two civilians in Iraq and opening fire on crowds. Gallagher has pleaded not guilty to all the charges.

His lawyers have said he did not murder anyone and that disgruntled SEALs made

the accusations because they wanted to get rid of a demanding platoon leader.

In their March 18 letter to Spencer, the House members said Gallagher's family and friends reported that he had not had sufficient access to his defense attorneys. They also said they got reports he was not receiving enough food or adequate medical care.

Housing prisoners such as Gallagher who are awaiting trial with those who have completed their trials may be to blame for some of those problems, they said, and they called on Spencer to review that practice.

"Chief Gallagher is a decorated war fighter who, like all service members, is entitled to the presumption of innocence while awaiting court-martial," the letter said.

A military judge last month postponed Gallagher's trial by three months after defense lawyers asked for more time to go over the prosecution's evidence. The trial was reset for May 28.

Federal judge strikes down Calif. ban on high-capacity gun magazines

By GREG MORAN
THE SAN DIEGO
UNION-TRIBUNE

SAN DIEGO — In a forcefully worded ruling, a federal judge in San Diego on Friday struck down a state law banning gun magazines that hold more than 10 bullets, handing gun rights advocates a sweeping victory.

U.S. District Judge Roger T. Benitez ruled that the California law violated the Second Amendment rights of gun owners and issued an injunction barring state officials from enforcing it, invoking the nation's Colonial past as well as recent cases from around the country in which gun owners ran out of bullets while confronting intruders in their homes.

He concluded that the state law effectively made criminals out of ordinary citizens and was an over-reaction to high-profile gun crimes.

"Bad political ideas cannot be stopped by criminalizing bad political speech," he wrote. "Crime waves cannot be broken with warrantless searches and unreasonable seizures. Neither can the government response to a few mad men with guns and ammunition be a law that turns millions of responsible, law-abiding people trying to protect themselves into criminals. Yet, this is the effect of California's large-capacity magazine law."

The ruling may not have come as a surprise because Benitez, an appointee of President George W. Bush, in 2017 had granted a preliminary injunction stopping enforcement of the law



AP FILE PHOTO

A semi-automatic rifle is displayed with a 25 shot magazine, left, and a 10 shot magazine, right, at a gun store in Elk Grove, Calif. San Diego-based U.S. District Judge Roger Benitez declared, Friday, unconstitutional the law banning possession of magazines containing more than 10 bullets.

— a decision upheld last July by the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

Chuck Michel, president of the California Rifle & Pistol Association, which filed the suit along with several gun owners, said the ruling reaffirmed gun-owning rights.

"This comprehensive and detailed ruling recognizes that these magazines have great value as self-defense tools, and confirms that the government bears a very high burden to justify a law that infringes on the right to keep and bear arms," Michel said in a statement.

The state attorney general's office said in a statement that it was reviewing the ruling.

"We are committed to defending California's common sense gun laws," the statement said. "We are reviewing the decision and will evaluate next steps."

The lawsuit was filed in 2017 on behalf of gun owners who either wanted

the magazines for self-defense or already owned them and didn't want to be forced to give them up.

In his 86-page opinion, Benitez concluded that larger-capacity magazines are "lawful arms" under the Constitution and said the state did not have a strong enough reason to infringe on the constitutional rights of gun owners. He said the magazines are used for self-defense and are legal in 41 states and under federal law.

State law for years had banned selling or buying large-capacity magazines, though people who owned them were allowed to keep them. In 2016, the state passed a law that banned possession of the magazines, which led to the lawsuit. In addition to determining the law violated the Second Amendment, Benitez also said forcing residents to give up lawfully acquired magazines violated the Constitution's ban on taking property without

just compensation.

In the opening pages of the ruling, Benitez recounted three instances of home invasions. In two examples, women fired at the intruders but ran out of bullets. In a third case, a woman fired multiple rounds with a gun in one hand while she held a phone in the other to call police.

Benitez ended his ruling by harking back to the nation's founding.

"This decision is a freedom calculus decided long ago by Colonists who cherished individual freedom more than the subservient security of a British ruler," he wrote. "The freedom they fought for was not free of cost then, and it is not free now."

The issue may not be fully resolved because judges in other states have issued different rulings, potentially setting up a scenario in which the U.S. Supreme Court would have to ultimately decide.

NATIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

Texas boy missing 1 year found in Florida with dad

SANFORD, Fla. (AP) — A 9-year-old Texas boy missing for more than a year has been found safe in Florida with his father.

Sanford police say Joshua Graham was taken from Texas by his father in 2017. Authorities said 52-year-old Kenneth Graham did not have custody of his son and did not tell the boy's mother he was taking him.

According to authorities, they located the father and son Saturday while investigating a suspicious vehicle.

The child had been reported missing earlier this week. Police did not say why he was not reported sooner. The boy is under the care of child welfare officials until he can be reunited with his mother.

Police searching for father of child found dead after fire

LONDON, Ky. (AP) — Police are looking for the father of a 2-year-old boy found dead at the site of a house fire in Kentucky.

Kentucky State Police say in a news release that firefighters from the City of London found Joseph Brock's body after putting out a fire at a residence in the Marvin Gardens Mobile Home Park in Laurel County shortly after midnight Friday.

The post says the causes of the fire and the child's death haven't been determined, and that the body will be taken to the state medical examiner's office for an autopsy.

Police say they're searching for the child's father, 26-year-old Vaughn Brock. They say he was last seen leaving the area on foot shortly after the residence became engulfed in flames.

Police: Man killed teen who knocked on wrong door in Atlanta

ATLANTA (AP) — A man fatally shot a teenager who accidentally knocked on the wrong apartment door in Atlanta, a television station reported.

It happened about 12:30 a.m. Friday at The Retreat apartment complex in southwest Atlanta, according to WSB-TV.

Omarian Banks, 19, was dropped off by a Lyft near the wrong breezeway in the complex, the

television station quoted police as saying. Banks and his girlfriend had just moved to the complex and Banks wasn't familiar with the area, police said. Banks was using FaceTime to talk with his girlfriend when he knocked on the door he thought was his. Shortly after, he walked away.

The man inside, Darryl Bynes, 32, grabbed a gun and went onto his

balcony to confront Banks, police said. They said after a short conversation, Bynes shot him. Police said Bynes told them he shot Banks in self-defense.

Family friend Michael Wallace described Banks as a hard-working man who never bothered anybody.

"This is a 19-year-old child that didn't even deserve to die, that

hasn't even lived his life," Wallace told WSB.

Bynes is charged with murder.

Makayla Johnson, who identified herself as Bynes' cousin, told WSB the charge was unfair.

"He is an innocent father," Johnson said. "He has five kids. ... His truck was stolen earlier this week. Right now, he's just trying to protect his family."

Investment in pests had a good run, now switch

Dear Mr. Berko: While working for Rollins back in 2003 through late 2008, I bought 2,000 shares at \$5. Rollins is now \$39 a share, and after reinvesting the small dividends, I have 2,400 shares worth \$93,000.

My wife wants to sell, and she thinks we should buy Five Below. But because Rollins is in our joint account, we'll have to pay taxes on an \$83,000 gain. A friend tells us if we put this stock in our IRA, we won't have to pay taxes on our gain, providing we keep all the sale proceeds in the IRA. He seems to be very knowledgeable. — J.E., Cleveland

Dear J.E.: That friend didn't drink from the fountain of knowledge; he just gargled. Even my dog Fang knows that's wrong. There seems to be a twerp

in Cleveland spreading nonsense that's dangerous to your financial health.

Rollins (ROL-\$41.60) is Orkin Exterminators, and Orkin is among the largest pest and termite control companies, with more than 900 locations worldwide. Rollins has a splendid record of revenue, earnings and dividend growth. During the last dozen years, revenues improved yearly from \$823 million to \$1.84 billion, and cash flow increased annually from \$0.25 to \$0.95 last year. Earnings also grew each year from \$0.17 to \$0.75 and so has the miserly dividend, from a nickel to \$0.37.

Certainly, a testament to good management is the steady improvement in operating margins and a yearly growth in net profit margins from 5.5 percent to 13.5 percent last year. And I believe management (the Rollins family owns 53 percent of the stock) can continue its winning ways, as its well-planned

acquisition strategy (32 in 2018) continues to grow ROL's future.

But even considering ROL's notable and record-setting numbers, I'm not impressed with the stock, and I think your wife may be right as sunshine and blue skies. ROL's long-term chart of the last dozen years shows a steady 45-degree incline with higher highs and higher lows since 2012, but the current price gives ROL a rather high P/E of 55, and I don't think there's a bug business on the planet that justifies this number. Even though company officers and directors purchased more than 300,000 shares of ROL last year, I'd sell the stock, which appears too richly priced in the \$39 to \$42 price range. You've got a smart wife.

Even with the lure of Amazon and the convenience of the internet, off-priced retailers continue to thrive in the sweet spot of the retail industry. Five Below sells a formidable range of

junk merchandise to a target market of teens and pre-teens. And every piece of merchandise is priced at \$5 or below. Cool beans! The "wow" management certainly has impressive merchandising alchemy to grow revenues from \$280 million to \$1.8 billion since coming public at \$17 in 2012. Five Below (FIVE-\$117) has 750 stores in 33 states, and each location is about 8,000 square feet. And that 8,000 square feet is engaged with more bits and bobs, knick-knackery and oddments than a county landfill. Think jump ropes, dumbbells, DVDs, candy, crafts galore, innumerable pens, pencils, stickers, crayons, team sports merchandise, backpacks, greeting cards, beach and outdoor games, headphones, arts & crafts, T-shirts, jewelry, gag gifts, puzzles and incense, and this is just a tiny list of the merchandise at a FIVE store.

While management needs a quantum computer to keep inventory, foxy

marketing, clever TV ads and talented social media skills continue to attract customers and reach a wider audience. FIVE has a brilliant group of nixies, pixies, gnomes and elves running this company; therefore, I believe the momentum can continue. So,

even at 41 times earnings, I reckon FIVE has the mojo to be \$200 in 18 months. Do it.

Please address your financial questions to Malcolm Berko, P.O. Box 8303, Largo, FL 33775, or email him at mberko@yahoo.com.

ANSWER TO CROSSWORD

B	E	A	R	P	I	T	S	T	A	S	H	E	S	S	P	U	D		
A	L	S	O	R	A	N	D	O	O	R	P	O	S	T	H	O	P	E	
B	O	S	T	O	N	T	A	N	G	O	P	A	R	T	Y	E	A	T	S
E	P	E	E	S	S	A	G	E	N	A	E	N	A	C	R	E			
L	E	T	P	E	A	K	Y	A	N	K	E	E	B	O	T	H	E	R	
S	E	N	D	S	S	I	S	E	T	H	E	N	E						
J	A	K	A	R	T	A	G	O	Y	A	A	S	T	I	D	D	T		
U	N	I	F	O	R	M	B	E	T	G	E	L	C	A	P	S			
J	O	S	E	L	O	T	H	A	R	I	O	T	A	T	I				
I	T	S	I	F	S	O	A	R	I	T	H	R	O	W	O	N			
T	H	E	P	R	I	N	C	E	S	S	A	N	D	T	H	E	P	A	P
S	E	R	R	A	N	O	T	A	T	A	S	H	E	Y	S	L	R		
U	R	S	A	O	U	T	L	A	W	E	D	S	H	I	A				
T	I	L	T	S	A	T	B	R	A	V	O	S	T	I	N	G			
I	O	S	T	O	Y	S	A	G	A	R	A	L	I	E	N	E			
N	O	T	B	A	D	C	I	A	R	A	V	A	S	T					
C	H	A	R	L	I	E	W	O	R	L	D	N	A	V	Y	R	A	W	
E	L	R	O	Y	T	R	U	A	R	M	Y	P	R	A	D	A			
N	A	T	O	P	H	O	N	E	T	I	C	A	L	P	H	A	B	E	T
S	L	E	D	H	A	T	T	R	E	E	S	C	R	U	M	B	L	E	
E	A	R	S	O	N	E	Y	E	A	R	D	O	S	S	I	E	R		

JONES FROM PAGE 1

showed a reckless disregard for the truth and for the distress and real harm he was causing the parents, piling torment on their tragedies.

“So long before these lawsuits I said that in the past I thought everything was a conspiracy, and I would kind of get into that mass group think of the communities that were out there saying that,” Jones said. “And so now I see that it’s more in the middle. All right? So that’s where I stand.”

But under questioning by Houston lawyer Mark Bankston, Jones continued to display a fundamentally conspiratorial frame of mind.

The deposition offers a revealing look at Jones’ state of mind at a moment of maximum peril for an Austin original. Jones has been stripped since summer of major social media platforms for InfoWars because of the content of his posts and playing defense in multiple courtrooms.

He was a local cable access cult figure who built a vast national audience on radio and online by declaring most every major national calamity since 9/11 as a “false flag” or inside job. With the rise of President Donald Trump, the once anti-establishment icon became a kind of underground auxiliary to Fox News, building support for Trump and creating news narratives that complement the president’s own taste for conspiracy thinking.

Throwing fuel on the fire, Jones on Monday questioned the circumstances surrounding the death of Jeremy Richman, one of the Sandy Hook parents has sued him for defamation in Connecticut. His body was found that morning in the Newtown building where Richman, a neuroscientist, had created a foundation named for his daughter Avielle, to encourage brain research into the causes of violent behavior. The state’s chief medical examiner has confirmed his death was a suicide.

“I mean, how do I get a fair

trial with stuff like this?” Jones said on InfoWars. “I’ve never said this guy’s name. Never said his name, until now. And obviously first, it’s we don’t know, he’s got gunshot wounds or whatever. Now it’s, well, apparent suicide. I mean, is there going to be a police investigation? ... This whole Sandy Hook thing is, like, really getting even crazier.”

“We have no idea whether he was even murdered at this point,” Jones said of Richman’s death on Monday. “Why would some anti-gun guy do this? This is really sad. ...”

The deposition of Jones was ordered by state District Judge Scott Jenkins in the case of Scarlett Lewis, whose son was one of 20 first-graders, along with six educators, shot to death Dec. 14, 2012, by 20-year-old Adam Lanza, who also killed his mother and himself. Lewis is suing Jones for intentional infliction of emotional distress.

Under questioning by Bankston, Jones sought to deflect responsibility for years of claims that the shootings were a hoax staged to inflame public opinion and undermine gun rights, by blaming others whose outrageous and unsupported reports he relied on and suggesting that it was his right and responsibility as a “pundit” under the First Amendment to present alternative points of view he had found on the internet.

But, even as he said he has come to believe over the years that the Sandy Hook shootings were real, he continued in the deposition to voice conspiratorial suspicions.

“I think we’ve agreed before that Sandy Hook was real. It was not staged. It was not phony. You were wrong about that,” Bankston said.

“Well, I want to be clear,” Jones replied. “I believe children died. I believe there was a mass shooting. I still think that there was a man in the woods in camo ... and just a lot of experts I’ve talked to, including retired FBI agents and other people and people high up in the Central Intelligence Agency, have told me that there is a cover-up in Sandy Hook.”

AID FROM PAGE 1

money he needs. In the meantime, he has repeatedly threatened to close the border, but this time, with a new group of migrants heading north, he gave a definite timetable and suggested a visit to the border within the next two weeks.

A substantial closure could have an especially heavy impact on cross-border communities from San Diego to South Texas, as well as supermarkets that sell Mexican produce, factories that rely on imported parts, and other businesses across the U.S.

The U.S. and Mexico trade about \$1.7 billion in goods daily, according to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, which said closing the border would be “an unmitigated economic debacle” that would threaten 5 million American jobs.

Sen. Bob Menendez, D-N.J., ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, spoke out Saturday against cutting off aid to Central America, declaring that “foreign assistance is not charity; it advances our strategic interests and funds initiatives that protect American citizens.”

And a group of House Democrats visiting El Salvador denounced the administration’s decision to cut aid to the region.

“As we visit El Salvador evaluating the importance of U.S. assistance to Central America to address the root causes of family and child migration, we are extremely disappointed to learn that President Trump intends to cut off aid to the region,” said the statement from five lawmakers, including Rep. Eliot L. Engel of New York, who chairs the House Foreign Affairs Committee. “The President’s approach is entirely counterproductive.”

The Trump administration has threatened before to scale back or cut off U.S. assistance to Central America. Congress has not approved most of those proposed cuts, however, and a report this year by the Congressional Research Service said any change in that funding would depend on what Congress does.

Short of a widespread border shutdown, Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen said the U.S. might close designated ports

of entry to re-deploy staff to help process parents and children. Ports of entry are official crossing points that are used by residents and commercial vehicles. Many people who cross the border illegally ultimately request asylum under U.S. law, which does not require asylum seekers to enter at an official crossing.

Border officials are also planning to more than quadruple the number of asylum seekers sent back over the border to wait out their immigration cases, said an administration official. The official said right now about 60 migrants per day are returned and officials are hoping to send as many as 300 per day. The official was not authorized to speak publicly about internal plans and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador said Friday his country was doing its part to fight migrant smuggling. Criminal networks charge thousands of dollars a person to move migrants through Mexico, increasingly in large groups toward remote sections of the border.

“We want to have a good relationship with the government of the United States,” Lopez Obrador said. He added: “We are going to continue helping so that the migratory flow, those who pass through our country, do so according to the law, in an orderly way.”

Marcelo Ebrard, Mexico’s foreign relations secretary, tweeted that his country “doesn’t act based on threats” and is “the best neighbor” the U.S. could have.

Alejandra Mier y Teran, executive director of the Otay Mesa Chamber of Commerce in San Diego, said the mere threat of border closures sends the wrong message to businesses in Mexico and may eventually scare companies into turning to Asia for their supply chains.

“I think the impact would be absolutely devastating on so many fronts,” said Mier y Teran, whose members rely on the Otay Mesa crossing to bring televisions, medical devices and a wide range of products to the U.S. “In terms of a long-term effect, it’s basically shooting yourself in your foot. It’s sending out a message to other countries that, ‘Don’t come because our borders may not work at any time.’ That is extremely scary and dangerous.”

PLASTIC FROM PAGE 1

Environmental conservation advocates had also been pushing for a statewide fee for paper bags as a way to encourage wider consumer use of reusable bags.

Nonetheless, Patrick McClellan, state policy director for the New York League of Conservation Voters, said his group was “thrilled” that the bag ban appears headed for passage.

“Plastic bags pollute our waterways and streets, and both plastic and paper bags contribute to the solid waste crisis and cost taxpayers money,” he said. “While the best policy would be a ban on plastic bags coupled with a statewide fee on other disposable bags, this agreement represents a tremendous step forward.”

Lawmakers are facing a Monday deadline on a budget agreement. Negotiations on other aspects of Cuomo’s proposed \$175 billion spending plan are continuing Friday, with the



AP PHOTO

A man leaves a supermarket in Manhattan carrying his groceries in a plastic bag, Wednesday.

Senate and Assembly expected to start passing budget bills Sunday ahead of the April 1 start of the state’s 2019-2020 fiscal year.

Lawmakers have also agreed on a measure that would close up to three yet-to-be-determined state prisons. Cuomo announced last month he wanted to reduce the number of facilities

because of the state’s declining inmate population.

The budget will also contain a provision requiring employers to give workers three hours off to vote on election day.

Another provision set for the budget would impose congestion tolls to ease traffic in the busiest parts of Manhattan and fund transit improvements, but details are still

being discussed.

Negotiations are also continuing on a proposal to tax luxury second homes in Manhattan worth more than \$5 million. The option now being considered would impose a one-time tax paid when the properties are sold, Cuomo told reporters Friday.

Revenue from the tax would go to transit.

Other pending issues still being negotiated included criminal justice reform and public financing of political campaigns.

One of the other big issues of the year — the legalization of recreational marijuana — will not be included in the budget. Cuomo said Friday that lawmakers need more time to work out the details to regulation.

BREXIT FROM PAGE 1

Associated Press.

Few in Britain would disagree.

For decades, the bloc was the target of ridicule in Britain for what was perceived as European hubris and an inefficient bureaucracy. But on Friday, there was very little gloating on the continent as May failed to get the deal through the U.K. Parliament, sending London deeper into the Brexit morass.

“We have resisted the temptation to position the (EU) Commission in terms of sentiments,” said EU spokesman Margaritis Schinas. “We don’t do that.”

The EU called another emergency summit for April 10, two

days ahead of a new withdrawal date. A chaotic “no-deal” departure scenario is expected to be costly to U.K. businesses and inconvenient at its border. May said there would be “grave” implications.

The EU doesn’t want to inflame passions even more, because it also stands to suffer, with hundreds of billions of euros and tens of thousands of jobs at stake for a U.K. exit without transitional measures in place.

“In Brexit, everybody loses,” said Ewa Osniecka-Tamecka, a vice rector of the College of Europe, speaking at a branch in Natolin, Poland.

There was frustration among EU officials who felt that they and their star negotiator Michel Barnier did their part and Britain didn’t.

Even Nigel Farage, a British driving force behind Brexit and staunch EU opponent, has nothing but admiration for Barnier who kept 27 nations aligned as one while Britain, as one, crumbled into chaos.

Almost three years after the June 23, 2016, Brexit referendum, the British government and Parliament seem to be still at a loss over what they really want from the EU.

“Britain is at a dead end,” said Nathalie Loiseau, who was France’s Europe Minister until she resigned this week to run in the May 23-26 EU elections. “Europeans have other priorities than having to wait until the U.K. takes a decision.”

What also is in tatters is a European admiration of Britain as a symbol of a well-run

parliamentary democracy, with its sometimes brilliant discourse and vigorous debate.

Lamberts said he was stunned at how May’s Conservative Party as well as those in the Labour Party seemed to act in their own interests, rather than the needs of the country.

“It’s the inability to build compromise,” Lamberts said. “That’s it. Party above country, in the most brutal sense of the word.”

Manfred Weber, a European lawmaker from Germany and center-right candidate to head the European Commission, said the repeated rejection of the deal highlighted “a failure of the political class in Great Britain — there’s no other way to describe it.”

Some saw Friday’s events as another blow to Britain’s international standing.

ALMANAC

Today is **Sunday, March 31**, the 90th day of 2019. There are 275 days left in the year.

Today in history

On **March 31, 2005**, Terri Schiavo, 41, died at a hospice in Pinellas Park, Florida, 13 days after her feeding tube was removed in a wrenching right-to-die court fight.

On this date

In **1492**, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain issued an edict expelling Jews from Spanish soil, except those willing to convert to Christianity.

In **1968**, at the conclusion of a nationally broadcast address on Vietnam, President Lyndon B. Johnson stunned listeners by declaring, “I shall not seek, and I will not accept, the nomination of my party for another term as your President.”

In **1976**, the New Jersey Supreme Court ruled that Karen Ann Quinlan, a young woman in a persistent vegetative state, could be disconnected from her respirator. (Quinlan, who remained unconscious, died in 1985.)

In **1986**, 167 people died when a Mexicana Airlines Boeing 727 crashed in a remote mountainous region of Mexico.

In **1991**, the Warsaw Pact was formally dissolved.

In **1993**, actor Brandon Lee, 28, was accidentally shot to death during the filming of a movie in Wilmington, North Carolina, when he was hit by a bullet fragment that had become lodged inside a prop gun.

In **1995**, Mexican-American singer Selena Quintanilla-Perez, 23, was shot to death in Corpus Christi, Texas, by the founder of her fan club, Yolanda Saldivar, who was convicted of murder and sentenced to life in prison.

In **2004**, four American civilian contractors were killed in Fallujah, Iraq; frenzied crowds dragged the burned, mutilated bodies and strung two of them from a bridge.

In **2008**, HUD Secretary Alphonso Jackson announced his resignation amid the wreckage of the national housing crisis.

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama arrived in London with his wife, Michelle, at the start of a trip to Europe, his first journey across the Atlantic since taking office two months earlier. Benjamin Netanyahu took office as Israel’s new prime minister after the Knesset approved his government.

One year ago: Amid tight security, Nobel Peace Prize winner Malala Yousafzai and her family returned to her hometown in Pakistan for the first time since she was shot in the head in 2012 for her work as an advocate for young women’s education. Hundreds of well-wishers lined the streets of Cambridge, England, as a hearse carried the remains of physicist and author Stephen Hawking to a private funeral.

Today’s birthdays

Actor William Daniels is 92. Actor Richard Chamberlain is 85. Actress Shirley Jones is 85. Musician Herb Alpert is 84. Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., is 79. Former U.S. Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass., is 79. Actor Christopher Walken is 76. Sen. Angus King, I-Maine, is 75. Rock musician Mick Ralphs (Bad Company; Mott the Hoople) is 75. Former Vice President Al Gore is 72. Author David Eisenhower is 71. Actress Rhea Perlman is 71. Actor Robbie Coltrane is 69. Actor Ed Marinaro is 69. Rock musician Angus Young (AC/DC) is 64. Actor Marc McClure is 62. Actor William McNamara is 54. Alt-country musician Bob Crawford (The Avett Brothers) is 48. Actor Ewan McGregor is 48. Actress Judi Shekoni is 41. Rapper Tony Yayo is 41. Actress Kate Micucci is 39. Actor Brian Tyree Henry (TV: “Atlanta” Stage: “Book of Mormon”) is 37. Actress Melissa Ordway is 36. Jazz musician Christian Scott is 36. Pop musician Jack Antonoff (fun.) is 35. Actress Jessica Szohr is 34.

Bible verse

“And in hell he lifts up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.” — **Luke 16:23.**

One minute after you have missed Heaven you will know that hell is no myth. The only way out is in Him. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.”

NEW YORK TIMES SUNDAY CROSSWORD

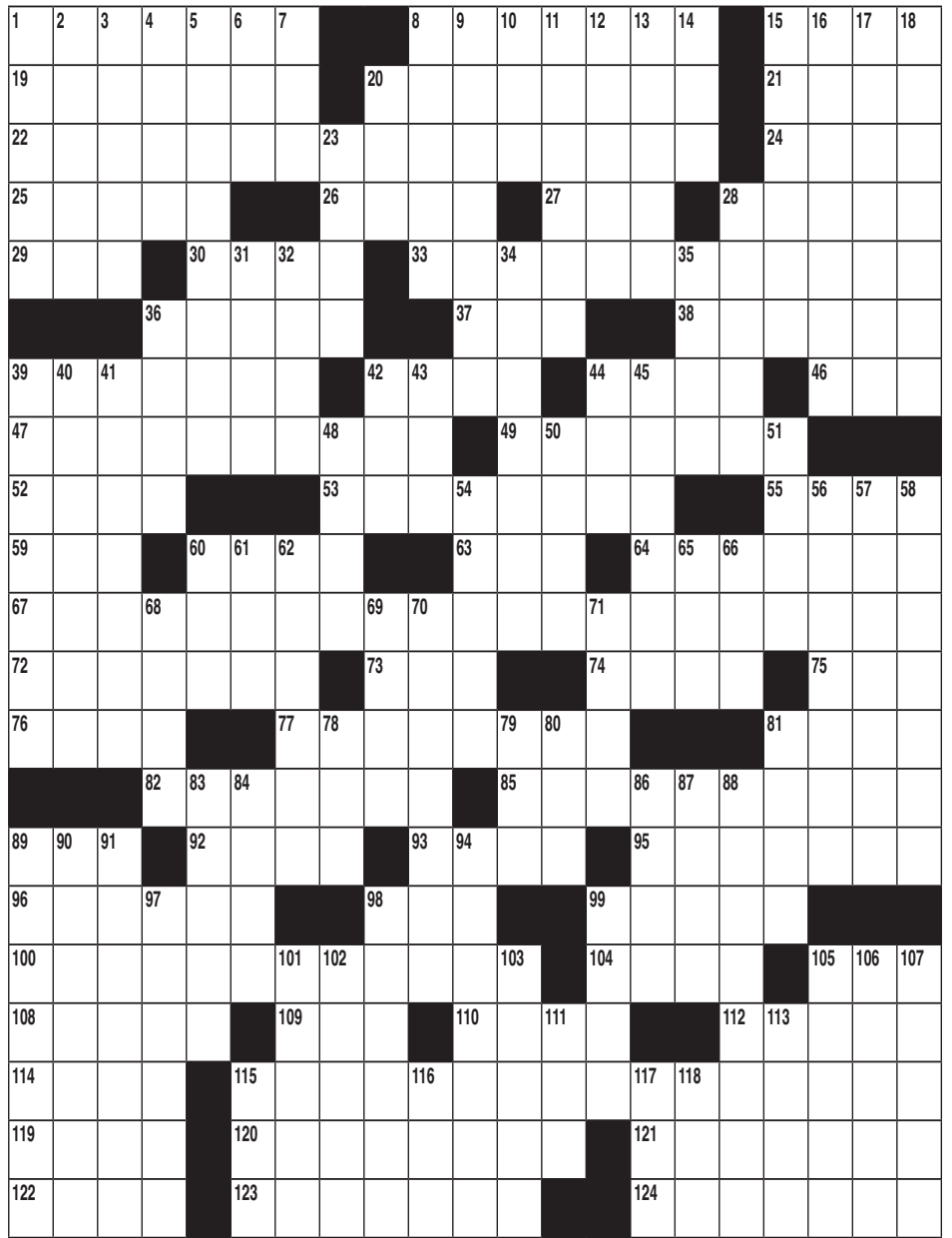
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CODE SWITCHING

BY TRENTON CHARLSON / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Trenton Charlson is a 2018 graduate of Ohio State University with a degree in English and a concentration in creative writing. "Sadly," he says half-jokingly (I think), "there is no crossword-puzzle major at Ohio State." Five of Trenton's previous nine crosswords in The Times were named "Puzzle of the Week" by the blog XWord Info. This is his first Sunday puzzle. — W.S.

- ACROSS**
- 1 Metaphor for an aggressive political arena
 - 8 Puts away
 - 15 Source of fries
 - 19 One who didn't even show?
 - 20 Frame part
 - 21 It stayed in Pandora's box
 - 22 *Ballroom dancing event for Beantown residents?
 - 24 Takes a course
 - 25 Relatives of foils
 - 26 Shade of green
 - 27 Dundee dissent
 - 28 Mother-of-pearl
 - 29 Imperfect service
 - 30 Climax
 - 33 *Annoying member of a New York baseball team?
 - 36 Thrills
 - 37 Family moniker
 - 38 Hydrocarbon gas
 - 39 World capital known as Batavia until 1942
 - 42 "Witches' Flight" painter
 - 44 Sparkling white wine
 - 46 Pesticide banned in 1972
 - 47 *Wager in which the winner gets the loser's pants and jersey?
- DOWN**
- 1 Early tower locale
 - 2 Skip the ceremony, in a way
 - 3 Strong point
 - 4 Mechanical
 - 5 Shakespearean sorcerer
 - 6 Janis ____, singer of the 1975 hit "At Seventeen"
 - 7 Earth-shattering invention?
 - 8 Unpleasantly wet
 - 9 Like child's play
 - 10 Artist Jean
 - 11 Defeats soundly
 - 12 Greek goddesses of the seasons
 - 13 Signature scent since 1968
 - 14 Total mess
 - 15 Sword holder
 - 16 Took stock?
 - 17 Good news for a stockholder
 - 18 Early name for Utah
 - 20 Forensic material
 - 23 Does some grilling
 - 28 What a stiffed server receives
 - 31 ____'acte
 - 32 Noted exile
 - 34 Falls for someone who's already married?
 - 35 Testing stage
 - 36 Bread box?
 - 39 Sport that emphasizes pinning and throwing
 - 40 Terse bar order
 - 41 Traps
 - 42 Former G.M. make
 - 43 First N.L. player to hit 500 home runs
 - 44 Laila of the ring
 - 45 Big maker of lawn care products
 - 48 Like-minded voters
 - 50 Secretary on "The Office"
 - 51 "Hold it!"
 - 54 Mañana preceder
 - 56 Inundated with
 - 57 Five-star
 - 98 Covert org.
 - 99 Sailor's cry
 - 100 *Amusement park named after a "Peanuts" boy?
 - 104 College football rival of 110-Across
 - 105 Unembellished
 - 108 Jetson who attends Little Dipper School
 - 109 Broadway show about Capote
 - 110 College football rival of 104-Across
 - 112 Pricy fashion label
 - 114 & 115 Communication system that's a hint to the answer to each starred clue
 - 119 Tireless racer
 - 120 They might hold derbies
 - 121 Fall apart
 - 122 Spots for hammers and anvils
 - 123 Common lease period
 - 124 It may have a lot of intelligence



Online subscriptions: Today's puzzle and more than 4,000 past puzzles, nytimes.com/crosswords (\$39.95 a year).

FOR ANSWERS TURN TO PAGE 3

Ask the Fool

Rising Losses

Should I focus on not investing in companies with increasing losses or investing in those with growing profits? — R.P., online

Profits are, naturally, preferable to losses, but don't be hasty ruling out companies. Take some time to look at each company's big picture, to see what's really happening. One company might be posting losses because it's having trouble selling its offerings: It might be facing tough competition, struggling in a price war or having trouble connecting with consumers. Another company, though, might be posting expanding losses while experiencing rapid sales growth due to great consumer interest.

How could that be? Well, remember that profits or losses are what you have after you subtract expenses from sales. A successful company might post losses for some years simply because it's investing heavily in furthering its growth — perhaps by buying more advertising, building more factories or acquiring other companies or technologies. Such companies can choose to rein in their spending later and suddenly become profitable.

How can I learn about home values in my neighborhood to help me determine my own house's value? — C.L., Horton, Michigan

You might start by asking a local real estate agent, who can come up with a value for your home based on comparable recent sales ("comps") in your neighborhood.

Online real estate sites can also be helpful. At Zillow.com, for instance, you can look up median sales prices for homes in particular states, cities and neighborhoods.

Some sites even offer an estimate of your own home's value, but remember that such an estimate is being offered with only partial information. It may not take into account any recent improvements, and it may not be using the most appropriate comps, either.

Want more information about stocks? Send us an email to foolnews@fool.com.



Fool's School

Pay Off That Debt

Debt can be helpful — making it possible for you to buy a home or attend college, for example — but high-interest-rate debt can be troublesome.

Credit cards, with interest rates recently averaging almost 18 percent, are primary causes of such debt, but some car loans, student loans, and other loans can also sport hefty rates. Paying off any such debt should be a priority — for several reasons.

For starters, paying off high-interest-rate debt essentially gets you a fat guaranteed return. Imagine that you owe \$20,000 and are paying 20 percent annually on it. If you pay off that debt, you'll stop paying around \$4,000 in interest per year, and can keep that sum in your pocket. It's like earning a 20 percent return on your \$20,000 investment — close to double the stock market's long-term average annual gain.

Ridding yourself of debt can also make you better able to deal with life's unexpected developments, such as a costly car repair or an expensive

health setback. If you're on the hook for substantial interest payments, you'll have less money available to handle unexpected expenses. In a worst-case scenario, you'll end up deeper in debt, facing even bigger interest payments.

On a more positive note, being free of that high-interest-rate debt can allow you to capitalize on great investing opportunities when they appear. For example, if the market swoons and suddenly lots of terrific stocks are on sale, you won't have your hands tied by debt-payment obligations, and you'll be able to pounce.

Debt costs you more than you probably think: If you owe \$20,000 with a 20 percent interest rate and you're making minimum payments of 5 percent on it, you'll pay close to \$10,000 in interest alone, and it will take you more than 12 years to pay it all off.

Having less debt — or being debt-free — can also boost your credit score, helping you get better deals from lenders and other financial services companies. It might also help you sleep better at night, with fewer financial worries to be stressed out about.

Name That Company

I trace my roots back to 1913, when America's first commercial liquid bleach factory, the Electro-Alkaline Company, was founded with \$500. For a while I was part of Procter & Gamble. Today, based in California, I'm a global consumer-products giant with a market value recently near \$20 billion. My offerings include Brita water-filtration products; Burt's Bees products; Fresh Step cat litter; Glad bags, wraps and containers; Hidden Valley dressings and sauces; Kingsford charcoal; Liquid-Plumr clog removers; Pine-Sol cleaners; and Poett home-care products. My name comes from parts of the terms "chlorine" and "sodium hydroxide." Who am I?

Think you know the answer? We'll announce it in next week's edition.

My Dumbest Investment

Averaging Down ... and Down

Years ago, I started moving my Roth IRA investments out of S&P 500 index funds and into individual stocks. At the time, I was trying to read, listen and learn as much as possible about investing from many different sources. Most of my stock picks were straightforward and based on things I knew or could easily understand, such as Apple, Starbucks, Chevron, Wells Fargo and Disney.

A TV guru did a few segments on an offshore drilling company that convinced me to buy. As the price of oil started to fall, the stock price fell, and I bought more shares in order to lower my cost basis; I was scared to sell at a loss. I figured that at least the dividend yield was high, but then the dividend was cut. I learned a lot. Now I generally only add to my winners. — Nick, Los Angeles

The Fool Responds: Adding to winners is a good move, especially if you plan to remain invested in the stock for many years and have great expectations for it. Just don't buy when the shares seem considerably overvalued.

Beware of "averaging" down — buying more of your losers — because stocks often fall in value for good reasons. Don't discount the value of just sticking with an S&P 500 index fund, either, as it's hard to beat the overall market's performance, and index-fund investing requires little time and effort.

LAST WEEK'S TRIVIA ANSWER

I trace my roots back to 1868, when my namesake founded me. Today I'm one of the largest businesses in India, encompassing 30 companies in a wide range of businesses, such as vehicles, steel, beverages, energy, hotels, aerospace, telecommunications, financial services and chemicals. My companies own other companies, such as Jaguar Land Rover Automotive. I operate in more than 100 countries, and most of me is owned by philanthropic trusts that support health, education, arts and more. I rake in more than \$100 billion annually and employ more than 700,000 people. My name sounds like a synonym for "goodbye." Who am I? (Answer: Tata Group)



Want to Invest? Email us at foolnews@fool.com, and we'll send you some tips to start investing. Sorry, we can't provide individual financial advice.

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The Motley Fool Take

In Hot Water

A.O. Smith (NYSE: AOS) is one of the three largest makers of water heaters in North America. Its recently depressed stock price presents a compelling opportunity.

Sales have been weak lately, in part due to the decelerating Chinese economy, but in countries moving up the socioeconomic scale, demand for hot water remains. China may be a weak spot today, but A.O. Smith's products, which also include water and air purifiers, aren't going to fall out of style.

Then there's India: A.O. Smith's business there is tiny compared with its China operations, but the company sees a huge long-term opportunity. Sales in China have grown at a compound annual rate of more than 20 percent over the past decade, and if A.O. Smith can come close to that figure in India, it will be a huge benefit to its top and bottom lines.

Notably, 2019 marks the 25th year in which A.O. Smith has increased its dividend, which recently yielded 1.7 percent. Even better, that dividend has been growing at a good clip. In 2018, the company announced two dividend increases that resulted in its 2018 payout being 36 percent higher than the prior year's dividend.

With more than \$400 million in net cash (total cash minus total debt) on its balance sheet and a business churning out loads of free cash flow, there's room for a lot more growth.



CROSSWORD PUZZLE

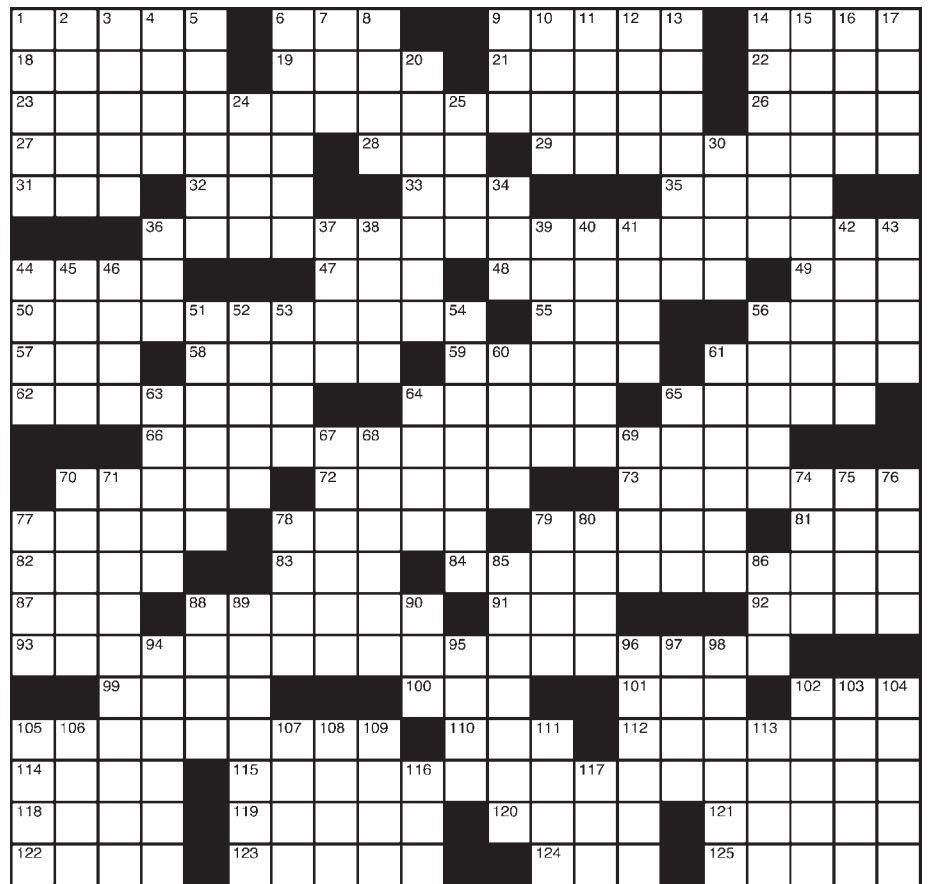
PARDON MY YIDDISH

By Ed Sessa

- ACROSS**
- 1 Tricks that treat
 - 6 Dali contemporary
 - 9 Shame
 - 14 Corp. bigwigs
 - 18 Raspy-voiced Cooper
 - 19 Protein provider
 - 21 Evergreen bean
 - 22 Road division
 - 23 Bar mitzvah
 - 24 Celebratory drink?
 - 26 "Roots" author
 - 27 Current gauge
 - 28 Body wrap venue
 - 29 Jed Clampett, for one
 - 31 Sault Ste. Marie's Locks
 - 32 "That ___ fact!"
 - 33 Ring ruling
 - 35 Two in a canoe
 - 36 Incompetent drivers?
 - 44 Seaweed product
 - 47 Howard of old comedy films
 - 48 Hereditary ruler
 - 49 Thumbs-up letters
 - 50 Where decent people buy decent clothes at honest prices?
 - 55 Lay idle
 - 56 Light sparkling wine
 - 57 Lodging with a "keeper"
 - 58 Bank job
 - 59 Collectible print, briefly
 - 61 Dark marks
 - 62 Stranger things
 - 64 Officer Kalakaua's group, familiarly
 - 65 Rainforest vine
 - 66 Cream cheese promotion?
 - 70 Sapling support
 - 72 Coordinate (with)
 - 73 Traffic warning signal
 - 77 Means of access
 - 78 Trouble from all sides
 - 79 Gumbo thickeners
 - 81 Label for some Elton John albums
 - 82 Son of Seth
 - 83 Web address letters
 - 84 Trash-talking broadcaster?
 - 87 Pickable point
 - 88 Confounded
 - 91 Joey's mom
 - 92 "Gotcha"
 - 93 Trudged through a nudist camp?
 - 99 Sport with mallets
 - 100 Metric introduction?
 - 101 Blood classification letters
 - 102 Tubular pasta, for short
 - 105 U.K. utility cost limitations
 - 110 Blow away
 - 112 Sufi Muslim ascetic
 - 114 Bull's partner, in a story?
 - 115 Disaster for a figure skater?
 - 118 Musical diner fixture, for short
 - 119 Like Poe pieces
 - 120 It ends at the gutter
 - 121 Choir voices
 - 122 Nap
 - 123 ___ Haute
 - 124 Letters on a Sun Bum container
 - 125 Scientific methods
- DOWN**
- 1 Some baby rockers
 - 2 Legendary mission
 - 3 Rube Goldberg device, e.g.
 - 4 Brand written in frosty letters
 - 5 Irish musical ensemble ___ Woman
 - 6 Unprincipled
 - 7 Short spin?
 - 8 D.C. fundraisers
 - 9 "That's awful!"
 - 10 Whole or half home unit
 - 11 Smoothie berry
 - 12 Wind catcher
 - 13 Valleys
 - 14 Danes of "Homeland"
 - 15 When many TV shows debut
 - 16 Like Nash's lama
 - 17 Steamy
 - 20 Of the highest quality
 - 24 "A Deeper Faith" musician
 - 25 It's iced and sliced
 - 30 Thai currency
 - 34 Overused, jokewise
 - 36 Yearbook gp.
 - 37 Ambulance pros
 - 38 Of no consequence
 - 39 Bettor's strategy
 - 40 After one bounce, in baseball lingo
 - 41 Warsaw Pact counterpart
 - 42 Host of, in slang
 - 43 Slope gear
 - 44 Francois's friend
 - 45 Millennials' folks
 - 46 A year in Caesar's time
 - 51 Peepers
 - 52 Anne of 1998's "Psycho"
 - 53 "The King and I" kingdom
 - 54 Brings out
 - 56 Arkin and Menken
 - 60 "Terrible" despot
 - 61 No small favor
 - 63 60-Down et al.
 - 64 Given away
 - 65 Fragrant shrub
 - 67 Endless, in verse
 - 68 Organized like big stores
 - 69 Jimi Hendrix do
 - 70 Drive-in with skating carhops
 - 71 Sticks with the Swedish meatballs
 - 74 Med. group options
 - 75 Behold, to Pilate
 - 76 Dirt smoother
 - 77 Red fox holes
 - 78 Possible result of swallowing air
 - 79 "Didn't expect that"
 - 80 Swiss painter Paul
 - 85 Jewel case storage unit
 - 86 Peter Pan rival
 - 88 Editor's mark
 - 89 "... ___ full of rye"
 - 90 Archaeological site
 - 94 Tiny portrait holder
 - 95 Type of tide
 - 96 In money trouble, say
 - 97 It dropped "Cab" from its name in 2011
 - 98 Document details
 - 102 Diner freebies
 - 103 Tied accessory
 - 104 Game with a mate
 - 105 '80s IBM flop nicknamed "Peanut"
 - 106 Don Juan
 - 107 Mariner's direction
 - 108 Sound from a lynx's larynx
 - 109 To-do
 - 111 God with a bow
 - 113 Poetic lowland
 - 116 Slice of pizza?
 - 117 Dandy

Los Angeles Times Sunday Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Nichols Lewis



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3/31/19

GOREN BRIDGE

LARRY'S CAREFUL PLAY

East-West vulnerable, South deals

NORTH

- ♠ 5
- ♥ J 9 4 2
- ♦ A Q J 6 5 3
- ♣ J 5

WEST

- ♠ 10 8 6 4 3
- ♥ A
- ♦ K 10 8
- ♣ Q 9 8 3

EAST

- ♠ A 9 7 2
- ♥ 10 7 6 5
- ♦ 9
- ♣ K 10 6 2

SOUTH

- ♠ K Q J
- ♥ K Q 8 3
- ♦ 7 4 2
- ♣ A 7 4

The bidding:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
INT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♥	Pass	4♥	All pass

Opening lead: Three of ♣

Hard Luck Louie was hoping for a strong finish in the club's Saturday night duplicate when he became declarer in this tricky game contract. He played low from dummy on the opening club lead and won East's 10 with his ace. He led a low trump, losing to West's ace. West continued with a club to East's king. East

cached the ace of spades and exited with a club.

Louie ruffed in dummy and drew the trumps with the jack, king, and queen. He led a diamond to dummy's queen and was pleased when that held the trick. He had to concede down one, however, when East showed out on the ace of diamonds and West took the last trick with the king of diamonds.

Lucky Larry declared the same contract and the early play was the same. When East continued with the third round of clubs, however, Larry ruffed this carefully in dummy with the nine. He led the jack of hearts from dummy and overtook it with the queen when East followed suit. Larry led a low diamond to the queen, winning the trick, and led dummy's last trump for the proven finesse against East's 10. Larry finished drawing the trumps and was in the right hand to lead a diamond to dummy's jack. He cashed the ace of diamonds for his tenth trick and scored up his game. Nicely played!

(Bob Jones welcomes readers' responses sent in care of this newspaper or to Tribune Content Agency, LLC., 16650 Westgrove Dr., Suite 175, Addison, TX 75001.)

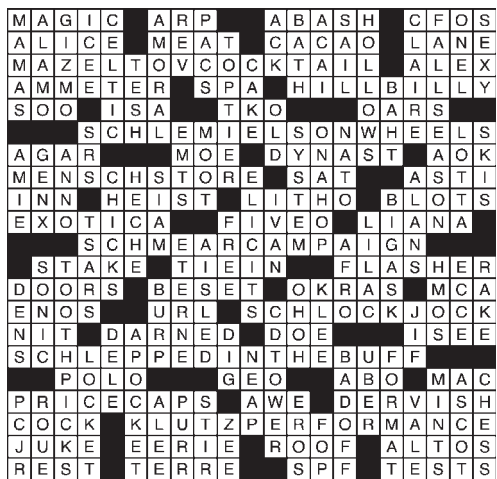
CRYPTOGRAMS

CRYPTOGRAMS FLOWER POWER 2 by Myles Mellor

1. B V E Q Q U G H O Q C I I G C E B S F D Z G S
V Z G V D Q P E Q D G K O U B O O G H . D Z C V P L S
D Z G S V L E B I O I K G O O G H V Q F G V Z G K !
2. Z I Y H F I Y S Q H H Q W L , J W H L Q Y L W H X
D Q D D N T J M J J Q Y L C M F Y X V M A F I Y Q A
V W C M A Q F Y J M J L F W A , F I Y Z Q H H Y A
Z W L Q D D T W S W N Y W !
3. R S Z I X L T S R K P D X X D P Z V G K W Y Z X Q
Y Z X Z E W C G A Q Z V D C V U A L N N L E D K Y S Z C
R S Z P Q D Y D C W Z C W K W T L Q R
Z A K W T L N L C T D V L G G Z X Z C R I W A U A Z R !
4. R N I U J N A D M X C Q X V V U M Z V N P U K R
V M A D E U L P E U C B E U O E U M K L B P N J M V L
I U C B K O X C D B N Z X C L B E U P M O B N
B E U K N D M X C U Q X V V M !

PUZZLE ANSWERS

(Puzzles on previous pages)



JUMBLE

Answer:

- IMPACT SHABBY FLORAL
- FENNEL FIASCO TIGHTS

Boeing became a huge airplane manufacturer after getting —

OFF TO A FLYING START

1. It looked so appealing when the two flowers kissed. What fun when tulips pressed together!
2. When the zinnias, pansies and giggly poppies voted for their favorite pop star, the winner was Iggy Azalea!
3. The brightly arrayed flowers were confused and quizzical when they saw an oenologist eulogizing a different bouquet!
4. Some bougainvillea flowers laughed when they heard two bald men trying to find the way to the Rogaine Villa!

HOLIDAY MATHIS HOROSCOPES

ARIES (March 21-April 19). When you do something potentially impressive, you crave a reaction; that's human! But they won't react if they don't notice. You have to wake them up first. Do the metaphorical equivalent to a drumroll.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). If you want to learn something better, teach it. In spending time explaining something, you'll come to understand it with new clarity and most likely develop the next phase of the idea, too.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You already asked yourself the "why" questions, and it's time to switch to "what." This will include such hits as "What am I going to do about it?" and "What's next?"

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Claims to character are always suspect. "Trust me, because I'm honest" is a red flag, and anyone who claims to be humble obviously is not. It's why you're very careful to behave the daim rather than verbalize it. Action speaks.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You can be very much like the person next to you in all the ways that come naturally, yet your habits differentiate you, vastly at that. With this in mind, there's a certain habit you will either lose or employ.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). To be clear with others about what you want and what you expect — now that's an aim and a life skill worth developing. It does take courage and a light touch, both of which you possess today.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You're fully aware that anything that can bring you joy can also bring you sorrow in equal measure, and you're willing to take the risk. Your courage in daily living is commendable.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Fame is not a skill, and it's not nearly so useful as many other skills a person can master. Concern yourself with acquiring new abilities. This will take you much further in life than any sort of publicity could.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The problem will not be solved by coming up with some new thing to help us fight the institutions and the mindsets that are keeping us down. "New things" are only as good as the people using them.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). The first law of good leadership is that the leader is for the people. The people come first. Some of the best leaders are invisible. The strength of the group is the voice that speaks for them.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You want the satisfaction of knowing you did a thing all by yourself, but don't dwell there. It wouldn't be worth it! The solo journey is overrated. Better to reach out and share. It's worth doing, it's worth doing with others.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Too bad you can't find courage in the places where you're already comfortable. Along, the very definition of courage involves withstanding discomfort. Leave what you know. Go where you're not sure what's going to happen.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (March 31). Much seemingly unrelated good luck comes of your role as a best friend. It's the moves you make out of loyalty and love that elevate your work and inspire new adventures. You'll help put a memorable event together in June. You'll raise a good deal of money for what you care about. A contract is signed in September. Gemini and Taurus adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 10, 4, 27, 13 and 50.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

7 LITTLE WORDS

Find the 7 words to match the 7 clues. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in each solution. Each letter combination can be used only once, but all letter combinations will be necessary to complete the puzzle.

- | CLUES | SOLUTIONS |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| 1 online giant (6) | _____ |
| 2 Elvis Presley's home state (11) | _____ |
| 3 "What About Bob?" star Bill (6) | _____ |
| 4 Algeria's southern neighbor (5) | _____ |
| 5 weighted fishing net (5) | _____ |
| 6 middle traffic light color (6) | _____ |
| 7 Alaska's Canadian neighbor (5) | _____ |

NIG	ON	PI	AY	AM
IP	ER	AZ	ON	MU
ISS	INE	SE	MI	RR
LL	SS	YUK	YE	OW

Today's Answers: 1. AMAZON 2. MISSISSIPPI 3. MURRAY 4. NIGER 5. SEINE 6. YELLOW 7. YUKON

JANRIC CLASSIC SUDOKU

Fill in the blank cells using numbers 1 to 9. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and 3x3 block. Use logic and process elimination to solve the puzzle. The difficulty level ranges from Bronze (easiest) to Silver to Gold (hardest).

9	2		3	1			8	
8	6	4					1	
		3			2			7
	9		1				4	
			9					
	4			8			6	
6			9			3		
		2				8	7	9
	5			7	3		2	1

Rating: SILVER

Solution to 3/31/19

9	2	7	3	1	4	5	8	6
8	6	4	7	5	9	1	3	2
5	1	3	6	8	2	4	9	7
3	9	5	1	6	7	2	4	8
2	8	6	4	9	5	7	1	3
7	4	1	2	3	8	9	6	5
6	7	8	9	2	1	3	5	4
1	3	2	5	4	6	8	7	9
4	5	9	8	7	3	6	2	1

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DEAR ABBY

Couples divide according to sex when large group gets together

DEAR ABBY: My fiance, "Gabriel," has a large network of friends who have known each other for a long time. We get together as a group a couple of times a month for birthdays, sports events, etc. Whenever we do, the men veer away into their own world of conversation, while we women are left to talk to each other and eat dips.



Dear Abby

Honestly, I dread it. These women are generally petty, hypersensitive and hard to talk to about anything of substance. We share no common interests in our jobs, musical tastes, television viewing, etc.

I don't want to skip the outings altogether because I have become good friends with the guys, and some of them will be in our wedding. But if I leave the women's table and join the men, I'm afraid I'll send a message that I'm clinging to Gabriel. That's not the case. It's that I prefer the men's conversation to what the women discuss.

Is there a solution? Must I learn to deal with what these women talk about? Can I join the men without the women

thinking I'm a clingy fiancee? I would like to enjoy myself at these parties, even if it means breaking the social norm.

— BORED IN BUFFALO

DEAR BORED: Discuss this with Gabriel to see what advice he has to offer. I see no reason why you couldn't join the men. However, you should make a point of spending some time with the women so they won't get the impression that you are snubbing them.

DEAR ABBY: We live in an area where rent is very high and buying is out of the question. The nearby lower-priced areas have terrible schools and aren't safe. Because we have a small child, these are real concerns.

We have an opportunity to move to another state where

costs are much lower. We could buy a nice home, the schools are excellent, and I could still maintain my same job and salary. The problem is, it would mean moving away from my family.

I want to give my daughter the chance to grow up in circumstances where we aren't constantly worried about not building home equity or saving toward retirement. But I worry that taking her away from her extended family will be rough.

My husband's relatives live all over the world. He has been in so many countries and states that he's used to not having family around. He wants us to move so we can buy a house and save for retirement. What's your advice?

— RACHEL IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR RACHEL: You have given solid reasons for making the move. Chief among them is that your child will have a brighter future if she grows up in a safe environment and gets the best education possible, plus there will be less worry about all of you being safe. It is

equally important for you and your husband to be able to accumulate enough in savings that your retirement years will be comfortable.

Listen to your husband because you have married a smart man. I know family is important, but your daughter already knows who they are. You may be able to visit with them in person or stay in touch via video-chatting. This is the way many families maintain close ties, and I hope you will consider it.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$16 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

HELOISE

Dear Readers: While you are doing spring cleaning inside your home, also take the time to check the outside for possible winter damage. Examine the roof and flashing closely. Clean out eaves. Make sure the exterior of your house is in good condition. And check for pests of all kinds.



Hints from Heloise

Investigate the outside for evidence of termites. They can be found on wooden decks and in stacked wood, fences and shrubs. They look for water and wood. If you find any, call a termite pro to come immediately. — Heloise

Dear Heloise: I opened a box of treasured old photos in picture frames that I wanted to take out and display. And to my shock, many were stuck to the glass. I think the attic must have been too hot. How can I get them unstuck? — Mary Ann in California

Dear Mary Ann: Oh, they do adhere to the glass. And if they are sepia or valu-

able photos, be very careful. Put the picture — frame and all — into a plastic bag. Leave open and place in the freezer for 24 to 48 hours to dry out. Then take these steps:

Gently try to lift one corner with your fingers or a small, dull knife to see if it will come off. If the photo starts to tear or is still sticking, stop. Take it to a professional photo restorer. You also can scan the photo (in the frame) to save it. — Heloise

Dear Readers: Herbs and spices are important ingredients in cooking. To keep them at the most potent, so they add the most flavor to a dish, you need to store them

properly. Don't buy large amounts unless you are going to use them. You don't want them to be sitting in a spice rack for a year unused. When you purchase herbs and spices, write the date on the can or jar for your reference. Here's how to store them:

To help make the herbs and spices last longer, store them away from strong light or heat. Never put them in a rack over or near the stove, in a window or in direct sunlight. And if you use lots of special spices or dried herbs frequently, place them in the refrigerator to help keep them fresh. — Heloise

Dear Heloise: My dear, young friend is getting married and setting up her first kitchen. She loves to cook, and I want to give her a set of knives. How many does she need, and what should I look for? — Debbie in Texas

Dear Debbie: You will want to get her quality sharp knives. But she doesn't

need many. In fact, for cutting, dicing and chopping she will need only three knives. They should be made of high-quality stainless steel, and the blade should extend into the length of the knife handle. Here's what she'll need:

1. Long chef's knife. This is good for chopping and slicing.
2. Paring knife with a 2- to 4-inch blade. Use this knife to peel veggies and fruit.
3. Serrated knife. Great for slicing breads. — Heloise

Dear Readers: If you want to liven up your daily coffee, check your kitchen to find what you can use to perk up that cup of Joe.

* To flavor coffee, sprinkle cinnamon on ground coffee before brewing.

* Check extracts you have and add a drop or two of vanilla or almond to the ground coffee.

* For a mocha taste, put cocoa mix or chocolate syrup in brewed coffee. — Heloise

KEN KEN THE LOGIC PUZZLE THAT MAKES YOU SMARTER.

EASY

12x		2÷	
2÷		1-	
5+		2	4+
2	1-		

CHALLENGING

24x		2	3÷	2-	
3-		10+		2÷	5-
1-	1		1-		
	5-		3÷	5	
12+			6		2÷
2-		3-		6	

RULES

- Each row and each column must contain the numbers 1 through 4 (easy) or 1 through 6 (challenging) without repeating.
- The numbers within the heavily outlined boxes, called cages, must combine using the given operation (in any order) to produce the target numbers in the top-left corners.
- Freebies: Fill in single-box cages with the number in the top-left corner.

3-31-19

TODAY'S ANSWERS

1	2	3	4
2	3	4	1
3	4	1	2
4	1	2	3

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JUMBLE

JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form six ordinary words.

CIPMTA
LNEENF
BHAYSB
SIOACF
LOFARL
GSITTH

Download the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

PRINT YOUR ANSWER IN THE CIRCLES BELOW

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US judge throws out Trump's Arctic oil leasing order

By **JENNIFER A. DLOUHY** and **KARTIKAY MEHROTRA**
BLOOMBERG NEWS

President Donald Trump's attempt to restore oil and gas leasing in U.S. waters was blocked by a federal judge in Alaska in a victory for environmentalists who argued that offshore drilling isn't worth the risk.

U.S. District Judge Sharon Gleason ruled that Trump didn't have authority to resume selling drilling rights in more than 125 million acres of the Arctic and Atlantic oceans that President Barack Obama had sought to protect.

The ruling is a defeat for the president as well as for oil companies eager to keep new territory open for exploration. It complicates the Trump administration's plan to auction drilling rights in Arctic waters that are believed to hold more than 30 billion barrels of oil equivalent. It also reimposes three executive orders from Obama that had removed

vast stretches of the Arctic and Atlantic from future oil and gas leasing.

The judge sided with environmentalists' central argument that Trump lacks the authority to strip protections for most U.S. Arctic waters as well as some 4 million acres of the Atlantic Ocean, after Obama permanently withdrew the territory from oil and gas development.

Congress offers presidents the power to withdraw lands from exploration, but Section 12(a) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act doesn't offer them the authority to reverse such withdrawals, they argued.

The Trump administration had contended that Congress gave presidents wider power to determine which U.S. coastal waters are available for oil, natural gas and mineral development, and the Justice Department asserted that courts can't override the president's authority under the Outer Continental Shelf

law to modify prior policy actions.

Environmentalists said the judge's decision could thwart plans to sell new drilling rights as soon as 2020 in the Beaufort Sea north of Alaska.

"This decision shows that no one, not even Trump, is above the law," said Gene Karpinski, president of the League of Conservation Voters, the lead plaintiff in the case.

The American Petroleum Institute, which had intervened to help defend Trump's order, said the ruling shouldn't stop administration efforts to sell new offshore tracts for oil development.

"Our nation still has a significant opportunity before us in the development of the next offshore leasing plan to truly embrace our nation's energy potential and ensure American consumers and businesses continue to benefit from U.S. energy leadership," the API said in an emailed



AP FILE PHOTO

In this Feb. 15, 2018 file photo, Judith Enck, center, former regional administrator for the Environmental Protection Agency addresses those gathered at a protest against President Trump's plan to expand offshore drilling for oil and gas in Albany, N.Y. A U.S. judge in Alaska says President Donald Trump exceeded his authority when he reversed a ban on offshore drilling in vast parts of the Arctic Ocean.

statement.

The case was the first major test of how much power presidents have to dictate when and where offshore drilling should take place under the 66-year-old Outer Continental Shelf law, which says presidents may

withdraw unleased territory from leasing "from time to time."

The LCV, the Wilderness Society, the Sierra Club and other conservation groups said that a victory for Trump would have undercut a vital tool for protecting oceans

and coasts. The obscure Section 12(a) provision at issue had been used to preserve coral reefs and walrus grounds even before Obama used its power to block a new generation of oil drilling in fragile, remote Arctic waters.

Warren, Klobuchar agree on breaking up Big Ag

In Iowa forum on farm issues, Warren and Klobuchar support breaking up monopolies

By **ALEXANDRA JAFFE**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

STORM LAKE, Iowa — Democratic presidential contenders Elizabeth Warren and Amy Klobuchar expressed support Saturday for strengthening antitrust laws and enforcement to break up big agriculture monopolies.

"You've got these giant corporations that are making bigger and bigger profits ... and they're putting the squeeze on family farms and small

farms," Warren said at the Heartland Forum.

The U.S. senator from Massachusetts called for breaking up some of the biggest farming corporations "so that they not only do not have that kind of economic power, so that they're wiping out competition, so they're taking all the profits for themselves ... but also so that they don't have that kind of political power."

While supporting an antitrust approach, Klobuchar, a senator and

Minnesota Democrat, also proposed putting a fee on corporate mergers to help investigate noncompetitive practices.

"If we stifle competition through monopolies, we're not just going to bring up the prices for consumers, we're going to stifle entrepreneurship," she said.

Targeting monopolies was a key part of the agriculture policy Warren rolled out this week, which included a handful of proposals aimed at helping family farmers compete

in a market saturated by corporations.

Klobuchar and former Maryland Rep. John Delaney, another White House hopeful who attended the forum, also rolled out policies this week. Klobuchar announced a \$1 trillion infrastructure plan that would help expand access to rural broadband and strengthen roads. Delaney offered a comprehensive rural plan that included proposals to strengthen family farmers and rural infrastructure.



AP PHOTO

Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., speaks at the Heartland Forum held on the campus of Buena Vista University in Storm Lake, Iowa, Saturday, March 30.

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2016 BUICK ENCORE

UPGRADED CONVENIENCE MODEL, 34,600 MILES, ONE OWNER, FLORIDA COLORS

LIKE NEW



2005 MERCURY GR MARQUIS

GS MODEL, TWO OWNER, 62,000 MILES, A FINE AMERICAN LUXURY CAR, NICE CAR

\$6,887



2009 TOYOTA CAMRY

ONE OWNER, LE MODEL, TOYOTA QUALITY, SAFE-ECONOMICAL TRANSPORTATION

62,000 MILES



2015 NISSAN ROGUE

S MODEL WITH CONVENIENCE PACKAGE, 29,000 MILES, NICE COLORS, BLUETOOTH

ONE OWNER



2016 FORD ESCAPE

S MODEL, 36,000 MILES, FLORIDA CAR, SYNC RADIO SYSTEM, FACTORY WARRANTY

\$15,587



2012 SCION XB

TWO OWNER FLA CAR, 66,000 LOW-LOW MILES, UNIQUE-DEPENDABLE & SHARP

BAM!!!!!!



2015 RAM 1500

ONE OWNER, 22,600 MILES, FLAME RED, QUAD CAB EXPRESS, BIG PACKAGE TRUCK

5/100 WARRANTY



2016 GMC TERRAIN

ONE OWNER FLORIDA SUV, 21,700 MILES, 5/60 FACTORY WARRANTY, SUMMIT WHITE

LANE CHANGE WARNING



2014 MERCEDES BENZ

ONE OWNER C-250, NEAR FLAWLESS CONDITION, ALL SERVICE RECORDS ONLINE

\$16,887



2016 CHEVROLET SILVERADO

FOUR DOOR DOUBLE CAB, 5.3 LITER V-8, ONE OWNER FLORIDA TRUCK, LT MODEL

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Tiger beats Rory, misses putt

After narrowly advancing to single elimination play, Woods knocked out McIlroy at Match Play but missed a four-footer to lose in the quarterfinals to Bjerregaard.

See the story on page 2.

Sunday, March 31, 2019

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■ NCAA MEN'S BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT: No. 3 Texas Tech 75, No. 1 Gonzaga 69

Red Raiders storm into Final Four

Overlooked Big 12 champions knock off West Region's top-seeded Bulldogs

By EDDIE PELLIS
AP NATIONAL WRITER

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Texas Tech is heading to its first Final Four thanks to a kid from Italy who made the big shots and a defense that refuses to rest.

Davide Moretti opened up a late lead with the two most important 3-pointers of his life, Tariq Owens came up with a big rejection and the Red Raiders caught a ride straight to Minneapolis with a 75-69 victory over top-seeded Gonzaga on Saturday.

"Texas Tech is going to the Final Four," coach Chris Beard said. "Some of you look surprised. But

Texas Tech is going to the Final Four."

Moretti also made all four of his free throws down the stretch to wind up with 10 of his 12 points over the final 4 minutes.

The first of his 3s — a spot-up from the side of the arc — gave third-seeded Texas Tech (30-6) a five-point lead, its largest to that point, with 3:49 remaining. The second came with 1:50 left and pushed the advantage to six.

Six might not seem like much. But then again, not every defense is like the one coach Beard draws up, and demands, out of the transfers and second-choice players

he started bringing to Lubbock when he arrived three seasons ago.

Nobody's overlooking them now.

"It's real. That defense is real," Gonzaga coach Mark Few said. "It impacted us tonight. They took a lot of balls tonight."

Texas Tech had nine steals that were among 16 turnovers by Gonzaga. The Bulldogs averaged a little more than 10 per game this season.

With Texas Tech leading 68-62 and less than a minute remaining, Owens swooped over to the sideline to reject Gonzaga's NBA-bound star, Rui Hachimura, then saved the ball to give the

Red Raiders possession and start placing an exclamation point of sorts on a celebration that was just getting warmed up.

"I knew he was their best player, and that was my assignment on the court," Owens said. "I knew they'd be looking for him. Once it went out to him, I knew I had to get out there."

Gonzaga (33-4), which spent a good chunk of the season atop the AP Top 25, chipped away and pulled within 71-69 on Zach Norvell Jr.'s putback with 11 seconds left. But Josh Perkins reached over the end line and tipped the ball out of Matt Mooney's hand as he was inbounding for a

technical.

Moretti did the honors — sinking the technical free throws — and then made two more after Gonzaga fouled in desperation.

Jarrett Culver, an NBA prospect who chose his hometown college over several other suitors, led the Red Raiders with 19 points. Mooney, a transfer from South Dakota, had 17.

But, as usual, the biggest stats came on defense. Texas Tech held the Bulldogs' nation-leading offense to 42 percent shooting. This was only the fourth time Gonzaga was held under 70 this season.

"I think I turned the

ball over five times in the first half," Gonzaga forward Brandon Clarke said. "It's something I've never done."

And though Gonzaga was the only team to beat Duke and Zion Williamson at full strength this season, there will be no rematch in the Final Four.

Neither team led by more than five for the first 38:10, until Moretti spotted up for one of the most open looks of the game for either team.

He was the player brought to tears earlier this month, when his family visited from Italy and Beard brought them into the meeting room to surprise him.

■ HIGH SCHOOL SOFTBALL

THOMAS "T.J." QUEIOR: NOV 14, 1968 — MAR 25, 2019

Lady Pirates dedicate year to beloved fan, dad

Father of Port Charlotte player, former coach in youth league, shared passion for the game

By JACOB HOAG
SPORTS WRITER

Two letters were chalked in bold, white letters just behind the pitching circle at Port Charlotte High School on Friday.

T.J.

The stadium stood silent and still as the crowd honored the life of Thomas "T.J." Queior, who passed away suddenly Monday morning of what is believed to have been a heart attack.

Standing feet from his initials was his daughter and Port Charlotte first baseman Alexis Queior. A teammate's arm wrapped around her, she couldn't contain her emotions.

No one in the stadium could.

T.J., former coach, player and lifelong lover of softball, touched the lives of most of the Lady Pirate program.

From the players he helped develop since little league to the fans who enjoyed his animated cheers behind home plate, he was an integral part of the local softball scene.

"He's been nothing but softball since (Alexis) was 5," T.J.'s wife Joellyn Queior said. "He's watched many of these girls grow up since they were 5 years old. It was always for the love of the game. He was always there for the girls. It didn't matter if he knew your name or number, he was cheering everybody on and the best days he had were

watching his daughter play.

"He would do anything for everybody. It didn't matter of it was the last dime in his pocket, the last shirt on his back, he'd drop everything to go help somebody out. He's gonna be dearly missed by a lot of people."

He bettered the lives of many, but none more than Alexis, who was his pride and joy on and off the field.

He wouldn't miss a game.

A staple behind home plate, sometimes dressed in his own softball uniform, T.J. would cheer on his only daughter as she followed him in their shared



PHOTO PROVIDED

QUEIOR | 3 T.J. Queior was the father of senior first baseman Alexis Queior and a lifelong lover of softball.

■ MLB: Rays 3, Astros 1

Glasnow, bullpen combine to shut down Houston

Double by Yandy Diaz breaks up Colin McHugh's no-hit bid in the fifth inning

By DICK SCANLON
ASSOCIATED PRESS

ST. PETERSBURG — Tyler Glasnow and four relievers shut down the Houston Astros after Alex Bregman's first-inning homer, and the Tampa Bay Rays won 3-1 on Saturday.

Bregman went deep on his 25th birthday, but Glasnow (1-0) was otherwise excellent, striking out four and allowing

six hits over five innings. Ryne Stanek followed with two hitless innings, and Jose Alvarado pitched a perfect ninth for his second save.

Astros starter Collin McHugh (0-1) struck out nine and allowed two runs over five innings in his return to the rotation. A 19-game winner in 2015, McHugh was moved to the bullpen last season due to Houston's rotation depth.

McHugh didn't allow a hit until Yandy Diaz's leadoff double in the fifth. Kevin Kiermaier drove in Diaz with a two-out double, and Michael Perez made it 2-1 with a single, the third and final hit off McHugh.

Tommy Pham drove in Tampa Bay's final run with a single in the eighth off Chris Devenski. It marked the 35th straight game in which Pham has reached

base.

Singles by Jose Altuve and Michael Brantley and a walk loaded the bases for the Astros in the eighth, but right fielder Avisail Garcia ran down Josh Reddick's line drive off Adam Kolarek.

The Rays struck out 13 times.

WHO'S COUNTING?

Rays first baseman

Ji-Man Choi fielded a sharp groundball by Tony Kemp in the second inning and threw to second base to start a double play, much to the surprise of shortstop Joey Wendle, since there were two outs.

BLUE LIGHT SPECIAL

Tropicana Field is still testing blue lights to tint its roof, hoping to make

it easier for players to track flyballs. In testing done after Friday's game, players were still having difficulty tracking balls that went above the lights.

"They're making adjustments and improvements," Tampa Bay manager Kevin Cash said. "Not quite what we're looking for yet." The lights are part of a new LED system installed throughout the ballpark.

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Florida Lottery

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PICK 2

Mar. 27N	0-6
Mar. 27D	6-1
Mar. 29N	8-2
Mar. 29D	1-2
Mar. 28N	2-7
Mar. 28D	6-9
D-Day, N-Night	

PICK 3

Mar. 30N	0-5-5
Mar. 30D	1-6-4
Mar. 29N	8-3-8
Mar. 29D	5-8-2
Mar. 28N	8-4-7
Mar. 28D	7-0-1
D-Day, N-Night	

PICK 4

Mar. 30N	2-3-4-6
Mar. 30D	2-7-3-9
Mar. 29N	4-3-2-8
Mar. 29D	8-0-6-2
Mar. 28N	2-6-3-8
Mar. 28D	8-5-3-9
D-Day, N-Night	

PICK 5

Mar. 30N	7-3-9-4-5
Mar. 30D	5-0-0-9-1
Mar. 29N	8-1-7-2-6
Mar. 29D	5-2-7-2-1
Mar. 28N	7-1-8-4-7
Mar. 28D	4-4-0-0-7
D-Day, N-Night	

FANTASY 5

Mar. 30	Late
Mar. 29	9-18-26-29-32
Mar. 28	9-10-18-20-26
PAYOFF FOR MAR. 29	
7-5-digit winners	\$30,319.28
286 4-digit winners	\$119.50
8,881 3-digit winners	\$10.50

CASH FOR LIFE

Mar. 28	4-6-21-37-58
Cash Ball	1
...	
Mar. 25	17-25-33-47-51
Cash Ball	4
PAYOFF FOR MAR. 28	
0 5-5 CB	\$1,000/Day
0 5-5	\$1,000/Week
1 4-5 CB	\$2,500
6 4-5	\$500

JACKPOT TRIPLE PLAY

Mar. 29	2-8-13-26-27-39
Mar. 26	4-7-17-30-33-43
Mar. 22	6-7-11-20-27-44
PAYOFF FOR MAR. 29	
1 6-of-6	\$550,000
41 5-of-6	\$436.50
1,942 4-of-6	\$22.00
33,090 3-of-6	\$1
ESTIMATED JACKPOT	
	\$500,000

LOTTO

Mar. 30	Late
Mar. 27	13-17-19-23-39-50
Mar. 23	2-21-23-25-33-34
PAYOFF FOR MAR. 27	
0 6-digit winners	\$2.5 million
20 5-digit winners	\$3,795.50
888 4-digit winners	\$73
ESTIMATED JACKPOT	
	\$3 million

POWERBALL

Mar. 30	Late
Powerball	Late
...	
Mar. 27	16-20-37-44-62
Powerball	12
PAYOFF FOR MAR. 27	
1 5-5 + PB	\$750 million
0 5-5	\$1 million
9 4-5 + PB	\$50,000
233 4-5	\$100
ESTIMATED JACKPOT	
	\$40 million

MEGA MILLIONS

Mar. 29	5-14-15-62-66
Mega Ball	3
...	
Mar. 26	4-14-22-43-58
Mega Ball	9
PAYOFF FOR MAR. 29	
0 5 of 5 + MB	\$75 million
0 5 of 5	\$1 million
2 4 of 5 + MB	\$10,000
20 4 of 5	\$500
ESTIMATED JACKPOT	
	\$88 million

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MEN'S GOLF

Woods lands knockout punch to McIlroy, Bjerregaard's clutch shots eliminate Tiger

Four-foot missed putt ends eventful Match Play for Woods

By **DOUG FERGUSON**
AP GOLF WRITER

SPORTS ON TV

AAF FOOTBALL
4 p.m.
CBSN — Atlanta at Birmingham
8 p.m.
NFL — Arizona at San Antonio
AUTO RACING
11:05 a.m.
ESPN2 — Formula One: Bahrain Grand Prix, Bahrain
3 p.m.
FOX — MONSTER ENERGY NASCAR CUP: The O'Reilly Auto Parts 500, Fort Worth, Texas
COLLEGE BASEBALL
12 p.m.
SEC — Auburn at South Carolina
3 p.m.
SEC — Tennessee at Vanderbilt
4 p.m.
BTN — Michigan at Michigan St.
MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL
2 p.m.
CBS — NCAA Tournament: Auburn vs. Kentucky, regional final
4:30 p.m.
CBS — NCAA Tournament: Purdue vs. Virginia, regional final
WOMEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL
12 p.m.
ESPN — NCAA Tournament: UConn vs. Louisville, regional final
2 p.m.
ESPN — NCAA Tournament: Oregon vs. Mississippi St., regional final
MEN'S COLLEGE HOCKEY
4 p.m.
ESPN2 — NCAA Tournament: Teams TBD, East regional final
6:30 p.m.
ESPN2 — NCAA Tournament: Teams TBD, Midwest regional final
MEN'S COLLEGE LACROSSE
12 p.m.
ESPNU — Rutgers at Ohio State
7 p.m.
BTN — Penn State at Maryland
COLLEGE SOFTBALL
12 p.m.
BTN — Wisconsin at Penn St.
2 p.m.
BTN — Michigan St. at Indiana
ESPNU — South Carolina at LSU
4 p.m.
ESPNU — North Carolina at Pittsburgh
6 p.m.
SEC — Tennessee at Missouri
7 p.m.
ESPN2 — Arizona St. at Arizona
CROSS COUNTRY
11 p.m.
NBCSN — 2019 IAAF World Championship: from Denmark (taped)
GOLF
10 a.m.
GOLF — PGA Tour Golf: WGC-Dell Technologies Match Play, semifinal matches, Austin, Texas
2:30 p.m.
GOLF — PGA Tour Golf: Corales Puntacana Resort & Club Championship, final round, Dominican Republic
3 p.m.
NBC — PGA Tour Golf: WGC-Dell Technologies Match Play, finals and third place matches, Austin, Texas
5 p.m.
GOLF — PGA Tour Champions Golf: Rapiscan Systems Classic, final round, Biloxi, Miss.
7 p.m.
GOLF — LPGA Tour Golf: Kia Classic, final round, Carlsbad, Calif.
MLB
1 p.m.
MLB — Baltimore at NY Yankees
OR Houston at Tampa Bay
4 p.m.
ESPN — Chicago Cubs at Texas
7 p.m.
ESPN — Atlanta at Philadelphia
NBA
8:30 p.m.
NBA — Charlotte at Golden State
NHL
12 p.m.
NBC — NY Rangers at Philadelphia
5 p.m.
NHL — Carolina at Pittsburgh
7:30 p.m.
NBCSN — Boston at Detroit
RUGBY
2:30 p.m.
NBCSN — European Champions Cup: Racing 92 vs. Stade Toulousain, quarterfinal, France (taped)
MEN'S SOCCER
8:55 a.m.
ESPNEWS — Serie A: Napoli vs. AS Roma
9 a.m.
NBCSN — Premier League: Cardiff City vs. Chelsea
9:30 a.m.
FS1 — Bundesliga League: Hannover 96 vs. Schalke 04
11:25 a.m.
NBCSN — Premier League: Liverpool vs. Tottenham
12 p.m.
FS2 — Bundesliga: VfB Stuttgart vs. Frankfurt
6:30 p.m.
FS1 — MLS: Orlando City SC vs. D.C. United
9 p.m.
ESPN2 — MLS: LA Galaxy vs. Portland
TENNIS
1 p.m.
ESPN2 — Miami Open: Men's final,

AUSTIN, Texas — Tiger Woods finally met his match Saturday, and it wasn't Rory McIlroy.

Lucas Bjerregaard delivered the clutch shots so often seen from Woods to tie the match on the 16th hole and beat him on the 18th hole in a shocking conclusion when Woods missed a 4-foot putt. The victory sends the 27-year-old Dane into the semifinals of the Dell Technologies Match Play.

"It's a shame it had to end the way it did," Bjerregaard said. "Our match didn't deserve that. But I'm happy to be on the winning side."

Equally surprising was how Woods won earlier Saturday against McIlroy, a big match between the two biggest stars left at Austin Country Club. McIlroy was on the verge of squaring the match on the 16th hole when he had a short iron for his second shot into the par-5 16th. He made 7 and Woods closed him out on the next hole.

McIlroy was so angry he walked briskly away into a cart, and wouldn't make eye contact on his way to the car.

They were in the same spot below the hill on the 18th, just under 50 yards from the hole. Woods went first and his lob wedge came out soft and into a bunker. He blasted out nicely to 4 feet, but then his putt to send the match to extra holes spun off the left lip.

"This is going to sting for a few days," Woods said in his last event before the Masters.

Bjerregaard, who won his first European Tour title last fall at St. Andrews in the Dunhill Links, next faces Matt Kuchar on Sunday morning in the semifinals.

Kuchar had to cope with a contentious moment in his 2-up victory over Sergio Garcia, two players in the news this

year for all the wrong reasons.

Garcia had an 8-foot par putt on No. 7 to win the hole to square the match. He left it just short, and then casually stabbed at it from the other side as it rimmed around the cup. Such putts typically are conceded. Kuchar said that was his intention. But under the rules, a putt can't be conceded after a player hits it.

Garcia needed to birdie the 18th hole to send the match into extra holes, missed the green and wound up conceding.

Woods, who had not been at Match Play since 2013, advanced to the weekend for the first time since 2008, his third title in this World Golf Championship. All the attention was on his match with McIlroy, and Woods had a 3-up lead through 10 holes until McIlroy closed the gap.

Woods holed a 7-foot birdie putt to stay 1 up, and then it all changed on the 16th.

McIlroy pounded a 395-yard drive with the wind at his back. Woods drove into a half-buried lie in the bunker, could only advance it 60 yards and had 204 yards for his third shot before McIlroy hit a short iron for his second.

Woods never had to putt.

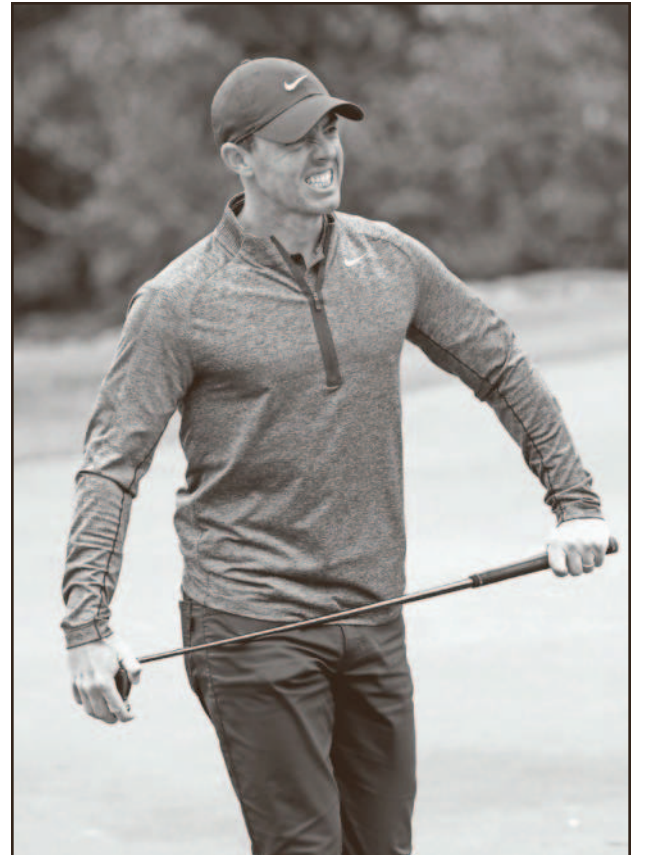
McIlroy hit a shot so bad that it was short and right. Worse yet, it hopped out of its pitch mark on the edge of a bunker, but not back enough to fall into the sand. Facing a difficult shot to the pin over another bunker, he went long and the ball rolled through the gallery against wooden posts. His only option was to go back to the original spot and play his fifth shot.

Woods, who looked certain to lose the hole and go all square, suddenly was 2 up with two to play. He closed out McIlroy with a 12-foot par putt.



AP PHOTOS

Tiger Woods, left, shakes hands with Lucas Bjerregaard after their quarterfinal match at the Dell Technologies Match Play Championship in Austin, Texas. Woods lost to Bjerregaard.



Rory McIlroy reacts to missing a putt and losing his match to Tiger Woods on the 17th hole during fourth round play.

WOMEN'S GOLF

Park tied for lead at Kia Classic

CARLSBAD, Calif. (AP) — Sung Hyun Park shot a 6-under 66 on Friday at the Kia Classic to take a share of the lead into the weekend.

The top-ranked South Korean star birdied four of the first five holes on her back nine in her

second straight bogey-free round at Aviara Golf Club.

Thidapa Suwannapura also had a 66 to match Park at 10-under 134

in the in the final event before the major ANA Inspiration next week in Rancho Mirage.

WOMEN'S TENNIS: Miami Open

Fresh face Barty latest title holder

By **STEVEN WINE**
AP SPORTS WRITER

MIAMI GARDENS — Amid the unpredictable swirl of this year's tennis results, with 33 different champions in 33 tournaments, Ashleigh Barty provides a change of pace.

The crafty 5-foot-5 Australian mixes backhand slices and drop shots with a deceptively strong serve and a knack for attacking, which is how she won the Miami Open.

Barty, 22, had 15 aces and became the newest 2019 titlist on the ATP and WTA circuits by beating Karolina Pliskova 7-6 (1), 6-3 Saturday.

That means there still has not been a repeat champion this year among the men or women.

"Amazing, isn't it?" Barty said. "On the women's side, I think the level has evened out a lot, and the depth has grown over the last few years. Everyone in the draw has a legitimate chance of winning the tournament, and you try to make the most of it."



Ashleigh Barty returns to Karolina Pliskova during the singles final of the Miami Open.

Seeded 12th, Barty won her fourth title and the biggest of her career to improve to 18-3 this year.

Barty became the fifth different Miami Open women's champion in the past five years, and she's the 14th different WTA titlist in 2019.

"I've always tried to bring as much variety to the court as possible," Barty said. "It's about trying to neutralize what

your opponent is doing. There was a phase in women's tennis of big power and first strikers, but physicality in tennis has grown, which has allowed more players to neutralize the big first ball and work their way into the point."

Barty can strike quickly, too. Her surprising serve was superior in the final even though Pliskova is 8 inches taller

at 6-foot-1.

The Aussie won a 14-stroke rally with a nifty backhand drop shot to go up 2-1 in the tiebreaker, and she was ahead the rest of the way. She outlasted Pliskova in a 20-point game to break at the start of the second set, smacked three consecutive aces for a 3-1 lead, and won eight of the final nine points.

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■ HOMETOWN HEROES

Atherley, Port Charlotte grad and Miami athlete, named ACC Women's Field Performer of the Year

BY BARBARA BOXLEITNER
SUN CORRESPONDENT

Michelle Atherley has been recognized for her indoor track and field performance.

The University of Miami senior was named the Atlantic Coast Conference Women's Field Performer of the Year.

The Port Charlotte High School graduate was cited after winning the pentathlon at the national championship, her 4,547 points setting a school record. She was named a first-team All-American by the U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association.

In addition, Atherley was named to the watch list for The Bowerman, an award given to the nation's top track and field athlete.

At the recent Power 5 Trailblazer Challenge, she won the high jump and was second in the long jump. Her fourth place in the javelin throw was a career-best effort, and she was a part of the winning 4-by-400-meter relay.

More women's track and field

Southeastern University freshman Maddison Welch placed sixth in the 3,000-meter steeplechase at the Bulls Invitational. She is out of Lemon Bay High.

Concordia University Wisconsin sophomore Alden Goucher finished fifth in the

triple jump at the Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference indoor championship. The former Pirate's effort of 34 feet, 1 1/4 inches was the fourth best in program history.

Venice High graduate Hannah Whitney finished third in the pole vault at a Texas Lutheran meet. The Trinity (Texas) freshman posted her highest finish this season.

Women's beach volleyball

Coastal Carolina University's Tanner Gauthier has an 11-7 record, including 10-6 at No. 4. She played for Venice.

Women's gymnastics

Ball State University freshman Sandra Elsadek scored 9.825 on the floor exercise at the Mid-American Conference championship. The Venice alumna scored 9.775 on the balance beam and 8.500 on the uneven bars.

Men's golf

Stetson University's Tate Smith shot 228 (73-74-81) at the University of North Alabama tournament. The past Pirate was third among the Hatters and tied for 46th.

Spencer Alexander of Towson University shot 229 (78-74-77) at the Cape Fear National. Previously at Imagine School at North Port, he finished ninth, second among the Tigers.

Send updates about area athletes to Barbara Boxleitner at jdanddoc@gmail.com.



UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI PHOTO

University of Miami track athlete Michelle Atherley, a Port Charlotte graduate, earned All-American honors after placing sixth in the pentathlon at the NCAA Division I Indoor Track and Field Championships. Her 4,547 points set a school record. She was also named a first-team All-American by the U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association.

■ HIGH SCHOOL WRESTLING

Lemon Bay's Heffner signs letter of intent



PHOTO PROVIDED

Lemon Bay wrestler Luke Heffner signed his national letter of intent to compete at Kentucky Wesleyan last week. Heffner qualified for states as a senior in the 145-pound weight class.

SPORTS ROUNDUP

Lemon Bay wins fourth straight regional title

Cooper, Andrle, and Sarver capture individual championships; Manta Rays top 24 other schools

Boys Weightlifting

Not one, not two, not three, but four Regional championships now for the Lemon Bay High School boys weightlifting team after another title was earned on Saturday.

The Mantas took the 1A-8 title, beating out Bayshore by five points. Out of 25 schools, Lemon Bay lead with 44, Bayshore had 39 and Labelle had 33 to round out the top three.

"This was our fourth Regional Championship in a row," Lemon Bay coach Don Southwell said. "Very proud of our team. We bounced back from a very difficult runner-up finish by one point to Bayshore at

the District Meet 2 weeks ago."

The individual region champions for Lemon Bay were Caleb Cooper (129-pound class, 395 total), Jordan Andrle (154-pounds, 495 total) and Cody Sarver (169-pounds, 585 total). The champions are the only automatic qualifiers for states, but after all regions report scores, more will be selected to fill out the brackets.

Other wrestlers with strong finishes include: Huy Quy, fourth place in 129-pounds; Preston Van Dine, third place in 169-pounds, Keegan Marinola, third place in 199-pounds; Billy Martin, third in 219-pounds; Wyatt Soucy, second in 238-pounds; Jacob Patterson, fifth in 238-pounds.

QUEIOR

FROM PAGE 1

passion. "You always knew that he was here," Port Charlotte coach Ryann Baker-Brose said.

"It didn't matter if we were away or at home, he was always in the stands. He loved the game and that was something him and Lexi had in common."

T.J., 50, coached softball with the Miss Charlotte youth league, building up many players who now don the red and black, and also played with an adult team at Carmalita Park in Punta Gorda.

As a former coach, it was often hard for him to sit on the sidelines. But softball was his life and he enjoyed sharing his passion with anyone that wanted to partake in his fandom.

Indescribable by his family, the only way they could put it into words was to say he was one of a kind.

"T.J. was T.J., there's

no other way to say it," Joel Lynn said.

"He liked to joke around. He loved to give everybody a hard time. If he liked you, you'd better watch out. He always had a smile on his face and it was all about softball all the time, he couldn't wait to get out there.

"He was just a good, hard-working man that loved his family and loved his friends."

There was an empty feeling permeating through the softball field without his voice and his energy, but it has brought the softball community closer together.

Everything Alexis and the Lady Pirates do for the remainder of this season will be for T.J. as they've dedicated this season to him.

"No matter how upset he could be, he was always there for everyone on the field," Alexis said. "He'll always sit there and cheer you on no matter what. I'm just going to do everything for him now."



PHOTO PROVIDED

The Port Charlotte softball team has dedicated the rest of this season to Thomas "T.J." Queior, who passed away Monday morning. The school honored him at Friday's game.

MLB STANDINGS

Baseball Expanded Standings. AMERICAN LEAGUE. East: Tampa Bay 2 1 .667, Toronto 2 1 .667, Baltimore 1 1 .500, Boston 1 1 .500, New York 1 1 .500. Central: Kansas City 2 0 1.000, Cleveland 1 1 .500, Minnesota 1 1 .500, Detroit 1 2 .333, Chicago 0 2 .000. West: Seattle 3 1 .750, Los Angeles 1 1 .500, Houston 1 2 .333, Oakland 1 3 .250, Texas 0 1 .000.

NATIONAL LEAGUE. East: New York 2 0 1.000, Philadelphia 2 0 1.000, Miami 1 2 .333, Atlanta 0 2 .000, Washington 0 2 .000. Central: Chicago 1 0 1.000, Cincinnati 1 0 1.000, Milwaukee 2 1 .667, St. Louis 1 2 .333, Pittsburgh 0 1 .000. West: San Diego 2 0 1.000, Colorado 2 1 .667, Arizona 1 1 .500, Los Angeles 1 1 .500, San Francisco 0 2 .000.

PHILLIES 8, BRAVES 6

Bryce Harper homered deep into the second deck in right-center field for his first hit with Philadelphia and celebrated with an emphatic curtain call, highlighting the Phillies' 8-6 win over the Atlanta Braves on Saturday.

ORIOLES 5, YANKEES 3

Brandon Hyde earned his first win as Baltimore's manager when slow-footed catcher Jesus Sucre was aggressive on the bases to score the go-ahead run, then added three late RBIs.

INDIANS 2, TWINS 1

Greg Allen hit a go-ahead sacrifice fly in the ninth inning, then Cleveland reliever Brad Hand escaped a bases-loaded jam. It was 34 degrees for the start at Target Field.

BLUE JAYS 3, TIGERS 0

Aaron Sanchez and four relievers combined to pitch Toronto's second straight shutout. The Tigers have scored in only one of 28 innings so far this season.

BREWERS 4, CARDINALS 2

Christian Yelich became the first MVP to homer in the first three games of the following season, Josh Hader closed things out with an immaculate inning and the Milwaukee Brewers beat the St. Louis Cardinals 4-2.

ROYALS 8, WHITE SOX 6

Miguel Rojas and Martin Prado each had three hits and the Miami Marlins won for the first time this season, beating the Colorado Rockies 7-3.

METS 11, NATIONALS 8

J.D. Davis delivered a tiebreaking two-run single in the eighth inning and rookie Pete Alonso contributed three hits and two RBIs for the new-look Mets.

ROYALS 8, WHITE SOX 6

Jorge Soler had three hits and three RBIs, Alex Gordon scored three runs despite not getting a hit and Kansas City used its speed to win.

MARLINS 7, ROCKIES 3

Miguel Rojas and Martin Prado each had three hits and the Miami Marlins won for the first time this season, beating the Colorado Rockies 7-3.

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SCOREBOARD

Rays 3, Astros 1. Houston ab rbi Tampa Bay ab rbi. Olson 1/3 0 0 0 0 30.00, Edwards, W, 1-02/3 0 0 0 0 50.00, Hand, S, 1 1 1 0 2 1 200.00, Minnesota IP H R ER BB SO NP ERA.

Orioles 5, Yankees 3. Baltimore ab rbi New York ab r h bi. Villar 2b 5000 Gardner cf 5000, Smith Jr lf 4021 Judge rf 4010, Mancini 1b 4010 Stanton lf 3010.

PHILLIES 8, BRAVES 6

Atlanta ab r hbi Philadelphia ab r h bi. Incarte cf 42 1 0 McCtchn lf 4000, Dndson 3b 40 0 0 Segura ss 4010, Sobotka p 00 00 B.Hrper rf 3111.

METS 11, NATIONALS 8

New York ab rbi Washington ab r h bi. Nimmo cf 4000 Eaton rf 41 0 0, Lagares cf 0000 T.Trner ss 41 1 0, PAlonso 1b 413 2 Rendon 3b 42 2 1.

ROYALS 8, WHITE SOX 6

New York ab r h bi Philadelphia ab r h bi. Syndergaard 6 7 4 4 0 7, Wilson W,1-0 1 0 0 0 0 0, Familia 2/3 1 0 0 1 2.

INDIANS 2, TWINS 1

Cleveland AB R H BI BB SO Avg. Martin cf 3 0 0 0 1 1.143, J.Ramirez 3b 4 0 0 0 2 .000, Naquin rf 4 0 0 0 3 .000.

BLUE JAYS 3, TIGERS 0

Detroit ab r hbi Toronto ab r h bi. J.Hrnsn 2b 3010 Drury 3b 41 1 0, Cstlins rf 4010 McKnney rf 30 11, Mi.Cbrn 1b 2020 T.Hrnan lf 21 00.

BREWERS 4, CARDINALS 2

Detroit ab r hbi Toronto ab r h bi. J.Hrnsn 2b 3010 Drury 3b 41 1 0, Cstlins rf 4010 McKnney rf 30 11, Mi.Cbrn 1b 2020 T.Hrnan lf 21 00.

ROYALS 8, WHITE SOX 6

Chicago ab r hbi Kansas City ab r h bi. L.Grcia cf 51 11 Mrrfeld rf 51 12, Moncada 3b 52 3 2 Mondesi ss 41 11, J.Abreu 1b 41 1 3 A.Grdon lf 23 00.

Colorado ab r hbi Miami ab r hbi. Blckmon rf 4021 Rojas ss-1b 5133, Dahl lf 3011 R.Hrrra rf 5021, Arenado 3b 4110 Bri.And 3b 5010.

Late Friday Red Sox 7, Mariners 6

Boston ab r hbi Seattle ab r hbi. Bnntnd lf 40 00 M.Smith cf 3112, Brts rf 50 10 Haniger rf 5010, Mrtinez dh 41 11 Do.Sntn lf 3121.

Cardinals 9, Brewers 5

St. Louis ab r hbi Milwaukee ab r hbi. M.Crpt 3b 52 21 Cain cf 4120, Jor.Hck p 00 00 Ch.Andr p 0000, Gldschm 1b 53 45 Yelich rf 3221.

ANGELS 6, ATHLETICS 2

Los Angeles ab r hbi Oakland ab r h bi. K.Clhun rf 52 21 Grssm lf 3000, Trout cf 41 22M.Chpnm 3b 4120, Bour 1b 30 01 Pscotty rf 4000.

Diamondbacks 5, Dodgers 4, 13 innings

Los Angeles ab r hbi Arizona ab r hbi. J.Dyson cf 50 10 K.Hrnan 2b 6110, E.Eschr 3b 70 00 J.Trner 3b 4010, D.Prlta lf 61 30 Freese 1b 4000.

Los Angeles 5, Dodgers 4, 13 innings

Los Angeles ab r hbi Arizona ab r hbi. J.Dyson cf 50 10 K.Hrnan 2b 6110, E.Eschr 3b 70 00 J.Trner 3b 4010, D.Prlta lf 61 30 Freese 1b 4000.

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MILWAUKEE (AP) — Christian Yelich of the Milwaukee Brewers has become the first player to win an MVP award and then hit a home run in the first three games of the next season. Yelich connected in the first inning against the St. Louis Cardinals at Miller Park on Saturday. After leading the Brewers with 36 home runs last year, he is the first player in franchise history to homer in each of the first three games of a season. The major league record for home runs to start a year is four games. Five players have accomplished that feat: Willie Mays (1971), Mark McGwire (1998), Nelson Cruz (2011), Chris Davis (2013) and Trevor Story (2016). Barry Bonds in 2002 and Albert Pujols in 2006 homered in the first two games of the year after winning MVP awards. Yelich also made an early sliding catch in right field for the NL Central champion Brewers.

SCOREBOARD

PRO BASEBALL

MLB All times Eastern AMERICAN LEAGUE EAST DIVISION Tampa Bay 2 1 .667 ...

Friday's Games Toronto 6, Detroit 0 Tampa Bay 4, Houston 2 ...

NATIONAL LEAGUE EAST DIVISION New York 2 0 1.000 ...

Friday's Games Colorado 6, Miami 1 St. Louis 9, Milwaukee 5 ...

PRO BASKETBALL

NBA All times Eastern EASTERN CONFERENCE x-Milwaukee 57 19 .750 ...

Friday's Games Boston 114, Indiana 112 Portland 118, Atlanta 98 ...

Monday's Games Detroit at Indiana, 7 p.m. Chicago at New York, 7:30 p.m. ...

CLIPPERS 132, CAVALIERS 108 CLEVELAND (108) Osman 5-13 7-19 ...

NETS 110, CELTICS 96 BOSTON (96) Tatum 4-9 0-0-9, Morris 4-11 6-7 16 ...

ROCKETS 119, KINGS 108 SACRAMENTO (108) Barnes 3-10 0-0-8, Bagley III 10-20 0-0-20 ...

PISTONS 99, TRAIL BLAZERS 90 PORTLAND (90) Harkless 5-11 0-0-10, Aminu 0-9 0-0-0 ...

MAGIC 121, PACERS 116 ORLANDO (121) Isaac 4-8 3-4 14, Gordon 9-15 1-1 23 ...

MAGIC 121, PACERS 116 ORLANDO (121) Isaac 4-8 3-4 14, Gordon 9-15 1-1 23 ...

HEAT 100, KNICKS 92 MIAMI (100) Jones Jr. 1-1 2-2 4, Olynyk 4-10 4-5 12 ...

RAPTORS 124, BULLS 101 TORONTO (124) Green 3-5 0-0-8, Ibaka 10-16 1-1 23 ...

Monday, April 8 Semifinal winners TEXAS TECH 75, GONZAGA 69 ...

ODDS

PREGAME.COM LINE COLLEGE BASKETBALL Today FAVORITE LINE UNDERDOG ...

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL Today National League FAVORITE LINE UNDERDOG ...

NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION Today FAVORITE LINE O/U UNDERDOG ...

TRANSACTIONS

BASEBALL American League SEATTLE MARINERS - Selected RHP David McKay from Tacoma (PCL) ...

BASKETBALL National Basketball Association MEMPHIS GRIZZLIES - Signed G Dusty Hannahs to a 10-day contract ...

HOCKEY National Hockey League ARIZONA COYOTES - Signed F Nick Schmaltz to a seven-year contract extension ...

SOCCER United Soccer League ORLANDO CITY B - Signed D Nathan Simeon to an academy contract ...

COLLEGES KANSAS - Announced sophomore men's basketball G Charlie Moore will transfer ...

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

MEN'S BASKETBALL All times Eastern NCAA TOURNAMENT EAST REGIONAL REGIONAL SEMIFINALS ...

SOUTH REGIONAL SECOND ROUND REGIONAL SEMIFINALS March 28 At KFC Yum! Center, Louisville, Ky. ...

MIDWEST REGIONAL SECOND ROUND REGIONAL SEMIFINALS Friday At The Sprint Center, Kansas City, Mo. ...

WEST REGIONAL SECOND ROUND REGIONAL SEMIFINALS March 28 At Honda Center, Anaheim, Calif. ...

Friday's Games N.Y. Rangers 4, St. Louis 2 Nashville 3, Pittsburgh 1 ...

NATIONAL INVITATION TOURNAMENT All times Eastern SEMIFINALS At Madison Square Garden, New York ...

COLLEGE BASKETBALL INVITATIONAL All times Eastern CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES (Best-of-3) ...

COLLEGEINSIDER.COM TOURNAMENT All times Eastern QUARTERFINALS ...

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL NCAA WOMEN'S TOURNAMENT All times Eastern GREENSBORO REGIONAL REGIONAL SEMIFINALS ...

PORTLAND REGIONAL REGIONAL SEMIFINALS Friday At Portland, Ore. ...

CHICAGO REGIONAL REGIONAL SEMIFINALS Saturday At Chicago ...

ALBANY REGIONAL REGIONAL SEMIFINALS Friday At Albany, N.Y. ...

FINAL FOUR At Tampa, Fla. NATIONAL SEMIFINALS Tuesday, April 5 ...

WOMEN'S NATIONAL INVITATION TOURNAMENT Quarterfinals Saturday Northwestern 61, Ohio 58 ...

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL INVITATIONAL SEMIFINALS Friday North Texas 56, North Alabama 53 ...

NHL All times Eastern EASTERN CONFERENCE GP W L OT PTS GF GA ...

WESTERN CONFERENCE GP W L OT PTS GF GA x-Calgary 78 48 23 7 ...

WESTERN CONFERENCE GP W L OT PTS GF GA x-Calgary 78 48 23 7 ...

conference; 2 points for win, 1 point for overtime loss. Top 3 teams in each division and two wild cards per conference advance to playoffs.

Friday's Games N.Y. Rangers 4, St. Louis 2 Nashville 3, Pittsburgh 1 ...

AHL All times Eastern EASTERN CONFERENCE ATLANTIC DIVISION GP W L OLSL Pts GF GA ...

WESTERN CONFERENCE CENTRAL DIVISION GP W L OLSL Pts GF GA ...

Friday's Games Chicago 4, Grand Rapids 3 Cleveland 6, Lehigh Valley 3 ...

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Friday's Games Chicago 4, Grand Rapids 3 Cleveland 6, Lehigh Valley 3 ...

Friday's Games Chicago 4, Grand Rapids 3 Cleveland 6, Lehigh Valley 3 ...

Friday's Games Chicago 4, Grand Rapids 3 Cleveland 6, Lehigh Valley 3 ...

Wichita at Allen, late Utah at Tulsa, late Rapid City at Idaho, late Today's Games Orlando at Greenville, 3 p.m. ...

PRO FOOTBALL

ALLIANCE OF AMERICAN FOOTBALL All times Eastern EASTERN CONFERENCE Orlando 7 1 0 .875 236 136 ...

WESTERN CONFERENCE W L T PCT. PF PA San Antonio 5 2 0 .714 152 131 ...

AUTO RACING

NASCAR MONSTER ENERGY CUP O'REILLY AUTO PARTS 500 LINEUP After Friday's qualifying, race today, at Texas Motor Speedway, Fort Worth, Texas ...

(1.48) Jimmie Johnson, Chevrolet, 188.890 mph. (2.24) William Byron, Chevrolet, 188.416. (3.09) Chase Elliott, Chevrolet, 188.271. ...

(18.17) Ricky Stenhouse Jr., Ford, 186.393. (18.66) Ryan Newman, Toyota, 186.175. (19.37) Chris Buescher, Chevrolet, 186.104. ...

GOLF

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF PGA TOURS WORLD GOLF CHAMPIONSHIPS DELL TECHNOLOGIES MATCH PLAY Saturday at Austin Country Club, Austin, Texas. ...

Purse: \$10.25 million; Yardage: 7,108; Par: 71 (Seedings in parentheses) Fourth Round Louis Oosthuizen (19), South Africa, def. ...

PGA TOUR CORALES PUNTACANA RESORT & CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP Saturday's leaders at Corales Golf Club, Punta Cana, Dominican Republic. ...

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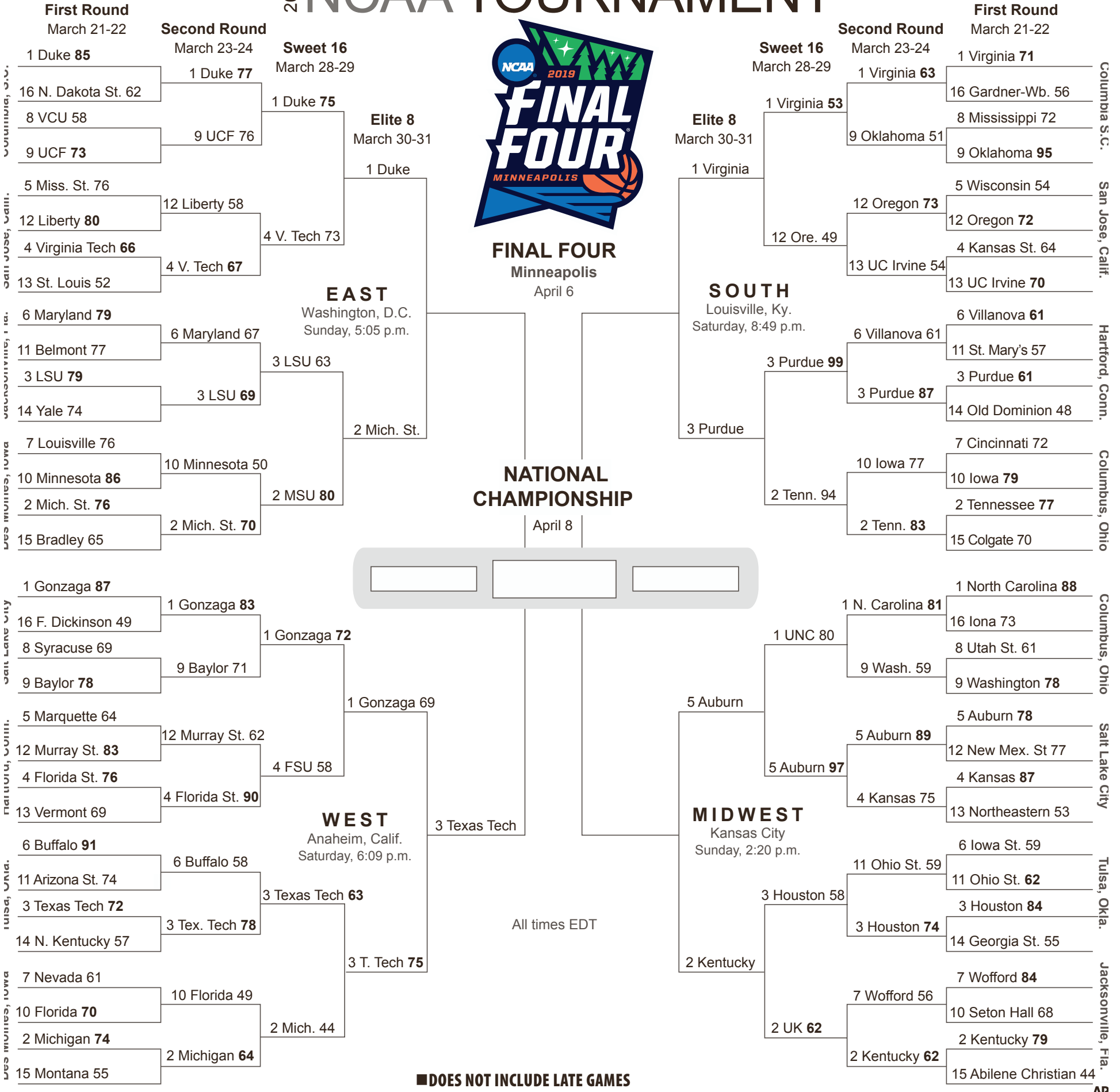
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PGA TOUR CORALES PUNTACANA RESORT & CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP Saturday's leaders at Corales Golf Club, Punta Cana, Dominican Republic. ...

16 Fairleigh Dickinson **82** 11 Belmont **81** **First Four** 16 North Dakota St. **78** 11 Arizona St. **74**
 W 16 Prairie View A&M **76** E 11 Temple **70** March 19-20 16 N.C. Central **74** E 11 St. Johns **65** W
 Dayton, Ohio

2019 NCAA TOURNAMENT



2019 NCAA TOURNAMENT



■ NHL ROUNDUP

Ovechkin nets 51st goal in Caps' 6-3 win vs Tampa

TAMPA (AP) — Alex Ovechkin scored his 50th and 51st goals of the season, leading the Washington Capitals to a 6-3 victory against the Tampa Bay Lightning on Saturday night.

Nicklas Backstrom and T.J. Oshie also scored twice, while Braden Holtby finished with 25 saves as the Capitals won their fourth consecutive game. Backstrom also became the seventh Washington player to reach 20 goals this season.

Ovechkin reached the 50-goal mark for the eighth time in his career. Only Mike Bossy and Wayne Gretzky, who each did it nine times, have scored 50 goals in a season more in NHL history. Ovechkin also scored his 657th career goal, moving past Brenden Shanahan for 13th-most in league history.

The first goal for Ovechkin came in the third period as Oshie fed a cross-ice pass from the left boards to the bottom of the right circle for a one-timer. Ovechkin added a power play goal at 16:15, his 247th career power play goal to tie Luc Robitaille for fourth on the all-time list.

Nikita Kucherov notched his 39th of the season for Tampa Bay, while Tyler



Washington Capitals center Nicklas Backstrom celebrates his goal against the Tampa Bay Lightning with left wing Alex Ovechkin during the first period of an NHL hockey game on Saturday.

Johnson and J.T. Miller also scored for the Lightning. Andrei Vasilevskiy finished with 29 saves.

The Lightning played the final two periods without defenseman Victor Hedman, who sustained an injury late in the first period.

FLORIDA 4, BOSTON 1

BOSTON (AP) — Troy Brouwer scored a short-handed goal, Roberto

Luongo stopped 30 shots and the Florida Panthers beat Boston 4-1 on Saturday to end the Bruins' home winning streak at 12.

Evgenii Dadonov scored twice and Riley Sheahan added a goal for Florida. Eliminated from playoff contention, the Panthers have won two straight.

Noel Acciari scored and Tuukka Rask made 19 saves for Boston. The Bruins have already clinched a playoff berth and will most likely

open the postseason at home against Toronto.

CAROLINA 5, PHILADELPHIA 2

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — Teuvo Teravainen and Dougie Hamilton scored 21 seconds apart in the first period, and Carolina beat Philadelphia to boost its playoff hopes and eliminate the Flyers from contention.

Justin Faulk, Jaccob Slavin and Brock McGinn and Petr

Mrazek made 30 saves for Carolina. The Hurricanes are in position for the first Eastern Conference wild card.

Claude Giroux and Oskar Lindblom scored for Philadelphia.

ST. LOUIS 3, NEW JERSEY 2

NEWARK, N.J. (AP) — Defenseman Vince Dunn scored in close with 2.8 seconds left in overtime and

the St. Louis Blues beat New Jersey 3-2 on Saturday night for their 11th straight victory over the Devils.

Robert Thomas and Tyler Bozak also scored for the Blues, and Jake Allen made 25 saves. St. Louis is 27-10-4 since the turn of the year.

Drew Stafford and Joey Anderson scored for the Devils and Cory Schneider made 24 saves. New Jersey lost for the second straight night.

N.Y. ISLANDERS 5, BUFFALO 1

UNIONDALE, N.Y. (AP) — Jordan Eberle continued his scoring surge with another goal, Anthony Beauvillier added two of his own and the New York Islanders clinched a playoff berth for the first time since 2016 with a 5-1 victory over the Buffalo Sabres on Saturday night.

Michael Dal Colle and Ryan Pulock also scored for the Islanders, who have 99 points in their first season under coach Barry Trotz and secured a postseason spot in March for the first time since 1990. If the Islanders finish first or second in the Metropolitan Division, it would mark the first time since 1988 they would open a playoff series at home.

AP PHOTO

■ NBA ROUNDUP

Harden has 50-point triple-double, Rockets beat Kings

By KRISTIE RIEKEN
AP SPORTS WRITER

HOUSTON (AP) — James Harden and the Houston Rockets knew they'd have to be aggressive Saturday night to counteract the young and fast-paced Sacramento Kings.

It was that mindset that led to another huge game for the Beard and a victory for the Rockets.

Harden had 50 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists, scoring 10 straight Houston points down the stretch to help the Rockets beat the Kings 119-108.

"They made a run, which we knew they were going to have in them," Harden said. "But I just tried to be aggressive, whether it was making an assist or getting to the basket or shooting my shot. That was it."

Harden had his 42nd career triple-double and third 50-point game in

the last six. He made seven 3-pointers to become the ninth player in NBA history to reach 2,000 career 3s. It was his NBA-record fifth 50-point triple-double, which is two more than second-place Russell Westbrook, and the second this season.

DETROIT 99, PORTLAND 90

DETROIT (AP) — Reggie Jackson scored 28 points, Andre Drummond had 22 points and 19 rebounds, and the Detroit Pistons ended the Portland Trail Blazers' six-game winning streak with a 99-90 victory on Saturday night.

The Pistons were missing Blake Griffin, who was scratched moments before game time with a sore left knee, but were able to maintain a half-game lead over the Brooklyn Nets for the sixth seed in the Eastern

Conference. Detroit has won 11 straight at home.

Damian Lillard scored 23 points and Enes Kanter added 20 points and 15 rebounds for Portland, which fell a half-game behind the Houston Rockets for the third seed in the Western Conference.

BROOKLYN 110, BOSTON 96

NEW YORK (AP) — D'Angelo Russell scored 20 of his 29 points in another blistering third quarter against Boston, leading the Brooklyn Nets to a 110-96 victory over the short-handed Celtics on Saturday night.

Back from a seven-game trip that lasted more than two weeks, the Nets had a happy homecoming thanks largely to Russell, who added 10 assists and finished with 25 points after halftime.

It was the third straight time he hurt the Celtics

in the third quarter, and the Nets really needed this one after going 2-5 on the road and dropping into seventh place in the Eastern Conference.

L.A. CLIPPERS 132, CLEVELAND 108

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Montrezl Harrell scored 23 points, rookie Shai Gilgeous-Alexander added 22 points and eight assists, and the playoff-bound Los Angeles Clippers beat the Cleveland Cavaliers 132-108 on Saturday.

The Clippers have won seven of eight and 12 of 14, and they moved within one-half game of San Antonio for the fifth seed in the Western Conference.

JaMychal Green added 18 points and 10 rebounds for the Clippers, who connected on 15 of 33 3-pointers. Los Angeles shot 62.4 percent overall.



Houston Rockets guard James Harden reacts after making a 3-point basket during the first half of an NBA basketball game against the Sacramento Kings on Saturday.

AP PHOTO

■ WOMEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL ROUNDUP

Notre Dame slides past Texas A&M in Sweet 16

CHICAGO (AP) — Arike Ogunbowale scored a career-high 34 points, Jessica Shepard added 24 points and 14 rebounds, and defending national champion Notre Dame beat Texas A&M in the Sweet 16 for the second straight year, 87-80 on Saturday.

Ogunbowale scored 12 in the final 6:45 to help the top-seeded Fighting Irish (33-3) advance to the Elite Eight of the women's NCAA Tournament for the eighth time in nine years. Ogunbowale, the Irish's career scoring leader, surpassed her previous high of 32 points. Shepard dominated down low, and Notre Dame got a sweet repeat to go with its 12th straight win.

Chennedy Carter led Texas A&M (26-8) with a season-high 35 points in another impressive NCAA performance. The

sophomore guard came in averaging just over 30 points in five career tournament games and came out connecting again, nailing 7 of 12 3-pointers.

Kayla Wells scored 18 for the fourth-seeded Aggies.

BAYLOR 93, S. CAROLINA 68

GREENSBORO, N.C. (AP) — Baylor reached the Elite Eight for the fifth time in six years with another dominant performance, drubbing South Carolina in the Greensboro Regional semifinals.

Didi Richards scored a career-high 25 points, and Lauren Cox added 17 points and 14 rebounds for the No. 1 overall seed. The Bears shot 52 percent to win their 26th straight game and blow out South Carolina for the second time this

season.

Kalani Brown had 18 points and 10 boards, and Juicy Landrum and Chloe Jackson each finished with 12 points for the Bears (34-1).

Baylor will play second-seeded Iowa on Monday night with the winner advancing to the Final Four.

Te'a Cooper scored 17 points and Mikiah Herbert Harrigan added 16 for the fourth-seeded Gamecocks (23-10).

IOWA 79, N. C. STATE 61

GREENSBORO, N.C. (AP) — Megan Gustafson had 27 points and 12 rebounds to lead Iowa past North Carolina State in the Greensboro Regional semifinals.

Hannah Stewart added 16 points and 10 rebounds. Gustafson, who averages a Division I-best



Notre Dame's Arike Ogunbowale grabs a rebound against Texas A&M's Aja Ellison during the second half of a regional semifinal game in the NCAA women's college basketball tournament.

AP PHOTO

28 points while also ranking second in rebounding, finished with her 33rd double-double to match the NCAA's single-season record. She made 10 of her 13 shots. They helped the

second-seeded Hawkeyes (29-6) earn their first Elite Eight appearance since 1993. Iowa will play top-seeded Baylor on Monday night with the winner advancing to the Final Four.

Freshman Elissa Cunane had 14 points and 11 rebounds, Kiara Leslie had 16 points and DD Rogers added 12 points for the third-seeded Wolfpack (28-6), who shot just 35 percent.

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TODAY / TONIGHT	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Partly sunny and pleasant HIGH 82° 0% chance of rain	Rather cloudy with a shower or t-storm 80° / 61° 55% chance of rain	A couple of showers and a thunderstorm 77° / 54° 60% chance of rain	Nice with plenty of sun 79° / 56° 0% chance of rain	Pleasant with partial sunshine 82° / 60° 5% chance of rain	Delightful with clouds and sun 85° / 65° 25% chance of rain

71° GULF WATER TEMPERATURE

Shows today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.

FLORIDA CITIES

City	Today			Mon.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Apalachicola	74	49	t	60	48	r
Bradenton	79	64	pc	76	63	r
Clearwater	77	65	pc	71	61	r
Coral Springs	83	65	pc	84	64	t
Daytona Beach	84	59	pc	70	59	r
Fort Lauderdale	82	67	pc	83	65	t
Fort Myers	83	62	pc	82	65	t
Gainesville	84	54	pc	62	54	r
Jacksonville	82	54	t	59	51	r
Key Largo	80	68	pc	81	69	t
Key West	82	72	pc	83	73	t
Lakeland	84	63	pc	75	59	r
Melbourne	84	62	pc	79	62	r
Miami	82	66	pc	83	65	t
Naples	80	63	pc	80	64	t
Ocala	82	55	pc	63	54	r
Okeechobee	82	59	pc	81	61	t
Orlando	87	61	pc	75	60	r
Panama City	70	47	t	62	48	sh
Pensacola	59	46	c	66	48	r
Pompano Beach	82	66	pc	84	66	t
St. Augustine	80	57	pc	63	57	r
St. Petersburg	80	63	pc	74	61	r
Sarasota	79	62	pc	78	62	t
Tallahassee	74	47	c	60	44	r
Tampa	81	63	pc	75	62	r
Vero Beach	83	60	pc	80	62	t
West Palm Beach	81	64	pc	83	63	t

TIDES

Location	Today		Mon.	
	High	Low	High	Low
Punta Gorda	2:58p	8:00a	---	7:49p
Englewood	1:35p	6:16a	11:46p	6:05p
Boca Grande	12:04p	5:01a	10:45p	4:06p
El Jobean	12:30a	8:29a	3:30p	8:18p
Venice	11:50a	4:55a	10:01p	4:44p
Tarpon Springs to Apalachicola	4:47 a.m.	9:12a	3:23p	9:35p

MARINE

Location	Wind	Speed	Seas	Bay/Inland
Cape Sable to Tarpon Springs	SSW	4-8	0-1	Light
Tarpon Springs to Apalachicola	SSW	4-8	1-2	Light

SUN AND MOON

Day	The Sun			The Moon		
	Today	Rise	Set	Today	Rise	Set
Monday	7:21 a.m.	7:45 p.m.	7:20 a.m.	4:47 a.m.	3:53 p.m.	5:25 a.m.

SOLAR TABLE

Day	Minor	Major	Minor	Major
Today	3:00a	9:12a	3:23p	9:35p
Monday	3:41a	9:52a	4:03p	10:15p
Tuesday	4:20a	10:31a	4:42p	10:53p

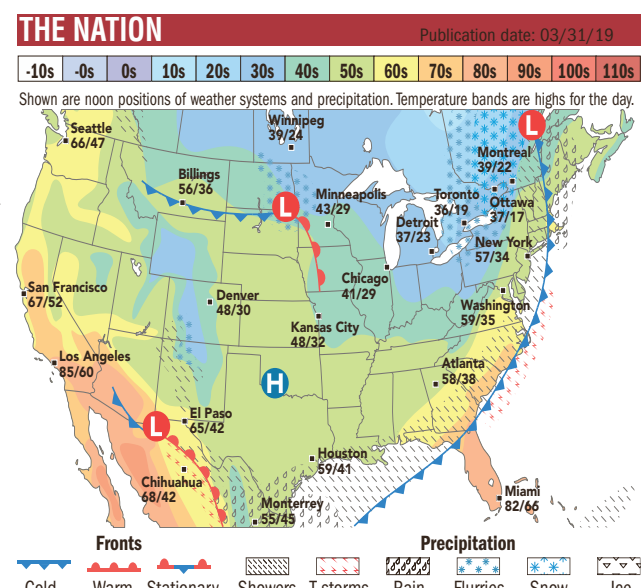
WEATHER HISTORY

On March 31, 1954, the mercury soared to 108 degrees in Rio Grande City, Texas.

WEATHER TRIVIA™

Q: What name is given to the lines that connect points of equal pressure?

A: Isobars



U.S. Extremes

(For the 48 contiguous states yesterday)

High	86° at Marathon, FL	Low	3° at Gothic, CO
------	---------------------	-----	------------------

U.S. Cities

City	Today			Mon.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Albuquerque	53	35	sh	60	42	s
Anchorage	46	29	s	45	29	s
Atlanta	58	38	pc	60	40	pc
Baltimore	57	29	sh	50	31	s
Billings	56	36	pc	51	32	c
Birmingham	57	34	pc	63	41	pc
Boise	61	42	pc	62	46	c
Boston	62	36	r	45	32	pc
Buffalo	36	22	sf	36	28	s
Burlington, VT	52	25	r	37	28	pc
Charleston, WV	44	25	pc	50	30	pc
Charlotte	63	32	pc	57	33	pc
Chicago	41	29	s	51	41	pc
Cincinnati	40	25	s	50	32	s
Cleveland	34	24	sf	43	32	s
Columbia, SC	69	37	sh	59	35	c
Columbus, OH	38	24	s	47	31	pc
Concord, NH	58	29	r	40	23	s
Dallas	57	40	s	55	40	pc
Denver	48	30	pc	57	34	pc
Des Moines	48	33	s	58	38	s
Detroit	37	23	sf	46	35	s
Duluth	40	25	c	45	30	pc
Fairbanks	53	22	s	51	26	s
Fargo	37	22	sn	42	29	c
Hartford	57	31	sh	45	25	c
Helena	46	31	pc	45	26	c
Honolulu	82	65	s	82	68	s
Houston	59	41	c	60	41	sh
Indianapolis	39	26	s	50	34	s

WORLD CITIES

City	Today			Mon.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Amsterdam	51	34	pc	54	40	pc
Baghdad	77	57	pc	64	53	pc
Beijing	61	35	pc	63	35	s
Berlin	52	29	pc	49	34	s
Buenos Aires	83	63	pc	78	64	sh
Cairo	65	56	pc	68	57	pc
Calgary	41	29	c	46	27	c
Cancun	84	72	pc	86	71	pc
Dublin	49	40	pc	51	35	r
Edmonton	41	25	c	47	22	pc
Halifax	47	38	pc	43	28	r
Kiev	62	41	pc	51	30	pc
London	54	41	pc	55	42	s
Madrid	65	46	t	65	45	t

PORT CHARLOTTE

Punta Gorda through 2 p.m. Saturday

Temperatures	High/Low	Normal High/Low	Record High	Record Low
79°/61°	81°/57°	82°/59°	90° (2002)	44° (2015)

Precipitation (in inches): 0.00"

MONTHLY RAINFALL

Month	2019	2018	Avg.	Record/Year
Jan.	3.77	1.98	1.80	9.93/2016
Feb.	2.89	0.66	2.43	11.05/1983
Mar.	1.01	0.53	3.28	9.26/1970
Apr.	1.15	2.03	5.80	15.98/2018
May	15.98	2.50	15.98	23.99/1974
Jun.	6.23	8.92	14.22	14.22/1995
Jul.	9.80	8.01	15.60	15.60/1995
Aug.	12.37	6.84	14.03	14.03/1979
Sep.	7.58	6.84	10.88	10.88/1995
Oct.	2.60	2.93	5.53	5.53/2002
Nov.	1.91	1.91	6.83	6.83/2002
Dec.	2.47	1.78	6.83	6.83/2002
Year	7.67	63.26	50.65	(since 1931)

VENICE

Venice through 2 p.m. Saturday

Temperatures	High/Low	Normal High/Low	Record High	Record Low
79°/61°	78°/59°	89° (2002)	47° (2015)	

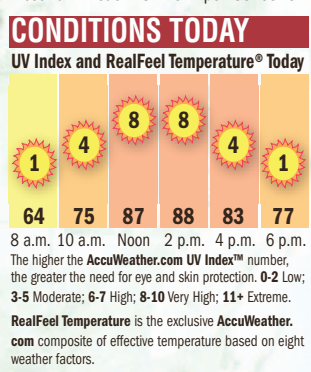
Precipitation (in inches): 0.00"

SEBRING

Sebring through 2 p.m. Saturday

Temperatures	High/Low	Normal High/Low	Record High	Record Low
79°/55°	78°/59°	89° (2002)	47° (2015)	

Precipitation (in inches): Trace



POLLEN INDEX

Category	Level
Trees	absent
Grass	absent
Weeds	absent
Molds	absent

AIR QUALITY INDEX

Index	Category
45	Good

Johnson in position to end drought in Texas

With first pole since 2016, a chance to end career-long, 65-race winless streak

By **STEPHEN HAWKINS**
AP SPORTS WRITER

FORT WORTH, Texas — Maybe Jimmie Johnson can do something old at Texas, and get back into Victory Lane.

"I think the term 'new' is the thing that has hurt us the most this year. We know and acknowledge that what we were trying last year didn't work," Johnson said. "Us trying new things and not having a past history with these setups, and honestly searching for greatness and to get an advantage. In some respects maybe we've been a little aggressive in trying to start the year."

With his career-long winless streak at 65 races since a win at Dover in June 2017, Johnson is the polesitter in his No. 48 Chevrolet Camaro for Sunday's race at the 1 1/2-mile Texas track where he is a seven-time winner.

It is his first pole anywhere since 2016, the season he won the last of his seven NASCAR Cup championships.

And maybe this will be the first race of 2019 that someone wins other than a driver from Joe Gibbs Racing or Team Penske. Each of those teams won three of the first six races.

Johnson and his Hendrick Motorsports teammates William Byron and Chase Elliott

are starting in the top three spots. Daniel Suarez qualified fourth for Stewart-Haas Racing, the team that last November in Texas had three of the top four starters and sent Kevin Harvick to Victory Lane.

"It's week to week. I think that everyone on the West Coast was kind of tied into however they built their cars it was done, and they were kind of stuck through the West Coast," JGR driver Denny Hamlin said. "But I think now this is the first mile-and-a-half we've had back where people have learned from the West Coast and made adjustments. Certainly, this weekend you can see a shift in cars that are fast that hadn't been in the past."

Hamlin, who won the opener at Daytona and has finished no worse than 11th this season, was the highest-qualifying Gibbs driver at Texas in sixth. He also had the fastest lap at 186.987 mph in the only practice Saturday, when temperatures were around 50 degrees — about 20 degrees cooler than Friday.

Johnson had the top practice speeds Friday, and led all three stages of qualifying to get the pole at 188.890 mph.

He was fifth-fastest in practice Saturday at 186.047 mph.

This will be the 37th



Jimmie Johnson, who hasn't won since 2017, has the pole for Sunday's race at Texas Motor Speedway in Fort Worth, Texas.

Cup race at Texas Motor Speedway since the track opened in 1997. It is the fifth since a total repave when Turns 1 and 2 were also reconfigured before the 2017 spring race that Johnson won.

Johnson last week finished 24th at Martinsville, where he got lapped during the

second stage on the historic short track where he leads all active drivers with nine victories. He is 15th in season points, after finishing 14th last year for the worst showing in his 17 full Cup seasons so far.

"I had so much support on social media," the 43-year-old

Johnson said in sarcastic response. "There were so many nice people talking about me and how good of a driver I am and how young I am."

As he spoke, Johnson could see on the far wall a photo of him celebrating in Victory Lane one of his wins at Texas.

Both arms are raised

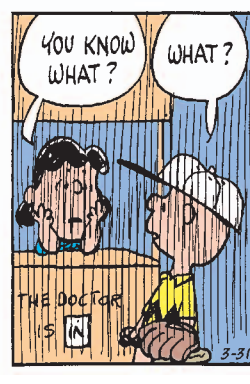
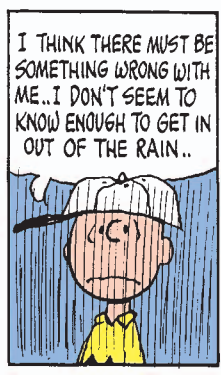
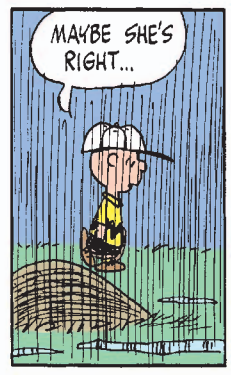
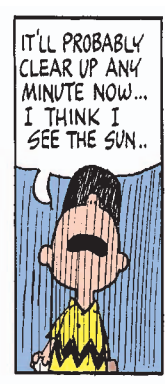
into the air and the checked flag is in his right hand.

Johnson's seven Cup wins are the most at Texas, four more than Kyle Busch, the next closest active driver. Johnson also holds track records with his 15 top-five finishes in his 30 starts, and 1,041 laps led.

The FUNNIES

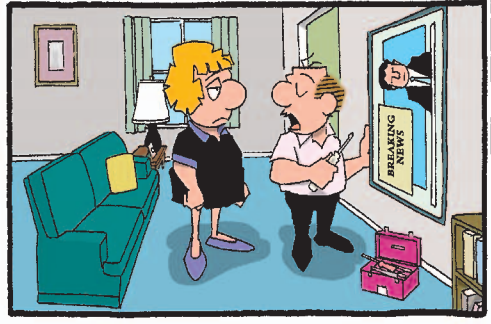
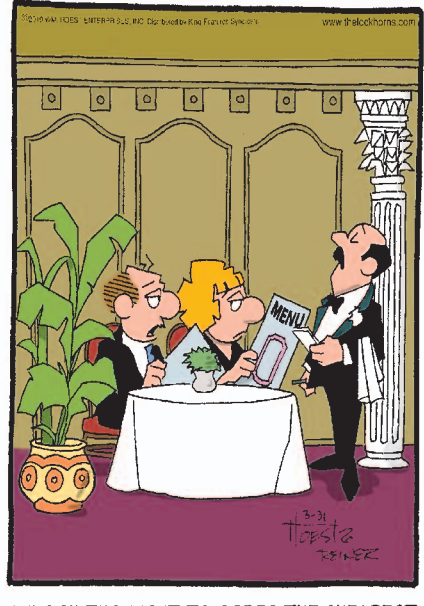
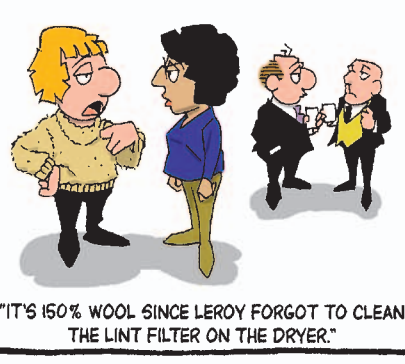
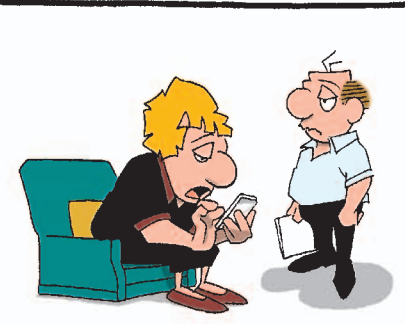
PEANUTS

featuring
"Good ol'
Charlie Brown"
by SCHULZ



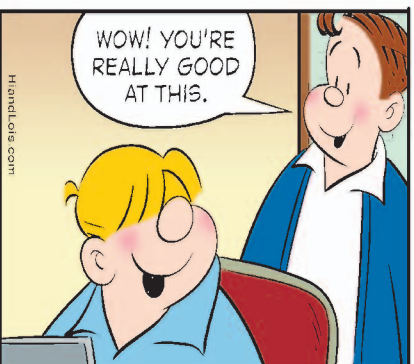
THE LOCKHORNS

BY BUNNY HOEST AND JOHN REINER



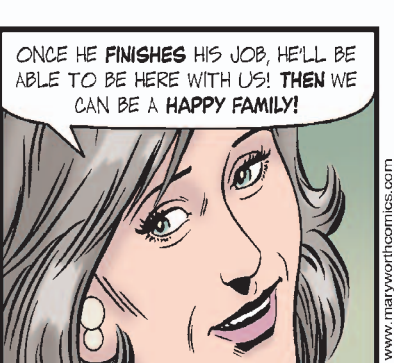
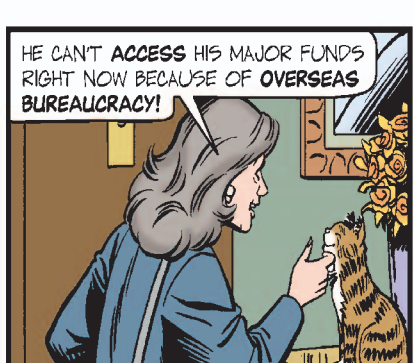
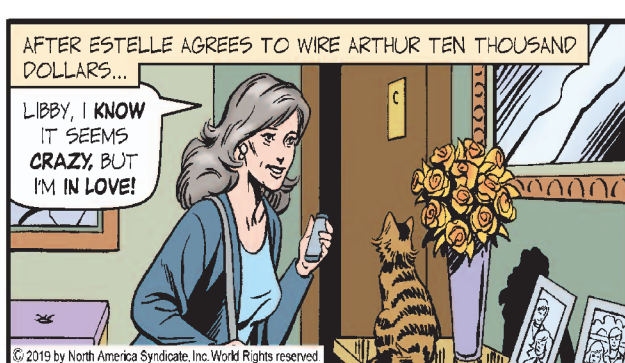
Hi and LOIS

by BRIAN and GREG WALKER



MARY WORTH

"RATHER THAN LOVE, THAN MONEY, THAN FAME, GIVE ME TRUTH."
- HENRY DAVID THOREAU



The FAMILY CIRCUS
By **BIL KEANE**

ALL RIGHT. YOU MAY COME OUT NOW, BUT FROM NOW ON, STOP BEING SUCH A NUISANCE TO BILLY AND DOLLY.

I'M BAAAACK!

JEFF and BIL KEANE

Wizard of ID
by **Hart, Mastroianni and Parker**

LOOK OUT! IT'S COMING!

RUN!

SQUAK

3-31-19

EEEK

CRASH

AAHGG! KILL IT! ACK!

I'M THINKING THERE WERE A FEW LIES IN THAT SPEECH, SIRE

BLAME MY WRITERS

Mort Walker's
beetle bailey

GOOD THING I CAN STREAM OLD "LASSIE" EPISODES

SOMETIMES I WISH I HAD A NORMAL LIFE...

GOING FOR LONG WALKS

PLAYING WITH OTHER DOGS

DOG PARK

SLEEPING BY A WARM FIRE IN A COZY HOUSE

LOOK WHAT COOKIE MADE FOR YOU!

I GUESS THE LIFE OF AN ARMY DOG ISN'T SO BAD

OTTO

3-31

HAGAR
the horrible
by **DIK BROWNE**

GRANDMA ALWAYS SAID, "YOU NEVER GET A SECOND CHANCE TO MAKE A FIRST IMPRESSION!"

BUT GRANDPA SAID, "IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED, TRY, TRY AGAIN!"

I'M HOME!!

DADDY! HAGAR!

DAD!

WE LOVE YOU!!

SO, WHAT DID YOU BRING US?

UMMM...

WELL, IT WAS NICE WHILE IT LASTED!

3-31

BLONDIE
BY **DEAN KELLEY & JOHN MARSHALL**

RING RING

HELLO?

DAGWOOD? NOPE, SORRY, I DON'T KNOW WHERE HE IS

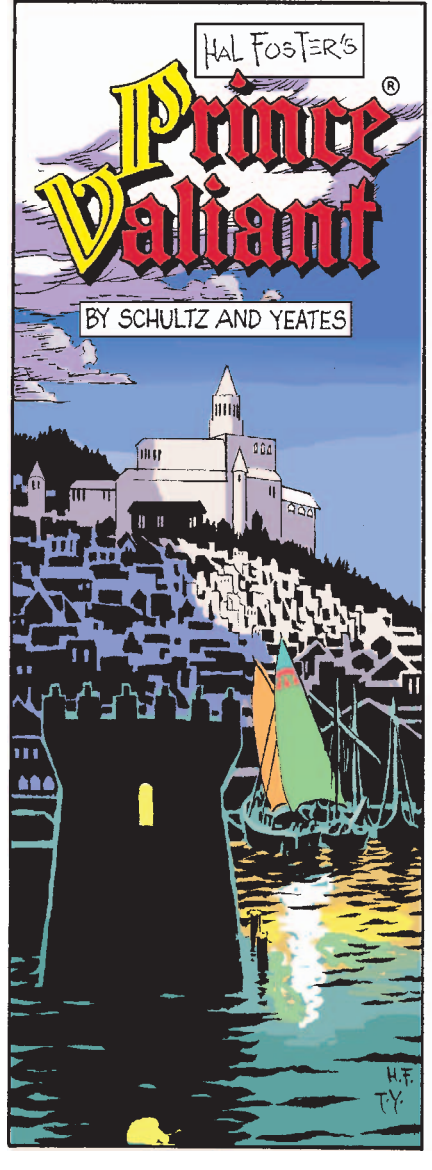
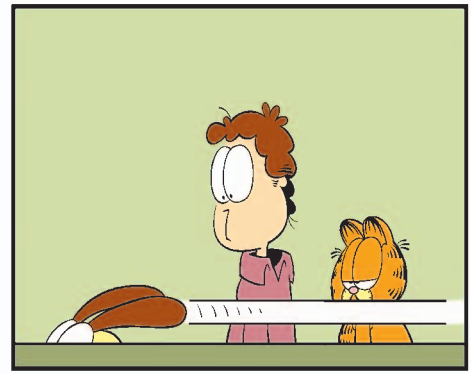
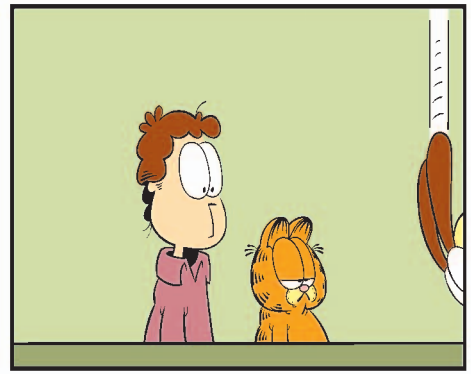
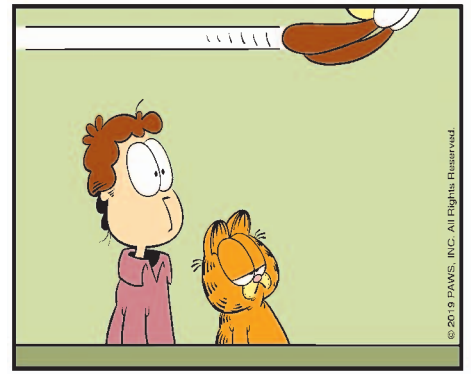
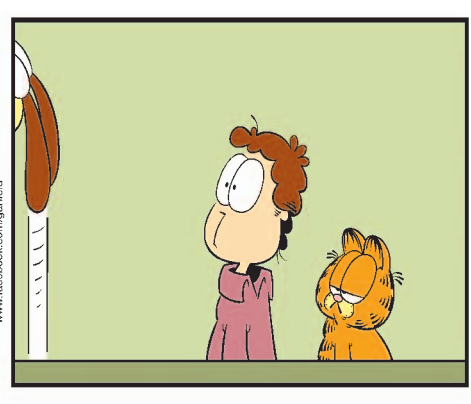
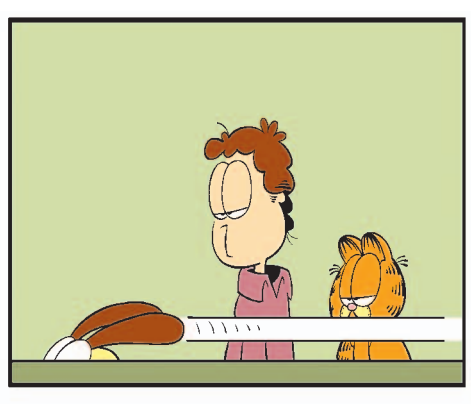
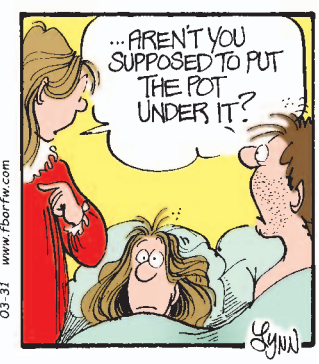
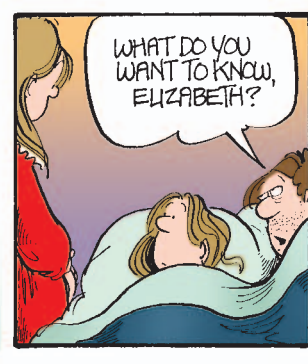
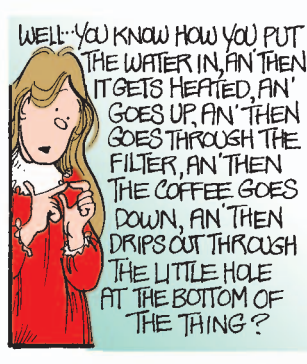
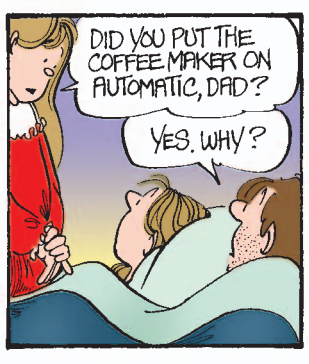
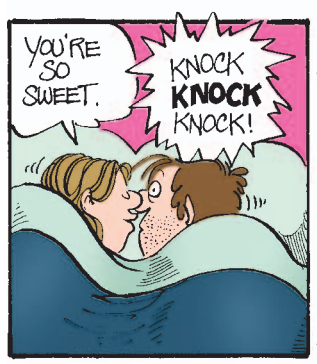
BLONDIE? I THINK SHE WENT TO THE SUPERMARKET

ME? I'M THE PLUMBER WORKING ON THEIR KITCHEN SINK

CAN I ANSWER A FEW MORE QUESTIONS FOR YOU? WELL, SURE...

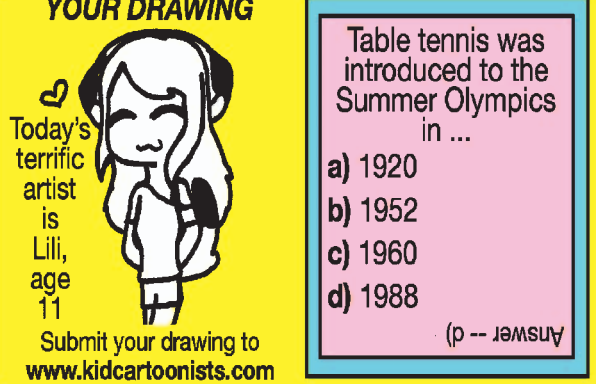
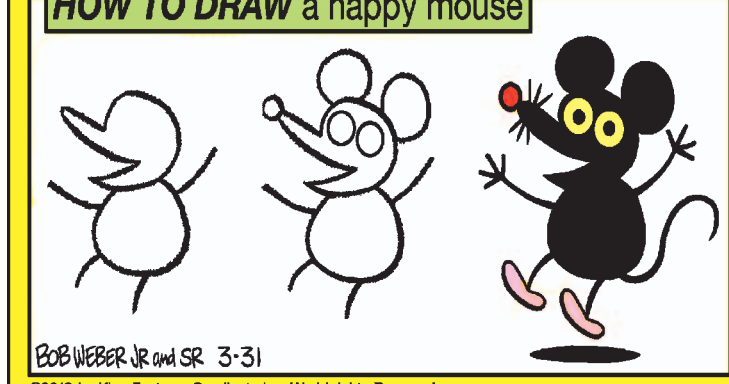
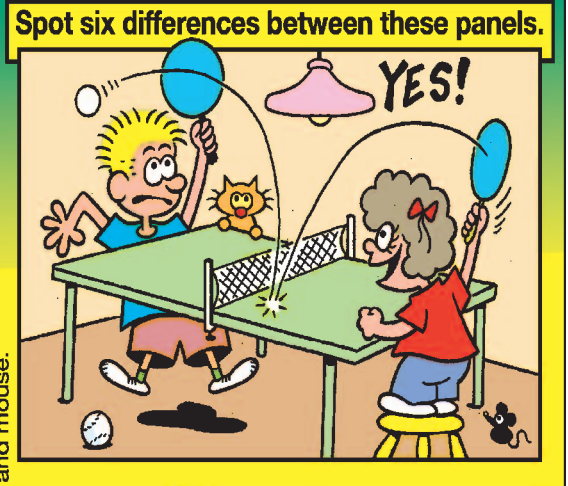
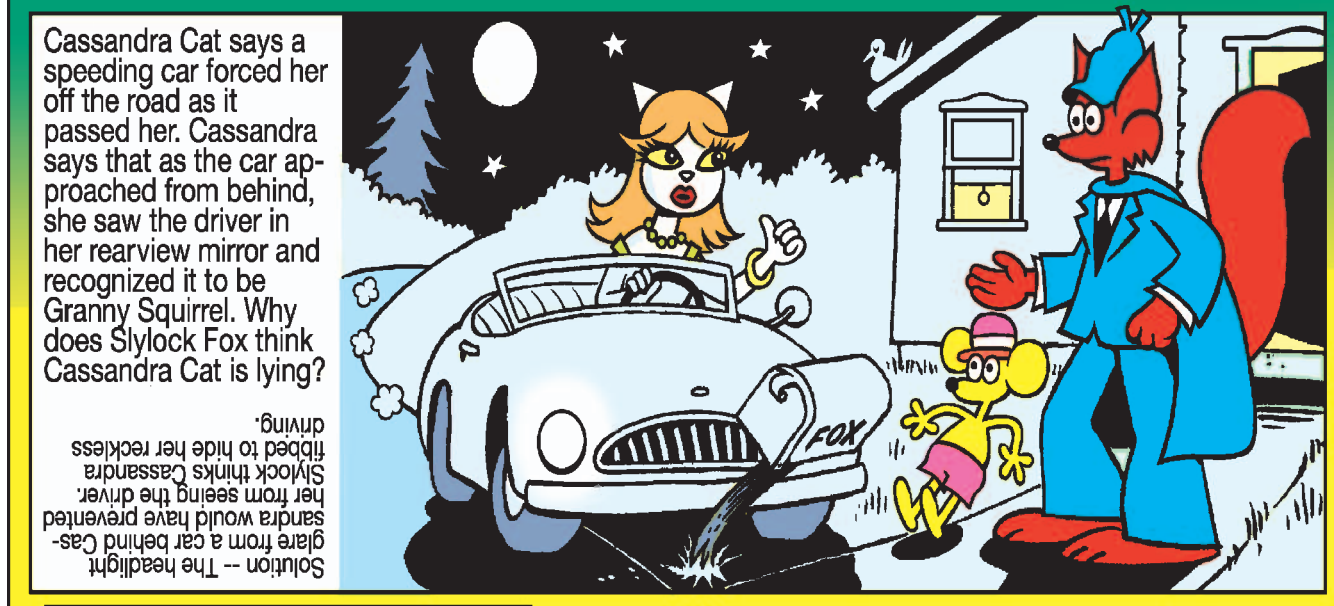
BUT DON'T FORGET, I GET PAID BY THE HOUR

3-31

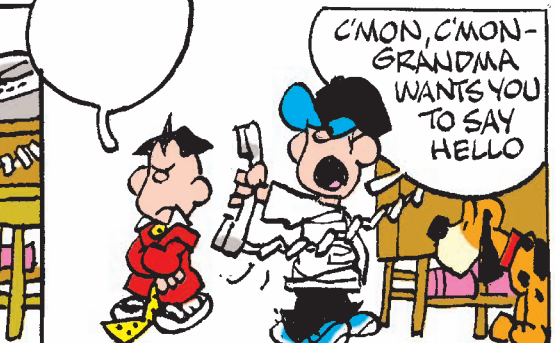
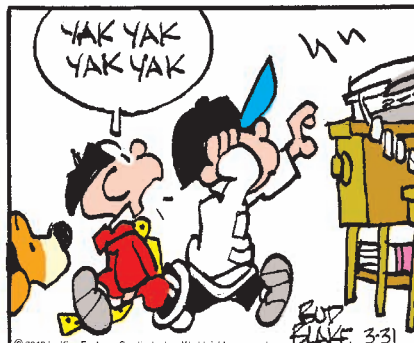
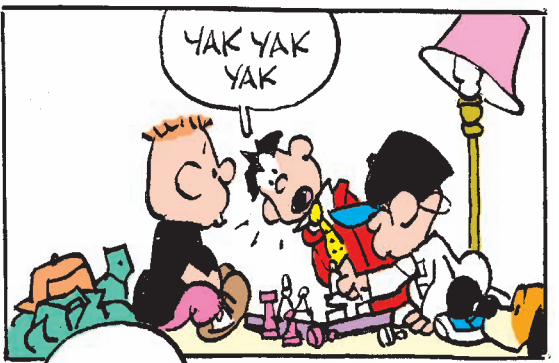
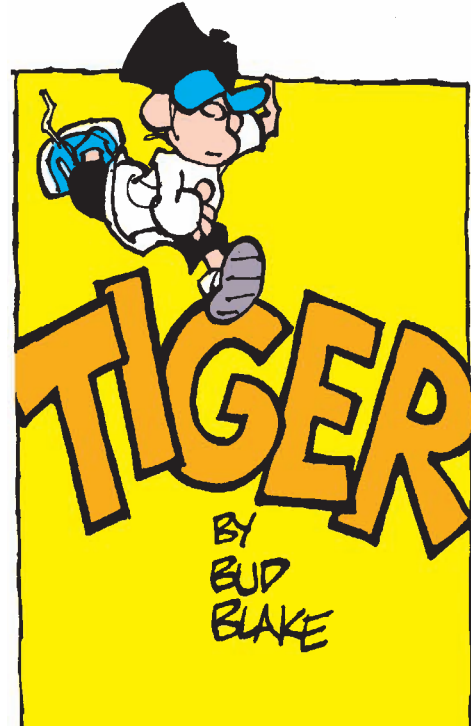
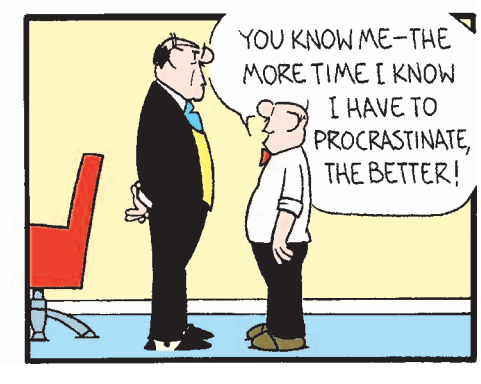
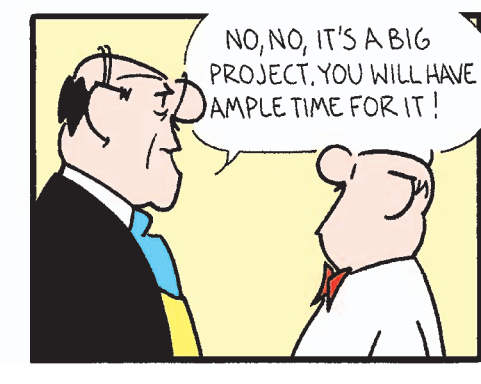
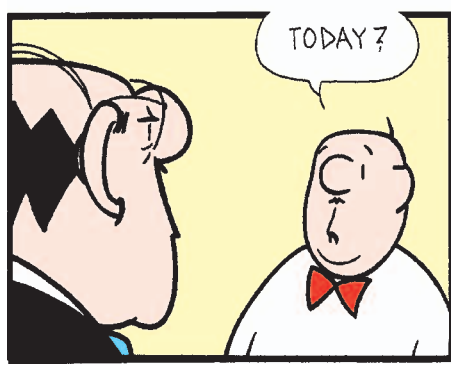
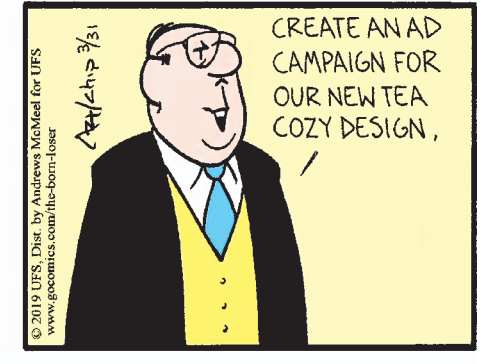
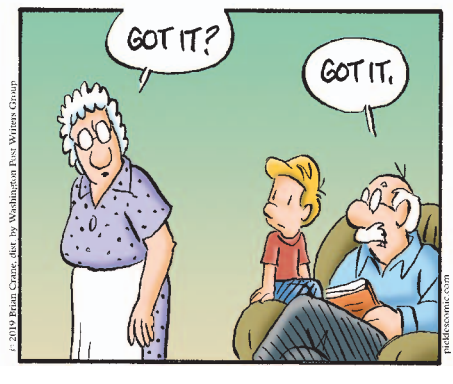
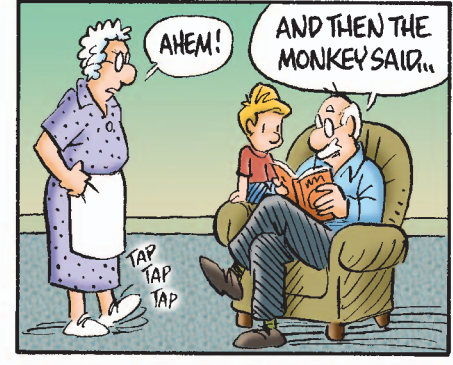
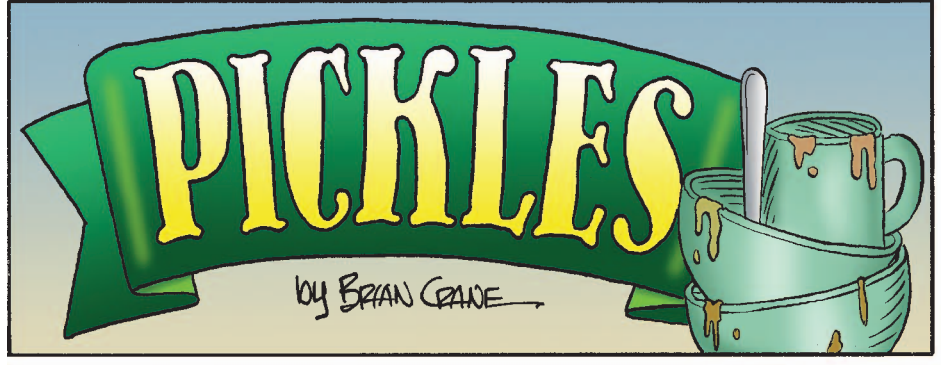
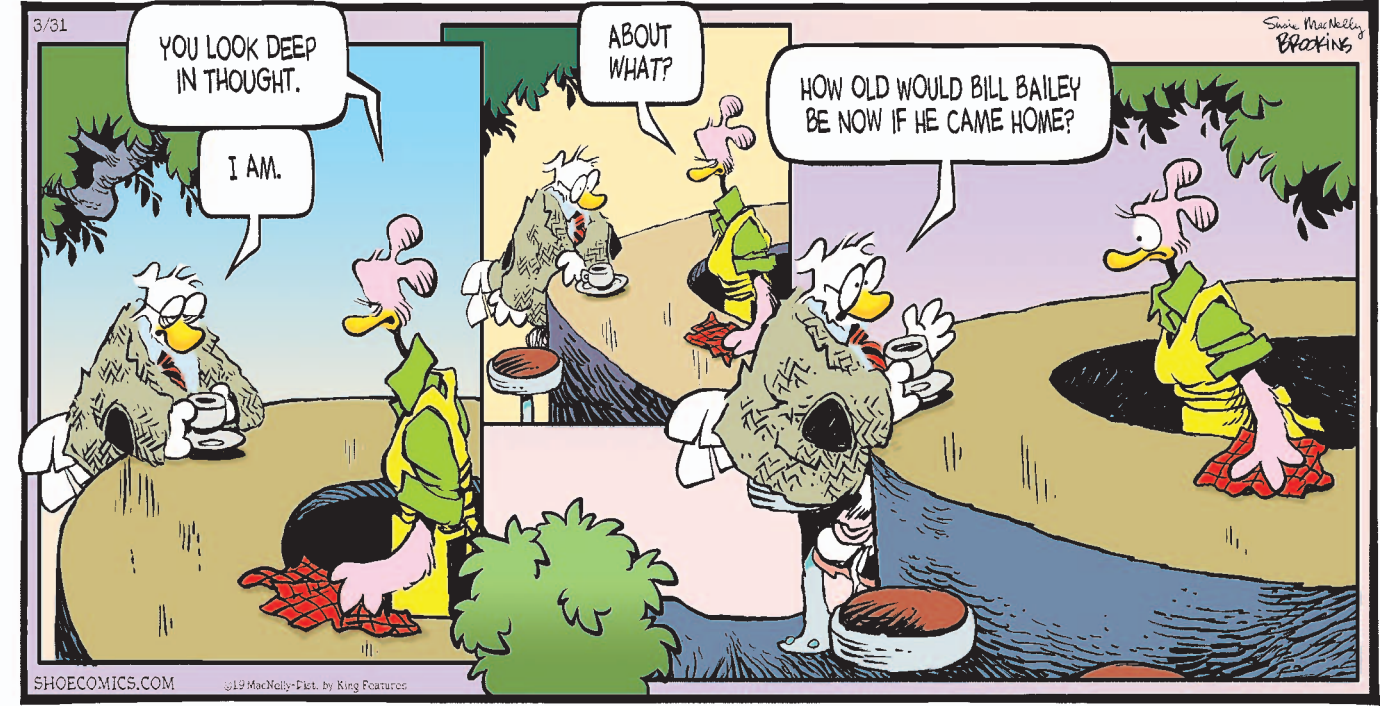
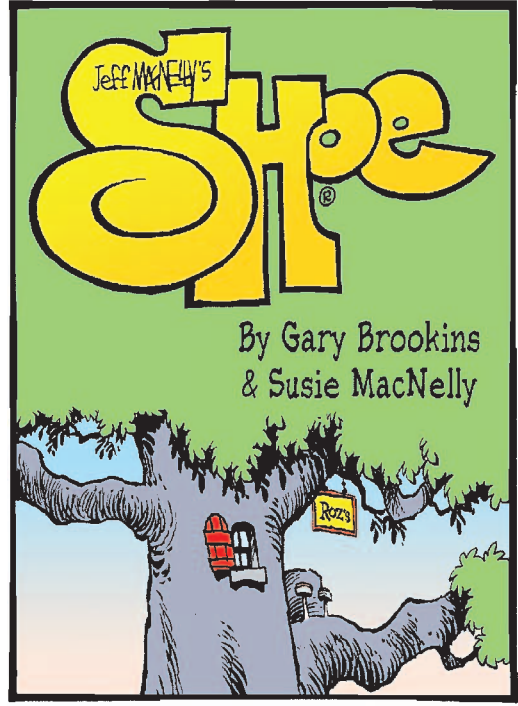
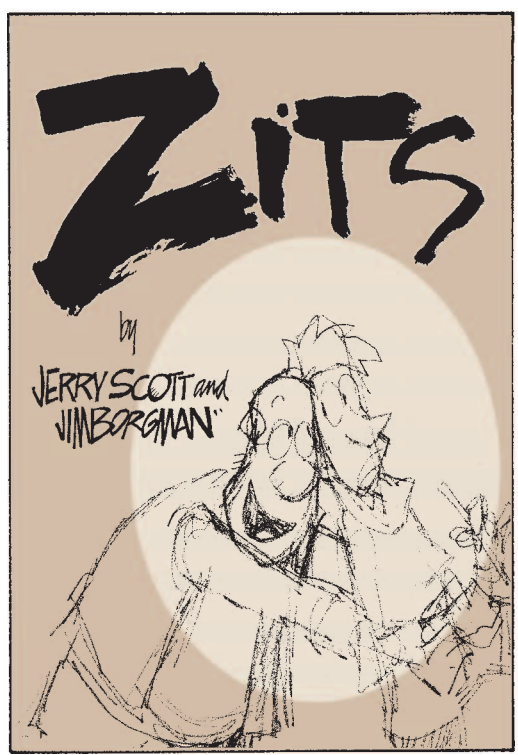


SLYLOCK FOX and COMICS FOR KIDS

BY BOB WEBER JR.



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BABY BLUES

Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

JASPER'S MOM TEACHES YOGA.

JASPER'S MOM DOESN'T COLOR HER HAIR.

JASPER'S MOM IS WRITING A NOVEL.

JASPER'S MOM KNOWS HOW TO SKYDIVE.

IF YOU LOVE JASPER'S MOM SO MUCH, WHY DON'T YOU MARRY HER?

WOW, THAT WENT "PLAYGROUND" FAST.

SORRY, MY GROWNUP COMEBACKS ARE KINDA RUSTY.

BARNEY GOOGLE and SNUFFY

BY JOHN ROSE

OL' BULLET DUG UP MY FLOWER BED, PAW !!

I KNOW, AN' I GAVE HIM A TREAT !!

FER SAVIN' ME ALL THAT WORM-DIGGIN' TIME !!

ELVINEY SAVED UP AN' BOUGHT ME THIS FANCY FISHIN' POLE FER MY BIRFDAY !!

IT'S A MICRO-TOOLED, REINFORCED GRAPHITE ROD WIF A WHISPER-DRIVE GLIDE-GEAR SPINNIN' REEL...

TEN-POUND TEST LINE AN' A SILVER SUPER-WIGGLE DEADSTRIKE LURE !!

WHAT'RE YOU USIN', SNUFFY?

A STICK, SOME STRING AN' A BENT NAIL WIF A WORM ON IT !!

WANNA TRADE ?!

BY MASTROIANNI AND HART

DAD, WHY DO THEY CALL US 'BUGS'?

PROBABLY BECAUSE OF YOUR MOTHER.

WHAT ON EARTH WAS THAT FOR ?

SAW A BUG IN THERE.

SALLY FORTH

by Francesco Marciuliano

WE DID IT, RALPH. WE FINALLY DID IT...

WE RENTED OUR OWN HOUSE. WE HAVE OUR OWN PLACE FOR OUR FAMILY...

WE'RE HOME.

WELL, I'LL SEE WHERE WE CAN STORE THE BOXES WE DON'T EVEN WANT TO BEGIN SORTING THROUGH FOR THE NEXT SIX MONTHS.

AND I'LL START THE HORRIFYINGLY ARDUOUS PROCESS OF GETTING CABLE AND WI-FI INSTALLED ANYWHERE NEAR THE SCHEDULED DAY.

CRANKSHAFT

BY BATIUK & DAVIS

PEOPLE HAVE TOLD ME THAT YOU CAN'T EAT PIZZA EVERY NIGHT...

BUT YOU CAN!

SO FAR I'VE HAD LUIGI'S, MONTONI'S...

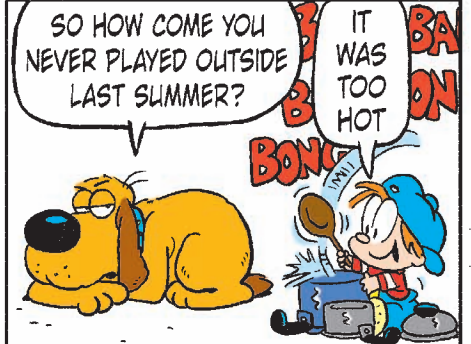
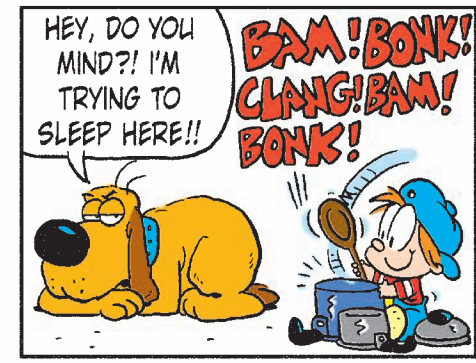
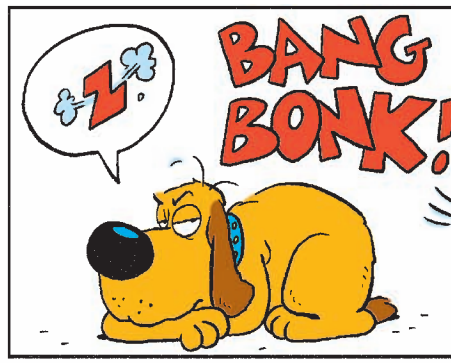
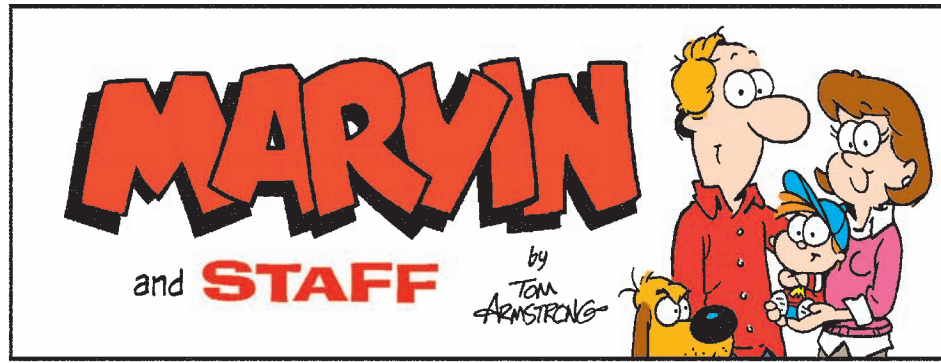
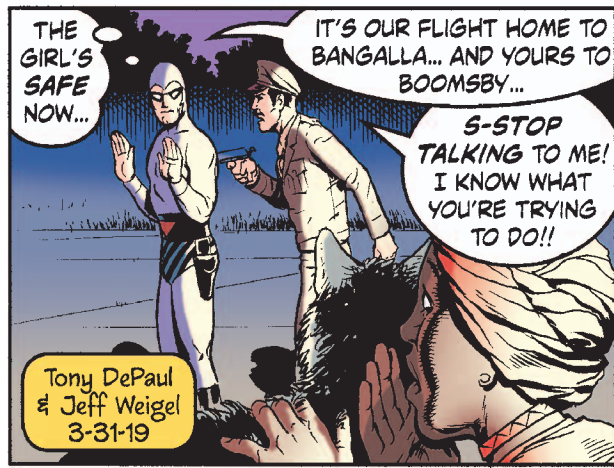
MAMA JOHN'S AND CHECKERS!

WELL, AT LEAST YOU'RE EATING A BALANCED DIET.



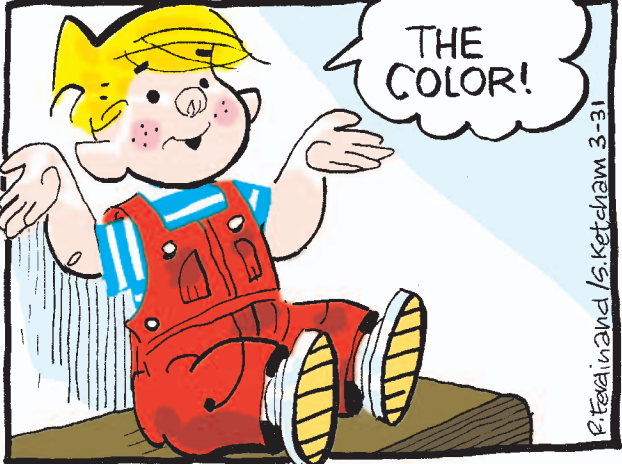
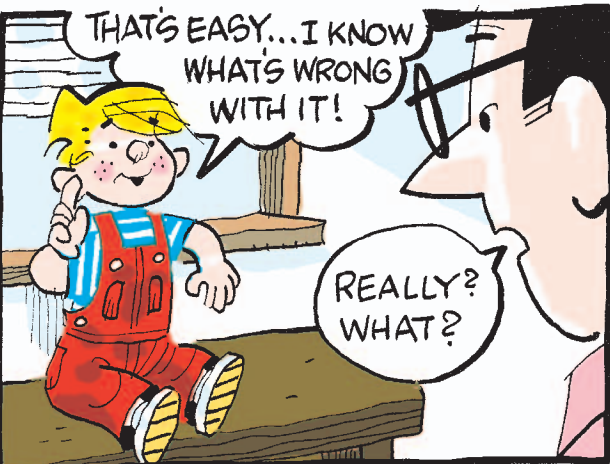
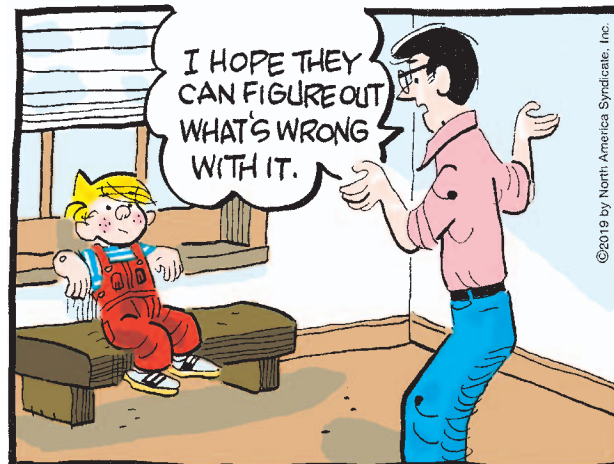
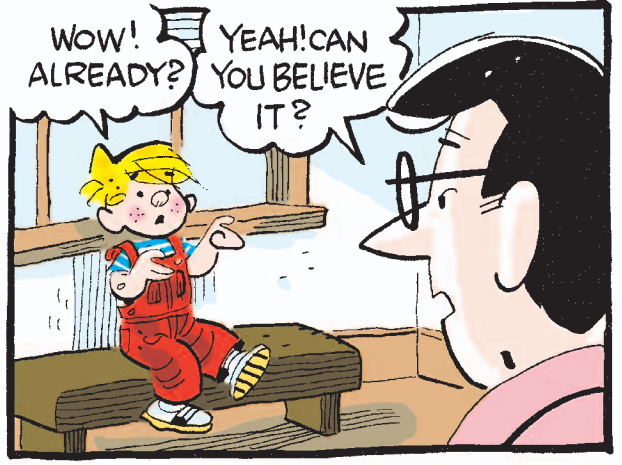
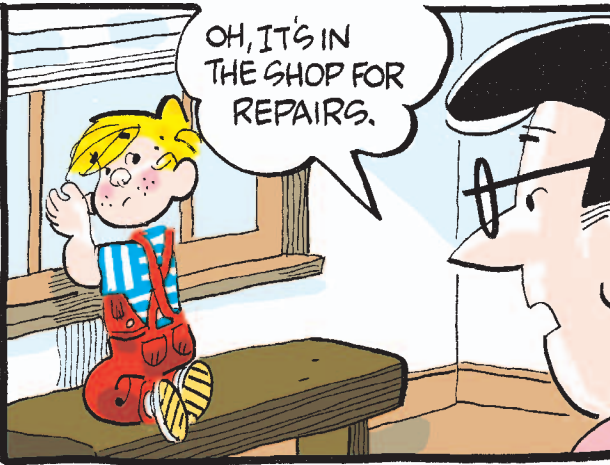
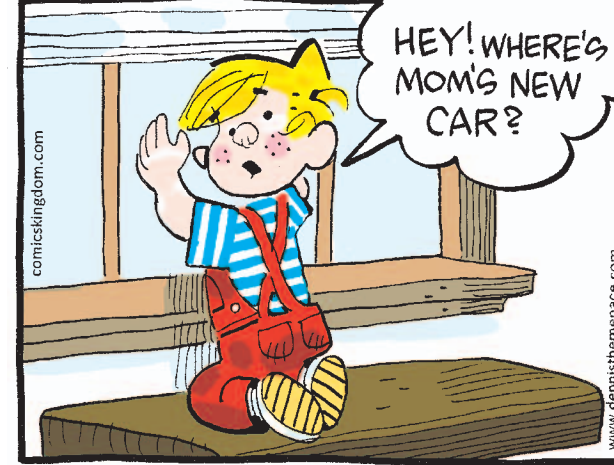
THE PHANTOM

BY LEE FALK



DENNIS THE MENACE

BY HANK KETCHAM



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE

BY STEPHAN PASTIS

