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INSIDE, PAGE 1B

Education is key issue at town hall

By Kevin Weiss
kweiss@lakerlutznews.com

Education was a recurring theme during a recent town hall meeting that featured U.S. Rep. Gus Bilirakis, State Rep. Danny Burgess, and State Sens. Wilton Simpson and Tom Lee.

About 100 residents gathered inside the Pasco Middle School Auditorium on Aug. 22 to voice their thoughts and concerns with their local representatives, via a question-and-answer-style town meeting that lasted more than two hours.

The state's public education system was among the key topics.

One speaker, Lisa Mazza, a third-grade teacher at Wesley Chapel Elementary, expressed concern over the recently passed HB 7069 and its charter-friendly measure that allows charter schools statewide to get a proportionate share of school district construction money, through a local property tax.

The 274-page bill, signed into law last month by Gov. Rick Scott, has been controversial, drawing criticisms from many of Florida's traditional public school leaders

and teachers for its various pro-charter measures.

Besides charter construction funding, another measure in the bill that has been divisive is the "Schools of Hope" program.

"Schools of Hope" sets up new rules and new funding to encourage charter schools to move into areas where the nearest traditional public schools have persistent low ratings.

The bill allows such "schools of hope" to open up either in the attendance zone of, or within 5 miles of, a local traditional public school that has earned either an F or D grade from the state for three straight years.

The "hope" schools would be run by charter school operators, certified by the state as having a record of serving students from low-income families, and raising student performances above the county and state averages.

The bill sets aside \$140 million that could be used to support and subsidize "schools of hope."

Burgess acknowledged he wished there

See TOWN HALL, page 11A



KEVIN WEISS

U.S. Rep. Gus Bilirakis, a Republican representing Florida's 12th Congressional district, addresses constituents during an Aug. 22 town hall meeting at the Pasco Middle School Auditorium. Other featured speakers were State Rep. Danny Burgess, R-San Antonio; State Sen. Wilton Simpson, R-Trilby; and, State Sen. Tom Lee, R-Thonotosassa.

Book pays homage to Florida minority political trailblazers

By B.C. Manion
bcmansion@lakerlutznews.com

When Dr. Susan A. MacManus set out a decade ago to write "Florida's Minority Trailblazers," she wanted to recognize the men and women who changed the face of Florida's government.

Her book does just that.

She recounts the personal stories of the first minority men and women elected or appointed to state legislative, executive and judicial offices, and to the U.S. Congress since the 1960s.

Through personal interviews, MacManus discovered what motivated them to seek political office.

Her book provides a wealth of information about how they ran their campaigns, what kinds of discrimination they encountered, what the experience meant to them and what advice they would offer aspiring politicians.

One of the politicians profiled is Bob Martinez, a former mayor of Tampa, who became Florida's first Hispanic governor.

MacManus said she decided to write the book because she believes it was important to preserve these stories as part of Florida's political history.

"It's very easy to take for granted what we have at present, but it's also important to know how we got to this point, and who took risks and made sacrifices for the public good," MacManus said, during a recent interview in her Land O' Lakes home.

Richard E. Foglesong, author of "Immigrant Prince: Mel Martinez and the American Dream," wrote that MacManus' book "Saves a piece of Florida's political history by narrating the personal stories of the state's 'minority trailblazers' from the Civil Rights Movement to the present day."

In essence, MacManus said she wanted to write a book that chronicled real stories



COURTESY OF FLORIDA MEMORY PROJECT (PART OF THE STATE ARCHIVES)

This is just one of numerous photographs in "Florida's Minority Trailblazers," a book by Susan MacManus, of Land O' Lakes.



COURTESY OF SUSAN MACMANUS

Dr. Susan MacManus, who lives in Land O' Lakes, is widely known for her expertise regarding Florida politics.

about real people.

"The whole purpose was to show, through people, the growing diversity of Florida, both racially and ethnically, as well as politically through biographies and in-

person accounts," she said.

In the forward of the book, David R. Colburn, writes "There is perhaps no recent book that reminds readers of the state's rich political and diverse culture more than "Florida's Minority Trailblazers," by Susan MacManus.

"She emphasizes that the story of Florida is more than just about new beginnings, population growth, and economic opportunity; it is also about the struggle for civil rights, equal justice, opportunity for all Floridians, and political background," Colburn wrote.

The volume will come in handy for historians and journalists, and college professors, too, said MacManus, who is a distinguished professor at the University of South Florida.

"There were literally no materials that were readily available for teaching that would be able to personalize the changing faces of our elected officials, in state politics, particularly," she said.

The book looks at factors that forced the

See BOOK, page 11A



B.C. MANION

A project that would ease traffic congestion on Wesley Chapel Boulevard, also known as County Road 54, is scheduled in fiscal year 2018. Planning calls for widening the road from two lanes to four lanes, from State Road 54/56 to Progress Parkway.

Outlining a road map to tackle Pasco traffic problems

By Kathy Steele
ksteele@lakerlutznews.com

Pasco County's residential and commercial growth is causing more traffic headaches on the area's roads.

At an Aug. 21 session, residents had a chance to learn about what's planned to tackle the area's congestion during The Pasco County Transportation Summit.

U.S. Rep. Gus Bilirakis and Pasco County Commission Chairman Mike Moore hosted the event at the Pasco-Hernando State College Porter Campus, in Wesley Chapel.

Other panelists included David Gwynn,

District 7 secretary for the Florida Department of Transportation; Pasco County Administrator Dan Biles; and, Hope Allen, chief executive officer and president of The Greater Wesley Chapel Chamber of Commerce, which recently merged with The Greater Pasco Chamber of Commerce.

The meeting focused on project updates for east Pasco and Wesley Chapel.

Audience members submitted written questions to the panel.

Their queries centered on current and future road projects; public transit; new technology, such as self-driving vehicles; and, passenger rail on CSX rail lines.

Charity Henesy-Brooks, who lives in the Meadow Pointe subdivision, said she came away with information she didn't know before. "It's good to know they are trying to get ahead of the (traffic) problem," she said. "At least they have these goals."

For Moore, the basic issue is how to build the right infrastructure to support economic development and meet residents' needs.

Anyone who drives in the county knows the frustration of long waits in traffic, he said. "Relief is on the way. There are a lot of

See TRAFFIC, page 11A

Tourist tax increase to help finance Wiregrass sports complex

By Kathy Steele
ksteele@lakerlutznews.com

Pasco County commissioners approved a 2 percent increase in the tourism tax and cleared the way to finance construction of the Wiregrass Sports Complex of Pasco County.

The added revenues will be used as collateral to secure a construction loan of up to \$15 million for a 98,000-square-foot multi-purpose indoor sports venue.

The tax increase is on top of an existing 2 percent tax collected on hotel rentals, often described as the "heads in beds" tax. At a total of 4 percent, Pasco's tourism tax rate will remain lower than most other counties in Tampa Bay.

County commissioners also approved a series of resolutions setting up the framework for a private/public partnership between Pasco, which will own the complex, and RADD Sports, which will operate and manage the facility.

The county will receive lease payments and share in profits generated from the sports complex.

Besides the indoor facility, seven outdoor sports fields, an amphitheater with an event lawn, trails, pavilions and a playground are planned.

County commissioners also approved a ground lease for a 128-room Marriott Residence Inn to be built on about 2 acres within the complex. Mainsail Lodge and Development will build the hotel at an estimated cost of \$18.5 million.

Funding for the sports complex also will

come from about \$11 million collected from previously pledged tourism dollars and sales tax revenues.

"I think it's time we put this money in the bank to work," said Pasco County Commissioner Kathryn Starkey. "It's long overdue that we took the leap and did something big with this money."

Several years ago, the Porter family - developers of Wiregrass Ranch - donated more than 200 acres near the The Shops at Wiregrass for the sports complex. But, proposals to build on the land fell apart, including one for an outdoor baseball complex.

"We know what happened in the past - nothing," said Pasco County Commission Chairman Mike Moore. "This is a test in showing cohesiveness, that we're all working together."

During public comment, Hope Allen, president of The Greater Wesley Chapel Chamber of Commerce, and Steve Domonkos of the Wiregrass mall, spoke in favor of increasing the tourism tax.

"We're really becoming a sports tournament destination," said Domonkos. "That sets us apart from other parts of Florida. It benefits the community as a whole."

The vote to increase the tourism tax passed unanimously, but it stirred debate among county commissioners.

"It's important that we get our fair share," said Pasco County Commissioner Mike Wells Jr.

He sought money for boat ramps and for boosting the scalloping industry.



COURTESY OF PETER C. LENT

This is what the Wiregrass Sports Complex site is expected to look like when the project is completed.

Mariano wanted money for beach re-nourishment, pointing out a need at Sun West Park. He also said the county's tourism development council needed to give its opinion before county commissioners voted on the matter.

The council, which is an advisory board, had a meeting the day after the county commission voted. County commissioners declined to delay their votes.

Mariano later was the lone dissenter in voting against the agreement for RADD Sports to operate the sports complex. He objected to the loan arrangements, preferring that RADD Sports do its own financing.

"We shouldn't be putting tourism money there," Mariano said.

County officials noted that the tourism dollars are pledged as collateral. "If they (RADD Sports) perform well, you may not even have to dip into there," said David Goldstein, chief assistant county attorney for Pasco.

The lease agreement requires RADD Sports to pay the county \$60,000, or 11 percent of gross revenues. The funds can be used to repay the loan.

The county also will benefit from new tourism dollars. Officials with the county's Economic Development Office estimate that 80 percent of hotel rentals will come from off-site hotels.

Construction or proposals for more hotels are expected to significantly increase the county's hotel room inventory.

In addition, the county, RADD Sports and the Porter family reached agreement on road work and ball fields.

At least one field will be open to the public at least 90 percent of the time. The remaining fields will be accessible to residents of Wiregrass.

The Porters will speed up roadwork, including a link from the sports complex to State Road 54 to the north.

"We do believe it's a win-win for the county," Goldstein said.



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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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Save time and money, with make-ahead meals

By Betsy Crisp, MS, LD/N
Special to The Laker / Lutz News



Put those take-out menus back in the drawer!

You can save time and money in your own kitchen by making meals ahead and freezing them. That way, you'll have them for those "too busy to cook" days.

When life gets too hectic, pull out of one of your prepared meals.

Not only will your meals be tastier, they'll also be healthier than those you are tempted to buy on-the-go.

You may have heard stories about how you can make a month of freezer meals in a day — and that's definitely possible. But, I prefer to simply double up on recipes and expand my inventory of prepared meals as I go.

If you cook a double recipe a few times a week, you can enjoy one now and freeze one for later.

These type of meals are great for people who:

- Rely on fast food now, but want to change their ways so they can eat healthier with less prep and in less time

- Are too busy at times to cook a healthy and complete meal on several nights a week

- Are ill and unable to cook

- Are cooking for just one or two, and recipes make too many servings

Just about everyone can benefit by planning ahead, preparing your meals and freezing them.

Of course, there are some food items that don't freeze well.

For instance, frozen lettuce, cucumbers, bean sprouts and raw potatoes turn mushy when they're thawed.

Hard-boiled eggs become rubbery.

And, egg-based sauces, including mayonnaise, will separate and curdle when they're thawed.

Many dairy products, such as cream, yogurt, cream cheese, sour cream and cottage cheese, sometimes become watery when

Oven-Baked Chicken Tender Strips

(kid-friendly, fast-food competitor)

Ingredients:

- 3 large chicken breasts (approximately 1 pound = 4 servings)
- 1 cup flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 2 eggs
- 1 cups Italian-style, whole wheat panko bread-crumbs (regular breadcrumbs will also work)

Instructions:

- Pre-heat oven to 350°F.
- Cut chicken breasts into equal-sized strips.
- Into 3 shallow bowls or pie plates:
 - In one bowl, add flour, salt, and pepper and mix well.
 - In another bowl beat 2 eggs.
 - In third bowl add 1 cup Italian-style bread-crumbs
- Dip each piece of chicken in flour, then egg and then breadcrumbs.
- For freezing: After dipping chicken in flour, eggs and breadcrumbs, place on parchment-covered baking sheet and freeze until frozen solid (takes approximately 3 hours). Transfer to a freezer zipper-top bag and place back in the freezer.
- Baking later: Place frozen strips on baking sheet and bake at 350 degrees Fahrenheit in oven for 30 minutes to 35 minutes, or until cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 165 degrees Fahrenheit.

- For cooking now: Place chicken strips on a greased or parchment-covered baking sheet. Bake for 20 minutes to 25 minutes, or until cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 165 degrees Fahrenheit. Turn chicken strips halfway through cooking, to ensure even cooking and crispiness.
- Serve with ranch or blue cheese dressing, honey-mustard or barbecue sauce for dipping.

Beef or Chicken Enchiladas

Ingredients:

- 1 pound lean ground beef (or 3 chicken breasts = 1 pound)
- 1 medium onion diced
- 3 cups reduced-fat shredded cheddar cheese, divided
- 10 medium (8-inch) whole wheat tortillas
- 2 cans (10-ounce) red enchilada sauce
- Optional: 1 can (15.5-ounce) black or red beans; jalapenos or green chilies; 1 cup cooked white or yellow rice

Instructions:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
- In a frying pan, cook ground beef and drain (if using chicken, place 4 raw chicken breasts into a pot of water, and boil and simmer for approximately 20 minutes, or until chicken is able to be shredded).
- Mix 1 cup cheese, onion, beef/chicken and 1 can red enchilada sauce in a bowl. (Add optional black beans/peppers/chilies/rice, if desired)
- With a large scoop (approx. ½ cup), fill each tortilla with mixture. Roll it up, and place it in large



BETSY CRISP

You can make a delicious meal of enchiladas to enjoy now, and by doubling the recipe, you can freeze a pan of enchiladas to cook and enjoy later.

9-inch-by-13-inch baking dish with seams down. Repeat until all mixture is used.

- Pour the second can of enchilada sauce over the top.
- Layer 2 cups shredded cheese over sauce.
- To freeze for later: Cover with foil, label and freeze. Bake later (after thawing overnight in the refrigerator) at 350 degrees Fahrenheit for 30 minutes to 45 minutes, until cheese is melted and bubbling, and reaches a minimum internal temperature of 65 degrees Fahrenheit on a quick-temp meat thermometer.
- To bake now: Bake at 350 degrees Fahrenheit for 25 minutes to 30 minutes, until cheese is melted and bubbling.
- Serve with sour cream, salsa, lettuce, beans or rice. Makes 10 servings (1 per person).

thawed, but if used in a baked dish, they will probably be alright.

When you're getting ready to make some frozen meals, you'll need to have something to store them in.

So, first decide what storage containers are right for you. Freezer zipper-top bags in quarts and gallon sizes are great and take up less room than containers, but they are single-use. Be sure to squeeze out all extra air, and make sure that they are sealed tight, so that they do not leak. The aluminum foil pans with covers

are also just good for one use and then must be discarded.

Check discount stores for lower prices. Reusable plastic, glass or metal containers are another option. Some are made stackable for easier storage. The size you pick will depend on if you are cooking for two, four, six or more.

Be sure to label with content, date and cooking instructions, especially if you are sharing with a friend.

For best quality, try to use within 3 months.

All leftovers and casseroles should be cooked until they are reheated to a minimum internal temperature of 165 degrees Fahrenheit on an instant-read/quick-temp meat thermometer. (By the way, no kitchen should be without an instant read/quick-temp meat thermometer, because it is the only accurate way to test for doneness.)

Betsy Crisp is a Professor Emeritus, UF/IFAS Extension - Family & Consumer Sciences

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EDITORIAL			
B.C. MANION <i>Editor</i> bcmansion@lakerlutznews.com	KEVIN WEISS <i>Staff Writer</i> kweiss@lakerlutznews.com	KATHY STEELE <i>Staff Writer</i> ksteELE@lakerlutznews.com	MARY RATHMAN <i>Editorial Assistant</i> mrathman@lakerlutznews.com
ADVERTISING			
TERRI WILLIAMSON <i>Senior Account Manager</i> twilliamson@lakerlutznews.com	ANNE KIBBE <i>Account Manager</i> akibbe@lakerlutznews.com	CHERYL MICHEL <i>Account Manager</i> cmichel@lakerlutznews.com	RACHEL THOMPSON <i>Classified & Directory Sales</i> rthompson@lakerlutznews.com
DESIGN		ACCOUNTING	
CAROLYN BENNETT <i>Art Director</i> cbennett@lakerlutznews.com	MATTHEW MISTRETTA <i>Graphic Designer</i> mmistretta@lakerlutznews.com	STEFANIE BURLINGAME <i>Graphic Designer</i> sburlingame@lakerlutznews.com	MARY EBERHARD <i>Accounting</i> meberhard@lakerlutznews.com

LOCATION: 3632 Land O' Lakes Blvd., Suite 102 • Land O' Lakes, FL 34639
 MAIL: P.O. Box 479 • Lutz, FL 33548
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What's Happening

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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 a.m. to 7:30 a.m., at Bay Hope Church, 17030 Lakeshore Road in Lutz. For information, call Dave Young at (813) 760-9543, or email Ray Harrison at rayharrison1111@gmail.com.

DISASTER PLANNING GUIDE

The Zephyrhills Public Library, 5347 Eighth St., has the latest Pasco County Disaster Planning Guide, available and free to the public. Senior and mobile home parks can also get a stack for clubhouses. For information, call the library at (813) 780-0064.

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., 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.

WOMAN'S CLUB

The Woman's Club of Zephyrhills, a member of the Greater Federation of Woman's Clubs, will meet Sept. 1 at noon. Any local woman age 18 or older can attend. The club provides assistance and resources to community groups, including a local elementary school, Thomas Promise and Meals on Wheels. Lunch will be served. For information, call (813) 404-5789 or (813) 423-2328.

TEEN GAME NIGHT

The Land O' Lakes Library, 2818 Collier Parkway, will host a teen game night Sept. 1 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., for ages 12 to 18. There will be video games and free snacks. For information, call (813) 929-1214.

WATER AEROBICS

The Lake Padgett Estates East pool will host water aerobics every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday at 10 a.m., starting Sept. 2. The cost is \$5 per session for residents of LPEE, and \$8 per session for non-residents. For information or to reserve your space, call (813) 431-6822.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

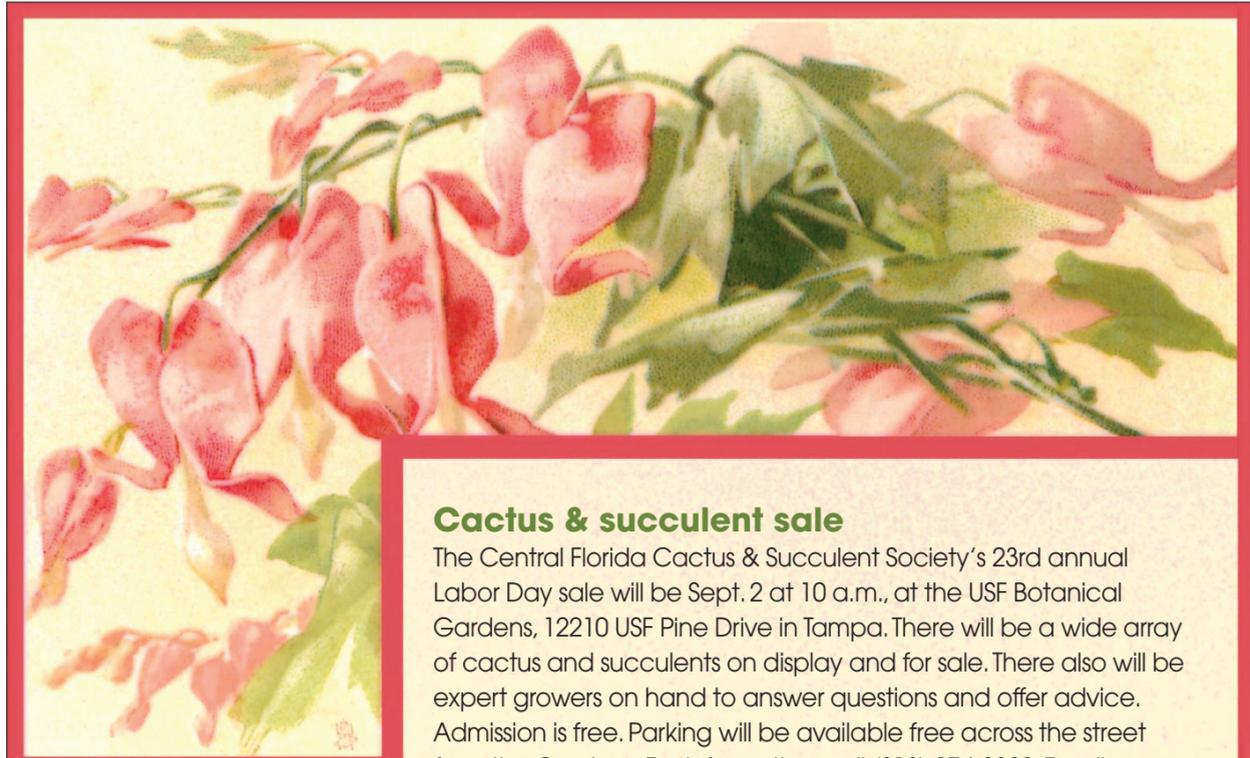
The Friends of the New River Library, 34043 State Road 54 in Zephyrhills, will meet Sept. 2 at noon, in support of the library programs for all ages. For information, call (813) 788-6375.

THE MARKET PLACE

The Market Place at Hibiscus Park, Seventh Street and Bougainvillea Avenue, in Dade City, will kick off the season Sept. 2 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The featured vendor will be Homespun Goods, specializing in goat milk and wool products. Other vendors will include fresh produce, garden accessories, home décor, soaps, jewelry, honey and more. Admission is free to this pet-friendly event. For information, call Lucy Avila at (352) 424-4972.

3-D PRINTING

The Land O' Lakes Library, 2818 Collier Parkway, will host a 3-D printing seminar Sept. 2 from 10 a.m. to noon on the open source 3-D design software, Tinkercad. Participants, ages 9 to 15, can also learn about the 3-D printer and print something. Those that want to use Tinkercad, must create an account. Proper dress code, a liability waiver and



Cactus & succulent sale

The Central Florida Cactus & Succulent Society's 23rd annual Labor Day sale will be Sept. 2 at 10 a.m., at the USF Botanical Gardens, 12210 USF Pine Drive in Tampa. There will be a wide array of cactus and succulents on display and for sale. There also will be expert growers on hand to answer questions and offer advice. Admission is free. Parking will be available free across the street from the Gardens. For information, call (813) 974-2329. For directions, visit Gardens.usf.edu.

Garden club

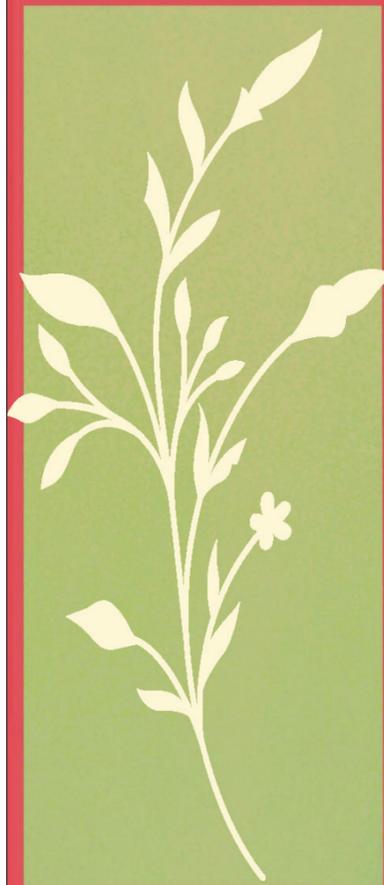
The Land O' Lakes Garden Club will meet Sept. 5 at 10:30 a.m., at the Land O' Lakes Community Center, 5401 Land O' Lakes Blvd. There will be a business meeting, collection of dues, and planning future meetings. For information, call Marie Woody at (813) 961-2697.

Water gardening

UF/IFAS Pasco Extension will offer a free seminar on water gardening Sept. 5 at 6:30 p.m., at the Land O' Lakes Library, 2818 Collier Parkway. A master gardener will explain how to avoid algae growth and leaks, what materials are needed and how to build a pond. Registration is required by visiting tinyurl.com/y8ekyjxh.

Lutz garden club

The Orange Blossom Garden Club of Lutz will meet Sept. 6 at 10 a.m., at the Lutz Civic Center, 98 First Ave., N.W. The guest speaker will be Harriet Gord, master gardener, on the subject of tomatoes. Members are asked to bring a labeled, small rooted cutting to trade and a canned good for the food bank. For information, visit Facebook.com/Orange Blossom Garden Club of Lutz, Florida.



registration are required. For information and to register, call (813) 929-1214.

DRONE CLUB

The Hugh Embry Library, 14215 Fourth St., in Dade City, will host a Kids' Drone Club Sept. 2 at 11 a.m., for first grade to fifth grade. Participants can learn how to fly a drone. For information, call (352) 567-3576.

DADE CITY CAR SHOW

The all new Dade City Car Show will take place Sept. 2 in downtown Dade City from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. The fee to enter is \$10 per car. Trophies will be presented, and there will be giveaways to the first cars registered. There also will be activities for kids. For information, call Ronnie Setser at (813) 879-1616.

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

The Zephyrhills Historical Association will meet Sept. 5 at 5:30 p.m., at the Zephyrhills Public Library, 5347 Eighth St. Refreshments include provided drinks and food brought in by members. For information, call (813)-780-0064.

PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB

The Land O' Lakes Photography Club will meet Sept. 5 at 7 p.m., at the Land O' Lakes Community Center, 5401 Land O' Lakes Blvd. The program will be on backgrounds and perspectives. All levels of photographers can attend. For information, email LOLPhotoClub2017@gmail.com.

BOOK DISCUSSION

The Hugh Embry Library, 14215 Fourth St., in Dade City, will host the Hugh Embry Mystery Book Discussion Group Sept. 5 at 2 p.m., to talk about "The Paris Librarian" by Mark Pryor. New members are invited. For information, call (352) 567-3576.

LIBRARY STORYTIMES

The Hugh Embry Library, 14215 Fourth St., in Dade City, will host a toddler storytime Sept. 6 at 11:15 a.m., for ages up to 2 years old; and, a preschool storytime the same day at noon, for ages 3 to 5. For information, call (352) 567-3576.

BIBLE STUDY IN LUTZ

Women at the Well, a weekly Bible study group, will meet starting Sept. 6 at 10:30 a.m., at Heritage Church, 1854 Oak Grove Blvd., in Lutz. The group will be studying Parables. Child care will be provided. There is a book fee. For information, call (813) 948-8860.

DEMOCRATIC CLUB

The Land O' Lakes Democratic Club will meet Sept. 6 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., at Beef O' Brady's, 21539 Village Lakes Shopping Center in Land O' Lakes. The guest speaker will be Beverly Ledbetter on the topic of "Prejudice, Discrimination, Racism... Defining the Terms: The Impact of Plessy V. Ferguson." For information, visit LOLDC on Facebook.

COMMUNITY BIBLE STUDY

Community Bible Study is a nondenominational Bible study open to all women and children (nursery, preschool and home-school). The group meets Thursdays from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30

Continued on next page

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a.m., at Harvester United Methodist Church on Collier Parkway in Land O' Lakes. The group will be studying the Book of Romans starting Sept. 7. For information or to register, email Tylene Headley at jthead_1999@yahoo.com.

EAGLE SCOUT DINNER

Grand Master Richard G. Hoover, of The Grand Lodge of Florida, will present honors to seven Eagle Scouts at a steak dinner Sept. 8 at 7 p.m., at 21049 Old Trilby Road. Sen. Wilton Simpson and Congressman Gus Bilirakis (FL-12) will be in attendance. There will be raffle tickets available for purchase. The cost of the dinner is \$20. For information and tickets, call Mark Capes at (352) 523-0800.

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Tampa Bay has launched its "100 Men in 100 Days" campaign to recruit mentors and volunteers. Participants can get involved with the organization's community-based program, site-based program, become a Big Couple or volunteer in Sports Buddies. For information, contact Deb Kristol-Irwin at (813) 997-6881 or DebK@BBBSTampaBay.org. For program information, visit BBBSTampaBay.org.

CHRIST'S CAFÉ

Christ's Café now serves free hot meals every Saturday at 5 p.m., at Harvester United Methodist Church, 2432 Collier Parkway in Land O' Lakes. For information, call the church between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Thursday, at (813) 948-2311.

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 information or to register for a session, contact Anne Ferrell at (813) 357-5321 or ferrella@chaptershealth.org.

FRIENDSHIP SINGERS

The Friendships Singers, a volunteer group that performs in local nursing homes, assisted living facilities and senior centers in Pasco and Hillsborough counties, is looking for members. There are two practices and two concerts each month. Practices are on Saturday from 10 a.m. to noon, at the Pasco County Senior Center, 6801 Wisteria Loop in Land O' Lakes. Florida residents and seasonal guests can join. There are no auditions and no prior singing experience is required. For information, all Charlotte Kalish at (813) 486-7096 or Joe Berling at (813) 997-1454.

MARINE CORPS MEETING

Marine Forever Detachment 1440 will meet the third Monday of every month at Beef O' Brady's, in the Village Lakes Shopping Center on State Road 54, in Land O' Lakes. The business meeting starts at 7 p.m. The Social Group meets for Mess Call every Monday at 6 p.m. For information, contact L. David Kirk at (813) 956-2469 or dkirk@Marine4Ever.com.

VIDEO GAME CONCERT

Tickets for The Florida Orchestra video game concert, "Distant Worlds: Music from Final Fantasy," in January, are now on sale. The performance will be at the Mahaffey Theater in St. Petersburg. Matinee performances have been added. Reserved seat tickets start at \$25. For information, visit FloridaOrchestra.org.

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COURTESY OF PASCO COUNTY

Pasco 2017 Master Gardeners

The UF/IFAS Extension Pasco County Office graduated a class of 11 new master gardeners. The master gardener program offers an intensive 13-week horticultural training for select citizens who then volunteer in the community to teach, conduct research, initiate school gardens, help homeowners solve pest problems, help promote Florida-Friendly Landscaping and water conservation, give lectures and provide other outreach programs. Front row, from left, Pam St. Louis and Barbara DeSimone; middle row, from left, instructor Jim Moll, Becky Finley, Heather Moran, Eden Santiago-Gomez, Jeannine Thompson, Judith Crowley and coordinator/instructor Whitney C. Elmore; back row, from left, Diane Whitman, Arlen Strickland, Francisco Cuin and Jessica Eile Keith. For information about the program and volunteer opportunities, call (352) 518-0156.

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COURTESY OF PASCO EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Scholars recognized

Take Stock in Children, a program with the Pasco Education Foundation providing scholarships, mentors and hope to Pasco County School's income-eligible students, attended a Tampa Bay Rays game at Tropicana Field. Pasco County was joined during the on-field recognition with 44 other students representing five counties within Florida. From left are Deborah Dellaportte, River Ridge High School; Angelina Cooper, Gulf High School; and, Zavianna Richardson, Ridgewood High School. They were the 10th-grade recipients of the Take Stock in Children/Tampa Bay Rays Helios Foundations scholarship. All three are working toward earning a tuition-paid scholarship upon high school graduation. All are being offered college and career readiness services through the program.

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COURTESY OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF SAN ANTONIO

Celebrating back to school

Forty students from the Farmworkers Self-Help community in Dade City visited the Publix Super Market, followed by lunch and the distribution of school supplies, sponsored by the Rotary Club of San Antonio. This is the 10th year for the Back-to-School Party, which also introduces the students to a variety of future job opportunities. Several middle and high school students were interested in after-school job opportunities, while the younger students expressed more interest in the food samples provided by the store. For information, call the Rotary Club of San Antonio at (352) 588-4444, or email rotarysanantonioff@gmail.com.

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Honoring Pasco County's local businesses

By Kathy Steele

ksteele@lakerlutznews.com

The Pasco Economic Development 31st Annual Awards and Trade Show will honor local businesses on Aug. 31 beginning at 5 p.m., at Saddlebrook Resort & Spa, at 5700 Saddlebrook Way in Wesley Chapel.

The event will have a new format, with a shortened awards ceremony, a brief report on Pasco County's economic development progress, and a trade show.

Instead of a sit-down dinner, there will be a variety of hors d'oeuvres.

Another change this year is the introduction of the Pasco EDC Leadership Award, which celebrates a person in economic development who has had a remarkable impact on Pasco County and the community. The inaugural award goes to the late Don Porter, who is being recognized for his vision in helping to shape the Wiregrass area into a community where people work, live and play.

The other awards being bestowed recognize top companies in Pasco that excel in technology, innovation job creation, growth, capital investment and community development.

This year 24 nominees were singled out for their contributions to the business community.

Nominees received scores based on company growth, leadership in current



FILE

The late Don Porter, whose family is the developer of Wiregrass Ranch, was known for his visionary approach — seeking to create a place where people could live, work and play. He will be the first recipient of the Pasco Economic Development Council's Leadership Award.

business issues, and corporate citizenship.

Awards are given in the following categories: small (1-20 employees); medium (21-100 employees); large (101 or more employees); and startup/new within past 24 months.

In alphabetical order, the nominees are:

- II-VI Optical Systems
- Academy of the Lakes Inc.
- Avalon Park West
- Complete I.T./Gear Spinners LLC
- DPW Legal
- Express Employment Professionals
- FACTS Engineering LLC
- Florida Hospital Center Ice
- Habitat for Humanity of East & Central Pasco County Inc.
- Hilton Garden Inn Tampa Suncoast Parkway
- MagicalButter.com

- Morganna's Alchemy
- Morton Plant North Bay Hospital
- North Tampa Behavioral Health
- Regional Medical Center Bayonet Point
- R.J. Kiely Plumbing, Heating & Cooling
- RP & G Printing
- SouthEast Personnel Leasing Inc.
- Synergy Ad Specialties Inc.
- Tampa Premium Outlets
- TRU Simulation + Training Inc.
- Viktoria Richards Chocolate
- Wiregrass Ranch

A chance to talk with state legislators

By Kathy Steele

ksteele@lakerlutznews.com

Get ready to quiz members of the Pasco County legislative delegation, or make a plea for a favorite cause or program.

Pasco legislators will have their annual pre-session public meeting on Sept. 18 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., at Sunlake High School Gymnasium, 3023 Sunlake Blvd., in Land O' Lakes.

The annual get-together is an opportunity for residents, elected officials, representatives of city and county governments, and civic organizations to speak directly to their legislators prior to the start of the 2018 legislative session.

Pasco's delegation includes Representatives Danny Burgess, Amber

Mariano and Richard Corcoran (past Speaker of the House); and, Senators Wilton Simpson, Jack Latvala and Tom Lee.

Public testimony is welcome. Anyone wishing to address the delegation needs to complete a speaker request form. The form is available at bit.ly/2gVEmxW.

Completed requests received by 5 p.m., Sept. 11 will be considered for the agenda. Additional speaker request forms will be available at the meeting.

However, speaker request forms received after the deadline may be considered, if time is available on the agenda.

All speakers, if possible, should email materials and handouts to Jonathan Till at jonathan.till@myfloridahouse.gov.

For information, also contact Till at (813) 780-0667.



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HEALTH & WELLNESS

Send health news to news@lakerlutznews.com

DIABETIC SCREENINGS

The Wesley Chapel Lions Club offers free monthly diabetic screenings at the Lexington Oaks Activity Center, 26304 Lexington Oaks Blvd., in Wesley Chapel, from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., prior to the club's monthly meeting.

The club meets every fourth Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m.

Screenings are open to anyone in the community.

For information, visit Wesley Chapel Lions Club on Facebook.

INFANT/CHILD CPR

St. Joseph's Hospital-North, 4211 Van Dyke Road in Lutz, will offer an infant/child CPR course Aug. 31 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., in Garden Classroom A.

Participants can learn how to perform CPR and choking rescue techniques, according to the American Heart Association guidelines.

The cost is \$40 per person. There also is a \$10 fee if a completion card is required.

To register, call (813) 443-2046.

HEARING AID BATTERY GIVEAWAY

The Sertoma Speech & Hearing Foundation of Florida will have a battery giveaway Sept. 1 from 10 a.m. to noon, at its office in New Port Richey, 6333 River Road.

The Foundation will offer free hearing aid batteries in these sizes: 10, 13, 312 and 675, while supplies last.

For information, call (727) 312-3881, or visit FamilyHearingHelp.org.

BREAST-FEEDING CLASS

St. Joseph's Hospital-North, 4211 Van Dyke Road in Lutz, will offer a breast-feeding class Sept. 2 from 9 a.m. to noon, in Garden Classroom A.

The class is for expectant mothers and a support person. Topics will include latching and positioning, the benefits of immediate skin-to-skin contact, newborn hunger signs, tips for returning to work, breast-feeding lifestyles and when to call a health care provider or lactation consultant for help.

The cost is \$25. To register, call (813) 443-2046.

CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

Regional Medical Center Bayonet Point will offer a tutorial on "Obesity with Cardiovascular Disease" Sept. 5 at the Rao Musunuru MD Conference Center, 14100

Yosemite Drive in Hudson.

The guest speakers will be Dr. Michael Harris and Dr. Pornchai Kittivarakarn.

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

Admission is free. A complimentary lunch will be served.

For information and reservations, call (727) 869-5498.

LUTZ SENIOR CENTER

The Lutz Senior Center, 112 N.W. First Ave., will offer these health events:

- Sept. 5 at 10 a.m.: "Go4Life: Endurance," in which participants can learn about endurance exercises for older adults

- Sept. 6 from 10 a.m. to noon: Flu shots from Walgreens. Participants should bring insurance card and photo ID. Vouchers will be available.

For information, call (813) 264-3804.

BREAST CANCER SUPPORT

The Medical Center of Trinity will host a breast cancer support group Sept. 6 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., in the American Cancer Society Resource Room, 9332 State Road 54, Suite 402, in Trinity. Reservations are advised.

For information, call (727) 834-5630.

CAREGIVER SUPPORT

The Land O' Lakes Library, 2818 Collier Parkway, will host an Alzheimer's Association/Caregiver Support Group Sept. 6 at 11 a.m.

Participants can learn about services and support available for patients with dementia.

For information, email Phyllis Bross at pbross@verizon.net.

GRIEFSHARE GROUP

Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church, 2348 Collier Parkway in Land O' Lakes, will offer GriefShare, a grief support group, Sept. 6, Sept. 13, Sept. 20 and Sept. 27, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., in Immaculata Hall, Room D.

For information, call (813) 949-4565.

SILVER RING EVENTS

Silver Ring Thing, a Christian international youth ministry that advocates sexual integrity, will host two free, live concert-style events:

- Sept. 6 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., North Pointe Church, 19862 Amanda Park Drive in Lutz

- Sept. 7 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., The Church at Odessa, 1234 Gunn Highway in Odessa

Statistically, between 100,000 and 300,000 underage girls are sold for sex in the United States every year. By the age of 14, 94 percent of children will have been exposed to pornography. More than 50 percent of teenagers have engaged in sexual intercourse by the age of 18. And, one third of teens who get pregnant seek an abortion.

Each event will include a parent session at 7 p.m., designed to help parents support



Bethany Wells

NEW DIRECTOR OF PATIENT SERVICES

St. Joseph's Hospital-North has promoted Bethany Wells to director of patient services, overseeing all nursing personnel. Wells assumed the position July 17.

Her duties will include leading and evaluating the nursing team; setting objectives and long-term goals for the nursing department; and organizing and coordinating admission, nursing and patient-care procedures.

Wells joined St. Joseph's Hospital in Tampa in 2000 as a patient care technician, and progressed academically and professionally becoming a registered nurse in the medical-surgical department, and then the charge nurse of the orthopedic unit.

She relocated to St. Joseph's Hospital-North as an education specialist when it opened. Most recently, Wells was the nurse manager of nursing administration, managing a team of 37 nurses and support professionals.

After earning a nursing degree, Wells received a Bachelor of Science in health care administration from Saint Leo University, and is currently working on a Master's Degree in nursing leadership and administration from Capella University.

a child's decision.

Optional rings will be available for \$20.

The events are sponsored by the Oasis Pregnancy Center, Moody Radio and The CleanCare Team.

For information and to register, visit SilverRingThing.com.

APPLY FOR BASIC EYE CARE

The Zephyrhills Lions Club, 5827 Dean Dairy Road, accepts applications from Pasco County residents for basic eye care through its Sight Program, on the first Thursday of every month between 9 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.

To qualify, visit the list of required documents at e-clubhouse.org/sites/Zephyrhills, or by calling the clubhouse at (813) 788-1441 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Those interested must have the required

documentation when applying to be considered for approval.

THIRD CARDIAC LAB OPENS

St. Joseph's Hospital-North, 4211 Van Dyke Road in Lutz, opened a third, 860-square-foot interventional services lab, simultaneously expanding its cardiovascular services to now include electrophysiology.

The state-of-the-art lab includes real-time radiation management software — for patient, physician and staff safety — and the latest 3-D precision imaging software to navigate the heart with accuracy.

In addition to electrophysiology (the diagnosis and treatment of heart rhythm disorders), the three-lab cardiac unit performs cardiac catheterization and interventional cardiac procedures.

OAK HILL EXPANDS PROGRAM

Oak Hill Hospital has been accredited by the American Osteopathic Association for a three-year GME residency program in family medicine. The program is accredited for up to eight residents per year, for a total of 24 additional residents training in Hernando County.

The Family Medicine Residency Program provides an educational experience to prepare residents to become competent family physicians, capable of providing comprehensive and coordinated care to patients and families.

For more information, please visit OakHillHospital.com/About/Newsroom.

OAK HILL HOSPITAL AWARDS

Oak Hill Hospital has recognized Dr. Pariksinh Singh with this year's Frist Humanitarian Physician Award.

Named in honor of Dr. Thomas F. Frist Sr., the founder of HCA and renowned humanitarian, the award recognizes individuals whose daily dedication and care giving epitomize the highest standards of quality and personal commitment.

Liz Jennings, a registered nurse and certified perianesthesia nurse, was recognized by the Business & Professional Women of Florida with the Elaine Gordon Lifetime Achievement Award.

The award, in memory of former State Representative Elaine Gordon, is given to those individuals who promote full participation, equity and economic self-sufficiency for Florida's working women.

In the past, Jennings also had been recognized as an employee Frist Humanitarian Award winner.

AL-ANON SUPPORT GROUP

The Al-Anon Family Groups are relatives and friends of alcoholics who share experiences, strength and hope in order to solve common problems.

There are local day and evening groups that meet weekly.

For meeting locations and times, and more information, visit the Pasco-Hernando-Citrus website at nflldistrict5.com.

For information, call (352) 697-0497.

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FILE

Pasco County officials want to remodel the Boys & Girls Club on Youth Lane in Port Richey for a navigation center to help the homeless population.

Navigation center gets funds; location upsets residents

By Kathy Steele

ksteele@lakerlutznews.com

Pasco County commissioners agreed to disperse federal funds for a navigation center that will work with the homeless population to find permanent housing, health care and jobs.

About \$250,000 will be used to remodel the former Boys & Girls Club buildings on Youth Lane in Port Richey. Approximately \$70,000 will be used to hire a staff member, possibly a program specialist, for the homeless program for adult men and women only.

Commissioners approved the funds at their Aug. 15 meeting in Dade City.

Their vote came after a nearly two-hour public comment period where county commissioners heard from supporters and opponents.

It is the location, more than the concept, which is at the heart of the dispute. The county proposes to reopen the two-building campus at the end of Youth Lane, off Little Road. The site is adjacent to Ridge Plaza, which is anchored by Hobby Lobby and a Walmart Neighborhood Supermarket.

Crane's Roost, a subdivision of about 90 homes, is on the opposite side of Little Road.

Residents say the navigation center will hurt property values, increase crime, and

make them less safe.

"Our fears are not unfounded. We do have the right to feel safe in our communities," said Valerie Schaefer, who has lived in Crane's Roost about 20 years.

Advocates for the center say Pasco has been too slow in responding to the needs of more than 3,000 homeless people who live on the streets, in vehicles and within about 100 encampments across the county.

The Youth Lane site is located by bus stops, government offices and agencies that can provide needed services.

"A lot of them need help with jobs and help with moving on, on their own," said Raine Johns, chief executive officer of the Homeless Coalition of Pasco County. "It has to be somewhere in the county. This is the perfect location for it."

The coalition is slated to operate the center. County commissioners will be asked at a later day to transfer the site's property deed to the coalition.

The goal is to relocate homeless people, one camp at a time. Adult men and women would temporarily live at a "low-barrier" shelter while case managers work to assess their needs, and find permanent housing.

Families wouldn't be eligible.

Johns estimates average stays of 90 days or less.

The navigation center is expected to open by mid-2018.

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ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPAIGN

Pasco County Schools will kickoff "A Bag's Life" Aug. 31 at 10:30 a.m., at Gulf Trace Elementary School, 3303 Gulf Trace Blvd., in Holiday.

The district and its partners have joined this national educational campaign that unites nonprofits, businesses, communities and government organizations to promote the importance of the three Rs — reduce, reuse, recycle — for plastic bags and wraps. Students from 23 district schools can learn about environmental stewardship and compete for prizes based on recycling efforts.

The guest speakers will be Superintendent Kurt Browning, Gulf Trace Principal Hope Schooler, and representatives from Pasco Schools Conservation and Recycling Operations, Walmart and Keep Pasco Beautiful.

For information, call Salinda Strandberg at (813) 794-2380.

FASHION DESIGN PROGRAM

The Dali Museum will introduce a hands-on fashion design program for high school students in the Tampa Bay area, in conjunction with the museum's special exhibit, "Dali & Shiaparelli," which opens Oct. 18.

Teens in grades 9 to 12 can take part in "Fashion Design at The Dali," a free 13-week course to learn the fundamentals of fashion design, construction and runway presentation, from artists and designers.

Sessions will be on Sundays from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m., Sept. 17 through Dec. 10, at The Dali and the Pinellas County Center for the Arts at Gibbs High School.

Applications for the program will be accepted at the museum through Sept. 4. Space is limited.

For information or to apply, visit TheDali.org/fashion, or call Denisse De Leon at (727) 623-4754.

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.



COURTESY OF PASCO EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Mentors get Congressional Recognition

Mentors from Take Stock in Children, a program with the Pasco Education Foundation, were awarded Congressional Recognition at the 'Heroes Among Us' event hosted by Congressman Gus Bilirakis (FL-12) at the Pasco-Hernando State College West Campus. The individuals were recognized for their time, dedication and loyalty to the students they mentor on a regular basis throughout the course of several years. From left: Melba Hamilton, Bob Memoli, Joyce Martin, Betsy Wunderlich and Fern Aefsky. Mentor Dee Murray is not pictured.

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.

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.

PASCO DISTRICT A HEALTHY EMPLOYER

Pasco County Schools has again been recognized as one of the 100 Healthiest Employers in the country.

The school district ranked 35th on the 100 Healthiest Employers list in 2014. The exact ranking for 2017 will be announced Sept. 18.

In the last five years, Pasco County Schools has won numerous awards for health and wellness for taking proactive steps to employee wellness, such as eliminating smoking on all district property and opening two additional wellness centers.

Healthiest Employers is an awards program that recognizes organizations that proactively shape the health of its employees.

To learn more, you can visit HealthiestEmployers.com and SpringBuk.com.

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. 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.

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TOWN HALL, from page 1A

was more time to review the bill, but ultimately expressed his holistic support for charters and school choice, suggesting it's "in the best interest of all the kids."

He pointed out Florida has more than 100 failing traditional schools, labeling the issue "a state of emergency."

"This was our 'Hail Mary' to the children," said Burgess, himself a "proud product" of the public education. "It's a shame that we had to do something, which is why we put in the 'schools of hope' provision."

Wilton Simpson, who also supported the education bill, celebrated the "hope" schools initiative, as a solution to help kindergarten through 12th grade from low socio-economic backgrounds.

"The only way you're going to break generational poverty...is through the education system," Simpson said. "...Clearly, the current system that we have has not, and we've had to something that's a little more aggressive..."

Tom Lee added that expansion of school choice is "a healthy thing" that will inject competition into the public education system.

"I think it's transformative, not so much for the students that left the (public education) system, but for what it's done in the system to cause it to react, to compete," said Lee.

"Parents are taking their kids out because they fear — rightfully or not — that their children are going to underperform and underachieve, and not be prepared for a very competitive world they're entering into."

Lee also said initiatives like eliminating burdensome testing and developing gifted programs in elementary schools should be implemented to "reinvigorate" and "recharge" public education.

Said Lee: "While we need to make sure we're creating opportunities and competition to the system, we're not abandoning the public education system, because it serves a vital purpose in this country for a vast majority of kids who have no other option."

Gus Bilirakis, meanwhile, offered less overall support for charter schools, saying they "need to be held accountable" and scrutinized just as much as public schools.

An alternative to charter schools, he said, is creating more fundamental schools. Fundamental schools mirror charter schools in their focus on strict discipline, but are free and operate through the school district.

"I think the fundamental schools are terrific; I think we need to expand the fundamental schools," Bilirakis said.

Besides the divisive charter school provisions, Burgess made mention to some of the education bill's more popular provisions, including:

- Mandatory recess for 20 minutes at most public elementary schools

- Elimination of the state's algebra 2 end-of-course standardized exam

- Expansion of the "Best and Brightest" teacher bonus program from \$49 million to \$233 million

- Requirement of college students, starting in the 2018-19 school year, to demonstrate "competency" in civic literacy, either by passing a course in the subject or a test

"There are ways you can look at that bill and say, 'That makes a lot of sense,'" Burgess said.

Another speaker, Beverly Ledbetter, an instructor at Saint Leo University and longtime public school teacher, expressed concern over teacher shortages afflicting Florida and Pasco County.

She stated the county has over 100 teaching positions currently filled by substitutes, and many educators are frustrated with low salaries, increasing work demands and job insecurity.

Bilirakis said the problem simply comes down to compensation.

"We need to incentivize teachers to go into the field and to go into the Title I schools, financially," Bilirakis said.

"We need to put teachers on a pedestal. There are some countries, in southern Europe, northern Europe, where teaching is considered the top profession. I think that's so very important."

He also suggested encouraging more veterans to become educators.

"Who better to teach our children than the veterans?" Bilirakis said.

Lee, however, said wholly fixing teacher shortage is "a very complicated problem."

He explained: "We struggle in the legislature to try to figure out how to advance teacher pay in the environment we have to operate in, which is the union construct, where we can't do performance pay outside the collective bargaining, sometimes. From my perspective, we've done too much to inhibit the kind of performance we want from our best teachers, at times."

Elsewhere, the topic of additional public school funding was raised, with a reference to Hillsborough County Public Schools' current struggles to repair faulty air conditioning units, district-wide.

Simpson presented one idea: spend less on building schools, and allocate more for capital outlay improvements.

He noted there's a bill under consideration for next year that would modify or ease some of the strict building requirements, such as State Requirements for Educational Facilities (SREF) that cost school districts "millions upon millions of dollars."

"Does it really take \$25 million to build an elementary school and does it take \$75 million to build a high school, or does it take some fraction of that? In the public school education system, we are putting our dollars and priorities in the wrong place," he said.

backgrounds, some common themes emerged, MacManus said.

"One of the questions I asked was: 'What kind of roadblocks did you experience?'"

"And, every one of them had something they could mention. None of these trailblazers had it easy."

"On the other hand, when I asked, 'Who helped you along the way?' Everyone had a cheerleader and some mentors."

When she asked what sort of advice they would offer future politicians, a common refrain was: "Make sure this is something you and your family want to do. It is very, very demanding and draining to go into public office."

In her work, MacManus said she tries to encourage students to consider becoming public servants.

But, she said there have been times over the years that she has worried that fewer people would be willing to run for office.

She routinely asks students if they have political ambitions.

"For a long time, I didn't see but one or two hands out of 50," she said. Recently, though, she's been encouraged: "Now, I see 10 or 12."

Of those who are interested, she said, "I think they think they can be change agents."

MacManus also has noticed in the data that the number of people with No Party Affiliation is increasing.

She attributes that to a rise in the number of younger people who are alienated by the traditional two-party system.

"It'll be interesting to see what they do with politics," MacManus said. "It is a party-dominated political system, and it's going to be hard to break that."

To order a copy of the book, call (800) 226-3822 or email orders@upress.ufl.edu.

TRAFFIC, from page 1A

things on the way, but these things won't come to fruition over night."

At least one project has been sped up.

Construction of the diverging diamond interchange at Interstate 75 and State Road 56 will begin in 2018, about two years ahead of an initial start date. The unique engineering pattern eliminates left turns and most traffic signals, to quicken, and ease, traffic flow.

The interchange is at the epicenter of a growth boom in Wesley Chapel that includes Tampa Premium Outlets and Cypress Creek Town Center.

"It's miserable. I get it," said Moore. "I'm with you."

Bilirakis said local governments will have federal funding available for their transportation projects.

President Donald Trump campaigned on a promise of \$1 trillion in shovel-ready infrastructure projects. Congress is waiting on a specific proposal from the White House, Bilirakis said.

"The infrastructure piece is very much alive," he said. "It's a priority for the President, and it's a priority for us in Congress. It's a bipartisan effort and, God knows, we need that today."

Bilirakis said he expected Congress to address tax reform early in 2018, and "then, we're going to get to infrastructure."

He also said the Ridge Road extension will benefit from an expedited review process implemented by the White House.

Pasco has lobbied for the extension for nearly 19 years as a necessary east-west road for hurricane evacuations. A permit is needed from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Environmentalists have opposed the project, which would cut through a portion of the Serenova Preserve. But, Bilirakis said, "We're really moving the ball forward on this project."

MANY PROJECTS ON THE HORIZON

The state department of transportation currently has a slate of road projects under construction, in design or in planning. In the past five years, the state agency has invested more than \$640 million in Pasco, Gwynn said.

By late 2017, work on widening Interstate 75 from four lanes to six lanes from County Road 54 to State Road 52 will be completed, along with a redesign of the interchange.

To the west of I-75, work to widen State Road 52 from two lanes to four lanes, from Bellamy Brothers Boulevard to Old Pasco Road, will be done by summer 2018.

State Road 54 from Curley Road to Morris Bridge Road will go from two lanes to four lanes by fall 2020. A shared use path and sidewalks also will be built.

Work recently began on a four-lane extension of State Road 56 from Meadow Pointe Boulevard in Wiregrass Ranch to U.S. 301 in Zephyrhills. Completion is scheduled by spring 2019.

Two projects are in design and scheduled to begin in 2019. One will widen State Road 52 from two lanes to six lanes, from west of Suncoast Parkway to east of U.S. 41, with a shared use path.

A second will realign State Road 52 from Uradco Place to West Fort King Road. A new four-lane road will run from Uradco Place to Prospect Road. From Prospect to Fort King, the existing road will widen from two lanes to four lanes.

A third project, with no construction start date, would widen State Road 52 from two lanes to four lanes from U.S. 41 to west of Bellamy Brothers Boulevard.

There are two unfunded projects in design stages that would both realign and widen Gall Boulevard in Zephyrhills.

Bicycle lanes and sidewalks are being designed for County Line Road from Northwood Palms to west of Bruce B. Downs Boulevard. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2018.

Also, planning is underway on two projects to widen U.S. 301 from Fowler Avenue to State Road 56, and from State Road 56 to State Road 39.

A major reconstruction of the State Road 54 and U.S. 41 intersection is on hold while a local task force reviews options and makes a recommendation to the county's Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Pasco has 48 road projects slated from 2017 to 2021 at an estimated cost of about \$426 million. Almost all will be in east and central Pasco, Biles said.

The county will fund about half the cost, with the remainder coming from state and local funds, he said.

The expansion of Wesley Chapel Boulevard from State Road 54 to Progress Parkway, from two lanes to four lanes, is scheduled in fiscal year 2018.

Sierra Properties, which is developing Cypress Creek Town Center, completed the initial segment of the project, and built an entrance into the mall from the boulevard.

In addition to increasing road capacity, the county is exploring options with new technology. For instance, adaptive traffic signals can be adjusted based on real-time conditions monitored via cameras a centralized command post.

This technology is being used in some areas of U.S. 19, and Biles anticipates that in the next five years it would be installed along other roadways.

Bilirakis is a fan of self-driving vehicles, which is an evolving technology. He is supporting federal legislation to ensure that such vehicles are adaptable to needs of seniors and disabled veterans.

The Congressman also agreed that partnerships with Uber and Lyft can enhance public transit by helping people reach bus stops.

Self-driving vehicles appeal to Land O' Lakes resident Kelly Smith as a means of providing ride-sharing opportunities.

That would get more vehicles off the roads and lessen the need for parking, and potentially mean fewer roads would be needed, she said.

But, Smith, who is running against Moore for a seat on the Pasco County Commission, said, "I'm concerned that we're not looking into the future."

In response to a question about buying CSX rail lines for passenger service, Moore said he favors rapid bus transit.

"CSX does not give their lines away," he said. "It's very costly. Bus transit is more economical."

BOOK, from page 1A

South to change laws and processes that discriminated against persons of color, and notes the importance of single-member districts, redistricting and term limits in opening up the political arena to minority candidates.

MacManus said her approach to the book was influenced by the work she did with her mother, the late Elizabeth Riegler MacManus, on local history books.

She and her mother are co-authors of "Citrus, Sawmills, Critters & Crackers," and "Going, Going, Almost Gone ..." which trace the history of Lutz and Land O' Lakes.

Those books stemmed from scores of taped interviews that MacManus' mother conducted with area old-timers who had deep roots in the settlements north of Tampa.

The interviews were supplemented with property records, advertisements, old brochures, photographs, documents and anything else that would help tell the community's story.

Like her mother, MacManus thought it important to include personal stories, along with hard facts.

Arranging the interviews was a challenge.

"These are very busy, very prominent people," she said.

Gaining the trust of the potential interview subject was essential, too.

In some cases, MacManus was seeking meetings with people who didn't know her. So, she turned to people who do, to help her secure those interviews.

"It took time to get to them," she said. "But, once I got the interviews, they were very gracious."

As she talked with people from diverse

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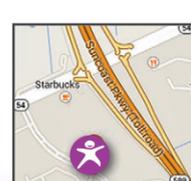
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Local youth barefoot water-skier wins national title

By Kevin Weiss

kweiss@lakerlutznews.com

Brett Swanbom can be considered a rising star in the extreme sport of barefoot water-skiing.

The 11-year-old, who lives in Land O' Lakes, has the medals to prove it.

Swanbom won first overall in the boys B Division (12 & under) at the 2017 United States Barefoot Nationals on Aug. 5 in Polk City. There, he claimed gold medals in jump and slalom events, and a silver medal in tricks.

In April, Swanbom entered — and won — his first-ever tournament — the 2017 PGA Opener in Palm Beach Gardens.

He also went on to win a handful of other tournaments in Florida and Texas over the summer.

Those achievements paled in comparison to capturing the boys B Division national barefoot title, however.

"It didn't really feel like it did at nationals; people come from all over America (to compete)," said Swanbom, a sixth-grader at Pine View Middle School.

A relative newcomer to the sport, Swanbom began barefooting just about a year-and-a-half ago. He first learned from his father, Bob Swanbom, a former show skier on the Wisconsin-based Tommy Bartlett water-ski team.

It became clear Swanbom was a natural.

"He just excelled real fast," his father said.

Barefoot skiing, also referred to as "barefooting," is water-skiing behind a motorboat without the use of water skis. It requires skiers to travel at higher speeds than conventional water-skiing (30 to 45mph); the necessary speed required to keep the skier upright varies by the weight of the barefoot-er.

There are three events in traditional barefooting:

- **Tricks:** The skier has two passes of 15 seconds to complete as many different tricks as possible. All tricks have specific point values depending on difficulty. The skier also is awarded points for the start trick they performed to get up.

- **Slalom:** The skier has two passes of 15 seconds to cross the wake as many times as possible. The skier can cross the wake forward or backward, and on two feet or one foot.

- **Jump:** The skier travels over a small, fiberglass jump ramp. They have three jumps and the longest one successfully landed counts.

Swanbom already has earned a name for himself in barefoot water-skiing.

He's one of just 23 sponsored skiers by the World Barefoot Center (WBC) in Winter Haven, where he receives training and equipment perks.



COURTESY OF BOB SWANBOM

Land O' Lakes' Brett Swanbom won first overall in the boys B Division (12 & under) at the 2017 United States Barefoot Nationals, on Aug. 5 in Polk City. The 11-year-old barefoot water-skier claimed gold medals in jump and slalom events, and a silver medal in tricks.

There, he's been called Brett 'Slalom' Swanbom, for his masterful displays in the wake slalom event.

"He's very, very good at the slalom ski," Brett's father said. "They think someday he'll beat (two-time World Barefoot Champion) Keith (St. Onge) in the world slalom record."

David Small, one of Swanbom's instructors at the World Barefoot Center, is spellbound by the 11-year-old's slalom skills.

"As soon as he could stand up beyond the boat, he'd be tearing up the slalom," said Small, the world's top-ranked barefoot-er and a six-time world barefoot champion.

"Natural ability helps him. The power-to-weight ratio on that kid is unbelievable. He's so strong, and he weighs next to nothing."

Besides his moniker, Swanbom's abilities spawned a new rule allowing the barefoot jump event for boys under 12 years old, colloquially referred to as the 'Brett Rule.'

"...They didn't allow 11 year olds to jump, so I said, 'Well, how can he ever win boys B Division?'" Brett's father recalled telling barefooting officials. "Now if you qualify, and they see you're really a good barefoot-er, they'll let you jump. You have to go through some qualifications. They just don't want somebody to go out there and get hurt."

Swanbom is currently ranked 27th in the world in the boys junior division (17 and under), according to the World Barefoot Council's latest rankings. Many ranked higher are 15, 16 and 17 years old.

"I'm very proud of him," his father said. "He's accomplished a lot in a short period of

time and, with the guys at WBC, he's learning from the best."

Swanbom stays humble, realizing there's ways to go to reach the world's elite.

"I'm not there yet," he said, modestly. "I haven't really mastered tricks. I haven't really mastered slalom, either."

Doing so is contingent on flawless barefooting technique.

"He's progressed fast," Small said, "so it's our job to keep him mentally grounded so that he doesn't act up, and really to solidify the fundamentals of the sport...so he can really push forward and compete at a high level."

Meanwhile, Swanbom has incorporated several sophisticated tricks to his repertoire.

That includes 'tumble-turns' — a 360-degree spin while butt-sliding on the water, then coming back around with feet planted — and 'toe-ups' — where a skier, with one leg locked onto the ski handle, rocks their body up on the water on one foot, without using hands.

"When you learn new tricks and you finally get it after a long time, you're relieved, but proud of yourself at the same time," Swanbom said. "Some part makes you proud, some part makes it fun."

During events, Swanbom focuses on setting personal-bests, rather than his opponents.

"It's not about going against another person — it's (about) going against you," Brett said. "First, you try to beat yourself, then you worry about the other person. But, I don't really do that much."



KEVIN WEISS

Brett Swanbom is currently ranked 27th in the world in the boys junior division (17 and under), according to the World Barefoot Council's latest rankings. He's won several events since competing in April.

"If you win or not, it doesn't matter. It's just like if you had fun," he said.

"With the kids, it's all about them having fun," added Small. "He really enjoys the sport. So, it's not like he's going out there and training and not having fun."

Swanbom someday hopes to compete professionally and set a world record "at least in one event."

A more immediate goal is joining the United States World Team, perhaps even the 2018 junior squad.

"I don't see why he can't be on the U.S. team for the junior world championships, and start actively competing against the rest of the world," Small said. "As long as he keeps enjoying it; he's got the mental ability, and the physical ability to do it."

It also doesn't hurt that Swanbom resides in Central Florida, often referred to as the "Water Ski Capital of the World."

"Florida's a great place to water-ski because you can ski year-round," Bob Swanbom said. "You can't do that in Wisconsin, and you might not be able to do that in Utah, and in Texas you can't, sometimes."

Interestingly, Land O' Lakes is home to a pair of the sport's most recognizable names, as both Don Mixon Sr. and Don Mixon Jr., live in Lake Padgett. Mixon Sr. is the past president of the American Barefoot Waterskiing Association and a former coach of the United States Barefoot Team. Mixon Jr. is a former barefoot professional, winning the 1994 World Barefoot Championship in Sydney, Australia.



SAINT LEO WOMEN'S LACROSSE PROSPECT CAMP

The Saint Leo University's women's lacrosse program will host its Fall Prospect Clinic Oct. 8, at University Turf Stadium on the campus of Saint Leo, 3701 State Road 52 in St. Leo. The clinic, which runs from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., is open to high school girls ages 14 to 18. To register, visit TotalCamps.com/saintleowomenslacrosse.

AREA COMMITMENTS

Kylie Coffin, a sophomore at Carrollwood Day School, has committed to play softball at University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, a Division I program. On the mound, Coffin posted a 3.16 ERA and 116 strikeouts in 117.1 innings pitched, with an 11-7 record last season. At the plate, she batted .407 with six extra-base hits and 18 RBIs. The standout right-handed pitcher/third baseman has played varsity softball since the seventh grade.



Kylie Coffin

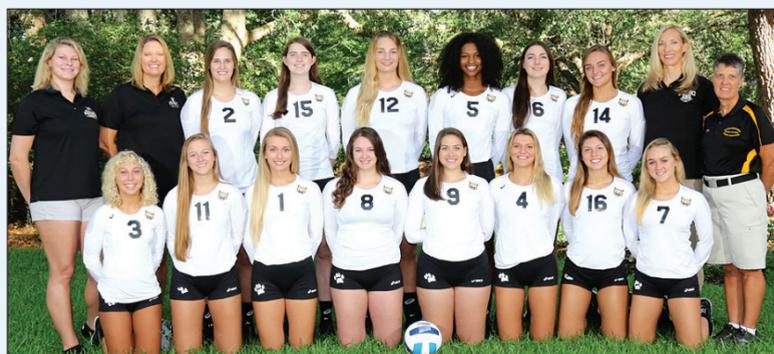
Rodrigo Montenegro, a senior at Carrollwood Day School, has committed to play baseball at St. Petersburg College, a Division I junior college program. Last season, the 5-foot-10, 170-pound junior posted a .472 batting average with nine doubles, three triples and 17 RBIs. He also led the team in stolen bases, with 12.



Rodrigo Montenegro

FISHING FOR FAMILIES SET FOR NOV. 3

The inaugural Pasco County Sheriff Chris Nocco's Fishing For Families Saltwater Tournament is set for Nov. 3 at 8 a.m., at Catches Waterfront Grille, 7811 Bayview St., in Port Richey.



COURTESY OF PASCO-HERNANDO STATE COLLEGE

The Pasco-Hernando State College women's volleyball team opens up its home slate on Aug. 30. Top row: Amanda Michels; Deann Newton, assistant volleyball coach; Cheyenne Miller; Abby Epstein; Lindsey Moore; Tyler Hunter; Natasha Bannister; Courtney Rottum; Kim Whitney, head women's volleyball coach; Mary Manning, athletic trainer. Bottom row: Zoe Murchio, Camden Bitter, Brie Tsamis, Sarah Asbury, Emily Schoonover, Marissa Niedermeyer, Kim Johnson and Morgan Church.

PHSC volleyball opens home slate Aug. 30

After opening the regular season Aug. 22, the Pasco-Hernando State College (PHSC) women's volleyball team kicks off its home slate on Aug. 30, with a 6 p.m. match against Santa Fe College.

The 2017 team is the school's first to compete as the Bobcats — PHSC's new athletics moniker since retiring the Conquistadors last spring.

Under longtime head coach Kim Whitney, the volleyball program returns seven players from last year's 12-18 squad, including captains Tyler Hunter (middle hitter) and Cheyenne Miller (outside hitter). Also returning is outside hitter Marissa Niedermeyer; middle hitters Lindsey Moore and Wiregrass Ranch-product Courtney Rottum; and, liberos Kim Johnson and Zoe Murchio.

The team also is buoyed by a freshman class that includes setters Brie Tsamis (Mitchell) and Sarah Asbury (Weeki Wachee); middle hitters Natasha Bannister (Nelson, New Zealand) and Abby Epstein (Crystal River); outside hitters Camden Bitter

(Belleview, Ocala), Carla Butler (Hornby, New Zealand) and Emily Schoonover (Sunlake); and, libero Morgan Church (Harmony, St. Cloud).

Meanwhile, PHSC added Deann Newton as an assistant coach. Newton spent the past four seasons as Sunlake High's head volleyball coach, who compiled a 76-38 career mark and two district championships.

Admission is free for all home matches, which are at the PHSC West campus, 10230 Ridge Road in New Port Richey.

Immediately following all home matches, PHSC will host a free volleyball clinic for elementary and middle school children, ages 6 to 13 years old.

PHSC volleyball home schedule

- Aug. 30: Santa Fe College (6 p.m.)
- Sept. 8: Bobcat Invitational Tournament (1 p.m. and 5 p.m.)
- Sept. 9: Bobcat Invitational Tournament (Noon and 4 p.m.)
- Sept. 12: State College of Florida (6 p.m.)
- Sept. 19: Trinity College (6 p.m.)
- Sept. 21: St. Petersburg College (6 p.m.)
- Sept. 28: South Florida State College (6 p.m.)
- Oct. 3: St. Johns River State College (6 p.m.)
- Oct. 17: Trinity College (6 p.m.)
- Oct. 19: Lake Sumter State College (6 p.m.)



COURTESY OF JOHN MEDVID

Nice Haul!

At the South Pasco Bassmasters' Aug. 19 tournament at Lake Reedy in Frostproof, Norm Soash, shown here, and Bud Hodgins teamed up to win first place, reeling in five bass for a total weight of 16.66 pounds. The winning weight was caught using Junebug assorted plastic baits, fished on the shore grass line in a depth of 3 feet of water. The next tournament is slated for Sept. 16, at the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes. For information on joining the club, visit SouthPascoBassmasters.com.

Registration is open to individual anglers, and opportunities remain available for sponsorships. No experience is necessary, and the event is all-inclusive.

Tournament species categories include redfish, trout and snook.

Prizes will be awarded for first place, second place and third place for combined total inches. A prize will also be awarded for largest single fish in each category, and a master angler award will be presented for biggest cobia.

This catch-and-release tournament will benefit the Pasco Sheriff Youth Fishing & Environmental Education Program, the Family Support Network, and the Pasco Sheriff's K-9 Association.

To register, visit tinyurl.com/y95gzdc6.

For information, contact Rick Cochran at RCochran@PascoSheriff.org or (727)-514-8417.



COURTESY OF AMANDA PERKINS

Liam Perkins celebrates Day 1 of fifth grade at New River Elementary School in Wesley Chapel with his traditional giant cookie.



COURTESY OF TAMMY FRISCO

Baylor Frisco, a junior at Sunlake High School in Land O' Lakes, gets ready to drive his little brother Cannon Frisco, an eighth-grader, to Rushe Middle School. Baylor can give Cannon a ride because now they start school around the same time.

Annual photos are like tiny time capsules

By B.C. Manion
bcmansion@lakerlutznews.com

Taking a "first day of school" photo is a tradition many families observe.

After all, it marks an important moment.

For some kids, like Ryland Green, this year's photo signifies not only the beginning of a new school year at a new school, but also in a new county.

For others, like Liam Perkins, the first day of school comes with another tradition. When he returns home, there's a giant cookie awaiting.

Some kids, like Andrew and Aubrey Deneau of Land O' Lakes, enjoy posing with the family dog.

And, for Betsy Murdock, that old adage rings true: If at first you don't succeed, try, try again.

She didn't get a photo of her daughter Kate before the fourth-grader had her first day at Learning Gate Community School in Lutz. So, she took a photo of her daughter after school.

Then, to remedy the situation, she took a photo of Kate on Day 2, in front of the school's sign.

Whether the kids strike the same pose every year, or do something entirely different — these annual photographs serve as miniature time capsules, tracking the child's changes, as they switch up fashions and hairstyles, and grow up.

They offer a visual window into the evolution of a child's life.



COURTESY OF BETSY MURDOCK

Betsy Murdock made up for not getting her daughter Kate's photo on first day of school by getting this photo on Day 2 of Kate's fourth-grade year at Learning Gate Community School in Lutz.



COURTESY OF ABIGAIL JAYNE KENNEDY

It's going to be awhile before second-grader Ethan Kennedy and first-grader Hannah Kennedy will be graduating from high school. They both attend Sanders Memorial Elementary School in Land O' Lakes.



COURTESY OF KIMBERLY CHAPMAN

Nicholas Chapman gets ready for his first day of second grade at Sanders Memorial Elementary School in Land O' Lakes.



COURTESY OF NADINE WEIDERER

Cloe Varga is looking forward to her first day of sixth grade at Cypress Creek Middle High School in Wesley Chapel. Cloe posed for photos at 6:15 a.m., according to her aunt Nadine Weiderer, who, given that fact, was quite pleased by the way they came out.



COURTESY OF SARAH BROWN

Five-year-old son Alec Brown poses with his dad, Tommy Brown and mom, Sarah Brown. Alec is in first grade at Bexley Elementary.



Nine-year-old Oscar Brown, a fourth-grader at Bexley Elementary, is shown here with his teacher Katlyn Gamble.



Emelina Brown, 12, was up early to catch the bus to Rushe Middle School, where she's an eighth-grader.



Eighteen-year-old Lizzie Brown sent her parents a photo taken on her first day of classes at the University of Florida in Gainesville.



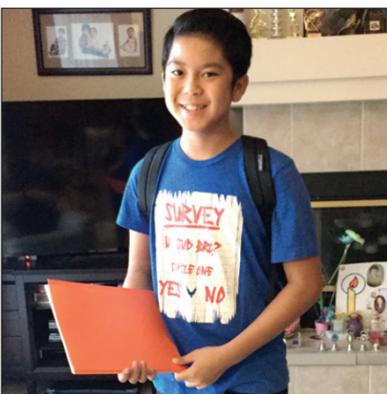
COURTESY OF CHRIS COULTER

Delaney Coulter, who attends Academy at the Lakes in Land O' Lakes, holds a sign that seems to make it official.



COURTESY OF ROWENA MENDOZA

Kayla Mendoza looks ready for her first day of fourth grade at Seven Oaks Elementary in Wesley Chapel.



COURTESY OF ROWENA MENDOZA

Colin J. Mendoza before heading off for his first day of seventh grade at John Long Middle School in Wesley Chapel.



COURTESY OF CATHERINE DENEAU

Andrew and Aubrey Deneau had their first day of school on Aug. 14 at Pine View Elementary in Land O' Lakes. Andrew is a fifth-grader and Aubrey is in kindergarten. Maycie is their Airedale Terrier, who said goodbye to Andrew and Aubrey as they headed off to school.



COURTESY OF KRIS SUNDBERG

Beck Sundberg, who attends Learning Gate Community School in Lutz, gets ready for his first day of fifth grade.



COURTESY OF TRACY GREEN

Ryland Green strikes a pose as she gets ready to head to sixth grade at Pine View Middle School.



COURTESY OF DIANE ROCK

Zachary Rock, a student at Rushe Middle School in Land O' Lakes, on his first day of sixth grade.

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PET PAWS

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.



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Molly is a sweet girl

Molly has been with the shelter for about a month. She is a sweet girl that doesn't mind having her photo taken. Molly is looking for her forever human to snuggle with during the day.



Come meet Charlie

Charlie is a 3-year-old mixed breed that loves to learn, and is a happy and active boy. The shelter recommends a home with older children, and a meet-and-greet with other dogs. A video of Charlie can be found on Pasco County Animal Service's Facebook page showing how gently he takes treats.

If you would like to adopt Charlie or Molly, 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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LOCAL WILDLIFE



Visitor curiosity

Lillian Cucuzza noticed a couple of new fawns in the woods behind her house in Land O' Lakes. The youngsters were out in broad daylight, in the cul-de-sac by the retention pond, seeming to have a good time. This one appears to be very curious about its surroundings, or on the lookout.

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BUSINESS DIGEST

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SMARTSTART WORKSHOP

The Pasco Economic Development Council will host a 10-week SMARTstart CO.STARTERS workshop for small business owners and entrepreneurs beginning Sept. 7 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., at the Copperstone Executive Suites, 3632 Land O' Lakes Blvd., in Land O' Lakes.

The sessions will be on Thursday evenings, including a celebratory meeting in the 10th week. The sponsor is the Central Pasco Chamber of Commerce.

The program will provide seasoned and aspiring entrepreneurs with the insights, relationships and tools needed to turn ideas into action, and passions into sustainable and thriving endeavors.

The cost is \$295 for 10 weeks of instruction and materials.

Participants must register online no later than 4 p.m., Sept. 1.

To register, visit SmartstartPasco.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.

You can register online at CentralPascoChamber.com.

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

GOODWILL JOBS FOR WESLEY CHAPEL

Goodwill Temporary Staffing will have a job fair Sept. 7 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the Goodwill Superstore in Lakeland, at 5411 S. Florida Ave.

GTS, Goodwill's full-service staffing agency, is seeking sales associates and donations processing associate positions for the Goodwill superstores in Lakeland, Brandon and Wesley Chapel.

Applicants are encouraged to complete an application at SbsGoodwill.com before attending the job fair. However, walk-ins are welcome.

Employment applications also are available at the stores.

Goodwill is an equal opportunity and affirmative action employer and a drug-free workplace.

Goodwill Industries-Suncoast is a non-profit organization with a mission to help people achieve their full potential through the dignity and power of work.

For information, visit Goodwill-suncoast.org.

NORTH TAMPA BEHAVIORAL HEALTH RIBBON CUTTING

North Tampa Behavioral Health will have a ribbon cutting Sept. 7 from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., at 29910 State Road 56 in Wesley Chapel.

The free event will celebrate a \$9 million expansion at the health care center, which opened in 2013.

North Tampa Behavioral Health serves patients with mental health needs, including depression, addiction, anxiety, psychosis, substance abuse, post-traumatic distress disorder and other disorders. Inpatient, outpatient and hospitalization programs are available.

There will be self-guided tours and light refreshments.

Please RSVP to (813) 922-3306.

For more information, please visit NorthTampaBehavioralHealth.com.

ZEPHYRHILLS BREAKFAST

The Greater Zephyrhills Chamber of Commerce will have its monthly breakfast on Sept. 7 from 7 a.m. to 8:30 a.m., at the Golden Coral, 6855 Gall Blvd., in Zephyrhills.

The sponsor is The Samaritan Project.

The cost is \$8 for chamber members and \$10 for non-members.

For more information, call the chamber at (813) 782-1913, or you can email cleanor@zephyrhillschamber.org.

BUSINESS LINK BREAKFAST

Business Link will have its monthly breakfast Sept. 13 from 7:30 a.m. to 9 a.m., at Wesley Chapel Toyota, 5300 Eagleston Blvd., in Wesley Chapel.

The monthly gathering, held at various locations, provides networking and an information-sharing platform for the small business community.

A complimentary breakfast will be provided. The event is sponsored by the San Antonio Citizens Federal Credit Union.

RSVP to Rebecca Gaddis at (352) 588-2732, ext. 1237, or email her at rgaddis@sacfcu.org.

COMMON GROUND PITCH BREAKFAST

SMARTstart CO.STARTERS will host the monthly "Common Ground Pitch Breakfast" Sept. 13 from 8:30 a.m. to 11 a.m., at the SMARTstart Dade City Entrepreneur Center, at 37837 Meridian Ave., No. 309, in Dade City.

Each month, two people present a five-minute pitch to introduce their business ideas to Pasco County's local entrepreneurial community. Each pitch is followed by a question-and-answer session, and opportunity for feedback.

The event is free. The SMARTstart programs are supported by the Pasco Economic Development Council.

To register, you can visit SmartstartPasco.com/events, or call Andrew Romaner, SMARTstart incubator program manager, at (352) 437-4861.

SELF-STORAGE AND HOTEL

About 110,000 square feet of self-storage, and a hotel are being proposed for the intersection of State Road 54 and Bruce B. Downs Boulevard, in Wesley Chapel.

Representatives of the project's developers are scheduled to meet with county planners in a pre-application meeting on Sept. 5, according to county records.

The project would be built on land adjacent to a Walgreen's drugstore also at the intersection.

Pre-application meetings generally are the first step in the process of obtaining approvals and permits for a project.

NEW ZEPHYRHILLS APARTMENTS

The Terraces at New River is a 228-unit apartment complex being proposed south of the southeast intersection of State Road 54 and New River Road, in Zephyrhills.

Representatives of the developers were scheduled to meet in August with Pasco County planners for a pre-application meeting.

A conceptual plan, also filed with the county, shows five apartment buildings - four with four stories and one with three stories. Parking, a car wash area, and an amenity area also are shown.

BUSINESS MIXER

Copperstone Executive Suites and The Laker/Lutz News co-hosted a Salute to Small Businesses on Aug. 23 in the meeting room at Copperstone Executive Suites.

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8	5	2	1	4	7	3	9	6
3	4	7	6	8	9	1	5	2
6	1	9	5	2	3	4	7	8
7	9	4	8	3	6	5	2	1
5	8	1	4	7	2	6	3	9
2	6	3	9	5	1	7	8	4
1	7	6	2	9	5	8	4	3
4	2	5	3	1	8	9	6	7
9	3	8	7	6	4	2	1	5

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Solar eclipse creates buzz

The Laker/Lutz News Staff Report

All of North America was treated to an eclipse of the sun on Aug. 21, with a path of totality stretching across the United States, from Salem, Oregon to Charleston, South

Carolina. Anyone within that path, estimated at about 70 miles wide, had the opportunity to see a total solar eclipse. During the eclipse, the moon completely covered the sun, and the sun's atmosphere — the corona, was visible.



COURTESY OF MAX RATHMAN

Max Rathman, of Lutz, drove to Dillard, Georgia to experience the solar eclipse Aug. 21. Ninety-six percent coverage was expected. This is a compilation of his photos of the progression of the eclipse, over an hour's time.



COURTESY OF LILLIAN CUCUZZA

Lillian Cucuzza, in Land O' Lakes, used her solar eclipse sunglasses as the filter over the lens of her Nikon P520 camera, and, as she says, it worked like a charm. She captured the images outside of her office at 6739 Land O' Lakes Blvd.

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In accordance with FL statute 63.212(1)(g), only attorneys licensed to practice law in Florida and Florida licensed adoption entities may legally provide adoption services under state law.

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