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INSIDE, PAGE 1B

'Facts are facts,' economic expert says

By B.C. Manion
bcmansion@lakerlutznews.com

Understanding the economy means having a handle on factual information. That's not such an easy thing to achieve in today's environment.

But John B. Jung Jr., the featured speaker at the Pasco Economic Development Council's 2019 Economic Forecast Luncheon, focused on informing the audi-

ence in his talk, "Facts are Stubborn Things." "We struggle sometimes when we talk about the economy, because we don't know what the facts are," said Jung, who is the senior managing director and head of BB&T Capital Markets.

"You turn on your television, and it's on Fox News, and you walk into your other room and you've got another television and you turn it on, and that's on MSNBC, you don't think you're living in the same coun-

try," Jung said.

"It's really important, when we talk about the economy, that we get down to facts. Facts are facts.

"The U.S. economy is driven by the consumer. Post-World War II, 70 percent of the GDP (gross domestic product) has been driven by consumer spending. Right this minute, it's between 73 and 74 percent.

See ECONOMY, page 15A



CHRISTINE HOLTZMAN

Creating sweet cards for their Valentines

Children had a chance to create some Valentine's Day cards in a make-and take-day at the Hugh Embry Branch Library, at 14215 Fourth St., in Dade City. Above, Kristine Johnson, of Dade City, left, watches as her 6-year-old granddaughter, Natalie, designs a Valentine's Day card. Natalie made two handcrafted cards, one for each of her parents. She said she wanted to make cards because she loves her parents and wanted to give them something special from her heart.



While making a handmade heart wreath for her grandfather, affectionately known as Papa Bear, 4-year-old Cadince Lethco, of Dade City, reaches for another brightly colored heart cutout to glue on her creation, as her father, Ashton, looks on. Cadince enjoyed making the wreath but said the glue made her fingers sticky.

TouchPoint Medical's headquarters to open in 2020

By B.C. Manion
bcmansion@lakerlutznews.com

Construction began last week on TouchPoint Medical Inc.'s global headquarters on South Branch Boulevard in The Preserve, a new residential community off State Road 54, west of the Suncoast Parkway.

The 142,000-square-foot facility in Land O' Lakes is expected to be completed during 2020. The company will bring a total of 228 jobs to Pasco County, including 116 new jobs and other positions transferred from several locations.

The project represents more than \$23 million in capital investment in Pasco County, according to officials with Pasco Economic Development Council Inc., the agency that seeks to attract new businesses and strengthen existing ones to bolster the county's economy.

Officials from TouchPoint Medical and its parent company, elected leaders, TouchPoint employees and members of the community celebrated the groundbreaking on Feb. 6.

It was a blue sky kind of day, with

See TOUCHPOINT, page 15A

BayCare continues quest for Wesley Chapel hospital

By B.C. Manion
bcmansion@lakerlutznews.com

BayCare Health Systems is pushing forward in its quest to open a new hospital in Wesley Chapel, despite a challenge filed by AdventHealth's hospitals in Wesley Chapel, Zephyrhills and Dade City.

Speaking on BayCare's behalf, Todd Jones recently outlined the health care system's plans for a 60-bed hospital that would be built on a 111-acre site at the northeast quadrant of Interstate 75 and Overpass Road.

He shared BayCare's vision for the hospital with about 120 businessmen and businesswomen at the North Tampa Bay Chamber of Commerce's monthly breakfast, at Pasco-Hernando State College's Porter Campus at Wiregrass Ranch in Wesley Chapel.

BayCare wants to put a new hospital along the I-75 corridor because of the dramatic population growth, and an increased demand for health services, said Jones, who is vice president of ambulatory experience and operations for BayCare Health System.

"Anytime you have population growth, there is going to be an increased demand for health services," he said.

"We want to recruit new primary care and specialty providers to the community.

"One of things that's frustrating for pa-



B.C. MANION

Todd Jones, vice president of ambulatory experience and operations for BayCare Health System, outlined the provider's vision for a new hospital in Wesley Chapel during a breakfast meeting of the North Tampa Bay Chamber of Commerce.

tients — and this is the thing that affects your health — is when you can't gain access to the care that you need in some way."

Beyond recruiting the professionals to work at the hospital, there will be a ripple effect — with providers opening up offices nearby, Jones predicted.

BayCare also wants to provide additional

See BAYCARE, page 15A

Local teen spreads anti-human trafficking awareness

By Kevin Weiss
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Walk through any public middle or high school in Pasco County, and you're bound to come across impactful posters bringing awareness to the issue of human trafficking. They're pretty hard to miss.

Displayed in bright pink and green colors, with large fonts in English and Spanish versions, the posters explain that human trafficking is a crime where someone is forced to work or engage in a commercial sex act against their will. They warn that anyone, especially young people, can be a victim, and that it's happening in Florida.

The posters lists warning signs that someone, particularly a friend or another student, may be involved in human trafficking. They may be a victim if she or he:

- Often runs away and skips school
- Has bruises, scars, brands or untreated injuries
- Is distant from family/friends
- Has a controlling older boyfriend/girlfriend
- Suddenly has expensive possessions

The posters informs students on ways to help. They can:

- Be aware and learn to recognize the signs
- Immediately report suspected trafficking to your school's Corporal/SRO (School Resource Officer)
- Encourage anyone you suspect is being trafficked to talk to a school social worker
- Provide support; remind your friend that help is available and they are not alone

Contact information for the National Human Trafficking Hotline is listed, too.

The posters were placed in schools this year.



Makayla Hildebrand founded Priceless Youth Movement her senior year at Land O' Lakes High School. Now in college, Hildebrand is an active volunteer with the Pasco County Commission on Human Trafficking, serving as a youth-friendly advocate.

They're the brainchild of the Priceless Youth Movement, an anti-human trafficking club at Land O' Lakes High School.

The club also collaborated on the project with the Pasco County Commission on Human Trafficking and the Pasco County School District.

The club was founded by Makayla Hildebrand, now an 18-year-old freshman at the University of South Florida, studying political science and criminology.

She created the club her senior year of high school, after being moved by the 2016 film, "Priceless," a drama about human trafficking based on true events.

"I was pretty shocked that I hadn't known (human trafficking) was something going on," Hildebrand said. "Before that, I didn't

even know it existed.

"I didn't know there was something going on this big. That's when I started looking into it more," she said.

She figured a poster campaign would be a good way to spread awareness to youth in schools.

Hildebrand and others gathered input from students and youth from the Runaway Alternatives Project (RAP) House in New Port Richey, on designs to best get the messages across.

Something big, bold, and vibrant was suggested.

"The main idea behind them, is that we want kids to look at these," Hildebrand said. "I'm getting feedback that kids are actually noticing them and they know that they're

there, and not just something else that's hanging on their school wall."

The posters have since reached recreation centers and courthouses in Pasco.

Many other local organizations have also requested posters, Hildebrand said.

"We've had a lot of people ask us for them," Hildebrand said. "They're getting around, which we're really happy about."

Besides the poster initiative, Hildebrand's club — which had over a dozen members — also participated in a handful of fundraisers.

They assisted with a supplies drive for Redefining Refuge, a Tampa Bay organization that helps young trafficking victims.

They also partnered with the U.S. Institute Against Human Trafficking, selling T-shirts to raise money for the organization's safe home for trafficked boys.

And, although Hildebrand has since moved on to college, she remains an active volunteer with the Pasco County Commission on Human Trafficking.

There, she serves as a youth-friendly voice to what can be sensitive subject matter, human sex trafficking.

"I just want to encourage more kids to get involved and do something about it, that they're not only priceless, but they're capable and able to take a stand," she said.

Human trafficking is a multibillion dollar industry that enslaves approximately 25 million people around the world, according to the Polaris Project, a nonprofit, nongovernmental organization that works to combat and prevent modern-day slavery and human trafficking.

The United States leads all other countries in the demand for trafficked victims.

Florida ranks No. 3 in the volume of calls to the National Human Trafficking Hotline.

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Making sense of choices available in senior care

By Brian Fernandes
bfernandes@lakerlutznews.com

As a generation of Floridians transition into retirement age, they and their families may have questions regarding what senior care facilities have to offer.

Keystone Place at Terra Bella is providing information to help the public find those answers.

The Land O' Lakes senior living facility had several open house sessions in January to explain the different levels of care available in senior homes.

"In general, we did the topic for what is assisted living; what is memory care; [and] what are the benefits," explained Arlana Guckenberger, community relations and sales director at Keystone Place.

Many people do not understand the distinctions between different levels of care, she said.

Independent living for seniors refers to elderly people who are self-sufficient and have few or no cognitive impairments.

They tend to be seniors who are on the younger end of the spectrum, and simply don't want the responsibilities of owning a home, Guckenberger said.

Assisted living facilities cater to residents who are somewhat independent, but have physical limitations that may require help with grooming, dressing or getting around.

There are others who need around-the-clock assistance.

"The memory care community is designed for people with Alzheimer's [disease] or certain forms of dementia, who being out in a larger population is too much stimulus for them," Guckenberger said.

While individuals vary, residents with dementia can be agitated by loud noises and other stimuli.

They also are prone to wander off in states of confusion.

In memory care units, residents have free range to move about the community, but for their safety, are secured from leaving the premises.

A physician evaluation can determine the type of residency that works best, Guckenberger said.



BRIAN FERNANDES

Keystone Place at Terra Bella is making efforts to educate the public on the lifestyle of senior care facilities. The Land O' Lakes center opened in May 2018.



A dining hall is not only a place to eat meals, but to socialize and play games with fellow residents at senior care facilities.



Movies theaters are one of the amenities that can be found at some senior care living facilities. Keeping residents engaged in daily activities is considered important in senior care circles.

Those suffering from cognitive declines may be eligible for assisted living, rather than memory care units, she said.

Others, who are recuperating from severe body trauma, may be placed in skilled nursing facilities, she added.

Admission can be a result of incidents, such as falls or strokes, and are intended to be short-term.

In some instances, a case manager, along with a physician, may decide that an individual is not able to live alone.

When that occurs, the individual may be referred to an assisted-living facility for long-term care.

Some facilities offer a single type of care, but others, such as Keystone Place, offer independent-living, assisted living and memory care residents.

Helping people to understand the different types and levels of care can help dispel the notion that seniors are stuck in a bed at these facilities, Guckenberger said.

Offering various daily options can help residents remain physically active and agile.

And, besides sharing meals in the dining room, residents congregate for other kinds of gatherings, too.

Many facilities have a "Happy Hour" to promote opportunities to enjoy refresh-

ments, listen to music and socialize.

At some senior living facilities, current residents serve as 'ambassadors' — welcoming newcomers, showing them around and introducing them to other residents, to help them feel at home.

Making arts and crafts is another avenue — allowing residents to be productive and showcase their creative works.

At Keystone Place, the warm outdoor pool is a big hit, Guckenberger said, noting, "we've found that aqua-fitness is huge."

There are also field trips, where residents can visit museums, malls or restaurants.

In addition to knowing what types of residences, care and amenities are available, it's also important to check into the financial aspects of senior living, Guckenberger said.

At the open houses, Keystone addressed not only insurance plans, but also encouraged seniors to compare expenses related to living at home versus those from living at a senior care facility.

While Medicare and Social Security may help offset costs, there is still other coverage available — especially for former military.

For instance, there's an Aid and Assistance benefit available to veterans and their spouses that many are unaware of, Guckenberger said.

Through the Elder Resource Benefits Consulting program, those who have served in the military may be eligible for financial assistance, if they meet certain criteria.

There's a growing need for these types of living facilities, Guckenberger said.

Keystone Place opened last May, and its independent living section already has a waiting list.

Two upcoming open house sessions are scheduled at Keystone Place, 2200 Livingston Road in Land O' Lakes, to help people gain a greater understanding of interacting with individuals suffering from Alzheimer's Disease.

Those sessions are set for Feb. 27 and March 6, from noon to 1:30 p.m.

Lunch will be provided and guests are encouraged to RSVP.

Reservations can be made at (813) 388-2121 or online at KeystonePlaceAtTerraBella.com/RSVP.

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What's Happening

Your Community Calendar • Submit 2 weeks in advance to: news@lakerlutznews.com • All listings free of charge

FLEA MARKET DONATIONS

The GFWC Lutz-Land O' Lakes Woman's Club will accept donations every Monday and Wednesday, between 9 a.m. and 11 a.m., starting Feb. 13, for its upcoming flea market (scheduled for March 1 and March 2), at the Old Lutz School, 18819 U.S. 41. Donations of clothing, shoes, household items, small appliances, kitchen wares, books, accessories, décor items, antiques and collectibles, tools, toys, and baby equipment will be accepted. All items must be clean and in working order. Larger furniture can be dropped off the last week of February, but large appliances, huge TVs and sleeper sofas will not be accepted. Additional collection dates will be Feb. 16 and Feb. 23 from 9 a.m. to noon.

AIR POTATO PROGRAM

The UF/IFAS Pasco Extension One Stop Shop, 15029 14th St., in Dade City, will present a free Air Potato Biological Control Program on Feb. 13 from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Air potato vine is an invasive weed that cripples native habitats in many Central Florida communities. Participants can learn about the citizen science program, watch demonstrations with air potato beetles, and grab free handouts, goodies and refreshments. Bring an air potato bulb (tuber) for a chance to win an air potato beetle T-shirt. The guest speaker will be Chris Kerr, biological specialist with FDACS Division of Plant Industry. Registration and parking are free. Visit Eventbrite.com.

ACOUSTIC MUSIC

Unity North Tampa will host an acoustic performance by Joe Scott and Hannah Alkire on Feb. 13 at 7 p.m., at 19520 Holly Lane in Lutz. The duo performs Celtic, flamenco, Americana and world music, on a double neck guitar and a cello. Tickets are \$20 in advance, and \$25 at the door. For information, call (813) 948-4884.

LANDSCAPE WORKSHOP

UF/IFAS Hillsborough County Extension will offer a Tri-County Workshop, "You, Too, Can Have a Florida-Friendly Landscape," for Pasco, Hillsborough and Pinellas counties, Feb. 15 from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., at Land O' Lakes Heritage Park, 5401 Land O' Lakes Blvd. Participants can learn about landscape design, landscape care, wildlife gardens and plant selection. Registration is \$10 and includes lunch and refreshments. No refunds will be given. To preregister online, visit bit.ly/ffl4u-feb2019. For information, call (813) 744-5519.

EARTHBOX GARDENING

Shell's Feed & Garden Supply, 9513 N. Nebraska Ave., in Tampa, will offer an Earthbox gardening class Feb. 16 from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. Participants can learn how the Earthbox is a wise investment, how the planting system works, how to step-by-step plant an Earthbox, what you can grow, tips and tricks and what will grow in the area. Guests also can see and touch the Earthbox and have their questions answered. A goody-bag will be provided per ticket holder, which will include a discount voucher for Earthbox purchases made on the day of the class. The cost is \$10. Register at tinyurl.com/y8us9m5r.

CONCERT 4 A CURE

The Land O' Lakes Sun Rays' 10th annual Concert 4 A Cure Land O' Lakes will take place Feb. 16 from noon to 6 p.m., at Land

Free presentations

Pasco-Hernando State College will feature free presentations to honor African-American heritage during Black History Month.

• Feb. 19 at 2 p.m.: "Revisiting Frederick Douglass, A Monologue," by Donald L. Dowridge Jr., at the West Campus, 10230 Ridge Road in New Port Richey

• Feb. 20 at 11:15 a.m.: Pasco notables will recognize African-American history makers, at the East Campus, 36727 Blanton Road in Dade City

Throughout February, there also will be book exhibits at all the campus libraries, and photo exhibits at the North and Spring Hill campuses.

Frederick Douglass portrayal

The Jimmie B. Keel Regional Library, 2902 W. Bearss Ave, in Carrollwood, will present "Frederick Douglass: A Portrayal" Feb. 21 at 1 p.m.

This is a one-man portrayal by Donald Dowridge of the life of Douglass, who played a vital role in the freedom of slaves.

The program is for teens and adults.

For information, call (813) 273-3652, or visit HCPLC.org.

NAACP meeting

The Pasco County Branch NAACP will have monthly meetings at St. John Missionary Baptist Church, 14549 Eighth St., in Dade City, downstairs. Executive committee meetings will be the first Monday of each month at 7 p.m.; and, the general committee meetings will be the second Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

For information, call (813) 863-4770, or email NAACP5630Pasco@gmail.com.

O' Lakes Heritage Park, 5401 Land O' Lakes Blvd. There will be an opening ceremony with Girl Scouts, live and Christian music, a Praise Party, a silent auction, and a kids' play area with a bounce house. Admission is \$10 per person and includes the concert plus five sample tickets to Best Taste of the Town. Additional taste tickets are \$1. Kids are free. Guests also can get a one-of-a-kind, custom-made T-shirt designed by Jimmy Denton. All proceeds will benefit the American Cancer Society's Relay For Life Suncoast. For information, call Lilly Fontanez at (813) 551-7351.

FREE 'COCO' MOVIE

Tampa Theatre's Traveling Picture Show will present a free screening of the movie, "Coco," as part of its new outdoor film series, parkCINEMA, Feb. 16. The movie will be shown at 7 p.m., at Al Lopez Park, 4810 N. Himes Ave., in Tampa. Guests can bring picnic baskets, blankets and lawn chairs.

KIDDUSH LUNCHEON

Congregation Kol Ami, 3919 Moran Road in Tampa, will host a Kiddush luncheon Feb. 16, after the 9:30 a.m. Shabbat services. Admission is free, but non-members are asked to RSVP by calling (813) 962-6338.

TRAIN SHOW & SALE

Regal Railways will present a collectible show and sale Feb. 16 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the New Lake Civic Association, 8330 Civic Drive in New Port Richey. Vendors will be on hand with various model trains, hobbies, collectibles, diecast cars, antiques and more. Admission is \$5 for adults. Children age 12 and younger are free. For information, call (727) 244-1341, or visit RegalRailways.com.

MASON JAR CRAFT

The Arthenia L. Joyner University Area Community Library, 13619 N. 22nd St., in Tampa, will offer a DIY craft class on fishnet wrapped mason jars on Feb. 16 at 2 p.m., for ages 12 and older. Participants can learn how to transform a mason jar into a nautical-themed craft. All materials will be provided. The class is limited to 12 participants. For information, call (813) 273-3652.

MINNESOTA PICNIC

Southern Charm RV Resort, 37811 Chancey Road in Zephyrhills, will host a potluck picnic for permanent or winter residents hailing from Minnesota on Feb. 17. Guests should bring a dish to share, table service and a favorite beverage, and a gift donation for door prize drawings. Coffee will be provided. The cost is \$3 at the door. Registration is at 12:30 p.m., followed by the picnic at 1 p.m. For information or directions, call (813) 355-4543 or (813) 783-8241.

SPY MOVIE SHOWCASE

Tampa Theatre, 711 N. Franklin St., in downtown Tampa, will host a "Bond-A-Thon," Feb. 17. Three movies will be shown: "Goldfinger" at 1:30 p.m., "The Spy Who Loved Me" at 4 p.m., and "Casino Royale" at "007" p.m. Film-inspired costumes are welcome, and there will be Bond-themed drink specials. The cost is \$10 per film, or \$25 for a Bond-A-Thon Pass for all three films. Theater members pay \$7 and \$20, respectively. For information, visit TampaTheatre.org.

SPEAKER SERIES

The Florida Humanities Council Speaker Series will present two upcoming programs at the City of New Port Richey Recreation and Aquatic Center, 6630 Van Buren St. The guest speaker on Feb. 18 will be Craig Pitman on the topic of "Oh Florida!" and on Feb. 25, Betty Jean Steinhauer will present "Old Florida." Both programs are from 6 to 7:30 p.m., in the Palm Room. For information, call (727) 841-4560.

AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

The Zephyrhills Area Amateur Radio Club (ZAARC) will meet Feb. 18 at St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church, 5855 16th St., in Zephyrhills. The business meeting will start at 6 p.m., followed by a coffee break and a discussion or presentation at 7 p.m. The group meets the third Monday night of every month. A Ham Fest is scheduled for March 2. Also, ZAARC hosts a breakfast every Thursday at 8 a.m., at Village Inn, 5214 Gall Blvd., in Zephyrhills. For information, call Gerald Hewitt at (813) 780-1980.

GROWING HERBS

UF/IFAS Pasco County Extension will offer a free seminar on "Growing Herbs in Florida" Feb. 19 at 2 p.m., at the New River Branch Library, 34043 State Road 54 in Wesley Chapel. Participants can learn about light and water requirements for herbs, which season to grow them, what herbs can be grown year-round, and more. Registration is required at Eventbrite.com.

SAFETY ACADEMY

The New Tampa Regional Library, 10001 Cross Creek Blvd., will host a Safety Superhero Academy Storytime, "Hot! Hot! Hot!" Feb. 19 at 11:15 a.m., for ages 3 to 5. Hillsborough County Fire Rescue will teach kids how to stay safe by identifying hot and cold objects, and when to call for backup from an adult. Parents can learn safety tips and first aid for treating scalds and burns. For information, call (813) 273-3652, or visit HCPLC.org.

OPEN WORKSHOP

Two Sisters DIY Workshop, in Lutz, will host a "Crafternoon" DIY Workshop on Feb. 19 from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Bring your own crafts, wood or supplies and use the shop's space, paints, stains and tools. There will be additional charges for hardware or stencils. Any and all crafts are welcome. Guests also can bring their own food, snacks and beverages. Preregister online at TwoSistersDIY.com.

3D COIN PRINTING

The Lutz Branch Library, 101 W. Lutz Lake Fern Road, will offer a pirate coin 3D printing class Feb. 20 at 4 p.m., for all ages. Participants can learn what 3D printing is, how the printer works, watch the process in action, and make a pirate coin of their own. To reserve a seat, sign in at the information desk starting 30 minutes before the program. For information, call (813) 273-3652, or visit HCPLC.org.

VETERAN BENEFITS

American House Senior Living Community, 38130 Pretty Pond Road in Zephyrhills, will host a seminar on veteran's benefits Feb. 20 at 1 p.m. The guest speaker will be local attorney Michelangelo Mortellaro, who will discuss the types of benefits available to veterans, how to qualify, how to apply and more. Light refreshments will be served. Admission is free, but participants should RSVP by Feb. 20, by calling (813) 400-2263.

GENEALOGY SEMINAR

The West Pasco County Genealogical Society will host a research lecture Feb. 20 from 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m., at the CARES Rao Musunuru M.D. Enrichment Center, 12417 Clock Tower Parkway in Hudson. Participants can learn the importance of using newspapers for genealogical research. Admission is \$7 for non-members and \$5 for members. After the lecture and presentation, a member meeting will take place. Register for the seminar by text to (727) 271-0770 or by email to debbehagner@yahoo.com.

GARDEN GATE CLUB

The Zephyrhills Garden Gate Garden Club will meet Feb. 21 at 10 a.m., at the Magnuson Hotel, 5734 Gall Blvd., in Zephyrhills. The topic will be "Secrets of Great Gardens." Refreshments will be served. For information, call (813) 782-8004 or (813) 782-3798

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B.C. MANION

Turner Arbour is the Pasco Economic Development Council Inc.'s workforce development manager. He's heading up a pilot program that aims to align employer needs with workforce supply.

Matching up employer needs with workforce supply

By B.C. Manion
bcmanion@lakerlutznews.com

The Pasco Economic Development Council Inc., has launched a three-year pilot program aimed at helping employers meet their workforce needs.

While the program, called the Pasco Talent Pipeline, aims to help employers meet their needs for skilled workers — other desired outcomes will be to improve the prospects for job seekers in Pasco County and bolster the county's economic development potential.

Turner Arbour, Pasco EDC's workforce development manager, is leading the effort.

His job involves a lot of listening, a fair amount of talking, and quite a bit of observation and data collection.

The initiative also includes the creation of a website that identifies a clear pipeline to different careers and targeted industries in the county.

The website will result from research and from collaboration between all of the stakeholders, Arbour said. He believes it will be a model for other initiatives in not only in Florida, but across the country, too.

Since assuming his responsibilities, Arbour has spent a good bit of time finding out about the array of organizations in Pasco County that are involved in workforce development.

Those entities include such organizations as AmSkills, CareerSource Pasco Hernando, Pasco-Hernando State College, Pasco County Schools, Saint Leo University and Goodwill.

He's building a foundation of knowledge so he can share information about available resources when he discusses workforce needs with employers.

He plans to meet with representatives — industry by industry.

"I want to get a good mix of large employers, and medium and small employers. Their needs are, I'm sure different, but also, they'll be facing some of the same challenges," Arbour said.

"That first year is a lot of visitation," said Bill Cronin, president/CEO of Pasco EDC.

In some cases, Arbour will help the employer tap into existing resources to help meet his needs. In other cases, he'll discover where gaps exist.

When there are obstacles, Cronin said: "We'll have to determine: Is it individual to that company? Is it individual to that location? Is it unique to that industry?"

"If it's a Pasco County issue, then we can work together with the players in Pasco County to provide some type of solution," Cronin said.

If it's an industrywide problem, helping to figure out or create a solution can help make Pasco County more attractive to that type of industry, Cronin said.

"We can use that solution to recruit other companies," he said, noting, in a sense, the county can say: "We get you. We understand you."

As data is collected, it can be analyzed to see if there's a systemic problem and efforts can begin to try to find solutions.

For instance, the data might reveal there's a shortage of workers in one industry that might be addressed by workers in another industry who have appropriate transferable skills, Cronin said.

To help create a full picture of industry needs and successes, Arbour welcomes an invitation to visit any business in Pasco County.

"I think it's important to see the operation and see what they have going on there," Arbour said.

Cronin added: "They don't have to wait until they have a problem to call. It would be great to have their input now. That way we can make sure their information is included."

The county wants to be sure it has a full picture — including plants and companies that are located here, but have their headquarters elsewhere.

"The last thing we want to do is miss part of that data," Cronin said.

The economic development agency also wants to offer help that has staying power, Cronin added.

Often, there are resources available, but companies need help navigating those resources.

"There's a tendency in a lot of these groups: 'Oh, call so and so.' And that's it. 'That doesn't work for us,'" Cronin said.

If your business would like to schedule an appointment with Arbour, reach him at (813) 926-0827, ext. 231, or by email at tarbour@pascoedc.com.

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United Way of Pasco plans to expand its reach

By Brian Fernandes
bfernandes@lakerlutznews.com

As he assumes the helm of United Way of Pasco County, Chuck Anderson said he plans to build on the organization's previous successes.

Anderson became president and CEO of the organization on Jan. 14, succeeding Alice Delgado, who retired.

He recently moved to the area from Fort Myers, and he's well aware of Pasco County's growing population and increasing demand for services.

United Way is already known for its collaborative work, but Anderson wants to expand those efforts.

The United Way recently got involved as an intermediary, to address financial shortfalls two agencies were facing because of the recent federal government shutdown.

The lack of federal money put the continued operation of two nonprofit agencies in jeopardy.

"The county (Pasco County) and United Way (of Pasco) worked collaboratively to put together a pool of funds to keep two of those programs running," Anderson said.

He understands, personally, the impacts that a federal shutdown can have because his daughter is a federal employee and has dealt with the consequences of not being paid.

One way to help people who are struggling is to assist them with filling out their federal tax forms, he said. United Way has a program that can help people secure their tax refund checks, he said.

"It puts many dollars back in the pockets of people who otherwise would be indigent," Anderson said.

The Connecticut native holds a master's degree in social work and a master's degree in business — and said that both have served him well throughout his career.

Previously, he taught at Florida Atlantic University and Florida Gulf Coast University.

He also worked for four years at Catholic Charities, a United Way affiliate, serving as a district director and overseeing the organization's efforts in Lee, Hendry and Glades counties.

In that position, he helped to advance food pantries, senior services, the federal



BRIAN FERNANDES

Chuck Anderson, the new president and CEO for United Way of Pasco County, plans to expand community outreach in the county.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and programs for at-risk youth.

He also is passionate about tackling the problem of human trafficking.

Anderson said he was associated with a program that spanned 10 counties and utilized intensive casework.

"We were able to help people go from [being] unable to care for themselves to becoming independent, self-sufficient and able to function successfully in society," he said.

Anderson believes that those who have resources need to reach out to those who lack them.

He said his life in public service has been fueled by a belief of the power that comes from engaging with other people.

"I thought the best way to help build positive change in the community was by working in the community," stated Anderson. "It really is holding out your hand and helping somebody up."

The United Way leader said he intends to implement this principle in Pasco County.

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<p>3-slides/4-door fridge/auto leveling/automatic everything was \$49,995 Now \$37,243</p>	<p>3-slides/residential fridge/electric leveling/king bed/washer-dryer hook up was \$39,995 Now \$27,841</p>	<p>3-slides/2-ACs/electric leveling/CLEAN!!! was \$24,995 Now \$17,663</p>
2018 35ft Wildcat FW	2011 32ft Sundance FW	2015 40ft Sandpiper Park Model
<p>3-slides/electric leveling/auto awning/TVs/queen bed was \$39,995 Now \$28,745</p>	<p>3-slides/queen bed/ducted AC-Heat/auto awning-jacks was \$21,995 Now \$15,221</p>	<p>3-slides/residential appliances/washer-dryer closet/automatic awning was \$39,995 Now \$29,397</p>
2016 36ft Lacrosse TT	2006 31ft Jay Flight TT	2012 33ft Windsport Class-A
<p>3-slides/residential refrigerator/king bedroom/automatic awning was \$29,995 Now \$21,624</p>	<p>1-slide/bunks/CLEAN!!! was \$14,995 Now \$9,224</p>	<p>2-slides/25k miles/leather furniture/2-ACs/CLEAN!!! was \$59,995 Now \$44,464</p>
2002 30ft Chateau Class-C,	2013 30ft Maverick Class-C	2002 33ft Supreme Class-A
<p>61k miles/queen bed/AC/Heat/front entertainment was \$17,995 Now \$12,451</p>	<p>queen bed/AC/Heat/sofa/booth dinette CLEAN!!! Was \$39,995 Now \$29,278</p>	<p>1-slide/50k miles/leather sofas, everything works was \$22,995 Now \$15,631</p>
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Architect selected for \$48 million technical education center

The Laker/Lutz News Staff Report

The Pasco County School Board has selected Hepner Architects Inc., to provide architectural services for the design of the new east-central Pasco technical center the district plans to build.

The facility, which has a construction budget of \$48 million, is planned for the northeast corner of Handcart Road and Fairview Heights Road, in Wesley Chapel.

Hepner's fee includes architectural design, civil engineering, structural engineering and other services for a total fixed basic fee of \$2,880,000.

The agreement also includes not to ex-

ceed confirmed additional services allowances in the amount of \$403,570, and a not to exceed reimbursable allowance \$30,000.

Hepner was selected from a short list of three architectural firms that the school board approved in November, and it was ranked No. 1 during the interview process.

The center will be designed for 900 students in grades nine through 12, although the district may opt to incorporate post-secondary programs, according to documents included with the board's agenda item.

The center is scheduled to open in the fall of 2022.

Paulie Palooza has a new venue

By Brian Fernandes

bfernandes@lakerlutznews.com

The annual Paulie Palooza will return to liven Downtown Zephyrhills on Feb. 23, but this year, the event has a new venue: Main Street Zephyrhills at 38537 Fifth Ave.

The new location was selected to incorporate downtown businesses into the festival, said Leesa Fryer, event planning specialist at Gulf Hospice and Pasco Palliative Care.

The festival, now in its seventh year, will be from noon to 9 p.m.

Guests can enjoy offerings from a variety of vendors, including food, arts, crafts and jewelry. There will be face-painting for kids, too.

And, the Zephyrhills Brewing Company will be there.

Items will be auctioned off, and there will be prize drawings for items that have been donated by local businesses.

Live musical performances will be given throughout the day.

Admission wristbands are available for a \$5 donation. Parking is free and pets are allowed.

Visitors are asked to bring their own lawn chairs, as seating is limited.

All proceeds benefit Gulf Hospice and Pasco Palliative Care.

To register as a vendor, purchase a wristband or for additional information, visit GulfSide.org.

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ACTIVE ADULT GOLF COURSE COMMUNITY IN LAND O' LAKES 2/2/1 Villa located in gated community. Eat-in kitchen with a breakfast bar, dining room/family room combination with sliding doors leading out to the Florida room. Additionally it has a screened lanai to enjoy the Florida sunshine. Tile and laminate flooring throughout. Worry free maintenance, as the homeowners' association fee covers the outside maintenance of the villa, exterior painting every 7-10 yrs., roof replacement 17-20 yrs., lawn mowing, shrub trimming and mulching. \$169,500.00 Call Billie at 813-446-5144

WATERFRONT HOME 3/2, 1.27 acres \$175,000 on Hwy 41 in Land O Lakes, Commercial/residential Call Phil Tamm 813-408-1357

MANOR OAKS IN LUTZ BEAUTIFUL POOL HOME IN PEACEFUL, QUIET NEIGHBORHOOD! The home sits on a large oversized lot in cul-de-sac with mature trees. SPACIOUS 4 bedroom 3.5 bath home has a huge master as well as spacious bedrooms and a den. Large windows throughout the home allow plenty of natural light. Outside the large screened-in lanai is perfect for cookouts, splashing around in the large pool or relaxing in the spa. Centrally located close to shopping, dining, great schools and Florida Ave, SR 54 and I-275 providing easy access to all of the Tampa Bay Area. ** Low HOA. **NO CDD \$579,900 Call Cody at 813-909-0712

LAKE LOTS

SKI LAKE 300' road frontage & 250' lakefront. Property is large enough for 2 homes. On lakefront with white sandy bottom. No Deed Restrictions. Call Cody Adams 813-909-0712

WATERFRONT 2.44 acres on fishing Lake Ryan on Newberger Road in Lutz. NO CDD or HOA! You are free to tear down the 1928 frame house to build the home of your heart's desire. Included are a concrete block 1 car garage, pear tree, banana trees and lush foliage on this fenced lot! Call Faith Garcia 813-503-6610

LEASE RESIDENTIAL/COMMERCIAL

READY TO MOVE IN 2/2/2, Villa located in gated golf course community. 55+ retirement community. Lawn maintenance, basic cable TV and pest control included in rent. GREAT amenities: community pool, fitness center: tennis, golf, clubhouse with restaurant, and security. 12 month lease available for \$1,300.00 monthly. Call Brandy Carrillo 727-998-2032

COMMERCIAL LEASE 2,500 SF of Professional Office Space available near intersection of Dale Mabry and Sunlake Blvd. Unit is divided into 8 offices, foyer area with administrative station, kitchenette and public and private restrooms, and conference/flex space. Included with lease: Water, Septic, CAM, Exterior lighting, maintenance of roof and exterior walls. Call Cody at 813-909-0712

RESIDENTIAL LEASE IMMACULATE 3/2/2, single family residence located in gated golf course community. 55+ retirement community all the amenities, including tennis, golf, clubhouse with restaurant, community pool, fitness center and security. Lawn maintenance, basic cable TV and pest control included in rent. 12 month lease available for \$1,600.00 monthly. Call Irving Hernandez 813-843-6026

VACANT PROPERTY

WOODED BEAUTY BELL LAKE & ALPINE in Land O Lakes. Come build your dream estate or family compound. Great Location, beautiful wooded lot. Almost 3 acres. NO DEED RESTRICTIONS! City water available. Property can be subdivided into two lots. Build on one and sell the other. \$299,900 Call Cody at 813-909-0712

WESLEY CHAPEL 1.65 Acres in Quail Hollow Pines. Call Phil 813-408-1357

BEAUTIFUL WOODED LOT 2.2 acres. Build your dream home with no CDD or any restriction. Owner financing available. Easy terms. Call Irving Hernandez 813-843-6026

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31.35 Acres on Vernon Dairy Rd Beautiful location for your dream home!! Bring your animals as there is room to spread out! Enjoy country living yet so close to all major highways and shopping. Call Cody at 813-909-0712

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Thursday, February 21 | 12:00

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Rias Ali, MD

Interventional Cardiology

Tuesday, February 26 | 12:00

Medical Center of Trinity



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Lectures are held at Medical Center of Trinity and reservations are required. A light lunch will be served.

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HEALTH

&

WELLNESS

Send health news to
news@lakerlutznews.com

NEWBORN CARE

St. Joseph's Hospital-North, 4211 Van Dyke Road in Lutz, will offer a newborn care class Feb. 16 from 9 a.m. to noon, in Garden Classroom A.

This is an interactive class that covers various aspects of infant care, including feeding, diapering, bathing safety, signs of illness and newborn characteristics.

The cost is \$25, which covers the expectant mother and a support person.

To register, call (813) 443-2046.

MENTAL HEALTH SUMMIT

Pasco-Hernando State College will host a "Life, Spirit and Wellness Holistic Health and Healing: Bridging Faith and Mental Health Communities" summit Feb. 18 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., at its Porter Campus at Wiregrass Ranch, 2727 Mansfield Blvd., Wesley Chapel, in the Conference Center.

There will be a panel discussion on mental health, substance abuse, wellness and recovery.

Breakout sessions will focus on suicide, substance abuse awareness and prevention, finding solutions to move forward and to heal after traumatic events.

Community partners for the summit include the National Alliance on Mental Illness, Pasco Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention; BayCare Behavioral Health's Community Health Activation Team, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Take Stock in Children, the James A. Haley Veterans Hospital, Moffitt Cancer Center, and Pasco Aware.

To preregister for the event, visit tinyurl.com/y7yp2l9p.

On-site registration the day of the event will begin at 8:30 a.m.

For information, call (855) 669-7472.

JOINT REPLACEMENT

St. Joseph's Hospital-North, 4211 Van Dyke Road in Lutz, will offer a free lecture on total joint replacement Feb. 18 and Feb. 25 at 10 a.m., in the Nursing Administration Classroom.

Participants can learn about joint replacement, prepare for surgery and become familiar with the recovery process.

Based on physician requirements, pre-op



Dr. George Giannakopoulos

MEDICAL STAFF ELECTIONS ANNOUNCED

Regional Medical Center Bayonet Point has announced the results of its medical staff elections for a two-year term, 2019 to 2020.

The following individuals were elected to serve on the Medical Executive Committee by members of the hospital's medical staff:

- General Staff: Dr. George Giannakopoulos, chief of staff; Dr. Keshav Remireddy, vice chief of staff; and Dr. Chirag Patel, secretary/treasurer

- Department of Medicine: Dr. Jose Pascual, chairman; Dr. Mrunal Shah, vice chairman; and Dr. L. Venu, member-at-large

- Department of Surgery: Dr. Craig Bennett, chairman; Dr. Kevin Spires, vice chairman; and Dr. Arthur Verga, member-at-large

testing could be done the same day.

To register, call (813) 443-2046.

AFIB TUTORIAL

The Heart Institute at Regional Medical Center Bayonet Point will host a Tuesday Tutorial on the topic of AFib (atrial fibrillation) Feb. 19 at the Rao Musunuru M.D. Conference Center, 14100 Yosemite Drive in Hudson.

The guest speaker will be Dr. Kenneth Yamamura, board certified in cardiovascular disease and electrophysiology.

Registration and lunch begin at 11:30 a.m., followed by the tutorial at noon.

Admission is free. A complimentary lunch will be served.

Reservations are required by call (727) 869-5498.

Continued on next page

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Blanket Tampa Bay's goal is to build Tampa's 1st Urban Rest Stop. A place where the homeless can go take a shower, do their laundry and use the bathroom without disturbing the local businesses. The funds raised at this event will go towards the Tampa Urban Rest Stop Project.

For a minimum \$20 donation directly to the cause, you receive:

- 1 drink ticket
- Free appetizers
- Raffles
- Opportunity to network with a fun and diverse group

DEMENTIA EDUCATION

The Alzheimer's Association will host "Understanding and Responding to Dementia-Related Behavior" Feb. 20 from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., at the Reliance Medical Center, 3655 Innovation Drive in Lakeland, as part of its education series for caregivers.

Participants can learn to decode behavioral messages, identify common behavior triggers and learn strategies to help intervene with some of the most common behavioral challenges of Alzheimer's disease. To register, visit ALZ.org/crf.

HEALTH BASICS

The Arthenia L. Joyner University Area Community Library, 13619 N. 22nd St., in Tampa, will offer a class on health basics Feb. 20 at 3:30 p.m.

Community outreach workers from Moffitt Cancer Center will share informa-

tion on how to make a health plan that makes sense to you, who may be able to help you, and access to care and resources. For information, call (813) 273-3652.

SMOKING CESSATION

Regional Medical Center Bayonet Point will partner with the Area Health Education Center to offer a free seminar to help tobacco users quit.

The "Tools to Quit" program will be offered on Feb. 20 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., at the hospital's cafeteria/private dining room, 14000 Fivay Road in Hudson.

Participants can learn how to prepare a plan; specific ways to deal with cravings; what to expect, and how to cope; and get four free weeks of patches, gum or lozenges, while supplies last.

Registration is required by calling (813) 929-1000.

NAMI SUPPORT GROUPS

NAMI Pasco County (National Alliance on Mental Illness) offers support groups for families and those with a psychiatric diagnosis.

- NAMI Connection: every Wednesday from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., at the WellCare Office, 5113 U.S. 19 in New Port Richey
 - NAMI Family Support: the second and fourth Monday of the month, from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m., at the Medical Center of Trinity, 5637 Marine Parkway in New Port Richey
 - NAMI Family Support: the first and third Tuesday of the month, from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., at Atonement Lutheran Church, 29617 State Road 54 in Wesley Chapel
- Education classes offered by NAMI are free, but registration is required. These include:
- Peer-to-Peer: an eight-session educational program for adults with mental illness

• Family-to-Family: a 12-session educational program for family, significant others and friends of people living with mental illness. For more information, call (727) 992-9653.

STRENGTH & BALANCE

Silver Sneakers Flex Strength & Balance classes take place Wednesdays at 9 a.m., and Fridays at 10:30 a.m., at The Groves Golf and Country Club in Land O' Lakes.

These are low-impact classes for men and women designed to improve flexibility and balance, which can help prevent falls, broken hips and more.

Admission is free for Silver Sneakers members and \$5 per session for non-members.

For more information, contact Tom Marbell at (352) 409-2984 or Trainwithtomm@gmail.com.

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HEAD START INTERVIEWS
In-person interviews will take place in February for families interested in applying for Head Start/Early Head Start services through the Pasco County Early Childhood Programs for the 2019-2020 school year. These comprehensive early education programs are for children from at-risk backgrounds, birth to age 5. The curriculum includes early math and readings skills to help children build the abilities needed to be successful in school and in life. For information on requirements and locations, visit PascoSchools.org/ecp.

SAINT LEO OPEN HOUSE
Saint Leo University will host an Undergraduate Admissions open house Feb. 16, starting at 8 a.m. Students of all ages are welcome to attend with their families and friends. Guests can explore the campus at 33701 State Road 52 in St. Leo, and speak with members of the Saint Leo University community. Prospective students are welcome to tour the campus, learn about the university's academic offerings, student life, campus involvement, financial aid and more. For information and to register, visit SaintLeo.edu/visit-campus. For questions regarding special accommodations, contact the school's Office of Admissions at (352) 588-8283 or admissions@saintleo.edu.

FOOTBALL FUNDRAISER
Land O' Lakes High School's football program will host a breakfast fundraiser Feb. 23 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., at First United Methodist Church (just south of the school), 6209 Land O' Lakes Blvd. The cost is \$7 at the door for pancakes and breakfast meats. To purchase tickets in advance, email td-club.president@gmail.com.

SCHOLARSHIP BENEFIT
The Republican Party of Pasco Scholarship Committee will host its inaugural "5 for 5 Dinner" on Feb. 26 at Benedetto's Restaurant Italiano in Land O' Lakes, to benefit its scholarship fund. The five-course meal aims to raise \$5,000 for five \$1,000 scholarships for Pasco County seniors graduating in the spring.

To help sponsor this event, contact Sandy Graves at (813) 817-3011 or sgraves253@msn.com.

- STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS**
The following local students have been named to the fall Dean's List at their respective schools:
- Kaylynn Butts (Lutz), University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa
 - Jennifer Clifford (Lutz), University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa
 - Ryan Davey (Lutz), University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa
 - Michelle Graham (Lutz), Mercer University, Macon, Georgia
 - Emily Leonard (Wesley Chapel), Mercer University, Macon, Georgia
 - Nathan Mansour (Odessa), University of Dayton, Ohio
 - Caroline Amanda Meisner (Lutz), Greensboro College, North Carolina
 - Savannah Melvin (Lutz), University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa
 - Chase Memmer (Odessa), University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa
 - Julianna Mitten (Odessa), Cedarville University, Ohio
 - Jacob Mocny (Odessa), University of Dayton, Ohio
 - Maxim Stepanets (Lutz), Alma College, Alma, Michigan
 - Emily Ymiolek (Lutz), University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa
- Also, Olivia Sargent, of Lutz, was named to the fall President's Honor Roll at Oklahoma City University. And, Cody Cash, of Lutz, graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Human Environmental Science from the University of Alabama; while Amanda Pollard, of Lutz, received a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Alabama.

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR WOMEN
GFWC Florida will award two \$3,000 scholarships to women returning to college who need financial assistance for education to achieve their goal to gain employment and become self-sufficient. Recipients must be a Florida resident and attend an accredited Florida public college, university or technical school as a full-time student. The recipient's application, personal statement and two references must be submitted by email to GFWCflscholarshipprogram@gmail.com. The application and recommended forms are available online at GFWCFlorida.org, under Member Resources, Grants, Scholarships and Awards. The deadline for applications is March 1. For more information about the program, contact Candi Aubin at (850) 508-3107 or aubin5@aol.com.

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TOUCHPOINT, from page 1A

speeches filled with enthusiasm — regarding the promise and potential that the new project represents.

Brian McNeill, president and CEO of TouchPoint Inc., the parent company of TouchPoint Medical, told the crowd that as a private company the focus is “on doing what’s right for the long-term of the business. And, we look to create value over a long period of time.”

“The investment that we’re making here in Pasco, Florida, is an example of our long-term commitment to our business, to our people, and to the communities in which we work and live,” McNeill said.

“I think this moment clearly demonstrates the power of aligning shared interests of private and public resources to create something new and exciting,” he added.

Pascal Testeil, president of TouchPoint Medical, said the company began looking for a location about a year ago, to enable its growth and expansion.

When it began working with the Pasco Economic Development Council’s staff and Pasco County, “we quickly discovered that we shared common values, such as growth, diversity, passion for creating value for customers and a strong sense of community.”

“For all of those reasons, we were convinced that our new home should be here, in Pasco County,” Testeil said. “We want to be a contribution to the local economy,” he added.

Pasco County Commissioner Mike Wells marveled at TouchPoint’s commitment to its employees, and at the sizable presence of TouchPoint team members at the event.

The commissioner added: “We are very excited to bring more jobs and economic growth to Pasco County. The new jobs com-

TouchPoint Medical incentives

The Pasco County Commission previously approved \$1.7 million in incentives to attract TouchPoint Medical, Inc. to Pasco County.

The packages includes:

- About \$464,000 to be paid over eight years in return for providing new jobs
- Up to \$150,000 in payments or credits for permitting fees
- An estimated \$980,000 in property tax rebates over 10 years
- \$100,000 in reimbursable employee training costs

TouchPoint Medical will partner with AmSkills as part of training and recruitment.

AmSkills is an initiative that helps high school students, adults and veterans learn manufacturing job skills.

ing to the county will range from product development, business services, customer and technical support, as well as manufacturing.”

Bill Cronin, president and CEO of the Pasco EDC, said “this land represents a great foundation to do business. It’s a wonderful location in the middle of the fastest-growing market in the United States, the southeast U.S.”

“The foundation here is also strengthened by the community leaders and elected officials,” Cronin said.

The economic development leader also pledged a continuing partnership with the company.

“We thank you for making the decision to move here,” Cronin said. “We are here for the long-run. We want to see you grow and prosper.”

BAYCARE, from page 1A

services that would not be based at the hospital, Jones added.

BayCare also plans to do community outreach, and to provide wellness and education activities, Jones said.

It plans to partner with education providers to help provide a path forward for both high school and college students, Jones added.

The construction of the hospital is expected to create 300 jobs, and once it becomes fully operational, BayCare anticipates needing about 300 team members, Jones said.

The proposed services at the hospital include:

- Emergency services for adults and children
- Intensive care unit
- Obstetrical care services
- Diagnostic lab imaging
- Physical rehabilitation
- Behavioral support services

Jones told the audience, people often want to know: “What’s it going to look like? How’s it going to function?”

It will be similar in appearance to BayCare’s St. Joseph’s Hospital-South, which opened in Riverview in 2015. That hospital used the template from St. Joseph’s Hospital-North, which opened in Lutz in 2010.

“We will use the same architects,” Jones said, using whatever was learned during the St. Joseph’s Hospital-South project, much like that project used what was learned at St. Joseph’s Hospital-North.

“The goal is, you always want to improve upon yourself,” he said.

It typically takes about three years from the time a hospital is approved, until the physical structure is operating.

The hospital has received preliminary approval from the state for a Certificate of Need, but that has been challenged, so the

process will take some time to work through.

BayCare has received word that a hearing is scheduled Aug. 13 through Aug. 22, according to Tiffany Scalone, media relations coordinator for St. Joseph’s Hospitals.

Jones told the North Tampa Bay Chamber crowd: “We will work through the process for the Certificate of Need. We anticipate it will be resolved by October.”

BayCare understands the value of the state Certificate of Need process, Jones said, noting it is intended “to protect the community, so that you don’t overbuild services and you do something the community actually can afford.”

“We support that process. We feel like it challenges us to make sure that all of the things that we thought through actually do support the community,” Jones said.

Beyond its plans for the hospital, BayCare also anticipates bringing in some other services.

“We feel like we can get to the community faster with some of the diagnostic services that are needed in the community,” he said. “We’re looking at another location for our outpatient services. Right now, the things that we have identified immediately are around laboratory and imaging, and also urgent care.”

Licia Tavalaccio, a real estate broker who lives in the area, said she’s excited about the prospect of the hospital coming into the area.

But, she noted: “My concern is traffic. Do we have a plan?”

Jones said the hospital will reach out in the community to involve them, as the hospital planning progresses.

“We would like you to participate. We want you to have input,” Jones said, noting that community participation also extends to helping to identify the community’s needs.

“We try to provide service for the patients where they need it,” Jones said. “We come to you.”

ECONOMY, from page 1A

“When does the consumer spend? The consumer spends when they’re confident,” Jung said.

“When the consumer feels confident, good things happen to the United States economy.”

The county’s workforce stood at 155 million workers before the December jobs report came in, which added 304,000 to that figure, he said.

“People have jobs. Consumer confidence is high. The one thing that’s been holding us back has been wage growth,” he said, but there are some signs that is changing.

On the flip side, “We keep creating all of these jobs; we don’t have workers to fill them.”

“This will be really interesting, this tug of growth that we’re seeing, and the supply of workers out there,” Jung said.

The productivity of U.S. workers is one strength of the nation’s economy, he said.

“Average productivity growth, it’s a measure of economic performance, the amount of goods produced, divided by the number of hours to produce them. They’ve gone up 2 percent a year, or 36 percent, since 2000,” he said. “The U.S. worker is the most productive worker in the world.”

“We keep growing because we increase people’s skill level, we invest in technology, we invest in process. This is really positive,” he added.

The improvement in worker’s skill levels occurred after World War II, the economic expert said.

In 1937, for instance, only 52 percent finished eighth grade; just 26 percent finished high school; and just a handful received training beyond high school, he said.

Access to energy is another strength in the U.S. economy.

At one point, the U.S. relied heavily on oil imports.

“Now, the U.S. is the largest oil and natural gas producer. North America is energy independent. This all happened in the last decade,” Jung said.

The U.S. enjoys a number of advantages and is performing well, but despite those strengths, there are challenges, he said.

The nation’s debt has ballooned.

The average deficit from 1950 to 2005



B.C. MANION

Economic expert John B. Jung delivered a talk called ‘Facts are Stubborn Things’ during the Pasco Economic Development Council’s 2019 Economic Forecast Luncheon.

was \$67 billion; from 2006 to 2018, it was \$707 billion, he said.

Taxes have increased, too.

“Since the end of World War II, the federal tax revenue has grown 15 percent faster than the national income. Think about that for a minute. That means you are paying more, as a percent of your income,” he added.

On top of that, the future of the Social Security Trust Fund is on shaky ground.

“We got a problem coming, and we know it,” he said. In 1900, there were 10 people under 18 for every 1 over 65. Today, that number is 1.6 and it will go under 1 in 2042.

“It’s just demographics. We’re living longer, and we’re not having as many children,” he said.

“The Trust Fund is scheduled to run out in 2034.”

“This isn’t political. This is just math,” he said.

Student loan debt is another issue, he said.

“There’s 1.5 trillion in student debt in this country and a 10.7 default rate,” Jung said, and because of that debt, it’s affecting people’s ability to buy homes or cars.

Overall, though, Jung offered a positive message to the bankers, real estate professionals, elected officials, government leaders, entrepreneurs, workforce trainers, health care providers and others in the crowd.

“Think optimistically,” he encouraged. “There’s so much good going on in the U.S. economy and this country. Don’t get yourself caught up in the wars between FOX and MSNBC, and all of the mislabeled stuff that’s out there.”

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New opportunities coming to Cypress Creek campus

By B.C. Manion
bcmansion@lakerlutznews.com

Crews have begun work on Cypress Creek Middle School, being built on the site where Cypress Creek Middle High School now operates.

A new Instructional and Performing Arts Center, which will provide educational opportunities and entertainment, will rise on the same site.

Both are slated to open in fall of 2020. Pasco County Schools gave Pasco-Hernando State College the land where the performing arts center, IPAC, will be built. The state college is paying the construction costs for IPAC, and will oversee its use.

But, the new facility will benefit middle school through college students, through the programs it offers.

In a recent interview with The Laker/Lutz News, representatives of the state college and the school district provided details relating to IPAC and the new middle school building.

The middle school project — at roughly 190,000 square feet, will take much longer to build than the 35,000-square foot performing arts center.

At the middle school, “they’re working on the site work. The foundation work is ongoing right now. Everything is on schedule for completion in July of 2020 for an August 2020 opening,” said Mike Gude, the school district’s director of construction services.

Cypress Creek Middle will have a capacity of 1,691 students, making it the largest of the district’s middle schools.

Safety and security will be first and foremost, with a single point of entry, controlled access and a fence around the school, Gude said.

“We designed our middle school to be very much compatible with the IPAC (performing arts center),” added Ray Gadd, deputy superintendent for Pasco County Schools. “We have a black box theater. A beautiful state-of-the-art black box theater. We also have an orchestra room. Dance. Chorus,” Gadd said.

Dr. Stanley Giannet, vice president of academic affairs and faculty development at PHSC, said the performing arts center will serve an important academic role.

“It’s called the Instructional and Performing Arts Center, the IPAC. The reason we have instructional there first is because in addition to a community-type events space and a performing arts space, the primary responsibility is to provide educational opportunities for our students, both dual enrollment students, students who will pipeline from the school district to PHSC, and community students, who wish to partake in the program,” he explained.

The state college will be using space within the performing arts center to provide courses to support a new Associate of Science degree in digital design and multimedia technology.

That new program was based on a needs analysis, and takes advantage of the fact that some programs are already offered in these areas at Wesley Chapel, Wiregrass and Cypress Creek high schools.

“It’s a natural extension,” Giannet said. Plus, there’s a documented need in the community for employees with these skills.

“This is a high-wage target industry,” Giannet said. The skills learned in this program can be applied to the performing arts, but also transferred to jobs in other industries, he said.

Students also will be able to take courses to support an Associate of Arts degree, which they can transfer to a four-year degree, he said.

Students will be able to take dance, theater and music classes as electives toward their associate’s degree, Giannet said. To get the associate’s, students would need 36 hours of general education, but the remaining 24 could be acquired at IPAC, focused on the performing arts.

CAMPUS COULD DRAW REGIONAL EVENTS

The performing arts center is considered to be an extension of the state college’s Porter Campus at Wiregrass Ranch, which will



COURTESY OF PASCO-HERNANDO STATE COLLEGE

This is what the new Instructional Performing Arts Center, to be built on the campus shared by Cypress Creek High School and the new Cypress Creek Middle School, will look like. The campus is at 8701 Old Pasco Road in Wesley Chapel.



COURTESY OF PASCO COUNTY SCHOOLS

In the fall of 2020, Pasco County Schools is scheduled to open Cypress Creek Middle School. It is being designed for 1,600 students, making it the district’s largest middle school. The middle school will join Cypress Creek High and Pasco-Hernando State College’s Instructional and Performing Arts Center.



FILE

Dr. Stanley Giannet, vice president of academic affairs and faculty development at Pasco-Hernando State College, said the new performing arts center on the Cypress Creek campus will offer a broad array of educational opportunities.



FILE

Ray Gadd, deputy superintendent of Pasco County Schools, envisions opportunities for education, entertainment and growth for the local economy through the collaborative project involving the school district and state college.

be under the direction of an administrator who will report to Kevin O’ Farrell, provost of the Porter Campus.

The community also will have access to a new performing arts venue, and the campus could attract national or regional thespian festivals, or other kinds of performing arts events.

The 444-seat performing arts theater, the 150-seat black box theater at the middle school, and the arts classrooms available on campus provide a set of resources that could be attractive for such events, Gadd said. Plus, the site has plenty of parking to support such events, after school hours.

The black box theater might prove particularly popular with local theater groups, Gadd said.

“One of the advantages of the black box in the middle school is that it might be more amenable to some community theater activities, because I think the IPAC center is going to be like an anthill — it’s going to be very busy,” Gadd said.

The combined state college and school district resources on the campus create the potential for increased economic development, additional educational programs, and a new entertainment venue for the community, Gadd said.

Gianett noted that the center will be a source of revenue for the college, too.

“We’ll have professional troupes, professional shows that we can bring in,” he said, and there will be opportunities for groups to rent the facility for events.

The theater also will provide another place for the school district to offer plays and other events.

Working together on this project has helped the district and state college develop a greater level of collaboration, said Gadd, who not only serves as the school district’s deputy superintendent, but also sits on the state college’s board.

The dual role offers a vantage point that allows him to see areas where the district and college can leverage the resources of the individual organizations, through collaboration.

Construction is expected to begin on the performing arts center around June of this year, and the project is expected to be completed by July of 2020, said Tony Rivas, associate vice president facilities management and administrative services for the state college.

O’ Farrell said a request is being made to the Florida Legislature for some additional funding for the project.

“One of the final pushes that we’re making this legislative session is for an additional \$2.5 million,” he said.

“We had \$15.5 million for the facility,” he explained.

Because of the partnership between the state college and the school district, the site for the arts center has been secured, and it is almost ready for construction, O’ Farrell said.

If additional money can be secured for this project, it would go to enlarge the interior space in the arts center’s foyer to accommodate breakfasts, receptions and community gatherings.



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PET of the WEEK



Little Bear is a Toto look-alike

Little Bear is a Cairn terrier, one of the oldest terrier breeds originating in the Scottish Highlands, and one of the earliest working dogs. The breed was given the name Cairn, because its function was to hunt and chase quarry between the cairns in the highlands. Little Bear is about 14 inches tall and weighs about 14 pounds. He was born in Oldsmar in November 1999, which makes him one of the older dogs at more than 19 years of age. Cairn terriers are generally healthy and live on average 12 to 17 years. Little Bear loves to ride in the car, go to the dog park, check out the girls, dig holes and chase anything that runs. He does not like it when he doesn't get his way, and marches to a different drummer. Little Bear loves his two best friends, William and Joyce Fields, of Land O' Lakes.

Adopt A Friend FOR LIFE



Handsome Henry

Six-year-old Henry arrived at the shelter in late January. His favorite pastimes are people-watching through the windows, and getting attention from the staff and volunteers. Henry is FIV-positive; however, this is not something that requires treatment, just a stress-free home where he can help brighten up your life. Henry can go to a home with other cats, but slow introductions are recommended to ensure all the kitties get along.

PET PAWS

CAT SHELTER FUNDRAISER

Two Sisters DIY Workshop, 2020 Land O' Lakes Blvd., Suite 4, in Lutz, will host an open-paint fundraiser for the Tampa Bay Cat Alliance, a nonprofit, all-volunteer, no-kill cat shelter, Feb. 23 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Preregister and choose your project to guarantee its availability at arrival, or come in and choose from any design on hand.

All open workshops include all necessary materials to complete a painted sign.

There also will be a raffle with a 50/50 and gift baskets.

Donations, such as cat litter and cat food also are needed and can be dropped off at the studio up until the day of the event.

To preregister, visit TwoSistersDIY.com.

ANIMAL SERVICES PARK WALK

Pasco County Animal Services (PCAS) will host a Park Walk on March 2 at 9 a.m., at Jay B. Starkey Wilderness Park, 10500 Wilderness Park Blvd., in New Port Richey.

Adoptable dogs from the shelter will be available for adoption that day.

Participants can also bring their own dogs.

These rules must be followed:

- All dogs must be on a leash (no flex/retractable leashes).
- Those joining the walk also must clean up after their own pet. Waste bags will not be provided.
- Dogs are not allowed face-to-face contact.

- Bring water and bowls for your pet.
- One pet per handler at all times.
- Prong or electric collars are not permissible.

For information, call PCAS at (813) 929-1212.

STRUT YOUR MUTT

Beach House Assisted Living & Memory Care, 30070 State Road 56 in Wesley Chapel, will host its inaugural "Strut Your Mutt Doggie Fashion Show" March 16 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

All breeds welcome, big or small. Complimentary refreshments will be provided.

Dogs can enjoy the Bark Park, pet treats and doggie vendors.

For information or to RSVP, call (813) 508-6677, or visit EventBrite.com.

BARK IN THE PARK

Bark in the Park will take place along the Hillsborough River, in downtown Tampa, at Curtis Hixon Park, March 23 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

There will be food trucks, wine and craft beer, music, vendors, dog costume contests, a dog agility zone, adoptable dogs, a VIP tent with mimosas and sweets, a pop-up dog park, and a 1-mile Walk for the Animals along the river.

For more information, you can visit BarkInTheParkTampa.com.



Sweet Estella

Estella, a 5-year-old pup, arrived as a stray in December. She is heartworm positive, but it is treatable. If interested in adopting sweet Estella, be sure to ask a staff member at the shelter about assistance in treating Estella's heartworm disease.

If you would like to adopt Henry or Estella, be sure to visit Pasco County Animal Services at 19640 Dogpatch Lane in Land O' Lakes. The adoption center is open Tuesday through Saturday, noon to 6:30 p.m. All adoption fees include spay/neuter, microchip and vaccines. For more information, email adoptionpartners@pascocountyfl.net.

PET cetera

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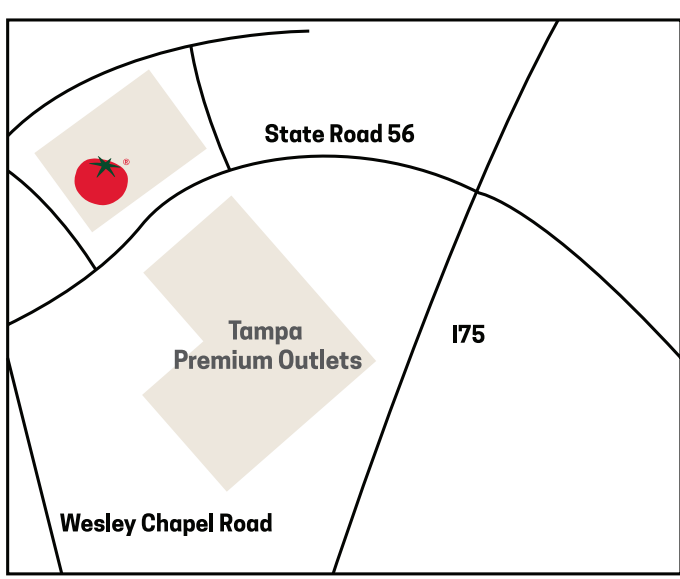
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