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AUGUST 23, 2017

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There's
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SPECIAL SECTION
inside this week

Lending sinkhole victims a hand

By Kevin Weiss
kweiss@lakerlutznews.com

Penny Foote felt the need to help families — after the largest sinkhole in Pasco County history opened July 14 on Ocean Pines Drive in Land O' Lakes.

"When I saw the two homes go in, my heart hit the floor," Foote said. "I knew we had to do something and try to pull people together because it could've happened to anybody, even me."

That same day, Foote created the Lake Padgett Families Sinkhole Relief Facebook page.

Through the group page, which now totals more than 2,200 members, Foote has coordinated the delivery of donations and supplies to displaced sinkhole families, and adjacent properties on Ocean Pines Drive and Canal Place.

Foote, who has partnered with United Way of Pasco and Pasco County Human

UPCOMING FUNDRAISERS:

Lake Padgett Estates Sinkhole Family Day Fundraiser

WHERE: Harvester United Methodist Church, 2432 Collier Parkway, Land O' Lakes

WHEN: Aug. 26, noon to 5 p.m.

COST: Free admission

DETAILS: Food trucks, local vendors, live music, yard sale, raffle and silent auction, kid-friendly activities.

INFO: email lpsinkholehelp@gmail.com

Build it Back Sinkhole Relief

WHERE: Skipper's Smokehouse, 910 Skipper Road, Tampa

WHEN: Aug. 27, at 5 p.m.

COST: Admission is \$10 in advance, \$15 at the door

DETAILS: Benefit concert featuring local bands Stonegrey, Peace of Woodstock, Solar Exposure, and 4X

INFO: SkippersSmokehouse.com

Services, has met individually with each of the sinkhole victims, to inquire about various essentials — everything from food and clothing, to baby supplies and furniture.

Then, she posted to the Facebook page, soliciting needed items from group members and local businesses.

"Somebody comes and just brings it,"

Foote said. "The community's just been donating tons and tons of stuff, and the families have been at my house multiple times getting everything they want."

Besides donations, Foote also rallied numerous volunteers to assist displaced

See SINKHOLE, page 15A

Aviation department takes off at PHSC

By Kevin Weiss
kweiss@lakerlutznews.com

With the addition of its new aviation department, Pasco-Hernando State College is preparing to launch students into an industry flourishing with job opportunities.

The college began offering two associates of science degrees in professional pilot technology and aviation administration for the fall semester, which began Aug. 21 at its East Campus in Dade City.

The two-year programs are designed for students interested in becoming private and commercial pilots or airport managers. Other possible career opportunities include flight dispatchers, transportation security officers, various Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) occupations, aviation safety and aircraft manufacturing.

The professional pilot technology already has received accreditation approval by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC); the aviation administration is still awaiting approval.

Those aren't the only new aviation programs in development, however.

Next fall, PHSC expects to offer associate degree programs in both unmanned vehicle systems and aviation maintenance administration, and a bachelor of applied science, with a concentration in aviation.



COURTESY OF RICHARD RILEY

Shown here is a Federal Aviation Administration-approved Advanced Flight Simulator Laboratory, located on the East Campus of Pasco-Hernando State College. The simulators can be reconfigured to emulate all types of aircraft in any environment or weather condition providing a realistic experience. Pilot flight training also will be based out the Brooksville-Tampa Bay Regional Airport.

Plans are in development for an Airframe and Powerplant (A&P) certificate program, as well, to tie into the aviation maintenance administration degree program.

The state college officially introduced the aviation department during a July 27 open house, which drew a crowd of more than 100 students, faculty and community members.

The department, which consists of six faculty members, is overseen by Mark Aragon and Michael Brunnschweiler. More staff will be added once additional programs are approved.

Aragon is a certified fixed wing pilot and FAA certified unmanned pilot, who spent more than 30 years in the United States Air

Force, with multiple tours in Afghanistan and Bosnia. He is an instructor, and is the coordinator for the professional pilot technology and unmanned vehicle systems programs.

Brunnschweiler is a licensed commercial pilot, who spent nine years in the United States Marine Corps and six years as adjunct instructor at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. He serves as an instructor, and is the coordinator for the aviation administration and aviation maintenance administration programs.

Aviation students who complete the professional pilot technology program will

See AVIATION page 15A

School impact fees set to increase beginning in January

By B.C. Manion
bcmansion@lakerlutznews.com

The Pasco County Commission has unanimously adopted higher school impact fees for new residential construction.

The increases will be phased in over three years, beginning Jan. 1, and will be charged against all new residential construction, except for new age 55-plus communities.

Pasco County school district officials have calculated that the higher fees will generate more than \$220.4 million over the next 10 years. Those funds will be used to build one new middle school, one high school, one elementary school and one school for kindergarten through eighth grade.

Hugh Townsend, who served as vice chairman of the Pasco County School Infrastructure Funding Committee, was the lone speaker during the public comment portion of the public hearing.

He offered his wholehearted support for the increased fees.

"I think this is a necessary fee in order to supply the necessary schools for all of the new construction," Townsend said.

Commission Chairman Mike Moore said "what you're seeing today is everybody coming together." He later said the obvious result of the higher fees will be more schools to serve the county's children.

The fees adopted by commissioners represented a compromise between the recommended rate by a consultant hired by the school district and the rate the building community wanted.

The adopted rate was less than what the school board, parents and other stakehold-

Current Rate:

Single-family detached: \$4,828
Single-family attached: \$1,740
Multifamily: \$1,855
Mobile home: \$2,843

New rates:

EFFECTIVE JAN. 1, 2018
Single-family detached: \$7,128
Single-family attached: \$2,869
Multifamily: \$4,182
Mobile home: \$4,377

EFFECTIVE JAN. 1, 2019
Single-family detached: \$7,728
Single-family attached: \$3,111
Multifamily: \$4,533
Mobile home: \$4,746

EFFECTIVE JAN. 1, 2020
Single-family detached: \$8,328
Single-family attached: \$3,353
Multifamily: \$4,884
Mobile home: \$5,114

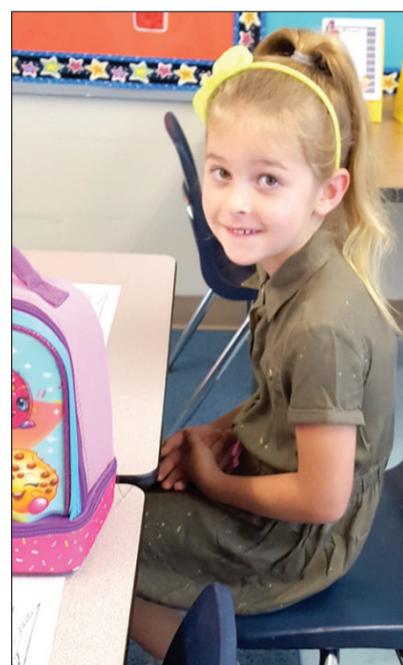
Consultant's recommended rate:

Single-family detached: \$9,028
Single-family attached: \$3,634
Multifamily: \$5,295
Mobile home: \$5,544

ers wanted, but more than homebuilders and apartment developers wanted.

All five commissioners had committed to the proposed ordinance for the higher fees during a July 11 public hearing. The vote

See IMPACT, page 15A



COURTESY OF ANGEL SHANNON

Shaylee Shannon on her first day of first grade in Lisa Hoffman's class at Lutz Elementary School.

Send us your First Day photos

We know that you took them, so why don't you share them?

If you would like your photo to be considered for publication in The Laker/Lutz News, please email us a digital copy. Include the name or names of the student, the grade of the student or students, and what school they attend. Also include contact information, in case we need to get back to you.

Please submit by Aug. 25 by emailing to bcmansion@lakerlutznews.com.

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Dr. Buck earned her medical degree from Michigan State University. She was Board Certified by the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology in 2009 and specializes in robotic-assisted gynecological surgery. For the past 10 years, Dr. Buck practiced at Hackley Hospital - Mercy Health, near her hometown of Muskegon, Michigan.

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A good week to be a newspaper publisher



By Diane Kortus
Publisher

Some weeks being the publisher of a weekly newspaper is more fun than others. And, the past week was one of them.

Let's begin with the recognition we received at the annual meeting of the Florida Press Association. Led by editor B.C. Manion, our news department received 10 statewide awards for outstanding photography, news stories and feature writing.

These awards convey the quality of work my staff does reporting about issues, new developments and people in our community.

Awards also give our readers outside validation that our stories meet high standards, as compared to our industry peers.

Because we print a lot of papers every week — nearly 45,000 — our entries compete in the largest circulation category of this competition. This means we are up against entries from large, corporate-owned newspapers with budgets and staffs that are much bigger than ours.

Here at The Laker/Lutz News, we have just four journalists, editor B.C. Manion, staff writers Kathy Steele and Kevin Weiss, and news assistant Mary Rathman. Working alongside our staff are freelance photographers Richard Riley and Fred Bellet, who are regular contributors to our papers.

It is significant that our small newsroom receives journalism awards every year, because it shows we consistently do good work. This year we had an especially strong showing, making us one of the best newspapers in the state. My staff is thrilled, and I couldn't be prouder.

After the Florida Press awards, I thought things couldn't get much better. But, they did.

At last week's dedication of Heritage Stage at the Land O' Lakes Community Park, The Laker/Lutz News was honored again by having our name engraved in the building's dedication plaque.

Our part in this community project was small, especially when compared to that of the Heritage Park Foundation and its leader, Sandy Graves.

Throughout the years, The Laker/Lutz News has written many stories about the Foundation's efforts to raise money for the stage. And, we've regularly reported on the group's diligence to influence public officials to provide the money, property and construction oversight to build the stage.

Today's story on the front of our B Section reflects on the 20 years it took for this stage to become a reality. The Laker/Lutz News has kept the community aware of the Foundation's fundraising activities, and its ultimate success.

We were just one of many business owners and community leaders whose names are memorialized on the Heritage Stage dedication plaque. Many of us attending the ribbon cutting had an emotional high as we listened to the amazing sound of the Sunlake High School Band, and were led in the Pledge of Allegiance by students from Sanders Elementary. The stage's acoustics were superb, and it's exciting to finally have a place in Land O' Lakes for people to gather for community events and concerts.

I believe there is a connection between these two recognitions. Both occurred because we want our newspaper to be a valuable resource in our community, documenting the happenings of Lutz, Land O' Lakes, Wesley Chapel, Zephyrhills and Dade City.

It is gratifying to receive accolades from our peers in journalism and from the communities we serve, but we recognize that the real prize comes from the satisfaction we derive from delivering stories and photographs that are important to you and your neighbors.



COURTESY OF PATRICIA SERIO

A quarter-century of service

The GFWC Lutz-Land O' Lakes Woman's Club honored its most senior member, 94-year-old Elfriede Rapp, on attaining her 25th anniversary of club membership and service to the community. Club member Patricia Serio 'pins' Rapp with her 25-year service pin and gave her with a bouquet of balloons to celebrate the milestone. Rapp's daughter, Gabriele Hansen, also was present for the occasion.

Mail call touches veterans on 'mission' flight

By Mary Rathman
mrathman@lakerlutznews.com

Everyone likes to get mail. Especially when it includes a sincere thank you, a special drawing or personal thoughts.

Honor Flight West Central Florida provides all-expense paid flights for war-era veterans in the Tampa Bay area to visit their memorials in Washington D.C.

These "missions" include about 80 World War II, Korean and Vietnam war veterans each time they fly.

During the flight's return to the Tampa Bay area, every veteran on board receives a mail call — an envelope filled with cards, notes, drawings and more — from family and friends, as well as groups such as Soldiers' Angels. The mail is meant to show appreciation for those who have served in honor of our country.

There are many ways to volunteer for the Honor Flight, including helping with preflight orientation, participating in the send-off and Welcome Home celebrations, helping to identify possible funding resources, becoming an Honor Flight Ambassador, spreading the word and encouraging war-era veterans to apply, and writing letters for mail call.

For information regarding the Honor



MARY RATHMAN

Mary Rathman, of Land O' Lakes, and a group of friends wrote almost 100 thank-you cards to veterans for an upcoming 'mission' through Honor Flight West Central Florida.

Flight, visit HonorFlightWCF.org, or email info@honorflightwcf.org.

To volunteer, contact (727) 498-6079 or hfwcfvolunteers@gmail.com.

Anyone interested in writing thank-you cards or letters, or sending in drawings from kids, can mail them to Honor Flight West Central Florida, P.O. Box 55661, St. Petersburg, FL 33732. Each piece of mail should be addressed to "An Honored Veteran." The "missions" appreciate any help so that each veteran isn't forgotten.

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KEVIN WEISS, Staff Writer
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ADVERTISING
TERRI WILLIAMSON, Senior Account Manager
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LOCATION: 3632 Land O' Lakes Blvd, Suite 102 • Land O' Lakes, FL 34639
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MARKET NEEDS VENDORS

The first Sunday market at the Land O' Lakes Community Center, 5401 Land O' Lakes Blvd., will take place Sept. 3 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Local artists and crafters, and farmer-market type honey, produce, bakery items and more, can exhibit. The cost is \$30 per vendor. Contact Dave Bingham art (813) 545-9132 or aslanred@gmail.com.

BLINGED BINGO

The GFWC Lutz-Land O' Lakes Woman's Club will host its annual "Blinged Bingo" fundraiser and luncheon Aug. 24 at 10 a.m., at the Lutz Community Center, 101 First Ave., N.W. The fundraiser will benefit Hacienda Girls' Ranch, a shelter for abused and at-risk teen girls. The cost is \$20 for 10 games of bingo and lunch. For information or a reservation, call (813) 240-9321.

MAKE A BRACELET

The Land O' Lakes Library, 2818 Collier Parkway, will offer a class on making a Kumihimo square-knot bracelet Aug. 24 from 10 a.m. to noon, for ages 16 and older. Participants can learn the Japanese art of Kumihimo. This is a two-part class. Registration is required. For information, call (813) 929-1214.

3-D PRINTING

The Hugh Embry Library, 14215 Fourth St., in Dade City, will host a 3-D printing seminar Aug. 24 from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., for adults. For information, call (813) 929-1214.

CHRISTIAN WOMEN

Joy Fellowship, an interdenominational Christian women's group, will meet Aug. 24 at 9:30 a.m., at the Family Life Center of Zephyrhills First Assembly, 36322 State Road 54. The guest speaker will be Deborah Roberts. A free continental breakfast will be provided, but reservations must be made by Aug. 23. For information, call or text Linda Bartlett at (813) 312-8739.

RED HAT SOCIETY

There will be a Red Hat Society gathering Aug. 25 at noon, at Grillsmith, at The Shops at Wiregrass in Wesley Chapel. The group is looking for a few new members. For more information, please send an email to LynnsSmall36@gmail.com.

AARP CHAPTER

Land O' Lakes AARP Chapter 4764 will meet Aug. 25 at 10 a.m., at the Land O' Lakes Community Center, 5401 Land O' Lakes Blvd. The meeting will double as the chapter's fourth annual charity silent auction to benefit The Alzheimer's Association. A potluck lunch also will be served. Chapter members get in free and will receive five free prize bidding tickets. Non-members can pay \$15 at the door, and receive 15 prize bidding tickets. For more information, email pebross@verizon.net.

BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS

The Hugh Embry Library, 14215 Fourth St., in Dade City, will offer a Nature

Saturday in the Square

Historic Downtown Zephyrhills will host "Saturday in the Square" Aug. 26 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. There will be live music by The Time Travelers, local craft food and beverages, free kids' games and a pizza party, sidewalk sales and more. Guests can bring chairs. There will be free parking.

Food Truck Fiesta

The Greater Hernando County Chamber of Commerce will host a Food Truck Fiesta to celebrate back-to-school Aug. 26 from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., at Anderson Snow Park, 1360 Anderson Snow Road in Spring Hill. There will be more than 20 gourmet food trucks, activities, face painting, sports games and more. There also will be a "Hernando's Got Talent" show featuring community musicians, singers, actors and dancers. Admission to the fiesta is free. Guests can bring lawn chairs.

Summer Roundup

The First United Methodist Church, 6209 Land O' Lakes Blvd., in Land O' Lakes, will host a Summer Roundup Aug. 27 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. The event is a free, old-fashioned festival with games, activities and food. Kids can try to lasso the horse, toss the snakes and pan for gold. Families can participate in mission projects - decorating and filling family bags for Ronald McDonald House, and decorating and writing cards to veterans. Guests also can have their mug shot cartoon drawn in "jail," and have a hot dog or snow cone. For information, call (813) 996-3533, or visit LOLUMC.org.

Detective Workshop on butterflies and moths Aug. 26 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., for ages 6 to 12 accompanied by a parent or guardian. This is an educational hands-on workshop presented by the Diggers of the Dade City Garden Club. Registration is required. For information, call (352) 567-3576.

HACIENDA HOTEL FUNDRAISER

The Friends of the Hacienda and Historic New Port Richey will host a fundraiser Aug. 26 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., in the main ballroom of the Hacienda Hotel in New Port Richey, to raise funds for the restoration of the hotel. There will be a presentation on the hotel's history and future, hors d'oeuvres and drinks, live music from Creole Belle, Riptide, and artists Julie Black and Dave Eichenberger. There also will be door prizes. The cost is \$100 per person. For information and tickets, call (727) 777-2217.

YOGA OPEN HOUSE

Sun Yoga Tampa, 19026 Geraci Road in Lutz, will host an open house Aug. 26 from 2:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. There will be free yoga and tai chi classes, healthy snacks, vendors and a free raffle entry. Guests can learn about yoga class packages, too. For information, call (813) 955-1263, or visit SunYogaTampa.com.

FUSED GLASS CLASS

The Land O' Lakes Library, 2818 Collier Parkway, will offer Fused Glass 101 with Michelle Gould of Purple Cloud Studios Aug.

26 from 10 a.m. to noon, for ages 16 and older. There will be information about fused glass, materials and handling, and a safety tutorial. Participants can make a sun catcher. A proper dress code, signed liability waiver and registration are required. For information, call (813) 929-1214.

MORNING MEDITATION

Sun Yoga Tampa, 19026 Geraci Road in Lutz, will host Shivabalananda, a long-term direct disciple of Sri Sri Sri Shiva Bala Yogi Maharaj, Aug. 27 from 10 a.m. to noon, to present Shiva Bala Yogi Meditation. Meditation is the study of deep concentration, calmness and tranquility of the mind. For information about the meditation, email gurudaschu@gmail.com. For information on the venue, email sunyogatampa@gmail.com.

CCC BOOK CLUB

The CCC Book Club will meet at the Carrollwood Cultural Center, 4537 Lowell Road in Tampa, Aug. 28 at 7 p.m., to discuss "With the Old Breed" by E.B. Sledge. For information, email David Brayshaw at david8463@verizon.net.

MATH FOR CHILDREN

The Friends of the Lutz Branch Library, 101 W. Lutz Lake Fern Road, will host "Fun Wise Math for Children" Aug. 29 at 11 a.m., for ages 3 to 5. Participants can learn math facts through games, stories and songs during this interactive program. Active games use multisensory learning and physical activ-

ity for increased retention. Space is limited to 25 children and their caregivers. Check-in is at the reference desk after 10 a.m.

ROTARY CLUB OF LUTZ

The Rotary Club of Lutz will meet Aug. 29 at noon, at Heritage Harbor Golf & Country Club, 19502 Heritage Harbor Parkway in Lutz. The guest speaker will be Mario Vittone, representing the child drowning prevention program, "Josh the Otter." The public is invited. The meal cost is \$12. For information on the program, visit JoshTheOtter.org. For information on Rotary, visit LutzRotary.org, or call Doug Andrews at (813) 857-7089.

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Tampa Bay will host an orientation and training session Aug. 29 from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m., at Wesley Chapel Honda, 27750 Wesley Chapel Blvd., for anyone interested in becoming a volunteer/mentor. For information, contact Deb Kristol-Irwin at (813) 997-6881.

THURSDAY MUSICALE

Thursday Musicale, a women's chorus, is approaching its 70th season, and looking for members. Rehearsals are Tuesdays from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., starting Aug. 29, at St. Mark's Presbyterian Church, 7922 State Road 52 in Hudson. The season's first concert will be Oct. 8 at 2 p.m., at St. Mark's. The chorus gives scholarships to local high school students who pursue a music degree. For information, call (813) 415-7085.

REUPHOLSTER A STOOL

The Land O' Lakes Library, 2818 Collier Parkway, will offer a stool reupholstery class Aug. 29 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., for ages 16 and older. Guests can learn how to reupholster the library stools for the teen room, and will be helping to liven up the library's furniture. A proper dress code, registration and signed liability waiver are required. To register, call (813) 929-1214.

MEN'S MINISTRY

The Bay Hope Men's Ministry exists to activate men towards knowing God, connecting with others, and equipping them for a spiritual journey. The ministry helps build relationships with other men seeking Godly manhood. The launch date is Aug. 31 from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., at Bay Hope Church, 17030 Lakeshore Road in Lutz. For information, call Dave Young at (813) 968-3983 or email Ray Harrison at rayharrison1111@gmail.com.

VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Life's Treasures Thrift Store, operated in support of LifePath Hospice and HPH Hospice, conducts orientation sessions for prospective thrift store volunteers. Adults and teens (age 14 and older) can join the team. Teens can earn community service hours required by the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program. For more information or to register for a session, please contact Anne Ferrell at (813) 357-5321 or ferrella@chaptershealth.org.

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Not All Communities Are Created Equal

It's been such an exciting year at Connerton that visitors and residents continue to be amazed by "The Community of More."

The year began with Connerton being named the 2017 Showcase Community for the Parade of Homes sponsored by the Tampa Bay Builders Association. The month-long Parade brought hundreds of people to the Land O' Lakes community for the first time in April, and many became new homeowners, with more than 30 homes being sold during the Parade.

Also in April, a brand new, mortgage-free home was presented to David Roca, a deserving Army veteran and his family. The dedication of the Roca home was an emotional outpouring of community support by local residents. Connerton's developer Hayman Woods, and Lennar Homes, which built the Roca home.

Then, on July 1, more than 8,000 people came to Connerton for an old-fashioned Independence Day celebration with music, games, food and fireworks. Many other special events are held throughout the year for Connerton residents, which bring neighbors together to mingle and get to know each other in a friendly neighborhood setting.

DISCOVER THE CONNERTON DIFFERENCE

When Connerton visitors stop at the community's beautiful clubhouse, they often ask, "Why does Connerton feel so different than other communities?" The answer is that Connerton is different because it is one of only three communities in Florida that has been formally recognized as a "New Town."



Connerton earned its "New Town" designation because of its outstanding community planning and design, which reduces residents' reliance on cars and promotes a more sociable, pedestrian culture. The mature trees, picturesque ponds and many conservation areas preserve the beauty of nature, and allow native foliage and wildlife to flourish.

As the town of Connerton grows, it is opening new neighborhoods and expanding its unique Town Center with its mix of residential, retail, professional, commercial space and 20 acres set aside for a future government center. The Town Center will be the focal point of the community, connecting a hometown main street, open spaces, gathering places, and educational and recreational opportunities.

EVERYONE LOVES A WINNER

Connerton is an award-winning community. In May, it brought home

trophies for Best Consumer Promotion for its Independence Day Celebration, and for Best Mobile Website, at the annual Award Presentation of the Sales and Marketing Council of the Tampa Bay Builders Association.

In July, Connerton won an award for Best Special Charity Event at the Southeast Builders Conference in Orlando. Numerous other awards have been presented to Connerton over the years, and are proudly displayed at Club Connerton, the resort-style clubhouse where the new Visitor Center is located.

WHY RESIDENTS CHOSE CONNERTON

The diversity in ages and wide variety of interests are just two reasons why residents chose Connerton as their home.

At community gatherings, you'll find people asking, "what brought you to Connerton?" Varied responses

include the community's connection to the outdoors, and its preservation of the natural beauty and pristine environment of the land.

Others love the "hometown American feel and the Norman Rockwell look about it." The extended trails, bike paths and parks are favorites for many families, and pet lovers enjoy the dog park where even their four-legged family members can make friends.

It is interesting to note that 44 percent of new homeowners who purchased their home this year came from the Land O' Lakes/Lutz area, 25 percent from Tampa, 7 percent from Wesley Chapel, 6 percent from West Pasco and 5 percent from other Florida counties. Another 13 percent are buyers from outside Florida, with the largest percentage of those coming from the northeast Atlantic area.

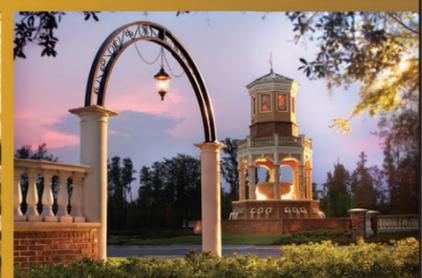
HOME BUILDERS

Five quality builders offer beautiful floor plans and furnished models where homebuyers can choose their home site and style of home. Taylor Morrison, Homes by WestBay, M/I Homes and Lennar continue to build in The Arbors and Gardens villages. Most models are open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and noon to 6 p.m. on Sunday.

In September, Connerton is welcoming Inland Homes to their model lineup. Inland will be offering homes from 1,700 to 2,000 square feet priced in the mid \$200,000. Watch for their grand opening invitation.

Connerton is located approximately 6 miles north of the intersection of State Road 54 and U.S. 41. For more information, visit Connerton.com.

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7 Things To Know Before Hiring Someone To Work On Your Home

By Dan Stevenson
Special to The Laker/Lutz News

Choosing someone to do improvements to your home can be a nerve-racking ordeal for many homeowners. And, that's why good recommendations (or the opposite) from friends and family are so important.

Hiring licensed professionals often give a homeowner some peace of mind, because licensed workers are usually properly trained and backed by a company that holds insurance to protect themselves, the homeowner and their biggest asset – their home.

Here's a list of things to look out for the next time you're contracting a home improvement person to work on your home.

- **License number.** State regulations mandate that licensed tradespeople put their license numbers on everything that can be construed as advertising. Business cards, trucks, estimates, contracts and invoices. Florida State offers a website to easily look up any craftsman professional to see the current status of their trade license: <http://www.myfloridalicense.com/dopr/>.

- **Branded vehicle.** Most businesses will present themselves with a branded vehicle of sorts, whether it is a full graphic-wrapped vehicle or a modest magnet sign on the door. Either way is often a good thing, as it lets everyone know that business is being conducted here and there's likely a company registered in that name.

- **Contracts.** Simply, they are a mutual agreement between two parties to perform or provide a service or product, the offer amount to perform the work, an acceptance and what's called consideration – or some form of good-faith payment (up to 10%). It doesn't need to be fancy, it just needs to be in your hand before you pay and your job starts.

- **10 percent upfront.** I've heard too many stories of people paying for services up front, only never to be delivered on the back end. Often

a contractor will put payments in the form of milestones, like payment of 30 percent after demolition, or 30 percent after materials are dropped at residence. This way the homeowner sees the job moving ahead and can feel better about releasing funds into the project. If your contracted help needs more money up front than 10 percent without a darn good reason, then maybe they don't have the financial backing to adequately service your need.

- **Paying cash.** Paying cash is always an option, but always get a legitimate receipt. If you are asked to only pay in cash, it is usually a red flag and for obvious reasons. Credit cards and checks have a trail of both parties and dates of transactions, should the need exist in any kind of dispute.

- **Asking homeowner to get the permits.** Any properly licensed professional should offer the homeowner the service of procuring, and then closing out, the needed permits for the job. It's not the homeowner's job to know codes, ordinances and when a permit is needed. Pasco County makes it easy to see what jobs need permits: <http://www.pascocountyfl.net/index.aspx?nid=394>.

- **Google them.** Today with Angie's List, Google business and so many other online referral sources and apps for tradespeople finding/checking, it only takes minutes to search a company to see reviews or watch-outs from people like you who've done business with the company before. The Internet is amazing for sharing word of mouth when it comes to the home improvement industry.

Hopefully this list will give you a few things to look out for when hiring your home improvement help. And, good luck with all of your residential projects.

Dan Stevenson is a licensed Residential Contractor RR282811971 and the hands-on owner of Above & Beyond Homes LLC a home remodeling company in Wesley Chapel FL.

He can be reached at (813) 563.6266 or emailed at dan.aboveandbeyondhomes@gmail.com.



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Homes Sales Booming At Birchwood Preserve

It's not often that a new community takes off as quickly as Pulte Homes' Birchwood Preserve in Lutz. Over 25 new homes have been sold since its grand opening on May 20, with its first closings taking place in July.

Families are choosing Birchwood Preserve because of its A-rated schools and convenient location, a half mile away from Dale Mabry Highway and less than two miles away from the Veterans Expressway.

"Lutz is very attractive to many homebuyers because it provides quick and easy access to St. Joseph's Hospital-North, Tampa International Airport, Westshore Business District, International Plaza and the Gulf Coast beaches," said Sean Strickler, president of Pulte's West Florida division.

"Plus, Birchwood Preserve is surrounded by beautiful county parks, connecting trail systems and champion golf courses, such as Cheval and TPC Tampa Bay," he added.

Excellent schools are another reason for the community's brisk sales. Birchwood Preserve is the only new, single-family-home community in Lutz whose children are zoned to all three schools at the highly desirable public school complex on Lutz Lake Fern Road — Steinbrenner High, Martinez Middle and McKittrick Elementary, all just three miles away. Even closer is a new charter school, Sunlake Academy of Math and Science, which opens this month for students in kindergarten through seventh grade.

The entrance to Birchwood Preserve is gated and beautifully landscaped. Amenities include a private luxury community swimming pool with cabanas and hammocks, a multipurpose clubhouse room with kitchen, and a children's exploration climbing dome playground, a swing set and additional discovery play equipment.

With just 196 home sites, there is no CDD requirement. Owners help



support the shared amenities and common areas with an affordable HOA.

Birchwood Preserve is located west of Dale Mabry Highway at the end of Geraci Road. The property is set back far enough from Dale Mabry that there is no traffic or road noise to interfere with its peaceful, natural setting. Many home sites boast nature views, including waterfront lots.

All Birchwood Preserve homes are designed for the way families live today, with Pulte's unique Life Tested home designs. "The ideas for our Life Tested designs come from our homeowners, whose suggestions we value and incorporate into our homes," said Strickler. "An example is the Pulte Planning Center® — a unique, multifunctional area designed with counters and cabinets to help a family get organized in one place that is conveniently located off their kitchen or gathering room." Pulte Homes' designs also offer Everyday Entry® drop zones with

built-in shelving, hooks and storage to accommodate backpacks, shoes, purses and jackets. Pulte's interactive online design tools allow buyers to preview its Life Tested personal options to help them get the most out of their new home.

Every home in Birchwood comes with a Diamond rating in the Environments for Living Energy package. "Many people come to Birchwood Preserve looking for the peace of mind that comes with a new home that's covered by Pulte's unmatched warranty," said Strickler. "We also have many folks coming in saying it would be way too expensive to try and update their current home, to get them close to par with the energy efficiency and current designs that our homes offer."

Birchwood Preserve offers 10 single-family floor plans ranging from 1,904 to 4,600 square feet. Homes start at \$318,990, and offer three to six bedrooms, two to six bathrooms and two- or three-car garages.

The Valleybrook is one of the

most popular floor plans. At 3,320 square feet, it features four bedrooms upstairs and an optional fifth bedroom or den on the first level. Birchwood Preserve is also attracting empty nesters who want the latest in home design, but in a downsized, one-story plan. The Cascade model is a perfect fit with its spacious floor plan that offers three to four bedrooms and a tandem three-car garage that provides extra storage or hobby space.

The community's model home is the 3,427-square-foot Millstone, which features from four up to six bedrooms and three and a half baths, with a three-car garage. The Millstone model center is open daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Wednesday and Sunday from noon to 6 p.m.

Please stop by and meet sales associates Vince Kuntz and Amanda Barningham, who will gladly give you a personal tour and answer all your questions about Birchwood Preserve.

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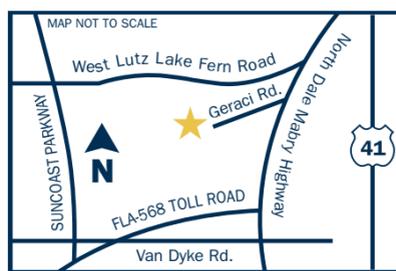
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DIRECTIONS:

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FROM THE WEST: Travel on US 19 North towards FL-590 E / Northeast Coachman Road. Turn left onto North McMullen Booth Road. Continue onto East Lake Road South and turn right onto Keystone Road. Continue onto County Road 587. Turn right onto Lutz Lake Fern Road. Turn right onto Sunlake Boulevard and then right onto North Dale Mabry Highway. Turn right onto Geraci Road.

FROM THE NORTH: Travel on FL-589 Toll South/Suncoast Parkway to West Lutz Lake Fern Road in Keystone. Take Exit 16 from FL-589 Toll South toward County Road 582. Continue on West Lutz Lake Fern Road, and then turn right onto Sunlake Blvd. Turn right onto FL-597 S/Dale Mabry Highway, and then turn right onto Geraci Road.

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* Flex Cash offer is available on new contracts that are accepted by Pulte Homes between 8/1/17 through 9/30/17. This offer includes Birchwood Preserve only, and is not valid with other promotions or discounts or on contract re-writes. If buyer participates in the Affiliate Incentive Program with financing through Pulte Mortgage LLC, buyer will receive a credit at closing in an amount up to \$4,000 for the payment of approved closing costs and prepaids. This credit may not exceed 3% of the purchase price. In addition, any buyer, including a buyer not participating in the Affiliate Incentive Program, will receive a credit at closing of up to \$16,000 which may be applied toward closing costs, prepaids and design center options. Total amount of credits may not exceed lesser of \$20,000 or 6% of purchase price of the home. Buyer is responsible for paying cost of closing costs, prepaids or options that exceed the incentive amount. Any unused amount of these credits is the property of Pulte Homes, and may not be applied to purchase price. Offer may not be redeemed for cash or equivalent. Financing available through Pulte Mortgage LLC. All loans are subject to underwriting and loan qualifications of the lender. Rates, terms, and conditions are subject to change without notice. Pulte Mortgage LLC is an Equal Opportunity Lender. NMLS Entity Identifier #1791. www.pultemortgage.com (www.nmlsconsumeraccess.org) ** The Built-In Appliance Package Incentive on a quick move-in homes only, includes certain kitchen appliances in locations selected by the builder. Please see a sales consultant about Built-In Appliance Package offer details for home being purchased. The items included in the Built-In Appliance Package are a type, grade, manufacturer or a model selected by builder, vary by home, and builder reserves the right to substitute or modify the types, manufacturer or models offered at any time without notice. Approximate retail value of Built-In Appliance Package varies based on individual home. Offers may not be redeemed for cash or equivalent. These offers may affect the amount of a loan for which a buyer may be eligible, check with your lender for details. The photographs depict models containing features or designs that may not be available on all homes or that may be available for an additional cost. Community home prices shown are estimated base prices, do not include lot premiums, upgrades and options, and are subject to change without notice. Optional features for individual homes may be available for an additional cost. Community Association fees required. Square footage is approximate and may vary in actual construction. This material shall not constitute a valid offer in any state where prior registration is required or if void by law. Additional terms, conditions and restrictions apply. Contact a sales consultant for details. CGC1519936 © 2017 Pulte Home Company, LLC. All rights reserved.

Epperson Attracts Hundreds Of Homebuyers With First Ever Crystal Lagoon

Epperson, with its jaw-dropping Crystal Lagoon, has quickly become the most talked about new planned community in Tampa Bay. This community is selling homes at an impressive pace, with over 100 new homes sold, a running waitlist and residents already moving in.

Located in Wesley Chapel, north of State Road 54 at Curley Road and Overpass Road, three builders have model homes open for tour: Express Homes by D.R. Horton, M/I Homes and Pulte Homes. Two other builders, Lennar and AH Avex Homes, have models opening this fall. Epperson's other builders, Maronda Homes and Freedom Homes by DR Horton, are accepting reservations for their homes that will be available soon.

The demand for Epperson can be attributed to the community's desirable Wesley Chapel location and its unique 7-acre lagoon. Already hugely popular around the world, this will be the first Crystal Lagoon to be built in the U.S.

Metro Development Group, who has several Metro Places communities in the area, is planning two of these lagoon communities in Wesley Chapel – Epperson and Mirada. Together, these communities will anchor the nation's first Smart Gigabit Community built from the ground up on a framework of the fastest internet and WiFi speeds imaginable. This means acres of crystal clear blue waters and an area ignited by technology, all in Pasco County.

Additionally, Metro has two more planned lagoon communities under development; Southshore Bay in Southern Hillsborough and Brightwater in Ft. Myers.

WHAT IS A CRYSTAL LAGOON?

Epperson's lagoon is an enormous 7-acre, 16-million-gallon swimming pool with crystal clear water that stretches the length of five football fields. It will be 200 feet wide and up to 8 feet deep, and include a series of arms that stretch out 1/4 mile in length from the main Lagoon. The



pool's average depth will be 8 feet, with some areas as deep as 12 feet.

Both lagoons will have crystal clear blue water with sandy beaches, swim-up bars and restaurants built along their shores. Water sports enthusiasts will be thrilled with the Lagoon's water slides, kayaking docks, snorkeling, paddle boarding and small sailboats. Those wanting quiet conversations and relaxing in the sun will enjoy the Cabana pools.

Crystal Lagoon's advanced ultrasound technology system uses thousands of sensors to keep the water crystal clear. Epperson's lagoon will use between 14 and 15 million gallons of water that will be purchased from Pasco County. After the Lagoon is filled, it is estimated that it will use 50 times less water than a park of the same size, and 30 times less water than an 18-hole golf course. Crystal Lagoons also use 100 times less chemicals than a swimming pool and up to 50 times less energy than conventional pool filtration systems.

"The lagoon at Epperson will truly be a first-of-its-kind amenity, not only in this region, but in the entire nation," said Jen Austin, marketing director of Metro Development Group. "There is nothing like it, and

it's why so many people are buying homes at Epperson."

1 GIGABIT OF ULTRAFI SPEED

Because Epperson is included in Pasco County's newly designated Connected City, it residents will have ULTRAFi —the fastest Internet and WiFi speeds available in North America. ULTRAFi offers 1 gigabit of speed throughout the community, and up to 1 gigabit at individual homes.

"Living in an ULTRAFi community means there are no buffering delays as residents play, watch, game, surf and stream by the pool, on the trails, at the playground and right inside their homes," said Austin.

This technology also offers smart controlled features that allow homeowners to customize settings from the same room or their smart device, including dimming lights, changing temperature and setting security.

Upon completion, Epperson and Mirada will have around 3,000 homes. The entire Connected City corridor will have around 37,000 homes and over 12 million square feet of commercial space, including office, retail, and state-of-the-art education, medical and technology facilities. The plan

for the Connected City spans 50 years.

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. For more information, please visit MetroDevelopmentGroup.com and MetroPlaces.com.

ABOUT CRYSTAL LAGOONS

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Asturia Receives Prestigious Awards For Design And Marketing

Asturia, a master-planned Hines community located on State Road 54 in Odessa, recently earned two prestigious awards at the 2017 Southeast Building Conference in Orlando.

Asturia was honored with the Excel Award for Best Mixed-Use Community of the Year for sales and marketing excellence in the building industry. The community was also honored with a Silver Aurora for Best Recreational Facility for its architectural and interior design.

Established in 1979, the Aurora Awards are presented annually to outstanding builders, planners, architects, developers, designers, interior merchandisers and other housing-related professionals.

This year's competition drew over 400 entries in 58 categories from residential and commercial construction professionals actively involved in projects throughout the Southeast. The awards encompass all facets of the residential, commercial and remodeling industries.

The entries were judged by a panel of four building industry leaders selected from among the most creative and successful individuals within the homebuilding industry.

Judge Sarah Breen said this year's competition was exceptionally diverse coming from across the Southeast. "Creative ideas in design do not know boundaries," she said. "We found the variety and level of excellence to be particularly heartening this year."

ABOUT ASTURIA

Asturia is a mixed-use, master-planned community located in the high-demand State Road 54 corridor in Pasco County. It incorporates retail, office, multifamily and a variety of single-family residential offerings.

The community's central location offers close proximity to U.S. 41, U.S. 19 and I-75, and is just five minutes from the Suncoast Parkway, and its



Walter O'Shea, Carla Luigs and Lane Gardner of Hines accept awards for its Asturia community at the recent Aurora Awards dinner at the Southeast Building Conference in Orlando.

direct link to Tampa International Airport and the Westshore business district.

Asturia offers residents a kid-friendly, family oriented lifestyle surrounded by community-wide multi-use trails, interspersed with a dog park and pocket parks. Kids especially love the Kompan equipped playground, and everyone enjoys the beautiful amenity center, with its expansive lawn areas, resort-style pool and state-of-the-art fitness center.

SECOND PHASE OPENS

It's been just two years since Asturia began selling homes, and already the award-winning

development has moved into its second phase.

"This is a great time for Asturia right now," said Lane Gardner, Hines managing director. "Home sales are very strong, and we are thrilled to be releasing a new phase of incredible lots to our builders."

Asturia's first phase of 248 home sites has been completed, with beautiful single-family homes built by David Weekley Homes and Ashton Woods. Hines recently announced that ICI Homes has been selected as its third homebuilder.

"It's a perfect time to add another great builder to the lineup and provide even more home offerings for

homebuyers at Asturia," said Gardner.

Many families have been waiting for Asturia to open its second phase because they offer some of the best woodland conservation views in the entire area.

"The second phase of Asturia features some of the most beautiful lots in all of Pasco County," said Kevin Jund, the community's project manager. "It's really an enclave surrounded by 360-degrees of protected preserves of mature cypress and lush native vegetation. There's nothing quite like these lots anywhere along the State Road 54 corridor."

There are a total of 157 large lots in Phase II, with a majority backing up to conservation areas. All lots provide homeowners privacy and a peaceful, quiet surrounding.

A boardwalk connects the two smaller neighborhoods within Phase II, which will tie into the community's multi-use pathway that meanders for miles through residential areas, parks, playgrounds and the Amenity Center.

When Asturia's development is complete in a few years, it will likely have less than 550 single-family homes.

"What makes Asturia stand out from other new home developments in the area is our smaller size," said Jund. "Other communities are looking at 3,000 to over 5,000 homes, and many years of construction. Many families prefer the intimate neighborhood experience that comes with our modest size."

More information can be obtained by visiting and registering at the community website, AsturiaFlorida.com, or by calling (813) 227-4148.

Hines, a privately owned, global real estate investment, development and management firm that was founded in 1957, is developing Asturia. It is one of the largest and most respected real estate organizations in the world.

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10 Ways To Add Colorful Curb Appeal To Your Home

Want to give your home a dash of curb appeal? Then focus on color, experts say.

Using color strategically, you can make your home more valuable to potential buyers, or just more personalized for your own tastes. Here are 10 ways to give your house a colorful facelift.

- No matter what style your home, the roof is a major aspect of its curb appeal -- sometimes it accounts for as much as 40 percent of the view. So think about your roof first, and use free online resources to quickly visualize how different colors and products will look on your home.

- Make landscaping decisions with color being top-of-mind. Either go for a vibrant and natural look, or create a stylized look with patterns and designs.

- Replace the numbers on your house, or clean the old ones. Brass will certainly stand out on most housing materials; however, you may prefer to use large colorful accent numbers to contrast with your home exterior.

- Replace your bland, boring garage door. Use free online resources to visualize a new door and select one with color and distinction. Available at HhaasCreate.com, this site allows you to upload a photo of your home and then select different garage door styles to see what will work best on your home.

- Give your mail carrier a warmer

welcome. Spruce up your mailbox with a fresh coat of paint. Or, if it's rusty or splintered, replace it. There are many styles available, so consider selecting something with character.

- Add decorative glass windows for a distinctive accent to your home exterior. An assortment of square, geometric and oval shaped options are available in both fixed and operable styles. Certain windows feature black, satin or brass coming to offset beveled glass pieces and other privacy textured glass, while other windows boast silkscreened designs.

- Soft touches, such as adding new colorful pillows to a front porch swing, buying a new welcome mat or hanging a flag, will give your home cozy, colorful curb appeal.

- Add color to shutters, door and window surrounds, and other trim pieces. Look for low-maintenance polyurethane pieces that are moisture, insect and rot resistant.

- For natural hues that accent and add contrast to siding, consider applying mortarless stone veneer as full accent walls on your home's exterior, or as a half wall/wainscot application.

- Pressure wash and repaint where necessary to restore your home to its original colorful splendor.

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In the two years that Air Hawk has been in business, Joe's commitment to customer service and technical expertise has resulted in the company growing to 12 employees and six service vans.

Air Hawk works with both residential and commercial customers out of its Odessa location. Most customers are from Land O' Lakes, Wesley Chapel, Lutz, Carrollwood, Odessa, Trinity and Palm Harbor.

You can reach Joe at 813-929-HAWK (4295), or by email at JMassa@AirHawkAC.com. Website: www.AirHawkAC.com. CAC License: 1817999.



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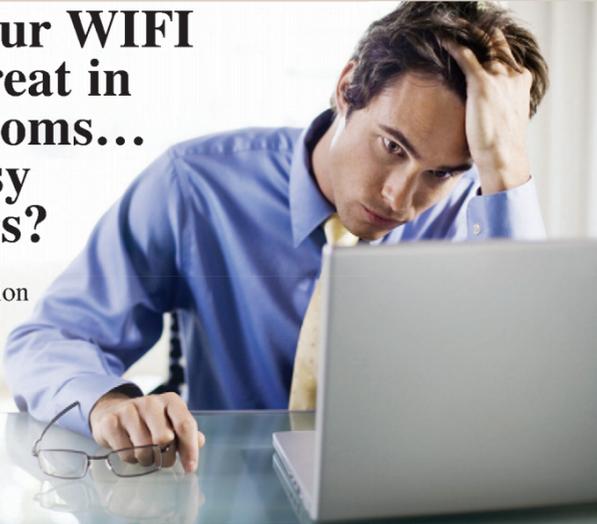
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Class Schedule

Thursday, August 24, 2017 | 3:00pm – 5:00pm
Medical Center of Trinity, Behavioral Health
5637 Marine Parkway, New Port Richey

Tuesday, August 29, 2017 | 10:00am – 12:00pm
Florida Primary Care Center of Pasco
7463 State Road 52 Hudson

Wednesday, September 6, 2017 | 10:00am – 12:00pm
Morton Plant, North Bay Hospital
6600 Madison Street New Port Richey

Friday, September 8, 2017 | 1:00pm – 3:00pm
Pasco Health Department
10841 Little Road New Port Richey

Wednesday, September 13, 2017 | 10:00am – 12:00pm
Good Samaritan Clinic
5334 Aspen Street New Port Richey

Wednesday, September 13, 2017 | 5:30pm – 7:30pm
Florida Hospital, Wesley Chapel
2600 Bruce B Downs Blvd Wesley Chapel

Wednesday, September 20, 2017 | 5:00pm – 7:00 pm
Regional Medical Center, Bayonet Point
14000 Fivay Road, Hudson

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LIGHTHOUSE REACHES PLATINUM LEVEL

Lighthouse for the Visually Impaired and Blind received a GuideStar Platinum Level designation on June 28.

To reach the level, the organization added extensive information to its GuideStar Nonprofit Profile, which includes in-depth financial information and quantitative information about goals, strategies and progress toward its mission.

Lighthouse's mission is to provide people who are visually impaired and blind with the skills needed to achieve maximum independence. The organization has training for all ages, including independent living, white cane, Braille, adaptive computer training, and leisure activities.

All Lighthouse training and services are available at no cost to residents of Pasco, Hernando and Citrus counties.

YMCA ARTHRITIS PROGRAM

The Tampa Metropolitan Area YMCA will offer the community a new program to help those with arthritis. The EnhanceFitness program will be available at the East Pasco Family YMCA.

EnhanceFitness is a community-based senior fitness and arthritis management program to help older adults become more active, energized and empowered for independent living. The program is deemed safe and effective by the Centers for Disease Prevention and Control for older adults living with arthritis.

The next session starts Aug. 28 and runs for 16 weeks. The program is free for YMCA Everywhere members, \$40 for Here members and \$48 for non-members.

For more information, please email Dawn.Kitz@tampaymca.org.

PULMONARY TUTORIAL

Regional Medical Center Bayonet Point will offer a "Keeping Health" tutorial on COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) Aug. 29 at the Rao Musunuru MD Conference Center, 14100 Yosemite Drive in Hudson.

The guest speaker will be Dr. Jose Pascual, board certified in pulmonary disease and internal medicine.

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

Admission is free, and a complimentary lunch will be served.

For reservations, call (727) 869-5498.

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GRIEF SUPPORT

Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church, 2348 Collier Parkway in Land O' Lakes, will offer GriefShare, a grief support group, Aug. 23 and Aug. 30 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., in Immaculata Hall, Room D.

For information, call (813) 949-4565.

MEDICARE 101

The Hugh Embry Library, 14215 Fourth St., in Dade City, will host a SHINE (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders) volunteer Aug. 24 at 2 p.m., to answer Medicare questions, help individuals complete forms, and more.

For information, call (352) 567-3576.

YOGA FOR WELL-BEING

The Land O' Lakes Library, 2818 Collier Parkway, will offer yoga for well-being Aug. 24 at 4 p.m. The class aims to reduce stress and tension, and increase flexibility, strength and breathing ability.

Fundamental techniques are tailored to the level of ability and fitness of the participants. Guests should wear comfortable exercise clothing, and bring a large beach towel or yoga mat.

The class is free. A completion of a liability waiver is required.

For information, call (813) 929-1214.

CRISIS CENTER FUNDRAISER

The third annual Beer and Bow Ties event to benefit the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay will take place Aug. 25 at 6 p.m., at The Cuban Club in Tampa.

The event aims to raise awareness and assist outreach programs for suicide prevention.

There will be beer and beverage tastings, and small-plate tastings.

Tickets are \$40 for general admission, and \$100 for VIP, and can be purchased online at BeerAndBowtiesTampaBay.com.

KNOW YOUR CALORIES

Samantha Taylor Fitness, 2206 Knight Road in Land O' Lakes, will offer a free seminar on "Know Your Calories" Aug. 26 at 12:30 p.m.

Participants can learn to tweak and track calories to gain maximum results.

Free light snacks and gourmet coffee will be provided.

To reserve your spot, visit SamanthaTaylorSeminars.com.

CAR SEAT INSPECTIONS

St. Joseph's Children's Hospital will sponsor car seat inspections Aug. 28 starting at 9 a.m., at the AAA Auto Club, 20315 N. Dale Mabry Highway in Tampa.

Inspections are free, but reservations must be made for a time slot.

For information, call (813) 443-2046.

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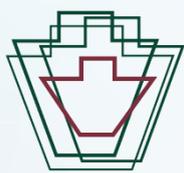
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HEARING SCREENINGS

The Sertoma Speech & Hearing Foundation of Florida screened more than 16,000 students at 74 schools last year, and is looking for volunteers to do the same this year.

No previous training is required, and the first screening will be Aug. 24.

Volunteers are free to choose which schools they would prefer. The average screening time is about two hours to three hours.

All volunteers must pass the School Board background check to help.

Prospective volunteers can access an application at Pasco.k12.fl.us and click on the Volunteer Application at the bottom of the page. Under Preferences, choose Sertoma Speech & Hearing.

For information, call (727) 312-3881.

ENGLISH CLASS

An English as a Second Language (ESL) class will meet on Wednesdays from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., at the Tampa Bay Presbyterian Church, 19911 Bruce B. Downs Blvd. The first class is Sept. 6.

Classes are taught using several ESL and Bible study resources.

There are classes for beginners through intermediate level speakers.

The cost is \$40 per semester, which covers the workbook and class materials.

Child care also will be available.

For information or to register, call (813) 360-2077.

MIDDLE SCHOOL FUNDRAISER

The ninth annual Taste of Trinity will be Sept. 9 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., at Seven Springs Middle School, 2441 Little Road, to benefit the school.

There will be stage music, a bounce house, a business expo, and food and desserts.

Proceeds will help the school purchase cutting-edge technology for its students.

Admission is \$5 per person, or a family four-pack for \$15.

For information, contact Maria Johnson at (727) 934-0940 or maria@wpba.biz.

Registration is available online at WPBA.biz, by clicking on the event link.

MORE THAN \$9,700 RAISED

During the month of July, the Pasco County Tax Collector's Office accepted donations from the public to purchase backpacks and school supplies for students in need.

Tax Collector Mike Fasano's offices raised \$9,739.50. The majority of the funds was used to purchase back-to-school supplies, and a smaller portion of the donations was used to assist in the purchasing of classroom supplies for teachers.

Each of the tax collector branches chose one school close to the office with a large percentage of children in need.

Staff members from each office delivered the backpacks and supplies to these



COURTESY OF SALTERMITCHELL PR

Leaders program

Five Tampa Bay area students took part in the Bank of America Student Leaders program. The local students were building workforce and leadership skills through a paid summer internship at Boys and Girls Clubs of Tampa Bay, and participation in a national leadership summit in Washington D.C. Participants included Alice Hamilton, of Odessa (shown); Jenna Callison, Robert Schofner and Caroline Sharpless, all of Tampa; and Allison Bloomer, of Dunedin.

schools on Aug. 3 and Aug. 4: Centennial Elementary School, Quail Hollow Elementary, Lake Myrtle Elementary, Fox Hollow Elementary and Marlowe Elementary.

YOUTH ART CONTEST

The Medical Center of Trinity announced its sixth annual "Expressions of Thanks" youth art contest, which started Aug. 14.

Students in kindergarten through 12th grade are asked to celebrate the service of all U.S. military veterans, those who currently serve our great nation and their families, by submitting artwork, poetry or an essay, by Sept. 15.

Each participant will receive a recognition certificate.

First-place winners in each grade level will receive a \$25 gift card.

The grand-prize winner will have a choice of a bicycle or iPod nano.

Participants and their families can attend a reception Nov. 5 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., when prizes will be awarded and all artwork will be on display.

For complete details and rules, visit MedicalCenterTrinity.com.

For information, call (727) 834-4868.

FREE VPK PROGRAM

Primrose School at Collier Parkway, 23021 Weeks Blvd., in Land O' Lakes, will offer Fall VPK (voluntary prekindergarten) programs for eligible families and their children.

The program is free for children who have not yet used a VPK voucher and turned 4 or 5 years old before Sept. 1, 2017.

There are three time options available: VPK Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.; VPK Monday through Friday from noon to 3 p.m.; and, VPK (K4) and VPK (K5) Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

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SINKHOLE, from page 1A

families in moving belongings from their condemned homes.

Including Land O' Lakes residents, Footed said people from Tampa, Wesley Chapel and Odessa have all offered assistance, in some form or another.

The widespread community support is "absolutely incredible," she said.

"There have been a lot of people pulling for them," Foote said. "I've never seen anything like it in my life."

Now, Foote, with the help of Tampa-based realtor Danielle Sullivan, has organized an upcoming fundraiser benefiting families affected by the sinkhole.

The Lake Padgett Estates Sinkhole Family Day Fundraiser will be held Aug. 26, from noon to 5 p.m., at the Harvester United Methodist Church, 2432 Collier Parkway in Land O' Lakes.

Besides numerous food trucks and local vendors, the event will feature a live band, yard sale, raffle and silent auction, and kid-friendly entertainment, such as a bounce house and face painting.

Foote hopes to raise at least \$20,000. All of the proceeds will go to sinkhole victims shortly after the event.

It's not the only sinkhole fundraiser going on this weekend.

The Central Pasco Chamber of Commerce has partnered with Skipper's Smokehouse for a benefit concert on Aug. 27. The show, beginning at 5 p.m., will feature performances by several local acts, including, Stonegrey, Peace of Woodstock, Solar Exposure, and 4X.

And, other fundraisers have been held the past several weeks, including events hosted by Plantation Palms Golf & Country Club, Beef O' Brady's of Sunlake and In The Loop Brewing.

Foote, who runs a child day care business, lives about 1.5 miles from the actual sinkhole site.

She remains heartbroken by the sinkhole victims' personal stories in the aftermath of the catastrophic event.

"These families are still struggling today, just like they were on Day 1. It's still very difficult and very hard for them," Foote said.

One of those affected is 77-year-old Emily Geldbaugh.

The retiree's home was one of seven that's been condemned, meeting the criteria for demolition.

The loss of her house, which she has owned for 14 years, was tough to grasp.

"It was shocking, and of course, sort of painful at the same time," Geldbaugh said. "I felt pretty sad about it."

Since the condemnation, Geldbaugh has been staying with her son's family while she searches for an affordable rental home. She noted the catastrophic event could have been worse.

"I'm just glad everybody got out, because if it happened earlier I don't think they would've," she said. "(My house) could've fallen in, too, who knows? I'm lucky that it's still standing."

The efforts of Foote and others have not been lost on Geldbaugh during this difficult time.

She is "totally amazed" by the community outreach received over the past several weeks.



COURTESY OF PASCO COUNTY

Debris and water removal of the sinkhole wrapped up on Aug. 13. The next steps for remediating the 260-foot-wide hole will be discussed by the Pasco County Commission at a later date.

"There's a lot of wonderful people out there, and a lot of them came to help me move," Geldbaugh said. "I mean, there's been donations and a lot of good is going to come from all that."

She continued: "(Penny's) a wonderful lady. I know she can't do it alone, but she's been real gracious, and she's really caring about all these people and their problems, and I think that's wonderful. You don't have very many people in the world like that."

Terence Doohen, another sinkhole victim, expressed similar sentiments.

The 44-year-old also is "floored" by Foote's efforts and the amount of donations others have provided, specifically mentioning nonperishable food, bottled water and toiletries.

"In my mind, it restores the idea that there is humanity left," Doohen said. "At the end of the day, when something like this happens, and you see good people doing thoughtful things, it really restores your perspective on humanity once again."

He added: "It's eye-opening, and it really is heartwarming to know that people care out there."

Doohen, along with his wife and 10-year-old son, were displaced over two weeks ago, when the Pasco County Building Inspectors Office red-tagged their lake house property — which they had owned for about two years.

The family is currently staying at a neighbor's home, until they find a suitable rental.

"It kind of stinks in a way because that was our little house on the lake. When we bought it a couple of years ago, we put a lot of money into it — new kitchen, new windows, everything," Doohen explained.

Doohen said his family — along with others affected by the sinkhole — will never be able to recover the full value of their house and property.

"Once that hole opened up — even if you're living within five houses and didn't have the condemnation letter — the value of your property just got slapped in half," Doohen said. "At the end of the day, everyone (affected) is going to be worse off; that's the sad part about it."

A month later, he still recalls witnessing the sinkhole develop as he got ready for work that Friday morning in mid-July.

"It starts out as a 20-by-20 little puddle, and then all of a sudden it just starts opening up like a big reservoir and starts chasing the house next to it, and then the one on the other side of it," he said.

"My blood pressure started rising when it started eating at the road," Doohen said.

AVIATION, from page 1A

receive a private pilot license, instrument pilot rating, multi-engine pilot rating and commercial pilot license.

Flight training, in partnership with American Aviation Inc., will be based out of the Brooksville-Tampa Bay Regional Airport.

Students, who receive more than 200 flying hours during the entire degree program, also will train on the FAA-approved Advanced Flight Simulator Laboratory, located at PHSC's East Campus. The simulators can be reconfigured to emulate all types of aircraft in any environment or weather condition, providing a realistic experience.

Besides flight training, other classroom topics cover meteorology, flight safety and security, flight theory, and aviation regulations, among others.

"Our program is a little bit different than other programs, because it's designed to emulate the duties as an airline pilot," Aragon said. "They include wearing the pilot's uniform, dispatching the aircraft, crew resource management, and even post-flight duties."

For aviation administration, capstone projects also will incorporate simulation software, with students learning how to run an airline, purchase and maintain aircraft, schedule flight routes, and handle delays and safety concerns.

Each of those scenarios, Brunnschweiler said, provides "an awesome, awesome learning experience for the students."

The state college's new offerings come at an ideal time for an airline industry that's projected to see a massive worker shortage in the next two decades.

A report released last month by Boeing estimates airlines in North America are going to need 117,000 new pilots and more

than 200,000 aviation mechanics in the next 20 years, as passenger and cargo airlines worldwide are expected to buy 41,000 new airliners between 2017 and 2036.

Meanwhile, retirements at U.S. airlines will start to rise precipitously starting in 2021 as the current crop of pilots turn 65, the mandated age of retirement. More than 42 percent of active U.S. airline pilots at the biggest carriers will retire over the next 20 years, according to a recent report by Cowen & Company.

Currently, aviation-related jobs create annual earnings of \$446 billion to the United States — almost 6 percent of our Gross National Product, the FAA reports.

During the open house, PHSC president Timothy Beard called the aviation department "a game-changer" for the college, its students, and local employers and partners.

"We have a commitment and an investment in providing new career workforce opportunities, and we believe these programs, along with other programs, will continue to take us to the top of the mountain here at PHSC," Beard said.

"I am quite confident that our aviation programs provide an ideal learning environment, combined with expert instruction, state-of-the-art equipment, and excellent aviation and industry partners."

The state college's aviation initiative began in January of 2016.

That year, the Florida Legislature granted PHSC \$2.3 million towards STEM programs.

Stan Giannet, vice president of academic affairs at PHSC, said "a good chunk" of that funding went to the aviation department's technological and personnel costs.

He noted the next step for the aviation department is to cultivate additional community partnerships and develop an internship program.



COURTESY OF RICHARD RILEY

Pasco-Hernando State College officially introduced the aviation department during a July 27 open house, which drew a crowd of more than 100 students, faculty and community members.

IMPACT, from page 1A

was delayed until Aug. 15 to allow some changes to be made to the final document.

David Goldstein, chief assistant county attorney, told commissioners at the July meeting that by the time the rates reach their final amount in 2020, they will represent 92 percent of what the school district's consultant had recommended.

At the same meeting, Ray Gadd, deputy superintendent for Pasco County Schools, told commissioners: "We didn't get everything we wanted, nor did the builders."

There were other stakeholders who didn't get everything they wanted, either.

Representatives of the multifamily industry, for instance, failed to persuade commissioners to reduce the proposed fee

increases for multifamily dwellings.

Parents also were unable to convince commissioners to adopt the full fees that the school district's consultant had recommended, and to make them effective this year.

In interviews after the commission's vote, Pasco County School Board member Collen Beaudoin and school board vice chairwoman Cynthia Armstrong voiced support for the county commission's action to raise the fees.

"I'm very excited to move forward with our projects, and I'm very proud of the way everybody worked together," Beaudoin said.

Armstrong added, "It's wonderful that all of the partners of the community could come together on this issue because it's so vital for us to prepare and build the schools that we need for the growth that's coming to Pasco County."

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Land O' Lakes coaches named nation's best

By Kevin Weiss

kweiss@lakerlutznews.com

The accolades haven't stopped for the Land O' Lakes High Gators softball program, months after winning its first-ever fast pitch state title.

The latest award spotlights the team's coaches.

The Gators coaching staff has been named the 2017 National Fastpitch Coaches Association (NFCA) High School Coaching Staff of the Year. The award came on July 27, and the Land O' Lakes coaches beat out staffs from other top-tier programs in California, New Jersey, Illinois and Kansas.

The recognition went to Gators third-year head coach Mitch Wilkins and assistants Edwin Rodriguez, Janet Sciales and Vinny Guarracino. They helped to guide the varsity team to a 29-3 mark, including a 3-1 victory over Plantation American Heritage in the Class 6A title game on May 20 in Vero Beach.

The staff previously was honored by the NFCA as South Region Coaching Staff of the Year on July 12.

Wilkins said the most recent NFCA honor was "completely surprising."

"We were astounded to even be regional winners," Wilkins said. "We were honored to just be nominated for regional; I didn't expect anything after that."

Wilkins said he is glad the national honor recognized not only him, but his trio of assistants, too.

The entire staff, he noted, is diversified, each providing a crucial role in the team's culture and achievements.

For instance, Rodriguez, the head junior varsity coach, instills discipline through development. Sciales, a hitting specialist, serves as a female soundboard for players. And Guarracino, the first-year volunteer assistant, provides the day-to-day exuberance.

"A lot of personalities that really work out well," Wilkins said of the staff. "We're all team players."

"We each have our strengths and our skills," added Sciales, who's coached with Wilkins for six years, dating back to their



COURTESY OF VINNY GUARRACINO

The 2017 Land O' Lakes varsity softball team show off their Class 6A state championships rings, during an Aug. 10 celebration at Beef O' Brady's at Wilderness Lakes.

stint at Hillsborough High School. "We all have our place and we function as a well-oiled machine, and none of us try to step on the other one's toes. None of us bring a gigantic ego to (coaching)."

Guarracino concurred, saying the staff "works like one unit."

Part of that is the staff's overall commitment to teaching the sport, explained Rodriguez, who has coached with Wilkins for three seasons.

"The passion that we have for coaching the girls and passing on knowledge makes us come together," Rodriguez said. "It's the love that we have working with the girls, because they're receptive to (learning)."

But, the staff's coexistence all starts with Wilkins, a retired Tampa police officer turned high school social studies teacher.

Besides the state title run—the first for any Pasco County school since 1992 — the Gators have gone a remarkable 80-9-1 in three seasons under Wilkins' leadership, and they have firmly cemented themselves as a softball powerhouse beyond the Bay Area.

Guarracino, fresh to the coaching profession, described Wilkins as "a genius" and the main influence on starting his career.

"Coach is a little bit like a psychologist,"

Guarracino explained. "He's there for us, and he adapts his style of learning. I'm a big fan. He's done a lot for me, and he's been a big instructor for me."

"Mitch knows more about ball than anybody I know, ever," Sciales, a longtime coach herself, said. "He genuinely lives, eats and breathes softball. He thinks of things that I never even think of. He's thinking two games in advance, three, five, seven games down the road. I'm thinking, 'Let me just get to the next inning.'"

"He's always going to coaching seminars — anything he can do to get better."

Sciales also noted Wilkins truly cares for each of his players.

"He's so great with the girls, and he doesn't yell," Sciales said. "I learned a long time ago that girls have to want to play for you. They need to want to perform for you, and he knows that. And, he's very consistent with them, he never lies to them; he's the fairest guy."

She continued: "You will never find another coach that works harder to get his girls scholarships than him. He takes them to (softball) showcases, and he does that so they can get scholarships, and I don't see a lot of other coaches doing that."

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YOUTH SOFTBALL REGISTRATION OPEN IN LUTZ

Registration is open for the Lutz Softball Inc., 2017 fall fast pitch season. The league is for girls, ages 4 to 18. Six divisions, including t-ball, are being offered. For information, visit LutzSoftball.com, or call (813)-949-9580.

SAINT LEO SOFTBALL CAMP SET FOR SEPT. 16

The Saint Leo University softball program will host a one-day prospect camp on Sept. 16, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., at its University Softball Stadium.

The camp, open to all softball players in eighth grade through junior college, is designed to include skill instruction in the morning session, followed by live games in the afternoon and a campus tour.

Athletes are asked to bring a lunch and a water bottle, along with all of their softball gear. Water will be supplied in the dugout.

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m., on the morning of the camp.

For information, contact assistant coach Maddie Holub at (352) 588-7112 or Madison.holub@saintleo.edu.

PHSC FOUNDATION GOLF TOURNAMENT SET OCT. 2

The eighth annual Pasco-Hernando State College Foundation Golf Tournament is set for 8 a.m., Oct. 2 at the Black Diamond Ranch Quarry Course, 2600 W. Black Diamond Circle in Lecanto. Opportunities are available for sponsorships, individual golfers and foursomes. Players are provided a breakfast buffet, lunch on the course, beverages, awards dinner banquet, official tournament apparel and goodie bags. Awards will be distributed to first-place teams and winners of the longest drive, closest to the pin and putting contests.

The annual tournament has raised more than \$250,000 for the PHSC Foundation, dedicated to the advancement of student scholarships, academic and athletic programs, libraries and other college initiatives. For information, visit PHSC.edu/foundation/events, or call (727) 816-3410.

FALL YOUTH SOCCER LEAGUE STARTS SEPT. 5

Registration is now open for the Idlewild Baptist Church 2017 Youth Fall Soccer League, which runs from Sept. 5 through Nov. 18. The league is open to all in the community, from age 3 to high school seniors. Games are played on Saturday mornings, while practices are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday or Friday at either 5 p.m., 6 p.m., or 7 p.m. For information, call the



COURTESY OF CHARLESTON SOUTHERN ATHLETICS

Shane Bucenell, a Wiregrass Ranch High product, is the starting quarterback at Charleston Southern University, a Division I FCS program in Charleston, South Carolina.

Bucenell named to FCS preseason watch list

Wiregrass Ranch High School football product Shane Bucenell, now a sophomore quarterback at Charleston Southern University, has been named to the College Football Performance Awards (CFPA) 2017 Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) National Performer of the Year Preseason Watch List.

The 5-foot-11, 190-pound dual-threat signal caller was one of 42 returning players across the FCS to be selected to the preseason watch list, and one of just three players from the Big South Conference.

The 2017 CFPA FCS National Performer of the Year Trophy is a 22-inch K-9 optic crystal tower with an 8-inch crystal football on top. All FCS players are eligible for the award, which will be announced Jan. 10.

Bucenell, a Wesley Chapel native, is

coming off an impressive rookie campaign that saw him twice earn Big South Freshman of the Week honors, as he led Charleston Southern to its second consecutive FCS playoff appearance. In eight starts at quarterback, Bucenell posted a 6-2 record, with key victories over Coastal Carolina, Liberty, and Kennesaw State. Moreover, he tied the Big South lead with 15 touchdown passes and finished second overall in total touchdowns with 19. Bucenell also is Charleston Southern's leading returning rusher, after finishing last season with 325 yards and four touchdowns.

Prior to his college career, Bucenell was a three-year starter at Wiregrass Ranch, twice earning All-Sunshine Athletic Conference honors. He also played baseball and ran track.

FHSAA TO HOST STUDENT-ATHLETE LEADERSHIP SEMINAR

The Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) recently announced it will host its inaugural Florida Student-Athlete Leadership Seminar on Aug. 1, 2018.

The event will host 100 FHSAA student-athletes from across the state. The focus will be on building leaders through teamwork, sportsmanship and citizenship.

Breakout sessions will include seminars on building your personal brand, communicating effectively with school administrators, utilizing your student leadership group and defining the role of captain on your team. The sessions also will feature leadership training from FHSAA staff, guest speakers and local school leadership.

"The FHSAA is very happy to embark on

For Wilkins, leading the Gators softball program is not about accolades or recognition.

Instead, "it's all about the girls," he said.

"Anything we can do help them compete," Wilkins said, "whether it's helping them get a college scholarship, whether it's helping them get prepared to move into college. Since I came aboard, every senior that's come through the softball program and graduated (high school) has gone on to enroll in college."

He stressed education "is first and foremost" for his players.

So, too, is "helping them become better people."

"I just try and be that role model for them," he said. "Show them that you don't have get loud, and yell and scream and demean people, to get them to be motivated."

Of course, the program's success isn't all about its coaches.

It's about its deep roster, too.

"If we didn't have the talent, then it's almost impossible to get where we did," Wilkins said. "What we do is try to develop their talent and do everything we can do to make sure they're prepared for whatever situation comes up in a game."

"You can't win a race if you don't have the horses," Sciales agreed. "It's a combination of excellent athletes, great parents, and coaches being on the same page."

Meanwhile, Gators players are appreciative for the makeup of the program's coaching staff, and how each manages the team in practices and games.

"They're really laid back compared to other coaches; they're not going to yell at you," said recent graduate Jessie McCallister, a standout centerfielder on the state title team.

"Obviously, when we do things wrong they're going to get on us, but most of the time they're really understanding," said Destiny Rodriguez, a junior utility player.

"They all help us differently; they always give us good advice," said junior ace pitcher Callie Turner. "It's good because there's no yelling involved in it. Like, I don't remember a time, especially in the past few years, of them yelling. It helps us, especially as girls, when we're not yelled at."



COURTESY OF CARROLLWOOD DAY SCHOOL BASEBALL

Carrollwood Day School baseball standout Frank Furey

AREA COMMITMENTS AND TRANSFERS

Frank Furey, a senior at Carrollwood Day School, has committed to play baseball at Gulf Coast State College, a Division I junior college in Panama City. Furey, a 5-foot-11, 175-pound left-hander, has proven to be a versatile two-way player throughout his four-year varsity prep career. As a pitcher last season, Furey posted a 3.25 ERA with 46 strikeouts in 36.2 innings. At the plate, he batted .506, with 11 extra-base hits and 14 RBIs.

Kacie Huber, a senior at Pasco High School, has committed to play softball at Florida Gulf Coast University, a Division I program in Fort Myers. The outfielder established herself as one of the top hitters in Pasco County last season, posting a team-leading .538 average, with two home runs and 12 RBIs, and earned Sunshine Athletic Conference First-Team All-Conference honors. Over her three-year varsity career, Huber has compiled a .457 average, with 29 extra-base hits and 41 RBIs.

Sophomore basketball standout Cairah Mays has transferred from Carrollwood Day School to Seffner Christian Academy. The 5-foot-7 guard played a key role for the Patriots' Class 3A state runner-up squad last season, averaging 7.1 points, 5.2 rebounds and 6.8 assists per game. Mays joins a Seffner Christian program that underwent a 28-game winning streak last season that ended in the Class 4A state semifinals.

this exciting new endeavor," FHSAA Executive Director George Tomy said, in a release. "Preparing our student-athletes to become successful in the game of life remains one of our primary goals. We look forward to a memorable event."

For information, call FHSAA Marketing Specialist Quinten Ershock at (352) 372-9551, ext. 190, or email QErshock@fhsaa.org.

Land O' Lakes' Heritage Stage makes its debut

By B.C. Manion
bcmanion@lakerlutznews.com

It was an occasion to mark the completion of Heritage Stage in Land O' Lakes, and it had all of the trappings of a traditional small-town celebration.

The American Legion Post 79 presented the colors.

Sanders Elementary students led the crowd in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Sunlake High School Seahawks band played a few numbers.

And, public officials and staff members were there from Pasco County, Pasco County Schools, the Clerk and Comptroller's Office, and the San Antonio City Council.

Others attending the Aug. 17 event included members of The Heritage Park Foundation, the Central Pasco Chamber of Commerce, the GFWC Lutz-Land O' Lakes Woman's Club, the Land O' Lakes AARP and other organizations.

The ceremony honored efforts that began more than two decades ago by the Heritage Park Foundation, seeking to create a community gathering space in Land O' Lakes.

The outdoor stage project finally reached fruition through an agreement between Pasco County and Pasco County Schools, funding from the Florida Legislature, and contributions from local contractors, local businesses, various organizations and other community partners.

As Pasco County Schools Superintendent Kurt Browning put it: "This band shell is certainly the result of a community coming together."

"This theater is a place for families, the community to come together," he said.

"We look forward to having our schools, and the community, use this facility to highlight the great talents of the kids, the families, the community members," Browning said.

Pasco County Commission Chairman Mike Moore, who served as master of ceremonies at the celebration, described the stage's physical attributes.

It measures slightly more than 1,000 square feet and spans 31-by-31 feet. It also has a green room, extra storage, power and lights, he said.

There's also a sidewalk and power outlets, "so, as events happen here, there will be an opportunity for vendors to line up around here and gather around the stage area," Moore added.

He foresees it being a busy place. "It's going to host cultural events, events such as school band assemblies, concerts, plays, cookouts, pageants and various other presentations throughout the years," Moore said.

"This is a special day," Moore said. "As a county, we're proud of this. I know that people from the Heritage Park Foundation are proud of what we're seeing here today," Moore said.

Browning credited Ray Gadd, deputy superintendent of schools, for guiding the project to completion.

"Ray has the uncanny ability of contacting contractors, skilled tradesmen, different individuals and getting them to do a lot of things, if not for free, on the cheap."

"Ray was able to leverage the dollars that we were able to get for this project and really make it work," Browning said, noting that many contractors donated their labor.

Gadd credited Humberto Gonzalez, senior project manager, and John Petrashek, director of construction services, for playing pivotal roles.



Elected officials, business owners and volunteers stepped up to cut the ribbon at Heritage Stage in Land O' Lakes.

B.C. MANION



Several members of the GFWC Lutz-Land O' Lakes Woman's Club were at the Aug. 17 ceremony to celebrate the completion of Heritage Stage. The club has donated three benches, which will be placed in the area that's near the stage.

DIANE KORTUS



From left, Pasco County School Board Chairman Allen Altman, School Board Vice Chairwoman Cynthia Armstrong, Pasco County Commission Chairman Mike Moore, Pasco County Schools Superintendent Kurt Browning, Assistant County Administrator Cathy Pearson, Pasco County Commissioner Ron Oakley, Pasco Schools Deputy Superintendent Ray Gadd and Pasco County School Board member Colleen Beaudoin stand near the plaque that names public officials holding office at the time of the Heritage Stage dedication.

B.C. MANION

"They are really the guys that need credit for helping this project come to fruition, and we owe them a debt of gratitude for this building here today," Gadd said.

Gadd also noted: "We actually put out a bid on the street, and we said we need somebody to manage this project, and we need them to do it for free."

Walbridge stepped up. "When we started this project, the estimate was it would cost us \$485,000, and we brought this project in for \$250,000," Gadd said.

Local contractors and friends of the community made that happen, Gadd said.

The final speaker at the celebration was Sandy Graves, of the Heritage Park Foundation. She's been pushing for the stage — to anyone who would listen — for years.

"Heritage Park began almost 20 years ago with a mission to revive this park and make it truly a community center," Graves said, noting the community created the original community center in 1962.

"I grew up with a father who loved this community. He also loved musicals. He had all of the musical albums," said Graves, a Land O' Lakes native.

She then injected a note of joy to the occasion, singing excerpts from "Oklahoma," ("Oh, what a beautiful morning, Oh, what a beautiful day, I've got a beautiful feeling, everything's coming my way").

And, "The Sound of Music," ("Climb every mountain, ford every stream, follow every rainbow til you find your dream).

And finally, "My Fair Lady." ("I could have danced all night, I could have danced all night and still have begged for more. I could have spread my wings and done a thousand things I've never done before ...")

Like the other speakers, Graves expressed gratitude to a lengthy list of people for helping to make the dream of a community stage come true.

She added: "We have a few finishing touches, such as historical markers that Dr. Susan MacManus is helping us with that tell our community story, and three benches that will be placed that were donated by the (GFWC) Lutz-Land O' Lakes Woman's Club."

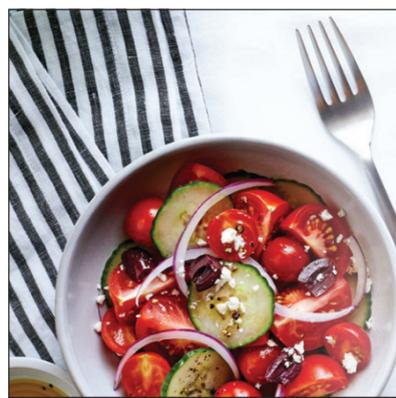
But, she said, the stage is ready for action, and an act has been booked.

The Florida Orchestra will be bringing its brass section for a Pops in the Park holiday performance in December.



B.C. MANION

Sanders Elementary students led the crowd in the Pledge of Allegiance. The children, from left, are Isabella Wilson, Madison Beck, Coda Lambert, Andrea Cortes, Jeswin Ullas and Michael Saffer.



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PLEASE NOTE: OWNERS NAME AND ADDRESS MUST BE INCLUDED FOR YOUR PET TO BE CONSIDERED FOR PUBLICATION.

PET PAWS

GRANT GIVEN FOR SNIP PROGRAM

Pasco County Animal Services has been awarded \$25,000 by Florida Animal Friend Inc., to help fund Trap/Neuter/Vaccinate/Return (TNVR) in the Zephyrhills area where feral and community cat populations are high.

Animal Services submitted the grant proposal in support of the Spay/Neuter in Pasco (SNIP) program in April, and the grant was approved Aug. 7.

Florida Animal Friend is an animal welfare organization with a mission to help end pet overpopulation by funding for grants through the sale of specialty license plates.

The money will help reduce unsterilized feral and community cats residing in Zephyrhills, which will help lower the shelter's cat intake and decrease cat euthanasia, while increasing the shelter's live release rate.

For more information, please visit PascoCountyFL.net/PAS.

WORKSHOP FOR PET PARENTS

Lisa Morrissey, of the Pasco County

Animals Services, will offer a monthly workshop for working pet parents on the second Tuesday of every month. Rescue groups can attend, too.

Parents and their fur kids can learn basic obedience, how to avoid and fix problem behaviors, and the importance of exercise and mental stimulation.

Classes are \$15 each.

For information or to RSVP, contact Lisa Morrissey at (727) 808-6724 or lmorrissey@pascocountyfl.net.

SHARE YOUR PET NEWS

If you have pet news about adoptions, walks or other events for pet owners and their pets, you can let us know by sending us an email. We just need the basics: who, what, when, where and why.

The information should be submitted two weeks prior to the desired publication date. We also need a contact name and number; in case we have questions.

There is no guarantee of publication, but we consider each item we receive.

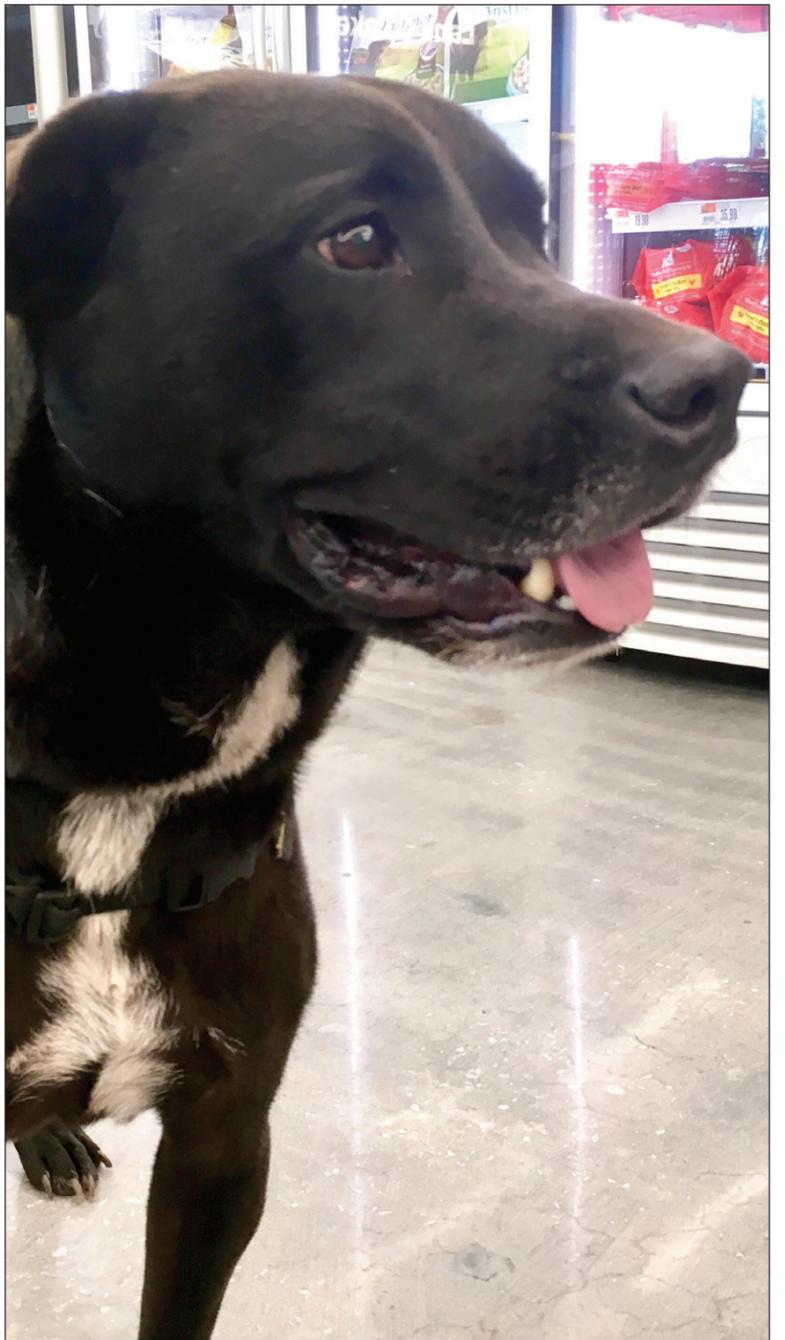
If you'd like to make a submission, send it to news@lakerlutznews.com.

Adopt A Friend FOR LIFE



Come meet Autumn

Autumn is about 3 years old and is a favorite at the shelter. The volunteers regularly take her into our socialization rooms, where she loves to cuddle and is very affectionate. Autumn has only been with the shelter for a couple weeks and would make a great addition to your home. All pets are spayed/neutered, vaccinated and microchipped when they are adopted out.



Hulk loves to be scratched

Hulk is a sweet boy and has been with the shelter for about two months. He seems to be very interested in meeting other dogs, but meet-and-greets are always encouraged. Hulk loves the feeling of a comb. This boy has really come out of his shell, and seeks attention and likes to bond with people.

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

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62								63					64		

ACROSS

- "Hamlet" has five
- Heirloom location
- Washington locale, with "the"
- Farm soil
- Hindu deity
- ___ vera
- Creole vegetable
- Property of being chosen
- Souvenir shop item
- "I swear!"
- Cheat, slangily
- "... ___ he drove out of sight"
- The ___ Union
- Star on keyboard
- Airy
- Some Olympians, nowadays
- Guy Fawkes Day mo.
- Cabal
- "Much ___ About Nothing"
- Havana's home
- Biochemistry abbr.
- Sean Connery, for one
- A Swiss army knife has lots of them
- Lighter, brighter shade of vibrant color
- People disliking something
- "___ we having fun yet?"
- Air bag?
- Great flood of water
- Lifting device
- End of the quip
- Length x width, for a rectangle
- Cheer starter
- Noted blind mathematician
- Blab
- "Ah, me!"
- Destitute
- Fill

DOWN

- Bunches
- Furnace fuel
- Container weight
- Crushing
- Back up
- "So ___!"
- Knight fight
- "___ fallen ..." (contraction)
- Official seals
- Bearing
- On the safe side, at sea
- Red ink amount
- "___ we forget"
- Bolted
- Clod chopper
- Oops!
- Express
- Corrupt
- Eagerness
- Dirty coat
- Occupied, as a lavatory
- Dry
- Russian beer with a sour taste
- Clip
- Diamonds can be used to do this
- Make more attractive
- Monasteries
- Bacchanal
- Empty stomach
- "Go on ..."
- Like composition paper
- Buddhist divinity
- Axis of ___
- Coins of Bulgaria
- Artifice
- "Mi chiamano Mimi," e.g.
- Transmitted
- Dressing ingredient
- Cast

SEE SOLUTIONS, PAGE 6B

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ROTARY BREAKFAST

The Rotary Club of New Tampa will have its weekly breakfast Aug. 25 at the Tampa Palms Golf & Country Club, 5811 Tampa Palms Blvd., in Tampa.

Join Debby Amon, Joe Rutherford and Nikki Smith, and Get to Know Your Fellow Rotarian.

The cost is free for first-time guests, and \$12 thereafter.

For more information, please contact Jennifer Cofini at (813) 907-7800, ext. 212 or jcofini@parksmotorgroup.com.

POTENTIAL FRANCHISE OWNERS

Discovery Point Child Development Center will host a Tampa area "Discovery Day" for potential franchise owners Aug. 26 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., at Discovery Point Suncoast Crossing, 1812 Crossing Blvd., in Odessa.

Entrepreneurs will be able to meet with Discovery Point's support staff and franchise owners, and walk through each step to center ownership, according to a news release from Trevlino/Keller.

Presenters will include Andrea Moore, executive director of operations and training; Spencer Reid, vice president of franchise business development; and local franchise owner Salim Karnaby.

Karnaby will be available for one-on-one meetings.

Discovery Point has nearly 50 locations throughout the southeast.

RSVPs are required for attendance.

To reserve a spot, please visit DiscoveryPointFranchise.com/expo-meeting.

NEW BOARD LEADER

Shelly Glenn, chief marketing and sales officer for Florida Cancer Specialists, is the new chairwoman of the board of trustees for the Suncoast chapter of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, according to a news release from the chapter.

The mission of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society is to find cures and ensure access to treatments for blood cancer patients. The Suncoast chapter serves patients in Charlotte, Citrus, Collier, Desoto, Hardee, Hernando, Lee, Manatee, Sarasota, Pinellas, Hillsborough and Pasco counties. It also partners with Florida Cancer Specialists.

Glenn was named Woman of the Year in 2014, the same year she joined the chapter's board of trustees. In 2015-2017, she was appointed chairwoman of the Suncoast Chapter Leadership Team of Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's Man and Woman of the Year initiatives.

Glenn joined Florida Cancer Specialists in 2012, and was named chief marketing and sales officer the following year. She has friends and family who have battled cancer, and volunteers with other organizations in support of cancer patients and their families.



Shelly Glenn

She currently serves on the board of directors of the Florida Cancer Specialists Foundation, Jack & Jill Late Stage Cancer Foundation, and is chairwoman of the marketing and communications committee for the Florida Society of Clinical Oncology.

BREAKFAST MEETING

The East Pasco Networking Group will meet Aug. 29 at 7:30 a.m., at the Village Inn at 5214 Gall Blvd., in Zephyrhills.

Guest speaker will be State Rep. Amber Mariano, who represents District 36.

For more information, please contact Chairman Nils Lenz at (813) 782-9491 or nilslenz@gmail.com, or Vice Chairwoman

Vicky Jones at (813) 431-1149 or donlvic1@yahoo.com.

WOMEN-N-CHARGE

Join Women-n-Charge Sept. 1 from 11:15 a.m. to 1:15 p.m., at Pebble Creek Country Club, 10550 Regents Park Drive in New Tampa. The women share their talents and resources, and they build relationships with other women in business.

Representatives of Belk department store will visit with updates in fashion, color and makeup for the fall season, and the upcoming holidays. Come find out what's hot, what's not, what's in and what's out.

The cost is \$15 for members and \$18 for all guests.

Please register at Women-n-charge.com. For information, call (813) 600-9848, or email admin@women-n-charge.com.

NETWORKING BREAKFAST

The Wednesday Morning Network Group will meet Sept. 6 at 7:30 a.m., at Hungry Harry's Family Bar-B-Que, at 3116 Land O' Lakes Blvd., in Land O' Lakes. Each attendee will be able to present a 30-second pitch. The cost is \$7 for members, if preregistered by Aug. 31, or \$10 for members and non-members at the door.

Please register online at CentralPascoChamber.com.

For more information, you can contact the chamber at (813) 909-2722 or office@centralpascochamber.com.

DUNKIN DONUTS IN LAND O' LAKES

Dunkin Donuts is popping up all over. A few months ago a Dunkin Donuts opened on U.S. 41 in Lutz, in Hillsborough County.

Two more shops are under construction on the northern end of Land O' Lakes Boulevard and to the west, on State Road 54.

One is at 7044 Land O' Lakes Blvd., just south of Wilderness Lake Boulevard and opposite the Land O' Lakes High School.

Dunkin Donuts is also building at the Shops at Ballantrae, on State Road 54.

NEW 7-ELEVENS FOR PASCO

Pasco County planners have two back-to-back pre-application meetings scheduled Aug. 29 to discuss 7-Eleven convenience stores at the southwest corner of Land O' Lakes Boulevard and Gator Lane in Land O' Lakes; and another store at the northeast corner of Eiland Boulevard and Dean Dairy Road, in Zephyrhills.

The pre-application meetings are the first steps in the permitting process.

SYNERGY REMODELING

Representatives of Synergy Pharmaceuticals met July 31 with Pasco County planners to discuss remodeling an existing building at the Odessa Business Park, at 2107 Gunn Highway.

The pre-application meeting generally is the first step in the development and permitting process.

The company bought the property in 2016 for about \$625,000, according to county records.

The approximately 14,000-square-foot building at the business park formerly housed multiple tenants, including offices and Gabbie's Grill. Synergy officials on the pre-application form indicated construction costs of about \$1 million.

A conceptual plan includes a solar covered walkway at the entrance and a solar covered parking area. On-site amenities also would include a gymnasium and a covered outdoor bar and café.

The company has a facility on U.S. 19 in Palm Harbor.

KIDDIE ACADEMY AT WIREGRASS

Representatives of Kiddie Academy scheduled a pre-application meeting Aug. 22 to discuss building a child development center at Wiregrass Ranch.

The approximately 9,700-square-foot facility would be built along Hueland Pond Boulevard. The Maryland-based company offers franchises, and has a Kiddie Academy in Tampa, on Casey Road in the Carrollwood community.

The pre-application meeting is a first step in the permitting process.

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Helping to fill the gap

GFWC Lutz-Land O' Lakes Woman's Club Public Issues Chairperson Marguerite Humet, right, and fellow club member Dianne Finn assembled, packed and shipped 42 boxes of necessities and treats to female members of the military stationed abroad. The needs of woman troops often are overlooked in gift packages, so these club members sought to help fill that gap by stepping up and providing ladies' items for women serving overseas.

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