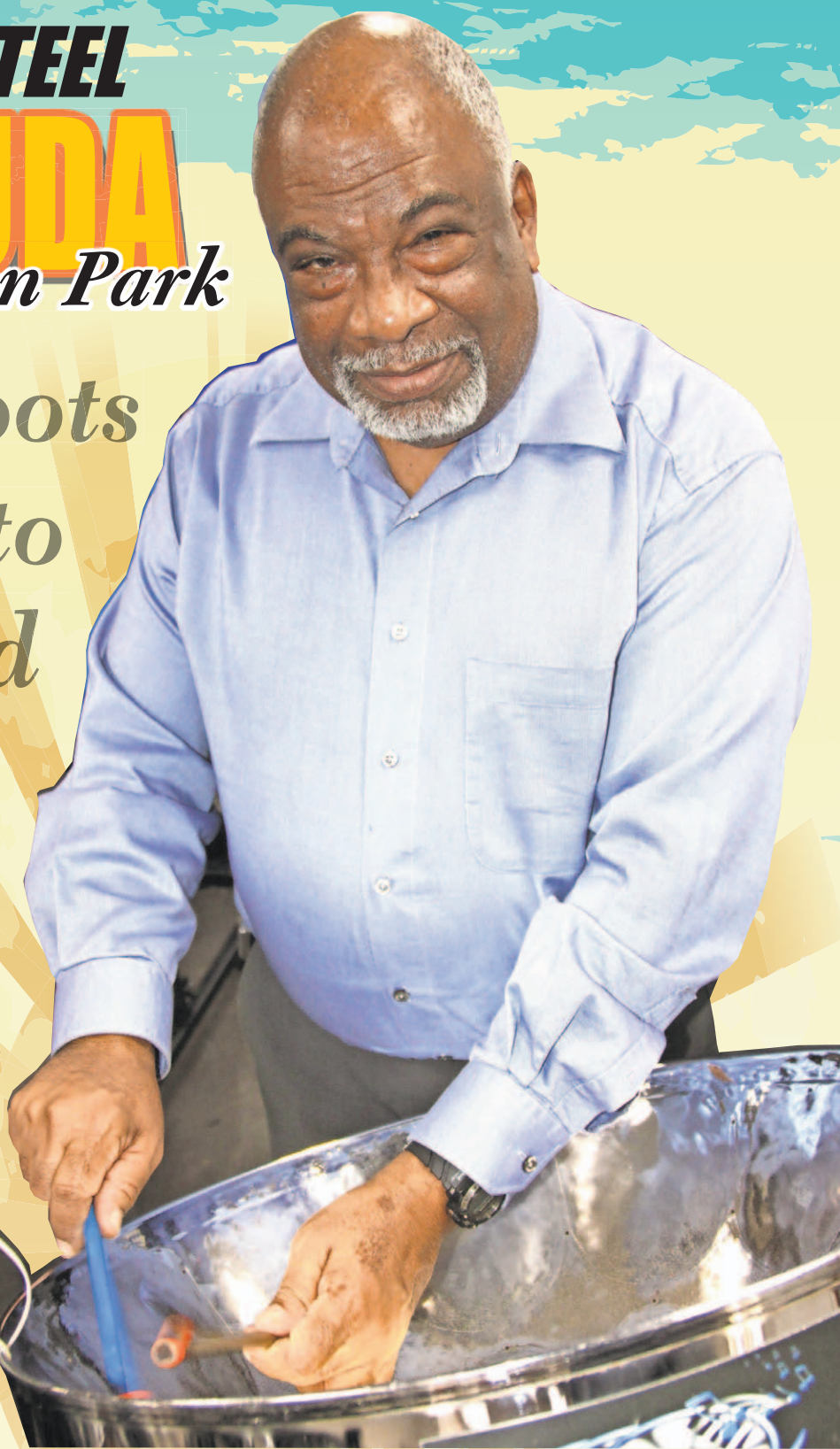


FIRE 'N' STEEL BERMUDA to Avon Park

band's roots go back to the island



MARC VALERO/STAFF

By **MARC VALERO**
STAFF WRITER

Walker Memorial Academy Music Director Leonard Cann started the Fire 'N' Steel Band soon after his arrival at the academy 22 years ago.

AVON PARK — A trip to Massachusetts and enthusiastic music students in Bermuda led to the formation 22 years ago of a unique and talented musical ensemble in Highlands County — The “Fire ‘N’ Steel” band from Walker Memorial Academy.

Often referred to as a “steel drum” band, the instruments created from modified 55-gallon steel drums are actually called “steel pans.”

The steelpan's surface is tuned to notes in the musical cycle of fourths and fifths, which are struck with rubber tipped sticks (mallets) producing a chiming or ringing sound.

Walker Memorial Academy Music Director Leonard Cann, who is from Bermuda, explained the background and formation of the Fire ‘N’ Steel band.

Cann taught music for five years in Bermuda, and during that period his school's concert band went to Massachusetts to perform at a festival.

Along with the big concert bands, the festival featured a separate program of performances of smaller ensembles.

“We were still new so we didn't have any ensembles yet, so we had a soloist perform; he was very good,” Cann said.

Cann's students told him they needed to come up with something unique from Bermuda.

He didn't know what was unique from Bermuda because the



MARC VALERO/STAFF

Misty Maxwell performing with the Fire ‘N’ Steel Band at the 2017 Avon Park Christmas Parade.

steel pans his students were persistent about are from Trinidad. Many people think Bermuda is farther south in the Caribbean Sea, but it is in the Atlantic Ocean, Cann noted.

When Cann stopped by a local music store to check band instruments, he noticed a steelpan and was told a fellow in the area was making them.

“I never played it or been that close to it,” he said. “I picked up the mallet and tapped it and I said, ‘boy that thing sounds good.’”

Steel pans before that sounded horrible, they were tinny

sounding and out of tune, which didn't impress him, but this pan had a beautiful brassy sound, Cann said.

He stopped by the instrument maker's home. He became excited saying he had been trying to get the public schools to use the instruments, but they weren't interested.

Cann tracked down some used metal drums and the fellow made a set of steel pans.

A group of Cann's best musicians learned how to play the pans and they learned one

ROOTS | 8

Local governments see higher pension costs

By **PHIL ATTINGER**
STAFF WRITER

SEBRING — When estimated returns on investments drop, pension funds suffer.

When it's the Florida Retirement System, the whole state feels it. According to News Service of Florida, counties, school boards, state agencies, universities, state colleges and other government entities will have to increase their contributions in the 2018-2019 budget year to make sure the \$160-billion pension fund has enough money in the long term to pay retirement benefits.

The increases total \$178.5 million, News Service reports. County governments will have to contribute \$66 million more in the new budget year than they already have, according to Senate Bill 7014, approved last week by the Senate Governmental Oversight and Accountability Committee.

School districts, which make up the largest segment of pension participants — half of the 627,000 active members, will have to contribute the second highest increase: \$54.4 million more.

PENSION | 8



KIM LEATHERMAN /STAFF

Charles “Haney” Hane sits in the doorway waiting to be picked up for all types of day labor jobs. He says he is not homeless and lives in Highway Park with his disabled brother. Concerned residents have been asking about his situation with the cold weather.

Fears assuaged about 'homeless man'

By **KIM LEATHERMAN**
STAFF WRITER

LAKE PLACID — The aftermath and recovery from Hurricane Irma has proved that Lake Placid is a tight-knit community. Neighbors helped neighbors and everyone seemed to look out for each other.

In that same spirit, because of the cold last week, a resident became concerned about a gentleman she thought was a homeless man, and she gave voice to those concerns.

She noticed a man loitering in the alcove of a defunct storefront. She felt he was malnourished and probably homeless.

The woman contacted the Lake Placid Police Department and was told Charles “Haney” Hane was not homeless and was a day laborer and hung out near the old Bealls Outlet so employees could pick him up for work.

They assured her that he was fine and they knew him.

The next call, from the woman who wished to remain anonymous, was to the Highlands News Sun Publisher Tim Smolarick. The investigation started.

FEARS | 8



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Lake Placid man dies in SR 70 crash

By **MARC VALERO**
STAFF WRITER

LAKE PLACID — A 62-year-old Lake Placid

man died in a two-vehicle accident at 7 p.m. Friday on State Road 70 east of Greenbrier Lane. Florida Highway Patrol

identified him as Dennis R. Prescott. Prescott was driving a 2004 Toyota Corolla, east on State Road 70 just east of Greenbrier Lane, while John W. Cofield Jr., 65, of Wimauma was driving a 2003 Chevrolet Silverado, west on State Road 70 east of the Toyota, the report shows.

the report. After striking the guardrail, the Toyota traveled across the east-bound lane and into the westbound lane where the two vehicles collided.

guardrail and cane to rest on the north shoulder facing west, the report shows.

Both Cofield and his passenger, Valerie Cofield, 58, of Wimauma, were transported to Lee Memorial Hospital with serious injuries. Prescott's vehicle had no passengers. That stretch of highway was very dark except for the lights of the first responders and from the head and tail lights of the traffic that was backed up for miles in both the east and westbound lanes. Onlookers got out of their cars to determine what the delay was about. When the traffic jam did not let up, many cars turned around and headed back toward Lake Placid or Okeechobee respectively. Highlands County Sheriff's deputies, FHP troopers, Highlands County EMTs and Sun 'N Lakes Volunteer Fire Department responded to the scene.



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The Toyota traveled off the roadway onto the south shoulder, and its right side struck a guardrail, according to

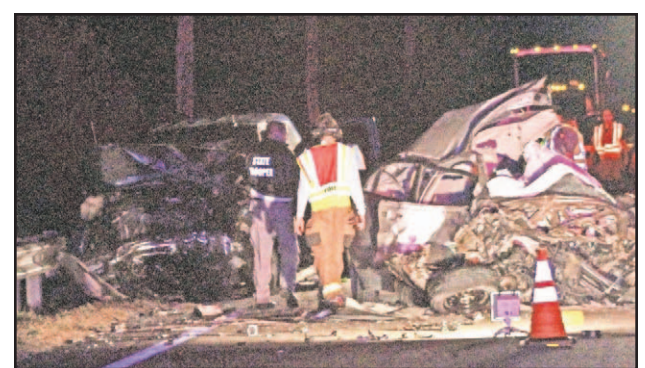
The front of the Chevrolet struck the front left of the Toyota, the report states. After the impact, the Toyota spun counter clockwise and came to rest facing southwest across both the east and westbound lanes.

Prescott's vehicle had no passengers.



KIM LEATHERMAN / STAFF

A head-on collision between a Chevrolet Silverado truck and a Toyota Corolla resulted in a fatality on Friday night on SR 70 east of Greenbrier Lane.



A Lake Placid man, who was driving the 2004 Toyota Corolla, on the right, died in a two-vehicle accident on State Road 70, east of Greenbrier Lane, Friday evening.

Changes lead to promotions at Sheriff's Office

BY **JAY MEISEL**
STAFF WRITER

SEBRING — Several promotions and changes have been made recently at the Highlands County Sheriff's Office.

Lt. Jim McGann has been promoted to captain over the uniform patrol division, Highlands County Sheriff Paul Blackman said.

He will replace Kenny Johnson, who was

appointed captain of Specialized Services, Blackman said.

Meanwhile, Sgt. Mike Brod has been promoted to lieutenant in the Uniform Patrol Division over the Delta Squad. As a result, deputy Ross Porter will become a sergeant over school resource officers.

Sgt. Mike Abell has been promoted to lieutenant over the Special Operations Unit and the TAC Team.

The upcoming retirement of Capt. J.P. Fane, who is over the Operations Division, which includes dispatch and communications, will result in Capt. Lauro Diaz, who is currently over Criminal Investigations, moving to operations.

Lt. Keith Starling is acting head of criminal investigations.

Blackman said that a permanent replacement will be chosen for Diaz after Fane's retirement.

ROAD ADVISORY

AVON PARK — A road advisory has been issued by the Florida Department of Transportation. S.R. 17 (West Main Street), from Central Avenue to North Museum Avenue will be closed from Monday to Friday.

Construction crews will close one direction of S.R. 17 at a time between Central Avenue and Ferguson Avenue in order to pave S.R. 17.

Detours are as follows:
-Eastbound detour: S.R. 17 (West Main Street) to Central Avenue south to Bell Street east to Lake Avenue north back to S.R. 17 (West Main Street).

-Westbound detour: S.R. 17 (West Main Street) to Ferguson Avenue north to Pleasant Street west to Central Avenue south back to S.R. 17 (West Main Street).

This project includes milling, resurfacing, curb and gutter and sidewalks. Expected completion is this spring.

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Be careful of bats: Some carry rabies

By PHIL ATTINGER
STAFF WRITER

SEBRING — On sultry summer nights when mosquitoes like to swarm, having a few bats flying around might ensure some peace from the biting insects.

That's fine as long as the bats also don't bite. In fewer than three months, Florida has seen two die from bat-contracted rabies — one of them a 6-year-old boy. Although only a small number of the animals carry the virus — 6 percent — they account for 90 percent of the rabies cases in the United States, usually one or two per year.

One of the recent rabies cases in Florida came from Highlands County last October.

According to the Florida Health Department, the middle-aged woman did not seek treatment after being bitten nor did she receive rabies post-exposure prophylaxis — the series of injections designed to treat and stop the disease — and she died.

The victim's name and age are withheld, along with where she was treated, in accordance with the Health Insurance Privacy and Portability Act.

The child — Ryker Roque of Orlando — died last Sunday. His father told the Associated Press he found a sick bat and put it in a bucket. He told his boy not to touch it,

but the boy did and got scratched.

The father washed the wound thoroughly, but didn't take the child to the hospital, because he cried when he was told he would get shots. About a week later, the boy developed numb fingers and a headache. By then, it was too late for treatment.

Rabies is almost always fatal once symptoms develop, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Vaccine given after a wound but before symptoms almost always prevents the disease.

Clay Kinslow, lieutenant in charge of the Highlands County Sheriff's Office Animal Services Unit, said he once had a bat in his family's fireplace.

He carried it outside

but didn't get scratched. He doesn't advise that.

Bats groom themselves constantly, he said, so even their fur is infused with their saliva and any diseases they may have.

"The main thing to do is not touch them," Kinslow said, especially if the animal is sick or dead. "Call us to get the (Florida) Health Department involved."

If you get bit, he said, people should seek medical treatment and call his division at (863) 655-6475. Again, he'll get the Health Department involved. Typically, he said, the Health Department won't test a dead bat for rabies unless someone has been bitten or scratched, but they can.

Bats are a protected species, Kinslow said. Some people keep bat

houses to allow wild bats to roost in an area, and feed on evening insects — like mosquitoes. There's even one at the Arbuckle Creek boat ramp, he said.

Sometimes, however, people get unwanted bats in their attics or outbuildings, usually discovered by the distinct smell of their dung.

Because bats are protected, people still need to call his office.

They should also be careful, he said. No one caught the infected bat whose bite killed a local resident last year. It's probably still flying around the county.



PHIL ATTINGER/STAFF

A bat box by a home in west Sebring lets bats roost near a lawn where the homeowner has a water drainage problem, which causes a mosquito problem. While the bats help in that regard, residents should know 90 percent of all human rabies cases come from contact with bats, and they should take precautions not to touch bats or get bit or scratched.

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OBITUARIES

Delores 'Dee' Johnson

Celebration of Life service for Delores E. "Dee" Johnson will be at 2 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 27, 2018, at Unity of Sebring, 10417 Orange Blossom Blvd. S., Sebring, FL 33875. Rev. Andrew Conyer officiating. Memorial contributions may be made to Unity of Sebring or The Humane Society of Highlands County.

Philip LaFlam

Philip LaFlam, 96, of Okahumpka, Florida passed from this life into Glory on Jan. 9, 2018. Born in Avon Park, Florida on Oct. 12, 1921, he is preceded in death by his parents, Alfred L. and Lennie (Jacobs) LaFlam; his wife of 65 years, Lena B.; sister, Evelyn Morrison; brothers, Thomas, Francis, Alton, David and Leslie LaFlam, as well as many other loved ones and friends he looked forward to being reunited with again. He is survived by his brother, Jack LaFlam of Okeechobee, Florida; daughter, Karen Baumgardner (Bill Coon); son, L. Philip (Debra); five grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren, and many other relatives whom he loved. He was of the Protestant faith, accepted Jesus as his savior at a young age, and this guided everything he did in his life. He helped his fellowman every chance he could.

He enlisted as a young man in the Army, was in World War II in the 11th Combat Engineers, demolition unit, attached to General Patton's army, seeing action in the Colmar pocket and Battle of the Bulge, going in at D-Day plus 1. He earned two Purple Hearts due to tree burst shells and carried shrapnel in his body the remainder of his days.

He was a retired master plumber/pipefitter, the oldest member of Plumber/Pipefitters Union Local 719, and was an avid fisherman all of his life.

A graveside service will be held at 1 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 27 at Lady Lake Cemetery, Lady Lake, Florida.

Kenneth O. 'KO' LaVergne

Kenneth O. "KO" LaVergne, age 77, passed away Wednesday, Dec. 20,

2017. He was born March 30, 1940 in Detroit, Michigan to Omer and Elizabeth (LaLonde) LaVergne. Six years later he moved to Parma, Ohio

where he made several lifelong friends. While living in Parma, Kenneth excelled in sports. He was an all-city in football, basketball and baseball. In 1988, he was inducted into the St. Ignatius Athletic Hall of Fame followed by the Parma/Cleveland Hall of fame in 1992. In 1962, Kenneth graduated from Kent State on a four-year baseball scholarship and was offered a try-out with the New York Yankees but was let go once he ruptured his spleen. That led him to start a 20-year career in the U.S. Air Force, retiring as lieutenant colonel. At that time, he was living in Derby, Kansas and went into real estate

and soon opened his own real estate office. While he was a real estate broker, he ran as a write in for mayor of Derby, winning on a Save the Trees ticket (there are not many trees in Derby). KO was mayor for two terms. In 2000, he moved to Sebring, Florida, sold cars and finally retired to play golf. Above all, KO was a son that made a parent proud, a friend you could count on for a lifetime, a loving and devoted husband and father. He had a way of always making people feel good about themselves. He will be missed by all who knew him.

He is survived by his wife, Mary R. LaVergne of Sebring, Florida; son, Tad LaVergne (Jennifer) of Derby, Kansas; daughters, Danyel Darger (Thad) of Fisk Dale, Massachusetts and Tiffany Wells (Brian) of Derby, Kansas; sisters, Carol Bare (Jack) of Black River, Michigan and Marybeth McMahan (Mike) of Grand Rapids, Michigan; 11 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Family and friends are invited to any or all services.

A memorial followed by a Celebration of Life will be held at the Madison Avenue Central Park, 512 E. Madison, Derby, Kansas from 2-5 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 3, 2018.

A memorial service will be held at Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church in Avon Park, Florida at 10 a.m. Friday, Feb. 16, 2018.

There will also be a service at St. Gabriel's Catholic Church in Black River, Michigan on July 24, 2018.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Alzheimer's Association, P.O. Box 96011, Washington, DC, 20090-6011, www.alz.org

Sherry F. Money

Sherry Farner Money, 68, of Avon Park, Florida passed away at home on Sunday, Jan. 7, 2018 surrounded by her family. She was born July 18, 1949. Sherry was a resident of Avon Park since 1982 and worked at Barnett Bank for many of those years.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Harold Farner and Dora Farner Chester; step-father, Everett Chester; and brother, Robbie Farner. She is survived by her sons, Larry (Ann)

Money of Avon Park and Emmitt Money Jr. of Hollywood, Florida; brother, Scott Chester; five step-grandchildren and four step-great-grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held at 2 p.m. Jan. 27, 2018 at Fountain Funeral Home. Friends and family are welcome to share in the celebration of her life. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Highlands County Human Society, P.O. Box 833, Sebring, FL 33871. Arrangements with Fountain Funeral Home, Avon Park, Florida.

Doris Pollard

Doris Pollard, 87, of Sebring, Florida died Jan. 18, 2018. She was born in Collins, Georgia, moving to Sebring in 1936. She was a member of Sebring High School class of 1948 and a member of First Baptist Church.

She was preceded in death by parents, Irene and JC Leaphart; sister, Margaret Pollard; and her husband of 63 years, A.W. Spizz Pollard. She is survived by son, Roy (Lori) Pollard; daughters, DeDe (Jim) Mims, Becky Hernandez (Ron Cooper) and Angie (John R.) Carter; grandchildren, Rina Nick, Hugo Hernandez Jr., Derek (Lauren) Pollard, SFC, US Army, Courtney (Walter) Stuart, Carmen (Chris) Noel, Caitlin Mims, John (Jenna) Carter, and Whitney (Kent) Hogan; great-grandchildren, Julia and James Pollard, Brayden Mims and Penny Noel; nieces and nephews.

Sincere thanks to her caretakers, our angels, Audrey Mason and Essie Allen.

Visitation is from 3-5 p.m. Sunday with a service at 11 a.m. Monday at Morris Funeral Chapel. Burial will follow at Pinecrest Cemetery. Donations to her church or Sebring Library. www.morrisfuneralchapel.com.

'Storied Pasts' features etchings, paintings

By MEGAN SMITH
NEWS CLERK

AVON PARK — Art lovers flocked to the South Florida State College Museum of Florida Art and Culture (MOFAC) for the Third Thursday Reception and Artist Talk with artist Larry Vienneau.

Vienneau's "Storied Past" series features etchings and paintings of the Raven and the Crow, inspired by countless stories, fables and myths throughout history, and is currently being featured at MOFAC.

Each piece in the series is paired with a story that explains the inspiration and meaning behind it.

Vienneau drew inspiration from tales from around the globe and across time. "There's so many stories about, you know, the Raven and the Crow in mythology and Aesop's fables, that I won't run out," Vienneau said.

He began working on this series when he was living in Alaska and was working as an illustrator.

He lived in Alaska for 12 years and decided to move to Florida to be closer to his family. "When I finally got to Florida, I really didn't know what direction my artwork was going to take, and I just kept coming back to the ravens," Vienneau said.

Most of the pieces are prints made by etching a zinc plate with acid and hand engraving it or drawing it on a photo-polymer plate and exposing it to light and water, then hand inking the plates and pressing them on to paper.

The pieces can take anywhere from 15 to 40 minutes to print. "Having to carve into something or engrave into something and then print something and have something be ultimately very unpredictable with prints. You can somewhat control a painting, but a print, you just never know. There's a kind of



MEGAN SMITH/STAFF

Artist Larry Vienneau standing next to his print "Thought and Memory" based on Norse mythology.



"Unkind Conversations" 1-4 prints by Larry Vienneau.



"Inquisition," an acrylic with gold and copper relief by Larry Vienneau.

an exciting factor to that, too," MOFAC curator Megan Stepe said about Vienneau's printing process.

"The images are important but the stories go with them," Vienneau said. "One of the reasons I have the stories is that people don't read anymore, you know? They don't take time to let it soak in."

Stepe said: "He uses this sophisticated medium to convey (these stories.) All of these start out as drawings. Larry is a master draftsman, and then he produces all of these prints from them. ...The craftsmanship involved melds well into the richness of the stories

themselves. There's a nice reciprocity with it."

Storied Pasts will be on display at MOFAC until Thursday, Feb. 8.

Vienneau will also hold a workshop/demo where he will cover making acorn-ink and art-pens from various natural elements from 3:45 p.m. to 5:45 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 8.

MOFAC is at the South Florida State College Highlands Campus, 600 W. College Drive. For more information, call 863-784-7240, or visit www.MOFAC.org.

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LaVergne. Six years later he moved to Parma, Ohio

where he made several lifelong friends. While living in Parma, Kenneth excelled in sports. He was an all-city in football, basketball and baseball. In 1988, he was inducted into the St. Ignatius Athletic Hall of Fame followed by the Parma/Cleveland Hall of fame in 1992. In 1962, Kenneth graduated from Kent State on a four-year baseball scholarship and was offered a try-out with the New York Yankees but was let go once he ruptured his spleen. That led him to start a 20-year career in the U.S. Air Force, retiring as lieutenant colonel. At that time, he was living in Derby, Kansas and went into real estate



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OUR VIEW

What about Oak Manor Avenue?

Last week, county commissioners voted to cancel their contract with Preferred Materials to continue construction of the Sebring Parkway.

The county started the \$6.36 million design/build contract with Preferred Materials in 2014, and at one point was paying \$12,000 per month for delays while dealing with environmental issues. Now, according to County Engineer Clinton Howerton Jr., Preferred Materials want another \$3 million just to build the original two-lane road.

Phase III of the Sebring Parkway would provide a 3.5-mile shortcut from downtown Sebring to south Avon Park, at one-third of the drive time. It would start at the Phase I 90-degree turn — the northeast corner of the current parkway — and end with a roundabout at College Drive.

The Sebring Parkway project is a huge project. There were problems with sand skinks and gopher tortoises, etc. That caused the costly delay. Now the contractor offered to back out of the project and the county took them up on it, leaving the county to do the project themselves or put it back out for bid, which would cause another long delay in the project.

Howerton told commissioners Tuesday said it would cost another \$1.32 million over the current \$8.37 million commitment from the county if the county went ahead and finished a four-lane road. That added to the \$3 million from Florida Department of Transportation would make a total of \$12.7 million.

Commissioner Don Elwell asked where the county would get the money, and Road and Bridge Supervisor Kyle Green said he's carried over \$600,000-\$700,000 in surplus funds from completed projects for years. Most of the money will come from there.

Green and Howerton also believe the county can get the work completed at least six months earlier since they won't have to seek bids for the project.

Green also assured commissioners that the county's own road repaving work would not suffer. He would farm it out to contractors.

Instead of applying that surplus to the Phase III project, what about projects that have been on the county's list for 10 years or more — like Oak Manor Avenue?

We can't help but wonder how the residents of Oak Manor Avenue feel about this talk of the county taking on a 3.5-mile project that can be done at least six months earlier. How do they feel about the county saying repaving work will not suffer? How do they feel about the growing surplus that has been sitting there while they continue to wait for the county to fulfill their promise made years ago?

The DeSoto City residents first asked the county to pave a .13-mile section of Oak Manor Avenue 10 years ago. Last year, the commissioners agreed to pay half the paving costs, and find a way for seven residents of the road to pay \$20,000 in taxes — perhaps over the next 10 years.

Oak Manor Avenue connects to U.S. 27 via Lunsford Road and Pioneer Road, all of which are paved. Only a portion of Oak Manor Avenue is paved. Although the county maintains the road, the entry point — where Oak Manor meets Pioneer — is shell with a washboard effect.

In April 2017, commissioners apologized to residents that the work hadn't begun. They acknowledged that the county had gotten sidetracked away from the project and that their promise to the residents had not been kept.

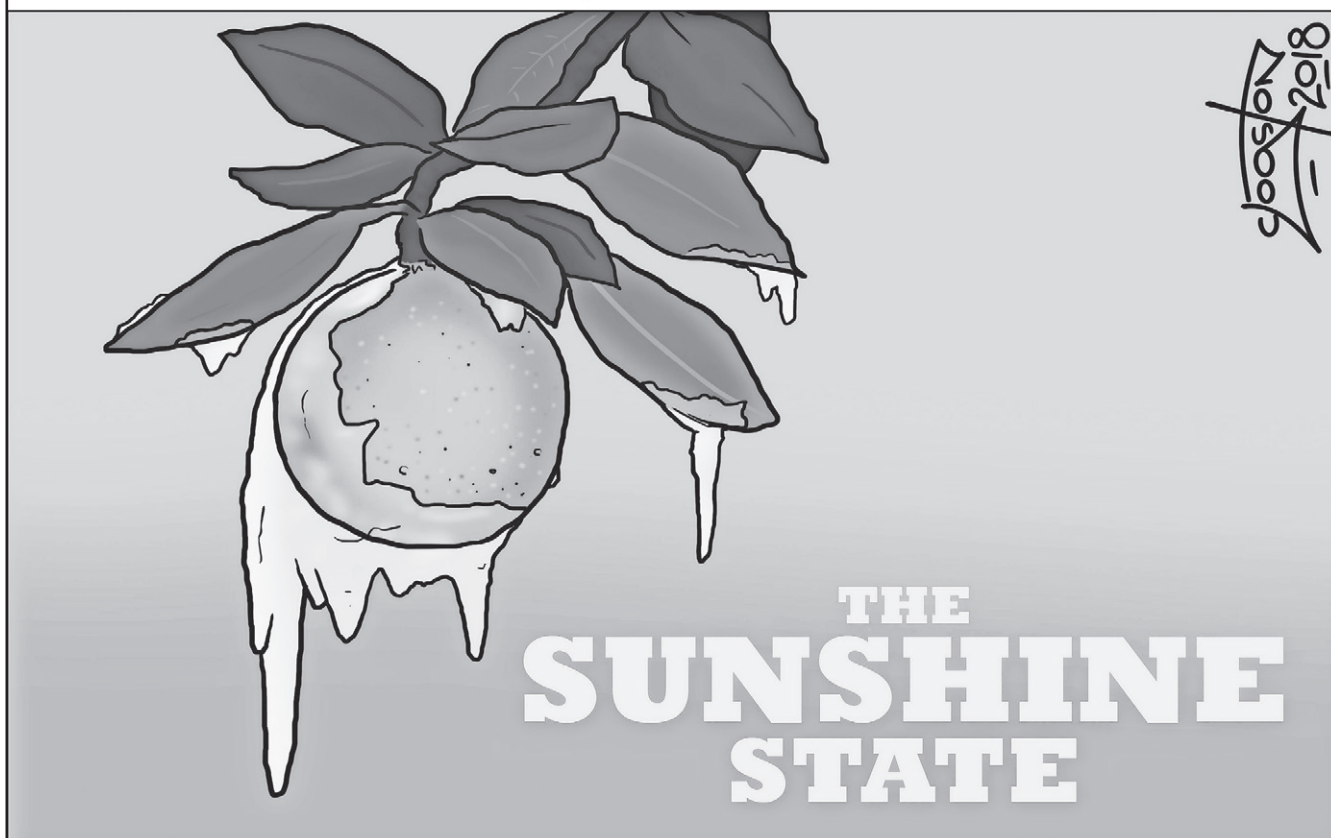
Santos de la Rosa, the resident spokesperson, wrote in an open letter to Elwell earlier this month that the only contact they have received from the county was an email from Green in August 2017. He also reminded Elwell that as of the date of his January letter it had been seven weeks since Elwell told him someone from the county would contact the residents to discuss the project. They continue to wait.

Later that same day, Green emailed County Administrator Randy Vosburg, bringing him up to speed with the Oak Manor Avenue project, noting former county attorney Ross Macbeth was to research how to set up the property owner assessments.

Still, the residents wait for the next step and we can't help but wonder how the county will handle a 3.5-mile project efficiently if they can't take care of a .13-mile project over an 11-year timespan. Especially when the seven residents who will benefit are willing to foot half the expense.

The residents of Oak Manor Avenue should not be forgotten when the county meets in February to discuss the financing and plans for the Phase III project of the Sebring Parkway. The commitment to these residents should be fulfilled before the Phase III project is allowed to continue.

LOCAL LOOK by GABE CLOGSTON



Our newspaper readers make fearless forecasts

In December 2017 I made my own fearless forecast for the new year. I invited our readers to test themselves by supplying their own forecast. One of my favorite restaurants, Dimitri's Family Restaurant in Sebring, was kind enough to supply a first, second and third prize.

How good of a forecaster are our readers? Our readers are an optimistic bunch. Here's what the many who responded predicted.

Dow Jones: The Dow Jones stock market average was 24,652 as of Dec. 15, 2017. I predicted a stock market correction of 11 percent would take the Dow Jones down to 22,000. The average of our readers predict the Dow Jones will increase 6 percent next year to 26,619.

New Jobs: The prior 12 months the USA had averaged 156,000 new manufacturing jobs. I predicted with full employment looming, new job growth would slow down to 75,000 jobs a month in 2018. Our readers predicted the growth in manufacturing jobs would sustain a still strong 145,000 a month job growth.

Wages: The average non-farm wage was \$26.55. I predicted a 2.6 percent increase in wages. The



INK IN MY VEINS

David Dunn-Rankin

average of our readers predicted a 9 percent increase in hourly wages. That's not a typo — 9 percent. The median increase in wages predicted by our readers was 4.8 percent. An optimistic group indeed.

Price of Gas: I predicted that the price of gas would stay around \$2.29 as the downward pressures of shale technology would keep a lid on prices. Our readers think gas will go up 10 percent to \$2.51 a gallon.

Seats in the Senate and Congress: I predicted that the normal pattern of the party in power losing seats in an off election would prevail. Republicans would drop from 52 seats to 50 seats in the Senate and from 239 down to 220 seats

in the House. The readers who responded are very bullish on the Republican party. You believe the Republicans will keep the same number of Senate seats and only lose five seats in the House.

Super Bowl: I couldn't bring myself to vote for the Patriots so I picked the Steelers who are now out of the playoffs. You all picked the Patriots by a wide margin and the Steelers second. No other team came close.

World Cup: Our readers predict Brazil and Germany. I picked Germany

Mens' NCAA Basketball: Duke is the overwhelming reader choice with Michigan State second. I picked Michigan State. Like the New England Patriots football pick, I just couldn't pick Duke.

College Football Wins: Our readers think Miami will have the most wins of any Florida college football team with Florida State getting the second most votes. I also predicted Miami.

College Football Losses: Our readers think Florida Atlantic will have the most losses. Might be. But, Lane Kiffin is back as coach and they were 11-3 last year. I predicted UCF, but

made my prediction before they beat Auburn in the bowl game. Wish I could take that choice back, but figured they were losing a beloved coach and the whole coaching team who were the secret sauce.

Bitcoin: Not a single reader thought Bitcoin would be higher 12 months from now. On average you predicted a 62 percent drop in price to 6,627. During the dotcom era I owned stocks that went from \$32 to .32 (cents). I predicted a larger drop in Bitcoin — to 2,000.

Named storms: The average of the readers was 2.6 named storms to hit Florida. I predicted 2.

All in all, you are a very optimistic bunch. Here's hoping our readers are right. Oh, and since the NFL playoffs have started, the Dimitri's Family Restaurant fearless forecast is closed to new entries. We will give you a mid-year and end-of-the-year status update.

Share your thoughts.
David Dunn-Rankin is CEO of Sun Newspapers, the family- and employee-owned group that owns the Highlands News-Sun and Highlands Sun. He can be reached at daviddr@sun-herald.com.

Life on the Circle

"The circle of life" ... we've all heard that quote, but imagine that our Circle in downtown Sebring was actually alive and could reflect on all the life encircling it through the past century. What would it say? What would it find amazing, amusing, anecdotal?

I picture our grand Circle as grandparents, watching as their children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren pass by them every day... little ones on their way to Woodlawn Elementary School for first grade, the excitement in their sweet, innocent faces. They watch as couples use the Circle "spokes" to attend their chosen church; some navigate their way to a quaint boutique. Grandparents who have seen the evolving businesses dotting the perimeter of their circle: Frames & Images was once The Colony Shops. Grandparents "Circle" watched as delighted shoppers left the Colony



GUEST COLUMN

Ladonna Rodriguez

Shops, arms full of new clothes; and now Frames & Images sends beautifully framed items out of that Circle-facing door.

The Circle spokes lead to memories... Cuttin' Up Salon was once Matthews Camera Store. It's funny how things change, but still stay the same. Hairstylists create the perfect look, and in days past, film was taken to Matthews to develop the perfect photo!

There was a time when life indeed revolved around

our Circle; a simpler time when neighbors gathered to catch up and check up; when one would walk or bike from their home near the Circle to just about any place they wanted to visit, and usually the Circle would be the route of choice.

Times do change. I imagine Grandparents Circle rather dizzy with the swirling of cars, pedestrians, and life in general around their circle. Sweet destinations are at the heart of our Sebring Circle: delicious treats, quaint shops, places to sit a while and visit ... these are all things that would make grandparents proud. Certainly our Circle is smiling to see the reinvigoration of downtown Sebring. New life is being breathed into historic buildings, studios of art are plentiful, its night life is coming alive with restaurants, theatrical performances, and is becoming a destination once again. I imagine that the Circle smiles to see it is not forgotten, but is being enjoyed and embraced for the special place it is.

They still watch for the little ones just beginning school; the car full of high school youth taking two laps around the Circle, just because; the new resident navigating the Circle who also takes "two laps", but for a different reason (where am I?)

This Circle has seen and continues to see so much of our daily lives. I believe "Grandparents Circle" have a warm spot in their hearts as they watch the progression of life around their Circle. The next time you hurry past our Circle, slow down a bit...notice the majestic trees, the sweet smell of grass, the scurrying animals, the many quaint shops; the flag always at attention, and imagine the many lives lived around this circle, our Circle. This is after all, the circle of life.

Ladonna Paedae Rodriguez is owner of Hobby Hill Florists in Sebring. Columns are the opinion of the writer, not necessarily that of the Highlands News-Sun.

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Letters are welcome on virtually any subject, but we do have some rules. We will not accept any Letters to the Editor that mention a business in a negative tone, as they have no means to defend themselves. Please keep Letters to the Editor 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. In the case of letters that are emailed, the same rules apply.

Due to the number of letters received, we are able to run only four letters per person per month.

The Letters to the Editor section is designed as a public forum for community

discourse, and the opinions and statements made in letters are solely those of the individual writers. The newspaper takes no responsibility for the content of these letters.

Please send or bring correspondence to the Highlands News-Sun, Letters to the Editor, 315 US 27 North Sebring, FL 33870, or fax to 863-385-1954. Readers may also email Letters to the Editor to editor@newssun.com.

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Prescribed burn planned near Sebring airport

By PHIL ATTINGER
STAFF WRITER

SEBRING — Residents near Sebring Regional Airport and Sebring International Raceway may see some smoke and soot in the next month.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service plans to have a controlled burn on Lake Wales Ridge National Wildlife Refuge lands within the undeveloped Flamingo Villas subdivision, between Airport Road and U.S. 98 in Sebring. It will take place sometime between

January and mid-February, weather permitting, according to Fish and Wildlife.

In addition to helping maintain sand hill, scrub and wetland habitat, the fire will help protect nearby neighborhoods and businesses from a wildfire in the coming dry season, according to a news release from Fish and Wildlife's Everglades headquarters in Vero Beach.

The news release describes prescribed fire as a "habitat management tool" that works with the

Refuge's Comprehensive Conservation Plan. It is further described as a cost-efficient and effective way to remove invasive woody vegetation and preserve rare, endemic plants and animals.

Without the burn, heavy amounts of vegetation, live and dead, would build up in an area, making firefighting much more difficult, the release states.

For more details about the Refuge, visit www.fws.gov/refuge/Lake_Wales_Ridge/.

5 THINGS That Will Make You SMARTER



1. Bread is closely tied to religious expression and communion. Hot cross buns commemorate Lent and Good Friday, Greek Easter breads are set with eggs dyed red to denote the blood of Christ, and Jewish families celebrate the coming of the Sabbath on Friday evening with challah.

2. Napoleon gave a common bread its name when he demanded a loaf of dark rye bread for his horse during the Prussian campaign. "Pain pour Nicole," he ordered, which meant "Bread for Nicole," his horse. To Germanic ears, the request sounded like "pumpernickel," which is the term we use today for this traditional loaf.

3. In Britain, the ceremony of First Footing is traditionally observed in the early hours of New Year's Day. A piece of bread is left outside a door, with a piece of coal and a silver coin, and is supposed to bring you food, warmth and riches in the year ahead.

4. The "pocket" in pita bread is made by steam. The steam puffs up the dough and, as the bread cools and flattens, a pocket is left in the middle.

5. It takes 9 seconds for a combine to harvest enough wheat to make about 70 loaves of bread.

Source: <https://mobile-cuisine.com/did-you-know/bread-fun-facts/>

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New programs offered at Circle Theatre

BY JAY MEISEL
STAFF WRITER

SEBRING — Thursday night, a group of people listened to a financial advisor from Wells Fargo give them advice with strategies to save money and reach financial goals.

The discussion included creating a financial plan to manage money better and save on expenses.

Most of the participants in the one-day class were young adults. And some brought their children.

Anna Richards, director of Children's Services for the Children's Advocacy Center, said the goal is to expand programs on Thursdays for adults and children. Some of those are geared to parents but are also family-friendly, she said.

Children attending the financial seminar were treated to pizza.

Other programs on Thursday include an expressive art class for children, ages 3 to 12, and parents. Children will be encouraged to "express thoughts and feelings with colors and shapes, tell your personal story, share your imagination and create healing and wholeness," according to a description.

The financial workshop with Wells Fargo is held the second Thursday of each month from 5:30 to 7 p.m.

A relationship building class is held the first Thursday of the month from 6 to 7 p.m. It's aimed at "strengthening family relationships through communications skills building and the importance of creating

a deeper understanding of the strengths and needs of family relationships and of each family member," the description said.

On the second Thursday of each month from 11 a.m. to noon, a safety first class is held, focusing on car seats, water, fire and internet safety. A leadership and community outreach is held the fourth Thursday of the month from 4 to 5 p.m. It focuses on how people can help other families in need in Highlands County.

On the second Thursday of the month, from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m., a parent support group meets with guest speakers. And on the third Thursday of the month from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m., a life skills group meets. It's open to teenagers, young adults and their parents.

The Circle Theatre also will have two upcoming speakers, Dianna Furr on Feb. 8 and Beatriz Mejia-Krumbein, on March 8. The speeches are open to the public and there's no

admission cost. The doors will open at 6:30 p.m. and the event will be from 7 to 8 p.m. Furr is a founder of Samaritan's Touch Care Center and Mejia-Krumbein is an artist. The classes and

support groups are also free and open to the public. Register at Circle Theatre during the hours the Family Resources Center is open, which are 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Wednesday to Friday.

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Point standings tightening up

Good-sized crowd takes in action at Avon Park's Mowerplex

By **JIM TAYLOR**
CORRESPONDENT

AVON PARK — A cold chilly night did not stop the heat of fierce competition in lawnmower racing or the largest crowd of the season to attend at the Avon Park Mowerplex last Saturday, Jan. 13. The event was fourth race of the season and many of the classification points standing are tightening.

In KART racing, Christian Galan

was able to extend his points lead over Steve Dodson and Sam Foster with wins in both the heat and main races. Foster finished second in both races, moving him to third place in total points, just 15 behind Dodson, who is currently in second.

It was a rough night for young Morgan Vaughn in the Mini-Mow class after a fourth-place finish in the heat and a third place in the main. Vaughn continues to hold the points lead, though it dropped

to just 10 points over Colby Pate, who finished first in both events and 15 over Reed Wallace, who finished third in the heat and second in the main.

Shannon Pate won both the heat and the main race in the CP class and cut into Bruce Runyon's points lead in the class. Runyon maintains a sizable point lead over after finishing second in both races.



JIM TAYLOR/CORRESPONDENT

Newcomer to FXS Class, Derrick Martin, in his second week, captured the checkered flag in the both the heat and main races last Saturday.

MOWERPLEX | 2

Dragons down Blue Streaks



RUTH ANNE LAWSON/CORRESPONDENT

Sebring's Genesis Morales goes up for a shot as Lake Placid's Kayla Domenich, left, defends.

Lake Placid pulls away from Sebring down the stretch

By **RUTH ANNE LAWSON**
CORRESPONDENT

LAKE PLACID — It was an exciting night for basketball, as the Lake Placid Green Dragons faced county rivals Sebring. The action was slow in the first half of the game and really picked up in the fourth period, as Lake Placid rallied for a 44-37 victory.

"I heard that Sebring beat Wauchula the other night so I knew they would be better," said Lake Placid coach

Steve Bullard. "I also heard they have a new player, Genesis Morales, she just moved here from Puerto Rico. She is a tremendous little player and she is only a ninth grader. The first half she could not hit at all but the second half she seemed to hit everything she threw up. She got them back in the game, but our girls responded well and played a better second half."

The Dragons took the lead in the first quarter, as Kayla Domenich led the Dragons in points with a couple

of two-pointers. Claire Pypers added a bucket for Lake Placid and so did Kylie Elliott. The Streaks cut the deficit in half with a basket from Essence Cummings and a shot made by MyKerriya Brown. At the end of the first Lake Placid was in the lead with a score of 8-4.

Lake Placid slowed in the second quarter. Donnie Gobourne was fouled and sent to the line twice where she

DRAGONS | 4

Sebring hosts prestigious tournament

Shuffleboard Association Hall of Fame Tournament takes place

By **NEIL SIMPSON**
SPECIAL TO HIGHLANDS NEWS-SUN

On Monday, some of the very best shufflers on the continent gathered at the Sebring Recreation Center for the annual Shuffleboard Association Hall Of Fame Tournament. This tournament rotates among the seven shuffleboard districts in the state. The Sebring Club, located in the Central District, was bursting with pride to be able to host the 2018 event.

The Hall of Fame Tournament is a pro event but amateur shufflers are welcome to enter and try their skill against the pros. Ellie Crowell and her husband, Jim, of Zephyrhills were two of a very limited number of amateurs that took the challenge this year.

Monday was a cool day with those



NEIL SIMPSON PHOTO

Ellie Crowell, an amateur from Zephyrhills, competes against Sebring's Hall of Fame shuffler Ruth Brown, who is in the background.

shufflers who played on the open courts enjoying the benefit of ample sunshine to keep them warm while those playing under cover had to deal with much cooler temperatures. 71 men and 44 women took part in this singles event.

Men played either walking or non-walking while the women were restricted to non-walking. In a walking event, the players push their discs from one end then walk to the other

SHUFFLEBOARD | 5



HIGHLANDS BASS ANGLER

Dave Douglass

Great fishing next 3 days

The Florida freshwater fishing forecast for the fourth full week of January gives anglers the first quarter moon phase on Wednesday, a cold front on Tuesday and 80-degree temperatures today and Monday. Winds will be ideal until after the midweek and the approaching cold front won't drop temperatures about 10 degrees until Tuesday night.

All fishing factors considered, fishing will very good for the next two and a half days then rainfall followed by high winds the rest of the week will make fishing a real challenge.

The second half of this week high winds will prevail in the 15- to 20-mile-per-hour range out of the northeast on Thursday, east on Friday, and southeast on Saturday and Sunday. Early morning anglers will have the moon underfoot working with the sunrise starting on Friday so there will be enjoyable fishing out of the wind on the leeward side of the lake. Choose your launch ramp accordingly.

Best Fishing Days: Today through Tuesday morning is forecasted to produce the best alignment of fishing factors. Remember during the Florida winter season water temperature trumps every other factor in that, when temperatures rise to the upper 60-degree range and into the 70-degree range, all freshwater fish feed twice as much during the week than they fed when temperatures were less than 60 degrees.

Monday night however will be the best fishing period of this week. As the moon overhead period occurs and the sun begins to set as water temperature reach the daily high mark, atmospheric pressure will spike and fish will feed heavy. Watch for the wind to shift out of the southeast in the midafternoon hours—trigger-effect before the approaching front.

The Major Fishing Period: The moon is overhead at 4:09 p.m. today and the sunset at 5:58 p.m., both producing a feed rating of 5 to 6 from 3-7 p.m. Additionally, weather forecasters are predicting above-average atmospheric pressure spikes tonight and Monday evening.

The Minor Fishing Period: The moonrise occurs at 10:11 a.m. today and solar noon at 12:37 p.m. Both will create a 4 to 5 feed rating from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. which will be helped greatly by an above average atmospheric pressure increase which has been occurring about an hour prior to the moonrise and I expect this to continue.

Prime Monthly Periods: Jan. 28 to Feb.3, full moon; Feb. 12 to 18, new moon. January and February will have strong full moon periods due to the lunar perigee influence.

DAVE | 6



JIM TAYLOR/CORRESPONDENT

Christian Galan (27) won both the heat and main races last Saturday. Galan currently is the points leader in the KART class.

MOWERPLEX
FROM PAGE 1

In the Grand Prix (GP) class, Randy Gandy won the heat race, but finished fourth in the main race. Gandy still holds the points lead over Ken Wayman and Harold Polhill. Tom Hodges, who finished fourth in the heat race, rallied back to take the checkered flag in the main.

Hodges also won both races in the Grand Prix

(GP) Twin races, holding off Marc Sweetman, who finished second in heat and was disqualified in the main event. With the wins, Hodges gave himself a little breathing room in the points standings as he holds a slight 35-point advantage over Sweetman and 60 over Polhill in this class.

In the FXS class, Runyon maintains first place in total points, 40 points over Becky Kuhfeldt, after finishing second and third in the main.

Kuhfeldt finished second in the main and third in the heat as the two flopped positions in the two races.

Both were behind newcomer Derrick Martin, in his second set of races of the season, who took first place in both events to make a highly competitive class even stronger.

Points leader in the FXT class, Matt Garner, finished third in the heat on Saturday, but recovered to take the checkered flag in the main.



Tom Hodges (15) holds off Marc Sweetman (00) and Harold Polhill (314) in the GP Twin race heading into turn 1. Hodges won both the heat and main races to extend his slight lead in the GP Twin class.

Charlie Summers, who won the heat race, fell to second in the main.

In the final race of the night, Sam Foster won the FX Lite main race after winning the heat earlier in the evening. Foster has built a sizable

point lead, but Becky Kuhfeldt, Martine Vaughn, Stacy Wallace and Tom Hodges are close enough that any mistakes by Foster can make one of the largest classifications in drivers even more interesting.

Next race at the Avon Park Mowplex is Feb. 10 with a 6 p.m. start time.

The USLMRA National Lawnmower races are also going to be held at the Florida State Fairgrounds on Feb. 17-18.



Colby Pate (41) won both the heat and main Mini-Mow races last Saturday. Pate moved to within 10 points of the Mini-Mow points lead.



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LOCAL RUNNING

2018 YFIRE 5K Jan. 6

Female Results

Open Winner: Lisa Foster, 26:20.7.

Master Winner: Jen DeYoung, 28:43.7.

Grand Master Winner: Darlene Christensen, 29:28.8.

10 and Under: Desiree Bassett, 45:07.0.

11 to 14: Aundria Smith, 37:27.4.

15 to 19: Maci Leapheart, 27:50.1.

25 to 29: Brittany Higgins, 31:52.3; Mindy Snyder, 50:10.4; Cassie Watson, 50:18.1.

30 to 34: Latosha Harnage, 32:16.9; Sullyann Morales-Reyes, 41:56.9.

35 to 39: Shawn Beumel, 28:53.7; Amanda Maghan, 32:11.6; Ruthy Wilson, 38:29.2; Krystal Griffin, 45:40.0.

40 to 44: Sharla Elliott, 30:34.5; Allison Giannino, 32:12.1; Jennifer Fulwider, 32:39.3; Christi Gose, 43:51.4; Brandy Albury, 45:22.4; Tabitha McHargue, 45:24.5.

45 to 49: Sharon

Pridgeon-Fennell, 30:28.9; Danette Sapp, 37:23.2; Tammy Mortensen, 38:08.6; Kimberly O'Connor, 38:32.6; Judy Basset, 45:16.9; Sara Zamora-Baldrige, 48:35.5; Stacy Lower, 48:42.1.

50 to 54: Shari Flowers, 47:40.5.

55 to 59: Robin Gonzalez, 40:04.3; Elise Andreen, 50:23.1.

60 to 64: Martie Brooker, 33:05.0; Donna Howerton, 44:15.6; Candy Morehouse,

50:43.4.
65 to 69: Bettye Hart, 40:52.0.
75 to 79: Judy Cayo, 33:06.0.

Male Results

Open Winner: Zachary VanFleet, 21:03.0.

Master Winner: Kirk Becker, 23:57.0.

Grand Master Winner: Michael Stewart, 25:40.4.

10 and Under: Brooker Revell 10 7 25:47.5 8:19/M

11 to 14: Nic Colbert,

21:44.0; Miguel Arceo, 26:58.8; Joey Potter, 28:43.3; Ashton Griffin, 37:07.3.

15 to 19: Daniel Malone, 27:38.0; Mark Morales-Reyes, 37:18.4.
25 to 29: Cody Higgins, 31:52.0.

30 to 34: Gregory Carr, 28:17.8; Eric Marshall, 28:36.4; David Morale, 41:57.2.

35 to 39: James Ruch, 23:20.0; Jason Maghan, 25:49.4; Matt Griffin, 39:12.4.

40 to 44: Ryan

Leapheart, 28:59.5.
45 to 49: Thomas Lamorte, 27:26.4; Curt Matthews, 34:04.9; Ricky Mortensen, 36:57.9; Jess Baldrige, 48:36.7.

50 to 54: Mark Colbert, 27:37.4.

55 to 59: Robert Taylor, 25:32.0; Tony Rice, 26:02.9.

60 to 64: Edward Dickerson, 37:54.2; Carl Morehouse, 46:50.4; Randall Wilkins, 47:12.6.

65 to 69: Kenny Vincent, 45:11.0.

70 to 74: Cliff Ables,

41:06.6; Ronald Sevigny, 44:23.5.

75 to 79: Chuck Imboden 76 9 25:56.2.

Highlands Half Marathon

Relay Results

Emily Vargas and Dylan Branch, 1:26:53.6; Oren Stephens, Brooker Revell, Martie Brooker and Nolan Stephens, 2:20:18.0; Mike Kirsch, Samantha Brand, Julie Kirsch and Dan McCoomb, 2:36:20.5.

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DRAGONS

FROM PAGE 1

went 2 for 4 giving the Dragons a total of 10 points. The Streaks cut the deficit with a bucket from Brown and a two-pointer from Zi'yanah Massaline, as the Green Dragons led 10-8.

"We started out rough in the first quarter," said Lake Placid's Kylie Elliott. "We picked it up in the second half and did pretty well. We are doing a lot better this season than last. We were 10-10 and this year we are 10-5 we have improved a lot this season. We are going to practice hard and work on our plays. We have had a couple of bumps along the way and we need to work on getting in shape. We are really out of shape. This season I want to get better with my ball handling. We only have one point guard and that is me so I want to do my best for my team."

Morales scored 12 points in the third quarter to help the Blue Streaks take a 23-21 lead into the fourth quarter

The fourth period was filled with fouls and free throws. The Dragons took back the lead early in the fourth, only to see Sebring rally back and knot the game at 27.

Phypers was sent to the line for the Dragons and made a free throw. A technical foul sent the Dragons back to the line, where Gobourne made two free throws to give the Dragons had a 30-27 lead. Gobourne added a nice jump shot for the Dragons. Phypers was sent back to the line where she added a free throw bringing Lake



Lake Placid's Kylie Elliott goes up for a shot against Sebring.

Placid's lead to 33-27. Sebring would get no closer than four points the rest of the way.

"We are young still," said Sebring coach Chris Taylor. "We are growing and maturing. It is the small things and improving on those. They are making small mistakes but they are improving each game. We are getting better. If we win against Desoto on Friday then we should be in the No. 4 so we will host the first round of districts."

Taylor said his girls continue to battle, which is all he can ask.

"We fought hard and you cannot coach that," he said. "We have a bunch of freshmen that are showing up and they keep getting better. We are making adjustments and we are going to take care of the small things to get ready for

the district tournament. We are going to play our game and do what we do best."

Bullard said it was a good win for his team.

"Anytime you win you are happy," he said. "I think we played pretty well as a team."

Lake Placid's next game is a district match-up against the Teneroc Titans in Lakeland on Tuesday, while the Blue Streaks host Frostproof on Monday at 6:30 p.m.



RUTH ANNE LAWSON/CORRESPONDENT

Sebring's Adrianna Condo hits the deck, as teammate MyKerria Brown, left, and Kiara Watson battle for a rebound.

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NEIL SIMPSON PHOTO

Glen Pelletier, one of three living Florida shuffleboard to reach 1,000 points, poses with Dave Kudro, Florida Shuffleboard Association President and 2018 Hall of Fame Inductee.

SHUFFLEBOARD

FROM PAGE 1

end to shoot back in the opposite direction while in non-walking, there are two players at each end of the court and each player shoots in only one direction.

The non-walking players played the best two out of three games to 75 points and the walkers played to 75 points or 16 frames, whichever came first. Preliminary rounds were played on Monday and continued into Tuesday. The semi finals and finals were held Wednesday.

While the pros were

competing in Sebring, the Avon Park Seniors Activity Centre was hosting the amateur tournament with 20 teams coming from Avon Park, Bartow, Lakeland, Lake Placid, Lake Wales, Sebring and Winter Haven to compete under the watchful eye of tournament director, Marlene Corbeil from Winter Haven.

Tom Clayton, president of the Avon Park Club, was delighted with the turnout, especially in light of the unusually cold weather. Having 20 teams resulted in a balanced draw sheet which meant that teams didn't have to wait around for a turn to play.

Risi Competizione ready for both GT classes at Daytona

SPECIAL TO HIGHLANDS NEWS-SUN

The team announced two additional drivers joining Risi Competizione for the 56th running of the 24-hour race. The No. 62 Ferrari 488 GTLM of Toni Vilander, James Calado and Alessandro Pier Guidi will also welcome Davide Rigon to the cockpit.

The No. 82 Ferrari 488 GT3-spec GTD entry is joined by fifth driver Matt Griffin to support Miguel Molina, Martin Fuentes, Santiago Creel and Ricardo Perez de Lara.

"This will be a little different Daytona for Risi Competizione; we've entered one GTLM F488 and one GTD F488 for this event," said race engineer Rick Mayer. "We consider this a two-car car team as opposed to two one-car teams; there's a lot of cross over and reinforced efforts between the car crews, even though the cars are in different classes."

Mayer said the size of the overall field is roughly the same as last year, with 50 cars, so a driver's mental state is going to be critical in the race.

"The four longer endurance series races always have a larger Pro-Am content than the shorter races and this makes getting through traffic and staying clear of trouble more difficult and risky," he said. "Your concentration must be high, traffic will be constant, spotters at Daytona are super important. The safety car and wave by rules will ensure a large

lead lap car count for each class, as the rules make it easy to make up a small lap deficit. Clearing traffic will be particularly difficult for GTLM as the GTDs have equal or better banking speeds and the GTDs are allowed ABS brakes."

The Balance of Performance was largely based on what transpired during the Roar Before the Rolex 24, so the GTLM Ferrari is unchanged from the Roar, while the GTD car will get a fuel capacity addition.

"Both the GTLM and GTD F488 should be competitive in their respective classes," Mayer said. "Based on Roar observation the best BoPs are likely the Porsches in each class. Significant? We'll see. The fuel flow restrictors and fuel capacities have more significance at Daytona as fuel fill time and stint length are more important as in-class passing will be difficult; gaining positions in the pits is low risk compared to passing

on track."

Daytona International Speedway is a track that can yield high speeds, but teams have to take safety into consideration during set-up.

"Daytona is a track that requires some reserve in setup to increase safety," Mayer said. "Unlike other tracks, Daytona setups only relate to Daytona. The mechanical setup and tire pressures we need to run (Daytona-only pressure and Daytona-only cambers) here are all in the direction of safety at the detriment to lap time and performance. We bias the setup to improve braking stability and traction and maximize banking speed."

Passing at Daytona isn't so easy and there are few places on the track that provide ample passing opportunities.

"With 50 cars you'll be in traffic throughout the infield nearly every lap," Mayer said. "The only legitimate passing areas are on the banking to clear

slower cars, braking into Turn 1, braking into the 'Bus Stop' and occasionally into Turn 5. Being fast in the infield section is of little advantage."

When everything is said and done, Mayer believes Daytona is a wide-open race with many contenders.

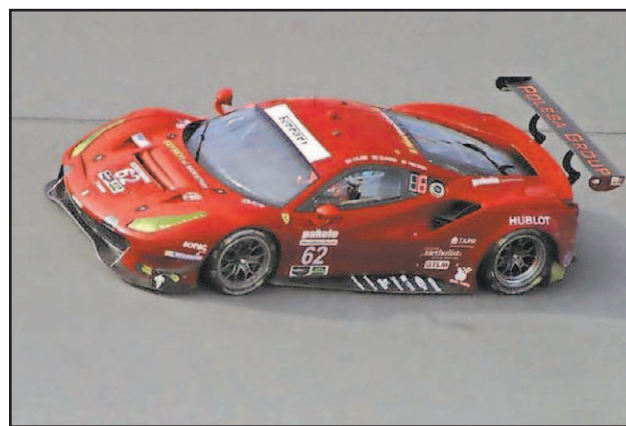
"Any of the nine GTLM cars could win this race, while the GTD field is more based on staying on the lead lap as the Am's circulate through the car, or getting your lap back if you lose one," Mayer said. "This year the BMW is the only new car in GTLM; they struggled at the Roar with pace, but their BoP for the event has improved considerably...so we'll see.

Naturally, Mayer is a bit biased towards his team and he believes they have a legitimate chance to take the win in either of both GT classes.

"We have had great success with the long races at Risi Competizione," he said. "The GTD car has two very accomplished Pros in the line-up and seasoned endurance Am drivers. The Pros know how to close a race.

"We have four of the best Ferrari factory GT drivers in the GTLM car; this has to be one of the best driver line-ups in the field, as all are champions and victors in 24-hour races driving Ferraris. Let's hope good fortune will start at Daytona and fade the memories of 2017's incident filled season."

The race starts at 2:40 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 27 and runs for 24 hours.



ASHLEY STRICKLIN PHOTO

The No. 62 Risi Competizione Ferrari competes in the Roar Before the Rolex 24 at Daytona International Speedway earlier this month.

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LOCAL SPORTS CALENDAR

Monday
 Avon Park boys soccer at Lake Wales, 7:30 p.m.
 Lake Placid boys soccer at Sebring, 7 p.m.
 Frostproof girls basketball at Sebring, 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday
 Lake Placid girls basketball at Tenoroc, 7:30 p.m.
 Sebring girls basketball at Bishop Verot, 7 p.m.
 Tenoroc boys basketball at Lake Placid, 7:30 p.m.
 Sebring boys basketball at Kingdom Prep, 7:30 p.m.
 George Jenkins wrestling at Sebring, 6:30 p.m.

basketball at Lake Placid, 7 p.m.
 Booker girls basketball at Sebring, 7:30 p.m.
 Lake Placid boys basketball at Vanguard, 7 p.m.
 Lake Placid wrestling at Sebring, 6 p.m.
 SFSC baseball at Eastern Florida State, 2 p.m.

Saturday
 Sebring wrestling at George Jenkins, TBA
 Broward College softball at SFSC (2), 1 p.m.
 SFSC baseball at Pensacola State, 11 a.m.

Monday, Jan. 29
 Lake Placid girls basketball at Clewiston, 7:30 p.m.
 Sebring girls basketball at Mulberry, 7 p.m.
 DeSoto boys basketball at Avon Park, 7:30 p.m.
 Lake Placid boys basketball at Discovery, 6:30 p.m.
 SFSC baseball at Webber International (B), 6 p.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 31
 Lake Sumter baseball at SFSC, 5 p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 1
 Sebring girls basketball at Avon Park, 7:30 p.m.
 Lake Placid girls basketball at Moore Haven, 7 p.m.
 SFSC softball at Indian River (2), 2 p.m.

Friday, Feb. 2
 Avon Park girls basketball at Lakeland, 8 p.m.
 Hardee girls basketball at Lake Placid, 7:30 p.m.
 Frostproof boys basketball at Avon Park, 7:30 p.m.
 Lake Placid boys basketball at Fort Meade, 7:30 p.m.
 Sebring boys basketball at Hardee, 7:30 p.m.
 SFSC baseball at College of Central Florida, 1 p.m.

Sumter, 1 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 6
 Avon Park boys basketball at All Saints, 7 p.m.
 Discovery boys basketball at Lake Placid, 6:30 p.m.
 Sebring boys basketball at Frostproof, 8 p.m.
 SFSC softball at Palm Beach State College (2), 4 p.m.

Wednesday, Feb. 7
 Webber International B baseball at SFSC, 6 p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 8
 Lake Placid

boys basketball at Okeechobee, 7:30 p.m.
 Sebring boys basketball at Haines City, 8 p.m.
 Pasco-Hernando softball at SFSC (2), 5 p.m.

Friday, Feb. 9
 Sebring wrestling at Lakeland, TBA

College of Central Florida baseball at SFSC, 1 p.m.

Saturday, Feb. 10
 Sebring wrestling at Lakeland, TBA
 Lake Sumter softball at SFSC (2), 1 p.m.
 Santa Fe College baseball at SFSC (2), noon

LOOKING FOR SOMETHING?
 Find it in the **CLASSIFIEDS!**
SUN NEWSPAPERS

Thursday
 Sebring boys soccer at Lake Placid, 7 p.m.
 Avon Park girls basketball at Hardee, 7:30 p.m.
 DeSoto girls basketball at Lake Placid, 7:30 p.m.
 Sebring boys basketball at Booker, 7 p.m.
 Kingdom Prep boys basketball at Avon Park, 8 p.m.

Friday
 Avon Park boys soccer at Sebring, 6:30 p.m.
 George Jenkins girls basketball at Avon Park, 8 p.m.
 Westwood girls

Tuesday, Jan. 30
 Avon Park girls basketball at DeSoto, 7:30 p.m.
 Lake Wales boys basketball at Sebring, 8 p.m.
 Sebring wrestling at Avon Park, 6 p.m.

Saturday, Feb. 3
 Sebring wrestling Spiegel Memorial, 10 a.m.
 Santa Fe College softball at SFSC (2), 1 p.m.
 SFSC baseball at Santa Fe College (2), noon

Sunday, Feb. 4
 SFSC baseball at Lake



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DAVE
FROM PAGE 1

Highlands Bass Angler Bass Guide-Trips are \$250 for one or two anglers. All gear, bait and tackle included for an artificial-bait six-hour trip. Cold water, Gatorade and weather protection provided. Custom bass fishing charters available. Call to plan and book your bass fishing experience today.

Istokpoga.info News: The lake level is at 39.25 feet above sea level, which is three inches below the max-level in the one-foot management-threshold range for the winter season. Currently the maximum and minimum levels are 39.50 and 38.50 feet above sea level, respectively. All four gates are closed.

Istokpoga.info website has links to the South Florida Water Mgmt. (SFWMD) real time S68 and S68X spillway gates status, and flow status data of all water way structures from Kissimmee to Clewiston. Access this article online using FloridaLakes

FishingForecast.com or BassFishingForecast.com. Need a lake map? Go to FloridaLakesMaps.com for free lake contour maps for hundreds of your favorite lakes statewide.

Fishing from Shorelines: Learn where the deeper water comes closest to shorelines using a lake contour map. There are 45 Highlands County lake maps published at floridaLakesMaps.com. Each map is edited to include boat ramp locations and have been enlarged for easy reading of the lake-bottom contour delineations.

The only challenge you have is to not trespass on private shoreline properties when accessing the best-fishing shorelines.

The 'good news' is, the majority of the lakes' public boat ramps and docks are located within the better shoreline fishing areas.

HighlandsBassAngler.com offers bass fishing guide-trip options, fishing-help tools, 72 lake-contour maps and additional map sources and fishing philosophy. Personalized custom fishing packages for beginners to professional anglers are available upon request.

Dave Douglass is a bass fishing guide and teacher on 25 lakes, from the towns of Kissimmee to Clewiston. Visit HighlandsBassAngler.com for complete details. Phone: 863-381-8474. Email: DavidPDouglass@hotmail.com.

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Military/Loyalty..... -1,000
Trade or Trade Equity..... 2,500

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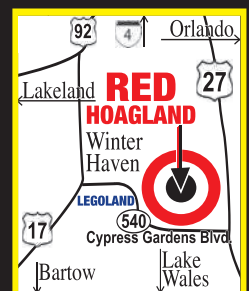
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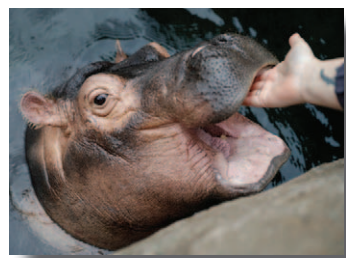


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See page 10.



GOP, Dems show no sign of retreat in shutdown's first day

By ZEKE MILLER, ANDREW TAYLOR and ALAN FRAM
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Republicans and Democrats showed no signs of ending their standoff over immigration and spending Saturday as Americans awoke to the first day of a government shutdown and Congress staged a weekend session to show voters it was trying to resolve the stalemate.

The closure of many government agencies was a striking display of Washington dysfunction, played out on the one-year anniversary of President Donald Trump's inauguration, and there was more finger-pointing than signs of bipartisan dealmaking.

Trump made light of the debacle in a tweet that Democrats "wanted to give me a nice present" to mark the start of his second year in office.

The president spoke with Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., to discuss the next possible steps, while chief of staff John Kelly also worked the phones. White House negotiators, legislative affairs director Marc Short and budget chief Mick Mulvaney, went to Capitol Hill to meet



AP PHOTO

House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer, D-Md., center, joined from left by, Rep. Joseph Crowley, D-N.Y., House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and Rep. Linda Sanchez, D-Calif., hold a news conference on the first morning of a government shutdown after a divided Senate rejected a funding measure last night, at the Capitol in Washington, Saturday.

with House Republicans, who emerged holding fast to their stance they would not negotiate while the government was shuttered.

Right around midnight, Senate Democrats killed a GOP-written House-passed measure that would have kept agencies functioning for

four weeks. Democrats were seeking a stop-gap bill of just a few days in hopes that would build pressure on Republicans, and were opposing a three-week alternative offered by GOP leaders.

RETREAT | 4

AP EXPLAINS:

Congress shuts down the government. Now what?

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — The U.S. government shutdown began at midnight Friday as Democrats and Republicans failed to resolve a standoff over immigration and spending. Here's a look at what the parties are fighting over and what it means to shut down the government.

What Are Lawmakers Fighting About?

Since the end of the fiscal year in September, the government has been operating on temporary funding measures. The current one expired at midnight. Republicans and Democrats have not been able to agree on spending levels for the rest of the year, so another short-term measure is the most likely solution. The House has passed a four-week bill Thursday that also extends funding for a children's health insurance program.

But Democrats have been saying for weeks they want a funding measure to be tied to an immigration deal that protects the thousands of young immigrants facing deportation. The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program is set to expire March 5, and members of both parties have been working on an extension that would also beef up border protection.

That deal has not come together, and Democrats have decided to dig in. They blocked the House-passed bill. Both sides were still negotiating early Saturday.

They've Blown The Deadline. Now What?

The government begins to shut down. But not all of the government.

The air traffic control system, food inspection, Medicare, veterans' health care and many other essential government programs will run as usual. The Social Security Administration will not only send out benefits but will also continue to take applications — though replacements for lost Social Security cards could have to wait. The U.S. Postal Service, which is self-funded, will keep delivering the mail. The Federal Emergency Management Agency will continue to respond to last year's spate of disasters. The Interior Department says national

CONGRESS | 4



DAVID MAIALETTI / THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER VIA AP

Thousands gather during the Women's March in Philadelphia on Saturday.

Across the globe, rallies against Trump, sexual misconduct

By VERENA DOBNIK AND TAMARA LUSH
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Across the globe, people are hitting the streets on the one-year anniversary of President Donald Trump's inauguration, marching against his policies and in support of the #MeToo movement against sexual assault and harassment.

A protest in New York was among more than 200 such actions planned for the weekend around the world. By mid-morning, people gathered in Chicago, Los Angeles, Denver and Raleigh, North Carolina. In Philadelphia, many marchers wore pink cat-ear hats as a show of solidarity, while others carried signs stating opposition to Trump and his policies.

Earlier Saturday, dozens of activists gathered in Rome to denounce violence against women and express support for the #MeToo movement. They were joined by Italian actress and director Asia Argento, who made headlines after alleging in 2017 she had been sexually assaulted by Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein in the 1990s.

The 2017 rally in Washington, D.C., and hundreds of similar marches created solidarity for those denouncing Trump's views on abortion, immigration, LGBT rights and more. Millions of people around the world marched during last year's rallies, and many



AP PHOTO

People take part in a rally portion of a march highlighting equal rights and equality for women Saturday, in New York.

on Saturday thought about all that's happened in the past year.

"I'd be lying if I said that I'm not dispirited and discouraged over having to march yet again to register our opposition to this disastrous first year of the Trump presidency," said Peggy Taylor, a New York City tour guide and Manhattan resident.

She said that last year, she felt "a kind of euphoria" walking through the city with hundreds of thousands of

participants.

This year, "the hard reality of what lies ahead of us has sunk in," she said. "I know that we have a long slog ahead of us to undo the damage that this man has inflicted."

In New York, scheduled speakers included Ashley Bennett, a Democrat who was elected Atlantic County, New Jersey, freeholder last November.

RALLIES | 4

Pence tells US troops to forget the shutdown and focus on their mission

By BRIAN BENNETT
TRIBUNE WASHINGTON BUREAU

On his way to Cairo for a Middle East tour, Vice President Mike Pence shook hands and chatted with U.S. service members Saturday during a stop to refuel Air Force Two at Shannon Airport in Ireland.

Pence is to visit three Middle East nations.

As the vice president took photos with some of the troops, he brought up the U.S. government shutdown, which began at midnight Friday.

"We'll get this thing figured out in Washington," Pence said. "You guys stay focused on your mission."

Several dozen Air Force personnel were in the airport terminal in transit to assignments overseas. Some troops were based at Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado and were headed to Kuwait for a six-month deployment.

Pence said he heard a number of soldiers bring up the shutdown. "It's disappointing to every American that Democrats in the Senate would shut down the government when we have troops in harms way," he said. "These soldiers deserve better."

FINANCIAL NEWS

Stinky GE Still a Buy

Dear Mr. Berko: My stock-broker wants me to buy 400 shares of General Electric. Is he nuts?

— JS, Moline, Ill.

Dear JS: Last June, Jeff “Big Melt” Immelt, who took control of General Electric (GE-\$18.47) from the iconic Jack Welch just before 9/11, announced he’d be stepping down as CEO. Good! He’s been replaced by John Flannery, a 30-year GE veteran who ran the company’s health care division. Huge yawn! Most doubt that Flannery and his personal broom can hurry GE’s price recovery. So far, his appointment has made as much difference to GE as would the advent of another fly to a slaughterhouse. That should change if Flannery’s broom can muck out the executive suite and remove the stench from the Augean stables in GE’s useless boardroom.

Recommending GE at \$25 several years ago was among my biggest disappointments since buying 250 shares of Studebaker-Packard in 1962. That company shut its doors in 1966. GE, with \$126 billion in 2016 revenues and \$13.4 billion in profits (\$1.07 a share), wasn’t earning enough to pay its 96-cent dividend, so Flannery reduced it to 46 cents, saving the company over \$4 billion a year. GE’s not in trouble; it just lost its mojo.

GE’s established dominant product categories — turbines, locomotives/transportation, lighting, medical imaging, renewable energy, aircraft engines and service contracts — do very well. Its service contracts business generates margins in excess of 30 percent.

GE’s problem is fivefold:

1) Integrating the power and grid business of Alstom, a French company GE purchased for \$14 billion in 2015, has proved more



Malcolm Berko

difficult than anticipated. Slow penetration in the European power infrastructure is disappointing. Still, 30 percent of the world’s electricity is generated by GE equipment. Recent events suggest modest success and profits this year.

2) Volatile fossil fuel prices are hurting GE’s oil and gas segment, an important growth platform for its slowly growing industrial portfolio. However, oil prices are expected to remain at current levels (\$55 to \$62 a barrel) through the first half of 2018.

3) It may take several years for GE’s industrial division to replace the significant, albeit slightly worrisome, earnings from GE Capital, which Immelt stupidly unwound in 2015.

4) Observers believe that integrating oil field service provider Baker Hughes’ business, which GE purchased for \$7.5 billion, will be more difficult than anticipated, as the sale was predicated on oil’s trading at \$60 a barrel.

5) Finally, bigger isn’t better. GE is so ginormous (301,098 employees in 180 countries) that it’ll take GE’s brain a week to discover that competitors are eating its tail.

However, GE should slowly stagger forward, and I’m comfortable staggering forward with a 48-cent dividend yielding 2.7 percent. If 2018 revenues come in at \$132 billion and produce profits of 90 cents a share — as is projected — GE may even raise its dividend to 50 cents this year.

If Flannery can hold the reins steady during the coming four years, analysts believe that net profit margins could improve from 8.9 percent to 15.3 percent. Analysts believe that 2022 revenues could come in at \$165 billion, that earnings could reach \$2.20 a share and that the dividend could be increased to a buck again. That’s a potential 5.5 percent yield at today’s \$18.47 price. There are quite a few ifs, but if those ifs can reach reality, aficionados believe that GE could trade in the \$50s by 2022.

There’s impatient buzzing by some activists suggesting the best way to maximize shareholder value would be to divide GE into four independently traded companies — dealing with medical imaging, aircraft engines, oil and gas service and equipment, and power generation, respectively — each with profitable service contracts. These four independent companies could have a combined share value of \$50 to \$60 within 18 months.

Your broker gave you good advice. GE’s long-term debt is declining, while book value, return on capital, return on equity and cash flow are improving. Still, GE’s board members have egregiously failed shareholders and management. These toadies, who gleefully fleeced millions of dollars in perks and directors’ fees, are responsible for GE’s humiliating performance. They should be pilloried, placed in stocks, publicly whipped and then prosecuted for malicious misfeasance. Buy 400 shares, but hold your nose!

Please address your financial questions to Malcolm Berko, P.O. Box 8303, Largo, FL 33775, or email him at mjberko@yahoo.com. To find out more about Malcolm Berko and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate website at www.creators.com.

FINANCIAL NEWS BRIEFS

French airport activists start unblocking road

PARIS (AP) — French activists say they are have started to unblock a road they used to occupy, in a move that eases tensions three days after the government abandoned plans to build a new airport in the west.

Anarchists, farmers and environmental activists said in a statement Saturday that they want to make the road a “shared” space with drivers.

They warned the French government against potential “expulsions” of people living in the makeshift settlement they built in a vast area around Notre-Dame-des-Landes, outside Nantes, to resist plans for the airport.

Activists previously said they hoped to transform the occupied land into “a space of social, environmental and agricultural experimentation.”

Unblocking roads was a key request of Prime Minister Edouard Philippe after announcing Wednesday the decision not to build the airport.

British Airways pilot, allegedly drunk, taken off plane

LONDON (AP) — A British Airways pilot has been removed from the cockpit of a flight amid fears he was drunk.

The Sun newspaper reported Saturday that police “rushed on the plane and headed straight for the cockpit. The first officer was cuffed and led away.”

The newspaper says worried airline workers alerted police before the flight left for Mauritius.

Sussex police say a 49-year-old man from west London has been arrested “on suspicion of performing an aviation function when the level of alcohol was over the proscribed limit.”

The flight departed several hours late from Gatwick on Thursday after another crew member joined the flight.

Big towers to rise near historic Jamestown: \$90M in payouts

NORFOLK, Va. (AP) — A power company is getting set to build 17 transmission towers in Virginia near colonial Jamestown Island. And already the utility has begun paying out \$90 million for projects to blunt the impact on significant historic areas.

Jamestown marked Britain’s first permanent settlement in North America. While many in the tourist region are gratified by the payments from Richmond-based Dominion Energy, others oppose such a project.

The power lines are expected to be visible from the eastern tip of Jamestown Island, although not its historic fort. Four towers will rise nearly as high as New York’s Statue of Liberty.

Dominion’s federally required payouts will support projects, among others, to improve water quality and shorelines and to acquire battlefield sites dating to the American Revolution and the Civil War.

TODAY / TONIGHT MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY

FLORIDA CITIES TIDES MARINE SUN AND MOON

PORT CHARLOTTE SEBRING AIRPORT AIR QUALITY INDEX WEATHER TRIVIA

THE NATION

U.S. EXTREMES WORLD CITIES

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NATION



AP FILE PHOTO

In this Sept. 6, 2017, file photo, Leslie Van Houten attends her parole hearing at the California Institution for Women in Corona, Calif. California Gov. Jerry Brown has again denied parole for Van Houten, the youngest follower of murderous cult leader Charles Manson.

Governor denies parole for Manson follower Leslie Van Houten

By **ANDREW DALTON**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES — The governor of California once again denied parole Friday for Leslie Van Houten, the youngest follower of murderous cult leader Charles Manson who blamed herself at her parole hearing for letting him control her life.

Gov. Jerry Brown said in his decision that Van Houten still lays too much of the blame on Manson, who died two months ago at 83.

Brown acknowledged that Van Houten's youth at the time of the crime, her more than four decades as a model prisoner and her abuse at the hands of Manson make it worth considering her release.

"However," he wrote in his decision "these factors are outweighed by negative factors that demonstrate she remains unsuitable for parole."

The 68-year-old Van Houten is serving life for the murders of wealthy grocer Leno LaBianca and his wife, Rosemary, when Van Houten was 19. They were stabbed a day after other Manson followers killed pregnant actress Sharon Tate and four other people in Los Angeles.

Van Houten's attorney, Rich Pfeiffer, said Brown's decision shows an unprecedented and unlawful reliance to deny parole based on the circumstances of the crime, rather than the inmate's fitness.

"We're going to challenge this in court," Pfeiffer said. "I expect the courts to uphold the law and allow her to be released."

Pfeiffer added that he has "dozens of clients who have done much worse deeds than Leslie has done and they're out leading productive lives."

Van Houten has long been considered among the most likely candidates among Manson "family" members to be paroled, but Brown, like Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger before him, has steadfastly refused to let anyone associated with Manson's killings go free.

It's the second time Brown has blocked parole for Van Houten after a state parole panel recommended that she be freed.

Brown wrote Friday that Van Houten "played

a vital part in the LaBianca murders, one of the most notorious of the Manson family crimes. The devastation and loss experienced by the LaBianca family and all the victims' families continues today."

Although she said at her September parole hearing that she accepts full responsibility for her role, Van Houten "still shifted blame for her own actions onto Manson to some extent."

Brown recalled Van Houten saying that she takes responsibility for "Manson being able to do what he did to all of us. I allowed it. I accept responsibility that I allowed him to conduct my life in that way."

She appeared frail at the parole hearing with her silver hair pulled back in a bun, almost unrecognizable from the young woman who pledged her allegiance to Manson.

She said at the hearing that she was devastated when her parents divorced when she was 14. Soon after, she said, she began hanging out with her school's outcast crowd and using drugs in the Los Angeles suburb of Monrovia. When she was 17, she and her boyfriend ran away to San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury District during the city's summer of love.

She was traveling up and down the California coast when acquaintances led her to Manson, who was holed up at an abandoned movie ranch on the outskirts of Los Angeles where he had recruited what he called a "family" to survive what he insisted would be a race war he would launch by committing a series of random, horrifying murders.

At her hearing, Van Houten candidly described how she joined several other members of the group in killing the LaBiancas, carving up Leno LaBianca's body and smearing the couple's blood on the walls.

No one who took part in the Tate-LaBianca murders has been released from prison.

Manson died of natural causes on Nov. 20 at a California hospital while serving a life sentence. A man who befriended him through letters and another who purports to be his grandson are fighting in court over his body and possessions.

NATIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

Maine town manager leads segregation group, promotes whites

JACKMAN, Maine (AP) — The town manager of a rural Maine community said he's the leader of a racial segregationist group, and he believes the United States would be better off if people of different races were to "voluntarily separate."

Jackman town manager Tom Kawczynski wants to preserve the white majority of northern New England and Atlantic Canada, he has told the Bangor Daily News. He moved to Maine a year ago and launched a group called "New Albion" to promote what he calls "the positive aspects of our European heritage."

American Civil Liberties Union of Maine legal director Zachary Heiden said Kawczynski's attitudes and materials are "shockingly racist." Kawczynski has defended his group as "pro-white" without being opposed to other racial groups. But he has also called Islam "the scourge of Western civilization" and incompatible with his view of American society.

Kawczynski said he doesn't run town affairs in a way that discriminates against anyone. He later told the Bangor Daily News that he suspects he'll soon lose his job in the wake of a social media backlash spurred by his activities.

Missouri governor: 'no blackmail,' 'no violence' in affair

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — Missouri Gov. Eric Greitens said there was no blackmail or threatened violence in an extramarital affair he had in 2015.

In his first interview since acknowledging the affair, the Republican governor told The Associated Press on Saturday that he won't resign.

St. Louis television station KMOV-TV broke the news about the affair shortly after Greitens' State of the State speech last week.

Greitens' attorney has denied that Greitens threatened to release a semi-nude photo of the woman, who was his hairdresser, if she spoke about the affair. But this is the first time Greitens has personally addressed some of the more lurid allegations against him.

Greitens didn't directly answer questions about whether he took the photo in question. He said neither he nor his staff have been contacted by the FBI or the St. Louis circuit attorney's office, which is investigating.

60-plus applicants appeal pot cultivator license rejections

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — More than 60 companies have filed appeals after the state rejected their applications for medical marijuana cultivation licenses.

Cleveland.com reports 47 companies that applied for a large grow-license and 16 for a small-grow license have thus far filed appeals with the Ohio Department of Commerce. Those numbers could grow because rejected applicants had 30 days to appeal after being notified by the state.

A total of 185 applications were submitted.

The state agency in November issued 24 provisional licenses, including 12 for growing operations of up to 25,000 square feet and 12 for operations of as much as 3,000 square feet.

Just over 70 percent of license applications were disqualified.

A 2016 state law said medical marijuana will be available by September.

Mudslides take heavy toll on immigrants serving posh town

The working-class immigrant population in Montecito suffered outsized losses from recent mudslides that killed at least 20, injured dozens and damaged or destroyed hundreds of homes in the Southern California coastal town of Montecito — home to Oprah Winfrey, Rob Lowe and other celebrities.

Nearly a third of those killed in the Jan. 9 mudslides were from immigrant families working in service jobs in the largely white and retired town of 9,000.

Two Mexican gardeners, Victor and Antonio Benitez, each lost a

child. Antonio's wife was killed and Victor's is missing.

A Mexican landscaper was killed while sleeping in the room he kept at his boss's property. A Thai man who worked at the local Toyota dealership and his 6-year-old son were also killed and his 2-year-old daughter is missing.

'Greatest Showman' stirs interest in PT Barnum

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP) — The Hollywood film on the life of the founder of the Barnum & Bailey circus is stirring new interest in P.T. Barnum.

The man portrayed by Hugh Jackman in "The Greatest Showman" was also a state legislator, philanthropist and mayor of Bridgeport, Connecticut.

Bridgeport's Barnum Museum has been adding guides to help accommodate an increase in visitors since the film started playing last month in theaters. The Ringling Circus Museum in Sarasota, Florida, also has seen more people taking interest in Barnum and asking to speak with their historian.

Circus historians also have found sport in picking apart where the man as depicted by a singing and dancing Jackman diverges from the true story of Phineas Taylor Barnum.

Small-town budgets hurting from loss of mini Walmarts

LUTHER, Okla. (AP) — Arkansas-based Walmart's closing of its Express stores in small towns across the Midwest and South has affected basic government services from police protection to parks.

Luther, Oklahoma had to postpone the purchase two new police cars. In Nettleton, Mississippi, plans to improve sewer and water services and city parks were shelved.

Losses were somewhat offset when Dollar General purchased and re-opened the stores, but the Dollar General stores are generating less revenue without the pharmacies Walmart offered that help attract customers.

Walmart spokesperson Anne Hatfield said the stores were closed because customers wanted more than the 12,000-square-foot buildings could offer and were driving farther to Walmart Supercenters, which offer a wider variety of products and services than the Walmart Express stores.

Kansas archbishop elected to lead anti-abortion role

KANSAS CITY, Kan. (AP) — The archbishop of Kansas City, Kansas, has been chosen to a leading role in the Catholic Church's fight against abortion.

Archbishop Joseph Naumann will be the chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities.

R. Andrew Chesnut, chairman of Catholic Studies at Virginia Commonwealth University, said it was the first time in four decades that a cardinal was not elected to the position.

The Wichita Eagle reports Mary Kay Culp, executive director of Kansans for Life, has known Naumann for years. She said he has always cared deeply about the abortion issue and is "the right man for the right job."

Naumann joined more than 2,000 Kansans in Washington, D.C., this week for the March for Life. He is expected at the Rally for Life Monday in Topeka.

Singer Ed Sheeran announces engagement on Instagram

Ed Sheeran has announced his engagement to girlfriend Cherry Seaborn.

The Grammy-winning singer posted a picture of the two on his Instagram page Saturday morning saying the two got engaged right before the new year.

He said they are "very happy and in love" and that their "cats are chuffed as well."

Sheeran said last fall how Seaborn inspired his song "Perfect," which is Number One on the Billboard Hot 100 charts.

Sheeran and Seaborn were friends when the two attended school in Suffolk, England. They reconnected years later.

Big towers to rise near historic Jamestown: \$90M in payouts

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Memorial service planned for beloved airport dog

TRAVERSE CITY, Mich. (AP) — Friends and fans are bidding farewell to a speedy border collie that became an internet sensation for keeping a northern Michigan airport's runways free of critters.

A memorial service for Piper is scheduled for 3 p.m. Saturday at City Opera House in Traverse City. The 9-year-old dog was euthanized Jan. 3 after battling prostate cancer.

He became the official wildlife-control canine at Cherry Capital Airport in winter of 2015 — the nemesis of geese, ducks and even snowy owls.

Images of Piper on the job, wearing his airport vest, ear muffs and goggles, made their way onto online social forum Reddit. He quickly became a top hit. Curious fans even caused network problems on the airport's website.

He was diagnosed with cancer about a year ago and treated with chemotherapy.

Las Vegas gunman was germophobe, possibly bipolar

LAS VEGAS (AP) — After three months of investigation, police have learned more about Las Vegas gunman Stephen Paddock.

The high-stakes gambler was on a losing streak, obsessed with cleanliness, possibly bipolar and was having difficulties with his live-in girlfriend.

But hundreds of interviews and thousands of pieces of evidence have not answered the key question: Why did Paddock open fire from his high-rise hotel suite, killing 58 people and injuring more than 800 others in the deadliest shooting in modern U.S. history?

On Friday, Clark County Sheriff Joe Lombardo released a preliminary report on the Oct. 1 attack on an outdoor concert staged from a room at the Mandalay Bay casino-hotel.

He said he did not expect criminal charges to be filed against Paddock's girlfriend, Marilou Danley. She had been called the only person of interest in the case.

Serial stowaway arrested again at airport

CHICAGO (AP) — A woman with a history of sneaking aboard planes slipped past security at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport this week and was flying to London when the airline realized she didn't have a ticket.

Chicago Police spokesperson Anthony Guglielmi said Marilyn Hartman was flown back to Chicago on Thursday night and taken into custody once she arrived. She's charged with felony theft and a misdemeanor count of criminal trespassing.

Guglielmi said Hartman this week got through a federal Transportation Security Administration checkpoint at a domestic terminal without a ticket before taking a shuttle to the international terminal. A day later she boarded a British Airways flight.

The 66-year-old Hartman has attempted several times to board planes without a ticket. In 2016, she was sentenced in Chicago to six months of house arrest and placed on two years of mental health probation.

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CONGRESS

FROM PAGE 1

parks and other public lands will remain as accessible as possible. The stance is a change from previous shutdowns when most parks were closed and became high-profile symbols.

Spokesperson Heather Swifts said the American public — especially veterans who come to the nation's capital — should find war memorials and open-air parks open to visitors. Swift says many national parks and wildlife refuges nationwide will also be open with limited access when possible.

The Smithsonian museums and the National Zoo will stay open through the weekend but close Monday.

Do Federal Workers Get Paid?

While they can be kept on the job, federal workers can't get paid for days worked during a lapse in funding. In the past, however, they have been repaid retroactively even if they were ordered to stay home.

Rush hour in downtown Washington, meanwhile, becomes a breeze. Tens of thousands of federal workers are off the roads.

How Often Did This Happen In The Past?

Way back in the day, shutdowns usually weren't that big a deal. They happened every year when Jimmy Carter was president, averaging 11 days each. During Ronald Reagan's two terms, there were six shutdowns, typically just one or two days apiece. Deals got cut. Everybody moved on.

The last one was a 16-day partial shuttering of the government in 2013, which came as tea party conservatives, cheered on by outside groups like Heritage Action, demanded that language to block implementation of President Barack Obama's health care law be added to a

must-do funding bill.

Who Will Get The Blame?

In a 1995-96 political battle, President Bill Clinton bested House Speaker Newt Gingrich and his band of budget-slashing conservatives, who were determined to use a shutdown to force Clinton to sign onto a balanced budget agreement. Republicans were saddled with the blame, but most Americans suffered relatively minor inconveniences like closed parks and delays in processing passport applications. The fight bolstered Clinton's popularity and he sailed to re-election that November.

In 2013, the tea party Republicans forced the shutdown over the better judgment of GOP leaders like then-Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio. Republicans tried to fund the government piecemeal — for example, by forcing through legislation to ensure military service members got paid. But a broader effort faltered, and Republicans eventually backed down and supported a round of budget talks led by Paul Ryan, R-Wis., then chairman of the House Budget Committee.

Republicans are calling the current standoff the "Schumer Shutdown," arguing that there's nothing in the bill that Democrats oppose, while a short-term extension would give lawmakers time to work out differences on issues like protecting young immigrants and disaster assistance. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said the GOP's unwillingness to compromise has brought Congress to this point. A Washington Post-ABC News poll conducted earlier this week found 48 percent view Trump and congressional Republicans as mainly responsible for the situation while 28 percent fault Democrats. If the shutdown drags on for long, it could give voters another reason to turn away from incumbents of both parties in a midterm election.



AP PHOTO

A woman holds as sign as she takes part in a Women's March in Seattle, Saturday.

RALLIES

FROM PAGE 1

Bennett defeated Republican incumbent John Carman, who had mocked the 2017 women's march in Washington, D.C. with a Facebook post asking whether the women would be home in time to cook dinner.

Among the goals of this year's march are getting more Democrats to run for public office and bolstering voter registration.

In Rome, the 42-year-old Argento addressed the criticism she received once she spoke up about her abuse.

"Women are scared to speak and because I was vilified by everything I said, I was called a prostitute for being raped," she said at the rally. "I wonder how women who received such violence would find the courage to come out as I did, when they saw what happened to me, so I am here to assess the necessity of women to speak out and change things."

Argento was strongly criticized by many Italian media and Italian women for not speaking out earlier and was hounded on Twitter with accusations that she sought trouble.

Last year's march in Washington

sparked debate over inclusion, with some transgender minority women complaining that the event seemed designed for white women born female. Some anti-abortion activists said the event did not welcome them.

The organizers for the Sunday rally are striving for greater inclusion this year, with Latina and transgender female speakers, said Carmen Perez, another co-chair of the 2017 Washington march. Women in the U.S. illegally, sex workers and those formerly incarcerated are welcome, she said.

Linda Sarsour, one of the four organizers of last year's Washington march, said Las Vegas was slotted for a major rally because it's a strategic swing state that gave Hillary Clinton a narrow win in the presidential election and will have one of the most competitive Senate races in 2018.

The rallies also laid the groundwork for the recent movement that brought a reckoning for powerful men accused of sexual misconduct, Sarsour said.

"I think when women see visible women's leadership, bold and fierce, going up against a very racist, sexist, misogynist administration, it gives you a different level of courage that you may not have felt you had," she said.

RETREAT

FROM PAGE 1

Democrats have insisted they would back legislation reopening government once there's a bipartisan agreement to preserve protections against deporting about 700,000 immigrants who arrived in the U.S. illegally as children. Each party believes it had a winning political hand, and the day's first words by party leaders underscored that so far, neither side believe it was time to give ground.

"The American people cannot begin to understand why the Senate Democratic leader thinks the entire government should be shut down until he gets his way on illegal immigration," said McConnell.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said voters will fault Trump and the GOP. He blamed Trump for reneging on a near-deal that Schumer said the two men had approached during a White House meeting Friday.

"Negotiating with President Trump is like negotiating with Jell-O," Schumer said.

Though the House and Senate were in session Saturday, it was unclear whether lawmakers would take any votes of consequence.

Democrats said they oppose the three-week plan, viewing it as a way to stall negotiations over the future of the "Dreamers" immigrants,

whose protections expire in March. Republicans declared they would not reopen talks until the government shutdown ends, a strategy aimed at trying to erode Democratic cohesion.

House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi of California said Trump had earned an "F" for "failure in leadership." She said Republicans are "so incompetent and negligent that they couldn't get it together to keep the government open."

The fourth government shutdown in a quarter-century began at the stroke of midnight at the start of a weekend, so many of the immediate effects will be muted for most Americans.

Social Security and most other safety-net programs are unaffected by the lapse in federal spending authority. Critical government functions will continue, with uniformed service members, health inspectors and law enforcement officers set to work without pay. But if no deal is reached before Monday, hundreds of thousands of federal employees will be furloughed.

Arguing that Trump's predecessors "weaponized" that shutdown, Mulvaney said his budget office would direct agencies to work to mitigate the impact this time, although it was unclear how long that was possible. That position is a striking role reversal for the conservative former congressman who was



AP PHOTO

Rep. Mark Meadows, R-N.C., chairman of the conservative Freedom Caucus, left, joined by House Armed Services Committee Chairman Mac Thornberry, R-Texas, center, and Rep. Lamar Smith, R-Texas, arrives for a meeting of fellow Republicans on the first morning of a government shutdown after a divided Senate rejected a funding measure, at the Capitol in Washington, Saturday.

one of the architects of the 2013 shutdown.

Political damage could grow quickly if the closure is prolonged.

Both parties are wagering that voters will punish the other at the ballot box in November.

Democrats are laying fault on Republicans, who control both chambers of Congress and the White House and have struggled with building internal consensus. Republicans branded the confrontation a "Schumer shutdown." The senator assembled enough Democratic opposition to kill the House-passed bill.

Trump said Democrats "could have easily made a deal but decided to

play Shutdown politics instead." In a series of tweets hours after the shutdown began, the president tried to make the case for Americans to elect more Republicans to Congress in November "in order to power through this mess." He noted that there are 51 Republicans in the 100-member Senate, and it often takes 60 votes to advance legislation.

The stop-gap measure won 50 votes in the Senate, including five Democrats.

Trump and Schumer tried to cut a last-minute deal that would have included greater military spending and money for a wall along the Mexican border. But the talks fell apart almost as abruptly

as they started.

Trump had been set to leave Friday afternoon to attend a fundraiser at his estate in Palm Beach, Florida, where he intended to make the inauguration anniversary. But he remained in Washington.

The last shutdown came in 2013. Tea party Republicans, in a strategy not unlike the one Schumer is employing now, sought to use a must-pass budget bill to try to force President Barack Obama to delay implementation of his health care law. At the time, Trump told "Fox & Friends" that the ultimate blame for a shutdown lies at the top. "I really think the pressure is on the president," he said.

ALMANAC

Today is **Sunday, Jan. 21**, the 21st day of 2018. There are 344 days left in the year.

Today in history

On **Jan. 21, 1968**, the North Vietnamese Army launched a full-scale assault against the U.S. combat base in Khe Sanh, South Vietnam, in a siege lasting 11 weeks; although the Americans were able to hold back the communists, they ended up dismantling and abandoning the base. An American B-52 bomber carrying four hydrogen bombs crashed in Greenland, killing one crew member and scattering radioactive material. North Korean commandos tried but failed to assassinate South Korean President Park Chung-hee at his official residence, the Blue House, in Seoul.

On this date

In **1915**, the first Kiwanis Club, dedicated to community service, was founded in Detroit.

In **1924**, Russian revolutionary Vladimir Lenin died at age 53.

In **1937**, Count Basie and his band recorded "One O'Clock Jump" for Decca Records (on this date in 1942, they re-recorded the song for Okeh Records).

In **1942**, pinball machines were banned in New York City after a court ruled they were gambling devices that relied on chance rather than skill (the ban was lifted in 1976).

In **1954**, the first atomic submarine, the USS Nautilus, was launched at Groton, Connecticut (however, the Nautilus did not make its first nuclear-powered run until nearly a year later).

In **1998**, Pope John Paul II began a historic pilgrimage to Cuba. Actor Jack Lord of "Hawaii Five-O" fame died in Honolulu at age 77.

Today's birthdays

World Golf Hall of Famer **Jack Nicklaus** is 78. Opera singer-conductor **Placido Domingo** is 77. Singer **Mac Davis** is 76. Actress **Jill Eikenberry** is 71. Country musician **Jim Ibbotson** is 71.

ODD NEWS

Cops: Maine man punches self in face to avoid sobriety test

BELFAST, Maine (AP) — Police in Maine have accused a man of punching himself in the face three times to avoid a sobriety test.

Police in the town of Belfast said they found 27-year-old Brian Fogg in his car, stuck in a ditch last week.

WGME-TV reports police said when they tried to test for his blood-alcohol level, Fogg punched himself in the face, causing himself to bleed. Police tended to his injuries instead of giving him the test, but later charged him with operating under the influence, falsifying physical evidence and criminal mischief.

Fogg's been released on bail. He has an unpublished number and it wasn't immediately known if he had a lawyer.



WALDO COUNTY JAIL VIA AP

This booking photo shows Brian Fogg, who's accused of punching himself in the face to avoid a sobriety breath test.

WORLD

VP Pence says US stands 'shoulder to shoulder' with Egypt

By KEN THOMAS
ASSOCIATED PRESS

CAIRO — Vice President Mike Pence and Egyptian leader Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi pledged a united front against terrorism in the Mideast as Pence, the highest-level American official to visit the U.S. ally in nearly a decade, began a trip through the region after leaving behind a government shutdown in Washington.

Pence and el-Sissi held 2½ hours of talks at the presidential palace in Cairo, with acknowledgements of friendship and partnership between the two countries. Through a translator, Pence listened intently as el-Sissi cited the need to address "urgent issues," including "ways to eliminate this disease and cancer that has terrified the whole world."

Pence pointed to President Donald Trump's efforts to forge stronger ties with el-Sissi in his first year in office, "after a time when our countries seemed to be drifting apart."

Pence said "we stand shoulder to shoulder with you and Egypt in fighting against terrorism," and that "our hearts grieve" for the loss of life in recent terrorist attacks against Egyptians.

The vice president noted the deadly attack against Christians in late December,

when a militant opened fire outside a suburban Cairo church, killing at least nine people. He also pointed to the killing of 311 worshippers inside a mosque in northern Sinai last November.

"We resolve to continue to stand with Egypt in the battle against terrorism," Pence said.

Pence arrived in Cairo hours after the U.S. Congress and Trump failed to reach agreement on a plan to avert a partial federal closure. Pence went ahead with his four-day trip to the Middle East, citing national security and diplomatic reasons.

Pence's meetings with el-Sissi delved into security cooperation, economic ties and efforts to fight the Islamic State group.

His visit to the region came more than a month after Trump announced his decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital, a step that's enraged Palestinians. El-Sissi identified "the peace issue" as one of the most important issues in their discussions, but the two leaders did not elaborate.

When Pence's motorcade arrived at the palace, journalists traveling with the vice president were initially barred from exiting their bus. After they were brought into the palace, media were not allowed into a photo

session with the two leaders. Negotiations between U.S. and Egyptian officials followed, and members of the media were eventually brought into the meeting and heard the leaders deliver short statements.

Pence and el-Sissi did not respond to questions at the end.

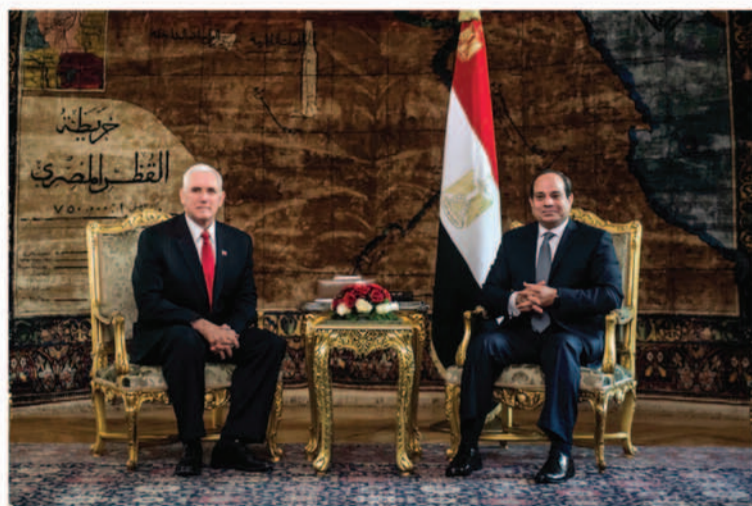
Pence planned to travel to Jordan later Saturday and then to Israel on Sunday. He was not expected to meet with Palestinian officials.

El-Sissi has built a strategic alliance with Trump and urged the American president to become more involved in the fight against Islamic militancy in the Middle East. Trump has praised el-Sissi for the April release of Egyptian-American charity worker Aya Hijazi, who had been detained for nearly three years.

But Trump's designation of Jerusalem as Israel's capital poses a dilemma for Egypt, which receives extensive military and economic aid from Washington but does not want to appear dismissive of Palestinian concerns.

White House officials said before the Cairo meeting they expected the decision on the Israeli capital and Trump's plans to move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem to come up.

Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas has



KHALED DESOUKI/POOL PHOTO VIA AP

U.S. Vice President Mike Pence meets with Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi, right, at the Presidential Palace in Cairo, Egypt, Saturday.

condemned Trump over the Jerusalem announcement and warned that the U.S. can no longer play any role in future peace negotiations between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

El-Sissi has tried to reassure Abbas of his continued efforts to secure an independent Palestinian state with east Jerusalem as its capital.

The Egyptian leader, who led the 2013 military overthrow of an Islamist president, has announced plans to run in the March election. El-Sissi is heavily favored to win a second four-year term after leading a heavy crackdown on dissent, jailing thousands of

opponents, including many of those behind the 2011 uprising that toppled Hosni Mubarak.

White House aides said Pence was expected to raise with el-Sissi the importance of human rights, political freedoms and freedom of expression.

Pence had initially planned to visit the region in December, shortly after Trump's announcement, but the trip was postponed in the aftermath of Abbas' refusal to meet the vice president in Bethlehem.

The spiritual leaders of Egypt's Muslims and Orthodox Christians also canceled their meetings with Pence.



AP PHOTO

Serbia's President Aleksandar Vucic, center, arrives in the Banjska Orthodox monastery with Serb Orthodox bishop Teodosije, right, in the village Banjska, Kosovo, Saturday.

Serbian president visits Kosovo after politician's slaying

By RADUL RADOVANOVIC
ASSOCIATED PRESS

MITROVICA, Kosovo — Serbia's president on Saturday pledged to help build a lasting peace in Kosovo days after the killing this week of a moderate Kosovo Serb politician fueled fears of instability in the Balkans.

Amid tight security, Aleksandar Vucic paid a visit to Kosovo that officials said was designed to ease concerns among Kosovo Serbs following the slaying Tuesday of

one of their leading politicians, Oliver Ivanovic.

Waving Serbian flags, hundreds of people cheered Vucic as he arrived in the Serb-dominated, northern part of the former Serbian province that declared independence in 2008. Serbia has refused to recognize the statehood of the majority ethnic Albanian Kosovo and maintains strong influence in Serb-populated areas, mostly in the north.

Upon arrival, Vucic first visited an Orthodox

Serbian monastery before laying a wreath at the site of the attack on Ivanovic in the divided town of Mitrovica.

"Serbia not only wants peace, but will do its best to preserve it," Vucic said in Banjska. "We will do all we can to solve decades- and centuries-old disputes, to secure a lasting peace and security for each (ethnic) Albanian and Serbian family."

Vucic called for those responsible for Ivanovic's death to be brought to justice "without mercy." Some Serbs shouted at the Serbian president during his press conference demanding more protection from Serbia.

Later Saturday, Vucic visited a Serb family in central Kosovo.

Under EU mediation, Serbia and Kosovo have opened talks on normalizing relations in order to advance in efforts to join the European Union. The talks were due to resume this week, but were suspended after Ivanovic was gunned down in Mitrovica.

Ivanovic was a rare voice of tolerance amid persistent ethnic tensions in Kosovo, nearly two decades after the 1998-99 war.

Cardinal rebukes pope over Chile 'slander' comments on abuse

By NICOLE WINFIELD
ASSOCIATED PRESS

LIMA, Peru — Pope Francis' top adviser on clerical sex abuse implicitly rebuked the pontiff over his accusations of slander against Chilean abuse victims, saying Saturday that his words were "a source of great pain for survivors of sexual abuse."

Cardinal Sean O'Malley, the archbishop of Boston, said he couldn't explain why Francis "chose the particular words he used."

In an extraordinary effort at damage control, O'Malley insisted that Francis "fully recognizes the egregious failures of the church and its clergy who abused children and the devastating impact those crimes have had on survivors and their loved ones."

Francis set off a national uproar upon leaving Chile on Thursday by accusing victims of the country's most notorious pedophile priest of having slandered another bishop, Juan Barros. The victims say Barros knew of the abuse but did nothing to stop it — a charge Barros denies.

"The day they bring me proof against Bishop Barros, I'll speak," Francis told Chilean journalists in the northern city of Iquique. "There is not one shred of proof against him. It's all calumny. Is that clear?"

The remarks shocked Chileans, drew immediate rebuke from victims and their advocates and once again raised the question of whether the 81-year-old Argentine Jesuit "gets it" about sex abuse.

The scandal over

the crimes of the Rev. Fernando Karadima has devastated the credibility of the Roman Catholic Church in Chile, and Francis' comments will likely haunt it for the foreseeable future.

O'Malley's carefully worded critique was remarkable since it's rare for a cardinal to publicly rebuke the pope in such terms. But Francis' remarks were so potentially toxic to the Vatican's yearslong effort to turn the tide on decades of clerical sex abuse and cover-up that he clearly felt he had to respond.

O'Malley headed Francis' much-touted committee for the protection of minors until it lapsed last month after its initial three-year mandate expired. Francis has not named new members, and the committee's future remains unclear.



AP PHOTO

Pope Francis celebrates a seaside Mass on Huanachaco Beach, near the city of Trujillo, Peru, Saturday. Francis travelled Saturday to northern Peru, a region still reeling from devastating floods nearly a year ago.

ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD

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Sunday Television

VEN-VENICE E-N-ENGLEWOOD SAR-SARASOTA PC-PORT CHARLOTTE ARC-ARCADIA SPG-SOUTH PUNTA GORDA

Main television schedule table with columns for time slots (6 PM to 11:30 PM) and rows for various channels (ABC, CBS, NBC, FOX, PBS, CW, A&E, AMC, etc.).

Today's Live Sports

- 6 a.m. FS1 College Football 2018 NFLPA Collegiate Bowl from Rose Bowl in Pasadena, Calif. (R)
FSN NHL Hockey Florida Panthers at Nashville Predators. (R)
9 a.m. ESPN2 2018 Australian Open Round of 16. (T)
FSN German Bundesliga Soccer RB Leipzig at Freiburg. (T)
SHO Showtime Championship Boxing Spence vs Peterson. (R)
9:30 a.m. FS1 German Bundesliga Soccer Werder Bremen at Bayern Munich. (L)
10 a.m. GOLF PGA Tour Champions Golf Mitsubishi Electric Championship at Hualalai: Final Round from Hualalai GC in Kaupulehu-Kona, Hawaii. (R)
12 p.m. CW College Basketball Miami Hurricanes at North Carolina State Wolfpack. (L)
FS1 Women's College Basketball Marquette Golden Eagles at Villanova Wildcats. (L)
12:30 p.m. FSSUN Women's College Basketball Virginia Tech Lady Hokies at Virginia Cavaliers. (L)
NBC NHL Hockey Philadelphia Flyers at Washington Capitals. (L)
1 p.m. ESPN2 Women's College Basketball Connecticut Huskies at Temple Owls. (L)
FSN NBA Basketball Orlando Magic at Boston Celtics. (L)
GOLF PGA Web.com Tour Golf Bahamas Great Abaco Classic: Round 1 from Abaco Club on Winding Bay in Great Abaco, Bahamas. (L)
2 p.m. FS1 AMA Arenacross Series Worcester, MA from DCU Center in Worcester, Mass. (T)
2:30 p.m. FSSUN Women's College Basketball Duke Blue Devils at North Carolina Tar Heels. (L)
3 p.m. CBS NFL Playoffs AFC Championship Jacksonville Jaguars at New England Patriots. (L)
ESPN Latin America Amateur Championship Golf Second Round from Prince of Wales CC in Santiago, Chile. (L)
ESPN2 Women's College Basketball Mississippi State Bulldogs at Tennessee Lady Volunteers. (L)
NBC European Figure Skating Championships Ladies' & Men's Free from Megasport Arena in Moscow. (T)
4 p.m. FS1 AMA Supercross Series Anaheim from Angel Stadium in Anaheim, Calif. (R)
GOLF PGA Tour Golf Career-BUILDER Challenge: Final Round from PGA West Stadium Course in La Quinta, Calif. (L)
5 p.m. ESPN Harlem Globetrotters Basketball Hoops for the Troops Game from Honolulu. (R)
ESPN2 Women's College Basketball Florida State Seminoles at Louisville Cardinals. (L)
FSN German Bundesliga Soccer RB Leipzig at Freiburg. (R)
NBC USSA Skiing and Snowboarding Toyota US Grand Prix: Snowboard Halfpipe. (T)
6:30 p.m. FOX NFL Playoffs NFC Championship Minnesota Vikings at Philadelphia Eagles. (L)
7 p.m. FS1 UFC Fight Night Prelims UFC 220: Miocic vs Ngannou. (R)
7:30 p.m. ESPN Women's International Soccer Denmark at United States. (L)
9 p.m. ESPN2 2018 Australian Open Round of 16 from Melbourne Park. (L)
3 a.m. ESPN2 2018 Australian Open Round of 16 from Melbourne Park. (L)

Convenient - Complete - Satellite ONLINE TV Listings www.sun-herald.com/tv

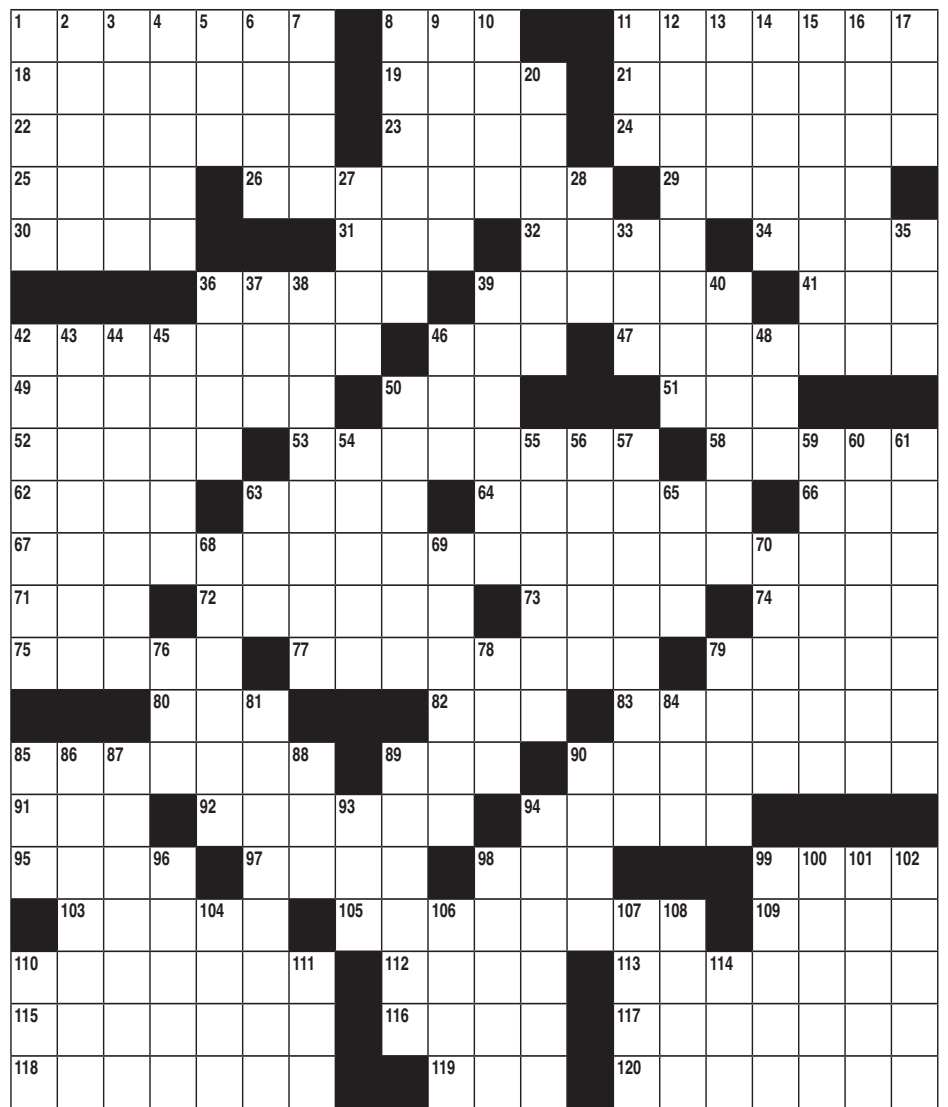
NEW YORK TIMES SUNDAY CROSSWORD

No. 0114

SUPREME INTELLIGENCE

BY JOEL FAGLIANO / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

- ACROSS**
- 1 Mike who was the 2017 N.B.A. Coach of the Year
- 8 Presidential advisory grp.
- 11 Covers
- 18 Worked on some screenwriting?
- 19 Major work
- 21 Like the French directors Eric Rohmer and Jean-Luc Godard
- 22 Poseur
- 23 Kid's creation out of pillows
- 24 Kind of elephant
- 25 Last monarch of the House of Stuart
- 26 Destructive sort
- 29 Photographer Adams
- 30 Lines in geometry
- 31 Android's counterpart
- 32 ___ Xtra (soda)
- 34 Scoundrel
- 36 Worked from home?
- 39 Cease communication
- 41 Bug-studying org.
- 42 Steinbeck novella set in La Paz
- 46 Topic for Sun Tzu
- 47 Has as a tenant
- 49 Shakespearean king
- 50 Retired chat service
- 51 Military term of address
- 52 Perry of fashion
- 53 "I knew that would happen!"
- 58 "Twelfth Night" twin
- 62 Thin pancake
- 63 Spa treatment
- 64 Flowery
- 66 ___ Nation (record label for Jay-Z and J. Cole)
- 67 Illegal interference ... or what can be found in this puzzle's 1st, 3rd, 7th, 15th, 19th and 21st rows?
- 71 Stewbum
- 72 Noted brand of guitars
- 73 Use an ice pack on
- 74 What a conductor might conduct
- 75 Online admin
- 77 Where a big bowl is found
- 79 Indication to bow slowly, say
- 80 Creator of the "Planet Money" podcast
- 82 Like a boiled lobster
- 83 Buoy
- 85 Poe ode
- 89 Nicknamed
- 90 Largest moon in the solar system
- 91 Got down
- 92 Discharges
- 94 Reasons for sneezin'
- 95 They might be backless
- 97 Fan favorite
- 98 Frequent Twitter poster
- 99 Thick hairstyle
- 103 For the case at hand
- 105 Hooded cloak
- 109 Home to the historic Moana Hotel
- 110 Connecticut city near New Haven
- 112 ___ speak
- 113 Kind of race
- 115 Dum-dums
- 116 In ___ (entirely)
- 117 Bit of advice before taking off?
- 118 Evasive basketball move
- 119 Brooding sort
- 120 Häagen-Dazs alternative
- DOWN**
- 1 Big name in Scotch
- 2 Appliance brand
- 3 Word before goat or state
- 4 Sporks have small ones
- 5 Suffix with crap
- 6 Bird bills
- 7 Now there's a thought!
- 8 Sign by a pool
- 9 Features of monarch butterfly wings
- 10 Add salt to, maybe
- 11 Santa ___
- 12 Former Buick sedans
- 13 "Victory is mine!"
- 14 Covered with water
- 15 Sleek fabrics
- 16 Closest to base?
- 17 Dry, as wine
- 20 Daze
- 27 Jessica of "The Illusionist"
- 28 Empty
- 33 Chocolate purchase
- 35 Language with six tones
- 36 180s
- 37 Dallas pro
- 38 Limit on what can be charged
- 39 "All right, let's play!"
- 40 Butcher's stock
- 42 Nickname for Springsteen
- 43 Comics superhero with filed-off horns
- 44 Joins forces?
- 45 Run off
- 46 Actor Wheaton
- 48 Prefix with -nomial
- 50 Joins forces
- 54 Insurance giant whose name begins with a silent letter
- 55 Spoke tediously, with "on"
- 56 Just for laughs
- 57 Marble marvel
- 59 Cuban province where the Castros were born
- 60 Found (in)
- 61 Nail-polish remover
- 63 Trivia venue
- 65 Margarine container
- 68 Sign of wind on water
- 69 Range that's home to the Mark Twain National Forest
- 70 Unit of 74-Across
- 76 It stands for January
- 78 Raiders' org.
- 79 Big name in chips
- 81 Hamlet's plot in "Hamlet"
- 84 "To what ___?"
- 85 Bill
- 86 Italian castle town
- 87 Advance warning
- 88 Nancy Drew's boyfriend
- 89 "Finally!"
- 90 Roman Empire invader
- 93 Part of S.S.N.: Abbr.
- 94 Wrap tightly
- 96 Looks for purchases
- 98 Crested ___ (Colorado ski resort)
- 99 Like Santa's suit on Dec. 26
- 100 Short-story writer Bret
- 101 The slightest margin
- 102 Shows nervousness, in a way
- 104 Taking action
- 106 Kids' character who says, "People say nothing is impossible, but I do nothing every day"
- 107 What has casts of thousands?
- 108 Hair-removal brand
- 110 Grate stuff
- 111 Potent venom source
- 114 "___-haw!"



Online subscriptions: Today's puzzle and more than 4,000 past puzzles, nytimes.com/crosswords (\$39.95 a year).

FOR ANSWERS, TURN TO PAGE 5

Ask the Fool

Lots of Options

Q My retirement accounts are funded, I've got a brokerage account, an emergency fund and no credit card debt. What now? Should I invest in more stocks or real estate or make extra payments on my 4-percent mortgage? — *C.S., Houston*

A Those are all good options. Paying down your mortgage is the least risky one, and would be like earning a guaranteed 4-percent return, since you'll not be paying interest on any principal you pay off.

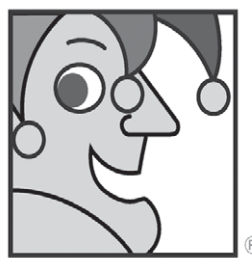
Real estate investing isn't as easy as it can appear. You'll need to have a good grasp of the local market and must be willing to deal with the work and hassle that come with property ownership. Remember that real estate can tie up your money and that property values can fall or not grow quickly. The stock market can also drop, but it has always risen over long periods, beating most other alternatives, such as gold, bonds and even real estate.

Think about whether you want to put in the time and work involved in real estate or stocks. Will you enjoy keeping up with your properties or your investments? If not, perhaps pay down the mortgage, or invest in a simple, broad-market index fund, such as one based on the S&P 500.

Q What's a trust? — *A.G., Lancaster, Pennsylvania*

A It's a legal structure that features someone (a "trustor") giving control of property to a person or an institution (the "trustee") for the benefit of someone else (the "beneficiary"). The beneficiary owns the property, but the trustee controls it -- usually for a limited period (such as until the beneficiary reaches a certain age). A trust is often part of an estate plan.

Want more information about stocks? Send us an email to foolnews@fool.com.



Fool's School

Investing Errors to Avoid

It's inevitable that if you invest in the stock market, you'll make mistakes — some of them costly. Learn to avoid the following common blunders, though, to minimize losses:

- Not paying off credit card debt before investing. You'll likely lose more in interest than you gain in stocks.
- Investing too conservatively. Long-term investments are likely to grow most rapidly in stocks, so don't just leave your money in savings accounts, bonds or CDs.
- Investing too aggressively. Don't aim for fast, huge wins via penny stocks, margin investing, day trading or any other risky and speculative venture. It's safest to aim for steady growth over decades by investing in healthy and growing established companies.
- Over- or under-diversifying. If all your eggs are in two or three baskets, you're exposed to too much risk. But if you have too many

baskets to count, then you probably aren't able to keep up with each company. Owning 10 to 20 stocks is a good range for many people.

- Focusing too much on a stock's price. A "cheap" stock isn't necessarily a bargain. Penny stocks trading for less than \$5 each are often likely to fall. A \$200 stock can be a bargain that will grow well for you, and you can always buy just a few shares.
- Investing in what you don't understand. The more familiar you are with how a company works and how well it's performing, the fewer unpleasant surprises you'll likely encounter.
- Relying on tips. It's fine to learn from others, but do your research and make your own decisions.
- Not tracking your returns. In the long run, you always want to be beating a benchmark such as the S&P 500. If you're not beating it, you might as well meet it by investing in an index fund.
- Impatience. Building great wealth takes time. Don't expect to get rich quick.

Learn more by checking out the "How to Invest" section at fool.com.

The Motley Fool

To Educate, Amuse & Enrich™

Motley Fool Goes Mobile!



Get investing advice and information on the go, now FREE on Android and iPhone.

My Dumbest Investment

Dumb in Several Ways

My dumbest investment has to be Under Armour. It wasn't dumb just because it tanked. It was dumb because: 1. It didn't fit with my portfolio thesis at the outset, but I bought due to the growth hype anyway. 2. I didn't pay enough attention to the fundamentals of the stock (growth rates, profit margins, debt levels, etc.). 3. I didn't look for or consider risks, such as the outsized control wielded by its founder and CEO. 4. I ignored negative social media commentary floating around in cyberspace.

I still own it, but I'm not buying any more even at low prices, because I don't think the CEO is a jockey worth backing for the long haul. I'll just leave it there, a bright red carbuncle in an overall well-performing portfolio. If it grows, good. If it doesn't, I've only got another \$1,000 left to lose. Fortunately, the rest of my portfolio is doing well enough to mitigate the regret — *D.C., Capetown, South Africa*

The Fool Responds: Some analysts today are bullish about Under Armour's restructuring, cost-cutting and international growth prospects, but others worry about weakness in the North American market, brand erosion and strong competition from Adidas and Nike. If you have little faith in the company, you'd be better off moving your remaining \$1,000 into something that seems more promising to you.

LAST WEEK'S TRIVIA ANSWER

I trace my roots back to the 1818 founding of a trading company in Amsterdam. In 1884 I started a grain trading business in Argentina, expanding to Brazil in 1905 and North America in 1918. Today I'm a global agricultural giant based in White Plains, New York. I sport a market value of more than \$9 billion and employ about 32,000 people. I buy, sell, store and transport oilseeds and grains; process oilseeds to make protein meal (for animal feed) and edible oil products; produce sugar and ethanol; mill wheat, corn and rice; and sell fertilizer. Who am I? (Answer: Bunge)



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.

Name That Company

I trace my roots back to 1923, when the Hassenfeld brothers founded me in Providence, Rhode Island. I started selling textiles and then added school supplies. My first toys were doctor and nurse kits. I launched Mr. Potato Head in 1952 and GI Joe in 1964. I bought Milton Bradley in 1984 and Tonka (with its Parker Brothers division) in 1991. Today, with a market value topping \$11 billion, my offerings include toys, games, television shows, movies, digital gaming and consumer products. My brands include Nerf, My Little Pony, Transformers, Play-Doh, Monopoly and Magic: The Gathering. Who am I?

Think you know the answer? We'll announce it in next week's edition.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

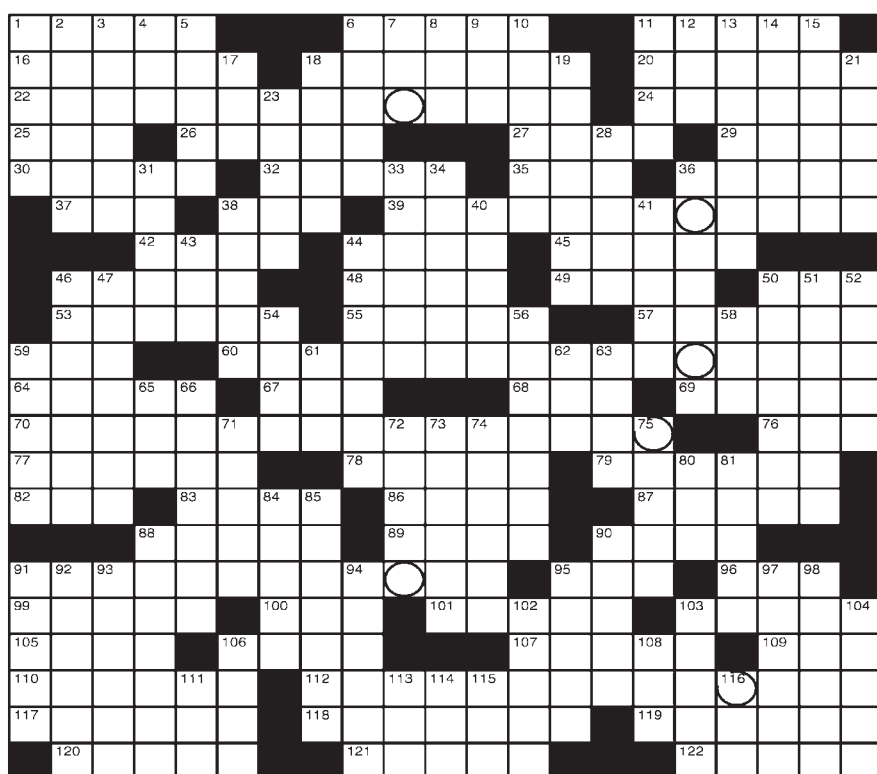
BIT PARTS

By Paul Coulter

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| ACROSS | 68 Aurora's Greek counterpart | DOWN | 56 In |
| 1 Many a reggae musician | 69 Leftover | 1 Indian prince | 58 Duty |
| 6 Flavor | 70 Film about dealing with a class of five-year-olds? | 2 Georgia's state wildflower | 59 "Witness" actor Haas |
| 11 Involved stories | 76 Arles article | 3 Mushroom stems | 61 Obamacare, briefly |
| 16 Montezuma's people | 77 Form of aphasia involving the inability to name objects | 4 Bus. card info | 62 John, to Ringo |
| 18 Books smaller than quartos | 78 Loi maker | 5 Years | 63 Recipe armts. |
| 20 Arenas, say | 79 Hot spots | 6 Extended operatic solo | 65 Gen. 's counterpart |
| 22 Film about a convict's lame claims of innocence? | 82 "Do the Right Thing" pizzeria owner | 7 PDX tower group | 66 Fictional miners' work song |
| 24 Play the market | 83 Disco family name | 8 Most golfers never break it | 71 "Spider-Man" director |
| 25 European skyline sight | 86 Cherbourg cherub | 9 Ab ___: from the start | 72 Latin lover's line |
| 26 ___ Marbles: historic sculptures | 87 It usually involves a getaway car | 10 1990 Stallone flick with the tagline "Go For It" | 73 The Supreme Court, for one |
| 27 Longtime film critic for The New Yorker | 88 Plump Capp critter | 11 Bad to the bone | 74 Where Tara Lipinski won her Olympics gold medal at age 15 |
| 29 "¿Cómo ___ usted?" | 89 "Beowulf" beverage | 12 Stock holder | 75 Community character |
| 30 Pays attention to | 90 "Well done!" | 13 Protest bitterly (against) | 80 War on Poverty agcy. |
| 32 Chow line? | 91 Film about yet another complaint? | 14 Hill with one steep side | 81 Hulu offering |
| 35 P&L report column | 95 ___ Colinas: upscale neighborhood in Irving, Texas | 15 Sonnet section | 84 Carried |
| 36 High hat | 96 Diminish | 17 One before la | 85 Spanish convenience stores |
| 37 ___ was saying ..." | 99 Rival of Paris | 18 Basket material | 88 Lettering guide |
| 38 Go public with | 100 Marshal at Waterloo | 19 Achieve with minimal effort | 90 Lively country dance |
| 39 Film about St. Peter's favorite striped stone? | 101 Cause harm | 21 Impolite look | 91 Extended family |
| 42 Wildebeests | 103 Studied, with "over" | 23 Hybrid fruits | 92 More cozy |
| 44 Barrel-bottom stuff | 105 "Sounds like fun to me!" | 28 Author Ferber et al. | 93 Political fugitive |
| 45 Cookie baking session output | 106 Utah lily | 31 Put on hold | 94 Mr. Magoo et al. |
| 46 Put to the test | 107 Metaphor for opportunities | 33 Put on hold | 95 Bridges in movies |
| 48 K-12 | 109 Pie in the sky? | 34 Variety show set in Kornfield Kounty | 97 Sultanate on the South China Sea |
| 49 River to the North Sea | 110 Jaguar, e.g. | 36 Fabric beltmaker's technique | 98 Make dirty |
| 50 Stage hog | 112 Film about a devastating blizzard? | 38 Lindley of "Three's Company" | 102 One in an airport taxi line, for the most part |
| 53 Lady of León | 117 A la King | 40 Line to the audience | 103 False: Pref. |
| 55 Duck | 118 Calmed down | 41 Gregg user | 104 Bridal estate |
| 57 Inherent character | 119 Stylish filmmaker | 43 "The Matrix" hero | 106 "Come Sail Away" band |
| 59 Back muscle, familiarly | 120 Chill | 44 Some wolves in flight | 108 ANC country |
| 60 Film about the last of the old-time schoolteachers? | 121 Runoff collector | 46 Catherine the Great, e.g. | 111 Mobile home: Abbr. |
| 64 First husband of Bathsheba | 122 Commuter's read | 47 Vitamin A form | 113 ___ to Billie Joe" |
| 67 Bar stock | | 50 Moves speedily | 114 Cry near the ears |
| | | 51 One often shared in flight | 115 Broke bread |
| | | 52 Flat-topped lands | 116 B&O stop |
| | | 54 "I don't give ___" | |

Los Angeles Times Sunday Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Nichols Lewis



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1/21/18

GOREN BRIDGE

OBLIGATORY FALSECARD

Neither vulnerable, South deals, North-South have a 40 point part score

NORTH

- ♠ 10 7
- ♥ Q J
- ♦ Q 6 5 4 3
- ♣ A J 8 3

WEST

- ♠ Q 4 2
- ♥ 10 9 8 6 5 2
- ♦ A 9
- ♣ K 2

EAST

- ♠ J 9 8 5 3
- ♥ A
- ♦ K 8 7 2
- ♣ 10 9 4

SOUTH

- ♠ A K 6
- ♥ K 7 4 3
- ♦ J 10
- ♣ Q 7 6 5

The bidding:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♥	Pass	3♣	All pass

Opening lead: 10 of ♥

The opening heart lead was won by East perforce, and East had to consider his shift. A switch to diamonds would have defeated the contract, enabling both a diamond ruff for partner and a heart ruff for himself. The queen of diamonds in dummy made the diamond shift potentially very dangerous, so East

shifted to a low spade instead.

South won the spade shift with the ace and led a low club to dummy's jack. East followed smoothly with the nine, trying to look like a man who started with 10-nine doubleton. This play is known as an "obligatory falsecard," a play that must be made in order to give declarer a losing option. Had East not played the nine, or the 10, South would have had no choice but to cash the ace of clubs and hope for the king to drop — a play that would have worked on this deal.

Declarer gave the nine a suspicious look, but decided that it was an honest card. He crossed back to his hand with the king of spades and led the queen of clubs. This fetched the king from West but not the 10 from East, and the defense had a trump trick. South cashed the queen of hearts and led a low diamond. East stepped up smartly with the king, cashed the 10 of clubs, and led a third round of spades. This forced dummy's last trump, and declarer had another diamond plus a heart to lose. Down one.

(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.)

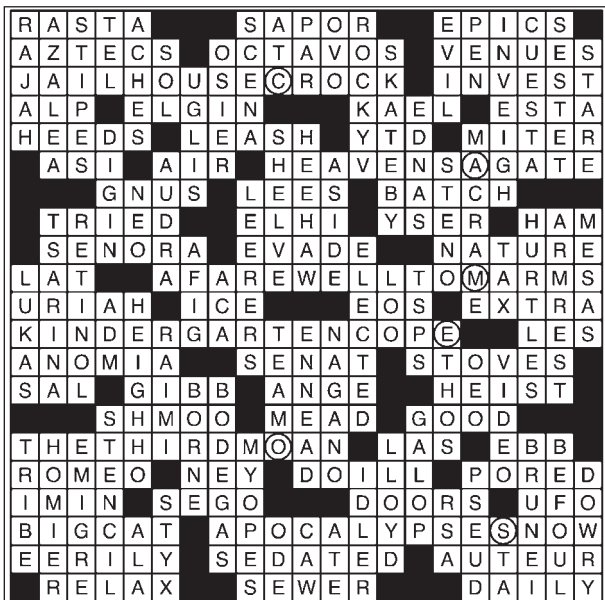
CRYPTOGRAMS

MOTION AND TRAVEL by Myles Mellor

1. O C M P E P B W W X I D E H M H Y B D E X J E P B I
D H Z I K . D H D H V X W X H W O X D X X V Y J C X I K O R
B I K T J C M P E Z I E C O R H Z P X B J E P X V T O Z J E H Z E
D H V X E P C I M .
2. X Z D H E Z D D E C D E T C H D M Z P V D , Z B L
U C I Y Y R I H M O B U B P T L V P E Z D C L I B M :
" X Z D C D P H D I C E Z Z I O D R P T Y D D H ? "
3. O K T N F M K O D V F T I I Z F Q A F I I F R M J F T M K F V
T C N O D Y V Z : " J K T M ' D J Y V D F M K T R V T O R O R S
A T M D Y V C Y S D ? K T O I O R S M T Q O D ! "
4. M B J A H D A B X E Y X V X Y Y X R N P R X P V
A Y J S D E P Y A V P Y J O P U R D S P M N J S ? J S
H O H O U X .

PUZZLE ANSWERS

(Puzzles on previous pages)



1. Light happens to go faster than sound. So some people seem friendly and bright until you hear them blurt out something.
2. When the ET returned home, his crabby and vicious mother said: "Where on earth have you been?"
3. I have this really excellent weather advisory: "What's worse than raining cats or dogs? Hailing taxis!"
4. What is the preferred mode of transport for a cold snowman? An icicle.

JUMBLE

Answer :

- HIATUS HAIRDO EXPERT
- AVIARY OUTING NEGATE

She purchased the billboard from someone who was happy to —

SIGN IT OVER TO HER

HOLIDAY MATHIS HOROSCOPES

ARIES (March 21-April 19). If you can change it, do. If you can't, you'll know after you make the effort. Most importantly, don't agonize. The imagination is a powerful force, not to be employed to negative ends.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Your life plays like a symphony these days. What comes around goes around -- though everything sounds different in the arrangement during the second and third passes.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). When someone shows you his or her soul -- and by the way, that's a real thing, to be shown the ethereal essence of a person -- well, it's an honor and a privilege, though one that you won't be exactly sure what to do with.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You've been instructed to put bright things into the universe, and this is, most assuredly, good advice. However, don't let it stop you from putting dull things into the universe, too, to keep things balanced and real.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Because you listen well, people become their whole selves when they communicate with you. If you forget to listen well, they will be but a fraction of themselves, and you won't learn the fullness of a person.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You have a good sense of people's intentions, even when they miss the mark entirely. Don't worry; you'll get the same leeway when you make these kinds of mistakes, although you won't be making them any time soon.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Boredom is the enemy of love. It seals people off from one another. Bored people often fight to break through the seal and into the realm of feelings again, although this is not the

only (nor is it the best) way to get there. **SCORPIO** (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Young people will be a significant part of the plot for today. Keep in mind that children only get one childhood. There is only one first time for everything, and firsts have unique impact.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). If you feel out of place, this is a blessing. There's a great benefit to being somewhere that feels just unfamiliar enough to cause you to reach back to the world of those you love.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). It's a tough crowd you'll be dealing with today. If you can't figure out how to put smiles on people's faces, put one on your own face. Your good vibes will be contagious.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You've a knack for being in the right place, and vicinity will work in your favor as you reach out. Even the most casual and common-place communication is an opportunity.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). It's not readily apparent why humans have fingerprints. Maybe it improves our sense of touch. It certainly helps us keep track of one another. Anyway, you won't need a single, definitive reason to appreciate the unique mark someone leaves on your life today.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Jan. 21). You'll rejoice in the way things are, and as you come to accept the finer features and deeper levels, it will be as though the whole world belongs to you. Creativity is a huge part of your happiness this year. If you're not being creative, you're not being fully you. Nurture this constantly. Love and support are all around you. Leo and Libra adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 8, 20, 1, 11 and 9.

GOOD NEWS TODAY

Hippo-y birthday to Fiona!

The popular preemie is turning 1

By **DAN SEWELL**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

CINCINNATI — Some days, it's more like being a Hollywood movie star's agent than a communications official for the zoo. That's what happens when your prematurely born hippopotamus becomes a global celebrity.

The Cincinnati Zoo has a day of festivities ready for Fiona's first birthday party Saturday, and expect plenty more of Fiona in year 2.

Zoo director Thane Maynard's own "Saving Fiona" will later this year join the growing library of books about her. The Cincinnati Reds baseball team will feature a Fiona bobblehead, and the minor-league Florence, Kentucky, Freedom plans a Fiona snow globe this summer. There will be a "Fiona's Cove" exhibit at next month's annual Cincinnati Home & Garden Show.

Also ahead: additions to the Fiona-themed T-shirts, cookies, ornaments, and even beer from tie-ins by local retailers who have shared an estimated half-million dollars in revenues with the zoo so far.

Not everything gets green-lighted.

"We've gotten some strange requests," said Chad Yelton, zoo



COURTESY CINCINNATI ZOO & BOTANICAL GARDENS VIA AP

In this April 12, 2017 photo provided by the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Gardens, Fiona a prematurely born hippopotamus, swims in her quarantine enclosure at the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Gardens in Cincinnati.



AP PHOTO

Fiona, a baby Nile Hippopotamus, right, and her mother Bibi, swim in their enclosure at the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden, Wednesday, in Cincinnati.

spokesman.

Left on the table: proposals to record music and make videos with Fiona, national toy company endorsements, a simulated space launch of Fiona, and a Texas library's invitation for her to pay a visit.

Meanwhile, zoo staffers are working with Fiona on her transition toward more-typical zoo behavior, with training on responding to verbal cues and receiving grown-up health care from staffers aware that hippos can become aggressive and dangerous. Her bottle-feeding ended a few weeks ago.

"We're treating her more like a full-time hippo and less like a part-time hippo, part-time human," said Christina Gorsuch, the zoo's mammals curator. Fiona will likely double in size in the next year from her current weight of nearly 700 pounds.

"But she'll still be her adorable self," Gorsuch added.

A few steps away, adults raised their cameras and cellphones and children squealed as Fiona swam over to check out her latest throng of fans. "I love Fiona!" shouted 3-year-old Nolyn Hanley after she nosed near the glass

where he had been watching for her with little brother A.J.

The numbers speak volumes about her popularity:

— Zoo attendance in 2016 was 1.63 million. In 2017, it rose to 1.87 million.

— Views of the zoo's Facebook videos in 2016 totaled 8.85 million. From Fiona's birth on Jan. 24, 2017, to Jan. 2, 2018, they totaled 144.4 million.

Some animal rights activists have expressed cynicism, saying the zoo is using a captive animal

to boost its marketing.

Fiona came eight months after the May 28, 2016, shooting by a zoo special-response team of an endangered western lowland gorilla after a little boy fell into his enclosure. The death of Harambe spurred criticism of the zoo, while leading to satires and memes over social media that made the slain gorilla a pop-culture icon.

Round-the-clock critical care, with an assist from Cincinnati Children's hospital personnel, helped the

baby born Jan. 24, 2017, grow from a dangerously low 29 pounds. The zoo kept up online updates through good days and bad, but as she continued to progress, the publicists signaled plans to cut back on the regular updates. That drew blowback from fans hungry, hungry for their "Fiona fix."

After a year of it, Yelton doesn't expect the Fiona frenzy to fade as she leaves her baby days behind.

"She's still going to be Fiona," he said. "A superstar."

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<p>2015 DODGE JOURNEY</p>  <p>CROSSROAD PACKAGE, ONE OWNER, LEATHER, THIRD ROW SEAT</p> <p>\$15,985</p>	<p>2015 RAM 1500</p>  <p>CREW CAB, 5.7 LITER HEMI, TRADEMAN PACKAGE, 20" WHEELS</p> <p>FOUR DOOR</p>	<p>2015 CHRYSLER TN & CTRY</p>  <p>TOURING-L MODEL, ONE OWNER, 24,100 MILES, 5/100 WARRANTY</p> <p>NAVIGATION</p>	<p>2016 JEEP PATRIOT</p>  <p>6,000 MILES, ANNIVERSARY EDITION, LEATHER, SUNROOF, LOADED</p> <p>\$15,881</p>
<p>2015 FORD ESCAPE</p>  <p>ONE OWNER, SE MODEL, POWER HATCH, 33,000 MILES, WARRANTY</p> <p>\$16,881</p>	<p>2015 TOYOTA SIENNA</p>  <p>LE MODEL, ONE OWNER, 21,700 MILES, FULLY LOADED, CREAM PUFF</p> <p>\$23,781</p>	<p>2015 MAZDA CX-5</p>  <p>31,500 MILES, ONE OWNER, TOURING MODEL, NEW TIRES, QUALITY</p> <p>\$16,781</p>	<p>2016 BUICK ENCORE</p>  <p>19,600 MILES, ONE OWNER, 5/100 WARRANTY, A MUST DRIVE</p> <p>\$16,881</p>

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Live the dream in WatersEdge

SPECIAL TO HIGHLANDS NEWS-SUN

This home is located at 204 Huntley Oaks Blvd. in Lake Placid. It is priced for \$379,900 and is listed with Debbie McCullough with Heartland Real Estate Corp.

Remember the days when kids played outside and neighbors greeted one another as they strolled the neighborhood? Well that still exists in the neighborhood of WatersEdge in Lake Placid. This beautiful three-bedroom, two-bath lake front home has 3,116 square feet of living space and 4,109 total square feet.

Tucked in a landscaped lot, the home provides privacy while being close to everything. It is less than a mile to drugstores, grocery stores, banking and town. This convenient location is great for all ages.

Imagine enjoying a coffee every morning overlooking peaceful Lake Saddlebags. The views are gorgeous from almost every room of the house. And the sunsets are breathtaking.

MCCULLOUGH | 1



COURTESY PHOTO

This home is located at 204 Huntley Oaks Blvd. in Lake Placid. It is priced for \$379,900 and is listed with Debbie McCullough with Heartland Real Estate Corp.

DIRECTIONS

204 Huntley Oaks Blvd., Lake Placid

From U.S. 27 in Lake Placid, turn east on County Road 621. Turn right onto Huntley Oaks Boulevard. Take the first right into the WatersEdge community. The home is on the right.

Golf course home in Spring Lake

SPECIAL TO HIGHLANDS NEWS-SUN

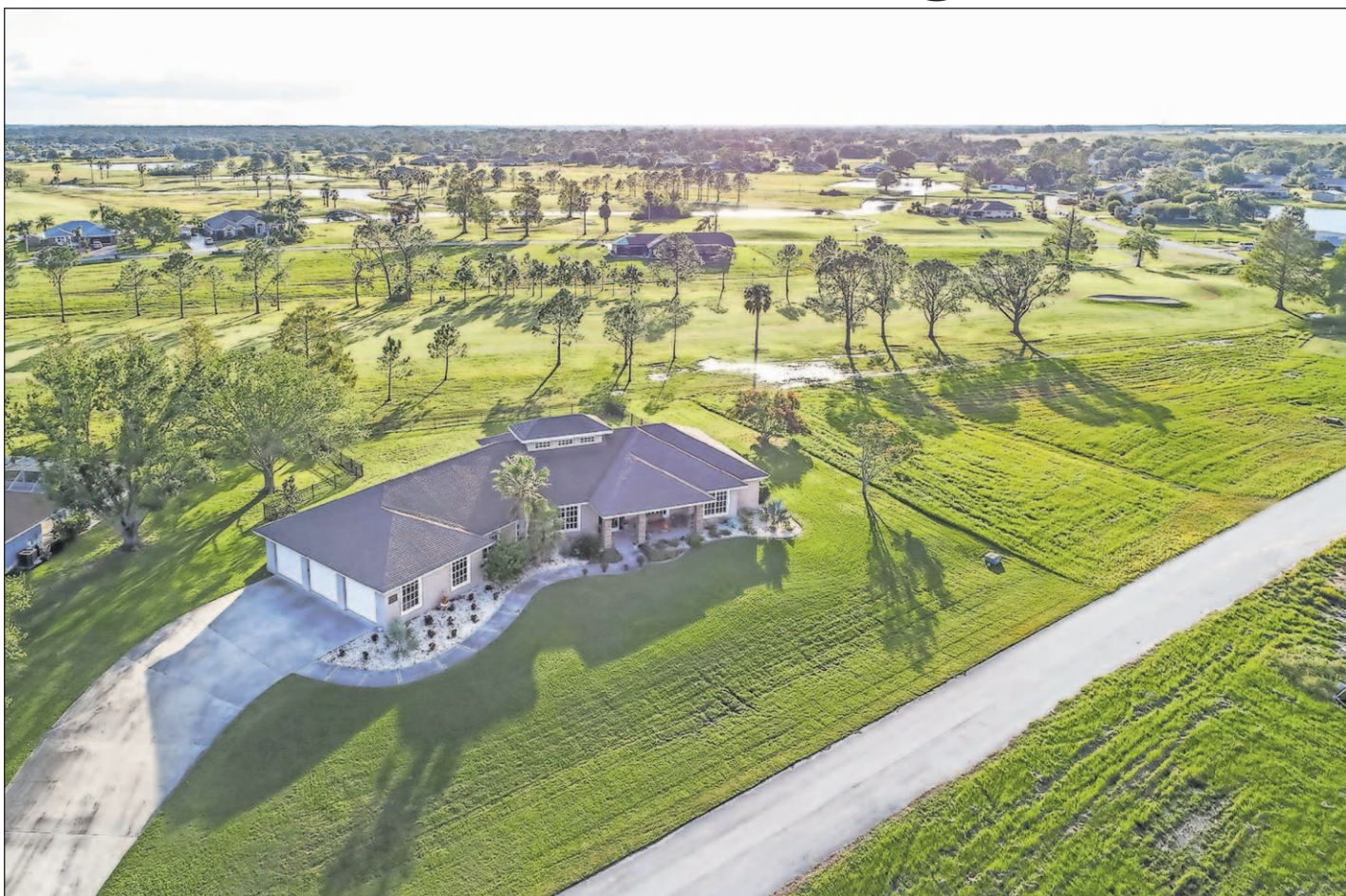
This home is located at 6400 Concord Drive in Sebring. It is priced for \$349,900 and is listed with Cheryl Oxsalida with Heartland Real Estate Corp.

This four-bedroom, three-bath custom-built golf course home sits on over half an acre and has more than 3,000 square feet of living space. It has a modern elegance and quality that sets it apart from the rest.

From its breathtaking 20-foot architectural ceiling and open split design, to its views of the golf course and sunsets, not much compares. Real hardwood floors, porcelain wood plank tile, recessed lighting, French windows and doors, 6-inch baseboards and rounded wall edges are some of the home's gorgeous features.

Located in Spring Lake, this golf course home is in one of Sebring's most desired golf communities. Originally built by the developer of the golf course, this street was purposely planned by the owner to

SALIDA | 5



COURTESY PHOTO

This home is located at 6400 Concord Drive in Sebring. It is priced for \$349,900 and is listed with Cheryl Oxsalida with Heartland Real Estate Corp.

DIRECTIONS

6400 Concord Drive, Sebring

From U.S. 27 in south Sebring, turn east onto U.S. 98. Turn left onto Spring Lake Boulevard. Turn left onto Duane Palmer Boulevard. Turn right onto Concord Street. Turn right onto Concord Drive. The home is on the right.

Home with acreage on Lake Istokpoga

SPECIAL TO HIGHLANDS NEWS-SUN

This home is located at 9 Windy Point Road in Lake Placid. It is priced for \$249,900 and is listed with Sue Clark with Lake and Land Realty of Highlands Inc.

OPEN HOUSE

Today, 11 a.m. to noon

This four-bedroom, two-bath manufactured home has 155 feet on Lake Istokpoga and more than 1.2

acres of land.

The home has unbelievable room sizes with 2,356 living square feet. In addition to the four bedrooms, this home has a family room, living room and large dining room.

This is a paradise at the end of the road with gorgeous, expansive views of the lake from the two porches. The master suite encompasses the entire end of the home and has the most beautiful east view of the lake.

The other three bedrooms are on the

CLARK | 1



COURTESY PHOTO

This home is located at 9 Windy Point Road in Lake Placid. It is priced for \$249,900 and is listed with Sue Clark with Lake and Land Realty of Highlands Inc.

DIRECTIONS

9 Windy Point Road, Lake Placid

From U.S. 27 in Lake Placid, head east on County Road 621. Turn left onto Highlands Lake Drive. Turn right onto Boat Ramp Road. Turn right onto Windy Point Road. The home is on the left.

MCCULLOUGH

FROM PAGE 1

The large open floor plan was designed with lake front living in mind. The living room centers the house with 14-foot vaulted ceilings and crown molding. From there it flows to the sun room and back porch. It also adjoins the more formal dining area.

It's a great house for entertaining as the beautiful kitchen opens to the family room, which flows into the breakfast area.

The master suite features an adjoining room perfect for media, office or nursery. The spa-like bath has expansive granite counter space with two vanity sinks, large soaking tub and oversized marble shower.

The kitchen has newer stainless steel appliances, granite counters, inlaid tile floor, two pantries and fabulous views of the



COURTESY PHOTO

This home has access to two lakes: Lake Saddlebags and Lake Huntley.

lake.

The laundry room has immense storage with separate pantry area large enough for an extra freezer and refrigerator. The home has hardwood and tile floors throughout making clean up a breeze.

It has a newer metal roof that resembles barrel tile, a new dock,

exterior paint and stone accents. The garage has extra storage cabinets with work space and room for two cars. The home is built with double walled construction for improved energy and sound efficiency.

This home has access to two lakes. The home is on Lake Saddlebags, which is a clear lake great

PEOPLE IN REAL ESTATE



Sue Clark is with Lake and Land Realty of Highlands Inc. Call 863-441-0969.



Debbie McCullough is with Heartland Real Estate Corp. Call 863-441-1319.



Cheryl Oxsalida is with Heartland Real Estate Corp. Call 863-214-3663.

HOW TO APPEAR IN PEOPLE IN REAL ESTATE

Members of the Heartland Association of Realtors who want to submit articles about their professional achievements should call Eileen Powers at 863-386-5809. People in Real Estate submissions appear on a space availability basis. All submissions are subject to change.

for fishing, swimming and water sports. The oversized lot has a seawall and 142 feet of lake frontage. In addition, WatersEdge residents enjoy a community park

that is located on the shores of Lake Huntley. It features two tennis courts, a gazebo, and dock with boat slips on the lake. Residents are free to keep their boats

docked on Lake Huntley for no additional fee. For more information or a private showing, call McCullough at 863-441-1319. See more photos at FineHomesDWM.com.

This 3 Bed/2.5 Bath home in Sun N Lake home in a private setting. Enter the foyer, you will be greeted by beautiful laminate flooring in the living room & dining room. Custom kitchen w/granite counter tops, cabinets with pull out drawers & top of the line appliances. Tray ceiling in living & dining room, family room, and master bedroom. Office with private half bath. Master bath w/garden tub, double sink, and separate shower.

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US 27 to Sun N Lake Blvd. Go west on Sun N Lake, right on Columbus, left on Woods and Iron, right on Myrtle Beach. Turn left onto Lorenzo. Mignon is 3rd street on right. House around corner on left. MLS 245727 **\$278,900**

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U.S. 27 to W. on Hammock Rd. to (L) on Lockman to (R) on Lake Vista Rd. to home on (R).

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SUNDAY, JAN. 21ST • 1PM-3PM
620 Colby St., Sebring
Large 2 BR 2 BA in 55 plus park sets on perimeter lot. Extended carport, storage shed, laundry room, large rooms. Master suite has garden tub plus shower, huge kitchen with dining area, breakfast bar, built in hutch in living room. Full front Florida Room has windows tinted. Perfect home for entertaining or get together. SB2145
Amy Slane (863) 450-3336 **\$26,000**

★★★★ TANGLEWOOD ★★★★★

SUNDAY, JAN. 21ST • 1PM-3PM
1656 Primrose Ln., Sebring
Great home for entertaining with 3 BR 2 BA and a den, large eat in kitchen, dining room and living room. Enjoy the fantastic views from your air conditioned lanai. Separate laundry room and a large garage. This is a well maintained home with great curb appeal. Home has newer roof and AC unit. SB2133
Donald Lariviere (863) 450-3340 **\$68,500**

 EXECUTIVE HOME ON THE WATER 2/2 immaculately kept executive home. Beautiful laminate and tile floors. Open, split floor plan. Large kitchen. Large two car garage. Most furniture is included. SB2140 Wendy Jager (863) 812-4675 \$89,900	 EXECUTIVE HOME! GOLF COURSE VIEW! 2BR 2BA 1120 sq ft, completely furnished Extra Large windowed Florida room adds an additional 300 SQ FT to this home. SB2174 Wendy Jager (863) 812-4675 \$48,900
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 ON THE WATER! Fully furnished 2/2 with Den. Also has large carport and nice 1 car garage. Roof is Approx. 5 years old. Golf Cart included. SB2129 Duane Madson (863) 808-4588 \$57,500	 NICE HOME! GREAT LOCATION! Feel at home in this 2 BR 2 BA home SB2100 Bruce Eberly (863) 812-4999 \$38,500
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 SPACIOUS & UNIQUE HOME IN 55 PLUS ACTIVE PARK This 2/2 is the most unique home and one of a kind. Extended carport and storage shed, block storm shed, full front Fla room w/thermo-pane windows and air. SB2165 Amy Slane (863) 450-3336 \$29,900	 CHECK OUT THIS LISTING IN NICE PARK WITH LOW LOT RENT 2/2 furnished home w/ new AC July 2017. Updated refrigerator, microwave, dishwasher, and range. SB2158 Kathy Rose (844) 802-7751 \$27,000

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TODAY'S REAL ESTATE
JULIO SEDA

Sebring has a variety of real estate communities to satisfy new buyers, along with established residents and seasonal visitors. There is an in house selection that offers an opportunity to invest in Sebring, starting with housing choices for ownership and rentals satisfying all financial

circumstances. Our residential communities offer easy access to golf courses, shopping areas, a wide selection of churches, schools, lakes, and our inventory of restaurants together with other amenities support the high quality of life experienced in Sebring. We have a variety of styles available; from a studio apartment to a mansion, with spectacular lake or Florida native views. For example, if you, family or any friends are interested in an elegant, affordable home, country club life style is available. One of the finest residential planned communities is equipped with a pool, club house, tennis courts, a school and medical offices. It

sits on a strategic, 7000-acre are named Sun 'n Lake. Other comparable communities are Golf Hammock, Country of Sebring and Spring Lake. Seniors are especially welcome. Sebring has a strong retirement population and senior residential facilities accommodate most special needs. Some offer two or three daily meals, housekeeping services, laundry services, transportation and 24/7 property maintenance. They also provide medical services, a health care program and a monthly calendar of social and cultural activities — field trips to shopping centers, theaters, museums and restaurants. We cannot leave out exercise programs; it creates a sense

of value in every senior for the years they have lived and excitement for those ahead. Sebring has apartments with multiple sizes and styles. You may rent or buy an apartment furnished or non furnished and with lake, garden or city views. Also, some are two or three bedrooms, and some have a washer and dryer inside the unit or coin laundry facilities. Other services include, depending on the condominium: allowing a pet, emergency services and sufficient resident and guest parking. Affordable housing is available, regardless of your taste or wallet, for all style and size homes, lots, garden or villa homes, duplexes, on the golf course, on the lake, and acreage.

If you want to buy a lot and build your own home, Sebring is fortunate to have a number of certified quality home builders who will work diligently in order to make your dream house a reality. Our local banks have an extensive financial qualifying home buying programs. You would request a private appointment with the loan originator and it is required you bring your credit score, proof of income (last two years of tax returns), minimum monthly payments of all credit card balances and car payments to this meeting. For a married couple, both would have to turn in the documents. Credit card balances are to be around 30 percent of your total line of

credit. If you are a local or future resident, and you hope of one day owning and living where you can have family and friend gatherings, this is the place to live. It is an area filled with a wonderful natural atmosphere of pine trees and Florida's landscape. Additionally, the area has a low crime rate, a reasonable amount of above-average schools and entertainment opportunities for everyone in the family. You will not regret investing and becoming a part of the family that is Sebring. On a side note: Rents in Sebring are increasing. To submit questions, comments or topics, call Julio Seda at 786-991-8235 or email 0532315@gmail.com.

Berkshire Hathaway represents seller in Holiday Inn Express

SPECIAL TO
HIGHLANDS NEWS-SUN

TAMPA — Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Properties Group announces the sale of the Holiday Inn Express & Suites Trinity, a three-story, 87-room property located at 2125 Corporate Center Drive in the North Tampa Bay community of Trinity. The \$12.2 million sales price equates to more than \$142,000 per room. This transaction is the highest price per key metrics for a Holiday Inn Express in Florida. The sale closed Jan. 11. Robb Sercu, chief communications officer for Berkshire Hathaway



CRUMBLEY SERCU

HomeServices Florida Properties Group and the managing director for its Commercial Division, and Commercial Broker Kim Lohry represented the seller, MPH Hotels, and brokered the sale to Trinity 123 LLC. "We knew this property had great potential when we first started working on it with MPH back in 2014," Sercu said. "With its lake front,

resort-style facility and business-centric location in the emerging community of Trinity, the Holiday Inn Express & Suites Trinity has been very successful since it opened in 2015, and is well positioned to continue to benefit from Tampa Bay's growing employment and residential bases." Berkshire Hathaway customer MPH Hotels purchased the property's vacant land in 2014. Along with MPH and Sercu, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Properties Group Brokers/owners Allen Crumbley and Dewey Mitchell, and agents Renee Dyer and Kim

Lohry worked together to secure local investors for hotel construction and ownership. The Holiday Inn Express & Suites is InterContinental Hotel Group's fastest growing brand. The Trinity property is located 18 miles from Tampa International Airport and offers strategic proximity to major transportation arteries, world-class businesses, Trinity Medical Center, golf clubs, beaches, restaurants, shopping and other Greater Tampa Bay area attractions. "We are thrilled to have led the growth and development of this property, resulting in

record per-key transaction for a Holiday Inn Express in Florida." Crumbley said. "Our commercial sales team is experienced and intimately familiar with the market. Our team will seek opportunities to create value and help develop customized real estate solutions for tenants, developers, investors, and commercial property owners." Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Properties Group has 22 offices throughout the Tampa Bay area.

Highlands County has four Berkshire Hathaway offices:

- 4800 Haw Branch Road, Sebring; 863-314-9641
- 1 Hammock Falls Circle, Sebring; 863-382-6575
- 211 U.S. 27 North, Sebring; 863-402-5700
- 15 N. Main Ave., Lake Placid; 863-699-0404

For more information about Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Properties Group, call 888-778-8258 or visit www.bhhsfloridaproperties.com.

SALIDA

FROM PAGE 1

have no HOA or restrictions at this address. Fences are allowed at this location even though it's on the golf course. Currently the house already has a black wrought iron fenced back yard. From this location it's just minutes to the golf course and clubhouse or to Lake Istokpoga for the best fishing in the area. It is also just minutes to the race track and airport. When you first drive up, there is a long entrance driveway that leads up to a huge 24 by 38 three-car garage. The house is also on a cul-de-sac street for lots of privacy and room to keep a boat, RV and several cars. The home also already has the electric to install a pool in the back yard so it's ready to add a pool if you like. When you first walk in through the front door, the open floor plan features a 17 by 23 living room with two sets of tall double glass doors with

a spectacular view of the golf course out to the back yard. To the left of the front door is a 14 by 14 formal dining room, which can seat 10 people at a large table. Way up high is a cut out sky ceiling with windows that light up the room with ambiance. A modern ceiling fan decorates the peak of the raised ceiling cavity. It also has a crystal chandelier. These modern architectural touches are the things that set this home apart from ordinary golf course homes. The huge 17 by 18 kitchen features modern appliances including a gas and grill stove top, double stainless-steel sink and stylish stainless-steel refrigerator, microwave, dishwasher and oven. A long modern counter wraps around the corner into an L shape, Corian counters plus a matching island table bar with sink and four bar seats for eating in the kitchen. Modern seamless cabinets with lots of drawers and cabinets wrap around the entire kitchen for massive storage. Big

windows and recessed lighting provide a lot of natural lighting in the day and interior lighting after dark. The large 15 by 17 master bedroom features rich hard wood floors, recessed lighting and double glass doors leading into the lanai. It has a huge walk-in California closet, double vanity, walk-in shower plus a Roman-style corner bath tub. All the bedrooms have large tall French windows for lots of natural light and rich hard wood floors. Besides having four bedrooms and three full bathrooms, there is also a 14 by 15 bonus room just to the right as you enter the home. Double French doors open into the office/game room, which fits a small pool table plus an office desk, computer and wall mounted TV with cable. For a relaxing evening step out the back

door into the 12 by 28 screened lanai that overlooks the golf course. Enjoy the sunset views of the open range with lots of shade trees that decorate the course. A second private outdoor patio is off the master bedroom with its own unique seating area and view of the golf course. Ceiling fans are in every room. The main entrance has a front porch seating area. The back yard has a custom wrought iron fence. There is mature landscaping around the entire house. Enjoy golf on three different courses: Panther Creek, Cougar Trail and Bobcat Run. You can also enjoy fine dining at the Spring Lake Golf Resort restaurant. For more information or to see this house, call Oxsalida at 863-214-3663, email cheryloxsalida@gmail.com or go to highlandscountyhomes.com and see all the photos.

CLARK

FROM PAGE 1

opposite end and are all of good size with walk-in closets. The kitchen, which also has a fantastic view of the lake, has room for a butcher block or small kitchen table.

The home has only been lived in part time and it shows. This is a special piece of property with a private location on the southwest corner Lake Istokpoga near Lake Placid. There is a small dock on the lakeside. For more information, call Clark at 863-441-0969.

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THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

This December 2016 file photo shows a house for sale in Miami. On Thursday, Jan. 18, 2018, Freddie Mac reports on the week's average U.S. mortgage rates.

RATES

FROM PAGE 6

as points, which most

borrowers must pay to get the lowest rates.

The fee on 30-year mortgages rose to 0.6 point from 0.5 point last week. The fee on

15-year mortgages was unchanged 0.5 percent. And the fee on five-year adjustable home loans dipped to 0.3 point from 0.4 point.

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3005 ROYAL OAKS CT., SEBRING \$195,000

2 bed/2 bath situated on the golf course, this lovely JE Futch villa has many features to enjoy starting with the paved driveway and walk-way and the elegant front elevation. Inside you will see 10' ceilings with 8' doors, crown molding and neutral tile and carpeting. MLS#241775

3051 ROYAL OAKS CT., SEBRING \$206,900

Gorgeous 3 bed, 2 bath, 2 car garage villa perfect for buyer who wants an executive home, without yard maintenance. Association takes care of it all! Situated on the 18th hole of Country Club of Sebring, this beautiful, like new home has 10' ceilings, neutral tile & newer window treatments. MLS#245802

7047 STRAFFORD OAKS DR., SEBRING \$289,900

Impressive custom built home with circular paver brick driveway, side entry garage & covered front porch greet you upon arrival at this 3 bedroom/3.5 bath custom home. Enter to find tall ceilings, crown molding & ceramic tile. MLS#245777

3805 ENCHANTED OAKS LN., SEBRING \$354,900

Stunning custom home that's sure to impress! Circular drive, 3 car garage, koi pond & glass front door. 12" crown molding, formal living & dining room, French doors open to office/den. Kitchen features Kraft Maid cherry wood cabinets, quartz counters & decorative backsplash. MLS#245595

3246 WYNSTONE CT., SEBRING \$377,777

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3791 ENCHANTED OAKS LN., SEBRING \$393,000

"SOUTHERN PLANTATION STYLE" custom home with 3 beds/2.5 baths. Inviting open air front porch. Hardwood floors in Living & Dining, decorative columns & cove ceilings. Large family rm, wet bar + gorgeous fireplace. Kitchen has wood cabinets, island cooktop, breakfast bar + nook. NEW ROOF! MLS#243202

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3230 WATERWOOD DR., SEBRING \$195,000

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3919 CORMORANT POINT DR., SEBRING \$154,900

2 bed/ 2 bath home overlooking pond in Cormorant Point, 55+ golf course community. This lovely, well-maintained home is perfect for someone who wants a VIEW! Home comes completely furnished. Just bring toothbrush & golf clubs. (The golf cart is included too!). MLS#245420

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2623 BLUE BONNET DR, SEBRING • MLS# 244875

Honey Stop The Car! This location is PERFECT!!! Hard to find 3 bed 3.5 bath 1 car garage. Every bedroom has a walk-in closet and bathroom. Living room with additional family room. This home is waiting for a family!

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How to care for palm trees



GROWING PAINS

Charlie Reynolds

Editor's Note: This article originally published Aug. 28, 2016 in Highlands Today:

To understand the problems palms can have, it helps to know a bit about their makeup. Palms are not true trees. Actually, they are more closely related to grass. The trunk of a palm is a tightly packed vascular bundle, which unlike woody trees, does not produce limbs or branches.

All palm tree growth takes place in the upper area where the fronds are produced. This topmost area is called the heart of the palm or the meristem, and is also where the "cabbage" is in a cabbage palm.

It is a tender spot that can be harvested sliced and cooked like potatoes. It tastes sort of like potatoes, too, at least to me. I like lots of butter on mine. If this meristem gets too cold, the palm dies.

There are several cold sensitive palms used in landscaping but all you need to do to protect these sensitive palms is the meristem, or heart

near the top. A string of Christmas lights works well wrapped around the meristem to keep it warm during a frost.

This heart area is also susceptible to bugs, especially the palmetto weevil, which lays its eggs in the top of the meristem. When the larvae hatch, they are absolutely huge and eat the heart of the palm out, killing it.

The grubs of this weevil get so fat they sometimes fall out of the top of the palm and wriggle around the base of the palm, scaring small children and me, too.

Ugly is too mild a term for these maggoty looking monsters with their cutting mouth parts. Any insecticide used has to be applied to the very top of the palm, the meristem, which may be a challenge if you have a 100-foot Washingtonia robusta.

Maybe hire a Marine to drop a mortar shell full of insecticide down the meristem. (That's a shout-out to my good buddy, Sam, a former Marine and firefighter who spent two weeks at 9/11 ground zero). He doesn't own a mortar so please don't call.

There are several



METRO CREATIVE IMAGES

Palms are not true trees. Actually, they are more closely related to grass.

problems associated with palms, most of which are untreatable despite assurances from "Louie and Vinnie's Quickie You Betcha Yard Service" "that they can cure any problem you may have.

If you have a palm tree in your yard, keep your eye out for "butt rot." No, not your butt, the palm tree's. It's a fungus called Ganoderma that plugs up the vascular system of the palm, and in its

advanced stage it forms a conk, or fungus protruding from the base of the palm.

If you see this conk, it is too late. The palm is fatally affected.

Nutrition is vitally important to give the palm the strength to produce the fronds and fight off disease at the same time.

As I drive around town, I notice canary island date palms with bright yellow bottom fronds. I want to knock on the owner's door and yell "Get some magnesium on that palm!"

Palm trees are voracious consumers of several micro-nutrients. Magnesium being the most noticeable when it's deficient. Large palms can have roots extending 50 feet or more from the trunk, getting their nutrients from whatever the homeowner puts on their lawns.

Lawn fertilizers are notoriously low on the nutrients needed for palms so an additional fertilizer specifically formulated for palms should be applied. Call the extension office listed below for the correct formulation and application rates.

Palms are the images

associated with Florida worldwide and with a few adjustments to their care and feeding they can be spectacular additions to your landscape.

Got questions? We got answers. Contact the Extension Office on George Boulevard at 402-6540 or stop by in person between 9:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

If you have a question that may help others, submit it directly to

Highlands News-Sun at karen.clogston@highlandsnewssun.com for possible publication.

Charlie Reynolds is a Highlands County Master Gardener and has been named the Florida Master Gardener of the Year by The University of Florida IFAS for 2017-2018.

The articles presented here originate from visitors' questions at the Master Gardener Help Desk.

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<p>UNIQUE HOME MOVE IN READY! 3 Bedrooms, 2 bath. This home has recently been updated like NEW!!! Open floor plan, New kitchen with Island. Newly tiled bathrooms. In house laundry room. Large family room tiled over looks large patio and nice back yard with fire pit and 2 sheds. Roof is less than 1 year old. MLS#245647 \$143,800 Contact: Anita Zahn: 863-840-1420 anitazahn@gmail.com</p>	<p>THIS IS TRULY A MAGNIFICENT HOME Elegant custom designed 4 beds, 3 baths 2405 sqft home, starting with the custom maple kitchen cabinets, gorgeous granite counter tops and impeccable landscaping. From the moment you enter the home you will notice the attention to detail from the high end wood plank flooring to the full kitchen in the 38x15 Patio/lanai and oversized 3 car garage. Pride of ownership shows as this home has been very well maintained. The 34x50 detached workshop has a full bath a wine room with sink & cabinets and can easily be converted into a mother-in-law suite or guest house. MLS#244543 \$349,900 Contact: Andrea Cranmer: 863-451-6400 acranmerrealtor@gmail.com</p>	<p>HISTORIC HOME! This 2 bedroom, 1 bath home with large eat in kitchen in wonderful downtown Sebring. Utility in house. Cute front porch. Walking distance to circle. MLS#244956 \$750/mo. Contact: Diana Williams: 863-414-5151 dwilliams90@htn.net</p>	<p>204 MIDDLE VIEW DR., LAKE PLACID This 1 bedroom, 1 bath cute condo is on Lake McCoy. Close to everything Community pool screened lanai This home is small but very nice and has washer dryer included. Great for a single person or a couple. MLS#245329 \$750/mo. Contact: Dana Olson: 863-451-1775 dolsonrealtor@gmail.com</p>
<p>LARGE HOME ON 7+ ACRES IN WAUCHULA 3 Bedroom 2 bath with metal roof. The home features large family room, game room, living and dining room with an enclosed back patio.The home is dated and in need of TLC. Home has good potential. Foreclosure Case #093-595063. HUD owned & sold as-is. Resources, forms, and bidding link to www.HUDHomestore.com. MLS#244788 Contact: Anita Zahn: 863-840-1420 anitazahn@gmail.com</p>	<p>BEAUTIFUL LAKE FRONT HOME IS A MUST SEE! Starting with the impeccable landscaping and breathtaking views of desirable Lake Sebring from nearly every room you enter. It's been a wonderful weekend home for this family for many years. This charming home boasts 3 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms which includes a private guest suite or mother-in-law suite. Remodeled kitchen with granite counter tops, open to the family room and dining room!. MLS#245332 \$219,900 Contact: Andrea Cranmer: 863-451-6400 acranmerrealtor@gmail.com</p>	<p>THIS IS WHAT FLORIDA LIVING IS ALL ABOUT! 2 Bedroom/2 Bath Lakefront charmer with expansive outdoor living areas on all sides of this quaint home. Community boat ramp and park at your door. 7 sets of french doors to enjoy the views from all areas of the home. Open concept living with granite counters and new appliances. Huge Master bath and dressing area. Lakefront living at its best! MLS#245080 \$1500/mo. Contact: Diana Williams: 863-414-5151 dwilliams90@htn.net</p>	<p>339 RACCOON LANE, FLORIDA 2 bed, 1 bath, This home is not only on the water but has been remodeled and has a stunning view of the water! Screened in porch on the entire lake side of the home where you will spend most of your time! Bath has river rock floor in shower Great place to spend the season!!! MLS#245226 \$2,000/mo. Contact: Dana Olson: 863-451-1775 dolsonrealtor@gmail.com</p>

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MLB: Free agency
Why free agency isn't fun (yet) for Cobb

By **MARC TOPKIN**
Tampa Bay Times

RHP Alex Cobb never expected to be going into late January without knowing where he was going for spring training. The longtime Ray's first foray into free agency hasn't gone as planned, much like the 150-plus others waiting for something to give in a market colder than the weather.

"You're full of excitement, you're rushing into this thing like, 'Oh, this is going to be a lot of fun, a great experience,'" Cobb said Friday. "Then somewhere between November and December you realize how slow things are going and you kind of start reading the writing on the wall that this is a little bit of a different offseason than years before."

"Then you go through a little bit of a frustrating moment, frustrated with

SEE COBB, 3

MLB: Rays
Rays could still look different by end of spring

By **MARC TOPKIN**
Tampa Bay Times

ST. PETERSBURG — Since entering an off-season planning major change and pledging to be open to "anything and everything," the Rays have made a few minor moves and one massive one in trading franchise cornerstone Evan Longoria to San Francisco.

But in the month since then, nothing.

Which means if they took the field today, they'd have a team with a higher payroll than last year and less talent.

For \$75 million plus, they'd look something like this:

An infield with Matt Duffy — yes, he's said to be healthy — at third, Adeiny Hechavarria at short, Brad Miller moving back to first and some combination at

SEE RAYS, 3

TENNIS: Australian Open

Last Slam standing



Germany's Angelique Kerber hits a backhand return to Russia's Maria Sharapova during their third round match Saturday at the Australian Open in Melbourne, Australia.

AP PHOTO

Kerber beats Sharapova in 3rd round

By **John Pye**
The Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australi — Angelique Kerber is on her own in an elite club at the Australian Open. The 2016 champion routed Maria Sharapova 6-1, 6-3 in a third-round win that showcased her credentials as a title contender and ensured she'll be the only Grand Slam champion still playing in the second week in the women's draw.

Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic were almost as ruthless in their straight-sets wins Saturday night, which is hardly surprising for two players with a combined 31 Grand Slam titles. As well, it was Federer's

90th match win at Melbourne Park. Women's No. 1 Simona Halep took a longer route — equaling a mark in Melbourne for endurance but signaling, perhaps, that she's closer to a Grand Slam breakthrough.

Sharapova was back at the Australian Open for the first time since 2016, when a failed doping test led to a 15-month ban from tennis.

After two comfortable wins the five-time major winner was growing in confidence, but she had no answers for Kerber, who is on a 12-match winning streak in a kind of comeback of her own after a sliding down the rankings last year.

"Of course is quite

a big match. I mean, Maria is a champion. She's always dangerous, especially at the Grand Slams," Kerber said. "I was really trying to not think about everything around, about against who I'm playing."

"I learned a lot from the last 12, 24 months. I had a great 2016 and last year was a little tougher."

Kerber's year-end ranking dropped from No. 1 in 2016 to 21 last year, when she failed to defend her Australian or U.S. Open titles. "Anybody who knows me knows I never give up."

Sharapova said Kerber was the more aggressive on court and took more risks.

"A lot of things I need to get better at

and improve on," she said. "Today was not enough (but) ... looking at the overall picture, there's a lot to build from."

The Kerber-Sharapova match, billed as the showdown of the round, was over quickly. That was in contract to Halep's 4-6, 6-4, 15-13 win in 3 hours and 45 minutes over American Lauren Davis.

The third set took 2 hours, 22 minutes. Halep wasted chances to serve for the match in the ninth, 11th and 15th games, then had to save three match points in the 22nd. There were 11 service breaks and two medical timeouts — for Davis to get treatment

SEE TENNIS, 4

NFL: Eagles

Blount, Long brought winning ways to Philadelphia

By **Rob Maaddi**
Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — When Chris Long and LeGarrette Blount joined the Philadelphia Eagles after winning a Super Bowl in New England, both players envisioned another title run with a team on the rise.

They had more faith than most, but the Eagles are two wins away from a parade.

"I knew we'd be a playoff team and that's why I decided this would be a good place to be and then what separates you is winning a game or two," Long said as Philadelphia prepared for Sunday's NFC championship game against the Minnesota Vikings.

The Eagles were 7-9 last year in the first season under coach Doug Pederson and quarterback Carson Wentz.

Expectations were moderate entering 2017 with many experts projecting the team to be a year away from serious playoff contention.

But Blount saw a team that was close. The Eagles added receivers Alshon Jeffery and Torrey Smith, traded for defensive tackle Tim Jernigan and signed Long before giving Blount a one-year deal in May.

"I chose the Eagles for the reason of me fitting in

really good here, having a championship run, having a banner season," Blount said after he signed. "And they're a really good team. They're a really good team before I came. I just want to fit in."

He was right and he's fit in perfectly.

Wentz had an MVP-caliber season before he tore his ACL in Week 14 and the Eagles (14-3) secured the NFC's No. 1 seed. Blount was the team's leading

rusher, though he's played a secondary role since Jay Ajayi was acquired in a trade in October.

Blount hasn't complained about fewer carries and has provided veteran leadership. He led the NFL with 18 touchdowns rushing last year when he earned his second Super Bowl ring in three seasons with the Patriots.

"We're winning and

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COBB

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the process, frustrated with the way things are going. Then you kind of get to the point where you're like, 'Whatever. We're all in this same boat together.' You just kind of change your frame of mind to accepting the fact that this thing is going to go down to the wire and you get comfortable with that."

The Cubs, with former Rays manager Joe Maddon and now pitching coach Jim Hickey, are rumored to be Cobb's likely destination, even with reports he turned down a three-year, \$42 million deal. Going into the winter, he seemed in line for more like a four-year, \$60 million deal, or \$70 million-plus over five, so that makes sense.

Cobb wouldn't get into specifics Friday, saying he has talked seriously with 15 teams and hasn't eliminated any. The Brewers, Twins, Nationals, Orioles, Rangers, Yankees are reportedly among the in. "Everywhere is an option for me at this point," Cobb said. Even — his words — going back to the Rays for a year, as unlikely as that is.

While ex-Rays Tommy Hunter (\$18 million over two years from Phillies) and Steve Cishek (\$13 million, two years, Cubs) have signed, Cobb waits, as do OF Peter Bourjos, 1B Lucas Duda, 1B Logan Morrison, RHP Sergio Romo.

"It'll be very interesting to see the reasonings when all this is done, and kind of dissect it a little bit and get to figure out why the market was so slow this offseason," Cobb said. "Very interesting."

San Francisco treat: With No. 3 retired for Bill Terry, ex-Rays star Evan Longoria gets No. 10 with the Giants. Can't imagine the Rays letting anyone wear 3 anytime soon. ... At \$13.5 million, Longoria went from being the highest paid Ray to ninth on the Giants. ... Heard the other teams Longoria suggested to the Rays as good trade fits included the Cardinals, Mets and Red Sox.

Helping hand: INF Daniel Robertson last weekend held his second fan fest-style event near his SoCal home, raising money to help families with medical bills related to fighting cancer. To donate, see

danielrobertstonfamilyfoundation.org.

Rays rumblings: In addition to a uniform patch marking the team's 20-year anniversary, expect promotions and giveaways with that theme. ... Curious when Tampa stadium proponents will start that drive for sponsor and season-ticket commitments principal owner Stuart Sternberg wants to see. ... Kevin Kiermaier, ranked 10th among centerfielders, was the only Ray to make Buster Olney's ESPN.com top 10 at each position. ... Seems likely the Rays will join other teams in expanding netting by the dugouts.

... With agent Jason Wood fired from his firm amid controversy, arbitration-bound RHP Jake Odorizzi signed with Excel and is handled by Bobby Barad, whose Rays clients include Corey Dickerson. ... Melanie Lenz was promoted from vice president, strategy & development to chief development officer. Also, Jeff Tanzer promoted to VP, ticket sales and service; Eric Weisberg to VP, marketing and creative services; Patrick Smith to senior director, controller; Michael Weinman to director, game presentation & production... Prospects 1B Jake Bauers, OF Justin Williams and LHP Ryan Yarbrough attended the MLB Rookie Career Development Program in Washington, D.C. ... Kiermaier was mlb.com's choice as the most likely Hall of Famer among current Rays.

Ex-Rays rumblings: C Curt Casali signed a minor-league deal with Texas, having first signed with Anaheim then granted his release when the Angels blocked his path to the majors by adding another ex-Ray, Rene Rivera. ... Maddon's Respect 90 Foundation donated \$71,000 to hurricane relief funds in Tampa Bay, Houston and Puerto Rico. ... Sure, Rays fans were upset to see Longoria go. But after franchise cornerstone OF Andrew McCutchen and RHP Gerrit Cole were traded, Pirates fans started an online petition urging Bob Nutting to sell the team and have 50,000-plus signatures. ... With nearly 200 of the roughly 425 Hall of Fame ballots posted online, Fred McGriff has 36 votes, Johnny Damon three and Aubrey Huff none. The announcement is Wednesday.

OLYMPICS: Hockey

Without NHL players, Olympic tournament is 'wide open'

By STEPHEN WHYNO
Associated Press

When Willie Desjardins coached Canada's 2010 world junior team stacked with future NHL players Taylor Hall, Jordan Eberle, Brayden Schenn, Alex Pietrangelo and goaltenders Jake Allen and Martin Jones, it took a wild final game with John Carlson scoring in overtime to win the gold medal for the United States.

Just like Canada was the most talented team back then, Russia is likely to have that role at the upcoming Winter Olympics. Desjardins isn't concerned about that.

"In this tournament, anybody can win," Desjardins said.

Goodbye, NHL players. Hello, unpredictability. No NHL participation



AP PHOTO

FILE - In this Dec. 16, 2016, file photo, Russia's Ilya Kovalchuk, center, tries to score as Czech Republic's Ondrej Vitasek, right, and Dominik Furch make a challenge during the Ice Hockey Channel One Cup match in Moscow. Russia is considered the favorite for gold in the upcoming Olympics because it has former NHL players Kovalchuk, Pavel Datsyuk and Andrei

for the first time since 1994 threatens to upset the traditional world hockey order after Canada has won the past three best-on-best tournaments: the 2016

World Cup, 2014 Sochi Olympics and 2010 Vancouver Olympics. Russia is considered the favorite because it has former NHL players Ilya Kovalchuk, Pavel Datsyuk and Andrei

GOLF: CareerBuilder Challenge

Austin Cook shoots 64 to take lead

The Associated Press

LA QUINTA, Calif. — Austin Cook played a six-hole stretch in 6 under and shot an 8-under 64 in breezy conditions Saturday to take the lead at the CareerBuilder Challenge.

Cook began the run at La Quinta Country Club with birdies on Nos. 4-5, eagled the sixth and added birdies on No. 7 and 9 to make the turn in 6-under 30.

After a bogey on the 10th, he birdied Nos.

11, 12 and 15 and saved par on the 18th with a 20-footer to take a 19-under 197 total into the final round on PGA West's Stadium Course. The 26-year-old former Arkansas player is making his first start in the event. He won at Sea Island in November for his first PGA Tour title.

Fellow former Razorbacks star Andrew Landry and Martin Piller were a stroke back. Landry, the second-round leader, had a 70 on the Stadium Course.

Piller, the husband of LPGA Tour player Gerina Piller, shot a 67 at La Quinta. They are both winless on the PGA Tour.

Jon Rahm had a 70 at the Stadium Course to reach 17 under. The top-ranked player in the field at No. 3, Rahm beat up the par 5s again, but had four bogeys — three on par 3s. He has played the 12 par 5s in 13 under with an eagle and 11 birdies.

Scott Piercy also was two strokes back after a 66 at the Stadium.

Adam Hadwin had a 67

at La Quinta a year after shooting a third-round 59 on the course. The Canadian was 16 under along with Grayson Murray and Brandon Harkins. Murray had a 67 on PGA West's Jack Nicklaus Tournament Course, and Harkins shot 68 on the Stadium Course.

Phil Mickelson missed the cut in his first tournament of the year for the second time in his career, shooting a 74 on the Stadium Course to finish at 4 under — four strokes from a Sunday tee time.

OLYMPICS: Athletes

IOC: NKorea to have 22 athletes in Olympics

By Graham Dunbar
Associated Press

LAUSANNE, Switzerland — A Korean unity deal for the Pyeongchang Olympics will bring 22 North Korean athletes across the border to South Korea, where they will march as one under a unification flag at the opening ceremony and compete together in one sport.

In the most symbolic agreement approved Saturday, 12 North Korean women's hockey players will join their neighbors in a united roster playing in special uniforms with a Korean song as their anthem.

North Koreans will also compete in figure skating, short track speed

skating, Alpine skiing and cross-country skiing after being given exceptional late entries by the International Olympic Committee.

The North Korean delegation will also include 24 coaches and officials, plus 21 media representatives at the Feb. 9-25 Winter Games.

The governments of North and South Korea were offered "sincere thanks" by IOC President Thomas Bach announcing the agreement.

An Olympic deal became possible after North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said in a New Year's speech that a team could cross the border to compete.

"Such an agreement



AP PHOTO

International Olympic Committee President Thomas Bach, center, shakes hands with North Korea's Olympic Committee President and sports minister Kim Il Guk, left, and South Korea's Sports Minister Do Jong-hwan, right, as they arrive for the North and South Korean Olympic Participation Meeting at the IOC headquarters Saturday in Pully, near Lausanne, Switzerland.

would have seemed impossible only a few weeks ago," said Bach,

who did not take questions from international media.

RAYS

From Page 1

second of Daniel Robertson, Joey Wendle, Ryan Schimpf and Micah Johnson.

An outfield with Denard Span in left, Kevin Kiermaier in center, Steven Souza Jr. in right, and Corey Dickerson as the primary DH.

A rotation of Chris Archer, Jake Odorizzi, Blake Snell, Nate Eovaldi and — after potentially opening with four starters — either Matt Andriese or Jake Faria.

And a bullpen with Alex Colome at the back end, lefty Dan Jennings and Chaz Roe as experienced help, possibly with Andriese, and the rest unproven young relievers.

Maybe that doesn't look that bad.

But that's not likely to

be the squad that reports to Port Charlotte next month. Or, at least, heads north to the Trop for the March 29 opener.

In addressing ownership's request to cut payroll after another season with majors-worst attendance and trying to fill some holes — like adding a true first baseman (maybe Lucas Duda as a free agent bargain?) and some veteran relievers — they still have some major work to do.

It's just that nobody has been getting much done.

Like most other teams, the Rays have been paralyzed by the lack of activity industry-wide. Though trades are more their thing, free agent decisions elsewhere often spark responsive deals.

Speculation on reasons for the overall freeze is rampant, with the

potential to get ugly.

Most tenable, that increased brain power and data flow across front offices has created a likemindedness in player (and prospect) evaluation to where no one wants to cede an advantage in making a trade and would rather wait out free agents. More concerning, that more teams have less interest in actually competing, reducing motivation to spend excessively. Most troublesome, collusion among teams to stall and thus depress value of the 150-plus players still on the free agent market.

At some point — right? — something will change. Spring camps open in 3 1/2 weeks, real games in less than 70 days.

And when that dam finally breaks, the Rays still have much to address.

"I think our to-do list is comparable to where we were earlier in the winter," general manger Erik Neander said this week. "There is just less time available to accomplish it."

"But that's, I think, the same for many teams at this point and it just requires us an industry to get more done in a shorter period of time. Spring training is not moving."

The current group, pending arbitration cases with Hechavarria and Odorizzi, is due around \$75 million.

That's \$5 million more than last year's opening day payroll, and doesn't account for the usual couple replacements for DL-ed players, or the \$4 million 2019 buyout they'd owe Span (who they had to take back as part of the net savings in the Longoria deal).

Though the Rays say there is no specific payroll number they have to cut to, they are going to have to find some deals to be made.

Either Span (\$9 million) or Dickerson (\$5.95 million) probably has to go. Odorizzi (\$6.05 or \$6.3 million) seems most tradeable among the starters, especially since Archer (\$6.25 million) requires a heftier return due to four years of control. Miller (\$4.5 million) is expendable among the infielders, though Hechavarria (\$5.35 or \$5.9 million) could go. And, given how much relievers are getting elsewhere, it's hard to imagine some team (Cardinals?) eventually won't meet the Rays' price for Colome (\$5.3 million, in the first of three arbitration years).

Also, while there will be plenty of talk about

their core of promising prospects, don't expect to see Willy Adames, Jake Bauers, Brent Honeywell or Christian Arroyo, the headliner of the Longoria deal, open the season in the majors, which can be both baseball and business decisions.

"At any given moment you know what your club would look like if you had to open the season tomorrow, and we certainly have that in mind as we sit here today," Neander said. "That being said, we're always looking to improve, we're always looking to make our organization stronger both for 2018 and out beyond that. As long as there is time available, as long as there is staff for us to consider, and there certainly is, we're going to make the most of the time we have to try to do the best we can for the organization."

Expanded Takata air bag recall 14 automakers list more models in recall



COURTESY PHOTO

An additional 1 million Toyota and Honda vehicles in the U.S. are being recalled as part of a third wave of recalls planned by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to fix cars equipped with potentially faulty Takata air bags.

By **TOM KRISHER**

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DETROIT — U.S. safety regulators have released models from 14 different automakers that are being recalled to replace potentially deadly Takata air bag inflators.

Documents posted Thursday by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration include many made by Ford, Nissan, Mercedes-Benz, Ferrari, Daimler Vans, Toyota, Tesla, BMW, Fiat Chrysler, Mazda, Subaru, Jaguar-Land Rover, McLaren and Volkswagen. Toyota, Ford and Honda released some of their models last week. Earlier this month Takata

recalled an additional 3.3 million faulty air bag inflators as it expanded the largest automotive recall in U.S. history. Models released Thursday are equipped with those inflators.

The company uses the chemical ammonium nitrate to create a small explosion and fill air bags quickly in a crash. But the chemical can deteriorate when exposed to high humidity and temperatures and burn too fast, blowing apart a metal canister. That can hurl hot shrapnel into unsuspecting drivers and passengers. At least 21 people have been killed worldwide and more than 180 injured.

The U.S. recalls, which

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit [nhtsa.gov/recall-spotlight/takata-air-bags](https://www.nhtsa.gov/recall-spotlight/takata-air-bags)

are being managed by NHTSA, are being phased in over the next three years. Older models and those in states with high humidity and temperatures are getting priority.

Some of the recalls are limited to certain groups of states. To see if your vehicle is involved, go to <https://www.nhtsa.gov/recalls> and key in your 17-digit vehicle identification number. It can be found on your registration and is stamped on the driver's side dashboard. Automakers and the government say the recall repairs should be done as

soon as possible.

The latest recalls are part of the largest series of automotive recalls in U.S. history, with 19 automakers having to recall up to 69 million inflators in 42 million vehicles. The problem brought a criminal conviction and fine against Takata and forced the Japanese company into bankruptcy protection.

Here are the models posted Thursday:

FORD: 327,796 vehicles including the 2013 Ford Mustang; 2010 Ford Edge,

AIRBAGS | 2

Boom Boom's celebrates 100,000th customer

By **MICHELLE BOYLAN**

SPECIAL TO HIGHLANDS NEWS-SUN

SEBRING — Since opening the doors for business in 2011, Boom Boom's Guns & Ammo has been the leading Class III Firearms dealer in Highlands County. Providing customers with the opportunity to buy, sell and trade guns. Always looking for a way to better serve the community, Jeri Canale, owner of Boom Boom's, decided to expand her business by constructing a private, indoor, air-conditioned shooting range.

With this addition, the business can provide services including private shooting lessons and Youth Gun Safety Camps. The most popular is the Concealed Carry Class taught by onsite NRA instructor and gunsmith Steve Marabel. Throughout the years, Boom Boom's dba AimRight Training Center has taught over 2,000 participants the importance of gun safety and the laws governing Concealed Carry.

On Jan. 14, Boom Boom's reached 100,000 customers. "We were excited," Canale said. "We knew it was getting close. We've kept records through several different systems and business really has been booming."

In late December, Boom Boom's counted 999,632 customers. With the big day coming, management and employees were on edge waiting to celebrate this monumental moment. "It was exciting greeting our very first customer, so imagine our 100,00th customer. We had to celebrate," Canale said. And so, they did.

On the last day of the Big Sebring Show held at the Highlands News-Sun Center, Boom Boom's awarded Lawrence Holton with a Legacy Sports 1873 22LR Revolver.

The award for the 100,00th customer is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to giving back to the community. Over the years



COURTESY PHOTO

Lawrence Holton and family pose with Captain Boom Boom cut out. Holton, Boom Boom's 100,000th customer, was presented a Legacy Sports 1873 22LR Revolver.

in business, Boom Boom's has contributed to charities throughout the county. "We are a tight-knit community; we all have to support each other," Canale said. "We've also sponsored many events like the SWAT Challenge and Clay Shoot just to name a few. We also have the \$25,000 Marabel and Canale Endowment Scholarship with Stetson University, which

is awarded to Highlands County students."

Investing in the community isn't always about the monetary contributions though. Boom Boom's wants to educate as many people as possible on self-defense and situational awareness tactics. Recently, the business has hosted

CUSTOMER | 2



COURTESY PHOTO

The new design of Kentucky Fried Chicken's interior includes family-style seating called the "Colonel's table."

Lake Wales KFC to soon feature bold new look

SPECIAL TO THE HIGHLANDS NEWS-SUN

LAKE WALES — Kentucky Fried Chicken franchisee KBP Foods is remodeling its Lake Wales restaurant as part of a multi-million-dollar nationwide KFC brand revamp effort.

Barry Dubin, chief development officer of KBP Foods, said the company expects to invest over \$40 million renovating about 200

KFCs, including their location in Lake Wales.

The new KFC restaurant design places Colonel Sanders' iconic image front and center. The remodeled restaurant's exterior features sharp graphics in red and white to evoke the Colonel's memorable white suit while alluding to striped tents, suggesting his remarkable instinct for showmanship. The interior includes family-style seating called the "Colonel's table", and a photo wall showcasing the Colonel's legacy as one of the South's original "celebrity chefs."

The prominence of Colonel Sanders — a



"I think the Colonel would be really happy with the look of these new KFCs."

Mike Kulp

president and CEO of KBP Foods

KFC | 2

ON THE MONEY

Bad gifts still hanging around? 6 ways to get rid of them

By **ANNE D'INNOCENZIO**

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — With the holidays gone, some people still have bad gifts hanging around. Time is ticking, since many retailers have 30-day return windows. But those who have waited can still find a few ways to discard weird sweaters or duplicate air fryers.

That includes selling them on eBay, using gift-swapping sites or donating them to charity. And if they're lucky, the

purchases came from retailers with more generous return policies.

"There are more options for people who have unwanted gifts because the internet makes it easier for you to be connected to someone who does want that item," says Lindsay Sakraida, director of content marketing with DealNews.com, a price comparison website.

Here are six ways to unload the castoffs:

RETURNS: There's still time to return gifts at

some retailers, as they're more lenient during the holidays. Many allow returns and exchanges until late January, according to Alex Vlasto, vice president of marketing at StellaService, which monitors customer service at retailers. During the holidays, items shipped by Amazon and Dec. 31 can be returned until Jan. 31. And for items from Zappos.com and Bed, Bath & Beyond you have one year to return. For consumer gadgets,

though, it might be too late. Best Buy had set a Jan. 14 deadline for most holiday purchases.

USE SWAP SITES: Plenty of sites allow shoppers to exchange items for something else. Got another copy of a favorite book? Maybe try bookmooch.com, an online community for exchanging used and new books. The website says giving someone a book earns a point and people can get any book on offer in trade. You do have to



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

In this Tuesday, Dec. 26, 2017, file photo, J.C. Penney sales associate Wanda Cofield, left, assists Cynthia Putney, right, and Linda Pierce with returns and exchanges at the store, at Golden East Crossing mall in Rocky Mount, N.C.

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MONEY

FROM PAGE 1

pay the cost of mailing the book to the other person. For clothing and accessories, you can try sites like swapstyle.com, where you sign up for free and trade items. Of course, you can always get together in person to swap items too.

TRADE IT IN: Some sites allow shoppers to trade in gifts for cash — or its rough equivalent. Gazelle focuses only on electronics, and lets customers get paid via Amazon gift card, checks or PayPal. There's also Letgo, a locally focused mobile app that lets you sell electronics, games, clothes and more. You snap a photo of the item,

post it to the app and chat with prospective buyers.

SELL IT: Unload that unwanted toy or sweater on sites like ebay.com, Amazon Marketplace or Craigslist. Check the sites to see how much items similar to yours are going for — and then price it. Got a gift from a significant other who has since faded into insignificance? There's neverlikeditanyway.com, where you can set up a profile using your existing social media ones or from scratch, create a listing and share your breakup story. You can pay \$5 to get extra promotion for your item, and if it's sold the site takes a 6 percent cut of the price. "It's cheaper than therapy," the site says.

DONATE: Consider



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

In this Tuesday, Dec. 26, 2017, file photo, a man returns a TV to a Best Buy at the Hamilton Mall in Mays Landing, N.J.

donating items to churches, nonprofit groups, schools or other places. Make sure you get a receipt for income tax purchases, and remember for next time to donate before Dec. 31 to get the deduction sooner.

REGIFT: Shhh. As long as it's not used or personalized, you can

easily wrap something anew and give to a friend or family member as a birthday gift or for other occasion. Just make super-sure you aren't presenting it to the same person who gave you the gift. Some frequent re-gifters even keep spreadsheets.

CUSTOMER

FROM PAGE 1

a Women's Self Defense Seminar with Lake Placid Police Chief James Fansler.

"This is the most anticipated event we have ever hosted. The ladies are taught to become more aware of their surroundings and how to defend themselves against an attacker," Canale said.

KFC

FROM PAGE 1

well-known personality throughout the U.S. for his famous finger lickin' good fried chicken, delicious biscuits, and tasty sides — goes hand-in-hand with KFC's recent efforts to refocus customers' attention on the Colonel.

Mike Kulp, president and CEO of KBP Foods, said, "The Colonel is central to everything Kentucky Fried Chicken stands for — doing things

the hard way and serving the World's Greatest Fried Chicken.

I think the Colonel would be really happy with the look of these new KFCs." Kulp added, "KBP Foods recently acquired these restaurants and the reinvestment is long overdue. I can't wait for the people of Lake Wales to see their new KFC".

The State Road 60 location is set to reopen in mid-February. The drive-thru will remain open during the remodel process.

AIRBAGS

FROM PAGE 1

Fusion, Mustang and Ranger, Lincoln MKX and Zephyr, and Mercury Milan, 2009 Ford Edge, Fusion, Mustang and Ranger, Lincoln MKX and Zephyr, and Mercury Milan.

NISSAN: 52,614 vehicles including the 2009-2012 Versa Hatchback and 2011 Versa Sedan.

MERCEDES-BENZ: 132,167 vehicles including certain 2013 C250, C250 Coupe, C350 Coupe 4Matic, C300 4Matic, C350, C350 Coupe, C63 AMG, C63 Coupe, E350 Cabrio, E350 Coupe, E550 Cabrio, E350 Coupe 4Matic, E550 Coupe, GLK350 4Matic, GLK250 Bluetec 4Matic, GLK350, SLS Coupe, SLS AMG GT Coupe, and SLS Roadster; certain 2010 C300, C300 4Matic, C63 AMG, E350 Coupe, E550 Coupe, GLK350, and GLK350 4Matic vehicles; certain 2009 C300, C300 4Matic, C63 AMG, and C350 vehicles.

FERRARI: 1,073 vehicles including certain 2013 California, 458 Italia, 458 Spider, FF, and F12 Berlinetta vehicles.

DAIMLER VANS: 17,413 vehicles including certain 2013 Freightliner Sprinter 2500 and 3500 and Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 2500 and 3500 vehicles.

TOYOTA: 15,000 vehicles including certain Toyota Yaris cars from 2010 through 2012.

TESLA: 17,846 of the 2013 Model S.

BMW: 41,808 vehicles including the 2007-2013 X5 xDrive30i, X5 xDrive35i, X5 xDrive48i, X5 xDrive50i, X5 M, 2009-2010 X5 xDrive35d vehicles and 2009-2013 X6 xDrive35i, X6 xDrive50i, and X6 M; 2007-2010 X5 xDrive30i, X5 xDrive35i, X5 xDrive48i, X5 xDrive50i, X5 M, X5 xDrive35d, X6 xDrive35i, X6 xDrive50i and X6M; 2007-2009 X5 xDrive30i, X5 xdrive35i, X5 xDrive48i, X5 xDrive50i, X5 M, X5 xDrive35d, X6 xDrive35i, X6 xDrive50i and X6M.

FIAT CHRYSLER: 317,000 vehicles including 2009-2013 Jeep Wrangler, Chrysler 300, Dodge Challenger and Dodge Charger vehicles, and 2009-2011 Dodge Dakota; certain 2009-2010 RAM 4500 Cab Chassis, RAM 5500 Cab Chassis, RAM 3500 Cab Chassis, Jeep Wrangler, Chrysler 300, Dodge Dakota, Dodge Challenger, and

Dodge Charger; certain 2009 RAM 3500, RAM 2500, RAM 4500 Cab Chassis, RAM 5500 Cab Chassis, Dodge Durango, Chrysler Aspen, RAM 3500 Cab Chassis, Jeep Wrangler, Chrysler 300, Dodge Dakota, Dodge Challenger, and Dodge Charger vehicles.

MAZDA: 70,918 vehicles including certain 2013 Mazda6 and CX-9s; 2009 and 2010 Mazda6, CX-7 and CX-9s.; certain 2009 and 2010 RX-8s; certain 2009 B-Series trucks. Mazda previously announced 159 2006 B-Series trucks.

SUBARU: 229,538 vehicles including certain 2009-2010 Tribeca, Impreza, Forester, WRX, Legacy, and Outbacks; 2009-2013 Legacy, Forester, Tribeca, WRX and Outbacks; 2009-2011 Imprezas.

JAGUAR-LAND ROVER: 36,520 vehicles including certain 2009-2012 Land Rover Range Rovers; certain 2009-2015 Jaguar XFs.

MCLAREN: 231 vehicles including certain 2013 MP4-12Cs.

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Crystal lagoons unveiled

First-ever lagoon amenity in the U.S.

BUSINESS WIRE

MIAMI —The much anticipated first-ever Crystal Lagoons® amenity in the nation is full in Florida as Crystal Lagoons U.S., Corp. and Metro Development Group team up to bring the world's top amenity to the U.S. Metro Development Group hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony today to commemorate the inaugural lagoon at the Epperson community, located in Wesley Chapel, Florida.

Epperson has had unprecedented sales success with its first 400 lots sold out within 45 days and a 3,000-person waiting list. The Epperson lagoon will soon have exciting features such as a waterslide, in-water obstacle platform, tidal pool, family beach, an entertainment plaza and an area for special events; the community will have 2,000 homes upon completion.

Globally, Crystal Lagoons® boasts a portfolio of more than 600 projects, in different stages of negotiation and development, in 60 countries. The company has announced 16 lagoon projects in the U.S. thus far with leading real estate developers, including Metro Development Group, Tavistock Development Group, Land Tejas, and a joint-venture with LeFrak and Turnberry Associates.

Crystal Lagoons U.S. Corp has an additional 44 lagoon projects in the works, representing an investment of \$53.4 billion and increasing real estate sales velocity by up to 60%.

In addition, Crystal Lagoons® has developed a public access model for their lagoon projects, including a partnership with Steve Wynn for Paradise Park on the iconic Las Vegas strip. In Florida, Crystal Lagoons U.S. Corp has partnered with one of Miami's main theme parks to build a Public Access Lagoon project.

"Crystal Lagoons has become the premier amenity for master planned communities in the U.S.," said Christopher Souza, East Coast Regional Director, Crystal Lagoons U.S., Corp. "Metro Development Group has been a valued partner of ours from the beginning as they were the first to break-ground, first to fill and now the first developer to inaugurate a Crystal Lagoons amenity in the U.S."

A grand opening celebration for the first Crystal Lagoons® amenity in the U.S. at Metro Development Group's Epperson community is scheduled for early spring where Crystal Lagoons® Global Ambassador Michael Phelps is scheduled to appear.

"We are excited to be the first developer to bring this world-class amenity to the U.S. in partnership with Crystal Lagoons," said Greg Singleton, President of Metro Development Group. "We are looking forward to continuing our partnership with them to bring our five Metro Lagoon communities to West Central Florida where families can enjoy together for many generations to come."

About Crystal Lagoons

Crystal Lagoons® is a



METRO DEVELOPMENT GROUP

The Epperson residential community in Wesley Chapel features the first Crystal Lagoons® amenity in the U.S. Visit MetroDevelopmentGroup.com and www.MetroPlaces.com.

multinational company, with U.S. headquarters in Miami and additional offices in Dallas and Los Angeles, that has developed an innovative concept and technology, patented in 190 countries, allowing for the construction and maintenance of unlimited size bodies of water in crystal clear conditions at low cost. Crystal Lagoons® impressive turquoise waters are revolutionizing not only the real estate world but also water and energy production. Applications range from bringing idyllic beach life to locations otherwise thought unimaginable, to providing industrial solutions for closed-circuit cooling systems for thermal power plants

and data-centers, among others. For more information, please visit www.crystal-lagoons.com and follow us on LinkedIn.

About Metro Development Group

A Tampa-based company founded in 2003, Metro Development Group is committed to bringing some of the most innovative technologies and amenities to homebuilders and homebuyers. With the introduction of the Connected City, Metro Places, ULTRAFi and Metro Lagoons by Crystal Lagoons®, Metro continues to be the gold standard in the development of master planned communities.

BUSINESS HIGHLIGHTS

Apple to build 2nd campus, hire 20,000 in \$350B pledge

SAN FRANCISCO — Apple is planning to build another corporate campus and hire 20,000 workers during the next five years as part of a \$350 billion commitment to the U.S. economy that will be partially financed by an upcoming windfall from the country's new tax law. The pledge announced Wednesday comes less than a month after Congress approved a sweeping overhaul of the U.S. tax code championed by President Donald Trump that will increase corporate profits.

Trump claims credit for economy

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump relentlessly congratulates himself for the healthy state of the U.S. economy, with its steady growth, low unemployment, busier factories and confident consumers. But in the year since Trump's inauguration, most economists tend to agree on this: The economy is essentially the same sturdy one that he inherited

from Barack Obama.

US stock rally lifts Dow above 26,000

NEW YORK — A broad rally on Wall Street propelled the Dow Jones industrial average to close above 26,000 points for the first time Wednesday. The sharp gains also delivered record highs for the Standard & Poor's 500 index and the Nasdaq composite, wiping out the market's modest losses from a day earlier. Technology and health care companies accounted for much of the gains. Financials stocks also rose, even as some big banks fell after reporting hefty quarterly losses.

Walmart offers way to turn leftover opioids into useless gel

NEW YORK — Walmart is helping customers get rid of leftover opioids by giving them packets that turn the addictive painkillers into a useless gel. The retail giant said Wednesday it will start providing the packets for free with opioid prescriptions filled at its pharmacies. When mixed with warm water, the powder

in the packet turns the pills into a gel that can be thrown in the trash.

Bank of America 4Q profits fall

NEW YORK — Bank of America says fourth-quarter profits fell by nearly half from a year ago after it booked \$2.9 billion in charges related to the new tax law. The bank says its effective tax rate will drop to 20 percent, and the CEO expects the savings to mostly go to shareholders in the form of stock buybacks and dividends.

Federal consumer regulator under review

NEW YORK — The Trump-appointed acting director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau says the entire operational structure and approach of the federal government's consumer watchdog agency is now under scrutiny. The announcement by director Mick Mulvaney is the clearest sign yet that the agency's direction will be dramatically different than it was under the Obama administration.

— *The Associated Press*

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PHOTO BY ALLISON WILLIAMS

From left, Lake Wales Medical Center CEO Rebecca Brewer, Dr. James Nelson, Tiffany Rodriguez, Amanda Williams, Mayor Gene Fultz, and Lake Wales Chamber Chairman Wayne Weathersby throw the first shovels of dirt for the new Wound Healing Center at Lake Wales Medical Center.

Lake Wales Medical Center expanding

By CHARLES A. BAKER III
CBAKER@SCMGINC.COM

LAKE WALES – Dozens of Lake Wales Medical Center supporters helped to celebrate the ground breaking of the hospital's expanded wound healing center Jan. 9.

"We are so busy at the center that the expansion has become necessary," said Lake Wales Medical Center Director of Marketing Maryemma Bachelder. "The wound care clinic is always bustling with patients." Chronic, non-healing wounds, those that haven't shown signs of improvement in several weeks or are not responding to typical treatments, need extra type to heal according to the hospital website. Lake Wales Medical Center provides specialized treatment for those types of wounds and now that the wound healing center is expanding, they will be able to help even more patients.

One of the hospital's supporters is Lake Wales Mayor Eugene Fultz.

"The expansion of Lake Wales Medical Center is wonderful for the city," Fultz said. "We are looking at it as not only a better quality of life for our citizens, but

"We are looking at it as not only a better quality of life for our citizens, but expanded economic development as well."

Lake Wales Mayor Eugene Fultz

expanded economic development as well."

At 5,100 square feet, the new center, to be built across the street from the Lake Wales Arts Center at the corner of State Road 60 and 11th Street, will nearly double the size of the current wound center.

"This is an exciting milestone for us," said Lake Wales Medical Center Chief Executive Officer Rebecca Brewer. "It marks a significant investment in our community, and we are happy to be able to expand on the already great service we are offering patients in our area."

The new center will include six patient rooms, three hyperbaric treatment chambers, a private waiting area for hyperbaric therapy patients, and a larger

lobby with enhanced wheelchair and stretcher accessibility.

Construction is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2018, Bachelder said.

"Our wound center is among the top 4 percent in the nation," said Lake Wales Medical Center Medical Director of the Wound Healing Center, Dr. James Nelson. "We've won the Center for Excellence award four years in a row, and the Center of Distinction Award five years in a row."

Lake Wales Medical Center Program Director Tiffany Rodriguez said many of the patients develop relationships with staff at the center.

"We get to spend a lot of time with our patients and we're truly invested in helping them get a great outcome," Rodriguez said. "This new larger facility will help us provide an even better environment in which they can receive care."

The hospital is partnering with developer Fischbach Land Company, architect Chapuis Design Group, Precise Construction and engineering firms of ICT and Quigg Engineering Inc.

'Renaissance' breaks ground in Lake Wales

By CHARLES A. BAKER III
CBAKER@SCMGINC.COM

LAKE WALES – Construction of a \$678,243 trail connecting the downtown area to Lake Wales Park began last week with a groundbreaking ceremony.

The project is currently scheduled to be completed sometime in 2019.

The first phase of the trail construction will be along Ridge Scenic Highway from Central Avenue to West Crystal Avenue north of the library. Phase two of the project will bring the trail around Crystal Lake and connect to the trail surrounding Lake Wales.

City staff received four sealed bids for this project, but one firm retracted their bid, and another was ruled as unqualified. A third firm submitted a bid substantially higher than the winning bid from the Bartow construction firm SEMCO Construction Inc.

Included in the project is the beautification of the parking lot on the east side of Ridge Scenic Highway and Central Avenue, and building a pavilion near the library. Gazebos, historic markers, lighting and free Wi-Fi will be built along the path all the way to Lake Wales, allowing residents to use the Internet while exercising. According to the winning bid, there will be around \$17,145 in stamped concrete, \$22,684 in landscaping, \$4,800 on monuments, \$7866 on benches, 22 light poles with concrete bases and other features. Irrigation will tie into an existing water



PHOTO BY CHARLES A. BAKER III

Lake Wales Commissioners Robin Gibson, Terry Howell, Lake Wales Assistant City Manager James Slaton and SEMCO staff helped break ground on the Lake Wales Trail Tuesday night.

source. "The Lake Wales Trail is the first tangible step toward what will become a Renaissance for downtown and the town's historic center," said Lake Wales Deputy Mayor Robin Gibson during the ground breaking ceremony.

Gibson said three important components will be coming together in 2018. The first draft of the new Community Redevelopment Plan is due Jan. 19; Karen Thompson, the new full time Lake Wales Main Street manager, is now off and running; and third, the city commission is committed to this fiscal year as the year of the downtown.

"Perhaps most important is the fact that the CRA now has money," Gibson said. "We have the responsibility to spend that money wisely and carefully. I believe in one to two years, the Renaissance we're talking about will be readily

apparent, and downtown and the historic area will be well on its way. In a word, the ground breaking for the Lake Wales Trail is only the beginning."

In addition to winning the contract to build the trail, SEMCO staff was also named as the primary contractor for the city back in December 2016. The three-year contract, which ends in September 2019, can be renewed for up to two additional one year terms. Since becoming the primary contractor, SEMCO staff have already been awarded four other projects in Lake Wales: repairing the fishing pier, repairing the CSX building, replacing the roof on the fleet maintenance building and repairing the Depot Museum. These four projects cost around \$148,147.

According to City Manager Ken Fields, all the facilities had been in disrepair for years and were in dire need of repair.



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SMALL TALK

Business owners help employees deal with emotional problems

By **JOYCE M. ROSENBERG**
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — An employee is severely depressed and unable to complete a task. Or has mood swings and outbursts, unnerving colleagues and disrupting the workplace. These are some of the hardest situations small business owners and managers can face.

John Crossman has had employees at his commercial real estate company whose personal problems made it hard for them get work done. He's sympathetic, because he's struggled with depression and sought counseling in the past.

When he sees an employee in emotional distress, he asks, "Is there something we can do to be helpful?" At the same time, "You have to decide, what business boundary are you going to put up," says Crossman, whose eponymous company is based in Orlando, Florida.

Small business owners juggle competing concerns when they're dealing with employees' mental health issues, and it can be particularly difficult for the many owners who don't have a dedicated human resources staff. They may be worried on a personal level about a troubled staffer's well-being, but they also have a business

to run.

If employees cannot get their work done properly or on time, revenue can suffer. In cases where a staffer has angry outbursts, co-workers might complain of a hostile work environment or might quit. If staffers alienate customers or vendors, an owner will have to repair the relationships.

Owners also must comply with federal, state and local laws. The Americans with Disabilities Act, which applies to companies with 15 or more employees, prohibits discrimination against workers with disabilities including mental illness and requires employers to make reasonable accommodations to help staffers work. The Family and Medical Leave Act, which provides for up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for medical conditions including mental illness, applies to companies with 50 or more employees. Some state laws offer employees even more protection. And workers who feel discriminated against because of emotional issues might file charges with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

At Maple Holistics' warehouse, one worker suffered from severe social anxiety. He couldn't always make it into work on time, and



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

In this Tuesday, Dec. 19, 2017, photo, John Crossman meets with one of his employees at his office in Orlando. Crossman has had employees whose angry outbursts disrupted his commercial real estate company, and staffers whose personal problems made it hard for them get their work done.

he didn't communicate well with his nine co-workers. Managers at the Farmingdale, New Jersey-based company that manufactures maple food and personal care products knew they had to make accommodations.

"I knew he was not necessarily going to make it in from 9 to 5 every day," marketing manager Craig Eckersley says. "I was never critical because I knew it was something he had to deal with."

The staffer, who worked on an hourly basis, wasn't paid for the time he missed. But he also wasn't disciplined.

Eckersley and other Maple Holistics bosses helped other staffers

understand that their co-worker needed compassion. While some initially asked, "What's up with this guy?" they grew to welcome him.

"He carved out his niche and people got to work well with him," Eckersley says.

Crossman believes helping a staffer in trouble will help his company as well. In one case, an employee was struggling to cope after being served with divorce papers in the office. Crossman suggested the man take time off, and he did. When another employee had emotional problems, Crossman persuaded her to start working with the counselor he had seen, and when she couldn't

afford the sessions, he paid part of the cost.

Crossman sees dealing with troubled staffers as a fact of life as a business owner.

"We live in a world where there are so many broken people," he says.

Some owners might want an emotionally troubled staffer to seek treatment. But the laws about medical and mental conditions also protect staffers' privacy. So a boss can't tell an employee, "You're having emotional problems and you have to see a therapist," or ask if they're on medication.

"But if the employee says, I've got depression, or I've got bipolar personality disorder, whatever the case is, the employer would be able to have a dialogue with the employee and say, 'OK, what can we do to help you?'" says Jonathan Yarbrough, an employment law attorney with Constangy Brooks Smith Prophete in Asheville, North Carolina. Once employers are aware of workers' medical conditions, bosses can be required to make some accommodations for them. The answer may be that an emotionally troubled staffer needs a schedule change or to have time away from work to see a mental health provider.

But owners must also address any impact that staffers' behavioral

issues have on co-workers, says Jay Starkman, CEO of Engage PEO, an HR provider based in Hollywood, Florida.

"An employer has an absolute obligation to provide a workplace that is safe for other employees and to provide a workplace that is not a hostile working environment. Those two things trump everything," Starkman says.

Owners should get advice from an HR professional or employment law attorney on how to address a staffer's emotional or mental problems, and to ensure the company is complying with federal, state and local laws.

Even if staffers acknowledge they're suffering from an emotional problem or mental illness, if they're not able to do their work despite the owners' attempts to make accommodations, the company can consider disciplinary action, Starkman says.

"You have a right as an employer to have performance at an acceptable level," he says.

In Britain, which also has laws to protect people with disabilities including emotional problems, Lisa Forde wants to be sure her 11 staffers don't feel they'll be judged harshly if they contend with emotional issues.

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What good financial advice looks like

Good financial advice can help you achieve your life goals. Bad financial advice can cost you a fortune and leave you worse off than if you had tried to go it alone.

Unfortunately, you're still on your own in trying to determine the good advice from the bad. The U.S. Department of Labor has delayed key portions of a fiduciary rule that would require financial advisers to put their retirement account clients' interests first. The provisions are set to begin July 1, 2019, but it's anyone's guess if that will happen.

Officials say they need more time to consider possible changes to the rule, which was crafted under the Obama administration. Opponents of the delay say the rule has already survived legal challenges and a congressional effort to block it, so the delay amounts to a repeal.

"The safe thing is for the investor to assume it's still the same buyer-beware market that's always existed," says Barbara Roper, director of investor protection for Consumer Federation of America, a nonprofit advocacy group.

Many Americans believe, incorrectly, that their financial advisers already are required

to act in their clients' best interests. In reality, most are held to lower standards. Asking advisers to disclose their conflicts of interest is always a good idea, but here are some other ways to spot advice that truly puts clients first:

Good advice doesn't promise the moon and stars

Beware of advisers who only want to talk about their investing prowess and how they plan to beat the market. Few advisers can consistently deliver market-beating returns, and attempts to do so usually drive up their clients' costs. A better approach for most people is to invest all or most of their portfolios in low-cost index mutual funds or index exchange-traded funds that strive to match various market benchmarks.

Good advice doesn't promote "high-commission garbage."

That's what financial journalist Bob Veres, publisher of Inside Information, a service for advisers, calls products that are notorious for high costs and potential to enrich advisers at the expense of their



LIZ WESTON
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clients. These can include non-traded real estate investment trusts, indexed annuities and variable annuities inside retirement accounts.

Proprietary mutual funds also can be problematic. These are the house-brand funds offered by the bank, brokerage or investment company where you have your account. Your adviser may earn extra compensation for pushing them, and they can have higher costs or worse performance than competing funds. Advisers may be able to make an argument why any of these products make sense for you, but it's worth getting a second opinion from someone who doesn't make commissions selling them.

"The more complex, opaque

and illiquid the investment, the more generous the compensation to the adviser tends to be," Roper says. "The incentives line up in a way that is directly contrary to the investor's best interest."

Good advice doesn't pretend to be free or cheaper than it is

All investments have costs, and advisers can be paid in a variety of ways that may not be readily apparent to their customers. Financial advisers should be straightforward in explaining those costs and the ways they're compensated.

Also, investors who pay a percentage of their portfolios for advice should know how that fee is calculated. A fee that's "only" 0.35 percent each quarter seems dirt cheap, but that adds up to 1.4 percent a year, which isn't. Veres' survey of about 1,000 advisers found most charge annual advisory fees of around 1 percent for portfolios worth less than \$1 million.

Good advice doesn't deliberately confuse people

Some advisers make a big deal about being fee-based,

but that means they also accept commissions or other incentives. Fee-only financial advisers, by contrast, are compensated solely by fees their clients pay. Also, some advisers have been telling their clients that the fiduciary rule required them to start charging fees. That's not true, Roper says.

Good advice comes from an adviser who puts clients first

Only a few categories of advisers are required to be fiduciaries, or someone obligated to put their clients' interests ahead of their own. Those advisers include registered investment advisers and certified financial planners when they're offering financial planning advice. Certified public accountants have a professional code of conduct similar to a fiduciary standard.

When advisers don't have a RIA, CFP or CPA after their names, ask if they're willing to be fiduciaries and to put that promise in writing. The Committee for the Fiduciary Standard, a volunteer group promoting the standard, has an oath advisers can download and sign.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Amazon narrows list for new headquarters

NEW YORK (AP) — Amazon has narrowed its search for a second headquarters city to 20 locations, concentrated mostly in the East and the Midwest. Toronto made the list as well Tuesday, keeping the company's international options open. Other contenders include: Boston; New York; Washington, D.C.; Chicago; Indianapolis; Columbus, Ohio;

and Los Angeles, the only West Coast city to make the cut.

Emirates throws Airbus A380 a lifeline

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — The Middle East's largest airline, Emirates, is purchasing 20 A380 aircraft with the option for 16 more in a deal worth \$16 billion. With Thursday's deal, the airline is throwing a lifeline to the European-made

double-decker jumbo jets. Airbus had said earlier that if it didn't close the deal with Emirates, it would end production of the jet.

Morgan Stanley's profits fall 59 percent

NEW YORK — Morgan Stanley's earnings fell 59 percent in the fourth quarter as the investment bank had to book \$990 million in charges related to the new tax law.

American Express posts \$1.2 billion loss

NEW YORK — Credit card company American Express posted a \$1.2 billion loss in its latest quarter after booking large one-time charges related to the new tax law. The company also announced it would suspend its share buy-back program for six months to rebuild its capital following the charge.

Company to make cheap generic drugs

TRENTON, N.J. — Several major not-for-profit hospital groups are trying their own solution to drug shortages and high medicine prices: creating a company to make cheaper generic drugs. The plan, follows years of shortages of generic injected medicines that are the workhorses of hospitals.



Cheryl Oxsalida
863-214-3663

Buy Sell

LAKE ISTOKPOGA



4 Bed 2 Bath Lake Istokpoga
1113 Lakeside Way \$399,900
Caged heated pool, 12' ceilings, 100' dock + boat house & lift.

GOLF COURSE



4 Bed 3 Bath Over .6 acres
6400 Concord Dr \$349,900
Lots of custom features in this 3000+ living sq ft. NO HOA.

LAKE JOSEPHINE



2 Bed 2 Bath Lake Josephine
1808 Sentinel Point \$249,900
Furnished, all updated, 2 car garage, dock, .67 acres.

LAKE JACKSON



4490 Lakeview Dr. Lakefront
2/2 Completely Remodeled
Storm windows, Granite, soft close, over \$100K in remodeling. \$299,900

POOL HOME



3/2 Pool Home \$229,900
523 Entrada Ave. RV Parking
New floors, Quartz countertop just remodeled. Caged pool, garden & more.

REMODELED



3 Bed 2 Bath \$159,900
3305 Hawk St.
Totally remodeled. New Roof December 2017, Lanai, 2 Sheds.

POOL - ISTOKPOGA



238 Racoon Ln. Fish Lake Istokpoga
4 Bed, 2 Bath + Pool .80 Acres \$219,900
This is 2 houses under one roof 2/1 and 2/1. Caged pool. Hardwood & tile.

VILLA \$55 HOA



3926 Sunbird Circle
2 Bed, 2 Bath corner lot
Handicap 55+ \$107,900
\$7,000 Remodel. 1 Car Garage.



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AVON PARK

MLS # 243811 \$189,900



LAKE FRANCIS

MLS # 245173 \$214,000



Owner has completely remodeled this home from top to bottom while retaining some of the charming characteristics of a 50's ranch including a sunken living room. Large rooms throughout this beauty with tile and hardwood flooring. Huge Dining Room.
MLS # 243522 \$140,000



Everyone's favorite deep, clear water ridge lake. Property is located on a canal, just steps from the lake, fishing or skiing in a matter of seconds. Large 3 Bedroom, 2-1/2 bath home. On quiet cul-de-sac.
MLS # 245173 \$214,000

SEVERAL TO CHOOSE



One of Highlands premier builders with high end finishes located in a gated development with convenience to everything yet peaceful and quiet. Hurry to choose your colors and finishes. This home will feature 3 bedrooms and 2 baths with a 2 car garage, screen porch overlooking the pond and within walking distance to the clubhouse
MLS # 245449

LORIDA



NEW Metal Roof, NEW Flooring, NEW Fence, NEW Water System. 3 bed/ 2 baths Well maintained home on canal to Istokpoga only seconds from the lake, the 5th largest lake in Florida almost 27,000 Acres! Large outdoor living area with porches, spa, workshop, boat house with lift and more. Furnishings and Pontoon Boat available
MLS # 244268 \$212,900

the FUNNIES

PEANUTS
featuring
"Good ol' Charlie Brown"
by SCHULZ

YES, MA'AM..

MY REPORT IS ON POPULATION CONTROL...

PEOPLE ARE EVERYWHERE.. SOME PEOPLE SAY THERE ARE TOO MANY OF US, BUT NO ONE WANTS TO LEAVE..

WHAT'S SO FUNNY?!

BY GOLLY, THIS IS A SERIOUS REPORT! YOU'D BETTER STOP LAUGHING!

I DON'T HAVE TO STAND FOR THIS!

I CAN WALK OUT OF THIS SCHOOL, YOU KNOW! I CAN GO TO MY LOCKER AND GET MY COAT AND MY BOOKS AND LEAVE!!

AND THAT'S JUST WHAT I'M GONNA DO! GOOD-BY!!

YES, MA'AM?

I FORGOT MY LOCKER COMBINATION..

THE LOCKHORNS
BY BUNNY HOEST AND JOHN REINER

"HAS IT REALLY BEEN THAT LONG SINCE I'VE BEEN TO CHURCH?"

"THIS IS MY HAPPY HOUR."

"SHOULDN'T FOREIGN CUISINE BE FROM SOMEWHERE ON THIS PLANET?"

"NOW THAT WE'VE STOPPED, YOU CAN ASK FOR DIRECTIONS."

"LEROY IS THE THORN IN THE ROSE GARDEN HE PROMISED ME."

Hi and Lois

WOW!

THAT'S GREAT THAT YOU SCORED 20 POINTS IN THE GAME, CHIP.

I'M VERY PROUD OF YOU!

THANKS.

I GOT AN "A" ON MY TEST. ARE YOU PROUD OF ME?

YES I AM, DOT.

HOW ABOUT ME? I GOT AN HONORABLE MENTION IN THE ART SHOW!

YES, I'M PROUD OF YOU TOO, DITTO.

I'M VERY PROUD OF ALL MY CHILDREN!

WHEW! FOR A MINUTE THERE, I THOUGHT I WAS GONNA HAVE TO DO SOMETHING!

MARY WORTH

WHAT IS LOVE, ANYWAY? I NEVER UNDERSTOOD IT.

"THOSE WHO DWELL AMONG THE BEAUTIES AND MYSTERIES OF THE EARTH ARE NEVER ALONE OR WEARY OF LIFE." - RACHEL CARSON

MAYBE I NEVER WILL.

WILBUR REFLECTS ON THIS BREAKUP WITH IRIS..

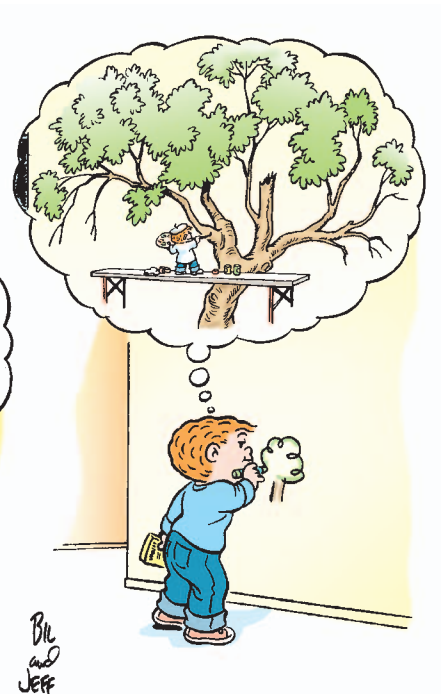
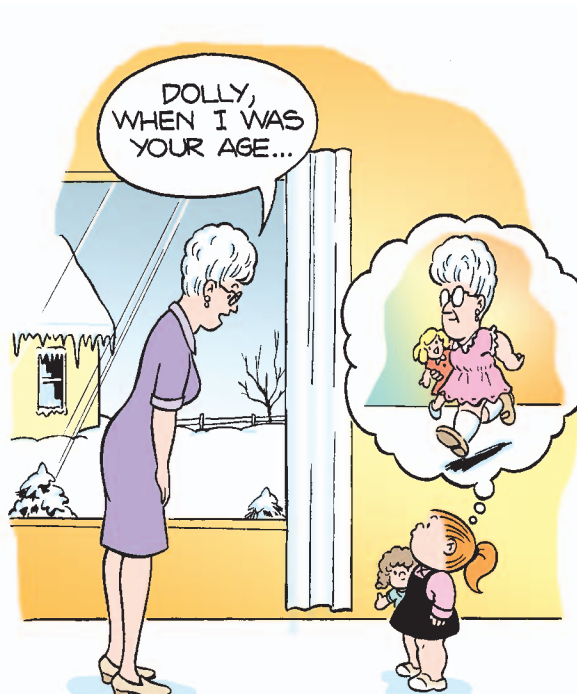
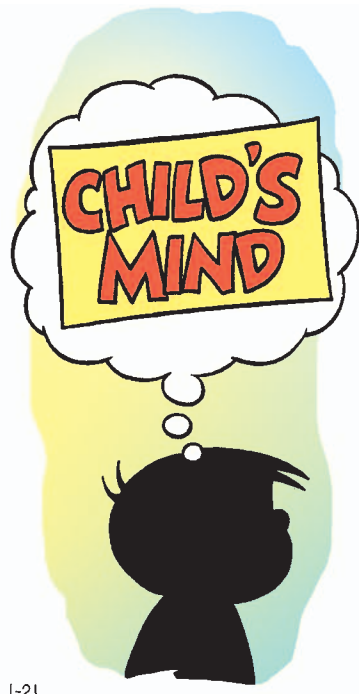
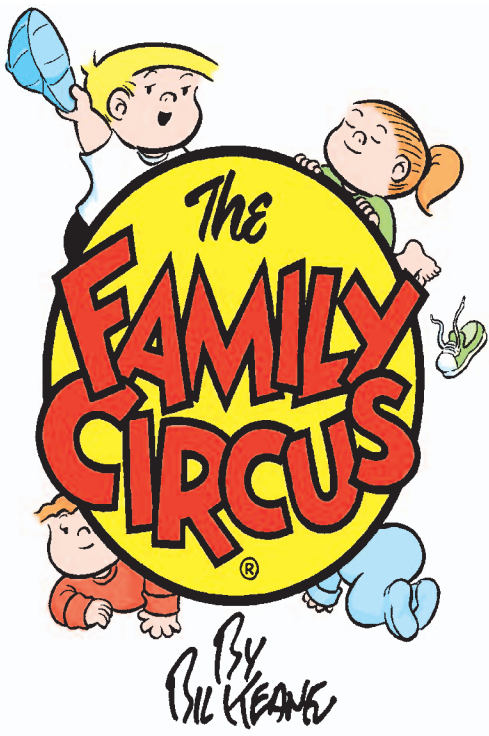
WE WERE TOGETHER, AND THEN WE WEREN'T.

YET I ALWAYS THOUGHT WED END UP TOGETHER.

THIS TIME IS DIFFERENT, THOUGH. IT MAY REALLY BE THE END OF THE ROAD FOR US.

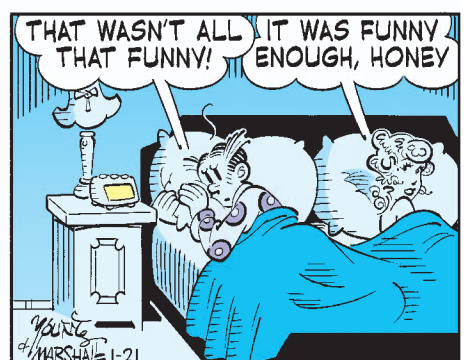
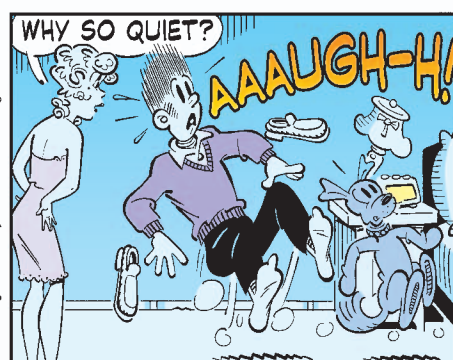
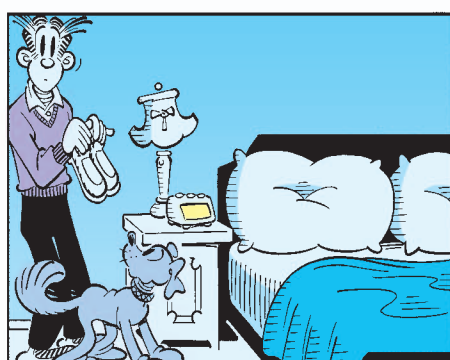
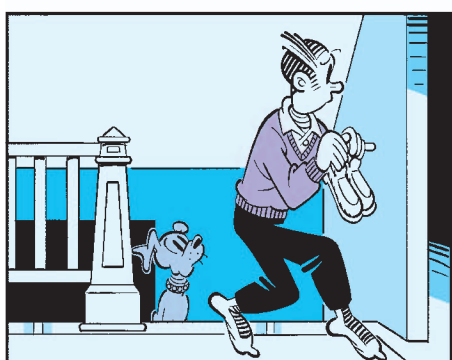
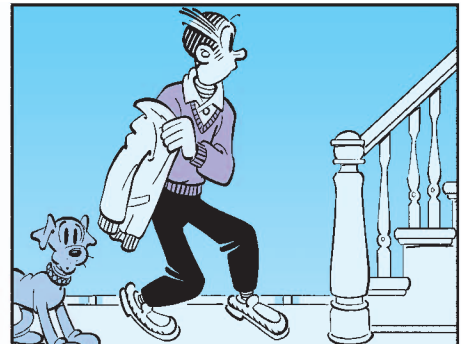
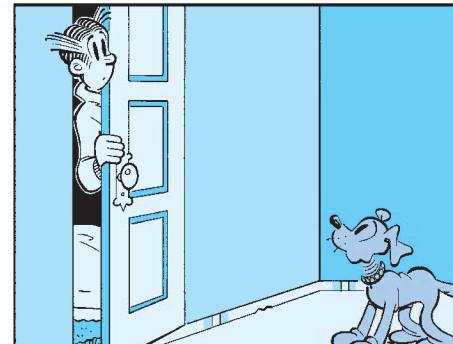
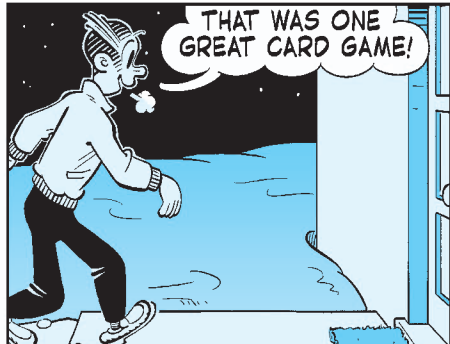
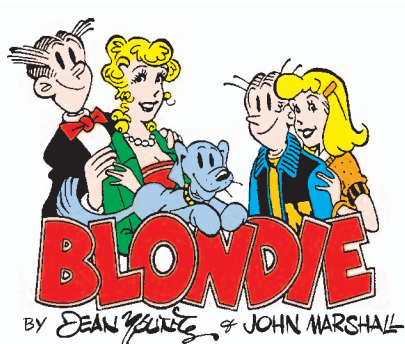
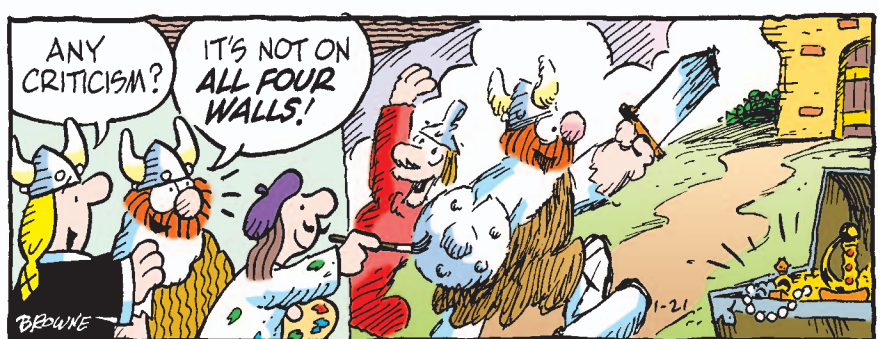
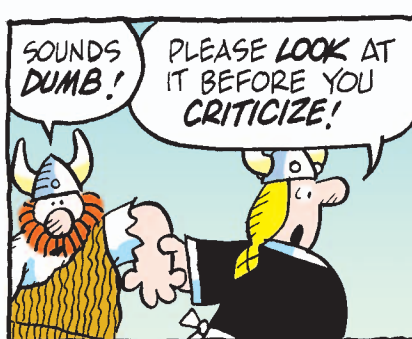
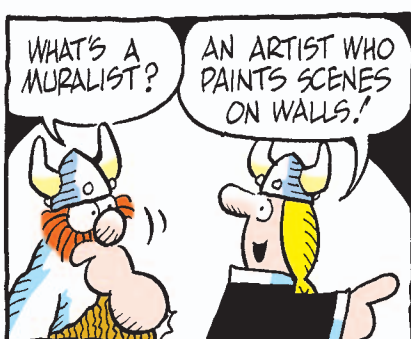
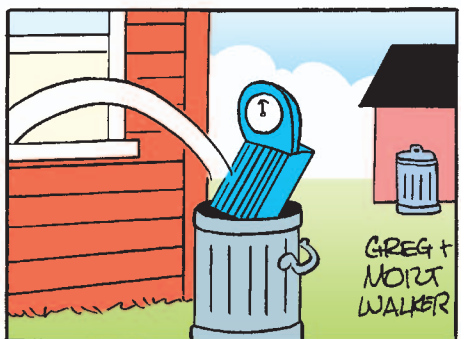
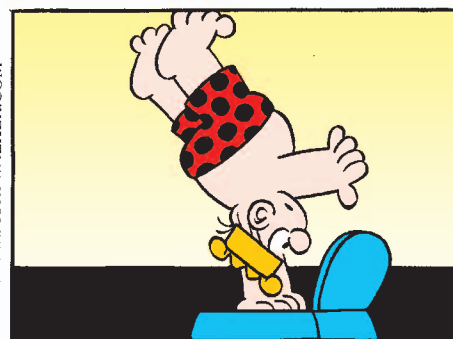
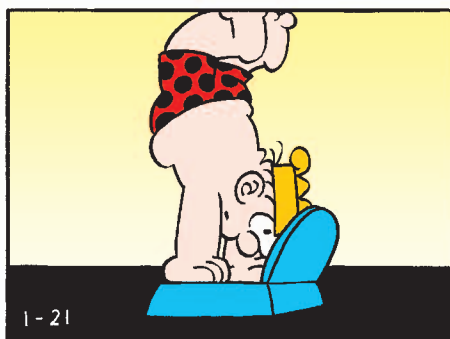
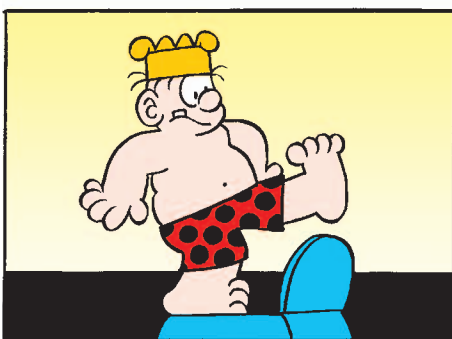
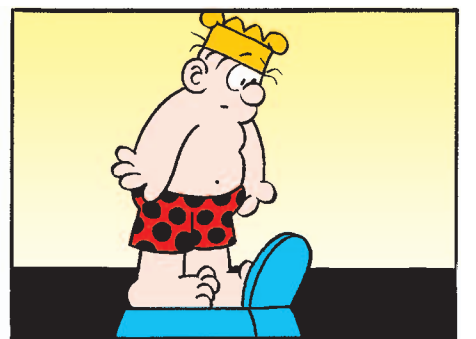
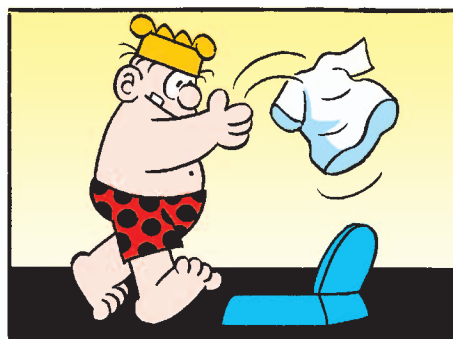
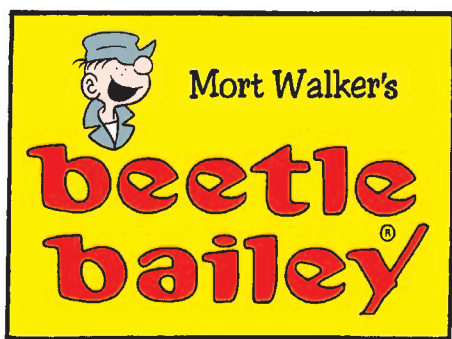
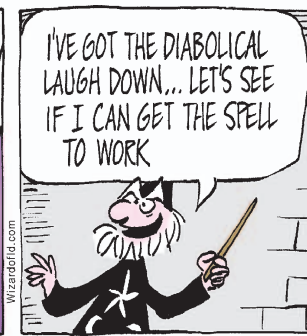
AND IT'S OKAY. EVERY EXPERIENCE IS NECESSARY FOR OUR LEARNING.

SUNSETS TEACH US THAT EVEN ENDINGS CAN BE BEAUTIFUL.



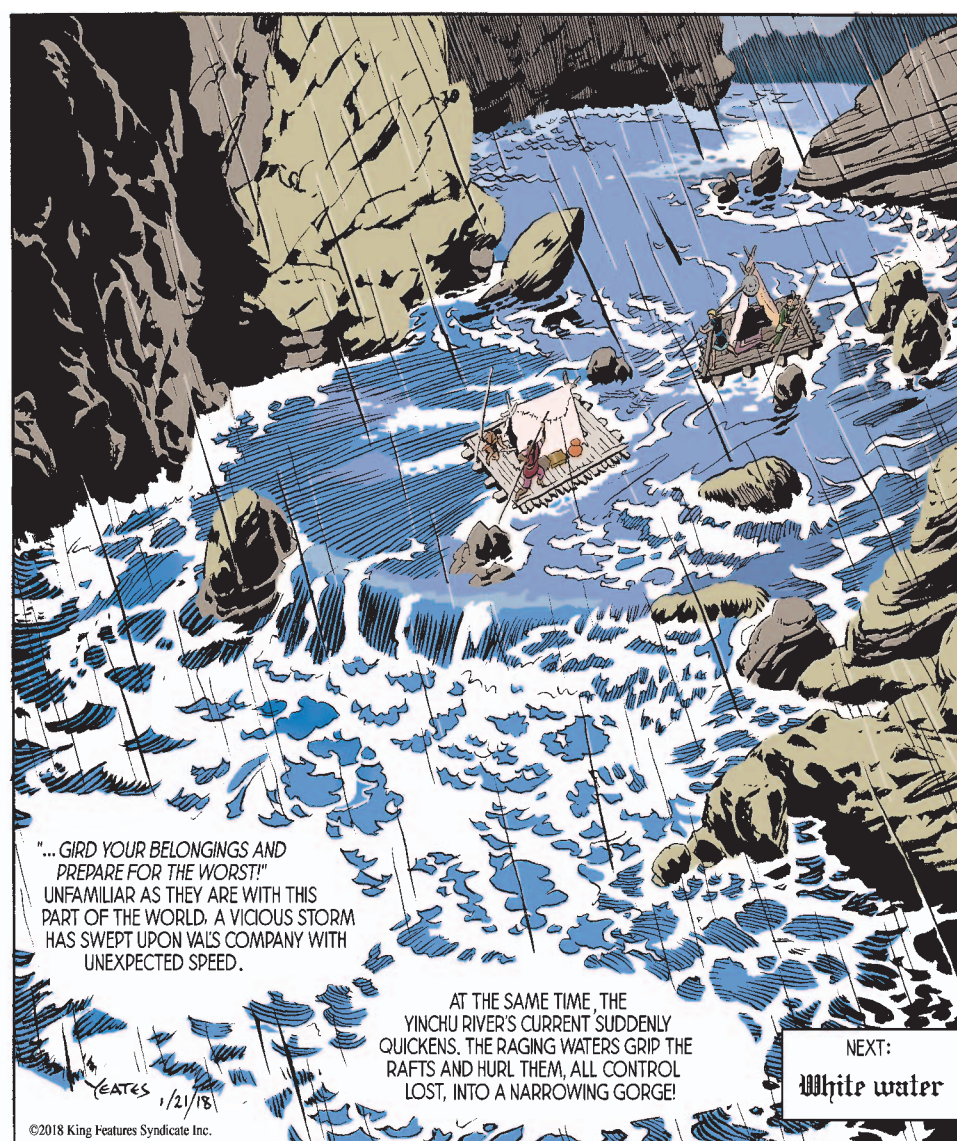
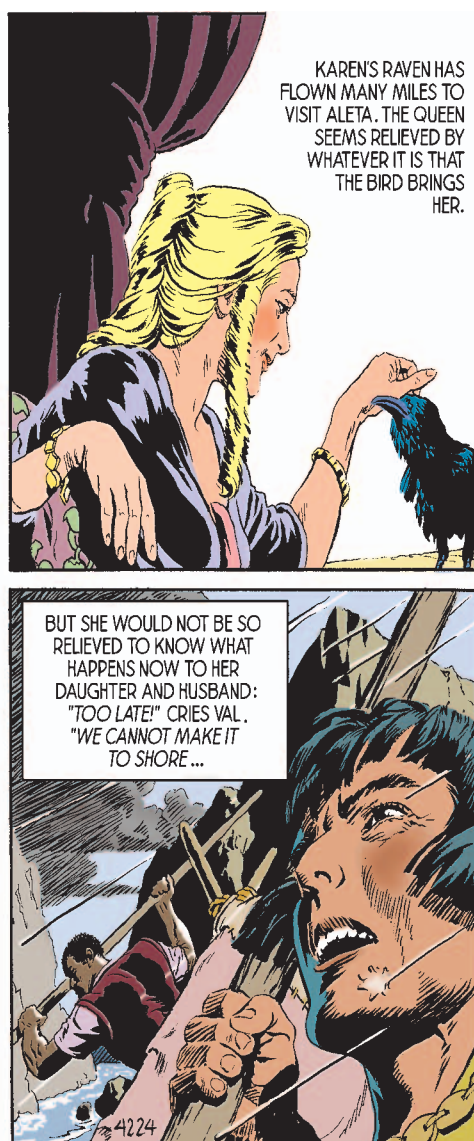
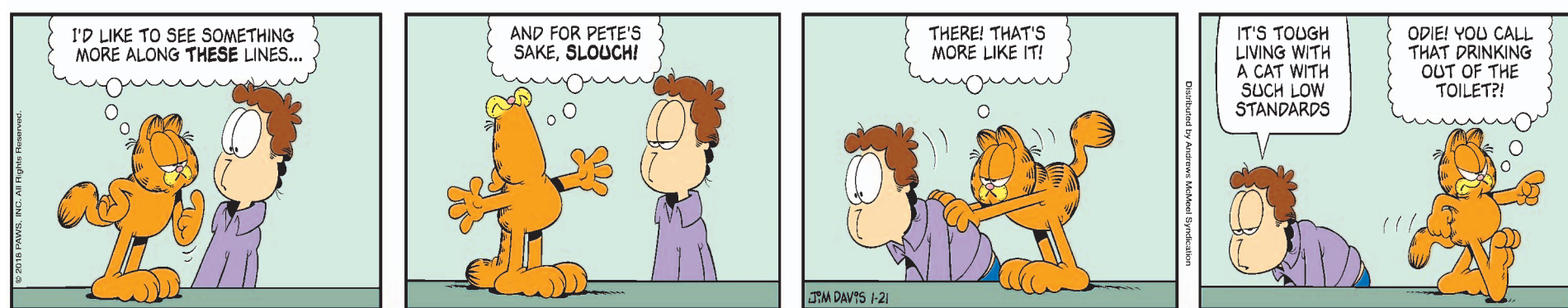
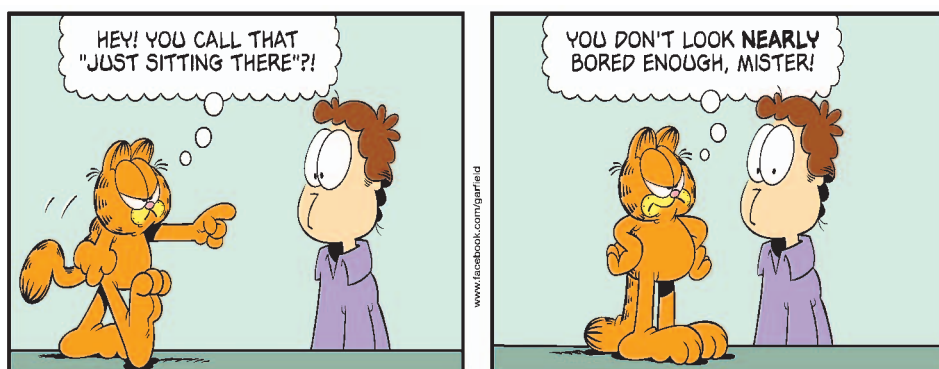
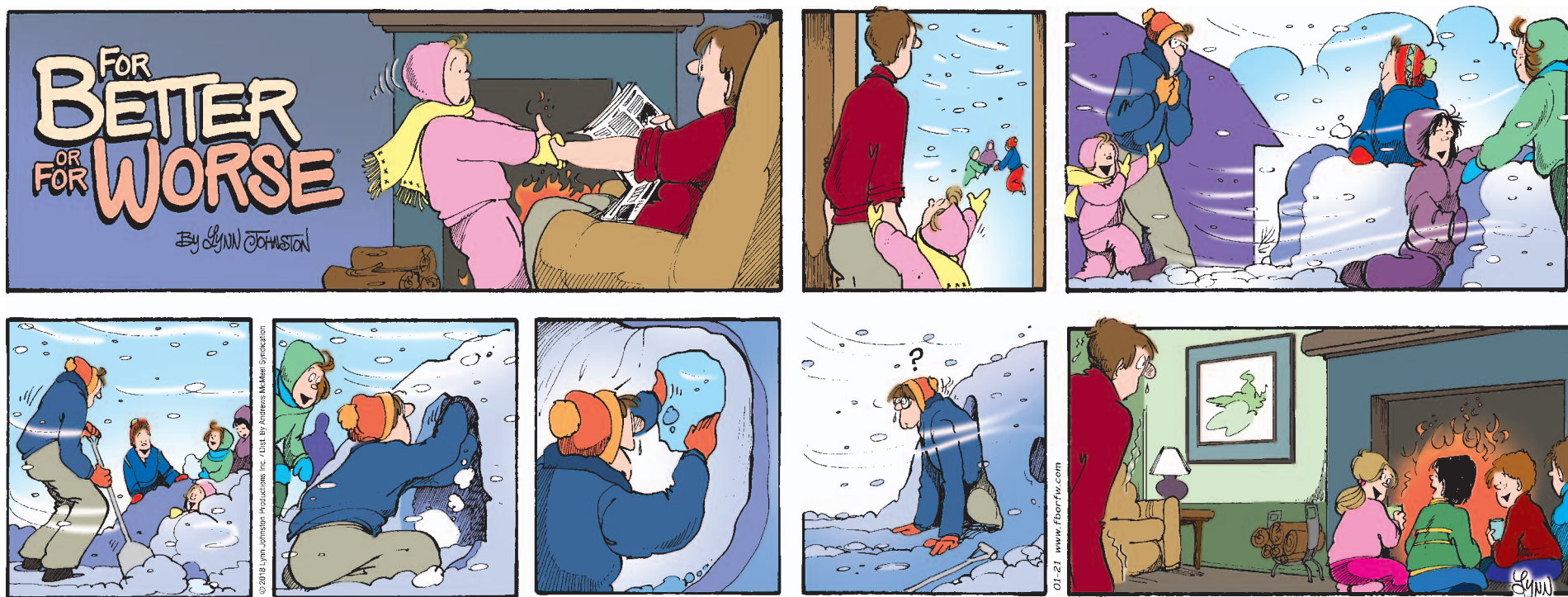
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DEAN YOUNG & JOHN MARSHALL 1-21

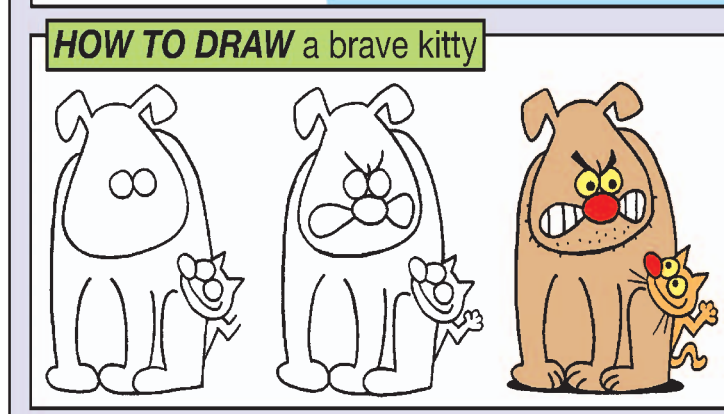
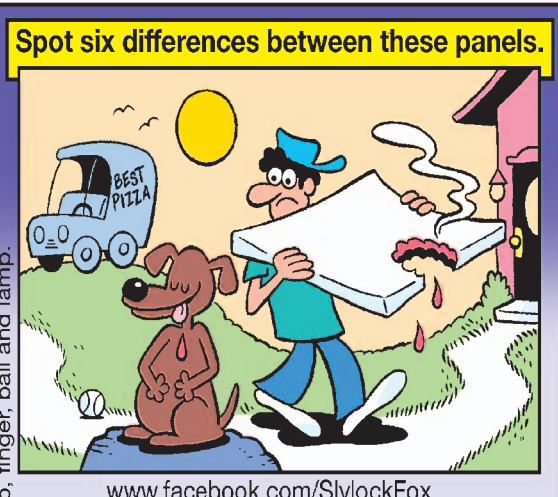


SLYLOCK FOX and COMICS FOR KIDS

BY BOB WEBER JR.

Max Mouse challenged his friends with the following crime puzzle: Police surround the hideout of a robber. They don't know what he looks like, but they know his name is Jeff. When the police enter the house, they find four people playing video games. They immediately arrest Jeff. How do they know they have the right man?

Solution -- The robber is the only man. The other gamers are all women.



YOUR DRAWING
Today's terrific artist is Mahin, age 10

Submit your drawing to www.kidcartoonists.com

Sea otters hold hands so they don't ...

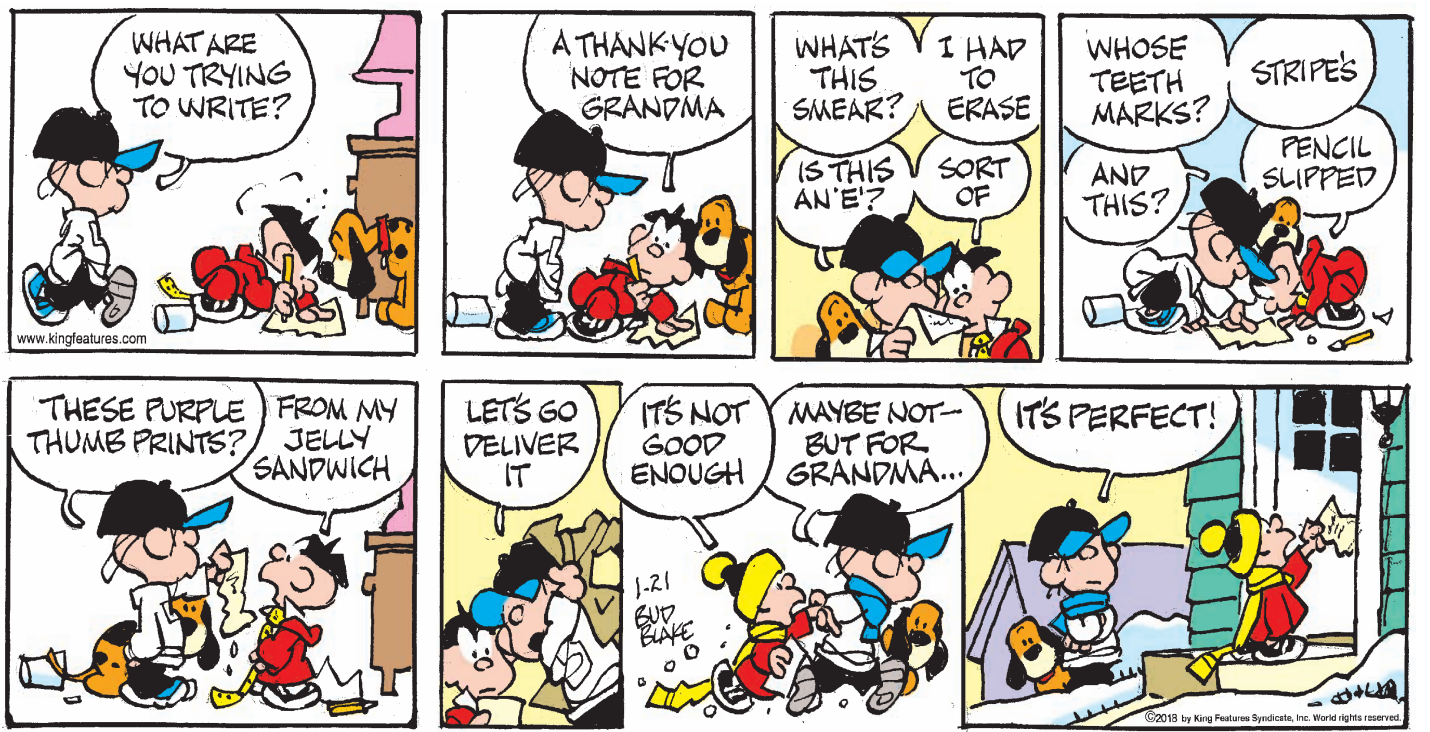
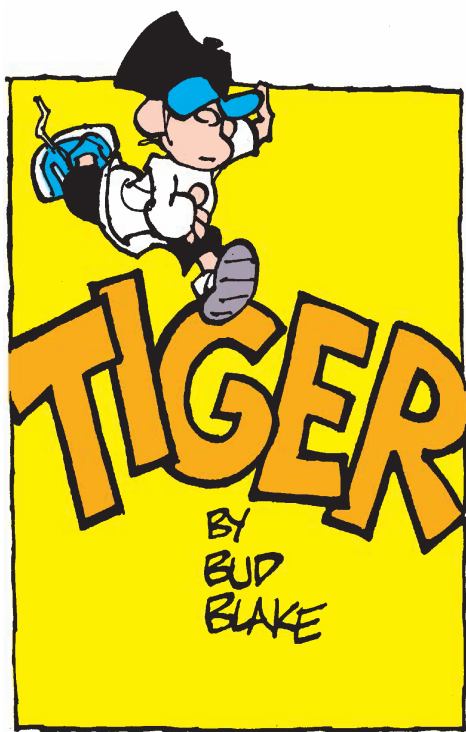
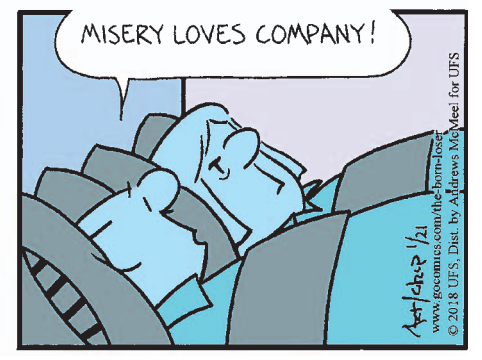
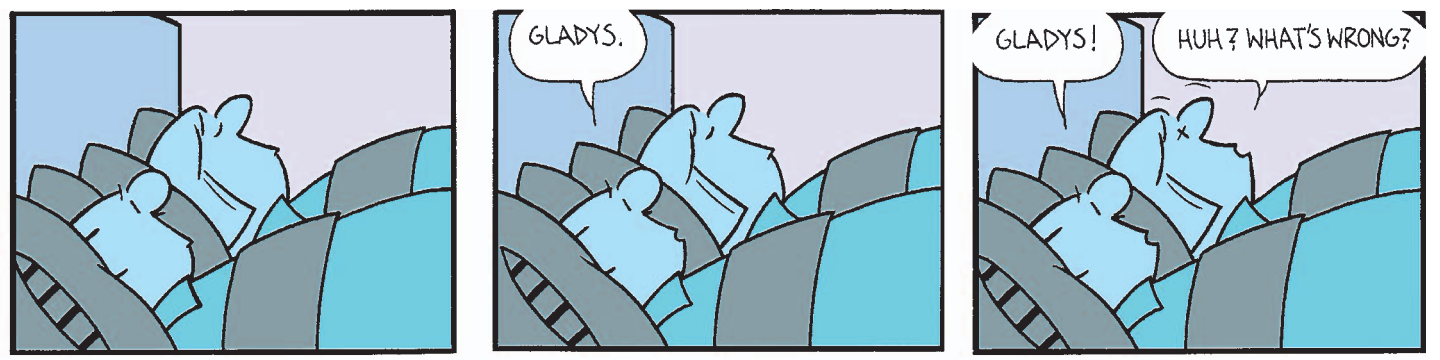
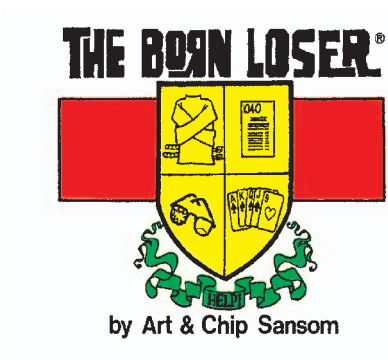
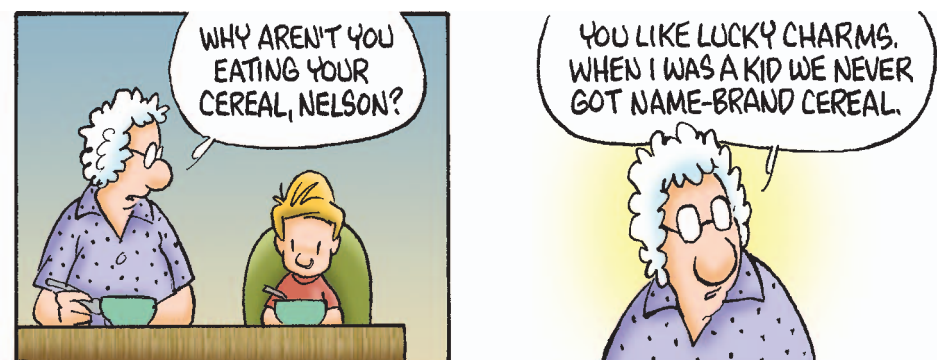
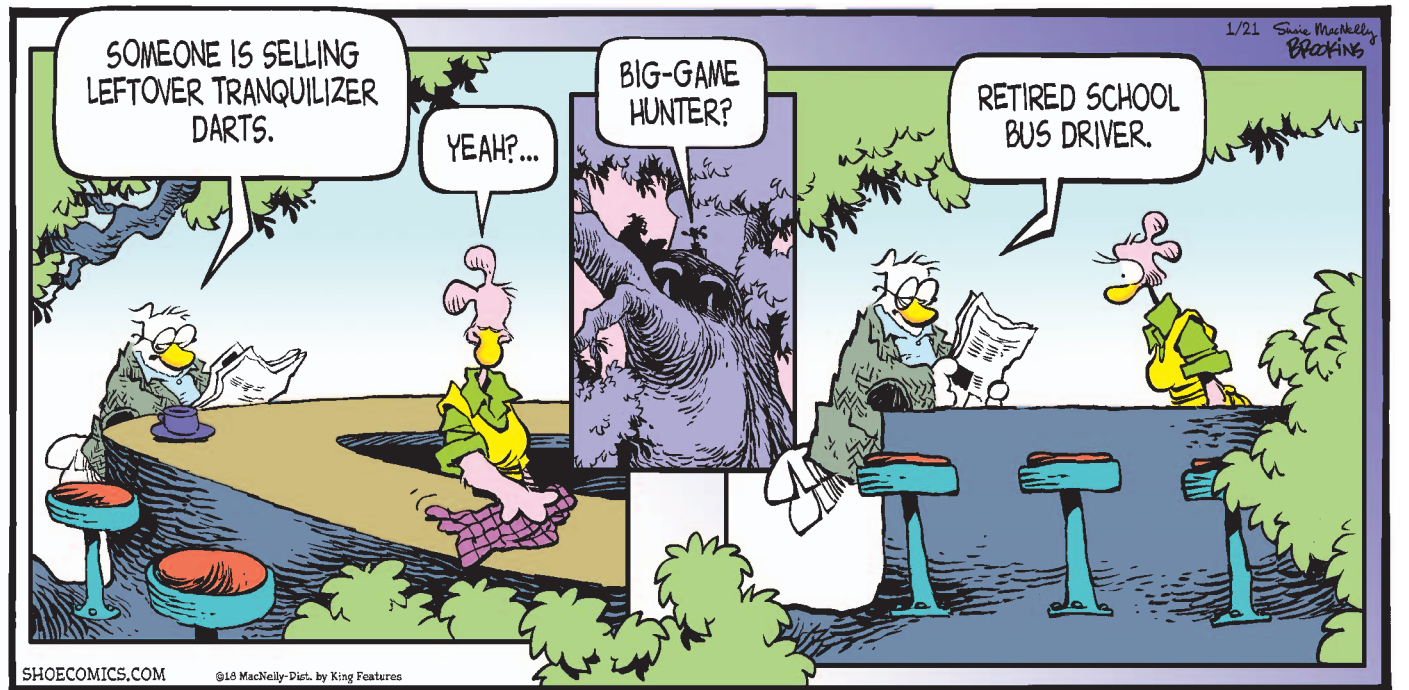
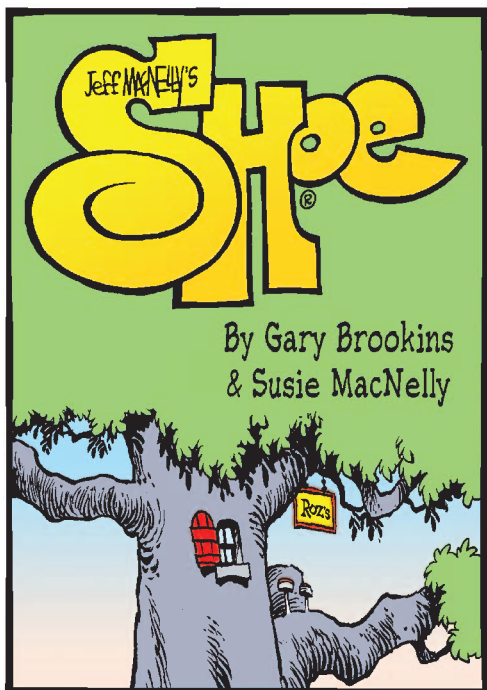
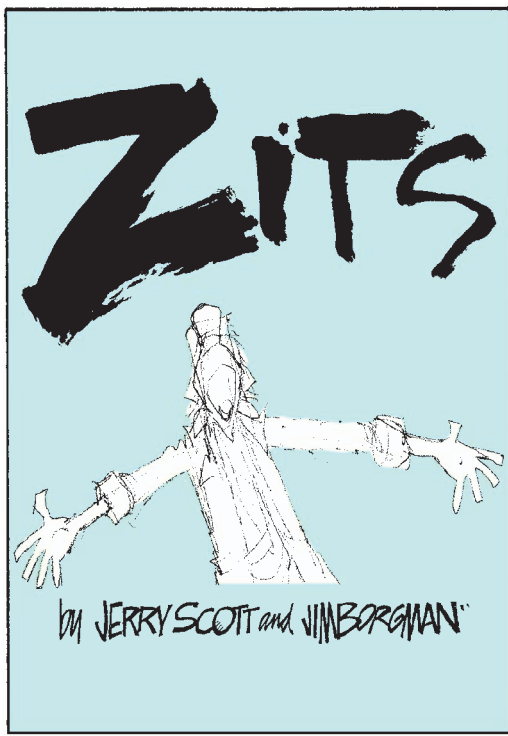
- Get cold
- Drift apart
- Drown
- Bite their nails

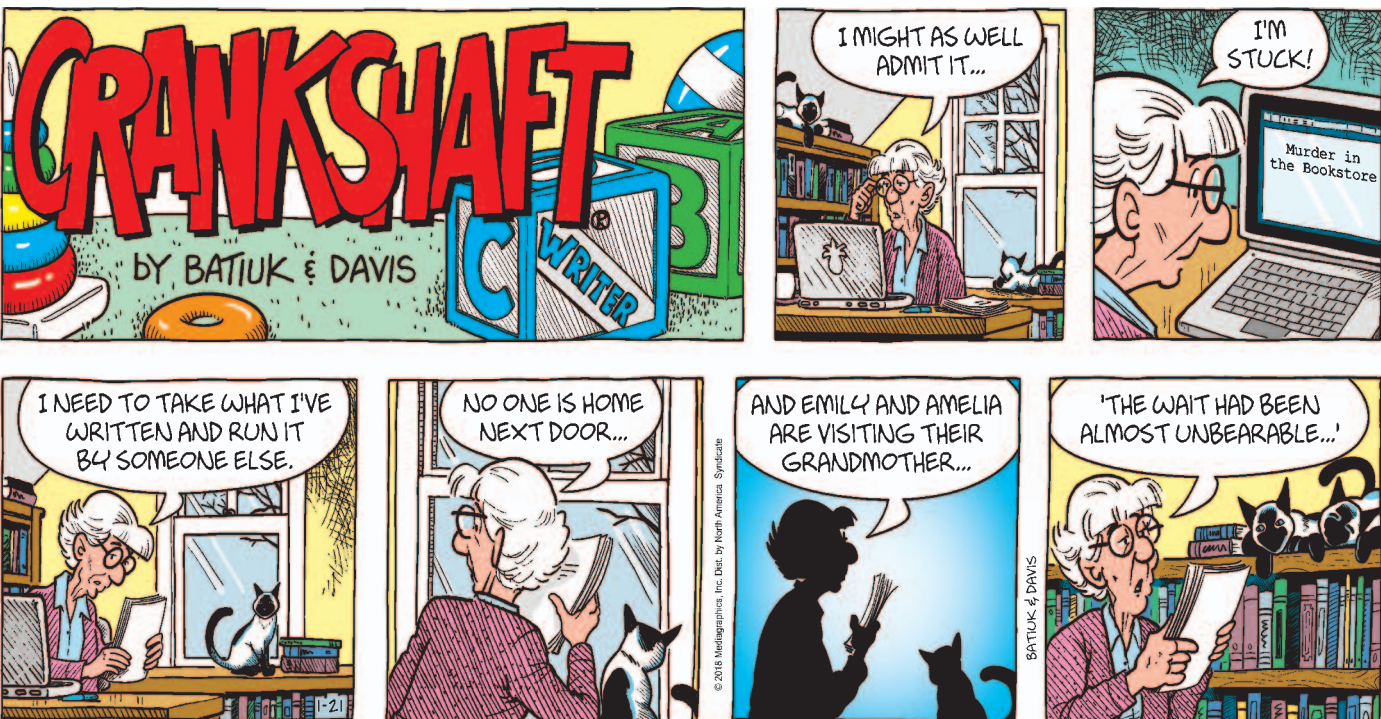
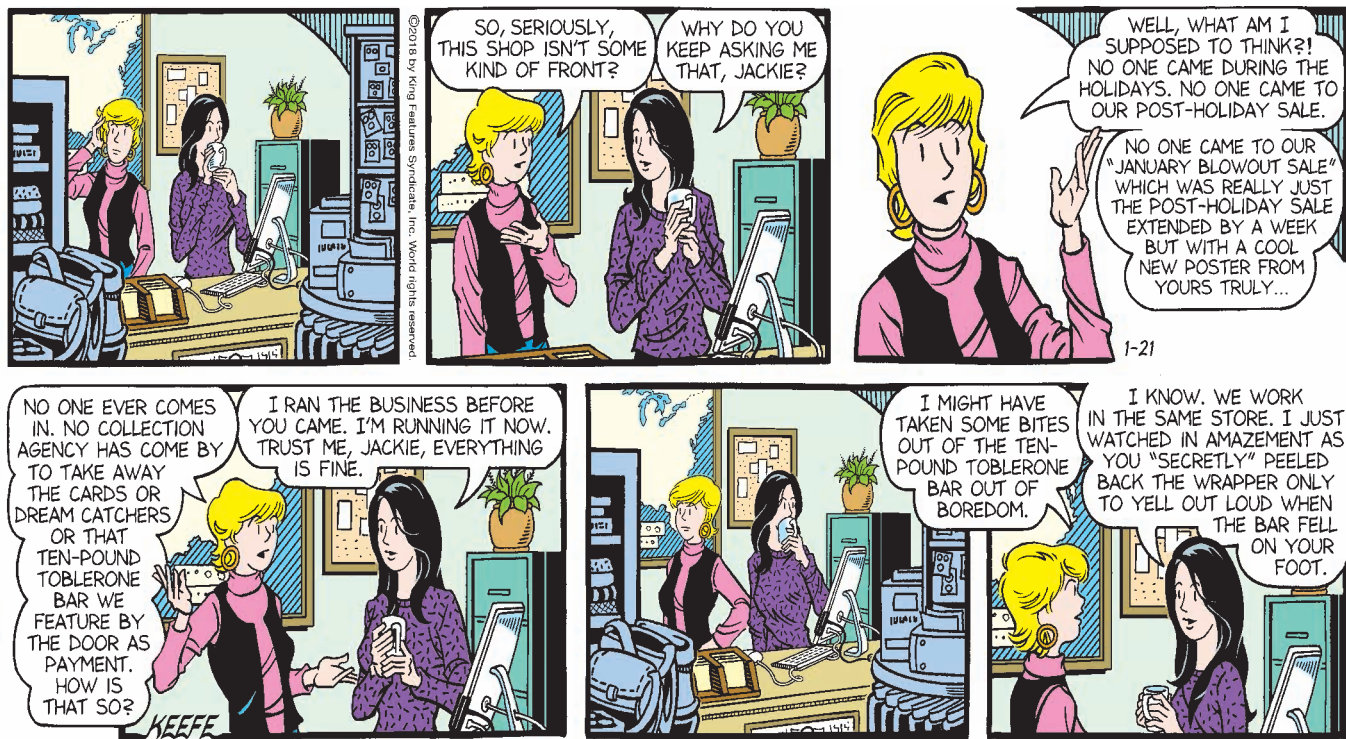
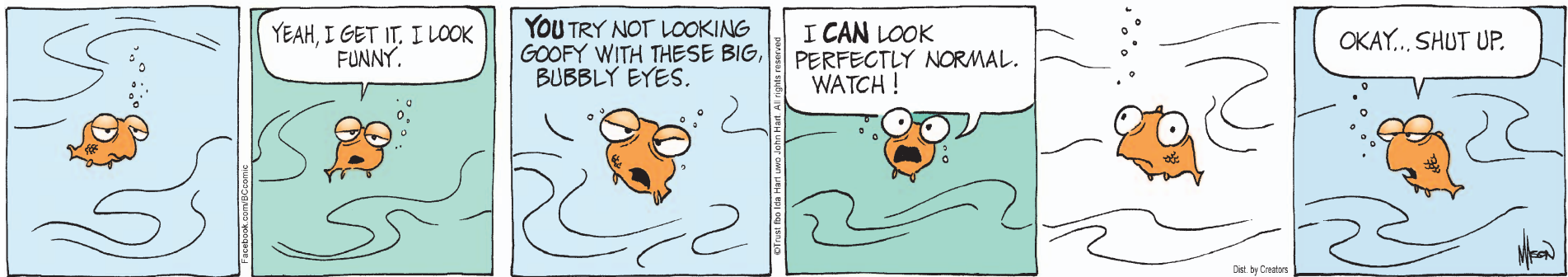
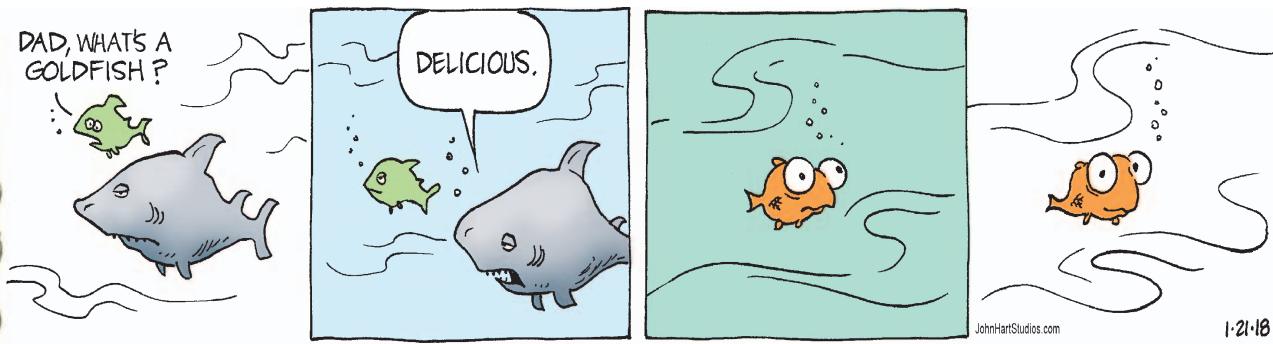
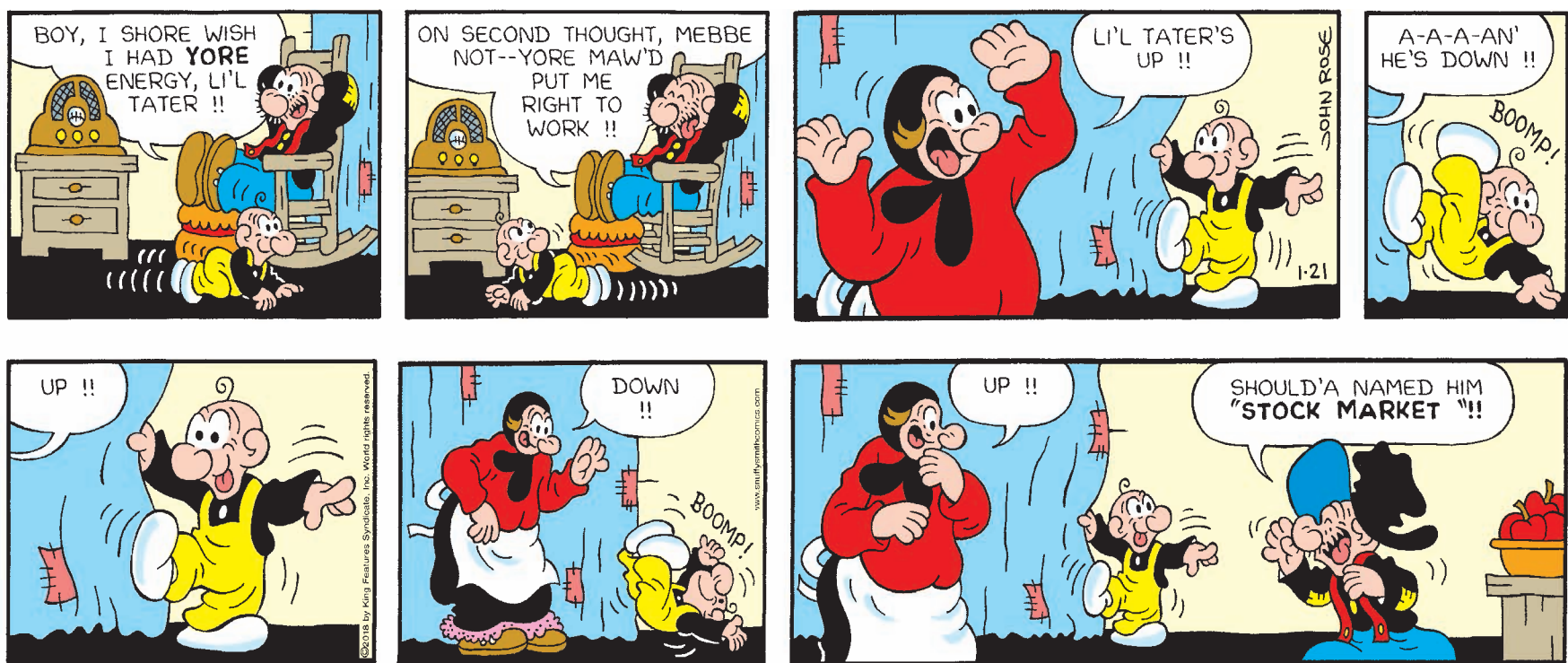
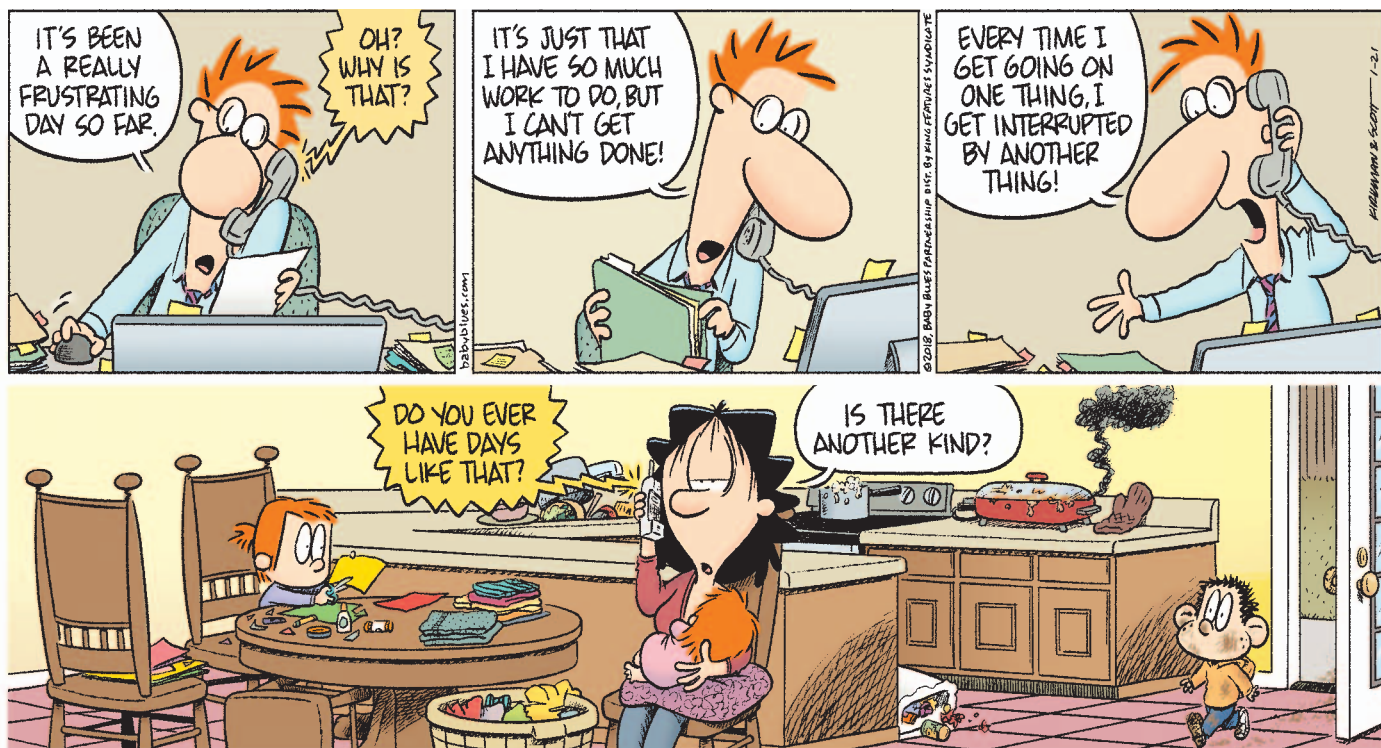
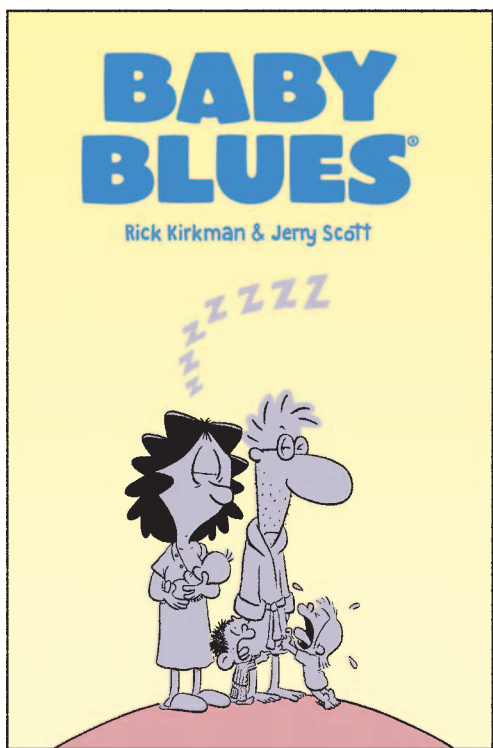
Answer -- b) A mother sea otter and her pup will often hold hands while sleeping to keep from drifting apart from one another.

Spot six differences between these panels.

Answer -- Steam, steering wheel, drop, finger, ball and lamp.

The fourth Find the six differences collection is here. Send \$4 (check/money order in U.S. funds made payable to King Features) with your name and address to Six Differences No. 4, 628 Virginia Dr., Orlando, FL 32803

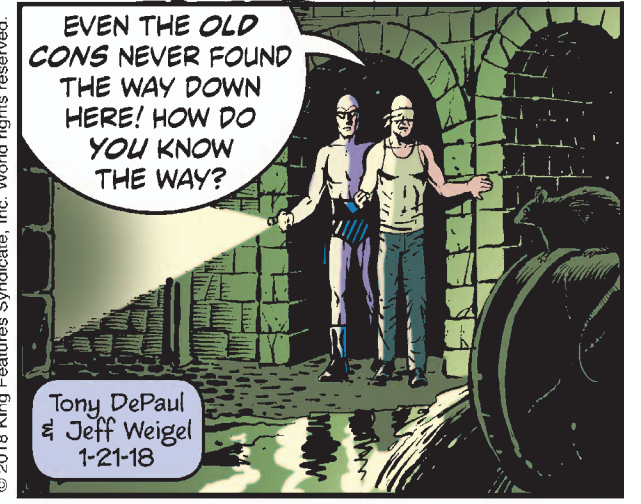
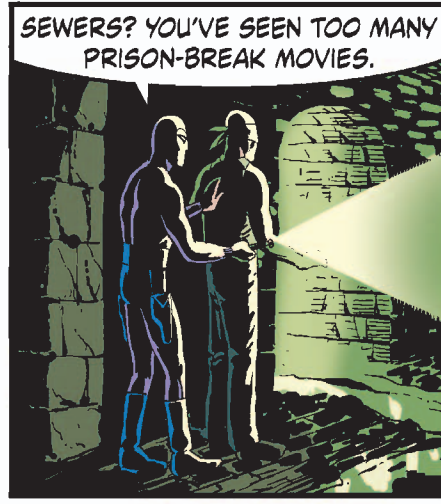
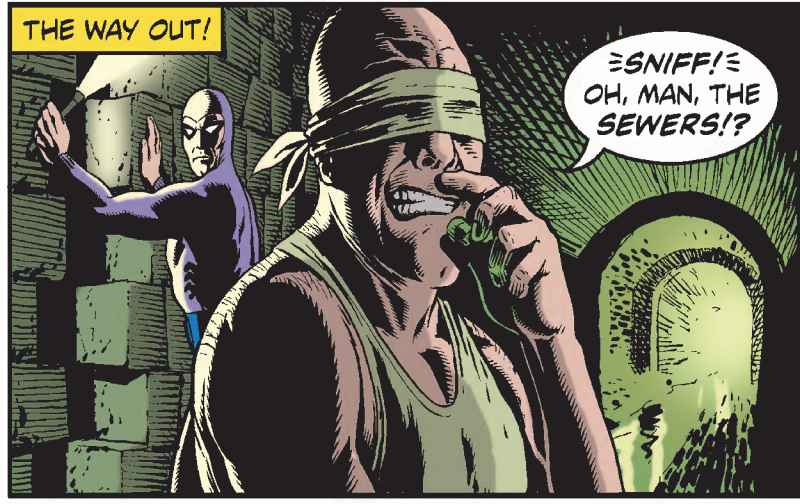






THE PHANTOM

BY LEE FALK



NON SEQUITUR

BY WILEY



DENNIS THE MENACE

BY HANK KETCHAM

